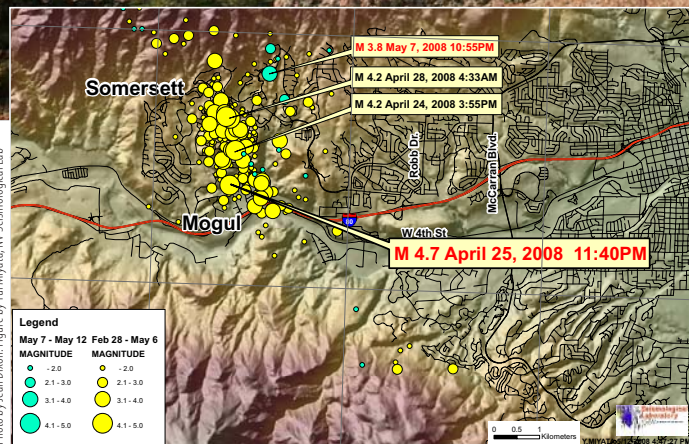
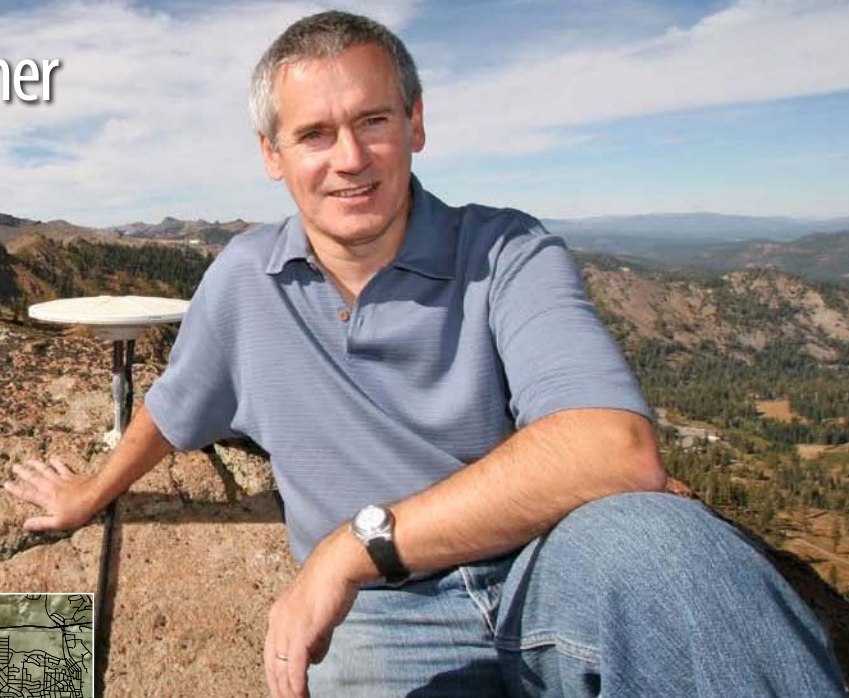


# University's earthquake community comes together for betterment of state



TOP: Research scientist Geoff Blewitt replaces a GPS antenna atop Ward Peak in Alpine Meadows Ski Area. Blewitt and his research team monitor 60 GPS antennas among 250 sites spanning Nevada and eastern California to detect shifts in the earth's movement. LEFT: A map of the earthquake swarms in west Reno between Feb. 28 and May 12, provided by the University's Nevada Seismological Laboratory.

Photo by Jean Dixon. Figure by Yui Miyata, NV Seismological Lab

Four years ago, when he first installed a GPS site on a hill not far from his home in west Reno—overlooking the popular Steamboat Ditch Trail, where he often ran and hiked with his family's two Labrador retrievers—Geoff Blewitt had no idea how valuable the site would become.

"When I put that station in," said Blewitt, a research professor in the Mackay School of Earth Sciences and Engineering, "I never thought it would get caught up with all of the events we've had since April."

