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Neuroscience program unfolds vision of a bright future





Letter from the Dean

There is an ongoing discussion in our society about the value of a college education, generated in part by the fact that the cost of higher education continues to rise. This discussion often focuses most intently on the value and relevance of a liberal arts education that stems from overriding concerns about student learning outcomes and employment opportunities for college graduates.

But the message on the role and value of a college education needs repeating again and again: today's college students are preparing for a lifetime of work, not just for the first job they get when they graduate. And a degree from the College of Arts and Sciences, which focuses on communication, critical thinking, and solving problems with creativity and imagination, is what will prepare most students to meet the challenges they will meet after college. Louise Anne Rinn, our College's outstanding alumna for 2012, delivered this message most effectively in her message of "three hopes" for our graduates, which you can read about in "Graduation Comes Home."

When you explore the rest of our magazine, I'm sure you will appreciate the depth and breadth of activity that takes place in the College of Arts and Sciences. I hope you enjoy reading about happenings in our College, and if you want to learn even more about exciting College events and successes, please visit our website at <http://www.unomaha.edu/cas>.

We hope this is the first of many Arts and Sciences magazines to come. We would love to hear from you, and we'd love to hear your story. Feel free to contact me at dboocker@unomaha.edu.

David Boocker

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We would love to hear from you. Your stories will help us highlight the many ways our graduates and supporters are improving lives and making a difference in our community and throughout the world. Please contact Dean David Boocker via email at dboocker@unomaha.edu or at the following address:

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Graduation comes home

On a stunningly bright and surprisingly warm May morning, to the strains of *Pomp and Circumstance*, two-hundred and thirty Arts and Sciences graduates marched past the grand columns of Arts and Sciences Hall to the brilliant green expanse of the Pep Bowl. Family, friends, and faculty looked on, beaming with pride and a hint of perspiration.

For the first time in ten years, students received their degrees in ceremonies on the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) campus, and, for the first time in UNO's history, each college honored their graduates in separate, more intimate commencements. Previous years' events were held at sites such as the Civic Auditorium.

Bringing commencement home allowed students and staff to celebrate their accomplishments in a meaningful setting. The park-like surroundings allowed even small children and a pet or two to enjoy the day.

The familiar voice of the college's chief advisor, Associate Dean Eric Manley, called students' names as they walked on stage to receive their diplomas.

Dean of Arts and Sciences David Bocker congratulated graduates as he handed them their diplomas. UNO Chancel-

lor John Christensen was also there to shake their hands. Dr. Linda Pratt, Executive Vice President and Provost provided the official congratulations from the University of Nebraska System.

Joseph Price, Coordinator for the English Department, served as the dean's intern in planning and implementing the inaugural affair. In celebrating the resounding success, Price commented, "Graduates loved the shorter ceremony, the intimate setting, being able to sit with their friends, and having their chairpersons involved in the diploma distribution. I loved seeing so many guests on campus. Starting a new tradition is hard, but I knew it was a success when people were telling us what we could do to make next year's spring commencement even better."

Words of Wisdom for Changing Times

Dean Bocker was first to address the graduates and reported on the dynamic nature of today's economy and the critical role that a liberal arts education can play in preparing students for that world.

continued on page 4



Louise Anne Rinn honored as Outstanding Alumna

Louise Anne Rinn was honored at the spring graduation ceremony as the inaugural College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Alumna. She also presented the charge to graduates.

Ms. Rinn received her Bachelor of Arts degree with honors from the College of Arts and Sciences with majors in both Economics and Political Science. Shortly after completing her law degree at Columbia University, Ms. Rinn joined the Law Department at Omaha's Union Pacific Railroad Company and has received numerous promotions since, including serving as Assistant Vice-President for Investor Relations and, currently, as Associate General Counsel.

Ms. Rinn has been involved in UNO's Alumni Association, acting as legal counsel for the association's board and liaison to the College of Arts and Sciences. She has also served in various roles on the Stephen Center Board of Directors, including President, and has served on the Executive Committee of the Association of Transportation Law Professionals, accepting officer positions. Ms. Rinn has also participated in international leadership programs in Shanghai and Moscow.



Graduation comes home *continued*



“Move forward with the confidence that you are prepared to take on life’s challenges, and with the understanding that the education you have received is powerful, because it has prepared you to be a good citizen who is able to succeed in a diverse and complicated world.”

--David Boocker



“Today, we will take the first step into the life of college graduates, where an entirely new story begins. Challenges await, but don’t let that scare you. The most interesting narratives involve obstacles and the protagonist’s will to overcome.”

--Erica Hengelfelt

The dean shared statistics published by the Association of American Colleges and Universities :

- Every year, more than 1/3 of the entire US labor force changes jobs.
- Today’s students will have 10-14 jobs by the time they are 38.
- 50% of workers have been with their company less than 5 years.
- Every year, more than 30 million Americans are working in jobs that did not exist in the previous quarter.

Boocker further explained, “Recent reports in *The New York Times*, *Newsweek*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, and on National Public Radio, all confirm the inherent value of a liberal arts degree as critical to the success of students and essential for success in a global economy.”

Boocker provided a percentage ranking of what employers most want from their employees (as revealed in a national poll) :

Written and oral communication	89%
Critical thinking and analytic reasoning	81%
Complex problem solving	75%
Ethical decision making	75%
Teamwork	71%
Intercultural competence	71%
Creativity and innovation	68%
Intercultural knowledge	67%
Quantitative reasoning	63%
Civic knowledge, participation, engagement	52%

The Student Story

Erica Hengelfelt, Outstanding English Major for 2011-2012 and Student Commencement speaker, encouraged graduates to be aware of the role that UNO has played in their life stories, “I am sure many of us would say that UNO was the place that we decided who we were going to become. This kind of revelation is a significant moment in every story.”

Hengelfelt’s English major includes an emphasis in Creative Nonfiction and a minor in Mass Communication. She has also been involved in various campus organizations, including Omicron Delta Kappa, the Student Education Association of Nebraska, and Cru.

Following graduation, she will continue her education by pursuing an MA degree at UNO while working as a teaching assistant in the Department of English.

The Charge to Graduates

The Charge to Graduates was presented by Outstanding Alumna Louise Ann Rinn. A few excerpts follow on the next page.

Congratulations!
Class of 2012





My first hope is that you find that job and the joy of learning continues the rest of your life. . . . Your degree does not mark an end so much as it does a beginning. Your degree represents a “license to learn.”

