

## Starry Nights Speech

By Walter Arbib

Thank you very much, Wendy, for that very kind introduction. It is an honor and a privilege to be here tonight with the other award recipients and I am very honored to share this award with past recipients.

We are all very proud to have our efforts, our work and achievements recognized by such a great organization, Ve'ahavta. Awards and recognition are not what motivate us towards making the right choices and why we act in humanitarian ways. I, like my counterparts here tonight, are driven by the opportunity to assist those in times of need whether at home or abroad, while building bridges between people of different nations.

My values and desire to help others has been shaped by many factors and includes personal experiences on the other side of tragedy. My personal adverse experience in Libya motivated me to want to help others. We survived, in part, because others made sacrifices and provided us with the opportunity to achieve success. These actions opened my eyes and my heart to how gratifying it can be to help people in need.

We have so much here to be grateful for. It is shocking to see how little some people have around the world and how great an impact we can make on their lives. I am grateful to have the time and ability and means to assist those in need. Anyone can help people in times of need regardless of personal position or resources.

There is so much need out there. Indeed, Repairing the World appears to be an overwhelming task. But again anyone can help. It is important for all of us to pursue these goals. Helping others is truly a rewarding experience. Philanthropy is an essential element for change. It makes me happy to see so many others and to have an organization such as Ve'ahavta who strives to do the same thing.

As I said recently - in our business at SkyLink we have to be present in terrible calamities, and you have to take the decision to close your eyes or face the reality. We never close our eyes.

I would like to thank the organizers, our host and our special guest Mia Farrow. I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to Counterpart International of Washington D.C. who, with SkyLink Aviation, last September immediately responded to the multiple earthquakes and tsunami that hit the island nation of Samoa and sent and distributed medical supplies to the thousands of injured survivors.

In closing, may I just say that you have all made this a terrific evening and worthy of the work we all undertake on behalf of others.

Thank you and good evening.