

Thank you – God, Family, Friends, Supporters

I want to take a moment and thank the Good Lord Up Above for all his blessings. This life we live, each and every day, is only by His grace and His goodness and for that, I am thankful. To the Council members, Supreme Court Justices, Administrative Court justices, and other dignities from across the region (lawmakers, court officials, law enforcement, and others), thank you all for being here tonight. To the family members and friends of those in attendance, thank you for taking the time to join us. Although we continue to battle COVID, I am pleased that Chancellor Cummings and his team here, at UNCP, have worked with us to host this ceremony. I look forward to our great partnership. COVID has really hit our community hard, again, and we have to remain vigilant and be smart about COVID. We have members who are in the hospital battling COVID, so continue to be smart and remember that the decision we make, just like limiting the number of individuals here tonight and practicing social distancing, we are doing it because it is best for the community as a whole. Thank you to those who have joined us via the internet from across the Country. Thank you to the Lumbee

Tribal employees and volunteers who worked hard to make this event a success and the GPAC and UNCP employees, I am grateful to you all!

I want to thank my wife Jessica for her patience, love, and understanding over the course of the campaign. You have been steadfast and strong and I appreciate your advice on a daily basis. I want to thank my children, John and Jenna, for their love and the joy they bring to me each and every day. I missed a lot of time with them over this year and I truly appreciate their understanding and for not getting rid of me. I love all three of you!

To my Mom, thank you for all your love and support throughout the years. You have been there when no one else was there and you always made sure my brother and I were taken care of. We always had a roof over our heads, clothes on our backs, and food on the table and I thank you for that!

To my Dad, thanks for all your support during the campaign. I could always count on you to be there when needed. Whether it was helping to

cook steaks, handing out cards, or letting me use your truck to move stuff, you always showed up and I'm thankful for that.

To my brother, we have been through life together and we have always had each other's back. I truly appreciate your hard work, your guidance, your dedication, and your ability to connect me with others. I love you.

To my grandparents, I miss you, I love you, and I am appreciative for everything that you have passed down to me. All your stories, lessons learned, and characteristics, I am forever grateful.

Thank you to all of my aunts, uncles, cousins and close friends who are here tonight. Your support throughout my life is what helped mold and shape me to be the person I am today.

To my supporters, who I will not name individually as I am bound to miss someone, THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!! I am only able to stand here tonight because of your hard work and support.

We have the best folks in the world and it was a pure pleasure to work with you towards this goal. Thank you all for believing in me and for believing in my vision for the future of our tribe. People got involved

because they cared about the future of the tribe as a whole and not because of individual political gain and that was truly inspiring to me. Thank you all for making our campaign a campaign of US and WE and not I or ME.

Acknowledging Chairman Godwin – Hurricanes, COVID

Chairman Godwin, I want to take a moment and thank you for your service to our people. Your term consisted of 2 hurricanes and a pandemic and your ability to guide the tribe through these tumultuous events will solidify your place in Lumbee history. As someone who believes we should honor our institutions and those who serve in those capacities, I say thank you for putting your name on the line, for sacrificing your time and efforts, along with sharing your talents with the Lumbee people. Thank you to your family for allowing you to serve our Tribe.

Path forward – Being Strategic with Our Funds, with Housing, with Customer Service, 10-20-50-100 Years Down the Road, Economic Impact Study, Utilizing Our Resources

One item that I constantly touched on during the campaign was the need for our tribe to be Strategic. Our ability to look forward and be proactive

is something we need to strive to do on a daily basis. Throughout Native cultures, we refer to the 7th generation as how far out we plan, but as many of you have heard me say, my oldest grandparent was born in 1919. We all know that 2019 was 3 years ago, so in my opinion, we need to know and understand that our decisions today will “easily” touch our grandchildren and great grandchildren 100 years from now. So strategically, I will work with the Tribal Council to focus on 20 to 50 to 100 years down the road. Where will our housing program be 100 years from now, what about our youth services, how about our health services or elders and Veterans’ services. What will the tribe be doing in the education and agriculture arena 100 years from now? What is our economic impact and how are we utilizing our resources and partnering with others to expand their programs and resources? It takes vision, creativity, and the belief that tomorrow will be better than today in order for our tribal government to truly be strategic. I am calling on the Tribal Council to work with me and let us begin to build a tribal apparatus that will carry on long after everyone in this building has passed away from the earth.

