

2008 Honored Alumni



HONORING OUR OWN

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO
HONORED ALUMNI
AWARDS CEREMONY AND BANQUET
OCTOBER 10, 2008

University of
NORTHERN
COLORADO
FOUNDATION

UNIVERSITY of
NORTHERN COLORADO

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

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2008 Honored Alumni Awards

EACH YEAR DURING HOMECOMING WEEKEND, the University of Northern Colorado Alumni Association honors outstanding alumni and friends whose service and achievements embody the university's tradition of excellence. Selected by the Alumni Association Board of Directors, we are proud to announce the 2008 Honored Alumni Award recipients.

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Art Terrazas '75, MA '77

Mike Tormey '72, MS '77

Curt Wyeno '83



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PROGRAM

Welcome

Jerry DeWitt '77, vice president of alumni and donor relations
Andrew Svedlow, dean of the College of Performing and Visual Arts,
master of ceremonies

Remarks

Virgil Scott, president and CEO, UNC Foundation
Kay Norton, president, University of Northern Colorado

Dinner

Awards Presentation

Kay Norton, president, University of Northern Colorado
Art Terrazas '75, MA '77, president, UNC Alumni Association Board of Directors
Ken Cook '80, MBA '84, chairman, UNC Foundation Board of Directors

Fireworks Display

View annual fireworks spectacular from the comfort of
the UC Panorama Room and Balcony



Distinguished Emeritus Award

Edwin "Buddy" Baker (Emeritus Faculty '98)



BUDDY BAKER is never far from his trombone. While Baker flew in the US Army between East and West Germany, he kept his trombone in the seat behind him. To say Baker has had a lifelong love of music would be an understatement. He has been described as a world-class teacher and performer, and the world's best trombonist in every style, including orchestral playing, brass quintet and jazz ensemble. One nominator said of Buddy Baker, "the saying 'to teach is to touch lives forever' could have been written about Buddy and his influence." While dedicating his life to teaching the students of the University of Northern Colorado from 1965 to 1998, Baker created 10 compositions for the trombone choir, which he later donated to the university. Baker served as the principal trombonist with the Greeley Philharmonic Orchestra for 33 years and performed with countless ensembles, both nationally and internationally. Two of his books, the *Buddy Baker Tenor Trombone Method*, and the *Buddy Baker Tenor Trombone Handbook*, are still used today. The proceeds from *Handbook* are donated to the International Trombone Association. Although retired from teaching, Baker still continues to travel and perform. Another nominator called Buddy "a musician's musician and his legacy of high standards of excellence lives on."

Distinguished Emeritus Award

John Beel, Faculty 1949-71 (Posthumous)



DR. JOHN BEEL'S COMMITMENT to chemistry education ran deep. His greatest passion in life was to further the study of chemistry and biochemistry. Beel founded the first UNC Chemistry Department, and was Chair of Chemistry and Biochemistry, a position he held from 1949-71. Beel also served as Action Science Division Chair and Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences for more than 10 years and led the department toward national certification by the American Chemical Society. One nominator recalled, "For 20 years, he taught one course [Chemistry 108] annually for the sum of one dollar." The same nominator said that Dr. Beel's greatest accomplishment in life did not come from professional achievement but from "helping a student who failed chemistry courses at another institution, but, through working with him [Dr. Beel], gained confidence and learned to understand chemistry—and even went on to earn a PhD in chemistry." He was the recipient of eight National Science Foundation grants, which allowed him to reach out to high school chemistry teachers and to help provide laboratory equipment. One former student who nominated Dr. Beel remembered him as "a man of patience and one who showed concern and interest in us as individuals."

2008 Honored Alumni

Honorary Alumni Award

Tom and Nona Gordon



TOM AND NONA GORDON may be University of Oklahoma graduates, but their hearts belong to the University of Northern Colorado. Their true passion for UNC lies in the College of Performing and Visual

Arts where the couple has established the Tom & Nona Gordon Theatre Scholarship. One nominator, who was also the first recipient of the scholarship, wrote "through their service, support and love, the Gordons have promoted the arts in the tradition of loyal alumni for several years and have certainly become part of the UNC family." The Gordons chose Greeley as their retirement home after selling their respective companies and raising a family in central Kansas. After working with Halliburton Oil Well Services, Tom started his own business, Gordon Lab, Inc. in 1961. Nona, once her daughters were in high school, bought and operated the Treasure Chest Book Shop until selling it to enjoy retirement with Tom. Their passion for the College of Performing and Visual Arts is not limited to their scholarship endowment as Tom was instrumental in developing two of the most successful CPVA programs, PVA in a Box and Appetite for the Arts programs. Another nominator said, "Their passion and loyalty to UNC continues to grow and they exhibit 'Bear pride' just as much as any UNC graduate!"

Creative Achievement Award

John L. Mendoza '61, MA '69



IT IS A GREAT ACHIEVEMENT to have a style of art named after you, and John L. Mendoza is one such lucky artist. As one nominator explained, Mendoza "developed a very personal, intuitive and fluid painting in watercolor that is recognized as the Mendoza Style." Mendoza has been working as a professional artist since leaving teaching to pursue art full-time. Talented enough to make a living from his paintings for many years now, Mendoza's works are shown everywhere from personal collections to Colorado state government in Denver and beyond. Mendoza is a member of the American Watercolor Society and the National Watercolor Society and has been in too many shows to list in a single publication. Along with his wife, Dorothy—an artist in her own right—Mendoza's paintings represent "romance, nostalgia, and natural beauty." Many of his paintings display dual characteristics and have been described as "gentle yet passionate, simple yet detailed, bold yet subtle and concrete yet abstract." Mendoza also contributes his time to various philanthropic causes with one nominator noting, "His art is in demand for every worthwhile event and scholarship event in Colorado and primarily in southern Colorado."



