

Talking Points of Pride

BY JASON WEBB '97, '06

TRANSFORMING LIVES OF UNC STUDENTS FROM COMMUNITY OUTREACH TO AWARD-WINNING PERFORMING ARTS

"You had me at hello."

IT HAS BEEN NEARLY 12 YEARS since its big screen debut, yet the most famous line from Dorothy, in the movie *Jerry Maguire*, is still considered a pop culture phenomenon, and to many, a widely accepted substitute for "say

no more." As I look back at my own time as a University of Northern Colorado journalism student, I can't help but think of that line myself—especially now, as I sit down with UNC's *Points of Pride* for the first time.

If you're not already familiar with UNC's *Points of Pride*, you're not alone. As a UNC graduate (twice) myself, I had no idea about all of the university's honors and prestige or the true breadth of its annual accomplishments. Admittedly, students are each drawn to a university for different reasons. Some of them initially choose a school based on its location, size, professors or variety of programs. But in the end, students choose a college based on its reputation and results. From business to education to sciences to the arts, UNC has award-winning programs for everyone. For example, the UNC Jazz Band has been rated No. 1 in the nation two years in a row and the Monfort College of Business won the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award in 2004. While recognitions like these help build UNC's longstanding reputation of excellence, it's the university's faculty, staff and

Founded in 1889 as a teaching college, one-third of the Colorado Teacher of the Year awards have gone to Northern Colorado graduates.



*The Monfort College of Business is the first
and only business program to receive the*

MALCOLM BALDRIGE NATIONAL QUALITY AWARD

from the Office of the President of the United States (2004).

alumni who impact the quality of life of not only UNC students, but people across the nation and around the globe. Each one of UNC's colleges can boast several different *Points of Pride* that help the university shine.

At the **College of Education and Behavioral Sciences** sits an incredible resource for schools and universities across the country—the National Center for Severe and Sensory Disabilities (NCSSD), formerly the National Center on Low-Incidence Disabilities. Launched in 2001 by Kay Ferrell, John Luckner and Lewis Jackson, the NCSSD serves as an information source for families, teachers and school

The Rocky Mountain Cancer Rehabilitation Institute is the only comprehensive cancer rehabilitation facility in the country focused on treating the debilitating side effects of chemotherapy and radiation.

districts. "The first year we were designated a program of excellence and won the Best Practice Award for the Innovative Use of Technology," says Ferrell, who is the executive director. During that first year, the center also won four other awards, and subsequent years brought more recognition. In fact, UNC President Kay

Norton has called the NCSSD "a jewel in the crown." For Ferrell, though, it isn't about winning awards, but cooperating and offering resources to help improve special education programs nationwide. With the primary goal of providing parents of children with sensory disabilities the tools they need to effectively ensure their children are given the education they deserve, the NCSSD is also committed to research. "The research we gather helps schools and administrators," says Ferrell. "It's secondary research where we compile data from other sources. It's the kind of work school districts can't always do."

Another *Point of Pride* at UNC is the **College of Performing and Visual Arts**, home to the Center for Integrated Arts Education (CIAE), a resource that acts as a professional development program to help schools keep up with trends in art education. "The university has a history and a role in prepping teachers," says Andrew Svedlow, dean of the College of Performing and Visual Arts. Last year, in the CIAE's inaugural year, its mission was written to act as the lead in planning arts policy, curriculum and professional collaborative efforts. Sved-

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low says arts education research is key to examining the impact programs have on student outcomes. In just the short amount of time that the CIAE has been operating, the College of Performing and Visual Arts has become one of only 24 colleges and universities recognized nationwide by the Dana Foundation, a philanthropic organization that supports arts education. As a result, the state of Colorado has contracted with the CIAE to start an Artist in Education program for the state. "It's a partnership with Think360 to create an AIE program by developing a database that matches professional artists with schools," says Svedlow.

The **College of Natural and Health Sciences** is home to the Student Research Initiative, a plan to encourage and



assist students within the college who wish to participate in faculty-mentored research. Out of the initiative came the Student Research Fund, which was established to assist undergraduate and graduate students by awarding them grants to help cover research and research-related travel expenses. Douglas Marshall, associate dean for the College of Natural and Health Sciences, believes the fund greatly benefits the students who apply for the grants. "It gives students the experience of writing grant proposals and conducting scientific research projects," says Marshall. When these students finish their degrees, they already have practical experience performing vital job

UNC graduates more than

800 TEACHERS PER YEAR

—placing the program among the top 5 percent in the U.S.

The nursing education PhD program is one of

ONLY SIX IN THE NATION

*and the online PhD program is
one of only three in the nation.*

functions many of them will need as they enter the workforce. In order to receive grants, students write proposals and submit them to a faculty committee for approval. An average of 16 students are awarded grants annually, and each one has a faculty mentor to guide them through



the process. "It provides a wonderful opportunity to get hands-on experience on a research project," says Marshall. While students are important beneficiaries of the fund, their research results also help advance our overall understanding of the natural and health sciences. Currently, funding for the grants comes from the college. "We're building an endowment through the foundation," says Marshall. "We eventually hope to fund the grants through the endowment. We're very pleased that many faculty and staff members personally donate to the endowment fund."

