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A TRIBUTE TO MRS. ROSA PARKS: A HUMBLE SERVANT LEADER

My earliest thoughts of life in Detroit are filled with fond memories of a vibrant city, replete with all the hustle and bustle on Woodward Avenue common to the main avenues of all urban enclaves of the nation during the 1950s. I fondly recall the Hudson Department Store and its wonderful holiday celebrations, eating at the counter in Woolworth, and of course, hot fudge crème puffs at Saunders served in the booths. During the summer of 1955, my aunt and I made a trip to the South to visit relatives, my first introduction to the shame of the nation—de facto segregation or Jim Crow! The shock of being told that my aunt and I could not be seated at the counter of Woolworth was truly disconcerting as were the “Whites Only” and “Colours Only” signs that began greeting us along the way as our train meandered through the small towns of the deep South as we made our way to Miami. Had there been no Civil Rights Movement, sparked by Mrs. Rosa Parks’ civil disobedience, I am certain that my life and the lives of millions of Americans would have taken very different trajectories with limited or no opportunities to experience what we commonly refer today as “the American Dream.”

Rosa Parks remained humble throughout her life, appearing indifferent to the admiration accorded her, especially during the later years of her life. She sought no public acclaim, yet her life positively affected the masses and sparked new possibilities for women, minorities, the poor, and all persons who are disadvantaged or live at the margins of society. Her impact is felt beyond the shores of this nation, encouraging young aspirants for social justices across the globe.

Robert Greenleaf (1970) defined servant leadership as, “beginning with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead.” On December 1, 1955, in taking a seat and refusing to move, Rosa Parks made an informed decision to serve in the face of possible bodily harm and possible loss of life to “serve.” Her knowledge of failed attempts to press the system and her involvement in the strategic planning of her local branch of the NAACP are evidence that Mrs. Parks set aside concern for self and allowed her personage to be used for the advancement of the masses. Although there remains much work to be accomplished before the vestiges of de facto discrimination are removed, Rosa Parks is the indisputable servant leader of our lifetime.

Mrs. Rosa Parks was the recipient of two of the nations’ highest awards, the Presidential Medal of Freedom (1966) and the U. S. Congressional Gold Medal of Honor (1999).

Other awards include: SCLC annual Rosa Parks Freedom Award; NAACP Spingarn Medal (1979); Martin Luther King, Jr. Award (1980); Ebony Service Award (1980); The Eleanor Roosevelt Women of Courage Award, Wonder Women Foundation (1984); Medal of Honor Award (1986); Martin Luther King, Jr. Leadership Award (1987); Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Legislative Achievement Award (1990) and honored with a Day of Recognition by Wayne County Commission.

In the period immediately following her death, I had a strong desire to pay tribute to a woman who quietly affected my life—I wanted to pay tribute to the human being who paved the way for me and many others—I wanted to have my “Rosa Parks moment.” As the hours waned and lines grew

longer outside the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History in Detroit, it appeared that I would not get a final glimpse of her bier. On the evening before funeral, however, I received a call from a cousin who is well connected with the funeral trade in Detroit, directing me to arrive no later than 4:30 a.m. if I wanted to view Mrs. Parks. Upon arriving, I was concerned that the viewing period had ended and the museum was closed in preparation for the procession to the funeral at the Greater Grace Cathedral in Detroit. My cousin arrived at about 5:00 a.m. and we were ushered into the museum and placed directly in front of her casket. Mr. O'Neil Swanson, Jr., much to my surprise, slowly opened the casket, revealing the absolutely beautiful remains of Rosa Parks, allowing several minutes for a 'private visitation.' My recollection of her beauty and peace will remain with me for the remainder of my life—my personal reflection of the Mother of the Civil Rights Movements.

