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# Spartan Echo

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*"The Voice of the Spartan Community" from Norfolk State University in Norfolk, Virginia*

## Probation lifted, Norfolk State maintains full accreditation with SACSCOC

by Danielle Kirsh

Norfolk State University's probation was finally lifted on Tuesday, Dec. 8, by NSU's accrediting agency the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC). Interim President and CEO Eddie N. Moore, Jr. was informed shortly after noon and spoke to the Spartan Echo immediately afterward.

"We are off of probation," Moore told the Echo in a phone interview.

"I feel very good. I wanted you to know," Moore told the Echo. "I called you first."

"I'm particularly grateful for the students who stayed with us," Moore said. Moore also thanked students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends of Norfolk State for their support.

"We were able to accomplish what we set out to do," Moore said. "We're really excited." Moore expects that the lifting of the probation

will help increase enrollment at Norfolk State.

The SACSCOC Special Committee visited Norfolk State University Oct. 13-15. The committee confirmed the contents of the university's Second Monitoring Report that was submitted to SACSCOC in September.

"They did provide a report to us as requested," said SACSCOC President

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Vice President Joe Biden and Norfolk State University President and CEO Eddie N. Moore, Jr. talk about the cyber security workforce training program on Jan. 16, 2015. Photo from Norfolk State University.

## BOV finalizes two-year contract with President Moore

The Norfolk State University Board of Visitors

finalized a two-year contract with Eddie N. Moore Jr. to

make him the president of the 80-year-old public institution. The contract went into effect on Jan. 10.

Moore is the institution's 6th president and has said one of his first tasks as permanent president will be to implement a 100-day plan focused on three key strategic initiatives: enhance institutional accountability,

increase retention of current students and grow the enrollment of new students, and improve the University's graduation rate. Moore has also initiated a campus-wide strategic planning and brand planning effort that will define the University's future direction, and expand its promotional efforts to tell the NSU story effectively.

Last month, the NSU Board of Visitors approved a resolution for BOV Rector Thomas N. Chewning to develop a contract with Moore, who had been interim president since joining the University in September 2013. The contract was finalized earlier this week.

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## Probation lifted

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Dr. Belle S. Wheelan. The outcome of the Committee's assessment was that there were no recommendations for Norfolk State University based on their review – the best possible outcome for NSU.

After SACSCOC completed their visit in Oct., they reviewed all of the information they received at their annual meeting in Houston on Dec. 8, where they decided the fate of Norfolk State and President Moore heard the news for the first time.

NSU was placed on probation for 12 months in Dec. 2014 until they were able to

fix some of the things that were below SACSCOC standards as outlined in their Principles of Accreditation.

Some of the 12 things NSU was required to fix included problems with administration, governance and finances.

“We expect all of our members to be in compliance with all of our standards at all times,” said Wheelan.

Since the probation was lifted, Wheelan said that means all problems have been corrected at Norfolk State University.

“It means they are in compliance with all of our

standards and have no cloud hanging over their head,” said Wheelan.

SACSCOC first began their investigation in the spring 2013 semester after financial audits were not completed for two consecutive years. Following that news, the Virginia Board of Nursing barred new students from enrolling in the associate degree program at NSU after too many students were failing the National Council Licensure Exam (NCLEX). By fall 2013, the associate degree nursing program was discontinued.

In Aug. 2013, NSU's Board of Visitors voted to fire President Tony Atwater and

bring in Interim President and CEO Eddie N. Moore, Jr. who was previously president of Virginia State University and had an extensive background in finance management with the Commonwealth of Virginia.

By the end of 2013, SACSCOC held their annual meeting where they decided to give NSU a warning, stating that if they didn't fix the outlined problems they would be placed on probation. With the lifting of the probation, SACSCOC says NSU is in compliance with all of the accreditation standards and will not face more investigation because of past problems.

“They will not be reviewed until their regular schedule for review occurs,” Wheelan said of NSU. “Their next review will not be any more rigorous because of past issues.”

Norfolk State has been fully and continuously accredited since it first became eligible for accreditation in 1969. “Today's news ensures that Norfolk State will continue toward improvement, growth and a culture of assessment,” said Moore. “Norfolk State University has emerged a much stronger institution; an institution well-positioned for a brighter future.”

## NATO conference offers rewarding experience for NSU journalists



Supreme Allied Command Transformation Gen. Denis Mercier speaking with journalists following NATO's COTC15 opening panel discussions. Photo by Tykhari Coles.

by Mahogany Waldon

On Wednesday, Dec. 9, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) invited journalists from Norfolk State University's Spartan Echo to its “Chief of Trans-

formation Conference” at Norfolk's Waterside Marriott. As one of the invited journalists, I was thrilled to represent my university at such an important event and traveled to the event with my fellow Echo colleague Richelle Hammel. The conference featured representatives from all 28 nations that make up NATO. The student journalists were able to view two panel discussions, had lunch and attended a private press conference with NATO's Supreme Allied Command Transformation General Dennis Mercier of France.

Our knowledge about NATO centered on the fact that the organization is made up of militaries from rich nations that make important decisions every day. We were somewhat famil-

iar with their mission and importance in world affairs. (Note: the Paris terrorist attacks occurred only some days before we attended the conference.) As a result, Richelle and I were nervous because we felt our role in the event would be overlooked and insignificant. We were HBCU student journalists and sure that the many five-star generals and other world leaders in attendance would not be aware of Norfolk State University nor care about us.

The large crowd that had gathered in the main lobby was mostly made up of men in military regalia that featured more stars, stripes and badges than we could really comprehend. We also noticed that most of these important looking men were white and looked at us

as if they were wondering “What do these young black women have to offer to this powerful room of gentleman?” There were very few people of color that made up the many military leaders in the room, a shocking insight that gave me the following revelation: “Imagine how powerful the military is, then take a look around this conference; that speaks volumes about who runs the world.” In our own military, just last year, Michelle Howard became the first black woman to hold the four-star rank in America. The statistics give one a lot to ponder.

In a private press conference with the host of the conference, Supreme Allied Transformation Commander General Dennis Mercier, students were able to ask the general questions regarding

NATO's plans and future. After the conference, the NSU Spartan Echo staff was pleased when LCDR Eiffert revealed that the General, as well as other officials from the day, were very pleased with us. All in all, the experience gave me insight into a very powerful, yet unique, organization, an experience I will forever cherish.

Finally, the Spartan Echo from Norfolk State University was the first to publish their resulting story online, which NATO has promised to link to on their Allied Command Transformation website. Behold!

You can read the story at <http://spartanecho.org/2015/12/09/nato-officials-discuss-new-initiatives-during-conference-in-norfolk/>.