INTRODUCTION SPEECH

FOR

ANTOINETTE CHEEK

Speaker 1

Speaker 2

Speaker 1:

Hello everyone!! We want to thank you all for allowing us the privilege of saying a few words about a rare individual. Jonathan Swift said, “Vision is the art of seeing what is invisible to others.” Taken a step further, we can safely say it’s the mark of a true leader if he or she can take that vision, mine it, and make it tangible. Nine years ago, I had the great privilege to sit where you’re sitting now. I had recently graduated at the top of my class in the engineering program and thought my fate and future were sealed as I planned to go on to law school. As a business enthusiast and a student of leadership, I thought it would be an excellent career challenge to apply for this program. Little did I know that nine years later I would be a materials leader at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I will never forget when I was accepted to Leadership Delta. I knew it would be one of the most challenging experiences of my life thus far, but at the same time, when I began the course, I have to say, I had never experienced such an overwhelming sense that I was where I belonged, and I was truly in association with my peers. I remember calling my mother and feeling such unbridled emotion mixed with adrenalin, from meeting so many accomplished women with the generosity and willingness to support me in charting my course. The talent that surrounded me was truly mind blowing… I was a part of a group of intelligent, diligent, talented, and compassionate women that I could truly identify with …. and they all spoke of someone named Charles…. hmmmm…..

I joined \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in 2006 on the OMLP program and about 6 months later I had the privilege of meeting Charles at a networking event at the global symposium. He was present-in **every** sense of the word, and it was apparent that this was an extraordinary human being. The incredible thing about Mr. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is that he could (and sometimes should) be in a million other places in the world, but his vision and humanity allow him to recognize how essential it is to support those who will inherit the future. As a true leader, Charles identifies what is needed in the world and then formulates his plan and takes action. He is a champion of diversity and equality when it comes to global conversations and calls to action. He leads by example, insists on accountability, and his vision has an impact worldwide. From hiring women in places like Saudi Arabia to initiating major profit driving programs and instituting projects that donate products to improve health care in Africa…. and so much more, Charles \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ constantly works to make the world a better place for ALL of us and it is really a privilege to know him. Charles has left an indelible mark on Delta Sigma Theta and he is an honored member of our family… so much so, that he has received one of our highest honors for someone who is technically not a Delta, and that is the Centennial Corporate Leadership Award. Thanks in large part to Charles’ vision and insight, we are proud to say that never before have there been as many African American and women officers and senior executives in the history of this business and it is because of him that I am here today. No matter how busy his schedule may be, he has found the time to attend every meeting of the national affinity network symposium to leave his mark. He truly inspires with his leadership.

Speaker 2:

Thank you \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Your story brings to mind my very similar experience and I am sure that as many of us have completed programs like AKA Leadership Fellows and Leadership Delta, we can really relate to what you describe. When we consider that since 2002, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ has hired more than fifty talented members of these two programs, it’s probably safe to say that you are now part of a network from which the future of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ will be determined. Each one of you is here because you’ve evidenced yourselves as ready, willing and able to push to the next level. You are diligent, poised, intuitive. And for those of you with that special something, the sky is the limit. In his blog, Jeff, as the CEO of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ addresses the traits needed to succeed and as he encourages diversity and nurtures those who will hold \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ‘s future, he is also clear that one of the most important **distinguishing** factors needed to be an effective leader is the ability to stand apart; to gain perspective, to have a unique vantage point-and then to **ACT** on it. We have two stunning examples of that in both Jeff and Charles. I could go on all day… but I won’t…. it’s time to hear from the “Master.” It is our great privilege to introduce the CEO and Chairman of the Board of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, a man who inspires us each day, let’s welcome Charles \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Thank you!