

FALL 2022

UNO MAGAZINE





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IN EVERY ISSUE
4 From the Chancellor



6 From the Editor
7 Alumni Association
10 Philanthropy Matters



14 The Colleges
20 Athletics



48 Class Notes
51 Future Alums
52 Sights & Sounds



54 For Fun



FEATURES
22 Internships Power Your Career
28 Dreaming Big: Maverick Entrepreneurs
36 Work Place
40 The Evolution of Work from Anywhere

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UNO MAGAZINE is a publication of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, the UNO Alumni Association and the University of Nebraska Foundation.

unolumni.org/unomagazine

FALL 2022

Mavericks,

It is so exciting to once again have this opportunity to provide you with an update on all the amazing things happening at UNO.

I have a strong belief that no matter your connection to UNO, you are a Maverick. We are your university. We will be here to support you whenever and however we can because we need your Maverick Spirit and the Maverick thinking you bring as a member of our alumni network.

There is no question that your success is our success, and I can say without reservation that our recent Homecoming celebrations and the Wear Black, Give Back only confirmed for me the amazing level of success that we have accomplished together. But even as we celebrate each other, there is still much more that we can, and truthfully need, to accomplish.

We know that our country – and especially the state of Nebraska – needs graduates to fill high demand, high skill, and high wage (H3) professions. These include careers in information technology, cybersecurity, healthcare, agriculture, finance, first responders, aviation and more.

As alumni, you are already familiar with UNO's long-standing collaboration between our university and the Omaha business and nonprofit communities. These partnerships are more vital now than ever before because access to opportunities like internships, mentorships, serviceships and experiential learning are vital for our students to achieve their higher education goals while also enhancing their intellectual, social and economic mobility.

Your efforts, your accomplishments, and your successes – dozens of which are detailed in this edition of UNO Magazine – are our proof of concept. Your work, day after day, following your curiosity and ingenuity, is a significant part of why our community knows they can trust Mavericks: we show up, and we are game changers.

Earlier this year a study showed a 9:1 return on investment for every \$1 invested in the University of Nebraska System and UNO alone has contributed nearly \$900 million of economic impact to Nebraska over the last year while you, our alumni, provide hundreds of millions of dollars in additional impact. So, yes, while our investment in improving our city, state and nation's workforce is not new, it will take continued innovation and collaboration to raise the bar even further.

To do this we are supporting efforts like Career Connect, where more than 60 local companies have committed to providing paid internships for our students; we are growing efforts like Learn and Earn, where our IT students are paired with industry mentors throughout their academic careers, making the transition to in-demand technology jobs seamless; and we are doubling down on our commitment to service learning, which not only keeps students engaged in their communities but makes clear connections between theory and practice.

Through your continued engagement with UNO, the future of our university is brighter than ever. However, we can only prepare for the future if we are willing to make a commitment to addressing the needs of today, together. It is important to dream daringly, yes, but as we turn our eyes toward the horizon, we must also do the demanding work to build the road others can then follow.

And that is why we cannot, and will not, simply put ourselves on cruise control. To meet our economic, social and intellectual workforce needs we must accelerate. We must set the pace. We must firmly set a course to solve the unsolvable. Because that is what a Maverick does and, right now, the world needs Mavericks.

The world needs *you*.

Sincerely,



Joanne Li, Ph.D., CFA
UNO Chancellor



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UNO MAGAZINE is published three times a year. The spring issue is sent to all graduates and to UNO donors of the past five years. The summer and winter issues are sent to all graduates in Nebraska and to UNO donors of the past five years. If you are a graduate who lives outside Nebraska but want to receive all three issues of UNO Magazine, email or write to the managing editor at the addresses listed at left.



Advertise to 60,000-plus UNO graduates! To learn more, contact Gary Domet at 402-995-1918 or gmd6@cox.net.

Views expressed within this magazine do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, the UNO Alumni Association or the University of Nebraska Foundation.

The University of Nebraska at Omaha shall not discriminate based upon age, race, ethnicity, color, national origin, gender-identity, sex, pregnancy, disability, sexual orientation, genetic information, veteran's status, marital status, religion, or political affiliation.

WRITE TO THE EDITOR

Do you have an idea for a future theme, cover artist or feature story? We want to know what you love and what we can improve.

Letters must include the writer's first and last names, address and phone number. Letters may be edited for taste, accuracy, clarity and length if they are published in future issues of UNO Magazine. Submit a letter online at unoalumni.org/unomag-led or write to the address at left.

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**METHODIST**

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Throughout my career I have been fortunate to work with many seasoned professionals and wise peers. Several pieces of advice from these colleagues have been beneficial to me over the years. One that surfaces often is something a mentor shared with me about leadership – communicate the “why”. If you want your work to truly resonate with your constituents, co-workers, audience you must explain why it should matter to them and what it means within the larger context of what you are trying to accomplish.

So, why does this magazine exist?

To tell the stories of UNO. The people, their aspirations and experiences, and the past, present and future of this great university. It is way for all Mavericks to connect – currently on campus or reminiscing from afar.

And why am I here?

As the new director of communications at the UNO Alumni Association / University of Nebraska Foundation, I am excited to take the helm as managing editor of this publication. I am passionate about stories (reading and writing them) and connecting with others, so this position is an obvious fit. I discovered these passions through my experience at the University of Nebraska, so it is also fitting that I now have the opportunity to help advance higher education for others.

I am a first-generation college student who thought she wanted to be a news reporter. Through my college, internship and early career opportunities, I found creative roles at community-based nonprofits are a much better fit for me than a television newsroom. Even though I didn't pursue a career in broadcast journalism, my education, and the experiences it afforded me after graduation, serve as the foundation to where I am today.

Similar and vastly different journeys have and are unfolding for Mavericks.

In this issue, we share how UNO students and alumni find their path. The stories within tell how UNO nurtures their passions and provides them with unique opportunities and experiences that not only set them up for success but give them a lifetime of memories and gratitude. You can also read about plans for future workforce development solutions and ways UNO, the University of Nebraska Foundation and the UNO Alumni Association are perpetually fostering the Maverick spirit.

Why does this matter to you?

This publication is for you and about you. We have intentionally designed these pages to spark a sense of pride or connection or curiosity. Hopefully, it inspires you to continue your education, become more engaged with your alumni network or support the work of UNO.

If you have a story that should be told, I would love to chat, and you can tell me why.



Davina Schrier
Managing Editor



MAVERICK COOKIES

If a Maverick were a cookie, what would it be made of? We have a recipe that is sure to fill your kitchen with freshly baked Mav Pride. Whip up a batch of these Maverick Cookies for your next tailgate, holiday party or just because it's Friday! Request your free Maverick cookie cutter form at unoalumni.org/cookies. Share your Maverick cookies on social media and tag us @unoalumni!

INGREDIENTS

2 ¾ cups community engagement	1 cup inclusion
1 teaspoon integrity	1 ½ cups sustainability
½ teaspoon discovery	1 UNO hockey puck
	1 teaspoon excellence

INSTRUCTIONS

STEP 1: Preheat the oven to focus on exceptional education, groundbreaking research and life-long success of students and alumni

STEP 2: Stir together a culture of critical thinking and creativity.

STEP 3: Mix an environment that is welcoming, open and diverse.

STEP 4: Bake in the preheated oven until the transformative power of shared resources, dynamic collaboration and sustained partnerships strengthens our community.

BAKER'S NOTE: Top these sweet cookies with a sprinkle of Maverick Spirit to really impress!



Above: The Baking Flamingos, Amber Sanne and UNO alum Curt Foerster (BS, 2007), helped us test the cookie cutter forms and recipe. The friends started the custom bakery business in 2021. View their menu offerings and follow them for updates on their brick and mortar storefront opening soon at bakingflamingos.net.

OUTSTANDING TEACHING AWARDS

For 26 years the UNO Alumni Association has honored distinguished teaching in the classroom through its Alumni Outstanding Teaching Award program. Peer committees choose recipients, each of whom received a \$2,000 award and a commemorative plaque at the UNO Faculty Honors Convocation on October 6, 2022.

2022 UNO Alumni Outstanding Teaching Award Recipients

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION



DANIELLE BATTISTI, PH.D.
History



P. ROXANNE KELLAR, PH.D.
Biology



ADAM D. WEAVER, PH.D., BCBA
Psychology



A. ERIN BASS, PH.D.
Management

COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATION, FINE ARTS AND MEDIA

COLLEGE OF INFORMATION SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING



STEVEN L. WILLIAMS
Theatre



KATHRYN M. COOPER, PH.D.
School of Interdisciplinary Informatics



GEORGE HUNT, PH.D., PE
Civil & Environmental Engineering

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND HUMAN SCIENCES

COLLEGE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS & COMMUNITY SERVICE



SANDRA RODRIGUEZ-ARROYO, PH.D.
Teacher Education



BEDE A. BOLIN, LTC(R),
Gerontology



Vivian Kaldahl, Jozy Piper, Lilly Gierhan and Jiya Chaudhari

UNO ALUMNI SCHOLARS

Congratulations to Jiya Chaudhari, Vivian Kaldahl, Lilly Gierhan and Jozy Piper on receiving the 2022 UNO Alumni Association and Lee Denker Scholarships. The UNO Alumni Association awards \$2,500/year scholarships to incoming University of Nebraska at Omaha freshmen who demonstrated leadership and involvement during high school. In 2022, an additional scholarship was added in honor of Lee Denker, UNO Alumni Association Executive Director from 2006–2021.

Learn more about these new Mavericks and why they chose UNO at unoalumni.org/2022unoaascholars

CAREER RESOURCES



The UNO Academic and Career Development Center (ACDC) offers many services to alumni including its Success Series Workshops and career coaching appointments. For more information about resume reviews, practice interviews, job search assistance and more, visit unomaha.edu/acdc

2022–2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The UNO Alumni Association Board of Directors, headed by an executive committee, establishes policies, reviews programs, issues awards and provides feedback and suggestions to the university administration. We are grateful for their time, expertise and passion for UNO.



Front (L to R): Sue Kutschkau; Andrew Wong, Officer; Carley Raneri, Treasurer; Negil McPherson Jr., 2nd Vice Chair; David Brisson, Chair of the Board; Martha Garcia-Murillo; Eric Gitt; David Hopp. Back (L to R): Melanie Krings; Mark Adler; Tami Williams; Tammy Voisin; Kaitlin Carlson; Anthony Flott, Executive Director; Samantha Chavez; Deb Circo; Ryan Curtis. Not pictured: Brian Allison; Jaime Damkroger; Viv Ewing, 1st Vice Chair; Richard Harrison; Jamalia Jones; Chancellor Joanne Li; Ann O'Connor; Tori Sims; Amanda Temoshek; Kate West



UNO alumni in Denver socialized with each other and Vice Chancellor and Director of Athletics Adrian Dowell and enjoyed a Rockies vs. Braves baseball game on June 5, 2022.

Mavs on the Move are nationwide social and networking events for UNO graduates and university representatives. Most recent trips have been to Scottsdale, Denver, Dallas and San Francisco.

Want us to come to your city? Find out where we are going next or invite us to your city at unoalumni.org/mavsonmove

VOLUNTEERS

COMMENCEMENT CHEER CREW

DECEMBER
16

Help us celebrate graduates at the UNO Commencement Ceremonies on Friday, December 16, at Baxter Arena! Join fellow UNO Alumni to cheer on new grads after they exit the stage and walk down a decorated hallway while returning to their seat. A Congratulations! sign including your graduation year will be provided. Sign up at unoalumni.org/commencementvolunteer



YOUNG. WILLING. ABLE.



The 12th class of the UNO Young Alumni Academy includes 50 participants from architecture, nonprofit, industrial development, banking, real estate, education, transportation, construction, agriculture and marketing, among other industries.

ADRIENNE CAVILL, Greater Omaha Chamber; **ALBERT PADANILAM**, Mutual of Omaha; **AMY JUNG**, Fiserv; **ASHLEY MILLER**, University of Nebraska Public Policy Center; **BETH A KALAL**, Triage, LLC; **BRIANNA CONYERS-LESTER**, Comfort Keepers; **CARSON CROCKETT**, Fiserv; **COLTON HEGGE**, PML Construction, Inc.; **DARREN BETTS**, Amplifi Capital; **DAVID CAVANAUGH**, Werner Enterprises; **DESHONDRE ROBINSON**, Pinnacle Bank; **ELIZABETH CHASE**, Fiserv; **ERIN M. FAIRCHILD**, Microsoft; **IRIS ESQUIVEL**, Conagra Brands; **ITZENI NAYELI LOPEZ**, OneWorld Community Health Center; **JACQUELINE GLASSMAN**, Self-employed; **JAEDA MATTHEWS**, Radical Minds; **JAKE RIDER**, Ardent Mills; **JAMIE OLMER**, City of Papillion; **JASMINE SMITH**, Kiewit Corporation; **JEDEDIAH D. HEEREN**, Securities America; **JESSICA SCHAAF**, NorthStar Foundation; **JOHNNIE SHAW**, Mutual of Omaha

Insurance Company; **JULIANA BREHM**, Union Pacific/Air Force; **KATE EARNHARDT**, UNO; **KATHERINE PORTO**, UNMC; **KATI STANZEL**, Kiewit; **LADASIA WILSON**, English Enterprise Carpentry; **LAUREN OMALLEY**, Aviture; **LEXI GOODIJOHN**, UNO; **LINDSAY M. SANDERS**, UNO; **LYLE KWIATKOWSKI**, UNO; **MARQUISHA FROST**, UNO; **MARVIN A NAJERA PRECIADO**, Papillion Foods; **MELISSA RAMOS**, World Travel Inc a Bcd Company; **MICHAEL GUTIERREZ-MADRIGAL**, UNO; **MICHAELA BLANEY**, MECA of The RiverFront; **NATHAN WIGHT**, Omaha Parks and Recreation; **NICHOLAS TROIA**, QC Supply; **RACHEL A MORALES**, Twisted Cork Bistro; **ROBERT T KOPP**, Baxter Arena; **ROSA DURAN**, Northwest Bank; **ROSE MONGA**, Gallup; **SPENCER FRENCH**, UNMC; **STEFANIE NEUMANN**, UNMC Global Center for Health Security; **THERESA CRNKOVICH**, Film Streams; **TYLER ENGLISH**, Union Pacific; **VANESSA KLEIN**, Amazon; **ZUZANA URBANOVA**, Zuzana LLC

Learn more about the award-winning professional and personal development program for alumni age 35 and under at unoalumni.org/yaa.

