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The road to Santa Margarita winds through boulders and chaparral, turning back the miles and centuries that define Southern California. Beyond the asphalt, it leads at last to an ancient island of back country known only to the wild creatures that live there and a few humans determined to keep it safe from civilization.

The Santa Margarita Ecological Reserve encompasses five miles of Southern California's last free-flowing river and a delicate ecosystem found nowhere else on the planet. The crown jewel among four science field stations managed by San Diego State University, Santa Margarita provides a living laboratory for researchers and an important information resource for a global public.

**Athreatened treasure**

It’s surprising that a land now indelibly inscribed by freeways, shopping malls and planned communities remains one of the richest veins of biological and ecological diversity in the world. Yet this is the paradox of Southern California — and the reality that motivates scientists, students and citizens to protect the Santa Margarita Reserve from subdivisions and strip malls.

With Fallbrook to the south and west and Temecula to the north and east, the reserve is surrounded by encroaching urbanization. Along with Camp Pendleton, the U.S. Marine Corps’ vast holding to the west, it may one day soon become the only undeveloped expanse of land left in coastal Southern California, an environmental museum documenting how the world was before so many millions of modern-day Californians arrived to claim a piece of paradise.

**An urgent task**

Luke’s job is to facilitate more than 50 research projects underway here: studies by faculty and students from SDSU and other institutions, by government researchers and private-agency scientists, and even by community volunteers, all eager to learn more about plants, animals, weather, pollution and habitat fragmentation. And to share what they learn with others.

“Our mission is to promote collecting, sharing and understanding of environmental information,” explained Sedra Shapiro, interim executive director of the SDSU Field Station Programs.

“The program provides a bridge linking the expertise of SDSU faculty and students with the needs of the region and the nation.”

Much of the research at Santa Margarita complements projects underway at SDSU’s three other field stations: Sky Oaks, 1,600 acres in the Chihuahua Valley east of Temecula; Fortuna Mountain, 500 acres of Mission Trails Regional Park, and the Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve, an auxiliary station adjacent to the U.S./Mexico border.

Studies at the four sites “range from changes in carbon dioxide levels and effects on global warming to movement patterns of carnivores to how loss of habitat is affecting biodiversity,” Shapiro said.

There is a palpable urgency to this work. Researchers are quick to cite a recent Harvard University study that predicts the fate of Southern California’s remaining undeveloped acres will be decided within the next 20 years. Policy-makers consequently must act quickly to preserve enough open habitat to support the region’s unique ecosystem and rich biodiversity.

To ensure that they also act wisely, scientists are racing to provide critical data.

**In the beginning**

There was plenty of open land left in Southern California when the Santa Margarita Ecological Reserve was established in 1962 with a 2,600-acre bequest from the estate of Murray Schloss.

Some 25 years later, with the Temecula-Murrieta region of southwest Riverside County exploding with development, The Nature Conservancy joined the California State University (CSU) in acquiring additional property to protect the Santa Margarita watershed.

Several more parcels have since been added to the reserve. SDSU administers the land, which is held jointly by the CSU, the Bureau of Land Management and the California Department of Fish and Game. The total area of all four SDSU field stations exceeds 9,000 acres.

**A global resource**

With population and urbanization now presenting challenges worldwide, SDSU’s field stations hope to play an increasing role as an information resource on a global level. A new exchange program allows college-students from North America and Europe to participate in ecological projects with international applications.

The goal: to train a new generation of international environmental professionals.

Increased access to field station research results via the Internet will also help elevate the stations’ role as an information resource. Currently in the works: a database management program designed to provide Web-based, real-time environmental data to K-12 students and teachers. A separate information network will post research results for scientists and decision-makers.

Information age technology may seem an unlikely pathway into a wild and primeval land. But in fact, knowledge is Santa Margarita’s unique gift to this and future generations. “The legacy of information is what is so important about having these dedicated areas,” Shapiro said, “because researchers build upon previous work.” No doubt, tomorrow’s Southern Californians will be glad for the work underway today at SDSU’s living laboratories.

**Past, Present and Future Meet at Santa Margarita**

By Sandra Millers Younger

The Santa Margarita Ecological Reserve encompasses five miles of Southern California’s last free-flowing river and a delicate ecosystem found nowhere else on the planet. The reserve is surrounded by encroaching urbanization. Along with Camp Pendleton, the U.S. Marine Corps’ vast holding to the west, it may one day soon become the only undeveloped expanse of land left in coastal Southern California, a wild and primeval land. But in fact, knowledge is Santa Margarita’s unique gift to this and future generations. “The legacy of information is what is so important about having these dedicated areas,” Shapiro said, “because researchers build upon previous work.” No doubt, tomorrow’s Southern Californians will be glad for the work underway today at SDSU’s living laboratories.
SDSU Library’s Special Collections
May Be the Best-Kept Secret on Campus

By Sandra Millers Younger

SDSU’s Special Collections comprises some 36,000 volumes, particularly the astronomical texts, are known and admired among scholars worldwide. Foremost authority Owen Gingerich, research professor of astronomy and history of science at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, first peeped the collection in an introduction to a catalogue of the books.

n 1513, Polish physician, mathematician and church official Nicolaus Copernicus came up with a shocking idea. What if the earth circled the sun and not vice versa? It was a wild theory, contradicting all existing scientific and religious knowledge, and sure to provoke ridicule, if not excommunication and eternal damnation.

Maybe that’s why Nicolaus waited 30 years to publish his Copernican Theory— the bedrock of modern astronomy— in a thick volume called De revolutionibus orbium coelestium (On the revolutions of the heavenly spheres). As it turned out, he waited almost too long. Some historians say Copernicus didn’t see the finished book until he died in May 1543.

Nicolaus Copernicus 1473-1543

Hidden treasures

You can see an identical first edition of De revolutionibus at San Diego State University’s library, where it holds a place of honor in a world-class collection of centuries-old astronomy texts—one of many “special collections.” SDSU librarians have tucked away carefully in climate-controlled perpetuity.

Located next door to the Info Dome on the fourth floor of Centennial Hall, SDSU’s Special Collections comprises some 36,000 books and 300,000 miscellaneous keepsakes, including art prints, etchings, postcards, photographs, autographs, manuscripts, sheet music, artifacts and correspondence. Thirteen volumes qualify as incunabula—books published before 1501. More than 200 are 16th century titles, and about 1,000 date back to the 17th century.

To the best-kept secret on campus,” said Leslie DiBona, the library’s director of development. “It’s a beautiful collection of original works by great thinkers and writers, whose words continue to inform the work of today’s scholars.”

