

***OUTSTANDING WOMAN of YEAR CEREMONY
THE PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON WOMEN'S ISSUES***

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DR. LOH, WOMEN OF THE COMMISSION, EVERYONE...THIS IS SUCH A TREMENDOUS HONOR. RIGHT OFF THE TOP I WANT TO THANK DOTTIE CHIQUELO FOR NOMINATING ME. THANK YOU, DOTTIE.

TO BE IN THE COMPANY OF THOSE GREAT WOMEN WHO HAVE RECEIVED THIS AWARD...AND TO BE TOLD, NOT THEIR NAMES, BUT THAT THE COMPETITION THIS YEAR WAS JUST TREMENDOUS....

WHEN I HEARD ABOUT THE COMPETITION I WISHED THAT I COULD HAVE GONE TO EACH AND EVERY ONE OF THE NOMINEES AND TOLD THEM HOW SORRY I WAS THAT THEY HAD NOT WON. I WOULD...NOT...MEAN IT...BUT I WOULD HAVE DONE IT!

I DO THANK YOU—AND MY MOM THANKS YOU. SHE IS 87 NOW AND NOT ABLE TO BE HERE TODAY. AND I EXTEND CONGRATULATIONS TO CORBIN, TO BARBARA AND BEVERLY AND TO SHARON ON THE ACHIEVEMENTS THAT HAVE BROUGHT YOU THIS RECOGNITION TODAY.

I AM REMINDED THAT WHEN I LEFT HOWARD UNIVERSITY IN 1997 TO COME HERE, THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER—IT'S CALLED *THE HILLTOP*—EDITORIALIZED ABOUT IT. MY FRIEND AND OUR FORMER COLLEAGUE THE LATE DR. RON WALTERS HAD LEFT HOWARD THE PREVIOUS YEAR TO COME TO MARYLAND. THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER EDITORIALIZED THAT HOWARD HAD LET

TWO GOOD PROFESSORS LEAVE AND THE PAPER—I HAVE A COPY OF IT TO THIS DAY—THE PAPER SAID, WE WERE BEING LOST “TO MARYLAND—WHERE THEY WILL BE, AT BEST, MARGINALIZED.”

WELL, OF COURSE WE WERE NOT MARGINALIZED. ANYTHING BUT. AND SO I THANK YOU TODAY, FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART.

I EXTEND MY DEEPEST GRATITUDE TO THE WOMEN OF THE COMMISSION AND TO SO MANY WOMEN—AND MEN—AT MARYLAND WHO HAVE OFFERED ME SUPPORT, FRIENDSHIP, GUIDANCE AND MODELS TO EMULATE.

IF I MAY, I WANT TO RECALL THE LATE DR. MARJORIE FERGUSON, A BRILLIANT, RENOWNED SCHOLAR AND A DEAR HUMAN BEING WHO KNEW THE IMMENSE VALUE OF LAUGHTER. SHE WAS THE FIRST PERSON TO BEFRIEND ME AND GUIDE ME HERE. AND WOMEN LIKE JUVONNE GASTON ADAMS, ROBERTA COATES, ELLIN SCHOLNICK, MAURINE BEASLEY, CAROL ROGERS CARLA PETERSON. AND MEN LIKE FRANK QUINE, GREIG STEWART, JIM NEWTON AND MAHLON STRASHEIM FOR THEIR FRIENDSHIP AND SUPPORT. AND TOM KUNKEL, DAN MOTE AND NARIMAN FARVARDIN, WHO ENTRUSTED LEADERSHIP ROLES TO ME. AND I COULD NAME SO MANY OTHERS FOR SO MANY GOOD REASONS.

I OWE THANKS TO MY STUDENTS—EVERY ONE OF THEM. WELL, *ALMOST* EVERY ONE OF THEM FOR ALLOWING ME TO LEARN WITH THEM. I SEE AND HEAR THEM EVERYWHERE ...ALL OF THE TIME. THEY ARE KORVA COLMAN AT NPR, MARA SCHIAVOCAMPO AT NBC NEWS, MICHELLE MILLER AT CBS NEWS, DIANA ALVEAR AT ABC NEWS (ETC.) AND MANY OTHERS. NOTICE THAT THEY'RE ALL WOMEN? FUNNY HOW THAT WORKS OUT. BUT I KNOW THEIR SUCCESS WAS LESS ABOUT ME THAN IT WAS ABOUT THEM...I JUST GOT LUCKY.

