Marion G. Thompson Trust Supports Senior Services

By DEAN SCHERMERHORN

The Sanford Center for Aging at the University of Nevada, Reno delivers essential services to Reno-Sparks elders, and the Marion G. Thompson Charitable Trust provides vital funding to help sustain those services. “The Marion G. Thompson Charitable Trust has supported the Sanford Center since 1998. The center’s primary focus is providing services to elders in the community, and so without their support, we would not be able to offer our robust programs. The services simply would not exist,” explained Peter Reed, director of the Sanford Center for Aging.

“The Marion G. Thompson Charitable Trust is one of the funders of those programs, along with the Sanford endowment, the EJC Foundation and a variety of other donors. They provide us with the support that we need to serve elders,” he said. “Together these philanthropic sources probably provide about 60 percent of funding for the center overall,” said Reed.

Marion G. Thompson wanted her charitable trust to benefit the Reno-Sparks community, and her resources continue to assist seniors throughout Washoe County. The value of this philanthropy is clear to Reed. “For example, the trust provided funding for two graduate assistants, one of whom works in developing a community needs assessment for the new geriatric clinic and has been an active participant in the clinic planning process.”

“The clinic would not exist without the support of that research assistant in developing the model and the plan for what we are doing,” said Reed.

The second graduate assistant supports the gerontology academic program. “We also offer a gerontology academic program with a minor and a certificate in gerontology. We have more than 135 students participating in that program, which is trying to build the state’s workforce to support elders,” Reed explained.

The largest of the Sanford Center’s community outreach programs is the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, which has about 650 participants and serves 38 community organizations across Washoe County. Another outreach program is Senior Outreach Services (SOS), which provides one-on-one, in-home support and companionship to about 250 low-income elders. SOS helps seniors maintain social connections, provides transportation and connects elders with resources.

In the Medication Therapy Management program, the Sanford Center works with certified geriatric pharmacists on comprehensive reviews of clients’ medication profiles. They then make specific recommendations to the client and his or her primary care provider on adjustments to the medications. This helps reduce issues of polypharmacy and negative interactions between the client’s drugs.

Marion G. Thompson wanted her charitable trust to benefit the Reno-Sparks community, and her resources continue to assist seniors throughout Washoe County. The value of this philanthropy is clear to Reed. “The Marion G. Thompson Trust provides essential support that allows us to expand our educational offerings and programs for elders to meet the changing needs of one of the fastest growing populations in our community,” he said.

To learn more about supporting the Sanford Center for Aging, please contact Seema Donahoe '02 at (775)682-7304 or sdonahoe@unr.edu.
Doctors Joshua Bardin and Carol Cheney and University of Nevada School of Medicine faculty members are committed to the education of future generations of physicians, and not just through their teaching.

Bardin and Cheney are spearheading an effort to increase scholarship support for medical students, and they have made generous gifts that will help students complete their studies and pursue their career dreams.

Bardin, an anatomy instructor and retired vascular surgeon, and Cheney, an endocrinologist, believe there is an enormous need for scholarship opportunities. Scholarships like theirs are instrumental to the success of University of Nevada School of Medicine students because many will incur a significant amount of debt in pursuit of their medical education. On average, students attending the School of Medicine will have about $166,000 of debt upon graduation.

“The cost of medical school is excessive. Graduates have enormous debt and it shapes their career choices. They tend to pick a career that will allow them to pay off their debt, which is a destructive force. Students should choose careers they are interested in,” said Bardin.

Bardin and Cheney have provided for a planned gift in their estate that will support future medical students with the establishment of the Dr. Joshua Bardin and Dr. Carol Cheney Medical Student Scholarship Endowment.

“A planned gift to the University of Nevada, Reno Foundation is an easy and fulfilling way to support the University. Your assets can be used to maximize your personal benefit, while providing for the future of Nevada and its students, faculty and programs,” said Lisa Riley, director of the Office of Planned Giving.

Bardin and Cheney feel so passionately about scholarship support, that in addition to their planned gift, they have made additional contributions to expedite the establishment of their endowed scholarship, which will allow for the first Dr. Joshua Bardin and Dr. Carol Cheney Medical Student Scholarship to be awarded this fall.

