

Winter 2013

## Giving Matters

UNLV Foundation

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## The Coach with a Cause

Afsha Bawany

**O**n the court, Coach Dave Rice is rooting for the Runnin' Rebels basketball team. Off the court, he's championing another cause – autism awareness.

Dave and Mindy Rice's son, Dylan, is an enthusiastic 10-year-old with a lot of hobbies and a smile for everyone.

"He loves life. If everyone in the world were as happy as Dylan is every single day, the world would be a lot better place," said Dave Rice, head coach for UNLV's Runnin' Rebels. "He's someone who actually enjoys affection. He likes to give people hugs."

"Sometimes whether they want it or not," Mindy Rice laughs.

But Dylan's personality didn't bloom as quickly as other children's. As a toddler, Dylan reached some milestones early, but struggled to communicate. His older brother, Travis, hadn't experienced the same difficulties.

"We were first told it was speech delay," Mindy said. "But as he got older, you could tell there were other things he wasn't catching on as quickly as he should have." Finally, after three years of tests and doctor visits, a renowned physician in Utah diagnosed then 6-year-old Dylan with autism. The Rices were left with a statement that still haunts them.

"He told us to start a trust fund for Dylan," Mindy said.

That was it. Their reaction? "Devastated. Frustrated," Mindy said, holding back tears.

Dave's reaction was of a coach who knows his team can beat the odds. So the Rices created a new game plan. They tapped into their network to find others whose kids were diagnosed with autism. They eventually found resources to help Dylan. Now they want to help families facing similar challenges.



The Rices, both UNLV graduates, have considered UNLV and Las Vegas home for more than 20 years. After playing on the Runnin' Rebels NCAA championship team in 1990 and serving as assistant coach, Dave returned to UNLV in 2011 as head coach. This position affords him a unique platform for influencing the community off the court.

"I think fathers particularly have trouble coming to grips when their son or daughter is diagnosed with autism," Dave said. "For me to stand up and say 'Hey, it's OK,' I think it's a positive message."

Dave Rice talks candidly about his son and the challenges his family faces. "There's such a stigma that's associated [with autism], and it doesn't need to be that way. Look at improvements that our son has made," Dave says. "He's mainstream in school. He's happy."

**Continued on Page 2**

## Extraordinary Things Happening at the Academic Success Center



**“O**rdinary people can achieve extraordinary things!” That is the core belief and guiding principle behind the new Hixson-Lied Success scholarship program at UNLV. Funded in perpetuity through a \$2 million gift from the Lied Foundation Trust and named in honor of Ms. Christina M. Hixson and Mr. Ernst F. Lied, the program will provide hundreds of economically and/or academically challenged Nevada students with the opportunity to earn a college degree.

The program is hosted at UNLV's Academic Success Center and was launched this academic year. Ten scholars are in the inaugural class, each of whom can receive \$2,500 per year in scholarship support as well as academic support from ASC. In addition to their scholarship is the expectation that the Hixson-Lied Success Scholars will give back to the UNLV community as ASC peer mentors and volunteers.

"The Hixson-Lied Success Scholars will be given an exceptional opportunity worth reciprocating to other students," explains Hixson-Lied faculty mentor Dr. Dan Gianoutsos. "The scholars will be provided a platform to serve their peers—who may also be facing challenges in their academic journeys—to capture the true essence of the program."



# Welcome from the Chairman of the Board



**GIVING MATTERS**—whether it’s a gift of money or time. You are one of the more than 8,000 donors and nearly 900 volunteers at UNLV who inspire not only our students and faculty but also the entire UNLV community which extends far beyond the campus and far beyond our Las Vegas region. Thank you.

Your generous financial contributions and commitments of your time and your talents are truly appreciated and treasured by UNLV. The impact of leadership and advisory board members and those who serve in other volunteer capacities at UNLV is immeasurable. In Nevada, a half-million volunteers donated 60 million hours of service valued at \$1.6 billion annually. As I calculate the value of the time our UNLV Foundation Board members spend at just one meeting, I suspect the true value is greatly in excess of the reported value.

