Collins
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Printing and Distribution
Advanced Color Graphics

Collins is funded by the Hae & Shina Park in Memory of Dr. Donald Lundberg Alumni & Outreach Endowment. The magazine is published by The Collins College of Hospitality Management at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, and distributed to alumni and friends of the college.

The college would like to thank the Office of Public Affairs and the Office of Alumni Affairs for their assistance in this publication.

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Cert no. SCS-COC-001081
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ON THE COVER Partners Joey Wolosz and Jeffrey Durham own two hotels in Northern California, Passport Hotel Group, Inc. and Poem Cellars. They are standing in front of a mural depicting loggers in the 18th century at their Holiday Inn Express in Fortuna. Wolosz and Durham are each alumni of The Collins College of Hospitality Management and reside in the Napa Valley. PHOTO BY TOM ZASADZINSKI
From the Dean’s Desk

Every September when we usher in a new academic year, I am moved by a sense of renewal and optimism as we welcome a fresh group of first-time freshman and transfer students. This year that sense was amplified when, after two years in the making, we launched our Master of Science in Hospitality Management (MSHM) program. This is the only MSHM program in California and one of only 24 nationwide.

Creating a new academic program in the California State University, which is the country’s largest public university system, is a daunting task with many checks and balances. The CSU Board of Trustees approved the program last March; however, final approval came a mere week before the fall quarter started. We could have easily waited until the fall of 2011 to launch the master’s classes. However, we worked through the inherent difficulties of starting on a moment’s notice because we see value and potential with this program. Our first group of graduate students will be trailblazers for the college and the future of hospitality management education in California. Why wait on something that important?

This fall we also put out the welcome mat for more than 150 alumni. Alumni are the college’s best ambassadors, and we often look for opportunities to build connections with them. In October, the college invited alumni to a special installment of The Richard N. Frank Distinguished Lectureship Series featuring Jim Collins where we also commemorated the 20th anniversary of the Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch.

During Harvest Celebration on Nov. 13, we will honor Chip Conley, founder and CEO of Joie de Vivre Hospitality; Steele Platt, chairman and founder of Yard House Restaurants, Inc., and alumna Michele Gendreau, director of Food and Beverage for Walt Disney Parks & Resorts. The event will be held again at alumnus Bruce Gorelick’s Renaissance Hollywood Hotel & Spa. I want to thank Bruce for his continued support and welcome him as the new chairman of the Board of Advisors. Howard Gordon leaves big shoes to fill, but I am confident that Bruce is up for the task.

This issue of Collins has a strong focus on the hotel, spa and tourism sectors of the hospitality industry. I am pleased to see alumni Jeff Durham and Joey Wolosz on the cover. They have built a strong and diversified business portfolio as owners of two hotels, a brokerage firm and wine label. This issue also celebrates a national win by Associate Professor Dr. Jeff Brown. He competed and won the American Culinary Federation 2010 Chef Educator of the Year Award, the highest award in his profession. Additionally, Professor Dr. Jim Burke received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Travel and Tourism Research Association. Both of these awards not only reflect well on Jeff and Jim, but they cast a positive light on the college and help continue our distinction as one of the best hospitality management programs in the country. Please enjoy this issue of Collins, and I hope to see you on Nov. 13 at Harvest Celebration.

Andrew Hale Feinstein
Dean and James A. Collins Distinguished Chair
The Collins College of Hospitality Management
Cal Poly Pomona Benefits from Unprecedented Gift

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation has awarded $42 million for an endowment at Cal Poly Pomona to increase access to educational opportunities: it’s the largest cash gift in the history of the California State University system.

“Mr. Kellogg was a strong believer in higher education, and his vision of ‘investing in people’ has translated into the foundation’s fundamental belief that access to a high-quality education is vital to enhancing the lives of vulnerable youth,” said Sterling K. Speirn, the foundation’s president and CEO.

This grant, to be given over five years, significantly bolsters the university’s ability to reach out and serve underrepresented communities in Southern California, including first-generation college students and their families, military veterans and emancipated foster youth.

“This will be transformational,” University President Michael Ortiz said. “With these resources we will be able to change lives and contribute to the economic growth and prosperity of the region. The CSUs have long been the gateway to opportunity for generations of Californians, and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation is helping to ensure that the gateway remains open.” – TIM LYNCH
Culinary Garden Receives Honor

The Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch’s culinary garden received the Honor Award for its design at the American Society of Landscape Architects’ Annual Meeting and EXPO on Sept. 13. The garden is maintained by The Collins College and College of Agriculture. Students from both colleges volunteer in the garden, and the fresh vegetables, herbs and fruit it produces are used in dishes served at the restaurant.

“We wanted a productive garden, but it had to be aesthetically pleasing,” said landscape architecture graduate student Kyle McEnroe, who led student efforts to design the garden. “It’s tractor friendly and works well with foot traffic too.”

The location of the garden, adjacent to the restaurant, presented McEnroe with the challenge of preserving the view of the valley for diners. To make his design work, he opted for dwarf fruit trees and placed them on the garden’s slope, which has the added benefit of providing drainage for the trees. McEnroe says the project never would have happened without the support of others on campus, especially Dan Hostetler, professor and chair of the plant sciences department, and Andy Feinstein, dean of The Collins College.

“This is a wonderful learning opportunity where both College of Agriculture and Collins College students can work together in a living laboratory,” Feinstein says. “Further, our garden allows students to see firsthand benefits of sustainability, an integral topic of Cal Poly Pomona’s climate commitment.” – JUSTIN VELASCO, STUDENT

CSU Initiative Helps Transfer Students

Now in its second year, the California State University’s Hospitality Management Education Initiative (HMEI), headed by Dean Andy Feinstein, is working to assure that the transfer process from community colleges to CSUs goes as smoothly as possible for students.

It can be common for community college students to lose credits when they transfer to a university. For example, if a student were to take Hospitality Management 101 at a community college, credits from that course may not automatically be cleared to take the place of another lower-division course like Introduction to the Hospitality Industry at a CSU campus.

“Receiving proper credit for coursework already completed can be crucial for a transfer student’s timely graduation,” said HMEI Program Coordinator Robert Hartman.

The preapproval process, called articulation, is not automatic. Courses must be reviewed to ensure that they are substantially equivalent to the CSU courses they replace. The process is normally initiated by a community college, which sends individual course outlines to a single CSU campus for approval. For the past year, Hartman has collected course outlines for hospitality-related classes from 30 community colleges, collated them into packets related by subject, and submitted those packets to the CSU campuses that offer equivalent courses. This approach facilitated approval of 135 new articulation agreements during the 2009/10 academic year.

There are 14 CSU campuses and about 80 community colleges that offer hospitality management-related programs. In the coming year, Hartman plans to collect course outlines from an additional 50 community colleges and submit them for approval as well.

For more information about HMEI visit, www.calstate.edu/hospitality. – LCM

HMEI Hospitality Management Education Initiative
Edwin D. “Ed” Fuller, who has overseen significant growth for Marriott International, was the featured speaker in the 2010 Richard N. Frank Distinguished Lectureship Series in April. The president and managing director of international lodging shared his experience and industry knowledge during a discussion moderated by Dr. Edward Merritt in the college’s Wine Auditorium.

Speaking to a standing-room-only crowd, Fuller shared his thoughts on how Marriott International became one of the largest and most recognizable lodging companies in the world. During the last 20 years, Marriott grew from operating in 16 countries to a company that now spans 70 nations. It was a shift that took considerable work in how people thought, Fuller said.

“Twenty years ago I had to give anybody in Marriott who said the word ‘global,’ $20, and I actually did that just to get the term used, and let me tell you it was not that easy to give away the $20 because the company was very North American-centric,” he said. “I did a lot of work in training and education to try and sell that point.”

Operating in a global market is vital to the success of the U.S. economy, he said. Companies must look beyond their own borders to make an impact.

“Tourism is almost 10 percent of the world’s GDP today,” Fuller said. “Tourism is an industry that is growing not because of America’s growth but because of global growth and to that end I think it is an industry that this college will service by learning how to deal with a different customer, a more global customer, in a different environment, one that demands a different mix of skills.” – LCM

Thinking and Acting Globally

Sumo wrestling, fortune-telling and cheeseburgers, lots of cheeseburgers are how students ended the last academic year on a high note. During The Collins College Carnival each student club hosted a game or snack booth, including the Collins Hospitality Society (formerly The Collins College Alumni Chapter), which brought the sumo suits.

“We wanted to produce an event for the entire college to celebrate the end of a great year and enjoy the company of our peers,” said Akeel Shah, the immediate-past president of Hospitality Management Council, which organized the event.

Farmer Boys Food, Inc., based in Riverside, donated the food for the event, which included more than 250 of their signature cheeseburgers and side dishes.

“The Collins College is the only four-year college in Southern California that offers a hospitality management degree, so we have a lot of interest in recruiting students from there,” said Camille Chavez, director of training for Farmer Boys Food, Inc. “From a business relations and practical recruitment standpoint, this made a lot of sense for us because we were able to reach a whole new group for recruitment and to get our brand in front of college students. Plus we had a lot of fun.”

The students had fun as well; especially during the burger-eating contest. Joshua Aldama, who graduated in June, won the challenge by scarffing down a Farmer’s Burger the fastest and earned himself a Farmer Boys gift certificate. – LCM

Year-end Fun

Photos by Tom Zasadzinski
Making Headlines

*Inland Living* magazine featured student Akeel Shah on the cover of its July issue with an article titled “Taste of Summer.” Shah is holding a pie made by Chef/Lecturer Scott Rudolph. The pie features Cal Poly Pomona strawberries, which are seasonally available at the Farm Store at Kellogg Ranch.

Horsehill Vineyards Takes Home Another Gold

Horsehill Vineyards Rosé won a gold medal for the second year in a row at the Los Angeles International Wine & Spirits Competition. The dark mauve, fruity but not overly sweet wine was singled out as the best rosé in the competition.

The wine is a partnership project between The Collins College of Hospitality Management and the College of Agriculture. The Zinfandel rosé wine is made by master winemaker Jon McPherson of South Coast Winery in Temecula from grapes grown on campus. In addition to this wine, South Coast Winery earned five best-of-class awards, two gold medals and numerous silver and bronze medals at the competition.

The wine can be purchased at the Farm Store at Kellogg Ranch and the Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch. Proceeds from its sales support the culinary garden, which produces fruits, vegetables and herbs for the restaurant. For more information about Horsehill Vineyards, visit www.horsehill.csupomona.edu. – LCM
Student Fees Increased

Students will be paying more at the pump per se this fall. In response to recent legislative budget action, the California State University Board of Trustees voted in June to raise the fees by 5 percent for undergraduates and graduate programs. For full-time undergraduates, that translates into a $204 annual increase, and brings the total annual Cal State University fee to $4,230 for the 2010–2011 academic year.

The Collins College continues to work to offset the cost of education to its students. Each year, the college awards nearly $100,000 in scholarships to students. There is an additional $100,000 in industry scholarships that the college makes known to students.

“Even with the funding we have on hand to help students, many of the scholarships have special earmarks which prevent us from awarding them to incoming freshman who may be getting offers from competing universities,” said Dean Andy Feinstein. “We hope that in light of rising costs, people consider donating to our unrestricted scholarship fund, to keep opportunities plentiful for our students.”

