When we watch a movie, read stories, or encounter our own difficult experiences, our brains automatically pick out who the protagonist and antagonist of the situation is. We analyze the difference between the good guy and the bad guy. Most of us find ourselves wavering towards the do-gooders reasons of peace, and more often than not, we skim over the hard work this hero has to put in. Heroes are all over the world; we just don’t always acknowledge how much work and effort they put in for the benefit of the greater good.

Famous Mexican American musician, Carlos Santana, once said, “The most valuable possession you can own is an open heart. The most powerful weapon you can be is an instrument of peace.” I think Carlos Santana explained that promoting peace is a powerful ability that we all have. If we were all open minded and helpful people, the world would certainly be a different, more peaceful place. The politician Federico Pena, a University of Texas School of Law graduate and 1992 U.S. Secretary of Transportation, has the great qualities that Carlos Santana describes. Federico Pena exemplifies this quote because he was a “new generation” socially conscious democrat who believed that he wasn’t there to just keep the system going, but to balance his role with environmental concerns as well. Federico Pena is a great example of Carlos Santana’s quote because he showed perseverance, especially when running for Mayor of Denver, Colorado, in 1983. After narrowly winning the election, his popularity didn’t come into play until his promotion for an Airport causing Denver to be a regional centre of trade.

I believe Frederico Pena is a good example for this quote because he balanced his role as Secretary of Transportation, with helpful environmental ways to improve society. He crafted the Clinton Administration’s strategy for oil and gas development in the Caspian Sea region and supported U.S. energy companies’ investments around the world. Federico Pena had the world’s best interest in mind when working. The Vietnam War wasn’t something Federico Pena was in favor of. In fact, he joined demonstrations against the Vietnam war and campaigned for liberal candidates for state offices. From 1972 to 1974, he worked as a staff lawyer for the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, where he worked with police brutality and voting rights issues. Soon after, he became a legal adviser for the Chicano Education Project, where for four years he worked for bilingual education in public schools and better school funding in Hispanic neighborhoods. Federico Pena was a positive man who had a firsthand view of the lack of peace the world had, and did something about it.

Another reason I believe Federico Pena is a good example of Carlos Santana’s quote is because of his ability to persevere when situations got tough. Federico’s effort to build an airport in Denver, led to a better American economy. A convention center, shopping center, library, and performing arts center, along with the recruitment of the Colorado Rockies major league baseball team, all came together with his help. In 1973, he and his brother opened their own law office, and together helped fellow American citizens. Federico also helped with the Colorado state wide transportation plan emphasizing transit and use of bicycles. He spent his whole life, making sure that we were taken care of as American citizens. Well all should have positive reviews from Federico’s helpful improvements.

The evidence above demonstrates how Federico Pena is an “instrument of peace”, an open minded person, and a helpful hero. Working on this project has opened my mind up, and made me think of other influential ethnicities that have contributed to better our country. Federico Pena is just one of many, and I think it’s an important topic for all students to have the opportunity to acknowledge. Federico Pena made it his goal for a very long time trying to help others succeed, even when he was the minority, and discriminated against. He is definitely an “instrument of peace” and optimistic, helpful, successful, instrument of peace. I think people don’t quite understand that in order for peace to happen, we need better people out there helping to make a difference: It’s easy to play the villain, but it takes time and work to be a hero.