



CELEBRATE PURDUE WOMEN

GLADYS M. FRANCIS

HOW DO YOU DEFINE SUCCESS?

My success should be defined by the people that I was able to be impactful for, the doors that I was able to open...how to emphasize other people's lives, how to emphasize the voice of the voiceless, how to make visible invisible people, and if I am able to make changes in the system...then I've been successful.

WHAT ROLE HAS COMMUNITY PLAYED IN YOUR SUCCESS?

As a woman of the African diaspora...what I carry is my body and all the cultural knowledge that I have gained over the years. As I look at this ocean, the horizon, what am I going to carry over? No matter where I go, I carry my community....I am always connected with the communities around me...this is the center of my life and something that defines who I am as a leader.

WHEN WAS A TIME YOU FELT INSPIRED BY YOUR COMMUNITY?

I have this sense, not of pride, but this sense of joy that I have, to know that...I was able to build a pipeline for students who are going to benefit from this impactful opportunity.

WHEN DOES MENTORSHIP MEAN TO YOU?

No matter who comes into my life, I'm the first one to say, "I think you're ready for more - you've gained so much." There is no sense of loyalty to me. You have to be loyal to where your journey should bring you. I also believe in that type of selflessness in mentoring...you should really carry and make sure that the people who work with you can also have their own journey of success whether it is with you or without you.

WHAT ROLE DID PURDUE PLAY IN YOUR JOURNEY?

I would not be at that point of my career without Purdue. At Purdue, I refined a lot of my passions. At Purdue, I was able to find my voice.

WHAT DOES LEADERSHIP MEAN TO YOU?

Leadership is definitely a selfless gift of giving.

Gladys M. Francis is professor of Africana, French, and Francophone Studies at Howard University, where she serves as Associate Dean for Academic Student Affairs and the Humanities in the College of Arts and Sciences. Dr. Francis is a prominent figure for the public humanities having been invited to deliver keynotes, lectures, and high-level consulting engagements across the globe - inclusive of interviews with media outlets (magazines, newspapers, radio, and TV). She has directed over 1,300 significant international collaborative projects, exchange programs, and experiential learning projects in Africa, the Caribbean, Europe, North and South America. Her international humanitarian engagement sums to \$5 million fundraised and \$18 million awarded in grants to advance issues pertaining to social justice, Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; digital education; Second Language Acquisition; global career preparedness; and research opportunities geared to students, faculty, and staff. She has published four books and over forty peer-reviewed articles on her research interests.

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