

## TESTIMONY BEFORE THE RULES COMMITTEE FOR NOMINATION TO UVI BOARD

ESTABLISH PROTOCOL

GOOD MORNING,

I AM HONORED TO BE NOMINATED FOR THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES BY GOVERNOR ALBERT BRYAN. SERVING AS A DIRECTOR OR TRUSTEE ON AN INSTITUTIONAL BOARD ESPECIALLY THAT OF A UNIVERSITY IS AN INCREDIBLE OPPORTUNITY TO SAFEGUARD AND FULFILL ON THE MISSION AND VISION OF THAT INSTITUTION.

*The University of the Virgin Islands' mission is to educate and empower the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Caribbean and the world through an environment that promotes creativity, innovation and excellence in teaching, student learning, research, and community engagement.*

THE OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE ON THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS IS PERSONAL FOR ME GIVEN MY POST HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION BEGAN AT UVI. AS A JUNIOR IN HIGH SCHOOL AT IVANNA EUDORA KEAN HIGH SCHOOL, I WAS SELECTED TO ATTEND UVI AS A FULL-TIME FRESHMAN FOR THE EARLY ADMISSIONS PROGRAM IN LIEU OF MY SENIOR YEAR IN HIGH SCHOOL.

WHILE I CHOSE TO ATTEND AS A PART-TIME STUDENT, I CAN STILL RECALL THE EXCITEMENT, ANXIETY AND THE DETERMINATION I HAD AT 16 ARRIVING ON

CAMPUS IN 1978, ENROLLED IN CALCULUS AND CHEMISTRY WITH THE OTHER FRESHMAN. BESIDES THE FOUNDATION IN MATHEMATIC AND SCIENCE I RECEIVED AT UVI, THE RIGOR OF INDEPENDENT STUDY PREPARED ME FOR THE HIGHLY COMPETITIVE ACADEMIC PRE-MED CURRICULUM AT THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY WHERE I ULTIMATELY MATRICULATED FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES.

I AGAIN ENROLLED IN COURSES AT UVI WHEN I STUDIED ENGLISH COMPOSITION IN THE SUMMER SESSION 1981. THIS ALLOWED ME TO FULFILL MY ENGLISH/LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT TO APPLY TO MEDICAL SCHOOL.

AS THE UNIVERSITY MOVES IN TO THE FUTURE WITH THE PRESIDENT SEARCH AND THE POSSIBILITY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MEDICAL SCHOOL, I AM READY TO WORK WITH THE ENTIRE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND THE LARGER VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY TO ACHIEVE THE VISION OF THE UNIVERSITY.

***The University of the Virgin Islands will be an exceptional U.S. institution of higher education in the Caribbean dedicated to student success, committed to excellence, and pledged to enhancing the social and economic transformation of the U.S. Virgin Islands.***

AS AN HBCU, THE UNIVERSITY OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS SERVES A UNIQUE POPULATION TO NOT ONLY EDUCATE AND DEVELOP THE FUTURE COMMUNITY LEADERS OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS BUT THE GREATER CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY. THERE IS NO GREATER PRIVILEGE IN LIFE TO PARTICIPATE NOT ONLY IN YOUR OWN TRANSFORMATION BUT IN THE TRANSFORMATION OF YOUR COMMUNITY AND LIFE ITSELF.

AS A SURGICAL ONCOLOGIST AND BREAST CANCER SPECIALIST WHO HAS SPENT MY ENTIRE PROFESSIONAL CAREER IN ACADEMIC MEDICINE, I VALUE THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION. I HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN THE EDUCATION OF MEDICAL STUDENTS, PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDENTS AND NURSING STUDENTS. ONE OF MY GREATEST JOYS IN LIFE IS MY ROLE AS THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR OF THE SURGICAL RESIDENCY PROGRAM AT SBH HEALTH SYSTEM IN NEW YORK. BEING ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OF YOUNG SURGEONS IS VERY REWARDING. THIS INCLUDES BUILDING THE ENTIRE SURGICAL CURRICULUM THAT IS DESIGNED TO ENSURE THAT OUR SURGICAL RESIDENTS ARE PREPARED TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THEIR PATIENTS AND ARE NOT A MENACE TO SOCIETY.

SIMILARLY, THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH A TEAM OF COLLEAGUES TO STRENGTHEN THE ACADEMIC, FINANCIAL AND GOVERNING STRUCTURE OF THE UNIVERSITY THAT PRODUCES PRODUCTIVE AND SERVANT MEMBERS OF SOCIETY IS AN HONOR.

THUS, I EXTEND MY APPRECIATION AGAIN TO GOVERNOR BRYAN FOR TRUSTING ME WITH THIS RESPONSIBILITY.

I ALSO EXTEND MY THANKS TO THIS GOVERNING BODY FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO MOVE THROUGH THIS NOMINATION PROCESS.

MY SPECIAL THANKS TO THE THREE WOMEN WHO ACCEPTED MY INVITATION TO SPEAK ON MY BEHALF TODAY...ELAINE WARREN JACOBS, MY SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH TEACHER AND A ROLE MODEL, ATTORNEY LISA HARRIS-MOORHEAD, MY LOCAL LEGAL COUNSEL, AND ATTORNEY DENISE GEORGE, FOR WHOM WORDS ESCAPE ME TO DESCRIBE OUR RELATIONSHIP (BIG SIS/RIDE OR DIE). THESE WOMEN HAVE BEEN MY FRIEND, CONFIDANT, INSPIRATION AND REPRESENT THE CHAMPIONS WHO HAVE SUPPORTED ME THROUGHOUT MY LIFE IN ALL OF ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PURSUITS.

MY GRATITUDE TO MY VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY, TO NUMEROUS TO MENTION BUT YOU KNOW WHO YOU ARE, THAT SUPPORTED ME AND MY FAMILY THROUGHOUT MY LIFE.

TO MY FAMILY ESPECIALLY MY AUNTS AND UNCLES FOR YOUR UNWAVERING SUPPORT, I ALSO OFFER MY LOVE AND GRATITUDE FOR THE HAND YOU PLAYED IN MY DEVELOPMENT.

TO MY YOUNGER SISTER, BARBARA, WHO TREATS ME LIKE I'M HER YOUNGER BROTHER, THOUGH YOU ARE NOT HERE WITH ME TODAY, YOU ARE MY CO-PILOT, WARRIOR ON THE BATTLEFIELD AND GREAT CHEERLEADER.

AND LASTLY, WHILE ALL MOTHERS ARE SPECIAL, IN MY WORLD I HAVE BEEN BLESSED WITH THE GOAT (GREATEST OF ALL TIME) OF MOTHERS. HTEIR HAS

ALWAYS BEEN A SPECIAL BOND BETWEEN BLACK MEN AND THEIR MOTHERS AND MINE IS NO EXCEPTION. MAKE NO MISTAKE, IF IT WAS NOT FOR ALL OF YOUR SACRIFICES I WOULD NOT BE SITTING HERE TODAY WITH ALL OF MY ACCOMPLISHMENTS OR UNDERGOING CONSIDERATION FOR THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES FOR THE UVI. THE SAYING GOES, BEHIND EVERY GOOD MAN THERE IS A GOOD WOMAN AND I MUST BE DOING SOMETHING RIGHT. WITH MY MOTHER AT THE HELM OF THAT ARMY I CAN'T LOSE. TO YOU I OFFER ALL OF MY LOVE.

THANK YOU!