Dear 2016 Moton Fellows,

Congratulations! It is a notable accomplishment to be accepted as a Moton Fellow. In order to be accepted, I know you all have impressive GPAs, previous work experience and community involvement. And after you complete your summer at the Gloucester Institute; your resumes will be even more remarkable. At the Institute, you will have the opportunity to meet distinguished speakers, engage with the surrounding community and do meaningful work. Most notably, you have an opportunity to be a part of history. Dr. Moton was a pivotal figure in American history and it is your job to represent him well. You have such a unique perspective because of your more intimate leadership role within the organization. So I urge you all to take that perspective and fully reflect on your potential impact. You are more than just “interns” or “summer workers,” you have the chance to make a greater difference.

You are about to begin an engaging and rigorous summer experience. As a previous Fellow, I want to give you a few words of advice before you officially start. Firstly, get to know the other Fellows. You will spend a lot of time together working and traveling. Please take the time to learn about each other’s likes, dislikes, passions and ideas. You could be potentially meeting lifelong friends. And also help one another, whether it is editing each other’s assignment or carpooling to work. You are not in competition with one another; instead you are all a team. My second piece of advice is to make sure you leave your own personal mark on your work. You will be given a lot of responsibility this summer and it may seem overwhelming at first. In addition to completing the assignments to the best of your ability, leave your own stamp. For example, if you’re asked to plan logistics for an Emerging Leader event, think of a new system that can helpful for planning all upcoming events. The goal is to leave at the end of the summer and Mrs. James knows where and how you made your mark, because they’ll continue to use your ideas. Lastly, I would advise to really engage in the process. You will meet a number of acclaimed individuals, so don’t forget to ask profound questions. Think hard about the connections others may have to your personal life now and in the future. And then take the opportunity to learn as much as you can from them. This advice also applies to your assignments. Work as hard as you can on your tasks and make sure to produce your best work. You can reap so many rewards from this experience if you’re willing to put in the effort.

In conclusion, take a moment to celebrate this milestone as the newest class of Moton Fellows. You all deserve this opportunity and you are prepared. So take a deep breath and jump right in. This is your moment to make a mark on history, so do it well. And always remember, if you run into a wall: *BLOW IT UP*, don’t let anything stand in your way.

All the Best,

Sydney Mance

2013 Moton Fellow