

Syracuse University

Remarks by Chancellor Kent Syverud

Delivered on September 14, 2017

Location: Chancellor's House

Remarks: Coming Back Together Reunion Reception

Good evening. Ruth and I are happy to welcome you here to our home at the start of an outstanding Coming Back Together weekend.

I am looking forward to our keynote speaker tonight, Soledad O'Brien, award-winning journalist, news anchor and documentarian.

Ms. O'Brien is a perfect choice for Coming Back Together and the kick off to our 2017-18 University Lectures series at Syracuse University. She has publicly and easily discussed her Latino experience and her mixed race heritage...along with her persistence in the field of journalism.

I thank Ms. O'Brien for joining us this evening as we begin a weekend of events that recognize and celebrate the contributions and accomplishments of our African American and Latino alumni.

Many people worked hard to put together this reception, including the staff in:

- The Chancellor's House;
- The Office of Program Development;
- The Office of Special Events;
- Campus Catering;
- And thanks to my wife, Dr. Ruth Chen for hosting us.

Most importantly, I want to thank all of you for your continued energy, loyalty and generous spirit. I am grateful, in particular, for your ongoing support of the Our Time Has Come Scholarship Program.

For three decades, Our Time Has Come Scholarships have launched and propelled the academic and career success of African American and Latino students. The Our Time Has Come Scholarship fund was established through the vision and hard work of many of our alumni, including trustee Deryck Palmer and David Bing, the former Mayor of Detroit.

Deryck and David's tireless efforts, in the early days, helped build the foundation. Since then, Our Time Has Come Scholarship fund has soared. It has provided more than \$3 million in scholarship support to outstanding students intent on achieving a Syracuse degree.

The Our Time Has Come scholars are testimony to the depth and reach of Syracuse University. They come to our campus from across the country. Their majors span across colleges. They have an average GPA of 3.6. As part of their scholarship, they commit to volunteering on campus and in the Syracuse community. You will meet many of these special students this weekend. All of them are exceedingly talented.

Ruth and I hosted the graduating Our Time Has Come seniors, and their families and teachers, in this very room last May. I wish you could have heard them speak. They are so grateful to you. To the alumni who came before them, who paved the way for them. They are grateful that you helped improve this place and make Syracuse University the place it is today.

Those seniors endured difficulties. They understood the power of education to provide opportunities to overcome some of those difficulties. And their success over four years was made possible by work and

dedication of alumni over these last 30 years to support them. For that, they and I, thank you.

As you will see this weekend, amazing things, and amazing progress, are happening at your University. Through your students, the Our Time Has Come Scholars, you have helped make this happen.

Thank you, and welcome home.

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