



**A Newsletter of the Association for the Study of Higher Education**

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*Spring 2007*

To our Virginia Tech Colleagues,

We extend our deepest condolences for the tragedy that struck your campus on April 16th, 2007. We can only imagine the horror and the loss that your community has endured. We all hope for our campuses to be places of safety, civility, and collegiality. When that hope is violated, the entire academic community shares in the grief and the search for understanding. We are with you in spirit as you journey toward recovery.

On behalf of the ASHE community,  
Linda K. Johnsrud, President

**ASHE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN**

Linda K. Johnsrud



Changes at the ASHE Office

Our ASHE office is small, and staff members support us in vital ways to give continuity to our organization. This year, staff again served to provide continuity during transitions. Former Executive Director Dennis Brown announced his resignation in December 2006, but continued to serve ASHE and assisted in our transition to a new Executive Director. Shannon Brecheisen, Director for

Administration, will leave for another position at the end of May, but first assisted with the 2007 Board of Directors elections, and conference proposal submission and reviewer training in early May. We thank Dennis and Shannon for all they have done for our Association, and wish them well.

I am delighted to introduce Dr. Patricia L. Farrell who became ASHE Executive Director on April 2, 2007. Her academic background includes a doctorate in Higher, Adult and Lifelong Education from Michigan State University, a Master's degree in Education in Organization Learning, and a Bachelor's degree in economics from the University of New Mexico. She has worked in higher education, government, and the corporate sector, and most recently was Senior Research Associate at Western Michigan University. She has taught, conducted evaluation research and academic advising,

and written and managed grants. Her background also includes finance, auditing, and cash management. She brings a range of skills and organizational experience as well as enthusiasm for ASHE.

A member of the first ASHE/Lumina Foundation Fellowship cohort in 2003-04, Patricia describes the experience as one that gave her confidence and a feeling of belonging to the ASHE community. Her experience confirmed that she was on the right path in her financial aid policy research and shaped her development as a scholar while introducing her to colleagues and mentors. As Executive Director, Patricia hopes to give back for all that ASHE has given her. Her ideas and plans for the ASHE Office include:

- Website development: Plans to strengthen our website and link it to other higher education and research sites are intended to support professional involvement and to keep members connected. A more interactive website that is linked to research, future work, and career information, also would assist graduate students who make up almost half of our membership.
- Changes that affect ASHE: ASHE is growing! We expect to reach over 1900 members by November 2007, and conference attendance is growing as well. We've reached a point where one hotel can't hold us. ASHE could choose to go to several hotels, but we don't want to lose sight of what makes ASHE special --- high levels of interaction and collegiality. In addition, no longer being a mom-and-pop size means that we must learn about financial audits, legal, and other procedures that face larger organizations.

- Challenges: The biggest challenges are growth and keeping costs down. We want to build an improved website to serve our members, but also need to keep an eye on costs. Keeping costs down will mean that graduate students can continue to afford to participate and attend our conferences.
- Initiatives: There are still many who do not know about ASHE and what we offer. Many who work in colleges and universities do not have a knowledge base in higher education, but in their work must address current issues, for example, the ethics of student financial aid or the role of institutional research in the academy. How can ASHE contribute to professional development and cross-disciplinary conversations, such as those on ethics, with professionals from law or business?

There is a need to promote greater visibility for ASHE publications, especially the ASHE Monographs and Readers. The Executive Director plans to work with the board on this direction, and also hopes to reach out to members to ask if the Association could do more to connect their research with others, including policy makers.

As Executive Director, Patricia intends to strengthen ties with the ASHE Board by communicating frequently by email and by reaching out to ASHE committees to ask how the Office might help their work. Good communication is important, because the Board, although small and collegial, has members scattered throughout the country who meet face to face only two or three times a year.

Patricia's long range goal is to utilize her broad background and love of education by becoming president of a community college in Michigan. She attributes her dedication to educational access to her father who had no college degree but founded a community

college in New Mexico when he saw a need. He taught her to give back to the community, and after 6 years of being involved, Patricia Farrell hopes to give back to ASHE as our Executive Director. Please join me in welcoming Patricia! Her contact information is (517) 432-8805, (517) 432-8806 (fax), or [pfarrell@msu.edu](mailto:pfarrell@msu.edu).