HIRING FULL-TIME ASSISTANT LEAD TEACHERS AND PART-TIME TEACHER ASSISTANTS



For more information call the UNO Child Care Center at 402.554.3398



GRADS GIVE

At the request of UNO Chancellor Joanne Li, graduating students are asked to **donate \$5 or more to the UNO Grads Give program**. Students can designate their gift to the Maverick Food Pantry, student hardship or student scholarship fund. All students who contribute receive a UNO Alumni zipper pull for their commencement robe. Since its inception in 2021, more than 430 graduating students donated nearly \$3,600 to help fellow students.

UNO AND UNMC COLLABORATE TO DIVERSIFY NEXT GENERATION OF HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS

URBAN HEALTH OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM SCHOLAR
AND FIRST-GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENT DANIELA
CORTÉS REYES AIMS TO GIVE BACK TO THE COMMUNITY
THAT PROVIDED FOR HER.

by Connie White

Growing up in the Omaha suburb of Bellevue, Daniela Cortés Reyes made regular visits to OneWorld Community Health Centers for back-to-school sports physicals, vision checks and vaccinations.

At age 24, Cortés Reyes is going back to the South Omaha clinic, this time wearing a white doctor's coat.

She will graduate in May 2023 with a degree from the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Instead of moving away to complete her residency in another state, Cortés Reyes decided to stay close to home.

She will spend the next four years based at OneWorld. She hopes her experiences — Cortés Reyes lived in Mexico until age 5 and is a fluent Spanish speaker — will help her build connections with patients from diverse backgrounds who come into the clinic.





Daniela Cortés Reyes will graduate from the University of Nebraska Medical Center with a medical degree in May 2023.

“I will be able to give back to the community that once provided for me,” said Cortés Reyes, who graduated summa cum laude from the University of Nebraska at Omaha in 2019 with a degree in neuroscience.

Cortés Reyes is a participant in the Urban Health Opportunities Program (UHOP), a partnership between UNO and University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) aimed at increasing the number of physicians who come from communities that are underrepresented or underserved. UHOP helps students prepare for medical careers through tuition assistance, mentoring, help with medical school applications, as well as preparation for the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT). Students who meet the program’s requirements are guaranteed admission to medical school at UNMC.

HEALTH CARE FOR UNDERSERVED AREAS

UHOP was started in 2016 by Paul Davis, Ph.D., a professor of biology at UNO. He modeled UHOP after the Rural Health Opportunities Program, a separate UNMC program to encourage rural residents to pursue careers in health care fields to address a critical need for providers in rural Nebraska.

UHOP is geared toward training health care professionals to work in underserved communities in urban areas, particularly in North and South Omaha.

Davis noted the lack of diversity in medicine, in terms of both race and socioeconomic factors. More than 56% of active physicians are white. About 17% are Asian. Fewer than 6% are Hispanic, and 5% are Black, according to a report from the Association of American Medical Colleges.



SOME POPULATIONS ARE EVEN LESS LIKELY TO SEEK CARE IF THEY DON'T HAVE PROVIDERS WHO LOOK LIKE THEM OR SPEAK LIKE THEM.

Since the pre-medicine program began in 2016, 83% of participants have gone on to pursue a health care career, whether that be as a doctor, a dentist, a physician assistant or in another medical field.

In 2021, UHOP was expanded to include a pre-nursing track for UNO students. Those students are now in their second year at UNO before they move on to UNMC to finish their nursing degrees.

Cortés Reyes said UHOP has been “a beacon of aid” as she works toward her goal of becoming a family practice doctor. Without UHOP, Cortés Reyes said, she would have had to come up with the \$1,500 fee to pay for her MCAT prep course.

She said she also received support from her UHOP peers — “We’ve all lifted each other up” — through academic preparation for the 7 ½-hour MCAT and a road map and structure to get through medical school.

HER PARENTS’ INFLUENCE

Cortés Reyes’ family moved to the United States from the small Mexican town of Cerrito Colorado when she was 5 years old. With her father already living and working in the U.S., Cortés Reyes, her mother and three siblings first lived in California, before moving to Bellevue when she was 8.

Her parents, Luis Cortés and Rosa Reyes de Cortés, work at a Council Bluffs manufacturing plant that makes frozen meals.

Cortés Reyes, who graduated from Bellevue West High School in 2015, credits her parents with instilling in her and her siblings a desire to further their education. One sibling is studying to become a physical therapist; one is a lawyer; and the other is a certified public accountant.

Her parents were not able to finish grade school.

“These are opportunities that they would have loved to have had,” Cortés Reyes said.

BUILDING PATIENT TRUST

During her residency, she will gain experience in obstetrics, pediatrics, surgery and hospitalist medicine. Cortés Reyes hasn’t decided where she wants to practice medicine after she finishes her residency, whether that’s in an academic hospital or a community-based setting like OneWorld.

Wherever she goes, she wants to build connections with her patients. Cortés Reyes said that people from underserved communities utilize health care at a much lower rate than the general population, even if they have health insurance. The thinking, she said, is “I will do it when I get sick.”

Some populations are even less likely to seek care, Cortés Reyes said, if they don’t have “providers who look like them or speak like them.”

It’s well established, Davis said, that people are more likely to seek care if they feel a provider “gets them.”

Diversity allows physicians to better understand patients within a larger context, such as their upbringing, culture and socioeconomic realities. Without such an understanding, routine visits may be put off, and, as a consequence, patients become less healthy.

“By the time they do address their problems, it’s usually an emergency situation,” Davis said.

He has seen the issue even among UHOP students. Davis recalled asking UNO freshmen who were preparing to job shadow a physician when they had last gone to see a doctor.

“The majority answer was 5 years old,” he said. “That was the last time the majority of our students had been to the doctor.”

The anecdote, Davis said, demonstrates the problem. He hopes that UHOP can be a part of the solution.

Building those connections allows for better conversations about potentially sensitive topics such as substance abuse or weight loss. No one is more vulnerable, Cortés Reyes said, than when they are sitting on an exam table in a doctor’s office.

“When someone is vulnerable,” she said, “it’s important to establish trust.”

And, Cortés Reyes said, “it’s important we listen.”



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Connie Claussen created electricity on the field. Now she's ensuring the next generation can lead the charge.

An electrician's tape usually secures an electrical connection. For Connie Claussen, that electric connection came in the form of UNO Women's Softball. When she first began coaching, her team didn't have real uniforms, so they used electrical tape on the back of their T-shirts for jersey numbers. Six years later, Connie's team went from taped numbers to number one in the nation by winning the national title.

For the next 23 years, Connie continued to provide a spark to UNO athletics until her retirement as assistant athletic director. Today, she's an active fundraiser for the university, but she doesn't just leave the donating to others. She will continue to leave funds to support UNO women's athletics through a planned gift.

You can impact the lives of future UNO students, too, by including the University of Nebraska in your estate plan. Whatever philanthropic impact you want to have, we can find a match for your passion and interest. Simply visit us online at nufoundation.org/giftplanning, or call a gift planning officer at the University of Nebraska Foundation at 800-432-3216.



Photo by Stephanie Veloso

HELPING AVIATION CAREERS TAKE OFF



Becky Lutte, associate professor of aviation

TWO-AND-HALF YEARS INTO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND THE IMPACT ON THE AVIATION INDUSTRY HAS BEEN FELT FAR AND WIDE.

HUNDREDS OF PILOTS, AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLERS, MECHANICS AND MORE WERE WITHOUT WORK AS COUNTLESS PLANES WERE GROUNDED BUT THEN, THIS PAST YEAR THE PROVERBIAL PENDULUM SWUNG THE OTHER WAY. FLIGHTS WERE ONCE AGAIN BEING GROUNDED, BUT THIS TIME DUE TO A LABOR SHORTAGE THAT WAS ALREADY PUTTING AIRLINES ON THE DEFENSIVE.



Gwendoline Dunlop, president of UNO's Women in Aviation chapter.

Heading into the pandemic, the Federal Aviation Administration reported a 30 percent decrease in pilots since the 1990s.

This is precisely why, in 2019, Southwest Airlines and Jet Linx Aviation asked UNO's nationally ranked Aviation Institute, one of the nation's top-ranked programs, to be one of just four universities in their new Destination 225° partnership.

This kind of hands-on experience not only provided unique opportunities to UNO students but also puts them in high demand once they graduate.

"By the time we reached July of this year we were already blowing past the previous record number of pilots being hired, which was set in 2021," explains Becky Lutte, associate professor of aviation. "Forecasts

"The really cool thing about UNO is they have a lot of different pipelines that are exclusive to UNO and that's been a big selling point for the students I know," Scott says. "Also, for me and I'm sure a lot of other students, is getting that college experience as well as the flight training."

"The support of the university has been really strong, and that's important," Becky Lutte says. "UNO is a university that gets us as aviators and that can sometimes be hard to find at other universities."

And while pilots like Scott, who grew up in the industry, are natural fits to fill the pilot shortage, it is also an opportunity for those who traditionally haven't been well represented in aviation: women and racially and ethnically diverse people. In fact, Becky Lutte is one of the few women who make up only 8% of the total number of pilots.

It is a glass ceiling that students like Gwendoline Dunlop, who is president of UNO's Women in Aviation chapter, are excited to see shatter in the coming years.

"Lack of representation is a strong invisible barrier. We don't get a lot of opportunities to see other women in aviation in our area, and it can feel isolating," Dunlop says.

"I often feel like I'm somehow representing all women when I am the only one in the class."

Lutte, whose research looks at aviation policy as well as the recruitment of underrepresented

groups to the industry, says airline companies no longer have the luxury to do things the same way. Big changes, like flexible scheduling and more family-friendly policies, are needed to attract a diverse pool of potential employees.

"They are going to need to tap into a large community and that is going to include women and underrepresented groups. UNO and Omaha are uniquely positioned to meet the moment because we do have strong faculty who are also diverse. With these assets, and the way our program is designed, our students, the future pilots the industry is needing right now, will be taking to the skies that much sooner."

— Charley Steed

MAVERICK AVIATORS ACCEPTED INTO DESTINATION 225° WILL BE ON COURSE TO WORK WITH THE NATION'S PREMIER AVIATION COMPANIES AS THEY TRAIN TO BECOME PROFESSIONAL PILOTS...

"Destination 225° and this exciting partnership offers a unique opportunity for our students," according to Scott Tarry, associate dean for the College of Public Affairs and Community Service. "Maverick aviators accepted into Destination 225° will be on course to work with the nation's premier aviation companies as they train to become professional pilots and begin the pursuit of a career in aviation."

Earlier this year, nine Aviation students who are part of the Destination 225° program traveled to Dallas to take part in leadership training where they got the chance to meet with pilot mentors and Southwest executives as well as engage with state-of-the-art flight simulators and training tools.

show that retirements combined with overall industry growth means more than 760,000 new pilots worldwide will be needed in the next 20 years."

One of those pilots is Lutte's son, Scott, who came to Omaha and UNO after growing up in Texas – recently joining the Maverick alumni network after earning his degree in August 2021.

Coming from a long line of pilots – many of whom were also Mavericks – dating all the way back to his grandfather on his mother's side and great grandfather on his father's side, he says UNO has a special place in his heart not only because of the family connection, but because what that connection says about UNO's track record in cultivating pilots.

A RIPPLE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Maverick Venture Fund offers needed source of startup investing in Nebraska



Levi Cermak of UNO's Center for Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Franchising (CIEF)

Watch interviews with Maverick Venture Fund leaders, mentors and several of its portfolio company founders.



Taylor Korensky, Apsky founder and CEO (left) collaborates with a coworker. Image provided by Apsky.

Some businesses need a little push to get rolling. A unique investment firm led by UNO students and faculty have given area startups that nudge to realize their potential.

Guided by Levi Cermak and Dale Easley of UNO's Center for Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Franchising (CIEF), the Maverick Venture Fund (MVF) helps launch and grow local startups while also teaching students about investments and venture capital.

