**BRUCE ANDREWS**

**U.S. Deputy Secretary of Commerce**

**Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Ceremony**

**Remarks as Prepared for Delivery, April 3, 2016**

Thank you, George [Benson, Chair, Foundation for the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award], for the kind introduction. And thank you, Willie [May, Under Secretary of Commerce for Standards and Technology and NIST Director], for inviting me to speak here tonight and for your outstanding leadership at the helm of NIST.

The men and women of NIST are doing extraordinary work in developing standards, shaping the next generation of technology, and conducting cutting-edge scientific research.

NIST is truly setting the standard for excellence in our department.

And in the case of Baldrige, I am amazed by NIST’s ability to make commitment to excellence contagious.

The Baldrige Program’s success ultimately rests on recruitment of a national network of more than 400 volunteer examiners, judges, and overseers.

Our great volunteers, including many of you in the audience tonight, represent every major sector of our economy and society.

The Baldrige Program has effectively created a national brain trust for excellence — an enthusiastic community devoted to providing the tools for a sustainable, healthy economy built on organizational excellence.

We wouldn’t be here today without the hard work and dedication of these volunteers. Can we please give them a round of applause?

I also want to recognize two special guests we have with us here tonight:

* Malcolm Hollensteiner, who is the nephew of the late Secretary of Commerce Malcolm Baldrige, the namesake and the inspiration for this award; and
* Senator Shelley Moore Capito of West Virginia, home state for one of tonight’s recipients, Charleston Area Medical Center Health System.

I know that Secretary Pritzker wishes she could be here to celebrate with all of you, but unfortunately she’s out of town this evening. She wanted me to let you know she is very sorry she can’t be with us tonight.

She did, however, record a brief video, so that she can personally congratulate our 2015 Baldrige recipients. Let’s watch it now.

Secretary Pritzker and I are both inspired by the achievements of our latest recipients.

Only a handful of organizations each year earn a Baldrige crystal. But thousands more reap the benefits from using the Baldrige approach to measure and improve their performance.

The Baldrige Framework is a systems approach that doesn’t just recognize excellent organizations – it helps create them.

What’s even more impressive is that the structure Baldrige provides for understanding and achieving performance excellence works for so many different kinds of organizations:

* For-profit and non-profit;
* Multi-national corporations and mom and pop shops;
* Transportation companies, hotels, retailers, banks, hospitals, schools, and even government agencies can improve their efficiency and effectiveness through Baldrige.

MidwayUSA knows this better than anyone, since tonight they will receive their second Baldrige Award.

After winning their first award in 2009, they’ve just continued to get better.

Midway is one of the nation’s fastest growing firms in the outdoor and recreational sport equipment industry. Their annual growth in net income is an astounding 43.8 percent.

They’ve achieved this by working hard every day to earn a customer approval rating of 90 percent. The company focuses on employee training and promotion from within, and pays close attention to the details in their supply chain and other processes.

At the Charter School of San Diego, they have an entirely different type of customer. But they’ve also used the Baldrige Framework to deliver impressive results.

They serve an at-risk population of urban students, who are often several years behind their academic peers. Yet for the last five years, more than 95 percent of their students have either graduated from the Charter School or successfully transitioned back to a traditional high school for graduation.

In addition, 95 percent of students and 97 percent of parents would recommend the school to a friend or family member.

Frankly, I’m impressed that many teenagers would recommend anything related to school to their friends.

The Charleston Area Medical Center Health System amazes in completely different ways.

They operate four hospitals and an extended network of health care centers with a workforce of almost 7,000 employees and more than 300 volunteers.

Despite its large size, the system clearly has won the hearts of its patients. Local residents are ten times more likely to say the Charleston Area System has the highest quality care compared to its competitors.

Over 51 percent of all residents are connected to the system’s inpatient, outpatient, and emergency room services in their local county.

And it consistently ranks within the top 10 percent nationally on a range of patient care measures.

Last but certainly not least is Mid-America Transplant.

Mid-America’s mission is to save lives through excellence in organ and tissue donation.

In their service areas of eastern Missouri, southern Illinois, and northeast Arkansas, less than 1 percent of the population chooses to donate their organs after death.

Yet Mid-America Transplant’s efficient systems for securing and transporting organs and tissues still allows it to be a leader among all such services.

The organization ranked number one in the nation for lung transplants in 2014 and second in 2015.

Mid-America has achieved this success by continually innovating.

It effectively uses both new technologies and new approaches to people, such as support programs for the families of donors to make the gift of life easier and more likely.

Because of their institutional commitment to the Baldrige Criteria, Mid-America Transplant and our other winners are primed for long-term, sustainable success.

But more than that, these four organizations show the kind of job-creating innovation that keeps our economy growing, vibrant, and prosperous.

On behalf of President Obama, Secretary Pritzker, and this entire Administration, congratulations on this great honor.

Our nation needs more leaders like you willing to share your best practices and invest your time and talents for the greater good.

I know you will continue to make your employees, your communities, and our country proud for years to come.

I want to thank ALL of you for being here tonight to show your commitment to the highest levels of quality in American institutions of ALL kinds.

Thank you.