Working With Our Council

As someone who has prior service on the Tribal Council, I believe I am in a good position to work with you all as we work towards your goals for your districts and the Tribe as a whole. My hope is to effectively communicate with the Council while we engage in the dialogue necessary to debate the future of our Tribe. My belief is that if we treat one another with respect and agree to disagree, then we will be in a position to come back to the table on the next item and work to move forward together. We will not always agree 100% of the time, but we can keep each other updated and informed and treat each other with the dignity that most of the Lumbee people expect from their tribal leaders.

Modernizing Our Government

Another item that I discussed frequently on the campaign trail was to work with the Tribal Council to get them staff to assist them in their duties to draft, debate, and pass ordinances and resolution related to the governing of our Tribe and our people. The Tribal Council needs staff to help with research, writing, and understanding the different issues they

are tasked to work on. Our Council is the lawmaking arm of our tribe and yet they do not have a lawyer on staff that works directly with or for them. This must change and I am offering to assist the Tribal Council to eventually get them fully staffed.

I was pleased to learn that in the recent budget that the Tribal Council passed and the Chairman signed in to law, money was set aside to give the Supreme Court Justices a stipend. This is much needed and I commend the Chairman and Council on this matter. Also, the Supreme Court, just like our Tribal Council, needs staff to assist them with case preparation and opinion writing. I will work with the Court and the Tribal Council on this matter as well.

Like many of you, I heard the stories regarding enrollment and the time it took to get an updated card or to enroll for the first time. It is time we update the computer software that is being used in the Enrollment office to bring them into the modern era. The ability to get a card renewed should be seamless. The effort to become enrolled and be able to take the Lumbee History course on the same day is very much needed,

especially for those individuals living outside of the Lumbee Tribal Territory. One of my priorities will be to make updating your card a lot less cumbersome for tribal citizens and to equip our staff with the tools they need to make getting your card a lot less of a burden on everyone. The last item on enrollment, we will launch a campaign to encourage parents to enroll their children early on. Too many times I have seen grownups trying to chase down birth certificates, learn lineage charts, and remember names of ancestors long gone. If we can have parents enroll their children at a young age, then those children do not become 30, 40, and 50 years old adults trying to enroll for the first time. Let's enroll our children now to lessen the burden on them when they are older.

Overall, we need to modernize our government and make sure we are using the technology of the day and putting processes in place for 2022 and beyond. If we want to attract talented folks to continue to run for Tribal Council or be appointed to the different boards and committees, we must move to pay them stipends for their time and efforts.

Volunteering hundreds of hours a year, to the tribe, without a dime should be unheard of as we move forward. Yes, we know individuals want to volunteer out of love, but when gas prices are moving closer to \$4 every day and inflation is pushing food prices past anything that looks normal, we must position the tribe to pay those who are willing to give of their time and talent for the betterment of our people.

Out of Territory Lumbees

I just mentioned out of territory Lumbees and I want to reiterate what I said on the campaign trail. We will work to provide services to those who are out of the territory, when we are able. Not all programs can serve those outside the four counties, but those that can, we will work to ensure everyone has access. I will designate a staff person or persons to handle out of territory phone calls and program delivery. We will travel outside of the territory to offer services and to conduct outreach. With the modern conveniences of laptops, cellphones, and Wi-Fi hot spots, I will make sure that we are working to get out of these four counties and meet with our folks in places such as the Triad, the Triangle, Baltimore, Atlanta, and Detroit just to name a few. We should not look down upon

those who have moved away, but we should look towards them to provide us with the resources and knowledge they have gathered since they left their homelands. As someone who spent 7 years outside of the territory, I understand the desire of those who have moved away to still want to know and feel that they are a part of our Tribe. Also, I would like to announce that my first trip to visit out of territory Lumbees will be during the Martin Luther King Jr. weekend as I take the drive up I-95 to visit with our relatives in Baltimore. I look forward to visiting our people and will plan future trips into other communities outside the territory.

