

# THE ALLIANCE

THE AAUP NATIONAL AWARD-WINNING NEWSPAPER OF THE NEVADA FACULTY ALLIANCE

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## Merit pool among top concerns

Report on NFA officers meeting with budget director and chief of staff

On December 7, NFA leaders from around the state met with Chief of Staff Gerald Gardner and Budget Director Jeff Mohlenkamp, discussing a number of issues of import to faculty and staff of the Nevada System of Higher Education. The meeting was cordial, with much give and take in conversations on the issues we raised. All NFA representatives from around the state participated actively, as did Gardner and Mohlenkamp, representing the governor. We indicated early in the meeting that we were aware of the difficulties they faced in building a budget given the revenue situation, and they seemed appreciative that we acknowledged their difficulties.

We opened the meeting by noting that NFA leaders have been meeting with governors, budget directors, and  
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(L-R) NFA legislative representative Jim Richardson, Chief of Staff Gerald Gardner, Budget Director Jeff Mohlenkamp, and NFA President Angela Brommel. Also pictured is Janet Usinger, UNR NFA chapter president (foreground).

## Legislative issues: Compensation, pay cuts and formulas

By Jim Richardson, NFA legislative representative and editor of *The Alliance*

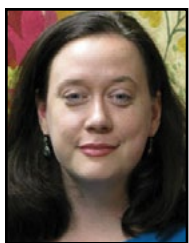
The next session of the Nevada Legislature begins on Feb. 4, running for 120 days, and promises to be one of the most crucial for the Nevada System of Higher Education in decades. The Nevada Faculty Alliance will take to Carson City three clear priorities.

First and foremost, the restoration of competitive compensation for faculty and staff, whose salaries have declined significantly in real-dollar terms over the past four years, while national averages for faculty pay have been rising. The consequent risk for our recruitment and retention of top-notch scientific researchers and innovative teachers, for whom we compete on a national and international market, poses a risk to the state's economic development strategy which depends heavily on higher education.

Secondly, we will seek legislative action to reverse the significant deterioration in health coverage for faculty and staff, whose coverage was scaled back in 2011 while out of pocket costs for faculty and staff and their families more than doubled. NFA has actively supported the work of the NSHE Public Employees' Benefits Program Task Force on this issue.

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### PRESIDENT'S LETTER



## What we believe: Shared governance 101

By Angela Brommel, NFA president

In our last issue of *The Alliance* I told you that the NFA is committed to advocating on your behalf and telling your stories about the need for restoring competitive compensation, the real heart-breaking impacts on our faculty and staff due the previous cuts in benefits through the Public Employees' Benefits Program, and the need for adequate and equitable funding for public higher education for our eight institutions within the Nevada System of Higher Education.

Since that time I have met with members, business, community and political leaders and allies to tell them the stories that you are forwarding to your chapters and the state NFA. But best of all, is that so many times when I mention you, they tell me a story about a letter, a phone call or meeting where you already told them where we stand on issues concerning the support of public education in Nevada. Just last week I was telling our story at a locally owned coffee shop in my neighborhood. It's an easy story to tell because it is about stewards of Nevada public

education who are living the mission of a tradition of shared governance as the vehicle for stronger institutions and greater student success.

Many people ask me what it means when we speak of shared governance. This is understandable. This is why this year we will build talking points that connect our stories and values with a common language that allows our members and allies to raise their voices and be heard in the local, state and national conversations about higher education.

The AAUP defines **shared governance** as, "One of the key tenets of quality higher education, this term refers to governance of higher education institutions in which responsibility is  
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*Editor's Note: This article is the first in a series to highlight the principles and ideas supported by the Nevada Faculty Alliance, an affiliate of the American Association of University Professors.*

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State News

## NFA Political Action Committee endorsements fare well in the election

The NFA Political Action Committee endorsed a number of candidates in various races for the election just completed in November. The NFA PAC committee operates as two subcommittees, one for southern races and one for northern races. Past NFA president Greg Brown headed the southern PAC group and Glenn Miller, NFA president of the University of Nevada, Reno, the northern one. The statewide NFA PAC Board then voted on the recommendations from each region, and on any contributions that were to be made to the candidates. Following is a report on how the NFA PAC endorses fared.

### Federal races

Barak Obama was the choice of both NFA PAC subcommittees, and he won handily, which we think bodes well for higher education issues over the next four years.

NFA endorsed former regent and member of Congress Shelley Berkeley for the U.S. Senate, but she lost a close contest to former Congressman and U.S. Senator Dean Heller, who had been appointed to fill a vacant seat in the U.S. Senate. We congratulate Senator Heller and wish him well in his first full term.

NFA PAC endorsed in three congressional races, with two endorsees, Dina Titus and Steven Horsford, winning their races. We congratulate them as well as congressmen Joe Heck and

### Legislative Leaders, 2013 Session



**Mo Denis** Majority Leader of the Senate  
**Michael Roberson** Minority Leader of the Senate  
**Marilyn Kirkpatrick** Speaker of the Assembly  
**Pat Hickey** Minority Leader of the Assembly

Mark Amodei who won their races. We hope the terms of all these winners in Congress will be positive for them and Nevada higher education.

### Legislative races

The NFA PAC scored very well on its legislative endorsements. All but two NFA PAC endorsees won their legislative races.

The southern PAC group recommended David Parks, Kelvin Atkinson, Aaron Ford, Justin Jones, Richard Segerblom, Joyce Woodhouse and Pat Spearman for endorsements, and scored 100 percent. We are particularly pleased to see three new faces, Spearman, Jones and Ford joining the state Senate. They will have a great learning experience working with veterans Parks and Woodhouse, and other holdovers in the Senate. Also, both Segerblom

and Atkinson have served long terms in the state Assembly, so they will bring considerable experience with them to the Senate.

