CHAIRPERSON SPEECH

FOR

BESSIE GILES

REVISED

Hello everyone and welcome to this well-deserved dinner!! We have all dedicated valuable time in support of the Bridge To Success Scholarship program and tonight we celebrate. Think of what it means to build a bridge… it’s a span constructed to form a connection, like extending an arm to offer hand to someone. The scholar Ralph Ellison said, “Education is all a matter of **building bridges**.” Tonight we are here to acknowledge our “construction crew” that supports our Bridges to Success program.

Each year we build on the hard work of those who have served us. I want to acknowledge \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, our outgoing Chairman for her (**his?**) tireless work and innovative guidance in support of our scholars. I am proud to be this year’s Chairman and partner with such a dedicated group of committee members who have served our cause so well. The previous year saw growth in several ways, especially in the response and interest by our younger congregants. In 2015 I am proud to say that we served several eager young people and presented a total of (**number of scholarships, not $$ amount**) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ scholarships. Since its founding in 20\_\_, The Bridge to Success Fund has awarded \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ scholarships and as we formulate our strategy and goals for 2016 onward, we have a strong and committed foundation upon which to grow.

(**Name the outgoing committee members**) To \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, I want to thank you for your devotion to this vital cause. Your enthusiasm has inspired us (**If any committee members are staying on you can say)** I would like to acknowledge current members for their ongoing commitment. It is because of friends like \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, that we are able to maintain a fluid agenda as we plan to outpace our current projections. To our new committee members, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, we want to welcome you aboard. We thank you in advance for your fresh new ideas that we know will invigorate our purpose.

To our students and scholarship recipients, **YOU** are our inspiration and the reason for doing what we do here through this program. As adults, we know that to have an education is an **urgent** necessity in overcoming the obstacles of adult life. We also know that there are many other places you’d rather be and still you have chosen to partner with us and invest in the future… **YOUR** future. Now, more than ever, an education is necessary to survive this increasingly competitive, divisive, and mixed up world we live in. Remember that it was Abraham Lincoln who said, “The philosophy of the school room in one generation will be the philosophy of government in the next.” Can you just **IMAGINE** if President Lincoln had even a **PEEK** into what’s going on in this country today??? It is up to **YOU** students to put this opportunity to good use… the world **NEEDS YOU**!

Each one of us is here by the grace of someone else that cared and each one of us knows the bridges and helping hands that reached out to guide us to achieve our goals. Steven Spielberg said, “The delicate balance of mentoring someone is ….in giving them the opportunity to create themselves.” That is what we do here with our Bridge To Success Scholarship fund. To my colleagues and committee members, I look forward to working with all of you to create more opportunities for the youth in our congregation. To our scholars past, present and future, we are proud and enthusiastic to offer a bridge to your future and we look forward to the positive impact you will have in the world of tomorrow.

Thank you all!