Two major gifts to the University of Nevada, Reno Foundation in 2009 will provide dynamic, cutting-edge learning spaces for students and fundamentally change the way professors teach and, in turn, how students learn.

The William N. Pennington Foundation has committed $10 million to build the new, 59,000-square-foot William N. Pennington Health Sciences Building. This building will allow expansion of the University of Nevada School of Medicine class size from 62 to 100, for a total eventual enrollment of 400. The number of Orvis School of Nursing students will also be able to double, for an eventual total enrollment of about 300 students.

The building, which will be adjacent to the existing Pennington Medical Education
Building, will house Orvis’ offices and will provide spaces designed to facilitate nursing and medical students training and learning together. The Pennington gift brings the total private investment in the building to $15 million, including a $2.5 million gift from the Nell J. Redfield Foundation and a $1 million gift from the Thelma B. and Thomas P. Hart Foundation. The William N. Pennington Health Sciences Building is slated for completion by the summer of 2011.

The Donald W. Reynolds Foundation has awarded the Donald W. Reynolds School of Journalism and Center for Advanced Media Studies $7.96 million to prepare students to navigate the revolution in journalism. The gift will provide funds to rewire and recable the journalism building, to install a robust server system, to replace analog TV and radio facilities and to create a new multimedia newsroom in which students will learn how to write and present information on every platform.

In addition to being the largest award to the Reynolds School, the gift is among the top five gifts in University history. The foundation has given more than $20 million to the University, most of it to advance the study of journalism.

The gift also includes funds to move the Donald W. Reynolds National Center for Courts and Media from the National Judicial College on the University campus to the journalism building. Renovations are slated to be completed by early spring 2012.

“These gifts are transformational and will have important, lasting impacts for our state.”

University President Milton Glick
special, that he thought it would be a fun trip. ‘Instead,’ he said, ‘I found the future of health science education. It was a “duh” moment. Imagine, training doctors and nurses in the same building.’

‘Ultimately, this generous gift will improve the quality of health care for generations to come. We are deeply appreciative of Mr. William N. Pennington for this gift and for his ongoing support of the School of Medicine and student scholarships.’

Glick continues: “The Reynolds Foundation helped the University 20 years ago with a $2.5 million challenge grant, which established the Donald W. Reynolds School of Journalism and Center for Advanced Media Studies and built the state-of-the-art structure that houses this premiere program, the only one of its kind in the state. The Reynolds Foundation has been a stalwart supporter of Nevada’s aspiring journalists and communicators, and they, and we, are profoundly grateful. The gift will help prepare our students for one of the most profound shifts in the presentation of news and information that the modern world has seen. It will enable our students to communicate on every platform, from print to broadcast to the Internet, social media … and whatever comes next.”

Christina Hernandez, 2009-2010 journalism senator and a senior who will graduate this May, says she is “very thankful” for the Reynolds Foundation gift: “During these hard times of budget cuts and difficult choices the University is facing, it’s comforting to know that our journalism program is still trying to better itself. I hope to one day come back after graduation and see how much the program is sought after and has improved. I also hope this will help in our recruitment efforts and attract students from all over the nation to try and be a part of our program.”

**William N. Pennington Health Sciences Building**

**Training Together**

Dr. John McDonald, vice president for Health Sciences, explains that when the School of Medicine expanded its class from 52 students to 62, the existing facilities were stretched to their limits: “Our anatomy laboratory, where the students learn the basic anatomy of the human body, and our multidisciplinary laboratory, where pathology and microbiology are taught, are very overcrowded.”

Both of those laboratories will be replaced with new, state-of-the-art teaching facilities in the William N. Pennington Health Sciences Building. “That’s a huge improvement,” he adds.

In addition, the William N. Pennington
Health Sciences Building will facilitate a new era of health care education in which doctors and nurses learn together.

“Study after study has shown that when you deliver care through teams, with the focus being on the individual or individuals who are receiving care, that the quality of care goes up and the cost of the care goes down,” McDonald says.

He notes: “We are introducing this team-based, patient-centered education to the classroom by educating nurses and doctors together. We are evaluating our curriculum and our academic schedules to create shared opportunities for education and learning.”

One of those opportunities has already begun in the Student Outreach Clinic, a volunteer activity in the School of Medicine. Students under the guidance of local physicians have been operating free clinics for the medically underserved since 1996. Last fall, they asked master’s level nursing students to become involved.