My second hope is that you like, respect and enjoy spending time with the people you work with. . . . It should be no surprise that spending your days with people you like and who like you and whom you respect and who respect you, will be more enjoyable than if you feel you’re in an episode of Survivor.

My third hope is that you surround yourself with integrity. . . . Achieving integrity will be easier if you spend time with honest people who strive to do what they believe is right and important and who respect you for living by your values.

--Louise Ann Rinn



Elizabeth O’Connor, Dean’s Scholar 2012

O’Connor named Dean’s Scholar

Political Science major, Elizabeth O’Connor was selected from among all of the Arts and Sciences Outstanding Undergraduate Achievement awardees to receive the Dean’s Scholar Award for 2012.

O’Connor graduated summa cum laude and has been admitted to Notre Dame Law School for the fall.

She has excelled not only in the academic arena but also in service to her school and community. At UNO, she has worked in Student Government as Student Body President and Regent Member and as Speaker of the Senate. In the Omaha community, she has been active in the Heartland Family Student Service League, Educare Center, and Make-a-Wish Foundation.

O’Connor presented the Outstanding Alumni Award to Louise Ann Rinn, fellow Political Science major, at the commencement ceremony.

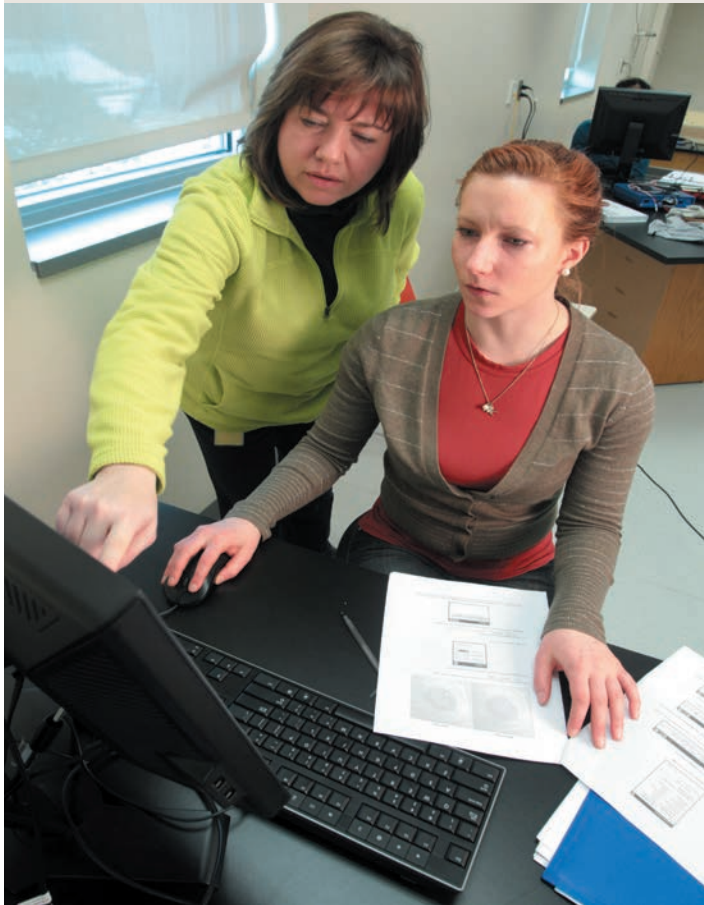
Other Honors

Other students honored included Katherine Becker, German and Neuroscience major, and Amanda Overgaard, Sociology/Anthropology major, who served as student marshals for the commencement ceremonies. The complete list of Outstanding Undergraduate Achievement Awards follows.

Arts and Sciences Outstanding Undergraduate Achievement Awards for 2012

Katherine M. Becker	Foreign Languages
Lauranne A. Beckwith	Foreign Languages
Bronson K. Gerken	Geology
Kalani N. Griggs	History
Heather E. Hannaford	English
Shannon D. Heesacker	Foreign Languages and International Studies
Erica Hengelfelt	English
Jacob A. Hettenbaugh	Chemistry
Sushrut D. Kamerkar	Biotechnology
Hitomi Maezawa	Geography
Daniel K. Miller	Mathematics
Kimberly E. Morss	Environmental Studies
Bailey Nelson	Biology
Elizabeth R. O’Connor	Political Science
Jamie L. Olmer	Religious Studies
Allan Ostle	Engineering Physics
Amanda L. Overgaard	Sociology/Anthropology
Krista D. Peterson	Women’s and Gender Studies
Deibi Sibrian	Latino/Latin American Studies
Dana Stochl	English
Oren Varkony	Physics
Nicole White	English

amazing BRAINS



Bird Brains

Recent UNO graduate Katherine Becker is pictured here working with Dr. Rosemary Strasser, Associate Professor of Psychology, in the Advanced Neuroscience Lab. In lab this day, students were learning to measure bird brains with Image Analysis, a software and image database package provided by the National Institute of Health. The purpose of this study was to better understand sexual dimorphism in songbirds through measuring and comparing certain areas of the brains of male and female birds.

Strasser's own research in this area was recently published in the international journal *Age*. She co-authored this study on the impact of variation in early testosterone exposure on lifespan in the house sparrow. Testosterone impacts behavior through programming the brain.



Neuroscience Program first in Nebraska System

UNO's Neuroscience program is the first undergraduate program in the Nebraska system and one of only a few in the region. Since launching in 2009, the program has grown from five majors to well over one hundred majors.

According to UNO's Neuroscience program director, Dr. Jeff French, this rapid growth reflects "the importance of the fundamental and applied interest in how neurons work on an individual basis, and how collections of neurons mediate behavior and cognition."

Neuroscience is a multidisciplinary field that requires a detailed knowledge of brain function including neurophysiology, neuroanatomy, and neurochemistry. Neuroscience majors at UNO benefit from the expertise of faculty in Psychology and Biology primarily but also study with UNO experts in the areas of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, Chemistry, the social sciences, and the humanities.

Students generally focus on one of two tracks: Molecular and Cellular Neuroscience or Integrative Behavioral Science. The program prepares them for a variety of career trajectories including graduate study at one of more than 200 programs nation-wide as well as a host of other health-related professional programs. Neuroscience majors will also possess the intellectual skill-sets for work as laboratory technicians and assistants in laboratories, both educational and corporate.

