

Presidents Message ó March 2009

I would like to take this time to acknowledge some very important individuals who have been very instrumental forwarding pertinent information out to our members here in the Inland Empire.

Dave Matuszak, the past president and currently my mentor, for his valuable service to his profession and the students lives he has impacted over the years as a Physical Educator in the Yucaipa Joint Unified School district, of which he still serves. Dave is a book of information regarding our rights, not only as teachers, but as people, to be looked upon with dignity and respect. Look for his input on serious matters on this web site. Dave's passion and wisdom is very much appreciated.

Mr. Terry Rizzo, Chair and Professor of Kinesiology at California State University San Bernardino. He is currently serving as our State CAHPERD President and will step down after this year's election from the state offices, having been held recently in Santa Clara, California. We are fortunate to have an ambassador right here in our backyard, from the state level to discuss issues relative to our cause. I met Mr. Rizzo many years back as I began my road in Physical Education and to this day, I will never forget his question to me, "Are you a coach/teacher or teacher/coach?". That question still resonates with me, after all of these years. I am a teacher first and foremost.

The countless educators that I have had the pleasure to meet over the many years, that give so much of their time, money and especially family, to endure the rigors of educating our students in what we love and have a passion for in Physical Education.

We reach many students on a daily basis, regardless of their athletic ability. For example, instructing Adaptive Physical Education students with moderate to severe disabilities and witnessing the progress they make, is truly a love for the profession.

We motivate students through the daily grind of meeting their fitness goals, through various activities. The best teachers motivate their charges to be at their individual best, while working and learning to be a collaborative and cooperative learner. We model the learning, have high expectations of standards based instruction, understand the "kinetic link" related to various activities, use technology, manipulatives and other modalities. All of this takes skill, patience and motivation.

I would hope to meet you and coordinate our efforts to be the type of Unit the Inland Empire can be proud of. You are the leaders of your profession and the curriculum specialist of your content, of which you love, which is Physical Education. Do not allow others to take that away from you. You have earned your place amongst our core academic brethren and we not only deserve to be treated with respect, but also given the dignity we so richly earned.

Sincerely,

Augustine Vega