

# Student proves there is success despite dyslexia

**The Learning Abilities Program on campus tests, advises and provides extra help for students with dyslexia.**

BY SHAWN BLACK  
FOR THE YELL

How ugly is it to take a page of writing and have to read it up a book?

If this sentence made little sense to you as you tried to pull out some kind of coherent message, then you now have an idea of what constitutes reality for someone with dyslexia.

For UNLV alumna Dawn Howard, a dyslexic, this reality is one that has shaded her life with struggle and hard work, but

also painted it with a richness of spirit and a perseverance to succeed.

"I was told by my teachers in high school that I shouldn't even think about going to college," said Howard, "But I wanted to go and I knew I was as intelligent as anyone; I just couldn't read."

For a dyslexic, most printed material appears as a jumbled mix of letters and words. They will often misread words, reverse the letters or make senseless substitutions.

School is usually a difficult and laborious ordeal as they are unable to read their books, tests, or even their own notes. Spelling is a particularly difficult problem for them because they lack the luxury of seeing the words to remember how they are spelled.

Howard was diagnosed with

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Dawn Howard

dyslexia in the third grade. There was little help available at that time for students with her condition, so reliance on others, Howard said, was the only way to get through school.

"I thought college was out of the question until my mother read an article about a program for dyslexics at UNLV," she said.

The Learning Abilities Program (LAP), is set up to test, advise and provide such things as books on tape, note takers and test proctoring for students shown to have a specific disability in basic information processing.

Janice Hurtubise, director of LAP, said sometimes there is a misconception about dyslexics. They are not mentally retarded, she said. They are usually of average or better intelligence, but their brain just has difficulty in processing some types of information it receives.

Hurtubise said there are many graduates from the program, like Howard, who have gone on to graduate school, physical therapy school and into the teaching profession.

"When I started at UNLV I

was pretty scared, but with the help of LAP I was able to go through school basically just like everyone else," said Howard. "It's nothing to be ashamed of, but you can't let others limit you. If I had listened to my high school teachers I might never have gone on."

"There is no reason why anyone with dyslexia can't make it in life; you just have to work a little harder and maybe want it a little more." Howard said. "Sometimes I get kidded for my spelling and I just say 'hey you don't have to spell to sell.'"

"If I ever hit it really big," she said, "I'm going to try to give something back to the program that helped me make it."

# Lecturer tells of a Mark Twain who wasn't funny

**Unpublished works by Mark Twain will be given new life when a campus English professor completes his latest book.**

BY MERILYN POTTERS  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

English Professor Joseph McCullough revealed a Mark Twain unfamiliar to the reading public at a literary symposium held at the Tam Alumni Center Tuesday.

While compiling manuscripts for his latest project, a book titled, *The Bible According to Mark Twain: Writings on Heaven,*

*Eden, and the Flood,* McCullough discovered that Twain, the humorist, had a more cynical side.

The book will include works that, to date, have been unpublished. One of the major pieces in the collection is Twain's "Autobiography of Eve," which was also Twain's first sustained attempt at using a female narrator.

McCullough said Twain tied the Bible to contemporary times. "Twain became an imperialist," McCullough said. "He had a cyclical vision of history and showed that all could be found originally in the Garden of Eden. The flood, according to Twain, will occur

again and again. History will repeat itself.

"Over-population obsessed Twain; so did disease. He asked how evil found its way into a good world. He had a suspicion, even a contempt for doctors.

"He fashioned himself as the father of history, a translator. He read history and had passionate biases. He began having interest in biblical subjects as early as the 1870s and became preoccupied with biblical subjects and the biblical portrayal of subjects. As he got old-

er, he got darker and darker."

McCullough exposed holes in a previously published work by a Twain executor, Bernard DeVoto, who published "Letters from the Earth" in 1960 which included many of Twain's biblical writings. DeVoto was selective in his editing and cut

many of Twain's important passages, McCullough said.

Manuscripts that have sat idle for 50 years include works Twain wrote during his later years and

which McCullough is now reconstructing.

"The hardest part has been getting the text in the order Twain would have wanted it," McCullough said.

The largest single collection of Twain manuscripts is at the University of California at Berkeley, where McCullough has done most of his research.

McCullough said his book of previously unpublished Twain works should be ready in about a year.

*"He fashioned himself the father of history, a translator."*

Joseph McCullough,  
English professor

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