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# AlcaláView

A newsletter for the employees of the University of San Diego / December 2003–January 2004 / Vol. 20, No. 4

**Make Merry with Mary!** Join the president and fellow employees for a holiday celebration. See page 3



## Fires Destroyed Homes, Friendships Restored Hopes

**A**fter a firestorm engulfed their home in the Scripps Ranch neighborhood of San Diego, business Professor **Andy Allen** and wife **Denise Dimon**, director of the Ahlers Center for International Business, plan to rebuild.

Allen was visiting his mother in Chicago, and Dimon was attending a conference in Peru, when the Cedar Fire raced through San Diego County in October, leaving 14 people dead and more than 2,000 houses destroyed, including 343 homes in Scripps Ranch.

The couple's son Cary, 18, was home for the weekend from the University of Redlands, and managed to evacuate with the car, an address book and the family cat. Their daughter Lindsay, a sophomore at USD, found out the home had been hit when she saw it burning on the local news.

"Everybody is fine and the cat is fine, which are the main things," says Allen, an employee since 1984. "All we had was what we had on our trips out of town. I had three days worth of clothes and Denise had five days worth of clothes."

Two days after the inferno ignited,

the family returned to their blackened neighborhood.

"It was kind of like a death march because all the people in the community were allowed in the same time," recalls Dimon, who's been at USD since 1983. "It was still very smoky and kind of eerie. The



*Sophomore Lindsay Allen found out her home was on fire when she saw it burning on the local news.*

sky was dark, and just to see all that devastation was overwhelming. It's what I would imagine a war zone would look like."

The family dug through the rubble of what had been their home since 1990. "The only things I found intact were a little jewelry box someone made for my mom and my son's water polo ball," Dimon says.

Although relatives can reprint family photographs, items like still-life paintings by Dimon's grandmother, who has since

*(Continued on page 2)*

### Emergency Gift Fund

The university established the Emergency Gift Fund to help employees severely affected by the fires. To request help or to donate to the fund, contact the Office of Human Resources in Maher Hall, Room 101.

Also, employees participating in the university's retirement plan may choose to borrow from their plan. The loan must be a minimum of \$1,000 to a maximum of \$50,000 and be paid back within five years. If the loan is for the purchase of a home, the payback period is up to 10 years.

Employees with investments with several companies may only borrow from one investment company. For a loan application, contact TIAA-CREF at (800) 842-2776; VALIC at (800) 448-2542; or SCUDDER at (949) 388-0934.

## President Demonstrates Open Door Policy

**P**resident **Mary E. Lyons** welcomed hundreds of employees to her home, known as the Casa de Alcalá, on Nov. 11, giving them a chance to meet their president and an opportunity to peek into bedrooms, imagine cooking in her kitchen and hear the history behind the many USD artifacts now showcased in her home.

After shaking hands with a queue of visitors, Lyons briefly addressed her guests and thanked them for coming to the open house, the first event in a week of activities celebrating her inauguration.

"I've said it to others and I'll say it again to you today, *mi casa es su casa*," Lyons said. "This is about us, it's about family, and you are my new family. When you have family, what do you do? You have them over to your casa. So, thank you for coming. It means so much to me that you are here."

*(Continued on page 2)*



*President Mary E. Lyons greets employees in her living room during the open house event.*



## Fires

(Continued from page 1)

passed away, are irreplaceable.

Allen and Dimon, who are renting a two-bedroom condo downtown, have lived in Scripps Ranch since 1983, and want to rebuild in the close-knit neighborhood they so cherish. Despite their loss, they say they feel fortunate to have received an outpouring of support from friends and colleagues, who have extended the couple gifts, food, clothing, gift certificates and, in some cases, a place to stay.

"I think (the fire) kind of renewed and deepened some friendships we've had," Allen says.

**Kathe Myrick**, special assistant to the vice president for University Relations, also considers herself one of the lucky ones, despite losing her family's Harbison Canyon home of 10 years. The only thing left standing after the blaze was part of the fireplace.

"I've received support from so many places," says Myrick, who was able to grab photo albums, two cats, two dogs and her daughter's stuffed animals as the family evacuated. "People are just amazingly wonderful."

