Inside UNLV

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SOAR Revamps Student Experience

Orientation Program Provides Earlier Advising, Eases New Student Jitters
By Shane Bevell | Marketing & PR

Imagine this: You’re a freshman and you’ve been told to show up, along with thousands of other new students, for orientation three days before the fall semester starts. And you have to figure out how to get financial aid, academic advising, and register for classes on your own before coming to campus.

A new program is making all that more manageable. The office of orientation and parent programs is launching student orientation, advising, and registration (SOAR) for freshmen and transfer students. UNLV will offer nine SOAR days for freshmen and six SOAR days for transfer students.

The one-day programs, which begin in April, are being encouraged to let lawmakers know how they feel about proposed budget cuts for higher education.

Writing Letters Best Way to Address Budget Woes
By Diane Russell | Marketing & PR

If employees are concerned about the budget discussion taking place at the state Legislature (and who isn’t?), they need to let lawmakers know. The single most important action people can take to ensure the university is funded at a reasonable level is to send a letter, said Luis Mosqueda, the university’s director of governmental relations.

“The people serving in the Assembly and the Senate are there to represent you, and few things have the impact of a letter from a constituent,” Valera said.

“Although they may not agree with everything you have to say, they always listen and want to know what you are thinking — especially when they are dealing with complicated matters such as the budget,” he said.

Not Self-Serving
Don’t think that because you are a university employee your letter will be dismissed as self-serving, Valera counseled.

“If course, if the message of your letter is, ‘Please don’t cut the budget for higher education, I don’t want to lose my job,’ that is self-serving,” he said. Instead employees can tell legislators how they’ve seen the budget cuts already made hurt the efficient delivery of services to students — and in what ways further cuts will make it worse, he said.

Critical Times
Make no mistake; these are critical times for higher education in Nevada, Valera said.

“We came out of the 2007 legislative session with millions of dollars in budget cuts. UNLV tightened its belt accordingly and has spent the last two years looking for and implementing other ways to accomplish

Questions:

What’s required to drive a cart on campus?
Anyone who operates a cart on campus must complete cart safety training and sign the cart operator’s agreement, according to UNLV policy. The agreement acknowledges understanding of training, which includes operator responsibilities, cart safety rules, and safe operating procedures.

Carts safety training is 11 a.m. Fridays in CSB, Room 164. The training is also available online at rms.unlv.edu/training/WebCT.php.

Got a burning question?
We’ve got an answer. Each month, Inside UNLV will answer a question of interest to the general campus community. Submit your question to inside@unlv.edu.

To Address Budget Woes
By Diane Russell | Marketing & PR

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UNLV Focusses on Four Legislative Priorities

With the Nevada Legislature now in session, the budget continues to be the top concern for most employees. What feedback are you getting from employees?

There is a real and serious concern about the future of higher education and the quality of life in Nevada. But, deep down, I think every individual is understandably concerned about his or her job and the jobs of their colleagues. They are concerned that UNLV may become a shell of an organization should the proposed budget cuts come to fruition.

I am most hopeful, however, that this crisis will prove to be a defining moment for Nevada. It offers an opportunity for the state to place the education system — from preschool through graduate education — at the top of the priority list. I hope this results in new, long-term strategies to protect education funding from extreme measures whenever there is a downturn.

What legislative priorities are at the top for UNLV?

We are looking to this legislative session for several things. First, we are asking that the budget for the upcoming biennium be restored to current funding levels. We have made a strong case in fact that UNLV is already operating on a bare-bones budget, and we have outlined the many cost-savings measures and increased efficiencies we have put in place over the last two years. Further cuts would decimate UNLV just when our state needs us most.

Second, we need more flexibility in how we use our funding. The inability to roll over funds from one fiscal year to another, for example, hampers good stewardship of resources. We believe it is critical that the Legislature agrees to allow student registration fee increases to stay on campuses, rather than be directed to the general fund.

Third, I was stunned when the academic building for the Harrah College of Hotel Administration was left off the proposed construction list. Our donors are offering $25 million to build this facility if the state matches that funding. With dollars for state building funding scarce, it would be a travesty to let such a donation wither.

Fourth, we need to see the approval of an interim study that addresses equity issues and the appropriate funding of NSHE institutions in relation to their missions. UNLV and UNR both need to be funded at a level that supports our research missions.

In campus meetings, you have noted that community members sometimes question UNLV’s goal of rising as a research institution. How do you address their concerns?

There are several ways to answer that, but what it comes down to is that Las Vegas needs a healthy, vibrant research university in order to prosper and grow. Research universities are catalysts for new enterprises and generate significant economic returns for every state dollar invested. Research raises the quality of teaching, enriches the student experience, and provides the advanced knowledge needed to support a highly skilled workforce.

