

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” Nelson Mandela

It is a sentiment that almost all of us who work on a college campus believe. It is the recognition that education can be transformational. And, we often share the anecdotal story among each other on lives that have been elevated, families that have been changed, and communities that invigorated because of the power of education.

Today was a celebration of the power of education, both in and out of the classroom. But more than just the ability for education to transform lives, today was a sharing of the evidence on how education makes a difference.

The presentations that have been part of today’s symposium demonstrate the collaborative efforts of academic affairs and student affairs to examine the value added experiences that emerge from our educational initiatives. Through these insights, we are able to assure quality in the programs we offer, better allocate resources to meet students’ educational needs, and the many celebrate accomplishments of faculty, staff, and students’ work.

More than anything, however, we are able to give more voice to those anecdotal stories around student successes. We are able to expand our stories around the work we do at UC Merced, both in and out of the classroom.

So thank you, all of you who have taken the extra step to not only assess student learning, but to present on it today during this symposium. You have expanded the campus narrative, and reaffirmed our mission around excellence in research, teaching and service.

Thank you.