

Charles "CC" Carter

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Katie, Cross Cultural Leadership Staff >> Well welcome to Passing on the Legacy, the higher education speaker series. We are honored and privileged to be able to hear from our very own mastermind behind this series who has really been invested in this community and get to kind of share his heart and his passion for the Chico State community and for the field of higher education. So I'm going to start with reading his bio. CC Carter is a graduate of California State University, Chico, and has been working at Chico State since 1980. He is married and a proud father of three boys. CC has worked in the Student Activities office (now known as the Student Life and Leadership), Office of Judicial Affairs, Department of Athletics and is currently the director of the Cross-Culture Leadership Center and the student-- and the center for Student Life and Leadership. As if it wasn't one to be the director of one department, he had to take on two departments and help direct that. CC's passions are his family, helping students to succeed and playing sports. His ultimate goal in life is to build a center that creates opportunities for students to make a true impact in the lives of students and that is something that he's dedicated to every day, all days is really to be able to invest and give back not only to our community but to youth and to all those that he comes and encounters. So if you could join me in welcoming CC.

CC Carter >> Thank you, Kate.

[Applause]

>> You know, it's-- thank you all for coming. I had this nightmare that I'd get up here and nobody would be here so I appreciate you at least coming to give me the benefit of the doubt. It is an honor and a privilege to be able to share with you a little bit about who I am and how I got to be where I'm at and then hopefully share with you some things that work for me as a professional in moving forward. It is first and foremost to say to you about me and this community, is that we are forever connected in some strange way that I cannot explain and I was just drawn here, and I'll share more about that in a little bit.

But I want to start by saying that my journey into higher education wasn't anything I ever planned and I think it was predestined for me a long time ago that somehow, someway I was going to be here, and I'll come back to that. But as you can probably get a glimpse of from me, I am not a traditional student. I'm not a traditional professional. I'm about as non-traditional as it comes. And when I came to school here, I was the billboard for non-traditional. I was a foster child. I was orphaned at 13. I was grown-- I grew up in a home that was monolingual. My mom spoke Japanese. I'm black and Japanese. I didn't fit anywhere, really. And somehow, some way I ended up in a place called Chico. Go figure—how somebody from San Francisco could go through foster homes, end up in a place like Chico, I don't know. But I want to start by telling you a little bit about my experience growing up and how I started to develop passion for people.

When I grew up in San Francisco my mom raised my sisters and I and we grew up in San Francisco in the western edition, and that's on Poston and Broderick in San Francisco, Poston and Broderick and Poston Baker, so we lived in the same area, about five blocks from Japantown and about three and a half blocks away from the Fillmore District. Western Edition projects were across the street and we lived in a little flat. Well, growing up in a predominantly all black neighborhood and being in a single home and my mom was Japanese, it wasn't very easy for us because we weren't necessarily accepted by the black community, but we were a part of the black community. We definitely weren't accepted by the white community nor the Japanese community. So we grew up trying to figure out how to fit in all the time. I learned to fight and I learned to run in the streets of San Francisco because of that experience. To complicate matters, we grew up in a predominantly black-- I mean a Catholic-- in Protestant neighborhood, Baptist neighborhood. And my mom decided that—well she didn't decide—she was a Buddhist. She was a Japanese Buddhist and she was in this whole thing about this thing called [inaudible] so they were going out and they were recruiting people to come to our house to chant, to recruit them into this religion. Well, go figure. My partners out there would look at that and say *"What are all these people doing in your house?"*—and they weren't black.

So we were teased and given hardships over that, fought over that all the time and it just wasn't the kind of experience that you would want to go through. But needless to say, it was my experience, that was one of the experiences that taught me some things about accepting other people, which I will get into. My mom did the best that she could in raising us. She knew very little about the American culture, she knew very little about welfare. She's a very proud woman. She wasn't even trying to accept those kinds of things, but she managed to raise us.

