In 1885, the University Preparatory School moved from Elko to Reno, and one stately building, Morrill Hall, a French Second Empire edifice, was built on a bluff overlooking downtown amid 10 acres of hay fields purchased from the Evans Ranch. Since then, the “Campus on the Hill” has stretched to include 256 acres on the main campus, some 60 acres at the south Reno Redfield Campus shared with Truckee Meadows Community College, operations in Las Vegas, as well as Cooperative Extension offices in every county.

An unprecedented building boom that began with the opening of the Joe Crowley Student Union in November 2007 continued with the addition of the Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center, the Marguerite Wattié Petersen Academic Center, the Nevada Agricultural Experiment Station Greenhouse Complex, the Davidson Mathematics and Science Center, and the Center for Molecular Medicine—will culminate with the addition of the William N. Pennington Health Sciences Building in summer 2011.

By the time the Pennington Health Sciences Building is completed, the new facilities will have added more than 800,000 square feet of teaching, learning and research space to the Reno campus.

President Milton Glick is grateful for everyone who helped bring the building projects to fruition and notes that the new buildings don’t merely add space, but are transformational to the campus culture: “We have many people to thank for our new buildings, from the Nevada State Legislature to the community, to the architects and contractors, to the students, faculty, and staff who have been so patient and understanding during this time of change.”

By Melanie Robbins 06M.A.
our many friends and supporters to our own faculty who have helped give us state-of-the-art facilities so that our campus is truly a part of the 21st century higher education landscape.

“They’ve not only given us new buildings, they’ve helped change the very nature of what we do. These new buildings have space where students and faculty can join together in meaningful ways that lead to new knowledge and discovery.”

John Carothers, vice president for development and alumni relations, notes that $70 million in private funding was raised to support this building boom. “We are extremely grateful to the donors who helped meet state and University challenges to provide our campus with the buildings and improvements that will launch our students and faculty into a new era of learning and research,” he says.

In addition to the brand new construction, the Reynolds School of Journalism Building is undergoing a $7.96 renovation funded by a gift from the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation to rewire, retrofit and remodel the 18-year-old structure so students can be trained in every media platform: print, video, audio and the Internet. Renovations are expected to be completed by early spring 2012.

Besides the transformation coming to the J-School, the Jot Travis Building received a makeover to house The Davidson Academy of Nevada—a free public school for profoundly gifted middle and high school students—as well as the University’s Honors Program, Black Rock Press and an auditorium classroom. The building originally opened on May 18, 1958 and housed the campus bookstore, student leadership offices, food outlets and recreation and meeting rooms. It closed as a student union on Nov. 2, 2007, but continues to house the Overlook restaurant. Today, some 120 Davidson Academy students study there.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE RECENT BUILDING BOOM

The first new structure to grace the north end of campus and shift the center of gravity away from the historical Quadrangle in the south was “The Joe”—the Joe Crowley Student Union, named in honor of President Joe Crowley. Opened Fall 2007, the 167,000 square-foot student union is the largest building on the University of Nevada, Reno campus.

The Joe Crowley Student Union

1892
Electric lights installed on campus

1894
The Alumni Association of the University of Nevada is organized.

1896
Men’s dormitory, Lincoln Hall, completed. Women’s dormitory, Manzanita Hall, completed. Dedication of the University’s first athletic facility, the gymnasium.

1899
Washoe County presents to the University a 60-acre farm valued at $12,000 to be used in connection with the Agricultural Experiment Station. Silver and blue are adopted as the school colors.

