Parents, family and friends of SDSU’s graduating class of 2005 are cordially invited to attend commencement exercises at San Diego State University in mid-May. This year, all individual college commencement ceremonies will be held in Cox Arena, and all ceremonies will require admission tickets. (The Imperial Valley Campus ceremony will be held separately in Calexico).

Commencement is a fitting conclusion to your student’s successful academic career. To learn more about the individual college ceremonies, log on to the SDSU home page (www.sdsu.edu) and click on “Commencement 2005.”

Students who applied for graduation were eligible to receive complimentary reserved-seat tickets for their family and guests during GradFest, April 12-14. If your son or daughter missed that opportunity, encourage him or her to pick up graduation tickets for you at the Aztec Center Ticket Office. They will need to present their SDSU Red ID card to obtain tickets.

Be sure to look at the Special Discounts page of the Aztec Parents Web site (www.sa.sdsu.edu/parents/discounts.html) if you will be traveling to San Diego for graduation weekend. You'll find information on discounts for parents, family and friends to help keep your costs to a minimum for shuttles and at various San Diego hotels. When you call, ask for the "SDSU for parents, family and friends to help keep your costs to a minimum for graduation weekend." You’ll find information on discounts if you will be traveling to San Diego for graduation weekend. You’ll find information on discounts site (www.sa.sdsu.edu/parents/discounts.html) if you will be traveling to San Diego for graduation weekend. You’ll find information on discounts if you will be traveling to San Diego for graduation weekend.

You’ve spent the past several years contributing to your student’s success. Now, it’s time to attend Commencement 2005 and celebrate as he or she graduates. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to all of you!

Family Weekend Coming September 30 – October 1
Mark your calendars for the 2005 Family Weekend

SDSU’s Family Weekend will be held September 30 – October 1. Family Weekend is a widely anticipated event that takes place each year during the fall semester. It provides parents and students the chance to experience university life together. Aztec Parent Advisory Board members Dan and Lori Steinberg are serving as the 2005 Family Weekend Co-Chairs.

The Aztec Parents Association sponsors the event in collaboration with Aztec Shops, Athletics, faculty, the library, residence halls, Associated Students and others. Parents are given the opportunity to dine with university administrators, attend class with their student, attend a football game, tour the campus, and much more.

More details about Family Weekend 2005 will be made available at www.sdsu.edu/aztecparents after July 1.

@State  SDSU Debuts Monthly Online Newsletter for Students

In an effort to keep students better informed, San Diego State University launched an online monthly newsletter, @State, in early spring.

Jointly sponsored by the Division of Student Affairs and Associated Students, @State is e-mailed to all current students the first week of each month.

@State is an informative, user-friendly communications vehicle designed to provide students with up-to-date information on events and activities while promoting student programs and services. It serves as a forum for students to share opinions and ideas and to provide feedback, and offers a one-stop source of appropriate links and key information that students need to know.

@State was the brainchild of Associated Students President Kelli Kedis. She proposed the idea to James Kitchen, vice president for Student Affairs, who immediately offered the services of his division to make it a reality.

As a student on campus, I felt that this newsletter would be a vital component to overall student enjoyment at SDSU, mainly because there are so many activities happening on our campus all the time that students may not know about,” said Kedis. “It was important for me to leave something behind that students can rally around to become more involved and more informed. @State was the best way to achieve this goal.”

@State is an informative, user-friendly communications vehicle designed to provide students with up-to-date information on events and activities while promoting student programs and services.

continued on page 10
My daughter had a specific date to register for classes last December, but when she tried to do so, she found she couldn’t register because her registration fees had not been paid. We never received a bill or notice about the fee due date. Why weren’t we notified through the mail or the new eBill system we had heard about?

Q.

A.

San Diego State’s Web Portal is the place for students to conduct most of their university business matters, from registering for classes, to checking grades and updating home and e-mail addresses. Students must log on to the Web portal in order to obtain their date for registering for classes and the deadline for paying registration fees. Students cannot register for classes until all fees are paid. There is no written statement or e-mail payment notice sent to either the student or parents, although students are notified to check their portal account for a variety of information.

The University Cashier’s office instituted a new electronic billing (eBill) system earlier this year, but that is only for monthly billing of services other than registration fees, such as housing charges, TNS billing, etc. Because SDSU realizes that many parents are the actual payer of the bills, students can set up multiple e-mail addresses to receive copies of the e-mail bill. So if a parent or other third party will be paying the bill, it can be sent to them as well as to the student. But to reiterate, eBill does not include upcoming registration fees; only after-the-fact additional fees owed to the university.

Additional information and instructions for eBill are available on the University Cashiers Web site at http://bfa.sdsu.edu/fm/co/cashiers/. Because of FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) legislation, only students can access their Web portal account. FERPA is a Federal law that protects the privacy of a student’s educational record. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. It is against federal law for the university to discuss a student’s educational record with anyone other than the student without written permission.

For parents concerned about paying registration fees on time to ensure that their son or daughter can register for classes on their assigned date, please encourage your student to check their Web portal account on a regular basis. They will need to write down the total amount of their registration fees due and the deadline for payment.

San Diego State’s Web Portal

Board Member Larry Svetich: Staying Connected

Larry Svetich and his wife, Linda, are parents who believe in letting their kids make their own choices in life. They have a daughter, Nicole, who is now at a Sacramento community college. After spending a very cold year in college in Lincoln, Nebraska, Nicole decided the Midwest wasn’t for her. Their son, Ian, is a third year student at San Diego State, majoring in International Business. Ian, like his father, loves sports. Rugby and soccer are his two primary interests, and he hopes to study abroad in a country that values these two sports.