Like many scientists on the University campus, the series of earthquakes that began shaking eastern and western Nevada this winter and spring gave Blewitt a unique opportunity to search for the answers why.

Blewitt's system of eight GPS sites in west and northwest Reno—which recorded important data on a ground-movement phenomenon known as "after slip"—were among the many technological and informational components that illustrated the Univer-

sity's strengths in seismology, geology and geodesy. Such scientific expertise was needed as a magnitude 6.0 earthquake struck the small northeastern Nevada town of Wells Feb. 21, and when a series of "earthquake swarms" in west Reno was highlighted by a 4.7 event on April 25.

"The fact that we live here certainly has helped," Blewitt said. "You really need the instruments and the expertise, and we just happen to have them all here in Reno."

For close to 10 years, research seismologists in the University-based Nevada Seismological Laboratory such as Ken Smith have developed an intricate telemetry network that—from the relative ease of a laptop—can take readings of seismic events on-site and in real time.

Smith's colleagues, such as Craig dePolo, a research geologist with the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology, have ventured into the communities of the state, educating businesses and homeowners about ways they can make their buildings safer.

And, with the addition of GPS experts such as Blewitt, the impacts of earth-

quakes—was the ground shifting and, if so, how much?—could be almost immediately plotted and noted.

"What we've created," said Smith, an associate research professor and manager of the Seismological Laboratory's seismic network, "is a collective earthquake-monitoring community."

Blewitt, through GPS, found that a 20-square-mile area had shifted eastward about one centimeter, or about half an inch, during the swarm in west Reno. He recorded the creep at a GPS site mounted on a library in northwest Reno. A site near Steamboat Ditch showed movement of about one inch.

"These kinds of swarms are very rare, so this is the first time we've actually been able to measure movement associated with one of these swarms," Blewitt said. "GPS is typically used to only measure magnitude 7, 8 or 9 earthquakes. You have to be lucky enough to have receivers packed together in all of the right places to measure [the movement associated with the magnitude 4.7 event of April 25]. So, to be able to measure a magnitude 5.0 or less earthquake is incredible."

—John Trent '85/'87, '00M.A.



Photos by Jean Dwan

## President Crowley, Hettrick, Pennington lauded at Commencement

More than 1,800 degree candidates were eligible to receive awards May 16 and 17 during Nevada's Spring 2008 Commencement exercises. They were not the only people to be honored though, on two unseasonably hot days on the University Quadrangle.

Joe Crowley, the longest-serving president in the University's history, received the Distinguished Nevadan award during the 118<sup>th</sup> Commencement exercises. Crowley served as University president from 1978 to 2000.

The Board of Regents award recognizes those who have made significant achievements contributing to the cultural, economic, scientific or social advancement of Nevada.

"It's the highest award that the board has to give," Crowley said. "It's very pleasing and humbling. I feel amply awarded. It's wonderful to get that kind of recognition."

An Iowa native, Crowley, 74, joined the University's political science faculty in 1966. He was appointed as interim president in February 1978, and a year later was selected to the post on a permanent basis.

Crowley administered expansion of the campus' School of Medicine into a statewide institution, development of a core curriculum, and the founding of the College of Human

and Community Sciences and the Reynolds School of Journalism. The Joe Crowley Student Union, opened in November 2007, was named for the University's 13<sup>th</sup> president.

Lynn Hettrick, the minority floor leader of the Nevada Assembly from 1997 to 2005, was also recognized during Commencement for being a 2008 Distinguished Nevadan. State voters elected Hettrick to the Assembly in 1992, and he was honored for his leadership of the 1995 session, when he served as co-speaker.

Also at Spring 2008 Commencement, University President Milton Glick presented William Pennington the honorary doctorate of humane letters. Pennington, co-founder of Circus Circus Enterprises, has been a generous supporter of the University's School of Medicine and other campus programs for nearly two decades.

