

Presidential Search Committee  
University of New Orleans  
c/o John K. Thornburgh and Elizabeth K. Bohan  
Witt/Kieffer Search Consultants

Dear Members of the Search Committee,

Five and a half years ago, I answered Mayor Landrieu's call to "come help rebuild a great American city." With his inspired leadership and the passion and energy of the people of New Orleans, we have transformed a city teetering on the edge of bankruptcy and weighted-down by a stalled recovery into a symbol of resilience. We achieved long-overdue fiscal stability, invested nearly \$2 billion of recovery funds in new infrastructure, and brought a can-do attitude towards city operations. The city is now on a roll-tops in job creation, entrepreneurship, education reform, the number of new college graduates moving to town, property value appreciation, tourism, music and culture. While the city faces a myriad of other critical issues that must be addressed in order for New Orleans to live up to her potential as a safe, diverse, and thriving community where the American dream is available to all, there is no doubt our city's renaissance has strong momentum and we are headed in the right direction.

Like the City of New Orleans in 2010, the University of New Orleans (UNO) today finds herself at a critical juncture. Hurricane Katrina, the onset of higher admissions standards, and state budget cuts hit the university like a perfect storm over the past decade. Like the people of New Orleans, the students, faculty, staff, alumni and administration of the university have sacrificed mightily to keep their institution afloat. Despite these heroic efforts to stabilize the university, UNO has not fully turned the corner and its potential to transform lives, produce ground breaking research, and play its proper role as an internationally-regarded urban research university and community anchor for one of the world's greatest cities remains at serious risk.

UNO's current leadership transition needs to be brought to conclusion quickly so that clear strategies and steps can be developed and taken-in partnership with the entire university community-to immediately begin laying the foundation for stability and planting the seeds for dynamic growth. As part of this effort, we must not be afraid to make difficult decisions or acknowledge the dramatic changes taking place in the higher education marketplace that will shape the future. At the same time, we should make sure to capitalize on trends and opportunities where UNO is uniquely positioned to lead given her place in a resurgent region that is setting the bar in such areas as international trade and tourism, film and video production, entrepreneurship and information technology, coastal restoration and water management, naval and marine architecture and advanced

materials, urban planning and education reform, music, arts and culture. UNO cannot wait. We must seize the moment and win the fight for UNO's future.

Leading UNO's turnaround is the kind of challenge I live for and the type of mission that has defined my professional career. When Governor Blanco asked me to lead the recovery effort after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, our state was at rock bottom with its biggest metropolitan area effectively shut down with no rebuilding plans in place and limited resources committed to the task. Powerful officials like U.S. Speaker Dennis Hastert were questioning whether New Orleans should be rebuilt. The storm's aftermath cleaved dangerous fissures between the Bush Administration and Governor Blanco, and between Governor Blanco and local leaders like New Orleans' Mayor Nagin. And Congress's first appropriations bill gave Mississippi almost as much rebuilding money as Louisiana, despite the fact that we had many times more damage.

As Founding Executive Director of the Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA), I led our highly-regarded, bipartisan board of directors in addressing these challenges head-on and securing \$14.5 billion to rebuild our levee system, \$10 billion for housing, and another \$4 billion for infrastructure. We succeeded by rigorously documenting our losses, winning the national media over to our cause through dozens of briefings, working closely with partner organizations, relentlessly and effectively lobbying Members of Congress and their staffs, and ruthlessly exploiting political opportunities like forcing the Bush Administration to address Congress's inequitable treatment of Louisiana versus Mississippi. I am incredibly proud of the talented, diverse, and indefatigable staff I pulled together for this mission. We sweated the small stuff and left nothing to chance. It took three years and three separate appropriations bills to do it, but we ultimately secured the billions in funding we needed.