“The University of Nevada School of Medicine is enormously grateful to Drs. Cheney and Bardin for taking the lead to provide more scholarship support for our students,” said Dr. Thomas Schwenik, Dean of the School of Medicine and Vice President for the Division of Health Sciences. “I am so impressed with their commitment to reduce the financial burden of attending medical school. Their efforts will help students who may have thought they could not afford to achieve their career dreams of becoming physicians. Their work will benefit all of Nevada and enhance medical care throughout the state.”

“All medical students are outstanding students and exceptionally high achievers, so awards will be based on need,” explained Bardin. “We both feel a sense of commitment to the future of this medical school.”

In light of their recent gifts, Bardin and Cheney are also encouraging others to consider supporting medical student scholarships with the help of a new committee. The University of Nevada School of Medicine Scholarship Support Committee is working towards increasing philanthropic support for medical student scholarships, including the establishment of a faculty scholarship fund to encourage other School of Medicine faculty contributions.

With this committee, Bardin is hoping to both expand his own commitment and involve others in giving so that medical students can focus on their education and not worry about the overwhelming expense of it. Although the committee is still in its early stages, faculty members, physicians, parents of alumni and community leaders are joining Bardin and Cheney in this effort.

“I hope to greatly expand the scholarship money for medical students. It will be a lengthy process, but I hope to improve the commitments from faculty and the community over time,” Bardin said.
The Seventh Annual Blue Tie Ball was held Feb. 5 at the Peppermill Resort Spa Casino to benefit Wolf Pack student-athletes.

Foundation Chair Jerry Smith ’03 (honorary degree), Sharon Smith, Kelli Creighton ’77 and Foundation Trustee Ken Creighton ’75.

With more than 850 attendees, the event raised $90,000.

Erliene Aramini, Be-Be Adams and Kim Aramini ’89.

GEORGE ANASTASSATOS

Marilyn Knuth, Director of Athletics Doug Knuth, Jen (Maguire) Grogan ’94 and Jim Grogan ’94.

Jered Snow ’12 and Tara Summers.

Discover Science

The College of Science’s Discover Science lecture series brings renowned scientists from all over the country for a series of engaging lectures that are open to the public. National Geographic contributing writer David Quammen, an award-winning writer on science, history and
The William N. Pennington Student Achievement Center Opening

The opening of the William N. Pennington Student Achievement Center was celebrated at a special event March 15.  

Assistant Research Professor Zeb Hogan and David Quammen spoke Feb. 4 in the Davidson Mathematics and Science Center.  


Officers for the Mallory Foundation Riley Beckett ’68 and Tom Cook ’63.  

Foundation Trustee Emeritus Keith Lee ’65, Nevada Military Support Alliance Board Members Alex Woodley ’15, President Scott Bensing, Vice Chairman Ronald Bath ’68, ’71 MBA and Dan Morgan after the ribbon cutting ceremony opening the new Nevada Military Support Alliance Veterans' and Military Center.  

human impacts of emerging diseases and pandemics, spoke Feb. 4 in the Davidson Mathematics and Science Center.  

N. Pennington Foundation, and NSHE Chairman Rick Trachok ’74 symbolically unlock the doors to student success.  

Vice President for Student Services Shannon Ellis talks to attendees about the vital student centers, services and programming brought under one roof in the Pennington Student Achievement Center.  

Foundation Trustee Emeritus Rick Banis ’67 and Fred Scarpella, both trustees for the William N. Pennington Student Achievement Center Opening
Ask the Master

by WENDY HANSON MAZET ’96 • Photos by THERESA DANNA-DOUGLAS

TO HAVE A GORGEOUS LANDSCAPE, BREATHTAKING FLOWERS AND BEAUTIFUL VEGETABLE GARDENS, FOCUS ON WHAT’S BELOW THE SURFACE.

T he University of Nevada Cooperative Extension Master Gardener Program continues to provide intensive training to those who become part of a cadre of 460+ volunteers who provide research-based information and programs to more than 70,000 Nevadans annually. Master Gardeners say that now is the time to make sure you are providing appropriate plant placement, water, nutrition and pruning care in your landscape. Here is some advice from the experts.

