

Spring 2002

## UNLV Magazine

Barbara Cloud

*University of Nevada, Las Vegas*

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SPRING / 2002

# UNLV Magazine

FOR ALUMNI, FACULTY, AND FRIENDS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS

## Framing the Scene:

An Innovative Approach to Filmmaking

History Lessons for Us All

Law Clinic Reaches Out to Small Clients

Film Professor  
Francisco Menendez







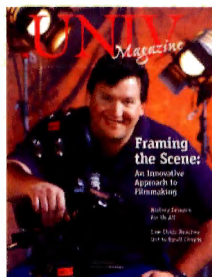
# Calling for a Great University

UNLV thanks you for your continued support that makes your University one of the greatest in the land! This spring, Rebel Ringers will call on you to further your involvement with UNLV. They will invite you to become even more ingrained in the fabric of this fantastic institution of higher learning. We need your support. Contribute to the UNLV Annual Fund and further promote academic excellence at UNLV. When students dial your number, answer the call with Rebel Spirit.

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UNLV Foundation Development Officer  
at (702) 895-3641.

**UNLV**  
FOUNDATION





on the cover: Film Department  
Chair Francisco Menendez  
Photo by David Phillips

# UNLV Magazine

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A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT CAROL C. HARTER

## Developing Our Metropolitan Character

Several months ago in my annual State of the University address, I had the opportunity to update the campus community on a number of our recent noteworthy successes, many of which support our goal of becoming a premier urban research university. In addition to detailing these achievements in the speech, I also discussed the fact that we are beginning to focus our energies in ways that reinforce the metropolitan character of our institution; since that time, several significant developments have occurred that further support this effort. All in all, the developments of the last year are beginning to take us in some important new directions that I believe you will find interesting.

*Regional campuses located in the urban core of the valley will give us the opportunity to strengthen our role as a major player in the economic growth and cultural development of Southern Nevada.*

First, the growing sophistication of our institution can be seen on several fronts. For example, it was recently announced that UNLV is now ranked within the National Doctoral Universities category of *U.S. News & World Report's* annual *America's Best Colleges* guidebook. UNLV moved up from the classification of "Regional Public Universities" to the classification of "National Doctoral Universities" and is now ranked along with 249 other doctoral-degree-granting universities, many of which strongly emphasize research. This is excellent news for us, and we are committed to continuing to move up within that classification.

Another development of which we are proud is the selection of one of our faculty members, Dave Hickey, as the recipient of a MacArthur Fellowship from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. The first Nevadan to receive this prestigious award, Hickey, a professor of art theory and criticism at UNLV since 1992, is one of the most respected art critics in America today. We are fortunate to have such a highly regarded individual on our faculty, and we congratulate him on the award.

Additionally, several of our programs have received either their provisional or regular accreditations, including some that are quite difficult to achieve, such as those for the William S. Boyd School of Law, the physical therapy program, computer science, and the School of Social Work. The accreditations serve as clear

validation of the academic merit of these programs, and it is a pleasure to see them receive such resounding endorsement.

While these examples of accomplishment speak to issues of quality, we have on our minds issues of quantity lately as well. With nearly 24,000 students now enrolled at UNLV, the great need for new land and space has led us to examine opportunities for expansion of the campus in downtown Las Vegas and in various locations in the northern part of the city, as well as in the city of North Las Vegas, and, of course, on property contiguous to the campus.

The possibility of land acquisition in these urban areas – or areas that will soon be urban – has given us a renewed vision for the campus, one that I believe will prove to make a great deal of sense over time. We are, after all, striving to become one of the finest urban teaching and research universities in the country. What better place to do so than in locations that reinforce the urban aspects of that goal? Regional campuses located in the urban core of the valley will give us the opportunity to strengthen our role as a major player in the economic growth and cultural development of Southern Nevada; they will give us the chance to help build and rebuild our surrounding areas, while supporting our city and further developing our urban character.

I am excited to say that this vision is quickly becoming a reality. In December, UNLV was able to acquire three buildings and 18 acres of land in the heart of Las Vegas at 1700 W. Charleston Blvd., the site formerly owned by the Employer's Insurance Company of Nevada. With 185,000 square feet of building space, a parking lot with more than 700 spaces, and a central-valley location just off I-15, the site is quite valuable in terms of its potential for multiple uses. Its location in the center of the community's primary medical district makes it an excellent site for some of our biotechnology and health care-related programs. Given our commitment to establishing a presence in this district – both at the recently acquired site, as well as at an academic medical center being proposed by Las Vegas Mayor Oscar Goodman – we are carefully examining which programs would be best suited to the various facilities.

For example, one of the buildings at the new regional campus will be an ideal location for UNLV's School of Dentistry. The facility has been designated as the site that will house the

*continued on page 32*

## NEWS

### UNLV Receives \$2.6 Million Grant for Biotechnology, Cancer Centers

UNLV recently received a grant of more than \$2.6 million from the U.S. Health and Human Services Administration for the university's Cancer Institute and new Biotechnology Center.

Biology professor Penny Amy, principal investigator on the grant proposal, said that the Biotechnology Center will serve as a facility for forensic DNA and other biotechnology training programs, including an environmental testing lab, which can be used to provide water quality testing for microbial contaminants.

"We have formed a partnership with the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department's (Metro) Crime and Forensic DNA labs to create a laboratory that will be specially equipped to train people nationwide in forensic science and human DNA profiling," Amy said. "In addition, researchers from the UNLV Cancer Institute will have new and modern facilities, both in the form of research laboratories and in specialty analyses, such as tissue culture and flow cytometry, as well as in DNA

sequencing capabilities."

UNLV President Carol C. Harter acknowledged Nevada's U.S. Sen. Harry Reid and U.S. Rep. Jim Gibbons for their assistance in acquiring the federal funding and for their support of the university's research programs. "This is yet another indication of the level of sophistication of our research here at UNLV, as well as our interest in partnering with government agencies and private industry to serve the community," Harter said.

Berch Henry, manager of Metro's Forensic DNA Laboratory, said the Biotechnology Center's DNA profiling facility will enhance training programs at Metro. "Workshops will be held for those attending UNLV's cell and molecular biology/biotechnology programs, for employees in current state or private DNA profiling labs across the nation who need academic refresher training, and for people with science backgrounds who want postgraduate, hands-on training in DNA techniques for employment potential," he said.

### UNLV Moves Up in Best Colleges Rankings

UNLV now is ranked within the National Doctoral Universities category of *U.S. News & World Report's* annual *America's Best Colleges* guidebook.

According to the magazine's annual campus rankings report, UNLV has been moved up from the classification of "Regional Public Universities" to the classification of "National Doctoral Universities." It now is ranked along with 249 other doctoral-degree-granting universities, many of which strongly emphasize research. The report explains that because of refinements to the categories developed by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of

Teaching in 2000, a number of institutions have moved into new peer groups.



UNLV is ranked under National Doctoral Universities, sharing placement in the fourth tier with institutions such as Portland State University, the University of Massachusetts, the University of Central Florida, the University of Houston, and Georgia State. The universities are listed alphabetically within each tier.

UNLV is also included in the report's list of colleges whose 2000 graduates incurred the least debt load, indicating it is a good value. UNLV ranked 10th out of 25 doctoral universities that received this distinction.

### New Alumni Scholarship Targets Local Minorities

A newly established UNLV Alumni Association scholarship, earmarked for minority students with high potential for academic success, will further the goals of the state Millennium Scholarship program.

The UNLV Alumni Association's Millennium Plus Scholarship is intended to help Millennium Scholars pay for books and fees. This year it will award \$500 per semester to 10 graduates of Community College High School in Las Vegas.

"These high school students were targeted because they have been involved in a 'college' setting through the Community College of Southern Nevada for two years and their potential for success at UNLV is high," said Pam Hicks, director of school and community relations and coordinator of the Millennium Scholarship program at UNLV. "In addition, the scholarship program is designed to help the university meet its diversity goals."

Applicants must be eligible for the Millennium Scholarship, which was established to encourage Nevada students who perform well in high school to stay in the state for college. Recipients must graduate from a Nevada high school, have a grade point average of at least 3.0, pass all areas of the Nevada High School Proficiency Examination, and be residents of Nevada for at least two high school years.

"The Alumni Association began the Millennium Plus Scholarship program to help ensure Nevada's best students become alumni of UNLV," said Kevin J. Page, Alumni Association president.

For more information, contact Hicks at (702) 895-2891.



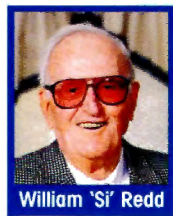
## Nevada Business Hall of Fame Inducts its First Honorees

The newly established Nevada Business Hall of Fame recently inducted its first members – William “Si” Redd, E. Parry Thomas, and Stephen A. Wynn.

UNLV’s College of Business and Andersen, a leading international professional services firm, created the Nevada Business Hall of Fame to honor the state’s top business leaders who have significantly contributed to the economic prosperity of Nevada and brought positive recognition to the state.

“It is a great honor to recognize the inaugural inductees into the Nevada Business Hall of Fame,” said Richard Flaherty, dean of the College of Business. “Their hard work, success in the gaming and banking industries, and leadership have made a tremendous impact on the lives of those who live and work in Nevada.”

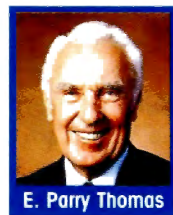
In 1980, Redd founded International Game Technology, the world’s leading gaming machine manufacturer, headquartered in Reno. Redd also became co-owner and developer of



William ‘Si’ Redd

the Mesquite Vistas master-planned community and the Oasis Hotel-Casino in Mesquite.

In 1995, Redd and his wife were named “Philanthropists of the Year” at the Fourth Annual National Philanthropist Day conference. The Redds have supported numerous charities and women’s assistance programs, including Temporary Assistance for Domestic Violence.



E. Parry Thomas

As chairman of the board of Valley Bank of Nevada (now Bank of America of Nevada), Thomas helped to create the major funding source for Las Vegas’ growth during the 1960s and early 1970s.

In addition to his contributions to the area’s economic development, Thomas has committed significant resources to the community through his generous donations to charities and UNLV. Along with Jerome Mack, Thomas provided \$1 million to construct the Thomas & Mack Center on the university campus. The Thomas & Mack Co. also recently gave

\$2 million to support the public legal clinic at the UNLV William S. Boyd School of Law (see “And Justice For All,” page 24).



Stephen A. Wynn

Wynn, former chairman of the board and chief executive officer of Mirage Resorts Inc., is widely credited with transforming Las Vegas into a world-renowned resort destination.

The Mirage, which opened in November 1989, quickly changed the paradigm by which all casino hotels since have been designed. The opening of The Mirage ignited a \$12 billion building boom, which resulted in Las Vegas becoming the fastest-growing city in the United States and the top tourism destination in the country. Wynn’s latest Las Vegas Strip project, Le Reve, is currently under way.

Wynn is active in a multitude of community affairs and is a recipient of an honorary doctoral degree from UNLV.

Andersen’s Las Vegas office will provide administrative and publicity support as well as donate more than \$45,000 to UNLV for the Nevada Business Hall of Fame.

## Alumni Across the Country Help Recruit New Students

A UNLV admissions program is turning alumni across the country into recruiters for the university.

Through the Rebel Recruitment Program, alumni in 16 states have volunteered to represent their alma mater at college fairs and to make congratulatory phone calls to newly accepted students.

Alumni recruiters will receive training on how best to promote the university to prospective students, said Kristi Rodriguez, assistant director for admissions. The Rebel Recruitment Handbook offers general information on admissions, financial aid, scholarships, and housing. Recruiters attending events also will receive a video that details college fair etiquette.

She hopes the program will expand to include such activities as letter-writing campaigns and send-off receptions.

The Alumni Association is helping to fund training sessions in San Diego, Chicago, and New York. “The program has a high potential for growth,” Rodriguez said. “Our high-need areas include California, Hawaii, New York, New Mexico, Colorado, and Washington.”

Rodriguez said she believes the program offers alumni another way to give back to their communities. “I have found that this program is beneficial for all those involved,” she said. “Students are able to hear about UNLV from someone who has experienced it firsthand, and the community gets to see the products of our university – our graduates.”

Alumna Brenda Mason joined the program when UNLV needed a representative at a college fair in San Diego. She tells prospective students how her education helped her reach her career goals. She is now a lawyer with the U.S. Attorney’s Office.

“UNLV has always been a big part of my life,” said Mason, who earned both her bachelor’s and master’s degrees at UNLV. “I am proud to be an alumnus and happy to give back to the school when I can.”

Other notable alumni recruiters include former U.S. Rep. James Bilbray and Linda Milam, mayor of Idaho Falls, Idaho.

For more information, contact Rodriguez at (702) 895-4678 or e-mail her at [krdriguez@ccmail.nevada.edu](mailto:krdriguez@ccmail.nevada.edu).

## Becker Family Donates \$1 Million to UNLV Football Program

A \$1 million donation made in the name of the late Ernest A. Becker Sr. will help turn UNLV’s football facility into a premier training center for student-athletes.

The gift will allow the team’s football practice facility to be upgraded with a state-of-the-art playing surface, helping turn the newly named Ernie Becker Sr. Football Fields at Bill “Wildcat” Morris Rebel Park into one of the nation’s top training sites. In addition, the athletic department’s strength and conditioning center at the Lied Athletic Complex now will carry the name of Ernie Becker Sr.

“Our father was a strong supporter of the school and its athletic teams from the first day they were founded,” Ernie Becker Jr. said. “With his own history of playing football, this is a great way to honor his name and help further enhance the quality of the Rebel football program, which he loved so much.”

The donation ranks among the biggest in history designated solely for Rebel football. Other notable donations to the program include the \$1.2 million over 10 years from the Boyd family during the 1980s and \$500,000 given by George Maloof Jr. in September.

