DINING WITH GEORGE POLL
“It’s all in the details.”
From the Dean…

Hello SHA Family,

We know that you want SHA to take a leading position in the industry—so—with the help of your generous donations—we are investing heavily in new technology. In April 2011 we gave all of our faculty and staff new iPad 2s. We are restructuring our core curriculum to take advantage of the tablet technologies, with interactive textbooks and real-time student polling of learning outcomes. We have also created two “mobile computing labs” so that faculty members can blend new learning material into any of their courses, in any classroom, beginning this semester. To ensure success with these initiatives, we recently upgraded our beautiful building, making it the most WIFI-enhanced facility on the entire BU campus. We have also upgraded the Marriott Board Room with new sound and HDMI projection, so that we’ll be able to take advantage of state-of-the-art video conferencing technology, allowing us to attract leading guest speakers from around the globe.

As part of our new technology focus, we have created Curriculum 2015, geared toward the essential skills this year’s freshmen will need upon graduation. This will include the creation of a personal “e-Portfolio,” a focused collection of digital materials created over their four years at BU.

Next in line will be the replacement of our desktop computer lab with a wireless, interactive, tablet-based learning classroom. This will be an incredible place for cutting-edge, team-driven, challenge-based learning projects, as well as executive education seminars. There are many other initiatives we can talk about when you visit SHA, such as the recent additions to our faculty and staff (see pages 1 and 2) and our new electives in hospitality design, event planning, and social media marketing. We are also proud to report that once again more than 90 percent of our recent senior class had job offers within three months of graduation.

Change is happening, but we’re also keeping the best of what has worked so well for the past 25 years. Your continued support, through gifts to the Annual Fund and participation in alumni events, makes it all possible. Thank you for checking in with SHA.

Chris Muller
Apps for Class

Reserving a quiet table for two? Planning a 200- guest wedding? Try using your iPad. “The hospitality industry has taken to using the iPad—and other tablet computers—in a whole raft of ways,” says SHA Dean Christopher Muller, and the School of Hospitality Administration is adapting, even leaping ahead. “Rather than trying to react to what the industry is doing, we feel we should move as fast or faster,” he says. “As educators, we need to ask ourselves, ‘What skills will the students need when they graduate four years from now?’”

That’s why SHA purchased 60 Apple iPads for use in all classrooms beginning this fall. Students learning about facilities design now use the devices to view and manipulate three-dimensional diagrams and drawings of equipment and floor plans. “It’s a wonderful way for the students to see interior design,” says SHA Dean Christopher Muller. “The entire way we look at a textbook,” says Muller. “The entire way we look at a ‘an interactive textbook is very different from a flat textbook,” says Muller. “The entire way we look at a textbook,” says Muller.

Gaining access to videos and interactive illustrations, changing the text size for ease of reading.) And they’re using the devices to update their Facebook status.

Whether it’s gaining access to videos and interactive illustrations, changing the text size for ease of reading.) And they’re using the devices to update their Facebook status. “We still have to make sure we convey the right information, that the students learn those competencies and skills that will help them be competitive.”

At the same time, the School’s embrace of the tablet is part of the SHA competitive advantage, says Muller. “Our location in Boston, our study-abroad program, and now our cutting-edge technology are three key things that will make our graduates stand out from everybody else in the country.”

Incidentally, the iPad won’t let SHA students virtually wander off to update their Facebook status. “There’s an app that lets the leader of the group,” i.e., the professor, “control the other iPads so they can’t go and do other things on them,” says Muller, flashing a smile.—Patrick J. Kennedy

5 iPad Innovations from the Hospitality Industry

PAPERLESS MENUS

This app shows hotel rates in a given city, tonight or in the future. “The students in strategic marketing are using this to study price change and competitive- ness,” says SHA Dean Christopher Muller. “They used it to pricing surveys by hand, now they’re able to use the iPad as an analysis tool.”

HOTEL PAL

A reservation system you can use in any city in the country, it lists the restaurants in town and when they have open seats and includes pricing and reviews.

