

**Planning for Biodiversity**  
**Welcoming Remarks by Elmore Alexander,**  
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I may not be the right person to welcome you here to Marist College. There are clearly two strikes against me. First, while economics and public administration are part of the School of Management at Marist, the dominant part of the school is business and my degree is in business administration. Business is not seen as a great friend of biodiversity. Second, I'm a golfer and have never seen a deer or a Canadian goose that I would not like to see eliminated from the biodiversity of golf courses.

On the other hand, and in hopes of not striking out this afternoon, I have to acknowledge my general frustration with corporate America's resistance to environmental sensitivity. Seldom has corporate America and the inventiveness of the American workforce not been up to the environmental challenge. Energy consumption is an excellent example. While total energy consumption within the US continues to grow, many businesses have dramatically reduced their energy consumption during the past 20 years. Why? Because they saw that there was money to be made by doing so. Heating systems have become more efficient. Lighting systems have been transformed. New high-tech software solutions from optimal truck routing systems to sophisticated internet based electrical utility meters for homes are hitting the streets. IBM Poughkeepsie is even benefiting as the energy consumption of mainframes as opposed to servers increases the demand for Z-series computers. None-the-less, the auto companies surprisingly resist increasing the cafeteria standards despite the fact that as long as they are imposed on everyone, the companies with the smartest engineers have to be successful and profitable. I personally have huge faith in our inventiveness and entrepreneurial spirit. I sometimes doubt the intelligence and resolve of our policy makers.

In that light, this is an exciting conference for us at Marist to be hosting. I truly believe that the Mid-Hudson Valley can grow and develop in a fashion that protects our diversity. If that is going to happen, however, planners and developers must work together. No growth is not an option if the next generation is to experience the standard of living that we have. On the other hand, unintelligent growth will destroy that standard of living as well. This is one of the most beautiful spots in the United States if not the world. It is certainly the most beautiful place that I have ever lived. Please find ways to maintain both its beauty and viability.

Thank you for being with us here at Marist and I wish you an informative and energizing conference.