

**GERRY AGNES  
PRESIDENT AND CEO**



**Acceptance Speech  
Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Ceremony  
As Prepared for Delivery, April 12, 2015**

Thank you, Deputy Secretary Andrews, and the entire Baldrige community. Congratulations to PricewaterhouseCoopers – Public Service Practice, Hill Country Memorial and St. David’s Healthcare for your exceptional accomplishment of receiving the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. We are thrilled to be in your company.

Pete Reicks and I are honored to represent Elevations Credit Union this evening to accept the 2014 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. This award means so much, not only to the two of us, but also to all of Elevations employees, volunteers, members, and community—many of whom are here this evening.

I want to thank everyone who made this journey possible. This was truly a team accomplishment that began with a vision shared by our Board and thoroughly embraced and carried out by our employees. We also had a lot of assistance from Jan Johnson, who served as our Baldrige advisor from the very beginning, and everyone at Rocky Mountain Performance Excellence, our state Baldrige-based award program, for providing us with the insights and counsel we required to attain this achievement. We wouldn’t be here tonight without their guidance and support.

Every morning I wake up feeling like the luckiest guy in the world because I get to work with the greatest people I know serving members of our community. We’re passionate about what we do: helping families and small businesses achieve their dreams, whether that’s buying a home, financing their education, or purchasing a manufacturing facility. At Elevations Credit Union, we’re not in this business to sell financial products; we’re here to meet the needs of our members.

When we embarked on our Baldrige journey in April 2009, most people probably thought we were out of our minds. We were in the middle of a global financial crisis, the economy was a mess, the financial industry was facing some of the biggest challenges it’s ever seen. And there we were—planning to take on one of the biggest, most audacious goals in our credit union’s history that would require significant investments—both financially and in human capital.

We were at a fork in the road: Either we'd take this bold step to provide positive momentum to greatness; or succumb to the effects of a devastating economy and risk settling for the frustration of mediocrity. We concluded that our audacious quest to receive the Malcolm Baldrige Award would be a daunting challenge, but far less frustrating and difficult than to slip into stagnation. After all, it's hard work to achieve greatness. We were—and continue to be—determined to create a safe environment for our employees to have honest conversations about salient issues, so that everyone works together to improve the experience we provide to our members. The Baldrige framework provided us with the perfect model to accomplish that goal. Because we were able to get to the “source of truth” and begin improving our environment for our staffs and members, we emerged from the crisis far stronger and better able to compete in an environment filled with much larger competitors. We're now positioned for long-term success, regardless of what the future holds.

Lastly, I want to thank everyone at Elevations for their frustration, joy, tears and passionate hard work throughout this journey of excellence. Importantly, I also want to thank their family members—wives, husbands, moms, dads, children, some of whom are here tonight. You provided all of us with the support system and inspiration we needed to succeed. You not only allow us to do what we do every day—you're the reason we do it.

Thank you.