In recognition of the donation, the John Robinson Honorary Coach’s Award was given posthumously to Ernie Becker Sr.



## Alumni Association Recognizes Top Graduate, Non-Alumni Supporters

Attorney Bill Koot and business executive Don Snyder recently received the Alumni Association’s top awards.

“Both Bill and Don are deeply committed to the Southern Nevada community and to UNLV,” said Kevin J. Page, association president. “They are continually willing to offer their leadership, and their dedication enhances UNLV’s ability to provide superior educational opportunities to its students.”

The association named Koot, a retired prosecutor for the Clark County district attorney’s office, its Alumnus of the Year. During his 30-year tenure with the district attorney’s office, he held numerous administrative positions and retired as chief of the major violators unit. He led the prosecution of some of the area’s most serious criminal cases as well as the office’s implementation of the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act, better known as RICO.

Koot earned a bachelor’s degree in political science from UNLV in 1966. After a tour of duty in Vietnam with the Marine Corps, he graduated magna cum laude from University of San Diego law school. He joined the district attorney’s office in 1972.

Snyder, president of Boyd Gaming Corporation, received the Silver State Award, the highest honor the association

gives to non-alumni supporters of the university.

Snyder was elected to Boyd Gaming’s Board of Directors in April 1996, and, in January 1997, he was named Boyd Gaming president. He is a former chairman of the board and chief executive officer of First Interstate Bank of Nevada. He also has been involved in starting local businesses in Southern Nevada, including the Fremont Street Experience (serving as its initial chairman and CEO) and BankWest of Nevada (as a co-founder).

Snyder is actively involved in numerous business, charitable, and civic organizations in Nevada. He is the former chairman of the UNLV Foundation, the United Way of Southern Nevada, and the Nathan Adelson Hospice.

In addition, the association awarded the 2001 Outstanding College Alumnus Awards to: Tony Gladney, College of Liberal Arts; George Maloof Jr., William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration; Paige (Zielinski) Russell, Howard R. Hughes College of Engineering; Lucy Klinkhammer, College of Education; Tom Brooker, College of Business; Curtis Fairman, College of Fine Arts; Rafael Villanueva, Greenspun College of Urban Affairs; Kameran Haq, College of Health Sciences; and Ashish Sharma, Honors College.

## Alumni Association Honors Faculty with Awards

The UNLV Alumni Association recently announced the recipients of this year’s Student-Centered Faculty Awards.

The association presents the awards each year to six professors who excel in making students the focal point of their teaching efforts.

Professors chosen for the 2001-02 academic year are Margot Mink Colbert, associate professor of dance; Aimee Govett, clinical assistant professor of curriculum and instruction; Patricia Markos, associate

professor of counseling; Henry Selvaraj, assistant professor of electrical and computer engineering; Krystyna Stave, assistant professor of environmental studies; and Jean Whitney, professor of legal writing.

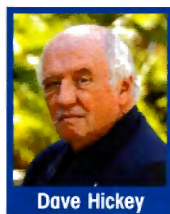
In addition, the association presented this year’s Student-Centered Project Grant Awards to Carol Jensen, director of the Urban Affairs Student Advising Center, and to Walter C. Vodrazka Jr., transportation systems analyst with the Transportation Research Center.



# University People



– **Dave Hickey**, professor of art theory and criticism, received a MacArthur Fellowship from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. He will receive \$500,000 over five years to pursue any creative endeavor of his choosing, “no strings attached.” The purpose of the fellowship is to reinforce the importance of the creative individual in society. According to the MacArthur Foundation, Hickey spurns ideological agendas and champions what some consider to be outmoded notions of beauty, artistic vision, and the virtues of the marketplace. The first Nevadan to receive the award, Hickey joined UNLV in 1992.



Dave Hickey



Jay Bybee

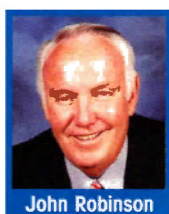
– **Jay Bybee**, a professor in the William S. Boyd School of Law, was named assistant attorney general in charge of the Office of Legal Counsel at the U.S. Justice Department. President Bush nominated Bybee for the position. He will advise Attorney General John Ashcroft on the constitutionality of legislation and executive orders. He has taken a leave of absence from the law school, where he specializes in constitutional law, administrative law, and civil procedure, and plans to return after his tenure with the Justice Department.

– **Jamie Davidson**, assistant vice president for student wellness, was named the 2001 President’s Outstanding Professional Staff Member of the Year. He was director of Student Counseling and Psychological Services when he was selected for the award. Davidson came to UNLV in 1994 as a staff psychologist and quickly assumed a leadership role at the Student

Counseling Center. Under his direction, the center established a walk-in crisis counseling program, developed preventive and educational programs on a variety of issues, and partnered with the School of Social Work and the counseling and psychology departments to provide clinical training for graduate students.

– **Colleen Peterson**, director of UNLV’s Center for Individual, Couple, and Family Counseling, now serves on the Nevada Board of Examiners for Marriage and Family Therapists. Nevada Gov. Kenny Guinn appointed Peterson to the board, which reviews licensure of marriage and family therapists, hears complaints, and reviews and implements laws related to the field. Peterson is a clinical assistant professor in the department of counseling.

– With the new year, **John Robinson** added the title of director of intercollegiate athletics to his football coach designation. As athletics director, he will oversee 17 Division I intercollegiate sports programs, 212 employees, and a budget of more than \$15 million. Robinson will continue to hold the head football coach position. He ended the 2001 season as college football’s 11th-winningest active coach with a record of 119-55-4.



John Robinson

– Retired Clark County School District educator **Pamela Hicks** is UNLV’s new director of school and community relations/Millennium Scholarship coordinator. Hicks helps recruit students to UNLV from the local school district. She also tracks Millennium Scholars at UNLV and provides outreach about the program to the school district. Hicks began working at the university last year as a faculty member in the College of Education. She worked for more than 30 years with the

Clark County School District as a teacher and administrator. Hicks is a past president of the UNLV Alumni Association and has served 14 years on its board.

– **Martha Watson**, dean of the UNLV Greenspun College of Urban Affairs, is the Nevada representative to the board of the Western States Arts Federation. Founded in 1974,



Martha Watson

WESTAF is a non-profit service organization dedicated to the creative advancement and preservation of the arts in 12 Western states. Watson’s duties include serving as a liaison between WESTAF and the arts community in Nevada.

– **Lawrence M. Scheier**, associate professor of counseling in UNLV’s Greenspun College of Urban Affairs, received a two-year grant from the National Institutes of Health to study the effectiveness of a school-based drug abuse prevention program. The \$375,000 grant is integral to a collection of ongoing studies already under way at the Weill Medical College of Cornell University, where Scheier worked previously. He was part of a team that developed a drug abuse prevention program for middle-school children. Scheier said this new study examines whether the program deterred or reduced drug use among the youth in the manner hypothesized.

– **Ann Williams**, who will receive a bachelor’s degree in hotel management this May, won the Kopf Student Achievement Scholarship Award from the Kopf Family Foundation. In addition to receiving a significant cash award, she will tour California and Europe extensively as an intern at 20 world-renowned wineries. The tour will include hands-on educational experience at the restaurants associated with the wineries.



## Framing the Scene

*Neon lights, stunning red rocks, and countless casinos have made Las Vegas a favorite backdrop for Hollywood flicks. Now, Francisco Menendez and the growing film department are working to bring the city to the foreground as a center for writers, directors, and producers.*

By Betty Blodgett

**C**ould Las Vegas become the next Hollywood? It could if Francisco Menendez and the UNLV College of Fine Arts have any say in the matter.

While films featuring Las Vegas are not unusual, one written, directed, and produced entirely in Las Vegas – by UNLV College of Fine Arts faculty members and students, no less – is rare. That is, until now.

*Medio Tiempo*, a 45-minute film written

and directed by Menendez, associate professor and chair of the UNLV film department, was one of four films that received a 2001 award in the Second Annual Latino Filmmaker Showcase short-film competition and aired on the cable network Showtime in September.

The plot revolves around Salvadoran immigrant Carlos Bonilla, who is determined to make an honest living in Las Vegas. Carlos hopes to get his adopted

younger brother, Manolito, out of the gang culture by securing him a part-time – in Spanish, *medio tiempo* – job. But a robbery shows Carlos that he is unable to control his brother’s destiny. In the end, Carlos realizes that he only has control over his own life and that Manolito must choose his own path.

While *Medio Tiempo* has been receiving accolades as it makes the rounds of the film-festival circuit, Menendez says the real





Filming *Medio Tiempo* as a co-curricular project offered students, such as Anthony Maranville (above, right), a hands-on learning opportunity. William Muchow (right, in black cap) served as assistant director for the film.



success of the film is that it marks the first co-curricular project by UNLV's film department.

"Ever since my arrival at UNLV in 1990, I've had this idea that it would be great to create a film project that would bring together the department's faculty members and students," Menendez explains. "You see university stage productions, where faculty members direct and design and the theatre students do everything else. This model intrigued me, and I thought, 'Why not take everything we offer in the film curriculum and put it into an actual hands-on project involving the students and faculty?'"

But before such a project could happen, a film department needed to exist. When Menendez joined UNLV, only seven students were enrolled in what was then the film studies program in the College of Liberal Arts. By 1996, the program had grown to 70 students, become its own department, and moved under the College of Fine Arts. In the fall 2001 semester, an enrollment of more than 250 students made film studies one of UNLV's fastest growing majors.

Menendez helped to expand the curriculum by creating the production and screenwriting sequences, serving as the film department's director of film production and screenwriting, designing the department's non-linear editing facilities, and beginning a master of fine arts in screenwriting degree program – the first graduate film degree to be offered in the state.

Menendez points to others – in particular, film professor Hart Wegner and College of Fine Arts Dean Jeff Koep – as also being instrumental in the department's growth during that time period.

"Hart Wegner provided me with guidance and the room to grow, which was especially valuable for me since I was a new faculty member working in my first university job," Menendez says. "Dean Koep has been incredibly supportive of the film department and our efforts to expand different programs, especially by helping us to find creative ways in which to work with the local community."

One of the creative community partnership programs that Menendez established

at UNLV in 1999 was the professional film crew training program. Through a partnership with the Entertainment Development Corporation and Citibank/Citigroup, this program targets non-UNLV students, specifically casino employees and welfare-to-work participants, and trains them to work on professional film sets.

"The professional film crew training program is designed to help working Nevadans cross over into careers in film production and to create a trained workforce to serve the emerging needs of the Los Angeles film industry when it comes to Las Vegas to shoot films," Menendez said.

With all of this groundwork laid, Menendez's vision to create a co-curricular film project finally could become reality. In 1999, he received a \$30,000 university-sponsored Planning Initiative Award grant, a donation of camera equipment from Panavision, and more than \$40,000 of in-kind donations from local providers.

The project also received a \$90,000 U.S. Department of Commerce grant, which was used to acquire state-of-the-art post-production equipment for the film department. This grant was awarded through the Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Technology (EPSCoT), which supports efforts to enhance local business through technology development.

With Menendez as director, film production instructor Warren D. Cobb as producer, and cinematography professors Deron Albright and Michele Hugo handling the camerawork, *Medio Tiempo* was shot in 17 days in April 2000 at locations both on and off campus. The crew completed the final cut of the film in January 2001.

The crew included more than 30 UNLV film students – whose shifts were limited to six hours to ensure they could attend classes – and several members of the local community participating in the professional film crew training program. The movie's cast consisted primarily of professional actors from Los Angeles working under contract from the Screen Actors Guild.

For UNLV film major Eduardo Mayen, who hopes to become a cinematographer when he graduates, participating in the

creation of *Medio Tiempo* was an invaluable experience. He served as second assistant director and also spent some time in front of the camera as an actor in a supporting role.

"It was great to be able to take the knowledge that we learned in the classroom and apply it to an actual hands-on production," Mayen says. "You learn more by doing. For example, as second assistant director, it was my responsibility to make sure the actors were ready to go and in place before the director yelled, 'Action!'"

In Las Vegas, filming took place at El Mercado del Pueblo grocery store and at Casa Veracruz and Pepe's Tacos restaurants. When Menendez traveled to his native El Salvador to capture footage for a small portion of the film, Mayen, who also is from El Salvador, served as a location scout and line producer. To capture the flavor of the Central American country, Mayen worked with Salvadoran cinematographer David Pinto to find just the right locations for filming, such as the village of Panchimalco, which was chosen for its colonial church and cobblestone streets.

"It was important not to compromise the visual reality of the film. So, as much as possible, we tried to shoot in actual Latino environments," Mayen says.

Reflecting on the experience of making *Medio Tiempo*, Mayen says the students involved with the project agreed that they came away with a much greater understanding of the realities of filmmaking. "As students and future filmmakers, we share a great sense of pride and accomplishment in the success of the final product," he says.

As an added bonus, the entire pre-production, production, and post-production process was captured in a 12-minute documentary, "Telling a Latino-American Story: The Making of *Medio Tiempo*," which will be used as a teaching tool for future film classes and a model for other co-curricular projects.

"It was just amazing how well it all came together," Menendez says. "This project gave faculty, students, and the Latino community an opportunity to become involved in the reality of professional film production. Through their direct involvement in



*Medio Tiempo* was shot in 17 days. UNLV locations included the Performing Arts Center Plaza outside Artemus W. Ham Concert Hall.



the making of this film, the students came to understand the intricacies involved in the production process and how the director is entirely dependent on the talents of the producers, the actors, the department heads, and the crew. Everything that we said that we would accomplish with this project came to pass – with even more success than we expected."

The script itself was an important component of this success.

Menendez began writing the script for *Medio Tiempo* in 1989 while still a graduate student in the master of fine arts in film

and video program at the California Institute of the Arts.

"The character of Carlos grew out of extensive writing workshops during my graduate work," Menendez says. "From the beginning, the character of Carlos spoke to me deeply and his wounds and obstacles were close to my heart. As a writer and as a native of El Salvador, the



## The Movies I Watch Over and Over Again

By Francisco Menendez

"What's your favorite film?"