Communication

During my time in office, we will look at ways to expand our communication efforts to reach Tribal citizens. We will continue the tribe's current usage of social media and also look to do a bi-monthly or quarterly newsletter that will go into individual mailboxes. As Chairman, I will do a monthly or bi-monthly write up to discuss our efforts and what the tribe is doing to assist our citizens. Communication

is key and we will strive to reach as many as possible while being clear, concise, and unambiguous in our messages.

Creating Advisory Councils – Agriculture, Health Care (Medical and Behavioral), Adoption and Foster Care, Missing and Murdered Lumbee Women and Men, Drugs, Mental health

One area that I am going to immediately ask the Tribal Council to help me with is in the creation of a few temporary advisor committees. These advisory committees will consist of Tribal members with experience and knowledge in certain sectors. These committees will be tasked with providing realistic recommendations to the Council and myself that we can work to put into place. We will create an advisory committee around Agriculture to look at ways we can help our farmers and ranchers in the production and marketing of their products. We will create an advisory committee to focus on Health Care, both physical and behavioral care along with drug addiction. Our people are suffering with a lot of health issues that are both physical and mental and we need realistic items that we can focus on to assist those in need. Another committee will focus on Adoption and Foster Care as the Tribe looks to be more involved in ensuring that our children in the system are protected and cared for. A

committee will be created to look at Missing and Murdered Lumbee Women and Men. We have a lot of families who need answers today and I want the tribe to be a partner with our law enforcement friends and those within the justice system to help put together the pieces needed to solve these issues. In the past, the tribe established youth councils and I want us to re-establish those youth councils to allow our young people an opportunity to discuss their needs and the future of the Tribe. Our youth is the next generation of leaders and it is imperative that we focus on building their foundation so they are equipped with the tools and knowledge they need when it is their time to become the next chairman, the next Supreme Court Justice, or the next election board member. Too many times our people have concentrated on keeping power to themselves and their generation, but it is my belief that we need to empower the next generation and not hold them back from what greatness they can accomplish for our Tribe going forward.

Travel and Tourism

Travel and Tourism throughout Indian Country has led to a lot of growth for Tribal communities. This is one area we, as a tribe, can work with

local partners to promote our history, culture, and knowledge to not only teach the world but to create economic opportunities. Whether we are talking about kayaking and canoeing on the Lumbee River, a Living Village at the Cultural Center, or the promotion of local arts and crafts by our artisans, we need to cultivate and promote our territory and what all we have to offer to our Non-Lumbee friends.

The world needs to know about our pine straw baskets, our jewelry, our recipes, our musicians, our paintings, and so many more of our talents.

This can only be done with a true emphasis on tourism and understanding that we can share our talents without compromising who we are, as a people.

Legislative Priorities/Federal Recognition

When it comes time to work with the North Carolina General Assembly and the United States Congress, I will collaborate with the Tribal Council to ensure we have our priorities together and ready to be brought before our representatives in both entities. We must be in a place to not only tell the General Assembly and Congress what we need,

but to also follow up and constantly advocate for our needs and our causes. We are our best promoter, but we will not receive unless we are at the table and not only asking for a piece, but asking for the entire meal. One of those areas of priority is our full federal recognition. I campaigned on being more aggressive and assertive when it comes to our congressional efforts. I also campaigned on the belief that we need to truly consider all efforts to achieve our full federal recognition. I have already begun to look at options, such as legal movements which could put us in a place to pursue some type of legal actions against the United States Government. We have been pursuing federal recognition for going on 134 years, and it is time that the United States live up to their promises to us as Lumbee people. In the 1930s, our people worked very closely with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to have land put into trust and to modernize our government. We have letters from John Collier, BIA Director, and Felix Colin, a lawyer for the Department of Interior and is known as the father of modern day Indian law. These correspondents and the promises made to our people during the beginnings of the Indian Reorganization Act need to be thoroughly combed through to determine

what steps we can take to challenge the Federal government. I do not want to lose another elder who is not considered a true American Indian by the United States.

