

A WILLIAM F. HARRAH HOTEL COLLEGE OF HOTEL ADMINISTRATION PUBLICATION

# PREMIER

FALL 2005

## Sal Semola Supports Students



**REALITY TV  
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**STAYING SAFE**

**A "WYNN"ING TEAM  
OPENS NEW RESORT**

**UNLV**  
UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA LAS VEGAS



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## PREMIER

*The official magazine of  
the William F. Harrah College  
of Hotel Administration*

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## A MESSAGE from Dean Mann

Envision  
a special  
corner of UNLV

with the world's finest providers of hospitality products and services as our partners. This will become a reality as we anticipate a major gift to launch our long awaited project, INNOvation Village. Vendors such as Microsoft, Micros, Bose, Sony, SBC, and companies like Harrah's Entertainment, MGM MIRAGE, Marriott, Hyatt, and Mandarin Oriental have expressed interest in joining with our efforts. Everyone I have spoken with is excited about the potential of using the hospitality campus as a site for research, development and demonstration of products and services for the hospitality and tourism industry. Because such a site does not exist anywhere in the world, we have named this "special corner" INNOvation Village.

INNOvation Village will become the place for conducting research by interacting with customers in a built environment (please see the story on page 12 for more information). This interaction between individuals and the physical environment in the form of products and services can be observed and studied across the many dimensions of our university.

The \$500 million campaign announced by President Carol C. Harter will enhance the existing efforts of the Harrah Hotel College to raise the dollars needed to build out the 10-plus acres on the North West corner of the UNLV campus at the Swenson/Flamingo intersection. We will be asking many of you to help us with both monetary gifts and in-kind gifts of your time and products to assist us in creating INNOvation Village.

A major campaign is often undertaken at universities to assist in the funding of scholarships, fellowships, student and faculty professional development, endowed distinguished professorships and chairs, and a host of other needs in addition to the actual physical buildings. These funds are needed because in public universities there is never enough state funding to provide for all of the required expenditures. In order for the Harrah Hotel College to continue its ascent and retain its leadership position among the world's finest hospitality and tourism schools, we must hire and retain outstanding faculty. We must recruit the best undergraduate and graduate students from around the world. We must have and maintain state-of-the-art facilities. As many of you know, we have had to raise money to hire staff where there are no state-provided positions, such as in alumni relations, public affairs, and fundraising.

These positions are crucial to the college's vision for the future. The jobs that have been created in the Harrah Hotel College for Karin

Olsen, Judy Nagai-Allison, Karen Sharp, Michelle Jordan, and their assistants (sometimes graduate assistants), would not have been possible without private support. We must raise the money annually to pay the salaries and benefits for these individuals who play such a critical role in the infrastructure and advancement of the Harrah Hotel College and our strategic goals. It would be wonderful if in the campaign we were successful in creating endowments that would put these positions in a status where we would not have to rely on annual gifts. University endowments pay out at a rate of about four percent annually so the principal that we would need to raise is considerable, around \$10 million. That amount would be retained as the principal of the endowment with the annual payout yielding around \$400,000 each year to cover our "Advancement Team."

While we confront unprecedented human needs from our country's natural disasters, each of you is being asked to be a part of our journey to INNOvation Village. This is an exciting time to assist UNLV in achieving its vision in becoming one of the country's finest metropolitan research universities. Your support as a new or ongoing donor will help us achieve our collective goals. Every gift counts and no amount is too little. We would like everyone to be a part of our effort. Let's make INNOvation Village a reality.

# HURRICANE KATRINA NEWS

## UNLV Helps Assist Displaced Students of Hurricane Katrina

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, many university students lost their educational facilities. In order to ensure that they are able to complete their college educations, UNLV announced on Sept. 1 that it would grant temporary enrollment to Nevada students, as well as others in specialized programs. The university has received many inquiries from Nevada-based students enrolled in universities impacted by the devastating storm

and its aftermath. In addition, the Harrah Hotel College and the William S. Boyd School of Law have been contacted about accommodating displaced students from the hospitality program at the University of New Orleans as well as the law programs at Tulane and Loyola.

“Our deans are working closely with their counterparts at the affected universities to

accommodate their needs,” said Executive Vice President and Provost Raymond Alden. “We are happy to be able to help these students continue their studies and re-establish some normalcy in their lives during those most difficult times.”

For additional information, affected students or families should contact UNLV’s Office of Admissions at (702) 774-8658.

# HOSPITALITY SUMMIT

## International Hospitality Summit Offers Myriad of Learning Opportunities

The Las Vegas International Hospitality and Convention Summit took place at UNLV June 5 – 7. This year’s 90 participants were able to hear experts speak on a number of different issues, including bed and breakfast operations, cruise ships, wine allocation, and tradeshow exhibitions. In addition, they were also able to take tours of some of Las Vegas’ most exciting hotel/casinos.

The keynote speaker for the event was Jim Moore of Moore Ideas, Incorporated. Other speakers and panelists included John Bruns, corporate vice president of service operations for Harrah’s Entertainment, Inc.; Phillip S. Cooke, chairman emeritus of FSA Group; Punam Mathur, senior vice president of corporate diversity and community affairs at



Participating in the “Crystal Ball Panel” at the International Hospitality & Convention Summit in June are (from left): Gus Tejeda '89, Bellagio; John Bruns, Harrah’s; and Punam Mathur, MGM MIRAGE. Dean Mann moderated the discussion.

MGM MIRAGE; Steven Seghers, vice president of hospitality for HyperDisk Media, Inc., and Gus Tejeda, executive director of convention sales for Bellagio.

Next year’s summit will take place June 4 – 7. This affordable conference offers presentations of

academic research and briefings from top industry professionals in the fields of hospitality, tourism, conventions, events, food and beverage, gaming, clubs, entertainment, and leisure services. For more information, visit <http://tca.unlv.edu/summit>.



# Semola Scholarship



Salvatore “Sal” Semola ’81 is a man who knows the importance of a college education. While there are many people in the gaming field who don’t believe a degree is necessary, Semola knows otherwise and places emphasis on those who do have a degree. He’s well aware that a majority of UNLV students are not traditional college students and that many have full-time jobs, take care of families, and have other obligations.

It’s for that reason that Semola recently endowed a scholarship fund available to qualified students of the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration. “Without a doubt, my UNLV experience has helped me attain the success I have enjoyed,” said Semola. “I remember how important it was for me to receive financial aid and I want to replicate that feeling for others. It’s what you’re supposed to do.”

Semola moved to Las Vegas with his family in 1976 and although he had begun his college career in Pennsylvania, he was disenchanted with the psychology major he had been pursuing. When he visited UNLV the year before he moved to Las Vegas, he had checked out the hotel college and thought he might enjoy a career in that field. “I had worked in food and beverage while I was in high school and knew that I didn’t want to come up

# Supports Student Endeavors

by Robyn Campbell-Ouchida '00 MA

through the ranks that way,” said Semola. “Leo Lewis taught an upper division casino management class at UNLV and that really piqued my interest. Of course, I knew my opportunities in the industry were limited because at that time, gaming was only available in Nevada and Atlantic City. Little did I know how widespread the gaming industry would become in just a few short years.”

As a student who also held a full-time job, Semola was excited to receive a scholarship that helped him pay for books. “I remember when I worked as a pit clerk at the original MGM Grand, I would study on my breaks,” Semola reminisces. “There were a few people who teased me about why I wanted a degree. In a few short years, after I had moved up the ranks in the casino, they didn’t laugh anymore. At that time, it was rare to find a senior management executive in the gaming industry who had education in that area. That was a definite plus for me.”

Semola is now the vice president and general manager of the Rampart Casino at the Resort at Summerlin. He started his career in the industry as a busboy at the Castaways, before becoming a pit clerk in 1980. All the while, he continued his studies while moving up the corporate ladder. By 1990, he had risen to the position of assistant casino manager at the Dunes Hotel & Casino. In addition to working in land-based casinos, he has also worked on riverboats and in Native American casinos. He has been involved in opening and operating three different casino projects beginning with the Silver Eagle Casino Riverboat in Galena, Ill. as director of casino operations. He also opened the Station Casino Kansas City, Mo. and Greektown Casino in Detroit, Mich. His prior positions include general manager of the Casino of the Sun, a Native American casino in Tucson, Ariz. and assistant casino manager at the Reno Hilton in Nevada.

In the fall of 2003, Semola was recognized as “Gaming Professional of the Year” for the Eastern

United States as a result of his efforts while he was the chief operating officer at Greektown Casino. He served as adjunct professor here at UNLV, teaching courses in gaming management. He also served as an instructor for the Gaming Management Series for the University of Nevada, Reno. In addition to his BS in Hotel Administration, he also earned an associate’s degree of applied science in resort occupations-casino management.