The family calls Sacramento home. Larry operates a business that focuses on labor-management relations. Linda is an attorney for the State Compensation Insurance Fund, specializing in worker’s compensation. Larry is very active in politics at various levels, and holds a bachelor’s degree in government.

When asked if Larry and his wife had any influence in Ian’s choice of SDSU, Larry Svetich said firmly, “No.”

“Ian and Nicole have always been encouraged to look at the options available to them, consider those options, and make their choices based on facts that they have either researched or which have been made available to them,” said Svetich. “SDSU and its International Business program have great reputations and that reputation and a few other factors, such as location, weather and recreational activities, sealed his decision.”

Not that the Svetiches aren’t involved with their son and daughter and their decisions – quite the contrary. They are always there to listen and offer advice when asked, but they strongly encourage their independence as a means of growth for their two children.

Larry relates how hard it is as a parent to allow their son and daughter to make choices and, sometimes, mistakes.

“Perhaps the most difficult thing we had to work through was allowing Ian to take care of his own business,” said Larry. “Letting him learn from his own mistakes, letting him find out where his own limits are, how to address social issues with parties and coeds and roommates, how to take care of academic issues (i.e., test or grade problems). These were all areas that were fairly new for him to have to deal with on his own. I might be able to ‘suggest’ alternatives for him to address an issue or a problem, but he had to go do the work and take care of the problem. While it has been painful to watch him struggle in some areas, it has also been fun to watch him succeed at taking care of those issues and problems. It has not been easy sitting on the sidelines throughout.”

The Svetiches foster independence, but they have always been very engaged in all aspects of both Ian and Nicole’s lives.

“I have always been an involved, participating parent in both the academic and athletic lives of our children,” said Larry. “I believe that parent involvement helps ensure a better chance at success for kids, generally, and it has given me the opportunity to watch my children grow in a variety of areas that are special to them and to me.”

“Also, giving back to the community in some fashion was something my parents did and it was something I grew up accepting as a normal part of my life, almost an expectation, if you will.”

Larry encourages all parents to become involved in one fashion or another.

“Whether or not it is a program like the Parent Board, or any other community type program that helps people, make the time to become involved,” said Larry. “Your opportunities to participate in any program that affects your student are few and far between. It is a growth experience for you and those around you. It is something that you will never forget and will never regret.”
SDSU Announces The Summer Reading Program Book for Fall 2005

Any universities throughout the United States offer a summer reading program as a means of introducing incoming students to the intellectual life of the university. San Diego State University launched its first Summer Reading Program last summer.

“The mission of the Summer Reading Program is to welcome new students to SDSU’s learning community,” said Chris Procello, special assistant to the dean in the Division of Undergraduate Studies. “By involving all incoming students, the program comprises part of each student’s orientation to the campus and provides a common experience for them as they transition to both university life and to SDSU.”

“From social activities, to course discussion in the Freshman Success Programs and study groups, and other structured events, students will develop an enhanced sense of community while strengthening their critical reading skills.”

— Chris Procello, Division of Undergraduate Studies

I t’s hard to believe another academic year is nearing its end. For those of you who have students graduating next month, I want to extend my congratulations. As parents and other family members, you share in the glory of your student reaching that milestone as much as your student. Most students would say they couldn’t have done it without their family’s encouragement, support and love.

For the rest of you, still a year or two – or more – from graduation, I want you to know that we at San Diego State are your partners in helping your student reach that ultimate goal of commencement. Just a few of the exciting programs and services that we offer are featured in this issue of News for Aztec Parents. Many of these programs and services would not be possible if it weren’t for the generosity of you – parents who contribute to the Aztec Parents Annual Fund.

The Bounce Back program, featured on page 4, is one I am especially excited about. We are having tremendous success through this new program in helping students overcome personal and academic obstacles when they find themselves struggling with their grades.

Another exciting program featured in the newsletter is our new Identities and Communities in Action (ICIA) living learning community, an integrated academic program for incoming freshmen living in University Towers. ICIA will provide a living option that combines integrated coursework with community service, focusing on social justice issues. Community service events are just one strategy in helping students connect to the university and their own personal values. There are a myriad of opportunities and events that highlight community service. Be sure to read the efforts of our students, faculty and staff in disaster relief, specifically the tragic tsunami in Southeast Asia. Helping students succeed, especially those who come from challenging backgrounds, is our key value.

What ensued is an unprecedented and illuminating work of immersion journalism, captured in its provocative entirety in Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America which became a New York Times bestseller. To answer her own questions, Ehrenreich left her home, took the cheapest lodgings she could find, and accepted the highest-paying jobs she was offered. Moving from Florida to Maine to Minnesota, she worked as a waitress, a hotel maid, a cleaning woman, a nursing-home aide, and a Wal-Mart sales clerk. She lived in trailer parks and crumbling residential motels, discovering quickly that no job is truly ‘unskilled,’ that even the lowliest occupations take an enormous mental and physical toll, and that one job is not enough – not, that is, if you intend to live indoors.

“With all the real life assets I’ve built up in middle age – bank account, IRA, health insurance, multi-room home – waiting indulgently in the background, there was no way I was going to ‘experience poverty’ or find out how it ‘really feels’ to be a long-term low-wage worker,” Ehrenreich cautions. “My aim here was much more straightforward and objective – just to see whether I could match income to expenses, as the truly poor attempt to do every day.”