To learn how you can help reduce the costs of education for Collins College students by making a donation to the Dean’s Unrestricted Scholarship Fund, please contact Cathy Hilliard at cahilliard@csupomona.edu or (909) 869-6910.

It is in the Service

Recipes can be duplicated. With enough capital, anyone can buy the best restaurant equipment. If a fast-food chain wants to distinguish itself – service is the key, Dan Cathy, president/COO of Chick-fil-A, Inc. said to a packed audience at The Collins College.

Cathy and an entourage of franchisees and members of his corporate team including son Andrew Cathy, visited the college in April. Their visit included lunch at the Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch, a tour of the college and a discussion moderated by Dr. Edward Merritt in the Wine Auditorium.

Cathy knows Chick-fil-A operates in a competitive market. However, one would be hard pressed to find another chain with consistently high standards for customer service.

“Rather than compete with the 99-cent menus and to compete with McDonald’s, Wendy’s and Burger King about how many new products we can add on our menu, we decide to compete with our service and to really define the service experience,” Cathy said. “It’s almost impossible to retool the way 50,000 people think and behave, but if you’ll take it on, it will give you unlimited competitive uniqueness and boy does it resonate with the customers.”

Chick-fil-A is one of the nation’s largest family-owned quick-service restaurant chains with more than 1,400 restaurants in 37 states. It does more than $3 billion in sales and has experienced 42 consecutive years of annual sales increases. Chick-fil-A is currently pursuing up to 20 new locations in Southern California. – LCM
There is no doubt that the hotel industry has taken a beating in the past year, but signs are pointing to a recovery, albeit a slow one. All three key performance measurements — occupancy, average daily rate, revenue per available room (RevPAR) — were up in June 2010 compared to a year ago, according to Smith Travel Research (STR), which is forecasting RevPAR growth of 5 percent for the year.

Even so, high unemployment rates, lack of conventional loans for hotel financing and a glut of overvalued hotel properties could hamper the recovery in some areas as least. If there is a lesson to be learned from the recent downturn, it is: be flexible, do your homework and do not be afraid to try new things.

Collins College alumni and partners Joey Wolosz and Jeffrey Durham, who own two hotels in Northern California, have turned a time of turmoil into a time for opportunity by investing in their properties and their people.

“We have found other opportunities we did not know were out there,” Durham said. “We’ve met some amazing people and had some amazing experiences that we would not have had if the past 14 to 16 months never happened.”

Other Collins College alumni, who are working in the industry, have tapped new markets, increased customer service and changed the way they do business. Here are their perspectives:

Wolosz and Durham bought the Holiday Inn Express in Fortuna, the heart of giant redwood country, two years ago and the Chablis Inn in Napa in May 2010. They also own the Passport Hotel Group, a hotel brokerage firm, and a winery called Poem Cellars.

While many hotel owners dropped rates and tightened their belts in the past year and a half, Wolosz and Durham have held steady on rates and made some strategic investments in people and property that are paying off. They hired a revenue manager for the Holiday Inn Express, who tracks rates and minimum lengths of stay at the hotel, monitors the competition, manages inventory and maintains the hotel’s presence on travel websites such as Orbitz, Travelocity, Priceline and Hotwire.

“There is no way we can stay on top of all that,” Durham said. “We really learned that we can be more successful as a team by outsourcing.”

Wolosz and Durham also hired a social media marketing consultant to post, monitor and respond to comments on Facebook, Twitter and TripAdvisor. “Social media is huge and it is free,” Durham said. The consultant created 20 pages of content for the Chablis Inn website including tips and tricks when visiting Napa Valley. If someone posts a tweet on
Twitter asking for a restaurant recommendation in the area, the Chablis Inn can respond with a recommendation, thus initiating a conversation. They also launched a campaign to manage their reviews on sites like TripAdvisor and Yelp by encouraging happy customers to post a review and by commenting on negative reviews with either an explanation or an apology.

The whole idea is to start a conversation and drive traffic to their website, Wolosz said.

The key to good reviews is a good staff. One of the main reasons the couple bought the Holiday Inn Express was because of the existing employees. They were showing the property to potential buyers when they realized how amazing the staff was.

“That was the tipping point,” Durham said.

Since then, the pair has created a recognition culture by handing out annual raises and giving employees a “quality of life” bonus of $50 every quarter that they can use to get a manicure, pay for child care or whatever else they choose.

“If we take care of our employees, they will take care of our guests and our guests in turn will take care of our bank account,” Durham said.

They also are investing in their properties. They recently painted the Holiday Inn Express exterior and added cosmetic improvements. Every week, they add a small upgrade to the Chablis Inn property like landscaping or added signage.

Business is picking up. Small business owners and sales people who stay at the Holiday Inn Express are staying longer and Durham and Wolosz are starting to see more European tourists.

One mistake people in the industry make is getting into what Durham calls “the sky is falling” mentality. It is too easy to get caught up in the bad news, which is one reason that Durham and Wolosz do not own a television set.

The industry needs to keep revenues in perspective. If 2008 was a banner year and revenues dropped in 2009 but were consistent with 2007, which is not so bad.

“Our RevPAR was down 1 percent last year. Fortunately or unfortunately, we are happy about that,” Durham said. “Some hotels in the San Jose area were down 20 to 30 percent. But, we did our homework. We did research. We knew what we were getting into and we knew the market and we made an educated decision.”
In 2004, Chris Chiotis founded Pacific Capital & Brokerage Inc., a boutique commercial real estate brokerage firm that specializes in hospitality. His primary business is acting as a hotel mortgage broker and providing financing for properties in the $5 million to $30 million range.

The current economic situation is grim for many hotel owners, who are overleveraged with assets worth 40 to 50 percent less than what they paid three or four years ago. Chiotis said a recent industry survey found that 478 of an estimated 3,300 hotels in California are in default or have been foreclosed on. Since 75 percent of all hotels in the state were financed or refinanced between 2005 and 2007, that means more than 2,500 may be underwater and as many as 10,000 nationwide.

Currently, banks are giving hotel owners some breathing room by opting to work out arrangements for lower payments, something called “Extend and Pretend,” but that will not last as banks come to the realization that values are not going to return to where they were three or four years ago, Chiotis said.

“Our clients have become banks and institutions who are quickly becoming owners but they are reluctant to sell on such depressed values,” Chiotis said.

The situation is creating a huge opportunity for management companies and asset managers with experience in the hotel industry to step in and operate the hotels on behalf of the banks, who are not interested in letting their investments deteriorate while they wait for the market to improve.

Chiotis said his company has shifted its focus to government-guaranteed financing, which is the only real source of capital for hospitality companies right now.

“Even though there are government guarantees in place and other incentives, banks are reluctant to pull the trigger on hospitality deals so locating a lender is like looking for a needle in a haystack,” Chiotis said. “We have access to some needles but it is tough out there. Conventional money is virtually non-existent.”

He predicted a “pretty big tidal wave on the horizon for the industry.” The banks will not hold onto these hotels forever, they are going to start selling them off. How it all shakes out remains to be seen. In the meantime, Chiotis is finding optimism in the smaller deals.

“We are still financing deals but it has to hit on all cylinders,” Chiotis said. “It has to be the perfect deal.”

Amelia Smallcomb, a senior business development manager with Gettys Group, Inc., a hospitality design, procurement and development firm with clients worldwide, said her company has had to be more creative as the competition has increased and more accommodating as clients are looking for greater value both at home and abroad.

“Before the economic slump, we would interview against two other interior design firms,” she said.

“Nowadays, we are interviewing with 15 or 20 and we have to compete in design competitions before we even get awarded the work.”

The types of renovations her company is hired to do also have changed. More clients are wary about spending money right now so they focus on soft goods like replacing pillows and comforters or changing upholstery on furniture to freshen the appearance of their hotels.

Smallcomb said Gettys has become more creative in spreading their services among other sectors of the industry such as looking at new opportunities of doing interior design for hospital waiting rooms and other public areas or serviced apartments concepts overseas in the Middle East with Rotana Hotels.

While hotel owners in the United States are investing in renovations, a majority of the new hotel construction occurs internationally where there is a shortage of rooms in areas like China, the United Arab Emirates and some Latin American countries.

The June 2010, STR Global Construction Pipeline Report showed that China ended the month with 138,492 rooms either under construction or in the planning stages, which accounted for more than half the rooms in the pipeline among Asian countries followed by India with 43,360.

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If Brandon Feighner was a weatherman, he would be predicting partly cloudy with patchy pockets of sunshine over Southern California and cloudy with gradual clearing over the rest of the nation. But Feighner, an associate with Colliers PKF Consulting USA in Los Angeles, does economic forecasts for the hotel industry not weather forecasts.

“If the national occupancy percentages are in the mid-50s, Southern California is in the mid-60s. Even if it is bad in California, the industry is a lot better off than places across the nation,” Feighner said.

Southern California is a dynamic economy with its array of leisure attractions and great climate. “Where else can you go skiing in the morning and hit the beach in the afternoon?” Feighner said.

Nationwide, things are beginning to pick up, too. Feighner’s company is predicting that recovery for the hotel industry will be strong through 2013. After reaching the bottom in terms of occupancy and other performance indicators, the hotel market is on the upswing.

“Business is returning to some semblance of normal,” he said. “People are dusting off projects and getting them going.”

A lot of Feighner’s business is with long-term clients like the City of Los Angeles with projects that have stretched out more than 30 years. He has noticed in recent months more phone calls and questions from clients, who are anxious about the economy.

Feighner’s company has been tracking trends in the hotel industry for 90 years with ups and downs every seven or eight years. His advice for anyone contemplating getting into the hotel business is this:

“First, I try to get them to understand that a hotel is a cyclical business first and foremost. They have to know the cycle and they have to know that hotels are a unique, unique business unlike an office or industry building. You have to continually rent each room, every night for 365 days a year.

“You have to know your asset and know what you’re getting into. Hotels are very much a relationship business and a lot of people did not realize that.”

Grace Lee is an economic development specialist for the City of Garden Grove Economic Development Department, which markets development opportunities within the city to promote and attract retail, industrial and entertainment ventures.

In the past 10 years, the Garden Grove has developed and assisted nine brand-name hotels including the Crowne Plaza Resort Anaheim, Hilton Garden Inn and the Hyatt Regency Orange County within the city’s International West Resort District. The district covers 560 acres of hotel, retail, dining and entertainment adjacent to Disneyland.

While some of the hotels in the district have experienced a decline in RevPAR ranging from 11 to 24 percent, Lee said others in the city’s resort district have seen increases of 4 to 24 percent.

The Great Wolf Lodge, a 600-room, 10-story hotel with a 100,000-square-foot attached indoor/outdoor water park, is currently in the planning stages and will become the district’s centerpiece.

Lee said the city capitalizes on a number of selling points from minimal infrastructure requirements to great access and visibility to entice businesses to locate in the city during the current economic downturn.

In order to stir recovery among businesses, the city created a “Buy in Garden Grove” program during the holiday season encouraging businesses to provide a special discount or other offer to customers who mentioned the program. The campaign was promoted in newspapers, cable TV, radio, flyers, direct mail and on the city’s website.

Long-term goals are important in a down economy, Lee said, because it keeps the city on track and motivates the Economic Development Agency to make deals.