Graduates find local opportunities at the University of Nebraska Medical Center that include working with faculty expert at both neuropharmacology and neurodegenerative diseases in the Department of Pharmacology and Experimental Neuroscience and the Center for Neurovirology and Neurodegenerative Disorders and the associated Neuroscience Research Training Program. For additional information on the Neuroscience major, please visit <http://www.unomaha.edu/neuroscience>

Who studies neuroscience?

Kate

Katherine Becker, who graduated with a dual major in Neuroscience and German this spring, chose UNO because she wanted to stay in Omaha and to swim in college. She explored three different majors before enrolling in Psychology Professor Kenneth Deffenbacher's Sensation and Perception Class. "This class changed the way I looked at the brain and consciousness. I never thought about the complex integration of stimuli and stimuli processing that constitutes every perception that we make about the world around us. It was this interest in learning how we process information that made me want to learn how the brain works," explains Becker.

Becker has applied for a Fulbright Scholar grant to conduct research in Germany this fall and will otherwise spend the next year volunteering, working, and taking some classes as she considers her options for graduate study or medical school. Becker says, "I want to work with people suffering from mental illness, and I think that it is only through working with people directly that I will come to know where it is that I want to go next with my educational pursuits."

Neuroscience (continued)

Natasha

Neuroscience Major, Natasha Fields (photo below) is planning for graduation next spring with a double major in Psychology and Neuroscience and a minor in Spanish. “I chose the Psychology department because of my strong interest in the mind-body- exterior world connection and this major seemed to be the best fit. Over time, however, it became clear that psychology was only one piece of the puzzle. There was much more to the story I was interested in, but until the Neuroscience major was declared and courses offered, this story remained incomplete,” says Fields.



She is looking into various MD/PhD programs for her graduate work. She adds,

“The Neuroscience program at UNO has been wonderful in preparing me for what is to come next.” She observes that “reading, reviewing, and writing scientific manuscripts, becoming familiarized with statistical analysis and related computer programs, along with hands-on experience in the lab, creating and running experiments, are all hugely valuable tools for both graduate and medical school programs, setting the critical groundwork for a career in research.”

Erica

Erica Kube (photo below) is working toward completing her master’s degree in clinical counseling but couldn’t be happier with the career she found directly after graduation from UNO’s Neuroscience program. Kube is a neurotherapist. After working in the field for a year, she has opened her own neurotherapy clinic, Integrated Neurotherapy.

“UNO’s neuroscience professors and program provided me with the fundamental knowledge that is essential for any career in the healthcare field. Apart from the in-class learning, I was mentored in the diligent exercise of this fundamental knowledge in



laboratory settings and internships,” explains Kube.

As a neurotherapist, Kube administers non-invasive quantitative electroencephalography (QEEG), also referred to as brain mapping, neurofeedback and ultra low intensity pulsed electromagnetic field (pEMF) stimulation. Neurotherapy challenges the brain to function more efficiently and is an FDA approved, evidenced based treatment modality.

Since the 1970s researchers have demonstrated in controlled studies that neurotherapy can safely and effectively train the brain to stabilize its “dysregulated” brain wave activity and has been shown to be an effective intervention for a variety of conditions including attention deficit disorders, learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, traumatic brain injury, depression, and addictions. Kube adds, “Neurotherapy also compliments many other existing treatments, such as prescription medication, behavioral, speech, and occupational therapies, and chiropractic care.”

Monkey brains, too

Neuroscience facilities located in Allwine Hall include multiple animal room suites and research facilities and a 12-station laboratory space with facilities for both live animal research and demonstrations, and computers for modeling and simulations. Additional animal space is available for specialized animals (aquatic, invertebrate, and non-human primate).

The Callitrichid Research Center, run by program director French, has been certified by The Association of Zoos and Aquariums in recognition for efforts in conservation and captive breeding of marmosets and tamarins. “These efforts go hand-in-hand with our research on hormones and social behavior,” French says.

French’s current laboratory research involves exploring natural variation in hormone concentrations and the relationship of these differences to behavioral differences, particularly in the realm of social behavior such as parental care and pair-bonding between adult males and females.

“We need to know where in the brain hormones are acting to alter social behavior, which class of hormone receptors are responsible for mediating these changes, and which critical neurotransmitter systems are altered by differing endocrine states,” explains French. Toward that end, French recently studied with Dr. Karen L. Bales at University of California, Davis, a staff scientist with the California National Primate Research Center, to refine research methodologies, including noninvasive brain imaging techniques such as magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and positron emission tomography (PET) scanning techniques.

For additional information on the Callitrichid Research Center and French’s work, please visit <http://www.unomaha.edu/crc/>



Arts and Sciences faculty practice excellence



Arts and Sciences faculty pose for a picture with the dean at the Faculty Honors Convocation, from left to right, Andrew Swift, Jessiline Anderson, Alan Kolok, Dean David Boocker, Melanie Bloom, Renat Sabirianov, Steven Torres, and Daniel Hawkins.

Outstanding Service-Learning Award goes to Jessiline Anderson

Dr. Jessiline Anderson, Associate Professor of Psychology, was honored at this year's Convocation for her work in incorporating service-learning activities into her Psychology classes. In one class, students traveled to Nebraska reservations to administer depression screenings for vulnerable segments of the population. Anderson was lauded for "promoting awareness and diversity and breaking the silence on difficult issues like depression and suicide."

Melanie Bloom receives UNO's Outstanding Graduate Mentor Award

Dr. Melanie Bloom, Associate Professor of Foreign Languages, was recognized for being "the heart and soul" of UNO's Master of Arts in Language Teaching (MALT) Program. One of her students wrote, "Dr. Bloom took the time not only to get to know me, but also to truly understand what I wanted to do for the rest of my life."

Alan Kolok and Renat Sabirianov are named recipients of UNO's Distinguished Research or Creative Activity Award

Dr. Alan Kolok, Professor of Biology, was praised for bringing national and international attention to UNO through his research in environmental toxicology. Kolok has published ten papers in peer-reviewed journals in the last three years and has se-

cured \$600,000 in grant funding in the last two years. Read about his recently dedicated Elkhorn River Research Station on page 11.

Dr. Renat Sabirianov, Associate Professor of Physics, was nominated for the Research award by scientists from the University of Texas, the Department of Energy's Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and IBM's Watson Research Center. In his career, Sabirianov has published more than 100 articles. His work on the properties of magnets and non-crystalline materials has been cited by hundreds of other researchers, including 2007 Nobel Prize winner, Albert Fert.

