

Remarks – Martin Luther King Day January 2018

**Buck Baker, Chairman Board of Trustees**

FIRST, ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD I WANT TO THANK ALL OF THE STUDENTS, FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATORS WHO HAVE WORKED TO HELP US COME TOGETHER TODAY, AND I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR LETTING US BE A PART OF IT.

I'M ONLY GOING TO TALK FOR A MINUTE, AND I JUST WANT TO SHARE TWO OR THREE REFLECTIONS:

FIRST, WHAT BOTH MY HEAD AND MY HEART ARE TELLING ME IS, IT IS TO SAY THE LEAST A TIME OF MORE QUESTIONS. CERTAINLY, FOR MANY OF US THOSE INCLUDE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE INTENTIONS OF OUR NATIONAL LEADERSHIP ON MATTERS OF RACE.

SO THERE ARE MORE QUESTIONS, AND SOME OF THOSE QUESTIONS ARE BIG ONES, AND SOME OF THEM ARE PAINFUL ONES.

BUT, WHEN I THINK ABOUT THE ANSWERS TO THOSE NEW QUESTIONS, AND AS I LOOK AROUND THE ROOM I FEEL LIKE WE DON'T NEED TO *SEARCH* FOR ANSWERS; WE ALREADY KNOW WHERE THOSE ANSWERS ARE, WE ALREADY KNOW WHAT THOSE ANSWERS ARE. **THIS** IS AN ANSWER. **YOU** ARE AN ANSWER. AS LONG AS WE CAN RENEW OUR COMMITMENT TO OUR VALUES AND TO EACH OTHER, WE'RE GOING TO BE FINE.

BUT, WHAT MAKES ME FEEL EVEN BETTER IS WHEN I THINK ABOUT OUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE: OUR MISSION, OUR METHODS, AND OUR MESSAGE ARE PROBABLY *MORE* RELEVANT TO THE EXTERNAL WORLD THAN EVER. WE DON'T REALLY NEED TO BELIEVE ANYTHING DIFFERENT THAN WE HAVE FOR MANY YEARS. JUST TO MAYBE *DO* SOMETHING DIFFERENT, TO DO SOMETHING EXTRA. PERHAPS WE CAN TRY TO FIND SOME NEW WAYS OF *SHARING*, SOME NEW WAYS OF *ENGAGING* WITH THE EXTERNAL WORLD. SO MAYBE THAT'S A QUESTION WE CAN LIVE WITH FOR A WHILE.

WITH YOUR PERMISSION, I'D LIKE TO END WITH SOMETHING PERSONAL.

FOR THE LAST FOUR YEARS I'VE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE AN ACTIVE PART OF THIS CELEBRATION AS BOARD CHAIR. THIS YEAR WILL BE THE LAST TIME I DO THAT. NEXT YEAR ASHLEY LOWE WILL TAKE OVER AS CHAIR.

PARTICIPATING IN THIS HAS HELPED ME TO UNDERSTAND BETTER THE ISSUES WE ARE FACING AS A SOCIETY. IT HAS HELPED ME TO UNDERSTAND HOW THOSE ISSUES ARE AFFECTING THE PEOPLE I'M CLOSEST TO AND CARE MOST ABOUT. THAT'S YOU. AND IT HAS HELPED ME TO RESHAPE AND REAFFIRM MY OWN PERSONAL COMMITMENTS.

I WANT TO THANK YOU FOR THAT.