

January 1, 2024

Dr. Jimmy Clarke  
Board of Supervisors  
University of Louisiana System  
1201 North Third Street, Suite 7-300  
Baton Rouge, LA 70802

Dear Dr. Clarke,

My letter today is for and because of Grambling, Louisiana, and Grambling State University (GSU). The little boy who sat in the president's office with the incomparable Mary Hobdy to prepare Founder's Day programs stands today with the requisite education, experience, and empathy to apply for the presidency at his alma mater. It is truly an honor to pen these words.

From my days at Grambling Lab as a scholar, musician, and student-athlete to my collegiate experience as student government association president, GSU prepared me to be an innovative thinker and world-class leader. My GSU education is the foundation of my successful career across various industries, including consumer products, technology, and higher education.

Having served as Executive Vice-President and second in command for two higher education institutions, I am pleased to highlight my experience and accomplishments in alignment with the advertisement for the presidency at GSU.

### **Academic Achievements**

Currently serving as Executive Vice-President and Chief Financial Officer at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA), I am responsible for successfully operating a \$91 million budget and a \$120 million endowment supporting over 291 faculty designers and artists. Our recently approved strategic plan positions the college as a global leader in integrative education. In partnership with the president and provost, we recently received approval for the college's first online bachelor's degree in design. My contributions to this effort include managing the market analysis and developing the business plan. During my tenure at GSU as Executive Vice-President and Chief Operating Officer, we successfully launched new programs in Cybersecurity, Cloud Computing, and Nursing. I led the engagement strategy for reviving the B.S. in Nursing degree, securing hundreds of support letters, and activating a social media campaign that increased public awareness. I led the talent development strategy for recruiting new faculty for the programs in Cybersecurity and Cloud Computing. At GSU, we have a distinct opportunity to grow our investment in teaching and learning through an enhanced focus on academic program review and student outcomes.

### **Innovation and Vision**

At my core, I am a brand enthusiast committed to enhancing market competitiveness and strategic positioning. The foundation of sustainable growth begins with delivering a compelling story of the institution's unique value proposition. At MICA, we provide integrative education where artists engage their heads and hearts. In 2022, to amplify our brand, I negotiated an earned media contract and location agreement for *The Exhibit: Finding the Next Great Artist*, an MTV reality show in partnership with the

Smithsonian's Hirshhorn Museum. Six episodes were filmed on MICA's campus, yielding student internships and an earned media value of \$2.6 million.

I led the brand activation strategy at GSU in partnership with Parkwood Entertainment and Beyonce, the most decorated Grammy artist, for launching her Ivy Park Collection and releasing her single *Before I Let Go*. This project resulted in 12.8 million impressions on Instagram featuring the World Famed Tiger Marching Band. This partnership's positive public perception contributed to the university's seven-year enrollment high. As a continuous innovator, I am excited about the possibility of establishing new creative partnerships that will amplify our iconic brand.

### **Administrative Achievements**

My leadership as a senior administrator is hallmarked by accomplishments that have transformed the student experience. At MICA, we petitioned and were awarded \$7 million in state appropriations to renovate student learning and engagement spaces. I developed a grants management policy that enhanced opportunities for faculty research, including the award of a \$700K National Science Foundation grant to support sustainable food systems.

Over five years, our administrative team at GSU executed projects that continue to impact the university's success. Chief among those accomplishments is a 200% increase in the institution's fiscal health score, for which I led the strategy and execution. An artful and strategic negotiator, I formulated new partnership agreements with SodexoMAGIC, Coca-Cola, Barnes and Noble, and Adidas with a collective investment of \$60 million over five years. It is time to create and collaborate on GSU's next strategic plan and campus master plan. With my in-depth knowledge of GSU's operations and the recent experience of completing a new strategic plan at MICA, I am prepared to lead these efforts on day one.

### **Fundraising, Economic Development, and Community Relations**

Fundraising in higher education is essential for physical and financial resource sustainability. As a fundraising professional, I have led successful campaigns with critical alums and secured GSU's most significant unrestricted corporate gift of \$2 million through the SodexoMAGIC partnership. At MICA, I facilitated \$1 million in donated real estate assets. As executive board member and treasurer of the United Way of Central Maryland, I support and steward an annual campaign of approximately \$81 million in funds raised.

In the state of Maryland, I serve on the board of the Maryland Film Festival and the Baltimore CollegeTown Network. Through these two organizations, I have the great fortune of impacting the success of over 120,000 students and hundreds of creative filmmakers. One of the top priorities I would lead in partnership with the Grambling University Foundation and the Office of Advancement is a capital campaign to support the university's endowment. To realize the full potential of our mission, we must reduce the burden of student debt and invest in high-quality teaching and research.

