



STATE OF NEW YORK
EXECUTIVE CHAMBER
ALBANY 12224

DAVID A. PATERSON
GOVERNOR

February 23, 2010

Dear Friends:

I am delighted to send greetings to all gathered on this anniversary of Emma Willard's birth to enjoy a special presentation by Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn – co-authors of *Half the Sky* – a study into the need and call for more extensive education among the global community of girls and women.

We recognize that women continue to have a tremendous impact upon the social, cultural, and economic development of this nation and others. While we look to the next generation of women to contribute in unprecedented ways, in many of the world's countries women never have the chance to rise out of a life of unthinkable poverty and oppression due to a lack of education.

This occasion provides the opportunity to gain further insight into this issue as studied and viewed by Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, whose collaborative partnership has brought the subject into focus and highlighted a reality that calls for global action. Within free and civilized countries, women have an immeasurable impact on many areas of life, affecting the smallest neighborhoods to influencing entire nations. Until more recent times, their roles have not always been well-defined nor their full potential recognized as, throughout history, deficiencies in educational opportunity have barred the path for many.

While in modern cultures education is a priority, the disparities that exist in underdeveloped countries prevent women from achieving what can be their certain destiny. The chance to learn would allow many girls and women to make a significant difference in the world community and to contribute in various areas of endeavor, with results that can be seen by their own communities and people.

A truly visionary woman, Emma Willard understood the need to broaden opportunities for young women and took the steps to make education a possibility for females, allowing them to seize the rewards and benefits of a sound foundation of knowledge. Today we find women who have crossed virtually all barriers, yet it is not without sadness at the lack of opportunity that still exists for many girls and women in developing countries who are poor, abused, neglected, socially-disadvantaged, or economically challenged.

Making education a possibility for women globally could help them reach the utmost heights of accomplishment, as outlined in the work of by today's guest authors. We all share in this responsibility and, in doing so, can improve our world. Congratulations to today's distinguished guests and best wishes to all for an enriching program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David A. Paterson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

David A. Paterson