Connie Vinita Dowell, dean of Library and Information Access, underscored that point. “They’re the foundation of our history,” she said. “They give us the ability to take students back in time in a much more interesting way than a textbook can.”

But Dowell believes antiquarian volumes have an important role to play in the future also: “As time goes by, these books will become more magical, because our students will be living in a totally electronic age,” she said. And as printed books themselves become pages of history, Dowell added, “part of the distinction of a fine university will be its special collections.”

For the love of books

The fundamental volumes by Copernicus and other pioneering astronomers, including Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) and Johannes Kepler (1571-1630), came to SDSU in 1967 when library director Louis A. Kenney acquired the Ernst Zinner astronomy collection and a number of additional treasures during his 20-year tenure at the University. “He was a true bibliophile,” said Lyn Olson, interim director of special collections. “He inspired others to donate.”

Currently, the Friends of the Library group is raising funds to purchase a superb addition to the collection: Tabulae Rudolphinae or The Rudolphine Tables, published in 1627 by Johannes Kepler.

Unglamorous as the title may sound, Tabulae represents a crucial step forward in humankind’s scientific scrutiny of the universe. It was Kepler, in these mathematical tables, who first described the motion of the planets in predictable terms.

World-class collections

They may be a campus secret, but SDSU’s antiquarian science volumes, particularly the astronomical texts, are known and admired among scholars worldwide. Foremost authority Owen Gingerich, research professor of astronomy and history of science at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, first peeped the collection in an introduction to a catalogue of the books.

And he’s still applauding

“When I wrote the introduction, I was much impressed by the number of outstanding astronomical classics included in the collection,” he said. “In revisiting the catalogue, I’m staggered by the depth of some almost unobtainable secondary works, including several of the important ones we don’t have at Harvard.”

Dowell hopes more SDSU faculty and students begin to take advantage of the opportunity to see these rare resources first-hand. “Our real hope is that they become part of our teaching and learning efforts,” she said. “It’s an opportunity to learn to use the imagination. They may actually change a student’s life.”

Herbs, orchids and Arnaz

Dowell’s perspective includes the library’s entire range of rare holdings, not just astronomy. Whatever your interest, you’re likely to find a fascinating treasure hidden among the chilly stacks of Special Collections. Learn just about everything there is to know about herbs and orchids. Discover that last unread, out-of-print title by your favorite science-fiction author. Retrace the history of San Diego, Mexico or Peru.

View vintage television footage donated by Desi Arnaz. Sing a few Hollywood show tunes from the original sheet music. Or flip through a dandy stash of 200,000 old postcards and see what the world looked like before the advent of strip malls and subdivisions.

More discoveries line the walls of the Special Collections reading rooms. The giant encyclopedia, ou Dictionnaire national des sciences, des arts et des métiers is a complete encyclopedia published in France in 1745. Each volume is filled with intricate illustrations and feisty humanistic rhetoric—all in all, a time capsule recalling the age of Enlightenment.

An open invitation

At the other end of the scale is a display of impossibly tiny miniature books. The entire Bible condensed into a stamp-sized volume? Yes, really. Another showcase holds the hand-crafted Janus Press series, each book a work of art as well as words. And in fitting tribute to Copernicus himself, the stunning Doliva/Hood orrery, a mechanical model of the solar system, demonstrates how each planet does, in fact, orbit the sun.

Here comes the best part. Anyone who’d like to see these rare treasures is welcome to visit Special Collections, don a pair of white gloves and touch a piece of history. Even...
Suzy Spafford's artistic talent business savvy and sunny outlook all helped create a company dedicated to making people happy.

By Liese Klein

**Duck, Duck, Goose**

Suzy Spafford's artistic

Suzy Spafford's artistic talent business savvy and sunny outlook all helped create a company dedicated to making people happy.

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**Duck, Duck, Goose**

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W

alk into any card store, and you’re likely to encounter Suzy Spafford’s animal characters prance across cards, stickers and stationery. Elsewhere, her baby ducks and bunnies adorn shirts and blankets, toys and diapers. And soon, kids will meet the residents of Spafford’s fictional world as part of a reading series by Scholastic, a major children’s book publisher.

Suzy Spafford’s animal friends have grown from a schoolgirl’s hobby into a 50-employee retail business generating $50 million in annual revenue—a tribute to her creativity in both art and commerce.

Merchandising may be the key to big profits, but the success of Suzy’s Zoo is based on the appeal of Spafford’s lovingly drawn animals, with their bright colors and winsome expressions.

"People find something in her artwork that’s special,” said Ray Lidstrom, president of Suzy's Zoo and Spafford’s husband. “There’s a lot of humor in her work; her products are unique; and they’re very warm and lovable. She’s hit a responsive chord with a lot of people.”

**MAKING PEOPLE HAPPY**

Spafford’s artistic endeavors started early, with scrawls on sheets of scrap paper spread across the living room floor—and lots of praise from her mother. Born in 1945 in Waverly, Ohio, Suzy moved to San Diego when she was two and her father landed a job at Solar Turbines.

Spafford believes her Midwestern room and the quiet, small-town atmosphere of San Diego’s Point Loma neighborhood during the 1960s helped shape her artistic sensibilities. “I liked to make people happy with my artwork,” she said.

She credits her early mastery of drawing to her parents’ inspiration and support. Recognizing her natural talent, they enrolled her and her older sister in painting classes at the Spanish Village arts center in Balboa Park, and later encouraged Suzy to take private watercolor lessons.

"Our parents gave us all the opportunities and figured something would really take off,” Spafford said. But while still in high school, Suzy discovered a knack for drawing animals. It began when she painted birds into her landscapes and found she couldn’t stop with a traditional rendering.

“I was invariably putting personality into these birds,” she said. “I put little eyes on them, and I’d cock the head just so. You do that a little bit, and there’s a relationship with that bird you just painted. I would go on from there.”

Spafford’s commercial art began by selling her paintings of surfers at the beach. Throughout her college career, she continued to sell her work at art fairs and paid close attention to what was selling—and what wasn’t.

"I was learning how to be competitive,” she said. "I was learning what it is to create art that people would actually buy.”

Her commercial work was mostly watercolor landscapes, but between art-fair customers: she dashed off pastel drawings of animal characters that bubbled up from her imagination. They were simply drawn ducks and frogs and other animals, sometimes playing golf or fishing.

"They would sell for $5 apiece,” Spafford said. "Kids—and moms—loved them.”

