

Past, Present and Future of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at UVA
Comments delivered at Old Cabell Hall during Black Alumni Weekend
April 6, 2019
Dr. Marcus L. Martin

Good morning! Greetings everyone. Welcome back black alumni, family, and friends. I hope you are enjoying your return to UVA. We are expecting about 2,000 participants for this wonderful weekend of events. Thank you very much for inviting me to speak.

So, this is what retirement looks like. I officially retired January 1, 2019, took a 30-day sabbatical and returned in a temporary capacity until the new Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is hired, and President Ryan agrees I can retire again.

I was asked to address the past, present, and future of diversity, equity and inclusion at UVA. There is a lot to consider, so I will do my best in 30 minutes to paint the picture from my collective experiences as a father, faculty, physician, mentor, advisor, and chief diversity officer and Vice President under the 7th, 8th and 9th UVA presidents.

While I am not an alum, three of my four children are UVA alums, as well as a niece, two nephews, and a younger cousin. They all had great experiences at UVA. I grew up in the mountains of Virginia not too far from here in the 50s and 60s. My wife Donna and I are the same age; we grew up just 10 miles apart with similar experiences, attending segregated all-black schools during the Jim Crow era. My high school was just across the street, so I just rolled out of bed right into the school. The football practice field was just across from my front porch. There were only 20 boys and 20 girls in my class. We got to do everything in such a small school. I played trumpet at halftime during football games, entertaining the crowd with my football gear and cleats on. I would run to the locker room for instructions from our only coach, and go back on the field and play quarterback on offense and safety on defense.

My community was loving and supportive. All my teachers were educated at historically black colleges and universities and took care to guide me in the right direction. My father had only a sixth-grade education, but with his stellar reputation as a safe and dedicated laborer at our hometown papermill, coupled with my good grades and encouragement from my high school guidance counselor, I received a scholarship to study pulp and paper technology and chemical engineering at North Carolina State University. As first-generation and African American students, the guidance counselor never directed my siblings or me to look at UVA as an option. I worked for several years as an engineer in my hometown papermill but after a major accident injuring colleagues, I no longer wanted to focus on mechanical pumps and fluid dynamics, but rather on the human pump. So I applied to the newly opening Eastern Virginia Medical School in Norfolk and became a member of the charter class.

I came to UVA in 1996 as the first African American chair of a clinical department in the School of Medicine and I have lived here longer than any other place I have lived during my entire life. However, way before my arrival at UVA, there were remarkable African

American trailblazers such as Gregory Swanson; Walter Ridley; Bobby Bland; Vivian Pinn, the only African American and only female in her 1967 medical school class; and Nathan Johnson, the University's first black faculty member hired in 1967. They opened doors, and even before these giants, the enslaved African Americans laid the foundation, paving the way for us all.

We celebrated the UVA Bicentennial in 2017 which included a cornerstone laying commemoration. The foundation, the cornerstone, and the building and sustaining of the University depended upon the enslaved such as Peyton Skipwith, Henry Martin, Isabella Gibbons, William Gibbons, and over four thousand more. These enslaved workers were resilient despite broken families and disparity of power and privilege being gifted from one individual to another; not being free to express their own giftedness. The enslaved were cornerstones, setting all other stones in reference; thus determining the stability of the entire institution. Let us also acknowledge that this institution is built on the traditional land of the Monacan people who were here before any of us as the custodians of this region.

Although not always readily visible, where there is good structure, a cornerstone is in place carrying the weight. Students of color, alumni, staff, and faculty are often not visible but typically carry heavier weight than others.

My experiences at UVA have been very positive. I have engaged in emergency care of children, students, and adults; the occasional delivery of a baby inside the ER; responding to disasters; participating in state-appointed panels; leading community health fairs; conducting research and grantsmanship; and teaching, mentoring, and advising many students of all races and ethnicities. I have directed J-term courses; participated in community engagement; and written letters of recommendation for undergraduate students, graduate students, professional students, and faculty aspiring for promotion and tenure.

Dr. Robley Dunglison was among the first eight all-white male faculty at UVA, hired as a professor of anatomy and medicine. Dr. Dunglison lived in Pavilion X and served as the personal physician to Thomas Jefferson. He was at Jefferson's bedside the day he died. Dunglison also administered to presidents Madison and Monroe during his nine-year tenure at UVA. His patients and students were quite homogenous. I took an oath to practice the art of medicine without permitting diverse human variations to interfere with the duty to provide compassionate care. Progress has been made way beyond those early days. UVA is a more diverse community with individuals driven by honor; respect; resilience; sensitivity to other's needs and feelings; cultivating academic and personal integrity; and synthesizing, integrating, and applying new knowledge.

