Collins
A publication by The Collins College of Hospitality Management

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Collins Hospitality Society

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ON THE COVER: The father-and-son team of Hae and Eugene Park are generous donors to The Collins College. They own and operate two swap meets in the Inland Empire.
From the Dean’s Desk

Hospitality is a global industry; so our graduate program must also be global.

This fall, we welcomed our second class of graduate students to The Collins College. The Master of Science in Hospitality Management (MSHM) had a successful first year, and I am pleased to announce that we are running the program at capacity. We are able to expand our academic program in an era of shrinking state funds because we operate the MSHM program with a unique revenue model administered through the College of the Extended University. The program is not supported by state money; rather student fees fund the program 100 percent. This model gives us the flexibility to offer the same tuition to students regardless of their residency. Hospitality is a global industry; so our graduate program must also be global. There is value in having domestic and international students collaborate in small classroom settings, and our model provides accessibility to prospective students whether they are local, out-of-state, or from overseas.

I am thrilled to share that the college raised more than $7 million in pledges and donations during the 2010-11 academic year. I expect even bigger things this year with the addition of Gina Johnson, director of major gifts. Gina brings more than 20 years of fundraising experience, with a successful track record of securing major gifts and raising millions of dollars.

In the last three years, we have raised in excess of $13 million; $10 million of this is earmarked for a college expansion. We have already begun the site selection process and hope to break ground soon. Thank you to our lead donors: Carol and Jim Collins; Peggy and Andrew Cherng; the J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation; Alumnus Eugene Park ’07, and Mary Alice and Richard N. Frank for giving us the ability to move this project forward. We look forward to a cutting-edge design from HMC Architects, led by a team of Cal Poly Pomona architecture alumni.

I hope to see many of our friends and alumni at Hospitality Uncorked, the college’s new benefit gala on March 3, 2012. We are honoring Sam Nazarian, the founder and CEO of SBE, with the Robert Mondavi Wine & Food Award. Sam is quickly becoming a legend in Los Angeles and beyond with his luxury hospitality brand and his incredible talent for identifying new ventures in the industry. No doubt he is going to help us kick off this inaugural event at the JW Marriott Los Angeles at L.A. Live in style. I would like to thank the Board of Advisors’ Events Committee for the time and effort they have committed to making Hospitality Uncorked a night to remember. The committee generously branded this gala as an industry event supporting the college, and we are very thankful. I can attest that our industry friends will ensure we have the best live and silent auction - hands down.

As a hospitality management program, The Collins College has the ability to pop champagne and throw an amazing party. But, it is important to remember we are a public college, and we are impacted by the ebb and flow of state funding. These days, it has been more of an ebb. Cal Poly Pomona is bracing for a $31.5 million reduction in funding this year, with a potential mid-year cut. We are able to offer a world-class public education because of the continuous backing from our industry partners and our creative ability to develop self-supporting programs. Thank you to those who invest in us as we invest in the future of the hospitality industry.

There are many exciting things happening at The Collins College. Please enjoy this expanded issue of Collins magazine, and I hope to see you on March 3 at Hospitality Uncorked.

Andrew Hale Feinstein
Dean and James A. Collins Distinguished Chair
The Collins College of Hospitality Management
Stand Tall

Upon writing this editorial today, the Dow Jones Industrial Average had its worst week since October 2008. Our business and public sectors have had a steady decline of faith in our leaders in Sacramento and Washington. High debt, government spending, foreclosures, high unemployment, depleting retirement savings … indicate our economic policies are faltering.

Where do we turn? How do we react? I say … we stand tall!

To the professors at The Collins College: Keep teaching our youth with sound, ethical and moral scholastic practices, preparing them for the changing landscape.

To the students: Keep learning; keep asking questions; keep speaking up if you do not understand; be heard; be wise, and most important, do not give up … keep persevering.

To the working professionals: Keep showing up, and do good work. Maybe for a while the compensation is not what it once was. But the reality is — times have changed and things are a bit more complex. Let us be smart and adjust, be realistic. Keep showing up.

Remember we can make a difference in our future. Get out and VOTE!!!

Donald B. Ayres, III
Principal
Ayres Hotels of Southern California
September 24, 2011

We would like to encourage our readers to share their views. Letters should be addressed to Lisa McPherson, c/o The Collins College, 3801 West Temple Ave., Pomona, CA., 91768 or emailed to lcmcpheron@csupomona.edu.

The views expressed in Letters to the Editor do not necessarily reflect the views of The Collins College of Hospitality Management or Cal Poly Pomona.
Coors CEO Shares Insights

Pete Coors, CEO and chairman of Coors Brewing Company, talked about the importance of innovation and the need for businesses to cater their objectives to a changing consumer environment during a guest lecture at The Collins College. He also shared the significance of encouraging employees to focus on what they can do differently to better contribute to the organization.

“It is just as important to bring your mind to work as it is your muscle,” Coors said.

The noted beer man shared stories from his 40 years in the business and answered questions at a Beer and Culture class in April.

The afternoon began with a meet-and-greet session, in which Coors Banquet beer and Coors Light were paired with pesto paninis. Coors then headed over to the Demo Auditorium, where he lectured on his organization’s history and the joint venture with SABMiller to form MillerCoors in 2008.

While students and guests tasted Coors Banquet, Blue Moon Summer Honey Wheat, Grolsch Premium Pilsner, Blue Moon and Killian’s Irish Red, Coors spoke of his 64-brand “company of firsts.” He also commented that his undergraduate engineering degree from Cornell University taught him how to think, how to solve problems, and how to probe and ask questions.

“That is the most valuable part of any kind of education,” said Coors, “when you are taught how to think, not what to think.”

When asked what he loves most about beer, Coors did not hesitate: “Drinking it.”

Collins lecturer and brewery consultant Owen Williams, who planned the visit, said he was grateful and honored to host Coors.

“Pete Coors is one of the most stoic and humble individuals I have ever met,” Williams said. “The students benefitted from Pete’s words of wisdom and realized how many opportunities are out there.” – Michelle Andrews
Building Campaign Raises More Than $10 Million

LESS THAN ONE YEAR INTO THE PUBLIC LAUNCH of the Campaign for Cal Poly Pomona, The Collins College of Hospitality Management has reached one of its major goals. The college has raised more than $10 million toward a new education complex to meet the demands of a growing faculty and student body.

The achievement was made possible through a generous $2.5 million pledge from Panda Restaurant Group founders Andrew and Peggy Cherng, a $2 million award from the J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation, a $1 million pledge from alumnus Eugene Park and $40,000 from Mary Alice & Richard N. Frank.

The gifts were matched by Carol and Jim Collins, the college's namesakes and longtime supporters.

“Private support has allowed the college to be where it is today, and it will be what gives us an edge as we continue to make a positive impact on future generations of students and the hospitality industry,” said Dean Andy Feinstein. “We are very fortunate to have the support of Jim and Carol Collins, the Cherng family, the Park family, the Marriott Foundation and the Frank family.”

These gifts pave the way for the college to break ground on the educational complex designed to accommodate the new graduate program, which launched last fall. Preliminary plans include several state-of-the-art classrooms, a student lounge and study area, and faculty offices.

HMC Architects has been hired to draft plans for the new complex. – LCM

Student Ambassadors Promote College

THE COLLINS COLLEGE CAN LAUNCH Facebook and Twitter pages and post information on its website, but to really reach prospective students – there is no better recruitment tool than current students who are proud of their school. Enter the Collins Ambassadors.

Last spring, the college launched The Collins Ambassador Program. Nine student ambassadors work under the direction of Student Services Coordinator Summer Pettus to promote the college through face-to-face interactions on and off campus. They are also tapped to provide support for events and tours on campus and to promote volunteerism among other students.

“The best way for prospective students to learn about The Collins College is through current students,” Pettus said. “They make our program shine.”

Kirk Bullock is a third-year hospitality management student and ambassador. Coming to The Collins College allowed Bullock to meet industry professionals, intern at the National Restaurant Association (NRA) in Washington, D.C., and even have lunch with the president of the NRA.

He is excited to tell his story and to inspire high school and community college students to share his passion for the industry.

“My education at The Collins College ranges from studying law to tasting beer. It is a practical education and at the same time it is fun,” he said. “Being able to share my experiences with prospective students and see that spark in their eyes is so rewarding.” – MICHELLE ANDREWS
Reporters’ email inboxes are flooded daily with messages from public relations firms and businesses clamoring for attention. Hugo Martín, a longtime reporter for the Los Angeles Times, told future hotel and restaurant managers and entrepreneurs in Dr. Jane Zhang’s class how to stand out: Know who you are pitching to. Keep it real. Say something interesting.

Martín, who covers tourism for The Times, says it is important to send story ideas to the correct reporter or editor. “Do your homework,” he said.

It is also important to know what kinds of stories grab a reporter’s attention. “Find your hook – something unique or quirky,” he said, citing the example of a hotel that catered to people and pets by offering massages to both. “Don’t lie or exaggerate. If you do that, the reporter will remember.”

Even more important than pitching story ideas is the ability to respond properly to negative news. Do not ignore bad news or poor reviews, he said, citing an article in Travelers Review about the 10 dirtiest hotels in the country. “Once you get on a list like this, it can take years to repair the damage.”

Instead, Martín said, stay on top of issues at your hotel or restaurant to avoid negative reviews and bad press. “Jump on things before you get on the list. When you buy media, you can frame your message,” he said. “When you’re working with the media, you don’t have that control.” – Tim Lynch

Expo Tops Career Month Events

The Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch teemed with activity when hundreds of students networked with 92 representatives from 40 different companies during the annual Hospitality Career Expo in February. The expo was the focal point of Career Month, which included numerous professional development activities for students.

“The hospitality expo went really well,” said Career Services Coordinator Ann Lara, who organized the month of activities. “The companies were engaged and the students, who attended, were well-prepared.”

Career Month included several opportunities for students to interact with potential employers. Panda Restaurant Group, Disney, Fairmont, Hilton Worldwide, Marriott, Pacific Palms and Princess Cruises/Holland America Line each hosted information sessions for students. Additionally, students had their pick of activities including: resume workshops; a dress for success presentation; an etiquette dinner; employer panels, and practice interview sessions.

“Ann planned activities for nearly every day in February,” said Dean Andy Feinstein. “It was a comprehensive service to our students that we plan to offer year after year.”

Collins College students can tap into career development opportunities throughout the year. In addition to February’s Career Month, Lara provides drop-in advising for students, leads a variety of workshops, and works with the Cal Poly Pomona Career Center staff to produce events such as the university’s Fall Career Expo and Spring Career Expo.

Do you work for a company interested in recruiting at the Hospitality Career Expo? Email Ann Lara at aelara@csupomona.edu if you would like to participate. – Michelle Andrews
Dining with Disney Execs

Five Collins College students had a special opportunity to join George Kalogridis, president of Disneyland Resort, for lunch at Club 33, the private restaurant at Disneyland. As recipients of the 2010-11 Hideo Amemiya Memorial Scholarship, students Carol Leung, Gary Park, Marianne Lima, Marielle Croudo and Christopher Delfs were extended this rare invitation.

Students walked away from the lunch with a greater appreciation for Disney operations and for Hideo Amemiya’s legacy. Amemiya’s career with Disney spanned 30 years. As senior vice president of Disneyland Resort Hotels, he was viewed as an extraordinary leader, manager and innovator. Additionally, he was a staunch supporter of Cal Poly Pomona and chair of the college’s Board of Advisors. The endowed scholarship in his name is an ongoing demonstration of his and wife, Naoe’s, commitment to Collins College students.

“It is so amazing to learn about a true leader like Hideo Amemiya,” Croudo said. “His name is even imprinted on a window on Main Street, which is a true testament to how much his leadership and company were appreciated by others.”

Over lunch, Kalogridis explained the impact Disney has had on the field of hospitality and about his relationship with Amemiya. The 38-year Disney executive was one of Amemiya’s employees, and he spoke of how he learned so much from the Disney legend.

The students were thrilled to be granted this experience. They were also joined by board member and incoming chair, Vice President of Disney California Adventure & Guest Services Mary Niven, Dean Andy Feinstein, Naoe Amemiya and Cal Poly Pomona’s Director of Major Gifts Gina Johnson. – Michelle Andrews

College Hosts Culinary Competition

California’s top high school culinary management students gathered at The Collins College for the 2011 ProStart Boyds Coffee Culinary Cup and BJ’s Restaurants Management Cup in April. The annual ProStart competition is a welcomed event at the college where many of the faculty participate as judges or timekeepers.

“The level of performance by the teams has increased every year,” said lead culinary judge and Professor Dr. Jerry Chesser. “The teams used a solid level of 19th century classical preparation skills but applied them in a 21st century manner.”

ProStart is a two-year training program that provides high school students a jumpstart on the education necessary for successful careers in the restaurant and other hospitality industries.

“The competition was much more intense this year, both in terms of the number of teams and the level of performance. The results were closer than ever,” said Alycia Harshfield, executive director of the California Restaurant Association Educational Foundation.

Newport Harbor High School won both aspects of the competition and advanced to compete at the National ProStart Invitational in Kansas where they also took home the gold. – Michelle Andrews

Photos by Tom Zasadzinski

ProStart students compete while spectators watch.

Five students enjoyed having lunch with Naoe Amemiya and top Disney executives at Club 33.
Frank Lectureship Featured Hilton Executive

Barbara Hollkamp, Hilton Worldwide’s senior vice president of human resources consulting, gave the 2011 Richard N. Frank Distinguished Lectureship address. She shared stories from her career, trends in human resources and insights into Hilton Worldwide during a presentation accompanied by a Q&A in the college’s Wine Auditorium last January.

Hollkamp described the global impact of Hilton; the 92-year-old company extends into 82 countries with more than 3,600 hotels and 600,000 rooms. In her role, she is responsible for overseeing teams of expert human resources consultants, who provide strategic business partnerships and consultative talent services to the hotel company’s global executive groups. Her passion, she said, is being in the business of dealing with people.

“I love to work with business leaders to find the best talent, bring that talent to Hilton and engage that talent,” she said.

Hollkamp then opened up to the group of students, alumni, faculty and staff, sharing some life lessons she described as defining moments and reality checks. She discussed how honored she felt to work for a company that values the same things she does.

“I’m proud to work for Hilton and proud to be a member of Hilton,” Hollkamp said. “I love bringing new team members to experience that.”

Hollkamp encouraged students to consider Hilton as an employer and invited them to talk to her if they were interested in an internship or career with Hilton Worldwide.

She emphasized that success is grounded by a combination of education and practical work experience. Once you enter into the business world, careers and trends will move quickly, she said. “We cannot stop learning,” she said. “The world is moving so quickly.”

— Michelle Andrews

Upgrades Come Into Focus

The television monitors in the Demo Auditorium may have captured the deft hands of Julia Child in 1990. But, nostalgia only goes so far when HD technology is concerned. The grainy, green-hued monitors are now long gone.