Pennington, recognized along with business partner William Bennett in *Las Vegas Review-Journal* reporter A.D. Hopkins' book, *The First 100 Persons Who Shaped Southern Nevada*, was a gaming icon. Hopkins wrote that Pennington and Bennett, at Circus Circus, "showed Las Vegas how to cater to a middle-American family market, establishing

*TOP: Distinguished Nevadans President Emeritus Joe Crowley and former minority floor leader Lynn Hettrick shake hands at Advanced Commencement. BOTTOM: Jennifer Miceli '09 (health ecology), the 2008 Herz Gold Medal winner, is flanked by University President Milton Glick and ASUN President Eli Reilly. The University's most prestigious academic award has been given to top graduating seniors with the highest grade-point average each year since it was established in 1910 by brothers Richard, Carl and Otto Herz.*

the trend which dominated the casino industry for two decades (the 1970s and 1980s)."

Pennington established the William Pennington Foundation, which has helped fund construction of the University's Pennington Medical Education Building, completed in 2002. The building is home to the Savitt Medical Library, the Office of Medical Education and the Admissions and Student Affairs office. His philanthropy has also helped support the School of Medicine's Department of Speech Pathology and Audiology, as well as University scholarships in medicine, business, engineering and the physical sciences.

—Pat McDonnell

## New provost is on a mission

Marc Johnson describes the University of Nevada, Reno as having a strong reputation for continuing in the storied tradition of land-grant universities. Coming from Johnson, the accolade is especially meaningful.

An economist with a specialty emphasis on national and international food distribution, Johnson, named provost at Nevada in March, has contributed to discussions and advancements in many countries, from Botswana to Honduras. He joined the University faculty June 1.

"I appreciate the opportunity to work in a land-grant university with its special missions to open access for college education for all who are prepared to learn, to provide basic and applied research relevant to real-world issues of people, and to serve as a provider of knowledge directly to the public," said Johnson, who was named Nevada's chief academic officer following a national search.

The Morrill Act of 1862 created a new breed of university, the land-grant university, to provide education in the liberal and practical arts for children of the industrial class. The University was founded as Nevada's land-

grant institution in 1874.

The land-grant mission of public outreach was later expanded to include the application of teaching and research, particularly in agriculture, to improve quality of life. This core tenet is an apt description of Johnson's work.

"My research has dealt with the structure and function of market systems," said Johnson. "This has led to evaluation of transportation regulation, regional economics and the function of international food economies migrating to market-based systems."

He is particularly proud of his work in Sri Lanka, where an effort to privatize the food system involved citizens from within the government bureaucracy to small shop owners. The result was progress toward a more efficient system and lower food prices, and these outcomes contributed to a stronger national economy.

Johnson was formerly dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences at Colorado State University. He joined CSU in 2003 as vice provost for agriculture and outreach and dean of the College of Agricultural Sciences, and then served as interim director of Colorado Cooperative Extension and interim state



Photos by Crista Hecht

forester of Colorado State Forest Service.

Johnson holds a bachelor's degree in biology from Emporia State University in Kansas, which named him a Distinguished Alumnus in 1994. His advanced degrees include a master of technology in international development from North Carolina State, as well as both a master of economics and doctorate of agriculture economics from Michigan State.

For the past three years, Johnson has been part of a team working with a state university in Russia. That country's agricultural system produces 50 percent of what it did in 1989, and the university is looking to emulate the land-grant tradition as a means to help family farms and eventually reverse the trend. It has been a mission-affirming project for Johnson, who looks forward to helping apply the University's expertise and resources for the benefit of Nevadans.

—Jane Tors '82

## World War II vet finishes degree 65 years later

What's a few years' wait for a diploma worth? To 86-year-old Robert Baird Jr., of Selma, Calif., patience is golden.

A decorated World War II veteran and Nevada student in the 1940s, Baird deferred his dreams of becoming a college graduate for service in the U.S. Navy. He was one of the Navy's famous "frogmen," and removed land mines from beaches during the 1944 invasion of Saipan and Guam. Baird received the Silver Star for his bravery, but never returned to college.

