Each year, the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) honors one accounting professor in the U.S. with the Distinguished Achievement in Accounting Education Award. This award “recognizes a full-time college accounting educator distinguished for excellence in teaching and for national prominence in the accounting profession.” This year UNLV’s Department of Accounting is proud to announce that Dr. Bill Messier has received this award. According to the AICPA “the award has a dual function: to extend profession-wide recognition to the recipient and promote role models in academia.”

“I am honored to receive such a prestigious award,” states Dr. Messier. The award was presented on October 21, 2012 during the Fall AICPA Meeting of Council/Annual Members’ Meeting in Amelia Island, Florida.

Dr. Messier served as the Academic Member of the AICPA’s Auditing Standards Board and as Chair of the AICPA’s International Auditing Standards Subcommittee. He is a Past-Editor of Auditing: A Journal of Practice & Theory and formerly President of the Auditing Section of the American Accounting Association. Dr. Messier was the recipient of the AAA Auditing Section’s Outstanding Educator Award (2009) and the Distinguished Service in Auditing Award (2008). Dr. Messier’s continuous accumulations of such high honors, accomplishments, and the recommendations of former students, faculty, and the Nevada Society of Certified Public Accountants (NVCPA) members have contributed to his recognition by the AICPA.

Dr. Messier joined the Department of Accounting at UNLV in the Spring of 2008 as the Kenneth and Tracy Knauss Endowed Chair. In 2011, he was awarded an honorary doctorate by the NHH Norwegian School of Economics. He is also the PricewaterhouseCoopers Professor II at the Department of Accounting, Auditing and Law at the Norwegian School of Economics and Business Administration. Dr. Messier holds a B.B.A. from Siena College, an M.S. from Clarkson University, and an M.B.A. and D.B.A. from Indiana University. He is a CPA in Florida, a member of the NVCPA and has held faculty positions at the University of Florida (Price Waterhouse Professor) and Georgia State University (Deloitte & Touche Professor). Professor Messier was a visiting faculty member at SDA Bocconi in Milan, Italy and the University of Michigan.

UNLV’s Department of Accounting is delighted to have Dr. Messier recognized for his many achievements.
Dr. Jason Smith Named as the First Ernst & Young Faculty Fellow at UNLV

The Department of Accounting recently named Dr. Jason Smith as the first Ernst & Young Faculty Fellow at UNLV. The fellowship, which is the first of its kind at UNLV, was established in the spring of 2012 to provide support for a selected accounting faculty member who demonstrates excellence in teaching, research, and in providing service to the Department, its students, and to the profession.

Professor Smith, whose research focuses on corporate governance and financial statement auditing, is currently in his fifth year as an assistant professor at UNLV. “I’m honored and grateful to have been selected for this fellowship. Ernst & Young has a long history of supporting accounting excellence at UNLV, and this fellowship is another example of the firm’s generous investment in the quality of accounting education and research here in Las Vegas. I’m excited to be part of the Department of Accounting’s mission to prepare our community’s future financial professionals and to pursue interesting and impactful research in accounting, and I appreciate this fellowship’s important role in encouraging and supporting those efforts.”

Mark Kercher, Ernst & Young Las Vegas office partner stated: “On behalf of the Ernst & Young Las Vegas office partners, we are proud to provide our financial support to UNLV and the Ernst & Young Faculty Fellow Jason Smith, an outstanding educator. With the financial challenges facing higher education, we believe our responsibility is to invest. Through this, we can continue growing and serving our clients with the outstanding graduates from the UNLV accounting program.”

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Robyn Raschke, Ph.D. Assistant Professor
Daniel Siciliano, MBA, CPA, CMA Lecturer
Jason Smith, Ph.D., CPA Ernst & Young Faculty Fellow
Paulette Tandy, Ph.D., CPA Associate Professor and Department Chair
John Zimmerman, J.D., CPA Associate Professor
For many years UNLV has been an active member of the USAC (University Study Abroad Consortium). As part of the program in the Fall 2012 semester, Professor Bob Aalberts taught Legal Environment of Business and International Business Law classes in Torino, Italy. Professor Aalberts’ classrooms were composed of students from the U.S., Spain, Hungary, South Korea, England, and Canada. The host university for Torino was a highly respected business institute—the Scuola di Amministrazione Aziendale (SAA), or School of Business Administration, of the University of Torino, which was recently recognized as one of the top business schools in Italy.

