

HOME MEANS NEVADA

UNIVERSITY & ALUMNI NEWS

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Photo by David Calvert

Getting a handle on HIV/AIDS drugs

It all boils down to a “door handle.” And thanks to work done by Tom Bell, a longtime professor of chemistry at the University, the door is about to open on a new generation of HIV/AIDS drugs that promise to revolutionize treatment of one of the world’s most damaging diseases.

Bell began working on developing a compound known as “CADA” (Cyclotriazadisulfonamide) more than a decade ago. The compound inhibits replication of HIV by eliminating the “door handle” by which receptor molecules on the surface of a white blood cell normally would grab HIV, allowing the virus to enter and infect the cell.

“There’s no other drug like it,” Bell says. “If you look at the cell before and after it has been treated with the drug, you see something truly remarkable. Before being treated with the drug, you can count the number of

CD4 (surface receptor molecules for HIV) on the surface of the cell. If you treat the cell with the drug for a half a day, or a day, then the CD4 is almost gone. It’s a completely novel mechanism of action in inhibiting replication of the virus.”

The rest of the research world is catching on quickly about Bell’s breakthrough. Last year, one of Bell’s articles made the list of the 100 most influential publications in the HIV/AIDS research field. Out of more than 10,000 such research publications in the world, Bell’s article in the *Journal of Medicinal Chemistry* was ranked at No. 90 — an amazing feat given that the keywords “HIV” or “AIDS” are not even in the article’s title.

Bell said that in the past few years, he and his research team have learned more about the compound and its properties. They have learned that very small amounts of the drug

can protect the cell against HIV. Also, they have found that the compound’s cellular toxicity on white blood cells is relatively low. This could mean that the therapeutic index that drug researchers use in evaluating side effects of a proposed drug could also be low — a good sign that humans could safely take the drug.

“Every drug is toxic, and the less toxic it is, the better,” Bell said. “It takes about 50 times higher the amount of CADA to cause toxicity on the white blood cells than it does to give it protection against HIV, which is a positive indication that we’re headed in the right direction.”

LOOK ONLINE

- To find out more about the rankings, go to: <http://www.ionchannels.org/newsletters/>
- For a copy of Bell’s article, go to: <http://www.aidshivresearch.com/>

Student publications follow digital migration

You can still read the weekly, newsprint edition of *The Nevada Sagebrush* and get a dusting of ink on your hands. Or, you can read the latest campus news online.

Nevada’s traditional student publications have followed the migration trend of news and information to digital and electronic platforms. While the 59th edition of *Brushfire*, the state’s oldest literary arts journal founded in 1950, was printed and distributed on campus this spring, an online version is also available.

Artemisia, first published in 1898, has changed the most. Faced with dwindling yearbook and advertising revenue sales, student editors moved from the traditional yearbook format to a semester magazine format in



Editor-in-Chief Louis James Somers and his 1914 *Artemisia* staff (shown here) would never have imagined the magazine and digital format of today’s publication.

LOOK ONLINE:

Find a history of *Artemisia*’s early years, published in the 1917 yearbook, and links to online versions of today’s *The Nevada Sagebrush*, *Brushfire* and *Artemisia* at <http://www.unr.edu/nevadasilverandblue/>

2005. Individual portrait photos of students are a thing of the past. This year, an online version of *Artemisia* was added.

“Even though the traditional aspects of a yearbook are not in the publication anymore, the magazine acts like a yearbook. It documents campus activities and community like the yearbook used to do,” explained 2006-07 Editor Kevin Clifford. “Also, magazines are more keep-able than newspapers are in that it’s easy to take home a magazine and leave it on the book shelf.”

'Alicia's Story' moves to the blogosphere

A flurry of emails and well-wishes was sent from faculty, staff and students of the Reynolds School of Journalism to University graduate Alicia Parlette '04 (journalism) this spring when it was learned that she would be going on disability from her job as a copy editor at *The San Francisco Chronicle*.