After writing to the Board of Regents

in 1945 to explain the situation, Baird said he was granted a waiver to the University residency requirement. He's lost track of the letter, explaining he was about 20 credits shy of completing the civil engineering degree program.

Baird's friend Robert Kirchner of Sanger, Calif., brought the matter to the campus administration's attention, and the wartime hero received his bachelor's degree in a March 28 ceremony at the Sanger Rotary Club.

—Pat McDonnell



Photo by Jean Dixon

Paul Neill, vice provost and physics professor, jokes with Robert Baird Jr., right, after Baird received his undergraduate degree 65 years after attending the University. The belated graduation ceremony for the 86-year-old was at the Sanger, Calif., Rotary Club on March 28.



Photo by Robert Moore

## New greenhouse complex drawing attention on I-80

Locals driving the Interstate 80 corridor between Wells and Virginia streets—overlooking the Nevada Agricultural Experiment Station’s Valley Road Field Laboratory—have witnessed the construction of the College of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Natural Resources greenhouse complex, a physical symbol of the college’s commitment to environmental research and education.

“The size and scope of the project is impressive, to say the least,” said Dean David Thawley, referring to the six greenhouses, each 96 feet long and 30 feet wide, which are anchored to a 12,000-square-foot headhouse. “These greenhouses will provide the most up-to-date teaching and research facilities to educate the next generation of plant scientists, molecular biologists, range managers and ecologists.”

The \$6.2 million Nevada Greenhouse Complex is a sub-project to the University’s Davidson Mathematics and Science Center. Officials broke ground in April for the

*CABNR undergraduate Leigh Armijo waters grasses for an experiment evaluating the use of Truckee Meadows Water Reclamation Facility waste water as an effective fertilizer.*

new center at the site of the college’s former greenhouses.

Experiments and research underway within the greenhouses provide insight into the college’s commitment to meeting regional and global environmental challenges.

“These modern facilities are enabling us to address issues like biofuel production, alternative crop development, environmental stress tolerance in plants and mercury contamination,” said Ron Pardini, associate director of the Nevada Agricultural Experiment Station.

The greenhouse complex is also opening the door to further horticultural innovation, as CABNR’s partnership with two commercial companies highlights. NewGardens plans an aeroponic greenhouse adjacent to the complex, while Nevada Naturals will construct up to four hydroponic greenhouses.

More than 150 guests attended CABNR’s April “Open Greenhouse” event, celebrating the grand opening of the complex.

—Mikalee Byerman-Dahle ’94, ’98M.A.

## Thienhaus takes reins at School of Medicine

Building relationships, growing the School of Medicine and the business of medicine are the goals of Ole Thienhaus, who assumed the position of dean of the University of Nevada School of Medicine on July 1.

Thienhaus, a practicing psychiatrist who plans to continue seeing patients in rural areas while serving as dean, will become more involved in both the Reno and Las Vegas communities to improve the school’s visibility. He plans to strengthen partnerships statewide with other healthcare institutions and organizations.



Photo by John Byrne

Thienhaus embraces the concept of the expanded Division of Health Sciences as it strives to integrate several health disciplines and create synergies in education, research and service amongst the major health sciences schools at the University of Nevada, Reno.

“We need to prepare students for the world as it is, and that is a team-based approach to disease management,” Thienhaus said.

Faced with increasingly tight budget constraints from the state, Thienhaus, who earned an MBA at the University of Cincinnati College of Business, knows his business background will help him “speak the language” of the business of medicine, as well as direct the school to a more team-oriented approach with better and more cost-effective outcomes.

Prior to joining the School of Medicine in 1995, Thienhaus was vice chair of psychiatry at the College of Medicine at the University of Cincinnati. He earned his medical degree from the Free University of Berlin. He is board-certified in psychiatry, geriatric psychiatry and administrative psychiatry.

He is a fellow of the American College of Psychiatrists and serves on the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology.