What she discovered was that, in fact, she could not. Ehrenreich’s hair-raising and darkly funny Odyssey through the underside of the working world brilliantly describes low-rent America in all its tenacity, anxiety and surprising generosity. A rare view of “prosperity” from the bottom puts a human face to the lives sustaining our economy (source: www.creativewell.com).

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The Aztec Parents Association is sponsoring an open lecture by Ehrenreich on Thursday, November 3 at SDSU.
The Aztec Parents Annual Fund Helps Students Bounce Back

One of the most important issues that San Diego State is tackling is retention. All students admitted to the university have the potential to succeed and graduate, but some students find themselves in academic trouble.

Academic probation occurs when an SDSU student’s GPA falls below a 2.0 (“C”) average. If that student cannot bring his or her grades up by the second semester, then he or she will be academically disqualified from the university and asked to leave. Freshmen students who end up on academic probation are at a higher risk of becoming disqualified.

There are encouraging signs, however. According to Sandra Cook, executive director of enrollment services, first-time freshmen continuation rates are up – from 75.3 percent in 2002, to 80.1 percent in 2003. Cook attributes this to several factors, including better procedures and tools available for students.

A pilot program introduced last year, and funded by the Aztec Parents Annual Fund, has shown great potential as being one of the most successful programs in helping students get off of academic probation. Called “Bounce Back,” the program teaches students resiliency in facing their challenges. “It is showing a tremendous success rate with students on probation because it addresses all of their issues, not just academics,” said Cook.

Created by Marsha Weinberg and Maria Hanger, two counseling psychologists in SDSU’s Counseling and Psychological Services, Bounce Back addresses who the students are and what they are struggling with in a very personal way. It is based on resiliency theory and positive psychology, which seeks to help students understand their strengths.

“I’m constantly amazed at how well students do in school in spite of their circumstances,” said Weinberg.

“For example, I was inspired by a first-generation college student in his senior year who was ridiculed by family and friends for being in college, and who had experienced a murder in his family. His resilience, the ability to succeed in spite of obstacles, is what helped him to not give up.”

According to the two psychologists, there is no common denominator surrounding probation. The issues vary from one student to the next and are unique and personal to each student.

The aspects to the Bounce Back program include:
- Helping students feel better about themselves and know their strengths
- Helping students improve academically related skills
- Providing peer educators who become peer resiliency coaches who share their own stories and help students on probation

Bounce Back seminars meet one hour per week for 14 weeks. Topics covered include advising sessions, developing time management and study skills, stress management, improving coping skills, avoiding procrastination, and various other positive psychological subjects.

“How Bounce Back Helped Jessica Davis Get Back on Academic Track

Transfer student and San Jose native, Jessica Davis, has a lot on her plate these days, but her bright outlook keeps her moving in the right direction.

Like many college students, Jessica finds herself juggling her academics with her life outside of the university. Taking a full course load at SDSU, and one class at Grossmont Community College, working two part-time jobs, and having a social life, are all a part of Jessica’s demanding schedule.

A Communications, Public Relations major, Jessica found herself on academic probation during her second semester at SDSU. “Having to be on academic probation because one semester’s grades were bad is really frustrating,” says Jessica. Academic probation was a new concept to Jessica, who had never before experienced problems in her schoolwork.

“Bounce Back is almost like a counseling center – they listen to you and chat with you. The staff really listens to what you have to say.”

To help her get back on academic track, Jessica joined the Bounce Back program in Counseling & Psychological Services (see related article above). “Bounce Back e-mailed me once I was placed on academic probation,” says Jessica, who was also aware that 70 percent of students who join Bounce Back get off of academic probation.

Meeting for one hour each week, Jessica and other Bounce Back students learn skills that work to assist them in their academic, professional, and social life. “Each week there’s a different topic,” explains Jessica, “last week was ‘Coping.’ We were given a hypothetical situation, and had to decide how we would cope if this were an academic situation.” Jessica further adds, “Bounce Back is helpful in life overall, not just academically helpful.”

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“Student Affairs is committed to retention, and we recognize the potential for growth of this great program. We are working to get more resources and support to grow it. A Student Success Center is being created and the Bounce Back program will be part of its offerings, along with other retention initiatives. We are taking a multi-pronged approach with retention.” — Eric Rivera

Initial results are very promising. During the spring 2004 semester, students on academic probation who participated in the Bounce Back program had a 70 percent retention rate. In comparison, students on academic probation who did not participate in the study only had a 30 percent retention rate. Grade point averages were significantly higher at post-test for study participants. Additionally, students had a stronger feeling of social support after completing the program. Participants praised the program and their peer coaches in their evaluations, citing the emphasis on real life issues.

“The preliminary study illustrates that resiliency can be learned and applied in academics,” said Hanger. “Our goal now is to grow the program so we can reach the majority of students on academic probation. Because it is based on psychological theory, mental health professionals need to lead the program.”

According to Eric Rivera, assistant vice president for Student Affairs, the university is taking notice of the Bounce Back program. Both Hanger and Weinberg were selected for President Weber’s Top 25, a recognition program that honors 25 individuals who contribute positively to San Diego State University.

How Bounce Back Helped Jessica Davis Get Back on Academic Track

Jessica’s parents have also played a crucial role in providing her support while she’s been on academic probation. “My parents believe in me. They knew that I could work through this. They were very, very supportive,” says Jessica.

Jessica offers advice to parents, whose students are on academic probation, “Be supportive of your student because parent pressure on top of school pressure, to get grades up, would be more of a stressor and not a motivator.”

