

On Being a First Citizen

Remarks by Dr. Edward C. Papenfuse, State Archivist
on the occasion of the presentation of the First Citizen Awards to
C.D. "Dan" Mote and Freeman Hrabowski
March 3, 2010

President Miller, Members of the Maryland Senate, honored guests, and visitors:

Since 1997 I have had the privilege of assisting the Senate in presenting the *First Citizen award* to distinguished public servants who have committed themselves and their careers to furthering the principles and goals of our written constitutions, both state and federal. The *First Citizen* award is named in honor of Charles Carroll of Carrollton, the last surviving signer of the Declaration of Independence whose public career as a Maryland and United States Senator set a high standard of public service and earned him the magnificent portrait by Thomas Sully on the walls of this chamber.

The award reads:

"First Citizen is the name that Charles Carroll of Carrollton chose to sign a series of articles published by Ann Catherine Green in the Annapolis Maryland Gazette in 1773. They form a strong defense of an independent legislature and were among the earliest arguments for a new concept of government based upon traditional community rights and liberties that protected its citizens from arbitrary rule. At the time, Carroll, as a Roman Catholic, could neither vote nor hold public office. With the publication of these articles, Carroll launched a career of public service that would not end until his death at the age of 95 in 1832. In addition to helping draft Maryland's first Constitution and signing the Declaration of Independence in 1776, Carroll served as President of the Maryland Senate, of which he was a member from 1777 to 1800, and as one of the first United States Senators from Maryland (1789-1792). To be a First Citizen is to be a dedicated and effective participant in the process of making government work for the benefit of all."

As Professor Ronald Hoffman relates in his study of the relationship between Charles Carroll of Carrollton and his father Charles Carroll of Annapolis, a good education, including a careful grounding in the legal foundations of government was essential not only to the improvement of his personal fortune, but also that of the future prosperity of the Maryland he called home. For sixteen years his father supported his quest for a broad, yet demanding formal education thousands of miles from his family because there was no comparable institution of higher education at home. He studied the law, even though his religion prevented him from practicing in the courts at home, a matter which he successfully set his sights on changing on his return. He mastered accounting and surveying, because he meant to inherit and expand upon his father's vast estate. At times, his father, as most fathers probably do, cautioned him to attend to those studies writing him at one point, "I do not send you...to spend 4 or 5 years to no purpose. I send you to Study & Labour." Charley followed his father's advice, and despite periodically complaining of the 'law's dryness and intricacy, even decrying" at one point its "barbarous language" and "unintelligible Jargon." He would bring that knowledge to bear on the shaping of the first Maryland constitution and the first laws enacted under that constitution, having successfully fought to remove the religious barrier to his election. In 1784, the first year of peace following the American Revolution, when the newly minted Maryland House and Senate agreed to the lobbying efforts of George Washington to finance Washington's vision of improving the navigation of the Potomac to the Ohio Country, and at the same time commissioned the full length portrait of Washington, Lafayette and Tilghman to grace the walls of the State House, one of the great treasures of the State now temporarily on exhibit at the Maryland Historical Society while the Old Senate Chamber is being restored, Charles Carroll of Carrollton sponsored the first

effort to found and fund a University of Maryland, with campuses on the Eastern and Western Shores.

Today we pay tribute to two outstanding educators and administrators of higher education in Maryland who have worked tirelessly to emulate Charles Carroll of Carrollton's commitment to higher education and to public service.

University of Maryland President, C. D. "Dan" Mote will retire this August as the president of the University of Maryland after 12 years leading the state's flagship public university. His devotion to teaching, and to fundraising for academic excellence has been heralded by all the news accounts of his impending departure. He has increased research funding by 150 percent and raised the status of the university among its peers to new academic heights. He has done so in the face of severe budget cuts, all the while seeking to stress the importance of recruiting the best students locally through such programs as the Maryland Incentive Awards for Baltimore and Prince George's County. As he pointed out in an editorial in the SUN in 2006, "America's most valuable economic asset, its sharp competitive edge in science and technology, is getting dull...the key to our prosperity is at risk." He has acted on his belief that 'the state's economy is deeply tied to high-tech and knowledge-based businesses,' not only by effectively seeking out the funding to supply that economy with well-educated graduates, but also through his own personal research and teaching that has led to numerous patents and educational awards. On behalf of President Miller and the Senate of Maryland the First Citizen Award is presented to C. D. "Dan" Mote.

Dr. Freeman Hrabowski, president of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, is recognized today as a "First Citizen" for his on-going, nationally recognized efforts to successfully foster his campus as a premier center of technological development and training, incorporating into that vision the importance and the need to increase minority participation and success--especially in science and technology. In doing so, he is probably not as aware as I am, that his campus hosts the mirror site of one of the largest public electronic archives in the United States, one that pays for itself as records are created and added to it, saving the State and its citizens considerable expense in accessing information vital to the rejuvenation of our economy. Yet that small piece of his extensive list of accomplishments is symbolic of his drive to make the UMBC campus not only a center of *learning* but also a center of *doing* in the fields of not just science, math, and technology but also the humanities. His history department, for example, may be the only one in the nation that participates in a joint seminar of history and law school students in which teams from each school write joint papers on the historical context of important legal issues. He personally has participated in the battle for civil rights from an early age, and was named one of America's Best Leaders by *U. S. News and World Report* in 2008, the year before the same journal ranked UMBC "the #1 up and coming" university in the nation, and *Time* magazine called him one of America's 10 best College Presidents. On behalf of President Miller and the Senate of Maryland, the First Citizen Award is presented to Dr. Freeman Hrabowski.