

A WILLIAM F. HARRAH COLLEGE OF HOTEL ADMINISTRATION PUBLICATION

# PREMIER

SPRING 2007

We Love  
**Scott Sibella '88**

ALUMNUS OF THE YEAR

Pictured In The Mirage's LOVE Theater,  
A Cirque Du Soleil Tribute To The Beatles

UNLV  
UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA LAS VEGAS



## PREMIER

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

### OFFICE OF THE DEAN

4505 Maryland Parkway  
Box 456013  
Las Vegas, NV 89154-6013  
(702) 895-3161

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As I look back over the nine years of my tenure as dean, it is easy to recognize the accomplishments of the faculty, staff, and students of the Harrah Hotel College. Upon joining this faculty, my vision has been to be *internationally* recognized as the premier source for hospitality, tourism, and recreation management education and research. To achieve such a vision, one must focus and excel in the three-pronged mission of the university. That is, programs must be directed at accomplishing the *integration* of the mission of *teaching, research, and service*.

To be nationally and internationally recognized, then these three program elements must be symbiotic. They must draw upon the other and create synergies. It is my belief that we have achieved that recognition among many constituencies. Our college continually receives requests to provide its educational programs in all corners of the world. While we explore many of these opportunities, not all are in our best interest. The UNLV Singapore campus is a realization of just such a request that we could not pass up.

The best universities in the world have become recognized not necessarily for what they are but for what they have produced—they have

## Dean's Message

produced graduates who have gone on to become leaders in their professions. We, too, have alumni who have gone on to achieve outstanding successes around the world.

One alumnus from our first graduating class is president of the Ambassador Hotel Group in Seoul, Korea. Former students are currently in positions as president, CEO, COO, and senior vice president in companies such as Starwood Hotels, US Franchise Systems, The Bellagio, The Mandalay Bay, The Mirage, The Imperial Palace, The Palms, Cannery Resorts, Wynn Resort, MGM MIRAGE, Boyd Gaming, and Kerzner International, among others.

To continue creating leaders in hospitality, tourism, and recreation management, then first and foremost, we must have outstanding instruction at both the undergraduate and graduate level. This means that we must hire the very best teachers. Some will draw upon research, and others will draw upon their practical experiences.

During these past nine years, over half of the current faculty have joined our college. There has been great success in hiring outstanding individuals who represent the best in the world. These faculty members continue to be recognized for their contributions to both teaching and research.

While industry leaders give their alma maters much of their reputation, outstanding faculty research also contributes significantly. When companies apply the research findings to improve their processes, procedures, operations, and bottom

line, the university also gains recognition. As faculty members share research results in the classroom, the educational process is enriched and strengthened.

When practitioners join academia, they bring a unique combination of knowledge and skills to the educational process. The classroom comes alive as students learn and interact intently with instructors who relate stories that focus on the relevance of their learning to the real world.

UNLV is located in the “Mecca of hospitality,” therefore our students are engaging in extensive work experience and internships on the Las Vegas Strip and in the surrounding valley. It is not a false promise when we use the tagline “Come study in the world’s greatest laboratory.”

The William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration at UNLV is internationally recognized for its outstanding programs. However, we cannot rest on our laurels. In the present dynamic climate in which we find our industries, to stand still is to fall behind. We have to lead and not follow. We do this through our progressive curriculum and research activities to ensure we are educating our students so that they can make an immediate impact on the industry and be prepared for future leadership.

It is my intent to see that we continue to be a benchmark for all areas of hospitality, tourism, and recreation management education, research, and service.

Stuart H. Mann  
Dean



## President's Message

I am delighted to have the opportunity to reflect on my first year at UNLV and offer my impressions of the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration in this issue of Premier magazine.

*I am impressed with all that I have discovered about UNLV in my short time as President, and I am proud to be part of such a dynamic university. The Harrah Hotel College is a shining example of what makes UNLV a great institution of higher education.*

I had little background in academic programming associated with the hospitality industry when I arrived at UNLV. Therefore, I was very interested in learning more about our hotel college. I was immediately impressed with its academic quality, high standards and faculty expertise.

The William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration has a world-class reputation in hospitality, and as such, students are drawn to UNLV from all parts of the globe. In fact, of the nearly 2,500 students enrolled in the Harrah Hotel College, 28 percent are international

students, making the college a top contributor to the ever-expanding global hospitality workforce.

Additionally, our newly opened Singapore campus has propelled UNLV into the international arena, serving as a source of pride for our campus and for our local community.

We have more than 60 talented faculty members in the college who bring their expertise in hospitality directly into the classroom. Our prime location in a city that is arguably the world's greatest tourist destination creates a unique opportunity for our students, providing both strong academic training coupled with valuable "hands-on" learning experiences.

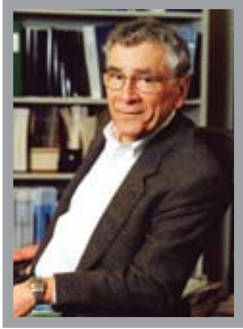
As UNLV prepares for its upcoming 50th Anniversary, I believe it is appropriate to reflect on our transformation from a regional university to a nationally recognized, research-intensive institution. I am impressed with all that I have discovered about UNLV in my short time as President, and I am proud to be part of such a dynamic university. The Harrah Hotel College is a shining example of what makes UNLV a great institution of higher education.



David B. Ashley  
UNLV President



## INDUSTRY INSIGHTS



Stephen Michaelides, Words, Ink  
National Advisory Board Member

### Trends: Some Radical Thoughts

**T**rends: There aren't any. This hospitality industry of ours evolves, not as a result of trends that muscle their way onto the food service scene. It's not because of what students learn at culinary and hotel schools (presumably they are taught basics and how to apply them). Changes as a consequence of consumer whims that are sometimes sensible, sometimes demanding to the point of foolishness. And, what do you know? Surprise, surprise: This industry of ours, more often than not, reacts emotionally to the latter (fads as trends and vice versa).

Witness, for example, the fast-moving, low-carb Atkins craze that disappeared from the dining-out scene about as quickly as it appeared. In other words, whatever trend that's out there today or anticipated for tomorrow is, I believe, a consequence of fad (not something legitimate), and not likely to take hold for very long. If there is an offshoot of this (let's call it a trend for lack of a better word), it's that restaurants are paying far more attention to healthy menu offerings and the ingredients that make for nourishing dishes (but isn't that the way it should have been from the very beginning?). What has emerged is cooking from scratch; using organic, farm-raised, and seasonal produce, the use of fresh products, and eliminating trans fats.

Yet when we look at the flip side, we watch (often in horror) the fast-food segment overindulging in an assortment of wretched excesses, concerned that if they don't balance their salad, yogurt, and fresh-fruit offerings with obscenely large, multi-thousand-calorie burgers and breakfast items, their customer base will erode.

Trends (if you wish to call them that) are impacted by cultural influences, brought on by a variety of ethnic persuasions, and incursions, and immigrations. There

isn't a food service operation out there—unless it's ethnically unadulterated—that doesn't season its menu, from appetizers through desserts, with a hodgepodge of items reflecting foods, ingredients, and recipes cribbed from the kitchens and cookbooks—both domestic and commercial—of foreign countries. From pizzas to egg rolls, Greek salads to curry-laced proteins, couscous to tacos, crème brûlée (or flan) to tiramisu, restaurants are compelled to appeal to an assortment of tastes. Not only does this demonstrate how flexible and au courant they are but also it satisfies the capricious demands of customers whose palates have been bombarded with flavors exported from East and West or who, indeed, may have savored those flavors during travels abroad.

Economic conditions, not trends, shape the growth of the hospitality industry: The fatter the economy, the more disposable income consumers are willing to spend on dining out at restaurants fond of experimenting with everything from braised coxcombs to insufferably baffling and painful combinations of ingredients (molecular gastronomy anyone?). The crummier the economy, the less disposable income consumers have to spend on dining out.

With the exception of those very high-end, dollar-a-minute restaurants (French Laundry, Per Se, anything Alain Ducasse creates) in cities where support for their offerings comes from those who can afford them, consumers look to restaurants to either bistro-ize or reconfigure their menus with easy-to-please, recognizable dishes that are less costly to produce, food- and labor-wise—a reintroduction of comfort foods, as it were.

Now that's a trend.

*"Industry Insights" is a new column which will be featured in future issues of Premier. A member of the college's National Advisory Board, Michaelides is a freelance writer, speaker, and food service consultant.*

## IN MY OWN WORDS



Deirdre Flynn, Executive Vice President  
National Advisory Board Member

### Why I Chose This Industry

**W**hen you talk to most people in the foodservice industry circles in which I travel, it's not so

much a "why" they joined the industry but "how." They'd address the question with a funny story to explain how they stumbled into it, loved it, and never left. I'm convinced that once you stumble in, you never want to get out. After all, I am living proof.

*It's a privilege to work within an industry that wants to make customers—everywhere in the world—comfortable and happy. Once you stumble into the foodservice industry, you never want to get out. I am living proof.*

Actually, I didn't really join the industry—I was assigned to it. About 20+ years ago, I went to work for an association management firm in Chicago. My first client assignment was with the North American Association of Food Equipment Manufacturers (NAFEM) where I promoted The NAFEM Show to food service industry professionals around the world. In

2002, NAFEM left the management firm and became a "stand-alone" association, where it operates like an independent, small business, and I became NAFEM's executive vice president.

With the association management firm, I had the opportunity to work in and explore a wide variety of industries. I eagerly accepted these assignments but only under the condition that it wouldn't diminish my opportunity to work with NAFEM and the foodservice industry.

Why?

First and foremost, since all of us have had the pleasure of enjoying food away from home, the foodservice industry is tangible and easy to appreciate. Thanks to my NAFEM involvement, my dining enjoyment grew from the food on the plate to other aspects—like noticing labels on equipment and turning plates and spoons over to see which manufacturer made them.

My appreciation for the industry's people grew as well. Through the years, I've found the people who work in it are bright, innovative, interesting, and engaging. They are incredibly focused on providing customers top-quality products and services.

