

WELCOME REMARKS, LEARNING FROM HOLLYWOOD

TUESDAY, MAY 17, 2010, 8:30 A.M.

- GOOD MORNINGAND WELCOME.
- MY NAME IS ERNEST WILSON, AND I AM DEAN OF
THE USC ANNENBERG SCHOOL FOR
COMMUNICATION AND JOURNALISM.
- IT IS MY GREAT PLEASURE TO KICK OFF THE SECOND
DAY OF THIS VERY IMPORTANT LEADERSHIP FORUM
THAT EXPLORES HOW WE CAN COLLABORATE TO
PRODUCE EDUCATIONAL CHANGE THAT IS
EFFECTIVE AND EGALITARIAN IN ORDER TO MEET
THE LITERACY DEMANDS OF OUR DIGITAL AGE.

- TO DO SO, I WILL WEAR SEVERAL HATS--AS FORMER MEMBER OF THE CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING, INCLUDING LAST HEAR AS CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD. ALSO, AS DEAN OF THE SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION AND JOURNALISM, WHICH DAILY WRESTLES WITH MANY OF THE ISSUES WE CONFRONT IN THIS CONFERENCE.
- BUT FIRST, I WANT TO PAY SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO MY GOOD FRIEND GARY KNELL AND HIS GREAT TEAM AT SESAME WORKSHOP AND THE JOAN GANZ COONEY CENTER. FOR YEARS THE WORKSHOP HAS BEEN UNPARALLELED IN ITS UNIQUELY COMPELLING COMBINATION OF SUPERIOR STORYTELLING,

WHIMSICAL SERIOUSNESS AND FACT-BASED SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH ON CHILDREN AND LEARNING.

THROUGH MY WORK WITH THE BOARD OF THE CPB,

GARY HAS BECOME A FRIEND AND COMRADE IN

ARMS, AND I ADMIRE HIS RARE COMBINATION OF

TENACITY AND PROGRESSIVE, VISIONARY

LEADERSHIP. A SPECIAL ROUND OF APPLAUSE FOR

THEM. AND OF COURSE IT IS ALWAYS A PLEASURE

TO WORK WITH MY FELLOW DEAN, ELIZABETH DALY

AND HER OUTSTANDING FACULTY.

- I WANT TO MAKE SEVERAL POINTS THIS MORNING, TO HELP PROVOKE WHAT I KNOW WILL BE GREAT CONVERSATIONS.

- FIRST, AS YOU KNOW BY YOUR PRESENCE HERE TODAY, THE GOALS OF THIS CONFERENCE ARE EXTREMELY **IMPORTANT** FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR YOUTH, AND HENCE FOR THE FUTURE OF THE COUNTRY. GAMES, TV SHOWS AND VIRTUAL REALITY ARE NOT JUST PLAYTHINGS. THEY ARE INSTRUMENTS FOR EDUCATING—OR MISEDUCATING—THE NEXT GENERATION OF AMERICANS. THE QUESTION IS, WILL WE FIND THE IMAGINATION AND THE ETHICAL COMMITMENT TO RAISE A GENERATION OF KIDS LITERATE IN THE NEW **AND** OLD WAYS OF LEARNING, USING THE BEST TOOLS, APPS AND EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES THE

WORLD'S SUPERPOWER CAN PROVIDE? OR WILL WE BE CONTENT TO LET OUR CHILDREN, ESPECIALLY FROM WORKING CLASS AND POOR BACKGROUNDS, RECEIVE SECOND AND THIRD CLASS PREPARATIONS IN THE 21ST CENTURY? OUR ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION WILL SHAPE EVERYTHING FROM OUR GLOBAL ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS TO THE BALANCES OF COMITY AND CONFLICT HERE AT HOME. THESE ARE BIG AND IMPPORTANT QUESTIONS, AND I CHALLENGE YOU TO TREAT THEM AS SUCH. THESE ARE NOT JUST QUESTIONS OF APPS AND TESTS.

- SECOND, THIS IMPORTANT ISSUE IS AN OLD ONE. SOME OF YOU MAY KNOW, AND SOME MAY NOT, THAT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ELECTRONIC MEDIA AND THE DIFFUSION OF KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING HAS BEEN AROUND FOR AT LEAST A HALF CENTURY. FIFTY YEARS AGO USC ANNENBERG PROFESSOR EVERETT ROGERS PUBLISHED A BOOK TITLED, *THE DIFFUSION OF INNOVATION*, AND SOON INVENTED THE ACADEMIC FIELD OF STUDYING EXACTLY HOW USING ‘NEW MEDIA,’ I.E. TELEVISION, COULD BE USED TO SPREAD LITERACY AND KNOWLEDGE THROUGHOUT THE POPULATION— WORK THAT INCLUDED DEVELOPING AREAS LIKE

INDIA. SO THIS KIND OF INQUIRY HAS A LONG AND HONORABLE TRADITION THAT IS WORTH DRAWING UPON IN THE WORK YOU DO—YET ALSO RECOGNIZE THAT THE CHANGE WE SEEK WILL NOT COME OVERNIGHT, NOR WILL IT COME EASILY.