Universities are also critical to filling the community’s social services infrastructure needs. UNLV is already contributing significantly to solving our region’s health care, energy, water resources, and transportation issues. In my opinion, UNLV must continue serving these community needs as a central part of its education and research mission.

What can employees do?

The Assembly and Senate leaders have organized the session into two parts. Through the middle of this month, they will be focusing on what they call the “need” side of the budget equation; that is, what the budget for all state services should be. Once that is established, the Legislature will turn to the extraordinary task of exploring all funding sources.

Keeping that timing in mind, I encourage the campus community to be visible and active in expressing what UNLV and UNR mean to us. You can do this by attending budget updates and information about contacting your legislators.

More info:
Go to unlv.edu/budget for budget updates and information about contacting your legislators.

SOAR Continued from Page 1

SOAR’s primary goal is to improve retention and student success rates, Gittens said. Research shows that institutions that emphasize advising and orientation have better graduation rates. UNLV used to have an orientation program similar to SOAR, but in 2000 advising and registration were separated out of orientation, making the registration process easier. But that flexibility left some new students feeling a little lost on this big campus.

“During that time, we found that students were looking for more structure to the advising and registration processes rather than being sent a checklist of things to do on their own,” Gittens said.

More Individual Attention

SOAR will guide students through such processes as getting a RebelCard, setting up computer accounts, and setting financial aid and billing matters. It will also offer tips and resources on how to succeed academically, and will have a social component, too. Participation in the program is voluntary (see “How to Contact Your Lawmakers,” box below). To some degree, legislators will be making the kinds of decisions that would traditionally hurt their constituents during an election; knowing exactly where their constituents stand will enable them to take some tough positions.

More info:
Letter templates and a link to help you find your legislators on the budget update website, unlv.edu/budget. Click on “Helpful Links” and then “Find Your Legislator and District.” And if you do contact your lawmakers, let UNLV’s lobbying team know by filling out the online form. More information about the NSHE budget is available at educatenevada.org.

Budget Continued from Page 1

system cannot provide that relief, leaving the state dependent on gambling and tourism.

We’re Not Alone

The problem, of course, is not unique to UNLV, he pointed out. All the institutions in the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) are feeling the cuts and are worried about what future cuts will mean.

“The NSHE is approaching the Legislature as a unified group. We’re not fighting each other for money. We’re fighting for all of us will have enough money to provide the level of education Nevada’s students deserve.”

Nor is the NSHE sitting it out. The K-12 school districts for money. Nevadans deserve quality education at both the K-12 and higher education levels, he said.

Self-Help

Legislators are impressed that rather than simply saying, ‘Don’t cut our budget,’ NSHE representatives are providing ideas on ways to help avoid slashing the budget, Valera said.

One idea is to let the NSHE institutions keep revenue generated from student registration fee increases for the next two years instead of sending the majority of that money to the state general fund, as has been done in the past. Valera, who met with about 90 percent of state lawmakers before the session began, said most of the people he met with were glad that the NSHE was looking for ways to help itself and were willing to consider such proposals.

“Even lawmakers who tradition ally have not been big supporters of higher education realize what a serious situation we face now,” Valera said. “It’s our job as sup porters of higher education to let them know how much we value our community’s social services infrastructure needs.

To some degree, legislators will be making the kinds of decisions that would traditionally hurt them during an election; knowing exactly where their constituents stand will enable them to take some tough positions.

More info:
Go to soar.unlv.edu.
Tell us more about software. Install more wi-fi. Keep web registration open 24 hours a day.

Those were some of the suggestions offered via two surveys conducted by the office of information technology last fall.

Overall, UNLV technology users report being satisfied. Eighty-four percent of employees and 80 percent of students agree or strongly agree that UNLV technology meets their needs. Open-ended comments offer praise for many services such as the help desk and classroom technology support.

It’s no surprise, however, that the student information system (SIS) ranks among the least satisfying services. Students complain that the online web registration system, while convenient, isn’t open late enough. They also say it’s hard to schedule courses because classes can’t be sorted by characteristics, such as date and time. Employees say that SIS is cumbersome. Fortunately, improvements will be coming once the Inegrate project is launched.

The survey found students like online classes and value the collaboration opportunities inside UNLV’s campus-wide integrated system, WebCampus. Students (79 percent) are more satisfied with the ease of WebCampus than faculty (53 percent). OIT plans to upgrade the system hardware and work with faculty to re-evaluate the product.

Results show that employees need to use more secure passwords. Only 59 percent use passwords made up of at least eight characters and four different character types. Weak passwords are a risk to campus data security.

