A Syllabus for Change
By Trisha J. Ratledge

At the Ethics Across the Campus town hall meeting on Feb. 12, about 200 members of the USD community heeded the call to discuss the recent values survey.

Many in the audience voiced concerns about issues raised by the survey results. Others nodded in approval and clapped in agreement when a comment hit home.

Distributed last fall, the values survey asked faculty, staff, administrators and students to evaluate whether USD adheres to the five goals outlined in the university mission statement: academic excellence, values-based education, individual dignity, holism and Catholicity.

The survey is the most recent step in a review of the university’s culture as it relates to the mission statement, a process initiated by Monsignor I.B. Eagen in the fall of 1996 with a committee of students, faculty, staff and administrators.

Survey results, disbursed to all members of the USD community prior to the town hall meeting, revealed that while the majority of respondents agree the university upholds the five goals in the mission statement, there are clear signs that some areas still need work. At the meeting, discussion focused less on what works and more on areas that require attention.

One critical area revealed by the survey — and reinforced by comments at the meeting — is individual dignity. Many comments related to how members of the USD community treat the staff employees. About a quarter of staff survey respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that they are treated with respect and dignity at USD.

“What used to be called common courtesy is not very common anymore,” said Tom Herrinton, chair of the faculty senate and associate professor of chemistry. “This is no excuse for our behavior. I call upon each of you to examine your behavior with your own staff.”

M.T. Carlinger, unit leader in retail operations, offered solutions to staff dissatisfaction, including encouraging administrators to be more available to staff and instituting a process by which staff employees can rate their supervisors.

Catholicity, which was rated in the survey “least visible” of the five goals, was a paramount concern for a graduate student at the meeting, who admonished the university for its “total lack of Catholicity.”

Gary Macy, chair of the theological and religious studies department, cautioned the audience not to misinterpret this survey result. Though Catholicism was rated the least visible, he noted, it may just be the lowest rated of five highly visible goals on campus.

“We have widely divergent opinions about what Catholicism should be,” Macy pointed out. “We need to have that discussion. Don’t misread these statistics.”

Academic excellence was addressed by several students and faculty members. A freshman student reported that cheating is a reality on campus and called for mandatory punishments. “It’s still the responsibility of the university to guide its young minds,” she said.

(Continued on page four)
In Crisis Mode

By Jill Wagner

Terry Mignogna spends hours with bereaved family members who are dealing with deaths, domestic violence and crime. Yet, in her three years as a volunteer crisis interventionist, not once has she broken down and cried.

“I’ve learned I can be compassionate and caring without crying,” says Mignogna, a technical services library assistant at Copley Library. “I can remain objective. It’s a gift I didn’t know I had.”

It’s an essential gift for effective interventionists, who are trained to help the San Diego Police Department in crisis situations. In 1995, Mignogna was searching for volunteer opportunities when she saw on television that the SDPD uses citizens to aid crime victims. She knew immediately it was the job for her.

“I have a heart for people who are hurting,” says the 29-year employee of USD. Mignogna worked first in the College for Men library, located where the legal research center now sits, and moved to Copley Library with the 1972 merger.

Mignogna’s talent for helping people blossomed early. As the daughter of an Air Force officer, she moved frequently and learned to make friends easily. Once she settled in a new town, Mignogna would often take the neighbors who moved in after her under her wing and show them around. Even as a young girl, she skillfully comforted those in need.

Police officers, paramedics and firefighters call interventionists to provide comfort and practical support at crime and accident scenes, including homicide, rape, suicide and natural death. Mignogna, one of about 60 volunteers, helps families make phone calls, acts as a go-between with the officers and victims, or just sits quietly and listens.

When the dispatcher calls, Mignogna responds to the scene within 30 minutes and reports to an assigned officer. She is required to be on call 20 hours a month, but she usually takes four weekly shifts totaling 48 hours. Mignogna’s work schedule allows her to take the 4 p.m. to midnight shift, or sometimes the 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. slot.

