**RETIREMENT SPEECH**

**FOR**

**JAY GRAHAM**

Hello everyone. Today we honor and celebrate the career and contribution of a truly “singular sensation...” one of the genuine visionaries that has kept this university up and running... through so many scenarios over the past several decades. It’s a privilege to honor a colleague that has contributed so much to the legacy of this institution. (**If there are any coordinators of the event you want to acknowledge, do that here**) First, I want to acknowledge \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for coordinating this tribute.

I would like to thank you all for being here to celebrate a really remarkable milestone.... Ayn Rand said, “The question isn’t, who’s going to let me, it’s who’s going to stop me?” For what seems like a lifetime, especially in the world of IT, we have been led and partnered, encouraged and challenged, and most of all, inspired by, an unstoppable and consummate professional.... someone who has demonstrated unequivocally what it looks like to innately know what has been needed and wanted and has the common sense and analytical prowess to identify issues and create and implement solutions that have made the world, and in particular, the University of Pittsburgh a better safer, “cyberly tuned” place to be... I know that’s not a real word, but... desperate times!!! **(If you want to make a joke, you can say...**)... but **today** is about **Jinx**... (**and wait for the laugh**). Whether they knew it or not, over the years, **THOUSANDS** of people .... from staff to faculty to students... and **WAY BEYOND**, have benefitted from her consummate professionalism, her vision, and her technical capabilities.

Jinx Walton... on the surface, superficially, her name betrays her.... we all know, to us that have worked with her, for her, and learned from her, that she’s been anything **BUT** a Jinx... she’s been a guiding light... a sage... a visionary..... she’s been the central theme in Pitt’s IT saga for many years.... and while her prowess begs references to beloved, almost mythical characters, one scenario in particular comes to mind.... when I think of Jinx... in the big picture, I’m reminded of “The Wizard of Oz...” Only the Jinx we know isn’t Dorothy.... Jinx Walton is the heroine of our story, but she’s not the innocent young heroine in search her roots and purpose in life... she is .... our **WIZARD**... the only difference is that when we pull back the curtain, there she’s been... consistently... with dedication, intelligence, and foresight... hard at work.... divining issues and preempting crises like no one else would have been able to do... we have been so lucky that **OUR** wizard has been more than a smoke screen with a booming voice.... she was an innovator when she began thirty years ago and she’s been a vital, engaged, intuitive leader for the past eighteen years. Jinx Walton **IS** our infrastructure....

In her tenure here at Pitt, Jinx has not only named the game, she’s changed it... she’s tuned it up... and for the duration of her tenure, she’s established protocols and procedures that others didn’t even realize they needed....she’s brilliant... she’s stealth... she’s resourceful and versatile... she’s **our** Jinx.... and now she’s poised to conquer that hot **new** frontier.... **retirement**.... (**Wait for the laugh**). ... Sure... we’re .... or **I’m** chuckling now, but the truth is, I cannot imagine the IT Department here at Pitt without her... but were all gonna have to get creative, because last I checked, she and her husband, Dr. Pack, didn’t invite us to go with them as they explore “Life Beyond Tech...”

When I think of the time I spent working with Jinx Walton, of course there are some standout memories.... clues to the force of nature she truly and innately is... January 25, 2003 will forever be a day that will live large in the legend of Jinx Walton.... Few of us will ever forget that day for several reasons.... one notable reason was that pesky SQL Slammer worm... man... that thing propagated like wildfire across the Internet... it dramatically slowed down general Internet traffic.... so many end users were adversely affected that day, but thanks to the genius and prepared anticipation of Jinx Walton, our systems barely shuddered. Jinx had made the necessary infrastructure updates that allowed all of us to sidestep potential catastrophe.... **OH**... and it was also Jinx’s wedding day... while she prepped for one of the most important moments of her adult life, she found the time to “foil that pesky worm...” She showed that bug a thing or two, and reinforced her innate talent for.... **multitasking**. (**Wait for the laugh**).

I don’t have to tell this crowd that the evolution and revolution that has taken place in the world of IT over the past twenty odd years has been stunning. While we, the professionals, are immersed in the day to day developments and innovations inherent in such a rapidly expanding field, for the most part, the majority of end users for the products and services our sector provides haven’t a clue as to what goes on “behind the curtain....” and while protocols and user experience have gotten more sophisticated over the years, the greatest of IT innovators express their prowess almost invisibly. It is a testimony to our “wizard,” Jinx, that the leadership and insight she’s brought to her duties is almost as esoteric as the clouds upon which we currently rest our data.

