**BANQUET SPEECH**

**FOR**

**MARTIN ENRIQUEZ**

**FINAL**

Hello everyone. It’s an honor to be here with all of you.... and whether you’re family or friend, colleague, graduate, faculty, board member or a distinguished guest.... and by the way, you’re **ALL** in that last group in my eyes, tonight we recognize achievement. I’m thrilled to have this opportunity to share some thoughts with you on the importance that formulating, working towards, and realizing, goals occupy in the fabric of life.... a brilliant idea with no plan for implementation.... a course of action with no timeline or consequence... a theory or plan for improvement without a roadmap for completion is worth nothing if we don’t focus on the horizon line of completion. (**If you want, as you said, say this**). Before I really begin, I have a favor to ask of all of you. Please stand up. (**Let them stand for a moment and then say**). Okay you can sit down now. (**Then take out a piece of paper and motion that you’re crossing something off a list and say**). “Bring the crowd to its feet... **CHECK**!! (**And wait for the laugh**). ... If only achieving **ALL** goals were that simple....

The people we honor tonight have demonstrated the end result of working towards, and attaining their objectives. Whether we realize or not, every action we take, whether to advance our position in life, satisfy our short or long term objectives, or just plain procrastinate, all can be seen as goal based.... setting goals is a discipline we learn at an early age... from our family, our lessons at school, our friends, and community. Whether or not those lessons from our mentors sink in is up to us, but what a waste of ingenuity and potential it would be to “cop out” and abandon the promise of making a difference in this world that I **KNOW** we possess... It’s up to each one of us how we choose to maximize the impact of those influences while we conceptualize actions and plans. I got to where I am based on hard work, formulating a vision, and taking action, influenced by the events and images I carry with me from my earliest childhood. I’d like to share my story with you.

Thomas Edison said, “When you have exhausted all possibilities, remember this: **you haven’t.**” Growing up impoverished in Mexico with my mother, a single parent, raising **NINE** kids, was a never ending exercise in demonstrating this particular theory of Edison’s. My mom wanted a better life for us so she took the chance to uproot the family and leave the only place she knew in order to move to the United States. Every day we faced the probability of failure and every day, she reassessed, reformulated, and realigned her goals... just to keep us going. Our journey took us from the mountains of Jalisco, to Chihuahua and then Tijuana where we had to live for 6 months while my uncle arranged to get us our green cards. During this time I was only 3 years old but I still remember living in a "commune" where everyone had to share the same bathroom. Our stay was longer than expected so we ran out of the little money my mom brought with her.  The nuns from a local charity were able to give my mom a small bag of food (potatoes, eggs and rice) once a week. This was not enough for all her 9 children so she exchanged the eggs for "chicklets" so we could sell them for money.  I still remember walking up to total strangers in the streets of Tijuana to sell them chicklets. This was a frightening but positive experience I will never forget. We finally got our paperwork to cross to America but we moved to migrant camps which were not much better. We lived in a crowded 1 bedroom wooden shack that had no heating and was infested with mice. Just like the cartoon Tom & Jerry, the mice had the little entrance door to the wall. (**If you want, you can say**)... yes, they were nervy mice... either that or they didn’t read English because they consistently ignored the “No pets allowed” signs... (**Wait for the laugh)**. I joke now, but it was .... challenging to say the least. Even so, still my mother assessed conditions and recalculated as needed in order to formulate a plan to advance the safety and well being of my brothers, sisters, and me. My family worked in the fields picking oranges and anyone of age would help.  I was too young so I stayed back with the baby sitter. This meant sitting under a tree while my mom worked and picked oranges. After a few years, she saved enough money so that we would be able to move out of the migrant camp. We rented a 3 bedroom home.... believe me... it felt like we were living in a **mansion**. This gave us some stability to allow us to attend regular school.  My mom was finally starting to see a better life for her children. It was now up to us to take advantage of this opportunity.

Living under those conditions taught me harsh but enduring lessons. As my mom set goals to make a better life for her children, she took painful but necessary steps to achieve her objective. She was able to see the results years later when her children and many grandchildren started to graduate from American universities with engineering, doctor, law or other professional degrees**.** What I learned from my mom is what took me years to learn in school and industry. Thank goodness I had that early exposure and even though I was very young, I felt the innate pull to plan, survive, and thrive. ... not so easy.

Thomas Edison is also famously known for declaring, “Remember, life is all what you focus on. Learn lessons, and **keep moving** forward towards your goals and dreams...” He added, “I have not failed, I’ve just found **10,000** ways that **won’t work**.” In this life, we all have personal and professional obstacles that need to be overcome, or, if not, what is the **TRUE VALUE** of our time here on earth? Why do what we do? Why go to school, constantly work towards achievement and advancement, if not to take those lessons and apply them in building a better, safer, more efficient and humane world for all of us? The general goal in life is to find one’s purpose and use it to the greatest effect. (**If you want to make a little joke you can say**).... I watched my mother do whatever it took so that **ALL TEN** of us would make it in this world and as I grew older, I wondered when she would be able to look back and breathe a sigh of relief, knowing that we were all okay. One day, as you and I approach our own moment of reckoning, we’ll ask ourselves if it was “all worth it,” which reminds me of the old man who was hospitalized.... the nurse came in and appeared concerned... “Are you **comfortable**?” She asked... “ **Eh... I make a living**...” (**And wait for the laugh**)... ultimately, that’s what we all want... to be able to look back and find comfort in knowing we made a living, made a **life**, and worked towards the ultimate goal.