This is probably the most dreaded question for a film academic. It is an impossible question to answer because, as a lover of film, my taste and interests run wide and deep. Needless to say, I am enriched by the films of Bergman, Capra, Ford, Hitchcock, Kieslowski, Kubrick, Polanski, Ray, Welles, and Wilder. The fact is there are too many great films and filmmakers that get ignored whenever any top-100 list is published.

Nonetheless, I began this task by studying the selection of my frequently watched DVDs, laser disks, and tapes. This list is *not* a best-film ranking. It does not begin with *Citizen Kane* (1941). Instead, I share with you some favorites that stand up to multiple viewings. Some are award winners, others have been derided and dismissed by critics, but all hold a special place in my heart.

Action: *Die Hard* (1988)

American Mob Film: *GoodFellas* (1990)

Atypical French Product:

*La Femme Nikita* (1990)

Bizarre Adaptation: Lührman's

*W.S. Romeo and Juliet* (1996)

British Gangster Film:

*Long Good Friday* (1981)

Classic: *The Third Man* (1949)

Coming of Age: *The Graduate* (1949)

Costume Drama: *Shakespeare in Love* (1999)

Creepy Holiday Movie: *One Magic Christmas* (1985)

Cross-gender Conundrum:

*The Crying Game* (1992)

Directorial Excess: *Apocalypse Now* (1979, not *Redux*)

Ensemble of Performances:

*On the Waterfront* (1954)

Epic: *Lawrence of Arabia* (1962)

Existential Comedy: *Groundhog Day* (1993)

Family Film: *E.T.* (1982)

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When filming moved to El Salvador (above), film student Eduardo Mayen (right), returned to his homeland to scout locations.

story became more personal as I worked on it draft after draft."

The idea for the story actually began even earlier when Menendez was an undergraduate at the University of Puget Sound. In the spring of 1984, Menendez took a semester break from his studies and returned to El Salvador, which was in the throes of a bloody civil war. He worked as a stringer for *Time* magazine and as a liaison for Jane Wallace of CBS News.

During the war, Menendez says, about one-third of the population fled El Salvador. Many immigrants settled illegally in the American Southwest, where they found jobs and sent money back to their families in El Salvador.

"It was important for me to tell the story of these unsung heroes who worked to keep my country alive economically during the war," Menendez says. "I thought, 'If I don't tell this story, who will?'"

After finishing graduate school in 1989, Menendez set his script aside until 1992 when he began refining the story. He presented his 40-page script at the 1993 University Film Video Association Media Writing Session in Philadelphia, where it was a runner-up for awards given by both the Hispanic Film Project and the American Film Institute Minority Filmmakers Program. But without the financial backing

to put his story on film, Menendez again set his script aside. When the UNLV grant materialized in 1999, he blew the dust off his script and asked colleague Sean Clark, who directs UNLV's graduate screenwriting program, to serve as story consultant.

"As a director, my work has always begun and ended with the script," Menendez says. "It was important for me to make the story of this specific Latino immigrant accessible to a wide audience. I sensed that the more specific I was, the more human the story would become, and the more relevant it would be in illuminating the condition of thousands of Latinos in the United States today."

Before its official film-festival debut, *Medio Tiempo* was shown to about 100 teen-agers attending the summer 2001 Latino Youth Conference held at UNLV.

"The kids were moved to tears and gave it a standing ovation," Menendez recalls. "That's why you make films – to make that human connection. All of a sudden, the kids who were watching the film saw themselves and their own struggles. To me, the real

success of *Medio Tiempo* is its ability to send a message of hope to people, especially to those who feel disenfranchised."

In *Medio Tiempo*, the gang culture dominates Manolito's choices, but by the end of the film, he makes his own decision to leave the gang culture and pursue an education at UNLV.

"My intent was not to make a recruitment film for the university," Menendez says. "But, I am a big believer in the importance of an education, and the overriding theme of the film is making those positive choices in life that will help to better yourself and others."

College of Fine Arts Dean Jeff Koep says that while *Medio Tiempo* was produced by an academic department at a university, it is important to note that the film stands on its own as a quality piece of filmmaking.

"*Medio Tiempo* is an important film in that it addresses issues faced by the Hispanic/Latino community in

Las Vegas," Koep says. "It also demonstrates that a rather new film program was able to develop – on a relatively low budget in relation to what is usually spent in the industry – a high-quality film that caught the attention of industry professionals."

Ultimately, Menendez hopes the success of this co-curricular film project will create opportunities for more local film production by UNLV film graduates.

"As Las Vegas continues to grow into a major film center, it is important for the College of Fine Arts film department to continue to educate our students in the realities of professional film production," Menendez says. "We are helping to create the architects of tomorrow's films – the screenwriters, directors, producers, and cinematographers – and as Nevadans, these graduates are going to be more likely to want to make their movies here in Las Vegas."

"When you talk about filmmaking here in Nevada – and the possibility that Las Vegas could become the next Hollywood – it's not about job titles, celebrity, money, and prestige; it's about providing the right education and tools so that those who want to make movies here can do just that." ■



Movie stills provided materials for marketing *Medio Tiempo* to film-festival audiences around the world.



*continued from previous page*

Film about L.A. Angst: *Magnolia* (1999)

Film by an Exiled Director:

*Los Olvidados* (1951)

French Film: *Wages of Fear* (1953)

From Down Under: *The Piano* (1993)

Guilty Pleasure: *The Pink Panther Strikes Again* (1976)

Idiosyncratic Character: *Rushmore* (1999)

Kidnapping Drama: *High and Low* (1963)

Love Triangle: *Casablanca* (1942)

Male Bonding Film: *The Deer Hunter* (1978)

Mid-life at 30 Movie: *Beautiful Girls* (1996)

Modern Mexican Cinema:

*Amores Perros* (2001)

Movie About Film Exec.: *The Player* (1992)

Movie About Making Movies:

*The Stunt Man* (1980)

Movie Featuring Reno: *The Misfits* (1961)

Movie Featuring Vegas: *Lost in America* (1985)

Movie I Should Hate: *Fight Club* (1999)

Movie My Students Hate: *Gladiator* (2000)

Noir Revisited: *LA Confidential* (1997)

Obscure British Film: *Witnail and I* (1981)

Police Drama: *Stray Dog* (1950)

Political Film: *Under Fire* (1983)

Revisionist Serial: *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (1981)

Romantic Comedy: *Notting Hill* (1998)

Satire: *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (1975)

Sequel: *Godfather II* (1974)

Small Italian Film: *I Viteellone* (1953)

Snake Pit (a movie filled with unsympathetic characters): *The Sweet Smell of Success* (1957)

Suspense: *The Silence of the Lambs* (1990)

Tech Noir: *The Matrix* (1999)

Thrill: *Jaws* (1975)

Time Travel Flick: *Back to the Future* (1985)

Tinderbox (an explosive and revolutionary movie): *Do The Right Thing* (1989)

Twisted Underbelly: *Blue Velvet* (1986)

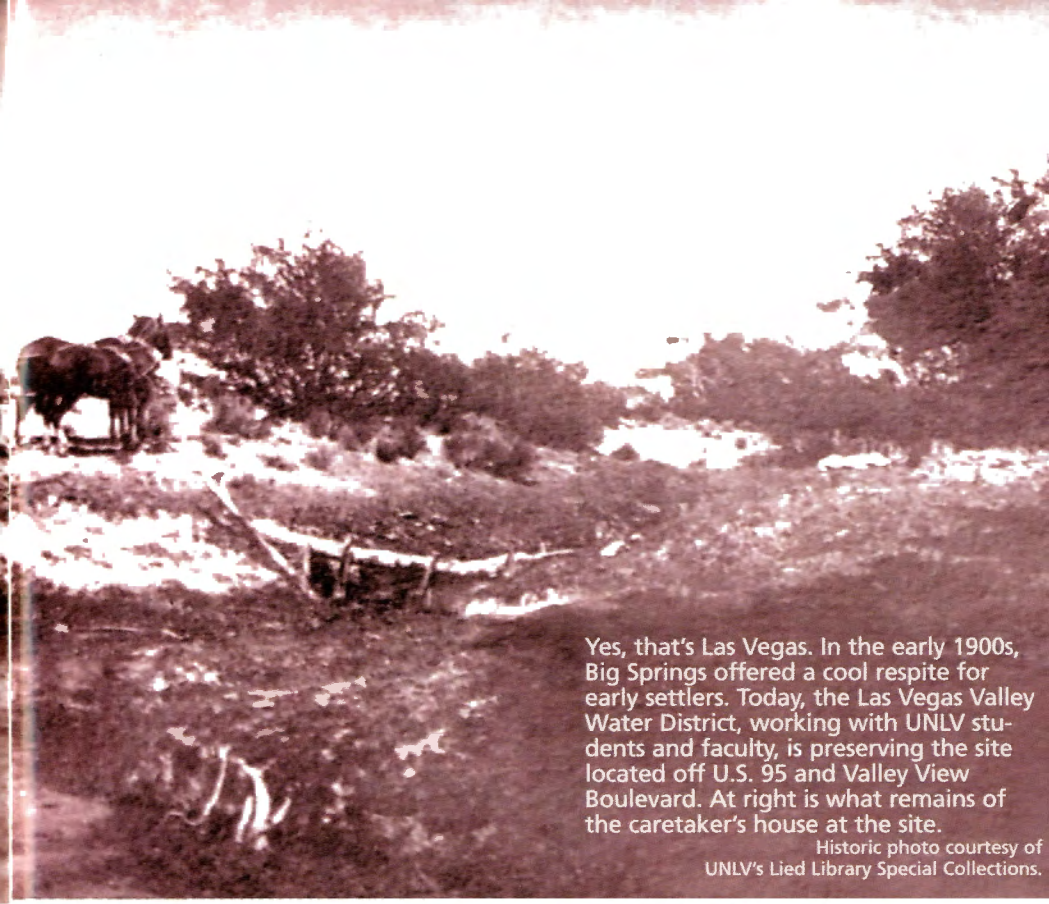
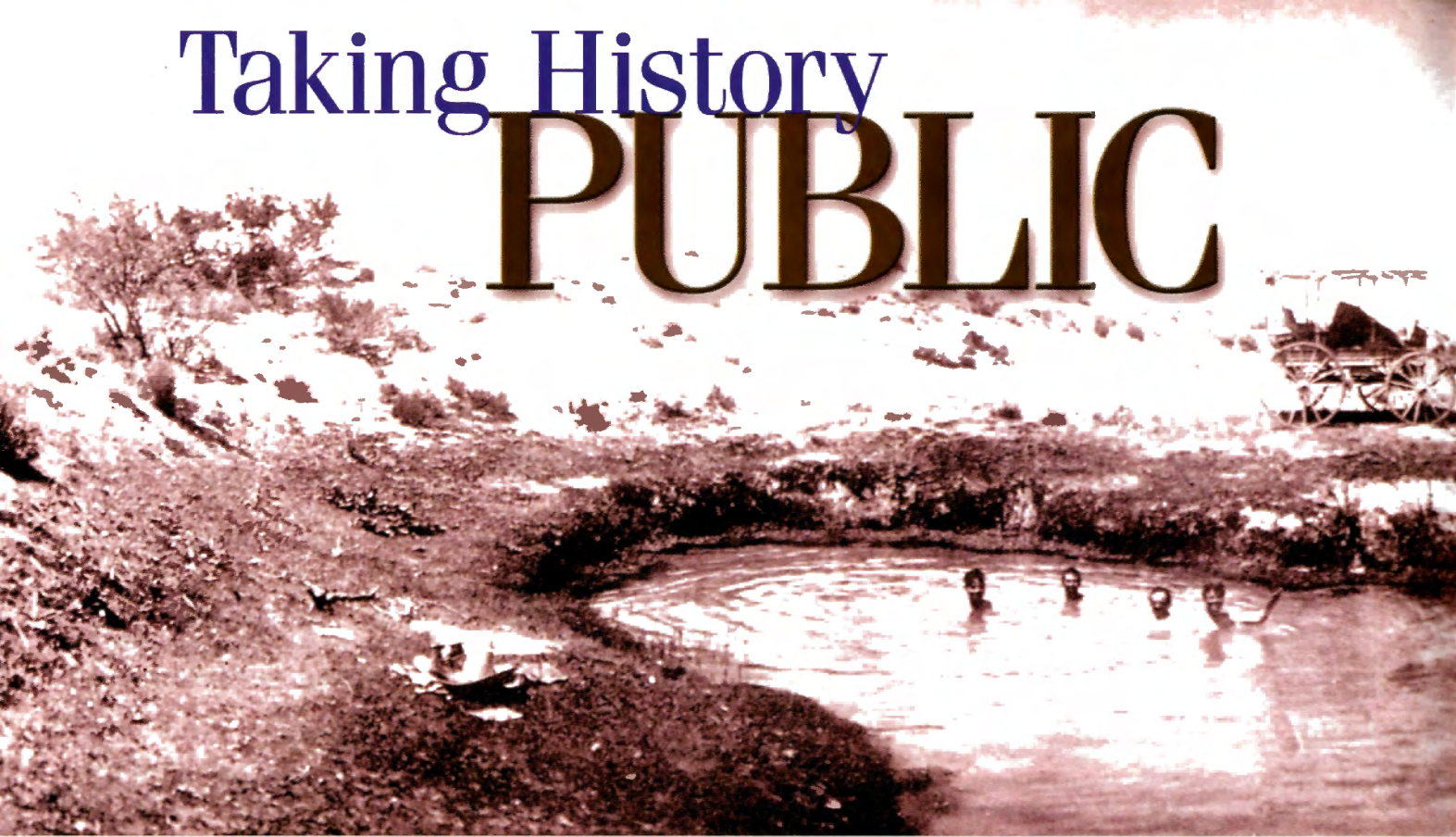
Unlikely Subject: *Trainspotting* (1996)

Use of Emotional Editing:

*The Limey* (1998)



# Taking History PUBLIC



Yes, that's Las Vegas. In the early 1900s, Big Springs offered a cool respite for early settlers. Today, the Las Vegas Valley Water District, working with UNLV students and faculty, is preserving the site located off U.S. 95 and Valley View Boulevard. At right is what remains of the caretaker's house at the site.

