ACCEPTANCE SPEECH

FOR

CARLTON LAMPKINS

Hello everyone!! It is with great pride and humility, enthusiasm and purpose that I stand before all of you and accept the honor and challenge of being the next President of this great organization, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I am also thrilled to be able to be here tonight with all of my brothers, our significant others, and the distinguished guests and dignitaries that encourage our collective partnership and contributions to our respective communities. (**If there is anyone in particular you would like to acknowledge for coordinating the evening’s festivities, you can do that here**) I would like to take a moment to acknowledge \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ who so generously \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Deepak Chopra has said, “The whole banquet is the first spoonful.” Based on the feast we have before us… one that includes gifts and delicacies far beyond food and drink, and by that I refer to friendship, partnership, encouragement, and nourishment for our souls, I’d say this “first spoonful” is a tough act to follow!! Each year at the annual conference we discuss the challenges, goals, and opportunities that eagerly await us in the coming months. Of course it would be easy to sit around and wait for someone else to make a contribution to the world while we choose to “Netflix and chill,” but that is not who we are, and although in some way, like crime, “volunteering doesn’t pay,” (**Wait for the laugh**), declaring oneself in service to his brothers and his community is truly **priceless**.

As your new President, it is my intention that we continue our outreach in the areas in which our service truly makes a difference, and as we work to mend and heal questionable conditions, our focus on strengthening our group voice and dynamic through team building, commitment, and transparency will empower all. No contribution is insignificant. No gesture of care or interest or enthusiasm is unappreciated. Perhaps we can have a greater understanding of the magnitude of our participation through an African proverb I once heard. “If you think you’re too small to make a difference, you haven’t spent a night with a mosquito.” (**Wait for the laugh**). Each one of you brings with him a perspective and a gift of sharing that is unique, respected, and relevant. For those of you that are newer to our fraternity, we welcome your willingness and fresh point of view. For those of you that have accepted new responsibilities that you haven’t mastered before, you inspire us. Together we will learn to navigate the conditions and projects that require our **attention** and **intention**… and speaking of navigating through new and unchartered territory, some wise man once said, “Noah’s Ark was built by amateurs. The Titanic was built by **professionals.**” ….Things that make you go, “Hmmmmmmm….” (**Wait for the laugh**).

We come together in honor of the legacy left by those that have preceded us. We go forth with new visions and goals that address the current and future problems that our communities face. There is a lot of work to be done (**Do you want to name some of the key projects and initiatives on which you plan to focus?)** in the areas of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ just to name a few. We must be ready to roll up our sleeves and get to work. Business will be handled, goals will be declared and met, and further outreach will be planned. We will work, we will stretch, and we will learn what it means to be true brothers working towards a meaningful purpose.

We will band together and we will learn from each experience. According to Socrates, the secret to successful change is to focus your energy… not on fighting the old but on finding ways to build upon the new… new challenges, new opportunities, new partnerships. It is my intention as President to focus on new and relevant ways to effect change and community support while invoking our heritage: Honoring our principles of manhood, scholarship, perseverance, and empowerment.

(**Do you want to acknowledge the spouses and significant others who are present? Do you have someone that you would want to acknowledge? You can do that here if you choose**). I would like to thank my \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for the love, friendship and support I receive that allows me to find the strength to bring my energy and passion to empowering others. To all of the spouses, partners and family that do the same for each one of you, we would all like to recognize how important your contribution is to this fraternity as well. Thank you for sharing us!!

From this point forward we enter in a new, inclusive, inspiring era here at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. We will keep the spirited malapropism of Yogi Berra in mind as we go forth… “If you don’t know where you’re going you might wind up somewhere else.” (**Wait for the laugh**). Together we will continue to define our purpose, chart our course, and work together to make this organization and its beneficiaries, stronger, more viable, and able to participate fully in a world that includes everyone. Thank you all!