Although keeping the City of New Orleans out of bankruptcy in 2010 was a fundamentally different challenge than leading the state's recovery effort, I brought that same approach to my work for Mayor Landrieu as First Deputy Mayor and Chief Administrative Officer: developing a great game plan and executing it by building a strong team and focusing relentlessly on the details. Most pressing was our \$100 million budget gap, which we quickly closed by cutting contracts and cutting up credit cards, recalling take-home cars, freezing hiring, travel, and overtime, and furloughing all employees for eleven days-while at the same time getting aggressive about growing revenues and collecting every penny that was due the city. My team and I did not waste time. We triaged cash, deciding each week which vendors got paid. We seized a delinquent taxpayer's Bentley. We made the tough decisions required to put the city on track to prosperity. We've balanced five budgets in a row, improved our fund balance from negative \$20M to positive \$60M, earned bond rating upgrades from all major agencies, and are now investing new revenues on things that move the city forward.

Not surprisingly, the problems we inherited were more than just financial. In 2010, one of our external consultants called New Orleans's city government the "most corrupt and dysfunctional," he had seen in forty years of public sector work. To get city departments focused on results, Mayor Landrieu gave me the green-light to launch our CitySTAT

performance management initiative. Every Thursday morning I personally chair one of our data-driven STAT meetings so that I know where we are doing well and where more attention needs to be paid, and so department heads know that results and accountability matter. Working together, we have made New Orleans fastest in the country in reducing blight, reduced the time it takes to process a contract by half and to hire a police officer by one-fourth, implemented a long-talked about One Stop Shop for permitting, and reached the highest percentage of streetlights functioning since Katrina.

At the Mayor's direction, I also led the way in resolving two complex and politically-fraught issues that hadn't been addressed in decades. After three years of work, my team and I persuaded the Civil Service Commission to approve our Great Place to Work initiative to modernize the city's human resource system. Similarly, I persevered through five years of negotiating and political battling and led the effort to resolve decades-old litigation with the firefighters. As part of the settlement, we also dramatically reformed the fire pension system, preserving it for future retirees while saving taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars in the process.

In addition to these milestones, I have been able to play key roles in advancing higher education in Louisiana. As chief of staff to Governor Foster and Governor Blanco, one of the most important parts of my job was fighting to make sure higher education received the funding needed by our colleges and universities to educate our students and serve as engines of economic growth in our communities. Over the twelve years I served in state government, I worked with both governors to increase higher education funding in Louisiana by over one billion dollars and reach the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) average for institutional funding and faculty pay for the first time in a generation. Tuition increases were only proposed as a means to further increase overall resources available to schools, not to make up for state funding cuts. We invested hundreds of millions in capital repairs and construction, and also provided match funding for hundreds of endowed chairs and professorships. It was truly a momentous time for higher education in Louisiana.

During this same period, I also led Governor Foster's effort to create Louisiana's community college system. In 1998, Louisiana was thirty years late to the dance, with a handful of community colleges playing second fiddle to the regional universities while technical schools were run as political fiefdoms by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. All the pundits said merging community and technical colleges into a new system was impossible, that it would never happen. But Louisiana students seeking an industry-based certificate or an associate degree were being denied access and opportunity, and our state's economic growth was being held back. To develop our proposal and build momentum for it, we created a working group of education, business, labor and civic leaders, documented Louisiana's needs and the potential of a new system, and secured legislative and voter approval of a constitutional amendment, ultimately overcoming the odds to shepherd into existence what has become Louisiana's fastest growing college system. To be clear: the expansion of that system has created some of the challenges UNO faces today. But the future demands that UNO turn these challenges into opportunities by aggressively recruiting high-quality transfer students, raising our

admission standards and graduation rate, and focusing on higher level teaching and research.

In my professional career, I've had regular opportunities to guest lecture and serve on university panels. And as a faculty kid, I spent the better part of my formative years on one campus or another: my dad taught psychology at Michigan and Baylor and my mom taught nursing at McLennan Community College. I am keenly aware and respectful of the vital concerns of faculty members. They were frequently debated at our dinner table when I was growing up! I see the job of a university president the way they and other faculty might have described it to galvanize the entire university community behind a compelling vision and strategy and do whatever it takes to enable that campus to live up to its potential for educating students, transforming lives, and providing a close connection to the broader community through research and partnerships. If the president does his or her job providing strong and collaborative leadership, seeking the public and private funding necessary for success, and creating energy and excitement that attracts students, scholars, and partners to campus, then the faculty—the true soul of a university—will be able to shine and focus on doing the great teaching and research they dreamed of when they signed on to work in academia.

