

SPRING 2019

UNO MAGAZINE

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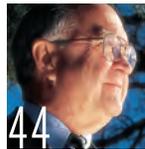
Public Administration, MPA
University of Nebraska at Omaha

My today started when I realized my leadership skills were building blocks. After serving my country with tours in Afghanistan and Iraq, I was equipped with the fundamentals. But I knew there was room to grow and more to learn. At the University of Nebraska at Omaha, I found a highly ranked program available online that worked with me while overseas and helped develop the skills I apply in my role each day. Thanks to my advanced degree, I'm able to use my leadership and managerial expertise to tackle administrative challenges. And I'm excited to see my opportunities continue to grow today and tomorrow.



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SPRING

2019

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

Spring is truly one of my favorite times of year. I am always reminded, during these months, how important the role of education is in each of our lives.

By the time you read this issue there will be no shortage of events celebrating the amazing accomplishments of our students, faculty, staff and alumni. Foremost among these celebrations is our May Commencement ceremonies when nearly 2,000 students will walk across the stage at Baxter Arena to become alumni and the next generation of leaders.

Leaders who will serve our community.

Spring also is a time for reflection, and looking back, it's clear that this past academic year has been one of tremendous accomplishments.

As we welcomed another record-breaking group of incoming first-year students this past August, we also welcomed new and exciting ways for these students to get connected, through a new UNO smartphone mobile app. We celebrated research and creative activity as faculty and students helped make great advances in everything from archaeology to cancer research. We also celebrated the next stage of campus development with the opening of the renovated Strauss Performing Arts Center and important construction projects to expand our Biomechanics Research Building and Mammel Hall. Much-needed updates to the Durham Science Center and Arts and Sciences Hall also began.

All of these impressive accomplishments are the result of dedication and hard work from all across our campus. However, in true Maverick spirit, this hard work is complemented by a playfulness, curiosity and boundless creativity.

While it may not seem, at first glance, that hard work and playfulness can coexist, I have seen and heard countless examples where both are necessary, side by side, to achieve greatness.

I hope that after reading these stories you will share my pride that UNO is a special place where, through hard work, play and Maverick spirit, anything is possible.



Explore these paths for greater career potential.

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Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D.
UNO Chancellor



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



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

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 www.unoalumni.org/unomag-led or write to the address at left.

CORRECTION

The Winter 2018 issued of UNO Magazine had an incorrect reference to what should be the "Biomechanics Research Building." We regret the error.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Showing the O is nothing new, as attested to by the UNO band getting into formation of the university's favorite letter some time in the 1970s..



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PLAY & THE PLATTE

My favorite place to play is at 72nd and the Platte River.

That's where my mother-in-law's cabin rests – the river on one side, a sandpit lake on the other.

I've been going there to play since 1993. It's where I've swam, racing my kids from shore to shore. Where I've escaped to by myself for a day of fishing, making sure I'd be in the boat before sunrise so I could see God's day come to life. Where I've relaxed around countless fires, enjoying an adult beverage or two while listening to the soothing flow of the Platte as it meanders by us on its way to meet the Missouri.

But those waters weren't so soothing in March. The Platte – as did many other rivers throughout the state – became a torrent of destruction, washing away banks and trees, flooding homes, plowing massive, churning ice deposits into fields and leaving utter devastation in its wake.

The Platte crested at a record-13.75 feet, topping the previous high of 12.45 feet in 1960. That's mind boggling for a river often referred to as "a mile wide and an inch deep."

The river reached halfway to our cabin's roof, and when its waters subsided, left mud inside, massive drifts of sand, debris and carnage outside.

Others suffered far more than we did. This was only our place of play, not our home, and my prayers go out to those whose lives were turned chaotic by these floods.

Nebraska will recover and rebuild. Homes will be restored and lives rebuilt.

And it might not happen this summer, but I'll be back to play at the cabin soon.

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Anthony Flott

Anthony Flott
Managing Editor



ASSOCIATION LAUNCHES ALL-INCLUSIVE MOBILE APP

The UNO Alumni Association has launched a new and powerful app that unleashes everything Maverick for graduates and donors everywhere!

The free app brings everything that is UNO Alumni – and more – right to your Apple or Android smart phone or other mobile device.

The app debuts with a new offering for graduates—discounts and savings of up to 50 percent at local, national and online vendors, including restaurants, hotels and more. The feature is location-aware, so graduates across the country can benefit.

ALUMNI CAN ALSO USE THE APP TO:

- Receive notifications for campus and alumni news, events, communications and more
- Find fellow graduates in their area through a mobile directory listing more than 100,000 UNO alumni
- Read UNO Magazine on the go
- Present their digital Alumni Card to access on-campus benefits
- Access social media streams
- Purchase Maverick gear via an online apparel store
- Register for periodic UNO Alumni giveaways and random drawings

DOWNLOADING AND ACCESSING THE APP

To get started, follow these simple steps:

1. Download the app at no cost through the iTunes App Store or at Google Play.

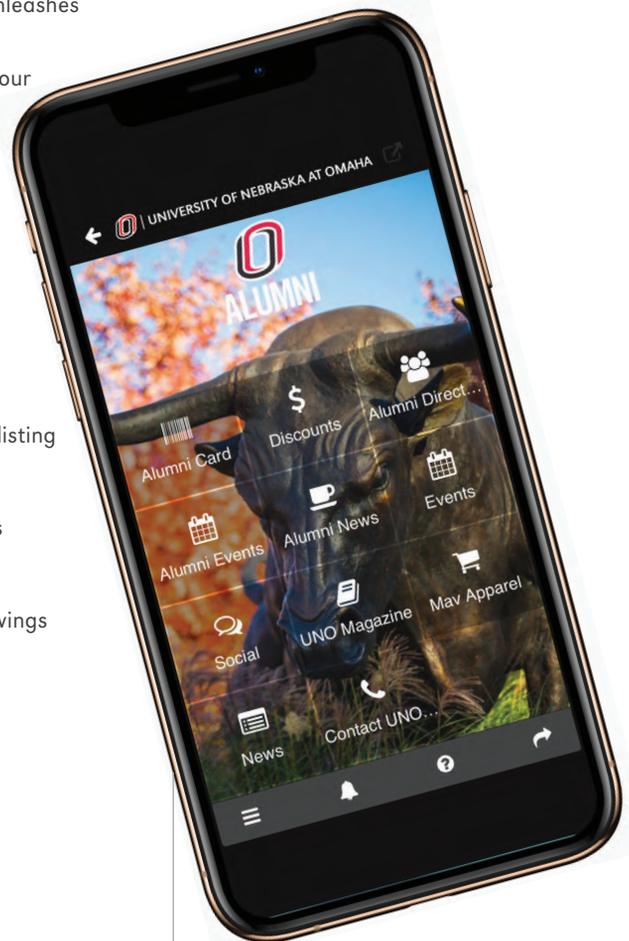


2. Click “Get Started” then “Click Here” under Alumni & Donors
3. Submit your email address on file with the alumni association
4. Copy and paste the six-digit verification code sent to the email address provided and hit “login”

AND THAT’S IT — THE UNO APP IS READY FOR YOU TO USE!

UNO Magazine readers who download the app by May 20 will receive a free UNO Alumni PopSocket that can be mounted to a phone for help gripping or propping it. PopSockets are available while supplies last.

So what are you waiting for? Download the app today and put the power of all things Maverick in your hands!



NO EMAIL ADDRESS ON FILE?

If the email address a user submits is not what the association has on file, users will be asked to click “CREATE AN ACCOUNT” at the bottom of the login page after navigating to the “ALUMNI & DONORS CLICK HERE” page.

This step is taken to ensure only UNO graduates and donors have access to the app and to protect privacy and security.

To find out what address the association has on file for you, email unocalumni@unocalumni.org.

AWARD-WINNING

The university in 2018 launched a portion of the app designed and branded for students, faculty and staff. In January, the Nebraska chapter of the Public Relations Society of America honored the UNO app with one of its Paper Anvil Awards.



LOVING ON MAVERICK BASKETBALL

INAUGURAL UNO ALUMNI NIGHT ON THE COURT HELPS ATTRACT RECORD CROWD ON VALENTINE'S DAY

There was lots to love about the inaugural Alumni Night on the Court hosted by the UNO and UNMC Alumni Associations on Valentine's Day.

First were the graduates and their families who came together for a pregame reception — more than 250 of them. The fun included snacks and beverages, door prizes, games and an appearance by the Maverick Dance Team.

Second was the attendance record those alumni helped set with 4,228 fans catching UNO's game against South Dakota State. That eclipsed the previous Baxter Arena mark of 4,106 set last year.

Finally, there was senior Mitch Hahn's winning shot with .2 seconds remaining to give the Mavericks an 85-84 win over the Jackrabbits.

ANNUAL BOARD MEETING SET FOR MAY 21

The UNO Alumni Association Board of Directors will hold its annual meeting Tuesday, May 21, at 4:30 p.m. in the Thompson Alumni Center.

For more information contact Meri Kennedy at (402) 504-3342 or mkenney@unoalumni.org.



PARTNERSHIPS

INSURANCE

Are you in need of home, life, auto, health or life insurance? The UNO Alumni Association offers graduates insurance for these and other needs at discounted rates available thanks to the purchasing power of more than 110,000 graduates.

See all the coverage available at unoalumni.org/insurance

TRAVEL

The UNO Alumni Association is pleased to offer discounted travel opportunities through a partnership with travel provider Go Next! Upcoming 2020 trips include:

OUTRAGEOUS OUTBACK (Sydney to Auckland)
Feb. 1-17

TULIPS, WINDMILLS AND BELGIAN DELIGHTS (Amsterdam)
April 14-22

FORESTS AND FJORDS OF ALASKA (Seward to Vancouver)
July 30-Aug. 10

COSMOPOLITAN HAVENS (Rome to Monte Carlo)
Nov. 3-11

To receive a brochure for any of our trips by mail, call **800-432-3216**.



GO. GET INVOLVED. GIVE.

UNO AND THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION STRIVE TO ENGAGE ALUMNI ON CAMPUS AND OFF, AND IT OFFERS NUMEROUS OPPORTUNITIES TO DO SO. FOLLOWING ARE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALUMNI TO GO, GET INVOLVED AND GIVE!

GO



UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL 24

CURIOS PEOPLE: SCOTCH WHISKY

Learn about the production and maturation of single-malt scotch from world traveler, Scotch expert and UNO Vice Chancellor B.J. Reed. For more, search "Curious People" at unomaha.edu.

MAY 10

GOTTMAN METHOD COUPLES THERAPY

Led by CPACS' Michelle Nelsen and helping couples learn practical strategies to successfully manage conflict, process fights and heal hurts. Based on 40+ years of research with more than 3,000 couples.

JUNE 3-JULY 19

TECHADEMY SUMMER CAMPS

Sign up your children to help them learn the fun in IT from an early age with hands-on activities teaching new concepts, tools and skills.

LUNCH BUNCHES

Looking for a great lunch — and even better conversation? Then make it to the association's Golden Circle Lunch Bunches at the Thompson Alumni Center featuring a delicious meal and a guest speaker from campus. The next Lunch Bunch is set for Friday, May 10. All graduates are invited to attend and to bring a guest. Meals are \$15 per person and each luncheon begins at 11:30 a.m. See upcoming speakers at unocalumni.org/lunchbunch

GET INVOLVED



VOLUNTEER AT A PRESERVE

Enjoy the outdoors? Enjoy volunteer service? Then consider helping at UNO's preserve sites, including Glacier Creek Preserve in northwest Omaha. Help needed varies by season and includes:

Seed Collecting: Done throughout the year; usually needed most in the fall.

Woody Plant Control: Particularly important at UNO's T.L. Davis Preserve, where UNO is trying to restore the historic savanna community.

Invasive Plant Control: Help control several invasive plant species from adversely affecting native plants at the preserves.

Educational Group Leaders: Assist with scheduled preserve visits mostly from school groups. Can include assistance with insect sweep netting, prairie plant identification and other activities.

Prescribed Burns: One of the most exciting volunteer opportunities at the preserves, burns can range up to 50 acres in size. Typically conducted around May 1 at both Glacier Creek and T.L. Davis Preserve. Spring, summer and fall burns also held at replicate site at Agricultural and Research Development Center in Mead, Nebraska.

For more information about volunteering at a preserve contact Preserves Director Tom Bragg at 402-554-3378 or tbragg@unomaha.edu.

GIVE



ADVOCATE FOR NU

The University of Nebraska's state funding has been reduced three times in the past two years, impacting athletic programs, academics and people. Further cuts could cause tuition increases for 52,000 students — and curb the university's momentum in serving Nebraska. It is vital that the governor and state senators hear from UNO graduates telling how UNO influenced their life and urging investment in one of the state's primary economic drivers — the University of Nebraska. To do so, consider becoming an "NU Advocate." See more at unocalumni.org/nuadvocate



Did you know that donors to the UNO Fund can choose to support whichever area is close to their heart? That includes scholarships, faculty development, a college, the alumni association, or other area of the university.

UNO Fund donors of \$25 or more receive a UNO Alumni Card, which includes perks on and around campus. Every gift — from \$1 up — is appreciated. Gifts of \$250 or more are included in the annual listing of Century Club supporters (see page 48).

Learn more and make your gift at nufoundation.org/UNOFund.

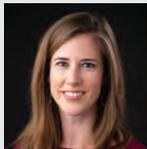
ASSOCIATION HONORS NINE FACULTY IN 23RD YEAR OF TEACHING AWARD

The UNO Alumni Association celebrated the 23rd year of its Alumni Outstanding Teaching Award program when it presented the honor to nine faculty members during the UNO Faculty Honors Convocation Thursday, April 11. Association President Lee Denker presented the awards, 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 2019 awards the association has issued \$203,000 through the program.

Recipients are listed below. For brief biographies of each recipient, visit unoalumni.org/2019aota

College of Arts and Sciences



Ashlee Dere
Geography/Geology

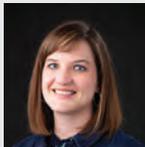


Ramón Guerra
English



Laura Walls
Foreign Languages

College of Business Administration



Jillian K. Poyze
Accounting

College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media



Paige Toller
School of Communication

College of Information Science & Technology



Matt Hale
Cybersecurity,
School of Interdisciplinary
Informatics



Shari L. DeVeney
Special Education &
Communication Disorders

College of Engineering



Chungwook Sim
Civil Engineering

College of Public Affairs and Community Service



Todd Richardson
Goodrich Scholarship Program



ASSOCIATION TO HONOR GRADS BRANIGAN, PECHAR WITH HIGHEST HONOR

The UNO Alumni Association will bestow its Citation for Alumni Achievement award upon UNO graduates Anne L. Branigan and Edward A. Pechar.

The awards will be conferred during UNO's commencement exercises Friday, May 3, at Baxter Arena. Branigan will be recognized at UNO's 9 a.m. ceremony for three of UNO's colleges. Pechar will be recognized at the 3 p.m. ceremony for UNO's four other colleges.

Inaugurated in 1949, the citation is the association's highest honor. It encompasses career achievement, community service, involvement in business and professional associations, and fidelity to UNO. To date, 178 graduates have been honored with the Citation award.

Branigan is senior vice president for innovative services with the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce. She earned a BS in 1984 and a master's in public administration in 1986. She has worked for the chamber for more than three decades.

Pechar earned his degree in speech communication in 1963. He is chairman and principal owner of McCormick Distilling Company based in Weston, Missouri.

For more about Branigan, Pechar and the Citation award, visit unoalumni.org/citation-award

SHOWING THE O

Mavericks keep traveling with the O – then traveling to ShowtheO.com.

The popular UNO Alumni Association website features photos from around the world featuring UNO graduates, faculty, staff, students and others posing with O flags. The association provides the flags free to anyone who requests them through the site.

Show the O flags since have made it to every continent and every state. Photos shown represent more than 130 countries displayed on a map and in a quick-loading photo gallery.

Recent Shows of the O:

DRAGON FLY

Jenny Liu, director of UNO's Office of Institutional Research, let the O fly at 4,650 feet high on Jade Dragon Snow Mountain in China's Yunnan province.



OORAH FOR THE O

A 2015 UNO MBA graduate and now a 2nd lieutenant with the U.S. Marine Corps, James Eldridge Showed the O while completing training at The Basic School at Camp Barrett in Quantico, Virginia. This photo came after completion of one of the school's major milestones – the final attack of Field Exercise III.



SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

Paul Hoffman hits Key West “fairly regularly,” he says. This time he took his O flag with him, taking a picture at the southernmost point in the continental United States – just 90 miles from Cuba.



GRAND TIME IN GRAND CAYMAN

Benjamin Spadt (BS '14) and his daughter Leona Show the O at Starfish Point in Grand Cayman. Says Spadt: “Over the last few years, my family and I have also traveled to Singapore, Italy, Australia and Iceland. I am happy that we are finally able to “Show the O” and we will continue to do so as we continue to travel.”



CAREER HELP WITH UNO'S ACDC

UNO's ACDC – the Academic and Career Development Center – offers career help to all alumni, including career coaching, interview practice, help with résumés, access to tools and more.

New to ACDC – and available to alumni – is Handshake, a career job board platform. Also available to UNO alumni is Startup Tree, an alumni and entrepreneurial network that brings together collaborators, investors and mentors in Omaha's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Alumni also can join the UNO Alumni Association LinkedIn group featuring thousands of members. Fellow alumni often are receptive to helping fellow graduates find a job – if they know who they are.

For access to career tools, tips and advice, and a list of career-related events, visit unoalumni.org/careerservices.



HITTING A HIGH NOTE IN STRAUSS

PERFORMING ARTS CENTER TAKES CENTER STAGE WITH RENOVATION, ADDITION

In music, a fermata indicates a hold or pause. If placed on a note or rest, it's a grand pause.

For much of UNO's existence, music students have had to endure several fermatas. But thanks in large measure to private giving, an upbeat tempo is being heard these days in the School of Music with renovation and expansion complete on the 46-year-old Willis A. and Janet S. Strauss Performing Arts Center.

"The renovation and expansion of Strauss will not only enhance UNO School of Music's growing reputation as one of the top cultural and academic destinations in Nebraska," says the school's director, Washington Garcia, D.M.A., "but it will also provide students, faculty and staff with state-of-the-art facilities and acoustics to strengthen scholarly and creative activities."

