

INAUGURATION DAY

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Thank you, Dr. Gallagher, for those kind remarks. Chairman Ratcliffe, Trustees, other distinguished guests, faculty, staff, students, alumni, parents, family, and friends. Welcome to Villa Julie College.

Let me tell you how honored I am to be Villa Julie's new President. What a great place! I have enjoyed meeting many of you in the last couple of months. You have greeted me with warmth, kindness and enthusiasm. You have told me stories of how the college has enriched your life and enabled your goals to be fulfilled. You've talked about challenges we will have in the future. You have shared your vision for the college and today I would like to share my hopes for Villa Julie College and for higher education.

Villa Julie is a strong institution with a bright future. This strength comes from the collaboration of many and the leadership of three individuals who are here today. I would like to recognize them at this time. Donald Ratcliffe, Chair of the Board of Trustees, has worked tirelessly as a board volunteer for nearly thirty years. Carolyn Manuszak, President Emerita of Villa Julie, whose powerful vision for Villa Julie has brought us here today. And, Dr. Rose Dawson, Vice President and Dean Emerita whose academic vision has created the successful programs that are at the core of Villa Julie's success. For all of your efforts, thank you.

We are all struck with the inequities that exist in the world. The news echoes what in ancient times would have been portrayed in religious drama and classical tragedy. AIDS ravages Africa. Wars of attrition destroy families. Religious and political conflicts are common. Since these problems have been present since the beginning of time, why have they become so painful – so much more meaningful to us?

In the past, we could look to traditional organizations for help. This has become more difficult. Churches have grown in many ways but are not always looked to in times of trouble. Governmental organizations, which have been helpful in past periods, are now looked upon by some as unable to respond to anything other than political priorities.

With the proliferation of instant communication - the Internet and global news coverage - these worldwide developments have become even more difficult to accept. We learn about problems immediately and we want to do something about the injustice we see. Higher education may be presented here with an opportunity that may make it as important a vehicle in the new millennium as churches and political structures have been in the past.

In a recent article, Nan Keohane, president of Duke University, wrote, “No longer simply a rite of passage for the young or a source of credentialing for the would-be-professional, education in the new era will become the staff of life and the stuff of every man’s – and every woman’s – dreams.”

In May of 1998, distinguished educators from around the world met in Glion, Switzerland to discuss issues associated with higher education in the new millennium. From this meeting, the Glion Declaration states, “... if the balance between promise and threat is unclear, what is clear is that the essential key, though not the only key – to human well-being in this daunting new world is knowledge. Knowledge is the core business of the university.” It

our colleagues in the universities to recognize their unique responsibilities and opportunities to their communities, regions and the larger global society by their affirmation that teaching is a moral vocation – not just the transfer of technical information, however sophisticated, but also the balanced development of the whole person.”

We have these worldwide challenges that have become more unacceptable, and this worldwide opportunity of instant communication, and the moral distinction in the Glion Declaration. Why should higher education see this as an opportunity for the future?

The answer to this has always been before us because higher education has always sought to make a difference within a changing world.

Higher education in the twentieth century has originated or supported almost every important innovation that has emerged. Beginning with Einstein’s theory of relativity and ending with the solution to Fermat’s last theorem, higher education has supported such things as musical innovations, laser development, econometric models, art museums, agricultural studies, and

materials research affecting such activities as dentistry and space exploration. Recently, higher education's collaboration with scientists in developing human genome mapping is significant because it may some day revolutionize medicine.

Higher education is a powerful research and development engine. If directed toward the resolution of world challenges, it could help all of us to realize a better world. Sharing information and knowledge over the many communication channels creates whole new vistas of opportunity. The human genome project is an excellent example of the power of sharing with higher education at the center of these efforts.

One of the subtler and yet significant aspects of higher education that is important to consider in solving world problems is the fact that it is a very environmentally efficient enterprise. It is efficient not only because of its orientation toward scientific research but also because of the values it teaches. Just consider for a moment the relative resource savings when you compare 1,000 individuals purchasing automobiles or the same number of students being taught how to create a more energy-efficient car which will use less of our natural resources thereby improving the environment for the next 1,000 years.