Thanks to generous donations raised at Harvest Celebration, The Collins College has begun a series of technological upgrades starting with the installation of ADA compliant 55” HD monitors in the Demo Auditorium. The monitors provide students in the stadium-seating classroom with a bird’s eye view of in-class cooking demonstrations.

The student computer lab is next in line for upgrades after a student survey identified that as a priority. Those updates will include interior design by Gettys Group and a technology overhaul, according to Associate Dean Michael Godfrey. — Michelle Andrews
College Renews Accreditation

The Accreditation Commission for Programs in Hospitality Administration (ACPHA) has reaffirmed the accreditation of The Collins College of Hospitality Management for a full seven years, the maximum period allowed.

Accreditation is an arduous process. It includes annual updates, the completion and submission of a full report to ACPHA, a site visit and report by members of ACPHA, and finally the college’s response to the site team. A team of staff and faculty led by Drs. Jerry Chesser and Neha Singh compiled a comprehensive self-study describing all aspects of the college, from how and what classes are taught, to how teaching and learning are assessed, to alumni relations and fundraising. The report chronicled the college’s commitment to academic excellence, periodic assessment and continuous improvement efforts.

“When ACPHA signs off on the college, it gives us legitimacy among our peer institutions and confirms that The Collins College meets or exceeds standards of educational quality,” said Associate Dean Michael Godfrey. “It’s an outside peer group grading us, and we earned our A.”

Even though the college received accreditation for seven years — the accreditation process is continuous and the college must provide certain documentation to satisfy further requests by ACPHA. For example, ACPHA cited a need by the college to conduct a survey of alumni in the next academic year in order to assess the quality of education they received. In the coming months, the college will be developing this survey and may be contacting alumni through email to participate. – LCM
Celebrating Collins and the RKR

More than 150 people gathered for the joint celebration of the Frank Lectureship Series featuring Jim Collins and the 20th anniversary of The Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch last October. Alumni, faculty, staff and student club leaders began the evening in the Wine Auditorium for the discussion moderated by Dr. Edward Merritt.

Collins shared stories from his career, his philanthropic history and secrets to his success. He entertained the audience by sharing many memories, including his experience opening his first hamburger stand, his college career in civil engineering, and his 47 business trips to Australia. He ended by discussing why he gives. It is simply what he finds pleasure in doing.

“One of the areas where I have the most fun is the philanthropic area where you give back. I look forward to doing those kinds of things; I really enjoy it,” he said.

Following the lectureship, the college hosted a party to commemorate the restaurant’s 20th anniversary. Past and present RKR faculty members and alumni enjoyed reminiscing and sharing stories of their time in the restaurant. They also enjoyed appetizers and wine and beer pairings designed by Chef/Lecturer Scott Rudolph and prepared by current RKR students.

“Oct. 5 was a very special day for me,” Dean Andy Feinstein said. “Listening to Richard N. Frank’s introduction of the college’s namesake and Mr. Collins’ incredible stories of his humble beginnings made it one of the most memorable Richard N. Frank Lectureship Series that I have participated in. The reception afterward was equally as memorable as more than 75 alumni had an opportunity to share memories with their former teachers, several members of the college’s Board of Advisors, and the university’s provost and president.”

The Collins Hospitality Society – formerly The Collins College Alumni Chapter — unveiled its new name and logo and offered discounted memberships at the reception. Fifteen new members joined that night. – Michelle Andrews

Bill Samuels Jr., the president of Maker’s Mark, guest lectured in Dr. Margie Jones’ Wines, Beers and Spirits class. The Maker’s Mark distillery in Kentucky dates back to the mid-1800s and is the oldest continually operating bourbon distillery in the world, according to the Guinness Book of World Records.

Photos by Tom Zasadzinski
Appealing to Sacramento

CSU Chancellor Charles Reed and other members of the Hospitality Management Education Initiative (HMEI) held their annual meeting in Sacramento to build rapport with the State Legislature and to discuss educational and industry needs. The goal of HMEI is to provide an uninterrupted supply of hospitality leaders in California and to connect the profession with future professionals. HMEI accomplishes this by drawing on the input of partners in the industry and educators from each of the 14 CSU campuses with hospitality programs. HMEI Program Coordinator Robert Hartman said hosting the annual meeting in the state capitol paved the way for progress, in both the educational and political realms.

“The purpose of the event was to demonstrate to Sacramento legislators the existence of the partnership between CSU programs and industry leaders,” Hartman said. “It also provided program members with the opportunity to share information with one another about advocacy at the state and local levels.”

The day-long meeting featured an array of speakers including California Restaurant Association President/CEO Jet Condie; California Travel & Tourism Commission President/CEO Caroline Beteta, and California Hotel & Lodging Association President/CEO Lynn Mohrfeld. Each serves on the HMEI industry advisory board. Anthony York, political staff writer for The Los Angeles Times, and John Myers, Sacramento bureau chief for KQED, led the keynote discussion. The meeting wrapped up with a legislative reception at the California Restaurant Association, which laid the foundation for boosting advocacy for CSU hospitality programs.

“The reception gave legislators the opportunity to meet and greet CSU officials and hospitality industry leaders,” Hartman said.

CSU Senior Legislative Advocate Wess Larson may have summed up the day best by saying, “Like with anything else in the hospitality industry, it’s about building relationships.”  – Michelle Andrews

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THE TASTE held nine signature events throughout Los Angeles over Labor Day weekend. The Collins College was one of a few non-profit organizations to benefit from the ticket sales.

Food Festival Benefits College

The Collins College benefited from the inaugural Los Angeles Times and Food & Wine’s THE TASTE, an unprecedented citywide epicurean extravaganza. The festival was the destination for those passionate about the Southland’s diverse and dynamic dining scene over Labor Day weekend.

This four-day culinary celebration featured nine signature events that offered delectable chef creations from a selection of 200 of the top L.A. restaurants; tastings from distinguished wineries, breweries, and distilleries; celebrity chef demos, and fascinating panel discussions, including an appearance by alumnus Ian Blackburn ’91. The Collins College of Hospitality Management’s 2008 Distinguished Alumnus led a tasting of wines from Paso Robles, the most diverse wine-growing region in the world. Numerous students also volunteered at Southern Wine & Spirits booths. In addition, a portion of the ticket sales from THE TASTE benefited The Collins College.
**Master’s Program Makes the Grade**

The new master’s program ended its first academic year in June, giving the graduate students and faculty the feeling of accomplishment and optimism for the future of the pioneering program. As California’s only Master of Science in Hospitality Management (MSHM), the program is providing a service to the state’s higher education community and economy previously unmatched.

“We have an outstanding group of master’s students who are now halfway through their program,” said Dean Andy Feinstein. “This has been a college-wide effort, and we are well on our way to establishing one of the best Master of Science in Hospitality Management programs in the country.”

The second cohort of graduate students started this fall. The program is already running at capacity in its second year. Feedback from students thus far has been positive. “Based on the results from student evaluations, we had a great start,” said director of graduate studies, Dr. Myong Jae Lee. “Students liked the quality of education and the personal approach from our faculty.”

Dr. Neha Singh added that the structure and flexibility of the program are something all the students enjoyed.

Samantha Doolittle, who is president of the MSHM student club, said her first year has been fulfilling. “The program creates a real-world and professional setting,” she said. “I am so grateful for the different networking opportunities. The connections I’ve made are priceless and something I’ve never experienced before.”

The two-year program is accepting applications for upcoming quarters. For more information, visit http://collins.csupomona.edu. – Michelle Andrews

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**Initiative Partners with Super Sunday**

The Hospitality Management Education Initiative (HMEI) partnered with Super Sunday to connect with and inform African American students and their families about educations in hospitality management.

On Sundays each February, California State University leaders, including the chancellor, trustees, presidents and other higher education ambassadors, speak at various churches across the state to share information with students, parents and community mentors about preparing for college, applying to a CSU campus and financial aid. This year, HMEI provided brochures to prospective students that targeted career opportunities in hospitality and the hospitality management degree programs at 14 CSU campuses.

HMEI Program Coordinator Robert Hartman estimated the recruitment drive reached thousands of prospective students.

Hartman said HMEI plans to continue working collaboratively with the Cal State University African American Initiative (AAI), which organizes Super Sunday. AAI hosts a variety of outreach programs including Summer Algebra Institutes. In addition to collaborating with groups like AAI, HMEI works to ease the transfer process from California community colleges to CSUs and to assist students in choosing degree programs. For more information about HMEI visit www.calstate.edu/hospitality. – Michelle Andrews
Good Gala
What better way to kick off a $150 million fundraising campaign than to throw a big gala, and what better way to throw a big gala than to enlist help from The Collins College? Last fall, faculty members Scott Rudolph, Barbara Jean Bruin, Ben Dewald, Ernie Briones, Lesley Butler and staff members Jenesie Hardyman and Chitra Perera, along with hundreds of students provided food and service for the Campaign for Cal Poly Pomona public launch party. The exclusive event took place in the historic University Plaza, which houses W.K. Kellogg’s original horse stables.

An Event For Events

Cal Poly Pomona strives to provide students opportunities to learn by doing. That is certainly what the Association of Student Event Planners (ASEP) accomplished when it planned a day-long forum that pulled numerous event planning experts together to talk shop and share best practices.

ASEP, in conjunction with the Southern California Chapter of Meeting Professionals International (MPI), hosted the Future Leaders Forum in April. The event featured a panel of industry executives with visitor bureau, event planning, meeting planning and culinary backgrounds. Panelists from organizations such as Marriott and BCD Meetings and Incentives discussed their careers, shared their experiences and gave advice for students after they graduate, said Karen Yi, ASEP’s director of activities.

Laurel Coote, chair of the chapter’s Student Outreach Committee, thought the event was a huge success. “To listen to industry professionals share their stories, inclusive of successes and failures, as well as details of the work they do, and why they do it, sheds light on the possibilities that await students upon graduation,” she said. – Michelle Andrews

ENJOY A GLASS
Horsehill Vineyards wines are available at the Farm Store at Kellogg Ranch and The Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch.
A lot of teenage boys like video games and slushies. But, few have the business sense or opportunity to turn them into profitable ventures. For Alumnus Eugene Park ’07, these two particular interests gave him his first entrepreneurial successes.

Park’s parents, Shina and Hae Park ’78, own and operate two outdoor swap meets in Southern California as well as a real-estate development company. Wanting their son to eventually become a partner in the family business, they encouraged him at a young age to think critically and supported his ideas.

“He asked me to try, so we tried,” Hae Park recalled of the time he took Eugene’s advice to replace old-fashioned snow cones with ICEEs at their concession stands. It became an instant success as was an overhaul of the arcade games, also his son’s idea.

“I was lucky that my first try was a success. My father was very surprised at how well the ICEEs were selling. I’m glad he made the right decision and allowed me to introduce the product to our business,” Eugene Park added.

Taking risks and trying new ideas was a reoccurring topic between father and son during a recent lunch at the Oak Quarry Golf Course in Riverside. There have been many moments when the younger generation Park proposed a new idea hoping his father would give it a try. However, it was not until Eugene graduated from The Collins College of Hospitality Management that his footing as a partner took hold.

“Eugene’s business mind is very clear, and when he says ‘try’ we try something new,” Hae Park said.

In addition to several commercial real-estate properties, the Parks own and operate the Bel-Air Swap Meet in Fontana and the Pro Swap Meet in San Bernardino. Both locations are successful and generate a lot of foot traffic encouraging vendors to return on a regular basis. On a busy Sunday, more than 20,000 guests may shop at the Bel-Air Swap Meet. Over the years, as their company grew, so did their philanthropic support of the college. They have given more than $3 million to the college.

“The Parks are incredibly humble and generous people,” said Dean Andy Feinstein. “They do not have a lavish lifestyle. The college is very fortunate to receive their support.”

The Park family story is a true American tale. Hae Park immigrated to the United States in search of a bright future. He found a mentor in...
Dr. Donald Lundberg, who founded the hospitality management program at Cal Poly Pomona in the 1970s. Those formative college years gave Hae the wherewithal to navigate the business world in California and ultimately become very successful. As a father, he wanted the same for his son. Eugene would also go on to study at the college and earn his bachelor’s degree in hospitality management.

“It was really straightforward that I was going to attend Cal Poly Pomona,” Eugene said.

The college’s restaurant series in particular gave Eugene experiences he has appreciated in his professional career. The series is the combination of three core classes that culminate in students managing and operating the Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch. When alumni reflect on their time in the RKR, they often proudly remember those moments when they were in the weeds or when the class forced them out of their comfort zone. Those sink or swim moments made lasting impressions on Eugene. While normally the more reserved one of the two, Eugene was gregarious when he promoted the lunch special in the RKR.

“I was assigned as a host during Week 4 of the RKR and I recall promoting the manager’s special to all the guests dining for lunch.

I felt that my enthusiasm to entice guests to purchase the manager’s special resulted in Week 4’s management team selling the most specials compared to all the other weeks’ teams,” he said.

His time in the kitchen under Chef/Lecturer Scott Rudolph’s watch was more bumpy, but equally character-building. “Scott kept me on my toes. A few times he could have fired me for the day,” Eugene recalled. As the son of a major donor, Eugene appreciated the equal treatment Rudolph gave him and his fellow pupils.

While he may no longer be a student, Eugene continues to learn and challenge himself to become a better businessman. The 27-year-old looks for cues from his father, who walks the grounds of the swap meets with ease, shaking hands and conversing with the vendors, some of whom have been renting spaces for years. While he may be more reserved than his father, Eugene’s connections with people run deep. For example, having learned that one of their longtime vendors had mounting healthcare costs from battling cancer, Eugene recommended lowering her rent. While it may not have been the best decision for the bottom-line, it was the right decision, he said.

Eugene also recommended that they offer free admission every day to senior citizens to help increase attendance.

“I asked him 'Why?' because we would lose revenue,” Hae Park said. “But, it was better for the vendors so I said, 'OK, we'll try.' ” The decision has worked out. More people are shopping, which brings more business to the vendors, who in turn continue to rent spaces.

As Eugene’s role in the family business has evolved from son to partner, Hae Park has also encouraged him to become philanthropic. When the Parks make a donation, it is to people or organizations that have had a direct impact on their wellbeing. In addition to supporting the college, Eugene donates to Rancho Cucamonga High School. His desire to give stems from his first day at the high school, which was his first time attending a public school. His homeroom teacher Debbie Patterson, who later died from cancer, put Eugene at ease by welcoming him.

“She made me feel comfortable,” he said. That kind gesture made a lasting impression. In her memory, Eugene has given $10,000 a year for the past three years to students, who show an aptitude to learning a foreign language. Additionally, he has set up college funds for Patterson’s six grandchildren. The Patterson family never sought out this generosity. Eugene approached them because his father challenged him to identify where he wanted to give back.

Eugene’s role in the company has come a long way since his input revolved around sugary drinks and video games. However, the desire to challenge the status quo has not wavered. Hae Park is proud to take a step back and trust his son to lead operations of the swap meets.