Each year on the UNC campus, the Rosenberry Writers' Conference invites well-known authors from around the country for a free festival that inspires students and community members alike. Sponsored by the School of English Language and Literature in the **College of Humanities and Social Sciences**, the Writers' Conference doesn't bring in only the literary elite, but organizers attract well-rounded authors who appeal to a broad group of people. Mary Angeline, director of the Writers' Conference, says, "It's a great vehicle to show off our commitment to the community and a wonderful opportunity for students." Each year, the conference focuses on a theme, and the writers' works reflect that theme.

Angeline says the 2008 conference focused on a poignant and timely topic—the environment. This year's list of guests included David Quammen, Kirk Johnson, Sneed B. Collard III, Mark Leichliter, Lisa Zimmerman and the former U.S. Poet Laureate Robert Hass. "We try to bring in writers who will interest everyone," says Angeline. The conference, supported by donations from the Rosenberry family, the Provost's Office and the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, also has corporate sponsors in Barnes & Noble and the Greeley Tribune. Some of the funding also goes to awarding student authors cash prizes for their own submissions. Awards are given for fiction, creative nonfiction and poetry. Not only does the conference allow students a chance to showcase their work to the university and local community, it also allows people to discuss the literary works. "We're dedicated to promoting cultural cre-

ativity and diversity through public readings," says Angeline.

All of these *Points of Pride* showcase different aspects of the university, its students and their service to the community. In the **Monfort College of Business (MCB)**, one of the major *Points of Pride* is built on student performance. Each year, graduating seniors are required to take the Educational Testing Service (ETS) Major Field Test in Business, a test of core business

UNC is one of
six universities
nationwide to receive
an Indian Education
Demonstration
grant for Indian
children from the
U.S. Department of
Education.

The Stryker Institute for Leadership Development

PROVIDES ACADEMIC SUPPORT AND TRAINING

*for talented women, minorities
and nontraditional-age students.*

*UNC was named one of only three
2007 recipients of the prestigious*

CHRISTA MCAULIFFE AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

*in Teacher Preparation by the
American Association of State Colleges and Universities.*

knowledge. It helps the college learn exactly how effective its teaching methods are. According to Tim Jares, interim dean of MCB, "test scores have consistently risen

The Cumbres Program trains bilingual teachers and maintains a stellar placement rate for bilingual education graduates.

compared with the national average." Over the past four years, the college's results have been in the top 10 percent, and according to Jares, roughly 600 institutions take the exam. In fact, UNC business majors do very well when compared with the rest of the nation.

"Consistently, 83 percent [of MCB students] test at or above the national mean," says Jares. "Thirty percent individually scored in the top 10 percent." These impressive numbers mean that the college is getting results. In part, Jares believes that is due to the "high-touch" philosophy of keeping class sizes small. "It keeps the students from falling through the cracks," says Jares. The bottom line is MCB is making an impact not only by winning awards, but by changing students' lives, giving them the tools they need to succeed in their careers. As further evidence of how well UNC has done, the ETS has asked Jares to give webinars and seminars for the exam, essentially using the MCB as a role model for success. "It builds the reputation of the college and the university," he says.

While UNC may not yet have the same name recognition as some of the other major colleges in Colorado, the fact remains—throughout its history, there have been numerous *Points of Pride* that have truly set the University of Northern Colorado apart from the others. This is what UNC alumni can look back on and smile. In some cases, these *Points of Pride* are what drew them to want to be a Bear in the first place.

These are my *Points of Pride*, but they belong to all of us; you may even have some of your own. I hope you pass them on. I will continue to do my share whenever I can. After all, UNC, you had me at "hello." Need I say more? **NV**

Additional information can be found regarding each of these *Points of Pride* at their respective web sites. For the National

Center on Severe and Sensory Disabilities, visit www.unco.edu/ncssd/. The Center for Integrated Arts Education's web site is www.arts.unco.edu/ciae/index.html. To learn more about the College of Natural and Health Sciences' Student Research Initiative, visit www.unco.edu/nhs/sri/student_research_initiative.html, and to learn more about the Student Research Fund, see www.unco.edu/nhs/highlights/srf_awards.html.

The Rosenberry Writers' Conference has a web site at www.unco.edu/writersconference/. To see a graphic representation of student performance on the ETS Major Field Test in Business, the Monfort College of Business has set up a web site at www.mcb.unco.edu/About/Charts/. Information on the Major Field Test can be found at www.ets.org.



*Northern Colorado music
faculty and alumni hold*

TWO GRAMMY AWARDS

and four Grammy nominations.