Las Vegas is regarded as the center of innovation in the gaming industry, and a new course this fall at UNLV will give students the chance to learn directly from local industry leaders what it takes to bring their gaming ideas to life.

The Dr. Mark Yoseloff Gaming Innovation Program, offered through the UNLV Harrah Hotel College, will launch in August with a course on gaming commercialization. Undergraduate and graduate students will learn how to design advanced casino games for casinos and the Internet, walk through the patent process, develop business strategies, and receive mentorship from top industry experts. The program is made possible through a $250,000 gift from the Yoseloff Family Charitable Foundation.

“Technology is driving the gaming industry like never before, and we want to give students the tools they’ll need to succeed in an increasingly competitive field,” says Yoseloff, gaming industry leader, former CEO of SHFL Entertainment Inc., and trustee on the UNLV Foundation board. “Gaming companies want more input from employees who understand the intersection of gaming with math, psychology, business, and sociology, as it’s these employees who will shape the future of the industry with an infusion of solid new ideas.”

A competition will mark the end of each semester. The Yoseloff gift will fund cash prizes, and the students with the most successful projects will get marketing and legal guidance to help them develop their products for the market.

As the program evolves, officials expect it will expand into a yearlong course with dedicated sections on innovation in entertainment, security, and productivity.

“This program solidifies UNLV’s reputation as the leader in hospitality education by placing our students at the forefront of innovations in the gaming industry,” says UNLV President Neal Smatresk. “Our students will learn directly from top minds in the gaming industry and our International Gaming Institute, setting them up to become the innovators we need to maintain Las Vegas’ role as the global intellectual capital for gaming.”

Faculty in the Hotel College and its International Gaming Institute, along with Yoseloff, will teach the course through the college’s gaming management concentration. Local industry and legal experts will participate as guest speakers.

Sun Shines for UNLV Solar Decathletes

Building a sustainable solar-powered home in one of the harshest environments on earth is the challenge being enthusiastically undertaken by members of UNLV’s DesertSol Decathletes. Team Las Vegas, a collaboration of architecture, engineering, business, communications, and hotel administration students will compete in the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon 2013 in Irvine, Calif., in October. This elite competition features 20 collegiate teams from around the globe.

Team Las Vegas has already won two Rebel Awards for Outstanding Collaborative Program. The 754-square-foot, net-zero-energy house is under construction on UNLV’s Paradise campus and will be trucked to California this fall. Meet team members and follow their progress at solardecathlon.unlv.edu.

Special thanks to NV Energy and Marnell Companies for their early support of DesertSol. Also, thanks to:

Silver Level Sponsors: Bombard Renewable Energy • NanoWall • Nevada State Contractors Board • UNLV College of Engineering, School of Architecture, Graduate College, and Urban Sustainability Initiative

Bronze Level Sponsors: Bosch Home Appliances • Cashman Equipment • Deco Lights • Mendenhall Smith

Green Level Sponsors: TimberSil of Texas • Tronox • Uponor

View an animated walk-through of DesertSol at solardecathlon.unlv.edu.
Welcome from the Executive Director

The change of seasons can be subtle in our desert landscape, but there is no denying the lengthening days, rising temperatures, and drying grasses of approaching summer. On campus, distinct rituals signal when change is in the wind, and the most eagerly anticipated is Commencement. More than 2,700 students were awarded diplomas at UNLV’s 50th Commencement in May, becoming the newest of UNLV’s 100,000+ alumni. Our heartiest congratulations to them all!

In this edition of Giving Matters, we talk with three young alumni who learned early on about “paying it forward” so that other students might have the same opportunities they did. James Arnold ’06, Emily Hartnett ’09, and Michael Iglinski ’04 are inaugural members of the UNLV Foundation’s new Young Alumni President’s Associates group.

We also examine the other end of the giving spectrum with the launch of a new column called Masters of Philanthropy, showcasing donors who have been giving to UNLV for 30 or more consecutive years. Our first profile features Joyce Mack, revered matriarch of the celebrated Mack family and an all-around amazing woman whom I am delighted to call a friend.

Whether you’re a first-time donor or a seasoned philanthropist, your contributions to UNLV make a difference, every day of the year. Thank you for your generosity, and have a happy summer!

