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Inside UNLV

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$3 Million Pledged for Science, Engineering and Technology Building

UNLV has received commitments of more than $3 million in support of its Science, Engineering and Technology Building, President Carol C. Harter announced recently.

The gifts, made through the UNLV Foundation, are from some of the university's long-time supporters — Sierra Health Services and one of its subsidiaries, Health Plan of Nevada; Fred and Harriet Cox; Bechtel National, the parent company of Bechtel Nevada; and PBS&J. Harter announced the donations during her 2003 State of the University address in September.

Sierra Health Services and its subsidiary company Health Plan of Nevada are partnering to give $1.35 million. Fred Cox, a member of the UNLV Foundation Board of Trustees, and his wife, Harriet, have committed $1 million; Bechtel National will contribute $500,000. PBS&J, an engineering firm with local offices in Henderson, has promised $150,000 ($100,000 toward the building and $50,000 for other purposes in the College of Engineering).

The combined gift of $1.35 million from Sierra Health and Health Plan of Nevada is the largest single contribution toward the building to date.

Camera Donation Aids Disability Center

Camera Donation Aids Disability Center

by Cate Weeks

The donation of a $170,000 camera system used by video game designers is aiding interdisciplinary research on human movement and should help a newly created campus center attract research funding.

When video game maker Westwood Studios closed its Las Vegas operation, the company's co-founder, Louis Castle, donated the high-tech Vicon motion-capture equipment to UNLV. The kinematic equipment uses 12 cameras and reflective tape-covered balls to generate three-dimensional computer images.

"The equipment is essential to creating realistic video game characters," said kinesiology professor John Mercer. "It will help researchers quantify what human movement looks like."

Mercer and Ed Neumann of civil engineering are co-directors of the Center on Disability and Applied Biomechanics, which was established by the Board of Regents at its June meeting. One of the goals of the center will be to look at the sport, workplace, and home activities of disabled people to determine how to improve design features of orthotic and prosthetic devices.

Mercer and Neumann plan to use the equipment to develop an interactive training CD for orthopedic specialists involved with the fitting of lower-limb prosthetic devices. The CD would allow...
On the State of the University
by Carol C. Harter
UNLV President

I was pleased to deliver my ninth State of the University address recently to the campus community. I always enjoy making this presentation; it is a wonderful opportunity to discuss our recent successes and to look ahead, and I am grateful to see so many familiar faces from the campus there. Those who attend the address—and this extends to many supporters from the Southern Nevada community in the audience as well—seem to share in my sense of pride in UNLV as I discuss our accomplishments and my vision for the university’s future.

This year, in addition to announcing some exciting and significant donations (see page 1 of this publication), I focused much of my presentation on the importance of research on our campus. As many of you know, UNLV is actively pursuing an agenda to become a major research university. It seems, however, that what this means to our campus and our state remains a bit ambiguous to some, particularly those in the community. Hence, I feel it has become critical for us to communicate more clearly and broadly the goals of our research agenda.

First, it should be noted that our agenda is not solely aimed at elevating UNLV’s prestige on a national level, although this is an outcome we also hope to achieve. Rather, it is based on UNLV’s goal to become a flagship university that both transforms and improves its community. This ambition is perhaps best characterized with a new and somewhat colorful term I learned from the consultants at a recent NCAA retreat: “a big, hairy, audacious goal.” The “big, hairy, audacious goal,” as described by Tecker Consultants, is simpler and perhaps more inspirational than a mission statement—and often more memorable.

In any event, this type of goal helps us identify a unifying focal point of effort for our institution and serves as a catalyst for team spirit; it is intended to be clear and compelling and to apply to the entire organization. I have grown quite fond of the concept of the “big, hairy, audacious goal” in the months since I learned of it and have developed such a goal for UNLV; I shared it recently with the campus community at the State of the University address and will present it to the Planning Council for their comments as well:

“To enhance our presence as one of the major higher education resources in the Southwest, transforming and adding value to the community (local, national, and international) in every way through the creation of a superior learning environment; the development of meaningful research, original scholarship, and creative performance; and, by manifesting a commitment to service beginning in Las Vegas and Southern Nevada.” I believe it captures quite succinctly many of the ideas that have been discussed on campus for some time.

To reach this goal, UNLV must produce the finest educated citizens and leaders, help solve...
History's Fry Earns Distinguished Professor Honor

by Diane Russell

Unassuming and soft spoken, Joseph “Andy” Fry has spent the last 27 years at UNLV teaching history to more than a generation of Nevedans. The Vietnam War and U.S. foreign relations — with special attention to the role of the U.S. South in those areas — are his fields of expertise, and he enjoys sharing these academic passions with his students.

