

Preface

When we established the General H. Hugh Shelton Leadership Center at North Carolina State University, our focus was clear. Our mission is to inspire, educate, and develop values-based leaders committed to personal integrity, professional ethics, and selfless service. As a young man, I was on an Edgecombe County 4-H livestock judging team, one of four sixteen-year-old members. We had just won the North Carolina state championship and were in Chicago to compete for the national championship. Problem: we learned that each member of the team had to be sixteen years of age by January 1. My birthday was January 2. We were devastated when we learned that we could only compete if we claimed my birthday to be January 1. Our coach, Mr. Charles Lockhart, laid out our options. We could withdraw or request a waiver, since to do otherwise would not be honest. We requested the waiver, and in the end, we were allowed to compete, as if eligible, although our scores wouldn't count in the final results. As it turned out, our scores were respectable but not quite good enough. So we didn't win the competition. But the leadership lesson I learned there was invaluable. It was a lesson about honesty and integrity that I never forgot, and that frankly, thanks to Mr. Lockhart, remained with me throughout my military career and later as we envisioned this leadership center here at NC State.

To support this leadership vision, we have created a number of outstanding programs. We sponsor a Leadership Forum engaging leaders from the corporate sector, K-12, higher education, and agency professionals—all in the pursuit of championing the importance of values-based leadership. The Center also engages the next generation through educational scholarships and enrichment experiences that encourage active learning in a global context.

We offer intensive, week-long summer leadership-development experiences for high school students focusing on what I consider to be five of the cornerstones of leadership—honesty, integrity, compassion, diversity, and social responsibility. So we started with a number of valuable initiatives in place to promote leadership; however, as the years passed, it occurred to us that there was a missing piece to our efforts. We had no intention of producing a textbook on leadership, for that is a road that has been well traveled. There are literally hundreds of books available with the word “leadership” in the titles. What we were searching for was a calling card for the Center, one that would demonstrate our mission in real life, one that would celebrate the legacy of values-based leaders. We found our answer in *Secrets of Success: North Carolina Values-Based Leadership*.

In this beautiful coffee-table book, you will hear the voices of some of the state's great leaders, people who have served North Carolina and our nation in a diversity of arenas—business, government, education, religion, the military, the arts, and athletics. Each anecdotal memory here sheds a unique light that clearly highlights values-based leadership. The brilliant black-and-white portraits of these leaders complement their thoughts; if you look carefully, you can literally see leadership in their eyes and faces.

As I reviewed their thoughts, it became instantly clear that this is a modest gathering, a fraternity of men and women who have found the secret to their own success in others, often their mothers, fathers, teachers, or mentors, people like Charles Lockhart. And it was no surprise that this is a well-grounded group, one whose lessons of leadership were learned—in most cases—on the playing fields of life through experience, education, and hard work.

Through their voices, you'll learn the role that mentors played in their lives and how they made them better leaders. Again, thirty-four voices, all sharing their unique and diverse views of values-based leadership—from David Gergen, who advised four presidents, to Julius Chambers, who led the fight to integrate North Carolina schools, to former U.S. Women's Olympic basketball coach Kay Yow and Dr. Johnnetta Cole, head of the Johnnetta B. Cole Global Diversity & Inclusion Institute. And although this feature was not by design, I find it quite fitting that all of our nation's military services are represented here—General Dan McNeill (R), U.S. Army; Rear Admiral Ralph E. Suggs (R), U.S. Navy; Colonel Curtis L. Brown, Jr. (R), U.S. Air Force; Hugh McColl, U.S. Marine Corps; and Arnold Palmer, who served in the U.S. Coast Guard. Over the years, I've been honored to speak on the subject of leadership on numerous occasions. The question that I receive most often is this: define values-based leadership. I have that definition. Values-based leadership is influencing others through the commitment to personal integrity, professional ethics, and selfless service. But that said, my answer has now become even more clearly defined. If asked today, I suggest taking a look at *Secrets of Success: North Carolina Values-Based Leadership*. The voices of these incredible leaders not only tell our Center's story, they define leadership in a most attractive and inherently readable way.

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