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Inside UNLV

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Christine Clark is joining President David Ashley's cabinet as UNLV's first vice president for diversity and inclusion.

Benefits of a Diverse Campus: One thing we know from national research is that students educated in environments that are racially and ethnically diverse are more likely to be hired first, promoted faster, and to earn more money sooner than students educated in non-diverse environments — if three criteria are met. First, there has to be significant racial diversity.

Christine Clark

By Leaders’ Commitment

Christine Clark arrives July 1 from the University of Maryland, College Park to become UNLV’s first vice president for diversity and inclusion. This cabinet-level post makes her President David Ashley’s chief advisor on all issues related to these topics.

Before arriving at UNLV, she sat down to talk with Inside UNLV.

Choosing UNLV: UNLV is a public research institution, which is very important to me. It also has a Carnegie ranking of “high research activity” and is interested in achieving the “very high research activity” designation and in becoming a top-20 public research institution. That was very appealing to me.

Also, the position is a full vice presidency dedicated just to diversity, which is more common than it used to be, but still somewhat extraordinary in the opportunity it provides for there to be a cabinet-level position with just this area of responsibility.

Some of the things that I heard from Dr. Ashley and some of the other senior leadership have really fueled my interest. Their level of commitment — beyond what is represented by creating this position — to equity and diversity is outstanding. I believe there is a critical mass of people in strategic positions who share a vision of equity and diversity that includes a strong commitment to social justice.

Gene Moehring’s 50th Anniversary Book Recounts University’s History

A need to grow, but inadequate funding to do it properly. Sound like a description of UNLV in this decade? Yes, but it’s also apropos to the ’90s, the ’50s, and all the decades in between, according to history department chair Gene Moehring. He spent two and a half years researching and writing the history of UNLV. Set for release this month, the book was written to coincide with UNLV’s 50th anniversary.

Viva UNLV!

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Viva Las Vegas

Ann-Margaret and Elvis Presley film a dance sequence for the movie Viva Las Vegas in UNLV’s first gym, which now is the Barrick Museum of Natural History.
Employees of the Year

Hugh “Buddy” Orr
President’s Classified Employee of the Year: $1,000 prize, a one-year parking permit, and a plaque
Energy management systems supervisor, administrative services
9 years at UNLV
This astronomy buff looks for dark skies to observe planets.

Orr Keeps Campus Comfortable
Whether it’s 40 degrees or 115 degrees outside, Hugh “Buddy” Orr’s mission is to make you comfortable.
For the past nine years, Orr has worked as an energy management systems supervisor, maintaining the campus’s heating and air conditioning units. Previously, Orr was a project manager for Honeywell, where UNLV was one of his customers. As UNLV grew, so did the need for regular maintenance on the campus’s heating and air systems. When a full-time position at UNLV opened up, Orr immediately applied.

Twice is Nice for Education Program Officer
After 25 years of service to the university, Kathi Ducasse says she could write a book. “I definitely know where all the cowbells are,” she said.
She has witnessed the faculty in her college increase to 130 members from 70 members and has had 10 bosses. But the biggest change she said she has seen is the community’s need for teachers. Since 1983, she has helped organize each accreditation process for the college’s programs and is amazed by the community’s growth.

Kathi Ducasse
2nd place, President’s Classified Employee of the Year: $750 and a plaque
Program officer, College of Education
25 years at UNLV; plans to retire in February
Unwinds by going on cruises, where she finds freedom and no stress.

Grass is Greener Thanks to Hoffman
The way David Hoffman sees it, UNLV is just one big backyard.
For 28 years, Hoffman has maintained the campus’s irrigation systems, helping to keep the grounds healthy. It takes a lot of watering and dedication to keep the campus attractive and enjoyable for the entire community.

David Hoffman
3rd place, President’s Classified Employee of the Year: $500 and a plaque
Grounds supervisor, facilities management
28 years at UNLV
This outdoorsman finds solitude in nature and scenery.

“Seeing the growth of this campus over the years and being able to walk by a building and say, ’I remember what I did right,’ is a great position to be in,” said Orr.
In a letter nominating Orr, James Wilhem, assistant director of energy management, praised him.
“Orr has contributed to the avoidance of over $4 million in energy costs to the university since 2001. On multiple occasions he has found and corrected errors that negatively affected environmental and energy efficiency. As a result, indoor air quality and energy usage were improved. When Hugh makes a decision, the comfort of the campus and cost savings to UNLV are paramount.”

