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UNLV Education Professor Cyndi Giorgis
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Vol. 7 No. 2  Spring 1999

features

6  It's Loney at the Top
As commissioner of aviation for the Chicago Airport System, Mary Rose Loney runs the busiest airport in the world. Find out what part UNLV played in her steady ascent in the field of airport management.

BY SZJAN DIBELLA

10  The Genetic Factor
UNLV biology professor Deborah Hoshizaki and her research team have discovered that at least part of the cause of obesity can be traced to the genes that regulate the development of cells in our bodies.

BY LAURIE FRUTH

14  Volumes of Enthusiasm
How can one education professor amass two storage rooms full of kids' books in only five years? With a love of children's literature and the right commitment, it's easy, answers UNLV's Cyndi Giorgis.

BY DIANE RUSSELL

18  Entering the Virtual Classroom
UNLV psychology professor Russ Hurlbut was fascinated by the idea of offering one of his courses on the Web. But what are the pros and cons of teaching online? He decided to find out for himself.

BY BARBARA CLOUD

departments

2-5  News
22-23  Calendar
26-27  Class Notes
UNLV President Carol C. Harter recently announced the resignation of Norval President for

administration. Juanita Fain, formerly the dean of enrollment management, has been named UNLV's

new vice president for finance. George Scaduto, formerly the assistant vice president for

budgets and sponsored programs, has been named interim vice president for finance.

The reorganization came after the resignation of Novell Pohl, UNLV's former vice president for finance and administration, who recently accepted a position as provost and executive vice president at the University of North Texas.

She holds a doctorate in higher education administration from Ohio State University, a master's degree in educational psychology from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, and a bachelor's degree in psychology from Knoxville College. She also attended the Management Development Program at Harvard University.

Scaduto has served in several capacities since joining the university in 1991, including associate controller, accountant, and, most recently, assistant vice president for budgets and sponsored programs. Previously, he held the positions of chief accountant and associate chief accountant at the State University of New York at Stony Brook and college accountant at the State University of New York at Old Westbury.

He holds an MBA from Dowling College and a bachelor's degree in accounting from the State University of New York at New Paltz.

In addition to her new duties, Fain is now also responsible for the areas of student financial services, human resources, diversity initiatives, and facilities management. Scaduto's duties have been expanded to include oversight of the offices of grants and contracts, controller, disbursements, payroll, human resources, purchasing, and the Thomas M. Mack Center.

"I am pleased to announce that our two very competent individuals have stepped forward to accept these positions of great responsibility," said Harter. "I have the utmost confidence in their abilities to guide their respective units with success."

Prior to joining the UNLV administrative team in 1996, Fain served as associate vice president for administration at Ohio University. She previously had held several positions there, including that of director of student financial aid and scholarships.

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Bennett, Hicks Receive UNLV Alumni Association Awards

Gaming executive William G. Bennett and educator Pamela Hicks have been selected by the UNLV Alumni Association to receive the group’s two most prestigious awards.

Bennett, who is owner of the Sahara Hotel and Casino, was chosen as the 1998 recipient of the Silver State Award. Hicks, who serves as an area superintendent for the Clark County School District, was selected as the 1998 Alumna of the Year.

Bennett, who has spent more than 30 years in the gaming industry and is acknowledged as one of the pioneers of modern Las Vegas, began his career at Del Webb where he worked his way up to become assistant principal at Valley High School. He then served as principal of Gains Junior High School and then became director of secondary curriculum for the school district.

“Pam has served the association and the university in so many ways over the years that it is difficult to recant them all,” Cook said. “As association president, she was a true leader who worked hard on behalf of both alumni and students.”

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Student Leaders Receive Scholarships

UNLV Alumni Association Board Scholarship Chairman Bruce Ford (back row, left), Alumni Association Board President Jim Raligan (back row, second from left, and UNLV President Carol C. Harter (back row, right) congratulate some of the more than 40 recipients of the Alumni Association’s Student Leadership Scholarships. The students were awarded $500 scholarships that were funded through the UNLV Collegiate License Plate Fund Program. The recipients include (back row, left to right) Joe Agasting, Matty Heinberg, Dennis Schwartz, Scott Cecil, Christopher Hovey, Daniel Johnson, Steve Mills, and (front row, left to right) Marion McLoughlin, Cyril Wayne, Natasha Wats, Meaghan Miller, Holly Wainscott, and Hamed Luce.

Miller Receives 1998 Nevada Professor of the Year Award

UNLV special education professor Susan Miller has been named the 1998 Nevada Professor of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

“It’s wonderful to receive this honor, but I really see it as a recognition of the good work that all my colleagues and I in the College of Education have done as a team,” Miller said, who joined the UNLV faculty in 1991.

The Professor of the Year program, which was started in 1981, salutes the most outstanding undergraduate instructors in the country. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching sponsors an annual national competition from which the state winners are also selected.

John Robinson Named UNLV’s Eighth Head Football Coach

Former University of Southern California football coach John Robinson has been hired as UNLV’s eighth head football coach, replacing Jeff Horton, who has accepted a post as quarterbacks coach with the University of Wisconsin at the Lovepeach.

Robinson will lead the Rebels into the 1999 season as the nation’s sixth-winningest active coach with a career record of 104-35-4. Robinson served as head football coach at USC during two different periods. His first stint as head coach began in 1976 and lasted seven seasons. During that time, USC captured the 1978 national championship.

Robinson’s career record at USC ended after 1980, when the Trojans posted a record of 11-2-1. Robinson went on to become an assistant coach at Nebraska, where he guided the Cornhuskers to a 1982 Conference Championship and a berth in the 1982 Rose Bowl.

UNLV Athletics to Join Mountain West Conference in 1999

UNLV, which is finishing its third year as a member of the Western Athletic Conference, announced recently that it will leave the league this summer to form the Mountain West Conference, with seven other current WAC schools.

Joining the Rebels in the new conference will be the United States Air Force Academy, Brigham Young University, Colorado State University, the University of New Mexico, San Diego State University, the University of Utah, and the University of Wyoming.

Citing, among other issues, high travel expenses and a lack of rivalry associated with a 15-team league, spread over five time zones, the eight schools felt it was in their best interest to form a smaller, more centrally located conference. The group will officially withdraw from the WAC June 30.

Former Sun Belt Conference Commissioner Craig Thompson has been named the first commissioner of the Mountain West Conference, which will be headquartered in Colorado Springs.

4 • UNLV Magazine • SPRING 1999 • 5
It’s Loney at the Top

She has worked her way up from a $2.50-an-hour ticket counter job for Grand Canyon Airlines to the pinnacle of airport management posts. As UNLV alumna Mary Rose Loney looks back on her 20-year career in airport management, she recounts the flight plan that took her to the top.

BY SUZAN DIBELLA

It is the busiest airport in the world.

Chicago’s O’Hare International Airport served 74 million passengers last year and conducted 895,000 aircraft takeoffs and landings. It serves as landlord to 93 airlines and 142 business tenants. Fifty thousand people go to work of supervisors, foremen, managers, and directors.

