

Opening Ceremonies Speech for Black History Month
February 2, 1996 Charles Sydnor

Good Afternoon everyone. I do hope you ^{are enjoying} ~~have~~ enjoyed
our opening ceremonies for what I expect to be
a spectacular Month here at Hopkins!

I would like to thank everyone who has

involved themselves in the preparation of this
celebration. It took a lot of hardwork and dedication
by numerous nameless hands to make this event what it
has manifested into today. And I thank you all from
the bottom of my heart.

I am a firm believer in not allowing efforts to

be taken for granted. Today I stand here because of the dedication and action of my predecessors against an unequal educational system which largely locked them out. For their actions they received curses, threats, and many other thorns within their hands, as they tried to pass the flower of opportunity, 3

to generations walking after them. And they ~~did~~ accomplished

that! The stems are not as thorny today. They

won! They won... for me, the privilege to attend

a local high school which up until 1952 never allowed

a ^{qualified} black student to attend. For those of you who know

Dr. Vernon Savage, his older brother was one of those y

pioneer trailblazers. And today, I ~~attend~~ ^{am privileged} to attend (5)

The Johns Hopkins University. To think, it was

just 1945 that the first black student was given the

opportunity to attend Hopkins as an undergraduate. These

nameless people won opportunities for ~~@~~ us all. Please

don't let their efforts be in vain, keep up the fight.

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Behind the scenes there has been a lot of work done to put together this year's celebration. If you have seen the pamphlets and the posters, I believe the events speak for themselves. In closing, I ~~make~~ ^{make} a very simple request. Please come to our future events, learn a little about our country's

history, and by your participation ②
demonstrate to us that our efforts
were not in vain. Thank you!