“Eugene has improved the business operations because he is not afraid of change,” Hae Park said. “He says 'try' so we try.”
Lightning in a Bottle

*SBE Founder and CEO Sam Nazarian has a talent for trendsetting and establishing successful partnerships. He is being honored with the college’s Mondavi Award on March 3.*

**BY LISA MCPHERON**

**F** there is something hot in Los Angeles, aside from the summer weather, Sam Nazarian is probably involved. The founder and CEO of SBE began to make his mark on the Southland’s hospitality scene in 2003 when he opened Shelter, his first nightclub. In the last eight years, he unleashed his entrepreneurial drive and built a luxury hospitality brand currently unparalleled. And, he did it during the worst economy since the Great Depression.

SBE’s flagship property is the SLS Hotel at Beverly Hills, designed by the renowned Philippe Starck. The contemporary hotel evokes the quintessential sense of luxury and set a standard that Nazarian is adopting at several other hotel properties, including the legendary Sahara Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas and the Ritz Plaza in Miami’s South Beach. The Ritz Plaza is set to reopen in the spring as the SLS Hotel at South Beach.

“People always want to know what Sam will do next. He has an amazing sense of what’s hot and what will be the next major thing to drive the hospitality industry,” said Dean Andy Feinstein.

On March 3, Nazarian, 36, will be the youngest recipient of The Collins College of Hospitality Management’s Robert Mondavi Wine and Food Award. He will be honored during Hospitality Uncorked at the JW Marriott Los Angeles at L.A. Live. Proceeds from the gala will support the college.

The Mondavi Award is given to individuals whose vision and leadership have advanced the wine and food industry. The inaugural Robert Mondavi Wine & Food Award was presented to Margrit and Robert Mondavi in 1999. Other distinguished honorees include: Julia Child; Alice Waters; Carol and Jim Collins; Richard N. Frank, and Leslie and Bob Spivak.

“It is fitting to include Sam in such a distinguished group of people,” Feinstein said. “He is an entrepreneur with impeccable taste, and he has the wherewithal to combine these two qualities to build a hugely successful company.”

SBE’s diverse portfolio includes hotels, restaurants and nightclubs, as well as real estate development and entertainment divisions. The company owns and operates more than 25 properties and employs more than 2,000 people with plans to grow. The privately owned company is projected to earn $150 million in food and beverage revenue alone this year.

While SBE is known for its high-end clubs and restaurants such as Hyde Lounge, Michael Mina’s XIV, José Andrés’ The BAZAAR, Katsuya and The Redbury, Nazarian is not shy about entering into other hospitality ventures as long as they show promise. He is committed to creating a vast array of hospitality concepts that appeal to various lifestyles. Take Papaya King for example. This New York hotdog stand famous for its frankfurters as much as its tropical drinks is not associated with luxury. However, it offers a steadfast product that Nazarian believes will hold up during a major expansion. He is the first Papaya King franchisee in Los Angeles, and he plans to open more than 20 stores in the next four years. Partnering with Umami Burger is another venture that Nazarian has described as “lightning in a bottle.” Nazarian made headlines this past summer when it was announced that he and Umami Burger’s Adam Fleischman would be partnering to expand the chain from five to 36 stores.

Additionally in 2010, SBE joined forces with former Los Angeles Mayor and Restaurateur Richard Riordan to transform Gladstone’s Malibu, a popular restaurant previously known for its legendary beachside location and its lackluster food. According to a *Los Angeles Times* article, before the retrofit, locals “treated the place like kryptonite” yet a steady flow of tourists made the restaurant one of the busiest in Southern California. The unorthodox partnership of a tourist dive with the trendy, chic SBE proved successful. The menu was overhauled and the interior was retrofitted. However, in the process everything good about Gladstone’s Malibu was preserved, and the locals have a reason to return.

The Collins College of Hospitality Management and its Board of Advisors are excited to honor Nazarian with the Mondavi Award. For more information on Hospitality Uncorked, please see the back cover.
**Trend**

**Tourism’s Shot in the Arm**

Dr. Neha Singh's study identifies ways to market medical tourism to Americans

BY SONJA BJELLAND

A photo of a white woman speaking to an Asian doctor adorns the cover of a Thai medical tourism flyer. The prices listed are: neck lift, $2,000, and bat ear correction, $1,200. Otoplasty may be the more common term for cosmetic ear surgery, however money is a universal language and when there is a cost savings upward of 50 percent, people start to notice.

While Europeans already head to places such as Goa, India, for dental work, research by Assistant Professor Dr. Neha Singh discovered 43 percent of the Americans she surveyed would be willing to travel abroad for medical reasons. Her research indicated that the U.S. consumer wants low-cost and high-quality care and is more drawn to a country that has laws and policies governing the medical industry. Those characteristics were more important than nearby beaches, shopping or other more typical tourism attractions.

The global medical tourism industry exceeds $60 billion a year. The Medical Tourism Association estimates 1.6 million Americans travel for medical purposes each year and those numbers are expected to rise. Depending on the country of origin, patients can save between 30 and 80 percent and more than 80 percent of medical travelers said they received better personal care while abroad than they did in the U.S., according to the association's research.

Convincing Americans that legal protections are in place proves to be the biggest hurdle for hospitals and countries looking to capitalize on America's healthcare problems, Singh said. “In other countries, there can be very different legal standards,” she added.

Beyond cosmetic procedures, many travelers go for hip and joint surgeries and more natural approaches such as meditation and ayurveda, an Indian practice of healing. Going abroad can also come with the added benefit of recuperating at a nice hotel and a little vacation time. “Sometimes a vacation helps you recuperate faster,” Singh said.

The industry is ripe for American travelers as wait times for procedures increase, healthcare costs rise and Baby Boomers age, she said. “As this generation is traveling more, they may be more willing to think about medical treatments abroad.”

In her research, Singh looked at what the U.S. consumer considers when thinking about medical tourism. Premiere Medical Travel Consulting funded the research in 2010 with a $21,000 grant. The Woodland Hills-based company gives advice and insight to medical tourism businesses wanting to enter the U.S. market.

Singh sent a survey to more than 12,000 patients who had ailments that could be treated abroad. Of the 1,117 who responded, 43 percent said they were willing to travel. Most said they had traveled abroad before - some at least once a year.

**Surprising Findings**

Singh was surprised to learn that most respondents ranked Japan as their first choice for medical tourism and Mexico second despite a lack of marketing by those countries. The countries that market medical tourism the most are Thailand, India and Singapore, yet they earned less than 15 percent of the total votes. For the countries courting Western medical dollars, such an influx in visitors can bring improved healthcare services and new jobs.

“Japan was a surprising finding especially because not much literature talks about this country as a medical tourism destination for U.S. tourists. It could be due to the perception by U.S. tourists that Japanese medical facilities and services are of high quality and technologically advanced,” Singh stated in the report. Those choices may also be based on popularity, image, flight connections and other factors, she said.
Marketing Strategies

The results also showed that a country’s laws regarding medical safety can be a big draw for American customers when they are deciding to go abroad for a procedure. Other key findings in Singh’s study included:

- Online research and a physician’s reference were key sources of recommendations.
- Hospitals should market themselves more because 70 percent of potential travelers were unable to name any top hospitals outside of the United States.
- Survey responders cared little about nearby tourist activities and were more interested in how often doctors had performed a certain procedure.
- Potential travelers also felt spas associated with their recuperation hotels were not important and put the most weight on the medical staff’s training and the legal standards of the country.
- People preferred working with either a travel agent who specialized in medical tourism or have the hospital make arrangements instead of dealing with a local travel agent.

For Singh, this research started a journey to answer many more questions in this emerging field. Not only did this survey open new avenues for her to study but she also hopes to survey Americans, who are considering going abroad for treatment, as well as those, who have traveled already. “I’ve just scratched the surface with this study,” she said.
Going Green for Good
Sustainability may seem trendy, but it is here for the long run

BY ELAINE REGUS

Restaurant owners are discovering that sustainable practices are not only good for the environment but for the bottom line as well. Green restaurants can realize considerable savings on energy, water and waste hauling by switching to low-energy LED light bulbs, installing low-flow water valves and composting. Return on larger investments such as installing solar panels or Energy Star appliances may take longer but eventually will pay off in terms of lower energy costs and consumer goodwill.

Studies show that customers are choosing to patronize restaurants that have adopted eco-friendly practices such as recycling or serving locally grown produce even if it means they have to pay more for dinner and a drink. A recent study conducted by the National Restaurant Association (NRA) in partnership with Georgia-Pacific Professional found that 60 percent of consumers preferred to patronize restaurants that recycle and 51 percent of respondents were willing to pay more at those restaurants.

A study of consumers in Taiwan by Dr. John Self, professor at The Collins College, and his colleagues, Hsin-Hui Hu and H.G. Parsa published in the Cornell Hospitality Quarterly, revealed that their knowledge of a restaurant’s sustainable practices was an important factor in their decisions to patronize green restaurants.

“The Dynamics of Green Restaurant Patronage” found that those who were older, had more money and higher education were more likely to dine at a green restaurant even if they had to pay more for the experience. Self noted that 20 years or so ago, the United States restaurant industry moved toward more healthy menus including veggie burgers at McDonald’s but no one bought it.

“People were talking about it but not really acting on it,” Self said. “Today, as all the Baby Boomers are starting to age, they are much more cognizant of their health and the calories they consume and of doing the right thing.”

Jot Condie, president and CEO of the California Restaurant Association, said many restaurant owners are green-minded individuals. They also are aware that they are serving green-minded customers, who are increasingly expecting similar commitments from the businesses they patronize.

“Combined with the potential advantages adopting green practices can have on a bottom line, it’s only natural that restaurants would make adjustments as it makes sense for their situation,” Condie said.

Sustainability is not just a trend any more, it is a mainstream movement.

The NRA study found that 65 percent of restaurateurs currently have a recycling program in place and 13 percent participate in composting programs. Seventy-two percent of restaurant owners said they use products such as bags, paper products and food containers made from recycled materials.

The NRA has been promoting earth-friendly practices with its Conserve: Solutions for Sustainability initiative since 2007. The Conserve website (http://conserve.restaurant.org) provides tips, tools and money-saving techniques for restaurant operators, who are interested in developing or expanding their green profile. A virtual green restaurant feature takes visitors on a tour from the front to the back of the house offering tips for conserving natural resources along the way.

Collins College student Kirk Bullock interned at the NRA in the summer of 2009. He helped develop content for Conserve, which was just getting started. The Conserve website not only offers best industry practices and educational videos, it has an actual cost calculator. For example, restaurant operators can input their energy costs and how many light bulbs they use. Then, they can select a green alternative and the calculator will determine the initial capital investment and how much money the restaurant will save in energy costs over time.

“It generates a return on investment for you,” Bullock said.

Some steps toward sustainability are as simple and inexpensive as asking guests whether they would like water instead of automatically serving it or opening blinds in the winter to let in natural light and heat. Others, like replacing incandescent light bulbs with longer lasting CFL bulbs or LED and installing high-efficiency refrigerators can require a significant investment.

“We usually like to suggest more low-hanging fruit especially for restaurants that want to do things more cost effectively,” said Jennifer Fleck, communications manager for the Green Restaurant Association, which has been working with restaurants since 1990 to cut energy, water and waste costs.

“Some low-hanging fruit can result in a significant amount of savings,” she said.

(continued on page 24)
TOP: Student Kirk Bullock, who interned with the NRA’s Conserve sustainability initiative, is surrounded by fruit trees in the college’s culinary garden. LOWER LEFT: Student Kimberli Turner gets into the spirit of recycling. The Collins College has recycling cans in each of its classrooms, offices and the Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch.
The GRA will certify restaurants that earn a minimum number of points in each of seven categories including Sustainable Food, Disposables and Energy, and a minimum of 100 points overall. Other requirements include a full-scale recycling program and no Styrofoam. More than 300 restaurants nationwide have been certified.

“Restaurants will continue to find the right balance of integrating greener practices into their business model,” Condie said. “But a lot of this is still new, and more products and solutions are introduced all the time that are marketed as sustainable, but have pros and cons about them like anything else. Those sorts of things will come and go as operators figure out what really works best in the real restaurant environment.”

As more and more restaurants join the green revolution, they need to aggressively market their efforts to the public. While the addition of solar panels is one of the more obvious displays of a restaurant’s commitment to green, a lot of sustainable alterations in restaurants are much more nuanced.

“Energy-efficient kitchen appliances, inventive recycling programs, compost heaps in the back – customers aren’t going to see those kinds of things,” Condie said. “So it’s important for restaurant companies to proactively and tastefully communicate their effort and philosophy to their customers so they have a sense of what the company is all about.”

Websites, information cards, menu notes and window displays can be employed to inform consumers about the restaurant’s environmentally friendly practices. Self said one of the surprising findings of his study of Taiwanese consumers was how important that information is to consumers. “It really behooves the restaurant owner or manager to make sure they publicize exactly what the restaurant is doing and really go out of their way to educate the consumer,” he said.

“It’s vital to get the message across that we’re not just a restaurant giving good food and good service. We’re also recycling and doing this and that. It’s for all of us that we’re doing this.”

As competition among green restaurants grows, some are realizing that green lifestyles and healthy lifestyles go hand in hand. Chris Rodriguez, an ’09 Collins College graduate and now a cook at the Four Seasons Hotel in Seattle, believes consumers are not only realizing that green lifestyles and healthy lifestyles go hand in hand. While sustainability is a major initiative for The Collins College, Chef Ernie Briones said that, unlike traditional restaurants, the Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch has a different and larger mission. Briones said there are a lot more students going through the restaurant every year than new customers coming in. Students are trained to pick, clean and process the produce as well as cooking and serving.

“The students going out have a bigger impact on what potentially can be done because of what they see Chef Scott Rudolph and I doing in the restaurant,” Briones said. “That’s where we’re getting the bang for the buck in teaching sustainability.”
LIKE A FINE ITALIAN SUIT, SOCIAL MEDIA is not a one-size-fits-all proposition when it comes to the hospitality industry. While a restaurant might benefit from tweeting its daily specials, hotels may rely on TripAdvisor and event organizers may find Foursquare is the best option to make connections and start conversations. Whatever the platform, social media is no longer an option for businesses that seek to grow and succeed.

“The great thing about social media is you can do it yourself,” said alumnus Ian Blackburn, who founded www.LearnAboutWine.com, the first wine education and event website dedicated to the understanding and enjoyment of wine, in 1995. “I still see a lot of people with websites that don’t have a Facebook page. It’s ridiculous! In this world, you’ve got to do it.”

Blackburn and two other Collins College alumni agreed to share their insights for navigating the increasingly crowded social media landscape where friends and followers are just waiting to be found.

Lisa Scalia owns Melting Pot Tours www.meltingpottours.com, which offers food-tasting tours of Old Pasadena, the L.A.’s Original Farmers Market and East Los Angeles.

