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ATHLETIC DIRECTOR Tom Bowen, who took over the athletic program in December 2004, been upfront about his priorities, emphasizing grade-point averages over rushing and passing averages. "He has made it very, very clear that our players will no longer be just athletes—they will be student-athletes," said Bowen Daley, SJSU assistant athletic director for academics, who has become Bowen's right hand in terms of enforcing higher academic standards for SJSU athletes. As a result, GPAs have steadily rising. "We can see the improvement across the board," she says.

Higher academic standards in play

Dick Perry, from San Antonio, Texas, and Reese, from East Palo Alto, are testifying to the higher academic standards now in place at SJSU. Both Perry and Reese have earned their undergraduate degrees: Perry in psychology and communications, Reese in radio/television. Both will take to the football field in 2009 as master's degree candidates. And both have learned what it takes to succeed as student-athletes.

"Your football career can be taken from you at any time," says Perry, who plans on earning a master's in counseling education.

Perry's college football experience has been complicated with physical injury but he has stayed the course.

"You've just got to keep pushing forward no matter how hard things get," he says. "You always get out what you put in."

Put on academic probation as a freshman, Reese rallied and achieved a 3.4 GPA in his major. Describing the student/athlete relationship, he says: "If I had to make a connection, it would be diligence. The grades that I have earned have been due to hard work, staying up late nights and studying." Reese's "get it done" attitude will take him far in the classroom, and doesn't hurt in getting that extra yard, too.

"A lot of student-athletes focus on making it in the pros," Reese adds. "That's not necessarily a bad thing, but they're putting so much focus on it that they're setting aside their academic degree."

Changing times

Student-athletes are getting a hand staying focused on academics—and getting their diplomas—from three academic advisors, a full-time academic director and a learning specialist. Students come to SJSU better prepared scholastically than in the past, says Daley, and the extra support has resulted in improved APR (Academic Progress Rate) numbers. APR is the metric the NCAA uses to measure progress toward graduation and the benchmark for excellence is 925.

During the 2007-2008 school year, SJSU topped that benchmark with a score of 949.

"We have some lofty goals we'll be reach-

ing for in 2008-2009," Daley predicts. "The number (949) will improve."

Across the hall from Daley's office is the former study hall for student-athletes, a classroom that held 25 people—at most. With the help of alumni Stan and Marilyn Gadway, football coach Dick Tomey dramatically improved those study conditions. The Scott Gadway Academic Center, established by a generous donation from the Gadways, now accommodates 100 student-athletes, equipped with desks and computers, and staffed by tutors.

Under Bowen and Daley's watch, student-athletes have the tools to graduate, which Reese says "is the most important thing you can do—why wouldn't you want something that will put you ahead of the rest?" ♦

"APR 101," Brown, Gary. NCAA News Online, February 14, 2005: The APR is calculated by allocating points for eligibility and retention—the two factors that research identifies as the best indicators of graduation. Each player on a given roster earns a maximum of two points per term, one for being academically eligible and one for staying with the institution. A team's APR is the total points of a team's roster at a given time divided by the total points possible. Since this results in a decimal number, the CAP decided to multiply it by 1,000 for ease of reference. Thus, a raw APR score of .925 translates into the 925 that will become the standard terminology.

SPARTANS HELPING SPARTANS

**SJSU ALUMNI AND FACULTY OFFER TIPS,
HANDS-ON TRAINING AND SAGE ADVICE
TO STUDENTS GRADUATING INTO
THE "REAL WORLD."**

Juan Escobar's life went into overdrive when he received two irresistible internship offers last spring.

"It took a lot of planning on Google maps to figure out how I would manage my internships in Redwood City and Palo Alto, classes at San José State and my leadership role with the Latino Business Students Association," says the SJSU business major. "My day would start at 5:30 am and end at 10 pm—if I was lucky."

Although taking on both internships meant Escobar essentially didn't have a life, he says it was an experience he wouldn't trade for anything.

"Who says no to bigwigs like DreamWorks Animation and IDEO?" he asks animatedly. "Just getting your foot in those organizations is a big deal. I knew it was going to be crazy managing everything, but I also knew it would pay off in the long run."

Escobar was right. The connections he made at those two companies have been critical to his self-discovery. "I came out of my comfort zone and learned how the business world works," says the sprightly 28-year-old. "Classroom learning only does so much...you have to step out into the world for those real life lessons."

There's no doubt that internships have become essential components of the educational experience, and SJSU alumni and faculty are helping students like Escobar realize their dreams.