But at the age of 13, I became an orphan. My mom died and my sisters and I were left alone. Our lives changed forever. I went to a foster home, my two sisters went to another foster home, we were separated. They went to a place known as Morin City, which is in Morin County and as Morin City is not a reflection of-- Morin County is not a reflection of Morin City. It's about as ghetto as you can get. I ended up going to three different foster homes. All of them were different kinds of experiences that I won't have time to explain to you right now that really shaped a little bit about who I was and who I am. But I will tell you this, that it was the first time in my life that I was alone because I always had my sister and my mom, even when we were disconnected I had them in my life but I was alone going through these foster homes and I always questioned myself about *"Why me?"*, *"Poor me,"* *"Why did this happen to me?"*

And I remember about-- I was about 15 into my second foster home and life wasn't very good. I'm 15 years old, I take my bicycle and I ride to the beach. I was in Monterey. That's where-- I was Seaside, actually where my second and third foster home was. I ended up going to the beach. Sitting on the beach and I'm just crying. I'm just in tears. 15 years old trying to figure out what happened, why did I lose my mom, why is this happening to me, why am I not loved, why I'm in this situation that I'm in and I'm crying and crying and crying. And I'm sitting there and I'm praying and I'm saying, you know, saying my prayer and I'm just listening, which I still do to this day. And something came over me, it's like *"Look, you got a choice. You either give up or you stand up. You have another responsibility,"* which my mom

had taught me, she had groomed me for, and that responsibility was that *"You cannot fail. You have an obligation and a responsibility to your sisters. You're the only thing that they have. If you can't figure out how to do this, what's going to happen to them?"* And for the first time in my life, at the age of 15, the first time that I really discovered something. There was this realization that I had to live and succeed for my sisters, that I had to be a way forward for them. I don't have a choice. It changed my life when I was 15 years old to make that realization. It was no longer about me. And from that day forward, it's never been about me.

So some of the things that happened was that I finally got out of school and out of high school, a lot of things happened there. First and foremost, being told that-- go to a community college and join the army. Four year colleges are not in your future. Not because I was not a smart kid or I didn't really apply myself, but they figured well, you know, that's probably the best thing for you to do. And this was talked to me, my social worker told me that and some of the counselors told me that. But that was the second lesson I learned, don't tell me I can't do something because once you tell me that, I'm gonna get it done. I was a poster child, like I said, for EOP. So I had options for days, but the other thing that I had going for me at that time was I was a fairly decent athlete. And basically athletics is what kept me from going over the cliff. I was a fairly decent athlete and I had options between EOP and through my athletic ability, I had options and people had provided those options for me through my athletic endeavors.

So long story short, I graduated and ended up coming to Chico. But what happened between the time I was 15 and 18, there were some things that happened and sort of got me through my life that I want to share with you in relationship to how I moved forward. And these are messages that I still hear to this day. I'm a spiritual person. I'm not going to say I'm a religious person. I am a spiritual person. I believe every day at the core of my soul there is something that's driving me and pushing me forward. It's something and I can't explain to get me to where I am, and part of it had to do with my mom, and I'll get to that. But she taught me some things at a very early age and I want you to image a little 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 year old kid trying to listen to my mom and trying to interpret her Japanese, which I didn't speak very well, and us talking about philosophy about life. My mom was grooming me at the very youngest part of my—that I can remember her—about life and what I need to do to succeed. I didn't know that. I didn't know that. We had conversations about rocks and *"Does rocks really exist? Do they hear? Do they feel?"* And I mean things like that that were like, what the hell are you talking about at a 13 year old? But she taught me some things and she did it by not necessarily what she said to me, but how she lived her life and I want to share some of those with you.

She said and showed me, you always love people, first thing. Always love people. And she showed that by in her religion when she went out and she recruited people, she brought strangers into our home, she fed them and she accepted them for where they were at in their life. She always tried to find a way to move them forward. She respected people for who they are and if they wanted to move, she tried to find a way to help them move forward. One of the greatest lessons she taught me, it's not what other people think or say that matters. It's what you believe about yourself that defines the person that you are.