But, up and down the line, all of them answer to one woman: Mary Rose Loney. Yes, she’s in charge of it all — and, as a matter of fact, two other Chicago airports as well.

The 1983 graduate of UNLV’s master of public administration program is the commissioner of aviation for the Chicago Airport System, which includes not only O’Hare, but also Midway Airport and Meigs Field.

Loney is essentially the chief executive officer of the airport system. Her responsibilities include overseeing an operating budget of $556 million and directing a $2 billion capital development project for the system. She manages 8,550 acres of land and facilities that comprise the three airports, including six terminal buildings, 13 runways, and 35,000 parking spaces.

She supervises a staff of 2,200 and oversees labor contracts with 17 different collective bargaining units.

Loney has held top-level management jobs at six major metropolitan airports over the course of her 20-year career. Most of her work days begin at 7 a.m. and end at 11 p.m.

“My oxygen is pretty much devoted to aviation,” she says with a smile, suggesting that her time commitment alone explains her rise to the top post in airport management. While commitment did in fact play a pivotal role in her ascent, she acknowledges that there was more to it than that.

There were the years of building technical competence, both on the job and through academic means, as well as her uncommon dedication to her career. There were some gender barriers to break. There were also fair amounts of risk-taking and tough decision-making. And there were some hard lessons. But she would be the first to say that getting there was half the fun. Here’s how it happened.

Born in Ohio, Loney was the second of five children in an Irish Catholic family. Her father, who worked for U.S. Steel, was transferred to Pittsburgh when Mary Rose was seven. Her first exposure to aviation came in the form of an ad for stewardess training that she found in the Catholic school magazine she read during grade school.

“I cut that ad out and wrote a report on it for my second-grade Catholic school class, highlighting the fact that I wanted to experience travel and romance,” Loney muses. “I don’t think my teacher, Sister Raphael, appreciated it all that much. But I think I’ve always been very big part of my spirit.”

So big a part of her was her desire for adventure that it led her to go west after graduating in 1973 from the University of Pittsburgh with a bachelor’s degree in sociology and philosophy.

“I had spent the preceding summer backpacking in Hawaii, and it was wonderful, she says. “So I wanted to return to the West after graduation. I went to hike the Grand Canyon that summer and didn’t want to leave.” She stayed on to take her first job in aviation: selling air tours of the Grand Canyon.

“I worked for Grand Canyon Airlines staffing a ticket counter for $2.50 an hour,” she says, noting that she actually lived in the Grand Canyon for two years. During that time, she made her first trip to Las Vegas; she moved here in 1976.

“On my first shot at management. Here I was the first woman in Lucky’s Nevada operation to go through that program,” she says, adding that it resulted in her becoming what was called in those days the “fourth man” — closing night manager of a huge supermarket on Bonanza Road.

“I remember having to climb up on the metal railing that divides the entry and exit doors to lock the store at 10 o’clock,” says the 5-foot, 2-inch Loney. “It was my first shot at management. Here I was at 24 managing a huge commercial operation with a unionized labor force and doing things that prepared me for what I do today.”

“I had worked my way through college as a grocery checker, so when I first came to Las Vegas, I took a job as a checker for Lucky Stores,” she says, adding that the move was a significant one for several reasons. Most importantly, she was selected by Lucky Stores to enter their management training program.

“So at the tender age of 24, I became the first woman in Lucky’s Nevada operation to go through that program,” she says, adding that it resulted in her becoming what was called in those days the “fourth man” — closing night manager of a huge supermarket on Bonanza Road.

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Photos by Peter J. Schulz © 1998.
In 1978, Loney took her first job in the public sector, a position created through the Comprehensive Employment Training Act; she was hired to train youths and disenchanted adults how to seek jobs. That same year a greater opportunity came her way — her first job at McCarran International Airport.

"I was hired as a $9,000 per-year administrative assistant in the business and finance office," she says, recalling that her first task was to draft a lease agreement for Air Cal. But set in the larger context of what was going on at McCarran at the time, Loney's humble beginnings take on greater meaning.

That was the year we launched the McCarran 2000 project," she says. "The following year we went out and borrowed $300 million in the revenue bond market to start construction on the project. At the time, it was the largest airport revenue bond series ever issued. So it was definitely trailblazing. And there was risk involved, Las Vegas had a population of 200,000 at the time, and we were planning this very ambitious growth program for the airport.

In the spirit of the environment in which she worked, Loney herself decided to take a risk that would set the pace and tone of the project.

"So I convinced him to set aside that master plan and bring in the team and said to the director, 'You can't do this! It's too short-sighted.' The plan called for a new terminal; after her work on the new terminal building in Albuquerque, as well as on the McCarran 2000 project, word was getting around that Loney was the person who could make a capital improvement project happen. And I was willing to do whatever it takes to enhance my skills at that point. I was at that point that I made the commitment to take on this kind of responsibility at this time. And in so many ways, he did me a favor, because that was then my incentive to look for other opportunities."

And, sure enough, I came in with him and ran all the floor scrubbers until we got the shifts moved around. That definitely taught me to always have a backup plan."

After two years on the job in Albuquerque, another opportunity, this time at a larger airport, presented itself. Loney was selected for the second-in-command post at San Jose International Airport,

"In our industry we have an accreditation that is tantamount to an accountant earning a CPA. It's called an AAE — an accredited airport executive," she says. "I ended up becoming the third woman in the United States to earn that accreditation. But first I completed my master's degree in December '83 and then my accreditation in January '84. Throughout the course of her six years at McCarran, she worked her way up through the ranks, eventually gaining the position of director of planning services manager of the airport. In that capacity, she led the environmental studies that supported McCarran's development program.

"I established the first noise abatement program for the airport. I also wrote the first comprehensive set of rules and regulations for McCarran. All of those experts on noise abatement served me very well as I have progressed in my career."

When the number two post — the director of day-to-day operations — at McCarran opened in 1984, Loney decided to go for it. But this time around, she didn't get the job.

"Once again, I went back to the director and said that I'd really like to be considered for the job. But up to that point in time, all of my skills were really focused on the business and training side of the airport, not day-to-day operations. And he said, 'I just don't think you're ready to take on this kind of responsibility at this time.' And in so many ways, he did me a favor, because that was then my incentive to look for other opportunities."

Not long after, she was selected as the top candidate for the post of assistant aviation director at Albuquerque International Airport.

"One of the interesting things about moving over to Albuquerque was that they had just adopted a master plan for the airport," she says. "And I had just come fresh from being part of the McCarran 2000 team. So I looked at their master plan and said to the director, 'You can't do this! It's too short-sighted.' The plan called for ripping up the terminal building for two years for a net gain of three additional aircraft gates. So I convinced him to set aside that master plan and bring in the team that had done McCarran 2000."

That was a big risk for both of them, she reflects, considering that the change in plans required them to go before the Albuquerque City Council to say they wanted to rip up the existing terminal. Yet, they succeeded and were able to bring in the McCarran 2000 architectural team to work with a local firm on a new plan.

"We created the terminal that exists there today, and it's really a charming facility that enables the ambiance of the Southwest region in its very functional layout," she says proudly.

It was also in Albuquerque that she learned one of her biggest professional lessons. Always have a backup plan.