The project also provides additional space to accommodate growth in the number of music majors in the school, he adds.

"With almost 200 students, the School of Music has continued to see a consistent growth of around 15-20 percent in its incoming classes. This renovation and expansion will help accommodate these students, as well as provide room for further growth," Garcia says.

The \$18.3 million project was made possible with state and university funds and private support from a community of donors, including a lead gift from Ruth and Bill Scott of Omaha.

"I would like to thank all patrons who made this project possible," Garcia says.

The Strauss Performing Arts Center now features a renovated concert hall to

accommodate nearly 400 guests for events including concerts, rehearsals, UNO's State of the University address, TEDxUNO and more.

A new, smaller recital hall also was added during the addition to seat 100 guests. The update included an addition of 25,000 square feet encompassing practice rooms, teaching spaces with studios for the keyboard, brass, percussion and technology areas, and a recording studio.

Existing rooms were updated and outfitted with new equipment.

It's all worth the wait, one of several the school has endured related to having adequate space.

UNO's first bachelor of science in music was established in the 1920s, but students performed wherever they could over the



UNO music students at one time performed in an annex just south of the fieldhouse. In 1965 it was named in honor of Sarah Joslyn, one of the most ardent and generous supporters of the university in its early days.



Strauss construction was completed in 1973 but was intended to be just the first phase of what was intended.

years, including Arts and Sciences Hall and in a small annex named for longtime university patron Sarah Joslyn, just south of Sapp Fieldhouse.

The Strauss Performing Arts Center provided the school's first permanent home — but it was not what was originally envisioned. The Nebraska Legislature in 1969 approved funding only for Phase I of the building at \$1.9 million, less than half the \$5 million requested. The building was dedicated in 1973.

A Phase II addition was to follow with space for speech and drama facilities. Those, however, later were allocated to Arts and Sciences Hall and the Weber Fine Arts Building, which opened in 1992.

In 1986, another wait ended upon dedication of the building to honor Willis

and Janet Strauss. That's when a Casavant pipe organ was installed in space originally designed for it but which sat empty for nearly 13 years.

Now, the Strauss Performing Arts Center is not just "whole" but poised to educate the next generation of talented musicians with world-class education in the instrumental and choral arts.

"We remain unconditionally committed to serving the community and improving the quality of life in the city and state through music," Garcia says.

*With contributions from Jessica Hilt,
University Communications*

A NEW SOUND TO CONCERT HALL NAME

The newly renovated concert hall in Strauss now bears the name of UNO Chancellor Emeritus John Christensen and his wife, Jan.

Christensen served as chancellor for a decade, stepping down from his post in May 2017. Jan was a longtime teacher and administrator with Omaha Public Schools.

Ruth Scott says that honoring the Christensens with the naming is a fitting tribute to them given that they dedicated more than 40 years to the growth and prosperity of UNO and to its positive impact on the Omaha community.

"John Christensen has had a profound impact on UNO over many years," Scott says. "This project was a priority for him during the final years of his tenure as chancellor. Because John and his wife, Jan, are a great team, it seems appropriate that we recognize the leadership and devotion they have provided to UNO."

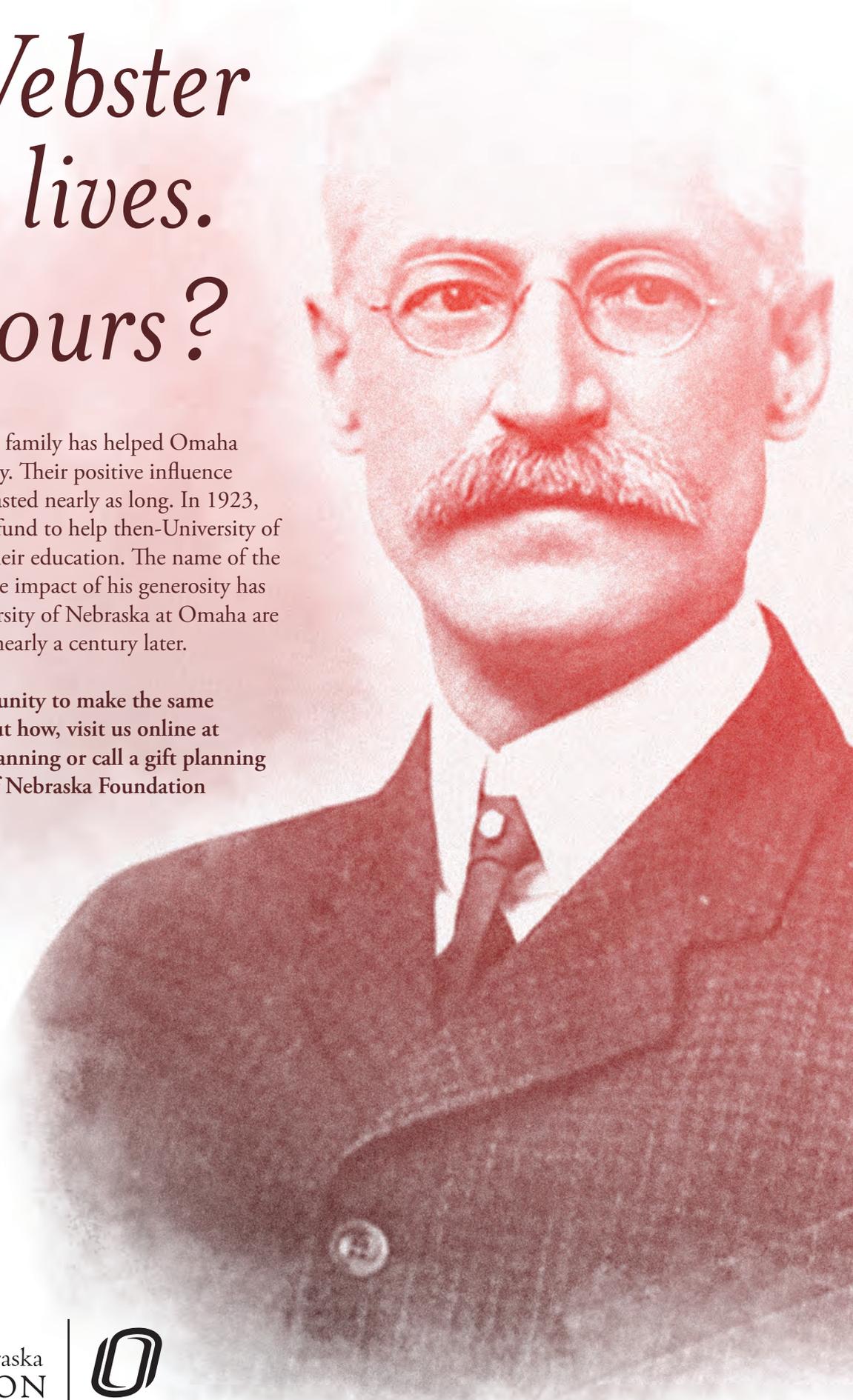
John Christensen said that he and his wife are both touched by this tribute.

"This honor is especially meaningful to Jan and me because of our love for the University of Nebraska at Omaha," Christensen says. "It was a privilege to lead the campus and to witness the extraordinary generosity and humility of its philanthropic supporters, especially that of Ruth and Bill Scott and the entire Scott family."

The Webster legacy lives. Will yours?

For 100 years, the Webster family has helped Omaha and its business community. Their positive influence on the city's students has lasted nearly as long. In 1923, John R. Webster started a fund to help then-University of Omaha students pay for their education. The name of the school has changed, but the impact of his generosity has not. Students at the University of Nebraska at Omaha are benefitting from his fund nearly a century later.

You have the same opportunity to make the same kind of impact. To find out how, visit us online at NUFoundation.org/giftplanning or call a gift planning officer at the University of Nebraska Foundation at 800-432-3216.



UNO HALL OF FAME BASEBALL COACH BOB GATES PASSES AWAY



Former UNO baseball Head Coach Bob Gates died on Tuesday, Jan. 22, at the age of 93.

Gates led the Mavericks for 23 years, earning 464 victories from 1976-99, the second-most wins of any coach in program history. Through his efforts, the program survived severe budget cuts within the athletic department during the mid-1980s and surged back to prominence in the North Central Conference.

He was inducted into the UNO Athletic Hall of Fame in 2002.

“Coach Gates was one of the of the most respected high school and college coaches in the state of Nebraska,” said Trev Alberts, UNO vice chancellor of athletics. “His vast contributions have had a profound impact in shaping the rich history of UNO Athletics and the Maverick baseball program.”

Throughout his time as UNO’s head coach, Gates led the program to two NCC Championships and two NCAA Tournament appearances. He replaced Virgil Yelkin as head coach in 1976, just months before Yelkin passed away after a long illness.

Gates’ first nine teams at UNO posted a 202-147 mark, including a 31-16 record in 1981 when the team was one win shy of advancing to the NCAA Division II College World Series.

program not only existed but also thrived.

“He will always occupy an important place in our history and our hearts. I and countless others are lucky to have known and played for him.”

Prior to his time at UNO, Gates coached six seasons at Pershing College in Beatrice, Nebraska. He also was a scout for the Baltimore Orioles and was the director of the Mickey Owen Baseball School.

Gates graduated from Omaha Holy Name High School, where he was a standout athlete. After graduation, he joined the U.S. Navy, serving on the USS Wiley as a seaman from 1944-46. He then attended the University of Nebraska, where he was a two-year starter in basketball and part of the Cornhuskers’ conference championship team in 1950. He also played baseball for the Huskers and graduated from the school in 1950.

He returned to Holy Name as the school’s head basketball, baseball and football coach and remained there until 1961. He led the Ramblers to six state championships in baseball, football and basketball before moving into college coaching at Nebraska. During his tenure as a high school coach, two of his football teams and one basketball team had undefeated seasons.

“ COACH GATES WAS ONE OF THE OF THE MOST RESPECTED HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE COACHES IN THE STATE OF NEBRASKA.

During his final eight seasons, he guided the Mavericks to a 164-143 mark and qualified for the NCC postseason playoffs each year, as well as winning a division title in the process.

In his 29 overall seasons as a college head coach, he recorded 541 career wins.

“Coach Gates was a great man and a great coach,” said former UNO baseball student-athlete Ethan Anderson, now UNO’s assistant athletic director of event management. “He was a true professional, gentleman and baseball ambassador to the community. His determination through perilous state financial difficulties ensured that the UNO baseball

Gates was an assistant coach in baseball and basketball for the Huskers from 1961-66. He then served as the athletic director as well as the basketball and baseball coach at Pershing College for the following six seasons. On the diamond, he totaled a 77-40 record at Pershing until the school closed. He eventually returned to Nebraska as a football recruiter and assistant baseball coach.

In his final season at UNO in 1999, Gates stated that “The thing I enjoyed most about what I’ve done is working with kids, helping them become better players, students and citizens so that they can take their place in life.”



UNO's String faculty. Front row, from left: Olga Smola, Mary Perkinson. Back, left: Brian Sherwood, Jeremy Baguyos, Gregory Clinton.

There's nothing to playing an instrument, said Johann Sebastian Bach.

"All you have to do is touch the right key at the right time and the instrument will play itself," the German composer noted.

Easy enough for music professors, right? We assume they were born to play.

But the doctors of music in Strauss aren't the only ones on campus who can touch the right keys. In every UNO college are professors who play brass, string, percussion and other instruments.

Some even do so quite well.

Here are a few of them. If there's a common thread among them, it's that a parent pushed them to play, and they begin to play young.

Love of music, though, keeps them playing — one right key after another.



BILL WAKEFIELD

CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE
DRUMS

Bill Wakefield was exposed to music at an early age thanks to his father's role as a full-time musician playing vaudeville shows throughout the Midwest. The younger Wakefield's first public performance on the drums was at age 9.

When he was a student at then-Omaha University, he joined fellow OU students Johnny Ray Gomez and Mel Daley to form the "U-Neeks." They were good enough to sign a three-year contract with the Applause label.

Wakefield kept the beat going, performing in places including Las Vegas, Chicago, London and Rome. Another group he belonged to even was inducted into the Iowa Rock 'N' Roll Music Association Hall of Fame.

"For me, along with academia, music has been one component of this 'duality'

throughout my life," he says. "I would never trade either one as both have provided me with everlasting rewards and memories."



RONALD BARTZATT

CHEMISTRY

GUITAR, VIOLIN, VIOLA, FLUTE, IRISH WHISTLE

Ronald Bartzatt was trained on the piano as a child, but after traveling to Japan as a member of the U.S. Army he found a passion for string and woodwind instruments.

First came the classical guitar, then the violin, viola and fife before Bartzatt taught himself to play the flute and Irish whistle. Today he owns nearly three dozen such instruments.

He also uses computer programs to write his own compositions.

"Playing and writing music gives me a method to defuse anxiety, worry and anger," Bartzatt says. "Music is very good for my health, both mentally and physically."

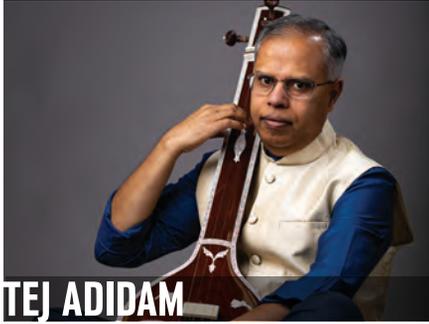


ASHLEE DERE

GEOLOGY
FLUTE

Starting at 10 years old, Ashlee Dere began performing on the flute in elementary band classes, continuing with her high school's wind ensemble and marching band. That led to performances during the Tournament of Roses Parade and at halftime of a San Diego Chargers football game. During college, she learned to play the contrabass flute, a larger version of a normal flute. Today, she plays bass flute as a member of the Heartland Community Flute Choir, which is organized by UNO School of Music faculty member Christie Beard and which performs its own compositions.

“One of my favorite things about playing flute is the chance to use a different part of my brain than I usually do for science,” Dere says. “And I find playing relaxing; a bit like yoga.”



TEJ ADIDAM

MARKETING
SITAR

When he was just 7 years old and living in Kanpur, India, Phani Tej Adidam attended his first classical music concert. Performing that day was Pandit Ravi Shankar, whose work on the sitar and tampura, two classical Indian string instruments, immediately captivated Adidam.

After initially pursuing vocal work and learning the sitar, Adidam ultimately focused on academics rather than music. Years later, after joining UNO in 1996, Adidam joined a group that invited reigning stars of Indian Classical music to perform in Omaha and Lincoln. In 2004, Adidam had the opportunity to perform alongside Shankar in what would be his last performance in the American Midwest.

“It was the greatest experience of my life,” Adidam says. “I even experimented and improvised on a few notes of the tanpura, and after the concert Panditji commented and appreciated that improvisation. Ever since, I have continued to celebrate Indian classical music as a medium of spirituality and therapy of the mind and soul.”

OWEN MORDAUNT

ENGLISH
PIANO, ORGAN AND
ACCORDION

Born and raised on a farm in the southern part of Swaziland (now Eswatini) in South Africa, Owen Mordaunt would visit his relatives after school and spend time teaching himself music on a pump organ. This led to interest in the piano, which he practiced from middle school through college.

Today, Mordaunt remains largely self-trained but he doesn't keep his talents

to himself. He sometimes performs at locations including the lobby of several CHI hospitals and at nursing homes to provide entertainment to residents.



DARIO GHERESI

BIOMEDICAL INFORMATICS
GUITAR, BANJO, MANDOLIN

As a child, Dario Gheresi would watch his grandfather play music on an accordion and soon began imitating him on his own child-size version. Today, he is a multi-instrumentalist who can play guitar, tenor banjo and mandolin.

He specializes in traditional Irish music but is familiar playing many musical genres — even having a stint as a member of a heavy metal band.

“There is something special about learning a new tune in a living tradition and passing it on to someone else,” Gheresi says. “The community is welcoming and I've met incredibly interesting people through this music.”



HOLLY MILLER

COMMUNICATION
VIOLIN

For Holly Miller, music was a part of her family's everyday life. Her father was a jazz musician from Chicago and her mother was an accomplished pianist.

Her own musical path began in fourth grade after being drawn to the violin for its size and design. She played year after year. As a student at UNO she played as part of the Town and Gown Orchestra and the UNO Heartland Philharmonic. For 20 years she has been a member of the Prairie Rose Ensemble.

Now, she's helping her 4-year-old granddaughter learn violin.

“Red Auerbach once said that ‘Music washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life,’” Miller says. “I agree. The act of making music brings me joy.”



KRISTIN GIRTTEN

ENGLISH
PIANO

As the youngest of three children, Kristin Girtten followed in her siblings' footsteps and was introduced to the piano at just 5 years old by her mother, herself trained on the saxophone. Girtten played and sang through graduate school.

These days, when she gets the chance, she turns to classical composers such as Bach for the mental challenge they provide. She's also passing her love for music on to her two sons, who are learning the violin.

“A lot of what I enjoy about it, as a mom, is the ‘me time’ it provides,” Girtten says. “However, what's most important to me is accompanying my children at home as they play.”

KAY KEISER

EDUCATION AND EDUCATIONAL
LEADERSHIP
HARP

After seeing an advertisement for private lessons as a student at Northwest High School, Kay Keiser began what would become a decades-long passion for performing on the harp. That continued as a student at UNO, including Keiser's first major performance at the Criss Library's opening.

She since has performed at events including weddings, holiday parties and even the Omaha Community Playhouse production of “A Christmas Carol” with the orchestra.

“When playing a wedding, and you do it well, or you're in an orchestra and everything is just right, it's more than just being successful,” Keiser says. “The experience of performing is satisfying just in itself.”



Claire Chamley



Tammi Owens

BOOK IT: BOARD GAMES AND BONDING ARE BIG AT UNO'S LIBRARY

You won't get a frown-faced "Shhhhhh" from librarian Tammi Owens when it comes to at least one of the offerings at UNO's Dr. C.C. and Mabel L. Criss Library.

In fact, she tells visitors that "Here you can play."

That's the title of a chapter Owens wrote with fellow library employee Claire Chamley in a soon-to-be published book on gaming and gamification in academic libraries.

Yes, gaming in libraries. UNO, in fact, has a collection of games constituting dozens of titles in circulation and available for checkout.

"As a library it might seem weird," says Owens, also an assistant professor at UNO.