1900
The President’s House is completed at a cost of more than $8,000.

1907
The family of Comstock pioneer John W. Mackay begins a donation to the University that founds the Mackay School of Mines, the Mackay Athletic Field, and the Mackay Training Quarters, and contributes $25,000 toward beautifying the campus. They also present a statue in bronze by Gutzon Borglum of John W. Mackay.
Emeritus Joe Crowley, who served from 1978 to 2000, and also returned for an eight-month term as interim president in 2006. The Joe is being funded entirely by student fees and students were involved in every step of development and design. The building has been called the “hearthstone of campus,” since it is the perfect place to study, socialize, or just kick back and read a book. The $66 million, 167,000-square-foot building boasts four floors that contain student government offices, the

ASUN bookstore, spacious meeting rooms—including a ballroom—a 220-seat theater and numerous food establishments and other businesses.

In spring 2008, the 8,100-square-foot Marguerite Wattis Petersen Foundation Athletic Academic Center opened to complete the E.L. Cord Foundation Academic and Athletics Performance Complex, a 46,000-square-foot facility designed to provide Nevada’s student-athletes academic and counseling resources. The Petersen Foundation Athletic Academic Center, located just east of Legacy Hall, was built strictly with private donations. In addition to a lead gift from the Marguerite Wattis Petersen Foundation, many other donors made the $6.2 million academic center possible, including the E.L. Cord Foundation, the Wilbur D. May Foundation, the Thelma B. and Thomas P. Hart Foundation, the Charles and Ruth Hopping Charitable Foundation, the Dorothy Towne Foundation and Drs. Rita and Harry Huneycutt, as well as other supporters.

After the original greenhouses were torn down to make way for the Davidson Mathematics and Science Center, new ones were built on Valley Road using $3 million in state funds and $3.2 million from the sale of land at Mill Street and McCarran Blvd. The Nevada Agricultural Experiment Station Greenhouse Complex, opened in early 2008, offers much more impressive accommodations for students and researchers in the College of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Natural Resources than in the past. Each of the six greenhouses is 96 feet long by 30 feet wide. More than 19 Morrill Halls would fit inside the spacious, 295,000-square-foot Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center, opened in spring 2008.
buildings are anchored to a 12,000-square-foot headhouse. Already, University researchers have greenhouse projects that will benefit the public. A biomass project focuses on converting algae to biofuels and a collaborative greenhouse project uses hydroponic methods to grow vegetables.

The 295,000-square-foot Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center opened its doors Aug. 11, 2008 and ushered in a new era. Built to replace the Getchell Library, constructed in 1962, the new building wasn’t exactly a library anymore. Designed not by library consultants, but by the University’s information technology and library staff, the Knowledge Center is unprecedented. Fully wired and digitized, the Knowledge Center combines the best of traditional library resources with new digital and multimedia technologies. Not just a place to find stacks of books or even information databases, it’s a place to create, share and collaborate.

The building, located just south of the Joe Crowley Student Union and designed for pedestrian traffic to flow seamlessly from one building to the other, is named in recognition of a combined $10 million gift from Chuck Mathewson and International Game Technology (IGT). Private donations account for more than $22 million of the $106 million facility. Remaining funding came from student fees and the state of Nevada.

Lifelong Learning Center soaks up the sun, saves money

Las Vegas certainly has its share of sunlight, so when University of Nevada Cooperative Extension built its Lifelong Learning Center in 2006, designers took full advantage of that abundant natural resource.

Dual purpose structures were constructed on the north side of the facility to provide shade for parked cars and to capture solar energy. Photovoltaic modules were installed on the top of the parking shade structures. NVEnergy provided a grant to install solar panels through their Solar Generations Project and Net Metering Program.

The grants were for installation of demonstration projects for solar energy use. The energy that is continually generated by Cooperative Extension’s PV modules is used by the facility and decreases the facility’s conventional energy use.

A review of NVEnergy electric bills revealed that annual savings have been approximately $5,000. As conventional energy costs rise, savings also rise. And when the solar energy isn’t being used—say on weekends—the surplus is sent into the power grid and nearby homes and businesses use this extra power.

Additional renewable energy, such as solar or wind power, could be added to the facility at a later date to decrease the facility’s use of conventional energy sources, which are expensive and sometimes problematic in delivery.

