A Letter to Graduating Students

March 3, 2009
To: The Graduating Class of 2009

“I________ pledge to consider the social and environmental consequences of choices I make in my personal life and work, and will act with integrity in my workplace and community.”

Whether you take the pledge is voluntary. It allows people to determine for themselves what they consider to be environmentally and socially responsible.

Different universities have had different levels of official administrative and faculty participation in supporting the pledge and in having recognition of the pledge be an official part of the graduation ceremony. For example, at Humboldt State University tables have been placed near the graduation stage for students to voluntarily sign the pledge.

Manchester College started supporting the pledge in 1988, a year after its inception at Humboldt State University. In 1996 Manchester became the headquarters for the Graduation Pledge Alliance (GPA), the national pledge effort, which further emphasizes Manchester's leadership. Over the years, typically 50 percent of students have worn green ribbons at commencement in recognition of the pledge. To our knowledge, Manchester was the first to wear ribbons, and now most other colleges and universities do also. At CU we wear green cords in recognition of those who have pledged. In addition, a note in the program describes the pledge and explains why students, faculty, and staff are wearing the ribbons. For those who wish to participate, decorative certificates will be available (to keep) at the upper union desk during the week of finals, if not before. Participants should also sign and keep the small pledge card received when you pick up your green cord prior to commencement to serve as a reminder of their commitment. There is no need to hand any of the materials back. However, in the spirit of the pledge we will be accepting back the cords in order to recycle them and for use in the coming years.

We have recognized that the pledge can be supported by anyone who wants to be intentional about the responsibility of his or her employment. It is our hope that your support of the pledge will contribute to the cooperative effort to build responsible citizenship for a sustainable world. The pledge is a serious commitment and CU pledge signers have taken actions such as turning down jobs they did not feel ethically comfortable with (and letting their potential employers know why); promoting environmentally friendly efforts while on the job; and simply staying informed of the events occurring in the international community.

Volunteers will be present prior to and during commencement to hand out green cords and to those graduates who endorse the pledge, as well as green ribbons to supportive faculty.

Sponsored by: The Senior Class Council, www.colorado.edu/StudentGroups/scc
members. Your wearing a cord will make a public statement of your intent to consider the well-being of the world and its inhabitants both when you consider job possibilities and after you are on the job and also during your personal life.

TO SIGN: Send your NAME, STUDENT ID, and GRADUATION DATE to cugradpledge@gmail.com

Sponsored by: The Senior Class Council, www.colorado.edu/StudentGroups/scc