

SPRING 2015

In This Issue:

Hospitality Uncorked

Commencement 2015

Back from Finland

Collins

A publication by The Collins College of Hospitality Management



CAL POLY POMONA



Collins

A publication by
The Collins College of
Hospitality Management

*Dean and James A. Collins
Distinguished Chair*
Dr. Lea R. Dopson

Associate Dean
Michael Godfrey

Editor/Art Director
Diana E. Garcia

Photographer
Tom Zasadzinski

Contributors
**Alejandra Jimenez,
Melanie Johnson, Elaine
Regus and John Self**

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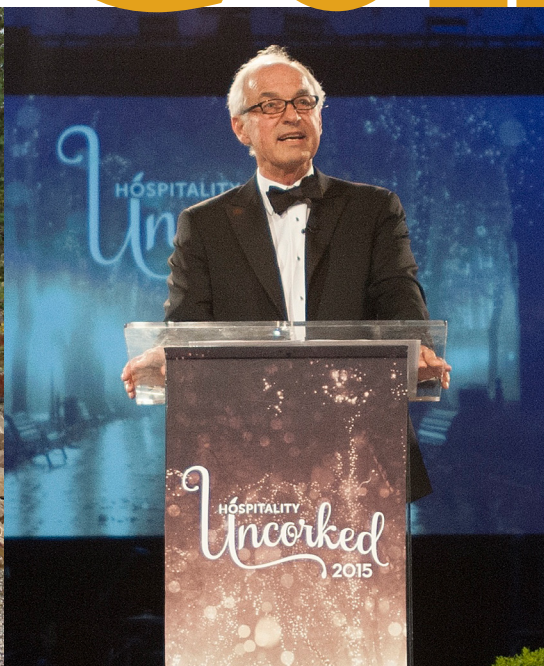
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Cover photo: Collins College
Ambassador Ashley Neault leaves
her mark during the beam signing
celebration.

PHOTO BY TOM ZASADZINSKI

Report From The Dean's Desk



A YEAR HAS FLOWN BY SINCE I began my role as the new dean of The Collins College of Hospitality Management, and let me tell you, it's been a great ride.

The college's faculty and staff have worked countless hours with me to create exciting events, to elevate our programs and to travel the globe for professional development. Here are just some of the great things the college achieved over the past year.

Achieving Excellence

Out of about 1,300 students enrolled this year, 335 graduated this spring. The undergraduate program is steadily growing and is consistently recognized for our students who are ready to work upon graduation. In fact, our job placement rate for graduating Collins students is 95 percent.

The Master of Science in Hospitality Management (MSHM) program just celebrated its fifth year in existence and has already been ranked as one of the nation's top ten hospitality and tourism management graduate programs by the *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Education*. Enrollment has grown from 12 to 60 students since the program's inception in 2010.

Expanding Facilities

In order to fulfill the college's growing need for more space, \$10 million was raised to expand the facilities. The two-year expansion project is just about complete and we are excited to announce our Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting ceremony that will take place on Nov. 19, 2015. The new building will be home to graduate studies classrooms, faculty offices, group study rooms, the H-Café grab-n-go, three courtyards, a huge flex classroom and plenty of lounge space with beautiful views of the rolling hills of Pomona.

Internationally Recognized

Not only are we expanding our facilities, but we are expanding our global footprint with more faculty research, conference participation and study abroad opportunities. The Collins College's internationally recognized faculty have presented research all over the world this past year, including in Dubai, Greece, New Zealand, Hong Kong, South Korea and Finland. Study abroad opportunities for students, faculty, and staff were available in Italy and for the first time in Costa Rica.

Fostering Relationships

The college's alumni chapter, the Collins Hospitality Society, hosted seven different events this year. In addition to some of the chapter's great annual events, including Alumni in the Outfield, Professor for a Day and the Bagel Mixer, the chapter hosted its inaugural ALIS reception at the prestigious California Club and revived its country-western themed alumni appreciation dinner, Night at the Ranch.

The annual Richard N. Frank Distinguished Lectureship Series was held in May. The Co-Founder of Wahoo's Fish Taco, Wing Lam, was the man of the hour and he even brought his taco truck for students to enjoy the famous tacos. Unfortunately, Richard N. Frank passed away a week before the lectureship, so we remembered him with a moment of silence at the event.

University Support

We welcomed Soraya M. Coley, Ph.D., Cal Poly Pomona's new president, with open arms since she began her position in January. Coley has become a big proponent of our programs and our mission. Some of the students got the privilege of presenting President Coley with a personalized chef coat and server apron, which she absolutely loved.

As you can tell, we have had a very busy and productive year. Students, faculty and staff will be doing a lot more traveling over the summer, so we will have a lot to report in the next issue of *Collins*.

Don't forget to mark your calendars for our Nov. 19 Grand Opening. Hope to see you in the fall.

Warm Regards,

Lea R. Dopson, Ed.D.

Dean and James A. Collins Distinguished Chair



President Soraya M. Coley holds a chef coat presented to her by Collins students.

CONTRIBUTORS



DIANA GARCIA is The Collins College's communication and external relations specialist. She is the editor and designer of *Collins* magazine and oversees

the college's communication and alumni projects. The '12 public relations graduate has four years of professional public relations experience.



ALEJANDRA JIMENEZ is a master of science candidate and graduate ambassador for The Collins College. Her tasks as a student assistant

include writing for the *Collins* magazine and collaborating with the events, communications and HTMEI coordinators. She enjoys organizing events, journalism, photography, cooking, concerts, sports and adventures.



MELANIE JOHNSON is a communications specialist in the Office of Public Affairs and a Cal Poly Pomona alumna. The areas she writes about include ASI,

University Library, environmental design, student affairs, foundation, CEU, and events. Her other duties include PolyUpdates and PolyCentric.



ELAINE REGUS is an experienced, versatile and creative writer and editor. Her clients include some of the leading colleges and universities in the Southern California

region. She is a regular contributor to *Collins* magazine.



TOM ZASADZINSKI is the university photographer and his list of professional awards is extensive. He has spent the last 14 years of his career capturing the people

and character of Cal Poly Pomona through the lens of his camera. Before coming to Cal Poly Pomona, he was a photojournalist for the *Inland Valley Daily Bulletin*.

Not Pictured:

MIRAM GEER is a Los Angeles photographer located near Malibu, who photographed Hospitality Uncorked 2015. Her work includes documentary photography, events and portraiture. She has been featured in the *Los Angeles Times* and her sample books are available for viewing at numerous locations throughout Los Angeles.



PHOTO BY TOM ZASADZINSKI

(Left to Right) Board member Howard Gordon; Panda Restaurant Group representatives Ching Hon and Gigi Cheung; Dean Lea Dopson; President Soraya M. Coley; President Emeritus J. Michael Ortiz; Marriott International representatives Chris and Matt Harrison; Provost Marten denBoer; Board of Advisors members John Gilbert and Cary Wheeland, and Irvine Marriott General Manager Scott McCoy.

A Sign of Progress

The Collins College Tops-Out \$10 Million Building Expansion with a Beam Signing Celebration

BY MELANIE JOHNSON

WITH THE HELP OF A FORKLIFT TO HOIST AND SECURE A WHITE METAL BEAM in place, almost 100 supporters and donors of The Collins College of Hospitality Management celebrated the construction of its fourth building.

The beam signing on Jan. 16 signaled significant progress in construction of the 12,100-square-foot building, which is expected to be completed by late 2015. Collins College Dean Lea Dopson said beam signings originated with the Scandinavians and are still practiced by steel workers at construction sites.

"This is going to be a place of learning," she said. "This is going to be a place of celebration and hospitality."

Cal Poly Pomona President Soraya M. Coley attended the signing, as did President Emeritus J. Michael Ortiz.

The \$10-million expansion will include two general-purpose classrooms, five faculty offices, study areas, three courtyards, a student commons area, a grab-n-go restaurant and two dedicated classrooms for the school's graduate program.

Neha Singh, director of graduate studies at The Collins College, said the master's program has grown from an initial class of 12 students five years ago to nearly 60.

"When we thought of this program ... we were answering a call of the industry," she said. "I am very proud to say that as students are graduating, they are taking leadership positions, not only in the United States, but also worldwide."



