Learning for the Future
Julie Gess-Newsome and NAUTeach are shaping the teachers of tomorrow

In Vino Vivacity
Master sommelier Richard Betts, ’96, glories in the grape p. 14

ALSO: The results of the NAU Nth Degree contest—meet the families with the most alumni. p. 16
From Thumbnails to World’s End
James Ward Byrkit, ’91, a storyboard artist, writer and director, sails through Pirates of the Caribbean and beyond.

Granting a Brilliant Future
The NAUTeach program trains the best science and math teachers of tomorrow.

In Vino Vivacity
A full-bodied, mildly nutty chat with master sommelier Richard Betts, ’96.

Thoughts To the Nth Degree and much more.

Links President Haeger shares his thoughts on the ‘quiet crisis’ threatening higher education.

Journeys Meet the Palmers, winners of the NAU Nth Degree alumni contest, and a host of others.

Connections Linking up with current and future Lumberjacks.

Memoirs They will be missed.

Red Rock Crossing
—Photograph by Elias Butler, ’98

Cover Photo
Julie Gess-Newsome is the director of NAU’s Center for Science Teaching and Learning.—Photograph by Michael Mertz
Call it a clan, call it a network, call it a tribe, call it a family. Whatever you call it, whoever you are, you need one.—Jane Howard

Rather than scripting the usual spring letter, we’d like to share some thoughts with you—our alumni and friends. As you may remember, we sponsored a fall contest, NAU Nth Degree, asking our alumni to share their family trees, detailing who in their family has attended NAU. Over the years we have been asked: Who is the oldest living alum? Who was the youngest to graduate? The oldest alumni couple? While we still can’t answer some of these questions, you’ve answered a vital one for us. We are so impressed by the responses we received from you. While we knew we had plenty of generational alumni, we were in no way prepared for the outpouring of caring response. Our humble Lumberjack “hats off” to you!

In this issue, we announce another exciting university initiative, NAUTeach (pg. 10). From sunny, phantasmagorical Hollywood we bring you NAU’s own James Ward Byrkit (pg. 7). Meet NAU’s most enthusiastic advocate for wine, master sommelier Richard Betts (pg. 14). In Journeys (pg. 16) we bring you the impressive results of the NAU Nth Degree contest. And, as always, join us in celebrating your fellow alums’ successes in Connections (pg. 18), and remember those we have lost in Memoirs (pg. 22). And please make sure you check out the Links section immediately following this page, where you’ll find information and opportunities about how to get involved with your alma mater.

About our inability to answer some of your tough statistical questions: please watch for more contests and opportunities in both the PINE magazine and online at naualumni.com. We are YOUR alumni relations office; we are here to serve YOU, our alumni. Help us by participating and letting us know what you want. We’ll do our best to keep you in the know.

On behalf of your entire alumni relations staff,

Managing Editor

NAME AND ADDRESS CHANGES
To submit address and name/marital status changes, call the NAU Office of Alumni Relations toll-free at 888-628-2586 (888-NAU-ALUM) or email sue.obrzut@nau.edu.

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There was a time when all you had to do to achieve success was graduate from high school and enter the workforce. That's no longer true in our 21st-century economy. As a result, our country is facing a quiet crisis in which our diminishing educational status threatens America's global economic standing and even our standard of living.

America's college completion rates are 15th in the world out of 24 countries. Arizona college completion rates are 46th in the nation. In Arizona, out of every 100 ninth-graders, only nine go on to complete a bachelor's degree. We call it a quiet crisis because most Americans don't even realize there is a problem. With that in mind, my message to you is simple yet critical: To remain a world leader, America must significantly improve its competitiveness—and higher education is the solution.

Some positive steps must be noted. Northern Arizona University is poised to attract and retain qualified teachers who will draw students into the seriously underrepresented fields of science and math.

As you will read in this issue of PINE magazine, a major grant funded by the National Math and Science Initiative, ExxonMobil and the Helios Education Foundation has the potential to more than double the number of math and science teachers NAU is currently producing.

However, we cannot attain our goal for NAU or for the U.S. educational system without a massive commitment from the public. I'm challenging you to help me give this quiet crisis a loud voice.

Gov. Janet Napolitano and the state Legislature have been solid partners in our efforts to make education affordable and accessible to all Arizona residents. Yet we cannot rely solely on government support and student tuition. I urge you to take some time to visit the Solutions through Higher Education website at highereducationssolution.com and watch a video that truly brings the message home. There are also links that will explain how you can help.

As alumni, you have learned through your successes the value of higher education. Now it's time to teach the rest of the nation how higher education is the solution for our future.

John D. Haeger
President

Defeat ‘quiet crisis’ through support of Higher Education

NAUAA Joe and Marie Rolle (1941/1950) Spirit of NAU Award

Special congratulations from NAU’s own beloved Joe and Marie Rolle to Cliff Alexander and Jeanne Fisher, whom they have hand-selected to honor with their eponymous Spirit of NAU Award. Jeanne and Cliff have been involved in key university organizations: Jeanne is in her second term on the NAU Foundation board, and Cliff is current president of the Alumni Association board, serving the sixth year of his term. Frequent patrons of campus events and annual donors, their commitment and spirit for NAU are to be celebrated.
You’re Going Out There a Lumberjack, But You’re Coming Back a Star!

“The movies,” said Will Rogers, “are the only business where you can go out front and applaud yourself.” True or not, the approving roar of the crowd was heard during NAU’s 83rd Homecoming celebration. “Lights, Camera, Axe-ton: NAU Goes Hollywood!” Students took advantage of the theme to show off their star power downtown, where people-watchers enjoyed a bird-nipped Tippi Hedren wannabe, a Lumberwood sign, a Scream-inspired residence hall float (“McKay Village: Even the dead’s first choice”), and the parade winner, Cowden Hall’s bovine “MOO-vie Stars.”

It was impossible to upstage the members of 1967’s Blue and Gold Reunion, who should have been awarded statuettes for “Best Performance by a Class Act.” Forty-year honorees included Bobbie Schauer Balthazor, Norm Barnhard, Diane Brady Black, John Blount, Jerry DaDurka, Lee Ferguson, Betty Flowers, Mike Graham, Don Hahenkratt, Bill Keebler, Richard Kevin, Dave Kleninsin, Eric Lewis, Marty Lewis, Charlotte Thevenot Madden, Pat Madden, Dennis Meador, Susan Ashwood Sisson, Kermit Smith, Ned Stageberg, John Tomlin, Nick Weil, Bob Welch and Stephen Windward. A Blue and Gold/Homecoming sequel is already in preproduction with an Oct. 25 release date. For news, have your people contact Beth Martin at 928-523-3358.

Fellow icons: Marie and Joe Rolle, and Louie the Lumberjack

Tailgating at the Dome—it was packed

Yuma Alumni Add Bang to Scholarship’s Bucks

In a program funded by NAU’s Rural Inclusive Special Education grant, 18 prospective educators from Yuma received scholarships to cover five semesters worth of tuition and book costs. According to an article in the Yuma Sun, “by the time this group of students graduates, the RISE grant will have produced 56 educators with a dual major in elementary and special education with endorsements in English as a second language.”

In December, Harry Hengl, ’76 M.A.ED., and his wife, Maureen, who is an NAU faculty member, hosted the scholarship presentations at their home.

“Over the past three years, Maureen and I have come to know the students both professionally and personally,” Harry says. “They’ve worked very hard to obtain their degrees, with full-time jobs and going to school every evening and weekends. Because the students can’t work during the semester that they student teach, the NAU Alumni group in Yuma decided to help pay for their expenses while they were student teaching. There were a lot of tears of joy when they opened their envelopes and saw the checks. I don’t think they had any idea that they would receive as much as they did.”

