The people who make up the Southern University community will never forget that its history is a point of pride from the recruiters who visit high schools, to the students counting down the days until graduation and to the alumni who stay in touch decades after they last took a class. To them, Southern is the school that welcomes everybody regardless of race and socioeconomic background. More important, they know Southern as the institution that took students who didn't have a lot of college options and turned them into quality graduates despite a history of being treated as less than the state.

On Thursday, the Southern community celebrates 100 years in Baton Rouge with the Centennial Gala at LaAuberge Casino. It was the school's premier 2014 event to raise money for student scholarships. It was one event in a year full of centennial celebrations as Southern's community looks back on its history.

Southern's distinguished students are jazz saxophonist Branford Marsalis, and educational leaders. Joseph Samuel Clark, president of Southern University, is seated to the right of Washington.

The people who make up the Southern University and A&M College. The men who traveled with Dr. Washington represented organizations, business interests, faculty members, as well as state, parish, civic and educational leaders. Joseph Samuel Clark, president of Southern University, is seated to the right of Washington.