

ASHLYN WALKER: Good afternoon, everyone. Hi. So I'm going to be getting us started. I'm going to be singing "Great is Thy Faithfulness."

[APPLAUSE]

(SINGING) Great is thy faithfulness. Great is thy faithfulness. Morning by morning new mercies I see. All I have needed, thy hands have provided. Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me. Great is thy faithfulness. Oh, God, my father. There is no shadow of turning with thee.

Thou changes not thy compassions. They fail not. As though has been, thou forever wilt be. Great is thy faithfulness. Great is thy faithfulness. Morning by morning, new mercies I see. All I have needed, thy hands have provided. Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me.

Summer and winter and spring time and harvest. Sun, moon, and stars in their courses above join with all nature in manifold witness to thy great faithfulness, mercy and love. Great is thy faithfulness. Great is thy faithfulness. Morning by morning, new mercies I see. All I have needed, thy hand have provided. Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me.

Pardon for sinned and a peace that endureth. Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide. Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow. Blessings all mine with ten thousand beside. Great is thy faithfulness. Great is thy faithfulness.

Morning by morning, new mercies I see. All I have needed, thy hands have provided. Great is thy faithfulness. Great is thy faithfulness. Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me.

[APPLAUSE]

SUSAN KOOLS: It's hard to come up and follow and be able to speak without tears in my eyes. Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to the 2017 Catherine Strader-McGehee Memorial Lecture. My name is Susan Kools, and I'm the Associate Dean for Diversity

and Inclusion in the School of Nursing. This is truly a day of Thanksgiving. And let me start by thanking our beautiful singer, Ms. Ashlyn Walker. Ashlyn is a graduate of UVA and a former member of Black Voices, which is an a cappella gospel choir on grounds here. And she has really set the stage for a very special event today.

The McGehee lecture is always a much anticipated rite of spring in the School of Nursing. It's an annual event that recognizes true and outstanding leaders in nursing. The McGehee lecture is possible because of a very special family, the Strader-McGehees, who honor a beloved alumna of the School of Nursing, Ms. Catherine Strader-McGehee.

Cathy was in the process of finishing her PhD, her third UVA degree, when she sadly died of breast cancer. Her family and friends from the BSN class of 1975 endowed this lecturer in Cathy's memory. I want to welcome Cathy's family and friends who are with us today. They are up here in the front. Especially Mrs. Martha Strader, Cathy's mother. We thank you for your ongoing commitment to us and the School of Nursing. And Mrs. Strader, we want you to know that your daughter's memory lives on in the School of Nursing. And so if the family is able, who is ever able to stand up to be recognized.

[APPLAUSE]

I also want to acknowledge another group of people who are very dear to us in the School of Nursing. We scheduled the McGehee lecture this year to coincide with Black Alumni weekend, and we want to welcome our Black Alumni home. And if any of you are in the audience, could you please stand and be recognized?

[APPLAUSE]

I also understand that we have another VIP in nursing who is with us today, Ms. Mary Holmes. Ms Holmes was one of the first African-American nurses in the UV hospital. And it's really dark out there, so I'm not sure where you're sitting, Ms. Holmes. There she is.

[APPLAUSE]

It's such an honor to have you with us, Mr Holmes. Thank you so much for coming. And finally, before introducing our speaker, I'd like to acknowledge another family. We're so pleased that Ms. Claytor's family has traveled from Roanoke to be with us today as we honor your mother, your sister, your grandmother, aunt, and cousin. And we're so pleased that you can be a part of this celebration. And I would love to have you stand and be acknowledged.

[APPLAUSE]

As I said in the beginning, this is truly a family reunion. We have such special families with us today, and we thank them both. And now, what everybody's been waiting for. It's such an honor and privilege to introduce our 2017 McGehee lecturer to you, Ms. Mavis Claytor. There are so many words that could be used to describe Ms. Claytor. Gracious nurse. Patient advocate. Trailblazer. Pathfinder.

As the first African-American woman to be admitted to the UV School of Nursing, Ms. Claytor broke down a color barrier that others before her had wished to but had not been able to cross. She faced challenges to be here, but with her faith, persistence, and resilience, she graduated with her BSN in 1970, paving the way for the integration of the School of Nursing. We're so grateful to you, Ms. Claytor. This is not a distinction that you chose for yourself. You just wanted to be a registered nurse. And since then, you've led a rich life of leadership and service to others throughout your career.