Above: A Collins College student talks to recruiters from Farrell's Ice Cream Parlour Restaurants. Right: A recruiter from Lazy Dog Restaurant and Bar tells a student about career options with the company. Left: Students meet Chef Marc Powers from Bon Appétit Management Company during the "Best of the Best" reception.

PHOTOS BY DIANA GARCIA



The "Best of the Best"

Seventy-one companies attend the 22nd annual Hospitality Career Expo

BY DIANA GARCIA

THE INDUSTRY'S LEADING BRANDS packed The Collins College for the 22nd annual Hospitality Career Expo.

These companies return to the college every year to recruit its exemplary students. Representatives from all sectors of the dynamic hospitality industry were present to talk to students about exciting employment and internship opportunities.

"There are talented, diverse students in this program," said Marriott International's University Relations & Talent Acquisition manager, Janet Bachtel. "We keep coming back because we get great candidates from The Collins College who are moving through the ranks to develop their career."

Paul Kramer, Collins College alumnus and Board of Advisors member as well as the president of Farrell's Ice Cream Parlour Restaurants, makes sure his company is always present at the annual career expo.

"The Collins College curriculum and professors prepare students to step immediately into management and leadership roles with our company," Kramer says.

For the first time, employers were able to hand-select star students who demonstrated great potential. The students chosen were invited to an exclusive "Best of the Best" reception with the expo's recruiters for some extra time to network and impress the industry leaders.

"I heard more consistent, positive comments from recruiters than ever before, but for me, it was even more telling how many of these same comments came from our long-time regular recruiters," Associate Dean Michael Godfrey said. "They have a point of comparison and they thought this year's group of students was the most well-prepared group ever."



PHOTOS BY TOM ZASADZINSKI



From Left: Professor David Guin talks about the fear of public speaking. Student organizers Stavro Victor, Michael Kahn, Gal Bechor and Kevin Bucher on stage. Cal Poly Pomona student Araya Dixon tells her story about believing in a higher power to inspire success.

Ideas Worth Spreading

BY ELAINE REGUS

TWO COLLINS COLLEGE STUDENTS EXPERIENCED THE epitome of event planning when they helped organize the inaugural TEDxCPP that showcased Cal Poly Pomona alumni, professors and students addressing the theme: Progress.

Michael Kahn and Stavro Victor, along with business major Gal Bechor and engineering student Kevin Bucher, spent almost a year planning TEDxCPP, an independently organized TED-like event in March. Victor, a fourth-year Collins College student, said the biggest challenge was the fact that the school had never hosted a TEDx event.

“There was no groundwork or framework or manual that says ‘This is how to do a TEDx event,’” Victor says.

Last summer, the TEDx team reached out to Marissa Martinez, executive assistant to the provost, who agreed to sponsor the event and provide financial support through the Kellogg Legacy Fund. Martinez was taken aback by the tremendous task the students were undertaking.

“They stressed that this was a real opportunity to showcase our institution and its faculty and students,” Martinez says. “After hearing about their hurdles and just what a TEDx event involved, I knew I had to both financially support them and provide them with guidance.”

After lining up the speakers, the TEDx team launched a social media marketing blitz that included posting links to previous TED and TEDx talks, interviewing students about their views of “progress,” planting large iconic red X’s around campus.

Tickets sold out in three days and live streams of the speaker presentations have generated thousands of views. The TEDx team received positive feedback about the diversity of topics ranging from “The Walmartization of Music Festivals” by Kevin Lyman, Vans Warped Tour producer to “Why Do We Fear Public Speaking” by Communication Professor David Guin.

Cal Poly Pomona President Soraya M. Coley, who delivered the opening remarks at the event, said later, “TED Talks is a source of inspiration for our students because the speakers are at the forefront of their industries with their bold and innovative thinking. We at Cal Poly Pomona see ourselves as being part of the frontier of human advancement. TEDxCPP is an event that will continue to invigorate and inspire the entire academic community at Cal Poly Pomona.”

Both Kahn and Victor says they appreciate the support they received from Coley, academic advisor Kevin Colenar and Martinez.

“I wish more faculty would encourage students to pursue entrepreneurial hands-on learning experiences with the same zeal and passion that Marissa gave to us from the moment we met,” Kahn says.

Recruiting of volunteers and firming up plans for next year’s TEDxCPP are already in the works.

Watch the inaugural event at www.TEDxCPP.com.

Riding a Wave of Success

Co-founder of Wahoo's Fish Taco shares his unique way of establishing a brand

MORE THAN 150 STUDENTS, FACULTY, STAFF AND ALUMNI PACKED the Kellogg West Auditorium to hear from this year's Richard N. Frank Distinguished Lecturer, Wing Lam, co-founder of Wahoo's Fish Taco. Lam is the face of the surf-inspired fish taco chain with more than 65 restaurants in seven states.

"I knew Wing could connect to our students on many different levels," says Collins College Board of Advisors member John Gilbert. "Wing is one of the most exciting entrepreneurs in the industry. His knowledge and understanding of branding is what case studies are written about."

Lam captured the attention of his audience with funny anecdotes of his adolescence that turned out to be important life lessons. After the lecture, students were able to enjoy complimentary tacos from Lam's taco truck.

The Richard N. Frank Distinguished Lectureship Series was established in 1988 to enable respected industry professionals to spend time teaching, and interacting with students, faculty and other professionals.

— DIANA GARCIA



PHOTOS BY TOM ZASADZINSKI

Top: Dean Lea Dopson presents Wing Lam with an appreciation gift from the college. After the lecture, students enjoy complimentary tacos from Lam's Wahoo's Fish Taco Truck.



In Memoriam: Richard N. Frank

RICHARD N. FRANK PASSED AWAY IN MAY at his Pasadena home from natural causes. He was 92.

His father was a pioneer in Los Angeles dining, co-founding several restaurants, including the original Lawry's in Beverly Hills. Frank joined the family business after graduating from business school at Stanford University and took over as chief executive in 1956. He ended up splitting the business into two separate ventures grouped into Lawry's Restaurants, Inc.

After the food company was sold in 1979, Frank focused on the restaurant side. Once known as the "king of theme restaurants," he opened a number of dining spots in California. He also expanded Lawry's the

Prime Rib into new cities such as Las Vegas and Chicago, and licensed operations overseas in countries such as Singapore and Japan.

In June 2009, Cal Poly Pomona recognized Frank by awarding him an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters (or L.H.D.) because of his "dramatic impact on the restaurant industry and service to the university." He also earned the title of The Collins College's Board Member Emeritus.

In 1989, he established The Richard N. Frank Distinguished Lectureship Series at The Collins College, and was also instrumental in the funding effort to construct the early Collins Center facilities. The Collins College is forever grateful for his generosity and support.

Leaving Room to Grow

BY ALEJANDRA JIMENEZ

THE COLLINS COLLEGE OF HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT SERVES MORE THAN 1,300 students who can now choose from one of two 12-unit series where they gain hands-on operations and management experience. Launched in spring 2013, the new lodging series complements the college's existing food and beverage series as part of the undergraduate curriculum requirement. The purpose of the hotel series is to provide students with additional career avenues. Students with a desire to focus on lodging operations may enroll in the program and immerse themselves in the industry.

Assistant Professor Patrick Lee is responsible for the lodging series' development and promotion. He also amends its design requirements and teaching content, minimizes academic overlap and advises students. Lee's goal is to offer the series year-round and to have at least 100 students enrolled each quarter.

"The lodging series allows for more passion development, focused discipline and rethinking of career choices," Lee says.

He encourages students to increase their performance and field application with the 200-hour work experience requirement. With work experience, students will increase their knowledge of hotel operations, structure and characteristics. This series, and the encompassing requirements, are designed to create knowledgeable, able and skilled entry-level employees for the lodging industry.

Ying Liu, a former student in the lodging series who completed her work experience in the Westin Hotel, China, says, "The hotel series program helps develop analytical skills, critical thinking, operation concepts and the mindset of management positions."

Dean Lea Dopson believes the program has a unique advantage.

"The lodging series is significant because students' experiences in the industry are broadened and this shows our true commitment to the industry and education," Dopson says.



