Harrah’s Donates Historic Collection to UNLV

by Diane Russell

Hundreds of photographs, publications, documents, and artifacts chronicling the 65-year history of Harrah’s Entertainment Inc. are now housed in special collections at the Lied Library, thanks to a donation by the Las Vegas-based gaming company.

“We are thrilled that Harrah’s chose to donate these materials to UNLV,” said Peter Michel, director of special collections. “Harrah’s has a long history in Nevada and in the gaming industry. Having its corporate archives housed at UNLV is a valuable research asset for UNLV, enhancing its already established position as an international center for the study of gaming and the gaming industry.

“The collection is extensive and eclectic,” Michel said. “It contains celebrity and entertainment memorabilia, financial reports, publicity and advertising files, corporate communications, newspaper clippings, film, videotape, and a variety of promotional items carrying the company logo. Anyone wanting a window into the growth and changes in the gaming/hotel/resort industry over the years will find this corporate collection invaluable.”

President Awards $250,000 in Planning Funds

by Katrina Hudak

Each year President Carol C. Harter awards approximately $250,000 in Planning Initiative Awards. These awards are coordinated by the University Planning Council. During this past year, the council received 50 applications that totaled more than $1 million. It recommended that 13 proposals be funded.

The following is a brief description of some of the research proposals that were awarded funding. Information on the other successful proposals will appear in a future issue of Inside UNLV.

William S. Boyd School of Law received $9,840 for a project titled Evaluating the Efficiency of the Kids’ Court School. In this project, the perceptions that judges and attorneys have of the credibility of child witnesses who participate in the Kids’ Court School program will be compared to their perceptions of the credibility of child witnesses who do not participate in the program.

Gregory Brown and Michelle Tusan of the department of history received $8,500 to support a team from their department to develop a course curriculum and instructional resources for a new survey course in world civilization. This initiative will combine the efforts of several faculty members and graduate students from the department and build upon multiple previous grants awarded to the department.

E. Michael Nussbaum of the department of educational psychology, Gale Sinatra of the Graduate College, and Leora Baron of the Teaching & Learning Center (TLC) received $29,995 for the purchase of a survey scanner to be housed at the TLC that will be used.
The Importance of Commencement
by Carol C. Harter
UNLV President

As winter commencement approaches, I want to take a moment to discuss the event, its importance to the campus community, and the significance I ascribe to faculty participation in it. It seems that some take the event for granted, which is unfortunate, as I consider commencement one of the most important days in the life of any university. Although I know many of you take the day quite seriously and participate fully, I hope to engender wider campus interest in the event.

As ceremonies go, commencement is one of the grandest, in my opinion. I have attended many graduation ceremonies—as a student, a faculty member, a parent, and an administrator. Although my role has changed through the years, my sense of awe has not. From the pride I felt at watching my own sons receive their diplomas to the sentiment that “Pomp and Circumstance” evokes in me each time I hear it, I have experienced a wide range of inspiring emotions at graduation ceremonies. I have always believed that commencement is a wonderful celebration of what we value most in academic life.

UNLV’s graduation ceremonies, which I should note, have received numerous accolades from both students and guests. We have a Herculean effort to plan and produce. It should be no surprise that the scope of the event is quite impressive, we generally fill the Thomas & Mack Center with families and guests. More than 2,000 students participated in spring commencement, and more than 1,000 students were involved last December as well. I would estimate that more than 200 faculty and staff members participate in the planning of commencement or in the ceremony itself, which should serve as evidence that the preparation and execution of the event reaches into virtually every corner of the university.

Although the ceremony can be exhausting for those deeply involved in it, we always find those willing to volunteer their time. The Commencement Committee meets regularly throughout the year to attend to countless details, and most members have a given set of tasks to perform at each ceremony. Also, four faculty marshals per college are required just to guide the graduates into the arena. We plan seating for another 100 faculty members who join their former students on the floor of the Thomas & Mack Center and watch the graduates as they hear their names announced and receive their diplomas.

As those of you who attend the ceremony know, I shake the hand of every other graduate who walks across the stage. (The provost shakes the hands of the other half.) Although it makes for a long day, I have the pleasure of seeing the unmitigated joy and heart-felt pride on the faces of the graduates as they have their moments before the crowd. It is genuinely one of the most enjoyable and rewarding aspects of my job.

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Honors College Enriches Academic Experience
by Gian Galassi

Since 1985, the UNLV Honors College has been enriching the undergraduate experience by providing the most talented students with a small-college atmosphere set within the larger university environment. The philosophy that helped guide the program to its inception back then remains an important component of the college’s mission today: to create a curriculum that will both challenge the university’s best students and attract more talented students to campus.