“In addition to working really hard in school, students should be able to enjoy the college experience,” said Semola. “If my gift helps students not have to work so hard outside the classroom, they will have time to enjoy social interactions and make even more positive memories of their time at UNLV.”

Endowments such as Sal Semola’s help the advancement of student education. These gifts provide deserving students with the “extra” they need in order to succeed. “Simply put, affordability is synonymous with access to an excellent education, and in the past decade, that access has become a significant challenge,” said Karin Olsen, director of external relations for the Harrah Hotel College. “Given the caps on federal subsidized loans and other restrictions, a college education has been placed out of the reach of many qualified students. More funding for student scholarships, made possible by generous alums like Sal Semola, enable the college to lighten the burden of enrolled students and open the door of opportunity to qualified candidates who would otherwise be unable to receive a high quality education at UNLV.”

*For more information on how to provide support to students, please contact Karin Olsen, director of external relations for the Harrah Hotel College at (702) 895-3148 or via e-mail at [Karin.Olsen@unlv.edu](mailto:Karin.Olsen@unlv.edu).*

*Sal Semola looks forward to hearing from former students as well as friends and classmates. He can be reached via e-mail at [ssemola@canneryresorts.com](mailto:ssemola@canneryresorts.com).*

# WHY I CHOSE TO WORK IN THIS INDUSTRY



JOHN (JACK) R. DONOVAN  
Senior Vice President  
and President  
ARAMARK Business,  
Sports and Entertainment  
National Advisory Board Member

I chose to work in the hospitality industry because I got lucky – but it was by my father’s definition: lucky is when opportunity meets hard work.

The opportunity first presented itself when I was in high school in Albany, Ga. A food service company posted a part-time job and I worked there after school and on weekends. When the company learned I went to college where it had a food service contract, it offered me the opportunity to work as night supervisor at a campus snack bar.

I saw that I could make a living *and* make a life for myself within the hospitality industry. More importantly, my life was consistent with core values on which I had been raised. So even though I thought about law school, I accepted a job with that same company after college graduation.

I have always liked the “feeling” of the industry. There is a sense of satisfaction that comes from serving others – and serving them well. When I look at all the incredible places that this profession has taken me, I am absolutely amazed. I couldn’t be further away from that little town in the southwest corner of Georgia, but then again, I couldn’t be any closer to the environment of a small community where a sense of pride is earned by working hard and serving others.



# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



Elisa Hobbs

Over the years, Las Vegas has become more and more of a destination for meetings and conventions. Now master's student Elisa Hobbs, who has always enjoyed coordinating events, gets to do it in one of the most exciting cities in the world. After graduating with a bachelor's degree from Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles in 2001, she went to work for San Diego's Event Network as an office manager. After coordinating events and meetings for three years, she decided that she wanted to prepare herself for a job more focused on event and convention planning.

"My mom suggested I look into UNLV, as she had recently moved to Las Vegas," said Hobbs. "I began

looking into programs and came to the conclusion that the Harrah Hotel College's program would give me more practical, hands-on experience than some others I was researching."

Upon her arrival at UNLV, she happened to meet Patti Shock, department chairperson, Tourism and Convention Administration, who asked her about her background and her future plans. "I told her that I really wanted to focus on meetings and tourism and she asked me if I wanted a job," recalls Hobbs. "I was caught off-guard and when I asked her to explain further, she explained that she was looking to hire someone to coordinate the annual International Hospitality and Convention Summit that is held at

UNLV. Once I learned a little more about it, I was sold...it would be a great way to gain more experience and assured me that I was making the right decision about which field I wanted to go into."

Needless to say, with Hobbs' experience and business acumen, nearly 100 attendees showed up and the conference went seamlessly. "Having Professors Patti Shock and Curtis Love take me under their wing and show me what the convention industry is all about really helped me. I had opportunities to network and subsequently, get a job at Wynn Resort." Hobbs is currently working as a convention services coordinator at Wynn Resort and will graduate in May 2006.

# A “Wynn”ing Team Opens New Resort

## Alumni and Students Help Open New Property

The April 2005 opening of Wynn Las Vegas was a feat that those “in the know” considered a challenge. Veterans who have opened many hotels will tell you that opening a property of this scale is no small challenge. Everything must be perfect, from the linens in the bedrooms to the place settings in the restaurants. It takes a team of seasoned professionals to get it right.

Luckily, the new Wynn resort had a lot of those professionals on hand. With the Harrah Hotel College turning out expertly trained hospitality employees right down the street, it was no surprise that everything went as planned.

The nontraditional educational program offered by the college ensures that hotel properties worldwide are staffed by those who have been trained in all aspects of the field. While some are “traditional” students in every sense of the word, the majority are not. Many students have jobs, take care of families, and have extra responsibilities that make learning even more of a challenge. Dan Cormany '04 MS is a remarkable example of how UNLV, and in particular the Harrah Hotel College, can impact a nontraditional student.

Cormany came to UNLV after spending twenty years as a university administrator. He had served as the dean of students at Chaminade University of Honolulu;

by Robyn Campbell-Ouchida '00 MA

dean of students at the Ringling School of Art and Design; and the associate and acting dean of Students at Malone College in Canton, Ohio. Having graduated from college in the late 70s, Cormany even worked in a student



Alumnus Dan Cormany

orientation program at Bowling Green University. Needless to say, he had vast amounts of experience in the field.

“Although I had enjoyed working in university administration for many years, I was getting to the point where I didn’t get much

interaction with the students anymore,” said Cormany. “Working in residence halls, planning special events, and working one-on-one with the students were the best parts of the positions I held and I knew that there had to be a way to put those skills to use in another industry.”

“When I was working at the Ringling School, I had the opportunity to do a lot of projects with Disney. I really enjoyed learning the hospitality aspects of that phenomenal company and the more I thought about it, I knew I could parlay the skills I had into something more enjoyable.”

In 2001, Cormany returned to school at the University of Hawaii. “I still wasn’t sure exactly where my career and my education were headed and after the tragedy of September 11, 2001, the Hawaiian tourism industry took a nose dive.”

Cormany’s attention turned stateside. He decided to attend UNLV with the goal of completing a degree in hospitality, although he didn’t necessarily have the convention and meeting industry in mind.

When asked why he chose the Harrah Hotel College, Cormany replied, “I looked into a number of schools that had hospitality programs and chose UNLV with two things in mind. First was the location. Las Vegas has a practically recession-proof tourism industry, where I knew I



Photo by Geri Kodey

could gain valuable experience, and secondly, I wanted a hands-on educational experience with sound training. I knew I would get this at UNLV. For someone with my interests, coming to Las Vegas was like coming to Mecca!”

He entered the Harrah Hotel College to make a complete career change from university administration to acquire the skills necessary to work in the special events planning aspect of the hospitality industry. He volunteered to work dozens of trade shows and conventions while attending school full-time. He also helped organize and produce the Hospitality and Business Marketplace, UNLV Career Day, and also managed a convention for Food and Beverage Professor Andy Feinstein.

Upon his arrival in Las Vegas, Cormany knew nobody. “I’m forever indebted to Professor Curtis Love,” he said. “He helped me make some connections, including one with the people at Wynn Las Vegas, which allowed me to see the inside of hotel/casino operations.

Cormany took on a volunteer

job that most undergraduates wouldn’t even want—calling old Desert Inn customers to update the new Wynn Las Vegas marketing database. “Being on property got me access to people who saw that I was capable of doing much more. When Arte Nathan [Wynn’s senior vice president and chief human resources officer] was looking for someone to complete some research projects on the world’s largest hotels, I was able to do the job and prove myself.”

Eventually he proposed his idea of writing a cultural guide for the convention sales department so they would better understand the different nationalities they would be working with as clientele. “I thought it was fascinating to learn all the cultural nuances and I knew that this would be important for the property.”

Cormany completed an unpaid internship with Wynn Las Vegas in summer 2004, creating a cultural guide for employees to better understand the various customs and cultures of the guests that Wynn would serve. That guide is now

available to all employees of the property.

All of his hard work and determination paid off and ultimately, last September, Cormany was offered one of six highly sought after positions as a convention service manager for Wynn Las Vegas. “I wasn’t sure I was ready for the job but it’s turned out to be one of the most exciting things I’ve done professionally. And one of the best parts is that nearly everyone in the department I work in are Harrah Hotel College alumni.”

His journey from having no prior experience in the field to obtaining a position in a premier property is nothing short of amazing. He did it by combining higher education with practical experience. He now wants to give back to the college by teaching convention services as an adjunct faculty member.

In addition to Cormany, convention services coordinator and master’s student Elisa Hobbs, there are four more Harrah Hotel College alumni plus one current student working in this department at Wynn Las Vegas.



