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University of San Diego Publications and Human Resources offices
USD Introduces High-Tech I.D. Cards

By Jill Wagner

Employees who already have had photos taken for USD's new I.D. card system may have been surprised by the high tech equipment that includes a video camera hooked into a computer and color printer. But there are some things the state-of-the-art photo system still cannot do.

"We can't get rid of gray hair and we can't remove wrinkles," laughs Gene Trebes, director of parking services.

What the new system can do is make student and employee I.D. cards that are as durable as credit or ATM cards. Officials had been searching for a card that did not require lamination or new stickers each year and agreed this summer to try the video image card, making USD one of only six universities in the country to use the new system.

More than 5,000 students, faculty and staff have switched to the new card. But the process has not been easy, Trebes admits.

"This was a learning process for us," he says. "We didn't know what to expect." From day to day, the temporary staff hired to shoot and print the photos discovered software and printer problems that had to be solved by the Pennsylvania-based manufacturer. Simultaneously, other universities and businesses using the system, such as the University of Southern California and Nordstrom department stores, were stumbling across other glitches.

The manufacturer stayed on top of the problems and sent out upgrades daily for several weeks.

The small headaches are well worth it, Trebes says, to get campus members a card with multiple uses. The magnetic strip on the back of the new card can be used for food service and for access to buildings in certain areas of campus. And the barcode for use at the library and media center is printed on the card, eliminating the possibility it will peel off.

A debit section on the magnetic strip could one day be used for vending machines and copiers. The cardholder would simply pay the cashier a set amount and then use the machines until that total ran out. Other potential uses are as an ATM card or credit card, if the university sets up a program with a bank.

What makes the card unique from other video image cards is the picture, printed directly onto the plastic. It takes about two minutes for the card to run through the five-color printer, Trebes says.

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Benefit Briefs

For those employees who responded to the health survey...thank you. Almost all the comments about the current medical plans were positive. The comments about dental benefits and services were mixed, both positive and negative.

IMPORTANT NEWS: Effective April 1, 1995, PruCare and PruNetwork health plans will change, and USD will begin participation in Prudential’s triple option plan, Preferred Choice. Preferred Choice is a point-of-service plan that offers an HMO, In-Network, and Out-of-Network options in one plan. The best news is employees will be able to keep their current doctors under the new plan. PruCare and PruNetwork will remain in effect through March 31, 1995.

Please be sure to attend one of the November information meetings for complete information about the new plan. The decisions that are made during November’s open enrollment will become effective Jan. 1, 1995, and will remain in effect for the year. PruNetwork participants should be particularly careful in calculating their health care reimbursement allocations. The change to Preferred Choice may affect the health care amount need for 1995.

PruCare and PruNetwork premiums between Jan. 1 and March 31 will remain the same as in 1994. Kaiser premiums decreased by 6.5 percent.

The BenUflex allocation for 1995 is $180 per month. The medical subsidy rate and family income levels for 1995 remain the same as for 1994. Social Security numbers will be required if an employee enrolls a spouse/dependent in medical coverage during open enrollment. Please come prepared.

— Vicki Coscia

Honoree a Wizard Behind the Desk

By Jill Wagner

Before coming to USD, Ruth Hastings spent her days with wizards and crystal balls. Today her working hours are spent with law students and faculty using the Pardee Legal Research Center. But Hastings’ work is no less magical now than it was eight years ago, when she was creating whimsical ceramic windchimes.

With her crafts, Hastings delighted buyers looking for something unique; with her broad smile and warm heart, Hastings delights patrons of the LRC who need help tracking down a book or using the library’s computer system.

“Sometimes a smile can go a long way,” Hastings says, explaining her philosophy on running the circulation desk. She encourages the two permanent staff members and 20 work-study students in the circulation department to always be approachable and friendly.

Hastings’ enthusiasm for helping others has not gone unnoticed. This year she was named runner-up for employee of the year at the Employee Appreciation Picnic in June.

In nominating Hastings for the award, Nancy Carol Carter, director of the LRC, said: “Whatever can be said about Ruth as an outstanding worker, it is overshadowed by her finest trait, her humanity.

“Whether she is dealing with co-workers, with the people she supervises or with the public, Ruth’s conduct exemplifies a great respect and compassion for others, as well as a sense of her own personal dignity.”

Hastings credits her compassion and patience to a strong family, including parents who offered solutions to problems rather than making decisions for their daughter. At the LRC, Hastings similarly empowers co-workers and patrons to solve their own dilemmas.

Patrons can be demanding; she admits, but that’s all part of the job. “I think most people have good intentions but don’t always plan their time as well as they should for getting assignments done,” Hastings says. “We can act as a calming influence just by assisting somebody with research.”

Born in Minnesota and raised in San Diego, Hastings first became interested in library work while attending San Diego State University. Through a work-study assignment, Hastings worked in libraries at several high schools. A venture into business for herself kept her away from books for 13 years, but when she noticed a newspaper ad for a position at USD’s law library, she decided to make the switch.

The 108 hours the LRC is open each week calls for some fancy scheduling among the three full-time circulation employees, but Hastings is perfectly content with flexible hours and midweek days off. She says the schedule allows her to spend at least one day a week with her favorite person: her niece, Brittany.

Whether it’s working on homework, playing computer games or going to an early dinner, Brittany, 11, and Hastings are an inseparable duo. “She makes me laugh all the time,” Hastings says, chuckling at the thought. “Kids do bring wonder back to things that we just take for granted as adults.”

But one thing that Hastings never takes for granted is her work at the LRC. She is constantly striving to learn more about the job. “Every day something new happens and you have to figure out how to handle it,” she says. “We try to figure out how to best help the patrons.”
1. Where is your department located?

