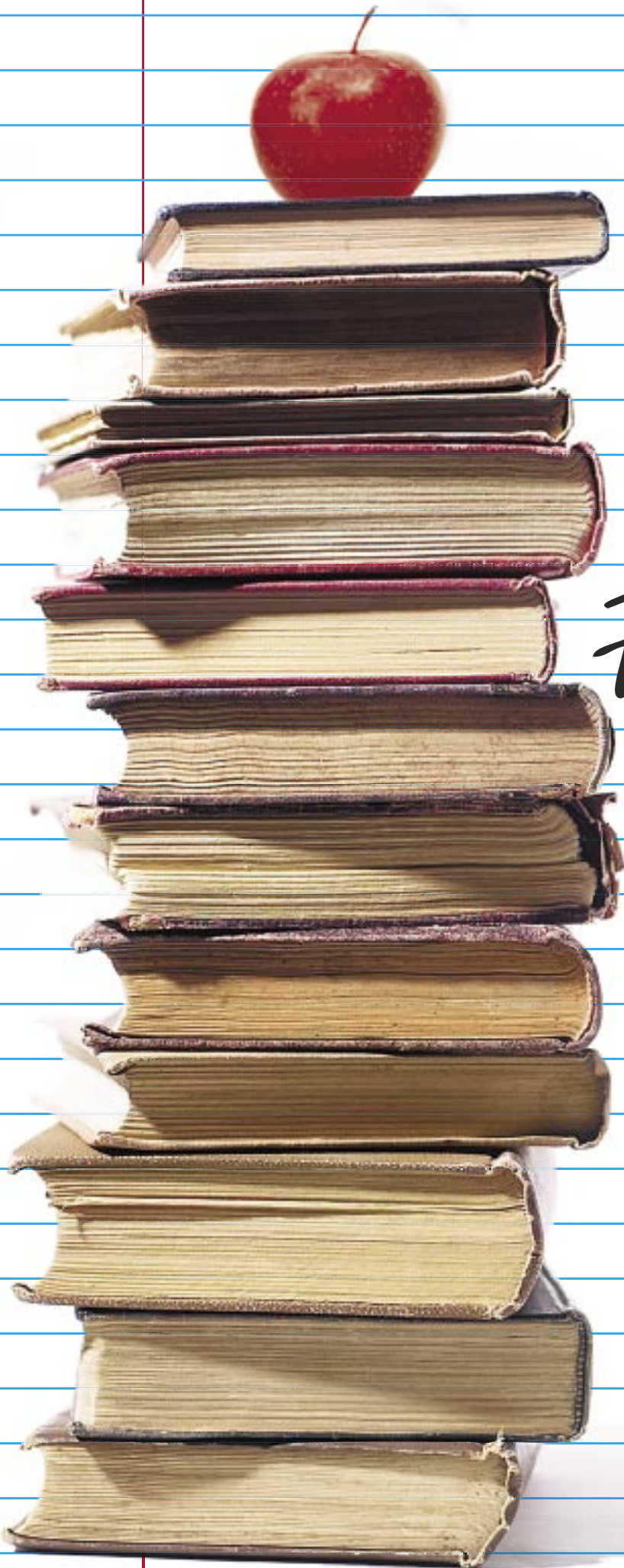


IN BUSINESS Las Vegas

APRIL 1, 2005

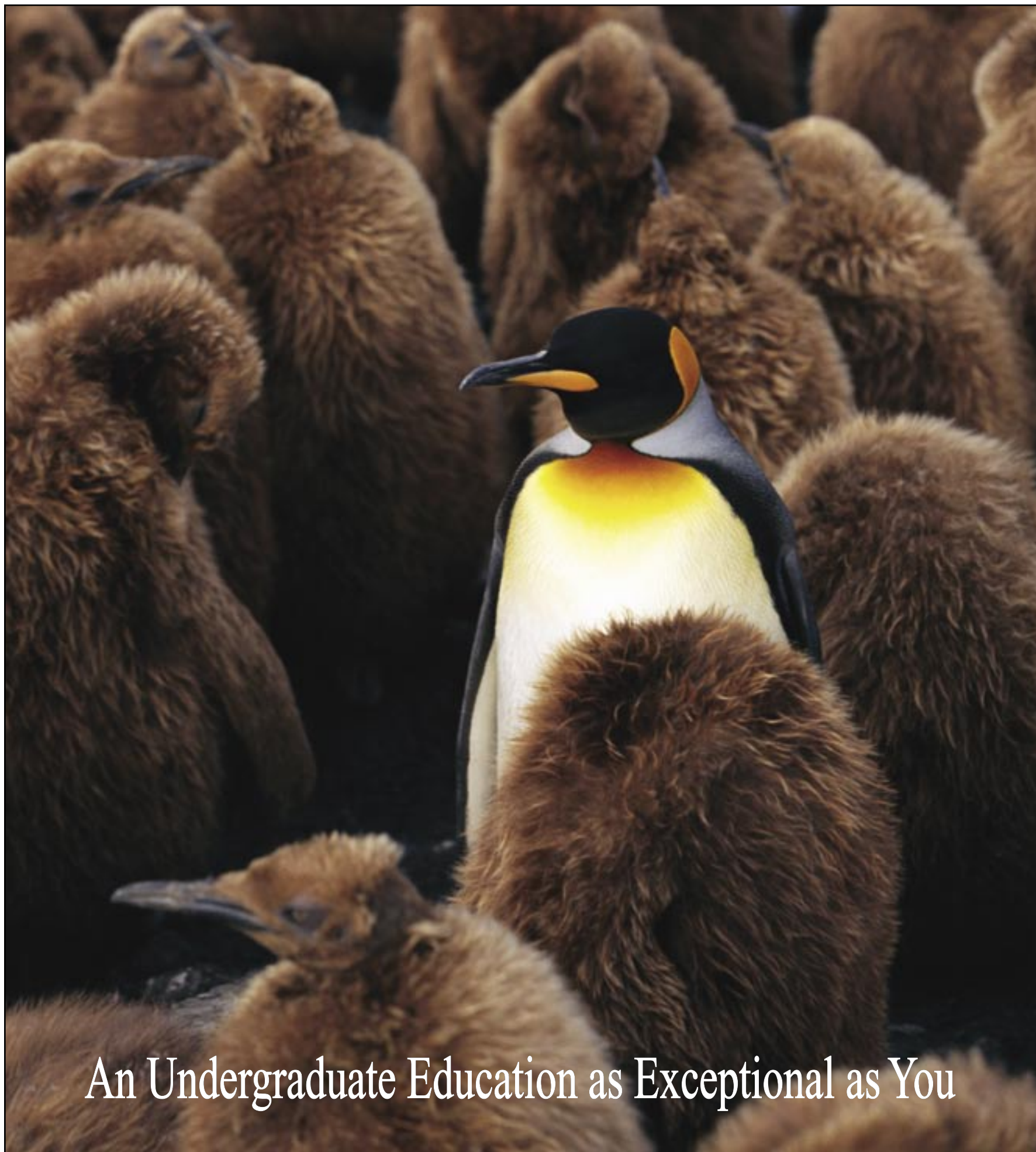


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From the sponsors

Dear In Business Las Vegas readers:

State-supported universities, colleges, and community colleges are powerful engines for economic growth and stability. Their importance as an economic driver to a region's growth and diversification efforts is becoming increasingly apparent as human capital plays a more pronounced role in today's knowledge- and information-based economy.

Too often we forget that higher education produces *both* public and private benefits for a community and its residents.

Consider the following trends that illustrate higher education's relationship with the economy:

- The earnings gap between the educated and non-educated workforce is widening at an increased rate as employers place more emphasis and a higher premium on knowledge-based skills.
- A person with a bachelor's degree can expect to earn approximately \$1 million more in her lifetime than a person with only a high school diploma (bachelor's degree: \$2,225,657; high school diploma: \$1,168,111).
- This increased earning potential on an individual basis collectively creates — within a given state's general population — greater economic stability and growth as tax revenues are collected from a more diversified and resource-rich population base.

Now, consider a few additional benefits listed below that flow from and are related to higher education. The extent to which these benefits are present in a community directly correlates with the community's level of investment in higher education. That is, the more a community invests in higher education, the more tangible these benefits become.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased tax revenues• Greater productivity• Increased consumption• Decreased reliance on government financial support• Reduced crime rates• Increased charitable giving/community service | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased quality of civic life• Increased social cohesion and appreciation of diversity• Improved life expectancy• Improved quality of life for children• Higher savings levels |
|--|--|

State governments and their citizens make — and must continue to make — meaningful investment in higher education. As an educator and university administrator for more than 30 years, I firmly believe in the power of education to change lives and to change communities. On behalf of Nevada State College, I look forward to working with you.