- THIRD, WE ACTUALLY KNOW A LOT ABOUT HOW THIS PROCESS WORKS. KNOWING HOW TO LINK ENTERTAINMENT AND EDUCATION IS CHALLENGING, BUT WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, IT ISN'T ROCKET SCIENCE. I WILL EXPLAIN THIS A BIT MORE IN A MOMENT. BUT WE ACTUALLY KNOW A FAIR AMOUNT ABOUT THE IMPACT OF RADIO, TELEVISION AND DIGITAL MEDIA ON PEOPLE'S

VALUES, BEHAVIORS AND THEIR LEARNING, AS MY COLLEAGUE HENRY JENKINS AND OTHERS SAID YESTERDAY. OF COURSE CONTROVERSIES EXIST IN THIS FIELD AS IN OTHERS, BUT THE SCHOLARSHIP IS THERE, IF ONLY WE CHOOSE TO USE IT.

- FOURTH, FOR A VARIETY OF DIFFERENT REASONS, FROM MASSIVE DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES TO NEW APPRECIATIONS FOR NEW TECHNOLOGIES, YOU IN THIS ROOM HAVE A RARE OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE POSITIVE STEPS SO THAT THREE SEPARATE GROUPS CAN LEARN FROM ONE ANOTHER AND COLLABORATE: THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY, THE ACADEMY AND THE FRON-LINE EDUCATORS

WHO ARE TEACHING OUR CHILDREN EVERY DAY IN A VARIETY OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL SETTINGS.

- I CHALLENGE YOU TO KEEP THESE FOUR CRITICAL POINTS IN MIND AS YOU DELIVERATE YOUR NEXT STEPS. YOUR COMMITMENT AND CREATIVITY CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IF YOU ENGAGE IN STRATEGIC LISTENING AND PAY ATTENTION TO WHAT YOUR PARTNERS SAY, DESPITE THE CULTURAL DIFFERENCES THAT CHARACTERIZE HOLLYWOOD, RESEARCH AND EDUCATION.
- NOW, THIS PART OF MY INTRODUCTION IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE LETTERS U-S-C, AND THE LETTERS A-S-C-J—WHICH STAND FOR ANNENBERG

SCHOOL FOR COMMUNICATION AND JOURNALISM,
ONE OF THE CO-SPONSORS OF THIS EVENT.

- FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO AREN'T FAMILIAR WITH OUR WORK, USC ANNENBERG IS A LEADER IN EDUCATION IN THE FIELDS OF COMMUNICATION, JOURNALISM, PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND PUBLIC RELATIONS. OUR SCHOOL OF MORE THAN TWO THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED STUDENTS OFFERS DOCTORAL, GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES, AS WELL AS A BROAD SCOPE OF MID-CAREER EDUCATION PROGRAMS AND CENTERS FOR WORKING PROFESSIONALS. THINK OF US AS A CONVERGED SCHOOL FOR AN ERA WHEN MEDIA

AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES AND BUSINESS MODELS ARE CONVERGING, COLLAPSING AND RE-FORMING. WE STUDY ALL OF THESE UNDER ONE ROOF.

- OUR TWO HUNDRED FACULTY TEACH AND RESEARCH DIGITAL MEDIA, BUT THROUGH THE LENS OF SOCIAL CONSCIENCE AND SOCIAL IMPACT, NOT SIMPLY TECHNOLOGY FOR TECHNOLOGY'S SAKE. WE INSIST ON RELEVANCE AS WELL AS ACADEMIC RIGOR.
- YESTERDAY YOU HEARD FROM MY COLLEAGUE AND FRIEND HENRY JENKINS ABOUT THE LEARNING REVOLUTION. THE ANNENBERG SCHOOL IS PROUD

TO SUPPORT HIS WORK WITH THE ROBERT F.
KENNEDY MIDDLE SCHOOL MEDIA LAB HERE IN LOS
ANGELES, HIS WORK IN PARTICIPATORY CULTURE
AND LEARNING AND THE VALUE OF PLAY IN
TEACHING.

