



¿Que Pasa?

¿Que Pasa? The Columbia Restaurant Newsletter

January 2008

The Columbia Receives 24th Celebration Of Free Enterprise Award From USF

The Columbia Restaurant and the Gonzmart family were honored on October 30, 2007 by the University of South Florida in Tampa as the recipients of the 24th Celebration of Free Enterprise Award. Funds raised by the awards dinner support student scholarships and related programs at USF's College of Business Administration. According to USF Dean Robert Forsythe, the Columbia, established in Ybor City in 1905, personifies the spirit of free enterprise. "The entrepreneurial spirit of each generation leading the restaurant has enabled it to blend tradition with contemporary business practices, making the Columbia one of the nation's most honored restaurants in the world and a favorite among locals and tourists," he said.

Richard Gonzmart, 4th generation family member and president of the Columbia, gave a heartfelt speech about the importance of giving back to the community. He attributes much of The Columbia's success to being part of all the communities where The Columbia Restaurants are located, and to the dedication of the Columbia's employees.

Lauren Gonzmart Schellman and Andrea Gonzmart, 5th generation family members, are both USF graduates. Lauren graduated in 1999 with a bachelor's degree in Interdisciplinary Social Sciences. Andrea graduated in 2001 with a bachelor's degree in Business Administration.

Richard's wife, Melanie, and their daughters, Lauren (and husband,

Chris) and Andrea were in attendance for the celebration. So were Casey Gonzmart and his daughter, Cassandra. Also in attendance were some of the corporate office employees. The Celebration of Free Enterprise is an annual awards program recognizing business leaders or leadership teams demonstrating solid business practices and displaying an entrepreneurial spirit.



The Gonzmart Family at the awards ceremony, along with employees.
L to R, back row: Chris Schellman, Lauren Gonzmart Schellman, Richard Davis, Richard Gonzmart, Curt Gaither, Dennis Fedorovich, Casey Gonzmart, Cassandra Gonzmart, Lorrie Hero. **Middle row:** Heather Skanks, Melanie Gonzmart, Angie Geml, Brian Reade. **Front row:** Andrea Gonzmart, Rocky, USF Mascot.



Sixth Annual “Richard’s Run For Life” 5K Raises Over \$75,000 For The Amandalee Fund For Pediatric Sarcoma Cancer Research At Moffitt Cancer Center

The Sixth Annual “Richard’s Run for Life” 5K took place on Friday, November 2 at 6:30 p.m. in Ybor City’s Centennial Park, with over 1,000 people running and walking through the historic streets of Ybor City. This year’s event raised over \$75,000.

100% of all proceeds donated by sponsors and participants supported the Amandalee Fund for pediatric sarcoma cancer research at H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center & Research Institute in Tampa.

“Richard’s Run for Life” 5K was created by Columbia Restaurant President, Richard Gonzmart, as a way to combine his love for running with his long-time desire to find a cure for cancer.

“I created “Richard’s Run For Life” 5K, which is part of the Gonzmart Family Foundation, a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization, dedicated to supporting my ongoing campaign to help find a cure for cancer and to give hope to those fighting it,” Richard Gonzmart said. “Cancer has affected so many of my loved ones and friends, including my 15-year-old friend, Bill Gowacki,

who has been fighting cancer for over 5 years and is now cancer free,” Gonzmart said. “Billy is a cancer survivor and an inspiration to other children and families who are fighting this horrid disease,” Gonzmart said. Bill Gowacki was the official race starter this year. Also assisting with the starting was 8-year-old Remi Storch, who also has been battling cancer and winning her fight.



A Message From Richard

“Honesty is the first chapter in the book of wisdom.”-Thomas Jefferson

Honesty is one of the most important virtues in order for solid relationships in business and in personal life.

If we would practice and accept when given an honest answer, the world would be a better place. I recently received a letter from a customer complaining about being asked to leave their table by a waiter since they had finished eating and paid the bill. They had been at the table for over two and half hours and the waiter was getting antsy. The fact is the Columbia is a destination where people and friends

get together to recall the great or sad times in their lives. It is our pleasure and honor that they choose to do so at the Columbia.