Sponsors of each $1,500 scholarship include AEA Federal Credit Union, Southwest Gas, Citizens Title, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona, Yuma Title, Kim and Larry McDonald, Pacific Steel, Sign Pro, Westmoor Electric and the NAU Yuma Alumni Chapter. For further information on the RISE program, please contact grant co-director Nancy Blitz at 928-344-7677, nancy.blitz@nau.edu.

NAUAA Dr. Cliff Harkins (1932) Distinguished Citizen of the Year Award

Dewey “Dick” Powell, ’66 B.S.

With a powerful personal investment in his beloved community of Casa Grande, Ariz., Dewey Powell may very well be the quintessential good neighbor. Owner of Powell Feed & Supply & Western Wear and a 57-year fixture in Casa Grande, Dewey has journeyed well beyond his own concerns to labor in the city’s economic trenches as a member of the Casa Grande Chamber of Commerce and founder of the Greater Casa Grande Valley Economic Development Association. His committee work has delved into the intricacies of city budget and planning, building and development, and public safety. Other civic roles include stints as a 4-H Club Adult Leader, a Life Member and Past President of the West Pinal County Sheriff’s Posse and an officer in the Arizona National Guard.

Dewey is lauded as an unquenchable resource to his community, a talented policy-maker, and a civic-minded person who exempts no one from his offices. We thank Dewey for his integrity of service, and his implicit philosophy that with good neighbors, there is no need for good fences.

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NAUAA Jeff Ferris
(1936) Volunteer of the Year Award
Rhian Evans Allvin, ’94 B.S.

Rhian’s award nomination states: “She epitomizes the NAU image: extremely effective but caring.” Clearly, enthusiasm and empathy have already become trademarks of every endeavor Rhian approaches.

At NAU, Rhian won the President’s Prize and served as a student regent on the Arizona Board of Regents. After working as a field coordinator for Eddie Basha’s gubernatorial run, she helped donors connect their philanthropic interests with community needs at the Arizona Community Foundation. Also, at Libraries for the Future and Children’s Action Alliance, she supported high-quality early childhood education. She spent four years nurturing Arizona’s Ballot Initiative on Early Childhood Education, and was appointed to the governor’s implementation board. Rhian currently heads the Brecon Group, consulting in public and fiscal policy, advocacy and philanthropic advisory services.

Rhian has an intuitive knowledge of Arizona’s communities and has developed strong relationships at every community level. The NAU Alumni Association is grateful to Rhian for her ability to effect positive change, her intelligent focus on our future, and above all the enduring gift of her human touch.

Now Voyagers
Close to home or across the sea, find an adventure for every taste with the NAU Alumni Association’s travel options. This year we offer a yearly favorite, the San Juan experience, plus two international trips certain to excite and educate. And the best part is you get to travel with family—the NAU alumni family!

A Floatin' We Will Go / June 5-8
The river rats are at it again. Join the NAU Alumni Association for our third annual trek down the amazing San Juan River in southern Utah. Spend three nights camping under the stars with us, June 5-8. Our faculty expert, Wolf Gummerman, along with guides from NAU’s own Outdoor Recreation Program, lead the way on this exciting educational journey. Contact Toni Fox at 888-NAU-ALUM or email Toni.Fox@nau.edu. Space is extremely limited, so reserve quickly.

Alumni Campus Abroad: Italy’s Magnificent Lake District / Aug. 5-13
An area known for its spectacular scenery, Italy’s Lake District boasts a mild climate, lush valleys, majestic mountains, and the sapphire waters of the lakes themselves. Spend eight days and seven nights where Italy kisses Switzerland! Highlights include a cruise by private boat on the Maggiore and Como and a visit to the vibrant city of Milan.

Alumni Campus Abroad: Andalucia / Oct. 16-25
From the Mediterranean Sea to the craggy heights of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, marvel at the blue sky that stretches across breathtaking Spain. Spend eight nights between Granada and Seville, with excursions allowing exploration and immersion in the local culture.

The High Altitude Road to Beijing
This year at Northern Arizona University’s Center for High Altitude Training, there is a heightened level of energy. With the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing looming, the center—one of the world’s leading multisport, altitude training facilities—serves as a U.S. Olympic Training Site for distance running, preparing postcollegiate athletes in events from the 800m to the marathon.

Since the 1996 Atlanta Games, 191 Olympic and Paralympic medals have been won by athletes who trained on the Mountain Campus. This year, more than 100 participants from around the world are expected to make the cut for Beijing. Most of the foreign athletes who qualify will be swimmers, but the center is also expected to produce a targeted group of the finest distance runners in the U.S.

With the heightened excitement of the Games, there is also an underrun of apprehension, as athletes feel the pressure of high-intensity training and strive to avoid injury. Coaches also feel the responsibility of strategic preparations for peak performance. But when the eyes of the world turn to Beijing Aug 8, the NAU family will eagerly cheer for our Olympic athletes. Watch for an Olympic roster at nau.edu/highaltitude.

Feeling Blue for the Right Reasons
If you’ve spent time in Flag recently, it’s hard to avoid the blues. It turns out that the sale of NAU-branded gear is on pace to shatter the record set last year, partly because of a new grass-roots campaign: True Blue Fridays.

In August, NAU President John Haeger signed a decree encouraging the NAU community to wear the university’s colors and gear every Friday. Finding NAU accessories has never been easier; in Flagstaff alone, 10 retailers now offer licensed products. Also, in great news for all alumni and friends, the NAU Bookstore offers many products online at nau.bkstr.com. So show your pride, be true, wear blue, go NAU!
James Ward Byrkit, ’91 B.F.A., conceptualizes his own life into an increasingly epic reality—with organic talent, his own special effects, and a little help from his Hollywood colleagues.

by Anne Walden

When we fired off a few interview questions to storyboard artist-director-writer James Ward Byrkit, we figured he’d send us a good narrative. After all, we’d seen his work before, in the baroque, larger-than-life characters of the Pirates of the Caribbean franchise, in which his achievement as a storyboard artist and conceptual consultant earned him serious industry buzz. But we never expected the pitch-perfect tenor of his reply: a fully loaded biographical portrait of the artist and his influences, chock full of canny sound bites and dazzling drawings. With auteurs like this, who needs editors?

In the Habit of Creation

Byrkit likes to couch his creativity as a renegade impulse, or even an addiction. For instance, when he studied for his master’s degree in theatre design at the California Institute of the Arts, he “started sneaking off campus to make short films with school equipment.” He also characterizes his initial storyboard work as a means “to finance my rather expensive film directing habit.” This irresistible inclination apparently crystallized at CalArts: “I grew to love directing since it combined all my favorite creative interests: storytelling, photography, acting, music, theatre, art, design and writing. All things I had been associated with at NAU.”

As Byrkit’s credits mounted, the plot thickened in the right direction.

“I worked as a storyboard artist for commercial directors, [and film directors] Gore Verbinski, Ben Stiller
and Michael Bay,” he says. “This set me on a quest to direct commercials as well, and I spent several years doing all sorts of projects, from developing a low-budget monster movie to directing a TV pilot for Aaron Spelling, and making commercials and music videos. When Gore Verbinski started directing movies, I was beginning my own commercial directing career.”

The ongoing partnership with Verbinski dovetailed nicely with Byrkit’s addiction. “We had worked together so well that I couldn’t resist going back to help him with storyboarding a bit, between directing jobs.”

Chance favors the prepared mind: when the first Pirates film came around, Byrkit was the first person Verbinski hired. “By now my role had developed beyond storyboarding to include conceptual work, figuring out core pieces of the films.”

What does that actually mean? If you’re addicted to the ancillary material on today’s DVD blockbusters, you may have envied the phenomenal artisans behind the scenes, tweaking CG masterpieces, acting out comic bits from impressionistic storyboards. Byrkit is actually one of those guys.