The northern PAC group endorsed two winners, Debbie Smith and Pete Goicoechea, both moving up from long service in the state Assembly. But NFA PAC came up short on its third northern senate endorsement of Sheila Leslie, who lost a very close race to incumbent Greg Brower. We wish the best for all these winners, and look forward to working with them in the next session.




**Debbie Smith**  
Senate Finance

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## UNR receives gift for renovations



The Nell J. Redfield Foundation has pledged a \$2 million lead gift toward a \$4 million renovation of the School of the Arts Church Fine Arts Building at the University of Nevada, Reno. The Redfield Foundation's gift supports the first phase of the renovation project known as "Act One." The estimated completion date for Act One is late 2013. 

### Legislative issues

Continued from p. 1

Thirdly, NFA will seek some restoration of the significant reductions in public investment in research, through state support of the Knowledge Fund to promote economic development objectives, and through enhancements to the budget for instruction.

The NFA in general supports the adoption of a new funding formula according to the principles identified by an interim legislative committee, which has proposed an overhaul of the longstanding funding formula used to allocate state support among NSHE campuses.

The committee's recommendations include a wholly new formula based upon a single purpose, supporting course and degree completion by Nevada students.

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Chapter Reports

## CSN NFA leaders respond to distance education

By Adrian Havas, president, College of Southern Nevada chapter of NFA



**Adrian Havas**  
We at the College of Southern Nevada chapter of NFA would like to respond to Chancellor Daniel Klaich's letter regarding the future of distance education in Nevada. We have several concerns about the substance of the letter, and take this opportunity to offer some constructive comments.

Chancellor Klaich asserts correctly that a major challenge is the possible elimination of the state funding "premium" for distance education. In our view, this could be "penny wise and pound foolish." Distance education is a relatively inexpensive form of education when one considers the sunk costs of land, construction, parking lots and building maintenance and security for brick and mortar methods of offering education. Distance education meets the needs of our students who increasingly juggle demands of family, and 24-hour work schedules in a growing state. For a decade and a half, it has been the fastest growing segment of our college because it fills a major need. Even with a "premium" it represents a good investment comparatively.

The letter also states that we need to face the challenge of Massive Open On-line Courses. MOOCs have so far apparently been successful in the niche that they occupy in that they offer a chance to take, for example, a Harvard or Stanford University class at no cost. These classes are huge ("Massive") but have a minimal completion rate – less than 10 percent in many classes. Furthermore, MOOCs are an experiment that is very new. It is hardly clear that it is the wave of the future or whether it is a fad that quickly fades.

Most of our students at CSN are predominantly Nevadans who, even if taking online courses, prefer smaller class size and local faculty to the prestige of taking a massive MOOC course. Many of our students take online and classroom classes simultaneously and many hope to obtain an AA degree and transfer to UNLV. We believe there is little competition between our

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## WNC NFA chapter collective bargaining negotiations are underway

By James Strange, president, Western Nevada College chapter of NFA

The Western Nevada College chapter of NFA is busy working on collective bargaining negotiations with the WNC administration. The work is currently on two fronts: development of bargaining proposals and official communication with the administration representatives.

A core group of seven NFA members was created in order to lead the development of bargaining proposals. The members of the core group are WNC professors Jeff Downs, Mike Hardie, Richard Kloes, Winnie Kortemeier, Holly O'Toole, Michelle Roussele and Jim Strange.

The primary negotiation team for the WNC chapter of NFA is Kloes, Kortemeier and Strange, with NFA Past President Scott Huber serving as the NFA state board representative. The remaining core group members will serve as alternate negotiators. Vice Presidents Mark Ghan (legal affairs) and Connie Capurro (academic


and student affairs) are representing the WNC administration.

The members of the core group attended a one-day negotiator training workshop on Oct. 19. The workshop was given by Angela Hewitt and Howard Bunsis, representatives from the American Association of University Professors. The workshop covered topics such as negotiation tactics, conducting a contract campaign and institution financials. Other NFA members in attendance were Huber, NFA legislative representative Jim Richardson and Julia Hammett, president of the TMCC chapter of NFA.

Five workgroups have been created and assigned specific topics based on the articles from the TMCC contract: evaluation, grievances, miscellaneous, workforce and workload. Each workgroup is led by a core group member. These workgroups have been charged with recruiting faculty to serve on the

workgroup, getting input from the faculty-at-large and codifying the bargaining proposals.

Official communication between the NFA and the WNC administration began on Nov. 1 with a demand to bargain letter submitted by the NFA. The WNC chapter sponsored an open forum on collective bargaining on Nov. 2. The purpose of this open forum was to solicit input and present the current status of the bargaining proposals. Attendance was moderate, but generated substantial input from attendees on the various bargaining proposals.

The process for the collective bargaining agreement commenced with a Dec. 6 meeting between the parties to agree on general process issues. The meeting was productive and the overall mood was amicable. At press time, one session had been completed with general agreement on some of the more technical contract items. Sessions on grievances will be scheduled soon. 

