True Believers

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A Toast to Art
The Las Vegas Art Museum (LVAM) collection of nearly 200 objects was moved out of long-term storage and into the newly renovated Manorie Barrick Museum. Selections from the LVAM collection will be offered for view regularly in the museum exhibition hall. Works in the collection include works by national artists important to the Southwest, including a significant representation of UNLV graduates. The first offering in the Barrick is "Into the Light: The Las Vegas Art Museum Collection Emerging." It runs through the fall semester. For more arts offerings, see "Don't Miss It," p3. [Photo by Aaron Meyers]
The Funding Formula

In the upcoming session, Nevada legislators will be looking at the way the state’s colleges and universities are funded. What improvements are you looking for?

For many years, the funding formula has been skewed, putting significantly more money per student into some of our community colleges and into UNR than into UNLV. In addition, the old funding method collected tuition and partially collected fees from all the colleges and universities, filtered them through the formula, and then redistributed them to the system institutions.

In this transaction, UNLV lost between $4 million and $8 million a year of our out-of-state tuition to the other state institutions. In the last year, a new proposal for funding has been developed by (Nevada System of Higher Education) Chancellor Dan Klein, the president at each institution, the Board of Regents, and the legislative Interim Studies Committee on Higher Education Funding. It does three key things.

First, it separates once and for all tuition from the state’s formula funds, which means our students can be assured that the dollars they contribute to the campus will stay on their campus.

Second, it will distribute funds to campuses equitably based around the mission of the institution. It recognizes, to some extent, the value of bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degrees and that it costs more to deliver those programs than two-year programs. With more adequate funding for high-cost disciplines such as nursing, engineering, and science, we can expand our capacity to produce graduates in those areas.

Third, the new formula will add a performance funding component that will make institutions accountable for outcomes such as success in graduating students—thus providing an incentive to do even better.

So the good news is that, after years of a formula that has been tweak ed and gamed to the point that it was hopelessly broken, the current proposal offers a straight-forward approach that is fair for everyone.

Do you expect challenges to the proposed formula?

The proposed formula was approved with virtual unanimity, but that doesn’t mean everyone’s happy about it. It is a bitter pill for some of the institutions to swallow. Some people are looking at it as a $4 million takeaway from the North to give to the South. That’s true in that some institutions will be getting a smaller percentage of the pot than they used to—but UNLV and CSN in particular have been on the short end of that stick for years and years. If this new funding approach is approved, every institution will receive a fair share per student, based on its mission.

I also expect some spirited discussions to focus on performance funding aspects of the formula. I do not believe the current approach adequately addresses the high value of master’s and Ph.D. graduates, which is a critical element for research institutions.

While I anticipate that this proposal will be comprised at the legislative session, I believe that the principles behind the formula—fairness and transparency—will win the day.

Are there any other challenges you hope to see addressed for higher education funding in this session?

For four years our faculty and staff have not only had no raises, but their salaries have been cut by 47 percent and their medical benefits deductible has risen dramatically. The higher education marketplace is extremely competitive, and these cuts have resulted in the loss of some of our best faculty to other states. We need to roll back the cuts and get a better health plan in order to retain and compete for the best and brightest.

While I am on the topic, I would like to thank the great faculty and staff who have committed their careers to UNLV and stayed through this fiscal crisis. Our institution has come a long way because of the principles behind the funding formula. We’ll need to see major commitments beyond an initial two years of funding.

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Dreaming Big
New UNLV digital collection offers look at history of resort architecture in Las Vegas

Before the Stratosphere became the unofficial north compass for Las Vegas, there was the Sahara. In 1963, it dominated the skyline with its 24-story tower and epitomized the pioneering concept of architectural masterminds Martin Stern Jr. and Homer Rissman.

Their designs — from concept to construction — now are accessible online in a new UNLV Libraries digital collection. “Dreaming the Skyline: Resort Architecture and the New Urban Space” captures their work from Las Vegas to Reno to Atlantic City with more than 2,000 photographs, drawings, and proposals. A timeline chronicles the rise and fall of buildings on the Strip.

“These two architects raised the skyline of Las Vegas,” says Peter Michel, director of special collections at UNLV Libraries. “Las Vegas went from two-story motels on a dusty highway in the middle of the desert to what is now CityCenter.”

The buildings that once graced Las Vegas Boulevard still influence today’s gaming and resort cities, Michel says. The integrated resort model visitors enjoy today can be traced back to the look and feel of Stern’s International Hotel (1966), which had a distinctive tri­tower form with wings radiating off a central corridor, giving rooms panoramic views of the Strip.

“It took into account traffic flow and complex items to create a functioning space that’s also aesthetically pleasing,” Michel says. “Essentially, he was building a minority, which provided guests everything they could possibly need.” And made finding the exit difficult.

Las Vegas’ architecture is also a study in adaptability to changing markets. The city excels at creating inviting, entertaining spaces that integrate natural sounds, water, and fire, such as CityCenter’s ice sculptures or The Mirage’s erupting volcano spectacle, says architecture professor Glenn N.P. Nowak.

Flasman built Circus Circus, the hotel-casino that Howard Hughes and Hunter S. Thompson loathed, and the Flamingo Hilton Hotel. He also riffed on Stern’s original works with expansion and renovation projects. Upon finishing the Hacienda in 1956, Rissman was known to rave says the building would last 10 years. Architects knew then what they know now — that Vegas buildings were not built to last.

“The architecture of the Strip and the valley are constructed in a way to only last for a limited time,” Nowak says. “Architecture here happens more quickly, is built more quickly, and torn down more quickly then in any other part of the world.”

— AFSHA BAWANY

More: Visit “Dreaming the Skyline” and other digital exhibits at digital.library.unlv.edu. UNLV Libraries houses thousands of physical copies of resort architecture drawings and artifacts.

Hearts of Campus
The heart of campus is now in three places. UNLV received three sculptures from the St. Jude Hearts of Las Vegas exhibit. Two of the hearts, painted by artists Jerry Misko and KD Matheson, have been gifted to UNLV permanently; the third, by Don Michael Jr., is on temporary display.

The sculpture that serves as the foundation for all 22 new is in the Las Vegas exhibit was created by alumnus is Miguel Rodriguez, ‘04 Master of Fine Art. Rodriguez is known for his oversized installations on display at Wetlands Parks and the Golden Gate Hotel-Casino. Using Rodriguez’s 5-foot sculptures as the base, different local artists painted their own interpretation of what “the heart of a child” means to them. They’ve been installed in public places across the Valley.

The Misko heart is at the entrance of the Ham Fine Arts Building. Matheson’s is on the south side of the Xeric Garden. The Michael heart is on Pisa Plaza outside the Student Union.

The installations came to campus after Delta Smolich, wife of UNLV President Neal Smolich, connected exhibit organizers from the Las Vegas Chapter of St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital with Jeff Kopp, dean of the College of Fine Arts.

THREE CHEERS FOR UNLV

1. Nest Popular National University
   U.S. News & World Report
   UNLV is the nation’s 12th most popular university. One of the best indicators of a school’s popularity among students is its yield — the percentage of applicants accepted by a college who end up enrolling at that institution in the fall, according to the publication.

2. Military-Friendly School
   G.I. Jobs
   Veterans gave UNLV high marks for its military-friendly programs, according to the magazine’s survey. The publication for military personnel transitioning into civilian life listed UNLV among the top 15 percent of institutions that embrace service members, veterans, and spouses.

3. Most Diverse Campus
   U.S News & World Report
   The publication gave UNLV kudos for its diversity. A UNLV, 51 percent of all undergraduates reported being part of a racial or ethnic minority. Hispanic students make up the largest minority group at 19 percent. Also recently, Diverse Issues in Higher Education magazine ranked UNLV at the top in diversity among institutions.

