

## **NOMINATING SPEECH FOR ROBIN BROWN-HAITHCO**

**for**

**PRESIDENT-ELECT, ACPE, INC.**

**April 23, 2010**

**by**

**The Rev. Dr. Timothy A. Thorstenson**

Great leaders are made, not born. They are shaped and refined over and over again, growing first into themselves, and then into progressively wider circles of community, and of awareness, and of influence. From our vantage point in CPE, we know that leaders most often arise out of tempering experiences, as steel is tempered by the refiner's fire. And we know that those people who learn to draw from those experiences, and who learn to integrate those experiences by turning the knowledge gained into wisdom - and those people who then, in turn, allow that wisdom to shape and inform how they live - those are the people that rise up, often humbly, to lead us forward. It is the painful experiences, as you all know, that hold the potential to redeem meaning in life and to deepen one's soul. It is the heart-breaking and illusion-shattering experiences that move people into their passions and into their truest selves and thus into their depths - and paradoxically into their fullness.

Robin Brown-Haithco is a soulful woman, a passionate woman, a woman now coming into her fullness. She knows both the foundational personal security that comes from nurturing and loving parents, and she knows the intensity of a competitive and sometimes alienated family. With her lineage coming out of Africa, mixed with a great-grandfather who was a white physician and a maternal grandfather who was part Cherokee, she knows diversity, both embraced by the blood pulsing through her body and learned the hard way through the soul-stealing effects of racism. She knows the struggle of growing up in a small town just an hour from the seat of the Confederacy, and she knows what it is to not just survive but indeed to thrive. She knows the reward of learning to be, even daring to be, self-reliant, and of rising up out of marginalization, and of reaching for the higher bar of higher education, all on her own. And she also knows the pain of it; and the costs; and the brokenness that is so much a part of that journey of becoming.

Robin's defining moment came just over a year ago. Most of you know that Robin was very ill with a raging sepsis from a surgical procedure. You may not know that for too long a time it wasn't clear if she would live or die. Such experiences - again as we all know - can be "make or break" moments. When Robin openly named her reality, and turned it over to God's and Miriam's care, and truly let go of the outcome, her heart became full, and perhaps not incidentally, her healing began and the tempering process took another turn. Robin knows what it is to tough things out, and she knows what it is to be deeply needful and truly inter-dependent. She is a woman of strength, and yet she is a woman of humility. She is a woman of self-control, and yet she is a woman who now knows its limitations and the soul-soothing serenity that comes with opening her hands. She is a woman who values the pragmatic, and yet she is a woman of deep faith and trust in the divine mysteries. She is a woman of power, and now she is a woman who knows that the greatest power is the power of love. Just ask her students. Just ask her patients. Just ask the physicians and nurses and secretaries and housekeepers to whom she ministers. They'll all say that we couldn't do better. And I agree wholeheartedly. Therefore, it is a high honor and a great privilege for me to nominate Robin Brown-Haithco to be the next president of ACPE.

**NOMINATING SPEECH FOR ROBIN BROWN-HAITHCO**  
**for**  
**PRESIDENT-ELECT, ACPE, INC.**  
**April 23, 2010**  
**by**  
**The Rev. Marla Yvette Coulter-McDonald**

I am Marla Coulter-McDonald, an ACPE Supervisor and a member of the ACPE Board of Representatives. I am honored and privileged to second the nomination of Robin C. Brown-Haithco for President-Elect of the Association of Clinical Pastoral Education.

There is no precious gift for an effective leader than to have the wisdom that can apply relevant values that give meaning to our knowledge and our own experiences. I invite the members of ACPE to hear now the depth of experiences and values that Robin stands to offer to our organization in pivotal and transitional times such as these.

Robin is an ordained minister and endorsed by the American Baptist Church. She has served as the Director of Chaplaincy Services and CPE at Grady Health System/Care and Counseling Center in Atlanta, Georgia. She currently serves as the Director of Staff Support for Emory University Hospital and CPE Supervisor for Emory Center for Pastoral Services.

She has served for over 15 years in her institution as a leader. Robin has worked with the Southeast Region in a variety of capacities on the Regional Board. They include: Certification, Standards, The Racial Ethnic Multicultural Network (*REM*), and the Professional Ethics Commission. She worked at the National Level a total of seven (7) years on the Professional Ethics Commission --- a 3-year term; one year as chair-elect and 3 years as Chair of Ethics. Those who have served alongside Robin and/or under her leadership have described her as a servant leader and as a woman who possesses characteristics of wisdom, remarkable organizational skills, focused, no-nonsense, and decisive. One person said and I quote: "*Robin leads with integrity, with vision and with a spirit of both compassion and excellence.*"

Effective leaders are stewards of God's purposes and resources in human lives and in organizations. Robin's record demonstrates that she has the knowledge, the experience, and the commitment to be entrusted as God's steward to serve and to lead ACPE toward the future and yes, through the "*front door.*"

I repeat: I am honored and delighted to join with my fellow Board member and colleague, Tim Thorensten, in nominating Robin C. Brown-Haithco as the candidate for President-Elect of ACPE and as the first woman of color to lead our organization. Thank you.

**NOMINATING SPEECH FOR ROBIN BROWN-HAITHCO**  
**for**  
**PRESIDENT-ELECT, ACPE, INC.**  
**April 23, 2010**  
**by**  
**Reverend Jasper N. Keith, Jr., Th.D.**

When I asked Robin why she wanted to be President-Elect, she said she has been called; and so, she's asking us to confirm her sense of calling to this good ministry of leadership.

When I asked if she had an agenda and what was motivating her, she said she wanted to attempt three things for ACPE, Inc.: (1) restore the financial stability through a careful aligning of the goals and vision of the FCPE with those of the ACPE, and vice versa; (2) facilitate the organization's movement towards embracing our rich diversity in a more integrating way by ensuring that that diversity is represented in every facet of our life together, and (3) continue the work of the Strategic Plan and especially the "New Generation Project" so as to explore other options and other creative ways of doing CPE.

When I informed the Southeast Region Administrative Board of Robin's calling and commitment, that ten person board unanimously endorsed her nomination.

Yesterday, when I announced her intention at the meeting of the Southeast Region, forty-two colleagues unanimously, enthusiastically, and joyfully endorsed her nomination.

These spontaneous endorsements happened because her colleagues have experienced Robin's servant-leadership in the Southeast since 1994 in certification, standards, annual conference, REM Network, and the Administrative Board. She has led us in worship at annual meetings, hosted REM Invitational Conferences, and taught us to be more inclusive of the "others," accepting and valuing our diversity.

Lately Robin's leadership in the ACPE has been as a member (2003-6) and then as chairperson (2007-2009) of the ACPE Professional Ethics Commission.

We have experienced her pastoral care ministries and her supervisory competency at Grady Memorial and Emory University Hospitals. She has supervised four SESs, two of whom are now ACPE Supervisors and one of whom is a Candidate. She has consulted with five other SESs, three of whom are ACPE Supervisors and two of whom are Associates.

Robin stands in the gap, listening, valuing, negotiating, reconciling, and transforming diverse relationship.

For such a time as this, the ACPE needs her gifts, her courage, her integrity and her compassion.

On behalf of her colleagues from the Southeast Region, I ask you to give Robin Brown-Haithco your serious consideration; and if you are so led, give her your vote for our next President-Elect.