Remarks from Mr. Richard Mangino
October 14, 2011

In thinking about what I wanted to say today, two words kept coming to my mind: gratitude and miracles.

First I must express my deep gratitude to the donor family. They are, and always will be, in my prayers. My family and I grieve for the loss of your loved one. I am humbled and overwhelmed with emotion. Thank you for this incredible gift.

Your selflessness and the expertise of this amazing care team have given me a new life. I am extremely grateful to Brigham and Women's Hospital and to all of my care providers here.

I also want to take the opportunity to thank all who have cared for me since I got sick in 2002: those at Mass General, at Spaulding and Shaughnessy Kaplan. You collectively have played a vital role in getting me to this day.

I must also express my heartfelt thanks for the many family members and friends who have been so supportive of me and my family. Your many acts of kindness have meant so much.

And finally, I must thank my family. My loving amazing wife of 42 years, Carole, and our three sons – Ricky, Rob, and David. And my precious grandchildren, Trevor and Nick. My family has been the inspiration to fight when things were hard and to never look back – always look forward. I love you all very much.

And finally a word about miracles… When I survived the devastating infection that took my limbs, people said it was a miracle. When I taught myself how to put on my prostheses and continued to do things like paint and mow the lawn, people said I was a miracle. When I began providing instruction to others who had lost limbs, to teach them what I had learned and how I did things…that felt miraculous. But the one miracle I have prayed for, since my oldest grandson Trevor was born, was to be able to feel the sense of touch again… To touch his and Nicky's little faces, and stroke their hair, and to teach them to throw a ball. To me, THAT would be a miracle. And today, my miracle has come true. And I am eternally grateful. Thank you.