More Info: For details on these events and a full listing of activities at UNLV, visit gp.unlv.edu/calendar.
The Network

Rebel Business Network pays dividends for alumni and students.

Fourth-year Lee Business School student Annie Huynh knows that the job market is tough, especially for recent graduates. In fact, the Associated Press recently reported that more than half of bachelor's degree holders under the age of 25 last year were jobless or underemployed, the highest share in at least 11 years.

So when Huynh was approached by the recently organized Rebel Business Network about an internship with the Downtown Las Vegas Alliance, she jumped at the opportunity. As an alliance intern, she worked with some of the city's top executive directors on projects that are impacting not just downtown Las Vegas but the Las Vegas community as a whole.

"The internship was a great experience," Huynh says. "I learned so much. ... (and) because of this internship, I am more confident in my abilities and my capabilities, and I think the Rebel Business Network is to thank." Helping alumni (and soon-to-be alumni) advance their careers and build their businesses is the goal, says Matt Engle, immediate past president of the UNLV Alumni Association and chairperson of the network. "I wanted to provide a venue that would allow business owners, alumni, and UNLV leadership to build relationships with one another for the good of our local community and UNLV."

Since its May launch, the network has served as a hub for 25,000 UNLV graduates who have remained in the greater Las Vegas area. It has already launched an online business directory with more than 100 members, and introduced the "Hire a Rebel" program and job board. Its networking luncheons and mixers have been packed with past and present Rebels as well as professionals who want to do business with Rebels.

"This is a long-term program," Engle says. "People are seeing the value in this group, so we will continue growing and building on the momentum going on in the community."

More: Visit unlv.edu/alumni to join the Rebel Business Network and learn more about programs and services for alumni.

Open for Business

UNLV's new office of economic development will spur economic recovery in Nevada by connecting emerging research with DUALcians. The office will help campus researchers commercialize their intellectual property by offering assistance with patent protection, licensing opportunities, and the creation of start-up businesses.

It will also expand UNLV's ties with local business by enhancing partnerships connected to the university's research strengths. "We're committed to helping Nevada create a new economy built on knowledge-based industries," says UNLV President Neal Smatresk. "By developing strategies to align our expertise with emerging regional development sectors, we'll create new businesses, a stronger workforce, and new technologies that will move Nevada forward."

It's Just Science

CCSD partnership helps teachers gain confidence teaching science.

How do fish breathe? What's the difference between a food chain and a food web? These life science fundamentals may seem elementary, but explaining them to a group of third-graders in an engaging and memorable way is no easy task.

That's why UNLV and the Clark County School District (CCSD) have teamed up to give elementary teachers a crash course in life sciences. The idea is that if teachers have a better understanding of core science concepts, they'll have the confidence to introduce more science in their classrooms in a way that will stick with young learners.

Project VISIONS is a professional development partnership between UNLV's Center for Math and Science Education and CCSD's Curriculum and Professional Development Division. The program has included summer workshops and graduate courses at UNLV. In the spring, the research will hit the classroom, allowing teachers to track how student learning has improved.
TOOLS OF THE TRADE

The Flashlight.

The Tools
3,000 keychain flashlights

The Users
Students at Premier UNLV

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

LIFETIME OF HORROR: Film professor David Schmoeller (above, during filming in the Student Union) received the Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in World Cinema during the Fantaspoa Film Festival in Porto Alegre, Brazil. The film festival also featured the world premiere of his 10th feature film, Little Monsters, shot on location in Las Vegas with a crew comprised of UNLV film graduates and local professionals. Five other Schmoeller films also were screened, including Tourist Trap (1978), which was selected as one of the 130 landmark horror films of all time in the Jonathan Rigby book Studies In Terror: Landmarks Of Horror Cinema.

A WIN AND A JOB: Two students won first place and $3,000 each at the Washington Media Scholars Foundation Case Competition. Maria Jose Flor Agreda, a senior journalism and political science major, and Jami Vallesteros, a senior economics major, beat out competitors with their strategic media plan based on a hypothetical special election referendum. The competition also helped Vallesteros land an interview that led to a job as a business analyst at POLITICO after he impressed one of the judges. He also was a member of the eight-person team that won the undergraduate division of the Nevada Governor’s Cup business plan competition in 2011.

HELP UP: The Center for Academic Enrichment and Outreach was awarded three nationally competitive TRiO Upward Bound grants totaling $45,5 million over five years. The grants will serve more than 1,000 Clark County high school students. Upward Bound helps low-income or first-generation students complete the college entrance process and ultimately get a degree.

NUCLEAR INNOVATION: Graduate student Edward Massolf took first place in a national U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) student competition for his investigation into the behavior of a radioactive byproduct of nuclear energy. The Innovations in Fuel Cycle Research competition recognizes college students from across the nation for outstanding research publications. Massolf, a Ph.D. student in radiochemistry, won for his unique analysis of the radioactive element technetium, a common product from nuclear fission.

UNLV research teams also recently were awarded more than $1.6 million from the DOE to investigate new ways to safely separate and store radioactive waste from nuclear fuel recycling. UNLV is one of just 32 universities to earn funding under the Nuclear Energy University Program.

QUOTABLE

"Most people think that the greatest opportunities for Las Vegas are on the Strip. Mr. Cohen recognized that the real opportunity is a few miles to the east — on the UNLV campus. That’s where the future of Las Vegas is really being determined."

— Brian Unguren, ’12 BA English, a member of the inaugural class of Philip J. Cohen Scholars. Named for the gaming and real estate executive who passed away in 2010, the program funds more than 40 scholarships for students who prove themselves deserving of support but who do not qualify based solely on need or grades.

More: See how the event has grown over the years in the commemorative poster gallery at unlv.edu/premier

Fall 2012
Winning Big in Las Vegas

Ryan Moore made the most of his hometown game.

The Las Vegas resident and former Rebels golfer closed with a 5-under 66 to win the Justin Timberlake Shriners Hospitals for Children Open by one shot over Brendon de Jonge of Zimbabwe on Oct. 7 at TPC Summerlin.

The victory was the 18th by a former UNLV golfer on the PGA Tour. Moore pocketed $810,000 for his first tour win since the 2009 Wyndham Championshi

A Family Affair

UNLV soccer siblings inherit their love of the game from their dad.

For Salvador and Aracena “Susie” Bernal, the UNLV soccer teams’ brother-sister act, the game has always been a family affair.

Sal’s a sophomore forward on the men’s team; Susie, a freshman, plays wing on the women’s squad.

As they talk about their requests on the pitch and in their academic careers, they keep circling back to their inspirations: their parents.

The Bernals picked up their father’s love of soccer.

How old were you when you took up the game? “Three or four,” they say in unison, glancing at each other.

Sal picks up the story: “I was the one who started playing first. I was the boy, so my dad wanted me to start playing. In Mexico it’s a big thing to play soccer. But she was the one who played first on our actual team.”

Both were born in the central Mexican city of Morelia. Their family moved between Mexico and the United States — including Denver, where they have extended family — a couple of times before the opportunities Las Vegas offers drew the family here.

Salvador Bernal Sr. and his wife, Rosa, both work in the Las Vegas service industry. Sal and Susie talk a lot about their parents’ sacrifices: rides to and from practice after long workdays and money for equipment, for joining the competitive club teams, and for many trips to tournaments.

The siblings are both graduates of Clark High School in Las Vegas. In his senior year, Sal set a school record for goals in a season while leading the Clark Chargers to the state semifinals. When it came time to consider college, the choice was easy.

“I wanted to stay home. UNLV was always my first option,” Sal says. “This is where I wanted to be.”

Last year he won the Mountain Pacific Sports Federation newcomer of the year. This year he’s continuing with standout performances. He had two goals and two assists in mid-October wins over Seattle and long-time rival San Jose State — the team’s first back-to-back road conference wins since 2005.