Elders/Veterans/ Other Areas

Our Elders have paved the way for us as a tribe. They have faced adversity that my generation and future generations will not have to deal with. They dealt with the Jim Crow south, double voting, unfair hiring practices and the loss of land. They have also dealt with a federal government that continues to consider them less than a full Indian. With that being said, it is my goal to get our employees out of the office and into our communities (once COVID has eased up) so our elders, on certain days, do not have to drive to Pembroke to apply for services. We have Boys and Girls Clubs, community buildings, and churches that we can utilize to get our employees closer to our citizens. Being out in the community will ease the travel time for a lot of our elders and help those who depend on others for transportation. I believe it is important to work with our elders to capture their stories. Each time an elder passes away, we lose those family stories, recipes, herbal remedies, and so much

more. I want the tribe to work with UNCP and other educational institutions to capture our elders and to preserve their words for future generations. Some of our elders are being hindered from receiving rehab services because they have too much in assets. It is my intention to do dissolve the asset standard for our elders. Our elders should not be penalized because they have worked hard their entire life and have a little property or a little money in the bank. If their roof is leaking, we should not ask them how much land they own, we should ask them how soon can we get someone over there to help with the roof.

We owe a great debt to our veterans. Our veterans have made sacrifices, demonstrated commitment, and shown unselfishness in the protection and service to our country and our tribe. I will work with our Veteran Service Office to ensure we are using modern technology to reach our veterans and to ensure continued efficiencies with our services. I want us to build relationship with veteran organizations that can grow our veteran services and provide support for spouses and family members of our veterans. Like we did during my time with North Carolina

Commerce with the creation of a Veteran representative to serve those with barriers to employment, we can enter into new agreements to create additional positions to serve other areas of need for our veterans, who have given so much.

There are many other areas that I would like to highlight. Areas such as broadband, housing, education, assisting those with disabilities, creating relationships with other Federally Recognized tribes, protecting our natural resources and historic preservation, engagement at the National level on Tribal affairs, Strike at the Wind, economic development, healthier living, community development, a Lumbee Bar Association for our lawyers, a Lumbee Small Business Network, creation of a non-profit foundation for our youth services, a Lumbee Policy institute, our partnerships with the local public schools, highlighting our Lumbee athletes, and much more, but I do not want to keep us here for another hour. During my term, we will have to address each of these areas and I will work with our tribal council and community partners to ensure we

make the right decision not just for today but with an eye towards tomorrow.

Why are We Proud To Be Lumbee/ Conclusion

As Lumbees, we have so much to be proud of. Our ancestors fought the Confederate Home Guard when they took our property, accused us of stealing, and killed our people. Our ancestors created an education system that began with the institution we now call UNCP. They deemed education important and did what they had to do to ensure Lumbee children received an education. When they would not let us preach and teach the gospel, we created our own denomination. We built a bank, when we wanted to have our own financial options and opportunities. We ran for office, when we knew we needed to stand for ourselves and represent ourselves. As Lumbees, we are craftsmen, we are educators, we are preachers, we are lawyers, we are health care workers, we are day care workers, we are scientist, we are engineers, we are business owners, we are farmers, we are artist, we are musicians, we are warriors in the military, first responders, beauticians, barbers, cooks, and so much more. The steps our ancestors took, the steps we are taken today, and the

steps that the young people will take tomorrow will continue to add layers to our accomplishments. We need to ensure that our children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren understand the importance of being a Lumbee. God only made a few of us Lumbee. Out of all the billions of people in the world, he made us the minority of the minority. Outside of our small communities in Hoke, Scotland, Cumberland, and Robeson County, we are the extreme minority or we do not even exist. Think about that. We can get in our vehicle and go any direction for hours and never see another Lumbee or American Indian. We are very often the overlooked minority in our own homelands. I do not say that to make us feel sad or down, but I say that to tell you we have to be proud of who we are and what our ancestors did to ensure we are here today. Young people, it is your duty and responsibility to pick up this mantle and continue to have that pride and promote our tribe. When you are in your 40, 50, 60s, I want you to instill that same proud into your Lumbee children and grandchildren. We have so much to be proud of and tonight I am so proud to be a Lumbee Indian, yes I am. Thank you all and God Bless the Lumbee Nation.