

A new era in **student life begins** **at 'The Joe'**

Story by Melanie Robbins '06M.A. • Photos by Jeff Ross



The new Joe Crowley Student Union—a building President Milton Glick has dubbed simply “The Joe”—was brought into being not by administrators decreeing what was best for students, but from the heart and soul of students themselves. The Joe, a \$66 million, 167,000-square-foot building, was paid for entirely by student fees. And it is their dreams and hopes that guided every step of its development.

The building and its interior were designed not only to be student-friendly, but to support the growth of campus community and an educational experience second to none, Sarah Ragsdale, president of the Associated

Students of the University of Nevada, says. “It’s not just a building. It’s a culture.”

Ragsdale, a health ecology senior, was actively involved in the planning of the look and feel of the building as a member of the Interior Design Committee.

The students didn’t want dirty white walls and alabaster meeting rooms, she says. “We wanted it to have a lot of warmth. You should be able to feel the energy when you are in the building.”

The blue, green and brown color scheme echoes the Sierra Nevada range and the

state’s native pine and sagebrush. The views of the mountains are spectacular from ceiling-to-floor windows, which let in enough daylight that artificial lighting is often not necessary, part of the student-led desire that the building incorporate “green” features.

Rebecca Bevans, Graduate Student Association president, was involved in the planning of the student union from its early stages, and among other duties, was a member of the Architect Review Committee, which

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Students Jared Miceli, Christopher Chadwick '05, Maria Urbina, Daniel Hernandez and Lucy Dugan spend time in one of the many new lounge areas in the Joe Crowley Student Union.

ultimately decided on WTW Architects, a Pittsburgh, Pa., firm that specializes in eco-friendly student unions. Even going so far as to visit the firm in its Pennsylvania offices. Bevans notes that the firm was the committee's top choice based on its experience, quality of workmanship and ability to include the environmental features students desired. (See sidebar on page 7 for more about green features.) WTW's impressive list of educational clients includes Carnegie Mellon, Cornell, University of California, Irvine, and University of Colorado, among dozens of other top-tier institutions.

The five fireplaces dotted throughout the four-story building are perfect for socializing, studying or simply kicking back and reading a good book. Symbolic of student unions everywhere, according to Chuck Price, director of the Joe Crowley Student Union, the fireplaces symbolize the purpose of the student union: "It is the hearthstone of campus."

With spacious seating, lounge and meeting areas, the brick and stone building also boasts a digital surround-sound, high-definition 220-seat theater, eateries (including one of Starbucks' largest franchises) a complete catering kitchen, a freight elevator that can hold a baby

elephant, a 10,000-square-foot grand ballroom, the two-story ASUN bookstore, as well as office space for student governments, student clubs and organizations, the Center for Student Cultural Diversity, staff and *The Nevada Sagebrush*.

"We wanted to make this a place where students, who could easily go back to their

fraternity or apartment, choose to stay," Ragsdale adds.

"You may choose to go see a slam poet in Starbucks, a guest speaker in the theater, or hang out for a late night movie or a film festival."

The Joe's homey ambience might help you "stay focused and study in that chair a little



Student body leaders Gabriel Matute, former student body president Jeff Champagne, Carmen Gilbert, Eli Reilly and Michael Cabrera attend a meeting in the new Dr. Rita Laden ASUN Senate Chambers. Student government offices are also located in the Joe Crowley Student Union.

bit longer,” she adds. That’s what it should feel like to be a member of the University of Nevada, Reno community.

But it’s more than just feeling good about a hangout place that makes the new student union special. It’s all about building community and staying engaged as part of the learning experience, according to Ragsdale:

“A University education is not just a bunch of hurdles you jump over and then you get a diploma at the end. It’s really about challenging and expressing and forming your values, and applying that to your life. You could be getting material online or at a college,

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The first floor of the new two-story ASUN Bookstore is devoted to retail merchandise and includes a Clinique counter and a plethora of Wolf Pack gear. General books and textbooks are located on the spacious second floor.

