

Good Evening Everyone!

I am humbled to be standing here with the task of sharing my experience with the Initiative for Diversity in Civic Leadership program. Thank you Councilor Pressley for those words of inspiration. On behalf of my classmates, I would like to thank Giovanna, Alejandra, and Teddy for administering an exceptional program. To my classmates, thank you for your acknowledgments and vote of confidence to allow me to speak on your behalf. And to the family and friends that are present, THANK YOU, for the support that you have provided us through our initial political journey.

I heard a quote yesterday afternoon that I need to share with you.

“One of the penalties for refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors.” These words were stated thousands of years ago by Plato, a Greek Philosopher.

THAT quote best describes why I applied and was thankful when selected to participate in the IDCL program. I wanted to know what it is I didn't know AND affirm what I did. I also wanted to be better informed and prepared to continue to contribute to my community. After all, we are aware that unless, we ALL make a contribution, we will continue to witness the developing transgressions of an ill society.

My experience with the program was invaluable. I've become empowered to ask for money; I have a profound sense of why we often hear that all politics are local – as stated by the late Thomas Phillip Tip O'Neill, Jr. and I learned about adaptive leadership.

One of the highlights of my experience was the retreat. On that particular weekend, my classmates and I were charged with three tasks: (1) keep an open mind, (2) be prepared for a different kind of experience, and (3) trust the process. It was an opportunity to get to know each other and, more so, to get to better know ourselves. If any of us in this room decide to serve in government, run for office or manage a campaign, we need to be firmly planted in our values and beliefs. It is a necessary prerequisite!

In the interest of time, I leave you all with this:

Get informed! – Know what is happening in your community, state, country and the world.

Get Involved! – Do more than just vote on election day.

Take Ownership! of what is going on around us and make a positive contribution to your community!

Ultimately, what can be expected is a change in quality of life. You've heard it before in different forms. We can make a difference if we all participate in the process!

Thank you and Be Blessed!