Like her brother, Susie stood out in high school. Her Las Vegas club team, Neuport FC, won state titles in 2008 and 2009. She followed Sal to UNLV because “my parents said, ‘since we’re here in town, we want you to stay here.’”

She is a key player on a women’s team that set a school record with a nine-game unbeaten streak earlier this season. One of those games was a 3-1 win over Oklahoma, a game that featured Susie’s first goal as a collegiate.

“People are starting to realize that we the women’s team are good,” Susie says. “We’re proving that we can do it. (Breaking the record) got people’s attention.”

The women’s team recently returned to the national rankings — they’re No. 9, one spot short of their best ever, four years ago. Susie says the coaches caution players against letting success go to their heads.

“We usually hear a lot about it from social media,” she says. “It’s cool to mention it, but they don’t want us to get cocky, and they tell us to stay humble.”

As important as soccer is to the whole family, it’s not everything. “Of course I want to be a professional soccer player,” Sal says, He’d like to rise to the level of his favorite player, Lionel Messi, leader of the powerful Barcelona team in Spain’s top league. “But if that doesn’t work, I want to have something to fall back on to support my family.”

His family’s influence and Las Vegas upbringing factoring into his major, hotel administration. Sal devotes about 20 hours a week to soccer and more time to studying. There’s little time for much else — but then, he’s not sure what else there is besides school and soccer. “I just don’t do that much outside of soccer,” he says. “I mean, I like to go out, have fun, but soccer has always been that part of my life. I’ve traveled a lot, met a lot, met many people because of soccer.”

Susie, who has not declared a major yet, lives on campus to help balance her athletic and academic responsibilities. “Without my family here,” she says, “I don’t have anything else to do. I don’t have any outside of school or soccer.”

“She’s always been our inspiration,” says the coaches. “Without them, we wouldn’t be here.”
High school students came out in force to a 1968 Los Angeles Unified School District board meeting to protest inequities in the system. The xửtives marked a turning point in Chicano activism, according to a new book by UNLV professor Anita Tijerina Revilla.

School Activism

Two works examine the legacy that school desegregation and funding inequities had on African-American and Chicano students.

BY DIANE RUSSELL

A
nita Tijerina Revilla wasn’t there in 1968 when Chicanos students walked out of Los Angeles classrooms in protest, yet her life—and her career—were profoundly affected.

She realized how lucky she was that someone had placed her on the college-bound track, unlike many of her fellow students with the same abilities. Unfortunately, she says, the education offered to marginalized students in America today really hasn’t improved. Much of the problem, not surprisingly, goes back to money. “School finance has been an issue for civil rights movements for a long time,” Revilla says. As long as districts with more expensive real estate receive more money than districts in poorer areas, the inequities will remain, she predicts.

That’s a problem that won’t be solved any time soon, Revilla says, but the country at least needs to strive for greater competence in dealing with the issues. “If teachers were trained to deal with differences related to mental illness, class, gender, and race, it would lead to different and improved experiences for students and would result in fewer students being marginalized because of those differences,” she says.

Revilla’s book won the 2011 Critics Choice Book Award from the American Educational Studies Association. She now is working on a book about immigration rights activism in Las Vegas.

Browns v. Board of Education often needs fixing in the way of explanation. The landmark 1954 U.S. Supreme Court case ruled segregated schools unconstitutional and some contentious efforts to desegregate followed, but desegregation was inherently good. Right?

Maybe. While the intent of the ruling was good, the result has been a mixed bag too often left students of all races navigating a system that remains racially divided even when students of different races walk the same hallways.

That dilemma and what as a society should do about it, forms the basis of Sonya Douglass Horsford’s book Learning in a Burning House. Horsford, a senior resident scholar of education at The Lincy Institute at UNLV, interviewed eight black educators who had at one time attended segregated schools. They eventually went on to serve as superintendents for desegregated schools.

Marching Students: Chicano and Chicana Activism in Education, 1968 to the Present

Co-edited by Anita Tijerina Revilla

University of Nevada Press, 2011

Learning in a Burning House: Educational Inequity, Ideology, and (Dis)Integration

By Sonya Douglass Horsford

Teachers College Press, 2017

One of the fundamental problems with U.S. school desegregation plans is that they never looked deeply into why this country had segregated schools in the first place,” says Horsford.

The plans typically dealt largely with numbers, making sure that they broke up primarily black or white educational enclaves, says Horsford, who herself was part of Southern Nevada’s now-abandoned sixth grade center desegregation plan. Ironically, she was among the many black students living outside the primarily black neighborhood known as “the Westside,” who found themselves bused into that area for their sixth-grade year along with their non-black neighbors in order to help achieve desegregation. “While the experience may have proved beneficial for many students, exposing them to children from very different parts of the county, it was solely for one of 12 years of schooling,” Horsford says. “Cross-racial friendships were made, but rarely maintained beyond the sixth-grade experience.”

To see how desegregation plans throughout the nation have too often failed, all one has to do is look at statistics, Horsford says. On average, black students achieve academically at lower levels than other students and fail to graduate from high school in higher numbers than others. “I certainly am not endorsing segregation or a return to that,” emphasizes Horsford. But she encourages policymakers to take a look at the positive things the nation’s segregated schools once offered black children.

Each superintendent she interviewed told similar stories of segregated schools. They all experienced caring but demanding teachers as well as a support system that engaged parents, who perhaps had never gone past the eighth grade themselves.

Horsford says the only way to strengthen the schools is by encouraging a number of diverse groups—including health care professionals, business owners, researchers, and members of the faith community—to join educators, students, and parents in the task.

Near the end of the book, which sold out its first printing, Horsford writes, “Through community engagement, political activism, and the building of sustainable cross-racial coalitions committed to restoring a moral and ethical commitment to equal education, we can work to transform the systems and structures that have abdicated responsibilities for the educational experiences of our nation’s schoolchildren so that all child will learn in a burning house.”
Up-and-Coming

Scoping sediments from rural hot springs in search of new life. Presenting genetic research to scientists at national conferences. Such summer activities are typical for university professors; but these are accomplishments of UNLV undergrads. The federally funded McNair Scholars program gives first-generation and underrepresented minority groups a chance to step outside the classroom and see what it’s really like to be a college professor out in the field and in campus labs.

“Every professor I have approached with questions about my research has looked at me as an up-and-coming peer and not just a student,” says Richa sciences major Carmen Vassil. She worked with professor Eduardo Robelo to research how bacteria mutated when starved of key amino acids.

Fear Factors

Does algebra stress you out? Psychologist Mark Ashcraft is getting to the root cause of your math anxiety.

BY AFSHA BAWANY

Beads of sweat trickle down your forehead, your heart rapidly beats, and you can’t catch your breath. You’re up against the clock. You reassure yourself: “I can do this. But suddenly, you’re immobile. This isn’t a marathon. It’s a math test.”

Mark Ashcraft, a cognitive psychologist at UNLV, has been studying why using the quadratic formula is a cinch for some of us while others freeze up in high-stakes situations like SAT or ACT testing. It can become a lifelong fear and affect social settings. Imagine that friends designate you as the tip calculator for the group at dinner. Can you do the math or do you freeze up like you’re back in high school?

Applying the Research

Math anxiety can lead to poor performance on standardized tests. The UNLV Academic Success Center’s Summer Bridge program is giving incoming freshman placed in remedial math courses a second chance to succeed on math placement tests. Remedial courses do not count toward UNLV degree requirements, so having to take them costs students money and delays progress toward their degrees.

Students spent three hours a day, five days a week for five weeks with a center tutor. In addition to fundamentals of math, the tutors helped with proper note-taking and study skills and addressed test anxiety.

WORKING MEMORY

Ashcraft isn’t a mathematician. He started researching math anxiety when he was, ironically, stuck on a math problem. While grading papers 30 years ago, he could instantly calculate 30 minus 7 but subtracting seven from 75 tripped him up.

