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Dining Services Director Rudy Spano is Flavor of the Year

His dining services career began as a cafeteria cook in college when, for room and board, he served mystery meats with names like "smothered steak."

When Rudy Spano joined the industry professionally, he rebelled against what he calls "institutional food" by creating menus that rival those of commercial eateries. As USD's dining services director, he recently was named the 2001 Administrator of the Year.

"My success comes from surrounding myself with talented people and getting out of the way so they can do their jobs," says Spano, who was selected from finalists including Biology Department Chair Lisa Baird and Father Ronald Pachence, a professor in the theology and religious studies department. "I clear obstacles, am the go-between with other administrators, get money for my department and take the heat for things."

When he came to Alcalá Park 19 years ago, Spano oversaw the relocation of dining services from Sacred Heart Hall to the Hahn University Center. Under Spano's guidance, his staff expanded a catering department that this year hit a landmark $1 million in sales, introduced an award-winning coffeehouse, branched out to offer concession services at the Jenny Craig Pavilion, modified meal plans to give students more flexible choices and partnered with Domino's Pizza for on-campus delivery.

Through it all, his leadership skills have been defined not just by the big projects, but also by the small gestures.

"Rudy would never ask any of us to do something that he himself would not do," says administrative assistant Maria Lopez, one of three people who nominated Spano for the award. "He is a hands-on supervisor, not afraid to jump in and get his hands dirty. He will pick up a mop, change the trash or work in the heat of the dishroom."

Recently, dining services has focused on opening La Paloma, a new restaurant in the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice, and remodeling the Torero Grille. Next on the agenda is a convenience store planned for the residence hall being built near Cunningham Baseball Stadium.

"I'm proud of the breadth of our program," Spano says. "If there was a checklist of services offered by larger institutions, we're doing many of the same, including the coffeehouse, catering, partnerships, the convenience store and concessions."

Carol Norman, director of campus restaurants, says Spano always is up on the latest trends.

"He's usually ahead of the game."

(Continued on page 4)

Setting the Stage is a Labor of Love

A shy and quiet student who only dabbed in high school drama, Lisa Smith never dreamed theater would become her vehicle for doing God's work.

As a new member looking to become involved in a fledgling church, Smith, a clerk in USD's mail center, was coaxed by her friend, Tammi Waitley, into starting a children's theater troupe called King's Kids at Mission Christian Fellowship in San Diego and helping out with its inaugural Christmas pageant in 1995.

Since then, she's helped lead King's Kids performances at the San Diego County Fair, the Wild Animal Park and before crowds of 6,500 at the Sports Arena. Ultimately, she hopes to go into business offering her services to other churches.

"During the performances, I'm crawling around on the floor in front of..."
BENEFITS ORIENTATION: New faculty, staff and administrators must contact Nina Sciuto at ext. 8762 to schedule a benefits orientation. Retired employees who have had a break in coverage should contact Sciuto for an appointment to reactivate their insurance and retirement benefits. Please remember that insurance enrollment must occur within 30 days of eligibility.

FALL TUITION REMISSION: The human resources department must receive a tuition remission application for part-time students no later than 10 days before the first day of class. Late fees may be charged for applications received after the deadline. Tuition remission forms are available in the human resources office, Maher Hall, Room 101. For information, contact Sue Pillsbury at ext. 2063.

ERISA REPORT: The 2000 Employee Retirement Income Securities Act reports have been filed with the U.S. Department of Labor. Copies are available in the human resources office, Maher Hall, Room 101. A charge of 5 cents per page covers copying expenses.

—Vicki Coscia

Smith (Continued from page 1)

the stage, offering direction to the children, singing along, flashing cue cards and helping out with lines,” says Smith, who has worked at USD for 12 years. “I don’t get to see what the audience does until I watch the video. It’s then that I know this is what God wants me to do.”

The duo now organizes two or three productions a year. They write and direct the plays, build sets, sew costumes and coordinate music and book performances. The group performs at venues such as Balboa Park, the San Diego Adoption Center, the San Diego Rescue Mission and Walk for Life rallies.

The plays always have Christian themes, and Smith says she’s surprised at how the messages touch people’s hearts.

“I have a nephew who did not want to come to anything related to church,” Smith says. “But he came and watched a play that went all the way through the Bible from Genesis to Revelations. Afterward, he bought a Bible. I don’t think a Sunday service would have done the same thing for him, and it was great to see the way the kids reached him.”