### **Student-Centered Approach**

Student success is highly dependent on the quality of the student experience. Universities must commit to delivering excellence in student service. While at GSU, we increased campus broadband capacity by 20 times, empowering students to connect up to seven devices with optimal speed. We also re-engineered the student registration and residential life room assignment processes to reduce wait times and amplify the use of technology, particularly optimizing content for mobile applications. From admissions

application to graduation, my mission is that we would deliver every touchpoint in the student journey with excellent customer service.

**Commitment to Collaborative Management and Shared Governance**

Personal and professional development are cornerstones of my leadership philosophy. I care greatly for the wellness of the teams I am fortunate to lead. I am a collaborative leader who prioritizes candid feedback and believes in shared accountability and mutual respect. At GSU, I chaired the policy committee and worked closely with faculty and staff leadership on topics of shared governance, including leading the university's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. At MICA, I chair the college's annual priorities committee of faculty, staff, and student leaders, where we work to achieve alignment on the most important institutional decisions. In 2021, I led the successful completion of a collective bargaining agreement with our part-time faculty. My commitment to the GSU community is to be an active listener, consistent connector, and trusted thought partner.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my gratitude to *The Place Where Everybody is Somebody*: my home, Grambling State University, and Grambling, LA. Twenty-seven years of my life have been anchored by this beloved community we call #GramFam. As a third-generation alumnus of Grambling State University, it is an honor to convey my interest in serving as the university's 11th president.

With honor and respect,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martin Lemelle, Jr." with a stylized flourish at the end.

Martin Lemelle, Jr., D.B.A.

# Dr. Martin Lemelle, Jr.

## ABOUT ME

Third generation Grambling State Alumnus and native son of Grambling, Louisiana.

Respected change agent with a proven track record of organizing and developing highly functional teams that deliver superior performance. Effective communicator with the transformative ability to engage individuals at all levels of an organization.

## EDUCATION

2022

SKEMA School of Business Paris, France  
**Doctor of Business Administration**

2016

The George Washington University Washington, D.C.  
**Master of Business Administration**

2006

Grambling State University Grambling, LA  
**Bachelor of Science: Accounting**

## EXPERIENCE SUMMARY

**2021 – PRESENT**

### **MARYLAND INSTITUTE COLLEGE OF ART**

Executive Vice-President & Chief Financial Officer

**2016 – 2021**

### **GRAMBLING STATE UNIVERSITY**

Executive Vice-President & Chief Operating Officer

**2013-2016**

### **INDUSTRY RETAIL GROUP**

Director of Business Administration

**2008-2013**

### **DEAN FOODS**

Director of Revenue Management

**2006-2008**

### **GENERAL ELECTRIC**

Financial Management Program

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### **EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT and CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER**

**Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA), Baltimore, MD | September 2021 –Present**

As the nation's oldest continuously degree-granting college of art and design, MICA is located in Baltimore and deeply connected to the community. It is a leading contributor to the creative economy and a top producer of nationally and internationally recognized professional artists and designers. Selected from an international search to reimagine the college's business model and enhance the student experience's value proposition. Hired as the Vice-President of Finance and Business Services in 2021, promoted to Executive Vice-President and Chief Financial Officer in 2023, serving as the president's delegate and lead administrative officer of the college.

#### **Core Responsibilities**

- Member of the President/CEO's cabinet and second in command for an organization of over 600 employees and over 2,000 students
- Provide divisional leadership for the Business Services, Finance, Strategic Initiatives, Governmental Relations, and Baltimore Creatives Acceleration Network teams
- Responsible for the successful management of a \$91 million operating budget and \$120 million endowment

#### **Major Accomplishments**

- Executive team leader on the 2022-2027 strategic plan; developed the corresponding financial and business plans to support the college's mission and vision
- In collaboration with the Division of Open Studies, completed market and financial analysis for an online Bachelor of Design slated to launch in Fall 2024; forecasted to achieve 30 new students a year
- Awarded \$7 million in state capital grants for the renovation of two buildings
- Facilitated the donation and sale of \$3 million in real estate
- Strengthened capacity through a redesigned operating model that yielded \$6 million in annual savings
- Successfully led negotiations and ratification of a part-time faculty collective bargaining agreement
- Established a grants management policy that enhanced opportunities for faculty research, including the award of a \$700K National Science Foundation grant to support sustainable food systems
- Implemented an academic program analysis process that includes an evaluation of market competitiveness, financial performance, and career prospects
- Negotiated an earned media contract and location agreement for *The Exhibit: Finding the Next Great Artist*, an MTV reality show in partnership with the Smithsonian's Hirshhorn Museum. Six series filmed on MICA's campus yielded student internships and an earned media value of \$2.6 million.

