



# SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

L. Robert Payne School of  
Hospitality & Tourism Management

FALL 2015

## *Student Success*

**STORIES OF PERSONAL AND  
PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT**



## Greetings from the Payne School!

**T**HERE'S BEEN A LOT of talk about success around here lately. Here are my "two cents" on that topic.

Since our launch in 2001, the Payne School has committed to serving our students and alumni, the business community, the university, and San Diego at large. The results of that commitment can be found in our hard-working student body, accomplished alumni, a reliable workforce, academic rigor, and positive local and global impact. We teach leadership in a real world context that is personalized for each student. We think our approach to education reflects your expectations and I invite you to share your opinion on that: please let us know what you think!

This newsletter showcases the personal and professional accomplishments of our



**Carl Winston**, Director, L. Robert Payne School of Hospitality & Tourism Management

current students, alumni, and key community members. You will read inspiring examples of how the Payne School is living up to its vision of being "the most personalized school of its kind in developing hospitality leaders."

There are many remarkable stories that document our successes to date. I am especially fond of the amazing number of siblings and children of alumni who have

attended our school (pages 7–10), our alumni achievements (throughout), and the tremendous support we receive from the industry. If you are like me, you will wish you were in school again when you read about the amazing "star power" we reach, how far and wide our students travel, and just how much we do with such a small team.

Of course our school has its challenges, and there are plenty of opportunities ahead. However, for the first time in several years, our funding from the State is stable, and Dean Joyce Gattas secured approval for an additional faculty position. We are currently conducting a major revamp of our undergraduate curricula, planning new meetings and events programs, and even beginning to plan a major project to create new office spaces and classrooms for the Payne School. We invite all of you to help us build our future with your ideas and participation—serving on a task force, being a guest speaker, supporting student organizations, underwriting academic programs, and contributing to much needed scholarships for our graduate students. Please feel free to contact me about any of these activities or to share your thoughts.

There is so much to celebrate this year, and I hope you enjoy reading about just a few of our success stories on the pages that follow. ●



2015 Payne School graduation



# Hello from the Success Center!

**T**HE J. WILLARD AND Alice S. Marriott Foundation Student Center for Professional Development is focused entirely on helping our students achieve their professional goals.

So how does one define success, and, equally as important, how is it achieved? Associate Director Christina Jeffries and I joke that we are President and Vice President of Resume-Building. But, there is a method to how students set a course for the future they desire, and it is our job to help them find their path and steward them along it.

Success takes strategic planning. Academic achievement and a strong GPA are the building blocks, but practical experience is no less important. Students should have a healthy balance of academics and “muscle.”

First and foremost, we help students find their passion. The Confucius adage “Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life” is a truth we believe



**Brian Blake**, Director, The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation Student Center for Professional Development

in, and it is a joy to help students determine what it is that lights them up.

Finding a professional culture that is the right fit for a student is imperative. Is the student a rule-follower, interested in working for a brand that carries a specific image, or goal oriented? Where a student spends time should best match the values he or she carries in life.

Everyone has dreams, but dreams do not become real until there is a plan in place to accomplish them. We provide suggestions in strategic choices for part-time jobs and internships. We encourage students to start early on their path by trying on different arenas in hospitality—exposure is a must. If events are of interest, take an internship in catering and conference services. If it is sales, we find an opening in a sales department. Learn a language to broaden opportunities and be strategic about where in the world that may best be achieved. Eighty percent of our students are required to study abroad. It is not just about fulfilling hours to graduation but about fulfilling them meaningfully.

We promote the acquisition of transferable skills as a critical step towards success. We suggest that students not limit themselves to one area of experience; they should take the job that is a logical progression towards their dream career. Building on experience is of great value. Not everyone gets the cool job in concert production right after graduation. You do not become a manager before you have worked entry level. Sacrificing pay for experience will be a huge benefit down the road.

Finally, we examine something I call “competitive advantage.” What will make a student stand out? Is it the job that builds management skills? Is it traveling abroad to a less popular location, showing maturity and commitment? Often, taking a less desirable job means a foot in the door earlier, which means achieving one’s career goals sooner.

Emma Marx (HTM ‘16) is a shining example of the success that comes from strategic planning for one’s career. She has spent her summer as a Food and Beverage Intern at the Four Seasons St. Louis and has grown tremendously from the experience. “I am grateful that I was given the opportunity to step outside my comfort zone by traveling to a different part of the country to gain valuable experience within the hospitality field. This opportunity has allowed me to excel professionally and personally by exploring a new city and company, all while working towards my future goals within the industry.”

Lindsay Cress (HTM ‘15) is another stellar example of success that is born from “outside the box” thinking. She was accepted to SDSU as a math major, but after conversations with her dormitory residence assistant, she attended HTM 201, where she found her passion. Lindsay studied abroad, which was her first time out of country, where she visited 13 countries and learned more about herself than she thought possible.

She excelled at the Hyatt Regency in her front desk internship, was an Event Intern for the Girls Scouts, interned with Allied-PRA, and became very involved in the Payne School, even as early as her sophomore year. She was the National Society of Minorities in Hospitality (NSMH) Programs and Membership Chair in 2013 and is currently Vice President. She has been the San Diego State University Marching Aztecs Feature Twirler, has won the Directors Award (2014), and has been Captain for three years. She also participated in the International Association of Amusement Parks & Attractions Executive Education as the Executive Student Assistant for Materials & Signage, Transportation, and is currently Team Lead. These leadership and professional development opportunities have molded Lindsay as a leader.

On the pages ahead you will witness the impressive success of Payne School alumni who used both passion and planning to achieve their goals. Their stories are our success, and we could not be more proud of them. ●



Lindsay Cress ‘15

**DONOR FEATURE: THE J. WILLARD AND ALICE S. MARRIOTT FOUNDATION**

## The Gift of Success

**I**NNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS CREATE A healthy balance of giving and receiving, enabling each entity to successfully achieve mutual goals. For more than a decade, The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation has generously been that partner for the Payne School.

The Marriott Foundation was established in 1965 with the purpose of giving back to the community. Under the current direction of J.W. Marriott, Jr. and Richard E. Marriott, the Marriott Foundation is dedicated to helping youth secure a promising future, especially through education on the secondary and higher education levels, mentoring and youth leadership programs. The Marriott Foundation's role in the development of the Payne School has been integral to the school's success.

"We decided to be industry focused from our launch in 2001," said Carl Winston, Director of the Payne School. "We worked first with Marriott International on the recruitment of our graduates and they welcomed the professionalism and caliber of our students. Later on, we were introduced to the Marriott Foundation and Executive Director Anne Gunsteens."

"We were pleased to support the Payne School with moderate, targeted gifts that assisted in its growth," said Gunsteens. "The Marriott Foundation has supported SDSU's internship and career placement center

since its creation in 2003, with the understanding that through the center, SDSU would continue its strong relationship with the hospitality industry, giving students greater access to internships and job opportunities."

In 2007, Winston approached Gunsteens and the Marriott Foundation about creating an endowed fund to indefinitely sustain the operational needs of what would become The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation Student Center for Professional Development. The Marriott Foundation granted the endowment and the partnership between the Marriott Foundation and the Payne School grew stronger.

During a meeting with the Marriott Foundation in 2012, Winston mentioned SDSU's innovative work with schools in China. "The timing was serendipitous as the Marriott Foundation had recently decided to expand its support of hospitality schools globally, beginning with China," said Gunsteens. "It was then that Carl shared his vision with me of partnering with schools across China to expand existing hospitality resources, connect teachers with industry leaders, and offer educators first-hand exposure to hospitality operations—ultimately benefiting thousands of students."

The Marriott Foundation wanted a trusted partner who was willing to innovate, pilot programs, and expand the scope

as pilots were successful. "Winston and the Payne School were the perfect choice as an academic partner due to their extensive experience working with schools in China," said Gunsteens. "Carl's vision has always been broad, and the passion and entrepreneurial spirit he brings to his work are what we were seeking. We also knew that Carl and his team would be culturally sensitive in the development of the program."

"In the fall of 2012, Carl and I went on an exploratory trip to China. This trip was meant for listening and learning," said Gunsteens. "The common theme we discovered was the need for enhanced hospitality teaching resources, real-world operational experiences, and the ability to share best practices among a community of educators."

That fact-finding mission led to the creation of the Marriott China Hospitality Education Initiative (CHEI), a multimillion dollar charitable program of the Marriott Foundation to prepare youth in China for rewarding careers in hospitality. CHEI currently has 48 active partnering schools and 54 active industry partners. As the program's academic advisor, SDSU develops and deploys CHEI Hospitality English curriculum and other teaching-learning resources.

This July, CHEI held its second teaching conference with 170 hospitality educators from more than 60 vocational schools and universities across 18 provinces in China. The conference offered educators first-hand exposure to hospitality operations and event management; educational workshops demonstrating advanced teaching techniques and resources; sessions on industry trends, best practices, and CHEI success stories; and networking with colleagues and industry leaders.

The L. Robert Payne School of Hospitality & Tourism Management is proud to be an entrepreneurial partner with The J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation. The Payne School is deeply grateful to the Marriott Foundation for its continued support. Because of their generosity and great partnership, the gift of success is within reach for hospitality teachers and students on campus and far beyond. ●



Associate Director Christina Jeffries '08, Kristina D'Alessio '13, Shannon Charlton '13, Director Brian Blake, and Ravi Khilnani '12 at the San Diego All Industry Cruise.



## ALUMNUS FEATURE: KEVIN CHOW HTM '10

# Creating Success

**A**N INNATE DRIVE AND A NATURAL sense of leadership are a powerful combination. Alumnus Kevin Chow HTM ('10) credits both for his success.

Born and raised in Hawthorne, California, Kevin arrived at SDSU in 2006 to pursue business studies. It was in Professor Randy Baker's HTM 201 class, however, where he discovered his professional path. Switching his academic emphasis to tribal gaming, Kevin took an internship with Sycuan Casino in 2008 that fostered his leadership skills and interest in the gaming industry. At Sycuan, Kevin delved into every facet of the organization.

Not one to shy away from an opportunity for growth, Kevin was president of the National Society of Minorities in Hospitality (NSMH) his senior year, during which he played an integral role in his chapter winning four awards from the national organization. "Throughout my career I have thought of this experience fondly. My close friends were the presidents of the other program student organizations, and our support of each other was ongoing. It was the time when I started to truly understand the philosophy of one large team working together as opposed to 'my team/your team.' This is something I've taken with me to every position I've held."

Kevin's studies and work at Sycuan fostered his desire to move to Las Vegas post-graduation. While on his senior-year trip in the city, he toured Planet Hollywood Resort & Casino. It made quite an impact on him. "I



Kevin '10, pictured far right, at the Dukes Challenge in Honolulu in March 2015. Pictured with Kevin are members of his staff.

told Director of the Student Center for Professional Development Brian Blake that I wanted to live and work in Las Vegas. Coincidentally, at that time, Robert Earl, founder and CEO of Planet Hollywood, was touring SDSU. Brian generously mentioned my interest to Mr. Earl, and before I knew it, I was beginning a series of interviews to be hired as the assistant general manager of Buca di Beppo in Las Vegas, which is owned by Planet Hollywood."