Software acquisition and information technology needs improvement. According to Lori Temple, vice provost for information technology, “Software licensing and regulations vary for each vendor and the terms change regularly. It’s a challenge to know the terms of contracts and even more difficult to make the purchasing process easy for employees.”

Wireless is an important service to those who use it (75 percent of students and 67 percent of employees). Everyone wants more wireless hotspots. Expansion of the wireless infrastructure depends on funding and the building infrastructure. OIT is exploring all new funding sources and expands coverage as the resources become available.

To contribute to this summary of actions it will take based on results.

Invent the Future
UNLV Couple Remembered

By Michelle Mouton | UNLV Foundation

Two scholarship funds are being established in memory of Willard Rollings and Barbara Williams-Rollings, a husband and wife who were integral parts of the UNLV community for more than two decades.

The Willard Rollings and Barbara J. Williams-Rollings Scholarship in History will be awarded to graduate students in history. Similarly, the Barbara Williams-Rollings and Willard Rollings Scholarship in Law will be directed to students in the Boyd School of Law.

Willard Rollings joined the faculty of the history department in 1989, specializing in Native American history. His unique perspective, based on his own Cherokee heritage and his background growing up in New Mexico, provided students with new ways to consider history. He was the recipient of numerous teaching awards at UNLV and made a significant impact on the students with whom he worked. “In addition to being a very widely published scholar, he was also a tremendously popular teacher,” said David Wrobel, history department chair. “Students cared about the course and about their intellectual development.” Barbara Williams-Rollings was an alumna and employee, serving most recently as the director of academic relations in the office of the vice provost for academic affairs. She earned her law degree in 2002 from the Boyd School of Law and was involved in the Organization of Women Law Students. She remained active in law school events as an alumna and mentored new law students.

“She cared very much about her job and the university,” said Christine Smith, associate dean in the Boyd School of Law. Colleagues remember her as someone who always stayed connected to what was happening on the campus and with students by volunteering at campus events and serving on committees. Her impact touched many students and had a significant impact on her commitment to finding ways to continuously improve service to students, Smith said.

More Info: To contribute to either scholarship, call Deborah Young, director of scholarship and tribute giving, at ext. 5-2818.

Tips to Keep More of Your Money

By Shane Bevell | Marketing & PR

Are you the type of person who waits to the last minute to file your taxes?

If you are one to procrastinate, then here are some things to remember when filing. If you already have filed, you still should read on as you can make changes that will affect next year’s taxes.

Big Refund vs. No Refund

Accounting professor John Zimmerman said that if you get a big tax refund each year, you are doing yourself a disservice because that gives the IRS the use of your money for the year. He recommends trying to break even or owing the IRS a little money at the end of the year.

Some people prefer to get the big refund, Zimmerman said. “They feel if they were getting money throughout the year, they would spend it.” Instead, he recommends putting those dollars into a supplemental retirement plan, an automatic savings account, or a bank CD. But, he also said, people need to keep in mind that the latter two don’t have any tax advantages.

Employees can set up their exemptions so they are near break even even when filing taxes, he said more than any other time during the year. Check with your department’s administrative assistant for the form or find one at payroll.unlv.edu/forms.

The website also includes a link to the IRS’s tax withholding calculator.

Supplemental Retirement Plans

One of the best tax-saving benefits UNLV offers is the ability to defer income into a supplemental retirement plan, Zimmerman said. UNLV offers both 403b and 457 supplemental retirement plans.

Employees can contribute as much as $16,500 per year (plus an additional $5,500 if they are over 50). Contributions to the 457 plan are on a tax-deferred basis, which lowers your taxable income now. The 403b plan is available as a pre-tax plan (traditional 403b) and a post-tax plan (Roth 403b). The advantage of the Roth 403b is that contributions are after tax, but if you keep your monies in that account for at least five years, you are not taxed on either the principal or the earnings.

Both plans have withdrawal restrictions. Money invested in either the 457 plan or the traditional 403b plan is taxed when employees make a withdrawal and incurs a 10 percent early withdrawal penalty if they are under age 59 1/2.

A Roth 403b has two problems you have in a market like it is today is that people are very hesitant to invest money,” Zimmerman said. “I understand their reluctance. You have to evaluate your own financial situation and determine if you are in position to make that sort of decision.”

The necessary forms are available at hr.unlv.edu/Benefits/forms/main or by calling ext. 3-5384.
Academic Success Center

Refer Your Undergrad to Peer Mentoring Program

Undergraduates seeking academic success tips are being linked with trained peer mentors through the academic peer mentoring program. The undergraduate and graduate peer mentors provide guidance in:
- Time management
- Effective note-taking
- Creating a study plan
- Reducing test anxiety
- Test preparation
- Test-taking skills
- Motivation

More info: Contact Nicole Rogers at 4-4612 or at nicole.rogers@unlv.edu

Scholarship Deadline April 10

Faculty and staff members are asked to alert students about the April 10 application deadline for Re-entry Scholarships for fall semester.

