Good afternoon, everyone.

Thank you for being here as I mark a milestone that still feels a little unreal to say out loud—my retirement after 18 years.

I arrived in 2008 as a project coordinator with a notebook full of questions and a deep belief that integrity and accountability are not negotiable.
Those principles shaped me—sometimes the hard way—as I learned how work really moves through a business and how people make it possible.

In 2014, I stepped into the role of Operations Manager.
That promotion carried weight I felt every day, and it sharpened a conviction I've held ever since: continuous improvement is not a slogan; it's a daily habit, built quietly and defended firmly.

Many of you were there in 2017 during the Horizon ERP rollout.
At midnight, the go-live snagged, alarms were blinking, and the easy move would have been to blame the system.
Instead, a cross-functional war room formed—calm voices, clear roles, no theatrics.
By morning, we had shipped.
That night taught me something I've tried to practice ever since: process and people win together, or not at all.

By 2021, our on-time delivery had improved by 22%.
A number is just a number unless you remember what it stands on—the planners who reworked sequences, the operators who flagged small defects before they became big ones, the analysts who asked better questions, and the supervisors who chose candor over comfort.
I'm proud of that improvement because it reflects a culture you built.

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In 2023, we launched the cross-functional internship program.
Watching interns rotate from supply chain to quality to finance, and seeing mentors grow alongside them, reminded me why developing people is the most durable strategy any company can have.
Some of those interns are now colleagues.
That is the kind of compounding I'll brag about.

I owe thanks that won't fit neatly into a single paragraph.
Diane and Marcus—your mentorship was precise when it needed to be and patient when it had to be.
To the Operations team—thank you for embracing change with grace, for raising issues early, and for caring enough to disagree well.
You made my job meaningful.

Outside these walls, a few things keep me grounded.
Cycling clears my head.
Sourdough keeps me humble.
Classical piano keeps me honest about practice.
And mentoring first-generation college students keeps me optimistic about what's next.

What is next for me is simple and full.
I will consult part-time where I can be useful, spend more time with my grandchildren, and support local workforce development so more people can find a sturdy first rung on the ladder.
If you ever need a sounding board—or a loaf—reach me at cto@kuchventures.com.

My wish for you is straightforward: set bold goals, and pair them with kind leadership.
Be exacting about standards and generous with people.
If you keep doing that, this place will keep getting better, one steady improvement at a time.

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Thank you for the privilege of these 18 years.

It has been an honor to be part of this team.

With respect and gratitude,

Alex

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