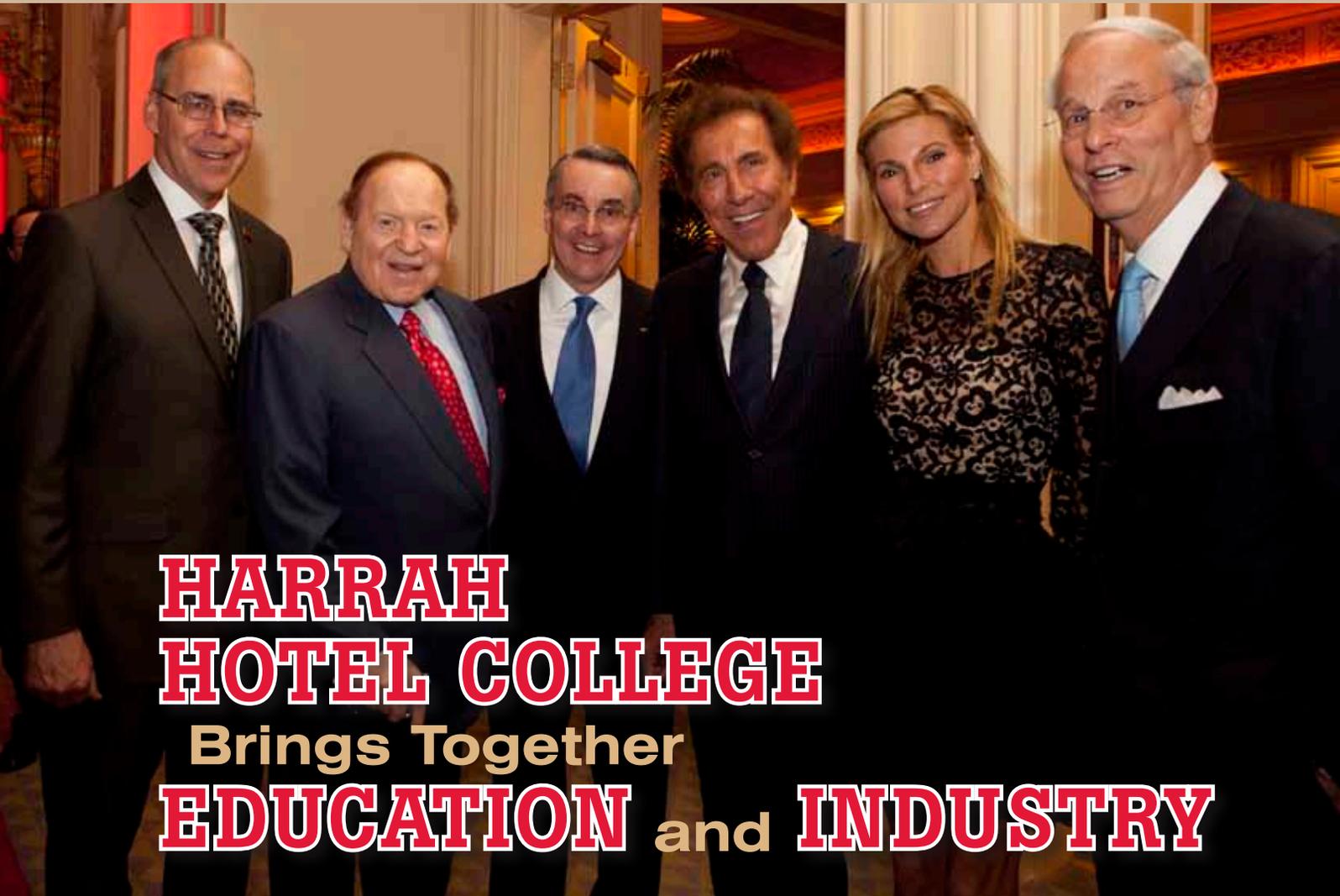


# PREMIER

Fall/Winter 2012



## HARRAH HOTEL COLLEGE Brings Together EDUCATION and INDUSTRY

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# UNLV

## PREMIER

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

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Cover photo courtesy of Sam Lee Fine Art Photography.  
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Design and production by Reprographics/Design Services

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This issue of *Premier* provides me an opportunity to reflect on my first two years as dean and to look forward with greater clarity as a result of all that has been accomplished in the past two years. My life has been enriched by my direct encounters with academe, and I feel that academe has been enriched by the private-sector perspective I brought to the university. Truthfully, there has also been an element of challenge — both for me and for the college during these past two years. But we are collectively stronger, more focused, and better positioned than ever for moving forward.

In my message in the inaugural issue of *e-Premier*, I focused on the fact that, after working through the leadership changes, a strategic planning process, and tough legislative and fiscal challenges, we are now positioned to “play offense.” This is clearly evident in the substantial strengthening of our academic foundation with the hiring of the largest, strongest group of new faculty and professional staff — perhaps in the 45-year history of this college. While we are not finished with this very strategic hiring process, we have accomplished as much or more than our highest expectations when we initiated this part of our strategic plan. You can read more about this outstanding group in a subsequent section of this issue of *Premier*.

With this strategic hiring process off to such a robust start, we are clearly better prepared to build on the pre-eminent academic reputation developed in the first four decades of this wonderful program. You can expect to see us continue to strengthen the foundation and to deliver an even stronger program as we focus on more of our strategic initiatives, including some of the following items:

**New academic building.** While much remains to be done, I am encouraged by the conversations that are moving us toward the 2013 legislative session.

**International Gaming Institute and the governor's global gaming initiative.** As previewed in the inaugural issue of *e-Premier*, positive

momentum has been generated through presentations to the governor's Gaming Policy Committee to lay the foundation for the key role the International Gaming Institute (IGI) will play in creating an “intellectual hub for global gaming.” The recent visit by President Smatresk and me to Singapore and Macau reinforced both the opportunity and the obligation for UNLV and the state of Nevada to accelerate our efforts in this regard.

**Executive education and outreach.**

We have taken steps to reactivate the Hospitality Research & Development Center (HRDC). HRDC will do for nongaming programs what IGI has done in terms of gaming-related executive/professional development and research. Together, they will add an important and growing dimension to our college — leveraging our exceptional (and expanded) academic resources.

**Curriculum changes.** I am excited to see the very strategic changes to our curriculum going into effect this fall, as detailed in a related story in this issue of *Premier*. There was a positive reaction to these changes when we announced them last year; it is now time to implement them.

On a personal level, I want to acknowledge the passing of someone who shares a very special connection to our William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration. Verna Harrah, the wife of William F. Harrah, played an integral role in her husband's name gracing our college in perpetuity. She passed away June 29. Without her financial and moral support, it would not have been possible for us to share a special bond with William F. Harrah, someone who meant so much to our state and the hospitality industry for which we so effectively prepare young men and women to excel. Verna Harrah will be missed. ■■

# Hospitality Heroes

In celebration of the U.S. Travel Association's annual National Travel and Tourism Week, the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority (LVCVA) honors exemplary employees in the hospitality industry.

Since 2010, the LVCVA has honored UNLV Harrah Hotel College students with the "Hospitality Heroes" designation. Students are nominated by hotel college faculty and are selected based on academic achievements, leadership qualities, and contributions to the hospitality field.

On Friday, April 27, 2012, LVCVA representatives surprised hotel college students Michael Ahn, Leanne Ford, Alex Salvo, and Karla Washington with the award and a gift bag with Las Vegas memorabilia. 📷



Left to right: Alex Salvo, Karla Washington, Hotel College Dean Don Snyder, Leanne Ford, Michael Ahn



Rebel Business Network founder Matt Engle explains the new program

## Alumni Helping Alumni: Support Alumni Businesses & Professionals

In today's tough economy, alumni can help each other by networking and seeking products and services for personal and business needs through fellow alumni in their area.

On May 16, the Alumni Association launched the Rebel Business Network. The network offers a quick and easy way to connect with fellow Rebels in the business community.

Benefits of being part of the Rebel Business Network include:

- Business Directory — A searchable database of alumni professionals available for view by the general public - similar to electronic yellow pages. The business directory is a convenient way to find alumni who offer products and services for your use.
- Hire a Rebel — Gain introductions to alumni for hiring and other employment opportunities by searching the listings.
- Networking — Members will have the opportunity to build relationships with each other through luncheons, mixers, and relationship building events.

To be eligible for the Rebel business Network, you must be a current member of the UNLV Alumni Association and an alumnus/a of the university. Join or renew your membership today by visiting <https://netcommunity.unlv.edu/network>. 📷

# Hilton Foundation Grant Enables Students to Attend National Conference

Because of the generosity of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, a group of hotel college students was able to travel to Washington, D.C., in February to attend the 23rd annual National Society of Minorities in Hospitality (NSMH) national conference.

"It is an honor and privilege for UNLV's National Society of Minorities in Hospitality to receive funding from such an accomplished, selfless, and giving leader of the hospitality industry, Conrad N. Hilton," says UNLV NSMH vice president and conference attendee Matini Sinirath. "The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation grant was truly a gift that gave the members within our club the opportunity to gain firsthand experience to network with industry professionals from many well-known hospitality companies, meet other aspiring hospitality students from around the country, engage in workshops that build professional development, and learn ways to stay competitive within the



industry." The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation grant was awarded to the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration in March 2011 to support the recruitment, retention, and professional development of students. The fund supports student travel, awards, and related expenses so students have the ability to attend industry events such as conferences, events, seminars, and other related industry activities that build upon their

classroom learning.

"Mr. Hilton's benevolence not only allowed several of our members a chance to attend a cross-country function that would have otherwise been inaccessible, but it also inspired each of us to seek a way to 'pay it forward,'" says UNLV NSMH President Mitch Harper. "The most important thing we learned at this

conference is that the competition out there is fierce! Students need to seek out these types of events to cultivate networking relationships as early and as often as possible."

After attending this year's conference, Harper says, "Matini and I have decided to pursue an expanded role in our organization. We are committed to bringing home the Chapter Community Service award at next year's convention!"



## Sweet Victory

The fourth annual Dean's Cup was held March 28 at The Orleans Bowling Center. Pitting the Harrah Hotel College against the Lee Business School made for an exciting afternoon with the hotel college coming out the winner! Dean Don Snyder is now able to display the Dean's Cup in his office for the next year.

# Alumnus Provides Gift Opportunity Through Book

One of the members of the hotel college's inaugural graduating class recently published a book. For Roger Wagner, '69, *No Work and All Play: Audacious Chronicles of a Casino Boss* is the culmination of his years working in the hospitality industry. Recalling his career in Las Vegas and Atlantic City, Wagner's chronicle includes such recognizable industry names as Jack Binion and Donald Trump.

"I wanted my book to serve several purposes beyond just being a memoir

for my family," says Wagner. "I especially wanted it to pique the interest of young people considering the hotel and casino business for a career. Since the UNLV hotel school played such a major role in helping me both select and shape a career in hospitality, I thought that perhaps I could write a book to demonstrate to potential students of UNLV that with a lot of determination, a



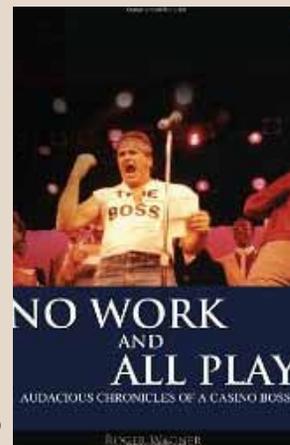
**Roger Wagner**

career in gaming hospitality is more fun and rewarding than almost any other career I can think of."

Wagner, who plans to donate half of the net royalties of the book's sales to the hotel college's Jerry Vallen Professorship, understands the significance of an advanced degree. "The value of a college education is

more important today than ever before.

Competition for the best-paying and most coveted jobs in our industry is so keen that you cannot just 'sneak by' the way we could years ago." He continues, "My entry into hotel casino management came quite by accident. But luck, timing, and fate are three ingredients of the gambling business, so it is appropriate that I got my start that way.



"My work experience in the industry was so enjoyable that when I learned that Professor Richard Strahlem was coordinating the development of a hotel school, I could not wait to be part of the first class of graduates. Early classroom study was primitive. There were few books written on the subject of hotel management, but new professors like Boyce Phillips and George Bussell joined a motivated new young dean, Jerry Vallen, to crank up the curriculum."

Wagner's book is available in Las Vegas at the Gambler's Book Club and can also be found on Amazon.com and at Barnes & Noble.



