

INTERVIEW WITH DR. MARK BECKER AND GSUTV, 2018

INTERVIEWER: Dr. Becker Georgia State recently opened the Center for the Advancement of Students and Alumni or CASA. What will the center do?

DR BECKER: CASA is a program where the goal is to identify, early in their education, students who have the potential and the interest to pursue postgraduate education, whether it's going to be a Ph.D., perhaps for an academic career or the legal or medical profession. When I went to school, they tended to happen somewhere in the middle of your junior year. Today, we've realized, to get students ready to have the best opportunities, we need to help identify them earlier and give them support and the encouragement to consider careers that they may not have been aware of otherwise.

I: Why is CASA important?

DR BECKER: CASA's important because right now, even though we have a very diverse student body at Georgia State University and the demographics of higher education are changing dramatically across the nation, when you look at the workforce out there-in the legal profession, the medical profession, and particularly professorial-the diversity is nowhere near what we see in our student body.

This is an opportunity for Georgia State, as one of the most diverse universities in the nation, actually to move the needle, help move the needle for the nation, so that the people going into Doctoral programs, as well as medical and legal education, look much more like the face of the country, to really have a much more level playing field for the country. We really want to be a part of the solution. Not only for Atlanta and for Georgia, but for the nation to try to come up with a model that demonstrates how you identify talent of all races, ethnicities-whatever the case may be-socioeconomic background and promote people to consider a broader range of career opportunities, and ones that are great careers but, right now are not diverse populations or diverse workforces.