

Alumni shine in Master's Week

By SARAH FOX
Staff writer

Notable UNL alumni – including a Sears vice president and an AT&T technology pioneer – are revisiting their academic roots this week.

Master's Week, which runs through Friday at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, provides students the chance to learn about careers from successful graduates and also teaches real-life skills for the job market.

"It shows students how to really make it in the real world," said Phyllis Larsen, UNL director of public relations. "They can learn secrets from (the alumni's) success."

The 1998 Master's Week featured graduates are:

■ Bob Thacker, vice president of marketing for Sears, Roebuck and Co., graduated from UNL in 1970 with an advertising degree.

Thacker was also vice president of marketing for Target Co. and has been recognized by Advertising Age magazine as one of the top 100 marketers in the United States.

■ Patricia Wirth, network design analyst for AT&T, received her bachelor's in mathematics in 1971 from UNL.

Wirth taught at Washington University in St. Louis and was hired by AT&T. She's received company honors, including being named AT&T's first woman Fellow in 1997. She lives in New Jersey.

■ Arthur Hughes, director general of the Multinational Force and Observers, an independent peacekeeping organization.

Hughes, a native of Lincoln, received his bachelor's degree in history from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 1961.

He served as deputy assistant secretary of defense during Desert Storm. Hughes received the Presidential Distinguished Service Award before taking his current position in Rome.

■ Debra Miller, owner and director of Animal Health Services, an emergency veterinary clinic, received her bachelor's in animal science from UNL in 1979.

In 1993, Miller founded Animal Health Services, a 24-hour emergency veterinary clinic with more than 4,000 clients. She currently resides in New Jersey.

■ Scott Stevens, senior systems scientist for the Information Technology center at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, earned his doctorate in curriculum and instruc-

tion in 1984 from UNL and works with multimedia research and development.

Stevens developed a virtual Albert Einstein for a synthetic interview software program. He lives in Pittsburgh.

In addition to speaking in classes and visiting campus organizations, four of the Master's Week honorees will speak publicly this week.

The public sessions are usually well attended by interested faculty members, staff and students, Larsen said.

Today's speakers include:
■ Stevens from 10 a.m. to noon in 116 L.W. Chase Hall and at 7 p.m. in 102 Hamilton Hall.

■ Hughes at 4 p.m. in 1126 Oldfather.

■ Wirth at 5:45 p.m. in 115 Burnett Hall.

Friday's speakers are:
■ Stevens at 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. in 203 Brace Lab and at 3:45 p.m. in 115 Burnett Hall.

■ Hughes at 3:30 p.m. in the Nebraska Union.

■ Miller at 3:30 p.m. in A130 Animal Science Building.

Master's Week is sponsored by the chancellor's office, the Student Alumni Association, the Innocents Society and Mortar Board honors society.




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Denver court charges UNL senior with murder

The case against two twin brothers, one a UNL senior facing murder charges, was taken up by Denver's district court.

David and Kevin Bills, both 21, along with two of their friends Joshua Wright, 18, of Arvada, Colo., and Kevin Snyder, 19, of Omaha, face first-degree murder charges for the Oct. 4 stabbing death of 34-year-old Patrick Perry.

David Bills, a UNL senior, was in Denver visiting his brother Kevin, who had transferred to Metropolitan State College from UNL.

According to probable cause affidavits filed with the court, the four men encountered Perry outside an apartment building early on the morning of Oct. 4 when the four men broke up a domestic dispute between Perry and a woman.

A few hours later the four men again encountered Perry, and a fight occurred in which Perry was stabbed.

But reports differ about the nature of this second encounter.

Perry's friends say the four men came after Perry, harassed him and then beat him to death.

The Bills brothers maintain that Perry came back to the apartment building threatening them and then attacked Kevin Bills, starting the fight.

On Nov. 12, the Bills brothers will be back in court for a bond hearing. Until then, they will remain in jail.

Compiled by senior staff writer Josh Funk

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