Long after the first eight white male faculty members were hired at UVA, women and minorities were included within the faculty ranks and the numbers are growing. Some of our diverse faculty have given 3 or 4 decades of their lives in service to UVA. They are cornerstones, carrying the weight and working to ensure the best future for our students and university.

Subsequent to my hiring as Chair of Emergency Medicine at UVA, notable African Americans have served as chairs of Orthopedics, Family Medicine, and Psychiatry, Dean of the School of Medicine, and CEO of the Health System.

Formation of the Office for Diversity and Equity

In 2003, following an attack on a minority candidate for President of Student Council and other bias incidents, President Casteen formed the President's Commission on Diversity and Equity (PCODE). Co-chaired by Angela Davis and Michael Smith, the 2004 PCODE report called for the establishment of the Office for Diversity and Equity, among many other recommendations.

I served on the search committee that recruited Bill Harvey, the first Vice President and Chief Officer for Diversity and Equity in 2005, and six months later I became a member of the Diversity and Equity team. The Office for Diversity and Equity (ODE) created goals to:

- Promote an inclusive, welcoming, respectful environment;
- Encourage commitment to diversity and equity in all aspects of academics, extracurricular activities, the workplace and within the surrounding communities; and
- Enhance student, faculty and staff experiences.

The six ODE staff members in addition to myself strive to synergize efforts related to the goals across Grounds and in the community through numerous initiatives and programs.

Diversity Council

In 2006, the Diversity Council was established. There are currently about 40 Diversity Council members representing the President's Office, each Vice President, the Provost's Office, each Dean or school and various other units, and student, staff, and faculty organizations. A university-wide commitment to diversity statement was written by the Diversity Council "promoting an inclusive and welcoming environment that embraces the full spectrum of human attributes, perspectives and disciplines."

A dashboard was created with more accessibility to diversity data. Individual schools established diversity committees and directors or associate deans of diversity. The Office of Graduate and Post-Doctoral Affairs created a Director of Diversity position as well. In addition, each school has written a diversity strategic plan.

African American Professorships

From 2007 to 2012, the Office for Diversity and Equity hosted sixty dinners with Professor Julian Bond as guest of honor, bringing together over 1,600 diverse individuals across the university and community. These dinners established new or rekindled old relationships, and subsequently, funds were raised to establish the Julian Bond Professorship of Civil Rights and Social Justice. Professor Kevin Gaines, a distinguished scholar in African American history, was appointed as the inaugural holder of the Bond professorship. African American and African Studies officially became a department in 2017. It was also my honor to see the Marcus L. Martin Distinguished Professorship of Emergency Medicine established in 2017. So, there are three endowed professorships at UVA in the names of

African Americans, including the Thurgood Marshall Professorship in Law, the Julian Bond Professorship of Civil Rights and Social Justice, and the Marcus L. Martin Distinguished Professorship of Emergency Medicine.

Virginia-North Carolina Alliance

In 2007, ODE submitted a National Science Foundation (NSF) Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation grant proposal resulting in the Virginia-North Carolina Alliance. UVA is the lead institution and received nearly \$15 million in grant support to increase the number of underrepresented minority (URM) students receiving STEM degrees. In the first ten years of the grant we have increased URM STEM degrees by 174% within our partnership, granting from 488 to 1,341 degrees annually. The alliance consists of UVA, Bennett College, Elizabeth City State University, George Mason University, Johnson C. Smith University, the National Radio Astronomy Observatory, Old Dominion University, Piedmont Virginia Community College, St. Augustine's University, Thomas Nelson Community College, Virginia Commonwealth University, and Virginia Tech. It has been my pleasure to serve as the Primary Investigator (PI) of the 12-institution partnership along with Co-PIs Kristin Morgan, Archie Holmes, Rosalyn Hobson-Hargraves, program coordinator Maurice Walker, and UVA partners Jason Jones in Engineering and Keisha John and Ed Murphy in the College.