Historic photo courtesy of UNLV's Lied Library Special Collections.



Being in the right place at the right time. Sometimes that's what it's all about.

And history professor Andy Kirk believes he has found that kismet at UNLV.

What better place to launch a public history program than at a public university committed to forging partnerships with the community?

And, what better time could this be happening than now when residents of both Las Vegas and the state of Nevada have begun showing significant interest in public history and public preservation projects?

"This is really ideal," says Kirk, who came to UNLV in 1999 specifically to create a graduate-level program in public history. "This university is an innovative institution that wants to try new things, and public history, while it has been practiced for many years, is fairly new as an academic pursuit."

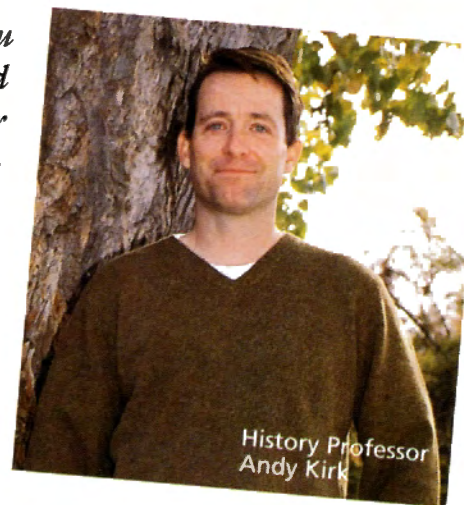
"At the same time, you have a community and a state that are just now reaching the population size necessary to support substantial numbers of public history and preservation projects. It's a terrific match."

*Think of history and you think of fat textbooks filled with facts, right? Professor Andy Kirk thinks of rebuilding an old chicken coop and of chatting with old-timers who have memories a mile long. That's all part of today's public history.*

By Diane Russell

Already, students in the fledgling public history program have garnered valuable experience working with the ongoing Las Vegas Springs Preserve project and the Goffs School preservation project. Many more projects await their attention.

Jim Frey, dean of the College of Liberal Arts, which houses the history department, says the public history program is earning high marks for its work in the community.



"The public history program, under the leadership of Dr. Andy Kirk, has made a significant impact in the community and region even though it is a relatively new program within the department of history," Frey says.

"Dr. Kirk and his students have developed projects in oral history, archival preservation, and historic site designation that enable us to chronicle and preserve

accounts and descriptions of historical events relative to the area."

With all this talk about the value of public history work, maybe it's time to have Kirk explain exactly what public history is.

"Public history is everything that's not teaching history in a classroom," he says. "And there's a whole universe of things that historians have always done that fall under this broad rubric of public history."

For years, historians have worked in a variety of non-school settings, including museums, homes, and national parks, where they develop exhibits, write historic accounts for displays, and conduct tours. But, he says, until relatively recently, academically trained historians had to adapt their skills to their public history work. Few historians received training specifically in the field, he says.

"There was just a disjuncture really between the training of historians and what they often ended up doing," says Kirk, a traditionally trained academic historian who

has gained most of his public history expertise through extensive hands-on work.

"In some ways, I would say I was kind of born into it," he reflects. Born in Virginia to a father who was an archaeologist for Colonial Williamsburg – which Kirk describes as the "most notable experiment in public history in America" – and to a mother who volunteered as a docent for a historic home museum there, Kirk was exposed to public history at an early age. "I don't know if I got it by osmosis or what, but my parents were living and doing public history."



In the 1980s, when his father was heading up the historical foundation in Galveston, Texas, Kirk volunteered on preservation projects there while earning money as a reconstruction contractor for 150-year-old homes. Later, he interned for the National Trust for Historic Preservation, serving on the Barn Again program, which saves historic rural buildings from demolition as corporations buy out family farms.

Although Kirk worked in the public history field while earning his degrees, he had few chances to take public history classes during his studies. He earned bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Colorado at Denver in 1989 and 1992 respectively. In 1998, he received a doctorate in Western history from the University of New Mexico.

Based on his own experience, he

In the 1940s, water gushed through the Las Vegas Valley Water District's Well No. 3.

Photo courtesy of the Las Vegas Valley Water District.



began advocating that more universities needed to offer programs in public history, which surfaced as an academic pursuit in the late 1960s.

"It sprang up as part of the larger social history movement, which was a desire to tell history from the ground up, to tell popular history, the history of 'regular' people," Kirk says. "A lot of historians said, 'If we're going to tell the stories of regular people, why not tell them *to* the regular people, not just *about* the regular people?'"

"So, a focus emerged on trying to develop programs to train historians to take their really useful research skills and gear them toward products that would be aimed directly at the public, rather than giving the public a diluted version of an academic product."

Because almost all historians do public history work at one time or another, taking courses specific to the field is a good idea for all history graduate students, Kirk maintains. UNLV's graduate history students seem to agree; Kirk estimates that about 75 percent of them take at least one public history course.

"Experience is the key to the program," he says. "During their training they work directly with the public. Instead of doing traditional research papers, they do things like national register nominations."

One group of students wrote the nomination to put the historic Goffs Schoolhouse on the National Register of Historic Places. The building is located in California's Mojave Desert near the Nevada border. Preparing the nomination is not as simple as filling out a form, Kirk points out. Before the writing could even begin, the students extensively researched the schoolhouse's past so they could justify the nomination.

The project was a success; the schoolhouse now is on the historic register, having received national approval last fall. When the California State Office of Historic Preservation put its stamp of approval on the project during the nomination process, it took the extra step of issuing a special commendation to the UNLV students. The office noted that the exemplary nomination should be used as a model by others.

Another group of UNLV graduate students currently is drafting the nomination of the Lincoln County Courthouse in Pioche for national historic status while others are cataloging artifacts from the Cold War at the Nevada Test Site and in the U.S. Department of Energy's Las Vegas office. One student is serving an internship – a requirement for all UNLV graduate students majoring in public history – at the Liberace Museum, helping with the redesign of the collections there.

One project Kirk discusses with particular enthusiasm is the ongoing Las Vegas Springs Preserve project.

The Little Spring Springhouse was built in 1917 to keep livestock out of Las Vegas' water supply. It was once in danger of being bulldozed to make room for expansion of U.S. 95. Its collapsed roof (below, in a 1998 Water District photo) has been carefully restored.



"The Las Vegas Springs Preserve is a really incredibly innovative project," he says. "It is being run by the (Las Vegas Valley)

Water District, whose normal job is to find water and deliver water. With real foresight that the entire region ought to be thankful for, the district decided to take a 180-acre parcel of land that it owns and turn it into a preserve."

The preserve is adjacent to the district's Desert Demonstration Garden and is visible from eastbound U.S. 95 between Valley View Boulevard and Rancho Drive.

"The land is the site of the original springs and the site of original human habitation in our valley. It's really the only reason that Las Vegas exists. It was the reason Native Americans settled here; it was the reason the Mormons stopped here; it was the reason the Union Pacific built a railroad town here. And, ultimately, it was the reason that the resort community could even exist in its early years."

To many Southern Nevadans, Kirk maintains, this history is virtually unknown. "Some people think Las Vegas just sprang to life out in the ether with some gangsters involved somehow."

In fact, the history of the settling of Las Vegas is not unlike the history of many towns, according to Kirk. A dominant natural feature – in this case, meadows fed by water bubbling up out of the ground – attracted people to the area.

"What you've got there is an entire history of how humans lived in the Mojave Desert encapsulated in a 180-acre parcel that's been almost perfectly preserved – and it's right smack in the middle of town," Kirk says. "This is a really unique resource, not only for Las Vegas; it would be a unique resource anywhere. It is essentially a cultural preserve and a biological preserve."

UNLV public history students will be involved in the Las Vegas Springs Preserve project in a variety of ways between now and 2005, when the preserve opens to mark the 100th anniversary of the founding of Las Vegas, Kirk says.

Their first involvement will be as interviewers for "Voices from the Past," an oral history project for which Kirk serves as director. The students will talk with long-time Southern Nevadans about the early days of Las Vegas, especially their recollections concerning water.

"Those histories will become part of multimedia exhibits in the cultural center there," he says. "We want to piece together this incredibly interesting story of the relationship between water and people in the Mojave Desert."

"The idea is very forward-thinking. Not only do we want to save these people's histories and get these interviews, but we want to do it in a way that, 20 years from now, school kids can access them on whatever kind of technology is available at the time," he says. "It really is a first-class project by any standard, and I think it will be a national model for this kind of thing."

Joe Thompson, a history graduate student, is working to complete photo documentation of the settling basins at the preserve. Thompson is doing a very precise type of documentation that adheres to the stringent requirements of the Historic American Building Survey and the Historic Engineering Record, a system that records critical information about historic buildings, structures, and artifacts and makes that

information available to a wide variety of humanities researchers.

"While the settling basin does not fit the stereotype of a historic resource, it played a crucial role in the early growth of Las Vegas," Kirk says.

Kirk also uses the preserve as a laboratory for historic preservation. He takes classes there to show the students its wells, old water derricks, and buildings. "It's just a perfect place for me to take my classes and say, 'Here are all the issues of historic preservation,'" he says. "This semester, we're going to be working to actually physically restore the chicken coop that's out there."

Kirk is quick to point out that, while the involvement of the public history students at the preserve is recent, many other UNLV professors and students from areas such as biology, environmental studies, architecture, and engineering have contributed their expertise and energy to the project over the years.

Greg Seymour, a 1997 UNLV master's graduate in archaeology, is the archaeologist for the preserve. He says he's glad to add the public history students to the list of those assisting in the work.

"What the students are doing for me is extremely valuable and, at the same time, they are getting a variety of worthwhile experiences out here," he says.

Seymour is also working with Kirk and his students on Preserve Nevada, the state's official historic preservation association. Former U.S. Sen. Richard Bryan heads the recently established association, and Kirk serves as its executive director. UNLV history professor Sue Fawn Chung is another key player with the group.

Nevada is one of the last states to establish such an organization, a fact that Kirk says works to the association's advantage. "We get to build one that is really particularly suited to Nevada, which is a unique state geographically, demographically, and historically," he says.

The non-profit organization is based at UNLV and will be run largely by the public history graduate students, an arrangement that Kirk believes is unique in America.

As Kirk sees it, UNLV is just the university to be so intricately involved in such an unusual partnership with a non-profit historical preservation association.

"UNLV is a very flexible institution that really embraces the idea of new and innovative programs," he says. "I also think it is significant that President (Carol C.) Harter has made it part of the university's mission to build links between the university and the community."

"That's exactly what public history does. My job is to work directly with the community in a variety of ways to create links between scholars and people who are out in the community so that UNLV professors and students will serve as resources for the community." ■



Kirk (right, holding an old broom handle) talks with Greg Seymour, archaeologist for the preserve, at the old chicken coop on the property. In the early 1900s, the spring's caretaker, who lived in a small house in the area, ensured valley residents had a constant supply of water.





# Family Man, Law Man

*Alumnus Richard Perkins has risen through the ranks on the job and in the Nevada Capitol. The legislator and deputy police chief talks about politics, parenting, and his commitment to his hometown, Henderson.*

by Suzan DiBella

**W**hen Richard Perkins sat down with his family in 1996 to discuss whether he would run for the state Assembly for a third time, he experienced one of those golden moments in the lives of politicians when real life spontaneously produces the kind of story that could be used in campaign literature.

The story goes like this: As he does at the start of every election season, he asked his wife and five kids whether they were willing to make the kind of commitment a political campaign requires of a family. It was then his daughter Ashley, 10 at the time, volunteered a line that he could have used in a brochure.

"Daddy," she asked, "if you don't do it, who's going to do it?"

The earnestness of her inquiry floored Perkins.

"It's not that I believe I'm truly the only person who could do the job. But to have that kind of support from your family – and that kind of trust from a 10-year-old," he says, still marveling at the

unexpected depth of the comment, "has a significant impact on your life."

Though he has never used the story in his election materials, you know he thinks of it often. You also don't doubt for a minute either the veracity of the story or its impact on him. And therein lies some hint for those seeking to understand the success of a man who has risen to become one of the most powerful political figures in the state: In an age when politicians are viewed with a cynical eye by pundits and citizens alike, Perkins' integrity is often acknowledged as one of his most appealing qualities.

He is, after all, both a devoted family man and a longtime police officer, both indications of life choices that speak to issues of character. But how did this soft-spoken man, hailed for his dedication and the respect he commands, come to choose a second career in a field so often disparaged?

**T**he story begins in Henderson, of course.

"I've lived here in Henderson my entire life, probably within about a two-mile radius of my current home," he says. He acknowledges he grew up hearing plenty of comments ridiculing his hometown as a "hooterville" or as having a "white cloud" of pollution, but he never longed to move away.

After graduating from Basic High School in 1979, he chose to attend UNLV over several other schools that had recruited him.

"I was an All-American football player



**With the full support of his family, Perkins entered Nevada politics. He and daughter Ashley met then-President Bill Clinton as Perkins' political mentor, Joe Dini, looked on.**

in high school and a state wrestling champion," says Perkins, who had reached most of his 6-foot-5-inch height as a teen-ager. "I was recruited by several colleges in the West to play football, and I had an academic scholarship to go to Reno. But I chose to go to UNLV and stay close to home."

Though he attended UNLV full time the first year, it would take him the better part of the next 20 years to finish college, taking classes whenever he could fit them in between career and family obligations.