Parking, parking, parking!

A number of parking options are available at the new Joe Crowley Student Union for students, faculty, staff, and campus visitors.

Permitted Parking (faculty and staff are eligible for pre-tax payroll deductions):	Brian Whalen Parking Complex – Silver 11 Permit, \$355/year
	West Stadium Parking Complex – Tan Permit, \$300/year
Visitor Parking (Permit dispenser machines are available on the top of the two parking complexes. (After 3:30 p.m., both parking complexes are \$3/day.)	Brian Whalen Parking Complex – \$5/day
	West Stadium Parking Complex – \$3/day
Parking Hours	After 8 p.m., parking is free on campus. Parking is also free Fridays after 5 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays.
Street Parking	There are also 100 parking meters adjacent to the new student union, which are \$1.50/hour.
Campus Shuttle	A free shuttle runs every 10 minutes and has a stop in front of the new student union. Shuttle Hours: Monday – Thursday: 7:30 a.m. – 7 p.m. Friday: 7:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. After 7 p.m. the RTC Sierra Spirit takes over the campus shuttle route.





Yolanda Rangel (standing), Tomiya Eastlin (seated in front) and Caley Murray take advantage of the Center for Student Cultural Diversity in the Joe Crowley Student Union.



Photos by Theresa Dama-Douglas

The Starbucks in the new student union is one of the largest in the country, featuring a fireplace lounge.

but you wouldn't be getting the University experience."

President Glick echoes this sentiment: "The Joe Crowley Student Union gives us an opportunity to establish a new gathering place on campus, a magnet for campus engagement. It is my hope that it will fundamentally change the attitude about this campus and change the perception that this is a 'commuter campus.'"

For more information about the Joe Crowley Student Union, visit the website: <http://www.unr.edu/studentunion>

Ragsdale notes that when students feel they are a part of University life, they begin to join clubs and organizations; they start, for example, going to campus book readings. They become *involved*. Once students are engaged in campus life, "they begin to understand what it means to be a contributor to their community. They can begin to see that what they are learning in the classroom applies on the outside."

Being involved "produces better scholars, and ultimately, better citizens, which is the mission of the University," she notes.

Glick confirms that research bears this out: "Engagement is key. All the research tells us engagement leads to student success."

But it's not just students who will benefit from the Joe Crowley Student Union. The

building was designed with alumni, University and the greater community in mind.

Price notes: "We want people to feel comfortable visiting the University, and not just for athletic events. We are working with the Alumni Association to host events here. We now also have the perfect venue for weddings, if alumni want to get married at their alma mater."

President Glick: "I want this campus to be a place where people live; a place where the whole community feels welcome."

On a practical note, the new student union is also designed to make student life more convenient. Thus the combination of a food court, retail outlets and services such as a full-service credit union, campus mailboxes and Kaplan Test Prep and Admissions, as well as entertainment opportunities, have been brought together under one roof. Other retail outlets under consideration include a game room for billiards, a non-alcohol sports grill, cellular phone services, convenience store and more. When the Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center opens next door in August, access to the state-of-the-art research library will be within walking distance of the campus hub.

But the building wasn't a sure thing.

When former ASUN President Alicia Lerud '03 (biology) introduced a resolution in early 2003 for the expansion of student life facilities, including a new student union, she met resistance.

"It didn't exactly go over well during my time," she says. "The resolution led to a long process and many discussions, but the reception when I was there was not good." Nonetheless, she felt compelled to bring the idea forward since the Jot Travis Student Union was "grossly inadequate," despite extensive

renovation. "We really needed a heart of campus where students could congregate."

Money was an issue. It became clear to Lerud that getting donations to pay for a new building was going to be nearly impossible.

"Realistically, if we wanted a new student union, it would have to be through student fees," Lerud says. The push for a new union came at a

good time because with the Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center being built, the University could pool construction resources.