In 2012, undergraduate students in our annual VA-NC Alliance Summer Research Program working on an astrochemistry project discovered a new interstellar molecule cyanomethanimine, a precursor of RNA, which is the building block for life on our planet. Placing this into perspective, it takes a whole lifetime for some researchers to be part of such a discovery. The VA-NC Alliance was also awarded the NSF Bridge to the Doctorate grant in full support of a cohort of 12 graduate students accepted into STEM programs at UVA this fall.

Charlottesville Community Health Fair

In 2008, ODE established the annual Charlottesville Community Health Fair in conjunction with the annual African American Cultural Arts Festival, the UVA Health System, Sentara Martha Jefferson Hospital, the TJ Health District Department of Health, UVA medical and nursing students, pre-med undergraduate students, faculty, and about 35 local agencies. The fair offers free youth sports physicals, hemoglobin A1C testing, body mass index, eye and ear exams, mammograms, and other free health assessments to the community. This year will be our 12th year for the health fair.

John T. Casteen III Diversity-Equity-Inclusion Leadership Award

In 2010, the John T. Casteen Diversity-Equity-Inclusion Leadership Award was established, and the first award was presented to John Casteen in the 20th and final year of his presidency. Award recipients must be a current student, faculty, or staff at UVA and have demonstrated deep commitment and distinct passion for diversity. Recipients must have achieved a sustainable and quantifiable impact on diversity, equity, and inclusion at the University and in the community.

John emphasized the importance of this institution reflecting the diverse cross-section of the nation in which we live. He stated that this was not an award for him personally, but an award that recognizes what a university had done. The accomplishments just happened to be during his time as one of the curators or keepers.

In addition to John T. Casteen III, other recipients of the Casteen award the past decade are:

- Angela M. Davis
- Bob Covert
- Kim Forde-Mazrui
- Hajar Ahmed and Martin Davidson
- Ashley Blackwell and Joel Hockensmith
- Deborah McDowell and Frank Dukes
- Randy Canterbury and Attiya Latif
- Derrick Alridge and Gary Nimax

2019's winner was Associate Dean of Undergraduate Admission Valerie Gregory.

IDEA Fund

In 2010, the UVA Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Access (IDEA) Fund and board of trustees was established as an official and influential UVA alumni group that provides action-oriented leadership in support of the University's aim to be accessible, equitable, diverse, and inclusive with these values permeating the University community climate and culture. The IDEA Fund works in close collaboration with ODE, supporting diverse student initiatives and conceiving and carrying out big ideas such as establishing the President's Commission on Slavery and the University, enhancing the diverse student pipeline, and providing career-related internship opportunities for minority students.

In 2012, through efforts of the IDEA Fund trustees, Henry Martin, the former bell ringer for the University, was commemorated and a plaque was installed next to the UVA chapel in his honor. Alums Tierney Fairchild, John Muletta, Russell Logan, and Kevin Carrington have served as IDEA Fund chairs. We are grateful to all the alumni who have served as trustees.

First Female President of UVA & Community MLK Celebration

In 2010, the hiring of the first female president of UVA was a major milestone. UVA's 8th president, Teresa Sullivan, committed early-on her support in multiple ways, including a more extensive annual Community MLK Jr. Celebration, thus enhancing institutional diversity goals. Students, faculty, and staff (including dean appointees), and community members comprise the Community MLK Celebration planning committee.

Since 2011, 225 MLK programs have been scheduled, averaging around 25 programs annually. Programs have included guest speakers, panels, film screenings, and art and entertainment in various forms, honoring, reflecting, and acting on Dr. King's legacy: standing up for justice, reconciliation, and truth.

Women's Leadership Council

ODE coordinates the Women's Leadership Council, whose goals are to ensure that women are included fully and equitably in all aspects of the institution, and to promote the development and well-being of all members of the University community in an atmosphere marked by collegiality, rigorous intellectual inquiry and self-examination, moral reflection, and fundamental human kindness. The WLC promotes and supports the full range of educational, employment, and research opportunities for women.

LGBT Committee

In 2011, ODE established the LGBT Committee as a subcommittee of the Diversity Council, charged with reviewing best practices and addressing areas of interest resulting in improved benefits and climate for our LGBT community. The committee hosts an annual welcome reception for new and returning LGBT employees, convenes the UVA LGBT Employee Resource Group, and leads coordination of social events several times during the year.

Disability Advocacy and Action Committee

In 2013, ODE established the Disability Advocacy and Action Committee as a subcommittee of the Diversity Council to serve as a think-tank for improving access, in its broadest sense, at the university; valuing disability within the spectrum of human diversity, recognizing historical exclusion of people with disabilities, and working to eliminate physical, technological and attitudinal barriers and challenges throughout the University and community.