Along with the teaching, of course, he has conducted considerable scholarship, resulting in three books, 24 articles in refereed journals, and 20 reviews. He is editor of the “Biographies in American Foreign Policy” book series, and has served on the editorial board of the journal Diplomatic History.

And along the way he has managed to fit in a variety of administrative duties, ranging from department chair, to associate dean, to executive assistant to UNLV President Carol C. Harter. More recently, he chaired the high-profile search committee whose work led to the hiring of Mike Hamrick as athletics director.

While he has received a number of accolades from both the university and the College of Liberal Arts for his work over the years — including the Morris Award for Teaching, the Morris Award for Scholarship, and the Schmiedel Award for University Service — he received the highest honor of this academic career when he was named distinguished professor earlier this year.

The title of distinguished professor, which is bestowed by the president based upon a recommendation by a university committee, is not an annual award. In fact, it has been bestowed only 12 times previously. The honor is granted only after serious consideration by a highly select group of faculty.

Nominees must have demonstrated extraordinary qualifications both in research and scholarship and must have achieved national and international recognition in their fields of study.

“Andy’s career at UNLV has been defined not only by his commitment to teaching but by his commitment to excellence,” Harter said. “His contributions to the field of history are invaluable and have enriched the educational experiences of countless students over the years. We are privileged to have him among our faculty.”

History department chair Hal Rothman said, “Andy Fry is one of the most original and innovative teachers on the UNLV campus. His scholarship is cutting-edge, revising every standard cliché about the South and American foreign policy. Nationally recognized and widely respected, Andy Fry has more than earned the coveted title of distinguished professor. The appointment is a fitting tribute to his accomplishments at the university.”

For his part, Fry said of receiving the honor, “I was really flattered and excited. It puts me in great company.”

Fry said that when he received the job offer in 1975 to come to UNLV, he wouldn’t even have dreamed he’d still be in the same job more than 25 years later.

“I was delighted to get the call to come to UNLV,” Fry said. “It was exceedingly hard to find a teaching position in 1975. When Vern Matteson, who was chair of the history department, called to offer me the job, I accepted immediately without asking any questions. I remember Vern saying, ‘Don’t you want to know what the salary is and how many students you will be teaching?’”

“I told him, ‘Yes, of course,’ but the fact is I was teaching 300 students a quarter as an instructor at Virginia Polytechnic and I knew I wouldn’t be teaching any more than that at UNLV. As for the salary being offered, my appointment in Virginia was about to end and I just needed a salary, period.”

“I think I had sort of expected to go back to my home state of West Virginia or to Virginia some day,” said Fry, who has degrees from Davis and Elkins College and from the University of Virginia, “but I found I liked it here at UNLV. It has been an immensely interesting and exciting place to be.”

“The (history) department has remained one whose members concentrate on students, teaching, and scholarship rather than being diverted by pointless squabbles,” he said. “I support my colleagues nominating me for recognition as a distinguished professor and for their indispensable help and support.”

AS FOR FRY’S future, he said, “I’ve already had a sexual harassment complaint, so I will be teaching students a quarter as an instructor at Virginia Polytechnic and I knew I wouldn’t be teaching any more than that at UNLV. As for the salary being offered, my appointment in Virginia was about to end and I just needed a salary, period.”

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“After 27 years I can still say that the vast majority of the tasks involved in my job are enjoyable. That’s a wonderful thing to be able to say about one’s career.”

BOOKS BY ANDY FRY
Chosen as a History Book Club selection

John Tyler Morgan and the Search for Southern Autonomy (1992)


New UCCSN Sexual Harassment Policy Takes Effect

by Cate Weeks

The UCCSN Board of Regents recently approved a new statewide policy regarding sexual harassment and complaint procedures. The new policy replaces the UNLV-established 1966 policy. “Fortunately, UNLV already had a sexual harassment policy and a well-established system for investigating complaints,” said Mike Sauer, associate vice president for administration. “We are now in the process of modifying our old policy to be in line with the new UCCSN policy.”

The new policy requires human resources to document that all employees receive a copy of the policy, which also must be posted on UNLV’s website.

“Human resources must develop procedures to document that all employees — not just full-time employees, but part-time instructors and student employees as well — have seen the policy,” Sauer said. “That documentation will become part of the employee’s personnel file.”

Human resources is also responsible for tracking complaints. It will maintain a database on such complaints and will assign trained investigators to them.

