Students Brew Success with Coffee Cart

Quite often the most popular people on college campuses are the star athletes or student body president. At Fontbonne University, two of the most popular people on campus are Neuwoehner students Stas Johnston and Sam Shortal.

Through a partnership with Fontbonne, Stas and Sam are learning valuable communication and independent living skills, while operating a thriving business.

Every Tuesday morning for the past two months, Stas and Sam, along with their teacher Madeleine Grucaz, navigate the Coffee Cart along the corridors of Ryan Hall, offering Costa Rican coffee, hot tea and hot chocolate to Fontbonne faculty and staff.

Even though the two may not be on the rolls at Fontbonne, it is evident when they arrive at office doorways that they have become a well-known duo. “They always brighten my Tuesdays,” said one customer. “They always come at the right time of day to bring me a pick-me-up,”

Both Stas and Sam are in their second year in the Neuwoehner class at Fontbonne, and they work as a team to serve their customers.

“I like the money — taking it and giving change back,” said Stas. He often handles the financial aspects of the business, teaming up with Sam.

“We are learning how to run a small business, which includes ordering, managing and providing good service,” said Grucaz. “There are multiple steps involved when selling hot drinks. Besides approaching each customer with a warm greeting, they need to pour the hot coffee or water into a cup, offer cream, sugar, stirrer and lid, and calculate the change they need to give back.”

The idea for the Coffee Cart was borrowed from SSD teacher Sherri Jenkerson’s class at Mehlville High School, where they run a similar vending cart. The project, funded initially through a mini-grant from the Special Education Foundation, has already had to expand. “By the second week we expanded our service to a second building and added items other than just coffee,” Grucaz said.

The money earned with the cart is used to replenish supplies and also pay for Metro bus passes that the students use weekly as part of their life-skills training.

“It’s an important thing that they can get out there and interact with an adult population outside of school,” said Neuwoehner Principal Lorie Arnsman-Schwartz.

“The pride I see in Stas and Sam is evident as they become more confident in themselves,” Grucaz said. One goal for Stas and Sam is to learn the names of many staff members they cater to. Getting staff members to remember them, on the other hand, has already been accomplished.
**Multiple Scholarships Available to SSD Students**

**Deadlines Quickly Approaching**

With the school year approaching the halfway point, many students are already making plans for when the school year wraps up. Summer jobs, time with friends and trips to the park are popular choices.

Many graduating seniors, however, are preparing now for post-secondary education. And it’s no secret that the cost of schooling is rising every year.

To help SSD students offset the costs of college and camp tuitions, SSD and other organizations, including the Special Education Foundation (SEF) and the Bonhomme Lions, provide opportunities to apply for scholarships, camperships and other awards.

“The impact of scholarships on the students and their families is significant,” said SEF Executive Director Diane Buhr.

“It gives a student a great sense of accomplishment to be selected as a scholarship recipient, it aids in self-esteem and provides a very good financial start for the first year of college.”

Each reward is unique, and has its own criteria. Visit www.ssdmo.org for complete details and an application form.

### SCHOLARSHIPS

**SSD Board of Education Scholarship**

Established in 2008, the SSD Board of Education honors graduating SSD students who show strong leadership skills as well as a dedication to voluntarism and community involvement. For the 2011-2012 school year, the SSD Board will reward two students who demonstrate these skills and who plan to attend college or post-secondary institutions. Visit www.ssdmo.org for complete details and an application form.

**Special Education Foundation Scholarships**

The Special Education Foundation (SEF) is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of students with disabilities within the St. Louis area. Each year, SEF awards scholarships to college-bound SSD students. Winners for the award are selected based on multiple criteria. Visit www.sef-stl.org for complete details and an application form.

