Partners in INNovation

$30 Million Gift by Harrah’s Foundation Sets INNovation Village Project in Motion

GARY LOVEMAN
CEO, Harrah’s Entertainment
The Harrah Hotel College is pleased to welcome to campus William Boldt, the new senior vice president for advancement. You may not know that the hotel college has had an advancement team in place for several years. Under President Ashley’s leadership, UNLV will now coordinate all of its activities that involve interacting with external constituencies, within an advancement model.

What is advancement? Advancement in our college involves those activities that are related to development, alumni, communications, public relations, career services, and marketing. These are activities that engage with external constituencies, advancing the position of the college to those individuals. We have been putting the necessary pieces together over the years to reach the point where we are today with four of those positions either filled or ready to be filled.

Unfortunately, none of these are state-funded positions. We need to go out and solicit gifts to support these roles. With Bob Boughner’s gift, we have at least partially solved the problem for career services. We need to find a way to fund these other positions in the future. If you have any ideas, please send them to me, and I will be very grateful.

The advancement model was one that I began to structure when we first hired Judy Nagai as our director of alumni relations to join with our director of external relations and me to create a unified position that we could present to our external constituencies. We followed that up with the hiring of Karen Sharp in Public Affairs and most recently with Bobbie Barnes as the director of the Bob Boughner Career Services Center. We are in need of a couple of other positions, but for now, we have the necessary critical mass for success.

It might be useful for you to have a sense of what we have achieved by having such a team working together. In my opinion, one of the better things that happened because of this effort is that outstanding people have chosen to join the team because they believe in what we are doing. They agree with the concept and want to be part of a “winning” team. It is a pleasure to be at our monthly meetings and see the enthusiasm with which our goals are addressed. Each of these individuals believes in UNLV and the Harrah Hotel College and what we are trying to achieve nationally and globally. They are all creative and energetic individuals who want to advance the mission of the college and university through their collective efforts.

While folks of my generation and maybe the baby boomers also, read hard-copy newspapers, magazines, and other promotional materials like this issue of Premier, the Gen Xers and Millennials choose to do their reading and listening mostly online and through other contemporary electronic mechanisms. Thus, the marketing of our programs and communications about what we are doing must be reviewed all of the time to make sure we are reaching our desired audiences. We have a monthly electronic newsletter for that purpose and Premier in print and also available electronically on our website.

The role of our advancement team is to keep you, our biggest supporters, involved with what we do. We want your interaction. You can do this electronically through e-mail. You can phone me if you prefer. You can do this the old-fashioned way with a letter addressed to me or to any of our team. You can come to our receptions in New York, Chicago, Las Vegas, and other places where major meetings and conventions take place. You can advise potential students of the advantages of studying with us in “the world’s greatest laboratory.” Or, you can simply send us information about your successes and make us proud of you.

In any case, stay in touch. We care about you. Show us that you are still a Rebel and proud of it by getting in touch with Judy Nagai at judy.nagai@unlv.edu. Thanks.

Stuart H. Mann
Dean
Webinars for industry professionals are now available online. Directed by Patti Shock, who served as department chair for Tourism and Convention for 17 years, the new webinars are presented by UNLV faculty as well as faculty from other hospitality programs across the country. Leading industry professionals are also offering their expertise to round out the course presentations. The webinars explore a wide variety of topics ranging from hotel management to the latest food and beverage trends to what’s new in the entertainment industry. Each course supplies interactive and hands-on tools that allow participants to learn new strategies and techniques and keep up with the ever-changing hospitality industry.

“The great thing about these webinars is you can participate from work, home, or even Starbucks,” says Shock. “If you are in a hotel, you can view it in a boardroom or meeting room on a big screen with your whole staff.”

Presenters self-select their topics in areas they are passionate about. “We want them to give a lecture they look forward to presenting in the classroom or at industry conventions,” Shock says. “This will ensure that they are experts in the topic and not someone that was asked to present on a specific topic and researched it just for the webinar series.”

Harrah Hotel College Alumni have a unique opportunity to benefit from this new program as well. Alumni can register and use the code “alum” typed into the group discount box to receive $20 off the registration fee.
INDUSTRY INSIGHTS

Stephen Michaelides, Words, Ink
National Advisory Board Member

Hotel Food & Beverage: Worth it or Not?

For the nearly 30 years I was editor of Restaurant Hospitality, a monthly business publication, we covered what was going on in food service in every conceivable segment of the industry, except one: hotel food and beverage. For some reason—best explained by the publisher—we deemed hotel food and beverage services to be of only marginal consideration, giving it token coverage once a year, usually in October, one month before the hotel show. And if you took the time to page through the other hospitality magazines, including those covering the lodging industry, you’d be hard-pressed to unearth much more than that. For some reason, magazines that were reputed to write authoritatively about what was going on in food service failed to notice what was going on in hotel food service. As editor of Restaurant Hospitality, I always thought of hotel food service as being a special breed of the industry (just as independents, chains, and noncommercial food services were).

The marketing strategies hotel food and beverage directors use are worlds apart from those used at other food service establishments. From banquet and catering to room service, from cafes to fine dining, from in-room minibars to free coffee services, hotels cope with a consumer whose demands and choices are far different from the typical dining-out consumer who decides, often on a whim, where and what to eat and drink. Hotel customers are so diverse (business people, conventioneers, families on vacation, and an impetuous assortment of other sorts tossed in for good measure) and their demands so unpredictable that hotel food and beverage personnel must be prepared, psychologically and intuitively, to satisfy the disparate demands of their guests and to allay their anxieties with all sorts of food and drink from the moment they wake up until they go to bed.

At the risk of stating the obvious, how many restaurants can you name that will rush an a la carte breakfast to the homes and bedrooms of their customers any time of the day or night? And when was the last time your favorite restaurant was willing to convert its dining room into a mini-conference center, complete with audiovisual equipment, microphones, a podium, snacks and drinks, and an abundant buffet for when the conference adjourns?

And yet, there are differing points of view voiced by some hotel general managers who sense that F&B isn’t worth the effort exerted to make it work. Here are some thoughts—anonymous thoughts for reasons that will soon appear to be obvious:

“I wish it [F&B] would all go away. It’s a pain in the neck to run. I have yet to talk to a food and beverage manager who’s content. I have proposed—and am still waiting approval—to close our restaurant and offer the space to a restaurant or a chain willing to take on the responsibility. Let me tell you, there are several chains out there that would jump at the chance. Furthermore, they would run the restaurant and take over room service. Ask any food and beverage manager what he or she would give to get rid of room service. That alone would be worth the deal. Talk about a drain on profits. Do you think Le Cirque’s Mario Maccioni cooks bacon and eggs or anything else on demand any time for guests at the Bellagio? How about the chef at Spago at the Four Seasons, Maui, which closed its Seasons restaurant there more than three years ago and handed the reins over to Wolfgang Puck? No one expects any of those celebrity chefs to cook anything for guests ordering room service. But our arrangements with a chain or an independent will. That would be part of the bargain.

“As far as banquet and catering are concerned, I am looking to outsource that too. We have plenty of quality caterers in this city more than willing to work with us. We supply the space; they supply the food, the drinks, the labor. We are running a hotel here, not a food and beverage amusement park. Our restaurant today is a loss leader. And—make no mistake—as a loss leader, do not think for a moment that it helps promote our banquet and catering department. That’s a myth.

“Also, don’t overlook the fact that when we eliminate F&B, we’ll be able to delete some high-salaried employees from our payroll. Have you any idea what I’m paying my food and beverage manager, my chef, my maitre d’, my front- and back-of-the-house staff?

“Up until the outsource arrangements are in place, we’ll make do with what we have, but I’m not at all happy with it.”

“Industry Insights” is a featured column in Premier. A member of the college’s National Advisory Board, Michaelides is a freelance writer, speaker, and food service consultant.
IN MY OWN WORDS

Robert N. Grimes, Chairman, Accuvia
National Advisory Board Member

Why I Chose This Industry

I actually joined the hospitality industry when I was in high school working for various food service operations. Upon graduating, I thought I was going to pursue a medical career as I really wanted to be a surgeon—but then reality set in, thankfully. There was no way I was ever going to get through all the science and math courses, which were not my strong point, so I entered college as an “undecided” major.

“My advice to anyone thinking about, or serving in, this field is twofold. First, follow those things that you are passionate about. Second, never underestimate the power of networking.”

My first semester at school, I took an entry-level course called “An Introduction to the Hospitality Industry.” As part of our reading assignments, we read the book Hotel by Arthur Haley and had various speakers from the industry. At that point, I was hooked. My focus was on the food service side of things because I always believed it was easier for a person to own a restaurant than a hotel. I clearly had the entrepreneurial bug back then.

While my first few jobs were in operations for various restaurants and hotels, through the networking offered through my Hotel, Restaurant & Institutional Management program at Penn State, I met people at Marriott headquarters who helped me move my career along and eventually land a job in the information systems department of the company. This was a slight career change that allowed me to use my skills and love for operations but also combine them with my interest in the developing technology area—and since the PC arrived almost to the day that I started at Marriott, I did not have to be a programmer in order to understand and eventually direct systems development and deployments for several areas of the company.

I was allowed the latitude within Marriott to develop an “intrapreneurship”—essentially a company within the company. From there, my business course was eventually set to leave Marriott and start my own company. I have been working for myself ever since in the technology space for hospitality, food service, and retail but have also continued to own and operate restaurants.

My advice to anyone thinking about, or serving in, this field is twofold. First, follow those things that you are passionate about. There are opportunities and careers in this field in almost any area of interest. I was able to marry my love for operations with that of technology and build a career on it.

Second, never underestimate the power of networking. If it had not been for my taking advantage of networking during and after school, I never would have had the introductions to those who were able to mentor, influence, and help guide my career choices. And even today, it is the networking aspect that is most important in continuing to develop and build upon my business interests and drives me toward other goals and objectives. At the same time, I am constantly striving to give back and share some of the experiences and opportunities that I have had with others. This includes my efforts with UNLV and other universities and industry organizations.

