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### Remarks of TiRease Holmes

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“As an urban university, La Salle invites students to enhance their academic experience by immersing themselves in the rich resources of Philadelphia and the region. All members of our community are called to maintain a heightened sensitivity to those marginalized within society as they practice civic engagement, provide leadership with a global perspective, and contribute to the common good.” *La Salle Mission*

Good Evening, President Hanycz, Fellow faculty, staff, student, esteemed and invited guest and Fellow panelist. It is my honor and privilege to be here this evening with these amazing panelist and moderator.

- **How do we educate students who will be prepared to engage in an urban context, in particular when we consider this education through the prisms of faith, service and community?**

- It comes down to the basics.... Don't judge a book by its cover. Help students to see that there is more than meets the eye. Challenge them to unveil, peel back layers and thumb through proverbial community pages to truly gain a greater insight of the urban environment they will be engaging in
- Prepare critical and analytical thinkers..
- PAN: Pay Attention Now.... Ask questions. Unfortunately there are racial, social economic disparities, Ask yourself why this is? How you contribute to it? What role do you play in it? Understanding that doing NOTHING is a role as well.
- As a friend of mine said “Teach students to be servant leaders, rather than saviors” “that might help them see themselves as part of the community they're engaging, rather than the Great Educated Hope swooping in to save the day...”
- Faith Plays a huge role
  - Golden Rule: Love thy Neighbor and Do Unto Others, as you will have them do unto you.
  - A variation of these simple well know principles can be found in almost every religion. To point out a few.
    - **BUDDHISM:** "Hurt not others with that which pains yourself or in ways that you yourself would find hurtful. One should seek for others the happiness one desires for one's self"(Udana-Varqa, 5:18)
    - **HINDUISM:** "This is the sum of duty: do naught unto others that which would cause pain if done unto you. (Mahabharata 5:1517)
    - **ISLAM:** "Not one of you is a believer until he desires for another that which he desires for himself." (Muhammad, 40 Hadith of an-Nawawi 13) "Do unto all men as you would they should do unto you, and reject for them that which you would reject for yourself."(Mishkat-el-Masabih)
    - **JUDAISM:** "What is hateful to you, DO NOT to your fellow man. That is the law: all the rest is commentary." (Talmud, Shabbat 31a) "Thou shalt LOVE thy neighbor as thyself: I am the LORD."(Moses, Leviticus 19:18)
  - If this is a core value and concept why aren't we a more just society.

- Civic learning and engagement. Theory to practice. How students learn to apply in these concepts and in class learning experiences in the communities by comprehending and discerning with a new set of lenses.
- **What are the things we learn about Philadelphia and about ourselves and our institution when we take our urban context seriously?**
  - When we take our urban context seriously, we are able to acknowledge, accept and appreciate the rich heritage, history and diversity Philadelphia has to offer
  - The Community and the people in it are like the book I described earlier.
  - Get to know Gene who by day works for the Federal Government, by passion, moved back to take care of his aging parents, and who has won National salsa competition awards. Turn through the pages of our neighbor on 5700 block of 19<sup>th</sup> St that in her 70s or 80s plants every planter on the block with flowers to keep her community beautified. Ask another neighbor about her family member who played professional baseball. Thumb through the pages of my neighbor growing up who not only taught me in elementary school, but also in the summers hosted Vacation Bible School on her porch. Learn about Mr. Philmore Johnson whose mural represents the legacy he left behind at 20<sup>th</sup> and Conlyn. Learn the rich history of our great city, the landmarks, the food, the legacy
  - There are some basic necessities that mirror each other across racial, socioeconomic, gender, etc. lines. Safety, security, quality of life. Find the commonalities don't disrespect the differences and embrace the teachable moments and opportunities for life growth. There is Common Ground to be found as long as you're open and willing to be exposed to differences and deeper and richer experiences
- **How are we poised to contribute to a revitalized Philadelphia and what can we do to contribute in light of our mission?**

Our mission speaks directly to being a contributor to a revitalized Philadelphia. Collaboration is to work with another person or group in order to achieve or do something. In order to contribute to a revitalize Philadelphia we have to "DO SOMETHING" In light of our mission what we as La Sallians. Together and by association, NOT FOR, NOT TO, But WITH and IN ASSOCIATION. Brotherly Love And Sisterly Affection represents a familial concept. I believe if we Consider our city and our community as our family we can bridge the gap in the revitalized Philadelphia of Haves and Have nots