**EULOGY SPEECH**

**FOR**

**MUHAMMAD IBRAHIM**

Hello everyone. It is an honor to be here today for many reasons. It is a privilege to celebrate the good work all of you are doing here at (**Name the school)**. It’s so gratifying to hear of the progress the students are making. But most important, today’s gathering is an opportunity to recognize the incredible, essential contribution that this school has made to its youth and to our community. That contribution would not have been possible without the passion, insight, and dedication of our founder, my mother, (**Name your mother)**, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

Today is our Founder’s Day celebration, and since I have been honoring a woman who was **MY** founder, so to speak, as well as that of this school, I am more than proud to share her legacy…. her life…. and her achievements with you. Although she is no longer with us, the impact she has made on all of our lives, and in turn on the lives of future generations, is immeasurable. (**Name your mother**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ was born in 19\_\_\_\_\_ in (**Name the city or town and country if necessary)** to a family that provided inspiration, motivation, and passion for social justice…. whether they realized it or not. She may not have had much in a material sense…. And of course that is relative…. For some people, having anything and everything one might wish for can make a person complacent…. It can make a person lack curiosity. For some people, growing up in an environment of challenges and struggles can inspire someone to dream… of a better life…. a way to solve one’s own problems as well as those of her neighbors, family, friends and the community. I believe my mother is in that second group. Anyone that had the honor to know her knew one indisputable thing about her…..that she had an incredible curiosity about the world around herself and as she grew up, her passion for knowledge, education, understanding, social reform and social justice became more and more evident.

(**Give two or three examples of what your mother was like growing up that would show her character as a young girl growing up**). To paraphrase the famous English documentary director, Michael Apted, “Give me the child when he or she is seven years old and I will show you the adult,” my mother led her life true to that statement. Even as a child, as a young girl, and as a young woman finding her way through adulthood, my mother always, without fail, advocated for the people that needed a voice. (**Name her**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ used to tell me stories that showed me how, at every stage of her life, somehow she managed to make a difference. I remember her telling me that when she was only \_\_\_\_\_\_ years old, that she \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. As Mom got older and began to realize the problems facing her friends and family, she continued to make her mark. As a teenager, she would \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, which, of course, meant so much to those involved. By the time she got to college, her direction was determined. She told me of the struggles she witnessed, like \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Yes. As a young woman, she saw a lot…. More than most, and she resolved to find the ways to institute changes, to teach and inspire. She studied and researched and confronted issues that would have otherwise continued to plague people who deserved a better life. She found a path and gave a voice to those who didn’t yet know how to speak up for themselves. She became a champion for women and a strong, respected voice for all people…. especially those that were and are less privileged….. the ones that **REALLY** needed and **STILL** need a helping hand and a way to speak up and speak out in order to be heard.

Nelson Mandela said, “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” My mother realized that shining a light on problems…empowering people through education…. providing strength and resourcefulness through knowledge, truly was the greatest weapon…. And the greatest gift that she could ever share. Every generation… every country…. every county, city, and community has its share of social, economic, and political challenges, and this community has certainly not been an exception. Towards the end of the twentieth century, as my mother was finding her way on the social and political landscape, there was no lack of problems to attempt to resolve… actually, there was an ABUNDANCE of issues!!! While this country may be rich in natural resources, I don’t have to remind any of us that a great many of our countrymen live in poverty. There are issues of employment, government challenges, gender abuse, and economic insecurity (**Give more specific examples if necessary**). The challenges we face, like \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ unfortunately thrive in the darkness caused by ignorance. Somehow, my mother found the strength, gathered the resources, and managed to envision and actually build this school over twenty years ago. In 1995, it took courage and nerve and more than a little determination for a woman to commit to and complete such an enormous project, but that was my mother. She was unstoppable and her dedication to her mission of supporting others in finding their own inner strength was… and is… legendary. When the school opened in 1995, there were just \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ students. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ committed, curious, eager people that also knew that the way out of poverty and repression was through education. Those early charter students are now twenty two years older and have had a generation’s time to spread their light and to lead by example. (**If any of those original students are present, you can mention them and you can call out any achievements they have had**). People like \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ who \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ who impressed everyone when she \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are all part of the permanent legacy of (**Name the school**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. In twenty two years the school population has grown by \_\_\_\_\_%.... over the years \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ have attended…. That’s \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ people that continue to learn and grow, question and research…. and inspire future generations to continue to make a difference in this world.

Sadly, my mother passed away in 2009 after fighting a beast of a challenger…her biggest opponent in her life…. cancer. Through every step of her illness, she made a point of continuing to be exactly who she was….. she was a **warrior**…. She challenged…. She stood toe to to with the disease… and with every treatment and operation, she continued her life’s mission, which was to learn, to teach, and to give strength through education and social advocacy of women’s rights, and reform for those who are less privileged.

A poet once wrote the line, “I am part of all that I have met.” (**Name your mother**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ has left an indelible and permanent legacy. She is a part of every single person that has entered the doors of this school. She is a part of every lesson learned, and she is a part of every bit of wisdom to be taught and shared with future generations thanks to her dedication and vision. She is a part of **YOU**. I may be blessed to have her DNA, but she lives and breathes in the light of knowledge and progress inspired by the good work that continues in her honor in this school and beyond. I am so grateful to have had her as a mother and as my own personal guide through life, and I am so thankful to have been able to share that gift…. Her heart and soul and insight, with all of you. Let’s all vow to continue sharing her light and spreading her legacy for many years to come. Thank you all!