PHOTOS BY TOM ZASADZINSKI

Top: Assistant Professor Patrick Lee conducts his Hotel/Resort Rooms Division Management class. Bottom: Lodging Series labs are conducted in the Kellogg West Conference Center and Lodge.



Pit Lin (Alison) Chin

Raising the Heat

HOSPITALITY WEEK, A WEEK-LONG CELEBRATION ORGANIZED by the National Society of Hospitality Management (NSHM) each spring, came to life with the second annual iron chef competition. The event provides an opportunity for students to display their cooking talents in front of a live audience. Ashim Shrestha, NSHM vice president, emceed the event and reported the live action from the Demo Kitchen Labs. Caitlin VanWagenen, Hospitality Week chair, organized the competition, worked with the film crew, and managed logistics and marketing.

Pit Lin (Alison) Chin and Christopher Ojales went spatula to spatula for the win.

"I joined the competition because it was a chance for me to explore my skills and gifts and see how far I can go," says Chin.

The judging panel consisted of the presidents of each Collins College co-curricular student organization. Competitors were scored on taste, creativity, presentation and utilization of the secret ingredient – Cal Poly Pomona oranges. Chin sealed the Iron Chef Championship with her seared scallop entrée with blood orange and golden-red beet salad, paired with a zesty orange and ground onion dressing. Ojales came in a close second with his chicken à la orange.

– ALEJANDRA JIMENEZ



Left: Master's students at the Graduate Student Research Conference. Right: Faculty and student conference participation has grown this past year.

Taking Graduate Research to the Next Level

TEN GRADUATE STUDENTS AND SEVEN FACULTY MEMBERS TRAVELED to the East Coast to attend and present at the 20th Annual Graduate Education and Graduate Student Research Conference in Hospitality and Tourism this past January.

The conference was hosted by the University of South Florida and held in Tampa Bay. This event provided a forum for graduate program administrators, faculty members and graduate and undergraduate students to network, explore education and research opportunities in addition to exchanging ideas and information related to the hospitality and tourism disciplines.

"Graduate conferences are a fundamental experience for

students to gain industry insight, connections and communication skills," says Dean Lea Dopson, who was in attendance. "I encourage all of my students and faculty to take part in these valuable opportunities."

The international conference featured more than 331 speakers and poster presenters from around the world. As a proud research conference sponsor, The Collins College of Hospitality Management was graciously accepted to present 10 graduate students at the event.

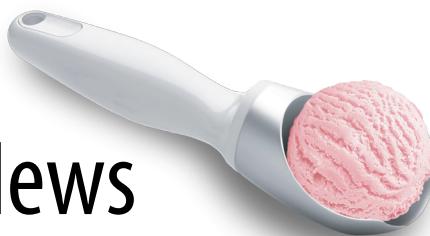
— ALEJANDRA JIMENEZ



It Was Truly a Grand Affair

The Hospitality Management Council (HMC) hosted The Grand Affair for more than 100 students to celebrate a successful academic year. The event is a revamped version of the off campus prom-like event that was previously called "Spring Social." HMC brought it back on campus at the beautiful Kellogg House overlooking the hills of Pomona. Guests, dressed to the nines, enjoyed casino table games, an Italian buffet, mock-tails and more.

SMALL BITES: The Scoop on Student News



TAKE A BITE OF THIS: **Jenna Bodensadt** is the 2015 Valedictorian after earning the highest GPA of her class. **Christopher Ojales** was selected as the 2015 Julian McPhee Scholar and gave a speech at commencement. Presenting the senior class gift at the ceremony was senior class representative and The Collins College's ASI Senator **Taylor Young**. The Cal Poly Hospitality Association (CPHA) had its plate filled with several tours. Alumna **Jennifer Langford** created three outstanding courses at three Irvine Company properties: The Resort at Pelican Hill, The Island Hotel, and Hotel Irvine. The Waterfront Hilton and the Hyatt Regency Huntington Beach provided sparkling conversations with alumni and management teams. Board of Advisors member **Denise Pflum**, alumnus **Brian Radford** and **Nicole Fernandez** created learn-by-doing opportunities with a pizza-making competition. The CPHA leadership team of **Sandra Chan**, **Wesley Perng**, **Petty Thai**, **Erica Yates**, **Lauren Denison**, **Rima Vora** and **Genevieve Poeschl** led groups of undergraduate and graduate students on these tasty tours. The Eta Sigma Delta Honor Society (ESD) dished out memberships at a dinner where 30 undergraduate students and four graduate students were inducted as ESD student members. **Hunter Yamashiro** got the icing on the cake when he was elected as the 2015-2016 Hospitality Management Council president along with **Brian Phan** as vice president, **Vivian Nguyen** as the director of finance and **Cassandra Magana** as the director of communications. Collins Ambassadors **Jonathan Joyner**, **Michael Kahn**, **Ashley Neault**, and **Jessica Otero** got their last slice and graduated this spring. Ambassadors **Sarah Wendee**, **Tia Breininger** and **Kristina Safarian** will be returning for another bite next year. Incoming ambassadors include **Kate Taylor**, **Jenny Tung**, **Mary McVey**, **Kayla Turner**, **Alfeno Putra**, **Gaelle Kazadi Tshiamala**, **Nguyen** and **Magana**. Serving up some volunteerism were **Michelle ABERNAL**, **Jonathan Mok**, **Barbara Wong**, **Eric Bassett**, **Steven Hatten** and **Adrian Wong**, who assisted Professor **Jerry Chesser** and Lecturer **Sheree Mooney** with a cooking demo that packed the

Demo Auditorium to max capacity for Staff Appreciation Week. **Margarita Hernandez**, **Elaine Chang**, **Celine Ison** and **Michael Judilla** represented The Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch at a booth during Cal Poly Pomona's annual Southern California Tasting & Auction under the direction of Culinary Laboratory Coordinator **Niloo Sarshar**. **Aric Attebery** and **Giuseppe Scarpello** turned up the heat and traveled to Europe for the Banfi Vintners Scholastic Tour of Italy. The National Society of Minorities in Hospitality (NSMH) raised \$750 for Cal Poly Pomona's Relay for Life in support of the American Cancer Society. NSMH also took 24 members to Pittsburgh for the 2015 NSMH National Conference and won "Best Chapter Newsletter" out of 94 chapters nationwide. Master of Science in Hospitality Management (MSHM) students **Neil Yi-Fong Kao** and **Sanha Ko** whipped up a research paper that they presented at the 2015 Pan-Pacific Business Research Conference (PPBRC). **Brian Montero**, **Daniel Castro**, **Kelsey Gonzalez**, **Stan Gershkovich**, **Otero** and **Wendee** worked as ambassadors at the Riviera Country Club's Northern Trust Open in February. **Abby Roboson**, **Anissa Garcia**, **Dominique Young**, **Jeffrey Boeddeker**, **Kelley Liu** and **Magali Smolik** also worked the event as food and beverage staff members. Through this experience, **Castro**, **Wendee** and **Gershkovich** were offered an internship for summer at Rhode Island Country Club. As the perfect treat, **Bai Bing Chen**, **Juan Du**, **Lanlan Hu**, **Xiaomei Lin**, **Aeriel Villanueva**, **Kyra Yong**, **Rainer Villanueva**, **Sandra Chan**, **Xiapei Yang**, **Zhaotong Yuan**, **Megan DiTucci**, **Andria Antoniadis**, **Chang** and **Joyner** traveled to Chicago for the 2015 National Restaurant Association Show. The college was recognized as "Best in Show" in the education category by Restaurant Daily News. And for the final course, **Alejandra Jimenez**, **Autumn Pew**, **Guadalupe Escalera**, **Lucas Smeets**, **Breininger**, **Otero**, **Taylor**, **Safarian**, **Kahn**, **Perng** and **Wendee** received the 2015 Hotel And Restaurant Foundation Scholarships.



Students help Professor Jerry Chesser make osso buco and risotto.



Collins Ambassadors before their commencement ceremony.



Tomasina and her band perform during the Moulin Rouge after-party.



Auctioneer Grant Sneider calls out bids during the live auction.



Tom Simms, Lea Dopson, and Jim and Carol Collins

La Magie de Paris

More than \$436,000 raised for the college at Hospitality Uncorked

BY DIANA GARCIA

MORE THAN 500 INDUSTRY professionals and supporters of The Collins College traveled back in time to 1940s Paris in honor of Tom Simms, founder of Mimi's Café and recipient of the 2015 Robert Mondavi Wine & Food Award, at Hospitality Uncorked.