In my book, the hospitality and technology industries are second to none. I have been very fortunate to have been a part of them at the right time and to also help promote and expand their influence on the industry.
STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Elizabeth Stayner, Class of 2008

Karen Sharp
Photo by Geri Kodey, '85

Arriving at work before the sun rises for a full shift and then tackling a heavy course load is a daunting task for even the most organized students, but it has become everyday practice for Elizabeth Stayner.

A senior in the Food and Beverage Management department, Stayner manages the Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf inside the Venetian, often working double shifts and odd hours. “It’s very difficult working 40-plus hours and taking a full-time course load,” she says. “But it helps when much of what I’m doing in school ties in to what I’m doing at work.”

Food and beverage management is a perfect fit for Stayner now, but she didn’t always know what she wanted to do. She actually counts herself lucky that she was a bit undecided in her career path because it led her to UNLV. “I have lived in Las Vegas since junior high school,” she says. “I didn’t want to go out of state if I didn’t know what program I was looking for.”

So Stayner chose to stay local. Like many students, she dabbled in various subjects before her true collegiate calling found her. “I took one random culinary course one semester, and I thought, ‘I’ve found it,’” recalls Stayner. “Lucky for me, we have a great food and beverage program in the hotel college. Being close to home ended up being the best thing because I am in a terrific program.”

In addition to her demanding job and her food and beverage courses, Stayner is also working on a minor in French. She was raised in a family that valued food for its cultural aspects. In fact, it’s her love for travel and different cultures that is shaping her future plans after graduation. “My husband and I spend our free time in the Caribbean on a French-speaking island. We’ve decided that we want to move there in the next few years and open a restaurant of our own.”

Some of Stayner’s favorite courses have included Professor Christine Bergman’s experimental course on global food and nutrition, which Stayner found fascinating because it focused on the process in which food is produced. “It was such an eye-opener as to what we eat and what it takes to get our food from the fields to us,” she remarks. Professor Bergman says Stayner’s culinary future looks bright. “Elizabeth’s enthusiasm for producing and selling food and beverages that are good for humans and the environment is infectious.”

So with work, school, and plans for the future, how does she do it all? “Sheer willpower,” she laughs. “But it’s all worth it. I want a degree, I enjoy learning new things, and UNLV has been a great place for me to discover who I am and what I’m interested in.

“Balancing it all is a dance sometimes, but at the end of the day, when you put in a full workday and you’ve completed assignments, it’s a good feeling to know that it’s all working out.”
Bobbie Barnes,’93, wasn’t looking for greener grass, just new grass. And a new opportunity to make a difference in the lives of students, which is what drew her from The Mirage to her new position as director for the Bob Boughner Career Services Center at UNLV. The center opened this fall to serve the needs of students in the Harrah Hotel College, thanks to a $1.2 million gift from local gaming executive Robert Boughner.

Armed with nearly two decades in the hospitality industry, Barnes hopes to link her past experience to the future of students on campus now. “I secured my internship with help from Professor Vince Eade, so I understand the importance of placement and people helping you along the way,” she says. Barnes worked her way through school by dancing in various productions on the Strip. “I would park at the Flamingo, put on a business suit, walk over to The Mirage, do my internship, then change my clothes and do the show at night,” she recalls. “I was lucky enough that I was graduating right when Treasure Island was opening, and because of my internship experience, I was able to walk right into a position, and I was there for 14 years.”

Barnes credits the hotel college and her internship for her big break, and now wants to offer students similar opportunities. “From the student perspective, I’d like them to reach out for career services much earlier than they are now,” she says. “I recently had a student call in a panic. She’s a senior and she’s never attended a career fair, and now she’s graduating without many job prospects. I hate to see talented students with limited options,” she explains. “If students start their job search sooner and take advantage of the mentor programs and internships, they’d be a lot farther ahead than this student is now.”

Barnes’ goal is to get students started as freshmen or sophomores learning about career services and exploring opportunities during their entire time at UNLV. “I want them to consider different types of companies,” she says. “Many students want to work for large international companies, but sometimes the better job is at a smaller property or in other cities around the country. I’d like to help expose students to those opportunities early in their college careers.”

The other side of the coin is the employers themselves. Barnes realizes this is a vital constituency that needs to be served by the career center. “I always say you have to take care of employers because you want them to continually come back here after they recruit our students,” she says. “We have to provide a positive experience for them, so I’m working to find out their needs before they arrive on campus, set up classroom and faculty time, and make sure their experience is a good one.”

Barnes equates her current responsibilities to her former job in the hospitality industry; much like making sure guests have an enjoyable experience, she will ensure employers have the ultimate experience at UNLV. “Coming from the hotel industry, I understand that employer viewpoint,” she states. “They spend a lot of money to come here and they want it to be productive. They have a limited amount of time, so they really want to maximize their visit to our campus, and this new career services center will make that possible.”

If you or your company is interested in learning more about hiring UNLV students and alumni, please call 702-895-5553 or e-mail Bobbie.Barnes@unlv.edu.
Although Lynda Tache, ’97, has always enjoyed drinking and learning about wine, little did she know that this hobby would lead her to become an entrepreneur and business owner. Here’s Tache’s story of how Vegas Vino, the premium souvenir wine of Las Vegas, got its start.

As a student getting ready to graduate from Cypress College in Orange County, Calif., Tache learned of a transfer program to UNLV. She knew that Las Vegas was an “up and coming” place, and after being accepted, she grew close to her new college advisor, Kathy Bell.

“I worked at the Anaheim Hilton and knew that I was interested in the hospitality field,” says Tache. “When I decided to come to UNLV, I knew absolutely no one in town, so during my second semester (fall 1993), I joined the Wine Club.” She soon signed up for a club trip to Napa Valley, which ended up being a life-changing experience for her.

“The beauty of Napa and learning about the whole wine-making process from grape to finished product was really special to me,” recalls Tache. “It was one of the best times in my life, and I absolutely fell in love with the industry and its history.”

Not one to shy away from new experiences, Tache became the Wine Club’s vice president in 1995 and its first female president in 1996 under the leadership of Chef Jean Hertzman. “I loved working at the UNLVino events each year and seeing how wine could bring a special flavor to occasions,” says Tache. “In fact, I thought about becoming a sommelier after graduation. I worked at the MGM Grand during the time I was a student, and upon graduating, I helped open the New York-New York property as a beverage manager. After a while, I knew that it was not really where I wanted to be.”

Tache ended up going into the financial services field, which might not seem appropriate given her education, but with the business courses she had taken, she was uniquely qualified to work in investments and banking. “It’s all about building relationships, just as in the hospitality industry.” Although she had a new career, her love for the wine industry never subsided.

A few years later, at a party (a luau, to be specific), Tache met future Vegas Vino partner Tom Stephanos. “He was as enthusiastic about wine as I was but didn’t have the educational background about it,” says Tache. “We became good friends, and he mentioned starting our own label and calling it ‘Vegas Vino.’ With my hospitality background and his creativity, we made a great team.”

After completing some research, Tache and Stephanos were surprised to learn that no souvenir bottle of Las Vegas wine existed. “Tom was really excited about our prospects, but I was more of a realist, concerned with the numbers and such,” Tache remembers. “We found a third partner in Jeff Weston and worked on getting affiliated with a distributor.”

This is where Tache’s friendship and history with Southern Wine and Spirits really came into play. “I knew it had to be a quality wine and had to appeal to the mass market,” she says. “A friend gave me the name of a northern California winery that does secondary labels, and because of my mentoring partnership with Southern’s senior account executive Tony Goitia, the company agreed to help with the distribution locally.”

The Vegas Vino label made its official debut this past January, and Tache and her partners have since participated in a number of local wine tastings, including UNLVino, KLVX’s Splendor in the Glass, and the Rock ‘n Roll Wine Tasting, where the wine was paired with popular music. “It was so fun to be there as an owner!” says Tache.

One unique aspect to this company is its philanthropic angle. “We want to give back to the community, and for me, the best way to do it is through the Lili Claire Foundation, which helps children living with neurogenetic conditions. My son has high-functioning autism, and I feel very strongly about helping other children who are living with similar challenges.” To help this cause, Vegas Vino donates 25 cents of every bottle sold to the Lili Claire Foundation.

Vegas Vino is currently sold at a number of Las Vegas retailers, including Lee’s Discount Liquor, ABC stores, and several hotels along the Strip. For a full list of retailers, visit www.vegasvino.com.
With the sounds of music reverberating in the background, Joe Lucchese, '02, is just where he always wanted to be. “Touring with The Police is the dream of a lifetime,” the former UNLV student says. “I've always been interested in music and special events, and I am living the life I always dreamed of, thanks to my education.”

What makes Lucchese so special? Well, his combination of skills and educational experience helped him establish his own special events company two years ago. “I have always organized events, even in high school,” recalls Lucchese. “I was planning parties, helping with a trip to Cancun, getting everyone matching T-shirts to remember the occasion. It’s just something I really enjoy doing.”

Raised in Chicago, Lucchese’s godfather was a Las Vegas heart surgeon in the early 1990s, and he used to visit him on breaks from school. “I think that’s where I really got my interest in entertainment—my uncle would take me to shows and hotels, and I just thought it was so exciting,” says Lucchese. “When it came time to choose a college, I looked at a few different factors: Where could I learn entertainment, and how far away was the campus from Chicago?” he laughs. “I’ve always had a sense of wanderlust.

“My dad and I visited the UNLV campus during my senior year, and I sat in on Kathy Nelson’s class. It just happened to be the day she was introducing the curriculum for the college’s new entertainment program, and I was hooked,” says Lucchese. “My decision was made after I had a dream that I was attending UNLV.”

The next fall, Lucchese started classes, and he credits Nelson for her inspirational teaching. “If it weren’t for her, I probably wouldn’t be where I am today,” he says. He also formed a close bond with Patti Shock—“She was a mentor to me.”

One of his favorite and most impressionable classes was taught by the late Las Vegas entertainment reporter Joe Delaney. “It was a writing class, and Joe was really strict,” says Lucchese. “It definitely wasn’t easy, but I think a lot of English professors could have learned from it!”