Pro bono contributions provide the university with skills and new ways of thinking that it could never otherwise afford. Your support provides valuable resources for students, programs, and other essential needs. Volunteers also build relationships between UNLV, the business sector, and government. When all these partners are at the table, new ideas and positive change are created and thrive.

In appreciation to our volunteers, on February 28th the UNLV Foundation will be partnering with the UNLV Student Alumni Association and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education to present UNLV’s first Student Engagement and Philanthropy Day. This event is part of a new global initiative to enhance awareness of higher education philanthropy and volunteerism. It encourages students to be involved in volunteerism and civic engagement, which are core values of a healthy UNLV and a healthy community. In addition, in this newsletter, you will read about gifts large, small, and enormous, which are brightening the future of UNLV and our entire region.

Your support of UNLV makes a real and significant difference for our students, our faculty, our campus, and our community. Once again, thank you for your past, present, and on-going commitment to UNLV.

John F. O'Reilly '74  
Chairman, UNLV Foundation Board of Trustees

## The Coach with a Cause Continued from Page 1

In 2012, the couple established the Dave Rice Foundation to fund autism programs in the Las Vegas Valley. Its goal is to help fill in gaps of existing groups. “We want to be on everyone’s team,” Dave says. “This is not just (mine and Mindy’s) cause; this is ‘our cause’ as in everyone’s cause.”

Last July, the Dave Rice Foundation donated \$100,000 to the UNLV Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders, allowing it to add comprehensive testing for children and adults to its community services. The donation will also expand the workshops that the center offers to parents and professionals. The center provides its services on a sliding scale based on income.

UNLV faculty and graduate students will administer the tests needed to diagnose autism spectrum disorder (ASD)-related developmental disabilities. “The longer children go without treatment, the worse their condition. By identifying ASDs early on, the likelihood of improved communication, academic, and behavior skills increases,” said Sharon Crozier, director of the center.

Sometimes Mindy wishes she could go back to the doctor who had little hope of Dylan having a normal life and say, “Look at him now.” No parent should have to feel like there’s no hope or help available.

Members of the public may visit the UNLV Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders website at [unlv.edu/content/center-autism-spectrum-disorders](http://unlv.edu/content/center-autism-spectrum-disorders) or call 702-895-5836.

# Marlon Family Foundation Gift Buoy Health care and Education in Nevada

**D**r. Anthony M. Marlon, a retired cardiologist and founder of Sierra Health Services, completed his internship, residency, and fellowship at Stanford University before moving to Las Vegas in 1972 to start a cardiology practice. A specialist in dealing with the human heart, it surprisingly was his experience as a businessman that inspired him to become one of Nevada’s most important philanthropists.

“When I headed Sierra Health Services, it was a \$3 billion company with an active community relations component. Giving back to the community was always part of what we did,” Marlon explains. “So when I retired and sold the property [now UnitedHealthcare], a part of the proceeds funded a charitable foundation.”

The Tony and Renee Marlon Family Foundation, created four years ago, is following the model of giving back to the community. Each family member—Dr. Marlon, his wife Renee, their three grown children and son-in-law—serves on the board, and each is charged with bringing a challenge to the table. About 80% of the foundation’s gifts are directed to education and healthcare. They recently committed a \$500,000 gift to UNLV’s School of Nursing to fund graduate scholarships and fellowships.

“There is a great need for talented healthcare professionals in Nevada,” Marlon says. “Training and retaining well-educated nurses is essential. UNLV’s School of Nursing has strong leadership, and this money will not only help train nurses, but will help assure that we have teachers who can train future nurses.”

The Marlon Family Foundation scholarships and fellowships will enable students to maximize their education without having to devote a large share of time to outside jobs, according to School of Nursing Dean Carolyn Yucha. “But this gift goes beyond just the dollars,” Yucha adds. “It expresses Dr. Marlon’s belief in us, and that we are doing what we need to do to best meet the healthcare needs of Nevadans.”



Marlon has a long history of supporting UNLV. He has served on the UNLV Foundation Board of Trustees since 1995. The Marlon Family Foundation has also funded UNLV Angel Network fellowships — see story page 4. “I try to tell students to keep their eyes open. There are always opportunities,” he says. “I’m a big believer that you like the thing you know the best—so get to know something very well.”

