Glenn L. Martin Award Acceptance Speech

First off I want to say Thank You to the University of Maryland, the A. James Clark School of Engineering, Dean Pines and the entire selection committee for including me in the Glenn L. Martin Award inaugural class of medal recipients. I would like to say Thank You to those who got me involved in Fire Protection Engineering, a profession that I am so proud to be a part of because I help save lives every day.

Mr. Quinn Schilling a fellow Fire Protection Engineer from my home town of Jarrettsville, Maryland first introduced me to the field by suggesting I look into Fire Protection Engineering.

Dr. John L. Bryan was the founding Chair of the Fire Protection Engineering Department when it was established in 1956. Dr. Bryan was an inspiration to generations of fire protection engineers and had a tremendous impact on the course of my life when he suggested I live at a fire station, as a live-in student. By living at a fire station while pursuing my Fire Protection Engineering degree at University of Maryland, I was able to blend the practical side of firefighting, with the book smart side of earning my degree. Prof Bryan passed away just last month, but his impact on the fire protection community, lives on through the generations of fire protection engineers he has mentored.

I also want to thank Dr. James Milke, who is here tonight to celebrate with me and who was one of my professors for several classes in the Program and is currently the Chair of the Fire Protection Engineering department. Having the opportunity to work with Jim over the last couple of years as a volunteer for the department has been such an honor and I am delighted to see Jim’s work return to the roots of the program, by blending the practical with the academic. Many of you here
tonight may not know it, but the University of Maryland Bachelor of Science Degree in Fire Protection Engineering is the only ABET Accredited Fire Protection Engineering Program in the WORLD. It is such an honor to be a graduate of the Program and to now be receiving this Glenn L. Martin Metal.

I also need to send a special Thank You out to those sharing this once-in-a-lifetime moment with me tonight: my Mom and Dad, Bill and Ruth Ann Poole who helped me get through the Program, my lovely wife Laura for always being by my side and supporting me as we grow our business, Poole Fire Protection, together, and to both of my children, Stephanie and Drew Poole. Stephanie is a Terp in her junior year in the Fire Protection Engineering program. Drew holds bachelors and master’s degrees in Fire Protection Engineering from the University of Maryland as well as a second Master’s in Engineering Management, and is now working for the family business in Olathe, Kansas. With Drew tonight is his fiance’ Heather, who I am delighted to report will be joining our family in August of 2015. I am proud beyond measure that my children have chosen to enter this profession that means so much to me.

So in closing, I once again would like to say Thank You to everyone who has provided support to me in being a University of Maryland Alumnus, helping make my career such a success to enable me to give back my support and appreciation to the Department of Fire Protection Engineering to make sure the Fire Protection Engineering Program remains the best in the WORLD.