# SCHOLARSHIP LUNCHEON

## Students and Faculty Honored at Spring Scholarship Event

In April, the Stan Fulton Building hosted the UNLV Scholarship Luncheon. Nearly 200 Hotel College students were recognized for receiving scholarships from a number of funding sources. In addition, three professors were also recognized for their achievements. Each year, a committee of faculty select their peers to receive awards and recognition for their outstanding contributions to the college. Zheng Gu, Ph.D. was honored with the Sam and Mary Boyd Distinguished Professor Award For Research; chef Jean Hertzman was awarded the Sam and Mary Boyd Distinguished Professor Award for Teaching; and Andy Nazarchuk, Ph.D. received the Sam and Mary Boyd Distinguished Professor Award for Service.

The 35 students in Hertzman's Quantity Food Management course were responsible for developing the menu and preparing the lunch for the attendees.



Green Valley Ranch Resort vice president and general manager Joe Hasson, Betty Tata, and Dean Mann attend the UNLV Scholarship Luncheon.



Above: Chef Jean Hertzman is honored with a Distinguished Professor award for Teaching. Right: Andy Nazarchuk accepts a Distinguished Professor award for service from Dean Mann.



Zheng Gu received the Distinguished Professor Award for Research.



Photography by UNLV Photo Services

# AWARDS

## Dean Receives Marshall Award

Dean Stuart Mann was honored with the inaugural Anthony G. Marshall Outstanding Education Leadership Award, named for the renowned president of the Educational Institute and Dean Emeritus of Florida International University, by the Educational Institute of the American Hotel & Lodging Association. The award, which was presented in Las Vegas in April, recognizes a lasting, influential, and innovative contribution to educating and training in the hospitality industry.

With Mann's support and guidance, the Harrah Hotel College has expanded its programs to include a BS in gaming, management, a BS in



Joseph A. McInerney, CHA, President and CEO of the American Hotel & Lodging Association, presents Stuart Mann with the Marshall Award.

culinary arts management, and has also created majors in the following areas of hotel management: beverage management, foodservice management, lodging and resort management, and meetings and events management.

During Mann's tenure he has concentrated on two key directives for the college – the formalization of international programs, and creating

diversity within the college. Through these directives, UNLV has signed memorandums of understanding for cooperation with universities in Korea, Japan, China, Australia, Macao, and Hong Kong. It has also created a UNLV Singapore campus that will allow students to complete the last two years of their BS degree in hotel administration in Singapore. This campus will open in 2006.

## Shock Receives PCMA Award

The Professional Club Managers Association Education Foundation recently announced Patti Shock, a professor and department chair of the tourism and convention

administration department, as its 2005 Faculty Honoree. She was recognized for her exemplary contributions to the meetings industry. Shock received this

honor at the 2005 PCMA Education Foundation Dinner Celebrating Professional Achievement in May at the Hilton Washington in Washington, D.C.

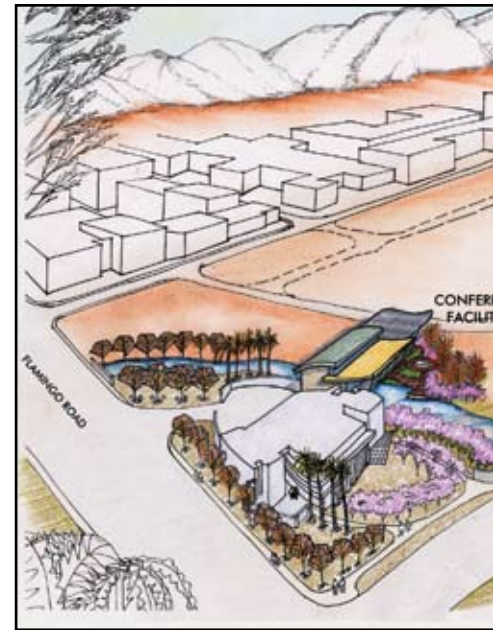
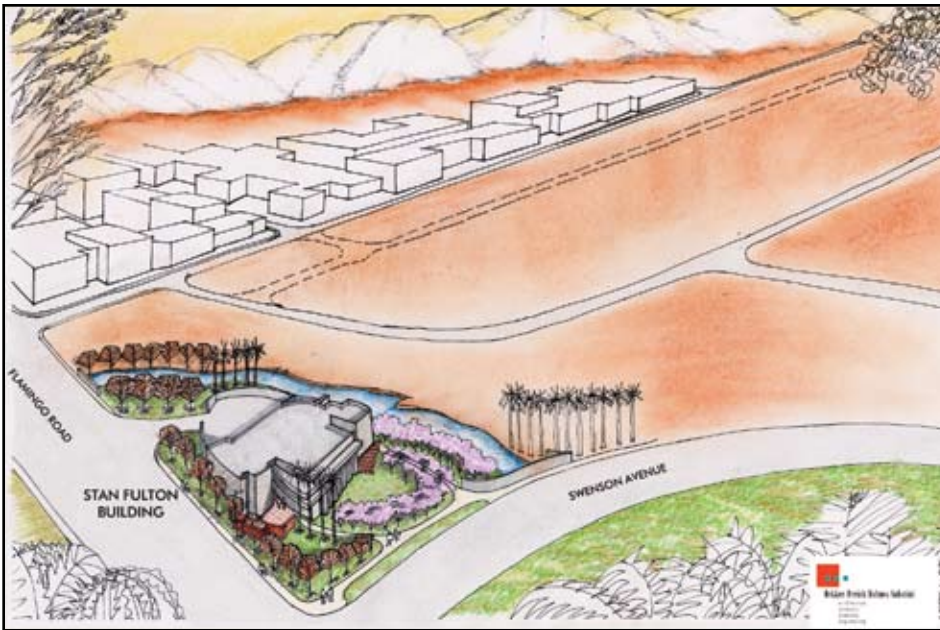


Patti Shock receives the PCMA award in Washington, D.C. From left: Min Sun Park, Patti Shock, Dean Stuart Mann

"Patti Shock's distinguished contributions have made a lasting impact on PCMA and the industry," said Sheila Stampfli, 2005 chairman of the PCMA Education Foundation. "She was the ideal choice for our first Faculty Honoree."

Shock is the faculty advisor for the UNLV student chapter of PCMA, she chairs the PCMA Faculty Task Force, and she is an author and frequent speaker at industry meetings.





THIRD IN A SERIES

by Russell Dazio '73

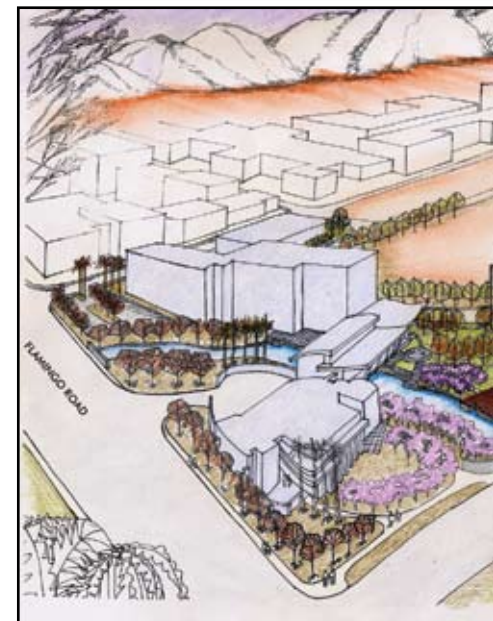
UNLV HOSPITALITY CAMPUS DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

# Regents Enthusiastic About INNOvation Village Concept

As the Spring 2005 semester came to an end, Dean Stuart Mann delivered a formal presentation to the Board of Regents regarding the development of a hospitality campus. With the proposed name INNOvation Village, the large-scale project could make the Harrah Hotel College the preeminent hospitality technology research center in the world, while bolstering UNLV's goal of becoming a nationally ranked, research-intensive institution. The Regents were enthusiastic about the concept and encouraged Dean Mann to continue with the endeavor.

INNOvation Village is designed to represent higher education's most advanced living laboratory for

testing products, technologies and the built environment. The "real world" aspect of this undertaking underscores that each product will be tested with the intent to establish the "industry standard" by which specific product lines are measured. What makes this a peerless testing facility is the capacity to interchange emerging technologies as they become available in commercially operated facilities. This will be achieved in part through an interior design program that creates adaptable space zones. These zones will carry the responsibility of insuring that a perfect fit exists between the art, science, and business of operating hospitality facilities.