On June 5, alumni and friends gathered at the Stan Fulton Building to watch the episode premier of *Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives* when Guy Fieri, '90, visited UNLV for his Food Network program. Those in attendance enjoyed an evening of eating, drinking, networking, and reminiscing. In the last segment of the episode, Fieri arrived in his signature 1967 Chevy Camaro SS convertible at the Stan Fulton Building where Professor Vince Eade greeted him and walked him inside (Eade was Fieri's academic advisor while he was a UNLV student). Once inside, Fieri met with Executive Chef John Gremo, '02, and UNLV students, who prepared Thai sauté shrimp with Asian slaw. The recipe was posted on the Food Network's website for *Diners, Drive-Ins and Dives*.

# Global gaming conference could help Vegas build its 'intellectual capital,' experts say

For Bo Bernhard, bringing one of the world's most important gaming conferences to Las Vegas is an important step toward preserving the city's future as an international headquarters for gambling.

As casinos, and their revenue, spread across the world, Las Vegas has found itself taking a second row to other destinations, including Singapore and Macau.

But Bernhard, executive director of the International Gaming Institute at UNLV, has maintained that Vegas can keep from losing its foothold in an industry it practically invented the same way Houston has done in the oil industry.

"Even though most of the oil is produced overseas, most of the decisions in how the oil industry is run actually are made in Houston," Bernhard says. "Las Vegas could reinvent itself the same way and become the intellectual capital of the gaming industry."

The next step in that evolution could be the return of the International Conference on Gambling and Risk Taking, coming to Caesars Palace in May 2013, which Bernhard and Bill Eadington of the University of Nevada, Reno announced Monday morning. The 15th conference, held every three years since the 1970s, would come back to Vegas for the first time since 2000 in the first-ever collaboration between UNR and UNLV.

"This is really historic," Bernhard said during a news conference at the gaming institute's Stan Fulton Building.

Conference organizers hope to draw 300 to 500 participants from researchers to policy makers, manufacturers and executives in the gaming industry internationally. The focus will be to develop research to solve problems before they occur, as gaming spreads to areas where it never has been before.

"Gambling is not going to become an industry that matures quietly, like the insurance industry," Eadington said.

Research and studying of gambling were rare when Eadington started the first such conference in 1974. But by the end of the decade, attendees had become an eclectic group

ranging from old-school card counters to mathematicians and behavioral scientists.

"One reason gaming doesn't develop like the insurance or furniture industries is because it requires government approval to come into a community," Bernhard said.

It also has different ways it affects the community, Bernhard said: what happens inside the casino and its operations, and also what happens outside with both economic and social effects.

Next year's conference is expected to target research on the growing online gaming industry and how it effects casinos, in addition to growing research on problem gambling that has emerged in Canada and Europe in recent years, Eadington said.

Cost cuts at UNR kept the conference from going forward.

Organizers had hoped to put on the conference this year in Nevada, but cost cuts at UNR got in the way. By partnering with UNLV, Eadington said the two schools could combine resources. Plus, he said, putting the conference on the Las Vegas Strip just makes sense.

The conference is scheduled for May 27-31, 2013.

Eadington said learning about the research that now has been in the works for years could help communities and nations new to gambling head off potential problems before they happen.

As Bernhard and Eadington travel, they say they see other places watching the riches of gambling with no thought as to potential pitfalls that await them. Las Vegas acted much the same way, until reality hit with the crash of the economy in 2008 and the billion-dollar casino losses of 2010.

"When problems start emerging," he said, "the hope is you have a basis of research to address them, so you're not just shooting from the hip." ■

*This article by Ron Sylvester first appeared in the April 9, 2012 edition of the Las Vegas Sun.*



# International Gaming Institute

Bo Bernhard

## INTRODUCTION

The UNLV International Gaming Institute (IGI) was founded in 1993 to serve as an educational hub for the global gaming industry. With the expansion of gaming in the early 1990s, new jurisdictions often lacked expertise and turned to Nevada for educational programs focusing on regulatory and operational challenges. As these programs grew, the university moved quickly to hire Shannon Bybee, a regulatory and operational pioneer, as the IGI's first full-time executive director. Today, this regulatory and operational focus remains, and the IGI is widely regarded as a premier source of information and training for the international gaming industry, with program graduates from more than 50 different jurisdictions.

The IGI boasts the finest gaming educational facilities in the world, with an on-site casino lab featuring the latest slots and table games, a fully functional casino surveillance room, numerous "smart" classrooms and executive boardrooms, a bistro, conference facilities, and a prominent location on the corner of the UNLV campus.

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

The IGI offers instruction at the executive, intermediate, and basic levels. A full listing of standard courses can be found on its website at <http://igi.unlv.edu>. The most popular programs (especially for international groups) feature customized curricula, which usually consist of one to three

weeks of training provided by UNLV professors and industry professionals. Each program blends "classroom" learning and "real-world" learning, with lectures at the IGI in the morning and "living laboratory" site visits to Las Vegas-area gaming businesses in the afternoon. IGI also provides customized training off premises to gaming industry professionals and regulators worldwide.

Because of international demand and evolving technology capacity, the IGI recently began offering online programs. Currently, 11 Internet-based courses geared toward gaming industry middle-management professionals are offered. These courses culminate in a certificate of completion and have been attended by students in more than 30 countries.

Finally, throughout its history, the IGI has focused heavily on training government regulators who govern the world's gaming industry with the highest standards of rigor and integrity. Regulatory training is often conducted in concert with the Nevada Gaming Control Board and is delivered either at the IGI or "on the road" in gaming jurisdictions abroad (most recently in a weeklong program in South Africa attended by regulators from every African jurisdiction).

## RESEARCH PROGRAMS

The IGI conducts objective, scientific research on a variety of important issues pertaining to gambling and the global gaming industry. It publishes the twice-yearly UNLV Gaming Research & Review Journal, the premier peer-

reviewed publication in the gaming operations research field. The IGI has also been awarded more than \$1 million in grant-funded research from regulatory agencies, gaming industry companies, and government organizations worldwide.

Over the past five years, this research has been highlighted in keynote addresses on six continents and at each of the major international conferences in the gaming field. By their nature, these projects are cross-disciplinary and have incorporated academic partners in business, law, history, psychology, public health, sociology, policy, economics, and gaming management. The IGI recently partnered with the Brookings Mountain West program on campus to co-host a successful summit on gaming, technology, and health — and these two unique entities on campus plan to offer similar programs moving forward. In addition, the IGI has worked collaboratively with UNR's gaming programs, consolidating statewide efforts that will lead to greater efficiency, reach, and programmatic scope. In May of 2013, these collaborative efforts will be celebrated at the 15th International Conference on Gambling and Risk Taking, which will be co-hosted with the UNR Center for the Study of Gambling and Commercial Gaming. ■■

*To learn more about the International Gaming Institute and its programs, please visit [igi.unlv.edu](http://igi.unlv.edu).*

# UNLV PGA Golf Management National Advisory Board Members Visit Students

In March, Eric Dutt, vice president of golf operations for Caesars Entertainment, and Willy Choma, president of WPC Retail Consulting, visited the PGM 202 (merchandising and golf operations) students to share firsthand retail experience with the second-year students. Dutt, a longtime Las Vegan, won the Nevada State Amateur at age 17, held a number of positions with the PGA, and currently oversees Rio Secco Golf Club, Cascata, and the Butch Harmon School of Golf. Choma studied economics and business before going into the golf industry in 1991. He served as director of Canadian operations and director of operations for Las Vegas Golf and Tennis and since the inception of WPC Retail Consulting has worked on a multitude

of projects both domestically and abroad, including the Caesars Macau project in China.

During the visit, students were able to apply the concepts they learned in previous classes and gain a better understanding of how the lessons apply to real-life situations. The guest speakers discussed various strategies they've used over the years in their wide variety of experiences at different facilities.

"We could not have found two professionals with more experience, knowledge, and a general willingness to help our students than Eric and Willy," says graduate assistant Zaanan Telschow, who taught the PGM 202 class alongside past assistant director Chris Brown. "We sincerely thank them for their visit and continued support of



**Eric Dutt and Willy Choma share retail experiences with students**

the UNLV PGA Golf Management Program through service on our National Advisory Board." ■■

## UNLV PGA Golf Management University Program Honored by The First Tee of Southern Nevada, Las Vegas, Nevada

Annually, The First Tee of Southern Nevada selects a Facility of the Year for contributions with assisting

their association to grow the game of golf. This year, the UNLV PGA Golf Management University Program was honored as the 2011 Facility of the Year

for Growing the Game of Golf during the association's annual awards banquet Feb. 12, 2012.

UNLV PGA golf management director Christopher Cain was present to receive the award on behalf of the students and program. "We are extremely honored by this recognition. Our students have benefitted from their experience in volunteering during the open golf clinics, tournament operations, and summer internships. We are fortunate as a golfing community to have an organization like The First

Tee of Southern Nevada to engage our community through the game of golf," says Cain.

The First Tee of Southern Nevada is celebrating its 10-year anniversary as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization established through the merger of the Southern Nevada Junior Golf Association and the Southern Nevada Inner City Youth Golf Association in 2002. More than 65,000 youth throughout Southern Nevada ages 6 through 17 are encouraged to participate in school programs, development clinics, educational seminars, tournaments, and special events throughout the year. The First Tee mission is broader than simply teaching youth how to play golf; its unique curriculum has a strong life-skills component that includes community service and mentoring opportunities. ■■



**Samantha Clawson, tournament director for The First Tee of Southern Nevada, with Chris Cain**

# UNLV PGM Program player development initiative recognized as Best Practice by PGA Magazine

In April, Chris Cain attended the PGA Professionals of the Year Conference at Bandon Dunes Golf Resort in Oregon, which offered some unique networking opportunities as well as connections for future internship sites. He notes that UNLV, the hotel college, and the PGA golf management program will all benefit from these associations.

During the conference, the UNLV PGA Golf Management Program was highlighted as being a best practice for player

development. In addition, the UNLV program was the only PGA University Program out of the 19 golf programs that were represented there.

*PGA Magazine* has sent the video link that is highlighted below to its PGA membership. Check it out! 📺

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3qYHIF-QWYQ&feature=player\\_embedded#!](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3qYHIF-QWYQ&feature=player_embedded#!)

# UNLV Hospitality Major Ranked Top Choice for Minority Students

## Diverse Issues in Higher Education Magazine ranks UNLV top hospitality degree producer for minority students

Afsha Bawany

UNLV's Harrah Hotel College awarded more degrees to minority students than any hospitality program in the nation from 2010 to 2011, according to the magazine *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*.

The publication's June issue featuring top bachelor's degree producers ranked UNLV first among 53 schools offering hospitality management programs.

The magazine used U.S. Department of Education data to identify students in each of four categories: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian-American, black or African-American, and Hispanic. The Hotel College also topped the list for degrees obtained by African-American and Native-American students.

"The ranking validates UNLV's commitment to create a welcoming environment, and is reflective of the university's ability to embrace our community's cultural make-up," said Luis Valera, interim vice president of diversity initiatives and

government relations. "UNLV offers a campus experience that emphasizes the importance of cultural awareness, be it academics, student life, or campus programs."

At UNLV, 45 percent of total undergraduate students in fall 2011 reported being part of a racial or ethnic minority. Last October, UNLV ranked among the nation's 10 most diverse universities for undergraduate students, according to U.S. News & World Report.

Harrah Hotel College student groups include the Hospitality Association of Koreans and National Society of Minorities in Hospitality.

The report also ranked UNLV 14th nationally for Native American graduates in all disciplines, and 41st for Asian-Americans. Complete rankings are available at [diverseeducation.com/top100/](http://diverseeducation.com/top100/). 📺

# Welcome New Hires



**Ali Green** has more than 25 years of experience in the hospitality field. Her research areas include generation diversity in corporate hospitality training, learning styles, employee engagement, e-learning, mobile learning, and motivation in the workplace. She uses emerging technology such as Web 2.0 applications, Second Life, and authoring tools to complement her teaching both online and face to face.

Green has taught at Gulf Coast State College, Panama City, Fla., at the University of New Mexico, and at the University of Phoenix. She helped create electronic learning objects for the University of New Mexico University Libraries. Her hotel industry experience is in operations, training, and sales at the corporate level as well as at the property level. Her Ph.D. is from the University of New Mexico and she also holds masters' degrees from the University of Oklahoma and the University of Phoenix, with an undergraduate degree from Eastern Illinois University.