The longtime softball player has had a few curve balls thrown her way, but none have yet to deter her from achieving her goals. Jessica plans to graduate in May 2006, and is set on getting her teaching credential.

“I want to coach high school softball,” says Jessica, who played throughout childhood. “When asked to describe a few positive qualities about herself, ‘optimistic’ was the first quality mentioned. Her easygoing demeanor has allowed her to roll with the punches, and her optimism has enabled her to persevere and keep her goals in sight.
Students Leave the Classroom to Go Behind Bars
Professor Paul Sutton’s class, Prisons in Theory and Practice, takes students out of the classroom and puts them behind bars.

Students enrolled in Sutton’s week-long course get an up close and personal look at California’s prison system. Most students haven’t stepped foot in a prison until they’ve experienced Sutton’s prison tour. “When they walk up to the first prison gate, their confidence really grows,” says Sutton. By the tour’s end, students walk anywhere between 20 and 30 miles, and will have experienced the wide array of the prison system.

Sutton, a criminal justice professor, created the course more than 20 years ago and has taken over 1,000 students on the prison tour. “I believe it’s important for students to get out of the classroom and into the real world whenever possible. Their reaction is essential to realize how important it is,” he further explained. “Students specifically requested to go on the tour. They said ‘Take us to prison, Sutton,’” and he’s been taking them ever since.

Sutton gives students a three-hour intensive orientation before entering the first prison on their tour. “I talk to students about what to expect and how to behave. This is hard work that’s tough, exhausting, and dangerous at times. I make sure that the students ‘have their mind right.’ If they are indicative of not being prepared – I don’t take them on the tour,” explained Sutton. Not one minute goes to waste on this tour. Sutton shows videos and talks to students all day long on the bus, to and from the prisons. Students aren’t allowed to sleep in class, and his prison tour isn’t any different. “I tell the students ‘Every minute we’re away from campus, we’re in class. So no sleeping on the bus unless I say it’s bedtime,’” Sutton said.

During the tour, students have the opportunity to talk with inmates face-to-face. “We have a three-hour session where we have a discussion group with the students and 10 convicted murderers. I situate the students so that everyone sits next to a killer: Student, student, inmate, student, student, inmate and so forth. After a three-hour group discussion, we break for snacks, and the remainder of our time we spend talking/interacting with the inmates,” said Sutton. “I tell the students to take advantage of this opportunity because they will never again get a chance to talk with these people one-on-one in this type of situation.”

Each student comes away from the prison tour with a new perception of the State’s correction system, and of the people who are at its mercy. “Students come back much more sensitive about the lives and plight of the prisoners, but they aren’t conned either,” Sutton said. “I typically see from students is how unexpectedly attached they become with some of the people they meet. It’s odd for many to think of a 65-year old grandfather who’s serving a life term, but it’s the reality that the students experience on the tour. Reality just smacks them in the face. It grips them in a way that makes them more intellectually curious, which is what education is all about,” he said.

So what do parents have to say about their student chatting it up with an inmate? According to Sutton, parent feedback has been very positive and encouraging. He received an e-mail from one parent expressing the maturity she witnessed in her son after embarking on the tour. And once a parent and ex-con contacted Sutton asking him to take his student on the tour because he felt it was a great opportunity for his son. “Students leave this tour with a greater understanding of people, and I find that this is a humanizing experience for just about everyone who goes,” Sutton said.

Twenty years ago, students did not receive university credit for touring the prisons, and they had to organize their own transportation. Today, students receive university credit, travel by charter bus, and stay in hotels. Students have two prison tours to choose from; the California Prison Tour, a 5-day journey, spanning 1,200 miles and eight prisons; and the Southwest Mega Tour, a 12-day journey; spanning six states and 16 prisons. Over the past 20 years, many changes have been made in the prison system, but the sentiment of Sutton’s tours has remained the same.

“‘The object of the tour is to engage people about what they’re doing, career-wise, and give them personal growth. The tour really opens their eyes and minds to a world they thought they knew something about,’” Sutton said.

For more information please visit www-rohan.sdsu.edu/~psutton/
A n unprecedented SDSU scholarship program offering local, high-achieving, low-income high school seniors the financial support they need to get a degree from San Diego State University was launched this spring.

The new program, called the President’s Diversity Scholarship, provides $3,500 annually for each recipient for up to four years, and is open to any eligible local high school student regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability or national origin.

Twelve students were selected for the inaugural scholarships. All 12 were feted at a special gala ceremony on February 24. Yolanda King, the eldest daughter of Coretta Scott King and the late Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and an internationally renowned motivational speaker and actress, was the keynote speaker at the gala honoring the 2005 recipients.

The scholarship recipients receive other benefits, including an academic adviser, internship opportunities, fee waivers for student orientation activities, and an annual meeting with SDSU President Stephen L. Weber.

“It’s important to remove the financial barriers facing these local, high-achieving, young students so they can attend our university and concentrate on building a successful future,” said Weber. “These scholarships are designed to help open the doors for tomorrow’s leaders today.”

The impetus for the President’s Diversity Scholarships came from the President’s Diversity and Equity Community Advisory Council, consisting of about two dozen community and business leaders who help SDSU develop ideas for enhancing and supporting student diversity.

The Recipients are:

Erika Azubu, Helix Charter High School – Erica, who plans to major in business management, was described by one teacher as “an excellent role model for students of all ages. She is innovative, creative, and ready to work. Erica is mature and has a sense of commitment to her community, volunteering at Rolando Elementary and Murdock Elementary Schools.”