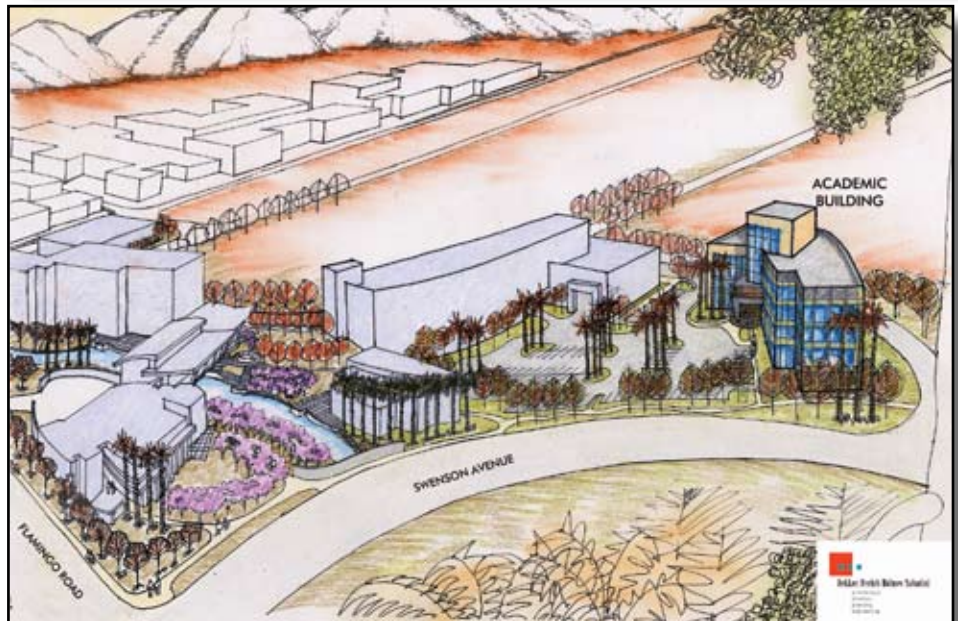
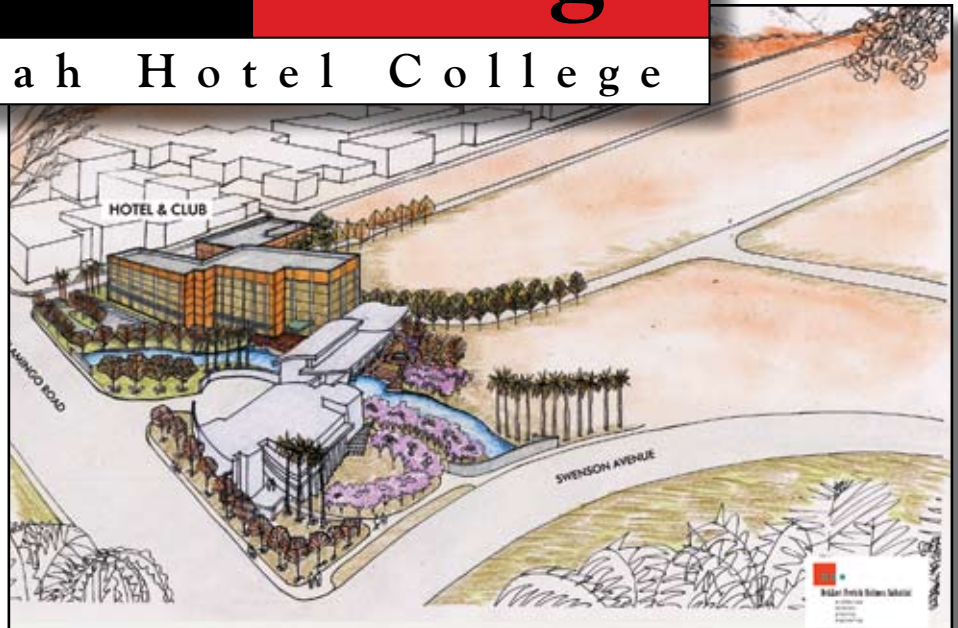
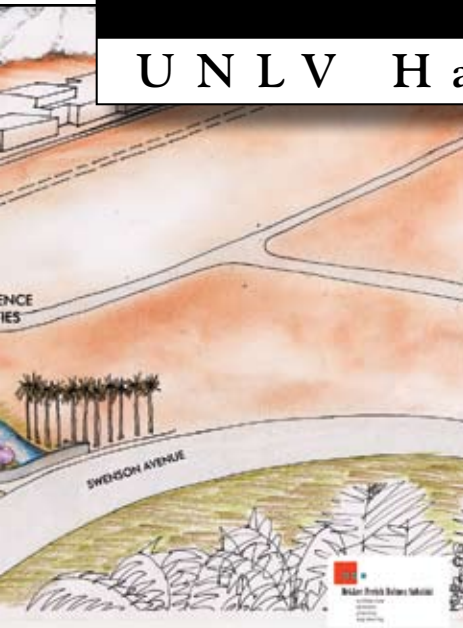


Prior to the Regents' presentation, the Dean and Russ Dazio, the project coordinator for INNOvation Village, went on a press tour to familiarize a number of key national and international hospitality executives on what INNOvation Village is all about. To help do this, Dazio made the student project for his Hotel Development course focus on pre-development planning



# INNnovation Village

UNLV Harrah Hotel College



Architectural renderings show the progression of INNnovation Village.

and promotion. "My students really came through," commented Dazzio. "Among other things, they helped produce a DVD on INNnovation Village that features comments from UNLV President Dr. Carol Harter and delivers a message words alone just can't convey."

Since then, this DVD has been shown at the International Hotel

and Restaurant Show, Hospitality Technology Magazine's Technology Summit, to the heads of nearly every casino entertainment company in Las Vegas, and to the chief technology officers of every major hotel chain and hospitality technology provider in the US. Thanks to these efforts, there is now a solid base of support from every one of the sectors mentioned.

*For additional information about INNnovation Village, please contact Karin Olsen, director of external relations at [Karin.Olsen@unlv.edu](mailto:Karin.Olsen@unlv.edu) or (702) 895-3148.*

*Architectural renderings provided courtesy of Dekker/Perich/Holmes/Sabatini.*

The events of Sept. 11, 2001 have significantly impacted how tourist destinations, such as Las Vegas, use security and surveillance technology to ensure the safety and security of visitors and employees. With millions of people traveling to Las Vegas each year, it's crucial that they feel safe in their surroundings.

To understand the challenges that hospitality security and surveillance directors face in Las Vegas, we went to the experts. Dave Shepherd is the executive director of security at the Venetian Resort~Hotel~Casino. With experience honed from his years working for the FBI, Shepherd is uniquely qualified to run the state of Nevada's largest private security force.

# Staying Safe...

## HOW HAVE SECURITY AND SURVEILLANCE OPERATIONS CHANGED IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY SINCE 9/11?

by Robyn Campbell-Ouchida '00 MA

terrorism, infectious diseases, and other not-so-obvious dangers. For example, who had heard of Norovirus, Anthrax, suicide bombers, or cyber terrorism five years ago?"

Security has to be able to adapt to any challenges. As Shepherd stated, there are three goals of hospitality security, in order of importance: 1) to protect and preserve life; 2) to protect property; and 3) to protect and preserve the company's gaming license.

"We know that we can't rest on the successes of the past," said Shepherd. "We need the tools and training to be forward-thinking and ready to make changes. I think what helped us a lot here at the Venetian was that by September 13, 2001, everyone in this building was a part of the security department. Nobody said 'that's not my job.'"

Shepherd believes that everyone must be on guard all the time—policies and procedures do not change simply because the threat level changes. "Security will continue to evolve. Right now, the level of cooperation between the public and private sector is greater than ever and the amount of intelligence being passed between both markets is at an all-time high."

The Venetian has been instrumental in training security personnel up and down the Las Vegas Strip. "We look beyond the Venetian to all properties. We want to help them be prepared in case of disaster."



Instructor Jeff Voyles '98 explains how surveillance systems are used. Photo by Geri Kodey

"We have always been security-conscious. Security departments today are not at all like they were five years ago," said Shepherd. "We have to think beyond the normal civil and criminal liabilities to the threat of



To this end, Shepherd is currently spearheading a group of seven security chiefs who are establishing a command center book to be used by the industry. When complete, it will contain information from the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Centers for Disease Control, the Clark County Health District and the Clark County Fire Department. It will be an all-inclusive book for standards in the area that each hotel/casino will be able to adapt to their own environment.

What is Shepherd's advice when talking about possible terrorist threats? "Security is everyone's responsibility. It's not a question of how much money to spend. You need to spend what is necessary so that people feel safe. The goal of every security program should be total protection—the ability to stop any activities without loss of life or damage to the building. Precautions should be in place to minimize the effect of what could be," he said.

Another expert in the field is Nick Walling. In his role as director of corporate training, Walling travels to Harrah's properties around the country, including those in Biloxi, Miss. and Atlantic City, N.J. He oversees a variety of training programs, including those for security personnel. Previously, he worked at UNLV where he helped to secure a Department of Homeland Security grant to provide homeland security training for private security officers.

"Since September 11, I have seen an increase in awareness of the importance of security," said Walling. "However, there is always the continual challenge of funding. Many programs are under-funded and under-manned. They do what they can but it's tough."

The UNLV training that is offered as a result of the above-mentioned grant is a "boon for those in the hospitality industry," said Walling. The training sessions are free and the government even funds the transportation to the site.