Connecting people and opportunities

"In such a tough economy, it is obvious that students need to go the extra mile to land a job," says Alan Wong, '89 Physics, president of the Corporate Asian American Employee Network. "Students can work hard to get good grades but may not have access to contacts within companies. That's where alumni come in—we can make a real difference by sharing our knowledge, experience and contacts."

The Corporate Asian American Employee Network offers professional networking events and leadership development programs led by company executives that target employees at HP, Google, Kaiser Permanente, VISA and other Bay Area companies. After seeing how much the employees benefited from mentorship, Wong won-



DEBBIE DRESCHLER

ed if those employees would, in turn, become mentors for U students. "I found it natural to bring both these parties together," he says.

An idea was born. Recently Wong initiated a mentoring program within SJSU's College of Science. The program particularly emphasizes soft skills development.

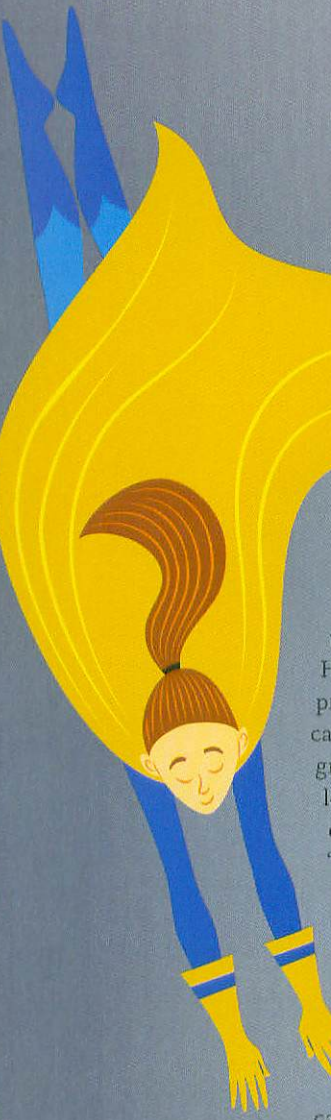
People skills often determine how efficient an employee be," he explains. "For science students, or those in other technical disciplines, soft skills tend to be the weak link I could be a limiting factor for employment, especially in a poor economy."

Susie Sahim, '07 BFA, used her summer internship at Google to showcase her "hard" and soft skills talents. The alt? A full-time job.

An internship is like a test run," says Sahim, who works with Google's graphics team creating illustrations on the Google home page for millions to see. "The company gets to l you out and see how well you adapt to the new environ-

ment in 12 weeks. If you jive well with the company, then it's possible for that internship to turn into a permanent position. But even if it doesn't, that internship can open the door to new opportunities."

Sahim returned to campus this summer as a prospective employer. "Since I have firsthand knowledge of the animation/illustration department, I know what the students here are capable of," she says. "What's unique about this program is that all the students have very strong drawing fundamentals—something that's severely lacking in many art schools across the country." SJSU students have also worked digitally on large projects with "lots of restrictions," Sahim notes. "SJSU tries to simulate the work environment as closely as possible, including scenarios of tight deadlines and harsh critique of the artwork," she explains. "My entire team was very impressed with the skill level of the graduating students. If we do end up hiring a new graduate from SJSU, I'll definitely be mentoring."



Spartans in action

"Our students are very application oriented and visual," says Fred Barez, professor and department chair for mechanical and aerospace engineering at SJSU. "It's important for them to see where they may end up working."

Barez regularly takes his students on visits to local companies such as Cisco, NASA Ames Research Center, the Tech Museum and BAE Systems. He also invites engineering alumni and professionals to speak in his classes. "They can give students a firsthand account of the great engineering opportunities and challenges that lie ahead and of the companies' expectations of new graduates," he relates. "We teach time management, resume writing, interview preparation, and simulate ethical situations and behavior, but it's seeing alumni in action that stays with students."

Michael Rose, '91 Finance, managing partner of Montage Capital, believes bringing professionals on campus helps the university build relationships with local companies. "It also helps maintain SJSU's reputation of delivering high-quality students who are prepared and valuable to businesses upon graduation," he says.

Rose mentored one of the winning teams of the Silicon Valley Business Competition Plan this year. "I enjoyed sharing my knowledge of the startup process. If I can bridge the gap between the academic idea of a business plan and the real world components that matter in selling the idea to investors, I've given something of real value to the students."

Think career, not job

The SJSU Career Center also does its best to leverage its connections with alumni. "Many of our students have not

had career coaching from family members and have no idea how to go through this maze of college, let alone find an internship or job," says Susan Rockwell, assistant director of employer services at the career center. "We've invited alumni to give panel presentations about how students can leverage their classroom project into something that could be of value to an employer. Increasingly employers are expecting students to have had an internship experience by the time they graduate... we're trying our best to give them those opportunities."

