

NSB REMARKS
Public Service Award
May 2007

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR THIS VERY SPECIAL
AWARD AND FOR THE HONOR BESTOWED ON ME.**

**CONGRATULATIONS ARE DUE BOTH TO THE
SELECTION COMMITTEE AND TO THE NATIONAL
SCIENCE BOARD—AS, I BELIEVE, THEY HAVE
EXERCISED GOOD JUDGMENT!**

**I AM HUMBLLED AND HONORED BY THIS AWARD
AND BY YOUR PRESENCE HERE THIS EVENING.**

**I AM THRILLED TO SEE SO MANY FAMILIAR FACES
AND TO ALSO MEET OTHERS WHO BELIEVE IN THE**

**MISSION OF NSF AND WHO CONVINCINGLY
ADVOCATE ACHIEVING ITS GOALS.**

**I KNOW FROM MY SIX YEARS OF SERVICE AS NSF
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR SCIENCE AND
ENGINEERING EDUCATION THAT NSF IS AMONG
THE VERY BEST AGENCIES IN OUR FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT.**

**MY EXPERIENCE AT NSF WAS RICH AND
REWARDING.**

**I AM PROUD OF WHAT I AND MY STAFF DID TO
PROMOTE AND EXPAND NSF'S ROLE IN RESEARCH
AND IN EDUCATION.**

**I AM HAPPY THAT MEMBERS OF MY FAMILY AND
CLOSE FRIENDS ARE HERE TONIGHT: MY WIFE
JUNE..... AND MY DAUGHTER ELIZABETH.**

**ELIZABETH WILL GRADUATE FROM THE
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON NEXT
SUNDAY AND IN THE FALL SHE WILL ENROLL AT
MICHIGAN LAW SCHOOL.**

**MY SISTER AMAHL CAME ALL THE WAY FROM
CALIFORNIA, BUT HER HUSBAND FRANK DRAKE
DIDN'T.**

**FRANK IS THE FATHER OF SETI-THE SEARCH FOR
EXTRATERRESTRIAL INTELLIGENCE - I TRIED TO**

**TELL HIM THAT NO SIGNAL IS LIKELY TO COME
TONIGHT.**

**HE SAID WHEN YOU DO RESEARCH YOU HAVE TO
BE VIGIL!**

**MY SISTER MAHA AND HER HUSBAND VICTOR ARE
HERE.**

**FROM MADISON, MY CLOSE FRIENDS GEORGE AND
CANDY GIALAMAS AND MY COLLEAGUE FLEMING
CRIM;**

**MY CLOSE FRIEND RANDY GUSCHL FROM THE
DUPONT CENTER FOR COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH
AND EDUCATION.**

5

**THANK YOU ALL FOR SHARING THIS HAPPY
MOMENT IN MY LIFE.**

**VERY SPECIAL THANKS GO TO MY LONG TIME
COLLABORATOR AND FRIEND ROD SCHREINER—
WITHOUT HIM I WOULD NOT BE HERE TONIGHT.**

**I GRATEFULLY ACCEPT THE PUBLIC SERVICE
AWARD..... I CONSIDER IT TO BE A CHARGE TO
MAINTAIN MY EFFORTS TO ADVANCE SCIENCE AND
TO COMMUNICATE ITS VALUE TO THE GENERAL
PUBLIC.**

I RESPECTFULLY REQUEST THE NATIONAL

SCIENCE BOARD TO CONSIDER ENABLING
RECIPIENTS OF THIS GREAT HONOR TO FURTHER
PURSUE THEIR CHARGE, AS APPROPRIATE.

ADVANCING KNOWLEDGE CAN BE DEEPLY
REWARDING TO EVERYONE.

TO THE RESEARCHER.... AND ALSO TO OTHERS.....
AS ENLIGHTENMENT HELPS SATISFY PERSONAL
CURIOSITY.

AND ENLIGHTENMENT ALSO CAN LEAD TO
INVENTIONS TO IMPROVE THE HUMAN CONDITION
AND TO SERVE SOCIETY.

I URGE MY FELLOW SCIENTISTS TO COMMIT
THEMSELVES TO PROMOTING SCIENCE LITERACY.

**SCIENCE LITERACY IS NECESSARY FOR THE
DEMOCRATIC PROCESS TO WORK.**

**I MAKE A DISTINCTION BETWEEN *SCIENTIFIC
LITERACY*, EXPERTISE IN A PARTICULAR FIELD,
AND *SCIENCE LITERACY*, A BROAD APPRECIATION
AND UNDERSTANDING OF SCIENCE AND ITS
PRACTITIONERS, AND OF WHAT SCIENCE IS
CAPABLE OF ACHIEVING AND WHAT IT CANNOT
ACCOMPLISH.**

**SCIENCE LITERACY ENLIGHTENS AND ENABLES
PEOPLE TO MAKE INFORMED CHOICES, TO BE
SKEPTICAL, AND TO REJECT SHAMS, QUACKERY,**

UNPROVEN CONJECTURE, AND TO AVOID BEING BAMBOOZLED INTO MAKING FOOLISH DECISIONS WHERE MATTERS OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ARE CONCERNED.

