

2005

Premier

Stuart H. Mann

Sam-Erik Ruttman

Robert J. Schabron

Mary Ann McDaniel

Andy Nazarechuk

See next page for additional authors

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Authors

Stuart H. Mann, Sam-Erik Ruttman, Robert J. Schabron, Mary Ann McDaniel, Andy Nazarechuk, Ivan B. Turnipseed, and John Stefanelli

PREMIER

New Scholarship Awarded in Memory of Michael Tata

Many people were saddened by the sudden death in July 2004 of hotel executive and Harrah Hotel College alumnus Michael Tata '96. As the vice president of hotel operations at Green Valley Ranch Station Casino, Tata was also appearing on the Discovery Channel's reality television program "American Casino."

To properly honor his memory, Station Casinos and its majority shareholders, the Fertitta family, along with members of the Greenspun family, endowed a scholarship fund. The Michael Tata Scholarship Fund provides up to two



Scholarship recipients Matthew Wilson and Karina Herrera met with Betty Tata, Michael's mother; and Joe Hasson, Vice President and General Manager of Green Valley Ranch Station.

awards, totaling \$2,000, to be distributed each year to an undergraduate or graduate student in the College

See "Michael Tata" on page 7

IN THIS ISSUE

Message from the Dean 2
 Working with the Military 4
 "Almost Famous Chef" Competition.. 7
 Hospitality Campus Update..... 10
 Alumni Updates..... 15

Former Pro-Bowl Quarterback Scores a Degree

Four-time Pro-Bowl quarterback and former UNLV football All-American Randall Cunningham returned to UNLV 20 years after he last attended class to complete his bachelor's degree.

"It's that step that was kind of missing in my career," he explained about his December graduation.

At an age when most people are beginning to contemplate retirement, the 41-year-old decided it was time to finish his college education. Although he didn't need the degree for professional reasons (he's an ordained pastor with Remnant Ministries in Las Vegas) or even financial reasons (he earned lucrative commercial endorsements), he remembered how comedian Bill Cosby always said that education is vital for Americans and even more so for minorities.

"It was important to me because it was unfinished business," Cunningham said. "I want to give my children an understanding of the importance of education and what better way than finishing my degree?"

Cunningham who graduated with a bachelor's degree in leisure studies from the Harrah Hotel College said, "I wouldn't have gone to another school – I always knew that I wanted to finish at UNLV."

He's hopeful that other former students who are just shy of earning their degree will follow in his footsteps.



Alumnus Randall Cunningham '04 and UNLV President Carol C. Harter celebrate at December's commencement ceremonies.

"It's not as difficult or daunting as it might sound," he said. "Everybody on campus was really helpful and persistent and it's great to say that I earned my degree from the Harrah Hotel College."



PREMIER

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William F. Harrah College of
Hotel Administration

Office of the Dean
4505 Maryland Parkway
Box 456013
Las Vegas NV 89154-6013
(702) 895-3161

Stuart H. Mann
Dean

James Busser
Associate Dean

Seyhmus Baloglu
Assistant Dean

Pearl Brewer, Director
Graduate Studies

Andrew Feinstein, '91, '95 M.S.
Chair, Food & Beverage
Management

Gail Sammons, '87 M.S.,
Chair
Hotel Management

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Judy Nagai-Allison, M.Ed.,
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Development Director

Robyn Campbell-Ouchida,
M.A. '00
Writer/Editor

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DEAN'S
MESSAGE

Stuart Mann, Dean,
William F. Harrah
College of Hotel Administration

I'm often asked to speak to groups around the world about why Las Vegas is so successful as a tourist destination. Many think that it has happened by chance, and the beginnings may have been fortuitous circumstances, but what happens today is far from accidental. In fact, there are two relatively recent books to which I refer, in order to base my comments on economic and marketing theory and not simply on opinion and conjecture. They are "The Experience Economy: Work is Theatre & Every Business a Stage" by Joseph Pine and James Gilmore, and "Differentiate or Die: Survival in Our Era of Killer Competition" by Jack Trout with Steve Rivkin.

Pine and Gilmore write about how our economy has moved from the sale of commodities to goods to services to today's world experiences. So while we commonly read in the media that we are now in a service economy, these authors believe we have gone far beyond that into what is now an experience economy. What they are saying is that it is no longer enough to provide "just" outstanding services to our customers, we now must provide outstanding experiences and that is what people are buying, no matter what age group they are in, whether it be Generation Y or the Baby Boomers.

Las Vegas has clearly recognized this for a number of years. We have all heard the phrase: "What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas." This advertising push has received a great deal of national recognition, both good and bad, and plays to experiences, not service.

Trout, who has written other excellent marketing books such as Positioning and Marketing Warfare, discusses in his new book how a company must find a way to differentiate itself from others in the marketplace if it is to be successful. He talks about all of the ways that a company can be different. For example, he discusses points of differentiation as "being first into the market with a product or service" and "be the leader in the market with such attributes as sales, performance or technology." McDonald's first with the quick service burger is an example of the

former and Hertz as the leader in sales is an example of the latter.

Another way that a company can be different is "to be quite different in price," and here he means high price, not low. One cannot usually differentiate and win with the lowest price. Examples here would be The Four Seasons or The Waldorf=Astoria. The Hampton Inn does not differentiate by being low priced. It does try to differentiate in other ways, however, and is quite successful.

"Being the latest" and "being hot" are other points of differentiation. I use Las Vegas as the perfect example for these points of differentiation. We are all anxiously awaiting the opening of Wynn Las Vegas. Each new opening has increased the overall demand in the city. Each opening has created another level of success for Las Vegas overall and in particular for all of the Strip hotel properties. Each new show opening creates excitement and demand. Each "hot" new club creates the same kind of excitement with the Gen X'ers today.

Another example that Trout uses as a point of differentiation is to be a "market specialist." Thus, it is possible to be different by focusing on only specific market segments and not varying in an approach to the marketplace. Thus, we see the struggle in Las Vegas for those hotels trying to focus on the "high roller" market segment. When that market is in a downturn, the hotels focusing on that segment suffer. Thus, we see Las Vegas as a good example here when being different is not rewarding.

