UNLV HIGHLIGHTS

UNIVERSITY

• Scientists in UNLV’s radiochemistry program were called upon for help in the wake of the nuclear power plant catastrophe in Fukushima, Japan. General Electric, which designed the nuclear reactor, reached out to professor Ken Czerwinski and his team for assistance in understanding the effects seawater might have in scattering the radioactive material. UNLV’s program is one of only a few of its kind in the nation.

• On the anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks, the university dedicated the UNLV Veterans Memorial honoring Las Vegas and UNLV service members from all wars and conflicts. Organized by the UNLV Student Veterans Organization, the memorial sits near the Alta Ham Fine Arts Building at the base of the stairs leading to Artemus W. Ham Concert Hall and Judy Bayley Theatre.

• Dave Rice became the first former Runnin’ Rebel to be named head coach of the UNLV basketball program. He played as a reserve guard on two of coach Jerry Tarkanian’s Final Four teams — the 1990 championship team and the 1991 team. He returned to UNLV after coaching at BYU.

• U.S. News & World Report placed UNLV at No. 25 in its ranking of most popular national universities by yield — the percentage of applicants accepted by a college who chose to enroll at that institution in the fall. A national university is one that is research-oriented and offers degrees of all levels. The 2009 figures used in the ranking showed that of the 6,057 students who were accepted, a total of 3,236 actually enrolled — a yield of 53.4 percent.

RESEARCH

• A team of researchers from UNLV and UNR have developed the most comprehensive model to date explaining how Carlin-type gold deposits were formed. The deposits, which are unique to the state, have yielded more than $225 billion worth of ore at today’s gold prices — more than was ever mined during the California gold rush.

• Two UNLV researchers, health physics professor Ralf Sudowe and radiochemistry doctoral student Megan Bennett, were part of an international team of scientists from Russia and the United States that discovered the newest addition to the periodic table, element 117.

• In fiscal year 2010, UNLV received approximately $96 million in external award funding with nearly $38.4 million supporting research, including significant support from the U.S. Department of Energy, the U.S. Department of Education, and the National Science Foundation.

The number of donors giving private support to UNLV is on the rise. The total number has increased each of the past three years, from fewer than 6,000 in FY 2008 to more than 7,700 in FY 2010.
COMMUNITY OUTREACH

• National Guard troops and veterans from all branches of the service who meet eligibility requirements receive free dental care from UNLV’s School of Dental Medicine through the Sergeant Clint Ferrin Memorial Clinic. A dental student started the clinic in memory of his brother who died while serving in Iraq. It has received national recognition from the American Dental Association Foundation.

FUNDRAISING

• The gaming lab in the Stan Fulton Building is being named the KONAMI Gaming Laboratory in recognition of a $1 million gift to the Harrah College of Hotel Administration from KONAMI Corp. The gift is funding scholarships and also helping students pursue professional development opportunities.

• The UNLV Foundation endowment fund is headed in a positive direction as it recovers from one of the most difficult investment markets in history, growing 24 percent overall in FY 2010. With a value surpassing $100 million, the fund will be able to provide more dollars for program support and scholarship distributions in the 2011-12 academic year.

STUDENTS

• Engineering students Wali Zaidi, Sammy Zaidi, and Christopher Belcher won the Humanitarian Technology Challenge, an international competition sponsored by the Institute for Electrical and Electronics Engineers and the United Nations Foundation. The trio edged out finalists from universities in Germany and India with their idea of a solar-tracking power system that could bring affordable electricity to rural areas.

• Women’s golfer Therese Koelbaek earned medalist honors at the 2011 Mountain West Conference Championship after being named the MWC Golfer of the Year and an All-MWC honoree. She is the fourth Rebel to win the MWC’s women’s golf individual championship.

• Courtney Waldron received a Fulbright fellowship that is allowing her to spend a year at the University of the Basque Country in Bilboa, Spain. There the Honors College graduate will study the link between cultural attractions and economic diversification. She graduated in May with a bachelor’s degree in economics with a minor in math and a concentration in music. For her honors thesis, and as part of a National Science Foundation EPSCoR grant, she investigated ways to track the public’s willingness to pay for efforts to reduce the effects of climate change.

• The men’s swim team swept both the conference regular season and the MWC Championship meet titles. It was the seventh straight MWC Championship title for the Rebels. Additionally, Cody Roberts became the eighth Rebel to be named MWC Swimmer of the Year in the 12-year history of the conference.