

NEVADA

Silver&Blue

The magazine of the University of Nevada, Reno

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From the President

All things great and small add up to student success at Nevada

In recent months, with the openings of the Joe Crowley Student Union, the Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center and the groundbreaking for the Davidson Mathematics and Science Center, we have seen the number of great buildings on our campus grow dramatically.

Yet, it can be argued that it is the “small” things—small only in the sense that they are the often overlooked but critically important daily elements of a thriving university—that truly equal success for our students.

Student success has always been one of the foremost goals for our University. We have been challenged in recent months with a statewide economic downturn that has necessitated deep budget cuts. A year ago, I counseled our campus to keep the faith; our goal, even with budget cuts, was to continue to search for ways to make a better institution.

Our faculty, staff, students and administration have taken this challenge and have shown a great amount of creativity, reaching across divisions, departments and programs to produce initiatives that are helping our students. Now, more than ever before, our campus is a place of engagement, where the curricular and support opportunities for our students are more efficient and impactful. Let me give you a few quick examples.

As the state's land-grant institution, part of our mission is to service all students, from all backgrounds with all types of different academic preparation. We are especially concerned with the fact that Nevada is ranked 50th in the nation regarding the likelihood that a 19-year-old will earn a college degree. This is particularly true for students from economically disadvantaged families. To remedy this situation, in September we announced the creation of the Pack Advantage program (www.finaid.unr.edu/finaidTypes/typesPackAdvantage.htm). Through the Pack Advantage program, we will be providing more Pell-eligible students than ever before with financial aid to seek full course loads, and to graduate in four years. Through Pack Advantage, any Nevada resident who is Pell-eligible will have tuition, fees and books covered by our University for four years.

Due to our budget constraints, our centers for writing and mathematics on campus, which have traditionally provided tutoring services, will have to be closed. I am pleased to announce, however, that our student leadership has played an integral role in helping us offset this loss. Through many of our academically based clubs and organizations, our student leadership has put forward a plan that will offer many of our best students—at no charge—as tutors for students who need help. In addition, our residence halls continue to provide academic intervention programming that works to ensure first-year academic success through free and easy access to academic counseling.

An overriding outcome for our University is to ensure that our students, once they graduate, are “complete” people—well-trained, knowledgeable citizens, who have a keen understanding of the interconnectedness of the world today. The University Studies Abroad Consortium is an opportunity for our students to take three months, a semester, a summer, to live and study overseas. On a campus-wide level, with more than 230 clubs and organizations to choose from, our students can reinforce their passion for almost any area. In recent months, our concrete canoe team as well as Wolf Pack mountain bikers, have captured national championships. By land, by water, even by dirt, our students are excelling outside of the classroom in notable and championship fashion.

With all of these efforts, we have simply re-thought what we do in the area of student success, and we have re-focused our energies in ways that have made a difference.

We have brought a lot of “small” things together, for the betterment of a great University.

Sincerely,

Milton D. Glick

President

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Shannon Ellis, vice president of Student Services, and President Milton Glick.

Photo by Theresa Danna-Douglas