NAFEM members in particular provide me a forum to learn from the best and the brightest in food service equipment and supplies manufacturing at all organizational levels. The supply side of the industry is actually a lot of fun with all the right ingredients: people; processes; entrepreneurship; innovation; creativity; and opportunities to grow organizational, management, customer service, and listening and marketing skills.

It's a privilege to work within an industry that wants to make customers—everywhere in the world—comfortable and happy. Once you stumble into the foodservice industry, you never want to get out. I am living proof.



# STUDENT SPOTLIGHT





# *All Day I Dream About . . .* **Golf**

**Kyle Helms '07**

Robyn Campbell-Ouchida '00 MA

Photo by Geri Kodey '85

**U**nlike many children who are drawn to baseball, football or basketball, Kyle Helms started playing golf as a youngster in New Jersey. “Of course, you’re no good at it when you first start,” says Helms. “But if you keep playing, you become addicted to it!” That addiction is something he never outgrew, and when a friend moved to Las Vegas to enroll in the Professional Golf Management (PGM) program at UNLV, he told Helms he should check it out too. Little did he know that in a few short years, he would be the program’s student president.

“I told him, ‘No way—I can’t go to school in Las Vegas,’” recalls Helms. “From what I knew, Las Vegas was all about having fun, and I didn’t think I could concentrate there. I found out later that I sure was wrong.”

During his senior year of high school, Helms had reason to visit Las Vegas when he played in a golf tournament. “I met up with my friend, who showed me the UNLV campus and all the great things that were going on with the PGM program. The facilities and resources were just unreal, and the warmer weather was another good reason to get out of New Jersey.”

He came back from his trip and told his parents that he had decided where he wanted to go to college. “They were supportive, and I’m so glad. The experiences that I have had here are incredible.”

Favorite courses have included Professor Jim Busser’s budgeting class, which Helms says “is really going to help me in the future.” He especially enjoyed Professor Cynny Caruthers’ course, RLS 220, which focuses on leisure services for individuals with disabilities. “That class really opened my eyes to the entire world,” says Helms. “It was a great interactive experience, and I learned that you can help anybody learn to do anything.”

Now Helms is looking forward to completing an internship at one of the country’s top 12 golf courses, the Congressional Country Club in Bethesda, Md. “I will complete a six-month internship there and will have the opportunity to lead junior clinics and camps and to help out in the golf shop,” states Helms. His future plans include returning to UNLV for graduate school and either becoming a pro golfer or working in some capacity with a PGM program.



NATIVE LAS VEGAN A LEADER IN CASINO INDUSTRY

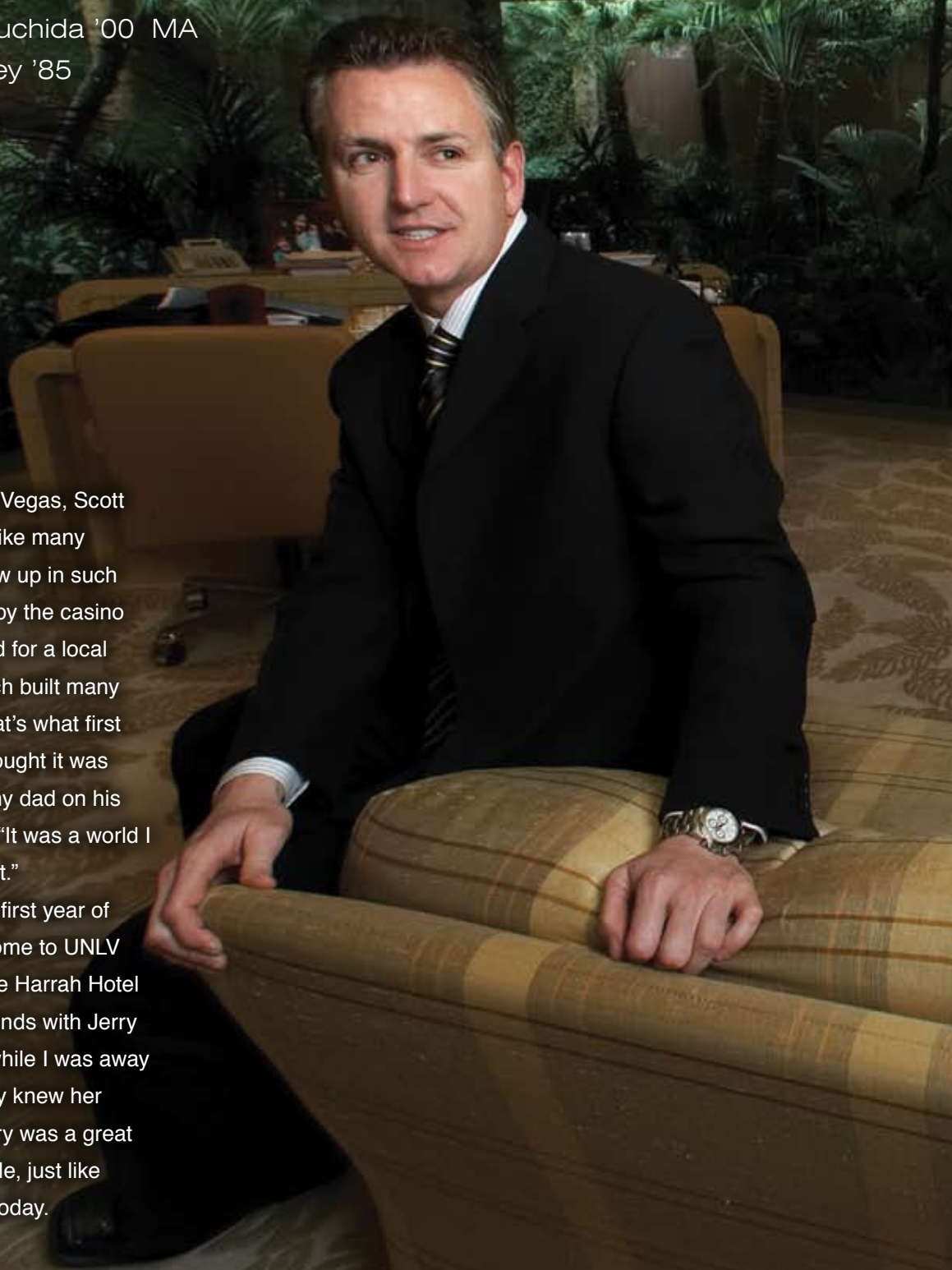
# Scott Sibella '88

Robyn Campbell-Ouchida '00 MA

Photos by Geri Kodey '85

**G**rowing up in Las Vegas, Scott Sibella '88 was, like many children who grow up in such a unique setting, intrigued by the casino business. His father worked for a local construction company which built many of the hotel/casinos and that's what first got Sibella interested. "I thought it was fascinating to go out with my dad on his job sites," recalled Sibella. "It was a world I wanted to know more about."

After going away for his first year of college, Sibella returned home to UNLV and more specifically, to the Harrah Hotel College. "I had become friends with Jerry Vallen's daughter, Becky, while I was away so I felt like I kind of already knew her dad," he remembered. "Jerry was a great dean and very approachable, just like Dean Mann is to students today."





# now heads up The Mirage

*Scott Sibella was selected as the 2007 Alumnus of the Year, an award given to an outstanding alumnus as a symbol of recognition for his accomplishments. In this issue of Premier, we celebrate Sibella's contributions to UNLV and to the hospitality industry, where he has made a lasting impact on the lives of students today and also for those in the future.*

# *“The Harrah Hotel College has come a long way and we need to let more people know that it’s the best education out there for the hospitality industry.”*

“Dr. Don Bell was a huge influence on me. Because of all the things I learned through such a wide variety of classes, I really felt I was ready for my career and future.”

In addition to his studies, Sibella truly enjoyed his time at UNLV. “I met so many people and made so many new friends. I played intramural sports and remember going to the basketball games back in the Rebels’ heyday. There was always so much going on—I sure can’t say I was ever bored...it was a great time to be a college student here!”

Although he was mesmerized by the Las Vegas casino industry, Sibella first thought his career would lead him

elsewhere, to another exotic locale where maybe he would work in a resort. “I completed an internship with the Golden Nugget and toward the end of my time there, the hotel added 1,500 rooms with its Spa Tower and I was offered a job as a front desk clerk. I really liked it there and decided to stay and try it out. From that position, I just kept working my way up until I was eventually the hotel manager.”

Sibella’s enthusiasm and curiosity about the world of hospitality kept him intrigued and eager to learn. “The industry has been generous to me and although I wasn’t the smartest guy in college, just having that

background and experience helped me reach my goals.”

Today, as the president and chief operating officer of The Mirage, Sibella is a leader in the Las Vegas hospitality industry. He recently oversaw the hotel’s largest renovation since it opened 16 years ago as well as the debut of a new Cirque du Soleil show, *LOVE*.

Prior to holding his current position, he was the president and chief operating officer of Treasure Island, now known as TI, where he directed the resort’s pirate-themed aspect into one of sophistication and glamour.

What is Sibella’s advice to those looking for a similar career path? “Get as much experience as you can. It’s okay to move around to other departments within a company as long as you learn from each move,” says Sibella. “Don’t let anything hold you back—be aggressive! There are so many opportunities in this industry that you can’t be afraid to just put yourself out there and find them.”

Sibella is more than aware of the importance of education. “UNLV was good to me and it’s my obligation to give back. My degree and experience, which my internship was a huge part of, really helped me lay a foundation and eventually, helped my career take off,” adds Sibella.

“The Harrah Hotel College has come a long way and we need to let more people know that it’s the best education out there for the hospitality industry. We have more practical experience right around the corner from the university than anywhere else in the world.”

## **What’s your favorite place to unwind in Las Vegas?**

Riding my bike through Red Rock Canyon.

## **What’s your favorite activity to do with your kids?**

Spending time outside, playing with them.

## **What’s on your iPod right now?**

The Beatles, of course! (Note: The Mirage just opened a new Beatles-themed Cirque du Soleil show “LOVE” and the Revolution Lounge.)

