

Letter for the Editor

Too often in the rush of everyday living, we leave important words unsaid. Therefore, the Coalition Executive Committee members, Journal Editorial Board members, and several colleagues want to make sure that you, Dr. Barbara A. Holland, understand exactly how much we appreciate you as the executive editor of the Metropolitan Universities Journal, as a staunch advocate for the metropolitan/urban university, and as a devoted friend.

We know how difficult saying goodbye to a father is, even when he has lived 85 years. On Jan. 30, 2005, when James Edward Holland passed away, he left you as a tremendous legacy of his life-long work as an educator, both as a professor at the University of Missouri-Columbia and as a superintendent in Arkansas and Missouri.

When asked to say a few words about you, so many people responded with eloquent comments that we cannot possibly include them all here because of space limitations. Suffice it to say that your impact on those with whom you interact is unilaterally positive as well as lasting; and your reputation as the journal's executive editor is stellar. The following was written to recognize the very special woman you are.

Barbara Holland: Executive editor of the journal

After having worked on the journal with your mentor, Dr. Ernest Lynton, you assumed editorial responsibility at his request with a mandate to maintain high quality content and to increase readership. You continue to fulfill your promises to Dr. Lynton with each issue.

In terms of your importance to the journal and your dedication to the work of the Coalition, Dr. Nancy Belck, chancellor of the University of Nebraska at Omaha and immediate past president of the Coalition, summarized our feelings best when she said:

“Quite simply, you are the heart and soul of the Metropolitan Universities Journal and the Coalition’s unofficial ‘keeper of the flame.’ Your complete understanding of the opportunities and challenges faced by urban

institutions keeps this publication on the cutting edge of research within the discipline. Like your mentor and predecessor, Dr. Ernest Lynton, you have dedicated considerable professional energies toward taking the journal to the forefront of national higher education publications. You keep the Coalition forward-focused and are a strong proponent of the metropolitan advantage offered by our institutions. If organizations are fortunate, there are within their ranks consummate professionals who hold the organizational vision within their hearts. For the Coalition, you are that person; and we salute and thank you for your devotion and service.”

Dr. Joel E. Anderson, chancellor of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock and a member of the Coalition’s executive committee, added:

“As executive editor of Metropolitan Universities Journal, you have been a worthy heir to Ernest Lynton. I look forward to every issue and am always rewarded with something of considerable value to me. You grasp the issues our universities face and know the politics, as few people do, from the campus to the federal level. No one knows the history of the Coalition better than you do.”

Dr. Alfred F. Hurley, chancellor emeritus of the University of North Texas and past president of the Coalition, said:

“A growing number of us support the Coalition and its mission as best we can, but who does more for those objectives than you do through your talented leadership of our journal? Only someone with your tireless dedication could ensure that the Coalition continues to have such a strong intellectual cornerstone. Most importantly, only someone with your very human touch can carry out this demanding administrative responsibility in a way that promotes involvement with the journal and the Coalition.”

Mark Langseth, executive director of Minnesota Campus Compact, noted your dedication and persistent involvement in “all things urban” when he said:

“Your tireless, yet always thoughtful, contributions on behalf of civic engagement are a perfect match for the journal, for the Coalition, and most importantly, for the future of metropolitan higher education. Indeed, your choice

to take on the journal's editing role is a reflection of your commitment to be an ever-mindful steward of your own impressive resources. James Edward Holland is surely resting as a supremely proud father."

Speaking as an editorial board member for the journal, Dr. Mary E. Mazey, dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Wright State University, said:

"Without your continuous dedication, the journal would not be where it is today. All of us who believe in the metropolitan missions of our institutions are deeply indebted to you for the time and effort you have given to the metropolitan movement."

Barbara Holland: Staunch advocate for the metropolitan/urban university

Former Coalition Secretary/Treasurer Samuel A. Kirkpatrick's remarks best depict the significant impact you have had on the growing importance of civic engagement and the urban/metropolitan university's role in changing American society.

Dr. Kirkpatrick, senior fellow, American Association of State Colleges and Universities, said:

"Many universities have been transformed through your depth of knowledge about how high performing institutions operate, about the complex factors shaping community outreach, about the role of the government as a partner in revitalizing cities, and about best practices in service learning. You have accomplished this through persistent involvement; your work as a role model in universities, the government, and the association worlds; and through your steady hand in guiding the development of the Coalition and its influential journal. Your impact throughout the academy and our communities will endure and serve as a fitting legacy in honor of your father."

