Joe Bradley

Joe Bradley '78 (economics)

Throughout my life, I have learned the importance of an education—not only to acquire knowledge, but also because it is during your education that you develop lifelong relationships with people who serve as mentors and become friends. It is also important to help those who are less fortunate and continually strive to improve conditions within your community. This is something I do every day in my job as a senior partner at the law offices of Bradley, Drendel & Jeanney and in my philanthropic work as a trustee of the E.L. Cord Foundation, University of Nevada, Reno Foundation, and the Athletic Association of the University of Nevada.

I'm a native Nevadan born in Reno in 1955. I came through the Washoe County public schools, graduating from Reno High School. While I was at Reno High, I started my work career. I fueled airplanes and drove concrete trucks, and it was through those experiences that I truly learned the value of an education. My father, William O. "Bud" Bradley, had also been a lifelong resident of Nevada. He led a very interesting life in northern Nevada, first as a water rights and ranching lawyer, and then branching into injury litigation—which we carry on to this day and have done so in our very location at 401 Flint Street for 55 years.

While I was an undergraduate at Nevada, I met many people whom I still consider friends and who continue to be influential in my life: Mike Reed, former professor and dean of the College of Business, current vice chancellor of finance with the Nevada System of Higher Education, was my faculty adviser; Nazir Ansari, emeritus professor of management, was my teacher; Ret. Air Force Major General Ron Bath '68 (business and agriculture), '71MBA, was a professor of mine and was instrumental in guiding me toward law school. As I look back on my life, I recognize how important it was for me to attend Nevada, particularly because at the time I didn't realize that I was going to continue practicing law in Reno for the next 25 years. I had a very rich and fulfilling experience at Nevada.

I attended the University of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law in Sacramento. It was there that I met many more interesting and influential people, including the late Dean Schaber, who was the former dean of McGeorge School of Law and former presiding judge of the Sacramento Superior Court.

Law school solidified my desire to continue on in the practice of law doing what my father and his partner, John Squire Drendel, had been doing: representing the rights of injured victims.

My father was an original trustee of the E.L. Cord Foundation, a Reno-based philanthropic organization. The Foundation was established for the purpose of improving the health, education and welfare of the residents of the Truckee Meadows and rural counties of northern Nevada. The work I do in this field is extremely rewarding because I have the opportunity to make changes in the quality of people's lives.

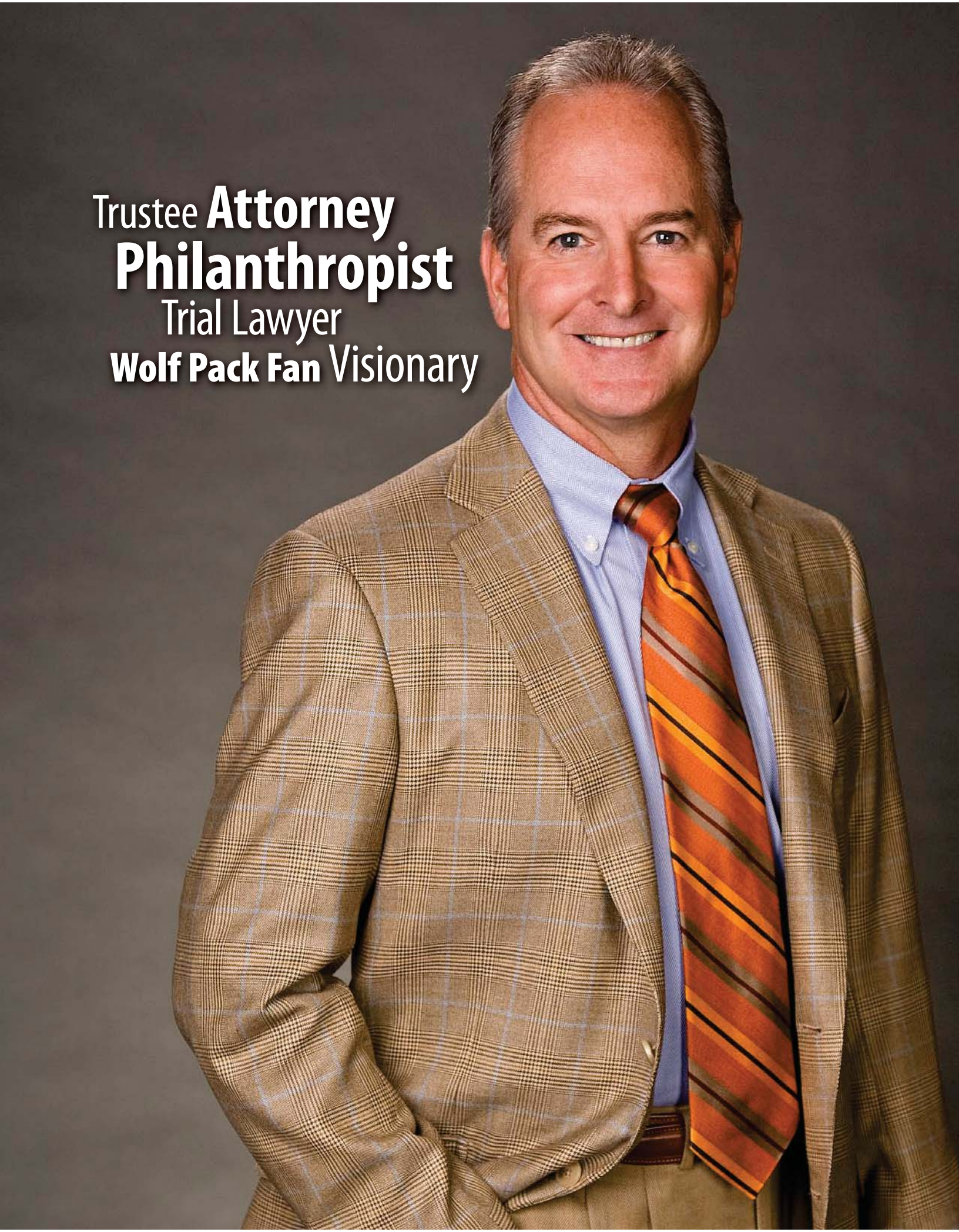
When the Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center was nothing but a scribble on a piece of paper, President John Lilley approached the Foundation—I'm proud to say—as the first potential, major, private donor. The E.L. Cord Foundation became one of the first private commitments to the Knowledge Center. I like to think our pledge was the springboard for other donors to become involved, and that this magnificent facility exists today, is at least in some part due to our initial involvement.

If people haven't seen the Knowledge Center, the Joe Crowley Student Union or the E.L. Cord Academic and Athletic Complex, they really should take the time to come up and look because I doubt that there's a trio of buildings anywhere on the West Coast that would outshine these three facilities.

LOOK ONLINE
For the full interview, visit: www.unr.edu/nevadasilverandblue

From a conversation with Senior Editor Melanie Robbins '06M.A. in October 2008. Bradley, 54, is the incoming chair of the University of Nevada, Reno Foundation Board of Trustees. He is a senior partner with the Reno law offices of Bradley, Drendel & Jeanney, where he has worked for the past 25 years. In 2005, he won a $4 million jury verdict on behalf of a young, mentally disabled man seriously burned by a defective fryer machine. He graduated in 1978 with a degree in economics. He earned a juris doctorate in 1983 from the University of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law. His wife, Liza, graduated from Nevada in 1996 with a degree in accounting. The couple has two children, Gina and Sam.

Photo by Theresa Danna-Douglas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