Introducing the GPSA Executive Board 2016—2017

**GPSA President Meghan Pierce** began her studies at UNLV in 2003, after completing a B.A. in psychology, she then went on to complete a M.S. in Clinical Mental Health Counseling and a M.A. in Psychology. Currently, Meghan is working on her Ph.D. in Experimental Psychology with an emphasis in neuroscience and quantitative psychology. Her research examines the neuroendocrine and genetic correlates of stress, specifically markers of the HPA axis in various populations of veterans, females, and psychopathology. Meghan has held past positions as the GPSA Secretary, Treasurer and Vice President.

**GPSA Vice President Patrick Daleiden** is a Ph.D. student working in Dr. Andreas Stefik’s Software Engineering and Media Lab in the Department of Computer Science. He works on programming language research, developing the compiler and libraries for the Quorum programming language and serving as a teaching assistant and lab monitor for two Software Engineering courses. Patrick’s dissertation research is focused on parallel programming in high performance and scientific computing. He has been at UNLV since 2014 and has served as a GPSA Representative and member of the Sponsorship Committee for the past two years.

**GPSA Treasurer Kimberly Florence** is a third-year Higher Education, Ph.D. student in the department of Educational Psychology and Higher Education; holding both a Bachelors and Masters degree from UNLV. This native Nevadan has spent many years at UNLV expanding her knowledge base both within and outside of the classroom by participating in various academic/professional opportunities. Some of the more recent opportunities include: First and Second-Year Instructor for the College of Education, President of the Black Graduate Student Association Fall 2015-Spring 2016 and Ambassador for the Graduate Rebel Ambassadors Program. In terms of research, Kimberly is interested in college access and success at both the undergraduate and graduate-level. This interest has been exhibited in her most recent publication regarding -year/first-generation college students and the promotion of self-regulated learning through academic success coaching.

**GPSA Secretary Kirk Askia Talib-deen** received both his B.A. and M.A. in English with an emphasis in British Literature. He is an alumnus of UNLV and recently has been admitted into the Curriculum & Instruction Ph.D. program, in the area of Cultural Studies, International Education, and Multicultural Education. Kirk’s focus will be praxis-oriented on the Intersectionality of Blacks, Orthodox Islam, and Education.

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**Coffee & Bagels**
Graduate Student Commons
Lied Library room 2141

from 7:30am – 10:00am
and 3:00pm – 6:00pm
during last week of instruction:
May 2nd – 6th, 2016

(Available until refreshments are exhausted)
Graduate & Professional Student Research Forum
Outstanding Presentation Award Recipients—Poster Sessions

Science and Engineering Poster Session A: UNLV Student Union Ballroom—1st Place: Kazi Ali Tamaddun, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Construction; 2nd Place: Erica Marti, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Construction; Honorable Mention: Jessica Hartman, Department of Mechanical Engineering; Honorable Mention: Yiyuan Li, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering

Science and Health Science Poster Session B: UNLV Student Union Ballroom—1st Place: Kristi Agari, School of Dental Medicine; 2nd Place: Jacqueline Phan, Department of Chemistry; Honorable Mention: Toni Jilka, School of Dental Medicine

Science and Health Science Poster Session C: UNLV Student Union Ballroom—1st Place: Matthew Thacker, School of Dental Medicine; 2nd Place: Whitney Saarem and Fang Yu Wang, School of Dental Medicine; Honorable Mention: Judy Goldman, School of Public Health; Honorable Mention: Chun Yin Wong and Van Tan, School of Dental Medicine

Science and Health Science Poster Session D: UNLV Student Union Ballroom—1st Place: Ashley Tovar, Department of Kinesiology and Nutrition Sciences; 2nd Place: Scott C. Thomas, School of Life Sciences; Honorable Mention: Evan Davis, School of Dental Medicine

Science and Health Science Poster Session E: UNLV Student Union Ballroom—1st Place: Ian Pearson and James Luke Taylor, School of Dental Medicine; 2nd Place: Inyoung Chong, School of Dental Medicine; Honorable Mention: Saruna Ghimire, School of Public Health; Honorable Mention: Ghazaleh Rezaei and Weston Milne, School of Dental Medicine

Social Science Poster Session A: UNLV Student Union Ballroom—1st Place: Carrie R. Underwood, Department of Psychology; 2nd Place: Karli Nave, Department of Psychology; Honorable Mention: Stacy J. Graves, Department of Psychology