Sauer said that employees can submit complaints to an appropriate administrator (such as a dean or departmental director), or to human resources, or directly to one of the campus’ sexual harassment investigators. Those investigators are Marti Ash (ext. 5-3571, Phil Burns (ext. 5-4076), Marc Cardinalli (ext. 5-1879), Ann Casados-Mueller (ext. 5-1597), and Karen Strong (ext. 5-4074).

As an investigation continues, human resources will periodically check the status of the complaint.

“Human resources will also develop a database so we can create an annual report for the Regents and the president regarding statistical information on sexual harassment complaints,” he said. “This is something that UNLV has already been doing through our administrative code officer; the policy just changes who is responsible for maintaining this information statewide.”

The new policy will not affect how investigations are conducted, said Marc Cardinalli, administrative code officer. “The methods we use for investigating claims are not changing. Once human resources assigns an investigator, the investigator meets with the individual filing the complaint, potential witnesses, and the person who may be committing the harassment. The investigator then tries to resolve the matter among the parties.”

The investigator’s recommendations are then sent to the appropriate administrative officer, such as a supervisor or dean, as well as the vice president over that area. If further disciplinary action is called for, the complaint is turned over to human resources in the case of classified personnel; to the administrative code officer for professional staff; or to the student judicial affairs officer.

Sauer said the goal of the statewide policy is the same as UNLV’s goal in instituting its original policy in 1996: to reduce incidences of sexual harassment.

Cardinalli added, “Since 1996, the number of complaints has certainly gone down because UNLV had put in place a sexual harassment policy. And, not a single lawsuit has been filed in that same time.”

A link to the policy can be found on the UNLV human resources website at http://hr.unlv.edu/.
From the Dean’s Desk
by Martha Watson
Dean of the Greenspun College of Urban Affairs

Created in 1996 as part of UNLV’s strategic plan, the Greenspun College of Urban Affairs absorbed units from across campus that reached out into the community with applied research, internships, and collaborative problem solving. “Making a difference” became a shorthand way of describing the college’s mission and focus. Now, some seven years later, by any measure the college is a dynamic presence in the university and in the community.

For example, for the last two years, we have experienced record growth in our undergraduate enrollments with scores of new students choosing to major in our programs. Some of this growth has come from our new undergraduate major in human services/counseling, which has responded to a community need for alcohol and drug counselors. But our well-established programs in criminal justice and communication have also experienced unprecedented growth; those programs have, respectively, the third and sixth largest enrollment in majors in the university. Our graduate programs, particularly those in social work, public administration, and counseling, make us second only to education as a producer of graduate PTFAs.

But burgeoning enrollments are only one sign of the health of the college. Since its inception, the college has quadrupled its grants and contracts. Daily we are building new collaborations with the community in the areas of child welfare, mental health, social services, and criminal justice. College faculty are recognized throughout the region and the nation for their expertise and willingness to work with the community.

We are especially proud of our two new centers. The Center for Urban Partnerships is designed to serve the community by providing services in training, program development, and program assessment. Currently, the center is working with a variety of agencies in these areas, and the demands for its services are increasing rapidly. This year the Legislature also approved the Center for the Analysis of Crime Statistics to be housed in the department of criminal justice. By gathering and analyzing crime data, the center, directed by professor Dick McCorkle, will be able to help local and regional officials develop and implement public policy to respond to community needs.

The Greenspun College’s service to the community extends beyond teaching, research, and community collaborations. KUNV-FM, Jazz 91.5, is the public radio station for the university. The station is known for its jazz format; many of the volunteer DJs are closely connected with the local jazz scene. On weekends, KUNV expands its format to include programming that reflects the diversity of the community. Among the only Hawaiian music show regularly scheduled on public radio in the country — and the community responds with generous support.

The faculty, staff, and students in the college take pride in their contributions to the community. With the creation of a new interdisciplinary Ph.D. in public affairs this year, the college looks forward to finding new ways of “making a difference” in Las Vegas.

Business
Nasar Daneshvary has left the position of associate dean and director of MBA programs for the college to become the university’s associate provost for academic resources. Daneshvary provided invaluable service to the college for 14 years. Effective Sept. 1, Rich Lapidus became associate dean for administration and Melissa Jamison became associate dean for graduate programs and research. Lapidus had most recently served as chair of the department of marketing, while Jamison had served as coordinator of international business programs. Both will continue to have some teaching responsibilities.

Finance professor Robert Chatfield will assume the role of director of MBA programs for the college. He will have responsibility for all aspects of the MBA programs, including the executive MBA. Lisa Davis will assume responsibility for executive MBA recruiting as well as MBA recruiting. Her new title will be MBA programs recruiting director. She has been working with the college for six years as undergraduate advisor, senior undergraduate advisor, and MBA recruiting director.

