

San Diego City Schools Staff Bulletin – March 26, 2003

Budget Situation Update **Title I Funding Increase Proposed**

In direct response to school principals and the District Advisory Council, Superintendent Bersin recently announced a proposal to increase Title I funding for the 2003-04 school year and to give schools receiving Title I funding more flexibility in how they spend the money. Title I, a federally funded program that seeks to create a pattern of success for educationally disadvantaged students, is "categorical funding," meaning the money provided through the program has specific and restricted uses. In SDCS, Title I funds contribute to the support of Blueprint intervention and retention/acceleration strategies as well as other strategies to improve student achievement.

The proposed increase in Title I site discretionary funding is based on the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced meals. Should the Board of Education approve the proposal, schools will receive a greater amount of total Title I money as well as an increase in the percentage of funds made available to school sites and school site councils to be used outside the Blueprint.

For the past several years, 80 percent of each school's Title I allocation was to be spent on Blueprint strategies, and school sites have received 20 percent of their Title I allocation as discretionary funds. The proposal would raise the amount of discretionary funds to 50 percent. At the same time, the rate per student would be increased. These changes provide greater flexibility to each site in addressing student needs. Additional funds may be used for a variety of purposes, including extended day/year programs, additional counseling time or parent involvement support.

The recommendation to increase the allocation of Title I discretionary funds to eligible schools in 2003-04 will be included in the Title I budget to be presented to the Board of Education for action on May 13, 2003. For a list of questions and answers about Title I funding, visit the Budget Situation page on the district website, www.sandi.net/budget

Keeping Our Schools Safe & Secure

In light of the nation's security we want to assure you that the safety and security of our students and staff is of paramount importance in San Diego City Schools. All school site personnel have been asked to review established guidelines related to emergency procedures. Additional materials have been developed to help school site staff assist and respond to students, parents and each other. These materials are posted on the website at www.sandi.net/safeschools, accessible off the front page. Additional materials will be included as they are developed and approved for use.

Every effort is being made to ensure that our schools and administrative facilities continue to be safe and secure. A hotline has been implemented in order to help respond to concerns of both staff and parents at (619) 725-5578.

Getting to Know You: Andreanna Murphy, Counselor, Farb Middle School

Tell us a bit about your background.

I grew up in Oceanside, the daughter of two teachers. I swore I would never go into education. I was convinced my path was dental school. Halfway through my sophomore year at USD, I decided I really would rather be a teacher than look at teeth all day long. Got my degree, and my first teaching assignment was at Correia.

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When did you turn to counseling?

I wanted to expand on being one-to-one with students, so I went back to USD and received a Masters in Counseling. I think it was something I had always wanted to do and finally realized it.

What was your first day like?

Oh, wow...I'm not sure where to begin. My first phone call was from a mom who was angry about some situation with her child. She wanted to give him permission to fight. It sort of blew me away, because I wasn't expecting that. Then I had these girls come in arguing and calling each other names. They ended up having all kinds of questions about inappropriate sexual behaviors. I was sort of in shock thinking...“What did I get myself into?” But I was also really happy that these students trusted me and wanted to talk about these issues. I remember going home to my husband saying, “You wouldn't believe what these kids asked me today.”

What was it like to transition from teaching to counseling?

As a counselor, I am not involved with grading, and I'm able to support them in different ways, both one-to-one and schoolwide. Instead of remembering what was talked about in class yesterday, I need to remember things about soccer, basketball, things in their life outside of school. I trust them to be truthful with me about these things and they know they can trust me, too, once they realize I'm not here to get them in trouble.

Do some kids associate you with being in trouble?

I think that's a common stereotype. If you get called to the counselor's office, there's this sort of panic. It's like, “Uh-oh... I'm in trouble.” I try to make sure kids know a visit with me is a good thing. I do a lot of rewarding, a lot of getting to know students' little things because sometimes those little things mean the most. I had one student who had a terrible time remembering to bring a PE shirt to wear. When he finally remembered to bring it in and *wear* it, it was a big deal! My goal is to have a positive contact with every student I see. That might mean a wave, a smile, something simple. If we have a new student, I make a point of finding that student and introducing them around during lunch. “Oh, have you met this person?” It's hard being the new student, not knowing anyone.