## **What book is currently on your nightstand?**

John Daly’s new book, *My Life in and out of the Rough: The Truth Behind All That Bull\*\*\*\* You Think You Know About Me*.

## **What’s your favorite restaurant at the Mirage?**

Japonais—the atmosphere is great and the food is superb.

## **What does it mean to you to be named the Alumnus of the Year?**

It’s a great honor! As a leader in our industry, I’m committed to giving back to UNLV in any way I can.





# Getting The Job Done

## BOB BOUGHNER CAREER SERVICES CENTER ESTABLISHED

Robyn Campbell-Ouchida '00 MA

Photo courtesy of Echelon Resorts

Every student reaches a point in his or her college career where it becomes time to put learning to the final test: to land a job relevant to the newly earned degree. But many graduates are too familiar with the challenges of the job search process.

In the Harrah Hotel College, this process should become smoother over the next few years, thanks to a gift from Robert Boughner. As CEO and president of Boyd Gaming's emerging Echelon Place, Boughner was once a student in the college. His memories of UNLV hold an important place in his life.

To that end, Boughner has made a \$1.2 million gift to fund the new Bob Boughner Career Services Center within the Harrah Hotel College. He remembers that when he was a student, the "career services center" existed as a corkboard with 3-by-5 cards tacked to it. "I received a great value in my education and I encourage all students to graduate," he says. "Since I am here in Las Vegas, I am aware of the opportunities and challenges of securing a career path. I knew that I wanted to focus my efforts on the hotel college and contribute to the opportunities that are presented to graduating students."

"When I was considering a move to Las Vegas, I met with then Dean Jerry Vallen," recalls Boughner. "I was grateful for the level of interest he expressed in me, one single student, and I felt that moving here to attend UNLV would be making a good decision."

Boughner was excited about his choice and the fact that not only could he afford the university, but it was also located in the Southwest near his family. After starting classes, he was even more impressed by the professors and topics he discovered. "My interaction with my professors mirrored the interest Dean Vallen had showed in me. Another plus was the way the courses were set up—they enabled me to work a full-time job and be a full-time student."

"My professors were not only good teachers, but they were also inspirational to me in regard to the hospitality industry," says Boughner.

"I distinctly remember learning from Jim Abbey, Frank Borsenik, and Charles Levinson, among others. The classes were interesting and well presented and even after I was no longer an active student, I maintained contact by participating as a guest speaker on campus. I am also thrilled to see that the atmosphere

*"I am aware of the opportunities and challenges of securing a career path. I knew that I wanted to focus my efforts on the hotel college and contribute to the opportunities that are presented to graduating students."*







at UNLV today is still as exciting as it was in the late 1970s, even though it's grown into a large university."

Boughner began his career in the hospitality industry at Boyd's California casino in Las Vegas as a timekeeper in 1976. Over the years, he earned his way through the company's ranks and now, as the CEO and president of Echelon Place, is intimately involved with another large-scale hospitality project. Boughner also oversaw development and operation of the highly successful Borgata in Atlantic City. "I knew that since I was back in Las Vegas full time, the time was right to seek out an opportunity to express my appreciation not only to the community but also to the university

that provided me with the education and inspired me to succeed. I hope to share my success to benefit the educational and career opportunities for UNLV hotel students."

According to a Dec. 12, 2006, survey in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, freshmen put high value on how well college prepares them for a profession. The article says that freshman college students consider career preparation the most crucial factor in determining the value of their college education. With that in mind, students in the survey also said that they viewed programs and services that would assist them in career-development efforts as the most likely indicators of a college's commitment to professional preparation.

Students participating in *The Chronicle's* study noted three significant factors that convey the college's commitment: opportunity for internships, the job-placement records of its graduates, and the quality of its career office. Now, because of Boughner's gift, Harrah Hotel College students will have access to a much more comprehensive career services center.

"We are very appreciative of Bob's gift," says Dean Stuart Mann. "This will enable our college to offer the very latest in job-search technology as well as personnel to staff the center. We're looking forward to students benefiting from the career services center."

# Contaminated Rice Supply

UNLV Researcher Calms Fears

Karen Sharp

Photo by Geri Kodey '85

It's a story that made international headlines last year: U.S. Rice Supply Suspected of Being Contaminated with Genetically Engineered Rice. In August 2006, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) announced that American commercial long-grain rice





supplies were tainted with trace amounts of genetically engineered rice unapproved for human consumption.

UNLV researcher Christine Bergman, an expert on this topic, is working to raise awareness about the issue. Bergman, along with many other industry experts, says there is no reason for the public to worry. As an associate professor in the Food and Beverage Management Department, Bergman has done extensive research on the development of analytical chemistry methods that are used in the development of improved rice cultivars. As an expert, she serves on the USA Rice Federation's Scientific Advisory Panel and is frequently invited to speak at meetings such as the International Rice Research Conference in New Delhi, India.

According to news reports, the genetically engineered rice known as Liberty Link 601 (LLRICE601) had been modified to resist a kind of weed killer that had not undergone environmental and health impact reviews by the USDA and the Food and Drug Administration. LLRICE601 was field tested from 1998 to 2001 under permits granted by the USDA, but the developer of the experimental rice, Bayer CropScience, did not ask for commercial approval. The contamination was discovered only after Bayer notified the USDA itself. In November 2006, The Washington Post reported the USDA declared the genetically engineered rice safe for human consumption.

Many consumers who suffer from celiac disease or people who avoid gluten in their diets expressed concern that if genetically modified rice was allowed to infiltrate the commercial food chain, they wouldn't be able to eat it. Rice is a major component of the diet of those suffering from celiac disease. Bergman contends this is a serious public misconception. "People are concerned these modifications are putting something into the plants that will be dangerous to their well-being

or that these genetically modified organisms (GMO) may be harmful to the environment. But there is just a lot of confusion around this issue."

Bergman wrote a letter to *The Federal Register*, a publication for proposed rules and notices of federal agencies and organizations. In it, Bergman explains

the misapprehension of the health risks of this particular genetically modified rice. "Genetic transformation of a crop, such that it becomes known as a GMO, does not by virtue of the modification make it into a gluten-containing food," she contends. "If a human eats the rice line LLRICE601, they are not consuming the herbicide glufosinate, but are consuming an enzyme that is able to destroy it.

The confusion likely comes from the fact that the name of the enzyme is similar to the word gluten." Bergman goes on to explain that when enzymes are eaten, they are generally denatured by the low pH in the stomach, consequently making them inactive. "Therefore, this genetic transformation of rice does not make the rice unsafe to eat by those avoiding the consumption of gluten."

Bergman's extensive research on the genetics controlling the health-beneficial properties of rice and wheat allow her to teach patients with celiac disease how to use rice in place of wheat in

their diets. Today she incorporates her experiences into the education of students at UNLV. "The Food and Beverage Management Department is hoping to broaden their focus to include laboratory-based food science and nutrition research," she says. "We have this vast food service industry in our own backyard, and I want to use my research experience to impact the quality and health benefits of the foods this industry offers the public."

*"People are concerned these modifications are putting something into the plants that will be dangerous to their well-being or that these genetically modified organisms (GMO) may be harmful to the environment. But there is just a lot of confusion around this issue."*

# No Smoking... in Las Vegas?

Robyn Campbell-Ouchida '00 MA

Photo by Geri Kodey '85



**T**he old adage “anything goes in Las Vegas” used to be mostly true. However, late last year, Nevada voters unanimously approved a ban on smoking in public places that serve food. The Nevada Clean Indoor Air Act, Question 5 on the November ballot, limited smoking in all “indoor places of enjoyment” specifically including (but not limited to) child care facilities, movie theaters, video arcades, government buildings and public places, malls and retail establishments, all areas of grocery stores, all indoor restaurants, school buildings, and school property.

According to the Nevada Clean Indoor Air Act, areas that will not be affected include areas within casinos where loitering by minors is prohibited by state law; stand-alone bars, taverns, and saloons; strip clubs or brothels; retail tobacco stores; and private residences, including private residences that may serve as office workplaces except those used as child care, adult care, or health care facilities.

“If you would have asked me before the election about the passage of Question 5, I would not have given it much hope,” says Professor Tom Jones of the Harrah Hotel College, regarding the act’s impact on the hospitality industry. “As I have told my students for the past couple of decades, it has been my belief that Nevada would be the last state in the union to pass legislation restricting smoking in public facilities.

“I would imagine that most who voted for the passage of Question 5 did so because they were tired of being assaulted by others’ smoking when they frequented the places listed in the measure,” Jones adds. “Business owners and operators would be well served to note the opinions of the majority of their customers and potential customers.”

According to an informational public memorandum about the ballot question from Nevada-based law firm McDonald Carano Wilson, for the purposes of Question 5, “casino” is defined as an entity that contains a building



or large room devoted to gambling games or wagering and that holds a “nonrestricted gaming license.” This is a license that permits the operation of 16 or more slot machines or any number of slot machines plus other games, including a race book or sports pool. Therefore, gaming businesses that do not hold “non-restricted gaming licenses” are not considered “casinos” for purposes of the new requirements.

Whether these noncasino businesses may permit smoking on their premises will be dependent on whether or not one of the other express exemptions applies to their particular circumstances.

Jones also notes, “The supporters of Question 5 knew that if casinos, all bars, strip clubs and brothels were included in the question, a ton of money would have poured into the campaign by the casino industry, which would have caused the question to go down in defeat.”

Although it seems the rules are clear and understandable, Las Vegas is not like anywhere else in the world, which has invited many questions about the new law. “Stand-alone bars, taverns, or saloons” that serve prepackaged foods such as peanuts, chips, popcorn, and the like do not have to obtain and maintain licenses or permits to serve food, so the law does not apply to these establishments. Presently there are 12 U.S. states as well as certain parts of Europe that have nonsmoking bans in effect.

