



Capitol

Achievements

SUU ALUMNI ARE
MAKING THEIR MARK
IN THE NATIONAL
POLITICAL ARENA

When the founding fathers of then the Branch Normal School (BNS) began their quest for a school in Cedar City their dream was to establish a house of learning that would benefit all who entered and studied there. It was their firm belief that the quest for education was a life long process...a process which was supported by their religious convictions as well.

So when the school came to Southern Utah, the hope was, that the students could gain knowledge, and make for themselves a better life, and have a lasting influence on the lives of their children and

their associates. Little did they dream that one day the results of their efforts would play a major role in the governance of the most powerful nation in the world.

It has taken just three generations for that to happen. As the result of the 2004 national elections two SUU graduates have been elevated to national and international prominence. Former Utah Governor Michael O. Leavitt has just been confirmed by the US Senate to fill the cabinet position of Secretary of Health and Human Services, and Senator Harry Reid of Nevada was recently selected as the US Senate Minority leader.

■ **MIKE LEAVITT** (pictured above)

Monday, December 13, 2004 was not a typical Monday for **Michael O. Leavitt ('72 business)**. That was the day the President of the United States nominated then EPA Administrator Leavitt to replace Tommy Thompson as the Director of Health and Human Services. Accepting the nomination and being confirmed by the U.S. Senate to serve in President George W. Bush's cabinet placed Leavitt in one of the most influential positions in the United States governing circles and marks the first time in the University's history one of its

graduates has achieved such a position.

Prior to Leavitt's new appointment, he served as Administrator of the EPA beginning in 2003, and just prior to that, as Governor of the State of Utah for 11 years.

Born in Cedar City, Utah, Leavitt graduated with a bachelor's degree in economics and business from Southern Utah University. He later became president and Chief Executive Officer of a regional insurance firm. He and his wife Jacalyn are the parents of five children.

Growing up in the shadows of SUU, Leavitt's playground was the campus with all its wonderful places to explore and discover. Later when attending the university his discoveries and explorations were of a different nature. Choosing business and economics, he learned well his lessons and put them into practice when he graduated in 1972. Going to work with the family he became CEO and President of the company. Along the way he did not forget his educational background. He served on the Board of Trustees for SUU and led the fight for University status as a member of the Board of Regents. Former SUU President Gerald Sherratt said he "carried the ball" during that campaign. Speaking of his education at SUU Leavitt has often stated, "I will put my business training up against anyone."

The confirmation of Leavitt to the cabinet-level position was quite smooth. The Senate Finance Committee unanimously approved his nomination and he was confirmed, also unanimously, by the United States Senate on Wednesday, January 26, 2005.

During the confirmation proceedings it was pointed out that Leavitt had proven himself

nationally and had been a leader on homeland security, welfare reform, and environmental management. Noting that six times during his tenure as governor, independent policy analysts ranked Utah among the best managed states in the nation. In a statement before the finance committee he reiterated his philosophy of service: To leave things better than he found them; plant seeds for the next generation; and give the job all he has.

During the commencement exercises in 1997, marking the Centennial of the founding of the institution, SUU bestowed an honorary degree on then Governor Leavitt and conferred a second honorary degree in 2004.

Cedar City and SUU are a long way from Washington D.C. and the fact that one of the community's residents has achieved so much is remarkable. In response to the question of whether Michael was destined for the position he now holds, his father Dixie stated, "Mike was always confident and accomplished. He prepared himself with the goal of becoming a success in the insurance industry." Adding, "he gained political experience through helping with several local and state campaigns and his interest kind of evolved through those opportunities." His mother Anne said, "At an early age Michael displayed good judgment. He was intelligent and possessed a sense of right, and had a zest for life." She adds, "Another character trait that has served him well as he has accepted new and greater challenges, is his love of learning new things." She indicated that like his father Dixie, Michael was not afraid to take on projects that seemed too large or intimidating.



While attending then-Southern Utah State College (now Southern Utah University) in the late 50s, Harry Reid, democratic senator from Nevada and the U.S. Senate Minority Leader, dabbled in boxing and played football. He is mostly remembered, however, as an excellent student.