"But university libraries should have more than just an academic resource. With the game collection, we're taking care of the whole student. Students need time to de-stress and engage their brain in different ways.

"When you start breaking it down it's exactly what we're working towards here at the university. What are we about? Learning new things and coming up with new ideas."

Through gaming, Owens says, students learn how to be creative, solve problems, work with others toward a common goal, and play by the rules. All skills that will benefit them in the classroom and beyond, she adds.

Charles Fisher, supervisor of the library's

Creative Production Lab, agrees. Fisher says he's had great success using gaming in settings like debate camps.

"Students need to step into the role they're going to play, know the rules and go in prepared from a research basis to operate within those rules," he says. "It tests all of their basic problem-solving skills."

Fisher says he's also seen board games become more popular among adults as a social pastime. One example includes Spielbound Board Game Café, founded by UNO alum Scott O'Dell ('10). Spielbound, in its fourth year, offers hundreds of board games patrons can check out to play in the coffee shop setting.

Erin Painter, creativity librarian at the UNO-KANEKO Library, notes that games aren't just kid's play.

"Adults are realizing that creative play is rewarding and satisfying in a way that being online isn't," Painter says. "It's a lot more meaningful and tangible."

"Carving that time out for creative play and coming together — especially right now with lots of tension and divisiveness in the world — reminds you what it means to be human and be part of a community. Doing that more can help you remember why you want to be a part of a community to begin with."

Community is a big part of what motivated Chamley to host a regular game night

with the same group of friends for the past four years. She says it's something to look forward to as a social outlet.

"Maybe I had a bad day, but I can forget about everything except how to be this character and make it through this [fictional] desert without dying," Chamley says.

The storytelling aspect of gaming is a draw for many, too. "Gaming is such a great way for someone to take a step out of their regular day-to-day and expand their mind," Owens says. "You're developing a whole new world, developing a backstory."

Games like Dungeons and Dragons (commonly referred to as D&D), a fantasy role-playing game set in an imaginary world loosely based on medieval myths, are a perfect example of when storytelling and gaming converge.

Owens says she's thrilled to see students developing research, critical thinking, problem-solving and other skills that will also help them navigate the library and their academic lives.

UNO student Liam al-Hindi says that playing Dungeons and Dragons has taught him "how to tell a good story" over the past few years as a member of the Dungeons and Dragons Club on campus.

But storytelling isn't the only takeaway al-Hindi has gained from his "passion" for D&D over the years. "I've learned how to push people to succeed when they think they can't and, most importantly, how to understand that there are times in our life that are just up to chance."

Beyond community, research and storytelling, Owens says there is one big, sometimes overlooked benefit to playing games: being open to taking risks.

"Games allow people to fail with a really nice safety net. You can lose and it can even be fun. And it's going to be fine."

— Stefanie Monge, *University Communications*

Reacting to the Past with Renaissance Role-Playing

Growing up in Rapallo, Italy, UNO Associate Professor of history Martina Saltamacchia was accustomed to walking by medieval structures. Her students, however, often find it more difficult to comprehend life in medieval Europe when many of them have never seen a building more than 200 years old.



Martina Saltamacchia

For the past few years, Saltamacchia, who also is director of the Medieval/Renaissance Studies program at UNO, has been leading “role-playing” sessions in her “World Civilizations I,” “Building Cathedrals,” “The Medieval University” and “The Crusades” classes.

“I was looking for new ways to reach my students,” Saltamacchia says. “I was looking for ways to bring the past to life.”

This effort, called “Reacting to the Past” (RTTP), consists of elaborate games set in the past in which students are assigned roles informed by classic texts. Class sessions are run entirely by students; instructors only advise and guide before grading students’ oral and written work.

For example, one reenactment of the events of the Second Crusade involved students playing characters including Frederick Barbarossa, King Louis VII and Emperor Conrad. After some brief instructions, the students dove into verses from the Bible, the Quran and other ancient texts before jumping into dialogue with each other. Students each have their own agenda while striving to win the war.

Once the activity is complete, students learn that things could have played out much differently. But, as the saying goes, history is written by the victors.



“I immediately feel the difference, because when I go back to a normal lesson they start questioning everything I say,” Saltamacchia says.

Another way history is brought to life is the annual “Encountering the Past: Costumes, Crafts & Combat” event organized by Medieval/Renaissance Studies every September in the Pep Bowl. Students have the chance to wear and interact with armor comparable to what was worn by knights in the Middle Ages.

The Barony of the Lonely Tower, Omaha’s chapter of the Society for Creative Anachronism, also provides combat demonstrations. The group studies and recreates mainly Medieval European cultures and their histories before the 17th century.

The armor is heavy, uncomfortable and hot in the summer heat. As students help each other strap on the gear, they experience what soldiers of the era had to endure.

“Today, it is hard for students to get fully engaged into something,” Saltamacchia says. “Anything that brings to life the past is something they respond to very well.”



Many students get so immersed in the role-playing experiences that they go far above and beyond what is required for class.

For example, when Saltamacchia mentioned that an international symposium on the Crusades would soon be held in St. Louis, 10 of her students raised money to attend.

Saltamacchia says “play” in class has allowed her students to personally experience ancient history in a brand-new light.

“The most important thing to realize is that history is not made up of events and dates, but people.”

— Nolan Searl, University Communications

A PLACE TO *play*



To say theater roots at UNO run deep is anything but ... dramatic. The first time students here staged a production, Woodrow Wilson was president, Greece was ruled by a king and Eugene O'Neill had yet to produce his first play.

That first UNO play, performed Dec. 13, 1912, was "Hicks at College," the tale of millionaire breakfast food man Hiram Hicks (some took it to be real-life cereal magnate John Harvey Kellogg). Staged by the senior class, the play raised money to purchase a since-forgotten memorial to the university — the first gift from the student body.

"Hicks," though, had to be performed in Jacob's Gymnasium on the university's original campus, located at 24th and Pratt Streets. There was no place for UNO Theatre to call home — and wouldn't be for 80 years.

Even when the university moved to its present site, theater productions still had to share gym space in the Arts and Sciences building's multi-purpose auditorium.

That resulted in countless frustrations for Frances McChesney Key, a part-time dramatics instructor at UNO in the mid-1940s.



"I had to fill out a requisition every time we wanted to rehearse on stage," Key recounted in a 1960 Gateway article that looked at the history of theater at UNO. "We seldom got to the stage before dress rehearsals because the women's physical education department was in the auditorium, and the stage was also used for assemblies, convocations and talent shows, plus being rented out to off-campus groups."

THINKING OUTSIDE OF THE BOX

These days, UNO Theatre doesn't have to share space with bouncing balls and warning whistles.

That came with the 1992 dedication of what now is known as the Del & Lou Ann Weber Fine Arts Building (WFAB), dedicated to the arts with functional teaching space for dramatics — and a stage.

Like the building itself, the stage is anything but traditional. Called the "Black Box Theatre," it is a simple, unadorned space with a flat floor and black walls versatile enough to create stage space for the most unique of productions and presentations.

Located on WFAB's basement level, it features mobile seating units and a full-tension wire grid system for ample lighting positions. Three balcony levels surround the stage floor, providing audience seating or additional stage space. The flexibility allows UNO's theatre students and faculty to transform the Black Box Theatre into a living, functional work of art for each performance.

An example of the space's versatility came in 2013's "Female Transport" set aboard an early 1800s ocean transport ship. The set was designed to move like an ocean liner and to spray water. The female cast, portraying convicts, also never left the stage, necessitating some ingenious costume transformations.

In the 2016 production "Kwaidan — Japanese Ghosts and Demon Stories," the audience was taken on a trip to several

UNO theatre program spaces throughout WFAB to view presentations of different traditional Japanese spirit stories. The play was a celebration of Omaha's 50-plus year relationship with its sister city, Shizuoka, Japan.

"Metamorphose" in 2018, meanwhile, featured a 16-thousand-gallon pool of water.

WHAT'S NEXT?

With its own space now for 27 years, UNO Theatre is thriving as one of three units within the College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media's School of the Arts. Around 70 students are majoring in theatre and another two dozen are minoring in it, says Steven Williams, unit coordinator.

Students stage four to five productions per year with about eight performances per production. With the introduction of a new musical theatre concentration, forthcoming productions will include one musical a year in partnership with the School of Music.

UNO Theatre also is collaborating with the University of Nebraska Medical Center, becoming an integral part of programs like the new joint Medical Humanities major and UNMC's Buffet Cancer Center's Healing Arts Program. UNO Theatre students pose as patients, acting out various scenarios that are recorded then incorporated into online education modules for UNMC students to use as case studies for their classes.

Students also will see more opportunities for national and international initiatives with expansion of current study tours in Stratford; a performance tour of the world-famous Fringe Festival in Edinburgh, Scotland; and, tours to London in collaboration with the School of the Arts and School of Criminology and Criminal Justice.

With its own space now, it appears there's no boxing in UNO Theatre.

— With contributions from Jessica Hilt,
University Communications

SUITED FOR BETTER PLAY

UNO researcher studies how ‘exosuits’ could benefit those who play — and those who need a hand

The term “exosuit” might call to mind science fiction films like “Iron Man” or “Tron.” But while exosuits are real, none today will help you hack into a video game or defeat alien invaders (as yet).

Rather, exosuits are helping modern researchers — including some at UNO — discover important insights into the human body.

Assistant Professor of Biomechanics Philippe Malcolm is one of today’s scientists studying exosuit technology. He began his first exosuit project, WarriorWeb, while working as a post-doctoral research fellow under Connor Walsh, associate professor of engineering and applied sciences at Harvard University.

The overall goal for the WarriorWeb project was to develop an exosuit that provides health benefits by reducing load and preventing injuries. For example, Malcolm says, the exosuit could reduce potential injuries for soldiers traversing diverse terrain while carrying heavy loads.

“As part of the project, we developed different versions of the exosuit, or what we call, ‘soft exosuits,’” Malcolm says.

A soft exosuit consists of textile garments that attach to the individual wearing it and cables that generate movement. The goal is to reduce the amount of energy the body needs to produce to achieve a specific result.

One study Malcolm helped with discovered that running on a treadmill while wearing an exosuit reduced the metabolic cost of that running by 5.4 percent. That would make a marathon, 26.2



miles, “feel” like 24.9 miles with average pace reduced from 9:14 minutes a mile to 8:49 minutes.

Malcolm joined UNO in 2017 and now studies how exoskeletons can help not athletes, but those who have difficulty just walking.



Philippe Malcolm

“We are currently working on biomechanical methods that will help with assistive devices for people with health issues, like peripheral artery disease,” he says.

With the help of his UNO research team, Malcolm hopes to influence what the next generation of assistive devices looks like while pushing the limits of what the human body is capable of.

“If we are able to better minimize the energy we expend while walking, then the logical next step could be to improve performance.”

— Brendan Brown, University Communications

FANTASY PLAY

It doesn’t matter the sport: football, baseball, golf, hockey or even NASCAR — if there is a professional sports league, chances are it has a companion fantasy sports league, too.

Fantasy sports begin with leagues composed typically of six to 12 players. Each member of the league takes on the role of an “owner” who assembles, through a draft, random selection or other generator, a team of players in the professional league in which they are participating.

The better those players perform, the better the owner does. For many participants, fantasy sports are played just for the fun of it. For many more, money is at stake.

Millions play fantasy sports each year, making it an increasingly popular subject of academic research.

That’s so for Adam Tyma, an associate professor of communication at UNO and an avid fantasy football player. For him, fantasy sports are more than just having fun or winning funds.

This spring, Tyma will begin researching primarily fantasy football players, studying what they do and the language they use within their team spaces.

“There are class issues, there are race issues, there are gender issues,” Tyma says, reflecting on his own league’s play. “There are all of these things going on with how we play and the language we use when we play those kinds of things.

“There are unique cultural and communicative aspects that are going on out of each of those spaces, so I want to start digging into that and playing with that for a bit.”

Mathematical analysis is also important for fantasy sports participants. Some pick their players on whims; others put significant thought and research into their selections, scouring player statistics to find the best players.

Completions, passing yards, sacks, fumbles, field goals, punts, etc., are analyzed meticulously. Fantasy sports websites help with player rankings. News is scoured as owners consider trades, cuts and additions.

Play can get complicated and competitive — not unlike the real games being played.

“I’ve been a football fan forever,” Tyma says, “I love the comradery, the collection of people that the fantasy league brings together. You start recognizing the humanity behind it, which is cool.”

— Jessica Hilt, University Communications



Getting Serious About Kid Play

Playing isn't just about having fun — it's critical to learning and development, say UNO's professors of play *By Rick Davis*



Debora Wisneski
John T. Langan Community
Chair of Early Childhood
Education at UNO.

When it comes to education, UNO associate professor Debora Wisneski is serious about play.

Wisneski developed the Play Lab at UNO, an innovative space that prepares aspiring teachers in the theory, science and application of play.

"We know through research on many levels — from neuroscience to developmental psychology, general teaching — and learning research and pediatric medical research — that play is how very young children learn and develop," says Wisneski, the John T. Langan Community Chair of Early Childhood Education at UNO.

But there is a lack of hands-on facilities to train future teachers in play-based education.

Wisneski and Peggy Pawloski, a play environment designer, former kindergarten teacher and UNO graduate, created the Play Lab in 2017 to fill that void. The lab features art materials, games, a small library, a puppet theater, comfy seating and a communal workspace. It also complements a STEM lab that prepares future educators in teaching math and science and an IDEAS lab that provides professional resources for education students.

"The Play Lab allows our students to learn through play themselves," Wisneski says, "then learn how to use play to teach."

A LOSS OF PLAYTIME

To play is to progress.

“We do know from the research that when very young children are deprived of play, their learning is diminished and they can have problems, either emotionally or cognitively,” Wisneski says.

Play can be child-directed, teacher-guided or controlled. According to research, none is particularly “better” than the other. “It’s about having the teachers know which type of play is necessary for the best learning at that time, for that child,” Wisneski says.

And that’s become something of a lost art.

In 2009, Joan Almon and Ed Miller, founders of the Alliance for Childhood, published a report highlighting dramatic changes in kindergarten education over the last two decades. Students were spending more time being taught and tested on skills and less time learning through play, exploration, exercise and imagination.

“These practices,” the authors wrote, “violate the long-established principles of child development and good teaching, and compromise both children’s health and their long-term prospects for success in school.”

“It caused a concern,” Wisneski says, adding that many of the performance-based changes in early education coincided with the No Child Left Behind Act. “There was some debate in the research because when you directly teach someone, surprise, their test scores go up.”

But, Wisneski says, those better scores didn’t necessarily translate to greater success for children in later grades. Neither did they account for play-based learning’s critical role in social-emotional learning and self-regulation. “We were finding that those students socially and emotionally were not doing well in the older grades,” she says.

Play-based learning, Wisneski believes, aligns more directly with today’s in-demand skills: scientific inquiry, problem-solving, teamwork and creativity, to name a few.

The tide is slowly turning in education. New Hampshire passed a law last year requiring that kindergarten course content and teaching follow a play-based model that includes movement, creative expression, exploration, socialization and music. Omaha Public Schools is also working on an initiative, called Transforming Kindergarten, that looks to incorporate play-based learning into the curriculum.

UNO is ahead of the curve as College of Education faculty research and teach about play across various spheres.

ADVENTURES BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Assistant Professors Anne Karabon and Amanda Steiner, for example, have studied learning through play at the Bay Family Children’s Adventure Trails, an adventure exhibit at Omaha’s Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium. Situated on five acres of zoo land, it offers young visitors outdoor, hands-on learning opportunities, including an oversized eagle’s nest; a three-story treehouse with a shipwreck slide, climbing net and bridge; interactive animal exhibits; and a 400-gallon, 250-foot water exhibit.

Karabon and Steiner in a 2017 study found that the exhibit offered children an opportunity to practice, refine and enhance their cognitive, physical, social and emotional skills. The richest play occurred in spaces where children developed pretend scenarios and transformed material and the environment into something from their imagination.

Karabon now is working on a research project funded by the National Science Foundation called BODYMODELS — Biomechanics to Offer Diverse Young Minds Opportunities to Develop, Explore and Learn STEM. The project provides professional development for early elementary teachers on how to use biomechanics, the study of the body in motion, as a way to teach STEM concepts.

“Kids love moving their bodies and seeing the results,” Karabon says, a Milwaukee elementary school teacher before joining academia. “Early educators can use these movements to discuss physics — forces, balance and motion — as well as mathematics — angles and comparing measurements.”

PLAY AND MOTOR-SKILL DEVELOPMENT

A former college softball player at the University of Nebraska at Kearney, Assistant Professor Danae Dinkel, is investigating how to support active play behaviors in infants.

“Usually people think of this in terms of ‘tummy time,’” Dinkel says. The practice involves putting infants on their stomachs, while awake and supervised, as a way to develop their neck and shoulder muscles and promote motor skills.

“From birth, we just want to make sure they have opportunities to move as much as possible,” says Dinkel, a faculty member in the School of Health and Kinesiology

As children grow older, active play can offer parents opportunities to bond with their children through physical activity.

She says studies have linked moderate to vigorous activity and fitness with increased attention, executive function (working memory) and higher academic achievement. Dinkel is conducting her own study looking at how new parents encourage their babies to explore.



RACE AND CHILDREN’S PLAY

Education assistant professor Kerry-Ann Escayg, a native of Trinidad who taught preschool and elementary education in Canada before coming to UNO four years ago, says observing children’s play in the classroom can reveal racial perceptions and serve as a starting point for discussions on racism.

“Much of the research shows that children demonstrate racial beliefs through play activity,” Escayg says, adding that white children, in particular, are often found to exclude children of other races from play activities.

In addition to racial exclusion, racial beliefs and attitudes are expressed in what children prefer to play with. She references a recent Canadian study finding that children — irrespective of race — preferred to play with white dolls over black dolls. She says studies have shown that children’s racial attitudes begin to emerge around 3 to 5 years of age.

Escayg advises teachers to talk to young students about racism — and to go beyond traditional platitudes of “we are all the same” to deeper discussions about racial relationships and white privilege.



Guentzel photo courtesy of Pittsburgh Penguins/Joe Sargent
Zuerlein photo courtesy of Los Angeles Rams

DRINKING FROM THE CUP

JAKE GUENTZEL has had a meteoric rise with Pittsburgh since joining the team in 2016 following three seasons at UNO.