Orr said there is nothing more satisfying than knowing he has resolved a problem. He attributes his work ethic to a six-year stint in the Navy, where he worked as an electronics technician on a submarine. The experience taught him to stay on top of the details.
“I had to know where I was even in the middle of the ocean. It’s something that’s still with me,” Orr said.
On dry land, he continually tracks system problems and seeks to find ways to reduce energy consumption. “It’s a shared responsibility and a lifestyle change we all need to take on here and in our personal lives,” he said.
This was the second year Orr was nominated for the honor and the first time he won. “It was neat to share the plaque with my two daughters,” said Orr. “School is their lives. This award shows them that even after school, they still need to achieve and work hard.”
As for the $1,000 cash prize, he said his wife has already spent that.

“Always walk proud, serve proud, and be proud of UNLV because UNLV has been good to you.”
This is the Second Employee of the Year honor for her. In 1998, she was named the first place Classified Employee of the Year. “To win an award from your peers twice in your lifetime is very exciting,” she said. “You feel a real sense of accomplishment and that you are the best that you can be.”

Obenour-Dowd praised Hoffman for his conservation efforts. “David works closely with the Water Authority to make sure that we don’t waste water and we stay within their guidelines. With a campus this size, it is amazing that he has been able to do this.”
Obenour-Dowd was also impressed with his commitment to the beautification of UNLV. “David has watched this university grow and has grown right along with it. This campus is his pride and joy. He wants us to look good for the community,” she said.
Hoffman said he is especially proud of the academic mall. “People come here from different places and have the perception that it should be grassy at UNLV, too,” he said.
“It makes me feel good when I see groups of people relaxing on the lawns in the mall and enjoying other areas of the campus.”
Hoffman was amazed that he won the honor. “I am one of those people who usually doesn’t win anything,” he said. “When they announced my name at the ceremony, I looked around to see if there was another David Hoffman in the crowd.”
Hoffman didn’t plan to work for the university for 28 years and doesn’t remember when the time went. For longevity, he says you have to be self-motivated. He enjoys UNLV’s friendly atmosphere and likes coming to what he calls “an oasis in the middle of the city” every day.
At home, Hoffman admits, he is not as attentive to his own yard. But for maintaining a healthy lawn, he says that it is important to have proper soil condition, irrigation and, of course, a lot of love. If you want to bring plant life into your office, he said you would need to have access to plenty of sunlight. “But, plastic is also a good option.”

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Employees of the Year

Good Advice Puts Allison on Top
By Shane Bevill | Marketing & PR

On the wall of Heather Allison’s office is a quote from Thomas Jefferson: “Whenever you do a thing, act as if the whole world were watching.” She said the quote reminds her that everything she does as an academic advisor affects other programs and other people at the university.

That attitude recently paid off for Allison. As it turns out, someone on campus was watching and making note of her dedication and hard work. As a result, she was named the 2007 Professional Employee of the Year.

High Praise
Paula Castillo, a program officer in University College, nominated Allison. The two worked together for four years before Allison was named director of advising for the College of Education in 1999.

“Heather has the rare ability to communicate well with people from all walks of life and professional backgrounds,” Castillo said. “She is friendly, accessible, dili- gent, and fair. She is a hard worker and gets things done on time, without complaint.”

Unfortunately, not everyone understands what an academic advisor does. Most people think advisors simply help students pick classes. According to Allison, advisors have three main roles: gatekeeper, coach, and mentor. Allison supervises three professional advisors and two graduate assistants, and meets with students to discuss academic requirements and policies and procedures.

Making Strides
Allison’s challenges are similar to what most advisors face — not enough advisors for students. The National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) recommends a ratio of 285 students to every full-time advisor. While the ratio has improved to about 500-to-1, Allison said it was double that.

The improvement is the result of UNLV receiving additional funding that allowed the 11 advising centers on campus to increase staff and of the hiring of Gayle Juneau as the executive director of advising last July. Allison said, “Even though we still report to our respective deans, there is now a more coordinated effort with goals beyond just keeping our heads above water. There is an Advising Council that allows advisors to focus on cross-campus initiatives such as assessment, professional development, research, and technology.”

Allison has served on numerous committees and currently sits on the College of Education Assessment Committee, which is creating a model for the college to evaluate student knowledge, skills, and dispositions. In 2005, Allison and Rimi Marwah, assistant director of advising in University College, co-chaired the national NACADA conference in Las Vegas, which had a record-breaking attendance of more than 3,400.

