September 29, 2011

TO: CSU Employees

FROM: Chancellor Charles B. Reed

RE: The Power of Serving Students

The beginning of the fall term is one of the best times of the year at the California State University. Students and faculty return from summer break, and we welcome a new class of freshmen with opportunities that will shape their lives.

We will face many challenges this year. The CSU’s budget has been reduced $650 million. As a result, you will see changes on our campuses. There will be programs that are no longer offered, class sizes that will be larger and parking lines longer. Building repairs will be delayed, and equipment purchases deferred. It is an unprecedented and difficult time for higher education.

But there is one thing that will not change: Our commitment to serve students.

The CSU was founded on a mission to provide California’s students with the opportunity for a college education. Our predecessors understood that an educated population would make California one of the most successful economies in the world.

Now, as the CSU marks its 50th anniversary, we have many proud achievements:

--We graduated 95,000 students into the workforce this year.

--We reached hundreds of thousands of underserved students through our community partnerships.

--We have 2.6 million alumni providing leadership to every major industry in the state and the nation.

While these numbers speak to our success, the greater story is you, our employees. It is our faculty and our staff who come to work every day helping students succeed. You open doors for our students and guide their future.

Throughout our 23 campuses, our employees are doing remarkable things. For the second year,
Chico faculty members James O’Bannon and David Shirah volunteered hundreds of hours working with Chico State students to build two transitional homes for domestic violence victims. Students learned the reward of giving back because it was modeled by their faculty.

At the age of 83, Philip Levine, a professor emeritus in English at Fresno, was named the nation’s Poet Laureate by the Library of Congress. Philip is a Pulitzer Prize winner who has inspired thousands of CSU students and mentored many aspiring writers.

Additionally, 24 CSU professionals received Fulbright Scholar grants this year. These faculty members will share their knowledge worldwide and expand learning far beyond California’s borders. In turn, their experiences will help prepare our students for a competitive global workforce.

I share these stories because they say a great deal about our employees and what the California State University stands for. It is a place that makes high-quality, affordable education accessible to all citizens. It is a place where your work helps students realize their dreams.

And it is a story we want to tell for the next 50 years.

Universities will always face difficult times. The California State University will prevail because the people who work here are committed to the future of our students and our state.

I thank you for the work you do every day.