

Notes of Speech Delivered at the Memorial Service for Jennifer Kane
Saturday, September 22, 2001

Earlier this week, during a conversation with the Kane family, I was asked to speak about the five years that Jen worked with our organization. After the feelings of honor and privilege wore off, I realized that I needed to put together some notes of what I was going to say. I took a piece of paper and drew a line down the middle. On one side I jotted down Jen's accomplishments and the relationships she developed, on the other side I put together a time line. I soon realized that there was much more written on one side of the page than the other. It became very clear that Jen's contributions to our firm and to us personally far exceeded the amount of time that she spent with us.

I first met Jen shortly after she started in our Philadelphia office. I had heard some very good things about her, and once I had met her I understood immediately why the partners in this office spoke so highly of her.

That day we were working on a major project, and as always seems to be the case, we were running against a deadline. We worked late that evening and I noticed that Jen stayed to help us, even though she had not been involved in the engagement, nor was she at all responsible for the fact that we were up against a deadline. I also noticed that, although she was handling some of the less glamorous jobs, such as photocopying and binding the presentations, she handled herself professionally and had a smile on her face at all times. It actually appeared that she enjoyed helping us out of our bind.

At the end of the evening, Jen gave me a ride to the train station and in that short period of time I recognized that Jen was a special individual. As soon as I got on the train, I made a note to myself that, although my partners in Philadelphia would not be happy, we had to convince Jen to transfer to our NJ/NY offices. Several months later, and following some coaxing by the manager of our NJ office, Jen agreed to the transfer.

This was not an easy thing for Jen to do as she was new to our organization as well as to the business world. But she made the decision that she believed to be the right one for her career, and forged ahead. I must admit that she did make it very clear to me what the terms of the transfer were going to be before she made the commitment. I admired her spunk and the self-confidence she exhibited at such an early stage in her career.

During the next several years I worked closely with Jen, and she was the one I went to when I had a difficult assignment or needed to meet a deadline. My partners often commented that I monopolized Jen's time and didn't allow them access to what they knew was a valuable resource. During meetings when we discussed staffing requirements, I almost always told the other partners that Jen was booked and unable to

assist them. Well, as I stand here today, I must admit that at times I lied. I knew that if my partners had access to Jen, they would monopolize her time and lie to me about her availability.

Throughout her career Jen met many clients and colleagues. Without exception these individuals commented on Jen's professionalism, friendly smile, and that she always made the work environment a pleasant place to be. Each of these clients and colleagues were grief stricken when they learned of the recent tragedy. They all described Jen as a wonderful young woman who was an absolute pleasure to work with.

During the time we worked together, Jen always spoke of her family and friends. We have all heard of her years at Villanova and the time she spent with her roommates, a time in her life that she cherished. And of course we all knew about Fred.

We were well aware of Jen's trip to Portugal and the wedding that she was simply not going to miss. Some time prior to her trip, Jen seemed to be looking for additional business trips. I thought that this was odd. Although she never complained about it, I didn't think that she actually enjoyed the business travel. As Jen was not always able to keep things to herself, I realized that she needed additional frequent flyer miles. Needless to say, Jen managed to get in the additional business trips in time, and she made her way to the wedding.

Most of all Jen spoke of her family. She often told us how hard her parents worked and the sacrifices they made in order to provide the family with the best education possible. We knew of the time her father spent with the boys and their sports programs. We knew of her mother's cooking exploits and that when she mastered a new recipe, she prepared that meal for the family over and over and over again.

We knew of Tim's hockey accomplishments, and that during Jen's recent vacation at home she attended several of his games, games that she was not going to miss even though it took two hours to get there and two hours to return home. We also knew of Matt's career and his time spent in Houston, Italy and Atlanta. I also dreaded the day that Matt's salary reached Jen's, as I would surely have had to address that issue.

It was quite obvious that Jen loved her family very much, and was proud of each one of them. During the past two weeks I have had the pleasure to meet the Kane family and I quickly came to understand why she felt the way she did.

Of all the relationships that Jen made, none could compare to the bond that she developed with the staff. This staff included individuals with very different backgrounds, someone from Sweden, someone from Puerto Rico, another from Poland and yet another from the Middle East. There also were those whose culture was so different from Jen's, that she often considered them to be from far away lands, that being the Bronx and Staten Island. This group of diverse individuals, were not just coworkers or colleagues, they were friends. Friends that looked up to Jen and considered her their mentor.

Jen was referred to by some as the Boss of the Back. Not because she ruled with an iron fist or that she was a taskmaster, she left that to the partners, but because they respected her so much. Jen laughed at their practical jokes, but let them know when they were going over the line. She also made it very clear that she would inflict physical pain if she was ever the recipient of their practical jokes. Believe me, they listened to her.

Most of all Jen was there for the staff when they needed help. I had often noticed Jen sitting side by side with a coworker helping them with their assignments or teaching them a task that she had already mastered. She did this by taking time out of her own busy schedule, which often caused her to be one of the last to leave at the end of the day. We joked with Jen that if she could only master the early morning hours better and get to work on time that she would be able to leave earlier. However, we all knew that Jen stayed late because she was committed to her job and committed to helping her friends and coworkers.

I don't think that a day will pass, whether I am at the office or home with my family that I won't think of Jen and the nine other friends in our group that we lost on that tragic day. However, I won't think of what could have been, as we all know of Jen's potential and that she would have continued to excel in her personal and professional life. I will think of her as a friend that made everybody's day more pleasant.

I find it comforting to know that all ten of our friends were together when they needed each other the most, and that they are together today. I also know that if any of them are confused or uncertain of where to go or what to do next, that they could look to Jen, and that Jen will smile, extend her hand and help them throughout their journey.

That is the Jen I will remember, and that is the Jen that I will miss.

Ken Giambagno