"There was one memorable night there when I had been on the job only about six months," she recalls. "First shift, our graveyard crew wasn't able to get drunk during their shift. And it wasn't just, 'Let's have a cocktail before we start.' It was, 'Let's have a big party.' It was an ugly scene. Employees had passed out. Others had even left in the middle of the night to bring in more provisions.

"Well, I got a call early the next morning about it. When I arrived, they were all pretty much sobering up to reality and admitted what they had done. So I boldly said right on the spot, 'All right, you're all fired!' Then, after they left, the terminal building manager said, 'That's great, Mary Rose! But who's going to polish the floors tonight?'

"I looked at him and said, 'Mario, you and I are going to do the floors tonight.' And, sure enough, I came in with him and ran all the floor scrubbers while the shifts moved around. That definitely taught me to always have a backup plan."

In 1999, Loney quickly accepted the post that would take her to McCarran International Airport, where she administered daily airside and landside activities at the fourth busiest airport in California.

"I was working in the business and finance office, and there was a management analyst position opening that was to report to the director of aviation," she says. "Our director was passing through town from another county department, but it felt I had been overlooked in the selection process. So I remember going to him and saying, 'I wish that you would consider me for this, and if you'll give me the opportunity, I'll be willing to do whatever it takes to enhance my skills and abilities to do the job.' And he gave me the chance. It was at that point that I made the commitment to further my education, to get my keys and radio. Then one of the continued on page 25
UNLV biologist Deborah Hoshizaki and her research team have discovered that at least part of the cause of obesity — and fat cell production in general — can be traced to the genes that regulate the development of cells in our bodies.

By Laurie Fruth

You've tried them all — the grapefruit diet, the liquid diet, even the highly touted protein diet. You've sweated out miles on the treadmill, trudged up the stairs instead of riding the elevator, and grunted through too many sit-ups to count. And you just can't seem to shed that extra weight you hate.

For most people, excess weight is only a nuisance that, at best, makes their clothes fit too tight and, at worst, forces them to dredge up some nagging self-esteem issues that they'd rather forget.

But for 25 percent of the American population, fat is more than just an annoyance or matter of vanity — it's a serious health risk. The clinically obese are at far greater risk of developing diabetes, cancer, and heart disease than the rest of the population. And as the medical profession warns that the problem is reaching epidemic proportions nationally, scientists are taking a fresh look at its causes — and why some of us become obese while others merely carry around a few extra pounds. Many scientists are no longer blaming the condition exclusively on eating behavior.

UNLV biological sciences professor Deborah Hoshizaki is one of those scientists. She believes that at least part of the cause of obesity — and fat cell production in general — can be traced to the genes that regulate the development of cells in our bodies. She and a team of biology graduate students and post-doctoral researchers are investigating the genetic programming that controls how cells develop and determines which ones become fat cells.

"What people need to realize is that, yes, if you eat too much, you're going to gain weight. But that's just a small part of the problem," Hoshizaki explains. "For many years it was thought that you're born with a certain number of fat cells that either grow or diminish according to your eating behavior and metabolic rate. But as it turns out, that's not true. We can always make more fat cells."

Of course, making more fat cells is not the problem — it's getting rid of the ones we have. But, as the thinking often goes in scientific research, if you can find out how and why a condition develops, you can often discover how to make it stop developing. Hoshizaki believes that her work may someday make this possible.

She and her team have already identified two genes that play a critical role in the development of fat cells and are in the process of cloning a third. In order to conduct their research, they have had to examine cells before they've matured, which has made working with human cells unfeasible; hence, their research subjects are not exactly what you might expect.

"We have used fruit flies because we're looking at the very earliest stages of development — stages that you can't see in humans," Hoshizaki says. "And with the exception of some very early events in the creation of an embryo, the rules that govern embryo development in the fruit fly are the same rules that govern embryo development in humans."

Because the genetic rules are...
essentially the same for humans and fruit flies, Hoshizaki believes her research will pave the way for future studies on human subjects.

"We have colleagues in France who are interested in doing human studies, and they call and say, 'So, do you have it?' They're waiting for us to identify the genes that control fat cell development in the fruit fly so that they can begin to look for the same genes in humans.

But they may have to wait a while longer. The process of finding the genes is not simply a matter of looking at a gene under a microscope. As Hoshizaki explains, every single cell in a fruit fly's body contains the same genetic material or DNA. But only a portion of that genetic information is needed for a cell to become what nature intended it to be. The researchers must discover which genes tell a cell to activate or "turn on" the specific portion of the DNA sequence that will program it to become a fat cell rather than a heart cell or muscle cell.

To find that gene, scientists in Hoshizaki's lab have performed their own brand of detective work. They have scoured the scientific literature for clues. They have asked "what if" questions of each other and carefully designed experiments to pursue theories. They have analyzed and criticized the work of their colleagues. And eventually, after months of long hours in the lab, they have made some amazing discoveries.

Perhaps their most striking one has been the discovery of "serpent" - a gene in the fruit fly that, when defective or mutated, causes the embryo to become "serpent". However, if Hoshizaki, Miller, and Hayes can find out more precisely how these three genes interact to produce fat cells, perhaps they and their colleagues can begin to unravel the mystery of why fat cell generation becomes a runaway problem in some fruit flies and not in others. The next step, of course, would be for their colleagues to extrapolate from their findings how the same process might occur in humans.

Though the researchers are excited by the strides they have made so far, they recognize their work is far from done. Their ongoing process of collecting embryos, staining slides, and decoding DNA sequences is extremely time-consuming, and they acknowledge they've chosen a challenging field to study. They've also found that working long hours on such a specialized research project presents some other non-scientific challenges.

"It can be lonely," Miller admits. "It's hard to talk to people outside the lab because you're working so hard, you can find yourself socializing primarily with other scientists. And this can lead to some interesting conversations. I was in an elevator one day with a lab friend and some other people. Without thinking, I said to my friend, 'Oh, I hope my embryos turned out okay.' Then I noticed the strange looks I was getting from other people in the elevator."

But both Miller and Hoshizaki are committed to spreading the word about their research and increasing awareness of the problems associated with obesity. This spring, they are presenting a two-day series on childhood obesity - and, as Hoshizaki describes it, "how fat cells talk to the brain" - for local physicians and families of obese children.

Though their lectures are not specifically focused on their own research, Hoshizaki says they offer her and her graduate students the opportunity to apply their scientific knowledge in a different setting, as well as a chance to do a bit of public service.

"I strongly believe that the more the general public understands how we do science - how we make observations, how we collect data, how we use models - the better informed they will be when it comes to making decisions about health issues. We do this public service because we want the scientific community and the general public to know that UNLV is a resource," Hoshizaki says.

Toward this end, Hoshizaki and two local physicians recently presented a University Forum lecture at UNLV on the biological and clinical aspects of obesity. Also, she consults regularly with the physical education and service learning programs that treat overweight children between the ages of 5 and 17; she keeps them up to date on the latest literature about the scientific research being done on fat cell development.

Meanwhile, the researchers themselves have authored several articles on their findings in the scientific journals Development and Mechanisms of Development, and their investigation of the fat cell continues.