Social Science Poster Session B: UNLV Student Union Ballroom—1st Place: Stephanie Verba, Department of Psychology; 2nd Place: Yulia Gavrilova, Department of Psychology; Honorable Mention: Cheryl Anderson, Department of Anthropology

Social Science Poster Session C: UNLV Student Union Ballroom—1st Place: Travis Loughran, Department of Psychology; 2nd Place: Christina M. Vanden Bosch der Nederlanden, Department of Psychology; Honorable Mention: Stephany M. Molina, Department of Psychology; Honorable Mention: Brenna Wilkerson, Department of Anthropology

Social Science and Hotel Poster Session D: UNLV Student Union Ballroom—1st Place: Miliai Keala S.J. Heen, Department of Criminal Justice; 2nd Place: Nicole Santerno, School of Journalism and Media Studies; Honorable Mention: Kelly Stout, School of Environmental and Public Affairs

Education Poster Session A: UNLV Student Union Ballroom—1st Place: Michelle Dominguez, Department of Educational Psychology & Higher Learning; 2nd Place: Rachel Part, Department of Educational Psychology & Higher Education; Honorable Mention: Cynthia Bezard, Department of Teaching & Learning; Honorable Mention: Wynn Tashman, Department of Educational Psychology & Higher Education and William S. Boyd School of Law

Fine Arts Poster Session A: UNLV Student Union Ballroom—1st Place: Maureen Halligan, Department of Art; 2nd Place: Elizabeth Johnson, Department of Art; Honorable Mention: Monique Arar, Department of Music; Honorable Mention: Wendy Chambers, Department of Art

A luncheon and awards ceremony are held at the conclusion of the Research Forum
Graduate & Professional Student Research Forum
Outstanding Presentation Award Recipients—Platform Sessions

Science Platform Session A: Student Union Room 205—
1st place: Courtney Bartlett, Department of Geoscience; 2nd place: Lynette Kolger, Department of Chemistry; Honorable Mention: Alicia Crespin, School of Life Sciences; Honorable Mention—Katelyn Porter, School of Life Sciences

Science Platform Session B: Student Union Room 207—1st place—Moinak Bhaduri, Department of Mathematical Sciences; 2nd place: Jonathan Baker, Department of Geoscience; Honorable Mention—Michael Isaacs, School of Life Sciences; Honorable Mention—Anthony Waddle, School of Life Sciences

Science and Engineering Platform Session C: Student Union Room 208A—1st place: Kishor Shrestha, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Construction; 2nd place: Matthew Hodges, Department of Mechanical Engineering; Honorable Mention: Sichu Shrestha, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Construction; Honorable Mention: Chao Chen, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Construction

Social Science Platform Session A: Student Union Room 208B—1st place: Shelly Volsche, Department of Anthropology; 2nd place: Liya M. Rakhkovskaya, Department of Psychology; Honorable Mention: Katelyn DiBenedetto, Department of Anthropology; Honorable Mention: Jessica E. Nave-Blodgett, Department of Psychology

Social Science Platform Session B: Student Union Room 209—1st Place: Vanessa C. Irsik, Department of Psychology 2nd Place: Matthew Martinez, Department of Anthropology; Honorable Mention: Monica M. Bolton, Department of Psychology

Social Science, Business and Hotel Platform Session C: Student Union Room 211—1st Place: Lenna V. Shulga, Department of Hotel Administration; 2nd Place: Kate Eugenis, Department of Political Science; Honorable Mention: Andrea Dassopoulos, Department of Sociology; Honorable Mention: Kaiyang Wu, Department of Economics

Social Science Platform Session D: Student Union Room 213—1st Place: Breanna Boppre, Department of Criminal Justice; 2nd Place: Jason Scott, Department of Sociology; Honorable Mention: Nathan Henceroth, Department of Political Science; Honorable Mention: Moritz Rissmann, Department of Political Science

Education Platform Session A: Student Union Room 218—1st Place: Marissa Nichols, Department of Educational Psychology & Higher Education; 2nd Place: Refika Turgut, Department of Teaching & Learning; Honorable Mention: Robert Walker, Department of Teaching & Learning; Honorable Mention: Katie Woods, Department of Educational Psychology & Higher Education

Education Platform Session B: UNLV Student Union Room 219—1st Place: Caitlin Saladino, Department of Educational Psychology & Higher Education; 2nd Place: Barbara Paz Cornejo, Department of Teaching & Learning

Humanities & Fine Arts Platform Session A: UNLV Student Union Philip J. Cohen Theatre—1st place: Stefanie Resnick, Madison Kisst, Kayla Gaar, Jack Lafferty, Jasmine Mathews, Sam Cordes, Bernhard Verhoeven, Darek Riley, Amber Bonasso, Stephon Pettway and Ryan Dougherty, Department of Theatre Arts; 2nd place: Rachel Disney, Department of English; Honorable Mention: Rebecca Robison, Department of English; Honorable Mention: Syed Haider Shahbaz, Department of English

The 2016 Research Forum Abstract Booklet and other related materials are available at http://www.unlv.edu/gpsa/forum
2015-2016 GPSA Council Flashback
Take a look at what kept the GPSA Council busy this year!!