The college's Board of Advisors transformed the JW Marriott LA Live's Diamond Ballroom into the streets of France to tell the romantic story of how Mimi's Café came to be. Guests enjoyed French cuisine, tempting libations, vintner tastings, a gourmet dinner, exclusive live and silent auctions and a Moulin Rouge after-party that lasted all night.

"You wouldn't believe how much detail went into the evening," said Dean Lea Dopson. "Between the delectable food, the tree lined 'streets,' the hanging bistro lights and French street performers, it truly felt as if we were in the city of romance enjoying a night to remember."

The March 28 event celebrates the vibrant social and cultural life that has made hospitality the No. 1 industry in Southern

California. The college raised more than \$436,000 and gained a new addition to its esteemed family of Mondavi honorees.

The Mondavi Wine & Food Award is steeped in tradition at The Collins College and is the focal point of the evening. It is given with great appreciation to individuals whose vision and leadership have advanced the wine and food industry. The honor was first bestowed upon Margrit and Robert Mondavi in 1999. Simms is now a member of the prestigious family of honorees that include Julia Child, Alice Waters, Jim Collins and the 2014 awardee Alan Fuerstman.

"When you look at the other people who have received this award, the biggest honor is being part of that group," Simms says.

He and his partners created Mimi's Café, a French-New Orleans casual dining concept in 1978. They opened their original restaurant in Anaheim and over the next two decades developed and operated over 100 Mimi's across the country. Simms sold Mimi's in 2004 and resigned from his position as CEO to pursue other interests, including the growth of Lazy Dog Restaurant & Bar with his son, Chris, as well as the development of South Bay favorites, Simmzy's, Tin Roof Bistro, MB Post and Fishing with



Ron and Soraya Coley, and Sara and Bruce Gorelick



Mary Niven, Michele Gendreau, Chef Alex Flores and Rebecca Harris participate in the live auction.



Aric Attebery represents the college at The Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch's tasting table.



John and Lori Strauss dancing



Tom Simms and Russ Bendel



Students Christine Alford, Ashley Neault and Lindsey Allen

Dynamite with his son, Mike, and partner, David LeFevre.

Part of the reason why the college chose to recognize Simms this year was because of his support of higher education through The Simms Family Foundation. His support helped propel the Fund A Need section of the gala. Out of more than 1,300 Collins College students, 66 percent receive financial aid. The college is dedicated to providing access to students who need support.

"We make sure that quality education stays within reach for underrepresented communities," says Cal Poly Pomona President Soraya M. Coley. "When our students graduate, that experience gives them a generous head start. And it is with this lead that they become natural leaders."

A film called "Mikey's Move" was shown as a call to action to support student scholarships. The video shared the story of Frederick 'Mikey' Varias, a Collins student who was born and raised in Guam and moved to California after high school to pursue his dreams in the hospitality industry. Thanks to scholarship support, he has been able to attend The Collins College, excel in school, travel the country, and work toward his goals.

"I wouldn't have made it this far in school without scholarships. The Collins College has brought so many opportunities for scholarships and grants that I can't be more grateful for," says Varias. "All of these opportunities help me achieve my goals and propel me in doing what I want to do as a career goes."

Guests were moved by his story and gave more than \$27,000 for student scholarships.

"The college is educating tomorrow's young, independent entrepreneurs, which I think is super important in a world today where startups and new businesses in our country are on the

decline," says Simms whose family supports entrepreneurship.

"To give a young student who has a vision and a passion the opportunity to go out and be one of those people is very rewarding"

Before the night was over, the traditional 21-cork salute was held on stage with the Board of Advisors and honoree. As soon as the corks went flying, Disney's Tomasina took over the stage with a can-can dance number and Moulin Rouge after-party that was one for the books.

"Every person who had a hand in the planning and execution of Hospitality Uncorked 2015 is as important and appreciated as the next," says Dopson. "This event would not have been possible without the tremendous support from industry and long-time friends of the college."

Hospitality Uncorked is a Collins College Board of Advisors event with assistance from event manager Joan Wrede, auction coordinator Ann Marie Coronell, college staff and faculty, and more than 60 student volunteers. The planning committee, consisted of Collins College Board of Advisors members Bridget Bilinski, Russ Bendel, Michele Gendreau, Daniel Harley, Javier Cano, Bruce Baltin and Bruce Gorelick.

Visit us at www.youtube.com/thecollinscollege to see "Mikey's Move" and an assortment of videos from the night. Photos from the evening can be found online by scanning the QR code with your smartphone.



PHOTOS BY MIRIAM GEER & TOM ZASADZINSKI

Commencement 2015

Honoring Our Graduates

The 2015 commencement ceremony celebrating our graduates was held in June. More than 330 students received their diplomas after years of dedication and hard work in and out of the classroom.

A light drizzle of rain followed by a beautiful rainbow welcomed families and graduates before the ceremony. While lining up for the processional, students called the rainbow a sign of good luck for their future endeavors.

Alumnus Jeff Durham from the graduating class of 1989 was present as the college's guest of honor. After going straight to work in the hospitality industry upon graduation, he was never able to walk during his commencement ceremony. He received the privilege to walk with the 2015 graduating class that evening.

There were 21 candidates for the degree of Master of Science in Hospitality Management and 314 candidates for the degree of Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Management.

Congratulations and best of luck to the class of 2015! View the commencement video at

www.cpp.edu/commencement.



Jonathan Joyner receives his diploma.



Hien Hoang, Allison Drinkert and Brysa Martinez



President Soraya M. Coley and senior class representative Taylor Young



Processional of graduates follows McPhee Scholar Chris Ojales.



John Levengood sings the National Anthem.



Valedictorian Jenna Bodensadt and Dean Lea Dopson



Kyle Kim, Nicki Trinh and Alicia Boril



Commencement speaker and '89 alumnus Jeff Durham



Dr. Jim Burke as the macebearer

PHOTOS BY TOM ZASADZINSKI

Student Named Diversity Champion

BY ELAINE REGUS

WHEN JUSTINE BUDISANTOSO FOUND out she was among the Cal Poly Pomona 2015 Diversity Champions, she did some homework.

"It's always nice to receive awards and to get recognized for your hard work, but I didn't have a firm grasp on everything it encompassed until I looked at the previous winners," Budisantoso says.

She recognized a lot of her mentors, friends and colleagues whom she has worked with in different organizations on campus.

"These were people I highly respected and admired," Budisantoso says. "I couldn't believe I was going to be lumped in with people who have absolutely inspired me to be a better person. It was a humbling experience."

Every year at the Unity Luncheon, Diversity Champions are honored by the various Cal Poly Pomona affinity groups for their efforts to promote diversity and to support underrepresented communities on campus. Budisantoso, who is primarily Asian and Latina, was chosen on behalf of the Asian Pacific Faculty, Staff & Students Association.

Budisantoso, a fourth year Collins College student, is an ambassador with the CSU Asian American and Pacific Islander initiative to improve college access and graduation achievement for Asian and Pacific Islander students from underserved communities. She is co-founder of the Half Asian Peoples Association for multiracial students and a member of the campus Multicultural Council.

Her various jobs on campus as a resident advisor, a student advisor for the Office of Student Life and Cultural Centers and as a Poly Pathfinder, leading campus tours, have convinced her that her passion lies beyond the realm of hospitality.

"I've had such a great experience here, my ultimate goal is to create similar opportunities for students that Cal Poly Pomona created for me," says Budisantoso, who wants to pursue a master's in higher education.

Justine Budisantoso (left) holds the Diversity Champion Award.



In Memoriam: James H. Little

JAMES HERBERT LITTLE PASSED AWAY ON June 13, 2015, after a brief but mighty battle with leukemia. He was 76.

Born on June 27, 1938, to Keith and Mary (Dunkin), he was the oldest of the four Little children. A graduate from University of Toronto Civil Engineering and a member of the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity, Little joined his father in the foodservice consulting business at Keith Little Associates in 1962. In 1975, he took over the business upon his father's retirement.