“For a cognitive psychologist, when one mental process takes longer than another, I think there is something there to investigate,” Ashcraft says. He links the issue to our “working memory,” which we rely on to pay attention to our actions. For example, your working memory is in high gear when you’re driving and talking on the phone. But when you’re driving and talking on the phone. But when you're driving and talking on the phone.

Neat!

AFSHA BAWANY

An accident in a glass-blowing class has turned into a new barware business for George Manska. But before launching the company, he needed some evidence to explain why his NEAT glass enhanced his spirit-sipping experience.

A chance encounter led him to chemistry professor Spencer Steinberg. Steinberg designed a test to compare the NEAT glass to other common drinking vessels. He found that the unique shape positioned the drinker’s nose closer to the surface of the whiskey and at a position where he or she was more likely to inhale fatty acid ethyl esters, which hold the chief aroma and taste components of the spirit.

“These basic tests were validation for us that there is indeed a correlation of vessel shape and the presentation of aromas,” said Manska. “We are indebted to (Steinberg) for the confidence he gave us in our product design.”
Faster, Higher, Stronger

To perform like an Olympian, you have to think like one. Kinesiology professor Gabriele Wulf explains how to change your thoughts to boost your results.

BY MEGAN DOWNS

Want to perfect a butterfly stroke to rival Michael Phelps’ or hurl a hammer farther than UNLV student-athlete Amanda Bing- scoe did at this summer’s Olympics? Stop concentrating on the mechanics of what you’re doing and start focusing on the end result, says kinesiology professor Gabriele Wulf.

OK, so changing your concentration might not turn you into an Olympian, but it will improve your balance, accuracy, and consistency. Focusing on your mechanics implicitly triggers self-consciousness and self-evaluations, which often has a negative influence on performance.

“Avoid thinking about anything on your body,” Wulf says. “Having an external focus of attention makes performance more automatic and speeds up the learning process, thereby enabling performers to achieve a higher skill level sooner.”

She applied her research to helping athletes, novices, and those suffering from debilitating physical ailments understand the same concept. In one of her studies, Parkinson’s patients improved their balance by shifting their concentration from their feet to the inflated disk on which they were standing.

The concept came to Wulf nearly 30 years ago when she was teaching herself to perform a power 6jbe, a complicated windsurfing move requiring precise timing and foot positioning. When she paid attention to her feet on the board or her hands on the boom, she frequently fell or failed to complete the move. So, she began to focus on the tilt of her board and how fluidly it turned. “It seemed so simple, but I continued to succeed by changing my thought pattern,” she says.

A Subterranean Surprise

A new species of scorpion nearly squirmed past a couple of UNLV graduate students. The story behind the Death Valley arthropod’s discovery.

BY SHANE BEVELL

The discovery of a tiny new species of scorpion is one of those stories about a string of almost-missed moments.

It was September 2009 and Matthew Graham was taking the last survey on the last night of the last research trip to Death Valley. A scorpion glowed bright green under his ultraviolet flashlight. Graham, a Ph.D. candidate from the School of Life Sciences, nearly dismissed it as a juvenile of a common species in the area. But it was especially small, about the size of a thumbtack, and something about its claws just wasn’t quite right. He identified it as a member of the genus Wernervia, but this little guy was more than 400 kilometers from his usual haunts.

Graham grabbed the squirming arthropod with his intermediate crawlers and brought it to the lab. For the next few days he and Michael Webber, who worked in a cubicle, took turns examining the scorpion in meticulous detail, the same way scientists do with specimens in a museum. They were looking for anatomical characteristics like these can indicate that you are dealing with a different species. They were looking for features that would help them understand the scorpion’s shape and why it had that particular form. They were looking for ways to tell this scorpion from other species.

It was a new species. An unknown species. A species that had been hiding in the desert for millions of years. A species that could be described as a new species.

Graham and Webber each bring a different expertise to their collaboration. Graham studies the biogeography of the American West, so he knew that the tiny little scorpion was definitely out of place. He uses the DNA from scorpions to investigate how geologic and climatic events have influenced the evolution of desert organisms. Webber studies the reproductive biology of scorpions and different aspects of their behavior. She noted that the Death Valley scorpion had a distinct tail, pincers, and reproductive organs. "Differences in anatomical characteristics like these can indicate that you are dealing with a different species," Webber says. She grew up in Las Vegas and received her undergraduate degree in biology from UNLV.

The team named the scorpion Wernervia insignia because it was found in the Inyo Mountains. After describing the specimens in meticulous detail, the pair submitted a paper to ZooKeys, a peer-reviewed, open-access journal.

Graham hasn't found another of this new scorpion species, but he is always on the lookout. He hypothesizes that it could live completely underground and might only rarely emerge to the surface. "It's also cool to show the world that there are still places to explore and new things to discover."
The Clothes Make the Woman

Deirdre Clemente's byline once graced articles about trendiest lipstick colors and newest slimming pants on the market. A former fashion writer for The (Baltimore) Sun and trade publications, Clemente switched careers when she became more curious of how trends began and their ties to cultural habits. She now teaches students to understand history and modern society through the context of people's choices in belts, shirts, and shoes.

I don't wear white after Labor Day. I still observe the fundamental rules of the seasons. I think I am unable to detach myself from the cultural contexts of fashion and just observe. Maybe that is why I am a cultural historian, and not a cultural anthropologist.

What we see in fashion magazines is very expensive and extreme. People don't change at the pace that fashion magazines would have you to believe.

Fashion is transient. Style percolates for a long time.

Women wore pants in the 1920s but weren't buying pants until 1940s. And pants were only seen among younger groups and progressive women. But in the 1960s, society was still concerned about women wearing pants. Cultural change doesn't happen with the hippies and social elite; it's when the middle class wears particular trends that fashion has changed.

I live in a world of outdated Vogue magazines and historical documents. I write extensively on F. Scott Fitzgerald and 1920s fashion and consulted on the upcoming The Great Gatsby movie.

Fitzgerald wrote, "life hasn't much to offer except youth, and I suppose for older people, the love of youth in others." This hangs on my heart heavily. I'm afraid of getting older and losing exuberance. Watching students fall in love with the things we are teaching helps me keep that.

Now that I am a mother and a professional, I've toned down what I wear. I look a little more professional than in grad school, when I wore leather shorts, high heels, and some kind of sweater that I'd cut up the night before.

There isn't as much dignity with age in the West as there is in the East, and this really translates to dress.

The culture of Vegas allows women of all ages to dress in clothes that in other regions would be considered youthful — rhinestone-studded tank tops, jeans with heels, and skull-print hoodies.

I'm not saying that grandmothers shouldn't wear rhinestones, but should do so in a way that celebrates their station in life, rather than try to look like a 20-something.

Las Vegas fashion is underemphasized in American culture.

Vegas, throughout the '60s, '70s, and '80s, lived in the shadow of Los Angeles. People shopped there and wore it here. In the last 15 years, Vegas became a place where people come to shop, where American celebrity culture thrives. Youth and newness is covered here.

Las Vegas fashion is bold and showy — two characteristics that are frowned upon by more staid cities, such as New York. Here, people take fashion risks; they push the boundaries of "appropriate" in a way that makes Americans at large uncomfortable. Even I — in my "Hey, everyone gets to use fashion to express who they are and who they want to be" way of thinking — struggle not to judge.

I still care about what my mother would say. I very often mentally consult my mother when getting dressed. She is an avid Vogue reader. She wore leather pants to a PTA meeting. My dad is an old-school professor. He wore a lot of tweeds and full-fledged suits to teach.

When I met my husband, he owned one pair of pants. I think I've done a lot to help his style. He's an easy mannequin to dress.

