A True Gaming Pioneer

Remembering Claudine Williams
PREMIER

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

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My summer began in a unique way, as I had the pleasure of addressing our first graduating class of the UNLV College of Hotel Administration in Singapore June 6. We were pleased to have the Singapore Minister of State for Trade and Industry and Minister-in-Charge of Entrepreneurship Lee Yi Shyan, then-President Ashley, and other distinguished guests in attendance for the momentous occasion.

I was excited to share that our vision of an international campus had become a reality and that even though we've had international students in our Las Vegas program for many years, hospitality and tourism have become a global phenomenon requiring managers to understand multiple cultures and their requirements for outstanding customer service.

The Singapore campus was created to get closer to those geographic areas where students demand the program and begin to create an international network of campuses for students wanting to study hospitality management. This, in turn, increases UNLV's brand equity and makes visiting such hospitality hot spots as Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong, and Macau more convenient.

Although I was told in my initial meeting with Singapore's Economic Development Board (EDB) that it would take a minimum of five years to develop our campus, I am pleased to say that it took less than two and a half years. Of course, there was lots of learning that needed to take place: First, I learned of Singapore's economic strategy and the place of education within that strategy, and second, I learned about the concept of the Global Schoolhouse and bringing many of the world's best academic programs into an education hub.

Next, I focused on getting the requisite approvals from Nevada and the university administration, including our Board of Regents, the governing board for the university system. Obtaining the support from the EDB came next. This group has been a fantastic partner from the very beginning, and this campus would not have happened without its support.

We then selected the campus administrator, the campus’s chief academic officer. The perfect candidate was Dr. Andy Nazarechuk. With his international knowledge and business acumen, we found a location in the National Library for our campus. After that, it was Andy’s turn to develop the operating structure.

And operate it, he has. He has done an excellent job of putting together the campus, no easy feat. In addition, he has attracted worthy students to our programs by traveling with the Singapore Tourism Board, promoting UNLV within Singapore whenever he had the chance, and being a wonderful ambassador.

Now the first class has graduated from UNLV Singapore, and I feel like a proud parent. This group of adventurous graduates is not afraid to seek the unknown; has an obvious willingness to try something new; and does so with the attributes of courage, perseverance, and hard work.

As Singapore Minister Lee Yi Shyan told the group: “This graduation ceremony is the starting point of your professional journey. You have the distinct honor and privilege of being the inaugural graduating group of those who represent the best of an international education in hospitality. Today, you become role models to the students who will follow in your footsteps.”

“These graduates are to be congratulated not only for their accomplishments academically but also for their pioneering spirit,” says Nazarechuk. “We have every reason to believe that they will carry this pioneering spirit into the workplace and lead the way for the graduates who will follow in their footsteps.” He also expressed his confidence that the tourism industry in Singapore will provide ample professional opportunities for UNLV Singapore graduates to become leaders in the hospitality industry.

I’m excited to follow these graduates’ careers as they infiltrate the international hospitality world. I hope they can all find positions that they look forward to each day while they continue to grow in the industry.

On a different note, we received news in June that Governor Jim Gibbons signed the Capital Improvements Program bill and that the hotel college will be getting $3.2 million in planning funds for the new academic building, to match the $2.5 million we have already received from Harrah’s Entertainment.

On behalf of the college, I thank everyone for helping make this a reality.
On Oct. 18, 2007, CNN conducted a poll about the economy and discovered that 46 percent of those polled believed the country was already in a recession. Fast forward to Jan. 4, 2008, at which time John Ryding, chief market economist for Bear Stearns, told the media that he was on what he called “a recession watch.” Three months later, March 14, the 85-year-old investment bank was toast. Between that CNN poll and today, the country has weathered the agonizing twists and turns of an economy gone amok. The details are as evident as the weather and often as unstable and unpredictable, and we need not dissect them here. We know what they are, and we are for the most part glum.

In the meantime, the hospitality industry has been scrambling to hang on to business, to increase guest room and cover counts and the revenues and profits that result. The tactics and strategies are all too familiar: Cut food and labor costs, cut prices, slash hours, offer incentives and discounts, deal and trade, institute an assortment of favors from elaborate amuses and lagniappes (often more than one), introduce happy hours that make sense, and last, but not least (remembering that service is your ace), fire employees, both front and back, visible or not, who grumble, complain, and infuriate guests.

Also, shuck the obvious, introduce the surprise (however short-lived it might be). At the Benoit bistro (NYC), Alain Ducasse (believe it or not) is serving sliders and deviled eggs for a buck apiece. Or so noted the April 3, 2009, Wall Street Journal, which went on to say, “Around the country, proprietors are turning their restaurants — or significant parts of them — into glorified bars ... proving [that it’s] more cost-effective to serve lower-priced dishes that diners can munch on as they buy drinks.”

Not noted in the article was why upscale, luxurious dining has fallen off. A plump percentage of sales restaurants depend on results from expense-account business. Much of that has dropped off sharply as companies prohibit their employees from indulging in spending that smacks of conspicuous consumption, a policy likely to remain in place once the country recovers from this mess.

Here is sound counsel from fellow UNLV Advisory Board member Stan Bromley, who for his entire career spanning more than 45 years worked in the hotel business, most formidably and recently (he retired nearly three years ago) as regional vice president, Four Seasons Hotels, and as general manager of its hotel in San Francisco. Bromley still finds himself immersed in the hotel business, currently troubleshooting a hotel in Napa.

“Throughout my career, I practiced that if you hire the best people, train them, treat them right, and are relentless about an eye for detail and attention to detail, you will make money. That’s no longer true. I’ve had to change my approach by reversing the people/product mix process: What used to be the attention to detail on people and product has to be transferred to a different skill set that deals with revenue generating and expense managing.

“If I were teaching a hotel school class in 2010, I’d make the director of finances as important as anyone else in the hotel. Look at your 90-day forecast and identify how much money you can spend, given the revenue shifts and changes (or lack of), then spend time explaining to every employee why you’ve done what you’ve done, involving them in understanding what the business needs are and how bad they are so that they can begin to believe in the fact that what you’re doing is absolutely necessary.”

Finally, let me leave you with this optimistic note from Matt Creighton, co-exec chef, Melange, Beachwood, Ohio: “When guests leave Melange, I want them to look back on the experience and decide that — absolutely — every minute they spent here was the best thing they could’ve done with their time.”
Industry Expert Rainmaker Donates Software for Learning

Especially during times like our current economic situation, the question on many people’s minds is, “What does it take to make a profit in the casino hotel industry?”

Students aspiring to become hotel and gaming leaders now have access to figuring out the secrets to the trade. To help students understand the role of revenue management in the hospitality industry, The Rainmaker Group, a world leader in automated profit-optimization software and services for the gaming hospitality industry, recently donated its revolution™ product suite to the UNLV William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration.

Valued at $1.23 million, this gift of software and support services will enable hospitality students to gain valuable experience with the gaming industry’s most widely used casino hotel revenue-management system. Rainmaker provides revenue-optimization services to companies that include Wynn Las Vegas, MGM MIRAGE, Trump Entertainment Resorts, and Harrah’s Entertainment. revolution is the only system that considers “total customer value,” which includes hotel revenues plus revenue from gaming, food and beverage, spa, and other sources of customer value for determining optimal availability conditions.

“Our executive education programs will be enhanced by allowing us to add revenue management to our offerings,” says Stuart H. Mann, dean and Michael D. Rose distinguished chair of UNLV’s William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration. “The Rainmaker software will be a great addition to the programs we offer through the International Gaming Institute. While these times of stressful economic conditions make revenue management critical for the success of hospitality operations, the concepts will be important throughout the careers of our students. This contribution from Rainmaker will allow our students to learn from the industry standard.”

According to Tammy Farley, principal of The Rainmaker Group: “Rainmaker partners with the top gaming hotel companies worldwide to implement our systems, so it is appropriate that we also provide our revolution system to the industry’s most respected educational gaming program at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Using our system gives UNLV students a chance to get hands-on experience as they learn revenue management, particularly with a focus on total customer value to the gaming enterprise.”

Leo A Daly Scholarship Fund Provides Support for Students

Giving back to the community is what the international architecture firm Leo A Daly is all about. As a business whose success depends on the supply of well-educated and committed employees, the company understands the importance of a college education. With the establishment of a scholarship set up through the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration, Leo A Daly is able to give back to the community and provide educational opportunities for the work force of the future.

Leo A Daly hopes this will provide Native American students with the educational resources and inspiration to pursue careers in the Native American hotel and gaming industry.

“Mr. Leo A. Daly III, FAIA, is pleased to provide scholarship funding to Native American students so that they may attend UNLV’s prestigious William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration,” says Patrice Sowers, vice president of Leo A Daly. “Our firm’s intent is to perpetuate the spirit of ‘giving back’ and self-governance as graduates return to their tribes to successfully manage their own tribal casino resorts.”

With this scholarship, students will receive financial support as they pursue undergraduate degrees in the college.

“This scholarship has provided incentive for me to reach my goals and provided a reward for my hard work in the classroom,” says Jeremy Braga, a senior majoring in hotel management and a recipient of the scholarship. “I am very thankful for the scholarship, and I will continue to work hard.”

“A college education starts you on a lifelong journey for knowledge, and if we can help that spark start, then we are proud to be able to do what we can,” says Charles Dalluge, executive vice president of Leo A Daly.

Notice about our last issue
The listing of executives offering expertise to students as featured in spring 2009’s Premier was not meant to be a complete listing but served as a representative record.
Keeping Your Eye on the Ball While Contributing to Great Causes

You’ve no doubt heard of speed dating, but what about speed golfing? Well, for the director of UNLV’s PGA Golf Management program, Chris Cain, and fellow golf enthusiast and founder of Par for The Cure, Brian Esposito, it was a challenge they couldn’t refuse. On May 1, the two embarked on a quest to play 1,000 consecutive holes of golf in just 12 hours. (If you’re trying to figure out the math, that’s about 80 seconds a hole!)