It is clear, I believe, that Las Vegas is an excellent example for how we are now in an experience economy and that the only way that Las Vegas has survived is by being different. There are no other gaming communities that have been able to do what Las Vegas has done in being able to create experiences and to have the hotel properties develop these experiences to the extent that each is different from the other. This maintains their success and the success of the city as a tourist destination.

ALUMNUS PROVIDES FIRSTHAND ACCOUNT

Indonesian Tsunami

By Sam-Erik Ruttman '83

Dusit Laguna Resort was the first hotel built on the beachfront of Laguna Phuket and is often described as the “resort nestled amidst tropical gardens and caressed by the azure waters of the Andaman Sea.” My wife and I live in the center of the resort complex. Sunday morning is my “sleep-in day,” but on Dec. 26 at around 8:30 a.m., we felt a light tremor. Out of habit, I went to check my e-mail, then the latest news. Although a report came up that there was an earthquake somewhere off the coast of Sumatra, I did not think anymore about it and went back to sleep. Around 10 a.m., I got up again and looked out, and to my horror, the garden was filled with water. A call came through from my manager-on-duty that there was a problem and water was everywhere.

After getting dressed, I ran to the lobby and met my front office manager and housekeeper, who reported to me that only the rooms in our north wing ground floors were inundated with water. After visiting all of our guest rooms to see if anyone was injured (no one was, thank goodness), I tried to reach the security manager and eventually had him use his team to assist guests to the lobby. I went to the garden and saw the pool and garden full of debris. At that point, I did not know this was a tsunami and more waves would be expected. Someone screamed, “Another wave is coming!” so we rushed people to the second floor lobby. At that moment, I turned around and saw the entire sea level rising and a swell of water entered again into the resort.

The news finally reached us that this was a tsunami. We were informed that more waves, worse than had already been experienced, were on their way. We organized the housekeeping team to take a guest count and realized some were missing. We later found out that they had gone golfing. It was then that I realized the telephones were not working and the mobile network was jammed.

We assisted the guests, arranging flights out for those who wanted to leave. Amazingly, there were many repeat guests who said that they would like to stay and help. This is quite a sign of human spirit — guests who pay \$500 a night insisting on paying for their continued stays to help us with cleaning after the storm.



Sam-Erik Ruttman '83 at the Dusit Laguna Resort

I prepared a statement informing press and our travel partners what had happened. Out of 226 rooms, only 24 rooms had water damage and there were no injuries or lives lost.

Since we did not have trauma or crisis counseling available, we arranged for a Buddhist monk ceremony, which was attended by all staff and a few guests. The spirit house (in the garden) was damaged and we contacted the local Brahman to bless its replacement.

Fortunately, our hotel had a business interruption insurance policy in place so we are fully insured. Two of the resort's restaurants will have to be reconstructed. A crisis information desk was opened in the lobby to assist guests with flights out of Phuket and daily food and beverage arrangements were made in the hotel. Our sales executives are attending trade shows, plus media visits have been arranged. The meetings, incentive-travel, conventions and exhibitions market has already shown tremendous interest to support Phuket. We have several regional meetings booked for the next three months and we are working on an advertising campaign to bring business back.

The most gratifying part of the experience has been the determination and spirit our entire team has shown. The guests have been so supportive. Emotionally, I feel drained as I live and work here and have not taken any time off, but what keeps me going is the fact that we all work as a team and everyone has been understanding and helpful.

“The news finally reached us that this was a tsunami. We were informed that more waves, worse than had already been experienced, were on their way.”



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WORKING WITH THE MILITARY:

College Trains and Prepares Air Force Services Officers

You may not know that the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration has served as a training field for a number of United States Air Force officers. A master's degree is regarded as a necessity for promotion beyond captain regardless of Air Force specialty. An officer in the military services career field manages a wide variety of base support programs that include fitness centers, lodging operations, dining facilities, officer and enlisted clubs, and golf courses. These service's officers are given the unique opportunity to compete for full-time education slots at civilian hospitality schools.

Annually, the Air Force selects between three and eight officers to attend master's degree programs full time for a 20-month period to provide continual growth and maintenance for current military base support functions in order to compare favorably with the civilian sector. Currently, three officers attend UNLV.

Captain Robert J. Schabron entered the Hotel Administration program in the fall 2003. First Lt. Sara McCoy and Capt. Jim Beaty began the Sports and Leisure Studies program this fall.

"When it comes to serving our country, I believe everyone can make a contribution based on their own talents and skills," said McCoy.

"Earning my master's degree in Sports Management from UNLV will help improve management of the many programs we offer to military personnel and their families."

Often, UNLV graduates find themselves in critical roles upon continuing their careers in the Air Force. Capt. Keith Washington '02 MS Hotel Administration now serves as an instructor at the Air Force Services Technical School. In this position, he relays many of the lessons from both his military experience and his UNLV education. Another alumnus, Lee Wyatt, received a Bronze Star for his stellar leadership while deployed to Al Udeid in Qatar. He assembled the entire lodging, food, and recreation support for the new headquarters base, which supports over 5,000 troops.

"The master's program really helped prepare me for my duties in Qatar," said Wyatt. "The structure of the curriculum provided me an opportunity to develop an appreciation for international hospitality chains,



Capt. Jim Beaty, 1st Lt. Sara McCoy, and Capt. Robert J. Schabron use their hospitality management skills to serve U.S. military troops.

companies, and ways of doing business.

"The living hospitality laboratory of Las Vegas is a huge asset and working with Dr. Stefanelli on mystery shopping and classroom projects provided an internal reference library that proved to be invaluable in building a deployed city for over 9,000 people in just two-and-a-half months. The program enabled me to think at higher strategic planning levels in developing and marketing large hospitality organizations that you do not get in other programs," said Wyatt.

UNLV's hotel college has proven to be an effective training ground for Air Force officers that in turn provide the school a military perspective of hospitality.

*-Capt. Robert J. Schabron, USAF
Class of 2005*

G2E Continues Successful Run



Professor Billy Bai, Dean Stuart Mann, student Min-Sun Park, Professor Gail Sammons, and student Can Sanli attended the 2004 Global Gaming Expo.

