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Positive Effects Can Result From Both a Cordial Welcome – and Even Adversity

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Positive Effects Can Result From Both a Cordial Welcome – and Even Adversity

By Gerrod Lambrecht
UCF Forum columnist
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This Saturday marks the beginning of a new football season as the Knights get ready to host South Carolina State. This game will also mark the beginning of the Scott Frost coaching era of UCF football. We have a new coaching staff, new uniforms, a new offense (UCFast), a new defense (UCFierce), and a more exciting game day experience.

Since about 90 percent of our football staff is new to UCF in the past eight months, it seemed like an appropriate time to reflect on how we have been made to feel so welcomed, and on some of the adversity Orlando has gone through recently.

Since arriving on campus in mid-December, we have all been blown away by the hospitality, graciousness and cordial welcome we have received. Whether it has been faculty or staff members, employees of UCF Athletics, alumni, former players, fans or students, almost everyone we have encountered has been a delight. Not only have they displayed the characteristics I just noted, but the welcome has been so enthusiastic.

While some of the new coaching staff have roots and/or ties to Central Florida, the majority of us do not.

The Orlando community has been through a lot in the past few months. When preparing to write this, I found myself ruminating on how resilient the greater Orlando community is and how welcoming the residents have been to us. These two things seem to speak toward the character and resolve of Central Floridians at large.

Something we discuss often with our football players is dealing with adversity. While adversity is not something that is generally welcomed, we know that it can have positive effect.

The Book of Romans tells us: “But we also glory in our sufferings, because we know suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.” While I would never equate the sufferings and adversity of football to what the Orlando community has experienced recently, our football program looks to this season with hope and a sense of resolve. Dispositions garnered through hard work, preparation, and watching the people of Orlando.

As we have been embraced by the Orlando and UCF communities, it is also very important to our program to reciprocate. Over the past six months, we have gone to great effort to engage with fans, alumni, students, faculty, staff, and the greater Orlando community. Our desire is to build a program that not only makes UCF and Orlando proud, but also one which is committed to being a positive force in the community.

Our staff is made up of family men. They are men of integrity and character. They have wives and families that are already part of the Orlando family. Our staff has more than 25 children aged 5 and under. We are involved in local schools, places of worship, charities, organizations, and many other community activities. We will continue to look for opportunities to have a positive impact on those around us. We also look forward to getting to know those around us even more.

We all feel so blessed to be working in such a beautiful environment with such exuberant support where the potential truly is limitless. We are so thankful for the open arms that have already made us feel like an integrated part of this university and community.

We want to grow, learn, and strive for greatness with you.

Please come out and support us this year. We will work hard to put a quality product on the field, but more importantly, we will strive to represent UCF in a way that makes you proud both on and off the field. Charge On!

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