Dr. Vernon C. Polite, Dean

MRS. ROSA PARKS: PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

During my K-12 experience, I desegregated schools in the Eastern and Southwestern part of our country - usually being the first and only African American in the school. There were times when I felt so overwhelmed and afraid, and often tried to understand why I had to experience such painful encounters with my classmates and teachers. One way I made sense of my world was to think about Rosa Parks. My parents would speak frequently about that monumental event, the courage she [Rosa Parks] possessed, and how grateful they were for her. I would listen and think about how much strength and resolve she must have had. I would be in awe of the fact that her quiet resistance opened up the gates of opportunity for every African American in the United States. Then, I would imagine what she would say to me, if she knew how I felt. Thinking about this would bring me such comfort and a sense of security. I heard a news reporter describe Rosa Parks in a way that reminded me of how I regarded Rosa Parks. He described Rosa Parks as a gentle spirit that unleashed a terrific

storm that had been building for years, a storm that changed the landscape of our country.

Dr. Deborah A. Harmon

As a woman, I would not be standing where I stand, walking where I walk, and doing what I do had Rosa Parks not started the revolution.

Dr. Lynne A. Rocklage

Those of us—black and white, men and women—of a liberal persuasion who "came of age" during the 1950's and 1960's, especially in the segregated South, were greatly inspired by many leaders of the civil rights movement, including Mrs. Rosa Parks. Some led through the gift of oratory or the ability to organize large, non-violent actions. Others, such as Mrs. Parks, led through steely determination and a passionate belief in taking a stand for what was "right," even if the laws of the time and place required some other action. We are indebted to them all. The battles for equality under the law for all our citizens are not yet over, but we are a much better society today than we were 50 years ago, thanks to people such as Mrs. Parks.

Dr. Jerry Robbins, Former Dean

A popular hymn written in the 1960's begins, "It only takes a spark to start a fire glowing....." For almost a half century, Mrs. Rosa Parks has been that spark not only to this nation but to the world. In one seemingly small quiet act of defiance, she ignited a fire that would burn through the hearts and minds of men and women around the globe. Through her courage, she called others to stand for the causes of freedom, justice, and equality for all people regardless of race, language, religion, gender, sexual orientation, social or economic status. We can never forget the great gift that she gave us as she raised our national consciousness and forced us to seek ways of behaving towards others that would uphold human dignity in all circumstances. Mrs. Rosa Parks has passed from this earthly existence but her footprints can never be erased from the landscape of our society. It is to us that the spark has been passed and now we must keep the fire glowing.

Dr. Linda Lewis-White

I've had a great deal of difficulty finding words that seemed appropriate to this occasion—nothing felt

right and I couldn't figure out why. Finally, as I listened to parts of Mrs. Parks' service I understood my problem. Several speakers affirmed that they—or someone they quoted—spoke with authority of experience and wisdom. I am uncomfortable because when I attempt to pay tribute to this woman I so admire, I speak with little or no authority. While I marched when I was young, I did so with considerable naiveté, not understanding the privileged vantage point from which I could choose, or not choose, to engage struggles for equality. The knowledge of that privilege is one of the legacies Mrs. Parks left to my family and me.

And so I write with some hesitation and great awareness of my limitations. As I've listened to the tributes this week it struck me that I can't remember another occasion when political figures spoke so openly of goodness. Mrs. Parks was a courageous activist, but she was also a genuinely good woman. Her humility, concern for others, gentle manner, and devotion to faith are not characteristics commonly praised on such a public platform. Her legacy is one of courage and political action, but it is also one in which right matters and good can triumph over evil in profound ways. I thought today of a song written by Anne Hills and David Roth, in which each verse portrays activist actions of courage and goodness. The chorus says, "And when I sing Amazing Grace, her face is all I see. I hope and pray that kind of grace will find its way through me." I believe the song needs an added verse for Rosa Parks. It is one we could all sing together.

Dr. Alane Starko (Former Interim Dean)

Mrs. Rosa Parks--By her single courageous act of defiance, Mrs. Parks became an exemplary role model for our young people of today.