With proceeds from the event to benefit both UNLV’s PGA program and Par for The Cure, a local nonprofit organization dedicated to helping those who suffer from breast cancer, Cain and Esposito took their quest seriously. They trained with a physical therapist specializing in golf, watched their diets, and practiced certain conditioning techniques.

Luckily, the weather cooperated that day, with cloudy skies and temperatures in the 80s. Together, the two men played 1,068 holes of golf during the 12-hour time allotment, resulting in an achievement they have submitted to the Guinness Book of World Records.

“Guinness has initially approved our feat, and we are just waiting on confirmation,” says Cain. “Brian and I set individual marks as well.”

Cain went on to say: “I’d like to use this event as a jumping board to start a tradition of getting our UNLV golf management students to participate in golf marathons. These events can broaden their networking base and spread enthusiasm into their professional lives, all while giving back to their communities.”

This year’s event raised $8,000—not too shabby for a first-time event, especially in light of the current economic conditions. “We felt pretty good about it,” says Cain. “We were thankful that the Las Vegas Golf Club donated its facility for the event and that we had many great supporters.”

On August 22, the UNLV PGA Golf Management program held its annual Family and Friends Tournament and Banquet. In attendance were (left to right): Monica Stratton, PGA, supervisor of staff programs for Callaway Golf Company; Amy Bush, PGA, UNLV assistant women’s coach; Nicole Dutt-Roberts, PGA, executive director, Southern Nevada Golf Association; and UNLV PGA golf management students Lindsey Hoskins, Ashley Keller, and Shawna Richardson.
In Memoriam

Claudine Williams. The mere mention of her name brings about thoughts of a pioneer, a woman who overcame the obstacles of a male-dominated era in gaming to make her mark. To others, her name embodies the true meaning of philanthropy — giving others a chance to make their mark. And still others knew that her name simply meant friend and a woman of her word. Her passing leaves a legacy of accomplishment.

As someone who was comfortable working around the “good old boys” of Las Vegas’ past, Williams made a name for herself in the hospitality industry. With husband Shelby, she helped develop the Holiday Casino, which became the foundation for Harrah’s Hotel and Casino. After his death, she continued to improve the property until she sold her interests in 1983 to the Holiday Corporation. Her contributions to Las Vegas, in both the gaming realm and the community, are still in place today.

After moving to Las Vegas in 1963, the couple turned the Silver Slipper casino around, sold it to Howard Hughes, and prepared for the construction of the Holiday Casino. When Shelby’s health failed, Williams assumed more duties and eventually took over the operation. She became the president and general manager of the Holiday Casino in 1977. She was the first female executive of a major casino and the first woman to serve as chair of the American Bank of Commerce board of directors for the state of Nevada. In addition, she was the first woman to serve as the president of the Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce. In 1992, she was honored by her peers as the first woman inductee into the Gaming Hall of Fame, and in 2008, received the hotel college’s Dean’s Medal of Distinction award for a lifetime of commitment to hospitality education.

One of the principles Williams lived by was giving back to the community in which she resided. Numerous organizations and Las Vegas institutions have benefited from her generosity. She made a commitment to help advance education in the Las Vegas valley and was among a small group of residents who started the UNLV Foundation. Always a proud supporter of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and especially of the hotel college, Williams’ generous donations provided scholarships for deserving students and created a residence hall on campus.

Dean Stuart Mann says, “Claudine loved to participate in the activities of the hotel college. She attended many of our lunches and dinners, but I think her favorite was the annual scholarship luncheon where she could see the eagerness and enthusiasm of our students,” he continues. “Claudine was happy to know that she made a difference in the lives of these scholarship winners through her many contributions to the hotel college.

“One of my favorite memories of Claudine was the day she reached into her purse and pulled out a check already prepared for a five-figure sum and said, ‘I am sure you can put this to good use,’” recalls Mann. “She was truly a very special person.”

Williams’ good friend and UNLV Foundation Board of Trustees Executive Committee member Kitty Rodman says, “She was truly one of a kind. From her status as a gaming and community leader to the special friendship we shared over the years, she never let anyone down.” Rodman continues, “She believed in UNLV and the opportunities education presented.”

According to Peter Michele, director of Special Collections at UNLV’s Lied Library, “Claudine Williams was a remarkable woman in many respects — as an extremely accomplished, successful, and respected businesswoman in an industry dominated by men and as a civic leader, role model, and philanthropist. Her generosity to UNLV is, of course, well known.”

He continues, “Our mission in Special Collections is to document the history of both the city of Las Vegas and the gaming industry, so any collection documenting and illustrating the life and career of Claudine Williams is important and essential. We were, therefore, very pleased when her family donated material that had been in her home to us after her death. We already have much material on her life and role in the gaming community: an extensive photo collection documenting her life. And the Holiday Casino and Hotel, which she owned and managed, is well represented in our Harrah’s corporate archives when Harrah’s took over that property.

“The material we recently acquired includes much personal material, photographs, and awards documenting the recognition she received from the community as well as business files related to the management and sale of her gaming properties. These collections illustrate her life as a community leader, a shrewd businesswoman, and someone who was committed to UNLV and higher education in Southern Nevada.”

In 1997 and again in 2005, Williams was interviewed as part of UNLV’s Women’s Research Institute of Nevada for the Las Vegas Women Oral History Project. To hear about her life in her own words, please visit http://wrin.unlv.edu/oral-history/claudine-williams.html.
Student Spotlight

Ed Bobbett

Never the typical student, Ed Bobbett has already completed a tour of duty in Afghanistan as an Air Force Reservist, and that’s only one of many adventures this young man has under his belt.

Born in Ireland, his family relocated to California when he was 10 years old. After completing a bachelor’s degree from Cal State Fullerton in 2001, Bobbett settled into the financial industry, first working as a bank teller and later promoted to several other positions during his 11 years with the bank. During this time, he often recalled a family vacation years earlier to Lake Arrowhead that had an impact on his future.

“The hotel we stayed at really impressed me, even at a young age,” says Bobbett. “I was completely taken by the atmosphere and on that trip decided I wanted to work in that type of environment. As a child, it appeared like work would be a daily vacation.”

With his mind set on UNLV’s hospitality program (which he had learned about as a high school student), he moved to Las Vegas to pursue his dream in 2005. “I started at UNLV in 2007 and left the bank in 2008 in order to complete my master’s degree. I worked as a graduate assistant at UNLV while working to publish a paper and mentoring with a revenue manager to understand revenue management better.”

Never one to sit still for long, Bobbett joined the Air Force Reserve in 1999. “I am stationed at March Air Reserve Base in Riverside, Calif., and recently spent the summer deployed to Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan.” He has kept a blog about his first deployment, which can be found at http://summer09-edward.blogspot.com/.

In addition to his educational and military pursuits, Bobbett completed a Habitat for Humanity project in El Salvador last spring. Helping construct two homes, Bobbett is not one to take the easy way out. “I plan to travel to Costa Rica and Guatemala in the next few years and work with Habitat for Humanity again,” he says. “I’m excited to do it again — this time with my father and brother.”

Bobbett is on track to finish his thesis and graduate with his master’s degree in 2010.

Who knows where the world will take him in the future? Learn more about Edward Bobbett’s Habitat for Humanity work at https://www.habitat.org/cd/gv/participant/participant.aspx?pid=71027108.

Robyn Campbell-Ouchida, ’00 MA
Spring Luncheon Recognizes Academic Excellence
Robyn Hadden, ’05 MS

Each year, Dean Stuart Mann and the Harrah Hotel College host a scholarship luncheon, providing recognition for scholarship recipients. The university’s hotel college faculty and staff are invited to attend, along with donors to the scholarship program. This year’s event was held April 16. In 2008-09, the college awarded $532,957 in scholarships.

In addition to the scholarships, three important awards for faculty are also announced at this luncheon. The recipients of this year’s Sam & Mary Boyd Distinguished Research, Teaching, and Service awards were presented to Tony Lucas, Michael Dalbour, and Pearl Brewer, respectively.

This year’s keynote speaker was Teresa Cookson, vice president of Middle East and European Marketing for MGM MIRAGE, who began by speaking about the Delores Owens scholarship, established in the memory of one of the most respected women in gaming. The scholarship was established in 2004, and more than $28,000 has been awarded to 19 students since that time.

Students Alexandra Ainsworth and Heidi Berger spoke about how scholarships made completing their degrees first a possibility and then a reality. “I am truly thankful that there are people out there who care enough about us, the students, to provide assistance of this scale,” says Berger. “This recognition makes getting through school that much more manageable. It is an inspiration for all of us to continue with our education.”

Vallen Dinner of Distinction

The fifth annual Vallen Dinner of Distinction was held April 30 at the Orleans Hotel & Casino. This year’s event raised more than $31,000 toward the Jerry Vallen Professorship Endowment Fund, which honors founding hotel college Dean Vallen and his wife, Flossie.

After a cocktail reception (including a silent auction) and dinner, a live auction commenced. One highlight of the evening’s action was a package that sold twice. Executive Chef John Gremo, Food and Beverage Chair Pat Moreo, and Dean Stuart Mann auctioned a dinner they would prepare and serve to two lucky winners and their guests.

Honors for the evening began with the Harrah’s Excellence in Innovation Award to Tapcode Inc., an entertainment and software company. The inaugural International Gaming Institute Recognition of Achievement Award was presented to Stan Fulton, and industry executives of the year were also recognized: Don Ross by the food and beverage management department, Sal Semola by the hotel management department, and Kevin Rabbitt by the tourism and convention administration department.

Prior to Bob Boughner, president of Echelon Resorts, being awarded the college’s alumnus of the year, a video tribute was shared with those in attendance. In the video, Boughner’s colleagues described their experiences working with and knowing the honoree.