The scholarships, which are now being administered by the Academic Success Center, are given to older students who are attending college for the first time or who are returning to college after an absence of three or more years. These scholarships previously were administered by the Jean Nidetch Women’s Center.

Thanks to generous donations from a number of benefactors, the center is able to give several scholarships of five different types each semester. Scholarships may be awarded to undergraduate or graduate students attending classes full- or part-time.

Currently, 27 UNLV students are benefiting from these awards.

The deadline is 5 p.m. April 10. All applications must be received at the center by that time.

More info: Look for the details under the “Scholarships” link at academicsuccess.unlv.edu or contact Sally Caspers at ext. 4-4611 or sally.caspers@unlv.edu.

Conversation Café Postponed

The Conversation Café gatherings previously announced for this semester have been postponed until fall. The discussions hosted by the Academic Success Center and the Teaching & Learning Center will focus on the first-year student experience.

More info: Call Paula Castillo at ext. 5-0667.

Libraries

Longtime Librarian Makes $2 Million Bequest

The announcement of two new major gifts and the formal recognition of another — totaling more than $3 million — highlighted the University Libraries Dean's Associates celebration last semester.

Dean Patricia Iannuzzi announced a bequest intention with an estimated value of $2 million made by retired staff member Billie Polson. Following a 40-year career with University Libraries, Polson retired as head of technical services in 2003. She said she wants to support the Libraries long after she is gone. Of course, as the dean told Polson and the more than 100 people attending the event, "We want you to be here for a long time, so we don't expect it to be very soon."

Iannuzzi also announced a commitment of $1 million by Flora and Stuart Mason to endow the University Libraries' peer research coaches program. The program addresses retention of undergraduate students both by improving their research and communication skills, and by providing role models to other students. At-risk, but motivated students are mentored and trained to serve as front-line research coaches to their peers. In 2005, the Masons provided the funds to pilot the program. This gift will create an endowment to fund the program for generations to come.

Lance and Elena Calvert, who endowed The Libraries' Calvert Award for Undergraduate Research in spring 2008, also were recognized by Iannuzzi. Although research awards exist at other colleges, the Calvert Award is the first in the nation to be endowed so that it will be presented in perpetuity.

Business

College Partners with Bank to Offer Entrepreneurs Experience

Applications are available for the Wells Fargo Global Entrepreneurs Experience. This series, directed by Janet Runge, will supplement a student’s major with a selective curriculum that combines immersive learning, leadership development, and global perspective with an entrepreneurial focus.

The program is designed to attract creative, high-achieving high school students to UNLV to experience entrepreneurship on a global scale. Students will get hands-on experience in developing unique business models to bring new products and services to world markets. Thanks to Wells Fargo, aspiring entrepreneurs will receive full scholarships. They take several special courses and attend competitions. The program is not a substitute for a traditional major, but rather a complementary curriculum that gives students from any major a distinctive experience that will differentiate them in the marketplace.

This new signature experience is the first in a series of initiatives designed to reinvent the undergraduate experience at the college and develop national prominence in areas unique to the Las Vegas community.

More info: Go to business.unlv.edu/bges.

Rebels with a Cause

Approximately 2,000 students, faculty, and staff protested proposed budget cuts for higher education at a student-organized campus rally Jan. 22. Among the people who addressed those gathered were Nevada System of Higher Education Chancellor Jim Rogers, UNLV President David B. Ashley, and CSUN President Adam Crain. Many of those attending signed petitions objecting to the proposed cuts. At left, a youngster wonders what kind of higher education Nevada will be able to offer him.

Education

UNLV Students Learn While Helping Youngsters Read

About 50 students from kindergarten through eighth grade are improving their reading skills thanks to the tutors at the Gayle Zeiter Literacy Development Center.

Seniors and graduate students tutor the youngsters as part of their coursework. The one-on-one tutoring helps striving readers increase their competency while also allowing the tutors to improve their teaching skills.

Additionally, parents meet regularly with the tutors to learn ways to assist their children at home.

The center, which is housed within the college’s department of curriculum and instruction, is the result of a donation by Las Vegas real estate developer Jim Zeiter.

More info: Go to campaign.unlv.edu/fin_hendricks.

Counselor Ed Targets At-Risk Children for Services

The counselor education department (CED) is providing high-quality counseling services for at-risk youth through collaboration with the Southern Nevada chapter of Communities in Schools (CIS).

