

**Robert K. Masuda July 15th, 2016 Induction.
Remarks (3 minutes): YMCA Hall of Fame Reception.**

Our global fellowship that is the YMCA is a blessing for all of us, especially those privileged to serve as volunteers and professionals. For me our YMCA has been a positive light and a provider of exciting experiences & understanding over more than five decades.

Our YMCA provides us with opportunities & challenges in our life journeys. It provided me exposure to both the “bright & dark sides” of life. My professional life as a YMCA Director provided many choices... teaching that the essence of our democracy is the existence and exercise of choice making.

I had the privilege of traveling the World, especially extensively in the 1980s through the early part of this new Century... when China, Central & Eastern Europe and the old Soviet Union opened to the rest of our World.

For an island boy it was an adventure AND a fantastic learning experience!

- I learned that the world was bigger, broader & deeper than I knew; that however I looked on the outside, I was & am an American... (*Hawaiian at heart.*)

- That people regardless of national citizenship, or race, or religion, or creed, or wealth, or whatever... wanted peace; to be respected; to be treated with dignity; to be acknowledged as a person; to be loved; to be trusted.

Our YMCA provides this value base as we walk this higher road of humanity, and not suffer from fear, suppression or the like. It simultaneously promotes Reconciliation, Unity, Justice and Altruism.

From my 1960s Chicago experiences with racial divisions and early civil rights activity; to international work with Catholics & Protestants in Belfast; Muslims & Jews in the middle East; and, have & "have-nots" through Africa, Asia, Latin America, emerging states of Central & Eastern Europe, and especially, in our own Country - the challenge of seeing clearly, maintaining inspiration and a sense of altruism, was all part of the process of evolving personal values.

Our world continues to evolve, with greater demands on our capacity to respond faster, smarter and wiser.

For our younger generation & successors... your evolution and life experiences will be more frightful or courageous than of my generation. Rest confident, you have been prepared well and are prepared.

Life can be an adventure, with exciting - sometimes scary experiences, but it is an evolving journey. And our YMCA continues to be the best vehicle for any life's journey! Thank you!

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