Soils - One of the most important components for plant success is enhancing your soils with organic matter, which is essentially nature’s fertilizer. Most soils in Nevada have less than one-half percent of organic matter, whereas areas such as the fertile Midwest have more than 5 percent. By incorporating organic matter into the top 6 inches of soil, you will have better moisture retention, increased root growth and increased plant health and vigor.

Water - When watering your landscape, focus on watering plants and turf areas in the morning, when temperatures are cooler and winds are calm. Early morning watering prevents moisture loss caused by evaporative winds. Delivering water early and allowing it to soak a minimum of 6 inches into the soil allows moisture to be available throughout the day as temperatures increase.

Turfgrass - Monitor your irrigation system and adjust...
Writing about the Zika virus for National Geographic online in January 2016, David Quammen, award-winning science writer, traces the roots of the global health scare that has dominated the media in recent months. He writes that the virus has been developing in the shadows over decades and its spread is intricately tied to human activity. "This is a story" writes Quammen, "of biogeography as well as medicine and public health, and of the consequences of human travel and transport."

Quammen’s writing has taken him around the globe with the world’s leading scientists to study zoonotic diseases, and he places their importance within a broader context for his readers. On February 4, Quammen spoke with University of Nevada, Reno graduate students before giving a public lecture in the Redfield Auditorium in Davidson Mathematics and Science Center.

David Quammen is just one of the fascinating speakers the College of Science brings to campus as part of the Discover Science lecture series, which is free and open to the public. With past speakers such as Bill Nye, Neil deGrasse Tyson and Michio Kaku, the Discover Science lecture series allows the community to experience the extent of the science universe, right here on the Nevada campus.

Trees - If trees have been established for more than five years, it’s best to water not only under the canopy, but also beyond to encourage a wide and deep root system. Water trees at least 12 to 18 inches deep and add 2 to four inches of organic mulch or compost around the tree’s base to prevent moisture loss and weeds. By adding compost, you also feed the soil, which in turn feeds the tree. Avoid adding additional fertilizer to the tree’s rooting area to prevent overfertilizing.

Flowers - Keep flowers blooming throughout the summer by incorporating continually blooming annuals with prominent perennials that add not only color, but also structure and texture to the landscape. Flower beds can also be amended with compost to reduce weeds and hold moisture.

Vegetables - When purchasing plants, be sure they are not overcrowns for their containers, and choose bushy, rather than spindly plants. Before planting, gradually introduce them to outdoor conditions by “hardening them off,” leaving the plants outdoors for increasing amounts of time before planting them in the ground. This will allow them to acclimate to full sun and wind.

by CARRIE BUSHÁ ’06

Frequently to account for temperature changes. Mow your lawn to a height of at least 3 inches. Set your mower at its highest setting and leave longer grass blades to encourage deeper roots. Deeper roots mean plants have access to more soil moisture, so you won’t need to water as often. Avoid fertilizing in the summer when turfgrasses typically struggle in the heat. Work with the plant’s natural cycle; if plants need a boost, fertilize in spring or fall.

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Robotic devices that help blind and visually impaired

A hand-worn robotic device is being developed in Yantao Shen's electrical engineering lab that may help millions of blind and visually impaired people navigate past movable obstacles or assist in their ability to pre-locate, pre-sense and grasp an object.

In a collaboration with the University of Arkansas, Little Rock, researchers here will develop new technology, with co-robotic functions currently unavailable in assistive devices, for the wearable robotic device. The team received an $820,000, three-year National Robotics Initiative grant from the National Institutes of Health's National Eye Institute.

“The miniaturized system will contribute to the lives of visually impaired people by enabling them to identify and move objects, both for navigational purposes and for simpler things, such as grasping a door handle or picking up a glass,” said Assistant Professor Shen. “We will pre-map the hand and build a lightweight form-fitting device that attaches to the hand using key locations for cameras and mechanical and electrical sensors. It will be simpler than a glove and less obtrusive.”

The methods and technology Yantao Shen develops have great potential in advancing small and wearable robotics with applications in space exploration, law enforcement and search and rescue.

by MIKE WOLTERBEK '02

Expanding the frontier of neuroscience

How do we think, remember, see or hear? What does it mean to be asleep or awake? How do the molecules, nerve cells and networks of the brain work, and how can we help the brain when it ages or fails?