Sharon Fusco has transitioned back to the college’s Nevada Small Business Development Center as program development and outreach manager.

Dental Medicine
Dental school orientation was held the week of Aug. 25. New students registered that Monday and met faculty members during a breakfast event.

During the first day of orientation, students learned about financial aid problem-solving, were issued their laptop computers, and participated in a hands-on WebCT training session.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, students received information about the availability of campuswide student services, the curriculum of the dental school, and opportunities for student research. Chris Forsch, a representative of the Nevada Division of Health, presented an introduction to oral health in Nevada.

Thursday was a fun day that featured the second annual Mt. Charleston outing. Hiking, games, and a barbecue were part of this family-inclusive event.

On Friday, orientation week ended with the second White Coat Ceremony, led by President Carol C. Harter, and featuring Patrick Ferrillo, dean of the School of Dental Medicine and vice provost of the Division of Health Sciences. Dignitaries from the Nevada Dental Association and the American Dental Association also attended.

It was a good start to the second year of the dental school. Next year’s orientation of the third class of students will take place at the new Shadow Lane campus.

Education
The college’s primary mission is to provide professional development and preparation for a variety of programs that serve the public — including programs in the area of health promotion and education.

An expert panel workshop titled “Environmental Health Promotion” that grew out of a grant obtained by professor Richard Papenfuss; Charles Begin, director of the Center for Health Promotion; Paul Ferguson, vice president for research and graduate studies; and Dean Gene Hall is one example of such a program. The panel was sponsored by UNLV’s Center for Health Promotion in partnership with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry and the Association of Occupational and Environmental Health at the Centers for Disease Control.

This workshop defined the field of environmental health promotion and established a national agenda for research, practice, and policy. The collaborating disciplines were environmental health sciences, health promotion, and social change.

An expert panel of 30 renowned professionals addressed the potential for integrating health promotion practice with environmental health issues. It provided the experts a forum at which to review, analyze, and discuss health promotion issues and practices that are relevant to strengthening environmental health practice. The six broad topics addressed were health promotion models and theories for environmental health, social determinants, environmental epidemiology, interventions and evaluation, environmental justice, and theories of social change. The hosts of the workshop, Papenfuss, Regin, Ferguson, and Hall, also presented the session on “Theories of Social Change.”

The workshop results will be disseminated through The Journal of Health Behavior and organizational networks to a broad national audience in the field of environmental health.

Fine Arts
The School of Architecture announces that two landscape architecture students recently won national American Society of Landscape Architects awards. Jennifer Margesson won first place in the individual undergraduate research category and Beth Scott won a commendation in the individual undergraduate design category, her second award in two years. Scott has now won in both the research and design categories. This is the fourth consecutive year that UNLV students have won national awards.

Last month, the college successfully hosted the first induction into the Nevada Entertainer/Artist Hall of Fame at UNLV. The inductees were the late Academy Award-winning director George Sidney. Speakers at the induction ceremony included actor Tony Curtis; Rosemarie Stack, the widow of actor Robert Stack; President Carol C. Harter; Dean Jeff Koew; and film professor Sean Clark. Those attending the event were presented with 100-page programs featuring some of the many celebrity photographs taken by Sidney throughout his career.

The Performing Arts Center welcomes Faith Prince on Oct. 10. Prince, a Tony Award winner, is undeniably a shining star of the Broadway stage, starring in recent hits such as Noises Off, Guys and Dolls, and Bell’s Are Ringing, The King and I, and The Little Shop of Horrors. Her recent cabaret show, “A Leap of Faith,” drew raves from the audience. The highly anticipated UNLV Fall Dance Concert will be performed Oct. 10 and 11 in the Judy Bayley Theatre.

The UNLV Symphony Orchestra hosts its annual Halloween concert at 7 p.m. Oct. 31 in Artemus W. Ham Concert Hall. Tickets are $1 for people wearing costumes to the event and $3 for others. Additional information on all October performances can be obtained by calling ext. 5-2787.

Graduate
The college conducted two orientations for graduate students at the beginning of the semester.
More than 200 new graduate students participated in the college's new student orientation. Topics included Graduate College policies and procedures, funding opportunities, and a question-and-answer session. The highlight of the orientation was a keynote address by Paul Ferguson, vice president for research and graduate studies, on the changing role of graduate students and the challenges and rewards of the graduate experience.

The Teaching and Learning Center, with sponsorship from the college, conducted a two-day workshop for new graduate teaching assistants. This workshop covered topics such as principles of effective teaching and syllabus and assignment development. The center will continue to provide professional development opportunities for graduate students throughout the year.