Once again, the Harrah Hotel College participated in October's Global Gaming Expo (G2E), the international gaming trade show and conference "by the industry and for the industry." A total of 25,018 attendees and exhibitors enlivened the Las Vegas Convention Center during G2E – ten percent above last year's impressive numbers.

Alumni Golf Tournament an Inaugural Success

The first Harrah Hotel College Alumni & Friends Golf Tournament was a great success.

"It was very gratifying to see so much support for our first event," said Dean Stuart Mann. "Our alumni are obviously interested in giving back to their university and college. This is a good sign for the future success of what I hope will become an annual event."

Sponsors of the tournament included Hospitality Experts Consortium, LLC, Caesars Entertainment, MGM MIRAGE, Las Vegas Convention & Visitors Authority, and Coca-Cola Foodservice & Hospitality. Companies that made donations to the tournament were Tibetan Tea Inc., Adventures in Advertising Las Vegas, Montecristo Rum, DeLuca Liquor & Wine, Ltd., Vegas4locals.com, and Wildcard Golf.



National Advisory Board member George Baggott, Hotel College Dean Stuart Mann, Tournament Coordinator Marcus Threats, Business College Dean Richard Flaherty, and Professor Andy Nazarechuk participated in the college's golf tournament held during the 2004 Global Gaming Expo.



Members of the Korean Alumni Association recently held a well-attended reception in Korea.

Alumni Teach Casino Auditing Level 1 Seminar

Paula Eylar '89, MBA '97, vice president of internal audit for Boyd Gaming, and Jeff Voyles '98, table games floor supervisor at the MGM Grand Hotel, taught the college's first Casino Auditing Level 1 seminar via videoconference for a state gaming control board.

The attendees were located in the video conference-enabled training room at their employer's office. The instructors covered audit topics including such as casino internal control and management's responsibility, internal audit and the regulatory

process, currency transaction reporting, minimum internal control standards, analyzing casino operation, auditing the casino cage, the slot and table games department, and casino fraud. The gaming control board saved thousands of dollars on travel expenses and countless hours in employee travel time.

For more information on gaming educational seminars via videoconference, please contact Mary Ann McDaniel, director of wage surveys, at (702) 895-1052.

-Mary Ann McDaniel

Professor Nazarechuk Continues His Travels Around the World



Andy Nazarechuk with staff members at the World Tourism Forum held in Salvador, Brazil.

The 2004 World Tourism Forum was held in Salvador, Brazil, and focused on sustainable tourism development. I participated in a panel discussion about tourism development and shared the platform with the Minister of Tourism from Spain – the world's top tourism country – and the Minister of Tourism for Mexico. My talk focused on the success that Las Vegas has achieved by promoting entertainment, restaurants, and conventions as motives to visit our city. Over eight hundred attendees, representing many different countries, participated in the conference seeking to develop or improve their own tourism industries.

-Associate Professor Andy Nazarechuk '79, MS '85

Hotel College Factors Heavily in NBGSA Western Regional Meeting

Several members of UNLV's Harrah Hotel College played key roles in the 2004 National Black Graduate Student Association (NBGSA) Western Regional Meeting, which was held in early August at UNLV's Stan Fulton International Gaming Institute.

Assistant professor Wanda Costen gave an address entitled "The Reality of Diversity: Where Do We Go From Here?" Associate professor Angela Farrar and Ch-a Mosley, master's student and vice president of UNLV's Black Graduate Student Association, served as panelists in a discussion entitled, "The Prerequisites for Success: How to Succeed in Your Graduate Program." Jocelina Santos, doctoral candidate and immediate past president of the UNLV Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA), welcomed

meeting attendees and introduced Vice President of Administration, Juanita Fain.

Ivan Turnipseed, doctoral student, vice president of GPSA, and NBGSA Western Regional Representative, was one of two key coordinators responsible for planning the three-day program. Undergraduates Omari Deron-Head and Detrick Sanford also participated in the event, partially sponsored by Dean Stuart Mann.

Forty-two individuals participated in this meeting, representing eight higher educational institutions in six states. For more information on NBGSA, please visit <http://www.nbgsa.org>.

-Ivan B. Turnipseed
Class of 2007

Culinary Arts Student Gillanders Takes Top Honors in “Almost Famous Chef” Competition

Facing an all-star panel of celebrity chefs and media personalities, as well as the discerning palates of the public, Hotel College student Stephen Gillanders cooked his way to the national title of “Almost Famous Chef” recently at the Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino. Gillanders, who faced regional winners from the nation’s top culinary schools, won a trip to the Italian Culinary Institute for Foreigners (ICIF) in Italy, numerous culinary products, a \$1000 prize from contest sponsor S.Pellegrino and an appearance on NBC’s Today Show in New York.

Preparing his signature dish - Crispy Skin Cured Salmon with Parmesan Spinach Cakes, Yukon Gold Potato Puree, Mushroom Ragout, Smoked Salmon Rillettes, and Port Beurre Rouge – Gillanders took the competition’s “People’s Choice” and “Signature Dish” awards, as well overall top honors.

“Stephen is a great chef and also a young man of exceptional character,” said Jean Hertzman, lecturer/chef at the Harrah Hotel College. “His personality, creativity, and grace under pressure impressed a very tough panel of judges. We are very proud of his accomplishments and expect him to have a wonderful career ahead.”

“This competition has been a great experience for me,” said Gillanders. “I’ve learned a lot about this field – that it’s really all about satisfying people. The heat of the competition also helped me learn about my own capabilities under incredible pressure. I’m very excited to have come so far and I’d like to thank everyone who has supported me.”

The Almost Famous Chef competition is designed

to help students learn firsthand from some of the world’s most famous culinary personalities what it takes to become a great cook - and a successful chef - in today’s competitive marketplace.