These are some of the many questions faculty and students throughout campus actively pursue through the booming growth of research and educational initiatives in the sciences, supported by a $10 million grant from the National Institutes of Health Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE).

Foundation Professor of Psychology Michael Webster began work several years ago with faculty in the departments of psychology and biology to create an interdisciplinary bachelor's degree in neuroscience. It has exploded in popularity since it was started six years ago and now has nearly 400 students.

The surge in neuroscience research presents more opportunities for graduate students such as Zhiheng Zhou ’02 M.S. (right) to collaborate with accomplished researchers such as Director of Neuroimaging Lars Strother (left).

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A fish that spears its prey is just one of the underwater giants featured in the latest season of the popular television series Monster Fish. The Nat Geo WILD series chronicles the work of Zeb Hogan, University of Nevada, Reno ecology biologist and assistant research professor, as he travels the globe to find, study and protect the world's largest freshwater fish. Hogan said this season's episodes, which premiered in January and February, introduced fish with “some of the craziest attributes we’ve seen.”

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University researchers uncover new findings about bees and memory

With funding from a National Science Foundation grant, researchers Anne Leonard and Felicity Muth found that bees are capable of distinguishing colors for the purpose of identifying food.

by ALI ROVACCHI

Bees can learn colors based on pollen rewards and thus recognize and remember long-term which flowers have pollen and nectar, College of Science Postdoctoral Researcher Felicity Muth and Assistant Professor Anne Leonard have discovered in new research.

Bees are model organisms for the study of learning and memory, yet nearly all such research to date has used a single reward—nectar, according to Muth. Her research found that many bees collect both nectar (carbohydrates) and pollen (protein) on a single foraging bout, sometimes from different plant species.

"After a few times of going between the foraging array and colony, bees had learned where to go to collect nectar and where to go to collect pollen," Muth said.

"After they had learned those associations, we further found they would generalize them to new flowers they had not previously experienced, but which were a similar color," Leonard said. "So, in essence, bees form expectations about what kind of reward a flower will offer based on its color."

Bringing fresh produce to those in need

Each hoop house is 8 feet high, 16 feet wide and 96 feet long. The project could reap as many as 500 pounds of fruits and vegetables year-round. The hoop houses will be used in the Catholic Charities of Northern Nevada food programs through the St. Vincent's food kitchen. The workers erected the framework for the hoop houses on the east side of the University's 900-acre Main Station Field Lab in east Reno. The first crops will be planted this spring.

The Desert Farming Initiative grows fresh produce for research, education and outreach. This sustainable year-round production of fruits and vegetables highlights the benefits of locally grown food and healthy eating. It also fits the initiative's mission to demonstrate the ease and simplicity of construction and the economic benefits of this type of structure.

"We do what we do well: growing, planting, harvesting," said Jennifer Ott '13 MBA, director of the Desert Farming Initiative. "They will distribute the produce using their programs throughout the community, and thousands of people will receive this food in their meals. It's a mutually beneficial partnership, using both of our strengths to benefit the community."

Faces on the Quad

Zach Hadsell is a veteran from Reno in his third year at the University pursuing a degree in electrical engineering with a minor in computer science. During his six years of service in the U.S. Air Force, Hadsell trained as a cryptologic linguist translating Arabic to English. He received a scholarship from the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) and the G. Ray Ekenstam Memorial Scholarship, a national scholarship awarded to students-veterans seeking a career in electric power and energy engineering. He will receive this scholarship at the IEEE Power and Energy Society’s general meeting this summer in Boston. Hadsell is a member of the Tau Beta Pi honor society for engineering and has completed two marathons and a century bike ride from Carson Valley to Lake Tahoe.

Lindsay Honaker is a senior majoring in journalism with an emphasis in strategic communications and a minor in anthropology. In 2014, Honaker helped lead development of a strategic communications plan for the Nevada Department of Transportation that is currently being implemented statewide. In 2015, she played a vital role on the University's team in the National Student Advertiser Competition of the American Advertising Federation. Honaker was selected to receive the Vance and Betty Lee Stickell Award as the outstanding member and University student. Recently, she was recruited to be the account executive for the University's team in the PRSSA (Public Relations Student Society of America) Bateman Case Study Competition. She is a member of Delta Delta Delta Sorority, co-chair for the strategic plan for Fraternity and Sorority Life, former Panhellenic President, member of the Order of Omega Honor Society and was campaign manager for the elected ASUN President and Vice President for 2016-2017. She was also presented the Order of Omega Outstanding Leadership Award this Spring.

