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Jody Williams Great Lakes Peace Jam Nobel Laureate

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Good evening and thank you all for being here. It is my pleasure to welcome--to welcome back--to Kalamazoo someone who has become an old friend, Jody Williams.

She's been our guest before through PeaceJam--in 2004 and 2009--talking about how individuals can make a difference, and we are delighted to have her back with us this evening. For one thing, it gives us a chance to take a quick measure of the ongoing impact of the work she started several years ago. From the start, her goal has always been peace. That may sound deceptively simple but, in reality, it is perhaps a goal of ultimate complexity. She defines peace not by the absence of war but by the existence of true human security.

Jody Williams, along with the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, received the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize for her efforts to help ban and clear anti-personnel landmines. She was the coordinator of the ICBL from its inception in 1992 until 1998.

During her tenure, the ICBL’s membership grew to some 1,300 non-governmental organizations and the organization successfully spearheaded an international treaty banning anti-personnel landmines. The treaty was ultimately signed by more than 120 nations.

That treaty banned the use, production, sale and stockpiling of anti-personnel mines. In addition, it contained provisions concerning mine clearance and the obligation to provide humanitarian assistance. So successful were her efforts that in
in 2004, just as she was visiting us, Jody was named by Forbes Magazine as one of
the 100 most powerful women in the world on its first such annual list.

Jody Williams was the 10th woman and the third American to be recognized
with a Nobel Peace Prize. In 2006, she began the Nobel Women's Initiative to join
with her sister peace laureates to support and amplify the efforts of women around
the world who work for sustainable peace, justice and equality.

She holds the Keeper Endowed Professorship in Peace and Social Justice at
the Graduate College of Social Work at the University of Houston where she has
been teaching since 2003. In academic year 2012-13, she became the inaugural Jane
Addams Distinguished Visiting Fellow in Social Justice at the University of Illinois
at Chicago

Her public presentation tonight is about "Creating True Human Security."
There is truly not another individual to better address that topic.

Please join me in welcoming back to Western Michigan University and
Kalamazoo tonight's speaker Peace Laureate Jody Williams.