

Thank you ... for allowing me to publicly thank you, the ensemble, and the dept. of music for all your hard work, and allowing me to follow both of my dreams

It seems tonight's concert theme is appropriate for the end of the spring semester and graduation, as the music congers images of what lies *beyond* – magnificent phenomena that have been studied and explored, and worlds and outcomes that are still unknown.

In preparing for this future, for things beyond, I have been thinking about all that has come before...

As I graduate from CSU with a Masters degree in civil engineering, I realize that perhaps all the most important things I needed to know for a future in engineering came not from my engineering classes, but from my experience in the department of music. I've learned to listen carefully to those around me, for if you do not play together in harmony, the outcome will not be understood. I've learned that creative expression is often the most effective means of communication. I've learned the responsibility in working with a group, for the quality of the group is dependent upon the quality of the individual. I've learned that consistency and hard work by a leader can foster consistency and hard work by those he or she leads. I've learned the value of working and planning ahead – it is not possible for the human system to learn Maslanka by cramming in one night. I've learned that you must be emotionally connected to what you are playing... or what you are drawing, designing or building, or planning – because that connection will result in a melody or plan or system or structure that will make a difference in someone's life – an effect that makes being a musician or an engineer extremely rewarding.

I am so very grateful for the opportunity to have played with this wonderful ensemble – it has been excitingly challenging and diverse, and also comfortingly steady and consistent. Through seven years of graduate and undergraduate engineering classes, my professors changed, expectations varied, and standards differed. What an amazing experience it has been to have had the same ensemble director for over four years – the same philosophy, the same high expectations, and always the encouragement to reach a little bit higher. In the CSU wind ensemble you are not a number or another body in a chair – you are someone your director knows, someone your section knows, because there is that emotional connection – the one that is required to affect others – that connects you not only to what you are doing, but to the others who are doing it with you.

I am sad that I will not be playing with this group any longer, but it is this experience that has built my foundation upon which to build my future...the *space* that lies *beyond* –

Linda Riley