

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE IN CHRISTIAN MINISTRY – Eva De La Rosa

Leading Women by Her Courageous Example

Before Eva De La Rosa completed her education at CBU, she spent several years helping other women to complete theirs. Eva had founded California's first Christian Women's Job Corps (CWJC) in Grover Beach in 1997, and through that ministry she helped equip women in crisis to get back on their feet.

"I was working with women who were victims of domestic violence, battling drug addiction, or had dropped out of school," Eva said. "Our hope was that as they would go through classes and workshops, they'd also come to know Jesus."

"It was because I was running that ministry that I decided to go back to school," Eva said. "I was encouraging women to go back to school so they can fully use their gifts and talents, and I started thinking, I never finished my own college education."

In 2000, Eva began her studies at CBU's Evening College. "I think I hold the record for the longest commuter, unless somebody else was crazier than me," Eva said. For 18 months, Eva drove 4 ½ hours from Grover Beach to attend classes on Monday and Wednesday evenings. "I spent the night with my son, who lives in Riverside," Eva explained. "And when class was over on Wednesday, I would drive back to Grover Beach and get home at about 1:00 a.m."

During her time at CBU, Eva continued running the CWJC in Grover Beach. "I was running into roadblocks with local social service agencies I was partnering with," Eva recalled. "One day a lady asked where I got my social work degree. Because I didn't have one, she no longer wanted to work with me or support our ministry, even though our local welfare agency was sending us some of their hardest cases, and these women were getting jobs, getting their GED's, and going to college through our program."

But that roadblock was soon removed when Eva received her B.S. degree in Behavioral Science in 2002. That same year, she was also elected president of the California Woman's Missionary Union (WMU), based on her exemplary work with the CWJC. She served as president until 2007, but continued volunteering for the WMU, helping churches address family and community issues such as domestic violence, drug addiction and poverty.

During this time, Eva also continued pursuing her education. When CBU introduced its masters program in counseling in 2005, she immediately enrolled, and was the first CBU student to graduate with a Master's of Counseling Ministry in 2007. "My kids were so proud," she recalled.

Today, Eva is putting her education to good use as she leads multiple ministries. At home, she serves as Education Director at New Hope Community Church in El Monte,

where her husband is pastor. She also offers counseling services to the church and community.

Eva has also continued working with the California WMU, including numerous mission trips to Moldova and Croatia, where human trafficking has become a growing epidemic. “These countries are war torn, poor, depressed. Their only commodity is humans.” Partnering with another Baptist ministry, Beginning of Life, Eva helps train and certify churches in these countries to begin their own CWJC ministries.

In 2011, Eva was appointed Executive Director of the California WMU & Women’s Ministries. In this role, she oversees women’s ministries and missions groups for more than 2200 churches, providing training and leadership development. She also manages the promotion of missions through special church offerings, and helps connect churches to mission opportunities and partnerships.

One of her main objectives in this role is to develop a sense of unity among the women of California. “In an effort to address the diversity of our state convention, [the WMU] has developed programs for separate ethnic and language-based groups,” Eva explained. “Now we’re working to bring everyone back together. God gave me this picture of a beautiful woven tapestry, with all those different colors woven together - that’s how I see the women in California. It’s a work in progress, but it’s starting to happen.”

Eva is also focused on reaching out to younger women, encouraging them to become involved in the WMU & Women’s Ministries. “The younger women want to know they are doing something that makes a difference,” Eva said. “I want to be an agent of change for the kingdom, because we can do so much more together than we can individually.”

“I always had doubts about myself and came here afraid I couldn’t do it,” Eva reflected. “But when I was at CBU at 47 year old, it was a turning point in me recognizing that when I allow God to work in my life, he takes all the good and the bad that has happened and uses it for His purpose.”