Inside UNLV

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The campus prepares for the April 27 inauguration of President David B. Ashley.

Departing Deans
Three deans who will step down June 30 look back on their years on campus.

From Surf to the Strip
Smatresk Leaves Hawaii for UNLV Post

By Cale Weeks | Marketing & PR

When Inside UNLV called Neal Smatresk for this interview, the university’s next executive vice president and provost held all his calls. Well, except for the one from his daughter asking for a ride home. She’s an international business major at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, where Smatresk is currently serving as vice chancellor for academic affairs. He admits that he’s going to miss being on the same campus as her when he takes his new position here on June 1. But he’s eager to bring his experience as a faculty member, as an administrator, and as the dad of a college student to his new job.

On being a Scientist: I was a hopeless and utterly unguided science nerd — the kind that built my own hovercraft and entered every science fair. I went to Gettysburg College, a small liberal arts school, and discovered a number of new creative outlets. I sang in the choir, acted in plays, and took up photography, which I still do. Eventually I realized that research scientists got to combine both their analytical and creative-thinking skills. I went off to grad school and never really looked back.

Smatresk says he and his wife both love cooking, but he dodged the question on who reigns in their kitchen as Iron Chef (a favorite TV show). He’s also, “a hopeless putterer” who spent 18 months renovating his historic home in Hawaii.

There are also many similarities. Hawaiians call Las Vegas the ninth state.
A Catalyst for Constructive Change

As I’ve interacted with faculty and staff over the last several months, it seemed that many people expected me to come in and quickly announce “The Big Initiative” — the thing that would change your world. That’s just not my style; I believe my role is to be a catalyst for constructive change. Change that is enduring needs to build on the existing foundations and strengths of the institution.

While the ambitions for this university are dramatic, they do not necessitate dramatic disruptions every year. I believe it is important for new leaders to first take time to understand their institutions, the issues they are facing, and the things that work best — the faculty and staff. At the end of the day, I must make some hard choices to move UNLV forward, but I need your input to make wise decisions.

I began learning about UNLV by visiting campus departments and by regularly meeting with Faculty Senate leaders. Now, with the executive leadership team taking shape, the next step will be to engage the campus broadly through the strategic planning process. That process will define the major initiatives and the steps, large and small, to get us to our goals.

Progress Report: Infrastructure and Funding

Many faculty and staff members shared their concerns with me during recent departmental visits. In future conversations, I’ll more fully address some issues — including our commitment to diversity, the planning process, and quality in undergraduate education. In the meantime, I want to update you on progress that has recently been made.

1 Issue: “Our institutional infrastructure does not match our stated research agenda.”

What I’ve Learned: Prior to my tour, I anticipated having conversations about the lack of space and equipment — the “hard-side” of research infrastructure. While those concerns do exist, many of you brought up issues with “soft-side” infrastructure. You pointed to the need for greater support in key areas, such as grant services, as well as more clarity on policies to handle an ever-expanding research agenda. Fortunately, in my opinion, the “soft-side” of research infrastructure is the easier of the two to correct, and it starts with getting grants education education.

What’s Happening: The Graduate College has made several changes to help departments attract top graduate research assistants, including policies that give departments greater flexibility in awarding stipends. We’ve added positions in the office for the protection of research subjects and the office of sponsored programs. And the internal awards programs were overhauled to promote research that can garner competitive grant funding.

Still, we have a great deal of work to do. For example, we need to assess if our teaching loads match our research mission. I intend to work closely with the executive team to continuously improve our services to research faculty.

2 Issue: “State funding doesn’t match our goals.”

What I’ve Learned: After many years of growth in our student population, our enrollments are now stabilizing, due in part to the tougher admissions standards. However, we currently face a model for state funding that is almost entirely dependent upon increases in student enrollment.

In addition, I spent time reviewing documentation on our newest academic programs. I was surprised by the number of programs approved without funding to support them.

What’s Happening: Funding is, of course, a huge issue. I will continue to support efforts to address the disparity between the state funding formula and our research and graduate mission. However, this is not the only way we’ll address our funding needs. Institutions that expand their research presence rely upon two primary sources: a strong philanthropic base and competitive research funding.