Parlette has written of her battle with cancer through a series of journal-like personal accounts called *Alicia's Story* in *The Chronicle* over the past two years. Parlette's update in early March 2007 informed readers that the 25-year-old would be going on disability and the series would have a new home as a blog.

On March 2, 2005, Parlette, then 23, was diagnosed with alveolar soft part sarcoma, a rare form of cancer that affects less than 200



Photo by David Calvert

people each year. In October 2005 Parlette returned to the Nevada campus to share her story as the 2005 Robert Laxalt Distinguished Writer, one of the school's most prestigious honors. *Alicia's Story* was published as a book, and Parlette was chosen as "Person of the Week" by ABC News.

"The reaction to the story was overwhelming," said Robert Rosenthal, managing editor of *The Chronicle* and the person who first asked Parlette to share her story with the publication's readers. He noted that within the first few weeks of the appearance of the series, more than 2,000 emails and letters were received by the newspaper.

The Laxalt Distinguished Writer award is

presented annually to accomplished Nevada writers. The award is in honor of legendary Nevada journalism professor Robert Laxalt — considered one of the state's finest and most influential writers.

In her update in early March, Parlette noted that although she would be on disability, she would continue to write.

"This will be my last piece in *The Chronicle*, at least for a while," wrote Parlette, a summa cum laude graduate and recipient of a prestigious Hearst Fellowship. "I'm going on disability — maybe for a few months, maybe forever — because I just can't work often enough to justify being a full-fledged employee of Hearst Newspapers (or anything, for that matter).

"It's not because I'm suddenly deteriorating; I just can't keep up with work. Since I have the opportunity to put work on the shelf in order to get more aggressive about prolonging my life, I'm going to take it.

"But I'm not disappearing. Writing this series has been everything to me these past two years. It has been my comfort object and my therapy; my emotional protection and my emotional pipeline; my loving retreat and my connection to the world.

"So that connection will continue. While my work won't be appearing in *The Chronicle* — or any other print publication — I will be writing a blog, 'Alicia's Story,' as a member of the public, at sfgate.com/community/blogs. I look forward to emptying my life onto the page, digital though it may be, and I thank readers in advance for following me into the blogosphere."

One of Parlette's professors at Nevada, Warren Lerude '61 (journalism), perhaps said it best in an email to journalism school faculty and friends: "Our hopes, prayers and power of our positive and supportive deep thinking are with you every minute, Alicia."

LOOK ONLINE

For more on Alicia's Story, go to: <http://www.sfgate.com.alicia>

Mensing's teaching mastery inspires students, colleagues

Can a teacher make a meaningful connection with students by chomping on an orange or sitting on a peanut butter and jelly sandwich? For Scott Mensing, chairman of the University's Department of Geography, that's the best way to create an environment of hands-on learning, and it has resulted in a teaching "triple crown."



Mensing

Mensing received the 2007 Regents' Teaching Award, an annual honor presented by the Nevada System of Higher Education to the professor throughout the entire system with the most distinguished teaching record.

The award came on the heels of awards Mensing earned in 2005 and 2006: the LeMay Award for Excellence in Teaching, signifying the top instructor in the College of Science, and the F. Donald Tibbitts Distinguished Teacher Award, the University's highest teaching honor.

Mensing earned each award in his first nomination.

To teach students how maps can be distorted, Mensing chomps on an orange and slams it on a desktop. To demonstrate the processes rocks go through from sedimentary to metamorphic, he sits on the sandwich. It's an attention-getting heat and pressure lesson, but it works. Mensing also holds office hours in the library rather than in his office.

"The library is the students' turf, after all," he says.

Coake's gripping tales wow critics

'TROUBLE' TAKES EUROPE

Christopher Coake now knows how to spell "brouhaha."

The University assistant professor of English stands at the base of the stage in Reno's McKinley Arts and Culture Center, flanked by red velvet drapes, and suffers a flashback to a sixth-grade spelling bee when he misspelled the word. He still has nightmares about it, he tells the audience.