He scored two goals in his NHL debut against the New York Rangers in November 2016, the first on his first-ever shot. Then, in the Stanley Cup Playoffs, Guentzel led all NHL scorers with 13 goals and tied the playoff record for points by a rookie with 21.

Guentzel scored the winning goal in Games 1 and 2 of the Stanley Cup Final against the Nashville Predators, helping the Penguins become the first repeat champions in 19 years.

Helping Guentzel and the Penguins to the championship was another former Mav, Josh Archibald. Andrej Sustr played for the Tampa Bay Lightning in the 2015 Stanley Cup Finals.

GETTING A LEGATRON UP WITH THE RAMS

Rams kicker **GREG ZUERLEIN** became the first UNO graduate to score in a Super Bowl when his team fell to New England 13-3 in February.

Zuerlein — known as “Greg the Leg” and “Legatron” — had propelled the Rams into the Super Bowl with a 57-yard winning kick in overtime vs. the New Orleans Saints in the NFC Championship. That came after he hit a 48-yarder with eight seconds left in regulation to force the extra period. And Zuerlein did it all with an aching foot that he injured at halftime of that game when stepping on a metal plate near the field surface.

In Super Bowl LIII, Zuerlein hit a 53-yard field goal in the third quarter to force a 3-3 tie.

Zuerlein began his career with the Rams in 2012 when they were in St. Louis. For his career he has made 177 fields and 222 extra points for 753 total points scored.

Three other former Mavs also have played in the Super Bowl: Marlin Briscoe (Miami, 1973 and 1974), Chris Bober (New York Giants, 2001) and Chris Cooper (Oakland Raiders, 2003).



On the diamond and on the hardcourt, on turf and on ice, former Maverick athletes are playing for pay around the world — some even reaching the pinnacles of their sports.

GPRO

By Greg Kozol

IT'S NOT LIKELY THAT RALPH WALDO EMERSON COULD HAVE DRILLED A 58-YARD FIELD GOAL, BUCKLED A BATTER'S KNEES WITH A WICKED CURVEBALL OR POSTERIZED AN OPPONENT WITH A TOMAHAWK-JAM.

But the transcendentalist poet-philosopher from Beantown still was something of a kindred soul with many Maverick athletes now getting a paycheck playing sports.

For many of them, pro sports aren't about glitz, glamour and groupies. Rather, it's about the grind.

But though reaching the pinnacle is the goal, getting there is the fun.

Or, as Emerson is attributed with saying, "It's the not the destination, it's the journey."

Never has UNO had so many of its former athletes on the journey of professional sports. A few of them are even known nationally.

Former Maverick kicker Greg Zuerlein was on the cover of *Sports Illustrated* in January after booting the winning field goal that sent the Los Angeles Rams to the Super Bowl.

Jake Guentzel and Josh Archibald helped the Pittsburgh Penguins to the 2017 Stanley Cup.

More typically, however, most former Mavericks who earn a paycheck playing professionally are grinding away day by day striving to reach the top of their sport.

Or, in some cases, to get back to it.

Tyler Cloyd is at spring training with the Tampa Bay Rays trying to pitch his way to the bigs again. Jayson Megna is skating in Hershey, Pennsylvania, with hopes of joining his brother on NHL ice. Mike Rostampour has hustled up and down courts in Mexico, El Salvador, Slovakia and now Iran.



MIKE ROSTAMPOUR

Mike Rostampour says the life of a professional athlete is both a struggle and a thrill. He describes a typical day as waking at 8 a.m., eating breakfast, going to a two-hour practice, getting lunch, taking a nap, going to a more intense two-hour practice then going home.

"Repeat over and over," he says. "We only have Sundays off. Most jobs aren't as physically taxing."

Rostampour says he's been treated well, living in five-star hotels in El Salvador and Mexico and getting a free apartment and two free meals a day at his most recent pro stop in Prievidza, Slovakia.

He's currently taking a break from the pros having made the Iranian national basketball team. The team is trying to qualify for the FIBA World Cup in China this summer. Rostampour, whose father is from Abadan, Iran, near the border with Iraq, is living in Tehran. The country's basketball federation pays for his food, housing and transportation. When the World Cup ends, he plans to stay in Iran and play in that country's professional league.

No matter where he plays, Rostampour takes the uncertainty of being a professional athlete in stride. The biggest challenge, he says, is the stress of working on short-term contracts and not knowing where he'll end up next. And injuries don't just mean missed playing time — they can put a player in the unemployment line.

"You really have to take care of yourself," the 6-foot-8 forward says. "If you have an injury, it can cause problems. You can get cut. You have to stay on top of that. My body is my job. It's my moneymaker."

To stay on the court, Rostampour brings his own medical kit with an ice machine, icy-hot cream and other supplies.

"You can love basketball but not be a professional basketball player. A lot of guys will see it's a grind."



TYLER CLOYD

Tyler Cloyd also understands the uncertainty that comes with life as a professional athlete. Cloyd made his major league debut with the Philadelphia Phillies in 2012 then missed a season due to Tommy John surgery. He's since bounced among the independent league, the minor leagues and two teams in the majors. He's also pitched in Korea.

Cloyd spent 2018 with the Miami Marlins organization, pitching 17 innings in seven games for the big-league club. He became a free agent after 2018 and in February signed with Tampa Bay hoping to win a spot in the team's bullpen (as of press time).

A right-hander, the 31-year-old has pitched more than 1,000 innings in the minor leagues and 112 in the bigs.

He didn't sign with Tampa Bay until just days before pitchers reported for spring training — but he took that in stride.

"I've been doing it for so many years," he says. "Being a free agent at the end of the year, it's nothing to me."

Cloyd calls his major-league debut with the Phillies a "surreal" experience. "You work hard to get to the big-league level," he says. "You think you know what to expect."

But he was sent back to the minors, where a player deals with long bus trips and early wake-up calls.

He got that taste of the majors and wants to get it back.

"You have to do the work and continue to get better," Cloyd says. "When I first got called up, I took that for granted. I feel like that was a good learning experience. It helped me grow into the person and player I am today, understanding what I need to do."

And though Cloyd says baseball is his job, it hasn't diminished his love of the game.

"When I was in the minors, I really didn't make a whole lot of money," he says. "I needed to have another job to help for my wife and my family. I've been lucky, I've been in baseball long enough, I can make a living."

“ NEVER IN MY LIFE WOULD I HAVE THOUGHT I WOULD BE TRAVELING THE WORLD LIKE THIS, IT'S BECOME BIGGER THAN BASKETBALL. I AM BLESSED TO PLAY A SPORT AND GET PAID THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS FOR IT.



CHRIS BOBER

With his playing days having ended more than a decade ago, Chris Bober can bring a more reflective perspective to life as a professional athlete. The offensive lineman started 46 consecutive games at UNO before spending eight seasons with the New York Giants and Kansas City Chiefs. He retired from football in 2008.

When he became a starter, Bober felt a sense of pride in becoming one of the best 32 centers in football. But that's not what he remembers most.

"When you get to that level, there is so much work involved," says Bober, who now works in real estate and has an auctioneer's license. "There is so much stress. I would have enjoyed the relationships even more."

Bober calls the NFL the most competitive environment he's ever experienced. "They are always looking for a way to replace you," he says. "I was lucky I didn't have an injury that required surgery until I was 30 years old."

Most fans don't understand the mental work and preparation that goes into today's game, Bober says. Although he loved it, the experience became very much like a job that made him appreciate his college days at UNO.

"I was lucky to go to a smaller university," he says. "I was around a lot of guys that played at the big-time schools — the Penn States, the Nebraskas. Their college experience was kind of like a job, he says.

Not at UNO.

"My college experience was just about football. The biggest crowd I ever played for was 10,000 people. Some of the guys I played with had that many at practice in college."

Bober left the game in relatively good health and wouldn't mind if his teenage son got a chance to play in the NFL in the future, if that was in the cards.

"I want him to learn all the things I learned in football," he says. "How to sacrifice and set goals. How to be a good teammate."

Those are the things that stick with Bober, even if the job of professional athlete comes with aches, pains and a lack of job security.



TRA-DEON HOLLINS

In basketball, Tra-Deon Hollins finds himself on the verge of becoming the first former UNO player to make it to the NBA.

He's not the only former UNO player chasing that dream. Other one-time Mavs playing professional basketball include Rostampour, Daniel Norl, Marcus Tyus, Randy Reed II and Devin Patterson.

Hollins is tantalizingly close to making the NBA a reality, though. Growing up in Omaha, he dreamed of playing on basketball's biggest stage but didn't always think he could make it.

He made his mark at UNO from 2015-17, twice being named the Summit League's defensive player of the year while setting the university's single-season and career record for steals. He was drafted by the Fort Wayne Mad Ants of the NBA G League.

The point guard brought his defensive focus to what serves as the NBA's official minor league for upcoming talent. Hollins was among the top five leaders in assists and steals per game midway through the 2018-19 season.

Hollins says he's gaining confidence and is growing as both a person and a player.

"It's one of the best leagues in the world, besides the NBA," he says.

“ I'M NOT AFRAID OF ANY CHALLENGE. NO NAME IS TOO BIG, WHETHER IT'S MY NAME OR STEPHEN CURRY'S NAME.

At the same time, the former Maverick star says he's keeping things in perspective, even though he was only a breath from the NBA at the start of the year. That's easy to do for most G League players.

"I'm doing my laundry," he says at the start of an interview.



Photo courtesy of JustSports Photography



JAYSON & JAYCOB MEGNA

In hockey, former Maverick Jayson Megna also experienced professional sports at the highest level — and now seeks to get back to that stage. Megna, who played the 2011-12 season at UNO, spent time with the Pittsburgh Penguins, New York Rangers and Vancouver Canucks before ending with the Washington Capitals organization.

At the start of the 2018-19 season he was playing center with the Hershey Bears, an affiliate of the Capitals in the American Hockey League

“Obviously, that’s where everyone wants to play,” he says of the NHL. “There’s only a certain amount of jobs. You have to take it on a day-by-day basis. I used to take it harder, more personally. Some things are out of your control.”

Megna says he isn’t the most gifted player but makes up for it with work ethic and preparation. He credits his father, who played defensive back for the Miami Dolphins and the New Orleans Saints, with giving him the right mindset for a professional career in sports.

‘ MY DAD, PLAYING PRO FOOTBALL, HE WAS ALWAYS PUSHING ME. HE WAS A GOOD EXAMPLE TO ME, OFF ICE, WITH ALL THE NUTRITION AND TAKING CARE OF MY BODY. I HAD AN INCREDIBLE FAMILY AND SUPPORT STAFF.

Megna’s brother, Jaycob, who also played hockey at UNO, has played in both the AHL and NHL. He was called up to the NHL’s Anaheim Ducks in late January this season.

Jayson was pushing to join him, but he’s also happy to be doing what he’s doing — no matter where he’s at. “It’s still something I love,” he says. “It’s what gets me up in the morning.”

ALSO PLAYED



UNO has had numerous former athletes go on to play professionally, most notably in football. The first, it appears was one-time Omaha University footballer **ROYCE BROWN**, who played for the Cincinnati Bengals.

Brown was part of the then-Cardinals' football, basketball and track teams. But he excelled most on the gridiron, playing all four years on offense, defense and as a punter.

He continued playing after graduating in 1938, first in the Chicago Cardinals' training camp then for Cincinnati — but not the Bengals now playing in the NFL. The first Cincinnati Bengals were formed in 1937 as a member of the NFL rival American Football League. The AFL folded after that season, but the Bengals continued as an independent team in 1938. Cincinnati played three NFL squads that year, losing to none of them while finishing 7-2-1. That included a 17-13 win over George Halas' Chicago Bears.

But that was Brown's only season as a pro; following his one year with the Bengals, Brown went to work for Swift & Co. in Omaha. "It's a great life, but there's no future in professional football," Brown said. "I think I'll string along with the meatpacking business."

Even then, however, his success was seen as a milestone.

"The fact remains," wrote one reporter, "that Brown's success is certainly one of Omaha U.'s first major athletic achievements."

HERE ARE A FEW OTHER FORMER MAVS WHO NOT ONLY PLAYED PROFESSIONALLY, BUT WHO EXCELLED AT IT:



JOE ARENAS

A 1951 UNO graduate, Arenas was one of the first 20 Hispanics to play in the National Football League, doing so for seven years with the San Francisco 49ers. His best season with the 49ers came in 1953 when he led the league in kickoff returns at 34.4 yards per attempt.



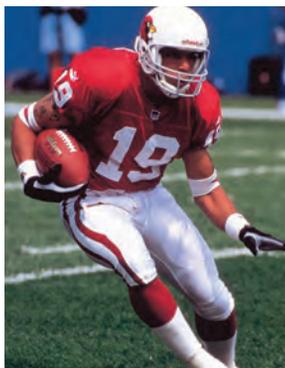
MARLIN BRISCOE

The best known former Maverick professional athlete, Briscoe in 1968 became professional's first black starting quarterback, doing so for Denver. He went on to set several passing records with the Broncos that still stand. Later, he became an All-Pro wide receiver for Buffalo then won two Super Bowls with the Miami Dolphins. A movie on his life is in the latter planning stages.



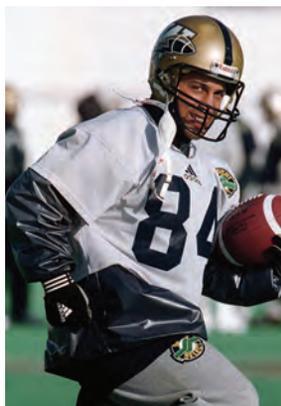
BRUCE BENEDICT

The one-time Maverick played 12 seasons in Major League Baseball as a catcher for the Atlanta Braves from 1978 to 1989. Known more for his defense than for his bat, he was named an All-Star in 1981 and 1983. The latter was his best season at the plate with a .298 batting average, 43 RBI and 61 walks. For his career Benedict hit .242 with 696 hits in 982 games.



MARTAY JENKINS

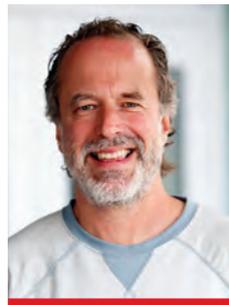
A lightning-fast receiver, Jenkins played in the NFL for Arizona and Dallas but made his mark on kickoff returns. With Arizona in 2000 he had 82 kickoff returns for 2,186 yards, setting NFL single-season records in both categories that still stand.



ROBERT GORDON

A 1990 Maverick graduate, Gordon played 13 years in the Canadian Football League. Six of those were with Winnipeg, which last year inducted him into its hall of fame. For his CFL career, Gordon finished with 623 receptions for 9,539 yards and 50 touchdowns. He also played a handful of seasons in the Arena Football League, where he totaled another 216 receptions for 2,943 yards.

BRICK BY



Victor Winter
UNO computer science
professor and developer of
Bricklayer software.

AS A FORMER COMPUTER SCIENTIST AT SANDIA NATIONAL LABORATORIES IN ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO, A NATIONAL NUCLEAR SECURITY ADMINISTRATION RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT LABORATORY, UNO COMPUTER SCIENCE PROFESSOR VICTOR WINTER IS ACCUSTOMED TO HIGH-LEVEL CONCEPTS.

But it was some low-level play — his children building with Lego blocks on the floor of his home office — that led to one of the more innovative ideas to come out of UNO in recent years.

Winter at the time was ruminating on the best approach to make computer science engaging and meaningful to middle schoolers. He was preparing to teach them computer coding for the first time as part of the College of Information Science & Technology's summer Techademy program.

"My son and my daughter were building Lego stuff on the floor," Winter says, "and they kept handing up stuff to me saying, 'Hey, Dad, code this.'"

BRICK

UNO PROFESSORS MAKE MATH ENGAGING WITH UNIQUE SOFTWARE PROGRAM

By Rick Davis

It was the beginning of Bricklayer, a unique software program that uses coding, mathematics and art to teach computational, quantitative and visual-spatial skills to a wide range of students — from elementary school through college.

And it's fun.

"I figured it was a cool thing for my kids to see me at work, because they got to see that, 'Hey, Dad is playing with Lego. Computer science is cool,'" Winter says.

BUILDING SKILLS

Bricklayer lets students write code to create 2D and 3D artifacts that can be viewed and interacted with using various third-party software, including Lego Digital Designer, Minecraft and 3D Builder.

"Bricklayer is unique in the strength of its integration of math, art and computer science concepts into one learning environment," Winter says.

It's also scalable for different age groups and learning abilities — what Winter calls "a low threshold, infinite ceiling system." Writing a Bricklayer program to create simple Lego artifacts is relatively straightforward. However, more complex code can be written to create intricate artifacts. To help students develop the skills to create such artifacts, Winter continues to refine and add tools (e.g., interactive web apps) to the Bricklayer ecosystem.

"My goal is to leverage tech to the fullest," says Winter, who has taught at UNO for nearly two decades. "After all, I am a computer scientist, so I have the right background to build these things."

The program caught the attention of UNO mathematics associate professor Betty Love. In the summer of 2015, she attended a "Coffee and Code" presentation that Winter was giving at Aromas in Benson, sponsored by the AIM Institute.

"I had never been to one before, so it was really just a fluke," Love says. "After hearing the presentation, I thought, 'This is fabulous. This is what I was looking for.'"



Love is passionate about getting students more engaged with math and lessening fears associated with the subject. "And this was perfect for that," she says. She was so impressed that after the presentation, she met with Winter and told him, "I think we should be teaching this instead of math in elementary schools."

"Fundamentally, I think all people like to create, and Bricklayer allows students to imagine what they would like to create and then figure out how to do it," Love says. "There's this creative piece and then this puzzle piece."

Winter had found that students in his upper-level Principles of Programming Languages class at UNO were often lacking a solid theoretical foundation in the science of programming as well as appropriate fluency in discrete math, the concepts of which form a cornerstone of advanced computational thinking.

"The students in the class didn't understand programs as well as they should," he says. "They never really polished their code. When it (their program) passed the test, they called it a day."

He likened that mindset to a political speech writer who delivers the first draft of the speech that passes the spellchecker. Creating a good speech typically requires numerous revisions. Wordsmithing a speech is an involved process that entails rewording as well as moving, removing and adjusting paragraphs and sentences. The writer needs to understand the message the speech intends to deliver, as well as the rules of grammar.