Nancy Strouse
Executive Director, UNLV Foundation
Senior Associate Vice President for Development

P.S. A much-anticipated fall tradition is the UNLV Foundation Annual Dinner. For news, please visit foundation.unlv.edu/dinner2013.

Faces of Scholarship:
Horacio Guerra
Finds Clues to a Cure

On the common outside UNLV’s Life Sciences Building, a couple of students glide by on skateboards and many more bask in the warm sun, reading or texting. It is an idyllic April scene, and a lot of talk around campus is about spring break and the Final Four. But step inside, enter an unassuming laboratory, and there you’ll find Horacio Guerra absorbed in a far more serious — some might even say life-and-death — endeavor. The 22-year-old Honors College undergrad is part of a team of UNLV researchers who think they just might be on their way to finding a cure for AIDS.

Guerra, a senior, is working with other students and post-doctoral fellow Christy Strong in Professor Martin Schiller’s life sciences lab. The team has created a synthetic protein that is expected to clear HIV from infected cells. Guerra recently presented the research at the National Institutes of Health in Washington, D.C. It is currently being tested with HIV-infected cells in a Petri dish.

Their research has potential to be a major scientific breakthrough. For Guerra, the experience of working in Dr. Schiller’s lab has been a major breakthrough on a personal level too. It changed the course of his studies and his future.

“When I was in high school [at Palo Verde High School in Las Vegas], I thought I’d become a doctor, like my father,” he explains. “But when I got to UNLV and started volunteering in a lab, my interest in scientific research took off.” By the time he turns 30, Guerra hopes to be running his own biomedical research lab.

Guerra is a recipient of the prestigious STEP-UP Scholarship from the NIH, the Linfa Wright Scholarship at UNLV, a Millennium Scholarship, and an EPSCOR research award from the National Science Foundation. “The scholarship support has given me the opportunity to dedicate a lot of time to my lab work instead of having to earn money for my education at an outside job,” he says. “More scholarship funding would be very beneficial to the campus, to UNLV’s research labs, and to discoveries that can make a difference to the world.”

Back when he had more spare time, the soft-spoken Guerra earned a black belt in the martial arts, an interest he’d like to revisit when his schedule allows. “The martial arts require a lot of focus. You can’t get sidetracked by distractions. The same is true of scientific research. Both are challenging.”

Whether or not the research being done in Dr. Schiller’s lab today will lead to a cure for AIDS in the future remains to be seen. Either way, reflects Guerra, their work is advancing science. “Even negative results give scientists new insights. Sometimes the best results come from something that fails.”

“What doesn’t work leads to new knowledge,” he adds. “That is what is so challenging, and so gratifying, about basic science. Things eventually click.”

Analyze That!

A team of four students from the Lee Business School traveled to London in April to compete as reigning Americas champions in the CFA Institute Research Challenge Global Final. Sean Skinner, Elias Shilivyan, Warren Stender, and Jeffery Zemp bested 350 teams from across the U.S., Latin America, South America, Mexico, and Canada for the Americas title. They were advised by faculty member Jagdish Mehta and industry mentor Dominic Rodriguez.

In the London finals, UNLV was one of four champion teams from across the globe. The team from Poland, representing Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, was declared the winner.

The CFA IRC is a global competition where business undergraduate and MBA students develop equity research reports and present their buy, hold, or sell recommendations along with analysis and rationale. The UNLV students got their competitive edge by participating in Lee Business School’s Student Managed Fund classes, led by finance professor Michael J. Sullivan. The courses allow students to get real-world experience by investing funds from an account that was established through private gifts to the UNLV Foundation.

