

WINTER 2021

# UNO MAGAZINE



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University of Nebraska Omaha

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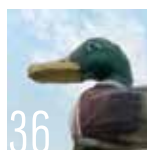


## IN EVERY ISSUE

- 4** From the Chancellor
- 6** Alumni Association
- 10** Philanthropy Matters
- 14** The Colleges
- 46** Class Notes
- 51** Future Alums
- 52** Sights & Sounds
- 54** For Fun



## FEATURES



- 20** Big Hire
- 22** Big Data
- 24** Big Passion
- 28** Big Ideas
- 36** Big Trip
- 40** Big Future
- 42** Big Bet
- 44** Big O



# WINTER

# 2021

**VOL. 12, NO. 2**

[www.unoalumni.org/unomag](http://www.unoalumni.org/unomag)

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

Dear Mavericks,

There is an undeniable energy on our campus.

It comes from students who are pursuing their dreams in and out of the classrooms. It comes from our faculty who are blazing trails through research and inspiring a new generation of learners. As we saw during Homecoming and the Wear Black, Give Back campaign, it comes from our alumni who wear our colors with pride and invest in the university's continued success.

In the nearly six months I have served as UNO's chancellor, it has been a privilege to hear from Maverick students, faculty, staff, alumni and community partners about how we can harness that energy to make our university the force for good that we all know it can be.

On my 90th day as chancellor, I asked our Maverick family to honor our university's journey and embrace our future as the nation's leading urban institution. We will need the help of our alumni to drive us forward — here's how:

First, share your stories with everyone you meet about how UNO helped you become the person you are today. Second, we need your help to drive a statewide culture shift around topics of student safety, diversity, equity, access and inclusion. Third, share your ideas about how we can disrupt the traditional student-to-university relationship to better serve

the modern learner. Finally, trust that we will be transparent as we work toward our ambitious goals so that you can be informed, engaged and invested in our shared success.

I truly believe UNO's best days are ahead of us. We are thinking big and building something great together.

So, let's stay connected. Whether you have an inspiring story, an idea about how we can better serve our alumni community or just want to share some experiences from your time at UNO, I want to hear it all. You can reach me any time at [unochancellor@unomaha.edu](mailto:unochancellor@unomaha.edu) or on Twitter at [@UNO\\_Chancellor](https://twitter.com/UNO_Chancellor).

If you've spent some time away from campus and haven't experienced this energy I've come to know and love, take some time to stop by.

Inspiration is everywhere.

Sincerely,



**Joanne Li, Ph.D., CFA**  
**UNO Chancellor**



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## UNO MAGAZINE WANTS TO KNOW WHAT ITS READERS ARE THINKING AFTER READING THE CURRENT ISSUE.

*Write us about the magazine or university.*

Letters must include writer's first and last names, address and phone number. Letters may be edited for taste, accuracy, clarity and length. Submit a letter online at [unoalumni.org/unomag-led](http://unoalumni.org/unomag-led) or write to the address at left.

## FROM THE ARCHIVES

### THE BIG REVEAL

Television came to campus in February 1952 with President Milo Bail unveiling a new Philco 17-inch TV set for the student center. KMTV and George Roth's Paramount Radio Shop donated the television.



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# FLOTT CHOSEN TO HEAD UNO ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



Anthony Flott, executive  
director of UNO Alumni  
Engagement

## PAST DIRECTORS OF THE UNO ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Anthony Flott  
2021-

Lee Denker  
2006-2021

Jim Leslie  
1973-2006

Terry Humphrey  
1970-1973

Warren Wittekind  
1963-1970

Betty Ellsworth Davis  
1959-1963

James Erixon  
1958-1959

June Gautier  
1956-1958

James Erixon  
1955-1956

Tom Townsend  
1952-1955

John Adams  
1951-1952

Dale Agee  
1950-1951

Joan Sorenson  
1949-1950

Olga Strimble  
1943-1949

For only the third time in nearly 50 years, a new director of the University of Nebraska at Omaha Alumni Association has been named.

Longtime alumni association employee Anthony Flott was named executive director of UNO Alumni Engagement with the University of Nebraska Foundation effective Dec. 1.

Flott replaces Lee Denker, who left in March to become executive director of the Papillion-LaVista Schools Foundation. Denker followed Jim Leslie, who was UNOAA executive director from 1973-2006.

Flott had served as interim executive director since Denker's departure. He has UNO bachelor's (1990) and master's (1999) degrees in communication. He joined the alumni association in 1993 after working three years as a sports editor for the Papillion Times News Paper group.

At the time of his interim appointment, Flott was senior director of communications responsible for UNO Magazine and the association's digital communications and marketing efforts. Under his leadership as managing editor, UNO Magazine earned numerous awards from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education and other organizations.

Flott's tenure at UNO included seven years as an adjunct faculty member in the School of Communication. He also was a member of various university committees, and in 2016-17 was president of the UNO Staff Advisory Council (SAC). As SAC president, he served on the University of Nebraska's Budget Response Team Steering Committee in 2017. The UNO School of Communication presented him its 2019 Alumni Achievement Award, and in 2016 he received the Andy Award for International Reporting.



From left, Teja Farley, Abby Heimann, Hannah Serhan.

## 2021 UNO ALUMNI SCHOLARS

The 2021 UNO Alumni Association Scholarships have been awarded to three Nebraska high school graduates:

Teja Farley, *Syracuse-Dunbar-Avoca*  
Abby Heimann, *Wakefield*  
Hannah Serhan, *Millard North*

The three \$2,500/year scholarships are awarded to those who have demonstrated leadership and involvement during high school. The scholarships are renewable for up to four years total.

See scholar bios at  
[unoomaha.edu/2021unoaascholars](https://unoomaha.edu/2021unoaascholars)



The UNO Academic and Career Development Center (ACDC) is still working for alumni, offering many of its services virtually.

That includes its regular Success Series via Zoom and online appointments for help with resume reviews, practice interviews and other career-related initiatives.

For more, visit  
[unoomaha.edu/acdc](https://unoomaha.edu/acdc)



## YOUNG. WILLING. ABLE.



The 11th class of the UNO Young Alumni Academy convened for the first time in November, beginning seven months in the award-winning professional development program designed for alumni 35 and younger. Members selected to the academy have unique networking and professional development opportunities while developing stronger connections to each other and with UNO.

A big Maverick welcome to these members of the Class of 2022 Academy:

**OMAR AL MULKI**, HDR; **PAOLA BRIONES**, UNO; **HANNAH CANADY**, Boys Town National Research Hospital; **KAITLIN CARLSON**, UNO; **KATHYA CARVAJAL**, Radical Minds; **SERGIO CEDILLO**, Best Buy; **MORGAN CHAPMAN**, Werner Enterprises; **CALVIN CUSTARD**, First National Bank

of Omaha; **PATRICK DAVLIN**, Union Pacific; **ZACHARY DOBROVOLNY**, Graham Construction; **JANAE DONALDSON**, Avenue Scholars; **QUINN EATON**, Jackson Lewis; **WILLIAM GIER**, OPPD; **JANET HERNANDEZ**, Kiewit; **COURTNI KOPIETZ**, UNO; **CALEB KREJCI**, Woodmen Life; **GEORG, LINK**, Bitergia; **CONNOR MASON**, BKD; **CHELSEA OLIVER**, The Meriwether; **ISMAEL PASCUAL**, Northern Natural Gas; **SUSAN PAYNE**, Girl Scouts Spirit of Nebraska; **AIDAN POSEY**, Metonic Real Estate Solutions/Nebraska Realty; **LIZ POTTER**, University of Nebraska Foundation; **CAMERON RAM**, CHI Health; **KALPANA RASAILY**, Omaha Public School; **PHILIPP RUHE**, Omaha Police Department; **MICHAEL SMITH**, UNO; **EMMA STEEVE**, Boys & Girls Clubs of the Midlands; **RACHEL STEWART**, Plant Sentry; **KAITLYNN THOMAS**, Ameritas; **BREANNA WARREN**, FNBO; **BROOKE WEGNER**, Venel.



## ALUMNI NIGHT ON THE COURT

Put some bounce in your step Thursday, Feb. 17, by joining other alumni and their families at Alumni Night on the Court at Baxter Arena to watch the UNO men's basketball team take on Denver.

### 6 P.M. PREGAME RECEPTION

featuring snacks and beverages, door prizes, games and more!

### 7 P.M. UNO VS. DENVER TIPOFF

Alumni will be seated together in one section.

*Hosted by the UNO and UNMC Alumni Associations*

**\$15 per adult**  
**\$10 per child**

Includes reception fare, game ticket and a meal voucher for use during the game at a Baxter concession stand.

For registration details, visit [unoalumni.org/nightonthecourt](http://unoalumni.org/nightonthecourt)

## BRISSON LEADING ASSOCIATION AS 98<sup>TH</sup> CHAIR OF THE BOARD



Seated, from left, Maeve Hemmer, Keristiena Dodge, Gabe Romero, Viv Ewing, Chancellor Joanne Li, David Brisson, Eric Gitt, Anthony Flott, Samantha Chavez. Standing, Lori Byrne, Carley Raneri, Tami Williams, Ann O'Connor, Mark Adler, Andy Damkroger, Ryan Curtis, David Hopp, Stephen Roberts, Andrew Wong.

The UNO Alumni Association Board of Directors confirmed a new executive committee and elected members to three-year terms during its 109th annual meeting conducted May 18 via Zoom.

David Brisson, a 2002 (BSBA) and 2007 (MBA) UNO graduate, was named 98th chair of what is one of Omaha's longest-running nonprofit organizations. Brisson, director of fixed income sales with Wells Fargo Securities, joined the association's board in 2016. A Quebec City, Canada, native, he played hockey for UNO from 1999 to 2003.

Brisson heads the following executive committee for 2021-22. Years of UNO graduation are in parentheses, followed by places of employment.

### CHAIR OF THE BOARD:

**DAVID BRISSON** (2002), Wells Fargo Securities

### 1ST VICE CHAIR:

**VIV EWING** (1983, 1986), Nebraska Families Collaborative

### 2ND VICE CHAIR:

**NEGIL MCPHERSON, JR** (1985/2015), HDR

### SECRETARY:

**TAMI WILLIAMS** (2003, 2009), UNO

### TREASURER:

**CARLEY RANERI** (2008), Metropolitan Community College

### LEGAL COUNSEL:

**TODD RICHARDSON** (1982), Husch Blackwell

### PAST CHAIRMAN:

**BRIAN ALLISON** (2005), Rady Children's Hospital - San Diego

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

**ANTHONY FLOTT** (1990, 1999), UNO Alumni Association

### EX-OFFICIO VOTING MEMBERS:

**JOANNE LI**, UNO Chancellor Designee  
**TBD**, University of Nebraska Foundation  
NUF Vice President of UNO Advancement

Members voted to second three-year terms were **ERIC GITT** (2003), G4S Secure Integration; **DAVID HOPP** (2010), Agape Red; and, **AMANDA TEMOSHEK** (1999) One Nebraska Coalition. Members voted to first three-year terms were **MARK ADLER** (2008), Ralston Public Schools; **SAMANTHA CHAVEZ** (2017), Voices for Children in Nebraska; and, **KATE WEST** (2007), PCL Construction.

Outgoing members also were recognized for their service at the meeting. That included past chairman **CHRIS DENNEY**, who prior to the meeting was presented a miniature Maverick Monument in appreciation of his service. Denney (2005, 2017), director of strategic planning at OrthoNebraska, was 2019-20 chairman of the board.

Director Appreciation awards were presented to two members who completed second three-year terms: **ENID SCHONEWISE** (1996, 2001) of Westside Schools and **JIM SUTFIN** (1993, 2002) of Millard Public Schools. Also receiving a director appreciation award was **PATRICIA MAYORGA** (2011) of Kiewit, who served the board from 2018-21.

The board also approved adding the UNO Staff Advisory Council president as a non-voting ex-officio member.

A complete board roster is provided at [unoalumni.org/board](http://unoalumni.org/board).



## Save the Month for THE BIG SERVE

### Association Hosting 3rd Annual Alumni Month of Service

If we learned anything through 2020 and into 2021, it's that people in need are all around us. But we also learned — thankfully — that there are plenty of people willing to help.

And so the association is pleased to again host UNO Alumni Month of Service in March 2022.

Alumni everywhere are encouraged to join us by pledging their intention to complete a service project wherever they live or travel during March. Consider picking up litter, assisting at a shelter, serving youth, or helping any cause or organization close to your heart.

UNO Alumni Month of Service is a great opportunity to:

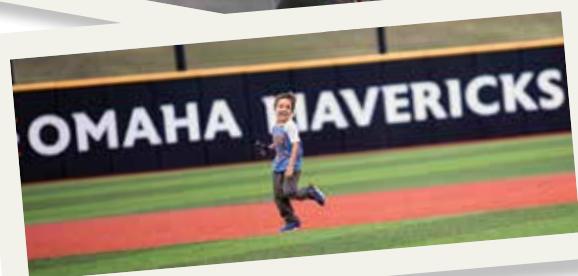
- Positively impact your community — wherever you are
- Earn service hours for a youth or with an organization
- Serve together as a family, company team or other group

Each person who pledges will receive a free UNO "O" flag and UNO Alumni fandana. Take a photo with them during your project and share it on social media with a photo or video!

Additional details will be coming soon at [unoalumni.org/monthofservice](http://unoalumni.org/monthofservice)

Questions? Contact Elizabeth Draney at [elizabeth.draney@unoalumni.org](mailto:elizabeth.draney@unoalumni.org) or 402-504-3343





## BIG FUN AT HOMECOMING

Big Fun was had by all Oct. 9 during the UNO Homecoming Family Festival. Held at Maverick Park, UNO's new baseball and softball complex, homecoming featured delicious Maverick Meals, giveaways, \$10 hockey tickets, yard games, fun by the kids and more. **THANKS FOR ALL WHO ATTENDED.**

## FACULTY HONORED IN 25<sup>TH</sup> ALUMNI OUTSTANDING TEACHING AWARD

The UNO Alumni Association celebrated the 25th year of its Alumni Outstanding Teaching Award program when it presented the honor to nine faculty members during the UNO Faculty Honors Convocation Oct. 14.

The awards were established in 1997 to honor distinguished teaching in the classroom. Peer committees in UNO colleges chose recipients, each of whom received a \$1,000 award and commemorative plaque. With the 2021 awards the association has issued \$221,000 through the program. For biographies of each, visit [unoalumni.org/2021aota](http://unoalumni.org/2021aota)



**SAMANTHA AMMONS**  
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Anthropology  
College of Arts and  
Sciences



**JODI BENENSON**  
School of Public  
Administration  
College of Public Affairs  
& Community Service



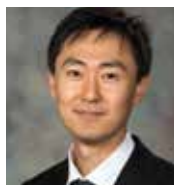
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College of Health and  
Human Sciences



**ROBERT DARCY**  
English  
College of Arts and  
Sciences



**PAUL DAVIS**  
Biology  
College of Arts and  
Sciences



**SEUNGHEE KIM**  
Civil and  
Environmental  
Engineering  
College of Engineering



**BRIANA BAKER MORRISON**  
Computer Science  
College of Information  
Science & Technology



**HUGH REILLY**  
School of  
Communication  
College of Fine Arts  
and Media



**JAMIE WAGNER**  
Economics  
College of Business  
Administration

## NEWMAN CENTER



## Newman Center Seeking Alumni Contacts

In 2016, the Catholic movement on UNO's campus grew into its own space — the St. John Paul II Newman Center. Currently, the movement features 40+ active small groups, 150+ students living in Newman Hall, 80+ students attending weekly community nights and 200+ students attending Mass on Sundays.

Ministry leaders want to connect with any alum who was involved in Catholic college ministry while at UNO.

To connect, learn more about the community and more, visit [JPiOmaha.org/member](http://JPiOmaha.org/member) to complete a brief information form.

# BIG GRANT TO FIGHT HATE

*by Robyn Murray*





## UNO STUDENTS ARE HELPING TO SOLVE **BIG** PROBLEMS — LIKE STOPPING POTENTIAL TERRORISTS BEFORE THEY ACT

UNO in early 2021 earned the biggest grant in school history: \$36.5 million. It was awarded by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to NCITE — the National Counterterrorism, Innovation, Technology and Education Center. A one-of-a-kind institution that comprises 18 university partners, NCITE is based at UNO and dedicated to understanding, tracking and stopping domestic terrorists.

“This is an opportunity to build something that Nebraska can be known for,” says Professor Gina Ligon, a rising star in the field of counterterrorism and the founder of NCITE.

Ligon is passionate about stopping domestic terrorism, and her desire is deeply personal. Ligon grew up in Oklahoma City. She was 16 when she toured the wreckage of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building after it was blown apart by Timothy

they also understood the gravity of what they were looking at.

That little blue dot is a potential terrorist.

“I’ve never been exposed to data in that way before,” says Liz Bender, a UNO senior majoring in criminology and criminal justice. “You read about it, but I never really thought I could have access to some of that data.”

