**15808, Alan Hansen**

Good Evening Ladies and Gentlemen,

I want to thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to you today for this Veteran’s Day celebration. Veteran’s Day is one of the most important days that we celebrate in this country. It doesn’t celebrate one person, or one organization, or one event in our history. Rather, it celebrates a family of people who joined together to protect and defend our nation from its earliest beginnings and continues today.

The United States of America has always been a proud country, founded upon the many freedoms listed in our Constitution. Those who have served in our military have fought and sacrificed to keep our nation strong and I am honored to stand here today to honor our country and our veterans.

I had the honor of serving this great country for 28 years in the U.S. Navy. I first enlisted in the US Navy June 1979 and after Recruit Training I reported to Basic Submariner School. I served on multiple ships and earned many different qualifications over the years. I participated in Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm, assisting with the installation of many different weapons systems and processes, working my way up to the rank of Master Chief.

During my tenure I dramatically improved retention, Enlisted Surface Warfare qualifications, additionally implementing Information Warfare into the advanced phase of the Inter-Deployment Training Cycle. I expertly supported five Joint Task Force Exercises, two Multi-National Rim-of-the Pacific Exercises, two Fleet Battle Experiments, Numerous Amphibious Ready Group certifications, and two Joint Marine Corps-Navy Kernel Blitz exercises. I proudly served the US Navy in shore assignments that included Naval Technical Training Center, Corry Station Pensacola, Florida in March of 1986 for instructor duty where I was designated as “Master Training Specialist” as was frocked to Chief Petty Officer in September of 1988.

After that I transferred to Navy Recruiting District San Francisco, Navy Recruiting Station Fresno and Merced California where I served as Recruiter and Recruiter-In-Charge (RINC), and was frocked to Senior Chief Petty Officer where I earned awards for recruiting excellence, had 66% of my recruiting force meritoriously advanced to First Class Petty Officer and was runner-up medium station of the year, second only to San Francisco.

In July 2001 I transferred to Washington, District of Columbia and served as a Requirements/Action officer for Surface Electronic Warfare, where I had the privilege of being the only enlisted Requirements Officer on the staff. I was promoted to Master Chief Petty Officer in September of 2003, was transferred to Electronic Warfare Systems Program Office (IWS 2E) within the Program Executive Office for Integrated Warfare Systems (PEO IWS) in June of 2004. I was responsible for Electronic Warfare (EW) requirements and Fleet Liaison. I am honored to have served in the military and to have received many different awards while in the Navy. After I retired from 28 years in the US Navy, I transferred to the Fleet Reserve.

After my military service I’ve had the opportunity to serve as the Surface Electronic Warfare Improvement Program (SEWIP) Block 1B3 Program Manager for General Dynamic Advanced Information Systems (GDAIS). The Surface Electronic Warfare Improvement Program is an evolutionary development block upgrade program installed on aircraft carrier and surface and amphibious warships in the U.S. Navy, with total fleet-wide population of 150 systems in early 2012. These system capabilities provide improved battlefield situational awareness.

From December 2012 to present, I’ve been a Harris Corporation System Engineer working onsite at the Naval Research Laboratory (NRL) in Washington DC supporting system development, integrated logistics product development, curriculum development, developmental testing, element certification, tactics, installation training and installation of the AN/SLQ-59 Electronic Countermeasures Set. AN/SLQ-59 will augment existing Electronic Attack (EA) capability on U.S. Navy ships. The system is being installed on CVNs, DDGs and CGs.

My opportunity to speak to you today came about as a result of a near death experience for me. I was hiking in the Grand Canyon when I had an accident and broke my leg, as well as some other injuries while on vacation. That is a remote area, relatively untraveled during the season I was there. I laid alone for three days and three nights in an area with little to no cell service, but had managed to crawl to where I was found my new friend Sean Lawley.

Sean had been forced to replace his old flip phone unexpectedly just before his trip and decided to purchase an IPhone. When he reached me my phone wasn’t able to get any cell service, so he tried unsuccessfully to find a ranger. When that didn’t work he climbed to a higher point where my phone still didn’t work, but his IPhone was able to get limited service. He made the necessary phone calls, worked with some local climbers and rangers, and stayed with me as paramedics and two helicopter services worked to get me to the hospital. Paramedics said that with my injuries and the time I was out in the elements with my injuries, I could have died. So, Sean will have my enduring gratitude for his acts of selfless courage.

It was through that chance meeting that Sean, and our subsequent conversations, that I learned that I have used this particular facilities’ equipment and systems quite extensively during my tenure in the Navy. As a result, he eventually extended an invitation from his company for me to be the guest speaker for today’s Veterans Day celebration.

I am very proud of my years of service in the U.S. Navy. Every position and rank I held, and every job I was assigned to do provided an important service to my country. When I served in front line positions my work directly affected the safety of me and my shipmates. When I served in land positions such as recruiting I was able to aid people interested in joining the Navy to choose a career they could be proud of for a lifetime. I could also help them to choose what type of work they like to do in the Navy once they completed basic training. Then, after I retired I had the privilege of working with officers and engineers to develop new systems as well as help with the creation of curriculum and training so that when my fellow members of the US Navy would have the necessary equipment and systems to keep them safe during peacetime or wartime.

We have veterans all over this country who have served honorably and much to be proud of. Many of you here today are veterans, having served in one of our branches of the military. Regardless of which branch you served, and what rank you held, you made a lot of sacrifices for our country. Sacrifices of time, talents and personal decisions regarding your families. You gave your country your best while you were on active duty and if you spent some time in the reserves that was also a sacrifice, knowing that you could be called back to active duty should your country need you again.

Not everyone here is a veteran, but I’m quite certain you know one or more veterans. If they haven’t told you specifically, I am here to tell you today that the work you do here is imperative to the safety of our men and women in active military service. You see, when one of our warfighters is on a ship, or in a land position in a war zone, they must be able to trust the equipment and systems they use without question or doubt of their quality or ability to do the job they were designed and built to do. If you have helped to build a weapons system they need to know they will fire on demand and will hit the required target without question. If you built a navigation system they need to know that it will direct them where they need to be, whether it is directing them to their military target or whether it is directing them back to their base or their ship.

I know from working with this company and using equipment you produce that quality is the premier measurement that you use. Each one of you strives to put forth your absolute best for each step of the operation where you work. And I can tell you that our active duty veterans greatly appreciate all that you do for them.

Tonight as we celebrate Veterans Day let us all remember the great sacrifices that veterans have given to the United States since its very beginnings. Let us remember the commitment of all our veterans, men and women, whether they serve in the Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines, and Coast Guard, for their faithful service. Let us celebrate their service, and commemorate their dedication to this great country.

 I want to thank you again for allowing me to speak to you tonight. It is always an honor to celebrate what veterans all over the country have done to protect and defend this great nation, and that includes each and every one of you.