■ HARRY REID

Sen. Harry Reid ('59 AAS *general education*) who was selected by fellow democrats to the prestigious post of U.S. Senate minority leader soon after the election in November of 2004, obtained the educational foundation to his career at Southern Utah University in Cedar City, Utah.

Sen. Reid received his associate's degree in political science at SUU, which was then known as Southern Utah State College, in May 1959. He came to SUSC on a scholarship, from Henderson, Nev., where he attended high school. During his time at SUSC, Sen. Reid boxed and played football. He is remembered mostly though as an excellent student.

"He was an outstanding student, a good football player and from Nevada," states professor emeritus of English, Kent Myers.

A native of Searchlight, Nevada, a small mining town an hour outside Las Vegas, Reid says he is proof that anyone can succeed through hard work and determination.

“I want every American – from Searchlight to the big cities – to have the same opportunities I had, and more,” Reid declares. “This is a responsibility I take very seriously. I am honored to be called Minority Leader, but in my heart, I am just Harry Reid from Searchlight. And that’s who I’ll always be.”

Sen. Reid suggests to SUU students who want a life in politics to seek it for the right reasons. “You have to really want to be an elected official,” Reid says. “You have to be willing to do the work both to get elected and then to do the job you were elected to do. If you’re going to have a truly successful career in politics, you need to get in for the right reasons, (because) you can make a difference in people’s lives.




Harry Reid, U.S. Senate Minority Leader.

Whether it’s a position on the city council, or a United States Senator, you need to take very seriously the responsibility that voters have put their trust in you.”

After graduating from SUSC, Sen. Reid received his bachelor’s degree at Utah State University and his law degree from George Washington law school. He served as Henderson City Attorney and Nevada State Assemblyman. In 1970, Sen. Reid, at age 30, was elected lieutenant governor, the youngest in the state’s history. In

1977, he was appointed chairman of the Nevada Gaming Commission, after which he returned to private law. In 1982, he won election to the U.S. House of Representatives, where he championed the Taxpayer Bill of Rights. He has served the U.S. Senate since 1986, where in his previous term he acted as minority whip, the second-ranking democrat.

In 1984, during the annual Commencement exercises, SUU bestowed an honorary degree upon Sen. Reid. Of his time on campus as a student, he recalls, “I went (to SUSC) on a sports scholarship, but quickly realized I wasn’t good enough to continue down that path. I began to really love learning. And also realized if I worked hard I could get good grades. Of course the same is true of life. SUU prepared me for a career that I love. It has always been an honor and a privilege to be involved in this profession.” 

Oxford Roundtable honor two years in a row

Dr. Alan Hamlin, Chair of the Department of Management and Marketing of Southern Utah University, has been invited by the Directors of the Oxford Round Table at the University of Oxford in England to join the prestigious panel in July 2005. Hamlin is the second professor from the School of Business at SUU to be selected as a Round Table participant in the past year.

Meeting to discuss trade relations between the United States and the European Union, representatives from the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, private and public sector, and other members of academia, will meet July 24-29, 2005, in Oxford, England.

Last Spring, Dr. Gerald Calvasina, Associate Professor of Management, participated on a panel discussing employment rights and duties. Hamlin says it’s a “feather in the cap of SUU and the School of Business” for two members from the Department of Management and Marketing to be selected in the course of one year.

“I’ve always thought that SUU in general and our

School of Business specifically are diamonds undiscovered,” he says. “It’s nice to be recognized.”

Invitations to the Round Table are based on previous participants’ nominations, the recommendations of Round Table directors, and recognized awards and presentations from national or state organizations. However, Calvasina states that he did not nominate Hamlin – proving Hamlin’s academic aptitude is well-known in international academia.

The Oxford Round Table convened for the first time in August 1989 to consider major issues in contemporary educational policy with the objective of promoting human advancement and understanding through the improvement of education.

“It helped me do a better job in the classroom and that’s the main thing it’s all about,” Calvasina says.



Alan Hamlin