**Bon Voyage**

 **Mike Nekahi**

Hello EVERYONE, welcome,..welcome.

If ever there was the definition of ‘bitter-sweet’, then this is the occasion.

In life we always want the best for our families and friends. And in doing so we want them near. But, if they have an opportunity of a lifetime, and that means they won’t be close by, that brings into play the term; ‘bitter-sweet’, for this afternoon’s Bon Voyage..

Before I make any comments, I want to acknowledge our hosts and good friends, Tim and Lauren for inviting us into their beautiful home for this gathering. Tim and Lauren, along with Colin, Gale, Bereq, and Becky, orchestrated and planned this event, and all of us thank you for your efforts. And to Mr. Brandon Thompson, a very good friend, and one heck of an entertainer when it comes to ‘***Rocking the House’*** with his **DJ-**ing talent and skills. Lauren,…..,when Brandon cranks it up, I hope your neighbors don’t have any naps planned for this afternoon. **(laughter).**

Khasha, Rachel,….for over two decades we have been friends, through our educations, work relationships, social gatherings, parenting, and more. And each and every day, through work or play, we always knew you were close by. And Khasha, twenty-two years we have been partners, being involved in four enterprises. Our successes, our providing for our families, were a collaboration between us, and I can say that without you we would not have had the good fortune that we have experienced. Now that you’re leaving for an adventure, a journey, there will be a void in our lives and in our hearts. And, Cyrus and Daryus, you have an exciting time ahead for both of you. New places to see, new places to explore, and new ‘stuff’ to learn in and out of school. And who knows Cyrus, maybe a new young lady friend too !! **(laughter**)

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Matt and Diane,….friends for eighteen years, and the past eight years enjoying holidays, birthdays, even Europe together. Now off you go with Beckett and Remy on a western adventure. Across the beautiful, and sometimes **wild west**. While Seattle is a city without equals, the American West is one of the most beautiful places on earth. You will see vistas where the mountains are literally one hundred miles away on the horizon, yet they appear as close as across the street. And Yellowstone, Glacier, and the Grand Titans, will take your breath away. But remember, there is now a speed limit in Montana, and when you come up to wolves, bison, and bears, it won’t be Disney World, it will be the real deal. **(laughter).**

All of us here today, hope that all eight of you experience joy and excitement as you begin new chapters in your lives. We hope it is fulfilling, adventurous, educational, and rewarding. We know you’ll learn from the places you go and the new people you meet. And as your close friends, we know that the folks you will meet, will learn many good things from you. So, **to you**, **to your children**, may your days and nights **be filled with good** **health**, **good fortune**, and **safe travels**. We love you **like family**, **you are family**,…and as the commercial on TV says; **“WE’LL LEAVE THE** **PORCH LIGHT ON’**.

**But,** just in case either or all of you end up in a **warm** climate, and that climate **just happens** to be the south pacific, then let me conclude by saying; **“a Hui Ho”,** which is Hawaiian for: *‘until we meet again’*

**(Mike, the expression ‘a Hui Ho’, is phonetically pronounced;**

**‘ah-hooey-hoe’).**

Please enjoy the rest of the party everyone and thank you for joining us in this *Bon Voyage.*