

Sunday, May 20, 2016

Alumni Speaker-Natural Sciences

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Good morning and congratulations to all of you. You have completed years of hard work, dedication and, for many of you, significant sacrifice.

Before I start, I would like to thank the College of Natural Science and the College of Communication and Education for asking me to speak to you today. It's an honor, and I stand before you very humbly.

This is quite emotional for me. I walked the halls of Chico State 15 years ago. This is where my love for science flourished. This is where I received the education that formed the foundation on which I have built my career as a doctor.

My life has been the culmination of the efforts and hard work of those around me. I stand here today because of the courage

my parents had when they left their home in Mexico, crossed a border and started a life in a new country, because of the curiosity my high school biology teacher sparked in me, because of the passion I gained for science from my classes at Chico State and from hours spent in the lab.

I am here because my older sister left a path for me as she made her way through medical school. I am here because so many believed in me and this list could go on forever.

Each one of you has a list of people who have helped you get here, too. They are excited to see what you do as you go out into the workforce. I am excited.

Our world today is changing fast. We are in an era where technology is at the fingertips of almost everyone in the world.

Last month I met a woman whose son works in the tech industry, and she told me we will soon run out of broad band space. I don't even know what this means.

But I do know that the Internet is growing exponentially, and that there are almost 14.5 billion devices connected to the

World Wide Web, that's twice the number of people in the world.

There are predictions that by the year 2020 there will be six devices per person. We have driverless cars and socially intelligent robots around the corner. However, the problems of yesterday remain, and we cannot forget them.

The environmental crisis is worse than it has ever been, there are more people in the world than ever before, there continues to be hunger and poverty, violence plagues many communities, and the worse problem of all, human disconnection. People are now extremely disconnected from each other and from nature.

So what will you do? You have the power to change the course of our world.

In a recent article, I read that Millennials, your generation, think they can change the world; that was the top goal for most people in their twenties.

I agree you can change the world. In fact, I say you have to. I urge you to create a sustainable way of life, a world where no human is left behind, and to truly see the light inside every one of us.

We do not need a world or country, for that matter, where we all assimilate. We do not need to be a melting pot. We need to celebrate our differences and our strengths. Help each other feel comfortable enough to speak up and contribute, to face our fears and accept our power.

Now is the time to embrace peace and treat each other with honesty, respect and kindness. It is the time to create a world that praises all of us because for our cultural background, our religious beliefs, and our disabilities and helps us become the beings we are meant to be.

One of my favorite quotes says that the meaning of life is to find your gift and its purpose is to give it away.

So take the gifts you have developed here at Chico State and use them to solve the problems that really matter: Figure out

how to distribute sustainable energy, water, education and health care to everyone on the planet.

Come up with innovative ways to help the planet deal with the 7 billion people living on it. Use your technology to connect people of different backgrounds and exchange ideas to solve these problems.

As you do this keep everyone in mind and see the world as others see it. Don't forget the Mayans in Guatemala, the Aborigines in Australia and all the other indigenous people still present today. Don't forget the men, women, and children still living in poverty. Let's be done with the idea that money and power are more important than being humans. Let's stop working for money and use it instead to help us create a lifestyle that is sustainable for everyone.

Let's connect and change the world. And let's demand this way of thinking from all, for there's no room for complacency if we are to meet the needs of tomorrow. I really believe we can do it; I believe you can do it.

Thank you and congratulations again.