

Good afternoon:

I have been honored to serve as Interim Dean for the College of Agriculture for the past two years, and to get to know so many of you as students and future professionals in this remarkable field of agriculture. Congratulations to each of you! Whether you took 4 years –or a little more!--You have earned the respect and admiration of our faculty and staff, and the many who helped you along the way. Each of you have your own unique story—some of you did this the hard way! Others found it smooth sailing. But in the end, you have achieved that wonderful goal – a college degree. In some cases—you are first generation college students.....who set high expectations for yourself...and you made it. For others, you always knew you were going to College...and made the very, very smart choice to study Agriculture at Chico State!

We are a family—a growing family – indeed. But I can say, somewhat boastfully, that no other College at Chico State is so cohesive, family based, and we care about each of you individually. From mandatory advising, to co-curricular clubs and programs, the University Farm, undergraduate research and internships—the faculty and our staff of our College have been here for you each step of the way. When I think of our students, I think of hard workers, high achievers, highly employable and can't wait to see the things you will do and the places you will go.....Oh, the places you will go....

And, although you share similar degrees and a long term commitment to some part of food and fiber production, you are all so unique. The careers you have chosen—sciences, production, graduate school, international agriculture, business, education.....the list is endless. You are the same, yet different. We hope that your time at Chico State has helped to shape you into the citizens that you have become. Those who give back to their community, who care for the land, who want to see others succeed. Our job at Chico State has not been to teach you what to think, but to help you learn how to think. To realize that you will be faced with change and challenges and opportunities—and to provide you the knowledge and skills to take advantage as life unfolds.

So to get to know you as an advisor, a professor, a mentor and a friend, is why I do what I do – and so do the faculty and staff of our College and University. I have enjoyed that time with you as your dean, but more importantly, as someone who is committed to your success not as an administrator, but as someone who is deeply committed to agriculture and the future. We wish all of you well as you venture forth from Chico State.

And so, we say Goodbye and Good luck—but it is not goodbye, it is simply a step in time, as you will always be part of our family.