

U.S. Chamber Speech: DREAM BIG Small Business of the Year Award

By Matthew Albuquerque, CPO

On behalf of my business partner, Peter Couture, and everyone at Next Step Orthotics & Prosthetics, I want to sincerely thank the U.S. Chamber for honoring us with this award.

What a great day for Next Step and the orthotics and prosthetics profession. One person cannot claim the responsibility for such recognition. We have been blessed with the most compassionate, caring, loyal group of employees a business could ask for. Each one has contributed to this award.

These employees and I believe we have the best occupation in the world. Orthotic and prosthetic care is not usually visible within the field of healthcare. This award brings awareness to the role our profession plays in peoples' health, dignity, happiness, and productivity.

Every day what we do allows a physically challenged child to walk for the first time, the man without feet to take up golf, and a woman without arms to hug her child. We consider ourselves fortunate to witness the power of the human spirit and to influence the outcome of a life. As a company we know free enterprise makes such an impact possible.

Sometimes it feels strange to receive an award for helping those we consider our heroes, people who face life's challenges with a level of dignity and grace difficult to understand. I want to take this time to thank all of our patients, who continue to teach us not only what is important but also how to face adversity and live happily no matter what happens. Personally, I have become a better individual because of my involvement in orthotics and prosthetics.

In conclusion, after meeting many of you over the last day and a half, I am privileged to receive this award your presence. People like you understand the trials and tribulations of running a small business. People like you put it all on the line to pursue your passion. People like you know what it means to meet payroll and know how to be self-sufficient when it counts. Together, we are the fabric of our American economy, and it is an honor to represent the entire small business community in accepting this award.