There are many donors, volunteers, alumni, and friends who helped make the Vallen Dinner of Distinction a success. From donations of many items to the concessions made by The Orleans, the event was a success because of loyal supporters of the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration.
Kristal Surick in front of the soon-to-be-opened Mandarin Oriental
Despite Tough Times, Mandarin Oriental Prepares to Enter the Las Vegas Market

Mandarin Oriental, Las Vegas, is taking on a challenge despite the country’s economic woes and is preparing to debut its new property just before the winter holidays. Located at the entrance to MGM Mirage’s CityCenter, the nongaming “urban resort destination” will consist of 47 stories with dining options and a spa/fitness center. With a mixture of hotel rooms and suites as well as 227 residences, Mandarin Oriental, Las Vegas, will also feature functional space.

For Kristal Surick, ’94, director of human resources for Mandarin Oriental, Las Vegas, life has been extremely busy. Premier spent a few moments asking her about the experience and her career path thus far.

What kinds of challenges have you found working in human resources? How is the recession affecting your job applicants/the job market as far as your property is concerned?

We are lucky to be opening at a time when there are so many candidates looking for jobs, but it is difficult knowing that we can hire only a select few! Our objective is to be our colleague's employer of choice in the Las Vegas market and to have a working environment that is inclusive and rewarding and that values individuality.

Have you ever opened a property before? What are the challenges? What makes Mandarin different from other high-end properties in Las Vegas?

Mandarin Oriental, Las Vegas is my first opening as a human resources director (I was part of a human resources pre-opening team that assisted with the Green Valley Ranch opening during my tenure with Station Casinos), but I have been through four acquisitions. During acquisitions, it was challenging to take on new ideals for operations and integrate them into the current culture.

I believe Mandarin Oriental is different from other seemingly similar properties because we are bringing an unparalleled service level. It is evident, even from our recruitment process, that the company values every minute detail of its operations.

How and why did you choose UNLV for your hospitality education?

I was raised in Southern California and had worked in various hospitality jobs during school. It didn’t take long for me to realize that I wanted to establish a long-term career in the hospitality industry, and I wanted to attend a well-known hospitality program. UNLV was an obvious choice. Plus, there is always something new every day in this field, especially in Las Vegas.

There is something very unique about UNLV that stems from the energy of the city. UNLV is a “working” university in that students are presented with great opportunities within the market due to the close relationships and support from the gaming market.

As mentioned previously, now might not seem like the best time to open such a property, but according to Professor Vince Eade: “This is a renowned brand with a global presence. With that in mind, as well as being part of this incredible project called CityCenter, it only adds to its potential for success. Likewise, Mandarin Oriental has a strong reputation for extraordinary management, which is a formula for success, even in these economic times.”
HotlinkHR Provides for Faculty Professional Development

by Michelle Mouton

Photo by Aaron Mayes, ’06

For faculty in the Harrah Hotel College, opportunities for additional professional development and research activity related to human resource management are available through the Faculty Professional Development Fund established by HotlinkHR. The company, founded by alumnus David Black, ’96, known as “The Big Guy,” his brother Steve Black, and John Boggs, Esq., has generously provided a gift of $100,000 that will allow faculty to attend conferences, engage in research, and enhance their knowledge in human resource management. The company has been recognized as a member of the UNLV Foundation’s Benefactor Society as a result of their generosity.

Through HotlinkHR’s success, the company is able to give back to the community, and the area of faculty development is one that David Black is proud to support. He recalls the work of his teachers, including Vincent Eade, a professor in the hotel college, who taught him human resources courses. Through that experience, he says he came to understand the value of human resources and the role the HR manager plays in the industry.

“I wanted to partner with UNLV because of my experience. I’ve always been proud to be an alumnus,” says David Black. “UNLV gave me the foundation and really set the stage for me. I was able to take that knowledge to the marketplace.” Black says that he and his company are looking forward to continuing their relationship with the Harrah Hotel College, including being involved with Innovation UNLV and enhancing students’ understanding of how technology can help solve HR challenges and labor law compliance issues.

HotlinkHR provides software tools now used by more than 1,000 companies that allow employers to more easily comply with federal and state labor regulations. The sophisticated software aims to simplify the daily HR tasks and force compliance through a series of integrated processes. For many companies, managing the human resources compliance regulations is a daunting task — including, for example, maintaining compliance with the laws related to the complete life cycle of an employee. HotlinkHR guides the user through each process from start to finish, ensuring that all steps are followed and compliance is maintained. For the hospitality industry, the program provides a much-needed tool to assist human resource departments.

Black says that supporting faculty development is a good fit for their company. “We always want to be on the cutting edge of best practice. What better way than to have faculty learning the best practices in the industry and relaying that to the students — and to us too?”

The funds are designated for faculty involved in research in the area of human resource management and have been used to send several faculty to national conferences in human resources management. Gail Sammons, MS ’87, a professor in hotel management, used the funds to attend a training conference sponsored by the American Society of Training and Development. ASTD is the world’s largest professional organization for human resource managers and
professionals. Through the conference, Sammons was able to identify best practices and teaching methods for online courses, which has helped her frame the online course being offered this fall, where undergraduates will get an overview of human resource practices — including recruitment, selection, training, and performance.

Sammons was able to bring back many of the ideas she learned and share them with other faculty, some of whom have adopted new tactics and materials as a result. She says that faculty development funds like these give departments opportunities to try new things and expand the resources they share with students. “I believe we’re in the business of lifelong learning, and we can’t stop learning,” says Sammons.

Eade notes that in addition to faculty development through conference attendance, funds are also being used to support research initiatives of the faculty. “Most recently, we used the funds to conduct a survey with human resource directors at hotel/casinos in Las Vegas, asking them to identify human resource issues they’re dealing with now,” says Eade. The funds were used to conduct the survey, publish results, and host a luncheon to review the survey findings with participants. “It turned out to be a nice session, in that the human resource professionals could mutually discuss issues that are going on locally with the economy and HR issues,” says Eade.

Research like this and the information gleaned from conferences helps keep the faculty members educated and engaged, and that translates to what happens in the classroom. “The research we do, we take and use in the classroom,” says Eade, who also teaches courses in human resources management in the hotel college. He says incorporating that knowledge and experience makes the teaching experience richer and provides greater context in which the students can learn.

Eade is grateful for the partnership with HotlinkHR and the opportunity to have a former student now support the continued development of the program and faculty. “I’m a Rebel at heart,” says Black. “It’s been nice to bring things back to where it started for me.”
The vision of homelessness. For most, it’s an older man panhandling on a street corner or a woman, swathed in coats in the heat of summer, pushing an overstuffed grocery cart. Few people can envision or even admit that there are homeless young people—teenagers, kids, people under the age of 21—sleeping every night on the street.

For the past five years, students in one of the Tourism and Convention Administration (TCA) Festival and Event Management capstone classes have more than admitted there is a problem. They have taken their event-planning knowledge and translated it into a real-world “services fair,” known as the DUSK Project, for Southern Nevada’s homeless youth.

Last spring’s more than 170 attendees experienced a full day of activities and services. They received free HIV tests and dental checkups with the offer of additional free treatments for cavities or other issues. They got haircuts and took showers and were given personal hygiene products. Food and drinks were available throughout the day. Free school supplies and backpacks were given away, as were clothes and other items. Local impersonators provided entertainment, and face painters created realistic wash-away tattoos.

In addition, two district attorneys from juvenile court were available to “forgive” offenses such as jaywalking, panhandling, and loitering and to help clear warrants and arrange hearings. But most importantly, this was a day when these homeless young people could get needed services and materials in what they perceived as a safe environment—one free of police, parents, predators, and pedophiles.

The students hosting the event, held at University United Methodist Church, were totally responsible for the planning and execution of the services fair. They developed a marketing plan, secured sponsorships, hired security, organized food providers, scheduled entertainment, and created the décor. Whether it is an extravagant fundraiser or a daylong retreat for homeless youth, the event planning tasks are the same.

The students’ learning wasn’t limited to classroom subjects. One student said, “My favorite part of working for the DUSK Project was seeing the faces of the kids light up the day of the event. I have done community service work before, but nothing like this.”

Another student wrote, “I was just surprised how many kids were living on the street, having family-related problems, suffering domestic abuse… etc. I know these issues are happening all over the world, but actually interacting with these kids and helping them out for a day was very satisfying. I wish these kids didn’t have to go through these issues.”

“DUSK” is an acronym for “Destigmatizing and Understanding Street Kids.” The DUSK Project is the teenage version of the Stand Down for the Homeless, a similar services fair held each year in Las Vegas. Kate Hausbeck, Ph.D., associate professor in sociology and senior associate dean of the Graduate College, originally partnered with Kathy Nelson, Ph.D., assistant professor in tourism and convention administration, and her TCA Festival and Event Management class to plan and execute the first DUSK Project event.

Since the first event, TCA and sociology students have continued to work together under the direction of Nancy Matheny, MA, CSEP, adjunct professor in the Harrah Hotel College, and Andrew Harper, ABD, outreach and student liaison in the Sociology Department.

In addition to providing services for the homeless teens, the project has provided an opportunity for continuing research on the needs, challenges, and future of this homeless population. According to Clark County School District statistics, there are 5,607 homeless students in the county. Street Teens, a local day shelter, indicates these numbers are growing.
In the hospitality industry, climbing the ladder to success is based on who you know and the experience you have. Opportunities to network are extremely beneficial to students in the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration. The Micatrotto Restaurant Group wanted to provide students with unique opportunities to be better prepared for professional work. As a result, the Micatrotto Restaurant Group Professional Development Fund of $50,000 was recently established to support students in their career development. With this funding, two UNLV students attended the National Restaurant Association show in Chicago last May and networked with some of the top names in the restaurant industry.

The Micatrotto Restaurant Group, a Nevada-based restaurant franchise company that currently operates four Raising Cane’s Chicken Fingers locations in Las Vegas, has always been active in community service and supporting education and was eager to get involved with the hotel college.