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit." --Aristotle

Andrew Swift, Steven Torres, and Daniel Hawkins received the Alumni Outstanding Teaching Awards.

Math . . . "beautiful" and "exciting?"

So say the students of Dr. Andrew Swift.

"I really have to commend Dr. Swift on pushing me beyond my tendency toward black and white ideals about mathematics and showing me the beauty of applying math to the world around me," writes Amanda LaRandeau, a former student.

She adds, "His analogy comparing the American judicial system to hypothesis testing made seemingly arbitrary rules turn into a rock solid foundation in my mind."

UNO student Ellen McNemar writes, "You could see and feel his passion for the topic, which made learning from him pleasurable and exciting!"

In addition to practicing his infectious enthusiasm, Swift, an Assistant Professor of Mathematics, pushes students to actively explore mathematics through class discussions. As he tells his students, "Mathematics is not a spectator sport!"

Can't afford study abroad to learn Spanish? Try a conversation class with Torres.

With a dash of creativity, a sprinkling of humor, and a healthy serving of hard work and enthusiasm, Dr. Steven Torres whips up a spell-binding classroom experience. He creates a world for learning language by engaging students in conversation about the world.

"His classes are engaging, thought-provoking, fun, and challenging," explains Colleen O'Dougherty, a UNO Spanish major. "A Torres class is rarely just a Spanish class. It's sociology, political science, literature, and much more."

Former student Kari Korenchen adds, "A short story in our conversational Spanish textbook turned into an analysis of the UN Declaration of Human Rights, and a film about a struggling Latina woman became a discussion of social norms and their impact on identity."

In addition to creating a world within a classroom, Torres, Associate Professor of Spanish, takes his students into local Spanish-speaking communities through service-learning projects to further immerse them in meaningful conversation and culture. Recent student projects have included serving as interpreters at the University of Nebraska Medical Center Community Health Center and at special events such as Bi-National Health Week and Women's Awareness night.

Sociology, up close and personal

Students writing in support of Dr. Dan Hawkins consistently mentioned not only his accessibility, but also their surprise with the level of personal interest he affords each student.

Excellence *(continued)*

“Dr. Hawkins is always available to students outside of the classroom and often dedicates hours of his personal time to assisting any student who comes by, regardless of whether they are a seasoned graduate student or a confused first year student in need of some direction. Simply put, Dr. Hawkins does not have an open door, as the volume of students he guides necessitates something more akin to an aircraft hangar,” explains former student Andrew Schill.

Kitti John decided to pursue a graduate degree in Sociology upon recommendation from Dan Hawkins. She writes, “I had never met a professor like Dan Hawkins. . . . To a girl who hadn’t even planned on finishing her college degree the year before, the fact that someone cared enough, had enough faith that I could accomplish great things and actually thought I was capable of graduate work, this suggestion meant the world.”

Hawkins, Assistant Professor of Sociology, views his role as “partner” in his students’ education. He adds, “I emphasize to my students that we share the same goals of student learning and success – as well as the responsibility for achieving these goals – so our relationship should be considered a “team effort.”

McCarty’s work sets “gold standard”

Professor of Biology and Director of Environmental Studies Dr. John McCarty was selected as this year’s recipient of the College of Arts and Sciences Excellence in Research Award.

Among McCarty’s supporters for the award is Dr. L. Scott Johnson, Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, Towson University, and President of the Association of Field Ornithologists. He writes in reference to a study done by McCarty on the impact of cold, wet weather, and reduced insect availability, on the reproductive productivity of birds, “This work has for years been the ‘gold standard’ around the world when ornithologists discuss the effects of weather on passerine breeding biology.”

Johnson goes on to offer several more examples of how McCarty’s research has impacted the study of ornithology and climate change and calls McCarty one of the “go-to” people in this “incredibly important and exploding field of study.”

McCarty’s work has been published in the top journals in his field, including *The Auk* and *Environmental Science and Toxicology*. His grants since coming to UNO total more than \$500,000 and include those from the US Department of Agriculture, US



Fish and Wildlife Service and the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

According to Dr. William Tapprich, Chair of Biology at UNO, McCarty is also “one of our most active research mentors for graduate and undergraduate students. Dr. McCarty’s thesis students are also nationally recognized for the quality of their work.” McCarty’s students have received over \$20,000 in extramural funding and awards for their presentations at meetings.

Gouveia builds bridges among local, national, and international communities



Professor of Sociology and Director of the Office of Latino/Latin American Studies (OLLAS) Dr. Lourdes Gouveia is this year’s recipient of the College of Arts and Sciences Excellence in Service Award.

Nominator Dr. Mary Ann Powell, Chair of the Sociology/Anthropology Department,

writes, “Lourdes builds bridges and connects people with the good of the whole in mind. She is a community activist in the best sense of the word.”

Gouveia’s research, teaching, and service are centered in Latino Studies, with special focus on immigrant labor and migration.

Regarding her research, Dr. Juan Casas, Professor of Psychology writes, “Her research has generated grants in excess of \$1.5 million dollars, she has over 30 publications and 50 plus research presentations. While this output is impressive, what makes Dr. Gouveia’s research endeavors so special is that she doesn’t just contribute to the corpus of knowledge on immigrant labor and migration, but she helps to define the course of the area itself. . . . Her research impacts the discipline and can be felt in global, national, and local communities.”

Gouveia has been the driving force behind the establishment of the Latino/Latin American Studies (LLS) Program, offering a major in Latino/Latin American Studies and a minor in Chicano/Latino Studies. As Director as well as an instructor in the pro-

gram, Gouveia promotes the incorporation of service-learning in LLS classes. Gouveia’s Spring 2011 Latino Migration and Integration class captured the oral histories of senior Latina immigrant women from South Omaha’s Intercultural Senior Center, and assisted the center with development efforts and materials.

Gouveia serves on governing boards for the International Network on Migration and Development in Zacatecas, Mexico, the National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy of the Migration Policy Institute, and locally for the Partnership for our Kids and the Futuro Latino Fund of the Omaha Community Foundation.

She serves as Board President for The Heartland Workers Center in Omaha and was honored by that organization in 2010 for her contributions to their founding. The Center’s mission is to improve the quality of life of Latino/a immigrant workers by promoting leadership development, workers’ rights, and civic engagement through information sharing, training, and organizing.