Professional Employee of the Year Nominees

Each year, the professional staff committee of the Faculty Senate and the president select the Professional Employee of the Year. Nominees must have worked at UNLV for more than five years and demonstrate concern for the university, their work, and their fellow employees. Here are the others who were nominated:

- Denise Tanata Ashby — executive director, Nevada Institute for Children’s Research & Policy
- Warren Cobb — director of production operation, College of Fine Arts
- Carolyn Hensley — assistant director, Wilson Advising Center
- Everett Philips — director of budget and administration, Educational Outreach

Rookie Gains Better Benefits for Staff

The honeymoon phase didn’t last long for Dottie Shank. After only two months on the job, she was asked to serve on the Classified Staff Council and was soon elected as the chair. Shank accepted the position to make a difference on campus and to serve as a vocal advocate for classified employees.

As council chair, she immediately set out to change policies to increase classified employee benefits. Shank was instrumental in helping to increase the number of credit hours under UNLV’s grant-in-aid program for classified staff to 18 hours. She also regularly gathers input from employees on campus issues and presents them to university officials.

In addition to working in the environmental studies department, helping students, and serving on the council, Shank is working on graduate coursework. Two years ago, the mother of nine children and one adopted child, was working for a large private corporation in California, when she got the feeling that she was supposed to be doing more. She searched for a new job and received five corporate job offers. But, after interviewing with the university, she said she knew she was supposed be here.

“I realized that it was not the money that was important, but what I could learn and give.” In letters nominating her for the classified award, she was praised for her organizational skills, leadership, dedication, compassion, and genuine connection with students.

“Allison generally enjoys the students. They have so much energy, but sometimes they don’t. Sometimes they come in here and fall apart,” said Shank. “If there is something I can do, I will. If not, the least I can do is listen.”

Stephanie Fincher, an environmental studies graduate student, praised Shank for the “little touches” she adds to the department such as arranging socials every semester for graduating students. “Having completed my undergraduate degree in the department before Dottie came on board, I know how much of a difference she has made. We are very lucky to have her.”

Shank was on stage conducting the president’s classified staff employee of the year ceremony when she was named Rookie of the Year. She said the win took her by surprise. “There were some really great people nominated. So, I thought why would it be me?”

David Hassenzahl, chair of the environmental studies department, was happy to nominate Shank, but doesn’t want her to receive too much attention. “My biggest concern is that I support her nomination, others in the university will start to notice Dottie and try to lure her away.”
**Business**

**Students Qualify for Business Honor Society**

This year, 24 students from the college earned invitations to join Beta Gamma Sigma, the business honor society. While almost 300,000 students receive bachelor’s or master’s degrees in business each year, only about 20,000 are inducted into lifetime membership in Beta Gamma Sigma. Students ranking in the top 7 percent of the junior class, top 10 percent of the senior class, and top 20 percent of master’s programs at schools accredited by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) International are eligible for this invitation.

Membership has become an international honor. With the expansion of accreditation by AACSB International, membership is no longer limited to those who have studied in the United States or Canada. Students at schools around the world that have been accredited by AACSB now are eligible. Beta Gamma Sigma was founded as a national organization in 1913.

**Engineering**

**Risk Management Benefits From Student Software Project**

One UNLV department is operating a bit more smoothly as the result of a software product developed specifically for it by seniors in the computer science program.

Students in the newly created Software Product Design & Development class developed a software program to assist the department of risk management & safety maintain records related to campus safety inspections.

Their work was done under the supervision of computer science professor Tom Nartker. Auralie Dade and George Fratus of the risk management department collaborated with the students, answering questions that helped the students design the exact software program to meet the department’s needs.

The capstone course was developed by Nartker, in conjunction with the Computer Science Advisory Board, to meet the industry demand for computer science graduates with software engineering expertise.

“This course provides students with the opportunity to incorporate all of their educational experience to build a real-world software product,” Nartker said.

This year’s class was given two objectives when designing the program. The product had to:

- store and track the results of safety inspections conducted on campus.
- prepare reports comparing the inspection results in successive years.

For future student projects, Nartker plans to solicit ideas for needed software products from the campus community.

**Fine Arts**

**NCT’s 2007-08 Season Announced**

The Nevada Conservatory Theatre announced its season for 2007-08.