**Toni Repetti, '11 Ph.D.**, assistant professor of hospitality accounting and finance courses, has more than 19 years of gaming experience in all operational areas. She has held positions in accounting and finance and her experience includes working with Las Vegas Strip resorts; Midwest casinos; and tribal gaming properties in the areas of budgeting, strategic planning, analysis, property acquisitions, financial reporting, compliance, system implementation, training, and audit.

She holds an MBA from Colorado State University and a bachelor's degree from UNLV. She is a certified managerial accountant and a certified hospitality educator. Her main research concentrates in the area of managerial finance and operational decisions in hospitality companies.



**Kate Ponders** graduated from Lindenwood University before earning an M.B.A. from the University of Southern Mississippi. She graduated with her doctorate in marketing from Louisiana State University in 2010. She currently researches, teaches and serves in the marketing community, with a focus on how social influence and consumption emotions impact consumer attitudes and behaviors. She is actively involved in the American Marketing Association and is also a member of the Academy of Marketing Science.

**Dina Marie V. Zemke, '03 Ph.D.**, has worked for companies including Hilton Hotels, the Otis Elevator Company, and the American Cancer Society. Her research interests focus on atmospherics, or the effects of the physical environment on peoples' behavior, as well as facilities planning, design, and management. She has authored several articles in academic journals and co-authored a textbook on hospitality facilities management.

Zemke holds degrees from Cornell University's School of Hotel Administration (B.S.), the Carlson School of Management at the University of Minnesota (MBA), and the Harrah Hotel College (Ph.D.). She also holds the Real Property Administrator designation through the Building Owners and Managers Institute. She previously served on the faculties at the University of New Hampshire, Cornell University, and Johnson & Wales University — Charlotte.



**Cheryl Olson** recently joined the International Gaming Institute as the director of Management and Executive Education. She has 14 years of experience in educational program development and design, including 12 years of experience developing educational programs exclusively for the international gaming industry. Olson earned her Bachelor of Science in health education from the University of Nevada, Reno, and is currently pursuing her MBA at Maastricht University School of Business and Economics in the Netherlands.



**Anthony Gatling** has joined UNLV as an assistant professor. A former executive with Red Lobster Restaurants, he supervised 44 outlets with annual sales of more than \$158 million. He began his career as a server with the company and over 23 years, worked his way up to senior director of operations. He holds a doctorate of business administration from Lawrence Technological University, an MBA from Wayne State University, and a bachelor's degree from Duquesne University.

Gatling has been a board member of the Allegheny County Health Department Food Advisory Board in Pittsburgh, Pa. and the Hospitality Industry Diversity Institute at the Conrad N. Hilton College of Hotel and Restaurant Management at the University of Houston.



**Stowe Shoemaker** has rejoined UNLV after serving as the Donald Hubbs Distinguished Professor at the University of Houston's Conrad Hilton College of Hotel and Restaurant Management. He holds a Ph.D. from Cornell University and has been an adjunct professor at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. He is a member of the Executive Education faculty at the Cornell University School of Hotel Administration. His research interests include the antecedents and consequences of consumer loyalty, loyalty programs, and strategic pricing and revenue management. His research has won numerous awards, and has appeared in the *Journal of Revenue and Pricing Management*, *Journal of Travel Research*, and many other publications. He has also published two textbooks.



**Dr. Jungsun (Sunny) Kim, '06 MS, '09 Ph.D.**, received her bachelor's degree in hotel and tourism management from Kyunghee University in Korea. She has worked in the area of operations for restaurants in Australia and for hotels in Korea and in the information technology departments in a number of American hotel/casinos.

She is an active member of Hospitality Financial and Technology Professionals and the American Hotel and Lodging Association (AH&LA), serving on the Technology Committee of AH&LA and on the Hospitality Technology advisory board. She served on the faculty of Texas Tech University over the past three years and has worked extensively on the development of theoretical models to better understand the customer behavior toward new technologies, including: social media; self-service; and green, mobile, and wireless technologies.

**Dan Abdalla, '98**, is the new director of development for the Harrah Hotel College. As the former head coach of the UNLV women's soccer program, he brings extensive leadership and community relations experience to his new position. Abdalla was most recently at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, where he led a capital improvement campaign for the university's athletic department. While at TCU, he also initiated social media and community outreach strategies.

Please feel free to contact Abdalla at [dan.abdalla@unlv.edu](mailto:dan.abdalla@unlv.edu) or 702-895-2934 with any questions about how to support the UNLV College of Hotel Administration, or visit the UNLV Foundation website: <http://foundation.unlv.edu>.



# Doctoral Students Pursue Unique Research Projects

This listing includes some of the interesting research projects with which Harrah Hotel College Ph.D. candidates are involved. It is not meant to be a comprehensive list.

## **Brett Abarbanel**

B.L. Abarbanel and B.J. Bernhard, "Chicks with decks: The female lived experience in poker," *International Gambling Studies*, 2012. Expected available date online: May 22, 2012.

B. Abarbanel, "Cultural dimensions of countries enacting Internet sports betting policy," *UNLV Gaming Research & Review Journal*, 16(1), 2012, pp. 77-85.

## **Orie Berezan**

O. Berezan, M. Millar, and C. Raab, "Sustainable hotel practices and guest satisfaction levels," *International Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Administration*, 2012.

O. Berezan, C. Raab, S. Tanford, and Y. Kim, "Evaluating Loyalty Constructs Among Hotel Reward Program Members Using Netnography," 2012.

O. Berezan, M. Yoo, and C. Raab, "Sustainable hotel practices and nationality: The impact on guest satisfaction and guest intention to return," 2012.

## **Lan Jiang**

L. Jiang and R. Schmidgall, "A Longitudinal Study of Equipment Leasing in the U.S. Lodging Industry," *Journal of Hospitality Financial Management*, 19(2), 2011, pp. 77-89.

## **Xi "Cece" Leung**

X.Y. Leung, F. Wang, B. Wu, B. Bai, K.A. Stahura, and Z. Xie, "A social network analysis of overseas tourist movement patterns in Beijing: The impact of the Olympic Games," *International Journal of Tourism Research (SSCI)*, 2012.

B. Wu, L. Xue, A. Morrison, and X. Leung, "Frame analysis on Golden Week policy reform in China," *Annals of Tourism Research*, 2012.

X. Leung, F. Wang, B. Wu, and J.A. Busser, "Park user quality evaluation: Applying an Analytical Hierarchy Process for managers," *Managing Leisure*, 16(2), 2011, pp. 142-160.

## **Safak Sahin**

S. Sahin and S. Baloglu, "Brand personality and destination image of Istanbul," *Anatolia: An International Journal of Tourism & Hospitality Research*, 22(1), 2011, pp. 69-88, doi: 10.1080/13032917.2011.556222.

S. Sahin and S. Baloglu, "City branding: Investigating a brand advocacy model for distinct segments," *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management (in review)*, 2012.

## **Courtney Suess**

"Determining Traveler Characteristics and Preferences to aid Development of Rural Business Opportunities in Ecotourism," with Dr. Seyhmus Baloglu, Las Vegas, Nev., 2012. *This paper will be submitted to a research journal.*

"Economic, Social and Environmental Impact Analysis of Ecotourism Development in the Las Vegas Valley," with Dr. Seyhmus Baloglu, Las Vegas, Nev., 2012. *This paper will be submitted to a research journal.*

C. Seuss and C. Giannoulakis, Ph.D., "Determining Traveler Characteristics and Preferences to aid Development of Rural Business Opportunities in Ecotourism," *International Scientific Congress on Current Trends in Tourism Management and Tourism Policy*, Athens, Greece, February 2012.

## **Sarah Tanford**

S. Tanford and S. Baloglu, "Grading reward program members using the loyalty matrix," *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 2012.

## **Yun Ying "Susan" Zhong**

In January 2012, Zhong's paper "Developing a Mobile Tourism Application for a Tourism Destination: The Case Study of Aruba" received the best paper award at the 17th Annual Graduate Research Conference in Tourism and Hospitality.

That crazed fan with the red-haired wig (reminiscent of a Dr. Seuss character) and face paint you see jumping around at UNLV's home basketball games? He's just one of many Harrah Hotel College students letting loose during his educational experience.

"When I had narrowed my college choices to four, I knew that whatever school I chose needed to have at least one outstanding athletic program," says student Alex Salvo. "UNLV's basketball program is a legacy, and after attending my first Runnin' Rebels game, I was hooked."

In addition to his "fandom," Salvo is a seriously involved hospitality major. He grew up in New Jersey, an hour west of Manhattan, in the shadow of one of the world's most dynamic cities. "I had an idea of city life, to some degree," he says. "But during the spring of 2009, I received an internship offer from Walt Disney World Resort, and during my summer in Florida, I heard students raving about their experiences at UNLV.

"I decided to check it out for myself, and during that trip, I saw that Las Vegas and its surrounding communities are more than just the Strip resorts. There's real life out there, and there's lots of room to grow." He vividly remembers seeing City Center rising up, the construction of The Cosmopolitan, and the never-completed Fontainebleau and Echelon Place. "I thought that even if these properties didn't get finished, they would somehow have an impact on me," recalls Salvo. "Las Vegas is big on change and has been able to recreate itself through the years. The other schools and communities on my list just couldn't compare."

Salvo's first event-planning experience was with 2010's UNLVino. "I served as a student culinary manager and was part of a team of eight. I hadn't ever pictured myself doing

anything like that. I worked with vendors, made flyers, made sure students knew about the food they were serving. I was really lucky to work on that project, and it served as a catalyst for things to come."



Photo by Aaron Mayes

Approximately three months after the event, Salvo received a call from the MGM Grand about an application he had put in to work at the front desk. "The next thing I knew, I was working the front desk at one of the world's largest hotels. That's a great way to learn hospitality management very quickly!"

While the job was educational, Salvo moved on the next semester to concentrate on his duties at school and as vice president of the UNLV Hotel Association, the college's oldest student organization. "I needed to find balance. Between work, school, and extracurricular activities, my life was getting out of control. A fellow student, Sandy Kim, and I worked hard to reorganize the association and get students as connected as they should be." This included coordinating property tours, bringing in industry speakers, and organizing other club activities.

Salvo took on the presidency of the group in fall 2011 and has been pleased with the association's success. "This spring, we hosted The State of the Strip and brought in midlevel executives from some of the top hotel/gaming companies in town, along with representation from the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority. The attendees received an assessment of how the industry is doing locally. It was so fulfilling to be a part of this successful event!"

No matter where Salvo ends up working in the industry, he will be an asset because of his skill set, determination and, of course, his "fandom." ■■

# Career Fairs Connect Employers With Students

In the age of online applications, Facebook, and LinkedIn, are career fairs a hiring novelty of the past? Absolutely not! College career fairs provide a unique opportunity to network with hundreds of students. Despite the convenience and cost savings of technology-based application and interviewing processes, career fairs allow employers to connect with students on a

more personal level and are instrumental in assessing candidates' interpersonal skills and potential organizational fit.

The newest generation of college students is looking for more than jobs; they are seeking positions that allow for opportunity, recognition, growth, and work-life balance. Making the most of college career fairs depends on employers following the three P's: preparation, promotion, and positive energy.

### PREPARATION

Employers participating in college fairs are encouraged to prepare for career fairs by evaluating their current and future hiring needs. Create customized promotional pieces that highlight your company's brand, list employment opportunities specifically for college students and recent graduates, and provide an overview of benefits.

### PROMOTION

Register early and request that information regarding your company and career opportunities be advertised to students ahead of the fair. The more information provided ahead of time, the better prepared the students will be to talk with you during the fair. Many organizations have students apply

Bobbie Barnes, '93, '05 M.Ed.

for positions ahead of the job fair and schedule interviews during the career event.

### POSITIVE ENERGY

Once at the fair, select company representatives with high energy and enthusiasm who will represent your brand well and stay positive throughout the recruitment event. Students remember recruiters who spend time getting to know them and provide detailed information on their company and career opportunities. A great strategy is to invite company representatives who are also alumni of the school to staff the event.