A national non-profit organization,
Liberal Arts

Professor Pens Book about Beloved Ballpark

Michael Ian Borer joined the sociology department last fall with an anthropologist’s eye and a book in hand. His book, Faithful to Fenway, Believing in Boston, Baseball, and America’s Most Beloved Ballpark (NYU Press, 2008), was based on his dissertation research at Boston University. Interested in cities, culture, and religion, he found Fenway Park — the home playing grounds of the Boston Red Sox since 1912 — the perfect research site. He sought to uncover the ways people have prolonged a mundane edifice into the realm of the sacred.

Faithful to Fenway tells the tale of a relationship between a ballpark and the people who revere it, near it, or hope to some day be near it. The Red Sox organization granted Borer unprecedented access to Fenway as well as to both former and current Red Sox players. Some of the most enlightening stories, which Borer relates in his book, came from Red Sox legends such as Carl Yastrzemski, Jim Rice, and Johnny Pesky and current players like Jason Varitek. He also talked with former Red Sox such as Nomar Garciaparra and Johnny Damon. Collectively, they told Borer about the intimacy of the ballpark and their relationships with the fans and the city.

These interviews complemented those that Borer conducted with fans, revealing some of the varied and unique ways that people use common grounds for public devotion and public celebration.

Borer intends to take his ethnographic skills to the iconic places of Las Vegas, continuing to explore the collective power of urban placemaking.

CIS addresses the holistic needs of children, including food, clothing, medicine, dentistry, optometry, and counseling. The collaboration between CED and CIS focuses on counseling at risk youth in Las Vegas. Counseling is provided by CED master’s level counseling interns, who are provided with extensive supervision from site supervisors and faculty.

The partnership continues to expand and now offers counseling services through Nevada Partners, a non-profit organization that provides education, training, and job possibilities to youth and adults.

Engineering

Lunacy Reigns at Competition

Fifteen teams of high school students will bring their robots to UNLV on March 26 to play the game Lunacy as part of the fifth annual FIRST Las Vegas Regional Robotics Competition. FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) initially awarded a regional competition to UNLV in 2005 when three local teams competed. This year, 14 schools from Clark County as well as one school from Kingsman, Ariz., will participate.

Regional winners will meet in Atlanta to vie for the national title. For 2009, teams will use their 120-pound robots to compete in Lunacy, which is played on a low-friction field by robots equipped with slippery wheels and payload trailers. The game pieces are “orb balls” designated as moon rocks, empty cells, or super cells.

Two-three team robots alliances collect and score orb balls in trail cells. Two three-team robot alliances as moon rocks, empty cells, or super pieces are “orbit balls” designated as moon rocks, empty cells, or super cells.

The game is played on different grounds for private benefit and public celebration. Borer intends to take his ethnographic skills to the iconic places of Las Vegas, continuing to explore the collective power of urban placemaking.

Experience allows the university’s students to apply their engineering knowledge to a real-world situation while encouraging high school students to pursue engineering degrees. Hosting the regional FIRST competition is part of the college’s strategy to recruit students who will be the next generation of scientists and engineers. Despite the high demand for engineers nationwide, American universities struggle to attract enough engineering students to keep pace with other industrialized nations.

More info: Go to engineering.unlv.edu.

Fine Arts

Labor Opera Among March Events

The Nevada Conservatory Theatre presents The Cradle Will Rock by Marc Blitzstein as part of its Main Season beginning March 13. Continuing through March 29, this famous 1937 “labor opera” uses parody and satire to expose the desperation and discontent of its time. As union organizers gain strength, steel magnate Mr. Mister bribes businessman, clergy, and local police to silence the voice of exploited workers.

A series of varieties and programs is being performed as part of the Main Season, beginning March 13. Continuing through March 29, this famous 1937 “labor opera” uses parody and satire to expose the desperation and discontent of its time. As union organizers gain strength, steel magnate Mr. Mister bribes businessman, clergy, and local police to silence the voice of exploited workers.

The PAC welcomes the Dublin Theatre production with a group of intellectuals made it one of best trips of the theater I’ve ever had.”

The college offers seminars on a variety of topics each semester.

Hotel

Cod Recipe Continues UNLV’s Winning Streak

The college’s culinary arts management program continued its winning streak at the regional competition of the annual S. Pellegrino Almost Famous Chef contest.

More info: Call ext. 5-2262 or go to honors.unlv.edu.

Graduate

Application System Improved

An online application system that makes it easier for people to apply to UNLV has been launched.

Known as Hobson’s Apply Yourself, or AY, the advanced application portal also streamlines the campus review and processing of applications and provides a seamless interface with other campus electronic initiatives.

Applicants are now able to submit all their required materials (including supporting documents such as CVs, writing samples, and letters of recommendation) in a single application, and then track their status in the admissions review process. This cutting-edge, paperless system, which was designed by the college, renders the application process more efficient for prospective graduate students, graduate program administrators and faculty, and the college.