Smith currently is working on the Sept. 21 production called “Hallelujah Hop.” The musical, which looks back on the 1950s and ’60s, features familiar songs from the era with new Christian lyrics. Although theater takes up much of her free time, Smith enjoys it more than she ever could have imagined.

“On the nights when I’m out there building sets or sewing endless sequins on angel costumes, I wonder what I’m doing,” Smith says jokingly. “But there are times I love it so much I have to remember to stop and make time for other things in my life.”

King’s Kids is open to children from ages 4 to 17 from throughout San Diego. Participants do not need to audition and are not required to be members of the church. For more information, or to join, log on to www.mvcf.com.

The Alcalá View wants to hear what you do when you’re off the clock. Share your “Off the Clock” stories by sending an e-mail to Krystn Shrieve at kshrieve@sandiego.edu or calling her at ext. 4934.

**Picnic People Ask for Pardon**

Picnic People, the company hired by USD to help with the 17th Annual Staff Employee Recognition Picnic on June 29, recently apologized after employees complained about some actions of Barnaby, the event’s master of ceremonies.

The following is an excerpt from the Aug. 6 letter sent to the university by company president Lisa Richards:

“Barnaby has worked with us for 12 years. Under no circumstance would we ever tolerate an employee who would make disparaging remarks to a person of any age or ethnicity. We at Picnic People have a very diverse work force and try to always be sensitive to the feelings of our employees; this philosophy translates to all of our guests.

“We deeply apologize and are embarrassed and concerned about offending any guest at one of our events. Our business is to create fun memories. Sometimes what is funny to one guest is not fun for the next.

“I extend no excuses for Barnaby’s actions. He has been appropriately disciplined within our guidelines and he is personally very sad that he created an uncomfortable situation for anyone. Please accept our apology.”

**Get Outta Town!**

During a trip to England this summer, President Alice B. Hayes visited Stonehenge, a circle of stones more than 4,000 years old, built on Salisbury Plain in Wiltshire.

This new section lets us peek at your vacation snapshots. Share those Kodak moments! The only rule is that you, the USD employee, must be in the photo. Send your “Get Outta Town!” submissions to Krystn Shrieve in Maher Hall, Room 274.

Lisa Smith and troupe rehearsing “Hallelujah Hop.”
Real Estate Institute Administrator Makes a Heartfelt Comeback

John Ferber was hit with a double whammy last year when he was diagnosed with prostate cancer and then, while in the hospital for radiation treatment, suffered a type of heart attack so severe it's called "the widow-maker."

Ferber, the Real Estate Institute’s associate director, fought his way back after double bypass surgery and two months later returned to USD and participated in the annual 5K Heart Walk in Balboa Park. He and his family raised nearly $5,000 in donations for the American Heart Association’s research on heart attacks and strokes.

"Last year I wasn’t one of the fastest walkers," says Ferber, whose family has a history of heart disease. "But I was bound and determined to do the whole five kilometers. I didn’t expect I could do it — and prior to the heart attack I probably couldn’t have done it — but it felt so good to be part of it all."

This year, the 65-year-old Ferber will once again don the red cap proudly worn by heart attack and stroke survivors and join thousands of San Diego County residents for this year’s Sept. 15 walk in Balboa Park. His goal is to raise more than double his family’s contribution to $10,000.

Last year, Ferber's wife of 37 years, Jean, and their daughter, Karen, proudly wore placards telling others they were walking on behalf of Ferber. A photo of them at that walk became a symbol for this year’s event. Ferber also was featured in August in a Channel 10 news segment about preventing heart attacks.

This year, USD will form a team to participate in the Heart Walk. The goal is to draft 10 teams of 10 walkers, each of whom will raise $100. Those who want to participate as either walkers or team leaders should contact Diane Callahan in the communications and marketing department.

"USD is all about heart," Callahan says. "Our mission is a definition of living from the heart. What better way to help others than to put our feet on a path — spiritually and physically?"

Ferber now walks almost daily as part of his rehabilitation program. He also does aerobic exercise and weight lifting, and has learned to better manage his diet and stress.

"I feel great," Ferber says. "My heart is healthy, the prostate cancer is under control and all my vital signs and medical reports are good."

Ferber, who began working at USD shortly before his June 2000 heart attack, also volunteers at health fairs and recently joined the Combined Health Agencies Board as the American Heart Association liaison to United Way.

