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# 360



**Health-bent on Life** SDSU faculty help San Diegans live longer and stronger.

**Historic Murals** Depression-era art rediscovered in Hardy Tower.

**Behind Bars** An up close and personal look at California prisons.

**I Can Hear Music** The 60-year history of the SDSU carillon.

# Direct

This year, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching revised its classification of doctorate-granting institutions. The new classification is good news for San Diego State University. We are now identified as a research university with high research activity, placing us among the top 200 research universities in the country. We share that classification with peers, including Georgetown University, George Washington University and Oklahoma State University.

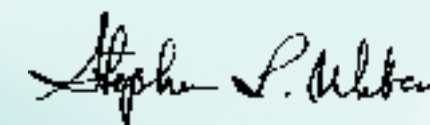
The new ranking has positive implications for the students, faculty, staff and alumni of San Diego State. It signifies the high priority we place on research and the tremendous success of our faculty and staff in securing research grants and contracts. Of the 1,102 grant proposals submitted by faculty in 2004-2005, more than 70 percent were accepted and funded, for a total of \$129 million in grants and contracts. Staff at the SDSU Research Foundation play a critical role in this success, assisting faculty with the highly competitive research proposal process.

One reflection of our commitment to expanding research opportunities is the growth in degree programs offered on campus. In the last 10 years, we increased that number from 149 to 168, and more than 70 percent of the new degrees were in graduate and doctorate programs. Over the same period, we expanded opportunities for undergraduate students to participate in meaningful research under the guidance of faculty in a broad range of disciplines.

In fact, SDSU is recognized as a regional model for integrating research into the undergraduate curriculum. The Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) committee that recommended our reaccreditation last year also cited the university for its research initiatives.

The cover story in this issue spotlights eight San Diego State faculty members whose work impacts the fields of public health and health-related science. Their applied research targets individuals at risk for a variety of chronic illnesses. Their discoveries improve the welfare of entire communities, particularly our own. The grants they have secured and the research programs they have built allow thousands of students to gain hands-on, real-world experience in their chosen fields before graduation.

At San Diego State, we have the intellectual horsepower, the energy, the imagination and the ambition to do great things. Our faculty-driven research programs empower students to become the best in their fields as they prepare to play leading roles in California's dynamic economy.



Stephen L. Weber, president  
San Diego State University

# 360

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SAN DIEGO STATE  
UNIVERSITY

# 360

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Photo: Alan Decker

**Long on Football**

By the time the whistle sounds to signal the beginning of the college football season, Chuck Long will have been Aztec football coach for eight months. That's a long time to think about how to build a confident team and draw fans to QUALCOMM Stadium to support the Red and Black.

Long already has a few ideas. Previously offensive coordinator for the University of Oklahoma, he has hired seven new coaches. Together with Long, they have 75 bowl games, 15 conference championships and six national championships under their collective belts.

Long intends to get San Diegans, particularly Aztecs, "personally involved with the football program." He wants to begin a weekly radio or television show – on campus – featuring star players. "We'll make campus appearances a regular occurrence," Long said.

He is also asking SDSU students, faculty and alumni to actively participate in the football program by calling a favorite play to be used in an upcoming game. The contributor's name will be announced on the air.

**Aztec Intelligence**

Capt. Timothy Mungie, a 1997 College of Business graduate,

received the 2005 Gen. Douglas MacArthur Leadership Award, which recognizes outstanding leadership in the U.S. Army's field environment (See Class Notes for 2004 winner – also an SDSU alum). Mungie served as task force fire support officer with 1-21st Infantry Battalion in Iraq and is scheduled to be redeployed there as battery commander with the 2-11th Field Artillery Battalion... **Ivan Hernandez** just completed a seven-week run as the lead in the La Jolla Playhouse production of "Zhivago." A 1998 graduate of the SDSU musical theatre program, Hernandez recently made his New York City Opera debut as Joe in "The Most Happy Fella"... Have you heard Generation Y Radio? It's a weekly talk show on 103.7 Free FM (CBS Radio) hosted



by three young San Diegans, including Aztecs **John Fiske** and **Kris White**. They pitch the program as an alternative to the "old and crusty" commentators on the airwaves... May 2006 SDSU grad **Rachelle Lim** received a \$15,000 fellowship from the Windgate Foundation, which recognizes promising young artists. A jeweler and metalworker, Lim plans to build her own studio and visit museums across the country to research Chinese-American art.

“  
**"Today's world lacks a moral political leader."**  
Lech Walesa, Nobel Peace Prize winner, Solidarity union organizer and Poland's first non-communist president speaking at SDSU on April 28, 2006.

# Update

To paraphrase William Shakespeare, “that which we call a bell by any other name would sound as sweet.”

San Diego State’s campanile, also known as the chimes or carillon, peals every quarter hour across campus, delighting listeners with melodies both familiar and original. Housed in Hardy Memorial Tower, the carillon is also a sensory feature of major campus activities, including commencement and homecoming.

The SDSU Retirement Association recently donated funds for an expansion of the carillon. Its \$25,000 gift will pay for the purchase and installation in July of 100 additional bells, for a total of 244.

“The SDSU Retirement Association has great respect for what the carillon represents,” said Kathie Ross, current president. “All of our members have come to value the carillon over time. It’s something that isn’t specific to a department or division. It belongs to the campus.”

The carillon holds a special place in SDSU history. A donation of 25 chimes from Sen. and Mrs. Ed Fletcher in 1946 commemorated San Diego State College’s 50th anniversary and served as a memorial to Aztecs killed in action. Twice in the next 40 years, the Ed and Mary Fletcher Foundation, through Associated Students, expanded the installation. In 1968, it became a carillon and in 1985, a digital chronobell.