Escenthalo Marigny, Jr. moved to Reno in 2013 from Seattle, Wash. He is an active student leader pursuing a degree in women’s studies. He is president of the Reno Justice Coalition (RJC), a student group he co-founded that is dedicated to starting dialogue and challenging situations of injustice locally, nationally and internationally. The organization conducts training around social justice and peaceful demonstrations, brings important figures to campus and collaborates with other organizations to host events like “Real People, Real Solutions.” Marigny has been involved with organizing efforts for more than a decade, starting in his hometown of Oakland, Calif. He was called to act in this field by his first-hand experience with poverty and racism. He is currently an organizer at the Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada. He has received the California Teacher’s Association Peace and Justice Caucus’ Youth Activist Award, and the University’s Thornton Peace Prize jointly with the co-founders of the Reno Justice Coalition.

Michael Stuyvesant is a Reno High School graduate who has been studying journalism at the University. He has been involved in the Winter Sports Club, the student club Wolf Pack What, and now works as a videographer for the Associated Students of the University’s Center for Student Engagement. Stuyvesant produced an independent documentary film, “Little Truckee Big Responsibility.” With the help of the Reynolds School of Journalism. After graduation in May, he plans to continue his career as a filmmaker and work on documentaries, marketing campaigns and short films. He wants to stay in Reno and pursue emerging opportunities.
Campus Changes:

Great Basin Hall, the new STEM-themed residence hall, will be directly west of Lincoln Hall and is designed to visually complement the historic structure.

by NICOLE SHEARER '03

Saying “so long” to White Pine

To keep up with the increasing demand for on-campus student housing, which currently exceeds 122 percent, White Pine Hall was removed in February 2016 to make room for Great Basin Hall. The new, STEM-themed hall will focus on academic success when it opens in 2018.

Great Basin Hall is designed to house approximately 430 students, anticipated to be 90 percent freshmen and 10 percent upperclassmen. The concept behind the new hall will allow informal mentoring to take place in a continued effort to recruit and retain students in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

Preserving Lincoln Hall

Built in 1896, Lincoln Hall is one of the oldest buildings on campus and in Reno. To respond to the University’s ability to meet the modern and evolving needs of a growing campus and address safety, while also continuing to preserve the building’s legacy, renovations are underway at Lincoln Hall. Through this renovation, Lincoln Hall will undergo structural upgrades that address safety and seismic standards.

Closed as a residence hall in May 2015, Lincoln Hall is being converted to office uses. In cooperation with the State Historical Preservation Office and a design agent who specializes in historic structures, upgrades in seismic, fire safety, mechanical, plumbing, phone and data plus Americans with Disabilities Act access will be included in this project.

“One of the most visible forms of momentum at the University continues to be the multiple construction projects taking place on campus. With the proliferation of new buildings comes an important opportunity for our campus as we re-purpose existing space to meet our current needs.” - University President MARC JOHNSON

University MBA program celebrates golden anniversary

Did you know?

- There have been 2,400 MBA students who have graduated from the University since 1965.
- The College of Business Masters of Business Administration degree was fully accredited in 1971 by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business.
- The MBA program is the largest graduate school program on the University’s campus.

The first College of Business Alumni Day was Saturday, April 20, 1985, which included a tour of the “new” business building that had yet to be named*.

*The Nazir Ansari Business Building honors the emeritus professor of managerial sciences.
New CIO and AVP bring strong optimism, experience

Steve Smith joins the University as chief information officer and vice provost for information technology, and Ellen Purpus joins the University as assistant vice president for enterprise and innovation in the Office of Research and Innovation.

Smith views information technology as a bridge and system security as an imperative. Most recently, he was associate vice president and deputy chief information officer for the University of Hawaii System. He previously served as CIO for the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, as well as for the University of Alaska System.

“I think northern Nevada is on an upward curve of tremendous growth and opportunity,” Smith said. “The University of Nevada, Reno is a focal point for that growth.”

