2014 Lifetime Achievement Award Acceptance Speech – André Lafargue

CSHA – CASLPA – SAC - WHAT'S IN A NAME?

O-M-G!!!

It is with great emotion that I stand today in front of you my dear S-A-C colleagues to receive this Honor. I am humbled that some of my colleagues felt I deserved this nomination and took the time to prepare it - It is indeed a great Honor to be recognized at the tail end of one's career for one's lifelong accomplishments… The fact that this coincides with the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of our Association makes it even sweeter. Wow! What a ride it has been! And guess what? If I were given a chance to do it all over again I would not change a single decision I made which lead me to practice within and to participate in the development of two of the best professions in the world. And this within my beautiful country of adoption! 38 short years ago after graduating from UBC I applied for and was accepted for membership in an organization called C-S-H-A! My first membership certificate was signed by the then President, Elaine Heaton of Alberta. I had the privilege to be present in 1999 when Elaine, a "Force de la nature with a wonderful sense of humor" was the first member to receive the same Honor bestowed on me today. She accepted the First Lifetime Achievement Award from the organization then called C-A-S-L-P-A!

A different name you say? Yes but what's in a name without people like you, or people like us in it?

As I look back at these 38 years I realize how little I would have been able to accomplish had I been all by myself without the support of my Provincial and National professional associations… And Gosh am I ever grateful…

I am grateful for the kind parents I had who instilled in me the concept of hard work and responsible citizenship. Through their own actions, they demonstrated to me an effective leadership model I chose to follow for my personal and professional life. As 'me old' 87 year old mom still says to me… " "Ne te laisse jamais inféoder par quiconque » - Never ever become subservient to anyone – Reserve your right to be able to say what you think is right and to defend your arguments – If you must? Always fight arguments; never people!"

I am grateful to my professors both at MUN and UBC who believed in me, planted seeds, cultivated them and satisfied my thirst for knowledge. Many of these professors have been lifetime mentors. One of them in particular, who is largely responsible for CERTIFICATION, Dr. John Gilbert was the first ex-CSHA/CASLPA president to receive the Order of Canada! When I doubted that I could be President of this organization, it was John who said to me in January 1985 (ad lib… and btw for the benefit of our guests from ASHA present today it was well before someone else used the slogan south of the border! Wink!) - " YES - YOU CAN"!

I am grateful to the many hundreds members, volunteers, colleagues, National Office staff I have had the pleasure to work with over the last 38 years on Executive or Boards of Professional or benevolent Associations both on the provincial and national level or

Committees and task forces. Together we shaped the policies surrounding our professions and the services we provide to our clients from coast to coast to coast! We followed our Dream and together we "rocked"!

I am grateful to the many thousands of clients I had the pleasure and privilege to serve over my lifetime, for their thank–you notes and hugs or tears of joy witnessed and shared in my practice. They rekindled and fueled my fire to continue working to improve their life!

Last but not least I am grateful to my wife Lynn the wonderful person who stood by me through thick and thin all these years allowing me to get involved. Lynn still dances with me. Lynn brings me back to earth when the Type A tornado that I am gets out of control!

I know time is precious but I beg a couple more seconds of your time. I would like to conclude by passing on advice to the numerous students present today - including student volunteers at this Conference and those recipients of Student Awards who stand here today to be recognized…

As S-A-C embarks in a new era… As our world advances at warp speed when (O-M-G! am I really going to say this? Ha!)… Short acronyms are replacing longer, cumbersome sentences… I say: "Please, please take the time to slow down, to reflect on the meaning and purpose of your chosen profession. Most of all, take the time to get involved in whatever capacity you can to help carry the torch offered to you today by so many people present here and others who have given of their time and energy to prepare the path for you on the provincial or national level… They have already taken the time to develop and shape the services across this wonderful country… or better still across the world! Get involved to put your own trademark on what is offered to you!"

May you be standing in front of your peers 30+ years from now - under whatever name the organization will have at that time - as I am today - receiving this Award and echoing my few last words!

NON RIEN DE RIEN… NON - JE NE REGRETTE RIEN!

We did it! I just gave it my best and my two cents' worth to help out! It was well worth it!

Long live S-A-C!

Thank you all!