THIS YEAR I HAVE SERVED AS THE INTERIM ASSOCIATE PROVOST FOR EQUITY AND DIVERSITY. IN THAT ROLE, I HAVE HAD A CHANCE TO SEE BENEATH THE SUFACE OF DIVERSITY

AT MARYLAND TODAY AND HOW MUCH FARTHER WE HAVE TO GO. I SEE SMALL ATTITUDINAL SIGNS: SUCH AS A COMMENT IN THE STUDENT NEWSPAPER THAT SAID, “WHAT’S ALL THIS TALK ABOUT DIVERSITY GOING TO DO FOR ME? IS IT GOING TO GET ME A JOB?” AND I SEE MUCH LARGER SIGNS, SUCH AS CLAIMS OF OUTRIGHT RACIAL DISCRIMINATION FROM FACILITIES WORKERS AND I HEAR CLAIMS OF ACADEMIC BULLYING FROM SOME JUNIOR FACULTY. AMONG OTHER THINGS.

THIS YEAR HAS TOLD ME HOW FAR WE HAVE TO GO IN THE SIMPLE ACCEPTANCE OF THE HUMANITY OF EACH OTHER. I KNOW IT’S COMING—IT’S COMING—BUT IT IS NOT HERE YET. AND I KNOW THAT EACH TIME WE PAUSE TO SAY TO OURSELVES...IN THIS MOMENT...THIS MOMENT... I WILL REDEDICATE MYSELF TO THE IDEA OF MY COMMON HUMANITY WITH AN “OTHER” PERSON...WE GET THAT MUCH CLOSER. AND THAT “OTHER” MAY BE DIFFERENT FROM ME IN GENDER, IN RACE, IN ETHNICITY, IN SEXUAL ORIENTATION, IN RELIGION, OR ABILITIES OR IN MANY OTHER WAYS.

WE HAVE BEGUN THE EARLY IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 10-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN FOR DIVERSITY. I AM VERY ENCOURAGED BY THAT PLAN. AND I AM VERY ENCOURAGED THAT THE UNIVERSITY WILL SOON HAVE A CHIEF DIVERSITY OFFICER AT THE LEVEL OF ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT. IT IS A SERIOUS MOVE AT A SERIOUS TIME IN THE FACE OF A RAPIDLY CHANGING STATE AND NATION.

AS I COME TO A CLOSE, I WOULD SHARE WITH YOU THE FACT THAT I TEND TO BE A SENTIMENTAL SOUL. I MEAN, I CRY AT DOG SHOWS. ON TELEVISION. SO BEFORE I START UP LIKE HALLE BERRY ACCEPTING THE ACADEMY AWARD...OR JOHN BOEHNER ACCEPTING A LATTE GRANDE AT STARBUCKS...

I JUST WANT TO SAY THAT AS PROFESSIONALS AND ACADEMICS, WOMEN DON’T GET UP IN THE MORNING SAYING, “I AM A WOMAN GOING TO DO THIS JOB.” WE HAVE LONG SINCE WORKED OUR WAY PAST THAT!

AND WE ARE PAST THE POINT WHERE WE NEED TO RECITE OUR GRIEVANCES TO FORTIFY OUR RESOLUTION. MAKE NO MISTAKE: WE NEED TO RECITE OUR GRIEVANCES—LOUDLY—BUT WE NEED TO DO IT TO ***GET THE POINT ACROSS***. AND WE NEED NOT TO BE DISTRACTED BECAUSE THERE IS SO MUCH **IN** OUR WORK **BESIDES** OUR **WORK**.

WHEN WE REALIZE OUR LIFE'S GOALS, WHETHER THEY BE ACADEMIC, PERSONAL OR PROFESSIONAL, THERE IS **SATISFACTION** IN IT.

WHEN WE SURVIVE THE WORST, THERE IS **STRENGTH** IN IT.

WHEN WE MENTOR OTHERS, THERE IS **CARING** IN IT.

WHEN WE RECOGNIZE AND APPLAUD THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF OTHERS, THERE IS **GRACE** IN IT.

AND WHEN WE MEET TO HONOR EACH OTHER, AS WE DO HERE TODAY, THERE IS **GLORY** IN IT.

I THANK YOU SO MUCH.