Dr. and Mrs. Bernard Lipinsky’s gift in 1992 extended the reach of the Fletcher Carillon to the southeast corner of campus via remote speakers and amplifiers in Lipinsky Tower. More than 100 bells were added in 2001 and 2003.

“The Retirement Association’s gift enables us to complete the carillon expansion as it was designed in 1985,” said Terry O’Donnell, professor in the School of Music. SDSU’s resident carillonneur since 1963, O’Donnell has written dozens of original songs for the bells. “Once the installation is complete,” he said, “we will realize the full potential of the instrument. Listeners will hear the carillon as never before.”

– Lorena Nava



## Cream of the Crop

Did you know that all four of the current San Diego County Teachers of the Year are SDSU alums?

Karen Anglin from Campo Elementary School earned an M.A. in elementary curriculum & instruction from SDSU in 2000.

Guillermo Gomez completed the multiple subject bilingual cross-cultural language and academic development (BCLAD) teaching credential in 1996. He works at Vista Square Elementary.

Keith Koelzer, who teaches math at Rancho Bernardo High School, and Erin McPeck Mangahis, a teacher at Patrick Henry High School, both earned M.A. degrees in secondary curriculum & instruction at SDSU. His was in 1990; hers in 2004.

Another SDSU grad, Stan Murphy, was California State Teacher of the Year and a finalist for U.S. Teacher of the Year in 2005. He earned an M.A. in educational administration/supervision in 1996. Murphy teaches American History at San Diego High School.



Illustration: Tom Voss



Photo: Alan Decker



Illustration: Tom Voss

## Photo Opportunity

A master of the photographic arts world joins San Diego State University in August as director of the School of Art, Design and Art History. Arthur Ollman, founding executive director of the Museum of Photographic Arts (MoPA) in San Diego, will lead SDSU's professionally active faculty of artists, designers, historians, critics and educators.

During his 23-year tenure at MoPA, Ollman curated more than 70 exhibitions and grew the museum's permanent collection to more than 9,000 objects. Most major figures in the world of images visited the museum during Ollman's stewardship.

Previously, Ollman served as president of the board of directors of CAMERAWORK, a non-profit gallery he helped to establish in San Francisco.

## Door to the World

San Diego State University ranks second in the nation among universities of its type for students studying abroad in the latest "Open Doors" report by the Institute for International Education.

The ranking is based on the total number of students – 1,115 – who studied abroad during 2003-2004. That number rose to 1,220 for 2004-2005, and is expected to continue growing.

SDSU's goal is to have at least 30 percent of each graduating class spend one full semester or summer term abroad.

The 10 most popular destinations for SDSU students in 2003-2004 were Mexico, the United Kingdom, Spain, France, Cuba, Italy, Australia, Costa Rica, Chile and Germany.

## Homeland Harmony

San Diego State has received a half-million-dollar grant from the City of San Diego to evaluate homeland security technologies for local fire, law enforcement and emergency response agencies.

As part of the project, SDSU technology experts will assess potential technologies to ensure their compatibility with equipment used by the various agencies. They will also establish a clearinghouse of information about competing products.

"San Diego State University's assistance will be invaluable to law enforcement, fire and emergency response departments across the county," said Jill Olen, deputy chief operating officer for public safety and homeland security for the City of San Diego. "This project will help every local agency involved in protecting our communities

make the most of their technical budgets by providing unbiased information necessary to develop common technical solutions."

SDSU staff will evaluate tools that could help agencies in the region detect potential threats; respond quickly and precisely to disaster sites or other areas of need; and communicate large data sets – maps, video or sensor information – across local jurisdictions.

## Safety First

It's a blogger's dream – a Web site built on personal interest that attracts 24,000 readers. Welcome to SafetyLit.org, brainchild of SDSU public health professor David Lawrence.

Lawrence and his small group of staff and volunteers continuously search more than 2,600 scholarly journals, conference proceedings and government reports worldwide for articles

relating to safety and injury prevention. They compile the results in a weekly email update sent without charge to safety professionals and researchers in 186 countries.

When the site first took to the Web in 2000, it served SDSU faculty as a research tool. Today, Lawrence says he doesn't mind the many hours required to keep pace with the demands of a site that serves thousands.

"If it helps others in their mission to make people safer, it's worth it," said Lawrence. "SafetyLit is an obsession of mine, professionally and personally. A lot of times, people don't collect evidence before making safety-related decisions, such as the safer car to buy or what type of child restraint seat to use. But there's a lot of information out there and people don't need to take risks."

# Mural, Mural on the Wall

## Depression-era legacy rediscovered in Hardy Tower

On a drowsy summer day two years ago, workmen repairing tiles in Hardy Memorial Tower stumbled into the past. Above the lowered ceiling along a basement wall, they found the partial remains of two historic murals thought to have vanished decades ago.

The murals are a priceless piece of early campus history from the Great Depression. San Diego State art students created five of them to adorn the first campus library in Hardy Tower. They were presumed destroyed during campus renovations in the 1950s.

Now “rediscovered,” the two existing murals reveal deep connections between San Diego State and the people of San Diego in the years following the university’s move to Montezuma Mesa. Though faded and crumbling, the paintings vividly depict an era of economic upheaval that lionized the common laborer and challenged popular faith in rugged individualism.

### Artistic force

1930s American life was tinged with desperation. Unemployment affected 15 million people, nearly a quarter of the nation’s workforce. Determined to pull the country out of decline,

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt worked with the U.S. Congress to create the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The agency supervised construction of roads, dams and other public works projects, including the Aztec Bowl and Open Air Theatre on the San Diego State campus.

