Dear Friend of TSU’s “Ocean”:

Wow! We are ecstatic, elated and proud to report to you that Texas Southern University’s “Ocean of Soul” Marching Band presented AWESOME performances in Canton, Ohio during the 2014 Pro Football Hall of Fame weekend. High school students admitted to us that they had been stalking us and anxiously awaiting the arrival of the famed band from Houston, Texas, known around the world as the Ninth Wonder of the World.

The “Ocean” was ready and performed they did…at the four events as promised: The NFL Statue Unveiling, the Grand TimkenSteel Parade, The Fan Tailgate and the Iconic Steps (that will never be the same again). The “Ocean” turned it out and up.

This communication is a brief note from us that carries a big message. We THANK YOU for making this trip possible. The excitement on the faces of our students was priceless. Many were boarding the airplane for the first time in their lives – some had never traveled outside the confines of their hometowns. It was a culturally enriching experience that the students will share for the rest of their lives. The students were calling home, texting, sharing selfies, posting to all forms of social media, to inform family members and friends about their plane ride, the friendly people and fan reaction to their performances.

What can we say about the City of Canton? Over 4800 volunteers – worked together as one unit to perfect every move, and every anticipated need of their visitors.

It was awesome to see. The volunteers pulled out all the stops for Texas Southern University. Thanks to Michael Strahan, Kevin Hart, Marcus Davis (TSU Alumnus) and The Breakfast Klub, Tom Joyner, Tony Wylie, A-Rocket Moving & Storage, Malone University, Artsin Stark, QUINTEVENTS, Perry Miller & Southwest Airlines, the Pro Football Hall of Fame, Radio One and Linda Ragland, TSU’s National Alumni Association and its Ocean of Soul, Metro Houston, Business School, Ft. Worth, COST Alumni Chapters, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity and all of you who gave to make this once in a lifetime event possible.

A special thanks to our president, Dr. John Rudley who believed in and supported this initiative as an outreach of his vision of enhancing the university’s footprint on a national and international level. This initiative did just that –positioned the university’s talented students on a national stage, recruited students to the university and raised money for student support programs.

If Texas Southern University is going to take its rightful place at the top of the educational ladder, it’s going to take some “over-the-top” and “bold” moves. Thanks for flying with us to Canton, Ohio, for a “one of a kind” celebration.

Again, thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Eva Pickens
AVP, University Advancement