

From The Desk of President Lord:
Faculty and Staff Community Meeting Remarks
Wednesday August 17th 2011
Naropa University

Each of us has dedicated our lives to serving Humanity. That commitment is why we are part of Naropa.

- We have Chosen Naropa as our vehicle to serve in the world. Naropa is both unusual, and special, because it is uniquely willing, and able, to function as that kind of vehicle in the world.
- We have all witnessed how this Vehicle has so beautifully transformed the hearts, and minds, of those its touches.
- We all offer thanks and gratitude to our founder, Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche for his vision of Naropa ushering in a new enlightened society, where all of us will be awake in the world.
- We are also indebted to the countless others who have invested and dedicated themselves to the noble work that is Naropa University.

We share a Common Dream and Vision

- We all have a common vision for our work in the world. We are dedicated to benefitting all of Humanity. This is a shared and unifying vision. Naropa is founded on this vision.
- We, all of us, are making decisions to best support our hopes and desires for a better world. Increasingly we are unifying our actions to work together with greater and greater cohesion and effectiveness.
- This learning process will allow us, as an institution, to realize our fullest capacity of being seated at the table of Higher Education with distinction and excellence.
- This is our common goal: to produce, and be recognized for, graduates who have the skills, and capacity, to be authentically and powerfully engaged in the world for the benefit of all.

Each Member of our Naropa Community not only Matters, but is Vital to our Success

- The Board helps to support, guide and nourish the administration
- The Administration and Staff help to support, guide and nourish the faculty

- The faculty helps to support, guide and nourish the students
- The students help to support, guide and nourish our human society
- We function as supported partners with a shared mission.
- We are interdependent in our commitment to achieve our mission of benefiting all of humanity.

We live in a Changing World

- Our World is changing; it requires more of us, as a community, than our days as a young institution. To fulfill our mission, of preparing our students to thrive in the world, we are required to evolve.
- We have all chosen to come to Naropa, to prepare this next generation of leaders. We are all here, at Naropa, for them; our future world leaders.
- We teach our students about the nature of Impermanence. We prepare them to not only thrive in a world of change, but to guide that change. To manifest this teaching in their lives we expect our students to transcend fear, and personally transform into their fullest potential.
- However, we too, as an institution, are on the threshold much like our world, of a major transformation. We must model for them, our students, our world's future leaders, how to achieve this transformation of realizing our highest potential as a University, and, as a Community.

Naropa Needs our support to adapt to a Changing World

- The world is shifting, and Naropa too, must evolve with the changing times so that we may better serve this world.
- The process of evolution is not always easy, but in the end it is incredibly fulfilling. The beauty is that we are doing it together, as a community. We are not alone.

Naropa's New Story

- In some ways we, as a community, are holding onto an old story. Today however, we are making a new story together, a new Naropa. As we create this new story it will be vitally important to carry forth the beautiful heritage of our old story. Our new story will be hollow without the integration of the gems of the old; our task is to dance with the brilliance of the old as we create the new. The seeds of this new story are embedded within our Strategic Plan.

- It is true, we may be experiencing the painful feelings of loss as we let go of this old story. However, the Changes you see at Naropa are the changes of an institution rising up to meet the challenges of a new world. However, it is still change and as the teachings on impermanence states: change can be painful.
- This new world is a vibrant World and it requires a new era for Naropa. We are making, as a community, that choice to create that new era, together. The new evolution of Naropa is bringing the vision of the founder, in the 21st Century, to life; evolved, to meet the current needs of our world.

To Deliver Excellence with Distinction

- We may have thoughts that yesterday was better than today; that this is too much change, too quick. However, in actuality this change is not an option. Our strategic plan, and, the Higher Learning Commission, both require that we evolve; they require that we deliver Excellence with Distinction.
- Let us not forget that our distinction is what helps to make us so powerful. We are a Contemplative Institution, which means that we draw on a different capacity of mind in comparison to more conventional institutions. Working with the natural perfection of our minds gives us incredible strength, insight, awareness and wisdom.
- But our Mission is also to deliver this distinction with Excellence. This means that we all agree with and are without exception committed to being professionally Accountable.
- We all have stories where we have not been satisfied with the institution that is Naropa; and, we have been very vocal about those stories in the past (and this is a good thing.) Whether it's Professional development funds for faculty, IT, Human Resources, Finances, the Administration, Faculty offices, Classrooms or Salaries. These limitations have held us back significantly, both as an institution and as a community.
- We are now making the necessary changes to embrace a Naropa of Excellence. It is true that we are working to build a cutting edge faculty and staff that can deliver the standard of excellence that we want Naropa to represent as a contemplative institution.
- In addition, job descriptions and responsibilities have changed; this is a fact of reorganization. You are here because we value your ability to help us deliver this distinctive, contemplative education with excellence. We believe in you.

Impermanence, the Fact of a Changing World

- This is the process of transformation, and the fact of impermanence in a changing world. The teachings of impermanence are much more than just useful words. These words point to the actuality of our lives, every moment of every day.
- We, of all people and institutions, know this well and we embody these deep teachings.
- Much like our namesake, Naropa himself, we are becoming our own best students and embrace an understanding of the meaning behind these words.
- In these times of change, as we build a stronger and more stable institution with deepened commitment to our shared humanity, we have the remarkable opportunity to rely on the essential teachings of our Founder more than ever.
- And as we move together into a new era of Excellence at Naropa University, we find ourselves celebrating in every moment our potent and unswerving dedication to a better world for all of humanity.
- I appreciate deeply this opportunity to be with you in this precious conversation as a community shining in its dedication to be of service.
- I welcome, I invite, I honor any questions you may have. Thank you.