Beneath the Neon Author Event

By Sophia Quinton, Hixson-Lied Success Scholar

The Beneath the Neon author event was held on Thursday, November 17th in CBC A112 from 5-6pm. Matthew O’Brien came to UNLV to speak to COLA 100E students about his novel Beneath the Neon that discusses Las Vegas’s underground tunnels from a first person perspective. “Matthew O’Brien is a journalist who was following a murder story about Jimmy TJ Webber, a man who ran into the tunnels to escape the prosecution of killing his girlfriend and her daughter,” according to Kara Langin, Graduate Assistant in the Academic Transitions Unit of the Academic Success Center. From there, O’Brien, and his partner, Joshua Ellis, explored the Las Vegas underground drainage tunnels. The book is a story about people and how they end up in the tunnels from various addictions or experiences.

This was the book chosen by the department as the common reader for the school year for the COLA 100E students. It is custom to ask the author of the common reader to present his novel to the students. The event “offers a great opportunity to learn and get the books signed by O’Brien who is highly involved in UNLV and education,” adds Kara.

The event was organized by Kara and she explained the format which the event followed: “We introduced Matt, and he spoke about his experiences for fifteen minutes. Then, each student had the opportunity to submit questions and have books signed in a meet and greet. The event offers a great opportunity to meet a local author that discusses events close to home, and students were also offered extra credit to partake in the experience.”

During the event, Matthew O’Brien discussed his personal experiences within the tunnels and what he learned from it. He stated, “I discovered this virgin territory no one ever really heard about.” He investigated with Joshua to collect commentary for the city to raise awareness. He eventually created his organization Shine a Light. This organization helps those that live in the tunnels by offering many items and available resources. He even stated that all they want is friendship and someone to talk to. With the second edition being sent to the press as part of the ten-year anniversary, the one thing that he said that hit home is that these “people are not that different from us.”

Look out for the second edition at a bookstore near you. If you want to help those that live in the tunnels, visit http://beneaththeneon.com/shine-a-light.asp. Remember that everyone can make a difference.
By Robert Vargas, Hixson-Lied Success Scholar

With a continuing physician shortage in Southern Nevada, the opening of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas School of Medicine will help increase the amount of doctors we have serving in our community. Now having passed its preliminary accreditation, the UNLV School of Medicine is currently accepting applicants for its inaugural class. Located at 625 Shadow Lane, the school will be starting classes for 60 students on July 16th, 2018. With this, the UNLV School of Medicine hopes to increase the class size to 120-180 in the future. In addition, it hopes to create 5,300 new jobs by 2025 and also generate an $800 million per year impact in the local community. With this increase in physicians, the UNLV School of Medicine will also open patient care centers for student clerkships that can make healthcare more accessible to the public.

**UNLV School of Medicine: Our Vision**

Create a world-class center of excellence and innovation for medical education, patient care, and research that prepares Nevada’s physicians with the most advanced knowledge, treatments, and technologies while serving the health care needs of our diverse urban community.

For prospective students, the UNLV School of Medicine plans on offering an innovative curriculum. Using small groups, virtual anatomy labs, outpatient longitudinal integrated clerkships, and problem-based learning are some of the many features the school will offer for students. Incoming students will also gain an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) certification to further promote knowledge. Students will also have opportunities to participate in student government and to work with the community via local organizations. Helping local organizations via built in community service components in the curriculum will allow students to gain a greater bond with the Las Vegas community.

Combining an inventive curriculum along with additional ways for involvement, students will have no shortage of opportunities while they pursue their medical degree.

