



**IRV ERDOS**  
Ham on Wry

## Discovering the light at the end of the treadmill

It's been exactly one month since I joined the local gym and I find it to be quite rewarding. I've tried a number of exercise machines, but I tend to spend most of my time on the treadmill.

It's a rather sophisticated piece of equipment with computer readouts that indicate speed, distance, heart rate, and calories expended. The numbers provide motivation and allow me to set certain targets for a one-hour workout.

With the help of information I found on the Internet and taking into account the speed, the grade and time, I put together an incentive chart. Now I'm not just working out, I'm setting goals.

For example, if I walk for 39 minutes at a speed of 3.5 miles per hour, I can have a doughnut. That's because a doughnut is 195 calories and requires the exact time, speed and distance I've outlined to work off the equivalent number of calories. Walk for 10 more minutes, it could be glazed.

A cup of coffee with that doughnut doesn't require additional time, but if I wanted cream with it, it's another five minutes.

The only down side is that I have to get in my car and drive the 6 miles to get to the local doughnut shop. Then I have to stand in a line for a while. And who knows if the doughnuts are fresh or yesterday's?

And so I came up with what I'm sure you'll agree is a revolutionary idea. One I plan to approach the major gym equipment manufacturers with. I just wonder why no one thought of it before. What's the breakthrough discovery?

A treadmill with a built-in fryer.

How difficult would it be to design a treadmill that would incorporate a doughnut machine? And why stop there? Why not make them with a pizza oven? Right now, my motivation level is honestly rather indifferent. But if I knew I'm getting a hot pizza at the end of my workout, I'd be running like a gerbil on steroids.

As an extra incentive, the pizza production would be tied into the level of your exercise. Your speed and grade would determine how hot the oven, and thus, how fast it bakes. If you want a pizza in a half hour, you're going to have to basically be running at 8 or 9 miles an hour with a fairly steep grade. But what's the rush? In my case, I can walk at 3 miles an hour with no grade and have my pizza in an hour. A slightly higher speed if I wanted pepperoni.

You think you might want a drink with that pizza? How about a treadmill with a soda dispenser? Ten extra minutes gets you a 16-ounce Coke.

I'm also going to call on George Foreman to see what he thinks of my idea. He could combine efforts with an exercise equipment manufacturer and wind up with a treadmill that makes cheeseburgers.

Coming soon to your local Walmart: The George Foreman Treadgrill.

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## ONE-ON-ONE WITH BEATRIZ PALMER

U-T profiles of notable local people

# Helping students learn by serving

BY LISA DEADERICK ■ PHOTO BY HAYNE PALMOUR IV

When it was first announced that someone at MiraCosta College was being honored with an annual Salute to Women of Color award from the North San Diego County chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Beatriz Palmer thought it was someone else.

"We have two people named Bea at the college," she says.

But it was Palmer who was recognized alongside six other women for the ways they impact the lives of others through their professional or personal work.

"It is such an honor ... I am humbled that they picked me, too."

Palmer, 44, is the student services coordinator for the college's service learning program and volunteer center, where she oversees the program that matches students with an organization or school that can use that student's academic skills and interests. Students are able to apply what they've learned in class, to the community.

For 11 years she's been with MiraCosta, where she started out as the program secretary. She lives in Oceanside with her husband, and they have three children. Palmer took some time to talk about the program, her goals for it and how she hopes to continue positively affecting the students she works with and the surrounding community.

**Q.** Tell us about the service learning program.

**A.** It's very different from traditional volunteering. In service learning, there's an opportunity to see the community through an academic lens, to think critically, to plan meaningful and purposeful work, and then the students serve. While the students are serving, they think critically, learn to problem solve, while making connections to their academics. Students learn more about themselves, they explore potential career opportunities, and learn about resources and issues that impact their community, and often become empowered to be part of the solution. We help students find placements in the community, and help identify on-campus service opportunities. There are some students that in reality are very limited in resources, and thus may not be able to go off campus, so I look for events on campus that may need a few service learning students to help.

We've experienced quite a big increase in student participation and that may be due to the social changes that our nation is experiencing. Students are becoming more empowered to connect with others and speak up for causes they feel passionate about. This semester, our program has registered a little over 1,000 students that are doing both service learning hours in the community and volunteer hours. We have service learning in math and science, arts, English, social sciences and architecture.

**Q.** How is this kind of program beneficial to students?

**A.** Students get to find immediate relevance to the courses they are taking. They find the real-life application to some of the concepts and theories they learn about through class discussions, texts, lectures, etc. They also begin to build a list of references for future letters of recommendations for transfer, scholarships or even employment. Students discover a lot about themselves through these experiences. They often learn about cultural

competencies, how to communicate more effectively through email, phone and in person. I notice that some students have never had jobs, and for them, starting a service learning project is a lot like starting a new job, and these are real-life skills that they can add to a résumé. I think for a college campus, service learning is a lot about social justice, and an opportunity to give students a space to learn about their own voice. They learn to become civic-minded individuals,



and to engage and connect with others on and off campus.

**Q.** What led you to the service learning program? Why was this something you wanted to do?

**A.** Our family has always valued service to others, it's an integral part of who we are and what our faith as Christians is all about: to make Christ look good. Not because our salvation depends on it, but because we get the privilege to live out our faith by serving others. But serving comes easy for us because we love helping. When my husband and I were little, we both grew up with limited resources. His mother, a single mom, raised them in church, serving in church and their community. In my family, we served but in very different ways. We were very poor, my parents were illiterate and worked in agriculture, my father struggled with alcohol and drug addiction, but they always managed to provide. I remember them always helping. If it wasn't for the kindness of many of the local nonprofits and other programs, we may not have come out of poverty and drugs. So serving my community and encouraging others is like coming full circle or paying it forward. I am a product of the resources in my community.

