

Monday's Message – December 6, 2010

Good afternoon everyone!

December has arrived and the quarter is coming to a close. Since this will be my last video of the calendar year, I thought I would bring into your screen a little holiday spirit fresh from the Farm Store. But before I begin, I want to say thank you. We know that Cal Poly Pomona is a marvelous place to work and learn. And the reason is you. I want to take this time to recognize your efforts, every day, in support of our students. When we host people from other universities, they invariably say how impressed they are by the culture of our community. We are a campus whose members truly care for each other. No one is more proud of the Cal Poly Pomona students, faculty and staff than me.

Congratulations to chemistry professors Ed Walton and Barbara Burke, as well as chemical & materials engineering professor Winny Dong, for their efforts in bringing a [\\$1 million National Science Foundation grant](#) to Cal Poly Pomona.

The project, "Three Strategies to Improve STEM Graduation Rates," aims to increase graduation and retention rates for students in those disciplines.

The five-year grant will address three areas: course redevelopment, enhanced first-year experiences, and apprenticeships or professional development opportunities. In particular, curriculum in introductory math and science courses will be improved to include more interactive teaching and learning. First-year experience courses will engage students in problem-solving activities and promote community.

The award puts Cal Poly Pomona in a select group nationwide. From the more than 200 proposals submitted to the NSF, only 22 were approved. The university was one of just two recipients of an award at the million-dollar level.

Speaking of grants, George Lwin and his team in the energy services unit of facilities management have secured a construction grant of nearly \$2.5 million dollars from the California Department of Public Health, Health and Human Services Agency. This grant will allow the campus to proceed with our groundwater filtration project and reduce our reliance on water supplied by the Metropolitan Water District. A great effort – congratulations to George and the entire facilities management team!

Last week I bid good luck to our Bronco women's cross country team. Cal Poly Pomona advanced to the NCAA Championships last Saturday in Louisville, Kentucky. I am proud to say that we finished [19th in the nation](#). Congratulations to the entire team and Head Coach Troy Johnson. This marked the second time that our Bronco women competed at the cross country national championships. Way to go!

Every now and then I get asked why we don't have a football program. Well, our campus community knows that Rose Float is our fall sport, and unlike some of Southern California's high-profile football programs, we compete on New Year's Day every year. Last week we gave folks a chance to get a sneak preview of our 2011 entry – Galactic Expedition – specifically what the float looks like before final decoration. It is a engineering and animation marvel that will be completely covered by flowers and seeds come January 1.

I know that many of you come down and volunteer to decorate the float in the days leading to the parade. But there is a way for EVERY faculty, staff, student, alumnus and emeritus can get involved in our success. For the past two years, our Rose Float has won the KTLA Viewers' Choice Award, which is decided by an online vote of fans. The Cal Poly Universities will go for their third consecutive win in 2011. If you believe our float is worthy of your vote, then I encourage your participation. Voting can be done online or via text, with a maximum of five votes for each email address or phone. We will be sending out an e-mail message to give you instructions on how to participate. And be sure to watch the parade on New Year's Day.

And that's it for 2010. Winter quarter begins on January 3, but I will return to your computer screens on Monday, January 10. And if you like the poinsettias, the Farm Store has these and many other things that make the season a little brighter. From Betty Faye, Piglet and me - happy holidays, everyone.