Think of the fund as a hands-on, educational form of Shark Tank that directly impacts area businesses. Companies apply for funding and students select those they think present the best investment opportunities. Entrepreneurs then pitch their business to the MVF group.

Students from any major can complete three semester-long courses that accompany the fund. Each course provides an understanding of key concepts and principles needed to conduct due diligence, calculate returns on investment, make recommendations, and manage investments. Each cohort mentors the next and continues to develop guidelines, tools, processes and systems to help the fund grow more independent.

"The MVF experience culminates in making decisions that have tangible impacts on startups and ultimately our community," Cermak said. "Best of all: everyone involved can see how these companies thrive after receiving funding from the Maverick Venture Fund."

And thrive they do. Local design, software development and consulting creative agency Apsky is one such example. Apsky faced cash flow challenges during a slower time in 2019. While such a stretch could stifle a startup, MVF investment enabled the company to maintain its payroll and position itself for future growth.

Taylor Korensky, Apsky's founder and CEO, believes the pitching process is a valuable experience for students and entrepreneurs alike. "It gives students an opportunity to see a real business and its struggles, allowing them to get involved more deeply, possibly even more than an internship," Korensky said.

The agency works with larger clients such as the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) and the Nebraska Department of Economic Development, but many of Apsky's clients are startups—from designing mobile apps that help users find local restaurant deals to web apps that help streamline business processes.

"A lot of groups we work with apply for the Nebraska Innovation Fund Prototype Grant. The Maverick Venture Fund's investment range is a perfect setup for matching funds through that grant. As a startup, every little bit helps," Korensky said.

Since 2018, the MVF has built a diverse portfolio funding 11 companies through more than \$100,000 raised by students.

For example, Pincurl Girls provides encouragement and positivity for girls through daily texts, podcasts and products. RetailAware helps businesses track in-store data and gain insights behind foot traffic and purchasing habits. Two companies, Logica and Connect Care Hero, have gone on to graduate from top-tier accelerators such as YCombinator and TechStars, respectively.

The next cohort, led by Student President Marcus Quevedo and Vice President Alex Wewl, will search for the next success stories. Each one is made possible through the curriculum behind the MVF program. Startups interested in the Maverick Venture Fund can apply by visiting maverickventurefund.com.

—Brandon Bartling

From Amateur to Professional

How determination and UNO launched Ana Bellinghausen's sports media career



Ana Bellinghausen, Hurrdat Sports digital director and UNO alumna, interviews players at the 2022 College World Series in Omaha, Neb.

Journalism's evolution in the digital age always seems to be up in the air.

Between the move from print to online, the advent of livestreaming and the emergence of podcasts as a storytelling platform, the only certain thing in journalism is uncertainty.

So, if you want a preview of what journalism might look like in the years to come, ask Hurrdat Sports digital director and UNO alumna Ana Bellinghausen.

On a given day you can find Bellinghausen interviewing Arizona Cardinals quarterback Kyler Murray at the College World Series, mapping out a podcast series, storyboarding a documentary, making radio show appearances and posting real-time sports coverage on her Twitter: @AnaBellMedia.

But Bellinghausen didn't become a sports journalism Swiss Army knife overnight. It began in middle school on fall Saturdays watching ESPN's College GameDay with her father and seeing reporters like Erin Andrews, Samantha Ponder and Maria Taylor.

"I thought that could be me too," she said. "That was the first time I understood that women belonged in the sports field as well."

MavRadio faculty advisor Jodeane Brownlee said Bellinghausen made an immediate impact working for the student-run station. In settings where any young journalist would feel intimidated – like locker rooms – Bellinghausen was "fearless" and set a tone for her peers.

"Here was a student who acted like she had been there before at 18, 19 years old," Brownlee said. "Ana broke these barriers for professionalism and really laid this foundation."

It wasn't long before Bellinghausen realized she wasn't alone.

"There's no way I'm the only girl here who likes sports," she thought, launching the Women in Media Club her junior year, that with Brownlee's support, grew to 25 members strong at the time of her graduation. Brownlee said Bellinghausen went above and beyond to put mentors in front of the group, coordinating Zoom sessions with ESPN personalities like Mina Kimes and Laura Rutledge.

The professional network she developed for herself and others to support women pursuing careers in sports media opened a

door with Hurrdat Media, which launched a new property called Hurrdat Sports.

She finds the wild-west nature of her position – and sports media in general – equally intimidating and exciting. For example, unlike many legacy media outlets, Hurrdat prioritizes smartphone video clips, satisfying sports fans' desire for real-time coverage.

"You can create the next wave of how sports are covered because our phones are our TVs nowadays. Nobody is waiting until 10:00 p.m. to find out if their team won or not," she said.

It was through her UNO experience, including opportunities with the Big East Digital Network and covering the U.S. Olympic Curling Trials to name just a few, that shaped her into the journalist she is today.

"I honestly think it's just work hard, believe in yourself and find ways to gain confidence," she said. "When I look at videos I did in 2018–2019, I wasn't confident. And that's okay. You're building a better image of yourself every day, and every day you're getting better at what you do."

—Sam Peshek



Photo by A.J. Olites

Dr. Adam Rosen (center) works with students in the Health Professions Academy at Benson Magnet High School.

BENSON HEALTH PROFESSIONS ACADEMY: THE UNO PIPELINE

UNO is strengthening the K-12 to college to career pipeline through community engagement.

At a time when healthcare professionals are more in demand than ever before, UNO is hard at work training and preparing the next generation of health professionals right now.

Launched in 2015, the Benson Health Professions Academy connects students at Benson High Magnet School with the experts and resources that will give them a head start in their careers. In this program, students can explore and work toward their future healthcare profession goals while learning the necessary skills and earning certifications and college credit that will let them start ahead of the curve when they enter college.

“This academy prepares high schoolers to enter a variety of career pathways including kinesiology and sports medicine; nursing; pharmacology; and mental health professions,” says Adam Rosen, Ph.D., associate professor and director of the School of Health and Kinesiology’s Athletic Training program at UNO. “The support from their school, Omaha Public Schools, UNO and the Omaha community helps prepare

students for a successful post-secondary education and identify career interests.”

Benson’s Health Professions Academy Lead Teacher Robyn Jernigan has a special connection with UNO — she is an alumna of the Teacher Education program and a May 2022 graduate of the Master of Arts in Health and Kinesiology program. A Benson teacher since 2008, Jernigan developed a course in her first year of teaching, “Foundations of Healthcare,” that gives students a glimpse at more than 70 possible healthcare careers and laid the groundwork for the Health Professions Academy.

“The Health Professions Academy is an amazing opportunity that allows students to take ownership of their education as well as make real world connections. Dr. Rosen has been vital in helping to develop these strong relationships,” said Jernigan.

“The partnership with UNO has given me the support and experiences needed to develop my students into well-rounded, resilient and post-secondary-ready individuals. UNO faculty have provided classroom activities, field trips and cohort training.”

New Benson graduate Anna Burks agrees. “The partnership between UNO and Benson is essential because we get to envision

ourselves as working professionals. The field trips, supplies and experiences that we have gotten through UNO will make us more successful in the future because we are prepared.”

The partnership between UNO and Benson High School has been recognized with several awards. In 2020, Benson’s Health Professions Academy achieved Model Academy status from the National Career Academy Coalition (NCAC). Then, in 2021, it received recognition as the Nebraska Career and Technical Education Outstanding Career Academy and was selected for the Jeffrey N. Stein Award, a recognition awarded to college and career academies for exceptional blending of staff, family and community support.

With a combined focus on bringing in expert lecturers from healthcare fields; interactive experiences and tours in lab spaces; as well as experiential learning activities, the Benson Health Professions Academy is a clear example of how UNO is helping Omaha, and Nebraska, innovate to create a stronger workforce by helping make sure students’ future dreams and ambitions are within reach before they even begin their college journey.

—Sam Anderson

Creative Thinking and Inspiration Solve IS&T Labor Challenges



Photo by Elsie Stormberg

Dr. Martha Garcia-Murillo, dean of the UNO College of Information Science & Technology, welcomes legislative staffers during a visit to the college.

Recent projections¹ by the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicate that growth in computer science occupations is expected to reach 13 percent by 2030.

While some view this as an impossible challenge, producing more than 667,000 tech workers in less than eight years, Martha Garcia-Murillo, Ph.D., welcomes it as an opportunity.

“In Nebraska, the future of the STEM, computer science and technology fields will require a collective effort from the university, our private and not-for-profit partners and the state,” Garcia-Murillo, UNO’s dean of the College of Information Science and Technology (IS&T), said. “We need to coordinate and support efforts that can motivate and excite young kids and teens to pursue the STEM and technology fields.”

But what does a cross-state mobilization like this look like? It looks like open-source learning materials and technologies for classrooms. It looks like a technology lending library, where teachers can test hardware and software before districts make an investment. It looks like equipping new and existing teachers with STEM skills while also preparing former tech industry employees for teaching careers.

THE MORE STEM AND TECH TALENT WE CAN GENERATE, THE MORE ATTRACTIVE THE STATE WILL BE TO COMPANIES THAT NEED THESE SKILLS.

Lucky for Nebraska—a state that faces an expected tech worker shortage of 10,000 – these examples don’t need to be developed from scratch. UNO IS&T faculty, staff and administrators are already building next-generation tech workforce infrastructure.

But what about losing graduates to opportunities out-of-state? Through IS&T’s new “Learn and Earn” initiative, students develop early relationships with local prospective employers through job shadowing in their first year, an applied project their second year and then two years of internships. This pipeline approach is designed to retain graduates while also attracting out-of-state companies to Nebraska.

“The more STEM and tech talent we can generate, the more attractive the state will be to companies that need these skills,” Garcia-Murillo said.

Brian Dorn, Ph.D., IS&T associate dean for academic and faculty affairs, currently oversees many of these collaborative projects across the state. He says developing the next generation of computer science and technology workers requires a unique combination of creative thinking and inspiration.

“If we want to be successful in bridging this worker gap, we need to combat the idea that a career in tech means hours alone in front of a computer coding,” Dorn said. “We also need to create as many touchpoints with students early on as possible through things like summer and after school programs, and make science, technology, engineering and math exciting.”

Bridging the worker gap, retaining tech talent in-state and attracting employers to relocate to Nebraska would all be major victories and a testament to the state’s ability to take on a major project. A broad-based commitment to computer science and technology, quite simply, is not just transformational but necessary.

“Our ability to overcome challenges and pursue new opportunities as a society and a democracy will depend on how tech-literate our population is,” Garcia-Murillo said. “This kind of literacy—knowing principles of coding, cybersecurity and technology use—will be as essential to the population tomorrow as reading and writing is today.”

—Sam Peshek

¹ www.bls.gov/ooh/computer-and-information-technology/home.htm.

THE FIRST 50 YEARS: TITLE IX AND CONNIE CLAUSSEN'S LEGACY AT UNO



When you think of sports legends in Nebraska, few rival Connie Claussen. She is the only person to have received the UNO Alumni Association's Outstanding Service Award (1976) and Citation for Alumni Achievement (1997) and be inducted into the UNO Athletic Hall of Fame (1983). In 2021, UNO recognized Claussen's contributions by naming its new softball complex in her honor.



NO PERSON IN THE UNITED STATES SHALL, ON THE BASIS OF SEX, BE EXCLUDED FROM PARTICIPATION IN, BE DENIED THE BENEFITS OF, OR BE SUBJECTED TO DISCRIMINATION UNDER ANY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM OR ACTIVITY RECEIVING FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENTS ACT OF 1972



Connie Claussen (back row, left) with the UNO's 1969 Women's Softball Team.

In 1968, there were no sanctioned sports for women at UNO when Omaha was selected to host the first women's softball World Series. Connie Claussen taught physical education at the university, and she thought if the women's world series was coming to town, UNO should have a team. She quickly recruited players, borrowed uniforms and held a few practices before entering the tournament.

"We ended up losing our first two games, but honestly, this was never about winning and losing. It was about the beginning of women's athletics at UNO. And by 1971, we had an actual softball team," said Claussen.

The move opened the door to opportunities for female athletes in Nebraska. Despite much enthusiasm, they lacked financial and administrative support. In 1972, the passage of Title IX requiring equity in academic and athletic programs furthered Claussen's efforts.

Progress didn't happen overnight, but Claussen, and many volunteers were persistent.

"We added basketball, volleyball and then track and field," said Claussen. "Change we'd only dreamt about was slowly unfolding before our eyes."

After half a century, the impact of this landmark civil rights law on women's sports is evident. Today, women make up 44% of all NCAA athletes compared to 15% pre-Title IX, when fewer than 30,000 women played college sports, according to the NCAA Sports Sponsorship and Participation Report, 1971-72 and 2020-21.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of this essential legislation, yet the full promise of Title IX remains unfulfilled for many girls and women across the nation.

"My only hope is that we can celebrate the past, while also working to improve the future," said Claussen. "Let's make these next 50 years even better than the first."

Reigning Summit League Champs Host Volleyball Tournament in November

Omaha Volleyball made history with its first conference championship and 20-win season at the Division I level last year. They held a 20-10 overall record and 15-3 conference record making it to the Summit League Championship game. On November 25–26, 2022, the Mavericks will host the Summit League Championship Tournament.