#### ASHE Newsletter Editor Turnover

After eight years of distinguished service as the editor of ASHE's newsletter, Mimi Wolverton, UNLV, has decided to move on to new endeavors. During Mimi's tenure, the newsletter went from paper to on-line, and regular columns were established including, the President's Column, Conference Program column, Thinking Globally, Policy and Politics in Higher Education, Soft Money, CAHEP Happenings, Celebrating Diversity: News from the Council on Ethnic Participation, Survival in the Academy, Graduate Student News, and Notables. In addition, invited pieces have been included in each issue. Many of us have been on the receiving end of Mimi's gentle prodding and careful editing. Please join me in expressing our appreciation for the creative and timely editorship Mimi has provided for all of these years.

With this issue of the newsletter, we welcome our new editor, MaryBeth Walpole, Associate Professor at Rowan University. She has been a member of ASHE since 1995 and brings previous newsletter experience to the job. She comments, "I am happy to become involved in the organization and am looking forward to working with the other ASHE organization participants and to editing the newsletter. I also want to thank Mimi for passing on to me a well thought out, terrific newsletter." We appreciate her willingness to take on the responsibility of ensuring that this important

source of communication continues to benefit ASHE members.

#### ASHE Request for Proposals

The Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) requests proposals from institutions and others interested in housing the offices of the association and assuming responsibility for the management of the association. The RFP can be downloaded from <http://www.ashe.ws/2007rfp.htm>. Proposals are due on October 1, 2007, sent electronically to the chair of the ad hoc committee named by the board to manage the search, J. Douglas Toma <[jdt@uga.edu](mailto:jdt@uga.edu)>. Please contact Doug with any questions.

## **2007 ASHE PROGRAM UPDATE**

Vicki J. Rosser, University of Missouri-Columbia

The deadline for proposal submissions has come and gone. Preliminary submissions indicate that there were 885 proposals submitted for the 2007 ASHE program: 291 proposals in the student section, 85 in the section for faculty, 117 in policy, finance, and economics, 115 in organization and administration, 88 in contexts and foundations, 60 in teaching, learning, and curriculum, 38 in methodology and assessment, 74 for the international forum, and 17 for the public policy forum. This represents an increase of 7% or an additional 59 proposals compared to last year's submission of 826 proposals. We have a new record!

We always need more reviewers. If you signed up to be a reviewer, thank you—we are very appreciative of your willingness to serve. Qualified and competent reviewers ensure the integrity and excellence of the review process. I can't stress enough the importance that quality reviewing plays in the overall program planning. When you submit a proposal, please be willing to reciprocate by offering to serve as a proposal reviewer, particularly in the student section.

A very special thank you goes out to the section co-chairs, who have worked and continue to work very hard on the 2007 program. I'm personally grateful for their hard work and dedication on behalf of the ASHE membership.

### Students

Lisa Wolf-Wendel - University of Kansas  
Joy Gaston-Gayles - Florida State  
Matthew Wawrzynski - Michigan State University

### Faculty

Kelly Ward - Washington State  
Kerry Ann O'Meara - University of Massachusetts,

### Policy, Finance, and Economics

Mario Martinez – University of Nevada, Las Vegas  
Terrell Strayhorn - University of Tennessee - Knoxville

### Organization and Administration

Jay Dee - University of Massachusetts, Boston  
Valerie M. Conley - Ohio University

### Contexts and Foundations

Vasti Torres – University of Indiana, Bloomington  
Nana Osei-Kofi - Iowa State University

### Teaching, Learning, and Curriculum

Jeffery Bieber - University of Kentucky  
Robert Reason - Pennsylvania State University

### Methodology and Assessment

Yonghong Jade Xu – University of Memphis

## 2006 ASHE CONFERENCE EVALUATION

Kelley Rhoe Collins, University of New Orleans

Marietta Del Favero, University of New Orleans

Conference attendee feedback was solicited via email using email addresses supplied by registrants to the ASHE office. Attendees were emailed the website location of the survey created with SurveyMonkey and were directed to the survey form. Completion time was approximately 5-7 minutes and followed the general format of previous ASHE conference surveys over the past four years. Two email requests were sent to all attendees requesting their participation. The first solicitation requesting participation took place after the Thanksgiving holiday with the majority of responses coming in during the first week of December. A total of 370 responses were received, representing 47% of the 774 conference attendees.