I would also like to introduce Ms. Tori Tucker, who earned her BSN here 42 years after Ms. Claytor earned hers, and she's a current beloved PhD student here. Tori met Ms. Claytor when working on a nursing history paper, and the rest is history. Tory was so inspired by Ms. Claytor story that she wanted to share it with all of us. And so now, Tory will interview Ms. Claytor today for our McGehee lecture. Why don't you come to the podium?

[APPLAUSE]

TORI TUCKER: I hope this looks like we're at home because this is what the School of Nursing feels like for me. Can everybody hear me OK? Wonderful. As I look out in the audience, I just want to thank all of you for being here. I can't begin to express what this

moment means for me and our School of Nursing. And as I see Ms. Claytor and her family, I now truly do feel at home.

So before we get started, I don't know if many of this, but Ms. Claytor has been practicing mindfulness for the last 15 years. So in honor of that and our dean's Compassionate Care Initiative at the School of Nursing, I'm going to ask that everyone close their eyes briefly. And as you close your eyes, I want you to picture mountains. I want you to picture a blue sky. I want you to picture grass and animals.

And when you open your eyes-- and you can open them now-- we're going to begin our journey in Franklin County, Virginia. And that will be a great segue. And we're going to have some pictures that I'm going to run through. Franklin County, Virginia. Here's a beautiful mountain view. Ms. Claytor, you grew up in Franklin County, Virginia. Do you mind sharing with our audience what your experience was like growing up in Franklin County, and who were you surrounded by?

MAVIS

Yes. I grew up in Franklin County, which is a rural county in southwestern Virginia.

CLAYTOR:

And I lived with my parents and my grandparents on the farm there. It was about a 30-acre farm. And the entire county population was only about 5,500 people.

It was hard work there. We cared for all of the farm animals. I had to be a part of that as one of the older children in the family. And we had goats, cows, pigs, hogs, all kinds of farm animals. And the billy goat really ate my homework whenever I'd leave it on the porch.

[LAUGHTER]

TORI TUCKER: Thank you. And I understand you have siblings. How many siblings?

MAVIS

I had six siblings at that time growing up. Yes.

CLAYTOR:

TORI TUCKER: So a billy goat really did eat your homework.

MAVIS

Yes.

CLAYTOR:

TORI TUCKER: Did the teachers believe you?

MAVIS They never believed me, but they did.

CLAYTOR:

SUSAN KOOLS: No, of course not.

[LAUGHTER]

TORI TUCKER: So when I use that as an excuse, I hope someone believes me. Wonderful. Walker's Grocery Store. So this was a grocery store that was in your hometown. Can you tell me about Walker's Grocery Store and how that's significant to your family?

MAVIS Yes. That was a small grocery store approximately one mile from my home. And
CLAYTOR: after school in the evenings, we would walk there and get candy and snacks. And at that time, the owner of the store would just write down and keep a log of what we had purchased. And once a month or every two weeks, he would give that bill to my grandfather, and my grandfather paid that bill.

And we never signed anything, no contracts or anything. And when I came to Roanoke to go to school and went to get something, everything had to be signed on the dotted line. I couldn't imagine that.

[LAUGHTER]

TORI TUCKER: And you mentioned your grandfather, Mr. Wyatt Smith. Now, it's my understanding that Mr. Wyatt Smith grew up, and he was enslaved. But in 1865, when slavery was abolished, he gained his freedom. And some of the land that your family still owns today is land that after he was freed his family worked to earn and preserve. Your grandfather.

MAVIS That is correct.

CLAYTOR:

TORI TUCKER: Your grandfather meant a lot to you. Can you tell us a story about him and how he influenced your journey?

MAVIS My grandfather grew up, as she said, during slavery time, and after that, purchased
CLAYTOR: this land that we are now living on. He instilled in us some very, I think, wonderful values. He taught us to love ourselves, love others. Not to criticize others. He always

said, unless you walk a mile in their shoes, then don't criticize that person. He taught us to be compassionate to others, care for others. And also, he taught us a lot about farming and caring for the farm animals there.

TORI TUCKER: Thank you. So I know school-- so you learned a lot of lessons from your grandfather, Mr. Wyatt Smith. But I know you also learned a lot at Lee M. Waid School. Lee M. Waid School at the time was a segregated school for Black students that lived in the Roanoke area, and it was for grades 1st through 12th grade. You shared with me that you loved school. What was it about school that you enjoyed?