“The new Lifelong Learning Center has helped make Cooperative Extension a leader in conservation in the Las Vegas area,” said Cooperative Extension Dean and Director Karen Hinton. “But it’s also helped us save money.”

—Marilyn Ming
The Davidson Mathematics and Science Center, located north of Fleischmann Agriculture Building on the southeast side of campus, is fast becoming the central hub for the sciences on campus. Opened June 3, the building is home to the College of Science Dean’s Office and the Department of Mathematics and Statistics. The $67.3 million building is the first, new capital project for the natural sciences on campus in nearly 40 years. The 105,000-square-foot, four-story building features the 464-seat Nell J. Redfield Foundation Auditorium, the largest teaching-centered auditorium on campus, as well as high-tech classrooms and laboratories. Some 70 percent of the student body will attend classes in the facility. The generosity of private foundations, which provided $21.6 million in funding, helped make the building possible. Major donors included foundations such as the Davidson Foundation, Nell J. Redfield Foundation, University of Nevada, Reno Foundation, E. L. Cord Foundation, Thelma B. and Thomas P. Hart Foundation, Mallory Foundation, Robert Z. Hawkins Foundation, Charles N. Mathewson Foundation, Bretzlaff Foundation and others.

The Center for Molecular Medicine, opened Aug. 21, is the first new research building constructed at the University of Nevada School of Medicine in nearly 30 years and will house medical research programs in pre-term birth, muscular dystrophy, breast cancer, male infertility, asthma, stroke and neurodegenerative diseases, tumors, herd of dairy cattle and other livestock.

1958 Jot Travis Student Union completed.
1962 Getchell Library, named after Nevada mining tycoon Noble H. Getchell, is completed.
1963 Fleischmann Planetarium is completed, Scrugham Engineering and Mines Building opens.
1967 Effie Mona Mack Social Science Building dedicated.
1969 Reno campus enrollment passes 7,000 and Las Vegas passes 5,000.
1981 The University of Nevada, Reno Foundation established to generate private support for the University.
The William N. Pennington Health Sciences Building, slated to open in 2011, creates the space for the Division of Health Sciences to lead the nation in a new pedagogy that combines medical, nursing and health sciences education, allowing future doctors, nurses and health care workers to train together to provide team-based health care.

The William N. Pennington Health Sciences Building, under construction currently, will combine medical, nursing and health sciences education under one roof, representing a paradigm shift in pedagogy to support the demand for health care practitioners who work as an integrated team. The building, projected to cost close to $49 million, will give the School of Medicine the physical capacity to increase its class size from 62 to 100, for a total eventual enrollment of 400. The building will also house the Orvis School of Nursing and will allow nursing enrollment to double to 300. Study after study has shown that team-based health care is not only cost-effective, but delivers optimal care. The 59,000-square-foot building will be adjacent to the existing Pennington Medical Education Building on the north end of campus. The William N. Pennington Foundation gave $10 million, bringing total private gifts toward construction and debt service to $14.4 million, including major gifts such as $2.5 million from the Nell J. Redfield Foundation and $1 million from the Thelma B. and Thomas P. Hart Foundation. The Nevada State Legislature allocated $3 million for planning and $31 million in construction bonding was approved as part of the Legislature’s 2009 Capital Improvement Project budget. The building is slated for completion by the summer of 2011.

The Center for Molecular Medicine, opened Summer 2010, is a 140,000-square-foot facility that focuses on the research of herpes viruses and infectious disease. The $77 million, 140,000-square-foot center is also the headquarters for the Whittemore Peterson Institute for Neuro-Immune Disease, specializing in the treatment and research of crippling and baffling ailments such as Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. The building will also house a new geriatrics clinical educational suite, operated under the auspices of the Sanford Center for Aging. The majority of the funding—$60 million—was generated through the efforts of researchers from across the University, including the School of Medicine. A $12 million appropriation from the Nevada State Legislature and $5 million from the Whittemore Family Foundation account for the balance of the funds.
President Glick notes that the importance of surroundings—both inside buildings and the landscaping outside them—matters. Well-executed design of campus spaces produces environments that lead to better teaching, better research and better learning: “Place still matters on our campus, and nowhere is this more apparent in the wonderful new buildings we’ve added to our campus over the past several years. The new buildings have fundamentally changed how we teach and reach our students.”

