***From: EZ Speechwriters***

To: ***Patty,***

Thank you for the opportunity to earn your business.

Please note:

Normal black ink font color is your speech.

Purple ink font color, speechwriter’s notes to you.

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I suggest you practice your speech three times prior to the event, the third time the day of. I suggest you do this alone, or with someone who is in sync with your project. Practice standing. Make any notes you want between the paragraphs. You might want to make a copy for your notes while practicing, then another for The Speedway Club.

After you are introduced and step to the podium, pause for a moment or two, for the room to quiet down, wait, no hurry, they will focus on you.

Speak slowly, all too often we rush and do not even realize that we are speaking in *‘fast-forward’*.

Maintain your posture, do not bend over into your notes/written speech. Bring the microphone to you, do not bend into it. Do not tap it, just begin. If it needs adjustment, adjust. If there is scratchy feedback, push it away from your face just a bit. Normally the top portion rotates on a ball, and the height adjuster is a screw or ring that is located midway or at the top of the vertical pole. Make eye contact as best you can. You can also pick a point just behind the farthest audience members or occupied dining tables and focus on that point. It can be a picture on the back wall, a door, a fire extinguisher, anything just beyond the farthest person in the room.

 Then begin:

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“Thank you for that warm reception, thank you. What a wonderful evening The Lone Star Awards Leadership Celebration is for our industry, and for the seventeen, (?), award recipients. A note of special thanks to Linda for your kind words, (and if you wish to share that funny story then do). Thanks too for the video montage along with those accompanying caring remarks. I am especially appreciative for the members of my family, special guests, and board members also being with us this evening. Look in their general direction in the dining room.

 Before I begin my brief, yes it will be brief, conversation with you, I must share a moment about when I arrived here earlier.

Texas Motor Speedway is a big venue as most of us have come to learn. And I must have zigged when I should have zagged as I entered the entire complex. I got turned around for just for a moment, and before I knew it, I was going 100 miles an hour in a circle, ……and drivers wearing really cool helmets were passing me low and on the inside. I jammed on my brakes, (I can’t imagine why that seemed to really upset a few who were very close behind me), and thankfully I then saw something that looked like an exit lane. So down that lane I went and ended up stopped in something called the pit. Well, talk about Texas hospitality, when I came to a stop, four guys put new tires on my car and another filled my gas tank, all in 9 seconds. I went to hand one of them my debit card, but instead he slammed his hand on my roof and yelled: **“GO”.**

 Laughter, then pause.

I assume this respected position of AATC President, with humility and dedication. I take this new challenge both professionally and personally. Professionally to maintain and broaden the direction of the AATC, and personally with respect to the confidence you are vesting in me.

 Pause.

Health concerns have shuttered so much in our world these past two years, yet through it all our hearts and minds have remained open. Open to creativity in serving our association, open to new ideas that benefit our business models, and most importantly open to every single human being who enters our literal and virtual doors. While we have implemented measures to ensure our wellbeing, we have not shied away from our mission: Educate, Advocate, Network, and Inspire. We are about people, living, breathing, women, men, and children. And nothing will deter the AATC from serving and providing a wholesome, productive environment for each and every one.

 **“WILL YOU TAKE AN ADVENTURE,………….?**

 **……………….. WILL YOU DANCE WTH ME?”**

I owe this metaphor, dance with me, to the University of Michigan’s, Robert Sellers, their chief diversity officer. His metaphor begins as **diversity**, that being all individuals invited to the dance, then **equity** when all those individuals may in fact have the opportunity, to dance. Then **inclusion** is when each has a voice in what songs are played. The National Apartment Association has for the last four years been at the forefront of exploring and developing the concept of diversity, equity, and inclusion. And I am excited to tell you this evening, that AATC, from this moment on in 2022, will embark on our own framework for diversity, equity, and inclusion. So,……… Will You Dance With Me?

This evening, I am going to take our Apartment Association of Tarrant County acronym, AATC, and transform it into **A**DVOCATING **A**CCEPTANCE **T**HROUGH **C**OMMUNITY.

 Who are we if we are not representative of our community? Our community is a tapestry of individual expressions, hopes, dreams, and determination. Our community is a thesaurus of words layered together to form an inspirational poem. My goal is to allow our community to grow. We must never assume. We must live and work by the examples we set. We should not expect the morality that builds diversity, equity, and inclusion to be handed to us from the person sitting to our left, or to our right this evening. Understanding and implementing diversity, equity, and inclusion begins with the image we see when the morning shower mist evaporates off of the vanity mirror. **Diversity** is opening our doors to everyone otherwise qualified: **Equity** is when we give them exposure to all areas of our businesses while simultaneously encouraging their suggestions. And the **inclusion** is adopting one of their suggestions and providing them with the resources to personally implement that new idea or policy. And all of that is done with a tone of acceptance and compassion. That is what brings humans together, when we pull out the chair for someone and invite them to our table, which then becomes their table. Good intentions, strength of character, and simply doing the right thing, can and will ripple far and wide, and in many instances come full circle giving us all an encouraging nudge

The board, staff, and myself, are charged with significant responsibilities. To structure and continue a framework that assists our members to remain solvent, so they may provide their customers, clients, tenants, lessees, and renters, with a quality product. A product that is tailored to meet their needs and their wants. There is no better place than home, and our members do their very best to provide that safe and secure feeling of home. From one side of our options to the other, people need and want to feel they are in an environment of secure and comfortable surroundings. And we do that both objectively with our residences, and subjectively with our interactions with customers, vendors, suppliers, subcontractors, and our employees. And those efforts are endorsed by our strong partners, the American Red Cross, the Union Gospel Mission, and the recent addition of Toys for Tots. It begins with and ends with human relations. Relations that are professional, courteous, comprehensive, and empathetic. And what sets us apart is the baseline of excellence we have demanded of ourselves, and to ensure that baseline sustains our reputation and our ability to improve. We must not be influenced by mediocrity. We will take the high road, and stay on course, with people being our priority, for **we,……are people,…too.** Character is silent, yet speaks volumes, so won’t you join me in turning up that volume and **DANCE WITH ME?**

 pause

As a favor before we all leave, on a lighter note. As many of you know, we sold our building in 2021,……….. Does anyone have an available 3/2, maybe 8,000 square feet? We promise not to pirate our neighbor’s WI-FI……..not to graze our livestock on the common green areas, park our uncle’s motorhome for five weeks in a guest space, and we’ll try our best not to give the pizza delivery guy the gate code.

 Short laughter, pause

I will conclude with these thoughts, my thoughts, of which I share and offer to you. I will learn from my predecessors, I will listen to you, truly listen, and I will be inspired by those who work to improve human rights by enhancing individual dignity.

As we leave today, be careful, be alert, and get to your destinations safely.

……………..and oh by the way, on your way out you might check to see if those guys are still giving away free new tires and gas?

 Goodnight everyone.