“I noticed there wasn’t anything in place yet for students to go to national restaurant shows. We saw this opportunity and decided to take some students to the show in Chicago,” says Joe Micatrotto, Jr., president of Micatrotto Restaurant Group. Along with his business partners, Micatrotto took the students on an all-access tour of the show, and the students who attended agree that the experience was a huge help for them as they begin to pursue professional work.

“The Chicago trip was unlike any experience I’ve had,” says Michael Tomorsky, a junior majoring in culinary arts management. “We were given a chance to see the hospitality industry as members and not just as students. The trip was designed to enhance our networking ability so that when we graduate, we have a head start in the real world.”

The Micatrotto team worked with the students and gave them the opportunity to meet industry leaders, gain access to new innovation, and see firsthand how the Micatrotto Restaurant Group markets its company on the backdrop of a restaurant show.

“The insight to the industry will be very beneficial to my career in the hospitality industry,” says Jeffrey Holoway, a junior majoring in food and beverage. “After attending the show, I now realize the extent of the hospitality industry, which can be seen under one roof.”

The Micatrotto Restaurant Group plans to build a relationship with the Harrah Hotel College and continue funding trips like these to help students gain experience in the industry. “With this fund, we’ll always be attending the events with the students and be able to give them our input and share each aspect of the shows,” says Micatrotto.
Although Kerry Simon’s been dubbed the “rock and roll chef,” he’s truly a renaissance man at heart. With a background that includes studying music and art, practicing yoga, and even driving a Chicago cab, Simon’s true love is cooking and food.

Growing up in Chicago, Simon would occasionally cook for his brothers and help his father prepare the food for his beer and crab/lobster summer parties. While working at Little Caesars, he gained an appreciation for the chemistry of food and began experimenting with soufflé recipes from the Julia Child & Company cookbook. What started as a self-imposed challenge led to an interest in food and its preparation that continues to this day.

“The first real recipe I remember making came out of the newspaper,” recalls Simon. “It was for chicken cacciatore, and I cooked it for my family. I loved making the soufflés because they’re very hard to do and I was trying to understand the concept.”

While his family may have found his future hard to predict, Simon wasn’t one to worry about it. “I had studied jazz and classical music and went to art school for a while too,” he says. “My dad and stepmom went with the flow of it and were very supportive.”

At the age of 20, Simon enrolled in the prestigious Culinary Institute of America in New York, followed by a nearby apprenticeship at Jean Morels’ L’hostellerie Bressane, where he learned the basics of French cuisine. “I worked like a dog,” he remembers. “And afterward, I worked for little or nothing for a long time. It’s all about the training, learning all the background information you can, and understanding the basics. To be a chef, you need to learn, see, explore, and get any information anywhere you can. Today’s chef is not just the guy in the kitchen.”

After a whirlwind career that has taken him to Europe, Russia, Los Angeles, and Asia, Simon is back in Las Vegas after originally being here in 1998 to help open Prime in Bellagio. “When I lived here in the late ’90s, the success of Prime was unexpected,” he says. “We weren’t mentally...
prepared for how well it was going to do, and we had to work quickly to get our step and meet the challenge. I love that stuff, but not everyone does.”

While living here, Simon became friends with the Maloof brothers and constantly talked with George Maloof, ’88, about some day opening a restaurant together. “A few years later, when I was in L.A., I had a conversation with George about opening a restaurant at his about-to-open Palms property that could serve breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Not many restaurants do that, and George knew that I had such an operation in California.”

It was good timing for Simon, as the Hard Rock Hotel, where his previous restaurant, Simon kitchen + bar, had been located, had just been sold. “George knew where he was going with the Palms, and I’ve always had a good feeling about him. It’s nice to have a partner that is accessible, supportive, and easy to work with.”

Maloof feels the same way. “First of all, Kerry’s a good guy,” he says. “He’s extremely talented and has great food. What more could you want in a restaurateur? He works hard and is a pleasure to be around.”

So what’s Simon’s favorite food? “I appreciate everything for what it is,” he says. “Food is so endless. You can’t limit yourself; there are no limitations. I can’t even think of one thing to say that’s my favorite.”

How does he hope people remember the experience of dining at his restaurant? “I want them to remember the entire experience — from the moment they call to make a reservation to the time they leave the place,” he says. “I want to recreate a family existence at the table, and it takes a lot to do that. You have to take everybody into consideration … people in bad moods, people from all walks of life. All of this needs to be noted in order to make them feel fulfilled.”

On Oct. 15, Chef Simon participated in the Chef Artist dinner series at UNLV. This series is held each semester to provide students a unique opportunity to work directly with a guest chef in preparing a gourmet dinner event open to the public. Proceeds from the event benefit the students, faculty, and facilities of UNLV’s Food and Beverage Department.

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Jumbo Lump Crab and Avocado Crab Salad

Serves 4

| 3 C jumbo lump crab | 1/4 C thinly sliced hearts of palm |
| ½ C brunoise (diced) cucumber | 3 tbsp shelled edamame |
| ½ C brunoise (diced) roma tomato | 2 small diced avocados |
| 2 tbsp brunoise (diced) red onion | 1 C petite micro lettuce mix |

1 C grapefruit vinaigrette (recipe follows)

**To make the salad:**

Combine crabmeat, tomato, onion, cucumber, hearts of palm, and edamame in stainless steel bowl and toss with the grapefruit vinaigrette. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

To assemble, place 2 tablespoons of avocado in the bottom of a 3-inch ring mold, topping avocado with crab salad mixture, approximately 4 ounces. Remove ring mold and garnish crab with micro greens and drizzle 1 tablespoon of grapefruit vinaigrette around salad to finish.

**Grapefruit vinaigrette**

| 2 C fresh grapefruit juice | 1 tbsp rice wine vinegar |
| 1 C vegetable oil | Salt and pepper |

Reduce the grapefruit juice to ½ cup. Transfer to a blender and, on high speed, slowly drizzle in vegetable oil. Finish with rice wine vinegar and season to taste with salt and pepper. This will make more than you need for four crab salads. You can refrigerate the rest for up to a week to use for another application.
With names like Annika Sorenstam and Natalie Gulbis becoming more recognizable to golf fans, it’s only natural that women are becoming more involved in both the sport and the industry. Currently, there are four women students participating in UNLV’s PGA Golf Management program, accredited by the Professional Golfers’ Association of America and administered through the Department of Recreation and Sport Management of the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration.

Program director Christopher Cain notes that women are indeed becoming more prevalent in the world of golf. “We are seeing more women instructors and more females on the business side of the industry as well. Golf is a sport for everyone.”

One of the women in the program, senior Shawna Richardson, did not discover golf until high school but knew almost immediately that it was her life’s calling. “I had done gymnastics until the middle of high school, and when I quit, I was looking for something else to do with my time,” she says. “I joined my school’s golf team and learned that the father of one
of my teammates ran a junior golf academy. As I became more interested in the sport, his wife suggested that I take lessons and learn more about the game. It all came together, and by the summer before my junior year, I was playing in tournaments.”

During her last year of high school, Richardson began looking into college programs. “Although I didn’t know how I could use it in a career, I knew I wanted to study golf further,” she remembers. “I heard about the UNLV program from the same friend’s father who ran the academy so I decided to check it out. Even when I began at UNLV, I really didn’t learn the full extent of the program until later.

“Once I started discovering the business side of golf, I knew that’s what I wanted to focus on,” says Richardson. “This game is changing rapidly — the PGA has a goal of increasing its female membership, and I want to help with that. They want women involved and are open to it. It’s up to us to spread the word and help them diversify their membership, not just with women but with all ethnic groups.”

She comments that while many men “go to the golf club,” their wives may feel intimidated to do the same because there just aren’t as many women hanging around. “I want to help change that,” says Richardson. “I believe that the number of women participating in golf will increase if they’re more comfortable with the situation, and that will mean having more women instructors and golf pros.”

Richardson feels that the internships she has completed while a student have been very beneficial to her education. “I have interned in some incredible golf clubs,” she states. “Two years ago, I was at Meadow Club in Marin County, and last summer, I was at Bandon Dunes on the Oregon coast. This year, I’m at the Colorado Golf Club in Denver, which is getting ready to host the 2010 Senior PGA Championship, so I’m learning how they prepare for an event of this magnitude. It’s all been really good for me to see.”

The goals of the college’s PGA Golf Management program include providing a challenging and comprehensive academic experience and preparing students to successfully meet all necessary concentration requirements to obtain PGA membership. “We try to recruit a diverse, well-rounded student population,” says Cain. “With our comprehensive internship programs that students complete during the summers at a variety of top-notch courses, they learn all facets of golf management.”

As much as she loves working in golf facilities, Richardson has a goal of some day working for the PGA. “The organization really intrigues me. I’d like to work with them in their learning center, possibly at headquarters. I really feel that I could make a difference and that my education and experiences have prepared me for such a role.”

Another PGA student, Charlene Fajardo, wants to “positively affect the woman’s world of golf, whether that’s through the business side, through marketing, or on the course itself.” She decided to attend the UNLV program because she wanted to have golf as her career. “At first, the only way I saw that happening was playing on tour,” Fajardo notes. “That was until I read an article about the PGA program and realized there are other fields of golf that I can be a part of.”

For Lindsay Hoskins, also a student in the program, the internships have proved invaluable. “The main things I have learned through our required internships are customer service, dedication, leadership, and attention to detail. These traits will inevitably help me be successful in this industry.”

As the program continues to grow and gain visibility within the golf industry, UNLV will remain on the forefront of golf management education.

On August 22, UNLV’s PGA Golf Management Program hosted its sixth annual PGA Golf Management Family and Friends banquet. The evening’s guest speaker was PGA Professional Monica Stratton, supervisor of staff programs for Callaway Golf Company, who told students that their “PGA membership will create opportunities and open doors. But it is up to you to work hard, be diligent, and to be patient. I would tell you to take challenges head on and know that you will wear many hats.”