“Being a part of the Honors College is like belonging to a small community of students where everybody’s interested in learning more and helping each other out,” said Nick Orton, a hotel administration student from South Dakota. “And because there are typically fewer students in each class, I feel like the professors not only provide more personal attention but also encourage and accommodate more interesting group discussions.”

Now in his senior year, Orton, who was initially uncertain about enrolling as a university honors scholar, considers the program to have been an integral part of his undergraduate experience.

“The Honors College has provided me with a lot more than I’d ever expected,” Orton said. “I know that if I’m having trouble with my coursework on, say, a Sunday night, I have a network of students on whom I can call to get some assistance. Everybody is willing to help out because they’re familiar with the difficulties you’re encountering.”

Although nearly 600 students are currently enrolled in the Honors College, Dean Stephen Rosenbaum said he hopes to significantly increase the number of honors students next fall. New databases acquired by the office of undergraduate recruitment will help him reach that goal.

“The new databases have essentially opened the door to new recruitment strategies,” said Rosenbaum.

“We now have the opportunity to reach more students and be more selective at the same time.”

Students in the Honors College can apply for one of two programs: the honors scholarship program or the honors college. The former is limited to the top 5 percent of new freshmen, while the latter is open to all students with a 3.5 GPA or higher. Students are typically more selective at the same time.

“Students applying to the college as freshman are expected to be in the top 5 percent of their high school class or have scored at least 28 on their ACT or a combined 1280 on the SAT. Transfer students with a 3.5 GPA or higher are also eligible to apply. But students aren’t the only people Rosenbaum is interested in recruiting. Although a number of experienced scholars are already teaching honors classes, the college is seeking more faculty who are interested in getting involved with the program.

Anthropology professor John Swetnam has taught multiple honors courses over the years and is continually impressed by both the motivation and the determination of his honors students.

“Teaching honors courses is always a rewarding experience because the students are typically excited about learning, well prepared for class, and more willing to explore issues in depth,” said Swetnam. “These classes seem to provide more opportunities to really watch your students grow and begin to better understand the world around them.”

For more information, or to learn how to get involved in the honors program, contact the Honors College at ext. 5-2263.
UNLV Transmutation Research Program Strives to Improve Safety of Nuclear Waste

by Gian Galassi

For many people nuclear power still evokes catastrophic images of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the accidents at Three Mile Island and Chernobyl, and, here in Nevada, the possibility of becoming a dumping ground for the rest of the country's nuclear waste.

But UNLV scientists and students are currently developing technologies that could improve nuclear energy’s tainted reputation — research that could lead to real solutions for the nuclear industry’s most contentious problems.

Established in 2001 with a $3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Energy, UNLV’s Transmutation Research Program (TRP) is a multi-disciplinary effort to address the ecological and economical management of the country’s used nuclear fuel. Spanning six departments in three colleges and involving more than 30 faculty members and 37 graduate students, the TRP is one of the most ambitious research efforts in the university’s history.

The program, administered by the Harry Reid Center for Environmental Studies (HRC), is a component of the Advanced Fuel Cycle Initiative, a national program born out of the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico.

The TRP currently supports 16 separate graduate research projects, called tasks, which examine the technological requirements of a process called nuclear transmutation.

Simply defined, nuclear transmutation converts volatile, radioactive isotopes into more stable isotopes by changing their nuclear structure. This is done through neutron-induced fission or neutron-capture processes conducted in nuclear reactors or particle accelerators. The result of both fission and neutron capture in problematic isotopes is the same: the transformation of the most dangerous materials in used nuclear fuel into safer, more stable waste that can be easily stored or recycled.

Anthony Hechanova, director of the Transmutation Research Program, hopes that UNLV researchers and students will develop ways to transform the most dangerous materials in used nuclear fuel into safer, more stable waste that can be easily stored or recycled.

UNLV the nation’s top school in transmutation research.”

Although the elimination and reduction of the harmful byproducts of nuclear energy is a considerable accomplishment, it is by no means the only benefit of transmutation. Researchers also are investigating benefits that could lead to dramatic breakthroughs in homeland security, environmental protection, energy production, and nuclear medicine and therapy.

But the most practical outcome of the transmutation process may also be the most controversial. Most of the energy released during the transmutation of waste processes — equivalent to 10 billion barrels of oil — can be harnessed to generate large amounts of electricity. What’s more, the electricity produced could not only be sold to offset the costs of transmutation, but would also provide a relatively benign energy source.