Conference evaluation respondents represented the following institutions:

<i>Institutional Affiliation</i>	<i>Response Percent</i>	<i>Response Total</i>
Doctoral/Research University	82.9%	305
Master College/University	7.9%	29
Baccalaureate College	3.3%	12
Community College	1.9%	7
State/University Higher Education System	2.4%	9
Policy/Research Institute	1.9%	7
No Institutional Affiliation	0.8 %	3

The basic demographic data for the respondents was as follows: the majority of respondents (69 %) were female, 30% of respondents reported that this was their first year attending an ASHE conference, and 33% of respondents had attended the last 2-3 years. Consistent with the previous three years, novice attendees and graduate students comprise the largest proportion of respondents.

### *Key Findings*

- Only 3% of respondents were dissatisfied with the length of the conference. This compares to 27% of 2004 respondents who favored lengthening it.
- Respondents rated the conference accommodation as very satisfactory. The majority of the conference sessions were identified also in a positive manner.
- For those who submitted a proposal, there was high satisfaction with the process overall, including 79% of respondents stating that they were very satisfied with the review process. One third of the respondents were very satisfied with the adequacy of reviewer comments, which was the highest response within that category.
- Of the 370 respondents, 218 skipped the question rating satisfaction for pre-conference activities. Those who did respond were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with their experiences.
- The conference sessions, including the format, the distribution of session topics, the quality of the discussant comments, discussion following paper sessions all received positive comments of either satisfied or very satisfied. Only the poster sessions were rated as slightly lower with 31% somewhat satisfied and 32% rating the sessions as neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.
- It should be noted that 37% of the respondents do not believe that a Saturday evening social event is needed compared with 33% of who responded positively to the

Saturday event and 30% neither agree nor disagree with the event.

- Slightly less than half of the respondents (47%) disagree with the need to add Sunday morning session at future conferences.

Some of the key findings related to the conference evaluations have been compared to previous years to check for trends that were identified by conference evaluators in previous years.

Four Year Summary of Key Findings

Responses relative to number of conference attendees resulted in response rates of 55% for 2003, 53% for 2004, 38% for 2005 and 47% for 2006. Graduate students continue to disproportionately represent the total number of respondents: 44% in 2003, 46% in 2005, 45% in 2005 and 41% in 2006.

<i>Response Summary</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>
Total Responses Received	466	477	447	370
Total Response Rate	55%	53%	38%	47%
Graduate Students	206	214	199	153
% of Graduate Students	44%	46%	45%	41%
Others	247	253	240	230
% of Others	56%	54%	55%	62%

**WHAT THE NUMBERS DIDN'T TELL YOU: THEMES FROM THE ASHE 2006 CONFERENCE EVALUATION**

Barbara J. Johnson, Jackson State University

Open-ended comments provide further insight into various aspects of the conference that were not captured in the numerical data on the conference evaluation. Electronic processes, pre-conference communication, the venue, and general comments and suggestions comprised the five areas in which the 370 respondents could provide detailed remarks as they completed the conference evaluation. Each of the five sections received an average of 79 comments with 62 being the lowest number of comments for an item and 90 being the highest. All open-ended responses were placed into broad categories. Subsequently, the categories in which more than 20% of respondents provided comments are highlighted below.

Respondents expressed satisfaction with the electronic process for proposal submission, as illustrated in the following excerpts.

- *Going to an electronic process was a big step forward. It makes the entire process easy, clear, and complete.*
- *It is like any other process that's only used annually, you forget how to use it but the staff was helpful in responding to requests.*
- *I like the electronic submission process, it makes things very easy and at little cost of time.*

Relative to pre-conference communication, attendees responses centered on posting the preliminary program earlier, updating the draft program often, and making the program searchable.