Judges in the competition included chefs Charlie Palmer

(Aureole, New York and Las Vegas), Susan Feniger and Mary Sue Milliken (Owners, Border Grill, Los Angeles/Hosts, TV’s “Two Hot Tamales”), John Bray (Assistant Executive Chef, Mandalay Bay), Piero Selvaggio (Valentino, Santa Monica and Las Vegas), and Hubert Keller (Fleur de Lys, San Francisco and Las Vegas). Media judges included Muriel Stevens (Food, Wine and Travel Editor, Las Vegas Sun), Heather John (Senior Editor, Bon Appetit), Evan Kleiman (Host, “Good Food”, KCRW-FM) and Jennifer English (Host, The Food & Wine Network).



Stephen Gillanders speaks with Robin Leach about the competition.

“I’ve learned a lot about this field - that it’s really all about satisfying people. The heat of the competition also helped me learn about my own capabilities under incredible pressure.”

“Michael Tata” from page 1

of Hotel Administration.

Brian Greenspun, president and editor of the Las Vegas Sun, first met Tata while vacationing in Maui.

“He was working behind the front desk at the Four Seasons and when he learned that I was from Las Vegas, told me that he was a Harrah Hotel College graduate,” said Greenspun. “I could tell that he was a hard worker and loved his job and the next time I saw him was at the opening of the Four Seasons in Las Vegas. As we were developing plans for Green Valley Ranch Station, I knew that I would like him to be

part of that property’s opening team as well.

Michael was very proud of UNLV and I’m glad that his name is now helping other students,” Greenspun continued. “I hope that the recipients try to understand who he was and his level of dedication to the hospitality industry. If they pick up half of what he knew and did, they’ll be doing great.”

In early 2005, the Michael Tata Scholarship Fund awarded \$1,000 each to students Karina Herrera and Matthew Wilson.

In Memory of Claude Rand

Claude Rand, former professor in the Harrah Hotel College, passed away in September at age 86. Originally from Massachusetts, he graduated with a bachelor's degree from Tufts University and held a master's degree from the University of Georgia. He served with the United States Army in World War II, and then worked as director of sales for TWA in several cities before moving to Las Vegas in 1969.

"Claude was very popular with students," said professor John Stefanelli. "I think they appreciated his unique sense of humor and his ability to combine academic materials with 'reality-based' education." Rand is survived by his wife, Berte, two sons, and one grandson. Memorial gifts may be sent to Nathan Adelson Hospice in Las Vegas.

In Memory of Frank Watts

Frank Frederick Watts, 93, passed away Dec. 5 in Las Vegas. Originally from Ohio, Watts held a degree from Franklin University. He and his wife Jane moved to Las Vegas in 1950, where he served as the controller for the El Rancho Vegas and later, the Riviera. He was influential in the establishment of the Harrah Hotel College as well as the Hotel Accountants Association.

Faculty Internships, MGM MIRAGE-Style

After 12 years of administrative service to the college, I embarked on a faculty development leave in July 2004. Part of it included a faculty internship at MGM MIRAGE, which was the most informative and entertaining experience I've had in a long time.

First, I was surprised that the company would even host a faculty intern. Over the years, many companies have approached faculty with internship offers, but very few have received the idea like MGM MIRAGE. Not only did they provide me with the opportunity of a faculty internship, they did everything but send a limo to pick me up each day. Ken Goodly, the company's manager of College & Community Relations, along with all the wonderful people I interacted with at the MGM Grand and the Treasure Island, were incredibly gracious and generous with their time and willingness to share information and answer questions.

The second surprise was my pleasure at rediscovering that my opinion of field trips, internships, externships, etc. is as valid today as it was when I first began teaching. Those of you who know me know that I think these experiences are the most valuable teaching tools we can offer students. This was certainly true in my case. I came away with a great understanding of multi-unit restaurant management that I did not previously have.

Another surprise was bumping into so many alums. I also ran into several current students gaining their work hours. In addition, I ran into some of my favorite guest speakers from over the years.

Another pleasant surprise was receiving an excellent education and warm welcome from so many alums and marveling at how well they've blossomed professionally. I had the opportunity to hang out with Jennifer Tipps '96 BS Hotel Administration, the food and beverage training manager at MGM Grand, and was just amazed at how articulate and focused she is. Likewise with Jeff Yedlin '02 BS Hotel Administration, beverage manager at Treasure Island, Kathy Springstead '92 BS Hotel Administration, director of banquets at MGM's Conference Center, Omri Karo '03, restaurant manager at TI, and Marina Vial Tsina '02, senior buyer at MGM Grand. Actually, if I knew they were one day going to be this nice to me, I would have been nicer to them when they were



Pictured left to right, Bruce Belcher '98, Samantha Ebmeier Taube '95, John Stefanelli, and Jennifer Tipps '96, all bring their UNLV ties to their careers in the hotel industry.

here (just kidding).

I would have never expected the next surprise: the amount of latitude the company gives to its restaurant managers and room chefs. Looking back, I probably should have anticipated some of this, especially at the MGM Grand, given the fact that Gamal Aziz is the president. When he was in food and beverage at Caesars years ago and regularly spoke to my graduate classes, you could sense this young man was the real deal. The same is true at TI, where Adam Odegard is now vice president of food and beverage, having moved up from the executive chef's position.

The last surprise I'll share is my shock at how clean and neat these properties are. And quiet. And how pleasant everyone is to one another. I hung out one night at the MGM's Conference Center and watched the crew put out a sit-down dinner for 1,800 guests. No yelling, no screaming, no threats, no fighting, no panic attacks, no noise. And after they put it out, you would never know by looking at the kitchens and service corridors; they were about as clean and organized when the meal ended as they were when the first guest arrived.

I've been teaching over 30 years and I regret I never had an opportunity to do a faculty internship before. If you're a faculty member in this great industry and haven't had this experience, don't wait. Contact Ken Goodly (kgoodly@treasureisland.com) and tell him I sent you.

-Professor John Stefanelli

Hospitality Networking Receptions

Leverage your affiliation with UNLV and immerse yourself in a relaxed atmosphere of networking and socializing among hospitality professionals from all areas of industry. Experience how networking can help improve your career opportunities.

Dates: The third Thursday of each month from April through November.

