



**SDSU** *Universe*

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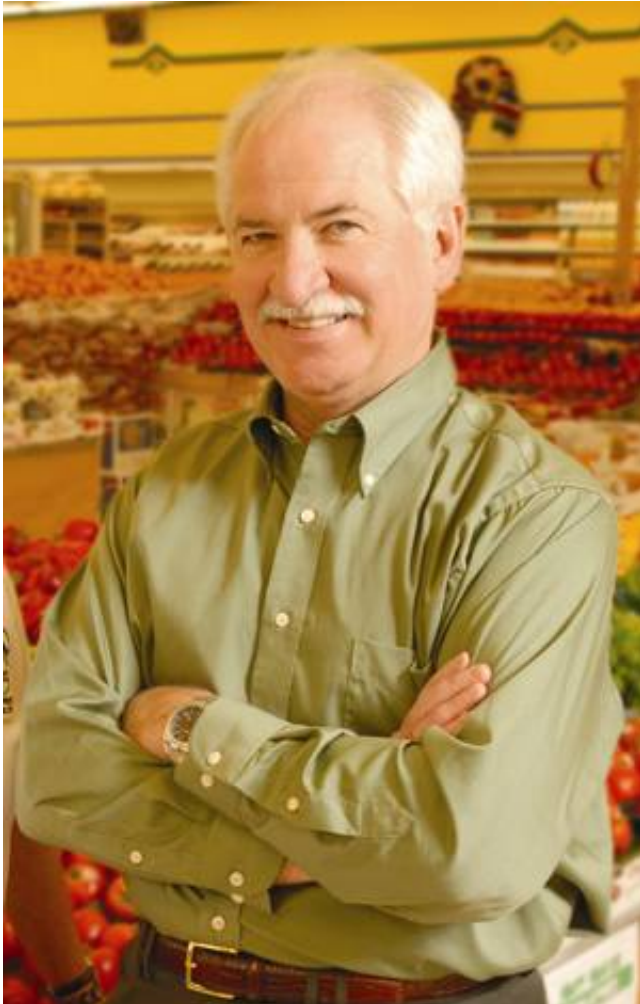
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## SDSUniverse

PETER LARLHAM STARTS BOOK DRIVE FOR TANZANIAN SCHOOL 02/27/09

AZTEC FOR LIFE 02/27/09

SPORTS MBA CASE COMPETITION UNDERWAY AT PETCO PARK 02/19/09



Monday, March 2, 2009

## John Elder and the Agents of Change

Elder will present the Albert W. Johnson Research Lecture on Friday, March 6.

### Story Highlights

- Get with the program
- Syndicating good health
- Albert W. Johnson Research Lecture

John Elder

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### By Coleen Geraghty

***Tune in 11:30 a.m. on Friday, March 6, for a live preview of John Elder's Albert W. Johnson Research Lecture. The preview interview will be broadcast on SDSU Live.***

It's as old as tribal society and as contemporary as Barack Obama's presidential campaign.

The use of citizen advocates to effect social change is a proven recipe for success, not only in politics, but also in a variety of other arenas.

This is particularly true in the field of public health, where a handful of local outreach workers – known as *promotoras* in Latino culture – can multiply the impact of beneficial programs across an entire community.

Twenty years ago, John P. Elder, San Diego State professor of public health, incorporated the *promotora* model into a health promotion program in the

South Bay community of San Ysidro. Not only did that project prove remarkably effective at the time, several of its components remain in place at the San Ysidro Health Center today.

### **Get with the program**

Currently, Elder directs *Aventuras para Niños*, a \$3.6-million, National Institutes of Health-funded initiative to reduce childhood obesity in several South Bay communities. The project required one group of *promotoras* to make home visits and talk to parents about the value of exercise, healthy eating and limited screen time for children.

Elder joined the Graduate School of Public Health (GSPH) in 1984, just three years after it welcomed its first degree candidates. From day one, he fostered the school's commitment to serving diverse national and international populations, particularly San Diego's growing Latino community.

In fact, Elder and his former students, several of whom became faculty members in GSPH, were among the first researchers to verify a spike in the prevalence of obesity, heart disease, asthma, diabetes and other chronic diseases among San Diego's Latino population.

### **Syndicating good health**

Not only has Elder employed *promotoras* in San Diego, he has also relied on outreach workers in dozens of countries around the world to spread current information related to alcohol abuse, maternal and child health, HIV/AIDS prevention and vector-borne diseases.

"Thousands of people worldwide can attribute their good health to the practice of John Elder's models of healthy behavior," said Thomas R. Scott, vice president of research for SDSU.

### **Albert W. Johnson Research Lecture**

In recognition of his work, Elder has been named distinguished professor of public health and the winner of the 2009 Albert W. Johnson Research Lectureship, an annual award honoring outstanding achievement in research and scholarship by an SDSU faculty member.

His lecture, "Agents of Change: Improving the Health of a Nation," is scheduled for 2 p.m., Friday, March 6, in the Arts and Letters Building. It is free and open to the public.

This event is part of **SDSU Month**, an annual celebration of SDSU and its "Minds that Move the World."

**Story Keywords:** Graduate and Research Affairs, Health and Human Services, University Relations and Development, Community, Diversity, Health, International, Public Health, Research, San Diego, sdn, vosd, Events, News, People, Take Part, SDSU Month