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The Visionary Within

Mari Wells

Editor's Note: *Finalist in the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. "I Have a Dream" Speech Contest.*

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was a visionary,
a person with unusually keen foresight. Although

he struggled to lift the African American of his generation from despair, he was also able to envision a better future for Americans of all races. Like Reverend King, I also have a vision for a future of promise. The purpose of this paper is to share that vision with you. My two years at Collin College are almost at an end, and my time here has given me an insight into my future; my classes, my teachers, and my experiences have contributed to a future, one of possibility, of problem solving, of facing difficulties with hope, and of connecting with others to achieve our dreams.

I had a vision that I was a piece of artwork like Constantin Brancusi's *Beginning of the World*. This sculpture appears to me like an egg: it symbolizes the beginning, sitting upon a piece of circular glass, which both reflects and absorbs light, as it lies on top of a pedestal of stone. The piece is presented as something tangible representing something intangible, like dreams. I am like the egg, in the beginning of my adulthood, things in my world are reflected and absorbed by me, like the glass. I rest upon a pedestal which represents my childhood. I learned of Constantin Brancusi in my Art Appreciation class last summer at Collin College. I found that even though I am not talented at painting, drawing, or sculpting, I can appreciate art in my own way. Art is like a doorway to our dreams.

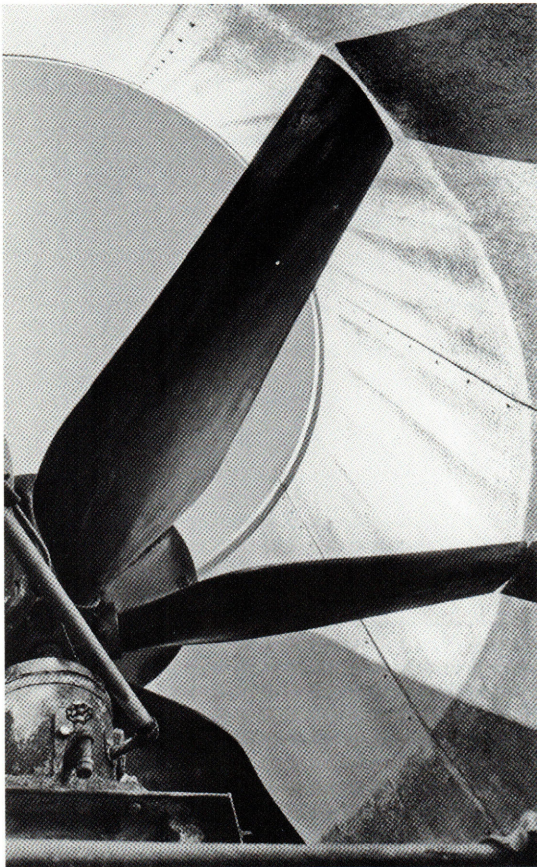
I had a vision that I was a physics problem and, that, like the world which faces challenges. I had to develop an equation, or sets of equations, to find a solution. My Collin College physics course helped me to become a problem solver both in mathematics and in life. Even when a solution seems impossible or improbable, that does not mean it is insurmountable. Many of the problems we can now solve today were complete mysteries a half century ago. The

world we live in suffers from problems such as pollution, the struggle to feed populations in agriculturally barren parts of the world, and helping our brothers and sisters across the oceans to fight off infectious diseases like malaria and HIV, but solutions are out there, and working together, we can find them. My dad told me that one person can make a difference, that one person can change the equation. I can be that change.

I had a vision that I was the poem "Sestina" by Elizabeth Bishop. In my Composition II class, I completed a research paper on this work and discovered that it is more than a form of poetry; it is a story about connections and about the circularity of time. All the things I am learning about here at Collin College connect to my dreams. I will pass my knowledge and experience onto those whose lives I touch. And when I face difficult times, like Bishop, times when my teacup is "full of dark brown tears," I will, like the grandmother in Sestina, try to remember there is a "Time to plant tears."

I had a vision that I was in front of a crowd of people making this speech, and despite the fact that I had one of the highest levels of apprehension of speaking in front of people in my Fundamentals of Speech Communication class, I did it anyway. I was not calm and collected like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., instead I was nervous and speaking too fast. I was stuttering a bit and my hands were trembling, but I was sharing my ideas with others. When my grandparents were my age, there were no cell phones, no internet, no Facebook. My generation is the first generation to be so globally connected. This is a great opportunity. We need to be responsible communicators, considerate of each other and our individuality, and like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said in his "I Have a Dream" speech, "as we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead."

My two years at Collin College have helped prepare me for my future. I will step forward from these doors as a woman who is hopeful, a woman who is a problem-solver, a woman who is better equipped to face difficulty, and a woman who can communicate with others, face to face, or from a podium, in order to achieve her dreams. We as citizens of our communities, citizens of our world, have a responsibility to rise to our potential. In the first inaugural address, George W. Bush said, "We are bound by ideals that teach us what it means to be citizens." I ask you to join me in being a citizen, and like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., we too, can be visionary.



TURBINE #82 Robert Shipley