Barn and silo journey through time and space

Life's journey began for these icons of our rural heritage in the early days of Nebraska's statehood when Danish immigrant Hans Johnson Sr. purchased farmland near what is now 180th and Ida Streets. The barn was built around 1880 and the farm was passed down through generations of the Johnson family.

According to descendant Barbi Hayes of Omaha, her mother grew up on the farm and delivered milk to Omaha grocery stores in the 1930's and 40's. Haye's grandmother Bess Grau Johnson ran the large dairy while grandfather Roy Johnson ran the farm.

Though many years have passed since the lowing of cattle and bustle and clang of the dairy drifted up through the rafters, the old "bones" are sound and the barn is on a new mission to preserve both our natural and agricultural heritage.

Hayes has donated the barn and concrete silo along with funds for renovation to UNO's Allwine Prairie Preserve where the barn will be repurposed as an education and research center and the silo will be transformed into an observation platform.

The 160 acres called Allwine Prairie are near 144th and State Streets and were donated to the Biology Department at UNO in 1959 by Arthur and Antoinette Allwine. In 1970, 130 acres were seeded with native tallgrass prairie grasses and the prairie is now one of the largest and oldest original tallgrass prairie restorations in the United States. 109 species of birds, 12 species of amphibians and reptiles, 24 species of mammals, and over 250 species

of plants thrive in their native habitat.

Allwine Prairie is the heart of a larger preservation effort called the Glacier Creek Project. When complete, the project will expand the boundaries of the preserve to encompass the entire Glacier Creek watershed thereby creating a unique and sustainable preserve for the enjoyment of future generations and protection of the gene pool of native fauna and flora. The Preserve is currently seeking funding to purchase the additional land.

The Preserve provides a site for research on prairie ecosystems and on grassland management and maintenance, and a field laboratory for classes and for other interested individuals or groups. The addition of the new education and research center, to be called the Barn at Glacier Creek, will greatly facilitate both teaching and research. The 36-by-36-foot barn will provide the core of a larger structure which will include classrooms, research labs, offices and space for community events. The hayloft will be preserved as open space. Renovations began this July and will be completed by late fall. The new education center will include a geothermal heating and cooling system.

The principle donor for the second "raising" of the barn, Barbi Hayes, is an environmental scientist and regulatory specialist with Hayes Environmental, L.L.C. and has served

in numerous posts on local and regional advisory boards and committees. She is presently chair of the Omaha Parks and Recreation Advisory Board and is serving her second three year term on that board.

Hayes is married to Dr. Tom Bragg, who is Director of the Preserve and Professor of Biology for UNO. Bragg initiated the Glacier Creek Project in 1999 and has raised nearly two million dollars in support of the project since that time. Funding has been provided by the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District, Nebraska Game and Parks, and the Nebraska Environmental Trust.

Other "neighbors" to help with the "raising" of the barn have included McArdle Grading of Omaha who donated site preparation and anonymous donors who contributed toward the moving and renovation costs.

For contact information as well as progress reports, please visit <http://www.unomaha.edu/prairie/>



Early on a crisp morning in January, the old barn and silo floated slowly toward Allwine Prairie on specially designed trailers pulled by 300-horsepower trucks. When darkness fell, the time travelers had nearly completed the four-mile journey.

Elkhorn River Research Station first port on Watershed Network



According to Dr. Alan Kolok, Director of the Nebraska Watershed Network and UNO's Aquatic Toxicology Lab, "The vision of the Nebraska Watershed Network is to provide the necessary infrastructure from which research, teaching and outreach regarding Nebraska's surface water quality can be assessed and disseminated to community, national and international stakeholders."

The first port on that network, the Elkhorn River Research Station (ERRS), was dedicated on April 20. The Aquatic Toxicology Laboratory (ATL) has partnered with the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District (NRD) to construct the station located on the T.L. Davis Prairie, a nature preserve at 245th and Q Streets, donated by Davis' family in 2005. George Haddix, a 1962 graduate of UNO and former head of HDR Systems, provided the lead gift to the building project.

The ERRS will provide direct access to the river for student, faculty, and community scientists. Water from the river is pumped through holding tanks so that fish and other aquatic animals are exposed to river water, and any toxins in the river, in real time. In addition to providing on-site access, the ERRS allows Kolok and his students to monitor toxicity levels in the Elkhorn River from their research labs at UNO. Kolok envisions a virtual laboratory on the Internet from which other researchers and the

public will be able to draw data generated by a network of river stations.

The ATL will continue to involve elementary, middle and high school students as well as the community at large in their research projects. Reaching out to younger students and area residents, getting them "pumped" about science, is one of the project's primary goals. Recent projects have included "Know Your Watershed Day" in which citizen scientists were recruited to collect water samples from several hundred points along the Elkhorn and a high school research proposal competition.

The ATL is working with the Lower Platte South NRD on construction of the second research station in the network. Construction on the Lied Platte River Bridge Research Station will start this summer with the goal of opening next spring. Funding comes from the Nebraska Research Initiative, a state-sponsored program for building a research base within the University of Nebraska system. One of the program's priorities is Water and Environmental Management and another is Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics or STEM.

Kolok sees The ERRS (photo left) in the role of masthead for an environmental science program focusing on the natural and social aspects of Nebraska's waterways. Architect Randy Brown explains that the structure, visible from the river as well as a nearby road, "could be mistaken for a rusting vestige of the steamboat days . . . like so many other industrial cast-offs. Clad in overlapping, steel panels, with an asymmetrical roof, the station looks like the prow of a ship, or, from afar, like a preserved slice of a covered bridge."

The building is moored by thin steel tubes that will cause minimal disruption to water flow and pilings 40 feet below ground. The split in the panels symbolizes the floodplain level. ADA-compliant ramps help to further stabilize the structure. A small, V-shaped observation deck serves to deflect blocks of ice and logs in the event of seasonal floods.

In the photo below, at the ERRS dedication, left to right, are Drs. Angie Hodge, Math, Neal Grandgenett, Teacher Education, and Alan Kolok. Grandgenett is a Co-director of The Office of STEM Education and Haddix Community Chair in Teacher Education. Hodge, the Haddix Community Chair in Mathematics, is featured on page 12.



What is STEM?

STEM is an acronym for the focus of various nation-wide, regional, and local initiatives on improving education in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics as well as encouraging student interest in those areas for careers.

According to the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce (CEW), "Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics occupations are critical to our continued economic competitiveness because of their direct ties to innovation, economic growth, and productivity. . . The disproportionate influence of STEM raises a persistent concern that we are not producing enough STEM workers to compete successfully in the global economy."