Gradually, animal drawings became a larger part of her business. “People commissioned me to do more and more and more,” she said. “I was beginning to anticipate what people wanted to be a part of everything and work to make sure that everyone has a good time. She’s a happy little kid running around.”

Spafford brought her sunny personality and canvases to San Diego State University in 1963, just as the social ferment of the decade was beginning to take root in the art department.

She summarizes the mood of the times in one sentence: "You better have something to say, girl.”

**REVERSE REBELLION**

She did, of course, but her artistic statements were invariably upbeat and pleasant, in contrast to the tortured and psychedelic efforts of many of her peers.

"I remember feeling always like I was bucking the tide,” Spafford said. "I was the rebel. Everybody else was a nice traditional rebel, but not me. It was reverse rebellion.”

Spafford stuck to her style, but still draws on the artistic discipline and techniques she learned at SDSU, where the art faculty inspired and motivated her.

Professor Robert Baxter gave the budding artist an intensive introduction to life drawing, using a model who changed poses every two minutes.

"I think I learned more from life drawing than anything else, and I still use it today,” Spafford said. "He made us memorize the entire body—start with the pelvic girdle, rib cage and collar structure. You draw from inside out. It really taught me how to draw freely and how to draw any animal from any pose.”

Professor John Rogers helped stimulate Spafford’s imagination.

"He would give us these incredible titles—'Hero Sandwich' and..."
Suzy Spafford’s parents both helping out. It was her mother who gave the company its name, Suzy’s Zoo. Opening at first from a 1,000-square-foot space, the young firm grew to employ 12 people after eight years. By 1978, when Suzy’s Zoo celebrated its 10th anniversary, it had broken into the million-dollar revenue bracket.

Spafford said, “Nationally, our products continued to gain more and more visibility.” Along the way, Spafford added more and more characters to the zoo, carefully placing each one in a fictional world she called Duckport, “a small river and seaport town with a big heart and a wildly varied citizenry,” as the company describes it. “There you will see how ducks, turtles, pigs, ostriches, mice, elephants, marmots, groundhogs, tigers, bears, giraffes and many others all live in a kind of harmony that could only happen in one spot in the world.”

Suzy’s Zoo now operates from a 55,000-square-foot space in San Diego’s Sorrento Valley, in an industrial park overlooking a canyon. On a recent weekday, military jets from the nearby Miramar Marine Corps Air Station screamed overhead, a reminder of turmoil in the outside world. Suzy’s Zoo, an oasis of cheery Duckport faces. One woman held up a box of cards. “How cute!” she said. “I know that I love things that the public loves. This is the kind of work in some form.

Spafford’s natural ebullience infuses her management style as well as her art. “She’s almost like a Pied Piper, because of her personality,” said Lidstrom, Spafford’s husband and company president. “That’s why a lot of people have stayed here for a lot of years. We just enjoy working with Suzy. It’s a pleasure working with someone who’s so upbeat and has such a positive attitude.”

Spafford’s childhood interest in the world also helps her make smart business decisions. “She has a real good sense for marketing what people want,” he said. “She’s interested in everything that’s going on. She’s just tuned in.”

Suzy’s Zoo is now welcoming a third and fourth generation of the family to the business. Spafford’s daughter Kerstin Lot, who graduated from SDSU in 1997, works in the art department, often bringing her 21-month-old daughter, Lauren, into the office to paint and play among the paper scraps.

COMMUNITY COMMITMENT

Spafford’s commitment to “make people happy” extends into the San Diego community, where she serves on the boards of the Sharp Memorial Hospital Foundation, the Rees-Stealy Research Foundation, the San Diego Rotary Club and the San Diego Hall of Champions.

“Suzy is not just very smart; she is also very organized,” said Maureen Westfall, Spafford’s executive assistant, who joined the company in 1985. “I don’t think you can combine all that stuff without being organized.”

Spafford maintains close ties to her alma mater, serving as an enthusiastic spokesperson for the university as part of SDSU BRIDGE, a group of influential San Diego women dedicated to promoting the university. And Suzy’s Zoo cards and gifts are displayed prominently in a kiosk at the SDSU Bookstore.

“SDSU has not let me slip away,” she said. “I’ve built some really nice friendships with people on campus now.” Although life in Duckport remains tranquil, the business world has been a little more challenging in recent years. “Big box” retailers have encroached on the market once dominated by card stores, and independent shops are disappearing as their owners struggle to stay in business.

“Everybody has changed, the retailers have changed,” Spafford said. “It’s not the same world as it was. I feel like I was very lucky to get into it when I did. If I had to do it again today I think I would find it to be much more of a challenge.”

But Suzy’s Zoo is adapting and holding on to its market share. A new character, the baby duck Wizzi, has taken a starring role in cards and books aimed at mothers and preschoolers. There’s also baby products, Suzy’s Zoo, is doing well.

“We are a small niche, but our baby brands have been selling pretty successfully in the mass market,” Spafford said. Although big stores can mean big sales, she hopes the smaller stores that are the company’s mainstay will survive as long as consumers value unique gifts.

Spafford also has faith in the future of the traditional greeting card, even in the face of competition from e-mail and electronic greeting cards.

“There’s a poetry with a well-made greeting card that you simply can’t put in an e-mail greeting,” she said. “It’s kind of a little art form.”

Suzy Spafford’s earliest artwork celebrated San Diego’s surfers.
Costco’s Jim Sinegal
NO FRILLS, REAL VALUES

By Sandra Millers Younger

First published Fall 2000

Manager Rick Carson and his team at Costco La Mesa can’t wait. For days now, they’ve been busy preparing for this very moment, mapping out-upholstered concrete floors, re-stacking sky-high pallets of bulk-box merchandise, polishing long dark cases filled with salmon, cheese and produce. Finally, the word comes via walkie-talkie from the front entrance. “He’s here!”

He is Jim Sinegal, co-founder, president and chief executive officer of Costco Wholesale Corporation, the membership discount chain that’s made warehouse shopping chic for customers and profitable for investors, posting a whopping $31 billion in revenues for fiscal year 2000, which ended Sept. 3.

Recipient of an honorary doctorate at SDSU’s 1999 commencement ceremonies, Jim Sinegal was back at the university he calls his second home. “Yet, his success is a result of more than shrewd business decisions. It is based on solid values and ethics,” says John Mariano, SDSU’s College of Business Administration associate dean.

In business, Sinegal says, those ethics boil down to a few basic principles. “It’s really kind of simple,” he explains. “You have to do four things. You have to obey the law. You have to take care of your customers. You have to respect your suppliers. If you do that, you’ll do what you ultimately have to do as a business: you have to reward your shareholders.”