The University of Nevada, Reno campus has evolved in a student-oriented manner, he notes, that continues even more so with these new “high-tech, high-touch” buildings that encourage student-to-student and student-to-faculty interaction. “There is no higher form of learning that a university can aspire to than that exemplified in human interaction that places students first.”

Since the Reno campus opened in 1885 and Morrill Hall was built on a bluff overlooking downtown, the University of Nevada campus has grown from 10 acres to 256 on the main campus and some 60 acres at the south Reno Redfield Campus shared with Truckee Meadows Community College. In addition, University operations exist in every county in the state.
While growth at the University has boomed in recent years, it began slowly. With just 75 students in the 1886-87 school year and facilities that consisted of “a woodshed and stable behind Morrill Hall, and an abandoned alfalfa field where the military cadets practiced marching and using firearms,” only four more buildings were constructed—all now gone—over the next few years, according to Holly Walton-Buchanan, from her book, *Historic Houses and Buildings of Reno: An Architectural and Historical Guide*. Fifteen additional acres were purchased from the Evans family in 1894 and two dormitories, Lincoln and Manzanita, were constructed on the new parcel.

New Yorker Clarence Mackay, president of the Mackay Company, the predecessor of International Telephone and Telegraph (now AT&T) and son of the wealthy Irish miner, John W. Mackay, who had made a fortune extracting ore from the Comstock Lode, became a major donor to the University, changing the course of its history forever. On June 10, 1908 a statue of the elder Mackay was placed at the head of the Quadrangle, where it stands today, and the new Mackay School of Mines Building, a two-story, Georgian Colonial structure, was dedicated before a throng of several thousand.

The Nevada Legislature had rejected the Mackay family’s bid to have the statue, created by sculptor Gutzon Borglum, placed on the Capitol grounds in Carson City. President Joseph Stubbs offered the University site, which led to a long and beneficial relationship between Clarence Mackay and the University.

Clarence Mackay brought his personal architect, Stanford White, to the fledgling campus. White designed at least eight of the original buildings, as well as the landscaping and placement of buildings around the Quadrangle. Following the trend in academic architecture of the time, they modeled the Nevada Quad after Thomas Jefferson’s design for the University of Virginia Lawn, which has buildings facing inward toward each other. Mackay was so influential, according to Walton-Buchanan, that he, not President Stubbs, “had the final say” in the design and cost of the buildings and landscaping.

From 1907 to 1936, John Mackay’s heirs bequeathed the University more than $1.5 million for the Mackay School of Mines building, the Quadrangle, an athletic field, land acquisitions and the Mackay Science Hall. The elm-lined Quad and the University’s original core campus, with a listing on the National Register of Historic Places since 1987, is considered a United States’ cultural resource.

By the 1940s, Hollywood movie producers, attracted by the University’s vine-covered, Ivy-League-like brick buildings and idyllic Manzanita Lake, were using the campus as a setting for popular films, including “Mr. Belvedere Goes to College,” with Shirley Temple. By 1958, with 2,000 students attending classes, the institution’s colleges of education and business were in their first years and the Jot Travis Student Union was built.

By 1969, the campus had doctoral programs in more than a dozen specialties, and had created a School of Medical Sciences.

Since then, the University has met the challenges of leadership in one of the fastest-growing states in the country, with its enrollment rising to more than 17,000 students in fall 2010.

—Melanie Robbins ’06M.A. and staff reports

*Morrill Hall, the first building erected on campus, opened for classes as a preparatory school in 1886. This photograph was taken in 1895.*