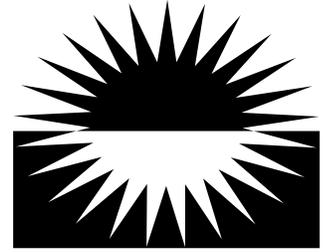

ON THE HORIZON

A NEWSLETTER FOR ADJUNCTS



Des Moines Area Community College

February 2011



Our Holiday Celebration for DMACC Adjuncts and Winter Picnic was almost snowed under, but the Garage Sale once again brought home the bacon – nearly \$500 this year! Thank you – everyone.... *All the monies went to student scholarships.*

Innovation Week DMACC West Campus February 28-4, 2011

We are ready to go!! Please let your students know what's happening each day and check when you will be facilitating. This is an exciting opportunity for our students and faculty to experience creative and the informative presentations.

Adjunct Advisory Council Members

Hugh Stone

Laura DeLoss

Mary Hanson Harrison

Rick Dawson

Seeta Mangra

Faculty member -
Darlene Lawler

KEEPING Adjuncts informed, inspired, and working together – Rick Dawson

As this newsletter goes to press, we will be looking forward to adding new members onto our Adjunct Advisory Council. We have planned a get-together Tuesday afternoon (February 15) and several people have responded. We'll keep you informed about the outcome and invite you once again to come to our meetings and events.

The Adjunct Council established the following goals:

- Create a network of interdependent educators who feel listened to and supported by administration and peers.
- Establish a sound academic practice that is portable and accredited.
- Build and sustain a comprehensive communication infrastructure.

We welcome new members, please

contact Rick Dawson

redawson@dmacc.edu

A purple-outlined arrow pointing to the right, containing the text "NEW! Eatery Reviews - read on".

**NEW! Eatery
Reviews - read on**

Books to Read - please share your thoughts...

"If the purpose of a college education is for students to learn, academe is failing, according to **Academically Adrift: Limited Learning on College Campuses**, a book being released today by University of Chicago Press.

The book cites data from student surveys and transcript analysis to show that many college students have minimal classwork expectations -- and then it tracks the academic gains (or stagnation) of 2,300 students of traditional college age enrolled at a range of four-year colleges and universities. The students took the Collegiate Learning Assessment (which is designed to measure gains in critical thinking, analytic reasoning and other 'higher level' skills taught at college) at various points before and during their college educations, and the results are not encouraging:

Coming in the next next issues: More Reviews - movies, books, eating & drinking - more academic reviews will be welcomed!

- 45 percent of students 'did not demonstrate any significant improvement in learning' during the first two years of college.
 - 36 percent of students 'did not demonstrate any significant improvement in learning' over four years of college.
 - Those students who do show improvements tend to show only modest improvements. Students improved on average only 0.18 standard deviations over the first two years of college and 0.47 over four years. What this means is that a student who entered college in the 50th percentile of students in his or her cohort would move up to the 68th percentile four years later -- but that's the 68th percentile of a new group of freshmen who haven't experienced any college learning.
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'How much are students actually learning in contemporary higher education? The answer for many undergraduates, we have concluded, is not much,' write the authors, Richard Arum, professor of sociology and education at New York University, and Josipa Roksa, assistant professor of sociology at the University of Virginia. For many undergraduates, they write, 'drifting through college without a clear sense of purpose is readily apparent.'" Go to following website for more of this article by Scott Jaschik

http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2011/01/18/study_finds_large_numbers_of_college_students_don_t_learn_much **PLEASE SEND RESPONSES TO meharrison1@dmacc.edu until we set up our blog site.**

The Picky Eater Reviews – adjunct nom (non) de plume?

This month, I'm reviewing three nearby eateries: Bang Bang Mongolian Grill, Pancho's Mexican Grill, and Red Robin Gourmet Burgers. Fast food gets ranked with greasy wrappers while everyone else gets gold stars. All rankings are out of five.