Launching a career

Sinegal traces his ideas about management and ethics back to the mid-1950s when he began studying business at SDSU and working part-time at Fed-Mart. Born in Pittsburgh, his mentor and his alma mater. Now living in the Seattle area, he tries to call or visit Price whenever he’s in San Diego. “We have a lot of people from SDSU working for us,” Sinegal says. “My wife, Janet, and son, David, share our SDSU alumni bonds, as do a number of close friends and Costco employees. “We have a lot of people from SDSU working for us,” Sinegal says. “My wife, Janet, and son, David, share our SDSU alumni bonds, as do a number of close friends and Costco employees. Costo nametags, he remembers most of them from previous visits. Commanding in a crisp striped dress shirt, no tie, no jacket, Sinegal wears a nametag, too. It reads, simply, “Jim.”

Bottom line, SDSU alumnus Jim Sinegal is a lot like the business he runs. No frills, no nonsense. Shrewd yet unassuming. Breezing with wit. And tremendously successful. The ultimate hometown-boy-made-good, he’s risen from working class roots to Wall Street prominence, earning major ink in *Forbes* and *Fortune*, and a slot in *Business Week’s* 1997 list of “25 Top Managers.”

Sinegal admirers say he’s a merchandising visionary. He’s become also a champion of education, sitting on a number of prestigious academic boards, while continuing his 23-year tenure as the Price Club’s CEO, a controversial move Sinegal characterizes as a family reunion. “We got back together, so everything came full circle,” he says.

Sinegal, Brotman and crew have continued to refine the Price Club recipe, driving hard bargains for quality inventory, developing a first-quality “Kirkland Signature” product line, rethrowing costly advertising and sales-force efforts, and limiting the selection of products in each store to around 4,000 easy-to-rent mushrooms, “fast values,” quite a contrast to the typical Wal-Mart Supercenter’s 125,000 units. Paid memberships and stringent security also help keep Costco’s prices low by minimizing theft and bad-check losses. All is all, a very smart business blueprint.

Doing the right thing

People admire Jim Sinegal’s personal values as much as his business acumen. “Jim is recognized by his employees, his peers, his competitors, manufacturers and by Wall Street as one of the great merchants and managers of our time,” comments Richard Libenson, Price Club co-founder and Costco board member. “They all know who Jim Sinegal is and what he stands for, and they respect him for it.”

As an expression of that respect, SDSU’s College of Business Administration last year recognized Sinegal with the rarely bestowed Doctor of Humane Letters honorary degree. “Jim may well be our most successful business alumnus,” says Michael Largent, dean of the college. “Get his success is a result of more than shrewd business decisions. It is based on solid values and ethics.”

In business, Sinegal says, those ethics boil down to a few basic principles. “It’s really kind of simple,” he explains. “You have to do four things. You have to obey the law. You have to take care of your customers. You have to respect your suppliers. If you do that, you’ll do what you ultimately have to do as a business: you have to reward your shareholders.”

Launching a career

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Sinegal who stepped up to present her diploma. "It was great," he says. "It was perfect." Newell now holds a management position with Costco in Yonkers, New York.

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING

Sinegal obviously believes in the value of education. "It's the great equalizer in our country," he says. "A person with a good education can overcome any barrier." No doubt, that conviction inspires his service to SDSU and several other educational organizations. He's chair of the board of trustees at Seattle University, a member of the Washington Governor's Commission on Early Learning, and a director of Communities in Schools, a national organization devoted to reducing school dropout rates.

Ever mindful of Price's tutelage, Sinegal sees himself as an educator, too. As top manager of 75,000 Costco employees worldwide, he makes a point of sharing what he's learned about business with a new generation of merchandisers. "If you understand your position as manager, you know that teaching is the most important thing you do," he says.
Since cows grazed in Mission Valley. That’s how long Marion Ross has loved San Diego State University.

She was a drama student then, popular and precocious. In her freshman year, classmates voted her “most outstanding actress.” By the time she graduated in 1950, she’d already worked ‘em at the Old Globe and pocketed a Hollywood contract. Clark Gable, Lauren Bacall, Cary Grant, Ginger Rogers. Marion worked with all of them.

Television came next, and a family, then a stretch of tough times, and — just when she needed it most — a funky little ’50s retrospective called “Happy Days.” Suddenly everyone knew Marion — dutiful wife of Howard, doting mother of Richie and Joanie, dubious landlady of Arthur Fonzie, aka, the Fonz.

Despite a dazzling portfolio of more recent work, most of the world still sees Marion Ross as Marion Cunningham, the bubbling matriarch of “Happy Days.” It’s a mantle she wears graciously, even when ardent fans sometimes confuse fantasy with reality. “You see,” she tells them, smiling. “I’m a real person.”

It was the real Marion back on campus last October for her 50-year reunion, sparkling like a diamond, chatting with classmates about the movie she’d just wrapped, and reminiscing about cows in Mission Valley.

“People don’t seem to get old anymore,” she says. “Isn’t that wonderful?”

Wonderful. In Marion’s case, it’s not a cliché. It’s the wide-eyed way she sees the world. It’s how she makes people feel. It’s the one word that describes her genuine nature, a certain vibrancy she projects, and her lifelong generosity toward her alma mater.

In 1983 she established the Marion Ross Scholarships for SDSU theatre students.

She’s also appeared in campus productions, led student workshops, and, with her husband, veteran Broadway actor Paul Michael, staged benefit performances for SDSU’s College of Professional Studies and Fine Arts (PSFA). After her reunion in October, Marion starred as honorary chair of Homecoming 2000.

And most recently, she’s joined the board of The Campanile Foundation, SDSU’s philanthropic body.

It’s not as if Marion Ross needs to fill her calendar. At 72, she’s still plenty busy working, thank you. She stars with Olympia Dukakis in an upcoming Disney television movie, “Ladies and the Champ,” the tale of two spunky seniors who transform a mugger into a prize fighter. (Look for her husband, Paul, too, as the state boxing commissioner.) Then there’s her recurring role as Drew Carey’s TV mother, not to mention plays and working cruises with Paul. And, oh yes, her ongoing responsibilities as spokes-woman for the town of Marion, Illinois. (“I went there, and there’s the water tower with my name on it — Marion — and I said, oh, you shouldn’t have gone to all that trouble.”)

So why does Marion Ross keep doing so many wonderful things for San Diego State University? “It’s because they’ve invited me,” she says. “They’ve been so generous with me that it makes it very easy for me to want to come here.”

