

Once I read from Author Kahil Gibran that, "Work is love made visible.'" To me that line is a testament to how much we gain, grow and offer through the work we do.

Twenty-two years ago I embarked on a journey which has brought me here today.

It really is a privilege to love what one does for a living. Well enough about me...

I have only spent two days in this conference but I have met many of you.

We come from all corners of the world, with diverse sets of problems, yet we all have a common purpose which transcends our differences.

We all seek to do justice, to be fair, and we love what we do in order to bring meaning to our lives and the lives of others.

The International Association of Prosecutors through these events brings recognition to our work in real life adversity.

This award is humbling and I am grateful beyond words. It was precisely two years ago that devastating Hurricane Irma followed only two weeks later by catastrophic Hurricane Maria's path of destruction forever changed our way of life - and work - in Puerto Rico.

"Maria is regarded as the worst natural disaster in recorded history for the Islands and deadliest. This duo caused over 160 Billion dollars in damages.

As we all attempted to grasp our new reality, there remained a duty, as public servants, to set aside our personal difficulties and work together for the greater good. It didn't take long for the magnitude of our responsibility to manifest itself. Just a few days after the hurricane, when I was still trying to clean up what was left of my house as it had been destroyed by the sheer force of the wind. I was faced with the horrific request of one of our District Attorneys, from the town of Utuado, who needed personnel and heavy machinery to extract the bodies of 3 elderly women who died buried in their home by a mudslide. From then on it became clear to me that our work had taken on an entirely different scope. Rescuing and providing for the most vulnerable members of our society was our mission during the months following the hurricane. Federal and state prosecutors, law enforcement agents came together as one, to help close to 900 nursing homes and 16,000 residents with the most basic necessities - water, food and medical assistance. It was a labor of love, which I will never forget. *To be a face of hope became our mission.*

Day in and day out we all face major obstacles, yet we carried on. It is only with passion that we can stare down enormous challenges to savor perhaps the smallest of triumphs. It is this passion which unifies us, which strengthens our sense of purpose and, in the end, humanizes the institutions we all represent. We are entrusted with the maintaining and solidifying the credibility of these institutions with society and ultimately with the world. It is a delicate balance that we all must calibrate every day, whether it's a big or a small decision, the responsibility and consequences are always significant.

I receive this award on behalf of the hundreds of prosecutors in Puerto Rico who offer so much of themselves to promote justice, help victims, and make our island a safer place. All of you do the same in your countries, and through your leadership you inspire those who are in the front lines to work with fervor despite the many limitations that your respective systems may have.

I am encouraged by the victories - big or small - we can all share as colleagues. This business of seeking justice is an evolving and very complex process. Dedication, confidence and persistence go a long way in our common

quest of justice, fairness and equality. As I said when I started, work is love, and our job is to make it visible. As I wrap up my assignment with the PRDOJ, I will continue my public service with the USDOJ as an Assistant US Attorney in the District of PR. Personally and professionally, this award closes a very rewarding chapter in my life, and opens a new one - one in which I will continue to do what I love.

I want to thank the International Association of Prosecutors for this honor.

Thanks to the National Association of Attorney Generals for their friendship and support in this endeavor.

Thank Governor Vazquez, from PR for always stepping up to challenges.

And to my family and friends because this work we do needs to have a balance and to remain grounded so that our lives our meaningful. That balance allows us to offer our gifts our service to the world but at a cost of self and the family.

To my Son Carlos. Thanks for always thinking I am your hero.

Thanks

Thank to all present here. Let us all embrace new possibilities when we are challenged and bring upon the best outcome for the day.