It’s A Date!
Treat the Taste Buds!
Dining Services will open two new dining facilities when fall semester classes begin Sept. 6.

La Paloma, in the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice, offers everything from coffees and baked goods to sandwiches and gourmet salads. Customers can enjoy the grab-and-go menu or a made-to-order house specialty.

Traditions, recently remodeled and renamed Torero Grille, is in the northeast corner of the first floor of the Hahn University Center and offers three unique areas. Skip’s will have a variety of grilled items, including hamburgers and chicken sandwiches. Mangia! Mangia! is a full pizzeria featuring calzones, salads and a variety of toppings with which customers can create their own masterpieces. The T-House will serve Asian cuisine including rice bowls, wraps, egg rolls and monthly specials.
Dear H.R.
What are the rules regarding the direct deposit of one's paycheck? What's the process to start the service or make changes if necessary? Is there a limit to the number or types of accounts into which one can have portions of his or her check directly deposited?

— Direct to the Bank Frank

Dear Frank,
On my summer vacation in Hawaii, I found out that those drinks with the little umbrellas are a lot more expensive than I thought! Luckily, I already had arranged for direct deposit and could go to the ATM on payday instead of washing dishes to earn my way back to San Diego. Here's how it works: Direct deposit forms are available in the payroll office of the human resources department. Fill out the form, attach a voided blank check and return it to the payroll office. The payroll office then needs one pay period to test and verify the transfer capability of the account before actually transferring an employee's funds. Direct deposits can be split among a maximum of three separate bank accounts. Changes to the dollar amounts do not interrupt direct deposit transactions, but changing bank accounts requires a new verification period. Be aware that a few banks do not accept direct deposit agreements, so check with your financial institution first.

H.R. is here to answer your human resources questions, and will respond to as many queries as possible in each issue. He cannot, however, analyze individual cases. Send your questions to askhr@sandiego.edu.

Spano
(Continued from page 1)

Norman says, "We had a coffeehouse before they were 'in' and sandwich wraps before anyone else ever heard of them."

Spano's goal is good food served fast and fresh. He's dedicated to offering salad bars, vegetarian selections, ethnic cuisines and even daring special menus featuring entrees such as shark.

"You must have a thick skin in this business," Spano says. "You never really get raving compliments from students. When they say, 'Hey, this isn't so bad,' you know it's high praise."

H.R. Department Gets New Hire
Gwendolyn S. Lytle recently was named associate vice president for human resources. Lytle, who will arrive on campus Sept. 3, most recently was the director of human resources at Clark Atlanta University in Atlanta, Ga. Prior to that she was the assistant director of human resources at California Institute of Technology in Pasadena, Calif., and also worked in the private sector.

Holy Spirit Mass
Celebrate the beginning of the academic year by attending the Holy Spirit Mass at noon, Sept. 14, in The Immaculata. If you are interested in helping with the Mass, contact University Ministry's Mary Krueer by Sept. 4 at ext. 5903.

Milestones
Community and Government Relations Director Pamela Gray Payton, and her husband, Jerome, welcomed the newest addition to their family, Briahjah Chanel Payton, on Aug. 8. Briahjah joins siblings Brittany Alexandria Gray, Brandyn Alexander Gray, Jordan Chandler Payton and Joshua Channing Payton.

The Alcalá View Wants to Hear from You
If you have story ideas, events to publicize, vacation photos for the "Get Outta Town" section, nominations for the "In the Spotlight" segment, classified ads or questions for H.R., our human resources guru, please submit them by the 10th day of the month prior to publication.
Send submissions to Krystn Shrieve, Maher Hall, Room 274, call ext. 4934 or email kshrieve@sandiego.edu. Send human resources questions to askhr@sandiego.edu.

CLASSIFIEDS
FOR SALE: 1994 Ford Explorer, 4X4 XLT. Champagne color with 99,000 miles and many extra features. Excellent condition. $8,500 or best offer. Call Sharon at ext. 4697.

FOR SALE by original owner: 1967 Ford Mustang coupe. All original. $8,500. For more information visit: www.sandiego.edu/~slainas/ or call Sharon at ext. 4697.

WANTED: House or townhouse to buy. Three bedrooms, two bathrooms, near USD. Yard a must. Low $300,000s. Call Marty Rider at ext. 4773.