I can't live without my silver cuff bracelet. I have a strong emotional attachment to it because my best friend gave it to me when I had my first child. I never lend it to anyone and I keep it in a velvet bag.

My style is quirky and ethnic and colorful.

Fashion is about individual choice made on an individual day. Those choices speak to our social and cultural identities.

I sit outside the Student Union to see what students are saying about themselves without saying anything.
School Spirit

Kathryn Thompson, a sophomore architecture major, and Mrs. Lamb, a senior majoring in sociology and health education, shot over Red Rock Canyon during a photo shoot for the 2013 UNLV Cheer & Dance Team Calendar. The team raised a large chunk of their operations through the sale of calendars at games and events. While the athletic department covers the coaches' salaries and some athlete scholarships and fees, the teams must raise the money for uniforms, transportation to competitions, as well as to bring in specialty choreographers and tumbling coaches. In April, UNLV Cheer won the group stunt competition at the National Cheerleaders Association Championship. The Rebel Girls have placed in the top five at the Universal Dance Association College Nationals in the last four years they attended. 

(Photo by Aaron Mayes)
True Believers

We asked people from across campus and beyond why they believe in and choose to support UNLV. Students told us about the personal interactions that showed them the path to graduation. Faculty told us how they hope to make the region better through their research. Alumni shared why, long after they walked across the commencement stage, they return to campus. And donors told us about how they value our role in building a strong Southern Nevada.

Watch: "I Believe in UNLV" is online at unlv.edu/president. Respond: Why do you believe? Tell us why UNLV gets your support as Nevada's first-choice university. Post on UNLV's official Facebook page or tweet your answer with #UNLVfirstchoice. Read More: Students, alumni, and friends of the university aren't the only ones touting us as a first-choice university. See "Three Cheers" (p5) and "Accomplishments" (p9) on the attention we're getting from national outlets.

Because we get to work with faculty from programs that are world-class in spheres that we aren't used to seeing in Washington, like hotel administration and gaming.

Because I can see the potential for this university to be a leader in biomedical research.

Because I have nothing but positive things to say about the interns and the hires we have had from UNLV. You can tell that their fundamental education in accounting and finance, which is what we need, is very solid.

Because it is our community university—a place where you can make a home, get an excellent education, and turn that into an amazing career.

Because every morning I wake up, come to work, and think that today I have an opportunity to make a difference, just like so many professors who made a difference in my life.

Because after 25 years at UNLV, I'm still having so much fun seeing the transformation in our students.

Because there is no university in the United States of America that has built what UNLV and this community have built in such a short amount of time.

Because UNLV has been great to me in my professional development and offered me opportunities for advancement.

Because when I look at the commitment that so many people have to this university, it fires me up!

Because I look forward to UNLV being one of the best universities in the country and that's where we are headed.

Because, at UNLV, it's really hard work but it's so worth it because the staff are here for you...I feel at home at UNLV.

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“College professor” might conjure images of tweedy, bespectacled fellows poring over thick books in the stacks of the library — the kind of job where the greatest occupational hazard is a paper cut. But some of our faculty, staff, and students get their hands pretty dirty in the course of a day. Their work can be downright dangerous.

Studying the secrets of human evolution requires quite a road trip.

Every summer, Alyssa Crittenden flies into Arusha, Tanzania, leads up a Land Rover with food, water, spares, tires, and a machete, and treks into the East African bush. Here, in an area anthropologists call the “Crossroad of Human Evolution,” she observes the Hadza, one of the world’s last groups of hunter-gatherers.

Just a few million years ago, our hominin ancestors took a step forward in brain size. This coincided with changes in diet and reproduction. We’re pretty much the only species that cares for offspring years after weaning and that has more babies before the last one is independent. This requires what Crittenden believes is the hallmark of human cooperation. “To figure out how nutrition, reproduction, and social behavior interact, I have to go into an area where these things are constantly at play.”

The journey takes five hours on a paved road, another few hours on dirt roads, and then five more to hack through undergrowth off road. And that’s only if she makes good time by welding punctured tires and quicksand — “Before I went to Tanzania, I really thought that existed only in Tarzan movies.”

The Bay Area native had never camped before spending 14 months in Hadza country in 2004 for her doctoral research. “If I’d known how risky it was, maybe I wouldn’t have gone,” she says. “I was afraid of the wrong things.”

She feared the bushwhacking and found that broken-down cars and donkey gatherings made the paved roads more treacherous. She was afraid to drink the water but failed to grasp the potential danger that encounters with displaced refugees or illegal poachers could bring.

She is one of only a handful of anthropologists documenting the ways of the Hadza. Through personal observations, she developed a theory on the role that honey, alongside meat, had in boosting our brainpower. Her ability to study the Hadza, however, is changing as they are displaced from their traditional lands. She expects their ways to die out within her lifetime. With a small population of merely a thousand people, many might think that the importance of the Hadza is negligible compared to our huge society. As an anthropologist, however, I believe it’s necessary to document their world before it’s gone.”

*A Crittenden’s work is featured in the documentary The Hadza: Last of the First, now under consideration for the Sundance Film Festival.*
DEADLIEST CATCH

Oddly, cougars aren't David Choate's biggest worry during his long stretches in the Desert National Wildlife Refuge. The post-doctoral scholar is the lead field researcher for a multi-agency project trying to find out why the desert big-horn sheep population hasn't rebounded since a die-off in 2004. Could the area's cougars be eating more than their expected share of our state animals?

To find out, Choate hikes into the vast land with roadkill on his back and sets his cage. He tranquillizes the cougars, fits a radio frequency transmitter collar on them, and releases them unharmed back into the wilderness. The solitary predators can be very dangerous but an injury can lead to starvation, so they're wary of tangle with unfamililar or larger creatures. “I suspect that by the way they track on cross mine that sometimes they're observing me, but they tend to avoid confrontation with humans,” he says.

The real danger comes from the land itself. The former African safari guide sets up camp far off rudimentary roads, often enduring nasty windstorms, freezing temperatures and the occasional scorpion sting, so he can immediately reach a caught animal. Because cougars move primarily at night, so does he. During a bad snowstorm last winter, he hiked over a steep ridge in the dark, only to find that the snow itself had set off the trap. “Collaring takes patience,” he says.

Then comes the dirty work. Choate tracks their movements. A cougar will return to its kill site over several days to feed on a stunned carcass. “I go looking for evidence; it’s analogous to doing crime scene forensics.” A fresh kill can be gruesome; a decaying one might be covered in maggots. He also bags up dropplings from cougars, sheep, and deer for lab analysis.

“Most people have this Disney-esque or National Geographic view of wildlife work,” Choate says. “We often have little direct contact with the animals. Most of the time we’re tracking bleeps and blips from a radio signal or we’re elbow-deep in a carcass or collecting scat.”

JAW-DROPPING DOC

Dr. Daniel Orr
Dental medicine professor

It's like doing a jigsaw puzzle, says Dr. Daniel Orr. Find the border pieces first and then start filling in the middle. Only Orr's pieces are the bones and tissues of a person's face, displaced by a collision with pavement or the violence of a bullet.

The director of oral and maxillofacial surgery at the School of Dental Medicine also is a longtime volunteer with the UNLV Athletics medical staff. In 1990, when basketball player Greg Anthony broke his jaw, Orr was there to wire it back together.

His reconstructions generally are done a day or two after the patient is stable. Not so at a.m. one day this year. A trauma center doctor texted him a picture of what he was dealing with: an accidental shooting victim whose jaw was dangling 90 degrees away from normal. Orr stared at the image, trying to figure out where the patient's midface bones were, then jumped out of bed.

“Usually I know exactly what I'm going to do from the start. This one I had to take one baby step at a time, like climbing Mount Everest,” Orr says of the six-hour surgery. “Fortunately, the patient] didn't have any tissue on the ceiling — all the anatomy was there, somewhere.”