I understand the server’s issue that he wanted to turn the table over so he could have another paying customer but he made a mistake by asking our customer to leave, if anything, he should have approached a manager to discuss the situation. The customer took the time and effort to write me a letter and this gives us the chance to make it better, but how often do they just say nothing and then do not return? The server denied ever saying anything but...

“Rule No. 1: Use your own good judgment in all situations. There will be no additional rules.”

Bruce, Jim & John Nordstrom co-presidents of Nordstrom department stores, in the employee handbook





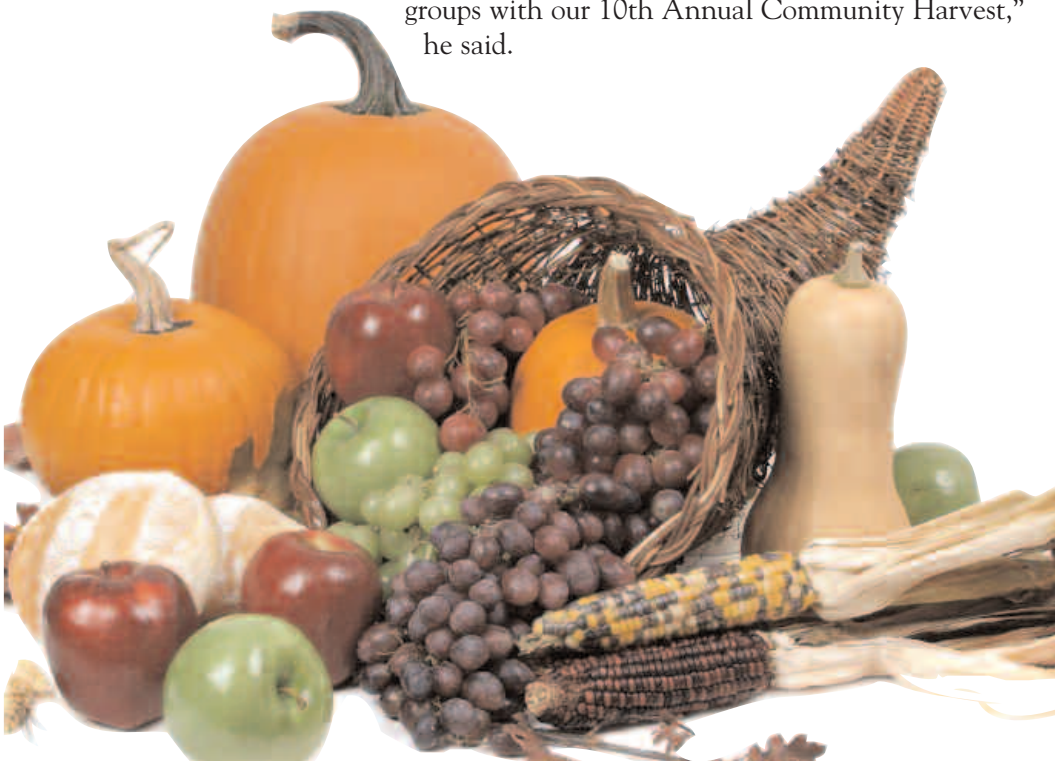
Columbia Restaurant Donates Over \$122,000 To 90 Non-Profit Groups Throughout Florida

The Columbia Restaurant has donated over \$122,000 to more than 90 non-profit organizations throughout Florida as a result of the 10th Annual Columbia Restaurant Community Harvest held in September.

This is the largest donation made in 10 years of giving back to non-profit groups. Over the past 10 years, the Columbia Restaurant Community Harvest has donated over \$820,000 to non-profit organizations throughout Florida.

The Columbia Restaurant Community Harvest program was developed by the Columbia Restaurant as a means of giving back to the communities that have supported the family business for over 100 years. Through this annual program held in September, each of the seven Columbia Restaurants makes a donation from lunch and dinner sales to charitable organizations selected by their guests.

“We are proud to be able to help these organizations that help so many in our great country and our state. We are fortunate to be able to help in a time when so many organizations are facing a decline in charitable gifts. This year was a record year and we look forward to making a bigger donation next year,” said Richard Gonzmart, 4th generation family member and president of the Columbia Restaurant. “The Columbia Community Harvest is based on the family's philosophy of helping others ever since the Columbia was founded in 1905. We have been blessed to be able to help so many non-profit groups with our 10th Annual Community Harvest,” he said.