In addition, the hotel and food and beverage finance classes really opened Lucchese’s eyes to the reality that the field is not all fun and events; there’s a business to think about as well.

“One of the most influential things I got to do was an internship in China. It was a big part of my life, and Ellis Norman helped coordinate it. I lived and worked at the Golden Eagle Plaza Hotel in Nanjing from June through December 2000. Two other students and I were placed in positions around the property based on our UNLV curriculum. It was an amazing experience but also easy to become frustrated due to the learning curve and cultural gap,” says Lucchese.

When he returned to UNLV, he became the entertainment director for student government, helping plan large-scale events, including the music festival RebelPalooza. “I was a student with a full class load, working full time for student government, and interning at the Fremont Street Experience,” remembers Lucchese. “I was crazy busy but loving every minute of it.”

Lucchese knew that he wanted to one day dictate his own future while making a difference in other people’s
lives. “For the first five years out of college, I worked for other people but always believed that I could start my own business.” One day, he wrote down a vision for this future company and realized that during all of his previous work experience, he had been taking subconscious notes on what worked best.

“I had been living the life but gave it all up to follow my dream,” says Lucchese. “I believe that everyone needs to spend some time ‘in the desert’ to find out what they really want.

“I built a website and came up with EventJoe as a name—it’s symbolic and easy to remember and also keeps me grounded,” says Lucchese. “I officially established the company in March 2005.

“I’m appreciative for getting the opportunity to study at UNLV. Without that experience, I would never have had the success that I have.”

Lucchese’s advice to others seeking similar paths?

“Dream as big as you can. Nothing is out of the question, and people who continually deny themselves fail. Go meet as many people in the field as you can—be polite and gracious, and really talk to the people that you want to emulate.”

Future plans for EventJoe include internship possibilities for Harrah Hotel College students in both Las Vegas and Chicago.

For more information about EventJoe, please visit www.eventjoe.com.
Partners in INNovation
Harrah’s $30 million donation—the largest corporate gift to UNLV—will help launch the INNovation Village project

By Erin O’Donnell

When the next generation of graduates from the Harrah Hotel College joins the ranks of the hospitality industry, they will have already helped shaped its future, thanks to a major investment in their own future by the Harrah’s Foundation.
The philanthropic arm of Harrah’s Entertainment announced on Sept. 10 a gift of $30 million to launch INNovation Village, the college’s proposed campus within a campus. The plans include a hotel, conference center, restaurants, and a 100,000-square-foot academic building to serve more than 4,000 students and 100 faculty members. It will be located near the Stan Fulton building at the corner of Flamingo Road and Swenson Street, within sight of the Las Vegas Strip.

Even as students learn about industry trends in its state-of-the-art labs and classrooms, INNovation Village will also provide the industry with an unprecedented place to test-drive new products and processes.

“This gift allows us to create the umbrella concept of INNovation Village, which allows for research projects and new product demonstrations to be conducted by the hospitality and gaming industry at UNLV,” says Stuart Mann, dean of the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration.

“There is nowhere in the world with live commercial facilities where this can be done. Harrah’s is going to be able to have its name associated with research and output from our projects that nobody else in the world will be able to claim.”

The bulk of the gift—$25 million—is designated for the new academic building. In addition to classrooms and offices, it will have food, beverage, and nutrition labs as well as teaching kitchens, and it will serve as a base for interdisciplinary research projects. Mann says the gift provides the college with the leverage it needs to seek matching funds from the Legislature and other private sources to complete the buildout, for a total cost of $50 million. He hopes to see ground broken on INNovation Village by late 2008 or early 2009—the sooner, the better to accommodate the school’s booming population.

“When I first arrived nine years ago, it was obvious to me that we had too many students for the facilities available to us,” Mann says. “We had about 1,800 students then, and now we have more than 2,500. We’ve just blown the walls off of the place, and it’s not possible to do the kind of job we want to do with our students with the facilities we have available.”

UNLV President David Ashley says the additional $5 million pledged for the research and programs fund is what will provide the true seeds of innovation among students, faculty, and professionals—particularly those from Harrah’s. “That is really an investment in the future, and we hope that collaboration will continue for a very long time,” he says.

Most of the $5 million will fund the Harrah’s Endowment to support our industry is one that’s getting more sophisticated every day, and we need folks who are trained to help us push that envelope farther.”

—Gary Loveman

Dean Stuart H. Mann and Gary Loveman sign documents to formally establish the partnership between UNLV and Harrah’s Foundation.
research, recruitment, internal training, and education initiatives. Gary Loveman, the chairman, CEO, and president of Harrah’s Entertainment Inc., says that will give his company a critical edge as the world of hospitality becomes increasingly complex and competitive.

“We believe the best hotel school in the world ought to be in the city with the most hotel rooms in the world, and it ought to be in the place where the most sophisticated hotel management practices are in use,” Loveman says. “Our industry is one that’s getting more sophisticated every day, and we need folks who are trained to help us push that envelope farther.”

Three factors drove the decision for Harrah’s to become the leading benefactor of INNovation Village, Loveman says. First, the company wants to contribute to the communities where it operates. Second, it was an opportunity to align the company with progress. “UNLV is on a terrific run,” he says. “Like everyone else, we like investing in a winning program, and we feel we found that here.” Third, he says, it made sense to invest in the school that carries the Harrah’s name.

Mann says the gift heralds a new era in the public-private partnership between the school and its namesake. Both entities had desired a closer working relationship, he says.

“We’ve decided to work together so that this will forever be a true partnership between the corporation and the university,” Mann says. “We have been seeking ways of doing research together and ways for Harrah’s to be able to identify the university’s finest graduates. We also can assist Harrah’s in the development of training programs for their employees and evaluate their needs in terms of training.”

Other hospitality companies have already shown interest in working with UNLV to test new products and conduct research in their field, Mann says. INNovation Village will allow the college to say yes to them and embark on public-private collaborations that have never existed before. “It’s an opportunity for them to work with a single faculty member and the university in product testing and product delivery,” Mann says. “We’re going to be in a very unique position.”

A hospitality technology company could test new property management software at the hotel and conference center, for example. Food and beverage companies could try out their latest products in the sensory evaluation labs. Or a business could test employee or guest reactions to a new process before implementing it companywide.

President Ashley says, “It’s a place where industry has a chance to experiment and use our students in that process. I can’t think of a richer environment for students to learn about the future of the industry.”

However, Mann says the hotel and conference center won’t be a lab for students, as some other hotel colleges have it. “We don’t need that because the Las Vegas Strip is our lab. We use the tagline, ‘Come study in the world’s greatest laboratory.’ If you’re a student, you’re expected to work on the Strip,” Mann says. The hotel will be a commercial enterprise, providing space for meetings and events at the university that would usually be too small for the mega convention centers on the Strip.

As hospitality and tourism continue to be among the fastest-growing segments of the global economy, Mann says the college intends to stay ahead of the industry’s curve. The Harrah Hotel College is already recognized as a leader among hundreds of similar programs, and INNovation Village will ensure that it stays out in front. “If you’re in the top-10 hospitality programs worldwide, you’re in a very elite group,” Mann says. “As one of these premier programs, we’re expected to demonstrate high quality in everything we do. We can’t stand still.”
Over the past decade, Las Vegas has become a spa Mecca as nearly every major hotel/casino resort adds a spa to its offering of amenities. However, the prevalence of luxury spas doesn’t mean all employees have formal training or education to keep pace with the growing industry and management demands.

“People in spa management often lack a business background,” says Mindy Terry, president of Creative Spa Concepts Inc., a consulting firm. “They don’t know how to talk to hotel management about accounting issues and other business applications.”

That said, the industry has grown so rapidly that there is
The Creation of LVSA

The LVSA was created in 2002 by current President Michael Garvey as a networking solution for Las Vegas spa directors and vendors. Its purpose is to inspire and encourage spa directors to share ideas, services, and industry trends in a fun and social setting, with the goal of providing the best possible spa experience for Las Vegas guests. The organization is a member of the International Spa Association (ISPA).

In addition to Terry and Rachel Knapp, MGM Grand's spa director, there were a number of UNLV alumni who were instrumental in helping form the LVSA, including Mitch Jucha, who received a dual degree in health sciences in 1997 and an MBA in 2001, and is the vice president of Creative Spa Concepts, along with Rebecca Hellman, '05 hotel administration, who is the event manager for LVSA. Also involved with LVSA's creation were Liz Lesser, '01 hotel administration, Southern Highlands spa director; Jennifer Lynn, '98 art history, Caesars Palace spa director; Michelle Wilkos, '97 fine arts, Bellagio's spa director; and Blake Feeney, '97 hotel administration, Venetian' Canyon Ranch spa director.

"Las Vegas was becoming spa-saturated back in the late 1990s," says Terry. "There was a need for an industry organization as we were seeing more regional groups forming to work with their specific regions. The LVSA board members knew firsthand how difficult it was to run an operation without qualified management. A group of us approached UNLV to collaborate on an educational program for spa personnel."

Research a Predictor of Growth

Based on a study by the ISPA, as of August 2006, there were an estimated 13,800 spa locations across the United States, with the two largest regions being the Southwest and the Northeast. The growth in consumer demand (number of visits) had decreased between 2001 and 2003 but rose again in 2005.

The latest study shows that the number of spa employees has grown at an average annual rate of 16 percent, showing even more importantly the need for more education. The report discusses what the industry sees as a human resources challenge in that the U.S. and Canadian spa industry is experiencing a significant shortage of skilled people who are also prepared to take on roles as directors and managers while also efficiently running their spas.

The general feeling, according to the report, is that the underlying cause of the spa industry's long-standing human resources problems continues to stem from the fact that the demand is huge but the education is inadequate. While some efforts, such as certification, may be helping somewhat, the suggestion has been made that the individual spas themselves should be playing a more significant role through better in-house training.

Teamwork Pays Off

The organization approached Associate Dean Jim Busser, who is a faculty member in the Recreation and Sport Management Department, at the ISPA national conference. "We sat down with Jim and told him we wanted to develop a spa management program with UNLV," says Terry. "He agreed that it was a smart idea and that if we could get together a preliminary schedule, he would try to make it available as a spring course offering." In addition to the LVSA, the course was also developed utilizing many of the LVSA members’ companies as partners.