- April 21 • May 19 • June 16 • July 21
- August 18 • September 15 • October 20
- November 17

Time: 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Location: The newest “Lounge” in Las Vegas, located in UNLV’s Stan Fulton Building (International Gaming Institute) at the corner of Flamingo and Swenson.

Harrah Hotel College Alumni Association members are free. Non-members and guests are \$10. Don’t forget to bring your business cards. Appetizers and no-host beverages provided. Visit <http://hotel.unlv.edu/alumni> for additional information. RSVP to each reception by e-mail to hotelalumni@cmail.nevada.edu.

Business-to-Business Breakfast

Invest in your career by strengthening your resources and connections on:

May 13
September 9
October 21
November 18

This "build a connection" networking format includes a 10-to-15-minute program followed by card

exchanges and one-on-one discussions. Admission is \$10 for members of the UNLV Alumni Association, faculty, and staff. Nonmembers are \$15. Continental breakfast is included.

The programs are held from 7:30 – 9:00 a.m. at the Richard Tam Alumni Center, UNLV (Maryland Parkway and Harmon). Parking is available on campus. RSVPs are encouraged. Please call (702) 895-3621.

Alumni and Friends Reception and Events

Tuesday, April 26, 2005

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

House of Blues
at Mandalay Bay

(New Orleans Room)

Held on the occasion of the Las Vegas International Hotel & Restaurant Show (www.lvihrs.com)

Sunday, May 22, 2005

5:30 – 7:30 p.m.

The Westin Chicago River North

Ember Grille Restaurant

320 N. Dearborn Ave., Chicago, IL

(312) 744-1900

Held on the occasion of the National Restaurant Show (www.restaurant.org)

Thursday, June 9, 2005

6pm

Dinner of Distinction Honoring Excellence in Hospitality

TI Hotel & Casino, Treasure Island Ballroom

Booksigning by Jerry Vallen, Founding Dean

For ticket information please call

(702) 895-2934

August 9, 2005

Napa Valley Wine Tasting tour

for Alumni and friends

Lead by Dr. Don Bell

Saturday, October 29, 2005

2nd Annual Birdies, Bogeys,

and Beer Golf Tournament

Painted Desert Golf Club

To RSVP for all events, contact the Alumni Relations Director at (702) 895-2934

or e-mail

judy.nagai-allison@cmail.nevada.edu

Merit Found in Creating Technology Research Focal Points Within Development's Commercial Facilities

“What we were unable to share with you at that time was that we had just finished gathering data on how a new element would fit into our already impressive plans.”

Our first installation of this series described the core components which make up the exciting Hospitality Campus development now under study. Those of you who read that article learned of our plans for creating a wonderful campus within a campus that showcased a new hotel, conference center, free standing fine dining restaurant, and possibly other facilities. These commercial ventures would frame the development under the study's star attraction, a new hotel college academic building. What we were unable to share with you at that time was that we had just finished gathering data on how a new element would fit into our already impressive plans. It occurred to us that we had an opportunity to create some real donor interest.

We expanded our original concept to include what we are calling INNnovation Village. We realized that a living research laboratory could position the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration as the preeminent research center for the study of emerging hospitality technology in the world. Before we boldly went where no man had gone before, we decided to see if our idea had any merit. To do this, Dean Mann and I took our idea to a few hotel conferences, including the International Hotel/Motel & Restaurant Show in New York, where we bounced our ideas off of Joe McInerney, president of the American Hotel & Lodging Association; Reid Paul, editor of Hospitality Technology Magazine; Tom Lichford, Microsoft's top specialist in hospitality retail services; and a few dozen other high level hospitality operator and vendor executives. The response we received was both encouraging and supportive beyond our expectations. Everyone saw that if this was done right, it would be a win - win for all.

The following are a few of the key benefits UNLV's Harrah Hotel College, vendors, and operators would enjoy if the INNnovation Village concept becomes a reality:

- Research on new technologies, products, and the built environment would be performed as well as a controlled setting implemented to measure guest preferences;
- The opportunity to design, direct, and participate would attract stellar faculty, as well as top-tier undergraduate and graduate students;



Russell Dazio '73, Project Coordinator

- The hospitality industry would be able to use published results produced under an unbiased rating system to make informed decisions for major investments;
- The hospitality industry would have a central source to direct questions about emerging technologies and the built environment;
- Vendors would be able to use this research center to measure product performance and acceptance prior to making decisions to release it for public consumption;
- Students would be exposed to the latest technology that would enhance their skill sets in the open job market;
- New programs related to the built environment designed to reduce costs and improve profit would receive heightened awareness; and
- The Harrah Hotel College would gain a unique position among all colleges offering hospitality programs as the source where hospitality innovation is born.

2005 Resolutions

Although we're already into 2005 by a few months, we thought it important to share a few New Year's resolutions we hope you adopt!

- Give the Harrah Hotel College and UNLV your current e-mail address. C'mon – get in the 21st Century! We primarily communicate via e-mail to our alumni.
- Update your address with us. If you're still getting mail with that annoying little yellow forwarding sticker on it, you need to let us know where you've moved.
- Tell us about all the fabulous things your degree has allowed you to do! We want to know where you work as do all of your former student cohorts. Plus, we want to brag about our alumni in future newsletters.
- Send us your story ideas for Premier or submit an article yourself – we're always on the lookout for interesting story angles!
- Last, but certainly not least, join the Harrah Hotel College Alumni Association and show your Rebel pride to all!

*To share
your news or
update your
contact
information,
visit
[http://hotel.unlv.edu/
alumni](http://hotel.unlv.edu/alumni)*

Students Host Friends of Nevada Dinner To Benefit Homeless Organization

For the third year in a row, the Friends of Nevada Dinner was held in late October in the Boyd Dining Room. Proceeds from this annual event go to Poverello House, a local non-profit that provides shelter to the homeless. Planned and executed by Harrah Hotel College students, the dinner features gourmet menu items based on the recipes of some of Las Vegas' most famous chefs.

This year's gastronomic feast featured recipes from a number of international cuisines. After starting with passed canapés, diners sampled selections from Asia including Nobu's Black Cod with Miso, Italy with Wolfgang Puck's Garlic Chicken, and America including Emeril's Crab and Olive Salad, and finished with desserts that included tiramisu and an ice cream sundae bar.