Dr. Fred Maryanski
President
Nevada State College



Dear In Business Las Vegas readers,

Silver State Schools Credit Union has been privileged to serve the financial needs of its membership since 1951. As a credit union, we take pride in the central role we play in our community — through community support and through a desire to help everyone who wants to improve their financial well-being. We take this obligation very seriously, not only to our adult members, but also to future generations — today's children who will be America's future.

The educational institutions featured in this year's In Business Las Vegas special section on Education touch the lives of the children and young adults in this community in a very special way ... empowering them to be better citizens, helping them to realize their potential, and to lead fulfilling and valuable lives.

As an educators' credit union, we also reach out to touch the lives of our young people. Through a national partnership of the National Endowment for Financial Education, our credit union leagues, and Credit Union National Association, Silver State Schools Credit Union has introduced valuable, unbiased financial curriculum into Las Vegas Schools; both public and private. The NEFE materials provide a basic introduction to all aspects of personal finances and show students how to develop their own spending and savings plan. Since the program debuted in late 2003, we have been able to reach more than 1,000 high school students in classroom and branch presentations.

As we expand the program locally, we are dedicated to achieving even greater success; to touching many more lives. Not just doing what's right for our members today, but making sure we pave the way for the many members who will need us in the future.

Sincerely,

Dave Rhamy
President/CEO
Silver State Schools Credit Union

If you would like to learn more about the programs Silver State Schools Credit Union can offer to your educational institution, please contact Mariclar Reyes in the Marketing Department at (702) 697-8082, or via e-mail at mpr@silverstatecu.com.



From the editor

Education is most often the root of all successes. Work in the classroom can reap huge dividends in the business world.

It's important to begin that education process early in life. We all remember stories or events that occurred during our childhoods, many of these memories related to a lesson at school or words from a teacher that have stuck close to the heart over the years.

We at In Business Las Vegas have a deep and vested interest in the education process today. After all, how many times have we heard that today's youth are tomorrow's leaders? Some of us have children in school now; others have already gone through the schooling process and scores still have that experience waiting for them in coming years.

Annually, we produce a special publication entitled "Focus on Education." It contains a multitude of helpful stories and charts, and takes a look at education options in Southern Nevada.

Over the years, this publication has evolved to include everything from pre-kindergarten opportunities to options for adults looking to continue their education. We realize that the educational process doesn't stop simply because someone has a birthday. It's an important and life-long process.

We have compiled Southern Nevada's most comprehensive directory of private schools (pages 6 and 7). We have done the same with our list of Business and Professional Colleges (page 14).

Also included in this publication are well-written editorials taken from two angles. One focuses on "Why choose private school" and the other lays out details on "Why choose public school." Those can be found on pages 12 and 13.

Also addressed are a variety of stories about scholarship programs available through the Clark County Public Education Foundation, the impact of the "No Child Left Behind" Act and the ever-increasing options for adult education in the valley.

We hope this special section provides options and choices that are valuable in enhancing your or your family's educational dreams.

Rob Langrell
Editor of Special Publications



IN BUSINESS Las Vegas

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Private schools expanding to meet valley's needs

By Danielle Birkin
Contributing writer

As the population of Clark County swells at an unprecedented clip, many existing private schools in Southern Nevada are expanding their facilities and curriculum to meet the needs of the approximate 12,000 school-age children who annually move to the region.

This includes Southern Highlands Preparatory School, which opened in August 2003 and serves 190 students in pre-school to grade seven, according to Dean Alcott, the school's principal.

The nonsectarian facility, an affiliate of Ohio-based Learning Unlimited International Schools, recently more than doubled the size of its campus from 2 acres to 5 acres and increased its building space from 11,000 square feet to 30,000 square feet, adding a regulation gymnasium, a performing arts stage, a ceramics center, a baseball diamond and a kitchen and cafeteria.

Beginning in August, the school — located in the master-planned community of Southern Highlands — will also begin accepting students through eighth grade, and will accommodate up to 300 students.

"We expanded because our demand exceeded our current facility," said Alcott, adding that the school may eventually offer high school curriculum as well. "We've entertained the idea of going through high school if the area merits it and it could be supported by the community."



Administrators at the Merryhill Schools stress hands-on experimentation and social development to their students.

He went on to note that the nation faces a school shortage that is even more pronounced in a rapidly growing area such as Southern Nevada.

"All over the country they can't build them fast enough, both private schools and public, and here in Las Vegas in particular," Alcott said. "I would expect both the number of public and private schools to continue to grow at a fairly rapid pace."

The Clark County School District, the fifth largest and the fastest growing in the nation, operates 301 schools. The district

opened 13 new schools in August 2004 and is scheduled to open 11 new schools this August.

Meanwhile, on the private side, four new private schools opened in Clark County in 2003-2004, bringing the total to 116 private facilities in Southern Nevada, according to Orval Nutting, private schools consultant for the Nevada Department of Education.

Nutting said there are 14,535 students in the Las Vegas Valley enrolled in private facilities for 2004-2005, up 4.77 percent from the previous school year. Private

school enrollment in the valley peaked at 4.85 percent in 1999-2000.

"Compared to the national average, Nevada does not have as many private schools, but each year the number of new private schools coming in is keeping pace with growth," Nutting said. "Nevada historically has been slower in having private schools come in because of the way the state has evolved — our state was late in developing and growing. But I think the economy is good in Clark County and they are building more new (private) schools and many are increasing their programs, which gives students more opportunities as well."

The Alexander Dawson School, an independent facility that opened in 2000 and lies on a 30-acre campus on West Desert Inn Road, is among the institutions that has recently expanded, adding a new music building as well as an early childhood education center to meet the needs of 4-year-olds, according to Stephen Bowers, head of school. Alexander Dawson, which serves 520 students through eighth grade, also added a new classroom at each grade level, and now has a total of four classrooms per grade, each accommodating 18 students.

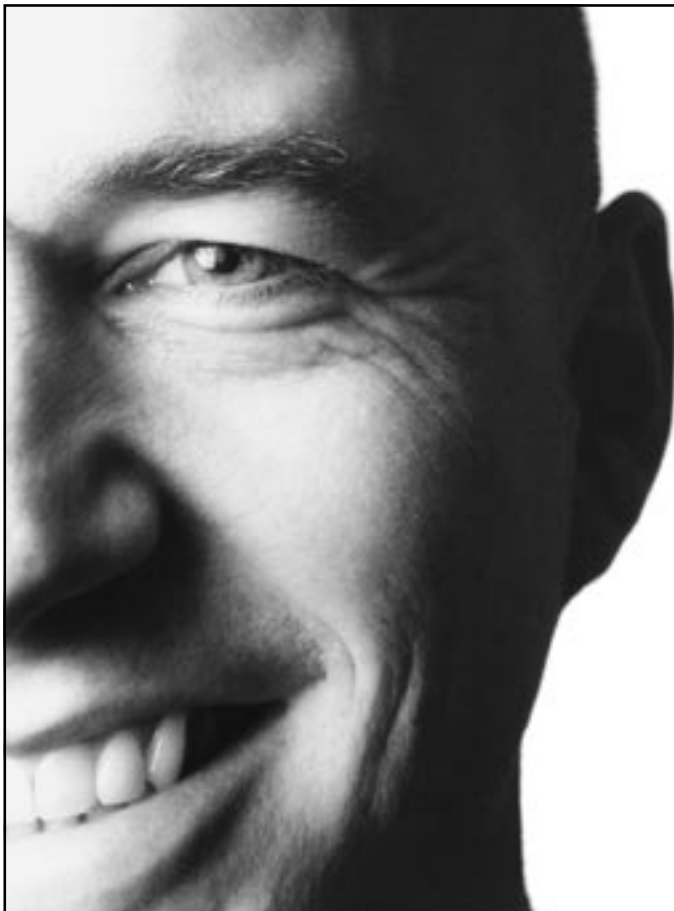
Bowers agreed that Southern Nevada is underserved as far as schools are concerned.

