

First of all, let me say how humbling it is to represent this excellent faculty at Berea College. I have been asked to share a few words with you about my Berea story, which began back in 1982 when I was hired to teach accounting in the Economics and Business Department. When I first came to Berea I didn't know much about it, but I wasn't here very long before I began to see that this is a very different place. And then after I had been here a while I began to understand what a truly amazing place Berea is.

One of my earliest memories about my time here at Berea is that there were so many people who reached out to me to help me find my way here and become part of this community. These were people who did not know me, and had no reason to be so nice to me, other than that that was just the Berea way of doing things. They were so kind and patient with me. I had so many wonderful mentors who welcomed me into the community, Bob Menefee, Paul Hager, Jacci Betts, Cliff Sowell, Libby Jones, Wayne Tolliver, Delphia Canterbury, and so many others.

Berea has educated me and provided me with so many opportunities to grow professionally and personally. Most importantly it has exposed me to it's one of a kind student body, and all its beautiful diversity. I have had the chance to work with and learn with students from all across the US and all around the globe, and this has truly been the education of my lifetime.

I have seen a lot of change since I have been here. My first office had an old rotary phone and that was how we communicated with people around campus, we didn't have email in those days. Then came desktop computers for faculty and staff and computer labs for students, and a campus network, and the internet. I was chair of the Campus Information Resources Committee when the Administrative Committee began the conversation about laptops and universal access to computing for all that we enjoy today.

But while I've seen a lot of change, there are some things that never change at Berea College. I have served under four presidents here. I have seen our entire General Education curriculum revised three times. I have seen bad recessions that have posed real threats. But through it all Berea has always clung to and been guided by its Great Commitments. Another thing that has never changed is this faculty's undying love for and commitment to our truly amazing students.