Lorraine Bonaldi-Moore, an assistant professor in the Orvis School of Nursing, as well as a family nurse practitioner student, was one of several graduate-level nursing students who volunteered at the Student Outreach Clinic Feb. 20 held at the Family Medicine Center on the Reno campus. “Because we all work together in health care, learning together and growing together is going to help tremendously—the patients’ health care is going to be much improved.”

Training together has already helped medical students see the world from a nurse’s perspective, says Bonaldi-Moore, who, like many others in Orvis’ graduate nursing programs has been a practicing nurse and is gaining the extra education to boost her career. “The nursing students are helping the medical students learn how to interact with patients, how to touch patients, how to deal with families.”

Deepa Dandge, a first-year medical student and an Outreach Clinic volunteer, agrees that training together is valuable for all involved in health care: “It’s important

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that all aspects of medical care work together because that's how it's going to be in a real-life setting. Having experience working with nursing students early is going to set us up for success in the future. It's not only good for our careers and good for our practice, it's also good for the patients because patient care is a team-based approach. Starting early is key to learning that and appreciating how teams work.”

**Code Blue**

One of the classic medical scenarios that many medical practitioners will face—and which in real-life is random and cannot therefore be anticipated for training purposes—is cardiopulmonary arrest, commonly referred to as a “Code Blue” incident in hospital parlance.

McDonald explains that in real life, a person experiencing cardiac arrest needs immediate resuscitation in order to stay alive, a process that involves experienced teamwork. “It requires a great deal of technical skill and knowledge, and solid team skills because different individuals have to perform different tasks in a very seamless fashion,” McDonald says. “It’s a complex choreography of difficult manipulations of the patient—they need drugs, insertion of a breathing tube, intravenous catheters. …”

The William N. Pennington Health Sciences Building will have a three-room simulation center that will be used by both nursing and medical students. This “sim center” will employ human patient simulators, such as “Stan,” who is housed in a smallish room in the current Pennington Medical Education Building.

Stan and other human patient simulators are sophisticated robots whose pupils dilate and eyes close when given a dose of an “anesthetic,” their chests rise and fall with each breath, and when given the wrong dose of certain medicines, will go into cardiac arrest and “die.” Female models can even be programmed to give birth.

“Interprofessional education is one of the crowning features of being a division of health sciences—that’s where the future is going to be. Nursing and medical students have many opportunities to work together during their educational process, especially in critical thinking exercises and simulation scenarios, so that it won’t seem foreign to them when they are actually practicing.”

Patsy Ruchala, Director of the Orvis School of Nursing

These simulators are used to great advantage when training members of a health care team to perform their roles during a Code Blue episode, as well as many other life-threatening medical situations,” McDonald says. Trained actors are also part of the simulation, playing the roles of distressed family members for example. “The medical students would learn to communicate in these tense circumstances, even delivering the bad news if the ‘patient’ did not survive the cardiac pulmonary arrest.”

Kim Baxter, assistant professor of nursing and co-coordinator of the Nurse Practitioner Program, says training with the simulators is invaluable in helping nurses learn to communicate in emergency situations in which they might otherwise be overlooked: “In a collaborative simulation, they start finding the words and being able to express articulately what’s going on with the patient. I think it’s going to take the fear out of the mix and that betters patient outcomes, which is what we are all about.” 

(Please see related story about the Las Vegas sim center on page 88.)

David Ton, School of Medicine Class of 2012, agrees that training together and studying in closer proximity to one another will enhance the health care educational experience: “Right now we’re separated. Medical students are on the north side of campus and nursing students are on the south side. There are a lot of practices that nurses do that medical students don’t understand and perhaps vice versa. Being able to see each other and train together, we can get a stronger idea of what the different roles of a nurse and a physician are and that will help us to better work in the future.”

Patsy Ruchala, director of the Orvis School of Nursing, says Nevada nursing students are lucky that they are part of a division of health sciences that includes both a nursing school and a medical school and has strong administrative support for innovative teaching and learning methods. “Many, many nursing programs across the country are not in institutions that have both nursing and medical schools, so being at Nevada puts us in a unique position to go forward with interprofessional education.”

Although both nursing and medicine
have separate accrediting bodies and are distinct fields of study, they don’t need to exist in separate silos, Ruchala adds: “Interprofessional education is one of the crowning features of being a division of health sciences—that’s where the future is going to be. Nursing and medical students have many opportunities to work together during their educational process, especially in critical thinking exercises and simulation scenarios, so that it won’t seem foreign to them when they are actually practicing.”