“You can see one small aspect of my work on the two-disc DVD set of Pirates of the Caribbean: At World’s End,” he says. “In the bonus features, there’s a part about a prop I created under ‘Masters of Design.’ But you don’t have to refer to me as Master of Design. Yet.”

Another pleasure of watching these onboard documentaries is seeing the cast and crew get inside the head of an A-list director. In Byrkit’s regular routine, his was the brain that Verbinski picked.

“Gore and I would meet over the course of developing the movie, sometimes every day, to pound out creative, filmic and story concepts,” he says. “Whether it’s beginning to visualize a gigantic whirlpool battle, designing underwater pirates, or plotting out hundreds of shots for a massive sea monster attack, it’s always creative.” The time and mileage accumulated. “I worked on At World’s End for a few years, took trips to the Caribbean to scout locations with Gore, and also visited the set during filming.” Was it glamorous? “No. Exhilarating, yes.

### Extra Credit

* Byrkit’s father, NAU history professor emeritus Dr. James W. Byrkit, taught at the university for 23 years.
* The film Outside Ozona (1998), in which Byrkit is credited as a storyboard artist, was written and directed by NAU alumnus J.S. Cardone, ’69 B.S., and produced by Carol Kottenbrook, ’71 B.S. The cast includes actor Bert Emmett, ’95 B.S.ED.
* Byrkit’s other film and TV credits as writer, director and artist include Mousehunt, Things to Do in Denver When You’re Dead, Yes and … , Fractalus, Stop at Nothing and Special Unit 2.
Words can’t describe it: “No need to try, if it’s anything like the giant whirlpool or Davy Jones’ amphibian face.”

**Fire and Music ... and Something Incurable**

Long before the leviathans, Byrkit studied the arts at NAU, “a great fertile ground for creative exploration and meeting lifelong friends.” While always interested in multiple disciplines, he found a reassuring commonality in his favorite instructors, a creed of precision and passion. Byrkit’s talent for illustration was nourished by teacher Dave Christiana, “who still inspires me with his commitment to excellence. He used to say, ‘Put some fire in it.’ Put yourself in your art, the real stuff, make it burn with truth, love, pain, whatever it takes to make it special.”

From NAU choir director Dr. Jo-Michael Schelbe, Byrkit learned about the transformative power of true focus.

“Year after year, he would take a group of fairly average singers sprinkled with five or six great voices, and get a sound out of them that would transcend the music,” he says, “becoming something you had never heard before. Bigger, snootier choirs would marvel. I remember, in my early 20s, finally paying attention to what he was actually doing as a leader. His insistence on perfection is legendary.”

And then there was Dr. Clifford White, the consummate theatrical trouper. “I didn’t actually have a class with him,” says Byrkit, “but he directed me in some big shows. I can never thank him enough for those opportunities to learn and be part of the spectacles he was creating. His love of theatre was infectious and is still with me. Like a strange rash.”

Or an addiction.

Whether your creative impulses tend to the spectacular (swordfights on the bounding main) or intimate (Keira Knightley in tears), Byrkit cautions fledgling artists about the practical necessity of obsession.

“This industry ... is a life-consuming endeavor,” he says. “This is no halfway. You have to love it. You have to love it so much you would do it for free, even if someone were tempting you with a nice cushy corporate office job. You must do what you love all the time, and put some fire in it.”

Byrkit is now writing and directing, “finishing some ambitious short films, selling spec scripts and developing a slew of possible future projects.” He couldn’t give us details about his latest venture with Verbinski & Co., except to say that it’s a new idea for a movie. “This time we’re working with just a tiny team of artists right out of Gore’s office, to avoid the studio executives for a while.”

And how would this Master of Design conceptualize his own biopic? “I doubt I could ever storyboard my life because it would require too many different styles to convey the changing tone of the plot,” he says. “Also, it would be too absurd for American audiences. It might have to be a foreign film. I would cast a life-size puppet of myself to play me, operated by six highly trained union puppeteers with one assistant to get coffee and fax stuff.”

Gofors, on your mark, get set, go.  

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**No Small Parts, Only Small Businesses**

Sometimes Hollywood happens quickly. For NAU alumna Courtney Giauque, ’97 B.A., her work as manager of small Flagstaff businesses, Ceiba Adventures and HIS Support, led to a fascinating supporting role in Sean Penn’s recent, acclaimed directorial effort, *Into the Wild*. Under the umbrella of Adventure Sport Services, Giauque (pronounced “juke”) found herself hired by her bosses, river experts Brian Dierker and Scott Davis, to help outfit and supervise the film crew—providing boats for filming and staff for the support boats; working through the logistics; and other duties as necessary, including the occasional directorial cameo.

Magicking the film crew to four different locations, Giauque’s job was basically “allowing them to get the shots they wanted.” She worked directly with Penn, the assistant directors and cameramen. “OK, Courtney,” they would tell her, “we want this guy to come down here, and we want these boats to move up here, and then your safety guy will grab everyone ... and then we’ll film it again.” She would then relay the instructions to her crew by walkie-talkie. She found her new colleagues extremely professional. “They paid us a lot of respect, looking for our opinions on different locations, and especially consulting on the natural aspects like, ‘When is the sunlight going to be over in that area?’”

Would she do it again? “Definitely,” says Giauque, “although it’s a full-time lifestyle; both in production and preproduction we worked minimum 12-hour days, seven days a week. [Making the movie] was a great experience, but then it was also nice to step back into our Flagstaff lives.” She certainly had her share of “wow” moments: “During one river trip we were shooting in this little place called Silver Grotto. They were filming [star] Emile Hirsch walking down, about ankle-deep in the water; we were looking out onto an expanse of rock and it was just beautiful. And there I was, huddled down, quiet, underneath the camera, with the AD and Sean Penn. I thought, ‘I can’t believe I’m here with these two guys, making this movie.’”

**Films: Into the Wild (2007)**

**Locations:** From Diamond Creek along the Colorado down to Lake Mead; Lake Powell (where screen classic *Planet of the Apes* was also shot). 

**Beyond the Cutting Room:** Shots that made it into the finished movie include an extended sequence with Emile Hirsch in the rapids, and one frame from the Lake Powell footage of a crewmember waterskiing.

**Her Hollywood Alter Ego:** “I guess I would have Courtney Cox Arquette play me in a movie. Ever since she was Alex P. Keaton’s girlfriend on *Family Ties* I’ve been told we look alike.” [Editor’s Note: We can see it.]

**Sean? Just Call Him “Bob”:** Director Penn believed in leading by example, refusing to let the actors do anything he couldn’t do himself.

“When it was time to capture Emile Hirsch in a kayak, Sean jumped into the boat to do it first. We were in this strange little eddy, and as soon as his weight went into the kayak, the current caught him and flipped him upside down. It happened at least twice, and everyone was shouting, ‘Oh my gosh. Sean Penn’s in the water, get him!’ It was tense, but funny—and impressive to work with the kind of boss who is right there in the thick of things.”

*naualumn.com | Spring 2008 | 9*
NAUTeach is helping train the best math and science teachers of tomorrow.

Granting a Brilliant Future

by Samuel Greengard
Photography by Michael Mertz
Staying competitive in the Digital Age is no simple task. Companies, universities and entire nations increasingly battle to develop the brainpower for competing in the 21st century. Yet, amid all the discussion and a barrage of news stories, one fact is clear: knowledge doesn’t just happen. It’s often the result of a complex loop of finding qualified teachers who can impart science and math expertise to the next generation of young people.