Although Hoshizaki does not intend to extend her research into human testing of her theories, she is interested in developing methods and establishing a facility in Las Vegas for diagnosing genetic defects that cause childhood obesity. She plans to seek grant funding in the community to pursue the idea.

"No one knows to what extent obesity is inherited," Hoshizaki says. "But the data we're collecting at the local clinics suggests that the genetic contribution to obesity is much greater than we imagined. For that reason, we are very interested in developing diagnostic tools to determine which genes are responsible.

"Through my work with the clinics, I have met children and their families whose lives have been so adversely affected by obesity," she says. "It's been truly compelling to meet these people. It has demonstrated to me that we need to offer some diagnostic services locally. This is very important because it will determine the best clinical treatment for this very serious disease."
Cyndi Giorgis has acquired a huge number of children's books. For those who wonder what would bring someone to possess such a collection, the UNLV education professor has a quick answer: With a love of children's literature like hers — and a little storage space — who wouldn't want to own 7,000 kids' books?

BY DIANE RUSSELL

I n order; for Rumphius — the "Lupine Lady" who makes the world a more beautiful place by scattering flower seeds wherever she goes — then a trip to the library may be in order; for Miss Rumphius is the title character of a children's book by Barbara Cooney.

And in the eyes of UNLV curriculum and instruction professor Giorgis, Miss Rumphius is not just any book; it's her favorite book of all time. "I love this book, and it's just so me," Giorgis says with obvious enthusiasm. "I connected to it the minute I saw this book."

And when you consider just how many children's books Giorgis loves — and owns — you would recognize that her appreciation of Miss Rumphius is indeed an honor. After all, Giorgis has collected more than 7,000 children's literature books over the years. "I use them in everything I do — everything," she says. "Whether it's reading to one of my classes at UNLV, making a presentation at a professional conference, or conducting an in-service for Clark County School District teachers, I find that it's essential to have the books I'm discussing on hand. People don't just want to hear about a book; they want to see it. They want to have their hands on it."

Her extensive collection reflects her zeal for the written word, which she has tried to instill in all of her students over her 16-year career in education. Giorgis passed it on to many of her first-grade pupils when she taught in Wyoming eight years ago and tries today to instill it in tomorrow's teachers who study with her now. She also takes her mission off campus and into the Southern Nevada community by serving as the local coordinator for Teachers' Choices, a national program sponsored by the International Reading Association. As part of Teachers' Choices, local teachers read and review the newest books in children's literature. At the end of the review process, hundreds of new children's books are donated to the libraries of participating schools.

Because Giorgis is careful to make sure the program includes some schools serving at-risk student populations, many of the free books end up in the hands of the children who need them most.

Giorgis, whose courses at UNLV include children's literature, literature-based instruction, and multicultural literature, believes it's critically important for her college students to have or to develop a love of literature because, as teachers, they will be in positions to influence scores of youngsters. And if they can turn those youngsters on to the love of literature, they can create scores of lifelong readers, she maintains.

Right now, America is losing too many children as independent readers — and at an early age, according to Giorgis. "We're losing boys as readers by the fourth grade," she says. And, unfortunately, the girls, who traditionally have been stronger readers, are beginning to slip away, too. Many possible reasons for this downward trend exist, including participation in sports, peer pressure, and a preoccupation with television, according to Giorgis.

To combat this trend it's imperative that both parents and teachers read frequently to children too young to read by themselves. Later, children should be encouraged to read on their own. But, at the same time, parents and teachers should continue reading to children even after the children are capable of reading independently.

Unfortunately, a lot of parents think that once their children begin to read on their own that they should stop reading to them, and that's terrible," she says. "A person is never too old to be read to, Giorgis maintains. And she practices what she preaches. Just ask her UNLV students.

"I read a story to my classes every week," she says. That means she begins each semester looking out at classrooms filled with dozens of college students who roll their eyes or look at her with disbelief painted prominently on their faces when she announces that she's
about to read them a story.

As the weeks pass, however, "they come to expect it, and then when I don't read a story to them, they're disappointed."

This makes perfect sense to Giorgis, who says, "We love to hear stories. We love to hear language.

And the stories and books we read often serve to create a bond between us and others who have read and loved the same books, says Giorgis, who holds a doctoral degree in language, reading, and culture and a master's degree in library science, both from the University of Arizona.

"It's amazing how much of that literature really stays with us, whether it's Mother Goose or Charlotte's Web," she says. "It's something that draws us all together. Even though we may be thinking in different ways, somehow that story ties us all together."

For instance, when she asks the women in her classes how many of them remember reading the Judy Blume book, Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret, "Hands all go up. It's one of those titles that so many of us related to because it was coming-of-age kind of thing for girls."

Giorgis, who at 13 began working in the local library in Jackson, Wyo., as a story-time reader for youngsters, says she still has vivid memories of the books she read as a girl.

"I read every Nancy Drew book there ever was, I read Little Women. I remember my fifth-grade teacher reading Where the Red Fern Grows, and I remember crying and just sobbing. I think that's what speaks to me about literature — that it can stir our emotions."

Today, Giorgis has what she calls a personal text set — a subset of her larger collection — that contains hundreds of books that she considers to be among her favorites and to be relevant to her life.

Hamlet and Othello is included because of her German heritage, many dog books, such as Wilson Rawls' Where the Red Fern Grows, are also included because of her love of canines. Never Spit On Your Shoes, about a little boy's trip to grade school, and Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret are also among the books in her personal text set.

"It's just the books that really have touched me or signify something important in my life experiences," says Giorgis.

She says her personal text set — as well as her larger collection — has taken years to create and is always evolving. She began collecting books on her own many years ago, and her collections have been greatly supplemented in the last five years through her involvement in a number of book-judging and book reviewing projects, from which she has received free copies of books from publishers.

However, that doesn't mean she has stopped buying children's books. "I have the credit card receipts to prove it," she says with a laugh.

One of Giorgis' missions these days is to help other find those books that will make a difference in their lives.

That's where the Teachers Choices program comes in. Through that program, hundreds of new children's books are provided by publishers to teachers throughout the country so that they can be introduced to the newest children's literature.

Giorgis, who is in her third and final year of administering the program, says it has been a real boon to a number of schools in the Clark County School District because it has resulted in their libraries receiving dozens of the latest and best children's books for free.

The way the program works is that publishers of children's books supply the International Reading Association with hundreds of copies of what the publishers consider to be their best new books for youngsters. Teachers' Choices coordinators select the books to teachers at participating schools so that they can review them. Teachers are encouraged to read the books they are reviewing to their classes so that they can gauge the students' reactions.

Giorgis has made a special effort to target schools that serve at-risk students because she has noticed that many ethnic schools have inadequate library collections, and the pupils could truly benefit by having dozens of the newest books on their shelves. Last year, each of the seven participating elementary schools received more than 100 books.

The book distribution session that takes place after the judging has been completed is something to see, according to Giorgis. It's handled something like a sports draft. Participants choose their top 20 titles, then their next 20 titles, until all the books have been distributed.

"It's like Christmas because they're picking out these books, and they're just overwhelmed," she says.