MAVIS
CLAYTOR: One of the main things that I loved about school was that it got me out of the farm work whenever I attended.

[LAUGHTER]

So I very seldom, if ever, missed a day of school.

[LAUGHTER]

But I also loved learning and studying. I enjoyed science. We had home economics at that time. The Glee Club I served in. And I stayed busy as much as I could after school so I wouldn't have to do that farm work.

[LAUGHTER]

TORI TUCKER: And I understand that the teachers were all Black teachers.

MAVIS
CLAYTOR: Yes, they were.

TORI TUCKER: What did they impart in you?

MAVIS
CLAYTOR: They encouraged us to excel in whatever endeavor we would take on. They also encouraged us to love ourselves and to know that we were accepted and a very valuable part of society. Some of the teachers traveled 35 miles a day to get to school to teach us. Teach you.

TORI TUCKER:

MAVIS Yes. And we loved having them there and learning, yes. And they brought along with

CLAYTOR: them some extracurricular activities, some sports and things of that nature that we participated in also.

TORI TUCKER: Thank you. So as you-- this was a school that was grades 1st through 12th grade. So when you turn 16, I know that in addition to school, you had other responsibilities, and you cared for your grandmother. But could you tell us about caring for your grandmother and how, in caring for her, your journey began in nursing?

MAVIS
CLAYTOR: I will. I stayed with my grandmother during the nights after school. She was 85 years old and had some difficulties doing personal care and taking care of herself, so I assisted with that. Then suddenly, she had a stroke one day. And I was so upset by that. And felt so inadequate that I could not provide the needed care, I decided at that point I was going to become a nurse so that I would never have that feeling again and would be able to provide care for others and service to others.

I stayed with her all of those years, and I continued to stay with her after her illness, but I was unable to assist her as I wanted to at that time. So I decided at first, I was going to be a teacher. That's what I wanted to do. And then after her illness, that changed my mind, and I started on the nursing journey.

TORI TUCKER: Began your nursing journey.

MAVIS
CLAYTOR: Yes, that began my nursing journey.

TORI TUCKER: Thank you for sharing that. So I also understand-- and we can go to the next slide-- so that began your nursing journey. You graduated from Lee M. Waid School, and then you decided to go to Burrell Memorial Hospital. That they had an LPN program that was connected with Lucy Addison High School.

And Burrell Memorial Hospital has a unique history in Roanoke. For those who are not familiar with the hospital, it was established in 1915 by Black physicians. And the physicians in this area were concerned and recognized that the Black patients did not have an opportunity for health care and that the health disparities were affecting the success of their community.

So the Black physicians used their own internal funds and opened a two-bed unit,

which was essentially a room in a house that later expanded. And then over the years, this became Burrell Memorial Hospital. They had a nursing program that was established in 1925 but it later closed in the late 1930s during the Great Depression. However, when Ms. Claytor and her sister, Ms. Lois, who's also in the audience, attended Burrell Memorial Hospital, the nursing program was then connected with the high school. Can you tell us about your experience at Burrell Memorial Hospital?

MAVIS Well, I enrolled there to become a licensed practical nurse, and that was because I
CLAYTOR: had been rejected at a local hospital which I wanted to attend to become a registered nurse. So since I could not become a registered nurse at that time, I enrolled in Burrell and got my LPN. And then I later went to another school to become a registered nurse.

TORI TUCKER: So you're going to find within her story-- I'm just like, she really didn't waste any time with school.

[LAUGHTER]

MAVIS No. As I told you, I stayed in school as much as possible to avoid the housework.
CLAYTOR:

[LAUGHTER]

TORI TUCKER: But this is her graduating-- this is a picture of Ms. Claytor's 1963 graduating class from Burrell Memorial Hospital, and she is standing in the front row.

MAVIS That picture looks horrible.

CLAYTOR:

TORI TUCKER: No, I think you look great.

MAVIS We started out with approximately 25 students in the class and only the 5 of us
CLAYTOR: graduated from there.

TORI TUCKER: So when you say that, that says something. I think that's worth an applause.

[APPLAUSE]

MAVIS

Thank you.

CLAYTOR:

[APPLAUSE CONTINUES]

TORI TUCKER: So after Ms. Claytor graduated from Burrell Memorial Hospital, she decided that she wanted to continue her education. So she went to Morgan State University, where she studied general studies. Morgan State is located in Baltimore, in Maryland, and it's a historically Black college. And they also had a registered nursing program connected with Helene Fuld Provident Hospital.