More than 50 years of activity in projects around the globe have proven Little's immense contribution in all markets, including the Eaton Center in Toronto, the Kuala Lumpur City Center in Malaysia, sports facilities for several

Olympics, many of the major league facilities in North America, Europe and the Middle and Far East, and theme parks from Universal to Disney. Healthcare and education also benefited from Little's design approach.

Little was a strong mentor not only to his associates, but to many in the industry. He was an active member of the Foodservice Consultants Society International. He has lectured at several institutes of higher learning and was an active member of two Advisory Boards: Northern Arizona University, School of Hotel and Restaurant Management and The Collins College of Hospitality Management. The college thanks him for many years of support.



High school ProStart students tour the kitchens of the Anaheim Marriott.



CSU students at the Northern California Career Fair at San Francisco State University.

HTMEI

The California State University's Hospitality and Tourism Management Education Initiative

BY DIANA GARCIA



THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY (CSU) understands how beneficial the hospitality industry is to the state's economy. The multibillion dollar industry creates an increasing number of jobs every year and employers are eager to hire young motivated professionals.

The state actively fosters hospitality and tourism management education and connects its students with the industry through the chancellor-led Hospitality and Tourism Management Education Initiative (HTMEI), formerly known as the Hospitality Management Education Initiative. The initiative includes participation by 14 CSU campuses that offer hospitality and tourism management programs.

HTMEI holds career expos for both the southern and northern California campuses every year. It also hosts annual events with the California Restaurant Association Educational Foundation that expose high school students to the industry and opportunities within the CSU. In addition,

HTMEI connects community colleges with the CSU programs. Lea Dopson, HTMEI director and dean of The Collins College of Hospitality Management, says the initiative gives CSU students a unique advantage.

"These campuses are coming together and pooling their resources to serve as a pipeline that funnels quality students to the industry," Dopson says.

"HTMEI is committed to helping the CSU system elevate hospitality education in the state of California and the world."

Maintaining a Foundation for Excellence

The Freeberg Foundation gives back to the college for a second year in a row

BY ELAINE REGUS

RENOVATION OF THE DEMO AUDITORIUM AT THE RESTAURANT at Kellogg Ranch, which will improve the learning environment for current and future Collins College students, is being made possible by a \$240,000 gift from the Don and Lorraine Freeberg Foundation.

This is the second donation The Collins College has received from the Freeberg Foundation.

Last year, the foundation contributed \$500,000 to support construction costs, equipment and furnishing of two flex classrooms in the Marriott Learning Center, which is under construction.

Gina Johnson, director of major gifts, says the two classrooms and the demo auditorium will bear the foundation's name and it will be listed on the donor wall outside the new building.

"Since the beginning in 1973, The Collins College has received generous support from many individuals, foundations and corporations who have invested in

hospitality education," Johnson says. "Their generosity has afforded opportunities for our students to learn and grow in an innovative center of excellence. We are forever grateful for their commitment in shaping our future leaders in hospitality."

The Don and Lorraine Freeberg Foundation is administered by the Sierra Land Group, which was founded by Don Freeberg. The group includes four hotels, several apartment buildings and medical offices among its holdings. When Don Freeberg died, his will provided for a significant contribution to the Don and Lorraine Freeberg Foundation.

"The foundation's two main focuses are on education and health care," says James Geary, Sierra Land Group CEO.

Geary became familiar with The Collins College through Professor Don St. Hilaire. They have known each other for 20 years and serve together on the board of the Hospitality, Financial and Technology Professionals Association.

Years ago, Don Freeberg and Jim Collins, longtime supporter and namesake of The Collins College, served together on the board of a different organization.

Geary says St. Hilaire told him about the new building and mentioned some of the needs of the college. He invited Geary to visit and to meet with Johnson.

"I went out there one day and had lunch and was very impressed with what I saw," Geary says. "I brought it up at a foundation board meeting and everyone thought it was a good fit, especially since we are in the hospitality business."

This year, Geary asked Johnson for a list of additional items the college needed and the foundation was able to grant them all.

Dean Lea Dopson thanks the foundation for its generosity.

"These gifts are helping us reach our goals with world-class facilities," Dopson says. "We appreciate all the foundation has done for the college."

BUILDING A LEGACY: The Collins College Expansion Naming Opportunities

The college raised more than \$10 million in donations from Carol and Jim Collins, Peggy and Andrew Cherng, The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation, Eugene Park, and Mary Alice and Richard N. Frank for a 12,100-square-foot expansion. This facility will allow the college to increase its capacity to educate a diverse cross section of students who will one day be leaders in the industry. Be a part of this legacy by supporting the college's needs to furnish and equip these state-of-the-art facilities.



Naming opportunities are available to preserve your legacy and positively impact future generations of Collins College students:

Undergraduate Student Commons

Main Courtyard	\$75,000
Graduate Classroom (2)	\$150,000 each

Faculty Building

Conference Room	\$75,000
Faculty Lounge	\$50,000
Faculty Office (4)	\$25,000 each

Contact: [Gina Johnson](#), *Director of Major Gifts*, The Collins College of Hospitality Management, University Advancement
3801 W. Temple Ave, Pomona, CA 91768 | (909) 869-5349 | gjohnson@cpp.edu

Back from Finland

Professor John Self talks about his Fulbright Scholar experience

BY JOHN SELF

I WAS FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO HAVE BEEN AWARDED THE Fulbright Scholar award to teach and do research at Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences in Helsinki, Finland, for four months. I left the states Aug. 14, 2015, and returned Dec. 18, 2015.

I kept busy by teaching, giving guest lectures and presenting my research on restaurant failure. During the two eight-week terms, I taught nine classes, not all of which I had taught before. I also tried to accept all guest lecture invitations from other professors who wanted me to talk about the U.S. restaurant industry or the American educational system.

Haaga-Helia is similar to Cal Poly Pomona in that it is a learn-by-doing university and has about 1,100 hospitality students. They are very much international intentional. One of my classes was an international exchange class with students from Ukraine, U.K., Russia, France, Belgium, Switzerland and Nigeria. With the Russian incursion into the Ukraine happening while I was there, it was very interesting to engage in conversations with the Ukraine and Russian students and learn their perspectives.

Each Fulbright Scholar gave a presentation to the American Studies program at Tuurku University of Applied Sciences in Tuurku, Finland, on any aspect of American culture. I gave mine on American college football. I showed video clips of tailgating, marching bands, cheerleaders and mascots, plus some football, none of which European universities have. The students all seemed to enjoy it very much.

Finland itself is beautiful and right on the Baltic Sea with almost 200,000 rivers and lakes. It is always ranked in the top 10 happiest countries in the world, has the world's best educational system, and it hosts the annual Wife Carrying World Championships.

An interesting fact is that it is impossible to be in Finland for any length of time without a "sauna" coming up (pronounced SOW-na, not SAW-na). This is a way of life in Finland and integral to their culture. After the shock of having to be naked and cooked at 176 degrees, I liked it. Now, I have a better understanding of their love for the sauna and why saunas are in every apartment building,



Professor John Self in Lapland, Finland, stands in front of a hut made for viewing the Northern Lights.

condo, home, and hotel in Finland.

The country's educational system is usually ranked No. 1 in the world. There is free education for all domestic and international students at all levels, including a PhD. The government gives students 200 Euros per month for assistance and there is some student housing priced below market rate.

The country is the land of social welfare, but it is obvious they are willing to absorb the high taxes so that no one should have to worry about daycare, healthcare, education, or basic food and shelter. This national ethos makes for very secure citizens and an environment that produces strong, independent women. You get a strong sense that every person is important and that all work is valuable, regardless of how menial or important. Maybe the most surprising fact about the country is that the average highest paid executive makes only five times more than the average lowest wage earner.

Helsinki is centrally located, safe, clean, with little graffiti, no homeless, no panhandlers, and a world-class public transportation system. We went everywhere in Helsinki on the trams or trains.

While in Finland, my wife and I were determined to not miss anything. We took Finnish language classes, shopped until we dropped, visited museums, sampled as many restaurants as possible, and traveled across the Arctic Circle to Lapland to see the real Santa. We took the ferry to St. Petersburg, Russia, to see the Hermitage, and were able to make short trips to Stockholm, Berlin, Budapest, Dubai, and Tallinn, Estonia.