He concedes that his profession can be cringe-inducing, though after 35 years and 5000 major trauma surgeries, he seldom is shocked himself. “It can be intense, but I pinch myself every day that I get to do this job.”
ONE WOMAN’S TRASH

Keeping the planet clean can be pretty grubby work for Tara Pike-Nordstrom. Occasionally, a less-than-courteous person will toss something nasty into one of those blue recycling bins all around campus. Moldy food. A dirty diaper. Even a molar with a gold filling once was found in a jewelry box.

The worst though was someone’s catheter bag. Pike lowers her voice and crinkles her nose as she retells the story: “The bag was full.”

She shrugs. Such inconveniences come with the territory as UNLV’s Rebel Recycling coordinator. The operation grew out of Pike’s undergraduate thesis (B.S. Environmental Studies). She started small with all the expected discards — paper, plastic, and glass — and built a model program that collects 779 tons of materials a year.

Food waste is now composted, and a community garden is in the works. She coordinates with local nonprofits to pick up the clothing and perfectly good housewares left behind in the residence halls. When some perennially clogged toilets on campus were replaced this year with more efficient models, she salvaged them; they’ll likely be crushed to create a decorative element in landscaping. Her latest target is the 60,000 water bottles sold on campus each year.

This fall, UNLV installed filtered water stations around campus to make it easy to refill your own containers.

“It’s all about small steps,” she says. “We’re making progress every day.”

*Pike-Nordstrom, B.S. Environmental Studies, is the College of Urban Affairs 2012 Alumna of the Year. For more on this year’s honoree, see p.35.

TOO HOT TO TROT

Brian Hedlund
Life Sciences professor

This summer Brian Hedlund became his own poster child. The microbiologist frequently leads international research teams to geothermal sites across the globe. He studies the fundamentals of life that thrive at high temperatures. Such organisms and their enzymes show great potential for use in biofuel development.

Every trip starts with a detailed lecture on safety to newbie researchers and grad students on the trip. No running. No hurrying around. Get your sample and immediately step away from the water’s edge. Never turn your back on a hot spring. He likens the hot spring to a wild animal; you can’t tell when it might unleash violence.

“When you say hot spring, people think of old folks sitting in their houses, but these are really dangerous areas,” Hedlund says.

In June, he had the kind of momentary lapse that can happen after a long day in the field. He was following a small crust that he thought was a rock. In retrospect, it was really stupid. It was a lump of clay with a mineral crust that made it look solid. It gave way and his right foot went in.”

He jumped back and ripped off his shoe and sock along with layers of skin. Then came a 30-minute walk across the muddy plays in bare feet back to his car and on to the hospital. “On all our trips, we’ve never had an incident like this before. It’s embarrassing, but now I have photos and a story to share with our students.”

On the web: For extended interviews and more Extreme Jobs stories, visit news.unlv.edu.
The Bobbie Business

Former UNLV roommates like the Capriotti's restaurant chain so much they bought the company and doubled its size.

BY BRIAN SODOMA

Last summer, some 200 people showed up at the Little White Wedding Chapel for "Holy Caprimony Day." These devotees sweated in 100-degree heat for their mock marriages to The Bobbie, a Capistrami or another of their favorite Capriotti's sandwiches. That level of devotion is exactly what sold Ashley Morris and Jason Smylie on the company.

"I believe Capriotti's is one of those special brands that has an allure. The food is phenomenal. The food translates into people being passionate about the entire organization," says Morris. "People don't think of us as fast food — even though we play in the same circle — because we're better."

Marketing efforts like "Holy Caprimony Day" are one of only a few changes that have come to Capriotti's Sandwich shops since 2008, when the two UNLV graduates assembled an investment group to buy the corporation. They already owned a couple Las Vegas franchise stores.

"When we bought the company there was no marketing at all. It was pretty much just word-of-mouth," Smylie adds.

The chain's good reputation has extended all the way to the White House. On June 7, President Barack Obama gave a shout-out to the restaurant during a speech about student loans on the UNLV campus.

But both Smylie and Morris know that the basics of business rely first on a solid product. The Capriotti's brand had some great recipes, for sure, so changing the food was never a consideration for Smylie, who works as chief marketing officer today, and Morris, who is CEO.

The pair added about 25 corporate-level jobs and have nearly doubled the company in store count. Today, there are 79 Capriotti's stores in 12 states. Their goal is 500 shops within five to seven years. Revenues have climbed from about $27 million in 2007 to more than $44 million today.

As children, Morris and Smylie grew up in the same Los Angeles neighborhood. They knew of each other through mutual friends at the time. By happenstance, both moved to Las Vegas in 1990, and their families ended up living on the same street in the Desert Shores area. They eventually became college roommates at UNLV, where Smylie introduced Morris to the Bobbie, a turkey, cranberry, and stuffing sandwich. Even today, both still eat the sandwiches at least twice a week.

"It doesn't happen with a lot of brands where you have this loyalty," Morris adds. "I know people who own Taco Bells and never eat there."

After graduating with a finance degree in 2003, Morris worked for Wells Fargo in its private client services division, where he analyzed company structures from top to bottom. But he notes that his "capstone" class did the most to prepare him for owning a business. In it, he learned how to really analyze a company's strengths, weaknesses, and threats and put a growth plan together for the future. "The UNLV experience gave me the confidence at the end of the day, when looking at buying Capriotti's, that I have the skill set where I can take it to the next level and build a great company," he adds.

Smylie graduated in 2003 with a computer science degree and minor in math and then returned for his MBA, graduating in 2006. He also leveraged his experience as a software engineer with Bechtel of Nevada into improving in-store technology, such as cash registers and ordering systems, and social media marketing efforts for Capriotti's. "Everything I learned has been valuable in some way, shape, or form. Even with the math minor — I didn't think I'd use a lot of it, but it has helped me to analyze financial data and spot sales trends," he says.
 **The Doctor is ... On the Air**

With an easy-going and effervescent personality, Wachs is a natural for a talk show. “Before I came to UNLV, there was a Catch a Rising Star circuit,” she says. “I did singing and comedy and was close to pursuing show business. Then I got a full scholarship to UNLV and there was no way I was going to give that up. I was going to be the first in my family to go to college. My radio show now satisfies that hankering for show business.”

**ON THE RADIO**

When the recession hit in late 2008, Wachs found more and more patients calling her office for medical advice. They didn’t have insurance or much money and were wondering what type of specialist would be most appropriate to visit.

To test out her idea for a medical talk show, she spent $100 a week to buy airtime on a local station. By January 2009, Wachs moved to KDWN-AM 720 and by the end of 2010, she was on five days a week.

Her show is now three hours a day for five days and then on Saturday for an hour. It is broadcast on 15 AM radio stations, everywhere from Kentucky to North Dakota to California.

In January 2011, Wachs started on satellite radio after Dr. Dean Edell retired. Within one year of going on air, Wachs was syndicated and within two years was named in the top 250 Radio Talk Hosts by Talker Magazine. “Although we do take serious calls, I like to make it fun,” Wachs says. “You have to make subjects like cancer approachable. I love that I can make people laugh and feel at ease. There is a lot of negativity in the world, but if I can bring some humor and still educate, then I feel a sense of accomplishment.”

**HER UNLV DAYS**

Wachs, who was in the Honors College in addition to the College of Sciences, embraced the research and community service opportunities for students at UNLV. It also didn’t hurt that it was the peak of the Runnin’ Rebels heyday, she said. “I was a huge fan and attended every home game.”

“At the time, UNLV had an uphill battle as Las Vegas wasn’t seen as a college town,” she says. “You didn’t see that much pride, but during the time in the early ‘90s when the Runnin’ Rebels were winning, everyone was wearing UNLV gear and was proud that UNLV was their university. UNLV is an amazing university and needs the support from our city.”