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"My close friends were the presidents of the other program student organizations, and our support of each other was ongoing. It was the time when I started to truly understand the philosophy of one large team working together as opposed to 'my team/your team.'"

Until that point, Kevin's experience with food and beverage had only been front-of-house, as a server, but his keen business sense and apparent strength as a leader made him the best candidate for the management job. "I worked as a busser at the Buca di Beppo in downtown San Diego to familiarize myself with the business and the culture I was about to step into. Only the general manager of the San Diego location knew I was going to be an assistant manager in Las Vegas," explains Kevin.

He proudly worked for Buca di Beppo in Las Vegas until 2012, when he was promoted

to General Manager for the restaurant in Anaheim, California from 2012–13. He also held the same position at the Glendale, Arizona location for a short time. In 2013, a friend and former colleague invited Kevin to Honolulu, Hawaii to interview for General Manager of Jimmy Buffett's Margaritaville at the Holiday Inn Waikiki Beachcomber Resort.

Kevin's work in Hawaii is what he feels he has been called to do. In 2014, Handcrafted Restaurants LLC took over the chain (now Jimmy Buffett's at the Beachcomber) and Kevin has played an integral role in successfully transitioning the restaurant to new ownership. He is proud to work in an environment that promotes professionalism while maintaining a strong family feel. Kevin does what he does best: he leads by example, learning everything he can about the food that is served and the practices of the kitchen. He takes his staff on farm tours and to auction to buy fish. He creates a team that empowers both front and back-of-house, and is in constant collaboration with the executive chef to build success for his employees while offering the best in customer service.

Working in different cities is something that Kevin credits to his success but it is his experience at the Payne School—particularly his studies with Professors Jeff Campbell and Lori Sipe—that played an integral role in his education and leadership training. "In understanding how best to create a balanced work environment in my restaurants, I have created the success in my professional and personal life that I have been striving for." 🍷



Kevin '10, pictured with his parents and younger brother.



Kevin '10 with staff members at Aloun Farms in Oahu.

**FACULTY FEATURE: LARRY BECK**

## Reinventing Success

**W**HAT DOES REINVENTING SUCCESS mean? For accomplished professor Dr. Larry Beck, it is the ongoing exploration and enhancement of the equally beloved components of teaching, research, and service that have built his career and his home at SDSU for 34 years.

Larry is an internationally recognized expert in the area of cultural and natural resource interpretation, and how this relates to sustainable tourism. He has received the Fellow Award from the National Association for Interpretation, its highest honor, for his instruction, research, and writing, which address optimal experience theory, communication theory, environmental interpretation, and the symbolism and management of protected areas. He has written more than 100 abstracts, articles, research papers, reviews, grants, and technical reports.

Larry is the author or co-author of four books in the field of interpretation. He is currently working on (updating and reinventing) a third edition of *Interpretation of Cultural and Natural Resources*, which will be published in 2017. To Larry, his publications are both a personal achievement and a win for the Payne School. “It means that our professors have a national and international presence in regards to our research and publication, and this widens our sphere of influence dramatically.” His book *Gifts of Interpretation: Fifteen Guiding Principles for Interpreting Nature and Culture* is used by the profession internationally and has been translated into Chinese. Larry’s writing is “widely adopted by state and federal agencies,” he explains, “including the ‘NASA-NPS Earth to Sky Project’ in which NASA scientists are working with National Park Service interpreters on

communicating issues associated with global climate change.”

As Professor and Advisor for the Outdoor Resource Management emphasis at the Payne School, his current teaching assignments focus on tourism in relationship to protected areas such as national parks and cross-cultural perspectives of tourism. Larry also serves on numerous university committees. His never-ending curiosity and love for helping others has brought life to a multitude of projects, programs, and research that have benefitted the Payne School, SDSU, and the global arena.

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“I am as enthused about teaching and learning as I was when I started more than 30 years ago. This work brings me overwhelming joy.”

For example, Larry helped to spearhead the online academics of the Payne School, which, with his colleagues, introduced online learning to SDSU as a whole. At its inception, Larry conducted research on whether technology was an effective teaching tool and would increase access to education for adult students. He is a published author on the subject, lectures on his findings about the effectiveness of online learning, and has received several awards for his teaching, most recently the 2013–14 distinguished faculty “Monty Award.”

Larry’s work in the advancement of online education generously aided in a reinvention of the HTM program to include a highly esteemed Master’s program for industry professionals. This program is almost fully conducted online, and Larry teaches two



of the required courses. “For our students, the HTM Master’s program means access to state-of-the-art technologies to enhance their learning experience.”

In addition to teaching, Larry has been co-investigator in a multimillion-dollar grant funded by the National Cancer Institute, under the National Institutes of Health, that examines sun safety precautions in outdoor recreation pursuits at resorts throughout America. This study, the results of which will be published in many academic hospitality, interpretation, public health, and medical journals, will ultimately influence health issues in hospitality settings in this country and around the world. “This grant has aided in firmly establishing SDSU as a major research institute, and I am honored to participate in this critical work,” says Larry. For more information, visit [gosunsmart.org](http://gosunsmart.org).

Overall, Larry loves paying forward his accomplishments and experience. “For the students and faculty I work with, it means that we have someone who has been around a while in a position to assist others who are striving to be successful at this university. For me, it means that I am as enthused about teaching and learning as I was when I started more than 30 years ago. This work brings me overwhelming joy.”

“But perhaps my greatest joy is in the success of my students, and I relish the idea that three of my former students—Jason Hemmens, Eric Blehm, and Carol Morris—whom I consider dear friends, share this issue of the newsletter with me.” ●



Larry exploring Zion National Park



# Success in the Family

“Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery.”

—Charles Caleb Colton

**S**INCE 2001, THE PAYNE SCHOOL HAS had the pleasure of educating siblings, and parents and their children, with our programs. It is not only a compliment to the school to have made the positive impact on our students that draws other family members to follow in their footsteps; it is the most sincere form of validation of our success.

Thank you to our Payne School families for sharing their stories of accomplishment!



Sheila (RTM '82) and Tom Grieco (RTM '81) met while studying recreational administration. Their love of the outdoors brought them together, and they look back fondly on their days at SDSU, attending classes with beloved professor Gene Lamke and working with children at outdoor camps and elementary school programs. Sheila worked for many years as a tour guide at SeaWorld and for the City of Poway in the parks and



Professor Gene Lamke, Lauren Grieco '15, Tom Grieco '81, Sheila Grieco '82

recreation department. Tom decided to pursue a more analytical educational path. He received his MBA from the University of San Diego, worked for 13 years at Rohr Inc. in finance and program administration, and is currently employed at Qualcomm Inc. where he has worked for nearly 20 years and is currently in its intellectual property department.

When it came time for their daughter, Lauren (RTM '15), to attend college, the Payne School was the obvious choice, but only after she discovered it on her own. “I was originally a marketing major,” says Lauren. “It was not for me, so while I was looking through the SDSU catalog for a new academic path, I found recreation. After reviewing what the program entailed, it became the obvious choice for me.” Lauren has done impressive internship work with the Brail Institute and Coronado Community Center, where she is still employed in operations. “Tom and I are very proud of Lauren’s accomplishments and her hard work to achieve her degree at a school we all hold near and dear to our hearts,” says Sheila. “We are very impressed with the leadership skills she learned and practiced during the program, and we are happy she found a major that suited her personality so well.”



Brothers Robert (RTM '05) and Tucker Baksa (RTM '07) grew up in Gilroy, California where they shared a love of sports and the outdoors. Their father was a city manager, and they were involved in parks and



Robert Baksa '05 and his wife, Casey, with their World Series rings.

recreation for their city at a young age. “This was a formative experience that we can not stress enough,” says Robert. “Tucker and I were refs, coaches, therapeutic coaches for senior citizens...we did it all.”

“When I attended SDSU I was constantly telling Tucker about how much I loved the program,” says Robert. “I worked with the SDSU women’s basketball team and worked on equestrian therapy with children. I worked for the City of Coronado with their youth programs. When you are in school you do not know where you are headed exactly,



Lauren '15 and her parents



Tucker Baksa '07

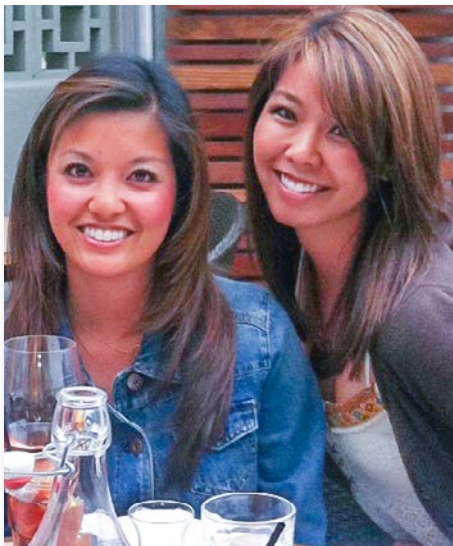
but you take in what you know and apply it wherever possible.”

“I had the advantage of being the little brother,” says Tucker. “Witnessing Robert’s love of SDSU, the Payne School, and his internship opportunities helped me make an informed decision.” Tucker enjoyed his class work, especially with Professor Gene Lamke, and loved his Recreation Facility Management internship at the Coronado Community Center.

The Baksa Brothers have gone on to find great success. Both received their Master of Arts in Sports Management from the University of San Francisco, and their careers in recreational and sports management led them to working in professional sports. Today, Robert is the Player and Community Relations Manager for the San Francisco Giants, and Tucker is the Youth Sports Coordinator for the San Francisco 49ers. “We take pride in giving SDSU a good name,” says Tucker.



Brianne Doherty (HTM ‘07) and Carissa Bulatao (HTM ‘09) have always had a passion for hospitality. “I fell into the HTM program because biology was not for me,” shares Brianne, “but [hospitality] was something that was always of interest.” Brianne enjoyed an overseas internship in Greece and began her career with The Fairmont Grand Del Mar as a Human Resources Intern. Brianne is now the National Sales Manager for the property.



Brianne Doherty ‘07 and Carissa Bulatao ‘09



Renee ‘16 and Regina Estacio ‘13

Brianne co-started the Meeting and Event Student Association (MESA) for the Payne School.

Carissa, who became an event coordinator of MESA while a student, considers it wonderful to have spent two years at SDSU at the same time as her sister. “It helps form a very strong bond,” she says. Carissa found success in her internship and post-graduation work in meeting and event planning at The Lodge at Torrey Pines. After working for Festivities Catering as an Event Manager, she is now the District Operations Training Manager for Chuze Fitness. “We are thankful for the wonderful professors we had, like Lori Sipe, and the networking opportunities the program has afforded us.”



Regina Estacio (HTM ‘13) is an example of professional success for her sister, Renee, who is currently a student in the HTM program. Regina participated in the Disney College Program, was an intern for Marriott International in Huntington Beach, California for her summer program, and last year began the Marriott Voyage Program as a Food and Beverage Manager for the J.W. Marriott in San Francisco.

“Having the example and support of my sister has been invaluable,” says Renee. “My discipline is in Restaurant Management, and as I look at what I would like to do specifically within restaurants, my sister has provided me with tremendous advice in networking.” Regina adds, “I love that attending the Payne School has brought us closer as sisters.”



