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August 1, 2016

Ricardo Salinas Foundation  
c/o Aspen Institute  
One Dupont Circle, Suite 700  
Washington DC, 20036

Dear Members of the Board of Trustees and Program Officers;

It is with a deep and heartfelt appreciation that I send this letter to thank you for sponsoring my attendance at this year's Resnick Aspen Action Forum. The experience was transformative. The planning and thought put into designing a program that would both serve as a retreat from the day to day grind and yet serve as a catalyst for action is commendable.

I started the experience with a deep dive on race. A timely but incredibly difficult topic. I left the day feeling uneasy about the state of race relations in our country. I also felt energized by the fact that each of us who participated committed to taking both individual and collective action. I am proud to report that this group continues to have conversations about what we can do to move towards Truth and Reconciliation.

The days that followed continued to inspire and challenge me. I met individuals from all over the world who are grappling with similar issues and who are equally committed to taking action. What I appreciate most about the Forum is its focus on action. I have committed to come back to my community and inspire the next generation of leaders to take an active role in solving some of our most difficult and intractable social problems.

July 1, 2016 marked my first year in office as an elected member of the Board of Education of the Los Angeles Unified School District. Participating in the Forum after a year in office was an incredible gift. I left my brief time in Aspen ready to continue to fight for all of those who continue to be failed and marginalized by our public school system.

Thank you for investing in me. I recognize that my job, as a Ricardo Salinas Scholar, is to pay it forward.

Sincerely,

  
Ref Rodriguez