"I worked in the construction trades for a couple of years, then started my career with the Henderson Police Department in 1984," he says, noting that he followed his late father into the department. "It was my

dad who got me into police work, and it was because of him I began to understand the importance of giving back to the community through public service."

Perkins rose through the ranks of the department, working first as a uniformed officer and then as a detective in a variety of areas. He came to the notice of his superiors for his dedication in conducting child abuse investigations, and he eventually moved into supervisory roles. Today, he serves as deputy police chief in charge of operations.

His election in 1986 to the office of president of the Henderson Police Association marked a pivotal point in his life.

"In my capacity as the president of the police association, I built relationships with various

elected officials, especially with members of the City Council since we negotiated labor agreements with them," he recalls. "So I began to work on some campaigns, and then my involvement spread to the state level when I began lobbying on issues related to the state Public Employees' Retirement System."

When the state reapportioned its voting districts in 1991, Perkins, a Democrat, found himself living in a new district without an incumbent. "All the same people I had helped along the way said, 'Hey, it's your turn.' So I took the opportunity to run and was successful."

Perkins found that he enjoyed campaigning. "I like getting out to meet with



people and talking with them,” Perkins says. “About 90 percent of them are very positive people, and even if there are some who want to take you to task, they do it in a very constructive way. Some of them are just mad at you, though, and that’s fine, too. Even so, I enjoy getting out there and hearing what’s on their minds.”

**A**fter serving his first term in 1992-93, Perkins was re-elected into an Assembly evenly split between Democrats and Republicans in 1994; he was chosen to be the Democratic floor leader that year. In his two subsequent terms, he was selected to serve as majority floor leader.

Through the years, Perkins introduced a number of bills he is proud to have sponsored.

“There are a whole host of legislative initiatives that I proposed in my five sessions,” he says. “The very first one I introduced and passed was a bill that requires parenting courses to be included in high school curriculums in the state. That interest grew out of my years as a child-abuse investigator. You see, I feel we teach them math and science, and all those very important academic subjects, but we don’t teach them how to be adults. I wanted them to know that a child makes noise, and it smells, and needs diapers, and, most importantly, that there are alternatives to whacking it.”



Perkins, a member of UNLV’s 1980 wrestling team, finished his bachelor’s degrees in criminal justice and political science in 2000. (Yearbook photo courtesy of UNLV Library Special Collections.)

Because of his continuing career in law enforcement, he has been called upon by many state leaders for advice about bills pertaining to criminal justice matters. In fact, in 1995 he worked closely with then-Gov. Bob Miller on the most sweeping overhaul of criminal statutes in Nevada’s history. He was also involved in a great deal of legislation aimed at improving educational accountability and standards.

In 2001, he succeeded veteran Assembly Speaker Joe Dini.

“Joe was my mentor,” says Perkins. “He taught me more about legislative politics than any one person. We have a father/son relationship.”

Also in 2001, Perkins was gratified to bring to fruition a project near and dear to his heart – the creation of Nevada State College in Henderson, which is expected to open this fall.

The idea for the four-year college came from Perkins, who, in 1995 and 1997 watched the Legislature fund the Redfield satellite campus, which is affiliated with UNR, Truckee Meadows Community College, and Western Nevada Community College, in the northern part of the state.

“I came back and said, ‘By golly, if higher education is going to grow in this state, we need it to grow in Southern Nevada. We are bursting at the seams down here. So I spoke with Mayor (Jim) Gibson to find out if a four-year college fit into his vision for the city of Henderson and if

property could be made available. He came back to me several months later and said that the idea had support.”

While Perkins believes the Henderson college will have tremendous benefits for the entire state, he acknowledges that some controversy initially surrounded the plan to create a new college while Nevada’s other institutions, including UNLV, were vying for limited state dollars.

“I have absolutely no interest in harming UNLV in any way,” he says. “I think UNLV will benefit from the creation of this next institution more than any other entity. If some of the undergraduate load can be carried by the Henderson college, then UNLV can put more of its resources into research and graduate programs.”

Perkins goes on to add that he has the highest regard for UNLV and the education he received there. He graduated in 2000 with two bachelor’s degrees, one in criminal justice and one in political science. He says studying both fields contributed significantly to his ability to perform effectively in his roles as a law enforcement professional and as a legislator.

He recalls fondly working with now-retired criminal justice professor John Horvath. “John was just an extraordinary guy,” Perkins says, noting that at the time he was taking Horvath’s courses, he was already serving with the Henderson Police Department. “He dealt with me on an adult level and with respect for my status as a working professional.”

In political science, his mentors were professors Jerry Simich and Dina Titus, a fellow legislator. “As much as I liked learning the practical side of politics that Dina taught, I also enjoyed the political theory classes I took from Jerry.”

Though his coursework certainly made him more knowledgeable about the political process, he says it was his “day job” that provided him with the best preparation for his legislative leadership roles.

“I think the best training I ever got for politics was police work,” Perkins says. “It taught me to deal with conflict, to seek consensus, and to de-escalate crises. It taught me to be able to judge people very quickly, which is a very important skill in politics.”

His law enforcement work also helped shape his communication skills, which have served him well in the Legislature.

“I’ve been characterized as a ‘gentle giant’ or something along those lines. I don’t raise my voice; police work taught me that. If you go to a family fight, it does you no good to scream over the top of them. If you talk in a lower tone, they have to talk that way as well.”

**W**ith the personal qualities of both integrity and finesse, Perkins is often perceived as having great political potential. Asked about his political aspirations, he says he is keeping most doors open.

“I have such an interest in public policy that I will want to be involved in it for some time to come,” he says, adding that he would not, however, be willing to leave the state in the near future.

“Right now, my world does not encompass Washington, D.C. I have young children, and that just doesn’t fit the plan. I’m not going to uproot them. Also – save for the last several months – Washington has been a pretty caustic place to practice public policy. So, Nevada is my focus.”

And, he notes, since he’s not an attorney, he is precluded from becoming a judge or attorney general, and the roles of the other major constitutional offices – controller, treasurer, secretary of state – don’t involve setting policy. That leaves him with one sizable possibility to consider: the office of governor.

“It’s been talked about,” he acknowledges, “but if you asked me today if I’m going to run for governor in four years, I wouldn’t know the answer. Four years is a lifetime in politics. But if it’s an opportunity in four years, I’ll analyze it with my family.”

In the meantime, Perkins says he is content to support his hometown, which, he notes for the record, does not face the ridicule it once did.

“Henderson is now the second largest city in the state,” he says with pride. “I think it has grown to become the envy of other local governments. With its cultural and recreational activities, with its nice



Perkins, above with Henderson police officer Frank Fuentes, says police work offered excellent training for politics. At left, Perkins addresses attendees at the Police Memorial rededication that takes place in Carson City every year.

homes, with its sense of community and its open spaces, I truly believe it’s a community with a great quality of life. I know our motto may sound corny, but it’s true: ‘It’s a place to call home.’”

It’s also a place he would happily continue to serve as deputy police chief if all of the more grandiose political talk were to cease tomorrow.

“I’m living a dream,” he says. “I really am. My paying job in law enforcement is a job I love. I’ve been given opportunities here in the department that have been very fulfilling. And then working in public policy, being successful in my campaigns, and feeling the support of the constituents are all experiences more fulfilling than I can express. I could never have any regrets

because I’ve been able to accomplish so many things I’ve wanted to pursue.”

For now, he says he feels fortunate to be able to balance the responsibilities of dual careers and family life. While he admits it can be challenging to juggle it all, he tries to keep perspective and recognize priorities.

“During the legislative session, I come home on weekends to spend time with my family and to take care of my work responsibilities here at the office. But it’s also very common for me to fly back home on a Tuesday or Wednesday night for a school play or a basketball game because it’s so important to the kids.”

And you can bet his attendance at those events isn’t about the photo opportunities available there. ☐



*To inspire a diverse new generation to reach beyond the bachelor's degree, the McNair Scholars Institute gives undergraduates a taste of life as academic researchers.*

By Barbara Cloud

The undergraduates in UNLV's McNair Scholars Institute honed valuable skills while researching a vast range of topics – from faraway stars and down-to-earth waste to connecting with others in love and business.

The McNair Scholars Institute, a national program that encourages undergraduates to pursue advanced degrees, takes the learning process beyond the classroom by pairing qualified undergraduates with faculty mentors. Together the students and mentors complete in-depth research projects, exploring opportunities usually enjoyed just by graduate students.



# New Scholars on the Block

The program is named for Ronald E. McNair, a scientist and astronaut who died in 1986's ill-fated Challenger mission. The McNair Scholars Institute came to UNLV in 1999 through the efforts of the Center for Academic Advancement and Outreach. It is a partnership between the center and the UNLV Graduate College.

In the program's first year on campus, 11 students participated in the McNair Scholars Summer Research Institute, an extension of the program. This year, eight students are putting their knowledge and intellect to work researching issues in their respective fields.

To qualify for the program, the McNair students must have completed at least 49 credits with a minimum grade point average of 3.2 and must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents. They must also be low-income or first-generation college students or members of a group traditionally underrepresented in graduate education.

Each McNair Scholar intern receives a stipend, the one-on-one guidance of a faculty mentor, graduate school preparation seminars, Graduate Record Exam study workshops, free tutoring services, financial aid assistance, and help with the graduate school admissions process.

The program offers another opportunity seldom enjoyed by undergraduates: getting published. The institute publishes a journal of the students' research papers.

They also present the results of their research at a special "poster session."

At this event, instead of reading papers before an audience, researchers put information about their projects on display boards and talk personally to visitors about the findings.

UNLV President Carol C. Harter describes the institute as a marvelous example of a student-centered program. "It provides a unique opportunity for several of the most talented undergraduate students at UNLV to work with some of the extraordinary faculty on campus in order to learn about how to design, implement, and report research while at the same time gaining knowledge about the role of the university professor," she says.

Harriet Barlow, director of graduate student services in the Graduate College and the McNair Summer Research Institute coordinator, says the program offers a taste of the graduate student-professor experience. For the summer program, she identifies and matches faculty mentors and interns, coordinates the poster session, and oversees the publishing of the annual *McNair Scholars Institute Journal*.

Barlow said she has no difficulty finding professors to serve as mentors for the students. The mentors praise the students as talented and hard-working and express appreciation for the research help.

Hence, the mentors enthusiastically write letters of recommendation for the students when they apply to graduate school. Because of the close professor-student interaction, the letters are personalized and speak directly of

the students' research abilities.

"The McNair Scholars Institute is the only program in the country that provides this kind of experience for undergraduates," Barlow says. "Most students have to rely on individual advice about graduate school from their professors."

The McNair program is designed to encourage more minorities to consider graduate studies with the goal of eventually becoming professors.

William Sullivan, who works extensively with underrepresented groups as executive director of the Center for Academic Enrichment and Outreach, praises the program as "proof that, with proper tutelage and unbridled tenacity, all students can achieve academic excellence."

Barlow hopes to see the program grow. "I would like to have 20 to 30 students participating a year," she says, noting that each year the program gets better.

One recent improvement is a UNLV Graduate College scholarship designated for those who have completed the McNair Scholars program. This scholarship covers UNLV graduate school tuition and fees. The university also waives graduate college application fees for McNair Scholars from UNLV and other schools participating in the national program.

All of the 2000-01 McNair Scholars have enrolled in or are applying for graduate, law, or medical school. Here, four undergraduates share their experiences as McNair Scholars.

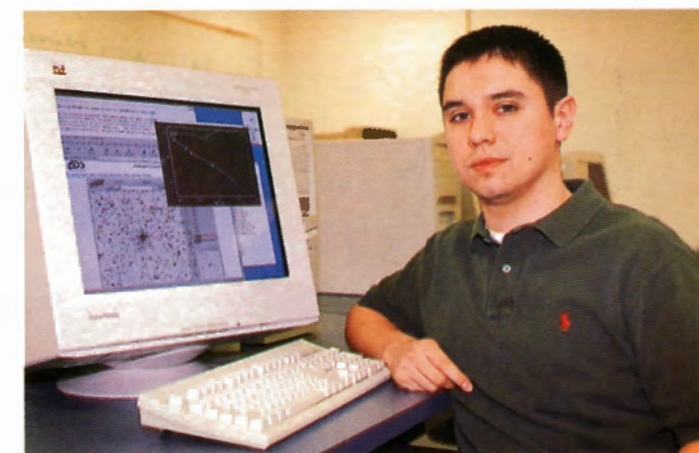
## Rising Star: Adam Villarreal

Adam Villarreal set his sights on a doctorate in theoretical astrophysics/cosmology after his experience as a McNair Scholar.

"I experienced professional collaboration with a wonderful mentor and learned a wide array of data reduction techniques that will certainly help me out when I am a research assistant in graduate school," he says.

Villarreal worked with UNLV physicist/astronomer Jeremy King, who has a National Science Foundation grant to study approximately 5,000 stars in low-resolution spectra and about 200 in both high- and low-resolution spectra.

"Adam worked on the high-resolution group and really made a





dent in what has to be done," King says. "He's the hardest-working undergraduate at UNLV."

As part of a larger star-mapping project that King is doing, Villarreal analyzed data obtained from the Cerro Tololo Inter-American Observatory in Chile. Villarreal compared the chemical composition of nearby sun-like stars with that of our own sun.

Astronomers have found that some chemical compositions are more likely than others to indicate the existence of planets around sun-like stars. In particular, measuring the lithium in a star's

atmosphere can help determine its age. Our sun is considered an "old" star because its supply of lithium has been depleted. Older stars are more likely than young stars to have planets around them.

"Given the astounding discoveries of planetary companions around sun-like stars over the past few years, and the potential implications these have for our understanding of how life might arise in the universe," the astronomical community is particularly interested in the chemical composition of stars, Villarreal wrote for his poster session. ■

## Grounded Experience: Mariam Bakhtary

A more down-to-earth project was the "Biodegradation of Low-Level Nuclear Waste Packaging Material," a team effort by Kevin Hughes and Mariam Bakhtary, mentored by Penny Amy in the department of biological sciences.