It’s typical Marion to turn it all around like that, to make it sound as if she’s the lucky recipient, not the generous benefactor. But no one invited Marion and Paul to host a picnic last year for all the Ross Scholars. That was their idea. “Paul cooked all this food,” Marion recalls. “And we said, Archival photographs courtesy of SDSU Archives.
you can't bring your mates and your dates because I want to talk to each one of you and see what you're doing."

That's what hits people about Marion Ross. Dozens of stage and film roles to her credit, more than 400 television appearances (including 11 years of "Happy Days" and 35 episodes of her favorite show, "Brooklyn Bridge"), five Emmy nominations, once razor close to a Golden Globe — and she wants to know all about you.

"The first thing most people think about is her success," says PSFA Dean Joyce Gattas. "That's their first impression. But within minutes of meeting Marion, all that goes away. People are immediately struck by her warmth, her generosity and her inquisitive interest in others."

"I think she's most impressive when she's in touch with students; she treats them as if they were the center of the universe," Joyce Gattas continues. "They're usually in awe of her, but that immediately breaks down, and they realize this is someone caring about them."

Ross Scholar Amanda Davis, a graduate student in theatre, feels that connection even though she's yet to meet Marion in person. After quitting her job and moving back in with her parents in order to study acting, Davis says the Ross scholarship is welcome validation of her bold decision. "What I really love is theatre," she says, "so it's really great that the person who's financing my education values that so much, too."

If Marion enjoys her leading role as mentor to SDSU's theatre students, maybe it's because she remembers so clearly her own passion to succeed and the folks at San Diego State who helped her. Faculty like Sue Earnest, still an encouragement today in her nineties. "I want to be her when I grow up," Marion says.

And then there was Rosa Choplin, a Spanish teacher who saw Marion perform and worried her talent might go to waste after the young actress eloped. "I didn't even know her, and she took me to 20th Century Fox because she knew Tyrone Power's manager," Marion remembers. "She wasn't very show-business savvy, so she kept calling up 20th Century Fox saying, 'Well, what are you going to do about that girl?'"

"I often wonder," Marion says wistfully, "if it hadn't been for Rosa Choplin here at San Diego State, who opened that first door for me..."

"It's a sweet story, but anyone who's known Marion Ross for 10 minutes knows she would've made it with or without Rosa," Davis says.

Rosa. After all, she'd dreamed of being an actress since childhood. And she'd always believed she could do it, because her mother told her so. "She always talked to me like, you can be anything, and not only you can, but you must. You must get ahead; you must take advantage of everything," Marion recalls. "And I picked up the mantle that I would be that... I would be that."

She started as a high school student by soaking in the ambiance at the Old Globe Theatre. "I would go and just hang around," she says. "And I would take my mother, and all these actors would kiss each other and call each other darling, and I thought, oh, these people are just wonderful! And I'd say to my mother, 'Aren't they wonderful!' And she'd say, 'Well, see.'"

In college, Marion squeezed classes in around rehearsals and performances. If there was a production anywhere nearby, on campus or off, chances were, Marion was in it. Then, as now, she considers SDSU's theatre department a huge influence on budding new careers.

"Of course now it's large, and it's even better because you have more facilities," she says. "You have all the things now that we dreamed of having — a big theatre with a big light board, a big television department. But on the other hand, when I went, because it was small you could be the one who got to act in all those plays."

Marion and Paul both are bullish on the prospects of today's SDSU theatre students. So much knowledge and perspective, they say. So many opportunities. "Paul and I went to the music class, and they were just getting ready to go to New York, being taken by the university to do a showcase," Marion says, pouting her lips for emphasis. "Unheard of! When I started, oh my goodness, there was no connection to anything like that... What a tremendous advantage that is."

Enough to make an actress want to start all over again? Not likely. These are happy days indeed for Marion Ross. As Mrs. C, she's known and loved wherever she goes, and, no, she doesn't mind a bit. "They're very nice to me," she says. "Why would I not like that?"

As a mother, she's enormously proud of her children, actor Jim Meskimen and "Friends" writer/producer Ellen Plummer. As a wife, she's perfectly paired with Paul Michael, a star in his own right who clearly loves to see Marion shine. "It's wonderful," he says of their life together. "It's just wonderful."

And as a performer, Marion Ross is still as passionate as ever about her craft. "I'd like through my eighties," she says. "I'm going to do everything. What a lovely thing that would be."
No one has accomplished more across a wider spectrum of sailing than SDSU alumnus Dennis Conner. Eight America’s Cup campaigns, an unmatched four wins. Multiple world championships in multiple racing classes. An Olympic medal. Three times U.S. Yachtsman of the Year. Twice around the world. CEO of Dennis Conner Sports and Team Dennis Conner. Author of nine books on sailing and winning.

Now 60 and completing his 40th year of international competition, San Diego’s best-known sailor shows no indication of pending retirement. After winning the 2002 North American Etchells Championship in September, a repeat performance from 2001, Conner ordered a new Etchells boat for next year. Currently, his Stars and Stripes racing syndicate is battling for the right to challenge New Zealand in the 2003 America’s Cup series in February.

Winning the Louis Vuitton Cup challenger series, which began in Auckland Oct. 1, would give Conner the chance to clinch an unprecedented fifth America’s Cup win and heal a 20-year-old injury. While sailing for the New York Yacht Club in 1983, Dennis Conner became the first U.S. skipper in 131 years to lose the big silver trophy when Australia’s controversial winged keel gave the Aussies a speed advantage. Conner retrieved the Cup at the next opportunity in 1987, but for San Diego, not New York. After 20 years, Conner is once again sailing for New York, and intent on returning the Cup to the Manhattan shrine he considers its rightful home.

Some people object to Dennis Conner’s no-nonsense personal style. Others chalk it up to his single-minded focus on sailing — and winning — at the very highest level of his sport. It’s an attitude Conner calls “the commitment to the commitment.” Here’s how he explained it to SDSU Magazine.
Q: Tell me what it is that you love the most about sailing.
A: I like the competition. Above all, I'm a competitor, and I like to compete, and sailing is a chance for me to compete at the very top level against the most intelligent and wealthy and innovative people in the world. I can't do that in automobile racing, and I can't do that on the golf course. I can't do that in snow skiing. I can't own a baseball or football or basketball team; I don't have the wherewithal. The one area I can compete in at the very top level is sailing. I enjoy that. People tend to gravitate toward what they enjoy. For me I enjoy competing, and my vehicle is sailing.