SCIENCE LITERACY IS FOR EVERYONE – SCIENTISTS, ARTISTS, HUMANISTS, ALL PROFESSIONALS, THE GENERAL PUBLIC, YOUTH AND ADULTS ALIKE.

BY SCIENCE LITERACY, I MEAN LITERACY IN TECHNOLOGY, IN SCIENCE, AND IN MATHEMATICS. AND SPEAKING OF LITERACY IN MATHEMATICS, I AM SO PLEASED THAT “NUMBERS” IS ALSO BEING RECOGNIZED TONIGHT.

I'D LIKE TO SHARE WITH A STORY THAT RELATES TO MATHEMATICAL LITERACY.

IT'S A STORY ABOUT A STUDENT ATHLETE WHO WAS HAVING TROUBLE MAINTAINING HIS ELIGIBILITY AND HIS COACH WENT TO THE MATH TEACHER AND SAID, "PLEASE GIVE MY STUDENT A CHANCE TO MAINTAIN HIS ELIGIBILITY, OTHERWISE, HE IS GOING TO GO OFF THE TEAM AND WE WILL END UP NOT GOING TO A POST SEASON TOURNAMENT."

THE TEACHER AGREED TO GIVE THE STUDENT A SPECIAL TEST AND THE COACH ASKED, "MAY I COME ALONG?" THE TEACHER SAID, "YES".

AT THE APPOINTED HOUR THE STUDENT AND HIS COACH CAME TO THE TEACHER'S OFFICE AND THE TEACHER PROCEEDED TO ADMINISTER A SPECIAL EXAM.

THE FIRST QUESTION WAS, "WHAT IS THE SQUARE ROOT OF 16?" THE STUDENT SAID "4".

THE COACH IMMEDIATELY SAID, "OH, PLEASE GIVE HIM ANOTHER CHANCE, PLEASE GIVE HIM ANOTHER CHANCE!"

SOME TIME AGO I SHARED THIS SAME STORY WITH A GROUP OF LAWYERS AND UNLIKE YOUR REACTION, THERE WAS DEAD SILENCE.

ABOUT 23 SECONDS LATER, SOMEONE IN THE BACK OF THE ROOM WAS HEARD CHUCKLING; HE HAD TAKEN OUT HIS POCKET CALCULATOR.....

WHEN I SPEAK OF LITERACY IN SCIENCE I MEAN LITERACY FOR EVERYONE –LAWYERS, BUSINESS PEOPLE, PROFESSIONALS, THE GENERAL PUBLIC— YES, EVERYONE!

AS WE WORK HARD TO PROMOTE ADVANCING SCIENCE AND ACHIEVING SCIENCE LITERACY WE MUST ALSO ACCEPT THE AWESOME RESPONSIBILITY TO BE HUMANE IN EVERYTHING WE DO AND TO BE HUMANITARIAN IN OUR PERSONAL AND COLLECTIVE BEHAVIOR.

I CLOSE BY READING WHAT IS INSCRIBED AT THE

**STEEPLE OF ST. MARGARETS CHURCH IN GOTHA
(GERMANY.) THIS WAS WRITTEN IN 1784 AT THE
OCCASION OF THE CELEBRATION OF THE
PROGRESS OF THE 100 YEARS AFTER SIR ISAAC
NEWTON. THE AUTHOR IS NOT IDENTIFIED AND
THIS IS A FREE TRANSLATION FROM THE GERMAN:**

**“HATRED BORN OF DOGMA AND COMPULSION OF
CONSCIENCE SINK AWAY; LOVE OF HUMANITY
AND FREEDOM OF THOUGHT GAIN THE UPPER
HAND.**

**THE ARTS AND SCIENCES BLOSSOM AND OUR
VISION INTO THE WORKSHOP OF NATURE GOES
DEEP.**

**ARTISANS APPROACH ARTISTS IN PERFECTION;
USEFUL SKILLS FLOWER AT ALL LEVELS.**

**HERE YOU HAVE A FAITHFUL PORTRAIT OF OUR
TIME.**

**LOOK NOT SO PROUDLY DOWN UPON US,.....BUT
RATHER RECOGNIZE FROM THIS PICTURE HOW
WITH COURAGE, STRENGTH, PERSEVERANCE AND
LOVE WE RAISED AND SUPPORTED YOUR
STANDARD.**

**DO THE SAME FOR THOSE WHO COME AFTER
YOU..... AND REJOICE!"**

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I THANK YOU DEEPLY
FOR THIS GREAT HONOR AND I ASK YOU TO ACT
ON YOUR CONVICTIONS TO ADVANCE SCIENCE**

14

**AND TO COMMUNICATE ITS VALUE TO THE
GENERAL PUBLIC.**

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.