University President Milt Glick has signed the “Campus Compact,” joining a national coalition of more than 1,100 college and university presidents committing their campuses to encourage service learning and civic engagement. Nevada Volunteers, an organization dedicated to strengthening Nevada through AmeriCorps and volunteerism, helped the University secure an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer for one year to help jump-start the Campus Compact Program at Nevada.

“When students volunteer and realize we’re part of the community, and they’re part of something bigger, that’s very powerful,” says Tamara Valentine, director of the University’s Honors Program, who has established a student Honors Service Council that will lead the charge in encouraging student volunteerism. “And, as a land-grant institution, this really fits our mission.”

Joining the Campus Compact also allows the University to award 10 students completing 300 hours of service an education award of about $1,100. The program, Students in Service, is funded through the Corporation for National and Community Service.

More than 100 honors students have already volunteered for local organizations. Phillip Breslow, a sophomore majoring in community health sciences, volunteered for Friends of Nevada Wilderness one weekend, doing trail maintenance in central Nevada.

“I wanted an opportunity to give something back because I really enjoy hiking in my free time,” Breslow says. “The feeling you get from volunteering—it’s unreal. Nothing compares to it.”

Several University students, including senior honors student and mechanical engineering major Toby Marble, spent their spring break last month volunteering at the Desert National Wildlife Refuge in southern Nevada, removing old fencing with other Friends of Nevada Wilderness volunteers. In a blog featured on March 14-19, Marble wrote, “The laughter has been constant. There is something about hard work that draws a group together—and this group is quickly becoming tight knit.”

Freshman business major Lyndsey Bohall has established the Alternative Break Club on campus to organize and encourage student participation in volunteer projects on breaks throughout the year at local, national and international levels. (See related story on page 39.)

Bohall, who spent about 10 days helping to build houses in Mexico during a high-school summer break, says, “I think participating in the alternative breaks that we organize will really open students’ eyes and will allow them to be more culturally aware of the problems we face.”

The University is also encouraging more faculty to incorporate service-learning into their coursework, as Richard Mason, associate professor of accounting, and other faculty are already doing. Each spring, about 60 of Mason’s advanced students volunteer some 700 hours to help lower- to middle-income wage earners file their taxes.

“It’s a win-win for the students and the people they’re helping,” he says. “Service learning is a whole different way of educating them.”

—Claudene Wharton ’86, ’99M.A.
Center for Student Cultural Diversity wins national award for student retention initiative

The University’s Center for Student Cultural Diversity received a College Keys Compact Innovation Award, one of 17 national awards presented by the College Board in 2011.

The College Board, which promotes excellence and equity in education, honored higher education programs to help minority and low-income students in the categories of Getting Ready, Getting In and Getting Through. The Center’s College Life 101 program was one of five acknowledged nationally in the Getting Through category. Each honoree received a $5,000 award to support the continuation and growth of their program.

College Board President Gaston Caperton describes the winning programs as “leading the charge” toward improved graduation rates and “giving our students the best possible opportunities to succeed in college and beyond.”

“Our freshmen retention rate is at 80 percent, an all-time high for this University, and the center is a vital contributor to this,” says Shannon Ellis, vice president for student services. “The center has become a community of faculty, staff and students all fully committed to the academic success of students. Everyone benefits as we continue to improve retention rates and see these students graduate, ready to join the workforce and be active, productive citizens.”

The center is a focal point of the University’s campus environment and student life. Located in the Joe Crowley Student Union, it is a gathering place for studying, attending programs and accessing professional staff to help with student issues.

The number of students of color is at its highest point in the University’s history at 24.6 percent of total enrollment. College Life 101 is a custom-tailored, support-services initiative to aid students and keep them on track toward a degree.

“The center has worked hard since 2003 to set the high-water mark for supporting Nevada’s college students,” says Reg Chhen Stewart, director of the Center for Student Cultural Diversity. “The fact that we have the top retention program in the West, and one of the top in the country, is a point of pride for the entire University.”

—Natalie Savidge ’04

Big impact: Analysis shows significant economic contribution by NSHE

The total, annual economic impact of all eight of the Nevada System of Higher Education institutions is estimated at $2.7 billion. So shows an analysis of direct, indirect and induced economic impacts for 2009. The study was conducted as a joint effort by the Center for Economic Development and the Center for Regional Studies at the University of Nevada, Reno and the Center for Business and Economic Research at UNLV. State appropriations to NSHE institutions totaled $623 million in 2009, representing less than half of the total NSHE budget.

