

# VISION

National University's Alumni Magazine

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## National University Alumni are Everywhere

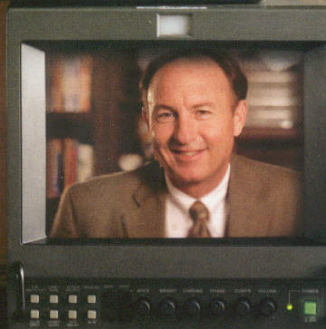
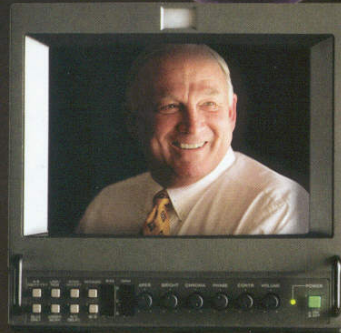
Six award winners,  
35 more to watch

## The School of Media and Communication

Podcasting, digital cinema and more

## Thriving on Peak Performance

E-magazine and TV show put viewers in the zone





## Rob Dean

From depression to substance abuse, one in four Americans is impacted by mental and psychological conditions each year. According to the National Center for Health Statistics, 46 million people annually visit a doctor's office seeking help for a mental disorder. The good news is that with access to quality professional care, the majority can be cured, treated, or learn to manage their condition.

National University alumnus Rob Dean has been promoting good mental health for more than 25 years.

He started as a manager at the Vista Hill Foundation's Mesa Vista Hospital in 1979, supervising a 15-bed inpatient and outpatient chemical dependency program before becoming the director of recreation therapy.

In 1986, he became an administrator at Vista Hill's Los Niños Education Center, a multi-site facility for the developmentally disabled. Two years later, he became a member of the executive management team at Mesa Vista Hospital.

Of course, managing an entire hospital entails greater responsibility than directing a 15-bed program. That is why Dean pursued a Master of Arts in Management from National University. It provided him with the education he needed to match his experience, without requiring him to leave the workplace or put his career on hold.


"I was a full-time working adult, so National University was a logical choice for me," says Dean, who completed his degree in 1988, the same year he began directing an entire healthcare system.

When Mesa Vista became a member of Sharp HealthCare, he was named chief operating officer, assuming administrative responsibilities for all operational aspects of San Diego's largest, full-service behavioral health facility. In 2000, Dean was promoted to senior vice president of operations at Vista Hill, overseeing clinical and service operations for the nonprofit organization. A year later, he assumed an

additional role as chief executive officer of the Stein Education Center, a multi-site facility providing special education and training services to the developmentally disabled. In 2004, he was named president and chief operating officer of Vista Hill, assuming responsibility for three divisions and nine centers.

Thanks to the mental health services provided by Vista Hill, children are overcoming their behavioral problems and increasing their school attendance. Teens are decreasing their levels of anger and building better relationships with their parents while strengthening their self-esteem. Disabled adults are transitioning to less restrictive levels of care as they learn to participate at greater levels within the community. And former substance abusers are reuniting with their families and contributing to society.

"I decided very early on that I would commit myself to a field in which I could make a difference," says Dean.

Investing in his education helped Dean rise to the top of his organization, and his leadership has played a key role in Vista Hill's success. He serves as an inspiration to others who aspire to excel in the field of mental health, including current National University students pursuing degrees in management, psychology, nursing, or healthcare administration. 

# THE 2006 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS DINNER

More than 200 people attended as National University honored six recipients on April 25, 2006 in the Fairway Pavilion at the Hilton La Jolla Torrey Pines. Each recipient was presented with an award by a dean from the University's five schools and one college.