Across a career that has taken her from government to business to academia, the common thread for Purpus has been connecting research-driven discoveries with the realm of commercialization. She is the former director of The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia’s Office of Technology Transfer.

“When I first visited, it became clear the University of Nevada is really on the move and pushing to create an innovation ecosystem,” Purpus said. “Entrepreneurial activities are a big part of this.”

Seismologists kept busy by thousands of 2015 earthquakes

More than 17,500 Nevada earthquakes were recorded in 2015, including 231 quakes in south Reno and the magnitude 4.8 in Caliente that shook Las Vegas in January 2015. The shaking was captured and studied by the University’s renowned Nevada Seismological Laboratory, a public service and research department in the College of Science and host of the annual Great Nevada Shakeout.

“What’s really bumping up the number from the background rates is the energetic sequence in far northwestern Nevada called the Sheldon sequence,” said Graham Kent, Seismological Lab director, of the 4,511 earthquakes recorded in the remote Sheldon Wildlife Refuge east of Cedarville, California.

In 1965, the University’s MBA program was one of only two in the West.

The MBA program ranks No. 29 in U.S. News & World Report’s Best Online MBA Programs • No. 24 in Bloomberg Businessweek’s list of Part-time MBA programs • one of the Top 25 Online MBA Program for 2015 by Princeton Review

Resumes, then and now.

1972
The College of Business collected graduate resumes to send to employers. Each graduate’s resume included his/her age, marital status, height, weight, health condition along with his/her education, extracurricular activities, salary expectation and previous jobs.

2015
The College not only works with students on refining their resumes, but also offers coaching to enhance each student’s networking and interviewing skills.

Calling all University MBA alumni

The College of Business is offering 50-year commemorative coins to any MBA alumni who submits his or her most-recent contact information to: unr.edu/business/50years
Students honor the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Eighty-five students used their last day off before the spring semester to give back to the community. They joined with seven local non-profit organizations in Reno and Sparks to make Martin Luther King, Jr. Day a day of service. Their total contribution of 255 volunteer hours was spent partnering with the Kiwanis Bike Program to fix bikes for children from low-income neighborhoods, delivering dolls to children in local hospitals, packing boxes for hungry families at the Northern Nevada Food Bank and the Reno-Sparks Gospel Mission, and cleaning up roadside trash.

White House appointees on campus to launch 70th anniversary of Fulbright program

The University hosted the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board in Reno in early February. From left to right: Fulbright Country Director from Chile Antonia Campaña; Board Member Jeffrey Bleich; Reno City Council member Naomi Duerr ’78, ’83 MPA; Board Member Tom Healy; Board Member Betty Castor; Board Member Shervin Pishavar; University President Marc Johnson; Board Chair Laura Trombley; University Vice President and Provost Kevin Carman; Board Member and Director of the Latino Research Center Emma Sepúlveda Pulvirenti ’76, ’78 MPA; University Vice President for Research and Innovation Miriald Gautam; U.S. Department of State Academic Deputy Assistant Secretary Mala Adiga; Board Member Joseph Falk and Fulbright Country Director for Argentina Norma González Centeno.

by NATALIE SAVIDGE ’04

The University welcomed the U.S. State Department’s J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board to campus in February for the 270th board meeting and to kick off the 70th anniversary of the Fulbright program.

Since 1962, when the first Fulbright grant was awarded at the University, the institution has been home or host to more than 20 Fulbright U.S. students, 20 Fulbright foreign students and more than 70 Fulbright scholars.

“...The University was thrilled to have this opportunity to host the Fulbright board and share with its members the many international activities and opportunities we offer in Nevada,” said University Executive Vice President and Provost Kevin Carman. “And we are proud that the University is home to Emma Sepúlveda Pulvirenti ’76 (Spanish), ’78 M.A., professor in Foreign Language and Literature and director of the Latino Research Center, who was appointed to the Fulbright board by President Obama in 2014.”

Research finds a popular mercury measuring system yields inaccurate data

Foundation Professor Mae Gustin of the College of Agriculture, Biotechnology and Natural Resources has been leading research to determine the accuracy of a widely used mercury measuring instrument. The study by Gustin and her team shows the instrument, which is commonly used in the scientific community to measure mercury in the air, yields inaccurate results. The findings have been validated by other notable agencies and are anticipated to inform future regulatory decision-making, other research efforts and even international treaties.