“We simply cannot sustain ourselves on fossil fuels for much longer,” said Hechanova. “Transmutation is one of the best possible solutions to this problem because it shows how we can maximize nuclear energy by getting the most out of the material we already have. And it won’t contribute whatsoever to the global warming problem because it doesn’t produce any of the greenhouse gases.”

Even with the technical and political challenges ahead, he is confident about the program’s future. Plans are already under way to expand campus facilities. They include construction of a thermal hydraulics lab, in which phenomena, such as the corrosion and strength of materials used during transmutation, will be examined.

Four new research tasks will be added, as will new faculty members in the areas of nuclear physics, molten metal coolant technology, and reactor physics. Hechanova also hopes to build complementary academic programs in radiochemistry, material science and engineering, and nuclear engineering.

“At the rate we’re going, UNLV will soon be among the most respected nuclear research institutions in the country,” said Hechanova. “Our students are playing a critical role in putting the U.S. back at the forefront of nuclear science and technology. Their future in this field is as bright as they want it to be.”

PIA Funds continued from page 1

primarily for processing course evaluations. Funds would also be used to support a graduate assistant for one year to conduct campuswide training sessions. The scanner would also be available to support faculty research and institutional surveys, but would primarily be devoted to enhancing the scholarship of teaching.

Eduardo Robleto of the department of biological sciences received $14,400 for revising and updating instruction in Biology 251 (Microbiology): A Foundation Course for Biotechnology and Nursing Program. This project would update the laboratory section to offer students lab experience in molecular biology and current microbiology techniques. The new and updated laboratory experience will provide students with a better foundation for careers in biotechnology and nursing.

Amy Hyams of Educational Outreach received $14,782 for the Center for Community Outreach and Engagement (CCOE). The Division of Educational Outreach, through CCOPE, will develop and utilize faculty teams to ensure the highest quality of programs, services, and outreach activities. The CCOE will be an innovator, facilitator, and motivator, enhancing the organization’s culture of collaboration, outreach, and civic engagement.

Eunsook Hong of the department of educational psychology and Linda Quinn of the College of Education received $50,000 for establishing a College of Education Assessment System. The goal of the project is to improve curriculum and instruction on an on-going basis, to assist program review, and to examine the college’s effectiveness in producing education professionals.

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News FROM THE COLLEGES

Business

The college is pleased to welcome two new staff members—Barbara Stevens in the undergraduate student services office and Carla Eagleton in the MBA programs office. In November, the college’s Lied Institute for Real Estate Studies honored Del Webb with the Lieder Award. This award is presented to individuals and companies for excellence in real estate development. Del Webb—the man and the company—are among Southern Nevada’s premier developers whose vision has forever changed the landscape of the community.

In February, the college will present the Nevada Business Hall of Fame in association with Deloitte. The 2004 inductees are James Rogers, J.A. Tiberi, and William F. Harrah. The college created the Nevada Business Hall of Fame to honor top business leaders who have significantly contributed to the economic prosperity of Nevada and brought positive recognition to the state. Rogers, Tiberi, and Harrah were selected for induction into the Hall of Fame by members of the college’s Executive Advisory Board, which includes senior Nevada business leaders from a variety of industries.

Education

The department of educational psychology is pleased to announce the opening of the new Center for Evaluation and Assessment. This center will provide contract evaluation services and training resources to the UNLV campus community, the Clark County School District, the state of Nevada, and other national, state, and local institutions with evaluation needs.

The center’s mission is to provide national and international leadership for advancing the theory and practice of program, personnel, and student/constituent evaluation and assessment as applied to education and human services. Objects of evaluation include institutions, programs, projects, grants, services, personnel, students, materials, and facilities. The center’s general evaluation goals are to ascertain the strengths and weaknesses of an evaluative target and to provide guidance to evaluation sponsors and stakeholders on documenting, understanding, and improving the programs and processes under study.

The center offers services in four evaluative areas: research design and statistical consultation, including the plan and design of research intervention studies, data analysis and interpretation, and evaluation of tests and assessment tools; program evaluation, including needs assessment, program monitoring, and cost-benefit analysis; instructional alignment, including standard-setting, curriculum design, and training on reliability and validity issues; and assessment, survey, and attitude scale development. Affiliation with the college’s department of educational psychology also enables the center to serve as a hands-on training center for graduate students interested in acquiring and applying a variety of evaluation and assessment skills.

For more information, please visit the center’s website at http://education.unlv.edu/EP/index.html or contact one of its co-directors, Gregory J. Schraw (gschraw@unlv.nevada.edu) or Ralph E. Reynolds (Ralph.Reynolds@ccmail.nevada.edu). The center can be reached by phone at ext. 5-2253.