I've seen UNO at her dynamic best and have every expectation that her greatest days still lie ahead. The world is a stronger, more creative, and more resilient place with a resurgent New Orleans, but the Greater New Orleans region cannot reach her potential as a more equitable, more educated, and more innovative community without a resurgent UNO. The 21<sup>st</sup> century's doers, creators, and entrepreneurs are less likely to come off the streets of New Orleans like Louis Armstrong did a century ago, and are more likely to have their skills and talents nurtured as part of a dynamic learning community like UNO's where they can be taught coding and intern at a fast-growing local IT firm, where they can study civil engineering and environmental science and apply their education helping the New Orleans region become a world leader in water management, where they can hone their musical talent on campus and play with the world's best jazz ensembles at night, where they can get an education degree and teach in one of our "break the mold" charter schools, where they can learn urban planning principles in a city that has literally been brought back to life and then apply this experience at one of the many local companies building New Orleans's reputation as the region with the most "know-how" in coming back from a disaster. The possibilities for UNO are limited only by our imaginations.

When I was leading Teach For America's national fundraising efforts, I found that our hopeful sense of possibility and messianic call to end educational inequity made all the difference for our donors. We weren't asking for their money—we were asking them to help us change the world, to end an injustice, to give kids an equal chance to realize the American dream, and our inspiring teachers and alumni were delivering game-changing results that gave them hope about what was still possible. That's how Teach For America became the juggernaut it is today, and how we increased private fundraising by tens of millions of dollars each year I was there.

I believe that great leaders must have an unshakeable belief about what is possible and then do everything in their power to engage the people around them in developing a shared vision for the future and ensuring it becomes reality. That's what I have been doing in my career. I believe UNO can be to New Orleans what NYU has become to New York City-a university that capitalized on its brand identity as part of a resurgent city and used it to aggressively attract students and scholars from around the region and across the globe and massively grow her research, graduate programs, fundraising, and impact.

That is why I am applying to serve as UNO's eighth president. We can do this. It would be my honor and privilege to serve the University of Louisiana System's Board of Supervisors and the UNO community and lead UNO's resurgence.

Sincerely,

Andy Kopplin

# Andrew D. Kopplin

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

MAYOR MITCHELL J. LANDREIU, CITY OF NEW ORLEANS *New Orleans, LA / May 2010-present*

*First Deputy Mayor & Chief Administrative Officer Develop and oversee the city's operating and capital budgets and manage the daily operations of City government*

- Designed the strategy and led the effort that brought the City back from the brink of bankruptcy. Closed a \$100M funding gap that represented 20% of the City's budget, inherited in 2010 when Mayor Landrieu took office. Cut contracts, credit cards, and take home vehicles, made the hard choice to furlough all employees for eleven days, and aggressively managed cash flow and revenue collections.
- Earned a series of bond rating upgrades for the City by producing five consecutive structurally balanced budgets, managing a difficult refinancing of our Pension Obligation bonds, and taking the City's fund balance from negative \$20M to positive \$60M, reaching the ten percent level recommended by the Government Finance Officials Association.
- Developed and led the City's award-winning performance management and CitySTAT initiatives, including overseeing the City's nationally-recognized blight reduction strategy. Met our goal of reducing blight by over ten thousand properties in four years.
- Led a four-year effort that successfully resolved over \$200M worth of judgments against the City for less than half that amount while also securing changes to the Fire Pension Fund that will ensure sound management and save taxpayers \$275M over forty years.
- Chaired two task forces whose work has led to a dramatic reduction in the population of the Orleans Parish Jail and improved our criminal justice system, saving millions and making compliance with a federal consent decree more manageable for the Sheriff.
- Proposed and secured Civil Service Commission approval of Mayor Landrieu's Great Place to Work Initiative, which modernized the Commissions procedures for recruiting, selecting, training, supporting, evaluating and promoting classified employees.
- Helped secure an additional \$1 billion in FEMA funding for the City by better documenting our losses from Hurricane Katrina.
- Played key leadership roles in the City's responses to the BP Oil Spill and Hurricane Isaac.
- Played key leadership roles in reforming the City's procurement and Disadvantaged Business programs, and in creating our award winning One Stop Shop for permitting, the Office of Police Secondary Employment, the New Orleans Business Alliance, the New Orleans Recreation Development Commission and the New Orleans East Hospital.