Jennifer Best, Hoover High School – Jennifer has had to overcome many challenges in her young life. With her mother suffering from MS and her only sister diagnosed with cancer, Jennifer finds herself doubting as primary care giver and college-bound student. Her greatest hero is her mom. She wants to make her family proud by doing something they lacked the opportunity to achieve.

Lisa Doan, Mira Mesa High School – Lisa is self-motivated and enjoys the fact that she has the inner power and confidence to succeed in whatever risk she may take. One teacher wrote, “Lisa has played a major role in an organization with the goal of preventing drug and alcohol use among young people. She has devoted her spare time to addressing and eliminating this critical social problem.”

Carolina Galindo, Montgomery High School – Carolina’s family moved to the United States when she was in the ninth grade. Not knowing the language or culture, they took a risk to make a better life for their children. This reinforced to Carolina that she had to take full advantage of the things that were being offered to her. Her parents had a great influence in her decision to choose chemistry as her major. They taught her that it was interesting and amazing to see how nature behaves, and she has a desire to help humankind to improve life by making people healthier.

Alan Gomez, Eastlake High School – Alan was born in Tijuana, Mexico and didn’t begin school in the United States until the seventh grade, struggling to learn his new language. He discovered that getting involved in activities helped him learn English much more quickly. He has been fascinated with building and designing models since he was a young boy, which made his choice of mechanical engineering a natural fit.

Leonid Kandinov, Patrick Henry High School – Born in Uzbekistan, Leonid and his family moved to the United States shortly before his sixth birthday, not speaking any English. By the third grade, Leonid could read at the same level as his classmates. He took advantage of many academic opportunities and community leadership. He volunteers at the American Red Cross, Casey’s Place and various retirement homes in San Diego.

Elizabeth Meraz, Castle Park High School – One of Elizabeth’s teachers said she has been on a mission to be the most successful and well-rounded individual she can be. She will be the first in her family to attend college. Realizing the importance of a good education, Elizabeth’s goals include studying business administration and law.

Dwight Nwaigwe, The Presuss School UCSD – Dwight, his mother and six siblings moved from state to state in a 25-foot motor home before settling in San Diego prior to his starting the second grade. One of Dwight’s teachers wrote, “when I think of Dwight, I think of a very unique young man, an independent thinker and, one who learns best when he is challenged.” Dwight is interested in medical research, but also has a calling to become a Catholic priest. He also has a deep interest in athletics, especially NBA basketball and Olympic wrestling.

Pedro Parra, Brawley Union High School – Migrating to the United States and to a whole new environment was difficult for Pedro and his mother. His mother’s sacrifices have made her his role model and have now enabled him to attend SDSU. Pedro desires to be a bilingual education teacher at the elementary level. His teachers describe Pedro as responsible and hard working.

Monica Rodriguez, Mar Vista High School – When Monica is not in school or tutoring other students, she is at home helping her mom and taking care of her little brother. She has known since the age of 11 that she wanted to be a teacher. She has had the opportunity to tutor middle school students and enjoys the work. She loves seeing these younger students understand their homework and help them learn and grow as individuals.

Lagina Scott, Mount Miguel High School – Lagina has always had the desire to help people, and her goal is to become a doctor. Her love of the study of living things, her desire to better people’s lives, has motivated her to declare a major in the field of biology. She is very involved in helping her peers and youth, all of which have served to strengthen her sense of responsibility, dedication, patience, and understanding of people.

Vanessa Tapia, Sweetwater High School – Vanessa has had to encounter many personal barriers in reaching her goals, but she views these obstacles as having made her a stronger individual. Growing up in a single parent, economically disadvantaged household has been a hardship, but her experiences have prepared Vanessa extensively for the real world. She considers her life to be a valuable gift. Her goal is to teach at the high school level.

For more information on the President’s Diversity Scholarship, visit www.sdsu.edu/diversityscholarship
Student Success Recognized Through “Quest for the Best”

Scholarship, one part of SDSU’s educational mission, goes hand-in-hand with the promotion and development of leadership skills and community service. Under the theme of “Quest for the Best,” the vice presidential student service awards are given each spring to up to 10 outstanding students who typify and promote this broader mission of the university.

Applications for these prestigious awards are available from the Office of New Student and Parent Programs during February each year. A panel of faculty, staff, and past student recipients interview the finalists and make their selections based on academic excellence, student involvement and commitment, community service outside the SDSU campus, and leadership qualities and development that reflect initiative, advancement of intercultural understanding, and evidence of positive, ethical decision-making styles.

Each student awarded the Quest for the Best honor nominates the SDSU professor or mentor who has made the most significant contribution to his or her personal growth. Both student and professor are honored at an elegant banquet held each April.

This year’s Quest for the Best winners, selected from junior, senior and graduate applicants, have been involved in diverse activities on and off campus. From leadership roles in the student-run newspaper to various honor societies, these students give their time and talents to the campus and community.

