

## PRESIDENT'S FRIDAY LETTER

December 3, 2010

Dear Naropa Community:

### **Contemplation for the week:**

*“Regard your good name as the richest jewel you can possibly be possessed of - for credit is like fire when once you have kindled it you may easily preserve it, but if you once extinguish it, you will find it an arduous task to rekindle it again. The way to gain a good reputation is to endeavor to be what you desire to appear.” ~Socrates*

Endeavoring to be what we desire to appear is a much more difficult task than it may appear to be at first blush. While we want to appear mindful, practicing it with regularity and sincerity can be challenging. Socrates did challenge us in this statement to live our values and as we come to the end of this fall semester, living those values can be very challenging.

This involves a desire for authenticity, for transparency and for the development of our own personal character in line with our values. This is the kind of leadership we desire to develop in a Naropa education.

### **Appreciations**

This week, I would like to single out both a department and an individual within that department. Several people have commented to me that they have greatly appreciated the helpful and supportive atmosphere being generated by our business and finance office. People have commented on the department's responsiveness and willingness to help people do the right thing. So while a heartfelt thank you is expressed to all in that department, I have received the following comment about our payroll manager, Stacey Sawhill. One staff member wrote, “She's new and stepped up to the duties of the position quickly.

I've been hearing co-workers sing her praises because she has been able to process a late timesheet, resolve mis-coded sick time, untangled exempt/non-exempt boondoggles, and responded to requests for extensive workstudy data.

She did all this quickly and thoroughly, sometimes apologizing if it took her 48 hours instead of 24.

If there is someone for whom you would like to express appreciations in a Friday letter, please forward to me their name and a brief description of why you would like them acknowledged.

## **Suzanne Benally's Departure**

Some of you may have read a note yesterday indicating that Suzanne Benally will be leaving the university at the end of January to assume the role of Executive Director at Cultural Survival, a Cambridge, Massachusetts based organization which addresses Indigenous human rights and environmental concerns in the world. We will certainly miss Suzanne's presence and leadership for the university.

"Suzanne Benally has been an exceptional colleague and friend," stated Provost Stuart Sigman. "Her wisdom and guidance have been invaluable to me as Academic Affairs has maneuvered several significant challenges in the past few years. I am certain that she will bring that same level of professionalism to Cultural Survival. I will be working with the President in the days ahead to determine our next steps for addressing Suzanne's responsibilities."

I expect to name a faculty member to fill the position of Special Assistant to the President for Diversity, and will, with that person, help advance the university's inclusivity and diversity goals. Suzanne is also continuing to work with me to establish next steps for issues related to inclusivity.

***I also welcome the community to join me at the President's Tea on Thursday, December 9 at 4:30 pm for an opportunity to share with Suzanne just how much she is valued and appreciated.***

## **Save the Date – Holiday Party**

Staff and Faculty Holiday Party – Wednesday, December 15, 2010 from 3:00 – 7:00 pm with a back-up date of Thursday, December 16 at 3:00 pm. This celebration will be held in the Nalanda Events Center and refreshments will be provided.

## **Chanukah**

We want to wish those members of our community who celebrate Chanukah a very peaceful and warm holiday. For those who have not seen the notice from the Provost, it is included here:

December 2, 2010

Dear Colleagues:

The Office of Academic Affairs has relocated to the first floor of 2111 Arapahoe (also known as “North Suite”). We are still in the process of unpacking boxes, furnishing our offices and settling in. We have created a shared shrine space on the east side of our suite where we occasionally place pictures, contemplative sayings, and other meaningful artifacts. Today, I placed a menorah (candelabra) in the space in celebration of the first full day of Chanukah, the Jewish festival of lights. I’d like to invite you to a brief candle lighting ceremony and contemplative moment in our office tomorrow, Friday, December 3, at 4:00 PM.

The story is that the ancient Jews fought the Greek efforts to assimilate them and during that time a miracle occurred: a jar of lamp oil that should have stayed lit for only a short time lasted a full eight days. Hence, the eight-day celebration.

Many traditions hold celebrations in preparation for the dark winter ahead. Mythology and religious observance aside, for me this is the time to stoke the inner (as well as outer) light in anticipation of a long period of hibernation.

Please join Academic Affairs for a moment of community at 4 tomorrow. In addition to the candle lighting, we’ll have some lemonade and cookies.

Warmly,

Stuart (Sigman)

P.S. Please note: The request to light an open candle flame was approved by the Safety and Security Department following university safety and security procedure.

## **Advisory Council to the President**

Yesterday, December 2, the Advisory Council to the President, a group of 20 members from around campus, met for the first time. This group of individuals

provides advice to me on issues of strategic importance and counsel on major issues confronting the university. This group is comprised of the members of the Cabinet, two staff persons representing each division, three faculty members (at least one of whom is adjunct faculty) to be nominated by the Provost and two students to be nominated by the Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management.

## **Calling all Volunteers**

If anyone is interested in assisting with the Fall Ceremony for Graduates taking place next Saturday, December 11 at 1:00 pm in the Nalanda Events Center, please contact Todd Kilburn (Tkilburn@naropa.edu). We are in need of assistance with handing out sashes, greeting people, and general assistance with the event.

## **Save the date – Martin Luther King recognition**

Because the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday is a day when classes are suspended, we would like to have a special recognition of this important day on Wednesday, January 19. Details will follow, but please mark this day on your calendars.

As always, thank you, members of Naropa for your engagement and passion for our university.

Go Naropa!

In the spirit of service,

Stuart C. Lord  
President