"We really buckled down and worked on a course schedule, and 12 students enrolled. Trisha Cain moderated the course, and we had guest speakers come in and combined that with field trips. The spring semester served as a test class, and I’m happy to say that the class went over well—the students wanted to learn even more.”

This fall, the course is being offered again, and the team of LVSA members and hotel college faculty are working to revise the course based on the feedback of all involved. “Our goal is to create a specific program for UNLV to offer on a long-term basis,” says Terry. “There aren’t many universities that offer this type of education, and we are in the best city to do this.”

This spring, Blake Feeney (see page 35) hosted the students in the UNLV course to a Canyon Ranch SpaClub field trip. “I really do believe in the value of the course,” he says. “UNLV is really good at broadening students’ horizons and exposing them to real-life stuff, not just theory. This is a great time for UNLV to partner with all the industries prevalent in Las Vegas, especially the spa industry. We should have the best spa curriculum in the world, and we can because we have access to the best people to help develop the curriculum.”
Premier UNLV Celebrates 50th Anniversary

Premier UNLV is the major kickoff event to welcome students back to campus each fall. This year, UNLV alumni were invited back to help light up the “50”.

After a BBQ, live music, and activities, the event ends with a big bang (literally) when all of the students, alumni, faculty, and staff gather on the field to form the letters U N L V. An aerial photograph, complete with flashlights and fireworks choreographed to the UNLV Fight Song is taken to commemorate the event.

Established in 1996, Premier UNLV has grown into a cherished tradition at UNLV and is embraced by all students, new and returning. Each year, students have an opportunity to be in a different letter of the UNLV. Freshmen are asked to stand in the U, sophomores in the N, juniors in the L, and during their final year at UNLV, seniors are given the privilege of standing in the V.
“From an early age, I just loved to cook,” recalls Don Bell, a professor of food and beverage in the Harrah Hotel College since 1981. “My mother liked to eat, but she didn’t like to cook, so I was always preparing dishes for her.”

Bell knew that he wanted to run restaurants, so Michigan State University’s food service management program was a perfect fit for him. After graduating with his bachelor’s degree, Bell got into managing restaurants—six, to be exact. “I was the general manager of six different operations for two companies and opened three restaurants. It was busy and crazy, but I loved it!”

After doing this for a few years, he married his wife, Kathy, and decided to pursue an MBA through Michigan State’s business college. While there, he applied for a graduate assistantship, and it turned out, amazingly enough, that because of his restaurant experience, he had more familiarity with the food and beverage industry than any of the faculty members.

“The school was trying to come up with a course outline for a class similar to our 467, an actual food service practice course,” remembers Bell. He interviewed to help with this project, and the professor in charge came back saying, “All I need is Bell.” It was a six-credit course, and a few weeks into the program, the professor left for a position with Penn State, so Bell took over.

“I was a graduate student teaching an entire course, which was unheard of,” says Bell. “After I finished my MBA, I decided to go after my Ph.D. in food science, which took four more years.” During his Ph.D. education, Bell continued to teach courses as well. He was offered a job with Michigan State upon completing his Ph.D. and worked at Michigan State from the early 1970s until moving to Las Vegas in 1981.

“Two people influenced my move to UNLV, specifically Frank Borsenik (who had told then-Dean Jerry Vallen about me) and John Stefanelli,” says Bell. “Borsenik had been at Michigan State and moved to UNLV around 1976, and Stefanelli had been my grad student there.

“During the summer of 1981, I came to Las Vegas to do some bar management seminars and met up with UNLV while there. When I left for the trip, I told Kathy we weren’t moving anywhere, but when I came back, I said ‘pack your bags!’” says Bell. “Las Vegas, and UNLV in particular, looked promising, and I was anxious to get started.

“When I came to Las Vegas, there was no F&B industry. The sophistication level was not there. Nobody knew what a good restaurant was, but today, if you’re not good, you’re dead.”

Bell says this is the best market for finding competent people in the industry, which makes the Harrah Hotel College’s program that much more significant.

“My involvement with UNLV has been a very positive experience,” says Bell. “I enjoyed coordinating UNLVino when it was just beginning and held in the warehouse. Watching the evolvement and growth of the college has been fun. When Beam Hall opened in 1984, we thought it was state of the art,” chuckles Bell.

“I’m proud of the strides in diversity we’ve made—we are the program in the Pacific Rim. We have a large percentage of the university’s international students in our college.”

In Bell’s spare time, he reads to stay on top of the business in addition to visiting distilleries, wineries, and breweries. “I try to get to Kentucky every three years or so to visit the bourbon distilleries, and I also enjoy visiting the Pacific Northwest for its boutique breweries, wineries, and micro-distilleries.”

Bell has twice been named the Hotel College Teacher of the Year and was named the Claudine Williams Distinguished Professor in 1994. His wife, Kathy, also teaches in the college.
Chef Claude Lambertz isn’t sure how old he was when he first became interested in food, but he has wonderful memories of growing up in Minnesota on his mother’s and grandmother’s cooking. “My grandmother never used a recipe,” he recalls. “I was, of course, too young to remember how she made her special dishes, but I have always remembered the flavors.”

His first job in the “real world” was in a department store’s coffee shop. “I started out as a dishwasher, just like everyone else,” says Lambertz. “There was a gal who did the cooking at night, and she asked me for help. Before I really knew what was happening, the manager had promoted me to a cook position.”

Lambertz really enjoyed the fast pace of the kitchen and soon began his culinary studies at the St. Paul Technology Vocational Institute. “I lasted one semester, then went into the Marine Corps. I knew I was going to get drafted, so I might as well enlist and get only a two-year assignment rather than a four-year one.”

After his stint in boot camp, Lambertz became a mess hall cook. “Then I was transferred from San Diego to Key West. When I got there, I asked where the mess hall was and was told that I was no longer a cook, I was an MP [military police]. I did that for about a year and a half, then went back to culinary school when I got out.”

Upon graduation, Lambertz got a position at Charlie’s Café Exceptional in Minneapolis—at that time, one of the top-10 restaurants in the United States. “My time there was an incredible learning experience,” he remembers. “Just the a la carte menu alone had more than 300 items, and printed at the bottom of the menu was, ‘If you don’t see what you want, ask.’ Needless to say, we made about everything there!”

After a few years at Charlie’s, Lambertz went back to school at a local community college while working in hotels and restaurants. It was a professor’s chronic tardiness that led to his teaching career. “I had an
Linguini and clams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 1/2 dozen</td>
<td>littleneck clams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 oz. can</td>
<td>chopped clam meat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>garlic cloves, chopped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/8 cup</td>
<td>extra virgin olive oil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/8 cup</td>
<td>parsley, chopped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dash</td>
<td>pepper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dash</td>
<td>red pepper flakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/4 tsp.</td>
<td>Italian herbs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2 lb.</td>
<td>linguini, cooked al dente</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 cups</td>
<td>clam broth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sauté the clams; put to the side, keeping them warm. Sauté garlic in olive oil; do not brown. Add seasonings, parsley, and canned clams.

Mix with pasta; add clam broth. Optional butter may be added to give the clam sauce a rich feel and taste. Garnish with the sautéed clams. Serve in warm pasta bowls with toasted garlic bread.

Recipe from Chef Lambertz’s collection of favorites

English class where the professor came in later and later every day,” says Lambertz. “It was really frustrating to me, and one day, when he was late again and I decided to get class started, he came in and asked if I was interested in teaching as a career.”

“I got a job as a student teacher, which led to a job offer at a culinary school in White Bear Lake. I did that for a while before I realized that the students in the class were making more money than me!” It was then and there that Lambertz and his wife decided to leave Minnesota.

After a job in Phoenix, Ariz., and another in Little Rock, Ark., Lambertz became frustrated with the “slow” lifestyle of the area. “Everybody was way too laid back for me,” he recalls. “Nobody was in a hurry, and the people I was working with were not responsible enough for my style.”

Leaving the industry for a while proved to be a drag. “I got a job as a car salesman and after three months knew it wasn’t my calling. It was 1978 when I flew to Las Vegas, got a position as a cook at the Holiday Inn Center Strip, then eventually moved on to a chef’s position at the Riviera Hotel.” After a delivery man for a bread company told him that UNLV was looking for culinary instructors, Lambertz joined the teaching staff under then-Dean Jerry Vallen.

“I’ve been with the hotel college for 24 years now,” says Lambertz. “It’s a position I really enjoy. My favorite part is when students come back to me a few years later and thank me for being so honest about the real world.”

Lambertz has plenty to be proud of. He was recently inducted into the Hall of Fame of the American Culinary Federation (ACF) Chefs of Las Vegas. The award honors his long-term service and commitment to the university and his profession.

Chef Claude Lambertz can be reached via e-mail at claude.lambertz@unlv.edu.
The trend of living in a residence hall at UNLV has never been so popular. Much of this popularity has to do with the new and creative programs developed by the Campus Housing staff and student resident assistants that meld together residential learning with academic programs to create a holistic learning environment for students.

The fall semester kicked off with the opening of what is affectionately referred to as the “Hotel House,” a residence hall reserved for approximately 90 students enrolled in the College of Hotel Administration. As a residential learning community, “This program is co-curricular in focus in that it provides a way to blend the extracurricular experiences with their classroom experience,” says Allison Myers St. John, program coordinator for UNLV residential education.

Although many students opt not to live in residence halls by the time they are upperclassmen, that trend is changing with this new style of dormitory. Michael Amato-von Hemert just began his junior year and chose to live in the Hotel House this fall.

“The benefits of living here include having some of the same classes with the other residents, and we eat together and study together. Students and parents realize that living with people who have the same interests is great for developing friendships, a support network, and a community,” states Amato-von Hemert.

“We have found a way to make a seamless living and learning experience for our students that will ultimately benefit them in the long run. Students will also have an opportunity to interact with faculty outside of the classroom,” says Myers St. John.