Kelly Sprauge ‘05

Kelly Sprauge (HTM ‘05) and Michael Cochran (HTM ‘04) are not only siblings, they are best friends who share a love of sales. Growing up in Walnut Creek, California, they both had a propensity for hospitality and entertainment. Kelly planned her school’s proms, and Michael was dancing in a hip-hop troop and had aspirations of owning his own club.

“I received information in the mail about the HTM program and thought it would be a good fit,” says Kelly. “I loved the program and found such value in the internship program. I discovered my passion for sales while working at the Catamaran Resort & Spa and The



Michael Cochran ‘04



Westin Gaslamp, and would share my experiences with Michael.”

“I knew from Kelly’s happiness with the HTM program that it would be a terrific fit for me,” says Michael. Both have had exceedingly successful careers since graduating. Michael worked at a myriad of properties around San Diego, received three promotions while at the Hilton San Diego Resort, and is now Associate Director of Sales for the Hyatt Regency Mission Bay. Kelly also worked for many years at the Hilton San Diego Resort as a Sales Manager and Associate Director of Sales, and now loves her job as Regional Sales Manager for The Noble House Hotels and Resorts. “I feel lucky that everywhere I have worked, I have worked with amazing teams,” says Kelly. “It has been fun working with Kelly professionally. We support each other one hundred percent,” says Michael.



Jason '06 and Eric Girard '09

Hailing from Victorville, California, Eric (HTM '09) and Jason Girard (HTM '07) feed off each other and have a friendly competition but always help each other out. Growing up traveling with their family, they both grew to love the hotel industry and felt that the Payne School was the best place for them academically and experientially. “We missed going to school together by six months, but we lived together and discussed the HTM program constantly,” says Jason.

The drive and ambition they each possess is undeniably genetic. Jason, who knew he wanted to be in business, explored working in concerts and casinos but focused his career on hotels. Payne School Director Carl Winston convinced Eric to stay in hotels while working at Live Nation Entertainment

in operations. Today, Eric is the Group Sales Manager for Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide in Plano, Texas. This comes after a successful career track in sales with HEI Hotels & Resorts throughout California and Texas.

Jason is the Area Director for Choice Hotels International based in Omaha, Nebraska. He previously worked in operations and management for Marriott International and Westmont Hospitality Group. “We both took much away from the HTM program and thank professors such as Jeff Campbell and Lori Sipe for their guidance.”



Jessica '10 and Olivia Johnson '15

Jessica Johnson (HTM '10) could not be prouder of her sister, Olivia (HTM '15). Olivia is currently working in New York City in Starwood’s Management Training Program (see “Success in the City”). “I am so proud of

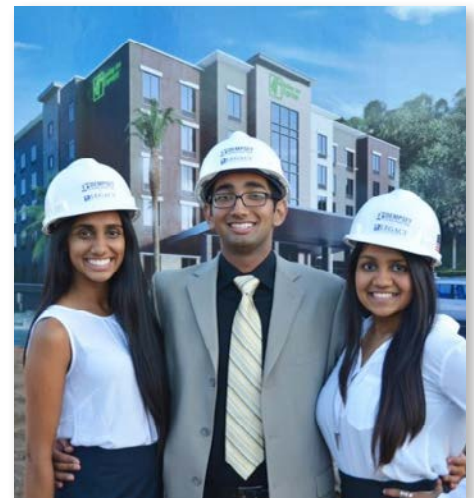


Jessica Johnson '10

Olivia, she is amazing. She would be where she is with or without me.”

Jessica learned quickly while attending the HTM program that she had a knack and love for human resources. While interning at Hotel Parisi in La Jolla, California, she touched on every facet of the business. After graduation, she entered the Starwood Management training program at the St. Regis Hotel in San Francisco. When the Associate Director of Human Resources was called away on inter-hotel task force, Jessica filled the position. Her success in that role landed her the job of Human Resources Manager at The Rancho Bernardo Inn before becoming Director of Human Resources at the W San Diego Hotel. She recently left the W to become Director of Human Resources for the St. Regis Aspen Resort in Aspen, Colorado.

“Witnessing my sister’s success inspired me to join the HTM family,” says Olivia. “My sister and I are thankful for the teachers who have shaped our success.”



Aarti '18 and Pooja Patel '17 with their brother, Darshan.

Aarti (HTM '18) and Pooja Patel (HTM '17) joined the Payne School for formal training that would complement their valuable practical experience gained through working within their parents’ management company, Hotel Investment Group. They strive to be at the forefront of the ever-growing hospitality industry in order to evolve their parent’s company to greater heights.



Aarti is an Operations Manager and Pooja is the Director of Brand Marketing. Aarti wants to delve into the food and beverage component of the industry to diversify the company's portfolio. Pooja on the other hand is in charge of the marketing, design, and development of their new boutique hotel brand, Lifestyle Hotels. "The program has been transformative for both of us," says Aarti.



Greg '17 and Anastasia Papadin '15

Anastasia (HTM '15) and Greg Papadin (HTM '17) credit traveling around the world with their family for why they both decided on hospitality careers. They both love their shared time at the Payne School.

"I think that working in the boutique hotel environment is more culturally fitting for what I am seeking professionally," explains Greg. "I worked for three years at McArthur Place Hotel in Sonoma, California prior to attending the HTM program. I have come to appreciate that specialized service throughout my studies."

"I am an Account Executive for Paula LeDuc Fine Catering in the San Francisco Bay Area," says Anastasia. "As I fine tune the direction I would like to go, I truly appreciate the support of professors like Lisa DeFino. I am thankful for how much they care."



Tarisha (HTM '09) and Riya Patel (HTM '11) grew up in the hospitality industry. Their parents launched Advanced Management Investments in 1989. The sisters saw the value of attending the HTM program as a means to help their family business and build their own careers.

Tarisha is now the Director of Sales and Marketing and Riya is the Director of Regional Operations. "What makes our family's company so successful is that we are adaptable to the constantly growing environment," says Riya. Both found their academic internships with Marriott International were vital in helping them grow in a way that was beneficial to their family business. "The networking opportunities that have come about from being an HTM alum have been so rewarding," says Tarisha.



Amanda Morad (HTM '07) forged the path for her cousins, Mary (HTM '11) and Sara Springer (HTM '15), in their family's legacy at the Payne School. "I began as a business major but switched to the HTM program," says Amanda. "The small group projects fit my learning style and the professors set the students up for success." Amanda worked at the MGM Hotel in Las Vegas as a student, and was offered a management position at The Fish Market upon graduating. For the



Riya '11 and Tarisha Patel '09

past two years, Amanda has served as Restaurant Manager for Stone Brewing World Bistro and Gardens at Liberty Station.

"I found Amanda's experience in the HTM program inspiring, so it was a natural fit for me," says Mary. After a successful career in hotel management with Omni Los Angeles, Mary now works for Brad Metzger Restaurant Solutions in Los Angeles as a recruiter.

Sarah, who graduated this year, has accepted a Manager in Training position with Hyatt in San Antonio. "Mary and Amanda's career advice has been invaluable. It has been such a benefit having had them attend the same program." ●



Siblings Sara '15 and Mary Springer '11 and their cousin Amanda Morad '07 with Payne School Director Carl Winston



## ALUMNI FEATURE: ERIC BLEHM RTM '94 AND CAROL MORRIS RTM '99

# Wildly Successful

"I only went out for a walk and finally concluded to stay out till sundown, for going out, I found, was really going in."

—John Muir, naturalist, author, environmental philosopher

**O**CCASIONALLY OUR PATHS CROSS with those who unknowingly, humbly, show us that success is generated from the inside out. They measure their greatest achievements by the geography they traverse or the stories they share.

This can be said for Eric Blehm (RTM '94) and Carol Morris (RTM '99), two alumni whom the Payne School is fortunate to call family. They, through the most unique and unassuming of ways, are wildly successful.



Eric Blehm '94

"A lecture of Professor Larry Beck's used to run through my head. He said there are two things in life: your job and your work. Your job pays your rent and your work is what fulfills you. I wanted my job and my work to be the same thing."

Eric Blehm's life shifted substantially at the age of 17 when his mother was diagnosed with cancer. Prior to her passing, she mandated her son to "do it now." This sage advice influenced every decision Eric has made personally and professionally ever since.

In 1987, Eric, who was born and raised in San Gabriel, California, discovered a love of snowboarding. After moving to Breckenridge, Colorado in support of this passion,

he struck up a conversation with a man who shared his chair lift one day. The man told Eric that he was a travel writer and majored in journalism during college. For Eric, the notion that he could write about what he loves—snowboarding and the outdoors—took hold of him, and played a major role in his academic decisions when a knee injury prevented him from pursuing a career as a professional snowboarder.

Eric graduated from SDSU in 1994 with a major in journalism and a minor in outdoor resource management. During his senior year, he took a part-time job working for *TransWorld SNOWboarding Magazine*. Within a short period of time after graduating, Eric was not only a full-time writer at *TransWorld*, he was its editor-in-chief.

Although Eric has steered his career using journalism as his North Star, his love of the outdoors has influenced its course. "While I was in my Wilderness 101 class with Professor Dan Dustin, I became interested in the work of Edward Abbey and John Muir. My appreciation for the outdoors—how therapeutic and cleansing it is—led me to take on amazing adventures like hiking the John Muir Trail and snowboarding all over the world. A lecture of Professor Larry Beck's used to run through my head. He said there are two things in life: your job and your work. Your job pays your rent and your work is what fulfills you. I wanted my job and my work to be the same thing."

Eric has been exceedingly successful in doing just that. He put his two disciplines of study together to write *The Last Season*, the compelling real-life tale of legendary Park



Eric '94 with Professor Dr. Larry Beck at the Arts and Letters building at SDSU post-guest lecture.

Ranger Randy Morgenson who mysteriously disappeared while patrolling in the Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Park. The book won the National Outdoor Book Award and Discover Writer Award, and *Outside Magazine* recognized it as one of the top ten adventure stories of all time.

Eric is equally interested in and respectful of those who serve in the United States military, and he is dedicated to telling their stories. He wrote the *New York Times* best-sellers *The Only Thing Worth Dying For*, about the Green Berets who fought alongside Afghan leader Amhid Karzi against the Taliban, and *Fearless*, the story of Navy SEAL Adam Brown—which is currently under consideration as a feature length movie. Most recently, Eric published *Legend*, an account of the U.S. Army's 240th Assault Helicopter Company and Green Beret staff sergeant Roy Benavidez rescue of a Special Forces team trapped behind enemy lines.

Although Eric pursues his career and life with an intensity that is not met by many (he was the first journalist to accompany and keep pace with an elite Army Ranger unit on a training mission), there is a remarkable calm about him. His passion for the outdoors keeps him grounded and



*Legend* is Eric's most recent novel.

centered, poised for new adventures in storytelling. The latest? Self-publishing the children's book series *Molly the Owl*, inspired by his own children.



Carol Morris' life philosophy is very clear: there are no do-overs. "Live your life so that when you look back, you want to do it all over again."

Carol's passion for life and the outdoors is inspiring and is something that she has always possessed. Born in Colorado Springs, Colorado and raised in Davis, California, in a solar house, she graduated in 1999 with a Bachelor of Science in outdoor resource management and was that year's Outstanding Graduating Senior. Carol had one goal professionally: to be a Park Ranger. While working in a restaurant in high school she became friendly with some Park Rangers who were in town assisting with fire containment. Hearing about their love of their careers made a lasting impact on Carol.