The Main Stage will present:

- *Amadeus* by Peter Shaffer, Sept. 21-30. This is Shaffer’s new version of his epic play. The provocative work weaves a confrontation between mediocrity and genius into a tale of dramatic power.
- *Fiddler on the Roof* with music by Jerry Bock, lyrics by Sheldon Harnick, and book by Joseph Stein, Nov. 23-Dec. 9. Fiddler On The Roof has touched audiences around the world with its humor, warmth, and honesty. Variety called it, “One of the unforgettable stage musical creations of modern Broadway history.”
- *Come Back, Little Sheba* by William Inge, Feb. 8-17. Loss plays a larger role than love in the marriage of the Delaneys. But when a spirited college student, Marie, moves in with them, their world is shaken in a dazzling and heart-wrenching display of conflict and compromise.
- *Lysistrata* by Aristophanes, translated by Douglas Parker, April 4-20. Sexual politics, war, and peace combine to create a bold, bawdy, and funny play in which the women decide to put an end to war by refusing to sleep with any man until the fighting has stopped.
- *Doubt* by John Patrick Shanley, May 2-11. Set in a Bronx parochial school in 1964, this Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award-winning play is a riveting exploration of paranoia and suspicion in the Catholic Church. For ticket information, call the Performing Arts Center box office at ext. 5-2667.

**Graduate**

**New Grad Student Orientation Set for Aug. 24**

The Graduate College will present this year’s new Grad Student Orientation at 9-11:30 a.m. Aug. 24 in the ballroom of the Student Union. The orientation will provide important information to ease the transition into graduate study at UNLV. Graduate College staff members will discuss policies and procedures and address issues and concerns that new graduate students face.

A question-and-answer session will also be offered. Among the topics to be addressed are student funding opportunities, graduate assistantship benefits, and graduate student resources.

“Orientation gives new graduate students an opportunity to meet other students, graduate college staff members, and campus leaders,” said Harriet Barlow, associate dean for graduate student services.

“The event is designed so that students are able to make points of contact, to learn policy and procedure, and to prepare to be successful in the first day of class.”

Immediately following the orientation, students can speak one-on-one with Graduate College evaluators, financial services administrators, and other staff members during an hour-long information session.

Graduate students should attend this event in addition to their departmental orientations.

Graduate students can register for orientation at graduatecollege.unlv.edu.

**Hotel**

**Alumni, Industry Leaders Honored at Annual Vallen Dinner**

The college recently honored excellence in hospitality at the third annual Vallen Dinner of Distinction.

The event is named for Jerry Vallen, the college’s founding dean. To recognize Vallen’s dedication to the industry, the college established an endowed professorship in his name. Proceeds from the silent and live auctions held at the dinner go toward bringing industry leaders to the college.

Dean Stuart Mann also presented the dean’s medal honor to Joseph Kane Jr., president of Wyndham Hotel Group. The college also honored its alumnus of the year, Scott Sibella ’88, who serves as president and CEO of the Mirage.

In addition, the event recognized outstanding hospitality industry executives, chosen by each department within the college. Awarded included Peter Bernhard, chair of the Nevada Gaming Commission; Guy Fieri, host of the television show "Guy’s Big Bite" and CEO of Johnny Garlic’s; and David Saxe, CEO and owner of David Saxe Productions and V Theater.

**International Hospitality Summit Serves as Capstone Course**

The college hosted the Las Vegas International Hospitality and Convention Summit last month.

The conference offered presentations of academic research and briefings from top professionals in the fields of hospitality, tourism,
conventions, events, food and bev-
erage, gaming, clubs, entertainment, and leisure services.

It also served as a capstone class for UNLV students studying meet-
ing events. These students were involved in every aspect of the planning and execution of the conference.

Law
Most Court Students Make Impressive Showing in Competition
The school’s most court program recently completed a successful year—with one team taking top hon-
ers in a nationwide competition and making it to the semifinal round in international competition.

The students in UNLV’s moot court program, called the Society of Advocates, work under the direction of professors Michael Higdon and George Mader.

While the program produced a number of victorious student teams during the year, two were particu-
larly noteworthy:

First, for the third year in a row, the school’s client counseling team, which this year consisted of Elizabeth Naccarato and Jenny Routheaux, was crowned the top client counseling team in the United States. Coached by professors Jean Sternlight and Rebecca Scharf, the team advanced to the national competition in Dallas after taking first place at the regional competition. In international compe-
tition in Sydney, Australia, the duo advanced to the semifinals.