“For every dollar we receive in state appropriations, NSHE generates $4.39 in economic activity for our state,” says NSHE Chancellor Dan Klaich ’72 (accounting). “The bottom line is that education trains our workforce, develops our future leaders and creates cutting edge research that helps us build a new Nevada.” Learn more at www.nevada.edu.

—courtesy of Nevada System of Higher Education
Zeb Hogan is joining the ranks of one of the world’s most respected and exclusive programs. Hogan, a Nevada research biologist and host of National Geographic’s “Monster Fish” TV series, has been named a National Geographic Fellow—an honor thus far bestowed upon only 15 men and women worldwide.

Other National Geographic fellows include a linguist who studies endangered languages, the world’s foremost (and one of the first) tropical biologists, a Nobel Peace Prize-winning climatologist, a chef committed to sustainable cuisine and a man who took a 17-year-long vow of silence to draw attention to biological degradation.

Hogan, who is a research assistant professor in the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Science in the College of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Natural Resources, is added to the group as a conservation biologist. He is well-known for his Megafishes Project, a research mission to find, study and protect the world’s largest freshwater fish, which measure more than six feet and weigh at least 200 pounds.

“It’s a great honor,” Hogan says. “At its most basic, the fellow position makes it easier for me to work together with the National Geographic Society on collaborative projects. It’s also a recognition of the important work being done here at the University of Nevada, Reno.”

As a National Geographic fellow, Hogan will serve as an expert consultant to the organization’s freshwater and biodiversity programs, developing educational and outreach resources, writing and reviewing project proposals and grants and recommending public policy.

As leader of expeditions for National Geographic’s Megafishes Project and host of the “Monster Fish” TV series, Hogan has already studied 18 of the 24 known megafish species, including the 23-foot-long Australian sawfish, 10-foot-long alligator gar, 14-foot-long endangered giant stingray and the 600-pound, 10-foot-long Mekong giant catfish.

He has worked with nearly 100 scientists around the world and visited rivers such as the Amazon, Mississippi, Nile and Yangtze, throughout six continents and in 14 of the Earth’s most diverse freshwater ecosystems.

Hogan earned an undergraduate degree in ecology and evolutionary biology from the University of Arizona and a doctorate in ecology from the University of California, Davis. He is a National Geographic Explorer, was a Fulbright Scholar at the Environmental Risk Assessment Program at Thailand’s Chiang Mai University and served as a World Wildlife Fund freshwater fellow.

—Carolina Chacon, Class of 2011
Art professor designs Nevada's First Lady's gown

Virginia Vogel received a unique opportunity to design a ball gown worn by First Lady and University alumna Kathleen Sandoval '92 M.S. (speech pathology) at the two inaugural balls held in January for Governor Brian Sandoval '86 (foreign affairs). The University professor of art received an honorary ticket to the ball for creating the one-of-a-kind, Victorian-inspired gown worn by Sandoval.

"It was such an honor to be able to take part in something so historic," Vogel says. "When Mrs. Sandoval first walked in the room, she looked radiant, and I received a lot of positive feedback," Vogel says of the Jan. 29 event at the Silver Legacy in Reno. "Everyone always has an opinion about fashion, but most importantly, it was Mrs. Sandoval's opinion that mattered to me."

As a professor and local designer, Vogel has designed more than 300 costumes for theater productions.

Vogel was approached by Governor Sandoval's deputy chief of staff, Ann Wilkinson, in December with the opportunity to design and create the First Lady's dress. After only one meeting between First Lady Sandoval and Vogel, the first cut of fabric was made on Dec. 12.

According to Vogel, the Victorian-inspired gown reflects Sandoval's values. "She represents the all-American, Western woman," Vogel says. "Mrs. Sandoval is independent, elegant and practical; the dress reflects these characteristics."

A team of five University students assisted Vogel in the creation of the dress. It was designed in five separate pieces, including a bronze, straight skirt with a chartreuse overlay; two bodices, one chiffon and one lace; and two different jackets decorated with lace and beading, resulting in two different looks for the two balls, the first ball was held Jan. 28 at the Wynn Las Vegas.

"All the beading on the dress was hand-beaded—the students were such a help in that area of design," Vogel says. "The connection I now have with a local designer for the First Lady is something that I will never get over."

