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Welcome Remarks

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Welcome Remarks

Paul Benson

Good evening. I join Dr. Amin in welcoming you to this evening's keynote address for the Global Voices Symposium. I am very glad that you have joined this webinar and hope that you have been able to participate in other symposium sessions yesterday and today.

I want to thank the Alumni Chair in Humanities office and the outstanding campus planning team for their thoughtful work in developing this year's symposium, and I want to thank the co-sponsors across campus for their support of these important conversations. Julius Amin deserves particular thanks for his leadership, vision, and active campus-wide collaboration as our Alumni Chair in Humanities.

The Global Voices Symposium has established an important presence and legacy our campus. From the first symposium in this series in 2017 to the subsequent symposia over the past six years, the theme of global voices has afforded a fruitful point of departure for a broad spectrum of campus conversations, research presentations, and dialogues with community partners that touch on central elements of our mission as a locally engaged and globally committed university in the Catholic and Marianist educational tradition. The global voices framework connects powerfully with our curricular work, with co-curricular programming, our expanding involvements in community-engaged scholarship and discovery, and our strategic efforts to become a more inclusive, equitable, richly diverse Catholic university. This is work to which our mission calls us, even as it challenges us deeply, and even as our efforts are imperfect, our progress halting.

This spring's symposium addresses what is in many respects the most significant, dynamic continent of our century—Africa—and the

dazzling kaleidoscope of rich histories and cultures that have emerged from the multitude of societies that enliven the continent, and which continue to influence and shape histories and cultures around the world. The context of the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic should heighten our awareness of the multitude of ways in which our understandings of our own lives and the opportunities and challenges we face are inextricably linked to the lives of our African sisters and brothers, and the opportunities and challenges they face as our neighbors in the human community.

It is now my pleasure to introduce Dr. Amy Anderson, associate provost for global and intercultural affairs, who will introduce this evening's speaker. Thank you again for participating in this week's symposium.