**MOTIVATIONAL SPEECH**

**FOR**

**DR. KIRAN PATEL**

Hello everyone, and thank you for joining me for this long anticipated moment. (**Acknowledge any dignitaries present**). Although I am grateful for all of you being present today to witness this event, I would like to extend a special acknowledgement to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. As with anything worth doing, this project has had a colorful history filled with vision, planning, doubt, and reinvention. It has endured several phases and in many ways... probably as many ways as there are grains of sand on this beach, it has had myriad incarnations. After all, it wasn't that long ago that we were referring to this very spot as the "world's biggest parking lot" ... (**Say this with a deadpan face and wait for the laugh**) but as I have discovered throughout my life, when creating and building one's dream, there is a process that has to be respected. When broken down to the simplest terms, that process can be summed up in three simple words....**Be** - or create and come up with an idea... **Do** - what is needed to bring the vision to life, and **Have** - acknowledge the completion of the fruits of hard earned efforts. Somehow we endured through the first two phases of the process and today we celebrate our accomplishment.... for a short while... before we come up with new ideas and continue the cycle of creation, action, and achievement once again.

The beautiful and legendary actress, Audrey Hepburn, has been credited with saying, "Nothing is impossible. The word itself says, 'I'm possible'!" I may not be as pretty as Ms. Hepburn was (**Wait for the laugh**), but I admire her determination and I completely agree. As with most worthwhile and enduring concepts and projects, there will be supporters and there will be skeptics. Those that doubt serve a tremendous service in this world. They hold us to our word, they keep us "on purpose," and they provide a mirror to assess progress and determination. **NOTHING** worthwhile is created or completed without consideration. Today we stand on the site of affirmation... of **POSSIBILITY**. J.K Rowling, the author of the Harry Potter books, is no stranger to doubt, despair, and resilience. Her tremendous success is so much sweeter knowing how far she's traveled on her path and knowing how her determination didn't abandon her. She has taught us, "It is impossible to live without failing at something, unless you live so cautiously that you might as well not have lived at all, in which case you have failed by default."

It's been said that one man's trash is another man's treasure, and although there are places in this country that might surely have a logistics and space problem, my team and I would have never been satisfied with maintaining the status quo.... of stopping at our first achievement... yes- that **HUGE** parking lot (**Wait for the laugh**). There was work to do, people to employ, and a vision to be realized. We all have dreams. Success is measured in action and completion. Goals involving the benefit of thousands of people are my favorite.

As I think of how to describe what it feels like to embrace a vision for the betterment of my community, I am reminded of others that have used their vision to support and improve the lives and future of others. As many of you know, I was born in Africa and I am of Indian descent. I studied in Europe and I've made my home here in Florida. As a genuine "citizen of the world," I have seen a lot in my life. I know the non-negotiable importance of compassion, consideration, and respect for all people. I also know the fundamental necessity of nurturing human dignity through education, and so as I dedicate my efforts to improving health care, I also devote my resources to seeing that people have the wherewithal to learn and to be able to self sustain and so I've dedicated my life to doing what I can to share those goals. In that regard, I would like to tell you of an amazing story I heard of Mrs. Lopez, a principal in a school in NY, and her extraordinary impact on her world.

It started with a picture of a young boy standing on the street, in a rough neighborhood in Brooklyn. He was asked a question by a man named Brandon Stanton, the creator of the Internet site, Humans Of New York. "Who has influenced you the most in your life?" His answer was quick and simple. "Mrs. Lopez." She is the leader of a school called Mott Hall Bridges Academy. The vast majority of the students are marginalized, living below poverty levels, with otherwise little to no chance to conquer their circumstances and make something of themselves, but Mrs. Lopez finds that reality unacceptable. And even though she is painfully aware of the issues and challenges that face the community... issues like post traumatic stress disorder, fears of abandonment, and disproportionately high rates of HIV and AIDS, she insists on giving and receiving respect for all of her scholars. One of her projects is to select a student each year to win a trip to Harvard in order to hold a vision and a goal for what MIGHT be. She gives her scholars a taste of possibility. Because... and in spite of the overwhelming struggles she has faced to sustain her vision, she has inspired the kids in her school. Because one young boy, Vidal, was touched and motivated by her passion, a light was focused on this school, these kids, and this community. Thanks to contributions of over one million dollars, Mott Hall Bridges Academy now has established a permanent college and scholarship fund. There is no stopping a person with determination and the will to support a community and a cause.

And here we are, at the opening of this beautiful resort that gave \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ jobs (**Give the number**) to people in the Clearwater area, that helped to build and support a growing infrastructure and economic expansion, that encourages relaxation and regeneration, and that.... yes.... still has ample parking!! (**Wait for the laugh**).

To those of you that may have wondered and doubted, here we are... to those of you that may have seen problems within the possibility ... here we are... again... to those of you that thought it couldn't be done... I may have had moments of doubt myself but I never lost sight of the ultimate goal. India is the country of my origin. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (**Please name the country of your birth in Africa)** is the country of my birth, and I am proud to say that my country of **action** is right here, in the United States. I have built businesses in this area with the goal of sharing my gifts with my neighbors and I don't forget for one day that I am so blessed to live the American dream. That dream resides within all of us and if there is one message that I would want to share with you is that **each one of you** has the same substance required to dream and to build that dream into reality.

The opening of this hotel heralds a new era in Clearwater, and I intend for this to inspire all of us to live fulfilling, healthy, involved, and engaged lives. With every opportunity comes issues, but it is my intention for you to understand that perspective influences one's point of view. While for what seemed to be eternity some saw only a massive empty lot, others maintained the goal and here we are. (**If you want to make a joke you can say**), I don't know about you, but I for one can certainly use a massage (**or name one of the spa or guest amenities**) right about now!! May the Wyndham Grand Clearwater Beach be a place of renewal, celebration, and collaboration for all of us! Thank you all!