—Anne McMillin

## Nursing student identifies a need, works to fill it in Mexico

Orvis School of Nursing student Danielle Lallement found a chance to integrate her skills as a nurse and a student with her charity work for the Rotary. Lallement's latest accomplishments in a Mexican town have opened up opportunities to expand her nursing experience and provide help for those in need.

Her Rotary project in Loreto and the surrounding area began two years ago when Lallement and other Rotary members were invited by friends to help a community on the eastern side of the Baja Peninsula. They sought assistance and funding to build a dormitory that would house young students in Ligui, a small town near Loreto. Because many students lived in outlying rural areas, it was difficult for them to reach the Loreto schools.

"The students who go to the schools in Loreto live in mountain villages hours away," Lallement said. "The students live in the dorms for the week."



Photo by Crista Hecht

*Danielle Lallement's nursing training and her heart led her to help improve living conditions for the women in Ligui, a rural Mexican town.*

Lallement and colleagues from the Rotary traveled to Ligui to reconstruct the dormitory rooms last October. She also observed the area's health needs.

"I went down with a nursing perspective as well as helped with the dorm," Lallement said.

The group plans to travel back to Loreto and Ligui this October. Lallement is hoping to evaluate basic women's health care, including surveying the need for prenatal care and basic gynecology.

"I'm interested in outlying areas, places that have no health care except for small clinics," she said.

Lallement is inviting a colleague who specializes in gynecology to assist her in the venture, which she hopes will eventually

result in a women's clinic.

As a student in the R.N. to BSN program at the University's nursing school, the project contributes to Lallement's academic career. Deborah Shindell, an assistant professor in the program, praises Lallement's resourcefulness in integrating her knowledge as a student, a nurse and a Rotary member in this ambitious project.

"I think it's a great opportunity for her to use her skills with the Rotary," Shindell said. "She gets to do something not every nurse gets to do. It takes a lot of initiative on her part." The school's online, degree-completion program helps registered nurses garner the bachelor of science in nursing degree.

—Guia Del Prado

## Three graduate programs make top 50 in national rankings

For the first time, *U.S. News & World Report* magazine ranked three University of Nevada, Reno graduate programs in the top 50 of public institutions nationally in its recent 2008 report.

Civil and Environmental Engineering made the rankings for the second time in three years and came in at the 44th spot. Geologic Sciences, which was also previously ranked, placed 45th, and Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology in the University's School of Medicine ranked 46th. It's the first time Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology made the list in the 15-year history of the report.

"The fact that three of our graduate programs ranked in the top 100 for all colleges and universities, both public and private, and in the top 50 ranking of public institutions speaks to the overall quality of graduate education at the University of Nevada, Reno," said Marsha Read, associate vice president for research and associate dean of the Graduate School. "The University grants more than 600 advanced

degrees a year from more than 60 different graduate programs, ranging from fine arts to the humanities, social sciences, and the physical and life sciences.

"We are proud of all of our graduates and know they are integral to Nevada's future."

In addition to the top rankings from *U.S. News & World Report*, the University's part-time master of business administration degree program was recently ranked 17th nationally by *Business Week* magazine.

Its contributions to peer-reviewed research journals also put Nevada in the spotlight in 2007. The doctorate program in ecology, evolution and conservation biology was rated 24th nationally by the *Conservation Biology* journal for its quality and quantity of publications in the field.

—Sue Putnam

## Faces on the Quad

### SARAH RAGSDALE

At the 135th annual Conference of the American Public Health Association in Washington, D.C., Ragsdale received the top award for a student poster presentation of her research on college campus suicide. She was working with Kristen Clements-Nolle, assistant professor of epidemiology in the University's School of Public Health, who described the presentation as a particularly impressive achievement for an undergraduate. Ragsdale served as 2007-08 undergraduate student body president. She received her degree in health ecology in May and will pursue her master of public health at Boston University.