Angela Wayfer, internship program specialist with the career center, offers students an important bit of advice that she's gleaned from employers: "Don't go with the expectation that you'll find that dream job right after graduation. Your career is going to have several levels and multiple paths, so think broadly and keep an open mind."

Juan Escobar is following that piece of advice keenly. In addition to his intense internships at DreamWorks Animation and IDEO, he has interned at Delave, Eggo (where he got free waffles), Intuit and VisualCV. He's also served as a peer intern and peer advisor at the university's career center.

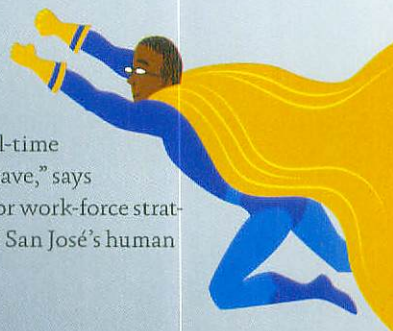
"Learning from people who've been there and done it, is key for me," he says. "When looking for internships, I look for the big names because I figured that if a company's got a good reputation, there has to be a reason for it, and in most cases it's because the company has a great work culture. I want to be exposed to the people who create that culture and imbibe their professionalism."

Once he nabbed an internship, Escobar used the opportunity to explore all the operational facets of a company.

"The great thing about being an intern is you can be in the accounting department but still ask questions of people in recruiting," he says.

Rounding it off

"We tell our interns that you have an access card that even full-time employees don't have," says Kelly Spivey, senior work-force strategist in the city of San José's human



sources department. "They can call a director of any department and get an appointment for an informational interview."

Last summer, the city of San José mentorship program had 20 mentors and mentees; this summer, that number doubled. "If there's a certain expertise area that the intern is trying to develop, they can ask for a mentor from that area," explains Spivey. For instance, "if an intern is passionate about economic development but feels the need to learn more about financial management software, he might find a mentor who works as a financial analyst to mentor him."

Chen, '08 Digital Media Art, is currently interning with the city manager's office designing web pages, brochures, newsletters and ads. He sought mentorship this year from Kathy Lang, '90 Speech Pathology and Speech Pathology, '94 MA Audiology, who works in the city's IT department. "I don't know any of the behind-the-scenes stuff that goes into submitting forms that I design for the website," says Chen. "So this gives me the opportunity to get a bigger picture view of the entire process, both the artistic and technical."

Lang has also helped Chen polish her resume and practice her interviewing skills. "I knew that she had wonderful design skills, and now I'm excited to be able to share my technical expertise with her. In return, she inspires me with her design skills," says Lang, who also enjoys mentoring interns because of their common SJSU connection. "I think it is a fabulous way for Spartans to come together. I was involved in so many opportunities while attending SJSU that I am excited to be giving back in this way."

Another alumnus who's doing his part to give SJSU interns a well-rounded experience is Asian Art Museum curator John Stucky, '92 MLIS.

"I have tried to impress upon all my interns the importance of knowing all aspects of the profession in order to be the best and most informed job they can in their future careers," he says. "Working in a small library allows interns to do a greater variety of tasks, some of which they may never do again. Yet it gives them a much broader background and a greater level of understanding of how libraries function at many levels. You must learn how to draw basic shapes before you can even begin to paint."

Tough times, new trends

In the current economic climate, the influx of internship opportunities is a boon for students.

"We're seeing more unpaid internship offers coming through," says the career center's Wayfer. "And there's an increased interest in public service sector opportunities."

