



Kevin Livergood Graduate, Environmental Science

Kevin completed his Master of Science in Environmental Studies in December 2007. His final project “The Effects of Construction Activity on the Breeding Success of California Gnatcatchers: A Case Study of the Marblehead Coastal Development Project” was the culmination of his Masters studies and is an extension of his work with a local environmental consulting company, Glenn Lukos Associates.

Kevin’s undergraduate work was in Communication Theory and Human Resource Management at the University of Arizona, which led to a career at Fluor Corporation. Following a layoff, a time filled with reflection, prayer and volunteerism, Kevin found the Environmental Studies Program at CSUF, which ultimately led to his current career as an environmental consultant.

Kevin finds great joy in his family, which includes his wife Amy and daughters Abby and Kendra. With the completion of his degree Kevin looks forward to resuming his outside interests in mountain biking and enology.

Faculty, students and guests,

It is an honor to be standing before you today.

As I started graduate school my life was in transition. I was emerging from a year of unemployment following a layoff from a lifeless career in human resources at a Fortune 500 company and I had just started a part-time job at a local wilderness park in an effort to chart a new course.

My academic pursuit began shortly thereafter and firmly set me moving in that new direction. I advanced on faith with the hope of making a difference in a new field.

Shortly after getting started, about 3 weeks actually, the first of my little girls, Abby, was born. This alone should have counted for at least 60 or 70 extra units, but to no avail, so I continued with my education adding Dad-in-Training to my class lists.

4 years later I have 2 beautiful girls and I’ve charted a new course that never would have come to pass without the love of my beautiful wife Amy, the support of my parents and a faith in the true Master’s plan that promises to give me hope and a future.

Through the Environmental Studies Program I learned about environmental policy, had a few crash courses in biology and along the way it opened my eyes to the issues that face the world we live in. There were obvious yet important issues like global warming and recycling. But we also learned about things that we don't hear about on the evening news. Things like environmental racism, the effects of poverty on our planet and environmental conditions that can affect entire communities, cultures and even nations.

I believe we have all been charged with the good stewardship of the world we share. We've been called to be responsible consumers, wise planners and safeguards of our natural resources. As we ponder what it means to be good stewards, let us consider the effects of choosing conservation and compassion over consumption. Let us consider the effects of embracing something larger than ourselves, something that takes us out of ourselves and let us endeavor to make a difference with our lives.

Today marks a milestone in many of our lives. While it marks the end of academic life for some, it can mark a starting point for all of us.

Let today be the day that we wake up and choose to take the courageous step of faith required to advance in the direction of all that we've hoped for and all we've been called to do even if that takes us to a place that is unpopular or uncomfortable.

As we end the transition through this life stage, let us take all that we've learned through our academic disciplines with us, but let us also take hope, honesty, good character and integrity back to our jobs and into our homes and then... watch us change the world.