“Deals are out there, but it just takes time to find the right one,” Lee said. “We know hotels, restaurants, entertainment venues want to come to the world famous International West Resort District, and it is all a matter of making the right deal.”
Dr. Jane Zhang and four Collins College students have taken Cal Poly Pomona’s learn-by-doing to heart by traveling to Mexico in aims of helping a spiritual resort earn a bigger stake in the $100 billion global wellness tourism industry.

Through demographic research, studying advertising options and building a potential client database, Zhang and her students have formed a plan to help the Sterra Hotel Spa build its client base with marketing.

Zhang was brought into the project through Eddie Hodges of Strategic Business Partnerships, Inc., who sought out her expertise to develop a plan to improve the resort’s marketing. The Sterra Hotel Spa is a secluded but posh resort in the state of Hidalgo, northeast of Mexico City. It holds traditional celebrations for the equinoxes and solstices and offers a variety of natural healing treatments. Hodges knew people willing to go to Sterra might be into meditation and yoga, which are offered. But those are personal practices that extend beyond one demographic group or organization making potential customers difficult to target.

On the advice of a colleague in Mexico, he started looking for colleges with four-year hospitality programs and met Zhang. A hotel developer and researcher of destination marketing, Zhang drove home the point that resorts at exclusive and remote locations need to target specific market segments and to adopt a selective marketing approach. Hodges liked her approach and awarded Zhang a $16,200 research grant to conduct special group marketing research. Seeing an opportunity to bring theory into practice, she assigned two research assistants and her 40 marketing students to develop plans to help the resort.

“If they can market this hotel, which is located ‘in the middle of nowhere,’ they are able to market anything in the world,” Zhang said. Studying spiritual tourism on an academic level helps students and marketers better understand customers in this growing industry, she added.

Divided into eight teams, classmates researched a variety of potential markets for spiritual tourism such as wellness, corporate and cancer survivors. The students also knew nothing about such resorts and found little about Sterra on the Internet. Students Diego Godoy, Anthony Liu, Tatiana Noguera and Kristina Petrossian decided they could only find out by going there. They paid for their own airfare and Sterra resort covered their expenses at the hotel.

“We wanted to do our best, to make this effective and not just a blind report,” Petrossian said.

At the hotel, Petrossian and Noguera spent three full days taking in every massage, treatment and ceremony the resort offered. Petrossian said it made a strong impression on her and inspired her to believe in what they were trying to sell. The 25-year-old college senior lives by her smartphone and works at Disneyland’s Splash Mountain and canoes. She experienced some
Dr. Jane Zhang and her students had these recommendations for the Sterra Resort and Spa:

- Build a social media presence on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube
- Sponsor spiritual travel conferences attended by tour operators and travel agencies
- Work with the International Ecotourism Society and its network in the industry
- Partner with specialty travel agencies
- Target the Southern California market with online and print advertising

Dr. Jane Zhang visits with people in the community near the hotel.

Zhang’s students became close with the people who worked at the resort during their trip. They respected the camaraderie they saw among the employees. They understood that if the resort flourishes, it will help the surrounding community flourish by creating more jobs. That understanding coupled with the coursework gave them the tools to execute the marketing research and develop proposals.

“The classes help because they not only teach you the lingo and technicalities, but a greater understanding of what you are representing and how it is directly correlated to other people on a personal level compared to on a business level,” Petrossian said. She and Noguera wrote about their experiences for the class and gave a presentation when they returned. Their inspiration was enough for the rest of the class to feel a stake in the project. Zhang watched as the students took ownership of their plans and ideas blossomed. The class looked at social networking opportunities and personal sales starting with a database of 1,000 potential clients.

Hearing about the students’ trips and learning what people took away from the resort gave Hodges a sense of how he needed to market the resort. “If someone is looking to have that experience and that life change, this is the place for them,” he said. “It’s not about a spring break vacation.”

The students compiled their research and prepared their ideas. Zhang put together a detailed marketing plan for Sterra’s top management team to execute in this fall. In August, Hodges and Petrossian presented the plan to the hotel in Mexico. The recommendations proposed to Sterra included operational changes such as purchasing a vehicle that could transport guests as well as marketing suggestions such as partnering with travel agencies specializing in ecotourism and sponsoring spiritual tourism conferences.

Working with universities and students, Hodges said, should be considered by more small- and medium-sized businesses. Hodges hopes to continue working with Zhang who wants to take this research beyond a class exercise. She has since applied for and received a follow-up grant for $5,000 from The Collins College. Her research will explore tourists’ psychological needs concerning nature-based tourism in underdeveloped regions.

“I like having the fresh ideas. The passion and the blank canvases they bring are helpful,” Hodges said.
Student spearheads software overhaul to keep real-time data on the college’s wine collection

BY SONJA BJELLAND
More than 2,500 bottles of wine line the walls of The Collins College's wine library kept chilled between 55 and 58 degrees. These days, each bottle is in a designated spot. However until recently, this fine attention to detail had not always been the case.

With a number of beverage courses and the Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch using the wine library for storage, it was not uncommon for the collection to become askew. As a teaching assistant for the wines of the world course, Jake Vallens could spend 30 minutes finding bottles needed for each class. He knew there had to be a better system for finding the wine, so he mixed his background in computer sciences with his love of wine to find a solution.

The college is now working with the web-based company CellarTracker, and Vallens has documented the library creating volumes of data about the wines. Each bottle dawns a barcode sticker that is scanned into the system and contains details about the wine such as vintage, region, varietal and tasting notes. The software also works with any web-connected device so a professor can check from a smartphone for instance if there is certain Chardonnay. If someone was looking for a Chardonnay, he or she could search by varietals, region or vintage. A list would reveal how many bottles of that Chardonnay are in stock. Each individual entry would then display comments made about that wine as well as the column and row where the wine is kept. Before the bottle leaves the library, the barcode would be scanned and its use noted. Such features allow the college to track how wine is used over time.

The new tracking system also allows students, faculty and staff with the Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch to know the inventory of its extensive wine selection in real time. Knowing what types of wines are in stock at all times makes it easier for students and faculty in the restaurant to determine if they have enough product or if something needs to be ordered.

Associate Professor Dr. Margie Ferree Jones said she is already reaping the benefits of the reorganization. Having so much information easily accessible about which wines are available allows her to spend more time planning lectures and being more thoughtful in her wine selections. She has also thought of other ideas for the data such as checking to see if she is showing a bias for a particular brand.

Teaching students about the wine database also shows them what is possible in today’s technology-driven world and keeps the college current with the industry, Jones said. “The less time I can spend schlepping, hunting and pecking, the more time I have for students,” she said.

Vallens’ effort to document the wines in an independent study class not only served the college but also helped him personally overcome the impacts of a nearly fatal injury. Last year, while a friend was cleaning a gun after the two had visited a firing range, the friend accidentally fired at Vallens from about three feet away. The .45 caliber bullet shattered Vallens’ right forearm, shredded part of his colon and pancreas and stopped an inch from his aorta. He underwent several surgeries. Metal rods and screws with freeze-dried cadaver bone restructured Vallens’ arm which has nearly fully recovered, but his organs sustained permanent damage.

Three and a half years into his wine studies, Vallens was on a fast track to pursue a career in the wine industry. He had lined up a competitive internship that was to take him throughout California’s wine regions for several months and a scholarship wine trip to Italy. His injuries however, came on the eve of both activities and prevented him from consuming wine. If he consumes more than a few ounces of wine he now risks becoming seriously ill.

At 23, Vallens had to find a new career path, and he was not fully ready to give up wine. Diving into the database aspect of wine collecting gave him a project to focus on while he healed and new career possibilities that better suited his personality and skills. “In the beginning, I’d be in here until my nose was numb from the chill in the cellar, but I love what I’m doing and seeing these things come together makes it all worth it,” he said.

Vallens has taken what he has learned to develop a company called Slightly Sweet, which works with CellarTracker to help hospitality operators better track and manage their wine and beer collections. He is working with faculty and staff to beta test the system with the Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch.

CellarTracker is a website and software company that contains information on more than 850,000 wines and allows people an easy way to catalogue and track their collections. The information comes from entries made by about 110,000 registered CellarTracker users as well as being aggregated from wine sites such as Burghound.com and Sommelier Journal. Founder and Owner Eric LaVine originally started CellarTracker for personal use and then expanded to friends. Now, CellarTracker focuses on individual collectors who can check what price a bottle sold for at an auction and look up reviews.

Collections such as the wine library add new and rare wines thereby improving the database for everyone else, LaVine said. Even with the thousands of wines entered in the site, not everything in the library had been previously documented. For Vallens, that meant researching bottles such as a Sansovino Friulano, which was made in small batches in Italy. “If they’re adding information then they’re adding value to the community and the web as a whole,” LaVine said.
The spa and wellness industries have grappled with the ebb of the world economy during the past three years, but like many industries a flow has begun and turnaround is occurring. This turnaround is often being done with an eye toward environmental sustainability and an understanding that the aging baby-boomer market may be a saving grace.

These topics and more were discussed in detail at the 4th annual Global Spa Summit (GSS) this past May. Professionals in the spa and wellness industries converged on Istanbul, Turkey from all corners of the globe to attend the summit which is modeled after the World Economic Forum held each January in Davos, Switzerland. Like the forum, the GSS created collaboration and community by addressing issues and trends that impact the health and well-being of these global industries.

“The new research presented concurs that not only is the economic turnaround now re-energizing the global spa economy, but that a more extraordinary, long-term opportunity is looming: to dramatically expand our industry's stake in the massive health and wellness markets,” noted Susie Ellis Board member of the Global Spa Summit.

“Bridges Worth Building” was an appropriate tag line for the summit both for its content and location. The conference hotel, the Ciragan Palace Kempinski, sits on the banks of the Bosporus Strait in the shadow of the suspension bridge that connects the land mass of Europe to that of Asia. The conference’s content embraced a number of disciplines and topics such as: trends in medicine and wellness; social issues; the development of sustainable spas and communities; social networking; fitness and leisure activities, as well as the financial and economic silos related to the ever-expanding spa industry.

As a regular GSS participant, hotel educator and vetted spa professional, I found the agenda to be informative, thought provoking and insightful. Participants included educators, innovators and CEO's invited to attend, based on their contributions to the industry and their professional ability to guide material changes in the industry. Each attendee was invited to share their insights and discuss options on ways to enhance health, hospitality and lifestyle trends. The sharing was presented during plenary sessions, round table discussions and the informal exchange of insights over meals.

Achieving environmental sustainability by spas is an inherently challenging task, and one that was discussed in detail at the summit. It is well noted that spas need to be aggressively involved with the efficient use of both water and energy because that is socially, environmentally and economically prudent. To that end, sustainability and spas have a special relationship that challenges all stakeholders in this industry, from equity holders to service providers and ultimately the consumers. However, the idea of parsimoniously deploying resources to guests in a pampering and luxurious environment is innately counterintuitive. During the summit, architects, designers and operators all weighed in on the pros and cons of various
energy efficient systems and what that means for the short-term sustainability issues related to the industry, including efficacy of treatments and customer satisfaction.

It is important to note that from a resource-use perspective, spas can be a hotel’s greatest user of both water and energy; consequently mismanagement of either or both has the potential to be a drain on the profitability of the spa. (For instance, one spa treatment room in a 12-hour business cycle can use seven to 10 times the number of towels, sheets and robes that a corresponding guest room uses in the same 24-hour-period.) There are significant water requirements by the front-of-the-house because of bathing rituals, experiential showers and other recreational activities. The need for water is further exacerbated by additional back-of-the-house laundry, linen and general building cleanliness requirements. Additionally, energy for both front- and back-of-the-house is required to regulate air temperature for guest comfort and water temperature for showers and baths. This is a rubric that clearly was not solved at the conference, however the first steps were made by looking at what questions to ask and how to prioritize them.

