

**NASW Breakfast
Standing Up: Lead the Way Speech**

Introduction

Good Morning All!

Quotes: I'm for truth, no matter who tells it. I'm for justice, no matter who it's for or against.

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A man who stands for nothing, will fall for anything.

Malcolm X

Friends, social work provides an excellent opportunity to stand up and lead the way to advocate and be the voice for those without a voice.

Today, we are here to honor some of our fellow social workers who have stood up and led the way.

Now before I begin my speech I would like to ask, how many of you want to stand up, but fail to get up? How many of you want to lead the way, but have failed to create a path? Lastly, how many of you hold the belief that standing up and leading the way does not matter?

Well, I am here to let you know that standing up and leading the way does matter and let me tell you why.

Speech

It matters because when no other profession will not stand up and lead the way for improved mental health & behavioral health services for the aging, homeless and veterans and their families..... Social Work Will!

It matters because when no other profession will not stand up and lead the way for a more just and fair criminal justice system.....Social Work Will!

It matters because when no other profession will not stand up and lead the way for accessible and affordable health care for all familiesSocial Work Will!

It matters because when no other profession will not stand up and lead the way for gender wage equality Social Work Will!

It matters because when no other profession will not stand up and lead the way for transgender protection..... Social Work Will!

It matters because when no other profession will not stand up and lead the way for social equality in education, employment, housing and other services Social Work Will!

It matters because when no other profession will not stand up and lead the way for the advancement of the Social Work Profession..... Social Work Will!

Finally, it matters because when no other profession will not stand up and lead the way for new legislation that benefits all ages and populations including the elderly, low income, physical, intellectual and/or psychiatric disabilities, survivors of violence/crime/abuse, children and teens, chronically ill, persons with addictions, human trafficking victims, and undocumented residents..... Social Work Will!

Closing

As you aware, today some basic human rights are being threatened at the local, state and federal levels which means we still have a lot of standing up left to do. And while you are doing this standing up in the future, always remember when no other profession will not stand up and lead the way..... Social Work Will!

So in closing, I challenge you today to catch on fire, and in the words of the late great Bob Marley, "Get up, Stand up and Don't forget the fight!" Thank you.