Kelly O'Connor has been elevated to associate head coach. O'Connor served as an assistant the last three seasons. Primarily responsible for defensive coaching and scouting, O'Connor helped Omaha achieve increasingly lower opponent hitting percentages since her hire. In 2021, the Mavericks had the sixth toughest non-conference schedule in the country and held those opponents to a .173 hitting percentage. Their defense was even stronger in league play posting a league leading .132 among the Summit teams.

This season is well underway with upcoming matches against Kansas City (11/3) and Oral Roberts (11/5). Omaha concludes the regular season at North Dakota State (11/10) and North Dakota (11/12), while playing the final home match of the season against Denver on Nov. 19.



Welcome New Omaha Athletics Coaches



DONOVAN DOWLING

Head Men's Soccer Coach

Donovan Dowling was announced as the men's soccer head coach in June 2022. He is the third head coach

in the program's history. Dowling came to Omaha after a four-year stint with the Louisville Cardinals serving as an assistant coach and recruiting coordinator. He helped lead the program to 36 wins, three NCAA tournament appearances and a Sweet 16 finish.

"I am humbled and honored to work for such a special academic institution and athletic department. I look forward to continuing to build on the tremendous foundation that has been previously established while growing a program that is synonymous with academic achievement, community engagement and athletic excellence," said Dowling.

Read more about Dowling's background and career at Louisville, University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, Northeast Texas Community College and Fort Hays State at omavs.com.



ERIN GUNTHER

Women's Soccer Assistant Coach

Erin Gunther was named UNO women's soccer assistant coach in June 2022. Gunther spent the last two

seasons as a graduate manager at LSU where she assisted the coaching staff on team decisions, incoming recruits, and travel plans.

Gunther played from 2008-11 at Creighton. She was a four-time All-MVC selection and helped the team to a 2010 MVC championship and NCAA tournament appearance. She was named a team captain for the 2011 season. Following her collegiate career, Gunther played internationally for eight years in Sweden for Limham Bunkeflo 07.

"I'm very excited to be back in Omaha and working for a program that is looking to build not only for the players now, but for the future players to come," said Gunther.

Learn more about Gunther's education and achievements at omavs.com.



TED KOPACZ

Volleyball Assistant Coach

Ted Kopacz joined the Volleyball coaching staff as head coach in June 2022. Kopacz spent

the previous two seasons with Colorado University as a volunteer assistant coach. He was responsible for assisting in the training of the team's defensive schemes, alignment and techniques for both the block and team floor defense. Prior to joining the CU staff, Kopacz was a senior account manager at bswift, while also offering his services as a high school coaching consultant.

"I am ecstatic to be joining the Omaha Volleyball program," said Kopacz. "I'm looking forward to getting to know the team and to help them grow as people and players. I want to thank Coach Buttermore for this opportunity, as well as the mentors who have helped me along in my journey."

Find more highlights about Kopacz's career, experience playing volleyball and education at omavs.com.

INTERNSHIP POWER YOUR CAREER



by John Melingagio, APR

HIPS



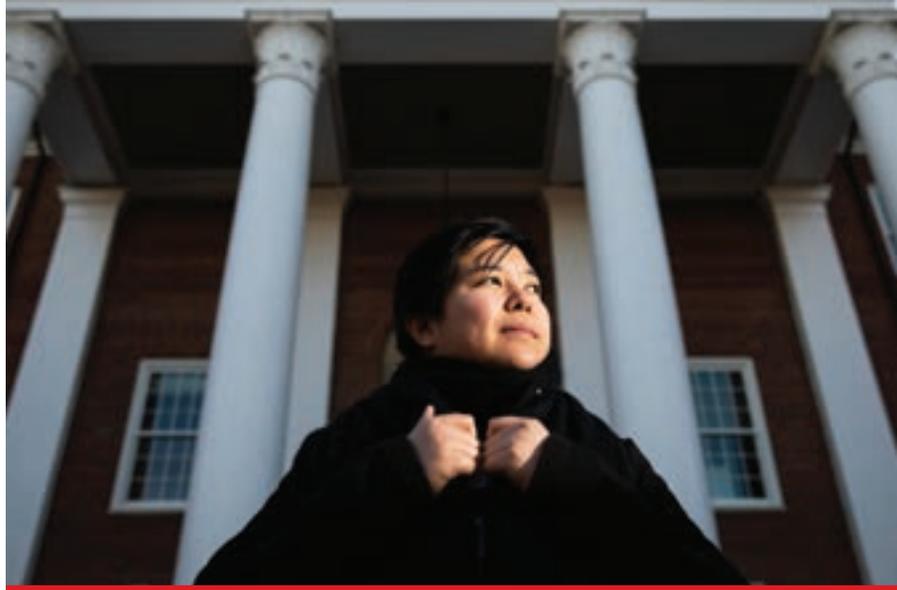
Photo provided by Green Plains Inc.

INTERNSHIPS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A GATEWAY FOR STUDENTS TO POWER THEIR CAREERS AND PROFESSIONAL NETWORKS, AND THEY ARE EARNING EVEN MORE ATTENTION FROM UNO AND THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA SYSTEM BECAUSE OF TIGHT LABOR MARKETS.

Above: Taylor Davis, an IT Innovation student at UNO, participates in a field day at Green Plains' Optimal Aquafeed facility in Shenandoah, IA.



Quentin Graves, current UNO senior



Mars Nevada (BS, 2020)



One of the great benefits of an internship is real-world experience. Green Plains interns travel to their facility in Shenandoah to see first-hand how Green Plains is creating sustainable, high-value ingredients.



Photo provided by Green Plains Inc.

Green Plains, an ag tech innovator based in Omaha with 11 biorefineries in the U.S., is a great partner of UNO, and their location to Scott Campus is a huge benefit to students seeking internships during the school year. In this photo, Green Plains interns kick off their summer at the corporate office in Aksarben Village.

“Internships are and always have been part of the fabric of our student experience,” said Sammi Kaiser, assistant vice chancellor for Student Success. “But I think they are flying under the radar, though not intentionally.”

Not anymore. UNO is lighting up the screen this fall with a new program—Career Connect—aimed to take a unique leadership position for students to connect with employers, Kaiser added.

Career Connect and the new focus on internships at UNO already was underway when Chancellor Joanne Li and University of Nebraska President Ted Carter declared 2022 “The Year of the Internship.” The logic for the declaration is simple – internships lead to job offers, and Nebraska is losing college-educated students to other states. So, why not focus on local businesses and connect them to talent?

“When Ted Carter recently said 2022 is the year of the internship, I couldn’t have cheered more loudly,” said Levi Thiele, UNO’s director of Career Resources and Career Connect. “The same for Chancellor Li, who continuously promotes workforce development and internships as a key part of the university experience for all our students.”

As Dr. Li pointed out in a May Omaha World-Herald opinion piece, connecting students to paid internships is vitally crucial to UNO’s mission for two reasons. “When we restrict who can gain meaningful work experience and build connections while in college based on their economic background, two things happen: low-income students who are unable to take on an unpaid internship are at a disadvantage in the state’s job market, forcing them to look out of state for a career ... or remain underemployed in Nebraska; and because employers place emphasis on internships during their recruitment process, the talent pool for them to pick from in our

state shrinks, and those employers end up looking out of state for talent. Both outcomes contribute directly to ‘brain drain.’”

Last spring, UNO began recruiting Career Connect business partners. Companies took a pledge to provide at least one paid internship to a UNO student.

Career Connect employers will host a series of campus hiring events and career fairs. Thiele said the program kicks off for students with events and a curated job portal at the start of the fall semester.

For UNO graduates and students who participated in internships, a more intentional focus on paid internships is welcome news.

For Mars Nevada, paid internships were vital as a Goodrich Scholar. “Let’s be clear, I was privileged to have all these opportunities where my internships were paid,” Nevada said. “Minimum wage for the most part but paid.” The 2020 UNO graduate with a bachelor’s degree in Journalism and Media Communication participated in about a half-dozen internships.

Doing so many internships was kind of a mistake, they said. “Journalism and Media Communication does require one internship by the time you graduate. But I misread it and thought it was one per year. By the time I realized the mistake, I was just like, you know what, let’s just keep this rolling! I think it’s important to use internships to build your resume, but also to figure out what you like and what you don’t like.”

“To be honest, if you want to compete, you have to have way more experience,” Nevada said as part of being from an economically-challenged background and a trans nonbinary, queer person of color. Now, Nevada is an art director for Arnold Worldwide in New York.



David Brisson (BS, 2002 / MBA, 2008)

Photo provided by Green Plains Inc.

Delaney Henton,
currently serving

Nevada left Omaha, but they appreciate all the experiences Omaha internships and mentors provided. Because of that, Nevada chooses to be a mentor and a resource to students.

Michael Feldmann also appreciates the mentors and assistance he received in his internships. A May graduate with a bachelor's degree in psychology, Feldmann hopes his final internship will lead him to his dream career as a software engineer.

Feldmann had experiences in multiple internships, including large and small companies and freelance app development work. "The ultimate goal was just to find something that really fit my needs. To end up somewhere I was happy, and I like the people I work with and felt like I was working on something important."

For him, that meant taking one more internship, even though he has graduated. Feldmann is a contract software engineer intern at LinkedIn. "When I graduated, I thought LinkedIn would be a really good opportunity to gain experience and have a little bit of time to learn without so much pressure and an opportunity to transition into a full-time role."

Feldmann said his internship experiences gave him advantages in the job market regardless of the job outcome. "I'm able to look at problems a little bit differently. Sometimes there are different initiatives that rather than just taking what you're given, I can take a step back first and say, why are we building

this, and what's the problem it's going to solve? Seeking and understanding the 'big picture.'"

For Quentin Graves, the big internship picture is a first after switching majors and earning a highly sought-after Public Relations internship at Bailey Lauerman. The senior, majoring in Media Communications with a concentration in Advertising/Public Relations and a minor in Black Studies, switched from a major in Elementary Education.

"Teaching in a virtual classroom after COVID-19, I realized that this isn't for me," Graves said. "But I still wanted to do something around communicating and reaching audiences."

Graves said he loves his first internship. "I'm writing pitches to local and national news media, blog posts and thought leadership articles. I couldn't have gotten this kind of experience with college alone. It is so different being in the actual industry."

While he is unsure of his career future, Graves said the experience will always be a benefit. Attitude is part of it, and he advises others seeking internships: "Try your best and let your colors shine. The most important thing in the creative world is to show why you're different from competitors."

Internships help build networks and a lifetime career, said David Brisson, a 2002 graduate of the College of Business Administration with a degree in banking and finance; and a 2008



a senior at UNO, delivers her summer internship learnings in front of her peers and coworkers. She is as a Communications Intern at Green Plains Inc.

MBA. Brisson's network stretched more than 1,450 miles from Quebec City to Omaha.

Brisson joined the UNO hockey program in 1999, and an Omaha guy, Greg Lavitt, whose father, Sam, played for the original Omaha Knights, was the mentor. The internship was with Wells Fargo, where Brisson began his career 17 years ago and is the director of fixed income sales.

Early on as a hockey player, the right winger said he knew the value of networking. "The Blue Line Club would have luncheons, and I did like any freshman and go in and talk a couple of minutes and then head back to the rink," Brisson said. "It's a little uncomfortable, but then over time, I realized there were a lot of businesspeople there that would be good to know."

Brisson tries to continue that mentoring and networking for present UNO hockey players. He has created a program called "Wingman" to help them navigate careers and networking in Omaha. "It's important," he said. "One out of five players stay in Omaha."

Creating and making students aware of internship opportunities is essential, Brisson said, but the student has the most significant role. "You still have to share your story to benefit from those internships. You still have to do your part."



CAREER CONNECT

Imagine a "signing day" similar to high school student-athletes committing to playing a sport for a university. Now imagine UNO students signing on for internships with some of the most prestigious companies in the Omaha area.

A signing day like this is reality as part of Career Connect, a new initiative to connect area businesses to UNO student talent through internships. It is one of many high-profile activities placing a more intentional focus on the importance of internships at UNO, said Levi Thiele, UNO Director of Career Services and Career Connect.

In the spring, UNO began recruiting Career Connect business partners, and in May, 50 companies pledged at least one paid internship to a UNO student. The number of businesses taking that pledge now counts more than 65 and continues to grow.

As companies continue to sign up, a list of internships will be in Handshake, UNO's job platform for students. Thiele's team vets every employer who wants to join UNO's Handshake job board, confirming to students these are good employers and good opportunities, Thiele said. Employers who pledge internships can post their job opportunities for free and promote them to students. There also is an additional function so that employers can post interview slots.

She added that the next steps will be student engagement opportunities like the signing event to broaden student access to paid internships.

To find out more, visit careerconnect.unomaha.edu



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DREAMING BIG: MAVERICK REPRENEURS

By Susan Houston Klaus

At UNO, Maverick Spirit is defined as exemplifying strength, resilience, curiosity, independent thinking and entrepreneurship in our everyday deeds and collective endeavors. Here's a look at some alumni, and soon-to-be graduates, who are channeling that spirit into business ownership.

These Maverick alumni entrepreneurs are a passionate lot. They've weathered the uncertainties and second-guessing associated with starting a business — many of them at the start of the COVID-19 outbreak — and they're still standing. They've even thriving. And they give a lot of the credit to the experiences they've had, mentors they've met and resources they've tapped into at UNO.