A 2010 report from the World Economic Forum revealed that 93 percent of American public school middle school students are taught the physical sciences by a teacher without a degree in those areas. The report also ranked the U.S. 48th in overall quality of mathematics and science education.

While the CEW projects that 92% of STEM jobs will soon require some post-secondary education and training and 67% will require a bachelor's degree or higher, only 45% of 2011 U.S. high-school graduates who took the ACT test were prepared for college-level math and only 30% were ready for college-level science according to data from ACT.

The CEW further reports that only 1 in 5 high school graduates who score in the upper quartile in math will go into a STEM career.

STEM education initiatives propose a variety of solutions. Most recently, the College of Arts and Sciences has focused on working closely with the College of Education and the Office of STEM Education, providing the expertise, energy, and best efforts of faculty like Angie Hodge from Mathematics and Alan Kolok from Biology. In conjunction with other offices on campus, the College is also supporting and promoting student research with funding for travel and materials.

The STEM initiative at UNO has received critical support in funding, leadership, and inspiration from donor George Haddix who has strengthened programs in both the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Education.



Angie Hodge (right) teaching UNO mathematics class.

Hodge takes on challenge of George Haddix Community Chair in Mathematics

Angie Hodge's enthusiasm for helping students find the joy in mathematics and in teaching mathematics is a passion born of personal experience. Growing up in Minnesota, Hodge found math fun but math class boring. As an education major in college, she knew she wanted to teach, but it never would have occurred to her that teaching math could be her way of making a difference in the world and having fun in the process.

"Thankfully, I had some amazing college professors who saw my potential and convinced me to consider grad school. They saw some talent in me that I didn't know I had," says Hodge.

She is now on a mission to help other students discover the same joy and purpose that she has found. As the George Haddix Community Chair in Mathematics, Hodge will be able to focus on reaching out to students with promise.

Hodge explains, "I pay careful attention to how students interact with each other in the mathematics classroom, looking for students who are bright, love math, AND love helping other students. I encourage those students to become tutors or teaching assistants or even just to take the next mathematics course."

"Outside of my own classroom, it's about helping students who may like mathematics, if shown to them in a different way, to

discover this interest. We have organized several "Cool Math Talks" and are working on giving our Math Clubs more of a presence as well to spark interest in students at UNO."

Hodge will also be reaching out to area teachers. "Reviving the Omaha Area Math Teachers' Circle is the project that I'm most happy about right now," she explains. With the help of several math/math ed faculty, we were able to get over 40 teachers at our last monthly meeting. The goals of these sessions are two-fold: (a) to help teachers learn mathematics content and (b) to give teachers ways to enhance their classrooms to help encourage their students to take more math and hopefully be math teachers some day."

This summer she extended her reach to youth in the community through Camp Eureka! a project funded with a grant from Girls, Inc. Twenty-eight young women, eighth graders, spent four weeks on the UNO campus doing a variety of hands-on science and math activities as well as sports and personal development activities.

Hodge is working with Carol Mitchel from the College of Education in directing the program and both are principal investigators on the grant. The Eureka project was first conceived in 1987 at Brooklyn College, but this grant brings the project to Nebraska for the first time.

Free public lectures bring national and international experts to Omaha Community

The great diversity of academic fields within the College of Arts and Sciences creates opportunities for rich dialogues regarding the world's most pressing issues. A number of annual lectures have been established to promote such dialogues, all free to the public and generally funded by private donations.

The Religious Studies Program organizes two lectures each year, *The Goldstein Lecture on Human Rights* and *The Rabbi Sidney Brooks Lecture*. This year's Brooks Lecture was entitled "The Tri-Faith Initiative: Beyond Dialogue to Cooperation." Rabbi Aryeh Azriel, from Temple Israel, the Rt. Rev. J. Scott Barker, of The Episcopal Diocese of Nebraska, and Dr. Syed Mohiuddin, from the American Institute of Islamic Studies and Culture, led the discussion on the Tri-Faith Initiative and what it means to Omaha as well as the larger community.

In addition to their sponsorship of the *Brooks Lecture*, The Natan and Hannah Schwalb Center for Israel and Jewish Studies offers *The Phil and Ruth Sokolof Lecture* once each year. Daniel Gordis, author, columnist, Senior Vice President and the Koret Distinguished Fellow at the Shalem Center in Jerusalem, this year

presented "The Year 2048: Can Israel Survive to the Age of 100?"

The Office of Latino/Latin American Studies invites nationally and internationally known speakers several times each year for their *Charla Series*. Most recently, Attorney Emiliano Lerda presented a lecture titled "Understanding the U.S. Immigration Legal System: Challenges & Opportunities." Lerda, an Argentine-born attorney, is the executive director of Justice for Our Neighbors – Nebraska.

The Black Studies program organizes the annual *Malcolm X Festival* which features free lectures by renowned artists, activists, and politicians among others. Chicago Activist Ameena Nuur Fort-Matthews presented "Making Our Communities Vibrant: Positive Interventions to End Youth and Community Violence" this spring.

Question and answer periods generally follow each presentation, allowing members of the community, students, and faculty to engage in lively discussions. As Dr. Oliver Pollak suggests below, occasionally, choosing from among the many campus discussions can be a happy dilemma.

A Busy University by Oliver Pollak, Professor of History

Emeritus History Professor Bill Pratt recently observed that a sign of a good university is when you have to make choices about which of two simultaneously scheduled events you will attend. Two events occurring at the same time, with a similar audience, may be attributed to poor planning or an exciting public lecture calendar. During the past half century I attended many lectures and conferences.

On Tuesday, October 25, 2011, at 7:00 the Annual Richard D. Winchell Lecture (started in 1997), and the Shirley & Buddy Goldstein Human Rights Lecture (started in 1999), took place simultaneously at the Thompson Alumni Center. The Winchell Lecture is named for Richard Winchell, who graduated from Omaha University in 1952 with a BA in History and went on to become President of Bellevue University. The Goldstein's Leonard "Buddy" died in January 2012. He and wife Shirley campaigned passionately since the 1970s in behalf of Russian Jews exiting the Soviet Union.

The historian Dr. Peter Coclanis, of the University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill), presented "Would Slavery Have Survived Without the Civil War?" The nation is observing the 150th anniversary of the Civil War. Simultaneously across the hall, Sarah Leah Wilson, Executive Director, Middle East and North Africa Division, of Human Rights Watch, presented "The Black Swan of the Middle East," employing the theoretical contribution of Nassim Nicholas Taleb's *The Black Swan* (2007).