After graduating, Wachs attended the University of Nevada School of Medicine. She wanted to be a surgeon but changed her mind after meeting her husband in medical school. She realized that family medicine would allow her to have a lifestyle that would be more accommodating to her future family. She has owned and operated Integrated Family Medicine in Las Vegas since 2000, and she and her husband, Corey, a chiropractor, have two kids.

Wachs is a fixture in the Las Vegas community, working with charities such as Opportunity Village, FASTKids, St. Jude’s Ranch for Children, and the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. She also lectures students at UNLV, Touro University, and the University of Nevada School of Medicine.

More: The Dr. Daliah Show broadcasts weekdays nationally on Sirius XM channel 165 and in the Las Vegas area on KDWN-AM 720. Visit doctoraldaliah.com for times.
**Class Notes**

**1970s**

Betty Costel College Alumna, ’72 (Govich, ’70). BKACS, was named the Macomber Elise National Foundation Community Investment Program volunteer of the Year at the Elin National Convention. She was selected for her outstanding fishery project at Mater School and ability to combine success in both work and other projects. She received $10,000 in financial assistance for her community project. She is Vice President of her local community project. She serves on the Board of the Public Library of Superior, Wis. She retired as a geologist. She worked for 33 years at the U.S. Coast Guard District 2 in Duluth. She and her husband, Arthur, live in St. George.

**1980s**

Gary Maida, ’84, Toronto, Canada, on their boat finished Nationals in Anaheim, Calif., in July. He is regional vice president of operations for his company. Previously, he worked at the UNLV library and at the Boulder Building Hoover Dam. He is the author of Building Hoover Dam: An Oral History of the Structure, is located on the grounds of the UNLV. He also drives him.

**1990s**

Gary McBride, ’99 (BA, Philosophy), describes himself as a malevolent contemplation focusing on the perverted consciousness. He lives in the high desert near Reno.

**Notes**

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BY BRIAN SODOMA

Chad Belding

’99 BS Business Administration

Chad Belding feels like he’s batting a thousand these days. The former Rebel baseball player transitioned from slagging homemakers to shooting food and other game — with the cameras rolling. Some 45 million viewers now tune into his show The Final Fish, Dead Dog Bidding, and others on the Sportsman Channel.

Belding launched Banded.com with some 700 hunting products and is embarking on a new television show, The Syndicate. Like his other shows, it involves the behind-the-scenes life of a hunt, not just the big moments.

“For the most part, we try to keep the cameras rolling from the time we leave the driveway. We want to capture the flat tires and everything that goes into a hunt ... campfires, friends in a living room cutting up,” Belding explains.

Belding’s hunting shows have kept him connected with professional athletes, baseball and others, who accompany him on hunts and fall in love with the sport themselves.

“Now I get to hunt with major leaguers, and sometimes they’re thinking they’d like to trade jobs with me,” he adds with a laugh.

Belding’s commitment to learning more about the television world also drives him. With a seemingly continuous supply of ideas and storyboards for other shows, he still finds himself amazed at the power of television. He foresees his hunting shows, which cover hunts in the Reno area to Colorado, Alaska, British Columbia, and numerous other locations, hitting the mainstream.

“We can jump from 45 million viewers to 25 or 35 million and that’s huge,” he adds.

Missing from the mix is perhaps Belding’s biggest fan, his late father, who introduced him to the sport. If his father were alive, Belding could see him having a role in the shows.

“The most prestigious award Belding has received for his shows is the National Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters’ Sports Media Pilgrimage Award from UNLV special education teacher Tom Hoard, who introduced him to the sport. If his father were alive, Belding could see him having a role in the shows.

“Now I get to hunt with major leaguers, and sometimes they’re thinking they’d like to trade jobs with me,” Belding adds.

More: For listings of Belding’s shows, visit theadddgwaking.com or thefishlife.com.

The Reno native played for Rebel baseball coach Fred Dallimore, a mentor and friend with whom he still speaks weekly. Belding came to UNLV with hopes of eventually making the Big League, but admits he barely made the cut in Division II baseball. “I miss baseball. Sometime I see a game and think ‘I can hit that guy,’” he says.

Baseball, and more specifically the experience at UNLV, taught him a lot about the discipline needed to build an outdoorsman alive, Belding could see him having a role in the company. “He would be a huge personality on the shows, bring up his humor and knowledge to every episode. I know he is looking down on us and his family,” he adds.

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2012 COLLEGE HONOREES

Boyd School of Law: The late William Michael Kulicka, ’04 JD, was truly a civil servant. When he graduated in 2004, he was recognized for his public service efforts with the presentation of a Dean’s Award. Kulicka’s law practice specialized in criminal and family law. He was recognized every year since 2008 for completing more than 100 hours in pro bono work, making him a member of Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada’s 100 Hours Club. Kulicka frequently served as a judge for the law school’s mock appellate argument competitions and client counseling competitions. He was also an enthusiastic mentor to the students in the Partners in Pro Bono Program. Kulicka passed away following his battle with pancreatic cancer shortly after he was selected for this award.

Hornors College: Dr. Daliah Zodieru Wachs—see “The Doctor Is...” On the Air,” page 32.

Fine Arts: Eric Whitten, ’95 BA Music Education, is composer in residence at Sidney Sussex College at Cambridge University in the UK. He was turned to classical music relatively late in life, when he joined UNLV’s choir and performed Mozart’s Requiem. Since then, Whitten has gone on to compose and conduct multiple albums (Light & Gold won a Grammy in 2012) and has written for world-renowned orchestras. Whitten has served as UNLV’s wind and percussion director for three years and is now the director of UNLV’s wind and percussion department. He is also a member of the UNLV Wind Ensemble and the UNLV Wind Symphony, which is the only music program at UNLV to perform on the main stage of the UNLV Fine Arts Concert Hall.

Liberal Arts: Eric Talbert, ’93 BS Psychology, is the executive director of the Virginia War Memorial Foundation and oversees the Virginia War Memorial National Cemetery in Chesapeake, Virginia. Talbert has been with the foundation since 2000, where he has served as the vice president and executive director. Prior to joining the foundation, Talbert was a public affairs officer for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and a communications manager for the National Association of Multi-State Companies. He is a former Marine Corps captain and served as a public affairs officer for the 1st Marine Division during Operation Desert Storm.

School of Dental Medicine: William Dahlke, ’10 DMD, is a professor of periodontics at the University of California, San Francisco, and an associate professor of periodontics at the University of California, Los Angeles. Dahlke is the director of the periodontics program at the University of California, San Francisco, and the director of the periodontics program at the University of California, Los Angeles. Dahlke is also the director of the periodontics program at the University of California, San Francisco, and the director of the periodontics program at the University of California, Los Angeles.

UNLV Alumni Association Homecoming Awards

ALUMNI OF THE YEAR

Tony F. Sanchez III

BLA Political Science

Tony F. Sanchez III is NV Energy’s senior vice president of government and community strategy. He oversees all regulatory and government strategy, legislative communications, community relations, and economic development. In 2009, Sanchez worked with UNLV to create a curriculum for renewable energy. Two years later, and with a grant from NV Energy Foundation, a start-up in sustainability and renewable studies is founded in his honor. His volunteer activities include serving on the NV-energy’s Business Roundtable and the Excellence Advisory Board. He also serves on the UNLV Alumni Association Board of Directors, 2003-09. He and his wife Elaine Sanchez, ’95 BA Criminal Justice, have four children.

Hughes College of Engineering: Judy Walker Belaski, ’97 BS Civil Engineering and ’10 MBA, is the founder and president of Walker Engineering, LLC. She is a Las Vegas native who has built her career in Southern Nevada and has always supported UNLV. Belaski is a partner of the UNLV College of Engineering through the Dean’s Associates program and is serving on the Advisory Board for the Howard R. Hughes College of Engineering. She is also on the alumni committee for the Executive Master’s in Business Administration program and a member of the College of Business Alumni Association.

