



Dear Pepperdine,

In 2000 when we first spoke in Toronto, I was a doctoral candidate, eager to start my academic career. Do you remember? When I met you a couple months later in Malibu, it was love at first sight. I found more than a job; I entered a life-long relationship. You didn't know, but I was alone: a single parent, an only child, who just buried her mom. To aid my study, you gave me a wonderful chronological Bible during my interview. You invested in me and nurtured me. Your dean and chair placed their confidence in me and your faculty and staff befriended me. You gave me some amazing

students too. You rejoiced (and ate well!) when I married a chef. You prayed when I almost lost my daughter and you loved her once she arrived. You cried with, cared for, and provided for me when I was suddenly widowed. You embraced me when I returned. You held your peace when I left to grow. You sent love when I buried my dad. When I returned with new tools, perspectives, experiences, and an answered call you opened your arms.

So, as I reflect this Thanksgiving, I am grateful for you, Pepperdine.

Isaiah 1:17

“Learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.”

Dr. J. Goosby Smith

Vice President for Community Belonging and Chief Diversity Officer



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