

Brief speech at 6th Jan Pentland Foundation Dinner-REVISED-2

Canberra May 19, 2015

David Morawetz

Thank you Colin. I will be brief.

Jan would be so proud that Financial Counselling Australia is celebrating its 30 year anniversary this year. After AFCCRA (as it was then called) was defunded by the Howard government, Jan worked unpaid as its chair for the better part of 10 years to help it to survive. We used to have the meeting of the national AFCCRA board in our home in Melbourne, with people sleeping in various rooms to save accommodation costs. A far cry from where FCA is now!

It is super-special to be having the Jan Pentland Foundation annual dinner in these exceptional surroundings this year.

First of all, it is special to be here in **Canberra**. In her last years, Jan made a lot of day trips to Canberra to advise bureaucrats and politicians, sit on committees, and so forth. One of her last committees was chaired by Julia Gillard. And Deputy Prime Minister Gillard, as she was in 2009, wrote a beautiful note of appreciation when she heard of Jan's death, as did Minister Jenny Macklin.

Incidentally, right from the start of the Rudd-Gillard leadership ticket in opposition in 2006, and even when Kevin Rudd was at the height of his popularity in 2007, **Jan always said:** *"Julia Gillard is fantastic, but **you can't trust Kevin Rudd.**"* Jan got a lot of things right.

Jan even got **footy tipping** right In our hotly contested family-and-friends footy tipping competition, she won it three times, this despite the fact that Jan barracked for Richmond, who never missed an opportunity to miss an opportunity to win. Jan was able to separate out her heart as a Tigers supporter from her head which did the tipping.

Secondly, it is special to be here at the awesome **Australian War Memorial**. In the last year of her life, Jan insisted that I come with her to Canberra to visit this War Memorial, which was very dear to her as a number of her relatives served in overseas wars – and we had a very moving time here together.

What a great group of **scholarship winners** we have again this year. Congratulations to all 18 applicants for the Jan Pentland Foundation scholarships. We are sorry we could not fund you all.

The first scholarship winner is **Shae Skinner**.

Shae, Jan would be very happy that you have won a scholarship. Jan worked with problem gamblers for many years. And she would be so impressed and delighted that you have not allowed your **blindness** to hold you back. **Well done indeed, Shae!**

Next we have **John Gilmour**.

John, your application form mentions that you run an AA Big Book Study Group. Jan was a huge fan of Al-Anon, which is of course run along similar 12-step lines to AA. Jan would be happy that you have got a scholarship both because of this connection, and also because, when you found out that there was no financial counselling course in Canberra, you didn't give up – you enrolled in a course in Orange, even if that is 280 km away. **Well done, John!**

Next, we have **Karyn Hicks**.

Karyn, I know Jan would be impressed at your mid-life career change. In mid-career, Jan herself left financial counselling for a few years to teach community development at the Outer Eastern College of TAFE. Jan would also be impressed at your wanting to embark on this new course even while the demands on you as a carer are high. **Well done, Karyn.**

Last but not least, we have **Shyam Banjade**.

Shyam, Jan was very keen on the Dalai Lama. The Dalai Lama said once when he was in Melbourne: "Help people, because you are the one who gets the help. If the people get some help as well, that's a bonus."

Your application, Shyam, provides an example of precisely what the Dalai Lama was talking about. You wrote:

*"When someone comes to see me with a gloomy face with loads of problems, and leaves my office with a smile, confidence and a positive thought, **I feel very much rewarded.**"*

Also, Shyam, your work is in the Northern Territory. Jan had a special soft spot for the Northern Territory. For her 50th Birthday Present, she asked that the two of us go on a 10 day group camping tour, sleeping under the stars, experiencing the Territory. And we did, and it was beautiful. **Well done, Shyam.**

Now to Financial Counselling Australia's **Jan Pentland Prize**, the prize for the most "Jan-like" performance (so to speak) by a practitioner in the field of financial counselling. Congratulations to all the applicants for this year's prize, a very distinguished group.

And special congratulations to the winner: **William Santo.**

William has made a huge contribution to Save the Children Australia's Financial Counselling and Financial Capability Program, which reaches the most marginalised and financially excluded families in the remote Gulf communities of North Queensland.

William – Jan went to school with mostly Aboriginal kids for the first few years of her schooling in Silverton, about an hour outside Broken Hill – and she never forgot it. Jan was passionate about many things, but she was super-passionate about mentoring and supporting the development of Aboriginal Financial Counsellors. So Jan would be totally thrilled that you have won her Prize tonight. **Well done indeed, William!**

Finally, a big **THANK YOU** to my fellow members of the Board of the Jan Pentland Foundation. Without them, there would be no Jan Pentland Foundation, no Jan Pentland scholarships, no Jan Pentland Prize – and no Jan Pentland Foundation Dinner. These are the people who set up the Foundation, and who keep it running so smoothly: **Colin Neave, Carolyn Bond, Delia Rickard and David Tennant**, plus **Fiona Guthrie, Secretary**. You continue to do a magnificent job, all of you. On behalf of Jan's family and everybody here, **THANK YOU!**