The Hotel House has resident assistants who are responsible for planning educational programming, social events, study groups, and out-of-class opportunities related to their career interests. Myers St. John states that “this experience enhances their potential for success after graduation. They’re exposed to programs that focus on career development while they live in an environment that supports their academic and personal development.”

In fact, research from fall semester 2006 indicates that students who lived in this type of themed residential learning community had grade point averages (GPAs) that were higher than the overall average of all students living in residence halls. Additionally, their GPAs were higher than the overall campus GPA average, according to the Campus Housing office.

The success of themed residential programs is an example of how partnering residential education with academics can result in a win-win situation for both students and faculty. Student success both inside and outside the classroom sets a great example as they prepare to become leaders in hospitality.
A pit boss who needs to learn more about Title 31, a newly hired regulator in a state just venturing into gaming who needs training, a seasoned slot machine manager who wants a shot of marketing adrenaline for his promotions—these people and more can find answers to their education needs at the UNLV International Gaming Institute (IGI).

Long known as the premier source of information and training for the gaming industry, the institute is building on its reputation for custom programs and publications by adding a series of targeted online programs and multiple-day seminars. “It is our job to keep pace with the changing gaming industry,” says Nakia Jackson-Hale, director of programs for the institute. “To do this, we are not only including online programs in our offerings, but we are also creating learning opportunities that address the needs of a broad spectrum of gaming employees, such as our soon-to-be-released Title 31 training.”

“The Title 31 regulation outlines the way casinos are required to report cash transactions,” comments Pat Merl, director of gaming outreach for the institute. “We worked closely with gaming compliance executives and consultants to develop a comprehensive Title 31 training program. The new learning module will provide ongoing training for casino employees to ensure compliance with this regulation.” Casino employees can study specifics on the most recent version of Title 31 and learn ways to avert money laundering.

Programs at IGI have traditionally been taught by both professors and industry experts, but in the recent past, yet another dimension of knowledge and experience was added to the offerings. Gaming regulators from around the world can take courses taught by instructors from various divisions of the Nevada Gaming Control Board. Upcoming courses include Law Enforcement and Criminal Activity, Pre-Licensing and Background Investigations, and Financial Techniques for Gaming Regulators.

“These courses are ideal for regulators new to the industry,” says Isabel Pfeifer, director of gaming outreach for the institute. “Experienced regulators attend these seminars to learn about new or changing regulations.”

Other courses are available for people who already hold gaming licenses or are in the process of applying for them. “These courses are extremely valuable to help ensure that casino properties stay compliant,” continues Pfeifer. “In addition, owners of much smaller businesses with gaming licenses, such as bars, restaurants, or convenience stores, benefit greatly.”

The institute, under the executive direction of Patricia Becker, J.D., recently collaborated with the Gaming Standards Association to educate gaming executives about the Game-to-System (G2S) protocol, which allows for secure communications between gaming devices and gaming systems. In essence, slot machines can “speak” G2S to the casino’s central management systems and vice versa. This program is targeted at development and test engineers working for both game and systems manufacturers as well as operators, regulators, and independent labs. Those who are interested are encouraged to participate in the G2S Protocol Certified Engineer program in January 2008.

For information on any of the programs offered at the International Gaming Institute, visit http://igi.unlv.edu or call 702-895-2008.
The UNLV William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration honored excellence in hospitality and with it, a number of outstanding industry executives at the third annual Vallen Dinner of Distinction. The dinner event was held May 3, 2007, at The Mirage Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas.

Once again, Don Snyder, retired president of Boyd Gaming, served as master of ceremonies, with Dean Stuart Mann announcing the industry awards. The event is named after Jerome Vallen, founding dean of the college, and his wife, Flossie. It began in 2005 to honor the Vallens’ vision and contribution to establishing the nationally ranked hospitality program.

The Alumnus of the Year award was presented to Scott Sibella, president and chief operating officer of The Mirage. Sibella graduated from UNLV in 1988 and has since established a solid career in the hotel industry. He has served as president and COO of The Mirage since 2005.

Each department chose an exceptional individual to receive an Industry Executive of the Year award. Awards were presented to Peter C. Bernhard, Esq., chairman of the Nevada Gaming Commission; Guy R. Fieri, a 1990 alum of UNLV and host of Guy’s Big Bite on the Food Network, winner of The Next Food Network Star, and CEO of Johnny Garlic’s Inc. restaurants; and David Saxe, a 1993 UNLV alum and president and CEO of David Saxe Productions.

Dean Stuart Mann also presented the Dean’s Medal of Distinction to Joseph R. Kane Jr., group president of Wyndham Hotel Group and president/CEO of Days Inns Worldwide, Inc.

In addition to the awards, silent and live auctions were held during the evening, with Dean Mann serving as the auctioneer. Many auction items were donated by local and national companies, which allowed the college to raise more than $22,000. The money raised will go to an endowed professorship in Jerry Vallen’s name. The professorship will make funds available to bring distinguished industry or educational leaders with significant achievements in the hospitality industry to the hotel college.

Special thanks are extended to all of our generous donors, including Scott Sibella ’88, The Mirage staff, and DeLuca Liquor and Wine for its sponsorship of the opening reception.
For nearly two decades, Patti Shock has paved the way for many new ventures in the Harrah Hotel College. After coming to UNLV from Georgia State University in 1988 as a faculty member, Shock took over as chair for the Tourism and Convention Administration department in 1989. “I was somewhat of a pioneer of meeting and convention education,” she reflects. “I was the first academic to put it into higher education at Georgia State, but they limited how big I could make the program.” Upon arriving at UNLV, then-Dean Jerry Vallen gave Shock the green light to expand the tourism and convention programs.

She started by adding more faculty and classes and soon included special events and entertainment courses. Shock was very strategic about who she hired. “I wanted experts to develop these areas because they were cutting-edge and were innovative to academia,” she recalls.

Shock found a true passion in teaching online courses about six years ago. “It kept me up on technology, and it led me to talking to people at meetings about exploring new avenues for education. That’s where I came up with the idea of the webinar series that is now under way.”

Just because she’s not wearing the department chair hat anymore does not mean Shock will have any extra free time. She intends to continue teaching her online courses, running the student listserv she created, and producing the Las Vegas International Hospitality and Convention Summit — an academic conference for the presentation of industry research. But her main focus will be the new webinar series. “I’m excited about bringing our expertise to areas that don’t have access to education in this field that will help them improve their businesses,” she says.

Throughout her tenure at UNLV, Shock has received countless awards and recognition through speaking engagements at various conferences. She is widely recognized as an industry expert and has been featured in The New York Times, local media outlets, and numerous trade publications.

But it’s recognition from her students that means the most to Shock. “There are so many rewards in seeing your graduates out in the world being successful,” she says. “When you teach, you put so much of yourself into your students, and when you see their success, there’s a sense of pride there that says, ‘This is why I do this.'”

20 Years Down, Countless More to Go: New Challenges Ahead for Shock

Karen Sharp
Today’s hospitality industry is a fast-paced, global industry. And with the influx of international travel, we have seen an influx of additional “travelers” coming to our properties: the dreaded “bed bug,” aka Cimex lectularis.

Bed bugs were virtually eradicated following World War II, largely due to the use of heavy-duty pesticides, including DDT. Over the next 50 years, many pesticides were banned, such as DDT, which was subsequently linked to birth defects and other health issues, and people began using more environmentally friendly pest-control methods. In the past five years, there has been a massive resurgence of bed bug infestations in the United States. Some experts believe that the increase in international travel is partially to blame for the infiltration of bed bugs into U.S. hotels, as bed bugs are commonly problematic in other areas of the world. Other experts also blame the use of more environmentally friendly pest-control substances as failing to “kill” the bugs once they are introduced into a U.S. hotel, noting that we use more surface substances, which are typically effective only for short durations of time and are subject to being wiped away during room cleaning.

This resurgence has raised significant legal, ethical, and financial concerns for the hospitality industry. Elimination of bed bug infestations is very difficult, proving costly in terms of extermination and removing rooms from rental status. Also, it is difficult to find bed bugs prior to a full-blown infestation, when they are the most difficult (and costly) to address. A common misconception is that bed bugs are found only in “cheaper” hotels or “dirty” facilities. This is simply untrue. Bed bugs are found in every price-point facility in the United States. So what is a hotelier to do? First, it helps to understand some things about bed bugs.

Identify Your Bedmate

Bed bugs vary from a translucent color when freshly hatched to a reddish-brown color as adults. The oval-shaped insects start as small as 1 millimeter in size and can grow up to 5/8 of an inch in length. Bed bugs are wingless and do not fly or jump. They can, however, travel up to 20 feet in radius in order to search for food sources. The nocturnal insects survive by sucking the blood of host animals, most commonly (and preferably) humans. A female bed bug can lay as many as 500 eggs in her lifetime. Bed bugs also have a distinctive odor, which has been described as smelling like over-ripe raspberries.

Bed bugs have acquired their name because they burrow into small areas and are primarily found in mattresses and bed linens. However, they are also commonly found in carpets, behind peeling paint or headboards, in box springs, in electrical outlets, behind decorative molding, in picture frames, in personal items, etc. Since bed bugs are so small, they can easily hide in deep and narrow crevices, avoiding detection upon a visual inspection. What is troublesome (and difficult in eradicating the insects from your property) is that an adult bed bug can live for more than a year without feeding. They also can avoid chemical deposits (pesticides) in their journey for a food source, including surface insecticides. Their ability to burrow into small areas makes it easy for bed bugs to travel between units that have adjacent walls, which makes infestations within a hotel widespread, as they easily travel from one room to another.

What if Your Bedmate Bites?

Bed bugs are known to carry 28 different types of human pathogens in their bodies, including Hepatitis B and HIV. In fact, Hepatitis B has been detected in a bed bug up to six weeks after feeding on infected blood. HIV has been found in bed bugs up to an hour after feeding on infected blood. Despite these findings, there are no reported cases of bed bugs transmitting any pathogens to a human.

That does not mean they are harmless. When a bed bug feeds, it injects its saliva into the host animal, usually
a person. Depending upon the state of a person's immune system, people experience a wide range of reactions to a bite. Some people have no noticeable reaction to the bite, never being aware that they were bitten. Others will suffer a reddening of the bite area, perhaps with some minor swelling and inflammation. In more severe cases, the bite site may become a large, red, severely inflamed welt that is itchy and painful, sometimes for weeks or months following being bitten.