The Bob Boughner Career Services Center works exclusively with hotel college students and hospitality employers. The center partners with University Career Services to offer two campuswide events each year — one each semester. In addition, the College of Hotel Administration hosts exclusive hiring events for employers to connect specifically with hospitality students. We hope to see you at an upcoming event! For more information regarding on-campus recruitment, job postings, or career events, please contact Bobbie Barnes, director of Career and Student Services, at 702-895-5553. ■■



## 2012 FALL CAREER EVENTS

### Hotel College Networking Mixer

Monday, October 8  
5:30 to 7 p.m.  
UNLV Stan Fulton Building

Join us for this complimentary mixer to network with Hotel College junior- and senior-level students. Each participating employer will be stationed at a high-boy cocktail round, providing just enough room for displaying company brochures and collecting student resumes.

Please email Bobbie Barnes at [bobbie.barnes@unlv.edu](mailto:bobbie.barnes@unlv.edu) to register for this free event.

### UNLV Fall Career Day

Tuesday, October 9  
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
UNLV Student Union

Annual Career Fair for all majors. Log on to CareerLink (<http://hire.unlv.edu>) for additional information and costs and to register.



## Profession Connection Event Links Professionals and Students

On March 13, the Bob Boughner Career Services Center hosted the Profession Connection networking event on campus. With more than 250 students in attendance, this evening provided an occasion for students to mingle with industry professionals in a relaxed setting.

According to planning committee student chair Geoffrey Moran, "I think networking events are amazing opportunities for students to reach out to a large variety of employers. There is an employer for everyone, and they're looking to meet students and help them get jobs. Even if you're not ready to be employed, you could possibly find a mentor or future contact by attending. Getting started early is a great opportunity to build relationships.

"Personally, these types of events have been very helpful, as I've received several job interviews and even a few job offers by attending. These opportunities were from companies like Disney, MGM Resorts International, and Caesars Entertainment. I got amazing advice about their recruiting process."

Another student chair for the project, Brian Hong, agrees. "I strongly believe that students are not taking full advantage of their college years if they choose not to network with recruiters. As upperclassman years approach, the pressure of making our parents and ourselves proud increases, but the uncertainty of our futures can drown students in frustration. By attending these networking, career development, and employment fairs, students can steer clear of the uncertainty that can inevitably

drive us mad. Students must realize that these recruiters bring industry experience, impeccable corporate networks, and dream career opportunities."

Hong continues, "As a sophomore, I had the honor of taking a career development course. At that time, building a career was the last thing on my mind, yet the course required me to attend networking functions. That's when I stumbled into the Hyatt information session. The course trained me in personal branding and assisted in building my professional confidence, and as luck would have it, I was selected as a Hyatt corporate intern, exposing the true value of my previously underappreciated education. The opportunities are endless." ■

Hospitality companies in attendance: ARAMARK, Bloomberg, Boyd Gaming, Buca di Beppo, Caesars Entertainment, Café Zupas, Champagne Creative Group, Dragon Hill Lodge, Enterprise Car Rental, Expedia, Fairmont, Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center, Global Experience Specialists, Gold Rush Hotel & Casino, J. Alexanders Restaurants, Kimpton Hotels, Mandarin Oriental, Marquee Night and Day Club, Marriott International, Merlin Entertainments Group, MGM Resorts International, Panda Express, Priority Staffing, Rosewood Hotels, Sodexo, Soirees Catering, Starbucks, Station Casinos, The Cosmopolitan, Viad Exposition Services, Wirtz Beverage, and Wynn.

## 2011-2012 Donor Honor Roll UNLV William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration

Thank you to the loyal donors who supported the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration during the fiscal year 2011–2012. We are grateful to our alumni and friends whose support to the college has allowed our students and faculty to continue setting the standard in hospitality education.

We are pleased to thank and recognize the individuals and companies who this past year helped contribute more than \$1.5 million in cash, pledges, and in-kind donations to our college. Additionally, through scholarship endowments and annual giving, the college awarded more than \$590,000 in scholarships to students during the 2011–2012 academic year.

We would also like to take an opportunity to thank Judy Nagai, '11 Ph.D., who this past fall accepted the position of assistant dean of development and external relations at the UC Davis Graduate School of Management. Nagai served as both the director of alumni relations, 2002–2008, and the director of external relations, 2008–2011, for our college. Those of you who had the opportunity to work with her understand what a great asset she was to our college and how much she will be missed.

This past May, we welcomed Dan Abdalla, '97, as our new director of development. He is returning to UNLV after spending the past seven years at Texas Christian University. His role is to continue working with our great friends and alumni who play such an integral role in helping our college maintain the highest standards of excellence. Please feel free to contact Abdalla at 702-895-2934 should you have any questions regarding current or future support.

Again, on behalf of the students, faculty, and staff of the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration, thank you for your past, current, and future support. It is with gratitude and heartfelt thanks that we acknowledge the following benefactors listed in the Harrah Hotel College Honor Roll.

### Recognition of the Dean's Associates July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2012

The Dean's Associates program provides unrestricted donations to fund priority projects and activities within the college. Most importantly, this includes supporting student professional development so that students may represent UNLV at national and international academic conferences, meetings and industry events. Our students are the future of the industry and they are truly a worthwhile investment. We wish to thank the Dean's Associate members for their annual support through unrestricted gifts, which is vital to continue setting the bar as a premier international hospitality program.

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*I am extremely thankful for the generosity of Stations Casinos. Their generosity was a symbol of encouragement and motivation. The scholarship award was a sign that my hard work was recognized and that there is help out there for students who are dedicated to their studies.*



— Elle House



*The hospitality business has been a wonderful, rewarding career in all respects. To provide assistance to students at the William F. Harrah School of Hotel Administration is just a small payback on the absolute joy I have experienced in my 46 years working in this industry.*

— John Fitts,  
Chief Executive Officer,  
Outrigger Lodging Services

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*Though the John C. Kish Foundation Scholarship helped fund my education in gaming management, its benefits extended far beyond a financial sum as I was also fortunate to meet Frank “Jack” Plevo, founder, and Matthew Frazier, the administrator of the John C. Kish Foundation. I got to share both their company and expertise and have formed connections and bonds that will extend into my personal life as well as my career.*

— Elijah Tredup

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 Amy Wright  
 Sherrie & Lonnie '78, '84 Wright  
 Thomas Yasuda, '79  
 Wayne Ye  
 Steve York  
 KiMun Yu  
 Dina Marie Zemke, '03  
 Zen Magic Ai and Yuki

**Bold**—Faculty, Staff, Dean's Advisory Board, College Alumni Board of Directors or their related companies.

\* Deceased

**A Final Note**

We strive to ensure accuracy in this listing of benefactors who supported the Harrah Hotel College from July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012. If there is an error in the way we listed your gift or if you wish to make a change to your name as shown, please accept our apology and bring it to our attention by calling (702) 895-2934 or e-mail robyn.hadden@UNLV.edu.



# Epiphany Farms Fulfilling Alumni's Passion

Gael Hancock, '09 MS



Imagine using pigs to “seal” the bottom of a new holding pond with their wallowing. Or driving chickens around in an old RV, retrofitted as a coop with open yard area, to give them new spaces to find bugs, grubs, and seeds. Or starting an organic farm when you had never even owned a houseplant.

This is the world of Ken Myszka, '08; his wife, Nanam Yoon Myszka, '08; and Stu Hummel, all members of Epiphany Farms Enterprise (EFE) in Bloomington, Ill. Currently nearing the end of its fourth growing season, Epiphany Farms is a thriving farm-to-fork operation serving the surrounding community. It also provides the majority of the food for Station 220, a restaurant and bar in nearby Bloomington owned in part by EFE. The farm is home to 250-plus varieties of garlic, multiple vegetables and herbs, fruit trees, pigs, chickens, rabbits, ducks, geese, goats, and cows.

Myszka's passion for organic foods came from his training as a chef. “During school, I worked up and down the Strip in some of its most famous restaurants. It is there that I learned to appreciate ‘local’ and farm-fresh produce. However, I realized that the energy footprint and cost for getting that food was huge. That's when I started thinking about alternative options,” Myszka says.

The EFE team defines Epiphany Farms as being “beyond organic.” This means paying close attention to maintaining the integrity of the soil by rotating crops and moving the animals throughout the entire property for natural fertilization and pest control.

“Just because a food is organic doesn't mean it is nutritionally rich,” says Myszka. “The soils of most of the large industrial farms

have been completely depleted of nutrients; therefore, the foods have little nutritional value. We focus on foods that are inherently rich in nutrients, like garlic and honey.”

Myszka has a model for food production that is committed to supporting, growing, and showcasing a thriving local food culture. “At Station 220, we use about eight gallons a week of pasteurized but not homogenized milk from a local dairy farm,” he says. “However, for example, if we introduce our guests to the nutritional value and good taste of this milk, within our community, the demand will increase.”

Hummel and Myszka rotate weeks working on the farm and serving as chef/manager at Station 220. In addition, all of the employees at the restaurant have spent time volunteering at Epiphany Farms. They help plant and harvest as well as care for the animals. This is all part of the educational goals of EFE: helping people make a connection between the foods they eat and the way those foods are produced and the people who grow those foods.

“When an employee has been out to the farm and pulls Purple Dragon carrots, he or she is able to tell the customers that night: ‘I picked these carrots this afternoon. Their tops were full, lush, and green, and they're grown in incredibly rich soil,’” says Myszka. “This helps people start thinking about actually knowing the people who grow and prepare their food.”

Myszka travels throughout the area speaking to students and other groups about his vision for the future and how he hopes to change the way the world eats, “one plate at a time.” ■■

# MHA Program *Turns 12*

Gael Hancock, '09 MS

It was the year 2000, and the Harrah Hotel College was ready to roll out a new degree — a risky undertaking at best. An online degree program was one thing, but at the graduate level? How would this even work? Who would take the courses? How would this degree be accepted in the industry?

Participation in the Master's of Hospitality Administration program during the first few years was exciting and occasionally challenging. "When we started in the program, there was no Skype, no easy file-sharing system, and Wi-Fi was virtually unheard of," says Amy Beaulieu, the first graduate of the program. "Dr. Curtis Love wanted us to connect with each other as a class. All of a sudden, through the mail, we were receiving these big microphones and speakers to connect to the computer — everything wasn't built in as it is today," Beaulieu continues.

Beaulieu and fellow graduate Niesa Silzer in Calgary, Canada, got acquainted in the program and are still friends today. They see each other at least once a year at various meetings and event conferences. Their lasting friendship is one of many that have developed through the MHA program. "I almost feel like I know the online students better than I know the students in class," says Love. "The MHA students will respond to discussion board questions with detailed stories, anecdotes, and personal opinions — responses you don't always get in a face-to-face class. I'm sure the students get to know each other very well."

Because the program requires three or more years of management experience in the hospitality industry, most of the students are between 30 and 50 years of age. They bring a wealth of experience to the classroom, and the students learn as much from each other as they do from the faculty through the discussion boards and collaborative projects. (Yes, they work, even in online classrooms.)

