

**Remarks for the Inauguration of
Dr. T. Alan Hurwitz
Tenth President of Gallaudet University**

*Given by
President Patricia McGuire
Trinity Washington University
May 12, 2010*

(Webcast of Gallaudet Inauguration available at <http://bit.ly/bDpJes> with these remarks starting at 4926)

Congratulations, President Hurwitz! Congratulations, Gallaudet! With pleasure, I bring greetings and heartiest best wishes for great success from your neighbors at Trinity Washington University and all colleagues from the great university communities here in Washington.

Our Washington Consortium includes a remarkable group of universities founded and sustained in the cause of justice to provide access to higher education for historically marginalized populations. Georgetown and Catholic universities were founded in the 18th and 19th centuries when Catholics were not particularly welcome on other campuses. Howard University was founded after the Civil War to open the collegiate gateway for African American citizens only recently emancipated from slavery. Trinity College, now a university, was established at the end of the 19th Century by courageous nuns who insisted that women had a right to go to college, as a matter of social justice, in spite of social and religious opposition to the very idea of women's education. The University of the District of Columbia arose in the 20th Century in response to the large educational needs of residents of the nation's capital who could not afford private higher education.

And on this great, historic campus, Gallaudet University traces its deep roots in the education of deaf and hard-of-hearing students to the impulse for justice and freedom that motivated Abraham Lincoln to expand educational opportunities even as he strove to end slavery and heal the deepest of American divisions during the Civil War. Your nearly 150 years of institutional history are an integral part of the ongoing American struggle for equality and justice for all.

Our mutual labor in the cause of justice for the students we serve continues to be as urgent today as it was at our founding. In the vast marketplace of higher education, Gallaudet's mission and values are unique and irreplaceable.

Today, President Hurwitz, you accept the responsibilities of leadership for this great university. Your office, like your institution, poses difficult challenges and great opportunities.

You must have the patience to listen to everyone while having the perspicacity to sift the important from the urgent. You are expected to have great vision but not talk about it too much lest the campus community think you are enamored of your own ideas.

You must see to it that all systems work harmoniously to achieve the strategic goals and plans and assessments and budgets and bottom lines and fund raising priorities and compliance reports and accreditation self-studies while assuming a very humble posture in board meetings. You will be a friend and mentor to all students, while ensuring the fairness and effectiveness of the programs and systems that keep these precious lives safe and able to master the rigorous challenges of Gallaudet's curriculum.

You will learn how to race from Congressional hearings to basketball games to faculty meetings to student lunches to donor dinners all in the same day. You might even stop along the way to inspect a water main break or that aged-out boiler the facilities director insists you must see in-person. You will learn how to change your clothes in the car if need be. You will bi-locate and multi-task through long days and nights and weekends and summers, never once showing your constituents a hint of irritation or exhaustion.

You will be perfect in one sure thing: smiling at each person who needs your radiant approval.

You must not appear to enjoy yourself too much lest anybody think that your work is a great joy, not the terrible burden this job is rumored to be. You will not let on that it's the best job in the entire world because a presidency is all about making the dreams of others possible and achievable through the power of education.

You will do all of this for this great university, Gallaudet, that needs you so much in this time of institutional challenge.

You will be a tireless advocate for the resources and public support that this university needs to grow even more prominent as the world's leading university for the deaf and hard-of-hearing. You will work to ensure that Gallaudet's mission as a "bilingual, diverse, multicultural" institution of higher education lives well in the curricula and programs, research and scholarship of this university.

You will be that strong voice reminding this community of the imperative of justice in times of challenge, of the necessity of charity in times of conflict, of the need for wisdom to illuminate ignorance.

You will strive to ensure that Gallaudet is always at the table with the other great universities of Washington, insisting that this special mission enlarges, never excludes, our shared mission in advancing the educational needs of our city, nation and global village.

You will remember the words of John Gardner: "The first and last task of a leader is to keep hope alive."

Today, President Hurwitz, you are that leader. You stand here now as a beacon of hope for the entire community of Gallaudet University!

May the memory of this day and this moment be a source of inspiration and good cheer for you through all the days of your presidency!