Jeffrey Durham operates two hotels in Northern California including the Chablis Inn www.chablisinn.com and a winery www.poemcellars.com with his partner, Joey Wolosz, also a Collins College alumnus.

What is the most effective social media platform for your business?

BLACKBURN: “Social media improves our natural search, and search is No. 1! LinkedIn, since going public, is growing very fast and there’s a professional element to it, less social and more business oriented. I use it to search for professionals I’m trying to appeal to. Another new tool I’m investing time in is Foursquare. I can check in and let people know I’m at a particular location. I think my followers like to see me involved in greater food and wine activities and ultimately one of the best things somebody can do in social media is to “check-in.” Foursquare notifies my Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn audience, which totals over 20,000 followers. If someone “checks-in” or mentions my business like that, it is more topical and timely than writing a bland review.”

SCALIA: “I think there’s a segment of people who get their information from Facebook, a segment from Twitter, a segment from emailed newsletters, a segment from online advertising and on our website because of search engine optimization. You need a combination of marketing strategies. Just as important is face-to-
(continued on the next page)
face networking at marketing events and trade shows. You can’t put all your eggs in one basket.”

DURHAM: “I don’t think Twitter is fully realized yet. There’s probably a lot more opportunity with Twitter in the future. Napa is a major destination. The idea with Twitter is to start a conversation with people. We don’t say ‘Come buy our hotel rooms.’ We use Twitter to keep them abreast of activities in Napa or the Redwood Forest. We tweet to let people know what restaurants and wineries are worth visiting. When they come here, they need a place to stay, and they think of the Chablis Inn.”

Do you encourage your customers to post positive reviews on Yelp and TripAdvisor?

BLACKBURN: “Yes I do, and when I get a good one I let everybody know it.”

SCALIA: “Yes, we appeal to them at the end of the tour and follow up with an email to all those, who signed up for the email list, asking them to help spread the word and giving them the link to Facebook, TripAdvisor, Yelp and IgoUgo.”

DURHAM: “TripAdvisor is a major force to be reckoned with as a way to allow for conversation to happen in the internet world. It’s becoming a huge factor. At both hotels, we have worked on a campaign in-house to make guests aware of TripAdvisor and encouraging them to post reviews if they have had a positive experience. As of today, our Chablis Inn in Napa is ranked 12 out of 26 on TripAdvisor and is listed as the top value property. Some hotels that ranked above us charge three or four times our rate. We’re getting tremendous response from people calling and emailing for reservations as a direct result of our positive reviews.”

How do you handle negative reviews?

BLACKBURN: “When and if I get a negative review, I respond appropriately as they might just be a customer trying to reach out. A concern with tools like Yelp and Citysearch is they rarely allow for you to publicly address the negative review. I hope people become better at looking at the body of reviews and the pattern of reviews and not use a single review as any kind of tool. They need to read into the reviews and see what people are saying. I am confident that truth comes out in the end.”
**SCALIA:** “I personally monitor the reviews. Fortunately, negative reviews are rare. We’re very blessed that people like our tours. The first time we received a negative review, my sister and I took it so personally. Now, we laugh unless someone had a legitimate beef. If they do, then I respond personally.”

**DURHAM:** “If someone posts a comment on TripAdvisor, management and the owners have an opportunity to respond so it’s not just a one-way conversation. The turnaround time for responding is a lot quicker now. Time is of the essence now and everything is so instantaneous. If someone complains, I like the opportunity to explain my side of the story.”

**Blackburn:** “Yes, I believe in a balanced approach to advertising and wish I could afford to do it all. For nine months of the year, I hire a PR firm to represent us as I much prefer PR to paid advertising but it is a large investment. An informational write-up in a well-read blog or local newspaper can have a much larger impact than a paid ad. I think PR works well because of our type of customer, a very high-end client that is willing to pay for education. We appeal to a pretty defined audience. After 15 years in business, we continue to innovate and to improve quality, working to deserve strong word-of-mouth support.”

**SCALIA:** “At this point, we are going strictly electronic. We have done print advertising in the past. We had a couple of PR consultants work on our behalf, but we found we have equal success doing it ourselves, and it’s a lot cheaper. Word-of-mouth is our most effective advertising. The one piece of press we got the biggest boost for our business from was an article in Westways magazine in October.”

**DURHAM:** “We do a tiny bit of print promotion. We took most of the money from advertising and put it toward staff development and training so when someone calls or visits the hotels, our staff can nail it. The Chablis Inn is a motel with exterior corridors. We can’t compete with Marriott down the street and its interior corridors, restaurant and bar. But, we can compete in service and can compete in letting people know we’re there. People are coming to Napa because they need an air-conditioned room to store their wine in while doing other things during the day. They get a great experience with my staff and a clean room and they pay less.”
Pomp and Circumstance
Excitement was in the air when nearly 300 students graduated on a cool June evening. Hundreds of friends and family members watched as their loved ones crossed the stage in the University Quad. These photos offer a glimpse of the joy, celebration and reflection shared by many during the ceremony.

1 Jaime Cosico sings the national anthem. 2 HMC President Sacha Tani presents President Michael Ortiz with the class gift. 3 Julian McPhee Scholar Gary Park gives a touching and funny speech about his time at the college. 4 Mary Niven, vice president of Disney California Adventure & Guest Services, gives the keynote address. 5 Venus Wu and her classmates move their tassels to the left. 6 (from left) Leo Yuen and Quan Nhan cook up some fun. 7 Chris Chen served at ASI Vice President in 2009-10. 8 (from left) Akeel Shah and Brian Radford celebrate their moment.
Entrepreneurial SPIRIT

Three alumni share a youthful drive to run their own companies

BY ESTHER CHOU AND LISA MCPHERON

For two years, David Li ’01 did not get a good night’s sleep. He was too busy opening up his first restaurant and formulating plans to expand. From management to cooking to sweeping the floors, in the early days, Li did it all. He had to in order to get where he is today.

Eight years later, Li owns and operates the popular chain of Guppy House restaurants in Orange and Los Angeles counties that features a Taiwanese-influenced menu with gigantic shaved ice desserts. With a food truck expansion on the way, the Guppy House group has steadily grown despite the recession.

“I kept telling myself that there is so much reward in the end and that if you work hard, life is more enjoyable," he said. With sales at about $4 million at each of the five locations, that hard work is certainly paying off.

Li is a standout entrepreneur not just for the monetary success of his company, but for achieving so much at a young age. He opened his first teahouse at 23 years old. The Collins College alumnus is not alone in his young entrepreneurial spirit. Alumni Linda Vuong ’11 and Jake Vallens ’10 represent two distinctly different areas of hospitality, but they share youth in common. They, too, launched their businesses before turning 30.

Li, Vuong and Vallens each are driven by a desire for success and independence and often fall back on their Collins College educations for guidance and know-how as they navigate their careers.

Polly’s Pies CEO encourages professional and personal growth for his employees through reading

BY LISA MCPHERON

Organizations need to shepherd professional and personal development among all ranks and titles if they want to foster leadership in a positive and productive workplace, according to Eddie Sheldrake, CEO of Polly’s Inc. and longtime member of the college’s Board of Advisors.

Sheldrake oversees a company that encompasses Polly’s Pies Restaurants and KFC franchises. With about 1,200 people working at 29 locations, it is essential he said to help keep them motivated and content in all aspects of their lives.

“Our company is one that believes in education, so we coach our people and help them become better leaders,” he said. “That is where we differentiate ourselves.”

He tries to help foster education and development by offering leadership seminars and encouraging his employees to read two books: People First: Achieving Balance in an Unbalanced World by Jack Lannom and It’s Your Ship: Management Techniques from the Best Damn Ship in the Navy by Captain D. Michael Abrashoff.

“Both books basically say that when you care for people you create great leadership and you get good results," Sheldrake said. People First offers a 5-step philosophy to coach people on achieving balance in their lives. “People do better in all parts of their lives when they learn to strike a balance," Sheldrake said.

It’s Your Ship is a personal story of Captain Abrashoff and how his command of the USS Benfold taught him to be a leader. As the title implies, Abrashoff spurred a sense of ownership among his crew that had a direct impact on productivity.

Both books are in print and available through major bookstore chains.
Li opened the first Guppy Teahouse in 2003 as the boba tea craze in Southern California was taking off. While his menu continues to include many flavors of the popular milk tea, his menu is like no other. “We make changes based on customers’ opinions. You want to serve what they want,” he said.

Li grew up in a restaurant family. His parents owned and operated an Italian-French restaurant in Taiwan until he was 12 years old. That amalgamation of cultures fuses its way into the cuisine at Li’s teahouses today. Guppy House’s expansive menu draws from Li’s mother’s take on traditional Taiwanese comfort food like beef stew, mixed with French presentation and preparation techniques and influences from the richly diverse Southern California population. Filipino and Korean cuisines are apparent in some of the fish and noodle dishes. None of the teahouses serves alcohol yet they stay open late, so they are popular night spots for young adults and families.

Li credits the company’s success to its ability to evolve its menu and human resources management. Those reasons — plus — location, location, location. The location of each store was painstakingly chosen for their freeway access, large parking lots, patio seating and more.

Li launched the first Guppy Teahouse soon after graduating with the help of his parents and other investors. Vallens and Vuong started even earlier while they were still hitting the books.

(continued on next page)
LINDA VUONG

Flower Power

Linda Vuong launched her company as a student. During her college career, it was not unusual for her to begin Fridays at 3 a.m. walking by stall after stall of vendors at the Flower Mart in downtown Los Angeles. A full-time wedding florist and event coordinator as well as Collins College student, Vuong visited the flower market twice a week to pick up flowers and supplies. She devoted the rest of her day to classes, evenings to client consultations and event prep, and virtually every weekend to weddings. During the busy season, from March to November, she handled about six weddings a month.

Business, however, does not follow such a neat schedule. The 40-plus hours she devoted to her 6-year-old company did not include the time she spent thinking about work: "every waking minute."

"Going to school and working full time was so hard. There were days when I wanted to quit," she said. The support from her family, friends and academic advisors at The Collins College, as well as the positive reviews and compliments from her clients, kept her going, Vuong said.

Also, she knows the hospitality management foundation will be vital in a few years, when she expands her business from floral design and event coordination to owning and operating a wedding ceremony and reception venue. The hands-on experience at the Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch, where she worked as a teaching assistant, provided her with a foundation in restaurant operations, finance, inventory and food.

"The hospitality management program and my business go hand-in-hand," she said. "I had to learn a lot for my business through trial and error, and I also learned them first-hand in my classes."
Changing Course

Jake Vallens is a creative, business-minded young man, and when faced with a hurdle, he can change his course. Vallens is aiming high with his start-up company Slightly Sweet, yet while the wine inventory management system has yet to turn into a money-making enterprise due to delays in development – he has started a second company to keep the cash flowing.

“Once it became clear that Slightly Sweet was going to take much more time and capital to develop than I had initially anticipated I decided I had to pivot and create other streams of revenue. So we launched Shoutoutz, a promotional products distribution company. Difference being it allowed us to almost immediately begin generating revenues and with a fraction of the overhead,” he said.

Slightly Sweet is a cloud-based wine inventory system designed to allow wine collectors and restaurants alike the ability to maintain a real-time inventory of their beverage collections. The 2010 alumnus laid the foundation for Slightly Sweet while organizing The Collins College’s wine, beer and spirits inventory under Dr. Margie Jones’ direction.

The software is in development and work is underway to identify investors. As it became apparent that development would take a while, Vallens launched Shoutoutz, which produces customized promotional products. Shoutoutz products feature QR codes, which are the increasingly popular barcode technology that people can scan with smartphones. Additionally he launched a web application called Smarter Square to compliment Shoutoutz that helps track, monitor and manage QR codes.

“Now amusingly, we’re rolling out a totally different web app that we’ve just completed called Smarter Square and plan to use revenues from that to invest back into developing the wine inventory systems,” he said.
The Collins College and CRA have close ties. How does this relationship serve our students and the industry?

We have a rich history together. Dr. Jerry Chesser is the past chairman of the CRA Educational Foundation and Dr. Andy Feinstein is currently serving on the CRA Board of Directors.

There is significant Collins faculty-CRA connectivity. Past CRAEF directors include Dr. Bob Small and Dr. Burke, among others. And there is another important connection. Jim Collins was a longtime CRA board member and served as our president from 1980-1981.

The Collins College-CRA relationship has always been about the students – to provide them with a top-notch educational experience. We both win: The Collins College gets to boast about the career accomplishments of its alumni, and we get to boast about our talented industry recruits, who will become our leaders of tomorrow. As cliché as that may sound, it’s real. And, I see it play out on a regular basis. In fact, Erin Mascho, a former ProStart student and Collins alum, is our program coordinator for the CRA Educational Foundation. She is a good example of how our partnership feeds top talent into the hospitality industry.

ProStart educates high school students about the industry by giving them hands-on lessons in foodservice and management. Is it your hope that they apply for programs like The Collins College after graduating high school? If so, why?

For CRAEF, The Collins College is “exhibit A” for the leaders-of-tomorrow narrative.

It is critical that our industry develop a deep field of management and top executive talent. And without question, a college degree is the most direct path in that pursuit. So, yes, we always encourage our ProStart students to continue their education beyond high school. That being said, a college degree is not always within immediate reach for some high school students. In the meantime ProStart provides them the skills and knowledge that will make them more competitive in a tight, entry-level, labor market.

What are some of the benefits for people and businesses that join the CRA?

First and foremost, we look out for our members while they run their restaurants during the day and while they sleep at night. Twenty-four-seven we are working at reducing their exposure to regulatory and legal risks. Our No. 1 priority is to advocate for a business environment that allows them to be profitable.

We also have many benefits that are intended to help them increase their bottom line. We partner with outside companies to provide discounts on products and services.
Every few years, there is a new governor and new set of legislators, which means a new agenda for the state of California. How does the CRA decide which measures to support and which measures to oppose?

The state’s agenda is constantly shifting with the economic and political winds. That agenda comes at us in the form of the annual state budget and the roughly 3,000 pieces of legislation introduced every year. We analyze every proposal and then narrow our focus on the measures that directly affect our industry. Typically we end up actively lobbying on about 200 measures per year. The policy objectives set by the CRA Board of Directors are central to our process when deciding on which measures to engage our advocacy efforts.

Of course, depending on those economic and political winds some years are easier than others. One year, we can safely navigate our industry through the proverbial intersection with the state’s agenda. And in another year, it can be a collision. In either case, our state’s large restaurant presence and contribution to the economy always make us a formidable voice in any debate. Staying with the traffic metaphor — these next few years will require side airbags and a loud horn.

Before joining the CRA, you worked as a lobbyist for the Southern California Air Quality Alliance, a consortium of aerospace, manufacturing and high-tech companies. What are some transferable skills you have used in each of these industries?

