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Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a very important date in the Florida educational community. Nova Southeastern University, Florida's largest independent university, will celebrate its 35th anniversary on December 2nd, 1999. This event, entitled "Celebration of Excellence," promises to showcase the outstanding achievements of NSU students and alumni alike, and I am honored to be a part of this joyous occasion.

Through Nova Southeastern University's quality educational programs, the university has made an immense contribution to the personal and professional advancement of thousands of Florida residents. In addition, NSU provides a wide range of community services and programs for the benefit of South Florida residents. Working to bring new skills and knowledge to the community around it, the work of Nova Southeastern University ultimately benefits Florida residents of all ages.

"Celebration of Excellence" is also notable because it features the fifth anniversary of the merger of Nova University and Southeastern University of the Health Sciences to form NSU in its current state. This synergistic merger of the two schools has resulted in the development of some of Florida's most impressive medical and health care education programs. Indeed, these programs benefit the entire community's health and well-being.

Nova Southeastern University has set itself apart in its ability to form partnerships with other educational institutions, state and local agencies, and community organizations. These successful cooperative efforts enhance local access to advocacy, counseling, health care, rehabilitative and other human services, raise community awareness on existing services and resources, and provide a valuable forum to identify and address unmet local needs. It is without hesitation that I say that Nova Southeastern University has had a tremendous impact on the lives of all South Floridians.

Mr. Speaker, Nova Southeastern University has spent the last 35 years demonstrating its strong commitment to the well-being and education of the Florida community. I am extremely proud to celebrate this anniversary with administration, students, and alumni of NSU. Reflecting on their success of the past, I wish everyone at NSU the best as the university turns its eyes to the immediate future.