Many environments that are energy rich lack water resources and vice versa. It appears that over time with equal measures of innovation, inspiration and technology we as an industry will address these needs and shape consumers’ expectations accordingly.

Sustainability of resources ran parallel with “quality-of-life sustainability” during discussions at the summit. Underpinnings to this topic included presentations related to aesthetics, healthcare, general wellness, fitness and subsequent consumer desires. It is clear that the spa user of 2010 is looking for experiences that sustain and enhance their quality of life on multiple levels, such as physically, emotionally and spiritually. It is also clear that this thorough approach to wellness may prove to be successful while expanding the baby boomer market.

A number of presenters, including western-trained physicians and globally recognized wellness practitioners identified areas that supported empirical trends regarding body/mind connection and spa programs that are located in clinics and hospitals where comprehensive patient care is provided. These dual wellness programs address the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the patient. In most cases, not only were the outcomes generally better, but the costs involved were often less due to expedited healing times and fewer subsequent complications. In view of this research, the ramifications for an aging population are astounding. It appears it is within the spa and wellness industries’ ability to not only have clients look better and feel better, but actually be better … at any age.

Edie Weiner, a New York-based, futurist was the five-day summit’s featured speaker and she challenged participants by asking them to evaluate the application of the hospitality industry vis-à-vis the aging boomer demographic. Clearly, Weiner is on to something.

The spa industry has historically targeted women over 40 with promises of reversing the effects of time and gravity, keeping their promise that 50 really is the new 35. This is evidenced by profound growth in the sale of nourishers/anti-aging products worldwide. According to Euromonitor International, an aging population is the key demographic for the industry with 23 percent of boomer households having an income of more than $125,000 in the United States. While resort spa guest demand is generally split 50/50 between genders, the industry averages, which include day-, mineral springs- and club-spa visits computes to a 31 percent male and 69 percent female clientele in the United States.

As the conference came to a close it was clear that drilling deeper into the multi-faceted spa industry only created more questions and ultimately more opportunities for growth and expansion. Disciplines collaborated, friendships were made and promises to reunite at the Global Spa Summit 2011 were exchanged. While this conference is a five-day event it is actually an incubator for innovation and collaboration and the work of the participants is shared week in and week out on some levels for the other 51 weeks of the year when conference is not in session.

Peter Anderson is a longtime lecturer at The Collins College and is president and principal of Anderson and Associates. He also sits on the board of advisors for the Medical Spa Management program at the University of California, Irvine.
As a student or graduate of The Collins College of Hospitality Management, you probably chose this field either because you love the world of hospitality, or it is an industry that is stable and growing, or both. While the last few years have been challenging, you can be assured that the jobs in the hospitality field will not be outsourced overseas and the habits of the customers most likely will not change: people will still travel and go out to eat, and they will always appreciate a friendly smile.

I have spent more than 30 years practicing human resources, most of it as Chief Human Resources Officer for Golden Nugget and its successor companies, Mirage Resorts and Wynn Resorts. One of the coolest things I did during that time was start and run one of the most successful college recruitment programs in the industry. And now that I have just completed teaching two courses here at The Collins College, I have a better perspective of the views and needs of all of the participants in the college recruiting game. So, here is my take on how to find a good job:
Doing well matters as much as GPA

If you think a high GPA is what matters most, think again. Recruiters may use this to find what they think are the best students, but more goes into that decision than a look at your grades. Recruiters are interested in whether you completed your studies and probably will ask about the classes that you thought were the hardest in order to see how well you were able to do with them – it is a good way to see how you handled difficult situations and might be a good indicator of how you would handle others in the future. Once you get out of school, it is less about grades and more about performance relative to expected outcomes. Get prepared for that.

Experience counts

The work experience you get as a student is from vacation jobs and internships, so make the most of them. Choose assignments that are varied and interesting, and view them as a way to get an orientation to the various aspects of the industry and to broaden your knowledge and horizons. While you are there, make sure you work hard and make a good impression – recruiters just might check. And you may want to go back for a real job in the future.

Recommendations matter

Some of the best recommendations come from your teachers – they are the ones who know how hard you work, whether you participate in class and how well you do under pressure. These are all indications of how you will do on the job, so make sure you are always doing your best.

Communications skills are critical

In the real world, written and verbal communications are critically important to your success. Your memos, reports and other written communications will be seen by many; your words and body language will be heard and watched by everyone - remember that professionalism and accuracy and clarity and your demeanor are important. I learned early on that the difference between a good manager and a great manager is their ability to communicate effectively.

Knowing what you want is important

Use your time to try a variety of classes and jobs so you get an idea of what you like and dislike. Do not be shy when talking to recruiters about the areas that interest you the most; and do not be surprised or disappointed if you do not get your first choice. Companies are usually interested in placing students in operations positions (as opposed to sales and marketing jobs you may be hoping for) – if that is the case, use the opportunity to learn all about the business, how people work and what customers want. Knowing that stuff will make you more valuable in the long run.

Don’t Job Hop

If you have graduated and are already working, you should realize that your first job probably will not be your last. Work hard; learn all you can, and find a role model who can help you better understand the job and give you good advice. You may want to change jobs, but only do so for the right reasons and at the appropriate times. And remember that it is a small world, so do not burn any bridges.

You only get one chance to make a good first impression

The hospitality business is all about those moments of truth when you run into someone who is looking for something. Guests, supervisors and colleagues will all want part of you throughout a normal working day, so be prepared, do what is right and look the part; you want to act and be seen as a professional. The same is true with recruiters – they are watching as well as listening and will assess you on several levels, not the least of which is how comfortable, professional, personable and at ease you are in a conversation. Remember: smile, be sharp, and stay alert – first impressions matter. The hospitality industry is full of great opportunities. Those who do well always are prepared, work hard, smile and care about providing great customer service. If you are a student or graduate then you are certainly prepared to compete for any opportunities. Anyways, that is my take. I hope these ideas are helpful as you approach the world of career opportunities. Good luck!
Many family and friends came out in support of the 227 Collins College of Hospitality Management students who graduated on June 11, 2010 in the University Quad.

1. Graduates line up before the ceremony.
2. Dean Andy Feinstein and Jim Collins
3. Dr. Jerry Chesser gives the keynote address during the 2010 commencement.
4. Brittny Richard celebrates with her friend’s baby RJ.
5. Morgan Strain and Tyler Brown
6. Chef Mark Peel celebrates a long-overdue accomplishment - graduating from the college. He left school in the late 1970s before finishing his final project. A degree audit found he could use his extensive work experience and one of three co-authored cookbooks to satisfy his final credits.
7. Sean Van Straatum
8. Gia Nesbit gets a little help from a friend adjusting her mortarboard.
9. 2010 ASI Senator Matthew Mintzias high fives the faculty after crossing the stage.
Class of 2010: Enjoying Their Moment

PHOTOS BY TOM ZASADZINSKI
Student Marielle Croudo shares how her family and the Disney College Program inspired her to create joy for people through a career in hospitality

BY MARIELLE CROUDO
I remember the day I received my acceptance letter to Cal Poly Pomona; enthusiasm flowed through me. As a fourth-year student today, that excitement is visibly still with me. I love my days at The Collins College, and as more time passes the more I appreciate how the hospitality industry strives to create happy and lasting memories for people. Those memories are intangible but can be so important.

My appreciation for hospitality runs deep and in fact was sparked by watching the formation of new restaurants and in the kitchens of existing ones. During my childhood, I watched my father open and sell 13 restaurants in eight years in Mexico City, some of which are still open today. I have always admired him for his constant dedication to his businesses and employees. I would love to have a career that gave me the opportunity to have a positive impact on the lives of others, and I have certainly seen through my dad’s accomplishments that this can be done.

My father’s career has also had a major impact on my world view simply because it has taken us around the globe. I grew up in Mexico City. My family and I moved to Israel when I was 11 and on to the United States when I was a teenager. I have learned to see life and its value through different eyes, especially after the most tragic event in my life at four years old when my mom lost her battle against cancer. My family remained inseparable after that and with their help I grew up to be an independent, motivated and blissful individual. I rely on this strength in all my endeavors and know that it is possible to share it by helping others.

Embracing the spirit of hospitality can be accomplished through a donation of your time and skills and sharing that power to make a difference. Volunteering gives me an incomparable sense of fulfillment. At present, I volunteer for the Make a Wish Foundation, which grants wishes for children with a life-threatening disease. This non-profit organization focuses on people and it is wonderful and rewarding to know that that is the same in a hospitality career. Every day is different and exciting in the non-profit world and in hospitality work because of the interaction with people.

I know a career in hospitality, especially in event planning, is for me. However, when I began my college life at Cal Poly, I had a difficult time choosing a major. Most people have this kind of obstacle because they lack perspective or understanding about their career options. I was in a bit of a different situation; my problem was not that I did not know what I wanted to do, rather that I wanted to almost do it all.

While I was figuring out direction during my first year of college, I completed the Disney College Program. As a photographer, I worked in both theme parks and a few restaurants in the hotels. This frontline position allowed me to focus on customer service by interacting with a variety of guests every day. I began to understand that I helped create experiences. Our lives are made up of all kinds of experiences; good, bad, important, interesting, funny, etc. and I believe those experiences that are best become the most memorable. An experience is one that is exclusive to a person, and that is part of what makes it so special.

I saw a strong parallel with what was being taught at The Collins College and what was being practiced by the Walt Disney Company. So I decided a hospitality management degree would allow me to continue to make a difference in people’s lives through the creation of exceptional and memorable experiences.

Though the Disney College Program ended after my freshman year, I wanted to stay connected with the company so I applied to be a campus representative for the program. While this position is unpaid, the resulting rewards and experience as well as my passion for the college program are taking me far. This past summer, I volunteered for the World of Color Road Show in San Diego where I had the pleasure of meeting and working with the Disney Destinations Marketing Special Events Team. I assisted the team in many ways like informing guests about the event itself and World of Color at California Adventure.

I also had another wonderful and unforgettable Disney adventure thanks to my Disney supervisor and recruiter Kathleen Mock who referred my name to Dean Andy Feinstein. I joined Dean Feinstein and two other students to the Disney Studios in Burbank for a lunch with Jay Rasulo, CFO of the Walt Disney Company. This was an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and I was so grateful to have had the pleasure of meeting Jay and having a pleasant and casual conversation with such an admirable and successful person.

I have enjoyed my time at The Collins College so immeasurably and have joined a few of the student clubs. This academic year, I am on the executive board of the college’s Hospitality Management Council, and I am member of Cal Poly’s Top Line Ballroom Dance Company. I am equally happy to be back working for University Housing as a resident advisor (RA) in the Suites. As an RA, I interact with residents and plan a variety of events, always applying the same essential skills as those necessary in the hospitality industry.