Black Faculty & Staff Employee Resource Group

Established in 2013, the Black Faculty & Staff Employee Resource Group (BFS-ERG) is a proactive group whose mission is to actively engage in recruitment, mentorship, collegiality, professional development, and retention of its members. The BFS-ERG also works to promote an inclusive environment that will benefit all UVA faculty, administrators, and staff, as well as the Charlottesville community. Frequent lunch meetings and social gatherings are held, and faculty and staff awards were created, including the Armstead Robinson faculty award and the Lincoln Lewis staff recognition award.

Diversity Recommendation Index

Recent racially-biased events which occurred at numerous universities around the country, including UVA, led to a list of demands from students protesting racism. The list was first published in 2015 representing 51 institutions. Top demands included:

- Increase diversity of professors
- Require diversity training
- Fund cultural centers
- Require classes on racism for students
- Increase diversity of students
- Track race related offenses
- Rename buildings and mascots

- Retain more minority students
- Expand financial aid
- Revise speech code on time/place/manner

Considering these demands, in conjunction with the President's Office, ODE reviewed 7 reports written over the past three decades which contain over 200 recommendations related to diversity, equity and inclusion at UVA. The completed review, titled "Diversity Recommendation Index (DRI)" is available online on the ODE website and incorporates information from the following 7 reports:

- *An Audacious Faith: Report of the Task Force on Afro-American Affairs, 1987*
- *An Examination of the University's Classified Staff: The Muddy Floor Report, 1996*
- *Envision Diversity Report, 2002*
- *Embracing Diversity in the Pursuit of Excellence: Report of the President's Commission on Diversity and Equity, 2004*
- *UVA Alumni for Change: Letter to President Sullivan, 2015*
- *Towards a Better University: Black Student Alliance List of Demands, 2015*
- *Report to the Ad Hoc Committee on the University Climate and Culture, 2015*

The DRI highlights and summarizes significant actions taken as well as ongoing challenges of cultivating a more diverse, equitable and inclusive environment for learning, working and living. The summary is categorized under:

- Minority student recruitment, retention and financial aid
- Classroom climate and curriculum
- Minority faculty and staff recruitment and retention
- Diversity education opportunities
- Family leave, childcare and living wage

Recently, the new college curriculum general education requirements included courses on engaging difference, and implicit bias training is now required for all first-years.

The university recently expanded paid parental leave for all UVA employees who are eligible for benefits under the Family Medical Leave Act and living wage is to be paid to all eligible employees starting January 2020.

Multicultural Student Center

In 2016, the Multicultural Student Center was created following a two-year initiative by students advocating for the space. The new Multicultural Student Services unit was created within the Office of the Dean of Students. The Multicultural Student Center was made possible by the generous gift of the UVA parents fund. Multicultural Student Services collaborates with various cultural student groups on programming and events to celebrate diversity and multiculturalism such as:

- Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month
- Culturefest
- Disability Awareness Week

- Hispanic Heritage Month
- LGBTQ Pride Week
- Middle Eastern/Arab American Heritage Month
- Native American History Month

Increasing Diversity at UVA

In 2009, the National Center for Education's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) changed reporting methodology for race and ethnicity and began including the multi-race category, so all institutions must be vigilant in comparing current data with years before 2009.

We have tracked diversity at UVA diligently. The class admitted in Fall 2018 is the most diverse first-year class ever with over 34% minority students. African American students entering this past fall represented 9.2% of the class, second only to UNC among public research university peers in the 62-member Association of American Universities (AAU). The number of African American students that entered this fall is 34% higher than five years ago. The current total enrollment of African American students at UVA is the highest ever with over 1,400.

At UVA, African American students have the highest graduation rates of all public institutions over two decades. However, as emphasized within the strategic vision of the Office of African American Affairs under Dr. Maurice Apprey's leadership, high graduation rates must be aligned with correspondingly high graduating grade point averages, and that alignment has become evident. GPAs have increased in recent graduating classes and current classes are demonstrating elevating GPAs. For example, comparing first semester GPAs, 29% of the class of 2021 had a 3.4 to 4.0 cumulative GPA compared to only 10% of the class of 2005. The graduating class of 2021 is the first to lift a first-year cumulative average above 3.03.