Her special jacket (or T-shirt in the summer) and name badge identify her as an interventionist. Mignogna has responded to as many as three calls during one shift but also has spent several hours with one victim. She makes a point to never leave until a friend or relative of the victim arrives.

Once she made it past an interview and background check by the police department, Mignogna says apprehension set in when her two-month training began. Other than attending her grandparents’ funerals, she had never witnessed death up close. She questioned her ability to handle something as traumatic as a child’s death or a gruesome car accident. A police ridealong in the sixth week of training, however, was so exciting that her nervousness quickly dissipated.

“I’m a lot more capable than I thought I was,” Mignogna says, adding that her experience has helped her grow in many areas of her life. “I’m less afraid now to try something new. I just got elected to my homeowner’s association, for instance. I’ve never done anything like that.”

E-menu at Your Fingertips

Want to know what’s for lunch in the faculty/staff dining room today? Check your e-mail.

Steve Martin, production manager and chef in dining services, coordinates a mailing list that will send the day’s menu to subscribers.

In the first month of the e-mail service, 270 employees subscribed to the list. To add your name, send Martin a message to stevem@acu.edu or drop him a note, including your e-mail address, through campus mail.

(Continued on page four)
Ironing Out the Glitches in PMP

By Jill Wagner

Education about the university's new performance management program (PMP) began a year ago when the review process was introduced to the Staff Employees Association. A series of summer workshops for staff members and supervisors followed. But despite these efforts, in the weeks leading up to the March deadline to complete performance reviews for this year, many employees said confusion about the process permeated the campus.

“Supervisors don’t know what’s required of them or their staff,” said one staff member at the February SEA meeting.

The sentiment was echoed repeatedly by a cross section of employees — including faculty secretaries, facilities management workers and administrative assistants — who attended meetings sponsored by human resources in hopes of clarifying what they should be doing. The information sessions were quickly organized when SEA executive board members reported to human resources the high volume of questions they were fielding from staff employees.

As staff members peppered officials with questions, one human resources administrator noted, “This is what ironing out the glitches looks like.”

Every effort was made to assure the employees that the new system is designed for their benefit and that the university's top administrators understand the first year of implementing a new program is always rough.

The PMP was adopted by President Alice B. Hayes and the President’s Advisory Council as a way to encourage growth and individual responsibility. The system allows managers and staff employees to set goals within the structure of their departments, says Thom Barnett, assistant director of human resources.

“The university’s mission statement requires us to be good stewards of what we have here,” says Barnett, “including individual dignity and responsibility.”

Under the performance management program, the more than 500 staff employees are asked to set goals and evaluate their own job performance by filling out a packet of forms. Employees are then supposed to sit down and the $1.1 million tuition remission budget.

By Jill Wagner

The Social Scene
The San Diego Gulls will take to the ice for the final game of the season on March 28 and the SEA has tickets. It’s fan appreciation night at the Sports Arena, so grab tickets while you still can. For information and to order a ticket, call Yolanda Castro at ext. 4520.

Castro, chair of the SEA social committee, also has $18 tickets for the Old Globe production “What the World Needs Now,” a musical by Burt Bacharach. The showing is April 8. Tickets are regularly $39.

University Ministry
(Continued from page one)

Women’s History Month
Liturgy, 7 and 9 p.m., March 29, in Founders Chapel.

Women’s History Month
Lecture and Luncheon, 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m., March 30, in UC107. Pauline Turner, Ph.D., will speak on “Women in the Gospels.” For more information and to make reservations, call Sister Irene Cullen at ext. 2265.

Faculty/Staff Prayer
Breakfast, 7:30 to 8:30 a.m., April 3, in the faculty/staff dining room. The guest speaker is Sister Ursula Bugembe, R.S.C.J., from Uganda, who is currently on her congregation’s leadership team in Rome. Reservations are required by March 30. Call Sister Irene Cullen at ext. 2265.