Fine Arts

The Best of the New York Stage series of the Performing Arts Center at UNLV will present two highly anticipated holiday shows in December, beginning with the Boys Choir of Harlem on Dec. 5. Well known for the breadth of its repertoire, ranging from staples of the European canon through gospel, jazz, and pop, the choir is internationally recognized for its virtuosic performances, choreographed innovations, and magnetic stage Presence.

Maureen McGovern performs Dec. 20. Her show will feature the music of Richard Rodgers and special holiday favorites. Winner of both the Oscar and Grammy Awards, the Grammy-nominated McGovern has earned her reputation as one of the truly great singers of our time, or any other. According to the Los Angeles Times, “If there’s a singer on the planet who can perform material from the great American pop music songbook any better than she can, it’s hard to imagine whom it might be.”

For prices and times, call ext. 5-2787.

Graduate

In keeping with the growth of new programs and increasing applications, 70 new state-funded graduate assistantships were added this year, bringing the total number of students receiving support to 871. This represents an increase of 68 percent in the number of students receiving funding since 1999. A large proportion of this increase is due to the growing success of the faculty in supporting graduate students on extra-mural funds. Indeed, the number of graduate students supported by external grants has increased from 68 in 1999 to 238 in 2003. Another large area of growth is in the number of PTI/GA s. More than 100 students are now supported as part-time instructors.

Health Sciences

The School of Dental Medicine has begun the process of selecting candidates for its third class, which is scheduled for admission in August. With 1,264 applicants to date, the pool of prospective students has increased by more than 500 individuals, compared with the same time last year. It is anticipated that more than 1,600 applicants will vie for the 75 available positions for the 2004 entering class. Faculty and staff recruitment activities continue to build in preparation for the opening of the Shadow Lane facility and the addition of the next class. Construction progress on the Shadow Lane facility continues to remain on schedule with an anticipated opening in May 2004. In preparation for the opening, current students will begin screening individuals in January to build a pool of patients for the opening of the Shadow Lane campus and dental clinic. Screenings will be conducted at various clinical sites in the city and also on the UNLV campus.

It is anticipated that the innovative use of information technology, which will be implemented within the School of Dental Medicine, will set the benchmark for health profession education nationwide. Information technology will support every aspect of state-of-the-art curriculum development and presentation, delivery and management of patient care, diagnostic imaging, recordkeeping, academic management, and fiscal management. Faculty and staff are currently training and testing to make the implementation phase of this aspect of the new facility as smooth and effective as possible.

Honors

The newly proposed curriculum for freshmen in the college who are seeking to become university honors scholars has been approved by the Honors Council and is now making its way through the curriculum.
process. The college aims to have this curriculum change fully implemented for new students entering in fall of 2004, and to schedule classes accordingly.

Although the proposal was initially somewhat controversial, the total number of hours required for students to become university honors scholars, it would increase slightly the number of hours of honors courses they would need to complete the program. The criteria for students working to become department honors scholars are not recommended for change.

The college helped several UNLV students apply in November for the distinction of being named to the USA Today Academic All-America team. USA Today will announce its selections in February. In addition, the college is helping several science students work toward applying for prestigious Barry Goldwater Scholarships in 2004. These scholarships are designed for students planning research careers in mathematics, science, or engineering.

Hotel
Planning for the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics was the impetus for Dean of Stuart Mann to participate in L.R. Gonnou's recent trip to Shanghai, Shanghai, and Hong Kong in October. This 10-day trip provided the opportunity for the dean to discuss partnership development and cooperative programs for hospitality training and education with educational institutions, private companies, and governmental agencies throughout China. To prepare for the Olympics, Beijing will build many new hospitality and tourism facilities. There is a significant need to provide high-quality international hospitality training to thousands of employees throughout China who will serve the tourist population. In meetings with higher education officials from Beijing International Studies University, Shanghai Institute of Tourism, and the School of Hotel & Tourism Management of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Mann discussed the development of a joint bachelor of science degree in international hospitality management.

In addition, he met with tourism officials and private companies to discuss the creation of training programs resulting in a certificate of completion. The proposed programs would be taught by visiting faculty who would teach and train in China for various periods of time. While many details are yet to be worked out, this is an exciting venture and a great opportunity for UNLV and the state of Nevada to participate in such an important and historic event as the 2008 Olympics.

