INTRODUCTION SPEECH

FOR

MARK BRIONES

Hello everyone!!! It is with great enthusiasm and even greater anticipation that I am here to introduce myself and tell you a bit about who I am, what I’ve done, and what I envision for our collective future. Change is interesting and fortuitous for me as I continue my career with this respected company as of the first of the year; it is an opportunity to begin this chapter with fresh perspective and energy. (**If you are delivering this before the end of the year you can say “ We are about to celebrate” instead**) We celebrated the close of 2015 and whether it was no matter the ups or downs, we have all grown from having lived it. Each one of us has gained our own unique experience. 2015 also saw the retirement of a singular and dynamic person, a wonderful example, and a great District Manager. Of course I am referring to (**Name the previous DM**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I have heard only great things about him and his positive impact on this team and this company has been immeasurable. He brought with him a tremendous amount of experience and inspiration and although he has gone on to conquer newer horizons in his life, I am sure he will be missed here at Valic.

Here we are at the dawn of a new day in this company’s history. There will be new challenges, new insights, new dynamics, and of course new goals to achieve and surpass. In order to do that, we need to get to know each other and one way to begin that process is for me to tell you a little bit about myself, my history, my philosophy, and my goals for us as a team.

I grew up in Mississippi and attended \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ College there where I played baseball and football. Later on I studied at the University of Mississippi where I majored in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I grew up in a household in which I learned that service and teamwork were essential to forming and living a fulfilling and purposeful life. My father was a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ coach and whether I was involved in school sports or still active in an off-season, the spirit of sportsmanship and teamwork prevailed. My father’s influence and inspiration contributed greatly to the person…professional… and manager… I am today. Because of our parents’ compassion for others, when I was a teenager, at ages fourteen and sixteen, I had the privilege of spending two summers in Guatemala working with families to assist them in building homes for themselves and their children. If we’re lucky, at an early age we are exposed to experiences that are life changing and my time in Guatemala aiding those families really gave me a new perspective on who we are and how we define our purpose on earth. There is so much we tend to take for granted, especially as kids, and to see people who have nothing more than a tent to call home was a real eye opener for me. It was also incredible to see the gratitude in those people who had been given a chance to claim or to reclaim their sense of dignity because of the work we helped them to do. Those two summers really taught me about life, changed my viewpoint and appreciation of what I had, and contributed to my desire to work with and serve people as I got older.

At the age of twenty-four I began my professional career in the insurance and financial services industry. My first job was in New York where I began as an agent and within eighteen months I was transitioned into a sales management position. I was lucky enough in the beginning of my career to work for a mentor who saw potential and when he moved to Ameriprise Financial I made the move with him. Thanks to his mentorship and guidance, I learned to value the lessons that can be learned from seasoned professionals. I learned to keep my eyes and ears open, to consistently welcome challenge and responsibility, and I saw that there was something new every day that would test me and teach me. While at Ameriprise I concentrated on fee based financial planning, which worked to round out my education and experience.

As we all know, the world was irretrievably changed due to the tragic events of 9/11. Professional challenges prevailed before that day and afterwards new and difficult puzzles faced all of us. Circumstances presented the opportunity to go out on my own and I made the decision to open a Farmer’s Insurance group agency office. I was fortunate enough to rank in the top 5% of all agents nationally and in my second year at Farmer’s I was promoted to District Manager for East Tennessee. Things went well and after two years I was tapped to take on a bigger territory, namely West Tennessee where I managed that district for seven years. The last two years found me managing the Birmingham, Alabama region. All in all, my tenure at Farmers spanned the course of fourteenyears and in that time I was able to grow and learn, as reflected in my performance. Thanks to the passion and genuine interest that I bring to the job and to our clients, and to the teamwork and communication that is so essential between colleagues, success was reflected. My time at Farmer’s has seen many milestones: I have consistently ranked within the top 10% of all managers nationally- out of 380, and for the last three years I have ranked in the top 1%. In 2015, I am on target to rank #1 in the state and #2 in my region. Over the years throughout my career as District Manager at Farmer’s, I have had many opportunities to work with many diverse, worthy, and respected professionals- 115 to be exact, and I am eager to begin **OUR** new, refreshing, and mutual collaboration.

Although throughout my professional life I concentrated on being the best agent and manager I could possibly be, I somehow managed to marry a wonderful woman named \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, who is a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (**Perhaps mention what type of work your wife does or what her interests are**). We have formed a very special “team” of our own and we have two terrific children. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, our daughter is twenty years old and currently attending \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and our son \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is eighteen months old (**If you want to make a joke you can say**)…. He’s not quite ready to matriculate but he has already expressed interest in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_!!! (**And wait for the laugh**). Something tells me that you will learn more and more about my family as I learn of your interests and families as well.

I want all of you to know that I believe, as it has been said, “I am part of all that I have met.” From my father’s coaching influence to the summers working as a teenager in Guatemala; from my time in New York learning at the desk… and feet… of my mentor, to venturing off on my own through my time at Farmer’s, I know that I do not produce any results on my own. I do not exist in a vacuum. None of us does. I know each professional liaison and experience brings all of us closer to understanding the requirements of the customer and the necessary skills and responses of our team in this increasingly fast paced, complicated, and demanding global environment.

Success in business- any business- is contingent on one principle, and that is doing the best job possible- no matter what that job might be. Henry Ford said, “Quality means doing it right when **no one is looking**.” I agree with that whole heartedly, because the truth is, that even when you think that no one may be looking, our own personal integrity watches our every move. I attribute my success to caring about the results produced and being able to provide value to my agents who, in turn, will serve our client base with superior enthusiasm, attention to detail, and unparalleled guidance. Each one of us is accountable for the results we produce both individually and as a team. I look forward to building on the foundations already formed at Valic and bringing them and all of us to new and unprecedented levels of success. I strongly believe in productive communication and I am a proponent of constructive 2-way conversation. By that I mean that although I am ultimately responsible for the results achieved in this district, I support each one of you to contribute your ideas in order to find the path to value and success. As a functioning and healthy team we would have nowhere to go but up.

I want to thank all of you for sharing this meeting with me today and I look forward to strengthening our connections and strategic partnerships in the coming weeks and months. Here’s to a great new era for Valic and unprecedented client satisfaction and company success!! Thank you all!