Honors

As of this writing, the new class recruited by the college for 2003-04 was taking shape to be larger and significantly better on paper than recent classes of new students.

Substantially more students submitted applications for admission to the college this year than last, resulting in increases in both the number of students being accepted for admission and the number being declined. As a result, the average high school unweighted GPA improved among the newly admitted freshmen. Students accepted for admission also showed significant improvements in SAT and ACT scores for incoming freshmen.

Although the college needs to continue finding ways of attracting better and better students and supporting their educational opportunities, the increased interest in the college and the increased quality of the average student is positive.

The college looks forward to improving recruitment in the future as it uses new methods of recruiting and contacting students through this entire academic year.

Law

In August, the William S. Boyd School of Law welcomed its largest entering class ever. This reflected the dramatic increase in applications that the school experienced during the most recent admissions cycle, including an increase in out-of-state applications that has occurred since the school received full accreditation from the American Bar Association in February. This year the law school also accepted a significant number of well-credentialed transfer students from other law schools.

The week before Labor Day, the entering class participated in a revamped Introduction to Law program. This year the program continued its focus on the public role and professional responsibilities of lawyers, but added more elements designed to convey the law school's expectations about the students' academic performance, and to introduce the students to the study skills and professionalism necessary to meet those expectations.

The program also introduced students to the law school's newly expanded Academic Success Program, which is designed to help them realize their full academic potential.

Guest speakers at this year's Introduction to Law program included Judge Johnnie Rawlinson of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals; U.S. District Judge Philip Pro; Deborah Agosti, chief justice of the Nevada Supreme Court; Assembly Majority Leader Barbara Buckley; Pat Flanagan, president of the Nevada Bar Association; and law school benefactor James E. Rogers.

Liberal Arts

The department of psychology continues to advance in the prominence of its faculty and in the quality and size of its student body. With the recent arrival of Jennifer Ramsey, who completed a Ph.D. at the University of Texas at Austin, the department faculty numbers 21. This is a dynamic and energetic faculty, unusually productive in the areas of research, service, and teaching.

This fall the department has more than 900 undergraduate psychology majors, placing it among the highest in the university. The Ph.D. program of the department enrolls more than 60 full-time doctoral students.

The psychology faculty continue to garner recognition and awards, both on campus and at the national level.

Professor Daniel Allen is this year's recipient of the Early Career Award of the National Academy of Neurosciences. While many neuropsychologists are recognized for their contributions to applied forensic psychology reflect a distinctive blend of clinical insight, theoretical sophistication, and scientific rigor." Sreek was the sole recipient of this award.

Libraries

The Libraries' Faculty Seminar Series is winding down but there's still time to sign up for the sessions "Competitive Intelligence" and "Online Medical Journals." "Competitive Intelligence," 12:30-1:30 p.m. Oct. 6, will showcase library materials used to enhance marketplac competitiveness through a greater understanding of a firm's competitors and the competitive environment. Business librarian Cory Tucker will discuss the legal collection and analysis of information regarding the capabilities, vulnerabilities, and intentions of business competitors, conducted by using information databases and other "open sources."

From 12:30-1:30 p.m. Oct. 15, Eva Stowers, subject librarian for the health sciences, will present "Online Medical Journals," a seminar on the full-text medical literature available via the Libraries' web resources.

Both seminars meet in the Pioche Room on the first floor of Lied Library. Please sign up in advance by calling ext. 5-2123. Don't forget that the Libraries' instruction department also offers workshops, clinics, and tours for students throughout the semester. See www.library.unlv.edu/inst/ for the full schedules of both faculty and student sessions as well as handouts and tutorials on research, evaluating web sites, citation styles, and more.

Sciences

The college is going through a transition. Dean Fred Bachhuber, professor of geosciences, has retired, and Ron Yablon has joined UNLV as the new dean. Bachhuber's retirement comes after 30 years of dedicated service to the college and the university. He will remain an active part of the college as a professor emeritus. In true "Fred" style, he leaves the college in great shape. At the start of this academic year, the college experienced an enrollment increase of more than 12 percent in all courses and the faculty had obtained more than $7 million in external grant support. The family that constitutes the College of Sciences wishes Fred well and thanks him for his leadership.

This year the college added seven new full-time faculty members, in addition to the dean, who is a microbiologist. They are Roger Kennes in the chemistry department (organic chemistry); Matthew Lachniet in the geosciences department (quaternary paleoclimatology); Brian Hedlund (microbiology) and Michelle Elekonich (physiology) in the biology department; Michael Pravica in the physics department (condensed matter/high pressure physics); and Daniel Kern (applied mathematics) and Caryn Bellomo (math education and biomathematics) in the department of mathematical sciences.