New Scholarship Funds:
May 1, 2012 – April 30, 2013

• Mark H. Alden UNLV Alumni Association Music Scholarship
• Harold L. Boyer Nursing Scholarship Endowment
• Brooks Family/Chris Hudgins English Literary Essay Award Endowment
• Bryan Chomka Memorial Scholarship
• Nasser Daneshvari Memorial Scholarship
• Russell L. & Brenda Frank Endowed Scholarship
• History Department Tribute Scholarship
• Tony and Renee Marion Foundation Nursing Fellowship & Scholarship
• Meadows Bank Scholarship
• Rosemary and John Metters Scholarship
• Nevada Beverage Hotel Administration Scholarship
• Nevada State Bank Presidential Scholarship
• O’Brian Family Scholarship
• Selzor’s of Excellence-Selzor’s of Distinction Scholarship
• Ron Smith and Susan Thompsoon Scholarship
• WRIN Women’s Leadership Award
• Yellow Ribbon Fund

Visit us online at foundation.unlv.edu or call 702-895-3641
Masters of Philanthropy: A Conversation with Joyce Mack

Joyce Mack has always loved Las Vegas, and the city she helped create loves her back.

Joyce Mack has loved Las Vegas ever since she moved with her husband, Jerome, and two infant daughters from California to what was then a remote outpost town. That was 65 years ago. Today she is the matriarch of one of the most respected families in Nevada. Over the years, the city that her family helped define has grown to love her back.

Joyce is an influential community leader and philanthropist, and the Mack family imprint appears on key institutions all over the valley. She has been a loyal donor to UNLV for more than 30 years and has served as trustee on the UNLV Foundation board since 1999.

She sat down with us recently to share part of her story.

What did you make of Las Vegas when you first lived here as a young mother?

It was an adventure. I loved it from the start. I remember driving to the edge of town with Jerry, and he gestured at the vacant desert landscape and declared, “One day this will be filled with houses, streets, temples, department stores — clear to the mountains.” He told me to remember what he was saying. Of course, he was right. It happened like that.

The names Thomas and Mack are inextricably linked, on the UNLV campus and around town. What made the relationship between your family and the Thomas family so special?

Jerry met Parry [E. Parry Thomas] when they were young businessmen in Las Vegas — they were both bankers. They became business partners and friends.

What determined whether the arena would be called the “Thomas & Mack” or “Mack & Thomas”?

That was a coin toss! Jerry and Parry left it to the children to decide, and the children all wanted their name to be first. So they tossed a coin and…. Well, as you can see, the Thomases called it.

What is your favorite place on campus?

The Boyd Law School. It meant a lot to Jerry. He was proud of the Thomas & Mack Center, but he told me that he wanted people to know he believed not just in athletics but in the entire university. When he passed away [in 1998], I wanted him to be remembered for something that was important to him, and that was the Law School. And, of course, the Thomas family was supportive of that. Now we have the Thomas & Mack Legal Clinic and the Thomas & Mack Moot Court Building, and Jerry would have been very pleased.

I love Claes Oldenburg and Goosje Van Bruggen’s “Flashlight.” It is an important piece of art. Oldenburg sculptures are on exhibit this summer at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and we’ve got a gigantic piece right here. Great art belongs on campus.

You’ve got photographs in your living room of you with each of the Democratic presidents of the United States since Jimmy Carter. What experience stands out?

I got to sit right next to President Obama at a dinner. He is a wonderful man, but he had recently made some thoughtless remarks about Las Vegas. So I scolded him — I let him know what I was thinking. He promised me he would fix it and set the record straight, and sure enough, he did. His next several speeches all included very positive messages about Las Vegas.

What would people be surprised to learn about you?

I think most people in this community know what I believe in and what is important to me — my family, the university, my support of our temple and the arts. But when Jerry first mentioned to me that he wanted to move to Las Vegas, back in 1949, I never imagined we would stay. I told him I’d move to Nevada as long as we could move back to California in time for our girls to go to Beverly Hills High School. Obviously, I changed my mind! My three daughters have grown up here — Barbara, Karen, and Marilynn. All of them have become outstanding citizens.

What has been most rewarding to you as a philanthropist?

I can’t think of anything more rewarding than being part of the UNLV story.

It was a life-long bond. They’re from such different backgrounds that I can’t exactly explain it, but they got along beautifully. And the same is true of our families. Their family feels like mine to me, and vice versa.
Autumn Nielsen looks forward to owning a successful events company one day. Her hospitality studies have given her industry knowledge, but the Global Entrepreneurship Experience program has grown her creative drive and confidence to pursue her dreams of business ownership.

