

**RISA GOLUBOFF:** Good afternoon. I am Risa Goluboff. I'm the Dean of UVA Law School. And I could not be more delighted to welcome you all today as we celebrate one of our path breakers, Elaine Jones, the first Black woman to graduate from the University of Virginia Law School.

[APPLAUSE]

So many people in this room today have been path breakers in their own right. And so many have had remarkable careers marked by service to others and to our country. I want to thank all of you for the contributions that you have made and continue to make to our communities, our institutions, our countries, and the world.

I am grateful to those of you who have traveled from far away to be here with us today and to the law school alumni and alumni from other parts of the University, welcome back. It is good to see you. I am thrilled that you are all able to join us for this occasion.

Thank you also to the many law school and foundation staff who have made this event possible, most especially to Rebecca Clough in the back of the room, who has shepherded this event with enormous love and attention and to our communications and building services teams.

[APPLAUSE]

So I will have more to say in a minute, but first I want to cede the floor to two people who are among those who Elaine best. In a few minutes, we will hear from her sister, Judge Gwendolyn Jones Jackson, class of 1972. That means this is her 50th reunion year.

[APPLAUSE]

There are several other class of '72s in the audience too, so it's wonderful. Judge Jackson was appointed to Norfolk General District Court in 1991, the first Black woman judge in South Hampton Roads, and the second woman appointed to the Norfolk General District Court bench. During her nearly 2 and 1/2 decades of full time judicial service, Judge Jackson heard an estimated-- you are not going to be able to guess this number-- an estimated 1 million cases. That is an enormous number.

[APPLAUSE]

Equally committed to serving her community off the bench, Judge Jackson has been a leader within the Hampton Roads NAACP, the board of the city of Norfolk Employees Retirement System, and the Norfolk School Board.

Before we hear from Judge Jackson, however, we will hear from Wade Henderson, a friend and former colleague of Elaine's. Mr. Henderson serves as an advisor to major corporations and nonprofits on matters relating to civil and human rights. I had the honor of meeting Mr. Henderson a few weeks ago when we both testified for Ketanji Brown Jackson before the Senate Judiciary Committee.

[APPLAUSE]

It was my first time testifying and will probably be my last, but it was really wonderful to watch Mr. Henderson and learn from him. He was so wise, so poised, so smart, I thought, I want to be him when I grow up. Mr. Henderson currently serves as the interim president of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and the Leadership Conference Education Fund Organizations, he previously led for 20 years. And with that, I turn it over to you.

[APPLAUSE]

**WADE  
HENDERSON:**

Thank you, Dean Goluboff, for that very generous introduction. Good afternoon, everyone. Good afternoon to the distinguished faculty and alumni of this great institution. And to all those who are here to celebrate the honoree today, what a wonderful occasion. As you know, I'm Wade Henderson, former president and CEO of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, the nation's leading civil and human rights coalition.

We're made up of more than 230 national organizations using law and public policy to build an America as good as its ideals. I'm honored to be at UVA today, and it is especially good to be here to celebrate my dear friend, the indomitable Elaine Jones. Though Elaine graduated law school only three years before I did, she was already a legend in the law by the time I joined the profession.

As a young lawyer, she was leading class action lawsuits against some of the nation's largest employers and was counsel of record in the landmark US Supreme Court case that abolished the death penalty in 37 states. There was quite simply no stopping Elaine Jones. Now, she transformed the law, not just in the litigation she pursued, but also in her legislative advocacy. And that's what I want to talk to you about today.

One of the most significant lessons I learned from Elaine was the importance of coalition politics. She understood that to advance civil and human rights, if you weren't working in coalition, you weren't practicing the politics of the 21st century. This principle has guided the work of the Leadership Conference in no small part because of Elaine.

Now, I had the honor to see Elaine in action on three key issues. The first was on the Voting Rights amendments of 1982. Notably the '82 re-authorization of the Voting Rights Act made permanent section 2, the provision that prohibited the violation of voting rights by any practice that discriminated based on race, regardless of intent.