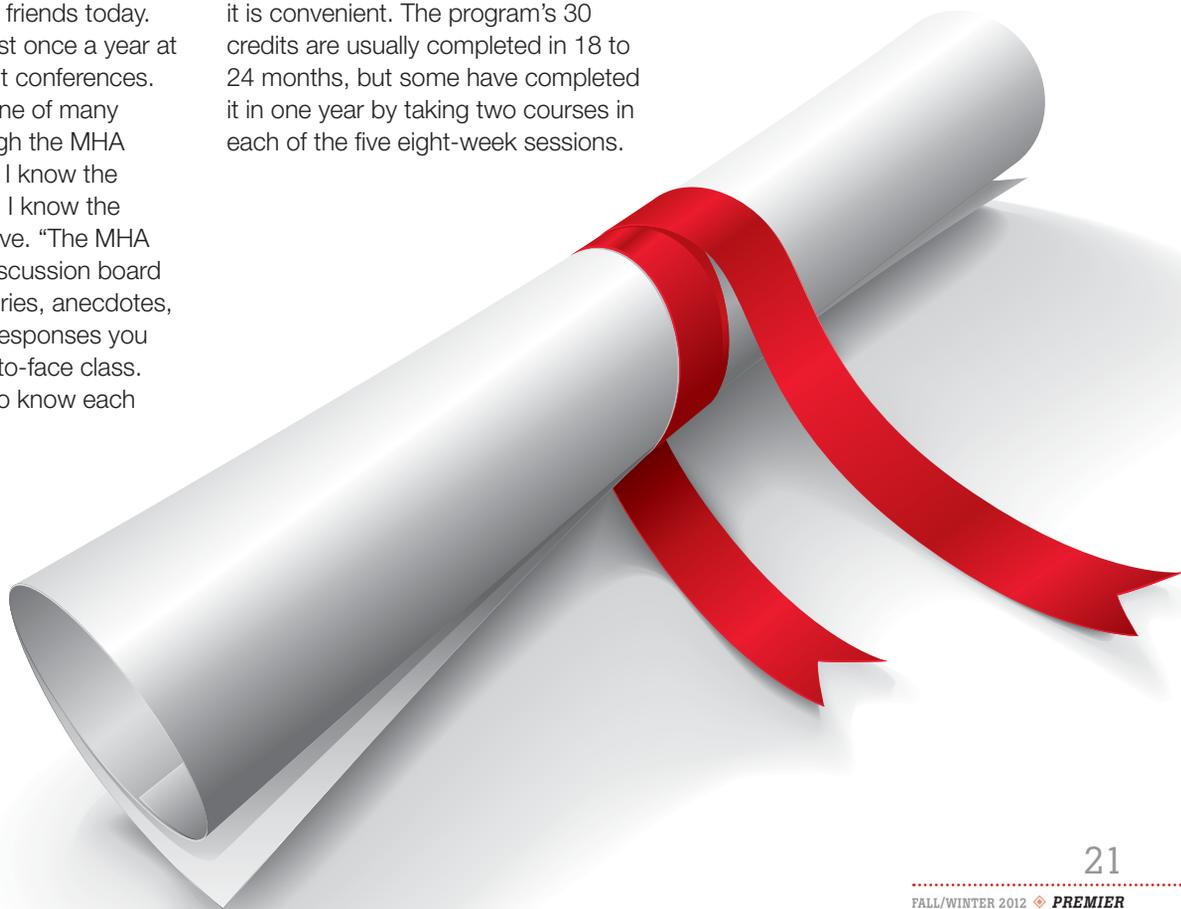
The MHA program has gone through a number of iterations during the last 12 years. Originally, the program had cohorts of students who entered at the same time, took the same classes, and graduated as a group. This didn't work for people in the hospitality industry, who often work 70-plus-hour weeks and even longer in a crisis.

Today, students can start the program at any time, register for the classes they want, and study when it is convenient. The program's 30 credits are usually completed in 18 to 24 months, but some have completed it in one year by taking two courses in each of the five eight-week sessions.

The fact that that the program qualifies for financial aid has contributed to its success.

Cynthia Mejia is currently a Ph.D. student at Texas Tech and a graduate from the program. Just after graduation, she said, "The MHA program definitely gave me an edge on the interview process. I really don't think anyone would have taken a serious look at me with three years off from the industry without some higher education under my belt." Mejia was a chef instructor at Le Cordon Bleu Institute of Culinary Arts Dallas before being admitted into the Ph.D. program.

The MHA program boasts 132 graduates and a current enrollment of 87 students. In December, the college will celebrate the 10th anniversary of the first graduate, with a reception following the graduation ceremony December 18. ■■





## Searching the World for Rare Ingredients

If you've been desperately searching for a source for freeze-dried phytoplankton, black truffle juice, or Tahitian vanilla beans, look no farther. For purveyor Brett Ottolenghi, '08, finding these and many other exotic ingredients is his passion. His Las Vegas shop, Artisanal Foods, is the go-to spot for many of Las Vegas' most recognizable chefs, although the store is open to the public as well.

Still a student at heart, Ottolenghi travels the world learning about the most sustainable ways to include exclusive culinary components. Recently, he took a fact-finding trip to a food show in Spain and studied various methods of escargot and caviar production in France. "I want Artisanal Foods to be as responsible as possible, so with that in mind, I look at all of the perspectives of everything I

purchase: environmental impact, social implications, and each product's sustainability. I want my patrons to feel confident about the sources of the products I offer."

Giving people access to foods made as they should be is his goal. The nicknamed "Truffle Kid's" father interested his son in the culinary arts at an early age. "My dad taught us how to hunt mushrooms near our home in Pennsylvania, much like he did growing up in Italy," recalls Ottolenghi. "When I was 13, he and I started The Truffle Market, an online shop geared toward wholesale customers, mostly private chefs."

Although it would have made sense for Ottolenghi to attend an East Coast school, he was aware of the Harrah Hotel College's reputation and its access

to Strip properties. "When I made the decision to attend UNLV's hotel college, it was because I knew what I wanted, and this was the place that could help make it happen." At UNLV, Ottolenghi learned the intricacies of the food and beverage side of the industry as well as the business acumen that allowed him to continue following his dream.

While living on campus, his online business grew and he also began to meet with Las Vegas chefs to discover what ingredients they had trouble obtaining. He forged relationships up and down the famed Las Vegas Strip and to this day continues with his "meet and greet" method. Upon the finding of each new product, he knows exactly which chef will be interested. With Las Vegas' plethora of gourmet restaurants, he has had the opportunity to conduct transactions with many world-renowned chefs, including Thomas Keller and Joel Robuchon.

Future goals include becoming more involved in the production of these food goods, including his dream of bringing the health benefits of raw milk to the state of Nevada. "I've been working on legalizing raw milk in Nevada for nearly four years," he says. "I'm helping set up a raw dairy commission, and once it becomes legalized, I'd like to produce and sell it myself."

"It's unavoidable to study nutrition when you're around food all the time. It's clear what a healthy diet consists of, and raw milk is a very cheap way to nourish a lot of people. Plus, it can lead to other products like yogurt and cheese."

Ottolenghi continues, "Over the years, I've learned that there are a lot of tricks and dishonesty in the food industry. I just want to keep it real and simple."

His story is just one of many about Harrah Hotel College alumni impacting food trends around the world. ■■

*To learn more, visit [artisanalfoods.com](http://artisanalfoods.com).*

# Living the New York Dream

For Gardnerville, Nev., native Juan Leonis, '11, the hospitality bug bit while he was working as a valet car attendant. "After parking cars at Harrah's Lake Tahoe for six months, I fell in love with the industry," he explains. "I worked for a hotel manager who had gone to UNLV, and I ended up choosing it also because of its reputation as a hospitality school."

Fast forward a few years: Leonis is now employed as a front office manager at the world-famous Plaza Hotel in New York City and is also participating in the 18-month Fairmont Hotels and Resorts' Leadership Development Program.

"Initially when I was attending UNLV, I hoped that I'd be lucky enough to get a position as a manager or accepted into a management training program in such a tough economy," he says. "I never planned on being offered a job to work for Fairmont Resorts at one of the most famous hotels in the business."

Leonis credits his time at UNLV for his career path and current employment. "My favorite memories from UNLV are the professors. Their classes and their willingness to go above and beyond just teaching have made me successful in my job. Numerous professors, including Bill Werner and Cheri Young, were so willing to teach me the concepts and ideas I needed to be successful.

"In fact, I got my job when Fairmont Resorts came to UNLV and interviewed students for their leadership program. Additionally, the college's requirement of hands-on industry experience set me above candidates from other hospitality schools."

With plans to continue working for Fairmont Resorts no matter where in the world it leads him, Leonis says, "I have a passion for housekeeping and front office because it is where you feel the pulse of the hotel. I love the operational side of the



business.

"It's important to give back to the hotel college so it can continue to produce talented future managers. The service industry is the largest manufacturer of jobs in America, and it is important to produce impressive managers to keep the industry alive and successful. There are many ways to give back, from donating money to the college or giving guest lectures to students to sharing your wisdom about how to be a successful manager." ■■



## 2012 VALLEN DINNER OF DISTINCTION: HONORING EXCELLENCE IN HOSPITALITY

**Alumna of the Year Paula Eylar with Hospitality Leader of the Year Sheldon G. Adelson**

**T**he William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration and its alumni chapter were proud to honor Sheldon Adelson and Paula Eylar at the eighth annual Vallen Dinner of Distinction. Adelson was recognized as the Hospitality Industry Leader of the Year, and Eylar, '89, '07 MBA, was the 2012 Alumna of the Year.

Hotel college students from the events management capstone course spent the entire semester planning and executing this event with direction from the alumni chapter.

The evening consisted of a silent auction, which raised nearly \$23,000 for the Stuart H. Mann Endowment Fund and Hotel College Alumni Relations program. Just as the silent auction was ending, excitement filled the room as guests were amazed to see two Las Vegas legends, Adelson and Steve Wynn, enter the room together, a rare sighting.

Dean Donald D. Snyder welcomed the audience prior to dinner, and immediately afterward, auctioneer Christian Kolberg managed the live auction. Then it was time for the hotel college to recognize its deserving awardees in front of an audience that consisted of alumni, faculty, staff, students, advisory board members, and

hospitality industry representatives.

Eylar was chosen by the Harrah Hotel College Alumni Chapter to receive recognition as Alumna of the Year because of her impact on the industry, her continued engagement with hotel college programs, and because she serves as a mentor to others in the hospitality industry. A brief video tribute to Eylar was shown to the audience before she accepted her award.

As part of the evening's festivities, Frank J. Fahrenkopf Jr., president of the American Gaming Association (and last year's Gaming Management Association Award of Excellence recipient), conducted an intimate interview with Adelson before he was presented the Hospitality Industry Executive of the Year award. During the interview, Adelson spoke about several hospitality-related topics, including what has made him successful in the hospitality industry.

The William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration is grateful to Adelson, Fahrenkopf, and Eylar for their support of its programs. The eighth annual Vallen Dinner of Distinction was a success, thanks to the generous donors (included in our Donor Honor Roll on page 16) and the staff at The Venetian|The Palazzo ■

*Photos courtesy of Guideng The Picture Co. and Sam Lee Fine Art Photography*



**Gary, Flossie, Jerry, Kim, and Randal Vallen**



**Dean Don Snyder, Paul Eylar,  
UNLV President Neal Smatresk**



**Harrah Hotel College students assisting  
with the event**



**Paula Eylar and William S. Boyd,  
executive chairman, Boyd Gaming**



**Sheldon Adelson and Steve Wynn**



**Three deans: Jerry Vallen, Stuart Mann,  
and Don Snyder**



**Paula Eylar accepts her award from  
Dean Don Snyder**



**Frank Fahrenkopf, Jr. interviews Sheldon Adelson**



# In the Kitchen

Join hotel college students on Tuesday, November 6 for the 10th event anniversary of the Chef Artist Series. This tribute to the chefs and student managers who have participated in the culinary experience over the past five years will be an evening to remember.

Menu items from past events will comprise the delicacies served. Students from Chef John Gremo's FAB 467 (quantity food management) class will serve as the management team and will work with local participating celebrity chefs. For more information and reservations, please contact Gadine Whitaker at (702) 895-1330 or by email at [gadine.whitaker@unlv.edu](mailto:gadine.whitaker@unlv.edu). ■■



**Chef Geno Bernardo, of Nove Italiano, participated in a past Chef Artist Series Dinner.**

## **Chefs who have participated in the Chef Artist Series include:**

- Kerry Simon, Simon Restaurant & Lounge, KGB
- Guy Fieri, Tex Wasabi's and Johnny Garlic's, Calif.
- Geno Bernardo, Nove Italiano
- Eric Klein, Spago
- Joel Robuchon, Joel Robuchon Restaurant and L'Atelier Joel Robuchon
- Claude Le-Tohic, Robuchon
- Matt Seeber, Craft Steak
- Stephen Hopcraft, Sea Blue
- Sean Griffin, Jean-Georges Vongerichten's Prime Steakhouse
- David Bush, St. Francis Winery
- Andre Rochat, Andre's and Alize
- Frank Grisanti, Grisanti Italian Restaurant, Memphis, Tenn.
- Kurt Fleischfresser, The Coach House, Oklahoma City, Okla.



## Tortellini in Brodo

This recipe is courtesy of Geno Bernardo, executive chef at Nove Italiano inside Palms Casino Resort, and will be served at the dinner Nov. 6.

