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A Toast to Barbara Jordan

Specific Purpose: To inform the audience about the politician, educator and leader, The Late Barbara Jordan, and to pay tribute to her.

Central Idea: Barbara Jordan had a tremendous impact on the views and beliefs of America, and on the governance of the U.S.A.

Inform About Occasion

- I. President Bush, members of parliament, other distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen; it is my pleasure to welcome you this evening to the first Woman of the Century Awards' Gala.
 - A. We gather here this evening to chat, to mingle, to exchange pleasantries, but most importantly to pay tribute to an extraordinary woman, someone who has played many roles in her lifetime.
 - B. She has been politician, educator, inspirational speaker, and leader. I join with Senator Barbara Boxer, in considering her a pioneer and riveting orator.
 - C. I see her as the First Lady. Why? You ask. Because she had so many firsts while she was with us.

(Transition: Let's get to know our honoree a little first)

Refer to Person's Accomplishments

- I. Our awardee was born Feb.21, 1936, in Houston, Texas. The daughter of a Baptist Minister, she was practically raised in the church. Educated at Texas Southern University, she graduated magna cum laude in 1956.
- II. She was so intelligent that after receiving her law degree from Boston University, she received honorary doctorate degrees from 25 colleges and universities.
- III. She had many firsts.
 - A. She was the a member of the first debate team from a Black University to compete in the annual forensic tournament at Baylor College.
 - B. She was the first Black elected to Texas Senate.
 - C. She was the first Black woman governor in the history of the U.S.A.

(Transition: Let's look at why she is our Woman of the Century)

Express to Audience Your Goodwill

- I. A Woman of the Century should be a leader, and that just what our honoree is.
 - A. She was a woman of authenticity.
 - 1) She struggled to break the color barrier.
 - 2) She refused to accept the position she was given as a woman, and spoke up.
 - B. She was a woman of integrity and moral resolve.
 - 1) Her view that the Constitution should be upheld was unchanged.
 - 2) She spoke out against discrimination due to color, gender or class.
 - 3) Her powerful words made a difference when she was a member of the Judiciary Committee during Watergate.
 - C. And we can't forget her initiative.
 - 1) She saw the importance of the Constitution .
 - 2) She realized the importance of education about values.
 - 3) Her words reached all ears, and imparted that everyone could make a difference.

(Transition: Now, the moment we've all been waiting for)

Propose Toast

- I. You yourself have said that a leader must have courage, must stand up for what he or she believes, and must be able to motivate.
- II. Thus, you have chosen this woman as a leader.
- III. Ladies and gentlemen, I therefore ask you to join me and raise your glasses in honor of your leader, your Woman of the Century, The Late Barbara Jordan.

Works Cited

“Life Of Barbara Jordan”. Congressional Record. 22 January, 1996.

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“A Short Biography”. Good Hope Memorial Service. 22 January, 1996.

<http://www.rice.edu/armadillo/Texas/Jordan/jordan.html>

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