During my presidential transition, I’ve reached out to build relationships in our donor base and keep our Invent the Future campaign moving forward. I’ve used my status as “the new guy” to re-establish relationships with donors who are not currently active with UNLV. Internally, I noticed that many colleges were not actively involved in setting development goals or heavily engaged in fundraising. This will be one criteria used to evaluate the colleges and their deans.

Another point I want to make is that while the ambitions for this university are dramatic, they do not necessitate dramatic disruptions at every turn. I believe it is important to recognize the progress we’ve made.

3 Issue: “Tougher admission standards could hurt accessibility.”

What I’ve Learned: While I support the increase in university admissions standards — it is one aspect of advancing our research agenda and differentiating our mission — I am concerned about our ability to ensure access for underrepresented students. We need to constantly monitor the impact of these standards on our student demographics and adopt strategies to address any disparities.

What’s Happening: We will be evaluating the admissions process to see what criteria should be used beyond GPA and standardized test scores. A more comprehensive approach may allow us to become more selective while attracting broad participation of all communities.

Break Out Your Regalia: Inauguration Set for April 27

It doesn’t happen often, but when it does, it is worth seeing. The “it” is a university presidential inauguration, a tradition that traces its roots in the United States back to the nation’s nine colonial colleges in the 17th century. The formal ceremony allows for an opportunity to come together to celebrate our heritage and to look toward a promising future,” said Juanita Faich, vice president of planning, diversity, and chief of staff. “I encourage members of the community to attend this important event.”

The academic regalia and other ceremonial objects used during inaugurations, such as the university mace, can be traced to the world’s oldest institutions of higher learning.

In addition to the inauguration itself, a number of events are scheduled the week surrounding the ceremony. They include:

- April 24, Phi Kappa Phi dinner
- April 25, Academic and other ceremonial breakfast
- April 25, Campuswide barbecue lunch
- April 26, Academic recognition ceremony and reception

Several events will mark the occasion:

- April 26, Inauguration dinner
- April 27, Inauguration reception/luncheon
- April 27, UNLV Orchestra concert
- April 30, Classified staff awards ceremony
- April 23-May 2, Juried student art exhibit

More info: Visit president.unlv.edu/inauguration to learn more about the events.

CORRECTION

Thanks to those of you with eagle eyes who caught the error in last month’s edition of Inside UNLV concerning the campus location of the upcoming Nevada presidential debate.

The正确 location for that event is the student union.
Departing Deans Reflect

Visit of U.S. Supreme Court Justice

Special Moment for Law School Dean

Why are you leaving?

I have three grandkids who are growing up fast. One is already 9 years old, another is 6, and we have a brand new 9-month-old grandson who lives nearby. When he was born last May, it occurred to me that the childhoods of these people go by so quickly.

Keep in mind, too, that I have been a dean for 20 years — which is a really long run for deans this day and age. I take the responsibility very seriously, and I know what I was like at my best and what I am like now.

I also worry a lot. I have been a dean at UNLV for 10 years, and frankly, I am tired of the responsibility — tired of the worrying, I don’t see myself as having the energy and the freshness of ideas to be the optimal leader for this place for the next five years. Maybe after I have been away from it a year or two, I’ll miss it. But right now, I would like to be free of the responsibility.

What is next for you?

I will still be in Las Vegas working on several private-sector, part-time engagements.

My wife and I have a place in Brianhead (Utah) that I always regret leaving. I’ll be 62 years old on June 30 when I step down. At that age, you don’t know how long you have left for skiing and mountain biking. I would like to hit some trails and slopes while my legs can still take it.

What was your greatest achievement?

A proud moment for me was when U.S. Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy was here to dedicate the law school in August 2002. He spent three days here as a visitor, teaching classes and interacting with community benefactors. At our dedication dinner, without being asked, he made a wonderful statement about the law school. He was impressed with the quality, excellence, and spirit that he saw in this place. It was a really heartfelt sentiment expressed by one of the most prominent people in the legal and judiciary profession. He seemed to have a genuine appreciation for what we had accomplished in four short years.

What is the biggest change that you have seen over the years?