Law
The law school's fall 2003 entering class was its largest ever, and is also one of the best-credentialed classes the school has seen. Largely as a result of the school's receiving full American Bar Association accreditation in February, the applicant pool grew tremendously. In the prior admissions cycle, the admissions committee had reviewed 1,100 applications; this time, it reviewed 1,700. This stands in marked contrast to the applicant pool of 450 for the school's first entering class in 1998. Because of the surge in applications, the school increased the size of its 2003 entering class from the usual 140 to 160. At the same time, the median LSAT and undergraduate GPA of the entering class increased to 155 and 3.48 respectively. Although the majority of these students have enrolled in the full-time program, 29 percent of the entering class opted for the part-time day or evening programs. The school anticipates another strong admissions pool for the fall 2004 class.

Liberal Arts
The women's studies department is celebrating many successes. Since receiving departmental status during the fall 2002 semester, three new faculty members, including a national 500 recognizes a new chair, Lois Rita Helmbold (Ph.D., Stanford University, history); an assistant professor, Carol Mason (Ph.D. 1996, University of Minnesota, English); and is currently embarking on a search for a third tenure-track faculty member, whose specialization may be Chicana/ border politics/ Latina, or race/ ethnicity and popular culture, or women and immigration. Judging from the two new hires, the department expects to hire a third outstanding faculty member. Faculty members from several other colleges cross-list courses and serve on department committees.

Currently, women's studies is the fastest growing department in the college, having expanded its offerings of WOM 101, Gender, Race, and Class, to enable more students to begin analysis of these three critical dimensions of life and society. The number of majors and minors is growing as well, and seven students are currently enrolled in the women's studies graduate certificate program. This fall, Helmbold's popular presentation at the University Forum lecture series, "Feminism: the other F Word," had a standing-room-only audience and has been replayed on television. Mason presented a paper at the annual American Studies Association conference. Helmbold initiated the first systematic women's studies meeting this fall, at which five of the seven UCCSIN institutions were represented, and will host the annual meeting of the Southwest region women's studies directors and chairs in January.

Libraries
The University Libraries' collection of electronic resources has increased significantly with the recent addition of more than 30 new databases and electronic journal collections. Providing access to information in a wide range of disciplines, the new resources were selected in response to the changing information needs of faculty and students as UNLV continues to expand its instructional programs and research agenda. The Sage Full-Text Collections include article content from more than 75 journals in sociology, political science, communications, and criminology. SpringerLink provides full-text article content for more than 500 scientific, technical, and medical journals published by Springer-Verlag. Site licenses for online access to the journals Nature, New England Journal of Medicine and JAMA have also been added. New databases include LION (Lit Online), PsychArticles, and American Film Scripts.

For more information about these and other electronic resources, visit the Libraries' website at www.library.unlv.edu or contact a subject librarian listed at www.library.unlv.edu/cl/bibliol.htm.

Sciences
The UNLV physics department offers three undergraduate and two graduate degree programs. These include bachelor of science degrees in physics, applied physics, and computational physics, along with master of science and Ph.D. degrees. Master of science and Ph.D. degrees in astronomy will also be offered in the near future.

Physics is a very research-active department with research emphases on atomic, molecular, and optical physics; astronomy and astrophysics; and condensed matter physics, particularly high-pressure condensed matter physics.

Research programs in physics have been increasingly interdisciplinary in nature and this trend is expected to continue for the foreseeable future. For example, research on state-of-the-art lithium/polymer batteries has been ongoing in the department for more than five years. Its focus has been on the relationship between the structure and dynamic behavior of the polymer electrolyte and the transport of lithium ions in this medium that is ultimately responsible for the output current of the battery. This research involves a number of disciplines, including chemistry, physics, chemical engineering, mathematics, and materials science. Very recently, representatives of a Canadian-American partnership firm producing, for the first time, lithium/polymer batteries of significant size and output power visited UNLV and, based on this visit, is setting up an active research collaboration with the department. This effort fits nicely into the energy/ materials microelectronics effort already underway in the Science, Engineering and Technology Building that is targeted to open in fall 2007.

Urban Affairs
The college's Center for Urban Partnerships (CUP) recently collaborated with the Clark County Department of Family Services (DFS) on a $2.5 million, five-year project funded by the Administration for Children and Families of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The project is designed to improve outcomes for children and families in the child welfare system. Clark County DFS is among only nine organizations across the country to receive federal funding. Interim CUP director Ramona Denby, who serves as the lead evaluator for this federal initiative, has organized an interdisciplinary team of UNLV researchers to provide methodological expertise, statistical, and analytic support, and conceptual guidance for the Caring Communities Demonstration Project. The project is designed to provide intervention and services for grandparents and others who assume care of their relatives' abused and neglected children.