Prospective students can visit [www.unlv.edu/medicine](http://www.unlv.edu/medicine) for additional information in regards to the admissions process. Donors can also visit the website to find out more information on donating to the school. With all of this in mind, the local community will gain an influx of new physicians as well as a lasting economic impact to promote all the goals the UNLV School of Medicine has planned for its future.
Military and Veteran Service Center

By Lidia Wossen, Hixson-Lied Success Scholar

The UNLV Military and Veteran Service Center creates a veteran-friendly environment to provide valuable services to veterans, dependents, active duty service members, National Guard members, and reservists on campus. Here is an outline of their programs and services:

Veterans Focus Program

The Focus program highlights and honors UNLV veterans whose contributions make a positive impact on campus, within their college, in their community, and in assisting their fellow veterans. We hope this encourages all veterans to share their story and be recognized for all their continuous hard work.

VetSuccess helps veterans with:

- Vocational testing, career, academic, and readjusting counseling services
- Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) counseling and referral services
- Overcoming any obstacles that could potentially interfere with successfully completing training and/or entering a suitable career
- Registering for health services through VA Medical Centers, community-based outpatients clinics, or Vet Centers, as needed

Returning from deployment can cause veterans to experience psychological effects when adjusting back to their “normal” lifestyle. After returning home, veterans may cope with depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, a traumatic brain injury they may have endured, or any other condition as a result from their service. These conditions not only affect the vets, but also impacts their spouses, children, family, and friends. Support and treatment is the key to recovery from trauma or mental health issues. During deployment, service members may feel alone and isolated from their families. It’s important to have resources, such as those provided at UNLV, to give our veterans the support they need and deserve after serving our country.

Yellow Ribbon Program

UNLV ensures that its veterans do not have economic worries concerning their tuition. The Yellow Ribbon Program is a federal program that provides funds up to $100,000 per year, with 100% of all proceeds going to UNLV student veterans. It’s designed to assist with funds not covered by the GI Bill. The program gives our student veterans the opportunity to reach their educational goals and have their focus solely on education.

For more information, email veterans@unlv.edu or visit their website: https://www.unlv.edu/veterans.
Art on UNLV’s Campus

By Bridget Manguiat, Hisson-Lied Success Scholar

“How do we know what we know when what we know we don’t actually know?” Mike Calway Fagen’s question to the world and the inspiration behind his art displayed at the Banana Strings exhibit is one everyone has probably asked themselves once in their life. His art at the Donna Beam Fine Arts Gallery gives form to that very same question. Upon walking into the gallery, it became apparent that there was more to every piece than meets the eye.

Or is there?

Art is such an ambiguous way of expression. There is no one way to ask the world a question with your art or to give an answer to a question the world asks you. Every artist approaches art in their own way, and every person that passes by an artwork will walk away from it with a rainbow of emotions unique to themselves. Idea and emotion are abstract concepts; there are few words to give meaning to each feeling we, as people, experience throughout our life. Things such as literature, poetry, and music are very much a part of art. People often get the misconception that only paintings and sketches can even be considered as art. Words give description to the chaos, the calm, and the happiness deep inside us. Illustrations and visual arts give expression to those feelings. They even go hand in hand at times.

The last few weeks, I was able to visit Fagen’s exhibit Banana Strings, Felicia Mora’s Now You See Me collection found on the second floor of the Richard Tam Alumni Center, and the Please I’d Like to Grow display that was in the Lied library during election week. None of these displays shared the same theme, and all three of them had something different to offer students and staff alike. Just as students and employees are always bustling around here and there because of work or classes, we often times do not notice the artwork displayed on walls or portraits displayed for viewing. Yet I truly believe that in some way or another, at some point, the single glance of a passerby caused pleasant and interesting thoughts of several compositions, maybe even a few times. UNLV is continually changing up what is on display, adding new work from professionals across the country and from their very own graduated students. There are works from both the masters and the students.

This brings me to the “Please I’d Like to Grow” display. It was more of a historic display showcasing parts of expression through protest. In this day and age, we are all encouraged to embrace ourselves, our roots, our skin color, our language—the very components that make us who we are. However, unfortunately, it wasn’t always like this. Even today, it isn’t easy to properly express ourselves openly for people to understand. This display showed how speaking up and being active within your community, in this case UNLV’s community, is important. It’s how we are heard.