#### **Institutional Service**

- Provost Search Committee
- Annual Priorities Committee (Co-Chair)
- Governance Committee
- Maryland Independent College & University Association (Governmental Relations Representative)
- Baltimore College Town Network (Board Member)

**EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT and CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER**  
**Grambling State University (GSU), Grambling, LA | August 2016 –September 2021**

Grambling State University is one of the world's most recognizable collegiate brands. Renowned for its leadership in Computer Science and Developmental Education, GSU's brand equity is enhanced through the prominence of its *World Famed Tiger Marching Band* and historic football program. Hired in 2016 as Interim Chief Operating Officer, promoted to Executive Vice-President and Chief Operating Officer in 2019, serving as the second in command and president's delegate.

**Core Responsibilities**

- Member of the President/CEO's cabinet and second in command for an organization of over 500 faculty and staff and over 5,400 students
- Provided divisional leadership for the following teams: Marketing, Communications, Strategy, Finance, University Police, Information Technology, Human Resources, Title IX, Facilities, and Risk Management
- Responsible for the successful management of a \$102 million operating and auxiliary budget
- Primary fiscal officer for the Grambling University Foundation

**Major Accomplishments**

- Led the brand activation strategy in partnership with Parkwood Entertainment for the launch of Beyonce's Ivy Park collection and release of her single *Before I Let Go*, resulting in 12.8 million impressions featuring the World Famed Tiger Marching Band
- Engineered the university's lobbying strategy in collaboration with the Thurgood Marshall College Fund, which resulted in \$87 million of debt forgiveness through the Coronavirus Act
- Three successive audits with no findings for the University and Foundation
- Completed the university's first employee engagement survey
- Financial Ratio Improvement: +83% in viability, +80% in reserves, and 179% in net income, resulting in a 200% increase in the university's fiscal health score
- Supported the market analysis, design, and launch of three new academic programs: B.S. in Nursing, B.S. in Cybersecurity, and B.S. in Cloud Computing
- Increased campus broadband capacity by 20 times, empowering students to connect up to seven devices with optimal speed
- Refinanced student housing debt through the HBCU capital financing program, resulting in an annual savings of \$1.4 million and a cash reserve of \$10 million
- Secured \$25 million in capital outlay for the construction of a new library
- Awarded a \$500,000 grant by the Public Service Commission to improve campus operations
- Negotiated new partnerships with SodexoMAGIC, Coca-Cola, Barnes and Noble, and Adidas with a collective investment of \$60 million over five years
- Established new dining outlets, implemented 24- 7 dining, and completed the renovation of the dining facilities

**Institutional Service**

- University Policy Committee (Chair)
- Bayou Classic Committee (Chair)
- Provost Search Committee (Chair)
- SASCO Reaffirmation Committee and Peer Evaluator (CEO and Finance)

## **DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

**Industry Retail Group, Bethesda, MD | April 2013 – August 2016**

Industry Retail Group supports thousands of Fortune 1000 retailers through a portfolio of broadband-enabled services. Recruited to re-establish a financial and administrative team post-acquisition by Vector Security.

- Performed leadership responsibilities for the following departments: Procurement, Financial Planning and Analysis (FP&A), Human Resources, Legal, and Consultant Services
- Implemented a vendor evaluation matrix and review process for a vendor pool of over 200 partners, accounting for \$20 million in spending
- Created a performance management program that linked goal setting with performance reviews and employee rewards
- Developed a tiered margin commission model that increased Q2 2014 profitability for the equipment segment by 12%
- Completed a lean six-sigma initiative to automate the parts database, improving time efficiency by four hours
- In partnership with other senior leaders, executed multiple high-impact initiatives to achieve overall organizational goals; modified the execution of the strategic plan in response to changing internal and external factors

## **DIRECTOR OF FINANCE (Revenue Management)**

**Dean Foods, Springfield, VA | August 2008 – April 2013**

Dean Foods is a leading Fortune 200 Food and Beverage Company. Hired to develop processes for a growing regional finance team.

