**HOLIDAY PARTY SPEECH**

**FOR**

**PATRICIA CAIRO**

Hello everyone and welcome to this year’s holiday celebration for Meyer, Suozzi, English and Klein. As tends to be the case at the end of each year at holiday time, as we prepare for celebration, we naturally look back, acknowledge the events, challenges, and opportunities that we faced.... and conquered, and plot our future course, freshly pledged to welcome the New Year with intelligence, enthusiasm, tenacity, and a healthy degree of camaraderie. Each one of us is here out of pure intention and commitment to the excellence and quality upon which this firm has built its reputation, and although each year we experience twists and turns in our professional and personal lives, our combined dedication remains a beacon in our practice, our community and in the world of jurisprudence.

It’s been said that the tests we face in life are our greatest teachers. If that’s true, then I think we can agree that we’ve had the “good fortune” this year to have been exposed to, endured, and taught by, some extraordinary challenges. (**If possible, briefly state, In two or three sentences the major issues faced in the past year**) In an already difficult professional climate, we found ourselves confronted by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. I want to acknowledge all of you for weathering those storms as a **team** and for working together with cooperation and ingenuity as we maintained our core ideals of strength, resourcefulness, and tenacity in the face of adversity. As attorneys, administrators, and those that support us to advocate for justice and equity in so many areas of personal and professional well-being, it’s gratifying to know and quantify the relentless support we have here at MSEK. (**If you want to make a little joke you can say**) Our success and effectiveness as attorneys depends not only on attaining and accessing our stellar collective education and impeccable professional credentials, it also relies on the strategic initiatives we so carefully assess.... as well as one simple, genuine, irrefutable characteristic, and that’s the ability to access and rely on our collective powers of observation and **common sense**. Years ago, I remember hearing a comedian.... actually, he was known for being quite deadpan.... but his insights were pithy. One time, as he was doing his stand up routine.... he said, “I recently broke a mirror. I got **seven** years bad luck.... but the good news is my lawyer thinks he can get me **five**...” (**Wait for the laugh**).

Throughout the fifty-eight year history of Meyers, Suozzi, English and Klein, this firm has built an unparalleled reputation within the branches of local, state, and federal government, labor, and really any and every arena that has required and demanded, quite simply, the **best**. Any adversity that we have faced, whether individually or as a collective, has made us stronger, more aware, and more aptly prepared to confront the challenges inherent in the practice of law and all that entails, in order to sustain our tenure and professional recognition.... and while I know that all of you are aware of the importance of your contribution to this firm, I also want you to know that **I KNOW** that acknowledgement, no matter how rare or effusive, is always appreciated. I don’t know of anyone that has attained a rank senior to expressions of appreciation, so with that, I want each and every one of you to know that you are **valued**.... that your dedication and support matters, and that, at the end of the day, from the executive offices to reception desk at the front door of each office and branch.... and **beyond**... that you matter. Your contribution, your enthusiasm, your eye for detail, your vigilance, is what has built and sustained MSEK.... and while you have accepted the mantle and mandate, and carry it from previous generations of attorneys and partners upon whose shoulders you stand, and upon whose wisdom you build, it is **YOUR** contribution and common sense that continue to strengthen the foundation of this enterprise well into the future. It is with profound gratitude that I speak for all of us when I express a simple, but universal “**THANK YOU**.”

With that appreciation, and with the knowledge that time and tenure both evolve and **revolve**, I would like to take a few moments to recognize two very special people, without whom the light of Meyer, Suozzi, English, and Klein would have been considerably less bright. Two of the beacons of this firm are retiring and it is my privilege to acknowledge them now.

Lois Carter Schlissel has been a distinguished member of MSEK for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ years. As Managing Attorney from 2002 to 2017, Board Chair, and member of this firm’s Management Committee, Lois has been an undisputed leader and guiding light. She has headed our Employment Law practice and has been an active and indispensable member of our Commercial Litigation and Dispute Resolution department. Lois’ work in all areas of employment law have garnered distinguished recognition within this firm and well beyond our offices. Her Curriculum Vitae is a testimony to her incredible dedication and commitment to justice and compliance for all in the field of employment. With too many accolades and prestigious honors and recognitions to mention, suffice it to say that Lois Carter Schlissel has been, is, and always will be, a treasure to all in the legal arena, and especially to all of us at MSEK. I know that from my perspective, every day, personally and professionally, I reference the incredible work and accomplishments of this force and I am thankful to have the opportunity to continue the management of this firm that she so astutely handled. Lois, while your contribution to Meyer, Suozzi, English, and Klein is indelible and sealed within our history, and while I am sure that everyone here will always feel and reference the positive impact you’ve had, we want to make sure that **you** don’t forget **us**.... as a token of our gratitude and esteem, we’d like to present you with this\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Please accept this with the knowledge that your tenure has, and always will, inspire us to greater levels of achievement. Thank you.

Richard Winsten has guided, inspired, supported, and contributed his intelligence, ingenuity, and determination for well over a generation. As Co-Chair of our Government Relations Practice, Richard’s impact and legacy will stay with us. While he began as an associate in 1987, it was in 1993 that he became a full fledged member of our team. His significant and strategic relationships with members of the New York State Legislature, government agencies, and various labor boards, unions, and counsels, has insured his place as a much respected advisor and advocate in many fields of government. Richard has also been a registered New York State Lobbyist since 1978. Known as an effective and respected voice for all workers, he has garnered accolades from governing agencies. In 2012, he was honored by the New York Committee for OSHA for his thirty five years of activism. He has consistently provided a cohesive, impactful counsel to those that really needed his guidance... the workers that keep this community, region, and state, functioning. He has consistently been a vocal and respected protagonist throughout New York State as a lobbyist advocating for the rights of all workers. Richard, your contributions to the professional well being of others has had a geometric effect. We would like to present you with this \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as an acknowledgement of all of your hard work and service and for the inspiration you have consistently provided to those in the law community and especially to us here at MSEK. We extend our most sincere gratitude and wish you only the best in the next phase of your life and career. Thank you.

I want all of you to know that we, here at Meyer, Suozzi, English, and Klein are profoundly aware that our greatest asset.... our most valuable entity... our greatest resource for future success, is our TEAM. We have sustained unprecedented challenges in the past year and we have prevailed through mutual cooperation and support. Going forward, we have that strength upon which to build. There is an expression I have heard some people use.... “Adapt or die.” Personally and professionally, to me, only the first option has merit. Together we will continue the important work of this firm and we will all be stronger, more cohesive, and more effective as we go forth and face the challenges and opportunities that the future will present to us. There is just so much that we can anticipate and predict.... the rest will take fortitude, common sense, intelligence, and a commitment to the mutual success of our company and all of us. I look forward to facing and accepting a bright, challenging, inspiring future with all of you. Thank you all!