Artists employed by the WPA and its predecessor, the Public Works of Art Projects (PWAP), created nearly a quarter of a million works of art in the years between 1933 and 1943. Donal Hord’s black diorite sculpture of the Aztec Warrior, a.k.a. Monty, was financed with WPA support.

Everett Gee Jackson, then chair of the art department, used WPA funding to commission murals by San Diego State art students, including George Sorenson, who became a renowned local artist and chair of SDSU’s Division of Fine Arts from 1946 to 1969.

Sorenson’s work – a 25-foot-long depiction of San Diego’s fishing and fish-processing industries – was created in 1936, just a year before his graduation from San Diego State College. But he died thinking that his and the other murals were destroyed during a remodeling of Hardy Tower 50 years ago, accord-

conveyer belts lined with short, cylindrical cans.

Mallios believed Sorenson used the Van Camp Seafood Company as a model for his mural, citing “perfect parallels” between Sorenson’s painting and historic photos of the defunct San Diego cannery. Van Camp also



**NRA Packages,** Genevieve Burgeson Bredo

By Coleen L. Geraghty

Genevieve Burgeson Bredo’s mural, found behind ceiling tiles in Hardy Tower, could be restored by San Diego State art students.

ing to his daughter, Lynn Sorenson Yahr.

### “San Diego Industry”

The Sorenson mural, in its current state, shows 20 different characters. The original contained a much larger cast, according to Seth Mallios, the SDSU anthropology professor who identified the rediscovered art and is leading restoration efforts. The left portion of the mural depicted men fishing, weighing fish and gutting them. The right side illustrated the fish-processing industry with nearly a dozen women standing in two sets of assembly lines and, in the background,

operated canneries in Terminal Island, California, American Samoa and Ponce, Puerto Rico. It was the first company to commercially pack yellowfin tuna.

In “NRA Packages,” the second existing mural, Genevieve Burgeson Bredo painted men unloading crates from a truck in a San Diego neighborhood near Hillcrest. Each crate displays a splayed blue eagle with the red letters NRA above, a symbol of the National Recovery Act, which created the WPA. As in many WPA murals, Mallios noted, the sexes are in separate realms; the men work and the woman and children watch.

“Sorenson’s mural was more progressive and less typical of WPA art than Bredo’s work in terms of its treatment of women and ethnic minorities,” Mallios observed. “Although both murals separate men from women, Sorenson placed the women as active components of San Diego industry. His female workers are far from passive onlookers; they are an essential part of the industrial process.

“In addition, Sorenson incorporates different ethnicities into his images. The man on the dock holding the fish is likely African-American, and he does not appear to be segregated from other ethnicities in the workplace. The same cannot be said of the three Asian men at the end of the fish-processing procedure. They are clustered off to the side, portrayed in distinct clothing, and the

slant of their eyes is pronounced, likely to emphasize their ethnic difference.”

#### Restoration efforts

In their current state – severely damaged and once more hidden behind ceiling tiles – the Sorenson and Bredo murals might as well be lost. But Mallios is trying to stimulate local interest in and support for restoring the murals to their original condition.

**Packing Oranges**, *Ellamarie Packard Woolley*



## “A message of New Deal Optimism”

**Sailors Going to Hell**, *Ellamarie Packard Woolley*



## “Emphasis on the integrity of labor and laborers”

**San Diego Industry**, *George Sorenson*



At left and below are images of George Sorenson’s 25-foot mural, which depicts the San Diego fishing and fish-processing industries. The artist used the Van Camp Seafood Company as a model for his work, which was displayed in the original San Diego State Library in Hardy Tower (left).



**Lumber Working**, *Genevieve Burgeson Bredo*



He collaborated with the Library’s Special Collections division to unearth images of the murals Jackson had commissioned. Photographs by Edward Hess and Gordon Samples showed a total of five murals in Hardy Tower. In addition to the two recently uncovered, there was another by Bredo and two by Ellamarie Packard Woolley, the daughter of

Phineas Packard, founder of San Diego’s Arts and Crafts Press.

For now, Mallios is asking San Diegans to scour their scrapbooks for photographs of the murals taken before the renovation of Hardy Tower. He hopes to generate enough community support to restore them to their original condition and relocate them – from the original campus library to the current Library Addition and Dome.

Mallios’ plans also call for current SDSU students to take part in repairing the work of their predecessors. “Since the original artwork was created by San Diego State students for display in the heart of campus, it is only fitting that a new generation of SDSU art students aid the conservers in the restoration process,” he said.

It will be a costly and prolonged endeavor. But Library Dean Connie Vinita Dowell, sees the Dome as the perfect showcase for this rediscovered piece of SDSU history.

“A function of today’s library is to create an intellectual environment for users, to give them opportunities to experience the kind of culture that, for a long time, has been associated with museums and galleries,” Dowell said. “This is a wonderful opportunity for the library to showcase part of San Diego State’s heritage, created by our own students.”

*Seth Mallios and Nicole J. Purvis contributed to this article. For more information, go to <http://soap.sdsu.edu>, or contact Seth Mallios at [smallios@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:smallios@mail.sdsu.edu).*

## “Themes of social realism pervade”





# Health - bent on Life

When it comes to health, Americans are a paradoxical lot.

We advocate healthy eating, but fill our grocery carts with processed foods and our plates with gargantuan portions.

We publish dozens of fitness magazines, but more than 40 percent of adults never participate in regular physical activity.

We recognize the perils of teenage eating disorders, but continue to send our children dangerous messages about body image.

We buy more than \$100 million in tobacco products annually, despite incontrovertible evidence that smoking harms not only ourselves, but the people around us.

## How SDSU faculty are helping San Diegans live longer and stronger

It's true that Americans are living longer thanks primarily to medical advances and public health initiatives. But longer doesn't always equate to healthier. Detrimental behaviors put us at risk for obesity, heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure and accidental injury or death.