Kathlyn Parker

I never had the opportunity to meet Ms. Parks. But I have, as many people in southeast Michigan do, a special feeling, a secretly pleased feeling, that she had chosen to live out her days here in Michigan. I silently cheered a few years ago, when the Henry Ford Museum won the bid to purchase the very same bus she had used, in her weariness, to rest her feet, and start a revolution. Two years ago, I took the opportunity to go see this bus. This icon's icon. I was moved. I was humbled. I felt as though I should

not step aboard. I had not earned the privilege to be so close, to climb those steps, to take a seat within this... monument to a moment, this restored thing, this simple bus, this piece of history. I never had the opportunity to meet Ms. Parks, but she helped me to see the person I strive to be.

Brian Filipiak

About three years ago I was driving to EMU on I-696 from my Royal Oak home when I was suddenly aware of the presence of something huge and unusual in the next lane. To my most pleasant surprise, I realized that it was Mrs. Parks' bus on an enormous flatbed trailer, being towed to the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn at 6:00 a.m.! All of my fond feelings for and appreciation of Mrs. Parks came rushing back... I treasure the moment.

Dr. Nelson Maylone

When Rosa Parks said, "All I was doing was trying to get home from work." it reflects both the bravery and grace that infuse everyday acts of resistance to oppression and the necessity of such acts to make an impact on the forces that seek to control our lives. I think it is also important that this was not a single act, though it's the one that was famous, but that she had a long history of resistance. She had worked for the NAACP for twelve years prior. She had also chosen not to get up of the bus seat years ago and the bus driver had thrown her off the bus. And knowing this, she did it again. The idea that we need to act despite our uncertainties and fears, and refuse to give in, regardless of the success or failure of our efforts, is my personal piece of the legacy of Rosa Parks.

Dr. Dibya Choudhuri

My husband and I were shocked back in the early 60's while traveling through Southern states and seeing signs that were unbelievable to us about who can not drink at drinking fountains, use of restrooms etc. Being raised in Michigan, we were unaware of such atrocities. I remember thinking when I read about Rosa Parks that I was glad someone had the gumption to stand up for ones self as well as others.

Carole Zakrzewski

Rosa Parks is named along with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Cesar Chavez as part of the King-Chavez-Parks Future Faculty Fellowship Program

to capture the character and courage of these distinguished leaders of civic, labor, and social rights for disenfranchised groups in the United States. Mrs. Parks' one subtle yet determined act of defiance during the time of legally authorized racial discrimination launched the Civil Rights Movement and imparted upon her the title, "Mother of the Civil Rights Movement." Her lifelong involvement and contribution to service and change through non-violent protest reflects her deeply rooted values to impart strength, self-empowerment, and dignity to African Americans and others. **The Department of Leadership and Counseling** joins in the collective salute to the life and legacy of Mrs. Rosa Louise McCauley Parks.

FACULTY NOTES

Dr. Valerie Polakow presented "Human Rights in the US? The Crisis of Poverty and the Lives of Children and Families" at the annual meeting of the Annual Social Justice Symposium, organized by Teachers College, Columbia University and Barnard College, October 27, 2005. She also presented "Poverty, Public Policy and the Lifeworlds of Children" at the Center for Urban Education's annual conference, Long Island University October 26, 2005.

Dr. Ethan Lowenstein has received funding to work half-time this year on a major study of teacher and student learning in civics/moral education. Dr. Lowenstein will be a co-Principal Investigator on the study, "Facing History and Ourselves. The other PI's are Robert Selman at Harvard, Melinda Fine at New York University, and Dennis Barr. The study will look at whether, how, and to what effect the professional development organization influences teacher and student understandings and dispositions. The longitudinal study will include both qualitative and experimental design components.

Dr. Ron Williamson, Department of Leadership and Counseling, had a chapter "Leadership in the Middle Level School" recently included in the Encyclopedia at Middle Level Education, which is a peer-reviewed publication.

Dr. David Anderson, Department of Leadership and Counseling, attended a discussion on Teacher Education Evaluation and Assessment with Dean Polite and Associate Deans Virginia Harder and Shawn Quilter on November 4, 2005 at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana.