The collaboration between CUP and DFS is one example of the many projects that the center facilitates. A citizen policy advisory board that includes several prominent local community leaders oversees CUP's many projects, which are organized into five research cores. These are headed by UNLV researchers Pat Markos (counseling), Daniel Allen (psychology), Larry Ashley (counseling), Chris Cochran (public administration), Mary Ann Overcamp-Martini (social work) and Joanne Thompson (social work).

The Clark County DFS, under the leadership of Director of Services Susan Kaiser, and Project Director Joy Salmon, will use its first $500,000 annual installment to implement the project. The U.S. Children's Bureau commissioned the nationwide demonstration projects as an outgrowth of the state Child and Family Services Reviews that showed that many children's needs exist in most state child welfare agencies in terms of ensuring children's safety, finding them permanent homes, and protecting their wellbeing.

For more information about this and other CUP collaborations with the community in the areas of child welfare, mental health, social services, and criminal justice, contact CUP at ext. 5-0415.
Spotlight

ON ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Mayumi Itoh (Political Science) had her new book, The Hazama Dynasty: The Japanese Political Leadership Through the Generations, published by Palgrave Macmillan in November. At the annual meeting of the International Studies Association - West, which took place in Las Vegas in October, she delivered two papers, “Political Leadership: A Theoretical Framework” and “Issues Concerning Recognition of History Between China and Japan: Has ‘History’ Really Ended?” She also participated in and served as chair of a panel at the meeting.

Shashi Nambisan (Transportation Research Center) recently received the 2003 Outstanding Educator Award from District 6 of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) at its international annual meeting in Seattle. The award recognizes excellence in teaching, research, and service to the organization. He was credited with dedicating a significant amount of his time, energy, and financial support to UNLV’s ITE student chapter through social events, technical presentations, and research opportunities. District 6 consists of 13 Western states.

Stephen Rosenbaum (Honors) was invited to write for a recent volume on Epicurean philosophy. His article, “Death as a Punishment: A Consequence of Epicurean Thranatology,” appeared in October in Epicurean: His Continuing Influence and Contemporary Relevance, published by the Rochester Institute of Technology’s Carya Graphics Arts Press.

Jerry Landwe (Educational Leadership) presented a paper titled “A Qualitative Analysis of Lexical Transformations in Dissertations” at the 48th annual conference of the Western College Physical Education Society in Reno in October. He also presented a poster session with graduate student Mark VanDame and colleague Monica Lounsbery (Educational Leadership) titled “A Comparative Study of Three Field Tests Purporting to Measure Cardiorespiratory Endurance.”

John Massengale (Kinesiology) published a paper titled “An Analysis of the Teaching of Risk Management” in the inaugural issue of WCPES Western Society Review. He also recently chaired a roundtable discussion titled “Social Psychology: What Content and How Much for Physical Education Classes” at the annual meeting of the Western College Physical Education Society in Reno.

Mildred A. McClain (Dental Medicine) is the principal investigator for a grant awarded by the Nevada Trust Fund for Public Health of the State Health Division to conduct a study titled Nevada Showdown. It will assess the efficacy of the Clark County School District's tobacco cessation curriculum. The focus of the grant is the promotion of public health and programs for disease or illness prevention. She will be mentored by Susan Silverton, associate dean of research for the dental school.

Erika Engstrom (Communication) and Beth Semic (formerly of Communication) had their article, “Portrayal of Religion in Reality TV Programming: Hege­mony and the Contemporary American Wedding,” appear in the most recent issue of Journal of Media and Religion.

All UNLV faculty, classified staff, and professionals staff members are encouraged to submit items to the "Spotlight on Accomplishments" section of Inside UNLV. Items should be no more than 75 words in length. Please submit via e-mail to inside.unlv@ccmail.nevada.edu or on the commencement hotline at 5-3229.

Steve Walsh, a campus grounds worker, plants a colorful array of pansies on Valerie Pida Plaza outside the Moyer Student Union. When the task was completed, the pansies spelled out "UNLV."

Harter

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I suppose it is natural for many to take this event for granted. Commencements does happen once a semester, rain or shine, so it is dependably available in the future to those who might wish to sit one out every now and then. But I think we all must be reminded of the value of the ceremony here at UNLV; we have relatively few venerated traditions and even fewer as steeped in meaning as commencement. To me, the graduation ceremony is our greatest chance to demonstrate our pride in our institution and what it seeks to achieve. Commencement allows us to honor, to revel in our academic culture; it is an opportunity for us to observe the collective accomplishment of our unifying goal of educating students. Thus, I applaud those of you who regularly attend and appreciate your taking the time to do so. I also encourage those who regularly do not attend to join us in the experience this Dec. 17 and at future ceremonies as well. I believe you will find it time well spent.