And Provident Hospital, for those who are not familiar with the history, is a historically Black hospital that provided a lot of the training for Black physicians as well as Black nurses. So it was a very, very special place. You were Ms. Provident Hospital.

MAVIS

1965, yes.

CLAYTOR:

TORI TUCKER: In 1965. What was it like relocating to Maryland and experiencing being in a registered nursing program in a bigger city?

MAVIS

CLAYTOR:

The change in the location was really a cultural shock to me coming from a rural area and then going to the big city. I had never been away from home before, not for that length of time. And I found that there were so many differences there in the large city.

I remember my earliest week or two there, I became so homesick. I wanted to go back home because no one would speak to you when you were walking downtown or out on the streets. And in the county, everybody spoke and knew everybody. So that was quite a change for me.

And then the food was quite different, too. I was unable to eat their food because I had been used to farm home cooked foods and I did not receive that there. And I became so anemic I had to be admitted to the hospital. And my director of nurses visited me in the hospital, and she whispered in my ear. If you don't eat this food, you're going to be on the next bus back home. s So you know I wouldn't go back

home to the farm, so I ate. And you can tell I haven't stopped since.

[LAUGHTER]

TORI TUCKER: You look wonderful. You look wonderful. This is a picture of Ms. Claytor receiving her diploma at Helene Fuld Providence Hospital. What a special day.

MAVIS Yes, thank you.

CLAYTOR:

TORI TUCKER: What skills did you learn there?

MAVIS I participated in most of the nursing activities, the clinical activities. And I became

CLAYTOR: really interested in surgical nursing. And also, we took care a lot of older patients there, and I became interested in working and taking care of the older adults at that time.

TORI TUCKER: Wonderful. Thank you. So next-- because again, she really does not stop with school. We're kind of going straight through. Could you share with us what path you took after graduating? You worked clinically some, but you decided you were interested in pursuing your bachelors in nursing. So what path did you take?

MAVIS Yes. I worked in med-surg in a local hospital. I returned to Burrell Hospital at the

CLAYTOR: time, worked there for a period of time, and then discovered that there was so much more that I needed to know, I felt I needed to know. So I decided to return to school again, as I told you, to stay off the farm. [LAUGHTER] So I could finish my education.

And I wanted to gain more knowledge and skills in nursing. And at that time, the RN was really accepted and respected in my local hospital, but I understood that in order to get higher supervisory and leadership positions, you needed to have that BSN and higher education. So I returned back to school again.

TORI TUCKER: So where did you apply initially?

MAVIS I applied to Roanoke College, and I was enrolled there. But that was not an

CLAYTOR: accredited school, so I transferred to the University of Virginia.

TORI TUCKER: So it sounds like accreditation was important.

MAVIS Yes.

CLAYTOR:

TORI TUCKER: And that you were thinking about the future long term.

MAVIS Yes.

CLAYTOR:

TORI TUCKER: And so Ms. Claytor, of course, she came with great credentials. Her application was accepted at Roanoke College. And then they transferred her application when she expressed that she was interested in a school that was accredited by the National League of Nursing. Her application did require her to include a picture. No?

So when her application arrived to the University of Virginia, it was accepted into the School of Nursing. Can you take us on the journey of when your family brought you to Charlottesville in the fall of 1968 for you to begin your BSN program?

MAVIS Yes, I remember that vividly. My mother had borrowed a little few dollars for me, and
CLAYTOR: I had worked as an LPN to earn a little money to come to school here. And when I arrived here, I did not get a room in the dormitory. So I had to live in a nearby hotel. I was told that there were no rooms available here in the dormitory for me.

So I stayed in the hotel for a while, a period of time, until my money ran out. Thinking that I had to go back home, I went to the Dean of Nursing, I went to Dean Lore and explained my situation. And remarkably, that same day, there was a bed available for me, and I did not have to go back home.

TORI TUCKER: Didn't have to go back home.

MAVIS No.

CLAYTOR:

[APPLAUSE]

TORI TUCKER: On that day, you could have very easily decided that I am going to go back home. What inside allowed you to keep going?