And that lesson was when I was very young kid living on hate, in the hate district, I was out with three of my partners and we got in a fight because they were teasing my mom calling her Japanese and Jap and all of that kind of stuff and I got pissed. So we started to go at it and one of the kids took a bottle, threw the bottle, hit me upside of my head and I'm out there crying and all this stuff and these kids are going at it and my mom comes out the house and she yells at the kids and then she takes me in the house and I get a whooping and she told me, she says, *"Don't ever, ever let somebody put you in that situation that you don't believe. Do you believe that about me? Then it doesn't matter. Words don't hurt."*

She also told me never to give up. There's always a way to overcome the barriers that are in your life. And how she showed me that was that we didn't have money. I don't know how we paid our bills. She worked three or four jobs. She didn't have any real skills but we always had some food on the table. We always-- we had a roof over our head and even though I didn't have the cleanest or nicest clothes, I had clothes on my back. She didn't believe there was anything that was going to stop her from providing for us. She never gave up, never gave up. And the most important thing that she taught me, have faith in something larger than yourself. She believed in her religion, and this is where I talk about this spiritual connection and my conflict between the religious ideologies that are happening out in the world right now. She believed that if she prayed hard enough, that she would be able to increase her kid's chances of success, not only in their religion that they believed that if you pray, you assume all the bad karma in the world, but by assuming that karma that which you do is for your children and seven generations forward you will change the destiny and culture and the karma of the kids-- of her kids and then my grandkids. She believed that with all of her heart. She prayed every day up until the day she died.

The day she died she was sick as a dog, she had a heart condition and my mom had gone to the hospital prior to, she had a mild heart attack, they came and got her. She went to the hospital and she came home. She came home because she was afraid if she'd left us, that somebody would come and take us. She didn't know who, but somebody would come and take us so she came home. The day she died I was playing-- getting ready to go to a baseball game. She's laying in front of her Buddha, her Bah Anza, and she's sitting there and she's laying and she's praying on her back, I mean on her side. She's just praying. And I said, *"Do you want me not to go?"* She said, *"You need to go."* She says *"I've done everything that I possibly can do for you. It's going to be okay."* Those were her words to me and I went and played baseball. I knew when she died. I felt it on the field. So when I came home, she had already gone. She had passed away so she wasn't even in the house when I came home. The next time I saw her she was at the funeral parlor.

So long story short, she prayed for us and when she prayed for us our lives forever changed. My conflict comes, is because in the Christian religion, if you pray to a false idol, you go to hell. One of the reasons that even though I am a Christian, I could never go and completely accept the other side of it because I didn't believe my mom would ever go to hell because of who she was. It defined me in some other ways, spiritually, about having my personal relationship but also believing in what is important in your spirituality is how you treat people and how you show up in the world and what you give and how you give to people because that's what Christ would do, that's what Christ would want. But in her religion, that's what they believed as well and that's how I showed up each and every day of my life.

Moving from foster home to foster home, I started to really, really develop this passion for trying to figure out how to move myself forward, but there was really something that was happening at the same time as I was doing that. I was always trying to help somebody else. I wanted everybody not to feel the way that I felt. I didn't want them to feel that hole that I had in my heart and in my soul. I didn't never want-- I still to this very day never want anybody to feel that. I want that to be filled. In anything I can do to fill that and I didn't know that was the journey, but anything I can do to fill that became my mission. It became my mission each and every day and that's what I did and that's what I continue to do. It was the very beginning of me starting to realize and starting to shape and craft who I am and what I'm about and to be able to articulate it and then help others to move forward. It was the very beginning of all of that, that experience in the foster home.

Now I want you to know something, three foster homes. I was kicked out of one because of divorce, the second one because the wife was cheating on the husband, the third, which was the greatest, I was involved and I had a family that was predominantly, it was white, my dad had a wooden leg. He blew it off playing-- or hunting. My mom at that time was a very obese woman, but had a heart this big, we can do no wrong, the three sons, my four brothers, one was a jock like me, and that's how we connected, and the other was this, some of you know him, Big D, Guida [phonetic], was this big dude that had a big heart, the youngest was this little biker, and the oldest brother, well-- that was a whole different story.