Possibly no one knows the healthcare needs of Southern Nevada better than Tony Marlon. And through his generosity, he knows that nursing students at UNLV will have the opportunity to raise the bar in providing quality health services to fellow Nevadans.

“There are  
*always*  
opportunities”

Dr. Anthony M. Marlon



# The Real Deal

Brett Abarbanel, Ph.D. candidate, William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration



**B**rett Abarbanel knows that gaming industry business decisions can't be left to chance. Brett is conducting studies on how external and internal aspects of the gaming industry influence behaviors. Her doctoral dissertation explores how online gamblers feel about and react to what they see on screen. The results will give gaming executives research-based data they can use to increase efficiencies and profitability. And through better understanding of operations and perceptions, Brett's research has the potential to improve relations between the gaming industry and the communities they serve.

Brett's research is supported by the President's UNLV Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, funded by private gifts to the UNLV Foundation.

**How did you get interested in gaming?** I grew up next to a racetrack in Del Mar, California and worked there summers. I loved horses. I majored in statistics as an undergrad, and my interest in numbers and racing led me to gambling. At one point, I also thought it would be great to be an instant billionaire....Of course, now I know it's not that easy!

**One facet of your research explores how women experience the male-dominated world of poker. Is being female an advantage or a disadvantage at the poker table?** Different men react differently to playing opposite a woman. Some are kinder to women than they would be to other males; other men are menacing. I wouldn't say that being a woman is necessarily an advantage, but women can use being female as part of their game strategy.

**What has your research revealed so far that casino operators should be aware of?** Well, my master's thesis looked at the indirect effects of sports books on slot revenues. Sports books are huge investments, and don't necessarily drive revenues or significantly boost other revenues. The investment has to be carefully considered.

**What will dominate in 10 years—casino or online gaming?** Predictions are trouble—but generally, casino and online gambling are projected to be complementary, especially if casino operators secure online gaming licenses.

**When you were in grade school, what did you want to be when you grew up?** I wanted a hands-on occupation, like a plumber or auto mechanic. Later, I thought it would be fun to be an aerospace engineer.

**And now?** I'd like to continue to do meaningful research, maybe in the private sector, and also be affiliated with an academic institution.

**When you look back on your UNLV experience many years down the road, what will your most indelible memory be?** UNLV has been incredible. I've got a gigantic gaming lab in my backyard. UNLV is a huge academic resource and a huge research resource. There is no better place in the entire world to study what I study.

## New Tax Law, You, and UNLV

**T**he new year brought long-awaited clarification from Congress about how charitable donations will fare in your 2013 tax returns. The legislation could also influence charitable giving to UNLV.

“Most philanthropically-minded people give because they want to support the mission of a charity, not necessarily because of tax incentives,” says Nancy Strouse, executive director of the UNLV Foundation and senior associate vice-president for development at UNLV. “While a majority of Americans want their gifts to be as tax-efficient as possible, we hope the changes in the new tax law will not have a significant impact on charitable support for UNLV, higher education in general, or the greater not-for-profit community.”

Strouse advises that questions about how the new tax law will personally impact your tax returns be directed to your tax attorney or professional financial advisor.

Here are some highlights from the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012:

**The IRA charitable rollover is extended for 2012 and 2013.** Donors age 70-1/2 or older may transfer up to \$100,000 from their IRA directly to qualified charitable organizations without paying income tax on the money.

**Tax rates increase for “high-income households.”** Individuals earning \$400,000 a year or more in taxable income and married couples earning \$450,000 or more will see their income tax rate increase to 39.6% from 35%.

**Capital gains and dividend tax rates increase to 20% for high-income households.** There will be no capital gains tax for taxpayers in tax brackets below 25%. The capital gains tax rate will be 15% for taxpayers at or above the 25% tax bracket but below the new 39.6% rate.

**Estate, gift, and generation-skipping tax exemptions are preserved.** The law permanently retains these taxes to a unified \$5 million exemption level (indexed for future inflation). It also ups the top rate to 40% from the current 35%. The executor of a deceased spouse's estate will be able to transfer any unused exemption to the surviving spouse.

