

A December to Remember

The Collins College Alumni Association hosted an exciting holiday mixer on December 11th, 2009 to celebrate the success of their first year in existence. The Leadership Board was formed in December, 2008 and since, has made much progress. In its first year, the association was tasked with establishing a sustainable infrastructure for the organization. This was achieved through the creation of organizational bylaws, meeting procedures, and committees. In its first year, the association experienced some growing pains dealing with challenges of attrition and attempting to accomplish goals while simultaneously learning and establishing new processes and procedures. Despite the challenges, the Alumni Association established a strong sustainable infrastructure, established lines of communication with Alumni through social networking sites, and even designed their first newsletter which was released in December.

The event was attended by over 125 people including alumni, students and employers.

Rainbow Studios, Phoenix's largest video game developer, was on-hand and allowed guests to demo two of their newest titles, one of which was released in January, 2010. Two guest



Audience listens as Guest Speaker, Jim Nissen, President of Sw!tch Studios and Arizona AIGA speaks.

speakers from the studio discussed life in the game industry to a captivated audience of game design alumni and students. Fashion
Continued on page 3

From the board...

As the leadership board for our alumni association, we want to provide everyone with updates on the latest happenings of the group on a quarterly basis. Some of you may already know, but the Leadership Board of the Collins College Alumni Association has been working hard behind the scenes to create these forums and other processes to help all Collins Alumni stay in touch and continue to learn from each other long after we have graduated. Over the past year, we have celebrated the achievements of multiple former students with recognition awards, hosted two alumni mixer events, and created the Facebook, LinkedIn, and InCircle groups. We have achieved many great successes to get to this point but are definitely looking forward to expanding on these successes over the coming years.

Great successes to share

You are a great group of passionate people and everyone has many great successes to share. We encourage you to do so by joining our forums, coming to local events and spreading the word to all of your fellow graduates. Overall, we as the board are only the starting point but you are the folks who will help this organization continue to grow and expand to every reach of Collins College's long history. That's about it for this edition. But one last item that we would like to encourage is everyone who reads this to get involved in the group and stay in touch with your former classmates and help each other continue to grow beyond our formal education. If you are interested in learning more about the inner workings of the board with the possibility of joining in the future or are local to the Phoenix area and wish to attend one of our monthly meetings please contact Robert Starks at rstarks@collinscollege.edu. Thanks all and have a great second quarter.
 Jeff Braun - President,
 Collins College Alumni Association

CCAA goes "Above and Beyond"



On January 10-12th Career Education Corporation hosted the 2010 Alumni Summit for all alumni champions and alumni board presidents in the entire company. At this summit, Collins College was widely promoted as having a very strong alumni association and used as an example in breakout sessions with other schools. Along with being a leader in alumni relations programming, our very own, Robert Starks,



Director of Career Services and alumni champion, received the "Above and Beyond" award for Art & Design at left. Jeff Braun, the president of the Collins College Alumni Association received the recognition award on behalf of the leadership board for their outstanding progress in alumni programming. Congratulations to Robert Starks and the Collins College Alumni Association Leadership Board!



Let's Dance 80's Party

With Cyndi Lauper, AC/DC, and Michael Jackson playing in the background, some students and alumni conversed in the halls, others watched the Breakfast Club in the theatre and some dared to attempt the moonwalk. This was the scene at the Let's Dance 80's party thrown by the Collins College Student Council and Alumni Association. Whereas some alumni were in high school during the 80's, others were in



diapers, but everyone seemed to love the nostalgia evoked from the music, the movies, and especially, the unique 80's fashion. The Film students built an entire set with lights, effects, fog, and even a disco ball to give the space it's 80's makeover. Robert Starks, the Director of Career Services, showcased his mixing skills as the DJ of the event and instructors busted out with their old dance



Alumni Happenings

To learn more about what's going on with your alumni association, go to the Collins College Alumni Association page at www.collinscollege.edu/alumni and join one or more of the social networking sites.



moves including the cabbage patch, the running man, and the Pee Wee Herman. Of course, the Electric slide was still a dance floor favorite and no matter how many decades go by, pizza is still the preferred party food.



Jeff Braun, the President of the Alumni Association said, "It was fun to see everyone dress up in their 80's gear and just have fun hanging out, eating, watching movies, and dancing together. It was also nice to meet peoples' significant others and learn more about one another on a more personal level. It really helps build a sense of community." Stay tuned for the next party, we may dare to bring back the Disco era!

Alumni speaks

Are you an alum with a success story to tell?

Remember not all success stories are perfect from beginning to end. Some are like obstacle courses, but through any combination of determination, perseverance, focus and hard work success can be achieved. Share your story with others... Submit your article to rstars@collinscollege.edu.

And the alum said...

Dreams Really do Come True...

- By Julie Collins -



I grew up in a suburb northeast of Cleveland, Ohio. I had dreams throughout junior high and high school of taking off to the west coast and living near the beach happily ever after! The only class I ever earned an A in was Art so it made sense for me to major in Graphic Design. I really had no idea what I wanted to do with my life - who does at age 17? So off to Kent State University I went, enrolled as a full time student, clad with all the cumbersome art student tools including a T-square and tackle box. Things were going fine until the winter storms arrived and I had to trudge through the snow to class with heavy books and tools. Really? Does it have to be this hard? Did I just hear California calling my name?

