Captain Goes On Deck to Make Sure Her Fleet is Ship Shape

As part of her due diligence as USD’s new leader, President Mary E. Lyons announced in March that she will conduct a systematic inspection over the next 18 months of how efficiently the university utilizes its time, money and personnel.

Lyons announced the study publicly at the March meetings of the Staff Employees Association and the University Senate, and said the review process will be an important step in her larger goal of determining the strategic directions USD should pursue during the next five years. The timing is right, she said, not only because there has been a change in leadership, but also because it’s been at least a decade since an examination of this type has been done at USD.

“In the Navy, every time there’s a change of command there’s an inspection,” Lyons told SEA members gathered for their monthly meeting in the Manchester Conference Center. “From now on, everything that happens at this university will be on me, because it’s my watch now.

“This is a chance to renew ourselves,” Lyons continued. “It’s been 10 years or more since anyone looked at how we do business and how we spend money. It’s a chance to strip everything away, start from zero and see if we’re spending correctly and staffed correctly.”

The first step in the process, Lyons said, was to update the USD mission statement, a new version of which the Board of Trustees approved in February. The university’s mission, Lyons said, should be the engine that drives where the university puts its resources. It’s one of the standards against which she and the vice presidents will measure the efficiency of their divisions, she said.

“Because we’re a community of creative people, a lot of ideas rise to the top,” Lyons said. “I get phone calls all the time from people who say we should do this program, or we should form that partnership. But we can’t do everything. Not everything is in our mission. The mission is our frame.”

(Continued on page 3)

A Harmless Tease Turns into a Rocky Ruckus

The year was 1961. It was the year Rock Hudson — basking in the glow of an Oscar nomination for “Giant,” a nod from Look magazine as star of the year and the popularity of his movie “Pillow Talk,” with Doris Day — was filming three movies at once. One Saturday night, he took a break to spend an evening hanging out with friends at a club on L.A.’s Sunset strip.

It was also the year college freshman Don McGraw, who was hanging out at the same club with friends of his own, came to believe in hypnosis after a light-hearted, ever-so-slightly naughty episode that left the movie legend needing a fresh drink and the college kid straightening his tie.

McGraw, an assistant provost who has worked at USD for 16 years, went to The Interlude, on an 18-and-over night, to see a performance by hip hypnotist Pat Collins of ‘60s and ‘70s fame.

Collins — who was a regular on talk shows and game shows, and once hypnotized Lucille Ball on “I Love Lucy” — brought McGraw, a biology student from nearby Cal Poly, Pomona, up on stage with other members of the audience.

Collins hypnotized the participants and put them through wacky situations,
Raising the Issue of Raises

Merit versus market. Those are the two forces that will go head-to-head as staff employees this month have their say in whether merit recognition or market value should have priority when supervisors decide whether to award monetary raises.

A survey, crafted by the human resources' staff compensation and performance management committee, will be sent to all non-exempt staff employees this month. The survey will ask staff members whether they're satisfied with the current policy for staff increases, which allows available funding automatically to be distributed evenly into increases for employees in each pay grade.

The survey goes on to ask whether staffers would prefer that raises instead be based on a merit system, which then would not be automatic.

In the meantime, the staff compensation and performance management committee since September 2003 has been working on a evaluation form with which supervisors can evaluate staff members' performances. It's been several years since the university has used this kind of form.

Once finalized, the new evaluation form, which is expected to be used during the 2004-05 school year, would replace the current performance management program (PMP), which focuses more on setting goals for the future, rather than progress and achievements of the recent past.

"We don't have an evaluation tool in place," says committee member Elaine Atencio, special assistant to the president. "At the end of Dr. Hayes' tenure, people were stating that they were unhappy with the PMP process. So we started to look at other tools that could be used."

The evaluation form the committee created allows employees to evaluate themselves, using a numeric scale, in the areas of communication skills, dependability, job knowledge, planning and organizational skills, initiative and judgment skills. After the self-evaluation, the supervisors rate the employees in the same areas. Then, the supervisor's superior reviews the document for an added layer of accountability. The process is meant to increase communication between employee and employer.