## NFA at TMCC is very active

By Julia E. Hammett, president, Truckee Meadows Community College chapter of NFA

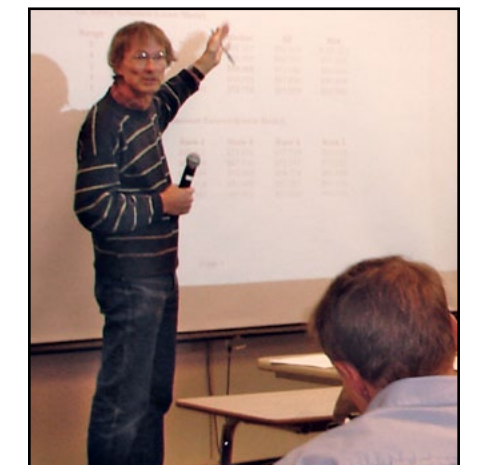
This semester has been a very busy one for members of the Truckee Meadows Community College chapter of NFA, beginning with a reception for new faculty members in August. Our first chapter meeting of the semester occurred on Sept. 26, where we identified key issues of concern to the rank and file, shared information from the state board meeting, and provided information of key candidate endorsements for the upcoming election. Jim Richardson, NFA legislative representative and professor at the University of Nevada, Reno, attended the meeting.

On Oct. 19, the TMCC NFA chapter hosted an American Association of University Professors training for the Western Nevada College. AAUP staff member Angela Hewitt and CBC Chair Howard Bunsis (East Michigan University) led an excellent data-driven training for our WNC colleagues. In addition, local collective bargaining veterans, Scott Huber (TMCC, NFA past president) and Julia Hammett (president, TMCC NFA chapter) and Richardson, offered insights into previous contract negotiations at TMCC.

During the course of the semester TMCC union members have been actively participating in numerous college committees working in partnership with the faculty senate, college staff and administrators. NFA members have been added to several TMCC committees including the Space Allocation Committee, the President's Advisory Council, the Faculty Recruitment Committee, and the Planning and Resource Allocation Council. In addition, union members have met with key administrators regarding a number of pressing issues.

Important issues for union members at TMCC include pay equity, allocation of office space, revisions in recruitment and hiring processes for new tenure track faculty, and two new processes for institutional accountability, the Program and Unit Review, and the Resource Allocation Process.

TMCC faculty are currently studying the Nevada System of Higher Education Salary Committee's proposal to revise the community college salary schedule in order to assess the current proposal's fit and effectiveness for



**NFA member Lars Jensen spoke to the TMCC Faculty Senate Salary and Benefits Committee and NFA members, offering ideas for improving the current NSHE salary proposal. Steve Streeper, chair of the Salary and Benefits Committee, was in attendance.**

serving the needs of our faculty. Several members of TMCC's math department, including NFA member Lars Jensen, have sketched out modifications that may improve the existing proposal. They have met with the NSHE Salary Committee, which initially was receptive to their ideas, as well as administrators and faculty leaders at TMCC. They presented their ideas to the Faculty Senate Salary and Benefits Committee on Nov. 16, where a motion was passed to meld their

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# Faculty pay restoration is a foremost budget priority

## Statement presented by faculty senate chairs to regents meeting, Nov. 29

For the record, my name is Brad Summerhill. I speak on behalf of the Council of Senate Chairs. We come to you today with data to aid you in your cause of fulfilling your budget priorities and to thank you for these budget priorities, foremost of which is faculty pay restoration. Let what is taking place at the universities also stand for what is taking place at your colleges, where, arguably, the situation is even worse.

Over the past four years, nationwide, in public doctoral granting universities, salaries for all ranks of professors have gone up by about 7.4 percent. When adjusted for inflation, faculty nationwide have remained fairly steady on income, with a 2008-2012 average salary fluctuation of (minus) -0.15 percent.

In Nevada, comparing the same data reported in the same way to the same agency, we see that things are far worse. At the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, in 2008-2012, all ranks dropped -6.26 percent compared to national averages, while at the University of Nevada, Reno, all ranks dropped an average of -8.25 percent. You may think that's not so bad, all things considered, but the picture gets far worse when we disaggregate the numbers. When adjusted for pay cuts and furloughs, all ranks at UNR dropped -13.01 percent in the past four years. Instructors dropped -16.57 percent, and associate professors dropped a staggering -16.67 percent. Please recall not only our pay freezes but the lack of any cost-of-living adjustments. And none of this data touches upon the changes in our health benefits.

What we notice looking at these numbers is that our most mobile faculty have been the hardest hit. Instructors, even those tied to a graduate program, can and will study elsewhere. The rising stars of our institutions, the assistant and associate professors, have experienced double-digit losses in income. These are promising scholars who do not often begin their careers in academia with high starting salaries. Anecdotally, we have grim evidence to consider: at colleges throughout the state, candidates refuse tenure-track positions based on low starting wages, a deteriorating benefits package, and the recent history of pay freezes and furloughs. Bear in mind that assistant and associate professors have opportunities beyond our state borders. These are not only individuals, they are families. Educated people tend to marry educated people; they tend to have educated children. Think of the economic impact of a highly educated family leaving the Silver State. I have seen the chair of my English department at Truckee Meadows Community College take his family to Arizona, where, frankly, he can get

paid a whole lot more (and take on a softer workload, by the way). I have seen a tenured CT computer tech professor take his family back to Kentucky, and I have seen a promising tenure-track performing arts instructor leave Nevada after a single year for more promising terrain in the Midwest. Every institution reports a loss of faculty not just through buy-outs and retirements; no, we are losing some of our youngest, best and brightest, those hardest hit and most difficult to replace. These are future leaders in their fields of study who are the most likely to have the most profound long-term beneficial impacts on Nevada in the 21st century. This is obviously a serious recruitment and diversity issue.

You might ask, "Brad, what do you expect regents to do about it?" Quite simply, advocate. We want you to debunk the propaganda that says Nevada faculty are somehow overpaid. As a community college professor who has seen his base salary continuously lose buying power over the past decade, ever since I was hired, I can guarantee (and demonstrate in numerical terms) it isn't so.