TAYLOR KORENSKY

When Taylor Korensky entered the IT Innovation Program, he already had his sights on starting a business someday. He got a head start working in the Applied Innovations Research Lab, where he learned iOS Apple app development.

The director of the lab, he said, “basically gave me a book and said, ‘Hey, I need you to build this.’ I got to cut my teeth on that and learn how that was supposed to work. I made a lot of mistakes along the way, but it was a really great experience.”

As part of the IT Innovation Program, Korensky met entrepreneurs and investors who served as mentors for him and fellow students. He picked up more experience doing freelance iOS development for start-ups and other entrepreneurs. For his junior year, he designed a curriculum focused on entrepreneurship.

His senior-year capstone project, for the IT Innovation Program, was the foundation for what would become Appsky, a service-based web and app development company.

When he needed support in the early days, he looked to UNO.

“The Nebraska Business Development Center (NBDC) helped with projections; financial planning and development; and general customer research,” he said. Master’s students worked with the business to help refine potential market categories. A convertible note from the Maverick Venture Fund in 2019, paid off after a year, “came at a pretty critical time for us and was able to help us keep going.”

Today, Korensky leads a team of nine full-time employees and as many as 10 contractors. His company is thriving, and he’s giving back to his alma mater by sharing his entrepreneurial advice with students.

[appsky.io](https://www.appsky.io)





JOSEFINA LOZA

Early in her journalism career, Josefina Loza developed an uncanny ability to sit anywhere and talk to anyone, in any circumstance and connect on a human level.

That ability not only has made Loza a respected journalist, but also a person who can form connections between people. After earning her bachelor's degree from UNO, she spent over 15 years at the Omaha World-Herald; she also has a freelance career.

In 2015, she was recruited to be the manager of student publications at UNO, working with students at The Gateway student newspaper.

When COVID-19 struck, she was recently separated. Home with her two daughters, bills began to stack up.

"My life was shook," she said. "I wondered what I was going to do."

As Loza began connecting with people on Zoom, her instincts kicked in. She recognized that many small businesses in Omaha, particularly those in the Black and Brown communities, were struggling to adapt.

"How can I make sense of things?" she wondered. "For me, that was always through writing. I started paying attention to how I can assist my community to make it better."

After a conversation with a former colleague at The Gateway from their undergrad days, in July 2020 she helped found the Midlands African Chamber, the first black chamber of commerce of its kind in Nebraska. She donated marketing and media relations services free of charge.

"What I noticed is people would have phenomenal products and phenomenal businesses, but they just didn't know how to get the word out," she said.

A few months later, she launched Lozafina, her marketing and public relations firm. The business offers a range of services, including communication strategy, branding, messaging, public relations and marketing.

"I'm a firm believer that if there's a need, you focus on what the need is, and then come with a solution," said Loza, who will graduate with her master's degree in communication and media studies in December 2022.

lozafina.com

loza fina 



ALYSSA MORRISON

Music has been part of Alyssa Morrison's life since her grandmother enrolled her in piano lessons at age 5. In fourth grade, she started violin in the Omaha Public Schools. Along the way, she picked up guitar and singing.

Morrison also had a love for working with young people. Over the years, she's worked in early childhood daycares and also volunteered for local nonprofits Arts for All and Omaha Girls Rock.

After earning an associate degree from Metro Community College, she took a break to raise her children. When she went to UNO for her bachelor's degree in 2018 in her late 20s, she started in multidisciplinary studies.

Soon, Morrison discovered the music entrepreneurship degree, and she knew she'd found her calling. She dusted off her piano skills and got accepted into the program.

Along the way, her coursework also gave her practical information about running a business.

musicaexpressionsacademy.godaddysites.com

"We learned about taxes, how to write a business plan, what qualifies as business deductions for music-related expenses."

The track provided a path to combining her loves of music and teaching.

Morrison opened Musical Expressions Academy in April 2020. She offers piano, violin, guitar and voice instruction to clients ranging from children as young as 3 up to adults.

She recently transitioned from lessons in her home to partnering with Dietz Music in Omaha. She teaches onsite as one of their independent instructors. Morrison is set to graduate with her music entrepreneurship degree in December 2022.

While she describes herself as a nontraditional student, she said she believes in always being open to learning. And as for her students who want to learn an instrument, she said, "I want to encourage adults who think they can't start again or do something different."



GABY EARL

A native of Brazil, Gaby Earl loves the colors and textures of the country, especially displayed in its jewelry.

"A lot of times when I was wearing something from back home, people would stop me and ask, 'Where did you get this?'"

This sparked of an idea for a business — a boutique that offers 18 karat and handmade jewelry imported from Brazil.

In 2018, she went to NBDC for advice.

"I had no idea how to start," she said. "I thought I had to have everything right away. They made me feel comfortable." NBDC consultants showed her how to craft a business plan and the steps she'd need to take to get her business off the ground.

In 2019, she launched Brazi Lion Boutique online. Pieces are also available at four local retailers, with plans to add a fifth, and one day to have locations beyond Omaha. Customers can book private appointments to



JEAN DOUCHEY

Often, owning a business comes years after working in another field.

Jean Douche had more than 25 years in the corporate world before she and her niece founded Alumna House, an online store that offers stylish gameday apparel for women.

Self-described “super sports fans,” the two were disappointed in the offerings found online and in stores. They wanted something that wasn’t a T-shirt, not a polo, she said.

“We interviewed over 25 women at three large universities and all of them said, ‘Look, I can get a T-shirt anywhere. But I cannot find stylish dressy apparel to wear to a donor meeting, a meeting with the president or the board, to a faculty meeting or a student event.’ They wanted something that was stylish but logoed for the university.”

Students in Dr. Dale Eesley’s Executive MBA class provided important information as the partners developed a positioning strategy.

“They helped us get information about competition in the marketplace and how we could differentiate ourselves,” Douche said. “Having a unique selling proposition was really helpful.”

The partners launched Alumna House in November 2019. The website features logoed apparel from local high schools and from universities around the region and the country, including UNO.

COVID-19 threw the company a big curve ball. But the business survived, and this year sales are swinging up, Douche said. The partners are adding about 30 more schools to the website, and they’re confidently looking forward.

“We want to expand beyond apparel into more accessories and other lifestyle products.”

They’ve partnered with a UNO freshman graphic design student who is creating hand drawings and sketches of iconic images at the represented universities. Plans are for them to be used on candles, 100% silk scarves and tote bags.

alumnahouse.com



make their selections or have a jewelry party. She’s also found success spreading the word about her business through local pop-ups, especially during the busy fall season.

Earl partners with a jewelry distributor in Brazil who keeps her up to date on trends and works with the designers. Together, the pair collaborate with the group, and sometimes Earl herself comes up with her own twist on a design. One of her goals is to design her own line one day.

She continues to work full-time while devoting nights and weekends to the boutique. Juggling both “definitely is a challenge,” she said, but she is disciplined about separating her time and responsibilities of both.

Her advice for small business owners just starting out? “Do a little bit every day when you can and know that you’re building a foundation for the future.”

brazilionboutique.com



BRAZI LION
BOUTIQUE



JENNIFER LEA

Jennifer (Colwell) Lea has never been afraid of a power tool.

In April 2021, she was almost done with her remodel of a fixer upper. She decided the best way to modernize the exterior was to paint the garage and front doors and update the house numbers.

Lea found herself surfing Pinterest and Etsy, trying to find a style of house numbers sign that she liked. She kept gravitating toward one with a planter's box on it.

Knowing she had the skills and supplies, she decided to make one.

"It got real cute, real fast," she said. "Then I said, 'What am I going to do with the box?'"

Two weeks before Easter, she went to a local craft store and bought the supplies to outfit her creation.

"When I finished, I realized the holiday would be over soon and I'd have to do the whole thing again." Then, she thought, "You know what? I think I've got a great business idea."

The UNO alum has a bachelor's degree in marketing and an Executive MBA. Most recently, she was in law firm management for 18 years.

"I knew how to manage a \$10 million law firm, but I didn't know how to start a business," she said. She called a business coach she'd connected with during her EMBA program and said, 'Hey, I think I've got an idea, but I need some help. Can I hire you?'"

She dug in, and between her new business and her day job — which she left in March 2022 — started working 20 hours a day. The working mom has kept up that schedule and it's paid off.

Lea opened Entry Envy in October 2021. The online business offers custom house number signs, hand-painted signs and interior signs available singly, or as a subscription. Customers can choose a monthly or quarterly subscription to update the look of their signs by holiday or by season.

Less than nine months after starting her business, Lea received The Subscription Trade Association Cube Award for Best New Subscription of 2022.

She's enthusiastic about sharing her platform to promote women in the trades and uses the business as a training ground and coaching space. Two young women from a nearby high school help with production.

Without her experiences at UNO, Lea said, her life and her business would not be the same.

"UNO played the part in connecting me to a lot of the people from the very beginning, when I graduated with my undergrad. All the ties come back to where it started."

[entry-envy.com](https://www.entry-envy.com)



STACIE TOVAR

Ask Stacie Tovar her if she wanted to own a business, the answer is emphatic.

“No. Never in my wildest dreams did I think I would be doing this today,” she said.

Tovar, who earned a bachelor’s degree in exercise physiology at UNO, has a long list of athletic accomplishments. NCAA Division II college volleyball player. Nebraska high school volleyball team state champion. Eight-time Nebraska state high school track medalist.

Her career has taken her from the office, where she worked in population health management, to the gym, where she was a trainer and coach.

After working out with some of his UNO strength and conditioning coaches, her husband, Dustin, encouraged her to try CrossFit. She was hooked.

In fall 2013, Tovar quit her corporate job to become a professional CrossFit athlete. She traveled the world, racking up eight podium finishes and becoming a three-time series champion. In 2015, she was named the 11th fittest woman on Earth.

When she decided to start a family, she retired from CrossFit competition.

Tovar and her husband bought the Omaha CrossFit affiliate from its previous owners in January 2016. Big Omaha Fitness is the flagship program that serves a 60+ population; under that is CrossFit Omaha and GoFar Lifestyles, a nutrition piece designed to help people build healthy lifestyle habits.

The business moved to a new location this past January. This year, CrossFit Omaha celebrates its 15th anniversary.

With UNO professor Dr. Mike Messerole, she helps the adaptive population and the Down Syndrome community in Omaha. Looking forward, Tovar said she’d like to continue to work with kids, athletes, corporations and schools.

Her advice to others starting a business is this: “Find a resource. Talk to someone. Have a mentor. As risky as it may seem in the grand scheme of things, think about why you’re doing it. For me it was to serve the Omaha population. I know that I can help people.”

bigomahafitness.com



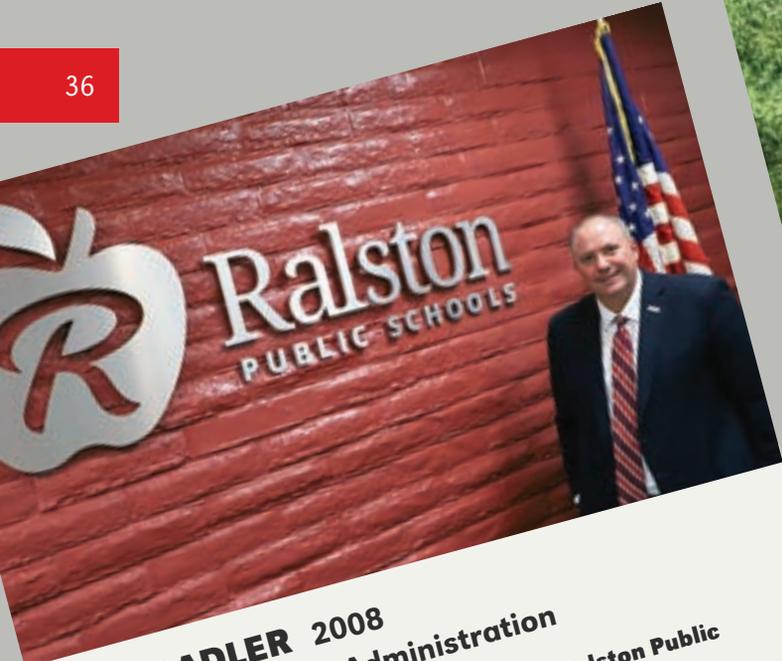
A BOOST FOR BUSINESS OWNERS

If you’re thinking about starting, or growing, a business, you’ll find a wealth of resources through the Nebraska Business Development Center (NBDC). Hosted by the UNO College of Business Administration, NBDC has been helping businesses find their footing since 1977.

Consultants help entrepreneurs develop a business plan and make financial projections, including a cash flow statement, balance sheets, loan amortization schedule and capital expenditure budget. Assistance also is available for learning how to structure administrative and operational aspects of a business, define business goals and complete a financing package.

Best of all, for fledgling entrepreneurs for whom money may be tight, the price is right. Basic consulting is free and confidential.

Services are available statewide in Chadron, Kearney, Lincoln, McCook, Norfolk, North Platte, Omaha, Scottsbluff and Wayne. To find a consultant near you, visit unomaha.edu/nebraska-business-development-center.