USD is doing its part to help the entire San Diego community. **Chris Nayve**, assistant director for community service-learning, says in one week his staff collected enough clothing and blankets to fill five mini vans. Most of the donations came from students.

The university also has established the Emergency Gift Fund for employees and their families severely affected by the fires.

Besides Allen, Dimon and Myrick, the fires displaced at least five other employees, says **Keven Backman**, director of human resources.

The Staff Employees Association, which planned this year to raise money for needy families at USD as part of its annual charity drive, hopes employees who were victims of the fire will come forward for assistance if they need it. Donations will be collected at the association's annual Christmas party on Dec. 10.

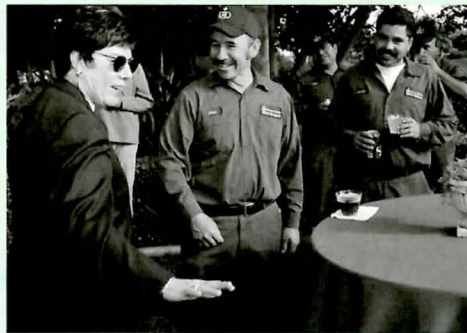
"We're just trying to help our own this year," says SEA President **Penny Navarro**, "whether they are fire victims or people who just need a little extra help during the holidays." AV

— Cecilia Chan

## Open House

(Continued from page 1)

During the tours of the presidential residence, not much was off limits. Visitors saw bedrooms, a sitting room with a flat-screen television, recently purchased by the president herself, an exercise room complete with a treadmill, and even the laundry room.



President Mary E. Lyons visits with members of facilities management.

Homey touches offered insight into Lyons' decorating style and a glimpse of her warm personality. Throughout the house, visitors came across childhood photos of her now grown son, Tim, playing on the beach, an extensive collection of Hummel figures, some of which date back to the 1950s, and even a throw pillow embroidered with the words, "My

other house is in Minnesota."

Budget and treasury's **Carol Steslicki**, who volunteered to be a hostess for the event, says Lyons' openness endeared her to the university employees in attendance.

"They see that she's here to serve," Steslicki said, "and that she's a regular person just like the rest of us."

Employees gathered in the casa's back yard for food, courtesy of banquets and catering, and music by **Tom Boyer**, assistant director for public safety, who played the guitar for much of the afternoon. Between sets, Boyer also praised the president's lack of pretense. When she is talking to a group of employees, Boyer says, she doesn't put herself on a pedestal.

**Frank Chmura**, who works for dining services, agreed. He met Lyons and spoke briefly with her at an earlier event. When he arrived at the open house, Chmura was impressed that the president remembered his name.

"She seems like a very nice woman," Chmura said, "and I think she'll be good for the university." AV

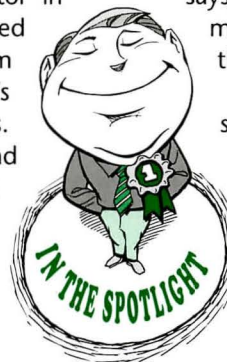
— Denis Grasska

## A Setup for Success

**Kimberly Brody**, assistant director in events management, nominated the facilities management team for its help in making this year's Homecoming Weekend a success.

The team, Brody says, had the unenviable task of setting up and tearing down countless tables, chairs and podiums for numerous events throughout the weekend, and remained friendly and cheerful when asked to move "just one more table."

Brody says **Lou Magana** and **Thu Tran** managed a group of people who, despite hectic schedules and quick turnaround times, didn't miss a single chair, table or trash can. The best example, she



says, was when equipment had to be moved from the tailgate reception to the luau/casino night.

"The turnover was so fast and so smooth it was unbelievable," Brody says. "And for our Mass reception on Sunday, they not only had all the equipment laid out by 8 a.m., but everything was laid out exactly as I had it on my floor plan. Their attention to detail and level of professionalism is incredible."

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If you or someone you know deserves to be put "In the Spotlight," send an e-mail to Krystn Shrieve at [kshrieve@sandiego.edu](mailto:kshrieve@sandiego.edu) or call her at ext. 4934.



