



NAROPA UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

President Stuart Lord's Speech to the Rotary Club of Boulder, Colorado
October 23, 2009

It is an honor to be here today at the Boulder Rotary Club. Naropa and the Rotary Club share a common vision of service, ethics and the betterment of society. I commend the Club for their commitment to higher education. This is an organization that truly values education. And there is no better proof of your commitment than the prestigious Ambassadorial Scholarship you have given to Kristin Wegner. Kristin is now pursuing a postgraduate education in architectural design.

The Rotary Club's efforts have removed barriers for young people that want to pursue an education and ultimately serve others. I know that the leaders of today and tomorrow will forever be in your debt.

Additionally, I want to thank the Club for creating a song for Naropa University using the tune from your Rotary song. Your creativity has inspired me. I promise that I will challenge our community to create our very own university song!

I am awed and humbled by the leadership and dedication the Rotary Club has shown in the direction of service - both locally and internationally. It is because of the efforts of this organization that children throughout the developing world have access to cleaner, safer water. It is because of your members that the poliovirus is on the brink of eradication. Put simply, this organization's commitment to service is nothing short of amazing.

The Rotary Club's accomplishments and endeavors speak to a level of excellence we at Naropa strive to achieve.

As a new member of the Boulder community, I can only say that it is a privilege to speak before business and community leaders that yearn to make a difference. As president of Naropa, I strive to graduate leaders—young people of strong character and undeterred ethics. Graduates that will become the Rotary Club members of tomorrow!

Furthermore, it is because both our institutions have such shared values of service, ethics, peace, and goodwill that I consider my time here today as important as my time at Naropa. I believe that Naropa should be a partner with the community in which it lives, and it is in that vein that I am here today.

As you know, service is of special importance at Naropa, it is more than an obligation, it is a way of life. I believe that our students should spend time in the world and learn from it through service, and not simply confine themselves within an educational bubble. We must be sure that our students have the experience of the world, and build service to others as part of their life styles. Helping students to meet the world as it is and change it for the better.

Naropa students have demonstrated their commitment to service. In 2008, a group of our students decided to spend their spring break in New Orleans, volunteering to help rebuild the city.

Not only did our students do quite a bit of general construction work, but they left a uniquely Naropa stamp through their efforts: students, in addition to putting up drywall etc, planted beds of oyster mushrooms to help remove toxins from the polluted soil!

Often our students volunteer their time by serving in places such as local hospice centers, clinics and schools. And I intend to build on our already strong record of community service. For example, my inauguration week will include a Volunteer Service Day on Oct. 30, where students, faculty and staff will go out into Boulder County as volunteers.

In addition to service, ethics are also a strong part of Naropa's education:

Our mission is to provide contemplative education, which helps students become reflective and thoughtful change-makers who seek to go beyond the status quo of learning to embrace the concepts learned in the classroom in their own lives.

For good will and peace—Naropa literally has a Peace Studies department, in which students are exposed to the works and thoughts of academics, religious and spiritual leaders, and citizens who have worked to foster peace. In this time of widespread warfare and violence, ways of waging peace are more important than ever, and we want to be part of the solution.

We at Naropa teach our students that there is no disconnect between serving and making money—because it is not how much you make, but whether you use the money to serve that defines the person.

In an effort to “Deliver the Distinction with Excellence” that we promise our students, we recently announced a strategic plan. In it, we outline our long-term strategic goals as a university. There are five key areas, which we're focused on

1) Academic Plan: to create a comprehensive student program, define the university's distinctiveness, interconnect components of our academic infrastructure, and prepare students for work in the world.

2) Enrollment Plan: focuses on growing enrollment, student retention and student services.

3) External Relations/Advancement Plan: to bring our message to the public and extend our presence out into the world.

4) Campus Master Plan: to retain a consultant for master planning, build out the interior of the Nalanda Campus, and improve facilities on the Arapahoe Campus to enhance amenities and gathering space for students.

As we move forward to implement this plan, we could always use the continued support of our community partners! Because the fact is we have a vested role in the Boulder community:

- Our 1,041 students will provide an estimated \$1,000 per month on average for the local economy.
- We have more than 700 full and part-time employees, and an annual payroll of about \$10 million.
- We attract national and international visitors to Boulder-based events such as our recent Wilderness Therapy Symposium and our symposium on Women's Leadership and Activism in the Muslim World. In the latter, we had a Nobel Laureate from Iran, Dr. Shirin Ebadi, speaking on campus for only the second time in our history.
- We own a substantial amount of real estate, including three separate campuses in Boulder (Arapahoe, Nalanda and Paramita), and student housing facilities.

In conclusion, I recognize that we all need to live up to the Rotary Club motto of "service above self." And it is in that vein that we must never forget that our students cannot make a lasting impression on the world through their intellectual obtainment—without the use of an equal amount of conscience and heart. Thus, I would like to learn how Naropa University and the Boulder Valley Rotary Club can achieve our goals by working together as partners moving forward. We at Naropa have much work to advance our mission and goals. And I look forward to working together as we attempt to meet the world as it is and make it better.