Inside UNLV

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Patrice Holrah (Writing Center) presented a paper, "Teaching Les Anne Howe’s Shell Shaker: A Tribalography Approach," at the National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute. The institute, whose theme was "Working from Community: American Indian Art and Literature in a Historical and Cultural Context," took place at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Wash.

James Cidzdiel (Harry Reid Center) presented a paper, "Mercury and Selenium in Water, Sediments, and Plants from the Las Vegas Wash, USA," at the Rocky Mountain Conference on Analytical Chemistry in July. James Pollard (Harry Reid Center) and Xiaoping Zhou (Southern Nevada Water Authority) contributed to the research.

Erika Engstrom (Communication) presented a top-three competitive paper, "Hegemony and Counter-hegemony in Bravo’s Gay Wedding," to the entertainment studies interest group of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) at its annual convention in Kansas City, Mo., in July. Engstrom also has been promoted co-second-year co-chair of the Commission on the Status of Women, and serves as the commission’s representative to the AEJMC Executive Committee.

Louis Kavouras (Dance) recently returned from Scotland where he participated in the Edinburgh Arts Festival – the largest arts festival in the world. His performance of "Joe...This Infinite Universe" earned rave reviews from critics. One critic with The List wrote, "This hour-long voyage from the Big Bang to infinity is beautiful, funny and intelligent...it's a three-dimen­sional, snappy, thought-provoking performance."

Murgot Mink Colbert (Dance) also performed for three weeks at the Edinburgh Arts Festival. Her work, "Chaconne and Other Dances" inspired the critic from Three Weeks to whimsically write, "How do they point their toes like that?" and "She has some crazy calf muscles...then again, she is a dancer." A reviewer with The Scotsman called the performance by Ballet Harter continued from page 2

many of the community's problems, strengths the area's economic base and health, and produce exceptional creative, cultural, and athletic activities. Most universities in the country that do these things best are known as Research 1 or major research universities; we aspire to that status not simply for the sake of reputation, but to help the people and the state of Nevada – to raise our state's fortunes – in every way. Let me explain how a research university can help achieve this.

Major research universities improve student learning in a variety of ways. The old chestnut that research universities abandon teaching is a myth. Great research professors are, more often than not, great teachers, as we know from long experience in the academic world. Faculty with research agendas are usually more up-to-date and closer to their colleagues across the nation; they experiment with novel methodologies and create new knowledge. One of the critical byproducts of this faculty activity is that students have access to the most current information in their disciplines, an outcome that improves student learning dramatically and directly.

Major research institutions help keep the best and brightest students in their states. Good students often investigate many institutions before deciding which to attend. They ultimately make their choice based on many factors, but certainly the perceived quality of the faculty and the opportunity to explore many different disciplines are two of those factors. Outstanding research programs, those that give the most to the community and to students, help attract great students, who, in turn, often remain here to live and work.

Major research universities are selective or highly selective in their admissions practices. This particular characteristic of the major universities is a challenge for Nevada, and particularly for UNLV, to meet. Because there are only two universities in our state and because we have a very real and deep commitment to broad access, we have been slow to come to the conclusion that we must be defined, in part, by our ability to provide students with the clearest paths to success, even if that means we must enroll as first-time students only those who are truly prepared for university work. The new standards for admission we have set – to take effect in 2006 and 2010 – will boost our efforts in this direction, especially in light of the recent large increases in enrollment at UNLV and the options provided for access at Nevada State College.

Major research universities improve the quality of life in their communities. Universities with active faculty and research agendas are hotbeds of ideas. Many of the most significant discoveries that improve the lives of individuals and nations have occurred on university campuses. These discoveries are sometimes global in that they affect people throughout the world; they are sometimes local, aimed at helping people in the university’s community. The list of UNLV research projects with very practical and beneficial outcomes is so extensive that I do not have the space here to delineate them. But it is clear that with more than 800 faculty members and more than 26,000 students, we are a remarkable resource to our community.

Major research universities have both direct and positive effects on economic development and diversification in their communities. University research creates knowledge that can lead to new technologies, commercial products, and jobs that have a significant impact on the economy. Both our Science, Engineering and Technology Building and our planned research park will contribute significantly to the university's ability to continue producing sophisticated research and promoting the unencumbered exchange of thoughts, ideas, and opinions among faculty and students of diverse disciplines. Both of these projects represent a major step in increasing momentum for Nevada's economic diversification efforts as well.