According to Gustin, mercury inputs into the atmosphere have increased worldwide several fold over the past 150 years. Gustin said this historical context requires a dramatic shift in thinking regarding the scientific community’s understanding of atmospheric mercury. She was invited to present her research at a mercury conference in Beijing’s Tsinghua University in December 2015. Gustin’s work is supported by the National Science Foundation, the Electric Power Research Institute and the Environmental Protection Agency.

by NICOLE SHEARER ’03

Twenty-five speakers and artists took to the stage during TEDxUniversityofNevada Saturday, Jan. 23 at the Pioneer Center for the Performing Arts in downtown Reno. Each speaker brought a new idea or concept to spark conversation locally, live, and internationally through videos posted to the Internet.

This year’s event was a milestone for organizers at the University’s College of Business. Rather than hold the event at the University, the decision was made to move it from campus out into the community to engage a broader local audience.

“We had no idea how many people we could expect by doing this,” said Bret Simmons, College of Business associate professor and TEDxUniversityofNevada organizer. “Seeing the Pioneer Center filled with people from our community was such an incredible honor for our team. Our goal has always been to create an inspiring event, and this year was a home run.”

TEDx events are locally organized programs aimed at sharing short, powerful talks.
Pavement research sets stage for federal highway improvements

by MIKE WOLTERBEKK '02

When the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) needed to update its crucial and complicated 30-year-old formula for fuel consumption and vehicle operating cost predictions, it awarded the project to the University’s renowned pavements/materials program.

“The project is one of the critical and influential projects for FHWA and the nation,” said Elie Hajj ’03 M.S. (civil engineering), ’05 Ph.D., assistant professor of civil and environmental engineering and the project’s lead researcher. “This award is a great accomplishment for the program and the college, showing that the program is one of the major leaders in the nation.”

Hajj works with Peter Sebaaly, director of the University’s Western Regional Superpave Center, on this and a number of research projects to improve pavements in Nevada and around the country, including asphalt and concrete pavement testing; software management tools used around the world; a national research database; and super heavy-load research—all in the department’s five labs dedicated to pavement and materials research.

The results of the study will give federal highway managers more accurate data as they seek to improve the nation’s transportation network.

Native Americans “today and into the future”

by JANE TORS ’82

Through development of strategies that deal with climate change on tribal lands and the careful archiving of papers detailing the long legal battle over Shoshone grazing rights, as well as nutrition outreach programs, the University is becoming more closely engaged with Native American tribes and peoples. A wide swath of the University is involved, from Cooperative Extension to art galleries, and from hydrology and agricultural research teams to the Center for Student Cultural Diversity.

“It is significant to see things that are representative of your culture on campus,” said Saundra Mitrovich, outreach and retention coordinator in the University’s Center for Student Cultural Diversity and a Native American, of four art and history exhibits hosted on campus in the fall semester.

Named Nevada’s American Indian Youth Services/Role Model of the Year in November, Mitrovich sees this engagement as fostering greater cultural understanding. “We are a people that live and breathe today and into the future. These programs can reframe the view of Native Americans.”

Program encourages girls to pursue STEM careers

by NICOLE SHEARER ’03

“Research indicates there is a middle school drop, where girls start opting out of STEM disciplines,” said Lynda Wiest, College of Education faculty member. “This program targets students before that gap to increase interest and make sure these students don’t make a choice to drop out of something they may, in fact, be interested in and good at.”

The disparity between men and women working in the computer science field is often referred to as the coding gender gap. While women earn 57 percent of bachelor’s degrees nationally, they earn only 12 percent of computer science degrees.

In an effort to recruit female students into computer science, University faculty members Lynda Wiest and Heather Crawford ’06 (elementary education), ’09 M.Ed. have expanded The Northern Nevada Girls Math and Technology Program, offered as a summer program through the University’s College of Education since 1998, to include a new one-hour weekly component at the Glenn Duncan STEM Academy. It is part of the school’s 21st Century After School Program and specifically targets female third, fourth and fifth grade students.
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