Nearly 150 book lovers have come to hear Coake read from his debut collection of short stories, *We're in Trouble*. His appearance is the second in the "Books & Authors" series, sponsored by Nevada Humanities

and the Nevada Center for the Book.

Since the 2006 publication of *We're in Trouble*, Coake has received the prestigious PEN/Robert Bingham Fellowship for Writers. *Lire*, a leading French literary magazine, named the French translation of *We're in Trouble* one of the 20 best books of 2006. The British magazine of new writing, *Granta*, named him as one of the top 21 "Best of Young American Novelists," an honor bestowed each decade.

The book has been published in the United States, Britain, Italy, France, and Germany, where it's in a third printing.

His March 2007 presentation included references to his muse, his academic career, and his love of writing.

Coake began by dictating stories to his mother, who wrote them in longhand. He illustrated the fiction with crayons, stapled the pages together and passed them out to friends. Coake was six.

"I wrote all the way through junior high and high school. And, I did a disastrously brief stint as a journalist," he said. "But, I kept coming back to fiction."

During graduate school at Ohio State University, a professor introduced Coake to James Joyce's tour de force short story, *The Dead*, which he says changed his life and his writing.

"I began graduate school on September 16, 2001. I wrote the stories



Photo by Jean Dixon

Christopher Coake started writing his highly acclaimed first book, *We're in Trouble*, a few days after the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

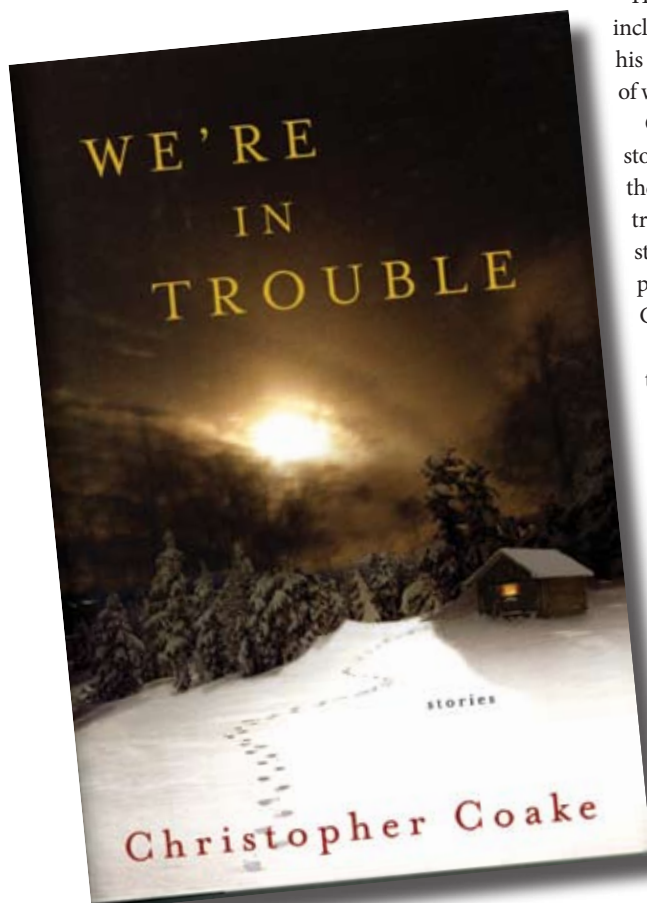
for this book at a time of personal and national tragedy," he said, referring to the death of his first wife following a protracted illness and the attack on the World Trade Center. "About halfway through graduate school, I had collected enough stories for the book."

The panel judges who awarded Coake the PEN/ Robert Bingham Fellowship wrote "In all of these stories, and in practically every sentence that composes them, there is a germ of bland familiarity that, in Coake's hands, has been twisted into the strange, the new, and the alarming."

"You have to write what you know or, in my case, what you're afraid of. But I couldn't be an artist without an underlying sense of optimism. There's hope for the 'we' who are in trouble," he said.