What kinds of things are students talking about these days, given our military activities?

A lot of them are obsessed because it feels like 9/11 all over again. There's a lot of fear – could it happen here, or could it happen again? They are nervous and they don't really know how to act. Many have come in to see me to see how *I'm* doing. I tell them I'm okay and that I'm glad to see them, and we talk about their job...which is to be in school. I validate their feelings, but I also help them focus on school so they don't get lost in their anxiety. Everyone's anxious and that's to be expected, given what's going on. My husband's in the military, which is why I might be especially tuned to it.

How does that military connection help you in what you do?

Growing up in Oceanside and having grandparents in the military meant I was surrounded by it. You learn, as a military community, to anticipate certain feelings and emotions. Back in Desert Storm, Oceanside was empty. And regardless of whether you supported the military action, your concern lay with the families. Even kids were sensitive about it. They'd step in without even realizing it. I see that these days too. The community here is amazing. Having a spouse or a parent being deployed is a loss – and the community here recognizes that and steps in. At Farb, we see a lot of parents coming in to simply support other parents. Being at school means being connected with their kids and their friends and for many, that is the best thing they can be doing right now.

Last week, our staff met to review our safety plan and we talked about ways we can be especially sensitive to our students at this time...what kinds of things could happen that might trigger concern, such as a fire drill. Planned or unplanned, if kids hear that bell, they'll think it's something serious instead of it being “just” a fire drill.

What are some things we can encourage students to do, regardless of their opinions on the war?

A lot of students right now just want to *do* something. They want to take on the responsibility of doing something, even though they're not sure what. We have had kids here tie yellow ribbons to trees. Many students, whether they know someone in the military or not, have written letters. A lot of them are talking about doing service projects. Some of them aren't practical projects, but just thinking about ways to get involved or show support is good. Plant a peace garden, write a letter, paint a picture. It doesn't have to be huge.

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What should we be doing as adults?

Being honest with kids and as tuned in to them as possible. Answer their questions as simply as possible and acknowledge every single one. As a family, spend a half-hour together every day...just as a family. You don't have to talk about the news – it might be a game night, or you read together or watch a video. Sometimes watching news leaves so much more to be answered. Especially with older students, make a point of monitoring what they're hearing and saying, where they're going; what music are they listening to. If a student is allowed Internet access, be aware of what's being said in the chat rooms. There are a lot of mixed messages out there and it's not reliable information. Keeping our schedules as normal as makes sense right now is also a good idea because it helps connects families together.

Celebrating Arts in Education Month

As we celebrate March as Arts in Education Month, it is important to recognize the work of our hundreds of arts teachers throughout our schools. Over 11,000 4th – 6th grade students receive instruction each week in instrumental music by our team of 29 full and part-time elementary itinerant instrumental music teachers. Elementary music prep-time music teachers provide general music instruction to more than 14,450 K – 6th grade students. Also at the elementary level, instruction in visual arts is provided by prep-time art teachers to over 3,500 students and numerous sites sponsor a variety of arts programs, many supported by parents who are committed to furthering arts in our schools.

At the secondary level (grades 6-12), arts teachers provide elective opportunities to more than 350 dance, 2,400 music, 1,725 theatre and 5,625 visual art students. At our arts magnets (Oak Park, Valencia Park, Zamorano, CPMA and SCPA), all students (over 4,600) are provided a comprehensive education where the arts are the center of the curriculum. Students are challenged to excel in the arts, providing a foundation for excellence that will follow them throughout their lives.

The district's Visual and Performing Arts Department also recognizes the work of our elementary classroom teachers in furthering arts education. With the adoption of the state's Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards, VAPA has been working with an initial group of teachers to help them implement a standards-based weekly arts block. Teachers at EB Scripps, Sunset View, Loma Portal and Florence elementary schools have been paired with arts specialists for 20 weeks, where teachers and artists co-plan, co-develop and model standards-based arts lessons. VAPA has also been working with an assessment team that will be field-testing K-3 assessment checklists that are "teacher-friendly."