Honor Poster Session Set for April 23

Faculty members are encouraged to support their departments’ honors students by attending the research poster presentation for department honors students April 23.

At the event, students will present research posters describing their works in progress for their senior thesis projects. Each student works with a faculty member on a project. Faculty members from every college are serving as mentors to this year’s seniors.

More info: Call ext. 5-2262 or go to honors.unlv.edu.

Lady Rebels Ready for MWCC Championships

First-year Lady Rebels coach Kathy Olivier strategizes with senior guard Brittany Halberg during a February game against New Mexico. Both the Lady Rebels and the Runnin’ Rebels will compete in the Mountain West Conference Championships beginning March 10 at the Thomas & Mack Center.

Students Explore the Arts in LA

Honors students enrolled in the What is Art? seminar led by Jeffrey Kooi, dean of the College of Fine Arts, recently had a chance to explore the arts in Southern California. The students traveled with Kooi and Peter Starkweather, dean of the Honors College, to Los Angeles to visit the Museum of Contemporary Art and attend a performance of The School of Night by Peter Whelan at the Mark Taper Forum.

A follow up to the trip included a classroom discussion with Tony Award-winning producer Mike Merrick, who was responsible for bringing the play to Los Angeles.

“The trip to California was a very fun, unique, and inspiring opportunity,” said student Sean Akari.

“The experience of going to a major theater production with a group of intellectuals made it one of best trips to the theater I’ve ever had.”

All text is representative of the page's content.
**Spotlight On Accomplishments**

**David Kreamer** (Geoscience) recently was elected director of the National Ground Water Association, Association of Ground Water Scientists and Engineers (NGWA). The 14,000-member NGWA is the largest groundwater association in the world. Last fall, he was also elected secretary of the U.S. chapter of the International Association of Hydrogeologists (IAH). In addition to his university role, he serves as editor for the U.S. IAH newsletter.

**Lisa Levine** (Academic Success Center) has been selected to receive the N4A Professional Promise Award for her work as an athletic academic advisor. Driven yearly to one or more regions, the N4A honors professionals who serve student athletes and who have dedicated their energy to the association and its mission. She will receive the award at the annual convention in Miami this summer.

**Philip Xu** (Nursing) published a book chapter on tenure and promotion in American universities for Personal Perspective on American Education: Experiences and Reflections from 20 Chinese Studying in the United States, published by the University Press, which is written in Chinese.

**Keith A. Rowley** (Law) was the only Nevada lawyer, judge, or law professor elected in October to the prestigious American Law Institute. In January, he was chosen chair-elect of the Association of American Law Schools (AALS) Women's Law and Related Consumer Law and secretary of the AALS Section on Contracts.

**Lee-Anne Milburn** (Architecture) won the President’s Award from the Nevada chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects. In December, she was honored for her contributions and dedication to the profession in Nevada.

**ACROSS CAMPUS**

**Nursing**

**Governor Appoints Nursing Professor to State Regulatory Board**

Associate Dean Tish Smyer recently was appointed by Gov. Jim Gibbons to a four-year term as a member of the Nevada State Board of Nursing. Smyer, the School of Nursing’s associate dean for academic affairs, brings more than 30 years of nursing experience to the seven-member board charged with regulating the state’s more than 35,000 nursing professionals. She primarily will oversee matters related to education and continuing education and serve as liaison to the board’s Education Advisory Committee.

“It’s a pleasure to join an organization so committed to serving the citizens of Nevada and the nursing profession,” she said.

Smyer’s research focuses on Native American elderly and on health issues related to the aging prison inmate population. She was named Fulb Fellow of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing’s leadership for academic nursing program in 2002 and has served as a reviewer for the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education since 1999.

She oversees academic programs for the School of Nursing, leads the school in the preparation of federal training grants, and serves as a resource to faculty in the teaching mission of the university.

**More info:** Go to nursingboard.state.nv.us

**Law**

**Rapport Recognizes Award from Media and Entertainment Counsel Group**

Gerald R. Weeks (Marriage and Family Therapy) recently has published his 18th professional book, Systemic Sex Therapy with Katherine Hertlein and Nancy Gamboa. Published by Routledge, the book already has been called the “new gold standard” for the field. It is the book of a series of texts that solidifies a paradigm for the field in one comprehensive volume.

**Joe Aldridge** (Theatre) is the new president-elect of the United States Institute for Theatre Technology for 2010.

**Jacob Thompson** (Communication Studies) presented “New Program Development, Recruiting, and Longevity: What Can We Do To Help Create and Sustain New Programs” at a top paper selected by the Cross Examination Debate Association at the National Communication Association annual convention in November.