In another impressive finish, the law school’s Students for Sexual and Gender Equality, in coopera-
tion with the Society of Advocates, organized a team to compete in UCLA’s annual National Sexual Orientation Law Moot Court com-
petition. Students Mike Friend, Dawn Gearhart, and Judy Cox took home the trophy for having written the best brief. They were coached by professor Peter Bayer and advanced to the semifinals, taking fourth place overall.

Busy by the success of both these teams, the Society of Advocates is in the process of planning a num-
ber of exciting activities for 2007-08.

Liberal Arts
Foreign Languages Keeps Pace with Increasing Student Interest
Faculty and staff in the depart-
ment of foreign languages are busy trying to meet students’ increasing interest in foreign languages and hosting an exciting program.

Bachelor’s degrees are available in French studies, German studies, Spanish, Spanish for the professions, and romance languages. The depart-
ment also offers minors in classical studies, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Italian, Spanish, and French for the professions.

At the graduate level, the depart-
ment offers a master’s degree in Hispanic studies and a graduate cer-
tificate in Spanish translation.

In February, the department hosted the Western U.S. selection committee for the prestigious 2007-08 Congress Bundestag Exchange Program for Professionals. In May, the department was certified as one of only five West Coast test centers for the certificate of German for the professions exam that was given in May.

Four faculty members, Emi Fujiyama of Japanese studies, Iria Gonzalez-Llano of Spanish studies, Marie-Noëlle Olivier of French studies, and Daniel Villanueva of German studies have been selected to teach for the Honors College SAGE Academy, a summer enrich-
ment program for gifted Clark County high school students. Villanueva was also the inaugu-
ral recipient of the Honors College Master Teacher Award in May.

Reproductive Success and Behaviors
resources, and reflection upon the afterglows.

Zhang and his collaborators have published numerous articles as part of this project, including articles in two of the most prestigious scien-
tific journals, Science and Nature. One of the Swift mission discover-
ies (short gamma ray burst after-
glow) was announced in Science as No. 4 on its list of top 10 break-
throughs of 2006.

Urban Affairs
Community Studies Hosts Major Teaching Conference
The department of communica-
tions hosted the 45th annual Basic Course Directors Conference, a national meeting of directors of the basic course in communica-
tion (such as Oral Communication and Introduction to Interpersonal Communication).

More than 60 directors from schools across the U.S. attended the meeting. The conference featured round-table discussions on current teaching issues, including new peda-
gogical approaches in delivering the basic course, administrative innova-
tions, developing panels and papers for national conventions, and issues facing administrators and instruc-
tors, such as plagiarism, technology in the classroom, and attendance.

Department chair Tom Burkholder served as the conference host. Basic course director Joseph Valenzano and graduate students Nora Cooper and Desree Carntill assisted with the on-site management.

“The conference was a resounding success because it brought together over 60 directors of the basic course—who confront many of the same chal-
enges in their own universities,” Valenzano said. “One idea in par-\ncular resonated very well: allow-
ing students to opt out of a tradi-
tional speech to record a book for the national lending library for the blind. It was this type of exchange that made the conference productive and energizing.”

Across Campus

Impact of the new communication studies minor

• Heidi Ann Manlove, psychology—“Hyperandrogenemia, Obesity and PCOS: Consequential Female Health, Reproductive Success and Behaviors from their Fetal Environment to their Granddaughter” (faculty sponsor: Peter Gray, anthropology)
• Lisa Riss, “The Children of the Anasazi Working Class: A Biocultural Study of Child Health on Black Mesa, Arizona” (faculty sponsors: Debra Martin and Jennifer L. Thompson, anthropology)
• Melissa Mejzcz, “Student Attitudes about Alternative Energy Use at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas” (faculty sponsor: Timothy Farrham, environmental studies)

For more information, visit www.
library.unlv.edu/award.

Libraries
Undergraduate Awards Showcase Research Skills
Three students recently received the 2007 Libraries’ Award for Undergraduate Research.

The awards, which are presented in partnership with the Division of Research and Graduate Studies, recognize projects that incorporate the use of University Libraries’ colle-
ctions and demonstrate sophis-
ticated information literacy skills on the part of the undergraduate researcher.

