

Paul Kelly

In 2014 I was homeless and bankrupt. My wife and two small children had moved to California to stay with family after I had made a series of ill gotten investments over a short period of time. I traveled over 2000 miles over the course of three days reflecting on my life choices, as I made the journey to reconnect with my family, strategizing a plan so that my wife and I could effectively support our children. When I finally arrived in California I was still at a loss.

I received my position as Chef de Cuisine with Parkwest Casino Cordova on June 20, 2014. I am now more financially stable then at any other moment in my life. My children and wife enjoy a quality of life I never imagined I would be able to provide. I am a contributor to the Sacramento Metropolitan Community, and Economy, helping to turn the wheels of the economic machine. Without Parkwest Casino Cordova, Card Rooms in general, and the way they conduct business, this would not be Possible.

My Name is Paul Kelly. I am 35 years old originally from just outside Flint and Lansing Michigan. I studied Political Science at Hope College in Holland Michigan. After completing my time there I received my culinary certificate from the Great Lakes Culinary Academy at Northwest Michigan College in Traverse City Michigan.

I have always been entrepreneurial and adventurous at heart. I come from a family of restaurateurs and small business owners, yet from the time I could push a lawn mower I was forced to make my own way.

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At 18 years old I owned my first business, the Buck Brew, a small operation that specialized in coffee, chocolates and simple quick bread pastries.

My first professional experience in full service hospitality environment came as the Assistant Pastry Chef at the Hotel Iroquois, where I oversaw the day to day operations in absence of the Pastry Chef. The Hotel Iroquois is consistently ranked a Conde Nast best, most recently #10 in midwest in 2017.

After my experience there I worked 4 years as the Sous Chef at Rancho de los Caballeros in Wickenburg Arizona, overseeing the day to day operations of a multi outlet resort and golf club. The golf course is a National top 100 course and #5 overall in Arizona according to Golf Digest.

With the entrepreneurial spirit biting at my hip, I again forayed into my own business, this time a full service, casual upscale dining environment that would become Kelly's Restaurant, in the middle of the forest that is Northern Michigan. We were casual as you could come in with your hunting or beach attire. We were upscale as we offered a menu with the goal of completely scratch cooking. No easy feat I should say.

We provided an excellent product and guest service to our clientele. We had many great team members that were able to support their families and necessities while employed for the restaurant. But at the end of the day, the profit of the business model we created was not enough to also provide for my family. The resort nature of the area we operated made the slow times tough,

and the busy times not enough. So I ended up in California, it may seem cliché, but for me, it has been a "land of opportunity." That is

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entirely because of the opportunity provided by Parkwest Casino Cordova.

Parkwest Casino has provided economic stability to my families life. We live in a three bedroom house in a nice neighborhood east of Sacramento. Buying groceries, filling the car up with gas, is a non issue. For the past 4 years I have been able to save for my children's future, as well as making the possibility of retirement seem plausible for my wife and I, something that did not seem a reality in my 20's.

I contribute to the economic machine that is Northern California and the greater Sacramento Metro Region. My children receive first rate education, though preschool and afterschool programs. My ability to afford those programs, invests in not only my children's future, but also helps provide for the 15 plus individuals that work for the community school they attend.

I have gone from being a burden on the state to becoming a provider. I am able to provide health care for my children through Parkwest Casinos sponsored program, rather than through benefits provided by the state. The clothes on their backs, the food on their table, is entirely provided by mine and my wifes payroll checks, not another taxpayers hard earned contributions.

My paychecks as well as our staff's, are deposited consistently every week without fail. As a young line line cook, there were several instances a bad week would result in the check being "late", or the proprietor handing out cash so we could get by,

At the casino, if there is a slow week, there is no need to worry that the paychecks will come though.

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I also maintain a quality of life I never imagined possible in the food and beverage industry as I do with Parkwest Casino Cordova. I am able spend most holidays home with my wife and children. I am off work most evenings in time to have dinner and put my children to bed. For comparison, while sous chef at Rancho de los Caballeros, we regularly worked shifts from 7am to 11pm. Sometimes for two to three weeks straight with no day off. My wife would have to bring my daughter to work on holidays so I could see her for just a few minutes. This example may seem exceptional, but it is indeed typical of many food and beverage environments in the industry as a whole.

I am no expert to the inner workings of Card Rooms, nevertheless, I understand the current business model makes Parkwest Casino Cordova profitable to the point they assume the risk of providing a food outlet in their establishment. Forced change to this model would lead to decreased profitability, which would force change to the way Card Rooms do business and the salaries they pay their team members. My families quality of life would deteriorate. Financial stability would come to an end. My savings would deplete and my children's education would suffer. We would be back to trying to survive in an unpredictable business environment, as goes the food and beverage industry.

The best people to make decisions for Card Room business models, specifically the

bank rotation, are the individual club owners and managers. This goes with basic Capitalism Ideology of maintaining competitive markets and creating pricing structures that fit the business needs to remain relevant and profitable.

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Thank you to John Park, Owner and President of Parkwest Casino Cordova and our family of Casino/Card Rooms in Northern California. Thank you Mike Vassey, our CFO. Thank you Shaun Yapple, General Manager of Parkwest Casino Cordova, for allowing me the opportunity to speak today.

From my family to all of yours, please enjoy a safe and happy holiday season, Thank you