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions is located in Serra Hall, room 203. The first door on the right, immediately inside the main entrance. For many students, this is the front door to the university. We get mail addressed to Sarah Hall and Sara Hall, just as we have fervent pleas to be “excepted” into the University of San Diego.

2. What are the functions of your department?

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions serves in outreach (recruitment) and selection (gatekeeper) roles. We visit high schools and community colleges, attend local, regional, state and national college fairs, conduct receptions off-campus and host college visiting day. We offer information sessions and tours twice daily, conduct transfer interviews and read more than 5,500 files from applicants each year. The full-color Undergraduate Perspective and Viewpoint are produced by this office.

3. What is the biggest challenge your department faces?

Some might think it is the enormous increase in the volume of work over the past 10 years. In that time, requests for applications have increased from 18,527 to 51,817, and freshman applications from 2,444 to 4,246. Actually, our biggest challenges result from changes in demography, the economy, state and federal funding, and the highly competitive nature of the higher education marketplace. We find a far more sophisticated “shopper” as a result of those marketplace changes and as USD has attracted a stronger student population. In the past 10 years, the average grade point average of entering freshmen has changed from 3.03 to 3.41 and SAT averages increased 60 points. At the same time, we are pleased that USD's diversity has developed from 13 percent to nearly 30 percent in underrepresented populations.

4. How has your department changed over the past 10 years?

To cope with these challenges, we have had to develop many ways of working “smarter” or more efficiently, and find low-cost outreach methods. We have developed much greater sophistication in our evaluation methods as USD’s application pool has grown not only larger, but much stronger in qualitative ways. Admissions work is never done, so there is no such thing as a clean desk. There is always something else that could be done, and so the challenge is in discerning what needs to be done and what could be done with available resources.

5. What is the one thing you would like the campus community to know about your department and its function?

The success of our efforts is dependent on the good work of every single person at the Office of Undergraduate Admissions including (back row): Vince Pandes, Jorge Huinquez, Wendy Dunlap, Molly Di Fede, Carrie Stinson, Kit Phelps, Janelle Dunn, Joanne Leslie, Valencia Hamman and Warren Muller; (front row): Erika Lynn Quiggins, Anne Barker, Pam Reynolds, Maribeth Dulay, Jac Nguyen, Margaret Ames and Elaine Winfrey. Not pictured: Kelly Farland and Karen Hagler.
The Laughlin turnaround trip was a huge success. Congratulations to our big winners: Steve Glover from physical plant and his three friends, won $10,000, and Mildred Brown from career services and her three friends, won $4,000. All who went on the excursion were winners — their prize was a great time.

Plan to attend the San Diego Gulls vs. Phoenix Roadrunners hockey game at the Sports Arena on Saturday, Nov. 19. Tickets are being purchased by SEA and will cost $5.50. Look for a flier soon.

Scrip from Vons and Ralphs continues to be sold at the University Center ticket window. Proceeds finance a scholarship for an employee’s child to attend the Manchester Family Child Development Center. Please support this worthwhile cause; it costs you nothing. You receive the dollar amount of scrip that you pay for and the store gives us a percentage of the money received. You gain the ease of not writing checks at the checkout stand and the good feeling of knowing you are helping a child.

— Lillian Flynn

**Passages**

**Birth**
A boy, Gregory Austin, to Kathy VanHoe, payroll clerk, and her husband, Ron, Oct. 14.

**Deaths**
Margarita Sarre de Najera, sister of Sister Alicia Sarre, RSCJ, on Oct. 2.
Myron Krause, father of Susan Zgliczynski, director of counseling program in the School of Education.
Michael M. White, reference librarian at the Pardee Legal Research Center from August 1990 to July 1994, in September.
Georgia Rita Dillon, mother of Georgia Gordon, faculty secretary, law school, in September.
Anna Clark, mother of Mary Suesz, faculty/staff cashier in dining services, in September.

**Department of the Month**
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University. So the word “our” is a collective term that includes all members of the USD community — from those people who air dry the sidewalks every morning to the faculty and academic deans. Within our office every person is a critical member of the team. Each member has an impact: the student volunteer “Toureros,” who give hundreds of tours each year; the student workers, who enter tens of thousands of inquiries, stuff mail and lead tours; the receptionists, who greet visitors and answer a constantly ringing phone; the processing team, which assembles all the application credentials and produces thousands of individualized letters each year; the systems team, which keeps the admissions computer working day and night; and the counseling staff, who travel, read files and manage special programs.

**High Tech**
(Continued from page one)
in particular have been fascinated by the process, and Trebes says he opens the printer for the curious whenever he has time.

The plastic card moves back and forth within the printer five times, with a different color printing on each layer. In the final step, the printer lays a clear coat over the card to protect the surface of the I.D.

Employees who have not been issued a new I.D. should go to parking services in Maher 106. The first card is free. If a cardholder wants to change their name or get a new photo later, the replacement cost is $5.

**Turkey Reminder**
Are you looking forward to Thanksgiving, but not to the hours it takes to prepare a traditional turkey dinner? Then USD’s catering department has the answer for you!

Once again, Nona Janus, catering manager, wants all USD employees to know that her department is “cooking up a storm” for the Thanksgiving holidays.

You can order a complete dinner, which includes a whole roasted turkey, stuffing, whipped potatoes, cranberries, sweet potato souffle, gravy, rolls and pumpkin pie. If you don’t want “the works” you can order anything from the Thanksgiving menu, which includes soups, stuffings, side dishes and desserts.

Orders must be in by 3 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 17. Your food will be available for pickup between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 23.

Watch inter-campus mail for a flier to order your dinner. For more information, call Nona at ext. 4560.