"I know the public schools are having trouble keeping up as far as constructing new schools and how they have managed to build all these new schools is remarkable to me," Bowers said, adding that he believes there is a need in Las Vegas for more independent, not-for-profit schools such as Alexander Dawson. "I was surprised to find that a lot of private schools here are either proprietary, meaning they belong to someone who has to make a profit to make a living, or they are for-profit schools that belong to a big company. The advantage of being an independent school is that all the tuition and fees the parents pay go back to directly benefit the students."

Merryhill Schools, Southern Nevada's largest private school system, with six valley locations serving more than 1,200 students from infant to eighth grade, also pours its tuition fees into its classrooms, programs and staff, according to Jamie Kominos, executive director of Merryhill Schools, a Pennsylvania-based Nobel Learning Communities facility. Merryhill, which opened locally in 1997, has a school in Henderson, three in Summerlin and two in the Southwest.

"Almost to the dollar, we have the same amount (of funds) that the Clark County School District is getting per child but they cannot keep up with growth," said Kominos, who said the figures were derived from the U.S. Department of Education. "(CCSD funding) is not going into its classrooms or curriculum — it's more for administration and building more facilities, so that seems like a big difference."

Kominos said Merryhill is evaluating...
SEE PRIVATE ON PAGE 10A



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No Child Left Behind Act creates some confusion

By Lisa McQuerrey
Contributing Writer

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), signed by President Bush in 2002, was intended to establish various layers of accountability in the nation's school systems and provide parents with more choices if their child's school was designated as low-performing or dangerous.

While the implementation and measurement of the program are garnering mixed reaction from parents, educators and legislators across the country, Las Vegas' continuing growth and burgeoning school population are adding yet another layer to the issue.

Theoretically, if your child is attending a school deemed "in need of improvement" by NCLB measures, you, as a parent, would have the option of choosing another school to send your child. In most parts of the country, the transfer issue is a simple one. In Las Vegas, where more than a dozen new schools are built each year and classrooms are still overcrowded, the issue is much different.

Parents can't simply say, "I want my child in school A instead of school B." Rather, a select list of schools in close proximity is provided and the parent may choose among them, as long as space is available. As of September 2004, the most recent reporting date, slightly more than 800 of the Clark County School District's (CCSD) more than 300,000 students took

advantage of the NCLB's "school choice" option and transferred from a poorly performing school to a higher achieving one.

So what factors put a school into a "low achieving" category? With numerous facets to the NCLB act, many educators feel the program's measurements are misleading to the public, particularly when related to gauging participation and proficiency in any of the program's nine evaluation categories. The district's Communications Coordinator Pat Nelson gave an example of a local elementary school that demonstrated proficient achievement at state levels across the board, but had several special education students absent during the testing process. Because the school fell below the NCLB-prescribed requirement of 95 percent participation in that particular sub-category of students, it was placed on the "watch list." Nelson said this approach doesn't accurately reflect what's happening in the schools.

Schools that do not make "adequate yearly progress" (AYP) under the NCLB guidelines are placed on the watch list, and if the school fails to make AYP for two or more consecutive years, it becomes identified as "needing improvement." The State Department of Education sets the standards for schools in Nevada. If the schools don't improve, state officials can step in, taking over the school from the district.

Scores from 2003-2004 show that the CCSD's 262 schools (now 301) that were evaluated achieved 95.4 percent of the re-

quired AYP targets and demonstrated "substantial improvement" in achievement by students in nearly every sub-group. Sub-group categories categorize students by things such as ethnicity, income and English language skills. The district saw a significant increase in math and English/language arts achievement in the Hispanic and African-American sub-groups, as well as in the sub-groups for students receiving free and reduced lunch and those with limited English proficiency.

While numbers point to a level of success by the CCSD in meeting NCLB mandates, the measurement of progress is still rubbing some people the wrong way.

"It's an unfair way to see if teachers are teaching and students are learning," said Donna Hoffman-Anspach, president of Nevadans for Quality Education. "We have an incredible burden and stress placed on our local infrastructure and our school system. It's really incredible what the CCSD has done with what they have."


While students at low-performing schools are given the option of transferring to another approved school, and having the CCSD foot the transportation bill, parents who are simply "not happy" with the way their school is performing don't have the same option. If a school makes AYP, and a parent wants a transfer regardless, they must ask for a zone variance. Zone variances are granted at the discretion of individual school principals and parents are required to provide their own transportation.

"I'm new to the school district and I was surprised at the number of people who asked for zone variances," said C.P. Squires Elementary Principal Marcie McDonald. She bases her zone variance request decisions on space availability and whether the incoming student will be a potential truancy or discipline problem.

"There are not a lot of other options unless you have the resources for private school," said Hoffman-Anspach, noting the expanding popularity of charter schools and of home schooling.


According to the CCSD, annually distributed accountability reports contain detailed information about schools in the district as well as other Nevada school districts. The reports are prepared in compliance with the federal No Child Left Behind Act and NRS 385.347. Reports are used by teachers and administrators as they develop academic plans tailored to specific school populations and communities to increase student achievement. If a parent wants to move a student, they become eligible immediately after the performance report is issued.

The Nevada Department of Education (NDE), in partnership with Otis Educational Systems Inc., has developed an online state accountability report card to provide statewide accountability information to parents and the community. The NDE interactive Web site can be accessed at www.nevadareportcard.com.



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2005 Guide to Private Schools