Ten years ago, there was nothing here. Now there is a high quality, nationally regarded law school. We received our American Bar Association accreditations and our membership in the Association of American Law Schools in record time. I think we are widely regarded as the model for how to start a law school. But most important, I think we are regarded around the state as a very good law school and community resource. So, it is satisfying to see the law school go from nothing to something quite good and substantial in a short period of time. We have built a really fine foundation for the long-term wellbeing of the law school. But there is more to do.

What has been your biggest challenge in getting the law school where it is today?

One of the biggest challenges we faced was solidifying the community’s support for the law school. There was a mixed reaction as to whether the law school would be a good idea. I went out into the community and assured people that this law school would be a community resource and an excellent law school.

We also had to convince skeptical faculty members at other law schools to give up their good jobs and come to an unknown law school. Also, for our charter students, there was no assurance that they would graduate from an accredited law school. We convinced them to take the leap by saying that we had really good community support and that the law school was not going to be a fly-by-night operation.

What do you want people to remember about your tenure?

I would hope people will remember me as a leader and facilitator. I don’t want people to think that I built this law school. But, I do want them to think that I had something to do with assembling the people and assets that became the law school.

The fact that we have a law school at all is a tribute to Carol Harker. There had been 30 years of conversation about the possibility of a law school at UNLV, which had gone nowhere until she arrived in 1995. She immediately embraced the opportunity to do a law school. She went out in the community and got the initial support for the law school. She deserves a lot of credit.

What will be your involvement with the school after leaving?

I will certainly be available to help the law school if I can. But I am also willing to stay out of the way. I know it is hard when transition takes place when the old leader is hovering around. So, I will not be offended if my role is to just watch the law school continue to flourish from afar.

What is the number one thing you want people to know about your school?

I want people to know that the law school is and will always be a community resource. We are acutely aware that this school is supported by the state of Nevada through taxpayer dollars and donors from this community. We have tried very hard in everything we do to serve the community and make it better. I hope people will see it as an asset.

What are you going to miss the most?

I’ll miss the people. I have formed great relationships with many people on the campus and in the community.

I’ll also miss the entrepreneurial spirit of the law school. This place is brimming with people who are truly questing for excellence.

The day after you retire, after you have cleaned out your office and the lights are off, what will you be doing?

I am terrified of cleaning out this office. But, I hope I sleep late the next day and sleep like a baby the night before — and not worry about anything.

I continue to think that change in leadership periodically is healthy for an organization. For the College of Business and me, this is a good time. The college is in a good position to attract high quality candidates. Part of my job was to put us in that position.

Also, I am looking forward to a little more balance between my personal life and my professional life. My wife of 40 years deserves a little more of my time. I am sure she would like to keep that from being too much time. I will continue consulting with business schools, primarily related to accreditation issues. I also will continue to serve on several boards.

What is next for you?

My wife and I have a home in Flagstaff, Ariz., where we will be splitting our time. It is a great summer retreat located in the middle of the largest pine forest in the country.

What was your greatest achievement?

I really think the Nevada Business Hall of Fame has been a good event for the business school and the business community. We have also initiated a college alumni association to create a strong network of graduates.

Internally, the school has clariﬁed performance expectations for faculty and has made some headway toward enhanced research and higher quality research productivity.

Additionally, there are many new entrepreneurship initiatives.

What has been your biggest challenge in getting the College of Business where it is today?

Resources. This is a very simple business. It’s faculty, students, curriculum, and infrastructure. But, faculty and students form the core of it. Then you have to have staff support to leverage the faculty. Additionally, you have to have physical facilities that are conducive to high-quality work. But in my opinion, it all starts with the faculty. If you don’t have high-quality faculty, none of the rest of the stuff matters.

To move forward, we have to continue to grow the quality of the faculty. I consider a very good faculty. But that costs money. We also need to generate resources and more support to keep and attract high-quality students here. We need to secure resources and then use them effectively and efficiently. So that will be a continuing challenge for whoever comes into this position.

> See DEANS, Page 7

Additional Reading:

Business Is About People, Says Dean Flaherty

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Business
Weeklong Event Fosters Student Entrepreneurship
Social entrepreneurship, commercializing technology, and launching a business were hot topics on campus during Entrepreneurship Week.

