



Broad Scholar Colleen Keller's Remarks at the 2005 Broad Prize

Thank you, Mr. Broad for that kind introduction.

I am honored to be here today with Mr. and Mrs. Broad, superintendents from across the country, Members of Congress, the U.S. Secretary of Education, and Boston Mayor Tom Menino—whom I interned with last summer! And it is because of the extraordinary philanthropy of the Broad family that I am able to be with you today.

As Mr. Broad said, I am a junior at George Washington University, and going to college has been an experience that has far exceeded my expectations.

I was raised by my mom—who is here today—and she always instilled in me the value of education. She encouraged me to excel and to set goals from a very early age. She taught me to love literature—she got me my first library card when I was 4—and she read to me every night.

When I was 13, my mother suffered a severe accident, which required neurosurgery and a lengthy recovery. My world was shattered. It broke my heart to come home from school to see my mother immobilized, slowly, slowly mending. Even though it was just the two of us, she still kept an optimistic view that this difficulty would not deter my determination to continue with my goals and aspirations for a college education.

During this time, I watched my mother struggle to find adequate assistance. Her fight to claim her social security benefits sparked my interest in the struggle of the disabled to find services, and I learned first hand of the discrimination this group faces on a daily basis. When I began looking for a college, I considered opportunities in law, politics, and social services. My goal was to study in another state, and given my interests, I wanted to be in the nation's capital, where policy is created and enacted.

When I found out that I had been accepted to my top choice school, I was both happy and anxious about being able to afford the dream. And then when I applied for and received a Broad Prize scholarship—in the amount of \$10,000—it was one of the happiest days in my life. I can honestly say that if I had not received that scholarship, I would not be attending George Washington University.

I want to thank my mom for all the support she's given me and the values she's instilled in me. I'd like to thank my teachers at Boston Public Schools who gave me my education foundation, and I'd like to thank Mr. and Mrs. Broad for making my dream of

a college education a reality. I want you to know that I will continue to work hard to make all of you proud.

Thank you.