For those who are interested in working in the field, Walling stresses the importance of higher education. "The more courses you can take in security, the better. I'm a proponent of higher education and since this is a field where you can move up the ranks rather quickly, the bonus of educating yourself



Surveillance cameras aid casinos in monitoring guest activity.

really pays off." He also says, "Get experience. Learn the ins and outs of security because you can never have too much experience."

Another side of security involves that of risk management. According to Stan Smith, Boyd Gaming's corporate director of risk management and security, "Management looks for surveillance and security to assist in protecting the company assets. These departments are the first line of defense and look at issues that have potential liability to the company. Surveillance is also a component of detective controls in that surveillance is not only required to observe procedures, but also to report deviations from these procedures to management."

Smith continued, "Surveillance and security also help to discourage individuals who may consider committing a fraudulent activity. Internal audit tests both security and surveillance processes to ensure that each department's involvement in operations occurs as designed; this gives additional confidence to management and regulators about the integrity of the processes. Last, internal audit relies on the assistance of surveillance at times to perform their observations and to inform them of potential concerns."

As President and Chief Operating Officer of The Mirage in Las Vegas, Scott Sibella '88 is very aware of the goals and challenges of security and surveillance operations. "We are in closer contact with various

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# DINNER OF DISTINCTION HONORS INDUSTRY WINNERS

## Annual Event To Be Named For Jerry Vallen



Dean Vallen is presented with the Dean's Medal of Distinction by Dean Mann and Don Snyder.

The UNLV William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration paid tribute to hospitality industry executives for their outstanding contributions to the college at its annual "Dinner of Distinction," held June 9, at Treasure Island. Master of ceremonies Don Snyder presided and Dean Stuart Mann also played a large role in the evening's festivities.

Dinner honorees included Bill McBeath, president/chief operating officer of Bellagio (Alumnus of the Year); Richard Melman, founder-chairman of Lettuce Entertain You Enterprises (Food & Beverage Management); Steven Hacker, president of the International Association for Exhibition Management (Tourism & Convention Administration); and Stan Bromley, regional vice president of Four Seasons (Hotel Management).

Dean Jerome Vallen, founding dean of the college, and Vallen's wife, Flossie, co-authors of "The Right Place: An Anecdotal History of the UNLV College of Hotel Administration" signed copies of their book during the cocktail hour. Vallen was honored with the Dean's Medal of Distinction as well as having the event named for him in the future.

The Dinner of Distinction also featured a silent and live auction. With auction items ranging from a trip to San Francisco to autographed sports memorabilia and art, the Hotel College was able to raise nearly \$15,000 to be used for student and faculty professional development, which includes supporting research presentations at academic conferences and industry events and to further develop recruitment and alumni programs. Such fundraising is necessary to keep the faculty and students current with the dynamic changes in the world's hospitality industry.



Four Seasons' Stan Bromley (second from left) receives his award from Dean Mann, Gail Sammons, and David Corsun.



Alumnus of the Year Bill McBeath with Dean Mann.



Steven Hacker receives his award from Patti Shock and Dean Mann.



Tola and Marcia '74 Chin, Linda and George Baggott, and Susie Southgate-Fox.



Professor Ellis Norman and his wife, Pat.



Hotel College Alumni Board Chairperson Marcus Treats '87, '99 MBA and Marnie Peppers '01.



Mirage President Scott Sibella and his wife, Kim with Dean Mann.



Don and Dee Synder with Dean Mann.



Richard Melman greets Dean Mann.

# REALITY TELEVISION . . . HAS IT INFLUENCED TOURISM?

by Robyn Campbell-Ouchida '00 MA

With the rise in reality television shows over the past five years, *Premier* wanted to find out from hospitality leaders what this genre of television has done for the tourism industry. We've been told by the experts that the negotiation of exposure to the right audience is key. The production company and the property discuss logo placement as well as the fact that the property should be shown in the best of all possible lights. It all seems to come down to the matter of controlling when, where, and how long the production crew will be in public spaces. Through both e-mail and telephone interviews, here is what the following professionals had to say.

**Tyra Bell-Bloom '94** is the director of concierge services for The Venetian Resort~Hotel~Casino in Las Vegas. A number of reality programs, television shows and specials have been filmed at The Venetian. Shows include the original "Bachelor" program and the ultimate live television production, Fox's New Year's Eve special in 2001, with celebrity host Ryan Seacrest.

**Damian Cooper '95** is the food and beverage manager at Le Meridien Port Vila Resort & Casino in Vanuatu. The popular television reality program "Survivor" was filmed on this island in the summer of 2004.

**Joe Hasson** is the general manager of Green Valley Ranch Resort, located just outside Las Vegas in Henderson. The Travel Channel's "American Casino" has been filming there since January 2004. Hasson describes the program as being "part educational and part advertising."

**George Maloof '88** is the owner of the popular Palms Las Vegas Casino Resort. Known as one of the hippest hotels around, The Palms has played home to a number of reality television programs, including MTV's "The Real World Las Vegas," "Party at the Palms," "Inked," "The Bachelor," and "Dr. 90210."

**What do employees have to say about the various television reality program crews and the disruption/excitement they pose to guests of the property?**

**COOPER:** There wasn't a major disruption to business here at the resort, as the crew took the whole Banyan wing of our hotel encompassing 75 rooms. They were generally a well-disciplined bunch. The guests staying at the resort knew about the production due to the number of Americans present and the amount of equipment that they brought in with them.

During the filming, the site was restricted so tourists couldn't visit. The small casino at the resort was a plus for the crew—they spent most evenings playing blackjack and listening to their own music.

**HASSON:** Guests usually are pretty tolerant of filming. If they're curious, they'll steer toward it. Since we [hotel staff] have become used to having camera crews following us around (cast members are often followed by cameras—since nothing on this program is "set up," they take a lot of footage while they wait for things to

happen), we have really become indifferent to the cameras.

**MALOOF:** People seem to get a kick out of seeing these shows filmed. We're very particular about what productions we let in and the majority of our guests enjoy knowing that these things are going on around them.

**How has the show's viewing increased tourism to your area?**

**COOPER:** The show hasn't had a major impact on the tourism industry in Vanuatu. The main reason for this is the



accessibility to Vanuatu—there are only direct flights to Vila from Sydney and Brisbane, Australia; Auckland, New Zealand; Fiji; and Noumea New Cal. The national carrier Air Vanuatu flies only one plane so there isn't any competition.

The majority of our clientele come from Eastern Australia and New Zealand during the winter months (June through September). Vanuatu competes with the Southeast Asian countries (such as Australia and New Zealand) that are more affordable and accessible. Most North Americans don't know where Vanuatu is and may only know of Fiji and Tahiti. From the United States, you would have to fly to Australia or New Zealand and then connect to Port Vila.

**BLOOM:** Many of our guests are loyal fans of the Travel Channel and when they see one of our culinary greats featured, it entices them to visit the same spot. That reservation, which I can make, enables them to experience what they witnessed from their home, allowing us to help them live out that fantasy.

**HASSON:** Our target audience is twofold—those who enjoy traveling for hotel/casino getaways, and the uninitiated to the industry—those who might not have thought of it as a vacation destination before. By being able to see the back-of-the-house and what goes on behind the scenes on television, they're curious to see the operation for themselves.

**MALOOF:** First of all, these shows help promote even more tourism to Las Vegas. When



The Las Vegas Strip

we pursued having “The Real World” film at The Palms, we knew it would help promote the city as well as help establish our new hotel as a brand. Nobody knew who we were and with the huge following “The Real World” has, we knew it could only help.

**Do employees get asked a lot of questions related to the show?**

**COOPER:** Our employees no longer get questions asked about Survivor. On the Vanuatu island tour, you stop at “Survivor Beach” but it looks very different than the way it did on television. People don't choose to travel to Vanuatu because of “Survivor”—it's a side attraction.

**BLOOM:** According to our team members, people may ask where Sandra Bullock filmed a scene from “Miss Congeniality 2” or where a scene was filmed on one of our

gondolas. However, they do seem to remember travel and restaurant programs and ask more detailed questions about those items.

**HASSON:** Yes, they do. TV is a powerful medium with a broad reach and consumer appeal. It seems now that when our cast members are traveling across the country (really, to anywhere the Travel Channel broadcasts), they are recognized. They also get asked a lot about if the show is truly “real” or scripted. We let them know that everything that happens on “American Casino” is real, unlike some other so-called reality shows. What viewers see is what we really do. There is always a little bit of chaos, uncertainty, and confusion but these are all brought to resolution by the end of each episode.

**MALOOF:** All the time! The shows that have filmed here have really added to the Palms' promotional value. People ask about the various suites that they've seen on TV as well as other locations around the property.