By: GPSA President Surbhi Sharma

- The E-Board took charge this past summer to enhance the branding for the Graduate and Professional Students Association. To that end, we redesigned the GPSA logo, ordered service pins for the GPSA Council members, and ensured that the GPSA flyers are available at the Graduate College, Office of International Students and Scholars, School of Dental Medicine, and Law School.

- Our power-packed members of GPSA Activities/Community Service Committee organized social events throughout the year providing networking opportunities for graduate and professional students. The GPSA held a mixer on April 15th to raise awareness of domestic violence. Invited guests included: Shade Tree Women's and Children Emergency Shelter, the Jean Nidetch Center and Green Dot. February 27th of this year, the GPSA sponsored a team for the Color Run. The Run supported the charity Three Square. On October 15, 2015, the GPSA hosted the PHD Movie 2, an evening event with free admission and movie snacks. The GPSA also provides coffee and bagels at the start, middle and end-of-instruction during each fall and spring semester.

- This year’s Sponsorship Committee saw an increase in sponsorship applications with 269 applications being funded at $146,605.02 to graduate and professional students in order to further their research and academic experience. The GPSA Sponsorship Committee hosted 5 workshops (one campus-wide, 2 workshops for the Law School and a workshop at the Dental School) in Fall 2015 to provide guidelines and tips on how to submit a successful sponsorship application.

- 175 graduate and professional students presented their research at the 18th Annual GPSA Research Forum through oral and poster presentations. Members of the community, fellow students as well as UNLV faculty and staff were inspired by the depth of research, scholarship and creative activities conducted by UNLV graduate and professional students.

- The GPSA continues to be proactive in preparing our constituents for the next 79th Legislative Session (2017) by continually updating the GPSA Government Relations webpage and conducting popcorn sessions on how to meet legislators, advocate for a cause, and actively participate in legislative committee hearings. This year’s GPSA Council also laid a strong foundation for a dedicated GPSA Legislative Day at The Legislative Building during the upcoming Legislative session in Carson City. This day will allow graduate and professional students the opportunity to meet our state legislators and showcase the best of UNLV’s research, scholarships, and creative activities.

- The GPSA Awards, Bylaws, Elections, and Publications Committees worked diligently ensuring the smooth running of the GPSA.

- GPSA representative Kaiyang Wu sat on the UNLV Dining Committee this year. He shared with the Council the exciting news of the new app that is available: Tapingo. With this app students can now pre-order their beverages and food online and avoid long lines. GPSA continues to advocate for extended service hours for graduate and professional students on campus in the evenings.

- GPSA brainstormed ideas with the UNLV Foundation to provide better financial support for its constituents. In the coming year, members of the E-Board and Council anticipate formulating these ideas into more concrete actions.
(continued)

2015-2016 GPSA Council Flashback

♦ The GPSA enhanced graduate student mentoring by:
  ♦ Assisting the representatives with the departmental listserv.
  ♦ Creating drop box links for uploading various campus-wide committee reports for ensuring an easy transition for the new Council.
  ♦ Adding a resource webpage for new and returning graduate and professional students.
  ♦ Created the first GPSA YouTube channel, a repository of all the GPSA videos, so students can view valuable resources at anytime from remote locations.

♦ GPSA continued to advocate for a stronger Graduate Assistant program, and was involved in the strategic planning of UNLV’s commitment to be a Top Tier University. As a part of this initiative, the GPSA worked closely with the Graduate College and was involved in the process of increasing doctoral GA stipends.

♦ This year’s Student Health Insurance Committee looked hard at revising the Student Health Insurance Rates for the students on the hard-waiver mandatory insurance. Based on this revised policy, if approved by the Board of Regents, students on Hard-waiver mandatory will observe a ~ 2% reduction in the premiums for the 2016-17 academic year.

♦ The GPSA continued to maintain strong ties with the Nevada Student Alliance by supporting “It’s on Us” Campaign, NV Service Day, Voter Registration Day (September 22nd).