In recent years, the U.S. has found itself facing a serious challenge: it isn’t keeping up in teaching math and the sciences. In fact, according to the National Research Council, U.S. students continue to perform among the worst of all industrialized countries because schools have a critical shortage of qualified teachers in science, math and technology. Today, the shortage can be measured in the tens of thousands of teachers nationwide and the gap is growing.

NAU hopes to change the equation. A $3.4 million grant will be used to replicate a program
modeled after the highly successful UTeach program established at the University of Texas at Austin in 1997. The National Math and Science Initiative awarded $2.4 million funded by ExxonMobil, while the Helios Education Foundation contributed an additional $1 million toward the initiative. The program will give students an opportunity to step into the classroom and gain real-world experience. Through lectures, coursework and interaction, they’re able to try out teaching without making a firm commitment to the profession.

It’s a proven approach. At the University of Texas, the success rate has been phenomenal. Since its inception, more than 400 students have graduated from UTeach and, overall, one-quarter of science and math students express interest in teaching. In fact, the program has doubled the number of secondary math and science teachers graduating from the school.

“The program has a history of success. It impacts people and society in a real way,” says Julie Gess-Newsome, director of the Center for Science Teaching and Learning at NAU.

Beyond Class Struggles
It’s not an understatement to say that America’s future depends on its ability to promote learning in the sciences. As countries like China, India and Korea play a more dominant role in the world’s economy, the competition for the smartest and the best talent is heating up. The ability to engineer more sophisticated technology, unravel the human genome, solve global warming issues, and address a slew of other challenges, will determine quality of life and the standard of living in the years ahead.

Not surprisingly, learning spins a tight orbit around achievement...and success. Over the last quarter century, the picture hasn’t looked particularly attractive. Unfortunately, “America was once a leader in math and science education, but its position has steadily and drastically eroded,” observes NAU President John Haeger. “Today we rank 24th out of 29 industrialized countries. [We must] reverse this trend to ensure our ongoing competitiveness in a knowledge-based economy.”

That’s the aim of NAUTeach. Math and science majors at NAU receive an invitation to participate in the program, which lets them earn one credit for practice teaching at a primary school and an additional credit at a middle or high school. These freshmen and sophomores work in teams of two or three, and teach the lessons over a semester. Along the way, they observe learning environments, work with a mentor teacher to develop lessons, and actually teach the curriculum.

The program is carefully designed to help students gain confidence and knowledge as they teach and work with younger students.

“The great thing,” says Gess-Newsome, “is that at the primary school level the students love you and look at you as a real teacher. So, it’s a great introduction and there’s immediate buy-in.” Yet the program is also valuable for science and math majors who aren’t sure about teaching but want to give it a try. They’re able to steer in a different direction before making a major commitment.

On their way to a teaching credential, participating NAU students take a series of three-credit courses that provide insight into teaching and learning styles, modeling techniques, research methods and classroom interaction. They also head out on a field trip with students. “We might visit the Grand Canyon for two days and explore science in there,” Gess-Newsome says. “It’s an opportunity to put theory into action in the real world and do it in a fun and exciting setting.”

Formula for Success
The idea for UTeach came from Mary Ann Rankin, dean of the College of Natural Sciences at the University of Texas. A decade ago, she recognized that the model for finding math and science teachers in primary and secondary schools was broken. Too often, graduates from fields as diverse as music, history and biology were lumped together in teaching preparation programs that were generic. Instead of spending time figuring out how to teach genetics or discuss how silicon-based circuits work, they focused on learning the basics of lecturing, grading and other routine tasks.

The College of Natural Sciences set out to develop a model program that would take teacher development into the 21st century.

“The program has a history of success. It impacts people and society in a real way.”
— Julie Gess-Newsome, Director of the Center for Science Teaching and Learning at NAU
Ensuring that all primary and secondary schools are staffed with teachers proficient in math and science is no easy task. Despite a constant barrage of studies, reports and commissions, the shortage persists—and it has serious ramifications. According to a 2002 study by the National Center for Education Statistics, 37 percent of high school math teachers and 31 percent of science teachers lack a major or certification in their field. “The lack of specialized knowledge is a serious issue,” says Julie Gess-Newsome.

The UT each program and its offshoots at 12 other campuses around the country, including NAU, are part of a broader initiative to increase the number of teachers—particularly those with knowledge, background and degrees in math and the sciences. For example, 20 percent of today’s teaching force is composed of novice teachers from alternative route programs, according to the U.S. Department of Education. These programs—which select participants based on knowledge, experience and background—require only a bachelor’s degree and additional coursework. It’s ideally suited for those looking to recareer.

In addition, private organizations such as the National Education Association and the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, are working to fill the void; initiatives such as Troops to Teachers are attempting to entice members of the military to enter teaching; and states are getting into the action as well. For instance, in 2006, Ohio earmarked $2.6 million in grants to higher education institutions for training 260 Ohio teachers and mid-career professionals in high-need and hard-to-staff subject areas.

Says Gess-Newsome: “There’s a growing recognition that we must find a way to fill the gap.”

“The design of the program was shaped by collaborative planning among math and science experts, master teachers, and educational researchers who understood the latest research-based educational theory and practice,” says Lawrence D. Abraham, chair of Curriculum & Instruction at the University of Texas College of Education.

From the start, UTeach was highly successful...and popular. Approximately 85 percent of the program’s graduates enter teaching within a year and 70 percent are still teaching after five years. Nationally, only about 50 percent of science and math teachers stay in the profession after five years. The UTeach program also graduates more minorities than the school’s College of Natural Sciences, and participants have a higher GPA than their counterparts at the College of Natural Sciences.

Now, the program is going national. The National Math and Science Initiative and the UTeach Institute asked for proposals in March 2007 to select 12 institutions that will receive up to $3.4 million in funding to replicate the same program. More than 50 schools submitted proposals and NAU was among those selected.

“A team of reviewers carefully evaluated NAU’s ability to implement all of the elements of success of UTeach,” says Tracy LaQuey Parker, director of the UTeach Institute. “NAU impressed all the reviewers with its desire, initiative and capability to implement the program.”

ExxonMobil funded the initial $125 million to the National Math and Science Initiative efforts nationwide. The Helios Education Foundation contributed an additional $1 million directly for the NAU Teach program. The funding helps run the program but also goes toward scholarships and tuition reimbursement. The program benefits these companies by creating a larger pool of students proficient in math and the sciences,” LaQuey Parker points out.

Daniel Kain, dean of NAU’s College of Education, believes the program will have a profound impact in the months and years to come. “The National Math and Science Initiative recognizes NAU’s long-term commitment to excellence in teacher education—that is the history of our university,” he explains. “This award represents a charge for NAU to take on the serious business of preparing more teachers to address the changing needs of our state and nation.”

Adds Arizona Gov. Janet Napolitano: “By fostering innovation in our classrooms, we can regain our status as a global leader in scientific discovery.”
Tell us about the many hats you wear.
I am really lucky to be involved in the wine industry at many levels. I started as a sommelier; essentially, I am helping people enjoy their lives through wine. I also get the unparalleled experience of tasting great wine every night as we present the best wines in the world.

My job at the Little Nell is seasonal, so half the year I am free to do other things. After finishing my master sommelier process in 2003, I found I wasn’t so much happy as immediately bored! I decided I wanted to do something more with wine, so my partner and I created our own label, Betts & Scholl. It was a neat opportunity after reading all about it and knowing exactly where the wine comes from. To take it a step farther and see all these places—not just understanding that yeast plus sugar equals CO2 and alcohol—but to actually get dirty, test the theory and try to make something fun for ourselves. The winemaking is very complementary, as it makes me better at my job as a sommelier.

Last fall I was only home a total of nine days in three months. I have driven and flown around 100,000 miles, making wine on three continents. Now I’m ready to hang out for a little bit and get charged up and share my experiences from other places with others.