*The above questions took into account a variety of reality shows filmed in Las Vegas. However, since "Survivor" is filmed in places not many people have visited, we asked Damian Cooper a few extra questions.*

**Do people seem more apt to want to stay in a luxury resort when visiting Vanuatu or to try to rough it?**

**COOPER:** As there aren't a lot of backpackers' accommodations on the island and I haven't heard of anybody camping out on "Survivor Beach," most tend to stay in the resorts. Vanuatu is more of a family-friendly destination. More families are heading to our resort, while honeymooners tend to go to one of our smaller competitors. Our clientele want luxury when they head away, something that takes their mind off everyday living.



Hotel Lobby at Le Meridien Port Vila Resort & Casino



The Palms Hotel in Las Vegas

**Was "Survivor" a turning point in terms of notoriety for the island and for those who work there?**

**COOPER:** A few people still wear "Survivor" T-shirts and have related merchandise but you don't hear much about it. Vanuatu still has a long way to go in growing as a tourist destination, but that's the reason that most people come here—because it is unspoiled. There is no heavy industry, there are no fast food outlets, there are no English cinemas—it's a very traditional way of life. Most of my staff members are among the first generation in their families to work outside of the village. The Ni-Vanuatu people are very religious, with a good proportion attending church on Saturdays and Sundays. Alcohol sales (except for the resorts and a few bars)

are banned from Saturday noon through Monday morning. Shops are closed Saturday afternoon and all day Sunday.

*To sum up the impact of reality television, we went to Professor Patti Shock, the department chair for the Tourism & Convention Department in the Harrah Hotel College. She shares her thoughts on the impact reality TV has had on the industry.*

**SHOCK:** "Survivor" and the "Amazing Race" have certainly piqued more interest in adventure travel, which is a growing segment of the tourism industry. Shows like "Party at the Palms" or "American Casino" have been a marketer's dream, drawing people to see in person what they have seen on television. With reality shows, people actually feel they could be a part of the action



# Congratulations

**Bo Bernhard** '99 MA, '02 Ph.D., who teaches Sociology and Hotel Management courses, was recently awarded the Faculty International Development Award by UNLV.



Assistant Professor  
Bo Bernhard

**Seonghee Cho** '04 Ph.D., won a Best Paper Award at the Academy of Management conference in Hawaii. Based on her dissertation, "Examining the Impact of Human Resources Management on Organizational Performance," her paper will be published in the Best Paper Proceedings of the 2005 Academy of Management Meeting.

**Myounghee Ha**, '03 MS and **Curtis Love**, Ph.D. published an article called "Exploring Content and Design Factors Associated with Convention and Visitors Bureau Web Site Development: An Analysis of Recognition by Meeting Managers" in the Journal of Convention and Event Tourism, Vol. 7(1) 2005.



Associate Professor  
Curtis Love



Assistant Professor  
Christian Hardigree

The UNLV Outstanding Faculty Award was presented this spring to **Christian Hardigree** '93, who teaches in the Hotel Management department.

Students **Fouad Sadiki**, **Monica Moradkhan**, **Jessica Adler**, and **Loren Mack** attended the International Tourism

Students Conference in Madrid, Spain in April 2005. The students were chosen to attend after a process that included an application, an interview, and an analysis of a research article.

**Gail Sammons** '87 MS was elected by the faculty to serve the next term as chairperson of the Hotel Management department.



Associate Professor  
Gail Sammons

Students **Cre'shea Trexler** '05 and **Laura Plenkovich** '05 were honored at this year's Salute to Excellence during the National Restaurant Show in Chicago.

Doctoral student **Ivan Turnipseed** was elected as national finance director at this year's National Society of Minorities in Hospitality Conference in Charlotte, N.C. The UNLV Chapter received awards for its visual display of the conference theme. Turnipseed also received a scholarship from the International Programs office to study "community-based sustainable tourism" in Africa over the summer.

## WELCOME NEW FACULTY

**Christine Bergman** spent two years at UNLV visiting faculty member and is now an associate professor in the Department of Food and Beverage Management (FAB). She teaches upper and lower division classes for the Department of Nutrition Sciences and teaches Culture and Cuisine, Principles of Quantity Food Production and Nutrition in Foodservice for FAB.

Previously, Bergman was employed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as a research chemist, investigating the genetic control and improvement of the health-beneficial and functional properties of rice and its co-products. She has also served as a nutritional services director of a rural hospital and education director of a Boys' and Girls' Club.

Her Ph.D. and MS degrees are in Food Science from Michigan State University and University of Arizona, respectfully. Her BS degree in clinical nutrition was obtained from Loma Linda University. She is also a registered dietitian.

**Tyra Hilliard** was recently appointed associate professor of meetings and conventions, having worked more than fifteen years in the hospitality and tourism industry. Prior to joining UNLV, Hilliard was an assistant professor of tourism and hospitality management at George Washington University where she was responsible for teaching courses including conference and expositions, convention and meeting management, event management



Associate Professor  
Tyra Hilliard

and risk management. She also served as executive director of the International Institute of Tourism Studies.

Hilliard is the chair of the Convention Industry Council's APEX Contracts Panel and was recently appointed chair of the Professional Convention Management Association Council on Education. She was named one of the 25 most influential people in the meeting industry according to *Meeting News* in 2004. She earned a BA in business administration at Georgetown University, a MA in education and human development (tourism administration) at George Washington University, a J.D. at Georgia State University School of Law and is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in human environmental studies (hospitality & tourism administration) at Oklahoma State University.

**Yen-Soon Kim**, Ph.D. is an assistant professor teaching FAB 467 – Quantity Food Management this fall. She earned her Ph.D. from Oklahoma State University, with a specialty in hospitality administration. Both her bachelor of science degree and her master of science degree are in food science and nutrition from Soonchunhyang University in Korea.



Assistant Professor  
Yen-Soon Kim

Before coming to UNLV, Kim worked as an assistant professor in the Department of Nutrition, Hospitality, and Retailing at Texas Tech University. Prior to that, she gained food service industry experience working at ARAMARK Co., Sodexo-Marriott Foodservice, and Burger King.

Her major areas of research focus are foodservice management, secondary hospitality education, nutrition, job satisfaction, and customer satisfaction.



# Alumni Updates

## 1970s

**Chris Bigelow '74** is the president of Bigelow Companies, Inc. in Kansas City, Mo. In 2004, he was named 13th Most Influential Person in Sports Facilities Management and Design by the *Sports Business Journal*; he was elected president of the National Association of Concessionaires; was a keynote speaker at Venue Management Association Conference in Sydney, Australia; served as the food and beverage division director for the Association of Luxury Suite Directors; and was the chair elect for the International Association of Assembly Managers Foundation.

**Kent Viesselman '78** works at the Golden Nugget in Las Vegas as the assistant room service manager.

## 1980s

**Walter Lundberg '81** lives in Seattle, Wash. where he is a senior investigator for the United States Department of Labor, Employee Benefits Security Administration. In this position, he investigates pension and health care fraud issues under Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA). He previously worked for the IRS, CID as a special agent after beginning his career at the Flamingo Hilton and in Beijing, China.

**Joe Domina '82** is a regional executive chef with Centerplate and is based at the Indiana Convention Center & RCA Dome (home of the Colts). He and his family (wife Keltie, children Joey and Emily) have lived in Indiana for almost five years, moving from Portland, Ore., where Joe worked at the Portland Hilton for 18 years. His wife owns Kelties Restaurant in Westfield, Ind.

**Peter Connolly '87** lives in Henderson, Nev., where he works for Anthem Wealth Management and [www.AnthemWealth.com](http://www.AnthemWealth.com). His companies serve individuals and businesses in wealth management and preservation, including: retirement strategies; estate protection; risk management; education funding; investments; employee and executive benefits. He can be reached by e-mail at [peter@anthemwealth.com](mailto:peter@anthemwealth.com).

## 1990s

**Nancy Dunmyer Hamlin '90** lives in Detroit where she is the director of operations for Levy Restaurants at Ford Field (which means, she feeds 65,000 people at a time!). When you sit down to watch the Super Bowl on Feb. 6, remember that a Harrah Hotel College alumna is responsible for the entire food and beverage operation of that event!

**Kristen Shubert '91** was recently promoted to the food and beverage director of the Sands Expo & Convention Center, where seven of the country's largest conventions are held. She is also a professional jet ski racer, having attained the ranking of seventh in the world in 2000, eighth in the world, and National Off-shore Champion in 2001, and tenth in the world in 2002, and is racing again in 2005. She is also actively involved in Habitat for Humanity.

**R. Scott Barber '93** was named senior vice president and general manager of Harrah's Atlantic City in April. Prior to his promotion, he served as vice president of property operations and before that, he was the vice president of property operations for Harrah's Council Bluffs and Bluffs Run, as well as vice president of marketing, director of marketing and casino marketing manager for Harrah's Cherokee. In addition to his UNLV degree, he holds an Associate of Arts degree in Hotel Administration from Paul Smith's College in New York.

