**RETIREMENT SPEECH**

**FOR**

**DAYNA MCGILL**

Hello everyone... it’s an honor and a privilege to take a little trip back in time to highlight the “Middle Power Years” in the “Era of Rhonda.” I came to this company in 1991 ... as a star struck high school grad... I’m pretty sure the ink on my diploma was still wet when I first walked into USAA.... I entered a strange new land but I was eager to make my mark in the wonderful world of subrogation... as a file clerk. I remember everything seemed new and strange but then... like a **bolt from the blue**... I caught glimpses of Rhonda Noland in her power suits, and I was **done**.... I ask... is there anyone among us who might be able to “rock a shoulder pad” quite like this woman? I remember so clearly... in those early days, I would deliver files and mail to and from her desk, and as I heard her interact with colleagues and clients, it was so clear, even to **ME**, that this was a woman who exuded confidence and competence. I would see her periodically in the cafeteria, and she was always in command... when she talked, people listened. She was... and **IS**... an incredible roll model to emulate, and I am thankful for the opportunity to **silently STALK**... I mean **OBSERVE**... (**Wait for the laugh**) a **REAL PRO** in action. As the years progressed and the fashions changed, Rhonda continued to express her self confidence and professional command of her duties through her sartorial presentation. The celebrity stylist, Rachel Zoe, once said, “Style is a way to say who you are without having to speak.” Rhonda **clearly** got that memo... I wonder if I delivered it??? (**Wait for the laugh**)

People like Rhonda truly are role models, and neophytes, like I was back then, are so lucky to have those fine examples to guide us in order to be able to set goals and dream about a bigger, grander, more ambitious future. Although I had left the company in 1995, I returned in ‘98... and wouldn’t you know??? On my **FIRST** day in NEO class... there was Rhonda.... leading the session, talking about pride and core values, and, of course, looking like **A MILLION BUCKS**!! My interest was refreshed... I had found my silent mentor, and I **KNEW** that when I “grew up,” I wanted to have a career path like Rhonda’s... and the wardrobe wouldn’t hurt either!! (**Wait for the laugh**). I was up for the challenge and threw down the gauntlet of style... Rhonda’s style... to emulate. It was back to “**silent stalking**...” I mean researching Rhonda’s career path to look for hints and guidance, and sure enough, I enrolled in Eckerd, completed similar courses, and made my way to Dillard’s power suit section. I began to dress for the job I wanted... à la Rhonda. **It worked!**! Looking back, I realize that responsibility and the drive to advance, while starting as a seed from within, is definitely encouraged by having real live examples to follow, and for that, I am very thankful to have had Rhonda as MY example.

I clearly remember the first time I traveled for the company it was in 2000, eighteen years ago... I was going to a training seminar in Norfolk... and guess who was at the airport with me?? YUP!! Rhonda! I approached her on the plane... we had a wonderful conversation, and at the conference, I was emboldened to introduce **BOTH** of us by name. That was the “**Rhonda Effect**” at work!! (**Turn to Rhonda and say**) Rhonda, I don’t know if you’re aware of the impact you’ve had over so many of us throughout your amazing, fruitful career. I want to thank you for being a powerful role model... one that casts a positive shadow to inspire others. It is a privilege to honor you today, and I will never forget how, by being your authentic, professional self, I discovered my career... and one other thing... I apologize if you ever thought I really **WAS** stalking you...it was all done with the purest of intentions.... Thank you for all you’ve done for all of us.

To me, the name **RHONDA** is an acronym for all you’ve represented over the years:

(**I am giving you a choice of words for each letter.. the alternates will be in parentheses**)

* **R... RARE** (REASSURING, RESILIENT)
* **H... HONORABLE** (HAPPENING, HARDWORKING,
* **O... ORIGINAL** (OPTIMISTIC)
* **N... NATTY** (NICE, NATURAL, NATURAL LEADER, NOTABLE)
* **D... DYNAMIC** ( DETERMINED, DAUNTLESS, DIPLOMATIC, DAZZLING)
* **A... ADMIRABLE** (AMIABLE, ADAPTABLE, AMBITIOUS)

My only regret is that your name doesn’t have more letters... C for caring, P for professional, I for Icon, S for Style. I want to express my most sincere gratitude for your commitment to showing the world what a genuine leader looks like.... and **does**... You’ve left an indelible impression on USAA and all I can say is **THANK YOU.**.. I wish you great success and much happiness as you embark on your next exciting adventure. I know we will miss you!! Thank you!!