Similar concepts are at play when writing software.

"If you don't understand the meaning of the code or the rules by which your code can be manipulated," Winter says, "you are going to shy away from 'wordsmithing' your code. If you shy away from such activities, you never get your good speech or your good computer software."

"For me, that was a passionate issue, because I came from Sandia Labs. The Pentagon, back in the '90s, was saying that World War III will be won or lost in cyberspace. If that was true then, it's even more true now. For me, it really is 'hair on fire, this is my path' — understanding software is very important."

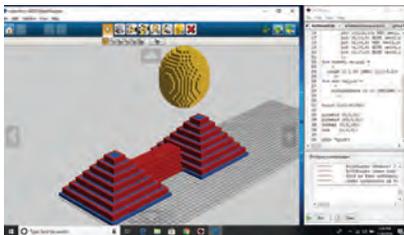


Betty Love, UNO mathematics associate professor, using Bricklayer as a teaching tool.

HELPING THE 'MATH-TRAUMATIZED'

Love was equally passionate about what this program could do for college math students, especially those non-math majors who needed a general math class to graduate. Many of these students had been turned off to math in grade school.

“A LOT OF THESE STUDENTS ARE WHAT I CALL ‘MATH-TRAUMATIZED. YOU SAY THE WORD ‘MATH’ AND THEY AUTOMATICALLY GET ANXIOUS.”



An interdisciplinary team of UNO faculty from computer science, mathematics and education was awarded a National Science Foundation grant to further explore the use of Bricklayer with this population. Winter taught the first pilot course – Introduction to Mathematical and Computational Thinking – to 12 students last spring. Winter and Love each taught a section of the course last fall, with a total of 60 students enrolled. Two sections are being offered this spring and both are at capacity, with 40 students enrolled in each. Previously, the only general-education math option was college algebra.



“I’ve had students tell me, ‘This is the first time I’ve felt like I’ve really understood math,’ or ‘I never knew math could be like this,’” Love says. “Really, math is about problem-solving and finding patterns, and using patterns to make things easier for you.” Those skills are honed in Bricklayer.

“They’re actually writing programs to generate visual artifacts. And it’s so much fun, because they have this innate creativity and, for the most part, they have never been able to use it in a math class.”

Students have presented their artwork on campus. Winter and Love are analyzing the results of the course.



In addition, about 90 area elementary and middle schools have incorporated Bricklayer into their curriculum to some extent, and it’s incorporated into Charlie Cuddy’s Bryan High School math class.

“The results can perhaps best be described as an agile classroom where student behavior more closely resembles that of employees at a tech startup than that of a traditional classroom,” Cuddy writes in a review of the program.

Winter looks to continue to not only enhance the program – he describes himself as an avid tinkerer – but make the program available to more schools and teachers.

“I’ve always wanted to do something that goes beyond helping my friends and neighbors,” Winter says. “I’ve always wanted to do more.”



EVERYTHING IS AWESOME FOR LEGO ENTREPRENEUR AND MAV GRAD RYAN NELSON

By Rick Davis

RYAN NELSON IS ASKED HOW BUSINESS IS GOING.

The small-business owner and UNO graduate is a Lego aficionado, so it's hoped the answer will be "Everything is Awesome!"

Nelson doesn't drop "The Lego Movie" line, but business is booming.

"It's getting to the point where there is only so much of me to go around," he says.

Nelson, a 2006 UNO business graduate, and his wife, Meghan, are owners of MR Brick Designer, a Lego-related small business they operate from their home in Colorado. Built, you might say ... brick by brick.

Ryan and Meghan both were "Lego kids." But they drifted away from playing with Legos. Ryan describes it as their Lego "dark ages" — college, landing a job, then the fun-sucking responsibilities of growing up pulled them away from the colored bricks that connect one to another.

But then, on their first Christmas together in 2010, Meghan bought Ryan a Lego set.

"We built it together, and that got the passion going for us again," Ryan says.

For Christmas 2012, Meghan, a medical research scientist, took it up a notch. She built Ryan a nightstand lamp using Legos. It was a light-bulb moment.

"I thought, 'This is awesome. We should sell these,'" Ryan says. "I threw it up as an experiment on Etsy (an e-commerce website). We sold the first one and then we sold a couple more."

The couple was living in La Vista, Nebraska, at the time. But in 2014, Meghan accepted a job with National Jewish Health in Denver, and Ryan, who was working in emerging technologies at PayPal, decided to jump full time into the Lego biz.

"There was a lot of soul searching," he says.

He loved constructing Lego sets as a kid, particularly the pirate-themed ones. As the oldest of four siblings, Ryan says those sets were reused by his younger brothers to make other creations. So he had no intact kits from his youth.

"Doing what I do, I come across some vintage stuff," Ryan says. "So, I've been able to buy some of the sets that I remember as a kid.

"The difficulty is I don't really have any place to display them. The business has taken up our entire basement right now, and I've got some off-site storage going."

MR Brick Designer's business is twofold: designing and building custom products out of Legos, and buying and selling Lego parts.

Multicolored Lego lamps — constructed out of 250 bricks — remain a top seller; picture frames, designed to match a customer's décor, also are popular. Some of their more unusual creations include a 3 ½-foot-tall replica of a wine barrel and a small-scale replica of a Hampton Hotel for the grand-opening of a location in Omaha. For this article, he created UNO's "O."

A self-described "sale hound," Ryan is always looking for discounts on popular Lego sets. He breaks those up, selling the popular elements, such as mini-figures, individually and the rest in bulk. For instance, a customer who only wants an Ironman mini-figure in a \$120 set could buy that piece individually from MR Brick Designer.

"We easily have a million elements, if not closer to 2 million," Ryan says. "Our workshop is a busy place. We had to upgrade to Elfa drawers, because the bricks are so heavy once you get a few thousand of them in a drawer. And organization is a constant challenge."

The business has taken Ryan across the country, attending such Lego conventions and fan events as Brick Fest Live, Brick Universe, BrickSlopes, Brick Fair and BrickCon. He attended 17 shows in 2017, traveling to Seattle, Pasadena, Miami, Boston and elsewhere.

He's been so busy that an entire shelf at his home contains unbuilt personal Lego sets, still in their packages. "I have a roller coaster that came out this year that's incredible," Ryan says. "But I don't have the time to build it."

That's not to say he isn't having fun — it's just different.

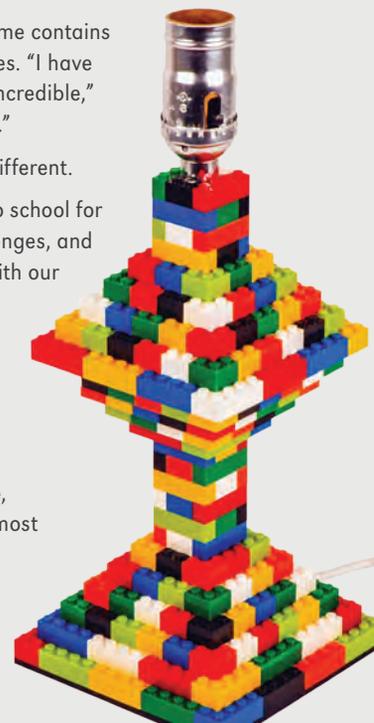
"I definitely enjoy what I do," he says, "I went to school for business, so I enjoy tackling the business challenges, and then the other part of it is getting to interact with our customers and fans in the Lego community.

"I've been a member of a few clubs over my life, but Lego seems to ignite more passion than almost anything else."

Everything is awesome, it appears.

"I've been a member of a few clubs over my life, but Lego seems to ignite more passion than almost anything else."

Everything is awesome, it appears.





From preparing students for careers in the gaming industry to using games in patient rehab, UNO is going to work with video game play

GAME PLAY

By Susan Houston Klaus

The gaming bug bit Jay Austin when he was about 5 years old.

The first time he played a Nintendo game was at an after-school daycare. “They just had one original NES with a couple of the games and you just had to take turns playing,” he says.

Waiting for his moment for another go at Mario Bros., he was hooked. That Christmas, he asked his parents for his own Nintendo.

“Unbeknownst to me, that was the year the Super Nintendo was released. I was very insistent saying, ‘No, no, no, I want a Nintendo like the one at school.’ My parents had to really persuade me to upgrade.”

ON THE BATTLEFIELD

Growing up, he always knew he wanted to do something involved with making games. That changed over the years, from designer to programmer to other aspects of the business.

Austin earned a BS in computer science from UNO in 2008; two years later, he got his master’s in game design from the Rochester Institute of Technology.

After a five-year stint working as a program manager for Microsoft in Seattle and then in Beijing, he moved to Stockholm. There, he took a post as analytics team lead for DICE game studio, part of video game company Electronic Arts.

He’s in charge of a team of analysts who work on DICE titles. Right now, that’s the “Battlefield” franchise.

“Our purview spans a pretty broad range of topics at the studio,” Austin says.

“We work on all of the systems that need to be in place to collect, store and analyze data about the games that we make,” he says. That includes how many people are playing those games and how they’re being used.

He says he appreciates his undergrad education for giving him the broad perspective on all the different disciplines one can be a part of in the gaming world, including programming, design, art and data analysis.

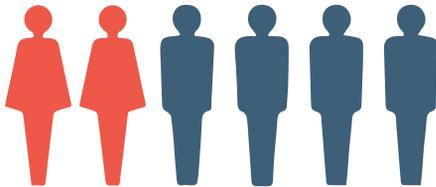
“At UNO, I got to try out a bunch of different things to find what I liked doing. When I graduated, I had a pretty well-rounded core skill set.”

Top: Jay Austin runs a team of analysts who work on the “Battlefield” franchise from his office in Stockholm, Sweden.

Bottom: Game play — and lots more — is available to students in the Criss Library and its Creative Production Lab.

THINK VIDEO GAME PLAY IS DOMINATED BY MALE TEENS? THINK AGAIN.

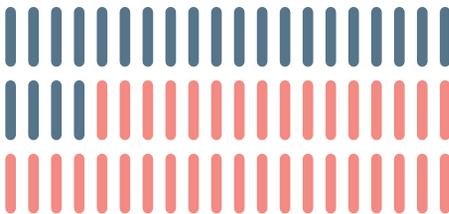
WOMEN 18 AND OLDER ACCOUNT FOR 33% OF THE VIDEO GAME-PLAYING POPULATION



BOYS UNDER 18 ARE JUST 17 PERCENT%



MORE THAN 150 MILLION AMERICANS PLAY VIDEO GAMES—60% DAILY



79%

FROM DIGITAL FORMAT SALES: SUBSCRIPTIONS, DIGITAL GAMES, DIGITAL ADD-ONS, MOBILE APPS, AND SOCIAL NETWORK GAMES



THE ART OF GAMING

UNO students interested in gaming can explore an emphasis in art via a game design concentration in media arts. Or they can choose a computer science track with a game programming concentration. Either way, they have an opportunity to get their feet wet with a broad range of coursework.

Lilly Lu, an associate professor in the College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media, heads the relatively new concentration in game design.

Coursework is focused on developing the artistic and professional aspects of game development, including creating visual content, game design theories and practice and emerging gaming culture.

Students on this track study the game development process of tabletop games, as well as 2D and 3D digital games. They also learn how to create visual content for interactive online games and character design. Advanced game design students study special topics and project opportunities in virtual reality.

A Game Design Studio offers students service-learning opportunities to apply their game design skills over the entire game development process in a real-world project.

ACCESS TO HIGH-TECH TOOLS

Housed at the Dr. C.C. and Mabel L. Criss Library, the Creative Production Lab is a great place for aspiring gamers to access high-end tools to produce their artistic endeavors or to try out a new technology.

Charles Fisher heads the lab. Its driving force, he says, is to make emerging technology available to students and the UNO community for the express purpose of getting them industry-ready and opening creative outlets to them.

"Those can range from people coming in to use some of our higher-end computers to make the graphics or stickers for their gaming groups to folks doing voiceover work for their video games and animated media."

A notable feature of the lab is its VR equipment, a second-generation Oculus Rift connected to a PC. Users can play games from Steam and from the Oculus site.

It's a chance to give lab patrons an up-close experience with pricey technology that's out of range for most users.

"The expense of offering VR as a creative opportunity is already a hurdle, which it shouldn't be," Fisher says.

"If it's going to be an emerging and a competitive technology, then we need to have students access it on the ground level and build things for it."

In his other life, he's the creative director for RHO Interactive Entertainment, where he does character design, animation, world design and project management.

The Omaha-based startup, founded by Fisher and other UNO grads, produces interactive games for local organizations like Omaha Healthy Kids Alliance, the Omaha Children's Museum and Lincoln Children's Museum.

REACHING OUT TO THE COMMUNITY

Through the Attic, housed at UNO's College of Information Science & Technology, undergrads and postgraduate students develop tools to educate and entertain.

One is called "Gout Racer" (yes, you read that right ...), designed to help UNMC rheumatology students learn ways to treat and manage gout symptoms.

"It came about as a request from one of professors at the department of rheumatology," says Zac Fowler, manager of the Attic. "They thought, 'Let's make it a little more entertaining for students.'"

"We had a student work with their offices to conceptualize the game, come up with the styling, get the content from the physician, put it in the game and then build and deploy it."

Another is "MIS Tornado," a real-time strategy game that charges players to save as many survivors as possible in eight minutes. Originally created as a tool to illustrate the complexities of information systems, its users have gone beyond the classroom to include gamers from around the country, Fowler says.

"Four Forces" was created for the SAC Museum as a game for elementary and middle school visitors. The tablet-based tool is based on the four forces of flight.



CPL Assistant Drew Roberts with the Oculus in action.

Students virtually mix and match pieces of the airplanes on display at the museum to see if they can make something that flies.

SUPPORT FOR STROKE SURVIVORS

Helping the greater community through gaming is also a big focus of Brian Ricks, an assistant professor in the College of IS&T.

His research lab, in partnership with the UNO Department of Biomechanics and local physical therapy programs, is creating games for stroke survivors to make recovery less tedious and maybe more enjoyable.

Ricks and students in IS&T have been developing software where patients in rehabilitation post-stroke will wear a VR headset as part of their therapy.

“You’re doing things like picking up airplanes and throwing them through hoops, and you’re getting feedback like you

would in a viral app on your phone,” Ricks says. “You’re scoring points, trying to beat someone else’s score and getting lots of visual feedback.”

During the game, the technology tracks the movements of the patient’s body to make sure they’re doing the correct number of repetitions and using the right muscles to improve their movement.

The Stroke VR project has been in development for about two years, Ricks says. He and the team are preparing to roll it out to a pilot group of hospitals this summer.

PROOF IS IN THE PORTFOLIO

With so many options available to students interested in gaming, Austin has this advice:

“No. 1, figure out the discipline that you really want to work in, because there’s a



Lilly Lu, associate professor in the College of Communication, Fine Arts and Media, heads the concentration in game design

lot more to software in general than just programming,” he says.

“There’s design, programming, testing, audio, art, and there are ancillary things like marketing and finance. Figure out where you want to work, what you want to specialize in and then start building a portfolio of work.”

He urges students to include projects they’ve done on their own or part of their university curriculum.

This, he says, “will show off that you not only have the credentials that so you’re good at this discipline, but also the proof in your portfolio to demonstrate your skill set.

“More than ever, there are more opportunities to go and contribute to either public projects or there are all sorts of game engines that you can work in for free. It’s very easy to start creating content or doing work if you know what you want to do and you’ve got the drive to go do it.”

As for those Nintendo games he cut his teeth on, they’ll always have a place in Austin’s heart—and home.

Last Christmas, he got a Nintendo Switch.

GAMES THAT GAMERS PLAY

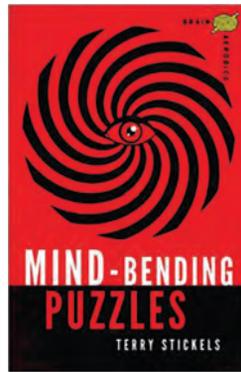
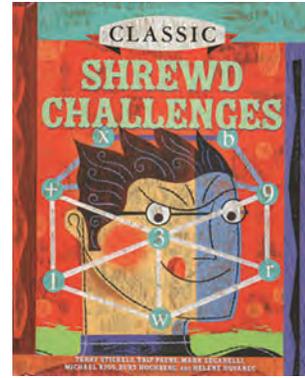
When they’re not at work, here’s what you’ll find these gamers playing:

BRIAN RICKS says his game of choice astonishes his students. “After our kids are in bed, my wife and I love to collapse on the couch and not move while we do the New York Times crossword puzzle.”

CHARLES FISHER plays two or three hours a week. His favorites: *Destiny* and *Morrowind*. “Both of them have successfully created a whole world around very different aesthetics and pull you into being willing to create a single entity and character and stick with them for 1,200 or 1,300 hours of gameplay.”

JAY AUSTIN has *Battlefield* on his playlist, of course. But he also likes *Command & Conquer: Rivals*. “It’s a really deep strategy game that I probably put more hours into in a week than I do anything else.”

MIND GAMES



UNO GRADUATE TERRY STICKELS MAKES HIS LIVING MAKING OTHERS THINK — WHILE HAVING FUN DOING SO

By Kent Walton

For most of his life now, Terry Stickels has been creating problems for others.

And getting paid for it.

Stickels, a 1976 UNO graduate, is among the country's foremost enigmatologists — those who devise mathematical, word or logic-oriented puzzles. He does so from his home in Fort Worth, Texas, spending most of his days dreaming up brain teasers, word puzzles, mathematical equations and more. His work has challenged, perplexed and amused countless people, ranging from junior high students to mathematicians and physicists.

But don't take his creations too seriously, he insists.

"They're fun challenges. Period. End of story," the 71-year-old Stickels says. "My whole purpose in creating a puzzle is to make a puzzle for what it is. There is no stepladder to significance in any area.

"They're like candy: Eat them and go about your business. That's my philosophy. Here's a puzzle. You solved it. Your reward is you get another puzzle."

Since 1991, Stickels' brain teasers have run in syndication in numerous newspapers and magazines (Stickels doesn't know the exact number; he says that's "bad juju" for an author.) They appeared for 15 years in the now-defunct USA Weekend magazine, and he's published more than 45 books filled with his creations (He doesn't know the exact number. That's bad juju, too). His puzzles have been featured on Kellogg's cereal boxes and on the Universal Studios website for the movie, "A Beautiful Mind." They've appeared in UNO Magazine for 10 years. He also publishes the website terrystickels.com.