**Kamal Fakhoury '93** is the general manager of the Jumeira Rotana Hotel in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. He is very happy to be back in Dubai and looks forward to hearing from any other UNLV grads in the Arabian Gulf. He can be reached at [kamal.fakhoury@rotana.com](mailto:kamal.fakhoury@rotana.com).

**Pedro Garcia '93** joined the World Market Center in Las Vegas in March 2005 as the show operations assistant manager. The World Market Center is the largest hospitality contract furnishings showroom complex on the West Coast. When complete, the Market will hold two semi-annual markets a year. Pedro was previously employed at GES Expositions as a service executive in the Exhibitor Services Department.

**Denise Worthington Moss '93** lives near Baltimore, Md. where she works for T. Rowe Price. She married Donald Moss, Jr. on May 6, 2005.

**Brad Randel '93** works as a casino floor supervisor at the Bellagio in Las Vegas. He and wife Jennifer have been married for 12 years and they have a five-year-old daughter, Holly.

**Denise Phillips Beban '95** is starting her own business, offering creative, planning, and logistical services for parties and events in the Willamette Valley, Ore. She previously worked in alumni relations at the University of Oregon and also serves as the UNLV alumni club coordinator for her region. She is actively involved with the Eugene Active 20/30 Club (an international service organization for the welfare of children). She and husband Bryan will celebrate their fifth wedding anniversary in Paris in October. Denise can be reached by telephone at (541) 461-2011 or by e-mail at [heyreb95@comcast.net](mailto:heyreb95@comcast.net).

**Damian Cooper '95** is the food and beverage manager at the Le Meridien in Port Vila, Vanuatu. Previously, he lived in Sydney, Australia.

**Andy Sabatini '96** and his wife own the De Pere Inn LLC in Helena, Mont. They previously owned a hotel in Green Bay, Wis.

**JungHoon Lee '97** is the general manager of a Tony Roma's restaurant in Seoul, Korea. Before returning to Korea in 2001, he worked for five years as a front office manager at the Fort Lee Hilton in New Jersey. He began working for Tony Roma's in 2003. JungHoon has two daughters and lives in a suburb of Seoul.

**Kelly Miller '97** lives in Charlestown, Mass., where she is the director of catering at the Westin Copley Place Hotel in Boston. She will be married in October 2005 in Newport, R.I. and her new last name will be Bishop.

**Jean Lorenzo '98** is a slot supervisor at Bellagio and a realtor with Liberty Realty. She married Ryan Witherow on September 17, 2005.

**Lance Thompson '98** works as the director of operations at Esperanza Resort (Auberge Resorts) in Los Cabos, Mexico. He has helped open four of Auberge's properties, including The Lodge at CordeValle, Calif.; The Inn at Palmetto Bluff in S.C.; Calistoga Ranch in California's wine country; and Esperanza Resort.

**Roni Benenson '99** was recently promoted to travel industry sales manager for Caesars Palace in Las Vegas.

**Bernard Chan '99** works as a letter carrier for the United States Postal Service in Palo Alto, Calif. And was married earlier this year.

**Henry Tsai '99** began his new position as an assistant professor at the School of Hotel

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# In Remembrance

Richard Emanuel Basile, a professor in the Harrah Hotel College from 1970 to 1988 who initiated courses that still are taught today, died June 10 at Nathan Adelson Hospice. He was 83. A Navy commander during World War II, Basile was buried at Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C.

Basile taught management skills, franchising and labor relations courses at UNLV and served as professor emeritus after retiring from teaching in 1988. Basile created UNLV's hotel and restaurant franchising course and co-created the school's hotel architecture course with noted Las Vegas architect Homer Rissman.

"The two put together a unique course, where Dick would tell students what management expected from the architect and Homer would say what the architect expected from management," said Jerry Vallen, founding dean of the College.

Vallen said Basile also established the standards for evaluating the mandatory work experience program, where students get paying jobs in the hotel industry to gain practical experience that also affects their final

grade. "Dick had an image that projected management — the way he dressed, the way he was organized, his demand for perfection," Vallen said. "He was what he taught."

Basile earned a bachelor of arts degree in Geology at Washington and Lee University and worked for the U.S. Geologic Survey from 1946 to 1948, conducting field work in Montana and North Dakota. He later earned a doctorate of humane letters from Combs College. During his business career, Basile was managing director of the Hotel Saranac in New York, a board member of the Marriott's Camelback Inn and Resort in Scottsdale, Ariz., and secretary-treasurer for the Paradise Valley Physical Therapy Clinic in Las Vegas.

Basile, who also mediated labor relations, was a member of the Nevada Employee-Management Relations Board and the American Arbitration Association. He was a recipient of the Winston Churchill Medal of Wisdom and was a consulting editor for Restaurant Hospitality Magazine. Basile also was a member of the Masons and the Las Vegas Rotary Club No. 1401.

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and Tourism Management in the Hong Kong Polytechnic University in August. His wife Tita and son Austin are also living in Hong Kong.

## 2000s

**Emily Bauer '00** is the assistant director of orientation and new student programs at Purdue University in West Lafayette, Ind.

**Eun-Young (Kate) Chang '00** recently became the senior sales manager at the Sheraton Hong Kong Hotel & Towers. She previously worked in sales at the Sheraton Chicago.

**Rahul Mark Barua '01** has returned to his home country of India to be the director of

operations at Center Point Hotels. His work for the past six years with the Four Seasons Hotels in Las Vegas and Austin, Tex., along with his Harrah Hotel College degree, prepared him to run two small boutique hotels. Next year, he will be looking for experienced managers for the new resort opening in 2006 in Shillong. He welcomes inquiries via e-mail to: RmarkB@hotmail.com.

**Charles Le Grand Butler '01** received a doctor of jurisprudence degree from Willamette University College of Law in May 2005.

**Natasha McGlinn '01** (Psychology major '00) is the sales manager for two Marriott properties in the Reno/Sparks area. She will also oversee a third property when it opens next

summer. If anyone is planning a trip to the region, Natasha welcomes inquiries via e-mail to: Natasha.mcglinn@marriott.com.

**Nino Robert Escobar-Chua '03** moved to Huntington Beach, Calif. and is working with the Four Seasons Newport Beach as a banquet coordinator. He also recently obtained his real estate license.

**Grace Herbert '03** is the new corporate sales manager for Sandia Casino & Resort in Albuquerque, New Mexico, which will be opening in fall 2005.

**Mary Fanok '04** lives in Charlotte, N.C. and was recently promoted to a territory manager for Hormel Foods.

**Frankie Lococo '04** recently received a promotion to assistant guest services manager at the Four Seasons Aviara in San Diego.

**Aaron Arneson '05** accepted a production manager position with Triumph Entertainment (located at the Fashion Show Mall in Las Vegas) upon graduation. He produces events, including fashion shows, corporate events, television shows, movie productions, and national marketing tours, for one of the country's largest shopping malls. While an undergraduate, Aaron was the director of entertainment and programming for UNLV's CSUN Student Government.

# HARRAH'S HELPS FIRST GENERATION SCHOLAR

by Tony Allen '05

For UNLV freshman Kissena Pilgrim, the creation of the Harrah's Entertainment First Generation Scholarship couldn't have come at a better time. "Quite simply, without it I wouldn't be in college," said Pilgrim, a native New Yorker who recently moved to Las Vegas with her brother.

Pilgrim came to Southern Nevada during the summer of 2004, with no place to live, and certainly no money for college. "It was definitely a struggle," she said. "My mom said she had no money to give me, so my brother and I came to Las Vegas because we heard it was the city of opportunity."

Opportunity didn't come right away, though. She struggled, but graduated near the top of her class from Las Vegas Valley High School. While at Valley, she had the opportunity to visit UNLV with classmates and guidance counselors, and felt comfortable from the start.

"I heard a man speak to us about how he was in a similar situation, but persevered and graduated with a degree in hotel management," she said. "He said it changed his life, and that if he could become a success, we could too."

From there, Pilgrim gained interest in the hotel management program at UNLV, eventually attending orientation seminars and hoping that she would be able to find a way to afford college.

Enter the Harrah's Entertainment First Generation Scholarship. Established this past December, the scholarship is intended for



students pursuing a degree in the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration and is funded by The Harrah's Foundation. Students may be at the undergraduate or graduate level, but cannot have a parent who has obtained a college degree.

"By reducing or eliminating financial barriers that stand between talented students and higher education, the Harrah's First Generation Scholarship Fund does more than create opportunities for recipients themselves,"



Gary Loveman

said Gary Loveman, chairman and chief executive officer for Harrah's Entertainment, Inc. "Our goal with the scholarship is to instill an educational tradition within

families that may be passed along for generations," he said. Ten students, including Pilgrim, will be the first recipients to receive the scholarship this fall. This scholarship supports the Harrah Hotel College's diversity initiative, designed to recruit and retain ethnic minority students to study hospitality administration and pursue their degrees to graduation.