The award review committee con-
siders the product of the research, but focuses on the research pro-
cess, the depth of the research, the library research skills, adept use of library resources, and the strategies used to investigate a research problem.

The students who received the awards at a ceremony in May are:

• Emily Arbanas, sociology—“Geriatric HIV: An Analysis of the Busy and Busy Grandma (when they have granddaughters) and their Grandchildren” (faculty sponsor: John Gray, sociology)

• Cole Palmieri, philosophy—“The Question of God in Nietzsche’s Thus Spoke Zarathustra” (faculty sponsor: Bibeau Kosciulko, political science)

• Daniel Freitas, history—“Theodore Roosevelt, William Jennings Bryan, and the 1900 RNC Convention: A Reassessment of the Phoenix Plan” (faculty sponsor: David Ferris, history)

For more information, contact Kim Lockett at ext. 5-2805 or Charles White at ext. 5-0971.
on campus. Second, there is an opportunity for informal interaction between students, faculty, and staff from different racial groups. And third, student racial diversity must be taken advantage of for more effective student persistence. I think about how other groups of people were, likewise, included in the classroom prior to that time, but I tell people that when I entered study in economics, but at (the University of Massachusetts at Amherst) there was a lot of buzz about a particular faculty member. I decided to take a course with her even though it was in education. I had never been in a multicultural classroom prior to that time, but I tell people that when I moved into Dr. Sonia Nieto’s classroom, I never wanted to leave because it was the first time I ever felt academically affirmed. Needless to say, that course changed my life — personally and professionally. In 1988, Dr. Nieto’s book, “Crisis in Citizenship,” was a “UMass” local secret, but now she is the leading expert in the world on multicultural education. I was, obviously, quite fortunate to have her as my mentor in this field.

Personal Experience: From the time I was very young, I understood — in a rather unfortunate way — that something about being a girl, and later a woman, made me matter less to society. This early insight helped to shape my later consciousness about how other groups of people were, likewise, socially constructed to matter less. Fortunately, my mother, who is deeply committed to social justice, was fiercely aggressive about making sure her children — all of us girls — were extremely well educated and imbued with tremendous professional ambition.

Using High School Grade Point Averages as a Predictor of Success at College: I’m not sure what GPA’s represent because there is so much grade inflation happening today. Sometimes this inflation occurs because very skilled teachers want to help promising students take advantage of financial aid and other higher educational opportuni- ties. But, unfortunately, the inflation also happens because teachers are ill equipped, academically and/or emotionally, to teach students in high poverty schools. Above all, we can’t afford to lose these teachers. INTERESTINGLY, some students who cannot learn, especially if this belief is predicated on classism or racism.

And on Using the SAT: The SAT accurately predicts how middle-class white male students will perform in the first year of college, period.

More Accurate Predictors: A lot of emerging research points to combining test scores with measures of non-cognitive variables. These could include how a student persists in the face of obstacles or how a student responds to racism or sexism.

Choosing a Career in Diversity: I went to college (at Franklin and Marshall) to study geology, but found it to be a very unfriendly educational environment for women in 1980. I ended up majoring in economics. I had intended to pursue graduate study in economics, but at (the University of Massachusetts at Amherst) there was a lot of buzz about a particular faculty member. I decided to take a course with her even though it was in education. I had never been in a multicultural classroom prior to that time, but I tell people that when I moved into Dr. Sonia Nieto’s classroom, I never wanted to leave because it was the first time I ever felt academically affirmed. Needless to say, that course changed my life — personally and professionally. In 1988, Dr. Nieto’s book, “Crisis in Citizenship,” was a “UMass” local secret, but now she is the leading expert in the world on multicultural education. I was, obviously, quite fortunate to have her as my mentor in this field.

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Shoben Returns to Classroom

Former Liberal Arts Dean
Proud of Faculty Hires

By Grace Russell | Marketing & PR

On May 31, Ed Shoben stepped down as dean of the College of Liberal Arts. Inside UNLV sat down with him to discuss his tenure as dean, the university, and what’s next for him.

What has been your greatest achievement?

I don’t know how much is due to good luck, or my deanship, but today the college has higher quality research and faculty. We are on the move and people are starting to take notice. We have been able to attract increasingly excellent faculty. Our new hires are from the best universities and are already showing signs of success.

Recently hired faculty away from the University of Maryland, the University of Notre Dame, and Harvard. It is a tribute to our current faculty who recruited them.

