

*Remarks for the
Presentation of the Mississippi Outstanding Older Workers Award
August 22, 2002*

I'm proud to have the chance today to be with someone who's a true inspiration.

It's difficult sometimes to find the words to describe someone like Merle Norton, who continues to work hard every single day for the Farese and Farese Law Firm and still spend time as a volunteer in her community.

The great entertainer Danny Kaye once said that "life is a great big canvas, and you should throw all the paint you can on it."

Merle's still throwing a lot of paint.

She cared for her husband, Roy, during his illness, while still working and raising a family.

She's active in her church, Girl Scouts and the Young at Heart Square Dancers – and I'd love to hear her play her dulcimer sometime.

And, I understand she attended the Health Care Summit my office organized last year in Hattiesburg, and continues to stay active in health care issues. Merle, that's a great gift to your community – and I appreciate it.

Perhaps most of all, it's her desire to stay informed, to stay educated, that I think has influenced her. She wrote on her questionnaire that "changes in technology" were a challenge in the workplace, but she is going "to keep an open mind and keep learning."

What a tremendous attitude, and what a great role model for our young people.

Merle, congratulations on your recognition as Mississippi's outstanding older worker.