Dr. Eboni Zamani-Gallaher, Department of Leadership and Counseling, recently spoke to the Joint Fellows Conference/King-Chavez-Parks Future Faculty Fellowship Program Board and facilitated a round table discussion on October 27-28th at the Renaissance in Detroit, Michigan.

Dr. Gary Marx, Department of Leadership and Counseling, with Jan Callis, Barry Rubin and Kay Cornell from the Oakland Intermediate School District; and Carol Johnson, Oak Park Schools; will present a session "Using Technical Assistance Team for Phase Three Corrective Action" at the Michigan Association of State and Federal Program Specialist's Fall Director's Institute in Traverse City on November 10, 2006.

Dr. Ron Williamson, Department of Leadership and Counseling, attended and presented at the National Middle School Association meeting in Philadelphia. His session was titled, "Leadership for Strengthening Interdisciplinary Teams".

Dr. Irene Ametrano and **Dr. Dibya Choudhuri**, Department of Leadership & Counseling, presented a professional development session at Porter on "Ethical & Legal Issues in Supervision" for Counseling site supervisors and members of the Counseling Programs Advisory Council.

Karen Schulte and **Loreena Parks** presented "Modeling Differentiated Instruction in Undergraduate and Graduate Level Courses: A Framework for Instruction" at the "Bridging the Theory, Research, Practice and Policy Gaps" October 2005 conference sponsored by the Michigan Association of Teacher Educators (MATE).

Dr. Gilbert Steifel, **Dr. Steven Camron**, **Karen Schulte** and **Loreena Parks** presented "Policy, Research and Practice in Treatment of Students with Learning Disabilities" at "Bridging the Theory,

Research, Practice and Policy Gaps" October 2005 Conference sponsored by the Michigan Association of Teacher Educators (MATE).

Dr. Pat Williams-Boyd's paper proposal has been accepted for juried presentation at the fourth annual International Conference on Education in Honolulu in January. The title of the paper is, "Schools as Agencies of Community Collaboration: Public Schools, Social Services and the Poor." Some of the work in Project Backpack will be included in the paper as well.

Dr. John Palladino presented a mixed-methods study about the importance of school administrators' support for social workers' special education advocacy at the Learning Disabilities Worldwide Conference (LDW) October, 27, 2005 in Boston Maryland, and at the Michigan Association of Teacher Educators (MATE), October 28, 2005 in Bay City, Michigan with co-presenter, Dr. Mark Giesler (University of Nebraska). He also presented a positioned paper about the over-representation of students with learning-behavioral disabilities in foster care at LDW with co-presenter, Dr. Jean Haar (Minnesota State University-Mankato).

Dr. Myung-sook Koh, Department of Special Education, presented "Voices of Korean High School Teachers on their Teaching Profession" at the Mid-Western Educational Research Association (MWERA) October 13, 2005 held in Columbus, Ohio. The presentation focused on the research related to the view of Korean high school teachers on their teaching in the cultural context.

Dr. Myung-sook Koh, Department of Special Education, presented "Preparing Pre-service Teachers for Inclusion: The Effects of Field Experience" at the Michigan Association of Teacher Educators (MATE), Bay City. The presentation focused on the research related to the general education preservice teachers' field experience in special education settings.

FACULTY EMERITI

Q.S. Samonte (Professor Emeritus) gave a book reading at Peter White Library in Marquette this

summer. He was also appointed to the Northern Michigan University President's Ethnic and Cultural Diversity Committee. On November 5, 2005 he gave a lecture as part of a series sponsored by the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, University of Michigan. The title of his presentation was "The Integration of Filipino-Americans into American Society."