LOOK ONLINE

Christopher Coake website: http://www.unr.edu/cla/lande/People/Faculty/Coake_Profile.htm



Caravan leaves statewide trail of advanced teaching

A caravan leaves the University of Nevada, Reno six times each academic year for an 800-mile round trip through Ely, Elko and Winnemucca. On board is a team of educators who encourage math teachers to excel in instruction by incorporating research advancements into teaching techniques.

The Northeastern Nevada Math Project is beginning its third year of a grant-funded partnership with the Nevada Department of Education, National Science Foundation and U.S. Department of Education.

“This is one of only two projects in the country that encourages collaboration with all education partners in the state,” said Teruni Lamberg, Project director and assistant professor in the College of Education Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning. “Our goal is to



Photo by Jean Dixon

Peggy Glick, wife of University President Milt Glick, joined the caravan and shared insights from her work with Arizona State University’s Center for Research in Education for Science, Mathematics, Engineering and Tehcnology with elementary school math teachers in Winnemucca, Nev.

change the way math is taught.”

The project has 37 participating teachers who have “demonstrated leadership

potential to participate in changing the culture of teaching at their schools and their districts,” according to David Brancamp, Nevada Department of Education math consultant.

“Over the next year, we hope to build a cadre of coaches who get research into the hands of teachers and facilitate communication that balances instruction methods and encourages problem-solving,” Brancamp said. “These are the tools we’ll need to transform education in the 21st century.”

Participants report a change in both attitude and performance on formative and summative assessments. “I pay more attention to how students interpret the curriculum and have shifted from lecturing to active participation,” said Holly Marich, a fourth-grade teacher at McGill Elementary in the White Pine County School District.

Grill.



Swill.



Chill.



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Faces on the Quad

DEANNE LEONARD

Sparks, Psychology



Leonard, 22, received the Herz Gold Medal at the University's May 2007 Commencement ceremonies. The medal is the University's oldest and most prestigious student award, given to the graduating senior with the highest grade-point average. A fluent speaker of Spanish, Leonard has volunteered for five years as a medical translator. Recently accepted to the University of Nevada School of

Medicine, she was an ambassador for the campus' Honors Program. In May she presented her research at the 2007 meeting of the Vision Sciences Society in Sarasota, Fla.

RICK KRAUS

Reno, Physics



Kraus, a May 2007 graduate of the University, received a studentship from Los Alamos National Laboratory to pursue a doctorate in physics at the University of Cambridge in England. He will be conducting his research at the university's renowned Cavendish Laboratory. The 22-year-old has developed and designed mechanical and electronics systems for the University of

Nevada, Reno's Nevada Terawatt Facility. He has also performed research at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center and at Los Alamos, where he earned a Distinguished Student Performance Award and an Outstanding Presentation in Physics award.

CHARLES MEBI

Reno, Chemistry



Mebi, 34, received the University's Outstanding Graduating Graduate Student award in May 2007. Born in Buea, Cameroon, Mebi earned his Doctor of Philosophy degree in chemistry this spring. A specialist in inorganic chemistry, he has had seven of his articles published in peer-reviewed journals. Mebi, the vice president for committees with the University's Chemistry Graduate Student

Association, has also received seven academic awards including the Outstanding International Graduate Student Scholarship and the Outstanding Graduate Student Researcher Award.



Artist rendering of the Center for Molecular Medicine, also the future home to the Whittemore Peterson Institute for Neuro-Immune Disease and the northern center for the Nevada Cancer Institute.

Twice the space for biomedical research

The headquarters for the University of Nevada School of Medicine's first new biomedical research facility to be built in more than 20 years is under construction. The Center for Molecular Medicine, located on the north end of campus, will also be home to the Whittemore Peterson Institute for Neuro-Immune Disease and the northern center for Nevada Cancer Institute.

Ground was broken this past spring on the 100,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art facility, which will double the medical school's research and laboratory space. The center will house portions of the medical school's basic science research departments and serve as home to programs within the microbiology, pharmacology and physiology departments. The facility will increase the research productivity of the school's faculty and assist them in attracting federal research grants.