UVA is the number one public university in the country for the percentage of women earning undergraduate engineering degrees, with 33 percent women undergraduates compared to a national average of approximately 21%. The Clark Scholars Program provides opportunities to exceptional students from populations traditionally underserved in STEM fields. Funded by a \$30 million gift from the A. James and Alice B. Clark Scholars Foundation and the UVA Bicentennial Scholars Fund, the program accepted its first 16 students in 2018 and will increase to a target enrollment of 60-75 diverse scholars in future years in engineering.

Reviewing minority progress at UVA, total minority undergraduates increased 40% from 3,643 to 5,274 over the past 10 years, compared to a 10% increase in the student body overall for the decade. Total minority graduate students increased 40% from 907 to 1,304 over the past ten years. The UVA School of Medicine's underrepresented minority (URM) students increased from 6% to 28% in a decade, averaging 23% over the past 5 years. The

School of Medicine averaged 12% African Americans in each entering class the past 5 years, 50% above the national average; but we went down to the national average of 8% the past year following the events of August 11 and 12.

Total minority teaching and research faculty increased 70% from 309 to 537 the past ten years. Total African American teaching and research faculty increased 30% from 86 to 109 the past ten years. Of our 62 AAU research institution peers including public and private, UVA ranks number 6 in percentage of African American tenured/tenure-track faculty with UNC again just ahead of UVA, 5.7% vs 4.59%. Total minority staff increased 25% from 1,084 to 1,335 the past ten years. Some diverse administrative hires in recent years include:

- Pam Sutton-Wallace, CEO of the Health System
- David Wilkes, Dean of the School of Medicine
- Carla Williams, Athletic Director
- Alex Hernandez, Dean of the School of Continuing and Professional Studies
- Tina Thompson, Women's Basketball Coach
- Tommye Sutton, Chief of Police

As a result of the efforts of many at the institution, diversity, equity, and inclusion goals and initiatives have been advanced with momentum to continue growth. Although the overall percentage of minority undergrads, grads, staff and faculty have increased in recent years ongoing efforts are needed:

- More professorships, scholarships and chairs
- More minorities in key administrative positions
- More space for diverse student organizations and multicultural programming
- More Native American students and faculty recruited and supported
- Establish American Studies department
- Establish Native American Studies
- Establish Asian American/Pacific Islander and Latinx studies majors

Considering negative events in our community in recent years, the annual student survey, Student Experience in the Research University (SERU) has shown a downward trend in scoring for the question "I feel I belong at UVA," especially for African American and Muslim students.

We acknowledge ongoing challenges as well as our progress, and the future looks bright. Our 9th President Jim Ryan, who himself was a first-generation college student, is creating a shared vision for the future focusing on community, discovery, and service. This fall, a record 25,126 students applied to the UVA class of 2023 via the early application process; about 17% more than last year. Overall, almost 41,000 students applied for admission through either early or regular admission. On March 22, the Office of Admission released its regular admission decision and 40% of those offered admission are minorities, an increase

of 5% from last year. Offers to first generation college students rose from 10% to 11.5% this year. The 2019 entering class is on track to be the most diverse ever at UVA.

We plan to improve offerings and tracking of diversity education for faculty and staff. This will be the focus of our April 17 Diversity Council meeting. The Center for Teaching Excellence in collaboration with the Provost's office, with University-wide support, recently established UVA Acts, an ensemble that performs original plays interrupted with moments of facilitated dialogue by faculty audiences focusing on practical interventions to prevent, address, and reverse inequities in the classroom and workplace. We anticipate this type of education will lead to everyday implementation of culture change and preventative practice.

President's Commission on Slavery and the University and the Memorial to Enslaved Laborers

Some here attended the panel held yesterday, Memorial to Enslaved Laborers Design Overview and Construction Site Tour.

In 2007, the Virginia State General Assembly passed a resolution in regret of slavery and involuntary servitude and called on all Virginians for reconciliation. The UVA Board of Visitors passed a resolution in support of the Virginia General Assembly's resolution on Founder's Day, April 2007.

A small grey slate plaque was installed in honor of the several hundred women and men both free and enslaved whose labor between 1817 and 1826 helped to realize Thomas Jefferson's design for the University. This small grey plaque memorial was deemed insufficient by the Memorial for Enslaved Laborers student group formed by the Student Council Diversity Initiatives Committee in 2009.