The University conducted two student surveys to determine whether, first, students even wanted a new union, and second, if they were willing to pay for it.

The response was overwhelmingly

I want this campus to be a place where people live; a place where the whole community feels welcome.'

—President Milton Glick



Photo by Jean Dixon


The Joe Crowley Student Union offers panoramic views of surrounding mountains.

positive. More than 4,400 students responded, which was the largest-ever student response to a University survey. Price says: "It was very significant data." Some 78 percent of students wanted a new student union.

In the second survey, actual dollar amounts were presented to determine how much, if anything, students were willing to contribute toward a new union.

"My expectation," recalls Price, "was that it would go down since Nevada is a non-tax state" But more than 3,500 student responded with a resounding 72 percent in favor, despite the price tag.

Lerud says: "That goes to show how inadequate our old student union was."

Now that The Joe is a reality, Lerud is thrilled. "I can't say enough about how happy I am that it went through and how glad I am that others followed up." 

Call 'The Joe'

To schedule a meeting or find out what's going on at the Joe Crowley Student Union, call (775) 784-6505

Or visit the web site at <http://www.unr.edu/studentunion>

Students make 'The Joe' green

The new Joe Crowley Student Union is the latest edition to the University's environmental résumé.

The University and WTW Architect, a Pittsburgh, Pa. firm, working with Students and Educators for Environmental Development and Sustainability (SEEDS), designed "The Joe" to maximize daylight usage, use recycled materials when possible—including furnishings—minimize energy and water usage, and minimize construction waste.

The University won approximately \$35,000 in grant money to do a daylight study that paid for a mockup of the building to be placed in a heliodome in San Francisco that simulated how the sun would hit the building every day of the year, Chuck Price, Joe Crowley Student Union director, said. With the information gleaned from the study conducted by Green Design Collaborative, a Boulder, Colo., firm, in coordination with David Nelson Associates, the architects were able to adjust the windows, shades and other daylight features, such as skylights, to not only maximize the use of natural light, but also allow for passive solar heat gain in winter.

Other eco-friendly features include xeriscaping for landscapes, pervious paving stones for outdoor drainage, and high energy efficiency systems for power, heat and cooling. In addition, University facilities engineers are investigating a photovoltaic energy system that could help power the building.

For a full list of the building's sustainable features, and to see videos of the daylight study, visit <http://www.unr.edu/studentunion>.

—Melanie Robbins '06M.A.

One of the eco-friendly features of the student union is the high efficiency, fritted (glazed) window glass. The glaze, in the shape of miniature silhouettes of the state of Nevada (shown here), impedes UV radiation, blocks the sun's heat and saves birds.

What's happening at Jot Travis?

As the northern Nevada community celebrated the Nov. 15 grand opening of the 167,000-square-foot Joe Crowley Student Union, people on and off campus wondered how the University of Nevada, Reno's 50-year-old Jot Travis Building will operate in its new role.

The much-frequented, two-story building, will be primarily recognized as the home for the Davidson Academy of Nevada. The academy, the nation's only free, public specialized school for profoundly gifted young students, is slated to open its third academic year Aug. 25, on the top floor of the building. Renovation for that opening began in January.

As many as 200 Davidson Academy students can be accommodated on the upper floor at Jot Travis. The University's Facilities Resource Committee has not made a final decision on the University programs and services that will be offered on the building's ground floor, although plans call for

the current Associated Students of the University of Nevada Auditorium to become a flexible space where larger University classes can be held.

"I've become very attached to this place," said Heather Turk, Jot Travis Student Union associate director of programs. "It's kind of like trading in your old car for a new one. You know you're really excited about getting a new car, but boy when you take it to the lot and say goodbye, it's gonna hurt. We have a lot of great memories."

Turk said people will continue to find a place to gather on the south end of campus for food in The Overlook (formerly the University's student dining commons).