Bang Bang Mongolian Grill

Locally owned, Asian-inspired, casual, moderate prices

Address: 6240 Mills Civic Parkway

Three and a half out of five gold stars

This locally owned Mongolian grill sexed up the interior of the former O'Charley's location making it a great first-date choice. Bang Bang is the only direct competition to HuHot in town. What HuHot lacks Bang Bang delivers including tasty appetizers, full bar, comfy patio, and fun desserts. Standouts include the large, crispy egg rolls and the gelatinous but luscious mini-trio desserts served in martini glasses (The key lime is a tart, creamy yet crunchy, smooth finisher). For the main dish, Bang Bang offers white and brown rice and more choices of veggies, proteins, sauces, and spices than HuHot. Soups and salad, fajita, and nacho bars are options, but the soups and nacho bar are bland and pointless. If you've never been to a Mongolian grill, experiment! If you've been to HuHot, don't expect the same thing; the sauces

at Bang Bang contain less sugar, making the dry spices a major component for flavor. Overall, Bang Bang is far cleaner, has more choices, and is sexier than HuHot. Between the two, I opt for Bang Bang.

Panchero's

Rapidly expanding Midwest chain, Mexican or TexMex, fast food, cheap
West Des Moines address: Bridgewood Plaza, 165 S. Jordan Creek Parkway, Suite 115
Four and a half out of five greasy wrappers

When I crave Mexican, I crave Panchero's. It's nothing swoon-worthy, but it's reliable, inexpensive, and delicious. Of all four locations, the cleanest, most consistent location is, conveniently, closest to West Campus. The staff, who've been there forever, make service fast and professional. Panchero's has just five items on the menu: burritos, burrito bowls, tacos, salads, and quesadillas. Each costs five to six dollars. The draw is the tortilla, made fresh daily, pressed when you order. The lightly seasoned chicken, steak, carnitas, and veggies, bolstered by the tortillas, are more than sufficient, but Panchero's extras elevate the meal. Subtle heat from red onions with earthy cilantro make for addictive pico de gallo; the corn salsa adds a sweet, recognizable quality. If the extras don't help fill you up, order chips and queso, normally a spot-on, thick, silky side. Unfortunately, a recent visit to the Johnston location brought runny queso that didn't cling to the chips for dear life, so stick with WDM's location. Lastly, despite testing barbacoa last year, Panchero's doesn't offer it regularly (my one complaint). If they did, Chipotle would hold no appeal. Of course, with Chipotle in the mall and nowhere else, I'll stick with the easy access of Panchero's.

Red Robin

National chain, "gourmet burgers," casual/family dining, moderate prices
Address: 6255 Mills Civic Parkway
Three out of five gold stars

Red Robin is a good standby to take the kids on Friday night, but it can be unpredictable. High turnover makes service somewhere between outstanding to absent. The family-driven atmosphere is bright and loud. With kids running the show (as staff and patrons), tables and floors get messy, but parents, aunts, and uncles likely just adjust. Red Robin isn't fast-food cheap (ten dollar burgers), but portions match the dollar. The entirely customizable, smoky, juicy "gourmet" burgers lack thickness, but that's a good thing. Post-toppings, anything thicker would out-size your head. If you're not into red meat, any burger can be replaced with crispy chicken, grilled chicken, garden or boca burgers. Admittedly, Red Robin challenges waistlines, so customization is crucial. My choice, the Bleu Ribbon burger is 999 calories with 57 fat grams, but I trade for grilled chicken and forgo onion straws (730 calories, 34 fat grams) . . . that's if you don't eat and drink your way through bottomless steak fries or bottomless root beer floats. Fortunately, Red Robin features salads and wraps. But if so-bad-it's-good is your thing, pick the greasy, crunchy onion rings with tangy campfire sauce. A brief warning: skip the watered-down, over-priced alcohol. Instead, opt for the unique, fizzy concoctions like raspberry limeade, rare at chains this big. Finally, for dessert, go somewhere else. You'll be too full, anyway.

SPACE FOR YOU TO USE:

Want to barter talents, share books, advertise upcoming events or garage sales, relate helpful websites for teaching???? Here's your chance, free of charge.

Email
meharrison1@dmacc.edu