OPEN TABLE

Hotel concierges use iPads “to help guests with everything from maps to booking theater tickets,” says Muller. “They use the iPad as a tool to help solve problems.”

GUEST SERVICES

“Hotel concierges use iPads “to help guests with everything from maps to booking theater tickets,” says Muller. “They use the iPad as a tool to help solve problems.”

EVENT PLANNING

“If you go to a hotel to book a wedding today,” says Muller. “Their marketing or sales people will sit with you and show you on an iPad what the wedding is going to look like,” presenting photos and layouts of the function rooms available.

Associate Professor of Hospitality Administration Peter Szende, who is pioneering a series of self-contained learning modules for students of food and beverage management, says his project is “just perfect for tablet devices because the modules are manageable chunks and because the tablet is a very instructor- and student-friendly, with very rich applications.”

Furthermore, SHA’s iPads will boost efficiency for all concerned by reducing the amount of paper used and eliminating time spent making copies, Szende says. “This is a benefit because BU is restricting the number of pages students can print,” thus shrinking the University’s carbon footprint.

“Perhaps the most amazing thing is the impact of the iPad on the consumer experience,” says Muller. “The iPad is just a tool,” Szende points out, and increased efficiency doesn’t mean professors need to work any less diligently. “We still have to make sure we convey the right information, that the students learn those competencies and skills that will help them be competitive.”

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Guide to Hospitality

Associate Professor Stanley Buchin has been promoted to chair of the SHA faculty, a role that involves mentoring other faculty members and managing the development of new concentrations and courses for SHA students. He recently oversaw the creation of three new electives courses: “Tourism and Hospitality in China,” “Social Networking, Marketing, and Hospitality in Languages and Films.”

Barry Bloom has joined SHA as an associate professor of the prac- tice. Bloom’s 25-year career in both real estate and corporate hospitality includes roles as executive vice president at CNI Hotels & Resorts and executive vice president for investment management at Hyatt. His expertise includes asset management and hospitality franchise and management agreements. He holds a PhD in hospitality managementfrom Iowa State University.

Erich Tucker has joined SHA as an assistant professor of hospitality administration. Tucker recently received a PhD in hospital and restaurant administration from Michigan State University, where her research focused on employee behavior and training. She is teaching courses in human resource management and in conference and event planning.

Trip of a Lifetime

CATCHING UP WITH THE RECIPIENT OF THE R. C. KOFP PRIZE, SARAH NYESTE

Recent graduate Sarah Nyeste (CSG’09, SHA’11) is among the six national winners of this year’s prestigious R. C. KoFp Prize, an award that includes $10,000 cash and a two-month tour of wineries associated with Kobrand Corp. throughout California, Italy, and France. The travel experience, arranged and funded by the KoFp Family Foundation, began in September. Check In caught up with Nyeste just after she arrived in Venice to begin the European segment of the tour.

Which location has been your favorite so far?

The experience is so surreal that I don’t think I can pick a favorite part yet; although, I must say that eating at the French Laundry [a five-star restaurant in California’s Napa Valley] is definitely up on the list. Also, Benizger was the first winery where we were able to actually see the grapes being harvested and crushed.

What have you learned that has surprised you the most?

I have consistently been surprised by the differences between the wine properties. For example, Cakebread Cellars has its own chef but not a restaurant because it’s in Napa, and they have regulations against profiting from ventures not purely associated with the winery. Domaine Carchers [also in Napa Valley] looks like a chateau dragged in from France. It offers food “tasting courses” that you can order with different flights to showcase their wines.

Which European location are you most looking forward to visiting?

I am very excited to travel to the Burgundy region of France. I’ll be able to practice my French and, best of all, see how they pair their wine with food. This is a wonderful, exhaust- ing, thrilling, exhilarating, fattening, awe-inspiring, and glorious scholarship, and I am lucky to have this opportunity.—CS
Chopsticks. Wood or ceramic? Disposable or reusable? Loose or wrapped in paper? Blank paper or paper printed with your logo? Logo printed vertically or horizontally? Two ink colors or one?