TEACH FOR AMERICA *New York, NY / April 2008-May 2010*

*Senior Advisor to the Founder & CEO January 2009-May 2010*

- Led Teach For America's state funding efforts-which more than doubled Teach For America's state revenues-as the manager of state government relations and representative of the Founder & CEO to Governors, State Superintendents, and Legislatures.

*Executive Vice President, Growth Strategy and Development April 2008-January 2009*

- Led Teach For America's annual operating campaign. We exceeded our organizational goal by raising over \$11 SM in FY2008-an increase of nearly \$40M over our FY2007 result.
- Managed expansion into five additional regions for FY2009-Boston, Dallas, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, and Nashville-where we secured over \$10M in new pledged revenues.
- Worked with officials from major donors like the Broad, Dell, Gates, Robertson, Stupski, and Walton Foundations and corporate sponsors like Exxon Mobile, Goldman Sachs, Lehman Brothers, Wachovia, and VISA

*KOPPLIN FOR CONGRESS Baton Rouge, LA / January- March 2008*

*Candidate for the 6<sup>th</sup> Congressional District of Louisiana.*

- Raised over \$300,000, developed an effective campaign organization, strategy, and message in 36 days, earning 17% of the vote in a special election Democratic primary field of five-including two current state legislators and another experienced, well-financed candidate.

*LOUISIANA RECOVERY AUTHORITY Baton Rouge, LA / October 2005-january 2008*

*Founding Executive Director of the bipartisan state agency responsible for Louisiana's recovery from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, two of the most catastrophic disasters in American history.*

- Designed and built an agency with a bipartisan Board of Directors and staff that provided strong leadership, forged consensus among local, state, and federal officials, and community leaders on the direction of Louisiana's recovery, and that succeeded in a highly charged political environment.
- More than doubled-from \$1.3 billion to \$2.8 billion-Louisiana's federal rebuilding funds by documenting Congress's initial inequitable funding for Louisiana, building the bipartisan political coalitions needed to secure appropriations, successfully lobbying Congress and the Bush Administration for Louisiana's needs, and identifying opportunities such as getting Congress to waive Louisiana's local FEMA match.
- Secured funding for and oversaw the public-private partnerships that developed the award-winning "Louisiana Speaks" regional plan for future growth as well as hurricane recovery plans in Lake Charles and Cameron, St. Bernard, and Vermillion parishes. Helped secure Rockefeller Foundation funding and the political consensus needed to revive planning in New Orleans with the successful, second-effort known as the Unified New Orleans Plan.
- Created effective strategies to ensure transparency and accountability for the allocation and expenditure of recovery funds, including the establishment of an independent audit committee of the Board and the hiring of external auditors to design systems to prevent and detect fraudulent expenditures.
- Worked with the Authority and other political leadership to secure transformative political reforms including the state takeover of New Orleans's failing schools, the consolidation of levee boards and duplicative elected offices for assessors and sheriffs in New Orleans, the legislative approval of Louisiana's first statewide building code, and the adoption of FEMA's most recent updated flood safety elevation guidance in coastal parishes.