Data is what drives NCITE. It began with the Jack and Stephanie Koraleski Commerce and Applied Behavioral Laboratory (CAB Lab). Ligon pitched the idea to the former dean of the College of Business, Lou Pol, in 2013. The proposal: high-tech tools capable of analyzing people’s emotions by tracking facial expressions, eye movement, brain activity and other neurophysiological responses. Her team would then apply that data to a broad range of subjects and answer

faculty members who began this fall — two research assistants and a sixth faculty member who will join in January. Omaha philanthropists and UNO graduates Jack and Stephanie Koraleski funded the CAB Lab and a professorship, which Ligon holds. And a whole community stepped up to support the college’s new Rod Rhoden Business Innovation Center, a \$17 million privately funded addition to Mammel Hall that now houses NCITE headquarters.

For students at NCITE, getting to solve real problems for DHS and helping stop terrorism are transformative opportunities. Bender says she learns something new every day and loves being encouraged to seek out her own projects.

“It’s not something I’ve experienced before,” she says. “It’s like the world is your oyster — do with it what you will.”

## THIS IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO BUILD SOMETHING THAT NEBRASKA CAN BE KNOWN FOR.

McVeigh on a clear spring morning in 1995. Ligon remembers the smell of the thick, muggy air, which was still acrid five days later, and how indiscriminate it felt.

“They were just doing normal things,” she says. “They were cogs in the machine of this ideological hatred that he had.”

McVeigh killed 168 people that day. For the nation, it was a watershed moment — the deadliest act of homegrown terrorism in U.S. history. But for the residents of Oklahoma City, it was woven into the fabric of their identities.

The experience changed Ligon. It made her want to find the next McVeigh, the terrorists lurking among us — and stop them.

On a recent Zoom call, NCITE students scrolled through charts and graphs, tweaking variables and inputting data to make the lines bend and curve. A little blue dot popped up on a map, corresponding with phone data and pinged locations.

It was mesmerizing, and the students were excited about the software behind it. But

questions like: What kind of business leaders are most effective? And, how do terrorists recruit new members?

Terrorism and business may seem unusual bedfellows, but Pol says the CAB Lab’s business perspective was key to winning over DHS, which has designated NCITE a DHS Center of Excellence and consulted it on shaping the White House’s first-ever domestic terrorism strategy in June.

“From the very get-go,” Pol says, “when [Ligon] was applying those business perspectives to this study of violent extremist groups, they said, ‘Holy cow, this is different. We need to pay attention to this, and we need to pay attention to this person.’”

Along with its unique perspective, the program stood out because of its multidisciplinary nature — the College of Information Science and Technology is a key partner — and how much support it received from the university and community.

Ligon and her team were among the finalists for UNO’s Big Ideas initiative and received funding to add five new full-time

Bender says her interest in criminology stems from growing up in the era of school shootings.

“I wanted to understand why,” she says.

Tackling questions such as those is what makes NCITE a powerful experience for students, whom Ligon wants to mold into the nation’s best counterterrorism professionals ready to work in government, nonprofits or business.

“NCITE has given greater purpose to all of these students,” Ligon says, “so they can work together to solve something bigger than themselves.”

Something bigger — like stopping the next McVeigh before he or she has a chance to act.

“We have this boiling cauldron of risk factors that none of us really know what it’s going to lead to,” Ligon says. “There’s no more important time to have a DHS Center of Excellence than right now.”

Lois Durham Memorial Aviation Scholarship Fund • Robert E. and Rosita C. Wolsmann Scholarship Fund • Bruce Tuttle Memorial Scholarship Fund • Russell C. Ross Memorial Aviation Scholarship • Larry M. Smith Memorial Fund • Aviation Institute Professorship UNO Subfund • UNO Nebraska Aviation Council Scholarship • David L. LaMar Memorial Scholarship Fund • Chris A. Hawks Memorial Scholarship Fund • Chambers Family Aviation Scholarship Fund • R. H. Ager Memorial Scholarship Fund • Don Smithey Scholarship Fund • Arlene V. Steier Memorial Aviation Scholarship • J. H. Ager Memorial Scholarship Fund • William Wakefield Student Support Fund • Dr. Benjamin Steiner Fellowship for Criminal Justice • J. H. Ager Memorial Scholarship Fund • J. H. Ager Memorial Scholarship Fund • Douglas Family Scholarship Fund for Criminal Justice • Detective Kerrie F. Ager Memorial Scholarship • J. H. Ager Memorial Scholarship Fund • Len and Ann Freeman Memorial Scholarship • J. H. Ager Memorial Scholarship Fund • J. H. Ager Memorial Scholarship Fund • Sylvia Siporin Webb Family Scholarship Fund • Dr. Larry D. Ager Memorial Scholarship Fund • J. H. Ager Memorial Scholarship Fund • Meredith B/7-8FA Scholarship Fund • Terry Haney Memorial Scholarship Fund • James A. Thorson Student Support Fund • J. H. Ager Memorial Scholarship Fund • J. H. Ager Memorial Scholarship Fund • John and Judy Smith Scholarship & Fellowship • J. H. Ager Memorial Scholarship Fund • J. H. Ager Memorial Scholarship Fund • Goodrich Summer Scholarship Program • Heike and Adam L. Ager Memorial Scholarship Fund • J. H. Ager Memorial Scholarship Fund • Nebraska City Management Association Scholarship Fund • Andrew Blair Memorial Scholarship Fund • J. H. Ager Memorial Scholarship Fund • J. H. Ager Memorial Scholarship Fund • Mary and Rodrigo López Fellowship for Professional Development • J. H. Ager Memorial Scholarship Fund • J. H. Ager Memorial Scholarship Fund • Mary Galligan Cornett Public Service Scholarship Fund • UNO School of Social Work Student Support Fund • Everett Scholarship Fund for College of Public Affairs and Community Service • Grace Abbott School of Social Work Scholarship • Carl M. Carlson LSCSW Fellowship Fund • Amy B. Clark Fellowship Fund • Dana Vaughn Gehring UNO School of Social Work Scholarship Fund



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To learn more visit [nufoundation.org/85anniversary](https://nufoundation.org/85anniversary).



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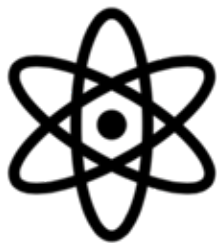


## Connie Claussen created electricity on the field. Now she's ensuring the next generation can lead the charge.

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](https://nufoundation.org/giftplanning), or call a gift planning officer at the University of Nebraska Foundation at 800-432-3216.



# ‘Big Bang Theory’ Helps Learning Economics

## Bazinganomics



UNO Economics Department Chair Ben Smith uses “Big Bang Theory” clips to teach economics.

THOSE FAMILIAR WITH  
SHELDON COOPER OF “THE  
BIG BANG THEORY” KNOW  
HE’S BIG-TIME SMART.

NOW, HE’S HELPING UNO  
STUDENTS AND OTHERS BE  
THE SAME BY HELPING THEM  
TO A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING  
OF ECONOMICS.

That’s through Bazinganomics.com, a website that provides instructors with “Big Bang” clips, explanations and lesson plans related to economics concepts. UNO Economics Department Chair Ben Smith created the site in 2015 in collaboration with counterparts from Penn State and the University of Arizona.

The website is named after Cooper’s trademark “BAZINGA!” catchphrase—used as an interjection to rub a joke in someone’s face or cheer someone on after a personal win.

The site is available to anyone. Similar resources have been created by other scholars to teach economics using clips from shows including “Seinfeld,” “The Office,” “Parks & Recreation” and others.

“It gets down to the idea that we need to have more creative ways of presenting the curriculum,” says Smith, an associate professor. “Bazinganomics and other similar projects work because a good chunk of the audience is already clear on what it is.”

The team behind Bazinganomics took the familiar concept and did as much as they could with it. The website was one of the first to include full lesson plans using clips. Other websites since have adopted a similar approach.

For example, in the microeconomics section, a clip is used to explain movements versus shifts in the supply-and-demand curve.

Sheldon takes another character, Penny, to the jewelry store. While they are talking to a salesman, Sheldon compares charcoal to diamonds, remarking that the store charges thousands of dollars for something so similar in molecular makeup to a household item like charcoal. The salesman explains the diamond he’s holding is discounted, which causes Sheldon to want to buy something, as a lower price represents a higher quantity on the demand curve.

Smith notes that the clip can be used as an example to show that price is only a movement along an existing demand curve. Demand itself only shifts if a non-price factor impacts it, such as if diamonds were no longer socially acceptable.

Though the show ended in 2019, Smith says content is still being actively used by educators across the country. He’s now working on a new project called “Economics of Star Wars,” using clips from Star Wars movies and spinoffs like “The Mandalorian” to explain and provide lesson plans for everything from microeconomics to macroeconomics.

“It’s about making connections,” Smith says. “If I talk to a student and I put something in very boring or unrelatable terms, that information doesn’t stick with them. It can be better to relate a topic you’re teaching to a concept they understand, such as a TV show or movie series.”

— Tavion Davis and Brandon Bartling



## UNO students continue to make the big-band sound



Skye Junginger, a 2019 UNO graduate.

## BIG BANDS STILL STANDING

There was a time in American popular music when bigger was better.

When the Duke, the Count and the Doctor would stand in front of a dozen, sometimes two dozen, musicians and get huge audiences swinging.

When the big bands were the biggest.

"The big band is the symphony orchestra of the jazz world," says Pete Madsen, coordinator of Jazz Studies at UNO. "The possibilities for the composition orchestration and arrangement of music for big band are endless."

Big-band music was at its heyday in the years following the Great Depression and through World War II. Popular music then was synonymous with jazz, and its evolution into big bands provided a soundtrack for Americans needing a reason to dance away the blues.

"I think big bands had a positive effect on the country's morale during the dark days of World War II," Madsen says. "I think it gave the public a distraction and common pastime."

By the 1950s, jazz became more experimental, rock n' roll took over as the popular sound and economics made it difficult to keep big bands together.

But big-band is not dead. The passion that helped big bands achieve success nearly three-quarters of a century ago is still alive and well in high school and college music programs around the country — including at UNO.

Skye Junginger, a 2019 UNO graduate who earned a Bachelor of Music in saxophone performance, is one of those who fell in love with big-band music. That love began

at his high school in Hooper, Nebraska, continued at UNO, and now is being taken around the world.

As a UNO student, Junginger hopped into UNO's big band ensemble early while also performing locally at venues like the Omaha Jitterbugs dance hall and at weddings. Farther from home, he performed at World Equestrian Championships, traveling to Japan, China, Latvia, Lithuania and the Czech Republic.

Today, Junginger is a music instructor and performer in the Omaha area specializing in saxophone, piano, clarinet and flute. Most recently he played flute for Omaha native Connor Oberst during a tour with his popular band Bright Eyes.

The big bands he performs with now have a more fluid makeup.

"Through UNO, I've met so many people and contacts who are now performing across the country — from Boston to California to Florida," Junginger says. "Because not everyone stays in the same big band all the time, you know who to contact for opportunities."

Madsen says it's because of programs like UNO's that students like Junginger can learn musical versatility that will benefit them throughout their careers — something he hopes future generations continue.

"Once kids get involved at a young age, they realize how fun it is and they are hooked," Madsen says. "Jazz is America's greatest artistic contribution to the world, and it thrives on college campuses where creative expression is valued."

— Charley Steed



## COMING HOME TO BIG SOUNDS

Once upon a time, UNO brought two of the biggest names in big-band music to Omaha.

The first was master clarinetist Artie Shaw, who made an appearance prior to Omaha University's football game against Morningside in 1941 at Benson Stadium. Shaw arrived at the stadium riding in a Jeep alongside homecoming Princess Margie Litherbury, then led the Morningside band in the national anthem.

Two decades later, Count Basie and his orchestra performed at Peony Park for the homecoming dance.



Kaitlyn Baysa, 2020 Big Idea! Pitch Contest Winner.

## ASKING FOR BIG IDEAS — IN 90 SECONDS OR LESS

In just 90 seconds, UNO students can turn their big ideas into something much bigger.

Now in its 12th year, the Big Idea! Pitch Contest, hosted by UNO's Center for Innovation, Entrepreneurship, & Franchising (CIEF) gives any student in any field of study the chance to take a big step toward making their big idea a reality.

Much like the reality show "Shark Tank," students have to pitch their business idea to a panel of judges. Comprised of local entrepreneurs, the panel hears pitches among three categories: Tech-Based, Non-Tech-Based and Nonprofit. After the pitch, the judges can ask questions before selecting the top three ideas to advance to the finals.

T.J. Andreasen, a graduate assistant and MBA candidate within CIEF, said the competition can serve as an accessible option to launch a businesses.

"This can be a great opportunity for a starting point and a place to pitch," Andreasen says. "Students don't always have a chance to get in front of judges in a field they like, so this provides an opportunity for a business they want to start."

Unlike the TV show, there is no negotiating over revenue or profit sharing. The idea judged best of show comes with a \$1,000 prize and a trip to pitch at the National Collegiate Entrepreneurs' Organization (CEO) Pitch Competition in Tampa, Florida.

Past UNO entries have succeeded in the national competition and the business world. The 2020 competition was held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Kaitlyn Baysa, a Scott Scholar, pitched the winning idea of Actívate, a nonprofit educational resource that helps Spanish-speaking students in elementary classrooms learn the basics of computer science.

Emily Buettner and her team won the 2019 contest with the idea of Plug, a social platform connecting high school athletes and recruiters. Plug evens the playing field for athletes to showcase their talents when they might not otherwise have the financial means to do so. Buettner presented her idea at the national competition. After graduating, she launched the project as PlugSports (<https://plugsports.io>), an app available on Google Play and the Apple App Store.

The competition is always looking for business owners and entrepreneurs from the Omaha area to judge entries in future contests.

Contact Andreasen at [tjandreasen@unomaha.edu](mailto:tjandreasen@unomaha.edu) to learn more about opportunities to be on the panel.

— Brandon Bartling

# BIG HELP FROM BIG INTERVIEW



## Alumni have free access to useful practice tool

It's one of the most important — and dreaded — parts of the job hunt: the interview.

That's just as true for students entering the job market as it is for industry veterans.

Thanks to UNO, students and alumni have help at hand via "Big Interview," an online, simple-to-use interview training system available from any computer at any time of day. Purchased by UNO four years ago, the tool, brings together lessons developed by experts with practice sessions and AI technology.

UNO is among dozens of universities across the country using the software, including Yale, New York University and Notre Dame.

Sam Zeitner, assistant director of career advising for UNO's Academic and Career Development Center, makes a special point of emphasizing that Big Interview is available for free to alumni.

"Access to ACDC's career resources and advice doesn't stop after graduation," Zeitner says. "Alumni can utilize them at any time. Big Interview is no exception, and we wanted to make alumni aware of that."

Among Big Interview's capabilities:

- Virtual practice interviews
- Access to a database of interview questions and tips on how to answer them
- A step-by-step "Answer Builder" for behavioral questions
- Software that rates answers and provides feedback on rate of speech, sophistication of language, eye contact and more.