In the 1990s, his work was seemingly everywhere.

"We used to do bookmarks, card decks, posters, wall calendars and T-shirts when puzzles were really hot," he says "You couldn't put them on enough things. For whatever reason, it was a time in American history when puzzles were very big. People loved them."

His work, though, still is enjoyed by enthusiasts around the world. His creations range from common Sudoku puzzles and word searches to complex mathematical and spatial-visual brain teasers. He's published a book of crossword puzzles, too. But don't look for another one of those from him.

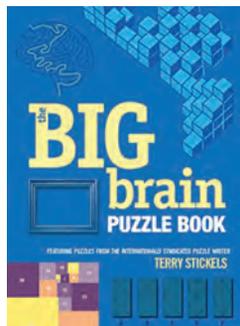
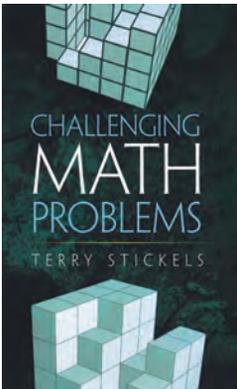
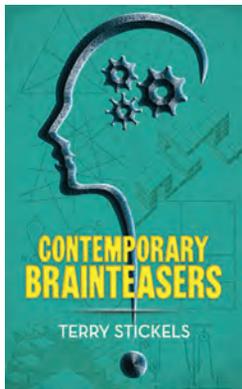
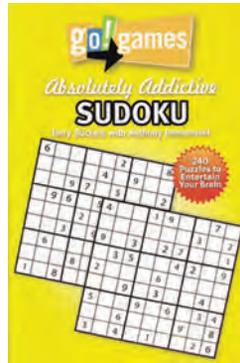
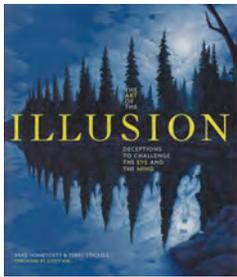
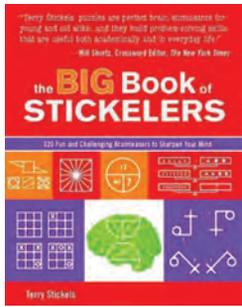
"I'll never do that again ever as long as I live," he says. "I admire people who create those crosswords more than you'll ever know."

Today, his puzzles, which are designed with the assistance of a New York-based graphic artist, appear in a syndicated column called Sticklers that appears in many American and Canadian newspapers.

"People in Canada go crazy over any puzzle far more than people in the United States," Stickels says. "I get incredibly neat emails from people in and around Toronto wanting to know more, and if I can refer them to a website where a particular discussion is going on. Sometimes they come up with their own solutions that are elegant, simplistic and beautiful."

UNO GAMES

Not too bad for a guy who during his time at UNO solved problems on the gridiron. He was Omaha-born but came to UNO from Council Bluffs Abraham Lincoln High School, where he was an all-state quarterback. He walked-on for then-Coach Al Caniglia and later earned a full scholarship. He also earned a degree in



geography while tutoring fellow students in math and physics, using puzzles to help them understand concepts.

Stickels had been collecting and creating puzzles since he was a child. The interest was sparked by a gift—a book of puzzles published in the 1800s. Stickels and a friend worked their way through the book then spent hours dreaming up their own puzzles and bouncing them off each other. He can still recall the first puzzle he created at age 11.

“It was a hard one,” he says.

He compares the process of creating a puzzle to a Matisse painting, putting down what he sees.

“That’s how my brain thinks,” he says. “I see this vision out in front of me, this three-dimensional screen out there that extends forever. It’s just full of fun challenges. Sometimes silliness.”

And those tend to be his most popular works.

“A perfect example is one of the first ones I came up with: ‘Write the word LOVE in all caps and use a stop sign for the letter O,’” he says. “Of course, it’s Diana Ross’ famous song, ‘Stop in the Name of Love.’”

Stickels grew his collection over the years, but not for professional purposes. After graduating from UNO he first worked for Union Pacific as a switchman, in the labor relations department, then back to the trains as a conductor. Later, he moved with his second wife to Rochester, New York, and became a salesman for Rand McNally.

In 1991, Stickels finally did something with his puzzle collection, bringing some to a newspaper office in Rochester with the proposal of writing a puzzle column. They bit. A couple of years later, Sterling Publishing signed him to a contract for his first puzzle book.

Thousands of puzzles later, Stickels is still at it. The ideas keep coming.

“I could do this for 100 years and never scratch the surface,” Stickels says. “I haven’t even begun this journey yet. I’m just warming up. I mean that sincerely. The almost infinite varieties are like a beautiful picture spread out in front of you.”

Puzzles, Aging and the Brain

Terry Stickels loves to challenge people’s brains with his puzzles. But he refuses to go as far as saying they’ll boost your IQ or prevent the onset of a degenerative illness such as Alzheimer’s or dementia. He’s even turned down book offers from publishers who wanted to make such claims about the power of puzzles.

“There are a lot of anecdotal pointers pointing toward that being true,” Stickels says. “But I don’t know of any scientific studies. It would be in my interest to say otherwise, but I believe in being truthful about it.”



Julie Blaskewicz Boron

Julie Blaskewicz Boron, associate professor and doctoral program chair for UNO’s Department of Gerontology, agrees there haven’t been any conclusive studies to show working puzzles staves off mental degeneration. But that doesn’t mean there are no benefits to challenging yourself with brain games such as those created by Stickels.

“There’s plenty of evidence to suggest learning new things and challenging yourself to learn new things is beneficial in the long run,” Blaskewicz Boron says.

Just as variety is the spice of life, it’s also a key to improving cognitive ability.

“If we’re always doing the same things day in and day out and we don’t challenge ourselves in a positive way, things can get rusty,” she says. “If you always do crosswords, and that’s your primary go-to, and they’re easy for you, that’s great. But it might not be helping as much as one that’s more challenging and takes you longer to figure out,” she says.

Because each person’s brain is a one-of-a-kind machine, no two respond and develop exactly the same way. While solving puzzles might have a positive effect for some, others may benefit from different forms of learning, such as attending a class or participating in a group activity.

Improving cognitive ability doesn’t guarantee a person will avoid the degenerative effects of aging or contracting dementia or Alzheimer’s. But Blaskewicz Boron says she believes it could play a role in slowing their onset.

“This might be able to provide a little bit of a boost so that the symptoms show up later,” she says. “So the amount of time that they experience non-normative change is reduced. That’s what most people are trying to aim for – ‘What can I do to increase quality years?’”

FOR MORE THAN 70 YEARS,



THE PE

Play for UNO students — as it has for their cohorts across the country — has varied over the years. The limbo and Hula hoops were hot in the '50s, Frisbees in the '70s and hacky sacks in the '80s.

One constant, though, that connects generation after generation of UNO students is where play often takes place on campus — the Pep Bowl.

Just a smidge larger than an acre at 110 yards by 50 yards, the Pep Bowl has served as a sort of Central Park on UNO's Dodge Campus, an oasis of green bordered by the Epley Administration Building, Arts & Sciences Hall, Caniglia Field and Allwine Hall.

It's been a university hallmark for more than 70 years.

Early on it mostly was used for athletics and went by various names — the PE field, intramural field, women's athletic field and Girls PE field. Aerial pictures of campus from the early 1940s show goal posts in its space, used by the football teams that practiced there.

"During the early years, pre-1960s, it is difficult to imagine students using the area as they do now," says UNO Archivist Les Valentine, "given the culture, dress codes and, at least very early on, the lack of development of the site."

The first mention of it in the Gateway as the Pep Bowl was in September 1960 with notice of a homecoming rally being hosted there — by the "Interpep Club." The club began some time in the late 1940s, and it appears its name eventually was attached to the field.

Homecoming rallies there included lots of play: sack races, bubble-gum blowing, bonfires and royalty crowning. But then students began using the field for other purposes.



PEP BOWL

HAS BEEN...

They competed to see who was better at obstacle course and human wheelbarrow races, twister, people-pyramid-building, grease-pole climbing, tug of war, or what coed had the shortest miniskirt. In 2011, students tried to break a Guinness World Record for having 250 people on a Slip'n'Slide at once (they fell short). Students also have rolled over the grass in giant hamster balls (Real-life sheep, llamas, mini horses and other animals also have grazed in the Pep Bowl from time to time).

Students began using it for athletics, too: for field hockey, intramural flag and "powder puff" football, softball, volleyball, rugby and soccer. In 1971, the student senate asked the university for permission to flood it to create an ice-skating rink (they said no).

At times, some saw the Pep Bowl not as a place to skate or play but as a possible site for another building. Or for ... parking. That was especially so in the car-crowded 1970s, perhaps the peak of parking frustration on campus.

"For many years there have been rumors or fears that UNO would do something with the Pep Bowl," Valentine says. "Certainly, the popularity of any UNO administrator would be severely diminished by a public suggestion that the Pep Bowl be trashed."

It has taken some hits, though.

In 1978 it turned into a small lake when a broken steam main flooded it with water. And 40-year-old trees along the west border near the student center had to be

PHOTOS FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:

Homecoming bonfire rally in 1956.

Ma-ie Day Carnival, 1969.

A pick up football game during the 1960 construction of

More Ma-ie Day Carnival fun at the dunk tank.

Wheelbarrow races



THE PEPLAC

PHOTOS FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:

Homecoming bonfire rally in 1956.

Ma-ie Day Carnival, 1969.

A pick up football game during the 1960s.

More Ma-ie Day Carnival fun at the dunk tank.

Wheelbarrow races.

removed in 1996 because of root disease. On more than one occasion, scorching summers have turned its expanse various shades of brown.

Typically, though, the Pep Bowl been green and inviting — a great place to catch some wind with a kite, some sun or some shade, or just some ZZZs.

It also has been a great place to enjoy a sack lunch or other bite to eat. The Pep Bowl has hosted picnics and chuck wagon lunches, free meals for students during Welcome Week, and a massive luncheon to celebrate 100 years as a university. It has hosted pudding-sucking and watermelon-eating contests and, one year, National Grilled Cheese Day. Students have hit professors in the face with pies here, rolled pumpkins with their hands and watermelons with their heads.

The Pep Bowl also has been the go-to site for entertainment. It's where movies have played: "American Graffiti" in 1983; "8 Mile" in 2003; "22 Jump Street" in 2014. Concerts have included the Sorry Muthas Jug Band (1971); all-female Fanny (1973) Son Seals Blues Band (1981), punk polka band The Toos (1982), Jazz Tones (1994) and others. The Royal Lichtenstein Quarter Ring Sidewalk Circus put on a show in 1983. There actors have performed Shakespeare, comedians have cracked wise, and combatants dressed in Medieval and Renaissance garb have clashed in mock fights.

More than once carnival, with rides, were there. Skydivers have landed on the field several times, and more than once hot air balloons were launched from its grassy



ETOPPLAY

expansive. Weather balloons, too. In recent years, it's come alive in a burst of color with the Indian festival Holi.

Students also have had their fun while raising funds in the Pep Bowl: The Zetas and Lambdas held a trampoline bounce marathon to benefit the Easter Seals foundation; The Pikes several times slept in boxes in the Pep Bowl to raise awareness of homelessness and to collect canned food.

It's also been a place to voice an opinion — or to stand in silence. More than 700 students gathered here in 1970 to protest U.S. action in Cambodia. In 1979 smokers were encouraged to toss their heaters into a giant ash tray in the Pep Bowl during the Great American Smokeout. In 2006, a mock refugee camp was set up to bring attention to World Refugee Day.

More recently, the Pep Bowl has been site of a POW-MIA remembrance and Tribute to the Fallen, thousands of flags lined one after the other honoring service men and women who have lost their lives during military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The somber moments, though, always give way to play, frivolity and fun.

That's likely to continue as long as UNO exists — and as long as people are looking for a place to play.

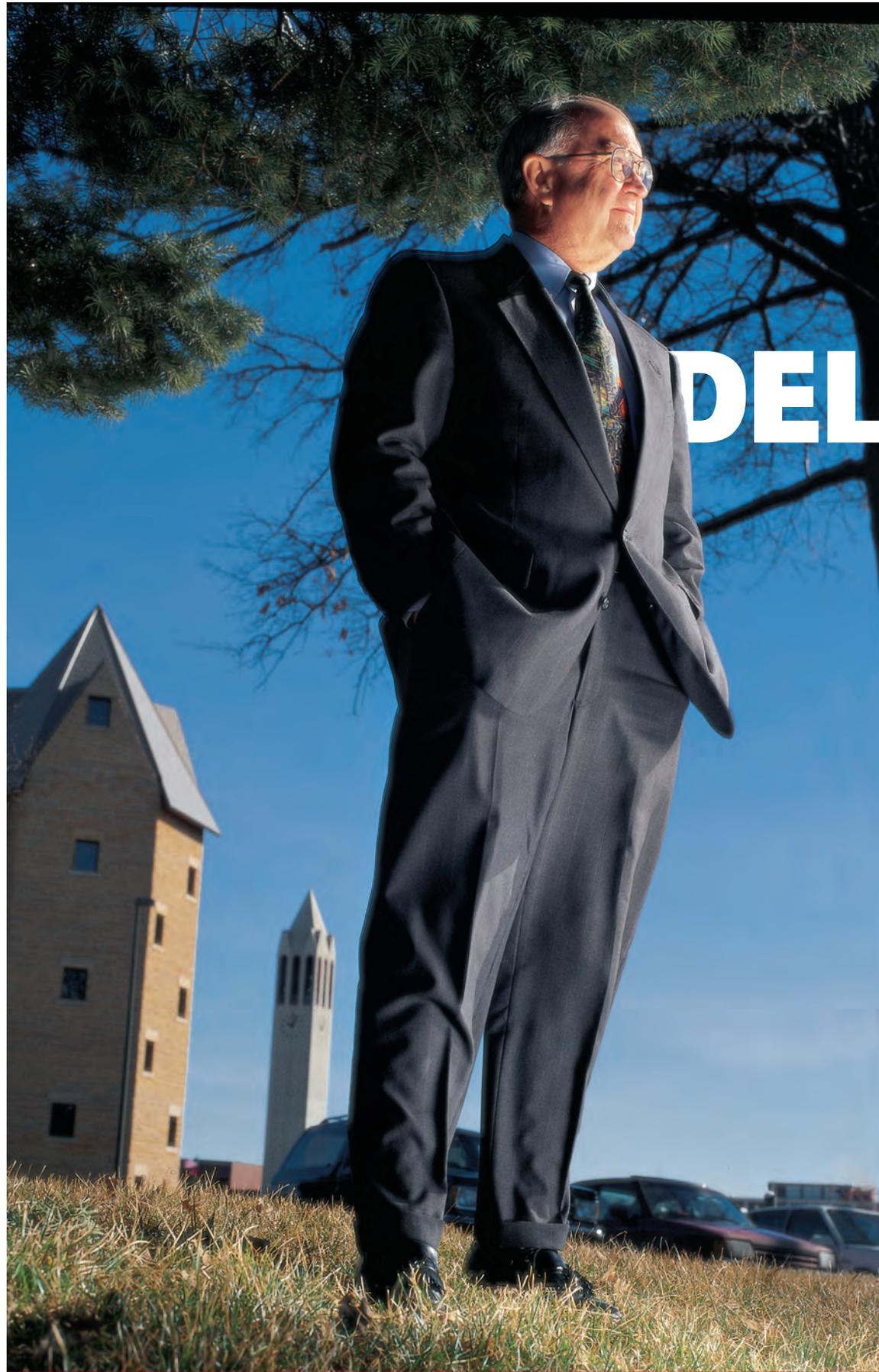


HIS GOALS FOR UNO UPON BECOMING CHANCELLOR

6 To me, certain things had to happen at UNO if we were going to achieve our appropriate place in higher education. First, we had to expand the campus. It was simply too crowded. There was too much griping about parking and it had reached crescendo proportions. And we had to beautify the campus. We had to do something to it aesthetically because, frankly, it was not very attractive. Second, I felt we needed to have student housing. Because without that, we couldn't create on this campus the kin of student culture we wanted. The third thing I felt we needed was to have at least a modicum of doctoral programs.

ON LIFE GROWING UP IN COLUMBUS

6 My dad had some very difficult years. But he was always a very strong family man, and my mother was, too. But we did not have a lot of money. I can remember in 1942 when I was 10 years old, my dad came home and said he had a job at the defense plant in Mead, Nebraska, for \$1.65 an hour. I'm telling you, we thought we had gone to heaven. He was paid \$40 a month on the WPA (Work Projects Administration) and here we were going to make more than that in a week. I'll never forget that wonderful feeling.



Upon retiring, Weber posed for photos outside what later would be named the Weber Fine Arts Building in honor of him and his wife, Lou Ann.

UNO's longest-serving
chancellor passes away
at age 86

REMEMBERING WEBER

The Maverick family lost one of the most pivotal figures in its 111-year history Jan. 11 with the death of Chancellor Emeritus Del Weber following his long bout with cancer. He was 86. A visionary leader whose commitment to success forever changed UNO, Weber was the university's longest-serving chancellor ever with a tenure from 1977 to 1997.

"It is hard to put into words the transformative impact that Del Weber has had on UNO and, as a result, the lives of countless individuals, whether they were students, faculty, staff or just supporters of his vision that UNO could be a leading metropolitan institution," said UNO Chancellor Jeffrey P. Gold, M.D. "In my time as UNO's chancellor, Del has been a truly valued friend and advisor. Our campus and our community have suffered a huge loss with his passing, but we continue to be reminded each day of his legacy and his incredible Maverick spirit. We will continue to build upon his remarkable legacy."

Weber is survived by his one-time high school sweetheart and wife of 64 years, Lou Ann; son, Bill; daughters Beth Bratches and Kelly Maddalena; and 11 grandchildren.

A native of Columbus, Nebraska, Weber became chancellor at just 45 years old. During the next 20 years, he oversaw many important firsts for the campus.

The following pages reflect on Weber's life and his time at UNO through photos, the insight of others, and his own words taken from a 1997 alumni magazine article marking his retirement as chancellor.