“It’s always the details, the little details,” says George Poll (CGS’82, SHA’84) as he discusses the six—soon to be seven—restaurants that he and his older brother, Gillis, have launched and are now successfully running on their native Long Island. Their impressive portfolio includes Toku, a sleek, upscale Asian restaurant in Manhasset, where a diner savors her Ja Jang Mein with a pristine set of disposable, wooden chopsticks that come wrapped in bright white paper imprinted with the horizontal version of the restaurant’s red and black logo. While Poll insists there are many, many factors that determine a restaurateur’s success or failure, it may be his and Gillis’s painstaking attention to detail that enables them to thrive in the notoriously risky restaurant business.

“Salt and pepper shakers. Who cares about salt and pepper shakers? Any saltshaker would be fine—a thin one, a fluted one, a fat one. But is it the right one? You think no one cares, but subliminally, they do,” says Poll, who chose traditional paneled-glass salt and pepper shakers to sit atop every white tablecloth of his flagship restaurant, Bryant & Cooper Steak House, which the New York Times has rated the best of Long Island’s steak emporiums. Customers may not remember the shape of the saltshaker, the heft of their knife, the typeface used in the menu, or the sheen of the floor, says Poll, but they do remember eating in a restaurant that looked and felt just right. Subconsciously, diners do notice the saltshaker, he says, “and it helps make the experience what it’s supposed to be.”

Poll is, of course, punctilious in the choice of the food he serves, having learned the importance of quality ingredients from his father and older brothers. When Poll was a boy in the 1960s, his father owned and ran Pappas, a seafood institution in Brooklyn. Poll often tells the story of how his father traveled to the fish market early each morning to personally select fresh seafood for his restaurant, and of how the three Poll sons followed his example, making predawn treks to the waterfront markets themselves when they reincarnated Pappas on Long Island in 1979.

— featured —

In Fine Detail

STANDING AT SIX-FOOT-FIVE, RESTAURATEUR GEORGE POLL IS A BIG PRESENCE—but he has an eye for the small details. By CORINNE STEINBRENNER | Photographs by BEATRICE DE AGÉA

At Toku, George Poll (CGS’82, SHA’84) serves modern Asian cuisine, from sesame-crusted tuna to mango pudding with coconut coulis (opposite), with elegant flair.
When the brothers opened Bryant & Cooper Steak House in Roslyn in the mid-1980s, they applied the same exacting standards to the selection of their prime beef. They also fully renovated the building they’d purchased, bringing a sophisticated Manhattan style to Long Island and making choices that would affect every aspect of a customer’s experience—from the genuine leather banquettes to the heavy “Daniel Boone” style steak knives. After seeing how powerful such design choices could be, they decided to renovate Pappas: they hired an experienced architect, replaced the previous owner’s “kind of corny” portholes and nautical flourishes with dark wood and antique light fixtures, and rechristened the restaurant Riverbay.

Since then, middle brother Dean has amicably split from the partnership, taking Riverbay with him, and George and Gillis have continued to launch and operate restaurants with keen attention to every detail: the garlic mashed potatoes at Majors (two locations), the brick oven at Cipollini, the illuminated oven at Bar Frites, the mosaic tile floor at Bar Frites. This fall, Poll is bringing a sophisticated Manhattan style to Long Island residents’ high expectations of the brothers Poll.

Poll’s the need to give every aspect of a new venture their undivided attention. As George and Gillis have developed the concept for Bar Frites, a catering hall near Bryant & Cooper Steak House, they couldn’t pass up the opportunity. “So we were already committed to one restaurant, and we took on another one at the same time,” says Poll with a rueful laugh.

When Bar Frites opened last year amid the planning for Hendricks Tavern, he says, the bizmo didn’t fulfill Long Island residents’ high expectations of the brothers Poll. “So we had to go back to the drawing board. We spent eight months to a year redesigning the menu, adding new items—more fun items, more sharing items—lowering the prices, retooling, retooling.” They hired a new chef and in July introduced the new menu. So far, says Poll, the changes have been well received.

