

Thank you Tara for the very generous introduction.

Thank you for the Honor of the “Spirit of Life” Award. It is a special honor to share this event and this stage with the Capo family. They exhibit the very best in terms of industry leadership and human courage in the face of adversity. Carlos, I could not be more pleased that you and your family are here with me tonight.

Events like this isolate a person, a family or a company – but we do not walk this earth alone. We are part of many circles or communities – and each has contributed to shaping us.

In the largest circle there is the reality of God, a reality that shapes our very existence and shapes our values and our possibilities. I am thankful that God has given me the privilege of living in a free country, has given me gifts and opportunities that can hopefully be used to make this world just a little bit better.

I am also part of a society and culture that includes the great nation that hosts us tonight. A society that has placed value on freedom, on the dignity of each person and that has encouraged generosity to others. We are all a product and beneficiary of this society.

We are all part of an industry that is based on relationships. We produce a product that creates a physical but also emotional home for our customers. Like you, I have been shaped by these relationships and the modeling of many of our leaders. Thank you.

I am also part of a company with a heritage, a present reality and a future that will be shaped by many of the young people sitting at Palliser tables. Thank you for your loyalty, your creativity, your dedication to quality and service but most of all for your friendship. Would everyone from Palliser please stand up!

A special thank you to Roger Friesen who has been a friend and business partner for two decades. Roger – you carried many of the responsibilities for the success of this evening – thank you for the passionate way you take on every challenge!

Finally, I am part of a family. I owe a great debt to my father who took the risk of a refugee and immigrant to enter an industry he knew nothing about. His values still pervade the company and they are essential to our success. I also owe an immeasurable debt to a mother who shaped my dreams and goals through the example of her personal journey.

Several of my siblings, family business partners and nephews are here tonight. Thank you for being such an important part of my life. I especially acknowledge my brother Dave and his wife Esther – Dave is my major business partner.

And then, I have my own personal family – the people who make life especially rewarding. You met Tara. Thank you Tara – I am always proud of you. Allow me to introduce her husband Peter Tielmann- known to many of you as the inspiration behind EQ3.

We have two daughters - my other son-on-law, Dan Nussbaum, is here tonight. Dan is manager of our very successful program in Thailand and we welcome you here tonight. However, I do miss my other daughter Shanti who is in Bangkok with our two lovely grandsons Leo and Sachin.

Finally, I could not have navigated my somewhat crazy life without the most supportive and wonderful partner in the world – Leona. Thank you Lee for being a great partner and my best friend.

One of my favourite poems is from Lord Tennyson:

*I am a part of all that I have met  
And all experience is an arch  
Wherethrough gleams that untraveled world  
Whose margin fades forever and forever as I move...*

We are all part of all that we have met – and we always have the opportunity to pass through new arches of opportunity. Sometimes the opportunities are close to home and sometimes they are in distant places.

Our industry interacts with people at various levels.

- We help to create homes that give comfort and pride
- As part of what we do - we create jobs that offer dignity
- Collectively we create successful communities
- This industry has given financial freedom to many in this room. Financial freedom allows us the opportunity to give back. We can give back to our community, our society and the larger world. We can choose where we give back – but if we have been given so much we also need to take seriously the obligation and opportunity to give back.
- You can choose how and where to give back –but please give back!

I would disappoint some of you if I failed to make at least some observations about the industry. I will limit myself to two simple subjects – Markets and Globalization.

Every survey I have ever read indicates that everyone wants fewer not more markets – but we are now supporting an additional market. Every market has its merits and deserves to stand or fall on those merits.

I simply wish to remind all of us that we spend well over 200 million annually as an industry to be in High Point. Whenever we add markets we do not increase the volume of retail sales – but we increase the cost of doing business.

My comment is that we love to criticize the little things like parking and dinner. Any retailer who cannot find a free dinner in this town is amazingly unconnected. Please consider what we have – a low cost location where we have 11 million feet to show our wares, where everyone who is anyone gathers in one place like a medieval market and where we are not distracted from our purpose. If we ever destroy what we have – like Humpty Dumpty – we will never put it back together again at any other location.

Now on to Globalization – an even simpler matter. Globalization is a new reality that challenges us in many ways.

In 1975 I gave a speech on Globalization. To my surprise the word Globalization was not on my Microsoft spellcheck, it did not appear in any dictionary and it could not be found in the documents of the prior World Economic Forum. The changes in the world are very sudden and this causes great opportunity but for many people painful dislocation.

I will tell a little story.

In 1976 Leona and I visited Bali the first time – I was actually being paid as a development consultant. Every day two young women came to our cottage with a lovely carved chess set – and I loved beautiful carvings. We had friendly negotiations all week and when the price would not go any lower we said – “But the chess set did not really cost you anything – you carved it yourself.”

They replied “My uncle carved this and it took two months – this is all that his family lives on.” We were humiliated and embarrassed because we had placed such a low value on the skills of that family. This is the reality of globalization – a world that does not appear fair to everyone who participates. This is the accident of birth – where we are born often determines our worth rather than what we actually do or are capable of doing.

As we become a global industry we will participate in these kind of real or perceived inequities at every turn and often we have limited choices. However, we can be aware that our actions and decisions are not neutral.

These stresses will also disturb the comfortable relationships between colleagues who were always on the same side of most issues

The personal connections and loyalties have often been lost.

Values and interests are no longer as easily aligned.

However, there are still people involved at every stage and we need to establish new patterns and seek to keep the humanity in the way we do business.

That brings me to the CITY OF HOPE. Our industry is fortunate that we have a cause that unites not only those in this room but potentially every person on our globe.

Disease knows no boundaries and solutions should also know no boundaries.

The CITY OF HOPE offers the results of its research without charge for the benefit of all humanity. This makes me especially proud to be associated with this evening and cause.

I also have the unusual pleasure of announcing that the Director of the City of Hope is interested in creating a special program directed to bringing the benefits of City of Hope to children in Asia. The goal will be \$500,000 in funding. Samuel Kuo of Laquercraft/Universal responded to my invitation by making a founding gift to this fund and I have agreed to make an additional gift to match the generosity of Samuel – a gift beyond what Palliser had planned to donate to City of Hope. Given the growing importance of Asia to our industry this is a very appropriate and symbolic way for our industry to respond to the fact that we are becoming truly international. I especially invite those companies involved in Asia or from Asia to join us in this exciting new venture.

Thank you again for this honor and thank you to each person and company that has supported this evening and to the many who have supported the City of Hope for many years.