From a lobbying perspective, most of the skills are transferable. You must have a 360-degree view of your risks, know how government’s many cogs work when they’re simultaneously in motion and master the legislative rules, constitutional requirements and parliamentary procedure. Then, you must have a deep understanding of what motivates your adversaries and work so they have an equal depth on what motivates your membership. Essentially you have to be part political scientist, part anthropologist. But most of all, you have to be fearless and aggressive on behalf of your membership, which is another long conversation.

How important is the hospitality industry to the state of California and the nation as a whole?

We are the second largest private sector employer in the state — healthcare is No. 1. We have a workforce of 1.4 million. This year in California, our industry is projected to exceed $60 billion in sales. And, we generate $4.5 billion in tax revenue for the state. Nationally, our annual sales outnumber the U.S. Agriculture, the U.S. airline, and motion picture industries — combined. So, we are important.

What steps did the CRA take in the last few years to help the industry weather the recession?

We have stepped up our efforts with our industry’s service providers to maximize savings for our membership. And, we continue to work at all levels of government to identify areas where we can change the law and reduce our liabilities. For example, we advocated for the passage of the Durbin Amendment, which was part of the Wall Street Reform and the Consumer Protection Act. It went into effect on Oct. 1 and restaurants can expect substantial savings in processing fees as a result. Our partners, such as Heartland Payment Systems, will pass 100 percent of the savings back to their customers, which averages about $1,000 per restaurant. In any economy, that is real money.

Have your members begun to see business returning to normal?

There is a lot of talk within our industry about the “new normal.” That is, people are less likely to return to their “old” normal dining out behavior, even when the economy rebounds. I’m not sure we agree with that theory. But the real “new normal” is that — through this recession — restaurant operators retooled operations to be more efficient and became more creative with their offerings to keep costs down and traffic up. That is the real “new normal.” I’m confident that when the economy does rebound the restaurant dining public will come back strong. All of our indicators suggest there is still a lot of pent-up demand for dining out. But, the recent employment numbers and economic indicators suggest that we’ve got another 12 months or so before we get our groove back. But, we will get it back.
Leslie Clevenger is in the first cohort of graduate students at The Collins College.
Graduate student Leslie Clevenger ’89 returned to The Collins College after climbing the corporate ladder at The Cheesecake Factory

I grew up working in my family’s seafood restaurant and had spent years in a major restaurant before I realized how lucky I was to still feel inspired by the challenges that working in this business give me. I never cease to take pleasure in offering joy to loyal guests and the seamless teamwork involved in getting through a tough night in the weeds.

By the time I was 12, I was the “dishwasher person” at Weatherby’s Seafood, my parents’ restaurant in rural Northern California. My father would march into the dish room like a master orator and say, “If those cogs don’t line up and work together, the wheel of the restaurant doesn’t work.” He also made every attempt to offer me positive encouragement when I was going into my second or third hour of deveining shrimp. It was not until years later that I came to understand the priceless gift of such work. The attention to detail and quality that I continue to develop today certainly had its beginnings in my parents’ restaurant.

The yield of skills that came from working in our family restaurant was a tremendous contribution to my level of comfort in a restaurant. In all facets of our family business – from dishes to prep, from cooking to serving, and from ordering to payroll – I was as comfortable as if I were home; probably because it was my second home. I was fearless in my pursuit of knowledge perhaps because my job was never on the line if I made a mistake. My parents were quite effective mentors, and I rarely made the same mistake twice. I started to feel the beauty, joy and fun of working in the hospitality industry. Attending Cal Poly Pomona to pursue a hospitality management degree was a natural trajectory considering the passion I already had for the business.

My studies at The Collins College added a fantastic layer of knowledge to my foundation. After graduating in 1989, I joined Brinker International and worked as a manager for their Chili’s Grill and Bar division. It was a good starting point for me, and I was able to apply what I had learned at school and build upon my skills and knowledge.

After a couple of years with Brinker, I joined the management team of a small company with a concept I was accustomed to from my own family’s restaurant: freshly made food combined with exceptional service. The Cheesecake Factory had five restaurants when I started and it went public shortly thereafter. This was really a dream-job of sorts considering how quickly The Cheesecake Factory became one of the busiest restaurants in the country. We were fast-paced restaurants with constant and rewarding challenges. The company was small and I worked with and was mentored by its founder David Overton. The most important thing David taught me was to have an eye for detail. His ability to spot the smallest discrepancy made him an exceptional person to work with. I began to see restaurant and corporate operations in a wonderfully enhanced light.

I also came to understand the impact of a company’s culture. All of us who worked for the company were committed to the same ideals: quality in everything we did; passion for excellence; responsibility; integrity, and respect. We were all service-minded, high performers. We had an opportunity to be dynamic leaders, who realized that the people we worked with were our greatest resource. I had a fantastic 10 years in upper management of restaurant operations in several Southern California Cheesecake Factory stores before I moved to the corporate side of the company to help expand the infrastructure. I worked for several years in the corporate office with David and the top company executives planning and executing operations, an undertaking that expanded my knowledge base in a direction that showed me the other side of the business from the top down. Having never worked in a corporate office before, I saw this as time to learn and continue to build my knowledge.

There is always a learning curve regardless of the professional position one is in. One of my main goals in attending graduate school has been to increase my depth of knowledge and skill set while simultaneously staying current with new trends. Improving my methodology for analysis, statistics and problem solving will only serve as a benefit for myself as well as my future employers. I want to employ the most forward-thinking ideas and techniques in this industry. This business is constantly changing; those of us who work in all aspects of hospitality can always be better equipped with more skills and knowledge. Even with the recent uncertainty with the economy, I applied to graduate school to give myself the best edge for moving ahead. I want to be part of a chain of knowledge, work on advanced projects and increase my contacts and resources. I want to stand out, advance my career and have greater earnings power. When I learned that The Collins College was starting a graduate program, I immediately knew I wanted to be a part of this historical event. To my delight, I was accepted. As an alumna, I was truly proud and excited to be back on the Cal Poly Pomona campus.

I continue to enjoy the field and I am still as excited to move forward in the industry, as I was when I had my first day as a manager. After graduate school, no matter what my next steps are, I will still aspire to increase my knowledge. And of course, my family is proud because I love what I do and it still involves cooking seafood.
You spent your early career primarily working in the hotel and beverage industries. When did you come to Cal Poly Pomona?

I came in January 1990 and I never left! I like to say I came with the first Collins building as it opened around that time. Actually, I did not initially interview for a teaching position, but for a purchasing job that was open. However, I was really hoping I could squeeze my way into a teaching position – and somehow the faculty who interviewed me agreed by giving me a quarterly position to teach. I must have convinced them that I knew something about purchasing because my first assignment was to teach Purchasing and Supervision. That same quarter, I also taught Wines, Beers and Spirits. While the purchasing class went well, I was better suited for the wines course as I had worked for several years in a wine bar and had also been one of the graduate teaching assistants for the wines course in graduate school at Cornell. Most importantly, the wines course is where my heart is and I have dedicated myself to learning everything I can about the subject and to continuously improve what and how I teach the class.

The Wines, Beers and Spirits and Wines of the World courses are among the most popular at the college and they attract students from across campus. What benefits do students gain from taking these classes?

I hope that they gain a life-long appreciation for wine in both professional and social settings. And, the results haven’t disappointed me. I have students, typically in their 30s and 40s, now thanking me for exposing them to the word of wine, beer and spirits. Most of them think of wine as a pleasurable avocation, but I have also had many former students pursue careers in the beverage business. The introductory course is taken by students from many majors. In this introductory class, we try to set them up to better understand a restaurant setting for when they are interviewing or dining for professional purposes.

You are a Certified Sommelier, a Certified Wine Educator, and have passed the advanced course for the Wines and Spirits Educational Trust. You are a national board member with the Society of Wine Educators. You also work closely with the Guild of Sommeliers and the Court of Master Sommeliers to offer Level One and Level Two Master Sommelier exams at the college all that in addition to your teaching. How do these affiliations create opportunities for you, students and alumni?

I want our beverage curriculum to be state-of-the-art and the top in the nation. To achieve that, you have to take an active role in such organizations as the Society of Wine Educators and affiliate with professional organizations where possible. You have to put yourself out there, stay current, and be open to learning. I take advantage of as many opportunities as I can. Last year, I traveled to Bordeaux to attend the Bordeaux Wine School, and I have taken students on the Banfi Scholastic Scholarship program in Italy. I have been involved in the Los Angeles International Wines and Spirits Competition and the L.A. County Fair Wine Education Program at Fairplex for over a decade. I am also lucky enough to judge for one or two
wine competitions each year. Understanding what the industry expects of experts is key for me, and for our students and alumni. The sommelier designations are well known in the industry and provide great additions to resumes; as such, I encourage and help earnest students to earn the sommelier certification and other notable designations.

You are instrumental in producing Horsehill Vineyards Zinfandel and Zinfandel Rosé wines with Jon McPherson at South Coast Winery and the College of Agriculture. Even though our rosé regularly takes home gold medals and, in one case, earned a best of class medal, we sometimes get flack for making a “pink” wine. How do you respond to that type of criticism?

First of all, rosé can be fantastic, and Horsehill Rosé can be a perfect pairing. On a hot summer day with the right food, there’s nothing better than a glass of Horsehill. We teach that wine is made in the vineyard and at this time, the vineyard gives us excellent rosé. Some day we may have red Zinfandel, but for now it is better to make the best wine we can from what the grapes give us. We have a great winemaker helping us showcase this generous vineyard gift. The College of Agriculture has done an absolutely fantastic job to welcome these wonderful old vines from the De Ambrogio Ranch.

You are also the college’s liaison to the Club Managers Association of America’s (CMAA) Business Management Institute (BMI). What is BMI and how often do they frequent campus?

CMAA is known for offering great professional development education. We are one of six partner universities that offer a course within the Business Management Institute, and we have been doing it since 1991. The course we offer is Leadership Principles and approximately 40 club managers attend a five-day, 40-hour seminar series focusing on what leadership is and how to hone their skills. We love having club professionals on campus, and we hear that the product we provide is timely and rewarding.

Why does CMAA seek out The Collins College as a partner?

CMAA believes that partnering with universities is essential in keeping their professional development rigorous and current. Most of The Collins College faculty, who teach in this program, have been doing it for many years, and we consistently receive excellent marks from the participants. We are proud to be on the list with Georgia State, Michigan State, Cornell, UNLV and University of Houston.

Each fall, you also work on behalf of the college to co-host the annual Southern California Visitors Industry Outlook Conference with PKF Consulting USA. How does this event serve the regional hospitality industry?

This event focuses on the idea that tourism is key to a geographic area and that hotels, restaurants and attractions collectively make an area desirable for travel. This conference provides an overview of how the tourism industry is doing on a national level and then focuses on how Southern California has been performing. This information is helpful for budget planning for future years. I also find this conference is a great place to network. Students who volunteer or attend this conference love the big picture that this conference provides.
Eva Wassermann ’86 still remembers the B she received on a paper she wrote in Professor Bob Small’s class 25 years ago.

“I knew it was probably the best paper in the class, but he told me, ‘For you, it was a B.’ He knew I was capable of working at a higher level and he was pushing me to try harder – to be the best I could be.”

Ask Wassermann about her experiences as a student and the conversation turns to the polytechnic model of education that allowed her to thrive, the internships that gave her an edge when she launched her career, and, most significantly, the relationships with faculty that inspired her.

“I simply would not be as successful today if not for the faculty,” said Wassermann, principal of State Park Advisory. Wassermann, whose expertise lies in assessing, purchasing and improving hotel properties, has completed transactions totaling more than $2 billion thus far in her career.

A sense of gratitude and a desire to ensure that future students have the ample opportunities she had, motivates her to give back. Wassermann serves as vice chair of foundation giving for the comprehensive campaign; she is a board member on the National Development Council; and she is a longtime participant on the college’s Board of Advisors.

Dean Andy Feinstein said Wassermann, whom he met years earlier when he launched his career after college, is a huge asset. “She has played an integral role in the shaping of the college’s programs and in the development of our new facilities. She exemplifies what it is to be a leader. She loves a challenge, she is incredibly creative and focused, and she motivates those around her.”

Those leadership skills will be critical to the university’s $150 million comprehensive campaign. As a part of the steering committee, she will guide the university’s efforts to reach out to foundations nationwide. She considers the comprehensive campaign a vital undertaking.

“This is a very exciting time for the university,” she said. “Because we are a public university, there has long been a perception that we don’t need private funds. But, as we have seen over the past several years, state funding to higher education has been cut significantly, yet we continue to provide an education that is at the highest level.”
Harvest Celebration 2010

The gala supported the college and honored three distinguished leaders in the industry

Harvest Celebration 2010 honored three exceptional leaders in the hospitality industry while raising funds to support students inside and outside the classroom. The charity gala last November netted $134,445 for The Collins College. In a time of reduced state funding, this private support sets the college apart in its efforts to provide special opportunities for students.

“The extras are what make our college exceptional. Extras like numerous scholarships and the ability to refurbish classrooms and laboratories with state-of-the-art technology,” said Dean Andy Feinstein. “Harvest Celebration helps fill a funding gap for the college, and has a direct impact on students, faculty and staff.”


With the college’s Board of Advisors taking the lead, a new benefit event called Hospitality Uncorked will be held March 3, 2012, at the JW Marriott Los Angeles. The event will preserve the Robert Mondavi Wine & Food Award and honor Sam Nazarian, founder and CEO of SBE. Please see the back cover for more details or visit http://collins.csupomona.edu.
The Collins College of Hospitality Management is moving forward with an academic building expansion thanks to an outstanding year of giving. The college benefited from $2,939,870 in cash gifts and gifts-in-kind. Additionally, the college received $4,461,500 in new pledges, most of which will go toward the construction project.

“In 2008, we set out to raise $10 million to fund an expansion of the college, and I am grateful to announce we have accomplished that,” said Dean Andy Feinstein. “With Carol and Jim Collins leading the charge, our industry partners and friends have shown incredible generosity.”

Three years ago, Carol and Jim Collins pledged to match $5 million to fund a new building project. In the last year, Peggy and Andrew Cherng of Panda Restaurant Group, Inc. heeded the challenge and pledged $2.5 million. Additionally, the J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation pledged $2.05 million and alumnus Eugene Park ’07 pledged $1 million. In 2009, Mary Alice and Richard N. Frank pledged $40,000.

The Collins College is not alone in its efforts. The university is in the midst of a multi-year $150 million comprehensive campaign. Contributions to The Campaign for Cal Poly Pomona will be transformative for the public university, which cannot thrive without private support.

The Collins College would like to sincerely thank those who have given this year. The Donor Honor Roll features the names of individuals, businesses and organizations that have provided cash gifts or gifts-in-kind from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011.