"This new facility will significantly expand the School of Medicine's ability to advance the work of our basic scientists,"

said Dr. John McDonald, vice president of health sciences and dean of the medical school. "Not only will we have the ability to expand our current basic science operation, but the building will allow us to develop new programs in addition to providing space for our clinical faculty to conduct research."

The center, visible from McCarran Boulevard, will also enhance the medical school's graduate student programs. According to University President Milton Glick, breaking ground on the new facility is just one of the first steps toward expanding the School of Medicine.

The Whittemore Peterson Institute, the first institute of its kind in the United States dedicated to finding a cure for Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, will conduct research, treat patients and develop educational programs for complex disorders of the immune system and brain.

The Nevada Cancer Institute will use the building to expand research and find the most efficient treatment options in patient-centered clinical trials.

The best place to shop for official Nevada Wolf Pack apparel



No store carries as wide a selection of Nevada Wolf Pack T-shirts, sweatshirts, shorts, jackets and other officially licensed apparel as the ASUN Bookstore on the University of Nevada, Reno campus.

Located in the Jot Travis Student Union at North Virginia Street and Artemesia Way (just north of 11th Street), the bookstore is open the following hours during the academic year:

Monday through Thursday 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Friday 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

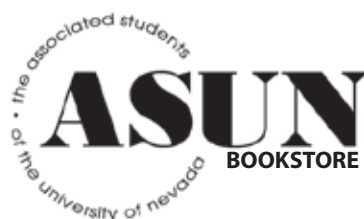
Saturday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Telephone 775-784-6597

email bkstore@unr.nevada.edu

or shop 24 hours a day at:

www.asunbookstore.com



Owned and operated by
the Associated Students of
the University of Nevada

Nevada Science Foundation soothes pain of nursing costs

The Nevada Science Foundation (NSF) is combating Nevada's shortage of nurses by providing a substantial endowment to support students enrolled in the Orvis School of Nursing at the University of Nevada. Annually, the NSF's gift will provide three \$4,000 scholarships to undergraduate nursing students and two \$2,000 scholarships to graduate nursing students.



Josef Waxler

Lavina Atkinson, president of the NSF, created the scholarship

in memory of Josef Waxler, the organization's founder. The gift is a fitting tribute to Waxler's lifelong interest in education and in helping others. Its impact will be felt by both University nursing students and the entire health care community.

The Orvis School of Nursing's mission includes service to the state of Nevada and to the professional community at large. It operates the Orvis Nursing Clinic, which provides a valuable learning environment for Nevada nursing students and is particularly important to many who cannot afford or for other reasons have no access to quality medical care.

To learn more, contact Kendall Hardin, director of development, College of Health and Human Sciences, at (775) 682-7495 or khardin@unr.edu.

Nowland Chase scholarship endowment supports international students

The late Professor Harry M. Chase, Jr. taught political science and world politics at the University from 1956 until his retirement in 1983. An outpouring of sympathy from Professor Chase's family, friends, and former students at the time of his death in 1996 led to the establishment of a scholarship endowment in his name.

When Harry's wife, Judy Nowland Chase, passed away in 2006, her estate provided for a substantial gift to increase the scholarship endowment which provides support for University international affairs and political science majors including student participation in the Model United Nations, work on honor theses and allowances for inter-

national travel.

Recently, 31 University students traveled to San Francisco to participate in the 57th Model United Nations Far West (MUNFW) and were supported, in part, by funds from the Nowland Chase Scholarship. Annually, Model United Nations simulation programs provide more than 4,000 students an understanding of the inner workings of the United Nations as they build skills in diplomacy and compromise. Students and faculty from five continents work diligently to propose resolutions addressing regional conflicts, peacekeeping, human rights, women and children, economic and social development, and the environment.

For more information about creating an endowment, contact Stuart Golder, director of development, College of Liberal Arts at (775) 784-1222 or sgolder@unr.edu.