More than 125 people attended the event and more than \$5,000.00 was raised for Poverello House. "As the event has gained more recognition each year, the contribution we are able to make to Poverello House has also grown," said organizer and professor Andy Feinstein. In the Franciscan tradition, the Poverello House offers regular daytime hospitality to homeless men and women in a homelike environment that respects their human dignity. It serves as an oasis for the poor who live on the streets of Las Vegas and Henderson. Poverello House offers laundry facilities, showers, meals, beds to nap in, and a place to relax in their enclosed backyard.

BRUNLV Scores Another Success

The third annual BRUNLV fundraiser, Birdies, Bogeys, and Beer, was held on Saturday, October 23 at the Painted Desert Golf Club. With 63 players participating in the golf tournament, over \$3,000 was raised to assist the education of students in the Department of Food and Beverage Management.

BRUNLV is a nonprofit organization formulated by Hotel College professors Dan Nelson and Andy Feinstein to support the advancement of craft brewing in Southern Nevada through a golf tournament/beer tasting event.

"Money raised will be used to help build a pilot

brewery at UNLV where UNLV students and local professional brewers will be able to learn more about the craft of brewing," said Feinstein.

"Students in our 490-level course, Festival and Event Management, helped plan and execute the event," said Nelson. "An experiential class like this really puts the pressure on students to deliver. They know that they have to have their act together."

Students sold tickets to the tournament and local microbrew tasting as well as secured items for the silent auction.

To join the Harrah Hotel College Alumni Association, please visit <http://hotel.unlv.edu/alumni> or call 702-895-2934

New Alumni Board Chairman Ready for the Challenge

Marcus Threats '87 BS Hotel Administration, '99 MMBA, is a man on a mission – the mission of recruiting more alumni to become actively involved members of the Harrah Hotel College Alumni Association. Elected in October as the chairman of the Alumni Board, Threats hopes to grow the Alumni Association membership to a new record.

"I'm really excited about spreading the word of the hotel college's aim to become more ethnically diverse," said Threats. "Dean Mann has been instrumental in



taking our college to the next level and I hope that my work with the rest of the Alumni Board can help him reach his goals."

"There are so many hotel college alumni all around the world, spreading the word about the wonderful education they received at UNLV,"

said Threats. "The most important way they can share that message is through membership in the alumni association."

You might think that someone like Threats is too busy to take on another challenge. With a job as a floor supervisor at The Mirage, he is also working on admission to law school and is an active participant in The First Tee program, an initiative of the World Golf Foundation. Its mission is to impact the lives of young people by providing learning facilities and educational programs that promote character development and life-enhancing values through the game of golf.

"The goal of The First Tee is to provide the golf learning facilities and the experience that will enable kids from every walk of life to partake of a game that teaches values for life and which can be played for

a lifetime," according to the organization's website. Threats makes sure that this is a reality for a group of economically challenged middle-school students in North Las Vegas.

Each Saturday during the school year, with the financial assistance of the Harrah Hotel College's own Dean Stuart Mann, Threats ensures that a van is on time to pick up the students at their school and take them to the Las Vegas National Golf Club. Once there, they learn life lessons including the importance of family, education, and commitment.

"I think I get more out of The First Tee than the kids do," Threats joked. "I know that the lessons we're teaching will really help them in the future. Little things, like looking people in the eye and shaking their hand, are things these kids just aren't taught and we aim to change that."

Threats has also been involved with the hotel college's mentoring program for the past few years. "I feel that supporting your school is one of the most important things you can do," said Threats. "I wouldn't feel right if I didn't show my gratitude."



Alumni Board Members for 2004-05 include Judy Nagai-Allison (staff), Kathy Nelson, Paula O'Donnell, Christine Kiely, Holly Mae Sparks, (Back Row) Dennis Gradillas, Marcus Threats. Not pictured: Paula Eylar, Jim Germain, Bill McBeath, Fayyaz "Raja" Raja, and Tony Santo.



Johnny Tullis '04 standing in front of the World Trade Plaza Hotel, Shijiazhuang, Hebei Province, China

Hotel College Graduate Begins Career in China

The World Tourism Organization has predicted that China will be the world's number one tourism destination by the year 2020. To that end, the hotel college now offers a class designed to expose students to opportunities that are becoming available in China and in other countries. Many international companies are expanding the numbers of hotels they have in China and are seeking qualified managers for these properties. Thus, it is important for students to learn not only about those opportunities for employment, but also to learn about the region's culture and their differences in management practices.

It is not often that a student takes this type of

opportunity and turns it into a reality. Johnny Tullis recognized not only the opportunities in China, but also saw the adventure and challenge of working in another country. After several e-mails and some effort on his part to seek out employment, he was offered a management position at the World Trade Plaza Hotel in Shijiazhuang, Hebei Province, China.

He has been working in China since September 2004 and enjoying his experience. Recently, he stated, "I am so happy I was given the opportunity to work in China. Just over a year ago, I was reading about China in Professor Nazarechuk's class at UNLV so it's a bit surreal that I am here now."

Hotel Students Help with New Student Orientation

Students enrolled in TCA 490, a capstone course for seniors, assisted with UNLV's new student orientation this past August. These are students who have a strong interest in meetings, conventions, and special event coordination so this was the perfect opportunity for them to fine-tune their planning and coordination skills.

"There were two events during the overall orientation program that the class helped with," said Kelly Cox, program coordinator of first-year programs and transition services for the UNLV Division of Student Life. "The students oversaw most of the

details in planning the university welcome and the closing ceremony. They coordinated the logistics and actually staffed the events."



These students used their interest in meetings, conventions, and special events to help with UNLV's new student orientation.

UNLV Prepares for Future With "Midtown UNLV"



A view of the existing Maryland Parkway

In her 10th Annual State of the University address that the institution has launched a large-scale public/private partnership to redevelop the areas surrounding campus. Called "Midtown UNLV," the redevelopment effort calls for private businesses, various government entities, community members, and the university to join forces to improve the physical space around the campus, starting with the areas immediately to the east along Maryland Parkway at the campus entrance.