**Is it Time for a New Bed?**

So, how do you know if you have a bed bug problem? There are no reliable monitoring or early-detection devices on the market. Therefore, the first line of defense for a hotel is its guest room attendants. It is imperative that a hotel train the guest room attendants to look for the telltale signs, which include rust-colored stains on the sheets and/or box springs, tiny black spots (excrement) approximately the size of poppy seeds, and/or translucent light-brown skins from a live infestation.

It should be noted that many times a property's first indication of a problem is when a guest reports being bitten. It should further be noted that some people will not experience a reaction to the bites for several days after having been bitten. So if a former guest calls to report a problem several days after his or her stay, that call should
not be dismissed as “fraudulent” or “false.” It is very possible that the bites are related to your facility, even though the person did not notice them for two or three days after the trip.

If your notification of a potential problem has occurred by a guest complaint (claiming he or she was bitten; saw bugs in the room; or found black/brown marks on the bed, sheet, or mattress), there are some steps you must take in response. Your response may be determined, in part, by the circumstances that have been reported and the economic situation of your facility.

First, remove the guest from the room. If possible, have the guest shower before leaving the room. Provide the guest with a clean set of clothes (not from the guest’s luggage). Do not allow the guest to take his or her luggage or clothing. If you do so, you may infest the new room the guest is moving into. You should have all of the guest’s clothes dry-cleaned and/or laundered (at least 20 minutes on high-heat cycle) and returned to the guest wrapped in plastic. Ideally, you should also destroy the guest’s luggage and replace it with new luggage. If you fail to take such steps, the guest’s personal items are likely to be reinfected and potentially spread the bed bugs within your hotel.

Contact an exterminator immediately, ensuring the exterminator has dealt with bed bug issues previously and has the proper licensing (depending upon the state). If the exterminator claims it can eradicate the infestation in one dosage, that exterminator is probably not competent to handle the situation. Bed bugs are resilient, and infestations typically require repeated treatments. Do not plan to handle the situation. Bed bugs are resilient, and infestations of adjoining rooms and other hotels. If a hotelier does not take bed bug claims seriously, it may open the hotel up to several different theories of liability. Some theories upon which guests have successfully sued hotels include fraudulent concealment (you knew you had a problem and did not do anything to correct it), severe emotional distress (a guest claims you caused emotional harm to him or her by your actions/inactions), negligence (you had a duty to protect the guest and you failed that duty, causing injury to the guest), gross negligence (you really ignored your obligations to the guest), assault and battery (you intentionally subjected the guest to harm because you knew the room was infected and put the guest in there anyway), and breach of contract (you violated the contractual obligations to provide the guest with a safe place to sleep).

Costs from litigation are not the only way a hotel can be affected, as a facility can be affected through goodwill, publicity, and word of mouth. It is true that there have been cases where hotels knew they had a problem but placed guests in rooms that were previously taken off market simply to make a profit. But most cases result from a failure to understand how pervasive the problem can become. Through education, patience, and perseverance, a hotelier can ethically implement cost-efficient and effective solutions to safeguard the health of their guests and their bottom line.

The transient nature of our industry makes the control of bed bug infestations very difficult. The transient nature of our industry makes the control of bed bug infestations very difficult. The constant flow of people and their belongings facilitates the reinfection of adjoining rooms and other hotels. If a hotelier does not take bed bug claims seriously, it may open the hotel up to several different theories of liability. Some theories upon which guests have successfully sued hotels include fraudulent concealment (you knew you had a problem and did not do anything to correct it), severe emotional distress (a guest claims you caused emotional harm to him or her by your actions/inactions), negligence (you had a duty to protect the guest and you failed that duty, causing injury to the guest), gross negligence (you really ignored your obligations to the guest), assault and battery (you intentionally subjected the guest to harm because you knew the room was infected and put the guest in there anyway), and breach of contract (you violated the contractual obligations to provide the guest with a safe place to sleep).

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Sleeping Solo

There are different methods of extermination, including gas fumigation, heating chambers, and topical pesticides. Some exterminators will tell you that it is unnecessary to destroy the mattresses. Be cautious in that regard. If furniture has been subjected to a heating chamber that reached a temperature of 160 degrees Fahrenheit for an extended period of time (several hours), then you may be safe in retaining the furniture. Otherwise, the bedding, mattresses, sheets, drapes, and (potentially) other furniture need to be destroyed. Do not throw those items in the trash for someone dumpster diving to “find” later; you must destroy them. If there is not an active infestation in the adjacent rooms, then the items in those rooms can be dry-cleaned. If an active infestation is in progress, then the same measures must be taken as outlined here.

The transient nature of our industry makes the control of bed bug infestations very difficult. The constant flow of people and their belongings facilitates the reinfection of adjoining rooms and other hotels. If a hotelier does not take bed bug claims seriously, it may open the hotel up to several different theories of liability. Some theories upon which guests have successfully sued hotels include fraudulent concealment (you knew you had a problem and did not do anything to correct it), severe emotional distress (a guest claims you caused emotional harm to him or her by your actions/inactions), negligence (you had a duty to protect the guest and you failed that duty, causing injury to the guest), gross negligence (you really ignored your obligations to the guest), assault and battery (you intentionally subjected the guest to harm because you knew the room was infected and put the guest in there anyway), and breach of contract (you violated the contractual obligations to provide the guest with a safe place to sleep).

Costs from litigation are not the only way a hotel can be affected, as a facility can be affected through goodwill, publicity, and word of mouth. It is true that there have been cases where hotels knew they had a problem but placed guests in rooms that were previously taken off market simply to make a profit. But most cases result from a failure to understand how pervasive the problem can become. Through education, patience, and perseverance, a hotelier can ethically implement cost-efficient and effective solutions to safeguard the health of their guests and their bottom line.
Career Power at Your Fingertips

UNLV Is Celebrating 50 Years

UNLV’s 50th birthday bash is under way and we want you to be part of the fun. Mark your calendar, and join us for these exciting events.

Capitol Steps in Concert
The political satire group performing its special brand of comedy.

January 17, 2008

Itzhak Perlman Anniversary Concert
An evening of music and celebration featuring the violin virtuoso conducting a special UNLV orchestra.

January 26, 2008

“Mark Twain Tonight”
Underwritten by Wynn Resorts
Hal Holbrook performing his award-winning portrayal of Mark Twain.

May 3, 2008

Picnic Pops Concert
An outdoor concert featuring Broadway and recording star Linda Eder and the Las Vegas Philharmonic.

June 7, 2008

UNLV’s 50th Anniversary is sponsored by:

Visit http://celebrating50.unlv.edu for more information on anniversary events.
It gives me great pleasure to share with you the College of Hotel Administration’s Honor Roll of Giving for fiscal year 2006-2007. The Honor Roll recognizes alumni and friends who make it possible for students to receive a premier hospitality education at UNLV.

Gifts from alumni and friends play a significant role in helping the college maintain the highest standards of excellence so that we can respond to shifting academic priorities. Annual donors are the foundation of the Harrah Hotel College’s development program.

Thanks to the generosity of 175 alumni and friends over the past fiscal year, we received $1,490,450 in gifts and an additional $1,963,368 in pledges. With this outstanding support, the college can continue to satisfy the growing demand for scholarships, student professional development, and faculty enrichment programs, to name just a few.

Please know how much your contributions are valued. On behalf of the entire College of Hotel Administration community, we recognize and are grateful for your past, current, and future generosity. It is with gratitude and pleasure that we acknowledge the Harrah Hotel College’s benefactors in this issue of the Premier magazine.

Thank you,

Judy A. Nagai
Director, Alumni & College Relations
William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration

The Dean’s Associates Annual Giving Program

The Dean’s Associates annual giving program membership begins at the $1,000 level. Annual giving to the Dean’s Associates program has funded student professional development, which allows students to represent UNLV at national and international academic meetings, conferences, and industry events.

The growth of the college and the ever-changing hospitality industry require us to adapt the traditional values of a hospitality education to the needs of the 21st century, which are essential to the economic and social development of Nevada and around the world. Due to the great need for diverse industry leaders, we have implemented a number of recruitment programs to recruit and retain students from underrepresented backgrounds, who will graduate with a superior hospitality degree. Our students are the future of the industry, and they are truly an important investment.

As our campus grows, so does our reliance on private funding from alumni, friends, and other community leaders. We invite you to continue supporting our students and programs. Your support is vital to the Harrah Hotel College.
HONOR ROLL LIST
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A FINAL NOTE
We strive to ensure accuracy in this listing of benefactors who supported the Harrah Hotel College during July 1, 2006 – June 30, 2007. If there is an error in the way we listed your gift or if you wish to make a change in your name as shown, please accept our apology and bring it to our attention at 702-895-3161, press option 8, or e-mail Eva.Perez@unlv.edu.

$1,000 - $4,999
Michael Gaughan
Andrea and Richard Goeglein
Kaoru and Masaaki '76 Hirayama
James '92 and Christine '90 Kiely
Doreen and Stuart Mann
Stephen Michaelides
Patricia '90 and Thomas '97, '03 Peacock
Kathy and Fayyaz '92, '95 Raja
Mary and Felix Rappaport
Gail Sammons '87
Christopher Silva
Susan '72, '76 and Dennis Smith
Florence and Jerome Vallen
Carolyn and Roger '69 Wagner
Fresh & Ready Foods of Nevada
International Game Service
Kerzner International Bahamas Ltd.
Leader's Edge Inc.
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Nevada Chapter Inc.
Venetian Resort-Hotel-Casino

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Sedona Rouge Hotel & Spa
Sheraton Universal Hotel
Silverstone Golf Club
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STEAK Restaurant
Sunterra Resorts
TAB Construction Inc.
Taymoor
31
Congratulations

Student Michael Amato-von Hemert received the seventh annual $5,000 AAA Five Diamond Scholarship for the 2007–2008 academic year. The scholarship, created in 2000 by AAA, the Florida-based organization, is part of the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Foundation (AH&LEF) Annual Scholarship Grant Program to honor outstanding hospitality students.