Commencement Set for Dec. 17

Winter commencement will take place at 4 p.m. Dec. 17 in the Thomas & Mack Center.

Faculty and staff participating in commencement are asked to arrive one hour before the start of the ceremony.

Faculty who are hooding doctoral students and all faculty marshals assisting with commencement should go the Cox Pavilion area (upstairs). All other faculty members attending commencement, including platform guests, should enter the Thomas & Mack through the northwest tunnel.

Commencement rehearsal is scheduled for 9 a.m. Dec. 16 in the Moyer Student Union ballroom. All deans and marshals should attend.

On the day of commencement, a reception for students, their families and friends, and faculty will take place on the concourse level of the Thomas & Mack immediately following the ceremony.

Additional information is available on the commencement website at http://commencement.unlv.edu/ or on the commencement hotline at ext. 5-1208.

General questions about commencement not answered on the website or hotline should be directed to education professor Jane McCarthy, chair of the Commencement Committee, at ext. 5-1208.

Questions about marshaling duties should be directed to committee member Rainer Spencer, associate dean of the College of Liberal Arts, at ext. 5-3401.

Mildred A. McClain (Dental Medicine) is the principal investigator for a grant awarded by the Nevada Trust Fund for Public Health of the State Health Division to conduct a study titled Nevada Showdown. It will assess the efficacy of the Clark County School District's tobacco cessation curriculum. The focus of the grant is the promotion of public health and programs for disease or illness prevention. She will be mentored by Susan Silverton, associate dean of research for the dental school.
Architects Win National Competition

A team of four UNLV architecture students competed against teams from 15 other U.S. institutions to take first place in a national architecture competition for minority students.

The competition, which was sponsored by the National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA), was held earlier this fall at the organization's 23rd annual conference in Chicago.

"This is a very prestigious award and serves to emphasize the rapid advancements UNLV and the School of Architecture have made in a relatively short amount of time," said Jeff Koep, dean of the College of Fine Arts, under which the School of Architecture is housed.

"I am very proud of the accomplishments of our students, who took first place under the expert tutelage of architecture professor Patricia Stissi. Stissi is one of those rare individuals who has the ability to encourage students to push themselves to extremes to accomplish excellence. Her inspiration, coupled with the talents of our students, brought this prestigious award to UNLV. It is a milestone for our School of Architecture," Koep added.

The UNLV team won the top award over Kansas State University, the Illinois Institute of Technology, the University of Florida, and the Tuskegee Institute, which took second place through fifth place respectively.

The UNLV team was composed of junior Sacri Tsukamoto, Timo' Harrison, and Marco Davis and sophomore Jose Aguilar.

"I am extremely proud of the achievement of these four dedicated students, and I would like to thank them, as well as all of the faculty, other students, and community members who encouraged the team to produce such high-quality work. I hope this achievement will inspire more students to get involved and help them to appreciate the type of education UNLV provides," Stissi said.

The objective of the national student competition was to design a museum building that would highlight the achievements of African Americans in the field of sports. The museum, which is being considered as a new public building in Bronzeville, Ill. - a neighborhood on Chicago's South Side - was to be designed by the students as a place for people to learn about the achievements of African American athletes and also as a venue for community activities, such as plays and meetings, Stissi said.

Other faculty members who worked with the students included Ed Brondo, Randy Hale, and John Sargent.

If the museum is approved and funded, the UNLV students' architectural design will be considered for use in the construction of the actual building, said Stissi.

The UNLV team, which received an expense-paid trip to Chicago to present its design, was selected to represent UNLV in a local student-design competition sponsored by the Las Vegas chapter of NOMA.

Initially, six teams of four students competed to represent UNLV. After a faculty panel judged the entries, the top three teams presented their designs at an event at which UNLV students selected the top team.

At the national competition, UNLV's student chapter of NOMA, which was created just last year, also took the title of Honorary NOMA Chapter of the Year. Junior Walter Huertas, who serves as the president of the NOMA student chapter, also attended the conference to accept the chapter's honorary award.

"The goal of the student chapter is to provide support for women and ethnic minority students, who have been traditionally under-represented in the field of architecture, and to create an all-inclusive environment in which individuals of different backgrounds can participate in the design of a project," said Stissi, adding that she is pleased with the student chapter's vitality.

Harrah's

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Las Vegas and Nevada communities, which are so proud to call home.