After graduating from SDSU, she completed a 500-hour internship with the National Park Service. A seasonal temporary position opened at Cabrillo National Monument, which eventually led to a permanent position as a Park Ranger. Her favorite work was in interpretation. "Interpretation is defined as a means to communicate that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and the meanings inherent in the resource," say Carol. "In other words, I was trying to get people to relate to and have a deeper appreciation for their surroundings, whether it be an old lighthouse, a scenic natural area, or a statue in honor of a historic figure. I wrote articles and gave talks that helped cultivate a sense of stewardship to those who visited the park. There was nothing better than

watching people's 'light' turn on when the connection was successful."

Although Carol loved her work as a Park Ranger, she felt that she might not be realizing her full potential professionally. Then, Carol's life unexpectedly changed forever: she was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma.

Carol battled cancer with the same strength and grace with which she took on every previous challenge in her life. Through her experience of treatment and healing she developed an unwavering appreciation for the science that saved her. Compelled to give back, Carol raised tens of thousands of dollars for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society (LLS) over the past decade. She has completed at least 15 endurance events to raise funds for cancer research including full and half-marathons, 100-mile bike rides, and a triathlon. Carol has also served on the Board of Directors of the LLS.

In defining the next phase of her career, Carol made doing what she loves a priority. Determined to stay in San Diego because of all it offers environmentally, Carol researched the best companies to work for in the area and has taken on a successful career in the education finance industry. Currently an executive with FACTS Management Company, Carol meets with schools to advise on current admissions/enrollment, billing and collection, and financial aid practices. "My expertise ranges from enrollment, accounts receivable processes and tuition policies, to cost reduction (including green initiatives), and providing an improved parent payment experience. I love the satisfaction I receive from my work. The opportunity to provide peace-of-mind for others is invaluable. I am also thankful that it provides the means for me to enjoy San Diego and all of its beauty." ●



Carol '99 and her dog, Shona.



## MASTERS PROGRAM ALUMNUS FEATURE: TODD RENNER RTM MS '15

# Mastering Success

**C**HEF TODD RENNER'S menu of academic and professional achievements is impressive and adventurous, similar to the food he creates. A native of San Diego but a man of the world, Todd completed his master's degree at the Payne School in May 2015. It is the most recent of eight degrees and certificates he holds.



Todd Renner MS '15

experience lead to culinary studies throughout Europe and Costa Rica.

In pursuit of further understanding the culture behind the food he cooked, Todd received a Bachelor of Arts in European Humanities from SDSU. He also received a certificate in meeting and event planning through the extended studies program at the Payne School. Post-graduation, Todd received a credential from the Master Culinary and Pastry

Program at the Italian Culinary Institute for Advanced Culinary, Pastry Arts, and Wine, in Italy.

"When I returned to San Diego in 2010 from my master baking program, I sent out over 100 emails in search of employment. I was fortunate to hear from Chef Olivier Bioteau of Farm House Café, who took me under his wing for a year." Todd later worked at the Grant Grill in San Diego's historic U.S. Grant Hotel, and then made the impressive move to foodie favorite Blind Lady Alehouse, where he served as both Sous and Executive Chef from 2011-14. Here, Todd began to stretch his culinary wings, creating a playful menu that included some of his favorite concoctions, like handcrafted barbecue sauces and mustards.

While he was working at Blind Lady Alehouse he met Tender Greens Chef Peter Balistreri, whose specialty salami was on Todd's menu. They became friends, and in 2014, Todd became Executive Chef and General Manager of Tender Greens in downtown San Diego. Todd has found much success in leading this beloved eatery; he recently created a



Todd's delectable breakfast menu for Tender Greens Downtown San Diego.

breakfast menu for the location, filling the need to provide fresh farm-to-table options for morning patrons.

With a graduate degree and an exceedingly successful restaurant to his credit, Todd stands out as an exemplary talent and leader in the culinary community. Now he has even more achievement to add to his roster; in addition to downtown San Diego, he recently became Executive Chef and General Manager of the Tender Greens in downtown San Francisco.

"I owe so much to the Payne School master's program. It hands-down made me a better leader and opened me up to understanding the balance of all my responsibilities. My professors were open, amazing, and true mentors." ●

"I wanted a strong understanding of the business side of the culinary world," explains Todd. "It is imperative to how I am navigating my career."

"I wanted a strong understanding of the business side of the culinary world," explains Todd. "It is imperative to how I am navigating my career."

Todd grew up with a love of food and cooking. In 2003, while studying culinary and pastry arts at Grossmont College, he received his certificate in Italian cuisine at the Grand Hotel Portovenere in Italy, under the tutelage of Chef Paulo Monti. This integral



Todd Renner, Tresa Hightower, Leslie Yu, Alexandra Borrelli, Jennifer Parker, Darcie McBeth, Jennifer Hecker, Tracy Judge, and Vince LaRuffa at 2015 master's graduation.

**ALUMNUS AND PROGRAM LECTURER FEATURE: JASON HEMMENS RTM '01**

## Double the Success

**L**ECTURER AND PROGRAM ALUMNUS Jason Hemmens' (RTM '01) academic and professional successes were first fostered on the sports fields of northern Illinois.

Native to that area, Jason experienced first hand the value of working to serve the community and the pride it brings. "I was a sports kid and spent many years on recreational teams. When it came time to get a summer job, I would work for the recreational department mowing lawns and keeping score of softball games. That environment was home to me."

Attending SDSU for undergraduate school was a natural fit. Jason loved the area, and, in 1997, he found that the recreational administration program opened a world of possibility for working in a profession he was so fond of. "I had my career 'aha' moment in Professor Jim Lustig's REC 305 class. I was presented with the opportunity to go on an Aztec Adventure hiking trip in the southern Sierras and write a paper about the experience instead of taking a final exam. I thought to myself, 'This is what I want to do.'"

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"I hope my story and knowledge inspires my students as much as professors like Larry Beck and Gene Lamke inspired me."



Jason '01 with his wife, Jennifer, and daughter, Isabella.



Jason Hemmens '01

Participating in fieldwork with Aztec Adventures—which provides the SDSU community with the opportunity to experience outdoor challenges that aim to promote personal growth, health and wellness, leadership, relationship building, and environmental responsibility—played a paramount role in establishing his vocation. His undeniable commitment to community service earned Jason a full scholarship to enroll in the graduate assistant program at Aurora University in Illinois. There, he received his Master of Science in Recreation Administration and was able to use his advanced degree to further broaden his career.

For over 17 years, Jason has developed innovative recreation programs and facilities for a broad range of constituents in San Diego County, beginning with the implementation of an outdoor adventure program that included 25 trips annually throughout California. After serving as the San Diego County Department of Parks and Recreation Chief of Development and Chief of North Operations, Jason advanced to Deputy Director in 2014. He is responsible for 50,000 acres of parkland, 350 miles of trails, all outdoor venues, and a full and part-time staff of 230. "What

I love about my work is that it provides the opportunity to build something great for the benefit of others."

Jason is able to give back academically as well, and the Payne School is fortunate to have his expertise available for its students. A lecturer for the RTM program since 2008, Jason is fond of sharing his experience and assisting in the growth of future recreational leaders. "I hope my story and knowledge inspires my students as much as professors like Larry Beck and Gene Lamke inspired me." ●



Jason '01 with his daughter, Isabella.



## INTERNATIONAL ALUMNAE FEATURE: LUDIVINE MAS HTM '13 AND HARUKA MATSUNO HTM '10

### International Success

**P**AYNE SCHOOL ALUMNAE LUDIVINE “Ludi” Mas (HTM ‘13) and Haruka Matsuno (HTM ‘10) ignited flames of success in their home countries and then fanned them on a global scale.



Ludi grew up cooking with her grandmother in Paris. “On summer holidays in neighboring Burgundy, I would watch the hustle and bustle of the kitchen staff at my family’s favorite restaurant and daydream of running my own some day.”

“I went to school for my degree to understand the business elements of hospitality. In addition to the fantastic course work at the Payne School, I found my internship experiences to be vital to my success and building confidence in running my own business.”

In 2008, after receiving her associate’s degree in Culinary Arts and Restaurant Management from l’Ecole Hôtelière de la rue Mederic in Paris, Ludi moved to San Diego with her husband, Guillaume Ryon. Inspired by her previous work as a cook and a server at Chef Guy Savoy’s Le Chiberta, Ludi wanted to bring a slice of her native country to her new home. She knew focusing on hotel management would provide her with the training necessary to foster her entrepreneurial aspirations.

Ludi graduated cum laude in 2013 with a Bachelor of Science in Hospitality Administration and Management. The recipient of the HTM Excellence – Emphasis in Hotels award, Ludi was a Hotel and Restaurant Foundation Scholarship student during her academic tenure. From a front desk and guest services internship at The Standard Hotel in New York City to an accounting



Ludi Mas ‘13

internship at The Westin St. Francis on Union Square in San Francisco, Ludi took her academic and experiential pursuits very seriously. She grew fond of working for Starwood Hotels while in San Francisco, and a human resources internship at the historic

U.S. Grant Hotel in downtown San Diego prior to her senior year of college led to a front desk and PBX position at The Westin San Diego Gaslamp. Post-graduation, Ludi was a Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide Revenue Management Trainee.



Ludi ‘13 and her husband, Guillaume, at the San Diego Magazine 2015 Best Restaurant award ceremony.

"I went to school for my degree to understand the business elements of hospitality. In addition to the fantastic course work at the Payne School, I found my internship experiences to be vital to my success and building confidence in running my own business."

Her confidence and determination paid off. In 2013, Ludi, Guillaume, and pastry chef Jean Francois Fay, launched the French bakery La Parfait Paris in downtown San Diego. Today, it is the winner of the 2015 San Diego Magazine Best Restaurant award in the bakery category. As Chief of Operations for La Parfait Paris, Ludi has fully embraced the opportunity to bring a taste of Paris to San Diego and to provide delectable desserts to some of the hotels where she worked during her time at SDSU.



Haruka fell in love with event production when she was a hip-hop dancer in high school in Japan. She was less interested in performing than in the intricate workings behind the scenes. She pursued that interest

in college, beginning as a recreation major at Grossmont College in San Diego. After learning about the Payne School's HTM program, she decided to transfer.

**"I took away the value of networking and the knowledge that you get back tenfold what you put in to anything."**

She embraced her new academic home as a student advisor to promote the Payne School. A Dean's List student—who would go on to win International Student of the Year for the school at her 2010 graduation—Haruka began to experience life in hotels and hospitality. She held a winter externship at the W Hotel and a guest services position at The Westgate Hotel, where she experienced many facets of the industry, from front desk to PBX to night audit. However, as the Operations Intern at Bollotta Entertainment in 2009, she confirmed her calling. "I knew that

no matter the work I took on, event production must play a primary role."

To combine her old love of events with her newfound interest in hotels, Haruka worked at The Westin San Diego Gaslamp

Quarter as a Convention Services Coordinator. She took her clients from the sales process through event execution. Haruka was with The Westin for a year before moving back to Japan when her student visa ended.

With success and experience to build on, Haruka's impressive background made her a quick hire with TOW, a Japanese-based marketing promotions company, where she was Assistant Director of the event productions team. She traveled domestically, designing and coordinating tradeshow booths and creating other marketing solutions for clients. She loved her work but longed for more international travel.

