



A message from **THE PRESIDENT**

The holidays are underway!

These are days of light and love. We celebrate the season with our families, our friends, and our communities, however we choose to define them. We gather to note and to honor the precious gift of being alive.

The world beyond the campus is rife with conflict; it often feels as if death and destruction have the upper hand. They do – if we let them. It is more important than ever to take a stand against those forces and manifest the qualities we value: Peace. Charity. Compassion for others. Respect for the glorious diversity we see all around us.

These are core principles at Hostos. There is no room here for hatred, bigotry, and intolerance of any kind. All are welcome here. All are cherished.

I'm reminded of a poem by the magnificent Joy Harjo, writer and member of the Muscogee Nation, titled "Perhaps the World Ends Here," which is included in her collection *The Woman Who Fell From the Sky*.

The world begins at a kitchen table. No matter what, we must eat to live.

The gifts of earth are brought and prepared, set on the table. So it has been

since creation, and it will go on.

We chase chickens or dogs away from it. Babies teethe at the corners. They

scrape their knees under it.

It is here that children are given instructions on what it means to be human.

We make men at it, we make women.

At this table we gossip, recall enemies and the ghosts of lovers.

Our dreams drink coffee with us as they put their arms around our children.

*They laugh with us at our poor falling-down selves and as we put ourselves
back together once again at the table.*

This table has been a house in the rain, an umbrella in the sun.

*Wars have begun and ended at this table. It is a place to hide in the shadow of
terror. A place to celebrate the terrible victory.*

*We have given birth on this table, and have prepared our parents for burial
here.*

*At this table we sing with joy, with sorrow. We pray of suffering and remorse.
We give thanks.*

*Perhaps the world will end at the kitchen table, while we are laughing
and
crying, eating of the last sweet bite.*

At Hostos we are all seated at the same table.
I wish you and yours the happiest of holidays.

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President

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