In a nutshell, tell us your personal philosophy on wine and food.
Wine is a grocery, not a luxury. It belongs on your table at lunch, at dinner, every single day. Wine is what pairs best with food. It doesn’t have to be fancy and you don’t have to pour it into a fancy glass.

Tell us about becoming a master sommelier.
The court of master sommeliers is the world’s only certifying body for sommeliers. There are four levels of examination. You have to learn about the world’s wine, spirits and food, and develop a certain ability to share that with people.

You start with theory, an oral exam where three masters ask anything they want about what you can eat, drink or smoke. In the service portion, masters are guests at a restaurant, and at each table you have to do something different. The “guest” is asking difficult questions. It is an opportunity to show that you are an advocate for your guests, which I think is the essence of the program. Finally, and most intimidating, is blind tasting. Six glasses of wine are set in front of you and you are given 25 minutes to deduce what the wine is, what it’s made from, where it was made, when it was made, etc. You have to smell, taste, feel and get them all right. While it is hard, I believe everybody can do it. Everywhere I go people put a glass of wine in front of me and ask me to identify it. I do humor them, but it’s not a parlor trick. Being able to really taste wine allows you to understand the world of wine a little better.

What’s next for you?
I am starting a project with mescal, a very poorly understood spirit. I have been captivated by it for a long time and decided I wanted to try it myself. I went to Oaxaca, Mexico, and saw true artisans doing their craft. I also visited a number of distilleries and found a guy to work with in the Oaxaca Sierras. Also, with fellow NAU alum Bobby Stuckey, I am working on another wine label called Scarpetta.

Is there something you learned at NAU that you use every day?
I use my geology background all the time, considering vineyards and differences in grapes and places. More importantly, I learned the scientific method and how to be an investigator. That is what graduate school was about. I never once had to lean on my thesis for my job, but I wouldn’t trade the process for anything. I also learned a lot about myself.
Is there any experience, person, class or instructor that you will never forget?

Two NAU scientists I looked up to were Matt Kapinski and Joe Hazel. They love what they do and make it fun. Outside of that, [ceramicist] Don Bendel really resonated with me. He was one of the reasons I had so much fun and got through. Having the opportunity to explore and satisfy different parts of your being through ceramics—in a world-class program—was awesome. In fact, I’m going to take up ceramics when I get some more time.

What advice would you give to someone following in your footsteps?

There isn’t a prescription to become a sommelier. The important thing is to pay attention to what makes you tick. I didn’t plan on going to Occidental College, floundering, getting on the dean’s blacklist because I was always at the beach surfing, and then change majors a trillion times, and end up in geology. I didn’t plan on working on Capitol Hill, writing speeches, going to grad school at NAU, taking the LSATs, and then within three weeks of going off to law school, deciding on a whim to do wine. It was really important to have all these experiences.

While finishing my master’s thesis at NAU, I ran across the street to Brix, bought a bottle of wine and took it home, opened it up, and stuck my nose in it. It brought me back to a very specific moment. I remembered where I was sitting, where my wife was sitting, what we ate. It was very compelling. The next morning I was at Late for the Train and thought, “What I want to do is food and wine.” And so I did.

Our alumni will read this issue in April. What do you think people will enjoy drinking in the spring?

I think that during any season, people are leaning more toward elegant wines. Drinking wine is not supposed to be work, but fun. We can all be impressed or wowed by something that is big, mysterious, hits you in the face, lots of fruit—but wine drinkers want more, in intellectual value, and that also comes with wines of finesse and elegance. Grace over girth, if you will. And I think that is just the natural progression people are following.

What do you think would be the quintessential NAU wine?

Something mountainous, since Flagstaff is such a beautiful place, which makes me think about Italy with the mountains rising above the town—so I will go with Barbera.

Wine is fun, not scary. Trust your own palate—don’t like something just because someone else likes it or tells you it is good. Wine doesn’t belong on a pedestal; it belongs on your table, and it only belongs on your table if you think it tastes good.
NAU Nth Degree Contest
Trees and stones will teach you that which you can never learn from masters.—St. Bernard

You might think of it as the NAU orchard. As we discovered from the gratifying response to our NAU Nth Degree Contest, thanks to our wonderful—and fruitful—alumni, we have many thriving family trees laden with Lumberjack fruit. But in the end, the Palmer family spread its branches widest, with a total of 47 family members attending Northern Arizona University.

Tom Palmer writes, “As you can see, this family loves NAU and has been blessed by the university’s academic programs.” He also notes, “Elwyn Gus Palmer and Ruth W. Palmer (both now 88 years old and residents of Flagstaff) are the parents of Thomas, Melvin, Robert and Marena. Gus was a ‘Town Jack’ supporter of athletics for many years—as early as the 1950s.”

In appreciation for the Palmers’ loyalty and spirit, and as a dynamic symbol of lasting commitment, the Office of Alumni Relations is donating funds to NAU to sponsor and maintain a genuine PALMER FAMILY TREE on north campus. This tree, marked by a customized bronze plaque, will become an official keepsake of NAU and generations of Palmers to come.

The Palmer clan and our three runners-up—the MacLean/Haydukovich family, the DeMiguel/Wahler family and the Rhoton/Nelson family—are listed at right. We heartily thank everyone who participated in the contest, and look forward to the ripening of many more NAU dynasties.

Members of the winning Palmer family (left to right): Marena Hales, Shannon Palmer, Gretna Palmer and Tom Palmer.
Members of THOMAS LEE PALMER family to attend NAU or ASC

1. Thomas Lee Palmer ’67; taught at NAU College of Business 1974-2000
2. Wife Gretta Ann Phinizy Palmer ’66

Children and spouses:
4. Wife Deborah Winward Palmer, attended
5. Steven Gus Palmer, ’95
6. Michael Thomas Palmer, ’95
7. Wife Heather Renee Darris Palmer, ’94
8. Daniel Aaron Palmer, ’97
10. Kalylnn Palmer, attended
11. Husband Michael Dean Pospisil, ’97
12. Richard Bryant Palmer, ’00
14. Timothy Paul Palmer, attended
15. Wife Tia Kathleen Noble Palmer, ’01
16. Mark Russell Palmer, current
17. Wife Celeste Jinia Reber Palmer, attended
18. Pamela Palmer Owens, attended

Older brother of Thomas Lee Palmer, ROBERT GUS PALMER family:
20. Robert Gus Palmer, ’66
21. Wife Mary Caroline Nelson Palmer, ’54

Children and spouses:
22. Patricia Adele Palmer, attended
23. Bruce Melvin Palmer, attended
24. Wife Debbie Lea McDaniel Palmer, attended
25. Andrew Price Palmer, attended
26. Eldon Gus Palmer, ’02
27. Wife Shannon Lacey Dodge Palmer, ’04
28. Julie Loretta Palmer Bryson, ’05
29. Sharon Glendene Palmer Howard, current
30. Husband Cannelton Levi Howard, current

Younger brother of Thomas Lee Palmer, MELVIN JAY PALMER family:
31. Melvin Jay Palmer, ’69, ’74, ’81

Children and spouses:
32. Alan Jay Palmer, ’95, ’03
33. Wife Vickie Hubbard Wright Palmer, ’94
34. Tonya Ruth Palmer Crosby, attended
35. Husband Kevin Glen Crosby, ’97
36. David Arthur Palmer, ’01
37. Kristy Boone Palmer, ’06

Younger sister of Thomas Lee Palmer, MARENA PALMER HALES:

Sisters and spouses of GRENTA ANN PHINIZY PALMER, wife of Thomas Lee Palmer:
39. Helen Phinizy Kennedy, attended
40. Husband Glen Kennedy, ’68, ’71
41. Pamela Lee Phinizy Crosby, ’68
42. Husband Francis Kennedy Crosby, ’67, ’70

