



**Hubert H. Humphrey  
Institute of Public Affairs**

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

**Hubert H. Humphrey 2006 Leadership Awards  
May 30, 2006**

**Remarks of Wing Young Huie  
Recipient of the Emerging Leader Award**

When my first major exhibition opened in Frogtown, 11 years ago, on a grassy lot on the corner of University and Dale in Frogtown, I remember getting the first questions about the social impact of what I was doing.

I am not an activist, I would say. I am an artist. To me activism and art were two different things. Activism implies partiality. My allegiance was to photography rather than to any social issue. My goal was to translate what I saw into the language of this miraculous, two-dimensional piece of paper. Transparency, rather than di-dac-ti-cis-m was the point.

And now, almost a decade later, after having photographed thousands of differing points of view, representing citizens of Lake Street, and other rural, suburban and urban communities of my home state Minnesota, as well 39 other American states, in my 9 month ethnocentric tour, I have come to understand that there is a larger purpose to what I do. But standing up here I am hesitant to articulate or dwell on what that purpose is.

I mean, I still don't think of myself as an activist. But...when I think about what this all means I think about the stranger who wandered into my gallery and said, "I'm not quite sure why I like looking at your photos." And then, she said, "I think it's because they're more real than the photographs I'm used to looking at."