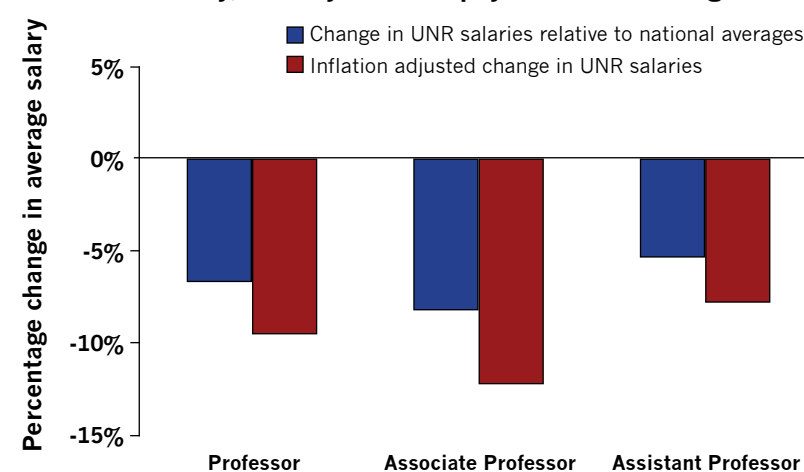
We thank you for prioritizing pay restoration in the budget request you approved. Very clearly, you are saying to the governor and to the Nevada Legislature, "We cannot serve the best interests of the state in a climate of continual cuts. We've had our budget slashed 30 percent. We've done our best in tough circumstances but we cannot do what we're supposed to do to fuel this state's economy, culture and citizenry if we're trapped in survival mode." Thank you for making pay restoration your top budget priority. Don't back down.

Even under constantly changing circumstances, even amidst obscure and uncertain political and economic forecasts, do not back down. Advocate for what you know is right. Higher education is the state's key investment and I don't have to convince anyone on this board that it's the right investment for the state of Nevada. Don't relent. Keep reminding our representatives in Carson City that the dollars we spend to keep our best and our brightest inside the state of Nevada represent nothing more and nothing less than a common sense investment in our communities and in our collective future.

Flat funding equals further slashing of our budgets. Imagine these numbers in two years under a flat funding scenario. It's unacceptable. Further cuts drive our best and brightest students and faculty out of state. Thank you for standing up for us — your professors, researchers, innovators and motivators.

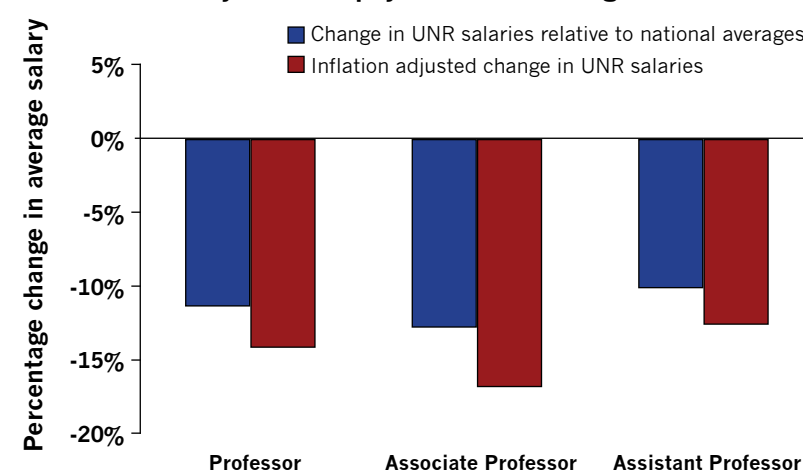
Your faculty senates appreciate the energy you will bring to this task in 2013. ☐

**Salary erosion at UNR (2008-2012)**  
Base salary, not adjusted for pay cuts and furloughs



Data showing UNR's salary deterioration. Other institutions compare similarly.

**Salary erosion at UNR (2008-2012)**  
Adjusted for pay cuts and furloughs



### State News (continued from p. 2)

#### NFA PAC

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In the state Assembly the NFA PAC also had a strong record. In the south, endorsed winners included Paul Aizley, Elliot Anderson, Maggie Carleton, Richard Carrillo, Olivia Diaz, Lucy Flores, Jason Frierson, Joe Hogan, William Horne, Marilyn Kirkpatrick, Marilyn Dondero Loop, April Mastroluca, Harvey Munford, Dina Neal, James Ohrenschall, Peggy Pierce, Lynn Stewart, James Healy, Andrew Martin, Ellen Spiegel and Heidi Swank. The only losing southern endorsee was Markus Conklin, who lost a tight race to Wes Duncan, a new face in Nevada politics.

On Dec. 18, Henderson attorney Lesley Cohen was appointed unanimously by the Clark County Commission to replace Mastroluca, who abruptly resigned for personal family reasons on Nov. 30. Cohen said she wants to quickly meet with the people she'll represent in Assembly District 29 to gauge how



Andrea Anderson Cedric Crear

**NFA PAC endorsed in four regent races, with two of the endorsees, Andrea Anderson and Cedric Crear, winning their races.**

they feel on issues ranging from taxes to gun control before the Legislature convenes on Feb. 4.

"I need to get up to speed pretty quickly," Cohen said in an interview outside the commission chambers.

Assembly endorsees in the north who won include Pat Hickey, Randy Kirner, Teresa Benitez-Thompson, David Bobzien, Skip Daly and Tom Grady, all of whom are returning veterans to Carson City. Mike Sprinkle, an NFA PAC endorsee, also won his race and will be serving for the first time.

#### Merit pool

Continued from p. 1

chiefs of staff in the fall before legislative sessions, starting in 1984 through the present (we did miss one time). We also noted that we have had a legislative representative in Carson City since the 1985 legislative session, and will have again this coming session.

