**CONFERENCE SPEECH**

**FOR**

**ANTONIO FORTE JR.**

Hello everyone... I am Antonio Forte Jr, and I am honored to have the opportunity to stand before all of you who are such excellent examples of character and leadership within the United States Post Office. Through my involvement in our organization, I’ve learned, I’ve grown, and I have served to the best of my ability. I believe it was Albert Einstein who said, “Strive not to be a success, but rather to be of value.” Throughout my career within the post office, and even before, I have done my best to keep an open mind, pay attention, exercise common sense and to accrue a “**toolkit**” of knowledge and experience to inform my work and improve my performance.

Each action we take serves as a teacher, and I have been fortunate to have had many teachers and learned valuable lessons throughout my professional life. With almost six years of management experience outside the post office, those lessons have been “accruing interest!” I started last February as a MHA, mail handler assistant at the MPA. I was then moved to 204B, acting supervisor status in July of 2018 and supervised APBS#1. In the next year I came to manage both APBS, SWYB, both P1 and P2 inbound and outbound docks, Indiana and Mixed States manual, then recently installed USS. I now work at the Indianapolis PD&C in downtown Indianapolis. (**If you want to make a joke, you can say**) I think it’s clear to say that being involved in the USPS has been a “**moving experience**.” (**And wait for the laugh**).

I am proud to be a team player and find that the more I challenge myself personally, the more my intention to serve becomes apparent. I have always believed in doing whatever has been asked of me and I've done my best to exceed the expectations of my peers and those that lead. I consider myself a born leader but know that in order to lead, a person must understand the importance of being a team player as well. There is value in every vantage point on the chain of command. It is an honor to serve and to learn from, management, peers and the union as well. To me, every day is a new learning experience and I look forward to facing and meeting each challenge presented.

I want to believe that I am “**allergic**” to failure. That concept is not in my wheelhouse. If we can accept that errors we make are our best teachers, and we do what is necessary to correct our mistakes and take responsibility for our actions, failure doesn’t exist. As I have made my way professionally through this organization, I have met some great people... those who have tenure and more well rounded experience are preparing for retirement, and I know that a prime concern is that the post office must be left in good hands. I want to say that I have been observing the actions and expertise of those that precede me, and as I continue to watch, learn, and strive to give my best, it is my intention to grasp the baton when it is passed to me, and to continue the service that our communities require... and deserve. Thank you.