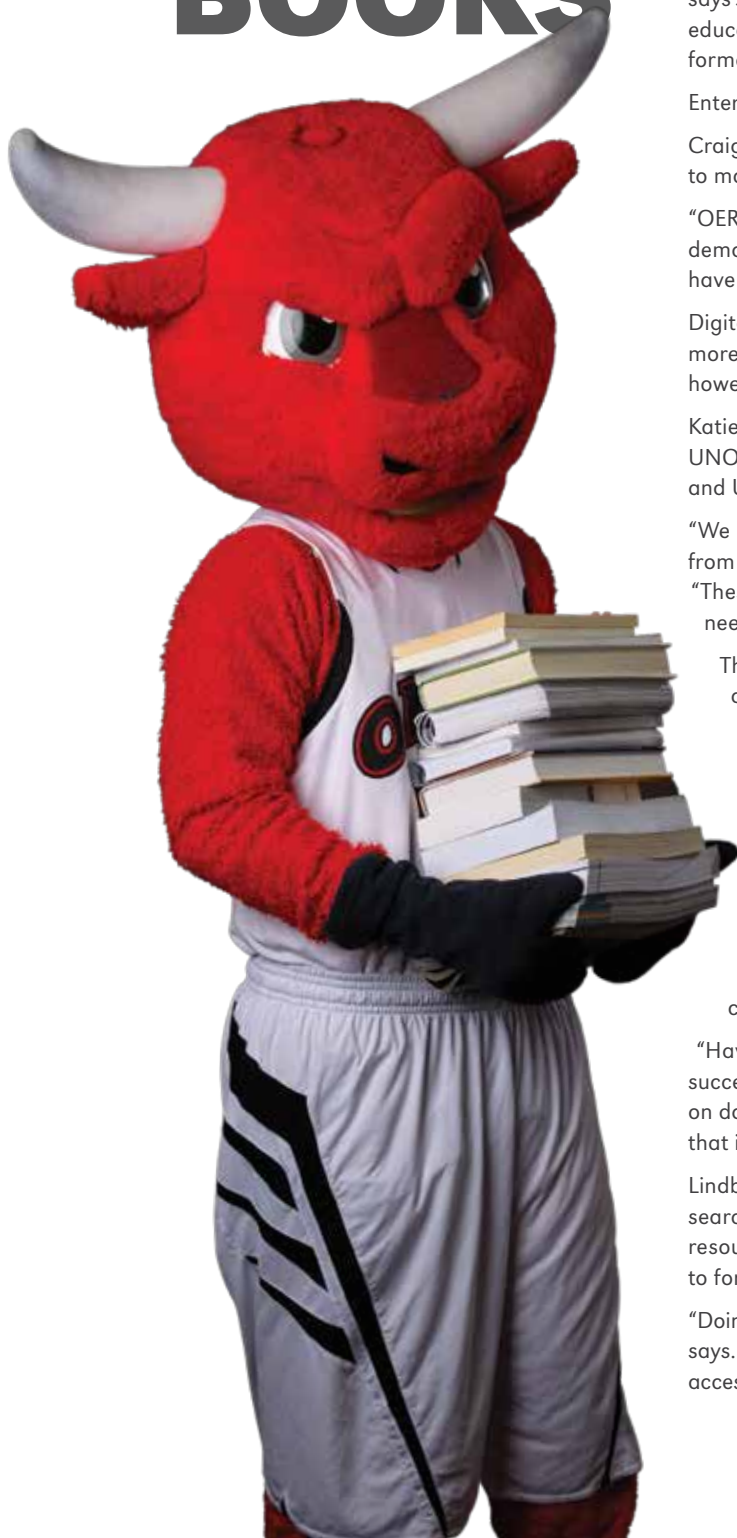
"We have heard from employers that the virtual interview format is not going away any time soon," Zeitner says. "Big Interview provides an excellent opportunity for participants to gain confidence in an interview format they may not be as familiar or comfortable with."

Alumni looking to make use of Big Interview can do so by going to [unomahaalumni.biginterview.com](http://unomahaalumni.biginterview.com) and registering with the access code 68182.

— Charley Steed



# BIG SAVINGS ON BOOKS



## UNO SAVES STUDENTS \$2 MILLION WITH ONLINE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

Outside of tuition, one of the largest costs of higher education is textbooks. In fact, U.S. News & World Report found that in an average academic year, undergraduate students will spend \$1,200 to \$1,400 on textbooks.

Reducing that financial barrier has been a key priority for the University of Nebraska System and UNO during the last five years.

"It's become unrealistic for many students to purchase books in addition to paying for tuition, fees and housing," says Jaci Lindburg, associate vice president for digital education for the University of Nebraska System and former director of digital learning at UNO.



Jaci Lindburg

Enter OER — Online (or Open) Educational Resources.

Craig Finlay, OER and STEM librarian at UNO's Criss Library is directly connected to making OERs available to Mavericks.

"OERs are really a movement to take advantage of the internet and the democratization of available information, as well as materials, so students don't have to purchase them," Finlay says.

Digital access to materials like journals, newspaper articles, websites, videos and more have been available for students and faculty for many years. Only recently, however, have textbooks been leveraged in the same way.

Katie Bishop, director of research and instruction services at UNO Libraries, says UNO started a push for OER in 2017 with a partnership between UNO Libraries and UNO's Office of Digital Learning.

"We have been able to offer faculty cohorts up to \$2,500 to convert their courses from physical textbooks to a low or no-cost alternative since 2019," Bishop says. "These grants help faculty keep the costs of software, fees and textbooks — if they need them — under \$40."

That push has netted tangible benefits for students over the last four years across all NU campuses, including UNO.

"We are nearing the \$7 million saved mark today, which is incredibly exciting," Lindburg says. "At UNO, at last calculation in spring of 2021, we had saved UNO students \$2 million."

Beyond financial savings, thanks to OER, students are ready to engage in their courses from day one. This is vital in general education courses, which are necessary for students to progress in their academic careers.

Matt Tracy, director of general education and dual enrollment at UNO, is committed to encouraging as many courses as possible to adopt OER.

"Having access to course materials on day one is so important from a student success perspective," Tracy says. "If we can find ways to not only provide access on day one but also make the costs of doing so more palatable for students — that is where we want to be."

Lindburg says the next step in this initiative is to make it easy for students to search and find courses — or entire programs — that offer OER and low-cost resources. It's an effort called "Open Nebraska" that got its start at UNO thanks to former UNO Student Body President Jabin Moore.

"Doing everything we can to enhance student affordability is imperative," Lindburg says. "Open Nebraska is an incredibly collaborative effort that puts quality, student access, student affordability and student success front and center."

— Charley Steed

## BIG ADVICE FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

### UNO's Nebraska Business Development Center offers help for businesses across the state

The Nebraska Business Development Center may be housed at UNO's Mammel Hall, but its influence extends throughout the state, strengthening Nebraska businesses for a healthy economy and prosperous communities.

Its credentialed consultants regularly provide confidential one-on-one business services to entrepreneurs; established business owners, innovators, and economic and community development professionals. In 2020 alone, NBDC served more than 1,800 clients across Nebraska.

Here are a few general tips NBDC experts offer your business — no matter how big or how small.

#### MAINTAIN ACCURATE FINANCIALS

Before issuing loans, bank lenders want to see at least the last three years of financial statements from your business. To maintain accurate financials, considering investing in bookkeeping or accounting software and/or services.

#### CREATE A FILING SYSTEM FOR RECEIPTS AND EXPENSES

Scan or copy printed receipts, which tend to wear away quickly.

#### DOCUMENT YOUR CASH FLOW

Businesses can look profitable on paper but still not be able to pay immediate operating expenses or replenish inventory. Cash flow statements provide a more straightforward report of cash available and should be as up to date as possible. If sales are on credit, a company needs to have enough cash on hand to pay for operating expenses and inventory expenses until the collection period is complete. Small business owners can review how money circulates through their business with a bookkeeper or accountant.

#### EXPLORE GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

A great way to expand the market for a small business' goods and services is to consider the government as a potential customer. All levels of government contract with small businesses, prompting the popular saying, "The government buys everything." Because the process of contracting with the government can be exacting, owners must prevent missteps that can cause them to miss out on the market.

#### PARTNER WITH NBDC

Need personalized help with your business? Experts from NBDC, including its Small Business Development Center and Nebraska Procurement Technical Assistance Center, can help. To start a partnership, contact [nbdc@unomaha.edu](mailto:nbdc@unomaha.edu) or visit [nbdc.unomaha.edu](http://nbdc.unomaha.edu).

— Eva Burklund

## BIG PARTNERSHIPS, BIG OPPORTUNITIES

### Career Currency program facilitates degree pursuit for employees of UNO's company partners

An innovative partnership program begun by UNO is having a big impact on workforce development in the Omaha community and across the state.

UNO's Career Currency program pairs the university with Omaha-based companies and organizations to help their employees pursue degrees and enhance their skills. Traditional tuition reimbursement programs require employees to pay tuition out-of-pocket before receiving reimbursement from their employer. Career Currency, however, removes financial barriers by enabling employees of participating organizations to enroll in classes at UNO without paying for tuition up front.

Chancellor Joanne Li, Ph.D., CFA, praises the program.

"These partnerships demonstrate the need for an institutional partner like UNO to help develop Nebraska's workforce,"

Li says. "I take great pride in the fact that Omaha's urban university is doing just that and moving the state forward."

The program has added partnerships with some of the largest employers in the area. Two of Omaha's Fortune 500 companies, Union Pacific and Mutual of Omaha, were among the first to partner with UNO. They since have been joined by the Omaha Public Power District, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska, Werner Enterprises, First National Bank of Omaha and Physicians Mutual.

"These partnerships prove that organizations are committed to the growth and development of their employees which, in turn, will lead to growth and development within their organizations and our community," says Sacha Kopp, senior vice chancellor for academic affairs.

Many employees who have enrolled are pursuing advanced degrees in business such as an MBA or a master's in information technology, information systems and computer science. Participants are not limited to graduate degrees and also may pursue undergraduate degrees.

While the program boosts the workforce of UNO's partners, it also boosts graduate and undergraduate enrollment at UNO. Career Currency enrollment grew by nearly 50 percent compared to Fall 2020.

While any organization can offer tuition assistance, only those partnered with UNO through its Career Currency program can offer the benefit without employees paying tuition up front. Interested employees at participating organizations should speak with their Human Resources department to learn more about this opportunity.

— Brandon Bartling



# BIGHIRE



Adrian Dowell, UNO athletic director

## ADRIAN DOWELL NAMED UNO ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

UNO on Nov. 15 announced that Adrian Dowell would serve as its next vice chancellor of athletics. He began his duties Dec. 1.

Dowell, previously assistant vice president and associate athletic director for Creighton University athletics, was selected following a national search. UNO Chancellor Joanne Li, Ph.D., CFA, introduced Dowell during a press conference on UNO's campus alongside University of Nebraska System President Ted Carter, UNO coaches, student-athletes, and members of the UNO campus and Omaha communities.

"Adrian Dowell is a true Maverick," Chancellor Li said. "He is a dynamic individual who inspires a winning attitude in others and has proven to be an transformational presence in Division I athletics.

"I am thrilled for our Omaha community to get to know Adrian, and I look forward to celebrating the success our student-athletes will achieve as a result of his leadership."

Dowell joined Creighton's staff in 2014 as the assistant athletic director and senior director for development when he was tasked with the initial build and implementation of the Athletic Development Office. Since the development of



the office, Creighton's Athletic Department raised more than \$98 million in gift revenue supporting various strategic priorities.

Dowell was guiding the department's external affairs and overseeing the Athletic Development Office, including all fundraising efforts for the athletic department consisting of Jaybacker annual giving, endowment, capital and planned giving programs.

"It is an incredible honor and a privilege to lead this athletic department, and I am grateful to the search committee for this opportunity," Dowell said. "Greatness is the collective goal at UNO, and I believe there is a strong foundation in place that we can build on together to achieve that goal. I couldn't be more excited to get started."

**GREATNESS IS THE COLLECTIVE GOAL AT UNO, AND I BELIEVE THERE IS A STRONG FOUNDATION IN PLACE THAT WE CAN BUILD ON TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE THAT GOAL. I COULDN'T BE MORE EXCITED TO GET STARTED.**

Mike Kemp had been serving as UNO's interim athletic director since July. That followed the resignation of Trev Alberts as athletic director after 12 years at UNO. Alberts now is athletic director at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

Kemp has worked at UNO since 1996, when he became the Mavericks' first hockey coach. He coached for 12 years and was elevated to associate athletic director in 2009 then to senior associate athletic director for events and facilities in 2019.

Dowell previously served on the Mountaineer Athletic Club staff at West Virginia University, where he served the final three of his five years with the program as a major gifts officer and director of development. While at WVU, Dowell was an integral member of a team that recorded two then-consecutive record-breaking fundraising campaigns as part of WVU's transition to the Big 12 Conference. He also oversaw all aspects of the premium seating program.

Dowell holds a bachelor's degree in Health & Human Performance—Sport Management from Roanoke College, where he was captain on the men's basketball team. He also earned a Master's in Business Administration and a master's degree in Sport Administration from West Virginia University in 2011.

He is married to Stephanie (Kirby) Dowell, a former UNO soccer All-American and a 2010 UNO Athletic Hall of Fame inductee. The Dowells have three children: Lauren Grace, Paige and Adrian III.

President Carter commended UNO on the selection.

"I'm thrilled to welcome Adrian Dowell and his family to UNO and the University of Nebraska," Carter said. "He will be an outstanding leader for our student-athletes and the UNO community as a whole. Adrian understands that athletics are a vital part of campus life, and he brings a proven record of leadership and success to our university."

"I'm confident he will help the Mavericks compete at the highest levels both athletically and academically."

## OU/UNO ATHLETIC DIRECTORS SINCE WW II

Virgil Yelkin	1946-1972
Clyde Biggers	1972-1974
Don Leahy	1974-1985
Bobby Thompson	1985-1988
Gary Anderson	Interim
Bob Gibson	1989-1994
Gary Anderson	Interim
Dave Cox	1994-1995
Gary Anderson	Interim
Don Leahy	1995-1997
Bob Danenhauer	1997-2004
Bill Wakefield	Interim
David Herbster	2004-2006
Tom Frette	Interim
David Miller	2007-2009
Trev Alberts	2009-2021
Mike Kemp	Interim
Adrian Dowell	2021-current



### GETTING BIGGERS

Adrian Dowell might have big shoes to fill as the new Maverick AD, but the biggest shoes ever in the UNO Athletic director post were worn by Clyde W. ... (yes) Biggers.

Athletic Director from July 1972 to June 1974, Biggers was 6-foot-7 and 255 pounds. He replaced Virgil Yelkin as AD and was succeeded by Don Leahy.



Let's stretch the brain for a bit with  
a quick science lesson on ...  
a teaspoon of water.

Never thought much about it?  
Think about this — each teaspoon  
of water contains  $2^{1023}$  water  
molecules. And given that each  
water molecule is comprised of 3  
atoms, we can say there are more  
atoms in one teaspoon of water ...  
than there are teaspoons of water  
in the Atlantic Ocean.

Whoa — mind blown.

Here's another staggering factoid —  
best estimates suggest that at least 2.5  
quintillion bytes of data is produced every  
day. That's 2.5 followed by a staggering  
18 zeros.

"Everything we do today is leaving a track,"  
says Parvathi Chundi, professor of computer  
science at UNO and a data analytics  
expert. "Everything we do today is being  
recorded in some way, is being logged in  
some way."

Raw data — bits and bytes — by itself  
without purpose is white noise. The focus,  
though, should not only be on the amount  
of data, but the value that data can bring  
to organizations and how we can use this  
data to improve products and services.  
Quantitative and Qualitative.

UNO researchers are doing just that in a  
variety of ways, funded by various grants  
and supported by faculty, students and  
collaborations with other universities and  
healthcare systems across the country.

### SEEING THE WHOLE PICTURE

At UNO, Chundi's focus is in the field  
of healthcare, where she is developing  
software that can help ophthalmologists  
understand the progression of age-related  
macular degeneration (AMD) and other  
retinal diseases. She works with doctors  
from the Byers Eye Institute at Stanford,  
along with faculty in the department  
of ophthalmology at the University of  
Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC).

In the case of AMD, ophthalmologists use  
many different instruments to take pictures  
of the eye, and each picture tells a different  
story about the eye and how healthy it is.  
Once the disease progresses, vision has  
already weakened. Dr. Chundi's work



Parvathi Chundi  
Professor of Computer  
Science



Bryan Ricks  
UNO graduate student

uses enormous amounts of data from  
hundreds of patients that includes pictures  
and data from medical records to come up  
with predictions and correlations among  
data points. She builds the software that  
analyzes the data then predicts patient  
outcomes and is continually working on  
building the software in a way that it can  
crunch through the data at quicker speeds  
and come up with predictions that will help  
ophthalmologists.

"As we collect more data and as we analyze  
it — in the future we want to prevent AMD  
— but right now our focus is on prediction  
and correlations," Chundi says. "Visually, we  
cannot see something, but algorithms can  
see something. The idea is to actually see  
that you are going to have this vision loss  
much earlier, before it actually happens."

### A GROWTH IN KNOWLEDGE

Her work with big data also spans into  
another large project that involves  
researchers from five institutions across  
four states (Montana, Nebraska, Nevada  
and South Dakota) where they are looking  
for the growth of microbes and bacterial  
growth on materials.

"This project is really exciting and really  
different than what I have done before. This





## UNO FACULTY & STUDENTS MINE BITS AND BYTES TO HELP MAKE SENSE OF BIG MYSTERIES

by Lori Rice

project is actually trying to see bacterial growth on materials,” Chundi says. “The idea of the project is: can we help material scientists in the lab to find materials where the microbe growth can be mitigated? We are using big data; in this case the genetic data from the microbes, the research data that is being brought about in the lab by researchers, and also papers that are published by the researchers in the field.

“Combine all these things and can we actually synthesize information that material scientists can take to the lab and devise experiments to discover new properties of materials and new materials themselves.”

The implications of these studies run the gamut from identifying the degradation of oil pipelines, bridges, and even materials used in spaceships.

“The idea is that materials we are using in daily life are prone to deterioration and destruction, and can we build materials that help us stay safe?” Chundi says.

### BRIDGING A GAP

Bridges, in particular, are complex structures with mass amounts of data to assimilate and understand bridge health.

“Bridges have a problem,” says Brian Ricks, assistant professor of computer science, and founder of UNO’s Bricks Lab (formed from his name, Brian Ricks). “Along with a long list of critical infrastructure in our country, they tend to be old.

“And when things get old, they break down.”

Ricks has been studying big data for years in an effort to improve the safety of bridges across Nebraska and the country. Funded by a \$1,000,000 grant from the

National Science Foundation, the program is a combined effort with students and professors from UNO and UNL. The research is done out of the Peter Kiewit Institute, which houses UNO’s College of Information Science and Technology, along with the College of Engineering and Technology at UNL.