### Broth:

1.5 pounds beef brisket or chuck, cut into two pieces  
1 pound beef shank bones  
1 (4- to 5-pound) chicken, cut into six pieces  
1 large white onion, peeled and quartered  
1 carrot, cut into three pieces  
1 celery stalk, cut into three pieces  
1 tablespoon salt  
4.5 quarts cold water

### Tortellini:

2.5 cups unbleached all-purpose flour or "00" flour  
4 large eggs  
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil  
Salt  
2 tablespoons unsalted butter  
4.5 ounces pork loin or shoulder, cut into cubes  
1/2 small onion, thinly sliced  
2 fresh sage leaves  
1 sprig fresh rosemary  
Freshly ground black pepper  
1/4 cup dry white wine  
3.5 ounces prosciutto, roughly diced  
3.5 ounces mortadella, roughly diced  
3/4 cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese  
1/8 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg

### INSTRUCTIONS

#### For broth:

In a large stockpot, combine beef, beef shank bones, chicken, onion, carrot, celery, and salt. Cover with the 4.5 quarts water and bring to a boil over high heat, skimming foam and fat from surface. Reduce to gentlest simmer and cook for 4.5 hours.

Strain twice, first through a fine mesh sieve, then through a sieve lined with cheesecloth. Let broth cool. Skim fat from surface. Season to taste with salt. Broth can be made ahead and refrigerated for up to three days or frozen for up to one month.

#### For tortellini:

On a clean work surface, mound flour; create a well in center. Add three eggs, oil, and a generous pinch of salt. Using a fork, gently break up yolks and slowly incorporate flour from the inside rim of the well. Continue until liquid is absorbed, then knead until dough forms a complete mass. Continue kneading until dough is smooth and elastic, eight to 10 minutes more. Wrap dough tightly in plastic and let rest at room temperature for 30 minutes. While dough rests, make filling.

In a large skillet, melt butter over medium heat until it foams and subsides. Add pork, onion, sage leaves, rosemary, and a generous pinch of pepper. Increase heat to medium-high and cook, stirring frequently, for five minutes. Add wine and continue to cook for 10 minutes more.

Transfer pork and any liquid from skillet to a food processor (discard onion and herbs); add prosciutto and mortadella and pulse until mixture is

very finely chopped but not puréed to a paste. Transfer filling to a bowl. Add cheese, remaining egg, and nutmeg; stir to combine well.

Divide dough into three pieces. Using a rolling pin (on a lightly floured surface) or a pasta machine, roll the pieces of dough into sheets, about 1/8 inch thick. Cut the sheets into 1.5-inch squares (keep dough, sheets, and squares covered with a clean dish towel while rolling and cutting to avoid drying).

Place scant 1/2 teaspoon filling in center of each square. Fold into triangles, with one top point slightly farther than the other. Press any air from around filling, then press to seal edges (a drop of cold water can be used to help seal edges if necessary).

Fold base of triangle to create a cuff, then bring points of long side together to form a fairly tight ring. Press to seal. Keep tortellini covered with a clean dish towel until ready to cook. (The tortellini can be prepared and frozen for up to three months. To freeze freshly made tortellini, freeze them first on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Once frozen, transfer tortellini to well-sealed, airtight plastic freezer bags and keep frozen until ready to cook. Do not defrost before cooking.)

To serve, bring broth to a low boil. Avoid a rolling boil, which may cause the pasta to open up. In batches of 15 to 20, cook the tortellini in the broth until they rise to the surface and are tender, about three minutes; frozen pasta may take another minute or two longer.

Using a slotted spoon, transfer tortellini to a colander to drain, then transfer to serving bowls. Ladle the broth over the tortellini and serve immediately.



## Curriculum Changes

# Benefit Students

The faculty of the Harrah Hotel College recently revised its curriculum in order to better prepare students for future careers. As part of this curriculum change, undergraduate students who are admitted in fall 2012 or later are hospitality management majors.

Until 1996, the college had one degree and one major — Bachelor of Science in hotel administration with a major in hotel administration. During the period of rapid growth experienced at UNLV in the past decade, the college expanded its offerings to include four degrees, nine majors, three minors, and a formal concentration to allow students the opportunity to specialize in their specific area of interest. While the new programs showed promise initially, they continued to maintain a relatively low number of students. The majority of the

student population continues to show interest in the college's original program, the Bachelor of Science in hotel administration, and there is continued interest from prospective students.

With current budget constraints top of mind, the college thought it prudent to examine the current program structure to ensure its efficiency. As a result, programs have been identified that do not support the core hospitality curriculum, are too specialized in nature, or serve a small percentage of the student population (without sufficient enrollment to support funding). Although these programs have value and long-term potential, the resources to grow the curriculum and provide students with a meaningful learning experience do not exist at this time.

The hospitality management major

offers a broad educational approach to a career in the hospitality industry. Its varied course of study prepares students with both the management theories and the operational competencies necessary to enter any segment of the industry upon graduation. In addition to the university's general education requirements, students take classes specific to the industry, including an introduction to hospitality, human resources management, organizational behavior, facilities management, and hospitality law, as well as a course in leadership, management, and ethics. Students also study food sanitation, food service operations, cost control, career development, financial and managerial accounting, financial management, hospitality service management, and operations and strategic management.

The inclusion of 22 credits of elective courses allows students to customize their educational experience based on their personal interests through the selection of the elective topics of their choice.

Although it is not required, students may elect to declare a concentration to provide an opportunity to focus their elective credits toward a specific area of study.

Rounding out this curriculum is an internship, two senior-level capstone classes that will have students using all of their learned managerial and leadership skills, and actual work experience in the hospitality industry. This approach offers prospective employers a well-rounded graduate who understands day-to-day operations, has the ability to do strategic planning, and can adapt to a multitude of positions. With this expansive knowledge base, students will be ready to look at numerous career opportunities upon graduation.

As recommendations were developed to move forward, the main focus was on the college's core mission of providing a premier education in hospitality management. With this in mind, the faculty members worked to objectively challenge the academic structure, programs, and curriculum to ensure the programs were as effective and efficient as possible in carrying out this mission. It was a tough but healthy process, and the college remains committed to maintaining the incredible reputation it has achieved over the course of the past four decades — and to ensuring that students receive the best possible academic preparation for entering the workforce and achieving their career goals. Students currently enrolled in our current programs will have the opportunity to continue in their existing major until they graduate (provided they do so before their catalog expires), or they may elect to change to the new hospitality management major. This provides maximum flexibility to students with the least amount of disruption to their original plan of study.

### Concentrations

• *Gaming Management Concentration*  
The gaming management concentration targets not only those who will work in actual casino operations but also students who are thinking about careers in casino accounting, in gaming regulations and

control as professional staff, and in serving the casino industry as suppliers.

### • Meetings and Events Concentration

The meetings and events management concentration encompasses meetings, conventions, trade shows, and special events. It is a specialized curriculum that includes everything from site selection and marketing to budgets and logistics. The meetings and events industry is an exciting, fast-paced field that allows and encourages creativity and innovation. Most classes are available online as well as in the classroom.

### • Restaurant Management Concentration

The restaurant management concentration is a course of study ideal for those students interested in all aspects of restaurant and food service management. The focus will be on food production, service, marketing, supervision, and financial management. With more than 15 million jobs available in the restaurant industry, this concentration will prepare students for careers in the fastest-growing area of hospitality. In addition to the hospitality management curriculum, students in this concentration will study purchasing, culture and cuisine, and nutrition in food service.

### • PGA Golf Management Concentration

The PGA golf management concentration provides students with the academic knowledge and experience necessary for careers in the golf industry. The PGA concentration consists of 23 credits within the hospitality management major. Sixteen months of internship at approved golf facilities and successful completion of the PGA's player's ability test and Level 1, 2, and 3 examinations are required. Completing the hospitality management major with the PGA golf management concentration qualifies students with U.S. citizenship membership into the PGA upon receiving a background check and eligible employment in the golf industry. Concentration fees include extensive golf course playing and practice privileges as well as access to the PGA knowledge center. ■■

## Programs Beginning 2012:

- Bachelor of Science Degree
  - Meetings & Events Management Concentration
  - Restaurant Management Concentration
  - Gaming Management Concentration
  - Professional Golf Management Concentration

## Programs Prior to Fall 2012:

- Bachelor of Science in Hotel Administration
  - Hospitality Management Major
  - Meetings and Events Management Major
  - Lodging and Resort Management Major
  - Food Service Management Major
  - Beverage Management Major
- Bachelor of Science in Culinary Arts Management
  - Culinary Arts Management Major
  - Beverage Management Major
- Bachelor of Science in Gaming Management
  - Gaming Management Major
- Bachelor of Science Recreation Major
  - Recreation & Youth Development Concentration
  - Leisure & Aging Concentration
  - Recreation Evaluation & Management Concentration
  - Sport Management Concentration
- Master of Science in Sport and Leisure Services Management
- Entertainment Management Minor
- Recreation Minor
- Sport Management Minor



**From left: Victoria Matherly and her mentor, Rachel Diaz, at this spring's Mentor Awards Reception**

# Mentee Becomes Mentor

Robyn Campbell-Ouchida, '00 MA

According to student Victoria Matherly, a successful mentor/mentee relationship can really strengthen professional opportunities. "My mentor, Rachel Diaz, has taught me more than I could ever have asked for," says Matherly. "I'm impressed with the way she has taken multitasking to a new level by managing all of the weddings at The Mirage and building meaningful relationships with all her clients and co-workers." In fact, Matherly was so impressed with her mentor's work ethic that she nominated her for Mentor of the Year.

"Honestly, I had never thought about becoming a mentor," says Diaz. "A conversation with Bobbie Barnes (director of the Bob Boughner Career Services Center) convinced me to sign up for the program. I wasn't sure that I had enough experience to offer, but Bobbie convinced me otherwise."

But the story doesn't stop there. Diaz, '09, participated in the same program as a mentee when she was a UNLV student in 2008. "My mentor was Meredith Powell, the former senior

catering manager at Wynn. I was very interested in weddings, and Meredith managed wedding receptions for the property. She invited me to shadow her during several wedding receptions. I was able to work alongside Meredith and offer my assistance for many weddings that took place at Wynn. I used my experience working with Meredith during my interview to obtain my first position as a wedding sales and catering coordinator."

That mentorship involvement and familiarity with the industry paid off for Diaz, and she is now pleased to be serving as a mentor herself. "I've learned so much from Rachel through examples she's shown me from previous weddings," says Matherly. "Being able to assist during the actual weddings has been a wonderful learning experience. Not only have I learned about weddings and event planning in general, but I also built a friendship with a person who is caring and genuinely interested in seeing me succeed."

"When I met Rachel for the first time and learned of her

position as catering sales manager, I was blown away by how she deals with all the weddings that come through The Mirage. From the moment I began assisting her, I knew that my learning experience had just begun. She took me on a back-of-the-house tour and introduced me to the department representatives she most often works with.”

But Matherly found more than just a work relationship with Diaz. “Something that I appreciated more than anything throughout my mentorship was building a friendship with my mentor. Knowing that I could talk to her about anything and ask any question, regardless of how crazy it might sound, was a crucial part of my experience with her. She always gave multiple examples of how she handled things and made sure I understood what she said. She really understood my schedule and helped me with both business and personal matters. All of these opportunities enhanced my understanding of the industry and how endless the possibilities are of making a wedding dream come true.”

Matherly describes the long hours Diaz works, including conducting site tours and rehearsals. She personally assembles party favors, makes sure the centerpieces are perfectly aligned, and reads banquet event orders with a sharp eye for detail.

“I was impressed that someone this busy had time to give to a mentee,” says Matherly. “She let me assist with going over new client profiles, listen in on phone conversations, help with site tours, and many other projects. I was able to see many different aspects of The Mirage and now have a better understanding of how a large property is run. The knowledge I acquired even helped me get an internship with the Four Seasons Baltimore this summer.

“I know that Rachel’s guidance and wealth of knowledge have had an immense impact on my life and my experience here in the hotel college. I cannot thank her enough for influencing my passion for the meetings and events industry, and I look forward to learning even more from her, one wedding at a time.”

“This is only my second year as a mentor in the program,” says Diaz. “I have been very fortunate to have had two amazing mentees who have worked alongside me for the duration of the mentor program and even after the program ended. Both my mentees were excited, motivated, and eager to learn. I could not have asked for anything more.”

Diaz continues, “I was very fortunate to have had many mentors during my college career. These mentors helped obtain valuable experience, scholarships, and job opportunities that have led to where I am today. I am forever

***The mentor program  
is an educational  
experience intended to  
accelerate the readiness  
of Hotel College students  
as they prepare for  
employment after  
graduation.***

grateful for my mentors, my education, my college professors, and the Hotel College Mentor Program, and what better way to show my gratitude than to pay it forward?”