- Served as the Authority's chief spokesperson to the media, holding numerous press conferences and giving on-camera, radio and print interviews that were broadcast almost daily by state, national and international news organizations, publishing frequent op-eds and letters to the editor in state and national publications, and securing positive editorials for Louisiana's funding needs from dozens of national newspapers.
- Built an entrepreneurial, diverse, and results-oriented staff widely recognized for their combination of talent, political savvy, idealism, and dogged determination.
- Testified numerous times before congressional and state legislative committees, provided regular briefings to Members of Congress, federal officials, Louisiana legislators and statewide elected officials, and met extensively with business, non-profit, religious and civic leaders to address critical recovery issues.
- Maintained strong, open, and effective working relationships with each of the agency's 33 Board members, engaging them directly in the development of the agency's ambitious strategic plan and keeping them well-informed about our progress, setbacks, and organizational direction.
- Served as the Governor's principal recovery advisor, providing her information and opportunities to effectively advance Louisiana's goals with state and federal officials; advised the Governor's Chief of Staff, Commissioner of Administration, and cabinet members on recovery priorities.

**GOVERNOR KATHLEEN BABINEAUX BLANCO** *Baton Rouge, LA / January 2004-October 2005*

*Chief of Staff* Managed the Governor's staff and cabinet secretaries and worked closely with legislative leadership, statewide elected officials, Louisiana Congressional delegation, the media, and business, civic, and other interest groups to develop and implement the Governor's legislative and policy agenda.

- Served as the principal deal closer in Louisiana's successful effort to land Union Tank Car's new manufacturing facility in Alexandria, Louisiana, which generated over 1000 new, high-paying jobs for an economically distressed area.
- Handled the Governor's legislation phasing out Louisiana's unorthodox franchise tax on business debt and our sales tax on manufacturing machinery and equipment.
- Oversaw the development of policy initiatives transforming Louisiana's previously much criticized juvenile justice system by creating a new Office of Youth Development, expanding funding for Louisiana's award winning pre-K program, increasing funding for K-12 and Higher Education, and strengthening Louisiana's nationally-recognized school accountability program by launching a privately funded initiative to improve the recruitment and preparation of school leaders.
- Provided strategic and crisis management before, during and immediately after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, coordinating evacuation and response efforts with FEMA, National Guard and US military commanders, and representing the state with state, local, and federal elected officials, and non-profit and business leaders.
- Helped develop the Louisiana Disaster Recovery Foundation and the Louisiana Family Recovery Corps to address key human service needs after the storms.

GOVERNOR M.J. "MIKE" FOSTER, JR *Baton Rouge / January 1996- January 2004*

*Chief of Staff July 2002- January 2004.*

- Secured legislative support for the Governor's aggressive funding proposals for K-12 and Higher Education during his last regular session.
- Raised private funds and organized the strategy and media campaign to secure passage of a constitutional amendment that eliminated "temporary" taxes; subsequently convinced Wall Street rating agencies to grant Louisiana a bond rating increase for the first time in two decades as a result of this change.
- Designed, secured legislative and voter approval of three constitutional amendments dedicating state, federal and tobacco settlement funds to coastal restoration.

*Policy Director Oversaw the development and implementation of the Governor's legislative and policy initiatives. January 1996- July 2002*

- Drove the creation of Louisiana's community college system by building a coalition of Republicans and Democrats, business and labor, educators and students to overcome 30 years of turf battles that had stymied the efforts of three previous Governors and put Louisiana decades behind the rest of the country; influenced the appointment of an outstanding group of founding board members, pushed for adequate capital and operational funding and the creation of new campuses statewide that helped the system become one of the fastest growing and most successful in America.
- Aggressively and successfully advocated for the Governor's budgets that prioritized teacher and faculty pay increases, K-12 and higher education funding increases-including the development of performance-based funding for colleges and universities, and new higher education research and development initiatives in information technology and biosciences.
- Handled legislation that put Louisiana's Quality Jobs Act on par with our competition, created the state's film incentives which immediately thrust Louisiana back into competition for film and video production, established research and development and biotechnology company tax incentives, and created a venture capital incentive program.
- Secured business community support and legislative approval to create the Incumbent Worker Training Program-which became the second largest worker training fund in America when it was established-and the Louisiana Workforce Commission to provide coordination and oversight of the state's job training efforts.
- Oversaw the development of Louisiana's nationally-recognized K-12 school accountability program, the passage of a charter school law that provided for both local and statewide chartering authorities to ensure favorable chartering entities, the development of alternate certification procedures, and the transformation of teacher training programs by our schools of education.
- Secured funding for and helped design LA-4, Louisiana's award winning Pre-K program.
- Led the implementation of Louisiana's welfare reform program-which included work and education requirements for recipients and aggressively expanded child care assistance-even before federal law changes required them.

