Good evening.

I am deeply honored to be here with you tonight to keynote the 2004 FACET Retreat and to receive the 2003 PA Mack Award.

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to FACET for inviting me to speak on this occasion and for presenting me with this wonderful award. I have received many honors throughout my career, and this one is very special for me for two reasons: first, because it recognizes excellence in teaching and second, because it carries the name of my very dear friend PA Mack.

As most of you know, the theme for this year’s FACET Retreat is “The Good Life”. Listed in your registration materials are some of the topics you will be exploring and, based on that list, I chose to speak tonight on a subject that is near and dear to my heart – the joy of teaching.

Teaching is my passion. It has been both my vocation and my avocation nearly my entire adult life. Even in high school I knew I wanted to teach, and if you look in my high school yearbook you will see that under my senior picture I listed “Music teacher” as my chosen profession.

I was born in Indianapolis, Indiana in December of 1931. The world I grew up in was completely segregated. This defined early on and very clearly the paths that would be open to me in my efforts to be to be a success in life – or, in the words of my family, for me “to amount to something.”
In the Indianapolis of my childhood, the day-to-day activities of life in the black community were carried out under a system of constraints imposed by the policies of segregation and the strong presence of the Ku Klux Klan. Boundaries of all kinds – social, geographical, political, educational, religious, and vocational – were firmly in place and rigidly observed. Fortunately for the children – and that included me – there were forces within our community that protected us and gave us a sense of self-worth. Individually and as a group, our TEACHERS were among the most important people who played this role.

Like me, my dear friend the great black poet Mari Evans is a product of the Indianapolis of this time period, and she wrote eloquently about it in a book entitled Where We Live, from which the following quote comes.

"The neighborhood was sustaining. Children were protected and insulated by classrooms manned by Black teachers who cared passionately about their charges' future, who saw promise in them, loved them, chastised them promptly, and encouraged them to be more than even they envisioned. School was not a place where teachers and staff feared Black students, not a war zone nor a place of controlled pain and anguish that manifested itself in student indifference and rebellion. Those schools were places where Black children understood above all else they were loved, and being cared for with love." (Where We Live, "Ethos and Community", page 34)
Facet keynote, page 3

Our teachers were also important role models. In the black community the profession of teaching was—and still is—held in high esteem. Because the Indianapolis public school system was completely segregated at that time, all black students and all black faculty were assigned to black-only schools. These teachers, many of whom held advanced degrees from some of the finest universities in the country, gave me and the generations of students who preceded and followed me the opportunity for a first-rate education. To this day I still remember some of them as truly exceptional—among the finest teachers I have ever known. Their depth of knowledge and the skill with which they were able to communicate it—coupled with the caring and compassion with which they treated me—left a deep impression, and undoubtedly influenced my thoughts—consciously and subconsciously—about my choice of a future career.

Like many of us in this room who went on to become teachers, there were a handful of special teachers in my life. And there was that one very, VERY special teacher. In my case that exceptional person was my high school band director, Russell W. Brown, a man who became my lifelong mentor and one of my dearest friends.

I am one of those people who firmly believe that there are no accidents; and that each of us was created by a loving divine supreme being who has a plan for our lives. There have been times in my life when I was led—or forced—to take a path which I had not anticipated but which either immediately or eventually put me in exactly the right place at the right time. These experiences were very difficult to go through, but were often exactly what had to happen to prepare me for that plan and for the things that were to come.
It is not often that a person is given the opportunity to virtually create a field of study or an academic discipline that did not previously exist as such. Informatics is an example of one such field that has only recently come into being.

In the 1960s I had the opportunity to be on the ground floor in helping to create the fields of jazz studies and jazz education as academic disciplines. That meant doing a lot of different things, including developing curriculum, writing texts, formulating -- and fighting for -- degree programs, and creating a department [which for many years was just ME!]. It also put into perspective the difficult life-changing experiences I had undergone and how they had been pivotal in putting me in the right place at the right time to do what was then and continues to be my calling in life -- teaching.

Here are some examples.

First example.

Because my primary and secondary education had been in all-black schools, I had studied under some truly exceptional black teachers to whom I could look as role models. Also, because black history was part of our curriculum at all levels, this was knowledge which stood me in good stead when the demands of the Civil Rights movement were heard on the college campuses of the 1960s, translating into the creation of courses in various areas of black studies. Because I had been on the faculty of the Indiana University School of Music since 1966, the timing was right for me to be given the opportunity to initiate and develop classes in black music and to lobby for the creation of the Jazz Department and its degree programs.
Another example.

I attended Indiana University at a time when the campus was completely segregated and there were very few black students. My college years were difficult ones in which I was confronted with the full range of racial hostility, from veiled suspicion to outright animus. Fortunately, I also met many caring, concerned people – some of whom were my teachers – and was able to successfully complete both my Bachelors and Masters degrees in Music Education. Because of that, I had the academic credibility I would need later in order to be recognized as a person who was qualified to create and develop a curriculum for the study of jazz in a university or conservatory environment as prestigious as that of the Indiana University School of Music.

Yet another example.

I had auditioned for positions in professional orchestras and had been told that, in spite of the fact that I was often the best candidate, as a black musician I could not be offered the job. Because of that, I went to a musical performing field that WAS open to me – jazz – and went about building a reputation there, as a trombonist, as a bandleader, and as a composer-arranger. These activities ultimately brought me into contact with George Russell, with whom I would perform and record and who gave me the foundations for what I would later go on to teach.
And a final example.