MAVIS Well, I had faith and courage that there would be possibilities available to me. And I
CLAYTOR: felt that if I expressed my concerns and my predicament to the dean, then something could be worked out because I had gone all over the city here trying to find housing and could not find any housing. There would be a sign outside that says vacancy, and when I went inside to inquire or to get a room, I was told no vacancy available at this time. We just filled that vacancy. So I was determined as, again, I said, I would not go back to the farm.

[LAUGHTER]

TORI TUCKER: I would say I'm so grateful that you kept putting one foot in front of the other that day.

MAVIS Thank you.

CLAYTOR:

TORI TUCKER: That you kept going. You can go to the next slide. So this is graduation day. There are some special people in this picture. We have Ms. Claytor, who's here, and then we have her family. Can you tell us about who's in this picture over here?

MAVIS That's my sister, who's here today with me on the left here. My sister-in-law. And my
CLAYTOR: brother is in the back there. He's since passed away. That's my friend, Ms. Cox, Ruth Cox, who was to be my roommate here. And we kept in touch for a while, and then I lost contact with her. But she supported me, and we were good friends throughout my stay here at the UVA. And then that's my brother, my little brother, that also passed away. He died of seizures at the age of 22. So.

TORI TUCKER: Thank you. I know that this was a very special day.

MAVIS Yes, it was. That was a very special day for me.

CLAYTOR:

TORI TUCKER: So Ms. Claytor graduated in 1970 from the BSN program. She was the first African-American nursing student to be admitted and also to graduate. And that came-- yes.

[APPLAUSE]

And just 20 years prior, Mr. Swanson came to the law school, and he was the first

African-American student to be admitted to the University of Virginia. So we saw that desegregation was happening across the University at different points. And I do just want to take this time to acknowledge, as Dr. Kools did, that there were many applicants, Black students, who applied who were qualified but who were not admitted because of the color of their skin. So as we honor Ms. Claytor today, we also honor and recognize those who were not given the opportunity to come. So we also applaud them as well.

[APPLAUSE]

So really, she avoided the farm completely, because you know what comes after a bachelor's? Your master's.

[LAUGHTER]

MAVIS

Yes.

CLAYTOR:

TORI TUCKER: So you came back here for your master's. But this time, instead of living in Charlottesville, you commuted. And your program-- and you worked very closely with Dr. Jean Fox. Can you tell me about the research and work that you did with Dr. Jean Fox?

MAVIS

CLAYTOR:

Yes. Dr. Jean Fox was our consultant in mental health care. She visited our facility many, many times and encouraged us to get involved in research, education, training. Just all aspects of nursing. So at the time, there was a call for papers in England. And she made me aware of that. And I was studying Alzheimer's disease at that time because not a lot was known about the Alzheimer's program and diseases at that time.

So we did research in that area. And I submitted my call for papers to England to the University there, and it was accepted. And we had the good fortune of attending there to present that paper. I worked with some of the nurse managers and other supervisors there, but Dr. Fox really spearheaded everything and guided us all the way in that endeavor.

TORI TUCKER: And that paper, if anyone's interested, in the research, is "The Environmental

Influences on Behavior of Patients with Alzheimer's Disease." And it's a publication that you can find today. And that's Ms. Claytor in England with the birds and a couple of other people are featured in this photo. Do you want to share who's in the photo?

MAVIS

CLAYTOR:

Yes. That's the nurse manager on my left. Both the nurse managers there. And one of the nursing supervisors on the other side. And I don't know why that bird wanted to come to me. I was quite frightened. I don't know how he knew I was country.

[LAUGHTER]

TORI TUCKER:

All right. So I just want to show some family pictures as well. I think this is a good time. So we're going to go back to some family pictures. In this picture, I have Ms. Claytor. I have her mom, Ms. Lucy Smith. I have Mari. Mari is here today. Mari, can you wave? Mari's also a UVA alum. She double majored in psychology and sociology. She also has a few miners under her belt as well. And her son, Kevin. Kevin, can you wave as well? You always have to pause and show family photos, right?

Look at these lovely people. So I have Ms. Claytor again with her mom, Ms. Lucy Smith, Mari, and then DeJaneke. And DeJaneke is her granddaughter. Can you wave, DeJaneke? Thank you.

MAVIS

CLAYTOR:

I might add, Kevin and Mari assisted me in my program. One would do the copying for me, and one would collate my material to make sure I was ready for class.

TORI TUCKER:

That's what I call teamwork. We call that now, I guess, a research assistant.