And finally, major research universities are in fact recognized as more prestigious. As the quality of education improves at UNLV, our academic reputation continues to grow; we witness this in a number of ways, but it is perhaps most evident in the rise in our ranking among major universities in recent years. When I came to UNLV in 1995, the Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching ranked the institutions in the Master’s College and Universities category, which included more than 600 institutions. In 2000, we became a member of a more select group of 110 institutions ranked in the Doctoral/Research Universities-Intensive category.

As most of you know, however, we aspire to be placed in an even more prestigious category – that of Doctoral/Research Universities-Extensive. This category is the most esteemed in higher education and is also the most transformational in terms of its effect on the community. UNLV hopes to achieve this ranking by 2010. Many excellent institutions are in this category, and you know them well: UCLA, the University of Arizona, Columbia University, Indiana University, Texas A&M University, USC, University of California-Berkeley, and the University of Nevada, Reno. We hope to join these great institutions because providing high-quality academic programs and research activities that directly benefit Nevadans is our paramount concern. We aspire to be a great university because of the rewards that will be reaped by our community and region; we believe we have the capacity to transform our community and, quite possibly, even our nation. And as we work toward that high ideal, we want to ensure that members of the campus community – as well as members of the larger community in which we reside – fully understand our goals and the impact we can have. Thus, I would encourage you to actively promote the value of research in whatever ways you can and attempt to communicate its significance widely; we must spread the word about the important work being done at UNLV.

Connally Assumes Role as Associate VP

Sam Connally, formerly assistant to the chancellor and director of human resources at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, began work as UNLV’s associate vice president for human resources and affirmative action Sept. 15. "His role here will be vital to efficiently managing growth while maintaining positive employee relations," said Juanita Pain, vice president for administration. "Of particular note is Sam’s expertise in affirmative action compliance. We also are impressed with his dedication to providing excellent service."

Connally said, "I believe the HR staff is poised and ready to move forward. It is an honor to join them as we work together to support UNLV’s educational, research, and public service mission."

Connally holds a bachelor’s degree from Principia College, a master of divinity degree from Boston University, and an MBA from Duke University.
Camera Donation
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Student prosthetists to see how minute adjustments to lower extremity prosthetics affect a person's gait.

"Right now, the fitting of orthotics/prosthetics is very much an artisan-type of skill based on visually assessing the user's gait," said Neumann, a certified prosthetist. "There are a tremendous number of scientific questions that this equipment can help us answer. Really, very little research has been done on the relationship between component design (of prosthetic devices) and activities such as sports."

Mercer will also use motion-capture equipment to further his research on running. He is studying shock attenuation and how the body absorbs the impact of each foot strike, under a variety of running conditions.

Both Mercer and Neumann expect the system to be used across campus and in the community. "I can see immediate applications for this equipment in the study of dance movement, entertainment engineering, and ergonomics," Neumann said. "For example, a collaboration between engineering and allied health researchers might look at issues related to repetitive stress injuries common to occupations like dealing cards."

"And, as the only motion-capture system for gait analysis in the valley, it could also play a useful clinical role. Most cities of this size have a gait analysis lab at a hospital to help health professionals uncover problems with patient's health related to the way they move."

Students, too, will see immediate benefits from the new equipment, Mercer said. The system is much easier to use than one of the donors that the biomechanics laboratory already had. Both graduate and undergraduate students had to train on that system for nearly a semester before they could begin actual research.

"Students were losing valuable research time just learning how to use our two-dimensional system," Mercer said. "The new equipment offers a much shorter learning curve, so I think more and more students will be able to collaborate with professors on joint research projects."

At the same time, I think it will give students a leg up for either employment or for funding for their Ph.D. research after graduation. Research labs especially look for students with experience using such state-of-the-art systems."

Both Neumann and Mercer hope to build a series of courses related to the motion of the human body around the equipment.

"They're doing great work," said Mercer, one of the donors to the Deacon Scholarship Fund. "We're hoping that the Deacon scholarship will reach endowment status soon so that the scholarships can be awarded to deserving environmental studies students, " Mercer added, "The list of what we can do with this equipment is getting longer and longer. We hope to secure outside funding in the future, but we're going to continue to use the equipment to its maximum potential."

Deacon, who joined the UNLV faculty in 1960, was the campus' second biology professor. His research focused on desert fishes. One of the highlights of his career was his role in saving the threatened, inch-long Devil's Hole pupfish from extinction; another was the creation of the environmental studies program in 1991.

Mechanical engineering professor Bob Roehm, one of the donors to the scholarship fund, said that although he and Deacon are involved in quite different fields of research, they respect Deacon's work.

"I have had him lecture in my classes. He's a fine, fine member of the university staff," said Roehm, who serves as director of UNLV's Center for Energy Research. "He is extremely thoughtful and right on the mark. He is a strong environmental advocate, which is crucial in this modern world."

