UNDERWOOD LECTURE

Good morning team!

Good morning Ms. Underwood. Thank you for being here to share with us in honoring Dave's memory this morning.

I trust all of you had a good night! And I'm sure each of you has your favorite fantasy programmed to go online at the 12-minute mark when your attention span fails.

Not to worry. Having helped Vivian write the speech she gave so eloquently yesterday the parallels will not be lost on you.

Thank you, Mary, for your kind and generous introduction. I sincerely appreciate your remarks. My heart is filled with admiration for you, and I think I speak for everyone when I say that you have been an inspiration to all of us. Thank you for sharing the honor of the Underwood Lecture with me this morning.

And what an inspiration it is to experience the
genius of Mozart played by Flo Valley's genius, Bertram Ward. As most of you realize, Bertram spends many hours preparing for this occasion and, once again, he has lifted us with the beauty of his music. He is the quintessential professional in a department where being the best is the expected norm. Bertram, thank you for the gift of music you've given us today.

The artistic and technological contributions for the Lecture were created by the Media Services and Theatre De[art, emts. I hope its meaning will become more clear as we travel that yellow brick road this morning. Thanks to both of you for another job exceptionally well done.

A special thank you to my favorite interpreter Loretta Durham. Don't let me make any mistakes Loretta.

All day long Kim had been leaving messages for me that he had found something of mine and wanted to return it personally. It was April Fool's Day; so, you can imagine the thoughts that raced through my head. What had I done? What incriminating memo or letter had fallen into his hands? Surely, there was no way he could
have gotten his hands on my weekend-with-Tom Selleck tape! What was so important that it required special delivery?

Since Joyce, the Keeper of the Flame, had banned my use of voice mail, I asked Kathy to give Kim a call. He said he'd be right over. Now I've lost a lot of things: my hair, my hearing, vision, reasoning power, and most recently—my chastity—or was it my memory, I can't recall. But I could not think of one thing that would bring Kim to my office under such mysterious circumstances.

Kim walked into my office wearing a smile that would eclipse the sun. I thought, "Here we go." (and my bladder was about to!) Without any preamble, he announced, "Congratulations, you've been named the Underwood lecturer." To that, I just laughed and said, "Yeah, right, and I've also won the 50 million dollar lottery." His next retort should have been, "No, I'm just kidding!" But he wasn't. The expression on his face became so serious that I thought I'd better humor him, at least for a few minutes. Then I had a feeling of
terror. Perhaps he was telling the truth, in which case neither I nor my bladder felt very comforted. Even though I'm standing here now, I still don't believe it's true.

Following the announcement of the Underwood award, several members of the Society stepped forward with advice and suggestions for developing and delivering a meaningful lecture. It may have been Ken who helped me the most when he quietly stated that I need not try to be cerebral. Surely, he wasn't obliquely hinting that I could not be cerebral or, worse, was he suggesting that my learned audience was not at all cerebral. I felt better when I assured him that the lecture would not at any point reach that level.

Being selected for the David L. Underwood Memorial Lecturer Award is the most prized academic award that one can receive at Florissant Valley. In accepting this award, I am honored to have been selected and humbled to join the distinguished company of the Underwood Society. I am grateful for the road I've been encouraged to
travel, a road that took me away from my childhood home in Kansas and led me to my "grown up" home at Flo Valley.

I am pleased to accept this award on behalf of everyone who helped me travel that road because you taught me "how to play the game." Like Dorothy, my yellow brick road has taken me to a wonderful Land of Oz where opportunity, experience, and adventure have given me the memories of my lifetime. In my Oz, I worked and played with people I love and looked forward to every new step along the way. Through Dorothy's eyes, I want to share my story with you this morning, my friends.

Born in America's heartland in a small farming community in Kansas, this Dorothy grew up in a stereotypical environment filled with hard-working, Christian people who valued Church and family and whose work ethic would not tolerate frivolous spending. Fortunately for Dorothy, she had an Aunt Em who was her role model. It was her Aunt Mel who taught her that taking responsibility for oneself leads to happiness in helping others. It was Aunt Mel who helped her appreciate that work is not labeled "men's work" and
"women's work;" it is simply work that must be done.

