

Thank you Sister Eunice for your words on this most important day.

I thank all of you for being here today. I am proud, honored, and humbled to be your next Mayor and the first female Mayor of the City of North Adams. Before I begin my formal remarks I would like to acknowledge all of my family who are here today - without their love and support I would not be standing here. I want to give a special thank you to my mother, Teresa, who wants me to stop telling everyone she is 90 years old; to my sister, Libby, who wants me to tell everyone she is the First Sister. Lib- you are not only the First Sister but the best sister; and my partner, Jose, who just wants to fly under the radar, but please know no matter how busy my days get, you will always be on my radar screen. Most importantly I thank you, the residents of North Adams, for believing in me and electing me as your Mayor.

Today, I begin a journey that will be the most challenging while at the same time I am hoping it will be the most rewarding part of my career. The journey will be an inclusive process as WE work toward our goal of making North Adams the best it can be. If I am to be successful, I understand that I also need the commitment on the part of the citizens, employees, businesses and of course, my partners in government, the City Council. My administration's biggest challenge will be to regain the confidence of the citizens in believing that the government can

and will work in their best interests. I have always believed that the government should be here to help people and not complicate their lives. My commitment to the residents of North Adams is that you will have an open and accessible City Government. Residents should expect their government to be efficient, inclusive and well managed; when we spend money we spend it like it is our own. A mayor cannot have knowledge of what is going on in the community if they spend all their time in their office. I will be a hands-on Mayor - I will be out in our schools, in our neighborhoods, visiting businesses and City Departments - always representing this community in the most respectful and honorable manner.

There are many challenges that North Adams will be facing in the next several years. Challenges which can no longer be delayed. The days of kicking the can down the road are over. North Adams has been talking about the need for a new Public Safety complex for years and it is time to stop talking and take action. Taking on this project when inflation is at its highest will be a challenge but we can no longer wait. My goal is to break ground on a new Public Safety Facility in the next two years. Working in conjunction with the City Council we must find a way to finance this project without placing an unfair tax burden on the taxpayers.

In addition to a new public safety building the City must also address its decaying infrastructure - deteriorating streets and sidewalks, and our aging underground water and sewer system as well as our failing flood control shutes. And we can't forget our beautiful historical Library building that needs immediate attention. I plan on submitting to the City Council a capital outlay program with this year's budget which will institute a plan to address these infrastructure and building needs.

Throughout my campaign, I talked about quality of life which starts first with safety. Our citizens, young and old, will be safe in North Adams. Police officers will be out patrolling so you know them in good times and bad. Crimes and drugs are issues that will be addressed head on, especially in areas where known drug dealers are preying upon our citizens. As I will have a no tolerance policy on drugs and crime in our City - I understand it cannot be completely eliminated but we will make it really difficult for dealers to sell drugs here in North Adams. And at the same time I will not forget those who are suffering from addiction - we all have been affected in some way and we as a community need to help those who are struggling. I look forward to working with the District Attorney in addressing these most serious problems. Public Safety in North Adams will be a priority.

The strength of any community lies in its neighborhoods. Many of our neighborhood properties have fallen into disrepair. I commit to the citizens of this community that my administration will work to rebuild our neighborhoods, eliminating litter, blight and abandoned cars. I want to make it clear that the days of landlords neglecting their properties are over. The City will be reinstating the Code Enforcement Officer and will ensure properties are inspected on a regular basis - ensuring that we have adequate and safe housing. We will seek out grant programs to help property owners improve their properties to boost our housing stock. We will work with people who are struggling financially to pay their taxes or water/sewer bills. I am committed to rebuilding neighborhoods even if it is one street at a time!

I will work tirelessly to revitalize our downtown and overall health of our economy, which includes streets beyond just Main Street.

I have spoken in depth about my vision of making the Mohawk Theater the catalyst to rejuvenating the downtown. I served in city government when the plan was first put forth to renovate this majestic art deco theater. Now it is our turn to save this historic complex and make it our gift to the next generation. This building is part of our past and it will be part of our future.

Has anyone visited Heritage park in the past couple of years? This once beautiful historic park has become an embarrassment to our city. The deteriorating buildings and unkempt grounds along with graffiti all over the buildings and trains has become an eye sore after the state put nearly \$10 million into the restoration of this historic railroad yard. Adding insult to injury the so called experts took a beautiful grassed park and turned it into a cement ghost town. The city saved it years ago and we will save it again and work to market it to be an attractive component of our City.