Also overwhelming can be the task of cataloging the books away. "Last year we had suitcases. We had boxes. We had luggage carts. It was hysterical.

Once the reviews, which also include numerical scores, are turned in by the teachers, the coordinators from across the nation send their data to the reading association to be tallied. The results showing what America's teachers consider to be the best new children's books then appear each November in the Reading Teacher, a journal published by the association.

The publishers benefit, too, because making the list of best new books ensures increased sales, Giorgis says, noting that many of the school's librarians use the list when placing book orders.

"It's been a tremendous project," she says of the local program. "I'm sorry it's my last year because I've enjoyed the fact that it's brought so many teachers back to reading and discussing books and taking such an active role in the selection of literature.

"We're really part of this national project, and they're helping to select these books for this national award, so it's pretty exciting."

"With Teachers Choices, teachers are starting to dialogue about books. They get excited about them and say to one another, "Oh, you've got to see this book. You've got to read this book."

One comment she says she has heard repeatedly from participants is that they had not realized the diversity of topics that today's children's books cover. She adds that timely topics such as homelessness and the prevalence of guns are included in current children's literature.

"It really has made the teachers stop to think about not only the literature that they're reviewing, but also about the literature they've already been using in the classroom," says Giorgis.

"Teachers are kind of creatures of habit in some ways, and they'll keep using the same books over and over and until they begin exploring other options."

While Giorgis wouldn't want to see classics such as E.B. White's Charlotte's Web tossed out, it would be a true shame if no new books made it into the country's classrooms, she says.

"Some of the most incredible literature being published today is literature that is for children and young adults," she says, adding that adults can read and enjoy many of the books. "I always tell my students, "These are really adult books disguised as books for children.""

Another of the reasons it's important for new books to be introduced into the schools is that at long last children's authors are writing quality ethnic literature, according to Giorgis.

"There's so much incredible multicultural literature being published," she says, noting that for years there had been a noticeable absence of such literature for children that was well written.

"All children need to be able to see themselves in the books that they read. They should be able to see their families. They should be able to see situations that they're involved with. We should be able to do that..."

"It's really nice when we can begin to see that it's not an issue of color; it's an issue of experience."

And the sharing of experiences through books is key to instilling the love of literature that Giorgis is so committed to engendering in her classrooms — and just about everywhere she goes.

Perhaps that is why she loves Miss Rumphius so much. She has shared the experiences of the title character, like Miss Rumphius, Giorgis is trying to make the world a more beautiful place. But instead of doing so by scattering flower seeds wherever she goes, she is spreading the seeds of learning.
Entering the Virtual Classroom

UNLV psychology professor Russ Hurlburt was intrigued by the idea of offering one of his classes on the World Wide Web. But what were the pros and cons of teaching — and learning — online? His decision to find out led him on an educational odyssey of his own.

For UNLV psychology professor Russ Hurlburt, developing a course on the Web was an opportunity to discover whether students learn as much in the virtual classroom as they do in a traditional one.

For the students, convenience is the name of the game in this undergraduate-level Statistical Methods in Psychology course that was offered last fall and is being offered again this spring.

For Hurlburt, developing a course on the Web was a great opportunity to discover whether students learn as much in the virtual classroom as they do in a traditional one. The recipient of a UNLV Distinguished Teaching Award last year, Hurlburt is committed to understanding how students learn. By teaching in many different courses as possible during his tenure at UNLV, he has been able to observe how students learn in different situations and how they respond to different teaching techniques. For him to turn next to the Web was natural. After all, as he points out, you can’t get much different than this.

Hurlburt’s own education was gained mostly in traditional classrooms. He earned a bachelor’s degree in engineering from Princeton University and, in what he calls a “previous lifetime,” was an aeronautical engineer who designed computer models to determine where nuclear bombs would hit if they were dropped “deliberately or by accident.” When he realized he was more interested in people than bombs, he enrolled at the University of South Dakota, where he earned a Ph.D. in psychology.

He came to UNLV’s department of psychology in 1976 expecting to leave computers and technology behind, but he found himself looking for ways to help students master the statistics they needed to be successful psychology majors. He began writing computer demonstrations for his statistics class, and a software package is now available with his textbook on statistics, published in 1990.

Then came expanded possibilities through the Internet. Suddenly, the option of putting a whole course on the Web seemed like an intriguing idea to him. After all, “distance education” seemed to be a buzz term with many positive connotations in academic these days. And recently an entire university — Wensers Governors’ University — had been created with the purpose of offering only online instruction.

Yes, it seemed like an interesting notion to Hurlburt — but not one he embraced without reservations. As he approached the development of the course, he began anticipating some of the pros and cons of Web instruction; he determined that one of his goals in creating and offering the course would be to observe the benefits and drawbacks along the way. Central to his analysis would be one question: Is the convenience offered to students by online instruction matched by the quality of student learning?

Additionally, some of his general philosophies about the use of technology in the classroom would guide his work on the course. Many of those philosophies remain unchanged after a semester of teaching online.

For instance, Hurlburt is quite skeptical about most uses of technology...
in the classroom. “So much of it is the ‘whoa, bang, gee-whiz!’ entertainment thing,” he says. “I’m still totally, 100 percent, opposed to that.” He also believes that the criterion for using technology is simple: “If you can’t make technology do something better or more conveniently than you can without technology, then you shouldn’t use it.”

He cites as an example the use of programs such as PowerPoint, a program frequently used to make slide-type presentations before groups. They are useful in the classroom, he asserts, but only if they present material better than transparency slides placed on overhead projectors.

He notes that computer presentations tie up a $5,000 piece of equipment, as opposed to the much cheaper overhead projector. And they are less flexible. If a student asks the professor to go back to an image shown early in a lecture, Hurlburt says it’s easier to shuffle through traditional transparency transparencies than to work back through the computerized presentation.

He acknowledges that people become excited by the use of new technology and the “pure” entertainment value it brings. “It gives some people, in particular shy students who would normally sit in the classroom, a chance to participate.”

He selected certain features that he felt would especially enhance student learning. For example, he decided to start each lesson with a brief review of the previous lesson that includes questions for student answers — a common enough approach in the traditional classroom.

But in the Web course, the student uses the computer keyboard to type the answer directly onto the computer screen. Then he or she clicks on a button and gets immediate feedback — the correct response appears right next to the answer that the student typed.

“In a classroom, the teacher says ‘Tell me,’ and the student says ‘Tell me,’ and the teacher says ‘Tell me,’ and the student says ‘Tell me.’ In the Web course, the student says ‘Tell me,’ and the computer says ‘Tell me’ three times.”

Hurlburt acknowledges that convenience is a plus. But, if used wisely, maintains, technology can deliver more. “So, seeking to take greater advantage of the medium, he put a great deal of thought — as well as hundreds of hours — into forming specific materials for his Web course.

Every step, every item that was included had to be carefully considered and anticipated how it might be perceived by students. The course had to be broken into small segments so that students could pace themselves to a greater extent than they would if they were in a traditional classroom moving at a pace set by the professor.

Hurlburt also developed clearly defined instructions on every item from assignments to how students could acquire the free software that would allow them to hear the audio portions of the course.