**First** we discussed **restoration of pay cuts, the merit pool, and doing away with furloughs.** We presented the information that was given to the Board of Regents by the senate chairs at the meeting last week, pointing out that salaries have deteriorated markedly when making national comparisons. Then several NFA leaders spoke about the problems they were seeing on their campuses in terms of recruitment and retention, especially with younger faculty. The compensation issue discussion included the impact of dramatic changes in the state health plan with the loss of salary. Several spoke about younger faculty who had come here a few years ago with apparently bright futures, but now were making less money than when they arrived. Numerous instances of young faculty and staff leaving or going on the job market were mentioned. The impact on classified staff (most of whom are lower paid employees) of the pay cuts, furloughs, lack of any

step increases, plus the problem with health coverage, was also mentioned. We explained the history of the merit pool, pointing out that we've had the merit pool since 1985, and how important it was to maintaining competitiveness in the national job markets in which we compete. We explicitly asked that if any consideration was given to restoring the merit pools that fund the step systems for state classified workers and K-12 teachers, we would like to be involved in that discussion and included in any decision made to restore such funds.

Later in the meeting Mohlenkamp asked us to prioritize the many issues we had talked about, and when it came to pay issues, some indicated that getting the pay cuts restored and the merit pool re-established were top priorities, indicating that they had heard that the furloughs were not as pressing as the pay cut and merit pool, since at least the furlough maintained a base salary. Gardner indicated that they were hearing from others (which I took to mean classified employees) that the pay cut restoration was more important than the furlough issue.

**Second** we discussed the **revenue picture**, with Mohlenkamp and Gardner going into some detail about how revenues were improving, but not rapidly, although the direction was positive. Mohlenkamp mentioned that we have had 26 consecutive months of increases in sales tax figures, which is good. But proceeds from gaming and mining have

#### Regent races

NFA PAC endorsed in four regent races, with two of the endorsees winning their races. Andrea Anderson and Cedric Crear will return to the Board of Regents for another six-year term. Also returning is Ron Knecht, who defeated NFA PAC endorsee Michon Macedon, a former faculty member and administrator at Western Nevada College. In the south, a new regent

won the seat formerly occupied by Mark Alden, defeating NFA PAC endorsee Stavan Corbett. We congratulate these winners and look forward to working with these four newly elected regents.

NFA PAC also endorsed one person running for State School Board, Donna Clontz, an employee of Truckee Meadows Community College, who lost to Dave Cook, returning member of the board. ☐



**President Obama, who was endorsed by NFA, spoke to an enthusiastic crowd at a campaign rally at the Cheyenne Sports Complex near the College of Southern Nevada, shortly before the election.**

been relatively flat, and they expect that pattern to continue. They noted that the Economic Forum would meet again in the spring and finalize estimates of revenues that will be available, but that they do not expect any major changes. Mohlenkamp and Gardner then went into considerable detail about the many demands on state funds in terms of case load growth in K-12 (4,500 new students in Clark County, for instance) and in Medicaid. However, they reiterated the pledge made by the Governor not to cut education further, and indicated that retaining a flat budget in the face of so many demands was actually important for NSHE institutions, students, and faculty. We said we were grateful, of course! It is worth noting that Mohlenkamp stated that there were two reasons NSHE was hit harder last session with budget cuts, one being that we could in fact raise tuition and fees, and the other was that our fees and tuition were relatively low. We indicated that we understood that but noted how much fees and tuition have been raised in recent years.

**Third** we covered the **new formula approach** presented by the chancellor and regents and the Interim Committee on Higher Education Funding. The NFA group stressed the importance of retention of tuition and fees, and stated general support for the new formula approach based on outputs (degrees, certificates, "completions") instead of enrolments. The NFA group spent some time discussing the importance of some sort of one

biennium mitigation plan such as the one regents approved (\$5 million per year from the state and \$5 million per year in delayed transfer of funds to be distributed to the northern colleges) to assist institutions that would be dramatically cut under the new approach. We also discussed the one biennium "hold harmless" approach supported by the bipartisan interim committee that would request the full amount each year (about \$13 million) for those institutions losing under the new formula, but allowing the full amount to be transferred to other institutions. Some excellent comments were made by community college representatives about the importance of workforce development if the state is to succeed in its efforts to rebuild the economy.

Gardner and Mohlenkamp demonstrated considerable knowledge about the new formula approach, and raised a few questions, including one about how F grades are to be counted. Gardner did say that "some smart people spent a lot of time working on the new formulas," and that he was hesitant to second guess them very much. They both indicated that the new formula approach was under review, and that discussions were taking place with the chancellor and regents about the new approach. They did say that some tweaking might be done, but they also complimented all the effort that went into developing the new formula approach. Gardner also said that the gov-

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## UNLV chapter is monitoring disruptive educational technology


By John Farley, president, UNLV chapter of NFA

Nevada System of Higher Education Chancellor Dan Klaich has contracted with a consultant, Richard N. Katz and Associates to review e-learning in Nevada higher education, examining the current state and future possibilities. Katz and his co-workers have advised dozens of colleges and universities in recent years. One recent development of special interest is the MOOC: massive open online courses.

In a related development, UNLV Provost John V. White has appointed an MOOC/Disruptive and Adaptive Technologies study group. An important member is NFA member Kendall Hartley, a faculty member in the UNLV College of Education and a specialist in the role of technology in education.

It is often forgotten that various technologies

have been touted for a century and a half as revolutionizing education: the phonograph (1877), radio (1880s), television (1927). One confident prognosticator was Thomas Edison, who proclaimed in 1922, "I believe that the motion picture is destined to revolutionize our educational system and that within a few years it will supplant largely, if not entirely, the use of textbooks."

I remember in the late 1950s watching lectures on introductory probability and statistics on television shows at 6 a.m., either on Sunrise Semester or its rival, Continental Classroom. It is now rare to find enthusiasts for the power of television to educate, and more common to find culture critics lamenting that television is degrading us as a nation. 



