**Chuck Vest Emails Re IBM, June 9 – November 5, 2000**

From: James J. Duderstadt <jjd@umich.edu>

Sent: Friday, June 9, 2000 2:39 PM

To: conway@umich.edu

Subject: Followup

Lynn,

I finally managed to have a talk with Chuck Vest concerning your letter to Gerstner. He thinks the tone of your letter is good, and he is willing to transmit the letter with a brief cover note directly to Gerstner. As it happens, both of them will be together next week on an IBM Board trip to China, so he can personally call it to his attention. He thinks Gerstner is an emphathetic individual who will both understand and be sympathetic to your concerns.

I have sent your original letter to Chuck for this purpose.

If you are comfortable with this, he will go ahead next week to contact Gerstner.

However Chuck also said that if you wished to contact him directly on this, his e-mail address is:

 cmvest@mit.edu

and his phone number is

 (617) 253-0044

Hope this works out.

Jim

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From: Lynn Conway <conway@engin.umich.edu>

Sent: (~ June 9/10, 2000 D/T TBD)

To: James J. Duderstadt

Subject: Re: Followup

Hi Jim,

Thanks ever so much for helping out. I'll explain someday why the IBM decision so long ago was so devastating to me at the time. It caused a lot more damage than just the loss of my job at the time - - .

I will also contact Chuck, at least by e-mail, to thank him for conveying the letter to Gerstner.

BTW, I've posted a short version of my story which catches the key points and is an easy read at: <http://ai.eecs.umich.edu/people/conway/LynnsStory.html>

I'll e-mail that to Chuck also, so he'll have it as background for his discussion with Gerstner.

Lot's of neat things happening right now. It'd be fun to chat with you about it sometime.

Thanks again,

Lynn

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From: Lynn Conway <conway@engin.umich.edu>

Sent: (~ June 9/10, 2000 D/T TBD)

To: cmvest@mit.edu

Subject: Thanks!

Dear Chuck,

Jim Duderstadt just e-mailed me that he'd talked with you about my situation, and that you were comfortable about conveying my letter personally to Louis Gerstner of IBM.

I'd be ever so grateful if you could do that. There are many reasons for the letter, including tying up lots of loose ends in my life and dispelling lots of angst from the past.

I've tried to live a good life and be productive, but it has been very difficult at times when society kept coming down on me for just trying to be a complete human being. Times seem to be changing now for others similarly afflicted, and maybe my story can help play into that. IBM might even find a way to make some points by apologizing for past errors, if they were brave enough.

As background for you, there's a short version of my story at:

<http://ai.eecs.umich.edu/people/conway/LynnsStory.html>

with more details linked from my homepage at:

<http://www.lynnconway.com>

Hope you enjoy your upcoming trip to China. Also, please give my best to Becky. I'd heard from Jim that she'd been ill - I sure hope she is feeling much better now.

All the best,

Lynn

Ms. Lynn Conway

Professor of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, Emerita University of Michigan, 146 ATL

Building, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-2110

517-764-4452 (h); conway@umich.edu; http://www.lynnconway.com

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From: Lynn Conway

<conway@engin.umich.edu>

Sent: (~ June 10/11, 2000, D/T TBD)

To: cmvest@mit.edu

Subject: P.S. re Thanks

Hi Chuck,

Just had a thought - it might be a good idea if you printed out my homepage cover sheet and my story, and show them Louis Gerstner too.

Besides the story, they contain a couple of recent photos. That way he'll be able to put a face on my name, and also see that I'm just a regular gal now.

Thanks!

Lynn

<http://www.lynnconway.com>

<http://ai.eecs.umich.edu/people/conway/LynnsStory.html>

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From: Charles M. Vest <cmv@MIT.EDU>

Sent: Sunday, June 11, 2000 3:46 PM

To: Lynn Conway

Subject: Re: P.S. re Thanks

\*\*\* Lynn, You're not a "regular" anything -- strictly an extraordinary achiever! I would settle for calling you a "great gal." I am more than happy to get this to Lou with a brief cover letter. As you know, the briefer, the more likely to get really read. My plan is to send him your letter with a personal note. I'll probably send the web page to either the board secretary or the VP HR, so that they have fuller background. I'll then see all of these characters on the Asian trip. My read on Gerstner is that he will be very understanding. He has promulgated personnel policies that are quite open and flexible. He also has a daughter in medical school, so he undoubtedly has learned through her that the world is not always simple. At least I've learned a lot from our John as he has gone through medical school at your old stomping grounds at Columbia. (Brag: He will be Chief Resident in internal medicine at Columbia-Presbyterian next year.)

Lynn, You are a great woman, and I hope that this process leaves you feeling strong and good. If anybody gives you a hard time, Jim and I will punch them out.

Thanks for your thoughts about Becky. This experience is more frightening the farther away from it we get. I now know that if she had not received full professional assistance within 12 minutes of the onset of her fibrillation, she would have had a 2% chance of surviving. She was flat line in our bedroom. BUT, ... her recovery has amazed everyone, and we are both convnced that she will continue on that trajectory.

