



Photo: J. D. Levine

## UC graduate changes his tune

By Karen Feldscher

For years, Dane Vannatter didn't tell any of his friends that he sang. Then, six years ago, he decided to come clean. He'd tied for first place in a singing contest at Diamond Jim's at Boston's Lenox Hotel and was scheduled for a run-off "sing," and he invited his friends and colleagues to come. He won the competition, and his friends were amazed.

"I had the greatest cheering section," recalled the 35-year-old Vannatter, a 1993 University College graduate who now supervises Deaconess Hospital's nutrition department. "It was a fantasy to sing in front my friends and kind of knock their socks off."

Vannatter's been knocking a lot of socks off these days. A jazz and cabaret singer, he has been "discovered" in the New York club scene, and he'll be singing at Sardi's, the internationally renowned theater restaurant, on April 5. He was also recently named one of three nominees for the outstanding male New York debut award. One critic called his voice "shimmering." Another said he is "poised for stardom."

"It's pretty huge," admitted Vannatter, who said he hopes to become part of the legacy of great singers like Sarah Vaughan, Tony Bennett and Barbra Streisand. Vannatter, who formerly worked at Northeastern for eight years as office manager for the Division of Fine Arts, said singing has always been a part of his life. He sang in church, where both his grandparents were ministers, and he learned a lot from his grandmother, who played piano and guitar. "Most of our time was spent with music," he recalled.

And yet he didn't pursue singing professionally for years. He attributes his reticence to his mother's death shortly before he graduated from high school. "A lot of me kind of shut down," he said. "I held a lot of it inside for years." But winning the Diamond Jim's contest was a turning point in his life. "It suddenly seemed like the most selfish thing to do was not to sing in public," he said.



**Avitus Productions**

300 Lynn Shore Drive #807, Lynn, MA 01902

tel: 781-598-9156 • fax: 781-595-8445 • e-mail: danevannatter@aol.com

[www.danevannatter.com](http://www.danevannatter.com)