The San Diego Arts Education Partnership took a giant leap forward this year with the hiring of Fran Carrillo as Partnership Coordinator. Fran developed a great website (www.sandi.net/vapa) that helps link the schools with community arts organizations and provides a much-needed line of communication. Fran also provides monthly arts e-brief updates to 700 teachers, administrators, community artists and others. If you are interested in receiving these updates please email your request to Fran (sdaep@mail.sandi.net). Another great addition to the partnership has been the establishment of the SDAEP Professional Development Cadre, a group consisting of district arts teachers, community artists and university faculty. This cadre has been working this year with The Galef Institute, a school reform program that incorporates the arts as part of systemic reform, to build each cadre member's capacity to observe instruction and provide professional development to our teachers and community artists.

Education Spotlight:

Literacy Program at Ocean Beach Elementary

Can a teacher promote empathy through literature? Patricia Ladd, a staff developer at Ocean Beach Elementary, offers up a resounding "yes!" Ladd has been collaborating with a local, award-winning writer of young adult novels, John H. Ritter, in a program that teaches compassion in the classroom through quality literature and critical thinking.

"There's two things we're after with these visits," says Ladd, a National Board Certified Teacher in the field of early adolescence/English language arts. "One is that we use quality literature to help students expand their abilities to anticipate and interpret others' feelings, to think before acting and to develop skills to be able to *discuss* differences rather than fight about them. It's called the "Jigsaw Model."

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"We are also following what's called the Socratic Seminar Model, which helps create cross-cultural cooperation and helps students make thoughtful and responsible choices about dilemmas they may encounter."

Students may not realize there's such deliberate planning going on. What they do know is that they are getting a close-up look at the writing process from someone who does it for a living. Ritter's third novel, *"The Boy Who Saved Baseball,"* is due for publication in May. This past winter, Ladd read the galley proof to a group of 3rd and 4th graders. Several Writers Workshop mini-lessons were also planned around the story, to help students understand and practice sophisticated and descriptive language including metaphors and double meanings.

"The typical response at the end of a Read Aloud would be a chorus of 'Please read more!' Ritter really knows how to tell a story and is a master of cliffhangers," says Ladd. "Every child succeeded in comprehension that went far beyond the literal."

Ritter himself has spent much time in the classrooms, fielding a myriad of questions from novelists-in-training. In response to "Why did you write this book?" Ritter explained that he wants his readers to gain an appreciation for looking at one issue from different perspectives, not just up close, but also one from further away to gain a sense of the 'bigger picture.' One of his examples involved looking at the game of baseball, from the perspective of a Global Position System (GPS) satellite or the perch of a red-tailed hawk.

"Students were then asking about the physics of triangulation as used in a GPS. I mean, imagine nine- and ten-year-olds having a sophisticated dialogue about such a complicated phenomenon," marvels Ladd.

Ritter returns to Ocean Beach for another visit in May, following the publication of "The Boy Who Saved Baseball." "The students are already ready," says Ladd. "They've got their own novels to show him and a whole bunch of new questions."

Ladd and Ritter will be presenting a workshop based on their program at the National Council of Teachers of English 2003 Annual Convention. Entitled "What's In It for Me? Teaching Compassion in Today's Classroom through Quality Literature and Critical Thinking," the workshop will guide participants through key Socratic Seminar and Jigsaw techniques while responding to shared readings from young adult literature.

School Supply Donation Valued at \$150,000

San Diego City Schools is receiving a school supply donation worth approximately \$150,000 from a national school supply provider which recently bought out several smaller companies.

School Specialty has identified the items as supplies that will not be maintained in its inventory, although they are all brand-new, top quality supplies. The items include assorted paper, pens, markers, punches, scissors, rulers, toys, easels, classroom furniture and arts and craft supplies.

"It is an incredibly generous donation and will be put to good use to benefit our students," says Dennis Yeatman, executive director of logistics in the district's Business Operations branch. All told, an estimated 40 pallets of supplies have been shipped to the district, and are being delivered to school sites this week.

"School Specialty will deliver the material and the warehouse staff will determine what items are sent to each school. Every effort will be made to provide a good mix of products to our schools with the most need," adds Yeatman. "If there are large quantities of a certain item, say paper, for example, then it will be split among schools. If there are only three or four items, then they will go to a single school. While this is a terrific donation, we don't have the time or staff to have schools request specific items, so we will bundle as equitably as possible." Schools which receive items they might not use are encouraged to disperse or donate as they see appropriate.