Given the seriousness of the world's challenges, any human activity that creates more power by using less is a vehicle that has a tremendous ability for solving serious problems. These are powerful potentialities.

Higher education excels at transforming individuals in ways unparalleled in any other human endeavor. Take medical education for example. It best demonstrates higher education's transformative power. We all know that a neurosurgeon is not born with that knowledge or those skills. The process begins perhaps in elementary school with an aspiration to become a physician, then on to high school and college learning the basics of science and the scientific method. Then there is entry into medical school and on to an internship at approximately 25 or 26 years of age, and then a residency. If it is neurosurgery, it could be another 7 to 10 years of practice, testing, and study.

This entire educational process is powerful enough to transform an individual youngster who loves science into an accomplished and gifted neurosurgeon who can save lives and reduce years of pain and heartache. Of course there are numerous other examples from professors of philosophy and economists, to poets and accountants who transform the lives they touch. Higher education almost singularly has the power to place in our society, in our world, solutions.

Henry Rosovsky, the distinguished retired dean of Harvard University warns about exaggerating higher education's direct contribution to solving the world's ills. He goes on to say however, "...modesty and realism concerning the capacities of higher education do not in any sense imply that our role in determining the quality of society's life is small." Rosovsky continues, "We are leaders in the development of ideas and alternatives. We train students in the state-of-the art while attempting with all energy to change the frontiers of that state." The efforts to expand Villa Julie's frontiers will continue in an energetic way.

We will work to become a national example of how to connect career planning and quality academic programs. We will continue to serve students in Maryland and the region, and we will seek to develop an exemplary model for insuring that Villa Julie students not only possess important knowledge but also know how to use this knowledge to make a difference in their careers and in the world. To know about something is important, but is not an end in itself. True success comes from the ability to apply what we know for the betterment of our world. We will help students define and shape careers that will produce success but also happiness and satisfaction. This connection can only come about by determining what things mean.

For this reason, Villa Julie will continue to struggle to connect quality liberal arts programs to solid career preparation. To earn a living is very important to us, to our students and to our families. To become a person of substance is something that emerges from the study of liberal arts. It is important to learn to ask the right questions. It is also important to know that what we do in life is a struggle to enable our spirits to become part of the world we live in. This connection can only be made by linking a meaningful curriculum in career preparation with the broader human vision that emerges from the study of liberal arts disciplines.

Every organization in America is constantly seeking to identify seasoned leaders who have well-developed human instincts. These instincts are essential because at the core of every activity there is a human yearning to make a difference, to support a family, and to be respected. The issues that must be grappled with by organizations are the examination of values that are fundamental to an effective life - mutual respect, courage, love, vision, and achievement. The struggle to develop these values will be a part of our efforts here.

Villa Julie's motto is to teach for learning and for living. In this sense, we will seek to foster a vision that makes students aware of their potential impact on a global society – to play an active role in providing strategies to this world community. We will seek to educate women and men to provide skills to a dynamic world but to also embrace the values of caring and service. We want to make a difference by recognizing the problems of injustice and by becoming aware of the role Villa Julie can play and that higher education plays in dealing with these pressing problems. We will do this through collaboration by sharing these purposeful ideals with a broader community.

There is a powerful illustration of sharing purpose from NASA, an organization that struggled to connect the highest possible aspirations with its employees and a nation! A visitor, touring the launch facility, spotted a worker sweeping the floor. She asked, "What is your job here?" The worker replied, "To put a man on the moon." An important illustration of how visionary journeys can connect us all.

We see a world longing for love, children seeking protection, parents needing guidance, the sick wanting help, nations needing food. All of these challenges may well be within the reach of higher education's potential.

The 19th century philosopher and writer Ralph Waldo Emerson once wrote: "A spark of fire is infinitely deep but a mass of fire reaching from earth upward into heaven, this is the sign of the robust, united, burning radiant soul."

So when we pick up our broom's tomorrow to sweep the floor, let's remember we all play a part in creating a better world. There are many people who need the help that only higher

education can provide. And that maybe Villa Julie College and higher education can assist in making this journey more meaningful and more possible for all. And, keep in mind, there are still many moons to explore.

Thank you.