Photo by Jean Dixon

Jeff Ceccarelli, president of Sierra Pacific Power Company; University President Milt Glick; Jeane Jones, a trustee from the Redfield Foundation; Walter Higgins, chairman of Sierra Pacific Resources; Daniel Schochet, vice president of Ormat Nevada; and Ted Batchman, dean of the College of Engineering, celebrate the announcement of the new degree program.

Sierra Pacific and Ormat empower new renewable energy program

Sierra Pacific Power Company has initiated an expansion of the sustainable energy curriculum in the University's College of Engineering. Through an industry-education partnership, the college will develop an undergraduate educational program in sustainable engineering, along with a graduate research program located at the University's Redfield Campus.

"Sierra Pacific has a long tradition of working with the University's College of Engineering and the geothermal industry here in northern Nevada," said Sierra Pacific Resources Chairman Walter Higgins. "This unique industry-education partnership will not only further development of the renewables field, but should help serve the energy needs of Nevada far into the future."

Ormat Technologies has also partnered with the University by providing funding to help complete laboratory facilities at the Redfield Campus. "This is literally a field laboratory, and with this educational base for geothermal and renewable energy, we have the proverbial alignment of the stars here for students and the entire community," said Daniel Schochet, vice president of Ormat Nevada.

The new program requires the hiring of faculty to lead the innovative curriculum. Sierra Pacific Power Company has committed \$500,000 over two years for two new professors in engineering. The goal is to catapult Nevada and the University into an alternative energy leadership role.

"We're grateful to Sierra Pacific and Ormat for helping to start this program," said University President Milton Glick at a recent program ceremony. "Now we have to engage the entire business community in expanding this program into a multidisciplinary endeavor. We look forward to expanding this focus on renewable energy beyond engineering and science into our other schools and also engaging our colleagues in the Nevada System of Higher Education."

To find out more about the Renewable Energy Program, contact Director of Development Melanie Perish at (775) 784-6422, or mperish@unr.edu.



Celebrating a new HOME

Team and fans enjoy new Christina M. Hixson Softball Park

Norm Dianda, president of Q&D Construction, threw out the first pitch and acted as the Wolf Pack's honorary coach as the University of Nevada softball team held an official dedication ceremony for the Christina M. Hixson Softball Park on April 13 prior to the team's game with San Jose State.

Nevada honored Hixson and all the businesses and individuals who made the construction of the softball park possible, including Q&D Construction, Jim Puzey, Basalite, GJH Rebar Services, Nelson Electric, Northeast Masonry, Odyssey Engineering, Sierra Nevada Construction, Sierra Restroom Solutions, A-1 Steel, American Redi-Mix, Anchor Door, Applied Mechanical, Carl's Imaging Works, CB Concrete, Cemex, Diversified Concrete Cutting, Harris Salinas Rebar, Henri Specialities, Holland Waterproofing, Martin Iron Works, Merit Electric, R Supply Company, Savage & Sons, Titan Construc-

tion Supply, Viper Steel Inc. and Western Nevada Supply.

"We are so thankful to Dr. Hixson for her extraordinary generosity and to all of the people and businesses who made the construction of the Christina M. Hixson Softball Park a reality," Athletics Director Cary Groth said. "The talented young women on our softball team have a beautiful new home to continue their on-field success, and that was made possible by the generosity of these supporters."

The University of Nevada softball team (28-31, 9-9 WAC) ended the 2007 season winning seven of its final nine games and making its second consecutive appearance in the final series of the Western Athletic Conference Tournament.

To learn more about supporting student-athletes in their endeavors, please contact Scott Turek, associate athletic director and director of development, at (775) 784-6900 or turek@unr.edu.



Photo by Jean Dixon

Nevada's softball team opened play at the Christina M. Hixson Softball Park in March 2007. The park, which is located on the former grounds of Bishop Manogue High School in Reno, features 168 permanent chairbacks behind home plate and permanent dugouts with restrooms. The facility features batting cages for both the home and visiting teams.

Photo inset: Norm Dianda, president of Q&D Construction.