MARK ADLER 2008
Ed. D., Educational Administration

I have the honor to serve as **Superintendent of Ralston Public Schools**. The 2022-2023 school year marks my 11th year as Superintendent in Ralston and my 32nd year serving students and families in education. I have the best job in the world!



STEVEN JERINA 2016
MPA, Nonprofit Management

I serve as a **Director of Development for Rollins College** in Orlando, Fla., one of the most beautiful campuses in the country. Armed with my education from UNO, I get to travel the country talking about philanthropy, higher education and fundraising.

WORK PLACE



EMILY POESCHL 2011
MBA

I spent the last year and a half relaunching **Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom**, the original wildlife/conservation series. Stay tuned to RFD-TV and WildKingdom.com to watch the new series, Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom Protecting the Wild. In this photo, I am on set filming for the new big cats episode in Collier County, Fla.





DAVID CRAFT
1990, 1992
BSBA, Finance, Banking & MIS and MBA

This is an aerial view of the **FNBO Tower** and main bank across the street which is where I work as Director, Wealth & Investments.. I took the picture on July 3, 2022, during my first flight with my son, Tyler (TC), who is also a UNO Maverick enrolled in the aviation program. We took off at dusk from the Council Bluffs Airport so we could watch fireworks from 3,300 feet. TC flew over my office building so that I could take a picture of the FNBO Tower.



HEIDI MIHELICH
Freelance Graphic Designer / Art Director, cre8ivenergy

I'm not a UNO graduate, but I design UNO Magazine. I had a pretty cool "office" while designing the Winter 2020 issue. Here I'm floating down the Danube past the Rock Sculpture of Decebalus (Romania), on our way to Golubac Fortress (Serbia).



SYLVIA S. DAVIS
1985
BS, Business Administration

Every weekend in autumn, you can find me at **Vala's Pumpkin Patch** in Gretna, Neb. Since 2001, I'm known as Sylvia the Friendly Witch! I welcome guests from all over the country. Children of all ages step into the cauldron for a special Halloween photo. My youngest guest was 8 days old and my oldest was a dear 93-year-old lady who insisted on having her turn! I love to help families create magical memories!



JUSTIN BARNES 2014
BS, General Studies with a concentration in Psychology

I fly a CRJ regional jet!



NATHAN DUNNING 2018
BA, Multidisciplinary with a concentration in
Emergency Management

My civilian job is a Relationship Manager with Flight Safety International. In my National Guard role in Airfield Management, I ensure that the aircraft at Offutt Airforce Base can operate safely at all times.



BRITTNEY RYBA 2004
BA, Journalism

I'm a **Digital Marketing Specialist with Core Bank** based in Omaha and as a community bank, we sponsor events to support the community. Here I am at our table set up at the Village Pointe Summer Vibes concert ready to pass out water to attendees at a free concert.

THREE OMAHA ATHLETICS HEAD
COACHES ARE UNO ALUMNI



CHRIS CRUTCHFIELD
1992, 1996
BA, Criminal Justice and
MA, Education, Health,
and Human Sciences

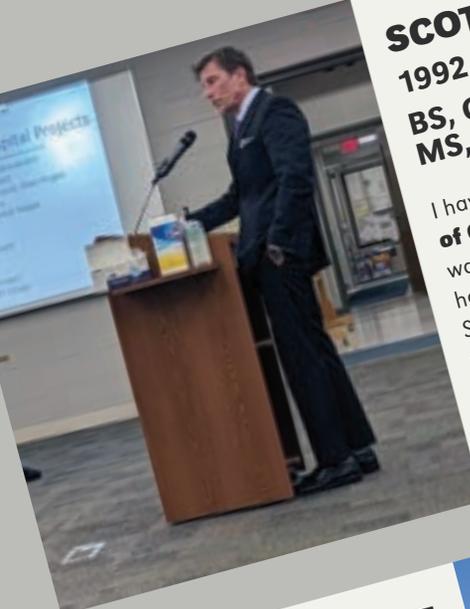
Chris Crutchfield was named the 22nd **head coach of Omaha men's basketball** on March 18, 2022. He brings with him 20 years of coaching experience. Crutchfield returns to the Maverick family after previously serving as an assistant coach in the 1995-96 season. He also donned the crimson and black as a men's basketball and football student-athlete in the early 90s.



PAWANKUMAR SHARMA 2016
MA, Management Information Systems

View of me working at the San Bruno office of **Walmart** where I work as a **Senior Product Manager, Last Mile Delivery** for the retail giant in the Bay Area, California!





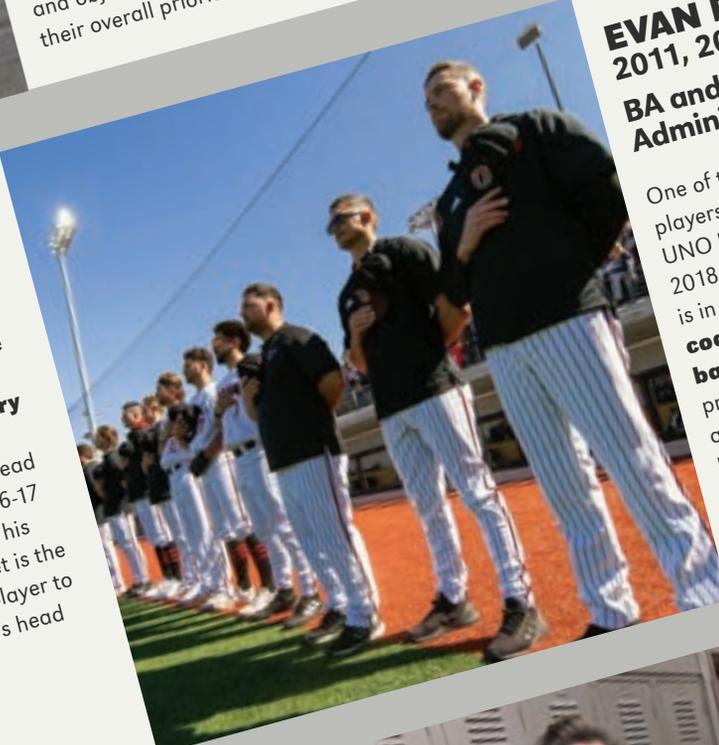
SCOTT L FLORY
1992, 1996
BS, Criminal Justice and
MS, Urban Studies

I have been the **administrator for the City of Clear Lake, Ia.** since 2001. Prior to that I was the city administrator in Atlantic, Ia., my hometown, for four years and city administrator in Shenandoah, Ia., for two years. I am responsible for the day-to-day operations of the city; assisting the city council and mayor in developing strategies and objectives for the community; and to advance their overall priorities.



MIKE GABINET
2004
BA, Finance

Mike Gabinet became the **third head coach in Omaha hockey history** on April 5, 2017, after serving as associate head coach during the 2016-17 season, his first with his alma mater. Gabinet is the first former UNO player to serve as the team's head coach.



EVAN PORTER
2011, 2016
BA and MA, Business Administration

One of the most decorated players in UNO history and UNO Hall of Fame Class of 2018 inductee, Evan Porter is in his sixth year as **head coach of the Omaha baseball** program in 2022. He previously spent four seasons as an assistant coach with the Mavericks from 2013-16.



CATHY PETTID
1985
MS

An **Associate Vice Chancellor and Dean of Students at UNO**, I have the amazing privilege to work at the BEST university with the most AWESOME students on the planet. UNO Mavericks are risk takers, gift givers, and change agents. Omaha is our campus, and our students make the most of it. Go Mavs!



KIMBERLY TALAMANTES 2010
BS, Education

When I'm not **teaching English in Omaha Public Schools**, you can catch me in the halls of Omaha South High School spreading School spirit. Go Packers!

REMOTE WORK USED TO BE A NOVEL CONCEPT PRIMARILY RESERVED FOR AND ENJOYED BY START-UPS AND FREELANCERS. THE PANDEMIC, AND THE NECESSITY FOR WIDE ADOPTION OF REMOTE WORK, FUNDAMENTALLY DISRUPTED WORKPLACE REQUIREMENTS, BEHAVIORS AND VALUES.



TODAY, COMMON PRACTICE AMONG MANY INDUSTRIES IS THE ABILITY TO WORK AWAY FROM THE OFFICE FROM ONE DAY PER WEEK TO 100% REMOTE. EMPLOYEES ARE BALANCING PROS AND CONS AND DETERMINING THEIR PREFERENCES. IF THE WORK FROM ANYWHERE MODEL IS HERE TO STAY, HOW MUST EMPLOYERS AND LEADERS CONTINUE TO ADAPT?



THE EVOLUTION OF **WORK** FROM **ANYWHERE**

by Veronica Wortman Ploetz

IN TERMS OF REMOTE WORK, GENIE BACK INTO THE BOTTLE. SIGNIFICANT PLANS TO BRING



FLEXIBLE OPTIONS

During the pandemic, Gabe Romero, founder of Cordova Solutions, a talent acquisition and staff augmentation company, offered employees and contractors flexibility. “Remote work can be highly effective, and you may find you can recruit for a skill set in a completely different geographic area as before,” says Romero. However, he recommends allowing the client to guide the needed direction. “Alternatively, there are roles that are highly collaborative or creative and benefit from working together in an office. Cordova Solutions works with each client to create thoughtful strategy around the necessity of where the work needs to be performed, which drives where and how your employees work,” he says.

He acknowledges workplace flexibility can be a positive option but not a one-size-fits-all solution. “It’s very trendy right now, but if the market turns, and becomes an employer-centric market instead of the employee-centric market we’ve had over the past few years, there could be a serious effort on behalf of the employer to measure productivity and start culling low performers,” says Romero.

Remote work isn’t an option for all employees in some industries. Most of the Nebraska Medicine workforce – clinic and hospital staff on the front line of patient care – could not perform their essential healthcare job functions from a remote location. When the spread of COVID-19 reached pandemic status, employees not involved with direct patient care were encouraged to work from home as a safety precaution. “We valued employee safety, and this was one way to ensure that employees were able to stay safe during the pandemic – people were happy about the

THERE IS NO PUTTING THE WE ARE NOT GOING TO MAKE ANY PEOPLE BACK TO THE OFFICE.



Andy Noon, Ph.D., talent management director at Nebraska Medicine

organizational focus around safety,” says Andy Noon, Ph.D., talent management director at Nebraska Medicine. The shift did not come without challenges. Leadership realized

managers needed support and skill development around leading remote teams. Onboarding new employees is now mostly virtual and the focus has shifted to helping new employees build relationships and create connections within the organization.

Even though remote work is not possible for nurses and physicians, Nebraska Medicine recognizes a need for tailored policies for staff. “In terms of remote work, there is no putting the genie back into the bottle. We are not going to make any significant plans to bring people back to the office,” says Noon.

EQUALITY GAPS

When considering remote work through an equality lens, evidence suggests a disproportionate negative impact on the primary caregiver in a household, as the lines between life and work can be blurred.

Remote may also be more challenging for employees who live in smaller spaces or where multiple family members are sharing physical and digital spaces. “These employees can, and often do, perform well, but leaders must be mindful of the multipronged impacts this can have on certain groups,” says Mahima Saxena,

PhD, assistant professor of Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Department of Psychology at UNO.

“I advise organizational leaders to be aware of the disparate impacts of company policies, how they can have varying outcomes for different groups of people and adjust accordingly.” Saxena suggests approaching the topics of remote work or returning to the office with compassion, considering the needs of all employees, gathering regular feedback, being open to adjusting the strategy and providing the opportunity to participate in acts of mindfulness and wellness. “These are small steps that can reap large rewards for the employer and the employees,” says Saxena.

CONNECTING ACROSS THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

Creating and maintaining meaningful connections with colleagues, leadership, partners and clients solely through virtual meetings, email and instant messaging can be difficult.

Nikki Lewis, staffing industry senior sales trainer and team lead, previously took for granted informal interactions in the office. While she found it easy to pivot from classroom to virtual training, she has had to be more intentional with maintaining relationships with colleagues in the remote work environment. One way she



Mahima Saxena, PhD, assistant professor of Industrial and Organizational Psychology.



In a UNO Access The Experts episode, show host Brandon Aksamit featured William Kramer, Ph.D., UNO assistant professor, Industrial and Organizational Psychology, about what teams can do to improve virtual teamwork. Takeaways from the interview include:

1. Do everything you can to mimic face-to-face interaction. Turn on that webcam!
2. Include everyone in discussions and decisions. If leading a meeting, offer the floor to all teammates.
3. Give detailed, thoughtful email responses, making up for the missing nonverbal cues.
4. Be a predictable and engaged teammate. Take control of the narrative around your work and deadlines and be transparent when and if they are missed.

Watch the full Access The Experts interview with Dr. William Kramer:





Gabe Romero, founder of Cordova Solutions, a talent acquisition and staff augmentation company



REMOTE WORK CAN BE HIGHLY EFFECTIVE, AND YOU MAY FIND YOU CAN RECRUIT FOR A SKILL SET IN A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT GEOGRAPHIC AREA AS BEFORE. ALTERNATIVELY, THERE ARE ROLES THAT ARE HIGHLY COLLABORATIVE OR CREATIVE AND BENEFIT FROM WORKING TOGETHER IN AN OFFICE.



Image provided by Carson Wealth.

