Welcome to the Methodist University class of 2016. What a fantastic time it is to be a new Monarch here. There is excitement in the air as new staff has been hired, new buildings have been built, and a president has been inaugurated.

Currently, Methodist University is undergoing a massive renovation plan for some of the major buildings. Headed by the Vice President for Business Affairs, Gene Clayton, Methodist University is currently in the midst of a three stage Master Plan that was drastically change the look and feel of this campus. In phase one, renovations have been planned and implemented on a primarily sophomore residence hall, know as North Hall, massive beautification projects on Ramsey Street, Stout View Drive, and Lowdermilk Drive, as well as concrete pavement in the main quad.

In phase two, which is a 10 year phase, a new health and science building, new parking lots, and a renovated chapel. A massive library renovation and Trustees Classroom building renovation are also in the works. Further, two steering committees are meeting for signature buildings, the Berns Student Center and the Reeves Auditorium, in order to facilitate massive renovations. According the Clayton, the Berns Student Center is renovating 43,000 square feet with an addition of 29,000 square feet, and will include a new game area, a new snack bar and outdoor dining area. It will also include a new bookstore, and a completely renovated cafeteria.

In phase three, which is a bit farther down the road, we can expect to see fantastic graduate housing for the health and science students, a Riddle Center expansion, and a Nimocks Fitness Center renovation. However, to put the immense growth that Methodist University has went through since 1990, there have been 25 new buildings that have been added to this campus. Fantastic growth!

However, Mr. Clayton is quick to remind new students that, at the end of the day, what makes a great institution is not the buildings or the trees or the flowers. Rather, he says, “signature people make this a great University. We are one family going in the same direction, providing students what they need, not to make a living, but to live a life. We are teaching team values and students always come first.” Being here at Methodist, with individuals who truly believe in Gene Clayton’s philosophy, is what being a Monarch is truly all about.