“It’s been a great collaboration,” Ricks says. “We are trying to use big data to help our engineers choose the next bridge to repair and where they should put their resources.”

The collapse of bridges over the years, such as the tragic catastrophic failure of the I-35W Mississippi River Bridge in August 2007 that killed 13 people, have served as a catalyst for a greater reliance on big data to help identify weaknesses in critical components of major bridge structures.

“You really want to avoid the catastrophic failures,” Ricks says. “In order to do that – you have thousands of bridges in your state and a limited budget – you have to be repairing the right bridge next so you don’t have the catastrophic failures.”

UNL students collect data on bridges in various ways including gluing sensors to bridges that measure all sorts of movements and fluctuations and by using drones that are able to get to places where it is difficult for a human to go and examine bridges for cracks. UNO students then take all of this data and create programs that display patterns and trends that can anticipate and identify bridge priority in terms of inspections and repairs.

Doctoral student Akshay Kale uses machine learning to look through inspection records on more than 15,000 bridges in Nebraska and uses predictive analysis to look at patterns found in the survey data.

“We hope that machine learning and going through all the big data will lead us to the bridges that require the most attention,” Kale says.

### BRICK BY BRICK

As part of the Bricks Lab, UNO graduate student Ryan Narducci works with Ricks and UNMC on a 3D hospital crowd simulation that virtually reenacts different scenarios and mass triage situations in emergency room settings.

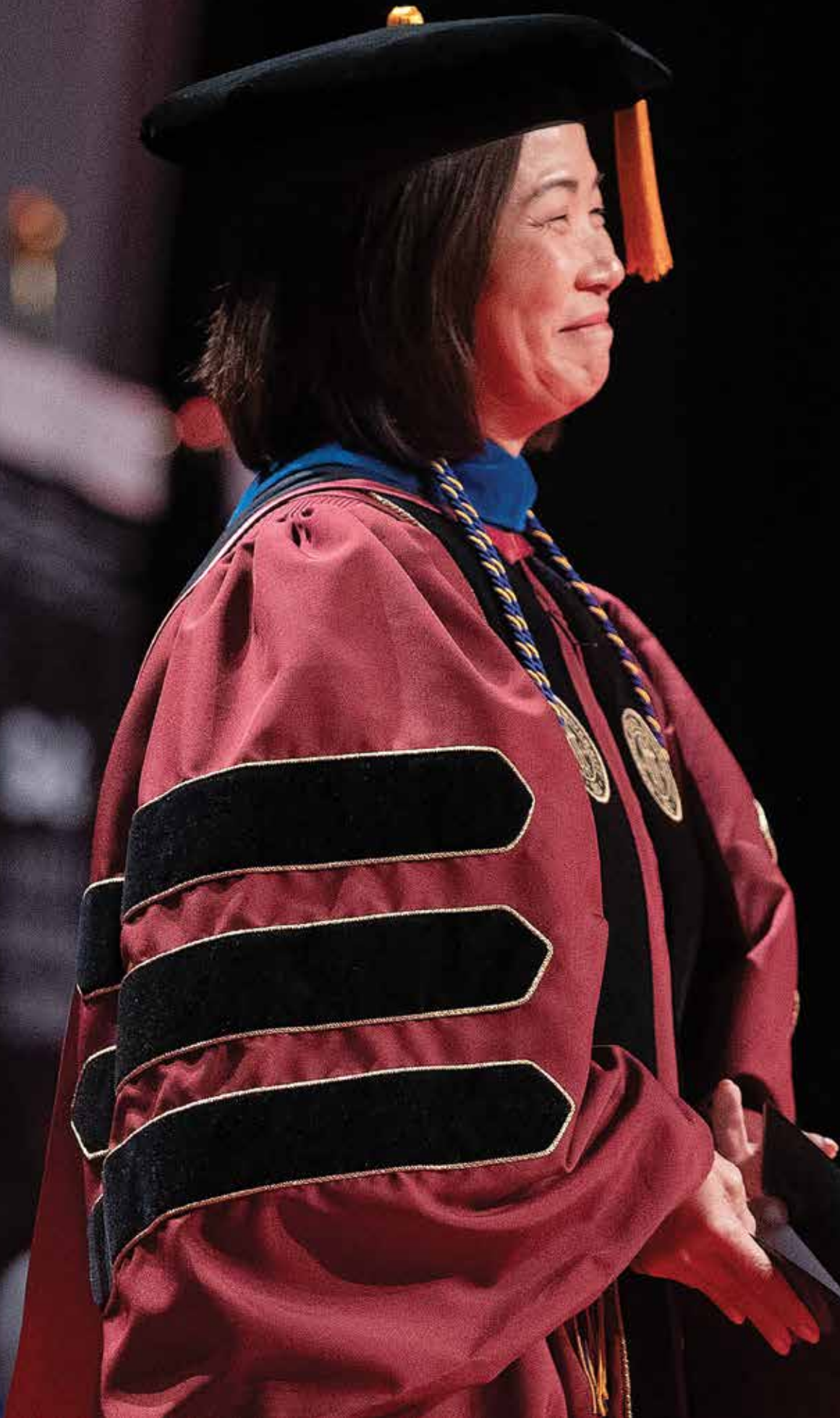
“It’s also a cost-efficient and safe way to examine if there are any changes you can make without having to actually make them at the hospital just yet,” Narducci says.

Using these simulations can improve the quality of patient care and safety, and improve flow through the emergency room.

“We have so much data we don’t know how to process it,” Kale says. “If a human had to do it by manually looking into, it’s not even possible to understand what the data is all about.”

With the use of these cutting edge technologies, these researchers and students are beginning to crack the code of big data in a predictive way which will be of great use to society.

Like making it possible to drink the ocean, one teaspoon at a time.



# B P



# BIG PASSION

JOANNE LI BRINGS  
BIG ENERGY AND  
A BIG VISION TO UNO  
AS THE UNIVERSITY'S  
16TH CHANCELLOR



Chancellor Li celebrates the beginning of a new semester at UNO's Student Convocation event, which was held at Tal Anderson Field in Maverick Park. More than 1,000 students, faculty, and staff were in attendance.



Dropping the ceremonial puck is a time honored tradition at Maverick hockey games. Chancellor Li joined University of Nebraska System President Ted Carter for the occasion as the Mavs took on Miami University earlier this season.



Chancellor Li joined former Secretary of Defense and UNO Alumnus Chuck Hagel in a visit to UNO's Chuck Hagel Archives collection.

Joanne Li, Ph.D., CFA, has hit the ground running since officially becoming UNO Chancellor on July 1, 2021. From commencements to convocations; from athletic competitions to campus dialogues, Chancellor Li has jumped feet first into her role and championing UNO's Maverick Spirit. These are just a few highlights from Chancellor Li's first 100 days as a Maverick.



As one of UNO's first public events following remote operations, Chancellor Li welcomed UNO employees back at a campus forum this past August.





Having a fun, welcoming campus is important to Chancellor Li. The UNO Child Care Center's annual Trick r' Treat parade is just one example of how the campus displays its Maverick 'Spirit.'



In her first commencement, and the first August commencement held at UNO in over a decade, Chancellor Li helped celebrate the class of 2021.



Listening to students and understanding their needs is priority number one for Chancellor Li. "Cup With Jo" – a regular sit-down opportunity for students to share their ideas, concerns, and priorities, as well as ask questions – was launched early on as a key campus initiative.



Well, actually there are lots of big ideas, as you might expect at an institution of higher learning.

In 2019, though, UNO began a Strategic Planning process to identify the biggest of those ideas, inviting faculty, staff, students and community partners to join an ongoing dialogue about UNO's continued maturation into a premier metropolitan public research university.

The Strategic Plan centers on four goals:

- Student Centeredness
- Academic Excellence
- Community Engagement; and,
- Institutional Quality.

The UNO Big Ideas process was created as a planning structure for Goals 2 & 3 of the UNO Strategic Plan — Academic Excellence and Community Engagement. Input was sought to prioritize investment in areas of campus strength and where there are opportunities to enhance scholarly, research and creative activities at UNO.

Following a six-month process engaging various audiences, UNO deans recommended six cross-campus themes for the UNO Big Ideas:

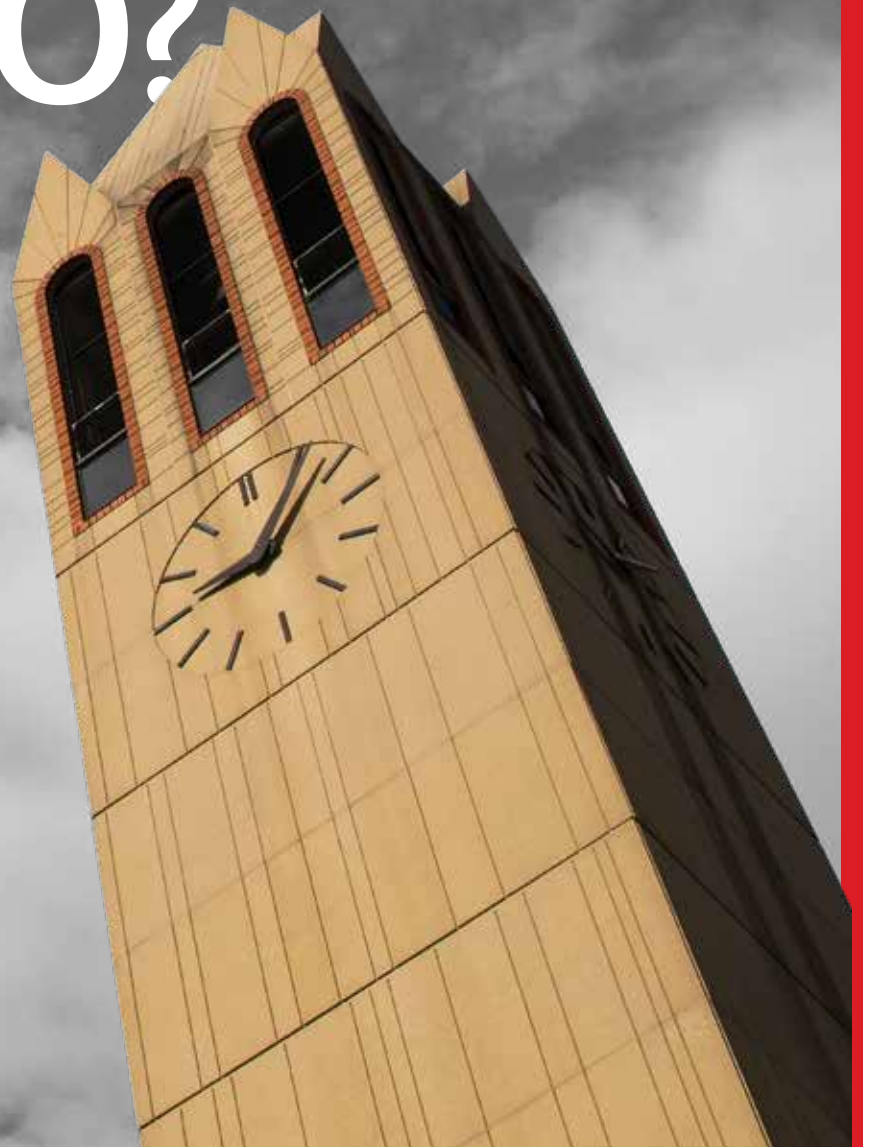
- Transforming Wellness and Aging Through Business, Informatics and Gerontology
- Samuel Bak Institute
- Security and Intelligence Studies
- STEM TRAIL Center
- Ted Kooser Center for Health Humanities
- Biomechanical Rehabilitation and Manufacturing

The six themes span all the colleges, the Graduate School, and the Criss Library. Through them, UNO will further advance student opportunities and community partnerships, and will attract philanthropic and sponsored revenues.

The Big Ideas process provides for regular opportunities for assessment, refinement, and improvement. Annually, UNO will hear progress reports on the Big Ideas, track progress towards concrete metrics, celebrate successes and adapt as circumstances require.

Brief summaries of each Big Idea follow on the ensuing pages.

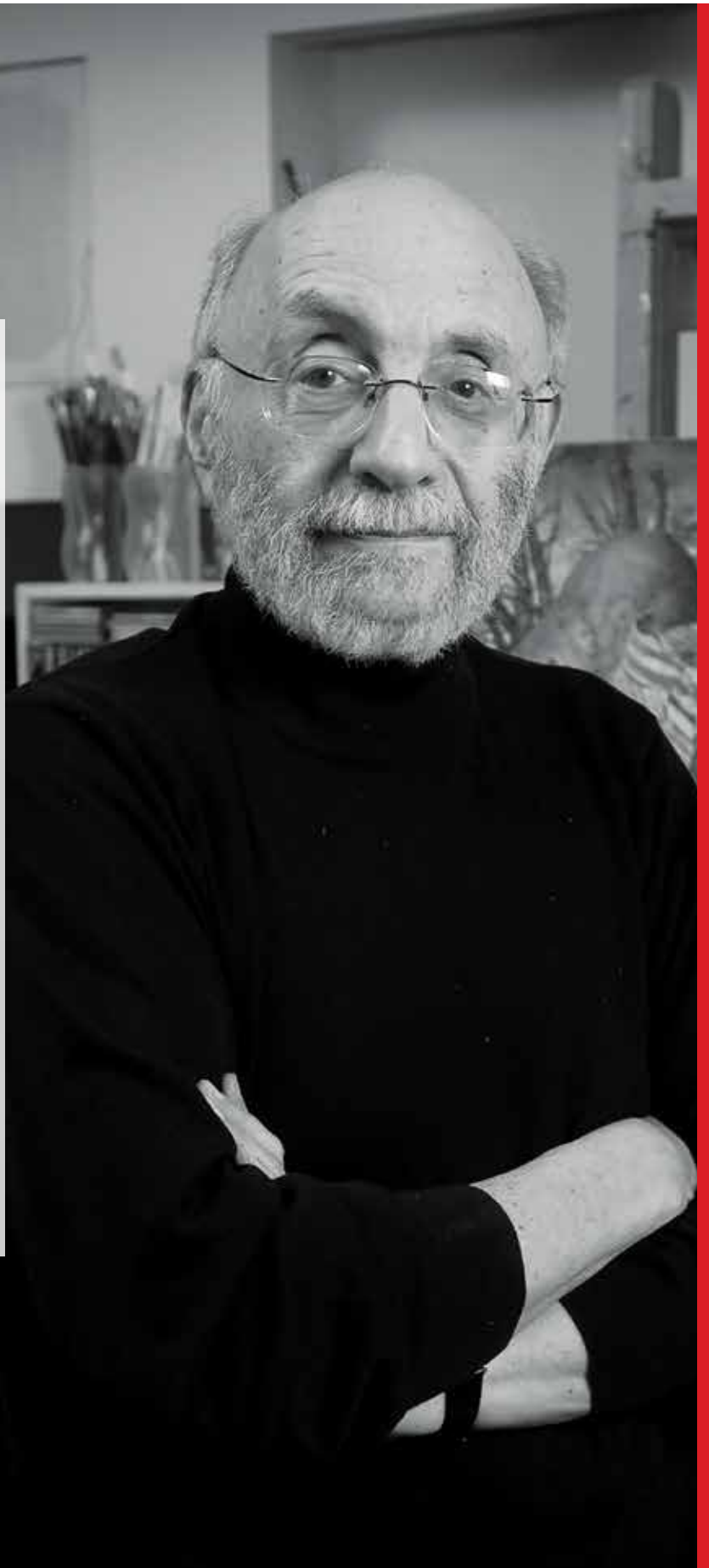
# WHAT'S THE **BIG IDEA** AT UNO?



## **SAMUEL BAK INSTITUTE**

Using the art and life of world-renowned artist and Holocaust survivor Samuel Bak, the museum will awaken the community to the richness and diversity of the human experience and invite curiosity and collaborative learning through active engagement with ideas, artworks and exhibitions. Programming on campus and in the surrounding community will be central, tailored to foster formative connections between the art of Samuel Bak and students of all ages. Critical to its role as a teaching museum will be direct experiential opportunities for UNO students and faculty to participate in integral aspects of museum/archiving practices.

With the seed funding provided by the UNO Big Ideas process, we will recruit an Executive Director who will develop and implement the Bak Institute's strategic direction, work with external consultants and campus leadership on space planning, foster faculty collaboration on curriculum development, and develop concepts for campus and community engagement built on such models as the Wellin Museum at Hamilton College, the Tang Museum at Skidmore College, Pozen Family Center for Human Rights at the University of Chicago, or the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation in Jackson, Mississippi.





## TRANSFORMING WELLNESS AND AGING

The Business of Healthcare initiative facilitate faculty and students in cutting-edge research that brings together methods and theoretical perspectives from business, informatics and gerontology in order to enhance health and wellness in the aging U.S. population, as well as provide students and professionals with education and training that effectively prepares them for long-term careers in health and aging related fields.