That set the path for a series of changes at the state level and primarily in the South, the old Confederacy. And it opened the political process to African-Americans and other people of color, leading to an expansion of Black elected officials, really an explosion of Black elected officials at a time when they were previously shut out.

Second was the Fair Housing Amendments of 1988 adopted 20 years after the Fair Housing Act was first established. Now, the '68 Fair Housing Act was an important milestone, but it was also largely symbolic. It had no teeth. The legislation did not provide for meaningful federal enforcement of the statute. Elaine helped change that.

Through skillful negotiation and careful and deliberate compromise, she helped successfully expand the scope of the original act and strengthened its enforcement mechanisms. Today, the Fair Housing Act is one of the strongest civil rights statutes on the books, thanks in part to Elaine.

Lastly, Elaine was brilliant in securing passage of the 1991 Civil Rights Act, a significant labor law that overturned a number of Supreme Court decisions that had essentially dismantled anti-discrimination laws in employment and grossly limited the rights of working people.

I also need to acknowledge Elaine's work on judicial appointments. Long before it was part of the progressive agenda that it is today, Elaine articulated the importance of a diverse, equal justice judiciary. She deserves much credit for sounding the alarm to make sure that appointees to the federal bench were qualified and had a demonstrable commitment to civil and human rights.

It is no coincidence that today, President Biden has appointed the first Black woman to the US Supreme Court, Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson, and the most diverse slate of federal judges in American history. The seeds for this phenomenon were sown early on by our dear Elaine Jones. Now, across these issues in so many more, Elaine has changed the landscape of civil rights, and she set the standard by which we in the profession as advocates continue to carry ourselves and benefit from.

Now, allow me to close with a few pieces of wisdom that I and others learned from Elaine early on and most especially in my role as president of the Leadership Conference. First, Elaine mastered the substance of every issue with which she was involved. She never fought for a piece of legislation that she didn't know inside and out. That became an early lesson for me, read the statute, know the statute, and then fight to change the statute.

Second, in circumstances like ours in which you are dealing with two major parties, and often a range of points of view in Congress, bipartisanship is essential. One has to recognize that issues of import to the country cannot be effectively won by one party alone. And if you are to be a successful legislative advocate at the federal level, you must be able to speak to various sides of the issue. You must run with the foxes and run with the hounds. And I learned that from Elaine. You've got to do both to be effective.

Now, she also refused to let perfection be the enemy of the good. Sometimes change must be accomplished in incremental fashion. What may appear to be a defeat may well be the foundation for success down the road. We're holding fast to that knowledge today.

And finally-- and this time I really mean it-- you must have a commitment to the generation that follows you. That's especially important for law students. Elaine's dedication to law students and her commitment to effective paid student internship programs is second to none. That is an important part that explains the success of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, of which she was the first woman to be its director counsel.

It seems to me especially appropriate then that Elaine's portrait will hang at the UVA Law School as a testament to the great work of this institution and to its values. Dean Goluboff, we have to thank you for taking this gesture and making this effort possible.

[APPLAUSE]

In sum, it is truly an honor and a blessing to know Elaine Jones. Our lives and the country we live in is better for it. Thank you so much.

[APPLAUSE]

**GWENDOLYN  
JONES  
JACKSON:**

You can tell Elaine and Wade Henderson are very good friends. I am Gwendolyn Jones Jackson. I'm the sister of the honoree. The family members of Dr. Elaine R. Jones-- and she is Dr. I think she has 26 honorary doctorate degrees from universities all over the United States, as well as the highest award that the University of Virginia gives, which is the Jeffersonian medal from the University of Virginia. But the family members--

[APPLAUSE]

--her nieces, her grand nieces, her nephews, her grand nephew, her cousins, and many of her friends who are here today are very, very, very proud of the great accomplishments that Dr. Jones has made. But more than that, we are inspired to continue our work for justice because of her excellent example.

