

SUU sisters tread different paths to political influence

Two of Southern Utah University's graduates are making a real difference in two different states doing the same thing. Trisha and Jodi also happen to have the same last name, Hart. These sisters have become very influential in political circles in Arizona and Utah respectively. Trisha is a governmental relations specialist with the leading firm in Arizona, while Jodi is a partner in arguably the top firm in Utah. Both came to the same profession by similar routes but totally different experiences. Being the daughters of a prominent Arizona lawmaker they were exposed to the parade and waving side of politics appearing at functions with their father as occasion would dictate. Following graduation from high school Trisha began attending BYU in Provo, Utah and three years later Jodi was set to follow her sister to Provo, but decided that SUU was as far away as she wanted to get from her family ranch in Kingman Arizona. Being the good big sister she was, Trisha transferred to Cedar City to "watch out" for little sister Jodi.

Jodi was planning on just staying one semester—maybe a year. Then destiny called. More precisely it was Met Johnson a representative in the nearby town of New Harmony who needed an intern starting Monday, someone who could understand the needs of his rural constituents.

Jodi didn't exactly jump at the opportunity. She was pursuing a degree in interpersonal communications, on the dance team and by her own admission, a political neophyte. "We wave in

Trisha and Jodi Hart, shown here high above the floor at the 2004 Republican National Convention.

parades and everyone wants to talk to my dad, she told Johnson at the time. That's pretty much all I know."

Johnson promised to teach her everything and soon enough she found herself at the Utah State Legislature in charge of the Western State Coalition, a group focusing on issues specific to the west. In 1996 she was hired as the student lobbyist for higher education, representing the nine Universities and Colleges in the state of Utah.

Meanwhile Trisha completed her senior year and graduated from SUU, with a degree in speech and communication. After graduation she spent time on Capitol Hill in Washington D.C. as a staff assistant to the Honorable Robert F. Bennett, United States Senator from the State of Utah. Upon her return from Washington she accepted a position with the Law Offices of John K. Mangum, PC. Trisha is known to those in the governmental arena as one of the most effective government relations representatives in Arizona. Policy makers and government relations practitioners alike respect her expertise and

knowledge of Arizona politics and keen strategic sense. She effectively works on both sides of the aisle for her clients and she is known for her ability to simplify and explain complex issues to policy makers and Legislators. She represents a wide variety of clients including nationally known and local companies and trade groups and represents the firm's clients at the local, state and federal levels. Her practice has involved representation of client interests in the legislative arena and at the local level including: the counties of Maricopa, Pima, and others throughout the state, and she has represented clients in virtually every city in Maricopa County, including the cities of Phoenix, Scottsdale, Tempe, Mesa, Glendale, Chandler, Peoria and many others. In addition, the firm has represented client interests in most of the cities across the state.

Trisha also specializes in local government relations and coalition management development. She joined the firm in 1995 as a specialist in government relations, communication and research. She has also represented a variety of local and nationally known business corporations and business



and trade association interests before various cities and counties in Arizona Utah. She has also worked in media, both in news presentation and newsgathering. In addition, she has extensive management experience in radio broadcasting. She also has extensive experience in coalition recruitment and organization involving a variety of interests on behalf of her clients.

Trisha is involved in many community service activities and serves as the President of the Public Affairs Professionals of Arizona, the youngest member of the lobbying community to ever be elected to the position of

President. In addition, she is a member of the Junior League of Phoenix, Arizona Women's Appointment Collaboration, Project Citizen and the Arthritis Foundation. She is also a member of the influential Public Affairs Committee of the Phoenix Chamber of Commerce.

Jodi on the other hand, armed with her limited lobbying experience under her belt, joined RRJ consulting in 1998, fresh out of college and 23 years old. In 2002 she was made partner in the firm. She is a contract lobbyist for some of the most powerful companies and institutions in the state from telecom giant AT&T to

the Utah Bankers Association. As one half of the partnership that is RRJ Consulting—Rob Holley is the founding partner - Hart holds in her hands the power to influence legislation that affects 2.2 million Utahns. In a relatively short time she has become one of the most trusted and influential personalities on the Hill, yet few Utahns even know her name. She's been operating in the wings, but in say five or 10 years Hart could be a household name. In 2003 Jodi was featured on the cover of the Salt Lake City Magazine in recognition for her effectiveness as a lobbyist. **RTI**

Open STUDENT

Sherry Nay, a Southern Utah University senior Communication major from Gunnison, UT, has been selected as the National Student Speaker of the Year by the forensic honor society Delta Sigma Rho-Tau Kappa Alpha. Over 300 colleges and universities nationwide sponsor chapters of the honorary, which is the early 20th century merger of two organizations with a near-100 year history.

Nay received the award following the keynote address, by 2000 Olympic Gold Medalist, wrestler Rulon Gardner. Gardner stressed the need for a "never give up" attitude in life's endeavors, a message consistent with DSR-TKA's call to produce ethical communicators.

Nay received the award at the recognition banquet ending the DSR-TKA national conference and speech and debate tournament. She was chosen by committee, based on outstanding attributes in forensics, academics, and service to both the forensics and general community. Her service includes operating forensics workshops for area high schools, working as a volunteer with Alzheimer's patients, and involvement in community environmental clean-up programs. Nay's selection as Student Speaker of the Year is intended to emphasize her record as the ideal of the forensic student champion.

Nay maintains a 3.96 grade point average and is President of both the SUU Forensics Chapter of DSR-TKA and Lambda Pi Eta, the national academic honor society for Communication students.

Nay will graduate from SUU in spring of 2005, and choose from among several graduate school opportunities to continue her career in Communication.



SUMMER 2005 PRODUCTIONS

Love's Labours Lost
 Romeo and Juliet
 Camelot
 Doctor Faustus
 All's Well that Ends Well
 The Foreigner
 Pippin
 Stones in His Pockets
 A Midsummer
 Night's Dream

See www.bard.org for details on the plots and actors, and how to get tickets!