This year’s Quest for the Best recipients are:

- Jerome Budomo
  - Liberal Studies major
  - Faculty/Staff Mentor: Salvador Flor
  - Educational Opportunity Program

- Betty Crawford
  - Psychology major
  - Faculty/Staff Mentor: Estralita Martin
  - College of Sciences

- Paul A. Escajadillo
  - Political Science major
  - Faculty/Staff Mentor: Farid Abdel-Nour
  - Political Science

- Rodney Gabriel
  - Cell and Molecular Biology major
  - Faculty/Staff Mentor: Thelma Chavez
  - College of Sciences

- Christopher Garcia
  - Kinesiology major
  - Faculty/Staff Mentor: Fred Kolkhorst
  - Exercise and Nutritional Sciences

- Augustus Gatto
  - Finance major
  - Faculty/Staff Mentor: Allan Zebedee
  - Finance

- Hilary Hartley
  - Spanish/Political Science major
  - Faculty/Staff Mentor: Janet Castro
  - New Student and Parent Programs

- Joanne Imus
  - Nursing major
  - Faculty/Staff Mentor: Richard Reed
  - College of Health and Human Services

- Van Nguyen
  - Physics major
  - Faculty/Staff Mentor: Calvin Johnson
  - Physics

- Isabel O’Donnell
  - Sociology major
  - Faculty/Staff Mentor: Beth Crawford
  - Educational Opportunity Program
Nutrition and Fitness

Good study habits, drive and organization are not the only necessary components your student needs to have to succeed in college. Nutrition and fitness are essential, but sometimes overlooked in everyday college life.

A new environment, stress, a different schedule, and lack of access to home cooking all can play a role in your student’s nutrition and fitness habits. Nutrition is an important issue for all college students, as it affects their physical and mental health in both the long and short term. Students can stay healthy by making wise food choices and being physically active. Knowing what is available to them on campus is also beneficial to their overall health.

What SDSU has to Offer

SDSU has made major improvements in their on-campus dining facilities in the past few years, with many fresh, healthy and affordable options from which to choose. From the salad bar at Caucacalli, to the fresh fruit in the campus markets, students can choose from a variety of healthy foods.

If your student is interested in free nutrition counseling, it is offered through Student Health Services in the Wellness Center at the ARC. Nutrition interns are available to assist your student with their basic nutritional concerns and can aid in steering them in the direction of healthier food choices when dining on or off campus.

To make an appointment, your student simply needs to stop by the information desk at the ARC, or call (619) 594-4133. Nutrition and Fitness Peer Health Educators are also available to educate fellow students on various topics such as Healthy Eating on Campus and Fad Diets.

On the fitness side of things, the Aztec Recreation Center (ARC) is an amazing on-campus facility free to students living in the residence halls and at a low cost for non-residential students. The ARC has over 90 pieces of cardio equipment, two weight rooms, four basketball courts and over 60 group fitness classes from which to choose.

Tips for Parents

Although you can’t exactly watch over your student’s shoulder to make sure he or she is eating all their fruits and veggies, you can remind them of the importance of eating frequently throughout the day and not skipping meals. Suggest that your student set an eating schedule and make time to eat nutritious meals each day. A daily routine with set mealtimes will not only keep your son or daughter properly fueled for daily activities, but will also prevent mindless grazing on empty calories.

Encourage them to make time for breakfast, and suggest packing portable, healthy snacks to take to class like fruit, granola bars or string cheese. Try sending them a care package that includes healthy snacks and perhaps gift certificates to a particular grocery store where they can stock up on food they will eat. College is a great time to begin building healthy nutrition and fitness habits that will benefit your student’s health for a lifetime.

“Students can stay healthy by making wise food choices and being physically active.”

Tsunami Symposium

In a campus-wide collaboration, SDSU held a symposium in response to the tsunami in Asia, allowing the campus to become more aware of political, social and economic issues that are involved in disaster relief.

Over 400 students, faculty, and staff attended the March 15 symposium on international disaster relief. The symposium was organized by Aztecs for Rebuilding Lives and Communities, a newly formed SDSU committee that is dedicated to the study and response of international disasters.

David Engstrom, an associate professor in the school of social work, moderated the symposium. Keynote, speakers from Doctors Without Borders/Médecins Sans Frontières, Oxfam America and Project Concern International, spoke about their organizations efforts during the recent tsunami, as well as other international disasters.

Each speaker was followed by a question and answer session.

Throughout the event, audience members were able to view exhibits of international disaster relief agencies, and talk to local representatives. Representatives included American Friends Services Committee, American Red Cross, Catholic Relief Services, Direct Relief International, International Relief Societies, International Rescue Committee, Project Concern International, Pure-O-Tech Inc., Relief International, Rescue Task Force, San Diego World Response, Sri Lanka Foundation, and World Emergency Relief.

Chair of Aztecs for Rebuilding Lives and Communities, Stephanie Brown, explained the rationale behind the symposium.

“The purpose of the symposium was to educate our community about the process of disaster relief, the challenges associated with gaining access to people in need of assistance, and the demands of seeing a community through a rebuilding effort.”

A panel discussion by campus experts involved with tsunami efforts followed the keynote speeches. Campus experts included Eric Frost, director of SDSU’s Visualization Lab, associate professor of geological sciences, and John Graham, technical director, Strong Angel II.

The symposium concluded with a special reception, where students were able to network with the speakers, faculty and local relief organization representatives.

“The symposium represented an opportunity for all of us to learn, talk and reflect about how we might utilize our knowledge and skills to make a difference in the lives of our fellow citizens both domestically and abroad. I think we achieved that goal,” concluded Brown.

The symposium was sponsored by the Center for Community Based Service-Learning, the School of Social Work, the College of Health and Human Services, The Division of Student Affairs, and Associated Students.
Students who choose to live on campus have higher grade point averages, take more units, have a 10-15 percent better chance of doing well in class, and enjoy activities.

Activities such as cooking, cleaning, and commuting to school can be time-consuming tasks for students who live off campus. Living on campus eases students from those daily tasks, giving them more free time to study and enjoy activities.