♦ GPSA Council served on 27 campus-wide committees, and represented GPSA at other community events such as the clean-up of 42 acre parcel at the Koval-Tropicana crossing; Town Hall meetings; Graduate Assistant Orientation, School of Dental Medicine Orientation, International Students and New Graduate Student Orientations; Board of Regents; and Nevada Student Alliance.

♦ The GPSA Council would like to thank GPSA advisors: Dr. Kathryn Korgan, Dean, Graduate College and Dr. Peter Gray, Associate Professor, Department of and GPSA Manager Ms. Becky Boulton. We thank you all for your dedication, encouragement and support to UNLV graduate and professional students, the GPSA Council, and the GPSA E-Board.

GPSA 2015—2016 COUNCIL MEMBERS

Cheryl Anderson, Chace Ashcroft, Joshua Bailey, Audrey Bardwell, Stephen Bohigian, Bree Boppre, Kyle Bowen, Carlos Camacho, Wendy Chambers, Patrick Daleiden, Dixidha Devarajan, Edith Gonzalez Duarte, Theresa Farmer, Mirae Fornander, Rebecca Gates, Amanda Gentry, Laura Gryder, Javier, Hernando, Amanda Kidman, Matthew LeClaire, Daniel Murphy, Rafael Oganesyan, Emily Paulsen, Meghan Pierce, Sogol Pirbastami, Maria Poggio, Ariel Rosen, Nicole Santero, Surbhi Sharma, Lenna Shulga, Brittany Stuck, Dominique Tetzlaff, Tim Thatcher, Terri Thomas, Adrian Viesca, Jeffery Wan, Kaiyang Wu and Li Zhang

UNLV Graduate & Professional Student Government

Strengthens your voice  Provides professional development opportunities  Enhances your academic endeavors  Supports your research  Hosts networking activities and events
Summer Fun

*GPSA suggestions for recreational activity on campus (and nearby)*

This information was retrieved from the new GPSA Resource webpage. Please visit this webpage (http://www.unlv.edu/gpsa/resources) for more tips on funding opportunities, and campus & academic resources.

◊ **UNLV Recreation Center** - The gym is 4 floors, includes a lap and wade pool, basketball courts, a full track, exercise classes, racquetball courts, spin classes, and cardio and weight equipment. If you are taking at least 6 credits, your membership is included in your student fees.

◊ **UNLV Performing Arts** - The Performing Arts calendar includes events, dates, times and pricing.

◊ **Free UNLV tickets**: As a UNLV student, you are eligible for one free ticket to each campus sporting events, and may purchase one buddy ticket at a discounted rate. Go to the Thomas & Mack Center and watch UNLV’s Running Rebels men’s basketball team dominate!

◊ **Relaxation Center in SRWC** – Visit the center for a 30 session re-charge in a quiet area while you relax in a massage chair.

◊ **UNLV’s art galleries and museums** - Experience the wide array of artwork brought to you by local artists’ and visiting exhibitions.

◊ **Xeriscape garden** – Located in the heart of campus is an oasis of indigenous plants. Sit on the benches throughout the garden and feel the tension roll off of you.

◊ **Student Union Game Room** - Located on the west end of the Student Union, the Game Room has billiard tables, ping pong tables, board games and video games, and multiple big-screen TVs where you can plug-in your personal game console.

◊ **Las Vegas local nearby trails** - Take advantage of all the hiking available in the Las Vegas area. You can get out of town within a half hour for a peaceful walk. It’s a great way to unwind.

◊ **Grand Canyon** - The south rim of the Canyon is only a 4 hour drive away. You can take in the breathtaking view of the canyon. If you are feeling particularly adventurous you can hike one of the many scenic trails in the National Park or even ride a burro.

◊ **Valley of Fire** - 55 miles northeast of Las Vegas this Nevada State Park has petroglyphs, picnicking, camping and hiking.

◊ **Red Rock** - 17 miles west of Las Vegas on Charleston Blvd/State Route 159, this gorgeous area is a National Conservation Area. There is a Visitor’s Center and a 13 mile scenic drive can be driven ($7 per vehicle), walked ($3 per person), jogged or cycled. You choose the mode of transportation - but this definitely something you want to experience! Many trails are located on the loop. It closes around sunset. Hikers and bicyclists, etc. can get a yearly pass for $30.

◊ **Hoover Dam** - Approximately 30 miles southeast of Las Vegas, this huge concrete structure, weighing more than 6,600,000 tons, is a not to be missed. You can also check out the newly constructed Hoover Dam Bridge and stop in Boulder City – a quaint small town that housed the dam builders in the 1930s.