Many of Attorney Jones's family members can attest that she is as ardent and successful at being a concerned family member as she is as being a successful, bold, and dynamic attorney. She's very determined to remain current with family. And she's even mastered texting and Zooming to keep in contact. She inspires in others a can-do spirit.

She was 11 or 12 years old when she announced to the family that she was going to become a lawyer. I'm certain mother and father had no idea how she would accomplish that, but they never discouraged her. She applied to this law school after completing four years in college in Washington, DC and after serving two years in the Peace Corps, assigned to Istanbul, Turkey.

And she said at that time that Virginia had a policy that minorities were not admitted, and if they were academically qualified, Virginia would give them a scholarship to go elsewhere. So Elaine said she applied, . Fully contemplating that maybe Virginia would pay for her to go to Yale

[LAUGHTER, APPLAUSE]

But they fooled her, and they admitted her. In Elaine's first year at this law school, she was one of two African-American students. They only admitted two at a time, you know, the arc. Elaine was the first Black female, and there was one Black male. James Benton was in her class.

And the next year, in the class after Elaine, they increased it. There were three African-Americans men, but no women. In that second year, she and attorney Whitebread initiated recruitment trips to predominantly Black universities to see if academically capable students would be interested in applying to the University of Virginia Law School.

At that time, she was in her second year, and I was a senior at Hampton University in Hampton, Virginia. She wrote to me-- because you know, we didn't have text back then and we didn't have cell phones-- so she wrote to me and said, when would you arrange for the professor to meet with academically capable students to see if they're interested in attending Virginia?

And. So I set up a group of students and a place on campus for them to meet after they had finished interviewing the students and the students had gone back to their classes or to their dorm and the representatives from the University of Virginia were packing up to leave, I said, well, since you're here, you just as well interview me.

I had planned on, as an English education major, going up to Philadelphia to get my graduate degree in education. You know, mother said, you always had to be prepared to teach. Whatever you do in life, get the qualifications to teach. So they interviewed me, and they went on to other schools and interviewed other students.

Then in Elaine's third year, the University of Virginia admitted 13 students. That was the largest admissions that it had ever done in one year. And I was a part of those 13 students. And so are many of us here. There are seven of us left, and this is our year for our 50th anniversary.

[APPLAUSE]

Let me give you just one more quick example of how Elaine's outreach, when she is provided an opportunity, will reach back and include others. When she was the assistant to the Secretary of Transportation in the Ford administration, the Secretary of Transportation directed her to meet with the commandant of the Coast Guard and to inform the commandant that it's time for the Coast Guard to admit women.

So Elaine met with the commandant, and they had some very serious discussions. And shortly thereafter, the Coast Guard began admitting women for the first time.

[APPLAUSE]

She can give you many more examples of where she used her firsts to reach and help others into doors. She is passionate about equal justice. She is a hard worker. And she's not discouraged by obstacles. You might have heard her speech where she quoted her favorite Swahili saying. "The life has meaning only in the struggle," she says. "Triumphs and defeats are up to the gods, so let us celebrate the struggle."

It is wonderful that the University of Virginia has had this portrait commissioned and will hang it in a prominent place so others will be encouraged by her example. It is tremendous that there's now a growing scholarship, Elaine R Jones Scholarship--

[APPLAUSE]

--which will be given to needy students-- will be given to students to go on and become lawyers. We are grateful to the University of Virginia for this day. And we are glad that we can, for a moment, just sit and say, well done. But Elaine, we must remember the words the mother taught us, and she taught us many poems around the house.

And you remember the ending of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *A Psalm of Life*. It, that ending, is an encouragement to all of us. "Let us, then, be up and doing, with a heart for any fate. Still achieving, still pursuing, learn to labor and to wait."