- Successfully promoted to various roles during a five-year career. Awarded the company's highest honor- the CEO Award in 2011 for exhibiting excellence in revenue management
- Provided leadership and direction to ensure that the revenue services team successfully achieved the current and future growth plans
- Served as commercial Finance Leader supporting the VP of sales responsible for the management of 10 major brands
- Created the investment analysis for the launch of *TruMoo*- the nation's largest chocolate milk brand
- Executed the deployment of a new pricing software; trained and certified over 90 sales professionals
- Provided financial planning and analysis (FP&A) and presented management decisions on an operating plan of \$1.6 billion in revenue and \$128 million in income

## **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

**General Electric, Louisville, KY and Bradenton, FL | July 2006 – August 2008**

Noted by the Wall Street Journal as the "training ground for CFOs," GE's financial management program combines rigorous rotation assignments with financial leadership classes over two years. Selected as one of 30 for GE's Consumer and Industrial Program, a global multi-billion-dollar business unit.

### **Supply Chain Finance Analyst | Consumer & Industrial Division**

- Served as finance lead for the dishwasher plant: 318 employees, \$15.3 million budget, 238K Units/Yr.
- Negotiated new vendor contracts yielding \$1.3 million in savings

### **FP&A Analyst | Homeland Security Division**

- Developed the 2008 Operating Plan for the Americas Organization -\$1.3 billion in revenue
- Certified a lean Six Sigma project to realign base cost reporting for 91 cost centers with a \$225 million budget.
- Created management analytics for product line performance, headcount, base cost, and service revenue

### **Controllership Analyst | Intelligent Platforms Division**

- Managed inter-company transactions for HQ-\$1.5 million quarterly
- Facilitated the account reconciliation training and audit for GE Security HQ, Europe, and Asia

### **Commercial Finance Analyst | Consumer and Industrial Division**

- Managed financial resource team of two employees in New Deli, India, for GE Appliances
- Lead analyst for corporate reporting of \$6.5 billion in annual revenue

### **PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS AND SERVICE**

Grambling University National Alumni Association (Life Member)

United Way of Central Maryland (Executive Board Member, Treasurer)

Baltimore College Town Network (Board Member)

Maryland Film Festival (Board Member)

Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. (Gamma Psi Chapter Initiate, Dulles-Leesburg, VA Charter Member)

### **LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS AND CERTIFICATIONS**

Aspiring Leaders Program: Rutgers University Center for Minority Serving Institutions

Green Belt Certified Lean Six Sigma

### **AWARDS**

Dean Foods CEO Award

*1 of 5 recipients from 16,000 employees*

GE Appliance Division CFO Award

*1 of 3 recipients from 12,000 employees*

GSU President's Award

*Award given to the top student leader*

Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. Byron K Armstrong Award

*Fraternity's top academic award; Selected from 400 chapters*



## **THESIS AND DISSERTATION COMMITTEES**

Yates, C. (2023). "The theory of leadership impotency – studying the recursive loop between leadership impotency and becoming the system." Doctoral dissertation, Business Science Institute, Luxembourg City, Luxembourg.

Fernando, R. (2023). "Managing firm ownership and management in family succession. The case of Chinese family businesses in Indonesia." Doctoral dissertation, Business Science Institute, Luxembourg City, Luxembourg.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

Lemelle, M. and Cloutier, M. (2023). Business Science Institute. "The Keys to Success for Maintaining Change in U.S. Higher Education." Impact Knowledge, 20 Dec. 2023, [en.dba-knowledge.com/post/the-keys-to-success-for-maintaining-change-in-u-s-higher-education](https://en.dba-knowledge.com/post/the-keys-to-success-for-maintaining-change-in-u-s-higher-education).

80 Tales of DBA Impact – 80 Récits D'impacts Du DBA: 2013-2023. France, Éditions EMS, 2023. (Pg. 229, Martin Lemelle, "A research road trip")

Lemelle, M. (2022). "Identifying and analyzing the key success factors for maintainable organizational change: Group concept mapping explorations in U.S. higher education." Doctoral dissertation, SKEMA Business School, Paris, France.

## **SELECTED KEYNOTES**

Association of Independent Colleges of Art & Design Fellows Program 2022: *The Modern CFO*

Apogee Corporation 2021: *The Power of the HBCU in Higher Education*

Higher Education Leadership Fellows 2020: *The Role of the Chief Operating Officer*

## **SPECIAL INTERESTS**

### **Public Service**

2020 Endorsed Candidate for U.S. Congress in LA-5

### **United Church of Christ**

Member and Unhoused Ministry Volunteer

### **International Business Consulting**

Supported clients in Luxembourg, Paris, and Brussels