Dynamic, inspiring, outreaching faculty are of paramount importance to not only student success, but also the success of the community at large. Faculty serve in many roles. In addition to teaching, they conduct vital research that expands the body of knowledge in their fields. They also serve the public by using their expertise to directly solve problems via applied research, as well as by providing expert analyses and assessments in consultation with members of the public, business leaders and community and state leaders.

To honor and acknowledge top faculty, annual awards are given by the University and the Board of Regents, as well as by national organizations. This year’s slate of award winners typifies the extraordinary faculty at Nevada.

**Tom Nickles**
Nevada Professor of the Year, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching/Council for Advancement and Support of Education

Philosophy professor Tom Nickles is one of only 38 professors in the nation to receive the State Professor of the Year honor this year, and he is the seventh professor from the University of Nevada, Reno to receive the honor in just the past 10 years.

“The Carnegie Foundation’s State Professor of the Year awards are among the most prestigious teaching awards in higher education,” University President Milton Glick says. “We are extremely proud of our most recent recipient, Professor Tom Nickles. Our students have been privileged to have had the opportunity to learn from Professor Nickles for the past 33 years, and I expect that he will continue to set the bar for the quality of instruction here at Nevada for many more years to come.”

The Professor of the Year program honors “the most outstanding undergraduate instructors in the country—those who excel as teachers and influence the lives and careers of their students,” according to the Carnegie Foundation.

Nickles also received the Nevada System of Higher Education’s Regents’ Teaching Award three years ago. He says he “feels rather modest” about his Professor of the Year award, recognizing the excellence of his colleagues at Nevada, but his students clearly feel the honor is well deserved.

“He’s incredible,” said Kaleb Wartgow, a senior majoring in biology and philosophy. “He’s incredibly knowledgeable and has a unique background. He’s internationally known for some of his expertise, so it makes me feel very privileged to get to interact with him.”

**Eric Rasmussen**
F. Donald Tibbitts Distinguished Teacher Award

English professor Eric Rasmussen is an internationally recognized scholar of Shakespeare and the Renaissance, with publications including The Royal Shakespeare Company’s Complete Works of William Shakespeare (co-edited with Jonathan Bate), 2006 and William Shakespeare and John Fletcher’s The Two Noble Kinsmen (co-edited with Richard Proudfoot),
Foundation Professors

Scott Casper is a professor and chair of the Department of History. Throughout his career he has won several awards, including the Nevada Board of Regents’ Teaching Award (2005), the Carnegie/CASE Professor of the Year Award (2008), and the Dr. Donald Mousel and Dr. William Feltner Award for Excellence in Research and/or Creative Activity (2009). He is also an award-winning author.

Yvonne Stedham is a professor of management. Her research explores intercultural differences in business ethics and management practices and is focused on understanding issues of fairness and equity in the workplace. She is actively engaged with the Society of Human Resource Management; co-founded WeAct, an area nonprofit organization that provides mentoring, development and networking for women in business; and she teaches managerial skills to presiding judges through the National Judicial College. In 2004 she received the University’s Adviser of the Year Award, and has been a College of Business senior scholar faculty mentor four times.

Richard Schultz is a professor of geological engineering and geomechanics. He specializes in geological engineering, structural geology and planetary science. He works closely with graduate students to develop strong and supportive research teams that have produced scientific contributions, as well as alumni who today hold positions in academia, industry, government and private industry around the globe.

Carol Parkhurst
Distinguished Faculty

In her 30 years at the University, Carol Parkhurst, emerita librarian and senior director of University Libraries, made a significant difference in the development of the University as a whole, not just the libraries. She played a key role in the development of the University’s technology infrastructure, as well as in the planning and design of the Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center, an award-winning facility that is one of the most technologically advanced libraries in the country. She is a national leader within her profession, where she has chaired and participated in major initiatives of the American Library Association.

William Sparkman
Distinguished Service

Since 1998, William Sparkman has served as the dean of the College of Education. During his tenure, the College of Education has earned notable national recognition in several different areas, including literacy studies, where our faculty continue to be among the nation’s leaders. Sparkman’s work in meeting the needs of our state’s underserved learners has been groundbreaking. In 2000, he created the Dean’s Future Scholars program, a pioneering K-12 outreach program that provides students from first-generation, low-income families with a formal support system in their desire to become teachers.
2005. Rasmussen’s teaching honors include Senior Scholar faculty mentor recognition in 2004 as well as the 2004 Alan Bible Teaching Excellence Award and the 1999 Dr. Donald Mousel and Dr. William Feltner Award for Excellence in Research and/or Creative Activity. Since 1973, the Tibbitts Award has been bestowed upon the campus’ top teacher.