# Moving in the Right Direction

If you've seen **Cel Johnson** and **Larry Gardepie** dashing around campus with easels and jumbo notepads tucked under their arms, it's because President **Mary E. Lyons** in October assigned the pair to help determine the strategic directions USD should pursue over the next five years.

This month, Lyons expects to present the board of trustees with a draft of an updated mission statement. In April 2004, she plans to introduce a set of proposed strategic directions.

For the past two months, at Lyons' behest, Johnson and Gardepie, who head up the newly formed Office of Institutional Research and Planning, have assessed perceptions of USD by conducting 19 focus groups with more than 200 on- and off-campus constituents.

"The timing for this was perfect," says Johnson, the office's executive director. "Our most recent strategic plan was due to be reviewed this year, and with a new president we needed to start looking again at our goals for the future."

They collected nearly 2,000 comments from faculty, staff, students, alumni, parents and members of the community. The information highlights everything from the university's strengths, weaknesses and Catholic identity to ways USD can improve. The data were used to help revise the university's mission statement, a draft of which will be presented at the trustees' Dec. 10 meeting.

In addition to the focus groups,


Johnson and Gardepie conducted 19 telephone interviews with church, business and community leaders. Early this month, they will send out a survey to employees, students and alumni to give more people an opportunity to participate in the process.

At each turn, they saw recurring themes.

"We heard from a lot of people that they like the architecture and the landscaping here, and that we do a good job maintaining small class sizes and strong student-teacher interaction," Johnson says. "We've also heard that we need to improve communication across campus, and that we need to do a better job recruiting more diverse students and faculty so that our population better reflects the San Diego community."

The university's strategic directions steering committee will meet in January to discuss the feedback from the focus groups, phone interviews and surveys. In February, the committee expects to start developing strategic goals, which will be discussed further at the board of trustees' retreat that month.

Once the final strategic directions are approved, Johnson and Gardepie will begin working on ways to measure the university's improvements and progress in each area.

The process so far has been well received by participants. "In general people are optimistic about the process," Johnson says. "They are glad that the president is interested, is asking these questions and is listening to what they have to say." 

## SEA Snippets

The Staff Employees Association, which typically opens each meeting with a prayer, recently debated whether it's appropriate to continue the practice. Members invited Monsignor **Daniel Dillabough**, vice president of Mission and Ministry and University Relations, and **Reuben Mitchell**, assistant provost and director of campus diversity, to their November meeting to clarify the identity of USD as a Catholic university and the role of prayer at meetings.

At the meeting, Dillabough explained that employees don't need to apologize for or diminish USD's Catholic identity as they practice the university's mission of celebrating diverse traditions.

"It is important to recognize who we are," Dillabough said. "We are a Catholic university, and we respect our Catholicism. This is not a secular organization. We accept and have dialogues with other religions, and respect individual dignity while making our world a better place."

Dillabough said prayer is not an obligation, but a choice. He suggested, however, that the SEA choose to continue praying, saying that people need to be sensitive and inclusive, but not neutralize prayer by taking God out of it.

Following Dillabough's address, Mitchell's opening statement was, "Ditto!" He made clear that the mission of USD's Catholic identity, and its values, bring people together as they honor each other. "Being inclusive as a diverse group, we understand that we are participants of the mission of the university, which advocates the respect for people," Mitchell said.

In lieu of the regular meeting, the SEA Christmas party will be held from 11 a.m. to noon, Dec. 10, in the Hahn University Center, Forum A. Donations will be collected for the association's annual charity drive, which this year will benefit members of the USD community who may be struggling with limited finances, illnesses or other difficulties this holiday season.



## It's a Date!



### Party with the President

The time is near for Christmas cheer! Join President **Mary E. Lyons** and fellow employees for a holiday celebration at 2 p.m., Dec. 17, in the Hahn University Center. Families are welcome, and festivities will include food, music, door prizes and a visit from Santa Claus. Please RSVP by Dec. 10 by calling **Yolanda Castro** at ext. 7689, or e-mailing her at [castro@sandiego.edu](mailto:castro@sandiego.edu).