Kendall Hartley


## CSN NFA leaders

Continued from p. 3

target market and that of MOOCs, and that MOOCs cannot replace what we offer our students.

We also take some issue with the suggestion that e-learning has become "mature." The implication is that e-learning is beginning to reach maximum saturation point, both in terms of enrollments and integration with classroom learning. We disagree. As older faculty and students (many of whom are returning students or seniors) move out of the system and younger ones replace them, there is every reason to believe e-learning will continue to grow at CSN and be more integrated into the classroom for the foreseeable future.

The letter also indicates that we would seem to imply reviving the discredited virtual college model that was resoundingly rejected last year. Reviving this idea would seem to introduce privatization into the state system, but much recent national discussion has focused on the relative poor quality of private distance education. And the cost is generally higher than expected.

It is our opinion that we should resist any proposal to replace one of the most successful parts of our Nevada System of Higher Education. If there are changes needed to improve what we are doing at NSHE institutions with distance education, let them be dealt with on an institutional level by incremental measures rather than any system-wide tectonic shift. 

## President's letter

Continued from p. 1

shared by faculty, administrators, and trustees. The AAUP emphasizes the importance of faculty involvement in personnel decisions, selection of administrators, preparation of the budget, and determination of educational policies. Faculty should have primary responsibility for such fundamental areas as curriculum, subject matter and methods of instruction, research, faculty status, and those aspects of student life which relate to the educational process, according to the "Statement on College and Univer-

sity Government." First issued in 1920 and then refined in 1966, below are excerpts and commentary on this foundational document.

*First, the academic institution, public or private, often has become less autonomous; buildings, research, and student tuition are supported by funds over which the college or university exercises a diminishing control. Legislative and executive governmental authorities, at all levels, play a part in the making of important decisions in academic policy. If these voices and forces are to be successfully heard and inte-*

## New membership portal now on NFA website

By Heidi Swank, NFA administrative coordinator

Over the past two months, you may have received some emails from our new membership software and portal. This portal is a new function that has been added to the NFA's website. It allows members to manage their NFA profile themselves. Through this portal, you can update your mailing and email addresses as well as your NFA home chapter, telephone number and membership level.

This portal is easy to use and allows the NFA to better serve and keep in contact with members. Activating your account is a simple process.

### Activating your NFA account

1. Go to [www.nevadafacultyalliance.org](http://www.nevadafacultyalliance.org)
2. In the Login box on the left side of the page click "Forgot password." This will allow you to set a password in our new software.
3. Follow the easy instructions on the website.

If you can't remember which email address you provided to the NFA, or if you no longer have access to that account, please call me at 702-530-4NFA. You may also email me at [admin@nevadafacultyalliance.org](mailto:admin@nevadafacultyalliance.org).


We look forward to taking full advantage of the functionality this software brings to the NFA.



Heidi Swank

## NSC professors interview noted writer and activist



Nevada State College history professors Pete La Chapelle and Shirli Brautbar recently interviewed Elie Wiesel, an honoree at a gala and fundraiser for The Dr. Miriam and Sheldon Adelson Educational Campus. Wiesel, who published a memoir in 1958 about his survival of Auschwitz (Night), has influenced many through his writing, activism and teaching. 

*grated, the academic institution must be in a position to meet them with its own generally unified view.*

New faculty advocates have asked me what advice I have for new members in faculty leadership roles – whether it be in our NFA chapters or faculty senates. I said that like our duly elected public leaders, we have been entrusted to speak on behalf of those we represent. We are here to have the difficult conversations for the good of our constituents, and strong institutions have Administrators who support and expect both your consent and dissent as part of the process of

developing a unified view on mission success. It is through dialogue that we discover solutions.

In other words, successful businesses and organizations build, maintain and recreate organizational communication models that welcome full, free and fair discourse. As we heard over the past few legislative sessions, everyone is invited to "the table." When we say shared governance, we mean that the best tables are round and gathered in the spirit of fellowship with an expectation of both shared and divergent viewpoints.

(Continued on p. 8)

## PEBP middle-tier plan fails on tie vote at December meeting

By Jacque Ewing-Taylor, vice chairperson, PEBP Board

The Public Employees' Benefits Program Board recently voted to have PEBP staff present a third-tier option for the self-funded medical plan. This has been under discussion for over a year, and the staff presented the board with some options for consideration at the Nov. 1 meeting.

After much discussion, the motion was made, seconded and approved to direct staff to come back to the board at the Dec. 10 meeting with a proposal that could give employees a third choice in their health care plan. The three choices would be a current HMO, the current Consumer Driven Health Plan, and a new PPO plan that would operate similarly to the "old" PPO plan. The vote in favor of this was not unanimous, however, and several board members clearly have some reservations, so the third-tier option is not a done deal by any means. If adopted in December, the

PPO option would have been available for open enrollment next year, with an effective date of July 1, 2013 (plan year 2014). Regrettably, the middle tier did not pass at the Dec. 10 meeting, failing on a tie vote.

There were several concerns contained in the board packet for the November meeting, and listed below, that undoubtedly influenced the December vote:


Any additional plan must minimize the potential for adverse selection between it and the existing plans, either through plan design or through the rate setting and subsidization process.

A third plan option with higher monthly contribution rates could create discrimination in favor of higher compensated employees (i.e., those employees with higher incomes can afford the higher premium). There are significant penalties for PEBP,

the participants and employers associated with discrimination in favor of highly compensated employees.

Two components of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Federal Health Care Reform or "PPACA") could impact PEBP and the participants; the "Cadillac tax" and the penalty for participants receiving a subsidy by enrolling through the State Exchange.