**Itemized deductions and personal exemptions are capped.** The law caps itemized deductions and phases out the personal exemption for individuals earning \$250,000 or more and for married couples earning \$300,000 or more.

## Annual Giving Mixers Bring Donors Together

**M**ixing and mingling is always in season for UNLV Annual Giving donors. An opportunity for dedicated supporters to network with each other and UNLV leadership, Annual Giving mixers are free high-energy events which take place throughout the academic year. They range from cocktail and hors d'oeuvres receptions, to family events such as the Picnic at the Ballpark, to exclusive leadership donor experiences such as the popular Suite Deal. New this spring will be a Class of 2013 gathering. Sponsors include UNLV Foundation community partners Back Bar USA, D.B.'s Pong and Pool, Fogo de Chão, NV Energy, Raising Cane's, Renaissance Las Vegas Hotel (in photo, right), Smith & Wollensky, and Southwest Airlines.

A new element this year is live music, showcasing UNLV's talented student ensembles.

Invitations are extended to members of the Annual Fund's President's Associates, President's Inner Circle, and Academic Corporate Council, as well as UNLV Dean's Associates and annual leadership donors to UNLV Athletics. For more information, contact Carrie Ahlborn, director of annual giving, at 702-895-2838 or [carrie.ahlborn@unlv.edu](mailto:carrie.ahlborn@unlv.edu).





# UNLV Angel Network Invests in Faculty

Just as ‘angel investors’ in the business world spark development of new products, UNLV’s Angel Network donors are growing the university’s intellectual capital by investing in its most important asset: faculty. UNLV’s Angel Network initiative was launched two years ago in response to state budget cuts that shaved salaries, reduced benefits, and made UNLV a prime target for out-of-state universities looking to recruit away the best and brightest of our academics and researchers.

The response from local philanthropists has been quick and decisive. Their support is helping UNLV retain and recruit key faculty. Funding for nineteen professorships and six assistant professorships for the next three years has already been committed. Recipients receive additional discretionary funding, as well as the status that comes with a named professorship.

**Keeping UNLV competitive in the caliber of its education and research are these named professorships:**

- Lincy Professorships**
- Lincy Assistant Professorships**
- Greg Fullmer Professorship**
- Tony and Renee Marlon Professorships**
- Dominic Marrocco Professorship of Energy Research**
- Ted & Maria Quirk Professorship**
- Saltman Professorship/Directorship**
- Southwest Gas Professorships**



## UNLV Angel Network Recipient Lincy Professor Shawn Gerstenberger

Dr. Gerstenberger is executive associate dean of the School of Community Health Sciences, and chairs the department of environmental and occupational health. He is also the founder and director of the Nevada Healthy Homes Partnership, a collaborative effort between UNLV, the local health district, and more than a dozen community partners. The program provides a holistic approach to health and safety in the home. Gerstenberger and his team of graduate students conduct in-home visits where they identify and prescribe remedies for preventable health issues, including asthma triggers, poisoning hazards, and accidents.