Thus, it was not surprising for this Dorothy to come home from school and find Aunt Mel shingling the roof, repairing a leaky faucet, juggling two businesses, or in the kitchen preparing dinner for as many as 12 people at one sitting. Whatever the task, Aunt Mel's greeting to Dorothy was always "come help me and have some fun!"

While the preparation for life came from Aunt Mel, the nurturing and compassion came from her uncle who tended her during illness and encouraged her to be her own person.

On a farm in the summer, being one's own person means learning to be a member of the team. At the breakfast table each morning, the day's work assignments were delegated. As the youngest worker, Dorothy's job was to scoop grain for which a cut-down shovel made work a little bit easier. She also learned how to drive a mule team, a skill that was destined to have special significance in her future professional life.

The boys on the farm helped her to overcome fear by challenging her to dive into the creek from a tire hung
from a tree limb. She learned life's lessons carved in birth, death, love, and hardship. Dorothy's annual summer farm work ended after her sophomore year in high school when an opportunity to teach swimming to local youngsters got her hooked on teaching.

When you're still a teenager working at low-paying jobs, attending college looks pretty remote. For Dorothy, having Butler County Community College just 12 miles from home and owning a rebuilt, red hot '36 Ford coupe for transportation offered her hope for a college education. While today's colleges boast of their affordable education, Dorothy could barely manage to pay the $10.50 for tuition, fees, and books.

Butler County Community College gave Dorothy a positive educational experience in every aspect save one. No community college offered sports programs for women nor was there a program at the 4-year college to which Dorothy later transferred. Feeling the need to grow and realizing that occasional sports days were not very challenging to her competitive spirit, Dorothy's journey along the road took her from teaching in a small Kansas
town to exploring the vast opportunities in a large metropolitan area. The St. Louis arch became her symbolic rainbow.

In St. Louis, the door to athletics was finally opened in ways that Dorothy could never have dreamed. She was finally able to play organized sport to satisfy her competitive appetite. She became a basketball and field hockey referee and a softball umpire, thereafter officiating team sports throughout the midwest and nationally as well as internationally. Learning the rules of the game took on a new dimension as she quickly grasped the importance of decisiveness in making split-second calls. She understood that maintaining the integrity of the game required fair, impartial, and consistent rulings. And her renowned singing ability was eclipsed by her acting skill when she learned, out of necessity, how to "sell a call" to an irate coach or a hostile crowd.

All that was prelude to the opportunities that began to unfold when this Dorothy worked with Billy at Beaumont High School. Billy's appointment to chair of physical
education at Florissant Valley, nearly 33 years ago, was Dorothy's entree to community college teaching. Her mentor and friend opened the door to leadership in the National Junior College Athletic Association, which, in turn, led her on the path to USA Basketball. Her niche was about to be carved.

The recent bombings of U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya are reminders to us that we are the most powerful country in the world. As such, we are always subject to attack by individuals and political groups, frequently with staggering loss of life. Each occurrence is a sobering reminder about how very vulnerable we are, even with our improved safety measures and tightened security. As Americans, we are free to travel throughout the world, which is a luxury not to be taken lightly.

All American tourists are ambassadors of this great country while we are guests in a foreign country. On a recent television show, an expert on international terrorism was being interviewed. He commented that we may never know who perpetrated the most recent attacks on
U.S. embassies because no one has yet come forward to claim the credit. An interesting question was placed to the expert about the relative safety of American tourists who are currently traveling abroad. He said, in general, Americans are in no more jeopardy in a foreign country than they are driving their automobiles on an American highway. He commented that American tourists need to go about their business and keep a relatively low profile.

When USA Basketball first began to send women's basketball teams to international competitions, "keeping a low profile" was not easy for us to do. For the most part, we were the first American female athletes to enter a foreign country for basketball competition. Thus, before leaving the country, we were usually briefed by the State Department on the political climate, protocols, areas to avoid, and the quality of the food and water.