Jinx Walton is so good at what she does that it can be difficult articulating her collective contribution to our university and ourselves. I have to say, however, that I am one of the “lucky ones.” I’ve had the great privilege to work closely with Jinx... to learn from her.... to observe her style.. to attempt to divine what makes her tick... to try and absorb some telltale signs of her brilliance... and to paraphrase a tag line on a popular reality show, I have to say that in many ways, Jinx is “an enigma.... wrapped in a puzzle... and **CODE**. (**FYI... this is a version of a Real Housewives tag line that I love and while many probably wont get it, I still think it’s funny.... If code isn’t the right word, switch it out for something that works and wait for the laugh**).

So what have been my observations of Jinx over the years? She has a few abilities that amaze me.  One is she can almost always meet someone one time and then make an assessment right then and there.  Also, she has the ability to listen to all sides of a situation and make the right decision for advancing the organization. This is something I know all of us are really going to miss.   Jinx is also so creative that she consistently seems to “think out of the box” and find unique and different ways to do things.   I’ve found that Jinx has a remarkable ability to judge someone’s character. She can see things other people can’t see and 99.9999% of time she is correct. Let’s just say that had Jinx been around when the Emperor was toying with the idea of getting new clothes.... (**Wait for the laugh**).

The **GOOD** news is, as we all know, that throughout Jinx’s time here at Pitt, the advancements, accomplishments, and innovations were many.... the **BAD** news is that there’s almost **TOO MUCH** to mention.... but it’s very safe to say that the University of Pittsburgh would have been a very different place without the talent and touch of Jinx Walton. As we were preparing our thoughts for today, so many of us had input and memories of all that has been done in the name of IT on Jinx’s watch (**Below is the full stream of conscience you included in your attachment. As you read the speech in full, If May be easier for you to see what points to truncate or edit out altogether**) ... in brief... or maybe not so brief.... (**Wait for the laugh**)...

1. NOC – Prior to 2000, network and system monitoring was done within each area. In 2003, Jinx lead an effort to centralize the network and system monitoring by constructing a state-of-the-are Network Operations center that opened for business in 2004.  It is because of her vision of this NOC, that we have one of the most redundant and robust networks this side of the Mississippi.   (Is it true, who knows, but it sounds good.)  The network operations center that was built in 2004 will serve as the cornerstone for the Security Operations Center whose project is underway now.  Jinx had many people contact her to take tours of the NOC. The University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC) toured it and stole the idea and built a NOC that looked just like ours in 2009.

2. Campus Wide Wireless – many departments were clamoring for wireless network service. This was a service that wasn’t even part of the strategic plan that was developed in 2000, however due to the foresight of Jinx in developing the strategic plan as a flexible plan, we were able to begin a project in 2001 that covered the Pittsburgh campus and all regional campuses with wireless coverage in just 18 months.  By the way, we have never stopped adding access points since then because, as we learned, you can never have too much wireless coverage.

3. When she took over in 2000, the network had been neglected 20 years. We were suffering from bandwidth issues, 8 hour network outages, and weekly service interruptions.  Jinx developed a plan to significantly upgrade the network infrastructure over the next two years and all of the issues went away and the network infrastructure was never neglected again and now we operate with the latest technologies in networking and security.

4. Firewall - When Jinx took over as CIO in 2000, we had approximately 25 departments that had their systems and workstations behind firewalls.  We even charged departments for firewalls back then.  Under Jinx’s leadership, we not only stopped charging for firewalls because she felt that if we were going to insist that departments move all of their equipment behind the firewalls, we couldn’t charge them for them.  It took a few more years than we would have liked, but eventually every single network port on all five campuses were put behind a firewall.  Faculty would scream and cry at Jinx that their life would end as they know it, if they were forced to put their workstations and servers behind a firewall. Jinx would speak to each and every one them and assure them that their life would go on after they were put behind a firewall and that they would be much more secure. This was a significant feat and other Universities we spoke with said it couldn’t be done, but Jinx did it.

5. Enterprise Email – Along with the firewalls, although it took significantly less time, she had a vision that the 65 departmentally owned email servers on campus needed to be centralized for both operational reasons and security reasons.  Heck we were even running three different enterprise mail servers ourselves.  Within the past 18 years, she centralized the enterprise mail into two services, IMAP and Exchange, but also phased out the IMAP server and moved Exchange to the cloud.

6. Multifactor for everyone – Another thing that many said could never be done, was to implement multifactor for every web application across the entire University.  Jinx not only did this, but did it in less than 4 months.

7. PeopleSoft Student System - When Jinx took over we were using a student system that was put in in the late 1970s and used terminals to access it.  She initiated a project to acquire a modern student system and not only implemented it under budget, but ahead of schedule too.