Hurlburt believes that shy students who would normally sit in the classroom have a chance to participate.

Another valuable aspect of Web-based instruction is that it provides multiple ways for a student to learn, increasing the likelihood of retention of the material. Finding different ways to enhance learning is key to Hurlburt, who has spent his career investigating the different ways people experience the world and process information.

“In a university community, most faculty are pretty highly verbal in their heads and use objective, logical, verbal approaches to education,” Hurlburt says. “They try to think that all students also have this verbal facility. But I think they’re mistaken.”

Hurlburt believes some students may think in images rather than words and others may engage in “pure” thought — ideas expressed mentally in neither images nor words.

His classroom experiences, which have been reinforced by his own research findings, have convinced him that multiple approaches are essential because there is no single best way to facilitate student learning.

“When I look out over a classroom, I know some people are processing what I say in an unsymbolized way, and others are using words or forming images. Those are different kinds of processing, and I try to be sensitive to those differences. The Web course has enabled me to do that in several ways.”

Still, he recognizes the drawbacks. To some students, there’s nothing like the personal touch of the traditional classroom. They prefer to be around other students and like the give-and-take of both formal and informal educational exchanges. As Hurlburt notes, they simply may not be comfortable in the Web environment.

Also, some students are not yet capable of navigating confidently or effectively on the Web. Hurlburt has found some difficulty getting all of his students to use the right kind of computer hardware and software to be able to take full advantage of his course.

Hurlburt says incompatibility of equipment and inexperience with technology have contributed to student frustrations, a fact acknowledged in the distance education community generally and one that UNLV is trying to address by encouraging standardized structural approaches to Web course design.

But rapidly changing technology will surely not only improve compatibility but also enhance and increase the user-friendly features of electronic instruction. And, as Hurlburt notes, though he himself deliberately chose not to use the video format for his short lectures for his own reasons, computer video is available and can provide a way for both instructors and students to have more personal interaction if they wish it.

More on Distance Education at UNLV

Psychology professor Russ Hurlburt’s Web-based version of Statistical Methods in Psychology is just one of several types of courses offered by UNLV’s Distance Education program.

Hurlburt notes, though he himself deliberately chose not to use the video format for his short lectures for his own reasons, computer video is available and can provide a way for both instructors and students to have more personal interaction if they wish it.

“Teaching via video involves sending videotapes to an off-campus location or transmitting an ordinary broadcast or cable signal. There are also the increasingly popular Internet courses that are accessible globally,” Hurlburt explains.

A professor may decide to put a course fully into one of these media or to combine one or more with regular classroom instruction. Many faculty now require their students to get e-mail accounts free to UNLV students and to communicate electronically as part of the course experience. Some make supplemental materials available on Web pages.

However, even courses that are offered entirely online may require the student to come to campus or some other location occasionally to meet with the professor and to take examinations. Hurlburt, for example, has arranged to have exams given at various locations where students can be supervised.

Farr expects the number of online courses offered by UNLV to increase gradually. Some kinds of material lend themselves more readily to electronic versions than do others, and her staff of course designers are helping faculty decide how to make the best use of the medium.

For one, computerized lessons can help overcome student hesitation in approaching the medium. They can offer instant feedback, and allow students to hear the audio portions of the course. In the classroom, the professor must wait until the entire class has completed an assignment before proceeding, Hurlburt says, adding that there are several advantages inherent to the medium that are similarly valuable.

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March 1999

1 Concert: Maripea Trio in Recital. 7:30pm. Judy Bayley Theatre. 895-3801.
1-6 Basketball: Men’s and Women’s Western Athletic Conference Championships. Call for times. Thomas & Mack Center. 895-3207.
1-13 Exhibit: Eldred, O’Neill, and Paratore: 3 From Texas. Wednesdays, 9am-5pm; Saturdays, 10am-2pm. Donna Beam Fine Art Gallery. 895-3803.
2-3 Basketball: UNLV vs Loyola Marymount. 3pm. Wilson Stadium. 895-3207.
5 Concert: Maritza Tamara Boiko & Hans Kraven, piano duo. 8pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.
5 Concert: Jazz Ensemble. 7:30pm. Judy Bayley Theatre. 895-3801.
5-7 Baseball: UNLV vs Air Force. March 5, 3pm; March 6 & 7, 1pm. Wilson Stadium. 895-3207.
7 Concert: UNLV Orchestra and Chorale. 2pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.
7 Concert: Jazz Ensemble II. 7:30pm. Judy Bayley Theatre. 895-3801.
8 Jean Nidetch Women’s Center Workshop: Dynamics of Goal Setting. Dr. Deborah Widor-Wright. 6pm. Classroom Building Complex C-219. 895-4475.
8-19 Art Department: Master of Fine Arts Candidate Exhibition — Eric Murphy. Weekdays, 9am-5pm; Saturdays, 10am-2pm. Donna Beam Fine Art Gallery. 895-3649.
8-26 Art Department: Different Looks. Wednesdays, 8am-5pm. Mcauliff Gallery. 895-3649.
9 Concert: Music Department Faculty Gala. 7:30pm. Judy Bayley Theatre. 895-3801.
10 Jean Nidetch Women’s Center Workshop: Street Smarts and Crisis Mindset. Also held on April 6, 3pm. Moyer Student Union 202. 895-4475.
11-13 Baseball: UNLV vs BYU. March 11 & 12, 3pm; March 13, 1pm. Wilson Stadium. 895-3207.
11-21 Theatre: Shakespeare’s Henry VI Part III. Call for times. Black Box Theatre. 895-3801.
13-14 Women’s Tennis: UNLV vs. BYU. March 13. South Carolina - March 14. 10am both days. Fertitta Tennis Complex. 895-3207.
14 Master Series: Orchestra of the Royal Opera House Covent Garden. 8pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.
15 Baseball: UNLV vs Southern Utah. 3pm, Wilson Stadium. 895-3207.
15-16 Men’s Tennis: UNLV vs Tennessee. March 15. Purdue - March 16. 1:30pm both days. Fertitta Tennis Complex. 895-3207.
20 Track & Field: UNLV Desert Classic. 8am. Myron Partridge Stadium. 895-3207.
20 Concert: UNLV Wind Orchestra. 7:30pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.
21-22 Concert: Vocal Extravaganza in Black. April 9 & 10, 7pm; April 11, 1pm. Wilson Stadium. 895-3207.
21 Concert: UNLV Symphony Orchestra. 7:30pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.
22 Concert: Community and Symphonic Band. 7:30pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.
22 Concert: Jazz Combo. 7:30pm. Black Box Theatre. 895-3801.
29 Concert: University Choral Ensembles. 6:30pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.
30 Baseball: UNLV vs. San Diego State. 7pm. Wilson Stadium. 895-3207.

