LAUNCHING THE LES FUND

ADAM:

So it's actually very emotional for me to be back here. The time that my kids were at this school was really just a wonderful time for both of them and my entire family. And it just goes by way too quickly. For the time that I was a dad here, I milked it for all it was worth. I was Zero the Hero in both of their kindergarten classes. Do they still do Zero the Hero? Yeah. I came in in a Captain America outfit. And back in 2008, when my oldest was in kindergarten, the iPhone camera had not quite developed yet, so I was one of those dads that walked around with one of those giant movie cameras that looked like I thought I was filming an actual movie on location.

And, you know, Ilene would always say at the winter show, you know, don't experience this through a lens. We're filming this for you. You know, experience it in real life. Of course, I failed to listen. The upshot is I've got a lot of great footage. And I was watching some of that footage with my family recently. And one video in particular comes to mind right now. In the video, someone else had the camera on me and it was shot in my house. And my kids were five and six years old. And it was clearly that time of day where I had been on as dad all day long and I was ready to check out. I'm shaking a martini in the kitchen and my kids are playing with their younger cousins.

They're being very rambunctious, so finally I put the shaker down. I go to shoo them into the playroom like come on you guys, now go into the playroom. And

as I'm watching my younger self shooing the kids away, I had tears in my eyes because I would give anything to have five more minutes to play with my kids at that age because it all goes by way too quickly My son just graduated USC. My daughter will graduate NYU in the spring. It has been nearly 10 years since I've had a kid at this school, and yet every time I drive by it on Ventura, I pray for a red light right in front of the school, just so I can have one extra minute to reminisce.

I'll look at the blacktop where we used to do carpool drop-off and I'll remember letting my kids off and then stopping at the foot of the driveway for just two seconds to watch them in my rearview mirror holding hands, walking through the red gates at five and six years old, seven and eight years old, I watched my kids grow up in my rearview mirror, dropping them off at this school, this incredibly magical place.

And that magic comes in large part from the wonderful faculty and staff that Ilene has assembled at this school, but it also comes from something more. Because what makes Los Encinos so special is the people who give to it. Giving is very important to a small school like Los Encinos. It's what keeps Los Encinos small, what keeps Los Encinos special.

And for the years that I was the director of development, we achieved 100% participation in annual fund every single year. We qualified for grant money that we otherwise wouldn't have qualified for. It helped put up the building that makes this school even more unique. And some of the families who gave to that building didn't even have a kid in this school by the time the building was finished. It was just about paying it forward. And some of the programs

that we put together, we got to enjoy the fruits of our labor. And those programs are still enjoyed today. But it all boils down to one question that I want to ask each and every one of you.

Ten years from now, when your kids have long graduated this school and you catch a red light on Ventura Boulevard in front of Los Encinos, what will you feel? I can guarantee you, you will feel all of the love that your kids have received from all of their teachers and continue to receive. But there's something that can enhance what you feel even more. Because love is not just about what you get. It's about what you give. And by giving to this school, by giving yourself and your time, by giving what you can, by giving meaningfully.

I guarantee you that when that light turns green, you will feel my sense of longing. But you will also feel a sense of belonging to a community that both you and your children will remember for the rest of your lives. And it reminded me of something my father would always say. Every great milestone, he would say, you're going to wish it was now again. Well, guess what? It's now again. So make the most of it. And I wish for you my kind of love for this school. Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

ILENE:

As Adam said, I hope that 10 years from now, we can pick somebody out of this audience and stand up here. and express their love and gratitude for this Los Encinos community. I have that love and gratitude for this community every single day. That's why I come back every day to do and be my best self.

And if you ask any faculty member here, they do the same thing. They have a love for this place, and a passion for what they bring, and a dedication to your children every single day.

Do you know that our faculty has already given at 100%? Do you know that our Board of Trustees has already given 100% to the Los Encinos Annual Fund? Be part of us! Join us. It'll make a difference in the lives of your children today, tomorrow, and in the future. Thank you very much. Enjoy the rest of the Dodger game. There's a lot more drink to be had and a lot more fun to be around. And I just want to say, I appreciate each and every one of you. Adam, thank you very much. Joe, thank you very much. And, everybody, a silent cheer for being here tonight to support our library, to support our community, and to support one another. Thank you very much.

END.