Home Means
NEVADA
ONCE NEVADA, ALWAYS NEVADA.

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Photo by Lee Pfeiffer
Message from the President

Dear Nevada Alumni,

Like most Nevada graduates, I am extremely proud of my alma mater. I could tell you where on campus I took Econ 101, where I met my wife, and where and when I could get the best drink specials. Remembering this got me to thinking how far our beloved Nevada has come, so I wanted to share a few thoughts with you.

Did you know?

• An increase of 2,000 new students at the University has an estimated economic impact of $88 million per year on our local economy.*

• Student enrollment is expected to surpass 20,000 by fall of 2015.

• We are nearly 87,000 alumni strong, and more than half live in Nevada.

• The Nevada Alumni Association and its chapters produce more than 65 events each year such as Pack Picnics, tailgate parties, March from the Arch, mystery bus dinners.

• The Nevada Alumni Association awarded more than $45,000 in student scholarships last year.

• There are 26 active alumni chapters engaging alumni throughout the United States.

• Currently 1,870 alumni and friends are dues-paying members of the Nevada Alumni Association.

There are so many exciting things happening at OUR Nevada, and it is easy to miss them if you are not in touch. The Nevada Alumni Association is working hard to keep you connected, and that mission includes growing our dues-paying membership base. It is so simple to become an annual or lifetime member. Just visit alumni.unr.edu/membership and sign up!

If you are already one of the 1,870 dues-paying members of the Nevada Alumni Association, I thank you for your commitment to Nevada. If you are one of the 85,000 who are not members, then I call on you to join today. Not for benefits or perks (of which there are many), but simply because it is the right thing to do for Nevada!

Sincerely,

Matt Clafton ‘93
President, Nevada Alumni Council

P.S. Remember! Just because you receive the Nevada Silver and Blue, doesn’t mean you’re a dues-paying member. Check the back cover to see your membership status.

* Economic impact study conducted by Brian Bonnenfant ’97 M.S., program manager of geographic information services for the Nevada Small Business Development Center at the University of Nevada.

Matt Clafton ‘93
President, Nevada Alumni Council

* ex-officio member
Class Chat

Barbara Marcus ’61 (journalism) recently moved from her home of 17 years in Beverly Hills, Calif. to Santa Barbara’s Samarkand retirement community. With no more home repairs or expensive upkeep, she is looking forward to more time with her friends and loved ones.

Bill Kroger ’70 (journalism), ’81 M.A. (economics) has published his first novel, “Fallon’s Orphans.” An action-thriller set in exotic locations around the world, the story centers on an ancient battle between an Orthodox Christian sect based in Istanbul and a mafia-like Islamic group. The book is available through Amazon.

Valerie Glenn ’76 (journalism), CEO and principal of The Glenn Group Companies, has been elected to a two-year term as president of the Nevada chapter of the International Women’s Forum. In this role, Valerie will further the IWF’s mission to advance the leadership of women.

Steve Martarano ’79 (journalism) is the public affairs specialist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Bay-Delta office in downtown Sacramento. He is also a writer, and his story about baseball player Andrew Susac was recently featured on the cover of Comstock’s magazine. Steve and his wife Sharon have lived in Sacramento for nearly 30 years.

Bill Thimmesch ’85 (education), ’87 M.A. (speech communication) is now program manager for executive development at the U.S. Department of Justice in Washington, D.C.

J. Carlos Velazquez ’87 (speech/theater) has been promoted to president of HMA Associates, Inc., a communications and health marketing firm based in Washington, D.C. Carlos oversees national communications campaigns aimed at reducing health disparities and improving access to health care delivery systems. His campaigns have won several national and international awards. Carlos lives in Virginia where he serves on the Arlington County Commission for the Arts and the Human Rights Commission. He is president of Crystal City Evening Toastmasters, which was recently named Club of the Year.

Sharon Lowe ’89 (general studies), ’95 M.A. (history) was named one of the Top 25 Junior and Community College Professors in the U.S. by RateMyProfessors.com, as reported by USA Today.

Kurt Dietrich ’00 (civil engineering), ’08 (construction management) and Candace Watson were married Nov. 29, 2014, at the Nevada Northern Railway National Historic Site in Ely, Nev. They joined in matrimony on the Steptoe Valley Flyer, the original steam train that served White Pine County from 1906 to 1941.

Alex Mingo ’10 (biology) and Jessica (Warren) Mingo ’10 (nutrition) were married last July. Family and friends, including many Nevada alumni, attended the ceremony and reception in Sparks, Nev. Alex and Jessica now reside in Sparks and continue to support the Wolf Pack.
Today, Sharon is a history professor at Truckee Meadows Community College and received the Reno Gazette-Journal TMCC Faculty Excellence in Teaching Award in 2008.

‘90s 
Alison Fogarty ’96 (biology) was recently named vice president of marketing for the Mystic Lake Casino Hotel in Prior Lake, Minn. Alison has been working in the gaming industry for more than a decade and is excited to be part of the Mystic Lake marketing team.