### Stats From the Four Rebel Golfers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lowest 18-Hole Score</th>
<th>Golf Handicap</th>
<th>Favorite Course</th>
<th>Longest Drive</th>
<th>Age Started Golfing</th>
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<td>Charlene Fajardo</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Coyote Springs</td>
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<td>Lindsay Hoskins</td>
<td>72</td>
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<td>Montreux</td>
<td>300 yards</td>
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<td>Ashley Keller</td>
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<td>Mountain Falls</td>
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<td>Shawna Richardson</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Pacific Dunes/The Olympic Club</td>
<td>225 yards</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2008–2009

Donor Honor Roll
UNLV William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration

This year, we pay special thanks to the loyal donors who have demonstrated their support to the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration for the 2008-2009 fiscal year. The unprecedented downturn in the economy continues to affect all of us, yet alumni and friends have continued to pledge their commitment to support today’s students as they prepare to become tomorrow’s leaders. This honor roll recognizes alumni, friends, and companies who make it possible for students to receive a premier hospitality education at UNLV.

Through scholarship endowments and annual support, the college awarded $532,957 in scholarships to students during the 2008-09 academic year. During the past fiscal year, the college received $3,542,893 in cash and in-kind gifts from 419 donors. This outstanding support allows the college to provide much-needed scholarships, professional development funds, and faculty-enrichment programs, to name just a few.

Gifts from alumni and friends play an integral role in helping the college maintain the highest standards of excellence so that the faculty can respond to shifting academic priorities. Annual donors are the foundation of the college’s development program. Please know how much your contribution is appreciated and valued. On behalf of the entire college, we recognize and are grateful 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, 2008 – June 30, 2009

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 Associates members for their annual support through unrestricted gifts, which is vital to continue setting the bar as a premier international hospitality program.

Dean’s Associates Inner Circle
Gold ($10,000+)
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Ann & David, ’96 Black
Pearl & James Brewer
Captain D’s Seafood Kitchen
Russell A. Dazzio, ’73
Paula E. Eylar, ’89, ’97
Deirdre T. Flynn
John F. Gremo, ’02
Robyn K. Hadden, ’05
Christian E. Hardigree, ’93 &
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Harrah’s Entertainment
David W. Head
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Hyatt Corporation
Christine, ’90 & Jim, ’92 Kiely
Nancy & Dean, ’92 Kissel
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Kathy & Fayyaz, ’92, ’95 Raja
Patricia Sahlistrom
Gail E. Sammons, ’87
Julie & Salvatore, ’81 Semola
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Angie & Christopher, ’98 Smith
Susie Southgate-Fox
St. Francis Winery & Vineyards
Arch Stokes
Skip Swerdlow
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Mark Waltrip
Westgate Resorts
Donor Honor Roll
July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009

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Angeliki & Stanley Fulton
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Station Casinos, Inc.

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Pacific Event Productions
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Bear’s Best Las Vegas
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Ann & David, ’96 Black
Blush Boutique Nightclubs
Kathleen & James Brewer
Julia & Stan Bromley
Cannery Casino Resorts
Carlson Companies
Circus Circus Adventure Dome
D&K Industries LLC
David Saxe Productions
DeLuca Liquor & Wine, Ltd.
Lorna & Stephen Donatone
Paula Eylar, ’89 ’97
Farmer’s Brothers Coffee
Kerry & Andrew, ’91, ’95 Feinstein
Fleming’s Prime Steakhouse & Wine Bar
Four Seasons Hotels Limited
The Freeman Companies
Jessica Galindo
Get Fresh Sales

Robyn Hadden, ’05
David Head
Las Vegas Hilton
Hyatt Regency Maui Resort & Spa
Hyatt Regency Waikiki Beach Resort & Spa
Kerzner International Limited
Christine, ’90 & James, ’92 Kiely
Nancy & Dean, ’92 Kessel
The Las Vegas Country Club
Las Vegas Paiute Golf Resort
The Las Vegas Photography Company, Inc.

Lettuce Entertain You Enterprises, Inc.
Mandalay Bay Resort & Casino
Doreen & Stuart Mann
MGM Grand
Stephen Michaelides
James Moore
Rosalie & Patrick, ’69, ’83 Moreno
Judy A. Nagai
Patricia & Ellis Norman
Palms Casino Resort
The Patricia Miller Anton & William C. Anton Foundation
John Peiser, ’78, ’07
The Peninsula Beverly Hills
Platinum Hotel & Spa
Sarah & James, ’78 Rafferty
Kathleen & Fayyaz, ’92, ’95 Raja
Louise & Felix Rappaport
Rhodes Ranch Golf Club
Rio Secco Golf Club
The Ritz-Carlton

Paul Robinson
Roy’s Las Vegas
Patricia Sahlistrom
Julie & Salvatore, ’81 Semola
Sheraton Universal Hotel

Christopher Silva
Silver State Schools Credit Union
Silverstone Golf Club
Angie & Christopher, ’98 Smith
Sonoma County Tourism Bureau
Susie Southgate-Fox
St. Francis Winery & Vineyards
Stiletto Entertainment
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Titan Nightlife Group, Inc.
Tournament Players Club - Summerlin
UNLV Alumni Association
US Foodservice

Robert Van Ness, ’83
Vino 100 Las Vegas
Carolyn Gilby-Wagner & Roger, ’69 Wagner
Mark Waltrip

Westgate Resorts Foundation, Inc.
Women’s Southern Nevada Golf Association
Cheri Young and David Corsun

 MJ Maynard, ’93
Assistant General Manager, Regional Transportation Commission of Southern Nevada

Every day is an opportunity to shape the future. Acknowledging the audacious dreams of college students by making monetary donations is something I believe in. The education I received from UNLV, along with the mentoring of some incredibly talented professors, culminated in a great experience and great career. Giving back seems the right thing to do...it’s a way to say thanks.

My son has just begun his freshman year at UNLV, and as a member of the marching band, I have even more reason to remain invested in my alma mater. Ensuring monetary funds are available to all college students is important not only for the institution; its positive impact on the community is priceless. I look forward to this lifelong connection with UNLV, and as a new member of the UNLV Parent’s Board, any opportunity to give back is one that I welcome.
The Harrah Hotel College is a crucial hospitality industry resource not only for Las Vegas but also for the state of Nevada, the Western U.S. and, really, the global hospitality industry. It provides graduates who are ready and able to compete in today's hospitality industry, enhances skills and education for people who are already in the industry who choose to study in the master's degree program, and provides current and future hospitality educators to schools around the world through its doctoral program. The size of the program provides the critical mass to support all of these goals, where a smaller school would not be able to support so many programs.

I got a great education, made great business and personal connections, and paid a fair price. The Harrah Hotel College offers an excellent price-value relationship. It has a great reputation in the hospitality education community, and I want to help in maintaining that reputation. I continue to collaborate with faculty at the Hotel College to this day.

Get involved! And donate! Strengthening our alumni group will strengthen the profile of UNLV. That's good not only for current and future students; it will also increase the value of our degrees!
Joe Micatrotto, Jr.  
President and chief executive of Micatrotto Restaurant Group LLC

As a Las Vegas-based hospitality company, we at the Micatrotto Restaurant Group see a major priority in giving back to the education of tomorrow’s work force in our industry. UNLV is the best university in the country when it comes to hospitality education. We consider ourselves lucky to be associated, and more importantly, we get to see our dollars at work. Dean Mann and the entire UNLV professional staff have opened their arms to our company. Not once did we ever feel pressure to give. Rather, we felt the need to be a part of the program that ensures the success of tomorrow’s industry leaders. We find our relationship with the university to be a very hands-on, give-and-take relationship. Everybody wins!

Richard Sinderbrand, '86  
R. K. Singal  
Sky High Marketing  
Kami Smith  
South Point Hotel & Casino  
Marilyn Spears, '72  
Sport Chalet  
Barbara, '92 & Gunter Stannius  
Laurie Steinmetz  
Sun Coast  
Kristina Szczesny, '96  
T-Fab Inc.  
Table 34  
Daniel Tacone, '06  
Geraldine & Rocco Testa  
Eric Thomson, '94  
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Rachel & Christopher, '99 Van Zele  
Darren Vaughn, '89  
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Venetian Casino Resort  
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Frank Vitucci '07  
Robin & Michael, '94 Walsh  
Warner Gaming  
George Warner, '73  
Paul Wawrzynski II  
The Westin Chicago North Shore Hotel  
Carolyn Wheeler  
Rachel & Thomas, '90 Wolf  
Dale & David, '75 Wolfe

Donald Wood  
Guy Wood, '78  
World Variety Produce  
Elizabeth & Clayton, '88 Wright  
Gary Xavier, '09  
Yard House  
Thomas Yasuda, '79  
Dina Marie Zemke, '03

BOLD—Faculty, Staff, International Advisory Board, College Alumni Board of Directors or their related companies.

A Final Note
We strive to ensure accuracy in this listing of benefactors who supported the Harrah Hotel College from July 1, 2008, through June 30, 2009. 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-mailing Judy.Nagai@UNLV.edu.

—Faculty, Staff, International Advisory Board, College Alumni Board of Directors or their related companies.
When you think of a “support group,” UNLV’s Career Services is probably not the first thing that comes to mind. But with the downturned economy and the changes it has wrought on communities across the country, that’s just what the university has created to help alumni who are looking for jobs or even new leases on life.

Once a month, the UNLV Career Services Center, in conjunction with the UNLV Alumni Association and the Bob Boughner Career Services Center, holds a support group where ideas can be exchanged, opinions are expressed, and everything is held in confidentiality. “We’re here today to share stories, talk about how to change careers, and answer questions,” said Eileen McGarry, executive director of Career Services, at July’s support group meeting.

These meetings, which have been held since last April, have gone through interesting changes as the economy continues to change. “When we first started in the spring, there were definitely more recent graduates,” says McGarry. “As time has gone on, we are seeing more experienced grads who have lost their jobs or their passion for their current positions and are looking to see what else is out there.”

Don Snyder, one of the center’s career counselors, begins each meeting by establishing some ground rules. “Please try to utilize ‘I’ statements, don’t monopolize the conversation, only one person speaks at a time, and everything stays in this room,” he says.