Beautifying our downtown will also be a top priority. First impressions are lasting impressions. We need to focus on bringing people to North Adams not only for performances, shopping, dining but hopefully to live as well. Mass MOCA and MCLA will play an important part of the plan too. All of this calls for a marketing plan and collaboration with our current merchants, residents and private investors and beyond. We will restore our downtown and the economy of North Adams so it will shine like a polished gem. It is time to put words into action plans and see results.

The economy of North Adams and the Northern Berkshire area must be a priority. An important element in expanding our economy is to have a decent broadband network. As your Mayor and the issuing authority, Spectrum will know that North Adams has a strong Mayor that will stand up for its people. I

will ask other communities to join me and I will undertake a feasibility study that will explore our ability to create our own municipal broadband service.

Education has always been near and dear to me. I am a proud product of the North Adams Public Schools system, graduating from this very high school in 1991. I understand the importance of a good education. I am committed to providing the children of North Adams with the best educational experience possible. Great strides have been already made in improving the City's education system but the work is never done. The children of this community are our future. I look forward to working with our school committees and challenge each of us to focus on setting policies to promote a safe and inclusive learning environment with a broad based curriculum that allows students to be the best they can be. That includes ensuring that our school staff is armed with the best resources that are available and that every possible dollar goes into the classroom. It also calls for continued support of early education programs and expansion of after school programs for all students. I will also ensure parents of this community that programs like band, art, and theater will be part of our educational programming too!

While we focus on education, we can't forget that our children need time to play. We have some of the best recreation

facilities in North Adams and under my administration they will be well maintained and accessible to the youth. Kids need to not only learn in the classroom but they need to learn on the basketball courts and on the fields. I will be sure our kids are safe on the playgrounds, on the basketball court, on the fields - free of litter, hypodermic needles, and drug dealers! The Youth of this community are our number one asset . We WILL invest in them wisely.

As you sit here today, know that there is not one priority and that the challenges of this community are vast. But know that they are all interrelated and one is just as important as the other. We have many challenges ahead of us but with challenges brings opportunities. I have faced challenges in every position I have held and always turned them into opportunities. As my grandmother would say, when you are handed lemons turn them into lemonade.

To my partners in government, the City Council, the tasks before us will not be easy but by working together we will get things done with our motto being that everything we do will be in the best interests of North Adams and its citizens. We may not always agree but let us always try to find a common ground. President Roosevelt once said, "the future lies with those wise political leaders who realize that the great public is interested more in good government than in politics." I am

confident that we will give the citizens of North Adams the good government they deserve.

City government is special. We are at the level closest to the people, so we must do the big and the small, the beautiful and the not so glamorous tasks. Every business, every street light, every street scape, every pothole, every fire hydrant, every classroom and most importantly every person, lays the foundation for the greater good of this community. It is absolutely necessary in this moment for North Adams to deliver basic city services and generational change. We will tackle our biggest challenges by getting the small things right out of the gate, by getting City Hall out of City Hall and into our neighborhoods, street by street and business by business.

In 1995 Maya Angelou spoke at my college graduation and told us to “do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.” I will be the Mayor that works for a better North Adams everyday. I will be the Mayor who sees the complete picture, a picture on how today’s decisions affect the future of this community in years to come. I make this promise to you that I will work everyday in the best interest of the City and I will not sell this City short.

I will be a Mayor that represents ALL the people of this great City, I will be a Mayor that not only listens but sees you and

hears you. I will not just talk about transparency and accountability, I will practice it. I will be fair, yet firm when needed. I will ask no more of my staff, then I will give.

In a nutshell, when it comes to leadership, the Mayor must be the hub of the wheel - the center to keep things going and I will be the Mayor that keeps us moving forward.

As we talk about the future of North Adams and my leadership style, I think it is important that you understand what drives me to be me - who has been the hub of my wheel. As most of you know, my dad died when I was 12. I had a great childhood with piano lessons, ballet classes, and the best ponies my dad and Bud Hayden could find. My mom was a stay at home mom and in a matter of days, she had to find a job, learn to drive, and raise a 12 year old child who didn't understand at the time what a budget was and why I couldn't keep my pony. Quickly my white picket fence life changed. My mom instilled in me not to look at the glass half empty but half full; to care about people as you don't know what baggage they are carrying; and to invest in yourself - work hard because no one is going to do it for you. My mom was or is my hub and as I enter this office I will never forget these values.

I tell you this because I know that the job ahead is not an easy task. I know that I have many hurdles to overcome but with inherited strength and wisdom I obtained from my mom early in

life and now with the support of you, the people of this fine community, the job will be a bit easier. I believe in North Adams and its future - and I am honored that you believe in me. Thank you North Adams for giving me the privilege to serve as your next Mayor and as my father would say in true Irish fashion, I will never forget whence I came.

Now - Let's get to work!