Committee member Pauline Berryman, assistant dean in the College of Arts and Sciences, already has tested a draft version of the form on six staff members, and says the results were positive.

"Overall, my staff liked it," says Berryman. "It created the dialogue we had hoped. I could explain what I was basing my decisions on and employees could remind me of things I may have forgotten."

The new evaluation form would go hand-in-hand with either the current policy for staff increases or a new merit system that could be adopted, depending on the results of the survey.

"If people are happy with the current policy, then we'll leave it at that," Atencio says. "But if they would prefer a merit system, then we want to make a difference for them."

In a merit system, employees would be rated on a scale from 1 to 5. Employees who receive a rating of 1 or 2 would not be eligible for a raise. If money is available, employees rating 3, 4 or 5 would receive pay increases that would vary in accordance to the employee's performance and pay grade.

Penny Navarro, SEA president, says when it comes to merit versus market, the new evaluation tool combines the best of both worlds.

"Some people may feel that with the market system, they get paid the same increase even if they are working harder than others," Navarro says. "Others may feel the merit system is too subjective. But this new tool answers the issue of people being rewarded for working below standard while allowing a more objective way to measure our successes."

Benefits Briefs

HIRING: Supervisors recruiting for a clerical position and needing assistance in determining a candidate's computer skill level can contact the human resources department to schedule candidates for an assessment in all MS Office applications, data entry and business writing and editing. Call ext. 6611.

FIVE-YEAR SERVICE AWARDS: A ceremony and reception recognizing employees who have completed five years of service will be held at 10 a.m., May 6, in Maher Hall's Salomon Lecture Hall. The ceremony will honor eligible employees who were hired between July 1, 1998, and June 30, 1999.

SCUDDER, VALIC and TIAA-CREF SERVICES: Effective April 1, Scudder, VALIC and TIAA-CREF will provide employees with the information needed to determine eligibility to make up contributions under the new 403 (b) IRS regulations. The university issued information regarding this in July 2003 and January 2004. To request a copy of this document, call Sally Kuchik at ext. 4377. To contact your retirement investment company's representative call: Scudder at (800) 595-1989; TIAA-CREF at (800) 842-2888; or VALIC at (619) 421-2222.

TIAA-CREF VISIT: A representative from TIAA-CREF will visit campus for personal counseling sessions from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., April 14, in the Hahn University Center, Room 114. To arrange an appointment, call (877) 209-3140, ext. 2626.
Efficiency Study
(Continued from page 1)

Lyons said as the vice presidents and their leadership teams work through the process, they may find that some programs are overfunded, some are underfunded and some will stay the same. Aside from the mission statement, another benchmark might be to compare USD to similar universities or universities USD aspires to be like. A third, she said, is the surveys employees filled out late last year to help update the mission statement. Lyons says along with the survey results, she has 68 pages of comments from staff, faculty, students and administrators that show patterns or clusters of issues about which the community is concerned.

"There's no quota," Lyons said. "I'm not working toward any specific numbers. I don't have any preconceived notions about anything." But because 80 percent of the university's budget is labor, Lyons said that cutting back on staffing is inevitable. But she assured the SEA members that the process isn't meant to be a slash-and-burn exercise.

"It would be dishonest of me to say, when 80 percent of the budget is people, that these changes won't happen," Lyons said. "But the changes aren't going to be sweeping. They won't be as draconian as you might think. Each will be done on an individual basis. Each person will be given good counseling and good assistance."

Cutting back on staffing isn't the only way Lyons hopes to increase efficiency. She said when she conducted a similar study at her last university, she discovered that departments were duplicating the printing of materials and wasting money on a process that should have been centralized. While she's not making judgments yet, Lyons said she had a hunch that centralizing USD's buying power in this and other areas could save a lot of money. She encourages all departments to be open and creative in finding ways to reduce spending.