◊ **Las Vegas Springs Preserve** - The Preserve is a 180 acre attraction on Charleston Blvd. featuring botanical gardens, trails, museums, and interactive science and nature exhibits. Students receive a discount.
Let your Voice Be Heard—How to Contact your Legislator

By: GPSA Representative, Theresa Farmer, Department of World Languages and Cultures

Dr. Constance Brooks, NSHE Vice Chancellor for Government and Community Affairs, spoke at the GPSA March and April meetings. During both meetings she emphasized how much state legislators appreciate hearing from students, particularly in relation to education matters, and encouraged everyone to contact their representatives for whatever issues they feel passionately about.

There are many different ways to participate politically in the upcoming 2017 Nevada Legislature session, such as attending legislative or community meetings and contacting legislators directly. In order to have an effective interaction with any legislator, Dr. Brooks provided the following advice during her "Effective Communication with Legislators" presentation at the March GPSA meeting:

- Always introduce yourself, state your district and your representative (if speaking or writing to a different one)
- Concisely refer to the issue, its relevance to you, your position on the issue and why it should be important to them
- In closing, be sure to thank the legislator for his/her time and include your contact information

The above suggestions can be used for both written communication (emails and hand-written letters) and face-to-face situations, such as giving formal testimony or an informal "elevator speech." When providing a position paper, connect your research findings to national trends and best practices in addition to including yourself as a resource for more detailed information. Due to the demands on legislators' time, clearness and brevity are greatly appreciated.

Useful resources:

- To find your representative and district: [http://mapserve1.leg.state.nv.us/whoRU/](http://mapserve1.leg.state.nv.us/whoRU/)
- Where to learn about legislators and watch committee meetings: [http://www.leg.state.nv.us/](http://www.leg.state.nv.us/)
- See meeting calendar: [https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/Calendar/A/](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/Calendar/A/)

GPSA Spring Fling Social Mixer for a Social Cause!

By: GPSA Secretary Ariel Rosen

On Friday, April 15, 2016 the GPSA hosted this year’s social mixer at the Stan Fulton Lounge located on campus. Food was served, the cash bar opened, and a great time was had by all. There were also several guest speakers associated with this event’s social cause. The mixer supported the Shade Tree Women’s and Children Emergency Shelter, UNLV’s Green Dot and the Jean Nidetch Center. The Shade Tree is a shelter for homeless and abused women and children. The Shade Tree allows these women and children to develop a sense of self-reliance as they provide food and shelter, along with other services. Currently the Shade Tree is looking for volunteers (especially in the computer lab!). For more information, please contact Marion Thomas, 702-385-0072 (ext. 105).

A special thank you to the Activities/Community Service Committee: Chair Amanda Kidman, Amanda Gentry, Jeffrey Wan, Amy Zhang and Emily Paulsen, for organizing this event!
May 2  GPSA Council Meeting @ the Student Union room 208 A, B, C from 2:00—3:30pm

May 2—6  Bagels and coffee in the Graduate Student Commons, LLB 2141 @ 7:30am and 3:30pm

May 4  Top Tier Rollout Sessions for Students. Foundations Building @ 7:00pm

May 5  Black Mountain Institute presents—Echo’s of War: The New Literature of War. Panel Discussion with authors, 7:00pm in the Philip J. Cohen Theatre, UNLV Student Union. Seats are limited.

May 13  Spring Commencement Ceremonies for Law Students—10:00am and Dental Students—5:00pm at Artemus Ham Hall

May 14  Spring Commencement Ceremonies for Graduate Students—2:00pm and 4:00pm at the Thomas & Mack Center

June 6  GPSA Council Meeting, Graduate Student Commons, LLB 2141 from 10:00am—11:30am

July 11  GPSA Council Meeting, Graduate Student Commons, LLB 2141 from 10:00am—11:30am

August 1  GPSA Council Meeting, Graduate Student Commons, LLB 2141 from 10:00am—11:30am

Congratulations Spring 2016 Graduates!

Commencement is quickly approaching. Ceremonies will be held:

Law Students’ Ceremony: Friday, May 13th @ 10:00am at the Artemus Ham Hall
Dental Students’ Ceremony: Friday, May 13th @ 5:00pm at the Artemus Ham Hall
Graduate Students’ Ceremonies held at 9:00am and 2:00pm at the Thomas & Mack Center.

Check the Commencement website for more information http://www.unlv.edu/commencement