- **Deadline is Feb. 17, 2012.**
- **Laura K. Sherman Laughlin Scholarship**
  - This scholarship honors the memory of Laura K. Sherman Laughlin and pays tribute to her life and to the many lives that she touched. The scholarship is presented to a deserving student who has sustained a brain injury or has a brain-related disability, including cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis and muscular dystrophy. Visit www.sef-stl.org for complete details and an application form.
- **Deadline is Feb. 17, 2012.**
- **Allison M. Haake Memorial Scholarship**
  - Established in 2008, this scholarship was created to honor an aspiring teacher who lost her battle with cancer in 2007. The scholarship is awarded to a deserving SSD student who has an interest in working with children. Visit www.ssdmo.org for complete details and an application form.
- **Deadline is Feb. 17, 2012.**
- **Dianne Arbeiter Scholarships**
  - Given in memory of Dianne Arbeiter, a 25-year SSD employee, these scholarships are awarded to students who are served by the deaf/hard of hearing program of SSD. Visit www.ssdmo.org for complete details and an application form.
- **Deadline is Feb. 10, 2012.**

### CAMPERSHIPS

**Sammy Goldman “Living Big” Campership**

Given annually to a child with special needs, the “Living Big” Campership is given in tribute to the life of Sammy Goldman. Sammy, whose life ended at age five, was remembered for his zest for life and “living big.” Visit www.sef-stl.org for complete details and an application form.

**Dianne Arbeiter Camperships**

Through the Dianne Arbeiter Fund, selected SSD students who are deaf or hard of hearing are provided tuition to attend summer camps. Campership winners are based on several criteria. Visit www.sef-stl.org for complete details and an application form.

**Stages St. Louis Access the Arts Campership**

In partnership with Stages St. Louis, this campership offers assistance to students who wish to participate in the performing arts. Access the Arts is specifically designed to make participation in musical theater arts accessible to students with special needs. Visit www.sef-stl.org for complete details and application form.

**C.J. Aubuchon Campership**

This campership, given in honor of C.J. Aubuchon who lost his battle with cancer, is presented to a student who exemplifies C.J.’s qualities of kindness, caring, humor and courage. Visit www.sef-stl.org for more information.

**Special Education Foundation Campership**

The Special Education Foundation’s mission is to assist students with disabilities to achieve success in their endeavors beyond the classroom. One of the ways it carries out this mission is by providing tuition to enable students served by SSD to attend summer camps. Visit www.sef-stl.org for more information.


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**Award for Ackerman Principal No Surprise to Those She Works With**

“Shocked” is how Ackerman Principal Kelly Grigsby describes finding out about winning the “30 Leaders in their Thirties” award presented by North County Incorporated.

“I had no idea I was even nominated,” Grigsby said, “which made winning the award even more special.”

This fall, Grigsby was recognized for her leadership by being named one of the “30 Leaders in their Thirties,” by North County Incorporated. NOIC, in partnership with North County Suburban Journals and Gateway Television News Network, recognizes leaders in their thirties in the North County region who are making a significant positive impact in the community through their work and community involvement.

Winning the award for her community leadership is no surprise to those that work with Grigsby.

“She makes such a positive impact on the community by sharing her great sense of humor and also by always reaching out to help those in need,” said Ackerman teacher Kathleen Vered. “Kelly can often be seen having lunch with a student, shooting baskets with another or listening to someone. She is a great role model.”

“It is her connection with people that makes her an outstanding leader,” said Ackerman music teacher Tony Volkman. “Kelly cares deeply about the learning that occurs at Ackerman and makes sure that high standards are in place for her students.”

Grigsby, in her fifth year as principal at Ackerman, received the award at a reception at the Norwood Hills Country Club.

“I accept the award on behalf of the Ackerman staff who work tirelessly every day at school to ensure students have an outstanding school experience and in the community making a significant positive impact in the community through their work and community involvement.”

“I whole-heartedly believe we are doing great work for kids at Ackerman School.”

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Tony Volkman, Ackerman music teacher

“Kathy cares deeply about the learning that occurs at Ackerman and makes sure that high standards are in place for her students.”

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