"Through contributions to this scholarship fund, Harrah's Entertainment, Inc. is making a difference for the next generation of students," said Stuart H. Mann, dean of the Harrah Hotel College. "Through their generosity, Harrah's is making a difference for the students enrolled today and for the future of our hospitality industry."

"There was a time that I didn't know which way to turn," said Pilgrim. "But since I've been in Las Vegas, things have really gotten better, and thanks to Harrah's and the hotel college, I finally have direction."



# STAYING SAFE

Continued from page 15

law enforcement agencies than we were pre-Sept. 11,” said Sibella. “We have also found new technological solutions to aid us in identifying potential threats to people and property. For example, we have a shared database that contains pictures and information on suspects and undesirables and this information can be accessed and updated from any of our MGM MIRAGE properties. We’re also doing interesting things with computerized recognition software.”

Sibella knows that keeping up with technology in this arena is as important as any other aspect of running a successful, responsible hotel/casino. “We are providing our surveillance operators and security officers the most advanced tools to work with.”



“We are responsible for providing a safe and pleasant environment for our visitors,” said Sibella. “This requires a proactive approach to mitigate risk. We regularly receive and evaluate intelligence from many sources, including federal, state, and local law enforcement sources. Additionally, the size of MGM MIRAGE allows for a broad sharing of information amongst our security departments.”

Alumnus Jeff Voyles '98 is another expert in the field. He completed an internship with the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino in 1993 and in 1998, he was promoted to a table

games floor supervisor position, where he became very interested in advantage play (otherwise known as card counting). Since then, he has developed a well-rounded perspective of how certain table games can be beaten and how industry policies, procedures, and regulations form the foundation of the industry.

Currently the MGM Grand Division Training Manager of Casino Operations, Voyles stressed the importance of training programs in the hospitality, and especially the gaming, industry. “The fact that gaming is a 24-hour business is the biggest challenge,” he said. “I am responsible for developing training programs, executing training programs, and motivating about 1,300 people in my department. By working closely with the surveillance and security departments, employee-training programs have really evolved since Sept. 11.”

“We try to teach employees to constantly be aware of their surroundings. There's a natural flow to everything and we want them to be able to detect unnatural activities—this is the same whether we're dealing with cheaters or potential terrorists. Whereas Las Vegas used to be a place where anything goes, we now have to re-think that stance and emphasize that nothing that seems out of the ordinary is too small to overlook,” said Voyles.

Voyles also commented that the majority of Las Vegas Strip properties are working together, cross-referencing each other's safety models to build a better model for all. “In addition to Sept. 11 bringing a lot of competitive

companies closer, it has also brought a lot of departments within companies closer,” said Voyles. “We are now more aware of the level of complexity within which security and surveillance personnel work.



Graduate students Rachel Haynes and SoJung Lee learn from instructor Jeff Voyles.  
Photo by Geri Kodey

Casinos know that their safety reputation precedes them and while the average tourist hasn't seen any differences, there's a lot going on behind the scenes to keep these places as safe as possible.”

In addition to his position at the MGM Grand, Voyles teaches in the Harrah Hotel College and also presents seminars related to the gaming industry. He is also helping to write a new gaming management textbook that should be published before the end of 2006. In the past, he has taught Protection of Casino Games and Gaming Regulations and Control classes. He conducts a number of workshops and lectures within UNLV's International Gaming Institute (IGI).

“I teach about a third of my classes in the fully-functioning surveillance room located on campus,” Voyles stated. “It's a wonderful place to learn about the field. With monitors, table games, cameras, hard and soft count rooms, and the latest in facial recognition software, it's a model of most casino surveillance rooms. It's great for students to get hands-on experience,” he concluded.

# WILLIAM F. HARRAH COLLEGE OF HOTEL ADMINISTRATION HONOR ROLL 2004-2005



Contributors to the Annual Fund are the mainstay of the Harrah Hotel College's development program. This unrestricted support is essential to the flexibility needed to address shifting priorities. Total giving to the Harrah Hotel College reached \$956,785 during the 2004 – 2005 fiscal year (July 1 – June 30).

Thanks to the generosity of 323 alumni and friends, the increase in gifts continues to grow steadily, and we are extremely appreciative to those of you who have made gifts to the Annual Fund and Dean's Associates, student scholarships, faculty enrichment, programs, endowments and planned giving.

The size of the gift is not as important as your willingness to help make a difference – every dollar counts and every dollar helps. Please know how much your contributions are valued. It is with gratitude and pleasure that we acknowledge the Harrah Hotel College's benefactors in this issue of the *Premier* alumni magazine.

Thank you,

Karin J. Olsen  
Director of External Relations  
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### The Dean's Associates Giving Program membership

begins at the \$1,000 level. Your support has tremendous influence on the entire UNLV Harrah Hotel College community. The growth of the college's ever-increasing international reputation requires us to adapt the traditional values of a hospitality education to the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which are essential to the economic and social development of Nevada and around the world.

Annual giving to the Dean's Associates program has funded student professional development, which allows students to represent UNLV at national and international academic meetings, conferences, and industry events. Due to the great need for diverse industry leaders, we have implemented a number of recruitment programs to recruit and retain minority students, who will soon graduate with a superior hospitality degree. Our students are the future of the industry and they are truly an important investment. Your generous contributions support these critical academic efforts.

As our campus grows, so does our reliance on private funding from alumni, friends and other community leaders. Please support our students and college programs—whether you are able to increase your gift significantly or modestly, **your support is vital to the Harrah Hotel College.**

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Brett Magnan, vice president of hotel operations and Joe Hasson, vice president and general manager, Green Valley Ranch Station Casino, members of the Silver Medallion Society.



# DESTINATION SINGAPORE

## UNLV LOOKS TO INVENT THE FUTURE OF HOSPITALITY EDUCATION

by Karen Sharp

The UNLV College of Hotel Administration's first international campus is one step closer to opening its doors. It is anticipated that final approvals to begin will soon be granted by the Singapore Minister of Education and that all of the necessary legal requirements will then follow in place.

In September, the Board of Regents unanimously approved the advance of funds as well as the university's request to begin hiring faculty for the "UNLV Singapore" campus.

The 12,000 square foot campus will be housed on the tenth and eleventh floors inside the National Library of Singapore, a prestigious building that has been compared to the United States Library of Congress. Nearly 250 students are expected to attend classes in fall 2006. The campus will offer a bachelor's degree program in hotel administration and hospitality management and an executive master's degree in hospitality. Dr. Andy Nazarechuk will serve as dean. "Singapore values education and UNLV will provide a valuable service by offering our hospitality management courses for the benefit of the region's tourism industry," he said. Nazarechuk is currently overseeing the building operations in Singapore.

The Economic Development Board of Singapore is actively engaged in helping UNLV create the UNLV Singapore campus. With the approvals from the Board of Regents, the university will begin hiring six to eight instructors to teach in the hotel administration program.

The next step is to finalize the class schedule for fall 2006, complete the admissions application process, and recruit faculty. "UNLV is fortunate that its first international campus will be located in Singapore, Asia's educational hub," Nazarechuk said. Cornell University, Stanford University, Johns Hopkins University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology are a few of the other institutions organizing programs in Singapore to help boost the economy and improve tourism revenue. "The proximity of Singapore to China and other Asian nations makes it the ideal place for our hospitality management programs as Asian tourism increases dramatically over the next 10 to 20 years," said Dean Stuart Mann.

The timing couldn't be better for this program. It comes on the heels of Singapore's introduction to legalized gambling, which the government approved last year. Mann said because of this, gaming

management courses could be offered in the near future.

The Singapore campus is just the jumping off point for international ventures. Dr. Mann said the Harrah Hotel College is working toward future projects in Mexico, India, China, South Korea and the Philippines. Some Singapore institutions have encouraged UNLV faculty to train their instructors and students in gaming management. The government is anxious to see more Asians enter in hotel management, whereas currently mostly Americans and Europeans hold those positions. "We are very proud to be asked by the Singapore government to stand side by side with many of the world's greatest academic programs," said Mann. Nazarechuk agrees. "Singapore is creating an 'educational hub' and seeking to become the destination where students go to obtain their degrees," he said.

"UNLV will play an important role in this vision by providing our world class hospitality management courses." The Economic Development Board of Singapore hopes to have upwards of 150,000 international students at any given time within Singapore's borders.

For more information on the UNLV Singapore campus please contact Dr. Andy Nazarechuk, dean of UNLV Singapore at [andy.nazarechuk@unlv.edu](mailto:andy.nazarechuk@unlv.edu).



The National Library will house the UNLV Singapore Campus.

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It's the best way to demonstrate your pride, stay connected with your fellow Alumni, give back to UNLV and its students, and stay in college forever. Learn more about the UNLV Alumni Association at [www.unlv alumni.com](http://www.unlv alumni.com) or call us at 895-3621 or 1-800-829-ALUM.

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