From the President

A photo, hopes wished for, and dreams realized

Thanks to our increasingly digitized world, photos, for the most part, do not yellow anymore.

The technology of our hand-held world has ensured that every moment captured in a photo remains indelibly crisp and—depending on the skill of the photographer—relatively in focus.

We are lucky that the passage of time doesn’t diminish what a photo contains.

In November, a photo was snapped in Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center’s Randall Rotunda of the celebration of awarding Bridget Maestretti, a senior from Minden, Nev., the Gov. Kenny Guinn Millennium Scholarship.

Before I get too far into this column, I have to note that seeing Bill Raggio in such a setting should not be a surprise. Sen. Raggio, a graduate of our University, whose 38-year service in the Nevada State Senate is a record, believed that Nevada was at its best when it was educating our young. I was reminded of the impact of his lifelong advocacy of higher education when I received the news of his death at age 85 in late February.

If you notice in the photo that accompanies this column, Sen. Raggio stands just off the right shoulder of Bridget Maestretti, a 3.9 GPA student in secondary education. For scores of our University’s students, past, present and future, Sen. Raggio occupied this same position. His legislative career provided much of the impetus for the bricks and mortar on many of our campuses; his spirit was, in the words of Nevada System of Higher Education Chancellor Dan Klaich, that of a “master sculptor” who modernized the delivery of higher education in Nevada.

And as influential as Sen. Raggio was, I believe he would be the first to tell you that the state cannot be expected to provide everything. Scholarships, whether they come in the form of the Guinn Millennium Scholarship or the hundreds of philanthropic scholarships that we offer our students in every major area of emphasis at our University, provide the intense murmur of possibility that hums so strongly in every one of our students.

Bridget Maestretti, who hopes one day to become a teacher, is just one example.

“There is no greater feeling,” she wrote in her essay for the scholarship, “than helping a struggling student grasp a concept that will help them move forward and feel success.”

I look at this photo taken in November and am reminded that photos are just pictures. What gives photos life, and colors them with meaning, are the people and the dreams within each image. With all due respect to the digital wizardry of modern technology, there is magic to education. And there is pure wonder in the support of so many who have helped make the hopes wished for in these photographs become dreams realized for the students of our University.

Sincerely,

Marc A. Johnson
President

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