The goal of this ongoing project is to determine which bacteria are most effective at degrading materials such as waste packaging materials. In containers of soil obtained from the Nevada Test Site, the researchers buried samples of materials that had been treated with different kinds of bacteria, or, for control, no bacteria at all.

In the process, the undergraduate researchers had to maintain sterile conditions to ensure that the results they obtained really came from the bacteria, not from extraneous sources. They also gained direct experience using a laser scanning microscope.

Bakhtary says the program showed her new possibilities for her future. As a child she saw friends die in her native Afghanistan when Soviet bombs destroyed her school. This experience forged her resolve to become a physician so she could help others.

Bakhtary conducted her McNair research while taking classes, working for UNLV, and volunteering at a local hospital. Her work in the McNair program has not diminished her interest in medicine, but she now considers medical research a possibility.

Mentoring through the McNair Scholars program proved to be an invaluable experience for Amy as well. "The McNair Scholars Program gave me an opportunity to get to know two talented students and to have them assist in my research program during a very busy time



of year," says the professor. "The students learned about research techniques involving environmental microbiology, and I got a helping hand when we needed it most." ■

## Love Connections: Giselle Stewart

Giselle Stewart, a junior in the communication studies program, researched love and conflict management under the mentorship of Beth Semic, assistant professor of communication and an expert on interpersonal relations.

"When people become involved in relationships, they have relational goals and expectations of their partners," Stewart wrote in the paper that resulted from her research. "These expectations can also be affected by a person's perception of love and how they choose to express love."

Building on the Love Attitude Scale developed by other researchers, Stewart paired the love styles identified in the scale with different conflict management styles. After conducting a lengthy survey, she investigated whether the pairings represented valid connections.

For example, is an individual who has a passionate love style and who is attracted to a partner with a particular physical appearance likely to manage conflict through collaboration, competition, or compromise?



Stewart, a Panamanian African-American, expects to graduate in May 2003 with a bachelor's degree in communication studies. She plans to study organizational communication in graduate school before becoming an organizational consultant for businesses.

The research experience sparked her interest in the subject and has given her confidence to pursue master's and doctoral degrees.

"I was able to gain valuable experience in how to properly conduct research as well as how to develop a quality thesis and dissertation," she says. "I believe this experience has provided me with an advantage when the time comes to apply to graduate school."

For her part, Semic felt rewarded by her mentoring activities. "It gave me the opportunity to work with an extremely bright, highly motivated student," she says. "It was truly a privilege to guide Giselle, one-on-one, through the research process and watch her develop skills that will carry her successfully into her graduate studies." ■

## A Role Model for Scholars: Ronald McNair

The late Ronald E. McNair believed that "before you can make a dream come true, you must first have one."

McNair's dream was to become a scientist. Although he grew up in a poor South Carolina community, he earned a doctorate in laser physics and eventually joined NASA's elite space program. McNair was on his second space flight when the Challenger shuttle exploded in January 1986. The Challenger's crew, including Christa McAuliffe, the first NASA Teacher in Space participant, died in the accident.

Congress created the McNair Scholars Institute to encourage students of color, as well as low-income and first-generation undergraduates, to follow in McNair's educational footsteps by enrolling in graduate studies.

McNair made a fine role model. He graduated magna cum laude with a bachelor's degree in physics from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. In 1971, at the age of 26, he earned a doctorate in laser physics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. His research at MIT led to new applications for highly excited polyatomic molecules.

He was selected for the space shuttle program in 1978, one of 35 chosen from 10,000 applicants. He made his first space flight in 1984, only the second African-American to fly in space.



## An Appetite for Research: Paul Edward

Paul Edward says that exploring a subject in depth – in his case, a business project – whetted his appetite for more independent study. Since working with management professor Dan McAllister on a project titled "Leadership and Emotional Intelligence (EQ): Success Requires More than IQ," Edward has gone on to another independent project with economics professor Hans-Hermann Hoppe.

Edward's McNair project investigated workplace success and the relationship between intellectual and emotional intelligence.

He compared the importance of a manager's "soft" skills, such as being able to understand the emotional state of an employee, to "intellectual intelligence." When it comes to motivating employees, Edward determined, a high IQ is not enough for a successful manager.

This kind of independent study particularly suits Edward's needs. An accident five years ago cost him his hearing; so, although he reads lips, the typical classroom setting can limit his learning.

"Less than three years ago, I never thought I would succeed in reaching a baccalaureate," he says, noting that he will graduate with his business degree in May. "Now I envision my Ph.D. from Harvard, Stanford, or another of the top-10 U.S. institutions."

Edward will be the first in his family to receive a degree and has funded his college education himself through scholarships and loans. He left home when he was 15. Then, higher education was "more of a luxury, and hard work was a priority simply for existence," he says.

Still, he finds more than financial reward in the McNair program. "The financial stipend that the McNair program offers is tertiary to the emotional benefit and the valuable experience," Edward says.

He plans to be a business educator with a focus on helping future peers who are burned out in teaching. He also hopes to raise the general public's interest in higher education. ■





# AND JUSTICE FOR ALL

By Cate Weeks

Terry Smith\* didn't bring much hope with him to the legal clinic housed inside a little gray barracks on the grounds of a converted elementary school. Frustrated by paperwork filled with legalese, Smith thought maybe, just maybe, the clinic could help him save 14-year-old James\* from years in a juvenile corrections facility.

"This boy is not a problem child, but if he stays in that system, they will make him a problem," Smith says of his former neighbor. "I know he has potential. He just needs a home so he can find his way again."

The teen-ager once lived with his mother and five siblings in Smith's Las Vegas neighborhood. He'd watched the children grow but worried about their upbringing by a mother who battled drug addiction. "One day, I noticed the boy had marks on his back," Smith says. "I told the mother I was going to turn her in. She said, 'Just take them.'"

Smith took in James' 16-year-old brother while the other siblings were sent to live with relatives. James, who Smith says has developmental and emotional problems related to his parents' drug use, ran away. "He was living out in the desert all alone and broke into someone's house to feed himself," Smith says. "His grandmother didn't want him back and his mother couldn't have him back if she wanted, so he got sent to a youth home."

If Smith wanted to change the situation, he was told, the best way was to petition for guardianship of James. "(The process) was really frustrating to me," he says. "I couldn't understand the paperwork. To tell you the truth, if I hadn't gotten some help, I probably would have given up a long time ago."

Help came when Judge Gerald Hardcastle of Clark County Juvenile Court recommended that Smith contact the Thomas & Mack Legal Clinic at UNLV's William S. Boyd School of Law.

Opened less than two years ago, the clinic houses full-fledged, malpractice-insured law offices. It currently includes two in-house practices: the Juvenile Justice Clinic and the Child Welfare Clinic. The student-attorneys advise clients, file legal briefs, negotiate with district attorneys, and represent their clients in court, all under the supervision of law school faculty.

Professors Mary Berkheiser and Annette Appell founded the inaugural in-house clinics at the law school in the fall 2000 semester. Their goal is to provide law students intensive learning through real-world experiences.

*In Clark County, children in the court system often have not had access to legal representation. That's changing as the Thomas & Mack Legal Clinic prepares its students to be attorneys while helping fill a gap in community services.*

"Clinical legal education is founded on the principle that adult students learn best by doing rather than by just reading or listening to lectures," says Berkheiser, associate professor and director of the Juvenile Justice Clinic. "Students learn how to be attorneys here by doing the exact things they will do after graduation, but with a big safety net."

The Thomas & Mack Legal Clinic is a first step in establishing a center for children and family law research and policy development at the Boyd School of Law. "Some law school clinics offer a smattering of all the different types of law practices out there," Berkheiser says. "The clinic committee decided we wanted to do something with an overarching theme and an integrated focus."

The focus on children was an easy decision, given a vast community need. Clark County's rapid growth has taxed the social services infrastructure, leaving the area's poor, especially chil-

dren, with few legal resources.

"We had to blaze a trail or two," says Appell, whose research focuses on the role of law and courts in family structures. "The community has attorneys who have incorporated child welfare issues into their practice, but there are few attorneys who are experts in child advocacy issues. This is what we do. It's not part of our practice; it is our practice."

The Child Welfare Clinic represents children in protection proceedings, including termination of parental rights. It also helps adults like Smith in guardianship cases. Among the clients in the first year were a number of siblings who were placed in different foster homes. The clinic's law students obtained court orders to ensure the state arranged for all of the children to visit each other.

"We usually represent children who entered the system because they may have been abused or neglected," says William Horne, a December law school graduate who spent his final semester in the Child Welfare Clinic. "These cases can get pretty complicated and emotional because the children have a legal right to be with their parents. You want to make sure the child is safe, but you also want to make sure the state has met its burden when it tries to step into the situation."

The competing rights of children – to be with their parents and to be in a safe environment – have prompted ethical discussions in the classroom, says professor Pamela

\*NAMES CHANGED TO PROTECT THE IDENTITIES OF THE LAW CLINIC CLIENTS.



The Boyd School of Law's clinical education faculty and staff challenge students to think beyond the legal consequences of their actions as attorneys. From left, Externship Director Martin Geer, professors Pamela Mohr and Joan Howarth, Clinical Program Director Mary Berkheiser, administrative director Audrey Fetter, and professor Annette Appell.



Mohr, co-director of the Child Welfare Clinic. "I challenge the clinical students to think beyond the norm and think about both practical and legal consequences," Mohr says. "We try to emphasize that they are dealing with people, not files."

Smith says Lisa Willardson, the student-attorney who helped him become James' guardian, learned that lesson well. "Lisa and professor Mohr explained every little bit to me – and not just how to get through the paperwork," he says. "As guardian, I would be fully responsible for this boy and everything he does. They explained the downside of what that could mean, too."

In another case, the law students encountered a 9-year-old who could clearly express exactly what she wanted. As her attorneys, the students were obligated to represent those wishes in court. "But what if we didn't think what she wanted was

right?" Mohr asks. "Students regularly wrestle with 'What are our duties to the children in terms of their best interests versus their clear wishes?' My students had to deal firsthand with their ethical obligations as lawyers versus what they saw as their moral obligations as people, and then work to find the right solutions."

In the Juvenile Justice Clinic, much of the legal work occurs outside the courtroom. The student-attorneys here directly represent children accused of crimes ranging from minor misdemeanors to felony burglary and drug charges. In addition to representing clients in court, the students learn to negotiate with district attorneys and social service providers to get their clients much-needed treatment.

"Our work involves everything a lawyer on a criminal case would do in terms of investigation, criminal rights, and determining how you would attack the prosecution's

case. But we also look at the client's life and what's going on with him," Berkheiser says. "We spend a lot of time on the disposition phase, which is like the sentencing phase in an adult case. For us, the focus is not on helping clients who admit to delinquent behavior 'get off.' We focus on what led to the behavior and what services will help them overcome that."

In the Juvenile Justice Clinic's first year, student-attorneys negotiated plea agreements with the district attorney to keep every delinquent client at home or in a community-based rehabilitation center. In the spring 2001 semester, the student-attorneys successfully lobbied to prevent a teen-ager accused of a serious crime from entering the adult justice system, where he would not have access to therapy, special education classes, and other state services for juveniles.

The law school plans to expand the clinic program into other areas of family issues. In the fall, professor Joan Howarth will direct a new in-house clinic to assist defense counsel with the sentencing phase of death penalty cases. The students will review the failures of institutions that served offenders when they were children – their families, schools, and health-care providers – and other mitigating circumstances

that would prevent the imposition of the death penalty.

"Death penalty cases often are related to juvenile justice work," Berkheiser says. "Those who end up facing the death penalty most likely have been abused and neglected, and they usually first entered the justice system as juveniles."

Another potential clinic may focus on immigration law as it relates to children and families. "This may include political asylum work," Berkheiser says. "We may also work with people in danger of being deported and victims of domestic violence who have an immigrant status."

All services at the Thomas & Mack Legal Clinic are free. Mohr says the clients, who generally have no other avenue for legal help and no ability to pay a private attorney, receive exceptional attention. "Our students have an average of three or four cases, whereas an attorney in practice typically has more than 50," Mohr says. "In addition, the students are directly supervised by experienced attorneys. We ensure everything that needs to get done, does get done. Really, each client has the benefit of three minds – two students and a faculty attorney – with diverse backgrounds and real-world experience."

The law students work a minimum of 20 hours a week in the clinics in addition to attending the classroom portion of the program. In the fall semester, Child Welfare Clinic students logged 1,380 hours



Berkheiser, pictured at left with law student Leah Ayala, is co-director of the Juvenile Justice Clinic, which helps children accused of crimes. Below, William Horne, a December law graduate, worked on child welfare cases under the guidance of clinic co-directors Mohr (center) and Appell.

while Juvenile Justice Clinic students devoted 1,750 hours to their clients.

Because clinic work is more time-intensive than a regular class, the school limits participation to 16 students per clinic each semester. The professors alternate a year in the regular classroom with a year in the clinic. Such a system frees the faculty in their off-clinic year to continue scholarly writing and to research policy issues while teaching in the classroom.

"We recognize that the clinical work feeds our writing and teaching, and so much of our writing can feed our clinical work," Berkheiser says.

Appell adds, "The clinic experience is very helpful in teaching students who are primarily from Nevada. I'm able to use examples drawn directly from the system here and contrast that with the issues we're discussing in class."



As an outgrowth of that work, both clinic students and faculty are having a hand in forming legal policy in Nevada. At the same time, the Boyd School of Law, the only law school in the state, offers local governments another resource to call upon.

Judge Hardcastle appointed the Child Welfare Clinic as "amicus," or "friend of the court," in four cases. As such, clinic faculty and students filed legal briefs to help determine the limits of authority between the courts and the Nevada Division of Children and Family Services.