Children and Spouses of PAMELA LEE PHINIZY CROSBY:
43. Kendra Crosby Ramsey, attended
44. Husband Scott Millard Ramsey, ’86
45. Bryant Kasey Crosby, ’96

A family is a unit composed not only of children but of men, women, an occasional animal, and the common cold.—Ogden Nash

MacLean/Haydukovich Family
Mike Joseph Cook, attended • Brenda Haydukovich Daly, ’79 • David Glen Daly, attended • Dennis Daly, ’96 • Annie Hanno, ’92, ’00 • Brent Hanno*, attended • Dawn Hanno* • Doug Hanno** • Candace Olivia Hartman, attended • Justin Hartman, ’00 • Joan MacLean Haydukovich* • John Haydukovich, ’84 • Mark Haydukovich, ’78 • Mike Haydukovich* • Nick Haydukovich* • Paul Haydukovich, ’88 • Steven Haydukovich, ’93 • Susan Story Haydukovich, ’78 • Tom Haydukovich, ’88 • Sara Henrie, ’02 • Mary Haydukovich Kriste, ’98 • Bess Stevenson MacLean, ’33, ’59 • Bramde Maclean, ’07 • Carol Giles MacLean, ’03 • DeWey MacLean** • Jim Maclean, ’61 • Joyce MacLean, ’40 • LeEllen MacLean* • Mike MacLean, ’78 • Olive Mitchell McLean, ’33 • Jeanne Haydukovich Oliwa*** • Mark Oliwa*** • Carol Reents, ’95 • Greg Reents, ’93, ’00 • Lori Haydukovich Reents, ’87 • Amy Haydukovich Rhoades, attended • Brandi Stallnichtch Rhoades, ’00 • George Rhoades, ’98 • Marilee Eveleth Roberts, ’94, ’00 • Mike Roberts, ’87, ’91 • Whitney Roberts, current • Jim Sexton**

If the family were a sport, it would be baseball: a long, slow, nonviolent game that is never over until the last out. —Letty Cottin Pogrebin

DeMiguel/Wahler Family
Manuel DeMiguel, ’49, ’55 • Annie Rodriguez DeMiguel, ’50, ’68 • Yvonne DeMiguel Greer, ’73 • Steven D. Greer, ’72 • Stephanie J. Greer, ’99 • Ryan C. Greer, ’01 • Lynelda DeMiguel, ’75 • Manuel DeMiguel Jr., ’77 • Philip DeMiguel Sr., ’57, ’63 • Nati DeMiguel, ’77 • Philip DeMiguel Jr., ’78, ’91 • Natalie DeMiguel, ’79, ’00 • Libby DeMiguel*** • Frankie DeMiguel* • Mathews DeMiguel, current • Eric Peter Greer, ’71, ’75 • Jeane Ann Holobaugh Greer, ’70, ’89 • Sally Greer Wahler, ’78 • Husband Charles B. Wahler, ’78 • Jacob J. Wahler, current • James D. Wahler* • Eric P. Greer* • Gina Greer, attended • Ricky Greer* • Christopher Greer, ’75 • Julie Greer, ’73 • Christine Grumbles Greer, ’04 • Elaine Jeanne Greer Hittle* • Edward Greer, attended • Dercus Beitrani Cuniff, ’78 • Erin Cuniff, ’04 • Elizabeth McWaters, current • Mike Fiebler* • Walter Roy Greer**

I can’t think of anything to write about except families. They are a metaphor for every other part of society. —Anna Quindlen

Rhoton/Nelson Family

For all other Nth Degree entries, visit naualumni.com.

*Attendance verified by Registrar’s Office
**Unable to verify attendance

Special thanks to Jessica LoCicero in the NAU Office of the Registrar for all her great work!
Peter Wiebe, ’62 B.S., Scientist emeritus with the renowned Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, passed on some photos from recent expeditions that sent him into the literal and figurative area of enigma. His research interests, such as “dynamics of zooplankton populations on the continental shelf region of the Western Antarctic Peninsula,” tie in with his description of the photos—including extreme locations such as “1,000 miles south of Chile, position 69.147S, 72.687W”—verbatim, the ends of the earth.

Anna Kettle Becker, ’68 B.S.ED., writes that she has kept in touch with another NAU classmate, Joann Simmons, ’69 B.S., and would love to hear from other alumni who graduated about the same time. She is a semiretired college/university teacher who worked for 30-plus years in Oregon and California schools.

Friends can contact her through alumni@nau.edu.

1970s

Mark Brewster, ’70 B.S., retired in 2005 after 35 years of teaching physical education and coaching at Strath Haven High School in the Wallingford-Swarthmore School District, broadcast nationally on CBS. His unprecedented record with the Lumberjacks, 25-4-1.

Ron Roman Riales, ’74 B.A., has written a science fiction novel, Red Moon (Looming of a New World Order), which is available through Amazon and Barnes & Noble. He was named an International Poet of Merit by the International Society of Poets and lives in Glendale, Ariz.

Debra May Himes, ’75 B.S., a dedicated member of the NAUAA National Board of Directors, recently added several beautiful new feathers to her professional cap. In Paris for the American Society of Interior Designers 2007 Design Excellence Awards, she garnered an impressive slate of honors, including first place in product design for her “Jewels” drapery hardware.

Patti Felix Vessels Pettigrew, ’75 B.S., wrote to NAU professor emeritus Ray Newton that she was looking forward to the NAUAA’s annual Del Mar race day. She also spent part of the summer “evaluating processes and streamlining” and moving/redecorating offices at Cal State University-San Marcos, where she is a field experience coordinator: “I have been given the task of making it a center with class and style. Fun—we don’t get to do that much in a state institution.”

Tim Delaney, ’76 B.S., ’77 MBA, writes of his two businesses, JDH Asset Management, a wealth management firm, and Linkenheimer LLP, CPAs and Advisors: “My client base is spread throughout the western U.S., which allows me to fly my airplane to see my clients.” He also notes proudly, “It has now been 30 years since I graduated from NAU.”

Michael Collier, ’76 B.S., is a family practice doctor who spends his free time off the golf course: flying a 52-year-old single-engine Cessna to tell the Earth’s story with breathtaking aerial images. Featured on NPR’s May 28, 2007 Morning Edition, he explains, “I want people to see beauty in the landscape … the plane is a visceral way to relate [to rocks and geology].” Michael also employs suspenseful aerobatics to capture the best sights, lines, light, and texture—and tries “not to fly into the cliffs. It’s considered bad form.”

Chris Mello, ’78 B.S.ED., of the Alaska Energy Authority is seeing climate change fallout firsthand: the river closest to the eroded coastal village of Newtok is now so shallow that barges can no longer deliver fuel, spelling disaster for the villagers who need to power their hunts for seal and halibut. Temporary solutions: constructing alternative energy sources such as hydro projects, wind power, diesel hybrids or geothermal power projects. “It’s an enormous problem,” says Chris, “that’s going to require enormous resources.”

Debe Campbell, ’79 B.S., coordinator of the 2007 summer Junior Leadership Academy, reports on this multidisciplinary collaboration among agencies, educators, at-risk students, potential leaders and community members. Promoted by the NavCo Coalition Against Drug Abuse and designed by Gilbert Alvidrez, ’81 B.S., last July’s two-week pilot academy for 15 youths focused on developing “goal setting, social and life skills, community service, oral and written communication, academic skill development, decision making/challenge exercises and drug awareness.”

1980s

John E. Cornely, ’80 PH.D., recently retired from the Mountain-Prairie Region of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as migratory bird chief, has received the Department of the Interior’s Meritorious Service Award. His exceptional contributions to biological...
programs at National Wildlife Refuges and all areas of migratory bird management included more than 40 scientific publications, many of which directly influenced the management of natural resources.