In 2014, Haruka joined Idea International in Osaka, Japan. The company demystifies exhibitions and trade fairs anywhere in the APAC region, including Australia and India, for clients, who are primarily U.S. Exhibit Houses who work with the end clients to meet their needs for any tradeshow/exhibition services. Haruka and her colleagues bring a knowledge of Asian culture and peace-of-mind in the production of their overseas events.

Haruka credits the Payne School for providing her with valuable tools in the classroom and through her internships. "I took away the value of networking and the knowledge that you get back tenfold what you put in to anything. Directors Carl Winston and Brian Blake have done a magnificent job at building a school that assists students with successful careers. I am so thankful to them." ●



Haruka Matsuno '10



Lobby of The Westgate Hotel, where Haruka credits learning many facets of the hospitality industry.



## ALUMNAE FEATURE: ALYSSA ANDREWS HTM '10, ELIDA ESPINOZA HTM '07, AND VERONICA POLNICK HTM '08

# Successfully Raising the Bar

**P**AYNE SCHOOL ALUMNAE ALYSSA Andrews '10, Elida Espinoza '07, and Veronica Polnick '08 chose careers practicing law. But, they credit their love of the hospitality industry and experiences in the HTM program for that choice.



"Payne School Director Carl Winston and Marriott Foundation Student Center for Professional Development Director Brian Blake sparked my burgeoning interest in the law," says Alyssa Andrews. "I attended an industry trade association lobbying event with them and was hooked, which surprised me because I thought I was going to be an event planner."

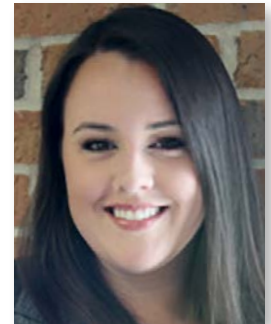
Alyssa graduated from SDSU with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and a Bachelor of Science in Hospitality and Tourism Management with an emphasis in meetings and events operations management.



Alyssa Andrews '10



Elida Espinoza '07



Veronica Polnick '08

Her internships with Marriott International throughout college provided a window on the event world, but the notion of practicing law was not an idea that was foreign to her.

"I was Professor Mark Testa's teaching assistant," she says. "He mentioned that I would occasionally steamroll people in conversation, which was useful in a career like law but something that should be tapered for hospitality." That drive and intensity earned Alyssa a spot on the Dean's List

while attending SDSU, and it led her to study England's legal system at Oxford University.

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"My hospitality background plays in to my legal career on a daily basis, and for that I am so grateful."

Alyssa graduated from Thomas Jefferson School of Law in 2013. While attending law school she brought her hospitality and business background to her work at the Small Business Law Center in the Community Economic Clinic. "Hospitality is phenomenal training for polishing an outgoing personality when interviewing for employment and meeting with clients." This asset also served her well during her employment as a Small Claims Court Mediator at the Superior Court of California – South County San Diego.

Upon graduation, Alyssa returned to her hometown of Palm Springs, California to be a law clerk for her father's attorney. A connection made while attending a wedding led to a position at Berman, Berman, Berman, Schneider & Lowary in Riverside, California. She is still there today, engaged in a successful career in insurance litigation and civil litigation.

"I'm able to combine all facets of my academic experience in my legal work, and meet with restaurants and hotels regularly on insurance claims. My hospitality background



Alyssa '10 at the PGA West Palmer Private Golf Course in La Quinta, CA.



Veronica '08 with her husband, David, and son, Davy.

plays in to my legal career on a daily basis, and for that I am so grateful.”



The intensity of a kitchen environment always excited Elida Espinoza. After she left her home in Tijuana, Mexico to attend SDSU, a major in business quickly shifted to a focus on restaurant management through the HTM program.

“Encouragement from professors like Jeff Campbell and Directors Carl Winston and Brian Blake made a huge impact on my confidence.”

Her internships throughout her undergraduate years, combined with encouragement from her professors, stretched her out of her comfort zone. “I am so thankful that I was pushed to excel in my English speaking and move beyond my shyness. Encouragement from professors like Jeff Campbell and Directors Carl Winston and Brian Blake made a huge impact on my confidence.”

Elida was a Food and Beverage Intern at the Courtyard by Marriott in downtown San Diego and at The Palm Restaurant. She accepted a summer position with MGM Grand in Las Vegas as the Entertainment Intern, and found that she thrived in the fast-paced environment. Post graduation, Elida participated in the management development

program at the La Jolla Marriott and then lived in San Antonio, Texas to open and work in operations for the Riverwalk Courtyard by Marriot.

Although Elida loved her work, she wanted to be closer to home. She took time off to spend with family and explore what was next for her. While working for Eurest Services in food and beverage management at Qualcomm, she considered options for obtaining an MBA or law degree. Her work in hospitality had exposed her to immigration issues, and she continually felt compelled to make a difference in this area.

Elida is now a member of the Class of 2016 at California Western School of Law in downtown San Diego. Her focus will be on immigration law, and she will begin a clinical internship in the field. “My current boss told me that he can teach anyone law but he cannot teach interpersonal connections. I credit my work in hospitality for building that strength.”



Elida Espinoza '07



Although it was not Veronica Polnick's plan to become an attorney, it now seems as if it is what she was destined to do.

“Every day there is something new to learn and experience. I could not be happier with what I do professionally.”

Veronica came to the Payne School to focus on restaurant management in the HTM program. She had always wanted to be a chef but was interested in business and knew she would want to earn a graduate degree. She was assertive in pursuing internship and employment opportunities, working as the Front Desk Supervisor at The Dana in San Diego and spending over a year in a management internship at Chili's, where she did a front of house rotation that included some management-related tasks. She worked in sales at several hotels owned by Starwood—her favorites were the historic U.S. Grant and the Horton Grand.

“I loved my work in hospitality, but after meeting my husband, who is a teacher, and getting married, I was not as in love with hospitality hours. The business law and hospitality law classes I took in college were among my favorites, and I decided that pursuing my juris doctor was the right decision for me.”

In fall 2008, Veronica began her studies at Thomas Jefferson School of Law in San Diego. She set out with the intention of studying copyright, trademark, and intellectual property but took a position with a law firm that handled mostly bankruptcies. She fell in love with the work and made it her specialty.

After moving to Houston with her husband, Veronica became an associate with a bankruptcy firm. Within a year, the owners sold it to her, and since 2013, Veronica has owned and operated The Polnick Law Firm. “Every day there is something new to learn and experience. I could not be happier with what I do professionally.”



## MARRIED ALUMNI: ERIC HTM '06 AND LAN GLENN HTM '06, DAN HTM '10 AND STEPHANIE PARKER HTM '09

### Marital Success

**T**HE LAW OF ATTRACTION STATES that “like attracts like.” As experience shows, people in the hospitality community, because of a natural tendency to be outgoing, radiate towards each other. Eric (HTM '06) and Lan Glenn (HTM '06), and Dan (HTM '10) and Stephanie Parker (HTM '09), found the five-star loves of their lives through hospitality.

“Lan and I met at a National Society for Minorities in Hospitality (NSMH) conference in Dallas, Texas,” says Eric. “I knew who she was from school, but I thought she was out of my league.” Eric, who was focusing on restaurant management, wanted to get to know the infamously studious Lan, hospitality major. It was an observant mutual friend, however, who facilitated the introduction. “Our friend told Eric that I wanted to dance with him at a party during the conference—a lie—so he approached me. It worked. We just celebrated our sixth wedding anniversary.”

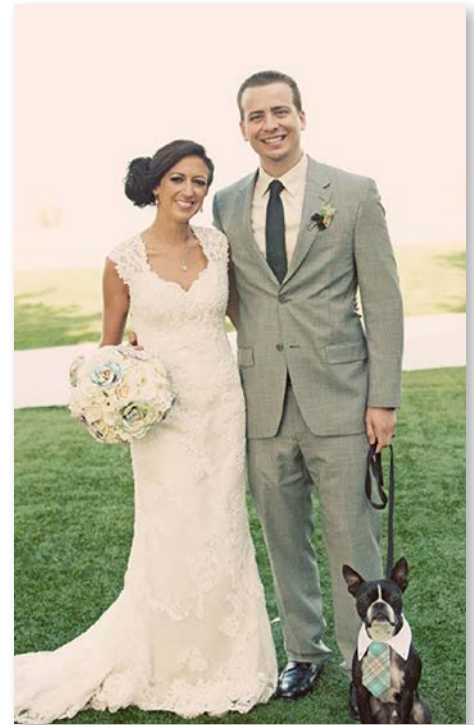
Eric, after working in restaurant management for several years, received his Master's degree in accounting and still consults for restaurants. Lan, who worked in hotels after graduation, is now enjoying the full-time job of being mom to their son, Liam, and daughter, Penelope. They reside in Riverside, California. “We look back on our days at the Payne School with such fondness,” says Lan.

Dan and Stephanie met at a student expo at SDSU. “I could not find my booth, and Dan handed me a flyer showing exactly what I was looking

for. We got to chatting, had lunch together that day and have been together ever since.” They have been married for the past three of their seven years together.

Creators of the Foodie organization for the Payne School, Stephanie and Dan have both enjoyed successful careers in the restaurant industry. After living in San Francisco for three years, they have returned to San Diego where Stephanie launched Epicurean San Diego, a touring company that promotes the most inspiring food and beverages south of Orange County. Dan works for L.A. Specialty, a distributor of wholesale produce and specialty items.

“The HTM program was the driving force to pursue our passions,” says Dan. “We think that now it is important to pursue what is important to us. We thank the Payne School for bringing us together and for teaching us to never be stagnant, to always learn.”



Stephanie '09 and Dan Parker '10



Eric '06 and Lan Glenn '06 with son, Liam, and daughter, Penelope.



**ALUMNI IN HOTELS: NICK HAFER AND NICOLE SPOTANSKI**

## Key to Success

**N**ICK HAFER (HTM '09) and Nicole Spotanski (HTM '12) have never played a small game professionally. Their key to success? Just go for it!



When speaking with Nick, one immediately recognizes that he is a hard worker and dedicated to excellence. A native Californian, Nick turned down the opportunity to attend prestigious culinary academy Johnson & Wales University for enrollment in the Payne School. "It was the right decision to make," says Nick. "I grew up cooking Greek, Italian, and Russian cuisine with my grandmothers, and although I love being in the kitchen, I knew studying the business side of hospitality was a better fit for me."

"I credit my success to the caring teachers of the Payne School and the amazing networking opportunities that have been extended by being a graduate."

Nick paid his way through college by working at The Prado Restaurant. When it became apparent that Nick's time out of the classroom would be better spent immersed in a hotel environment, Payne School Director Carl Winston encouraged him to make the jump. "Carl was very supportive, as were professors Jeff Campbell, Lori Sipe, and Mark Testa. Their kindness and encouragement have never been forgotten."

That jump led to a bright career with Omni Hotels. Starting his senior year as the "front desk dude" at Omni San Diego, Nick quickly excelled, holding positions as Front Desk Supervisor, Overnight Manager, and Assistant Front Desk Manager.