Faculty, staff, and students joined local entrepreneurs and people from the Nevada Small Business Development Center for a variety of activities during the week of Feb. 26.

The UNLV Center for Entrepreneurship is part of a broad coalition of national organizations involved in Entrepreneurship Week. The center seeks to reach every student on campus with the message that entrepreneurship enables them to create value for themselves and others across a wide range of disciplines and contexts.

Entrepreneurship Week serves as an educational kick-start for the uninitiated and an inspiration for young people to begin fulfilling their potential as self-starters and entrepreneurs.

Traditionally referring to starting a new business, entrepreneurship now permeates diverse areas of society, and entrepreneurial thinkers emerge through all sorts of routes and backgrounds. Entrepreneurial thinking is applied to non-business problems, and it is as relevant to public and volunteer organizations as it is to large corporations and small businesses. Entrepreneurship Week USA is designed to help individuals actually see themselves as entrepreneurial thinkers — using creativity and innovation in support of their goals.

To bring this initiative to fruition, a broad coalition of partner organizations was recruited — each reaching and engaging its own network in all parts of the country. These include educational institutions, youth-serving institutions, media outlets, philanthropic foundations, entrepreneurship-focused organizations, and hundreds of others around the country.

“Entrepreneurship Week serves as an educational kick-start for the uninitiated and an inspiration for young people to begin fulfilling their potential as self-starters and entrepreneurs.”

Business

Education
College Faculty, Students Involved in New School Model
College faculty and graduate and undergraduate students are involved at the ground level in partnerships at two local elementary empowerment schools — Warren and Antonello.

Empowerment schools have greater flexibility and decision-making power, and thus more ownership over setting and achieving academic improvement plans. At both sites teachers and administrators have been working closely with UNLV partners to create a “win-win” situation.

From the university side, the partnership supports efforts to improve the preparation of elementary teachers through substantial integration of coursework, field experiences, professional standards, and research. Education majors are involved in a variety of experiences over time, including on-site tutoring, practicum placements, and student teaching. On-site mentoring by both university faculty and CCSD teachers allows them to reflect on and strengthen their teaching practice in ways that are consistent with research on school reform and teacher education.

From the schools’ perspective, higher concentrations of education majors means more sustained, on-one assistance for children. The school staff gets to know teacher candidates over time and are better able to support their entry into the profession.

Rosanna Gallagher, principal at Warren, has been vigilant in involving UNLV faculty as part of the school’s design team. “If we are truly exploring ways to change the way we work with students in order to prepare them for the 21st century, then we cannot do it without the partnership of higher education,” she said.

Linda Reese, principal at Antonello, has been instrumental in helping university partners redesign components of the field experience. She credits the UNLV program as a major part of their success this year.

Graduate
Executive Degree Targets Crisis Responders
Effective management during times of crisis is an issue that has been driven to the forefront of the nation’s interest in the wake of the events of Sept. 11 and Hurricane Katrina. If disaster strikes — be it from natural, intentional, or technical sources — what measures need to be taken and who should carry them out? The answer to that question is what drives the executive master of science degree in crisis and emergency management (ECEM), one of few programs of its kind in the nation. Housed in the department of public administration, the ECEM program equips policy makers and potential “first-responders” with fundamental knowledge of emergency management and with a framework for effectively planning for and responding to crisis situations.

The 18-month ECEM program is a blend of on-campus and online coursework broken into three six-month modules of four classes. Students progress through the recently refined curriculum as a group of 20 to 25 known as a cohort, which means participants advance through the program together. Using the cohort system facilitates networking that can be useful to participants in the event of a real-life emergency.

Students learn from university and industry experts to identify and differentiate between the major elements of disasters; understand the evolution of terrorism; analyze leadership theories and the role of intergovernmental relations; and, as a capstone, demonstrate their understanding through a disaster simulation exercise.

In addition, the program’s most recent cohort began in January with professionals from both the public and private sector, including the U.S. Coast Guard, local law enforcement agencies, the fire department, and Los Alamos National Laboratory. Registration is currently under way for a second cohort to begin instruction in July.