It is an honor to be a Cal Poly Pomona student, but I feel even more privileged to be part of the family at The Collins College of Hospitality Management. I never thought I would be fortunate enough to be where I am today, but with hard work, determination, balance, purpose and great effort life will give you just what you put into and possibly even more.
The aromas, the food, the wine, and the wine regions of Italy were peaking as the Banfi Vintners’ Scholastic Trip to Italy embarked on its journey. Participants experienced eight days of everything hospitality and education had to offer this past May.

As a first-time faculty advisor and accompanied by Jake Vallens, The Collins College’s 2010 scholarship recipient, I had no idea what to expect on our journey to Italy. Would I be expected to lead discussions on Brunellos and Super Tuscans? Perhaps I would be expected to serve as a chaperon or as a faculty liaison for the college. From previous colleagues who have experienced the trip, I was only told I would have a nice time.

Upon arriving in Milan, I was pleasantly surprised to learn that I was as much a recipient of this scholarship as Jake. The trip, sponsored by the Mariani family and hosted by Sharron McCarthy, vice president of wine education; Bill Whiting, director of wine education, and Elizabeth Koenig, estate hospitality project director, was well planned, educational and oozed hospitality.

Our journey in food, wine and education began at Vigne Regale, best known for Brachetto d’Acqui or as we call it in the states, Rosa...
IN THEIR Words

Regale. It was there where we received our first tour of winemaking at its best. Alberto Lazzarino, director and winemaker for Vigne Regale, provided the tour and invited us to sample Rosa Regale from the holding tanks used in the winemaking process. The highlight of the trip was the barrel tasting. This tour culminated in a buffet spread full of cheeses, cured meats, salads, desserts, and of course wines from the Piedmont region.

“Riunite on Ice, that’s Nice”... For some that statement may bring a smile to your face, remembering the commercials in the 70’s advertising Riunite wine. Riunite was the beginning of the Mariani family’s introduction into winemaking. Our visit reminded everyone that quality wine can be made affordable.

The educational component of our journey continued as we visited Gamba’s barrel-making facility, where we met proprietor Mauro Gamba. Gamba is a family-owned company whose sole purpose is to make high-quality upright wooden tanks, fermenters, casks, puncheons and barrels. Gamba uses present-day technology with old world craftsmanship. The owner spoke about only using American, French, and Eastern European oak. As we toured the plant, we saw the wood being aged, then cut to specification, formed into the shape of a barrel, sealed and toasted. Wow!

Parmigiano Reggiano anyone? Our next stop was to La Grande, a Parmigiano Reggiano cheese making facility. We were greeted by the manager of the plant. With the exception of milking the cow, we experienced the entire process of the Parmigiano Reggiano production. The facility we visited had more than $2 million in cheese wheels ranging in various ages. We were especially fortunate because we had the opportunity to witness an official from the Italian government authenticating each Parmigiano Reggiano wheel by burning an emblem on each wheel.

Each day of our journey was filled with awesome experiences, such as visiting an olive oil producer, participating in a Tuscan cooking class or visiting a family owned bakery in Montalcino. The highlight of the trip was our visit to the Banfi Castle and winery where we met John Mariani, matriarch of the Mariani family, his wife Pam and niece Virginia. A lecture and tasting of Banfi wines was followed by lunch at the castle. We visited their state-of-the-art winery, where we had the pleasure of John Mariani as our tour guide. Mr. Mariani introduced us to the innovative techniques used at the winery to ensure high-quality wines are produced. My discussion of the Banfi winey tour would not be complete without mentioning the phenomenal multicourse meal hosted by the Mariani family at the castle.

Our journey to Italy was a spectacular opportunity to experience great food, excellent wine, and hospitality from our hosts, Sharron, Bill, and Elizabeth like no other. The Banfi Vintners’ Scholarship is an excellent opportunity for students and faculty members to gain life-changing experiences. For potential students applying for the scholarship, good luck and for the faculty advisor fortunate enough to accompany the student, set back and experience the food, the wine, and the meaning of hospitality.

Lesley Butler is a member of the Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch faculty team. She recently went on the Banfi Vintners’ scholarship tour, which took her to some of Italy’s finest wine regions.
When you started with Marriott in 1979, did you imagine you would still be working for the company today?

I really didn’t at that point. I knew it was a company that had a long history and a great track record for growth, and I wanted to be with the company that I could stay with for a long period of time. But yes, being with the company for 30 years is a bit of a surprise looking back. I’m not the only one by far. It’s almost mind-boggling the tenure people have in our company. That says a lot about Marriott and it says a lot about our culture.

What does Marriott as a company do to build such loyalty and tenure among its team?

I think it starts with our founder, Mr. Marriott Sr. and the ideals and the culture he established from day one. He is famous for saying “Take care of your employees and they will take care of the customer.” When that takes place, the customer will come back and profits will come. There’s something wonderful about working for a company where you feel like you’re part of a family, and that’s something that I don’t think a lot of companies can duplicate.

You became general manager of the Renaissance Hollywood Hotel & Spa in 2005. What have been some of the biggest changes to the property during that time?

Ten years ago, this was a new development. We are located at Hollywood and Highland next door to the Kodak Theatre. In the early years, it was all about filling this hotel and exposing it to the new Hollywood. The early lifecycle of the hotel focused on an occupancy strategy, to fill the hotel so people are exposed to it. The room rates are not necessarily as important.

I came here in the middle of that lifecycle, and the real challenge was how I change this hotel to focus more on profitability. We need to make some money now, not just put heads on beds. I had to totally tweak the business model of this hotel, everything from the rooms department to the food and beverage department to make this a viable, strong asset for the ownership group. That was probably the biggest change in culture. As you raise rates, the expectations of the customers also raise. So we revamped service strategies and modified service offerings, upgraded offerings to enhance the experiences here, because along with that rate increase, you have to have enhancements or the customer pushes back.

How does the hotel embrace being in the middle of Hollywood?

We would be just another hotel if we didn’t. Our location and connection to Hollywood is the cache of this hotel. We are the home of the Academy Awards. You can sense that year round in all our photos and marketing materials like my blog, the hotel webpage, and so forth. Our marketing materials all talk about the glitter, the glamour of the Hollywood experience. We are all about Hollywood. Otherwise we would be just a vanilla building.

What is your relationship to the Kodak Theatre?

The Kodak Theatre attaches to my ballroom. This hotel was actually built and wired for the Academy Awards, so all the television wiring and electrical is tied into the Kodak Theatre. When the winner receives their statue and they disappear behind the stage, they actually go through a hallway called Winner’s Way that ends up in my ballroom where the press are waiting in bleachers asking questions and taking pictures. The winners then return backstage and during the commercial breaks, they sneak back to their seats.

In addition to the Academy Awards, Britney Spears filmed a video at your hotel and American Idol held Hollywood Week there. How does this celebrity culture impact operations at the hotel?

It’s fun for the staff and it’s fun for the guests that are staying here. This celebrity presence adds life to the property and some buzz. We have movie shoots here quite frequently. Yes Man with Jim Carrey filmed here a few years ago and we had Collateral Damage with Tom Cruise and Jaime Foxx and many TV shoots. One would think the filming would interrupt the guests checking in because they are in the lobby and so forth. Well, 90 percent of our guests go “God, they’re shooting a movie," and it’s not an inconvenience, they love it. So we encourage it to be honest.
**How did your degree in hotel and restaurant management prepare you to start your career with Marriott?**

I went right from Cal Poly Pomona to the management training program with Westin, which at the time was Westin International at the Century Plaza Hotel. I felt so comfortable walking into that hotel because I felt like I had been there done and done that. Dr. Lundberg and the program that we had at Cal Poly at the time were all about hands-on education. I felt confident in any department I trained in because I already knew something about it.

**Over the years, you have remained active with The Collins College namely through the Board of Advisors. What are some of the reasons you have remained committed to the college and university?**

There are a lot of reasons. The No. 1 reason is to give back to the university. I’m sitting here with a great life in a great industry that I love, and I owe a huge debt to Cal Poly, and I believe in paying back. Two, is I love working with the students and I love mentoring.

It gives me great satisfaction to look back and see students I’ve mentored maybe six years ago who have graduated and are now leaders in the industry. I also love working with faculty. There are such bright folks there and a great dean, doing wonderful things for the college.

**The college’s Board of Advisors unanimously voted for you to be its next chairman. What are some of the key goals for the board in upcoming years?**

We all have to remind ourselves on occasion we are the Board of Advisors, and we’re there to support the dean and the faculty and not be directional in nature. My first goal is to really glean what Dean Andy Feinstein, the staff and faculty need, and then do my best to carry that out. To me the No. 1 goal is to be able to be a good soldier and be able to corral these great minds and great people, to harness their energy and to move us forward in an expeditious fashion.
$150 million University-Wide Comprehensive Campaign

For the first time, Cal Poly Pomona has launched a comprehensive fundraising campaign. The Campaign for Cal Poly Pomona strives to raise $150 million over five years to strengthen its ability to provide hands-on learning opportunities, to prepare students for the changing demands of workplace, to increase research and scholarship opportunities, and to ensure that a quality college education is within reach for underrepresented communities.

Contributions to any of The Collins College’s programs listed here will help the university come closer to achieving its $150 million goal.

Your gift makes a difference

The Collins College of Hospitality Management has a legacy of private support. Over the years, this support has allowed the program to grow and distinguished itself as a leading hospitality management program in the United States. It is important that this legacy continues so future generations of students can benefit from state-of-the-art facilities, scholarship opportunities and many other ways that make the college a bastion for future leaders in the hospitality industry.

Show your support

Your charitable donation enables the college to support a wide variety of needs including student scholarships, faculty research, alumni outreach and new and rejuvenated infrastructure projects. Show your support by giving to one of the college’s existing funds, giving a one-time scholarship, or creating an endowment in honor of an individual or organization of your choosing.

Student Scholarships

Linking scholarship benefactors with outstanding students is one of the most gratifying ways in which the college fulfills its fundraising mission. You can give a one-time scholarship, create a scholarship endowment or contribute to the college’s existing scholarship endowment. The college is especially in need of scholarship funds designated for the recruitment of incoming high-achieving high school and transfer students.

Student Services Endowment

Student enrollment rose significantly in the last four years. This growth is important to the continued success of the college, and it necessitates additional resources to meet student needs. Funds generated by this endowment enable the student services team to continue supplying the highest level of support possible, including more one-on-one time with advisors, additional educational workshops and materials to address common student needs, and more partnerships with employers to secure internships and job opportunities. It will also enable the team to honor a greater number of requests from middle and high schools and community colleges for campus tours and participation in off-site activities, such as college and career-day events.

Capital Improvement Projects

The number of students applying to the college and the industry’s demand for qualified professionals, are higher than ever. Our strategic plan calls for new buildings that will allow the college to expand in order to accommodate existing and new students as well as additional faculty and staff to serve them. The proposed plan for a college expansion places new academic buildings on the hillside between the college and Kellogg West Conference Center and Lodge. Taking advantage of the natural slope, the buildings will be constructed on a series of levels, creating a setting that is space-efficient, environmentally friendly and visually exciting.

As the college embarks on its expansion plan, the college’s namesakes, Carol and Jim Collins, have once again demonstrated their generosity and leadership by pledging to match up to $5 million in donations for new academic buildings. “Carol and I want to see this dollar-for-dollar challenge invigorate a broad base of industry and alumni support,” Jim Collins said.

“The Collins College is a premier hospitality management program, and it needs our support to continue to grow and make an impact on students and the hospitality industry.”