Brian Slipock, '92 hotel administration, is the owner of Jackson's Bar and Grill in Las Vegas. When the question was being proposed for last fall's election ballot, he held meetings with his employees and tried to get it stopped. “This is America, and if I'm putting up my time and money and sacrificing myself to run a bar, nobody should be able to tell me that people can't smoke in it,” says Slipock. “Many bars that used to serve food have quit and have had to let employees go. Some have even closed down their entire operations.”

Jackson's is licensed as a supper club, which means the establishment must by law keep its kitchen open.

“Smokers have been politely told that they're breaking the law and are directed outside to finish their cigarettes,” Slipock adds. “We have potential customers come in the door, ask if they can smoke, and when we tell them ‘no,’ they turn around and leave.”

While some owners of businesses that are directly affected are clearly not pleased with the new law,

others view it as no big deal. Marcello Mauro, who will graduate with a psychology degree in May, owns two establishments in Las Vegas: Nora's Cuisine and Nora's Wine Bar & Osteria.

“When we opened up our wine bar about seven months ago, we decided it would be nonsmoking,” says Mauro. “Nobody's complained and business and the reviews have been great.”

His other operation, Nora's Cuisine, which has been open for nearly 15 years, was originally a restaurant with a smoking section. “We were kind of concerned about the ban but people have been really cooperative. Our regular customers who like to come in and smoke still frequent Nora's; they just go outside to smoke now,” says Mauro. “The law has actually improved the volume of our restaurant in that when we used to take reservations, we had to ask if people wanted a smoking or nonsmoking table. They don't have a choice now, and it takes the discriminatory burden off of us. It's made life a lot easier!”

The penalties for violating the provisions of Question 5 are still under consideration, with health officials aware that it would be hard to penalize everyone who broke the law. A person who violates the new law can be cited for a criminal misdemeanor and can be held liable for a \$100 civil fine per violation. There are measures in place to punish those who are caught; additionally, the operator of any business that fails to post nonsmoking signs and remove smoking paraphernalia (ashtrays, matchbooks, etc.) can also be fined.

The statewide ban went into effect Dec. 8, 2006 and health authorities have said they have no intention of arresting anyone, but they have the ability to issue citations to smokers who violate the ban. Officials say they are counting on businesses to comply on their own.

While there remains controversy over the passage of the Nevada Clean Indoor Air Act, those who have been impacted by secondhand smoke have taken advantage of the opportunity to make their opinions known by voting. Concerns remain regarding the lasting financial impact on the bars and taverns that have had to ban smoking and will be monitored in the coming months.

According to Donald S. Kwalick, chief health officer for Clark County, Nev., “The Nevada Clean Indoor Air Act was passed in order to protect the public from secondhand smoke. Health district staff are committed to working with affected establishments.”

# Reality Check

## From Restaurant Manager to Reality Show Producer

Judy Nagai

Photos courtesy of Varuna Films

The UNLV hotel management program can prepare you for a career doing just about anything. This includes transitioning from a restaurant career to become a producer for the hit reality makeover show *Trick My Truck* on CMT (Country Music Television).

“Our show features the Chrome Shop Mafia, a collection of big-rig truck mechanics who scour America’s truck stops looking for drivers who need some drastic help. It is a ‘feel-good’ makeover show,” shares Varuna Studios Producer Todd R. Lewis ’98. The long work hours and management experience gained in the restaurant industry are transferable skills that have paved the way for his success in TV and film.

Lewis set off to study hotel and restaurant management at UNLV in 1994, not far from where he grew up in Orange County, Calif. By luck, the best hospitality program was less than a four-hour car ride away from home.

He chose to study in the food and beverage program after working in his father’s convenience stores, small grocery stores, and also working



as a busboy. He had a knack for the business, and he really liked the service-oriented field, meeting people, and providing great customer service.

While at UNLV, Lewis became very involved with the Food and Beverage Management Team courses. He learned that to be successful, it takes organization and hard work, all while performing your best for the client. These were essential knowledge

and skills he learned early on. “The experience opened my eyes to life in the real world. If I could survive this, I could survive anything,” says Lewis.

Working at a Tony Roma’s restaurant in Southern California after college, Lewis became good friends with aspiring producers who were customers at the restaurant. The more he learned about the film industry, the more excited and passionate he became. They eventually became partners, working out of a two-bedroom apartment. He and his partners finally sold one show, then another. Here he is today, five years later, with *Trick My Truck*, which had 70 million unique viewers in the first season and was also ranked in the top five of all cable network shows in its time slot.

“The management skills I learned at UNLV are indispensable in the film industry. While it isn’t the restaurant industry, the necessary skills are the same. I still handle personnel and hiring, inventory of equipment, cost control, off-site planning, and production. All of these are as important to the hospitality industry as they are to TV production,”





*“The management skills I learned at UNLV are indispensable in the film industry. While it isn’t the restaurant industry, the necessary skills are the same.”*

shares Lewis. “I wouldn’t excel in this industry if it weren’t for my hospitality management degree from UNLV.”

The best advice Lewis ever received was from Professor Andy Nazarechuk. During a discussion about Lewis’ frustrating internship experience, Nazarechuk reminded him to learn everything he could from every job, no matter how entry-level it might be. To this day, Lewis shares this advice with others. “If you’re frying French fries, figure out how many bags you go through and how much needs to be ordered each week. What are the actual cost and profit to the restaurant? ... There are

opportunities to learn from everything we do,” advises Lewis.

Lewis observes that some people he interacts with who have graduated from film school think that by virtue of their education, they’re entitled to work in the film industry. Lewis believes this isn’t the case at all. He advises students to work hard in college and take advantage of all the opportunities offered, both in and out of class. “Nobody will give you anything; you have to work for it,” he says.

“If you work hard, you put yourself in a position to be better prepared and more experienced than others. No one is entitled to a job, so excel

in what you do and make yourself so valuable that you can’t be replaced,” says Lewis. This perspective has helped him be successful across industries.

All in all, Lewis is a believer in giving back twofold to those who have helped him. He’s a walking billboard for UNLV and a fan of the hotel college. He appreciates all his college experiences and isn’t shy about telling others that those experiences have helped prepare him for his career today. By supporting UNLV, he knows that he is ensuring the success of students, no matter where their careers may take them.

# “Green” Meetings and Facilities

## *Are they a reality yet?*

Robyn Campbell-Ouchida '00 MA

**H**ave you ever walked through a freezing, empty convention center and wondered why so much power is being used when no one is around? It's not very friendly to the environment, yet it seems to happen all the time, all around the world. You might think that with more emphasis being placed on taking care of our environment, changes would be made to such situations...and you would be right—they're starting to be made.

As of last spring, nearly a dozen convention centers around the United States had implemented sustainable design and construction practices to significantly reduce or eliminate the negative impact of meeting facilities on the environment. Knowing that the average hotel/meeting facility purchases more products in a week than 100 families acquire in an entire year means that something needs to be done. Many convention centers are also in the process of addressing environmental practices that will curb waste and introduce more efficient methods of using energy and water.

For years, there was a stigma attached to environmentally conscious meetings in that the organizers believed that the attendees would feel they had scrimped. This myth has given way to reality as proponents have begun approaching

suppliers and associations with a new and effective angle: being good to your environment is good for your bottom line.

In the past few years, this message has gained momentum and changes are happening. The Convention Industry Council (CIC) published Green Meetings Best Practices in April 2004, Pittsburgh opened the first all-green convention center, David Lawrence Convention Center in 2003, and the Green Meeting Industry Council was formed in late 2003.

The Sands Expo, one of the largest convention centers in Las Vegas, has implemented green practices. “We do indeed have the lights off when there is nothing in the building,” states Ashlyn La Porte, executive director of the Expo. “We only have the lights at 50 percent when a show is moving in. We go to full lighting only on show days and the air conditioning is only on during actual show days as well.”

Harrah Hotel College Professor Ken Teeters states that as an issue, the entire greening process of business and industry speaks to the issue of using all resources more efficiently. “The process begins by thinking about the consumption process before we initiate any action,” says Teeters. “This is generally referred to as ‘source reduction,’ which is a concept that recognizes that the best way to reduce the impact on the environment is to get things



'right' at the beginning of a process. This is a better method compared to trying to figure out how to clean up a mess because we did not think about the outcome in advance."

All waste is a form of inefficiency. "So the focus of thinking 'green' is to take a serious look at all the waste stream, which we can do by making better decisions about how we consume," continues Teeters.

Another Harrah Hotel College professor, Curtis Love, Ph.D., CHE, says, "The concern of making events more environmentally friendly has really gained momentum from support by the event attendees. They recycle at home and at their workplace, and want to see our hotels and meeting facilities do likewise." Love continues, "I attended the Professional Convention Management Association's annual meeting at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre where the first large scale 'Zero Waste' convention was achieved. Through a partnership

of PCMA (Professional Convention Management Association), the Convention Centre, and the Turtle Island Recycling company, 98.5% of all waste materials generated by the convention were diverted from landfill."

According to Natalie Hsu, '00, the facilities services supervisor for the San Diego Convention Center, the belief about California being more "earth-friendly" rings true. "We recently purchased new boilers that are supposed to conserve more energy," she states. "Even then, we only leave on the air-conditioning and heat when clients are present in the building. With one million square feet of exhibit and meeting space, we need to conserve."

Hsu mentions that the center is required by California state law to recycle a certain percentage each year or they will be fined. "We have eight compactors (for trash) and one is designated for recycling paper, plastic bottles, aluminum

cans, and newspapers. We have an open container to pick up any wood products and we also have a 'baler' for cardboard boxes, which are then recycled."

"When clients leave products such as leftover binders or name badges, we throw them away. Our company has a policy that no employee can take anything home, even if the client says it is trash."

Her facility is unique in that is located on the waterfront and as Hsu explains, "We use a lot of chemicals to clean the building and there is only one area in the docks where we can dispose of these, preventing them from going into the ocean."

As more people become aware of the urgent need to conserve energy and take care of our quickly diminishing natural resources, more facilities will need to institute forward-thinking practices. It's inevitable and imperative to help save the environment.