The game plan with our teams was less about x's and o's and more about how to behave as Americans, more specifically, how to behave as female athletes in a country that had never seen American women play basketball before. We also had to prepare our athletes
to understand that being from the most powerful country in the world did not guarantee our popularity. At the World University Games in Mexico City, for example, we were booed, spat on, verbally abused, and generally harassed because we were Americans. In spite of our reception, our athletes knew they had to fulfill their mission as goodwill ambassadors.

The pressure to win every game was enormous, but building friendship through basketball had to be a high priority for us. That same kind of game plan was operating when we headed for Seoul in 1979. We were to compete in a tournament against teams from Korea, China, Japan, and Russia.

Within hours of the plane's touchdown in Seoul, we played our first basketball game and then immediately headed for Beijing. Entering China cast a sobering mood on our team and entourage. We had no liaison from USA Basketball to help us with the culture and no team doctor to bolster our confidence. We found ourselves at the mercy of the interpreter assigned to us by the Chinese government. We gained security from each other when we
were in a basketball environment because we had confidence in our playing ability and we could communicate in our own language. Anywhere else we were essentially on our own to adapt to the culture and interact with its people. The Chinese were fascinated by us because most had never seen American women, especially African-Americans. They particularly wanted to touch our hair and study our clothing. Players from the other teams were awed and charmed by the American team whose players loved to joke and tease and have fun at each other's expense.

In Beijing, our players met the American ambassador and later, in Taipei, they were warmly received by a government that otherwise did not particularly welcome an American political presence in its country. It was an experience that none would forget especially since their mission was to assist the United States in establishing relations with China.

But the embassy experience in the former Soviet Union was perhaps one of the most memorable for anyone of us who has ever been on international tour. Our women's
team had been traveling throughout eastern Europe during the summer, and the 4th of July found us in Moscow. For most of us, the Fourth of July conjures up images of family picnics and fireworks, and our players were feeling some homesickness about missing the USA celebration. We therefore rejoiced at the invitation of the American ambassador to join in the party at the embassy dacha, a country estate just outside Moscow. What a glorious memory for the American women basketball players who were able to share a traditional 4th with the ambassador and the embassy staff, complete with food that had been hoarded for the occasion. The National Anthem never sounded better to the team than when it was played on the 4th of July in Moscow. It was a much-needed touch of home that would sustain them for the rest of the tour, and no one could have ever orchestrated it any better.

In 1990, another of our tours began in Belgrade and took us from there to Sarajevo and Tuzla just before the Revolution. Both in Belgrade and Sarajevo, our players faced one of life's most dramatic realities when they saw college students on the streets of the city selling t-
shirts to raise money for the cause. The student's talked of war confidently and seemed oblivious to its inevitable brutality. Much later, home safely in the United States, we wondered how many of them survived and what lives were lost among their families and friends.

In Tuzla, we met some of the warmest, most friendly people we were to encounter on that tour. But our visit to Kishinev, Moldavia in western USSR opened the players' eyes to the hate that feeds on itself. Evidence of the bitterness between countries was seen everywhere on the Soviet symbols and statues that had been defaced by angry mobs. We were swept up in the pre-war unrest that led to the brutal struggle that even now is not settled. Our players stored away another of life's lessons in how the game is played.

Politics is part of the game of life as our basketball players had been experiencing, but never was it more apparent than the United States boycott of the 1980 Olympic Games scheduled to be held in Moscow. In protest of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, President Carter asked the United States Olympic Committee to
boycott the games. To influence the vote in favor of boycott, President Carter sent Vice President Mondale to speak at the meeting of the USOC. Also supporting Carter's boycott was William Simon, President of the United States Olympic Committee. It was stated that national security was threatened, but there were no facts to support it, at least none that we could see. We only knew that our athletes were about to be victimized by the world's political climate.

