

A SPECIAL REPORT

IMPACT

December
2024

How Stop Predatory Gambling is Leading With Love and Commitment

From Victim of Predatory Gambling to Passionate Advocate for Reform

Page 3

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2 Remembering the Legacy of JoDean Joy and Bill Evans

4 When Goliath Targets My Community

Update from National Director Les Bernal: Where We're Leading this Fight



For the last 30 years, we've been a passionate and committed grassroots network of citizens and organizations of all political stripes from across the US taking on our nation's most-neglected major problem: predatory gambling.

I firmly believe no network of citizens on any issue has had a bigger impact in states and communities in relation to

the size of its budget, especially when considering the Goliath we're up against, than the members of our organization.

Our National Board made a major decision almost exactly one year ago. They committed to do everything they can to help our members and partners make a bigger impact to stop predatory gambling across America.

In the very near future, you'll be receiving a letter from me that goes into detail about all that we've done to put our network on the right trajectory to make a much bigger, more transformative impact in communities nationwide.

Most importantly, the letter will include what is likely the biggest announcement we've ever made since our earliest members founded this organization in 1994. We're coming!

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IDAHO

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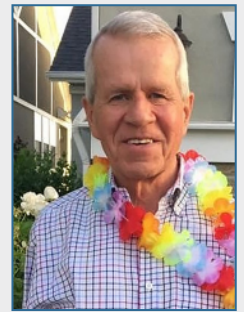
Remembering the Legacy of JoDean Joy and Bill Evans

We're sorry to announce that two founding members of our national movement to stop predatory gambling passed away in 2024: JoDean Joy of South Dakota and Bill Evans of Utah.



JoDean Joy (1934-2024)

JoDean brought a personal warmth, moral backbone, and relentlessness that made her a force to be reckoned with. She brought her state's political powers to their knees by almost winning a statewide referendum to eliminate electronic gambling machines operated by the lottery. She served our network more than 30 years.



Bill Evans (1942-2024)

Bill was a key player at the first meeting that ultimately launched our national network against predatory gambling. He also served as a Board Member for 30 years. In his capacity as State Director of Public Affairs for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Bill helped us navigate the perpetually rough waters of our national fight with invaluable wisdom, political savvy, and always with good humor.

The character traits both JoDean and Bill demonstrated by how they lived their lives helped to build the very special organizational culture that thrives in our national network today. We'll continue to do our best to honor them and all of our deceased members by the work we do every day to fulfill our mission.



Fact to Share With Friends & Family During The Holidays

Families will lose more than \$1 trillion of personal wealth to commercialized gambling over the next 5 years...
\$300,000 every minute!

Our Team Members

Les Bernal
National Director

Anisa Dirksen
Development Associate

Tom Grey
Senior Advisor

Cathy Krutz
Financial Manager

Rob Minnick
Video Content Creator

Eric Stamps
Digital Communications Director

From Victim of Predatory Gambling to Passionate Advocate for Reform



by Matthew Anderson

At about 10am on November 19, 2023, I awoke in the Riverside County (CA) Sheriff’s Department jail with no idea how I had gotten there. The last clear memory I had of the night before was playing blackjack at Pechanga Casino, one of more than a dozen Native American

tribal casinos within an hour’s drive of my home in the San Diego area. I was released and took an Uber back to Pechanga. My vehicle was still in valet and my belongings still in my hotel room. I had been arrested by Pechanga Tribal Police and transported to jail at about 3AM. My head was pounding and I had thrown up several times while in jail.

On the ride back in the Uber, I noticed that I had received several texts and emails from my bank about a \$50,000 cash withdrawal. This has to be a mistake. There is no way that I could have withdrawn \$50,000 on a Sunday night in a casino. My ATM card has a \$1,500 daily limit. I returned to Pechanga and after gathering my vehicle and belongings, I was given a lifetime ban notice from Pechanga. I asked about the \$50,000 transaction and was told that I needed to leave the property immediately.

Extreme depression and suicidal ideation set in over the next few days. I had been battling a gambling addiction for over 30 years but nothing like this had ever happened. When I processed what had happened, the first thought that came to mind was “that was predatory” so I Googled “predatory gambling” and Stop Predatory Gambling was the first link that appeared. I reached out to Les Bernal and he was gracious enough to respond to my email, listen and share info about Stop Predatory

Gambling. Without knowing, Les had talked me off the ledge,

I have a law enforcement and criminal justice background and I needed to find out exactly what had happened that night. I enlisted the assistance of the California Department of Alcohol and Beverage Control and the California Department of Justice. My investigation revealed that Pechanga had served me between 18-22 bourbons in the 4 hours that I was gambling \$1,000-\$5,000 hands of blackjack, stakes that I had never gambling before. I was also able to determine that Pechanga had circumvented my banking safeguards in order to access the \$50,000. No wondering that I couldn’t recall what had happened and felt so deathly ill in the following days. My blood alcohol content was a potentially lethal .36-.44%.

I have made every national Zoom meeting since Les’s initial invitation. I feel honored and privileged to be a part of an organization with such a noble cause. SPG has become an integral part of my recovery. Because of the wisdom and passion that you share, along with therapy and a deeper connection with my faith, 2024 has been a gamble- and alcohol-free year. I have filed a civil lawsuit against Pechanga that is making its way through the tribal court. I will be forever grateful to Les for responding to my email and taking my calls. Being a part of Stop Predatory Gambling has truly changed my life.

Help Us Help Others

If you or a loved one is an addicted gambler and you’re interested in volunteering on our Family Support Team to help other victims of predatory gambling like Matthew transform their lives to become advocates for reform, please email: mail@stoppredatorygambling.org with subject line "Family Support."