# University Ministry Events

- **Dec. 6: Alumni Mass**, 6 p.m., Founders Chapel. The Bishop Buddy Award will be given in recognition of extraordinary contributions and commitment to humanitarian causes. A reception will follow. Reservations are requested. Call ext. 4819.
- **Dec. 7: Our Lady of Guadalupe Mass**, 7 p.m., Hahn University Center.
- **Dec. 12: Our Lady of Guadalupe Day Mass**, noon, Founders Chapel. Meet at 11:50 a.m. in front of the Hahn University Center for the mariachi procession to Founders Chapel. All are welcome. Todos están invitados.
- **Dec. 15: Advent Penance Service**, 7 p.m., The Immaculata. The sacrament of penance will be offered at this service.
- **Dec. 18: Mid-Year Graduation Mass**, 3 p.m., Founders Chapel. To be a liturgical minister, contact **Mary Kruer** at ext. 5903.
- **Jan. 9–11: The 20-30 Something Retreat**. This unique retreat for working young adults is open to all graduate students, alumni, faculty, staff and administrators in their 20s and 30s. For information, contact **Lisa Directo-Davis** at ext. 7770. To register, contact the Office of University Ministry at ext. 4735, or stop by the Hahn University Center, Room 238.
- **Jan. 21–23: The Guided Silent Retreat**. It's almost three full days of silence. When was the last time you spent quality time alone with God? There will be guidance and instruction by Father **J.J. O'Leary**. For information, contact **Mary Kruer** at ext. 5903. Space is limited. Priority will be given to students, faculty, staff and administrators. To register, contact the Office of University Ministry at ext. 4735, or stop by the Hahn University Center, Room 238.
- **Jan. 30: All-Faith Service**, noon, The Immaculata.



# Service Awards

The following people will celebrate their milestone anniversaries at a ceremony on Jan. 14. The university wishes to thank its employees for so many years of service. The following list was provided by the human resources department:

## 10 Years

**Sheri Barzal**, Bursar  
**Georgia Belaire**, School of Education  
**Leeanna Cummings**, Philosophy  
**Molly DiFede**, Undergraduate Admissions  
**Georgia Dillon Gordon**, Athletics Administration  
**Mariana Djaja**, La Paloma  
**Jeffrey Hardick**, Building Maintenance  
**Michael Haskins**, Publications  
**Julie Hoyle**, Law School Administration  
**Mary Rose Johnson**, Summer Camps  
**Sharon Lainas**, Bursar  
**Joanne Lavin**, School of Business  
**Maria Antonieta Manriquez**, University Center Operations  
**Francisco Rubio Martinez**, Housekeeping Services  
**John McCloskey**, Campus Card Office  
**James McManus**, Main Dining Room  
**Patty Odeane**, Legal Clinic  
**Patricia Quinn**, Student Health Center  
**Pamela Reynolds**, Undergraduate Admissions  
**Noel Rodriguez**, Telecommunications  
**James Salton**, Public Safety  
**Richard K. Sierer**, MFA Dramatic Arts  
**Elba Lopez Sims**, Custodial Services  
**Maria Viegas**, Custodial Services  
**Elisa Weichel**, Public Interest Law  
**Eric Wildman**, Procurement Services

## 15 Years

**Mayola Martinez Acuna**, Custodial Services  
**Alicia Buenrostro**, University Relations Operations  
**Carl Eging**, Law School Financial Aid  
**Sixto Gomez**, Grounds and Maintenance  
**Jose Gonzalez**, Grounds and Maintenance  
**Christopher Hernandez**, Building Maintenance  
**Martha E. Hernandez**, Main Dining Room  
**Carol Lawrence**, Financial Aid Operations  
**Teresa Martinez**, Custodial Services  
**Donald McGraw**, Provost's Office  
**Karen Molenda**, School of Nursing

**Charles Moeller**, Budget and Treasury  
**Josefina Monroy**, Custodial Services  
**Carol Zorola Norman**, Dining Services Administration  
**Marcia Rathfon**, Continuing Education  
**Edward Starkey**, Copley Library  
**Marjorie Zhou**, Law School Records