- OUR ANNENBERG COLLEAGUES ALSO TEACH AND
RESEARCH THE SUBLIMINAL MESSAGES THAT MEDIA
SEND TO OUR CHILDREN, FROM SEXUALIZATION OF
GIRLS TO HEALTH ISSUES TO BRANDING. AND WE
PARTNER WITH MEDIA AND ENTERTAINMENT
COMPANIES TO RAISE AWARENESS AND EFFECT
CHANGE IN PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES TO ENHANCE

AND IMPROVE THE CONTENT AND QUALITY OF
MEDIA.

- LET ME CITE JUST A FEW OF THE PROGRAMS WE
OFFER:

- THE NORMAN LEAR CENTER IS ONE. ITS PROGRAM
ON HOLLYWOOD, HEALTH AND SOCIETY, AMONG
OTHER ACTIVITIES, LINKS HOLLYWOOD SCRIPT
WRITERS WORKING ON HEALTH-RELATED
TELEVISION SHOWS, WITH PHYSICIANS EXPERT IN
THE FIELDS THAT THE ARTISTS ARE WRITING ABOUT,
GETTING THE FACTS RIGHT SO VIEWERS WILL BE
BETTER INFORMED ABOUT THEIR HEALTH.

- ANNENBEG PROFESSOR STACY SMITH STUDIES HOW HOLLYWOOD HAS PRESENTED IMAGES OF YOUNG GIRLS AND WOMEN OVER THE PSAT DECADES. AS REPORTED ON THE FRONT PAGE OF USA TODAY, SHE FINDS THE PERCENTAGE OF LEADING ROLES FOR WOMEN IN THE TOP MOVIES HAS REMAINED STATIC OVER DECADES—THIS IS ALSO TRUE FOR PEOPLE OF COLOR—AND THAT TEENAGE GIRLS ARE BECOMING MORE SEXUALIZED.
- SEVERAL CENTERS FOCUS ON CITIZEN JOURNALISM AND PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION, RANGING FROM PROGRAMS WITH HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH IN UNDERPRIVILEGED NEIGHBORHOODS TO APPLYING

NEW MEDIA TOOLS TO ENCOURAGE CITIZEN
JOURNALISTS IN ETHNIC MEDIA.

- FOR EXAMPLE, OUR MOBILE VOICES PROGRAM
ENCOURAGES STORYTELLING BY LATINO MIGRANT
WORKERS THROUGH THEIR CELL PHONES.
- INTERSECTIONS IS A COMMUNITY WEBSITE
DEVELOPED BY USC ANNENBERG FOR RESIDENTS IN
SOUTH LOS ANGELES TO REPORT COMMUNITY
NEWS, COVER THE ARTS, BUSINESS AND EDUCATION
AS INSIDERS, NOT OUTSIDERS...AND STUDENTS
FROM SIX SOUTH LOS ANGELES HIGH SCHOOLS ARE
ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS.

- I COULD GO ON, BUT YOU CAN SEE FROM THESE EXAMPLES THAT WHEN THE ACADEMY APPLIES WHAT IT DOES BEST—TEACHING, RESEARCH AND SERVICE—TO BRING TOGETHER THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS, AMAZING PROGRESS, LEARNING AND UNDERSTANDING CAN RESULT.
- I'M PROUD OF THE EFFORTS THAT USC ANNENBERG IS MAKING TOWARD THIS GOAL, AND, IN PARTNERSHIP, I WANT TO EXTEND A HAND TO ALL OF YOU HERE TODAY, AND YOUR RESPECTIVE ORGANIZATIONS, TO WORK TOGETHER TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF MEDIA, THE INTERCULTURAL UNDERSTANDING OF MEDIA AND THE

STORYTELLING ABILITIES OF OUR CHILDREN, THE
FUTURE LEADERS OF OUR WORLD.

- THERE IS NO GREATER, NOR MORE IMPORTANT
GOAL.
- ENJOY YOUR DAY HERE ON CAMPUS AND YOUR
DISCUSSIONS. I LOOK FORWARD TO THE
PARTNERSHIPS AND CREATIVE SOLUTIONS THAT
WILL COME FROM TODAY'S CONVERSATIONS.
- NOW IT IS MY PLEASURE TO TURN THE PROGRAM
OVER TO DR. REBECCA HERR STEPHENSON, A
FELLOW AT THE JOAN GANZ COONEY CENTER, WHO,

I'M PROUD TO SAY, RECEIVED HER DOCTORATE
FROM USC ANNENBERG.

BECKY....