The Cellar at Manzanita Lake, the building's lower-level dining area and meeting place, is assigned to Residential Life, Housing and Food Services, and that office will decide future use of the facility.

—By Pat McDonnell

Meet Joe at 'The Joe'

By John Trent '85/'87, '00M.A.

You'll probably see Joe Crowley hanging out at the Student Union named after him. He still teaches at Nevada, a Core Humanities class on American constitutional political history, and, at 74, he's still learning. He's taking a poetry class from Gailmarie Pahmeier-Henry, an award-winning English teacher. Like many who know Joe—and that's what most people call him—you'll feel at ease waving and saying, "Hi!" to the tall man with the kind face and ready smile. And he'll wave back and greet you with genuine friendliness.

That Crowley blends in seamlessly in a world of students and learning is testimony to the fact that his life has been dedicated to education. Crowley not only held the University's presidency longer than any other individual, he has taught here since 1966, and has arguably had more impact on the institution than any person before or since.

For Crowley, it has always been about composure, constancy and careful, deliberate thought—traits that served him well

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during the more than 40 years that he has been associated with the University, and the time from 1978-2000 when he served as the institution's chief executive. His nearly 23 years as president are a University record.

In typical Crowley fashion, though, talk of his legacy and his time at Nevada is usually met with a characteristic good-natured grin. Then an abrupt U-turn in conversation to something else... to any topic other than himself.

Crowley has always been the most centered of men, unapologetically straight and old-fashioned, always calm, always projecting a sweet, reasoned logic.

He will note with dry humor, for example, that his first contract as a political science professor at Nevada was for \$3,500 as a one-semester temporary replacement for Eleanor Bushnell.

"I managed, despite or perhaps in spite of my best intentions, to keep my appointment at