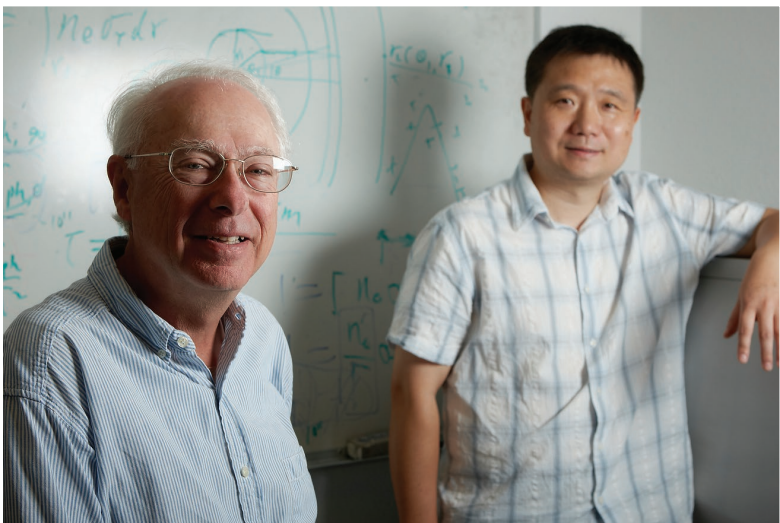
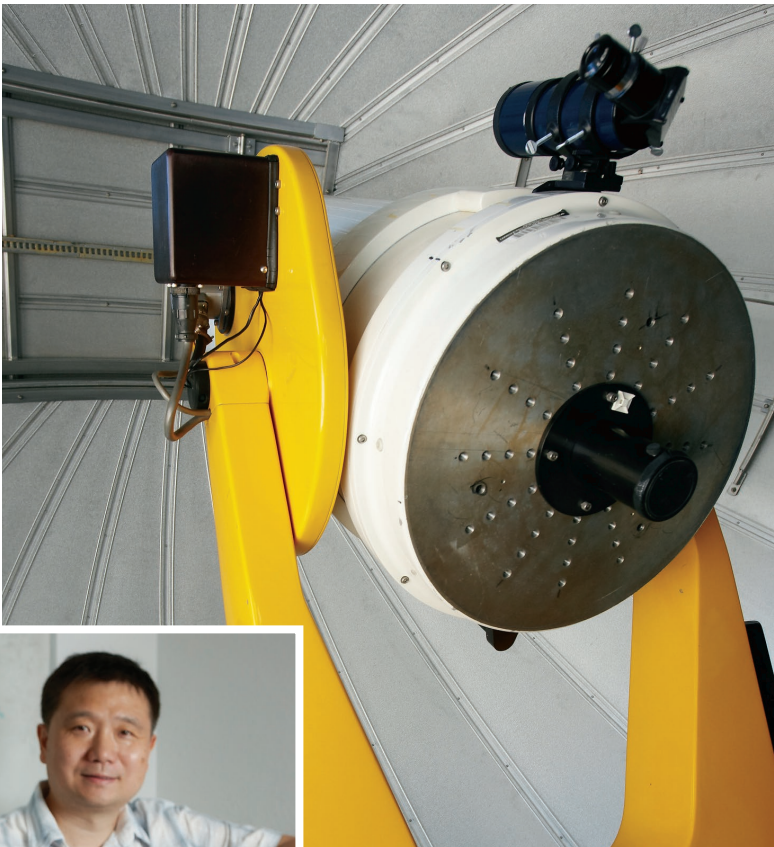
*Read about more exceptional faculty who are Angel Network recipients at [unlv.edu/provost/angel-recipients](http://unlv.edu/provost/angel-recipients)*

# Shining Light on Astronomy

Shane Bevell

Russell Frank’s universe expanded after he decided to explore his interest in physics. Now he is sponsoring a lecture series to spark the intellectual curiosity of others.

Last year, Frank enrolled in an undergraduate physics course simply because he enjoyed the subject. The lifelong learner and local transplant had such a good experience in professor Bing Zhang’s general astronomy course that he decided to audit Zhang’s graduate course about gamma ray bursts. “He [Zhang] is so bright and has a special ability of making the complicated material easy to understand,” said the 64-year-old Frank.



Russell Frank and professor Bing Zhang

The New Jersey native, who has multiple degrees and taught at several prestigious institutions, was very impressed with the quality of faculty at UNLV. He wanted to bring more recognition to the physics department and UNLV so he funded a new lecture series.

The first event in the Russell Frank Astronomy Lecture Series, which was organized by professors George Rhee and Daniel Proga, took place last fall. The second lecture, “Exploring the Dark Side of the Universe: Black Holes, Dark Matter and Dark Energy,” comes to campus March 22nd. It features Professor Karl Gebhardt of the University of Texas at Austin. The free presentation is intended for a general audience.

### A Giving Spirit

Frank’s parents both passed away of cancer when he was nine. He went to live with his grandparents, who died when he was 16. So his choice of school came down to whichever could give him the most money. He attended Colgate University on scholarship and went on to Princeton for a Ph.D. in theoretical particle physics.