That nomination couldn’t have befitted a better person. Diaz was named Mentor of the Year for the 2011–2012 program. ■■

#### ABOUT THE PROGRAM

For one academic year, a mentor is paired with a Hotel College student whose interest matches the mentor’s profession. Mentors are asked to dedicate as much time they can comfortably fit within their schedules. The program is flexible and based on the schedules of both the mentor and the mentee.

*To learn more, please see the Hotel College Mentor Program website at [unlv.edu/hotel/mentor](http://unlv.edu/hotel/mentor).*

## Pastry Perfection

Las Vegas executive pastry chef and native Texan Amy Byro, '00, almost took her career in a completely different direction. While she was attending Southwest Texas State (now Texas State) and studying for an accounting degree, she decided to visit her father and brother at Nellis Air Force Base in Las Vegas.

Byro, who already had a background in the culinary arts due to her job at the second-ever location of Whole Foods, read about the Harrah Hotel College's culinary arts management (CAM) program during her trip out West. "The program sounded perfect for me! I decided to apply for a scholarship, which I was awarded, and moved out here less than two months later to start school," she recalls.

While in school, Byro worked full time as a pastry cook at the now-gone Desert Inn. "Pastry has been involved in my life for so long that I feel it's a part of me," says Byro. "I liked to make my family cream puffs and bake cakes and cookies. I have been professionally decorating cakes and making candy since I was 16. I feel like Las Vegas was made for me — UNLV was the perfect start and gave me everything I needed and more to really grow with the city and my eventual job with Caesars Entertainment."

This successful pastry chef attributes her rise up the Las Vegas gastronomic ladder to her UNLV education. "Dr. Bell's food science course was one of my favorites; it really got into the WHY of everything. I loved that. I still have that class's book and refer to it to this day: cost control, recipe costing — I do that stuff every day. Chef Jean Hertzman has been a wonderful mentor, and we've kept in touch all these years. Al Izzolo got me the greatest internship ever at the Bellagio. I still have contacts to this day that I made because of him and that experience."

She continues, "I want everyone who goes to UNLV to get as much out



**In 2010, Byro's recipes were included in the publication of Harrah's Entertainment Presents *The Seven Stars Cookbook: Recipes From World-Class Casino Restaurants*. The cookbook is comprised of recipes from an acclaimed lineup of Harrah's Entertainment chefs, including Byro's lemon squares from the Flavors Buffet and The Range Steakhouse at Harrah's Las Vegas.**

of it as I did. Programs grow, change, and adapt to the needs of the industry, and if I can be a part of that, I'm happy. I serve on the advisory board for the hotel college under Chef Jean and am very happy to help however I can.

"I cannot stress enough how the hotel college and UNLV gave me the foundation that my entire career is built on. The work ethic you learn there is outstanding — and appreciated by everyone I have ever worked for. My boss, Shawn Ritchie, '90, is an alumnus as well. I encourage anyone I know looking into the hospitality field to consider going to UNLV." 

Recently engaged, Byro and fiancé (local radio personality Chet Buchanan) are loyal Rebel supporters. "We never miss a home football or basketball game. I am so proud to be an alumna of UNLV!"

### Leonard Goodall

On July 3, UNLV President Neal Smatresk announced the passing of former UNLV President Dr. Leonard “Pat” Goodall following illness. Goodall is survived by Lois, his wife of 53 years, and their daughter, Karen Crane.

Goodall served as the fourth president of UNLV, from 1979 to 1984. He was a specialist in urban politics, and he spent most of his career at major state institutions, including Arizona State University, the University of Illinois at Chicago, and the University of Michigan-Dearborn.

Among the highlights of the Goodall administration was the creation of The UNLV Foundation, a significant milestone in the partnering of donor support with academic programs. The newly constructed Alta Ham Fine Arts Building and the Frank and Estella Beam Hall were joined by the addition of the Claes Oldenburg sculpture, “The Flashlight.” Completing the work begun by his predecessor, Goodall was also instrumental in the development of the 18,000-seat Thomas & Mack Center.

In 1984, he returned to the faculty of public administration, where he taught until his retirement in 2000. Always a strong supporter of UNLV, Goodall remained actively engaged in the community and his profession, completing his ninth book, *An Investor’s Memoir*, while facing the challenge of his illness. ■■



### Verna Harrah

Verna Harrah, widow of casino magnate and UNLV hotel college namesake William “Bill” Harrah, passed away June 29. She was the founder of Middle Fork Productions, a film production company. Donald S. Snyder, dean of the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration at UNLV, says, “The Harrah name and legacy will live forever at UNLV and with students from around the world whose career foundations began at the Harrah Hotel College. Verna Harrah played a key role in making the gift that made this all possible.” ■■

**From left: Kenny Rogers, Verna and Bill Harrah, and Steve Martin in May 1978 at the couple’s Lake Tahoe estate, Villa Harrah.** Photo courtesy of the Harrah’s Corporate Archives, which are housed in the UNLV Library’s Special Collections.

### Frances Tally



The former executive vice president of Hospitality Financial and Technology Professionals (HFTP), Frances Tally, passed away in the spring. She was part of the first paid staff hired by the association. In 1971, she was hired as the national executive secretary, at which time the association’s name was the National Association of Hotel-Motel Accountants Inc. and there was only \$18 in the bank account. In 1972,

Tally was asked to fill the executive vice president’s position. She retired after 16 years of service, leaving a foundation for HFTP to grow into the global association it is today.

The Hospitality Financial and Technology Professionals Frances Tally Endowed Scholarship was established by the HFTP in 2001. It is awarded to an undergraduate or

graduate student of the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration. Applicants must maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher, and preference is given to students who are members of HFTP’s Las Vegas Student Chapter and have demonstrated an interest in hospitality financial management, hospitality accounting, or hospitality technology. ■■

### Charmaine Chia Pei Ing

Charmaine Chia Pei Ing, ’09, part of UNLV Singapore’s first graduating class, passed away July 7. Classmates and faculty fondly remember her as an adventurous foodie who enjoyed sharing new cuisines with fellow classmates.



# Hospitality Association of Koreans

The Hospitality Association of Koreans (HAK) is a multicultural club for UNLV students. The association has two objectives: to promote Korean culture and to build knowledge and experience in the hospitality industry by providing networking opportunities with industry leaders.

HAK welcomes students who are passionate about hospitality-related fields, want to obtain helpful information through seminars and seek advice from industry professionals, and are looking to be involved in activities and events within the university. Membership is open to all students regardless of nationality or the pursuit of a particular major.

President Minji Ryu says, "The club is structured like a hotel, with different departments, including sales and marketing, human resources, and events, to give students more experience in their areas of interest. Through this club, I've learned so much about leadership and many aspects of business. It's a great asset!"



The club meets regularly, planning and preparing for various events. Past events have included a Korean barbecue, tours of local resorts, bowling nights, wine tastings, talent shows, and industry guest speakers on numerous topics. ■■

# Chinese Students and Scholars Association



The Chinese Students and Scholars Association is composed of both undergraduate and graduate students who are interested in learning more about Chinese culture

and traditions. The club's objectives include enhancing Chinese culture throughout the UNLV campus and the Las Vegas community and providing assistance to interested Chinese students and scholars. This past year, the club organized a Chinese New

Year Celebration Gala on campus, and more than 300 people participated, including representatives from the Asian Chamber of Commerce, the American Chinese Import and Export Association, the U.S.-China Cultural Exchange Committee, and the Chinese American Academic Association of Nevada. Because of the importance of globalization, it is important for countries to understand each other's cultures.

According to Felix (Shiyu) Chen, the organization's current president, "The Chinese New Year Gala, which is the largest event hosted by UNLV CSSA, has been now recognized by not just the university but also by society. CSSA would love to continuously host this event in the future and utilize this fantastic opportunity to introduce Chinese culture to our fellow students and scholars."

For more information about the Chinese Students and Scholars Association, send an email to [unlvcssa@yahoo.com](mailto:unlvcssa@yahoo.com). ■■



## Singapore Students Visit Las Vegas Campus

In May, more than 200 students from the UNLV Singapore campus visited Las Vegas as part of their study program to further their knowledge about conventions and event planning. To get the UNLV student experience, they stayed on campus in the dorms for their three-week visit.

The students learned more about

conventions and event planning by touring MGM Resorts International properties. They also took a law course as well as a food and beverage course. Highlights from their UNLV visit included attending an etiquette dinner — where they learned how to conduct themselves during a business meeting over a meal — and a welcome reception planned

by students in the capstone events management course.

In their free time, UNLV Singapore students were able to take tours of the Valley of Fire and Hoover Dam.

The Singapore campus, which opened in 2006 and graduated its first class in 2009, offers instruction about the global hospitality industry. ■



Alumni gather for a reception in Seoul, Korea



Harrah Hotel College Dean Don Snyder and UNLV President Dr. Neal Smatresk pose as action figures at Konami Headquarters in Tokyo

## Tour of Asia

This summer UNLV President Neal Smatresk and Harrah Hotel College Dean Don Snyder traveled to several cities in Asia on behalf of UNLV alumni and development business. Their first stop was UNLV Singapore, where they attended an alumni reception (sponsored by the Harrah Hotel College Alumni chapter) and commencement.

After visiting Hong Kong and meeting with alumni, the president and dean visited Macau. While they were only there a

short time, they did get to tour several well-known hotel/casinos.

In Tokyo, Smatresk and Snyder visited Konami Gaming Headquarters.

Their last stop was Seoul, Korea. Professor Wonseok Seo, '95, '97 MS planned a reception, which was attended by over 120 alumni. At this event, Jung-Ho Suh, '82, '83 MBA, was recognized as the hotel college Alumnus of the Year, an honor he received at the 2010 Vallen Dinner of Distinction. ■



## UNLV Singapore Hosts Reception

On June 7, UNLV Singapore hosted a reception for alumni and graduating students. With over 50 people in attendance, including UNLV President Dr. Neal Smatresk and Harrah Hotel College Dean Don Snyder, the event was held in the campus' student union, located in the National Library Building.

## UNLV Singapore to Offer Pathway to U.S. Engineering Degrees

On June 7, Dr. Neal Smatresk, president of UNLV, announced the availability of undergraduate lower division engineering classes beginning Fall 2013 at UNLV Singapore. Students will complete 60 U.S. academic credits at the branch campus in Singapore before they relocate to the main UNLV campus to complete a bachelor of science degree in engineering at the university's Howard R. Hughes College of Engineering.

Subject to formal approval by the chancellor of the Nevada System of Higher Education and the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, UNLV will admit an initial cohort of 50 top engineering students, primarily from the Asia/Pacific region, to study in Singapore and then in Las Vegas. Classes in Singapore will be taught by locally-hired faculty in residence and part-time instructors, augmented by faculty from the main

campus engineering faculty. Students will be fully admitted to UNLV as freshmen and will choose to major in one of the following fields once they relocate to Las Vegas as juniors: Civil Engineering, Computer Engineering, Computer Science, Construction Management, Electrical Engineering, Entertainment Engineering and Design, or Mechanical Engineering.

Qualified international students who graduate within the Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics (STEM) fields may now be eligible for an extended 17-month Optional Practical Training (OPT) period of employment within the United States in addition to the basic 12-month OPT period. UNLV is U.S. regionally accredited, and applicable programs within the College of Engineering are accredited by the Accrediting Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET). Outstanding



Jimmy Ho recently joined the UNLV Singapore team as the recruitment and outreach assistant manager.

students will be eligible to apply some upper division undergraduate courses to a MS or Ph.D. degree in Engineering at UNLV.

## Fourth Commencement Held at Singapore Campus



This year marked the largest number of graduates at the UNLV Singapore campus since its inception in 2006. With 64 graduates representing 11 countries, the campus has become firmly entrenched in the Asian hospitality industry. The June 8 campus commencement ceremony was held at the Raffles Hotel Singapore.

Dignitaries from the main UNLV campus included President Dr. Neal Smatrek and Harrah Hotel College Dean Don Snyder. Two students spoke at the event — Justin Aow, representing the undergraduates, and Yolanda Lao representing the master of hospitality students.



### Students at the Singapore campus are from:

China, including Macau S.A.R.  
India  
Indonesia  
Japan  
Malaysia  
The Netherlands  
The Philippines  
Singapore  
South Korea  
United States  
Vietnam

# ALUMNI UPDATES

Submit your updates to [Robyn.Hadden@unlv.edu](mailto:Robyn.Hadden@unlv.edu)

## 1970s

**Jim Mikula, '78**, has recently been named the managing director of the Hotel Madeline & Inn at Lost Creek in Telluride, Colo.