David Ake

Regents’Teaching Award

Associate professor of music David Ake authored the highly regarded book *Jazz Cultures* for the University of California Press, and his articles have appeared in such publications as *Jazz Perspectives*, *American Music*, the *Journal of Musicological Research*, and the *Cambridge Companion to Jazz*. Among his honors are the Society for American Music’s Wiley Housewright Dissertation Award, the University’s Mousel-Feltner Award for Outstanding Research, as well as the 2009 F. Donald Tibbitts Distinguished Teacher Award.

As pianist and composer, Ake’s recordings include “In Between,” his first solo CD, and “Once and Again,” the latest release from The Collective. He has played with such outstanding musicians as Ravi Coltrane, Charlie Haden, James Newton and Bud Shank. He has several conference papers and invited lectures to his credit.

Ake is known throughout the University community as an excellent teacher with an astounding depth of knowledge. His lectures are described as engaging and electrifying, and his peers note that his students often comment on the many ways he has changed their lives through his mentorship and teaching.

Jamie Anderson

Regents’Academic Advisor Award (graduate) and University Graduate Advisor Award

Jamie Anderson, director of the Division of Interdisciplinary Medical Education in the University of Nevada, Reno School of Medicine, has been advising and serving the students of the School of Medicine for the past 21 years. She received Nevada Business Journal’s Health Care Heroes Educator award in 2007. Her role at the School of Medicine allows her to work in two areas that she loves—student clinical rotations in rural areas of the state and patient care courses that incorporate community physicians to help teach students. In addition, Anderson oversees seven courses in the School of Medicine curriculum requiring her to work extensively with medical students, advising and guiding them through their science and clinical courses.

David Fenimore

University Undergraduate Advisor Award

David Fenimore, director of undergraduate studies in the English department, has instructed countless courses at the University since joining the faculty in 1989. He has worked with undergraduate English majors and minors, providing course, program and career advice. For the benefit of University students, he has developed several innovative techniques to provide up-to-date advising and career information. These include an e-newsletter, an advisement blog, and a brochure entitled “What Can I Do With An English Major?”

Hugh Shapiro

Outstanding Undergraduate Research Faculty Mentor

In building Asian Studies at Nevada largely from scratch over the past 15 years, associate professor of history Hugh Shapiro has mentored dozens of research students in myriad
ways, and in the process has helped launch
t heir careers in academics, public service, and
other fields. Shapiro’s philosophy as a men-
tor seems simple but requires immense work:
awaken students to their own potential, then
give them the tools and support necessary to
achieve that potential.

Manoranjan Misra
Regents’ Researcher Award

Professor of chemical and metallurgical engi-
neering Manoranjan Misra’s research has been
recognized nationally and internationally, and
has brought distinction to Nevada and the Uni-
versity. His recent research in renewable energy,
more specifically in using coffee grounds and
chicken feathers to produce biodiesel fuel, has
garnered the attention of national media such
as the New York Times, the Washington Post,
and Science Daily. Misra’s work in the removal
of arsenic from drinking water has earned him
national recognition, as well as three patents.

Jonathan “Josh” Baker
Regents’ Rising Researcher Award

As an assistant professor in the Depart-
ment of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology,
Jonathan Baker’s research has focused on
bridging the gap between his graduate and
postdoctoral work, studying how the physical
chemistry of single molecules scales up to
explain the physical chemistry of muscle. He
team-teaches medical biochemistry, is a guest
lecturer for other courses in the School of
Medicine, and serves on the Medical School
Admissions Committee.

James Brune
Outstanding Researcher of the Year

Professor James Brune served as the direc-
tor of the Nevada Seismological Laboratory
at the University and has obtained more than
$22 million in research grants. His prestige
as one of the top seismologists in the world
brings recognition to the University’s seismol-
ogy programs. Brune was awarded the Medal
of the Seismological Society of America in
1997, a top honor in his field. He has more
than 200 publications to his credit, perhaps
best known for his studies of the earthquake
source. His 1970 paper on stress drop in
earthquakes is one of the most influential
papers of all time in seismology.

MaryAnn Demchak
Distinguished Outreach Faculty

Professor of special education educational
specialties MaryAnn Demchak has provided
expert consultation to school districts through-
out Nevada regarding students with moder-
ate to profound cognitive impairments and
with behavioral issues. Through her work in
directing the Nevada Dual Sensory Impair-
ment Project, she provides consultation in
home and educational settings to assist families
and service providers of children who have
impairments in both vision and hearing. In
addition, she has served on multiple state com-
mittees and task force groups related to special
education. Examples include serving on the
Nevada Special Education Advisory Com-
mittee, the Nevada Alternative Assessment
Advisory Committee, co-chair of the continu-
ous improvement monitoring program (Project
IMPROVE), and various task force groups to
revise the Nevada Administrative Code. In
addition, she has maintained a rigorous agenda
in research and publication.

— Melanie Robbins ’06M.A., John Trent
’85/’87, ’00M.A. and Claudene Wharton ’86,
’99M.A. contributed to this story.