Special Dates



February 3, 2008
Super Bowl - Sunday



February 14, 2008
Valentine's Day - Thursday

March 14, 2008
2nd Annual “Sip for Life” Wine Tasting Fundraiser for Moffitt Cancer Center - Friday



March 23, 2008
Easter - Sunday

¿Que Pasa? is a quarterly newsletter for the Columbia Restaurant.

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If you work for The Columbia and would like to share your story about working with us, please contact Angela at A.Geml@columbiarestaurant.com



The Columbia Supports Education Through The Latino Scholarship Program At USF

The Columbia Restaurant is currently sponsoring six students through the Latino Scholarship Program at the University of South Florida in Tampa. The scholarships were announced at a ceremony that Lauren Gonzmart Schellman and Andrea Gonzmart attended, giving them a chance to meet and congratulate the students.

This year's new recipients included Alisha Rivera-Ayoroa who is majoring in Foreign Language Education. She received the "First" Columbia Restaurant "Centenario" Endowment Scholarship.



Alisha Rivera-Ayoroa, USF scholarship recipient and Andrea Gonzmart of The Columbia.



Andrea Gonzmart of The Columbia and Rosalinda Medina, USF scholarship recipient.

Rosalinda Medina is studying International Business. She received the Adela and Cesar Gonzmart Memorial Endowed Scholarship.

There are also four continuing students who are receiving the Adela and Cesar Gonzmart Endowed Scholarship. Karel Fernandez, music major; Emanuel Lucas, majoring in Biomedical Science; Maria Rodriguez, International Business & Rossina Valarezo, Pharmacy.

The Latino Scholarship Program is proud of the achievements of its students and alumni. From classrooms, to hospitals, to research laboratories, our graduates are making a difference in our community and beyond.

For many, attaining a college degree seemed beyond their reach. The vast majority of these students came from low income, first generation in college families who may not have earned a college degree without the mentoring and academic, financial and social support they received from our scholarship sponsors and this program.

The Gonzmart family has a long-standing relationship with the USF Latino Scholarship Program. Their generosity has already helped graduates like siblings Elsi and Julio Rodriguez, who are both Engineers in the Tampa Bay area.





The Columbia Offers Gluten Free Menu Items

What is gluten?

Gluten, is a mixture of proteins present in the cereal grains. The long molecules of gluten, insoluble in water, are strong and flexible and form many cross linkages. This gives flour its characteristic chewiness and permits breads and cakes to rise during baking as the gases within expand and are trapped in the gluten superstructure.

Various flours have different ratios of gluten to starch (called hardness) and are appropriate for different types of foodstuffs. Thus soft flour is used for cakes, harder flour for pastry, hard flour for bread, and the hardest, or durum, for pasta.

The hereditary disease called nontropical sprue is characterized by an inability to digest gluten. In this disease the gluten acts as an antigen (see immunity) and forms immune complexes that cause damage to the mucus lining of the intestine.

The following Columbia menu items are gluten free:

Spanish Bean Soup
Black Bean Soup
"1905" Salad
Lula Mae Salad
Beefsteak Tomato Salad
Chicken & Yellow Rice
Roast Pork
Palomilla
Shrimp Criollo
Paellas
Mahi Mahi Cayo Hueso
Mussels y Chorizo "Andres"
Queso Fundido
Shrimp Ajillo
Flan
Crema Catalana
Moros y Cristianos
Snapper Bilbao
Filet Mignon
Delmonico Sonny
Pollo Valencia

Snapper Adelita can be made if not dusted with flour, just seasoned and grilled. Topping is okay.

Ternera Isabella can be made if not dusted with flour, just seasoned and grilled.

These Sauces Are Not Gluten Free:

Boliché Sauce
Columbia Sauce
Barcelona Sauce
Alicante Sauce
Chacho Sauce
Amontillado Sauce
Mornay Sauce





Employee Profiles



Oscar at
The
Columbia
Ybor City.

Oscar Funez Supervisor/Columbia Ybor City

Q: Which Columbia location do you work at?

A: Columbia Ybor City, I've been here for 10 years.

Q: How did you start out?

A: I started as a dishwasher and was transferred to the pantry area. I then moved to the middle area doing the fryer and learning this job, I learned how to work in the sauté and grilled areas.