Nick continued his work within Omni Hotels by tackling several positions at Omni San



Nick Hafer '09

Francisco. As Housekeeping Manager, Director of Housekeeping, and Front Desk Director, Nick's experience broadened and strengthened. Then, The Epiphany, a Joie De Vivre Hotel in Palo Alto, California approached Nick in 2013 about working for them. He is now Assistant General Manager there, and he feels simply thrilled by the opportunity. "My work with Omni was wonderful, and I love my job, my boss, and my team at Epiphany. I credit my success to the caring teachers of the Payne School and the amazing networking opportunities that have been extended by being a graduate."



The Epiphany, a Joie De Vivre Hotel in Palo Alto, CA.



Nick Hafer '09





“No one gets as excited about empty spaces as I do,” says Nicole. A Coloradan with a formidable spirit, she began her undergraduate studies at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas in casino management but quickly learned it was not the career for her.

“Not sure what my next step should be, I returned home and worked in finance but kept feeling the pull towards event planning. My uncle was in San Diego for work and chatted with a front desk clerk at the hotel where he was staying. She mentioned that she was attending the HTM program at the Payne School. My uncle called me immediately and said ‘Nicole, you have to apply for this program.’” Within a few weeks, Nicole was headed to San Diego, determined to take part. She worked as a server and bartender, and took classes at Grossmont College to obtain transfer credits.

“We used to say, ‘Do it the HTM way—better than anyone expected.’ The HTM program’s rigor really exposed me to what working in the real world would be like.”

While attending SDSU, Nicole threw herself in to any practical application she could get her hands on. Her initial focus of study was in meetings and events, but after attending more classes she began to consider turning her focus to a hotel environment. She interned at the Catamaran Resort and Spa and was the San Diego Convention Center Event Management Intern. “I was also able to plan a military ball on my own at the Convention Center, which was a formative experience.”

“Professor Michael Corr facilitated a sales and marketing job for me at the San Diego



Nicole Spotanski '12

Country Club. It was a valuable opportunity because I learned that I did not want to work in sales. Equally as valuable was working part-time for CONNECT as a Program Administrator where I planned half-day professional development programs and assisted Program Managers with numerous events monthly.”

Prior to graduation from the Payne School in 2012, Nicole began a seven-interview process with Omni San Diego Hotel. From 2012–13, Nicole was a Catering and Convention Services Coordinator and a Leader in Development. Interested in experiencing a new city and the extensive process of opening a hotel, she worked as both a Catering Event Services Manager and a Convention Services Manager at the Omni Nashville Hotel from 2013–15. “Opening a hotel is an amazing opportunity,” says Nicole. “The learning curve is steep but very rewarding.”

Now Nicole calls Scottsdale, Arizona home, and she is the Convention Services Manager for Omni Scottsdale Resort & Spa at Montelucia. Nicole was interested in working there because of the capacity to work with larger groups at a smaller property than the previous 800-room Omni Nashville Hotel where she worked.

“I learned at the Payne School that it is important to go after what you want

professionally. Because hospitality is such a competitive career you have to strive to do your best and stand out through hard work and kindness. We used to say, ‘Do it the HTM way—better than anyone expected.’ The HTM program’s rigor really exposed me to what working in the real world would be like.”



Nicole '12 with her fiancé, Troy.



Nicole Spotanski '12

## 2015 GRADUATED HTM ALUMNAE:

**MARIANA BURKLE, DALIA GHANDOUR, OLIVIA JOHNSON, AND HAYLEY MORENO**

# Success in the City

**T**HERE IS NOTHING more empowering and exciting for a young professional than achieving big goals in a way that is even bigger fun. For newly minted, bright 2015 HTM alumnae Mariana Burkle, Dalia Ghandour, Olivia Johnson, and Hayley Moreno, the experience of a lifetime awaits them in The Big Apple.

The four graduates of the Payne School were selected, after completing a rigorous interview process, to participate in Starwood's Management Training Program at



Dalia Ghandour '15

hotels throughout New York City. They are working in the rooms division of four different properties, which includes front office and housekeeping management. The program combines practical



Mariana Burkle '15

experience with professional development for college graduates in the hospitality industry. The curriculum offers mentorship and training in operations and support departments. The length of the program varies depending on the discipline, and at the completion of the program, each participant is placed in a management position either at the hotel where they worked or another Starwood property. SDSU represents seven out of the 37 Starwood Management Candidates placed in May 2015, nearly 19% of total placements.

This group of burgeoning leaders is ecstatic about living in a city that is exceedingly

rich with opportunity and possibility.

Mariana Burkle is working at the W New York Hotel in Midtown Manhattan and cannot wait to experience what will be thrown her way. "I chose hospitality as a field of study based

on a romanticized picture I had of hotels, combined with the wonderful things I had heard about the HTM program. Through my work in the industry, I realized that like anything in life, there are challenges, and I fell in love with those challenges. There is also the thrill of meeting people from every culture and background; that makes this experience a joy to be a part of."

Dalia Ghandour will call the W New York Hotel in Times Square her professional home. "I realized early on that to grow one's career in hospitality, you have to be open to move anywhere. When I was on the New York City trip my junior year at the Payne School, I was selected to attend the Starwood Breakfast during the New York Hotel Show. I was impressed with Starwood and knew that it would be a company I would like to work for."

Olivia Johnson is looking forward to everything she will learn at the W New York Hotel in Union Square. "I am open to any opportunity that presents itself. My front desk experience during my internships at the Hyatt Regency La Jolla and U.S. Grant Hotel taught me to expect everything."

The Westin New York Grand Central Hotel is

where Hayley Moreno will spend her time. "I really like the culture of Starwood. I interned at the Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina, a Starwood property, my senior year at SDSU and participated in a one-day manager simulation at the W San Diego Hotel my sophomore year. I am thrilled to have this opportunity and to be in New York City."

Mariana, Dalia, Olivia, and Hayley thank Payne School Director Carl Winston, J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation Student Center for Professional Development Director Brian Blake, and Associate Director Christina Jeffries, along with their supportive professors, for the peace of mind and encouragement they provided

throughout the rigorous selection process. This team of women looks forward to sharing their experiences with the students of the HTM program.



Olivia Johnson '15, Hayley Moreno '15, and Dalia Ghandour '15 in New York City.



Olivia Johnson '15



A lifetime of experience awaits these four graduates of the Payne School in the great city of New York.



## Road to Success

"It is a challenge to find a hotel in San Diego County that does not have a Payne School alumni presence," says Christina Jeffries (HTM '08), Associate Director of the J. Willard and Alice S. Marriott Foundation Student Center for Professional Development. "This means that there is a great support system for our students when they venture into the work force."



Rachel Lampke '17 at the top of Westin Seattle's 40 story tower.

**C**HRISTINA WORKS TIRELESSLY alongside Director Brian Blake to ensure that HTM students are provided with options to fulfill their work and internship requirements while in the program. Requirements are rigorous and provide an outstanding opportunity for experiential learning. Monica Haleh (HTM '10), Owner of Create Events, credits her success to the program: "When I was at SDSU, I interned for both a hotel and a wedding planner. Before doing these internships, I was unsure of the direction I wanted to go in with HTM. I knew I liked events but could not pinpoint what I wanted to do. After the internships, I realized my passion for weddings and special events, which led me to where I am today."

Freshman and sophomores are required to gain a total of 400 hours of paid hospitality experience in an area they would like to explore for their career. The work must be verifiable and relevant in order to be admitted in the major their junior year. "I encourage students to use this opportunity as a means to hone in on the direction they would like to take their career."

Juniors enroll in HTM 398, which is a 300 hour paid internship in their specific career emphasis of meetings and events, hotels, restaurants, and tribal gaming. Hotel and events students must work in the front desk department of a hotel in

order to be exposed to all facets of hotel management. Restaurant students work in area restaurants and tribal gaming students work in tribal casinos. A position may last anywhere between six-12 months and is typically 20 hours per week. "Most are employed during their entire junior year benefiting the hotel, restaurant, or tribal casino with a motivated employee and providing the student with a true work experience. During summer, students may be able to work full-time and they may also complete their internship anywhere in the world as long as the experience is relevant to the curriculum." This past year students participated in programs at the Hilton La Jolla Torrey Pines, Hyatt La Jolla, The Lodge at Torrey Pines, Marriott Marquis, Omni San Diego, and Sheraton Harbor Island.

Rachel Lampke (HTM '17) raves about her summer internship experience: "My internship at the Westin Seattle gave me many opportunities, but the two most important were expanding my professional network and enhancing my personal growth. I now have mentors in a different city whom I can reach out to in the future regarding my career. At the beginning of the internship, I had only been to Seattle one other time. Being in an unfamiliar city taught me how to be self reliant and resourceful. Overall, participating in my summer internship

helped me develop personally and professionally."

Seniors enroll in HTM 498, which is a 300 hour paid position that puts the student in the direct area of their specific career goals. Students complete a project during their internship, which directly benefits the employer, and present on their work to the class. Emphasis is placed on hotel operations, restaurant operations, tribal gaming operations, or meetings and events. Brittany Miller (HTM '15) worked her senior year with Create Events as an Assistant Wedding Coordinator and is working towards promotion to Wedding Planner with the company. "I love the time I have spent learning and working in a field that I adore, and the opportunities it is providing me for my future."

Christina is proud of the Student Center's achievements and reflects on what makes it successful: "Time is in the school's favor. Students are ambassadors for the HTM program and the alumni working in the industry are helpful in providing opportunities for our students, like Monica has provided for Brittany. In addition, the economy is stronger now, which creates more opportunities for our students."

If you are interested in participating in the Student Center's efforts, please contact Christina Jeffries at 619-594-0390 or [cjeffries@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:cjeffries@mail.sdsu.edu).

# Center Updates

## Center for Surf Research (CSR)

**I**N OCTOBER 2014, THE BEAUTIFUL Mingei Museum in Balboa Park opened its Surf Craft Exhibition to the Center for Surf Research where we presented an evening mini-conference titled “The Audacity of Stoke” to approximately 100 attendees. The Director of SDSU Housing Eric Hansen presented the partnership between SDSU Housing and CSR in developing the surf and sustainability theme for the newly renovated Zura Residence Hall. The hall now features outside lockers and wash down areas for surfboards and wetsuits, a huge surf mural by local surf artist Andy Davis, and more than 50 sustainable surfboards constructed from non-toxic materials as art/light installations throughout the building.

In November 2014, CSR Director Jess Ponting was named one of 16 “Agents of Change for Ocean Protection” by Surfer Magazine alongside the likes of Patagonia founder Yvon Chouinard. In December 2014, STOKE certified a sustainability certification for surf and snow resorts developed by former CSR intern Carl Kish (RTM ‘13), certified the Turtle Bay Resort on the North Shore of Oahu as was featured on the World Surf League webcast of the Billabong Pipe Masters, which reached millions of viewers around the world. In March 2015, STOKE certified



Redfrog Beach Isla Bastimentos, Panama

the Tavarua Resort in Fiji and was again promoted during the World Surf League Fiji Pro to millions of global viewers.