The President's Commission on Slavery and the University (PCSU) was established in September 2013 by President Sullivan following presentation of the concept to her cabinet in April that year by ODE, the UVA IDEA Fund, and the Memorial for Enslaved Laborers student group. The PCSU established local and national advisory boards and a community relations task force. Community coffees and forums were held. The PCSU produced *Unearthed and Understood*, a short documentary. The commission guided development of narrative content and graphic exhibits related to the history of slavery for the newly renovated east oval room in the Rotunda visitor's center. It also created the enslaved African Americans at UVA walking tour map.

Other accomplishments include:

- Held symposia, including *Universities Confronting the Legacy of Slavery*; and *Universities, Slavery, Public Memory and the Built Landscape* with 61 institutions, 23 states and the UK participating
- Planted a tree on Founder's Day 2015 in honor of enslaved laborers

- Established the consortium Universities Studying Slavery, now consisting of 51 national and international universities
- Formed the Cornerstone Institute, a summer educational program about slavery for high school students
- Established Slavery and its Legacy course for undergraduate students
- Commemorated the African American cemetery
- Named Gibbons House in honor of enslaved couple William and Isabella Gibbons
- Named Skipwith Hall in honor of enslaved master mason Peyton Skipwith
- Renamed Jordan Hall “Pinn Hall” in honor of Dr. Vivian Pinn
- Renamed Ivy Lewis building “W.W. Yen Building” in honor of the first international student to graduate from UVA and former premier of China
- Named Bond House, a new upperclassmen student residence hall in honor of professor Julian Bond, opening this fall

The Board of Visitors approved the hiring of design team Höweler and Yoon, resulting in the Memorial to Enslaved Laborers “Freedom Ring,” designed for reflection, learning, and healing. The west pathway reflects the angle of the sunset when 14,000 enslaved people in Charlottesville and Albemarle County, representing 52% of the population, were freed on March 3, 1865.

Recommended by the Blue Ribbon Commission on Race, Memorials, and Public Spaces and a resolution passed by the Charlottesville City Council, UVA and the community have celebrated Liberation and Freedom Day on March 3 the past three years.

Quotes from PowerPoint Presentation

“Our decision to create a memorial to enslaved workers is an expression of our shared commitment to tell the full story of the University’s past, as we look toward its future.” - Teresa Sullivan

“Can we forget the crack of the whip, cowhide, whipping-post, the auction block, the hand cuffs, the bloodhounds, the iron collar, the negro-trader tearing the young child from its mother’s breast as a whelp from the lioness? Have we forgotten those horrible cruelties... hundreds of our race have been killed? No, we have not nor ever will.” – Isabella Gibbons

“My hope is that the memorial to enslaved laborers will serve not simply as a monument to the past but a vibrant living space for the university and community to come together to learn, remember and continue to try and close the gap between our aspirations and our everyday realities.” – Jim Ryan

Fundraising was launched for the Memorial to Enslaved Laborers in April 2017. We have appreciated gifts from alumni. Fundraising for the memorial is a University priority and major focus of the Jeffersonian Grounds Initiative. The Board of Visitors approved \$2.5 million in matching funds for one to one gifts with commitment through December 31,

2019. To date we have raised a little over a million in the \$7 million campaign needed to complete construction by spring 2020. The minority-owned firm Team Henry is about 30 percent complete with the construction.

Conclusion

As I end, it is with a cheerful heart and gratefulness that I accepted the opportunity over two decades ago to contribute to this University and community, working synergistically with so many here and seeing the progress being made. I have personally been rewarded many times over. In the words of Maya Angelou, "When we give cheerfully and accept gratefully all are blessed." In my view, all here have served as cornerstones--past or present, carrying the weight, serving as the bedrock that stabilizes the institution. I thank each of you for your presence and support and for all you have given. We are UVA and blessed.

The work to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion has been close to my heart. The original position description for the chief diversity officer suggested the successful candidate wake up every morning with diversity on his or her mind. I have done just that, coming to the office many mornings by 6 AM. My wife Donna is ready for us to do more fishing and crabbing, and I aim to do just that.

I realize this is my last chance to give a talk like this at UVA, but I will always be supportive of this institution. A tree is being planted in my honor for Founder's Day this year for which I am truly honored. I only wish that tree at some point in the future, long after I am gone, could tell my grandchildren and great-grandchildren that the seeds sown here during my time produced growth at UVA in diversity, equity, and inclusion as strong as the oak tree itself will have grown.

Thank you and enjoy the rest of Black Alumni Weekend.

Go Hoos!