Not only would I have liked to attend the Winchell and Goldstein affairs, I taught that evening. Torn between my syllabus, loyalty to my department and interest in Middle East human rights I directed my class to the lecture of their choice. Students would learn the standards of research, public speaking, audience participation, and in addition get munchies. My spouse arranged the catering for the Winchell Lecture, with a reputation for no empty stomachs left behind, and no cost overruns. The following week we discussed the experience in class. Arts and Sciences

Dean Boocker avoided the dilemma of which to attend, he had a third engagement elsewhere.

Audiences learn from these presentations. Slavery attracts faculty and students, many of whom have this as a class assignment, extra credit, complete with sign in sheets. The Middle East is more community based and draws from friends of the Goldsteins, faculty, and students.

Parking was no problem. The Thompson Alumni Center staff were efficient and helpful. The Winchell attracted about 60 people. The spread included four different cheeses, Gouda being the hit, the usual vegetable garnish with pepperoncini, and sweet and sour meat balls. There was no printed program memento. The Goldstein attracted about 120, with far greater community attendance. Food included a baked brie with cranberry sauce, a carver dishing out tenderloin and turkey, and raspberry squares. The talks and lively questioning were recorded by Bob Coate and Katie Knapp Shubert for later broadcasting on KIOS Noon Forum.

I have attended the Inaugural lectures of the Winchell and Schwalb programs. On March 29, 2011, I attended the inaugural Kent A. Kirwan Lecture in the History of Political Philosophy featuring Professor Catherine Zuckert of the University of Notre Dame, a classmate of Kent's at the University of Chicago, on "Why Study Plato." In attendance were former students and retirees Orville Menard, Carl Camp, Harl Dalstrom, Dick Overfield, Bob Runyon, and Hugh Cowdin. Dean Boocker's introduction captured the spirit, "This is what the university is about." Free public lectures bring the community, colleagues and especially students together to be "engaged above and beyond what you get in your classes," and there is no exam.

Takeaway lesson. Bring it on. Have a busy university. Don't worry about double booking. Modern parents over schedule their young children, adults choose to multi-task, and maybe, under exceptional circumstances, you can be two places at once, watch or listen to the recording.

Kinneys help to build Creative Nonfiction Program

The Kinney Family Foundation has established a fund with the University of Nebraska Foundation honoring individuals instrumental to the development of the English Department's Creative Nonfiction Program and supporting the program and its students.

The John J. McKenna Graduate Fellowship and the John J. McKenna Undergraduate Scholarship will be awarded annually to students in the Creative Nonfiction program. The awards will provide full tuition for one academic year and a book stipend.

Emeritus Professor John McKenna is one of the founders of the program. He taught at UNO for over forty years and was a mentor to Yvette Kinney (photo right), chair of the Kinney Family Foundation and the first recipient of the Graduate Certificate in Advanced Writing.



The Yvette Kinney Creative Nonfiction Program Fund will provide \$15,000 annually to further the mission of the program and promote the program regionally and nationally.

"I am thankful for the education and experiences I had as a result of being part of the program, the relationships I found while attending UNO and the help I received from Dr. McKenna while I was there," said Kinney. "My granddad taught me many years ago that if someone helps you, you pay it forward. What better way of doing that than keeping Dr. McKenna's legacy of helping students alive for the coming generations of students."

Kinney, a native of Missouri, earned her bachelor's degree in education from Central Missouri State University in 1978. She enrolled in the English master's program at UNO in 2000 and, in the course of her studies, suggested to McKenna that he develop a certificate program for graduate level writing. McKenna worked with his colleagues in the English Department to create the advanced writing certificate, and the program launched in 2003.

"The Kinneys' generosity is commendable beyond belief, and they are making a difference with their fund," said McKenna. "I can scarcely conceive of the good fortune of the students who will benefit. It is an exciting time for the English Department and the creative nonfiction program. UNO has the faculty, the courses, the students and now, with the Kinney Foundation gift, it has the support to make this program a nationally recognized center for creative nonfiction."

In addition to being a celebrated teacher, McKenna is a widely published poet. His poem "At the Japanese Gardens" was nominated for the Pushcart Prize. His work has been published in over 50 popular and literary magazines, including *Ideals Magazine*, *Hawaii Review*, *Louisville Review*, *Midwest Quarterly* and *Nebraska Life*.

Stunning discovery at Bethsaida

An important piece to the puzzle of the Biblical city of Bethsaida may have been unearthed this summer by excavation director and Professor of Religious Studies Rami Arav.

Early texts tell us that in the year 30 CE, Philip the son of Herod renamed Bethsaida "Julias," in honor of Livia, the wife of the emperor Augustus. He also built a temple in that city in honor of the empress. The texts further suggest that Phillip lived and died in the city.

However, Arav has not found as much evidence of settlement from the Roman Period as expected at the site that he has identified as Bethsaida. One theory that might explain a paucity of finds is that significant structures such as the above mentioned temple may have been moved to another site at a later time.

In June of this year, from the dig at Bethsaida, Arav emailed friends and colleagues at UNO, "Today a stunning discovery was made at Bethsaida. On top of a heap of stones on one of the Syrian trenches, I have discovered a fragment of a stone relief depicting grapes. . . . I hurried up with the fragment to Chorazim and lo and behold the fragment looks strikingly similar, in size style and craftsmanship to one of the Chorazim stone reliefs. This is another peg confirming the theory that the Roman temple at Bethsaida was taken for the construction of the synagogue at Chorazim.

We can surely add a new woe saying: 'Woe to you Chorazim for stealing the temple of Bethsaida and perplexing archaeologists for so many years.'"

Attached to the email was the photo below showing the temple fragment from Bethsaida next to the synagogue at Chorazim.

According to the *New Testament*, John 1:44, Bethsaida was the home of Philip, Andrew, and Peter. In Mark 8:22-26, Jesus is said to have cured a blind man at Bethsaida, and, in Matthew 11:20-24, he cursed both Bethsaida and Chorazim: "Woe to you, Chorazim! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you."

Arav, who teaches religious studies classes, has been excavating at the Bethsaida site, 2 kilometers from the northeastern coast of the Sea of Galilee in Israel, since 1987. In 1990, Arav and several colleagues from around the world joined together to form the Consortium of the Bethsaida Excavations Project, which since then has been housed in International Studies and Programs at UNO.