Lee Business School: Janet Husmann Lowe, ’06 MFA in Creative Writing, is the author of “Chasing that Sunset,” a collection of poems about the life of a woman struggling with addiction. Lowe is a member of the Nevada Writers Guild and has been a featured speaker at numerous events, including the Nevada Writers Guild’s annual conference and the Nevada State University’s annual creative writing festival. She is also a founding member of the Nevada Women’s Writers’ Association and a member of the Nevada Writers Guild.

School of Medicine: Stephanie Reidy Guerra, ’01 BA English, is the author of “The Art of Empathy: A Guide to Mental Health, Personal Growth, and Life-Changing Conversations,” a book focused on empathy and relationships. Guerra is a former English teacher and a certified yoga instructor. She is a member of the Nevada Women’s Writers’ Association and the Nevada Writers Guild.

School of Nursing: Linda Anne Silvestri, ’81 BS Nursing, is the former executive director of the Nevada Division of Public Health and the former executive director of the Nevada Health Enhancement Program. Silvestri is a former nurse and has been a nurse for more than 30 years. She is a member of the Nevada Women’s Writers’ Association and the Nevada Writers Guild.

Silver State Award: Fred B. Cox has been a donor, industrial partner, advocate, and role model for the students of the Hughes College of Engineering and UNLV in general. He and his wife, Harriet Cox, have donated more than $1 million to UNLV and have been instrumental in recruiting many more donors to the college. In 1998, he established the Cox Engineering Endowment with the help of the UNLV Foundation. That year, the College of Engineering celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Fred and Harriet Cox Senior Design Competition and Dinner. He sits on the Engineering Advisory Board and the Mendenhall Innovation Program Advisory Board.

Outstanding Faculty Member: Christopher Keaneey has received numerous awards for his teaching and research in the field of education. He is currently a professor at the College of Education at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

On Your Mark, Get Set, Go! UNLV Alumni Association Homecoming Weekend is scheduled for October 26-28. The weekend kicks off with a tailgate party on the UNLV campus, followed by a football game against San Jose State University. The weekend also includes a variety of other events, including a homecoming parade, a homecoming dance, and a homecoming football game.

UNLV SUPPORTERS

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2000s

Chris Adkins, ’03 BS Administration, owns a food distribution business and is a member of the UNLV Alumni Association. Adkins has been involved with the UNLV Alumni Association for more than 10 years. He has served as a regional director and has been active in various alumni events and activities. He is a former UNLV football player and was drafted by the San Diego Chargers in the 2004 NFL draft.

Stephen Reilly, ’01 BA Business Administration, owns a landscape design company in Las Vegas. Reilly has been involved with the UNLV Alumni Association for more than 10 years. He has served as a regional director and has been active in various alumni events and activities. He is a former UNLV football player and was drafted by the San Diego Chargers in the 2004 NFL draft.
THE PROVIDED DOCUMENT IS A CONFESSION TO THE DEATH OF A WOMAN CALLED JEREMY MILLER, MARRIED TO COLEEN LAVENDER MILLER, ON AUGUST 3, 2010 AT LAKE SWIM LAS VEGAS. COLEEN LAVENDER MILLER WAS A NATIVE OF MEXICO AND A UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN ALUMNA. SHE LIVES IN MIAMI.

ROBERT BLAKELY, DISTRICT 2, SINCE 2008
Finding funding sources for higher education to supply funding for the state will be one of the challenges facing the Board of Regents this coming year, Blakely says. “We have an obligation to the taxpayer to find a balance in the funding between state and federal sources.”

Blakely would like to be able to restore the pay that professors and staff have lost in recent years. “It’s hard to predict right now what it will be able to do,” he says, adding that he is hopeful that the system’s economic position is about to improve.

He also wants to stabilize the cost of higher education so that a college degree is affordable for most Nevadans. He serves as vice chair of the Cultural Diversity Committee as well as the Workforce, Research and Economic Development Committee. Trachok adds that his continued presence will be more entrepreneurial and will give each member control over the future of his or her institutions.

Trachok says he is troubled by the state’s high rate of school dropouts and low rate of post-secondary graduates per capita. “We must change this dynamic,” he says. “We need to double our number of graduates from our public high schools and give every student the opportunity to meet the standards of today’s economy.”

Kevin Melcher, District 8, Since 2010
Emphasizing the role higher education plays in the state’s economic recovery will be crucial to the NSHE, says Melcher. “I am committed to ensuring that state’s support over that time frame will not double. We need to leverage our facilities and facilities with e-learning and other technologies while at the same time increasing funding from other sources.”

Trachok serves on the Board’s Academic and Student Affairs; Cultural Diversity; Workforce, Research and Economic Development Committee.

He is an attorney with an international business law degree for the past 12 years and has served as an adjunct law professor for 30 years.

**OBITUARIES**

Richard Beckman, associate professor of accounting at the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), passed away on July 20, 2010. He attended UNR from 1954 to 1959 and received his bachelor’s degree in business administration before being hired as an assistant professor at UNR in 1962. He was promoted to associate professor in 1967 and to professor in 1972. Beckman served as chair of the university’s Accounting Department from 1975 to 2006. He also served as the university’s associate vice president for academic affairs and dean of the College of Business Administration from 2006 to 2010. He is survived by his wife, Carol, and two children, John and Brian.

Richard Beckman's contributions to the field of accounting have been significant. He was known for his expertise in cost accounting and financial management, and he was a respected scholar in the field. He was a member of several professional organizations, including the American Accounting Association and the Institute of Management Accountants. He was also a dedicated teacher, mentoring many students who went on to successful careers in academia and industry. His legacy will continue to inspire future generations of accountants. His family and friends will miss him deeply.

**NOTES**

Robert Blakely, a native of Nevada, graduated from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, in 1970 with a bachelor’s degree in business administration. He served as a member of the Nevada State Assembly from 1978 to 1982 and as a member of the Nevada Board of Regents from 1982 to 1990. He has been a member of the Board of Regents since 1990.

Robert Blakely is survived by his wife, Carol, and two children, John and Brian. He is also survived by his mother, Margaret, and his father, John. He was preceded in death by his brother, Robert, who died in 2009.

Robert Blakely was a dedicated public servant who served his state with distinction. He was a leader in higher education, and he leaves behind a legacy of service to Nevada. His memory will live on through those he inspired and touched during his lifetime.

**CLASS NOTES**

38

John ‘Jack’ Deters, a professor of educational administration, died Sept. 1, 2010.

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Hidden Blooms

UNLV offered fertile ground to Wes Niles. When the biologist and taxonomist came here in 1969, there was little recordkeeping on native plant life in Southern Nevada. So Niles dug in and over the next 30 years amassed roughly 75,000 specimens in the Wes Niles Herbarium, a sort of library for plant species. The unique collection, tucked up on the third floor of the Juanita Greer White Life Sciences building, includes this variety of buckwheat named for him.

Researchers in other locales can’t visit every single plant’s location, so they rely heavily on places like herbaria. They ship plants all over the world. While the goal is to document plant life indigenous to the Mojave, Niles and his many graduate students through the years have taken samples of nonindigenous plants in the area as well. Their work helped bring understanding to the types of allergens in the area and how wildfires are linked to the excessive biomass from non-native flora.

“One can get the history of the invasion of nonnative plants of Southern Nevada right here,” Niles says.

— BRIAN SODOMA
People think they know Las Vegas.

But they won’t know this town until they’ve seen it through the eyes of a Rebel. Only then will they understand this city’s heart. Only then will they feel Vegas’ soul. This city, where the world comes to play, is the same place where those of us living the Scarlet & Gray go to work every day to earn everything we have. And that’s just the way we like it. Because we are Rebels. And Las Vegas is our town.