**Nancy Menzel** (Nursing) was among the first group to test for and earn certification in public health from the National Board of Public Health Examiners.

**Student Recognized for Outstanding Service**

Student Gerardo Avalos beat seven other competitors to win the opportunity to represent UNLV this month at the national competition in Napa Valley. His winning dish was ponzu-glazed black cod with citrus pork wontons and Asian vegetables. The competition’s judges also lauded the skills of another UNLV student, Rose de la Rosa, for her dish, herb-marinated pork tenderloin.

UNLV students have won four of the last five competitions in which the school has participated. In 2004, UNLV student Stephen Gylland won the national competition. Chef Jean Hertzman, UNLV professor of culinary arts, will accompany Avalos to the national competition, where he will compete against nine of the country’s top culinary students for a $10,000 scholarship and the chance to add national champion to his resume.

“The S. Pellegrino Most Famous Chef contest differs from other culinary competitions,” said Hertzman. “Not only do students have to exhibit a high degree of culinary skill and develop their own signature dish, but they also are evaluated by media judges on their pose under pressure, personality, and presence in the industry. UNLV can be proud that Gerardo and Rose excelled in all areas of the competition.”

**Science**

**Student Research on Mojave Soil Wins Award from National Geological Society**

Geoscience graduate student Amanda J. Williams recently received the Faras and Baz Student Award from the Geological Society of America (GSA). She received the award — and $2,500 — for her dissertation, “Biological Soil Crusts in the Mojave,” an interdisciplinary approach to develop a predictive model. Her dissertation research will identify environmental factors controlling biological soil crusts within the Mojave Desert and attempt to model their distribution effectively.

She will employ a novel interdisciplinary approach (combining biology, soil science, hydrology, statistics, chemistry, geomorphology, GIS, and remote sensing) to investigate and model a complex, natural system. This work will examine the ecology of primitive organisms under extreme conditions and will have implications for understanding basic requirements of life. Furthermore, her research will help unravel the complex feedback systems involving biological crusts, soils, geomorphology, and land stability.

The GSA Foundation established the award to encourage and promote desert research in the broadest sense.

“Deserts have received far less attention than other types of landforms in geological studies,” said scientist El-Baz, after whom the award is named. “This award will help me to pursue investigations of arid lands, which constitute over one-third of the land surface of our planet.”

**Urban Affairs**

**Criminal Justice Faculty, Students Present Research at National Gathering**

Faculty and graduate students in the criminal justice department presented research on crime reduction, policing, and international criminalology at the national meeting of the American Society of Criminology that took place in St. Louis.


Aless Kennedy and graduate student Nicole Pucci co-authored, with others from the University of British Columbia, “Comparing Attitudes toward Prostitution in Las Vegas and Vancouver.”

A group of students and co-authors with graduate student Paula Kutchens on the paper, “Using Macro-Level Predictors to Explain the Presence of Organized Hate Groups.” Shaker also was co-author of “Crime Reduction and Program Success in a Large Community Corrections Program in Colorado,” and served as the chair for the session, “Empirical Effects of Prison-Based Substance Abuse Programs.”

Hong Lu served as first author of “Testing Theories of Legal Regulation of Narcotic Drugs in China’s History,” with Miethe. She also presented “Courts and Sentencing Research on Contemporary China” with graduate student Jinting Xing and Kevin Kelly.

Department chair Joel Lieberman co-authored “Mortality Salience and Death Penalty Decisions” with graduate student Jared Shoemaker.
Erin Breen
Traffic Safety Coalition Coordinator
Rebel since: 1996

What you do: The coalition works on projects involving such things as seatbelt use, driving under the influence, and pedestrian safety. Right now I’m working with legislators. I supply them with data they need for the bills they are considering. This session we are trying to persuade legislators to pass a law making it illegal for a driver under 18 to use a cell phone when driving.

Why just minors? A law already was passed that prohibits putting limitations on cell phone use by adults. It’s hell to pass the laws that are going to save your life. It’s easy to pass the ones that say, “Stay out of my business.”

Past successes: One was the Legislature mandating graduated drivers’ licenses. Minors now must have 30 hours of driver’s instruction and more supervised driving experience before they get their licenses. Then, for the first six months they have their licenses, the only people who can be in the car with them when they are driving are family members — no friends. The number of driving deaths among 15 and 16 year olds in Nevada dropped from 21 one year to five the next year after the change in the law.

Why do you do what you do: The days are never boring. There’s always a fire to put out somewhere, and I like working that way. And I feel great about what I do at the end of every day.

UNLV folks would be interested to know: The Danish offset crosswalks in front of campus on Maryland Parkway are the safest crosswalks in the state.

