

Good Afternoon,

several years ago, our System Dynamics Society established **The Outstanding Service Award** to recognize people who have made exceptional contributions to the Society and its mission through years of work. Inspired was this award by the volunteer work of the Society's First Executive Director, Julie Pugh. Those around me – Roberta Spencer, David Andersen, Bob Eberlein, and Andy Ford –, we make up the award committee. As I can confirm from my own experience, the award is always a complete surprise for the recipients, and it is therefore with a great deal of pleasure that we get to present it and watch the winners' reactions.

The Society formalized this award as the Outstanding Service Award in 2009, but before that, there were two **Lifetime Service Recognition Awards** given. In total, only six awards in this Outstanding Services category have been given. The award is, and will remain, special – and this year's award is especially special because we are awarding two people, two personalities with outstanding accomplishments.

No award was given in 2013, and that is because we were saving it up to be able to honor two people at once. Honoring **two** people in no way detracts from the contributions of either one. It is just that their contribution is not so much additive as multiplicative. Individually, both winners have done amazing things over at least the last two decades. Together, though, their accomplishments, and the resulting impact, has been greatly magnified. In short: Both of them deserved and earned the award individually, and on top of this, together they accomplished something astonishing.

This year's recipients are both very different and very similar at the same time. They come from different countries, they have not written any *System Dynamics Review* papers together. They have different areas in which they do work, one with a stronger technical emphasis and the other with a special focus on the modeling process – but of course both share the status of being exemplary System Dynamicists.

And, beyond that, they have much more in common. They are both full professors, one since 1993 and the other since 1998. Both go to extraordinary lengths for their students. In fact, it

seems everything they have done has benefitted the students of our field. Their story of being close colleagues despite the fact that they are certainly geographically no close neighbors is the story of so many people in our Society.

I personally have had the privilege to know both for many years and all what is said here as the official opinion of the International System Dynamics Society fully reflects my own views and experiences.

Both the recipients have fostered a culture of service and responsibility and set a standard to inspire others. It is my honor to announce the 2013/2014 winners of the System Dynamics Society's Outstanding Service Award and express our thanks to

Jac Vennix and Pål Davidsen.

Jac, Pål, would you please join me and the other members of the committee at the podium.

APPLAUSE

The sequence in which I now continue is arbitrary. Pål had the longer distance to cover to come to Delft, so I shall start with him.

Pål has taken many initiatives to move the Society forward, showing dedication over many years. Before becoming

President in 2003, Pål Davidsen was a **Member of the Policy Council** for 6 years. He has been an **Editor for the *System Dynamics Review*** starting in 1999 and ending in 2007. He was **Conference Chair** for the 2000 Bergen Conference, and **Program Chair in Italy** and now again **this year in Delft**.

He has taken valuable initiatives to move the **field** forward in **creating the System Dynamics Group at Bergen** and is an influential founding member of the Consortium Board for the **European Master Programme in System Dynamics (EMSD)**, being responsible for the overall content and quality of that program.

ROBERTA HANDS PLAQUE TO PÅL – MORE APPLAUSE

Jac has shown excellence of service and accomplishment over a sustained period of time. He was

President of the Society in 2000, before that he served on **the Policy Council for four years**. Jac was instrumentally involved in the *System Dynamics Review* for 17 years as a Managing Editor (1995 – 2004) and then Associate Editor (from 2006 – 2012). Jac **organized the 1992 Utrecht Conference**, he was **Program Chair** in 1999, New Zealand, and **Conference Chair** in 2006, Nijmegen. He is the Recipient of the **Jay W. Forrester Award in 1999**.

He also has taken initiatives to move the **field** forward: Jac is the **Executive Coordinator** of the Erasmus Mundus **European Master Programme in System Dynamics**.

As many of you know this Service Award is not the first honor Jac received recently. In the spring of this year Jac received a Royal Honour from the King of the Netherlands: **The Knight of the Order of the Lion of the Netherlands was conferred on him**. My English friends tell me, if Jac were an Englishman and had had received the corresponding honor from the British Queen, he had to be addressed as **Sir Jac**, his wife as **Lady Lois**. Jac, however, insisted that there no such habit in The Netherlands. Thus, we simply stay with Jac.

ROBERTA HANDS PLAQUE TO JAC – MORE APPLAUSE

I mentioned several times the **European Study Programme in SD** and the crucial role Jac and Pål played in its installation. It is in this Joint European Programme where Jac's and Pål's work comes inseparably together. This is what I meant, when I said in the beginning that “*together* their individual accomplishments, and the resulting impact, has been greatly magnified”.

I should point out that besides Pål's University of Bergen in Norway and Jac's Radboud University Nijmegen in The Netherlands, The University of Palermo in Italy and the New

University of Lisbon in Portugal are with great success participating in the program. Many students have had great opportunities and graduated from the **European Master's Programme in System Dynamics**. A substantial number of them is present here today, and, by attending this ceremony, expressing their thanks.

When we asked colleagues of both Jac and Pål the question “Who was the ‘most’ responsible for the success of the European Master's Programme in SD?” both sets said it was **their** colleague who should get the bigger share of credits. But nearly all of them agreed, actually it is too close to call. It certainly took more than these two to achieve this great result, but today we recognize them: **Pål Davidsen** and **Jac Vennix**, the 2014 winners of **The Outstanding Service Award**. Pål, Jac, would you like to say a word or two?

PÅL AND JAC GIVEN CHANCE TO SAY A FEW WORDS