In 2005, California placed only 22nd of the 50 states in the United Health Foundation ranking of Americans' well-being. Our strengths include a low prevalence of smoking and a low incidence of cancer deaths, but in the minus column are unusually high rates of violent crime and infectious disease plus an above-average rate of cardiovascular deaths.

Though Californians cultivate an image of sleek, suntanned

fitness, they are 20th from the top in the obesity ranking, well behind the leaders Colorado, Massachusetts, Vermont and Rhode Island. Even New Yorkers do slightly better.

But there is a move afoot for a healthier California and a healthier America. In its vanguard is the public health industry, whose scientist practitioners combine research on disease and injury prevention with the promotion of a healthy lifestyle. Their proactive, preventive approach addresses the health of entire communities. The Centers for Disease Control credits the public health sector with adding 25 years to the average American's life expectancy in the 20th century.

San Diego State University is home to one of 37 accredited schools of public health in this country. Faculty at the Graduate School of Public Health, together with colleagues in the College of

Sciences, the School of Social Work and the Department of Exercise and Nutritional Sciences, are working to change the health behaviors of San Diegans.

Financed by multimillion-dollar grants, their applied research targets individuals at risk for a variety of chronic illnesses and harmful habits. Communities in this region derive the benefit of their work through programs designed to help families live longer, healthier lives. These faculty members are leaders in the field of public health, and they're training students to manage and shape San Diego's public health industry in the decades to come.

In this issue, we've profiled eight San Diego State faculty members whose research is changing – and perhaps, prolonging – the lives of the people you know and care about.



## Health-bent on Passive Smoking

Passive smoking is more than an annoyance – it's a serious health threat. The Environmental Protection Agency holds environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) responsible for up to 300,000 cases of bronchitis and pneumonia in children under 18 months of age. ETS can trigger asthma and aggravate existing respiratory conditions. It has been declared a casual agent for breast cancer in post-menopausal women.

Melvin Hovell's research gets at the heart of ETS exposure in children by educating smoking parents. Funded by the National Institutes of Health, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the California Tobacco-Related Research Program and others, Hovell works with physicians and health counselors, offering parents incentives to quit smoking and validating the results by sampling children's urine for tobacco markers.

He is founding director of San Diego State's Center for Behavioral Epidemiology and Community Health (CBEACH).



Photo: Lauren Radack

## Health-bent on Nutrition

**P**oor diet and a lack of exercise are taking a toll on California's fastest-growing resident group – the Latino population. And that bodes ill for the Golden State's economic and physical health in the coming decades.

Research shows that recent Latino immigrants are healthier than U.S.-born whites and African-Americans. But as Latinos acculturate to the American lifestyle, their health deteriorates. Among Latino adolescents, those born in the U.S. are nearly twice as likely to be overweight as their immigrant counterparts. There's a long list of possible explanations, including a lack of access to parks and playing fields, greater numbers of fast food outlets in urban Latino communities and frequent exposure to

television's incessant stream of ads for sugary and fatty foods.

To find a solution, faculty members from SDSU's Graduate School of Public Health went straight to the streets of San Diego's South Bay. They recruited and trained Spanish-speaking *promotoras*, or health outreach workers, to coach parents, teachers and merchants in Latino neighborhoods about the benefits of healthy eating and physical activity. Working one-on-one with community members, the *Aventuras para Niños* program has empowered South Bay residents to change their habits.

John Elder heads the program with funding from the National Institutes of Health. "By addressing multiple changes in children's home, school and community environments," he said, "*Aventuras para Niños* provides evidence of a feasible,

Guadalupe Ayala and John Elder promote the benefits of healthy eating and physical activity to South Bay families. Buy-in from parents, schools, merchants and community members is pivotal to the success of their program.

comprehensive strategy that may help slow the obesity epidemic."

During home visits, the *promotoras* help parents set goals to improve nutrition and physical activity. At the same time, *Aventuras* staff meet with teachers and school administrators, encouraging them to improve playground facilities, structure physical education programs to include more active time, encourage healthy lunch choices, avoid rewarding students with junk food and become role models for healthy eating and active behavior.

The *promotoras* also visit independent restaurants within a one-mile radius of each targeted school. Interested restaurant owners receive help creating a healthy children's menu with smaller portions, vegetable or fruit side dishes, fewer fried

foods and healthy beverages. *Aventuras* staff are securing buy-in from local grocery stores for a "frequent buyer card" giving shoppers one free pound of fresh fruit or vegetables for every nine purchases of fresh produce. Finally, they offer free nutrition classes in Spanish in an effort to boost awareness and spark interest in community change.

Though *Aventuras* was designed specifically for a Mexican-American audience, it could become a model for researchers developing similar interventions in other ethnic populations, Elder said. "Ultimately, the success of programs like *Aventuras* depends on consistent, widespread involvement from parents and local community members and permanent changes in the environments in which people eat and exercise."



## Health-bent on Alcohol Abuse

Alcohol abuse is a critical public health problem facing American youth. More than 1,700 U.S. college students die each year in alcohol-related incidents, most attributable to drunk driving.

At San Diego State, John Clapp and James Lange pioneered a proactive approach to alcohol abuse prevention. Their unique methodology moves beyond surveys to prove that field intervention can reduce alcohol abuse among college students. Clapp and Lange were the first to show that intervention, combined with law enforcement (extra patrols) in a college setting, lowers drunk driving rates. They've demonstrated that premeditated interventions – like approaching party-goers and asking them to identify a designated driver – result in comparatively lower blood alcohol content in these drivers.