**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 & CRA Educational Foundation
Gigi Cheung
Club Corp (Eric Boberg)
Farmer Boys Food, Inc.
Kathryn & Michael R. Ferguson
FreshPoint Southern California/FreshPoint Produce (Verne Lusby)
Joseph Gatto/J.G. Gatto and Associates
Bruce Gorelick*
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In-N-Out Burger
The International Gold & Silver Plate Society
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Stephanie & Murray Lowe
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Dawn L. Mason
Reginald McDowell
Eileen M. McNamara
Lisa McPherson
Dr. Clark McClay
Geraldine A. Medeiros*
Frank J. Medina
Patricia M. Moore
Roz & Don Nelson
William B. Newell*
Newport Seafood Group
Aaron P. Nielson
Wayne D. Norman
Northrop Grumman
Renee R. Nuanes*
Patti J. Obermiller
Danny Sandoval
Stephen E. Scherer
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Robert G. Schubert*
Lee & Mickey Segal
Steven Senft*
Michelle & Robert W. Small
Gregory P. Stewart
Paul Strona
Technomic, Inc.
Elizabetht & Thomas Tegart
Jennifer Tong*
URG/King’s Seafood Company
Raymond Viers*
Elizabetht & George Vulich
Randy A. Wallace, Jr.
Constance A. Warbrick Yard House
Tristine Lim*
Alicia Lopez*
Stephanie & Murray Lowe
Lucille’s Smokehouse BBQ
Dawn L. Mason
Reginald McDowell
Eileen M. McNamara
Lisa McPherson
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Jennifer Tong*
URG/King’s Seafood Company
Raymond Viers*
Elizabetht & George Vulich
Randy A. Wallace, Jr.
Constance A. Warbrick Yard House

CORRECTION:
The 2009-2010 Donor Honor Roll should have included Fairplex in the $1 to $999 section. We apologize for this oversight.

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 McPherson director of communications and external relations, at lmcpherson@csupomona.edu or (909) 869-3151.
It is not often you hear of an individual, who received a Lifetime Achievement Award, was inducted into their high school hall of fame and granted emeritus status at Cal Poly Pomona all in one year. However, 13-year Collins College veteran and tourism expert Dr. James Burke did just that.

Burke received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Travel and Tourism Research Association in June 2010. The award recognizes his contributions to the global travel and tourism industry. He was inducted into his high school hall of fame in April and granted emeritus status in May.

“I was pleasantly surprised,” Burke said humbly on receiving these awards.

Burke is a consummate educator. His list of publications, service work and teaching accomplishments from his 33-year career in higher education, attest to that. He has developed graduate and undergraduate tourism and hospitality management programs and assisted in curriculum development at seven different universities across North America and Europe.

Burke studied environmental biology and psychology at Dartmouth College, where he was a wide receiver and kicker on the football team. He also played lacrosse and rugby. He discovered an interest in hospitality when he went to work for Leo Burnett advertising in Chicago where he dealt exclusively with hospitality clients. His interest was piqued again during his travels to national parks. He observed, with concern, how tourists abused the parks, and he wanted to find a way to reduce their negative impact. This concern influenced his research interests, his participation in professional associations and his role in university hospitality programs. He went on to earn two master’s degrees and a doctorate propelling his academic career as a scholar and a leader.

Burke started at The Collins College in 1998, serving as dean until 2004. He oversaw the construction of two buildings, established and maintained major donor relationships, worked to recruit a competitive pool of diverse students, bolstered staff and faculty professional development – ultimately ushering the college through exponential growth.

“As a dean, I had a vision of where I wanted our program to go,” he said. “I wanted to get The Collins College ranked in the top five. I knew my job was to provide the resources to do that.”

In 2004, Burke returned to the classroom where he teaches marketing management and the Professional Work Experience course. He also continues consultation work and remains active with professional organizations.

Dean Andy Feinstein and colleagues Gary Hamilton and Dr. John Self agree it has been a pleasure to work alongside Burke. “He has been a great friend,” Feinstein said. “Jim has provided me with valuable advice the entire time I have been at The Collins College.”

Burke is gradually retiring, via the five-year Faculty Early Retirement Program. To Burke, his success has stemmed from a committed and passionate pursuit of excellence. His friend and colleague Dr. Peter Williams, director at the Center for Tourism Policy and Research at Simon Fraser University, may have said it best, “Burke stayed true to his mantra; he just did what he loved.”
Academic Advisor

Tengemana Thumbutu is the sparkling and sage academic advisor for The Collins College, who helps newcomers to understand what it means to be a college student and to prepare for the working world. In the role she has held for nearly a decade, Thumbutu’s charges rely on her to make them think and to make them laugh.

Parent and purveyor of life lessons are two tasks for which she comes well equipped. The mother of four grown children, Thumbutu recently celebrated 40 years of marriage. She earned a bachelor’s degree from Cal State Northridge and went on to postgraduate studies at Cal State Los Angeles. She has worked for Cal Poly Pomona for 27 years.

“I believe that the most valuable contribution Teng makes to our students is a tacit lesson on the importance of active listening, a critical leadership talent,” said Associate Dean Michael Godfrey. “When a student demonstrates that he or she was not paying attention to a procedure or guideline, her patient but firm ‘mom away from home’ approach is at its best.”

Thumbutu, who “had a bucket list long before it was trendy,” loves international travel. She has visited every continent on the globe – including Antarctica, a place she remembers for its “snow, penguins, snow, beautiful glaciers, snow, sea lions and a lot more snow.”

Ever feisty, Thumbutu set a goal to walk 1,000 miles this year for personal discipline as well as the physical benefits of exercising. She walks three miles each day. When she feels creative, she enjoys taking photographs, creating handcrafted greeting cards, making jewelry, gardening, and trying her hand at interior decorating. She is also writing a book about love that will be published soon.

Her breadth of interests and experiences sets Thumbutu up as much more than a purveyor of campus how-to tips. She helps students develop expectations, and understand guidelines and processes. In their first quarter as a Collins College student, Thumbutu matches each student to a faculty advisor, based on the student’s specific area of interest within the broad world of hospitality management. This allows her to be a one-stop, convenience shop for students’ general advising.

“Collins College students have come to a point in their lives where they must accept responsibility for their education, for their life choices, and for the methods they will use to achieve success,” she said. “And, remember success is achieved in the workplace as well as in one’s personal life. My goal is to assist the students in reaching their goals and in becoming a complete person who understands and appreciates people, life, and the joys of working in this industry.”

In Swahili, Thumbutu’s first name, Tengemana, means “settled and at peace after a big upheaval.” While she cherishes the name for its roots in the African trade language, Thumbutu is not certain whether it describes her perfectly. Admittedly, she is bold enough to speak up and pursue what she wants. However, Thumbutu defines her approach to life as happy, energetic and casual.

“I am just trying to enjoy my piece of the world and help others along the way,” she said.
**News & Accolades**

Congratulations to Professor Robert Palmer for his retirement in March. Palmer taught law for 23 years and made lasting impressions for his quick wit and deft understanding of laws that govern the hospitality industry. Many past and present colleagues wished him well during a retirement party at the Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch.

Professor Dr. Jerry Chesser will be hanging up his Collins College chef coat for about a year while he serves as interim dean of Cal Poly Pomona’s College of the Extended University. As interim dean he will oversee all functions of the college, which provides numerous courses, professional certifications and other services to the surrounding communities. Chesser was also elected as a trustee to the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation, the philanthropic foundation of the NRA.

Professor Dr. James Burke was granted emeritus status. Burke has been engaged in university education for more than 33 years and his list of publications, service work and teaching accomplishments is extensive. Read a profile about his career on page 44.

Professor Dr. Bob Small took Cal Poly Pomona’s learn-by-doing to an exceptional level this fall. In early October, he led a nine-day trip on behalf of the Alumni Association to Tuscany. The trip included world-class museums, restaurants, food markets, cooking classes and a variety of family-owned wineries.

In October 2010, Ann Lara joined The Collins College as the career services coordinator. Her work includes the annual hospitality career expo, providing industry-related job opportunities to students, networking with employers and launching the college’s new mentor program.

Gina Johnson also joined the college team as director of major gifts. She works with Dean Andy Feinstein to raise money on behalf of the college.

Lecturer Belle Lopez was selected as the 2010-2011 Outstanding Faculty Member by student-athlete Lauren Parr. Lopez was recognized at Faculty/Staff Appreciation Night in February, and was given a token of appreciation presented by President Michael Ortiz and the Athletics Department. Parr is a runner on the women’s cross country team and ran in the NCAA Division II National Championship in 2010.

Students selected Associate Professor Dr. Don St. Hilaire as the Outstanding Faculty Advisor for the fourth consecutive year. Provost Marten denBoer led the May 19 ceremony honoring St. Hilaire and faculty members from the other Cal Poly Pomona colleges, two staff members and an advising program.

Assistant Professor Dr. Neha Singh received the Provost’s Teacher-Scholar 2011-2012 Research Grant amounting to $11,000. Associate Professor
Dr. Jane Zhang was also accepted into the Provost’s Teacher-Scholar program. These awards provide summer stipends during two consecutive summers to support professors’ development as teacher-scholars. Zhang also received the 2010 College Seed Grant and conducted the study on “Tourist Psychological Motivation and Gratification Traveling to Under-developed Destinations.” For her research, she traveled to Sechelt, BC, Canada, to interview tourists who took an adventure tour to Kilimanjaro in Africa. She also went to China interviewing tourists who went on a Gobi Desert tour in Mongolia and a South Pole tour.

Director of Communications & External Relations Lisa McPheron won a bronze medal in the Council for the Advancement & Support of Education District VIII Awards of Excellence for the spring and fall 2010 issues of Collins magazine. In addition to her role at the college, McPheron now assists Feinstein in overseeing the CSU Hospitality Management Education Initiative, which works to promote hospitality management programs statewide and build stronger bonds between academia and the industry.

The Collins College “family” got a little larger this past winter when Assistant Professor Dr. Myong Jae (MJ) Lee and his wife, Crystal, welcomed the birth of their daughter, Grace Onyu Lee, on Dec. 30. Singh and her husband Dhruv welcomed the birth of their daughter, Sana Singh Srivastava, on Dec. 31, and on Feb. 22, McPheron and her husband, Jason, welcomed their daughter, Audrey McPheron, to the world.

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**Publications, Articles & Conference Presentations**


Lee received the Research, Scholarship and Creative Activities Educational Grant worth $6,605 in January. He earned this grant from his proposal “Customer Perceptions of Service Recovery Efforts in the Hotel Industry: A Market Segment Comparison.” Additionally he co-wrote “Why students choose a hospitality and tourism program: A study of undergraduate students in the United States,” for the *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Education* and “Impact of advertising on patron’s emotion, perceived value, and behavioral intentions in the chain restaurant industry,” for the *International Journal of Hospitality Management*. Lee and Singh co-wrote “Perceived justice needs and recovery actions in the hotel industry: A text-mining approach,” for the *Journal of Vacation Marketing*. Singh also co-wrote “Exploring the factors that affect the choice of Destination for Medical Tourism” for the *Journal of Service Science and Management*. She co-presented on the same topic during the 18th Annual Southern California Conference on Undergraduate Research.

(continued on next page)
Assistant Professor Dr. Zhenxing (Eddie) Mao co-wrote the article “What really brings them back? The impact of tangible quality on affect and intention for casual dining restaurant patrons,” for the International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management. Mao also co-wrote “Hospitality & tourism educators vs. the industry: A competency assessment,” for the Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Education.

Professor Dr. Edward Merritt published his latest book on leadership in the late summer. Leading, Structuring, and Facilitating Teams is his seventh, single-authored book.

Professor Dr. John Self continued his research on restaurant failure with “Why Do Restaurants Fail? Part II: The Impact of Chain Affiliation, Location, and Unit Size – Results from a Survival Analysis,” for the Journal of Foodservice Business Research.

Singh and alumna Lera Zelenskaya co-wrote “Exploring virtual recruiting from employers’ perspective using Second Life,” for the Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality and Tourism.

Professional Activities & Community Service

The California Restaurant Association Educational Foundation’s annual ProStart competition returned to The Collins College last March. Several faculty and staff members including Chesser, Ernie Briones, Dr. Jeff Brown, Barbara Jean Bruin, Lesley Butler, Dr. Ben Dewald, Jenesie Hardyman, Belle Lopez, Chitra Perera and Scott Rudolph helped run the event. Chesser’s other ProStart work includes being lead judge in the Guam, South Carolina, North Carolina and Mississippi competitions. Additionally, he is a co-coordinator and lead judge for the National ProStart Invitational.

Brown also lent his expertise at the invitational as a judge.

Lecturer Peter Anderson is the new president of the Western Federation CHRIE. He also attended the Global Spa Summit in Bali, Indonesia, as well as the Brazilian Spa Congress and the Brazilian Medical Congress, where he spoke on financial management and control procedures for operations and development. While in Brazil, he taught a day-long seminar to local spa operators.

Associate Professor Dr. Margie Jones was re-elected to the Society of Wine Educators Board of Directors for a two-year term and she completed the Certified Wine Educator certification last fall. Jones, Small and Briones each participated in the Los Angeles International Wine & Spirits Competition. Small returned as chairman, Jones as steward and Briones served as a judge in the homemade wine competition. Small and Jones also taught wine education classes during the Los Angeles County Fair. Dewald continued his service at the fair as a tablescape judge. Additionally, Dewald is an active member of the hospitality education advisory committee at Chaffey College and leads occasional business etiquette and table manner courses for organizations.

Two major Los Angeles media outlets tapped Self to help explain the reasons why some restaurants fail and others succeed. He shared general insight with 89.3 KPC Southern California Public Radio on restaurants and the economic recovery in a segment titled “Some restaurant chains fail, others thrive post-recession.” While a Los Angeles Times article “Time for Southland restaurant owner to cut losses, consultant says,” profiled his specific advice to help a local family-owned crepes café in Long Beach.

Lastly … The Collins College would like to wish Robert Hartman well in his next venture. For the past three years, Hartman has been the program coordinator for the CSU Hospitality Management Education Initiative.
Dear Collins Alumni,

I would like to take this opportunity to first congratulate the 2010-2011 graduates and welcome them to The Collins College alumni family.

This fall marks the three-year anniversary of the revival of the college’s alumni program, and what an amazing journey it has been! The newly elected executive board is excited to take this momentum to shape the future of the Collins Hospitality Society.

I would like to thank the alumni and friends of the college, who have participated and/or sponsored the Fleming’s Wine Dinner Fundraisers and the 1st Annual Scholarship Classic. With your involvement over the past three years, the society has raised more than $10,000 from these events, which has allowed us to start the Collins Hospitality Society Scholarship Endowment. This endowment will provide scholarships to undergraduate students, who demonstrate a commitment to academic excellence. We strongly believe scholarships can help shape the lives of future hospitality leaders by easing the cost of the student’s education.

The board is dedicated to advancing The Collins College nationwide by building our network of proud alumni. We do this by hosting a variety of events and by creating an active online community through LinkedIn and Facebook. With more than 3,800 alumni worldwide, we hope you will experience the lifelong benefit of our network by joining the Collins Hospitality Society, our chapter of the Cal Poly Pomona Alumni Association.