‘00s 
Pam Beaton ’00 (health science) is director of education for the American Society of Transplant Surgeons (ASTS) and has been named to fellow status with the Alliance for Continuing Education in the Health Professions (ACEHP), a prominent organization in the field of continuing health education. Pam was acknowledged for her continued volunteer service to ACEHP, including participation in mentoring, committees and presentations, and conveying a commitment to continuing education/medical education over many years.

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Kickin’ it with K-von | My first marathon

I went to Honolulu to perform in a comedy show and later that night one of the patrons asked if I was also running the marathon the next morning? Having just done a bunch of leg exercises that day, I said they didn’t need any more punishment. “Too bad, it’s the 3rd biggest in the USA. People are flying in from all over the world for it,” he replied.

Here’s how my brain works: I mean, if people are spending thousands of dollars for this, and I’m already here, this is a huge savings… and I LOVE SAVINGS! Therefore, I must do this marathon. Besides, how bad could 26.2 miles be when you have palm trees, ocean, and potential whales to look at? So, I went for it, and the following is a rough timeline of my experience:

5:00 a.m. The gun goes off and I’m feeling great, passing thousands of people for the first 12 miles. There’s mist in the air, fog, and an army of 30,000 people on the course. It was epic!

6:45 a.m. We head into the hills of Honolulu. At the higher elevation it’s pouring rain, but not just straight down, the wind is whipping it back and forth. Now my socks and shoes are squishy. I can’t help but notice I’m no longer passing anyone.

7:30 a.m. The sun is coming up and the scenery is absolutely gorgeous, but I’m not enjoying any of it. I feel fine and lungs are doing great, but my legs are starting to give out. Yesterday’s squats and lunges seem like a really bad idea now. Then, at the 17-mile marker it began... throngs of people started passing me.

8:00 a.m. When an athlete passes you, it’s one thing, but around mile 20 it got out of control... EVERYBODY was going by now! Was this a hidden camera show? A father and son, two people in Disney costumes with big heavy foam heads, a little Japanese girl, followed by a grandma in flip flops... yes, FLIP FLOPS! Then I hear, “On your left.” I look back, no one is there. Am I hallucinating? Then again, “ON YOUR LEFT!” I look back... and down. Here comes a wheelchair athlete passing me with a vengeance UP a hill!

8:20 a.m. At mile 22, for no reason, I literally cried out “PIZZA!” I’m still not sure why. Apparently my final words will be something along those lines some day. No poetic “E tu Brute?” for me.

9:10 a.m. I see the finish line in the distance and I’m desparately running (slowly shuffling my feet) towards it, but it seems to keep moving further and further away.

The longest 2.2 miles of my life. I cross the line and realize since I haven’t paid, I have no friends in town. There will be no finishing t-shirt, no medal, and no official race photos. Basically, NO PROOF THIS EVER HAPPENED! And as a bonus, I get to walk two more miles back to the hotel.

The Hawaiian people were very supportive. Many lined up outside their homes holding out snacks they’d made. Of course I reached into about every bowl, bucket and tray to grab a handful of whatever they offered, shoved it in my face, and kept moving. Some items were better than others. Luckily all were edible. Felt kinda like trick-or-treating on the run.

Going into the marathon I had 3 goals: Don’t get injured. Don’t stop running. Break 4 hours. Accomplishing the first two, I was fairly close on the final one with a finishing time of 4 hours 10 minutes. As you might expect, Kenyans won in the men/women’s division, both with a time of around 2 hours and 20 minutes.

I was feeling fairly good about myself for running on a whim. So I looked up celebrities and their previous times, and I discovered I beat Oprah, Al Gore and P Diddy, but was smoked by Will Ferrell, George W. Bush and Sarah Palin. Therefore, unfortunately, this will not be my last marathon. Next time however, I will plan at least a month in advance... and PAY so there’s some actual evidence!

K-von ’03 (marketing) is a Nevada alum and comedian. He wrote, directed and stars in the new film “NOWRUZ: Lost & Found” officially selected by the “Reno Tahoe International Film Festival”. Look for it June 4th weekend and bring the whole family! Visit www.Kvon.tv or www.facebook.com/KvonComedy for information.
Eric Harper ’00 (English literature), ’03 M.A. (English), ’08 MBA recently earned a doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania, and was promoted to director of organizational development for Harley-Davidson Financial Services. Eric and his wife, Maiko Yamagiwa ’01 (English literature), ’05 M.S. (speech pathology), reside in Dallas with their two daughters.

Kathleen (Slaboch) Kirkpatrick ’00 (journalism) was recently appointed director of marketing and communications for Truckee Meadows Community College where she oversees internal and external communications, college advertising, emergency communications, social media and more. She serves on the non-profit board of directors for Note-Able Music Therapy Services and as the president of the Reno Alumnae Chapter of Sigma Alpha Iota.

