

ERAU – Prescott Campus Commencement

Yá'át'ééh, my name is Arlando S. Teller. My Navajo clans are Naasht'ézhi-Táchii'nii (*Zuni clan adopted into Red Running Into the Water People clan*) born for Tó'aheedlíinii (*The Water Flows Together clan*). My maternal grandfathers are Tódich'ii'nii (*Bitter Water clan*) and my paternal grandfathers are 'Áshijhi (*Salt People clan*).

***Acknowledgment of Parents, Clara Tah-Nunn and Mike Nunn. Thank you for your unconditional love and support.**

***Acknowledgement of nephew, Isaac Noble, my niece Tahmika, and my mentor Bill & Sally Thompson for your unconditional support and encouragement.**

Thank you ERAU-Prescott for inviting to share my encouragement to my fellow Eagles!

Currently I am an Arizona House of Representative-Elect for Legislative District 7. Assigned to the Transportation Committee and Land & Agriculture Committee.

In 1991, at a Secondary Education event I happened upon a table with a young female recruiter sharing information of an aviation university I had not heard of. I recall our interaction was not brief and I decided to take the informational brochure that was available.

Later that evening, I vividly sharing with Mom of the school. She's always encouraged me to consider all educational opportunities. I recall her saying, "It's up to you Son. It's your education, your goals."

Fast forward weeks later, I was handwriting responses in the school application form in blue ink. Nervously filling in the boxes – making sure my handwriting was legible and no mistakes. I recall checking the box "Native American / Hawaiian Islander" or something similar.

Several months later, I was so excited to receive several acceptance letters from Universities throughout the Nation, AND Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University! Little did I know how this decision would change the course of my life.

I began my career in the transportation industry in 1995 as one of the first Native Americans to graduate from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. So as an Eagle and ALWAYS an EAGLE, I am proud to stand before you to share that you are ready to SOAR!

Now. Let's talk about The Eagle.

The Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University's Eagle is a significant mascot.

For most Native American cultures, particularly to Dine' or Navajo, the Eagle is a sincerely meaningful in all aspects of our prayers.

The Eagle's regal presence is magnificent

In flight the Eagle is graceful and powerful

In action the Eagle is nimble yet purposeful

It is with all these attributes, We place our prayers up the Eagles feather. As the Eagle has the strength and endurance to fly the highest to touch our Great Spirit with our prayers of harmony, beauty, protection, safety, wellness and love.

As an Eagle, I am very proud to be surrounded by you all as you continue your journey in our professional and personal livelihood.

As you leave the nest of Embry-Riddle and for most your parent's home, please know your journey is not complete.

Throughout your journey, as an Eagle, acknowledge that you have been trained, instructed and taught principles, theories, – know that each of you have been trained by the best Aviation/Aeronautical University in the World!

To my fellow Eagles it's amazing to say this to you all.... Always an Eagle!