"I was learning, passionate and excited about my future in this field"

After surviving two years at Kent, gaining lots of friends and partying too much, my parents said I needed to make a decision... get serious about school or forget it. I needed some time to figure it out. I called my oldest sister who had moved to Phoenix a few years earlier and invited myself to stay with her for the summer. Of course I had no idea it would be hotter than hell in July and August; however, I'll take the heat, just don't make me survive another Nor'easter! During this visit, while watching tv, I saw a commercial for Al Collins Graphic Design School. I thought it looked like the coolest school ever. I wanted to be part of the digital revolution! At this time in 1987, Kent State did not teach computer graphics as their program was very traditional; computer graphics was new to me and I found it very exciting and inspiring as well as strictly focusing on my major interest. I was sold. This was what I wanted to do and where I wanted to go. However, there was a major obstacle. I had to talk my parents into sending me 3,000 miles away to a rather expensive trade school. Somehow, I made my case. YES!

I loved Al Collins GDS from the get go. I fit in and was comfortable and I was learning, passionate and excited about my future in this field. I loved how small and personal it

Continued on page 3

A December to Remember

Continued from page 1

Design/Merchandising Program Chair, Nicole Bissing, hosted a workshop that allowed guests to design their own t-shirts while Kathleen Vick, an Interior Design instructor, held a workshop on Sustainable Design. The Alumni Association held an award ceremony recognizing Brendan Moriarty with the Distinguished Alumni Award, Blaine Coury with the Alumni Spirit Award, and THQ, Inc.



Awards handed out at 2009 Alumni Association Holiday Mixer.

with the Community Partnership Award. Jim Nissen, President of Sw!tch Studios and the Arizona chapter of the AIGA (American Institute of Graphic Artists) was the keynote speaker for the night. It was an exciting night and a great way to reflect upon and celebrate the organization's first year accomplishments .



From Drab to Fab: Redesign that old T-Shirt Workshop at 2009 Alumni Association Holiday Mixer.

Dreams Really do Come True...

Continued from page 2

was. I didn't just feel like a number. I'll never forget Typography class and drawing the alphabet over and over again in various font styles until my desk was black and my fingers were blistered or creating an illustration of the Harley Davidson Eagle in Adobe Illustrator 88 on a Mac SE. Everything you created could be saved on a few floppy disks. Sounds crazy right?

I graduated with honors and pursued my dream of living in California. I had visited LA in the past, and thought it was too busy and plastic. I opted for San Diego even though I had never even seen it. The counselors at Al Collins led me in the right direction. I went to the library and sifted through the San Diego Yellow Pages, writing down agency information and then sending out resumés with my fingers crossed. I scheduled a lot of interviews during a one-week period and drove out to SD. I was hired on the first day and the first interview with Lak Advertising. The owner was very nice and even offered a temporary place for me to live once I moved. How could I pass that up? I'm sooo IN! I vacationed for the rest of the week! After about a year, The art director with Lak Advertising referred me to a friend of his who was starting up a software company, EDUCORP Multimedia, Inc., and they needed an in-house graphic designer. This company

grew into a multi-million dollar venture which I helped to grow! I started out as the sole graphic designer and when I left I was the art director with 3-5 designers on my team; then the owner sold out and the company took a huge turn for the worse. Throughout my years of working corporate, I have witnessed what mismanagement can do to a once thriving and successful company. It is disheartening to experience the damage inflated egos and empty

Impress every person you meet

promises can inflict. The last corporate job I worked on was with Vertis, Inc. This is a national company with California offices in Irvine and Carlsbad. The economy went south and they were forced to close the Carlsbad facility. I was given a generous severance package which helped me to establish myself as a graphic design freelancer and I have been contracting ever since. I have been successful without having to advertise as most of my work comes from referrals. I do have to hustle a bit every now and then and work for a little less than I want or drive a little further but it is usually worth it. You want to impress every person you meet because you never know where your next job will come from. Currently, one of the hats I wear is a contracted art director for a bi-annual publication, Wine and Jazz magazine.

CAREER CORNER

**Practical Advice from
Robert Starks -
Director of Career Services**

HOW DO I FIND A JOB IN THIS ECONOMY?

Continued from the last edition

Improve your Marketing – Whether or not you are in a creative field, one should consider having a web portfolio that demonstrates results and/or competencies. For an artist, it's quite simple; show only your best, focused work. For those without art pieces, consider how video could be used to capture your talent in a certain area or how charts could be created showing tangible results you contributed to a company such as money you saved, processes you streamlined or time you saved. Consider a portfolio filled with letters of recommendation and/or copies of emails where customers or co-workers commented positively on your work and include awards you have won. Get Creative! Going back to the basics, have a business card and consider working with staffing agencies who essentially market you as a candidate to their employer connections. Discover every resource available to you and use them as marketing tools!

INDUSTRY SPECIFIC SITES

1. www.productionhub.com
2. www.interiordesignjobs.com
3. www.interiortalent.com
4. www.creativehotlist.com
5. www.creativeheads.net
6. www.dice.com
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14. www.creativehotlist.com
15. www.gamesondeck.com

Continued in the next edition.