That boy was a born loser's hell's angel. And the very first day that I moved into the third foster home there were bikes in front of the house, motorcycle bikes, and he was waiting outside for me because I was coming home from school, walking up. He walked up to me and said, *"Look, I have"--* and some of you heard the story-- *"nothing against niggers but I want to tell you something. You see these bikes out here. We got a problem. My mom and my brothers love you and you're a part of their family"--*right, not his— *"their family right now. If you see those bikes and you walk into the house, we got a problem."* And he said, *"if you walk into their house and my boys are there, they are not going to take very kindly to you and I have no control on what they will do. This is the problem. If they do that, then my brothers are going to jump on your side, my mom's going to jump on your side and then this puts me in a hell of a position."* So I said *"Okay. If I ever see bikes, I won't come home."* And I didn't.

The flip side of the story, because I don't have a lot of time, the flip side of the story, 10 years later I go home, he's no longer in the bar. He's no longer in the gang, he takes me to a bar and apologizes to me. But that was my experience in my third foster home. Each of those foster homes shaped me differently, but each of them I learned from and one was acceptance no matter what, the other was to deal with other people's pain and then figure out that I'm okay and it's not my responsibility and more importantly, it didn't matter what was happening out there, I still had control of my life if I was willing to work towards it.

So coming to Chico State, why and how I have no idea. 18 years old, I had options, I had taught if you know me, you know I'm a very independent individual, you cannot tell me what I do and how to control my life, always been that way. I'm going to march to my own tune, my own drumbeat, I'm going to do

what I need to do. So I had talked all of this smack from the time my mom died until I was 18 and I didn't tell you that story. You know, I was a spoiled, confident, cocky, brat and I had talked the whole time, *"You don't need to take care of me. I can take care of myself. I know how to run the streets,"* and I did. *"And I know how to hustle to make money. I can do good."* They get like 100 bucks from me for whatever it was at the foster home. *"And if you gave me that 100 bucks, I can take care of myself blah, blah, blah, blah."* 18 years old, boom, okay what in the hell are you going to do now?

So I had college. I had college. I was a poster child for EOP. I had athletic opportunity and somehow, somehow sight unseen my butt shows up in Chico, coming in on Highway 99, coming in and looking at the foothills there, the flattops, reminded me of a cowboy movie and I expected cowboys to come rolling over that hill with wagon trains thinking what in the hell did you just do, coming from Monterey, from Seaside at that time. I had a hoodie on and I had jeans on. It was August. It was 110 degrees. I come rolling up with two of these other friends that had come up here with me and we showed up downtown and there was a Orange Julius where the Thai food place is at. There was a Orange Julius there. So we go in and get this and we all got hoodies on and pants and stuff and we come out there and we're looking around like where in the hell are we. This is hot. This must be something straight out of [inaudible], right. And so we're walking and we just sort of gazed there. These three women come up and said *"What are you looking for?" "Well we're looking for Chico State." "Well duh, it's right there, right?"* So what happened? They said *"Hey, there's a party tonight. Why don't you all come to the party?"* First of all they were girls and they were talking to us and they invited us to a party. We're going oh, okay. Maybe we did land in the right place. But the truth of the matter is, we went to that party and at that party we must have met 50, 60 other people and got introduced to what kegs were.

And from that moment forward, I was sold because I realized something about Chico, and these are the things and the values that I want to share with you that's important for me to share if you're planning to stay here, and if you don't know this, most of you probably somehow internalized this. People here are for real. At their core when they see you and they talk to you and they say hello, they mean hello. They're not trying to figure out how to hustle you or how to whoop your ass. They're not trying to figure that out. It's just a genuine place. It was the community that cared about people, for the most part, that is to this day very, very true. Now there are pockets that that's not true, but for the most people, this community cares and it shows up in so many ways, when tragedy happens the community stopped.

When-- I remember one of the situations where some of the brothers in one of the fraternities got their house burned. You guys probably remember that, and somebody, I don't know what happened, probably over women, got their house burned and the community came and we had this thing and then all of the sudden community shows up, they got money, they got quilts, they got everything they could imagine because the community did not want them to feel that they weren't welcome because of some other idiots. We have a community that cares. And for the most part if you look for it, you have opportunities, especially if you work at the university. And even if you think about it, you're probably in one of the most prestigious places than you can imagine working at this institution. You have, and we have, an opportunity to impact students. As a student, I had a chance to impact students. I learned and I

appreciated that most people nurtured good ideas and were willing to help you if you went to them. There're like-minded people here.