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

2005 Joint Fellows Conference/King-Chavez-Parks Future Faculty Fellowship Program

Doctoral fellows **Shaftone Dunklin, Cheryl Price, and Tamara Stevenson** were among the graduate students from Eastern Michigan University and the Department of Leadership and Counseling to attend the Ninth Annual Joint Fellows Conference held October 27-30, 2005 at the Detroit Marriott Renaissance Center. This conference is held annually in partnership with Illinois and Michigan's public universities to provide networking and professional development opportunities to participants. They attended the conference as recipients of the King-Chavez-Parks Future Faculty Fellowship Program, designed to increase the number of under represented faculty at institutions of higher education in Michigan and beyond. This year's conference included tributes to Rosa Parks, the much-admired civil rights leader who died October 24, 2005.

Wednesday evening, October 26th, the Michigan State Conference of Branches of the NAACP held a candle light vigil honoring Rosa Louise Parks, Mother of the Civil-Rights Movement. As a life time member of the NAACP the vigil included a silent walk from the campus of Wayne state University to the African American History Museum where Mother Parks laid in state. The vigil was attended by youth from across the state. The presiding officer for the festivities was **David Wiggins**, member of the National Board of Directors for the NAACP. David is a College of Education student and works in the Department of Leadership and Counseling as the senior student secretary.

COLLEGE-WIDE NEWS

Susan Rink has been a wonderful asset for the College in her capacity as Director of Development. Recently, Susan accepted a position as the EMU Foundation's Director of Planned Giving. Susan served as the college's Director of Development for the past three years. She will still be on campus, so it isn't "goodbye." She has become a standard bearer for the future directors. Her shoes will truly be hard to fill. We wish her the very best in her new role with the Foundation.

Kelly Simpson will take Susan's place as the COE's Director of Development. Kelly has a master's degree from EMU in Historic Preservation and is familiar with the College serving as the dean's GA for the past two years. Kelly is fulfilling a dream to pursue development as a career with this job - I hope you will all welcome her back to our "family".

Commencement: You are encouraged to participate in the upcoming December commencement ceremony. Each of you embodies your commitment to our students in many different ways on a daily basis and this is appreciated. Another important way to demonstrate this commitment is by assembling to celebrate students completing their programs of study at the graduation ceremony. You will receive a formal invitation shortly, but in the meantime, please set aside December 18, 2005, from approximately 1:20 until 3:30, to be a part of the academic celebration honoring our graduates. Please notify your department head or school director by November 16, 2005, about your willingness to participate at the ceremony.

MLK COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT: The Martin L. King Celebration Planning Committee is asking departments and organizations to participate in their community service project, "Penny Drive/Penny Contest." The contest winner will receive a staff/student table at the MLK Luncheon. If your department would like to contribute or participate in the spirit of MLK, please contact Cynthia Merritt, 487-3147, or Jessica "Decky" Alexander, 487-3130, by Monday, Nov. 21. All funds raised will benefit local Washtenaw County area organizations

Dr. Diane Fox, faculty member in Nursing, is the niece of Lou Porretta. She and her father will be initiating a memorial endowed scholarship fund to support a student in the Education Doctorate in Leadership. They are recruiting the participation of other family members in lieu of flowers. Persons interested in supporting this endeavor may contact Dr. Fox.

John W. Porter Distinguished Chair in Urban Education (2005-2006)

Dr. Gary Orfield - November 21-22, 2005, Director of the Civil Rights Project, Professor of Education and Social Policy – Harvard University. Dr. Orfield will hold a public presentation discussing the topics of overrepresentation of minority students in special education, recruitment of minority teachers in special education, and the impact of accountability requirement in the No Child Left Behind Act. He will also hold several student sessions. Dr. Orfield is nominated by the Department of Special Education. **Lecture: 11/22/2005 @ 7:30 pm Eagle Crest**

Dr. James Earl Davis – January 26 – 27, 2006, Professor, Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies – Temple University. Dr. Davis will present a public lecture entitled, "Uneasy Ties: Race and Gender in Urban Education Reform" and will additionally hold a workshop in the College of Education. Dr. Davis is nominated by the Department of Leadership and Counseling. **Lecture: 1/26/2006 @ 7:30 pm Porter Building.**