Now, in the tradition, generational tradition that mother taught us the poem, I'm going to turn it over to my daughter now, Miss Arlette Jackson, who is a graduate of the University of Virginia Undergraduate school, class of '99 to continue the poem.

[APPLAUSE]

**ARLETTE**

Good afternoon, everyone. It's such a pleasure to be here today to the honoree and all our distinguished guests.

**JACKSON:**

Mom, thank you for that introduction. So I was given the task of reciting a poem, just one poem, about service. And ideally, this poem would capture the life and the work of our honoree, Elaine R. Jones.

If you know Aunt Elaine, you know that no one anything can capture Aunt Elaine. It was an impossible, impossible task. So instead, as I reflect upon attorney Elaine R. Jones, her life and her body of work, there are several poets, and there are several individuals who come to mind.

So I think about the little girl that people talk about in her bio and that mom described in the Jim Crow South who was so disenchanted with that injustice surrounding her that she decided to become a lawyer, despite all of the odds. And so when I think about that, I'm hearing Emily Dickinson. "Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul, and sings the song without the words, and never stops at all."

And this hope was not a selfish hope. Recall that she wanted to be an attorney to help others. It was a hope rooted in an ideal and an idea of who we as a country could be and should be and can be if we worked and we work for it. So for Attorney Jones, hope has always been indelibly bound with service.

So I think that she internalized the words of Harriet Du Autermont who said, "Your heart must ever cherish some hope, some dream to cling to, some rainbow in the sky, some melody to sing to, some service that is high." And I think she agreed with Benjamin Mays that "We make our living not by what we get. We make our living by what we give."

And so I imagine that as she prepared for that career in public service, Emily who loved birds, and I love Emily. We're still with her, and who said-- Emily Dickinson wrote, "If I can stop one heart from breaking, I shall not live in vain. If I can ease one life the aching or cool one pain, then my living shall not be in vain. Or help one fainting robin into his nest again, then I shall not live in vain."

So Attorney Jones committed to helping America back into its nest. And I imagined that once in the world beyond that cocoon of Norfolk, Virginia, her hometown, and that wonderful land-- I'm not biased-- known as the Martha Howard University in Washington, DC, when she was in Turkey in the Peace Corps and she was doing all of those firsts, like here at the University of Virginia.

And certainly, I think about her litigating those cases in the South with the KKK surrounding the courtroom. And I'm thinking that she must have thought, like Claude McKay, "Your door is shut against my Titan face, and I am sharp as steel with discontent, but I possess the courage and the grace to bear my anger proudly and unbent." And that is on Aunt Elaine, courage and grace, grace and grit. That Aunt Elaine, and always hope.

And so I imagine that she didn't let those things disturb her because she agreed with Helen Keller, that "no pessimist ever discovered the secret of the stars or sailed to an uncharted land or opened a new doorway for the human spirit." No pessimist ever did that. Her response to naysayers and to injustice itself evokes *The Speech to the Young*. It's called *The Speech to the Progress-Toward*-- it has two names-- by Gwendolyn Brooks.

So she said, "Say to them, say to the down-keepers, the sun-slappers, the self-spoilers, the harmony-hushers, even if you are not ready for day, it cannot always be night. And you will be right. For that is the hard home run. Live not for the battles won. Live not for the end of the song. Live in the along."

So the project to which Aunt Elaine has dedicated her life is that of lifting as we climb. And many of you know that lifting as we climb was the motto of the National Association of Colored Women, which was led by the Mary Church Terrell, that esteemed suffragist and civil rights leader.

Lifting as we climb. So to lift-- this is the preacher in me-- is to raise from a lower to a higher position. To elevate is a transitive verb. To ascend to rise, a lift, is a slight rise or revelation, the distance or extent to which something rises. To climb is to go upward with gradual or continuous progress. To rise, to ascend, to increase gradually, gradually and to slope upward.

And so onward and upward our honoree marched. And so when finally tasked to become the director counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, the first woman-- with apologies to JG Holland, ladies, I'm changing men to women in this text-- give us women a time like this. She was the woman for the time.