During the impassioned debate, the athletes' representatives, as would be expected, took a firm stand in opposition to the boycott. Nevertheless, the vote was an overwhelming one to support President Carter. For every athlete and staff member in the national governing bodies, this was the ultimate disappointment. To spend four years preparing for the most prestigious competition in the modern world only to have the opportunity stripped away was more than most athletes could or would ever accept. As a voting member of the USOC Congress that day, I have never forgotten the unbearable disappointment that overtook the entire room when the vote was
announced.

Later that summer, President Carter hosted the United States team, dressed in their parade uniforms, to thank them for their support. Most athletes welcomed the opportunity to meet the President and First Lady, but a few used the occasion to deliver their own commentary on the intrusion of politics into sport. Through it all, President Carter remained smiling and gracious.

Ironically, the women's basketball that summer had to qualify for the Games by winning a pre-Olympic tournament in Varna, Bulgaria while the Russians had an automatic bid by virtue of their 1976 Gold medal. In 1980, it was an empty gold medal for the Soviets without the challenge of the United States team.

Although the USSR would not admit it, their boycott of the 1984 games in Los Angeles was a retaliatory move that left the gold-medal winning women's basketball team and other athletes with that same feeling of emptiness.

Politics and sport. As Charles Osgood pointed out, sometimes they intersect and sometimes they collide. We
had experienced another of life's lessons in how the game is played.

Travel throughout the world left Dorothy with a kaliedoscope of images. Hundreds of schoolchildren in Tokyo who were so excited to see the American basketball team that they mobbed the players' bus, nearly causing it to tip over.

Standing on the Great Wall of China and realizing the overwhelming human sacrifice that allowed it to be created.

Experiencing the DMZ by standing at the 38th parallel and listening to the history of the Korean War.

Spending an evening with Australian sailors in Hong Kong and comparing cultural differences.

Joining thousands of massed soldiers in Tiennamen Square to pay last respects to Chairman Mao and standing in line with her Soviet friend Lydia Alexeeva in Red Square to visit Lenin's tomb. Feeling fear one moment and having it turn to pride the next when the American delegation entered the stadium in Puerto Rico for the Pan-American Games. Greeted at first with
silence, the Americans began waving to the crowd and tossing little American flags to them. The spectators, many of them anti-American, broke into applause that followed the athletes all around the stadium.

This Dorothy's yellow brick road had extended a long way from Kansas. Along the way, she met Presidents; she enjoyed the hospitality of ambassadors and invitations to homes in cities around the world; she attended social functions that included political figures, sports heroes, media celebrities, and Hollywood personalities.

Travel around the world and the events associated with her journey taught Dorothy the game's most important rule - that everything we experience is a foundation for the next set of lessons. Thus was her emergence from the Land of Oz.

In my role as Professor of physical education and athletics director at Florissant Valley, I have been blessed with exceptionally supportive colleagues. From Billy, my mentor, to Ruby, my little sister, to Pat, our President, I have been encouraged to follow my road. I owe an incredible debt of gratitude to the National
Junior College Athletic Association, and most especially to my school. We have great students, outstanding teachers, and hard-working staff who care about the kinds of citizens we develop here. Let me tell you about several of our success stories in physical education and athletics that illustrate my point.

Elaine was so painfully shy and withdrawn that she let her hair fall over her face in order to hide it. In fencing class, she was so timid that she didn't want to even try to hit an opponent, which, of course, is the objective of the sport. Hoping to draw her out, I paired her with Michael, a bright, mature student who fenced with confidence and skill. After several weeks of working together, Elaine progressed from being a frustrated student to one who not only wanted to hit Michael, she wanted to beat him soundly. Elaine stayed at Flo Valley for five years, enrolling in fencing class each semester. She is now a highly regarded elementary school teacher for whom fencing classes helped build the bridge to self-confidence. Michael, after graduating with honors from Flo Valley attended Rutgers on a fencing
scholarship and is now a successful financier on Wall Street.

Sandy was an above average student with a hearing impairment that she never acknowledged as a limitation. She excelled in three sports at Flo, and her magnetic personality provided the kind of leadership that makes a team a winner regardless of its won/loss record. Upon transfer to Central Missouri State, in her senior year, she was voted regional physical education major of the year. Sandy went on to compete in national and international competitions for the deaf. Those of us who worked at the basketball venue for the United States Olympic Sports Festival in 1994 were proud to see this successful Flo Valley alumna as a player on her national team. She now teaches at a special school for the deaf in Kansas City.