- *I would suggest uploading information about the conference as early as*

*possible, especially for travel arrangement purposes.*

- *I needed to plan my travel schedule around a particular meeting, but the schedule was posted too late. Earlier notification of meeting schedule (not presentation) is needed.*
- *Have the preliminary program available sooner.*
- *The preliminary conference program should be updated before the conference.*
- *Not posting revised schedules sooner (the original draft was posted in late August and the final draft at the very end of October). If updates cannot be posted to the website then presenters should be notified as this caused a problem with scheduling flights and the hotel.*
- *Make the program searchable as it is difficult to scroll through the long program online.*
- *It would be helpful to have a searchable conference program, where you can search for presenters, topics, etc.*

Respondents expressed positive and negative comments about the venue relative to the city and the hotel and one remarked “No venue ever suits everybody’s desires.” Overall, individuals expressed dissatisfaction with Anaheim as the locale. “Hotel was nice. Location was not interesting in the least” exemplified the comments of a majority of the respondents. A few respondents discussed their ideal venue.

- *The best venues are those embedded in a downtown area (e.g., shopping, food).*
- *I prefer urban locations that allow attendees to find good food and good entertainment at reasonable prices. Anaheim was a tourist trap.*

A range of the various issues for consideration in selecting future conference

sites are represented in the following excerpts.

- *The hotel was very good, but there is nothing to do in Anaheim unless you’re going to Disneyland. Plus the lack of a quick meal option in the hotel.*
- *It would have been nice to have a place to grab a quick (and healthy) bite to eat between conference sessions. There was a place for coffee and pastries and pizza but that isn’t healthy.*
- *This place is in the middle of nowhere and there is not much to do nearby. There is only one place for breakfast in the hotel.*
- *While the room rates were reasonable, the hotel made up for it in other a la carte charges (Internet, early arrival, etc.).*
- *It would be nice to try to negotiate discounted parking at the hotel. It was \$15 per day for those of us who live in LA and drove. That is very pricey.*

Discussants and program overlap were two programmatic areas that were of concern to respondents. There were suggestions that the role of discussants should be better defined as exemplified in the comments below.

- *There should be some standards on discussant’s comments.*
- *Prepare a guide for discussants. They should be guided to respond to the issues the papers raise and raise questions to guide the discussion and give their critique of the papers to the authors privately.*
- *A few of the discussants appeared to have not read the paper, had their own agenda and were not helpful to the process. In contrast, some discussants were knowledgeable and a ‘value’ added. Overall, their role needs clear definition and provide a way for specific feedback on individual performance.*

Respondents were dissatisfied about the overlap in similar session topics.

- *Conference committee really needs to see that sessions on similar topics are distributed across the program. There were too many sessions on similar topics in the same slot.*
- *Many of the sessions I was interested in attending were being held at the same time. I know this may be a difficult issue to remedy but it became difficult to choose at times, so instead I session hopped a bit.*
- *The distribution of sessions by topic/theme was off. For example, many of the student development/identity sessions were offered at the same time – 8am Friday.*

As to be expected there were numerous comments about the late start of the luncheon and the subsequent impact on the poster session. Several respondents acknowledged that while the “debacle was the hotel’s fault”, it was unfair to poster presenters to cancel the poster presentations because individuals “worked very hard and did not have any opportunity to engage and discuss their work with colleagues”. (Note: The posters remained up throughout the afternoon but there was no time reallocated in the program to the poster session.)

While respondents provided a plethora of additional comments that may be useful for future conference planning they were too numerous to be discussed in this synopsis of selected open-ended responses. However, all comments will be forwarded to the appropriate individuals within the ASHE organization for review.

## NOTABLES

Michelle Nilson, Simon Fraser University,  
Canada

This column is ASHE’s posting place for news about people, places, publications, and other items of interest in higher education. Keep your friends and colleagues apprised of your news, whereabouts, recommendations, kudos (yours, others), new book titles, announcements, awards, and website information. Please take time out of your busy schedule to toot your own horn or to pay homage to others—send your articles, snippets, and photos to Michelle Nilson, email address: [michelle\\_nilson@sfu.ca](mailto:michelle_nilson@sfu.ca)

*Ana M. Martinez Aleman*, Lynch School of Education, Boston College, has been named Chair of the Department of Educational Administration and Higher Education.