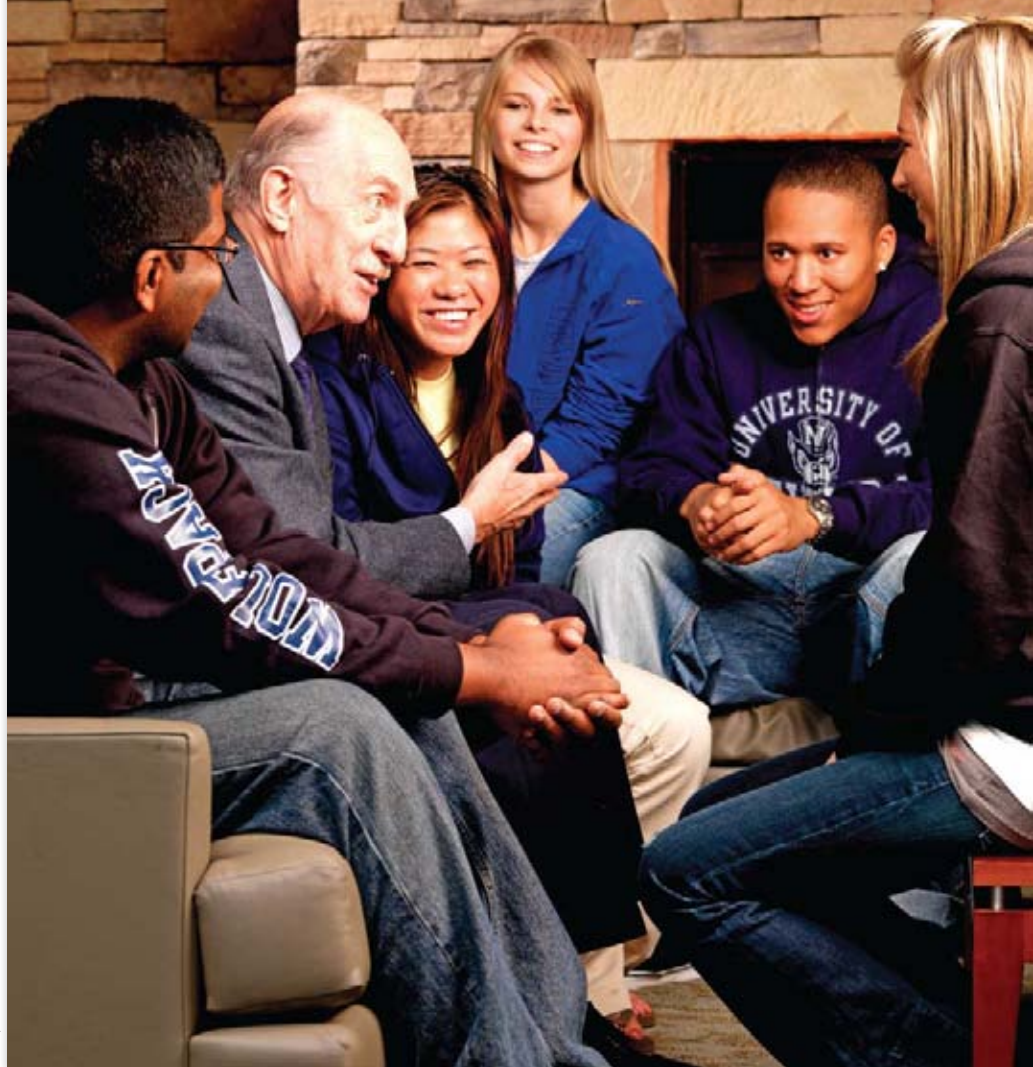


Photo by Jeff Rios

Naveen Tara, Jennifer Le, Haylee Finkel, Adrian Allgood and Brita Muller hang out in front of the fireplace in the Student Union's Great Room, as President Emeritus Joe Crowley tells them a story.

the University a little longer than that," he says.

Forty-one years later, it is clear that Crowley's mark at Nevada will be remembered for something more than a temporary semester appointment.

One of Nevada's most respected historians, emeritus history professor James Hulse, has written that Crowley's influence was not only that of a steadying hand during the constantly shifting political topography of a "time of troubles" in the late 1970s when funding support for the University was hard to find.

Hulse notes that Crowley, through subtle language and level-headed decisions, was able to provide a compelling vision for what is today a thriving and still growing institution.

"[Crowley] stabilized the subsequent decade and the University's relationships with its host community, the state, and sister institutions across the nation," Hulse writes. "The growth of the student population to about 12,000 by 1992 justified the expansion of the faculties and the hiring of energetic new faculty members.

"In 1989, an energized University of Nevada, Reno Foundation set a goal of at-

tempting to raise \$105 million within five years to enhance the University's endowments established from private gifts. The drive was overwhelmingly successful—producing more than \$120 million in the designated time and setting a pattern of broad community support that was a new factor in the University's life."

Given his work on behalf of the University—and, in particular, on behalf of students—it is entirely fitting that the new student union should bear Crowley's name, said Jeff Champagne, former ASUN president.

Champagne said work to find a name for the new union in 2005 was easy. Here was a chief executive, after all, who would, without fail, invite every new ASUN president for a talk about the coming year—its challenges, its issues, its possible partnerships and solutions. Here was an administrator who somehow managed to continue to teach during some semesters, in order to better keep his hand on the pulse of the campus' students. Here was a president who, though he might have been privately stung by criticism from some students, never showed it publicly, and indeed, always encouraged free expression of ideas

Ten Best Things to Do at the JCSU

By Mike Dillon '94

on campus. Here was a leader who was more than a leader to the students. Here was a man who was their friend.

“The students’ recommendation to name our union after Dr. Crowley is a tribute to a man whose contributions have affected and will affect generations of students to come,” Champagne says.

Affecting generations to come. They are words that clearly would make Crowley uneasy.

He is so disarmingly humble, with such a fundamental lack of vanity, that showing his weaknesses or imperfections is actually a central part of his personality.

