

Thank you all for taking the time today to celebrate this special occasion. It is my pleasure to introduce someone who has not only excelled in her professional field but has also made a profound impact on her community.

When Heather asked if I would give her introduction today, I was a little hesitant. While I conduct many training classes during my day job as a consultant, speaking in front of larger groups isn't exactly my strong suit. That's one trait I didn't inherit as a Hastings. But when Heather asks me to do something, well... I can't say no with everything she has done.

As I prepared for today, I was listing to the book "And We Will Rise" by Actor and activist **Common**, in it he says, "there is no activism without self-activism." Which I take as, you need to take care of yourself before you can help others. So, as you go through your day make an effort to do something for yourself.

As many of you know, over the past 26 years, Heather has built a foundation of trust and integrity in the financial services industry. To solidify that dedication, she has continually bettered herself through education, including earning her credentials as a Certified Fraud Examiner. But beyond her career, she has also been committed to her passion for community service fostering emotional well-being and helping individuals achieve a balanced, fulfilling life.

One of Heather's longtime dreams has been to start a foundation dedicated to supporting mental health. When she asked Penny and I to join her as founding board members, we didn't hesitate for a second. We're both proud of our professional achievements but often talked about doing more to give back. It was Heather who finally made it happen. With

so many of our friends and family members who struggle with mental health—whether it’s from returning home after serving in the military, dealing with personal tragedies, or facing the daily challenges of life. I want to help others find the resources they need. Rather for themselves or to support someone they know, and in doing so, better understand my own role in supporting loved ones and explore my own mental health. This is why this foundation is close to my heart. Through her personal experiences and countless conversations we’ve had, Heather understands this deeply.

Before I give my final thoughts, I have a message from our daughter Haley (who let me know she was a little upset with me that she and our son Tyler are in my bio), she wishes here today but couldn’t:

*“My experiences with Heather always include delicious food and lots of laughter. Time with her always leaves me feeling incredibly loved. Heather goes the extra mile to make sure I feel seen and valued. I’d like to think I’m her favorite person, but I know it’s because her heart is full of love to give. No matter what we’re doing—whether it’s swimming, caring for my wild kids, or having a heart-to-heart—Heather’s strength reenergizes me and helps me persevere through whatever life throws my way.”*

In closing. I asked a few people to describe Heather in just a couple of words. The responses were overwhelmingly consistent. Some of the words I heard were: *hard-working, dedicated, strong, supportive, inspiring, compassionate, and loving*. She’s a friend, a granddaughter, an aunt, a niece, a cousin, a sister, and a daughter.

But to me, Heather is simply an amazing person with a beautiful soul, and I am grateful knowing you.

Please join me in welcoming one of my favorite people in the world, my cousin and the visionary founder of the Harmony in Daily Happiness Foundation, **Heather D. Hastings**.



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