**Women’s Leadership Initiative**

**Lecture Series Discussion Guide**

*Date | time* 10/23/2015 12:00 PM  | *Location* University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Presenter</th>
<th>Lynette Marshall</th>
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<tr>
<td>Presenter Position</td>
<td>CEO, UI Foundation</td>
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<td>Sponsored By</td>
<td>Chief Diversity Office and Iowa Network for Women in Higher Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Practicing Leadership</td>
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**Key Points**

- Share your stories; they matter and shape us
- Recognize your sense of rootedness and appreciation for place
- Engage fully in organizations and accept leadership in groups that you value
- Acknowledge and embrace the authenticity of different women’s leadership experiences
- Learn to overcome roadblocks and allow others around to help

**Rootedness and Appreciation for Place**

**Formative Experiences.** Marshall describes her experience growing up on a 5th-generation family farm rooted in agricultural and land ethics. What core formative experiences and values have contributed to your leadership? How did you embody those values growing up? Which values do you still connect to today?

**Influence of Identities:** Which of your identities growing up influence your leadership currently? How were identities talked about in your family? Did your perception of your identities ever conflict with other’s perceptions of those identities?

**Symbolic Reminders.** What tangible items do you have or keep to remind you of your values? Have any of your values changed? Give an example of when you noticed a change in your behavior based on shifting values. How did these changes connect to your leadership?

**Learning to Doing**

**Learning by Doing.** Marshall focuses on practice: “Three times slow. Three times medium. Three times fast.” What leadership experiences required you to learn by doing? Did you use the learned skills in different environments? How did you adapt in each situation?
Training Grounds. Marshall shared how she learned about intense travel schedules and impromptu speaking through her experience as a pageant winner. What is your “pageant winner” experience? Where have you unexpectedly learned skills that have been essential to your leadership? How do you communicate your experience and acquired skills to others? How do you react when others share their “pageant winner” experience? Does your perspective ever get in the way of seeing value in a particular industry or organization?

Authentic Narratives

Ability Analyzed. Marshall describes her transition into college as a test of self-assurance and ability. For her, she realized that she didn’t “need to be the smartest, but just needed the chance to outwork everyone else.” How do you overcome your perceptions of your own ability? What stops you from seeing your skills? How can you reframe these situations? What happens if you can’t?

Finding Mentors. Who are your mentors? What do you look for in a mentor? Do specific identities of your mentor matter more to you than others? Do you have a network of mentors who support you?

Fighting History. Marshall describes how analyzing the patriarchic narrative of leadership was a pivotal moment in her life. If most of the characteristics we honor are driven and held by men, how does this influence the narrative of women in leadership? What leadership stories do you know and/or cherish? Who is the protagonist? What would happen if the identities of the protagonist changed?

Overcoming Roadblocks

Roadblocks Revisited. What has been your most challenging roadblock? What contributed to this challenge? Why is this experience so important to you? Who was there to help you? Who wasn’t there? Could the same roadblock occur again? If it does, what will you do?

Power of Disappointment. What are personal disappointments that have impacted your leadership? How have you learned from past professional disappointments? What disappointments are you currently experiencing? What methods do you have to overcome these disappointments?

Pathways Forward. How would you describe your leadership path? Marshall believes leadership journeys are not linear and that there will be many people who support you along the way. What shape does your path take? Who is on your path with you? Who do you trust? How important is trust to your leadership?

Other Resources


“…because each of our stories matter – even if they seem pedestrian to us…”

- Lynette Marshall