

Judy Lemons

Chief of Staff, Representative Nancy Pelosi of California

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

“Do Not Let Friendship Leave Your Voice”

Judy Lemons discusses her strategy for success on the Hill.

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One of the things, and, of course, this comes from my background and doesn't necessarily provide a recipe for everyone. But one of the things is leave your ego at the threshold. When you cross that door, be prepared for anything and nothing is beneath you. You can get your hands dirty. You can work in the trenches and you do everything you can to reach the success. You set a goal and go. And I just feel like we're so lucky to have this kind of public service, to work for this noble institution. And particularly for me, as a child of poverty, and to be able to, to walk these halls and serve this nation, and to work with the brightest minds and kindest hearts and the people that I have been so fortunate to be associated with. The opportunities that have opened for me. And I, and I just think, you know, create a fertile ground for opportunities. You know, be malleable. Be agreeable but also you can fight. And that's one thing that Nancy has said, always said. "Do not let friendship leave your voice." Even though you're fighting with someone, circle back and what you really want is unity and understanding. And I think that, I think it's also important. I mean, you can be humble, you can leave your ego. I mean, those may seem like sort of trite platitudes but, but I think that, you know, you can never give up. You always have to be ready to fight.