#### **Follow these green practices in order to minimize environmental and local impact for your next meeting or event:**

- Use recycled products—Print handouts double-sided using post-consumer recycled paper. Use recycled-content promotional products for awards, bags, pens, shirts, etc.
- Use paperless technology—Use electronic technology to cut down on paper use.
- Lighten your stay—Choose a hotel with a linen reuse program and bulk dispensers for shampoos and soaps in guest rooms.
- Use the off switch—Ensure that lights and air-conditioning will be turned off when rooms are not in use.
- Serve well—Ask F&B service to provide glass or china plates and cups instead of Styrofoam or plastic. Also ask for cloth napkins and coasters.
- Recycle—Ask the venue to put out recycling bins for attendees to use.
- Eat green—Include vegetarian meals and meals using local, seasonal, and organic produce.
- Conserve water—Have the venue serve drinking water in coolers or pitchers instead of individual water bottles. This saves money as well as helps the environment.
- Donate leftover food to local food banks or charities.

# Active ACADEMICS

## Recreation and Sport Management Department Developed

Karen Sharp



Recreation and Park Association, it will be the only accredited recreation program in Nevada. There are also plans to offer a Ph.D. in hospitality with a major in recreation and sport management, which will contribute to UNLV's goal of becoming a research-extensive university.

The department recently conducted a national search for a department chairperson. "We were

**W**hat began as a small program more than 30 years ago has been transformed into the college's newest full-fledged department. In January, the Recreation and Leisure Studies program became the Department of Recreation and Sport Management, focusing on providing a challenging new environment for students interested in sport and recreation management.

"We have always had a very solid program, but the attainment of departmental status and some key hires allow us to go to the next level. It energizes the faculty, provides a critical momentum, and allows us to be much more inventive," says Cynny Carruthers, Ph.D., a faculty member and interim chair in the Department of Recreation and Sport Management.

"The students learn how to facilitate leisure experiences and manage recreation services and settings through coursework in leisure behavior, leadership, programming, administration, supervision, and facilities operations management," Carruthers says. The master of science degree will also be offered in sport and leisure service management, which prepares graduate students with the theoretical, analytical, and managerial knowledge and skills necessary to assume management positions in sport and leisure service organizations.

One departmental goal is to revise the undergraduate curriculum to address more effectively the needs of the students as well as the state and region. Emphasis areas in sport management, youth development, outdoor recreation, gerontology, and commercial recreation are being considered. Once the department receives national accreditation for the B.S. in recreation by the National

looking for a senior faculty member and scholar who would also guide our efforts in attaining accreditation of the recreation program. We're excited to announce that Dan McLain, Ph.D., currently at Indiana State University, will serve as the new department chair beginning on July 1," says Carruthers. She believes the hiring of the chair and new professors will allow the department to advance to the next level relative to curriculum, development of a Ph.D. program, and elevation of the department's research profile. "It's an exciting time for us, and it's a time of great change," Carruthers says. "Achieving departmental status and hiring new faculty will provide us with the resources necessary to reinvent ourselves in many ways."

Harrah Hotel College Dean Stuart Mann finds the changes in the new department encouraging. "The Department of Recreation and Sport Management was created to recognize a critical mass of students and faculty engaged in study and research in these specific areas," he says. "As a department, it will allow for greater exposure and opportunity for faculty development and, ultimately, national recognition."

While the degree focuses on the facilitation of quality leisure and sport experiences, the effective management of services and settings is vital to success, according to Carruthers. "What we're trying to create are beneficial optimal leisure experiences that contribute to the quality of life of the individual and the community, but you have to know how to manage those experiences," she emphasizes. "Leisure behavior is at the heart of it, but management is certainly the tool for developing and delivering exemplary services."



## BEATING THE ODDS

# Gaming Degree Puts Students Ahead of the Game

Karen Sharp

Photo by Aaron Mayes '06

**B**ehind the table games and slot machines are people devoted to serving the casino industry, and UNLV is turning out some of the finest in the field with the college's gaming management degree. The program, which began in 2004, has graduated a dozen students so far. This spring, 10 more will receive their diplomas.

The four-year program is designed for students who want to pursue careers in one of several aspects of the gaming industry. Students graduating with the gaming management degree can dive right into careers in casino accounting or as managers in gaming regulations and control or suppliers who serve the casino industry. Additionally, graduates learn: economics; statistics; finance and business writing; gaming management

competencies such as table game and slot operations management; casino accounting and game protection; and real work experience and internships in some of the top gaming facilities in the world.

Gary Waters, a lecturer in the hotel management department, guides students through the internship procedures. He says these internships are the key in helping them gain the skills they need to land

management jobs after graduation.

"With our gaming degree and internships, the experience puts the students out there and places them above the competition in the industry," he says. "This is an operational type of degree, very hands-on, which puts students ahead of the game."

Gail Sammons, Ph.D., chairperson for the hotel management department, agrees. "Students in the gaming

management program gain real-world experiences through internships, independent study, and classroom visits from the leaders in the gaming industry," she says. "With gaming growing domestically and internationally, we here at UNLV are educating the next generation of gaming managers."

Waters says many of the internships are completed online, noting that one student even fulfilled an internship with the Venetian Macau through Educational Outreach. Other students in the program have gained experience working at MGM MIRAGE properties, Primm Valley Resorts, The Cannery, Rampart, and Wynn Las Vegas. Students work hand in hand with table operations managers, slot operations managers, casino marketing consultants, accountants, table games manufacturers, and even the Gaming Control Board.

"This degree is not for everyone," Waters emphasizes. "There is a lot of math and analysis and a core of gaming classes to complete. But students with this experience are valuable in management and operations. They've received the training and knowledge in operations in the very best possible way."

# IN THE KITCHEN WITH LOUIS FIORENTINO



Seeing the smiles, laughs, and looks of joy—and helping nervous guys propose—is why Louis Fiorentino, '07, continues to create wonderful food. He feels that being a chef gives him that rare opportunity to create meals and moments for people that they will never forget. What makes him happy every day at work is the knowledge that he has contributed to something memorable.

His discovery of the world of food began in 1996, his freshman year of high school, when his Italian grandmother invited him to help her make some of her famous cookies. He was more than happy to help out but didn't realize that on that day, he would find the passion of his life.

Once Fiorentino realized that food was his calling, he began to figure out how to pursue it. His first job, at age 16, was as a busboy at an Italian restaurant called RoSal's. It was a great introduction to the hospitality industry. He learned where he wanted

to go and how to get there. At the age of 17, he left RoSal's and became a prep cook at his cousin's Chicago-area banquet hall, Victoria's. When he graduated from high school, he knew he wanted to go to culinary school.

With support from family, he was accepted by Johnson and Wales University's Baking and Pastry advanced standing program. At the age of 17 and only one month out of high school, he left home and headed for Charleston, S.C., where he learned about the world of pastry. He began working at Ambrosia Bakery, which gave him his first taste of bread production and the world of retail baking.

At the conclusion of that summer, he decided to continue his education at Johnson and Wales in Providence, R.I. While there, he finished his pastry education and received an internship position at Spago in Chicago, where he worked as a pastry chef and banquet cook and reaffirmed his love for the culinary as well as the

pastry world. While finishing his A.S. degree in culinary arts, he honed his skills in plated desserts and plate design as well as wrote recipes. Most importantly, he learned how to organize and structure his workday.

He headed for Las Vegas and gained a cook's position at Harrah's Las Vegas. After working as a second cook for 5 1/2 months, he transferred into the hotel bakeshop. About a year later, he decided it was time to go back to school, so in the fall of 2003, Fiorentino started classes at UNLV for Food & Beverage Management. Through UNLV, he has had the chance to travel to Italy on the Banfi Scholarship and learn a great deal about Italian wine and food. He still proudly works in the Harrah's bakeshop at Harrah's, applying everything he has ever learned about food.

Note: Fiorentino was a contestant in the 2006 S. Pellegrino *Almost Famous Chef Competition*. His regional award winning recipe is shared on the next page.



## Veal Tenderloin with Prosciutto wrapped in Feuilles de Bric. Served with Sicilian Pistachio Orzo Pasta, Ragu of Summer Squash, Dark Cherry-Veal Reduction and Sage Beurre Blanc

### INGREDIENTS

#### Protein:

1 lb.	veal tenderloin, whole
4 pc.	Feuilles de Bric, frozen (pastry wrappings)
4 oz.	Prosciutto di Parma, thinly sliced
2 oz.	butter, melted
To taste	white pepper
4 each	green onion, whole
8 leaves	sage, fresh, whole
2 oz.	cheese, gorgonzola dolce
1 qt.	water

#### Sicilian pistachio orzo pasta:

1/3 lb.	orzo pasta
To taste	fleur de sel
3 oz.	Pistachio, Sicilian, whole
To taste	white pepper
4 oz.	chicken stock
A pinch	red pepper
½ gallon	water
2 oz.	butter, whole, unsalted
½ tsp	plain salt
2 T	olive oil

#### Vegetable:

½ each	yellow straight-neck squash
2 T	basil, fresh, chiffoned
½ each	zucchini, whole
1 T	fresh thyme, chopped
¼ each	eggplant
To taste	fleur de sel
4 oz.	vine tomato, whole
To taste	white pepper
½ C	vegetable stock
1 T	olive oil
1 ½ cloves	fresh garlic, diced

#### Dark cherry- veal reduction:

Veal stock	½ quart
Cherries, chopped, canned/or jarred	3 oz.
Dark cherry juice	¼ cup
Thyme, whole, sprigs	1 each

1. In a sauce pan, combine the veal stock and cherry juice, cherries, and thyme.
2. Reduce the mixture by 90% until a glacé consistency has been achieved.
3. Keep warm for service.
4. Serve according to instructions.

#### Beurre Blanc:

Heavy cream	4 oz.
Pepper, ground white	to taste
Dry white wine	2 oz.
Sage, fresh	2 leaves
Lemon juice, fresh	½ tsp.
Fleur de sel	to taste
Shallots, finely diced	½ tsp.
Butter, room temp.	3 oz.

