

Banking on the Future: They're All Our Children

by vcmorris - Thursday, November 04, 2010

<http://thethinpinkline.com/2010/11/04/banking-on-the-future-theyre-all-our-children/>

My grandmother always said: "Children are God's opinion the world should continue." I've believed that to be true for a very long time. Last week in New York with the brilliant, young, African-American scholars of the Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCf), I was reminded of why that thought strikes such a chord for me.

My husband and I spent four days with the 600 student scholars chosen to participate in the TMCf 2010 Leadership Institute: "Preparing the Next Generation of Leaders". They were and are amazing. Though we were there to give them the benefit of our acquired knowledge – we left carrying the glow of their youthful enthusiasm and the deliberateness with which they are creating their futures. How fortunate we feel to have been in their midst and how confident we are about the legacies they will build.

TMCf is named after Thurgood Marshall, the first African-American Supreme Court Justice. It represents 47 public Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), and their 235,000 students located in 22 states, the District of Columbia and the U.S. Virgin Islands. The Fund has awarded more than \$100 million in scholarships and support to students attending the member schools (www.thurgoodmarshallfund.org).

The student scholars all came prepared. They arrived with business cards that not only gave their name and contact information – but their field of study and graduation date. These young students were leaving no chance for missed opportunities. They attended my financial education workshop – on time and in tune with the importance of becoming and staying money savvy. They asked well thought out, relevant questions. They provided each other with some age appropriate money experiences, *mi\$\$ed-takes*, how they got back on track and doable, concrete suggestions on how to stay on track.

Less than a few hours after my seminar concluded – not one, not two but three of them independently found me, thanked me for what they'd learned in the seminar and handed me an envelope. Inside – their business card and a neatly written thank you note, specifically mentioning a point I had made during my seminar that particularly resonated with them. I was touched and truly impressed. They were the contingent of honor students from Tennessee State University.

Their faculty advisor had done his job exceedingly well. Dr. William U. Latham, PhD., Associate Director of Tennessee State's University Honors Program had impressed upon them that they were in the midst of 600 *equally superior* students and that they needed to distinguish themselves from the competition. These thank you notes were acts of courtesy that made each of them even more memorable in the midst of such an impressive group of young adults.

Robert and I believe that young people must be embraced with the mindset that they are all our children; that they are all worthy of our time and energy; that they are the bright future and that their transitions from college or graduate school into the workplace will be successful ones.

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In his luncheon keynote address to nearly 1000 (which included the students, corporate sponsors and other speakers), Robert's topic: "Global Leadership and Dynamic Capabilities". He told the students that anyone *could* lead but not everyone *should* follow - so he encouraged them to become a leader of one. He told them that the future is here – it's just not evenly distributed - so claim their place and space and create new jobs that will serve them and the global community well. He used job titles that hadn't been heard before – such as smart connected net zero communities architect; galactic commerce specialist; and alternative and sustainable energy sources expert.

He repeatedly asked: "Are you the one?" “

"Are you the one who will develop a cure for cancer? Are you the one who will come up with the answer to combat sickle cell or heart disease? Are you the one who will be among the first residents of a lunar colony? Are you the one who will create a new economic, educational or government model?"

"Are you the one?" he asked again and again – to which – by the end of his hour-long address – this audience of bright, forward-thinking students began calling out: "Yes! I'm the one!"

These children reminded me of what my grandmother said. They are God's opinion the world should continue. These children will bring the messages they learned at the 2010 Leadership Institute to others because they are truly part of the leading edge creating the 21st century world in which they will live.

Here's to your health and wealth.

My book "MIND OVER MONEY MATTERS: It's Your Money So Take It Personally"™ is available for

http://www.amazon.com/Mind-Over-Money-Matters-Personally/dp/0982758812/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&sr=8-1

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