Dr. Daniel M. Johnson, president of the University of Toledo and former member of the Coalition executive committee, expressed his appreciation for everything you have done to advance metropolitan higher education over the years. He said:

“Through your leadership and support, all of us who identify with and advocate for our metropolitan universities have been able to do a better job, achieve greater progress, and have greater clarity of vision. For more than a decade, you have given us the tools to develop mission statements, launch strategic plans, and initiate programs that reflect the essence of metropolitan universities.”

Journal editorial board member Jan Temple, acting director for regional development at the University of Western Sydney, noted that you are an adjunct professor at UWS whose advice is valued above all others in the field of civic engagement. She said:

“You came to the UWS at a time when we were just beginning to define and develop our commitment to community engagement. You were a whirlwind of enthusiasm and expertise, which I relished and devoured like a child in a candy store. You enabled us to tell the Australian story in the July 2003 issue of the Metropolitan Universities Journal. No one could have put us on center stage the way you did. You were also critical to the formation of the Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance, a group similar in mission to the Coalition, the steering committee that I currently chair.”

Dr. John W. Schaerer, assistant to the chancellor and director, Riverbend Technology Institute, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, and a member of the journal’s editorial board, spoke of your dedication to the “cause:”

“An advocate of the engaged metropolitan university, your commitment and devotion are relentless. Your pen and presence always communicate a reality of today and the future as universities are transformed, yet grounded in long-standing principles. These characteristics manifested daily through your work reflect a legacy of your father’s life that I am confident will become your gifts to those who follow.”

Coalition Vice President Dr. Robert L. Caret, who also is president of Towson University, described the Coalition as a family that has grown over the years. He added:

“You have been part of that family; and we therefore feel, as family members should, that we are part of your grieving. It is through the ebbs and flows of life that we continue to

grow and evolve, that our perspectives will continue to broaden, and that we move forward together.”

Coalition President, Dr. James C. Votruba, president of Northern Kentucky University, said:

“You have an enormous capacity to love. You love your work. You love your friends and colleagues, and you retain a special loyalty and love for your family. You recently lost your father with whom you were very close. Those of us who love you extend our deepest sympathies. You mean so much to so many, and we are grateful for all that you contribute to our coalition and our sense of professional purpose. No one is more eloquent or compelling in expressing our special mission.”

Barbara Holland: Devoted friend

To conclude this tribute, we have chosen comments from two of your closest friends whose words, we hope, will bring you comfort and strength.

Dr. Sherrill B. Gelmon, professor at the Mark O. Hatfield School of Government, Portland State University, said:

“Parents play an important role in shaping their children’s values, views of the world, and general orientation in working within society. When a parent is a professional, and a child is creative, inquisitive, and observant, it is inevitable that some of the parent’s professional values and skills rub off on that child. I did not know your father; but given his professional background, and working closely with you today, I cannot help but suspect that your father nurtured many of your qualities. These include your commitment to learning; your determination to expand our collective knowledge and better understand how what we do in higher education affects our students, our communities, our faculty, and our institutions; your humility and reluctance to take center stage; and your own deep knowledge of higher education institutions and your willingness to share that knowledge and help to teach others. Your father would be very proud of his daughter — and we all benefit from our work with you, and from his contribution to who you are today.”

Dr. Judith A. Ramaley, president at Winona State University and your long-time friend and mentor, conveyed what all of us want you to know:

“As you tell stories about your father, James Holland, a picture emerges of a man who gave to others with an open heart and with abiding generosity. The example of his life surely lives on in the spirit and habits of all the people he touched, most especially you, his daughter. Like your father, you listen carefully to what others say and, by so doing, grant to them a voice and a standing that encourages them to explore, to think, and to see that actions do have consequences. James Holland was a lifelong educator, a man who demonstrated by his own actions and values that he was aware of his duty to guide and encourage others. Like father, like daughter.”

Barbara, history will record your numerous contributions to society, higher education, metropolitan and urban universities, service learning, community engagement, and collaboration as significant ones; and your life will make the Holland family legacy noteworthy.

Our best to you always,
Dr. Martha W. Tack
Coalition Administrator and
Senior Executive for Presidential Initiatives
Eastern Michigan University