New Hires and Promotions
Welcome to the following employees who recently joined the USD community:

Julie Gegner, chemistry; Kookie Vu, law school financial aid; and Maurice Watkins, general services.

Congratulations to Mike O’Deane, who was recently promoted to public safety operations manager.

Passages
Deaths
Bernard Aronson, father of Robert Aronson, visiting professor in the School of Law, on Jan. 12.

Shirley Ellis, mother of Hugh Ellis, director of marine and environmental studies, on Jan. 17.

George Alsbaugh, husband of Doris Alsbaugh, professor in the School of Law, in January.

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Hayes Headlines March Meeting

In keeping with plans to have a guest speaker at monthly board meetings, President Alice B. Hayes will attend the Staff Employees Association meeting on March 11. She will spend 15 minutes talking about her goals and visions for the university and then take questions.

The 2 p.m. meeting, held in UC107, is open to all staff employees. The SEA board of representatives meets the second Wednesday of each month; guests are always welcome.

Tuition Remission on the Table
Hayes responded to the proposed changes in the tuition remission policy by asking for data on how similarly sized universities in California administer their tuition benefits, reported Becky Gilbert at the February SEA meeting.

The committee proposed last semester that money be added to the tuition remission budget to help cover summer school expenses for employees, their spouses or dependents. Gilbert, a secretary at Copley Library, is the staff representative on the university-wide benefits committee.

The committee says that summer school tuition is an important benefit for employees, whose schedules often make it easier to attend classes when the campus is not in full swing. Summer school expenses have not been covered the last two years because of shortfalls in the $1.1 million tuition remission budget.

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PMP
(Continued from page three)

with their supervisors, discuss the goals for
the coming year and review the past year.

Meanwhile, merit raises are also awarded
in March. The new system requires that
every staff employee receive the same per
hour increase unless he or she is in correct-
tive action, a probationary period for poor
job performance.

Some staffers said they wrote their goals
and conversed with supervisors by mid-
February, adding there were few problems
surrounding the process. Others, supervisors
and employees alike, reported not having
received the packet of evaluation forms or
any instructions on how to start the process.

According to employees in facilities man-
agement, they were asked to fill out only
the first page of the packet and answer the ques-
tions in one sentence each.

“This is supposed to be our chance to
express how we think we are doing our job,”
noted a staff member. “The whole idea of
this process was to create communication.”

Barnett acknowledges that some depart-
ments have considered not filling out the
paperwork because it does not have to be
turned into human resources. He responds
by going back to the notion of encouraging
individual growth and living up to the mis-

sion statement.

“Every employer has the right to ask peo-
ple to be accountable for the work they do,
in return for the paycheck they receive,”
adds Barnett.

Editor’s Note: Judith Muñoz, director of
human resources, will speak about the PMP at
the March 11 SEA meeting. It starts at 2 p.m.
in UC 107.

E-menu
(Continued from page two)

The menus for the faculty/staff dining
room and main dining also are published a
month in advance on the department’s Web
site at http://sa.acusd.edu/dining.

Martin welcomes questions or comments
through e-mail about the service and menus
at the campus dining rooms. “We make a lot
of decisions based on what we hear back
from people,” he says.

Several expressed concern that the
review process would end with the meeting,
pointing out the information is wasted with-
out action. One person recommended at
least three follow-up surveys to evaluate
changes.

Eric Karakis, a student and a member of
the values survey executive committee,
summed the goals of the survey committee
succinctly. “This is a chance to see where we
are,” he told the audience. “This was not
meant to be a final exam. This was meant to
form the syllabus.”

Change
(Continued from page one)

Dennis Clausen, an English professor,
noted with surprise that the students don’t
have an honor code, which he believes
would contribute to a student culture that
disdains cheating. A member of Associated
Students took the opportunity to announce
that a student committee is developing an
honor code.

In all, 27 audience members addressed
the goals evaluated in the survey, many speaking
with passion and thanking the organizers for
the survey and the public forum.

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