Commencement at Chico State

• Thank you president Zingg for inviting me to Come Home to Chico, to address the awesome class of 2014.

• Graduates, today on the threshold of your future, you’ve actually traveled back in time.

• Look around: all of us are decked out in caps and gowns from the Middle ages.

• This is basically what the men wore in 1088 when they came together in Bologna Italy to founded the world’s first university.

• So, they would feel quite at home here today,

• But at the same time, they would be amazed by the diversity of genders, backgrounds and disciplines that you graduates represent.

• After all, they originally only studied Roman law at Bologna.

• Now the University of Bologna may claim to be the Alma Mater of all higher learning, but I would like to focus now on your alma mater, my alma mater. CHICO STATE>>

• It is not just a song that we sing but a place we call home. And most of you would probably like to stay if you had a job.

• Now your alma mater is literally, in Latin, nourishing mother
• At the risk of sounding corny Chico State is the nourishing mother who nourished your mind with a vast array of ideas and discoveries.

• And it has nourished your hearts by encouraging you to volunteer and give back to your community, whether through CAVE, St. Jude’s Hospital or to help the homeless or those less fortunate that yourself.

• Your alma mater supports the most productive agricultural region on the planet and provides the talent that helps advance the massive amount of innovation occurring in the SF Bay Area. Many of the same firms I have the privilege of representing.

• Chico State alums are also in every sector where innovation is occurring.

• The founder of Cisco Systems is a Chico State Alum, many successful Salesforce team members are alums as are alums at Intel, Google, Linked In, Facebook, Twitter and Square.

• Many of our alums are also engrained in law, non-profits & Professional Sports.

• Chico State alums compete for any job where innovation, critical thinking & a caring heart is required.

• So let me share with you the importance of your network. I was in your shoes 38 years ago. Wow, in another 38 years, I’ll be 99...HA
• You see, since that time 38 years ago every opportunity presented to me, happened as a result of someone who was willing to help me.

• Never be afraid to ask for help.

• In my present position, I meet more Chico State students and alums via email and social media than are represented on this field. Awesome connectivity that social media provides and you are in the middle of it all.

• Social media really began to multiply in 2005 the same year I was elected by the alumni to the CSU Board of Trustees

• 2005, Facebook didn’t exist for most people

• Twitter was still a sound

• Cloud was something in the sky

• 3G was a parking space

• applications were what you sent to colleges

• and Skype was a typo.

• I spent 27 years of my professional life in this wonderful town.

• Early on I decided I wanted to give back to Chico State through my involvement in the Chico State Alumni Association.
• Think about a strategy to give back and always stay connected with your campus.

• I’ve received 100 times back what I have given. Quite a Return on Investment. Part of my reason for coming back to Chico was to say thank you to Chico State

• Thank you to the Faculty, Staff and my fellow alums. Thank you to my parents.

• But my greatest joy was to be part of a team that brought professional minor league baseball to Chico…. Twice..

• The players and investors that I met truly enriched my life. The students that we hired to work on game day staff and the kids that followed the players became a significant part of the culture of that experience.

• Many of those players are still here, part of the economy and now raising their children in this awesome town.

• So at the end of your career what will your legacy be; who will you enrich & where will you make a difference.

• In the past few years of your life here in Chico, I’m certain there have been your share of struggles, but you made it this far and the next chapter of your life begins tomorrow.

• But what led you to this moment is not as important as what you can influence tomorrow.
• My late Mother, who I miss a lot was a huge fan of Mother Teresa. In my graduation card many years ago, my Mom gave me a Mother Teresa Anyway Poem.

• So in the few minutes I have remaining with you, I’d like to share it.

• **Mother Teresa's Anyway Poem**
  • People are often unreasonable, illogical and self centered; Forgive them anyway.

  • If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives; Be kind anyway.

  • If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies; Succeed anyway.

  • If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you; Be honest and frank anyway.

  • What you spend years building, someone could destroy overnight; Build anyway.

  • If you find serenity and happiness, they may be jealous; Be happy anyway.
• The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow; Do good anyway.

• Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough;

  Give the world the best you've got anyway.

• You see, in the final analysis, it is between you and your God; It was never between you and them anyway.

Now I have a final request and I’d like you to listen carefully.

You are a class- you respect each other- you support each other

You will make a huge difference in the world by the education and experience to have to offer.

You didn’t get here all by yourself, you had some help.

Chico State is one of the few campuses that reads every name of every graduate.

Families have come from all over the globe to bear witness to that one name they came to hear.

Wouldn’t it be a glorious experience that when the last is read out loud and we all rise and your degrees are conferred that we have 100% in attendance, supporting and celebrating each other.

That means we are ONE CHICO STATE.

I challenge you to do the unexpected and create a vision for your future.
So today when you are out celebrating with your family at a local restaurant and the check is brought to the table.... Grab the check and tell Mom & Dad...no I’ll get that. It will make quite an impression

Thank you for the opportunity to experience your success.

Please celebrate safely.