Randy Roberts, ’81 B.S. ACCY, has been appointed to the Auditing Standards Board of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. His term began in October 2007 and will comprise three one-year terms. Randy works for the Arizona Auditor General’s Office as its professional practice director.

Christine Reuter Beckman, ’84 B.S., ’07 ED.D., is a full-time faculty member in the Department of Speech Communication at Mesa Community College.

Walter Delecki, B.S., ’07 ED.D., with NAU prof. Christine Reuter Beckman, ’84 B.S., asks, “Can two pet rats save the world?” Find out in her latest children’s novel, “Frederick and Ishbu.” Frederick and Ishbu are based on real pet rats that I kept in my kindergarten classroom,” she writes. The book is available at Amazon and Barnes & Noble.

Judy Cox, ’84 M.ED., asks, “Can two pet rats save the world?” Find out in her latest children’s novel, The Mystery of the Burmese Bandicoot (Tails of Frederick and Ishbu). “Frederick and Ishbu are based on real pet rats that I kept in my kindergarten classroom,” she writes. The book is available at Amazon and Barnes & Noble.


Cathy Aronson, ’86 B.S., pedals uphill for more than her own heart’s health: “I rode my bicycle from St. Louis to the coast of Oregon and raised $14,000 to benefit the Firelight Foundation, which helps children in Africa deal with the AIDS crisis.” A previous fundraising bike-a-thon took her from Washington to Maine. To learn more about this unique advocacy group, visit firelightfoundation.org.

Patti Jo Angelini, ’86 B.S., is working in an extremely difficult gray area: helping parents counsel their own teens while maintaining the fine line between friendship and authority. As executive director of the Arizona Coalition on Adolescent Pregnancy and Parenting, she counsels families of kids who participate in risky behaviors. In a recent Arizona Republic article she said, “What we recommend is to start where you’re comfortable ... the kids want boundaries.”

Marty Gruetzmacher, ’86 B.S., has been promoted to senior vice president of operations for Red Lobster restaurants in the Big East Division. As a senior director in the Paradise Division, he demonstrated strong leadership skills in improving the guest experience and played a key role developing a strong operations model for the company’s California restaurants. He and his wife, Cheryl, are relocating to the Northeast.

Alison Hillmer Wiers, ’86 B.S., ’91 M.ED., has been appointed dean of enrollment services at Guilford Technical Community College (GTCC) in Jamestown, N.C. She received her doctorate from the University of Texas at Austin, writing her dissertation on the establishment of the Entertainment Technology Program at GTCC. She has also held positions at U. Austin, as well as Indiana University, Davenport University, University of Phoenix and NAU.

Rob Sweeney, ’87 B.S.B.A., is now assistant chief information officer of the Phoenix Information Technology Department, managing the Enterprise Technical Operations Division. His responsibilities include the Phoenix Regional Wireless Network that supports public safety and municipal radio communication; the city’s IT Project Management Office; and financial and human resources and cable TV contract administration.

Richard D. Fisher, ’89 B.S., ’91 M.A.T., has taken the lead role with the new FOX Business Network, anchoring and guiding viewers “through the heart of the trading day.” A correspondent for FOX News Channel’s business unit since November 2006, she provides hourly market updates for both FOXNews.com and Yahoo Finance. Cheryl has also served on regional chapters of boards for the Associated Press Television and Radio Association and American Women in Radio and Television.

Michael Hoffer, ’92 B.S., sports editor of the Falmouth, Maine, Forecaster, has been named Man of the Year by the Maine Chapter of U.S. Lacrosse, for “documenting to perfection the remarkable growth of [high school] lacrosse in the state of Maine.” Michael lauds the “thrilling game” and the “countless wonderful people involved with the sport.”

Jenny Dowdall, ’95 B.S., is thrilled with brother Ryan Dowdall’s alumni status: “Being from a very large family full of U of A grads, I congratulate Ryan on his accomplishments as a proud Lumberjack.”

Cheryl Casone, ’92 B.S., is director of educational outreach for the Biodesign Institute at Arizona State University. In designing and implementing a comprehensive local, state and national public and K-12 outreach program, she will use his experience as founding director of an aerospace-themed regional science center for Florida State/Florida A&M universities. A former NAU lecturer and adjunct professor, Richard started his career as an aviator and officer in the U.S. Army.

1990s

Cheryl Casone, ’92 B.S., has taken a lead role with the new FOX Business Network, anchoring and guiding viewers “through the heart of the trading day.” A correspondent for FOX News Channel’s business unit since November 2006, she provides hourly market updates for both FOXNews.com and Yahoo Finance. Cheryl has also served on regional chapters of boards for the Associated Press Television and Radio Association and American Women in Radio and Television.

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Cheryl Casone, ’92 B.S.
Baby Jacks

Oliver, Caleb and Trevor Eisenbacher: David Eisenbacher, ’95 B.S.E., and Heather Neaton Eisenbacher, ’95 B.S.ED.

Benjamin Deyo: Alison C. Deyo, ’05 D.P.T.


Olena Grace Hoppe and Noah Morgan Hoppe: Marie Mollberg Hoppe, ’90 B.S.

Kiana Wyvonne Nah-Nay-A-Beke McAlpin: Jennifer McAlpin, ’00 M.E.D.

Colleen Burke Lesovsky: Nora Joyce Lesovsky, ’98 B.S. JOUR., and John Lesovsky, ’97 B.S.

Blake TenBarge: Julie Trzeciak TenBarge, ’94 B.A., Brad TenBarge, ’96 B.A., ’05 M.E.D.

Evan and Emerson Kuch: Dan Kuch, ’97 B.S., and Nicole Cossette Kuch, ’02 B.S.ED.

Isaac Owen Dixon: Chris Dixon, ’95 B.G.S., and Dena Walters Dixon, ’95 B.S.


Teagan Watson: Jason Watson, ’00 B.S.

Matthew Thomas Babington: Mark Babington, ’86 B.S.E.
Melanie West Dorn, ’96 B.S.E.D., has completed her Doctor of Pharmacy degree at the College of Pharmacy-Glendale of Midwestern University. She plans to work in Flagstaff.

John Longobardo, ’98 B.S., has been promoted by MKTG Services, a leading provider of marketing solutions, to director of national accounts. In his new position he will concentrate on furnishing MKTG’s top financial and insurance clients with high-performance, customized, direct marketing solutions.

John Arnold, ’99 B.S.B.A., a financial professional and divisional vice president with AXA Advisors LLC in Scottsdale, has earned a Certificate in Retirement Planning from The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. One of only 500 financial professionals nationwide to complete this program, John is active in many organizations, including Empowering Punol, Valley of the Sun: United Way Ambassador and Sun Angel Foundation.

Katie M. Black, ’99 B.S., Angel Foundation.

United Way Ambassador and Sun
Empowering Punol, Valley of the Sun:
in many organizations, including
complete this program, John is active
financial professionals nationwide to
do business.

Matthew Spieler, ’99 B.S.JOUR., has received special recognition from the North American Laminate Flooring Association for his years of contribution to the growth of the laminate industry. As senior executive editor of Floor Covering News, he was the first person in the U.S. floor covering trade to write a story about laminate flooring, and the “Lammy” award honors his coverage of the fledgling industry since its U.S. debut in the early ’90s.

2000s

Lydia Kennedy, ’00 M.E.D., was recognized by the Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Unions Division as one of Arizona’s finest Hispanic leaders at the inaugural 40 Hispanic Leaders Under 40 awards. Designated a “stellar employee and champion of our community who continually excels in her career,” helping establish a solid foundation for Hispanics in Arizona, Lydia is the human resources director for Buffalo Exchange, headquartered in Tucson.