“AAA Five Diamond properties exhibit extraordinary characteristics and are driven by impeccable standards—through his dedication and achievements so far, Mr. Amato-von Hemert has shown that he has the potential to excel within the hospitality arena, and AAA is proud to be a sponsor of his efforts,” says Michael Petrone, director, AAA Tourism Information Development.

Amato-von Hemert, a gaming management major, currently has a cumulative grade point average of 3.86. He has aspirations of working in management at a lodging and gaming facility. A resident of Littleton, Colo., Amato-von Hemert hopes to study in Spain to increase his knowledge of both the European culture and the Spanish language.

Professor Christine Bergman received a 2007 Research Development Award for her proposal, “Rice-Bran-Derived Antioxidant Fractions.” Bergman will study the efficacy of using rice-bran-derived fractions to retard lipid oxidation in foods.

Professor Bo Bernhard, ‘99 MA, ’02 Ph.D., received $47K+ in funding over two years for his research on “Toward an Understanding of Problem Gambling and Other Behavioral Health Issues Among Rural and Urban Multiracial/Multithnic Populations.” This grant is a President’s Research Award for spring 2007.

The College of Hotel Administration is proud to announce the 2006-2007 winners of this year’s Sam and Mary Boyd Distinguished Teaching Award. The award recognizes outstanding performance by faculty in their teaching responsibilities.

In July, Nick Rodgers, a sophomore in the Professional Golf Management program, took first place in the 90th Annual Portland City Championship golf tournament. The two-day championship event was held at Eastmoreland Golf Course in Portland, Ore., ranked by Golf Digest as among the top public courses in the country to play. Rodgers posted 71 and 74, for a total of 145. Rodgers’ name will be engraved on the trophy that stays permanently at the golf course, and on another that he can keep for himself. PGM director Chris Cain says this is a wonderful example of how a student can be successful in both academic and athletic pursuits.

In addition, Erdem and Seonghee Cho, ’04 Ph.D., have been awarded a research grant in the amount of $598,914 by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Professor Audrey McCool is also included in the research team. The project is entitled “Improving Food Safety Through Systematic Need-Based Training: A Focus on the Hispanic Workforce in Restaurants,” and its goal is to develop a training mechanism that will enhance Hispanic food service employees’ attitudes toward the importance of food safety as well as their knowledge of food safety practices.

Andy Feinstein, ’71, ’95 MS, was appointed senior advisor to UNLV President David B. Ashley. Feinstein serves on the president’s cabinet and provides counsel on faculty perspectives related to key issues.

The James Beard Foundation recently announced that student Louis Fiorentino received the restaurant Guy Savoy Scholarship in the amount of $11,000. Fiorentino will graduate in December 2007 with a degree in culinary arts management.

Christian Hardigree, ’93, was recently appointed associate dean for strategic initiatives. In this role, she serves as a member of the college’s Executive Committee, assisting Dean Mann with improving efforts in achieving strategic goals. In April, she spoke at the UNLV Security Forum on the topic of mitigating security risks and threats to Southern Nevada. Her recent publications include: Werner, W.B, Feinstein, A.H. & Hardigree, C.E. (2007). Overtime exemptions: the impact of the DOL’s new regulations on the quick-service restaurant industry. Electronic Journal of Hospitality Legal, Safety and Security Research.

Congratulations go out to Chef Claude Lambertz. He was inducted into the Hall of Fame of the ACF Chefs of Las Vegas at the organization’s Chef of the Year dinner on Sunday, June 10, at Green Valley Ranch Station. This award honors his long-term service and commitment to the organization. It is not given out every year, and Chef Claude joins only 16 other local chefs in achieving this prestigious designation.

Congratulations to Food & Beverage Department Chairperson Pat Moreo, ’69, ’83 Ed.D., on his selection as secretary for I-CHRIE for the coming year.

Cheri A. Young, Cynthia P. Carruthers, and Robert L. Ackerman of UNLV and Rachael S. Shinnar, ’98 M.S., ’04 Ph.D., of Appalachian State University co-authored an article published recently in the Journal of Experiential Education, a peer-reviewed, scholarly journal. The article is titled, “Implementing and Sustaining Service-Learning at the Institutional Level.” Deborah Young, ’98 MPA, from the UNLV Foundation, contributed to the research editing of the article. For more information, please visit: http://www.aae.org/skin1/pages/US/journal.htm.
Congratulations

WELCOME, NEW FACULTY AND STAFF

Bobbie Barnes serves as the director of career services in the Bob Boughner Career Services Center. She assists students with the transition from academics to the work force. Barnes previously served as the director of training and diversity initiatives for The Mirage Hotel & Casino, where she oversaw the creation and implementation of training programs, including management development, new hire orientation, customer service training, and diversity initiatives. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Hotel Administration and a Master of Education from UNLV.

Chuck Berg is the Gaming Standards Association (GSA) affiliate professor of gaming technology, where he is developing a gaming standards training and certification and will soon develop an undergraduate degree program in gaming technology for the College of Engineering’s School of Informatics. Berg joined UNLV after spending 22 years in Silicon Valley working for a number of high-technology companies, including Silicon Gaming (inventors of the high-tech video slot machine), where he was the vice president for engineering and information technology. He holds a bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering from the University of Missouri—Rolla, and a master’s degree in electrical engineering from the University of Delaware.

Gael Hancock is the college’s graduate program manager, responsible for the online Master of Hospitality Administration program. She is also an adjunct professor and is an experienced marketing professional and worked as a freelance writer. Hancock is a thesis away from completing her M.S. degree in hotel administration at UNLV.

Jennifer Livengood is an assistant professor in the Recreation and Sport Management Department. She comes to UNLV after serving as an assistant professor at Chicago State University. She received her B.A., Magna Cum Laude, from Southern Illinois University, and MSW and Ph.D. from the University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign. She is teaching courses in Program Development in Recreation and Program Evaluation in Recreation and Leisure this semester.

Teona Martin joins the Tourism and Convention Department as an administrative assistant III after working for the state of Nevada Childcare and Development Program. Martin is currently pursuing a business management degree at the College of Southern Nevada.

Daniel McLean serves as the new chairperson for the Recreation and Sport Management Department. He comes to UNLV after serving as department chair at Indiana State University. He received his B.S. from Sacramento State, M.A. from Brigham Young University, and Ph.D. from Kansas State University.

Pat Merl is the International Gaming Institute’s director of gaming outreach to develop online marketing and in-class certification and training programs for gaming industry professionals at all levels. Merl was most recently the executive assistant to the executive vice president of hotel sales & marketing at Wynn Las Vegas. She is also pursuing a degree in post-secondary work force education at UNLV.

Eva Perez joins the Alumni Relations and External Relations programs as an administrative assistant II. She recently moved to Las Vegas after serving as an administrative assistant in human resources. She is planning to continue her education at UNLV upon completing her associate’s degree from Sacramento City College.

Isabel Pfeifer is the director of gaming outreach with the International Gaming Institute and is responsible for coordinating educational and training programs for the gaming industry. Pfeifer previously served as a special agent at the Gaming Control Board. Her education includes a B.S. in business administration from Towson State University and MBA from George Washington University.

Barbara Richards joins the Hotel Management Department as an administrative assistant III after working as a compensation manager for The Mirage Hotel and Casino. She received her B.A. in criminal justice from UNLV in 2006.

Joseph Tien is the Gaming Standards Association (GSA) affiliate professor of gaming technology, providing instruction on GSA standard protocols. He most recently worked at Ball Technologies as the senior embedded engineer. He holds a B.S. in engineering from California Polytechnic University, Pomona, and an MBA from the University of Phoenix.

Frank Vitucci is the director of sales and marketing for the UNLV Stan Fulton Building, and he manages the catering, meetings, and events for the facility. Vitucci recently received his B.S. degree in hotel management after completing his internship as the sales and events coordinator for the UNLV Stan Fulton Building.
1980s

Mustafa Adamu, ’82, is the owner and CEO of Hotel de France, an 18-room hotel located in Kano, Nigeria. Adamu, along with his wife and two children, lives in Kano, Nigeria. He invites friends to contact him at musty1adamu@yahoo.com.

Dave Matthews, ’83, has lived in Las Vegas, Nev., since 1980 and is co-owner of Century 21 Act 1 Realty, Inc. Matthews specializes in residential and commercial real estate with an emphasis on corporate relocation. He is a provider of extraordinary service and results-oriented business practices and can be reached at primeproperty4u@aol.com or 702-496-7016.

Ron Schratter, ’83, has worked in the industry for more than 15 years, mostly with Fairmont and Hyatt Hotels. His last position was as the general manager for a premier country club, hosting numerous LPGA events. For the past 10 years, Schratter has been the president of Elite Hospitality Group, an executive-recruiting firm specializing in luxury hotels, resorts & casinos. He resides in Atlanta, Ga., with his wife and two daughters. Schratter can be reached at EHGroup@aol.com.

1990s

Loralee Boughton, ’91 MS, resides in Las Vegas, Nev., and has worked with USA Hosts - Las Vegas since 1993, both full and part time. USA Hosts is a full-service nationwide destination management company, and more information can be found at www.usahosts.com. Feel free to contact her at loraleeb@usahosts.co.uk.

Margaret Erstad, ’96 MS, has worked in London since graduating from UNLV and still resides there today. She first worked for the Forte Hotel Group, and in 2001 she joined Hand Picked Hotels as deputy operations manager in Kent, United Kingdom. Hand Picked Hotels is a collection of 14 architecturally stunning country house hotels located across the United Kingdom with approximately 800 employees. In 2004, Hand Picked was voted Hotel Group of the Year by the Automobile Association in the United Kingdom. She invites her former faculty and classmates to contact her at merstad@handpicked.co.uk.

Chris Roe, ’96, resides in Las Vegas, Nev., with his wife, Susan, and daughter, Taylor. He has accepted the position of customer service manager for Micros–Systems Inc. Southwest Division, located in Las Vegas. Micros is the largest hospitality technology firm for Point of Sale in the world. Roe previously served as implementation manager for the company.

