Good morning. My name is Cheryl Hodgin Marshall and I, like Kathryn am a proud 1991 graduate of Presentation High School.

Not words but deeds...our Presentation High School motto. Four incredibly simple, but undeniably powerful words when put into practice.

Words that I tried to live by as a child and words that I continue to strive to live by today.

As a high school teenager, the Presentation community was my everything. I was blessed to have teachers and staff help me to develop into the compassionate, faith-filled, and critical-thinking woman I have become. But most importantly they challenged me to live out my Catholic values and I am forever grateful for the role their teachings have continued to play in all areas of my life.

It’s due to that gratitude and my belief in our motto that I am here today.

I want to make it abundantly clear that I stand with Presentation High School. And I stand with Kathryn and the victims of sexual molestation and abuse. Those are not mutually exclusive statements.

I believe Kathryn. I believe the survivors.

And most importantly, I believe my childhood friend, Jane. I will refer to her as Jane Doe -- because although it has been many years since she was sexually molested **as a young teenager** by Kathryn’s same abuser, she is not ready to publicly reveal herself for fear of being disbelieved or silenced once again.

To be honest, I can't blame her. I am not a victim of sexual abuse or child molestation and yet this is one of the most difficult things I have ever had to stand up and share publicly. I guess part of me reverts back to that high school girl who so desperately wanted to help and yet felt like she failed.

**As Jane and I entered our senior year at Presentation High School**, Jane confided in me that she was sexually molested by her Spanish teacher. She swore me to secrecy but my education at Presentation taught me to accept the responsibility that comes with supporting those in need regardless of how personally difficult it may be.

Therefore, knowing I had to do something to help, I told a trusted teacher about the molestation who then spoke with Jane and in turn immediately reported it to the principal.

Jane was called in to speak with the principal and afterward came to me in tears saying she did not feel that the principal believed her and that the principal suggested that Jane must have been dreaming it. We were both in disbelief and we didn’t know what to do or what to think.

Watching Jane continue to struggle over the next month or two, I suggested to Jane that she could try again but that this time I could go with her to the vice principal and this time she could write down what happened so she didn't have to go through the pain of telling her story once more. Unfortunately, once again we were in disbelief and in tears at outcome. Not only did we not get any help, she dismissed both of us with stern warnings to be careful of what we say.

This third attempt of trying to help Jane report her abuse was a significant before and after moment in my life. Probably one of THE most life-altering moments in my life.

Before I reported the abuse, I knew exactly how to get help. I knew that we were strong girls and could survive anything and in my child-like mind I knew once she reported what happened, the teacher would go to jail and never hurt any girl again. After the third attempt to get help, I realized I was wrong. The world wasn't as I had believed it to be.

I struggled the rest of my senior year with what happened but I did not let that taint my experience at Presentation. I was mature enough then to realize that I could love my school and hate what happened all at the same time.

Since, it was clear that there was nothing left for me to do as far as getting help without victimizing Jane once more, as a 17-year-old girl I did the only thing left I could think of in order to protect Jane. I confronted the teacher, or rather the abuser directly. I told him that I knew what he did to Jane, and I knew he knew what he did. I had a few other words for him that I won’t share but mainly I wanted to be clear that for the remainder of the year, he never speak to Jane or me, he never look us in the eyes, and if he saw either of us walking down the hallway he either look away or turn around and go the other direction. He did not say a word. He walked away and he never looked at me or spoke to me again.

 About five years later, I returned to Presentation to try to find closure and understand how this could happen and why. I received an apology for how we were treated but was told that they did everything they could do. I didn't call anyone a liar but based on what I knew as an adult about mandating reporting I did not believe that statement. I tried to leave with forgiveness in my heart but I will admit it was not easy. Forgiveness was something I had to work toward over time.

So, imagine my shock when I read Kathryn's article in the Washington Post.

I was not naive enough to think that there would be no other victims. But I guess I had wanted to believe that if there were, the school would take a different approach.

So, after reading the article, I literally cried and struggled to wrap my head around it. I am still struggling to wrap my head around it. Kathryn was a victim and she also sought help to no avail. Why not? What possibly went wrong?

When it finally came to light that Jane and Kathryn were not the first to be abused by this teacher and in fact the administration was made aware of it a few years prior.......I didn't just cry, I broke down and sobbed. I am not embarrassed to admit that I sobbed like a child. Jane's and Kathryn’s abuse could have been prevented. It should have been prevented. Again, why? What happened?

And this is where we return full circle to my Catholic education at Presentation High School and my strong spiritual beliefs. I prayed. I prayed for the victims, I prayed for the Presentation community, I even prayed for the staff who I feel failed Jane and others, and most importantly I prayed for guidance as to what to do next.

Not words but deeds...I tried words, I really, really did.  But now with God's help, as hard as it may be, I have moved on to deeds.

We need to take action by starting from the beginning, assessing what happened, and then ensuring as we move forward that our deeds align with our words.

I want to acknowledge the courage and bravery that Kathryn, Jane, and any other victims who have had to endure this very difficult time, have done so with unbelievable grace.

I also am well aware that the Presentation community as a whole is suffering. It is my hope that we can all find solace in the amazing uniqueness of the Presentation community of administrators, teachers, alums, current students and families and hopefully work together with Mr. Bob Allard and his team to make us even stronger and more committed to living our life dedicated to our Presentation motto: Not words but deeds.