—Nonie Wainwright '08

Faces on the Quad

MAX ALDERMAN
A National Merit Scholar and political science and philosophy major, senior Max Alderman has further distinguished himself as a national collegiate debater. In March, he was named Top Individual Speaker at the National Parliamentary Debate Association's Championship Tournament, beating out 306 top collegiate debaters for the number one spot. He was recognized as an All-American at the tournament, one of only four debaters to receive the honor, in recognition of his highly successful collegiate debate career. Alderman was also chosen as one of only three student debaters to represent the United States in the "United States versus Irish Debate," which kicks off the annual tournament. The Irish have always won, but this year, with Alderman's help, the Americans pulled off a tie. Alderman will graduate in December and plans to attend law school or earn his doctorate in philosophy.

JAZZMINE HUDSON
A Chicago native, Jazzmine Hudson moved to Las Vegas in 2005 and graduated from College of Southern Nevada High School in 2007. She came to the University to study journalism and will graduate this May with her bachelor's in journalism, with an emphasis in public relations and advertising. As director of publicity for the student-produced Insight Magazine, intern for both Planned Parenthood and the Washoe County Democratic Party, board member of the Public Relations Student Society of America, and active member in a number of different student organizations, she is an on-the-go student. After graduating, she will attend graduate school and intends to dedicate her career to public relations in nonprofit organizations.

DIANA PERAZZO
Originally from Russia, where she earned a law degree from Bashkir State University in Ufa, Diana Perazzo is now working toward a degree in marketing at the University. She is president of the University of Nevada Russian Club and vice president of the American Marketing Association Student Chapter. She served as leader of the University's AMA competition team, which won the right to compete in this spring's AMA International Collegiate Competition where they placed third. For the last two years, she was publicity coordinator for ASUN elections and she works in ASUN's promotions division as an associate director of marketing. Perazzo was named a national outstanding campus leader in the 2011 Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges. She has been on the dean's list every semester since enrolling, and recently received the Marion Mallory College of Business scholarship.
Researchers discover insights into Carlin gold deposits

A team of researchers led by John Muntean, a research economic geologist at the University, has devised a new model for how Nevada’s “Carlin-type” gold deposits formed, which may help in exploration efforts for new gold deposits.

The team relates formation of the gold deposits to a change in plate tectonics and a major magma event about 40 million years ago. It is the most complete explanation for Carlin-type gold deposits to date.

“Our model for their formation may not directly result in new discoveries, but models for gold deposit formation play an important role in how companies explore by mitigating risk,” Muntean says. “Knowing how certain types of gold deposits form allows one to be more predictive by evaluating whether ore-forming processes operated in the right geologic settings. This could lead to identification of potential new areas of discovery.

“Understanding how these deposits formed is important because most of the deposits that cropped out at the surface have likely been found,” he adds. “Exploration is increasingly targeting deeper deposits. Such risky deep exploration requires expensive drilling.”

These Carlin-type deposits throughout northern Nevada constitute, after South Africa, the second largest concentration of gold on Earth. Geologists have argued for decades about how they formed.

“Carlin-type deposits are unique to Nevada in that they represent a perfect storm of Nevada’s ideal geology—a tectonic trigger and magmatic processes, resulting in extremely efficient transport and deposition of gold,” says Muntean, who as an industry geologist explored for gold in Nevada and around the world for many years.

The team combined decades of previous studies by research and industry geologists with new data of their own to reach their conclusions.

“The team won’t be the final word on Carlin-type deposits,” Muntean says. “We hope it spurs new research in Nevada, especially by people who may not necessarily be ore-deposit geologists.”

—Mike Wolterbeek ’02
Tech Transfer Office streamlines system to encourage start-up companies

A new, streamlined system to enable University faculty to begin start-up companies based on their research and development and to seek entrepreneurial partners from the business community to encourage economic development has been put in place by the University’s Technology Transfer Office.

“The Technology Transfer Office is committed to facilitating and encouraging our faculty who want to engage in entrepreneurial activities and to encouraging economic development and diversification that benefits the State of Nevada,” says Ryan Heck, patent counsel and director of the office. “This opens the door even wider for Nevada companies to develop new technologies in partnership with the University.”