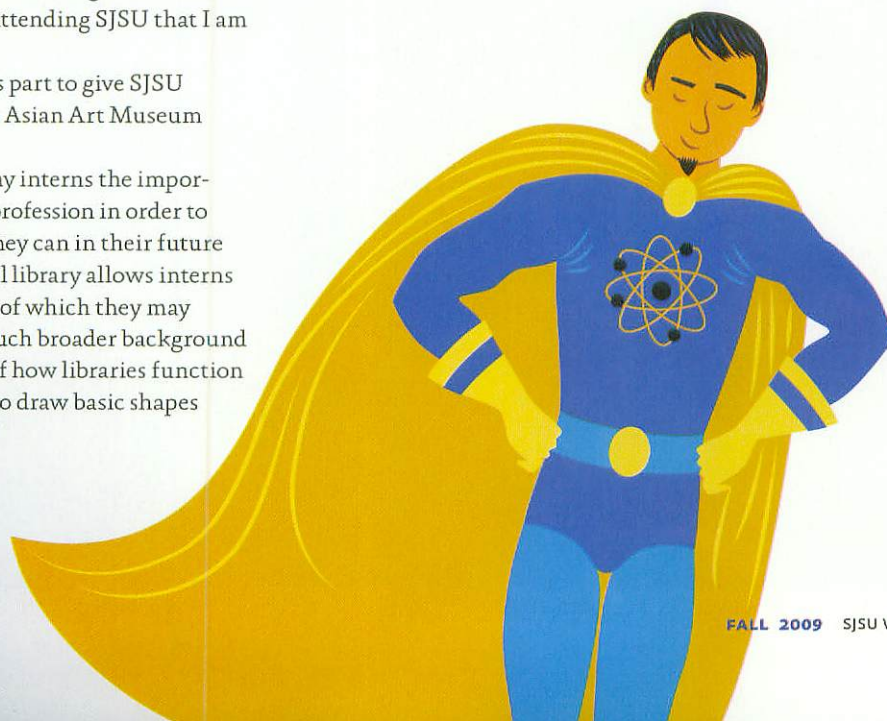
Talia Bisbano, '04 Justice Studies, interned without pay at Vanished Children's Alliance. She is now the organization's director of casework. She cautions students not to dis-

card an internship opportunity simply because it doesn't pay. "You can't really put a price tag on the kind of experience you get as an intern," she says. "It helps you become more marketable in the long run."

It's the big-picture perspective that's driving "super intern" Juan Escobar to expand his list of contacts and connections via online social networking platforms. To date, he has more than 1,000 Facebook friends and 500 connections on LinkedIn.

"As a student, these online friendships are my ticket to informational interviews," he says. "As a soon-to-be alumnus, I see them as an opportunity to form a real-life relationship that will help me become a connector for future Spartans." ♦

—Mansi Bhatia





SHARON HALL'S **LONG EXPOSURE**

*It's so much fun to be
on a campus working
with young people.*

*They're so excited about
the college.*

—Sharon Hall

SHARON HAS HELPED TO ELEVATE THE IMAGE OF THE UNIVERSITY.

CRAIG KOCHERSBERGER,
FORMER WSQ ART DIRECTOR



ographer Sharon Hall always gets her
“There are no excuses in photography,”
Hall, ’80 BS Photojournalism and ’93 MA
Communications, whose nearly 30-year
folio proves her tenacity.

Hall’s ardent philosophy belies her
oods: using humor and an occasional bit
ant work to make even the most camera-
omfortable. “I have a little trick where I
up on my stepladder and then pretend

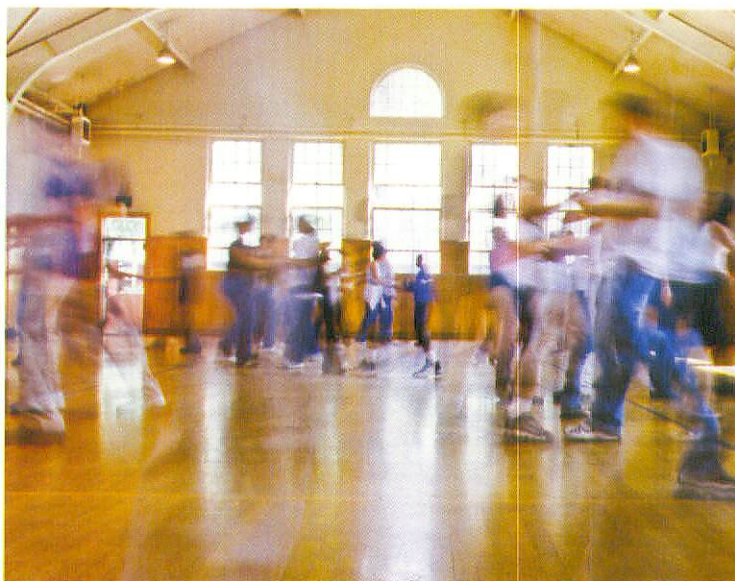
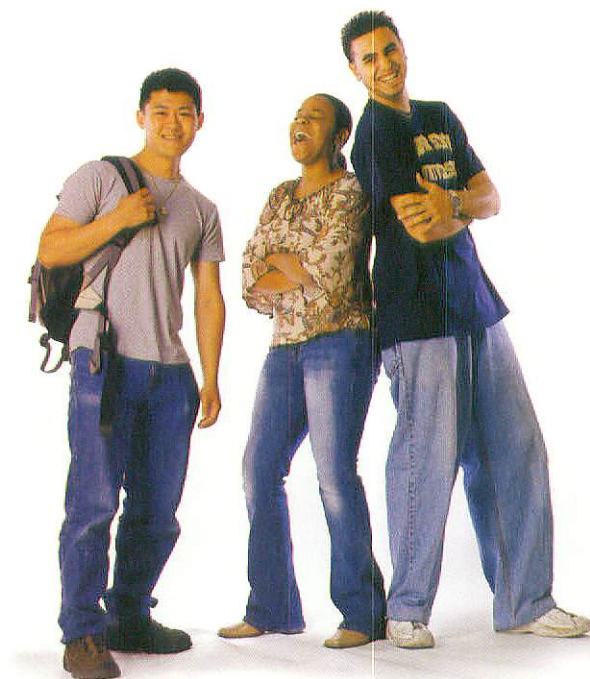
to fall off,” she says laughing. “People quit
worrying about how they look when they’re
laughing at me.”

