

COAS Dean's IWD Speech:

Every year, the observance of International Women's Day is an opportunity to evaluate the journey towards women's equality in our communities and around the world. It invites us to reflect on past struggles, victories, and challenges for women worldwide. This year's commemoration is particularly an opportunity to show gratitude and acknowledge the remarkable effort that women across the globe have made in the fight against COVID-19. It is from this perspective that the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women has chosen as its focus for reflection this year: "Women in Leadership: Achieving an Equal Future in a COVID-19 World." This theme is an incentive to showcase the instrumental role that women in the United States and abroad have played in the containment of this unprecedented health crisis.

Current data show that women make up a majority of healthcare workers in the United States and therefore are the leaders on the front lines of the fight against COVID-19. Countless women have sacrificed their time to be active participants in the fight against the pandemic. While in the line of duty, several healthcare heroines have been taken away by the deadly virus. Today, our thoughts and prayers go towards those brave women who sacrificed their lives for the common good.

The COVID-19 outbreak showed us that today more than ever, for a better world, we need to be more vocal about the fight for women's equality. The world needs more women in leadership positions. Many studies show that female-led countries have been more resilient to the virus.

As the Dean of the largest college at Howard University, I join the global call to action for men, women, young boys, and girls to participate in the building of a gender equal world. The election of Vice-President Kamala Harris, a Howard Alumna, as the first woman vice president of the United States, sends a strong signal of hope to women and young girls around the world.

I honor all the women healthcare workers at Howard University Hospital who continue to play pivotal roles in the fight against the pandemic at Howard University Hospital, throughout the United States, and around the world.

I express my sincere gratitude to the faculty, staff, and students who organized this honorable event. I want to give special thanks to Dr. Dawuni, the founding director of the Center for Women, Gender, and Global Leadership. As the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, I am committed to promoting gender equality at Howard University. I also encourage Howard faculty to continue creating spaces for discussion about gender equality and women's empowerment.

To all the women at Howard University and beyond, Happy International Women's Day!

Best Regards,



Rubin Patterson
Dean