Additionally, any plan that is not a high-deductible plan is ineligible for a Health Savings Account under IRS rules. Therefore, any employee who might opt into the proposed third-tier plan would not receive the HSA contributions that those in the CDHP receive (\$1,300 this year).

The NFA will continue to advocate for a more affordable health care plans for its members. Written comments to the PEBP Board can be sent to [board@peb.state.nv.us](mailto:board@peb.state.nv.us). 

### New PEBP Board members

Three vacancies on the PEBP Board have recently been filled. Ashok Mirchandani, the deputy director of the department of business and industry, was appointed to the seat representing state management. Romaine Gilliland, recently retired as administrator of the division of welfare and supportive services, was appointed to represent retirees on the board. Finally, Chris Cochran, associate professor of health care administration and policy, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, School of Public Health, has been appointed, giving the Nevada System of Higher Education two representatives on the board of nine.

## Merit pool

Continued from p. 5

error was well aware of the dramatic hit the new formula approach would have on the community colleges, and that they were discussing ways to help with that situation. It is noteworthy that they did not take any issue with the idea of allowing institutions to retain their fees and tuition.

One issue that did come up involved the new "completion" figures and how they will be taken into account for fall 2012 and then spring term in 2014. The usual way of doing a budget revisions late in the spring term of a legislative year is to use spring term enrollment figures, but this might not work this time around because getting "completion" data by the time needed for finalizing the budget may be difficult. Mohlenkamp said they would have to figure out what to do if such data is not available at the appropriate time.

**Fourth,** we discussed the issue of PERS reform and retirement contribution rates, and paying for the 2 percent increase due this year. We reminded them that our contribution rates have been linked for decades with those of PERS, and that any PERS reform could negatively affect NSHE professionals, who already do not compare well on overall compensation since we do not receive (or pay into Social Security). Cutting the contribution rate could negatively affect recruitment and retention of faculty,


nearly all of whom are in the defined contribution plan established by the regents and Legislature in the early 1970s. We also brought up how the 2 percent slated for inclusion in the budget this year would be paid for. We recognize that 1 percent would be paid by employees, which represents a cut in take-home pay (even as the 1 percent goes into our retirement accounts). But, we asked if the state would be paying the 1 percent, pointing out that if not, this would be another large hit on institutional funding (probably 4 to 5 million or so system-wide). We urged that the state cover the cost, of course. Mohlenkamp said he thought the state would pay it, and he sent an email the next day assuring us that this was the case.

**Fifth, Public Employees' Benefits Program matters** were discussed more. Several spoke about the serious impact that changes in the health plan have caused for them and their colleagues, especially new faculty with families, and also classified staff employees who tend to be lower paid employees. We cited statistics about the number of people, particularly lower paid ones, who have dropped state coverage, which led to a discussion about why they had dropped the coverage. (Are they "going bare" or moving to their spouse's coverage?) We admitted that this information is not readily available but should be, and that we hoped the PEBP board would gather such data. We noted that NSHE and PEBP have been cooper-

ating more of late, and specifically mentioned the survey of participants that was done this past year, and how NSHE has assisted with that through the NSHE Task Force. We also discussed the proposal from NSHE to develop a "middle tier" plan between the HMO and the Consumer Driver High Deductible Plan that was instituted nearly two years ago, and mentioned that we appreciated the positive vote at the last PEBP board meeting on that issue by the state budget office PEBP board member. We explained that the matter was up for a vote on Monday with the board and that we hoped it would pass. Mohlenkamp indicated that more choice on health plans was a good idea, which we took as encouraging news. We also raised the issue of the recommendation from employee groups and the chancellor to place a UNLV faculty member, Chris Cochran (who helped build the PEBP survey mentioned earlier), in the remaining open slot on the PEBP board, and thanked them for filling two slots this past week. (The board has been operating with several of its nine slots empty. The day after our visit we learned that indeed, Cochran has been appointed to the PEBP board, which gives NSHE two of nine slots on the board, along with Jacque Ewing-Taylor, who has served for eight years, and is the current vice chairperson of the board.)

**Sixth,** we raised the issue of the Knowledge Fund, urging that the regents' recommendation for \$10

million for that fund be seriously considered. We pointed out that before the recession the universities had a fund from the state to use to assist with obtaining grants, but that this went with the first round of cuts. The university and Desert Research Institute representatives in the meeting stressed the importance of making such funds available if we are to assist with the state's economic development goals. The DRI representative noted that ICR rates are dropping for some federal agencies, making it more difficult for them to fund their operation and meet matching fund requirements. We emphasized that Knowledge Fund funds should be available to use for required matching funds for grants, and that many federal agencies are now requiring a commitment for larger match before a grant can even be submitted.

**Conclusion:** After we went through the agenda items we were asked to prioritize all the items that we had mentioned, which turned out to be quite difficult, and we said so. We did end up suggesting some priorities in the compensation area, as indicated above, and there were a number of comments about the overall importance of higher education to the state's efforts to diversify its economy and get out of the recession. When we finished the meeting we thanked them for allowing us to meet with them, and they thanked us for coming down to share our views. 

## People

## Kevin Carman named UNR executive vice president and provost

Kevin Carman has been named executive vice president and provost for the University of Nevada, Reno. The dean of the College of Science at Louisiana State University will begin in the provost role on Feb. 1, 2013.

"Kevin brings an impressive breadth of experience, and it is apparent that he shares our aspirations for further enhancing the mission and role of our University," said Marc Johnson, UNR president. "I am confident that Kevin's dedication to the values of academic freedom and shared governance, his experience in fostering an interdisciplinary and collaborative approach to teaching, research and outreach, as well as the array of experiences he has had in his professional career, will serve our University well."