The city of Torino is home to many well-known companies such as FIAT, Ferrero (maker of Nutella and TicTacs), Cinzano, Campari, Martini and Rossi, Lavazza Coffee, and Caffarel Chocolate. Therefore, this makes Torino the perfect city to explore the international business and legal environment. Professor Aalberts states that living in a foreign country always has its “unexpected challenges such as finding things you want that you might take for granted at home. But, after all, that’s part of the fun.”

The Master of Science in Accounting program (MSA) is designed to provide professional preparation at the graduate level for students wishing to pursue careers and advancement in taxation, public accounting, managerial or corporate accounting, and government. Our graduate program encourages and helps students to further enhance and extend their accounting knowledge gained during their undergraduate studies. In order to provide better service for our graduate program, we established a new office on the 4th floor of BEH in room 414.

Upon entering the office, you will see the MSA program Peer Advisor, Christina Perez (pictured on left), who is in charge of advising future students about the application process and the requirements to apply for the program. Right next to Ms. Perez, you will find the Graduate Coordinator of the MSA program, Dr. Kimberly Charron (pictured on right). Dr. Charron guides MSA students throughout the program by counseling about classes, requirements to graduate, and future career opportunities.
Faculty Updates

Introducing Olumakemi (Kemi) Osidipe

Kemi Osidipe joined the Department of Accounting faculty in August 2012. She is a doctoral candidate in Accounting at the University of Central Florida. She holds a BSBA in MIS and Accounting and a Masters in Business Administration from the University of Louisiana, Lafayette.

Ms. Osidipe's experience includes being a Programmer Analyst for Stuller Incorporated in Lafayette, LA; an Ad-hoc Reviewer for International Journal of Accounting Information Systems; a Manuscript Reviewer for Accounting Information Systems text, McGraw-Hill; and a discussant at American Accounting Association Annual Meeting in New York, NY. From 2009 to 2011 Ms. Osidipe taught a course in Accounting Information Systems at the University of Central Florida. Ms. Osidipe attended numerous research and academic meetings, such as the KPMG Ph.D. Project Accounting Doctoral Student Association Conference and the International Symposium on AIS Research Conference.

Ms. Osidipe's research interests are focused on decision making under uncertainty, human information processing and accounting information systems, development and adoption of accounting technology standards, and XBRL.

Ms. Osidipe teaches Accounting Information Systems.

Introducing Daniel Siciliano

Daniel Siciliano joined the Department of Accounting faculty in January 2012 after an almost 20-year career in industry. His experience consists of being a senior executive with a large public company and being in the management ranks of a Big Four public accounting firm. He retired in June 2011 from International Game Technology (IGT) as a Senior Vice President of Treasury and Corporate Finance. IGT is the worldwide leader in the supply of gaming products and also a member of the S&P 500. Mr. Siciliano held positions in accounting, finance and treasury while at IGT and was the chief accounting officer, treasurer and interim CFO at various times. Prior to IGT, Mr. Siciliano worked at the Las Vegas office of Deloitte for seven years as an audit manager serving the gaming industry, real estate industry and not-for-profit sectors.

Mr. Siciliano received a BSBA in Accounting and an MBA with a concentration in Finance from UNLV. He won the Centennial Medalion by graduating first in a class of approximately 1,500 students in 1990. Mr. Siciliano is certified as a Certified Public Accountant, Certified Management Accountant, and Certified Financial Manager.

Mr. Siciliano is currently on the Board of Directors of Southern Nevada Soccer Association (SNSA), the largest soccer organization in Southern Nevada with over 3,000 registered players and is very active in the Las Vegas soccer community as a coach. His prior service in the Las Vegas community includes being on the Board of Directors and Audit Committee of Boys Hope/Girls Hope and being on the Audit Committee of the UNLV Alumni Association.