Your major gift can name a building, faculty office, or specialized classroom or provide program support through an endowment.
Lab Equipment

Donations given for lab equipment allow the college to provide students with state-of-the-art tools they will encounter in the real world. This includes equipment for the Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch, demonstration auditorium, computer lab, wine library and laboratory kitchens.

Faculty Research and Development Endowment

Promoting and supporting our faculty is critical not only to the college’s long-term health but to the growth of our academic program. The Collins College’s faculty research and development endowment was created by alumnus Hae Park and his wife Shina, with a matching gift from Carol and Jim Collins. Funds generated by this endowment provide our faculty the opportunity to engage in research and professional development activities, which enable them to provide students the most current information, engage with a wider academic community and to foster important relationships with industry.

Faculty Fellows Program

If the college is to continue to compete with other top hospitality programs, it must empower faculty members to reach their full potential. New faculty, in particular, require special attention. The Faculty Fellows Program is designed to subsidize reduced course loads, which would allow them to be more engaged in academic and professional development.

Alumni and Outreach Endowment

The alumni and outreach endowment was created by Hae and Shina Park in memory of Dr. Donald Lundberg, the founding professor of the hospitality management program. Revenue from this endowment funds the college’s director of communications and external relations position, which manages the college’s marketing, oversees production of Collins magazine, supports the college’s alumni chapter, and handles media relations. These activities enhance the college’s visibility and stature and strengthen its alumni base.

Dean’s Associates Program

The Dean’s Associates Program provides unrestricted funds which can be utilized at the dean’s discretion, based on areas of greatest need within the college. Such funds provide a margin of flexibility that allow the college to respond to emerging needs, to leverage existing resources and to capitalize on unique opportunities. These funds might be used to provide students with opportunities for professional growth, such as traveling to industry conferences and events, to employ skilled students to work on special projects or to engage special guest speakers.

Harvest Celebration

Participation in the annual Harvest Celebration is one more way you can support the college. Since its inception in 1994, Harvest Celebration has become a hospitality industry tradition that celebrates the achievements of such industry legends as Alice Waters, Julia Child, Margrit and Robert Mondavi and Richard N. Frank. Proceeds of the event provide financial support for the academic programs and Collins College facilities. For further event details, please visit http://collins.csupomona.edu.

The Value of an Endowment

Administered by the University Educational Trust, the college’s endowment funds are permanent assets which are invested long term to generate revenue which supports the college and its programs. An endowment can be established for as little as $10,000. Endowed funds are critical to The Collins College because they provide a permanent source of annual funding.

Alumni Association’s Matching Gift Program

For a limited time, the Cal Poly Pomona Alumni Association will match any cash gift up to $1,000. Contact the Office of Alumni Affairs for more details at (866) CPP-ALUM or cpalumni@csupomona.edu.

To Make a Gift to The Collins College

There are several ways to make donations. Checks and credit cards are accepted. Pledges to pay your gift in specified amounts over a period of time may also be made. You may also participate in an automated monthly giving plan. To make a gift to the college, complete and return the envelope located in the center of the magazine or contact Cathy Hilliard at (909) 869-6910.

All gifts to the college are tax-deductible.
The Collins College benefitted from $624,577 in gifts, pledges and bequests from generous donors in the last year. These funds will be used in a variety of ways such as bolstering an endowment to support the Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch, establishing new scholarship opportunities for students and supplying state-of-the-art equipment for laboratories.

The college also generated $68,070 from other income such as the ticket sales from Harvest Celebration and revenue from the Professional Development Institute.

“I want to wholeheartedly thank the donors who have supported the college during the last year. When people give they are making an investment in the future of the college and the long-term health of the hospitality industry,” said Dean Andy Feinstein. “We cannot continue to be one of the nation’s premier programs without ongoing support from our partners in industry and alumni.”

Notably, Cal Poly Pomona alumni Mickey and Lee Segal, whose son Andrew is a Collins College alumnus, made a $250,000 bequest to the college. Mickey Segal said the experiences he gained during his time at Cal Poly Pomona proved invaluable in launching his career, including work at a firm that served entertainment clients. From there, he co-founded Nigro, Karlin & Segal, a Los Angeles-based CPA firm also rooted in the entertainment industry. He is now managing partner at Nigro, Karlin, Segal & Feldstein, LLP, a certified public accounting firm based in Century City.

“Lee and I are proud to support The Collins College. Our son received an excellent education there and we feel compelled to give back and help build this important educational resource for future generations to come,” Segal said.

The Donor Honor Roll features the names of individuals, businesses and organizations that have provided cash gifts or gifts-in-kind to The Collins College from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010.

Bold names are members of the college’s Board of Advisors.

* Donors identified with an asterisk are alumni of The Collins College of Hospitality Management.
California Restaurant Association
Canary Hotel
Castle Brands
Cat & Jennifer G. Cora
Darden Restaurants
Fleming’s Steakhouse
Howard R. Gordon
Bruce Gorelick*
Hotel Casa Del Mar
In-N-Out
The International Gold and Silver Plate Society
Jeff King / Jeff King Consulting, Inc.
Lawry’s Restaurants, Inc.
Long Beach Area Convention & Visitors Bureau
Marriott International, Inc.
Michael R. Hawkins / MCL’s Elevenfifty Green Street Restaurant
Network of Executive Women in Hospitality
Panda Restaurant Group, Inc.
Mark W. Peel*
David A. Phifer
R.W. Smith & Co.
Michael Rable
James A. Rasulo
Michael J. Ross*
Stephen E. Scherer
Mickey Segal
Eddie Sheldrake / Polly’s, Inc.
Shutters on the Beach
Thomas M. Simms
Robert W. Small
Debbie & Ned Snively
Spago Beverly Hills
Ste. Michelle Wine Estates
Jackie Trujillo
Douglas R. Watson
Woodbury Financial Services, Inc.

$1 to $999
John S. Abbs
Aliso Creek Inn
Diana R. Alvarez
Anonymous
Arthur S. Archibald*
Monte Baier
Bruce Baltin
Dolores A. Barsellotti
Russell W. Bendel
M. Joy Bennett
Bryn Bevans
Lisa D. Bogard*
Marylouise & Ernie Briones*
Jeff Brown
Tyler Brown*
Barbara Jean Bruin*
Robert S. Burkett
Ronald W. Burreson*
Lesley Butler*
Leticia Calderon
Vikki Caldwell
Richard W. Carey
Sophia Chan*
Justin A. Chemelowski*
Jerald Chesser
Dorianne M. Chuilli*
CIC Research
Brian Condon
Donna Dannan*
Tiffany M. Darrell*
Jerald Chesser
Dorianne M. Chuilli*
CIC Research
Brian Condon
Donna Dannan*
Tiffany M. Darrell*

Theresa L. Geno*
Lois B. Godfrey
Michael Godfrey
Camille Godwin-Austin
Margaret A. Grainger
Theodore J. Grier
Stacy R. Hall*
Steven J. Halley*
Lisa Hatfield
Danielle A. Heider*
Scott P. Heiss*
Cathleen C. Hession
Lisa A. Hida*
James M. Higson
Dorothy Horowitz
Hotel & Restaurant Foundation
Raei Hsiao*
Elaine Hung*
Imperial Brands, Inc.
J.C. Plumbing ‘N’ Things
Nancy D. Jennings*
Lisa Hatfield
Dorothy Horowitz
Hotel & Restaurant Foundation
Raei Hsiao*
Elaine Hung*
Imperial Brands, Inc.
J.C. Plumbing ‘N’ Things
Nancy D. Jennings*

Montage
Katherine L. Moraga*
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Robert Palmer
Christine F. Papa*
Lisa Parker
Christopher Pilkinson
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Joyce S. Ralfs
Racquelle A. Rangel*
Carter Reum
Ronald Rhodes
Fabiola Rincon*
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David A. Schneiderman
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Andrew Segal
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Hilda Sugarman
Brian R. Swanson
SYSCO Food Services
Thomas H. Tegart
Tracy Thien Tran

Maureen C. Trippe
Jacob Vallens
Raymond Viert*
Eric Villalobos
Leslie Weinberg
Robert Weis
Jocelyn L. Winget
Ernest E. Wolfe, Jr.
Frederick Wolfe
Julie Anne E. Yu*
Nebil Zarif

EDITOR’S NOTE – We strive to present all names and gifts accurately. If there is an error in the way a name or gift is identified, please feel free to contact Lisa McPheron, director of communications and external relations, at lcmcpheron@csupomona.edu or (909) 869-3151.
Top Chef Educator Inspires Success in the Kitchen

Dr. Jeff Brown received the ACF Chef Educator of the Year Award

By Esther Chou

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR DR. JEFF BROWN remembers the first time he stepped into a professional kitchen in a restaurant. Barely a teenager, Brown bused tables and washed dishes at the neighborhood café.

“It was magical,” he said of walking into Embers restaurant in Arcadia. “There was stainless steel everywhere and men in toques.”

Forty-seven years later, he feels the same energy and exhilaration at the start of a new academic year. Brown, who teaches cooking and restaurant management courses, lives for the excitement of helping students overcome a challenge and watching light bulbs turn on.

“It’s exciting. I get the same charge when the kids get it,” he said. “It’s fun to see the ones who had no self-confidence, no self-esteem absolutely sparkle and beam when you tell them, ‘Good job.’”

It is evident that helping students shine is Brown’s passion and joy. In August, he was honored with the American Culinary Federation 2010 Chef Educator of the Year Award, the highest award in his profession.

“This is a coveted title and respected accomplishment from the American Culinary Federation,” said Dean Andy Feinstein. “The award recognizes Jeff as an elite chef educator in the United States.”

During the final selection process for the award, Brown presented a 50-minute lecture and prepared Cajun barbecue shrimp, a dish he teaches in his professional cooking course, for a panel of professional chefs and educators.

“The demonstration wasn’t about my ability to cook,” Brown said. “It was trying to teach other people how to do a particular dish.”
In class, Brown is interactive, humorous and patient—probably too easy at times, he admitted. He is not a fan of chefs who yell and belittle others. As a culinary educator and mentor, he tries to find the best way to improve each person’s skills and abilities.

“I want people to succeed. I want them to enjoy learning and to have fun,” he said. “The kitchen is an enjoyable place to work—and not just at Cal Poly Pomona but in the working world.”

The combination of Brown’s culinary expertise and passion for teaching makes him a highly effective teacher, said Professor Dr. Jerry Chesser. “Jeff is a high-energy teacher who brings excitement and humor to the classroom. He works to connect with his students and bring the material to life,” he said. “Jeff puts into action his motto ‘Teaching skills that pay bills.’”

Brandon Heist, a senior, said Brown’s classes are always informative and entertaining, with stories from his professional career. Brown’s best quality is his patience, Heist added.

“Some people had prior experience working as cooks in restaurants, some had cooked at home with their parents, and some couldn’t even boil water,” Heist said. “Regardless, Chef Brown spent an ample amount of time with each and every student, honing their skills and sharing his culinary knowledge.”

Providing a solid foundational education is close to Brown’s heart. During his teenage and young adult years, he worked as a diner cook, tableside chef and hotel restaurant chef. However, his career hit a roadblock when he applied for a promotion from kitchen manager to general manager at an upscale Palos Verdes restaurant. Simply put, management told him he did not have the required formal education.

“I might have had the skills and the knowledge, but I didn’t have the depth of knowledge,” Brown said. Work experience showed him the “how,” but he needed formal training to understand the “why.”

