

Cultural Diversity Forum

Closing Address

“Cultural Diversity Education: A Positive Focus
for the Future”

My expectations upon starting my efforts with the National Diversity Education Program were two-fold. First of all, I wanted to try some new experiences in my journey towards promoting an understanding of cultural diversity. I was very enthusiastic about making the specific connection with cultural diversity and the perpetuation of democracy, especially with my students and in the community. At the time I submitted my application, I stated that I truly believed that the connection of cultural diversity to democracy would add a new dimension to my efforts and would interest more people. I elaborated upon this belief by explaining that my concentration is always in bringing people together towards a better understanding of each other, and that democracy would add a strong unifying dimension. Secondly, I was equally excited about the opportunity to interact with colleagues from throughout the nation who had experienced similar interests and challenges. I had a very clear vision of meeting extraordinary people who had met the challenge of promoting cultural diversity head-on and looked forward to hearing about the successes they have experienced. I had an unmistakable mental picture of tangible mutual support for all of the

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hard work that these extraordinary people had contributed to our society. I also had an obvious desire to interact with people with similar interests who had vested their energy towards reaching an understanding of differences by promoting cultural diversity.

What a genuine honor and gift I have received from being able to meet with my colleagues in the National Diversity Education Program, as well as with everyone who has attended the Cultural Diversity Forum. Both of these encounters fulfilled my expectations of meeting with extraordinary people who have faced the challenge of promoting cultural diversity and who give every indication of continuing to do so. My belief in cultural diversity as a strengthening agent in the perpetuation of American democracy has been renewed and reinforced. I stand ready to do what ever is necessary to assure that our children and our future become secure through education that will meet the needs of all students, so that our democratic way of life will prosper and grow. I believe that what we have accomplished here today is the beginning of renewed efforts towards a positive future through diversity education. Thank you for your support and your encouragement; it has been a privilege to work with each and every one of you. I will end with a bit of culture and history. If this were a letter in the distant past in a Spanish-speaking country, I would end it with three capital Ss—SSS—which would mean Su Sincera Servidora, Your Sincere Server. I do see myself as one who serves our community and our nation by educating our young people. I hope I will have the energy and the wisdom to continue to serve the educational needs of our children through diversity education for many years to come. I know many of you

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feel the same way and that you will continue your efforts as well. Friends, family, colleagues, and associates, unfortunately, it is time to say good-by (sign), adieu, y adios.

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