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## Malachi Rafferty: an Irishman at USD

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MALACHI RAFFERTY: AN IRISHMAN AT U.S.D.

A San Diegan with the mellifluous name of Malachi Rafferty likes to describe himself (tongue partly in cheek) as "exactly the kind of Irishman that Americans have in mind when they think of the Irish stereotype: poetic, romantic, and all that goes with it."

The leprechaunish twinkle in his eye leaves the listener wondering just how much of that self-description is...blarney.

But one thing about which Mal Rafferty is in full earnest is his community responsibility as Director of Continuing Education at the University of San Diego. In that capacity, since 1976, the 42-year-old native of County Galway in the West of Ireland has helped enrich San Diegans' lives with programs to upgrade their professional skills (for nurses, attorneys, doctors, businessmen), as well as programs of special appeal to the clergy and to the military.

Prominent among the programs offered by Rafferty's department is the University of the Third Age, now in its fourth year at USD. U3A, as it is referred to for short, is a non-traditional program designed to rekindle the spark of enthusiasm and well-being among senior citizens.

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Modeled after a program originated in 1972 at the University of Toulouse in France, U3A is based on a stimulation of the physical and intellectual capacities of the elderly, via on-campus courses at USD ranging anywhere from three to six weeks. A typical day in the University of the Third Age might include a morning exercise period, followed by a class dealing with some topic of current interest, and perhaps a jazz or chamber music concert in the afternoon on some days.

"My policy is to see that USD's resources continue to serve the broadest community possible. (USD President) Author Hughes has said that USD must and should play a role in the life of San Diego. I feel that the University of the Third Age responds to that kind of philosophy," states Rafferty.

Alumni of the program agree, describing U3A as a "supremely warm and positive experience." Many have been motivated to stay with exercise and academic programs on their own, subsequently.

Rafferty came to America from Ireland on a Rotary exchange scholarship to New York's Columbia University, then moved on to California, "seeking the sun." Having graduated from University College in Dublin, and worked as an accountant in Dublin and London, he received an MBA from UCLA, where he also served as Assistant Dean of Foreign Students. Rafferty came to USD from a post as Assistant to the President at Marymount Palos Verdes College in Los Angeles. For relaxation, he favors racquetball and travel, and confesses to an abiding fascination for "politics of all kinds, Irish and American."

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