Of course, Poll doesn’t expect Bar Frites—or any of his restaurants—to coast from here. On the day of our interview, he had a 3 p.m. appointment to taste new items for Toki’s menu. “The restaurant has been open four years,” he explained. “You can’t let it get stale.” He also monitors the level of service his restaurants provide. He keeps an eye on his waiters, to ensure they’re reading their tables properly (“some people want to be entertained, some people, they just want a drink”) and noticing customers’ needs (“if a person is looking up, he needs something”). He brings any problems to the manager’s attention. But, he says, “It’s not always about finding something that’s wrong. Then you’re the negative guy. It’s good to tell someone when they’re doing something right, too.”

With so many elements to pay attention to—the level of service, the balance of the menu, flavors, pricing, styling, wages, food costs, and on, and on—there’s no one reason that restaurants thrive or fail, says Poll, “but we try to put as many positives as we can on our side.” Among the most important of these are love of the work, a hunger to succeed, devotion to the customer, and consistency in food and service, he says. “That’s in the details.”

Bryant & Cooper Steak House’s dry-aged prime beef is hand selected and then hand carved at the Poll brothers’ butcher shop, located next door to the restaurant.

George Poll is the recipient of SHA’s 2012 Distinguished Alumnus award.
Each year SHA’s distinguished lecture series—a spring-semester course that draws roughly 100 students from all class years—brings hospitality heavyweights to campus to share their stories and insights. The series is designed to introduce students to the industry’s leading companies and provide them the opportunity to meet the people responsible for the companies’ success, says Dean Christopher Muller, who oversees the course. Each lecture is followed by a roundtable discussion that allows 25 SHA seniors to interact on a more personal, informal level with the week’s presenter. We spoke to four recent lecturers and asked them to share their words of industry wisdom with Check In readers.

**Manny Costa**
(CGS’72, CAS’74)

**AGE:** 57  
**LOCATION:** Boston, Mass.  
**TITLE:** President and CEO  
**Costa Fruit & Produce**  
**RESPONSIBILITY:** Setting strategic direction for his company, which distributes fresh produce and specialty foods throughout New England

**WORDS OF WISDOM**
If you must cut costs, don’t sacrifice quality. Cutting quality is self-defeating. It may provide short-term improvement to your bottom line, but it does long-term damage to your business by alienating or disenchanting your customers. Eliminate waste from your systems. Restaurants or hotels, for example, may believe they need seven-day-a-week delivery service, when they can realistically cut back to four or five days. That’s just one of the ways to eliminate waste without jeopardizing the quality of the service your patron receives. Understand what drives you. Define who you are or what you envision as your purpose. Sometimes that can amount to very simple infinities: to serve, to build, to create, to teach. Choose your role in this industry based on what gives you the greatest satisfaction.

**Interviews by**  
CORINNE STEINBRENNER

**Marc Bruno**

**AGE:** 39  
**LOCATION:** Philadelphia, Pa.  
**TITLE:** President  
**ARAMARK Sports & Entertainment**  
**RESPONSIBILITY:** Overseeing operations at 170-plus stadiums, arenas, and convention centers across North America

**WORDS OF WISDOM**
Focus on the things you can control. You can’t control whether the game will rain out, so why spend time worrying about it? Shift your attention to the areas where you can actually make a difference. Don’t be intimidated by new responsibilities. It’s scary to take on something new, but try to remind yourself that somebody has done this job before. If they did it, so can you.

**Robert Earl**

**AGE:** 60  
**LOCATION:** Orlando, Fla.  
**TITLE:** Founder and CEO  
**Planet Hollywood International**  
**RESPONSIBILITY:** Directing strategy for Planet Hollywood and Buca di Beppo restaurants and the Planet Hollywood Resort & Casino

**WORDS OF WISDOM**
*Keep in touch with trends. Make sure you’re ahead of the game.*

**Peter Christie**

**AGE:** 60  
**LOCATION:** Southborough, Mass.  
**TITLE:** President and CEO  
**Massachusetts Restaurant Association**  
**RESPONSIBILITY:** Protecting and improving the food and beverage industry in Massachusetts

**WORDS OF WISDOM**
Stay informed about industry issues. Never stop learning. Belong to your trade association and read industry news. Attend networking events with your peers: if you get 15 restaurateurs together, they’re going to be talking about business, and that’s very healthy. Don’t make excuses. In business, if you discover you’re doing something wrong, stop doing it. I can’t tell you how many times people call me about a regulation or a law and say, “Yeah, but...” What they’re really trying to do is talk me into condoning their wrongdoing. No, just stop doing it. Immediately.

