

SOLEDAD MARTINEZ AND MAX LEUNG – October 2015

A Match Made at Merritt and a Surprise Proposal on Campus



When Soledad Martinez was asked to go for a walk on the grounds of the beautiful Landscape Horticulture Department and later have lunch with a District administrator, she didn't think anything of it. As secretary of ASMC, she is very active and enjoys her many roles.

But when she arrived and saw the father of her boyfriend, Max Leung, she got suspicious. Then she noticed the interlocking hearts formed with red and white rose petals and she knew. "My heart was beating so fast and I started shaking," she says. "I knew that this was the day I had been waiting for."

A few minutes later, Max was on his knee proposing to his girlfriend of four years as tearful friends, relatives, and colleagues came out of their hiding places to celebrate the joyous occasion.

This match made at Merritt actually started four years earlier at Sears where they were both working. Max had his eye on Soledad but she said she just wanted to be friends. "I had never had a boyfriend before, and I just wanted to focus on school," she says. But when she got to know him better, she knew that he was the one for her.

At the time, Soledad was transferring from CCSF to Merritt and after realizing how much better it was, convinced Max to attend as well.

So he followed her lead and joined her as a member of Puente (one of the few Asian "Puentistas"), excelled in his classes with her help, and followed her and now is ASMC Chief of Justice. It was there that they met Dr. Lilia Chavez who would play an important role in their lives.

"We got to know Dr Chavez, and she became our role model and practically a family member," says Max. "She was our inspiration to move forward and meet our goals. She's always there to support us."

And now they have their whole future ahead of them. Max, who is studying criminal justice, hopes to someday become a homicide detective. Soledad, whose love of learning led her mother to enroll her early in kindergarten, is studying communication and wants to continue to the

doctorate level and return to work at Merritt. (“Actually,” she says jokingly, “I want to come back and take Dr. Cedillo’s job!”)

What is the key to Max and Soledad’s relationship? “Communication,” says Soledad, as Max shakes his head emphatically. “We never argue, we never keep anything bottled up. If there is a problem, we talk about it and fix it right away.” They plan to marry in May of 2017.

Congratulations to Max and Soledad! May they have a prosperous marriage, and may we all be inspired by their simple life lesson!

—*Susan May*