Successful Alum

Auto Hobby Becomes a Career

When Michael Becker joined the military at age 18, straight out of high school in Kansas City, he was headed for a career in the service. What he did not anticipate were the twists and turns that would lead him to Carson City and a brand new career.

An Army Military Police Officer for 11 years, Michael spent most of his tour in Germany. There, when faced with the prohibitive cost of fixing his car, he collected a few books on auto repair and did it himself. Necessity bred learning which led to a hobby, and eventually his hobby turned into a brand new career.

While stationed overseas, an injury abruptly ended Michael’s military career. Circumstances brought him to Carson City, and since a military career was no longer an option, he contemplated a new direction.

Opportunity knocked when he discovered that WNCC could help him turn his hobby into a lucrative career in automotive mechanics. Married, with three children, he used his “can do” attitude and accepted the challenge.

His grueling schedule included a 40-hour job at Penske Automotive while attending WNCC three nights per week. On his day off, Michael worked side by side with his mentor and instructor Jack Andersen. He was determined to learn as much as he could during the two-year program, graduating in 1997 Cum Laude with an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Automotive Mechanics.

Since graduation, Michael has worked his way up the ladder and is now a certified technician at Carson City Toyota. Due to advanced computer systems in automobiles these days, he emphasizes that there are no longer mechanics in the field, only technicians. Reputable employers like Toyota encourage and provide ongoing training to help employees upgrade their skills as technology changes.

Michael also shares his knowledge with technicians-in-training and hobbyists at WNCC two nights a week as an instructor in the automotive mechanics program.

“As an instructor, I like to know my students on a personal level. It’s rewarding to watch that light bulb go on,” he said.

An injury may have thrown Michael Becker off his first career path, but he seized a possibility and found success.
Alumni Relations Committee

MISSION STATEMENT

The WNCC Alumni Relations Committee is dedicated to maintaining a communication link between alumni and WNCC, to heighten alumni awareness of the growth and improvement of WNCC, and to encourage their participation in that growth and improvement.

New Members Join Foundation Board

Tom Metcalf, vice president of Metcalf Builders, Inc. of Carson City, has been tapped to lead the WNCC Foundation Board of Trustees. Joining the board as newly-elected directors are Michelle Bertocchi, Greater Nevada Credit Union; John “Jed” Block, State Agent & Transfer Syndicate, Inc.; James Consiglio, Fidelis Advisors; Rick DeMar, Builders Association of Western Nevada; John DiMambro, Nevada Appeal; Dave Friedrich, Hampton Inn & Suites; Roger Moellendorf, Carson City Parks & Recreation; Fred Schmidt, Hale Lane Peek Dennison Howard & Anderson Law Offices; Carole Terry; Nicole Wegener, Nevada Appeal; Mike Wiley, J.C. Penney & Co.; and Brad Woodring, Sierra Pacific Power Company.

“MONEY TALK” at WNCC

Want to find out about how best to invest in today’s economy? WNCC Carson City is continuing a free monthly lecture series called “Money Talk” that will feature local professionals sharing information about diverse financial topics from investment to real estate. Each lecture will be followed by a question/answer session.

INFO/SCHEDULE/SPEAKERS
Dave Cook, WNCC Professor of Economics 445-4278

New Art Gallery Nears Completion

Construction is nearly complete on the new 1,000-square-foot art gallery in the Bristlecone Building at WNCC Carson City. Set to open its doors in January, the gallery will have a contemporary look and feel with black open ceilings and graceful, curving exhibition wall. A window from the skylighted reception area will provide a view of the exhibition inside.

The new gallery’s first show, January 16 - February 24, will be “Nevada Now II,” a Nevada Arts Council touring exhibition.

INFO/SCHEDULE 445-4294

Wildcats fever is catching hold at WNCC! This fall the college’s new women’s soccer and men’s baseball players have been competing, and both students and local residents are coming out to support their teams.

Thanks to a generous donation of $50,000 by the Greater Nevada Credit Union, the John L. Harvey baseball field is closer to completion. The money was used to excavate dirt and form, pour and finish 4,000 linear feet of concrete. It will also allow for the purchase of 400 Wildcats blue stadium seats, formerly used in the Philadelphia Phillies baseball stadium, and pavers for the plaza. The college is pre-selling the seats for $1,000 each, good for five years. So far, nearly 20 have been sold.

WILDCATS INFORMATION
www.wncc.edu/athletics

Community Support Grows for WNCC Athletics

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WHAT A SEASON – 2006!

Western Nevada Musical Theatre Company Presents
The Best of Broadway . . . Right Here at Home

Forever Plaid
WNCC – Marlette Hall
Weekends • March 24-April 9

The hilarious hit show featuring four young singers killed in a crash on their way to their big concert, then miraculously revived to live their musical dream: Lady of Spain, Three Coins in the Fountain, Heart and Soul, Sixteen Tons/Chain Gang, Catch a Falling Star, Shangri-La.