At LSU, Carman established a science residential college for entering freshmen, a concept similar to the

successful living-learning communities at UNR. Carman also established academic-orientation programs to increase the academic performance and success rates of entering freshmen who plan to pursue degrees in science. These "boot camps" were initially implemented for biological science majors and have been nationally recognized and replicated at many other universities.



Kevin Carman

Carman will oversee the university's academic and outreach programming, which includes the university's six colleges, Division of Health Sciences, Division of Extended Studies and University of Nevada Cooperative Extension.

"Kevin's career demonstrates success and leadership capability across the span of teaching, research and administration," said Johnson.

Carman earned his undergraduate degree in biology from McPherson College in 1982. He earned master's and doctoral degrees in biological oceanography from Florida State University in 1984 and 1989. **A**

## President's letter

*Continued from p. 6*

*Second, regard for the welfare of the institution remains important despite the mobility and interchange of scholars.*

The heart of an institution is its faculty members because of the policies and procedures they create that have the ability to cement the culture of an institution as it will be enacted in the classroom, the proof of a living mission. While great leaders occur above the rank of faculty as administrators, most of them have successive career changes that include changing institutions. Faculty build their academic homes and their personal homes in the local community, most often as a lifetime commitment to the mission of one institution. Faculty driven policies, procedures, and the development of curriculum provides continuity for institutions to live their mission and for student success.

*... a college or university in which all the components are aware of their interdependence, of the usefulness of communication among themselves, and of the force of joint action will enjoy increased capacity to solve educational problems.*

This brings us to the most fundamental component of a common language for explaining shared governance. It is in the nature of being human to want to live a life of meaning and purpose. We see this translated into individual's lifetime commitments to public institutions, businesses and community organizations. Leaders in all of these fields know that you hire the experts, consult them, and then let them do their job. These same leaders engage all members of their community to talk about how to assess the successes and failures of projects because they recognize that the very nature of interdependence is that solutions develop through the free exchange of ideas when retaliation is not feared.

While I cannot say that all faculty enjoy the same level of access to shared governance across our campuses, I can say that organizations are living entities shaped and changed by the people within them. This is what we advocate for on behalf of our members. When you gather on your campuses, may all your tables be round and all of your voices heard in solidarity.

Yours in service,

**Angela M. Brommel**

## Legislative issues

*Continued from p. 2*

The proposed formula would accomplish this by replacing the previous formula in use for more than a decade which funded based on enrollments rather than outputs. The old formula included secondary and tertiary functions such as building maintenance and administrative functions, with a new formula driven almost entirely by how many courses are completed at each institution.

The committee's second major recommendation is to end the longstanding practice of offsetting state formula allocation with student fees and tuition; under the proposed formula this money will no longer be treated as state support and deducted from the state allocation.

The third major change proposed by the committee is that the formula should be based upon credit hours earned by Nevada students and excluding those of non-resident students. This principle, is expressed simply as "Nevada dollars for Nevada students."

Finally the committee recommended that a portion of state funds be allocated based upon campus performance, specifically the number of degrees and certificates awarded, with particular weight

given to degrees in key economic development fields and degrees earned by minority and financially disadvantaged students.

The interim Legislative Committee also voted to ask the state for full "hold harmless" funding for the next biennium, which would be about \$13 million per year. The hold harmless funding, if approved, would also cover the nearly \$3 million loss that University of Nevada, Reno, would incur with the new formula.

The regents have voted to request \$10 million in "mitigation funds" for the next biennium to help alleviate the difficulties caused to the shift of funds away from northern community colleges. Five million is requested from the state and \$5 million would be held back from the funds to be shifted to other institutions.

The new formula approach does include one other very dramatic change involving tuition and fees. Heretofore fees and tuition earned by the institutions counted against the state allocation due them under the old formula. If the new approach is approved, those tuition and fees would be retained by the institutions to use as they see fit to accomplish their education and research missions.

There are several elements of the new formula approach that are still being discussed, including how

F grades are counted (does a person receiving an F grade count as a "completer"?) and how research funding is to be included and funded. The old formulas made no reference to research funding at all, and efforts have been made to recognize the important research function of the two universities. However, some debate has developed over how to most effectively accomplish this new formula element.

Whether or not funding for operation and maintenance of buildings should be included as part of the funding received for students credits generated also was an issue, with a compromise developed by the regents and the interim committee that pulls some research facilities out of the funding pool derived from student credit hours.

This and other elements of the new formula approach will be discussing in the upcoming months as the governor and the legislature decide how to best support NSHE in efforts to fulfill its important education and economic diversification missions for Nevadans and Nevada.

NFA will be represented again in the legislative process, as has been the case since 1985 session, and members will receive regular updates on developments on these and other issues throughout the session which ends in early June. **A**

## NFA at TMCC

*Continued from p. 3*

ideas with a counter proposal by the Salary and Benefits Committee Chair Steve Streeper. If this motion passes the TMCC Faculty Senate, it will be presented to the NSHE Salary Committee for possible inclusion in their current proposal.

Besides salary concerns, rank and file members have been preoccupied with recent revisions in the academic program review process and a new resource allocation process instituted by the new Vice President of Finances Dr. Rachel Solemsaas. Administrators and faculty leaders are attempting develop an accountable system that essentially closes the loop between review and assessment of programs and disciplines and the development of budgetary priorities. Although some steps of the process are essentially still in development, faculty and deans are trying to implement necessary revisions while adjusting to the new increased focus on accountability and transparency. NFA members are actively participating in many aspects of these processes with the hope of helping to develop an equitable system that will be consistent with our college mission, goals and objectives and will reflect our shared governance values.

Our final meeting for the semester will be in early December. **A**