Katie (Perkins) Nannini ’00 (journalism) has recently joined NV Energy’s Corporate Communications Department as senior media relations representative in northern Nevada. Before joining NV Energy, Katie worked with Immunize Nevada, The Glenn Group, Food Bank of Northern Nevada and Saint Mary’s Regional Medical Center.

Manita Rawat ’01 (biochemistry, mathematics) has been promoted to partner with Duane Morris LLP in Philadelphia. As a registered patent attorney with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, Manita has significant experience in patent preparation and prosecution, working primarily with mechanical, aerospace and software technologies. She has a technical background in biochemistry and applied mathematics with concentrations in computer science, aerospace engineering and statistical analysis.

Kristen (Newton) Mayer ’02 (journalism) has recently become a financial advisor at Stifel Nicolaus & Company, Inc., member SIPC and NYSE, a full-service brokerage and investment banking firm in downtown Reno.

Christopher Moore ’02 (international relations, Spanish) was lead editor on a recently published travel book about Shenzhen, China, a city located just over the border from Hong Kong. *Shenzhen: The Book* is available through Amazon and at ShenzhenBook.com.
Elliot Sparkman ’04 (general studies) has been hired as an on-site activation manager with Anheuser-Busch in Austin, Texas. Elliot will manage on-site activity as well as festival and sports properties in Austin, San Antonio and College Station. He credits the service industry experience he gained during his time at the University of Nevada for his professional success. Elliot proudly serves as president of the Nevada Cheer and Spirit Alumni Chapter.

Rob Gaedtke ’05 (journalism) has been named CEO of KPS3, a marketing and technology company based in Reno. Rob rejoined KPS3 in 2011 as shareholder and vice president of creative and technical services, during which time he led the agency’s evolution and growth in the digital and web division. In his new role as CEO, Rob will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the company and its 30-person team.

Lee Nelson ’05 M.A. (history) has been hired as head coach of the Nevada Wolf Pack women’s volleyball program. Lee returns to Nevada after a strong three-year run as an assistant coach at the University of Miami where he helped lead the Hurricanes to three straight NCAA Tournament appearances. Previously, he served as a Wolf Pack assistant coach.

Karl Fendelander ’06 (English) recently joined Biggest Little Group (BLG), a marketing communications firm in Reno as a partner and content director. Karl has been developing web content since the late 1990s, and comes to BLG after owning Smiling Eye Media, a writing, editing and web design firm in Reno.

Kelly Glenn ’06 (journalism) is vice president of account management at The Glenn Group and has been elected 2015 president of Western Industrial Nevada (WIN).

Christine (LoRusso) Parman ’06 (accounting) is a life insurance agent with New York Life and recently earned membership in the prestigious Million Dollar Round Table (MDRT). MDRT membership represents the top life insurance and financial service professionals worldwide. Christine recently started Parman Insurance and Financial Services with her husband, Brian, to help their clients with insurance, investments and retirement planning from the nation’s top financial institutions, including New York Life.

Jen (Hylin) Vittori ’06 (animal science) has become an associate veterinarian with Desert Hills Animal Hospital. Jen is a fifth-generation Nevadan, born in Reno, who completed her education at local area schools. She lives in Reno with her husband Josh Vittori ’06 (forest and rangeland management).

Ashley Brune ’07 (journalism) joined Biggest Little Group (BLG) in January as partner and communications director. Before joining BLG, Ashley owned Ashley Brune Communications, a boutique public relations firm in Reno.

Aaron Martinez ’08 (civil engineering) has been named one of the 2015 New Faces of Civil Engineering Professionals by the American Society of Civil Engineers. Aaron is the owner of A.M. Engineering in Elko. He also volunteers...
with the City of Elko Planning Commission, and he served as a mentor for the Boys and Girls Club, Truckee Meadows Branch.

'T10s

Taylor Anderson '10 (political science) recently graduated cum laude from Willamette University College of Law with his doctor of jurisprudence. Taylor was admitted to the Oregon State Bar in October 2014, and is currently working as a judicial clerk for the Hon. Jay A. McAlpin at the Lane County Circuit Court in Eugene, Ore.

Alicia Echevarria '11 (civil engineering) received her Ph.D. in civil engineering from the University of Connecticut in December. She is employed by the engineering firm HNTB in Manhattan, N.Y. in their structural and security-based design department. Alicia is the co-inventor of a patent-pending structural column system and has presented at the ASCE/SEI Structures Congress. She is currently teaming on several security mitigation projects for critical facilities throughout the United States.

Jeromy Manke '12 (international business) was recently elected to the Society for Human Resource Management's prestigious Young Professionals Advisory Council. Jeromy is one of 15 young professionals elected for a one-year term that began Jan. 1.

William Stevens '13 M.D. was elected chief resident for 2015-16 in the Department of Family Medicine at Madigan Army Medical Center at Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Tacoma, Wash. William is a captain in the U.S. Army and lives with his wife, Marysa (Falk) Stevens '11 (journalism) in Lacy, Wash. 

Submissions are due May 6 and can be sent to: chatter@ unr.edu. We edit all submissions for style, clarity and length.