“I’m OK with challenges. In GEE, it was OK to push the envelope. I learned to think out of the box — bigger, even crazier, thoughts sometimes. I have more confidence that I can do it. I have no doubt that someday I can have my own company,” she says.

Nielsen is a member of GEE’s first cohort — the first class to complete the program since its inception in 2009. Twenty students began the journey, and 13 will graduate in May, thanks to a generous initial investment from Wells Fargo.

The GEE program is open to all UNLV majors, and it teaches students about entrepreneurship on a global scale through classes that emphasize strategic thinking, creativity, and innovation. Students receive annual scholarships and complete one specialized course per semester. An international trip during their junior year allows students to apply their knowledge to world markets.

When he started the program, Eric Nguyen wasn’t sure how to integrate his entrepreneurship studies with his major in management information systems. Now a senior, he thinks GEE has universal value.

“Being innovative and thinking outside the box pertains to the medical field, liberal arts — any kind of job,” he says.

“We’re so nurtured and taught to think a certain way. I think society dims our creativity. Our GEE professors really wanted us to ask questions. They taught us to challenge what we think is true.”

In the ultimate test of business knowledge, GEE students often participate in business plan competitions. This spring, GEE seniors Taylor Hall and Sarah Tom captured third place and $10,000 for their energy-brokerage concept, Gymnerate, in use and send it back to the grid. In doing so, gyms could eliminate their energy costs and Gymnerate would profit.

Bill Trent was a local business leader and a decorated Army veteran who came to Las Vegas in 1946. He was an early benefactor to the Talon Alumni Center, and two of his daughters, as well as his wife of 25 years, Sharon, are all UNLV graduates.

“Bill’s generosity to UNLV was his way of giving back to the community,” says Sharon. “He decided years ago to make UNLV part of his estate plan, and he felt good knowing that this gift would be part of his legacy. I’m sure he would like to set an example for other people to consider doing the same.”

Why Give a Gift of Life Insurance?

Life insurance can be a convenient, efficient way to give to UNLV.

• In most cases, a gift of life insurance is tax-deductible.

• It is easy to do. One option is to simply name UNLV as a beneficiary.

• It is confidential and not a matter of public record.

• It is immediate. Proceeds are paid to the beneficiary in cash quickly after death and usually are not subject to the probate process.

For information about making UNLV part of your legacy, contact Bud Beekman at 702-895-2841 or visit foundation.unlv.edu/plannedgiving.

Young Alumni Step Up

James Arnold ’06, Emily Hartnett ’09, and Michael Iglinski ’04 are UNLV alumni with diverse careers and a common commitment. They are inaugural members of the UNLV Foundation’s Young Alumni Associates program. The new initiative was launched to engage alumni who graduated within the past 10 years in leadership giving to the university. It offers the benefits of President’s Associates membership at giving levels accessible to young alumni.

In their own words, they tell us why they give — and why it matters:

James Arnold ’06, BA, University Studies
Investment Adviser, Investment Management Consultants, Las Vegas
UNLV Young Alumni President’s Associates Silver Donor

“I like making change happen. Most people think they have to be rich to make a difference as a donor, but most of us can give time or money. UNLV gave me opportunities, and I feel it’s important to give back to others what’s been given to me. UNLV is young, and young people can be part of the university’s continued transformation.”

Emily Hartnett ’09, BS, Physics
Applications Engineer, Pololu Robotics & Electronics, Las Vegas
UNLV Young Alumni President’s Associates Donor

“As a physics major, I learned how to solve problems. My professors were truly interested in educating students. Now that I’m a professional and involved in recruiting, I care about the pool of employees in Nevada. All businesses should be. I give to education so people can be successful, and if people are successful, businesses will be successful too.”

Michael Iglinski ’04, BA, Criminal Justice
Director of Business Development & Strategy, Stovall & Associates, Las Vegas; Partner, Red Brick Real Estate
UNLV Young Alumni President’s Associates Bronze Donor

“I grew up going to private schools, and it was like growing up in a bubble. UNLV’s diversity helped me see things differently. It opened my perspective on how life could turn out. I give because it’s my responsibility. I want to create a more symbiotic relationship between the business community and UNLV. I can give a small donation and a little time — and see a good return on both.”

