

Log Cabin Democrat

128th YEAR- NO. 331

CONWAY, ARKANSAS, SUNDAY, AUGUST 10, 2008

A-1

UCA grad keeps positive attitude

By **FRED PETRUCELLI**
SPECIAL TO THE LOG CABIN

Paul Vitale took his "book learnin'" from the University of Central Arkansas and parlayed it into a career that has painted him as one of the nation's most sought-after motivational speakers and trainers.

Recently during a workshop at Hendrix College, he proved his mettle before a standing-room only assemblage of clinical and professional people, bouncing around the Staples Auditorium stage, imploring his listeners to adopt a positive attitude, a strong work ethic and other concepts of a meaningful life.

His presentation was marked by theatrical bursts of energy, often humorous in context but always thoughtful and engrossing. He offered a series of pictorial slides that complemented his presentation style that has made him a popular keynote speaker at universities, conventions, seminars and training conferences.

In 1995, with his UCA sheepskin in hand, he launched Vital Communications, Inc., a play on his name. With a gregarious nature and boundless ambition and a flair for animation, the young man who suffered the indignities of speech pattern difficulties while growing up, overcame his impediment and made his presence known quickly.

"I was motivated early on when I heard speakers who came to our high school, and I felt an urge to do the same thing," he said. "I went in that direction, taking courses in mass communications and journalism at UCA."

He admits to having a lot of fun while delivering messages of affirmation to hundreds of people here and abroad. His clients are

far-flung and imposing: ESPN Outdoors, the United States Postal Service, Dillard's Department Stores, Southwest Airlines, the Washington Redskins pro football team, ALLTEL Communications, Tyson Foods, Parke-Davis Pharmaceuticals, the Antiques Roadshow and Dole-Hong Kong, Ltd.

Being at home in Conway for the "Beyond the Borders" conference found Vitale in an expansive mood. Speaking on "Energizing the Enthusiasm That Exists Within" he said, "It begins with making a conscious choice. The choice is either recognizing the 'wow' of your own unique life, or wanting to simply throw in the 'towel'. The level of enthusiasm you chose to radiate or suppress sets a tone not only for yourself but also for those around you."

From that point on, Vitale said it was imperative to find what motivates you, what you can be passionate about and what drives you to get up in the morning.

"It's all about attitude," Vitale declared, and quoting Thomas Jefferson, he said, "Nothing can stop the man with the right mental attitude from achieving his goals; nothing on earth can help the man with the wrong attitude."

That's the Vitale mantra. By following his dream of helping others find their niche in life, he has become a top-notch motivator.

And author. He has written a best-selling book, *Are You Puzzled By the Puzzle of Life?* as well as *Pass It On*, a collection of inspirational quotes from a variety of people. "Dream Chasers", his latest book, is due for publication in the near future, he said.

In his spare time, the 36-year-old Vitale enjoys volunteering with the Big Brothers/Big Sisters organization, the Make-A-Wish Foundation, Children's Hospital-Kampaigh for Kids and the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.



He is a graduate of the Leadership Institute and was named one of the "40 Under 40" by Arkansas Business magazine. He also serves on the board of the Arkansas Travel Council, Inc.

Vitale's employment history includes a stint as director of the Convention and Visitors Bureau of Hot Springs, managing a \$1.4 million advertising and marketing campaign. Prior to his Spa position, he was with the advertising firm of Cranford Johnson Robinson Woods in Little Rock, promoting tourism in Arkansas.

One of Vitale's favorite observations from Ralph Waldo Emerson that makes a pertinent point in his presentations: "What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared with what lies within us!" ♦