[LAUGHTER]

MAVIS

CLAYTOR:

Yeah. [LAUGHING]

TORI TUCKER:

I know that they didn't get paid for helping you, but It sounds like they really enjoyed it. Can you go to the next slide? Thank you for sharing that. So you went on after you graduated with your master's. You went on to work at the VA. And you've worked at the VA for decades, but I was particularly drawn to this feature.

So this was featured in the *Roanoke Times*, and it says, "Nurse helps design an innovative bathroom." And Ms. Claytor, I'll let you share more because I could brag

about you for days. Can you tell me about what led to the design of the modular bathroom?

MAVIS

CLAYTOR:

Yes. I was working in geriatrics at the time and noted that a lot of our patients needed assistance with personal care. They were unable to get in and out of our bathtub. So I was determined to find some mechanism to make it easier for them.

And I was also working with a professor at Virginia Tech at the time in engineering who was also a consultant to at the time, and they were developing and wanted someone to test their modular bathroom. So I volunteered right away to do that. And we put that on one of our wards. Our nurse managers worked with it.

And then we decided that we were going to add a few more to our system of care for our patients, and our patients and staff evaluated that bathroom for Virginia Tech. And I understand now that bathroom-- there's a similar bath tub that has the door that will open, and then you fill it with water to get in. That you just walk in. And that has been a big success for not only patients in the but also in general. So I was proud to be a part of that test.

TORI TUCKER: Absolutely. Absolutely.

[APPLAUSE]

If we could go back to the past and just reflect on your experience with your grandmother and then you continuing your research and work at the VA, you seem to have been drawn to the geriatric population. What about that population have you enjoyed working with over the years?

MAVIS

CLAYTOR:

I've enjoyed working with the older adults. There is lots of wisdom and knowledge there that they shared with me. Their ability to be compassionate and caring for me, also. I enjoyed that. And I enjoyed trying to make their life a little bit easier, especially for the activities of daily living or whatever they had undertaken to do at that particular time.

And I felt that since I couldn't assist my grandmother in her great time of need, then I could assist others during their time of need. And the University of Virginia was just wonderful in providing the education and training, and that has been with

me all this time. When I graduated from the BSN program, I felt I knew everything. Then when I got out in the field and got to practice, I felt, well, I need to know a little bit more. So I returned to school. And I've enjoyed learning and studying and being a part of any aspect of nursing since that time.

TORI TUCKER: Thank you. So I would love to know, you have a great, vast experience. You've contributed over 50 decades in the field of nursing.

MAVIS Now, don't tell my age.

CLAYTOR:

TORI TUCKER: I'm not telling your age.

[LAUGHTER]

She's 30. She's 30. And my mom is shaking her head because my mom says the same thing. She's 30 every year.

MAVIS Right.

CLAYTOR:

TORI TUCKER: Yes. And 30 distinguished years at the VA Medical Center in Salem, Virginia.

MAVIS Yes.

CLAYTOR:

TORI TUCKER: I know we have-- are there any fourth year nursing students that are in the audience? So we do have some new grads. But we also have some desperate graduate students who are open to any advice that you would have for nurses who are entering the field in the future.

MAVIS Well, I would say to those nurses that you are embarking on a wonderful and
CLAYTOR: rewarding career. You will have many, many opportunities. There are no boundaries now for nursing. You can go into any field that you would really enjoy working in. And I'm sure your contributions at whatever you're doing would be invaluable.

You will be a member probably, no doubt, of a health care team. And your contributions will always be needed and appreciated in the field of medicine and nursing. You have done remarkable things already. Your accomplishments have

been great. You have proven that you are empowered to have the skills and knowledge to go ahead, to become a leader, to do anything that you want to do.

I would encourage you to be compassionate and caring not only for your patients, but for yourself. I did a lot of studying. I prayed. I also practiced mindfulness. I did many things to help me conquer the stresses of school and the workplace. And I'm sure you will find something that you can deal with and manage, too.

I enjoyed mindfulness a lot, and I practiced and used that a lot. I tried to play hard, work hard, and let the benefits pay off for me as I went along in my journey. I thank God for my journey. I've done a lot of wonderful things. I'm sure you will have a lot of wonderful experiences. You will have wonderful contributions. And there will not be any limit to What you will accomplish and do in your career.

TORI TUCKER: Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

I just want to share that Ms. Claytor retired from the US Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Salem, Virginia, as the service line chief nurse for geriatrics and extended care after 30 years of distinguished service. Could you all stand with me and applaud Ms. Claytor for her contributions in nursing.