GREASE
Carson City Community Center
Weekends • May 12-21

The most popular, fun-filled musical in the history of rock ‘n’ roll, packed with hits, including Summer Nights, You’re The One That I Want, and Greased Lightnin’.

TICKETS TO ALL SHOWS . . . 775-445-4249
General - $18 • Students/Seniors - $16 • Youth 17 & under - $14

We’re on the Web!
Keep up to date on WNCC happenings @ www.wncc.edu
Make it a bookmark!

PRODUCTION TEAM: Sandi Richman, Anne Hansen, John Hawkins, Michelle Legras Peltier

FACT: Carson City has the highest percentage in the state of families with children headed by a single parent.

FACT: With three prisons within Carson City boundaries and two work camps within the Dayton corridor, a number of our youth have an incarcerated parent.

FACT: Children who have a parent in prison face a 70 percent probability of following their parent to prison at some point.

FACT: 90 percent of the center’s mentored children live with single mothers who are at or below the poverty line.

WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING ARE TRUE?
A. Kids with a mentor are 52 percent less likely to skip school.
B. Kids with a mentor are 46 percent less likely to use illegal drugs.
C. Kids with a mentor are 27 percent less likely to begin using alcohol.

All of these are true! Do you have one hour a week to change a life?
Mentor Center of Western Nevada . . . . 445-3346
**Faces, Voices & Stories**

WNCC invites the public to a series of free cultural events sponsored by the Office of Student Activities and United Students Association.

**“Oh, How They Lived”**
Stories of the Negro Leagues
with Byron Motley
Friday, February 10
Marlette Hall - 7 pm
Byron Motley, performer and storyteller, entertains with stories about the significant contributions that Negro League players made in the 20th century.

**Art & Archaeology of Ancient Peru**

Featured WNCC Anthropology
Professor Hal Starratt
Friday, April 7
Marlette Hall - 7 pm
Dr. Hal Starratt, WNCC professor and member of an archaeological team working on the north coast of Peru, gives a slide lecture on Peru’s fascinating ancient history.

**Cultures Around the World**

11th Annual Multicultural Festival
Saturday, May 13 • 11 am - 4 pm
Carson City Campus
Aspen & Bristlecone Buildings
Celebrate our community’s diversity with live music, dancing, food and exhibits from various cultures throughout the world.

LIMITED SEATING • FREE ADMISSION • INFO: 445-3324

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**Graduates!**

Send us your news for Class Corner. Tell us what’s happening in your life... promotions, marriages, children, milestones. Please type or print clearly.

☐ check if address is new

Name ____________________________ (Maiden) _________________________________
Address _____________________________________________________________________
City _____________________________ State _____________________ Zip ___________
E-mail ___________________________________________
Home phone ______________________ Business phone ___________________________
Year of Graduation __________________ Major/Emphasis ___________________________
Notes ________________________________________________________________________

Send to: in touch • 2201 W. College Parkway • Carson City • NV • 89703
Fax: (775) 445-3127 • e-mail: richmans@wncc.edu
Space Science XXVI: Chandra and the X-Ray Universe

Area high school teachers can learn about the X-ray story of stellar evolution in a workshop this summer at WNCC. The workshop will be held in the Jack C. Davis Observatory at WNCC Carson City, Monday-Friday, June 26-30.

Topics include stellar evolution – supernovae, white dwarfs, pulsars, black holes, the electromagnetic spectrum, X-ray technology, stellar spectroscopy and software imaging analysis tools.

The Chandra X-ray Observatory was deployed by the space shuttle Columbia in 1999. It is designed to observe X-rays from high-energy regions of the universe, such as remnants of exploded stars.

The workshop is co-sponsored by the Wright Center for Education at Tufts University and the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory.

Enroll in the first astrobiology class ever offered on any campus in Nevada!
Visit www.wncc.edu to find out more about AST 120: Introduction to Astrobiology
Be the first to learn about life in our solar system beyond Earth!

What’s happening at the Jack C. Davis Observatory!

WNCC to Award $145,000 in Scholarships

WNCC made going to college a little easier this fall for 106 students who received scholarships worth more than $128,000. Scholarship funds included almost $67,000 from the WNCC Foundation, $57,000 from the National Science Foundation and $5,000 specifically allocated for student leaders.

Additional spring semester foundation scholarships will be awarded to 30 students in the amount of $17,000, bringing the total for the 2005-06 academic year to $145,000.

Donations to the foundation come from corporate partners, charitable foundations, professional associations, community service clubs and private citizens. Individual scholarships range from $100 to $4,000. The foundation’s sixth annual scholarship reception to honor donors and recipients is slated for Friday, March 3.
Spring Classes Begin
Monday, January 23
Register by Web-REG @ www.wncc.edu