Paul West, managing partner of Carson Wealth, meets with clients.

does this is by participating in both virtual and in-person happy hours hosted by her company.

Kate Hemminghaus, director of global media activation in the AdTech industry, considers herself a strong advocate of remote work while recognizing connection requires more intentionality. “Client partnerships are strengthened by in-person meetings and outings, which oftentimes leads to an increase in business from that client. It’s more challenging to develop a strong relationship both personally and professionally via online meetings and emails,” she says. “Collaboration takes extra effort as virtual whiteboards don’t have the same effect as sitting down closely with coworkers to generate new ideas, build off each other’s recommendations, formulate new processes, improve existing ones, while having fun together at the same time.”

Supporting the creation of a positive and engaging work environment is top of mind for Paul West, managing partner of Carson Wealth. He recognized the need to support employees virtually and in person. While working remotely, the investment advisor firm broadcasted mental health topical seminars. Today, company culture and meaningful social opportunities have increased traffic in their new headquarters in Omaha, Neb. West says, “I must give huge credit to our human resources and corporate communications teams for providing meaningful and engaging events to come back to. The most popular event is the monthly charity happy hour fundraisers.”

PAIN POINTS AND BRIGHT SPOTS

Jordan Acker Anderson currently serves as the chair and professor of studio art at Mount Mary University in Milwaukee, Wisc. She is mindful of the inevitable disengagement of the digital barriers such as the delay in video conferences and lack of eye contact. “Virtual options can deter us from participating as we would in a face-to-face circumstance, where we can read nonverbal communication cues,” says Acker Anderson. “At times, I feel disconnected from the greater community at my university

since we are not meeting in person. Remote work limits the casual exchanges that would occur before and after scheduled events.”

Christina Maly, a senior technical advisor for a global health nonprofit, worked fully remote during the pandemic. Now, employees are required to be in office two days per week. Although Maly makes the effort to go into office to collaborate and connect with colleagues, working away from the office can be more productive. “It can be hard for me to find the value of sitting in a room of colleagues on back-to-back Zoom calls, and I feel less distracted working from home,” says Maly.

While some professions are adapting new models, certain industries can’t maintain the same level of effectiveness. Terry Zenon II found value in teaching virtually during the pandemic but, ultimately, he believes being together in person provides a consistent and more controlled learning experience. “I was just glad to have a job and kids that were showing up every day. Working in an inner-city environment, these kids are up against all kinds of challenges, I was more concerned with them than anything else,” says Zenon. He continues to use the virtual tools as educational reinforcement and enrichment to extend learning beyond the classroom.

WORK FROM HOME ANYWHERE

With the return of domestic and international travel, working remotely isn’t just working at home. To remain competitive, many employers are offering the option to work from anywhere, and often, at any time. “Flexibility in work schedules and locations have impacted human resources and the entire workforce,” says Steve Kerrigan, assistant vice chancellor of human resources at UNO.



Steve Kerrigan, assistant vice chancellor of human resources at UNO

Companies are also able to hire beyond the typical commuting distance to their physical location. However, the legal implications of having a remote workforce spread out across different cities, states and even countries, is still unknown. “Companies are now identifying how the patchwork of different laws in different states dealing with such diverse topics as workers compensation, income taxes and personal leave can disrupt a company’s workforce and bring added legal costs and ramifications,” says Kerrigan.

Romero advises companies to share the boundaries where work must be completed up front. Internationally, there are data and privacy concerns to address. “If employees are traveling outside of the country, they need to gain approvals to work in an international location, take their company equipment and access company systems and networks while out of the country.”

WHAT’S NEXT?

Romero cautions against arbitrarily pulling employees back to the office without consideration. He says employees experienced and enjoyed a higher level of autonomy while working remotely during the pandemic. Companies need to be thoughtful about their strategy and include employees in the discussion to avoid disengaging the workforce and creating retention issues.

As Kerrigan looks to the future, “I think the pandemic has taught all of us we can shift into a fully remote workforce where necessary, but overall, most want a combination of in-office work and remote capabilities,” he says.

Among the most important elements of an active and engaged workforce is the focus and access to wellness and safety, both physical and psychological. “Employers of the future will be the ones that create a work atmosphere of inclusiveness, diversity and engagement that provides total rewards – not merely compensation but a package of wages, benefits and culture that enhances and enriches their workforce.”

The UNO Century Club is vital to UNO's continued growth as one of the nation's top metropolitan universities. Here, the Century Club recognizes all donors of \$250 or more to any designation under the UNO Fund – scholarships, your college, faculty development, alumni programs or the greatest needs of the university.

In 1973, the UNO Alumni Association created its premier giving society – the UNO Century Club. The first 44 members contributed \$5,250. Today, the Century Club includes more than 290 members who this year, combined, gave more than \$327,000 to UNO.

On behalf of the university, its students, faculty and alumni, the UNO Alumni Association and the University of Nebraska Foundation recognize the generosity of UNO Century Club members who strongly believe in the mission of the university and support its ongoing success.

Help UNO transform the lives of its students by making your 2022 Century Club donation today through the UNO Fund! Visit nufoundation.org/UNOFund.



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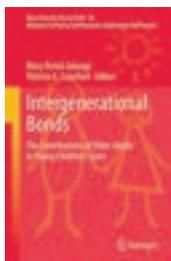
Chunhui Mei
Margo Metzger
Luanne and Ron Mohling
Rohit and Rajeshri Nayak
Lt. Col. & Mrs. Thomas D. Needham
Erin and Donald Owen
Drs. Michael D. and Laura J. Parr
Dr. Joseph W. Price and Mr. Mark E. Pedersen
Lois and David Peters
Donald and Linda Peterson
Ms. Joyce Prohaska
Larry and Karen Rainwater
Kimberly and Patrick Reefe
James and Patricia Rodriguez
Carolyn R. Roper
Abdulkarim Safi
Marcus Sanchez
Mr. Dennis & Dr. Beverly Schaffer
Alice Schumaker
Lonzale Ramsey, Sr.
Rodney Roenfeldt
Richard E. Secor Jr. & Sharon S. Rawson-Secor
Pamela Seward
Angela Thompson and Alan Seybert
Ronald and Doreen Skoneki
Daniel and Hallene Shaffer
Mary and Daniel Showalter
Shirley Siebler
Gary and Pamela Smith
Dorothy Spence
Mark and Donelle Stokes
William and Patricia Sturgeon
Maj. Raymond L. Summers
Joanne Thietje
Barry and Sandra Thoendel
Mr. & Mrs. J. Michael Thompson
Dr. Dan E. Tolman and Dr. Suzanne Nelson Tolman
Mr. & Mrs. Eugene Trout
Robin and Jeff Van Hove
Larry Watson
Troy Wilhelm
Gerald D. Willett, M.D.
Brian and Kristi Wilson
James and Theresa Winship
Wilson and Joan Younge
Steven and Jean Zuckweiler

CLASS NOTES

For this issue, we asked alumni to share the best piece of career advice they have ever received.

72 ALBERT FRED HODAPP (MA),

with Mary Jalongo and Wanda Boyer, co-authored a chapter titled *Promoting prosocial behavior in young children: Older adults as role models*. In Mary Jalongo and Patricia Crawford's book



(2022) "Intergenerational Bonds: The Contributions of Older Adults to Young Children's Lives". In 2020, Albert Hodapp presented a poster at the National Association of School Psychologists Convention Baltimore titled: Read Anything Good Lately.

82 DR. ROBERT E. MATHIASSEN (MA)

has retired from the University of Nebraska system after 40 years of service. Formerly a student affairs specialist at the University of Nebraska at Omaha and a psychiatry research assistant at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, Mathiasen began his career at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus in 1987 as an academic adviser in the former Division of Continuing Studies. Later, he was the assistant director of undergraduate programs and academic adviser for Extended Education and Outreach (serving as interim director on three occasions), recruitment specialist for Online and Distance Education, program coordinator of Advanced Scholars (Nebraska Now), and, most recently, the distance education program specialist for the Office of Graduate Studies. Among the honors Mathiasen received during his tenure with the University of Nebraska system are UPCEA Region VII Outstanding Student Specialist Award, University of Nebraska Board of Regents KUDOS Award, Husker Football Coach of the Day, NU Division of Student Affairs Recognition Award, Who's Who in



College and University Professional and Continuing Education and the Chancellor's Contribution to Students Award. In addition to his MA from UNO in psychology, Mathiasen has a BA in sociology from Creighton University and earned a Ph.D. in educational studies from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. He and wife Patti, a recently retired Life Skills Teacher/IEP Manager/Transition Specialist at Lincoln Southwest High School, have two children and seven active and fun grandchildren from ages 6 to 17.

rmathiasen1@unl.edu

90 JOSEPH P. JEANETTE (BGA)

lives in Omaha and Venice, Fla. In June 2022, he retired after 51 years in Criminal Justice, seventeen years with the Bellevue Police Department and 34 years with the United States Attorney's Office as their law enforcement coordinator. He has continued to serve as an adjunct instructor for Criminology and Criminal Justice at UNO since 2013. In addition to teaching, he and his wife, Rebecca, are involved in a business venture in the Venice/Englewood area. "My UNO experience has been tremendous; I was a non-traditional student and am grateful for everything it has given me. I especially enjoy the opportunity to serve as an adjunct instructor."

joylecc@icloud.com



91 KIM OLESKER (BS)

has been named Executive Director of the Alpha Kappa Psi Foundation. She was previously with the United Way of Northwest Indiana, where she raised millions of dollars, year over year, in her role as president and CEO. She was one of



twelve United Way Presidents chosen from more than 1,800 United Way offices worldwide to participate in United Way's Executive Leadership Development Program, which was taught at Harvard University and Deloitte University, along the way securing her Masters in Nonprofit Public Administration. Olesker has spent most of her career in nonprofits, beginning with Alpha Xi Delta as the sorority's National Housing Director. After a stint with American Cancer Society, she moved to United Way of Porter County, where she rose to become President & CEO, a position she served in for seven years. Located in Noblesville, Ind., the Alpha Kappa Psi Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization with the mission of providing resources for enhancing the educational experience of future business leaders. The Foundation distributes grants and scholarships to students and funds educational programs for the Alpha Kappa Psi Professional Business Fraternity, in partnership with the Commonwealth Leadership™ Alliance.

kolesker@akpsi.org

MICHAEL ANANIA (BA / MBA, 2000) book "From the Word to the Place: Essays on the Work of Michael Anania", edited by Lea Graham (Mad Hat, 2022), is now available on Amazon. It includes an essay by Kevin Clouther from the UNO Writers Program.

Additionally, a fellowship has been established in Anania's name at the University of Illinois Chicago (UIC) where Anania taught for 35 years. The Michael Anania Award is a juried prize for PhD students in the UIC Program for Writers in poetry based on a one-time submission of 3-5 poems.



98 SHERIE THOMAS (BS)

has been promoted to deputy chief of the Omaha Police Department. Thomas began her career with OPD on October 5, 1998. As an officer, Thomas worked in the Uniform Patrol Bureau in all four original precincts. From January 2022 to her recent promotion, Sherie was acting deputy chief of the Executive Services Bureau. As Deputy Chief Thomas oversees the department's Evidence/Property Unit, Research and Planning Unit, and Training and Community Services Section of the Executive Services Bureau.

Thomas was the recipient of the City of Omaha's 2021 Living the Dream Award, 2019 Rising Star Alumni Achievement Award from the UNO School of Criminology and Criminal Justice and



74 LESLIE KAPLAN (MS)

"The best piece of career advice I ever received was from an experienced secondary school principal. When I was about to become an assistant principal in a middle school, I asked him, "What's the most important thing for me to do if I am to become a highly successful AP? He responded, "Get to the parents before their kids do!"

In other words, communicate with your stakeholders early and often to present yourself and your school in their best, most credible light – and to gain stakeholder support for yourself and your programs.

Wise words apply far beyond leading middle schools."

the 2019 Julia D. Anderson Visionary Award from the Omaha Section of the National Council of Negro Women, Incorporated. She was a part of Leadership Omaha Class 41 and the inaugural class of the Empowerment Network's Redefine the Game Institute.

01 DAVID FORREST TERMUHLN (BS)
new board game, *The Shards of Alkemae*, has officially launched.



04 JODY KEISNER (MA) memoir, "Under My Bed and Other Essays", published September 1, 2022. "The book is about the fear and violence that afflict women and mothers, the dark corridors we sometimes follow in our own minds and the metaphorical boogeymen that reach out for us from under the bed at night. I learned the phrase "creative nonfiction" when I was a graduate student at UNO in John T. Price's class. His class was inspiring and opened up new avenues of possibilities for me, so I set off to earn my MFA in Michigan. Afterward, I returned to Omaha to apply for jobs, and I've been teaching in UNO's English Department ever since (15 years!). You could say that UNO continues to be a huge part of my life."
jkeisner@unomaha.edu

08 MARK ADLER (ED.D.)
"Don't let a job you don't get happen to get in the way of one you might get later. Always have grace if you don't get a job you want as the perfect opportunity may be right around the corner."

08 SHEENA KENNEDY HELGENBERGER (BS)
"Update your resume at least once a year so it's ready to go when needed. When applying for a job, tailor your resume to highlight keywords that were written into the job posting."