I love Brook's story because she was just an average athlete who participated in sport for the sheer joy of it. She was a talented student for whom athletics competition provided a different kind of outlet for self-expression. She understood that playing the game meant
accepting a role as a good, but not great athlete and that an intrinsic learning in sport is how to be a good team player. After two years at the Valley, Brook transferred to Brigham Young University on a full academic scholarship.

And Jeff's achievements are even more noteworthy. Jeff was an average student whose primary goal was to get rid of the baby fat that affected his self-confidence. He was an exceptionally hard worker, and he had to be, because he dedicated himself to excelling at the pole vault, one of the most difficult events in track and field. His best mark in high school was a vault of 13 feet, 7 inches. At Flo, Jeff improved his performance to 16' 1" and was named an NJCAA All-American. After one disappointing meet at which he failed to qualify for the NJCAA Outdoor Championship, Coach Norris Stephenson told him, "One day you're going to be a great vaulter." It's been 11 years and several surgeries since Jeff left the Valley, and he is now a great vaulter. He qualified for the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta and is currently the American record holder with a vault of 19' 8 ½". Do the
math on that one! "Jeff never does an interview that he doesn't credit Flo Valley for his success." That's the kind of lasting impact our coaches have on their students.

Clarence was another track performer who admittedly loved athletics but hated school, always doing just enough to get by. His ACT score of 14 convinced no one that he could do college-level work; accordingly, he was advised to forget college and get a job. Nevertheless, he persisted and managed the C average that he needed for NJCAA eligibility. His success in the triple jump earned him a national championship and a full athletic scholarship to UCLA where he earned a baccalaureate. After completing a master's degree at Missouri-Columbia, he went on to earn a PhD from St. Louis University. He is now a consultant for an educational consortium.

We know that many of our students, unfortunately, come from difficult home situations, and Kim was one of those. She came to Flo as a street-smart student-athlete who was determined to rise above her terrible home life to make something of herself. She stayed at the Valley
for three years and was a two-sport athlete. Coach Curry taught Kim The game of life had two rules: Learn how to be a team player and take advantage of every opportunity to better yourself. She learned them well because she is now a poised young woman who works with disadvantaged students to show them a better way to live their lives. Kim is currently an assistant coach at a County high school and is working on teacher certification.

These snapshots tell a story about the diversity of students we attract to the Valley. They are not unique to physical education and athletics. I'm sure that everyone of you has had students whose achievements are especially memorable. You're probably sitting there smiling as you remember how rewarding it was to help those students become better citizens. And I know you feel a warm sense of accomplishment when you meet your students in the community as bank tellers, store managers, teachers, or computer experts, and you know you made a difference in their lives.

Nearly a decade ago, the Commission on the Future of Community Colleges released its report entitled,
"Building Communities: A Vision for a New Century."
Just recently, that report was the subject of an article written by Augustine Gallego for the Community College Journal. As chancellor of the San Diego Community College District, Dr. Gallego serves the AACC as chair of its Board of Directors.

In his article entitled, "Accepting Civic Responsibility," Dr. Gallego cautioned his readers that "we should not lose sight of the societal value of students who learn more than the skills and knowledge needed to get and keep a job." He continues. "We have an obligation as part of our mission to develop within students an understanding and appreciation of the value of learning in and of itself, the value in discovery, and the value in service to communities."