Dr. Pete talks about eagles and turkeys. How many of you heard that story before? Okay. I can't tell it as well so I'm going to do an abbreviated story about it. Turkeys are dumb and they sort of walk around in flocks and they sort of follow the leader and they sort of, they don't have any sense of anything. They're easy prey. They just sort of walk around in groups. Eagles, they soar. They're independent. They have the ability to either mate, they have the ability to be able to take care of themselves and nobody messes with them. They soar independently, they climb, they accelerate, they excel. And in Chico we, especially at Chico State, there are nothing but eagles in the room. Well there may be a turkey or two, but for the most part they're nothing but eagles and that attracted me here and most importantly if you're willing and you're open to it, it's a place that stimulates growth unless you close yourself off from the opportunity.

So I share those things as a backdrop to let you know that by no means, no way, shape or form did I get here in a traditional way and my passion for people was driven by my life experiences and my need, my desire to make sure that all people were respected, connected and affirmed and everything that we possibly can do to make their lives better. To inspire those that want to be inspired to greatness is my goal in life and for any of you that are around me, you know that I don't accept mediocrity. I want you to be the very best. I don't care if you knock something out the park. What can we do next? How do we get to where we need to go next because I don't want to settle and I don't want nobody else to settle. We've got to expire, we've got to grow, we have to fly and that's what I do. Anybody that's around me will tell you one thing about me, if you go and you talk to CC about something, he's never going to tell you "No." He's going to say, *"How are we going to get it done? How are we going to get it done? How do we make this possible because you all have that potential."* That was all in my DNA at a very early age. My circumstances in life and to this very day my belief that my mom's belief in her religion sort of led me to where I am in my life right now.

So I want to share some things with you that may help you as a professional and some of it may apply and some of it may not apply as you pursue your roles in higher education. First and foremost I need to clarify this, is that I was never looking to be a student affairs professional. I didn't look for this profession. I was never trained to be in this profession. Somehow I ended up in it. I was a social worker. I was going to run group homes. I had three businesses, I still have-- and still have a business, three businesses, Level 10, Carter and Associates, The Alliance for Education Solutions because that social work part of me where I want to save people that are not here is still a part of my DNA and I worked very hard at trying to figure out how to make those things co-exist and to be able to make that impact. But student affairs was never what I was drawn to so everything that I'm sharing with you, I learned and they're my experiences and they may or may not apply to you but I share it and I give them to you freely. Hopefully something will resonate and help you.

Number one, no matter what, be the best that you can be at what you do. Be the best, do not try to slide by and do not try to fit in. If you're going to do a job, be the best at what you do, first and

foremost. That should pertain to anything in life. Anything less than that is unacceptable, and believe me, people around you will see that if you're trying to slide by. If you're the best, people will come to you, they will call on you, they will seek you out because you're the best at what you do. Be transformational in what you do. Create something that makes an impact in any way you can no matter where you work. I believe in transformational leadership. Whatever I touch, whatever I do I want it to transform. I want it to mean something. I want it to make an impact in somebody's life. Be transformational. That's where you're giving something back either to individuals or to the organization or to the department that you live in.

Find a mentor. Know who your cheerleaders are. Let me share something with you. There's a guy in my life name Bernie DeVito and some of my partners out here know Bernie. I don't know how I hooked up with Bernie. I really don't. It was something that drew me to him in a way that I went and I sought him and I said look, I need somebody to talk to to help me sort of figure some things out and you're the only person I know. I don't know why I'm here. I knocked on his door. One night I come knocking on his door. *"Hey, CC how are you doing? Whatcha doing here?"* And I have this conversation with him, that was 30 years ago, 30 years ago. Still to this day I don't know what and how that happened and we're about as odd as you can be in terms of who we are, but as close as you can be in terms of our friendship. He was my mentor and is still my mentor in a lot of ways and a friend and/brother. Know who your cheerleaders are. I have conversations all the time with individuals about what they want to do and I ask them, who's supporting you? Who's helping you to do what you want to do or who's talking about you in some way to help other people see your potential and your possibility? Who's seeing that? If you don't know, you need to figure that out if you're trying to advance. If you're just trying to exist, don't worry about it. But if you're trying to go some place difference than where you are, find your cheerleaders. If you don't know, develop them. Somebody's going to be on the sideline for you pushing and supporting you in any way possible.