UNO's Business, Informatics and Gerontology faculty, in collaboration with colleagues from UNMC, local and regional health providers, partner universities, and public sector agencies will provide health- and wellness-related research, education and training at the confluence of business, informatics and gerontology. Major advancements in bioinformatics — including improvements in modeling, data structures, connected databases, and analytic techniques — have increased the potential for more effective, evidence-based provider decision making in the health care and aging arena.

Seed funding from the UNO Big Ideas process will be used to hold a summit event that will encourage additional university colleagues and potential community partners to bring their expertise to bear on this effort. Funding will also be utilized to establish a pilot research grant program, hire graduate assistants and postdocs, develop for-credit and non-credit educational curricula, hold a health and aging career fair, and provide faculty-in-residence and summer research support opportunities.



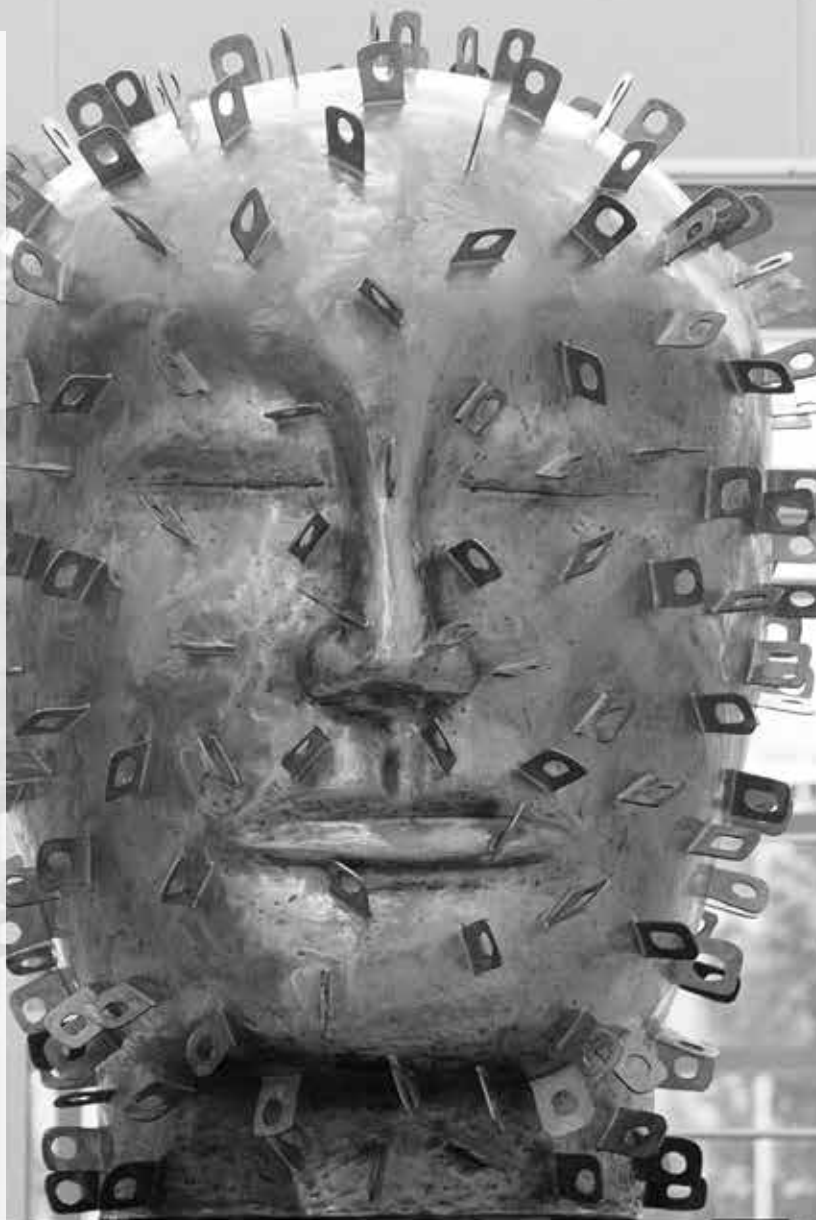
## SECURITY AND INTELLIGENCE

The collective threats to national and global security are complex and continually evolving. These threats include not only competing with other nations and non-state actors (e.g., al Qaida) but also countering weapons of mass destruction programs, cyber-attacks and infectious disease outbreaks.

The three over-arching goals of this Security and Intelligence big idea initiative are to

- Provide leading security and intelligence research by building on existing strengths and interests of UNO faculty and students AND by facilitating collaborative opportunities with other NU colleagues and external partners
- Expand workforce development pipelines for national security enterprise entities through on-campus and online degree programs, certificates, and professional training for students and professionals
- Address security and intelligence challenges facing local, regional, national, and global policymakers.

With the seed funding from the UNO Big Ideas process, UNO will develop a faculty cluster hire spanning the disciplines across the collaborating colleges, support postdoctoral fellowships and graduate assistant ships in the relevant disciplines, develop online curricula in cyber security, and support an internal grants process for UNO faculty summer support. Faculty will also explore a cross-college doctoral program in security and intelligence studies.



## STEM TRAIL CENTER

The STEM Teaching, Research and Inquiry-based Learning (TRAIL) Center seeks to transform how learners of all ages engage with science, technology, engineering and math. The goal is to enhance STEM literacy by increasing access to high quality opportunities for learners to cultivate their interest and expertise in these fields, thereby broadening the pipeline to cultivate a diverse workforce ready to meet the changing industry needs both regional and nationally.

UNO's recent investment in the center as a UNO Big Idea will provide the infrastructure needed to rapidly accelerate opportunities for stakeholders across campus, the city and the region.

High impact STEM teaching practices like experiential and inquiry-based learning will be featured. Discipline-based research and training both at UNO and with

partners in the community will enhance student success at the university as well as in PK-12 classrooms throughout the region.

By collecting evidence and rigorously evaluating the impact of our various activities, UNO aims to develop tools and techniques that are of value to both the research community and classroom teachers.

With seed funding from the UNO Big Ideas process, the center will support graduate assistants, grants coordination, operations, programming for speakers/seminars, and one-time contributions to explore a space to house the STEM Trail Center. This opportunity serves as our launch point to welcome additional partners to the table to support renovation and expansion needs surrounding STEM programming to dynamically pivot and address the needs of our students at UNO.







## **TED KOOSER CENTER FOR HEALTH HUMANITIES**

In 2019, UNO and UNMC inaugurated the Ted Kooser Center for the Health Humanities, named in honor of the Nebraska native and Poet Laureate-emeritus of the United States.

UNO has a pride of place in the health humanities, having formed in 2015 the Minor in Medical Humanities (valuable to students who are enrolled in multiple pre-health tracks) and the Major in Medical Humanities (BA/BS) in 2019. Faculty developing this program span the Colleges of Arts & Sciences and the College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media, with close collaboration with faculty from UNMC.

With the seed funding from the UNO Big Ideas process, UNO will build faculty and student research and creative activities to form a nationally-recognized center of

excellence in health humanities that builds on our partnerships across UNMC and the Omaha metro area.

Seed funding will enable recruitment of additional faculty in the humanities and the fine arts, fund a competitive faculty summer support process for UNO faculty to explore their research interests, provide conference and workshop travel, and fund student experiential learning or service learning opportunities at UNMC or the many nonprofit and healthcare related partners in the Omaha metro area. Students and faculty alike will contribute to new knowledge and the betterment of our community.

Faculty will also explore a cross-college doctoral program in security and intelligence studies.

## BIOMECHANICAL REHABILITATION AND MANUFACTURING

The mission of the Biomechanical Rehabilitation and Manufacturing Initiative (BRMI) will be to improve the quality of life of medically underserved populations through the offering of comprehensive rehabilitation services and the creation of low-cost medical devices for our local, national, and international communities.

This Big Idea proposes a rehabilitation research initiative that pairs the research performed at UNO with clinical expertise in injury prevention and rehabilitation throughout Omaha to bolster UNO's academic excellence and community engagement. The BRMI will also provide an ideal platform to expose students from diverse majors to hands-on research and entrepreneurship type of activities for the implementation of rehabilitation services and the development of new low-cost biomedical devices and related biotechnologies.

Funding for the BRMI would provide the necessary infrastructure to coordinate and implement impactful clinical trial research using the designs and interventions discovered through UNO's collaborative research. The BRMI will support new collaborative initiatives between UNO's departments and colleges in both research and curriculum, providing greater access and education to our students. Globally, BRMI will continue to establish and grow national and international partnerships with rehabilitation sites and health-care device companies through UNO's institutional support.










# Seth & Austin's *EXCELLENT* Pandemic Adventure



TWO SOPHOMORES DECIDED TO HIT THE ROAD (SAFELY) DURING THE EARLY DAYS OF THE PANDEMIC. NOW, 24,000 MILES LATER, THEY HAVE TWO STATES IN THEIR REARVIEW MIRROR AND MAY JUST BE LOOKING FOR THEIR NEXT DESTINATION.



## VARNER ON VALENTINE AND LONG PINE

6

## ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SPOTS IN THE STATE.

When the pandemic moved classes to Zoom halfway through the spring semester in 2020, UNO sophomores Seth Varner and Austin Schneider headed back to their hometown of Wahoo, Nebraska, to regroup.

Between classes, they picked up a few hours at the local Dairy Queen, where they've both worked since high school. And in these strange times they pondered what they'd do for entertainment for the foreseeable future.

Varner, a business administration major, had an idea.

"It had always been kind of like a childhood dream of mine go out and visit all the towns in Nebraska," he says. "So I got to thinking about it, you know, since everything is shut down, Austin and I could hop in a car and go visit these towns."

To be clear, this wouldn't be a handful of places. Nebraska has 531 incorporated hamlets, villages, towns and cities.

Schneider, also a business major, remembers his initial reaction was "Are we crazy?"

But he was more than game. He responded with an immediate "Let's do it."

Before they knew it, Visit 531 Nebraska was born. Little did the longtime friends know this endeavor would make them celebrities of sorts, at home and away, as well as enthusiastic advocates for tourism.

**DAY TRIPPERS**

Setting their itinerary for the trip had to revolve around school. So Varner and Schneider made Wahoo their home base and planned to first conquer the eastern part of the state via a series of day trips.

Supplied with plenty of hand sanitizer and disinfectant, soon they were hitting 15 or 20 towns a day, setting out at 7 or 8 in the morning and returning home after dark.

Often, they had a traveling companion in tow. Their roommate and fellow UNO classmate, Jack McGonigal, frequently joined them on the road. Other times, a friend or family member would tag along.

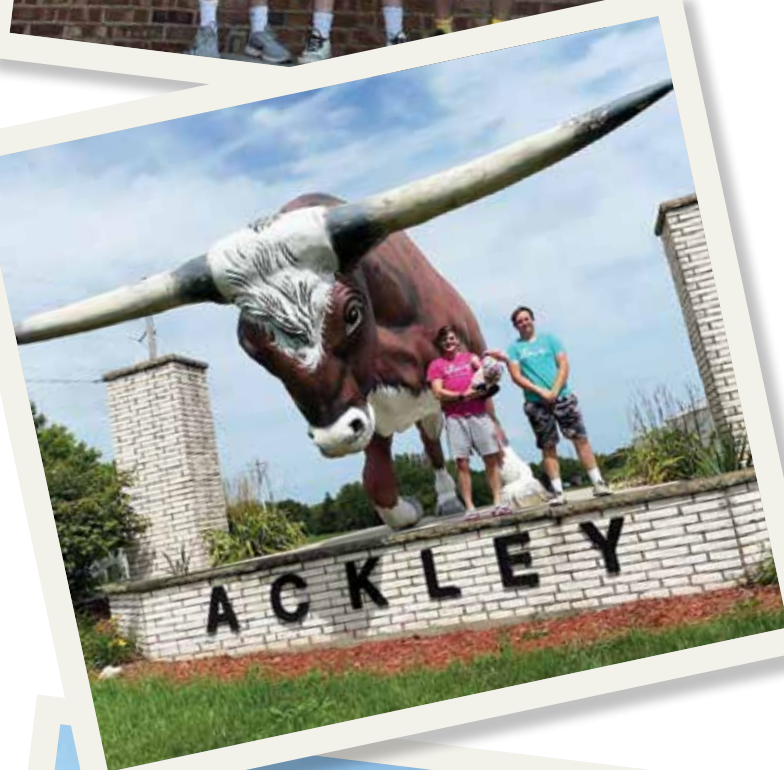
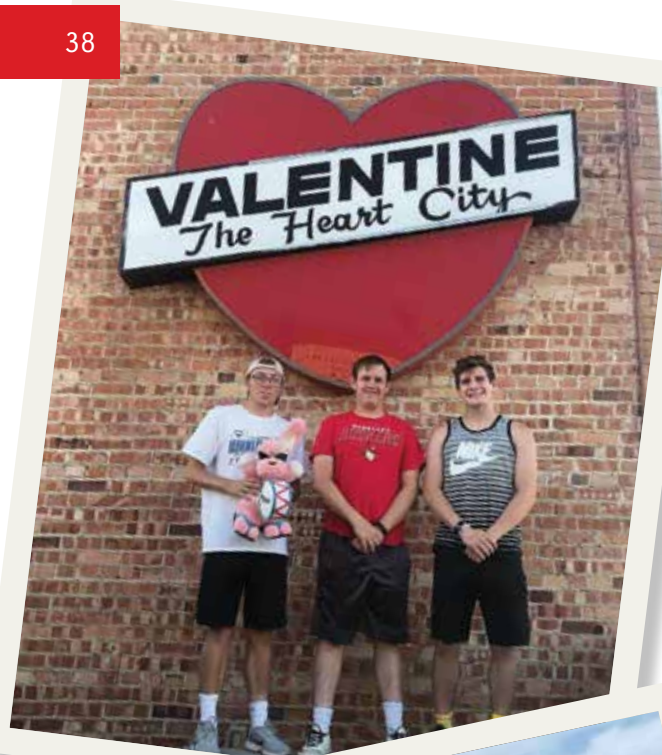
**GETTING SOCIAL**

Creating a social media page to share their travels was an afterthought.

"We always had the idea take our picture with a welcome sign, just to prove we had been there," Varner says. "But we were only going to make a little scrapbook at the end of it — 'Yup, this is the thing we did all summer.'"

As more people wanted to see where they'd been and where they were going, they created a Facebook page. Within a couple of weeks, the account was blowing up, says Varner.

The site quickly became a place not only to document their experiences and provide some trivia, but also for followers to comment on their own memories.



“It just became this whole thing where people wanted to let us know, ‘When are you going to be in this particular town?’ or ‘Would you like free admission to this museum?’” Varner says. “It was just absurd how quickly everything blew up and changed.”

### THE KINDNESS OF STRANGERS

In July 2020, the travelers headed west on an 8-day, 4,500-mile, 190-town trek.

They zigzagged through that part of the state twice, from the southwest corner to Grand Island, to the Scottsbluff area and the Sandhills, and back up to Chadron over to the Norfolk area.

A GoFundMe site they’d set up earlier helped fund gas, food and other expenses. Frequently, though, they accepted the kindness of strangers — many of whom have since become friends — to offer a donation, a free meal or a complimentary stay in their town.

By summer’s end, Varner and Schneider had racked up about 10,000 miles. They saved their hometown of Wahoo for their 531st stop, where they were treated to a parade and were presented with the key to the city by the mayor.

### WHERE NEXT?

After arriving home, Schneider says, “Countless people asked, ‘So what state is next?’ We thought it how fun it would be to do a whole another state and see what it has to offer.”

They only needed to look a little east for inspiration. This past summer, they set off on their next challenge: visiting all 930 incorporated Iowa towns. In late September, they rolled into Carter Lake with a total of 14,000 more miles on their odometers and another mission accomplished.

And though it’s too soon to tell if they’ll take on a third state next year — they’ll be going into their senior year and expect to be busy — it’s a definite possibility.

### GENEROSITY AND HOSPITALITY

After graduation, Schneider hopes to work in the medical sales industry or in the coffee business (he loves the stuff). Varner has been inspired by their travels to start his own travel agency one day.

Both said they’ve been continually impressed by people’s kindness and pride in their towns.

“The way that Nebraskans and Iowans both welcomed two college boys into any community, whether that be a town of 50, 1,000 or 100,000, they all had the same thing in common — generosity,” says Schneider.

For Varner, “it’s the hospitality. We can’t believe the amount of support we’ve gotten. In the end, we’re two college kids going around visiting towns. Everyone is full of excitement and they want to tell us as much as they possibly can because they have that hometown pride. And it shows in every single one of these communities.”

### VARNER ON PLAINVIEW

“THEY CALL THEMSELVES THE ‘KLOWN KAPITAL’ BECAUSE THEY HAVE THE WORLD’S LARGEST COLLECTION OF CLOWN DOLLS. EVEN THOUGH THEY WERE CLOSED, THEY MADE SURE WE GOT IN THE BUILDING AND THEY TREATED US TO A MEAL AT A LOCAL RESTAURANT.”