"I didn't have the pleasure of working with Del Weber, but I see evidence of his legacy every time I'm on the UNO campus," NU President Hank Bounds said. "The growing, thriving UNO we know today is a credit to Chancellor Weber's leadership, his love of Omaha and our state, and his deep commitment to young people. UNO and the entire University of Nebraska are stronger for his service."

NEBRASKA BORN, RAISED, EDUCATED

Weber was a child of the Great Depression who came from a long line of homesteaders and farmers who made their home in Nebraska.

Like many of UNO's students, Weber was the first in his family to attend college and earn a degree, graduating in 1954 from what now is Midland University – but not without struggle. His mother took on work as a cook to help pay his tuition. And Weber borrowed money from a retired faculty member, paying it back after graduation.

In 1956, he became principal of Creston High School in Creston, Nebraska, also teaching social studies and English. He also earned a master's degree (1959) and doctorate (1962), both in education, from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.



Weber was six years into his time as chancellor when UNO celebrated its 75th anniversary in 1983. The ceremony included formal announcement of a \$25 million capital improvement program.



Weber speaks at the 1984 groundbreaking for the parking garage that went up south of Arts & Sciences Hall. In the background is one of the Quonset huts that came down with the construction.



Weber accepted the Heritage Award presented by the Greater Omaha Chamber of Commerce at the 1989 River City Roundup.

WHY UNO WAS A GOOD FIT

When I got here, everything was in place for what I needed to have a satisfying career. What I needed to have was a good city, which you have in Omaha. It's really a first-rate place to live. You had to have an institution where there was always something going on, a challenge. Because I'm not a maintainer. If you gave me a job where all I had to do was simply maintaining what was there, that would bore me to tears. This job, for the 20 years I had it, there was always something going on, something to work on.

WHY HE ONCE REFERRED TO HIS START AT UNO AS "VERY SCARY DAYS."

I was not prepared for this; I don't think anybody is, unless they've already been a chancellor. When I got here I was not prepared for the rigors of the calendar, the demands on your time. This is the kind of job where from the time you walk in until you leave there's someone who wants to meet you all the time. You've either got meetings on campus or off campus. After the first 31 days, I was here I had only one day to myself. I was not used to that pace and I was angry about it. I remember taking it out on the secretary one day and she said something like, 'You know, if this is not what you want you probably should not be here, because this is the way it is. I can't do anything about it unless you simply say to me not to allow people to do what they are supposed to do.' I just had to adjust to that.

ARIZONA-OHIO-ARIZONA

Weber left Nebraska in 1962 to become an assistant professor of education at Arizona State University. He moved to Ohio in 1965, becoming an assistant to Cleveland State University President Harry Newburn. He later served one year at CSU as acting provost.

Weber returned to Arizona State in 1969 as dean of the College of Education, then one of the largest colleges in the country with nearly 5,000 students. He was just 37 years old.

CALLED HOME ... AND TO UNO

Weber's mother, who kept her son abreast of Nebraska news during his 15 years away, was the one who notified him of the opening for chancellor at UNO. He was relatively

"I was not intimately familiar with this place at all," he said in 1997. "I knew where it was located and I knew some friends who had gone to Omaha University, but there were only a few things I knew about UNO."

Despite that, he got the job, becoming UNO's 12th chancellor. He replaced Ron Roskens, who became president of the University of Nebraska system. In the 20 years prior to Weber's arrival, UNO was led by five presidents/chancellors. Weber stayed at UNO the next 20, surpassing founding President Daniel Jenkins as the university's longest-tenured leader.

That almost didn't happen, though. In 1986, Weber was offered and accepted the post of chancellor of the University of Nevada system. But he changed his mind and stayed put. Many who know him are glad he did.

"I had the honor of knowing and working with Del for 15 years during his time as chancellor, and even longer as a friend and supporter of UNO following his retirement," said B.J. Reed, UNO senior vice chancellor for academic affairs. "As a leader, as an educator and as a human being, he made a significant impact on my life, and I know the same can be said for anyone who ever had a chance to meet him."

EXPANDING UNO'S FOOTPRINT, IMPACT

UNO had joined the University of Nebraska system just nine years prior to Weber's arrival. If it was to grow in stature, though, it would need to acquire more land and expand its academic offerings.

Weber arrived in the summer of 1977, just after UNO had completed construction on the Dr. C.C. and Mabel L. Criss Library at the western-most edge of campus. Beyond the library was a collection of homes he spent the next 10 years working with the city and community members to purchase. During his tenure, that land would become home to key facilities like the Durham Science Center, the Fine Arts Building (later named for Weber and his wife, Lou Ann) and the Thompson Alumni Center.

He pushed for expansion right up to his final months as chancellor. Through an agreement with First Data, UNO received an additional 70 acres of land south of Pacific Street in 1997. As part of this agreement, Weber built a coalition of supporters to make the case for UNO's first new college in decades, the College of Information Science and Technology. The newly-formed college would share space on the newly acquired land with the UNL College of Engineering at the Peter Kiewit Institute.

Overall, Weber helped add more than 100 acres of land to the UNO campus.

The growth was perhaps best symbolized by construction of the iconic Henningson Memorial Campanile in 1989. And in 1997, just prior to his retirement, Weber received approval to build UNO's first-ever on-campus housing units, what now is University Village.

Weber also oversaw expansion academically, including the addition of the campus' first doctoral programs (criminal justice; public administration) and a doubling of full-time and doctoral-level faculty.

More than 35,000 students received degrees during his time as chancellor.

"The UNO everyone knows today simply would not have been possible without the leadership and vision of Del Weber," UNO Chancellor Emeritus John Christensen said. Christensen served as a faculty member and dean of the College of Education during Weber's time as chancellor before leading UNO from 2007 through 2017.

"As a faculty member and dean, I was able to watch as Del guided UNO into a place that outwardly reflected the potential we all knew it had," Christensen said. "His example is one that I followed in my own time as chancellor, and I couldn't have asked for a better role model to follow."



Weber's post-UNO life included five years as president of the Omaha Community Foundation and 17 years on the OPPD Board of Directors. In 2003, he also helped prepare for publication the letters of Joseph Barker Jr., an Englishman who wrote to his family overseas about his life between 1866-1871.

UNO PRESIDENTS & CHANCELLORS



Weber, fellow Chancellor Emeritus John Christensen (center) and current Chancellor Jeffrey Gold were together for the first time in June 2017 during a UNO Alumni Association Golden Circle Lunch Bunch.

1909-27	DANIEL E. JENKINS
1926-27	W. GILBERT JAMES
1927-28	KARL F. WETTSTONE
1928-30	ERNEST W. EMERY
1931-35	WILLIAM E. SEALOCK
1935-48	ROWLAND B. HAYNES
1948-65	PHILLIP MILO BAIL
1965-67	LELAND E. TRAYWICK
1967-71	KIRK E. NAYLOR
1971-72	JOHN V. BLACKWELL
1972-77	RONALD W. ROSKENS
1977-97	DELBERT D. WEBER
1997-2006	NANCY BELCK
2006-2017	JOHN CHRISTENSEN
2017-	JEFFREY P. GOLD, M.D.

WHY HE SPENT 20 YEARS AT UNO AFTER SIX JOB CHANGES PRIOR TO THIS ARRIVAL

“I found a home. This position had everything I wanted in my career. It’s interesting, because my career was not built upon my being a president some day. That’s not what I was doing. But I also knew that there was something missing or that it was not where I needed to be. There was a reason for every move I made and there was also a reason for staying here.”

CONTINUING A TRADITION OF GIVING

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

In 1973, the UNO Alumni Association created its premier giving society — the UNO Century Club. The first 44 members contributed \$5,250. Today, the Century Club includes more than 270 members who this year combined to give more than \$150,000 to UNO.

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

Help UNO provide access to exceptional education and experiences by making your 2019 Century Club donation today through the UNO Fund. Visit nufoundation.org/UNOFund.



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T. Ziebarth
Morgan White
Nick Wilson
Sara Woods and Kirby Woods

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. 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.

58 BOB RASGORSHEK JR. (BA) reunited with two other alumni who, like him, were presidents of Sigma Phi Epsilon: Neil Shooter ('57) and Loren Timm ('60). Shooter, of Novato, California, was best man in Rasgorshek's wedding 60 years ago. Rasgorshek and Timm are brothers-in-law.

MARILYN A. SCHMIDT (BS) writes, "I have a grandson in the U.S. Army, a granddaughter who is an interior designer, and a granddaughter who is a nurse. I also have four great-grandsons and just welcomed my second great-granddaughter in October. I have volunteer jobs every day of the week, which keeps me happy and active." maschmidt35@yahoo.com

64 RON SWAIN (BS) retired in 2011 after 50 years in the textile industry. He since has spent time traveling to India and China.



65 SHARI (ZAGOR) HOF SCHIRE (BS, MA-93) received the Governors Arts Award (GAA) for Excellence in Arts Education. GAA is a biennial statewide selection that recognizes a lifetime of professional achievement. Hofschire is past director of the UNO Center for Innovation in Arts Education. She taught UNO classes in art history and arts education and organized the CADRE II: The Arts Graduate and Mentor Program while serving as its original coordinator. She served as director of the Prairie Visions Institute for 10 years. Hofschire has twice been recognized as Educator of the Year for Higher Education by the Nebraska Art Teachers Association. She served as president of Nebraskans for the Arts and



was elected to Westside Community Schools Board of Education for 15 years, serving as president for three terms. She was president of the UNO Alumni Board of Directors in 1991. She developed the educational materials and thematic curriculum units for the Nebraska Masterpieces project, the curriculum content for the Iowa West Public Art project and the downtown Omaha mural "Fertile Ground."

FREDERICK VICTOR SOHLE JR. (BS) sent an email noting his 100th birthday celebrated April 5. fvsjr2@aol.com



66 JOEL C. SNELL (BA, MA-70) authored "Gridlock Democracy Reviews" with Brock-Martin Publishers. The book is "a non-purposive selection of articles and essays from turn of the 20th Century sources, in an asymmetrical font." joelsnell@hotmail.com

67 ROD OBERLE (BSBA) lives in Omaha and is retired after serving for 35 years as the Director of Human Resources at UNO. He received numerous awards during his tenure, including The Chancellor's Medal. He also served as chairman of the UNO Alumni Association Board of Directors in 2009. "All in all, I had more than 40 years of association with my alma mater," he writes. ROberle@cox.net

69 JAMES F. BARD JR. (BGS), a retired U.S. Air Force captain, writes, "at 82, I may not be the oldest from '69, but close to it. But my note is just to inform all UNO grads that it sure made my life easier. Thanks, UNO." jimbardjr@comcast.net



GENE KATHOL (BS) lives in Omaha and after retiring following a 32-year career with First Data spends his time to pursue hobbies including teaching fly-fishing, hunting, fishing, shooting, golfing, gardening, reading, woodworking and philately. He is an active member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Nebraska Trout Unlimited, Omaha Woodworkers Guild, Eastern Nebraska Gun Club, Omaha Philatelic Society and the UNO Alumni Association. He and his wife, Patti, celebrated their 45-year wedding anniversary in April. They have three children and three grandchildren. He is a former U.S. Air Force Airman and Vietnam Veteran. genefk@q.com

LESTER JOHN WARD SR. (BGS) took a trip with his wife in May 2018 to Tokyo, Japan, and Seoul, Korea. Ward just completed two terms and eight years, as mayor of Brownsville, Pennsylvania. He then was elected to a four-year term on the Brownsville Borough Council. Ward writes, "Thanks to UNO, the beat goes on." chiefwoo@yahoo.com

EDWARD E. ZOBRIST (BGS) writes, "Thank you, U.S. Army and UN at Omaha. GO INFANTRY!" edzobrist@earthlink.net



70 CURLEE ALEXANDER (BS, MS-76) writes: "In 1970, we won the NAIA national wrestling championship. I as a graduate assistant was a member of that squad. At that time, championship rings weren't really a thing. After 48 years, Dennis Cozad, another member of that team, thought it would be nice to get rings. We contacted all the other living members of the squad and purchased the rings. The rings were presented at a dinner in November at Anthony's Steak House.

Present were (front row, left) Mel Washington, Curlee Alexander, Dennis Cozad, Louie Rotella, Tony Martinez. Bernie Hospodka is in the back. Other



members unable to attend include Paul Martinez, Jordan Smith, Landy Waller and Bruce Strauss.”

EDUARDO CANAS (BGS) Canas is counsel to the law firm Canas & Flores, which he founded in Fort Worth, Texas. He was an attorney in Texas from 1985 until 2017. That followed retirement from the U.S. Army in 1979. He and his wife, Pyda, retired to Front Royal, Virginia, in 2018.

LOYAL STEUBE (BS) and his wife, Phyllis, retired from real estate and now live in Arkansas. They “left the life of snow sports and cool weather for lake life and spending time watching grandkids in their sports and activities.”

73 PATRICIA R. ABERNATHY (BS) retired from St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee. She spends her time enjoying activities including water aerobics, gardening and grandchildren.

75 GEORGE B. MEEGAN (BGS) rose from a private to captain in the U.S. Marine Corps before retiring in 1978 after 23 years of service. He since has spent time in Trinidad, Tobago, Pennsylvania, and now his home in Arizona. He worked as a consultant in Trinidad and Tobago in general service management with European hypermarket and property management. He is involved with Kiwanis, veterans organizations aiding those in need, and youth programs with the Young Marines. Meegan also is an artist and spends time reading historical and fiction novels.

76 JOSEPH B. JOHNSTON (BGS) writes, “at 36 years old, UNO launched me into a successful and rewarding career.”
jbjohnston@gmail.com

78 TIMOTHY W. CAVANAUGH (BS, MS-88) was voted chairman of the board of directors of Metropolitan Utilities District for a third time. He has been on the board for 19 years. He is a retired Omaha police captain, and currently the chief deputy Douglas County treasurer. Cavanaugh is active in Rotary Club and is a past president of the Downtown Rotary Club of Omaha.

79 LARRY ZAHM (BS, MS-87) spent 37 years as a teacher and administrator in schools spanning preschool through high school in Nebraska and Iowa. He left education in 2016 and now works as an assistant manager at Hy-Vee in Des Moines, Iowa. He also has worked part time as a funeral director assistant for 15 years.

81 DAN G. SEVERA (BS) is owner of Family Medicine Associates and Revelation Med Spa with his wife,



Kathy (Nissen), as the COO. He is married with four children ages 21 to 29 and two grandchildren.
huskjay@aol.com

84 DAVID TEAL (BS, MS-94) is a security solutions architect with XYPRO Technology in Simi Valley, California. Teal provides training, security solutions and professional security services on the HPE NonStop server for payment processing, financial services, claims processing, manufacturing, pharmacy and oil companies worldwide.



85 DONALD A CARLSON (BS, MBA-88) lives in San Francisco, California, and is dean of academic services at Las Positas College.

SALLY J. WALKER (BFA) is teaching screenwriting at Metropolitan Community College. She recently published her first textbook, “Learn Screenwriting” through AAE imprint. The publisher also recently released a revised edition of her novel, “Desert Time.”
sallyjwalker@cox.net



88 JENA JANOVY (BA) is an adjunct professor this spring at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, teaching Issues in Sports Journalism. She previously designed and taught the course (2012-16), instructing senior-level students on issues facing journalists in sports, including reporting, writing, sourcing, commentary, newsroom management and decision-making. She continues as senior deputy editor at ESPN working on collaborative storytelling.

89 KEN LIM (BA) writes, “after years of working in the jewelry business, time to look for another career. Not too old or late – determination and persistent can achieve your goal.”



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LISA PELTO (BS) founded Concierge Marketing Publishing Services in 2004 and has published hundreds of books for authors across the country and in seven countries. Peltó was honorarily initiated into Delta Sigma Pi, the co-ed professional business fraternity, joining daughters Elise Godwin (BS-13) and Monica Peltó (student). This past summer, Lisa wrote and published a children's book, "Meet Me at the Farmers Market," which was featured in the Deltasig Magazine in November 2018. She lives in Omaha with her husband, Eric.
lisa@conciergemarketing.com



90 JERRY DEAN CORNETT JR. (BS) with his wife, Renee, has been operating a restaurant and farm outside Lincoln, Nebraska, for five years. The restaurant, Prairie Plate, will be featured in "Truth, Love, and Clean Cutlery," a new guide "to the world's truly exemplar, ethical, organic and sustainable restaurants and food experiences." Contributing to the book were 57 leading food writers from 45 countries. Writes Jerry: "When we host visitors from outside the state, they're surprised to see a restaurant like ours here. I tell them what many of our customers that grew up on Nebraska farms tell me: 'We used to eat this way' - food with meaning because it connected you to your family, friends and community."

91 BRENT FRAHM (BSBA) has been a finance lender for 27 years, most recently joining Union Bank and Trust in Omaha in June 2018. He writes: "I absolutely love helping people navigate the largest purchase they will make in their life - a new home. My finance and banking degree from UNO opened the doors for me and I truly cherish the relationships with former classmates that I developed during that time."
brent.frahm@ubt.com



92 BRIAN TIMM (BS), director of facilities at Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium, was named president of the Aquarium and Zoo Facilities Association (AFZA). The association is comprised of facilities-related individuals from zoos and aquariums throughout the United States, Canada and abroad. Timm has had multiple roles during seven years with AZFA, including vice president and president-elect, and has chaired several committees. He is a certified Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator and has served on the Board of Directors for the Fremont Area Habitat for Humanity and the Village of Arlington's Planning Commission. Timm has been at Omaha's Zoo and Aquarium for eight years.



93 DAN P. HAYS (MA) is completing his fifth year as director of theatre activities for Midland University in Fremont, Nebraska. He is also the director of the All State Musical produced each summer and serves as an associate director for Young Americans.
hays@midlandu.edu

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00 MAUREEN GRAZIANO (BA) (far left in photo) represented her company, Lindsay Corporation, in ringing the bell at the New York Stock Exchange in January. Graziano is a member of the UNO Alumni Association Board of Directors.

06 THOMAS CENTARRI (BGS) is a field agent with the Knights of Columbus, serving Catholic men and their families in Arlington, Texas.

08 SHEENA KENNEDY HELGENBERGER (BA) was a winner of the 2018 Midlands Business Journal 40 Under 40 issue recognizing entrepreneurs, executives and business professionals in the greater Omaha area.