JG Holland says, "Give us women. A time like this demands strong minds, great hearts, true faith, and ready hands. Women who possess opinions and a will, women who have honor, women who will not lie, tall women, sun-crowned, who live above the fog. In public duty and in private thinking, for while the rabble, with their thumb-worn creeds, their large professions and their little deeds, mingle in selfish strife, lo! Freedom weeps. Wrong rules of land and waiting justice sleeps.

So LDF found such a woman, a drum major for justice, as Charles Hamilton Houston said. So what we have in Aunt Elaine is hope and service, grace, grit, and courage. And she has always, if you know her, believed-- Maltbie Babcock-- "We are not here to play, to dream, to drift. We have hard work to do and loads to lift. Shun not the struggle, tis God's gift. Be strong."

And so fortunately, Aunt Elaine is still engaged in that project of justice, of lifting as we climb. That is her heart song, and that work goes on and on and on. God bless you.

[APPLAUSE]

**RISA  
GOLUBOFF:**

I don't want to come after that.

[LAUGHTER]

Thank you to all three of you for those wonderful tributes, and the poetry was really amazing. So it's my honor now to speak a little bit about the honoree, Elaine R. Jones of the class of '70. A fair bit of what I have to say has been said in various places over the last three speakers, but I'm going to try to put them in a little bit of a chronology. That's the historian in me. So I'm going to do a little bio and then a little historical reflections.

So you've heard bits of this. And many of you, I'm sure, know the whole story, but here I go. Elaine R. Jones is a native of Norfolk, Virginia. Norfolk, anyone? I know. A lot of you. Go ahead. OK. An excellent pipeline from Norfolk to UVA Law School. She earned her bachelor's degree in political science from Howard University and then, as we've heard, spent two years in the Peace Corps in Turkey before applying to law school.

I'm sad to hear we were her second choice, but I'm very glad to hear that it worked out. Elaine, as you've heard, was one of two Black students in the class of 1970 and one of seven women in that class and the only Black woman in that class. So at her graduation in 1970, she became the first Black woman to earn a law degree from this law school.

We began talking about this celebration pretty close to Elaine's 50th reunion, and we were a little bit delayed by the pandemic, but that makes today all the sweeter. I just want to put Elaine's graduation in 1970 and the path-breaking nature of that in a little bit of context.

So when Elaine graduated as the first Black woman in 1970, it was 50 years after the first white woman had graduated from this law school in 1920. And it was 20 years after Gregory Hayes Swanson desegregated this law school in 1950. So it was a long time coming.

Elaine turned down an offer from a prominent New York law firm and went to work for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund after graduation. And in an interview in 2021 with the National Peace Corps Association, here's what she said. Quote, "I told myself, you didn't go to law school to go to Wall Street. You went to law school because of the work of Constance Baker Motley and Thurgood Marshall and all those lawyers who litigated all those landmark cases."

[APPLAUSE]

Her first assignments we've heard a little bit about involve litigating death penalty cases in the deep South. And when she served as counsel of record in *Furman v. Georgia*, the landmark case that struck down the death penalty, she was only two years out from her graduation from law school. So as Mr. Henderson said, by the time he came out in '73, she was already a superstar. She was already in the trenches.

During her career, she argued numerous employment discrimination cases, including class actions against some of the nation's largest employers. And with the exception of the two years that she spent as special assistant to the United States Secretary of Transportation, where she took the lead in opening the Coast Guard service to women, she spent her entire career at LDF.

From 1993 to 2004, she served as their president and director of counsel, the first woman to lead that organization. I will say I had the privilege and pleasure of serving as a summer intern there in one of my summers in law school. She later became the first Black person to serve on the Board of Governors of the American Bar Association.