Instructional Leaders have recommended that API 6-10 schools be served first, because API 1-5 schools have typically received more material resources in the last few years. Warehouse staff will distribute materials to the API 6-10 schools first, and continue deliveries to other schools until there are no items left.

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Designing a New School

Since 1998, sites have been selected for 10 of 16 of the new schools being built or rebuilt under Proposition MM. But before construction can begin, the schools have to be designed.

To ensure that each new school “fits” into the neighborhood and incorporates the latest educational amenities, the community participates in a Design Task Force. Through a series of evening workshops, neighbors, civic leaders, parents, teachers and students voice their design ideas to the school district’s project manager and the architecture firm.

Design Task Force participants often break into small groups and go through a “design charette.” Using small cut-outs of buildings, parking lots and playfields, they are tasked with arranging possible design scenarios. Input includes everything from which direction the front of the school faces, style of fencing, and color, to ventilation, window placement and path of travel.

Although Design Task Force participants are essentially working from a blank sheet of paper, they are guided by the district’s Educational Specifications for facility design requirements. If you are interested in participating in a Design Task Force for a new school, e-mail repairs@mail.sandi.net.

New School Sites Chosen

Since 1998, the Board has approved sites for 10 of the 16 schools to be built or rebuilt under Proposition MM. Construction of many of these schools will begin in 2004. The remaining six sites will be selected in 2003.

Sites have been selected for the following schools:

- Under design: Golden Hill Elementary (a.k.a. Brooklyn/Kimbrough Area)
- Under design: Cherokee Point Elementary (a.k.a. Central Area)
- Under design: Herbert Ibarra Elementary (a.k.a. Euclid Area)
- Under design: Adams/Franklin Area Elementary
- Under design: Scripps Ranch Middle School (a.k.a. Undesignated School A)
- Under design: Mead Elementary (rebuild and expand)
- Florence Griffith Joyner Elementary (a.k.a. Edison/Hamilton/Parks Area)
- Lincoln High School (rebuild and expand)
- Burbank Elementary (rebuild and expand)
- Ellen Browning Scripps Elementary (opened in 2001)
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News You Can Use

- Student journalists from all over San Diego City Schools held a press conference March 19 in preparation for April as **Alcohol Awareness Month**. Students had the opportunity to ask a panel of experts ranging from physicians to law enforcement officers to the American consulate to Mexico questions related to the legalities, hazards and consequences for teens who cross the border into Tijuana and engage in underage drinking. A video produced by **Health Services’ Life Skills** program and the **Video Services** unit, “**Think Ahead, Think Smart, Part Two**,” will be available for high school students beginning next week. The video includes interviews with law enforcement officials from both sides of the border, and an on-camera “visit” to a morgue. Informational materials will also be posted on the website. For more information, contact your Life Skills teacher or Marcia Sorini at (858) 627-7447.
- The **Parent Involvement Department** has been awarded a \$10,000 grant from the **Starbucks Foundation** to help support ongoing efforts to improve family literacy through the **Latino Family Literacy Project**. The Literacy Project is a key component of Parent Involvement’s “San Diego Parent University,” providing many opportunities for parents to learn simple techniques to encourage their child’s love of books and reading. The grant will help with the provision of childcare while the parents are learning how to promote their child’s literacy. The Foundation has awarded more than 600 grants totaling over \$6.5 million to literacy, school and community-based organizations across North America.

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- A new districtwide **Utility Conservation Plan** has been implemented, and is projected to save the district an estimated \$3 million per year through careful management of resources involving over two hundred utility sites. The Utility Conservation Plan is a multi-tiered approach to saving money. Each district employee has a responsibility to help reduce energy costs. Some of the measures will be very easy and may seem obvious. Others will require more effort and a district-wide commitment. To review the conservation plan, and to see other cost-saving ideas, visit the Cost-Saving Tips section of the Budget Situation page on the website, www.sandi.net/budget.

