**UNM COMMENCMENT SPEECH**

**I AM HONORED TO BE WITH YOU TODAY AT YOUR GRADUATION FROM A GREAT UNIVERSITY**

**MY UNIVERSITY, THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO**

**AS DEAN CHECCI MENTIONED I AM A GRADUATE OF THE COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING, A PROUD CHEM E.**

**THANK YOU DEAN CHECCI FOR THOSE VERY KIND WORDS**

**I OFTEN DREAMED OF BEING ON THE FLOOR OF “THE PIT” GROWING UP HERE IN ALBUQUERQUE**

**NOT EXACTLY AS I DREAMT IT THOUGH – I WAS ACTUALLY PLAYING POINT GUARD FOR THE LOBOS IN MY DREAM**

**BUT A DREAM COME TRUE NONETHELESS – BEING ON THE FLOOR OF THIS STORIED ARENA**

**TODAY, I’D LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOU A LITTLE BIT OF MY JOURNEY SINCE MY DAYS OFF CENTRAL BOULEVARD**

**AND PROVIDE A FEW ANECDOTES THAT MAY ASSIST YOU IN YOUR ROAD TO ACHIEVE YOUR DREAMS**

**IT WAS A SHORT 35 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH THAT I WAS IN THE AUDIENCE**

**I REMEMBER MANY THINGS ABOUT THAT DAY BUT ONLY VAGUELY WHO GAVE THE COMMENCEMENT SPEECH AND I ONLY A FEW THINGS THAT THEY SAID.**

**SO WITH THAT AS MY GUIDE,**

**IF I CAN’T MAKE THIS COMMENCEMENT SPEECH MEMORABLE**

**I WILL AT LEAST MAKE IT SHORT AND ALLOW YOU TO GET ON WITH PLANS FOR YOUR GREAT DAY.**

**AFTER GRADUATION - I GOT MARRIED AND MOVED TO HOUSTON, TEXAS WHERE I JOINED SHELL CHEMICAL.**

**AFTER TEN YEARS I MOVED OVER TO TEXACO CHEMICAL**

**AT BOTH PLACES I SERVED IN MANY COMMERCIAL ROLES, FROM SALES TO BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND PROGRESSED WELL THROUGH BOTH ORGANIZATIONS**

**I RECEIVED GREAT TRAINING, ESTABLISHED GREAT CONTACTS ALONG THE WAY AND EVEN GOT MY MBA**

**All the while though, working for both Shell and Texaco – I was lacking oxygen**

**I felt suffocated in those environments**

**In one case while at Shell, I worked for, you know,**

**That dreaded boss – the one where nothing you did was right!**

**A – It was a difficult time in my life. I was down on myself. But as I look back I realize if you want to accomplish your dreams, you must be your very best in the darkest moments!**

**IF YOU MAKE YOUR BED EVERY MORNING YOU WILL HAVE ACCOMPLISHED THE FIRST TASK OF THE DAY.**

**IT WILL GIVE YOU A SMALL SENSE OF PRIDE AND WILL ENCOURAGE YOU TO DO ANOTHER TASK AND THEN ANOTHER.**

**BY THE END OF THE DAY, THAT ONE TASK COMPLETED WILL HAVE TURNED INTO MANY TASKS COMPLETED.**

**MAKING YOUR BED REINFORCES THAT LITTLE THINGS IN LIFE MATTER.**

**So I followed my passion – While still working with Shell and subsequently Texaco I crafted literally dozens of business ideas to start my own business – put several plans together.**

**All of which after doing the due diligence I was going to be bankrupt somewhere between 6 weeks and 6 months**

**I even tried a few – Home Solutions, the current day Angies List and an computer venture w a local university – akin to the internet.**

**O for 2!**

**Undercapitalized and lack of management commitment to each – my lack of commitment to each.**

**A – You will fail. And you may fail often. It will be painful. It will be discouraging. At times it will test you to your very core!**

**But as Babe Ruth once said – “don’t let the fear of striking out hold you back”**

**Don’t be afraid of fear – embrace it!**

**In 1993 my perseverance finally paid off - the stars aligned. I was working for Texaco Chemical and it was announced that Texaco would be selling their chemical company.**

**A - If you want to be an entrepreneur you have to hear the door knock/you have to be listening – now listening for and hearing is important but you have to ANSWER THE DOOR! Now sometimes the opportunity on the other side of the door is not right but you have to answer the door and you may have to say NO.**

**I just happened to managing a business of chemicals that were being produced within a facility, a refinery that Texaco was not selling as part of the sale to Huntsman.**

**And ironically I had gotten to know the decision maker, VP/Refining by way of working on a project together and more importantly his trusted assistant who was preparing all the materials/options for the VP.**

**A – I cannot underestimate the importance of building relationships. Here at UNM you’ve begun the process as you have growing up.**

**Continue to understand the importance of doing so in the years ahead. And a key component of building relationships is listening!**

**Long story short – we were selected**

**What I must admit that we didn’t know at the outset but later discovered was that this concept had and has great application to our industry**

**Managing the “non core”, orphan or co products for producers – largely in the refining and petrochemical industries**

**With that as our model, we’ve grown from 1 contract in 1994 to 20 or so – from $20 to as high as almost $300 million in sales**

**Today, besides managing these orphan products for many producers, we started and are now growing nicely our Latin American business, we have expanded into the sale of polymers and are investigating some niche manufacturing opportunities.**

**20+ years into it I’m as excited as ever about our future. I love getting up each and every day – I love my work and believe strongly in our model.**

**I’m blessed to have a team of new and old – experience blended nicely with energy! A great company culture developed over 20+ years and a strong set of company core values.**

**And now I have my two sons in the biz – very rewarding although I did my best to steer them away. I also have 2 girls, younger and not in the business – yet!**

**YOU GRADUATED FROM A GREAT SCHOOL – I WOULDN’T TRADE MY EXPERIENCE AT UNM FOR ANY OTHER**

**YOU CAN DO ANYTHING!!**

**AND YOU ARE CAPABLE OF MORE THAN YOU THINK.**

**THANK YOU ALL VERY MUCH.**

**STAY HUNGRY**

**FOLLOW YOUR PASSION**

**AND KEEP YOUR SENSE OF HUMOR ALONG THE WAY**

**THANK YOU AGAIN!!**

**GO LOBOS!!**