"The goal of this project is to create a place at our front door that would help transform our surrounding area into a university district – a neighborhood of restaurants, cafes, outdoor gathering places, small-scale galleries, and welcoming residential and retail

opportunities," Harter said. "This district will revitalize the area, serve as an attraction to the creative people the university seeks to serve and employ, and to literally and figuratively transform our community."

The entire project is a physical manifestation of a community partnership orientation that Harter has adopted during her decade-long tenure at UNLV. "We have long maintained that a university should help transform its community in positive and constructive ways, and we are committed to that idea at UNLV," she said.

For more information on this exciting project, visit <http://midtown.unlv.edu>.

Congratulations

David Corsun, Ph.D. and **Cheri Young**, Ph.D. have each been promoted to associate professor. Both are faculty of the Hotel Management Department.

Assistant professor **Bill Werner** and associate professor **Christian Hardigree** '93 have authored a paper with UNLV alumnus Shannon Okada MS '04 entitled "Reconsidering Mandatory Employment Arbitration." It was published by the Cornell Quarterly in February 2005. In addition, Hardigree and S. Denise McCurry, corporate counsel for MGM/MIRAGE presented "Targeting Workplace Violence" at the third Annual Hospitality Law Conference in Houston, Texas in February.



Hardigree

Antonio DeLeon Guerrero '81 was recently appointed the new president of Northern Marianas College. The College is the only public postsecondary institution in the United States Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). The Northern Marianas College is a comprehensive community college that is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and is the closest U.S. accredited postsecondary institution to many Asian countries, including China, Japan, and South Korea.

The fourth edition of Associate Professor **Thomas Jones** '82 BS Hotel Administration, '85 MS Hotel Administration, Ed.D., textbook, "Professional Management of Housekeeping Operations" was recently published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc.



In October, the Culinary Team Las Vegas, of which **Chef Claude Lambertz** is a member, returned from the Culinary Olympics in Germany with nine silver and two bronze medals. This is the first time Las Vegas has been represented at the Culinary Olympics.



Lambertz

Associate Professor **Curtis Love** received the Distinguished Service Award from the International Association of Exhibition Management (IAEM) in December. The award is presented to members who have rendered distinguished service to IAEM and to the exhibition industry as a whole. Individuals are recognized for their extraordinary service and contributions at both the local and national level and have furthered the growth and development of IAEM.

Professor **Joe Perdue** received the 2004 Champion of Club Education award conferred by the University of Delaware's student chapter of the Club Managers Association of America (CMAA) at its annual fund-raising event held in October.



Perdue

Make Plans to See The World... With a Little Help from UNLV

An exciting new benefit is available to members of the UNLV Alumni Association — affiliated individuals are now able to enjoy significant savings on world-class travel.

As a member, your University Alumni Travel Benefits program includes discounts on vacation rental opportunities (for example, condo rentals are available for \$349 a week) as well as discounts on car rentals and various hotels. To see what is available, simply make sure your Alumni

Association membership is current, then visit www.alumnitravelbenefits.com.

Go see the world! Each time you go on a vacation using this service, the UNLV Alumni Association receives \$25 toward its programs. To join the UNLV Alumni Association, contact Alumni Relations at alumni.relations@cmail.nevada.edu or call (702) 895-3621. Be sure to join the Harrah Hotel College Alumni Association, too. Contact judy.nagai-allison@cmail.nevada.edu for more information.

Alumni Updates

1990s

Bruce Claver '90 recently joined the Union League Club of Chicago as front office manager. The club, which has been open since 1869, has 190 guest rooms and is rated the number two club in the United States. Bruce and his wife Amy are expecting their second child in June.

Christopher E. Bond '92 has been appointed as the director of leisure sales for New York-New York Hotel & Casino. He has been in the leisure sales business in Las Vegas for the past 11 years.

Brian Costanzo '92 took a big jump in July by starting his own independent meeting and event company, Vision Hospitality, in San Francisco. His advice to others thinking about starting their own business: "Take risks but just make sure you have a little voice in your head that tells you every day that all your hard work will make you the money you need to survive in a matter of time."

Lyra Beck '93 recently moved back to Las Vegas and is working for Boyd Gaming as corporate director of Hotel Yield/Teleservices. She was most recently in Reno/Tahoe working for another company in a divisional role and before that, she opened Harrah's Shreveport Hotel in Louisiana.

Christian Hardigree '93, associate professor in Hotel Management and Christopher Brown, internship coordinator for the PGM Program were married on March 25, 2005 in the Turks and Caicos Islands, British West Indies.

Ron Pepper '93 owned and operated a martial arts school until following a dream to live abroad. In Spain, he started a photography business specializing in panoramic "virtual tour" photography. Now back in his favorite city of San Francisco, he has launched www.panoramaneetwork.com, which keeps him involved with the hospitality business. He also works as a bartender on the weekends. Ron can be reached at pep@panoramaneetwork.com.

Sari F. Utschen-Ayalon '93 has recently returned to Las Vegas after being away for 10 years. She has opened her own staffing service called Culinary Pros and provides professional culinary services to hotels, country clubs, special events, etc. She invites alumni to contact her via email at sari@culinaryproslv.com or (702) 735-6644 if they are in need of staff or looking for work.

Diane Watanabe '93 made a lifestyle change recently when she moved from New Jersey to Scottsdale, Ariz. She's working as an Event Manager for WorldatWork, an association for human resources professionals. Her husband, Jonathan Ukeiley (MBA '91) is still in New Jersey and will join her in the spring.

Bon Ku '95 works as the rooms division director at Dragon Hill Lodge located inside the military compound in Yongsan Seoul, Korea.

Joanne Barrios Wildenhain '95 lives in Redondo Beach, Calif. and works for Marriott Hotels and Resorts Int'l. at the Renaissance Los Angeles Hotel as senior sales manager.

Mahika Chandrasena Bartholomeusz '96 is currently living in Sri Lanka, where she works for SriLankan Airlines in public relations. She recently graduated with a master's degree in public administration from the Postgraduate Institute of Management, a branch of the University of Sri Jayawardenepura in Sri Lanka, and wrote her thesis on service quality in the hospitality industry.