	School, Address, Phone Number	Chief Administrator	Grades	Enrollment	Student/ Teacher Ratio	Tuition	School Philosophy /Website
1.	Academy for Learning 1018 E Sahara Ave Ste. D, Las Vegas 89104 702.737.8668	Ginny Schmitz	K-12	30	15-1	\$6,000	Traditional curriculum of applied scholastics
2.	Alexander Dawson School at Rainbow Mountain 10845 W Desert Inn Road, Las Vegas 89135 702.949.3600	Stephen Bowers	Pre-K to 8	520	18:1	\$16,400 - \$16,700	Non-denominational college preparatory school with a focus on language, science, math, thematic education and visual arts www.alexanderdawsonschool.org
3.	All Saints' Day School 4201 W Washington Avenue, Las Vegas 89107 702.878.1205	Peggy Nettenstrom	Pre-K to K	100	12:1	\$185 to \$280 per month	Well-rounded traditional curriculum www.allsaintsds.com
4.	Bishop Gorman College Preparatory School 1801 S Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas 89107 702.732.1945	Connie Gerber	9 to 12	890	22:1	\$8,475	Coed Catholic preparatory high school with a focus on religious formation and academic excellence www.bishopgorman.org
5.	Black Mountain Christian School & Daycare 107 S Gibson Road, Henderson 89012 702.564.2435	Rev. Barbara Miller	Pre-K to 12	46	21:1	\$3,600	Christian atmosphere using the School of Tomorrow's Accelerated Christian Education curriculum www.bm4square.org
6.	Calvary Chapel Christian School 7175 W Oquendo Road, Las Vegas 89113 702.248.8879	John Weaver	K-12	500	21:1	\$3,300 - \$3,700	Christian-based education utilizing a Christian curriculum including the Saxton Method, Bob Jones University and ABEKA www.ccspringvalley.org
7.	Calvary Christian Learning Academy 2900 N Torrey Pines Drive, Las Vegas 89113 702.655.1385	Heather McEnulty K-5	Dayschool to Pre-K 100	120 18-1	5-1 \$4,500	\$125 per week	At CCLA, we're learning for life, dedicated to teaching truth, and preparing our students to be tomorrow's leaders by challenging them to live his or her life according to God's principles and purposes. www.ccalv.org
8.	Challenger Schools Lone Mountain Campus 9900 Isaac Newton Way, Las Vegas 89129 702.878.6418 Silverado Campus 1725 E Serene Avenue, Las Vegas 89123 702.990.7300	Lillian Brumwell Hugh Gourgeon	Pre-K to 6 Pre-K to 3	609 440	Varies	Preschool: \$2,180 to \$8,160; Elementary/ Middle: \$5,720 to \$9,820	Teaching concepts built logically on previously taught concepts, resulting in sound thinking methods www.challengerschool.com
9.	Christ Lutheran Children's Center 111 N Torrey Pines Road, Las Vegas 89108 702.878.1176	Tasha Fickas	Pre-K (2 - 6 yr old)	65	12:1	\$124 per week	Faith-based kindergarten preparatory school
10.	Cornerstone Christian Academy 5825 W Eldora Avenue, Las Vegas 89146 702.939.5050	James Whiddon	Pre-K to 8	310	12:1 to 22:1	\$4,500 to \$4,700	Core academic studies and extracurricular activities
11.	Desert Torah Academy 1261 S Arville Street, Las Vegas 89102 702.259.0777	Dina Harlig	Pre-K to 8	185	10:1	\$6,000	Judaic and general studies, as well as extracurricular activities
12.	Echoes Christian Academy 1401 E Washington Avenue, Las Vegas 89101 702.649.8744	Rev. Barbara Matza	K-12	20	10:1	\$260 per month	Individualized pace programs
13.	Faith Community Lutheran Academy 2700 S Town Center Drive, Las Vegas 89135 702.921.2777	Jerry Reinerston	K-5	220	24:1 +	\$5,670	Christ-centered, child-focused
14.	Faith Lutheran Jr.-Sr. High School 2015 S Hualapai Way, Las Vegas 89117 702.804.4400	Kevin Dunning	6-12	1115	18:1	\$6,870	Private Christian college prep school with a Lutheran heritage www.faithlutheranlv.org
15.	First Christian Church Child Development Center 101 S Rancho Drive, las Vegas 89103 702.384.4839	Bonnie Manion	Pre-K to K	110	8:1	\$410 to \$500	Faith-based learning environment
16.	First Good Shepherd Lutheran School 301 S Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas 89101 702.382.8610	Jim Kraft	K-6	207	30:1 K - 15:1 w/aide	\$3,150 with multiple student discounts	Well-rounded faith-based curriculaum of core subjects E-mail: FGSLschool@hotmail.com
17.	Foothills Montessori School 1401 Amador Lane, Henderson 89102 702.407.0790	Leanne Grafiada	Pre-K to 7	250	10:1	\$5,500 to \$8,500	Challenging Montessori curriculum that provides academic excelence and nures a lifelong passion for learning www.foothillsmontessori.com
18.	Gateway Christian Academy 1900 Gateway Road, Las Vegas 89115 702.452.7111	Ginny Profitt	K-12	40	5:1	\$300 per month	Well-rounded Christian-based instruction using the ABEKA curriculum and a set of studies developed by Pensacola Christian College
19.	Grace Chrstian Academy 1150 Wyoming Street, Boulder City 89005 702.293.3536	Marcia Harhay	K-6	35	9:1	K: \$2,975 1-6: \$3,835	Growing kids in grace and knowledge
20.	Green Valley Christian School 711 Valle Verde Court, Henderson 89014 702.454.4056	Deborah Ingalls	Pre-K to 8	650	Varies	Pre-K: \$169.50/wk K-8: \$4,200 to \$6,000	Private non-denominational Christian school teaching from ABEKA and Bob Jones University curricula www.Gvchristian.com
21.	Green Valley Lutheran Pre-school & Kindergarten 1799 Wigwam Parkway, Henderson 89074 702.454.0004	Shawn Nielsen	K	30	Varies	\$103 to \$128	Traditional faith-based education www.greenvalleylutheran.com
22.	Hillcrest Academy 1051 Sandy Ridge Avenue, Henderson 89052 702.597.2778	Patricia Riley	Pre-K to 4	135	10:1 to 18:1	\$2,700 to \$9,000	Traditional accelerated curriculum based on proven educational principals
23.	Imprints Day School 8185 Tamarus Street, Las Vegas 89193 702.270.2077	Lillie Englund	Pre-K to 5	200	Pre-K: 8:1 K-5: 12:1	\$90 to \$200 per week	NAEYC-accredited, emergent curriculum, with emphasis in cultural arts, in which students learn at their own pace www.imprintsdayschool.com
24.	International Christian Academy 8100 Westcliff Drive, Las Vegas 89145 702.869.1109	Bob Mekus	K-8	390	K-2: 12:1 3-8: 24:1	\$4,962	Christian-based education utilizing ABEKA and Bob Jones University curricula www.ICALV.net
25.	Lake Mead Christian Academy 540 E Lake Mead Drive, Henderson 89015 702.565.5831	Gayle Sue Blakeley	K-12	452	15:1 to 20:1	\$3,020 to \$4,739	Traditional instruction using ABEKA and Bob Jones University curricula www.LMCA.org
26.	Lamb of God Lutheran School 6232 N Jones Boulevard, Las Vegas 89130 702.645.4941	Criag Busseau	Pre-K to 5	90	Varies	\$5,570	Christian education program
27.	Las Vegas Day School 3198 S Jones Boulevard, Las Vegas 89146 702.362.1180	Neil Daseler	Pre-K to 8	650	9:1 to 17:1	\$6,500 to \$8,600	Accelerated curriculum and college preparatory format
28.	Liberty Baptist Academy 6501 W Lake Mead Boulevard, Las Vegas 89146 702.647.4522	John Shorer	K-12	130	Varies	\$1,730 to \$1,930	ABEKA curriculum www.libertybaptistlv.org

2005 Guide to Private Schools

	School, Address, Phone Number	Chief Administrator	Grades	Enrollment	Student/ Teacher Ratio	Tuition	School Philosophy
29.	Maranatha Academy 700 Lola Avenue, North Las Vegas 89030 702.399.4315	Zenaida Manibusan	Kindergarten-12	110	DND	\$1,730 to \$1,930	Focuses on high academics, offering a traditional curriculum with emphasis on the sciences, technology basics, computer science and math.
30.	The Meadows School 8601 Scholar Lane, Las Vegas 89128-7302 702.254.1610	Carolyn Goodman, William Richardso	Pre-K to 8	860	11:1	\$7,500 to \$13,950	Non-profit, non-sectarian, co-educational college preparatory school serving the academically ambitious student
31.	Merryhill Schools Green Valley: 2150 Windmill Parkway, Henderson 89104 702.896.0781 Peccole Ranch: 10050 Alta Drive, Las Vegas 89126 702.221.6337 Southwest: 5050 Durango Road, Las Vegas 89128 702.889.2803 Summerlin: 2160 Snow Trail, Las Vegas 89134 702.242.8838	Sue Tribe Lisa Fitzgerald Nina Taylor & Kimberly Way Walt Hackford & Mary Butler		1200	18:1	\$7,300 to \$9,250	“Whole child” approach combines age-appropriate curricula including arts, music, Spanish, computers and physical education with hands-on experimentation and social development www.merryhill-school.com
32.	The Milton I Schwartz Hebrew Academy 9700 W Hillpointe Road, Las Vegas 89134 702.255.4500	Camille Wright	Pre-K to 8	200	9:1 to 18:1	\$9,000 to \$10,000	Diverse curriculum focusing on high academic performance in general and Judaic studies
33.	Mountain View Christian School 3900 E Bonanza Road, Las Vegas 89110 702.452.1300 X 221	Crystal VanKempen- McClanahan	Pre-K to 12	650	16:1 to 22:1	\$4,412 to \$5,568	Christian-based traditional curriculum with goal of graduating Christian leaders
34.	Mount Olive Lutheran School 3875 S Sandhill Road, Las Vegas 89121 702.451.1050	Steve Rosenbaum	K-8	85	18:1 to 22:1	\$4,000	Educate young people for faithful, capable and intelligent citizenship in today's world www.MTOliveLV.org
35.	Mountain View Lutheran School 9500 W Cheyenne Avenue Avenue, Las Vegas 89129 Elementary: 702.804.5291 Preschool: 702.233.9323	Ross Chilies	Pre-K to 5	266	15:1 to 24:2	\$3,250 to \$4,100	Vigorous and exciting Christ-centered curriculum
36.	New Horizons Academy 6701 W Charleston Boulevard, Las Vegas 89146 702.876.1181	Dr. Roger Gehring	Pre-K to 12	175	7:1	\$9,350	Specialty school for above-average children and children with learning differences
37.	Omar Haikal's Islamic Academy 485 E Eldorado Lane, Las Vegas 89123 702.614.9002	Nancy Gasho	K-8	92	19:1	\$3,200 to \$5,500	Academic, moral and social excellence in an Islamic environment www.islamicacademylv.com
38.	Our Lady of Las Vegas School 3046 Alta Drive, Las Vegas 89107 702.878.6841	Richard Martinez	Pre-K to 8	653	25:1	\$3,800 to \$5,500	Traditional curriculum, as well as Christian studies www.OLLV.org
39.	Paradise Christian Academy 2525 Emerson Avenue, Las Vegas 89121 702.732.8256	Tina Oglesby	Pre-K to 12	165	15:1 to 21:1	\$2,675 to \$4,175	Christian-based education using ABEKA curriculum
40.	Redeemer Lutheran Elementary School 1730 N Pecos Road, Las Vegas 89115 702.642.5176	Patricia Davis	K-2	50	10:1 to 11:1	\$360 per month	Christian-based education in all core curriculum subjects
41.	Southern Highlands Preparatory School 11500 Southern Highlands Parkway, Las Vegas 89141 702.617.6030	Dean Alcott	Pre-K to 8	300	11:1 to 20:1	\$3,600 to \$8,300	Traditional academic program allowing children to work at their own pace www.southernhighlandsprep.com
42.	St. Anne Catholic School 1813 S Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas 89141 702.735.2586	Phyllis Joyce	Pre-K to 8	344	20:1 to 35:1	Varies	Faith-based curriculum www.stannecatholicsschool.com
43.	Spring Valley Christian Academy 7570 W Peace Way, Las Vegas 89147 702.873.1200	Madeline Childress	K-12	19	Varies	\$1,200 to \$2,600	Traditional, faith-based curriculum
44.	St. Elizabeth Anne Seton Catholic School 1807 Pueblo Vista Drive, Las Vegas 89128 702.804.8328	Tim Curlin	K-8	431	Varies	\$4,030	Traditional, faith-based curriculum www.edline.net/pages/SEASLV
45.	St. Christopher Catholic School 1840 Bruce Street, Las Vegas 89030 702.657.8008	Mary Gorts	K-8	315	35:1	\$2,650	Core curriculum of religion, English, math, reading, science and social studies
46.	St. Frances de Sales School 1111 Michael Way, Las Vegas 89108 702.647.2828	Catherine Thompson	K-8	305	35:1	\$3,000 to \$6,960	Christian-based traditional curriculum www.sfdslv.org
47.	St. Joseph's Catholic School 1300 Bridger Avenue, Las Vegas 89101 702.384.6909	Lynda Ballard	1-8	200	25:1	\$260 to \$330 per month	Religious atmosphere, Catholic studies and a basic core curriculum
48.	St. Viator Catholic School 4246 S Eastern Avenue, Las Vegas 89119 702.732.4477	Kathleen Daulton	Pre-K to 8	676	Varies	\$3,250 to \$4,950	Moral and faith development through religion and family life programs www.members.cox.net/stviatorschool
49.	Trinity Christian Schools High School: 950 E Sahara Avenue, Las Vegas 89104 702.735.5778 Elementary: 950 E St. Louis Avenue, Las Vegas 89104 702.734.0562	Gail Haase	K-12	300	15:1	\$4,580 to \$5,550	Core studies including ABEKA curriculum and a “Learning Center” enrichment program www.tcs-lv.org
50.	Trinity United Methodist 6151 W Charleston Boulevard, Las Vegas 89103 702.870.4749	Dr. Daisy Manansala	Pre-K to 5	110	15:1	\$180 to \$580 per month	ABEKA curriculum
51.	Warren-Walker Green Valley Academy 2150 Windmill Parkway, Henderson 89074 702.896.8430 1165 Sandy Ridge Avenue, Henderson 89052 702.616.3027	Janet Smith, Ron Bennett	Pre-K to 12	500+	12:1	Up to \$12,220	Basic core curriculum, small class size and one-on-one student-teacher interaction www.warrenwalker.com
52.	Wassell Academy 5000 Edna Lane, Las Vegas 89146 702.876.7970	Carolyn Wassell	Pre-K to 8	60	10:1	\$4,960	Individualized instruction, small class size, well-rounded educational curriculum including languages and computers
53.	Word of Life Christian Academy 3520 N Buffalo Drive, Las Vegas 89129 702.645.1180	Kelly Marchello	K-8	11	10:1 to 20:1	\$450 per month	Academic excellence in a Christian environment www.wordoflifelasvegas.com



