

I am honored and my heart is full to be receiving this degree from Pomona College today. Thank you, President Oxtoby and the Board of Trustees for making this award possible. And because I know awards do my receiving this award. orted

To the Pomona College graduates of 2012: Many of us, your faculty, parents and loved ones, have sat where you are today. One of the things about being older, we can look back over the decades. We have accomplished some but not all of the things that we wanted. And through the miracle of memory we can see ourselves where you are now. I hope through the miracle of words to help you see yourselves where we are now.

When I was some years younger than you, I began to dream; I was looking forward and I was planning. Although this was long ago, it was not far away: the Morongo Reservation near Banning California, just 50 miles from here. I had only a small plan. I have always described my early perspective and planning as being like standing in the branches of a small tree and stretching to see as far as I could.

As that young girl on the reservation my plan involved perhaps the most difficult action I have ever undertaken: To leave the reservation where my family has lived for more than 100 years to get an education. Apparently this was a very hard step; it appears that I was the first California reservation Indian to have ever made that jump: it was only a few miles to the University of California, Riverside but a world away. I know that some of you have made leaps that were as complex and as painful and I commend you for making those life changing transitions.

Now at the university I was standing on the branches of a taller tree and I could see further. Simply surviving was replaced by getting good grades. Eventually I could see a PhD, becoming a full professor and having a research career studying memory. By this time I was perched on a pretty tall tree and had a much broader view of the world. I had become successful, far beyond my wildest imagination. I had proved that I could succeed in White

although they stood less than two miles apart for more than 100 years. I learned how to de^s

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