Hall of Fame

- Ten district schools have been recognized in the annual “**K-8 Best Practices Project**” sponsored by the San Diego Chamber of Commerce **Business Roundtable for Education**. They include: **Bell Jr. High, Darnall E-Campus, De Portola Middle, Fletcher Elementary, Green Elementary, Hickman Elementary, Lafayette Elementary, O’Farrell Community School, Standley Middle** and **Vista Grande Elementary**. The program shares with educators and business leaders the outstanding programs taking place in our schools. Want to know more? Visit the chamber’s “Best Practices” website at <http://www.educationroundtable.org/BestPractices.htm>
- **Rolando Park Elementary School fifth-grade teacher Ruthie Murray** has been named winner of the KGTV Channel 10 Leadership Award. Ruthie’s classroom is getting used to the cameras now! In addition to the Channel 10 crew, the classroom was recently included in a videotaping during “Journey to the Universe” week, featured as an “Education Spotlight” on ITV, Channel 16. She was cited for her use of community partners in the classroom to augment her instructional program. Ruthie’s personally recruited 11 partnerships, not only for her classroom but for Rolando Park as well. Some of the partners include Washington Mutual, VS-35 Blue Wolves, Coco’s Restaurant & Bakery, Holiday Inn Express Old Town and the Ray and Joan Kroc Community Center.
- **Dingemen Elementary teacher Maryann Cook** and **Bell Jr. High teacher Bill Pearson** have been given the Science Teacher of the Year awards from the **San Diego Science Alliance**. Maryann is honored for her leadership in creating exemplary 6th grade science program and her role as a teacher leader in science. Bill is recognized for his exemplary teacher model for 9th grade physics both at his school and throughout the district and his leadership in collaborative planning and professional development.
- **Linda Pynaker**, an Administrative Assistant in the Institute for Learning, is now also a published author! Pynaker’s first novel, “A Time to Heal,” published by Infinity, deals with a woman who discovers “healing energy touch” to find herself after a divorce.

Scenes from Schools

- **Zamorano Elementary** was recently honored by the **Immigration and Naturalization Service** of the U.S. Department of Justice during the agency’s recent celebration of Black History Month. The INS presented a plaque to recognize the school’s contributions to the African American community. The agency also donated 10 computers and printers plus children’s books to the school.
- **Doyle Elementary students** are bringing in pennies to their classrooms as part of a schoolwide effort to raise \$300 in pennies to help build a school in Afghanistan that will then become Doyle’s “sister school.” The \$300 would be enough to support 80 students. The idea came about as Doyle students learned that many Afghan refugee children have no schools in their home villages. The penny drive, which will last through April 3, is being conducted with the **Rotary Jalabad project** in coordination with Sister Schools of San Diego. The two classrooms raising the most money will be treated to a pizza party. Want to know more about the Sister Schools of San Diego program? Visit www.sisterschoolsofsandiego.org.
- **San Diego City Schools high school students** recently participated in the annual “X-Sci/2003” event at **The Scripps Research Institute**, a program that highlights scientific research in progress and

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promotes careers in the biosciences. One Science Department staffer, Joan Loomis, says the kids noticed how “happy” the TSRI workplace was and that the field trip was such a positive ones on both sides. To see an online slide show of the field trip, visit www.scripps.edu/newsandviews and click on “Field Trip.”

- **The American Sign Language Class** at the **San Diego School of Creative and Performing Arts** (SDSCPA) recently was honored in a special presentation by the **NAS North Island Naval Base**. Captain Peter J. Laszcz and his staff awarded each student with a distinctive certificate and “Captain’s Coin” to commemorate the students’ participation in the 2002 National Heritage Day Festival, which took place at the base in October. Students signed multiple songs for the event.
- **Sunset View Elementary** will be celebrating **Cesar Chavez Day** on Monday with a special flag ceremony. Third and fourth grade students who are members of the Cesar E. Chavez Service Club will present an overview of Chavez’ life, work and values.