This system is based primarily on a new standard license agreement, the “NSHE Express,” available to faculty-based, start-up companies. “We want to remove any barriers to start-up potential,” Heck says. “The terms of the agreement are very favorable for the start-up company. It will save time and expense and make it easier for interested companies in Nevada to collaborate with researchers to commercialize new technologies.”

The Technology Transfer Office has more than 30 technologies available for licensing at the University in a variety of commercialization categories, including renewable energy, life sciences, physical sciences, environmental sciences and the medical field.

“We look forward to working with our faculty and the investment/entrepreneurial community to build more new businesses in Nevada,” Heck says.

—Mike Wolterbeek ’02

New rental car program ‘Connects ’students

Until recently, University students could not rent a car until the age of 25. With the new Connect by Hertz program, not only can students rent a car at the age of 18, but they can do so from campus on an hourly basis.

For students without vehicles, like 18-year-old Armin Garcia, this program is a perfect solution for getting around.

“I would use this car for daily errands—or my friends and I have been wanting to go to San Francisco for a weekend—I could use it for that too,” Garcia says. “Especially because the cost includes gas, it’s great.”

“The $8 per hour or $62 per day buys you gas, insurance, GPS coverage, road-side assistance and the car,” says Michelle Horton, alternate transportation and special event manager for the University’s Parking and Transportation Services. “Parents who cover transportation expenses could potentially save a lot of money with this program.”

Students and faculty of the University can register for the program online, receive an individual access card and rent a car any time of day or night. Once registered, students or faculty can go online the check the status of the car they wish to rent and make the reservation.

The University currently has two vehicles from the Connect program and, according to Horton, more will be added if enough interest is expressed in the program.

For more information about the Connect by Hertz program, visit www.unr.edu/parking.

—Misha Ray, Class of ’12
Burkin’s muscular dystrophy work featured in Better World Report

School of Medicine pharmacology researcher Dean Burkin’s successful work is giving new hope to patients who suffer from Duchenne muscular dystrophy, the most common form of MD. His research is featured in the latest Better World Report, an annual collection of inspirational stories from academic research that positively impact quality of life of people around the world.

The novel approach to treatment for muscular dystrophy, and the partnership created between the University of Nevada, Reno and Prothelia, Inc. to develop it, was selected for the publication by the international nonprofit Association of University Technology Managers.

“They profile about 30 stories selected from research institutions across the country that they felt were making the world a better place,” says Ryan Heck, Technology Transfer Office director at the University.

Burkin’s work on a therapy for muscular dystrophy led to a patent for laminin-111, a naturally occurring protein in the body that his research shows was quickly picked up in the bloodstream of mice and prevented muscle damage, an important finding for MD therapy. The University’s Tech Transfer Office has licensed the patent for laminin-111 to Prothelia, a Boston biotech company. Prothelia is in the process of making a human version of the protein for further testing and clinical trials.

Prothelia’s founder, Brad Hodges, was a colleague of Burkin’s earlier in the two scientists’ careers. Hodges says laminin-111 is at the top of his company’s list for development.

“It could be very soon that we’ll have something for human clinical trials to see if it works as well as it does in the animal models,” Burkin says. “This could be an IV drug for the patients if the work in the mouse models that we’ve been using translates to human studies. These patients have been waiting a long time for therapies to come about and I think we’re at the cusp now.”

—Mike Wolterbeek ’02

Nevada Silver & Blue honored with four Awards of Excellence

Nevada Silver & Blue, the magazine of the University of Nevada, Reno, won four awards, a Gold and three Silvers, in the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) Awards of Excellence 2010 contest.

“Nevada Silver & Blue is a valued part of Nevada’s long-standing traditions,” says John Carothers, vice president of Development and Alumni Relations and executive editor of Nevada Silver & Blue. “We are very pleased to have been recognized by the Council for Advancement and Support of Education.”

The magazine received a Gold for its “Family Tree Challenge” department in the Alumni Relations Programs: Programming for Special Constituencies category, and three Silvers for the magazine’s Fall 2010 Campus Map Illustration: two in the Excellence in Design category—for both Illustrations and Posters—and one in Institutional Relations and Alumni Relations Publications: Campus Maps.

“We introduced the Family Tree Challenge in 2006 to foster connections between the many alumni whose families have seen generations of Nevada graduates,” Carothers says. “The two-page spread is very popular with our alumni—we have a long waiting list. I am grateful for the many people in my division and across campus whose hard work makes Nevada Silver & Blue a success.”