The Fulbright experience was definitely one of my life's highlights. We were invited to faculty and student homes for dinner and engaged in many spirited discussions. We made what I believe will be lifelong friends in Finland and came away with many different perspectives and teaching approaches that I hope to pass along to my students and fellow faculty. I highly recommend applying for a Fulbright Scholarship or at least a visit to Finland.



(From left) Dean Lea Dopson, Frederick 'Mikey' Varias, Dr. Ben Dewald, Provost Emeritus Marten denBoer and President Soraya M. Coley

Outstanding Faculty Advisor

Provost Marten denBoer honored this year's Outstanding Academic Advisors for their dedication to students at an awards reception in May. Dr. **Ben Dewald** was selected as the college's 2015 Outstanding Faculty Advisor. The selection committee used the nominations and comments provided by students, staff and faculty to select Dewald for this honor.

Dewald is the faculty advisor for the Restaurant and Food Professionals, a co-curricular student organization at The Collins College.

This year, 16 faculty members were nominated, seven of which do not have formal advising roles. This is an indicator of how great it is to have so many faculty members advising our students on the curriculum, co-curricular activities, careers, and other life choices.

News & Accolades



James Burke, professor emeritus, retired this June after 17 years of service at Cal Poly Pomona. He started his role as dean of The Collins School of Hospitality Management in 1998. Burke played an integral role in the building expansion project of the early 2000s as the program grew in size, stature and reputation.

His list of contributions to the industry, to the university and the community helped earn him the title of Professor Emeritus in 2011.



Gina Johnson, director of major gifts for The Collins College and University Advancement, was awarded the Certified Fund Raising Executive (CFRE) credential from CFRE International in December 2014. This credential is awarded to individuals with professional tenure, fundraising achievements and a commitment to non-profit organizations.



Career Services Coordinator **Ann Lara**, her husband, Garrett, and daughter, Genevieve, welcomed a new addition to the family. Vincent Michael Lara was born on May 29. Baby Lara weighed 9 pounds, 14 ounces and was 21 inches long.

Dr. **Jeffrey N. Brown** retired from the college in June and was granted professor emeritus status by the Academic Senate.



Diana Garcia was a communications assistant for the college from 2012-2013. After a year away at The Claremont Club, she rejoined the Collins College team in December as the new communication and external relations specialist. Her roles include overseeing all publications, media relations, alumni relations, graphic design and social media.

Sheree Mooney is a 2008 Collins College alumna with many years of experience in the restaurant industry, including three years as executive sous chef at SPQR in San Francisco. She joined the college's faculty in January. Mooney took over as the front of the house lecturer for the HRT 383 dinner classes this past winter and spring.



James Yokoyama joined The Collins College as its new student advising coordinator in January after two years of service in Cal Poly Pomona's Registrar's Office. Yokoyama completed his undergraduate studies at UCSD and received graduate degrees from CSULB and CSULA.

Gary Hamilton starts his new position as chief of staff to Cal Poly Pomona President Soraya M. Coley in July.

Dr. **Margie Jones** and Administrative Analyst **Rachel Duenas** were chosen to escort 52 undergraduate students to Italy for the study abroad program at the Apicius International School of Hospitality.

Dr. **Neha Singh** took 11 students on a month-long sustainable tourism study abroad trip to Costa Rica this summer.

Professional Activities & Community Service

Sandy Kapoor and **Belle Lopez** presented their research titled “Developing Teamwork Skills in Hospitality Management College Students” at the 11th Annual International Conference on Tourism in Athens, Greece, this past June. Kapoor was also chosen to escort two students on the Banfi Vintners Scholastic Tour of Italy.

Dr. **Ed Merritt** was selected chair of the finance committee of the Accreditation Commission for Programs in Hospitality Administration (ACPHA), where he also serves as a commissioner. ACPHA is the agency that grants and oversees accreditation credentials of college programs in hospitality management throughout North America and internationally.

Dean **Lea Dopson** and graduate student **Jamie Dehn** presented their work titled “The CSU Hospitality Management Education Initiative: Programs, Pitfalls and Progress” at the Western Federation Council on Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Education (CHRIE) Conference in San Francisco this past February. This presentation informed fellow CSU and university colleagues about the initiative’s goals and development. Dr. **Patrick Lee** also attended the conference to present his research, “The Effect of Career Goals on the Academic Performance of Hospitality Management Students” with Professor, Andy Lee, University of Queensland. Dr. **Myong Jae (M.J.) Lee** presented his research titled “Graduate Study in Hospitality Management in the United States: Doctoral Programs” at the conference with graduate student **Sanha Ko**. Dr. **Ben Dewald** and Dr. **John Self** were represented by graduate student **Alejandra Jimenez** for their paper “Pre and Post Perceptions of Studying Abroad: An Italy Program Case Study.” Dr. **Linch Kwok** co-presented a full-paper presentation under the applied research track at the conference in with Assistant Professor Karen Xie from University of Denver. The title of their paper is “What Contributes to a Helpful Review? An Analysis of Consumer Word-of-Mouth on TripAdvisor.com.”

(Left to Right) Dr. Patrick Lee, Alejandra Jimenez, Sanha Ko, Dr. Lea Dopson, Jamie Dehn, Dr. Linchi Kwok and Dr. M.J. Lee during the Western Federation CHRIE Conference in San Francisco.



Dr. Sandy Kapoor and Belle Lopez present their research in Athens, Greece, during the 11th Annual International Conference on Tourism.

Kwok also wrote a refereed article for publication in *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*. He also presented a full research paper at the 2015 International Hospitality Information Technology Association Conference.

James A. Collins Distinguished Professor Dr. **M.J. Lee** published three first-authored articles in the *Journal of Hospitality Marketing and Management* and *Event Management*. Also, he co-presented a total of 11 papers at international conferences, including the 2014 Asia Pacific Tourism Association, the 2015 Graduate Research, the 2015 Pan-Pacific Business Research and the 2015 Korean American Hospitality and Tourism Educators Association. M.J. Lee, Dr. **Neha Singh** and Kwok presented their research at the 2015 Asia Pacific CHRIE Conference in New Zealand in June.

Chef **Scott Rudolph** created a chicken fabrication video for the National ProStart Invitational. This video will establish the new ProStart chicken fabrication standard for over 100,000 students and 1,200 teachers in high schools in 49 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, and worldwide Department of Defense schools.

Dr. **Jerald Chesser** has been appointed to the General Mills Global Culinary Group’s Palate Culinary Advisory Council.

View Chef Scott Rudolph’s chicken fabrication video at <http://www.nraef.org/ProStart/Invitational/Resources> or by scanning the QR code.





Dear Collins Alumni,

This past August, I transitioned from vice president to President of the Collins Hospitality Society (CHS). I personally want to thank the past president, Jason Farned '04, for the opportunity and wish him the best as he starts a new chapter in his life with his wife and family. Likewise, I want to thank the remaining board members who have assisted in this transition: Sneha Desai '12, Brandon Feighner '05, Nung Rigor '00 and Michelle Tu '13.

The Collins Hospitality Society is also delighted to announce the additions of two new board members: Katie Gorman '08 and Lera Zalenskaya '09. Having worked with both Katie and Lera during my time as a Collins College student, I am ecstatic about their additions to the board and the contributions they have already made.

Over the past several months, CHS hosted its first alumni networking mixer in San Diego, had a great mixer at the OC Wine Mart & Deli in Yorba Linda, debuted its inaugural ALIS Reception at The California Club, and had an impressive turnout at the annual Career Expo Bagel Mixer and line-danced the evening away at a Night at the Ranch. Thank you to alumna Kristin Conant for hosting the San Diego mixer at her beautiful Marriott Mission Valley property, and alumnus Andrew Rosenfeld for making the ALIS Reception at The California Club a very successful and elegant event. The Collins Hospitality Society has wanted to host an event with the annual ALIS conference for a number of years now, and we are very proud to have made it a reality as well as finally hosting an event for our San Diego alumni.

As this school year commences, we are looking forward to another great year and continuing the momentum that has made our alumni chapter the success it has been. Please mark your calendars because we will be having our Annual Alumni in the Outfield event Aug. 21 at the Angel Stadium of Anaheim.