In 2014/2015 the Center for Surf Research led study abroad trips on sustainable surf tourism management to Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Bali for more than 60 students and supplied travel scholarships for a number of those students. CSR has also provided research scholarships for a post-doctoral researcher and two graduate students, including Kelly Salmons, an RTM graduate now completing a Master’s degree in Geography looking at the efficacy of World Surfing Reserves in Santa Cruz, Malibu, and Huanchaco, Peru. We established the International Association of Surfing Academics which now has more than 60 members from 12 countries, many of whom are attending the Sept 19th & 20th conference we are staging titled “Sustainable Stoke: Transitions to Sustainability in the Surfing World”. The conference reflects the title of

a book the Center for Surf Research released in partnership with the Plymouth University Surfing and Sustainability Research Group (which was inspired by the CSR in 2012). The book, Sustainable Stoke, includes more than 40 contributors, from the CEO of Quiksilver, President of the Surf Industry Manufacturers Association and International Surfing Association, CEO of Surfrider, many world surfing champions, academics, and non-profit organization founders.



Allie Borrelli ‘13, Dohney Days Festival



Michael Vaca ‘14, Marine Biologist, two time world champion Tom Carroll, Dr. Jess Ponting at Catiet Mentawai Islands, Indonesia



In addition to Sustainable Stoke, the CSR is also under contract with Routledge to produce a more academic leaning edit book on surfing and sustainability before the end of the year. Three peer reviewed research papers were produced over the year placed in the two top tourism journals and a high ranked sports management journal. In addition articles have been produced for Hotel Executive, popular surf new website The Inertia, and popular book “Surf Stories, Indonesia”. In July 2015 Jess, the Center for Surf Research, and STOKE Certified were the subject of a podcast produced by Yale University’s Center for Environmental Communication program, Yale Climate Connections that looked at the work we do to lead surf resorts towards sustainability.

In a real testament to the importance of surfing to the San Diego community, the San Diego Tourism Marketing Authority, under the urging of the Center for Surf Research, has begun the process of joining the World Surf Cities Network. Based out of San Sebastian in the Basque Country of Southern Spain the Network includes leading surf cities from Australia, South Africa, and several countries in Europe. San Diego is the first US city to join the network and contribute to understanding how to sustainably leverage surfing for the economic prosperity of the region.



CSR Intern Carl Kisch '12 on location in Fiji

Over the summer of 2015 the Center has received a real boost from the incredible energy and creativity of a team of six volunteers/interns: Ana Gutierrez, Dunia Gonzalez, Gariella Motorana, Jenayl Peters, Gina

Navarro, and Kiori Snyder; Operations Manager, Allie Borelli; and Associate Director Dr Leon Mach.

—Dr. Jess Ponting, CSR Director

## Sycuan Institute on Tribal Gaming (SITG)

**I**N 2014–15, THE SITG CONTINUED TO expand its outreach and service to the tribal gaming industry. At the invitation of the Arizona Indian Gaming Association (AIGA), the SITG offered the first-ever Tribal Executive Development program in November in Phoenix, Arizona. Nearly 100 tribal gaming operators and managers attended the two-day, two-track session.

In order to offer on-going education for professionals in the tribal gaming industry, the SITG also created a new certificate program in tribal casino operations that is fully online. The Certificate in Tribal Casino

Operations Management is comprised of five courses for a total of 12 credits and can be earned in two semesters (fall/spring or spring/fall). Katherine Spilde, Chair of the SITG, serves as faculty advisor for the Tribal Gaming Student Association and organized a number of student learning events, all funded by the Sycuan Institute.

In March, the Tribal Gaming Student Association (TGSA) organized a site visit to Las Vegas that included tours of three Las Vegas Strip properties (Mirage, Venetian, and Stratosphere) and one “locals” property (Green Valley Ranch). The student officers

from TGSA, along with Dr. Spilde, also attended two national conferences: the Global Gaming Expo (G2E) in Las Vegas and the National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA) Trade Show in San Diego. These events provide access to top leaders in the tribal gaming industry, including regulators, operators and tribal government leadership. Please see the update from Ismael Barajas, TGSA President, for more information.

At the end of the academic year, the SITG co-hosted (with the American Indian Studies Department) an honoring ceremony for the tribal gaming graduates. The event, at

Sycuan Resort, attracted over 100 family and friends of this year's tribal and tribal gaming graduates. All of these activities are part of the Institute's larger goal of contributing to the strength and professionalization of the tribal gaming community while also welcoming our students and alumni into a meaningful career within Indian Country

— Dr. Katherine Splide, SITG Chair

## Institute for Meetings & Events (IME)

**T**HE IME ENJOYED A VERY BUSY 2014-15 school year. As a leading edge in teaching, we redesigned the HTM Meetings and Events curriculum to include a 499 Special Projects class. Ten students were interviewed and selected to work alongside IME Director Stephanie Dathe and Associate Director Lisa DeFino on the following event projects, which all took place in spring 2015:

- IAAPA Executive Level Education Conference
- Hospitality Industry Association Think-Tank event
- 17th Annual High School Hospitality Conference
- HSMIA Gold Key Awards
- TEDEX Speaker Easley Britton Event and Executive-in-Residence
- SOCAL MPI Education Conference



Natalie Hauptman & Jenny Lutz at the IMEX America, Future Leaders Forum.



Tribal Gaming Student Association with Chair Dr. Katherine Splide at the Venetian Casino, Las Vegas, March, 2015.

- Guest Speaker Lunches
- HMEI & CSU Chancellor Visit to SDSU
- Payne School Showcase event
- Payne School Commencement Ceremony

In addition, the students are working on the following non-event projects:

- Project Database
- Student Staffing Service
- HTM Marketing Video

Our students created and executed wonderful events during the year that provided them with valuable, first-hand experience:

- August 2014 – All Payne School Student Association retreat
- September 2014 – Payne School Welcome Back lunch
- September 2014 – Aaron Price Fellows program, Hospitality Day
- October 2014 – Event Model Generation workshop & Executive in Residence
- October 2014 – School of Public Affairs, iNews & KPBS Panel
- November 2014 – PCMA “Service in Sync” networking event
- November 2014 – MESA annual trip to Los Angeles
- November 2014 – Visiting Scholar, Dr. Krzysztof Celuch
- November 2014 – Executive-in-Residence, David Kliman
- November 2014 – IMEX Las Vegas Future Leaders Forum



Heidi Vettel, Natalie Hauptman, Jenny Lutz, Kendra MacLure and Larissa Chirzan at the IMEX America, Future Leaders Forum.

- Fall 2014 – HTM 201 Speaker Lunches
- February 2015 - Payne School Welcome Back lunch
- April 2015 – MESA downtown venue tour
- April 2015 – PCMA “give back” networking event

In our efforts to provide relevant and important research, Associate Director Lisa DeFino presented at a poster session first stage of global research on DMO'S at IMEX America in Las Vegas, October 2014. As a community resource, IME provides necessary volunteers to aid in the success of their events, such as One San Diego with Mayor Kevin Faulconer, Meals-On-Wheels, Explore San Diego, BMT Tandem Meetings, Mission Federal Credit Union Artwalk, and Athena Pinnacle Awards Gala. In addition, IME has formed a partnership with a locally based labor company Hands-On for qualified, reliable staffing options. Rates for students are very cost effective compared to hiring independent planners and or field staff through outside firms.

—Stephanie Dathe '95, IME Director



# Student Club Updates

## Meetings and Events Student Association (MESA)

**O**VER THE PAST YEAR MESA HAS done many activities to promote student involvement with the HTM program as well as professional associations. We put on our annual semester music video awards for all the incoming HTM students, which was a huge success in our student union. We also took many venue tours around San Diego to show students what it is like to plan events in our area. In addition, MESA took an annual trip to Los Angeles where we toured various big

name venues and saw what it was like to be a planner in that area. Our monthly meetings were a success with connecting students to each other and getting them excited about the events industry. Lastly, we also started up a Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) student chapter for SDSU in which we received funding to send students to PCMA meetings and conferences; it was a great opportunity for our members to network with professionals.

—Jenny Lutz, President



L'Auberge speakers at MESA monthly meeting.

## Recreation and Tourism Student Association (RTSA)

**L**AST YEAR WE ORGANIZED A VARIETY of events and activities. During fall semester we held a speed-networking event with District 12 California Park and Recreation Society (CPRS) members. We hosted the RTSA Professional Tailgate, an event in which we invite professors

as well as other professionals from the field. We have arranged multiple volunteer activities within San Diego County, including volunteering for a Chargers game and at Spring Valley Recreation Center. We also set up fundraisers in hopes to involve students in RTSA events. Our most important event would be

the Job fair that takes place in spring semester. During the job fair students get to interact with all kinds of professionals from the field.

—Kevin Romero, President

## Tribal Gaming Student Association (TGSA)

**I**N THE FALL OF 2014 TGSA KICKED OFF the year with a trip to Las Vegas to attend the Global Gaming Expo (G2E). G2E offers an exclusive view of the industry from slots and table games to igaming, food and beverage, and hospitality. After having the privilege to have lunch with Janet Beronio, Regional President of Caesars Entertainment, and Payne School Director Carl Winston we were able to have a tour at Harrah's Resort Southern California. Harrah's is a local casino in Valley Center that is quickly and successfully reinventing itself to be a Las Vegas style casino. Attending the National Indian Gaming Association's trade show (NIGA) was another huge honor for TGSA to be apart of. NIGA was fortunately held in San Diego this year. The goal of the trade show is to promote tribal sovereignty and Indian self-reliance to advance the lives of Native Americans. Lastly, TGSA paid Las Vegas a second visit following an invitation from MGM International where



Zach Helke, Korine Dang, Tye Halloway, Ismael Barajas, and Tribal gaming alum Mark Fojas at the Tribal Gaming Student Association (TGSA) at the SDSU/Sycuan Institute booth at the National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA) trade show San Diego in April, 2015.

we had the opportunity to tour Stratosphere, The Mirage, Venetian/ Palazzo and the Las Vegas local Green Valley Ranch Resort and Spa & Casino. Each hotel shared different

and useful insight into the world of gaming and hospitality that TGSA will take with them wherever they end up in the business.

—Ismael Barajas, President

## Foodies

**T**HIS PAST SCHOOL YEAR FOODIES has held multiple Restaurants of the Month (ROM). This is an event where we showcase a local restaurant while dining and learning about the food and basic operations from the Front of House and Back of House managers. Some of the restaurants we have visited were The Old Spaghetti Factory, Top of the Market, and Cucina Urbana. We have also had two fundraisers at BJ's restaurant, where a portion of the food sales went to Foodies, and Bolt Brewery, where a portion of the beer sales

were donated to Foodies. Our annual Wine Education Event also took place this past semester. At this event students that attended were taken through a guided wine tasting with a guest sommelier at 100 wines in Hillcrest. Four wines were included in the tasting, as well as appetizers and raffle prizes. We plan on hosting more educational Foodie events such as our ROMs in this coming semester at places such as Tom Ham's Light-house.

—Emma Marx, President



Foodies members at Payne School BBQ.

## National Society of Minorities in Hospitality (NSMH)

**N**SMH STARTED THIS PAST YEAR hosting a resume workshop to help prepare our students for the Regional Conference in San Diego, where we brought 30 students to attend. To help fund for the National Conference in Pittsburgh, we organized the Mr. and Ms. HTM talent show fundraiser. Due to the

massive outpour of support and participation, we were able to bring about 45 students with us. Many students that attended the conference earned jobs with various hospitality companies and board positions with NSMH for the 2015–16 school year. For our Hospitality Week, we volunteered at the Boys and Girls Club, had an exclusive

behind-the-scenes tour of the Hotel Solamar, and brought together all of our different cultures for a Taste of NSMH. In addition to these bigger events, we had many smaller socials, community service opportunities, and tabled for many HTM events.

