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Coronado's Newest (Yogurt) Escape Opens Up, Gives Back

by Elizabeth Guiten

Kevin Quan, co-owner of Yogurt Escape, while only open for only a few weeks, has worked to forge new community relations and will be giving back to the community on Jan. 16 at noon by presenting a check to a schools representative. Quan is donating a percentage of the store's proceeds since opening and will also raffle off a Holland's beach cruiser on Jan. 17. "This is the community we're in and it's our duty to support and give back to it."

Quan's move from 10-year investment banker at Lehman Brothers in New York to nine-month, half-owner with brother Scott of Yogurt Escape stores locally on Orange Avenue, on Mission Gorge and soon on La Jolla Shores may seem like an unconventional twist of fate, considering current economic times, but for Quan, who grew up in San Diego's Pacific Beach, the serendipitous move came both out of necessity and desire.



Brittany Payne, Yogurt Escape employee, demonstrates the store's motto: "You serve. You eat." Photo by Elizabeth Guiten

"After Lehman Brothers tanked, I decided it was time for a new career. I've always loved frozen yogurt so it made sense to me. My bother and I considered several different business models and decided on what we've got now. I believe it's really empowering for a customer to be able to make what they want, when they want it and how they want it. We have more than 20 different nonfat flavors and more than 30 different toppings available at any given time, so the possibilities are there," Quan said.

On the store's Web site: "Yogurt Escape was founded with the goal of indulging the inner child in all of us with a wide array of healthy, natural frozen yogurt flavors and toppings. We also offer a great buzz with a range of organic coffees. We want to empower you to make the yogurt your way and offer an innovative self-service design that enables you to build your own delicious creation - an escape. We want to share our passion for great food in an attractive environment."

From the airy storefront and decorative interior tiling to the countertop created in the shape of a yogurt swirl, the aesthetic of the store was at the forefront of Quan's mind. As he looks around, he muses out loud about the bare walls. "I've been thinking about finding a way to incorporate art from the high school students in the CoSA program, maybe rotating different pieces in and out."

Quan's connection to Coronado is not a new one. "My brother used to teach sailing at the Coronado Yacht Club and our family always used to come here during the summer to race sailboats. We developed a lot of good local relationships that way. To this day I still run across different people we used to race with. Coming back to Coronado has been an exciting adventure. This is such a great community and my family has a lot of good history here."

"We're planning on holding more events here in the future," said John, Kevin's father. "We want to support the community and let them know that we're here for them, whatever they need."

Yogurt Escape is at 942 Orange Avenue, open Monday - Sunday, 11 a.m. - 10 p.m. For more information, go to www.yogurtescape.com.

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