Clapp and Lange are currently evaluating a state-wide program of alcohol prevention initiatives in 13 counties. Their work is funded by The National Institute on Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse and the California Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs.



Photo: Lauren Radack

Jeanne Nichols' research sounds a timely warning for young female athletes, whose eating habits may put them at risk for osteoporosis later in life.

## Health-bent on Bones

**O**steoporosis is a progressive bone disease afflicting more than 10 million Americans. Another 18 million have low bone mass, a precursor of osteoporosis. Surprise – not all of them are elderly. New research has found low bone mass in other groups, including young female athletes.

San Diego State professor Jeanne Nichols is an expert on the subject of osteoporosis, and the author of research studies on how strength training affects balance and function in older women. Recently, Nichols, working with Mitchell Rauh in SDSU's Graduate School of Public Health, aimed the radar at young female athletes.

What they discovered has implications for all women.

Of 170 high school athletes tested, 22 percent had low bone mass, an alarming result because 98 percent of skeletal mass in women is acquired by age 20. Those who begin adulthood with low bone density could be at risk for osteoporosis later.

"We were surprised at the fairly large percentage of girls with low bone mineral density," said Nichols, who received funding from SDSU's Division of Graduate and Research Affairs and the National Athletic Trainers Association. "Our findings suggest that coaches, trainers and parents of high school athletes should encourage healthy eating and training behaviors to build strong bones."



Photo: Lauren Radack

Chris Glembotski's work may give heart attack victims a few more precious minutes to reach the emergency room before fatal damage occurs.

## Health-bent on Hearts

**H**ear disease remains this nation's leading killer. Most deaths result from irreversible damage to cardiac muscle when the oxygen supply is disrupted, usually by cholesterol plaque that builds up in the coronary arteries.

While public health experts work to change the behaviors that cause cholesterol buildup, researchers like SDSU's Chris Glembotski look for ways to protect the heart from fatal damage during cardiac arrest.

In the initial stages of a heart attack, heart tissue is protected because cells detect the threat and activate proteins to defend the energy producers of the

heart cells, the mitochondria, thereby increasing the odds of recovery when oxygen is restored.

Glembotski and his colleagues have identified these mitochondria bodyguards. Now, they are exploring whether genetic enhancement in the levels of certain proteins may reduce damage from heart attack and extend the time of mitochondrial protection. They hope to translate the results they've obtained in experimental mice to humans, which would give heart attack victims a few more precious minutes to reach the ER before fatal damage occurs.

Glembotski is director of the SDSU Heart Institute. His research has been funded by the National Institutes of Health since 1976. In 2000, he was named the outstanding biotechnology researcher in the CSU system.



### Health-bent on Obesity

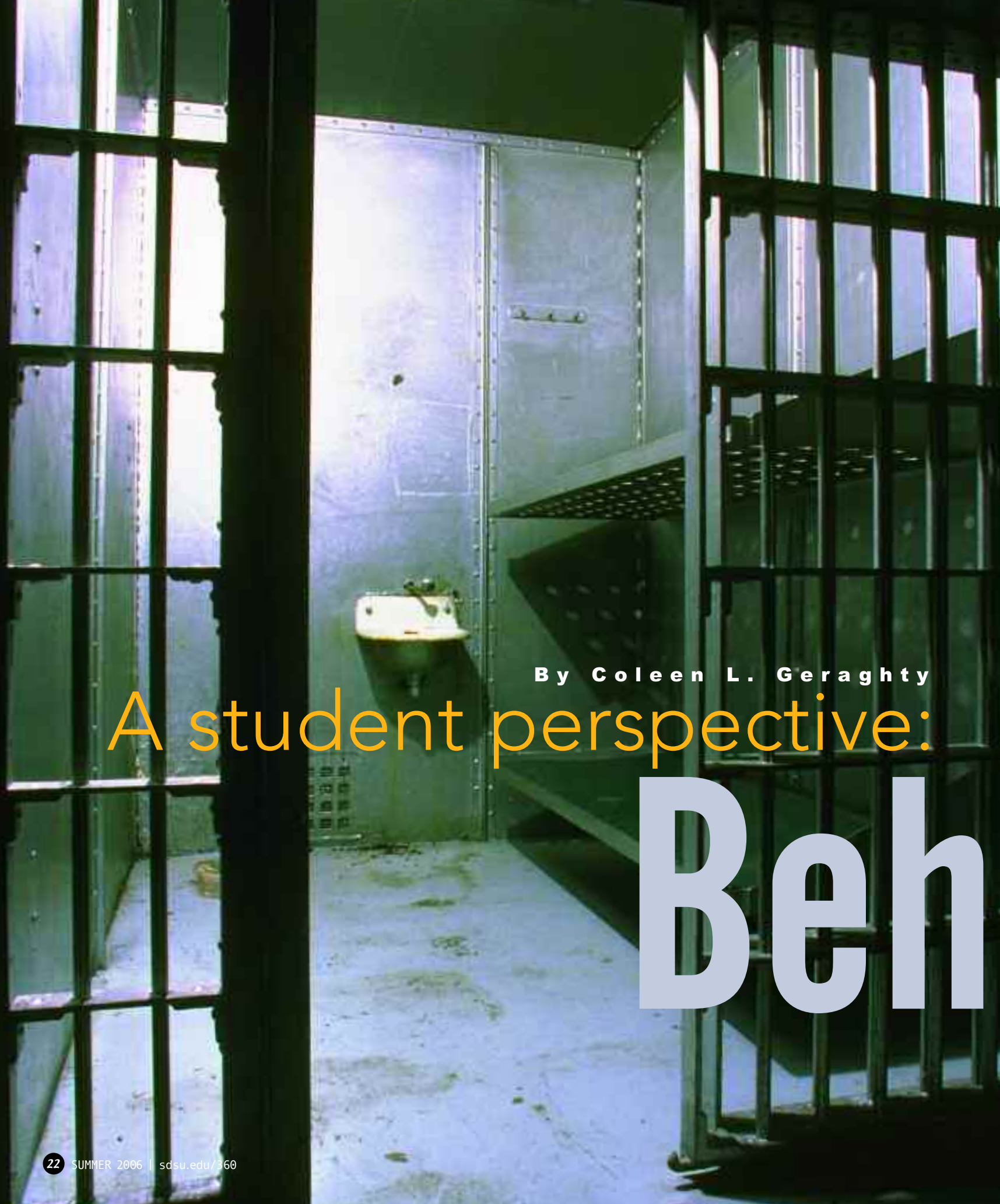
It's not an anomaly anymore. About 30 percent of American adults are obese; not just overweight, but clinically obese. Moreover, obesity is threatening to shorten the average lifespan of an entire generation – today's children – by two to five years, according to research published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Reversing the trend toward obesity is Jim Sallis' life work. Sallis is program director of Active Living Research (<http://www.activelivingresearch.org>),