"Some of the funds realized should stay in the units that found them," Lyons said. "You were a part of helping the university update its priorities. The best way to achieve those priorities is to work together."

Brush with Fame
(Continued from page 1)

including having them and type a letter to then President John F. Kennedy on an imaginary typewriter. But the highlight of the show was when Collins had some of the participants, including McGraw, bravely begin a strip tease act she assured them she wouldn't let go too far.

McGraw, who was wearing a shirt and tie, started his routine by removing his cheap tie clip. He spied Hudson, sitting at a table in the front row, and decided to drop the clip in Hudson's drink.

"Why did I do that?" McGraw asks himself as he recounts the story years later. "I have no idea. The crowd was in hysterics, but Rock Hudson was livid. He was hollering and screaming for a new drink. The madder he got, the more the crowd laughed."

McGraw only got one or two shirt buttons undone before Collins stopped his routine. After the show, a waitress returned the tie clip to McGraw. But McGraw never got to speak to Hudson.

"I had never believed in hypnotism," says McGraw, who was shocked at Hudson's response, thinking his action instead would have drawn a chuckle from the actor. "I came away a believer. How could you not?"

The Alcalá View wants to hear about your brushes with fame. Send an e-mail to Krystn Shrieve at kshrieve@sandiego.edu or call her at ext. 4934 to share your story.

SEA Snippets

The following issues were discussed at the March meeting of the Staff Employees Association:

• The SEA has only a few tickets left for three upcoming Padres games: April 16 against the Arizona Diamondbacks; April 30 against the New York Mets; and May 14 against the Chicago Cubs. See your SEA representative to purchase tickets. To find your representative, log on to www.sandiego.edu/sea/reps.html.

• SEA vice president Julie Tahapary, SEA's representative to the human resources benefits advisory committee, reported that the committee's wellness group has started offering yoga classes for employees at 7 a.m. and 12:15 p.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays in the exercise room at the Sports Center. The one-hour yoga classes, taught by certified instructors, are $25 per month. Fees must be paid in advance in the human resources office, Maher Hall, Room 101. Mats are available, but participants must bring their own towels. The wellness group this month is expected to send out a survey asking employees which other wellness programs they may be interested in, including smoking cessation, stress management, nutrition education and weight management, weight training, exercise classes or health screenings. For information on the yoga class or future programs, call Tahapary at ext. 7788.

• SEA meetings are open to all employees, especially staff. The next SEA meeting is scheduled for 2 to 3 p.m., April 14, in the Hahn University Center, Room 103.
Campus to Gather at the Gathering Place

The Degheri Alumni Center, funded by a generous gift from Bert Degheri '61, opened in February near the east entrance to campus, and provides a gathering place for alumni meetings, receptions and events. The official dedication ceremony of the new building will be held this month. The events include:

Employee Celebration
Employees are welcome to enjoy ice cream while taking a self-guided tour from noon to 1:30 p.m., April 15.

Student Celebration
All undergraduate students are invited to attend a free barbecue lunch from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., April 30. The event will feature live music by Dirty Bomb, Gregg Young and the Second Street Band and the JD Martinez Band. Students are eligible for a $100,000 giveaway, compliments of Degheri. One hundred lucky students will win $1,000 each. Pre-register at the Hahn University Center ticket booth to avoid long lines on the day of the event. Students must be present to win.

Alumni and Faculty Celebration
USD alumni and faculty are invited to a Spanish themed housewarming from 5 to 7 p.m., April 30. Enjoy paella, tapas and the sounds of Novamenco's Spanish guitar as you tour the facility. Children are welcome.

For more information on these events, call the Office of Alumni Relations at ext. 4819.

It’s A Date!

Rock Around the Kroc
Put on your poodle skirts and saddle shoes and join employees as they Rock Around the Kroc at this year’s staff appreciation luncheon on April 21 at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice. There will be a ’50s-style costume contest and the best-dressed guy and gal will win a prize. Other door prizes also will be given away.