In closing, I am honored to be your president for a second term. I look forward to another year and hope to see you at an event soon!

All the best,

Steven L. Senft ’98
President
Collins Hospitality Society
slsenft@gmail.com

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UPCOMING EVENTS

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 14</td>
<td>4th Annual New York Alumni Reception</td>
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<td>Dean Andy Feinstein hosts this annual mixer during the International</td>
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<td>Hotel, Motel and Restaurant Show weekend. The event will be from</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Marriott Marquis, 1535 Broadway, New</td>
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<td>York City.</td>
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<td>Jan. 23</td>
<td>CHS Networking Event</td>
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<td>Join the Collins Hospitality Society for a 6:30 p.m. mixer at The</td>
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<td>Cheesecake Factory in Redondo Beach, at 605 North Harbor Drive.</td>
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<td>Feb. 16</td>
<td>Hospitality Career Expo &amp; Alumni Bagel Mixer</td>
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<td>Enjoy a breakfast mixer with the CHS before attending the college’s</td>
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<td>career expo.</td>
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<td>March 3</td>
<td>Hospitality Uncorked 2012</td>
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<td>Support the college at this exclusive benefit gala at the JW Marriott,</td>
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<td>Los Angeles. SBE Founder/CEO Sam Nazarian is the guest of honor.</td>
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<td>See the back cover for details.</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 26</td>
<td>2nd Annual CHS Golf Classic</td>
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<td>Tee off and raise money for student scholarships at the Hacienda</td>
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<td>Golf Club in La Habra Heights.</td>
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<td>April 10</td>
<td>4th Annual Wine Dinner Fundraiser</td>
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<td>Fleming’s Steakhouse Operating Partner Russ Bendel, Jr. ’05 pulls</td>
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<td>out all the stops at this outstanding wine dinner. Proceeds support</td>
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<td>the CHS.</td>
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<td>May 6</td>
<td>4th Annual Chicago Mixer</td>
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<td>Dean Andy Feinstein hosts this annual mixer during the National</td>
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<td>Restaurant Association Show weekend.</td>
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<td>May 10</td>
<td>Professor For A Day</td>
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<td>Alumni are encouraged to guest lecture in classes during this annual</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>event hosted by the Cal Poly Pomona Alumni Association.</td>
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For more information, please contact Lisa McPherson at lcmcpheron@csupomona.edu or (909) 869-3151 or visit http://collins.csupomona.edu.

Find us on LinkedIn and Facebook!
In Michele Gendreau’s role as director of food and beverage for Walt Disney Parks & Resorts, she uses tasty treats and hearty meals to help tell the Disney stories that delight people worldwide.

The 1983 alumna is responsible for creating new menu items at the Disney theme parks and for designing packaging inspired by holidays or recent films. She also works to ensure the integration of standards throughout the 450 various restaurants at both the Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando and the Disneyland Resort in Anaheim.

What character does food play in the Disney stories loved by the world over? Take popcorn for example.

“Popcorn is a big deal for Disney,” Gendreau said. “Popcorn is not just about an energy source. It is about making a snack part of the story. We really believe in the continuation of creativity around our food products. The food should continue to tell the story of an attraction, a land or a film.”

Last year, Gendreau and her team — a group she describes as unique, dependable and talented — worked to develop molded popcorn buckets. During the Disney Halloween hoopla, they introduced a popcorn bucket shaped as Mickey Mouse in a ghost costume. With the opening of Star Tours last spring, they launched an R2-D2 bucket.

“The pairing with popcorn improves the customer experience,” she said. “We really work to enhance storytelling. If you’re going to eat popcorn at Disney, it should be about the story.”
’A Foodie at Heart’

Turning food into an experience comes naturally to Gendreau. “The field of hospitality suits my personality — I am a foodie at heart,” Gendreau said. “I love to be part of an industry that is ever-changing, based on a basic human need and brings people enjoyment.”

As a self-proclaimed foodie, Gendreau loves to read cookbooks and food anthologies. She can trace her interest in cuisine and in the hospitality industry back to her years at Cal Poly Pomona.

“I ventured into my first restaurant job while I was still a hospitality management student at Cal Poly Pomona,” Gendreau said. “My early work experience, coupled with the hands-on education and individualized attention I received at Cal Poly, really nurtured my love of food and prepared me for a career in the hospitality industry.”

Giving Back

Since graduating from Cal Poly Pomona, Gendreau has reached out to college students by providing guidance with resumes and job searches. She advises students to include on their resumes the skills they have acquired through direct job experience, classroom training, club or organization leadership and volunteer work.

Gendreau also enjoys giving back to the university by participating each year as a member of the Cal Poly Rose Float Alumni Association. She sees herself as an extra resource for students during the weeks leading up to Decoration Week and, of course, Decoration Week itself.

“As a student I was involved in the Rose Float many years ago,” she said. “I am happy to return as a mentor for students. I am available to teach them how to apply professional techniques to their float decorating and how to manage volunteers. I can provide guidance on how to set up a timeline and keep people moving.”

During the college years, Gendreau said extracurricular activities are critical to future success as they foster better, more well-rounded students. In addition to the Rose Float, she participated in Associated Students, Inc. (ASI) and the Pi Sigma Epsilon business fraternity.

College Dining

Before joining The Walt Disney Company in 2006, Gendreau worked for Spartan Shops, Inc. at San Jose State University as associate director and director of dining services. She supervised residential dining, catering, vending and 13 retail restaurants servicing more than 29,000 students, faculty and staff on campus. In addition, she has served as the manager of dining services at University of Southern California.

Directing food service for a university is about accommodating the campus lifestyle and meeting the students’ needs, Gendreau explained. “Just as Disney is about customer choices, the college campus is about students having a choice,” she said. “Do they need coffee and a pastry? Or do they want to sit with friends and have an enjoyable dinner? We have to be able to provide what they need in the way of an experience with food and beverages.”

Working on a college campus was very fulfilling for Gendreau. As a director, she had the opportunity to not only cater to students as customers but to work with students as employees of the many campus food venues.

“The university environment is high energy and filled with a flow of new ideas,” she said. “People come and go. They grow within the environment, then leave. It is very nurturing and energizing. I thrived there. I liked the newness of the freshmen, and the experience and optimism of the graduating seniors.”

Similarly, Gendreau said Disney is filled with the drive she felt on college campuses.

“The people I work with now have a real sense of adventure and awe,” she said. “We are more than a workplace. We are a community, where each member feels ownership.”

A Sixth Sense

A good encounter with food involves more than just the food, according to Gendreau. It involves the whole story.

“Whether you are at a sushi bar with a friend, or sitting in a field talking with the farmer, the setting and the people make a difference,” she said.

Gendreau relates the experience people have with a meal or a snack to a sixth sense — similar to taste and smell. The notion is one she found applicable to her work at Disney and on college campuses, and it is something she ties back to her Cal Poly days.

“If you’re going to have a Satsuma mandarin from the Cal Poly Farm Store, your enjoyment is all the better knowing that they are grown on university land and that Cal Poly sustains that crop,” she said. “I worked in those groves as a student and for me it is about the feeling, the story, and the history of the food.”
Many Collins College alumni work in interesting locales around the globe. Uganda is not typically one of them. But for David Harrison, the road less travelled took him to the landlocked East African country for two years. One month after graduating in June 2009, Harrison began working as an economic development volunteer with the Peace Corps in a small village in Western Uganda. With books donated by several Collins College professors in a classroom with a dirt floor, Harrison taught courses aimed at empowering and changing students’ lives for the better. With spotty access to the internet, he called on his former professors Dr. Don St. Hilaire and Barbara Jean Bruin when he could for advice and guidance as he transitioned from pupil to teacher.

“Although David had limited internet access, we exchanged ideas and brainstormed possible approaches to the challenges he faced,” St. Hilaire said. “Our role at The Collins College is to practice and demonstrate many aspects of servant leadership. David’s work with the Peace Corps is an excellent example of servant leadership.”

The Peace Corps aims to improve educational options little by little in Uganda, a country plagued by economic instability. Africa is home to 70 percent of the world’s HIV/AIDS cases. Uganda, which has a population of 25 million, has reduced its HIV prevalence rate from 30 to six percent in a decade. However, it remains one of the world’s poorest countries. The government spent 5.2 percent of the GDP on public education in 2008 and 3.3 percent in 2009. Many Ugandans, especially women, have no opportunity to become educated, or much less learn to read.

During his two-year-stint, Harrison was one of 148 Peace Corps volunteers working to build relationships, teach life skills and re-establish confident identities in students. He taught 62 students at the Bigodi Tourism and Hotel Institute, where his classes specialized in business management and customer service. The curriculum focused on the foundations of each subject, because the students had no relatable experiences to draw from. For example, in Harrison’s first business management class, the subject was “What managers do and how they do it.”

With the median age of the country being 15 years old, educating and inspiring this generation are of upmost importance, he said. In addition to hospitality related topics, Harrison taught classes on basic bookkeeping and financial planning and assisted impoverished students in finding economic opportunities.

“The students at the Bigodi Tourism and Hotel Institute are, what we would consider, the equivalent of high school dropouts,” Harrison said. “They don’t have the grades or the money to attend a university but they don’t want to work in a field for the rest of their lives.”

When the faculty and staff at The Collins College heard of Harrison’s involvement with the Bigodi Tourism and Hotel Institute, they joined forces with Pearson Prentice Hall publishing company to donate more than 60 textbooks. As a first-time teacher, Harrison occasionally experienced “teacher’s block.” He cannot thank The Collins College faculty enough for their support during those times. “Don St. Hilaire and BJ Bruin have served as invaluable resources of encouragement and information,” he said.

In addition to teaching, Harrison experienced many other highlights during his service including: having lunch with U.S. Ambassador Jerry Lanier; working with the management and staff of a five-star hotel where President Obama stays during his travels; running a USAID/CDC game show during World Aids Day for 8,000 high school kids, and developing income-generating activities with women’s groups.

With the many ups of his trip also came downs for Harrison. He was in Kampala on July 11, 2010, when Al-Shabaab, a militia group with possible ties to al-Qaida, set off bombs at a rugby club and an Ethiopian restaurant. He was not at either location during the attacks; however he frequented both during his stay in Uganda. Nearly 80 people died and hundreds were seriously injured.

Through experiences such as this and working in an impoverished community, Harrison’s world view has changed. “I’ve developed a tolerance for ambiguity,” he said by learning how to make progress even in an environment that does not have all of the answers, tools and resources needed.

After taking a few months off this past summer, Harrison began a new assignment with the Peace Corps. However this time, the California native requested that he be sent to a country with a coast. His request was granted and in September he began a six-month
David Harrison teaches hospitality management courses for the Peace Corps. His first assignment took him to Uganda, and in September he began working in Georgia on the Black Sea where there is a burgeoning tourism industry.

teaching assignment at Shota Rustaveli State University in Batumi, Georgia on the Black Sea. At the end of six months he has the option of extending his contract. He is also considering enrolling in the European Master in Tourism Management program.

Wherever he goes, Harrison takes the tools he gained at The Collins College with him.

“While my work is a far cry away from the dining room of the Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch, Margie Jones’ wine classes and Don’s finance classes, the tools and lessons that I learned at The Collins College are used every day,” he said.

Harrison is well-aware that not everyone can leave their lives back home and work in Uganda for two years. He does, however, believe that just as much good can be done on the home front. “I want to encourage The Collins College family to get involved with their local communities. There is so much work to be done, but I believe 100 percent that success comes from doing small things that amount to great deeds over time.”

Faculty and Pearson Prentice Hall donated more than 60 books to Harrison’s students in Uganda.
Many Collins College alumni visited their old stomping ground in May during Professor For A Day to serve as guest lecturers. Current students took advantage of the opportunity to hear from the experts, who once sat in the same seats not too long ago.

“When you love something, it’s not work, it’s fun,” said California Pizza Kitchen General Manager Mauro Barron ’07. “This is our passion, discovering the hospitality behind everything we do. When you know why you’re doing something the ‘how’ just clicks.”

Barron, along with 12 other alumni shared personal experiences, provided specific advice and spoke of their passion. Numerous alumni credited The Collins College for giving them a jump-start in their careers.

“The class structure here helps you to strategize how to think in the kitchen and in daily life,” said Joshua Goldman ’08, who works for Kraft Foods. “You’ll realize on the job that The Collins College of Hospitality Management gives you a leg up.”

Professor For A Day is a campus-wide event hosted each spring by the university’s Office of Alumni Affairs. The day includes lunch at the Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch. To volunteer at the next Professor For a Day on May 10, 2012, please contact Lisa McPheron at lcmcpheron@csumoneda.edu or (909) 869-3151.
Society Welcomes New Board

The Collins Hospitality Society elected a new executive board last spring. Some familiar faces are returning, while a few new ones join the mix.

Steven Senft ’98 was re-elected as president and will serve an additional two years. Jason Farned ’04 moved from chair of faculty and student outreach to vice president. Outgoing Vice President Russ Bendel, Jr. ’05 will remain active on the board as director of fundraisers. Seth Larson ’02 remained secretary and John Clay ’04 will continue his role as director of scholarships.

Erin Mascho ’10, Nung Rigor ’00 and Brandon Feighner ’05 each bring new perspective and ideas to the board. Mascho is director of membership and Rigor is director of networking and events. Feighner ’05 replaced Ivee Yu ’08 as treasurer. Yu remains active on the Cal Poly Pomona Alumni Association Board of Directors.

The Collins Hospitality Society board is elected through a mail-in election administered through the Cal Poly Pomona Office of Alumni Affairs. Members of the Collins Hospitality Society receive nominations forms and ballots in the mail. The society is a chapter of the Cal Poly Pomona Alumni Association.

Information on how to join the Collins Hospitality Society and board bios are available at http://collins.csupomona.edu. – LCM
Alumni
Events
Roundup

BY LISA MCPHERON AND MICHELLE ANDREWS

The college and the Collins Hospitality Society had a busy year hosting many activities for alumni. From an exquisite wine dinner at Fleming’s Steakhouse to the Angel Stadium outfield to an anniversary celebration at the RKR, it was hard to miss a chance to reconnect with fellow alumni in Southern California.

For those alumni who live out of state, The Collins College hosts annual receptions in Chicago and New York that coincide with large industry trade shows.

“We want these events to bring alumni back into the fold,” said Steven Senft, president of the Collins Hospitality Society. “There are a lot of benefits to having an engaged alumni network.”

Many alumni visited the college for the Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch’s 20th anniversary in October 2010 where the Collins Hospitality Society held its first membership drive. More than 150 people attended the college-hosted celebration, which included a Frank Lectureship featuring Jim Collins.

During the party, alumni had the opportunity to share stories about the restaurant series of classes.

“When I was here, the RKR facility had just finished being built,” said Ian Blackburn ’91, a past Distinguished Alumnus of the Year and founder of www.LearnAboutWine.com. “Being the first class in the restaurant, you can imagine the demands. We developed a special bond. There are so many memories inside that kitchen.”