The Public Education Foundation awards grants that provide additional resources — including computers — for students across the Clark County School District.

Public Education Foundation lends hand to area students

Group makes difference, provides scholarships

By Deborah Roush
Contributing Writer

In 2003, student Sylvia Tran was on the way to Southern Nevada Vocational Technology Center High School when an out-of-control pickup truck smashed into her vehicle and broke her neck, destroying her dreams of a senior year filled with adventure and joy.

After months of pain, depression and disappointment, Tran is a happy, busy student today at the University of Nevada-Las Vegas and pursuing a career in the health field. She credits a Smith's Personal Best scholarship she received from the nonprofit Public Education Foundation with helping her get to college.

Scholarships like Tran's are just one way the foundation, which was founded in 1991 by a small group of business leaders who believed that improving the public schools was too big a task for a school district to undertake alone, works to make education better for Clark County students.

Besides awarding more than 60 scholarships totaling more than \$525,000 to send young adults to post-secondary

school, the group — with a \$2.1 million annual budget — awards grants to “really make a difference in our schools,” said JoAnn Kittrell, the foundation's public information officer.

Through its Leader's Choice Initiative grant, for example, up to \$25,000 is awarded annually to about six programs designed to improve student achievement and produce system-wide change. A total of about \$750,000 is awarded in grant funds each year.

“What we're saying to principals and superintendents is if you have a problem in an area, design a strategy to fix that problem,” Kittrell said. “If you do, and after we audit it and determine how successful it was, then other schools might replicate that same (problem solving method) at little or no cost.”

Kevin Biesinger, who oversees the foundation's scholarships and grants, said the higher dollar Leader's Choice grants impact more than one classroom full of kids.

“The idea is that bigger ideas cost bigger money, but they affect an entire school or an entire pocket of schools or

SEE FOUNDATION, PAGE 19A

Nevada's per-pupil education spending doesn't include construction costs for new schools

By Lisa McQuerrey
Contributing Writer

While proponents of increased per-pupil educational expenditures are touting the merits of bringing Nevada education spending up to the national average, opponents have argued that when you factor in the costs of school construction, Nevada meets or exceeds national per-pupil spending.

Since 1986, the Clark County School District (CCSD) has built 159 new and replacement schools, completed more than 200 additions to existing schools and executed thousands of modernization projects to bring existing schools to new school standards. The district's 1998 Capital Improvement Program provided an estimated \$3.5 billion dollars for school construction and modernization over a 10-year period, including the construction of 88 new schools.

To date, 30 schools have been built and opened under the '98 program. Fourteen new schools were opened in 2004 and 11 new facilities are under construction, with anticipated opening dates this August. Thirty-five additional projects are on the drawing board with completion dates ranging from 2006-2008.

So should the monumental costs associated with building more than 12 new schools a year be factored into the dollar amount the state spends on education? Clark County School District Communications Coordinator Pat Nelson said adding in construction costs to the state's overall per-pupil expenditure would greatly skew the numbers. She said the statistics can't really be accurately compared.

“How many other school districts have the funding and the need for building at such a rapid rate?” Nelson asked. “There's general funding and bond funding. Money going toward construction of new schools doesn't go toward educating children, it goes toward building buildings.”

“It's comparing apples to oranges,” added Donna Hoffman-Anspach, president of Nevadans for Quality Education. “Most school districts in other parts of the country don't factor in construction costs either.”

Hoffman-Anspach said the complexity of education issues impacting the valley often lead to a distribution of misinformation and a resulting misunderstanding of the facts. She said different organizations and individuals with their own agendas can spin the numbers, and encouraged the public — parents of Clark County school children in particular — to educate themselves on the facts.

“We see reported per-pupil spending numbers ranging from \$4,400 to \$7,000 depending on who throws in what,” Hoffman-Anspach said. “The Clark County School District can tell you exactly what goes into the per-pupil spending.”

According to the Nevada State Education Association Ranking and Estimates from fall 2004, Nevada has slipped to 47th in per-pupil funding among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, ahead of only Mississippi, Arkansas, Arizona and Utah.

In his recent state of the state address, Nevada Gov. Kenny Guinn proposed, for the 2005-2006 biennium, a budget allocating a \$500 million increase in education spending; a 2 percent salary increase each year of the biennium; a \$100 million trust fund for underperforming elementary schools; \$10 million for education technology; \$10.2 million to continue the signing bonus for new hires; and \$260.2 million for a class size reduction program in K-3, and money for textbooks.



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A large photograph of a smiling man with short dark hair and a goatee, wearing a purple shirt, holding a young girl in a striped shirt who is holding a green apple. A young boy in a yellow shirt is in the foreground, also smiling. They are in a library with bookshelves in the background.

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The new Bishop Gorman High campus, which will be built on 35 acres in Summerlin, will include a courtyard for the students to use. It's the city's only Catholic high school.