People would be surprised to know: I sing and act. I’m a founding member of the Las Vegas Little Theatre (LVLT). I was a really stupid young person. When I was about 20, a famous voice teacher came to see one of his pupils perform in a play I was doing for LVLT. This voice teacher also was head of the Boston Opera. After the show, he handed me his business card and said, “I would love for you to come work with us.” He wanted me to study with the Boston Opera. I said, “No, No, thank you. I don’t really like opera.”

Last book you read: The Last Lecture by Randy Pausch and Jeffrey Zaslow.

Katharine Johnson
Career Counselor
Rebel since: 2005

Why do you do what you do: My stepmom always told me, “Life is a journey, not a destination” and encouraged me to find something I loved to do. My passion is helping other people find their passion. I genuinely love the reward I get from helping students “solve the puzzle.” The person is one piece of the puzzle and the job is the other piece. My job is to help students fit those two pieces together.

Why UNLV? I started my UNLV career with a part-time student activities job that helped me make the transition back into the workforce after being a stay-at-home mom for a while. That job was closely related to my previous work at the University of Washington, where I was a student organizations advisor. Then, the position in the office of career services came open.

Typical day: I would have appointments with students — every type of appointment, from “I’m changing my major and I’m not sure what to do with the new major” to “I’m graduating in a year and I need to figure out what kind of job I want.” I might critique a student’s resume or I might go to a class and make a presentation about what our office has to offer.

What job would you want if you couldn’t be a career counselor? As a career counselor you think about careers all the time. It’s like an obsession. In a way you are always living vicariously through other people and what they do. I think I would be a journalist for National Geographic or something like that. I’m fascinated by people, places, and things.

Last book you read: The Things They Carried by Tim O’Brien. It’s a semi-autobiographical novel about his experiences in the Vietnam War. Next I’m planning on reading Revolutionary Road.

Brett Goff
University Police Officer
Rebel since: 2005

What you do: I patrol the campus on my bike. Every shift is different. I help people, answer questions and, when I have to, write tickets. Right now I’m working the night shift and I’m adjusting to that. Also, once a semester I teach a self-defense course aimed at preventing rape.

Why do you why you do what you do: I like helping people. I like being out on my bike where people can see me and know that we are here providing a service. I like working at a university; I don’t know how much I would like working with Metro. They deal with criminals all the time. I deal with people who like UNLV. They either pay a lot of money to go to school here or they work here. We do deal with criminals, but not as often as officers in the community. I prefer policing to my previous job. I worked for nine years in prisons as a corrections officer. I didn’t like being in prison.

Can’t work without: The other officers. We’re a team.

About the bike: I’ve been a bike rider for 20 years. Now I get to ride at work as well as on my own time. What a great job. You can get out and help people and ride your bike all day. How great is that?

How much do you ride? I average about 20 miles per shift. One year I logged 3,400 miles just on campus. Off-duty, I sometimes ride with a group of UNLV students and staff. I used to race, but not any more.

What job would you want if you couldn’t be a police officer? A professional airline pilot. Those ginormous planes get off the ground and they can fly anywhere. It may be too late to become a professional pilot, but I will get my pilot’s license one day. I’ve already started logging hours.

Last book you read: This won’t be a surprise. It’s Not About the Bike: My Journey Back to Life by Lance Armstrong.
Today’s Students Help Tomorrow’s Students

By Shane Bevell | Marketing & PR

UNLV programs are not just for adults. Programs here also serve Nevada’s youth.

UNLV/CSUN Preschool

The preschool’s full inclusion philosophy means all children, including those with special needs, learn and grow together, said Claire Tredwell, preschool director. There are 251 children ranging in age from 6 weeks to 5 years at the preschool. UNLV students, faculty, and staff, as well as community members, can access the facility for childcare while taking classes or working.

Boyd School of Law

Kids’ Court School helps reduce anxiety for children caught up in the court system, said program director Rebecca Nathanson. Taught by law students and graduate students in education, children scheduled to testify in court learn about the investigative and judicial processes. In addition, the Thomas & Mack Legal Clinic provides services to children with child protection and guardianship issues or juvenile delinquency proceedings. It also handles issues such as suspension and special education in the Clark County School District.

School of Dental Medicine

The dental school’s pediatric residency clinic treats children and provides options for those who are anxious as well as for those who are physically, mentally, or emotionally challenged. The fees are affordable and most insurance is accepted along with all forms of Medicaid. Under supervision, dental students host free clinics on selected Saturdays for low-income kids identified through the Clark County School District.

In addition, the dental school provides free community outreach throughout Nevada. Highlights from the past year include:

- 10,984 toothpaste and toothbrushes distributed
- 2,871 oral health screenings
- 625 fluoride varnish applications.