[APPLAUSE]

MAVIS Thank you. Thank you.

CLAYTOR:

Thank you, Ms. Tucker. I have had a wonderful journey in my nursing career, and I'm sure that many of the students here will do the same as they travel along this journey. I thank God for all the accomplishments that I've made. And I am so thankful and blessed that I ended up at the University of Virginia.

I was upset at first because I could not attend the local school at my hometown, and I don't know why I was upset. I didn't have the money to go anyway.

[LAUGHTER]

And I appreciate everything you have done, that the University has done for me, and I'm sure that nurses in the future will continue their great endeavors and will make great contributions in all phases of nursing, and medicine, and research, education-- just everything.

TORI TUCKER: Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

So we're going to have some helpers in the field, but we're going to open up for questions in the audience. One question in the audience.

[LAUGHTER]

I will share that this is again hopefully a story of beginnings. That we recognize that there are many other nursing stories that we do not know. And so there is a great opportunity for us to come together as a community and seek those. Dr. Gibson.

AUDIENCE: Ms. Claytor, I admire all that you've done. And I just think sometimes how easy things have been for some of us and how difficult they were for you. So my question is, what was your most challenging moment in your journey to become a nurse?

MAVIS CLAYTOR: I think one of the most challenging moments was when I came here and did not find housing. I was horrified. I thought I had to return home. And I knew that was not a possibility or an outcome for me. So I decided to stay and see if I couldn't make a change.

And I will say to the staff here, while one person can have a negative impact, then another can have a positive impact on an outcome. And my outcome was positive after I went to Dean Lore and I started the journey there and continued ever since. I continue to utilize the University of Virginia for resources and health care for my family. And also, I would encourage all the students to go out into their respective fields and be the best that they can be in whatever they are planning to do, and not to give up. Don't take no for an answer.

[APPLAUSE]

SUSAN KOOLS: Thank you so, so much, Ms. Claytor. And now it's my pleasure to introduce the Dean of the School of Nursing, Dorrie Fontaine. And Dean Fontaine will give a message of appreciation for Ms. Claytor.

[APPLAUSE]

DORRIE FONTAINE: So I-- it's an emotional day. It's a family reunion here, as Professor Susan Kools noted. But it's emotional listen to these stories. And I was glad that we mentioned A former dean, Dean Lore. I would hope that I could be as courageous as she was. And there's another dean here today, too, and that's Dean Janette Lancaster who was here for nearly two decades. Jeanette, would you stand?

[APPLAUSE]

I'd like to honor her as well. Another courageous dean. Actually, Ms. Claytor served on Dean Lancaster's Advisory Board. We just keep uncovering more and more things of value. So Ms. Claytor, words really cannot adequately express our deep gratitude for your gracious, gracious contribution to our school and for your many contributions to the profession and communities you served. And I think we just caught a glimpse of that from, Tori, your magnificent questions.

Our gratitude would not be complete, however, without first offering you an apology. So on behalf of the University of Virginia School of Nursing, I ask you to forgive us for the challenges and hardship you faced when you courageously took your place as a student in our school. It could not have been easy for you, but you made it easier for so many others to follow in your footsteps, and always with style and grace.

[APPLAUSE]

MAVIS CLAYTOR: Thank you.

DORRIE FONTAINE: So we-- oh, go ahead.

MAVIS I just might add, all is forgiven And especially when I returned home and everyone
CLAYTOR: knew that I graduated from the University of Virginia, that remarkable feeling and the acceptance that I had from my colleagues and everyone seeking jobs-- it was just wonderful. So all is forgiven.

DORRIE You are my role model. So we cannot rewrite our history, but we will not forget the
FONTAINE: sacrifices that you and so many others have made to make us where we are today. We're deeply committed to making ours a community of rich diversity and to recognize that diversity is a valued part of our excellence. We are working every single day to make our school a place where all are welcome, respected, and cherished.

And this is in no small part to Professor Susan Kools, who took the good things we were doing and has made them so very much better. So please accept a small gift--

[APPLAUSE]

--in honor of this special day. We took photographs this morning here, and we are going to have Ms. Claytor in a very prominent place. So when you come back, you'll have to notice that. So here we are.

[APPLAUSE]

I am so appreciative and thankful for everything that I've encountered these-- thank you. I'm so appreciative and thankful for everything that I've encountered these past two days. It has been a wonderful experience here. I thank the university for all they have done, for Ms. Tori for all the planning that she has done, And for everyone that assisted me along the way in my endeavors.

