

Monday's Message – February 27, 2012

Greetings All!

Many of you know that I grew up in Carrizozo, New Mexico. My dad owned a gas station and was the sheriff of Lincoln County. My mom was the CEO of Casa de Ortiz, paying close attention to my brothers and sister, ensuring that we stayed on the straight and narrow. Cecilia Ortiz was a very smart woman with a wicked sense of humor. She would tease my daughter, telling her that if she was younger, Megan would have to keep a close eye on her husband, Alex.

I can honestly say that I only remember having a cold meal once when I was growing up. We were far from a family of means, but my parents always made sure that we had what we needed to succeed. She and my father made many sacrifices so that we could go to the University of New Mexico. As a result, all of my siblings went on to earn a college degree, a rare feat for kids that grew up in a Spanish-speaking household in little Carrizozo.

When my dad's health started to fail, my mom never left his side, nursing him through diabetes until he passed at 80. Last week at 96 years old, Cecilia Ortiz finally joined her husband. As she was preparing herself for the next life, she told me, "I've been waiting for your daddy to come and get me for a long time, I think that he hasn't come because he's afraid I'll find out what he's been up to." My family and friends celebrated her life last Friday in Carrizozo in ways that she would have appreciated. And you can bet that the food was hot.

We received so many heartfelt notes of condolence and I want you to know how much I appreciated them. I will miss her, as will everyone else that knew her.

*

As you might guess, I spent a good chunk of last week in church, but Sunday took me to the Corona Community AME Church with Pastor Charles Lee-Johnson. This was part of the CSU's annual [Super Sunday program](#). On Sundays each February since 2005, CSU leaders, including the chancellor, trustees, presidents and other higher education ambassadors, speak at various African American churches across the state. They are there to share information about preparing for college, applying to a CSU campus, and qualifying for financial aid

Super Sunday has clearly had a positive effect. The numbers of African Americans applying, and ultimately enrolling in the CSU, has steadily increased.

I want to thank Pastor Charles for letting Deborah Brandon, executive director of outreach and admissions; Yolanda Cleveland Friday, director of outreach; Mercedes Green, one of our students; and, me to join his congregation yesterday. He structures the entire service around education and his commitment to this important initiative is crucial to its success.

*

This is the week where the rubber hits the road for our [men's and women's basketball teams](#). The CCAA conference tournament begins tomorrow night, Tuesday, at 5:30 p.m. in Kellogg Gym. The women will play host to Cal State L.A. while the men take on Cal State Stanislaus. The winners will then head to UC San Diego where the tournament will continue this weekend. The CCAA Tournament champion earns the automatic berth to the big dance, the NCAA Division II Basketball Championships. A lot of things can happen, just check out the regular season finale last Friday night.

With 17 seconds left, Poly trailed Dominguez Hills 55-54 in double overtime. A three point shot by DeRonn Scott gave the Broncos a 57-55 lead. Let's now join game announcer Brandon Marcus with the final call.

That video clip went viral overnight, appearing on ESPN Sports Center and ESPN2. Like I said, anything can happen and tomorrow might be your last opportunity to see the Broncos this season in Kellogg Gym. I challenge you to see if we can set a modern attendance record and help the Broncos advance in the CCAA tournament. Let's pack it in and help our teams win! The road to another one of these starts Tuesday.

*

Last fall at Convocation, I helped celebrate Alan and Laura Felzer. [Alan](#) had spent almost 40 years on our faculty in the College of Engineering. He passed away a few years back, but his widow Laura ultimately reached out to our advancement team and donated \$200,000 to be equally split among the Kellogg Honors College and Partners in Education, also known as PIE.

Last Wednesday night, PIE held its annual scholarship dinner for 19 teacher credential students and awarded the first four Alan Felzer Scholarships. These were designed for credential students in math and science who follow his investigative style of teaching – using a hands-on activity to teach a central concept. Congratulations to everyone and thank you again to the volunteer board that supports this program.

*

We have a lot of great events at Cal Poly Pomona, but if you have never attended [the Southern California Tasting & Auction](#), you have been missing something special. On Sunday, May 6, the Rose Garden and the Japanese Garden will be the site of our fifth annual event. Dozens of restaurants as well as beverage partners will share their specialties – truly an adventure of tastes, sights, and sounds. You can now buy two or more tickets at the special price of \$75 each, but that price won't last. Ask anyone who has attended in the past – it's a terrific day. For more information, visit the web site on your screen (www.polytaste.com).

*

Tuesday morning at 11:50 a.m., the campus will be conducting its winter [safety alert test](#). Expect a brief test message on your cell, home and office phones, as well as an email. Be sure to notify those who share your home number, particularly if their first language is not English.

Emergency communication is extremely important. Your safety remains my highest priority, but we cannot keep you out of harm's way if we can't reach you. During an emergency or urgent situation, the Safety Alert system simultaneously sends out messages to phones, email, text/SMS and TTY/TDD devices. In order to receive the messages, faculty, staff and students need to provide up-to-date contact information in [BroncoDirect](#).

I am urging all faculty, staff and students – right now – to update their contact information in Bronco Direct. It takes less than five minutes.

All faculty and staff should log onto [BroncoDirect](#) and click on "Personal Information Summary" on the left-hand menu. If your phone numbers -- office, home and cellular -- are not listed or are incorrect, choose "Change phone numbers." When adding a new number, click on "Add a Phone Number," and specify the type of phone. If your mobile phone is not specified as "Cellular," you will not be able to receive text messages, which is one of the fastest ways to reach you in an emergency. Click "Save" to finish.

If you are a student, log onto [BroncoDirect](#) and click on Student Center on the left menu. Review your current information. If anything has changed, click on the appropriate link to revise the information. To add your mobile phone number, click on the main phone link and add your cell.

The contact information you provide in [BroncoDirect](#) will remain confidential and will never be released outside of the university. Please take the time and update your information today. Tomorrow might be too late.

*

On that note, let's have a safe week! Take care of yourselves and each other.