Q: So you would've been a competitor no matter what you gravitated toward?
A: Well, I think we're all a product of our environment. Because I was fortunate enough to be born here a block from the yacht club, and my father was a commercial fisherman, my environment was the sea. If my dad was the gardener at Augusta, my guess is I probably would've learned how to putt and drive, and I'd probably be a golfer. Or if he was a mechanic at Indianapolis, maybe I'd be driving a car. Or if I grew up in the Bronx, maybe I'd know how to play basketball. That was my opportunity to be exposed in those formable years when everything about us really gets put together. I was fortunate enough to be able to hang around the San Diego Yacht Club. It influenced, obviously, my career path.

Q: Speaking of that career path, you're one of the most accomplished sailors in the world. When people look back on your career 50, 100 years from now, what do you want them to say about you?
A: I'm sure I'll be recognized as an eclectic in the sport. I've won an Olympic medal and a couple dozen world championships, four America's Cups, and raced around the world twice, so I've had a chance to be successful at all levels of the sport. I think the most any one has won is two America's Cups. I've won four, and the record goes on and on, so I'll be recognized for my accomplishments. I've had a chance to win in a lot of different venues, whether it was the Olympics or the America's Cup, or one-design Star boat racing where I won five firsts in Keel, Germany, against 89 boats. That'll never be accomplished again. From a sailing standpoint, I've accomplished a number of milestones that will be difficult, if not impossible, to ever match.

Q: What would you like them to think about even now?
A: I'm gonna worry about it. Fifty or a hundred years from now it won't matter.
When Dennis Conner first stepped aboard a racing yacht as a kid, he joined an already illustrious tradition of San Diego sailors. Among his mentors in the sport were local legends Ash Bown, Lowell North and Malin Burnham.

Burnham, who took the world championship in Star class sailing as a teenager in 1944 and 1945, continued to race competitively, while simultaneously building his family’s real estate business. When Dennis Conner lost the America’s Cup in 1983 to Australia and its controversial wing-keel yacht, Australia II, it was his friend Malin Burnham who organized the Sail America racing syndicate that in 1987 sent him to Australia to retrieve the Cup and bring it home to San Diego.

Now chairman of The Burnham Companies and a director of The Campanile Foundation at SDSU, he holds a unique perspective on San Diego sailing history and Dennis Conner in particular.

“Dennis decided sailing was going to be his sport,” Burnham remembered. “He wanted to learn, learn, learn and do, do, do. He just applied himself more than anyone I’ve ever known in the sport of sailing. He’s very close to a natural sailor, but if you don’t work, you’re not going to get to the top.”

Even from the start, Dennis Conner was more than willing to work. Already a member at the San Diego Yacht Club by age 11, he sailed with Ash Bown and his buddies on the weekends and came away filled with questions. “Every Monday afternoon, when Ash got home from work, Dennis was sitting on his doorstep,” Burnham said. “He would come to discuss why this and why that, to pump him for information. That Monday evening front-porch episode became a regular session for two or three years.”

Conner’s early dedication came to characterize his approach to competition, which Burnham called “as close to 100 percent dedication to winning as I’ve ever seen in any sport.” Part of that dedication, he added, is Conner’s realization that winning repeatedly requires progressively more effort each time. “Whatever it took in 1987, it’s going to take more this year,” Burnham said. “He has always had that as a philosophy.”

Despite Conner’s intense commitment to winning, his leadership style is low-key. “Dennis can be a challenging personality on land, but on board the boat, he is calm, focused and very supportive of his crew,” Burnham said. “When things go wrong, he doesn’t get upset, at least not outwardly. He’s highly regarded and respected by his crew, always has been.”

Burnham also praised Conner’s “second-to-none” résumé of racing victories, his long tenure in America’s Cup sailing and his one-on-one attention to the commercial sponsors backing the Stars and Stripes team.

But primarily, Burnham said, Dennis Conner will be remembered for what he himself has dubbed “the commitment to the commitment.” “Many of his top competitors in sailing have criticized him for his extreme level of dedication, and, indeed, admitting that’s why he has been able to maintain his level of performance. But what he has done is to go out and raise $40 million every two years to sail in the America’s Cup, and that’s the key to the success of his team.”

Q: Is this something that you thought was natural?
A: It was more a matter of necessity, because without the money I couldn’t compete. The best sailor in the world is not going to be sailing if he doesn’t have a boat.

Q: I know that you were a business major at San Diego State. Did that prepare you in any way for what you’re doing now?
A: Well, one of the biggest things is that after a hiatus of 70 years, some of the richest and most powerful individuals are back in the sport. In the ’30s there [were] Sir Thomas Lipton and Vanderbilt and Morgan and so on. And then when WWII came they had obviously other priorities. Rich guys, the really wealthy elite, have not really returned to the America’s Cup until this time. Of the 10 Challengers in this race, there are eight legitimate billionaires. Larry Ellison and Craig McCaw and Paul Allen and Prada. I think that’s the biggest change, is that the America’s Cup has piqued the interest of the really successful, wealthy people around the world.

Q: What is the biggest change since 1987, when you brought the America’s Cup to San Diego, that we can expect to see in this upcoming race in 2003?
A: Well, one of the biggest things is that after a hiatus of 70 years, some of the richest and most powerful individuals are back in the sport. In the ’30s there [were] Sir Thomas Lipton and Vanderbilt and Morgan and so on. And then when WWII came they had obviously other priorities. Rich guys, the really wealthy elite, have not really returned to the America’s Cup until this time. Of the 10 Challengers in this race, there are eight legitimate billionaires. Larry Ellison and Craig McCaw and Paul Allen and Prada. I think that’s the biggest change, is that the America’s Cup has piqued the interest of the really successful, wealthy people around the world.

Q: And what about the technology involved? It was always a showcase for technology, even at the beginning in 1851.
A: Well that continues to be, but they’ve limited the technology somewhat. … We can’t use the highest [grade of] carbon fiber because they’ve made rules against it; I think from practicality. We can’t use diamond fiber, we can’t use the highest grade of stainless steel or cobalt rigging. So there’s some cost mitigation that’s gone on. … The technology is still there, and we still
spend a tremendous amount trying to design the boats faster, but it doesn’t have the free run that it might have had in the ’80s from a financial standpoint. And there was a lot of new materials being introduced then – Kevlar and carbon and so on. We don’t see that really going on right now in the fiber business. That changed a lot of things. There are still advances in the computer software that helps us design the boats and sail the race, but it’s not breakthrough type, just subtle changes as opposed to leaps and bounds, like winged keels. That’s not going on. Fine tuning is the new rule, as opposed to going to a completely different area of the box as the rule.