1. In a sauce pan, add the cream, wine, lemon juice, shallots, and sage leaves.
2. Bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer until the mixture is reduced by two-thirds.
3. Cut the butter into small cubes.
4. Remove the pan from the heat and slowly incorporate the butter.
5. Season to taste with the fleur de sel and pepper.

#### Meat Preparation:

1. Clean and trim the veal tenderloin, cut into 4 oz. portions.
2. Season the veal portions with white pepper to taste.
3. Place two sage leaves on the top of each portion of veal.
4. Wrap the veal in the prosciutto and set aside.
5. Sear the veal portions in a 14 in. non-stick frying pan. Cook until the internal temp of the veal reaches 115° F. Place on a parchment-lined sheet pan until ready to wrap.
6. In a small sauce pot bring the water to a boil.
7. Blanch the chives in the water just until they are soft enough to bend. Set aside to cool.
8. Lay the feuilles de bric on the table and brush with the melted butter.
9. Place the prosciutto-wrapped veal on top of the feuilles de bric.
10. Place ½ oz. of the gorgonzola dolce on the center of the veal.
11. Wrap the veal by bringing the ends of the feuilles de bric up and together. Pinch the dough together about 1 inch down from the top. Using butcher's string, tie a knot around the dough at the part that was pinched off.
12. Place the purses on a parchment-lined sheet, pans standing up.
13. Bake the purses in a 375° oven for 12 minutes or until the veal reaches a medium-rare state, approx. 145°
14. Once the veal has been removed from the oven, quickly remove the butcher's string and replace with the blanched green onion.

#### Starch Preparation:

1. Bring the water and plain salt to a boil in a large sauce pot.
2. In a small sauce pot, bring the chicken stock to a boil.
3. Coarsely grind the pistachios in a robot coupe.
4. Place half of the pistachios in a small sauce pan with ¼ cup olive oil. Heat the oil over the pilot light until ready to use. Strain through a chinois before using.
5. Add the orzo to the water and cook for approx. 9 minutes or just before the pasta has reached the al dente stage.
6. Preheat a 14 in. sauté pan. Pour in the pistachio-infused oil, then the orzo. Toss to coat.
7. Lower the heat to medium and slowly add the chicken stock to the pasta, 2-3 oz. at a time. Boil off the stock before adding the next stage. This process will resemble the making of risotto.
8. Once all the stock has been boiled out, finish the remaining pistachios and butter.

#### Vegetable Preparation:

1. Cut off the ends of the zucchini, yellow squash, cut the squashes into ½ in. cubes. Set aside.
2. Cut the sides of the eggplant only, retaining enough meat on the skin to make ½ in. cubes. Discard the core of the eggplant.
3. Cut the tomatoes into a ¼ inch cubes and reserve. Add the basil, thyme and garlic to the tomatoes.
4. In a large sauté pan on high heat, add the olive oil. Heat the oil and add the zucchini, yellow squash, and eggplant.
5. Add the vegetable stock, fleur de sel, and pepper to the pan and cook until the vegetables are al dente. They should retain their color.
6. Add the tomato and herb mixture just before service and toss together.
7. Serve according to instructions.

#### Serving Instructions:

1. Using a 4" ring mold portion out the orzo on the center of a 12" round plate.
2. Spoon the vegetable around the orzo making sure it looks neat.
3. Place the veal purse on top of the orzo.
4. Using a tablespoon, spoon the sauces sporadically around the vegetables and veal.
5. Finish with chiffoned basil.



## New Bistro in UNLV's Backyard

Karen Sharp

**T**his past spring, students in the college learned the art of bistro. The Food and Beverage Management Department offered its first-ever bistro management class. With bistro dining popularity increasing all over the country, the hotel college is taking the proper steps in educating its food

and beverage management students in the latest and greatest in dining cuisine.

“Bistro eating has become very trendy in recent years as more people become concerned about their eating health,” says Pat Moreo, chairman for the Department of Food and Beverage Management. “People are eating smaller, frequent meals these days, and the students are learning how to accommodate this movement.”

Students created high-flavored hot and cold foods, served on smaller plates, along with a variety of coffees, juices, specialty nonalcoholic drinks, wine, and beer. The senior class, under the direction of instructor Don Wood, Chef John Gremo, and Pat Moreo, combined practice and management together.

The end result: real experience that will help the students in their careers in food and beverage management. The bistro class was held in the Southern Wine & Spirits Lounge at the Stan Fulton Building.

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# College Memories Have Profound Impact

## Share Your Memorabilia with UNLV

Judy Nagai

**W**hen East Coast transplants like Bill Paulos and Pat Moreo arrived on Nevada Southern University's campus to attend college in the late 1960s, they couldn't have imagined the changes they would see at their university and in the city during their careers. As members of the first graduating class to receive degrees in hotel administration in 1969, they've had nearly four decades to reflect on the impact their college years have had on their lives and careers.

Their fond memories of college, from roommates to professors, or their antics in class and out, have had a profound impact on their lives today. Paulos is a principal and owner of Cannery Casino Resorts, and Moreo is an academic who prepares students for careers in hospitality and recently returned to UNLV to serve as the Food and Beverage Department chairperson. Both have both remained connected to the college in a variety of ways because of the transformational experiences they had as students.

When speaking with alumni, it is obvious that their time in college continues to have a significant impact on their lives and that they enjoy reminiscing about their "good ol' college days." Kathy LaTour, assistant professor of hospitality marketing in the Harrah Hotel College, explains that memory is a complex phenomenon. "Autobiographical memory is memory of personal experiences. By its very nature, it is extremely personal. Psychologists have found that there is a 'reminiscence bump' in our memories, where we tend to remember more experiences from our late adolescence than other times in our lives."

Since a majority of people attend college in late adolescence, experiences during this time become "self-defining memories." That is to say that "self-defining memories are memories that an individual views as important experiences that helped create their individual personality," according to LaTour.

"College years are an important part of developing self. Experiences and products associated with these college years will be ones that alumni will later become nostalgic for. These autobiographical memories from the college years will disproportionately represent their defining memories that they return to and share with others," states LaTour.



**UNLV'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION** is approaching quickly. As the campus prepares, make plans to join us and reminisce about your college experiences. "Plans are being finalized that will include a variety of new and exciting events and activities," says Schyler Richards, associate vice president and chair of the 50th-anniversary planning committee. "It is our hope that these activities will bring many alumni back to campus to help us celebrate this important milestone in UNLV's history." UNLV wouldn't be the campus it is today without the phenomenal alumni and friends who have helped shape UNLV.

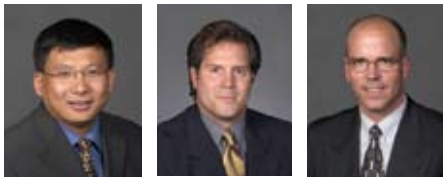
Do you have memorabilia you'd like to share? The university is collecting memorabilia for a special exhibit on UNLV's history and has put the call out for your collectibles. "We have had a wonderful response to this request for memorabilia, but we still need many items to create a comprehensive exhibit," Richards says. "We are still in need of larger-scale items like lettermen's jackets, sports uniforms, megaphones, etc." So pull out that box of college stuff and see if you have any personal keepsakes from your days at UNLV. The exhibit will be curated by the Barrick Natural History Museum and will open next fall. For more information, call (702) 895-5946.

# Congratulations

In February, *Premier* received an *Award of Excellence* by the Las Vegas Chapter of the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) at the 26th Annual Bronze Quill Awards dinner in February.

Welcome to **Donald Wood**, who joins UNLV after teaching at the University of Oklahoma in Stillwater, Okla. He is teaching in the Food and Beverage Management Department.

The latest faculty to receive tenure and promotions to associate professor are **Billy Bai, Kurt Stahura, and Bill Werner**. Associate Dean **Andy Feinstein** received a promotion to full professor.



Billy Bai Kurt Stahura Bill Werner

Professor **Zheng Gu** published four articles during fall 2006 on topics which include: an examination of the relationships between the stock market and casino gaming; predicting restaurant bankruptcy; an empirical test of a full-service hotel room pricing model; and financial competitiveness of Macau in comparison with other gaming destinations;. The first three topics were published in the *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism* and the last topic was published in the *UNLV Gaming Research and Review Journal*.



Zheng Gu

**Christopher Cain**, the director of UNLV's Professional Golf Management (PGA) program, won the *Bill Strausbaugh Award*, which is presented to PGA members who have shown outstanding integrity, commitment to mentoring PGA Professionals, and have made a significant impact on the careers of PGA Professionals. The award also considers the member's service to the association, and involvement in community and charitable activities. Cain, who learned under Strausbaugh, was very appreciative and honored by winning the award.



Christopher Cain

Assistant Professor **Kathy Nelson, '94, '96 MS, '04 Ph.D.**, served on the planning and presentation committee for the inaugural *Academic Event Professional Conference*, held January 8th at the University of Southern California in conjunction with The Special Event Conference and Tradeshow. Adjunct instructor **Robyn Hadden, '05 MS**, event manager for the UNLV Foundation, was also a presenter at the conference. Other planners represented universities including Duke, Cornell, and Michigan.



Kathy Nelson Robyn Hadden

In September, the Food and Beverage Department participated in the first World Gourmet Safari wine tasting event at the World Market Center in Las Vegas, Nev., which brought together some of the finest wines and spirits as well as wine enthusiasts from around the world. This event was held in conjunction with DeLuca Liquor & Wine, Community College of Southern Nevada, the Culinary Institute of Las Vegas, and the World Gourmet Summit.



The UNLV Stan Fulton Building facility was selected as the site for a reception to recognize outgoing **Nevada Governor Kenny Guinn**. The October 12 reception was held to thank Governor Guinn for his support of higher education in Nevada. The University Regents, Chancellor Jim Rogers, and NSHE Presidents were among those in attendance.

Associate Professor **Christine Bergman** is an expert on all things "rice," and recently published two research papers which report on the development of analytical chemistry methods that are used in the development

of rice with improved cooking, processing, and nutritional properties. She was invited by the Indian Minister of Agriculture and the International Rice Research Institute to speak at the International Rice Research Conference in New Delhi, India. Bergman serves on the U.S.A. Rice Federation's Scientific Advisory Panel with representatives from institutions such as Tufts, USDA, and the University of Minnesota.