8. Enterprise Services to Cloud and implementation of Cloud Services -  Lately Jinx has been working on moving services that make sense to the cloud.  In the past couple of years, she lead the effort to successfully move Blackboard Learn, PeopleSoft, and our Help desk and change management system to the cloud.  Additionally, we have been investing in cloud services to bring the University the best of the best of services such as enterprise file storage with BOX and OneDrive, Digital Signatures with DocuSign, Online trainings with Lynda.com, and most recently a cloud-based password manager just to name a few.

9. When Jinx was in charge of the technology help desk, one of the first she did was make it a 24 hour x 365 day help desk. Prior to that it was 8 hours a day x five days a week.  If you had an IT problem on Saturday or Sunday or in the evening, it had to wait.

10. KINBER , CIO of the year, ComputerWorld Honors Program

11. Bomb Threats – In early 2012, the University of Pittsburgh was subjected to over 160 bomb threats and the FBI and Secret Service were immediately involved.  Jinx was commended by the US Attorney by saying that they would not have been able to solve the crime without her help.  This lasted from February to August.  Jinx spent Easter Sunday in her office working on this case.

12. Pricing Model to Fund the Infrastructure Costs –  Paying for network infrastructure is not cheap.  Jinx developed a fair and equitable plan for funding network infrastructure on campus by charging a network access fee to departments based on head count of the staff and faculty that are in that department.

13. Jinx sits on the Board for Pittsburgh Technology Council.

14. Everyone else seeks her advice even though they are not IT.  For example many of the people responsible for other areas will always call and ask her advice on non-technical issues.  Some of the departments include General Counsel, Public Safety, the Center for Research Computing, just to name a few.

15. Jinx’s Relationship for Faculty  - Understands support piece. The first meeting I was part of when Jinx first became CIO was with Engineering faculty and screamed and hollered for about ½ hour at Jinx about her not letting them run their own network in their building. Everyone on Jinx’s staff was in awe and said nothing. (We all looked like deer in the headlights).  Jinx was cool and calm and explained the situation to the faculty and dean of the department and calmed them down.  Jinx’s staff that were at that meeting that day were dumbfounded how Jinx handled the situation and got the faculty to comply with the new network rules that were put in place.

16. PC Center and Office Systems Services -  Jinx was in charge of documentation and communications.  In  1987, she had the idea of opening a PC Center on campus and developing a group called Office Systems Services that assisted departments with Office Automation. When first brought up in her directors meeting, the other directors wouldn’t touch either of them with a 10 foot pole. Jinx took these tasks on and within a year, the PC Center and Office Systems Services was the most popular divisions within (Computing and Information Services)  which is now called CSSD.  I knew at that time when I first met Jinx that she would someday be the CIO and told her so back then.

17. Information Security is Jinx’s special Interest.  She inherited a security group that was 1 full time position and grew it over the next four years into a team of 14 people. She hired a consultant and in 2004 developed a security program that is still the foundation of everything security at the University of Pittsburgh.

18. Information Technology Plan   - In 2000 she developed the University’s first strategic plan that ser the direction of where we are today and provided a road map for the next 18 years to make the University’s IT infrastructure rival that of most corporations.

19. Another ground beaking thing Jinx did was in the late 1990s she developed a Faculty Computing Support Program affectionally know as UNA which stood for Ubiquitous network access. This program provided faculty with state of the are computers and networking to support their teaching and research. This program still exists today, but not with such a cool name.

20. Truckload Sale – In the decade of the 1990s when the PC Center was going full blast, Jinx had an idea to have students, staff, and faculty pre-order computers over the summer months and then hold a truckload sale at the beginning of the fall semester where tractor trailer trucks would deliver the PCs and students, staff, and faculty would pick them up over a four day period.  (Note: if you purchased a PC in the PC Center, it took almost 6 weeks to have it delivered. No inventory was able to be held due to space constraints).  The truckload sale was a way to get students and faculty their much needed computer right before the Fall semester went into full swing.  We did this for nine years and the first one was a learning moment and by the third one, Jinx had them running as smooth as silk.

(**HS.... The way I gauge the length is that the way I write, each page is about 1 1/2 minutes depending on how fast you speak. That means this speech would probably be at least 15-20 minutes BEFORE the conclusion. I would edit down to probably no more than 5 most important points.... that’s up to you. I can also try to shorten each point if you want)**.

Reed Hastings, the CEO of Netflix has said, “Stone Age. Bronze Age. Iron Age. We define entire epics of humanity by the technology they use.” The University of Pittsburgh was lucky enough to have had the “Jinx Age” for thirty one years and now we set our course for the next era. It will be largely based on the vision and talent of this consummate professional and while we will miss her presence in the day to day here at Pitt, Jinx Walton has built and sustained an unparalleled legacy. Jinx, on behalf of your colleagues here at the University of Pittsburgh, I want to acknowledge you for your enormous, enduring contribution to this institution... and beyond. We wish you immeasurable success in all you do going forward, and we say, **THANK YOU**.