

**NSC Congress & Expo – San Diego**

**September 9, 2019**

**Opening Session Remarks for Lorraine Martin – V9.1**

**Length of remarks: 12 minutes**

*(Lorraine on iMag)*

Good morning!

I am so excited to be here in San Diego for my first NSC Congress & Expo. Are there any other first timers here?

I know San Diego is Navy and Marines territory as well as home base for the original Top Gun training school.

Well, I served in the Air Force, and during my 30 years at Lockheed Martin,



I helped build the plane that now serves the Navy, the Marines AND the Air Force, the F-35, the most advanced fighter jet in the world.

*(Lorraine on iMag)*

I have it on good authority that the F-35 will be flying in the new Top Gun: Maverick movie. It will be fun to see Maverick and Ice fight over who is whose wingman.

San Diego is also home to the U.S.S. Midway.



I know some of you are taking advantage of the technical tour on Wednesday, but every one of us can appreciate its history.

In its heyday, the Midway led the fleet as one of the most advanced aircraft carriers, serving many missions around the world.

*(Lorraine on iMag)*

Its last mission was for safety.

When Mount Pinatubo (Pin-a-TOO-bow) erupted in the Philippines in 1991, the Midway evacuated civilian personnel from Clark Air Force Base, saving 1,800 lives.

In my view, leadership means showing up and never leaving your people behind. That's what good leaders do.

That's what the Navy's leading vessel accomplished that day, and what safety leaders around the world aim to do every single day.



Another craft that never leaves people behind is the C-130 cargo plane, used to provide humanitarian aid and supply missions.

*(Lorraine on iMag)*

During the Fall of Saigon in 1975, while the U.S.S. Midway evacuated aircraft and personnel, a C-130 Hercules became the last flight out of Vietnam.



Figure 22. VNAF Crewman and Families Disembarking From a Vietnamese C-130A at U Tapao AB, Thailand.



One of the hundreds of people crammed into a plane designed to carry only 90 paratroopers - was 24-year old Tinh (Tim) Nguyen (Win).

Tim came to the United States as a refugee, and went on to become an engineer. He wanted to work for the manufacturer of the C-130 that delivered him to freedom.

*(Lorraine on iMag)*

Tim was on my team at Lockheed Martin when I oversaw the C-130 program. He saw the need to protect the people on board first hand, and made it his mission to do so.

He became a leader in pioneering large aircraft defensive systems so that crews could safely complete their missions.

I was proud to serve with him, and now I'm proud to bring all I've learned over the years to serve the National Safety Council.

Serving as a leader means you show up for those around you. That's what safety leaders do.

And everyone here today is a safety leader.

You are not only the mavericks of the safety industry, you're also the wingmen.

You're trusted to have employees' backs when it comes to safety.

Together we can identify risk, reduce injuries and prevent fatalities, ensuring more workers go home to their families. That's why we exist, and that's why you're here.

Our keynote speaker, Mick Ebeling, is passionate about the idea that nothing is truly impossible. As you'll hear from him, he's made it his life's mission to make things "not impossible" – by modifying technology for the sake of humanity, and showing up to improve people's lives.

He believes, as I do, that any problem can be solved when we have the will and the leadership to show up and make it happen.

I'm an engineer by training, and if there is one thing that engineers love most, it's a good challenge.



In 1994, the American Society of Civil Engineers named the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco one of the seven wonders of the modern world.

Yet when the bridge was but a dream a century before, it was called something else – the Impossible Bridge.

Chief engineer Joseph Strauss took on the challenge that others deemed impossible, due to the treacherous waters, winds and conditions in the Golden Gate Strait.

*(Lorraine on iMag)*

Leaders who take on the impossible aren't blind to failure, they just show up anyway, employing novel solutions with the right expertise, the right tools and a diversity of ideas.

As Mick Ebeling will tell you – Commit to solving the problem, then figure it out.



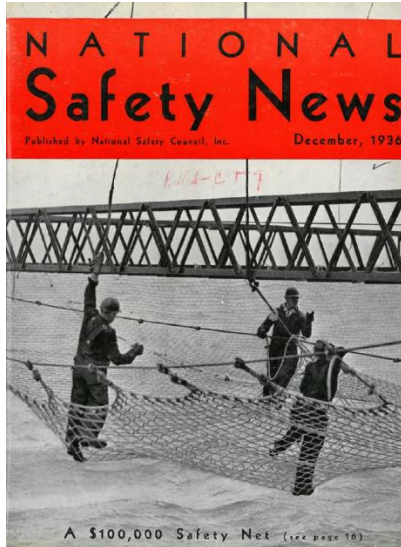
In the 1930s, for every million dollars spent on a major construction project like this one, one worker would be expected to perish.

Joseph Strauss wanted to ensure that deadly ratio wasn't part of the equation in building the \$35 million dollar icon.

He introduced worker protections that we take for granted today – such as the prototype of the modern hard hat, glare-free goggles and wind-protection for workers who risked their lives working hundreds of feet above the water.

Why?

Because that's what safety leaders do.



One of the very first construction safety nets protected workers in case of a fall, by spanning the bridge from end to end.

It saved 19 workers, who became known as the “halfway to hell club.”

For three years of construction, the Golden Gate had the best safety record of any large bridge.

*(Lorraine on iMag)*

Though as you all know, your safety record is only as good as your last incident.

On the morning of February 17, 1937, workers were removing temporary scaffolding underneath the bridge when a five-ton work platform fell into the safety net. Ten men did not survive, and two were rescued from the water.

A plaque on the bridge’s western side honors the men lost that day.

At the time, the reduction in lives lost in the construction of the Golden Gate Bridge demonstrated progress for worker safety.