A wise man..... actually, he was more if a wise **guy**, but that’s a story for a different banquet... (**Wait for the laugh**)... anyway, he said, “If opportunity doesn’t knock, **build a door**.” This organization has been building doors and encouraging professional exploration for the past \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ years. I have been supporting this event for more than 20 years. There may only be one person in the room that has attended more than me and that is Armando Veloz, a good friend and mentor over the years. Thank you Armando for leading the way for all of us. The consistent dedication to outreach and involvement of colleagues like Armando provides a clear roadmap of what sustainable organizational goals look like... the message is simple.... educate... mentor... study... learn... **REPEAT**. We dedicate ourselves to the advancement of participation and success in the professional arena because let’s face it... cavemen didn’t have iPhones and as brilliant as he was... as much as Da Vinci explored **flight**.... as far as I know, he hadn’t anticipated the moving parts needed for an ever changing industry... you know, like air traffic control towers... people movers... electronic ticket kiosks.... (**Wait for the laugh**)... I may be overstating the obvious, but this world is evolving... rapidly.... great minds and potential shape shifters... that would be **YOU**, our students and graduates... need to be involved in formulating and shaping the future. Advancements in technology or in any sector of industry and business can only thrive in an atmosphere of collaboration and a condition of diverse and multi layered points of view. Participation in USCB MESA encourages that concept.

Yes... things have advanced over time. My involvement with this organization started years ago while I was a student and member of Los Ingenieros. I can empathize with similar experiences you students have had on this campus... struggling to learn, then learning how to adapt, how to network, how to help others, and then learning how to succeed. I had some doubts along the way but eventually I completed my goal to graduate as an engineer. The MESA program provided the support and guidance that helped me reach my goal. After graduation I worked locally with Raytheon so it was still convenient to come by and support the students. During this time I became a founder of the SHPE Professional Chapter. Our mission was similar to MESA, and that was to advance our community in the Math, Science and Engineering fields. I then moved out of state to Idaho to work for HP, who generously sponsored me so I could continue to support and attend the banquets. One year I was able to hire 5 UCSB interns to work with HP. I also started a Professional SHPE Chapter in Boise and led the way to create a student chapter in Boise State. It was a privilege to carry the passion and experience from UCSB to help drive changes and encourage Hispanic students to pursue engineering or whatever pursuit encouraged them to realize their dreams.  Eventually I moved back to California in San Diego to be closer to family. Still working for HP, they continued to sponsor me to support the activities with the students at UCSB. Over the years,, I’ve been able to realize my goals of providing internships, scholarships, company tours and other support. What keeps me coming back is seeing the passion, enthusiasm, and the talent of the students that continuously emerge from the UCSB MESA program. It proves the cyclical theory I mentioned earlier... educate... mentor... study... learn... **REPEAT**.

I still remember when the banquets were held in downtown Santa Barbara at the Radisson/Hyatt Hotel just across east beach. I can even remember way back when this event was hosted in the Miramar hotel in Montecito. But the world evolves, needs change, and venues rise to necessity and logistics. I like the new location on campus ... **THIS** is where you have spent your time studying, learning and preparing to be a professional.

I have seen a lot of you grow up over the years, first as students and then as professionals. I am “happy” to see you return as mentors and patrons in order to continue the tradition of supporting and giving back. Remember one thing... **THEY’RE** **among us**... even tonight!! (**Wait for the laugh**)... bright, impressionable students and grads enthusiastic for guidance on their path... One day, Armando won’t be here, nor will Jose, Ricardo or me. It will be up to you to tell your own story to the students. Graduates, you will inherit the legacy of being the alumni with the wisdom and experience that students admire and follow. (**If you want to make a little joke, you can say**) ... and students... yeah... what **THEY** did... just work hard, respect others, and keep taking your cues...

No matter where you are in life right now... student, graduate, professional...we are all part of a universal cycle. Over the years, I have seen families form... I’ve witnessed children grow up and go off to college. The next generations continue our trajectory for success and our mission to advance members of our community.... whether they choose to follow in our footsteps as engineers or in their own professions. Look around you. You have been successful and you’ve planted seeds for the future, but our mission does not stop here. We **ALL** need to raise the bar. We need to continue to provide encouragement for others that are less fortunate, others that follow our path, others that need mentorship and guidance just as you received from those that preceded **YOU**.. You may not remember that **one person** but if you look back, there is someone who inspired you to do better. It could have been your parents, one of your siblings, a teacher, a counselor or someone just like you who gave up a few hours of their busy schedule to go talk to some young student eager to dream and be inspired at an early age. Our mission will never end as long as there is someone that needs our help and guidance. As long as we reach back, we will continue to move forward and advance our purpose and our profession …. Thank you all for your partnership!!