12 TONI MONETTE (BS) was elected to the national board of directors the League of Women Voters of the US. The election of the 12-member board of directors was held during the LWV's national convention in June 2022 in Denver, CO. The League of Women Voters of Nebraska is a nonpartisan, grassroots civic organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues and influences public policy through education and advocacy.



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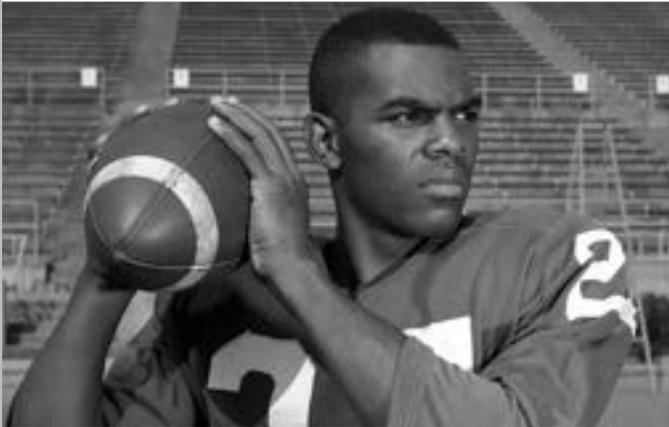
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unoalumni.org/unoclassnote

IN MEMORIAM

Deceased alumni reported to the UNO Alumni Association or University of Nebraska Foundation between May 13 and August 18, 2022. We extend our condolences to the family and friends of these graduates.

1944 Byron B. Oberst	1967 Phyllis A. Lowder	H.Kenneth Seymour	1980 Sharon A. Cheney
1953 Thomas D. Doyle	1968 Alvin M. Goodwin	Robert M. Vassell	Susan J. Slezak
1955 Irma A. Miller	Thomas F. Herek	Janet C. Collins	Lester C. Black
1957 Juanita A. Moore	Mary E. Anderson	1973 Della H. Lee	1982 Betty F. Majeski
Algimantas Totilas	1969 Jerry N. Hicks	Donald E. Coughlin	1983 Gary L. Schnebel
1958 Mercedes Bullard	William G. O'Brien	Sheilah W. Kenedy	1984 Vicki L. Young
1960 Vance M. Bricker	Jeriann Tinsley	Duane J. Kliever	1987 Marvin C. Seitz
Leroy F. Kozeny	Oscar L. Pulliam	Donald L. Wilson	1991 Patrick L. Hibberd
1961 Robert H. Jorgensen	Marlin O. Briscoe	1974 Martin E. Nilan	Darlene J. Irwin
William L. Ruf	1970 Maurice A. Carmichael	1975 Mary J. Harderson	Daniel P. McQuillan
Sharon J. Gordon	William H. Creed	1976 Patricia K. Wine	1992 Janice M. Lovely
Lane C. Isaacson	Linda Cumbee	1977 Raymond C. Bottner	Constance J. Boardman
1962 Robert L. Hohman	Timothy J. Classen	Terry L. Bruner	1993 Kenneth P. Jensen
J. Richard Burrows	Jerrold L. Aspengren	Stanley T. Yeaton	1995 David A. Schaben
Elizabeth A. Freeland	1971 Kenneth L. Kalkowski	1978 Pamela S. Fittje	2006 Jason J. Trummer
1963 Donald W. Lea	Elizabeth A. Hurt	Michael J. Egger	2010 Thomas S. Wrigley
Thomas R. Vandenaek	John L. Holt	Maurice E. Bantner	
1964 Donald M. Gammel	Thomas A. Phillips	Donald R. Kotrc	
Linda P. Krause	Jack E. Lofgren	1979 Barbara A. Bishop	
1966 Lloyd W. Cardwell	1972 Jack R. Cassell	Robert E. Burns	
Larry R. Moen	Valerie Enholm	Patricia M. Jesse	
Harry J. Weichel	Alfred J. Marchisio	Susan M. Newell	
	James H. McNeil		



IN MEMORY OF MARLIN BRISCO

Marlin "The Magician" Briscoe, the first Black starting quarterback in the American Football League (1968) and former University of Nebraska at Omaha football player (1963–1967), passed away on June 27, 2022 at the age of 76.

Briscoe played at Omaha South High School and at Omaha University. The year after he graduated, it became the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Playing at quarterback, Briscoe led the team to a 27–11 record and three conference titles. He left with 22 school records, including completion percentage (55%), passing yards (4,935), touchdown passes (52), and total offensive yards (6,253).

As a senior, Briscoe was named an NAIA All-American and also was named to the Michigan Chronicle's All-American black team alongside LeRoy Keyes of Purdue and O.J. Simpson of Southern Cal.

In October 1968, he was drafted by the Denver Broncos and established a Denver rookie record of 14 touchdown passes. He played professionally for nine years including as a Pro Bowl receiver with the Buffalo Bills and winning two Super Bowls with the Miami Dolphins.

Briscoe was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 2016. A statue in his honor stands on the UNO campus.

O BABY! WELCOME TO THE MAVERICK FAMILY



Since 1991, the UNO Alumni Association has given more than 2,000 free shirts and bibs to the children and grandchildren of UNO graduates.

Get your future alum an O BABY! shirt when you submit a birth announcement within your child's first year at unوالumni.org/futurealums.

James and Annabelle Bender, son and daughter of **JENNIFER NICOLE (BEEDE) BENDER (2008)** and **JONATHAN FREDERICK BENDER (2008)**

Duke David Bolte son of **MACKENZIE (MILLARD) BOLTE (2017)** and **DAVID BOLTE (2016)** of Bennington, Neb.

Hannah Jeanne Dougherty daughter of **SCHUYLER DOUGHERTY (2014)** and Meeae Dougherty of Omaha

Alonso Grey Estrada son of **HAYLEY FRAZEE (2017)** of Omaha

Sophie Alexis Fisher daughter of **MOLLY FISHER (2018)** and Jordan Fisher of Bennington, Neb.

Jade Galilea Hernandez daughter of **SILVIA HERNANDEZ RODRIGUEZ (2016)** and Julio Hernandez Avalos of Omaha

Gray son Kumm son of **EMILY MILLER KUMM (2010)** and Richard Kumm of Lincoln, Neb

Brecken Nicole Lehr daughter of **NICOLE PRESTON LEHR (2016)** and Drake Lehr of Columbus, Neb

Charlie Richard Malone and Maximus Gregory Malone Twin sons of **MERCEDES WIESE MALONE (2016)** and Alexander Malone of Ralston and grand sons of **RICHARD WIESE SR. (1971)** of Montgomery, Tx.

Justus Judah Malone son of **KAITLIN (HARTHOORN) MALONE (2018)** and **CLAYTON MALONE (2018)** of Omaha

Shawn Ma son McGuigan son of **JULIA MCGUIGAN (2014)** and Matthew McGuigan of Omaha

Owen Andrew Robbins son of **JESSICA NELSON ROBBINS (2015)** and **ANDREW ROBBINS (2014)** of Omaha

Reginald Victor Graham Ross son of **ABIGAIL GRAHAM (2021)** and Matthew Ross of Lincoln, Neb

Saanvi Mohan Sharma daughter of **MOHAN SHARMA (2018)** and **TEJASHREE PANDE (2018)** of Omaha

Preston John Timm son of **JENEVA NEWMAN (2010)** and **NATHAN TIMM (2008, 2009)** of Omaha

Andrew Francis Vipond son of **AMBER (LAR SON) VIPOND (2008)** and Matthew Vipond of Omaha and grand son of **KAREN (HAMILTON) LAR SON (1978)** and Francis Lar son of Bennington, Neb

Emmett Mark Roel Wood daughter of **JONATHAN WOOD (2020)** and Casy Wood of Omaha

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Nebraska Omaha

A LOOK AT HAPPENINGS ON AND OFF CAMPUS

INTERNATIONAL CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

The Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative Institute (YSEALI) fellows arrived in Omaha the weekend of May 14 and immersed themselves in the local community, learned about the role of civic engagement in Omaha, and experienced American culture. They were involved in hands-on leadership development sessions, met with influential community leaders across sectors, and learned about the United States by visiting historical, political, and social institutions like City Sprouts to learn about the nonprofit and to volunteer. Twenty young leaders from Brunei, Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, Timor-Leste, and Vietnam participated in the educational and cultural fellowship at UNO designed to provide leadership, civic engagement and conflict resolution skills through experiential learning.

COLLEGE WORLD SERIES LANDMARK

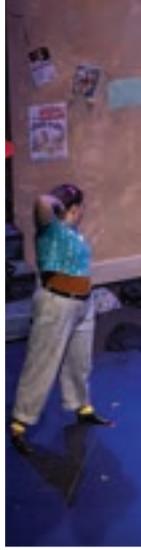
The CWS statue outside Charles Schwab Field, "The Road to Omaha," was designed by former UNO student John Labja. He used 13 UNO students as models while designing the statue.

DURANGO RACE AND REMATCH

After a heated mascot race ended in controversy at the College World Series, Durango met up with 6-year-old Logan Smith for a rematch at UNO's Tal Anderson Field.

LIVE FROM THE STANDS

Since 2017, UNO's student-led MavRadio has covered the entire College World Series from the press box alongside broadcasters from local and national sports news outlets like ESPN. Students returned to the CWS in 2022 after last covering the event in 2019. Over the years, MavRadio has earned numerous broadcasting awards for their sports reporting, including their CWS coverage.





FICTION AND REALITY

UNO College of Communication, Fine Arts, and Media, The School of the Arts, and UNO Theatre collaborated with 46 high schoolers from Omaha Public Schools to perform FAME The Musical. Based on the film and television series with the same title, FAME The Musical tells the story of young people aspiring to be involved in the arts.

IT'S A STORYLINE THAT RELATES VERY CLOSELY TO THE STORYLINE OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE THAT ARE IN THE SHOW.

UNO MUSIC THEATRE DIRECTOR
HAL FRANCE

JUNETEETH

University of Nebraska Omaha students, staff, faculty and alumni walked in the Juneteenth parade in North Omaha on Saturday, June 18, 2022. This important milestone in the African-American community represents the emancipation of African Americans enslaved in the United States.

CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Deputy Secretary John Tien, a decorated U.S. Army veteran who served four presidents, engaged with students and faculty in a fireside chat-style question and answer session during his visit to UNO's National Counterterrorism Innovation, Technology, and Education Center (NCITE).

HIS VISIT WAS PROFESSIONAL, VERY INTERACTIVE, AND AMAZINGLY FRIENDLY WITH BOTH THE STUDENTS AND FACULTY INVOLVED WITH NCITE. ON TOP OF THAT, IT WAS AMAZING TO HEAR HIS STORIES AND LEARNING MORE ABOUT WHAT NCITE CAN DO TO CONTINUE CONTRIBUTING TO THE MISSION AND GOALS OF DHS.

YAN VILTER, UNO POLITICAL
SCIENCE MAJOR

Test your brainpower with these puzzles created by UNO graduate Terry Stickels ('76) in his "BIG Brain Puzzle Book." For more information on Stickels, or to order any of his books, visit terrystickels.com.

WORDPLAY

Below are several phrases that are anagrams of the names of well-known people, both living and deceased. See how quickly you can come up with their names.

- A. Me, radium race (*scientist*)
- B. I'll make a wise phrase (*playwright*)
- C. Bursting presence (*American Rock 'N Roller*)
- D. Old West Action (*actor/director*)
- E. Edge? Ref error (*tennis great*) (*the question mark is not part of the anagram*)

LOGIC

Sometimes puzzles and problems appear to lack all the necessary information. This puzzle falls into that category. Upon first glance, you would swear there is not enough information – but a closer look will reveal that there is. Give it a try and see how flexible your mind can become!

What is the value of F?

- A + B = Z
- Z + P = T
- T + A = F
- B + P + F = 130
- A = 20

KNOWLEDGE

Match the first names on the right with their respective companies or last names on the left.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. H&R Block Tax Advisors | A. William and Andres |
| 2. Lewis and Clark | B. Charles Edward and John Nicholas |
| 3. Smith Brothers, Cough Drop Makers | C. Henry and Richard |
| 4. Ringling Brothers | D. Meriwether and William |
| 5. The Brothers Grimm, Authors | E. Horace and Daniel B. |
| 6. Smith & Wesson | F. Jacob and Wilhelm |

CAMPUS LIFE

DON GIBSON



"FOR THE LAST TIME MR. JOHNSON, WE DON'T HAVE A 6 MONTH DEGREE."

ANSWERS

WORDPLAY
 A. Madame Curie
 B. William Shakespeare
 C. Bruce Springsteen
 D. Clint Eastwood
 E. Roger Federer
 F. Roger Federer
 KNOWLEDGE
 1 - C, 2 - D, 3 - A, 4 - B, 5 - F, 6 - E
 LOGIC
 Since we know $A+B = Z$, it follows $A+B+F = T$. Since $T+A = F$, in the equation $B+P+F = 130$, replace F with $T+A$.
 $B+P+T+A = 130$ or $B+P+T = 110$,
 Since $A = 20$
 Rearrange to solve for T :
 $20 + B + P = T$
 $100 - B - P = T$
 $130 = 2T$
 $65 = T$
 $T + A = F$; $65 + 20 = 85$
 $F = 85$

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