April 1999

3 Track & Field: UNLV Invitational. 9am. Myron Partridge Stadium. 895-3207.
6 & 10 Women’s Tennis: UNLV vs Central Florida - April 6, 2pm. San Diego State - April 10, 10am. Fertitta Tennis Complex. 895-3207.
9-11 Baseball: UNLV vs San Jose State. April 9 & 10, 7pm; April 11, 1pm. Wilson Stadium. 895-3207.
12 Jean Nidetch Women’s Center Workshop: Communication and Speaking With Authority. Dr. Deborah Widor-Wright. 6pm. Classroom Building Complex C-219. 895-4475.
14 Softball: UNLV vs Long Beach State. 1pm (DH). Rebel Diamond. 895-3207.
17 Multicultural Student Affair: UNLV Greek Step Contest. 5pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.
19 Women’s Tennis: UNLV vs Utah. 10am. Fertitta Tennis Complex. 895-3207.
21-22 Concert: UNLV vs Tulsa. April 17, Noon (DH); April 18, Noon. Rebel Diamond. 895-3207.
23-24 Concert: UNLV Wind Orchestra. 7:30pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.
25 Concert: University Chamber Chorale. 7:30pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.
27 Concert: Community and Symphonic Band. 7:30pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.
27 Concert: Jazz Combo. 7:30pm. Black Box Theatre. 895-3801.
29 Concert: University Choral Ensembles. 6:30pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.
30 Baseball: UNLV vs San Diego State. 7pm. Wilson Stadium. 895-3207.

May 1999

1 Performing Arts Center: Canadian Brass. 8pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.
1-2 Baseball: UNLV vs San Diego State. May 1, 7pm; May 2, 1pm. Wilson Stadium. 895-3207.
4 Concert: UNLV Chamber Chorale. 7:30pm. Black Box Theatre. 895-3801.
7-8 Softball: UNLV vs Utah. May 7, 7pm; May 8, 1pm (DH). Rebel Diamond. 895-3207.
9 Concert: Music Department Gala. 4pm. Artemus Ham Concert Hall. 895-3801.
15 Commencement: UNLV Commencement. 9am & 1:30pm. Thomas & Mack Center. 895-3448.

For more information on UNLV events and publications, visit UNLV’s World Wide Web home page at http://www.unlv.edu/
Loney

continued from page 9

afternoons hit, and I went down. I broke my arm, but I didn’t even know it,” she says. “I worked all night. It wasn’t until about 24 hours later that I looked down at my arm and thought, ‘Wow, this really hurts.’ I had been dropping things all night and kept thinking that maybe I was a little more nervous than I had thought. I’m sure it was just the adrenaline that keeps me from recognizing it was broken. But we ended up being the only airport in the Bay Area that was operational because San Francisco and Oakland had sustained worse damage.”

Despite her injury, Loney looks back on the incident as another lesson learned. “The earthquake was an extremely valuable experience,” she says. “In the airport industry, we practice a great deal for emergencies, but they’re always our emergencies. Whether they’re aircraft crashes or acts of air piracy. We had never really practiced natural disasters. And when those hit, all the resources that you would normally depend on to be marshaled to your aid are all of a sudden being dispersed for everyone else’s catastrophe. So it was an important lesson in resource planning and allocation.”

It also strongly reinforced her decision to go to O’Hare. “Yep, afterward my motto was, ‘Chicago — my kinda town,’” she muses. But she is quick to add that her move to O’Hare was an important step in her career.

“That was probably the most remarkable step,” she says. “I’ve loved every bit of my career, but that was a real giant step because I went from running the day-to-day operations of an airport that was handling about six million passengers a year to one with 60 million a year.”

Almost immediately, she faced some O’Hare-sized challenges. “To start, it was the most delay-plagued airport in the country at the time. It also had considerable homelessness and housing issues in and around the terminal buildings. Additionally, the local media had recently reported substantial inadequacies in airport security.

During her three years in that position, she addressed each problem — along with many others — methodically and thoroughly. She formed and led a task force to examine and make recommendations about delay problems; she convinced the airlines to contribute to the financing of a homeless shelter for the airport, and she worked with consultants from Israel’s major airline to help beef up security. All the while she had 14 line divisions reporting to her, including operations, security, parking, ground transportation, and facilities maintenance and construction.

But even with the ability to direct that diverse assignment of divisions, she realized that her background lacked cow area of decision-making expertise: finance. So she left O’Hare in 1992 to become the deputy executive director and chief financial officer at Dallas/Fort Worth International Airports, the second busiest airport in the world.

“I wanted to round out my skills,” she says. “I wanted to position myself to be the number one at a major airport, and I knew I needed more experience to do that. I had started my career in the business and finance office at McCarran, but I was doing support work. I wasn’t making the final decisions about the budgets. So, I went and became a Texan for 18 months.”

Once again, Loney was presented with a unique set of challenges. She had just begun to negotiate the acquisition of homes to build an eighth runway at Dallas/Fort Worth when a different type of professional opportunity arose. She was approached by the Clinton administration about running the Federal Aviation Administration. She interviewed twice for the job with U.S. Secretary of Transportation Federico Pena and was eventually asked to take the number two slot with the FAA.

“But just about at the same time, Philadelphia Mayor Ed Rendell called me, saying they had heard about me and wanted to talk to me about running Philadelphia’s airport. At first I said, ‘Are you kidding?’ I was raised in Pennsylvania, and I’m not going back there,” she laughs. “I had felt that Chicago was about as far east as I wanted to come. But he said, ‘At least come and talk to us.’ And, as it turned out, it was the best career decision I have made. It just made more sense to me to be the number one in Philadelphia than to be the number two with the FAA.”

But what was waiting for her in Philadelphia was no runway of roses; to say the least, Philadelphia International Airport had its share of problems. In a 1992 national survey of 34 major airports rated by passengers, Philadelphia received some of the lowest rankings possible in many areas, including speed of baggage delivery, convenience, cleanliness, and food quality and price. Employees’ attitudes were poor, ground transportation signage was confusing, and the tied facilities were sorely in need of repair. The abundant problems of the airport were the favorite topics of everyone from cab drivers to the media. But Loney, in her inimitable way, welcomed the challenge.

“I had the opportunity to take an airport system that had largely been neglected and expand it and enhance it and continue on page 28
Mark McKinley, '75 BA Sociology, has been elected president of the Nevada Independent Agents' Association, the largest insurance trade organization in the state. McKinley has been in the insurance business for more than 20 years and is a charter member of the association. He serves on the board of directors of Carlgordians, an organization that aids children with cancer.

Peter Button, '86 BA Chemistry, and his wife, Diana Button, '87 BA Psychology, announce the birth of their twins, Ryan and Robyn, on Sept. 12, 1998. Peter is employed as a clinical scientist in drug development at Hoechst Marion Roussel. He earned a doctorate in psychology from Indiana University. Diana is a psychologist for Network Rehabilitation Services. She earned a doctorate in psychology from Indiana State University. They live in Shawnee, Kan.

Carmen Zapata, '87 BA Communication Studies, is vice president of human resources for Clean Car Inc., a landscape design and maintenance company based in Austin, Texas. She has directed Clean Car's human resource departments for the past seven years. Previously, she worked as a reporter for the Miami (Fla.) Daily Miner in Kingston. Her affiliations include the Austin Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and horizon-Hope School. She lives in Cedar Park.