During the course of the hour-long gathering, attendees learn about the resources offered by the career center, including computer programs, resume evaluation, on-campus recruiting, and other helpful items. “We try to inform them of things like CareerLink, which is a search engine that can pull down a list of jobs for more ‘experienced’ employees,” says Bobbie Barnes, director of the Bob Boughner Career Services Center. “Many alumni have been out of the job search game for a while and simply don’t know about all of the newer job search tools. As members of the alumni association, these tools are available to them at no cost.

“The alumni support group has been a great way to connect with alumni,” she continues. “We have seen a broad range of alumni — from recent graduates to graduates from the 1980s. Most of the participants are looking for job resources (i.e., job fair information, good online job search sites) as well as information on how they can stand out.”

Common questions at the support groups have included what employers are looking for in a resume, how applicants should handle questions about desired salaries, and exploring the most effective ways to network.

An article in the June 22, 2009, edition of HigherEdMorning.com discusses the fact that many job seekers are turning to their college career offices for help, sometimes more than 30 years after graduating. While this has caused some universities to hire additional career center staff, what are the universities getting in return?

“We don’t look for anything in return,” says Barnes. “I personally feel it is our responsibility to assist our alumni, especially in times like this.”

For more information on career services and the alumni job search support group seminars, please visit http://hire.unlv.edu.
IN MEMORIAM

Angela Farrar, 1966 – 2009

Associate Professor Angela Farrar, Ph.D., CHE, passed away August 20. A scholarship fund has been established in her name through the UNLV Foundation, known as the Angela Farrar Memorial Scholarship Endowment Fund. Please join the hotel college in remembering her as our colleague, friend, and advocate for students.

Born in Danville, Va., Farrar received her B.S. and Ph.D. degrees from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. She was employed by Pennsylvania State University and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, as a professor in the Hotel Restaurant and Institutional Management Department and the College of Hotel Administration, respectively. In addition, she was a member of the following professional and community organizations: Faculty Development in Human Resources, International Council on Restaurant and Institutional Education, Certified Hospitality Educators, Society for Human Resource Management, and the Coalition of Black Meeting Planners.

“I first met Angela in 1993 when she interviewed for a faculty position at Penn State,” said Dean Stuart Mann. “Immediately, one knew that this was a very special woman. When I accepted the dean’s position at UNLV, I wanted her on this faculty because of all that she could offer to our faculty and students. She was a terrific colleague at Penn State and at UNLV. I will miss her greatly.”

“Everyone who knew her understood how much she cared about student learning,” he continued. “This scholarship will be a lasting memorial to Angela’s focus on students.”

Associate Professor Cheri Young and David Corsun, formerly of the hotel college and now the director of the school of hotel, restaurant, and tourism management at the University of Denver, remembered her by saying: “Angela was a passionate person and educator, and gave everything to her students. We can think of no better way to honor her memory than to create a scholarship to keep that passion alive through the support of deserving students. We do not have many ways to make a lasting contribution in this world, but Angela did and will continue to do so through this scholarship and through our memories of her.”

“I was fortunate to get to team teach HMD 320 (Working with Diversity in the Hospitality Industry) with Angela Farrar,” said Assistant Professor Bo Bernhard. “I learned from Angela how to confront without being confrontational — to challenge students in a way that they actually enjoyed, and in a way that stretched their thinking. I had never seen such growth in a classroom setting before, and I have aspired to it ever since.

“I have another story that I doubt many people know about. Very quietly, Angela reached out to my mother — then the director of volunteers at Nathan Adelson Hospice across the street from UNLV — and volunteered to develop from scratch a brilliant educational program for hospice volunteers on diversity and dying. I got to observe again as Angela reached a group of volunteers who were heading out into very difficult situations, and led them through an exceedingly thoughtful conversation and contemplation of ‘difference’ in hospice settings.

“Her legacy, of course, not only lives on in the lives of those of us who learned from her here on campus, but also in the lives of those she reached more quietly,” Bernhard concluded.

Please remember Farrar by making a gift to this scholarship fund, which will support students in the hotel college, with preference for female students of African-American heritage. The goal is to raise $25,000 so the scholarship can be endowed and last in perpetuity in her name.

How to make a gift to the Angela Farrar Memorial Scholarship Endowment Fund:

Gifts in memory of Dr. Angela Farrar may be given to the UNLV Foundation for the Angela Farrar Memorial Scholarship Fund. Checks may be issued to the UNLV Foundation and sent to: UNLV Foundation, 4505 S. Maryland Parkway, Box 451006, Las Vegas, NV 89154-1006. Donors should note that the gift is in memory of Angela Farrar, either in the memo line or in a note accompanying the donation. Gifts can also be made online at http://foundation.unlv.edu/give.html. Select the link for the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration. Under “Designation,” select “Angela Farrar Memorial Scholarship Fund” from the drop-down menu. Angela’s name should be entered at the bottom of the screen under “Tribute Information.”
Recently, it seems that everywhere you go, you hear about social networking. While many of us have become familiar with the term and the myriad of opportunities it can provide, it’s amazing just how much it can help in your career and life. From reconnecting with classmates and instructors to hearing about special events and job openings, you won’t want to miss being part of this trend.

The hotel college has found that social networking is a tool unlike any other. According to Robyn Hadden, director of alumni and college relations, sites like Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter have allowed the college to keep interested parties updated as well as conduct discussions on a number of topics and events.

“There is immediate interaction with social networking,” says Hadden. “We started by listing the college’s alumni association on LinkedIn, and soon had over 500 members. We’ve since set up pages on other social networking sites and have been impressed at the participation by our alumni and others. These sites have grown exponentially and we’re pleased with them from a marketing standpoint. Even if someone can’t make it to an event, they can still feel they were a part of it by looking at pictures and reading comments from those that did attend. This can encourage future participation.”

The college first became involved with social networking because of instructor Patti Shock. To many, she’s known around the college as the “internet guru” and has been on the forefront of some of today’s brightest social networking trends. “I have been fascinated by technology,” she admits. “I was one of the early adopters of the internet and email on campus, back when it was all DOS-based. I remember the first time I saw a photo online — I went nuts! It was so exciting to me.”

That excitement and love of technology continues today as Shock continues to enthuse her fellow instructors with the plethora of social networking opportunities that exist. “About ten years ago, I started a Yahoo listserv for students because communicating with them was difficult. Then I started one for graduate students...
Social Networking Trends Continue to Grow

Robyn Campbell-Ouchida, ’00 MA

and another for alumni. It doesn’t work today to just tack something to a bulletin board.”

Hadden plans to incorporate more social networking in the future. “There’s definitely a need there and it’s a great resource for those looking for a job or those who are recruiting. I have used the sites to communicate information about alumni association events and news and want these to become a place to go to discuss current issues in the hospitality industry.”

Speaking of job searches, the college’s social networking efforts can already count one such success. When the Las Vegas Hilton’s Executive Director of Casino Marketing Peter Arceo, ’96, contacted his former instructor Shock through LinkedIn, she mentioned a student who was interested in learning more about social networking. Through the networking site, she introduced Arceo to a fellow alumnus (Robert Gaines, ’09), which led to an internship, and eventually a full-time position.

“Whatever new came along, I have always been one to get into it. I’ve gotten more involved with the meeting planning industry through listservs, and some of those online relationships have turned into true friendships now that we know each other in person. You connect to people you never would’ve had the opportunity to meet otherwise.”

Shock teaches online classes, speaks about social media, and trains faculty and staff in the intricacies of these tools. “Whatever new came along, I have always been one to get into it. I’ve gotten more involved with the meeting planning industry through listservs, and some of those online relationships have turned into true friendships now that we know each other in person. You connect to people you never would’ve had the opportunity to meet otherwise.”

LOOK FOR THE UNLV HOTEL COLLEGE ON THESE SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES:

LinkedIn
Name of group: Harrah Hotel College at UNLV

Facebook
Name of group: UNLV Hotel College Alumni

Fan Page for Hotel College:
Name of group: UNLV Harrah Hotel College

Twitter
http://twitter.com/unlvhotel
Name: UNLV Hotel College
Four Seasons ... Just saying those words conjures up images of luxurious hotels in beautiful locales. Since its first hotel opened in 1961, the company has made a name for itself as a worldwide leader in the upscale-hotel world. To that end, Four Seasons supports educational endeavors and provides scholarships to a small number of choice hospitality programs in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada, including the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration.

For Stan Bromley, one of the original members of the college’s national advisory board that was formed in 2000, being involved with UNLV was a “no-brainer.” Bromley, who served as the general manager of the Four Seasons San Francisco and a regional vice president overseeing four hotels in the Western states, says: “I had worked with Dean Stuart Mann when he was at Penn State and I was at the Washington Four Seasons. Our relationship evolved from one as colleagues to friends, and when we both ended up on the West Coast, he informed me that he was setting up an advisory board at UNLV and that he wanted me on it.”

Bromley is a strong believer in educating the hospitality workforce and, because of this, advised the corporate office of Four Seasons to make a five-year pledge to the college in 2006. Since then, the company has been a member of the Dean’s Associates, with a pledge of $50,000. The hotelier also established the Four Seasons Scholarship in 2006, with a pledge of $25,000, which provides two annual scholarships at $2,500 each.

“Early on, I learned that most hotel college students at UNLV work while attending school, so they have the added knowledge of being able to support themselves, which is a key skill of good management,” says Bromley. “I also noticed that the UNLV students had an eye for detail and service, key hallmarks of Four Seasons’ philosophy.”

Setting up the scholarship occurred after a Four Seasons regional vice president meeting where the company was comparing the success rates among different universities. “Four Seasons founder Isadore Sharp noted that the UNLV students were doing as well as if not better than most and that those students fit in the company’s philosophy of service,” says Bromley. “We have enjoyed a professional relationship with UNLV for almost two decades and feel that the scholarship is a fitting way to show our appreciation.” In addition, Four Seasons employs many UNLV graduates as leaders throughout the organization.