But I meant to tell you, this weekend, there have been tears in my eyes. I have to have someone talk to you about--

TORI TUCKER: It's not elder abuse.

MAVIS Elder abuse. [LAUGHING]

CLAYTOR:

TORI TUCKER: She told me it's elder abuse.

[LAUGHTER]

MAVIS So thank you again so much. I cannot tell you how much I appreciate everything.

CLAYTOR:

DORRIE You're so welcome. And you keep that one. Have a seat. I'm going to bring up Susan

FONTAINE: Kools again.

SUSAN KOOLS: Now, I'd like to introduce Doctor Barbara Mann Wall, who is the director of our Center for Nursing History Inquiry.

BARBRA MANN So again, thank you to the McGehees. Thank you to Ms. Claytor and to her family.

WALL: We really appreciate all of you being here. And this has been a wonderful day for us. And Dean Fontaine is correct. We cannot rewrite the history, but we can preserve it. And the overarching purpose of our Nursing History Center here at the University of Virginia is to promote an understanding of multiple Points of view on the history of our very complex historical health care system.

I want to quote Dr. Mary-Elizabeth Carnegie, who is our wonderful historian of nursing. She wrote the classic piece *The Path We Tread-- Blacks in Nursing Worldwide*. And she said that African-Americans have often been excluded from nursing histories, are given very brief mentions from history, and have thus been deprived of their heritage. Books, papers, many, many different publications about minorities in nursing are few and far between.

We have many students, we have many scholars who are looking for information on nurses and in minority fields. And I'm extending an invitation to all of you in this room, and I'm saying from LPN on up, even nursing assistants on up to PhD, you're all nurses, and we are very interested in your papers. If you have letters, if you have notes from your school of nursing, if you have-- especially photos. I mean, the historian in me is just dying over these photos that I've said here. They're just absolutely wonderful.

And some of you may just think that they're not important, but I can guarantee you that they're very important. You might want to check with some of your classmates to see if they have pictures or letters. And we really want to preserve those. We

have dates of gift. We have all sorts of legal maneuvers that we can protect the papers I'll be happy to talk to any of you about that. Thank you very much.

[APPLAUSE]

SUSAN KOOLS: We're going to close now, but in closing, I'd once again like to say what an honor it's been to welcome Ms. Claytor back to the School of Nursing to be our McGehee lecturer this year. Thank you for sharing your amazing story with us. Thank you again to the Strader-McGee family for supporting this memorable event for us. And thank you to my fellow members of the planning committee who made this event a labor of love. And in particular, I want to acknowledge Tori Tucker and [? Maya ?] [? Wright, ?] who've made sure that every detail of this event has been beautiful. Thank you so much.

[APPLAUSE]

And I'll quickly name the others. Kelly [? Mckaskle. ?] Nicole Thomas. Carol [? Cosac. ?] Christine [? Khutor. ?] Linda [? Hanson. ?] Trina [? Kamodzi. ?] And the deans leadership interns, Ashley [? Belfour, ?] [? Jalen ?] Gray, and [? Shayana ?] Jones. And now please join us for a reception in misleaders honor right outside the auditorium. And as we exit the auditorium, I'm going to invite Ashlyn Walker back up to the stage to send us off with the last song.

ASHLYN WALKER: So for the next one, I'm going to have you to help me out without music. It's kind of hard. So I'm going to have you clap your hands in just a second, OK? So this last song is called "Young, Gifted, and Black." It's originally by Nina Simone, Donny Hathaway. Aretha Franklin did it. So a couple of people. I'm going to just put my little own spin on it, OK? All right.

(SINGING) To be young, gifted, and black, oh, what a lovely, precious dream. To be young, gifted, and black, open your heart to what I mean. In this whole world, you'll find a million boys and girls who are young, gifted, and black, and that's a fact.

To be young, gifted, and black, we must begin to tell our youth, to be young, gifted, and black, this quest is just beginning for you. If you're feeling really low, there's a truth that you should know. To be young, gifted, and black is where it's at.

To be young, gifted, and black, open your heart, and you will find, to be young, gifted, and black, it opens up your mind. If you're feeling really low, there's a truth that you should know. To be young, gifted, and black, it's where it's at. Thank you, guys.

[APPLAUSE]