Miriam Roa, ’01 M.B.A., is chief executive officer for Phoenix Elementary School District #1. Awarded the Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association and Arizona Association of School Business Officials eight times, she has been with the district since 2005. She is bilingual in Spanish and English, and a candidate in the Arizona State University doctoral program for Educational Leadership and Policy.

Kelly J. Shira, ’00 B.A., joined Gust Rosenfeld P.L.C. as an associate, practicing education, employment and environmental law, general insurance defense and complex litigation. Her experience encompasses work with more than 30 public school districts, including those on Navajo and Hopi reservations. A former executive council member for the Young Lawyers Division of the State Bar of Arizona, Kelly is admitted to practice in many courts in Arizona.

Joanna Ulloa, ’02 M.E.D., and Reeve Staley, attended.

were married Dec. 31, 2006. An elegant reception and delicious dinner followed at the Ritz-Carlton in Phoenix, with dancing going well past midnight. The newlyweds then rested their feet Hawaiian-style, honeymooning in Oahu and Maui.

Mareia Bean, ’03 M.E.D., was honored twice in September: for her “outstanding contribution to the Hispanic community” in Prescott Valley, Ariz., by the Tri-City Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and with the Mayor’s Recognition Award. As head of the English Language Learners program in the Humboldt Unified School District, her stewardship includes approximately 600 Hispanic children at the 12 district schools, as well as media relations.

The Beat Goes On ...

Brian O’Neill, ’99 B.M., has been putting his summa cum laude in music/percussion studies to good use as a member of Waitiki, a “Polynesian exotica/tiki band that plays the lounge music of faux Polynesia from the ’50s and ’60s.” Hailing from Boston, Waitiki has performed in Mexico, won a Hawaii Music Award in 2006 for Best Exotica Album, and headlined at the 2005 Hawaii Jazz Festival.

“We’re one of only two bands in the world playing this long-loss style of music which wraps jazz, Latin, Asian and otherworldly sounds under a tropical umbrella,” writes Brian. When he isn’t caressing the steel drums, he is a freelance percussionist, interaction designer and user-experience professional. To say aloha to Brian and the band, or to download their latest album, Rendezvous in Oronkolu (available through iTunes), visit waitiki.com.

Joanna Ulloa, ’02 M.E.D., and Reeve Staley, attended.

Amy Karn, ’03 B.S., missed last year’s NAU Alaska Alumni breakfast, but she has stayed in touch with other NAU alumnae of Alpha Omicron Pi and is excited to announce the intention to found a formal AOII Alaska Alumnae chapter. “It’s wonderful to hear about these NAU alumni events, and to be involved in establishing an organization that was so important to me during my time at NAU,” Amy lives in Wasilla and works for the Matanuska-Susitna Borough Planning Department.

Jacob Sackin, ’05 M.A., has written a “young adult environmental science fiction novel,” Islands (Windstorm Creative, 2007). With extensive experience as a naturalist in South America and a gifted hand—he created the illustrations for Islands—he projects a dystopia that is completely isolated from the natural world, 100 years from now. For bio information, an interview and more, visit jackobsackin.com.

John Mallos, ’07 M.S., formerly a Lieutenant Commander of the U.S. Public Health Service, Mallos is now health attaché in Brazil. He writes, “It is an honor to be mentioned in Secretary [Mike Leavitt’s] blog about Africa.... the blog says it all.” To read an impressive account of John’s hands-on work—including an account of a traumatic vehicle accident in Tanzania—go to http://secretarysblog.hhs.gov.

naualumni.com | Spring 2008 21
Memoirs
They Will Be Missed

Alumni

Norma Coleman Barney, ‘28
B.S.ED., ‘61 M.ED., June 11, 2007. Received teaching certificate from ASTC. Taught for 25 years in Flagstaff schools.

Katherine Pavlich Duncan, ’34
B.S.ED., Sept. 14, 2007. Only student elected Homecoming Queen two consecutive years in 1932 and 1933; president, Associated Women Students.

Woodrow Francis LeSueur, ’39

Richard “Jiggs” B. Hardt, ’46


Simeon Traw IV, ’61 B.S., Aug. 30, 2007. After a battle with cancer, Longtime San Francisco resident; gay activist involved in bowling events, performances and AIDS fundraising.


Robert Daniel O’Brien, ’68 B.S., Sept. 22, 2007, of cancer. Army veteran, serving in Germany. His interest in science and industrial applications of chemistry was lifelong: he worked as a forensic chemist at the Arizona Department of Public Safety, and began his own business in 1981.

Ernest “Ernie” Almaraz, ’69 B.S.ACCY., Aug. 25, 2007. Worked at NAU in several departments; active in many local organizations including the Knights of Columbus. Enjoyed running, hiking, fishing and camping.


Miguel Angel “Manny” Manjarres, ’72 B.S.ED., June 14, 2007. Retired lieutenant colonel, USAFR, decorated many times during his 34-year military career. Passionate about education; his love for his fellow man and his faith and positive outlook on life.


Charles “Chuck” W. Shipleys, ’75 B.S., July 29, 2007. A three-decade career in public policy, working with health care, the Arizona Chamber of
Dr. Venetta B. Kell, Attended, Retiree, June 19, 2007

As a full professor with NAU, Dr. Venetta Kell chaired the Business Education Department and later the Department of Communication. Benefiting from her business communications expertise, the university honored her with several Outstanding Faculty of the Year awards. In 1976 she was named Outstanding Vocational Educator of Arizona, and in 1984, NAU’s College of Business further recognized her by dedicating the Kell Communications Room in her honor.

Although she rarely spoke of her educational achievements and was shy about them when friends inquired, her academic credentials included a B.S., M.S. and doctorate from the University of Oklahoma. She was also elected to her alma mater’s Alumni Hall of Fame. The satisfaction Venetta gained listening to the success stories of her students was all the reward she ever desired. She loved her family and was especially proud of her daughter, Anne, who followed in her mother’s footsteps and became a teacher.

All in all, Venetta dedicated 42 years of her adult life to the field of education. She once wrote, “I feel that my very happy and active life can be attributed to the philosophy of my wonderful parents and their guiding Christian principles.”

Ginny Emmons, ’90 M.A.ED., ’02 ED.D., July 26, 2007, of a massive stroke. Nine years as principal at Taft Elementary School; three years as principal at Webster Elementary School in Mesa, Ariz. Peace Corps volunteer; swimmer and lover of animals.


Michael Sullivan, ’05 B.S., June 27, 2007. NAU clarinet professor for 13 years; orchestra soloist throughout the U.S. and Europe. Fulbright scholar; named 2005-06 Teacher of the Year for the College of Arts and Letters.


Brian Mickelsen, attended, Aug. 18, 2007, while running in Cottonwood.


Friends and Associates


Allan B. Gray, Jr., retiree, June 9, 2007. Army Korean War veteran. Taught mathematics at NAU for 30 years; professor emeritus. Received the first Ph.D. from New Mexico State University.


Martha Jean Portree, July 7, 2007. NAU reference services librarian and active member in NAU’s Commission on the Status of Women.


The NAU Alumni Association invites you to share your recollections of these outstanding individuals. Please email your reminiscences to anne.walden@nau.edu, or write to PINE Memoirs, P.O. Box 6034, Flagstaff, AZ 86011-6034.
Add us to your favorites!

Keep in touch and win an iPod®

Email us your name (maiden/other name), phone number, full mailing address and class year. We will sign you up for our e-newsletters and enter you in a drawing to win an iPod. Send to alumni@nau.edu with the subject line NAU Spring Contest. Deadline is May 30, 2008. Drawing to be held June 12.