As you've heard, she received many, many honors. I can't even begin to describe the many honors, but I will say that we hold dear to our hearts here the Thomas Jefferson Foundation Medal in Law. We do not give honorary degrees. So that is the corollary here at UVA, and it is an honor to see her name on that list every time I look at it.

This is a very incomplete account-- even when you put all four of us together-- a very incomplete account of everything that Elaine Jones has done and everything that she is. And it only begins to capture the true impact of her brilliant legal career, her strategic insights, which I love hearing about in conversation as well as having witnessed as they happened. But we don't have all day.



So what I do want to emphasize, Elaine, is that your story is essential to both our history and our future at this law school. The stories that we tell ourselves about our past and about ourselves shape who we are as an institution, and they shape who we want to be in the future.

So today's event is part of the broader efforts that the law school has been making over the past several years to think about our history holistically, even the difficult parts, maybe especially the difficult parts and to really ensure that we remember and celebrate all of those who have made this place what it is today. Your story is such an important part of that, Elaine.

We want to be an institution worthy of your example and your lifelong pursuit of equal justice. You have already inspired generations of UVA Law students and lawyers everywhere to spend their lives doing the same. We want to be sure that continues into the future, that your history is the law school's history, and the law school's history is your history.

That is why we created the aforementioned Elaine R. Jones class of 1970 scholarship, and I was gratified, though not at all surprised that our alumni and friends responded quickly and generously, and that the scholarship is now at more than \$1 million.

[APPLAUSE]

When the scholarship was mentioned a minute ago, Elaine turned to me and said, we need to raise another million. And I said, absolutely. Let's do that. Your name on that scholarship honors this institution. It enables our students to follow in your footsteps, in pursuing equal justice in their careers, and it ensures-- and this is I think really critically important-- it ensures that future generations of students will know and admire you just as everyone in this room does.

Shaping our future in your honor and in your image is also why I am honored and thrilled today to dedicate your stunning portrait, which we will all see in a minute, which will hang in Clay Hall right at the front of the law school where you walk in the door beginning this afternoon. And it will become part of the fabric of our building for generations of UVA Law students, employees, alumni, and visitors who walk these hallways. They should see you, and they should know you.

Elaine's portrait was painted by the celebrated Washington, DC portrait artist Simmie Knox. Born in Aliceville, Alabama in 1935 and raised by extended family on a sharecropping farm near Mobile, Mr. Knox is himself a path breaker in his field, the first Black painter of an official presidential portrait, Bill Clinton's White House portrait, unveiled in 2004.

A portrait artist since 1980, Mr. Knox has built a reputation for capturing his subjects in a way that as one writer put it, quote "Sees memory and emotion that claim beyond question. This is the person."

Elaine, you are the person, a brilliant, inimitable, passionate, joyous, righteous person who has changed the world and enriched my life, among the lives of so many others immeasurably. Thank you for being here 55 years ago, and thank you for letting us celebrate you today. And now I'd like to invite Larry Frazier and Rambert Tyree to help us unveil Elaine's portrait.

[APPLAUSE]

They're just going to say a few words.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

**LARRY FRAIZER:** Simmie was unable to be here. He's 86, by the way, and I think he said he wants to do some more portraits. But I've known Simmie for over 30 some years. And he's a wonderful artist, a wonderful person that's been stated by the bio that was mentioned about Simmie.

I must also say that I think Simmie took great pleasure and honor in meeting Elaine and doing her portrait. And I think by him doing her portrait, it makes the portrait he did of Thurgood stand out even greater.

And I think Elaine certainly deserves to be a part of the ranks. And also by having her portrait done by Simmie being in this hall is also a continuing testament of who Elaine is and her continuing to advocate in terms of people being recognized of abilities that in the past perhaps may not have been. And so for that reason, I hope that people, as they see the portrait and asking about Elaine, will also say, who is the person that did this portrait? And will give them the opportunity to find out more about Simmie Knox and others like him.

So I think that UVA is certainly privileged and honored by having certainly having Elaine and by having it rendered by Simmie Knox of our time. Thank you very much.