“When you know how to do something correctly, then you can break the rules. But if you don’t know the rules, then you can’t do that,” he added.

Brown enrolled and graduated from the Culinary Institute of America in New York, received his bachelor’s degree in restaurant & hotel management from Webber College in Florida, a master’s in higher education administration from West Virginia University and a doctoral degree in education from George Southern University.

His career highlights include working as personal chef to King Hussein of Jordan and the royal family, general and district manager for Velvet Turtle restaurants, and teaching at culinary schools throughout the country.

Even with his extensive experience in the kitchen and as an educator, Brown remains curious about food and cooking. In his world cuisine course, he always asks the international students for input, picking up tips and foreign phrases over the years.

“When we get to the Asian cuisine section, I turn it over to the students and learn how they or their moms make the dishes,” Brown said. “I steal stuff all the time.”

Brown enters his eighth year at The Collins College this fall, and the excitement continues. Gesturing to his wife Carol, he said: “Ask her what I’m like the night before a new year.”

“He’s awake all night,” she said.

One of Brown’s other loves in life is restoring cars, specifically his 1933 Rolls Royce Woodie.
**News & Accolades**

Associate Professor Dr. **Jeff Brown** can officially be called the Top Chef Educator. Brown received the highest honor possible to chef educators in the United States when he won the American Culinary Federation (ACF) 2010 Chef Educator of the Year Award in August. The full story can be read on pages 34 and 35.

Professor Dr. **Jim Burke** received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Travel and Tourism Research Association (TTRA) in June. This award is the highest honor given by the TTRA. It recognized Burke for his significant contribution to TTRA as well as to the travel and tourism industry. The award is based on significant, long-term contributions to the industry and/or TTRA.

The Le Conseil Interprofessionnel du Vin de Bordeaux (Bordeaux Wine Bureau) is sending Associate Professor Dr. **Margie Ferree Jones** to visit its famous wine region in France and partake in the Bordeaux Wine School Accreditation Program this November. The school aims to establish educational partnerships with key American culinary, hospitality and wine schools – such as The Collins College. By working with professors like Jones, the school aims to enhance U.S. wine educational programs.

Assistant Professor Dr. **Neha Singh** received two research grants. She is one of 11 Cal Poly Pomona professors accepted into the Provost’s Teacher-Scholar Program. This award provides an $11,000 stipend paid over two years that supports her development as a teacher-scholar. Additionally, Premiere Medical Travel Consulting awarded Singh $21,000 to research international medical tourism trends.

In August, **Summer Pettus** joined the team at the college as the new student services coordinator. Her work includes: coordinating the college's student co-curricular events and functions; student outreach, recruitment and orientation; acting as the general hospitality industry liaison and managing student scholarships. Pettus has extensive hospitality and event planning experience from The Valley Hunt Club in Pasadena and The St. Francis Yacht Club in San Francisco. As a 2006 alumna of The Collins College, Pettus is enthusiastic about promoting the college and assisting students.

**Professional Activities**

Lecturer **Peter Anderson** was invited to attend the 4th annual Global Spa Summit this past May in Istanbul, Turkey. Read about the conference in more detail on pages 18 and 19.

ACF National President **Michael Ty**, CEC, AAC invited Brown to join the editorial advisory board for Sizzle, ACF’s quarterly publication for students of cooking.

Professor Dr. **Jerry Chesser** did some work on “island time” this summer. Hale ‘Aina ‘Ohana, a non-profit organizations dedicated to professional culinary development in Hawaii sponsored Chesser to give two seminars at the Hawaii Lodging, Hospitality & Foodservice Expo in July. The seminars were “The New Standard of Restaurant Service: Back to Basics” and “Steps to Culinary Excellence.”

Professor Dr. **Ben Dewald** and Assistant Professor Dr. **Myong Jae (MJ) Lee** were awarded a $5,000 seed grant from the college to pursue cross-cultural perspective research on hospitality and tourism management study motivations and preferences. Dewald also serves on hospitality education advisory boards at Chaffey, Cypress and Orange Coast colleges.

Dean **Andy Feinstein** now serves on the California Restaurant Association’s Board of Directors.

**Jones** led the college’s efforts in a partnership with Colliers PKF Consulting USA to host the 22nd Annual Visitor Industry Outlook Conference on Oct. 29 in Long Beach. She also continued to partner with the Club Managers Association of America’s Business Management Institute and the Court of Master Sommeliers by bringing both groups to campus to offer courses and exams. Additionally, she returned as steward of the Los Angeles International Wine & Spirits Competition while Professor Dr. **Bob Small** returned as chairman. Jones continued her
personal wine education by taking the Wines & Spirits Education Trust's advanced course; she passed with merit.

Professor Dr. Ed Merritt was appointed to a three-year term as a board member of the Cal Poly Pomona Foundation, Inc. and was appointed to a second three-year term on the National Restaurant Association Solutions Certification Governing Board. Merritt also continues to serve as a commissioner for the Accreditation Commission for Programs in Hospitality Administration.

Cal Poly Pomona Provost Dr. Marten denBoer awarded Associate Professor Dr. Jane Zhang a $1,000 grant to participate in the Leadership Education For Asian Pacifics, Inc (LEAP) program in July. For nearly 30 years, LEAP has offered leadership development programs that benefit and serve Asian and Pacific Islander communities. Zhang also received a $16,200 research grant to conduct marketing research for The Serra Hotel Spa in Hidalgo, Mexico. That work led her to receive a $5,000 seed grant from The Collins College to explore tourists' psychological needs concerning nature-based tourism in underdeveloped regions. Read more about her work on pages 14 and 15.

Publications, Articles & Conference Presentations

Dewald and Lee co-authored “An exploratory study examining the determinants of attendance motivations as perceived by attendees at Hong Kong exhibitions” for the Journal of Convention and Event Tourism. Lee gave the keynote address titled “Graduate Education in Hospitality Management: Cross-Cultural Perspective” at the Asia Pacific Alliance in Tourism and Hospitality Education (APATHE) in May at National Kaohsiung University of Hospitality and Tourism in Taiwan. Lee also presented a research paper “Impact of advertising on patrons’ emotion, perceived value, and behavioral intentions in the chain restaurant industry” at the Asia Pacific Tourism Association (APTA) Annual Conference in Macau, China in July. This paper was nominated for the Best Conference Paper Award and was included in the conference proceeding.

Merritt published his sixth single-authored book, The Leadership Trap: Toward an Understanding of Organizational Burnout (LAP Lambert Academic Press). The book is now available in bookstores and online booksellers. Merritt also published two articles recently in Club Managers Association of America email publications. They are “Focusing the Board on Vision and Mission” for At Your Service and “Conducting a Strategic and Long-Term Planning Survey” for At A Glance.

Associate Professor Dr. John Self co-wrote the featured study in Cornell Hospitality Quarterly in July. The article “The Dynamics of Green Restaurant Patronage,” found that customers’ knowledge of sustainable practices by a restaurant will increase their willingness to patronize that establishment. The full article is available at Cornell’s Center for Hospitality Research’s website. The article garnered some attention from the hospitality press resulting in at least three articles. Dewald and Self had their article “Why Do Employees Stay?” accepted for publication by the International Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Administration.

Academic Advisor Tengemana Thumbutu is the editor-in-chief of The Psalms of Sunergeo. The publication is a collection of original and personal psalms that represent the various styles of psalms written in the Bible. More than 75 anonymous contributors submitted psalms that are intended to share their life’s stories, victories, laments and passions.

Community Service

Several members of the faculty and staff volunteered in a variety of ways in the community in the past six months. Dewald returned as a judge for the Los Angeles County Fair’s Table Scape Competition in the summer. Lecturer Helen Gavin is president and a member of the education committee for the Mission San Juan Capistrano Docent Society. Lecturer Michael Hawkins, owner of Green Street Restaurant, serves on the Pasadena Chamber of Commerce board of directors and is a member of the South Lake Avenue Business Association. Assistant Professor Dr. Zhenxing “Eddie” Mao participated in the selection of recipients for Ronald McDonald House’s Asian Pacific America Students Increasing Achievement scholarships in April. Director of Communications and External Relations Lisa McPherson, a Cal State Fullerton (CSUF) alumna, volunteered to help organize a wine tasting and silent auction for CSUF’s Alumni Association in August. The event raised more than $8,000 for student scholarships. Arte Nathan, a lecturer and member of the college’s Board of Advisors, is director of the Greater Santa Ana Business Alliance. Last but not least, Zhang participated in the Cultural Cuisine Show during the National Culture Awareness Week at the Cal Poly Pomona Library this past spring.
Dear Collins Alumni,

Have you heard the news? The Collins College Alumni Chapter is now the Collins Hospitality Society!

Over the past 35 years, The Collins College has grown from a small department within the College of Business Administration into one of the nation's premiere hospitality management colleges. The alumni board is striving to have our alumni program reflect this excellence as well.

Though we are sad to see the old name go, the new name shows the substantial progress of the Collins alumni program since the original Lundberg Society was first established in 1984 and named in honor of the founder of the hospitality program Dr. Donald E. Lundberg. We have continued to have exceptional growth, with membership increasing by more than 45 percent in the last year, and membership growing monthly. As a powerful network of close to 4,000 alumni worldwide, the Collins Hospitality Society's mission is to bring back every alumnus to The Collins College family while building beneficial relationships and strengthening the alumni community.

These are exciting times at The Collins College, and we invite you to join and reconnect with your fellow graduates and become a member. We encourage you to get involved with the Collins Hospitality Society and hope that you will follow us on Facebook and LinkedIn. Please let us know what we can do as your board by emailing us at chs@alumni.csupomona.edu.

I look forward to seeing you at one of the next Collins Hospitality Society’s events!

All the best,

Steven L. Senft '98
President
Collins Hospitality Society

UPCOMING EVENTS

Nov. 6  Pacific Northwest Alumni Mixer
Join fellow Broncos at the first Pacific Northwest alumni mixer on Saturday, Nov. 6, at 6:30 p.m. at the Oxford Hotel in Bend, Oregon. Pacific Northwest Division Chair and the hotel’s Assistant General Manager Dominic Donatoni ’04 is organizing the event. Food will be served. To RSVP and learn about discounted hotel accommodations, please contact Donatoni at (541) 550-5412 or d.donatoni@gmail.com.

Nov. 13  Harvest Celebration 2010
Dues-paying members of the Collins Hospitality Society are eligible for a discounted ticket package to Harvest Celebration 2010 on Nov. 13 at 6:30 p.m. at the Renaissance Hollywood Hotel & Spa. For more information contact Joan Wrede at (310) 574-3663 or jwrede@jwevents.com

Nov. 15  3rd Annual New York Alumni Reception
The Collins College returns to the Big Apple for the annual alumni wine and cheese reception on Monday, Nov. 15 at 5:30 p.m. at the Marriott Marquis. Dean Andy Feinstein is hosting. RSVP to Lisa McPheron at lcmcpheron@csupomona.edu.

Feb. 17  Hospitality Career Expo
The Collins College and the Cal Poly Pomona Career Center will host the 18th annual 2011 Hospitality Career Expo on Feb. 17, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. Contact Summer Pettus for more details at sapettus@csupomona.edu.