JungHoon Lee, ’97 MS, currently works as the director of human resources for SuniFood Co., a leading restaurant operation company that owns and operates seven Tony Roma’s, seven Italian wine bistro named Mad for Garlic, 30 pasta restaurants named Spaghettia, and four Japanese steak restaurants named Pepper Lunch in Korea. He invites alumni interested in working for this company to contact him at tonyromas7@naver.com.

Thomas Castleberry, ’98, resides in Las Vegas, Nev., with his wife, Leslie, and children, Carter and Claire. He recently accepted the position of general manager for Micros–Systems Inc., Southwest Division, located in Las Vegas, Nev. Micros is the largest hospitality technology firm for Point of Sale in the world. Castleberry previously served as customer service manager.

Ed Conway, ’88, currently lives in Cornwell, Ariz. and is the general manager for Sedona Rouge Hotel in Sedona, Ariz., The hotel was awarded AAA Four Diamonds last year, and its restaurant, Reds, has received a Wine Spectator Award. The construction of Sedona Rouge began in 2004, and September marked the third anniversary with a special event featuring Broadway star Teri Bibb, who has performed in Phantom of the Opera in New York City.

Ruben Curiel, ’99, recently received his master’s degree in hospitality administration from Ecole Hoteliere de Lausanne in Switzerland. Upon graduation from UNLV, he worked as a G.M. in Hotel Coral & Marina, a 147-suite hotel with a Marina in Ensenada, Mexico. Curiel is married with a two-year-old daughter and one more on the way. Friends and classmates can reach him at curiel@hotelcoral.com.

Marni Moorhead, ’99, joined Sunriver Resort, in the heart of central Oregon, as a sales manager in April of 2006. Sunriver Resort, AAA Four-Diamond Award winning property, is the premier golf, meeting, and vacation destination in the Northwest. Moorhead moved to Sunriver after six wonderful years of working in San Francisco as a catering manager. She invites friends to contact her at mmoorhead@sunriver-resort.com.

Michael Peltyn, ’98 MS, is vice president of staffing for MGM MIRAGE CityCenter. In this role, he will oversee the recruitment and selection process for the 12,000 employees expected to be hired at the project. CityCenter is a 76-acre mixed-use project that opens in November 2009.

Beth (Appelbaum) Weinstein, ’98 MS, is the director of Summit Operations for the Academy of Achievement, based in Washington, D.C. The Academy of Achievement is a nonprofit organization that annually hosts an international summit. The summit brings together world leaders of exceptional accomplishment to share their wisdom and experience with accomplished graduate students from around the world. You can see highlights from past summits at www.achievement.org. Weinstein previously worked in convention services at Bellagio in Las Vegas. She now works remotely from home in Phoenix, Ariz., when not traveling for an event. She invites friends to reach her at beth.weinstein@gmail.com.
**Alumni Updates**

**Todd Weinstein, ’99 MS,** lives in Phoenix, Ariz., and is a manager of Learning and Organizational Development at PetSmart’s corporate headquarters, based in Phoenix. PetSmart is the largest specialty pet retailer, operating almost 1,000 stores in the United States and Canada. After graduating from UNLV, Todd worked in human resources on the opening team for Paris Las Vegas, as well as at its sister property, Bally’s. He then joined Expedia.com to work in human resources and learning and development at its field office in Las Vegas, and later at its corporate headquarters in Bellevue, Wash. Feel free to contact him at todd.weinstein@gmail.com.

**Marco Benvenuti, ’02,** recently joined Wynn Las Vegas as a director of IT for the hospitality account and resides in Las Vegas, Nev. In this position, he is in charge of system architecture, configuration, design, and development for all hotel systems. Benvenuti’s “special” project for the next two years will be to contribute to a smooth opening of the new property, Encore, at Wynn Las Vegas. He invites friends to reach him at marco.benvenuti@gmail.com.

**Dan Cormanys, ’04 MS,** returned to UNLV this fall semester to commence work on his doctorate in hotel administration, with an emphasis on convention/trade show study. Cormanys most recently worked at Loews/Hyatt Lake Las Vegas after work in preparation and opening of Wynn Las Vegas. He invites friends to reach him at dan.cormanys@yahoo.com.

**Jennifer (Eskin) Smith, ’04 MS,** has joined the University of California, Irvine, as a development officer for the School of Humanities and lives in Irvine, Calif. For the last four years, Smith worked in marketing and catering sales at the Thomas & Mack Center on the campus of UNLV. During her time there, she proudly served as a member of the UNLV Harrah Hotel College Alumni Board. Smith earned her undergraduate degree from UCLA. She can be reached at jennifer.smith@uci.edu.

**Blake Feeney, ’97,** is the spa director of the Canyon Ranch SpaClub at the Venetian Resort–Hotel–Casino. He has been extremely involved in both the LVSA and the spa operations and management course (see spa story, page 16). As someone who didn’t envision himself working in the spa industry, Feeney was surprised to learn how much he enjoyed it. “As a student, I completed an 800-hour internship at the MGM Grand Events Arena, and the spa just happened to fall under the ‘special events’ category back then,” remembers Feeney. “When my internship was over, the spa director offered me a job as a spa host, and I ended up being there from 1993 until 1998.”

When that director transferred to the Venetian to open Canyon Ranch, Feeney followed. “My first job there was as massage administrator,” says Feeney. “That meant I was the business guy for the spa department, managing budgets, accounting, and financial reports. I found that my UNLV degree really helped in that position—I had taken a lot of accounting and finance classes and put them to use with utilization, scheduling, etc.”

“There are so many issues today, and since spas cater to a different audience from some other facets of Las Vegas tourism, we have to be really careful,” he says. “We deal with all guest recovery situations—the spa industry is unique, and customers should be given the utmost in privacy and tactfulness. We have to be careful how we treat them so no wrong messages are conveyed.”

He believes that many of the younger managers training and working today are not receiving live-case scenarios that would help a lot in understanding spa clientele. “In the past, the spa was not as much of a priority to the overall resort, and there wasn’t a lot of thought put into it or its employees,” says Feeney. “Having more education and real-life examples would help with the full spectrum of spa specialization.”

**Nolan Halterman, ’06,** lives in Bend, Ore., where he works at Pronghorn, a high-end private golf club in the beautiful Pacific Northwest. After graduating from UNLV, Halterman worked at a private golf club in Park City, Utah.
Edward G. Polivka, 75, coordinator of International Relations for the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration, died unexpectedly Wednesday, May 30, of heart failure while at work at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. For more than a quarter of a century, Polivka was a pioneer in fostering education in the meetings and convention industry. Polivka served as senior vice president of education for the Professional Convention Management Association from 1986 to 1997.

Among his many accomplishments were developing meeting management curriculum used by colleges and universities throughout the United States; creating student chapters to provide education and networking opportunities for undergraduates; editing four books on meeting management; designing numerous hotel sales, convention services, and convention and visitor bureau training programs; and developing six self-study courses used by more than 4,000 students.

His faculty appointments include the University of Arkansas, Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Polivka was also a recipient of the prestigious “Wizard Award for Educational Originality” presented by the Walt Disney Corporation.

For the last decade, Polivka served the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, in multiple capacities as a professor, director of the Executive Masters Program, director of the Hospitality Research and Development Center, director of Hospitality Outreach Services, and finally as director of International Relations. His tireless efforts have advanced the reputation of the college and university throughout the world.

Throughout his almost-30-year career in promoting and developing the hospitality industry, Polivka had a dramatic impact on the lives of many. His passing is a great loss, but he will always remain in the hearts of those who knew him. Polivka will always be remembered for his wit and wisdom, which endeared him to many.

Polivka is survived by his wife, Kaye, and his four children, Susan, Kathryn, Steven, and David. In respect for Polivka’s wishes, no funeral services were conducted. A memorial celebration of Polivka’s life will be planned.

Gifts in tribute to Polivka can be sent to the Edward G. Polivka Memorial Tribute Fund, which will benefit students majoring in meeting and events management at UNLV. Checks should be made to the UNLV Foundation and sent in care of Harrah Hotel College Dean’s Office, UNLV, Box 456013, 4505 S. Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, NV 89154-6013. Gifts can also be made online at http://foundation.unlv.edu/give.html. Select the link for the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration. Under “designation,” please select “Hotel Administration Scholarships.” Polivka’s name can be entered at the bottom of the screen under “Tribute Information.”
Hold a cocktail party on campus? How about a wedding reception or a sports bash? It can be done, as can a number of different types of events, thanks to the banquet and meeting room space available at the Stan Fulton Building. With more than 6,000 square feet of space as well as a professional catering staff, the Stan Fulton Building can accommodate small meetings and conferences as well as receptions for up to 300 people and full-service dinners for 200 people. The Stan Fulton Building is also home to a hip yet comfortable lounge-style bar.

Conveniently located at the edge of campus on the corner of Flamingo Road and Swenson, the Stan Fulton Building is an ideal setting for special events and meetings. Executive Chef John Gremo and his talented culinary team will deliver an unforgettable dining experience, whether your group is in need of a continental breakfast, a working lunch, or an upscale, seated dinner. A variety of menu options are available and Chef Gremo can also personalize a custom menu to enhance the overall goal of your event.

The next time you’re looking for the perfect space in which to host your special event, look no farther than the experts at the Harrah Hotel College. With the range of services and room styles available, there is certain to be one that fits your needs perfectly!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT FRANK VITUCCI AT (702) 895-3903 OR SFBEVENTS@UNLV.EDU.
UNLV is celebrating 50 years. Our community support has changed significantly in that time. It began with students traveling to donors’ homes well into the night to raise funds for campus land. It evolved further with the creation of a formal fundraising program in 1981. And it continues today with a comprehensive campaign that has generated more than $375 million in private support — including a $30 million gift from the Harrah’s Foundation, the single largest corporate donation to higher education in Nevada history. These gifts help fund innovative opportunities for students and faculty and cutting-edge research that will power our next half-century of progress.

Visit http://celebrating50.unlv.edu for more information on anniversary events.