Mr. Siciliano teaches financial accounting, managerial accounting, and cost accounting.
Accounting Students Attend the Internal Auditing Education Partnership Conference in Orlando

Six accounting students from UNLV, along with Dr. Paulette Tandy, attended the Fifth Annual Internal Auditing Education Partnership Leadership and Networking Retreat in Orlando, FL from September 21-23, 2012. This was an invitation-only international internal audit academic leadership and networking event. The students were able to network and interview with internal audit professionals, as well as learn and refine their leadership and networking skills and techniques. To help the professionals further see the quality of this student talent, the event ended with a student team competition in which all the students were given the same internal audit case study and were organized in teams of seven or eight members per team, all from different universities. The UNLV students distinguished themselves in this case competition, and the top three teams all included a UNLV student.

The students attending the Retreat were Sok Kuan Lai, Matthew Avalos, Isaiah Godwin, Jordan Brooks, Daniel Bode, and Shannon Selby (Pictured from left to right).

The Internal Auditing Academic Advancement Fund, Inc. awarded a $14,040 grant to the Internal Auditing Education Partnership at UNLV for 2012-2013. The grant is administered by the Department of Accounting in the Lee Business School. The funds will be used to improve and support auditing course offerings, program development, teaching, graduate assistantships, and scholarships in the Department of Accounting.

The grant will help with the improvement of the internal auditing courses by enabling students to experience real-life internal audit experience through the development of a simulated internal audit. The project will be composed of a small scale audit on a simulated client. Based on the results, students must prepare a report with discoveries and recommendations which will be presented to a board of practicing internal auditors.

The accounting department also administers the Internal Audit Certificate Program, which currently enrolls 88 undergraduate and graduate students at UNLV. The program is designed to give students the latest information in the internal auditing profession and to award those who complete the program a valuable distinction.

Back to First Page
The annual Employers’ Night, sponsored by Beta Alpha Psi, offers UNLV students the opportunity to interact with accounting professionals to learn more about the firms that hire our students and the type of careers they offer. In addition, this event gives students the opportunity to build a strong professional network that will help them in their future endeavors.

This year’s event was held on September 25th in the Student Union Ballroom. More than two hundred students and twenty firms with a total of about one hundred professionals attended the event. The following firms and professional organizations attended: Bally Technologies; BDO; Becker CPA Review; Bradshaw Smith; Caesars Entertainment; De Joya Griffith; Deloitte; Ernst & Young; Johnson Jacobson Wilcox; Kafoury, Armstrong & Co.; Las Vegas Sands Corp.; LL Bradford; RSM McGladrey; Nevada Society of CPAs; Piercy, Bowler, Taylor & Kern; PricewaterhouseCoopers; Roger CPA Review; Steward, Archibald & Barney; Young CPAs; and Zappos.

This event is a prodigious occasion for students to network with professionals and explore future opportunities.

Five UNLV accounting students (Candace Corra, George Vasquez, Winnie Zhu, Harrison Fields, and Khalon Richards) competed in Deloitte’s annual interscholastic tax competition on November 2-3. Students from some of the nation’s top accounting and tax programs participated to gain real-world experience. The competition consisted of an issue-based tax case study that focused on a hypothetical real life scenario. All teams were composed of five students who were given the study case two to three weeks before the competition. Participants prepared a solution and presented it to Deloitte professionals at the firm’s office in San Diego, California. UNLV accounting professor, Donald Jones, provided guidance and helped the UNLV team prepare for the competition.
Alumni Spotlight

Scott Smith

Scott Smith graduated from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas in 1990 with a Bachelor’s degree in Accounting. After graduating, Mr. Smith began his career at the Las Vegas office of Deloitte. Since then, he has climbed up the professional ladder to his current position as National Managing Partner - West Region.

Mr. Smith is a member of the Deloitte national executive committee, as well as an audit partner in the power and regulated utility industry. He also serves as Advisory Partner on several public companies and deals with the most senior management and members of the board of directors.

Mr. Smith’s experience of over twenty years in public accounting includes serving a variety of clients such as clean tech and renewable energy clients. He also has spent three years as the U.S. Partner in the London office of Deloitte where he worked on U.S. GAAP and SEC matters for many U.S. and UK clients. Mr. Smith also has spent two years in Deloitte’s U.S. National Office Accounting Research Group where he worked on technical accounting and reporting issues for variety of industries.