The collection donated to UNLV also contains extensive material about founder William Harrah's large antique car collection and his personal historical game and card collection.

"The story of Nevada's casino industry cannot be told without our company's founder, Bill Harrah," Saret said. "These archives provide an intriguing look at his life and the legacy of the company he created." Harrah's began humble in 1937 when Harrah opened a bingo parlor in Reno. Harrah's went on to play a significant role in the development and defining of gaming resorts over the years. Today, it is one of the nation's largest gaming companies, operating 26 casinos in 13 states, including seven in Nevada.

Harrah's affiliation with UNLV precedes the donation of its corporate archives. The two entities have had a solid relationship for many years; the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration is named in Harrah's honor.

The collection, now known as the "Harrah's Archive," is part of the Gaming Studies Research Center housed in special collections.

President
Carol C. Harter
requests that, faculty, classified staff, and professional staff join her at

UNLV's Annual Holiday Reception

Thursday, Dec. 4
4:30 p.m.
Marjorie Barrick
Museum of Natural History

Inside UNLV
Oral Historian to Document Nevada Test Site Recollections

by Gian Galassi

Mary Palevsky's resume contains all the requisite qualifications you might expect for an oral historian. Yet her most compelling credential is perhaps more than just a result of her extensive professional and academic preparation.

Born into a family of storytellers and scientists, Palevsky learned at an early age the intrinsic significance of personal narratives. Her parents — both scientists with the Manhattan Project, the country's top-secret World War II atomic weapons development program — would often tell stories that, Palevsky realized later, were filled with the moral dilemmas associated with the project's legacy.

Now, as the new director of UNLV's Nevada Test Site (NTS) Oral History Project, which is part of the College of Liberal Arts, Palevsky will have the opportunity to document similar stories of people who were involved at Nevada's nuclear proving grounds.

"There are many interesting parallels between the ethos of scientists like my father, who did no weapons work postwar, and of those who worked at the NTS," Palevsky said. "They all shared an amazing commitment to ingenuity, hard work, and sacrifice that their work demanded of them, regardless of their politics. However, I think a lot of people have misconceptions about who these scientists really were and whether they could be human in certain ways."

Palevsky believes that the NTS oral history project is one way to chronicle this component of our country's past.

"A good oral history interview facilitates the articulation of a person's life experience," Palevsky said. "Sometimes all it takes is a few good questions and an interviewee will share interesting facts about their experiences that can open a window into the past, revealing things that may never have been written about before."

Palevsky is working with the project's principal investigators, history professor Andy Kirk and sociology professor Robert Futrell. In 2004, interviews will begin with more than 100 individuals who were affiliated with the test site in varying capacities. The three-year project is being funded by a $582,000 federal grant.

Palevsky says the project will be comprehensive enough to include the experiences of the "major players" — the politicians, administrators, and scientists — as well as the technicians, soldiers, secretaries, security guards, and others who did not have high-profile roles at the site. Also among proposed interviewees are protestors, "downwinders," "atomic veterans," and American Indians whose lives were impacted by the NTS.

"The fabulous thing about oral history is that it's a method to document the experiences and views of people who would not normally be included in the historical record," she said. "Their voices can democratize history, reminding us that history is made by all of us."

Palevsky's own interest in oral history didn't manifest itself until the late 1980s when she began recording the memoirs of her dying father. Although the interviews left her with as many questions as they did answers, the experience, along with the 50th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, inspired her to seek out other Manhattan Project scientists to discuss how they felt about the consequences of their work. Her research resulted in a book, Atomic Fragments: A Daughter's Questions, published by the University of California Press in 2000. In it, she weaves together personal inquiry and oral history to examine the legacy of the Manhattan Project in the lives of those who worked on it, and also to better understand the impact it had on her own life. She hopes the NTS project will do the same for others.

"Many people's lives in Nevada were affected by what happened at the Test Site, so I think that the stories that come out of this project will be important to them," said Palevsky. "It's an essentially interesting picture of the developments in American culture during the Cold War, not the least of which is the amazing secrecy surrounding nuclear weapons and the science behind them."

"I don't think we comprehend the extent to which nuclear weapons have changed our lives. What is striking to me is the diversity of views people hold about their meaning," she said.

All tapes and transcripts from the project will be housed in the Lied Library's special collections department, where they will be made available to the public for research and other purposes.

Anyone who knows of a person who worked at or was involved in activities at the test site between the years of 1951 and 1992 is encouraged to contact Palevsky at ext. 5-0489 or at mary.palevsky@ccmail.nevada.edu.