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### Cuse Conference

Kent Syverud  
*Syracuse University*

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# Syracuse University

Remarks by Chancellor Kent Syverud  
Delivered on Friday, March 20, 2015  
Location: Henniger Athletics Center  
Remarks: Lemoyne Inauguration

*The Chancellor was introduced by Dr. John Smarrelli*

On this happy day, I bring greetings to the LeMoyne community from all at Syracuse University. Syracuse and LeMoyne share so much; programs and alumni and friends and commitment to this region. We are so proud that a Syracuse University alumnus is president of this great school.

She is the first lay woman to lead a Jesuit Institution in the history of the world. Wow. The first woman.

I have been blessed to know and work with “first women” all my life. I have been blessed at home, in my marriage, and in my work with government, business, and academia. Many of those first women are here today on this stage and in this congregation. They include my dear friend Patty O’Hara, who came here today to bear witness for Linda. Patty is the first female officer of Notre Dame University and the first female dean of Notre Dame Law School.

I worked with Sandra Day O’Connor early in her career in Washington—one month I heard her introduced 50 times as the first woman Supreme Court Justice. In the car, I asked her whether she ever got tired of the “first woman” line.

She told me: “Kent, that’s going to be the first thing they always say about me. But right now it is mostly a responsibility, because I want more than anything for there to be a second woman, and a third, and a fourth. I just have to do a great job.”

And then Justice O'Connor stared directly at me and said, "So Kent, let's get to work."

Linda, I know you also feel the responsibility of being "first woman." I know that leading a college can be lonely sometimes too.

I have only known you one year. So many people here have known you almost all of your life. We all agree that you have the brains, heart, soul, grace and humor—you have friends, and we will be here for you.

To Linda, to all friends of this great college, I say: Let's get to work.

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