### READ MORE ABOUT IT

Interested in learning more about the places Seth Varner and Austin Schneider have discovered? Now you can get the highlights of their trips — and learn a little about the towns they’ve visited — in book form.

“Visit 531 Nebraska: Our Journey to Every Incorporated Town in the State” was published in 2020. “Visit 939 Iowa” followed with expected arrival in late November.

Self-published, formatted and written by Varner, each book includes facts and stories about each town as well as QR codes (created by Schneider) that link readers to an online photo album that’s continually updated.

**Visit531Nebraska.com or Visit930Iowa.com**



# BIG FUTURE FO



The finished 20-foot x 20-foot home prototype was built on Metropolitan Community College's campus



Caption needed.

APART FROM A SLIGHT DIFFERENCE IN THEIR BANK ACCOUNTS, BING CHEN AND ELON MUSK SHARE PLENTY IN COMMON. A LOVE FOR ENGINEERING, SOLAR POWER AND SPACE, FOR INSTANCE. BOTH ARE INVENTORS AND PATENT HOLDERS.

AND BOTH SHARE A VISION — A FUTURE FILLED WITH TINY, ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY HOUSES.

Musk, who resides in a 20-foot x 20-foot home on the SpaceX campus in Boca Chica, Texas, envisions communities on Mars made up of similar tiny homes, Chen, a UNL engineering professor who teaches primarily at UNO, has a more down-to-earth vision.

With a rapidly growing population of people 65 and older, the nation is facing a rising shortage of homes for seniors who want to live near family and avoid relocating to a nursing home or assisted living center. That need, coupled with increasing environmental and energy concerns, points to a promising future for what Chen calls “grannie pods,” tiny, portable, self-sustaining houses furnished for aging parents and set up on a family member’s property.

“When it comes to improving the quality of life for seniors, there needs to be alternatives,” says Chen, who has taught in the University of Nebraska system since 1967. “There is a segment of the population that wants to have their parents close by in a safe, secure environment.”

Small, sustainable, portable homes that are fully compliant with the Americans’ With Disabilities Act will offer them that opportunity.

## FROM VISION TO REALITY

Over the past two years, Chen, along with students from Metropolitan Community College, have taken the first steps to making his vision a reality. Earlier this year, this multidisciplinary team completed construction of a

# PORT TINY HOMES

400-square-foot prototype of a sustainable, ADA-compliant home that one day could be mass produced and easily transported almost anywhere in the country.

The construction students framed the home, created the floor, erected side walls, wired the home for electricity and installed heating, ventilation and air conditioning. The finished 20-foot x 20-foot home, which was built on MCC's campus, will be moved on a flatbed trailer to a location near UNO's Baxter Arena this coming spring.

Once at UNO, the house and its many high-tech features and furnishings will be rigorously tested by students and researchers representing a variety of specialties, including electrical and computer engineering, architecture, civil engineering and gerontology.

While Chen envisions small, sustainable houses such as this prototype serving as safe homes for seniors, he says they could fill many other needs, such as homes for retirees looking to downsize, shelters for the homeless and housing for disabled veterans.

## GRANT-FUNDED

The prototype was funded with a \$150,000 grant from the Nebraska Environmental Trust Fund, a \$30,000 grant from Omaha Public Power District and a \$10,000 grant from the Metropolitan Utilities District. Among its many leading-edge features are hail-resistant solar panels from Taiwan, an insulated door built in Germany, and advanced energy-efficient windows from Colorado. The result is a living space that can be efficiently heated by an energy output equivalent to 16 birthday candles.

OPPD utility engineers shared their expertise to help contribute to the home's energy efficiency. The UNO researchers will share their test results and findings with OPPD for use in other projects.

"When we built this building, it was meant to hit a home run out of the park when it came to thermal performance, energy efficiency and sustainability," Chen says.

## WATER-CONSCIOUS

In addition to the many energy-saving features, it is also equipped with cisterns and filters for collecting and converting rainwater into safe drinking water, a feature that Chen predicts will become increasingly important as large portions of the country struggle with water conservation.

Chen says he envisions a water recycling system that will one day repurpose water collected from sinks and showers for use irrigating gardens and flushing toilets.

Because these houses will be homes to an aging population, they also must be equipped with features that will make them safe for people with disabilities. UNO gerontology Professor Julie Boron and doctoral student Mollie George will conduct a range of tests to ensure the home is comfortable, convenient and secure.

This testing will include the effectiveness of automated windows, beds and appliances, "fall-and-call" technology that will automatically notify family and emergency medical personnel and even unlock the door for rescuers if the inhabitant falls and needs assistance.

A variety of floor coverings will also be tested for comfort and safety. Lighting schemes will be studied to determine their impact on mood and comfort level. Every detail, including the kitchen and bathroom cabinets, will be scrutinized to determine the best accessibility for people in wheelchairs.

Chen and the researchers will also conduct tests to simulate power outages to ensure the solar panels have collected and stored enough power to keep vital technology operating in the event of a power outage.

The prototype was intentionally built using high-end technology and energy-efficient materials. The end result is what Chen calls a "small house on steroids." If a person chose to purchase the same-sized house equipped with the same technology, they could expect to pay \$150,000, a price that is comparable to what some small houses are selling for on the West Coast.

The price of the house can be reduced by substituting features with lower-cost alternatives, Chen says. Unlike the expense of a nursing home or an assisted living center, the cost of a small sustainable home can be easily recouped by selling it and having it relocated when it is no longer needed.



**Bing Chen**  
UNL engineering professor who  
teaches primarily at UNO



# BIG BET

*By Greg Kozol*

LOOKING TO INVEST  
IN CRYPTOCURRENCY?  
IT'S A GAMBLE, SAYS  
ONE UNO PROFESSOR



Looking to score big with an investment in bitcoin or other form of cryptocurrency?

A trip to Las Vegas might serve you just as well.

At least that's what Olivier Maisondieu Laforge seems to intimate. An associate professor of finance, banking and real estate at UNO, Maisondieu Laforge is asked frequently about cryptocurrencies.

He usually provides a simple response.

"I generally tell them, 'Are you ready to lose it all?'" he says.

"If you're comfortable with losing it, and you know this is pretty much a gamble, and you act like it's a gamble, then go ahead and do it.

"But if it's your paycheck, I would say no."

## DISRUPTION IS COMING

Maisondieu Laforge teaches in a field that's on the cusp of technology-generated disruption — sort of like what Amazon did to retail commerce or Facebook and Twitter to traditional media. He can look in his classroom and see students who may rarely hold a dollar bill in their own hands, and not because they're impoverished.

"Almost all of their money transactions, if not all of them, will be digital," he says. "There won't be any paper money handed around. There will be a major global cryptocurrency."

Maisondieu Laforge says the topic of cryptocurrency arises regularly in his classes and in general conversation. El Salvador made news late in the summer when it made bitcoin its national currency, becoming the first nation to adopt the cryptocurrency as legal tender.

For now, according to Maisondieu Laforge, cryptocurrency remains more of a speculative investment than a way to make day-do-day purchases and transactions. He bought \$700 in cryptocurrency himself out of professional interest. It grew to about \$1,200.

"It's not going to change my lifestyle," he says. "It is unlike anything that's come before. It has a very low correlation with any existing asset pool. They thought it would be like gold, but then they went in opposite directions."

## YOU'RE ALREADY USING DIGITAL CURRENCY

In a sense, we all use digital currency every day.

"At the end of the month, your bank account goes up by a number and then you push a few buttons and it goes down and your mortgage gets paid and your bills get paid," Maisondieu Laforge says. "You don't actually see any paper."

The biggest difference with something like bitcoin, he says, is who gets to print it and why. Traditionally, central banks and governments controlled the issuance of money, meaning decisions on how much to put into circulation were made by human beings who seek a balance between price stability and economic growth.

"That's the good news," he says. "What's the bad news? Humans get very excited about printing money and then you end up with Venezuela."

A country that the International Monetary Fund in October estimated would have an inflation rate of 5,500% by the end of 2021.

The difference with bitcoin is that it's not backed by a central bank and the supply can't be increased or decreased depending on the prevailing economic winds. The supply is tied to the development of the computer program, or with bitcoin through a process called "mining" in which new bitcoin is released into circulation. That makes cryptocurrency less adaptable to the long-term changes in economic growth.

That's something that will have to be addressed to make cryptocurrency more than a niche product or novelty.

"In the short run, it's a good thing," Maisondieu Laforge says. "In the long run, it's a terrible thing. Because if I look out over the next 10 years, I am concerned about crazy people overprinting money. But if I look out over the next 200 years, the economy will grow, we will need a larger money supply and whatever digital current exists today will not fill that need."

## HERE TO STAY

Maisondieu Laforge believes digital currency will be around for a long time, although he's not as sure about bitcoin. It's possible, he says, said that bitcoin is to cryptocurrency what Myspace was to social media: one of the first but not necessarily the best or the one that endures.

"When it was created, it was a wonderful proof of concept, but it has built-in flaws," he says.

One problem, he said, is the amount of electricity and processing power it takes to compute and verify a transaction. The other problem with bitcoin, he adds, is the anonymity associated with the currency.

"It sounds great until you forget your password," he says. "If I had my bitcoin wallet and I forgot my password, I'm broke. If I have money in my local bank and I forgot my password, I get a new password."

Right now, 1,000 different cryptocurrencies are trying to find the right formula, from bitcoin with its public ledger known as blockchain, to stablecoins, which are a type of cryptocurrency pegged to fiat currencies like the dollar or backed by certain assets.

Both have shown extreme volatility, with Security and Exchange Commission Chairman Gary Gensler comparing stablecoins to poker chips and raising the specter of systemic financial risk if there's a rush to redeem them, a sort of crypto bank run.

There's a lot to sort out, and a need for a buyer-beware mentality, but Maisondieu Laforge says the future of money won't look like the past or even like it does right now for those in his classroom.

"Paper will become one of those antique things that you show people, that you used to trust this paper as money," he says. "They'll be like, 'why?'"

Did you know UNO once was literally Omaha's university? Starting in 1931, then-Omaha University was one of the few municipal universities in the country.

Yet UNO is part of the Big O like never before, as illustrated in this Big Map showing the ways the university is deeply ingrained throughout Omaha.

A helmet represents how student athletic trainers help diagnose and treat concussions among area high school athletes; a research





There are 70 points plotted, but we could have filled the map with hundreds more examples.

To get a printed copy, request one in an email to [unoalumni@unoalumni.org](mailto:unoalumni@unoalumni.org) and we'll send it your way while supplies last!



- 1 University of Nebraska at Omaha
- 2 Maverick Monument
- 3 Thompson Alumni Center
- 4 UNO/Community Arena
- 5 UNO Chili Greens Dome
- 6 National Guard Armory
- 7 Children's Hospital
- 8 Benson West Elementary
- 9 Benson's Pizza Shoppe
- 10 Forest Lawn Cemetery
- 11 Adams Park
- 12 Adams Park Senior Center
- 13 UNO's Original Home—24th & Pratt
- 14 King Science Middle School
- 15 Carter Lake
- 16 Eppley Airfield
- 17 Blackburn Alternative Program
- 18 Siena/Francis House
- 19 TD Ameritrade Park
- 20 Gifford Park
- 21 Turner Park
- 22 University of Nebraska Medical Center
- 23 Omaha Central High School
- 24 Holland Performing Arts Center
- 25 Lutheran Home
- 26 Douglas County Correctional Center
- 27 Omaha Police Headquarters
- 28 KANEKO-UNO Library
- 29 VA Medical Center
- 30 Hanscom Park
- 31 Missouri River
- 32 Lauritzen Gardens
- 33 Henry Doorly Zoo
- 34 El Museo Latino
- 35 Marlin Briscoe Way
- 36 USS Omaha
- 37 Missouri River Research Station
- 38 Offutt Air Force Base
- 39 Fontenelle Forest
- 40 Bryan High School
- 41 Midlands Hospital
- 42 La Vista's Thompson Creek
- 43 Ralston High School
- 44 Werner Park
- 45 SAC Museum
- 46 Railroad
- 47 Black Elk Elementary
- 48 Millard Public Schools
- 49 Dyna-Tech Aviation
- 50 Project Harmony
- 51 FBI Building
- 52 Local Union 464
- 53 Zorinsky Lake
- 54 Montclair Elementary and Senior Center
- 55 Elkhorn South High School
- 56 Elkhorn River
- 57 First National Bank Branch
- 58 Lawrence Youngman Lake
- 59 Sogeti
- 60 Boys Town
- 61 Burke High School
- 62 TD Ameritrade
- 63 Douglas County Sheriff's Office
- 64 ZIP Code 68116
- 65 Indian Creek Golf Course
- 66 Glacier Creek Preserve
- 67 Northwest High School
- 68 Cunningham Lake
- 69 American Legacy Complex
- 70 Another Grad in Omaha...Texas



# CLASS NOTES

What's new in your life? Bring your former classmates up to date on new jobs, promotions, travel, achievements and more. Send a Class Note online at [unoalumni.org/unoclassnote](http://unoalumni.org/unoclassnote). Or, write us at UNO Magazine Class Notes, 2285 So. 67th St., Suite 200, Omaha, NE 68106. Include Name, Class Year, Degree, Phone, Address and Email.

## 69 CAPTAIN JAMES F. BARD JR. (BGS)

attended what he believes to be his last military reunion.

At 84, he is the third youngest in his unit, the 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Wing, which deactivated in November 1957.

[jimbardj@comcast.net](mailto:jimbardj@comcast.net)



## 71 MONTE LEROY ANDERSON (BA)

thinks about the importance of his degree. He left his business job and dedicated his life to becoming a medical doctor after getting married and having three children. He graduated from the University of Nebraska Medical College in May 1976 and was chair, department of gastroenterology and hepatology at the Arizona facility. He is enjoying retirement in Prescott, Arizona.

[anderson.montemd@gmail.com](mailto:anderson.montemd@gmail.com)

**WILLIAM W. VICKERY JR. (BGS)** is enjoying retirement in Helena, Alabama.

**LARRY FRANKLYN FRUM (BS)** writes, "Calling on all former students of Professor Ernie Gorr to contribute to the Ernie Gorr Talent Scholarship, which is an undergraduate

scholarship support for students majoring in recreation and leisure students. His excellent program at UNO shaped my future and helped me to become a municipal and industrial recreation professional and an executive director of a Boys and Girls Club. While not staying in that profession, I've been retired since 2015 after a second career as a contracts and procurement manager for multiple international and domestic engineering and construction projects, and a public transit agency."

[larryfrum@gmail.com](mailto:larryfrum@gmail.com)



## 74 BARBARA FREEMAN (BS, MS)

wrote her first non-fiction book, "Black History." Published in July

2021, it is written for third through sixth grade students. The book contains 12 biographies of famous men and women of color. The book is available at Laredo Publishing Company and on Amazon.

**77 JOHN MARTIN FEY (BS)** is excited to have finished writing two books earlier this year. The first is titled, "Who in the Hell is Buddy Hunter? (And what is he doing in my bed?)" It's the story of South Omaha native Buddy Hunter, who spent 13 years in the Boston Red Sox organization as a player and later manager of the Pawtucket PawSox. The second book is titled, "The Riverboat Gambler: Still Dealing After All These Years." It's written by Sandy Buda (as told to him) and includes stories from his playing and coaching years at Kansas and Kansas State. The book also covers his 12 years as head coach of the UNO football team. Both books are available on Amazon for purchase. Fey is also wrapping up a book about his 20-year career at the Omaha World-Herald, which he is hoping will be published by mid-August.

[jmfey1952@gmail.com](mailto:jmfey1952@gmail.com)

## 82 KEITH ALLAN HANSEN (BA)

retired from the U.S. Air Force in 2009. He is now working as a medical support assistant in the labor and delivery department at the Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio Texas. He is still performing the trumpet with the heart of Texas Concert Band. His hobby is traveling and scuba diving (his highest rating is divemaster). His favorite dive location is Puerto Galera, Philippines.



**83 VIV (BS '83, MS '86) AND JOHN (BS '84, MS '85) EWING** were honored on Sept. 23 by the Omaha Press Club as the latest Faces on the Barroom Floor. Both are Omaha natives who met at UNO and have been married for 37 years. They are seen as a "power couple" and make a difference in the Omaha community. Artist Wayne Sealy created the

Ewings' portrait, which features Viv holding a Bible, symbolizing the time that the couple served as pastors at Salem Baptist

Church. There also is her book, "Yes, You Can Have Your Cake and Eat It, Too," included on the portrait. John is wearing a suit and police uniform, and is showing donning a Superman shirt he wears when exercising. The portrait also features a piggy bank and deputy badge that symbolize the work he has done at the Douglas County Treasurer's Office and as a police officer. Also included is a UNO logo and a homecoming queen reference. In their time in the Omaha community, Viv has been a member of more than 30 boards and communities, two of which were the University of Nebraska Media Center Board of Councilors and UNO Alumni Board (she will be the UNOAA Chair in 2022-23). In 1981 Viv was the 1981 UNO Homecoming Queen and was active in the minority student affairs department, student government, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority for African American students and helped start a chapter at UNO for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. John has an extensive list of community service, including volunteer time with Girls Incorporated and the Charles Drew Health Center.