PRIVATE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4A

ing various sites in Southern Nevada and may open additional local facilities in the future.

The nonsectarian Las Vegas Day School, which opened in 1961 and serves students in preschool to eighth grade at its facility at West Desert Inn Road and Jones Boulevard, is in the third phase of a new campus construction project that will increase the enrollment of 775 students to 1,000, according to Neil Daseler, the school's director. The expansion will include a 7,000-square-foot library as well

as art and Spanish rooms.

Daseler also noted that the valley is underserved in regard to private schools.

"Although Las Vegas has seen new private schools open in the past few years, there is definitely an ever-increasing interest in public education," he said. "Private education is becoming embraced in Las Vegas as more people discover the advantages available to them in the private sector. In every community there needs to remain a balance of private and public schools ... and in all fairness there are both good and bad public, as well as private, schools."

Faith Lutheran Junior Senior School, which opened in 1979 and has a 40-acre campus on South Hualapai Way, recently opened a student cafeteria center with four attached classrooms and plans are in the works for a new performing arts center and a chapel, according to Kevin Dunning, executive director. Faith Lutheran has about 1,100 students in grades six through 12.

"We've grown for the last 10 consecutive years, and I don't see any indication that it will slack off," Dunning said. "The issue for us is whether we can build classrooms to meet demand. I think it's true (that the

valley is underserved) because no new non-public schools have opened that have made a dent in the population we serve."

Bishop Gorman High School, which opened in 1954 and lies on a six-acre campus at Maryland Parkway and Sahara Avenue, is in the process of constructing a new 35-acre facility in Summerlin that will accommodate as many as 1,200 students. Bishop Gorman, the valley's only Catholic high school, has approximately 870 students enrolled, according to Dr. Richard Faccioli, chancellor of the Diocese of Las Vegas.

"The time is right after 50 years," said Faccioli, adding that Bishop Gorman conducted a study and determined that a great number of its students live in the Summerlin area. "I think we'll be able to build this tremendous facility because the students deserve it and the Bishop Gorman community has supported it."

In addition to larger classrooms, the new campus — expected to be complete by 2007 — will house a technology center, a performing arts center, a new chapel, a gymnasium that will seat 2,500 and athletic facilities that will include football, softball and baseball fields, a track and 10 tennis courts. The project has formally been in the works for more than three years, he said, and will help to serve the needs of students seeking private education, particularly Catholic students.

"I think there are a growing number of private schools, but have they met the needs of the whole valley?" he said. "That remains to be seen as the valley continues to grow."

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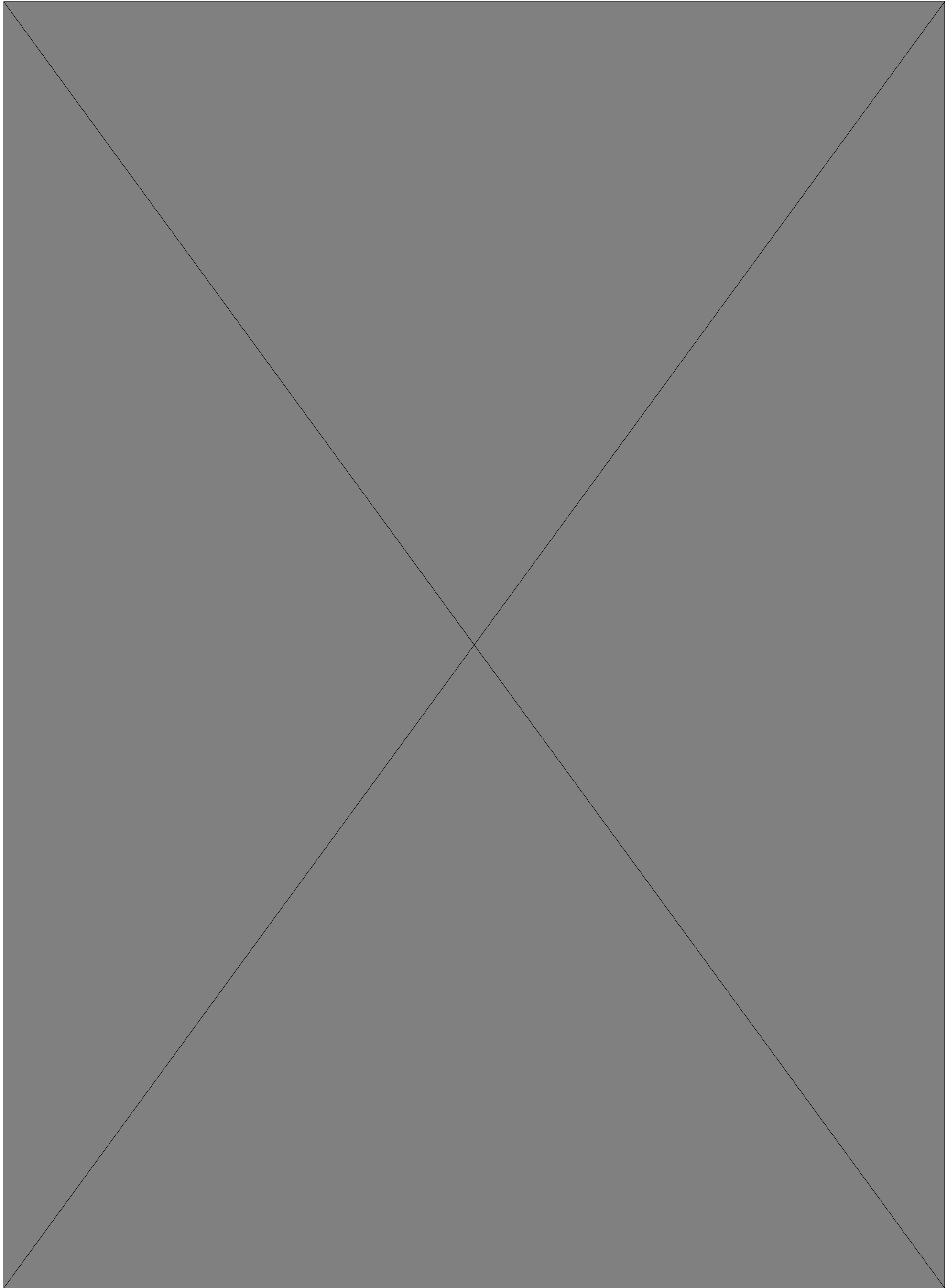
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2005 Business and Professional College Directory