[APPLAUSE]

**RISA GOLUBOFF:** Thank you. Now Elaine, would you like to make some remarks?

**ELAINE JONES:** Everything that needs to be said has been said, but not by everybody, right? I want to thank you, Virginia and Dean Risa Goluboff. I am just so honored, and so I'm full of gratitude. That is the first principle, gratitude for all those people who stand with you and who help you. And often, you don't even who they are.

I have no idea who was on that admissions committee. That admitted me I have no idea. At first I didn't whether to love them or dislike them, but that's OK. They had it right because I've always said, I took a chance on Virginia. Virginia also took a chance on me. We knew nothing about one another.

And it's the best choice I could have made. Now, our first female Dean is a tour de force. She's a tour de force. And thoughtful, perceptive, smart, whip smart, strategic, collegial. You want to work with her. You don't always have to agree, but she wants to listen as to why you have the temerity to disagree, but she listens with a smile. She listens with a smile.

And I was telling her there's an old spiritual that used to be sounding in churches all across the South. "There's a sweet, sweet spirit in this place." And that's what we have here. This spirit of Virginia is so different. I mean, everyone to me in 1970 was civil. They were civil. Many just ignored me as if I just didn't exist, but I made a few lifetime friends, a few lifetime friends.

I mean, it was great to see that big class come in 1972, 13 students. Oh my. So it's gratitude, gratitude to all the program participants here today, everything. Wade, I thank you so much. Sister, you poured yourself in that one. Thank you so much. And wasn't niece Arlette spectacular? Wasn't that a tour de force? A tour de force. I like that word. I like that.

Now, gratitude to all of you who've made the trip. Those of you in here today, you could be elsewhere. There are other meetings going on around. You have friends all across this law school. This is alumni weekend, after all. There are people to see, places to go, but you're here. And I'm grateful for it.

I'm grateful for the contributions that you have made and continue to make because this is our law school, and we care about it. And we're going to do what we must do to see to it that it succeeds and that it continues to grow and be a beacon among law schools schools. And the Dean, I mean, she's got us first in so many categories, I've lost count, so many categories, because it's all about the students and how we pass it on.

See, my generation-- I mean, 52 years out of law school. That's wild. That's wild. I don't even how to spell "contracts" anymore. But someone passed that torch on to us in this room, and it's our job, it's our obligation, it's our duty, to pass it on.

Those of you who are here, those of you who have come for this special occasion, I mean, there's so many of you. We could have a judicial conference meeting right here. Really. The judicial conference can just go in the next room and discuss whatever you want to discuss, whatever circuit you want to discuss it about, so I thank you, all of the judges who have come forward and all of the lawyers in practice, and also my family who are doctors.

And we have a person in the room. I just have to call her name. You've got a huge Penn Hall out in the medical school. That's Vivian Penn sitting there. That's Vivian Penn sitting there. Now, that's commitment. When she heard what Dean Risa was pulling off for me, when she heard that, she said, I'm going to be there.

Now, I was in Penn Hall when it was named, but that was easy. All I had to do was get in the car and drive from Washington. She was in Boston. And last night spent two hours in the Charlotte airport to change planes. She got here at 11:59 last night at the Charlottesville airport.

Now, I love Vivian. I don't know that I would have done it. I'm not sure. Sometimes we have to make these admissions against interest. I'm not sure, always. But thank you for it, Vivian, and thank you for being here.

And so family, you are always with me, so you don't get any more mentions. You're always around and so gratitude was the first principle. The other three are courage-- you can't do anything in fear. Fear gets in the way of thinking. When you feel fearful and somewhat frightened and don't if you can face, you've got to go on your secret closet somewhere and tap into some courage, because you can't make good decisions out of fear.

And so you have to conquer fear. You have to not fight it, you have to beat it. You have to conquer it. That's the only way you can move forward and make a real difference to yourself or anybody else. That's the thing. So it's gratitude, courage.