**WORDS OF WISDOM**
*Connect with hospitality students. There’s a lot of joy in helping this group. I derived a lot of pleasure from seeing these kids’ faces and hearing their questions, and I ended up hiring one of the SHA seniors I spoke to. She’s now arriving to work for me in a new food business in New York.*
Laurel Kramer
Greeting Guests
Is Just the Beginning

By PATRICK L. KENNEDY

During her first weekend night alone as concierge at a luxury apartment building, Laurel Kramer (’12) had to deal with a toilet overflowing and leaking into the apartment below, a fire alarm that wouldn’t stay off, and a princess (an actual princess) who needed her many skills. Her bosses have noted her many skills.

Many hospitals now have concierges who tend to palace visitors (even a princess), a royal officer whose bosses have noted her many skills. Her many skills.

The Arthur J. Gallagher Foundation

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Mr. and Mrs. Michael M. Barron (P’11)

Mr. and Mrs. John H. Turner (P’10)
Dana Lancaster (’88) recently celebrated 20 years with Anthony’s Restaurants. She is general manager of Anthony’s HomePort and Anthony’s Oyster Bar & Grill in Des Moines, Wash., a picturesque waterfront community five miles south of Seattle-Tacoma International Airport.

Ana (’92) and Graham (’91) Raggio of Ashland, Mass., sent their oldest daughter, Analicia, to college this fall. They write, “Can it really be 20 years since we graduated?” They encourage classmates to connect with them on LinkedIn.

In August, Jeffrey C. Selden (’91) began a new role as managing partner of Marcia Selden Catering & Event Planning in Fairfield County, Conn. “This exciting opportunity undoubtedly will prove to be tremendously rewarding on both a personal and professional level, as I will be working with my mother and sister, catering the coolest of parties to the most opulent gales and weddings,” he writes. Jeffrey was previously executive director of catering at The New York Palace Hotel.

Meredith Meade-Norins (’93) of Bucks County, Pa., has been working for 10 years as the school psychologist for the School District of Philadelphia. She is general manager of Anthony’s Restaurants. She recently celebrated 20 years with Anthony’s Restaurants.

Amy (Thomas) Greene (’99) of Red Bank, N.J., is enjoying married life following her September 2010 wedding. After five years working in health care, Amy has returned to the hospitality industry and is now rooms division manager at the Molly Pitcher Inn and Oyster Point Hotel in Red Bank. She recently earned an MBA from Baruch College, with a dual emphasis in finance and entrepreneurship.

Amanda (Wolfe) Guille (’00) of Charlotte, N.C., graduated in May from Johnson & Wales University, Charlotte campus, with an AAS in baking and pastry arts and then completed a summer internship at Scratch Bakery in Durham, N.C.

Heather McGuire (’00) has graduated in May from Johnson & Wales University, Charlotte campus, with an AAS in baking and pastry arts and then completed a summer internship at Scratch Bakery in Durham, N.C.

Punit Shah (’02) is president and chief operating officer of Tampa, Florida-based Liberty Group, which specializes in real estate investments, asset management, and commercial property development. He recently won Tampa’s 30 Under 30 Award and has been appointed to the boards of the InterContinental Owners’ Association and the CEO Council of Tampa. Punit married Carla Ports (’06) in 2009 in Sarasota, Fla., at a two-day wedding that celebrated both Carla’s family’s Catholic traditions and Punit’s Indian heritage. Carla now works in Tampa at the Home Shopping Network.

James Gregg (’03) of Walnut Creek, Calif., married Lindsay Laughlin on July 16, 2011. James is director of sales for the InterContinental Hotels of San Francisco, representing the InterContinental San Francisco and the InterContinental Mark Hopkins.

