



## **2009 Broad Prize Scholar Speaker Cindy Legagneur Remarks**

Thank you, Mayor Fenty. Mr. and Mrs. Broad, Secretary Duncan, Members of Congress, Mayor Fenty and distinguished guests—I am honored to be here with you today. I would like to begin by thanking everyone at The Broad Foundation for the opportunity to speak at this wonderful event.

Since I last spoke at The Broad Prize event two years ago, I have been inspired and motivated by many of you. It is an honor to speak to you and update you on my academic and professional activities since receiving The Broad Prize scholarship.

At that event, I told you about my background. I was born and raised in Boston—the only member of my family born in the United States. My parents immigrated to this country from Haiti in 1984 and worked hard to begin a new life. My mother worked as a nursing assistant and my father as a cab driver. I watched them struggle to give our family a better life than they had. They worked six days a week, often double shifts. But my parents always instilled in me the importance of education and hard work. Although neither of them went to college, they believed in me and supported my education.

I am now one of just five students who graduated from George Washington University in 2008 with a bachelor of science in statistics. During my senior year in college, I worked as a student research assistant with the Robert Graham Center, which focuses on important policy questions related to family physician services and primary care services. It was my first job within my major and it exposed me to the challenges of research and statistical programming.

After graduating, I took a year off to work as a faculty advisor for the National Young Leaders State Conference, where we facilitated leadership development workshops for middle school students across the nation. With this job, I had the opportunity to travel to many major U.S. cities and to solidify my interest in research and evaluation in an educational environment.

I then obtained a position at University of Massachusetts-Boston as a program assistant to the associate dean of research. I continued gaining experience in research, drafting proposals, and preparing for major university events.

During this time, I attended a two-day public policy conference at Harvard University. It was there that I met Dr. Tiffany Cooper, the CEO of BELL, Building Educated Leaders for Life. This

organization focuses on educating elementary and middle school students in under-resourced communities after school and during the summer. Dr. Cooper's work and ambition at a young age inspired me. Although I was working fulltime at UMass-Boston, I volunteered as an assistant to BELL's program evaluation manager, gaining more experience in statistical evaluation and surveying.

As I stand here this morning, I remember the day I learned that I received a \$10,000 Broad Prize scholarship. This was a pivotal moment in my life. It was not only financial assistance, but it also gave me the encouragement and ambition to continue reaching my full potential, and I owe this to The Broad Foundation.

This fall, I will attend George Washington University's Graduate Extended School for Survey Design and Data Analysis. Once I complete this program, I plan to enroll as a Ph.D. student for educational research and evaluation.

I recently joined KIPP D.C., part of KIPP's nationwide network of college preparatory charter schools, as the student data manager. I greatly appreciate working in an environment like KIPP, where dedicated educators and staff set high expectations for students from under-resourced areas.

I would like to once again thank The Broad Foundation. Your generous support continues to affect my life. Thank you.