Professors **Michael Dalbor** and **Andy Feinstein**, along with two doctoral students, completed a two-year research grant-funded research project, *ServeSafe Assessment*, with the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation.



Michael Dalbor Andy Feinstein

Assistant Professor **Mehmet Erdem, '03 Ph.D.**, co-authored two publications: "Hospitality Graduate Education: A View from Three Different Stakeholder Perspectives" (to appear in *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Education*) and "Employee Relation Programs and Hotel Performance: Impact on Turnover, Labor Productivity, and RevPAR" (to appear in *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality & Tourism*). Erdem was reappointed to serve on the Hospitality Technology and Finance Professionals (HFTP) Communications Editorial Advisory Council and was appointed to the Review Board for the *Cypriot Journal of Educational Sciences*.

On November 16th, the capstone food and beverage course, along with professors **Jean Hertzman, Mohsen Azizoltani, Claude Lambertz, and Andy Feinstein**, held the 5th annual Friends of Nevada dinner. During the past four years, \$20,000 has been donated to the Poverello House, a local homeless shelter. Feinstein is a past board member of the shelter and co-founded the event with Hertzman.



Claude Lambertz Mohsen Azizoltani Jean Hertzman



# Congratulations

Graduate student **Erin Kneesel** won both the *2006 Travel and Tourism Research Association (TTRA) Master Thesis Award* and the *William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration Best Thesis Award*.

Doctoral student **Stan Suboleski** was nominated for the *Best Paper Award* at the 12th Annual Graduate Conference Proceedings in Houston, Tex. this past January. The paper titled, "Multi-Unit Restaurant Management Training: An Exploratory Study," was derived from his master's thesis. Suboleski currently teaches courses in organizational behavior and internet marketing and works as the director of sales and marketing for the UNLV Department of Food & Beverage.

A group of UNLV Singapore students represented the college at a career fair to recruit students to the UNLV Singapore program. It took place at the Singapore Suntec Convention Center and more than 200,000 people were estimated to have attended.

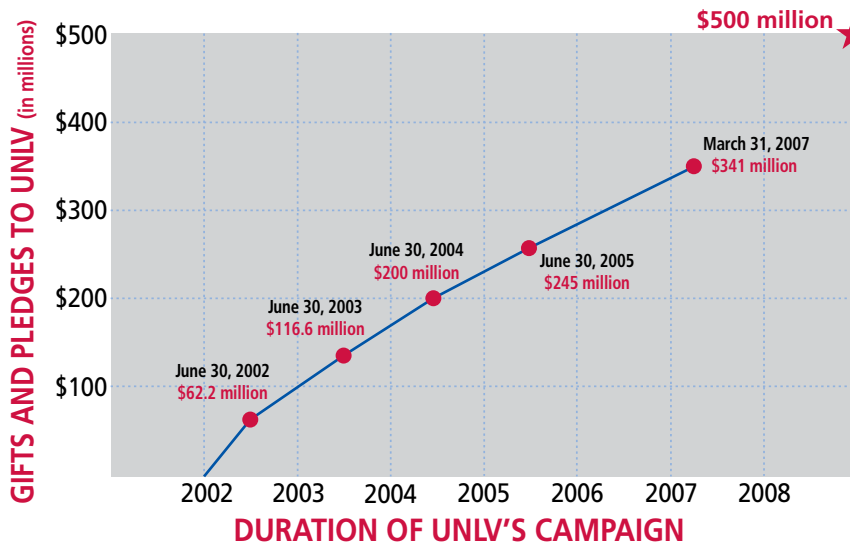
Montecristo Rum, the company run by alumnus **Tim Haughinberry**, president, and **Josh Wand**, national sales manager, was featured in an article in the November 18-19 edition of the *Wall Street Journal*.



UNLV Singapore students exhibit at a Career Fair in Singapore.

## Campaign Update

Contributions and private support for the Harrah Hotel College programs are essential to provide students with a world-renowned education. Additionally, this support provides faculty with a forum for cutting-edge research in hospitality and leisure services. Some of the major gifts we are pleased to announce include: Gaming Standards Association (GSA) increased their pledge for two professors-in-residence by adding another \$177,000. This raises GSA's total commitment to over the million dollar mark to \$1,077,000. The Vallen Professorship Endowment has reached \$137,600 of the \$250,000 goal. Banfi Vintners gave the college a gift of \$50,000 to enhance the existing Banfi Tasting and Demonstration Room; they will also be involved in the new tasting facilities in the proposed new academic building. Finally, Robert Boughner, president and CEO of Echelon Place, has made a pledge of \$1.2 for the development of the Bob Boughner Career Services Center in the Harrah Hotel College.



**Invent the Future** is UNLV's first comprehensive effort to secure the promises of tomorrow through a \$500 million fundraising initiative. With your help, private funding for students, faculty, research, facilities, and programs will map a course for Las Vegas' next decade.



# Alumni Updates

## 1970s

**Gary Brown, '73**, was recently elected president of the HSMAI (Hospitality Sales and Marketing Association International) Chapter of the Virginias. He first became involved with HSMAI as a student at UNLV. He was also recently inducted into the Washington D.C. Chapter of HSMAI Hall of Fame. Brown is the vice president of national sales for Colonial Williamsburg Hotels and lives in Williamsburg, Va.

**Paul Carpino, '74**, has joined UNLV Career Services as the new employer outreach and internship coordinator. He received his master of arts degree in professional counseling, with a track in career development from Chapman University in Calif. Prior to returning to Las Vegas, he spent four years as the director of career services at Flagler College in Saint Augustine, Fla.

## 1980s

**Michael Rhodes, '83, '84 MBA**, is attending law school at Gonzaga University. He lives in Spokane, Wash.

**Bonnie (Tell) Lally, '85**, worked for several years in the hospitality industry for Marriott Hotels, Bally's, the Marina, and opened the MGM Casino Resort. After receiving a master's degree in education, she worked as a high school teacher before working in public relations. Most recently, she and her husband started a construction company called Lally Steel, Inc. They are helping to build the growing Las Vegas skyline as a steel erection subcontractor. She has three children, Jessica, Mackenzie, and David and lives in Las Vegas, Nev.

**Mary Beth Cutshall, '88**, was recently named director of contract services for Atlanta-based Hotel Equities. She is responsible for securing third party management contracts and servicing the investors and owners who hire Hotel Equities. She also identifies possible acquisitions and development opportunities. In addition to her education at UNLV, she also studied at Ecole Hoteliere in Lausanne, Switzerland. Cutshall lives in Atlanta, Ga.

## 1990s

**Jeffrey Stutts, '90**, spent the past two years in San Francisco as the director of event planning and operations at The Stanford Court, A Renaissance Hotel. He recently made the transition to the Renaissance Hollywood Hotel as director of event management. This property is the home of the Oscars, the Espys, and many other high profile events that draw worldwide attention. He lives in West Hollywood, Calif.

**Julie Willis-Leon, '90**, has worked in food & beverage management and also worked with the Jeffrey Burr & Associates law firm. After starting a family, she created her own consulting business. As a highly sought after consultant, Willis-Leon represented clients in the areas of government affairs, public relations, event/travel planning and business development. She recently established The Dream Board Workshop™ and individual/organizational coaching. Dream Makers provides participants with tools and processes to help embrace human potential and to create clarity, purpose and passion in their lives. Julie lives in Las Vegas, Nev. with her husband, Juan, and two children, Sierra & Spencer.



Each year at commencement, outstanding graduates are honored during the ceremony. This winter, six students were selected for recognition including **Bruce Ollstein, '06**, who received a dual master's degree in business administration and hotel administration. He maintained a 4.0 grade point average while pursuing the dual degrees—the first student to achieve this honor in the joint program. Ollstein holds an undergraduate degree from West Point and served as a personal pilot for the 7th Air Force Commander in South Korea. He has written a best-selling book on golf, *Combat Golf* (Viking Press), and will soon publish his research on the effect of poker-room volume as a peripheral driver of slot-machine revenue on the strip.

**Samir Amin, '92**, is a research chef for the innovative company, Two Chefs on a Roll, in Carson, Calif. The company produces extraordinary and creative foods for both retail and foodservice channels. Amin lives in Long Beach, Calif.

**Dean Kissel, '92**, was recently promoted to ADP's National Account team in Las Vegas, Nev. Kissel is responsible for introducing business process outsourcing solutions to Las Vegas businesses with over 1,000 employees. He and his wife, Nancy, have a one year old daughter and live in North Las Vegas, Nev.

**Pedro Garcia, '93**, was recently designated Certified in Exhibition Management (CEM), a designation held by only a select

number of people in the exhibition management profession. Garcia is the exhibits manager for the new World Market Center, an integrated home and hospitality contract furnishings showroom and convention complex in Las Vegas, Nev. Prior to this position, he spent five years working for GES exhibition services in Las Vegas.

**Lori Krogel, '95**, resides in Las Vegas, Nev. and is the operations manager/minority partner for Accountants, Inc. She has been an executive recruiter for 14 years, specializing in accounting and finance; making placements within the hotel, real estate, construction, manufacturing and service industries. She invites friends and accountants to contact her at [lkrogel@accountantsinc.com](mailto:lkrogel@accountantsinc.com).



# Alumni Updates

## Melania Sandra, '96 Hotel Administration, '01 Management Information Systems,

and her husband opened Las Vegas' first and only Indonesian restaurant in 2002. After more than three years in the restaurant business, they sold it in early 2006. Sandra is a



Melania Sandra full-time realtor and recently expanded her business to include selling contemporary furniture. If you are interested in learning more, please visit her website [www.melianasandra.com](http://www.melianasandra.com) or she can be contacted at [indo888@cox.net](mailto:indo888@cox.net) or (702) 526-7809.