 --Chuck \*\*\*

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From: "Charles M. Vest" <cmvest@MIT.EDU>

To: <conway@engin.umich.edu>

Cc: <jjd@MIT.EDU>

Subject: IBM

Date: Sun, 25 Jun 2000 20:55:29 -0500

Dear Lynn,

I faxed your letter with a brief, handwritten note to Lou Gerstner last Thursday (I believe). When I arrived in Hong Kong for our board meeting on Sunday night the group was already eating dinner. Lou motioned me over to sit between himself and his wife, Robyn. He immediately began talking about your letter. He already had had people looking at your stuff on the web, and was aware of what you had published relevant to your IBM work, etc. But he had located no one who knew. (I checked with Nick Donofrio, and he wasn't even at IBM yet in those days. We must be getting old!!!)

I had also confused him because your letter, which I faxed was dated in March.

He was upset that it might have been lost in IBM.

But the point is that Lou had immediately engaged, and had obviously discussed it with Robyn. Both of them were appalled that the company would have acted in this manner. Thus he is personally paying attention to the matter, despite the fact that it arrived less than two days before he took off for a complex trip and a complicated board meeting.

Let me know if I can help further -- through IBM or otherwise.

Keep the faith!

 --Chuck

ps: Can you imagine the image of the IBM board having coctails at the very

spot high above Tiananmen Square where Mao proclaimed the New China, and

later started the Cultural Revolution? Truly surreal.

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From: Lynn Conway conway@engin.umich.edu

Sent: (Date/Time TBD)

To: Charles M. Vest

Subject: Re: IBM

Dear Chuck,

Many thanks for conveying my letter to Lou Gerstner. It was good to hear that he took it seriously and was concerned about how the company had treated me. I'm hoping that some good may eventually come from it all. I'll let you know what develops.

As you can now imagine, this is one area where science and medicine have far outstripped society's ability to cope with and integrate the results. Many others like me still live on the edge of disaster all the time because of family, social, legal, medical, bureaucratic, and employment discrimination.

The numbers are larger than most people realize, and they are often really sweet, sensitive and intelligent gals, many of whom are well educated and could be fine contributors to society if only they were given half a chance. Before I check out I'd like to do what I can to help make it better for them.

Hope that you and Becky are enjoying the summertime there and are having a chance to relax a bit from the hyperactivity of the school year. I'd so enjoy seeing you folks again someday - hopefully our paths will cross again. Meantime, I wish you both the very best.

Thanks again!

Lynn

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From: Charles M. Vest <cmvest@MIT.EDU>

Sent: Monday, July 24, 2000 3:33 PM

To: lynn\_Conway@umich.edu

Subject: IBM, etc.

GOOD TO TALK WITH YOU. I'LL GO AHEAD AND SEND THIS ANYWAY.

Dear Lynn,

I'm just checking in to see if your discussions with IBM are going ok from your perspective. I just checked in with the guy who is the board secretary and he said that they have been in substantial contact with you, but are having real trouble locating stuff from that far back. (Makes me feel old; the 60s don't seem all that long ago.)

Who was head of IBM Research in those days?

I'm leaving in a few hours for the board meeting, which is tomorrow morning, and will check e-mail tonight on the off chance that you may have received this.

Hope the summer is going well. Becky's progress continues and -- for the first time in our lives -- we are going to take three full weeks away in August.

Onward and upward,

 --Chuck

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**More . . .**

From: Charles M. Vest <cmvest@MIT.EDU>

Sent: Sunday, November 5, 2000 1:43 PM

To: Lynn Conway

Subject: Re: Upcoming L. A. Times article

\*\*\* Hi, Lynn. I look forward to the story and very much hopes it serves positive purposes -- especially for you. My interaction with Hiltzik was brief, but his questions and reactions seemed to be those of someone who would do a balanced, careful job. I have had some further conversation. albeit brief, with Dan O'Donnell. He was quite taken aback by the fact that what he took away from your discussion and what you took away were so different in interpretation. He found you to be a very nice person as well as very thoughtful and fair. I am still pondering if there is a way I can be of further help in this regard. --Chuck \*\*\*

>Hi folks,

>

>Thought I'd give you a heads-up about an article that will appear on

>Nov. 19th in the L. A. Times Sunday Magazine

>

>Michael Hiltzik, a Pulitzer-prize-winning L. A. Times journalist has

>written an extensive cover feature story about my life. It's the

>largest feature story the magazine has ever run (~8000 words) and will

>include many photos. Very dramatic aspects of the story will be

>included that I've never revealed before.

>

>I decided to go ahead and put the full story out there in hopes that it

>might help improve awareness of common gender-identity conditions and

>help reduce the terrible stigmatization and discrimination that

>transsexual and transgendered people still face.

>

>The text of the article will appear on website http://www.latimes.com

>on the 19th. However, some of you might want to see the story in print

>along with the photos - and thus this alert so you can find a

>newstand/bookstore in your area that carries the L. A. Times.

>I'd also appreciate it if you'd alert any others whom you think might

>be interested in seeing the article.

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>If at some point you get a chance to read the article, I'd be curious

>as to your thoughts and reactions.

>

>All the best,

>

>Lynn

><http://www.lynnconway.com>

><http://ai.eecs.umich.edu/people/conway/LynnsStory.html>

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