Years ago, the sports-loving Crowley was making his way into Peccole Park one spring afternoon when an errant foul ball bounced off his head. A bit shaken, but uninjured, Crowley still watched the Wolf Pack play that afternoon.

When word of the story spread, a request was made to photograph Crowley in a Wolf Pack baseball batting helmet—given to the institution’s chief executive by the Department of Athletics to forevermore protect his suddenly fair-game and seemingly at-risk head.

Politicians have always maintained that a photograph in a strange hat can mean political suicide (think: Democratic presidential candidate Michael Dukakis in that Snoopy-like tank helmet in 1988).

Crowley didn’t hesitate, though. He willingly obliged.

The photo ran in the next issue of this magazine. Crowley’s face smiled out from underneath the oversized protective headgear. He looked as comfortable as your neighbor next door, the essence of simplicity and modesty.

“But that’s Joe Crowley,” said Richard Lapchick, human rights activist, pioneer for racial equality in sports and author from the University of Central Florida.

“I’ve only met a handful of men like him in my life,” Lapchick said. “There is no pretense to Joe. He is a genuine leader, and as authentic of a human being as you will ever encounter.” **N**

—Melanie Robbins '06M.A.
contributed to this article



Photo by Theresa Darna-Douglas

Nevada Alumni Council Treasurer/President-elect Mike Dillon '94 and President Cindy Buchanan '95 shop for alumni gear at the new ASUN Bookstore.

There was a time when upgrades at the Jot Travis Student Union seemed impressive. Although student fees paid for the Joe Crowley Student Union (all \$63 million of it), it’s not just the students who will benefit. This building is for alumni and the community, too. So we invite you to head to campus, and say hello to Joe.

Here are the top 10 ways for Nevada alumni and friends to enjoy the new Joe Crowley Student Union.

1. Attend an event in the 10,000 square-foot grand ballroom. Located on the top floor, it’s the largest non-casino ballroom in northern Nevada. Along with cutting-edge technology, it offers the “best view in the building” overlooking the majestic Sierras.
2. Try something different for lunch. On the first and second floors, you’ll soon find a variety of options, from Baja Fresh and Port of Subs to Tahoe Creamery and Keva Juice.
3. Surf the Internet throughout the building. With wireless access, you can wander online without ever leaving your overstuffed chair.
4. Catch a movie in the digital surround sound, high-def 220-seat theater. Sure to quickly become a hub for student life, plans for the theater also include performances and lectures.
5. Grab a cup o’ joe. If you like coffee, you’re in luck. The union hosts one of the largest Starbucks west of the Mississippi. It even includes a small performance stage.
6. Buy Nevada alumni gear at the two-story ASUN bookstore. This place gives Barnes & Noble a run for its money, with

comfy seating areas, a fireplace, computer den, 1,600 square-foot convenience store, Clinique counter, and, of course, one of the best book selections in the region. (While you’re not living on Ramen Noodles anymore, it doesn’t hurt that bookstore purchases are tax-free.)

7. Challenge a group of friends to find something red. (Good luck!) From the carpet to the ceiling, the building was designed with the University in mind. Nevada colors, logos and art abound.
8. Take a people-watching break. For fast-paced action, head to the third floor of the union, home to student governments senate chambers, Center for Cultural Diversity, *The Sagebrush* and Wolf Pack Radio. For a more relaxing time out, choose among the various outdoor seating arrangements. You may encounter a performer, a lecturer, a campus protester, or even a student, who you can regale with tales of campus life gone by.
9. Educate yourself on some of the newest “green” building practices. While strolling through the union, watch for the little details that make this the most environment-friendly building on campus. (Start with the windows, hint hint.)
10. Finally, just go. In the Biggest Little City, you’re sure to run into President Crowley. When you do, you can let him know that you visited his namesake. How appropriate to name the student union for a man who made himself so accessible to the student body during his 42 years on campus. (Thank you for everything, Dr. Crowley.)