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

The College of Liberal Arts is a big college. It’s been a challenge to encourage all of the departments and colleges to be as good as they can be. At the moment, none of our departments are in the top 100 in terms of the national departmental rankings. But we have laid the groundwork to move up, and we have some departments that are going to crack that top 100-barrier soon.

What do you feel UNLV needs to become a major research university?

Hard work, wisdom, and will. Faculty members have to be encouraged to do things they don’t currently perceive as their interests, such as writing research grants.

Additionally, we have to have the wisdom to hire well and be patient. If the pool of people for a particular position isn’t exciting, then we should wait until we find people we are excited about — people who in six years are going to be on the verge of having national reputations, and in 12 years probably will have earned those reputations.

What do you want people to know about the college?

At a non-research university most of the time the teachers are conveyors of knowledge, not creators. If you come here, a research university, professors are not only conveyors, but also creators of knowledge in their fields. Students will engage with professors who are actually working, thinking, and showing them how to approach problems.

What’s next for you?

In the fall, I’ll return as professor of psychology. I must admit that I am a little anxious about that. I haven’t taught in a long time. Someone said to me, “You haven’t ridden a bike in a long time either.” I am not sure it’s the same. But, I’ll have a little time to practice this summer.

Any words of wisdom for the new dean?

Know who you are, what you value, and don’t try to be someone you are not.
New Business Dean Steps Up to the Plate

Paul Jarley, new dean of the Business College, says the college is seen as a place with great promise.

Jarley Predicts Success for College Team Effort

By Shane Bevell | Marketing & PR

To keep his perspective in a busy career, Paul Jarley heads to the ballpark. The incoming College of Business dean and his 7-year-old son trek to a few major league fields each year. The periodic trips give him a chance to take stock in the fact that “life is good.”

Jarley, currently associate senior dean in the University of Kentucky’s Gatton College of Business and Economics, spoke with Inside UNLV about the approach he’ll take to managing his team of faculty and staff here.

Three Challenges: There is great competition for human resources in academia today but if you cannot put the resources together to attract and retain high-quality intellectual capital, you have lost the battle. Finding the proper focus that will differentiate the college and its graduates is another challenge. We must attract a set of people and develop programs that stand out in the crowded global marketplace for education. We cannot be everything to everybody. Las Vegas is a unique city with unique opportunities, and capitalizing on the defining characteristics of the city must be a key component of our differentiation strategy.

Finally, let me mention maintaining momentum. Achieving our aspirations requires that we embrace change and move quickly to capitalize on opportunities. The costs of this are known and immediate, while the benefits are in the future and, as a result, more uncertain. Keeping people focused and upbeat while we lay the foundation is a challenge all leaders face.

Making the College Better: If you think I’m the difference between the institution muddling along and achieving greatness, you’re wrong. Making any institution better is a team effort. The dean doesn’t do any of the research or teach any of the courses. The dean must be a facilitator and an effective steward of resources.

Why UNLV?: The school, like the city, is seen as a place on the rise with great promise. I’d much rather help shape opportunities for growth than manage decline. The business community is very eager to help elevate the college and university, which is an important asset for a business school dean.

His Biggest Strength: This is a dangerous question. Research suggests that people’s self-image is pretty different from how others perceive them and that the latter is more predictive of their success. I’d like to think that my biggest strength is my direct and honest approach to issues. I believe in having credible goals and being open with people about both the opportunities and challenges that we face.

First Days on Campus: I plan to ask a lot of questions — that’s what new people do. One of the advantages of bringing in someone from the outside is the fresh look they provide. They question assumptions, are less committed to the status quo, and bring with them the experiences of other institutions. All of this is wasted, though, if they don’t listen to what they are being told.

Prepared to be Dean: I bring a wide array of administrative experiences to the dean’s position. Over my 10 years in administration, I have been a department chair, center director, and associate dean. This has exposed me to the entire gamut of activities that go on within a large college.

Vision for the Future: I want the college to be a place known for innovation and excellence in research and teaching; a destination of choice for people with high aspirations; a place with strong links to the business community; and a place where everyone is actively involved in the life of the college.

State of the Union

Workers buckle down as construction of the second phase of the new Student Union nears completion. Set to open to the public July 23, the new section of the union will feature a 10,000-square-foot ballroom. Also located in the new area will be the information desk, the Student Involvement Center, Jamba Juice, the Quick Zone convenience store, and a game room.