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Haiti Relief Welcome

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Haiti Relief Welcome
John M. Dunn
March 12, 2010

• I should thank all of you for being here this evening, but first, I have to tell you it's really my privilege and honor to be here with you this evening. I am extremely proud to be the president of our University--a place where people come together to help those in extreme need.

• This event is entirely student planned and sponsored. Coordinating this event is the International Programs Council, which is made of international and domestic students interested in meeting and experiencing different cultures. They have the support of Campus Activities Board, Graduate Student Advisory Committee and Western Student Association.

• They and all attending this evening recognized the need to reach out and do the most we can for those in Haiti who have lost so much and who continue to struggle and suffer. What I love about what is happening tonight is that every person here is prepared to donate in the way most appropriate to his or her ability.
  - Theatre and dance students are donating their talent to entertain you
  - The fashions you'll see were done by the Merchandising Opportunities and Design Association.
  - Door prizes, gift cards and silent auction items were solicited by student organizers and donated by members of our community.
  - Refreshments were gathered by still others.

• And all of you who are here to take part recognize that your mere presence adds to the success of the event. We can do so much together that we might not have been able to do individually.
If you are like me, you've found it difficult but compelling to watch the news stories that have come from Haiti over the past two months. We watch while eating breakfast in our warm, dry homes and we realize things we take for granted, like food and a home, are now luxuries for hundreds of thousands of people. It makes us pause and give thanks for what we have. It makes us want to ensure others enjoy the same benefits.

Albert Schweitzer, theologian, physician, and humanitarian, in a setting similar to this said to an assembled group: "I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who will have sought and found how to serve."

Thank you for being willing to reach out and serve.