Hosted by USD Banquets & Catering, the luncheon will start at 12:15 p.m. behind the building at the Garden of the Sea Patio, as soda jerks serve up root beer floats while all the cool cats and kittens munch on ’50s-era snacks. The event will continue with the luncheon, featuring ’50s fare.
School of Law Celebrates Golden Anniversary

The School of Law has marked its 50th anniversary with a year-long celebration of the school's transformation from one of the country's smallest law schools into one of its most respected. Many of the commemorative events will take place this month.

U.S. Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens will speak at the 20th annual Nathaniel Nathanson Memorial Lecture Series at 5:30 p.m., April 7, in Shiley Theatre. The event is free, reservations are required. For information, call Theresa A. Hrenchir, director of special projects, at ext. 7438, or e-mail her at hrenchir@sandiego.edu.

The 50th anniversary gala dinner will be held from 6 p.m. to midnight, April 24, at the Manchester Grand Hyatt San Diego, 1 Market Place, San Diego. Tickets are $125 per person.

The gala is just one of many activities happening during the April 23-25 anniversary celebration. Other events that weekend include: a salute to USD women pioneers in the law; law alumni reunion class receptions; moot court and mock trial reunion breakfasts; a 40th anniversary of San Diego Law Review brunch; a campus tram tour; continuing legal education sessions; a 50th anniversary Mass; and a Sunday brunch.

For information on these events, call the Office of Law Development and Alumni Relations at ext. 4692 or log on to www.sandiego.edu/usdlaw and click on the 50th anniversary link.
Easter Baskets
The American Humanics Student Association will be donating Easter baskets to children staying at the New Alternatives Group Foster Care Homes and the Toussaint Teen Center. All baskets include personal items requested by the children, as well as school supplies, music and candy. Each basket is $15 and must be purchased by April 7. Send your name, address and telephone number, along with a check made payable to USD American Humanics, to Teresa VanHorn in Alcalá West 2, Room 208.

Twilight Retreat
University Ministry is hosting a faculty and staff twilight retreat, 5-7:30 p.m., April 15, in the faculty staff lounge in Founders Hall. The retreat, led by Father J.J. O'Leary and Sister Virginia Rodee, includes a tour of Founders Chapel, which this year is celebrating its 50th anniversary, and a light supper. Look for registration forms in your mailboxes or call University Ministry at ext. 4735 to sign up. Reservations are due by April 12.

Other regularly scheduled University Ministry events include: Mass for peace at 9 p.m., Wednesdays, in Founders Chapel; daily Mass at 12:10 p.m. in Founders Chapel; and the sacrament of reconciliation at 11:45 a.m., before the daily Mass, or by appointment with any of the priests on staff.

American Indian Celebration
A weekend festival celebrating American Indian traditions will be held from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., April 17 and 18, at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice. The event offers a unique opportunity to experience American Indian art and culture. It will include a fine arts marketplace, where American Indians will show and sell their work. Traditional entertainment such as singing, hoop dancing and storytelling will enrich the experience, along with an educational village featuring a timeline of American Indian history and demonstrations of local cultural activities. Special guests include Albert Smith, a World War II Navajo code talker, and representatives from local tribes. For information, call ext. 4698 or e-mail adeyoung@sandiego.edu.

A Campus United
Make a difference in the lives of those in need by contributing to USD's 2004-2005 United Way/CHAD Campaign, which this year runs from April 5 to 30. No matter what the amount, your donation counts. The more of us who give, the greater impact we can have on the San Diego community. A free lunch and an informational forum will be held from noon to 1 p.m., April 14, in the Hahn University Center, Room 107. For reservations, or for information about donating, call the Office of Public Relations either at ext. 4659 or ext. 4681.

Career Achievement Awards
The 10th annual Author E. Hughes Career Achievement awards dinner, honoring USD alumni from each of the university's five schools, will be held at 6 p.m., April 3, in the Jenny Craig Pavilion. Tickets for the black-tie dinner are $150 each. Proceeds will benefit USD student scholarships. For information call ext. 4819, or log on to http://alumni.sandiego.edu.