Drawing from her own professional experiences during incidents at Three Mile Island and Chernobyl and adding the vast experience of the ECEM staff, Springer is convinced that the ECEM program will serve as a model for more institutions recognize the benefits of emergency management education. “Our expectation is that we will continue to attract well-respected faculty and guest lecturers from around the nation and within our own university community,” says Springer. “From a program standpoint, it will provide a notable learning experience; from a community standpoint, it couldn’t be more timely.”

More info: urbanaffairs.unlv.edu/pubadmin/

Engineering
Students “Make-a-Wish” Come True for Local Boy
A seriously ill local boy had his wish for a bed resembling a wrestling ring granted, thanks to the college and one of its student groups. Because of their efforts, the boy, called “Oscar,” now cheers for his favorite hero, a wrestler named Batista, from his ring-shaped bed. The college became involved
after being approached by the Southern Nevada chapter of the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

Under the direction of associate professor Brendan O'Toole and mechanical engineering machinist Kevin Nelson, the student chapter of the Society for the Advancement of Material and Process Engineering tackled the project.

In addition to presenting Oscar his bed, the society provided wrestling ponies and stuffed animals to ensure his wish was spectacular. UNLV engineering students who helped make Oscar's wish come true were Kim Clark, Julio Malpica, Venkat Mudupur, Robert O'Brien, Stacy Raagas, and Jagadeep Thota.

Oscar's wish also coincided with the college's activities to promote National Engineering Week. Activities that week focused on promoting engineering within the Southern Nevada community to "Engineer a Difference."

### Fine Arts

#### Assad Brothers to Perform

On April 29, the UNLV Performing Arts Center Classical Guitar Series presents Brazilian-born brothers Sergio and Odair Assad, whose exceptional artistry make them today's preeminent guitar duo. In their widely recorded repertoire, the brothers include original music by Sergio Assad, transcriptions of Bach and Scarlatti, and adaptations of works by such diverse figures as Gershwin and Milhaud.

#### Charlie Brown To Open April 20

Look at life with 6-year-old innocence as Charlie Brown, Snoopy, Lucy, Linus, Schroeder, and Patty share their hopes, dreams, and angst-ridden but optimistic view of the world.

The Nevada Conservatory Theatre at UNLV concludes its Main Season with You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown from April 20 through May 6 in the Judy Bayley Theatre. This musical day in the life of Charlie Brown has charmed audiences for almost 40 years and is one of the most produced plays of our time.

Based on the 1967 Broadway revival, this production provides a fresh approach to the all-time 1967 classic.

More info: call ext. 5-2787.

### Libraries

#### Hit the Highlights with Help from Architecture Studies

New to Las Vegas? Not so new, but want to know more about this sprawling desert town beyond the Las Vegas Strip? Curious about the varied styles of architecture you see?

An excellent place to start your exploration is the Architecture Studies Library (ASL) website, which provides directions for 11 self-guided driving and walking tours, complete with printable brochures, maps, and photographs at www.library.unlv.edu/arch/lanavegas/drivingtours.html.

The tours are divided into nine areas of the valley: downtown, North/Northwest, Summerlin, West, South, UNLV, East, Green Valley/Henderson, and Northwest. Within each...
Competing teams from diverse backgrounds are quizzed in a fast-paced, national finals in Washington, D.C., at the end of January. Recently at UNLV.

The objective of the Science Bowl is to promote and challenge the nation’s high school students to excel in math and science. More than 100,000 students have competed in the Science Bowl since it was established in 1991.

**Science UNLV Hosts Regional Science Bowl**

Reno High School’s “A” team bested 31 competing high school teams from four states to take top honors in the Nevada Regional Science Bowl recently at UNLV.

The Reno team received $5,000 for winning the competition and a dozen paid trips to the national finals in Washington, D.C., at the end of the month.

At UNLV, teams from Arizona, California, Utah, and Nevada were quizzed in a fast-paced, question-and-answer format similar to Jeopardy! Competing teams from diverse backgrounds are comprised of four students, one alternate, and a teacher who serves as an advisor and coach.