I was in the early stages of a major career as a jazz performer when my life changed drastically. Returning from a performing engagement some years earlier, I had been in a car accident and had been injured so severely that my family had been told to make funeral arrangements, that I was in a coma and not expected to live. As you can see, I did survive, but in their efforts to save my life, the surgeons and other doctors failed to detect injuries that had occurred to my facial muscles and jaw. When I had recovered enough to begin playing again, these undetected injuries worsened over time and eventually caused such severe problems that, after several years of long periods of hospitalization and unsuccessful treatment, I was forced to give up the trombone.

I began teaching out of my home in Indianapolis and, like many private teachers, taught the talented and not-so-talented. This caused me to draw on every teaching skill and technique I knew, and to create some more along the way! Among the many young people I was teaching at that time were IU music students who would carpool from Bloomington to Indianapolis and area high school students such as the already formidable young Freddie Hubbard.

In 1966 a teaching position opened up on the IU School of Music faculty, and while I was NOT the first person to which it was offered, I was AGAIN in the right place at the right time.
And the rest, as they say, is history. I was able to return to my beloved alma mater; I was able to create and develop a jazz program which serves as a model worldwide, and—best of all—I have been able to teach and nurture generations of wonderful young students—so many generations in fact, that some years ago I began teaching the CHILDREN of my students—and I expect to be here to teach THEIR children, too!!

To my great delight, many of these wonderful students have gone on to become inspired and inspiring teachers themselves. And isn't that one of our greatest joys as teachers—to know that our teaching legacy will endure long after we have left this earth!

In my pedagogy class I have the opportunity to pass on to my students some of what I have observed and learned about becoming a successful teacher. Here are some of the points that I cover with them in my opening lecture.
1. **Like teaching and like your students**
   
   [a] If you don't like young people, **don't** teach.
   
   [b] Teaching is not a fall-back vocation. Enjoy the company of students

2. **Know your students**
   
   [a] Don't expect that students will be your reflections.
   
   [b] Learn their patterns of thought and emotions. How do you learn this? Largely by experience. Watch, listen, talk to them, mix with them
   
   [c] Know the names and faces of the students. Use mnemonic aids, typing, other approaches
   
   [d] Help the students in planning how to study and how to organize
   
   [e] Cultivate wide-ranging and lively intellectual interests
   
   [f] Provide a bridge between school and the real world. Bridge youth and maturity
   
   [g] Maintain a sense of humor. • **never** at the expense of a student • be able to laugh at yourself • humor helps keep the students interested and attentive • avoid cynicism and sarcasm

3. **Like your subject**
   
   [a] Choose carefully the subjects you would like to teach, those that you find interesting and illuminating
   
   [b] Enjoy a spontaneous interest
   
   [c] Throw yourself into the subject
   
   [d] Read everything possible and not just for verification
4. **Know your subject**
   [a] Continue reading, studying, learning
   Update materials, new research
   [b] Be ever curious about everything
   [Always read the original!!!] – go to the source when possible

5. **Contextualize information**
   [a] Think outside the box.

   Dr. King – facts

6. **Use a Madison Avenue approach**
   [a] Make the information vivid.
   [b] Make it memorable.
   [c] Make it relevant.

7. **Use drama, humor, self-deprecation**

8. **Whenever possible, draw on personal experience[s]**

9. **Keep in mind that very often the subject matter will dictate the approach to methodology**

10. **Teach what they need, not what you know**

    **ENJOY TEACHING!!**
And along those same lines, here are some of the challenges that make continuing to teach so exciting!

1. The personalities of different classes
2. Staying on top of changes
3. Staying excited and communicating that excitement to the students
4. Learning new information every class.

[tiny writing on the chalkboard]

What a privilege and an honor it is for each of us to be in service to the teaching profession. By living in the present; honoring, preserving and learning from the past; and anticipating and envisioning the future, we have the wonderful and awesome task of helping to shape the young minds of generations to come. Once again, I would like to express my thanks to FACET for inviting me to keynote this year’s retreat and for presenting me with this wonderful award.

In closing, I’d like to leave you with some thoughts about the joys of teaching, presented as equally important but in the manner of one of my favorite Hoosiers, David Letterman. It was impossible to boil down all that I love about teaching into ten pithy statements, but here are some of my favorites. I hope some of your favorites are here, too.
And now, tonight’s top ten list.

10. Having a life where vocation and avocation are the same. This gives me and everyone else who feels this way the opportunity to receive payment for doing what we would do for free.

Please don’t tell Dr. Herbert or Dean Richards I said that!

9. Having the opportunity to give back to the profession the things that were so generously given to me.

8. Being a part of the constant changes and challenges that have marked the landscape of music, technology, health, politics, religion and so forth.

7. The revivifying effect of meeting hundreds of new and diverse students yearly, and having to constantly recontextualize information and the manner of its presentation in order to communicate effectively.

6. Being constantly exposed to the plethora of ideas that alternately confirm and contradict what’s in my information pool.

5. The wonderful, awesome, and sacred task of helping to shape the young minds of successive generations.
4. The intellectual stimulation of exchanging ideas with students and colleagues in a continuing intellectual discourse, held in a vibrant and exciting academic environment

3. Being a part of the wonderful world of teaching, where so many of my heroes have resided across the years

2. Being blessed with the opportunity to learn and profit from the mistakes of others, knowing that none of us will live long enough to make all those mistakes by ourselves

And the number one item on tonight’s top ten list ———— is YOURS!

Inasmuch as so many of these are your joys, too, I leave number one blank — for each of you to fill in from your hearts!

Thank you!!