Thomas Gurtner, regional vice president for Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, states, “The caliber of students at UNLV is high, and we have been pleased with the success of the many graduates we have recruited and trained who are now working in our hotels around the world.”

One such alumnus is Christian Gonzalez, ‘00, who now works for Four Seasons Hotel Los Angeles at Beverly Hills. “I take great pride in my education at UNLV because of the real life experiences it provided me,” he says. “Having access to faculty who actively work in the hospitality industry, attending the Summer Studies in Switzerland program, and participating
in the UNLV F&B Management Team are all opportunities that have benefited my career with Four Seasons Hotels & Resorts.”

Four Seasons Hotel Las Vegas is the closest Four Seasons destination to UNLV, and the two entities work closely together. The hotel’s management team provides internships and mentoring to students, conducts tours of the hotel, and fills guest-lecture spots at the university to give students greater exposure to the culture and style of Four Seasons.

Two students who have benefited directly from Four Seasons’ support are Heidi Berger and Ella Coon. At the college’s spring scholarship luncheon, Berger, who is majoring in hotel management with an emphasis in beverage management, spoke about her experience. “Once I had found my calling and my program, the only items standing in my way were a few classes, a piece of paper, and another huge tuition bill,” she says. “I was elated when I learned that the Four Seasons was giving me a scholarship. I have proved in my classes and throughout my UNLV tenure that I am capable of excellence, and it sure feels great and humbling to be recognized for that.”

Coon, who just completed a year abroad in Spain, is a full-time student of UNLV’s Honors College in addition to the hotel program. She is studying hotel administration with a dual major of Spanish for the Profession.

“A global perspective and awareness are embraced by the Four Seasons and embedded in its company culture,” says Coon. “I strongly believe Four Seasons recognizes the importance of supporting academic development as a means of shaping future leaders of our industry. The assistance I received enabled me to further my career goals and take advantage of a unique opportunity by being enriched by another set of values in Spain.”

College recruitment and relations are an important part of Four Seasons’ recruitment strategy as it expands its portfolio of hotels and resorts around the globe. According to Nicholas Mutton, executive vice president of human resources for corporate Four Seasons, “We have enjoyed a professional relationship with UNLV and wanted to show our appreciation in the form of scholarships, financially supporting future students.”
This past June, the hotel college Alumni Association Board of Directors spent time at a retreat working on mission and vision statements. Since then, the statements have been finalized and are now being used to define just what the UNLV Harrah Hotel College Alumni Chapter is all about.

**Vision Statement**
Our vision is to create and foster relationships for present and future alumni.

**Mission Statement**
Our mission is to grow the Harrah Hotel College Alumni Association; to support the hotel college in achieving its strategic goals; and to promote fellowship among alumni, faculty, and friends of the college.

The UNLV Harrah Hotel College Alumni Board of Directors consists of hotel college alumni who represent various disciplines in the hospitality industry. Established in 2002, the board meets monthly during the academic year to discuss alumni engagement, events, and fundraising, and it is updated with important information from the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration.

The board participates in a strategic planning retreat once a year to determine goals and objectives for the upcoming year. At this retreat, institutional events, alumni association events, and college events are discussed. Collectively, the board members determine which events to support with attendance and the best ways to reach out to fellow alumni.

“The hotel college is dependent upon the alumni board to help inform other alumni and hospitality industry professionals of what is happening at the Harrah Hotel College,” says Stuart Mann, dean of the college. “The board plays an integral role in helping the college maintain the reputation of our hospitality program — nationally and internationally.”

Currently, the board has 12 members who represent many segments of the hospitality industry. The goal of the board makeup is to have representation of different class years, segments of the hospitality industry, graduates from the different departments within the college, and cultural diversity.

The alumni board also interacts with current UNLV students, as they are future alumni. Last year, the board worked an alumni booth at the career fair, spoke to classes, and made a presentation to Hotel House (a designated...
In addition, the board works with the UNLV Alumni Association. The chairman of the hotel college alumni board attends the UNLV Alumni Association board meetings, participates in their retreats, and acts as a liaison between the boards.

“This much I know for sure — the diverse, multidiscipline hospitality approach to education UNLV provided me has proven to be absolutely vital in my career and life successes,” says board member Dean Kissel, ’92. “As a student who struggled to work and pay for his own education, I know firsthand how critical it is for students to be afforded as much time as possible to be in the classroom, studying, and taking full advantage of such a rich curriculum and culture. This is why I take great pride in contributing monetarily and donate my time as an alumni board member. If these efforts can afford just one student the opportunity to attend and/or take better advantage of the UNLV experience and achieve success in life, it is worth the efforts tenfold.”

The alumni board is always interested in meeting alumni and developing relationships. There are many ways you can be involved with the hotel college alumni association — you can join the alumni association, attend alumni events, contact an alumni board member to find out what you can do to help, be a mentor through the mentor program, speak in a class, and much more.

For more information about the alumni board, contact Robyn Hadden, director, alumni and college relations, at 702-895-3148 or robyn.hadden@unlv.edu.
APacCHRIE Conference 2009

The seventh APacCHRIE conference (APacCHRIE Conference 2009) was hosted by UNLV’s Singapore campus May 28–31. With more than 200 delegates in attendance, it was the first time the conference was organized entirely by undergraduate students. It was also the conference’s inaugural APacCHRIE Youth Conference. Next year’s conference will be in Bangkok, and in 2011, it will be in Hong Kong, so mark your calendar.

UNLV Singapore Celebrates First Commencement

On Saturday, June 6, UNLV’s first international campus conferred 34 undergraduate degrees in Hotel Administration and seven master’s degrees in Hospitality Administration. Guests of honor included Lee Yi Shyan, Ministry of Trade and Industry and Ministry of Manpower, Singapore; embassy officials from the U.S. government and the government of the People’s Republic of China; GMs of leading hotels in Singapore; Dean Stuart Mann of the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration; and then-president of UNLV David B. Ashley.

UNLV Singapore’s First Exchange Students

When professors in Thailand and Taiwan announced the opportunity to study at UNLV Singapore, students eagerly lined up to participate. After a rigorous process that included applications, grade reviews, interviews, and essays, two students each from Thailand and Taiwan were given the opportunity to study at UNLV’s Singapore campus for one session (six weeks).

Li Yue Feng and Wang Ying Chi came from Shin Chien University in Taipei, Taiwan, and Laowanitwisit Kwanjai and Piyanuch Boochangkool arrived from Dusit Thani College in Bangkok, Thailand, adding another international dimension to the campus. Some of the Singaporean students have now expressed an interest in going to Taiwan and Thailand for their internships and a possible exchange. Because of this, the campus is looking into establishing a UNLV Singapore Student Exchange Alumni Association.

Instructors Visit Singapore Campus

Teaching in Singapore offers visiting faculty from UNLV’s main campus the opportunity to experience one of the most modern cities in Asia with its great variety of shopping, eating, and cultural experiences. Visiting instructors can savor the first-class facilities of UNLV Singapore while experiencing a unique culture and can take back to their students on the main campus an understanding of globalization and of the international contribution that UNLV Singapore brings to the educational sector of the hospitality industry.

Instructors who have taken advantage of this opportunity include Karl Brandmeir, ’01 MS, ’06 Ph.D.; Neil Baker, the world’s first Ph.D. graduate in gaming; Heather Lusty, a doctoral candidate with UNLV’s English Department; Andrew Hanson, with UNLV’s Geo-Science Department; Gary Waters, ’79, ’93 MS; and Merry Xing, associate professor with the Shanghai Institute of Tourism, the oldest hospitality university in the People’s Republic of China.

Andy Nazarechuk, dean of the Singapore campus, says he intends to continue bringing in professors from other universities. “With the opening of a UNLV campus in Asia, we are ensuring the internationalization of our program. Exchanges with academics from other countries provide our faculty and students the opportunity to learn from and share ideas and techniques with...
educators from the global community.”
So far, 32 instructors have taken part in
the Visiting Professor Program of UNLV’s first
international campus in Singapore.

UNLV Singapore’s First Cohort Begins Internships
The rite of passage from student
to professional has begun for UNLV
Singapore’s first group of students who have
finished their course work and embarked on
their internships. The students are carving
out a name not only for themselves but also
for the UNLV program, since the concept of
managerial interns is new to most hotels in
Singapore.

Students have been placed at top-ranked
hotels such as the Four Seasons, the Ritz-
Carlton, the Conrad, the Meritus-Mandarin,
and the Intercontinental in Singapore, while
others have found internships in Japan,
Vietnam, Dubai, and the Maldives.
Christine Bergman was appointed by Dean Stuart Mann as associate dean for Academic Affairs, a position she began in July.

Congratulations to Bo Bernhard, ’99, on the birth of his daughter, Audrey Brynne, born August 6.

Congratulations to Bradley Bigham, ’09, on the birth of his daughter, Ryelé Kalista, born in November 2008.

Congrats to the three professors who were honored as track chairs during the seventh APacCHRIE Conference 2009, held in end of May in Singapore: Jim Busser, Leisure & Recreation; Mehmet Erdem, ’03, Information Technology; and Yen-Soon Kim, Foodservice.

The hotel management department welcomes Dana Cotham, appointed faculty-in-residence beginning this fall. Cotham is a graduate of the William S. Boyd School of Law and has practiced law in Las Vegas since 2001. Her previous work experience includes serving as human resources director for several firms. She will teach hospitality law and employment law courses.

Congratulations to Nakia Jackson-Hale on the birth of her son, Jackson Robert, born August 17.

Kathryn LaTour’s research was mentioned in the June 2009 issue of United Airlines’ Hemispheres magazine. The article, titled “Remembrance of Cocoa Puffs Past,” included findings from LaTour’s 2007 study on the brand meanings of cars using the Childhood Memory Elicitation method.