Mr. Smith currently lives in San Francisco, but he visits Las Vegas regularly. He started his auditing career in the Deloitte Las Vegas office and now this same office is part of his responsibility as the National Managing Partner – West Region. He owes so much to his education at UNLV and is a part of a large group of UNLV graduates who work at Deloitte.

Kim Wallin

Kim Wallin is the first CPA to be elected to the office of State Controller in 50 years. She is also the first Certified Management Accountant and Certified Financial Manager to hold this office.

In 2003, Ms. Wallin was nominated by Accounting Today as one of the 100 most influential people in accounting in the country. In 2006, the American Women’s Society of CPA’s named Ms. Wallin “Woman CPA of the Year.”

Ms. Wallin graduated from UNLV with a degree in Business Administration majoring in Accounting. Her professional experience includes being a member of the Association of Governmental Accountants Partnership for Intergovernmental Management and Accountability Steering Committee, a Director on the National Association of State Controllers Executive Committee and a member of XBRL International. Ms. Wallin is the former Chair of the Institute of Management Accountants (IMA), the worldwide association for accountants and financial professionals working in business.

Ms. Wallin is active in the Las Vegas community. She has been President of Soroptimist International of Creative Las Vegas and has served as the Treasurer for the Opus Dance Ensemble and the Actors Repertory Theatre.

Bob Beers

Bob Beers graduated from UNLV in 1987 with a Bachelor’s degree in Business Administration (Accounting major) with Distinction. In 1989 Mr. Beers founded Wilson, Beers & Company, computer accounting consultants. During the 90’s he was nominated twice by the Las Vegas Business Press “Top 40 Under 40.”

In 1999, Mr. Beers transitioned into politics and was elected to the Nevada State Legislature. He has served six years in the Assembly and four years in the Senate. Mr. Beers was appointed to serve on the Board of Directors of the Las Vegas Monorail Company by Governor, Jim Gibbons, in 2009. Mr. Beers was responsible for guiding the system through restructuring its debt in bankruptcy court. In 2012, he was elected to the Las Vegas City Council.

Currently, Mr. Beers is a partner at Seale & Beers, Certified Public Accountants, LLC. The company specializes in “small public companies, and small private companies seeking public listings in the near future.”
Gifts from alumni and friends greatly help to sustain the critical needs of the Department of Accounting. These gifts are used to fund scholarships to attract high-achieving students, provide research support to attract and retain faculty, and fund other meaningful programs.

These gifts would also allow UNLV to improve its national rankings. An article published in U.S. News discussed the methodology behind its “Best Colleges” rankings and mentioned that one way colleges are commonly ranked is by looking at the percentage of alumni who donated to the college. This factor is taken into consideration because the percentage of alumni giving “serves as a proxy for how satisfied students are with the school.”

Your gift, no matter the size, will help contribute to the department’s commitment to provide an excellent learning environment for students. Please direct your donation online at UNLV Foundation. Under the choice of designation, please select “Accounting.” Thank you for your support!

"The Nevada Society of Certified Public Accountants (NVCPA) is the premier professional accounting association in Nevada. The main purpose of the Society, among many, is to protect the integrity of the CPA license. Key to that effort is to work to attract the best and brightest of our Nevada students statewide to the profession of accounting. Therefore, the NVCPA has been awarding scholarships to accounting students throughout Nevada for nearly fifty years through its Nevada CPA Foundation for Education and Research. Not only is this important as assistance to the students, but it also encourages a "pipeline" of new accounting professionals for the future."

Sharon Uithoven
Executive Director of NVCPA

"We are grateful to the firms, organizations and individuals that donate scholarships to accounting students. These generous contributions help deserving students pursue their educational goals and make a difference in their lives. In particular, this is an appropriate means for former UNLV students to give back.”

Dr. Paulette Tandy
Department of Accounting Chair

"I am grateful to receive this scholarship from the NVCPA. It has supported my graduate education and will help launch my future career in the accounting profession.”

Aimee’ Cheun
Scholarship Recipient

"Giving Back

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