### DAVID SCHACTER

A senior international business major and University Studies Abroad Consortium scholar, Schacter became the first, four-time collegiate boxing national champion in Nevada's 80-plus years of competition in the sport. The 132-pounder defeated Lock Haven's

Addy Pizarro April 12 in the final bout of his collegiate career in the National Collegiate Boxing Championships in Reno. Schacter, who compiled a 29-2 record in four years with the Wolf Pack, studied in Costa Rica and Thailand through the Reno-based Studies Abroad program. A 22-year-old Green Valley High School (Henderson, Nev.) graduate, he hopes to garner a gaming-related internship in the Chinese administrative region of Macau on his next Studies Abroad trip, and is set to graduate in May 2009.

### MICHAEL TANOUE

Tanoue, a 23-year-old from Honolulu, is the Senior Scholar for the College of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Natural Resources. The May 2009 graduate in biochemistry was a nationally ranked member of the Wolf Pack rifle team during his academic career at the University. Tanoue was selected to the All-American Shooting Team in both air rifle and small bore during the 2005-06 season. He followed his junior year performance by sharing the nation's top two scores in both disciplines with Nevada teammate Meghann Morrill during the 2006-07 regular season. Tanoue compiled a 3.93 grade-point average.



## Measuring 'Vog' from erupting Kilauea volcano

A one-of-a-kind research study by Orvis School of Nursing professor Bernadette Longo may lead efforts to improve the health of adults chronically exposed to air pollution from Hawaii's Kilauea volcano.

"This research provides the first measures of volcanic-associated cardiorespiratory effects related to downwind exposure to volcanic air pollution, locally called 'vog,'" said Longo, a nursing professor at the University since 2006.

Vog is composed of volcanogenic sulphur dioxide and sulfate particles near the Big Island's youngest and southeastern-most volcano. Kilauea began erupting in 1983 and is active today.

The Associated Press, *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* and *Honolulu Advertiser* in Hilo have all reported on Longo's study, "Cardiorespiratory health effects associated with sulphurous volcanic air pollution." The study was also published in *The Journal of the Royal Institute of Public Health*.

To get a sense of vog's impact, Longo studied 335 individuals residing in areas exposed and unexposed to downwind volcanogenic sulfurous air pollution on the island.

Longo's research findings support the current hypotheses that air pollution is associated with adverse cardiovascular functioning.

"Volcanogenic sulphur dioxide is an irritant affecting changes in the mechanical functioning of the upper airways, resulting in bronchoconstriction or increased pulmonary resistance," Longo said.

Several groups of people living near Kilauea experience an increased prevalence of cough, phlegm, runny nose, sore/dry throat, sinus congestion, wheezing, eye irritation and bronchitis.

"Based on the results of this study, further investigations to evaluate health effects are vital for the growing populations that reside near active volcanoes," Longo said.

Longo is a nurse epidemiologist specializing in international health with a focus on the health of people in volcanic environments. Her study influenced new health policy legislation to monitor air quality in affected communities around Kilauea. Longo and Wei Yang, a professor in the University's School of Public Health, continue to research cardiorespiratory health effects associated with volcanoes, and they are developing health promotion programs for affected populations.

—Jill Stockton



Nursing professor Bernadette Longo standing at Mt. Kilauea, the Big Island's youngest and southeastern most volcano.

# News Briefs



Photo by Crista Hecht

## University Inn transformed into residence hall

It's proved once again, history repeats itself—especially at the University.

The University Inn, at North Virginia and 10th streets, shuttered its hotel doors in December 2006. The facility has undergone necessary renovation to provide an additional residence hall option for upper-division University students. The newly named Sierra Hall is slated to open prior to the fall semester. There will be accommodations for 289 students.

The University Inn was originally designed as a residence hall in 1967, and was later converted to the hotel, said Stephen Mischisin, assistant director for planning and design in the University's Facilities Services office. "We have updated the facility to offer students a comfortable living experience."

