

- Denzel Washington, 5/16/2011

As the son of a beauty parlor owner and a Pentecostal minister who had to work two jobs to make ends meet, Denzel Washington defied all odds and was admitted to Fordham University, a prestigious institution in New York City on a sports scholarship. He knew he could play basketball, but not much more. His instinct was to enroll as a biology major with an ultimate goal to become a physician. As he wrote in his book *And to Guide Me*, “

In his book Mr. Washington shares how he found wisdom in many persons throughout his life. First his parents and schoolteachers, but significantly from a dean at Fordham who told him to take a break before registering for his sophomore year. After a period of reflection, he worked as an art director for a summer camp where he participated in talent shows. His colleagues suggested that he return to college and pursue acting. Mr. Washington did return to Fordham to study drama, graduated and is now a part of Hollywood history.

The recipient of two Oscars

We celebrate all of our students, especially graduates and in my opinion those who have had the grace to have had grace under pressure for their commitment to their education and for their parents and teachers we are so proud of you!

We have invited SALSU President Steven Dorsey, a graduating senior, to be our guest writer for this month's diversity message. We are honored that he agreed to share with all of us his view on diversity from a student's standpoint. We also want to thank Mr. Dorsey for his excellent work as a member of our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council.

We are also sharing the link to Mr. Denzel Washington's speech at UPenn.

Many blessings!

<https://youtu.be/0FB9i7P9Zs4>