Don't ever be afraid to talk to your supervisors and the administration about what your dreams and goals are. There's nothing wrong with that, but you got to dream and you've got to have goals. And a lot of people are not willing to do that and if they do have, they're afraid to have the conversation. How in the world is anybody going to know what's in your head if you don't tell them? So if you have a plan and you want to go somewhere, then talk to somebody that knows that could either help you figure that out, give you some advice so they can put you on the path to get to where you want to go. That's important. Don't be afraid to talk to somebody that's in-- that's either your boss or that's in-- and can help. Don't be afraid to do that. There's not a person at Kindle Hall that I think that if you went and talked to and you set out the time with them, that if you really were sincere about what you said that they wouldn't give you the time of day and talk with you about whatever it is. And if it's not them, then find somebody outside of you. Go to the academics, go outside of your unit, wherever it is, have that conversation and there's multiple ways of doing that. And if you ever want an idea about how to do that, let me know. I'll be glad to share what I can with you.

Reach out and learn from everyone. Find folks who are and aren't your mentors and learn from them. I'm going to tell you something about me that you, I think some of you that know me will know. I find

something in everybody. I saw a student in the CCLC today on the back of it he had yearbook staff. I didn't have time to talk to him and Katie and Krystle haven't heard this yet. I'm thinking well, this young man is in the yearbook, then maybe CCLC should do a yearbook. Learn from people, observe what's going on.

But I want to tell you some things about some people in here. David Buckley, courageous leadership. Drew Kellen [phonetic] [inaudible], Drew, commitment to change. Pedro Douglas, faith. Where's my girl, Tracy, honestly. Pat, success. Shayla, compassion. Chris, friendship. Katie, fearlessness. Krystle, strength. Everybody in this room that I know, I can-- I know something about you and believe something more about you than you probably believe about yourself. I have had conversations and would hear what people 5, 6, 10 years ago about what I saw in them and their potential and possibilities and what they can do to make a difference. But it doesn't matter what I see if you don't see it in yourself. But more importantly, more importantly you take the time to learn about others and you'll discover things about yourself. So learn from everybody that you have an opportunity to. Don't stay-- don't stay confined in your worlds. Travel outside of those walls and figure out who's out there. Have a conversation. It doesn't matter whether it's a student or whether it's a professional or it's an administrator.

I didn't mention Eja [phonetic] Power. How many of you know Eja? Girl was a project but I'm going to tell you something. I'm going to tell you something, when she's finished with her master's degree, girl's going to change the world. What I learned from her as a student is community. She believes in her community and she'll go to her death trying to do something with her community.

Respect all those individuals that you have come in contact with, and I know that's hard sometimes because sometimes people are straight A's, you know. And you know, you've just got to respect them for where they are. Again, make your intentions known. Let folk know-- let folks know that you're looking to advance. If you're bored, it's your fault. I want to say that again, if you're bored, it's your fault. Whose responsibility is it to help you find some excitement in life or some excitement or some passion in your job? Is it somebody else's responsibility? It's yours. Find something that you can connect to. And I say that to the folks that are in the middle of their careers because when you hit your goals and you got to where you're at and all of the sudden you go, been there, done that. And the question is not necessarily *"What's next?"* It's *"I'm bored, I'm tired, I don't want to do this anymore."* It happens all the time. For those folks I say that's the time you got to reset your goals and figure out whatever that next-- whatever your exit strategy is what whatever it is that you want to do next. For those of you who are younger that's saying, *"I can't stand my job. It's the same damn routine every day, blah, blah, blah, blah"*-- change it. You may not be able to change it within the context of what you do, but you sure and will can change the relationship to how you interact in the university.

