



PERSONAL ENRICHMENT

Finding a job you love

Opportunities available in higher education.

BY TRACY DALY

Jennie wanted to be an actress. Tere planned to be a veterinarian. Donna was sure she was going to be a psychologist. Somehow, each landed in jobs they love, promoting education.

Jennie McCue

Jennie graduated from Irvine Valley College, transferred to UC Irvine where she earned a bachelor's in history, and then left for Washington, D.C. She graduated from George Washington University with a masters in political management and worked for Senator Barbara Boxer and two congressmen from New York and Texas. When her attorney husband got a job in Orange County, she enthusiastically packed up their two cats and moved west again. Saddleback College knew a good thing when they saw one, and hired Jennie as their Director of Public Information and Marketing.

"Saddleback is truly a gem. I want to let the community know that this is a great place to learn for all ages." The college, with close to 25,000 students, truly makes Mission Viejo "a college town."

While there is no "typical day", on any given day Jennie is writing news releases, publishing an online employee newsletter, supervising the publications staff, pitching new stories to the media, working with committees to devise marketing plans, and strategizing with the college president. The biggest challenge of the job is prioritizing what to let the community know about Saddleback, one of Orange County's largest colleges. "There is so much going on in addition to our incredible academic and workforce programs that cover everything from nursing and automotive repair to chemistry and anthropology. We have cultural events, performances, sports, gallery openings, and career workshops. And, in the summer there is College for Kids."

"I loved being a college student. When I

talk about going to work now I say 'I'm going to school'. My job brings back all those wonderful memories."

Tere Fluegeman

Tere graduated from the University of Utah with a degree in journalism/public relations, went on to get a masters in human relations from the University of Oklahoma, and after raising three kids, earned a post-graduate certification in integrated marketing communications back at the University of Utah. For many years she ran her own marketing communications firm with clients that included the 2002 Winter Olympics. When her husband landed a job as vice president of a digital projection systems company, the family moved to San Clemente.

Tere now works for ATEP, the Advanced Technology and Education Park, a new campus under construction at the former Marine Base in Tustin. ATEP will not be a traditional campus, and that's what attracted Tere to the position of Director of Public Information and Marketing. "This is an opportunity to do something completely different with higher education. Our campus will house two and four year educational programs as well as high technology businesses. Students can have internships literally across the street from their classrooms. We plan to close the gap between education and real life experience."

On a typical day, Tere can be seen interviewing potential partners in emerging industries, overseeing construction, or researching what ATEP can do to strengthen the Orange County economy. Looking down the road five years, Tere says that ATEP will be "a hustling and bustling campus. I will have helped develop its brand as a unique educational experience not found anywhere else in the U.S."

Donna Sneed

Donna taught high school business after

getting a degree from Southeast Missouri State University. She then worked her way through an MBA program from Southwest Missouri State University by teaching, too, but the students were serving time in prison. "They were excellent students and always had their homework done."

After a stint in the corporate world, Donna found her way back to teaching, this time as a professor in a community college. "I love that community colleges are such open door institutions." Romance with a Californian motivated her to move her career west after landing a job with Irvine Valley College as Director of Economic and Resource Development. Even though the romance didn't work out, she fell in love with the college.

Donna is putting her business experience to good use as the director of the college's newest department: community relations and outreach. It's Donna's job to make sure that every high school senior in the region knows about IVC, its intimate campus, quality faculty, and high transfer rate. "Students are not a number here, they won't get lost in the crowd."

"I believe our enthusiasm is contagious. Bringing potential students to our campus is a wonderful infusion. That I can look back at my career and know I started something from scratch and made a difference is awesome." **tw**

There are wonderful job opportunities in higher education. Log on to www.socccdjobs.com for more information. To find out about Saddleback College, Irvine Valley College and ATEP, log on to www.saddleback.edu, www.ivc.edu, and www.atep.us. For more information contact the author at tdaly@socccd.org.

