**HOLIDAY SPEECH**

**FOR**

**ANDREW BROOKS**

Hello everyone…. To all employees, it’s great to see you. To spouses, partners, and plus ones, thank you for joining us. If you’re here, you clearly make a difference to your significant others on our team. I want to acknowledge you for your encouragement and support of our company’s most valued asset… its employees.

Here we are again… whether we like it or not, the holidays are upon us, and even if it’s just for a little bit, we get to celebrate together. We all have so much to deal with in our respective lives…work, family, and the general challenges we face, but today we’re gathered to fill our plates with a slightly different kind of nourishment. While we work with each other every day and see each other, sometimes more than we see our own families, today is a little different. This gathering gives us a chance to view ourselves and each other in different lights, encouraging different insights and expectations… like who will bring the loudest laughter? … which one of you mingled the most?? …. and of course, there’s the part in which I get to express my gratitude… to all of you. While some of you may think, “Ugh… what will he say **NOW?**” I assure you, it’s all good. There is a poem by Lord Byron that contains the line, “I am part of all that I have met.” Although I may not say this throughout the year, I want you to know, that I am proud and thankful to have all of you as a part of me, here at Waiward.

I think we’ve realized, especially in the past couple of years, that life can be unpredictable… and that I can be a **MASTER** of **understatement** (**Wait for the laugh**). On so many levels, the “hits” kept coming. And those were not necessarily the kind you find on the Billboard Top 100 Songs… there were serious and very real threats to the ultimate health and survival of this company. But you know what? When backed into a metaphorical corner, you figure it out. **WE** figure it out… and we learn that some of life’s greatest lessons are born from adversity. And through adversity comes realization, connection, consideration, and **action**. If sometimes you see me standing by the window in my office, back to the door, seemingly gazing at nothing, I’m **not**. I look out the window at the cars in the parking lot and I don’t just see cars. I see that the cars represent people… loyal employees who have dedicated their considerable time and effort and tenure into this mutual cause… this company. Every car I see represents responsibility to work, devotion to family, and dedication to personal survival. Every car I see reminds me how critical it is to maintain Waiward in a way that keeps us all going, serves our clients and commitments, and acts to secure our mutual professional future. I take my job and my responsibilities very seriously. I want you to know that, and I want you to know that we’ve gotten through the “muck” of the past year and the future is bright…. Some of you may wonder, “What if it happens again?” Let me tell you this…. When I look for guidance, I think of what inspires me. I look to people and institutions with some sort of proven track record, and that brings me motivation. I found a few pearls of wisdom from the US Navy Seals… “The only easy day was **yesterday**”…”Have a shared sense of purpose.” … “All in. All the time.” That last one expresses how I feel about this company and the genuine gratitude I have for all of you. While we make our business transforming resources, the greatest natural resource we have is **you**. Each one of you is unique and is a critical part of Waiward Industrial, and I am here for all of you.

I heard it be said, “The only way a person can defy time is to leave behind buildings that will not die.” I want to emphasize that. What you do here… what **WE** do is important. The fruits of our efforts will leave a mark on this planet and you are a valued, integral part of that legacy.

With each gesture, each project, each new idea that comes to fruition, there is a possibility to fail, yet there’s a greater opportunity to learn, grow, and succeed. It’s how we achieve mastery. Progress comes in many forms and sometimes it might not seem viable, but I believe, with the combined strength and talent of this team, anything is possible. US President Theodore Roosevelt said, “Believe you can and you’re halfway there.” For what it’s worth, **I** **BELIEVE** you **CAN**… and I’m right there with you. Here’s to a wonderful holiday and may we all have an incredible, successful, insightful New Year! Thank you!