One of the aspects brought up within the exhibit was “Protest through Art.” This is another function art can have in society and within the student body. As I’ve been emphasizing so much—it’s an outlet to expression. It captures the words and feelings that get lost in things like language barriers.

“Students also explore and celebrate their diverse identities and advocate for social change through art—visual art, performance art, literary arts, drama, film, and other forms of expression. Art is an effective way to provoke thought or encourage solidarity.”

“Now You See Me” by Filicia Mora was probably my personal favorite of the three I visited. Embroidery is often refused to be seen as a form of art, so this medium and usage of it on her photographs screamed at me. It was beautiful and elegant, seemingly simple but spoke a thousand words.

There are so many different places on campus to see interesting artworks available and free to view for students. If only people could just take the time to see them. I promise, you won’t leave empty handed. You get to see the world through a stranger’s eyes. It’s going to be different, it’s going to be similar to your own vision—it can be so many things.

It’s for you to decide without fear of being wrong.
By Joshua DeLeon, Hixson-Lied Success Scholar

Turkey, cookies, chocolate milk, candy, ham, and cakes are just some of the few wonderful and delicious food that we tend to partake in during the holiday season. But, should we let all those calories, fat, and sugar build up while we lay in our warm and cozy blanket, watching Christmas movies with a mug of hot chocolate in our hands? If you answered yes, then you’re my kind of person. However, it is important to stop and notice how our body feels and reacts, rather than what our stomach wants.

Over the winter break, it is genuinely important to relax, remove most areas of college stress from your life, and most importantly, enjoy the time off for holidays or other celebrations! However, we should always do things in moderation, and we should definitely find opportunities to consider our health from time to time. The great thing about the term “health” is that it isn’t limited to being physically healthy. There are a lot of ways to maintain not only your physicality but also a stable emotional and mental state as well. During the winter break, I encourage you to continue any and all exercise routines that you established during the semester and do your best not to break the habit as much as possible. It can be very easy to reverse all the progress you made during the semester over the month long break, especially with the holidays that center around the consumption of food 24/7. Maybe you do not have an exercise routine or are thinking about starting one. Even running a mile or doing some exercises for thirty minutes out of your day can help you stay active during a season that calls for inactivity.

The holiday season is a time for family, friends, and food! For you students who are originally from out of state, or have families outside of the country, I encourage you to find a way to spend time with them whether it’s a skype call, Facetime or even flying out to visit for the holiday. It is undoubtedly important to spend time with family as much as possible, especially since they aren’t as readily available when you’re studying at a university, away from them. But, if visiting family is not an option due to finances or obligations, step out of your box and spend time with the new university friends you have made along the way. See if they want to hang out over the break or grab a bite to eat. Although it may not seem significant, making new friends to spend the winter break with can bolster your self-esteem, enhance your confidence, and also establish new relationships that can last forever. Making sure to include these activities during the break in some way or form will enhance and fortify your mental and emotional health.

Whether you find yourself with family, stuffing your face, or lounging around in your bed, don’t forget to stay healthy and active. It also does not hurt to stay healthy and try new things over break. Find a charity to volunteer at for a couple days, find a local church, group or club to be active with. The holidays are a perfect time for trying new things and it’s better to do it now before school starts up again and responsibilities and priorities take over.