## 84 RICHARD J. EVANS III (BS, BA)

was named executive director for the National Strategic Research Institute at the University of Nebraska. NSRI is a Department of Defense designated University Affiliated Research Center sponsored by the U.S. Strategic Command at Offutt Air Force Base. Evans retired from the U.S. Air Force and Air National Guard as a major general



in 2019 after serving in uniform for more than 35 years.

**86 CAROLYN SHAND (MS)** and her husband, Bob, are living comfortably in a nursing home on the Texas gulf coast. They are well and active in their community. [laquezandme@gmail.com](mailto:laquezandme@gmail.com)

**91 LAURA BEAL (MBA)** has been teaching for the finance, banking and real estate department at UNO since 1991. She is a senior lecturer and teaches all program levels. She holds the CFA designation and is currently president of the Beta Gamma Sigma UNO Chapter. She also directs the CBA financial literacy program (KEES) and the CFA review program. Recently, she also completed her first triathlon and finished a bike ride across Iowa. [lbeal@unomaha.edu](mailto:lbeal@unomaha.edu)



**LISA MAIRE HARRISON JACKSON (BS)** is producing content for TAC-G's YouTube Channel and Comcast Channel 331 in Portland, Oregon. TAC-G stands for The Artist Collective Group and is made up of writers, musicians, film makers and visual artists. The show is titled, My Nature'al Life, and its mission is to give simple ways that viewers can integrate nature into their everyday lives for overall health and wellbeing. This fall, she will also be releasing her first children's book titled, "Judah Wakes Up!" In addition, she recently launched her own marketing consulting businesses with a focus on small businesses and non-profits. [lisaharrisonjackson@gmail.com](mailto:lisaharrisonjackson@gmail.com)



**94 SCOTT GRAY (BS)** was selected to be Todd Schmaderer's executive deputy chief. Gray is a 25-year veteran of the department who was promoted to deputy chief in 2017.

**JEANNE LOUISE JONES (BS)** is most proud of being a mom and now an author. She wrote "Mixed: Exploring What It Means To Be Blended In America," a family memoir about being in a mixed race, blending family and a call to action for social justice. She says, "I wrote in 'Mixed' about my experiences as a criminal justice major at UNO, and how impactful it was for me to learn about the disparities in our criminal justice system." Mixed is at independent

bookstores nationwide, Amazon, B&N, Apple Books and more. [ourmixedfamily777@gmail.com](mailto:ourmixedfamily777@gmail.com)

**SCOTT SHILLER (BS)** recently served on the staff of the National Security Council at the White House, serving as the director for Israel, Jordan and Palestinian Affairs. Scott completed this one-year, detailed position in September 2020 and now serves as the vice president of Congressional Affairs at Ligado Networks. Ligado Networks is a 5G provider planning to deploy licensed mid-band spectrum in public and private 5G networks that will help pave the way for future innovations and economic growth across America. [scottbshiller@gmail.com](mailto:scottbshiller@gmail.com)



**95 DAVE M. MAINELLI (BS, MFA)** wrote "How To Be Lonely: Stories," published by the Wayne State Press. The book is available on Amazon or at the Dundee Bookstore in Omaha. [dmmainelli@outlook.com](mailto:dmmainelli@outlook.com)



**MICHAEL FLANAGAN (MPA)** is stepping down after serving 16 years on the City of Overland Park, Kansas, Planning Commission. He has served as deputy chair, chair and past chair, as well as chair of the comprehensive plan committee. During his tenure he has seen significant growth in his opinion, one of the best cities in the country to live, work and play. [mpaulf62@gmail.com](mailto:mpaulf62@gmail.com)



**98 HEIDI SPEECE (BA)** wrote and published her first book, "My Journey with Ernie: Lessons from a Turkey Dog," which debuted No. 1 in its category. The book highlights the many adventures – and misadventures – Heidi has had with a golden retriever that she rescued from the streets of Istanbul, Turkey. She is using the proceeds to help raise awareness of animal rescues and adoptions. [heidispeece@gmail.com](mailto:heidispeece@gmail.com)



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**00 TRACI MICHELLE HERNANDEZ (BS, MS)** has been living in Doha, Qatar since 2008 with her husband. They have two boys who attend the American School of Doha. She launched her business venture in Doha called Brix Solutions, a coaching and facilitating business.  
traci\_grindle@yahoo.com

**02 ASHIRA D. JONES (BS, MBA)** is now a full-time “solopreneur.” Since finishing her MBA at UNO she has held various full-time jobs that have helped build her career. She is now expanding her business Perfect Ten Coaching. As a coach, she weaves together equal parts intuition, profession training and strategy to provide life, leadership and relationship coaching to women. She looks forward to launching a line of Perfect Ten merchandise and a podcast soon. She also serves as director of coaching for a new nonprofit organization, Coaching for Everyone. The nonprofit offers complimentary coaching and leadership to traditionally underserved and under-resourced Black, Brown and Indigenous populations. You can learn more by visiting [www.ashirajones.com](http://www.ashirajones.com).  
ashirajones@gmail.com

**05 HELENOEL J. BRODERSEN (BA)** says, “It’s been a great journey since graduation.” She has a daughter who is now 13. She has lived all over the U.S. and has worked for companies like PayPal, Amazon and now ADP in Alpharetta, Georgia. Brodersen says, “Never stop reaching your educational goals.” She is now pursuing a Ph.D. in organizational leadership and management.  
helenoelbrodersen@gmail.com

**QUINN METAL CORBIN (BA)** created the C+C Mini Factory with Cheldea Cates. They place miniatures in fanciful and otherworldly environments and photograph the outcome. The C+C Mini Factory’s photography is described as “nostalgic, theatrical, sometimes absurd and always playful.” Their work has been exhibited in galleries in New York and San Francisco.



**07 NICHOLAS LURZ (BS)** was working at Nebraska Probation and was the problem-solving court coordinator in Omaha operating the Veterans Treatment Court and Young Adult Court. In 2019, he moved to Colorado and was the PSC coordinator for the first judicial district assisting the operation of four problem-solving courts and the manager of two large SAMSHA grants. In 2021, he began his position as the statewide problem-solving courts manager in Illinois, overseeing 119 problem-solving courts and assisting in the certification of those courts according to the Illinois Supreme Court PSC Standards.

**08 BEN BAZIS (BS)** has enjoyed traveling all over the United States pursuing exciting adventures in his life and business. In 2019, he launched his company FLPDE Dual Chamber Water Bottle, a locally owned and operated business that has been featured in Men’s Journal, SHAPE Magazine and USA Today. It produces a stainless-steel water bottle with a built-in storage compartment for snacks.  
holla@flpsde.com

**13 SUE VIOLI (BA)** is the director of sponsorship and development for the Omaha RiverFront, which includes the Gene Leahy Mall, Lewis and Clark Landing and the Heartland of America Park. The RiverFront will provide an inclusive, culturally enriching space that creates connectivity throughout the heart of downtown Omaha. She is very proud of her daughter, who graduated from UNO with her bachelor’s degree in 2019 and her master’s in 2021.  
svioli@omahameca.com

**LEANDRE’ LAMARR BALLEW (BS)** is a father of two beautiful girls, ages 1 and 3, with his girlfriend. They are currently in the process of building a new home after recently moving back from Denver, Colorado. He works as a customer success lead for an e-learning technology company. He also does some side consulting while assisting his girlfriend with her online boutique.  
llbprodigy@gmail.com



**14 MYHIAH LILLIAN DOTZLER (BS)** founded the Tekoa Learning Centers, a nonprofit organization in May 2020, working with children with disabilities in poverty-stricken areas of Latin America. Tekoa Learning Centers exist to recruit, raise and release leaders committed to establishing learning centers that unleash children with disabilities to change the world.



**QUINN EATON (BS)** has joined the law firm of Jackson Lewis PC to specialize his practice in employment litigation.  
Quinn.eaton@jacksonlewis.com



**16 HANNAH NODSKOV (CBA)** is owner of Hannah Caroline Couture and a fashion designer. Recently, one of her gowns was worn by Leila Cohan-Miccio at the 2021 Primetime Emmys, marking a major milestone for her small design company, and a huge accomplishment for the entire Omaha fashion community.



**KACIE LYNNE CAMPBELL (BA)** obtained her MA in interdisciplinary studies with a focus on military resilience and executive leadership from Liberty University in March 2021. She is working as a veteran certifying official at Metropolitan Community College, where she is also working toward her Spanish degree.  
kclynnecampbell@gmail.com



**17 ZACH MAHARAJ (BA)** writes, “Thanks for helping me survive, Omaha!”  
zmaharaj@unomaha.edu

**18 MAKAYLA MICHELLE BELL (BS, BSPH)** says, “To this day I am grateful for my experiences and the people I met, life has come full circle.” She now works at UNO as an admissions representative.  
makaylabell@unomaha.edu



## 20 CAROLE NANETTE JEANPIERRE FINCH (BA)

has defeated her Triple Negative Breast Cancer and now houses a foundation within her concentrative areas to help children ages 7-17 who have been diagnosed with cancer or any injury to their brain. She gifts, feeds and uplifts the children and their caregivers through her artistic and positive design. She encourages the youth to go beyond the diagnosis and live well. Visit the CJF Noalia: An Opera of Love and ACL Foundation on Facebook to donate and learn more about the children's book she has written. [carolefrenche1@gmail.com](mailto:carolefrenche1@gmail.com)



**KALPANA RASAILY (BA)** is proud of earning her bachelor's degree in public health. Kalpana says, "This is my happiest accomplishment that God has allowed me to share blessings to his people through knowledge, wisdom, education and understanding of my studies about healthy lifestyles and overall wellness. I would not achieve this degree without my parents, university professional people, friends and relatives because these persons helped and supported me a lot throughout the ups and downs of my personal life and college journey." She is now working at Mount View Elementary School as a Nurse's Aide.



**STEPHANIE DAWN MARIE MEEK (BA)** has been working full time for Aureus Medical since graduating. While working there, she has completed professional development courses and serves as a member of the team building committee and the diversity, equity and inclusion council. She is a member of the mentorship committee, helping train and develop team members. Outside of work, she spends her time volunteering as a member of the Junior League of Omaha. This year, her role is the Summit Logistics Coordinator for their 2022 DEI summit. She also proudly volunteers her time to support fundraising opportunities for the TeamMates Mentoring program in Omaha. She is also putting her degree to work by executing her business plan for her own business and hopes to have it up and running in 2022. For the future, she plans to return to UNO for her MBA. [stephi2014@gmail.com](mailto:stephi2014@gmail.com)



**LARRY ESTON HENDRY (MA)** has started an MS in criminal justice at Southern New Hampshire University online this summer. He says he's always on a quest to learn something new. [hendrylarry0@gmail.com](mailto:hendrylarry0@gmail.com)



**21 KAM BANY (BS)** is proud of her full-time school, full-time work and full-time parent of two and her graduation with honors. She is attending graduate school this fall. [kamlonylueng@yahoo.com](mailto:kamlonylueng@yahoo.com)



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**JOSLYN Art Museum**  
**FACES from the INTERIOR**  
The North American Portraits of Karl Bodmer  
Through May 1, 2022

*Faces from the Interior* features over 60 recently conserved watercolor portraits of individuals from Omaha, Yankton, Lakota, Mandan, Hidatsa, Assiniboiné, and Blackfoot tribes, among many Native communities encountered by Prince Maximilian of Wied and Swiss artist Karl Bodmer during their 1833-34 travels along the Missouri River from Saint Louis to Fort McKenzie, in present-day Montana.

Exhibition organized by the Margre H. Durham Center for Western Studies, Joslyn Art Museum, in association with The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

IMAG: Karl Bodmer (Swiss, 1809–1893), *Chan-Chá-Uliá-Te-Uinn, Lakota Sioux Woman*, 1833, watercolor and graphite on paper, Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska, Gift of the Enron Art Foundation, 1986.49.246, Photograph © Bruce M. White, 2019

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## IN MEMORIAM

Deceased alumni reported to the UNO Alumni Association or University of Nebraska Foundation between Jan. 1, 2021, and Nov. 4, 2021. We extend our condolences to the family and friends of these graduates.

<b>1943</b>	Genevieve R. Price	<b>1963</b>	Paul C. Scott	<b>1971</b>	Richard T. Cotton	<b>1976</b>	Stuart A.	<b>1985</b>	Steven L. Adams,
<b>1948</b>	Marion Campen Mahone		Betty A. Aufenkamp		David L. Bridges		Rosenkrantz		Joni K. Hoke
<b>1949</b>	Darlene K. Burham		Alan W. Draney		Charles P. Clawson		Cathy R. Anderson	<b>1986</b>	Michael J. McCauley
	Marie R. Shafer		William D. Edge		Louis A. Carnazzo		Gerald E. Ryan		Miriam E. Miller,
	Joseph F. Mangiamele		Harold F. Smith		Ronald L. Garrett		Douglas R. Cody		Kimberly M. Pacaj
	Earl N. Shrago		Jerry F. Ross		Michael J. Phillips		John L. Gier	<b>1987</b>	Richard S. Brown
<b>1950</b>	Nancy C. Estabrook		Edwin H. Johnson		William S. Pulsifer		Travis W. Lux		Jeffrey A. Clark
<b>1951</b>	Thomas N. Townsend	<b>1964</b>	James Dennis Thompson		Gaylene A. Searcy		John J. Malone		Douglas Halvorson
<b>1952</b>	Rudolph A. Kunkle		William M. Harrington	<b>1972</b>	Mary A. Rosser	<b>1977</b>	James E. Robertson		Daniel E. Johnson
<b>1953</b>	John C. Follman		Judith A. Cramer		Elizabeth Crain		Patrick F. Grindle	<b>1988</b>	William R. Kohl
	Aksel M. Schmidt		David A. Gibson		Joseph L. Huebner		John D. Bucksbee		Karen K. Shaffer
	Clyde F. Moore		Thomas E. Stevens		Edward R. Sladovnik		Karen M. Ellis		Debra M. Newcomer
<b>1954</b>	LaVonne R. Plambeck		Shirley R. Thompson		Carole A. Muetting		Herman P. Meisinger		William F. Schwening
	Fred W. Hendricks		Marie L. Hesser		Mary R. Bresley		Robert A. Murnan		Daniel P. Frost
<b>1954</b>	Virginia M. Stewart	<b>1965</b>	Elaine M. Penkava		David S. Rifkin		Theresa M. Underriner	<b>1989</b>	William L. Maxey
<b>1955</b>	Wayne T. Sacher		William R. Loder		Marc L. Cizek		Catherine I. Williams		Kenneth E. Johnson
<b>1956</b>	Joe E. Hanna		Anita Dreimanis	<b>1973</b>	Kenneth J. Koehler	<b>1978</b>	Caroline G. Bauer	<b>1991</b>	David J. Paladino
	Lawrence S. Albert		Gene H. Campbell		Beverly A. Harter		Phyllis E. Bovee	<b>1992</b>	Hugh R. Schuett
	Eugene M. Frese		Walter C. Horner		Michael B. Horony		Craig Ferguson		Stephanie A. Messer
	Charles H. Geisler		Richard H. Hays		James H. Ryan		Janice M. O'Callaghan	<b>1993</b>	Andria M. Schulz
<b>1957</b>	James E. Blake	<b>1966</b>	Dorothy V. Ryck		Michael A. Skaff		Robert M. Wiechelman		Brenda J. Shelton
	Conrad M. Olsson		Richard C. Slocum		James R. Smith		Martin G. Olsen		Michele A. Siderewicz
	Joseph C. Byrne	<b>1967</b>	Velda V. Hughes		Mary J. Kaczmarek	<b>1979</b>	Roderick R. Hernandez	<b>1994</b>	Michele A. Longeau
	Janis I. Lustgraaf		Joyce I. Swanson		Rebecca R. Bischoff		John J. Babic	<b>1995</b>	Simon A. Danigole
	Attilio J. Rindone		Martin F. Hanna		Edwin D. Rasmussen		Sherry L. Fitch		Diane M. McCabe
<b>1958</b>	Louis J. Sobczyk		Stanley L. Allen		Edward C. Dinovo		Ronald M. Shanahan		Sheryl L. Williams
	Everett A. Hopkinson		Gerald D. Nanos		James L. Harrel	<b>1980</b>	Paul H. Wade	<b>1996</b>	James D. Reilly
	Frank P. Dohn		Marian P. Nelson	<b>1974</b>	Larry L. Hausman		John R. Gahan		Jeanette R. Banahan
	Martin A. Pedersen		Mary J. Lickteig		Robert C. Herian	<b>1981</b>	John L. Gaines	<b>1997</b>	Sterling D. Boyles
	Richard G. Wood		James L. Sharp		Edward Hover		William A. Lawson	<b>1998</b>	Dee A. McCurdy
	Ellen L. Ryder		Vance M. Barefoot		Jeanette Lant		Brenda E. Frost	<b>1999</b>	Amy S. Parr
	Joanne F. Sokalsky	<b>1968</b>	Anatole Cigleris		Heather A. Gerlach		John W. Steele		Amber K. Tjaden
	Richard W. Hartford		Shirley P. Clemens		Gary R. Chase		Susan L. Ascoli	<b>2000</b>	Linda R. Wright
<b>1959</b>	Benjamin D. Wiesman		Emmy L. Wilcox		Ruth V. Gerken	<b>1982</b>	Lori S. McNabb	<b>2002</b>	Clayton T. Grice
	John F. Jackson		Marie C. Jacobi		Joyce A. Faddis		Paul W. Haggas		Patricia L. Linn
	Joseph S. Salerno	<b>1969</b>	Linda M. Dockery		Timothy L. Hoffman		William H. Jack	<b>2003</b>	Jamie M. Waggoner
<b>1960</b>	Glenn L. Fuller		Elmer L. Johnstone		Gerald L. Chamberlen	<b>1983</b>	Gail J. Reiter	<b>2004</b>	Lisa M. Pane
	David P. Greer		Matthew P. Kalan		William R. Brown		Gary P. Bishop	<b>2005</b>	Ryan K. McGrane
	George J. Pfeifer		Ellen R. Neary		Robert Bungay		Patricia L. Shiller		Jill L. Thewke
	Catherine L. Wibbels		Ann Wittwer		Lawrence J. Cahow		Roger P. Shipp	<b>2009</b>	Michael H. Boyd
<b>1961</b>	Stanley E. Duysen		Martha A. Gollner		Richard S. Horn		Karen J. Vrtiska		Joanne E. Loch
	Philip B. Bauer		Robert E. Bruckner		Robert E. Johnson		Kirk A. Kilgore,	<b>2011</b>	Mark S. Kaipust
	Lyle E. Franzen		John W. Blacketer		Gerald H. Kramer		JoAnn Hilgenkamp		Chad D. Young
	Adam A. Kirchofer		Gus Moutos		Scott A. Marcum		John A. Depa	<b>2013</b>	Carly R. Pester
	Ronald H. Traudt		Lynn C. Brawner		George Randle		Michael M. Sturgeon	<b>2014</b>	Matthew M. Thomas
<b>1962</b>	Rosemary F. Humason	<b>1970</b>	John A. DeGeorge		Russell L. Koken		Janniver K. Vala		David J. Stahl
	Philip E. Kaldahl		John W. Elftmann	<b>1975</b>	Kathy L. Kuehn		Joyce A. Sotello	<b>2015</b>	John R. Janda
	Robert D. Schmidt		Thomas D. Acton		Penny W. Nordahl		John P. Krejci,	<b>2016</b>	Alexander T. Morey
			Verla P. Mundhenke		Dorothy A. Schultz		Robert C. Vestal	<b>2018</b>	Shawn T. Collins
			James E. Cook		Robert A. Ueberrhein	<b>1984</b>	Gary E. Caraker		Blake M. Wilcox
			Rosemary G. Peterson		David H. Kehret		Richard L. Zpevak		Alysen R. Rail
			Lynn E. Osterholm		Terry L. Morris		Barbara J. Cotton		Jocelyn A. Aguirre
			Arlene K. Haynes						Vasquez
			Bette L. Kvetensky						Ryan J. McNeil
			Erma J. Umbarger						Janine M. Brooks