Student Salutes

- Four students and two staff members from the **Deaf and Hard of Hearing** program at **Madison High School** recently went to Colorado Springs to compete in the Gallaudet Western Region Deaf Academic Bowl. There were 16 high schools representing 6 states. The competition was held at the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind. The team from Madison placed 6th. The students who participated were **Kirsi Grigg, Crystal Eusebio, Amanda Fults, and Thao Pham**. They were accompanied by Madison teachers **Janet Terry** and **Joyce Brody**.
- Several district students have received "Academy Awards" as part of the **Outstanding Student Awards from the California League of High Schools**. The students also served on an advisory panel at the conference. The awards were presented at the Academy Conference, a gathering of over 90 high school Academy educators at the Hanalei Hotel in February. Student winners include:
 - **Robert Benson**, Scripps Ranch High School Academy of Finance
 - **Brittany Burton**, Serra High School Academy of Information Technology
 - **Karissa Call**, Scripps Ranch High School Academy of Finance
 - **Joel Callahan**, Clairemont High School Academy of Travel and Tourism
 - **Beckie Cecil**, Mira Mesa High School Teaching Academy
 - **Ryan Dinglasan**, Scripps Ranch High School Academy of Travel and Tourism
 - **Guillermon Garcia**, San Diego High School Sci-Tech Academy
 - **Erika Lopez**, Henry High School Teaching Academy
 - **Giovani Lopez**, San Diego High School Academy of Finance
 - **Heidi Massieh**, Scripps Ranch High School Academy of Travel and Tourism
 - **Silver Moua**, Scripps Ranch High School Academy of Travel and Tourism
 - **Phuong Anh Nguyen**, Serra High School Academy of Information Technology
 - **Dannesse Norris**, Kearny High School Construction Tech Academy
 - **Stephanie Orlando**, Henry High School Teaching Academy
 - **Esther Palomino**, Clairemont High School Academy of Travel and Tourism
 - **Catherine Piranio**, San Diego High School Academy of Finance
 - **Ian Quirk**, San Diego High School Sci-Tech Academy
 - **Kevin Ratliff**, Mira Mesa High School Teaching Academy
 - **Edmon Rubi**, Kearny High School Construction Tech Academy
 - **Nathan Saucedo**, San Diego High School Sci-Tech Academy
 - **Michael Weathersby**, San Diego High School Sci-Tech Academy.
- 450 San Diego City Schools high school juniors and seniors scholar-athletes were recently recognized by the San Diego Union-Tribune. The students, named to the "**All Academic Team**," maintained a 3.0 or higher cumulative grade-point average while playing a California Interscholastic Federation-approved varsity sport. The winter team was made up of athletes who participate in roller hockey, wrestling, girls' and boys' basketball and soccer, and girls' water polo.

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- **The Lewis Middle School Jazz Band** will be performing live on TV this Saturday. Watch them on KUSI-TV (Channel 51, Cable 9) on March 29 between 9 – 10 a.m.
- A team of students from **Mission Bay High School** has been chosen to represent San Diego City Schools in the third annual **Student Technology Showcase**, southern region. The students' presentation, entitled "*Web Wizards: School Web Site and Service Learning Projects*" and was developed by the 9th and 10th grade Technology/Language Arts class led by teacher Gail Lake. The team will be showcased at a convention May 17 in at the Marriott Hotel in Anaheim, in conjunction with the Computer Using Educators (CUE) spring conference.
- The **Mission Bay Buccaneers Team** at the recent **Dr. Seuss Race for Literacy** featured the school's AVID students and Students of Service (SOS) Club, among its runners. More than 40 students, staff, former staff and their families participated.

Classified Ads

For Sale: Kirby vacuum cleaner w/attachments, 5 years old, make an offer, 858-668-0986; Mac G3 computer w/17" display, perfect cond., programs included, \$400, 619-886-1330; Beautiful beige mink coat, price open, 619-660-9017; Bianchi Mega Pro XL road bike/99, great cond., triple chain rings, rolf wheels, 54cm seat, 55cm top tube, \$1,000/obo, 619-582-4005; Home entertainment center, lrg., wood-look, holds TV, multiple electronics, video storage, \$100, 858-587-2506; 4 – 17" 4 lug wheels, \$150/obo, Industrial garden cart, \$65/obo, 858-569-6875; '97 Ford Ranger, ac, 6 cyl., auto, 64K, white, \$4,900, 619-692-3060; Computer armoire, \$150, qn. sz. mat. set, \$350, VCR, \$20, washer/dryer, \$150, 619-234-5232
For Rent: House, College area, 3bd/2ba, 2 car gar., w/d, gardener, all hd. wood floors, view, \$1,850/mo., 619-229-8185.

**The next Staff Bulletin will be available online on April 9, 2003.
 Deadline for submissions is April 2, 2003.
 Send your submissions in an envelope marked "Staff Bulletin" to
 Communications Office, Room 2145, Ed Center.**