Despite the budget woes of both the state and the nation, this is nonetheless an “exciting time” to be an educator, Ruchala says: “We are in perilous economic times, but we still need to look toward the future at what the Nevada workforce is going to need. Once we start moving out of this recession, you are going to see a lot of nurses who will be retiring, and we will be facing an even greater and deeper nursing shortage.”

The American Nurses Association says that the nation is indeed facing an unprecedented nursing shortage that will peak in 2020 due to increasing demand for nurses, coupled with an aging workforce and many nurses reaching retirement age.

Ruchala adds: “We have to live in the present, but keep our eyes on the future. This is probably one of the most exciting times to be at Nevada, budget crunch notwithstanding. There are so many great things that are happening that will establish the future for the University and for health sciences. This building is going to be a big part of that future. We are exceptionally grateful to the donors.”

The William N. Pennington Health Science Building will be constructed to meet sustainable, environmentally friendly building standards, and will include classrooms, and a new anatomy and physiology laboratory, as well as the sim center.

Funding of $3 million for planning was allocated by the 2007 Nevada State Legislature and $31 million in construction bonding has been approved as part of the 2009 Nevada State Legislature’s Capital Improvement Project budget.

**Donald W. Reynolds School of Journalism Building**

Platform-free journalism

Journalism is changing. No longer are writers bound to print, or broadcasters to television. News is now available via a panoply of media, with reporters toting video cameras along to their interviews and broadcasters posting written versions of their stories online. Information flows freely.

Carissa Williams, far left, Jessica Crilley and Heather Chiappini, foreground, are learning to edit for broadcast using Final Cut Express in the TV News and Production 1 lab. In the Journalism 421 course students produce and assemble together numerous original television news packages into several complete TV newscasts.
and instantly from a news organization’s Web site to individuals’ Facebook and YouTube pages, or via Twitter or personal email accounts. People download podcasts and subscribe to video and photo “channels” available on the Internet. Just about every news source can be piped into a newsreader on your computer via RSS feeds. Increasingly, bloggers, self-proclaimed pundits and even the general public may command wide audiences, treading on territory once thought to fall within the purview of trained journalists alone.

What’s to become of a J-School?

“Journalism education has been catching up with the digital revolution since 1984, when the San Jose Mercury News became the world’s first online newspaper,” says Jerry Ceppos, dean of Reynolds School of Journalism, who previously served as vice president for news at Knight Ridder and executive editor and senior vice president of the San Jose Mercury News. During his tenure as a newspaper industry executive, he helped lead the San Jose Mercury News’ transition to digital and was involved with the digital performance of all 32 Knight Ridder dailies.

“Today, no meaningful media exist on only one platform,” Ceppos says. “Therefore, we have decided to change the curriculum to eliminate traditional sequences, such as print and broadcast journalism, permitting us to train every student on every platform—print, video, audio, the Internet,”

The marketplace demands the change. The Reynolds School will offer two tracks: news and Integrated Marketing Communications, or IMC. But all journalism students will be trained in all platforms.

Rosemary McCarthy, academic chair and assistant professor in the Reynolds School, says: “We know students cannot be platform-specific anymore—it’s not the way it works. So our teaching will not be platform-specific anymore. Every one of our students will be learning multimedia production along with reporting and press release writing.”

But the Reynolds School will continue, as always, training students how to report accurately and without bias, while emphasizing “news literacy,” which is the ability to think critically about the deluge of news and information currently available to anyone with an Internet connection or a TV set.

McCarthy notes that the new curriculum asks students to consider “whether a blog is news or opinion, or some mixture,” as one example. In addition, the school teaches the ethics of journalism in all media and in all lines of work. “The basic idea of fair, accurate and ethical reporting remains the same as it’s always been.”

Whether a student yearns to be a 21st century journalist or work in the rapidly changing fields of public relations, marketing or advertising, versatility with new media will be critical to success.

Ceppos notes: “When our students leave for an internship at a newspaper, they are likely to be asked to shoot some video, file for print and the Internet, and get a podcast going. It’s irrelevant that it happens to be a newspaper company. There’s no ‘pure’ advertising agency anymore—other businesses also expect our students to be able to handle every medium, especially since their bosses may not be able to.”

