



FRANK MINTON AWARD ACCEPTANCE SPEECH

Frank, my dear friend and mentor, thank you for your very generous introduction, and for being a model of the highest standards and achievements of our practice. I am both honored and humbled to receive an award bearing your name.

Thank you so much to the Washington Planned Giving Committee Board and its Award Committee members for this heartwarming recognition. I share this award with so many special people.

To my husband, best friend and anchor Thomas who has been my cheerleader, patient listener and master provider of comic relief, thank you for your extraordinary love and support as I evolved in this field over the past 25 years.

My gratitude also goes to the extremely talented, innovative and donor-centered Children's Legacy Planning colleagues, foremost of whom are Christina Lui, Sue Powell, Kim Ottele and the late Bev Winters. To the wonderful professional advisor volunteers and friends who became part of the Children's Legacy Council and Children's Legacy Advisors, and to my brave and brilliant partners at Leave 10, thank you for your inspiring volunteerism and for helping promote philanthropic planning in the community.

To all the charitable individuals – donors and clients -- whom I had the extraordinary privilege to interact with, many of whom have passed on and left magnificent legacies to the community, thank you for your compassion, optimism

and inspiration; for sharing your sense of true abundance with others and for positively impacting countless lives.

I share this award with all of you in this audience who have been devoted to planned giving for decades and to those of you who recently decided to enter this field of practice.

I especially wish to provide words of encouragement to planned giving professionals who are starting out in this field. I know that many of you feel a lack of support for your work due to the focus on short-term funding by your leaders. And though many institutions are slowly beginning to invest in planned giving, those investments are most of the time still far from adequate. In spite of these workplace challenges, don't even for one second diminish the importance of your role as a planned giving professional. Your role is supremely valuable in multiple ways.

As a planned giving professional, you have the most stimulating and fulfilling job in fund development. You weave the donor's biography, values and aspirations for family and community with tax, financial and estate planning concerns to come up with a perfect gift. You enable people of all backgrounds and economic classes to be heroes and philanthropists.

As a planned giving officer, you are creating a safety net for public benefit organizations. You are protecting the viability of your organization's future by building a robust pipeline of future gifts – those future tsunamis of charitable bequests -- uncorrelated with the stock market.

As a planned giving officer, you are a partner in your donors' search for meaning, in answering that question, what is it all for? What higher purpose will my life and assets serve? You are helping donors reach fulfillment through the promise of lives positively transformed by their legacy gift. Through your assistance, donors are able to complete their immortality projects.

As a planned giving officer, you are like that most talented documentary filmmaker, Ken Burns. You are preserving the very best stories and ideas of America and of previous generations. You are honoring and celebrating the lives, lessons and legacies of these donors, and hoping to inspire future generations through their example.

As a planned giving officer, you are also an activist. You are the great enforcer of donor intent. You help ensure that donors' legacy gifts are spent according to donor intent and challenge institutions that stretch the original purpose of gifts. You resist transactional fundraising. You don't rush a proposal or the documentation of commitments just because your boss wants certain metrics to be met. And you vigorously defend and protect donors from potential financial abuse. You are an activist through and through.

As a planned giving officer, you are most importantly an agent of virtue, justice and progress in the community and in donors' families.

If you are a gnostic – or God seeker -- like I am -- then every act of goodness is an expression of divine love. What a blessing to have a job that finds you harnessing the sense of abundance of people in order to reveal and propagate divine love.

If you are an agnostic or secular humanist – like my beloved husband --then you are a firm believer of human agency – the ability, the responsibility and the aspiration of men and women to create a just world. Again, how wonderful to have a job where you are helping individuals to exercise the highest form of ethics and to do everything in their power to address inequities, to seek justice, to provide healing, to create beauty and to protect the environment.

As you can see, we absolutely have the best job on earth. What's there not to like? And we are so blessed to have colleagues at the Washington Planned Giving Council who are simply the most talented, the friendliest and most supportive professionals. I hope this message reinforces what you already know to be true about your job and about your special calling. So keep the faith and have that spring in your step. Take great pride in being planned giving officers and great enablers of what is good in society.

Thank you again for this tremendous honor and for being part of a community that promotes and celebrates planned giving.