—Amanda Richlin, President

## Lodging Management Student Association (LMSA)

**L**MSA HAS DONE A SERIES OF EVENTS that we like to call our “Day in the Life of” events. This is where we bring in lodging professionals from a variety of departments and they do a Q&A about their jobs and companies. This past year we did an event with Coronado Island Marriott Resort and Spa executives and another with Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International (HSMAI). In November, we took 30 students to New York City to attend the International Hotel, Motel and Restaurant Show as well as tour major hotels in the area and explore the city. In April we took a smaller group of 18 students to San Francisco and toured hotels such as the Sir Francis Drake Kimpton property, the W San Francisco, the St. Regis San Francisco and the Palace Hotel.

—Madelein Tse, President



In front of the Javits Center where the IHMRS Convention was held in New York.



# Professors For A Day

Thank you for the gift  
of your time and expertise!

Adam DeVito  
Adam Miller  
Alecia Goldin  
Andrea Parker  
Andrew Mosblech  
Andy Baumann  
Andy Klosterman (HTM '10)  
Andy Meese  
Anthony Belef  
Anthony Wong  
Bethany Rockovich  
Brad Gessner (HTM MS '13)  
Brian Hilemon '02  
Brook Luedke  
Carl Kish (RTM '12)  
Chris Harrison  
Christian Herrera  
Claudia Guzman (HTM '06)  
Craig Long  
Darcie McBeth (HTM '07)  
Dave Holt  
Dave Rudel  
David Cohn  
David Kliman  
Dawn Norman  
Doug Raggio  
Dr. Dan Dustin  
Dr. Easkey Britton  
Elizabeth Galloway  
Eric Lingenfelder '00  
Erin Beadle (HTM '05)  
Frank Carson  
Guido Bauer  
Harmony Walton  
Holly Green  
Jackie Reed (MBA '15)  
Jan Coppola

Janet Bachtel  
Janet Beronio  
Janet Devaney  
Jason Girard (HTM '07)  
Jason Nichols  
Jeff Rossman  
Jessica Johnson (HTM '10)  
Jim Bennett  
Jim Treadway  
John Kolek  
John Schafer  
John Wayne Dashiell

Justin Navalle (HTM '09)  
Katherine McCarthy  
Keith Guilbault  
Kent Rideout  
Kevin McGourty

CEO  
Director of Human Resources  
Director of Human Resources  
Front Office Manager  
Director of Service Operations and Catering  
General Manager  
CEO  
Director Hotel Operations  
Area Director of Human Resources  
Management Development Trainee  
Manager of Campus Recruitment  
General Manager  
Director of Marketing Partnerships  
Regional Talent Acquisition Manager  
Founder  
Director of Room Operations  
Owner  
Assistant Director of Human Resources  
Director of Sales & Marketing  
Field Director  
District Manager  
Assistant Director, International Student Center  
Founder/CEO  
President  
President  
Founder & Managing Partner  
Professor  
Founder  
Wedding Manager  
Operating Partner  
General Manager  
Recreation Manager  
CEO  
CEO  
CEO  
Vice President of CA Operations  
Area Director, Human Resources –  
Southern California & Western Canada  
Manager, University Relations & Talent Acquisition  
Senior Vice President & General Manager  
Rooms Director  
Area General Manager CO & NV  
Owner  
Chef/Owner  
Human Resource Director  
Director of Engineering  
General Manager  
Director  
Area Vice President  
Child & Family Services Director  
  
Senior Director of Operations  
Director of Sales & Marketing  
VP Innovation & R&D  
Retired  
President

Big Bang Ideas  
MGM Resorts International  
Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina  
Hilton La Jolla Torrey Pines  
Cucina Urbana  
Tom Ham's Lighthouse  
Peak Beverage  
MGM Resorts International  
Omni Hotels & Resorts  
Hilton La Jolla Torrey Pines  
Hilton Worldwide  
LA Convention Center  
San Diego Tourism Authority  
Hyatt Hotels and Resorts  
STOKE Certified  
Marriott Irvine  
Oggi's Eastlake  
Westin San Diego Gaslamp  
Omni San Diego Hotel  
Outback Steakhouse  
County of San Diego  
San Diego State University  
The Cohn Restaurant Group  
The Kliman Group  
Normand Productions  
Gastronome Ventures  
University of Utah  
Project Inspire  
L'Auberge Del Mar  
The Verant Group  
Lakehouse Hotel & Resort  
City of El Cajon  
Green Globe International  
The Bridal Bar  
The Human Factor  
TS Restaurant Group

Starwood Hotels and Resorts  
Marriott International  
Harrah's Rincon Resort and Casino  
Hyatt Aviana  
Westmont Hospitality Group  
Waterfront Bar and Grill  
Terra Restaurant & Catering  
W Hotel San Diego  
The U.S. Grant  
Bardessono Resort  
Viejas Arena  
Manchester Grand San Diego  
Pechanga Department of Child  
and Family Services  
Eventvibe  
Town & Country  
Jack In The Box  
US Army  
INDP Systems

# Professors For A Day (continued)

**Thank you for the gift  
of your time and expertise!**

**Kristi Learn**  
**Laura Parsons (HTM '11)**

*Director, Human Resources*  
*Director*

**Lisa Richards**  
**Louis Chertkow**  
**Marco Rodriguez**  
**Marilee Gorham**  
**Martin Davis (RTM '99)**  
**Matt Clifford**  
**Melissa Calcagni**  
**Michael Contreras**

*CEO*  
*Supervising Park Ranger*  
*Co-Owner*  
*Recreation Superintendent*  
*Director of Program Development & Operations*  
*COO*  
*Manager & Large Party Coordinator*  
*President & CEO*

**Michelle Lucey**  
**Mike Brooks**  
**Mr. Todd Hale**  
**Nadia Steinbach**  
**Nicole Shook (HTM '10)**  
**Nikki Aphayrath (HTM '09)**  
**Dr. Patricia L. Roscoe '14**  
**Paul Kucharczyk '83**  
**Paul Patterson**  
**Paul Thiel**  
**Pierre Charmasson**  
**PJ Chryssostomides**  
**Rachel Chryssostomides**  
**Randall White**  
**Ric Edgar**  
**Richard Schuetz**  
**Robert Gleason**  
**Roel Frissen**  
**Ronnie Hauptmann**  
**Russ Mitchell**  
**Rusty Rodes**  
**Ruud Janssen**  
**Ryan Thorsen**  
**Scott Barnett**  
**Sean Brody '08 (HTM MS '13)**

*Human Resources Director*  
*General Manager*  
*COO*  
*College Relations Administrator*  
*Front Office Director*  
*Human Resources Manager*  
*Former Owner*  
*Supervising Park Ranger*  
*Director of Finance*  
*Regional Managing Director - San Diego*  
*Owner*  
*Director of Development*  
*Owner, Director*  
*Assistant General Manager*  
*Talent Acquisition Manager*  
*Commissioner*  
*CEO*  
*Co-Founder*  
*Director of Restaurants & Bars*  
*Director, Sales and Marketing*  
*Supervising Park Ranger*  
*Founder & Managing Partner*  
*General Manager*  
*Former President*  
*Founder*

**Shahid Kayani**

*Area General Manager*

**Staci Pike**  
**Stephany Phenny (HTM '10)**  
**Steve Mungai**  
**Teresa Love O'Bannon**  
**Terri Breining**  
**Tiffany Tassano**  
**Tim Billing**  
**Tim Kirkland**  
**Tim Ripke**  
**Tim Shanahan**  
**Tjeerd Brink**  
**Torie Gotaas**  
**Tracy Judge (HTM MS '14)**  
**Trisha Blake (HTM MS '16)**  
**Vanessa Cabrera**  
**Victor Rocha**  
**Virginia Steinbach**

*Senior Covnenton Services Manager*  
*Event Sales Manager*  
*General Manager*  
*Community Engagement Manager*  
*Founder*  
*Private Events*  
*General Manager*  
*CEO*  
*Assistant Director*  
*Managing Partner*  
*CFO*  
*Assistant Director of Revenue Management*  
*Director*  
*VP of Media*  
*Talent Acquisition/University Relations*  
*Owner and Editor*  
*Assistant Director of Human Resources*

Anthony's Fish Grotto  
Marketing & Events Alliance for  
Regenerative Medicine  
Hospitality Softnet Inc.  
County of San Diego  
Eastbound Bar & Grill  
City of Encinitas  
AlliedPRA  
Barnana  
Urban Kitchen Group  
San Pasqual Economic Development  
Agency  
Hilton La Jolla Torrey Pines  
Karl Strauss Brewing Company  
San Diego Country Club  
MGM Resorts International  
Hotel Del Coronado  
Hilton San Diego Bayfront  
AlliedPRA  
County of San Diego  
The Westin San Diego Gaslamp Quarter  
Bank of New York/Mellon  
Artisan Benefit Auctioneer  
Chryssostomides Financial Services  
Apogee Investments  
Dave and Buster's Mission Valley  
Chili's  
California Gambling Control Commission  
Evans Hotels  
Event Model Generation  
The Westin San Diego Gaslamp Quarter  
Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina  
County of San Diego  
Event Model Generation  
Bertrand at Mister A's  
Bubba Gump Shrimp Company Restaurants  
Kwepuna Liberian Surf Retreat,  
International Surfing Association  
Hilton San Diego Airport/Harbor Island,  
Westmont Hospitality Group  
Omni San Diego Hotel  
Tom Ham's Lighthouse  
Dave and Buster's Mission Valley  
Hostelling International USA  
The Breining Group  
Urban Kitchen Group  
Embassy Suites La Jolla  
Renegade Hospitality Group  
Viejas Arena  
Sterling-Rice Group  
Pechanga Resort & Casino  
Hyatt Hotels  
Cadence Travel  
AdEase  
Marriott International  
Pechanga.net  
Hilton San Diego Bayfront



## Donor Honor Roll

**Thank you for your  
generosity and support!**

Mr. Robert A. Alter	Mr. Justin Henry Navalle (HTM '09)
Ms. Shannon Teresa Baccaro (HTM '14)	Mr. Cory Joe Orcutt (HTM '12)
Barona Valley Ranch Resort & Casino	Payne Family Foundation
Mr. Anthony Bollotta	Dr. L. Robert Payne '55, '12
Mr. Fred Borrelli '72	Mrs. Patty Payne
Mr. Dana Caldwell	Pinnacle Hotels USA
California Restaurant Association	PRP Wine International
Mr. Lawrence Deitchman '76	Ms. Alyson E. Pullman (HTM '10)
Disneyland	Real World Academics, LLC
Mrs. Kathy Drucquer Duff (RTM '87)	Rivkin Family Fund
Finley Family Foundation	Mr. Arthur L. Rivkin
RADM Veronica Froman, USN-Retired	Dr. Patricia L. Roscoe '14
George & Germaine Fusenot Foundation	Mr. Kiley J. Rosenberg (HTM '08)
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In honor of this milestone, we will visit a city near you to thank you for your ongoing support and to share what is next for the Payne School:

- September – San Francisco
- October – Las Vegas & Los Angeles
- November – New York & Dallas
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