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It is not approved
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Dr. Boyer has not seen
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 THE CARNEGIE FOUNDATION
FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF TEACHING

FAX COVER SHEET

DATE: November 23, 1994

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FROM: Carol R. Duryea
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PAGES: 4 (including cover sheet)

MESSAGE: Here is the edited version of the speech Dr. Boyer gave on October 1. It has not been approved for publication by Dr. Boyer. If you plan to publish it, or parts of it, please let us know and we will work with you on getting Dr. Boyer's approval.

HIGHER LEARNING AND NATIONAL RENEWAL

Ernest L. Boyer, President
The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

Loyola College in Maryland
Baltimore, Maryland

October 1, 1994

Thank you very much. I am deeply honored to be recognized in such a very special way by this distinguished institution. Loyola College in Baltimore has, for almost a century and a half, combined academic excellence with the deepest yearning of the human spirit. I'm absolutely delighted to become a member of the Loyola family.

I'm especially pleased to be here at the very time "Hap" Ridley becomes the leader at Loyola. Father Ridley brings to the presidency of this outstanding institution a special blend of wisdom, scholarship, and warmth. I share with you the conviction that Loyola College and Hap Ridley belong together.

Above all, I'm pleased to participate in the Fall Convocation that honors 175 students who have excelled academically. I congratulate each of you for your superb achievement.

And I'd also like to say a special word about your teachers. The simple truth is that students who excel are standing on the shoulders of teachers who throughout the years—from parents to graduate school professors—stirred in them both insight and inspiration.

Several years ago I couldn't sleep and instead of counting sheep I counted all the teachers I had had. There were a few nightmares in the bunch, but I also remembered three or four outstanding teachers who consequentially changed my life.

I remember Prof. Joseph Smith, who taught literature. I remember how he read Shakespeare aloud in class and how I learned through hearing the power of his voice, not just through reading the printed page, that literature is an inquiry into the deepest yearnings of the human spirit. I remember Mr. Wittlinger, a high school history teacher, who stopped me after class one day and said, "Ernest, you are doing fairly well in history. You keep this up and you just might be a student." That was the highest academic accolade I've ever had.

But I remember above all Miss Rice, my first-grade teacher. On the way to school the first day, I asked my mother if I'd learn to read today. She said, "No, not today, but you will before the year is out." But I walked into the classroom and there she stood, half human, half divine. Miss Rice looked at twenty-eight children and said, "Good morning, class. Today we learn to read." Well, it was "Hello, Miss Rice, goodbye, Mother." I had a new hero in my life. We spent all day on four words—"I go to school." We wrote them, sang them, even prayed them. About fifty years later, I wrote a book entitled *College: The Undergraduate Experience in America*, and I included a chapter called "The Centrality of Language." It occurred to me that that was no accident. That was the influence of a first-grade teacher who taught me that education and language are inextricably interlocked. The influence of a great teacher lives forever.

The simple truth is that almost all of us are where we are today because of the influence of an inspired teacher. If I were to ask the honors students to name the most influential teacher in your life, who would you select?

On this occasion when we are honoring the academic achievement of Loyola students, it seems most appropriate to recall that Loyola's new president has been called not only a scholar, and a wit, and an avid lacrosse fan, and a priest who enjoys parish life, but, above all, he's been called a superb teacher.

When I read about Father Ridley's twenty-year classroom experience teaching English literature and intellectual history, I was reminded of Chaucer's famous characterization of the clerk at Oxford. Chaucer said: "Gladly would he learn, and gladly teach." I'm suggesting that when all is said and done, excellence in education means excellence in teaching. If we hope to improve the nation's colleges and schools, we don't need more rules and regulations, we need more teacher recognition.

I believe that if the nation would give as much status to first-grade teachers as we give to full professors, that one act alone would revitalize the nation's schools.

This leads me to one final observation about the importance of *service* in higher education, and Loyola's contribution in this critically important role.

Loyola repeatedly is cited as one of the most "service-minded" higher learning institutions in the nation. Loyola is a full partner in the Shriver Center, which brings together ten higher learning institutions to focus on the needs of greater Baltimore. The faculty at Loyola integrates "service learning" in their courses.

And last year more than twenty-two hundred Loyola students engaged in the Literacy Corp program, the Beans and Bread Program in Fells Point, tutoring in the city jail, the Public Justice Center, the Care-a-Van Program for the homeless, and the "Fourth Option" program that allows students to design their own service-based academic program. To put it simply, the students at Loyola view the campus not as an isolated island, but as a staging ground for action.

The poet Vachel Lindsay wrote: "It's the world's one crime, its babes grow dull, / Not that they sow, but that they seldom reap, / Not that they serve, but have no gods to serve. / Not that they die, but that they die like sheep." The tragedy is not death. The tragedy is to die with commitments undefined, convictions undeclared, and service unfulfilled.

Martin Luther King, Jr., said on one occasion that everyone can be great because everyone can serve. And I'm convinced the young people of this country are ready to be inspired by a larger vision.

We've gathered here today to celebrate the superb achievements of Loyola students. But we're also here to celebrate the sacred act of teaching, and to recall that students who enter to learn, also must go forth to serve, relating the theory of the classroom to the reality of life.

Again, I congratulate the students we have honored here today. I congratulate you for your great success. And I pray that your inspired gifts will bring blessings to God's kingdom.

And, incidentally, it occurs to me that following the ceremony today, it would be very nice if you would take just a moment to say "thank you" to a teacher.