Q: You’re sailing for New York again, and of course that would be a sweet moment for you to be able to bring the Cup back to New York after ’83 and the loss to Australia. How do you feel about that?

A: Well, New York had it for 131 years, and they really appreciated it – especially when they lost it. It was like losing the Panama Canal. And having four or five generations, 10 generations of hosting the Cup, they knew what it was all about. They had a special room in the yacht club, and the people really enjoyed the event. And so if there is one home of the America’s Cup, it’s the New York Yacht Club. That’s really where it belongs. It was fun bringing it here to San Diego, but people here didn’t even really appreciate what they had, and the newscasters bashed it. … So it’s fun to be racing for a group that really does want to win and if successful will really appreciate it.

Q: Are you going to be on the boat during this America’s Cup?

A: Well, my main responsibility is to raise the money and to see that we’re on solid financial ground. And after I raise the money, then I have to fulfill the promises to the people who gave it to me – the sponsors and the private individuals. So that’s my main focus, which really precludes me from being out there practicing on a day-to-day basis. If you’re not out there practicing on a day-to-day basis, you’re not going to be able to maximize your skills. Imagine Babe Ruth. If he only went up to bat once a year, he’s not going to be at his best. Or any other analogy. If you’re not going to focus on maximizing your ability, you’re not going to be able to do your best. And the people that are out there are quite talented and very focused, and they do it every day. So realistically it would be hard for me to expect to be able to compete with them when I have my other team responsibilities.

Q: So you’ve had to delegate.

A: Yeah, I’m the CEO. I have a fine team, but I’m not down there filling the sail.

Q: But you’re the consummate sailor, so that must be really hard for you to see the boat leave the dock when you’re not on it.

A: It’s not a perfect world.

Q: You’d like to be on it.

A: I’d like to be on it. But show me, where does the $40 million come from? Show me the money.

Q: If you could summarize three lessons that you’ve learned from your sailing experience and competition, what would they be?

A: Well, success is not for everyone. To be the best businessman in the world, you might sacrifice some other things. It’s hard to be the best father and community leader and deacon of the church while you’re the best businessman. How can you do that? Most people have found that compromise is best for them. But that’s not how to maximize your potential. If you want to maximize your potential in one area – I’m not saying that’s right – but if you do, it takes commitment. The words that come to mind are commitment, commitment and commitment. Or focus, focus, focus. Dedication, dedication, dedication.

Learn to Sail

If watching competition sailboats screaming across the waves has inspired you to try sailing, SDSU’s Mission Bay Aquatic Center is the perfect place to start. Designed to meet the needs of both beginning and advanced sailors, the center’s program requires only a small investment of time and money and is conveniently located right on San Diego’s Mission Bay.

If your boating experience is limited to ferries, kiddie pools or bathtubs, start with the basic sailing class – four 3-hour sessions covering safety, sailing theory, boat handling, basic knots and docking, with hands-on instruction in mini Sabot sailboats.

Costs of this basic class are $59 for students; $99 for alumni, faculty, staff and others affiliated with SDSU; and $135 for the general public through SDSU’s College of Extended Studies. A $9 insurance charge is additional.

After mastering the basics, aspiring racers can enroll in advanced sailing, small boat racing or dinghy racing. The center also offers specialized classes in handling the Hobie catamaran and the Laser – a high-performance, Olympic-class, single-person sailboat. Complete your sailor training with classes in handling the 24-foot ketch, a responsive craft favored by experienced sailors worldwide.

All sailing students spend time both in the classroom and on the water, and class packages can be purchased at a discount. The Mission Bay Aquatic Center is located at 1001 Santa Clara Point, in San Diego’s Mission Beach district. Call 858-488-1036 or visit the Web site at www.mbac.nu.

— LK

PHOTO: MICHELE A. H. SMITH

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Why College Costs So Much
and why it’s still worth it

By Sandra Millers Younger

It’s not just your imagination. College does cost more than ever, and the price tag just keeps going up. The College Board, those folks who administer the SATs, recently reported tuition and fees at public four-year colleges rose an average of 4.4 percent last year.

At an average of $3,520 per year for in-state tuition and fees at public four-year schools, plus $4,960 on average for campus room and board, it’s no wonder college-bound students and their families complain about sticker shock. (By comparison, San Diego State University’s in-state tuition and fees are $1,776 this academic year, on-campus food and housing total an estimated $7,586.)

College won’t always be so expensive. What’s happened? The answer is complex, but in fact, there are a number of good reasons why higher education costs so much, and even more reasons why it’s still worth it. Bottom line: adding a college degree to your resume remains one of the smartest financial investments anyone can make.

A 1998 report by the National Commission on the Cost of Higher Education, a private panel appointed by Congress, identified six factors contributing to rising tuition and fees: financial aid, demographics, technology, expanding regulations and consumer expectations, and the good news is, the lifelong benefits of higher education continue to outweigh these growing costs.

Expanding student services

Demographics account for another piece of the college-cost puzzle. With more older and part-time students on campus these days, many colleges have expanded student services to include child care, career counseling and the rapid adoption of institutional expenses is an increasing demand for remedial courses. These services all require additional staff and/or facility. Typically, more than half of a college budget is set aside for employee salaries and benefits, making it harder to cut costs and absorb wage increases, even at the minimum level.

Just as rent or mortgage payments take a big bite out of most household incomes, facilities pack a wallop in college and university budgets. From theaters to sports domes, smart classrooms to state-of-the-art science labs, comfy Web-wired dorms to flashy fitness centers, campus construction is an expensive underwrite. Maintaining existing structures adds to the budget. The Commission estimated U.S. colleges and universities faced a combined deferred maintenance bill in 1998 of $26 billion.

Ironically, financial aid, which totaled a record $68 billion last year, can itself swell the price of a college education, particularly at private institutions. With tuition and fees averaging more than $16,000 per year, most private colleges and universities routinely funnel a large portion of tuition revenue back to their needier students in the form of financial aid. This share-the-wealth tactic is designed to maximize college access for all. The result: Most private-college students actually pay about one-third less than the “sticker price” posted by their institutions.

At public universities, such as SDSU, where tuition costs run much lower than at private institutions, financial aid is less likely to increase sticker price. Rather, it’s often the deciding factor that makes college affordable to a broad student population.

In California, a recently signed law has added $43 million to financial-aid funds available to California State University (CSU) students through the state-funded Cal-Grant program. CSU officials estimate the new Cal-Grant provisions, which assure eligible students of full financial support at state institutions, will open college doors for an additional 27,000 CSU students, beginning with the 2001/2002 academic year.