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Jace and Kade Brooke, sons of Michelle and SKYLER ('13, '15) BROOKE of Omaha.

Samantha Jean Amber Draney, daughter of **ELIZABETH (KRAEMER '06,'08,'18)** and Heath Draney of Omaha and granddaughter of **MAUREEN (TROUBA '76) KRAEMER, DAN ('77) KRAEMER, ANDREA (FLICKINGER '05,'12), and BRUCE DRANEY ('84,'05)** of Omaha.

Eleanor Maree Carmody, daughter of **GRACE ('17) and SEAN ('16) CARMODY** of Omaha and granddaughter of **RICHARD MANTHEY ('08)** of Omaha.

Ainsley Nicole Shulo, granddaughter of Carolyn and **WILLIAM ('80) SHULO** of Papillion, Nebraska.

Eliora Antonia Zak, granddaughter of **CHRISTINA M. ZAK ('05)** of Glenwood, Iowa.

Jett Lennox Ward, son of **BRYONNA (JOHNSON '17)** and Lorenzo Ward of Omaha.

Colin Alan Seaman, son of **BRITTANY (NIELSON '11) and DANIEL SEAMAN ('16)** of Bennington, Nebraska.

Isabella Leigh Padrnos, daughter of **KAYCIE (MULLINS '17) and JORDAN PADRNOS ('17)** of Omaha.

Emery Grace Johansen, daughter of **JENNIFER (COBB '05)** and Timothy Johansen of Omaha.

Kennedy Talamantes, granddaughter of Rene and **KIMBERLY ('10) TALAMANTES** of Omaha.

Trez Cawthorn, son of **TIMOTHY CAWTHORN ('18)** and Blanca Rodriguez of La Vista, Nebraska.

Robert Evan West, son of Corey and **KATHERINE (ZIELINSKI '07) WEST** of Parker, Colorado.

Bennett Lee Rutz, son of Kris **DANIELLE (STUCK '18) RUTZ** of Omaha.

Mason Alexander Colgrove, son of Tom and **BRANDY (LINTZ '04,'10) COLGROVE** of Papillion, Nebraska.

Aylynn Rihanna Gann, great-granddaughter of **TIMOTHY HANSON ('81)** of Loganville, Georgia.

Joseph Francis Sirizzotti, grandson of Rick and **LESLIE PLANOS ('09,'19)** of Omaha.

Selah Maya Malone, daughter of **KAITLIN (HARTHOORN '18) and CLAYTON MALONE ('18)** of Omaha.

Owen Antoni Stalinski-Joly, son of **KENNETH JOY ('21)** and Roksana Stalinski of Ottawa, Ontario.

Abigail Louise Gunderson, daughter of **MIKAYLA BROHMAN ('17) and CHRIS GUNDERSON ('17)** of Grandview, Missouri.

Allison Arnold Armah, daughter of **MIRIAM COMMODORE MENSAH ('19)** of Indianapolis, Indiana.

Paa Anning Sarpong, son of **GRISELDA ASAMOAH-GYADU ('19)** and Akwasi Sarpong of Ajax, Ontario.

Riley Ann Voller, daughter of **SAIRA (ALBERT '02) and ZACH VOLLER ('03)** of New Brighton, Minnesota.

Maeve Marian Searl, daughter of **KIMBERLY (MOORE '16) and NOLAN SEARL ('14)** of Omaha.

Mia Catherine Thomas, daughter of **ELLEN (POWELL '17)** and Aaron Thomas of Bellevue.

Della Rae Walsh, daughter of **NICHOLAS ('14,'20)** and Deirdre Walsh of Bennington, Nebraska.

Milo Michael Ewart, son of **NATHAN EWART ('20)** and Tegan Ewart of Omaha.

Vance Ira Palimenio, son of **TREIGHTIN (YATES '20,'21)** and Jessica Palimenio of La Vista.

August Charles Xavier McDaniel, grandson of **REGINA ('19,'21)** and Charles Points of Bellevue.

Payton Andrew Douglas, daughter of **HALEY BARBER ('17) and STEPHEN DOUGLAS ('17)** of Omaha.

Addison Molly Kulig, daughter of Courtney and **ZACH KULIG ('19)** of Palatine, Illinois.

Trez Cawthorn, son **TIMOTHY CAWTHORN ('18)** and Blanca Rodriguez of La Vista.

Maia Faye McLean, daughter of **JERAD MCLEAN ('15)** of Ewa Beach, Hawaii.

Addiena O'Rear, daughter of **CHRISTA (HILLMER '11) O'REAR** of Omaha.

Mia Joy Kula, daughter of **LAINNEY ('13) and ERIC KULA ('13,'15)** of Omaha.

Max Joseph Kula, son of **LAINNEY ('13) and ERIC KULA ('13,'15)** of Omaha.

Javier Alejandro Lopez, son of **MARY FRIEND ('08)** and Michael Lopez of Omaha.

Charlie Nicole Parrott, daughter Zach and **NICKY ('20) PARROTT** of La Vista.

Quinn Hiram Hernandez, son of Chris and **EMILY MCIVOR ('07,'14)** of Omaha and granddaughter of **MARY C. MCIVOR ('96,'08)** of Omaha.

Axel J Basl, son of Aaron and **AMY (WIECZOREK '11) BASL** of Grand Island, Nebraska.

Lillian Mae Belfiore, daughter of Jessica and **JEFFREY ('08) BELFIORE** of Papillion.

Dylan Cole Johnson, son of Kimberly and **BRYCE ('17) JOHNSON** of Omaha.

Itzayana Xóchitl Francisco, daughter of **FERNANDA NUNGARAY ('20)** and Elmer Francisco of Papillion.

Seth Daniel Giwoyna, son of Susan and **KYLE ('06) GIWOYNA** of Papillion.

Evelyn Louise Athey, daughter of Scott and **JAMIE (STEENSON '12) ATHEY** of Council Bluffs, Iowa.

Kevin Tapia, son of **DALILA CORDOBA ('19)** of Bellevue.

Yvette Jordan Berndt, daughter of **BRANDI (ANDERSON '15,'17) and ALEX BERNDT ('16,'18)** of Omaha.

Scarlett Joy Andersen, daughter of Christopher **LEE ANDERSON ('13) and ALISSA PATRICIA ELLIS ('13)** of Omaha.

Brylee Deane Baker, daughter of Bryan and **STEPHANIE DAKIN ('11) BAKER** of St. Louis, Missouri.

Cameron Lee Muench, son of Matthew and **DANIELLE (HAGEMEIER '17) MUENCH** of Papillion.

Lucia Jane Handlos, daughter of **MONICA MORA ('03,'05)** and David Handlos of Omaha.

Camden James Klug, son of **ROBERT ('09) and KAYLA ('18) KLUG** of Bellevue, Nebraska.

Brantley James Schweitzer, son of **SHAWNA (HANSON '13)** and Troy Schweitzer of Broken Bow, Nebraska.



## A LOOK AT HAPPENINGS ON AND OFF CAMPUS

### BIG WIND, BIG CLEAN UP

Hurricane-force winds hit Omaha July 9, leaving a swath of damage, including throughout Elmwood Park and at UNO. Straight-line winds reached 96 mph, similar to an EF-1 tornado or Category 2 hurricane. The last time the wind blew that strong in Omaha was Aug. 23, 2016, when a much smaller storm set the city's wind record. It caused 188,000 power outages in the OPPD service area, 20% more than the previous record of 156,000 outages on June 27, 2008. There was extensive damage to trees at UNO, and the weather vane atop Arts and Science Hall's pergola was blown off..

### TOUR TIME

Staffers working for senators in the Nebraska Legislature toured UNO Oct. 5 to learn about the university's research and service efforts. It included a visit with Chancellor Joanne Li and Pepper, an artificial intelligence robot.

**“ I DO ENJOY HEARING HOW UNO IS NATIONALLY RELEVANT. EVERY TIME I COME ON THIS TOUR, THERE'S SOMETHING NEW I LEARNED.**

*KENNETH PANCAKE (2019)*

*ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT TO  
SEN. JOHN STINNER*

### PLANTING ROOTS AT UNO

Exploring, as UNO's Exploratory Studies program points out, does NOT mean one is lost. After all, Exploratory Studies students already have found their way to UNO. The university then supports them through their first 45 hours with courses designed to acquaint students with UNO and the programs it offers, and purposeful advising with the Academic and Career Development Center. Some of those explorers got a bit more help in August with team-building exercises at the "Tree Rush" obstacle course at Fontenelle Forest in Bellevue, Nebraska.







## FALLING FOR DURANGO

Autumn's return surrounded Maverick Monument in vibrant colors in late October.

## ROYAL HOMECOMING

**6** THERE IS NOTHING MORE INSPIRING OR EXCITING THAN A COLLEGE CAMPUS DURING HOMECOMING.

CHANCELLOR JOANNE LI

Indeed, especially when it's been two years since the last homecoming. Li (center) was on hand for the pinnacle of homecoming, the crowning of Uyen Tran, left, and Giovanni Cortave as Homecoming 2021 Royalty winners Oct. 8.

## THE BIG 5-OH

Is it just us, or has Durango never looked better?! He's 50, but you wouldn't know it from these photos taken in October to celebrate the big guy at the Milo Bail Student Center. Those around in 1971, of course, know it was students who voted Mavericks as the school's new mascot, narrowly defeating ... Unicorns.

## HONORING 50 ... AND 54

The department of Black Studies celebrated its 50th anniversary July 28 while also honoring the "Omaha 54" students. The reference is to students who comprised the occupation student organization BLAC (Black Liberators for Action on Campus), which occupied the office of then-UNO Chancellor Kirk Naylor in November 1969. The students were arrested and prosecuted. Their actions played a pivotal role in the creation of the Black Studies department. UNO Libraries hosts the Student Unrest Collection online, with materials including news clippings, resolutions, correspondence, student surveys, and other documents.

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 [www.terrystickels.com](http://www.terrystickels.com)

### LANGUAGE – 30

Here is a scrambled quote from one of America's best and funniest, Nebraska-born Johnny Carson. See how long it takes you to unscramble this gem.

"Nothing I do as sneak barn was the so a naïve I to used kid behind and."

### KNOWLEDGE – 39

Here is some interesting trivia for things you see all the time but may not know their official names.

1. The name for the dots on dice?
2. The dot above the "l"?
3. The pound sign #?
4. The attachment at the top of a lamp that usually screws into the lamp to hold the shade in place?
5. The plastic tip of a shoelace?

### WORDPLAY – 50

There are supposed to be more than 25 parts of the body which are spelled with four letters — such as, "nose."

How many can you name?


### ANSWERS

Fist  
Anus  
Lobe  
Drum

Nape  
Face  
Iris  
Fore  
Head  
Calf  
Uvea

Arch  
Cell  
Heel  
Brow  
Bone  
Axon  
Knee

Hair  
Skin  
Lung  
Back  
Jowl  
Neck  
Chin

WORDPLAY  
Nose  
Vein  
Nail  
Palm  
Hand  
Foot  
Lash

LANGUAGE  
"I was so naïve as a kid I used to sneak behind the barn and do nothing."  
KNOWLEDGE  
1. Pips; 2. Tittle or jot; 3. Octothorpe  
4. Finial; 5. Aglet



UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT OMAHA  
GRADUATE STUDIES

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**UNO FUND**  
EVERYONE FOR OMAHA



UNO is more than a college campus. It is a global network of passionate people just like you who are driven to make a difference. Through the passionate support of thousands of Mavericks each year, we have been able to provide access to exceptional education experiences that produce students of high quality and character who drive our community forward.

UNO graduates understand that an investment in the success of our students is an investment in our shared future. I cannot thank our alumni, donors and supporter enough.

**I am writing to all UNO alumni reading UNO Magazine, because this holiday season, our Maverick students need your help.**

I want to make sure every UNO student who wants to achieve their dreams can do so. As a first-generation student who relied on scholarships, I know firsthand that financial stability gives students the confidence and peace of mind they need to excel academically, graduate on time, and develop skills that meet our state's workforce needs.

Please join me in these efforts with a year-end gift today.

As you can see at right, I have a "holiday wish list" for our students. Your gift will help us provide as many of these critical items as possible. Your contribution — no matter the size — tells our students that the entire UNO community has their back as they pursue a brighter future, just as you once had as a student.

Thank you for your commitment to making UNO the pride of our community, our state and our nation, and for your investment in our shared success.

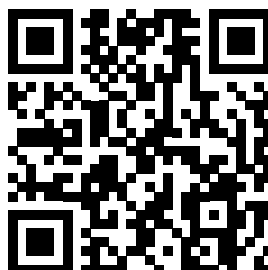
Now, let's show our students what the Maverick Spirit looks like in action and what Omaha as a community stands for! To give, go to [unofund.org](http://unofund.org) or scan the QR code.

Thank you, and Go Mavericks!

Joanne Li, Ph.D., CFA

Chancellor

University of Nebraska at Omaha



## Chancellor Li's Holiday Wish List

### Tuition and Fees

#### Resident Undergrad

**\$1,300** — tuition, fees & books for a 3-hour course

**\$3,700** — tuition & fees for 12 credits

#### Nonresident Undergrad

**\$2,700** — tuition, fees & books for a 3-hour course

**\$9,700** — tuition & fees for 12 credits

### Books

**\$500** — books for one student

### Living on Campus

**\$1,150** — 1 month housing & meals

**\$1,500** — meals for 100 students through Maverick Food Pantry

**\$5,200** — 1 semester housing & meals

**\$10,400** — 1 year housing & meals

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