*M. Christopher Brown, II* has been selected as the next dean of the UNLV College of Education, effective July 1, 2007. Christopher currently serves as vice president for programs and administration with the Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE), which prepares teachers and school leaders for positions in higher education. Christopher has gained an international reputation for his research and scholarly writing on education policy and administration, which addresses issues such as leadership and governance, institutional history and diversity. He earned his B.S. in elementary education at South Carolina State University; his M.S.Ed. in educational policy and evaluation from the University of Kentucky; and his Ph.D. in higher education from Penn State, where he is currently on leave from his faculty position in the College of Education to serve in a senior leadership role with AACTE.

The Department of Educational Leadership, Management and Policy at Seton Hall University is pleased to announce that *Rong Chen* will join the faculty in September 2007 as an Assistant Professor. Rong is currently completing her Ph.D. in Higher Education at the University of Michigan. Her strengths in quantitative methods and policy will further enhance the higher education group consisting of Rebecca Cox, Martin Finkelstein, Carol Frances, Joseph Stetar and Elaine Walker.

*Dr. Danielle Joy Davis*, a graduate of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, accepted a tenure track position in the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Department at the University of Texas at Arlington during the Fall of 2006. Dr. Davis also has begun service to the ASHE community via the CEP Advisory Board.

*Dr. Shaun Harper* will be joining the faculty in the higher education program at the Graduate School of Education at the University of Pennsylvania, Fall 2007.

*Dr. Mary F. Howard-Hamilton*, Professor, Higher Education, Indiana State University has been awarded the 2007 Wise Woman Award from the American College Personnel Association Standing Committee for Women. This award recognizes a woman who has worked in the field for at least 15 years and has contributed greatly to the development of women in the field. In addition, the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators has selected her as the 2007 Robert H. Shaffer Award recipient for Academic Excellence as a Graduate Faculty Member.

*Michael Mumper*, formerly the associate provost for graduate studies at Ohio University, has been named provost at Adams State College in Alamosa Colorado.

*Abbie Robinson-Armstrong*, vice president for intercultural affairs, was elected to serve on the board of directors of the National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education in February 2007. She will play a central role in shaping NADOHE's annual conference and in reviewing an inaugural scholarly journal focusing on diversity in higher education.

*Dr. Terrell Strayhorn* was appointed the Special Assistant to Provost at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. In addition, Dr. Strayhorn received the Benjamin L. Perry Professional Service Award from the National Association of Student Affairs Professionals at the annual meeting held in February 2007.

#### Notable Reads

*Education Policy and Practice Perspectives*  
The Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at Iowa State University is pleased to share "*Paying for College in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Challenges and Opportunities*" the second issue of *Education Policy and Practice Perspectives*, EP<sup>3</sup>, with the ASHE community.

This issue of EP<sup>3</sup> addresses one of the most critical issues confronting Iowa Regent institutions of higher education: rising college tuition and its impact on college affordability. According to the College Board, between 1996 and 2006 average tuition and fees, adjusted for inflation, increased \$5,375 (or 32 percent) at private four-year colleges and \$1,980 (or 51 percent) at public four-year colleges. Tuition increases are a major issue of concern not only in Iowa Regent institutions, but also across the nation.

John H. Schuh and Vijay Kanagala present compelling information that while diverse forms of financial aid are available to assist students in paying for college; the stark

reality is that most students will graduate having incurred a sizeable debt. Among several recommendations, the authors call for state legislators to provide generous support to institutions and students and for fundraising campaigns to target aid for students. Whether channeling more students to less expensive community colleges, employing dual enrollment strategies or working with students and families to assist them with financial management, the goal is to allow more students to fulfill their dream of graduating from college.

As always, we welcome inquiry and dialogue as we engage issues that call for transformative changes in our educational system. You can download the EP<sup>3</sup> at: [http://www.elps.hs.iastate.edu/EP3/documents/ep3\\_spring07.pdf](http://www.elps.hs.iastate.edu/EP3/documents/ep3_spring07.pdf)

#### Notable Passings

*George C. Keller*, a longtime educator who wrote widely about higher education, died Wednesday of leukemia at Gilchrist Center for Hospice Care. He was 78. While being treated for cancer during the past year, Mr. Keller finished his last book, *Colleges, Universities, and the New Society*, which will be published next year by Hopkins Press. Surviving are his wife of 31 years, Jane Eblen; a son, Rev. Bayard Faithfull of New York City; a daughter, Coby Keller of Leverett, Mass.; and two grandsons. <http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/obituaries/bal-md.ob.keller04mar04,0,5997380.story?coll=bal-news-obituaries>

*Berta Vigil Laden* died on November 10, 2006 in Laren, Netherlands. Berta was a former ASHE Board member. At the time of her passing, Berta was an Associate Professor at the Ontario Institute of Higher Education at the University of Toronto. She

is survived by her husband Jim and her son Gabriel.