For more information, contact Matt Sobotta at matthew.sobotta@unlv.edu or 702-895-2921.

Statue and Scholarship Will Preserve Tarkanian’s Legacy

Legendary basketball coach Jerry Tarkanian never had a losing season during his 19 years at the helm of the Runnin’ Rebels (1973-1992). Now “Tark the Shark” will have a permanent seat of honor at UNLV. Thanks to a campaign spearheaded by the UNLV Alumni Association, a bronze statue of Tarkanian will be installed in front of the Thomas & Mack Center. A scholarship is also being created in Tarkanian’s honor.

For more information, visit www.unlv.edu/onedforkark.com.

Global Entrepreneurship Experience Helps Students Channel Creativity

By Karyn S. Hollingsworth

In 1985, when Ronald Reagan was serving his second term as president, a gallon of gas cost $1.09, and Michael J. Fox starred as a time-traveling teenager in Back to the Future. William L. Trent Jr. was looking ahead. Trent, who turned 62 that year, contacted UNLV to convey the news that the UNLV Foundation had been named the beneficiary of his life insurance policy. It was his desire, he wrote, that the proceeds of the policy be used for the “enhancement of UNLV.”

When Trent passed away last September at the age of 89, his wish was realized. The William L. Trent Margin of Excellence Fund was established with the proceeds from his life insurance policy. “This gift will transform lives,” notes UNLV President Neal Smatresk. “It will enrich our community for generations to come.”

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“Bill’s generosity to UNLV was his way of giving back to the community,” says Sharon. “He decided years ago to make UNLV part of his estate plan, and he felt good knowing that this gift would be part of his legacy. I’m sure he would like to set an example for other people to consider doing the same.”
Vietnam: A Place Revealed

Richard Wiley, associate director of UNLV’s Black Mountain Institute, was the first recipient of the Tran Thi Onah Exchange, a visiting opportunity between UNLV and Nha Trang, Vietnam. This unique program was recently established through a gift from the Zaleman family. Wiley reflects on his experience.

Nha Trang is a golden city that sits on a concave curve of the coastline of the Biên Đông Sea (South China Sea). It has one of the most beautiful beaches in the world, but it is also graced with ornaments of Vietnamese history; staid and lovely temples, the last home of Vietnam’s last emperor. Long before the Nguyen lords wrestled this part of the country into their dynasty, Nha Trang had the Tháp Bà Pô Tower for 700 years.

During my stay, I was accompanied by Terry Zalem — Do Thi Tuyet Nga is her Vietnamese name — who is the founder of the exchange program. (Tran Thi Onah, for whom the program is named, was Terry’s mother.) It was Terry’s belief that there has been a static and unfortunate impression of each country by the other since the Vietnam War, called The American War in Vietnam. I didn’t know whether that was true or not. I am of that age, but I didn’t fight in the Vietnam War. For me — and, I will venture to say, for millions of other Americans — Vietnam had ceased to be a living place after the war and turned, instead, into a moment in history. A time, not a place.

Since 1975 whenever I heard the word Vietnam, many things came into my mind: wounded men on stretchers whose evacuation I saw nightly on TV, the ubiquitous antiwar protests, tunnels with terrifying Vietcong hiding in them, peace talks in Paris where they argued over the shape of the table, the monstrous acts of Lieutenant William Calley and others. But in all those years, I never thought of Vietnam as vigorous and vital and changing, as a body of people with as complex and lasting and changing a culture as any other. For me, those images listed above were set in concrete. And now that concrete has crumbled.

In Vietnam, the average age is 23.11 years. (In the U.S., it’s 36.3.) Nearly all the people I met, on the street, in restaurants, at Nha Trang University, seemed even younger than that. And my overriding impression was that I was among a demure, kind, humorous, and industrious people — a people for whom nothing at all was set in concrete. Everything was fluid, everything aimed at the future. They wanted to talk to me about everything under the sun, but no one, NO ONE, asked me to say a word about The American War.

It’s a simple thing to know — that people are people everywhere — but a very easy thing to forget. And this short exchange program made me remember it. Others from UNLV will now go to Nha Trang, while visitors from that lovely city will soon come here — to Las Vegas, the misunderstanding of which, worldwide, might equal my own previous misunderstanding of Vietnam. Ironic, no?