Flo Valley has already adopted that philosophy. Of the 10 recommendations set forth by the Commission in its report from 10 years ago, perhaps the one that best characterizes Flo Valley is the following: "Community colleges should create institutional climates, processes, and opportunities that encourage civility,
responsibility, commitment, collaboration, and personal respect." We, at Flo, know we are challenged to accept our students for whoever they are; understand their limitations; overcome their deficiencies; develop their strengths; and prepare them to be responsible members of the community. It is not merely an academic challenge for us, it is a whole-person concept that involves socialization, responsibility, values, culture, knowledge, and attitude. At the Valley, we meet that challenge very, very, well. For just a minute, indulge me while I speak to my friends and colleagues in the department I represent. You are the greatest, most supportive members of any team I've ever known. I could not have traveled all over the country and the world without you to keep things going back home. And nothing would have been possible without the financial and professional support from the administration of my school. I could not have volunteered Flo Valley to host a costly national championship, as we did recently with NJCAA track, without a total commitment from the entire staff. And it's not just the staff of physical
education and athletics that volunteers for big events like the National Senior Olympics, district and regional tournaments, district competition for high school basketball, and our many fund raisers for athletic scholarships. To Ank, Stan, Ron, Marcia, Ann, Brian, Barbara, Len, Fred, Pat, and others not mentioned here, sincere thanks for your support.

We rarely express our appreciation to Lori, Gary, sweet, sweet, William, and the staff of grounds and physical plant, but we couldn't run our program without them. They, too, are valued members of our team.

Our team in physical education and athletics is a true family affair. When Pete's son was named to the United States National Soccer Team, we all celebrated! We rejoiced for Norris when he received special acclaim from his Alma Mater, the University of Missouri-Columbia, as a distinguished alumni. And we're all helping Deb with the nurturing of her twins. We always eat well, too. Whether it's a special event or our regular Tuesday lunches, the family always has time to sit down to dinner.
Unless people are closely involved with athletics, they don't realize the time and energy it takes to be a coach or athletics trainer. We sponsor 9 sports for men and women, and except for Norris and Deb, we operate with a part-time staff that numbers 24 coaches, assistants, and volunteers. Almost all are working full-time jobs elsewhere, and they come to Flo 6 and 7 days a week to work yet another full-time job. They work in a high-pressure, high visibility environment in which they're expected to recruit, mentor, schedule, fund raise, and handle the local sports media. With thanks to the dedication of our coaches, we've achieved numerous district, regional, and national championships, and more than 230 of our student-athletes have been named to academic and athletic all-American teams. Numerous athletes have also gone on to successful careers in professional sports.

Although our coaches work for embarrassingly low salaries, their commitment to students illustrates the Commission's aim of community college education, which is to broaden student perspectives and to enable them to
live lives of dignity and purpose.

You've heard me say this countless times - and this is special delivery to my friends and colleagues in the department - "You know who loves you."

Community colleges have a unique role to play in higher education. Just recently, a colleague and friend from a 4-year school was sharing with me a conversation she had with a key administrator at her institution. They were discussing the challenges facing 4-year schools in competing for students. When the subject of community colleges was introduced, the administrator was quick to point out that community colleges know what they're about. They understand who they are, and they know their role in the larger picture of higher education. They use their resources effectively, and they meet the needs of students far more effectively than many 4-year schools. Hearing that made me want to shout, "Yes!" "Good job, Flo Valley!"

That brings me to you, my friends in the campus community. You've always given me your support and encouragement. Like Jeff, I am proud to talk about Flo
Valley and even more, I am privileged to be a member of the faculty here. In all my experience, I've never been a cheerleader, but I feel like one when I say, "You are the best."

And we have the best administration to lead us through our next set of challenges. The Valley has had Presidents in its brief history, but I believe, President Donahue, that we are destined for even greater distinction under your leadership. I know that your skillful hand will guide us through rough times and challenge us to even greater accomplishments, and I believe we all look forward to that challenge.

I have been given the highest academic honor in being named the Underwood Lecturer, and I am grateful for having this opportunity to speak to you today.

To paraphrase a conversation between the Good Witch and Dorothy, when the Witch asked Dorothy what she had learned, she replied, "If I ever go looking for my heart's desire again, I won't look any further than my own back yard" for my heart is here with all of you. Thank you. You know who loves you.
At this juncture it is my singular honor and pleasure to present the remarkably gifted actress and singer Donna Spaulding, accompanied by Doug Venable..........

Donna...take us home!