Alumna Rhonda Garib ’00 signed up to become a member of the society during the party. The general manager of the Hilton Garden Inn in Fontana was enthusiastic to give back to her alma mater. “If I had to give a highlight, the best thing of the night was running into some alumni,” she said. “It is nice to reconnect. I finally get the benefit of being part of the alumni network. Alumni chapters foster a richer connection.”

The Collins Hospitality Society plans several mixers throughout the year that are free for alumni. The locations feature hotels or restaurants that are owned or operated by alumni. Last May, alumnus Bill Doak ’82 showed great generosity when he hosted a mixer at the Loews Santa Monica Beach Hotel where he was managing director. Additionally, Sarah Schulhof-Brown ’06 hosted a mixer at the Hyatt Regency Huntington Beach Resort and Spa where she is the catering manager. Cocktailian Bartender Lacey Murillo ’07 also hosted an event at 1886 in Pasadena last February. (Read more about Murillo on pages 62-63.)

Russ Bendel, Jr. ’05 raises the bar each year when he organizes a Collins Hospitality Society fundraiser at his Fleming’s Steakhouse in Newport Beach. For the last three years, Bendel has donated all the food and beverage costs for the elaborate wine dinners that benefit the society and its efforts. The next wine dinner will be held April 10, 2012. This event sells out quickly.

In an effort to build a scholarship endowment for students, the society introduced the Collins Hospitality Society Scholarship Classic in June and will host the second annual classic on March 26, 2012. (Read more about the golf tournament on pages 58-59.) The annual Alumni in the Outfield is another popular activity. The family-friendly event is held each summer at Angel Stadium with a mixer beforehand at OC Sports Grill.

In an effort to reach alumni outside of Southern California, Dean Andy Feinstein hosts receptions each year during the National Restaurant Association Show in Chicago and the International Hotel, Motel and Restaurant Show in New York. These events are open to all Cal Poly Pomona alumni.

For current information on alumni events, follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/CollinsCollege.

“If I had to give a highlight, the best thing of the night was running into some alumni, it is nice to reconnect.”

RHONDA GARIB ’00
ABOVE: (from left) Ann-Marie Murphy ’04, Perri Shindler ’08, Brandon Feighner ’05, Lisa McPheron, Steven Senft ’98, Matthew Wentworth ’04 and Nicole Whittam ’04 gather during the Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch’s 20th anniversary celebration.

LEFT: Alumni in the Outfield returned for the third year in August.

BELOW: Senft unveiled the Collins Hospitality Society’s new logo at the anniversary celebration.

LEFT: Alumni Steve Silvey ’81 and alumna Danae Felsch ’08 participated in the Bagel Mixer on Feb. 17. The mixer is held each year before the Hospitality Career Expo.
FORE A GOOD CAUSE

The Collins Hospitality Society held its first golf tournament on June 3 at Brookside Golf Course in Pasadena. Proceeds from the event will be used to launch an endowment that will create a scholarship for Collins College students each year in perpetuity.

The Collins Hospitality Society Scholarship Classic attracted the support of many companies and alumni, including Eugene Park ’07 who was the tournament’s gold sponsor. During the course of the tournament, nearly 60 golfers enjoyed food and beverages at all 18 holes from a variety of hospitality companies. Each of the companies donated its time and products.

“I’d like to thank all those who participated in the event,” said John Clay ’04, who helped organize the tournament. “We had a wonderful day of golf whether you played well or not, because of all the great food and beverages served on the course and at dinner. I’m extremely excited about having an even larger event next year.”

The Collins Hospitality Society plans to host the 2nd annual Scholarship Classic on March 26 at the Hacienda Golf Club.
GOLD SPONSOR: Eugene Park

BRONZE SPONSORS: Cal Poly Pomona Foundation

Distad Clay Wealth Management Group
Donna Dannan
Marriott International
Mary Niven

Gift-in-Kind Sponsors:
Aliso Creek Inn
Ben & Jerry’s
BJ’s Restaurants
Buca di Beppo
Daily Grill

Hyatt Regency Huntington Beach Resort and Spa
Guppy Tea House
King’s Fish House
Lawry’s The Prime Rib
Lucille’s Smokehouse Bar-B-Que
Marriott Newport Beach Hotel & Spa
Mexico Lindo
Maker’s Mark

Newport Meat Co.
Outback Steakhouse
The Oxford Hotel
Palm Restaurant
Poem Cellars
Pronghorn Club & Resort
Samuel Adams
Santa Monica Seafood
Tetherow Golf Club
Young’s Market Company

PHOTOS BY MICHELLE ANDREWS
Where Are They Now?

Collins College alumni enjoy a wide array of careers in hospitality

1970s

Mike Mallory ’77 is chief executive officer of Second Harvest Food Bank of San Joaquin and Stanislaus counties. Second Harvest is committed to fighting hunger by providing and distributing food to those in need and feeding hope by recognizing the diversity of those it serves and treating each individual with dignity and respect. The food bank serves more than 400,000 people each year.

1980s

Bill Doak ’82 is the first vice president of CIM Group, a full-service, urban real estate and investment firm with more than $9.5 billion in assets. CIM Group’s properties include The Hollywood & Highland Center. Most recently, Doak was the managing director of Lowes Santa Monica Beach Hotel where he hosted a Collins Hospitality Society mixer last May.

1990s

After climbing the corporate ladder to become CEO of Claim Jumper Restaurants, Mark Augarten ’91 is now the vice president of operations for Sammy’s Woodfired Pizza. The 2002 Collins College Distinguished Alumnus of the Year devotes his spare time to several philanthropic affiliations such as the Shea Center for Therapeutic Riding, Special Olympics and Susan G. Komen Cancer Foundation.

2000s

Nung Rigor graduated in 2000 and spent her first 10 years out of school managing restaurants at Wilshire Grand Hotel and Lawry’s Restaurants, Inc. She is now an agent with New York Life and enjoys doing charity work with her family. Her recent volunteer projects were painting and beautifying the Blind Children’s Center in Los Angeles and packing meals for the Salvation Army. She also volunteers as an art teacher at CHOC Children’s Hospital and collects canned food from the members of Woman’s Club of Fullerton to donate to Fullerton Interfaith Emergency Service, Inc. She recently joined the Collins Hospitality Society board as the director of networking and events.

Jennifer Turney ’98 is the director of human resources at the Hyatt Regency Orange County. A stone’s throw from Disneyland and other attractions, this luxury hotel caters to business travelers, families and vacationers alike.

John Clay ’04 is a senior vice president of investments for Crowell, Weedon & Co. Member FINRA/SIPC, one of the largest independent investment firms in the Western United States since 1932, with $8 billion in client assets. Clay is also actively involved in his community through extensive volunteer work. He serves as president of the Rotary Club of Oxnard, as well as director of scholarships and golf tournament chair for the Collins Hospitality Society.

In September, Dominic Donatoni ’04 was promoted to general manager of the Oxford Hotel in Bend, Oregon. He had been the assistant general manager for the previous two years.

After nearly 12 years with Buca di Beppo, Jason Farned ’04 has found a new interest in the hospitality industry. This summer, he began working as an associate for Passport Advisory Group. He now works with hotel and restaurant owners in the areas of hospitality brokerage and advisory services. Farned also serves as vice president of the Collins Hospitality Society.

Brandon Heist ’10 and Tyler Worth ’11 attended the Banfi Vintner’s Scholastic Trip to Italy in the spring. They are seen here with Chef/Lecturer Scott Rudolph and John Mariani, the proprietor of Banfi. Heist and Worth are each certified sommeliers. Additionally, Worth is a certified specialist of wine through the Society of Wine Educators. Heist is the assistant sommelier at Big Canyon Country Club in Newport Beach, and Worth is the founder/executive editor of whatsworthdrinking.com.
Jodi Oliver ’04 was recently promoted from senior district manager to regional insurance manager and payroll consultant with APD Small Business Services. Orange County, Calif., is her region.

Brandon Feighner ’05 received a promotion from associate to vice president at PKF Consulting USA in Los Angeles. He is also a new member of the Collins Hospitality Society board where he serves as treasurer.

Jacob League ’05 recently transferred from the Houston’s in Manhattan Beach, Calif., to be the general manager of Gulfstream in Century City. After graduating from The Collins College, League attended the Culinary Institute of America (CIA) at Greystone and then launched his management career with Hillstone Restaurant Group. League does not have to go far to work with another alumnus. Sam Anguiano ’07 is the kitchen manager at Gulfstream. Anguiano also attended CIA after graduating from The Collins College.

This fall, Ben Small ’07 became the executive sous chef at The Source, a highly acclaimed restaurant by Wolfgang Puck in Washington, D.C. Most recently, he was sous chef at WP24 located at The Ritz Carlton in Los Angeles.

Heather Dancel ’08 is now the assistant manager at The FIG Restaurant located at Fairmont Miramar Hotel & Bungalows in Santa Monica. The FIG features fresh, local and organically grown ingredients selected from the Santa Monica Farmer’s Market.

Chris Rodriguez ’09 recently moved with his family to Seattle, Wash., where he is a line cook at ART Restaurant at the Four Seasons Hotel. Previously, he worked for the Four Seasons in Beverly Hills and Cinnamon Vegetarian Restaurant, a Mexican restaurant that focuses on healthy cuisine. Rodriguez’s interest in healthy eating and sustainable practices landed him on a Sustainable Business Council panel discussion titled “Fiscally Green Cuisine” with Chef Susan Feniger in 2010.

2010s

Josh Aldama ’10 is an events supervisor for MGM Resorts Events in Las Vegas. This division of MGM produces more than 900 events at 14 hotels and casinos each year. Aldama’s work includes extravagant New Year’s Eve parties.

Soon after graduating in 2010, Erin Mascho began working for the California Restaurant Association Educational Foundation as the Southern California program coordinator. She works with high schools that offer the ProStart culinary curriculum. She is also developing an alumni program for former ProStart students across California. Mascho joined the Collins Hospitality Society board this summer as director of membership.

Brittny Ri’chard ’10 is a contract event coordinator with the National College Resources Foundation. Her biggest event is the Black College Expo, which is held at numerous locations throughout the country.

After graduating in 2010, Steven Satterberg moved to Conway, Arkansas, to launch a career with Chick-fil-A. He is an assistant team leader and is participating in a corporate training program to become a certified grand opening trainer. He has helped open two new stores in Arkansas.

Jon Farzam ’11 is vice president of Ocean Avenue Management, which recently built and now operates Shore Hotel in Santa Monica. This luxurious beachfront hotel is LEED registered and dedicated to minimizing its impact on the environment.

Stacey Szumiak Orozco ’10 plans and runs large-scale wine trade tasting events across the country and abroad as an event coordinator and account manager for Balzac. This past summer, she married Jared Orozco in Moraga, Calif.

We Want To Hear From You

If you would like to be featured in a future issue of Collins, please call or e-mail Lisa McPherson, director of communications and external relations at (909) 869-3151 or lmcpheron@csupomona.edu
After graduating, Lacey Murillo spent time as the general manager of Barney’s Beanery in Pasadena and earned a Master of Hospitality Management from UNLV. She is a cocktailian bartender at Black Market Liquid Bar and 1886. She works with Marcos Tello on a number of consulting projects revamping bars, including Killer Shrimp.
Crafty Cocktails
Two Cal Poly Pomona alumni raise bartending to an art form

BY LISA MCPHERON

When you ask alumni Lacey Murillo and Marcos Tello to share their favorite cocktail recipes, and they respond, “How esoteric do you want them to be?” you know you are in for something distinctive and complex. A rum and coke is out of the question. Even a dry martini is child’s play to these two.

Murillo, who graduated from The Collins College in 2007, and Tello, a 2005 theatre major, are doing special things with cocktails at 1886, the bar at The Raymond Restaurant in Pasadena. Their cocktails are thoughtful and daring as they pay homage to a pre-Prohibition time when a tavern owner shared the same status as the town doctor. These cocktailian bartenders and their colleagues are raising the act of mixing drinks to an art form.

Tello and his consulting company Tello Demarest Liquid Assets, dug deep into the past of the property to develop the concept for 1886, which opened in late 2010. The Raymond Restaurant is housed in a Craftsman bungalow built in – you guessed it – 1886. It was the caretaker’s cottage of the long-gone Raymond Hotel, a glorious haunt that catered to the early Hollywood elite such as Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton. Its celebrity appeal earned it a pass, while neighboring bars went out of business during Prohibition.

“We stepped in a rabbit hole to take on the past while still looking to the future,” Tello said. The rabbit hole has led them to often use gin and scotch in forward thinking spins on retro cocktails. These original recipes offer a range of complexity. Do not expect to order these by press time though. They introduce 16 original cocktails every season. For hard-to-find ingredients, Murillo and Tello recommend Bar Keeper, a specialty shop in Silver Lake, or www.cocktailkingdom.com.

The last step to each of these recipes is “Drink! Or if you must, serve to a guest!”

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**Fields of Aberdeen**

BY LACEY MURILLO

- 1/2 oz. Laphroaig Cask Strength Islay Scotch
- 3/4 oz. Highland Park 18 Single Malt Scotch
- 3/4 oz. Macallan Fine Oak 10 Year Single Malt Scotch
- 1/2 oz. Curacao
- 6-8 mint leaves
- 1 brown sugar cube
- 1/2 oz. orgeat syrup
- 3/4 oz. lime juice
- 6 dashes Angostura Bitters
- 6 dashes Peychaud Bitters

**Crushed ice**

1. Muddle the sugar cube and mint.
2. Add the scotch, orgeat, Curacao and lime juice.
3. Take a tablespoon of crushed ice and whip the drink until the ice granules have dissolved.
4. Dump into a pilsner glass.
5. Add more ice and swizzle.
6. Top six dashes of Peychaud and Angostura Bitters.
7. Garnish with a mint sprig.

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**Medicina Latina**

BY MARCOS TELLO

- 2 oz. Blanco Tequila
- 3/8 oz. ginger syrup
- 3/8 oz. honey syrup
- 3/4 oz. lime juice
- 1 slice of candied ginger
- Spray of Del Maguey Chichicapa

**Crushed ice**

1. Shake and strain tequila, syrups and juice into a double old fashioned glass over ice.
2. Using an atomizer, spray Del Maguey Chichicapa over the drink.
3. Garnish with a piece of candied ginger.

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**Salt and Pepper Cocktail**

BY SASHA PETRASKE

- 2 oz. London Dry Gin
- 4 lime wedges
- 1/2 oz. simple syrup
- 2 cucumber slices
- Sea Salt
- Black Pepper

**Crushed ice**

1. Muddle the limes and cucumbers.
2. Add the gin and simple syrup.
3. Shake the cocktail with cracked ice and dump the contents into a double old fashioned glass.
4. Top with a pinch of sea salt and freshly ground black pepper.
Join us in honoring entrepreneur Sam Nazarian
and the vibrant hospitality industry of Los Angeles

HOSPITALITY uncorked

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