But today, everyone would acknowledge that even one life lost is too many.

Joseph Strauss not only believed in challenging the impossible, he was also a poet, penning these lines upon the completion of the bridge:



(slide)

At last the mighty task is done;  
Resplendent in the western sun  
The Bridge looms mountain high;  
Its titan piers grip ocean floor,  
Its great steel arms link shore with shore,  
Its towers pierce the sky.

*(Lorraine on iMag)*

I'm sure many here can remember that incredible sense of accomplishment when you completed something that others thought you couldn't, or maybe even thought was impossible.

I had a similar feeling when we got the F-35 to initial operating capability (or IOC) for the U.S. Marine Corps. I can tell you poems were written that day, but trust me, you don't want to hear them.

Since the Golden Gate Bridge was built, we have learned so much about risk and precaution, yet construction is still one of the most dangerous occupations out there.

One out of every five workplace fatalities is in construction.

Many other industries also face serious challenges when it comes to safety, so our commitment to eliminating preventable deaths remains as strong as ever.

I discovered that improving safety required showing up as a leader to see what we ask of our people, and to learn what is in their way.



After 40 years in operation, the C-5 cargo planes were undergoing renovation.

This is the biggest plane in the U.S. military inventory.

It needs a lot of fuel to carry its heavy cargo long distances, and the wings are also the fuel tanks.

It is hard for those who work inside to access the fuel tanks, and even after the fuel is siphoned off, the tanks still give off fumes.

Our mechanics were having a hard time fixing the fasteners inside these fuel tanks. They were on their backs for hours and the work was slow.

*(Lorraine on iMag)*

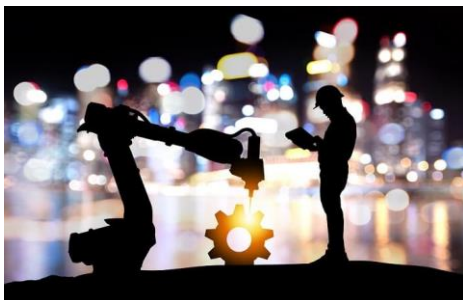
So I realized the best thing I could do was to see it for myself. I said, give me the suit. Let me see what you're working with. And I climbed into the fuel tank.

Being there and seeing it for myself made me realize we could engineer our tools better for our mechanics – and we did just that.

We may not all be building impossible bridges, but by showing up when employees have challenges, we can go beyond just patching things up. We can get to the root cause and make a real impact.

As you'll hear from our leadership keynote speaker Jim Carroll and others throughout the next few days, innovative technologies that seemed like science fiction just years ago are not only possible, but becoming ever more commonplace.

That's because leaders from many industries are showing up and redefining what's possible.





With a new NSC initiative we are calling Work to Zero, we aim to make monumental safety changes by harnessing the potential of cutting-edge technology to reach our goal of zero workplace deaths.

Working with the McElhattan Foundation, our Campbell Institute and other leading companies, we are excited to explore workplace safety from the technology standpoint.

*(Lorraine on iMag)*

We know that technology can help us redefine what's possible so we no longer lose lives at work.

With more than three decades in the aerospace industry, I know that improving workplace safety is a mission that is far from impossible.

As safety leaders, you know that the dividing line between on-the-job and off-the-job safety is fading. The risks we face in our workforce today are more complex than ever.

By coming to the NSC Congress & Expo, you are on the lookout for the latest innovations and best ideas to help you get to that next level.

Since 1913, the National Safety Council has used data, expertise and innovation to solve some of the toughest workplace safety problems.

We want to share with you the right tools and ideas to make your workforce safer, and often the right data can help us make the right decisions.

(IMAGE OF BOOTH HERE – Available 9/8)

This year I invite you to benchmark *your* safety journey at the NSC Booth - #4135. Stop by and find your safety score, and then get a free 15 minute consultation with our workplace safety experts.

*(Lorraine on iMag)*

You are spending your hard earned time and money to be with us this week, so I urge you to make the most of it.

(NEW TOOLKITS SLIDE)

All good leaders seek to address what's impacting their workforce, like opioids and fatigue – that's why we are launching free resources to help you address workplace impairment.

And if you're an NSC member, you'll get some personalized help to overcome these challenges. Stop by the booth to learn more.

*(Lorraine on iMag)*

I want to thank each and every one of you – for showing up to serve your community and bringing your safety leadership *back home*.

With the best ideas, the right tools and everyone showing up to redefine what's possible, no safety challenge will be too big for us to overcome, from workplace to anyplace.

I want you to know that your investment in the nonprofit mission of the Council is a force multiplier. Every dollar spent, every contribution made translates into a joint impact to save lives.

After all, that's what being a safety leader is all about.

For a long time, my mantra has been – “Every commitment, every day.”

I know that as safety professionals, you live by a similar code.

It is a commitment honored by the men and women who responded to our nation's need on 9/11, flew missions out of Vietnam and served on the U.S.S. Midway, to name just a few.

A commitment that was honored in the construction of the Golden Gate Bridge, and one we continue to honor in each of our workplaces today.

We already ask so much of our employees. We ask them to be efficient, to learn new ways of doing things and to look out for the latest hazards.

We cannot ask them to accept an environment where they could be injured or killed on the job. We must do what needs to be done - to be each other's wingmen.

Safety is a worthy mission. By putting safety first we ensure that people are able to live their fullest lives.

I challenge you to consider - what kind of a leader are you going to be?

Re-examine your definition of what's possible. Create the change you want to see by showing up for the people around you.

As the pilots say in Top Gun - you can be my wingman anytime. And have no doubt, I look forward to being yours.

Be safe, and now let's get to work!