It is our hope that these events will continue to grow the support, membership and participation of CHS. We thrive from your participation and enthusiasm, which allows us to continue to plan and host these exciting events. Please feel free to contact me or Diana Garcia (degarcia@cpp.edu) at any time regarding membership. I am looking forward to another eventful year and hopefully seeing you all soon.

Very truly yours,
Jason C. Dineros, Esq. '09
President, Collins Hospitality Society
jdineros@gilbertkelly.com



Lera Zelenskaya, Kenneth Doko, and Joshua Aldama at the country-western themed alumni appreciation dinner, A Night at the Ranch, this past May.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Aug. 21 7th Annual Alumni in the Outfield

Tickets are on sale at collinsbaseball15.eventbrite.com.

Oct. 17-18 23rd Annual Pumpkin Festival

The annual festival takes place at the Farm Store at Kellogg Ranch.

Nov. 19 Building Expansion Grand Opening

Join The Collins College as it celebrates the opening of its newest state-of-the-art building.

Jan. 25 ALIS Reception

Join us for our 2nd annual ALIS Reception in downtown Los Angeles.

Feb. 18 Hospitality Career Expo & Bagel Mixer

Enjoy breakfast with the Collins Hospitality Society before attending the college's Career Expo.

Feb. 27 Hospitality Uncorked

Join us as we honor Jose Andres with the Mondavi Wine & Food Award. More info: www.hospitalityuncorked.com

May 9-13 Professor For A Day

Alumni are invited to guest lecture in classes.

For more information, please contact Diana Garcia at degarcia@cpp.edu or (909) 869-3151 or visit collins.cpp.edu.

Find us on LinkedIn and Facebook!



An International Success

Alumna credits career achievements to a learn-by-doing education

BY DIANA GARCIA



IN 2013, ASHLEY SANDERS LERNER finished her senior year as a front desk supervisor at the Kellogg West Conference Center and Lodge. She was ready for bigger, better things once she graduated.

“It was time to live my dreams,” Sanders Lerner says. “I packed up everything and moved to Israel.”

After three interviews, she was selected for a guest relations position at a brand new property, the Waldorf Astoria Jerusalem. The hotel opened in April 2014 and Sanders Lerner was a member of its grand opening staff. She witnessed changes and contributed to building a successful team across all departments for what she says is an unbelievable and priceless experience.

The alumna was recognized for her hard work and dedication with the 2014 award for Outstanding Team Member of the Year.

She credits her success to her experiences as a Collins College student and is appreciative of Cal Poly Pomona’s learn-by-doing philosophy. She feels it gave her a huge advantage because she was ready to take on any challenge or project, even in a foreign country.

“I remembered and was thankful for all the hands-on classwork, especially the restaurant series for teaching me time management, prioritizing, and how to manage a team,” says Sanders Lerner.

She enjoys working in the Middle East because of the international need for hospitality.

“I love the fact that I can affect guests’ travel experiences,” she says. “It was important to me that people visiting from around the world have a good time at the property and throughout the country.”

According to the alumna, the hotel staff speaks multiple languages and is multinational. This made her transition a bit easier while trying to assimilate and learn Hebrew, the language of the land. She feels her transition was the ultimate confidence builder.

The alumna encourages all recent and future graduates to follow their dreams, no matter where they are in the world.

Alumni Notes

More than 4,000 Collins College alumni around the globe enjoy a wide variety of careers in hospitality and management. Find out where they are now.



Dan Lipton '83 is the publisher of TravelHost of Long Beach & South Bay Magazine, which directs the business and leisure traveler

to the best places to dine, shop and play from Seal Beach to Manhattan Beach. Every month, his magazine connects over 250,000 hotel guests and local businesses via print, Internet, a mobile application and social media. Lipton also hosts a weekly radio show called "A Taste of the Beach" on www.kbeach.org or the KBeach Radio app. He is a member of the TravelHost Advisory Board and the Long Beach Grand Cru, the fourth largest wine judging event in the U.S.

Steve Skoien '84, is the CEO of Al Faisaliah Group's ALFA Division in Saudi Arabia. Since 2010, he has led Saudi Arabia's top restaurant brands, including Steak House, Piatto Italian Dining, FireGrill Fresh Mex Kitchen, and City Fresh Kitchen.



Jeremy Eskenazi '86 is celebrating 15 years of leading his management consulting firm, Riviera Advisors, based in Long Beach. He and

his team at Riviera Advisors consult with both hospitality and non-hospitality organizations around the world on how to improve and optimize their recruiting and hiring processes. Eskenazi's book, "RecruitCONSULT! Leadership," was published in 2011 and has become a definitive book for corporate recruiting. He also received certification as a Certified Management Consultant in 2013 from the Institute of Management Consultants-USA.



Sharing his passion for wine education and event planning, **Ian Blackburn '91** started with the creation of LearnAboutWine in 1995,

which continues today. In 2015, wineLA.com was born to allow LearnAboutWine to go worldwide in 2016. Blackburn has also focused on his Master of Wine and the production of his top ranking Zinfandel called Beekeeper (BeekeeperCellars.com). He was awarded the Distinguished Alumnus Award in 2008 and is always proud to return to campus for Professor for a Day or to assist with campus activities.



Molly Jansen '02 is the hospitality program director at Monterey Peninsula College. Since graduation, she has worked in

food and beverage management at Le Parker Meridien in New York City, Lodge at Pebble Beach, and the Monterey Bay Aquarium. She received her MA in Organizational Leadership from Gonzaga University in 2009.



After graduating from Collins, **Hiral Patel '05** went on to earn an MBA from Pepperdine University in 2006. From there, he founded Sagemont Hotels in 2007, a hotel management and

development company affiliated with Marriott, Hilton, and Intercontinental hotels. Sagemont Hotels developed and built the Hampton Inn & Suites Banning/Beaumont in 2007. The company just completed developing and building the Holiday Inn Express & Suites in Loma Linda and has an extended stay hotel project in the development pipeline scheduled to open in 2017.



Jeffrey Fluker '08 worked in restaurants for many years but was hired as uniformed services manager for the Waldorf

Astoria Collection in Key West, Florida, immediately after graduation. He was promoted to front desk assistant manager and then housekeeping manager before leaving commercial lodging for military lodging. Fluker is now front office manager for almost 800 rooms at the Navy Gateway Inn and Suites.

A week after graduation, **Chris Karim '08** began his career as a food and beverage manager-in-training as part of the pre-opening team for The Resort at Pelican Hill in 2008. It opened in the fall of that year and he was a supervisor in the in-room dining department. Since then, he has worked in all of the food and beverage outlets on the property and was promoted to assistant general manager of the Coliseum Restaurant where he currently works.



Lera Zelenskaya '09 is the operations director at the City Club of Los Angeles, a private business and dining club in the downtown

area. She recently accepted a promotion with ClubCorp for this position and moved back to Los Angeles from Chicago. This relocation allows her to reconnect with The Collins College and to get involved with the Collins Hospitality Society Board.



Sean Van Straatum '10 is the food and beverage department manager for L'Ermitage Hotel in Beverly Hills. He relocated back to Los Angeles in 2014 after working for the late Charlie Trotter and at the Peninsula Chicago.

He is pursuing his Advanced Sommelier Certification through the Court of Master Sommeliers and he continues his world travels for hospitality practice exposure.



Allison Beachesne '11 is the regional marketing specialist for the Monogram Apartment Collection in Southern California. She oversees marketing and outreach for six luxury apartment communities

in Los Angeles, Orange County and San Diego. She implements creativity and business acumen on a daily basis to build lasting connections with the community and future residents.



Coming from China, **Joey Liu '12** was part of The Collins College's first Master's in Hospitality Management graduating class. She was a research assistant in hospitality education and travel experience study during

the program. Liu is now the hospitality market analyst for Haiyi Hotels, a new boutique hotel management company in San Francisco. She's been working with local and international organizations for hotel sales and marketing. Focusing on experience in boutique hotels, she oversees market trends for five hotels in downtown San Francisco.

JOIN TODAY

Stay connected with fellow alumni by joining the Collins Hospitality Society. Scan our QR code and learn how!