"I have very high regard for him. When he retired, it seemed fitting to remember his contributions to the university with a small contribution of my own," he said.

Another donor to the scholarship fund is Debra March, director of UNLV's Lied Institute for Real Estate Studies, who first met Deacon when she enrolled in one of his ichthyology courses.

"I have known Jim for more than 25 years and have witnessed his involvement with family, friends, and students," March said. "I am especially impressed with his ability to communicate and encourage others to succeed."

"Honoring this extraordinary man by giving a scholarship in his name is a wonderful tribute."
MSU and Rec Center Projects Move Ahead

Plans are moving forward for a major renovation and expansion of the Moyer Student Union and construction of a new student recreation facility following approval by the Board of Regents in August.

"This has been a student-driven effort, and we look forward to planning these projects that are essential to improving the quality of student life at UNLV," said Rebecca Mills, vice president for student life. "Students, through surveys and focus groups, demonstrated a willingness to pay the new fees in order to bring contemporary facilities to the campus. More than 10 student groups - including CSUN and the Graduate and Professional Student Association - passed resolutions in favor of funding the projects with new student fees," Mills said.

The Moyer Student Union, which was built in 1968, was designed to serve 5,000 students. The McDermott Physical Education Complex was built in 1974 to serve 7,500. UNLV today has more than 26,000 students. "Staff members have worked diligently to make these facilities welcoming for students, but the fact remains that they are 30 years old," Mills said. The move from McDermott will result in additional space for academic classes, extended education, and athletics.

At the August meeting, board members agreed with the need for new facilities but expressed concern about the fiscal impact on students. The proposal they approved exempted students taking three or fewer credits from the fee. "We are working with student financial services to be sure that we can find ways to assist - through short-term employment and other means of assistance - in minimizing that impact. I assured the regents that we would do all that we could to ensure that the new fees did not become an obstacle for student access to classes," Mills said.

Plans call for the student union to double in size to approximately 160,000 square feet at a projected cost of $37.5 million. The addition to the student union is projected to be completed in fall 2006.

Renovation of the existing building then would be completed by summer 2007.

The new 165,000-square-foot recreation center, which will be located south of the Student Services Complex, will cost approximately $50 million. Students have indicated a desire to include such features as indoor basketball courts, an indoor track, racquetball courts, an outdoor pool, sand volleyball courts, a climbing wall, and rooms for fitness classes, cardio equipment, and weight training. The projected completion date of the project is 2007.

For additional information, go to www.unlv.edu/committees/renovation/.

Eradicating the Worm

The timing couldn't have been worse. On Aug. 20, during new student orientation and just days before fall classes started, UNLV's computers were attacked by the annoying Sasser and Blaster viruses, leaving them vulnerable to the devastating Welchia worm.

The worm swapped UNLV's network routers with so much information - including more than 30,000 e-mail messages in three hours - that the network routers shut down.

Once the problem was identified, about 4,500 computers using more recent Windows operating systems had to be disconnected from the network before a patch on a CD-ROM could be applied. Professional and classified staff members, as well as student workers like Michael Shutt (right), scrambled across campus to apply the patch. Microles infected with a worm or virus - about one in six - then had to be cleaned.

Lori Temple, associate provost for information technology, said all 75 members of the office of information technology (IT) staff were immediately assigned to fix the problem. "The staff worked incredibly hard to get the campus back up as soon as possible," she said. "We pulled from everywhere and trained administrative assistants to run the patch."

Temple (above) estimates that IT incurred about $10,750 in unexpected real costs battling the problem, including overtime pay and equipment costs. "The soft costs of lost productivity are incalculable," she added.

To avoid similar problems in the future, Temple urges staff to pay attention to the e-mails asking campus computer users to update their computer virus definitions. "Between Aug. 1 and the time this happened, we had issued seven security alerts to the campus with instructions on how to apply patches and update virus definitions," she said. "Still, we had one in six machines actually infected."

UNLV Launches New Undergraduate Admissions Website

A new undergraduate admissions website, launched in September, gives prospective undergraduates a single point of entry for all university admission information.

Once students log on to the site, they are led through a series of information specific to their academic status. Checklists, including information on how to apply, when to apply, what to do after you've applied, and what to do after you've been admitted, are just a sampling of the helpful references listed.

The new site resulted from the work of a committee that included representatives from the offices of marketing and public relations, web services, undergraduate recruitment, and student enrollment services.

For more information, click on the "Thinking About Attending UNLV" icon on the UNLV home page or visit http://www.unlv.edu/admissions.