

Vicki Bier: Okay, our next speaker is Lydia Zepeda. She was a peer of Denice's here, one of the group of faculty members that went through their assistant professor years together and mentored and supported each other. She's currently a professor in the consumer science department at UW-Madison.

Lydia Zepeda: Thank you, Vicki. Can you hear me? Denice was a personal friend, but she also was a professional friend. And what I wanted to do in the few moments that I was going to talk today is just talk about some anecdotes – an anecdote – and talk about how important it is to be a personal and professional friend if we want to advance women and minorities in academia or in any profession. And she was a real example to all of us, and I think we can learn from her example and try to emulate what she did.

I believe we met in early 1990 – it could have been late 1989. We were both assistant professors at the time, and we were both the only women in our departments at the time. And so of course, when we met we had a lot to talk about, a lot in common. In fact, later, I remember Carolyn, Denice's mother, dug up an old email that Denice had sent to Phil Certain about how Denice and I were going to form a consulting firm where we would volunteer, well not volunteer, we would rent out our services as shock troops, and would go into departments that were all men, and we would be the first women in those departments. Because we figured, you know, we should be getting something out of this from him. She was a great personal friend. I mean, she was just so much fun, and we had lunches and dinners together, we went drinking together. She babysat my colicky son, she arranged the funeral for my father, she did what it needed to take as a friend. And that's a lesson for all of us. She was also a professional friend. I'm an economist; she's an engineer – what did she know about economics? Didn't matter – she knew how to make a CV, and she gave me examples. She knew how to find out tenure guidelines; she got them for me. She knew how to get a hold of tenure packets; she got me examples. She told me, "You're putting your own tenure packet together. It's too important to trust anyone else. The won't do as good a job as you're doing it." And she was right. So remember that – if you want people to succeed, help them out, whatever it takes.

But I did want to just give you an example of an anecdote of how she was both a professional and a personal friend. And this happened in February 2001 at the AAAS meetings in San Francisco. And I was on a panel, and I was going to be talking about lab technology. And I was the only woman on the panel. There were five guys and a male facilitator, and of course I was last. And I remember sitting in the panel with my – you know, we had all been told "20 minutes," we had 20 minutes – and I had my slides and I was all ready to go and I'm looking through my slides. And I'm noticing the clock, and I'm noticing that I'm last, and I'm realizing about halfway through I'm only going to have 15 minutes. Okay, well I'm pulling slides out. And I'm noticing, you know, I'm only going to have 10 minutes – I'm pulling slides out. And then five minutes. And it got down to the end, and I literally had two minutes to do my

presentation. And by the way, Denice had walked into the meeting about a half-hour before the end – you all know she wouldn't sit through a whole session. She just wanted to come and see me, right? So two minutes, and she figured out what was going on, the fact that I was not given any time. And as you can imagine, you've all been in this situation, it was very insulting, and going back to just the lack of respect. It was just, just, I was livid! Okay, so what does Denice do? She knew this restaurant that we were going to go to – and by the way, this was when they were right before the keynote for the human genome, this was a huge presentation that was going on, there were thousands of people there. And we ditched out of that, and we went down and on the way out of the building, she grabbed the whole stack of *Science* magazines – the one with human genome map in them – she said, "Come on, we're going to go do something fun." And so she took me and we walked through The Tenderloin – it was night – and we had this stack of *Science* magazines, and she would stop people in the street and say, "Can I interest you in a copy of *Science* magazine?" It had a map of the human genome on it! And we're in The Tenderloin, right?! We're stopping drug dealers, prostitutes, cops, I mean anybody! And we terrified them. We could not give these things away. [Laughter] And it was a real important message, it was very empowering, we had a great time because we really started just getting into it, and we did finally get rid of all 20 copies. I think people, some of them finally figured out they'd just better take it so they could get away from us. And after that we went to this wonderful restaurant and tried every flavor of margarita they had, and had a great time. But it illustrated several points: one is that she was a really good friend, she made me feel really good. I mean, I was feeling like crap and she turned it around. The other thing that she demonstrated to me was the importance of outreach [laughter], and that, there were like 10,000 people at this keynote on the human genome. Average person on the streets of San Francisco didn't care and didn't know. And Denice pointed out how important it is to publicize and do outreach. And of course, the third thing is that Denice always multi-tasks [laughter]. So that's what I had to say. Thank you.

[Applause]