2015 Distinguished Alumni

CAL POLY POMONA HONORED NINE OUTSTANDING GRADUATES with the Distinguished Alumni Award, the highest honor given by the Alumni Association, on April 24 at the Sheraton Fairplex Hotel and Conference Center. The Distinguished Alumni Award honors graduates with outstanding professional achievement, community contribution and service to Cal Poly Pomona. Pilar Hamil '97 was recognized for her career achievements and dedication to the community and her alma mater.

While attending The Collins College fulltime, Hamil began her career at Walt Disney Co. 21 years ago as a part-time Disneyland tour guide for celebrities and VIPs. She has worked at all three Disneyland Resort hotels in 10 different positions, and currently heads a team of 37 leaders and 1,500 hourly employees as the general manager of the iconic Disneyland Hotel in Anaheim, a AAA four-diamond property.

"It is really rewarding to be able to make people's dreams come true," she says. "Our mission here is to create happiness."

Fluent in Spanish, Hamil also serves as an executive champion for HOLA, a diversity resource group at the Disneyland Resort. She is also a Disneyland spokeswoman assigned to Spanish media.

The Distinguished Alumna also contributes on a personal level by giving back to Cal Poly Pomona. She has participated in the annual Professor for a Day program, regularly attends alumni events, and has given tours of her hotel to Collins College classes through the years.

"I love participating in Professor for a Day because it gives me an opportunity to spend time with students, see what their dreams are, and share my own experience with them," says Hamil.

Most recently, she came back to the college to have a private dinner at The Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch with first-year hospitality management students who were living in residence halls. The alumna is proud to share her success with students and credits her polytechnic education for preparing her to be a leader in the hospitality industry.

"The experience at The Restaurant at Kellogg Ranch is one I will take with me forever. I love working hands-on and immediately applying what I learn. That is one of the greatest benefits that I took away from my experience at Cal Poly Pomona," says Hamil. "I would highly recommend The Collins College because, after all, it is the second happiest place on Earth."



Bon Appétit

Aric Attebery whipped up the perfect guide to a delicious summer with a French twist. Try the ribeye steak for an outdoor barbeque and the chilled pea soup to help you cool off on a hot afternoon. The season calls for fresh berries, which perfectly tops off the creme brulee dessert.

Attebery graduated from The Collins College in June and works at Barrel & Ashes, a new highly rated barbeque restaurant in Studio City. In September, he will start at Bouchon Bistro in Beverly Hills.

Ribeye Steak with Roasted Forest Mushrooms & Pommies Puree

Yield: 8 servings

INGREDIENTS

- 8 bone-in ribeye steaks**
- 2 1/2 pounds butter**
- 10 garlic cloves**
- 10 thyme sprigs**
- 1/4 pound cremini mushrooms, cleaned**
- 1/4 pound hen of the woods mushrooms, cleaned**
- 1/4 pound oyster mushrooms, cleaned**
- 1/4 pound button mushrooms, cleaned**
- 4 pounds yukon gold potatoes**
- 3 cups heavy cream**



DIRECTIONS

1. In a large pot, cover the potatoes with cold water and bring to a simmer. Cook for about 2 hours, until they are tender.
2. Carefully peel the potatoes and pass through a ricer with the 2 pounds of butter.
3. With a plastic bowl scraper, pass the potato mixture through a tamis.
4. Fold the warm cream into the potato mixture. Season with salt to taste. Keep warm.
5. Heat a film of canola oil in a large sauté pan over high heat. Once the oil just starts to let off smoke, add the mushrooms to sear.
6. Once the mushrooms are golden brown in color, lower the heat and add a few tablespoons of butter, 2 crushed garlic cloves, and 2 sprigs of thyme. Season with salt and pepper.
7. Continue to cook for 5 minutes. Drain the mushrooms on paper towels, discard the garlic and thyme.
8. Season the steaks liberally on all sides with salt and pepper.
9. Heat a film of canola oil in a skillet over high heat. Once the oil begins to smoke, add a steak to sear. Flip once to sear both sides.
10. Lower the heat and add the remaining butter, garlic and thyme.
11. Flip the steak again and baste with the butter for 5 minutes for medium rare. Let the steaks rest for about 5 minutes before serving.
12. To assemble, arrange the steak on a plate and top with mushrooms. Serve with pommies puree on the side.



Lavender Crème Brûlée with Fresh Berries

Yield: 8 servings

INGREDIENTS

- 2 1/2 cups heavy cream
- 2/3 cup milk
- 1/2 cup & 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 vanilla bean, split
- 6 large egg yolks
- 2 tablespoons lavender flowers
- 1/4 pound strawberries, quartered
- 1/4 pound raspberries
- 1/4 pound blackberries
- 1/4 pound blueberries
- 8 tablespoons granulated sugar



DIRECTIONS

1. Heat the cream, milk, 5 tablespoons of granulated sugar, and lavender in a large saucepan. Simmer to dissolve the sugar.
2. Remove from the heat and let stand, covered, for 30 minutes to 1 hour. Strain the mixture through a chinois and discard the lavender.
3. Reheat the cream mixture and add the vanilla by scraping the seeds from the bean.
4. Meanwhile, whisk the egg yolks with the remaining 1/4 cup sugar. Slowly whisk the warm liquid into the yolks.
5. Fill 8 ramekin molds with the custard and cover with ceramic lids or plastic wrap.
6. Bake the custard in water bath at 300°F for 50 minutes. The custard should be set but still able to jiggle slightly. Cool the custard in the refrigerator for at least 8 hours.
7. To finish, sprinkle 1 tablespoon of granulated sugar over each custard in an even layer. Using a blowtorch, melt the sugar being careful not to burn it.
8. Top with fresh berries.

Smoked Chicken Liver Mousse

Yield: 8 servings

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/4 pounds fresh chicken livers
- 1/2 pound diced smoked bacon
- 1/2 pound melted butter
- 1 sliced shallot
- 2 sliced garlic cloves
- 1/2 cup red port
- 1/4 cup brandy
- 1/4 cup dry sherry
- 2 egg yolks
- 1 whole egg
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 5 grams pink salt No. 1
- 2 sprigs thyme
- 1 bay leaf



DIRECTIONS

1. Cold-smoke the chicken livers for 1 hour or until they have fully absorbed the smoke flavor.
2. Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, sauté the bacon over low heat for 15 minutes until the fat has rendered out.
3. Add the shallots, garlic, thyme, and bay leaf and sweat until soft with no color.
4. Add the port, brandy, and sherry to the pan and reduce the mixture to 1/3.
5. Cool the bacon mixture until it is cold to the touch.
6. Puree the chicken livers and bacon mixture together in a food processor. Transfer the mixture to a blender and with the blender running, slowly incorporate the cream and eggs until fully emulsified. Strain the mixture through a fine-mesh chinois.

7. With a hand blender, slowly incorporate the melted butter and pink salt until completely emulsified.
8. Fill 8 glass jars or one 3-pound terrine mold with the mixture and bake in a water bath at 300°F for 45 minutes until it reaches an internal temperature of 150 °F.
9. Serve cold, with toasted baguette.

Chilled Pea Soup with Kaffir Lime & Mint Crème Fraîche

Yield: 8 servings

INGREDIENTS

- 3 pounds freshly shelled or frozen green peas
- 1 large onion, diced
- 1 leek, thinly sliced
- 1 carrot, thinly sliced
- 1 shallot, thinly sliced
- 3 kaffir lime leaves
- 5 cups coconut water
- 3 cups coconut cream
- 1/2 cup lime juice
- 1 cup crème fraîche
- 1 tablespoon mint, finely chopped



DIRECTIONS

1. In a large saucepan, sauté the onion, leek, carrot, and shallot in canola oil over medium heat. Sweat until they are soft, but not caramelized.
2. Add the peas and cook until just tender. About 5 minutes for frozen and 10 minutes for fresh.
3. In a blender, puree the pea mixture and kaffir lime leaves. Slowly blend in the coconut water and coconut cream until a smooth consistency is reached.
4. Season with salt and lime juice.
5. Strain the soup through a fine-mesh chinois and chill over ice.
6. Mix together the crème fraîche and chopped mint.
7. Serve the soup chilled in a bowl and garnish with a spoonful of mint crème fraîche.



California State Polytechnic University, Pomona
The Collins College of Hospitality Management
3801 West Temple Avenue
Pomona, CA 91768

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