A two-story banner proclaiming the First Amendment hangs in the Reynolds School as a focal point for the guiding principle of journalism education. The banner was given by the Reynolds School Dean’s Council, made up of alumni and friends of the school. The Reno Gazette-Journal provided for the installation of 50” x 10” framed versions of the original artwork by Las Vegas designer Nancy Hara-Isa in school classrooms, labs, and the dean’s office.
Larry Dailey’s Journalism 490 course encourages students to think beyond the conventional and achieve the impossible. Students in the Games for Journalists course develop new business models for media and other industries using creative tools that are commonly associated with computer science, art, and political science disciplines. Senior James Morgan, far left foreground, is building a game that helps players understand how organizations use community, civic, education and other resources. His game may help people working in sex trades to identify positive life opportunities.

**Serious Play**

One of the avant-garde classes in the new curriculum is Larry Dailey’s Games for Journalists class, a senior-level course that teaches students how to design computer games. Dailey, who holds the Donald W. Reynolds Chair in New Media Technologies and is a former multimedia producer for MSNBC.com, says he’s not suggesting that journalism should become all fun and games, but that “some journalism can best be experienced by doing.”

“Consider,” he explains, “that a journalist’s job is fundamentally that of an educator. Science tells us that people learn best by doing.” Games engage people in a learning experience minus the drudgery and/or obstacles presented by other media, transcending language barriers and even illiteracy.

A “classic example,” Dailey says, was one of his first classes at Nevada: “It was right before the presidential elections; a couple of my students built a puzzle of the United States that had to be put together in order of electoral votes. The purpose was that you would understand that California and New York are really powerful and Nevada not so much.

“It was funny because on the day the games were due, one of the students who built the game was dragging things right and left, and I started laughing, and he said, ‘No, no! I’ve got to get this done!’

I said: ‘You don’t even realize what you’re doing, do you? If I’d told you the first day of class that you had to learn all the states and how many electoral votes they had. … ’

‘Two days,’ he said. ‘I’d have dropped in two days.’

Thinking like an educator is a “fundamental shift,” Dailey notes. Gone are the days when journalists could crank out a print story and consider their job done. They are already being tasked with creating interactive games designed around current events as components

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“The generosity of the Reynolds Foundation has given us excellence—that extra quality that you can’t get through ordinary means.”

Jerry Ceppos, dean of Reynolds School of Journalism
of a multimedia news strategy.

“Think about the power of games,” he says. “Who has seen Avatar?” he asks his class about the hit movie. About half the hands go up. “Who has played a game with Mario in it?” he asks, referring to the Nintendo video game character. All hands shoot up. “More and more, that’s the universal experience,” he notes. “It turns out that we are hardwired to learn through play.”

State-of-the-art Technology

In order to teach students in this new age of journalism, the technology behind the media is essential.

That’s why the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation gift is a “booster rocket” that will elevate the Reynolds School to the top ranks of American journalism education, according to Ceppos. “At the highest level, the generosity of the Reynolds Foundation has given us excellence—that extra quality that you can’t get through ordinary means. And their generosity is already running through the curriculum. We wouldn’t be teaching business journalism if it weren’t for an endowed Chair in Business Journalism from the Reynolds Foundation. “We ultimately will have the best media-ethics program in the country because we will have two endowed chairs in ethics, the Donald W. Reynolds Chair in the Ethics of Entrepreneurial and Innovative Journalism established by the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation and the Paul A. Leonard Chair for Ethics and Writing in Journalism.” (Please see interview of Rev. Jackie Leonard on page 92.)

“In a world that talks constantly about the decline of journalism, this gift lights the way for its future,” Ceppos adds. “This gift will permit us to deal with the continuing revolution in journalism, regardless of what it brings. Our entirely digital, multimedia technology will acquaint students—whether they are studying news or integrated

New journalism building infrastructure

The Donald W. Reynolds Foundation’s $7.96 million gift will provide approximately $4 million in new, high-tech infrastructure for the journalism building. Cabling, storage, power and air conditioning will combine to create a networked building where it’s possible to share, store and distribute all kinds of media quickly and simultaneously without creating bottlenecks.