The author lives in San Diego, CA

Empowering Citizens and Communities Coast-to-Coast



Les Bernal with community leaders fighting against a proposed casino project following a public forum on predatory gambling in Coney Island, NY in February

When Goliath Targets My Community



by Steve Rolston

I did not know I opposed commercial gambling until a Nevada firm, Las Vegas Sands, announced plans to build a casino just four miles from my home on Long Island, NY.

I had already been aware that the state lottery targeted the wallets of low-income citizens. I had also grown irritated at sports and entertainment legends promoting online gambling through TV ads.

A local pastor posted on Facebook that he feared what this Long Island casino would do to his parish and his town. He had seen how gambling addiction destroyed families in his congregation. Sometimes, even suicide. This single Facebook post moved me to take the time to learn more about the issue. I posted a sympathetic response which ultimately led me here to Stop Predatory Gambling.

First, an anti-casino advocate saw my Facebook response and asked me to join a grassroots protest group, 'Say No To The Casino Civic Association' to fight against the Sands casino project. I am now a part of the leadership. One member of 'Say No' sent me good information unearthed by Stop Predatory

Gambling (SPG). I visited their website, where I learned there is a lot of research and literature as about this rapidly expanding gambling addiction crisis.

The leadership team at SPG led me to read the studies at The University of Illinois Law Review, the research by economist Lucy Dadayan and Professor Earl Grinols, the anti-casino advocacy of NY State Senator Liz Krueger, and a remarkable investigative report on how NY Governor Andrew Cuomo misled New Yorkers into allowing casinos in 2013. SPG, with its national reach, has been able to connect us with fellow citizens who fell into the lure of gambling and are now able to tell of their stories, which inform us of the manipulative ways people are targeted, particularly, the young and impressionable, the old and lonely, and people who are having financial difficulties.

Membership in Stop Predatory Gambling has given me tools and a wider support system to better prepare my own advocacy against commercial gambling, in general, and against the destructive idea to build a casino in Nassau County across the street from two universities and close by four lovely towns who do not want a casino. We will continue our fight for as long as it takes.

The author lives on Long Island in Baldwin, NY

Message from the President of Stop Predatory Gambling's National Board

By Dr. Jonathan Krutz, Boise, Idaho

Some people look away when they see others exploited. Not you.

Here's what the research shows. Those meeting addiction criteria provide 72% of slot machine revenue in Alberta, Canada. 70% of gambling revenue in Connecticut comes from the 6.7% of the population exhibiting addictive tendencies. In New Jersey, the top 10% of online gamblers bet an addiction-demonstrating average of 166,000 times per year. Meanwhile, governments, watchdogs for the well-being of their citizens, instead promote gambling and take their cut.

Gambling operators exploit addiction. Addicts are the VIPs, the target market, the main source of revenue. Taking money from addicts is easy. They literally cannot stop gambling it away.

Stop Predatory Gambling is you. Thank you for your efforts, your prayers, your contributions, your conversations, and your activism to educate policy makers and the public and call out the unconscionable exploitation and destruction of those susceptible to gambling addiction by gambling operators and governments blinded by an addiction-dependent revenue stream.



NEED A SPEAKER?

We can send a speaker to talk at your house of worship, event, meeting, college, or other group gathering.

Contact us by phone (202) 567-6996 or by email at mail@stoppredatorygambling.org

What is Predatory Gambling?

Predatory gambling is when powerful corporate gambling interests partner with state governments to use commercialized gambling to exploit and defraud citizens and their communities.

When gambling is being run as a business, it creates a predatory and adversarial relationship between the gambling operator and the gambler.



Experience a Transformation: Partner With Us

How We Work

- **“The Convener”** – We’re a national grassroots network attracting individuals and partner organizations from all political stripes, empowering citizens & communities
- **Educate Youth and Concerned Citizens** – We create tools, resources, and research about the problem of predatory gambling at no charge
- **Multi-Channel Awareness Campaigns** - We spread the word by traditional and social media, lectures, conferences, forums, house meetings, and other public events at no charge.
- **Targeted Policy and Advocacy** – We build strategic partnerships and conduct policy briefings at the federal, state, and local level

Three Things You Can Do:

- 1) Sign Up** - Receive a monthly update about the progress that is being made against predatory gambling and how our supporters are making a difference.
- 2) Become an Ambassador** - Be part of a team that educates, advocates and mobilizes at the community, state, and national level.
- 3) Donate** – Become a monthly donor to provide a reliable revenue stream for the work and projects we do and to help ensure the sustainability of our impact.



Scan to donate

Our Promise to You

- 1** We offer you the promise of transformation that comes from sacrificing your time, talent, and treasure to change the lives of others.
- 2** We promise to provide complete transparency to our partners regarding how their donations are used. As a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt non-profit organization, we post all of our IRS Form 990 filings on our website so they are always available to our donors. Thrift (defined as a wise and careful manager of one's resources - the opposite of commercialized gambling) is a core value of our network and is reflected in how we use our resources.

Gold
Transparency
2024

Candid.

View our Form 990s here: <https://www.stoppredatorygambling.org/501c3-information-finances/>

Members Impact in 2024

Mentions in National News Media include:



Defeated major gambling expansion bills in five states:



Big Impact Powered By Love, Truth... and Sweets

Legendary National Board Member Pat Loontjer greets long-time predatory gambling opponent US Senator Pete Ricketts (R-NE) with an ice cream cake for his birthday, Aug. 2024



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