Among the other schools that competed at UNLV were:

- second place, Advanced Technology Academy (A Team), $2,500.
- third place, the Meadows School, $1,500.
- fourth place, Reno High School (B Team), $1,000.
- fifth place (tie) Wooster and Douglas high schools, $500 each.

The academic competition quizzes the student teams on scientific topics in astronomy, biology, chemistry, earth science, general science, math, and physics. Questions are submitted by scientists at U.S. Department of Energy facilities as well as from other federal agencies and from universities.

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**Urban Affairs Faculty and Students Participate in Communication Studies Conference**

Department of communication studies faculty and graduate students recently participated in the annual conference of the Western States Communication Association in Seattle.

- Joseph Valenzano, co-author of “The Presidency That Wasn’t: George W. Bush’s First Inaugural Address”

The book deals with the “Lugerizing Method,” a revolutionary new approach to actor training that explores the integrated manner in which mental and emotional content are expressed through the body and voice. It is an intensely physical exercise that also provides the actor with the tools for shaping thought and feeling into meaningful, expressive forms of expression. The result is increased strength, vitality, freedom, and control that enable the actor to be capable of a vivid, powerful, and artful expression of thought and feeling that is spectacularly human.

**Denny Kuzma (Campus Housing Facilities) was named classified employee of the month for February in the technical service category. A maintenance specialist II, he specializes in air conditioning repair and has spent all of his 12 years at UNLV in campus housing.**

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**Michael Lagering (Theatre) is the author of The Expressive Actor, which has just been published by Heinemann Drama. The book deals with the “Lugerizing Method,” a revolutionary new approach to actor training that explores the integrated manner in which mental and emotional content are expressed through the body and voice. It is an intensely physical exercise that also provides the actor with the tools for shaping thought and feeling into meaningful, expressive forms of expression. The result is increased strength, vitality, freedom, and control that enable the actor to be capable of a vivid, powerful, and artful expression of thought and feeling that is spectacularly human.**

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Getting to a higher level of education — or to advancing through the academic hierarchy — involves more than personal ambition. It requires that the talent and energy of our students and faculty be engaged, and passionate in the classroom. They’re not as likely to be active, engaged, and passionate in the classroom if they believe the engines of change and progress. That is the really difficult thing about leaving: you are going to be in the middle of several things moving up until the day you leave and you will come to realize that there is never going to be a clean cut. All you can do is keep things moving up until the day you leave and engage other people so that everything is not all in your head. I have tried to pull others in so that they will be an institutional history when I leave.

Though It’s Been an ‘Honor,’ Dean Rosenbaum Plans Return to Classroom

Why are you leaving the position?
This is the best job at UNLV. I get to know great students and faculty. But one sacrifices a lot personally and professionally to do this type of job. I plan to stay at UNLV in a different role. I will take a leave to revise a book I have drafted and pursue scholarly projects. Next spring, I will return to teach in the college. Then I will go into the philosophy department as a professor.

What has been your greatest achievement?
One of our goals was to stem the net outflow of talented students from Nevada. Many really good students leave to pursue their education.

We started the Summer Advanced Gifted Education (SAGE) academy, which is a special program for gifted high school students primarily in Clark County, but also for the region. In the program, students earn three fully transferable Honors College course credits. Courses range from modern and classical aerospace engineering to Japanese language and culture. The goal is to better prepare these gifted individuals for college, whether they choose to attend UNLV or another university — although we would hope to keep them here.

This is one of the most important things we are doing because it’s serving Nevada and the public. It has also raised the visibility of the college in the community and has enhanced UNLV’s reputation for keeping talented students in the state.

What is the biggest change that you have seen over the past five years?
We have more people working in the college now and more faculty. I think we have really improved the quality of student experience and the quality of students who are applying to the college, as well as those who are being accepted. Also, we have revised the admissions criteria and the curriculum.

What do you want people to remember about your tenure?
I want people to remember that we enhanced the quality of the university and of the college. We have more major professors and mentors, and teaching courses. The quality of students also has increased demonstrably. So we have competed with major universities to get students and have been successful reaching that goal.

What is the number one thing you want people to know about your college?
You can get serious education here. There are people who care and the classes are small. The Honors College operates pretty much like a small college, with a lot of one on one contact with professors and academic services that are not typically available at a large university.