Fiber optics

- Throughout the building with the exception of office space
- Assures real-time transfer of all data—text, audio, video, graphics
- Makes possible use of central storage capacity

Central storage capacity (Storage Area Network—SAN)

- SAN provides centralized, secure, substantial storage space
- Eliminates need for portable storage devices
- Feeds student sites, schools sites simultaneously and instantly

Additional server room/expanded existing server room

- Improves capacity and efficiency of existing second-floor server room
- Adds space for SAN and operational components (gear that runs things)

Upgraded electrical and air conditioning

- Protects equipment investment
- Additional electrical capacity to accommodate new equipment and additional student work stations
- AC essential in server spaces and production control room to protect equipment from overheating
- UPS—uninterruptable power supply provides backup power to protect against outages and surges

Computers

- Updated computers needed to take advantage of high-powered fiber optic cabling and connection to SAN

Projected and screens

- Newer, more efficient projectors will take advantage of faster building network
marketing communications—with every situation they might find in the rapidly changing world of media.”

About $4 million of the $7.96 million gift will be “invisible,” in the form of completely rewiring the Donald W. Reynolds School of Journalism building with fiber optic cabling throughout, and adding central, electronic storage capacity, updated computers, projectors and screens. The current audio and video control rooms will be updated and the two large studios on the first floor will be re-equipped.

“We plan to make the new wiring as accessible and complete as possible so that upgrades and expansion will be easy to facilitate in the future,” Ceppos says. The entire building will be updated to digital, High Definition standard.

Building Renovations

The remainder of the gift will go toward building renovations, using every bit of space, but without damaging the character of the building, Ceppos says. Some of the space on the first floor will be redistributed to create a multimedia newsroom for all news students. The broadcast studios and control rooms will replicate equipment and workflow processes in the marketplace, giving students professional level experience. A second studio/control room will be added so that younger students and clubs will have access.

The Linn Reading Room will receive new furniture that encourages students to spend more time within the school.

The school’s reception area and faculty lounge will be entirely reconfigured, adding one office to the dean’s suite.

The Reynolds National Center for Courts and Media, which is currently housed at the National Judicial College on the east side of campus, will be moved to the third floor of the Reynolds School building to replace the graduate school’s offices for students and faculty, most of which will move to new spaces renovated from old darkrooms, offices and computer labs on the first floor.

“While this move may not seem a significant change, we believe that it and other improvements—such as attention-grabbing First Amendment research and use of new media to expand the center’s record of training judges and journalists—never can happen if the center is not part of the life of the journalism school,” Ceppos says.
Philanthropic gifts such as those provided by the Pennington, Reynolds, Redfield and Hart foundations are crucial to a solid university teaching program, University Provost Marc Johnson says: “University teaching programs are built on good faculty, good program support and modern facilities. It takes all three legs for a school to have a modern, quality program.

“The William N. Pennington Health Sciences Building is not only going to allow the medical school and the nursing school to build the capacity to have more health care professionals for Nevada, it will allow them to educate their students in modern teaching facilities, such as the anatomy and physiology laboratories, and it is designed to allow medical students and nursing students to be trained in the same facilities, and in some cases, together. It’s a remarkable step forward into the future, and we have the Pennington Foundation to thank for it.

“Similarly, the vision of the Reynolds School of Journalism is to move away from the separation of newspapers, radio, television and Internet communications to a model of integrated media where the students focus on gathering and reporting information in story form through a variety of media. The Reynolds Foundation gift gives us the facilities and the technology to allow professors to teach story-writing and story presentation in the most modern, integrated multimedia fashion.”

The University’s overall strategic plan has as one of its primary objectives preparing a well-educated workforce for Nevada’s current and future industries in order to stimulate economic development in the state.

The strategic plan identifies traditional industries such as mining, agricultural, gaming, manufacturing, news and logistics, as well as the emerging renewable energy resources industries. In addition, the strategic plan identifies improving the physical and mental health of Nevadans as a key goal.

“An educated workforce that will provide for the health industry in Nevada is crucial to our mission,” Johnson notes, adding, “We are also moving into the knowledge industry, which includes the communication industries and encompasses the fields of journalism and computer science. These new buildings will greatly enhance the University’s strategic initiative in preparing students who will positively add to Nevada’s future growth and prosperity.”

Fund for the Future of Journalism

The Reynolds School of Journalism is excited to announce a new fundraising campaign to build a $1.6 million endowment, the Fund for the Future of Journalism, to support the capital enhancements that the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation gift provides. This fund will offer continued technological support and ensure the Reynolds School stays at the forefront of journalism education. Three areas within the school will have naming opportunities, the atrium, new graduate studies area and the newsroom.

If you are interested in supporting the fund, please contact Kristin Burgarello, director of development, (775) 784-4471 or kburgarello@unr.edu.

—Zanny Marsh ’09MJM and Jane Tors ’82 contributed to this story