*continued on page 32*

## Thomas & Mack Donation Enhances 'People Resources' at Law School

A \$2 million gift from Joyce Mack and the Thomas family will help the William S. Boyd School of Law enhance the human element in its clinic programs.

"The clinic committee believed that this money would be best used for people resources – not books or paperclips or bricks-and-mortar building," says Mary Berkheiser, clinical director and associate professor of law. "We hope this generous gift will help us enrich our students' experiences by offering them opportunities to expand their legal foundations well beyond the classroom before graduation."

The Thomas & Mack Legal Clinic currently specializes in child welfare and juvenile delinquency cases with plans to expand into other legal areas related to children and families.

The clinic offers free legal services to low-income people who otherwise would not have access to representation.

Another clinic program focuses on law student externships. Through this program, students work under the close supervision of experienced attorneys in positions with state and federal courts, at non-profit law practices, and in government offices.

"The externship program rounds out the learning experience for our students," says professor Martin Geer, director of the externship program. "Working directly with professionals in law practices and the judiciary gives students a deep understanding of their future roles as lawyers within the system. It also enhances the writing and research skills they will need to apply to their own practices once they graduate."

UNLV President Carol C. Harter says the gift to the clinic and the funds provided by the Nevada Legislature provide an excellent example of public and private collaboration.

"The Thomas and Mack families, for whom our campus sports and events facility is named, have continued to be among the most generous donors to, and visionary supporters of, UNLV," Harter says. "Indeed, it was the vision of Jerry Mack and Parry Thomas that led to the acquisition of the land our campus now occupies."

"This example of generosity by Joyce Mack and the Thomas family will enable us to enhance our legal clinic, which provides superb educational opportunities for our law students. We are most grateful to the donors for providing us the resources to undertake this crucial project."

Joyce Mack proposed the gift as a way to honor her husband, Jerome "Jerry" Mack, who died in 1998. The law school has named the clinics in honor of the donors. "Jerry Mack, certainly a leader in building the Las Vegas community, was a champion of the establishment of a law school at UNLV. He worked on that project over the course of several years and offered to provide financial support to such a law school," said Dick Morgan, dean of the law school.

Programs funded through the donation could include visiting professorships and a scholarship program that would help students take non-paying externships at public-interest law practices instead of paid positions with private law firms during summer breaks.

Expansion of the externship program will help the school better serve its part-time students. The school also hopes to offer externship placements out of state and overseas, Geer says.

"The gift also may allow us to develop a fellows program, like many law schools have," Berkheiser says. "Fellows programs enable schools to hire law school graduates and give them a start in teaching."

Berkheiser hopes to see the public clinic program grow from the 32 students who can now participate each year to approximately 60 students. Currently, qualified students are selected for the program through a lottery system with preference given to students in their final year of study. □



## CALENDAR

### March 2002

- 1-2 **Dance:** Dance Arts Spring Concert. Call for times. JBT. 895-2787.
- 1-3 **Women's Tennis:** UNLV Spring Invitational. All day. FTC. 895-3207.
- 2 **Concert:** Las Vegas Philharmonic Concert IV. "Classic Masterworks." 8pm. AHCH. 895-2787.
- Women's Basketball:** UNLV vs. Utah (MWC). 5pm. TMC. 895-3900.
- Men's Basketball:** UNLV vs. New Mexico (MWC). 7:35pm. TMC. 895-3900.
- 3-10 **Theatre:** *Top Girls*. Call for times. BBT. 895-2787.

5 **University Forum Lecture:** "Aspects of Rhythm and Melody in Spanish Music." 7:30pm. BMC. 895-3401.

6 **Women's Tennis:** UNLV vs. William & Mary. 2pm. FTC. 895-3207.

7 **Music:** "African-American Music: A Celebration." 7:30pm. BMC. 895-3008.

7-9 **Men's Basketball:** Mountain West Conference Tournament. Call for times. TMC. 895-3900.

8-10 **Men's Golf:** Las Vegas Intercollegiate. Call for times and locations. 895-3207.

8-10 **Softball:** UNLV Mini Tournament II with Oregon, Boston College, and Notre Dame. Call for times. EMS. 895-3207.

9 **Performing Arts Center's Charles Vanda Master Series:** Vienna Chamber Orchestra with Philippe Entremont. 8pm. AHCH. 895-2787.

11-12 **Baseball:** UNLV vs. BYU. Call for times. WBS. 895-3207.

13-15 **Men's Tennis:** UNLV vs. Southern Miss - March 13. Ball State - March 14. North Carolina State - March 15. Call for times. FTC. 895-3207.

13-17 **Theatre:** Annual Spring Ten-Minute Play Festival. 8pm. PHT. 895-2787.

14-15 **Women's Tennis:** UNLV vs. Pennsylvania - March 14, 2pm. Indiana - March 15, 2pm. FTC. 895-3207.

15-30 **Photography Exhibit:** Spring 2002 Exhibition, "Ni9ne," featuring photos of nine photographers. Weekdays, 8am-4:45pm; Sat., 10am-2pm. (Runs through May 25.) Reception, March 22, 5-7pm. MSM. 895-3381.

18 **Music:** UNLV Symphony Orchestra Concert V. 7:30pm. AHCH. 895-3949.

18 & 20 **Men's Tennis:** UNLV vs. Oklahoma State - March 18. Drake - March 20. 1:30pm. FTC. 895-3207.

20 **University Forum Lecture:** "Why Can't I See the Mountains? Haze Over Las Vegas." 7:30pm. MBMA. 895-3401.

22 **American Theatre Arts for Youth:** *Pippi Longstocking*. 10am & Noon. AHCH. 895-2787.

**Performing Arts Center's Best of the New York Stage:** Linda Eder. 8pm. AHCH. 895-2787.

22-23 **Women's Tennis:** UNLV vs. BYU - March 22, 2pm. Utah - March 23, 10am. FTC. 895-3207.

22-24 **Baseball:** UNLV vs. Utah. Call for times. WBS. 895-3207.

24 **Southern Nevada Musical Arts Society:** Orchestra and Chorus Concert II "Grand Mass in C." 3pm. AHCH. 895-2787.

26 **Women's Tennis:** UNLV vs. Auburn. 10:30am. FTC. 895-3207.

**Men's Tennis:** UNLV vs. Auburn. 1:30pm. FTC. 895-3207.

27 **Music:** Kitami Hakuyou Band. 7:30pm. AHCH. 895-3734.

29-30 **Softball:** UNLV vs. BYU - March 29, 1pm. Utah - March 30, 3pm. EMS. 895-3207.

29-31 **Men's Tennis:** UNLV vs. Air Force - March 29, 1:30pm. New Mexico - March 30, Noon. San Diego State - March 31, Noon. FTC. 895-3207.

29-31 **Baseball:** UNLV vs. New Mexico. Call for times. WBS. 895-3207.

### April 2002

1 **Baseball:** UNLV vs. Arizona State. 6:30pm. WBS. 895-3207.

3 & 6 **Softball:** UNLV vs. UC Riverside - April 3, 1pm. San Diego State - April 6, 5pm. EMS. 895-3207.

4 **University Forum Lecture:** "Afghanistan, Islam, and the Problem of Terrorism." 7:30pm. MBMA. 895-3401.

5 **Music:** UNLV Invitational Choral Festival. Call for times. AHCH. 895-3008.

6 **Performing Arts Center's Charles Vanda Master Series:** Australian Chamber Orchestra, featuring Stephen Hough. 8pm. AHCH. 895-2787.

7 **Performing Arts Center's Best of the New York Stage Finale:** Michael Feinstein and Ann Hampton Callaway. 7pm. AHCH. 895-2787.



Moscow Grigorovich Ballet *Spartacus*  
April 26

10 **Theatreworks USA:** *Peter Pan*. 10am & Noon. AHCH. 895-2787.

**Baseball:** UNLV vs. Southern Utah. 6:30pm. WBS. 895-3207.

11 **Music:** UNLV Symphonic Winds Spring Concert. 7:30pm. AHCH. 895-3733.

**University Forum Lecture:** "Greek Body Language: Evidence in Art and Archaeology." 7:30pm. MBMA. 895-3401.

12 **Music:** UNLV Chamber Chorale 16th Annual Home Concert. 7:30pm. BMC. 895-2787.

12-21 **Theatre:** *Louder Than Words*. Call for times. BBT. 895-2787.

14 **Music:** Chen Zong Yin, guest artist recital. 2pm. AHCH. 895-3736.

16 & 17 **Baseball:** UNLV vs. Southern Utah. 6:30pm. WBS. 895-3207.

17 **Music:** UNLV Community Band Concert II. 7:30pm. AHCH. 895-3733.

18 **University Forum Lecture:** "Landscape Images of the Colorado Plateau" (slide-illustrated). 7:30pm. MBMA. 895-3401.

19 **Las Vegas Philharmonic Concert:** Peter Schickele meets PDQ Bach. 8pm. AHCH. 895-2787.

22 **University Forum Lecture:** "Reading by Poet and Professor Ralph Angel." 7:30pm. MBMA. 895-3401.

25 **University Forum Lecture:** "From Political Symbol to Nostalgic Icon: The Kitsch-ification of the Mushroom Cloud" (slide-illustrated). 7:30pm. MBMA. 895-3401.

## CALENDAR

25 **Music:** UNLV Wind Orchestra Concert IV. 7:30pm. AHCH. 895-2787.

25-28 **Men's Tennis:** MWC Championship. All day. FTC. 895-3207.

26 **Performing Arts Center's Charles Vanda Master Series:** Moscow Grigorovich Ballet: *Spartacus*. 8pm. AHCH. 895-2787.

26-27 **Dance Arts:** Concert III. Call for times. BBT. 895-2787.

26 & 28 **Softball:** UNLV vs. New Mexico - April 26, 5pm. Colorado State - April 28, Noon. EMS. 895-3207.

30 **Music:** UNLV Jazz Ensemble II Spring Concert. 7:30pm. BBT. 895-0862.

### May 2002

1 **Music:** UNLV Choral Ensembles Spring Concert. 7:30pm. AHCH. 895-2787.

2 **University Forum Lecture:** "Get to the Point: Integrating Acupuncture into Western Medicine." 7:30pm. MBMA. 895-3401.

3-12 **Theatre:** *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*. Call for times. JBT. 895-2787.

3-5 **Music:** UNLV Opera Theatre One Acts. Call for times. BBT. 895-3332.

4 **Las Vegas Philharmonic:** Concert V, Season Finale. 8pm. AHCH. 895-2787.

6 **California Theatre Center:** *The Reluctant Dragon*. 9:30am & 11:30am. AHCH. 895-2787.

8 **Music:** UNLV Symphony Orchestra Concert VI. 7:30pm. AHCH. 895-3949.

10-12 **Baseball:** UNLV vs. Air Force. Call for times. WBS. 895-3207.

12 **Performing Arts Center's The World Stage:** Sweet Honey in the Rock. 4pm. AHCH. 895-2787.

15 **University Forum Lecture:** "President John Adams: A Performance Lecture." 7:30pm. Call for location. 895-3401.

16-18 **Baseball:** UNLV vs. San Diego State. Call for times. WBS. 895-3207.

**Nevada Ballet Theatre:** World Premiere Concert. Call for times. JBT. 895-2787.

18 **Commencement:** 9am & 2pm. TMC. 895-3229 (Hotline).

24 **Desert Chorale:** Annual Memorial Weekend Concert 2002. 7:30pm. AHCH. 895-2787.



Tina Mabanta  
UNLV Women's Golf Team

For more information on events and publications, visit UNLV's Web site at [www.unlv.edu](http://www.unlv.edu)

### Building Abbreviation Guide

AHCH:	Artemus Ham Concert Hall
BBT:	Black Box Theatre
BMC:	Beam Music Center
DBFA:	Donna Beam Fine Art Gallery
EMS:	Eller Media Stadium
FTC:	Frank & Vicki Fertitta Tennis Complex
JBT:	Judy Bayley Theatre
MBMA:	Marjorie Barrick Museum Auditorium
MSM:	Marjorie Barrick Museum of Natural History
PHT:	Paul Harris Theatre
TMC:	Thomas & Mack Center
WBS:	Wilson Baseball Stadium

Events are subject to change/cancellation



Linda Eder  
March 22



## CLASS NOTES

### 1970s



Chris Beecroft Jr., '71

**Chris A. Beecroft Jr., '71** BA Political Science, oversees more than 300 attorney and non-attorney arbitrators as the arbitration commissioner in the 8th Judicial District Court of Nevada, an appointed position. He previously served as assistant arbitration commissioner, practiced law in Las Vegas, and was an approved arbitrator in the Court Annexed Arbitration Program. He earned a law degree in 1974 from the University of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law....

**Dawn Kemp, '72** BA Social Work, is a deputy attorney general in the taxation division of the Nevada attorney general's office....

**Gary W. Brown, '73** BS Hotel Administration, is vice president of convention sales and services at the Baltimore Area Convention and Visitors Association. He and his wife, Suzie, have two sons, Tyler and Travis, and live in Ellicott City, Md....**Gregg Carter, '73** BA History, received the Sociologist of the Year Award from the New England Sociological Association as well as the Outstanding Contributions to Instruction Award from the sociology and computers section of the American Sociological Association. He is a professor of sociology at Bryant College in Smithfield, R.I. In the past eight years, he authored or edited 14 books, including *Working Women in America: Split Dreams*, which was published by Oxford University Press in 2000....