- Oversaw the development of the America's Wetland Campaign and Louisiana's first comprehensive coastal restoration plan at the Governor's Office of Coastal Activities, helping make coastal restoration a statewide priority for the first-time ever.
- Handled legislation transferring management of state's public hospitals from the Louisiana Health Care Authority to professionals at LSU, identified funding to implement Louisiana's Children's Health Insurance program, helped secure federal funding to transition Louisiana's Medicaid program from risky over-reliance on Disproportionate Share (DSH) funding, and secured federal approval of a \$1 billion payment to Louisiana's Elderly Trust Fund.

LOUISIANA DELTA SERVICE CORPS *Baton Rouge / August 1994-January 1996*

*Executive Director Created, led and managed a non-profit organization established to run an AmeriCorps national service program of approximately 100 members, raising \$ 150,000 in private funds annually to match a \$ 1.5M federal grant.*

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR MELINDA SCHWEGMANN *Baton Rouge / November 1992- August 1994*

*Executive Director, Louisiana Serve Commission Led and managed the state commission responsible for implementing the AmeriCorps program and K- 12 and higher education service learning initiatives.*

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE *Cambridge, MA / May 1991-May 1992*

*Research Assistant Staffed a presidentially-appointed commission and developed a new strategic plan for reinvigorating the National Park Service to meet its 2 1<sup>st</sup> century challenges.*

SENATOR LLOYD BENTSEN *Washington, DC/ June 1988-June 1989*

*Research Assistant Researched legislative issues, initiated special projects, and responded to constituent letters in the areas of health, social services, and commercial regulation .*

## EDUCATION

Rice University *Houston, TX / May 1988*

Bachelor of Arts in History, *cum laude.*

Harvard University, Harvard Kennedy School *Cambridge, MA / May 1992*

Masters of Public Policy, concentration in Energy and Environmental Policy

Broad Foundation Superintendents Academy *Los Angeles, CA / January-December 20 10*

## AWARDS

National Merit Scholarship *Rice University, 1984*

William Marsh Rice Scholarship *Rice University, 1984*

Harry S Truman Scholarship *awarded to approximately 100 college students annually who have demonstrated a commitment to public service, Harry S Truman Foundation, 1986*

Rod & Susan McIntosh Community Service Award *Rice University, 1988*

Rhodes Scholarship Finalist *State of Texas, 1988*

Rotary International Foundation Goodwill Ambassador *University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, East Africa, August 1989-June 1990*

Andrew Thayer Award for Academic Excellence *Harvard Kennedy School, Harvard University, 1992*

Top 40 Under 40 *Baton Rouge Business Report, 2003*

Henry Toll Fellow *Council for State Governments, 2003*

#### SELECTED BOARD MEMBERSHIPS

Louisiana Student Financial Assistance Commission and Louisiana Tuition Trust Authority  
*2000-2005*

State of Louisiana Bond Commission *2002-2005*

Louisiana State University Ogden Honors College Advisory Board *2008-2010*

New Orleans BioDistrict Board of Commissioners *2010-present*

New Orleans Revenue Estimating Conference, Chair *2010-present*

New Orleans Recreation and Development Commission *2011-present*

#### NOTABLE PRESENTATIONS

TED-x New Orleans "Government Post-Katrina: A Disruptive Force for Good," June 2015

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IsEm6jQcxO>