Students who live on campus have access to the university’s library and computer labs, which makes studying very convenient and accessible. Typically, students who choose to live on campus have higher grade point averages, take more units, have a 10-15 percent better chance of doing well in college, and are more likely to graduate.

Each student’s needs and interests are different, and SDSU makes great efforts to find the right communal fit for students.

SDSU’s Residential Education Office (REO) offers three different types of on-campus living communities: Learning-communities connected to specific courses or packages; Thematic-areas designed by theme (i.e. International House); and Lifestyle-areas that support specific lifestyle choices (i.e. Extended Quiet Study Hours).

Despite the various living options and amenities found on campus, it’s still common for students to choose to live off campus. Living off-campus and searching for an apartment for the first time is a lesson all its own. On the OHA Web site, www.sdsu.edu/housing, students and parents can find an off-campus listing service, apartment hunting tips, a guide for preparing a budget, information about finding the right roommate, as well as a list of communities where many students live and their distance to SDSU.

“The OHA provides information about off-campus housing to help the students on campus. Like most CSUs, we are unable to provide housing for families or graduate students and feel we should do what we can to help those individuals moving to the area. The service also benefits current students who are looking for an apartment or room share situation,” Maxwell said.

The OHA also advises students to take their time when choosing where to live, and to take careful consideration before signing a lease. Maxwell advises, “Be aware of the type of contract or lease students sign, and how long of it will obligate them. Many apartment leases are for a full 12 months and have consequences for terminating the lease early. On-campus License Agreements are for the academic year and have a detailed cancellation policy. Consider all of the terms, and the process for cancellation, before committing.”

Students are also encouraged to take a close look at the surrounding neighborhood, and to try to talk to some of the current tenants to get their impression of the apartment complex and surrounding community.

For more helpful tips and information, please visit www.sdsu.edu/housing/.

**New Living Learning Community Focuses on Social Justice**

The spring section, “Imagining Communities” include a visit to the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles; a day at a Buddhist monastery; music and theater performances; a film and lecture series, and more. Students also participate in service-learning activities such as an oral history project in a low-income community; mentoring elementary-aged students; working with non-profit and grassroots agencies, arts projects, and more.

Composing Identities will satisfy the GE requirements in the second semester for the same three disciplines. For more information about the Residential Education Office’s living/learning options, visit www.sdsu.edu/housing/.
Designated by Keith Parks, senior graphic designer in Communications Services, @State is divided into three key sections: “Spotlight” contains feature stories; the “Calendar” section highlights important student deadlines and various events for the upcoming month with a direct link to the main campus events resource center; and the “Connections” section lists different ways for students to get involved on campus. A feedback feature allows students to express their opinions about the information in @State, and also serves as a forum for timely issues.

“I am very proud of the collaborative team effort exhibited over the past few months to bring this important vehicle to fruition,” said Kitchen. “Kelli deserves special recognition for initiating this project. In addition to the hard work of my staff and the Associated Students, I want to acknowledge the support and efforts of Enrollment Services.”

To preview @State, go to www.sa.sdsu.edu/atstate.

Calling Continues for Aztec Parents Annual Fund

S tudent callers for the Aztec Parents Annual Fund will be hard at work until the end of June. If you get a call from a student soon, remember that any contribution you make goes directly to benefiting students, including your own.

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“Parent support plays a crucial role at SDSU in helping us achieve our strategic initiatives, all of which center on student development. From helping prepare tomorrow’s citizens, to providing campus safety, the Aztec Parents provide the financial gifts necessary to offer these visionary programs.”

— Dr. James R. Kitchen, Vice President for Student Affairs

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For STUDENTS

MONTHLY ONLINE NEWSLETTER

@STATE — SDSU DEBUTS

INFORMATION

TRANSPORTATION

HOTEL

INFORMATION

Best Western Lamplighter Inn & Suites

Town and Country Resort and Convention Center

Visit www.sdsu.edu/aztecparents, then click on “Special Discounts” to view a complete list of hotel partners.

To ensure the special rates, ask for the “SDSU Friends and Family Rate” when you make your reservations.

Hertz

Carrier: Hertz at the San Diego Airport

20% discount, 1-800-654-3131

Once you arrive in San Diego, you will want to book your shuttle service as well. The following San Diego hotels offer discounts for SDSU Aztec parents, families, and friends!

All special rates are based on availability. To inquire about “SDSU Friends and Family Rate” and to check out hotel amenities call the hotel or view their Web site.

www.sdsu.edu/aztecparents

SDSU March Kicks Off...!

SDSU Ranked #1 in Fleet College

San Diego State University

Fly Vaccine available at DHS — Fb vaccine is available at various high school and college locations.

Monterey Bay Aquarium. Did you know...?

Invocate a Great Advisor for the Exemplary Academic Awards.

Hanh Fong, Hertz

Best Western Lamplighter

Inn & Suites

Town and Country

Inn & Suites

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Travel Discounts Available for Aztec Parents

TRANSPORTATION

INFORMATION

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The long-anticipated ground opening of San Diego State University’s trolley station has been set for July 9. As of early April, construction of the 5.8-mile extension of the Mission Valley East extension of the San Diego Trolley was 98 percent complete. Testing took place in early March as part of the initial preparation phase prior to full-scale operations.

The new underground SDSU Transit Center will be the first subterranean station for the San Diego Trolley. It will offer easy public access to the heart of the SDSU campus, including Aztec Center, Cox Arena, and the Open Air Theatre. The Transit Center will include not only the trolley station, but also a street-level bus way, which recently opened to the public. Once the trolley station opens, riders will be able to transfer between buses and trolleys via stairs and elevators.