09 HANNAH OLDKNOW (BA) works in San Francisco for Instagram, managing web strategy for more than 15 websites and focusing on operations, data and analytics infrastructure, and sustainable web development. She lives in Marin County with her family.

10 ROGER GARCIA (BA) was named Nebraska statewide family engagement director for the National Center for Families Learning (NCFL). Garcia will work to create a statewide family engagement system that increases community capacity for cradle-to-career family engagement services and improves academic achievement for disadvantaged students in Nebraska. Garcia also is chair of both the Metropolitan Community College Board of Governors and the Citizen's Review Complaint Board with the City of Omaha. He also is an appointed board member of the Iowa Workforce Development Board.



IN MEMORIAM

- | | | | |
|-------------|----------------------|-------------|------------------------|
| 1944 | Marie R. Galda | 1973 | Susan M. Carroll |
| 1946 | Bernice H. Fahlberg | | Deanna K. Grindle |
| 1950 | Bernard A. Graves | | Michael E. Zach |
| | Joseph K. Fischer | 1974 | William F. Daly |
| | Patricia A. Bruce | | Retha B. Harris-Thomas |
| 1951 | Carol Cutler | | Lana L. Kraucunas |
| | John B. Davis | | Addison L. Swindler |
| 1953 | John W. Estabrook | 1975 | Elaine L. Drickey |
| | Marilyn L. Cowger | | William S. Heckendorn |
| 1954 | James A. Tangdall | | Carolyn S. Kelley |
| | H. M. Blacker | 1977 | Kenny Smith |
| 1956 | Gerald N. McAuliffe | 1978 | Norma J. Pycha |
| 1957 | Marilyn A. Higgs | 1979 | Patricia Engelhaupt |
| | Dorothy M. Patach | | Robert D. Miller |
| 1958 | Jeanne Giles | 1981 | Jeanne C. Schaaf |
| 1959 | Jerry R. Meehan | 1982 | Lorraine M. Maloley |
| | Josephine C. Brooker | | Lorraine M. Maloley |
| 1962 | Terry G. Forsberg | 1983 | Jeffrey S. Aarvig |
| | James J. Dworak | | Charles W. Harmon |
| 1963 | Joe M. Jackson | 1984 | Ellen S. Pesavento |
| | Warren H. Walker | | Mary E. Riley |
| | Dallas M. Dyer | 1986 | Rick E. Arfmann |
| 1964 | Milton V. Carter | 1987 | Kevin Buhr |
| 1965 | Alice B. Erftmier | 1988 | Karen A. Cordes |
| | Gerald F. Miller | | Ann L. Fulkerson |
| 1966 | William P. Applegate | 1989 | Gail Olsen |
| 1967 | Franklin W. Ellis | 1990 | Kelly J. Rinn |
| 1968 | Charles W. Lockwood | 1993 | Joel M. Wilson |
| 1969 | Ann S. Newton | 1994 | Charles M. Barrett |
| | James H. Sachse | 1995 | Eric S. Hammerschmidt |
| 1971 | Charles A. Pool | 1996 | Elizabeth C. Goodroad |
| 1972 | John C. Omel | 1998 | Stephanie L. Knobbe |
| | Zoltan Kerekes | | Mark A. Pelan |
| | George A. Waller | 2002 | Rhonda J. Wiebers |
| | Wayne E. Alexander | 2005 | Skyler J. Schlater |
| | | | Deanna D. Schmidt |
| | | 2006 | Julie C. Costello |

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11 LACEY MERICA (MBA) recently completed more than five years of service on the Omaha Public Schools Board of Education. She now is the accreditation associate in the College of Public Health at UNMC. lacey.merica@gmail.com



13 SHERYL CUMMINGS (BS) writes: "Since graduating from UNO, I have continued taking classes in the IT field. Most recent are the Joint Cyber Planners Course and Joint C4I course. I am a certified expert in risk management framework and a CompTIA-certified expert. I recently traveled to Dayton, Ohio, and earned a Cyber 300 certificate. For rest and relaxation, I am on my way to Aruba this year."

14 ASHLEY ALEXANDRIA BELMUDEZ-FRAKES (BGS) is the woman's chaplain of Douglas, Sarpy and Pottawatomie Jails through Good News Jail and Prison Ministry. abelmudezfrakes@icloud.com



JORDAN EMANUEL RELFORD (BM) has been regularly providing music ministry to the congregants of St. Paul United Methodist Church in Omaha. In addition, he owns and manages Relford Martial Arts in Ralston, Nebraska, and competes nationally and internationally in taekwondo as a third degree black belt. relford@netzero.net

EMILY SULZLE (BGS) started a new position at Nebraska Community Foundation as assistant director of gift Planning, helping Nebraskans across the state implement meaningful estate gifts to advance their communities and hometowns. esulzle@nebcommfound.org



15 DOUGLAS MORRIS (BS, MA-16) joined McFarlin & Brokke in 2015. A certified CPA since 2017, he recently was promoted to manager, expanding his role to include client satisfaction and staff mentoring. His areas of expertise include tax services and business consulting. He is a member of the American Institute of CPAs and the Nebraska Society of CPAs



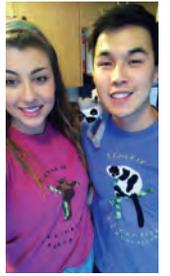
JUDITH NGOZI OBODOUGO (BGS) writes that she is continuing her education and volunteering in the community, though her greatest priority is being a single mom to her son. She is working on her Masters of Public Health at Creighton University. "Am seeing Ph.D. in my future," she writes. judyobodougo@rocketmail.com



16 ROXANNE DOCKTER (BS) in February began a new position as talent acquisition coordinator for DRM Arby's franchise. She previously worked full time as a security supervisor at night and interned part time during the day in the HR department of Lutheran Family Services of Nebraska. Dockter earned an MS in industrial organizational psychology from Southern New Hampshire University. roxannedockter@gmail.com



17 LI-DUNN CHEN (BS) writes, "following my graduation from the psychology department in Spring 2017, I traveled to Vietnam as a student mentor for UNO's YSEALI program, worked as an intern and field researcher for critically endangered lemurs in Madagascar, got married in Costa Rica, and started graduate school in the department of anthropology and archaeology at the University of Calgary in Calgary, Alberta. I will be heading back into the field this summer to study androgen hormones (including testosterone) and other possible drivers of aggression in endangered black-and-white ruffed lemurs as part of my master's thesis. My wife, Devin, and I have been enjoying married life and all the great stuff Calgary has to offer – poutine, rich cultural diversity, Canadian Rocky Mountains, hockey, and the Calgary stampede, to name a few. Mostly just the poutine, though. GO MAVS! SAVE THE LEMURS!" lidunn.chen1@ucalgary.ca



18 ALISON TERESE KAMPE (BSW) is a graduate assistant for the Goodrich Scholarship Program and pursuing her MSW. She hopes to work with individuals in vulnerable populations and change the systems that affect them. akampe@unomaha.edu

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Cora Carson Merritt, daughter of Devin and **BRITTNEY (NICHOLS, '11) MERRITT** of Missouri Valley, Iowa

Sullivan D. Jones, son of Emily and **SETH ('12) JONES** of Omaha

Jase Robert Martens, son of Sarah and **AARON ('10) MARTENS** of Bennington, Nebraska, and grandson of **JOY (HALL CLARK, '80) SCHWARTING** of Council Bluffs, Iowa

Henry James Ramirez, son of **ALLISON (NIELDS, '10, '12, '14)** and **ADAM ('11) RAMIREZ** of Omaha

Olivia Rhylan Hoffman, daughter of Michele and **ERIC ('08) HOFFMAN** of Elkhorn, Nebraska

Gracie Lynn Scott, daughter of Christin and **MICHAEL ('09) SCOTT** of Upper Marlboro, Maryland

Isaac Parker Finberg, grandson of Steve and **JUDY ('94, '96) EPSTEIN** of Las Vegas, Nevada

Avyan Arjun Iyer, son of Arjun Satish and **KAVYA SATHYANARAYANA ('17)** of Omaha, Nebraska

Miles Dean Egger, son of Kelly and **MARK ('07) EGGER** of Omaha

Grant Michael Schumann, grandson of Jeff and **SHERRI ('02) SCHUMAN** of Omaha.

Spencer Henry Wasserburger, son of Corey and **ERIN (STAFF) WASSERBURGER** of Lincoln, Nebraska

Ryan C. Taulman, son of Sean and **JENNA ('15) TAULMAN** of Rocklin, California

Taylor Mae Muench, daughter of Matt and **DANIELLE (MUENCH, '17) HAGEMEIER** of Omaha.

Christian Adam Bartron III, son of Christian and **LISA (KRIVOHAVEK, '07) BARTRON** of Omaha

Brendan David Gaule, son of **JENNIFER (PONEC, '10)** and **PATRICK ('07) GAULE** of Omaha

John David Klabunde, son of Cory and **BRIDGET (HANLON, '12)** of Omaha and grandson of Edward and **NORAH ('83) HANLON** of Omaha

Saina Santosh, daughter of Santosh Kumar Omprakash and **NANDINI MEERAA JAYACHANDRAN** (student) of Ralston, Nebraska

Zander Beau Schultz, son of Madelin and **ALEXANDER ('16) SCHULTZ** of Omaha

Lynlee Angela Lovell, daughter of Schuyler and **ASHLEY (MCALEXANDER, '09) LOVELL** of Gretna, Nebraska

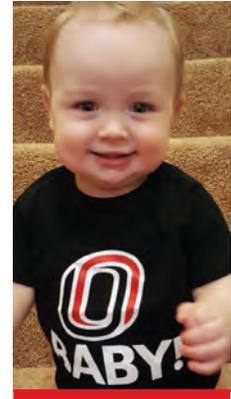
Madeline Jane Johnson, daughter of Kimberly and **BRYCE ('17) JOHNSON** of Las Vegas, Nevada

Roman Edgar Gredys and Holden Gregory Gredys, son of **ASHLEY (MORALES, '15)** and **JOSH ('17) GREDYS** of Shenandoah, Iowa, and grandson of **ANN ('02)** and **PATRICK ('85) GREDYS** of Omaha

Luke Robert Spellman, son of Austin Spellman and **JAMIE FROST SPELLMAN ('12)** of Omaha



Brynley Lee Stremick, granddaughter of **SHANNON (student)** and **SCOTT ('94) STREMICK** of Omaha, and great-granddaughter of UNO employee **JACKIE LYNCH**



Treyton Richard Brooke, son of Michelle and **SKYLER ('13, '15) BROOKE** of Bellevue, Nebraska

Charlotte Mae Scheideler, daughter of Christopher and **JESSICA (CULLAN, '13) SCHEIDELER** of Scottsdale, Arizona

Theodore Kresha, son of **KATHLEEN (BREEN, '07)** and **DANIEL ('06, '12) KRESHA** of Omaha and grandson of **KATIE KRESHA**

Thea Bald, daughter of **MACKENZIE (JOHNSON, '14)** and **JORDAN ('15) BALD** of Papillion, Nebraska

Quinn Camille Trinklein, daughter of **MELISSA (REDDING, '07)** and **JORDAN ('08) TRINKLEIN** of Elkhorn, Nebraska

Jane Elisabeth Davis, daughter of Chelsea and **LANCE ('14) DAVIS** of Omaha

Myer James Cousins, daughter of Max Cousins and **ASHLEE FEDYK ('06, '10)** of Calgary, Alberta

Whitney Hazel Kaiser, daughter of Steven and **SAMMI (STAFF) KAISER** of Omaha

Connor James Radke, son of Brianna and **TYLER (STAFF) RADKE** of Omaha

Wren Elizabeth Shafer, daughter of Abigail and **SETH (FACULTY) SHAFER** of Omaha

Bowman James Alexander, son of Daniel and **BARBARA (BOWLEY, '15) ALEXANDER** of Elkhorn, Nebraska

Clara Josephine Betts, daughter of **KRYSTAL (FESSLER, '15)** and **DARREN ('09, '17) BETTS** of Aurora, Colorado

Jordan Thomas Packer, son of Kelsey and **JEFF (UNO STAFF) PACKER** of Omaha

Louisa Cort Tooley, daughter of Jacob and **KELSEA (NORE, '08, '10) TOOLEY** of Omaha

Madelyn June Hennings, daughter of **ANDREA (CIUREJ, '10)** and **JASON ('10) HENNINGS** of Papillion

Scarlett Rose Rindone, daughter of Joseph and **BRITTANY (WURDEMAN, '10) RINDONE** of Omaha

Dallas David Burton, son of David and **TARICKA ('10, FAIRGOOD) BURTON** of Omaha

Charlotte Hazel Milone, granddaughter of **STEPHANIE (WEBER, '81)** and **MARK ('81) MILONE** of Omaha

Felicity Angelica Bohaty, daughter of Nicholas and **JESSICA (HARVEY, '12) BOHATY** of Wahoo, Nebraska.

A LOOK AT HAPPENINGS ON AND OFF CAMPUS

A JERSEY FOR JOE

Former Vice President Joe Biden visited UNO Feb. 28, helping launch the Chuck Hagel Forum in Global Leadership at the Strauss Performing Arts Center. Biden spoke to more than 300 attendees, mostly students. Student Body President Renata Valquier Chavez and Vice President Benji Fountain presented Biden with a Mavericks jersey.



6 IT'S IN OUR NAKED SELF-INTEREST TO STAY ENGAGED, NOT BECAUSE WE ARE THE ONLY COUNTRY WHO CAN SAVE THE WORLD, BUT BECAUSE WE CAN'T DO IT ALONE.

FORMER VICE PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN

SCULPTING SNOW

When BFA student Alec Paul couldn't sleep one night in mid-January, he headed to nearby Leavenworth Park and made a snowman to occupy his mind. Then another ... and another ... and another ... not stopping until nine hours later when he had 84 snowmen in a pop-up art installation he dubbed "Love Army."



CHANNELING HIS INNER STYLIST

UNO Chancellor Jeffrey P. Gold cuts 12 inches of hair from Student Body President Renata Valquier Chavez, fulfilling her pledge after more than \$10,000 was raised for Dance Marathon. Stephanie Purcell, Dance Marathon president, also was shorn. They donated their locks to Children with Hair Loss.



MANIACS AND FRIENDS

The Mav Maniacs cheering section was in full force throughout the UNO hockey season, often bringing along a few of their famous friends.





HOLOCAUST BY BULLETS

Criss Library hosted the "Holocaust by Bullets" display, which traces the effort by Father Patrick Desbois to document the shooting deaths of more than 1.5 million Eastern European Jews after Nazi Germany's invasion of Russia during the Second World War. UNO's Sam and Frances Fried Holocaust and Genocide Academy hosted the display in partnership with Yahad-In Unum, an international anti-genocide organization.

THE INNOVATIVE RESEARCH OF FATHER DESBOIS AND HIS TEAM OFFERS A DEEPLY MOVING AND HARROWING ACCOUNT OF THE HOLOCAUST IN EASTERN EUROPE. I'M GRATEFUL WE CAN OFFER THESE OPPORTUNITIES TO OUR COMMUNITY.

MARK CELINCAK

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE FRIED ACADEMY

A LEGENDARY LIFE

Barbara Jean Coffey, seated, was honored with the Legendary Woman of UNO Award during the Chancellor's Commission on the Status of Women Annual Luncheon. The award honors alumni who have made lifelong contributions to UNO.

CELEBRATING 99

Members of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority celebrated 99 years during a Founders Day event. The sorority's Tau Alpha chapter was established at then-Omaha University in 1939.

MLK DAY OF SERVICE

Many students went to work during MLK Day of Service. Project sites included MICA House in Council Bluffs, Iowa, and the Union for Contemporary Art in North Omaha.

THE PLAY OF VIRTUES

UNO's Medieval and Renaissance Studies Department presented a multi-sensory experience with choir, harp and dances while performing Hildegard of Bingen's "Ordo Virtutum" at Omaha's St. Cecelia's Cathedral in February.

Test your brainpower with these puzzles created by UNO graduate Terry Stickels ('76). An author, speaker and puzzle maker, Stickels' **FRAME GAMES** is published by **USA Weekend** magazine and in 600 newspapers.

For more information on Stickels, or to order any of his books, visit www.terrystickels.com

KNOWLEDGE

One of these four-sided figures, known as quadrilaterals, is different from the rest for a simple, straightforward reason. Which is the odd one out?

- parallelogram rhombus trapezoid square

WORD PLAY

Believe it or not, only one number is spelled with all of its letters in alphabetical order in the English language... and only one number has all of its letters in reverse alphabetical order. See how long it takes you to come up with both numbers. Better yet, once you know the answers, try this puzzle at a party or gathering of people. You may be surprised how much fun this can generate.

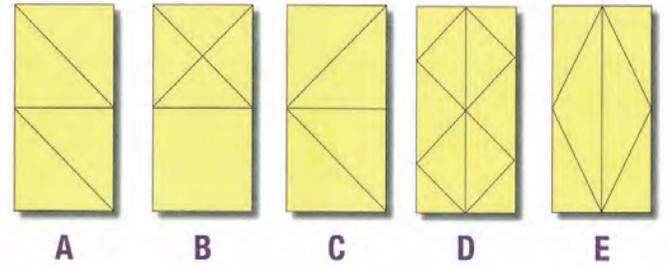
LOGIC

You have a balance scale with four weights. With these four weights you must balance any whole number load from 1kg all the way up to and including 40kg. How much should each of the four weights weigh?

(You may place weights on both sides of the scale at the same time.)

VISUAL

Four of the five figures below can be drawn with one continuous movement of a pen or pencil, without crossing any lines, retracing or lifting of the pen or pencil to perform any trickery or other movement. One of the drawings is impossible to create without crossing lines or retracing. Which one is the odd one out?



ANSWERS

KNOWLEDGE: Trapezoid is the odd one out. The others have two sets of parallel lines. A trapezoid has one set only of parallel lines.

WORD PLAY: Forty is the only number whose letters are in alphabetical order. The number one is the only number whose letters are in reverse alphabetical order.

LOGIC: You need 1kg, 3kg, 9kg and 27kg weights. You can achieve any whole number load from 1kg to 40kg by placing weights on both sides of the scale. For instance, a 3kg weight on the right and a 27kg weight on the left would let you weigh 24kg on the left.

VISUAL: Figure C is impossible to draw without lifting the pen or pencil to retrace or cross a line.



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