**Q.** The Salute to Women of Color award recognizes women who make an impact on the lives of others through their professional and personal efforts. What impact do you hope to make?

**A.** To continue to encourage others to be advocates for themselves and others, and to connect students with opportunities to serve and add to their academic journeys. To help them learn about their community, its issues, and provide them with an opportunity to find solutions to the existing issues. I tell my students, "Go and change the world." They may not be able to change the world right away, but they can start by changing their community.

**Q.** What's been challenging about your work?

**A.** To convince people that service learning is not just "fluff" work, that stu-

dents are really being transformed through these opportunities. It's also difficult to accept that we can't do it all. It's hard to tell a community partner we can't assist them or support them because we don't have the manpower or that the opportunity isn't a good fit. For example, an organization with a really good cause may need students to do physical labor like cleaning, yard work, or construction, and I have to think how those experiences will enrich a student's academic journey. If there isn't a connection to academics, then I have to tell the organization or community partner, "No." That's hard for me.

**Q.** What's been rewarding about it?

**A.** Hearing the students' testimonies of how they had an "Aha" moment, or they come back and tell me how that one service learning project reaffirmed their career path, or landed them a job or a scholarship they needed to pay for the things they need to help them be successful. Sometimes it's the little things like, "I didn't know that we had a food pantry," or "I learned about an organization's resources that I myself desperately needed." It's also rewarding to know a student got a job because of the service learning program, or that they got accepted into a four-year college and they think writing about their experiences really helped.

**Q.** What has it taught you about yourself?

**A.** Growing up, my family depended on the generosity of many of the local nonprofit organizations, so I feel like I am a product of the great work of the organizations in my community. I value my community, so I want to teach others to do the same.

**Q.** What is the best advice you've ever received?

**A.** When things get rough, there are two things I think of: lean in and fake it till you make it, and "perhaps this is the moment for which you have been created."

**Q.** What is one thing people would be surprised to find out about you?

**A.** That I'm a homebody. I love to cook and my ideal vacation is a stay-cation.

**Q.** Describe your ideal San Diego weekend.

**A.** Being able to be with my family and friends, even if it's volunteering together. One of my favorite things to do is serving at a shelter in Vista. I love cooking the meal with my family. It's a lot of work, but then watching the families enjoy a hot, cooked meal is so rewarding. I know it's altruistic, we say we serve others, but really it fills our cups. It's our way of exercising our faith.

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### What I love about Oceanside ...

That I live in a working community with diverse families, and that I live near the place where I grew up.

## SOCIAL SCENE

### NORTH COAST REP'S 'SPOTLIGHT' GALA

STORY AND PHOTOS BY VINCENT ANDRUNAS  
SPECIAL TO THE U-T

The North Coast Repertory Theatre may be considered a "small" theater only in regard to its performance space. But in fact, "intimate" would be a more accurate description of its comfy 200-seat facility, tucked away in an upscale Solana Beach mall just off Route 5. Even back row patrons can easily appreciate the actors' facial expressions and feel as if they're right there amidst the action. NCRT's attention to quality — including the use of acclaimed professional Equity actors from throughout the country, leadership by talented and experienced artistic director David Ellenstein, and inspired choice of material — has led to its recognition as one of the country's best regional theatres.

It's also well-loved by the local community, as evidenced by its recent annual "Spotlight" fundraiser gala, which drew more than 200 friends and supporters to the Del Mar Country Club. Holly Smith-Jones chaired; co-chairs were Jean and David Laing (unable to attend due to a last-minute illness), and Debra and Jim Lampley (just back that day

from London, where he, a sportscaster, called a boxing match).

A cocktail reception featured great hors d'oeuvres, a silent auction, and entertainment from a guitarist and a close-up magician. Just before dinner (tender beef and Scottish salmon, or veggie frittata), director Ellenstein presented the second annual San Diego Champion for the Arts Award to honorary chair Leonard Hirsch for his extraordinary support of the visual and performing arts. Marty Burnett was surprised with an award recognizing his 25 years of extraordinary service as NCRT's resident scenic designer and technical director.

Longtime NCRT "Angel" Hannah Step announced her family's latest gift: \$120,000 (including \$20,000 for NCRT's endowment fund). Paddle-raise donations for Artists' Advocacy programs totaled \$128,300 and live auction items garnered another \$19,000. Overall, the event netted \$352,500.

The evening's featured entertainment was a performance by the celebrated



Theatre folks hamming it up: Jerry and Sharon Stein (she's NCRT board president), David Ellenstein (NCRT artistic director) and Denise Young, Holly Smith-Jones (gala chair), Debra and Jim Lampley (gala co-chairs)

Lucie Arnaz and her trio. She's a longtime friend of director Ellenstein — he says she's a beyond-amazing person, and that he loves her dearly. Her husband, Broadway and TV star Larry Luckinbill, also performs one-person plays on NCRT's stage.

Ms. Arnaz sang beautifully, pausing between songs for verbal vignettes of her family life. The daughter of Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz, these entertaining anecdotes of her upbringing were illustrated with projected video images of her father's home movies.



Dr. Allen and Judy Moffson (he's past NCRT board president), Jeff and Sheila Lipinsky, Dr. Stuart and Lisa Lipton