Stuart Mann received the Stevenson W. Fletcher Achievement Award at the 2009 CHRIE Annual Conference in San Francisco in August. This award, formerly called the International CHRIE Achievement Award, was renamed in 1994 to honor Stevenson W. Fletcher, former program head of Hotel, Restaurant, and Travel Administration at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. The award recognizes an individual educator for outstanding achievement in contributing innovative ideas, methods, or programs that have advanced teaching, learning, or practice in the field of hospitality and tourism education. The recipient must also demonstrate exceptional professional ability and commitment through service to International CHRIE and the hospitality industry.

In July, Eddy Renio began as the PGA Golf Management program’s coordinator. His duties include coordinating Play Golf America University programming and assisting the program in administration, teaching, recruitment, and retention activities. Prior to this appointment, Renio held a similar position at Eastern Kentucky University for three years and from 2001 to 2006, he was the assistant director for the PGA Golf Management program at New Mexico State University. He earned his bachelor’s degree from New Mexico State University and recently completed his master’s degree at Eastern Kentucky University.

Master of Hospitality Administration alumna Larissa Schultz, ’08, was recently honored with the 2008 Professional Paper of the Year Award, given by the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration. The title of her paper is “Meeting Planning Basics: A Guide for Administrative Professionals,” and the final product is an actual reference document that can be used by administrative assistants for planning corporate meetings. She hopes to have it published in 2010.

Patti Shock was recently sworn in as a member of the city of Henderson’s Commission for Cultural Arts and Tourism. The board is responsible for bringing a variety of art and culture to the Henderson community through sponsorship of concerts, festivals, special events, and performances.

Congratulations to former student Michael Ty, who recently won the American Culinary Federation (ACF) national presidency. A leader in the culinary world, Ty has served as chairman of the board of the ACD and president of the Las Vegas Chapter of the ACF. He serves on a number of university advisory boards as well and received an Industry Achievement Award from the Food and Beverage Program at UNLV.

Gary Xavier, ’09, spoke during May’s afternoon commencement ceremony. After submitting a speech, meeting academic and leadership criteria, and auditioning to be a speaker, Xavier says representing his class and the PGA program was a “humbling honor.” Xavier expressed his belief that his generation is in an “opportunity phase in their lives, despite the floundering economy. It’s a time to create different forms of industry and to reflect on similar past situations and how people have been resilient.” He is currently working in Vacaville, Calif., as a junior golf tournament director for the Northern California PGA. To hear his graduation speech, visit http://hotel.unlv.edu/pga/alumni/xavier/.

In April, three students attended the 24th International Tourism Students Conference (ITSC), which was hosted by NHTV Breda University of Applied Sciences, The Netherlands. Delegates Breanne Davies, Gina Galvan, and Jonathan Gildewell won two major awards (the best research paper and the best market stall) during the conference. UNLV was the only American hospitality school in attendance although there were students from France, the United Kingdom, Portugal, Austria, Hungary, Finland, Sweden, Germany, Spain, Greece, Cuba, and South Africa.

The theme of this year’s conference was “The New Tourist and Co-Creation.” Under the guidance of professors Seyhmus Baloglu and Mohsen Azizsoltani, the undergraduates conducted their research on “Social Media (Network) Strategies Used in Las Vegas Hospitality Industry: Co-creating New Relationship with Customers.” The students utilized content analyses and telephone interviews to build their case. The 30-page case study won the Best Research Paper award and the student delegates were also honored for having the Best Market Stall. Each year, the host school assigns a market stall to each participating institution, which they decorate to represent their institutions and native countries. These market stall presentations offer great opportunities for students to acquire information about other institutions and learn about students from different countries.

Congratulations to the following faculty who have had research recently published:

1970s
Jim Mikula, ’78, is the general manager for Hotel Baronette in Novi, Mich. He has been busy rebranding the hotel to become The Baronette, a Renaissance Hotel.

George McGann, ’81, is the vice president, managing director of Pyramid Hotel Group and the general manager of the Los Angeles Marriott Burbank Airport. Friends can contact him at gmcgann@pyramidhotelgroup.com.

1980s
Jim Bunch, ’83, was awarded the Silver Beaver designation by the Mid-America Council of the Boy Scouts of America in Omaha, Neb., the highest national award that can be given by the local council for service to youth.

Ed Conway, ’88, is the general manager of Sedona Rouge Hotel & Spa in Sedona, Ariz. He has just expanded the spa and is currently seeking re-zoning on the property to expand the number of rooms and suites at the resort. He may be reached at econway@sedonarouge.com, or visit the resort’s website at www.sedonarouge.com.

Mary Beth Cutshall, ’88, is the director of business development for Hotel Equities (HE), an Atlanta-based, full-scale hotel management, development, and consulting firm. She spent her early years in the hospitality business honing her skills in various sales and operations positions with Marriott International. She also served as the corporate director of sales and marketing with Hotel Investors Trust, including the firm’s transition to Starwood Lodging Corporation. Prior to joining HE, she managed her own marketing and sales consulting firm for several years.

2000s
Thomas Anschartz, ’01, earned his law degree from the University of Nebraska in 2004. He currently serves as an Of Counsel attorney in the Labor and Employment Group of Spencer Fane Britt & Browne LLP in Omaha, Neb., but recently accepted an attorney position with a new law firm. Anschartz continues to represent employers in all manner of traditional labor and employment issues.

Robert Gaines, ’09, is currently working at the Las Vegas Hilton as Internet marketing specialist: running, overseeing, creating, developing, and basically doing everything for the property’s social media outlets. The Hilton’s social media sites are www.YouTube.com/thereginalILHilton, www.facebook.com/LasVegasHilton, and www.Twitter.com/LasVegasHilton. His contact info is rgaines@LVHilton.com, Twitter name: @RobertGaines.

Nina Hassing, ’08, moved to Singapore for a management trainee position with the new St. Regis Hotel after graduating. Recently, she was promoted to assistant manager of Remède Spa, St. Regis Singapore. She can be reached at nina.hassing@stregis.com.

Matt Higginson, ’07, is currently the front office manager for Welk Resorts. He is also co-founder and president of operations for PictureThis! Event Services LLC, a unique event services company based in Utah with affiliates in Orange County, San Diego, San Francisco, New York, Philadelphia, and Phoenix. He can be reached at matt@signwithasmile.com.

Adam Lopez, ’02, works as the fleet slot manager at Crystal Cruises in the Louisville, Ky., area. Some of his accomplishments include: being selected by the senior vice president to take over the slot operations for Crystal Cruises, contributing to the new casino layout and networking system, successfully increasing revenue by 15 percent, and designing an ordering and supply process that allows Crystal Cruises to be fully operational anywhere in the world.

Joe Lucchese, ’02, recently toured with U2, hosting VIP events and consumer engagements for the tour’s concert sponsor BlackBerry. Lucchese is the founder of EvenJoe, an event and tour management company based in Las Vegas and Chicago.

Kaitlin Riggio, ’07, is a hotel manager at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas. She recently received recognition in MeetingNews magazine as one of the nation’s “Ones to Watch: 30 Under 30.” She currently sits on the American Hotel & Lodging Association’s Under 30 Gateway Council and is also the chair for the Nevada Hotel & Lodging Association’s Under 30 Gateway Council. For more information on the Under 30 Gateways, please contact her at riggioK@caesarspalace.com.

Yolanda Tuttle-Williams, ’07, was recently accepted into the accelerated master’s of tourism administration program at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. She can be reached at yututtlewilliams@aol.com.

Maggie Vasquez, ’09, is working at the Wyndham Grand Desert in Las Vegas as a PBX operator. Friends are encouraged to contact her at vasquez14@unlv.nevada.edu.

Joseph Wagner, ’00, is the director of VIP operations for Venetian Resort Hotel Casino and Palazzo Resort Hotel Casino in Las Vegas. He may be reached at joseph.wagner@venetianpalazzo.com.

Heather L. Wilden, CSEP, ’05, is scheduled to graduate from UNLV in December with her master’s degree in hotel administration and is pursuing new opportunities in the industry. She can be reached at heatherwilden@gmail.com, or can be followed at Twitter name: @heatherwilden.
On June 7, the iconic One Times Square marquee featured the UNLV Singapore graduation.
Hold a cocktail party on campus? How about a wedding reception or a sports bash? It can be done, as can a number of different types of events, thanks to the banquet and meeting room space available at the Stan Fulton Building. With more than 6,000 square feet of space as well as a professional catering staff, the Stan Fulton Building can accommodate small meetings and conferences as well as receptions for up to 300 people and full-service dinners for 200 people. The Stan Fulton Building is also home to a hip yet comfortable lounge-style bar.

Conveniently located at the edge of campus on the corner of Flamingo Road and Swenson, the Stan Fulton Building is an ideal setting for special events and meetings. Executive Chef John Gremo and his talented culinary team will deliver an unforgettable dining experience, whether your group is in need of a continental breakfast, a working lunch, or an upscale, seated dinner. A variety of menu options are available and Chef Gremo can also personalize a custom menu to enhance the overall goal of your event.

The next time you’re looking for the perfect space in which to host your special event, look no further than the experts at the Harrah Hotel College. With the range of services and room styles available, there is certain to be one that fits your needs perfectly!

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT FRANK VITUCCI AT (702) 895-3903 OR SFBEVENTS@UNLV.EDU.**
Career Power at Your Fingertips!

"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 any higher education under my belt. I am a big fan of the program, as it has totally exceeded my expectations (which were very high to begin with)."

Cynthia Mejia
Chef Instructor
Le Cordon Bleu Institute of Culinary Arts Dallas

Staying ahead in the hospitality industry means continuously increasing your knowledge and honing your skills. Isn’t it time you added a master’s degree to your long line of accomplishments?

- Courses offered totally online
- Study on your schedule
- Books included in fees and shipped to your door
- It’s education on YOUR terms.

"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 any higher education under my belt. I am a big fan of the program, as it has totally exceeded my expectations (which were very high to begin with)."

Cynthia Mejia
Chef Instructor
Le Cordon Bleu Institute of Culinary Arts Dallas

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