## 1990s

**Nancy Banner, '94**, a classically trained chef specializing in self-health, delivers the message



that moving from SAD, the Standard American Diet of processed foods, toward GLADD, her whole foods, anti-inflammatory lifestyle diet, is satisfying to mind, body, and palate in her newly released book, *Chef Nancy's Recipe for Health*. The book teaches eaters how to transition their meal choices to prevent and reverse disease with tasty recipes that are dairy-free, gluten-free, soy-free, and low-glycemic. To purchase the book, enroll in a coaching program, or learn more, email [info@theholistickitchen.com](mailto:info@theholistickitchen.com) or visit <http://www.theholistickitchen.com>. Banner lives in Mesa, Ariz.

After years of working as a marketing communications director, **Roni Benenson de Sterin, '99**, has founded The Pitch Factory, a small marketing consultancy agency dedicated to providing integrated marketing solutions in English, Spanish, and Hebrew. The Pitch Factory assists its clients with necessary marketing

deliverables, including branding, strategy, etc. and the tasks' implementation within the organization. de Sterin can be reached at [roni@pitchfactory.co.il](mailto:roni@pitchfactory.co.il).

**Dennis Gradillas, '91**, is the executive director of Las Ventanas. He currently serves as president of the Harrah Hotel College Alumni Chapter Board of Directors and is a board member of the UNLV Alumni Association. Friends may contact Gradillas at 702-240-0276 or [dgradillas@lasventanas-lifecare.com](mailto:dgradillas@lasventanas-lifecare.com). In his last role, he was the general manager of the Platinum Hotel & Spa. Gradillas lives in Las Vegas, Nev.

**Chris Smith, '98**, has recently been promoted to director, Corporate Human Resources for Caesars Entertainment. Previously, he was the manager of Human Resources and the director of Training and Development for Caesars Entertainment. Smith serves as vice president for the Harrah Hotel College Alumni Chapter Board of Directors and lives in Las Vegas, Nev. Friends may contact him at [chrsmith@caesars.com](mailto:chrsmith@caesars.com).

**Todd Weinstein, '99**, is the director of Leadership Development at PetSmart, Inc., with primary responsibilities for leadership development strategy, programs and processes, individual and team coaching, and other efforts around building organizational effectiveness. More information can be found on his LinkedIn profile

at [linkedin.com/in/toddweinsteinonlinkedin](https://www.linkedin.com/in/toddweinsteinonlinkedin). Weinstein lives in Phoenix, Ariz.

**Allison Wiede, '99**, has recently been promoted to contract specialist at the Syracuse Veterans Administration Medical Center, serving all of upstate New York. She has also been working on obtaining her master of social work degree at Syracuse University and is due to graduate in May 2013. Friends may contact her at [allison.dubin2@va.gov](mailto:allison.dubin2@va.gov). Weide lives just outside of Syracuse, N.Y.

## 2000s

**Chris Adolph, '00**, started a food distribution business in California called Adolph Inc. The company has grown over the last ten years into a manufacturing and processing plant. Adolph played baseball for the UNLV Rebels from 1996-2000, and was drafted by the San Diego Padres before an injury ended his professional baseball career. He can be contacted at [Chris@Adolphinc.com](mailto:Chris@Adolphinc.com).

**Quynh Dam, '11**, was profiled in the official blog of the MGM Resorts International College Programs. She is currently working for the company as a management associate in hotel operations.

**Adam Gordon, '04**, recently joined the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority as a sales executive. Previously, he was a national sales manager with Green Valley Ranch

Resort Spa Casino. He also spent time at Caesars Entertainment and was part of the opening team for MGM Resorts' CityCenter project. Gordon is a member of the Harrah Hotel College Alumni Chapter Board of Directors and may be contacted at [agordon@lvcva.com](mailto:agordon@lvcva.com). He lives in Las Vegas, Nev.

**Jonathan Horner, '09**, was recently selected to introduce and implement a fresh holistic approach



**Joanthon Horner**

to game improvement at CordeValle, A Rosewood Resort, located in Northern California's Santa Cruz mountains. For the past four years, Horner has been a staff professional at the prestigious Jim McLean Golf Academy at Miami Beach Golf Club. His work in Miami has included assisting world-class players such as PGA Tour stars Greg Norman, Ryan Moore, and Keegan Bradley, as well as LPGA teen sensation Alexis Thompson. He is a certified Class A PGA Professional. He has also served as operations manager at the McLean School.

Horner has worked as an assistant pro at Bandon Dunes Resort in Oregon and Rio Secco Golf Club in Las Vegas; was an instructor at Colorado Golf Club in Parker, Colo.; and was a teaching assistant pro at The Club at Pronghorn, in Bend, Ore.

**Lindsay Hoskins, '11**, joined the staff at PGA of America Headquarters in March 2012 as a championship coordinator.



**Lindsay Hoskins**

Hoskins' internship experiences included working in Las Vegas, Nev. at Red Rock Country Club, the Southern Nevada Chapter of the Southwest Section PGA, Rhodes Ranch Golf Club, and the Medinah Country Club in Illinois.

She is now responsible for providing support for PGA of America-sponsored events including: the PGA Junior Series; the PGA Junior Ryder Cup; the PGA Junior Championship; and the PGA Minority Collegiate Golf Championship. The coordination for these events includes the management of player applications, website administration, tournament planning, and traveling for on-site event production.

**Jacob D. Montoya, '08**, is the assistant housekeeping

manager at Gilla River Casinos in Chandler, Ariz. Friends may contact him at [jdarnellmontoya@gmail.com](mailto:jdarnellmontoya@gmail.com).

## 2010s .....

**Jason Montoya, '11**, became the nation's first Pueblo Native American PGA Professional in May. Montoya, who works as a PGA assistant golf professional at Twin Warriors Golf Club in Santa Ana Pueblo, N.M., began his golf career in the club's Junior Golf Program. In his position, he manages tournaments, works with meeting and event planners, and performs other management duties. In 2011, he coached Team New Mexico to a first place victory in the 2011 Indigenous Games, an Olympic-style event for Native American and indigenous youth throughout the world.

**Matthew Muldoon, '09**, MS, is the chief development officer for Three Square, Southern Nevada's only food bank. He works closely with

the CEO, Board of Trustees, and various committees to develop and implement a comprehensive fundraising strategy to expand financial and in-kind support for Three Square. He may be contacted at [mmuldoon@threesquare.com](mailto:mmuldoon@threesquare.com). Muldoon lives in Las Vegas, Nev.

**Judy Nagai, '11**, Ph.D., is the assistant dean for Development and External Relations, Graduate School of Management at the University of California, Davis. She earned her doctorate from the College of Education, and is a lifetime member of the UNLV Alumni Association. Nagai initiated the Alumni Relations program for the Harrah Hotel College in 2002. Friends may contact her on LinkedIn at [linkedin.com/in/judynagai](http://linkedin.com/in/judynagai). She currently resides in Davis, Calif.

**Alexandra (Allie) Singer, '12**, recently accepted a hotel sales coordinator position at Treasure Island Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas. She is working directly with West

Coast corporate groups and wedding parties. Feel free to contact her at [Asinger@treasureisland.com](mailto:Asinger@treasureisland.com).

**Yolanda Tuttle-Williams, '07**, graduated from George Washington University with a master's degree in tourism administration in May 2011. She is currently living in Athens, Ga., where she works part-time as a travel consultant, and is looking forward to a move back to the southwest.

**Myongjee (Michelle) Yoo, '11**, Ph.D., is an assistant professor at Florida International University, Chaplin School of Hospitality Management. She can be contacted at [myoo@fiu.edu](mailto:myoo@fiu.edu).

The Harrah Hotel College is pleased to announce the re-launch of its website. Please visit [unlv.edu/hotel](http://unlv.edu/hotel) to view the new, user-friendly site.

## CONGRATULATIONS

The following awards were conferred at the April 18 Academic Recognition Luncheon:

**Bo Bernhard** — Ace Denken Research Award

**Christian Hardigree** — Boyd Award for Service

**Carola Raab** — Boyd Award for Research

**Heather Willden** — Best Professional Paper

**Robert Woods** — Claudine Williams Distinguished Chair Award

**Myongjee "Michelle" Yoo** — Best Dissertation Award

Congratulations to Ph.D. student **Brett Abarbanel**. She recently received the UNLV President's Graduate Research Fellowship and a summer scholarship.



**Brett Abarbanel**

Her research extends over the entire gaming industry and ranges from gambling addictions to casino operations to global gambling policies. Her dissertation looks at mapping the online gambling servicescape and how online gambling atmospherics affect the user experience.

# CONGRATULATIONS

Kudos to Professional Golf Management assistant director and internship coordinator, **Chris Brown**, who received his Ph.D. in May.

Welcome to three new academic advisors: **Alan Hott, Antonio Villegas**, and **Christina Zboril**.

Congratulations to **Curtis Love**, Ph.D., CHE, and the director of Graduate Studies, as he received the Regents Award for Graduate Advising and the UNLV Award for Graduate Advising.

Associate Professor **Karl Mayer**, Ph.D., graduate coordinator of dual programs, was awarded Outstanding Reviewer at the Emerald Literati Network Awards for Excellence 2012. Each year, the Emerald Literati Network names and rewards the outstanding reviewers who contribute to the success of the journals. Mayer made an impressive and significant contribution to International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management during 2011.

The Las Vegas Business Academy (LVBA) has awarded its first full scholarship to **Monica Moradkhan**, '04, for the Master's of Science in Hotel Administration degree. In addition to giving the scholarship, LVBA members will provide mentoring, networking opportunities, and additional educational options for Moradkhan. With



**Monica Moradkhan**

the scholarship, LVBA's goal is to nurture and support the future business leaders of Las Vegas.

UNLV men's tennis standout **Rene Ruegamer** was named to the 2011-12 Capital One Academic All-District 8 At-Large First Team in May. The senior from Wurzburg, Germany, boasted a cumulative grade point average of 3.92 while majoring in hospitality management. Ruegamer played atop the Rebels' singles lineup this spring and earned All-Mountain West honors on the court. In addition, he is the fifth man in UNLV tennis history to earn the CoSIDA academic all-district designation.

Professor **Patti Shock**, CPCE, CHT, recently earned the certified hospitality trainer (CHT) designation from the Educational Institute of the American Hotel & Lodging Association. Shock was also quoted in an article titled "Agency Scandal Highlights Conference Contracts" in the April 30, 2012, issue of *The New York Times*.

**Dean Don Snyder** was honored with the Free Enterprise Award by the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce in April. In addition, Snyder's work was vital to the successful opening of the Smith Center, where he currently serves as volunteer chairman of the board of directors. Snyder was integral in securing the \$150 million needed to build the cultural center, which opened in March.



**Troy Wailehua (left) receives his award from UNLV President Neal Smatresk.**

Ph.D. candidate **Courtney Suess'** paper with Seyhmus Baloglu on a hospitality development sustainability index won the Best Graduate Student Paper Award at the 41st annual Western Decision Sciences Institute Conference. The Network for the Hospitality Industry awarded Suess a \$3,000 scholarship to use for research toward sustainable hospitality architecture.

The Cornell University School of Hotel Administration recently published a special 90th-anniversary edition of its *Hotelie* magazine, "Celebrating 90 years as the

first and the best." Harrah Hotel College founding dean **Jerry Vallen** is listed as one of the publication's "90 Influential Hotelies" for being the first to establish a major hospitality program.

Hotel college student **Karla Washington** was honored during May's commencement as one of nine outstanding graduates. She was profiled in the fall 2011 issue of *Premier*. Congratulations to MHA student **Troy Wailehua**, '07, who received the 2012 President's Classified Employee Rookie of the Year award at the UNLV Classified Staff Employee Awards. ■

## Claudine Williams Distinguished Chair Recipients

1990 to 1992 — Frank Borsenik	2004 to 2006 — Seyhmus Baloglu
1992 to 1994 — John Stefanelli	
1994 to 1996 — Donald Bell	2006 to 2008 — Zheng Gu
1996 to 1998 — Patti Shock	2008 to 2010 — James Busser
1998 to 2000 — Vince Eade	2010 to 2012 — Pearl Brewer
2000 to 2002 — John Bowen	2012 to 2014 — Robert Woods
2002 to 2004 — Audrey McCool	



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