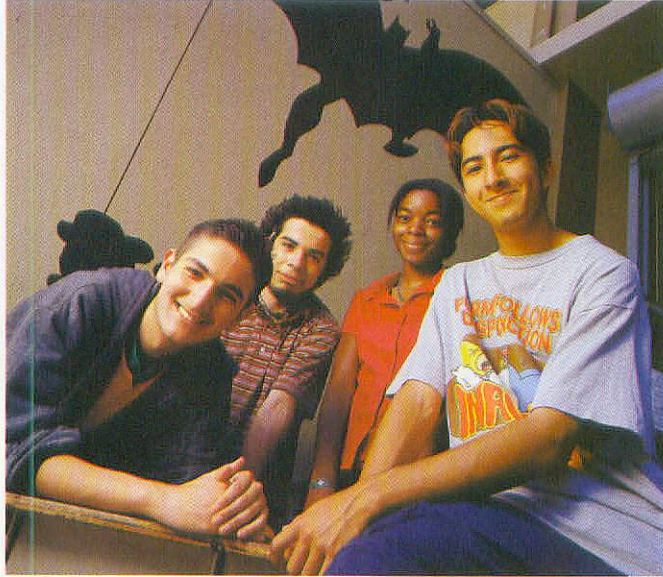
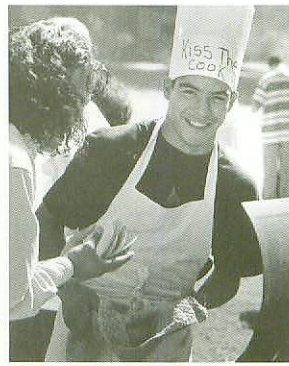
With her personable style, Hall has docu-
mented the rise of Silicon Valley—through
tech companies like Apple and Hewlett Pack-
ard—for public relations firms and magazines
on both coasts. And in the heart of Silicon
Valley, she has also captured through her lens
the very best of San José State.

Since the mid 1980s, the university’s
publications, *Washington Square* magazine,
“view books,” and eventually its websites,
have been brought to life with her photos.
Although Hall insists she’s not an artist, she’s
added color to the university. And with every
shot, she tells the stories of San José State
through its faculty, staff and students.

—Jody Ulate, ’05

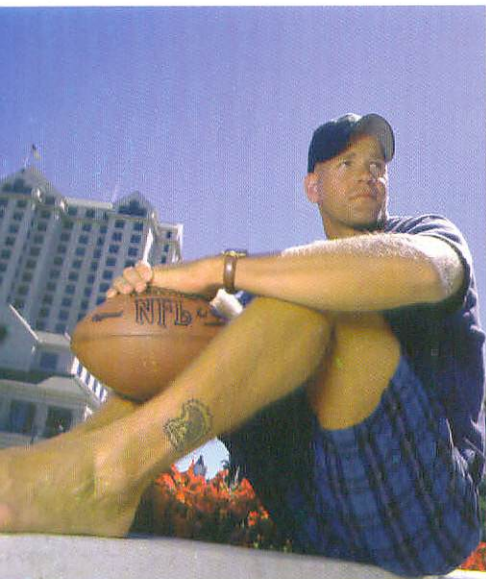
*People take San José State for granted until
they meet the students and hear their stories.
—Sharon Hall*





**SHARON IS A WONDERFUL
CREATIVE PARTNER.
HER AESTHETIC SENSE
IS REMARKABLE.**

**TOM FAIRBANKS, GRAPHIC DESIGNER
ENROLLMENT SERVICES**



*Photographing someone is
not about a person's looks
but about capturing their
personality.*

—Sharon Hall