May 12  Professor For a Day
Alumni are invited to guest speak in classes throughout the day. Lunch at the Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch is included. Contact Lisa McPheron at lcmcpheron@csupomona.edu if you would like to participate.

Find us on LinkedIn and Facebook!
Bridget Bilinski’s rise to the top at Marriott International started in a somewhat unlikely role: that of resident advisor in a dorm at Cal Poly Pomona.

“That was great leadership training for me,” Bilinski ’79 said. “I was responsible for 38 women; I had to create social experiences with the other wings; and I had to learn to manage people in a variety of challenging situations like relationship issues, drug problems, imperfect study habits and organizational challenges. That experience – along with my on-campus work at the Blazing Saddles beer bar, summer jobs at hotels in San Diego and my friendships with other working students – all those things together really gave me my start.”

Bilinski has a come a long way since then. Today, she is an area vice president for Marriott International covering Northern California, the Pacific Northwest and Utah, leading the pack as one of a few female executives at the company. Previously, she earned the distinction of being the first female regional vice president for Marriott’s 175 Select Service Hotels in the eight Western states.

The high-ranking executive still has time to assist her alma mater. For the past year, she has volunteered her time on The Collins College’s Board of Advisors, ensuring that its practices and curriculum are consistent with industry needs.

Not only does Bilinski have fond memories of her time at Cal Poly Pomona, she recalls exactly why she chose it.

“What really attracted me to Cal Poly Pomona was the fact that I was going to have to work, and that I would be learning from those who had actually done what I was going to do,” she said.

Beyond her solid education, Bilinski credits her success to her competitive nature, her sense of humor and even intuition.

“I always felt that as a female, I had a slight edge in being sensitive to relationships, and I use that skill all the time,” she said. “People love working for me because I’m very collaborative, which is another skill set that’s innate to women. That sense of teamwork really stems back to my college days. It became part of my style back then, and it just works.

“I never think about being the best female on the job; I just try to be the best person on the job,” she added. “It’s all about understanding people, networking and building relationships.”

Bilinski says two resources have been particularly helpful in her quest. One is Stephen Covey’s book “Seven Habits of Highly Successful People,” which reveals principles Bilinski considers essential for becoming a great leader and effective person. The second is Myers-Briggs personality profiling. As a certified Myers-Briggs instructor, Bilinski has become versed on quickly identifying people’s personalities and adapting her leadership approach accordingly.

“Everything about the hospitality business revolves around people,” she said. “If you can read people and understand them on an intuitive level – by knowing what influences them to make decisions, what they value and how they manage their time – it’s much easier to be successful in this business.”

As Bilinski makes her recommendations through the Board of Advisors, you can be sure that Myers-Briggs training will be on the list. She is also working behind the scenes at Marriott, rallying the troops in Los Angeles and Orange counties to be more engaged in the college through lectures and on-campus meetings with students. Plus, she is assisting Dean Andy Feinstein to identify new fundraising opportunities for the college.

“I’m incredibly excited about Feinstein’s vision for the college,” Bilinski says. “I love the growth in the curriculum, and I love the diversity and poise of the students. Marriott is growing, and we need a good campus that can feed our future leadership. His vision for the campus and the quality of the student body is spectacular.”
1980s

**Ralph Scatena ‘80** became Marriott International’s vice president of sales and marketing for the Western Region. He has a significant leadership role on the Western Region team, as well as the Americas Sales and Marketing organization. He serves as the Western Region’s sales business partner and leads the sales function in the region. He is responsible for driving top-line revenue for the region across all Marriott International lodging brands and ensuring the strategic priorities of the discipline are aligned and designed to yield profitable sales, increased market share, and expanded competitive advantage for Marriott. In particular, Scatena will play a key role in leading the continued roll-out of the Sales Force One strategy. Scatena started his career with Marriott 30 years ago.

1990s

**Ian Blackburn ‘91** is the founder of LearnAboutWine. Since its establishment in 1995, Blackburn has worked on building LearnAboutWine to serve as the go-to online source for wine education and events in Southern California. His passion for wine has allowed him to reach into the realms of education, service and pure enjoyment. Blackburn’s wine expertise led him to the small screen recently as a wine connoisseur on ABC’s *The Bachelor*. He has also been regarded as a top wine spokesperson by multiple Southern California radio stations. He is currently studying for his Masters of Wine and working to finish his second book from his home in Downtown Los Angeles.

**Chris Chiotis ‘96** is principal and founder of Pacifica Capital & Brokerage, Inc. located in Dana Point, Calif. Prior to establishing Pacifica, Chiotis spent several years with some of the nation’s leading hospitality advisory firms. Specifically, as a director with New York-based Insignia/ESG Hotel Partners in their Newport Beach office. He also held consulting positions with PKF Consulting and Landauer Associates in Los Angeles, where he provided development consulting for proposed hotel, resort and convention center projects; appraisal and valuation analyses for hotel, resorts and land; acquisition due diligence for various entities; and portfolio investment analysis. Additionally, he has held an operations position with the Four Seasons Hotel Company at their Beverly Hills property. He and his wife Jill have two children and reside in San Juan Capistrano.

**Jeremy Sierra ’98** is an assistant professor in the department of marketing at Texas State University. Sierra also taught at Northern Arizona University. There he received the Outstanding Professor Award in the W.A. Franke College of Business. Before entering the academic realm, he gained 10 years of hospitality experience in such areas as: cost control, customer relationship management and in-store design. He has worked on both sides of the industry spectrum: from entrepreneurial restaurants to up-scale resorts.

2000s

**Lisa Hogan ’02** serves as Santa Monica Seafood Company’s vice president of national accounts. Family owned since 1939, Santa Monica Seafood’s mission is to provide the highest quality of seafood products at reasonable prices with an adherence to sustainability and a healthy environment. Hogan was previously director of distribution sales. She feels very fortunate to work for the company and loves her job.

**Kersten Henri ’04** started as a call center agent with Tarsadia Hotels in 1999 while attending The Collins College of Hospitality Management. She now serves as area revenue manager for the company. Henri oversees three Anaheim hotels and a Las Vegas location. She understands each of these complex markets to best strategize rates and restrictions to maximize revenues, shift share from other hotels and drive incremental business. Her hands-on education and years of experience provided stepping stones, leading her to promotions within the company as well as with
Tristine Lim ’05 recently became an investment analyst for Invest West Financial Corporation/ Pacifica Hotel Company in Santa Barbara. He is responsible for financial analysis of the hotel and commercial properties. He is involved in identifying possible acquisition targets, evaluating financing options, syndication of partnerships, and asset management. Invest West and Pacifica Hotel Company currently own and manage 23 hotels in coastal California, Florida, and Hawaii and nine commercial properties throughout Western United States.

Matt Kou ’06 is now an associate at Sonnenblick-Eichner Company in Beverly Hills. The company is a premier real estate investment banking firm for the commercial real estate industry. Kou worked for PKF Consulting for several years before her current position.

Karly Klimas Lidinsky ’06 is the convention services manager at the Hyatt Regency Century Plaza in Beverly Hills. With more than 50 years of history, Hyatt is a widely-recognized hospitality company displayed on a global level. Lidinsky returned to California after working for several years in Chicago for Hyatt Hotels.

Miki Takashima ’07 focuses on corporate sales and business development at LUPICIA Fresh Tea Inc. Takashima develops marketing programs and maintains event attendance for the company.

Alumni Expansion Plans
The Collins Hospitality Society has plans in motion to expand into divisions across the country and abroad. Dominic Donatoni ’04 and Miki Takashima ’07 are leading these efforts with divisions in the Pacific Northwest and Asia-Pacific respectfully. The society welcomes more alumni volunteers to start divisions in their locals.

The first divisional event took place Nov. 6 in Bend, Oregon at the Oxford Hotel where Donatoni is the assistant general manager. Donatoni hosted a mixer for Cal Poly Pomona alumni and offered discounted hotel accommodations.

“This industry is all about networking and who you know and what better way to do it than with a strong common connection as alums of The Collins College,” he said. “My hope is to bring a sense of community to all those alums in my area.”

The goal is that divisions will operate like the base of the Collins Hospitality Society in Southern California, which hosts regular networking and social events for alumni. To stay apprised of all alumni events please find the society on Facebook and LinkedIn. For more information about joining or starting a division, email Steven Senft ’98 at ssenft@hrec.com. – LCM

With more than 400 varieties of both flavored and unflavored teas at LUPICIA’s, her goal is to continue increasing brand visibility and awareness throughout the greater Los Angeles area.

Lera Zelineskaya ’09 is the food and beverage director at The Metropolitan Club in Chicago. The Metropolitan Club is a private business club where members may meet friends and entertain their guests in enjoyable surroundings while experiencing quality food and service. The club is private and used primarily for business entertaining. Zelineskaya recently became director after moving from Colorado.

Susie Key ’10 is the general manager at Crepes Bonaparte, a food truck operations company that recently gained fame by competing in Food Network’s The Great Truck Race. Crepes Bonaparte is a French crepe catering company specializing in providing custom crepe stations at private parties and events in Los Angeles and Orange counties. The company was also featured on FOX’s Good Day L.A.

Sean Van Straatum ’10 accepted a position as line cook for Charlie Trotter’s Restaurant in Chicago. Van Straatum works with chefs and sommeliers to create new dishes and test recipes. Van Straatum recently moved from California to Chicago following graduation.
This is Research... No Really

(from left) Associate Dean Michael Godfrey and Lecturer Owen Williams toss in Cal Poly Pomona-grown hops while making Arabian Amber.

The College of Agriculture grows a limited amount of hops on campus.
American Amber Ale

American Pale 2-Row Malt 81.64%
Munich Malt 9.30%
Carastan 30/37L 1.3%
Carastan 120L 1.4%
Caramunich 2.07%
Special B 3.72%
Chocolate .21%
Unmalted 6-row Barley 1%

STEP-INFUSION MASH
Northern Brewer 15.43 IBU at 60 Minutes
Northern Brewer 6.47 IBU at 20 Minutes
Cascade 2.5 ounces at 0 Minutes
Chinook Fresh Hops 1 pound at 0 Minutes
California Ale Yeast #WLP001

OG 15.5 Plato
ABV 5.5%

Ferment at 20°C four-five days or for a lager at 1°C for 10 days

Grilled Cider-Brined Pork Chops

Yield: 6 servings
6 brined pork chops
4 tablespoons vegetable oil for the grill
1 cup Uncle Tim’s Best West BBQ Sauce, medium-hot

Pat dry the brined chops and grill the chops to desired doneness (about 160 degrees internal temperature) on a hot grill that has been seasoned with a small amount of vegetable oil. When the chops are done, begin basting with the barbeque sauce to glaze the chops on both sides. The sauce will begin to caramelize and thicken. This should be done at the end of the cooking process to avoid burning the sauce. Serve extra sauce on the side. Depending on thickness of chops, you may need to cook indirectly to avoid charring. Briones recommends Uncle Tim’s Best West BBQ Sauce. Details about the sauce can be found at www.bestwestbbq.com.

Photos by Tom Zasadzinski
HARVEST CELEBRATION 2010
Saturday, November 13
6:30 p.m. Cocktails, 7:30 p.m. Dinner
Renaissance Hollywood Hotel & Spa
1755 North Highland Avenue
Hollywood, CA 90028

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For further information or sponsorship opportunities, please contact Joan Wrede at (310) 574-3663 or email jwrede@jwevents.com
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