Rachel Ego Conneely '96 has made numerous life changes in just six months' time. In addition to moving from Boston to Wyoming, she has changed jobs and gotten married. She is working for the Powder Horn Ranch, a new golf community in Sheridan, Wyo.

Mark Benjamin '97 is the director of operations for net.insights, an Internet marketing company that designs web pages and provides web management services to hospitality companies. He recently ventured into new territory and is the head of Las Vegas Restaurants Online, a company which provides online restaurant reservation bookings. Visit it on the web at www.netinsights.com.

Kyle Horvatis '98 is currently a physical education teacher and baseball and volleyball coach at Kenmore East High School in Buffalo, New York. He enjoys teaching and has worked in this field for four years.

Tony Letendre '98 was elected to PGA membership as a Class A Member in May 2004. He is the Head Golf Professional at Toscana Country Club, a high-end private club with two Jack Nicklaus signature courses, which opened in December 2004.

Elliot Dubin '99 recently took a new position as the director of hospitality services for Jani-King of Illinois. Jani-King is the world's leading commercial cleaning franchise company with more than 10,000 authorized franchise owners worldwide.

2000s

Scott Ramin '00, MS '04 is currently in the Ph.D. program at Oklahoma State University and is also working as a graduate assistant/chef instructor in the State Room Grill in the Atherton Hotel, which is run by the University's Hotel Department.

Cesar Hernandez '03 began his career with Hilton Hotels Corporation in New Orleans, Louisiana as the assistant director of revenue management. He most recently has been promoted to the position of director of revenue management at the Hilton Cancun Beach and Golf Resort, located in the Zona Hotelera. He can be reached at 01152-998-881-8580 or via e-mail at Cesar_Hernandez@hilton.com.

Tim Lam '04 graduated last spring. From 2003 through the end of 2004, he worked at Caesars Palace as Housekeeping Manager. He recently took on the position of vice president of operations for Hospitality Experts Consortium, LLC in Las Vegas, which provides consulting services and legal expert witness sourcing for the global hospitality industry.

Ralph Piccirilli '04 is an employee of Boyd Gaming Corporation and recently transferred from Sam's Town Hotel & Casino to the California Hotel & Casino. He plans to attend the William S. Boyd School of Law at UNLV in the fall of 2005.

ALUMNI CLUBS Get Involved. Stay Connected.

Alumni Volunteers Wanted!

If you are interested in joining an existing alumni club or if you would like to start one in your area, please contact your fellow alumni:

Chicago Area
Stephanie Fisher, '00
w-312-755-4273
fishst@aol.com

Denver, Colo. Area
Tracy Varga, '98
h-303-722-8878
w-720-264-6321
tracyvarga@hotmail.com
and
Cindy Pegg Jennings, '94
h-303-484-8369
cpmadison@comcast.net

Mississippi State
Lori Beth Susman '86
w-228-832-7004
jackpot@digiscapoe.com

New York Area
Sue Roller, '00
c-718-781-5470
sue_roller@yahoo.com

Northeast Area/Rhode Island
Albert Ginchereau, Jr., '71
w-866-449-4600
h-401-849-5323
(Newport, RI)
albertginchereau@msn.com

Oregon/Willamette Valley
Denise Phillips Beban, '95
w-541-346-2101
h-541-349-1010
dbeban@uoregon.edu

Renno Area
Andrea Knapp, '92, '00 MSS
c-775-813-4870
andrea_knapp@ml.com

Sacramento Area
Jennifer Zajac Winters, '93
w-916-649-4416
h-916-451-2702
jwinters@sunstonehotels.com

San Diego Area
Scott Gulbransen, '95
w-858-784-1594
h-760-479-0661
Scott@sdunlv alumni.com

San Francisco Bay Area
unlvbayareahotelalumni
@yahoogroups.com
Tony Llanos, '97
w-415-365-0307
tllanos@theorchardhotel.com
and
Wanda Jong, '98
h-650-347-1122
or 650-347-1313
wandajong@yahoo.com

Southern California/Los Angeles
Daryl Magreta
h-310-663-2820
darylm@boardwalkrealty.com

Southern Utah
Kathy Pontius, '99
h-435-867-4763
klpontius@hotmail.com

Washington DC Area
Megan Woodman, '94
h-301-255-0876
unlvdc alumni@yahoo.com
or
unlvdc alumni-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

For all other areas,
please contact
Judy Nagai-Allison
UNLV Alumni Association
702-895-2934
judy.nagai-allison@ccmail.nevada.edu

KEEP IN TOUCH!

Send us your personal and career updates to share with fellow alumni. Visit <http://hotel.unlv.edu/alumni> and update your information online or send an e-mail to Judy.Nagai-Allison@ccmail.nevada.edu

Inside

PREMIER

IN THIS ISSUE

Message from the Dean 2

Working with the Military 4

"Almost Famous Chef" Competition.. 7

Hospitality Campus Update..... 10

Alumni Updates..... 15



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MAKE PLANS NOW TO ATTEND THIS SUMMER'S **International Hospitality & Convention Summit at UNLV**

WHAT: The Second Annual Las Vegas International Hospitality & Convention Summit

WHERE: UNLV campus, Stan Fulton Building, 4505 Maryland Pkwy.

WHEN: June 5 – 7

WHY: Because it's THE academic conference for research in the fields of Hospitality, Tourism, Conventions, Events, Food and Beverage, Entertainment, and Leisure Services, and will focus on Technology in the Hospitality Industry.

Experience breakout industry sessions, keynote speakers, panels of experts, exhibits, tours, and demonstrations.

A call for papers is a large part of the summit and the complete requirements are online at <http://tca.unlv.edu/SummitCallforPapers2005.doc>.

Certified Hospitality Educator Training will be available immediately prior to the Summit (June 3 – 4) and the Annual EduComm Conference will take place just after the Summit, June 8 – 10.

**For additional information on the
 Las Vegas International Hospitality & Convention Summit:
 Technology Track, please visit <http://tca.unlv.edu/summit>.**