a \$12.5 million national program supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Rather than addressing obesity as an individual health problem, the new field of active living considers the role of the built environment – including neighborhoods, transportation, buildings, parks and open space – in promoting more active lives.

Sallis' collaborations with researchers in this country and around the globe are building a strong scientific evidence base to support the construction of activity-friendly communities.



By Coleen L. Geraghty  
A student perspective:

# Behind Bars

SDSU criminal justice students talk with an inmate during the March 2006 prison tour.

When Criminal Justice Professor Paul Sutton leads San Diego State students on a tour of California prisons, he challenges them to find the gorilla.



It's a reference to a video clip that tests observation skills. Viewers are instructed to count the number of times a white-shirted person passes a basketball to another white-shirted person. Here's the catch: most viewers, intently focused on the white shirts, not only ignore the black-shirted people, but also fail to notice a big, black, gorilla ambling among the humans.

Sutton never misses the gorilla. For 23 years, he's been taking SDSU criminal justice students to visit California's harshest prisons. Leaving campus at dawn on a Monday, they travel by bus to Soledad, Folsom, San Quentin and other high-security institutions, returning to SDSU on Friday night, exhausted and frequently changed.

"I can't shake it. That feeling that things are never going to be the same again," Samantha Arlen wrote in an essay summarizing the tour she joined in March.

"I walked into the prison tour with my beliefs and values firmly held in my physical, mental and emotional being, and came back struggling to find a way to put them back together so that they made sense again."

*Sutton wants students to understand the reality of prison and what it does to those behind bars.*

Sutton hopes for this kind of reaction. Above all, he wants students to see, hear and feel the reality of prison and what it does to those who live and work behind bars. "I want them to get up close and personal with the harsh results of our society's chosen method of combating crime and dealing with criminal offenders. I want students to be troubled by what they learn; but mostly, I want them to be engaged by the experience so that, perhaps for the first time

# The Reality of Prison

in their lives, they care deeply and personally about something they have studied from afar.”

In class and in media interviews, Sutton often takes aim at the “monolithic” corrections system and those who sustain it. Yet, the correctional officers are some of his biggest fans.

Respect hung in the air when they greeted Sutton in March, during his 79th California prison tour. His is the only class in the country that immerses students in the prison experience for a full five days and offers them the rare opportunity to talk face-to-face with murderers.

*Despite the fear factor, students give the prison tour rave reviews.*

Kyle Roche, an aspiring lawyer, recalled his meeting with one inmate at the California Men’s Colony, a “progressive” prison nestled in a peaceful valley near San Luis Obispo.

“I found myself inside a cell with four other students and an inmate, Mark, who began speaking about life in a cell. Much to my astonishment, I began to like Mark and to forget that he committed an offense,” Roche said.

Roche described the scene, minutes later, when Mark told

the group of his conviction for murdering a friend and crime partner. “Speechless, I did not know what to do or what to say. It is an indescribable feeling... what I believed about a murderer my whole life vanished.”

Though students are disarmed by some of the prisoners, they encounter many who fit the hardened inmate stereotype. It’s difficult to remain unintimidated behind the walls of San Quentin.

Student Glenn Robinson talked about the experience: “Most every prisoner would stop what they were doing and stare at us. Nowhere was this more evident than in the dorm at San Quentin. The longer (our guide) spoke, the more people formed around us in a semi-circle until there were literally hundreds of eyes looking us over. Several of them were talking softly while laughing with their friends. (It was) one of the more awkward moments of my life.”

Despite the fear factor, students give the prison tour rave reviews. A number of Sutton’s former students said the experience crystallized their decision to become correctional officers. Others have left the tour bus resolved to change the criminal justice system. One way or another, by the end of the week, each student finds his gorilla.

*For more information on the prison tours, visit <http://www-rohan.sdsu.edu/~psutton>*

*A video of the prison tour, financed by The President’s Leadership Fund, is in production.*

## Samantha

“I am still shaken by the prison tour.”

## Kyle

“Being placed in a setting surrounded by inmates, scared out of my mind, taught me what prison life was like, reaching far beyond the confines of a classroom.”

## Glenn

“Meeting these guys, I realize that anybody can go to prison.”

## Kim

“I heard how inmates hide weapons on the yard, but never imagined I’d see one.”



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# Making a Difference at SDSU

## LEAVING A FAMILY LEGACY

The J.R. Filanc Company, a construction firm based in Oceanside, California, has employed San Diego State University engineering alumni for years. The hands-on abilities of these graduates impressed company president and CEO Pete Filanc, who spearheaded an industry fundraising campaign to create the AGC-Paul S. Roel Chair in Construction Engineering and Management (CEM) in 2002. In addition, Pete, his brother, Mark, and their father, Jack, each established endowed scholarships for CEM students in 2005.