*Martin Trow*, a long time ASHE member and recent recipient of the 2007 Howard Bowen award last November, died February 24th at his home in Berkley, California. He is survived by his wife of 47 years, Katherine Bernhardt Trow of Berkeley; a daughter, Sarah Eydam of Antioch, Calif.; sons Paul of Natick, Mass., and Peter of Santa Barbara; and a grandson. <http://www.latimes.com/news/printition/california/la-me-trow8mar08,1,4324612.story?coll=la-headlines-pe-california>.

#### **REMEMBERING BERTA VIGIL LADEN**

Chris Golde, Stanford University  
Alex McCormick, The Carnegie Foundation  
for the Advancement of Teaching

Berta Vigil Laden was such a presence. Thinking of her, we immediately picture a tall smiling woman dressed in a flowing brightly-colored dress, with silver and turquoise southwestern jewelry on her neck and ears, and her long black hair cascading down her back. ASHE conferences are surely not the same without her. We keep expecting to turn the corner and see her again.

But Berta was a presence in our lives in so many other meaningful ways, too. She was a committed and talented scholar, a devoted wife and mother, and a very, very good friend.

We got to know Berta in graduate school, where she was a delightful, supportive, generous colleague. Anyone who knew Berta felt her personal warmth and giving spirit. Not surprisingly, she brought these

traits to her professional life as teacher and advisor, and also to her participation in our scholarly community. Her research and writing focused on community colleges, and she received the Emerging Scholar award from the Council for the Study of Community Colleges in 2001.

Berta served ASHE and AERA-J in many ways, both formal and informal. Among the many responsibilities she gracefully undertook was chairing the ASHE Council on Ethnic Participation for many years. She also served as the AERA-J program chair in 2005.

Generosity was one of her defining characteristics. She always had time to talk through a personal or professional conundrum. She routinely sent "Thinking of you. How are you doing?" e-mails. She always acknowledged the contributions and accomplishments of others, often with a small gift or remembrance. Not only did she always give presents to friends who won tenure, she had token gifts for guest speakers in her classes.

As her career advanced, Berta never lost sight of the needs of graduate students and early-career scholars. When the three of us co-chaired a section for the AERA annual meeting Division J program, she forcefully reminded us of the importance of conference presentations for rising scholars. Berta had a special commitment to promoting and serving the needs and interests of under-represented groups. She was a mentor to many community college students, as well as graduate students within ASHE and on the campuses where she worked.

Berta also had great personal strength and drive. Not one to give up on her dreams, she steadfastly confronted and overcame any obstacles. After completing her Ph.D. at

Stanford in 1994, she spent a year as a postdoctoral fellow at ETS. Subsequently she took a tenure-track faculty appointment at Vanderbilt. Both positions meant she was separated from her husband Jim in California. She spent several years at Vanderbilt, and then returned to the West coast to take a visiting faculty position at the University of Washington.

After Jim took an overseas post in London, Berta returned to the tenure track at what would be her professional home at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) of the University of Toronto. She was awarded tenure in 2004. She traveled regularly between Canada and Europe to be with Jim, and her academic calendar permitted them to spend summers together. Jim's work ultimately took him to the Netherlands, and Berta spent her final months there. She died on November 10, 2006 from complications associated with lung cancer. Her illness did not permit her to travel, but her friends kept in touch by phone, cards, and email.

Berta Vigil Laden enriched our lives and we will miss her. In so many ways she was a model of collegiality and a pillar of our professional community. The quotation with which she signed her e-mails sums her up perfectly: A candle loses nothing by lighting another candle.

Let's honor her memory by living up to the standards she set in her life, both personally and professionally.