"Bringing the San Diego Trolley to campus opens a wonderful new chapter for San Diego State. It will be a major convenience for our students, faculty and staff, and provide another link between campus and the community. It will also help reduce traffic on our highways, benefiting everyone."
— SDSU President Stephen L. Weber

A 4,000-foot long tunnel will open into the unique SDSU underground trolley station. Neon ceiling art and “Taproots” hanging sculptures by artist Anne Mudge will add artistic elements to the station. Mudge fashioned stainless steel cable into shapes that create the illusion of trees growing down into the subterranean space. The artwork also symbolizes the university’s roots reaching deep into the San Diego community.

The Mission Valley East extension will also include new trolley stops at Grantville, Alvarado Medical Center, and 70th Street. The new line will connect San Diego city stops with current east county stops.

No SDSU funds were used for trolley construction. All costs of the $506 million project, which includes 11 new-generation trolley vehicles, were met through the local half-cent transportation sales tax (TransNet), as well as state and federal funding dedicated to public transportation.

July 8 will be devoted to opening ceremonies for invited guests and the media. The public can travel on the extension July 9, including four hours of free rides. The first full day of paid operations would be July 10, a Sunday.

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SDSU’s Entrepreneur Program Is Listed in Entrepreneur Magazine’s Top 100 Programs in the U.S.

The Entrepreneurial Management Center has been named one of the best 100 collegiate entrepreneurship programs in the United States in the April 2005 issue of Entrepreneur magazine. SDSU appears in the second tier of the list of the top 50 regionally recognized academic programs in the country.

A recent study showed that entrepreneurship students start more companies, and they are also more successful. Sales and employment growth of companies owned by or employing entrepreneurship graduates were more than five times the rate of other firms. In addition, entrepreneurship graduates working in large firms earn, on average, $23,000 a year more than non-entrepreneurship business graduates.

“We are pleased to be recognized again by Entrepreneur magazine for the quality of our program. It reinforces that SDSU is the best place in our region to come for entrepreneurship training,” said Sanford Ehrlich, executive director of SDSU’s Entrepreneurial Management Center. “Those who work hard to create businesses are the driving force in our local economy. We are proud to be a part of their success.”

San Diego University’s Entrepreneurial Management Center (EMC) is dedicated to providing the regional entrepreneurial community with tools and skills necessary for venture creation and growth. The privately-funded Center promotes better knowledge and understanding of the entrepreneurial process through experiential learning. More information is available at www.sdsu.edu/emc.
MAY
2  Odetta Concert, Don Powell Theatre
2  Greek Awards Night, 8 pm*
3  “Stand & Deliver” Open Mic Night, 6-8 pm, Casa Real
4  Diversity Career Fair, open to all students and all majors, Centennial Mall, 9:30 am-2 pm
5  USFC Banquet 7 pm*
11  Last Day of Classes
13-19  FINALS! Send Cookies!
19  All residence halls close for the academic year at 4 pm. Licensee should leave by 8:00 pm on the day of his/her last final examination.***
20  Commencement Ceremony for the College of Health and Human Services, 11 am, Cox Arena
20  Commencement Ceremony for the College of Business Administration, 1 pm, Cox Arena
21  Commencement Ceremony for the College of Professional Studies and Fine Arts, 1 pm, Cox Arena
22  Commencement Ceremony for the College of Education and Division of Undergraduate Studies, 8 am, Cox Arena
22  Commencement Ceremony for the College of Sciences and College of Engineering, 1 pm, Cox Arena
* For further information, call the Center for Fraternity and Sorority Life at 619-594-4745.
** For further information call the Cross-Cultural Center at 619-594-7057
*** For further information call the Office of Housing Administration & Residential Education at 619-594-5742

JUNE
20, 21, 23 & 24  New Student Orientation for transfer students

JULY
13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 20  New Student Orientation for freshmen students

AUGUST
4-5  New Student Orientation for freshmen students
28  New Student & Family Convocation
31  First day of classes of Fall Semester

SPRING 2005 SPORTS SCHEDULE

BASEBALL
5/1  UNLV  Tony Gwynn Stadium  1:30 pm
5/3  Cal State Fullerton  Fullerton  6 pm
5/6  Utah  Salt Lake City  6 pm
5/7, 8  Utah  Salt Lake City  1 pm
5/10  USC  Tony Gwynn Stadium  7 pm
5/12, 13, 14  New Mexico  Albuquerque  Noon
5/18, 19  Brigham Young  Tony Gwynn Stadium  6 pm
5/20  Brigham Young  Tony Gwynn Stadium  1 pm

SOFTBALL
5/6  New Mexico (DH)  San Diego  5 pm
5/8  Colorado St (DH)  San Diego  1 pm
5/12-14  Mountain West Conference Tournament  San Diego  TBA
5/20-22  NCAA Regionals  TBD  TBA
5/27, 28  NCAA Super Regionals  TBD  TBA
6/2-8  NCAA Women’s College World Series  Oklahoma City  TBA

WOMEN’S CREW
5/1  W.I.R.A. Championship Heats  Lake Natoma – All Day
5/14  Pacific Coast Rowing Championships  Lake Natoma – Sacramento
5/15  Pac-10 Rowing Championships  Lake Natoma – Sacramento
5/27-29  NCAA Championships  Lake Natoma – Sacramento
6/2-4  IRA Regatta  Copper River – Camden, NJ

IMPORTANT SDSU DATES

03/05 (047)