“We reap the dividends of SDSU’s Construction Management Program and wanted to give back to SDSU,” said Pete.

Family patriarch Jack Filanc continued the tradition last year when he and his wife, Jane, made a \$3 million gift to the College of Engineering. University Development staff alerted the couple to the tax advantages of the 2005 Katrina Act, which led to a donation of \$1 million in cash from their IRA assets. The couple also established a \$2 million planned gift in honor of their daughter, Julia, an SDSU alumna who died in 2005. The J.R. Filanc Construction & Engineering Management Program and the J.R. Filanc Lecture Series in Construction Engineering Ethics will memorialize the Filanc’s gift in perpetuity.

## VALUING JEWISH ARTS AND CULTURE

Elaine Lipinsky believes in honoring the past while exploring the promise of the future, and she put that personal value into action by establishing the Endowed Artist-in-Residence within the Jewish Studies Program. Her \$250,000 gift to the College of Arts and Letters follows a long family tradition of giving to San Diego State University.

An avid patron of the arts, Lipinsky maintains a special interest in Jewish music, art and culture: “It is a window into the very soul of the Jewish people and a reflection of their condition in the world at large,” she said.

Yale Strom will serve as the first Artist-in-Residence for Jewish Studies. The world’s leading ethnographer-artist of klezmer, he is also an accomplished director, composer, musician, writer and photographer.

The New York resident assumes his new role in August. He will conduct ethnographic research, teach courses on the Jewish culture and showcase concerts, exhibitions and workshops by leading contemporary Jewish artists and performers at SDSU and in the San Diego community.



# Class Notes

## 1970s

'71: **Mike Boyle** ★ (political science) is a policy advisor to San Diego Mayor Jerry Sanders. A long-time partner in Higgs, Fletcher & Mack, he will advise the mayor on homeland security, public safety, transportation and other infrastructure matters.

'75: **Ray Aragon** (political science) was elected vice president of the State Bar of California, representing more than 14,000 attorneys in San Diego and Imperial counties. A criminal law specialist, Aragon is past president of San Diego La Raza Lawyers Association.

'76: **Richard Robbins** (English) received the 2006 Kay Sexton Award for contributions to literary culture in Minnesota. He is director of the creative writing program at Minnesota State University, Mankato. **Kay Smith Hill** (nursing) was selected by the National Association of School Nurses to receive an Educational Advancement Award, recognizing contributions to school nursing and impact on the community.

'79: **Gene Burns** (recreation administration) has written “An Insider’s Guide to 52 Homes in 52 Weeks,” a narration of his success buying and selling homes in Las Vegas with real estate mogul Dolf de Roos.

## 1980s

'81: **Scott Cunningham’s** ★ (information systems) “Lone Pine Canyon” has been nominated for a 2006 Native American Music Award in the category of Best New Age Album. It is the sixth nomination for Cunningham, whose Cherokee name is Golana. **Gordon Glazer** ★ (marketing), president of San Diego Postal and Shipping Equipment, Inc., became the first independent dealer in his field to achieve certification by the Certified Mail and Distribution Systems Managers.

'86: **Troy Johnson** (history) was named Outstanding Professor for 2005-2006 at California State University, Long Beach. He teaches history and American Indian Studies.

'88: **Catherine S. Miller** (communicative disorders, '90, M.A. speech pathology) received this year’s Outstanding Service Award from the California Speech Language and Hearing Association. Miller is a speech pathologist in El Cajon with expertise in the area of autism.

'89: **Michael Minjares** ★ (journalism, '95, M.A. speech communication) has won a fifth “Quest for the Best” award. He is the only Aztec to win the award as a student (in 1989) and as a staff member (in 1996, 1999, 2000 and 2006). The award honors outstanding student achievement and the faculty and staff who have had a significant impact on the personal growth of the winning student. Minjares is an Annual Fund Officer with SDSU.

## 1990s

'90: **Sarita Fuentes** (social science, teaching credential) is principal and CEO of The Monarch School, a San Diego school committed to providing homeless and at-risk

Please send your news to the SDSU Alumni Association, 5500 Campanile Dr., San Diego, CA 92182-1690 or [alumni@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:alumni@mail.sdsu.edu). ★ = annual member; ☆ = life member

# When I was at State...

I was Monty Montezuma from September 1990 through the 1998



Gutierrez photographed in 1994.

football season and the Aztec Warrior from February 2004 through April 2006. It was an amazing time. I was just out of high school when I started and I put a lot of hard work into getting the costume right. Every other year, I would go down to Mexico to see Aztec performers and create a new look. One of the best memories was getting official status as the Aztec Warrior. The fans

wanted it so much. The day I came back unofficially, in September 2002, people were crying and hugging me. Now, everything is lined up for me to hand this off to the students. I feel that I’m leaving a legacy for the next generation...for the university.

*Carlos Gutierrez is mentoring two SDSU students to take on the role of Aztec Warrior.*

Do you have a favorite memory from your days at San Diego State? Log on to <http://www.sdsu.com/timeline> and add your story to our scrapbook.

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**Vice President for Constituency Relations:** Denise Keller '97  
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# Aztecs for Life



For San Diego County Supervisor Pam Slater-Price, it was simply time to commit. The 1970 graduate had been an annual member

of the SDSU Alumni Association for years. This year she decided to join for life.

"I thought about doing it several times and each time it was, 'Oh, let's just get it in the mail. We'll do that next time,'" Slater-Price recalled. "Finally, next time came."