“I have been very lucky in my life and I feel a sense of responsibility to give back to those who don’t have the opportunities I did,” Frank said.

When academic research funding became tight, he returned to school for an MBA and a Ph.D. in finance from Georgetown University and a law degree from Seton Hall University. After a career with both a tax law practice and an asset management business, Frank retired to Las Vegas.

“I always loved science and regretted that I couldn’t continue in the field,” said Frank. “I have enjoyed the various courses I have taken at UNLV and providing the astronomy and physics lecture series to the community is my way of giving back to UNLV.”

## Speaking of Lectures...

The Russell Frank Astronomy lectures aren’t the only free talks on campus established through the generosity of UNLV donors. Expand your intellectual universe at these other privately funded series:

- Barrick Lecture Series**—Established through a gift from philanthropist Marjorie Barrick, this long-running series brings premiere speakers to campus, including top political strategists, journalists, business innovators, and global leaders.
- Klai Juba Lecture Series**—Funded by Klai Juba Architects and housed at UNLV School of Architecture, this series exposes students to design professionals and introduces them to design disciplines including architecture, interior design, and landscape architecture.
- Moskow Distinguished Speaker Series**—Created by Lee Business School instructor Jeffrey Moskow in honor of his parents, Morris and Sylvia Moskow, this public series helps make students and the community understand how current events impact the business world.
- Peace in the Desert Series**—Michael and Sonja Saltman established this series at the UNLV William S. Boyd School of Law to explore the nature of conflict and how it can be resolved.
- University Forum**—A broad-ranging public lecture series sponsored by the College of Liberal Arts with partial funding provided by Dean’s Associates donors.

*For a calendar of upcoming lectures and other UNLV events, visit [unlv.edu/calendar](http://unlv.edu/calendar).*





# Making the most of UNLV

In a grand celebration of philanthropy, UNLV welcomed Caesars Foundation and Caesars Entertainment; the Lee family — Theodore, Doris, Greg, Dana, and Ernest; and Bob Boughner into the prestigious Palladium Society at the 2012 UNLV Foundation Annual Dinner.

Alumnus Bob Boughner received the Palladium award for his contributions surpassing \$1 million. Palladium Diamond awards were presented to CEO and President Gary Loveman on behalf of Caesars Foundation and Caesars Entertainment, and to the Lee family for their contributions to UNLV in excess of \$10 million.

UNLV Foundation Board of Trustees Chairman John O'Reilly and UNLV President Neal Smatresk presided over the awards ceremony followed by the keynote speech delivered by President Bill Clinton on October 9th at Bellagio Resort.

Emphasizing the emerging role that philanthropy will play in shaping the future, President Clinton emphasized to the crowd of more than 1,000 donors, students,

faculty, and community leaders that higher education “is arguably the single most important source of providing for America’s economy so that we can build the 21st century version of wildly shared prosperity.”

President Clinton is no stranger to Las Vegas. He professes a deep interest in our community, and credits his former college roommate and close friend UNLV Foundation Trustee Brian Greenspun with helping him understand the city’s history, culture, and value. Clinton predicts a bright future for Nevada, but adds, “I am quite sure that maximizing that future requires you to make the most of UNLV, of every brain, of every dream, of every good, new idea. And I am quite sure that you will not be able to do it without the help of the [UNLV] Foundation. I hope you will continue to support it.”

*“Maximizing the future requires you to make the most of UNLV, of every brain, of every dream, of every good, new idea.”*

*President Bill Clinton*

## 2012 PALLADIUM HONOREES



Neal Smatresk with Bob Boughner, John O'Reilly, and hospitality major student Matini Sinirath



Gary Loveman is congratulated by Neal Smatresk with John O'Reilly and English department faculty Maile Chapman



Dana, Greg, Theodore, and Doris Lee

## GUESTS



Irwin Molasky and Lindy Schumacher



Tony and Elaine Sanchez



Kell and Nancy Houssels



UNLV President Neal Smatresk



Joyce and Marilyn Mack



Guest Chef Alex Stratta and John O'Reilly



Mel Wolzinger and his granddaughter Tracy



# Diners, Drive-Ins and now... a Doctorate

Tony Allen

Since winning The Next Food Network Star in 2006, Guy Fieri has lived up to the title of celebrity chef. The 1990 Harrah Hotel College grad has parlayed his fascination with food into a successful career as a restaurateur, a New York Times best-selling author, and most notably as the face of numerous Food Network programs.