	School, Address, Phone Number	Degrees	Areas of Study	Tuition	Enrollment	Contact	Placement
1.	Academy of Healing Arts 901 Rancho Lane, Ste. 190 Las Vegas 89106 (702) 671-4242	N/A	Medical/office assisting, medical front office, massage therapy	\$10,950	200	Lee Parodi	96 to 100 percent
2.	American Career Institute 2340 Paseo Del Prado St., Ste. D 208 Las Vegas 89102 (702) 222-3522	Certificate programs	Pre-licensing real estate courses including Nevada real estate law, ethics, practices, principles and procedures	\$295 per credit	DND	Tony Deering	DND
3.	Art Institute of Las Vegas Culinary Institute of Las Vegas 2350 Corporate Circle Henderson 89074 (702) 369-9944	Associate of arts, associate of science, associate of applied science, bachelor of arts, bachelor of science	Culinary arts, drafting technology with AutoCAD, graphic design, interior design, media arts and animation, digital media production, game art and design, interactive media design, visual effects and motion graphics	\$352 per credit	915	Suzanne Noel	92 percent
4.	Career Education Institute 2290 Corporate Circle, Ste.100 Henderson 89074 (702) 269-7600	Diploma and certificate programs	IT, network administration, business administrator specialist, allied health, medical assistant, medical administrative assisting, massage therapy	\$9,000 to \$13,000	200	Joyce Heiser	77 percent
5.	DeVry University 2490 Paseo Verde Pky Henderson 89074 (702) 933-9700	Associate, bachelor's and master's degrees, graduate certificates	Business administration, accounting, e-commerce, health services management, human resources management, sales and marketing, business information systems, biomedical engineering technology, computer engineering technology, electronics, health information technology, network communications and security management	\$420 per undergraduate credit hour; \$1,485 per graduate course	150	Rob Eltz	78 to 92 percent
6.	Embry-Riddle Aeronautical 4475 England Ave., Ste. 217 Las Vegas 89191 (702) 643-0762	Associate, bachelor's and master's degrees; certificate programs	Professional aeronautical, technical management, logistics, aeronautical science, aviation maintenance management, safety	\$177 per undergraduate credit hour	340	Julie Williamson	N/A
7.	Heritage College 3315 Spring Mountain Road Las Vegas 89102 (702) 368-2338	Diploma and degree programs	Computer business systems, massage therapy, medical assistant, paralegal, pharmacy tech, medical coding and billing and crimin al justice	DND	DND	Penny Floyd	DND
8.	High-Tech Institute 2320 S. Rancho Drive Las Vegas 89102 (702) 385-6700	Associate of science degree, diploma programs	Allied health, surgical tech, medical assistant, massage therapy, dental assistant, pharmacy tech, medical billing and coding	Varies	480	Amy Tu	DND
9.	Intl. Acad. of Design & Technology 2495 Village View Drive Henderson 89074 (702) 990-0150	Associate and bachelor's degrees	Fashion design, interior design and visual communications	\$19,800	400	Germaine Badar	N/A
10.	ITT Technical Institute 168 N. Gibson Road Henderson 89014 (702) 558-5404	Associate and bachelor's degrees and certificate programs	Computer/electronics engineering technology, computer drafting and design, computer network systems, web development, multimedia, software applications and programming, technical project management, electronic commerce, information systems security	From \$12,500	DND	Don Nemmer	DND
11.	Las Vegas College 4100 W. Flamingo Road, Ste. 2100 Las Vegas 89103 (702) 368-6200 170 N. Stephanie St. Henderson, NV 89014 (702) 567-1920	Associate degrees in business administration and criminal justice	Criminal justice, business administration, health care administration, legal, computer skills training	DND	DND	DND	82 percent
12.	Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts Las Vegas 1451 Center Crossing Road Las Vegas 89144 (702) 365-7690	Associate of occupational science	Classical European techniques combined with cutting-edge technology and training, demonstration and practical application	\$40,000	600	John Hayet	Lifetime
13.	National University 10120 S. Eastern Ave., Ste. 206 Henderson 89052 (702) 492-4939	Associate and bachelor's degrees and certificate programs	Criminal justice, public administration, organizational leadership, education (elementary, secondary and special education), medical bill and coding	Undergraduate credits less than \$1,000 per hour	Opening in spring 2005	Tracy McMurry	N/A
14.	Nevada Career Institute 3025 E. Desert Inn Road, Ste. A Las Vegas 89121 (702) 893-3300	Diploma programs	Massage therapy, medical assisting, medical education programs, dental assisting	\$7,000 to \$19,000	More than 300	Arlene Muller	80 percent
15.	Northwest Health Careers 7398 Smoke Ranch Road Las Vegas 89128 (702) 254-7577	Certificate programs	Dental assisting, medical assisting, massage therapy, lobotomy, colon therapy and medical insurance specialist	\$6,885 to \$9,660	DND	Diane Annette	Lifetime
16.	Regis University 1401 N. Green Valley Pky, Ste. 100 Henderson 89014 (702) 990-0375 10750 W. Charleston Blvd., Ste. 170 Las Vegas 89144 (702) 932-1090	Bachelor's and master's	Business administration with specialization including management, human resources, finance, accounting and marketing; liberal arts including philosophy, English, psychology and religious studies; education, including specialization in language, communication, adult learning and special education; certificate programs in leadership, high-performance management and Catholic studies	\$265 per undergraduate credit hour; \$320 to \$400 per graduate credit hour	260	Cathy Cunningham	DND
17.	TechSkills 1050 E. Flamingo Road, Ste. R-180 Las Vegas 89119 (702) 836-9900	Field certification	Core IT skills, database design/administration, IT engineering, software development, network design/engineering, office applications, Internet/web design, medical coding associate training, medical transcription, medical office administration	Starts at \$1,795 per course; membership program available from \$7,495	200	Michael Smith	N/A
18.	University of Phoenix Various Las Vegas and Henderson campuses (702) 638-7868	Bachelor of science, master of arts, master of business administration, certificate programs	Information technology, human services management, business/administration, criminal justice administration, education, organizational management, computer information systems, human resources management, e-business, technology management	\$310 per undergraduate credit hour; \$355 per graduate credit hour	3,500	Lauri Rockwood	N/A

Adults take advantage of options for continuing ed

By Damon Hodge
Staff Writer

In the Census Bureau's 2002 American Community Survey, Las Vegas ranked 58th among 70 cities for the number of residents age 25 and older with a bachelor's degree.

With a recent influx of professional colleges — and their accelerated programs and flexible schedules — education officials think they can improve on this number.

Founded in 1977 in Chicago, the International Academy of Design and Technology opened a 50,000-square-foot campus a year ago. Owned by the International Academy of Merchandising and Design, Inc., a subsidiary of the Career Education Corp., the private college in Henderson, located at 2495 Village View Drive, offers associate and bachelor's degrees in fashion design, interior design and visual communications. Current enrollment is 300.

Carolyn Thomas, chairwoman of IADT's fashion design department, said opening a local IADT campus was sensible because the kinetic population growth provided a pool of students. The most obvious reason was more basic: no such institution existed in Nevada.

"People would have to go to California and other states to get the type of training we provide," Thomas said. "There is a lot more going on here in the areas of clothing, clothing design and merchandising than ever before. A permanent textile mart is supposed to come here in 2007. And look at the MAGIC (Men's Apparel Guild in California) Convention, which comes here twice a year. When I had a booth at MAGIC, it was smaller. But now it's growing. There are apparel marts all over the country, but none of them are quite as magical as MAGIC. It's the only one that continues to grow."

When the first class of IADT graduates walk the stage in October 2006, Thomas said they'll not only have techni-

cal training in their chosen fields, but degrees will mean something. "This is not a vocational college, so the bachelor's degrees and associate degrees are academic degrees, broad based and include all the core courses," she said.

Thomas envisions future graduates working in various industries all over the world. One student is designing bikinis while another is working on children's wear. Trained on innovative software like Illustrator and Gerber AUTOCAD (a state-of-the-art pattern system), she said graduates will be able to design casino costumes, some for the most exclusive clothiers in the world.

"I was looking in a trade industry publication and people were lamenting the lack of technical training that students had," Thomas said. "All the best designs — Carl Lagerfeld, Yves Saint Laurent, Donna Karen and Marc Jacobs — had to go to school to learn computer-aided design. Our students are getting the same training. There are lots of clothing vocations they can go into. They can be stylists, designers, personal shoppers; one student is looking to apply to Guess for internships."

Todd Rash, marketing director for the corporate office of the High-Tech Institute, said Las Vegas was a natural choice for the institute's 14th campus.

"Lots of people here are looking for a good career that will give them some longevity, and the health care industry is booming, according to (federal) Labor Department statistics," Rash said. "We felt the need in Vegas and once we opened the campus, it proved us right. We're continuing to grow and we'll certainly have to expand the facility."

There are 350 students seeking associate degrees and diplomas in allied health, surgical tech, medical and dental assistant, pharmacy tech and medical billing and coding. Rash says the institute offers lifetime job assistance and requires students seeking degrees in medical assistant and surgical tech

to complete externships. Also available is Career Finder, a program that allows students to explore which programs best fit their personality and aptitude. The 25,000-square-foot campus is equipped with surgical room equipment and instruments, medical equipment, computers and massage therapy tables.

"We're happy with our experience in Vegas," Rash said. "Like Phoenix, Vegas is booming as far as growth and our graduates have had good luck with landing jobs."

As director of development for the University of Southern Nevada, Barbara Wood has a right to gloat. Students in the college's two graduating classes have scored in the 94th percentile on their pharmacy licensure exams, compared to a national average of 84 percent.

"We have a high caliber of student," Wood said of the 345 people enrolled in the master's program in business administration and the baccalaureate in nursing. "We require students to have

SEE ADULTS, PAGE 18A

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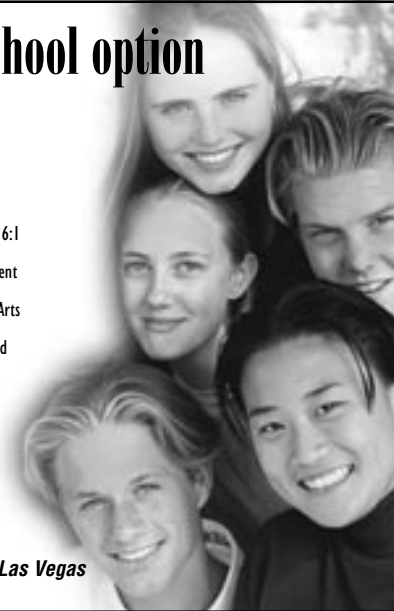


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Second City offers corporate training workshops in LV

By Cheri Watkins
Contributing writer

Executives at The Second City Training Center are working to fill a niche in Las Vegas' business community.