## 20 Years

**Maria Elena Briseno**, Custodial Services  
**Vicki Coscia**, Human Resources  
**Denise Dimon**, School of Business  
**Brian Fogarty**, Athletics Administration  
**Yvette Fontaine**, International Resources  
**William Geddes**, Custodial Services  
**Rosemary Getty**, Law School Administration  
**Edward Helzer**, Print Shop  
**Jeanne Heaphy**, Continuing Education  
**Ina Levy**, Law School Administration  
**Warren Muller**, Enrollment Management Administration  
**Lois Scheer**, Legal Research Center  
**Mary Vicknair**, Law School Administration  
**Nancy Weber**, Public Safety  
**Kathryn Whistler**, Legal Research Center

## 25 Years

**Gary Becker**, Athletics Administration  
**Leopoldo Briseno**, Custodial Services  
**Carolyn Greer**, Athletics Administration  
**John Martin**, Athletics Administration  
**Linda Quinn**, Law School Records  
**Linda Scales**, Career Services

## 30 Years

**Roberto Acuna**, Grounds and Maintenance  
**Thomas Burke**, University Relations  
**Dora Camacho**, Custodial Services  
**Jim Pehl**, Budget and Treasury  
**Thomas Rogers**, Building Maintenance

## 35 Years

**Kay Norton**, Registrar's Office

## Benefits Briefs

**Year-End Housekeeping:** This is the time of year employees need to review their benefit elections and other personal information that may have changed during the year, including an address, telephone number or change in insurance beneficiary. All changes must be submitted to the human resources or payroll departments by Dec. 15.

**Health Care Spending Account:** To qualify as a 2003 expense, health care spending account services must be incurred by Dec. 31. Employees have until March 31, 2004 to submit claims for services incurred during 2003.

— **Vicki Coscia**  
Assistant Director for Benefits

## The Alcalá View Wants You

The *Alcalá View* is not published in January, but will be out again in February. Do you want to be part of the *Alcalá View*? Don't be shy, just send in your story ideas by the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the month to Krystn Shrieve at [kshrieve@sandiego.edu](mailto:kshrieve@sandiego.edu).



## CLASSIFIEDS

FOR SALE: Samsung SPH I-300 Palm OS Sprint cell phone. With travel charger, standard charger, hands-free ear piece and extra battery. Good condition. \$100 (\$450 new with accessories). Call **Liam Dunfey** at ext. 2869.



## THE CONSTRUCTION CORNER

Construction crews are close to completing two major facilities. Here's what to expect in December and January:

**Degheri Alumni Center:** Crews are cleaning the interior rooms, finishing the tiling in the interior patio and working on the exterior sidewalks and landscaping. Crews hope to finish all work by Dec. 19, and employees are expected to move into the building in mid-January.

**West Marian Way Parking Structure:** Crews are finishing the lower tram stop, the upper tram stop and the upper access road into the structure. Approximately 400 spaces in the structure opened for use in November. The structure should be ready for full use by mid-January.

— **Roger Manion**  
Assistant Vice President of Facilities Management

## MILESTONES

**Erinn Tozer**, senior staff psychologist at the counseling center, and her partner, Sue Whiteside, announced that Tozer gave birth to their daughter, Maya Tozer Whiteside, on Dec. 12, 2002. The family was legally recognized when Whiteside adopted Maya on Nov. 7.

Professor **Darrell Bratton**, who began teaching in the School of Law in 1967, passed away Nov. 15.

Terry Rogers, husband of **Janet Rogers**, dean emerita of the Hahn School of Nursing and Health Science, passed away Nov. 13.

Marie McHugh, RSCJ, sister of **Helen McHugh**, RSCJ, professor emerita in the English department, passed away on Nov. 11.

Lillian Giroir Moriarty, mother of **Dan Moriarty**, professor of psychology, passed away Nov. 10.

Beatrice Costanzo, mother of **Marge Costanzo**, bursar for the university, passed away Nov. 4.

Fortunata Chavez, mother of **Robert Bacalski**, professor of Spanish, passed away Oct. 17.

Prenia Taylor, mother of **Jan Morris**, visiting professor in the School of Business Administration, passed away Oct. 6.

## Alcalá View

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