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Introduction of Dr. Nwando Achebe, Keynote Speaker

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Introduction of Dr. Nwando Achebe, Keynote Speaker

Amy Anderson

Greetings, everyone, to the Global Voices Symposium [GVS] Keynote Address. On behalf of President Eric Spina and Provost Paul Benson, I'd like to extend a warm welcome to each of you here this evening.

A special welcome and thanks to the students, alumni, faculty, staff, and community members who have participated in the GVS so far. Your insights and perspectives have been inspiring to the campus and will help to continue to motivate us (faculty and staff on campus) to pursue our vision of radical inclusion and the common good.

Another special welcome to guests from the Dayton community. Your presence here is important to us and we hope you will feel welcome to come back often for other programs and opportunities to learn together about important issues.

I'd also like to thank Dr. Julius Amin and the GVS committee for their excellent work. This is the third time that Dr. Amin has led a symposium on campus as part of his role as Alumni Chair in the Humanities.

I probably don't need to convince you of the importance of global perspectives and learning, but before I introduce the speaker, I

just want to make a few remarks to set the context for this evening's presentation.

According to UNESCO, at its core, global learning:

- Enables people to understand the links between their own lives and those of people throughout the world
- Increases understanding of the economic, cultural, political, and environmental influences which shape our lives.
- Develops the skills, attitudes, and values which enable people to work together to bring about change and take control of their own lives
- Works toward achieving a more just and sustainable world in which power and resources are more equitably shared.

The emphasis in global education is therefore on both changing self and changing society, for neither is possible without the other. In addition, we know that global learning has so many benefits that lead to student success and overall well-being.

Student Engagement. Research shows that when students learn content through authentic tasks and real-world experiences, they are more likely to engage, which in turn leads to higher attendance and achievement.

College and Career Readiness. The economy is global and employers today are desperate to hire graduates with intercultural leadership skills that allow them to work in diverse teams and with clients all over the world. By providing students with opportunities to understand the wider world, we are also giving students a competitive edge.

Social-Emotional Learning. Global education helps develop the following:

- *Self-awareness* of one's own identity, culture, beliefs and how those connect with the wider world
- *Social awareness*, including empathy, perspective-taking, appreciating diversity, and respecting others
- *Relationship-building skills* with diverse individuals and groups through effective communication and collaboration.

Student Empowerment. Global learning enables students with agency to take purposeful action to improve their own lives and to positively influence the world around them. When students are provided opportunities to investigate issues they deem important (be it sustainable energy, social inequality, climate change, access to clean water, or human rights violations), unpack why these issues exist, and come up with solutions to make them better, they become empowered to be the catalysts of the changes they wish to see.

And yet, with all this evidence, we still have a long way to go to build truly global learning spaces where all students, and if fact the world, benefit from these important outcomes. It is symposia like this one that bring critical perspectives together—including our keynote tonight—and that serve as catalysts for us all. So without further delay, I'd like to introduce Dr. Nwando Achebe.

Dr. Achebe is the Jack and Margaret Sweet Endowed Professor of History, and a multi-award-winning historian at Michigan State University. Dr. Achebe received her master's and PhD from UCLA after studying theatre at the University of Massachusetts. Her research interests involve the use of oral history in the study of women, gender, and sexuality in Nigeria.

Among her many accomplishments, Dr. Achebe is the author of six books, including:

- *Farmers, Traders, Warriors, and Kings: Female Power and Authority in Northern Igboland, 1900-1960*
- *The Female King of Colonial Nigeria: Ahebi Ugbabe*, a full-length critical biography on the only *female* warrant chief and king in British Africa
- Co-author of the *2018 History of West Africa E-Course Book*
- Co-editor with William Worger and Charles Ambler of *A Companion to African History*
- Co-editor with Claire Robertson of *Holding the World Together: African Women in Changing Perspective*
- A forthcoming Ohio University Press book, *Female Monarchs and Merchant Queens in Africa*.

She is founding editor-in-chief of the *Journal of West African History*. She served as a Ford Foundation and Fulbright-Hays Scholar-in-Residence at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Dr. Achebe has received prestigious grants from the Rockefeller Foundation, Wenner-Gren, Woodrow Wilson, Fulbright-Hays, the Ford Foundation, the World Health Organization, and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Please join me in extending a warm Dayton welcome to Dr. Nwando Achebe.