**Wanda Jong, '98,** moved from San Francisco to Eagan, Minn. last year and now works at the Crowne Plaza as the food and beverage director in the Twin Cities. Jong would love to hear from alumni living in the Twin Cities area. She can be reached at 323-481-7228 or [wandajong@yahoo.com](mailto:wandajong@yahoo.com).

**David Droz, '99,** along with his father, Dov, and brother, Guy, opened STEAK restaurant in Henderson, Nev. In addition to gourmet cuts of beef and other tantalizing fare, STEAK also offers a lounge and wine shop. Previously, Droz worked at Tao at the Venetian Resort Hotel Casino. He and his family live in Henderson, Nev.

**Jeongok (Angelee) Lee Shim, '99,** is currently president of Yacht Avenue Limited in Seoul, Korea. The company imports and distributes production yachts in Korea ([www.yachtavenue.com](http://www.yachtavenue.com)) and also owns a commercially operated yacht club and restaurant known as 700 Yacht Club ([www.700yachtclub.com](http://www.700yachtclub.com)) in Seoul. Jeongok and her husband, Harold, recently had their first child and are living in Seoul. She can be reached at [angelee69@hanmail.net](mailto:angelee69@hanmail.net).



David Droz (right) with his brother and father.

## 2000s

**Scott Ramin, '00,'04 MS,** is currently working on his Ph.D. in Hospitality Administration at Texas Tech University, after transferring from Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Okla. He lives in Lubbock, Tex.

**Daniel Castro, '01,** recently moved back to Las Vegas, Nev., and is currently the customer service supervisor/operations for Alaska Airlines in Las Vegas. Previously, he worked for Four Seasons Hotel Las Vegas, Westin Portland, and Frontier Airlines in five states. He is single and still travels as much as possible, having visited over thirty countries thus far.

**Kevin R. Allen, '02,** and his family, who live in Las Vegas, Nev., opened Cruise Holidays of Summerlin. He helps customers plan cruise vacations and special events, from corporate meetings and reunions to shipboard weddings. Contact him at [kevinscruise@lvcoxmail.com](mailto:kevinscruise@lvcoxmail.com).

**Michael Carosielli, '02,** joined the staff at the Sears Center outside of Chicago, Ill., as the event coordinator. Sears Centre is an 11,000-seat arena hosting concerts, professional sports, and family entertainment. Carosielli moved to Mount Prospect, Ill. in 2006 after working for four years for the Las Vegas Gladiators.

**Dongsuk Kim, '02,** currently lives in Seoul, Korea and works as a senior research executive for TNS, a marketing research firm. In this position, he combines his passion and energy with the knowledge he obtained from his hospitality education at UNLV. Friends are encouraged to reach him by at [Dongsuk.Kim@tns-global.com](mailto:Dongsuk.Kim@tns-global.com) or [dskinman@yahoo.co.kr](mailto:dskinman@yahoo.co.kr).

**Joseph Lucchese, '02,** is the owner of EventJoe, an event production and tour management company based in Las Vegas and Chicago. Lucchese spent the last year traveling the world by managing responsibilities for multiple clients and artists. He has logged more than 200 tour stops, working on live events and shows such as the *2005 Billboard Music Awards* and *DJ Z Trip's 2006 Australian Tour*. Visit his website at [www.eventjoe.com](http://www.eventjoe.com).

**Chris Knecht, '04,** was named assistant manager at the Las Vegas branch of Morton's The Steakhouse. Knecht makes the move from Bertolini's Authentic Trattoria in the Forum Shops Mall, which also is owned by the Morton's Restaurant Group. Knecht lives in Henderson, Nev.

**Susan (Price) Lavender, '04,** and her husband both work for the Culinary Institute of America and live in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. She credits her UNLV education and student opportunities for paving the way for her to meet her wonderful husband in Italy. She has had a fulfilling and rewarding career and thanks UNLV for helping shape her life to prepare her for present and future successes.

**Tien "Trent" Dang, '06 MS,** recently accepted the position of corporate director of property marketing for the Isle of Capri Casinos, Inc., where he provides strategic support of marketing operations for the company's 15 properties and development projects. He previously worked in management at Wynn Las Vegas and Harrah's Entertainment, Inc. He and his wife, Abigail, live in St. Louis, Mo., where she is a second-year law student at Washington University. He'd love to hear from classmates at [trent@farris-dang.com](mailto:trent@farris-dang.com).

Please submit your own alumni update to: [hotelalumni@unlv.edu](mailto:hotelalumni@unlv.edu)

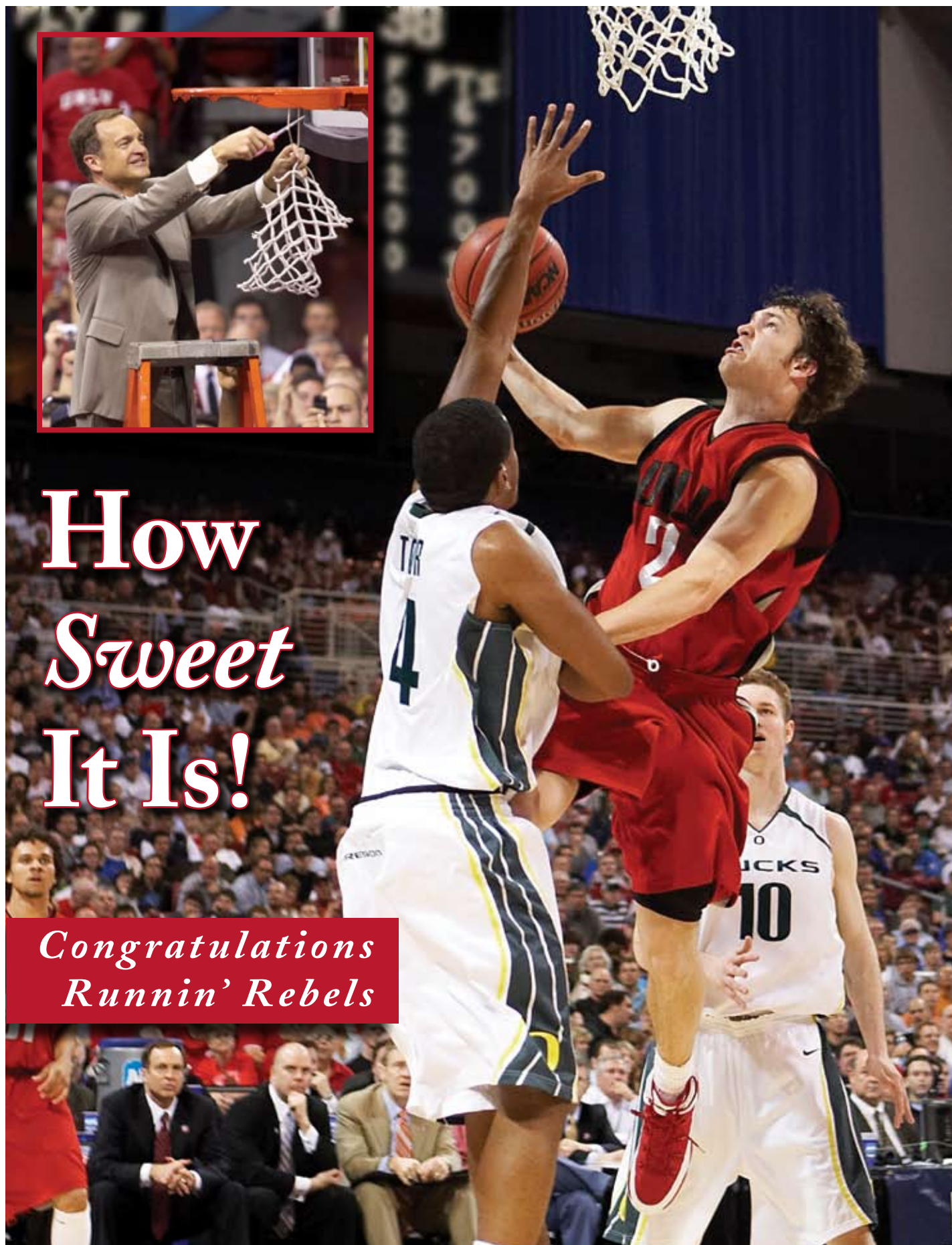


**Seth Grabel, '05,** is a professional magical entertainer who has performed for companies including Pfizer, Wynn and BMW. Raised by parents who were also in the performing arts industry, Grabel provides fun and captivating magical experiences. He has performed on television and also at celebrity events for such notables as Hugh Hefner and Johnny Knoxville. In addition to his magic performances, he recently opened a video production company called Vegas Create that specializes in promotional videos. He lives in Las Vegas, Nev. To learn more about Grabel, please visit his website: [www.sethgrabel.com](http://www.sethgrabel.com).



# How *Sweet* It Is!

*Congratulations  
Runnin' Rebels*



2007 MOUNTAIN WEST CHAMPIONS AND NCAA TOURNAMENT SWEET 16 TEAM





# UNLV Is Turning 50

UNLV's 50th birthday bash begins this fall and we want you to be part of the fun. Mark your calendar and join us for these exciting events.

**University Days** – A celebration of the university's founding that kicks off the fall semester with a university convocation, an academic showcase, special exhibits, and more — Sept. 12-15.

**UNLV Homecoming** – A week of activities including exhibits, student performances, alumni dinner and dance, golf tournament, tailgate, parade, and the unveiling of a new campus monument — Oct. 16-21.

**Itzhak Perlman Anniversary Concert** – An evening of music and celebration featuring the violin virtuoso conducting a special UNLV orchestra composed of alumni, students, and faculty — Jan. 26, 2008.

**Mark Twain Tonight** – Hal Holbrook performing his award-winning portrayal of Mark Twain in a special 50th anniversary event — May 3, 2008.

**Picnic Pops Concert** – An outdoor concert on the academic mall featuring the Las Vegas Philharmonic and concluding UNLV's 50th anniversary celebration — June 2008.

*The 50th Anniversary  
is sponsored by:*



*For more information or a complete  
listing of activities, log onto  
**celebrating50.unlv.edu.***



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