Sierra Hall will offer wireless data access on the first and second floors, classroom space off the lobby and lounges on the fourth and fifth floors. The former dining commons has been converted into a large multi-purpose room.

Several life-safety upgrades have been installed including new fire alarm and detection systems, a fire pump and a water storage system. A new cooling tower and new mechanical systems have also been installed.

Sierra Hall rooms have private baths and secure, card-reader keylocks, and each room includes two data jacks and cable television access.

—Zanny Marsh

## University teams win, place and show at Governor's Cup

Bio-Grounds LLC, a team of University engineering students, won the \$5,000 Lieutenant Governor's Award top prize for graduate students in the state-wide business plan competition held April 25 in Las Vegas.

The University's GoGreenOutdoors.com team took second in the Governor's Cup graduate student contest and the More Water Company placed third. Among the undergraduate finalists, Wolfpack Works came in second, and Gary Valiere, who helped advise four of the University's teams, received a special award for faculty advisers.

Wolfpack Works and GoGreenOutdoors.com moved on to compete in the inaugural Tri-State Reynolds Cup with teams from Arkansas and Oklahoma in Las Vegas May 14.

A record 10 of 16 teams selected for the finals of this year's Donald W. Reynolds Governor's Cup were from the University.

—Sue Putnam



Photo by Theresa Dama-Douglas

## Cargill wins Regents' Researcher Award

Thomas F. Cargill, economics professor, was awarded the 2008 Regents' Researcher Award. The prestigious award is bestowed upon a Nevada System of Higher Education faculty member with a substantial record of accomplishments, including a significant amount of research and scholarly work with recognition. Clear evidence of the national and/or international stature of research is a requirement for this award. In

the case of grants and contracts, a nominee must have competed on a national or international level. The honoree receives a \$5,000 stipend and a medal.

"I am honored to have a world-class researcher in this college," College of Business Dean Greg Mosier said.

"It is a great honor to be recognized for the work that I have done over the years," Cargill said. "I feel very satisfied and have a strong sense of appreciation for my colleagues, the University and the community. These people have given me the opportunity to do work that I love."

—Jill Stockton



Photo by Theresa Dama-Douglas

## Buxton receives 2008 Outstanding Researcher Award

The University of Nevada, Reno recognized the School of Medicine's Iain Buxton, professor of pharmacology, with its Outstanding Researcher Award in May.

"It is my pleasure to recognize Dr. Buxton for his outstanding research efforts in the areas of premature birth and breast cancer metastasis," Mark Brenner, vice president for research and dean of the graduate school, said.

Buxton's team at the School of Medicine has discovered an altered gene in some mothers who deliver prematurely that may help explain at least some preterm births, as well as offer hope of treatment. Premature birth (delivery before 37 weeks of gestation) is increasing and now accounts for 12 percent of pregnancies in the United States and for 75 percent of all fetal morbidity and mortality.

—Anne McMillin



Photo by Jean Dixon

Barone, Follette and Wesnousky

## Three faculty named 2008 Foundation Professors

The prolific academic careers of University faculty Diane Barone, Victoria Follette and Steve Wesnousky were celebrated as they received recognition as 2008 Foundation Professors at the University's Honor the Best awards in May.

The trio of longtime University professors is being recognized for research and teaching prowess. They will each receive annual awards of \$5,000 for three years for professional work at Nevada.

Barone, an author of several books focusing on student literacy, is the principal investigator of the \$26 million Reading First grant in Nevada. Follette, who chairs the Department of Psychology and is also a former associate dean, has achieved an international reputation for research in therapy for trauma survivors. Wesnousky, a professor of geology and seismology at the University since 1989, is the 2008 winner of the University's F. Donald Tibbitts Distinguished Teacher award, the campus' top teaching honor. He has published more than 75 research papers.

—Pat McDonnell

### LOOK ONLINE

For a full list of 2008 Honor the Best winners, visit [www.unr.edu/nevadasilverandblue](http://www.unr.edu/nevadasilverandblue)