Opportunities are everywhere. 90 percent of what I do and what I get involved with, I create them. I'd go out and find whatever that is that's out there that I'm passionate about and I create something. I never get bored. In fact, I have the opposite problem, too involved! But it's always the process. It's always the process and the opportunity for you to make impact or create transformation in your own life and in the lives of others if you think outside the box about what you can do. You know, your job is 8

to 5 or whatever it is and Chico State doesn't operate 8 to 5. I hate to tell you that. For those of you who have 8 to 5 jobs, you know, students don't operate 8 to 5. So there's opportunity forever to be involved and engaged. I can tell you right now, we can probably get 15, 20 professionals together, come up with some idea and do something and transform this university. All we need is somebody to say hey, CC, Tracy, whoever, let's get together and have this conversation and I want to do this, something will happen. If you're bored, it's your own fault.

Collaborate with others outside your area. My greatest challenge all the time for my staff is I do not want to pigeon hole them. I want them to be involved in anything and everything they have passion about and some things they don't even have passion about because I want them to be seen. I want them to have that opportunity to be exposed. I want people to know them by their first name. I want people to know how great they are. But if that's not happening from your cheerleader, then you have to create that for yourself because my job is not to hold people back. My job is to lift people up and to help them get to where they want to go. That's the same for you. Collaborate, get involved, step outside of your comfort zone, get involved and engage in something you haven't thought about doing before.

Take a risk. Let me tell you what risk is, okay. I return punts in football. For those of you who don't know this, there's one guy that stands way back there, there's 11 guys there coming at you. They kick that ball up, it's probably 70, 80 yards in the air, and you sit back there, you catch that ball and before that ball gets in your hand, you have to decide whether you're going to run with it, are you going to do this or fair catch it, right. Well what risk is, is when you're back there and you're looking at that and you're trying to make that decision. There's something that happens in your head you go, okay, I'm going to catch this ball and I think I can make this 6 inch step to left to make that dude miss and try to get some room to run. The risk is, if you go three and a half steps and that guy is coming full speed, he's knocking your head off. That's risk. That's calculated risk. And risk is not necessarily bad if you're calculating what it is. The reward is, when I move to that 6 inches to my right and I got that little lane and then I break a 70, 80 yard touchdown and I hear the crowd going wild and I'm in the end zone, I'm a bad boy. And then the other time we're taking that calculated risk and I do that and move three and a half inches instead of 6 inches to avoid the hit and they take my head off and I hit the ground and say okay, well, I- I guess that was a bad one. I have to come back and figure out how to do it again, that's risk. Risk is okay. Don't fear risk in your careers, in your life. Calculated risk has great rewards. Take chances, look for opportunities, do things that are not comfortable and if you do it well it will pay off big dividends for you.

Couple other things which you hear me saying help other people succeed, all of you help others succeed. Too many of us wait for other to fail instead of helping others to succeed. Give away credit, lift others up. My greatest reward in life is watching others succeed. All those folks that I have an opportunity to help in some way and I see them flourish and grow and do their things, a little piece of me is fulfilled. That big hole that I have in the center of my heart is filling in every day. By the time I leave this institution, it will be completely filled and my life will be complete. So that's who I am. Thank you very much for listening.

[Applause]

>> Any questions? I covered it all?

[Pause]

Audience Member >> I want to know where your sisters are.

CC Carter >> My sisters-- actually my sisters are, one's in San Leandro working for the census and the other is in Concord now working for-- she-- for Bank of America, she's a collector and that's a whole story. She's about this big, but if you met my sister in college, she was that big and almost always got me in a fight because she thought she was 6 foot 4 and indestructible, talking smack all the time and saying *"You don't say anything, I'm going to talk to you and you're going to have to deal with my brother,"* you know, and my-- and I was, you know, 5'8, 165 pounds. That wasn't happening, but collections for her is great because it's all over the phone. Nobody sees her. Anything else? Okay. All right. Thank you very much.

Krystle >> Let's give it up one more time for CC!

[Applause]