

**Speaker: Chairman Greenawalt
Event: Papadakis Service at St. Luke
Date of Event: 14 April 2009**

Eliana, Maria...if you didn't already know the extent to which Taki affected lives and inspired people, this turnout shows you how we all loved him. Not only that, but there are students, faculty and staff watching at viewing locations on the Drexel campus, and alumni and friends watching the Webcast around the world.

On behalf my fellow trustees and fellow alumni of Drexel University, let me express the profound sorrow being felt on our campuses. But I also want to express how thankful we are for the time that we were fortunate to have Taki. He made Drexel, and us, better.

Taki's unique approach to his presidency is well documented. It was even featured in a front page article of the Wall Street Journal. He ran Drexel like a business. He challenged the academic status-quo. He advocated constant, fast-paced innovation. He came to Drexel as a type of university leader no one had seen before. Thanks to his success, he became a model for the modern university president.

You can tick off the milestones at Drexel under Taki—financial stability, then unprecedented growth. Medical school, law school. Wireless campus. Drexel Online. Sacramento Graduate Center.

They're part of our history, and in retrospect their success seems inevitable. But it wasn't . . . Will, vision and planning were needed. And most of all, leadership.

If you worked with Taki or for him, you know that people followed him—willingly and enthusiastically for the most part . . . kicking and screaming only when absolutely necessary.

But why? Why was Taki such a great leader? It's a hard question, because really, leadership was part of his essence.

I joined the Drexel board just before Taki's appointment. I worked alongside him every step of the way. So I think I have a few insights into how he moved mountains, and rebuilt Drexel.

It's no secret that Drexel in 1995 was a challenge. The recession of the early Nineties had hit hard, and the University was in a slump. It was hard to picture exactly how a leader was going to move Drexel forward. Then we met Taki.

The first message he had for Drexel was so simple, it's a wonder it needed saying. That message was—"Work hard." He challenged us to put more into Drexel, to take responsibility for the success of the institution. Some didn't like being challenged, and they fell by the wayside. But the vast majority responded.

They responded to his words, but even more, they were inspired by his example. Because he was the hardest worker of all. That was his first secret to leadership—he set the tone. He set the tone for 15,000 students and employees, then 20,000, then 30,000, right up to his death.

We also responded to his vision. He could see opportunities we couldn't see for ourselves. He had a vision for how to reinforce Drexel's strengths, and how to nurture its culture. He was so far ahead of the curve sometimes, you would wonder, "What is he doing?" But when success came, we were able to see what he'd been showing us all along.

The world is full of people who have ideas but can't implement them. Taki's genius was in executing his vision. He could lay out the roadmap for how an idea advanced from concept to reality. Of course, then he would tell you how long he

thought it should take to travel that road, and you'd wonder, "Isn't there a speed limit?"

Vision, hard work, execution—these were the cornerstones of Taki's leadership. But there was more. There was the way people responded to him. It's a rare executive who could be as hard-charging and demanding as Taki, but at the same time as gracious, charming and inspiring. Little things meant a lot—shaking the hand of every graduate at Commencement to acknowledge their achievement. Attending student and faculty events. Remembering the details about an employee's life. Working the room, offering everyone a word of encouragement or a new thought.

That human quality is what will stick in my memory. Long after we forget the growth numbers—enrollment, research, endowment. Long after the new buildings stop feeling new. Long after the newspaper clippings have faded. I'll remember the twinkle in his eye when he explained a new idea . . . the concentration when he listened to a student . . . the smile when he was representing the University . . . the look of contentment when he was with Eliana and Maria.

Taki will be missed. But if ever a man built a legacy great enough to soften the blow of losing him, it was Taki.

Thank you.