Shiang-Wayne Teo (’04) “permanently renounced singlehood” on March 14, 2011, marrying his girlfriend of five years, Millicent Yap. They are expecting their first child in March 2012.

Leanne Lone (’06) is a food and beverage manager at the Sheraton New York Hotel & Towers, overseeing room service, a club lounge, a three-meal restaurant, a Starbucks, and a bar for the hotel’s 1,776-room hotel.

James Flynn (’07) is a group sales manager at the Fairmont Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, where he handles group sales for the local market, North America, Southeast Asia, and Asia Pacific. He previously spent four years in sales and marketing at the Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel Boston.

James Fynes (’07) is a group sales manager at the Fairmont Copley Plaza Hotel Boston.

Lee O’Hara (’08) received a 2011 Arthur J. Packard Memorial Scholarship from the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Foundation.

Jon Shon-Wen Hsu (’09) works at the W Hotel in Taipei, Taiwan. In July, she met up several BU students, faculty, and alumni for an informal reunion lunch at the Four Seasons Taipei. In attendance were Fei-Ju Hsiao (SMG’11), a management trainee at Four Seasons Taipei; Yueh Lee (’10), Assistant Professor at the University of New South Wales; and Carol Hung (’10) at Four Seasons Hotel in Taipei in July for an informal reunion lunch. Photos credit: ZOE HO

Julie Sutula (’10) graduated in May from a six-month intensive pastry program at the French Culinary Institute in Manhattan. “I loved it and learned so much!” she writes. She is now a hotel pastry cook in Midland, Mich.

Upon graduating from SHA, Zachariah Denush (’10) accepted a job with Marriott in the company’s revenue management department. He was placed in Newport Beach, Calif., and is now an inventory manager for the South Orange County region.

Melissa Lee (’11) is working at the front office at the Renaissance Vinoy Resort and Golf Club in her home state of Florida. She writes, “Built in 1925, the Vinoy is rich in history and is even rumored to be haunted! There is always something new and exciting going on both in the hotel and in the area!”}

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IN MEMORIAM

Christina Geno (CSG’08, SH’10) Christina Geno spent her last day doing what she loved: an avid cyclist and passionate volunteer, Geno was biking across the country for the charity Bike and Build, which raises money for affordable housing, when she was struck and killed by a sports utility vehicle in Alabama on June 6, 2011.

SHA program coordinator Jennifer Salzman fondly recalls Geno’s love of cycling and her giving spirit. “There was no one who could match her enthusiasm,” Salzman says. “When you saw her, you would automatically smile.” At the time of her death, the 22-year-old native of Newton, Mass., was director of operations for Revolution Lacrosse, a Boston-based club team. She is survived by her two brothers and her parents, who have established the Christina Charles Geno Foundation (http://ccgenfoundation.org) in her honor.—LF

Matthew Sullivan (SH’11) A motorcycle accident claimed the life of Matthew Sullivan on April 24, 2011. According to an obituary published in the Orlando Sentinel, the 26-year-old Floridian loved activities involving speed and adventure, including skydiving and adventure sports. “It was very recent when I last spoke to him,” say his SHA classmates Gary Chan (’09) and Karin Su (’09), recalling Sullivan watching out for him at BU and providing advice as an older brother would. “He was a risk taker and wasn’t afraid to take anything to its limit or to stand up for what he believed,” says Chan. “He was a bright, smart, hardworking friend, and he will be missed.” Though he participated in the 2007 Commencement ceremony, Sullivan left BU with one graduation requirement left to complete. He finished the assignment earlier this year, officially earning a 2011 diploma.

At the time of his death, Sullivan was a middle school teacher in Hall County, Ga. “He ment earlier this year, officially earning a 2011 diploma.” He was a risk taker and wasn’t afraid to take anything to its limit or to stand up for what he believed,” says Chan. “He was a bright, smart, hardworking friend, and he will be missed.” Though he participated in the 2007 Commencement ceremony, Sullivan left BU with one graduation requirement left to complete. He finished the assignment earlier this year, officially earning a 2011 diploma.

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