**Shine On!**

2012

Allow me to welcome you once again and thank each and every one of you for being here this evening. Personally, I have anticipated this evening since February of 2011, when we concluded our first STAR Banquet for Health Systems, themed “STAR Struck”.

This year, we proudly come together again to: enjoy a wonderful meal, be entertained and most importantly, have a great time honoring you, the STARs of the Year throughout the state of Missouri.

Each winner tonight deserves the highest admiration and congratulations for their accomplishment in winning STAR of the Year. Will you join me in congratulating our STARs once again?

(Applause)

Let’s think together, for a moment, about stars. Not the stars you see on TV, but the stars in the sky. I did a little research to discover what I might want to talk to you about this evening. As you know, people have been studying stars for thousands of years. People star watch, star gaze and some have made a life-long career of study on stars. Now to be honest, I didn’t retain a whole lot about astronomy, so this speech is going to head in a different direction.

I can tell you, however, what I *did* gather from what I read about star facts. Stars burn for a very, very long time. Scientists believe stars can burn for up to billions of years. Did you know that the stars we see this evening are actually stars that burned years and years ago? Now, what am I taking from this?

As a superior team player, appreciated and respected, better known to us as a “STAR”, you shine. But you may not realize the impact of your glow. You see, what you do today, and what you have done in the past, may impact people in the years to come.

People don’t always remember the words you say. I don’t think anyone will be able to recite this speech after this banquet. (And maybe that is a good thing!) But people WILL remember how you make them feel.

The care you have given to your residents, the attention and thoughtfulness you have shown to their family members, the consideration you have presented to your fellow employees, creates an impression on them that they will never forget. To the world you may be just one person, but to one person, you just may be the world.

Residents may pass away; they may be transferred to another location. You might lose contact with their family members and not see them every day as you once did. Fellow employees may begin work elsewhere. But your influence, your effect, your impact, continues to shine, far beyond what you are aware.

2012 STARS, listen carefully. It doesn’t end here. When you leave this room tonight with your hard earned bonus in hand, and your title awarded, you’re not done. Family, friends, supervisors and coworkers will continue to look to you to be “a cut above”. Because you see, just like a star in the sky, we recognize that the fuel that ignites your inner being is within YOU, and I am here tonight to encourage you.

As a STAR,

When you care, you shine. When you work, you shine.

Because of who you are, you shine.

And for this reason, I challenge you tonight to SHINE ON!