What will the day after you are no longer dean look like for you?
I will begin a fly fishing excursion in southern Utah. It is something that I love to do. It is very peaceful and relaxing. You go into a beautiful place and you have the opportunity to focus. Now, I don’t kill the fish — I catch and release them.

Invent the Future
Phonathon Nets Praise for Pros
By Lori Bachand | UNLV Foundation

It’s not every day you find something worthwhile awaiting you in your mailbox.

So it was a pleasant surprise for education professor Kent Crippen when he pulled out a thank-you message from a former student one day last month.

Scott Mangione of the class of ’05 had spoken with a student through the Rebel Ring Phonathon program and asked the student to forward a message to Crippen in the department of curriculum and instruction.

“I appreciate all the help you have given me,” said the note. “I believe I am a better teacher now. Thanks again.”

Crippen said it was the highlight of his day. “It’s always nice to be affirmed in what you do.”

The message came via the Rebel Ring Phonathon’s faculty-system. The Revolta Ring Phonathon’s faculty-system. When the team of 30 students contact more than 25,000 alumni each spring and fall to ask for financial support, they leave a thank-you message for alumni who comment or do not respond to give students many kinds of opportunities. I am proud that I was part of that effort.”

Linney’s experiences prompted him to encourage other alumni to donate to the College of Education during the fundraising drive this spring.

“I get very uncom- fort- able when all I hear is ‘yes.’ That doesn’t mean we need less dis- sension, but I do believe that feed- back — discussing the positives, the potential pitfalls, and simpler ways to achieve the goal — results in better operational plans. At the end of the day, leadership has to take ownership over the decision and you’ll never make everyone happy, but everyone should be able to get behind the decision.

The Bottom Line: If it isn’t improving our educational programs and it isn’t improving our research and scholarship, then why are we doing it?
**The Back of the Mack**

By Shane Bevell | Marketing & PR

Just 44 hours. That’s how long Thomas & Mack Center employees had to get ready for the Runnin’ Rebel game once the arena had emptied after the NBA All-Star Game.

“Nobody can really appreciate the time and effort and how many layers of people it takes to transition between events,” said Daren Libonati, director of the Thomas & Mack Center.

Approximately 100 full-time employees manage different operations, including clean up, parking, food and beverage, technical and production, sound and light, and UNLV’s own ticketing company. Another 200-500 part-time staff members step in for special events.

There are approximately 120 events per year at the Thomas & Mack. Including preparation and tear down time, there are closer to 200 days of events, Libonati said. The biggest UNLV-based events include commencement ceremonies and Runnin’ Rebel games.

Libonati said people would be incredibly surprised to learn about the branding and marketing the Thomas & Mack does in order to create a good perception of UNLV. “We believe the Thomas & Mack is a community treasure, and we are the gateway to the university for young kids to have great experiences at our venues and to become future university students.”

The biggest misconception about the Thomas & Mack is that it keeps the money it generates, Libonati said. “We generate a lot of revenue through a lot of different facets of business, but that revenue is spread around campus and supports the needs of various departments,” he said. “The arena is more like a professional business operation than a typical campus life venue.”

(Above) Over the last 13 years, John Ayers, executive chef, has catered countless events held at the Thomas & Mack, Cox Pavilion, and Sam Boyd Stadium. On any given night at the Thomas & Mack alone, Ayers is preparing food for 30 suites, two banquet rooms, and seven meeting rooms. His most memorable event was for a University of Wisconsin football tailgate party at Sam Boyd Stadium on Sept. 14, 1996. They cooked 28,000 bratwursts and went through 8,000 pounds of cheese for 15,000 tailgaters.

(Above) Administrative assistant Jarrett Peper has greeted visitors as they enter the Thomas & Mack administrative offices for the last nine years. Peper, as everyone knows her, has worked part- and full-time at UNLV for 17 years. Her most memorable moments include meeting and having her photo taken with President Bill Clinton, and the support she received from Thomas & Mack staff and the athletics department when her husband passed away. “My job really gives me purpose,” she said. “It’s my home away from home.”