Distinguished Alumni Service Award

Rhoda Rogers '88



RHODA ROGERS was anything but the typical graduate at the 1988 commencement ceremony. While most graduates were in their early 20s, Rogers walked across the stage on the eve on her 50th birthday to receive her diploma in nursing. In fact, Rogers' entire life has been anything but typical. As a child of missionaries, Rogers grew up in Latin America where she became fluent in Spanish. When her son, David, was a teenager, Rogers decided to fulfill her life-long dream of becoming a nurse. As a professional, Rogers focused her attention on diabetes education, using bilingual fluency to communicate to all individuals suffering from the disease. One nominator complimented Rogers by saying, "She provides this education in a culturally sensitive manner in order to achieve the greatest level of adherence to their therapeutic plan by this population." In 2005, she was rewarded for her efforts with Colorado's highest nursing honor, the Colorado Florence Nightingale Award. Rogers' greatest contribution may be her low-literacy teaching tool to educate individuals on the danger signs of hyperglycemia and hypoglycemia. Her cartoons were later published by Novo Nordisk into tear-off sheets and translated into 31 languages and circulated in 61 countries.

Distinguished Alumni Award

Michael Shonka '69



MICHAEL SHONKA may have left the University of Northern Colorado after graduating in 1969 to pursue other interests, but in some ways his heart has always remained here. As one nominator put it, Michael Shonka exhibits all three characteristics of an alumnus—one who's generous, one who's sincere, and one who's passionate about his alma mater. Another nominator noted that "Mike represents the best of what UNC is all about. He is a role model for students, employees, and those in the community." Shonka now works with Cessna Aircraft in Wichita, Kan., as the executive vice president and chief financial officer and remains connected to the university through his work with the Monfort College of Business Dean's Leadership Council. Cessna Aircraft is also a mainstay at UNC career fairs, recruiting many Monfort alumni, and through this relationship Shonka secured a \$75,000 commitment to sponsor classroom renovation in Kepner Hall. It should be no surprise that Shonka was active during his college career at UNC, playing varsity football and graduating cum laude with an accounting degree. Shonka also remains active as a member of the Textron Finance Council. Through Shonka's efforts, MCB proudly introduced the Cessna President and CEO Jack Pelton as a Business Plus speaker in 2007.

For a complete list of all Honored Alumni Award recipients, visit www.unccalumni.org and click on "Awards and Scholarships."

2008 Honored Alumni

Young Alumni Award

Patrick Varney '99



PATRICK VARNEY has not let age dictate his achievements. As a 1999 graduate of the University of Northern Colorado with a BS in finance, Varney was third in the Top 50 Bank Reps of 2007. He attributes much of

his success to "several branch managers who taught him that success depends mostly on forming strong relationships in and outside the bank and being active in the community." That motto has helped him become a financial advisor with Raymond James in Windsor, Colorado. One nominator recalls visiting with him and "more than once was our conversation politely interrupted by a friendly hello or exchange of pleasantries with a client just stopping in." Varney also dedicates his time to the local Optimist Club and the Windsor Chamber of Commerce. One nominator mentioned that Varney's commitment to his various volunteer activities "are more the rule than the exception." Varney continues to be involved with the university on a personal level, as a guest lecturer in a Monfort College of Business Bank Management class and in speaking with the Financial Management Association student club to discuss career paths. "Just as Patrick's achievements in career, public service, and volunteerism reflect well upon UNC," one nominator wrote, "his willingness to give personal one-on-one time speaks highly of his character."

Call For Nominations

Do you know other alumni who are doing great things? Alumni who are distinguished humanitarians?

If so, we want to know. The Northern Colorado Alumni Association is now accepting nominations for the 2009 Honored Alumni Awards to be held at Homecoming in October 2009.

Nominate your favorite alumni, faculty or friends today. Nominees should embody the **university's tradition of excellence** through service, achievement and transforming lives. For nomination forms and more information visit, www.unccalumni.org or contact the Alumni Association at 800.332.1862, 970.351.2551 or alumni@unco.edu.



Alumni Terrace Tiles

In celebration of 40 years of service to the University of Northern Colorado and the renovation of the Judy Farr Alumni Center, the UNC Foundation and Alumni Association would like to offer you a unique opportunity to cement your commitment as part of our Alumni Terrace Tile Project.

The Tile Project will help successfully complete fundraising effort for the renovation and achieve the final vision for the center. For more information, call 800.332.1862, email alumni@unco.edu or visit www.unccalumni.org.



SATURDAY HOMECOMING EVENTS

Saturday, October 11, 2008

Homecoming Welcome

8:30 am

Enjoy refreshments in the Panorama Room and have a chance to visit with reunion attendees, honored alumni and other Bear fans and friends.

Homecoming Parade

10 am

The Homecoming tradition will continue once again with floats, marching bands, and more. The parade heads north on 11th Avenue from the University Center south parking lots on 22nd Street, then turns west on 20th Street and heads west to Championship Blvd. and through the tailgating area at Nottingham Field.

Pre-game Tailgate

11:30 am

Join the UNC Alumni Association for a pre-game meal and party close to all the action under the big tent at the north east corner of Nottingham Field.

Homecoming Football Game

1:35 pm

Catch the Bears take on Big Sky Conference opponent Idaho State at Nottingham Field. A limited number of reserved tickets are available through the Alumni Association. Call 970.351.4849 for information about additional ticket options.