Great expectations

Although the meanderings of scholars may protest, colleges are no longer ivory towers, set apart from the madding crowds to nurture solemn study. They are instead dynamic participants in an evolving marketplace of ideas, services and products. Education itself has become a commodity, eagerly sought by throngs of eager shoppers who expect much more from colleges and universities than they used to.

Driven by both their own commitment to educational excellence and changing consumer expectations, U.S. colleges are racing to meet new standards of excellence, and the effort is an expensive one.

With so many escalating expenses, perhaps the most logical question isn’t “why does college cost so much?” but “how do colleges and universities manage to keep ends meet?”

Public institutions like San Diego State University, of course, benefit from government support, but they can’t expect these tax-generated allocations to keep pace with the one-two punch of inflation and rapidly escalating expenses.

At present, for example, SDSU receives about 35 percent of its operating funds from the state of California. Another 17 percent comes from tuition (among the nation’s most affordable, by the way, for a major research and teaching university). But the rest must come from private support.

Consequently, SDSU President Stephen L. Weber set a university-wide goal of increasing private giving by 12 percent annually over a period of five years. To spearhead this endeavor, in 1999 SDSU established The Campanile Foundation, an affiliate body devoted to nurturing philanthropy and managing gifts to the University.

Investment opportunity

Costs of higher education may continue to rise, but there’s still no dearth of eager customers. And for good reason. America’s system of higher education is universally acclaimed as the world’s best, “a public and a private good,” in the Commission’s words, “an investment in the nation’s future.” Increasingly, society sees a college degree as essential to lifetime success.

Almost two-thirds of today’s high school graduates go on to college, reports the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges. Twenty-five years ago, only half did. And today the estimated lifetime earnings of a college graduate exceed those of a high school graduate by a whopping 85 percent, as contrasted to 45 percent 20 years ago. All in all, higher education, despite the costs, shapes up as one of the best possible investments.

College Board President Gaston Caperton sums it up nicely. “In both earning potential and learning potential,” he says, “you cannot beat the value of a college education.”

“If you think education is expensive, try ignorance.”
— Derek Bok, former president, Harvard University
Philanthropy

A Place to Call Our Own: The SDSU Alumni Center

Friendships formed during our years at San Diego State University often remain among the most lasting memories of our life experience. Then, despite good intentions, we graduate, go our separate ways and lose contact with the individuals—and the university—that made such an important difference in our lives.

“Of the thousands of SDSU alumni living in the San Diego region, less than 5 percent remain involved with their alma mater,” said Jerry C. Dressel, ’76, president of the SDSU Alumni Association. “We need to do a better job of reconnecting with and engaging our alumni in meaningful ways. Key to this outreach is bringing them back on campus to see familiar places, tour new facilities and learn about all that is taking place here.”

The SDSU Alumni Center will become a cornerstone of the university’s efforts to serve its alumni and the greater San Diego community. In addition to providing much-needed on-campus banquet and meeting space, the new facility will house all of University Advancement, including the Alumni Association, in one convenient location with ample adjacent parking. Located on 55th Street, between Parking Structure V and the SDSU Athletic Center, the building will also offer a ballroom for large functions and a library/lounge featuring a rotating exhibit of Aztec and university memorabilia, curated by the staff of Love Library.

“I’m proud to be an SDSU alumnus, because of the university’s rich past, tremendous academic achievements and outstanding legacy of community service,” Dressel said. “The SDSU Alumni Center will help us showcase our university while providing a venue for alumni to meet. And when SDSU alumni get together, great things happen.”

Because alumni are vital to San Diego State’s long-term success, SDSU President Stephen L. Weber has made the Alumni Center his highest fund-raising priority. The majority of the $10 million needed to build the facility must come from private donations. To date, more than 55 percent of this amount has been committed, thanks to the leadership of campaign tri-chairs Nikki Clay, L. Robert Payne and Tom Carter.

To learn more about the SDSU Alumni Center and how you can contribute to the building fund, please visit www.sdsualumni.org or call Andy Hanshaw at 619.594.6119.

SDSU recognizes these lead contributors to the SDSU Alumni Center Campaign for their support and vision (partial list): Leon and Barbara Parma, Dr. Dwight E. Stanford, The Lipinsky Family Foundation, Arthur R. Barron and Robert E. Barron, Art L. and Guss Flaming Family Foundation, Jerry and Martha Dressel, Jeffrey W. Glazer and Lisa S. Braun-Glazer, Benjamin G. and Nicole A. Clay, Bill and Nola Trumpfheller, Eric Reifschneider, Richard R. Davis and Brita Colburn Davis, Randy Goodwin and Maria Misal-Goodwin, Douglas X. Patiño, Ph.D., and Walter A. Turner.

By Degrees

ERICA GONZALEZ

Future Profession: Retail marketing

SDSU degree: In December 2002, Gonzalez became the first graduate of SDSU’s CaMexUS partnership, the nation’s first transnational, triple-degree program. CaMexUS students study for a minimum of one year at SDSU and at universities in Canada and Mexico; they graduate with three bachelor’s degrees in business—one from each institution. The program is designed to produce trilingual business leaders equipped to succeed in the NAFTA economic environment.

What has SDSU done for you?

“My CaMexUS studies have been the most rewarding experiences of my life—just incredible! I earned three degrees, speak all three languages, and I have a true understanding of the cultures and the way people do business. Not to mention that it gave me a great chance to travel.”

Who on campus had the greatest impact on your life?

“CaMexUS coordinator Beatrice Schultz and Theresa Donohue helped make my university experience more rewarding than I ever thought possible.”

What were your favorite places on campus?

“I loved hanging out at the Aztec Center patio to listen to the live music and spend time with friends. I also spent a lot of time at the library, but that was more out of necessity than choice.”
What $45 gets you these days:

1. A no-frills dinner for two.
2. Three movie tickets w/popcorn and soda.
3. A fill-up for the family SUV.
4. Another pair of half-price shoes.
5. The chance to make waves. Big waves.

In addition to all the cool benefits you get as an association member, you get this: the satisfaction of knowing your contribution is helping exceptional SDSU students achieve great things through scholarships, mentorships, and a variety of other innovative programs. To make a real difference, call 619-594-ALUM (2586) or visit www.sdsualumni.org.

Thank you for reading 360 Magazine online! To receive your own subscription, join the SDSU Alumni Association or help support the university with a financial gift. Contact the editor at 360mag@mail.sdsu.edu for more information.

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