UNLV President Neal Smatresk donned a Guy Fieri headdress to award the exuberant celebrity chef his honorary degree.

Throughout his rise to stardom, Fieri has held strong to his Rebel roots. UNLV faculty and students have been featured on his show “Diners, Drive-Ins, and Dives,” and he regularly returns to his alma mater. In 2011, Fieri headlined UNLV’s Chef Artist Dinner Series, a fundraising event that benefits hotel college students and faculty.

Fieri was honored at UNLV’s December commencement ceremony with an honorary doctorate for his public service, for maintaining a strong connection with UNLV students, and for supporting hotel college fundraising efforts. He credits UNLV with helping him set the table for success.

“Even though I had early success, it was clear I had to get a degree, and there is no place better in the world to get a hospitality degree than UNLV,” Fieri said. “It allowed me to get the mental game it takes to win in the big leagues.”

# Wealthy Nevadans More Charitable

Wealthy Nevadans give more to charity than the average wealthy American, according to a recent study by The Private Bank division of Nevada State Bank. Its findings show that the average philanthropic contribution from Nevada’s high net worth households (incomes of \$1 million or more) was \$138,320—fully 8.2% higher than the \$126,973 given by the average high net worth household nationwide.

The average annual charitable contribution per tax return in Nevada was \$957. These figures were based on 2009 tax returns, the latest data available from the Internal Revenue Service.

The report also found that the largest beneficiary of charitable donations in Nevada, as well as nationally, is higher education. In Nevada, 44.3% of all charitable contributions made between 2000 and 2010 went to colleges and universities. Nationally, higher education received 27.5%.

While higher education as a category received the greatest share of large philanthropic gifts in Nevada, the Smith Center for the Performing Arts ranked first among single recipients (\$199.5 million). They are followed by the Nevada Cancer Institute (\$187.2 million), UNLV (\$166.6 million), and UNR (\$70.7 million).



Engineering professor Pushkin Kachroo, director of UNLV’s Transportation Research Center, likes to keep things moving. His research gives students hands-on experience that revs their interest in STEM education and careers. Now his academic profile is gaining traction, thanks to a gift from the Lincy Foundation in support of UNLV’s Angel Network.

For an update on how Angel Network donors and recipients are green-lighting educational innovation at UNLV, see page 4 inside.

# Lights, Camera, Education

It doesn’t require a spoiler-alert to report that the movie Stealing Las Vegas had a happy ending for students in UNLV’s department of film. Through a creative partnership between Hollywood producer Roger Corman and the UNLV College of Fine Arts, nearly 100 students and faculty helped create the feature-length Stealing Las Vegas. Department of film chair Francisco Menendez directed and edited the film, which he co-wrote with the film department’s director of production operations, Warren D. Cobb. The film premiered last fall at the Egyptian Theater in Hollywood at a red-carpet event attended by 400 UNLV alumni, industry professionals, and cast members. The screening was sponsored by Fisher Space Pen, a Boulder City based company that helps support the school’s Professional Film Crew Training program.

Menendez and Cobb worked with local professionals to make the project a training ground where film students could get hands-on experience. “Ever since I arrived at UNLV in 1990, I’ve wanted to create a program that would bring together our experienced faculty, visionary community, and talented students to create synergistic projects to educate our students,” Menendez says. “When teachers guide, the community contributes, and students participate, you create a professional product. Everyone wins.”

Now available on DVD by Anchor Bay, a Starz company, Stealing Las Vegas stars Academy Award-nominee Eric Roberts and actor Antonio Fargas.



UNLV Theatre’s LaBrandon Shead and UNLV Film’s Sergiu Iva (left) with Professor Francisco Menendez (center) and cast members Anabella Casanova, Ethan Landry, Krissy Terry, and Eloy Mendez.

Photo by: Deed DeBruno