Q: What are your favorite Columbia foods?

A: Steak salteado for lunch, Delmonico Sonny for dinner, Godiva chocolate cake for dessert and sangria to drink.



Inger at The
Columbia
Ybor City.

Inger Marie Sawyer Supervisor/Ybor City

Q: Which Columbia location do you work at?

A: I have been working at the

Columbia Ybor City location for 3 years.

Q: How did you start out?

A: I started out as a hostess, now I'm a supervisor, and I'm working toward a manager position.

Q: Have you ever worked at any other Columbia?

A: No, but I would enjoy working in another Columbia for the additional experience.

Q: What are your favorite Columbia foods?

A: "1905 Salad" for lunch, good rice for dinner, caf con leche martini to drink, and for dessert, it depends on what day it is and what my taste buds are craving.

Q: Have you ever waited on any celebrities?

A: Yes, Richard Gonzmart.

Q: What is your favorite Columbia experience?

A: Every day is my favorite experience at the Columbia. I can't wait to get to work, I love my job.

Q: Tell us about a special moment at the Columbia.

A: When I see the faces of the local elementary school kids who come to the Columbia Ybor City for a field trip...some of them are so well-dressed, and when you see their expression while walking through the restaurant and seeing how beautiful and elegant our restaurant is...that is priceless. Some of us take it for granted that we work in such a beautiful place. I love working with the Gonzmart family!



Congratulations

**Andrea Gonzmart
and Sherrod Turner
were married on
November 10, 2007**

AND.....Andrea was named one of "30 Under 30" by the *Tampa Bay Business Journal*. The program recognizes the rising stars in the Tampa Bay business community.



One Person Does Make A Difference!

We are ALL in the hospitality business. Without our guests, we don't have a business, and without a business, none of us have jobs.

Treating guests right is everyone's job. Remember, "It's My Pleasure!" Please read the letter below, and remember, One Person Does Make A Difference!

January 8, 2008

Dear Mr. Hanratty:

As lifelong Pinellas County residents, our family has had many excellent experiences over many decades with Columbia. The food is always exceptional, and many special family/life events have been celebrated with lunch or dinner at Columbia.

It is always a pleasure to recognize excellent service and outstanding care. In the framework of our already outstanding experiences dining at Columbia Sand Key, we would like to share with you our excellent experiences with our waiter today. Our group at Columbia was just my parents and myself, not the whole family. At lunch today (January 7) at the Sand Key location, we were served by a young man from Indiana who if memory serves, is named Kris. His service was exceptional---among the best we have received at Columbia. Kris was friendly, unobtrusive, approachable and warm. He seemed to know quite well how to pace our four courses. Additionally, Kris demonstrated very good product knowledge and made excellent and valid recommendations to us...people who have been eating at Columbia for years. He did everything he could, in our estimation, to make sure we had a good lunch. And we did.

We always make our gratitude known to waitstaff by means of gratuity, but in Kris' case, we also want to make our gratitude known to you, his manager. Please thank him for us, and please continue to find people of similar calibre, professionalism and great attitude to work there. It is the reason we keep returning.

All the best wishes in this New Year,
Vince Rossi
Palm Harbor, Florida

DEVELOPING AN "IT'S MY PLEASURE ATTITUDE"

A great way to make sure that our guests have an excellent experience at our restaurants is to develop an attitude within the restaurant of "It's My Pleasure" to serve our guests.

We need to establish a habit whereby everyone says "It's My Pleasure" at every opportunity; this will let our guests know that servicing their needs is of the utmost importance to us.

The only item needed to accomplish the goal of having an attitude of "It's My Pleasure" is a great attitude!

Make it a Habit

- Say "It's My Pleasure" as often as possible.
- Keep a card by the phone that reads "It's My Pleasure."
- When you hear an employee saying "you're welcome", "sure", "certainly" or any phrase wherein they could have said "It's My Pleasure" say to them, "It's Who's Pleasure?"
- Everyone should remind other team members of the chance to say, "It's My Pleasure."
- Everyone should compliment a team member every time they hear them say "It's My Pleasure."
- It should sound like "It's Your Pleasure."
- "It's My Pleasure to put you on hold" should not be a response.
- "It's My Pleasure" should be the last thing you say.