Second City, with nearly 50 years of experience in developing talent in modern theatre, is branching out to offer workshops geared toward businesses and professionals. The Second City has training centers and main stage productions in Las Vegas, Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, Detroit and Toronto.

"Shorter classes, like our four-week Introduction to Improv, and some of the workshops are designed for people with no theatrical background," said training center coordinator Jeynifer Tribbitt. "They focus on two basic principles: agreement and ensemble. It's not about coming to class and being funny."

Second City students range from business professionals looking to improve their public relations skills, such as marketing managers, real estate agents and casino executives.

Others are in search of stress relief, including physicians, nurses and teachers. It's also a place where the shy come to break out of their shell, Tribbitt said.

Second City will offer several business-related workshops, including a one-

day workshop focused on presentation skills, a listening and personal communications class and a teamwork and trust seminar.

It also provides corporate workshops tailored to meet a client's needs. More than 200 Fortune 500 companies have hired Second City to put on training programs for small groups (as few as eight people) to entire divisions.

According to Second City's Web site (www.secondcity.com), the company utilizes key improvisational techniques to help people:

- Think better on their feet
- Flourish and contribute in team environments
- Create new ideas quickly
- Communicate better and listen more effectively in daily situations
- Read an audience and understand what they see
- Become more confident and proficient presenters of ideas
- Serve clients and customers better
- Manage workplace conflict to achieve win-win results

The training center participates actively in the community. It has plans to develop children's programs this summer for the Jewish Community Center, and it is talking with the Clark County School District to establish training opportunities for at-risk youth. It has already



The Second City Training Center has added workshops to appeal to businesses and corporations. Some of the Second City cast include: top row, Brian Shortall and Bridget Kloss; and bottom row, Lauren Dowden, Martin Garcia and Seamus McCarthy.

teamed up with the Las Vegas Little Theater to offer an improvisation showcase featuring local talent.

Nationally, a short list of Second City alumni reads like a who's who of film and

television: Dan Ackroyd, Halle Berry, Tina Fey, Bonnie Hunt, Bill Murray, Mike Myers, Martin Short and the late actors Jim Belushi, John Candy, Chris Farley and Gilda Radner.

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ADULTS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15A

a 3.0 grade-point average from an accredited school and a minimum of 61 credits."

Wood said the university is just now hitting stride. There's now an accredited MBA program in pharmacy. A College of Nursing is slated to open in August. Other health care and business-related disciplines are in the works. The university faces demand-supply problem — too many students and too few openings. To date, more than 1,509 people have applied for 130 openings.

"We're successful because we identified needs in our state — lack of nurses, lack of pharmacists — and we're filling that need by providing the educational venue," Wood said.

Established here five years ago, Regis University offers degrees in business administration (with specializations in human resources, finance, accounting and marketing), liberal arts (philosophy, English, psychology and religious studies), education (with a specialization in language communication, adult learning and special education) and certificate programs in leadership, high-performance management and Catholic studies. Recently added were a master's in liberal studies and a degree in marriage and family therapy. The university's marketing director, Keith Evans, said the opportunity to open a campus in the valley was a no-brainer.

"Because of the growth potential, the



Students at the International Academy of Design and Technology earn academic degrees besides gathering a wealth of experience in their chosen fields of study.

business and organizational infrastructure and the need for workforce development, we thought this would be a great place," Evans said. "All the consolidation going on the gaming and hospitality industry creates a need for educated and talented professionals. We think we can meet the need. We fit a certain profile of student. Our approach is very personalized and has a values and ethics-based orientation."

Anne Tate wouldn't be shocked if the

influx of professional and business colleges continues. What will surprise the director of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas' Professional Development Center is if all the newcomers are here five to 10 years from now.

"The Nevada State College came about as an outgrowth of the need to provide more teachers," she said. "It'll be interesting to watch the continued growth because not every school that's opened here has survived."

T&M Concepts fills niche in industry

The construction industry generates 13 percent of U.S. gross national product, according to Associated General Contractors economist Ken Simonson, and is the nation's seventh largest industry and the No. 2 industry locally, behind gaming.

But industry trade magazine Constructech reports that only half of the nation's construction companies are taking advantage of project management software and other advanced technologies that could help them work more efficiently and produce higher profits.

Since 1993, T&M Concepts has worked to fill that void, offering consulting, training, technical services and products to the construction industry. To further its mission, the company opened Construction Tech-Knowledge Training Center last month. The school is located at 3620 N. Rancho Drive, Suite 111.

"Because our community is so full of building opportunities, Las Vegas has been able to attract many construction companies to fulfill the demand," said owner Larry Aaron.

— **Damon Hodge**

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FOUNDATION, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8A

region or county," he said.

The foundation offers a host of other grants, too — larger ones called Impact and Equity grants providing thousands of dollars for programs that encourage public school staff to try new ideas or provide opportunities for low-income and at-risk children who do not receive many of the enrichment opportunities available to students in more affluent communities.

And smaller, easy-to-apply for, online grants exist to provide a teacher with \$500 in supplies for math and science, such as a forensic science kit for a high school.

Kittrell said one of the grant programs she likes best is the one that allowed teachers to develop an orientation program for middle school students who must acclimate to changing classes, going to lockers and assimilating with a larger number of students.

"Kids from all of the feeder schools were invited in over the summer and prepared for the routines and requirements expected of a middle school student," she said. "They were also given a teacher or support staff person to work with one-on-one."

"We expect the results to show that there were fewer behavior problems and kids did better academically because they had support."

And then there are the countless initiatives the foundation spearheads, many in collaboration with other businesses and agencies throughout the Las Vegas Valley.

Right now, one of the biggest is its literacy initiative called Clark County Reads.

"The average copyright date of the books in the school district's libraries is 1982," Kittrell said. "Some of them even say things like, 'Someday we'll land on the moon.' The state standard in Nevada is 20 books per student in the library, and in Clark County there are 11."

"They are outdated and there aren't enough."

"This initiative is pulling out outdated books and determining what the best non-fiction they should introduce is, and then purchasing it. And we have a reading partner program where we have trained 700 volunteers who work with struggling readers," she said.

Through another initiative, the Inter-Act Exchange, the foundation collects everything teachers can use in a classroom, from pens and pencils to recycled carpet and refurbished computers.

At its warehouse on the corner of Sunset and Industrial roads, teachers are given credit to shop for the low-cost supplies. Teachers at half of the county schools can use the program, and as the program grows, more teachers are added.

"We're now looking for additional donors and funding so we can expand the program to serve the entire school district," said foundation President Judi Steele. "By the end of 2006, we will hopefully be able to serve all the teachers. And we anticipate creating a virtual warehouse so teachers in the outlining

areas can shop online."

Even with so many successes under its belt, Kittrell said there is still much work to do.

"We have more than 280,000 students in our school district and are building about a school a month. About 12,000 to 15,000 students enter the school district annually."

And Steele said there are other challenges as well.

"We're a community with almost 38 percent of a population where English is not their first language," Steele said. "Then there is the mobility factor. Many of our (students) move from place to place to follow their parents' jobs. And because the industries in Clark County are looking for so many entry-level positions, we

receive lots of students from entry-level laborers. The public schools community represents students of the working class."

That is why the foundation is always looking to the community for support to expand its services, Kittrell said. "We've raised more than \$31 million since we started. And last year, 89 percent of everything we spent was on programs for kids."

The organization is funded by federal and local grants and donations by business and individuals.

The foundation is successful in its fund-raising efforts because it allows donors to earmark where they want their gift used, Steele said.

"We require people who receive grants from us to create models that show they did what they said they would do with

(the funds.) And we go a step farther. An audit team made up of the business sector and educators review the projects.

"We hold people accountable," she added.

Steele said Las Vegas is a community that is concerned about education. "We have a core of people who want to see public education improved and realize they are partners in that process."

With so many students and a growing list of problems, is Steele ever daunted by the overwhelming task of the foundation's mission — to impact the quality of education in Clark County in a positive way?

"Everything we do in Las Vegas we start from scratch," she said. "We're a young, vibrant community that is the last pioneer place in America."

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