Supersized Service

It took three days and 50 gallons of paint for 20 volunteers to transform the exterior of a small building at the corner of Harmon Street and Maryland Parkway from a Carl’s Jr. to art studios for UNLV graduate students. The volunteers were part of McCarthy Building Company’s Heart Hats program — an outreach effort in which every employee can receive a paid day off to participate in community service projects. “We want to encourage everyone at McCarthy to personally get involved in their community,” says project manager Josh Brummels, “not just for one day but hopefully throughout their lifetime. We want them to meet the people they’re helping and see the benefits of their work.”

Scott Grow is just one of the students benefitting from the Heart Hats volunteer efforts. A second-year MFA candidate who works in a variety of media, Grow’s studio is located in the newly renovated building. “Having your own space is vital to artists,” he says. “This building gives us a diverse range of options for experimentation and contemplation.” Eight individual studios, plus a display area where students and faculty can view and critique each other’s artwork, are housed in the facility.

The former Carl’s Jr. was acquired by UNLV in 2011. Gifts-of-service from McCarthy, as well as support from Standard Drywall, were instrumental in converting the fast-food restaurant into a space where art — and artists — are being created.

Wonders of Science

Ansell Cabrera (above), a sophomore at East Career and Technical Academy, took first place in the Energy & Transportation category at the 2013 Beal Bank USA Southern Nevada Regional Science & Engineering Fair with his project, “The Wonders of Mag Levitation.” Organized and hosted by the College of Sciences, the high school fair had 89 students who presented 66 individual and team projects to judges. The elementary and middle school fair had approximately 691 students and 465 individual, team, and class projects.

Coral Academy of Science’s Sarah DiSalvo and Patrick Prochaska were the top overall winners and, courtesy of the fair’s sponsor, Beal Bank USA, advanced to the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair held in Phoenix.
Loyalty Pays Off

Many a coach has counseled players to keep their eyes on the prize. This turns out to be good advice not only for athletes but also for those trying to raise money to support UNLV’s Rebel Athletics program. Case in point: the RAF Loyalty Circle.

The Loyalty Circle program was conceived just two and a half years ago, with the objective of providing funding for UNLV student-athletes in all intercollegiate sports. Its goal — $1 million a year. The money raised would cover the students’ tuition, room and board, training, recruiting, and other essential services, in accordance with NCAA rules. A plan was put in place in late 2010 to find 20 people a year who would each commit to give annual gifts of $10,000 for five years. By the fifth year, with 100 people giving $10,000 apiece, the goal would be achieved.

The response from RAF supporters was immediate and strong. Now, less than three years into the program, donations exceed $900,000 a year. Some donors have accelerated their giving, providing not $10,000 a year, but up to $50,000 in direct support to student-athletes. The goal is in sight.

“First in” were longtime Rebels fans and local business owners Jim and Michelene Barton. “I don’t think anyone could love the Rebels more than we do,” says Jim. “But right up there with our love of athletics is our belief in education. The Loyalty Circle is a boost to both.”

What makes the program so compelling is that under NCAA guidelines, it connects each donor with a gifted student-athlete to support, resulting in very personal and rewarding experiences for both. Bruce Layne understands the value from both perspectives. He grew up in Las Vegas and is a former UNLV baseball player. He and his wife Sherry are local philanthropists and Loyalty Circle members who sponsor catcher Ryan Scott.

“I am privileged to provide a scholarship and to mentor a baseball player who has the opportunity to graduate with a degree in business administration,” Layne says. “Being able to give back to my alma mater is a tremendous opportunity. My hope is to create a cycle of committed involvement and generational giving.”

UNLV Athletics Director Jim Livengood recognizes the impact the program is making. “We can’t thank the members of the Loyalty Circle enough for their involvement and donations,” he says. “Their membership helps provide the funding necessary for us to fulfill our mission of giving each of our student-athletes everything they need to compete at the highest level, along with supporting them academically and socially.”

View all Loyalty Circle supporters at unlvraf.com/campaigns_loyalty_circle.php. For information about joining the Loyalty Circle, contact Julio Freire at 702-895-3020 or julio.freire@unlv.edu.