**Wellness Wheel** - The Wellness Wheel represents the collaborative effort of the programs and services of the UNLV Student Recreation and Wellness Center. The seven dimensions of the Wellness Wheel are inter-connected to achieve balance & personal well-being:

- **Occupational** — career, certifications, work ethic, school, training, interests, abilities
- **Spiritual** — values, intuition, character, ethics, tradition, enthusiasm, spiritual fulfillment
- **Intellectual** — time management, study skills, goal setting, memory, test preparation, imagination
- **Physical** — recreation, nutrition, sleep, relaxation, energy level, fitness, preventative maintenance
- **Emotional** — personality, stress management, self-efficacy, love, joy, hardiness
- **Environmental** — community service, world and political awareness, natural resource management, recycling, food choices
- **Social** — relationships, culture, organizations, family, friends, clubs, parties, communication
Interview with Academic Success Center Advisor, Debbie Pattini

By Danika Manguiat, Hixson-Lied Success Scholar

The Academic Success Center, located at the Claude I. Howard Building, offers a wide range of free services to students. These services can help all kinds of students achieve success. Although the ASC is meant to provide to all, some students do not take advantage of the various services offered since they do not know sufficient information regarding those services. After sitting down with Debbie Pattini, an Academic Advisor at the ASC, she helped clear up any inquiries a person may have.

Is advising at ASC available to all students?

“Advising in the ASC is available to all Exploring major undergraduate students, Non-degree seeking students, Early Studies students (high school students taking UNLV classes), returning students, non-traditional students, and students in other majors considering exploring majors. We also have two dedicated advisors for Business, Engineering, and Science Pathways.”

How can advising help students?

“Advisors have different academic and life experiences and are trained to know the policies at UNLV and the degree programs in their college. Students may need referrals to offices such as Financial Aid, Tutoring, and other advising centers, but they just need to meet with us to get the information and referrals. If we do not know something, we can find out and prevent the student from running around frustrated. Sometimes, students just need a listening ear while they explore different majors and careers.”

What type of assistance can students receive from advising?

“I have helped students file petitions for their Financial Aid, access permission for taking a math or English class, find a campus job, apply for scholarships, refer them to coaching, tutoring, and even to meeting with a professor and knowing what to ask. We also help students choose the classes that complete their degrees and give advice about semester and degree planning, who to speak with for declaring majors, and much more.”

How many advisors are at the ASC?

“We have two Pathways advisors, Michael and Nicole, and three Exploring majors advisors: Sasha, Sal, and myself. We have one advising graduate assistant, Carly, and one Pathways graduate assistant, Jenna.

What is your favorite part about advising?

“I can’t name one favorite part of my job because this is such a rewarding position. I enjoy meeting new and returning students and learning so much about each one and the unique ways they plan to fulfill their academic and life goals.” “I also work with and for a student-focused and wonderful team at the ASC! We all work hard to meet our students’ needs to succeed. I feel we all support our UNLV students and our community every day. The other staff and faculty on campus are so helpful, and I enjoy connecting students with them to get them closer to their goals.”

How can students receive more information about the ASC?

“We have a helpful website www.unlv.edu/asc that has links and information about all of our services. We also have well-informed and friendly front desk staff that can help in person or by phone. They are student workers, but they are more like a welcome center and campus resource. Also, students can email an advisor or meet in person to find more information about anything they want to know.”

The Academic Success Center offers various services around the clock, including online offerings like Brainfuse Tutoring. Their central building is open Monday-Friday, along with Satellite Outreach tables in the Student Union and the Student Recreation and Wellness Center (SRWC) for easier access. The ASC also has service locations in the Student Services Complex (SSC), the Lied Library, Engineering and other locations. Such easily accessible times and locations are provided in order for students to fully enjoy the ASC’s wide range of services. Alongside all the workers of the ASC, Debbie hopes that she will be able to help students achieve success one step at a time.

Interview continued...

Our director, Aaron, also advises on occasion. We also plan to welcome a new advisor for the spring semester. The Student-Athlete Academic Services (SAAS) advisors are also part of the ASC, and all of them are available on the ASC website. They work in conjunction with all the departments’ advisors to help student-athletes. We also work with the Honors College for dual advising for those students who are Exploring majors and in the Honors College at the same time.”

*All photos used are original, can be found on unlv.edu, UNLV social media or have references indicated

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