Slater-Price is one of more than 350 SDSU alumni who have become lifetime members of the Alumni Association in the past fiscal year – winding up the most successful 22 months ever for the organization in terms of lifetime memberships. There are now more than 3,700.

"I think our graduates are coming to see the value of maintaining a lifelong relationship with their alma mater," said Jim Herrick, the Alumni Association's executive director. "San Diego State is growing in stature not just in this community and in California, but throughout the nation and the world."

In fact, SDSU now ranks in the top 7% of research institutions nationwide for the funding it receives. For prospective students, Montezuma Mesa is more attractive than ever. Undergraduate applications for fall 2006 topped 52,000 for fewer than 9,000 slots. Herrick cited these among reasons the Alumni Association is pushing to increase its membership and visibility.

"To help elevate the university's standing, it's imperative to raise awareness and build support," Herrick said. "Alumni relationships are where you lay that foundation. By increasing our membership, we're strengthening ties between our graduates and their school."

Slater-Price believes the effort comes at a crucial time for SDSU. "I think the university at this point in time does need to have members of the public, who are alums, stand up for it because it's in a period of transition," she explained. "It's maturing as a university, in the (California State) system."

Just over a decade ago, the CSU system began formally encouraging private support of its public universities, emphasizing areas such as

# Banner Year for Alumni Association

alumni relations. Previously, tracking and engaging alumni was never a top CSU priority, explaining why SDSU, with more than 185,000 living alumni, only has about 9,000 Alumni Association members. The 5% membership rate is considered low by major university standards.

There are signs, however, that Aztec alumni are turning things around. First came a successful membership drive. Then, late last year, the Association's Life Endowment crept over the million-dollar mark - a significant milestone for an organization that had an endowment of less than \$66,000 in the early 1990s.

"Our board (of directors) has so many more options now that we've hit a million dollars," said Herrick. "It allows us to offer so much more in terms of benefits and services."

One such benefit was a free gift offer for lifetime members earlier this year. More than 1,600 alumni selected t-shirts, beverage coolers or license plate frames with no requirements other than lifetime membership.

The response, according to SDSU Alumni Association Associate

Director Tammy Blackburn, was amazing. "We expected maybe 800 or so alums to respond," she recalled, "but we heard from twice that many."

Blackburn leads the effort to improve member benefits, including giveaways, special events and discounts. She also helped devise a new payment plan for the \$500 Lifetime Membership, allowing alumni to make just two payments of \$84 a year over three years.

"With this plan," she explained, "our members can start enjoying their benefits without having to lay out all of their payment up front."

Although the deal is enticing, Slater-Price looks beyond the benefits in assessing her lifetime membership. "I think it's important to show support for your alma mater and to become a member."

— Tobin Vaughn



## 1990s Class Notes

children with an accredited education while caring for their basic needs.

'93: **Lisa Druxman** ('97, M.A., both in psychology) founded Stroller Strides, a 50-minute, fitness program for new mothers and their babies.

'94: **Luis E Alvarez** ★ (information systems) is vice president of operations for McNeilus Truck Manufacturing Corp., a division of Oshkosh Truck Manufacturing. He oversees 11 plants in North America and Mexico. **Eric Blehm** (journalism) has authored "The Last Season," a book about the life and mysterious disappearance of mountain ranger Randy Morgenson. This spring, Blehm spoke on campus about the experience of becoming a published author.

'96: **Capt. John Moore** (international business) recently returned from a second deployment in Iraq, where he was adviser to an infantry battalion from the Republic of Georgia. In 2004, he received the Gen. Douglas MacArthur Leadership Award for outstanding leadership in the U.S. Army's field environment.

'98: **Cupcake L. Brown** (criminal justice administration), an associate with the law firm Bingham McCutchen, is the author of the New York Times bestseller, "A Piece of Cake" (Crown Publishers). The book is a memoir of her life as an abused foster child who became involved in drug addiction and prostitution before turning her life around. **Kerri Font, D.D.S** (biology) was awarded Diplomate status by the American Board of Periodontology after completing postdoctoral advanced specialty training. She is a captain at Ramstein Air Force Base in Germany. **Cy Kuckenbaker** (film), returned from a Fulbright Fellowship in Lithuania, where he made the short film, "The Orphans." The film premiered in May at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York.

# By Degrees

**Pedro Parra**

**Hometown:** Brawley, California

**Future Profession:** Bilingual teacher

**SDSU degree:** Liberal Studies & Spanish

**What brought you to San Diego State?** I heard SDSU's liberal studies programs was one of the best. When I applied, I got an email saying that I was a good candidate for a President's Diversity Scholarship (awarded annually to low-income, high-achieving high school seniors). We get \$3,500 a year and lots of help with advising, registering for classes, leadership training, things like that. And we get to meet President Weber. That was cool.

**Why do you want to teach bilingual students?** I moved from Mexicali to Brawley when I was four years old. I'm the only bilingual speaker in my family, and I had to overcome the language barrier to succeed in school. That experience helped me grow. I want to be there for students who will go through the same thing.

**Has the adjustment to a large city been difficult?** Yes. I'm in the University Honors Program and I made some friends there. But I consider MEChA (an organization promoting the advancement of Chicano students) to be my family at State. They opened their arms to me. They taught me how to work hard and engage in the community politically.

**Besides MEChA, who has had a major influence on your life?**

My mother. She moved us to the U.S. because she wanted a well-balanced education for me. Since third grade, I've had to wake myself in the morning, make breakfast, lock the doors and walk to the bus – because she would leave the house at 3 or 4 a.m. to start work in the fields. She has been my motivation. Because of her, I'm here in college. Some day, I want to help her out, so she can stop working.

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