The third one is commitment, the value system, the sweet, sweet spirit in the place, the respect for one another. We don't have to agree on everything. We do not. Matter of fact, I enjoy disagreeing with you, listening, hearing your point of view. And maybe we can find a kernel somewhere in there that we can build some agreement.

And so it's commitment, but we the same basic values, , holding on to the democracy holding on to the democracy. There's nothing more important. And that's our job. And we can do it. Nobody can take from us what too many are laying in too many submitters who have given us. Nobody can take that from because we're not going to let it happen. We're just not.

And so we may have our fits and starts. Things may not always look as bright as we want them to be, but with the gratitude for the [? forepath, ?] the courage, the commitment to the values, and the last thing is the stamina. The stamina, you've got to hold on to your strength. You got to hold on because in order to struggle and to fight, you've got to take care of yourself. You got to exercise. You have to keep body and mind all in one place together. You've got to do all of those things.

But stamina, because it's is a relay race. And we've got to have the strength to pass the torch to successive generations. That's our job. We are obligated. Larry Frazier, you didn't introduce yourself, but thank you so much for the words and for talking about Simmie Knox. He took me by the hand to meet Simmie, who lives in Silver Spring, Maryland.

And Simmie said, Elaine, we got to each other fairly well, and he had done portraits of Hank Aaron and everybody, because he and Hank are both from Mobile. He said, I poured myself into this one, he told me. And I told him, Simmie, I can see that. I can see that.

So my sister gave the last verse, and I'm going to repeat it again, but there were a few verses before that. And the nerve, to paraphrase Longfellow. My mother is having a fit on this one, Gwen. But we do it. We're bold enough to do it. Have some courage.

"Lives of great men and women all remind us, we can make our lives sublime. And departing, leave behind us footprints on the sands of time. Footprints that perhaps another sailing o'er life's solemn main, a forlorn or shipwrecked brother or sister--" paraphrase-- "seeing, shall take heart again. Let us, then, be up and doing with a heart for fate. Still achieving, still pursuing, learn to labor and to wait." I thank all of you very, very much from the bottom of my heart.

[APPLAUSE]

**RISA  
GOLUBOFF:**

I think the reason why you like "tour de force" is obvious. I would now like to welcome Rambert Tyree to give our parting toast. Rambert will graduate from the law school-- Rambert, where are you? There. Rambert will graduate next week from the law school as a member of the class of 2022.

A native of Newport News, Rambert served on the executive board of the Black Law Students Association chapter and this year as one of two head peer advisors. If you're not familiar with the peer advisor system, they are the advisors to our first year students. It's a very big job, a big honor to be one of the two head peer advisors who organizes, basically, the passing forward of the torch to the next generation of students.

He is also a member of the Raven Society, and was the winner of this year's Gregory H. Swanson Award, which recognizes the UVA Law student for his or her courage, perseverance, and commitment to justice, so exactly the things that Elaine was just talking about. Rambert.

[APPLAUSE]

**RAMBERT**

Good afternoon. As I stand before you all today, I am immensely overcome with emotion, encouragement, inspiration, and grateful to be able to give the toast to our honoree, Miss Elaine R. Jones.

**TYREE:**

On behalf of-- on behalf of the current [INAUDIBLE] the graduating class of 2022, on behalf of the thousands of alum that have followed your path over the last 52 years, on behalf of the tens of thousands of individuals that will walk these halls and see this beautiful portrait for years and years to come, we thank you, and we honor you for your courage, your perseverance, your endurance, and your commitment to the mark on the law and this University that will last for years and years to come. May your legacy live forever more. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you.

**RISA**

On that wonderful note, let me invite you to continue this celebration during a desert reception outside, and just say once again, thank you, Elaine Jones, for gracing this law school with your presence and now gracing it in perpetuity. Thank you all for coming.

**GOLUBOFF:**

[APPLAUSE]