**Walter R. Griffen, '73** MS Vocational Counseling, is director of senior ministries at Reno First United Methodist Church. He earned a doctorate of ministry at the St. Paul School of Theology in 1987. He and his wife, Dorothy, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on Aug. 31....**Jerry W. Chernik, '75** BS Zoology, is a 1979 graduate of the Oregon Health Sciences University School of Dental Medicine and has operated a private dental practice in Wasilla, Alaska, since 1986. Prior to that, he was a captain in the U.S. Army Dental

Corps and served at posts in Germany, California, Texas, and Washington. He and wife Kris have a 5-year-old daughter, Shelley....**Quincy L. Moore, '75** MA Educational Foundations and Counseling, is dean of undergraduate studies and student support at West Chester University in Pennsylvania. He is the first African-American dean at West Chester. He previously held several positions at Virginia Commonwealth University, including director of educational support programs, director of academic support, and executive director of the Academic Success Center. He is a trustee to the American Counseling Association Foundation and the author of numerous articles and book chapters. He received a doctorate in counselor education from the University of Iowa and completed the post-doctoral management development program at Harvard University....**Arlene Samen, '77** AA Nursing, is a certified nurse practitioner with the University of Utah's Division of Maternal-Fetal Medicine and a critical care specialist in obstetrics. After returning from a trip to Tibet in 1999, she developed the One H.E.A.R.T. (Health Education and Research in Tibet) program. One H.E.A.R.T. educates Tibetan hospital staff in recognizing and treating obstetric and gynecologic complications as well as offers intensive midwifery training.

### 1980s

**Donald W. Ehehalt, '83** BS Hotel Administration, is assistant director of catering at the Four Seasons Hotel-Los Angeles at Beverly Hills....**Perry K. Todd, '84** BS Hotel Administration, is a member of the Screen Actors Guild and a pit boss at Palace Station Casino. He has appeared on several television shows, including *X-Files*, *Melrose Place*, and *Boston Public*, and in the horror movie *Eat the Rich*....**Jeffrey Wachter, '84** BS Hotel Administration, is self-employed, offering tree and landscaping services in Hicksville, N.Y....



Quincy L. Moore, '75

**James E. Reppert, '85** MA Communication Studies, is an associate professor of mass communication and director of broadcast journalism at Southern Arkansas University in Magnolia. The Kentucky Communication Association named him its 2000-01 Teacher of the Year, noting his innovative teaching methods and work with student-produced radio, television, and webcast programs. He is the first out-of-state educator to receive the award....

**George Gilbert, '86** BA Communication Studies, is a motivational humorist and speaker. He focuses on the importance of humor in various aspects of life, including business, marriage, and health. Since his wife received a kidney and pancreas transplant seven years ago, he has promoted organ donation awareness. In October, he spoke at the Nevada Donor Network's annual dinner. He currently is writing a book on the positive effects of humor....

**Angela Andrich, '87** BS Chemistry, is a psychiatrist in West Linn, Ore., and a 1991 graduate of the University of Nevada-Reno School of Medicine. She and her husband, Dale Laird, welcomed their first child, Victoria Nicole, on Oct. 11, 2000....**Rhonda Williams Shoulders, '87** BS Business Administration, is director of independent living at the Methodist Home for Children & Youth in Warner Robins, Ga. She helps youth in the foster care program gain skills to live independently. She previously served as coordinator for a Georgia foster care reform program....**Kurtis R. Hildebrand, '88** BA Communication Studies, is assistant managing editor at the *Nevada Appeal* in Carson City and teaches page design at Western Nevada Community College. Under his direction, the *Appeal* won first place for best special section from the Nevada Press Association. In 1994, the NPA named him best weekly journalist. He previously worked at the Ridgecrest, Calif., *Daily Independent* and the *Record-Courier* in Gardnerville. He lives with his wife, Jennifer, in Dayton....**Ronald S. Ellis, '89** BS Hotel Administration, is internal audit manager for Hyatt Resorts in

Nevada with secondary responsibilities for resorts in Aruba and Puerto Rico. Prior to joining Hyatt Resorts, he was director of internal audit at the Four Queens Casino and Hotel, senior accountant at Boomtown/Silverton Casino and Hotel, and held various positions at the Desert Inn Resort....**Liz Ritter Walsh, '89** BA English, teaches at Reed High School in Sparks, where she also is the adviser for the school yearbook, newspaper, and speech and debate teams. Jostens Publishing recently named the Reed yearbook as a National Sample Book, and her speech team earned a traveling trophy for competing in the most rounds at district tournaments. Before moving to Reno in 2000, she taught in Las Vegas schools while earning a master's degree from Grand Canyon University. She and her husband, Charlie, have one son, Connor.

### 1990s



Roy Centrella, '91

**Roy Centrella, '91** MBA, is controller for Southwest Gas Corp. in Las Vegas. An 18-year employee of Southwest Gas, he directs the company's accounting, tax, and corporate development activities. He is a certified public accountant and a member of Financial Executives International, American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, and the American Gas Association....**Sue Lynn Reif, '92** BA Psychology, works with numerous exotic and domestic animals as a zookeeper at Happy Hollow Park & Zoo in San Jose, Calif. Her background in psychology has proven vital to her work in animal training and behavior. She also is a research associate with the Pacific Cetacean Group, a non-profit organization for marine conservation....**Robert Vinson, '92** BA History, received a doctorate in history from Howard University in May 2001. He is an assistant professor of history at the University of Virginia....**Jessica Lee Clair-Kimbel, '93** BS Accounting, is a mall accountant and field accounting coordinator for Macerich Company. She and

her husband, Jason, recently moved back to Las Vegas with their two sons, Jared and Colbey....



Stephanie Penner, '93

**Stephanie Penner, '93** BA Communication Studies, is a public relations specialist with The Firm Public Relations & Marketing. Previously, she worked in the public information office of the Nevada Commission on Tourism. As deputy press secretary for former Gov. Bob Miller, she organized media events for President Bill Clinton's visits and the National Governor's Association annual meeting in Las Vegas. She began her career as a coordinator at R&R Partners, a Nevada advertising and public relations agency....**Sara Barrell Harrison, '94** BS Business Administration, opened American National Insurance-The Harrison Agency in Henderson in 2000. The agency specializes in auto, home, and life insurance and retirement planning. She and husband Jay have two children, Jake and Hannah....**Jim Geoffroy, '94** BS Business Administration, is manager of financial planning analysis with Verizon Wireless in Phoenix. Last year, he received an MBA from Arizona State

University....**Al Medina, '94** BS Fitness and Sports Management, '95 BS Health Education, '00 MS Fitness and Sports Management, is a corporate wellness coordinator with St. Rose Dominican Hospital in Henderson. He promotes health and wellness through corporate events and community health screenings. He also is a certified strength and conditioning specialist....**Jose Luis Melendrez, '94** BA Political Science, is working on his master's degree in social work at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor....



Mahika Chandrasena Bartholomeusz, '96

**Mahika Chandrasena Bartholomeusz, '96** BS Hotel Administration, is a media executive for the Hilton Colombo in Sri Lanka. As a management trainee with Hilton International, she led the housekeeping team's four-month renovation project at the Hilton at Rangali Island in the Republic of Maldives. Previously, she was a front desk agent at the Holiday Inn Boardwalk & Casino. She and her husband, Nigel, have one son, Daniel....**Yi Zhu, '96** MS Accountancy, is a tax analyst with CCH and managing editor for *World Economic Review* and *Succeed* magazines. He also serves

as a director for tangben.com and as an adviser with *EFC Journal*....**Wallace W. Hammons, '97** BA Political Science, is a deputy attorney general for the state of Nevada. A 2000 graduate of Southwestern University School of Law, he was admitted to the Nevada Bar in 2000 and the State Bar of California, 9th District, U.S. Court of Appeals, in June 2001....**Patrick Smith, '97** BA Communication Studies, '01 Master of Public Administration, works for the city of Las Vegas and is a volunteer for the YMCA of Southern Nevada and Big Brothers/Big Sisters. He is active in the Pi Kappa Alpha Las Vegas Area Alumni Association....**Bill Wang, '97** MBA, is deputy marketing director for John Deere, overseeing joint venture operations in China. He lives in Moline, Ill....**David**



David Sorensen, '98

**Sorensen, '98** BA Criminal Justice, is a law clerk for Judge Allen R. Earl, 8th Judicial District, Las Vegas. He graduated from Whittier Law School in December 2000....**Antoinette M. Thomas, '98** BA Sociology, is a real estate agent with the Prudential Americana Group and a member of the Greater Las Vegas Association of Realtors....

**Barbara Case, '99** BS Hotel Administration, is banquet captain at The Boulevard Restaurant in San Francisco and plans to open a delicatessen....**Nancy N. Shaw, '99** BS Finance, is a real estate agent for Century 21 Advantage Gold and holds a broker/salesperson license.

### 2000s

**Robyn Campbell-Ouchida, '00** MA Communication Studies, formed All Write Public Relations. She offers public relations, marketing, and free-lance writing services....**Scott Holper, '01** BA Criminal Justice, enrolled at Southwestern University School of Law. He is pursuing a law degree from SU's three-year program....**Valerie Williams, '01** BS Recreation, BA Interdisciplinary Studies, was a fall 2001 intern with the Vilar Institute for Arts Management at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. Her duties included events planning for the American Ballet Theatre and the National Symphony Orchestra. Before accepting the Kennedy Center internship, she worked for the Henderson cultural arts department.



Valerie Williams, '01

## We'd like to hear from you!

We invite all UNLV alumni to submit information about themselves to *UNLV Magazine* for inclusion in the Class Notes section. Please fill out the form below completely, type or print clearly, and avoid abbreviations. Information also can be submitted via e-mail. Please supply home and office telephone numbers so we can reach you if there is a question about your entry. We encourage you to submit a head-and-shoulders photograph of yourself to accompany your Class Notes entry.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Maiden Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Year Graduated \_\_\_\_\_ Major \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Degree(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
(e.g., Bachelor of Arts, Master of Science)

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Numbers: Home \_\_\_\_\_ Office \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Career or Personal Information \_\_\_\_\_

Send entries to: Cate Weeks, UNLV News and Public Information, 4505 Maryland Parkway, Box 451012, Las Vegas, NV 89154-1012; fax 702-895-4057; e-mail Cate.Weeks@ccmail.nevada.edu.



## Developing Our Metropolitan Character

*continued from page 2*

school's teaching and administrative functions, which will require clinical, classroom, and laboratory space. Another building will house faculty research activities, including a portion of the UNLV Cancer Institute and our new Biotechnology Center, a state-of-the-art facility for forensic DNA and other biotechnology training programs. (Additional details about the new Biotechnology Center are available in an article on page 3 of this issue.) Use of the third building at the regional campus is still under consideration.

I should make special note here that we appreciate the support we have received as we have pursued this opportunity for expansion. We are very grateful to Gov. Kenny Guinn and the Legislature for their support of the Dental School during the last legislative session, and to the state's Interim Finance Committee, which recently allowed us to revise our plans for housing the dental school and to purchase the new property and buildings. In addition to providing us with a considerable amount of

much-needed space to expand, the acquisition of this property enables us to move forward with many of our plans.

I am delighted by this wonderful development. With it, we expand both literally and figuratively, exploring new avenues for growth and success. It contributes to my belief, as I mentioned earlier in this piece, that the university is moving in some significant new directions: We are building a stronger presence in the Southern Nevada community, reaching out to serve its needs and developing along with it a metropolitan character of our own. The nuances of that character include a sense of growing sophistication, of being capable and worthy of supporting a city of complexity and size.

So, as you can see, the past year has taken us to new terrain. The quality of our programs and faculty are being acknowledged in unprecedented ways, and our ability to meet the needs of the campus and the community continues to grow. With these developments, I believe now, more than ever, we are advancing with certainty toward our goal of becoming one of the finest urban research universities in the country. And I look forward to continuing to pursue that goal. ■

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## And Justice For All

*continued from page 27*

Students and faculty in the Juvenile Justice Clinic also teamed with state legislators to draft and pass legislation regarding a juvenile's right to an attorney. As a result, Nevada now provides legal counsel to all juveniles facing felony charges before they plead guilty or not guilty. In the past, attorneys were appointed only after the children denied the charges.

Leah Ayala, who is in her final year of law school, and other clinic participants currently are working to change the state's wardship policy. "When a child is adjudicated in juvenile justice, he becomes a ward of the court – it's like being on probation," Ayala explains. "But, unlike on the adult side, the wardship isn't automatically discontinued after that six-month probation. And that's just wrong. A small infraction could become really serious, just because that wardship is still – erroneously – in effect."

The passion that students like Ayala show for the issues is what makes the legal services above par, says Audrey Fethers, administrative director of the clinical program and a veteran social worker of the juvenile justice system. "One good thing about new attorneys is they bring a fresh perspective," Fethers says. "The clients certainly benefit from the students' enthusiasm, and having worked for so long in the system, I know how jaded a person can get."

Fethers' experience with the local court system will be complemented this year as the program adds a social worker to assist with clinic cases and with interdisciplinary research. Law school faculty and members of other UNLV departments, including social work, special education, and criminal justice, formed a committee to tackle community issues from all angles.

"A lot of the kids we see have mental and emotional development problems that feed into their delinquent behavior," Berkheiser says. "By taking an interdisciplinary approach, we're serving the client by focusing on a holistic solution to both their legal and non-legal problems."

Still, at the heart of the clinical program is the school's primary goal: to turn UNLV's law students into community-minded legal professionals.

"In even the best classes, the teaching is still abstract," Appell says. "When students are involved in a real case with the real files, they understand in a much deeper way how things work and why each step is important. Sometimes students can recite a particular legal theory, but it doesn't always click until they've actually experienced it."

Horne, the recent law school graduate, felt that click the first time he stood up in court as a student-attorney. He represented two young children in a hearing to determine if one child was abused. Their mother had no attorney.

"I believe the hearing was unfair to the mother of the children," he says. "This really highlighted to me what I've been taught throughout my law school career: the proceedings are not always fair, particularly for the poor and uneducated."

Yet, Horne's most gratifying law school experience came at the same time. "My first thought was that I was woefully unqualified to spar against the seasoned DA that would be present during the proceeding," he says. "But I stood toe-to-toe with the DA and the hearing master and held my own."

"That gave me a tremendous amount of confidence. I realized that I still have a great deal to learn, but I have gathered, through my legal education, all the tools necessary to serve my future clients successfully." ■





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