The latest issue of Nevada Silver & Blue is available to view online at www.unr.edu/silverandblue.

CASE is a professional association serving educational institutions and the advancement professionals who work on their behalf in alumni relations, communications, development, marketing and allied areas. Nevada Silver & Blue was recognized at an awards luncheon held in conjunction with the CASE District VII Conference, March 4 in Los Angeles.

For more information, visit: http://www.casevii.org/awards/awards_excellence.html.

—Natalie Savidge ’04

The award-winning fall 2010 cover of Nevada Silver & Blue magazine was created by local artist Andrew Nixon and art director Patrick McFarland, ’97 (journalism).
Former Taliban hostage receives Courage in Journalism award

David Rohde, the New York Times reporter who was held captive by the Taliban for seven months before escaping, was the inaugural recipient of the Frank McCulloch Courage in Journalism award March 3 at an award ceremony and lecture in the Joe Crowley Student Union.

Rohde and two Afghan colleagues had been heading to a meeting with a Taliban commander when armed men surrounded their car and took them hostage in November 2008. After seven months and 10 days in the mountains of Pakistan and Afghanistan, Rohde and one of the Afghans escaped by climbing over a wall and making their way to a Pakistan Frontier Corps base.

Rohde and his wife, Kristen Mulvihill, have written a critically acclaimed book, A Rope and a Prayer, about the kidnapping. Rohde won a Pulitzer Prize in 1996, when he worked at the Christian Science Monitor, for exposing the slaughter of at least 7,000 Muslims in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 2009, he shared the Times’ Pulitzer for coverage of Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The Frank McCulloch Courage in Journalism Award is named for the former top news executive of Time Inc., the Los Angeles Times, the McClatchy newspapers and the San Francisco Examiner. McCulloch, 91, is a 1941 journalism graduate of the University. He was the Reynolds School’s distinguished alumnus for 2009.

American Journalism Review wrote that in his 50-year career McCulloch “exposed political connections to the Mafia and brushed off death threats from Mob bosses. During the Vietnam War, he aggravated Lyndon Johnson. His editorial leadership transformed the Los Angeles Times, where he went toe-to-toe with Robert F. Kennedy over reporting on the Teamsters. He fought and beat a dozen serious libel actions, establishing legal precedents that still protect journalists.”

“I can’t think of a better combination—a courageous and deeply thoughtful reporter winning an award named for a bold journalistic icon,” says Jerry Ceppos, Reynolds School dean.

“It is an incredible honor to be named the inaugural recipient of the Frank McCulloch Courage in Journalism award,” Rohde says. “Over a 50-year career, he never veered from taking the courageous and ethical path. He spoke truth to power and never wavered from his core values. In today’s world, that example is more important than ever.”

McCulloch, who attended the award ceremony and lecture by Rohde, says that “coverage of three wars and the tortured countries in which they were fought earned David journalism’s highest honors. What impresses me most about his performance in life-threatening environments is distinguished not by some bold, blind fearlessness, but by common good sense. If the story he is working on demands it, he willingly risks whatever the situation requires, including his life. If not, then he adjusts. In my view, that’s a near perfect definition of courage in journalism.”

The Courage in Journalism award was endowed by gifts from McCulloch, his family, The McClatchy Company Foundation and McCulloch’s friends.

—Staff Reports

University climbs to 21st in Peace Corps rankings of alumni in service

The University climbed this year to 21st on the Peace Corps’ rankings of the top volunteer-producing medium-sized colleges and universities, with 23 alumni in service for 2011. Last year, the University made its debut in the national ranking, achieving a ranking of 25th, with 20 alumni serving.

Jeff Crooks of Elko, a 2009 Nevada graduate, departs in June to begin a 27-month Peace Corps assignment in Peru as a youth development worker.

“From the first semester at Nevada, students are exposed to an environment that embraces cultural diversity,” Crooks says. “I was always meeting other students from all over the world in my classes and around campus, and I was always encouraged to study abroad myself and experience other cultures.”

As a geography major, Crooks says many of his professors spoke about their own experiences abroad and the value of those experiences.

“What began as a small interest slowly developed through the years into full-blown inspiration to have my own experiences living and working abroad, and the University was the perfect place to foster that development.”

—Claudene Wharton ’86, ’99M.A.

Nevada alumnus Jeff Crooks ’09 (geography) departs in June to begin a 27-month Peace Corps assignment in Peru.