



Remarks from outgoing President and CEO Maxwell King (delivered by Vice President of Communications Doug Root) of The Pittsburgh Foundation at the leadership event held May 2019.

Back a few years ago, when I was way too comfortable in my career track, I enjoyed doing impressions of Max to the delight of standing-room only audiences in the office kitchen. I titled them “Maxims.” Someone took a little video and, of course, it made its way to Himself.

He sent me an email with the video attached and a one-word comment:

“Amateur.”

So, the fact that he has entrusted me with delivering his remarks tonight, must mean that I finally measure up to the proper level of gravitas.

Seriously, I am truly honored to be delivering the following from Max to Edie, Lisa, the Board, staff and all of you:

“Thank you all very much for being here tonight. I am quite sorry not to be there celebrating with you. But this medical drill that I am in has knocked me back a bit. Longer term, as the medical people have assured me, I know it will be fine.

The first thing I want to offer is my gratitude – my profound gratitude – to the staff, the board and, particularly, to Edie Shapira for giving me the opportunity to come back to Pittsburgh and join the exceptional institution that is The Pittsburgh Foundation.

And nothing is more valuable to me right now than seeing the community-building work of the Foundation go forward as effectively as possible. I am grateful to everyone at the Foundation for providing me the opportunity to be a part of this mission. This has been the most meaningful work, and I thank Edie and the board for their support.

I especially appreciate the hard work of the Board Search Committee that resulted in the selection of Lisa as the next president. She has amazing experience, great capability and strong character to lead an exceptional staff in the right direction. She is a fine choice for the leadership role here, and I look forward to pestering the hell out of her with suggestions.

If you can bear with me, I want to offer two observations about the Foundation as it figures into the future of the region:

The real treasure of our community philanthropy is its extraordinary staff. Yes, the money is important, the grantees are important, the donors are important. But nothing is more essential

than the exceptionally capable and committed people who work here. I am honored to have been part of this team.

And, the second point: Of course, I want to remind all of you that the work we have embarked on to help vulnerable populations in the region is just a beginning. There is so much more work to be done – in Pittsburgh and across the country – to ensure everyone has opportunity to prosper. The shocking economic divide that bedevils our country has been building for five decades. It will take much more work by us and others to repair it.

I wish you all – Board, staff and all our great partners in the community – the very best. Peggy and I aren't going anywhere. We will be here, and I am confident I will continue to be a big pain in the ass to as many of you as I can.”

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