



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK:  
MONDAY MUSINGS

October 14, 2013

Colleagues,

Last week, our community was saddened and shocked by the sudden death of Joe Bell in Colorado.

Joe's journey, both physical and spiritual, was one commenced by the unnecessary and untimely death of his son, Jadin. By all accounts, Jadin was a young man with a promising future. He was sensitive and caring to all of those around him, and like many teenagers, he was finding his way in this world by expressing his individuality. For some, this provided a target and outlet for venting fears and misunderstandings. For others, as many of our own students have conveyed to me, Jadin created a safer pathway for them to find their own way in a world marked with perfidious and treacherous turns.

Joe began his "Walk for Change" across America last April to honor his son and raise awareness of bullying and the mistreatment of others. He did not want Jadin's life and his experiences to be forgotten, nor did he want others to endure the same intolerance.

We, too, must take up this charge and continue in Joe's footsteps. We are inherently responsible for our students and those who follow. While we may not trek across the country, we can take the same journey Joe started through our own actions by treating others with respect even if we disagree vehemently; tempering our reactions to those we perceive as different from us; and regarding others within our own University community who hold different levels of authority and influence with equal respect.

Many of you have noticed that I frequently wear a "Nemo" lapel pin (it is actually a clownfish.) Some of you have commented on it and others probably assume it is a gift from my daughter. The real story behind the pin is about when a member of the EOU community taught me an important and personal lesson one day. She gave the lapel pin to me, and it serves as a symbol of how we transform into our true selves by serving the needs of the community. This transformation is not easy – personally or for the community – but failing to transform is even worse as

it means denying our true identities. Just as the clownfish alters throughout its life to serve the community, we must change, and more importantly, offer support for others who are transforming.

This Thursday at 2 p.m., a memorial for Joe Bell will be held on our campus in the Gilbert Center. Please use this time to reflect and take stock of our own messages and actions to ensure we are signaling respect for others. Let us not forget Jadin and so many others who bring value to our community and deserve our protection when needed. And, let us honor Joe's journey by transforming our own lives to ensure others feel safe, secure and valued in this uncertain world.

Kudos and Miscellaneous:

I am seeking nominations for faculty, staff and students to serve on the President's Commission on the Status of Women. This commission is very important to me as it provides advice and insight in our efforts to have a safe and welcoming environment. Please send me your nominations (you can self-nominate or suggest a colleague) by Friday, Oct. 25.

Congratulations to the volleyball team for another excellent weekend in sweeping their matches against Northwest and Evergreen State. They were ranked 10<sup>th</sup> in the nation last week and I look forward to seeing the new standings on Tuesday. Kudos also goes to our women's soccer team. While they lost to SOU on Thursday, they rebounded on Sunday with a thrilling win over OIT with a score of "one to nil."

On Tuesday Oct, 22, Ars Poetica begins its season with Lidia Yuknavitch reading from her novel, "Dora: A Headcase." The event starts at 7:30 p.m. in Pierce Library. As an additional feature, our local, sensational band Sum People will also perform. For more information see [www.eou.edu/news-press/ars-poetica-yuknavitch](http://www.eou.edu/news-press/ars-poetica-yuknavitch).

Sincerely,

Bob

Bob Davies  
President