Dick Johnson, '77 BS Business Administration, is president of Time Warner Cablevision of Shelbyview (Ia.). He has been with Time Warner since 1981 and previously served as area manager for the Wisconsin and Illinois systems in the company's national division. In 1993, he received the Andrew Heiskell Award, the company's highest employee award for volunteerism and contribution to the community. He was recognized for initiating a successful midnight basketball program designed to get the inner-city youths of Beloit, Wis., off the streets during prime crime time.

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Kimberly McDonald, '88 BA Psychology, '96 Master of Public Administration, was elected vice president of the American Business Women's Association for 1998-99, which involves representing businesswomen in 15 Women's states. Previously, she received an award as one of the association's 1997-98 Top Ten Businesswomen. She works for the city of North Las Vegas as a public information officer and as a management analyst in the city's special affairs division. In 1996, she was honored with the Nevada Women's Rule Award.

Allison Coppening, '99 BA Communication Studies, recently opened AllKraft Creative Services, a company specializing in public relations, video production, and special events. Previously, she worked as marketing director of Purchase Pro Inc. She also serves as a member of the Desert Research Institute Foundation and on the statewide board of directors of Kids Voting USA.

Erik Duffy, '94 BS Hotel Administration, has joined Finnbos Publishing Co. Inc. as show manager/publications coordinator. He will handle all administrative details related to STL Construction/Manufacturing, the premier construction equipment and used equipment in St. Louis. He will also work with show and event activities involving the company's four magazines, St. Louis Construction News & Readers, Club Management, Painting and Wallcovering Contractor, and Resort Management & Operations. He lives in Balboa, N.Y.

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Kimberly McDonald, '88 BA Psychology, '96 Master of Public Administration, was elected vice president of the American Business Women's Association for 1998-99, which involves representing businesswomen in 15 Women's states. Previously, she received an award as one of the association's 1997-98 Top Ten Businesswomen. She works for the city of North Las Vegas as a public information officer and as a management analyst in the city's special affairs division. In 1996, she was honored with the Nevada Women's Rule Award.

Allison Coppening, '99 BA Communication Studies, recently opened AllKraft Creative Services, a company specializing in public relations, video production, and special events. Previously, she worked as marketing director of Purchase Pro Inc. She also serves as a member of the Desert Research Institute Foundation and on the statewide board of directors of Kids Voting USA.

Erik Duffy, '94 BS Hotel Administration, has joined Finnbos Publishing Co. Inc. as show manager/publications coordinator. He will handle all administrative details related to STL Construction/Manufacturing, the premier construction equipment and used equipment in St. Louis. He will also work with show and event activities involving the company's four magazines, St. Louis Construction News & Readers, Club Management, Painting and Wallcovering Contractor, and Resort Management & Operations. He lives in Balboa, N.Y.

Mark McKinley, '75 Sociology, is vice president of the Las Vegas-based insurance firm of Craig & Pike. He has been elected president of the Nevada Independent Agents' Association, the largest insurance trade organization in the state. McKinley has been in the insurance business for more than 20 years and is a charter member of the association. He serves on the board of directors of Carlgordians, an organization that aids children with cancer.

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really turn it into a diamond,” she says, adding that within a year, even the Philadelphia media began to acknowledge she had made significant progress. By the time she left in 1996, she had directed a $500 million capital improvement program that included major terminal renovations, airfield rehabilitation, and construction of a new runway. She had also effected sweeping changes in food, beverage, and retail offerings, as well as employee attitudes toward customer service. Philadelphia’s turnaround is still one of her proudest accomplishments.

“I probably would have stayed longer if Mayor Daley hadn’t called me to come back to run O’Hare, Midway, and Meigs,” she says a bit wistfully. “But how can you turn down an opportunity like the Chicago Airport System? The answer is you don’t. You just don’t. And I think in my heart of hearts, the Chicago job was the one I always wanted. It’s the top of the mountain. O’Hare is the world’s busiest airport. It’s the ultimate challenge. That kind of challenge is very important to me.”

She returned to Chicago in September 1996 to find that progress had been made on some of the issues she had worked on during her previous tenure there. But, she says, many of the same issues she had faced in all of her other airport positions — noise abatement, airport compatibility with surrounding environments, security, and safety — were still critical concerns for her at O’Hare and will remain so throughout the rest of her career.

Additionally, she must now direct two other smaller airports — Midway Airport, which serves to relieve some of the commercial traffic that would otherwise land at O’Hare, and Meigs Field, a smaller, centrally located general aviation airport. Both have their share of difficulties. Midway, which served 10 million passengers last year, is undergoing extensive renovation of its 50-year-old terminal building, and it must remain fully operational during construction. Meigs Field, which Loney calls “the world’s tiniest airport with some of the biggest challenges,” has been the site of two significant plane crashes in the last two years and faces closure in 2002 when the property on which it sits will be converted back to a lakefront park. Though both require her attention, there’s only so much to go around; she estimates she spends 60 percent of her time at O’Hare and splits the rest between Midway and Meigs Field.

Despite a seeming lack of any available personal time, Loney maintains she has found balance in her life more now than ever. Though she prefers to keep her personal relationships private, she acknowledges that she was married once — back in her Las Vegas days — but got divorced as her career took flight. She now maintains a long-distance relationship with an East Coast commercial developer.

“We see each other on weekends,” she says, “so it pretty much works out that I can remain focused during the week on my job, which is nice because, as you know, relationships require time, commitment, effort, and energy, too.”

She also finds time to participate in the Chicago Network, an organization for the area’s top professional women, and to serve — along with several other women from O’Hare — as a mentor for a Chicago-area group for 10-to-15-year-old girls.

“There are tremendous examples of women succeeding at Chicago O’Hare and Midway, whether it’s a woman air traffic controller or a woman captain of a 747,” she says proudly, adding that she has tried to give as many opportunities as possible to women on their way up.

“I think that it’s important for women who have achieved success to widen the path for women who are coming up behind them by creating opportunities. I’ve appointed a woman as the chief financial officer for the Chicago Airport System. I have a woman serving as my deputy commissioner who oversees our real estate transactions and another woman who directs all of our contracts and leases. I’ve put women into other nontraditional positions, as well. My chief of day-to-day operations at Midway is also a woman.”

Her advice to women seeking career advancement is quite simple.

“I think there is no substitute for being technically competent in whatever field you choose,” she says. “That has to come first. So pursue that competence, whether it’s through higher education or on-the-job training or both.”

And don’t be afraid to ask for an opportunity, she says, but be willing to back up that request with true commitment.

“I always advise young women to think of it this way: If your boss is willing to take a risk and make an investment in you, you must make that same commitment in return. And sure it’s hard, but make that commitment, like you would to anything else, whether it’s a commitment to a relationship or a commitment to changing a habit, such as dieting or quitting smoking. Just make that commitment and pursue it with as much passion and as much energy as you can muster. And if you can’t muster the passion for it, then you are probably in the wrong field.”

As for herself, Loney couldn’t be more certain she chose the right one.

“Can you tell I’ve loved my life?” she asks. “I have had a lot of wonderful opportunities along the way, and I’ve tried to seize those opportunities. My only regret is that it’s going by so fast.”
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