*In memoriam***Dean John M. Newton**

Feb 25, 1929 – Dec 14, 2011

Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences for twenty years, from 1974 to 1994, Jack Newton helped to shape the college, the campus, and tens of thousands of students' lives.

Born and raised in Schenectady, New York, Newton attended Union College, earning his B.S. in 1951. For his graduate work, he went to Ohio State University, finishing his Ph.D. in Psychology in 1955.

He met his wife Elizabeth Ann Slatery (Ann Newton) while at Ohio State and the first of their three children was born in 1957.

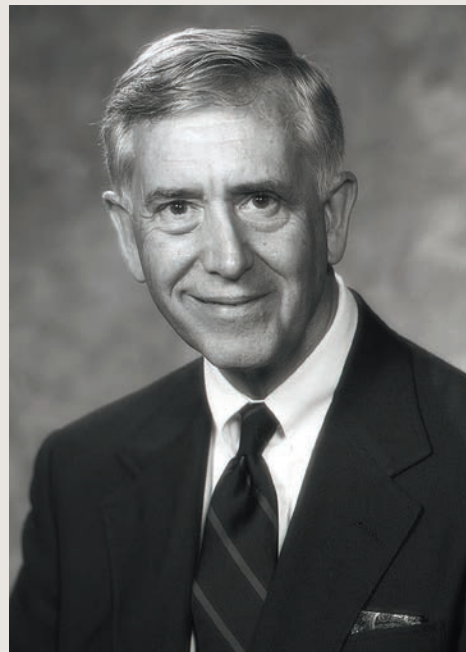
His first research assignment after graduation was as a Lieutenant with the United States Army Medical Research Laboratory in Fort Knox, Kentucky, where he served for two years.

Upon leaving the Army in 1957, he took a research position with the Electric Boat Division of General Dynamics Corporation at Groton, Connecticut. Both in the Army and at General Dynamics, Newton helped design controls for nuclear submarines and other equipment, working on issues of human interface.

In 1960 he was offered a teaching position with the Psychology program in the Department of Philosophy, Psychology, and

Religion at the then Municipal University of Omaha (OU). The career move meant a substantial reduction in salary, from \$12,500 to \$7,800, but, according to wife Ann, his "real love" was teaching.

Seven short years later, he was full



professor and chair of the Department of Psychology. Newton did much to help shape UNO's Psychology Program, adding significantly to the curriculum. One story he enjoyed telling involved Chancellor Milo Bail (retired 1965) being "dead set against animal research." Newton quietly purchased some rats, keeping them in his

garage at first. Later, with a little help from grounds staff, he created a new home for the rats in a remodeled coal bin in the basement of Arts and Sciences Hall. (For information on today's animal research facilities, please see page 7.)

Research of any sort was a rare thing in the early years of UNO. Newton brought OU its first research grant in the early 1960s from the National Science Foundation and soon after that another grant from the United States Office of Education.

As one of only a handful of OU faculty involved in research, Newton became particularly useful in negotiations surrounding the blending of Omaha faculty with Lincoln faculty during the formation of the University of Nebraska system in 1968. He served both on the governance committee and the graduate studies committee for the transition.

In his twenty years as leader of UNO's oldest and largest college, Dean Newton was instrumental in the development of a number of programs including the cooperative PhD program in Psychology, the International Studies Program, and the College of Information Science and Technology.

Jack Newton retired in 1999 and was appointed Professor Emeritus of Psychology and Dean Emeritus of the College of Arts and Sciences. He passed away on December 14 of 2011 after battling amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as ALS or Lou Gehrig's disease. He was 82.

Fahey donation supports city government studies

Former Omaha Mayor Mike Fahey recently made a \$50,000 gift to the University of Nebraska Foundation to support academic programs in the Department of Political Science at UNO.

Fahey's gift will support the development and implementation of a new course, Omaha City Government and Politics, establish the Mayor Mike Fahey Lecture on City Government and Politics, and fund a program to support students working as interns for the City of Omaha.

"We are enormously grateful to Mayor Fahey. UNO is the comprehensive metropolitan university in the heart of our city," says Randall Adkins, Chair of the Political Science Department. "Through Mayor Fahey's generous contribution, our outstanding students will be better-prepared to assume leadership roles in public service."



Fahey, born in Kansas City, Mo., in 1943, graduated from Creighton University in 1973. Upon graduation, he founded American Land Title Company, retiring as CEO in 1997. He was elected as the 49th mayor of Omaha in 2001 and won his second term in 2005.

The gift, which establishes the Mayor Mike Fahey Omaha City Government and Politics Fund, was announced at a luncheon honoring Fahey at UNO.

"I am proud my gift will be used to help young political science students get the training and experience necessary to prepare them for a lifetime of public service," said Fahey.

From left to right in the photo are Randall Adkins, Mike Fahey, Student Megan Liken, the first Fahey intern, and Mayor Jim Suttle.

Looking into the future

You make a difference! The University of Nebraska's ability to uphold its mission is dramatically strengthened as a result of our donors. We'd like to welcome new donors and thank everyone who has made a difference by financially supporting the College over the past year.

There are multiple ways that alumni, friends, faculty, businesses and corporations donate to aid the College of Arts and Sciences programs and research. Many people give each year when they receive an Annual Fund request by phone or in the mail.

Some wish to remember a classmate, faculty member or loved one with a memorial or honorary donation. Others choose to support research, establish a named scholarship, or create a fellowship. Examples include the Martha C. Page Study Abroad Travel Fund, the Dr. Steel R. Lunt Memorial Scholarship, and the Orville and Darlene Menard Political Science Scholarship. Named, endowed Chairs and Professorships are significant gifts that enable the College to attract and recruit the outstanding educators that prepare our students. Examples include the Blizek Professorship in Religion and the Charles W. and Mary C. Martin Professorship in American History. Gifts to the UNO Arts and Sciences Fund for Excellence create new possibilities for UNO's College of Arts and Sciences for many years to come.

I am privileged to work with the College of Arts and Sciences through the University of Nebraska Foundation. The Foundation is a non-profit organization established by the Board of Regents that raises and manages private gifts to the College. If you have questions about establishing a new fund or scholarship, making long-range plans, or giving through a different vehicle, please contact me at any time by phone, 402-502-4108, or by email, mbernier@foundation.nebraska.edu. I'd love to talk with you!

Mary Bernier



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