

Editorial

Local news misrepresents rally

If you've been watching local news this past week, you're probably aware of the generous air time Channel 3 gave to promote the rally held on the UNLV campus on Monday in protest of proposed cuts to student aid.

All news media presumably received the same releases touting a huge rally scheduled for 10:30 a.m. Monday.

Channel 3 heavily promoted the rally on its Sunday evening newscasts, and again on its early morning Monday newscasts.

A first reaction would understandably be praise for the local media taking the time to cover what we all thought was going to evolve into a significant news story.

And by the looks of the coverage Channel 3 gave to the story, it was. But guess what, folks, only 25 people showed up to this "rally," and dignitaries and news crews nearly outnumbered students participating in the rally.

Twenty five participants. That's less than 1 percent of the entire UNLV student population.

So, two crucial points must be made:

Number one, Channel 3 is practicing one of the lowest forms of journalism you can imagine: skewing the facts of a story to cover their butts. Videography of the rally, the prominence of the dignitaries interviewed on-air and the general tone of the news stories aired, conveyed a completely different story than what actually took place.

It should make you question whether these guys know a news story when it slaps them in their faces. It should also make you take

yet another analytical look at their motto, "Where news comes first."

Another danger of this type of irresponsible reporting is that it gives a false sense of active student involvement on the UNLV campus.

This is not to diminish the efforts of those who organized and attended the rally. They did so with the best of intentions dedicated to a true cause of protest, and honestly thought they would have a bigger turnout.

The second crucial point is that this lack of student participation in an event that has a significant impact on their futures, is a perfect example of the enormous apathy of the student population on campus.

Sure, we had a few students go to Washington, at our expense, to speak on behalf of the student body and protest these cuts in person with Congressional representatives, but where were their constituents and supporters on Monday?

It is hard to believe that all but a handful of students on the UNLV campus are from such wealthy families that these proposed cutbacks would not significantly alter their chances of a college education. But, if by some strange stretch of the imagination this were true, what about their fellow classmates across the country who are less fortunate? Where is their dedication to those classmates?

This only goes to show that UNLV's 1990s version of "protest" is a poor excuse for student involvement in campus events, and the students of UNLV should be ashamed of themselves.

December is for graduation too

College takes a significant part of your life, the degree you hope to receive at the end is the accumulation of years of hard work. A ceremony to honor the occasion is more than appropriate. It's essential.

The semester that you graduate should not have any bearing on whether or not you are allowed a graduation ceremony.

Many of you understand this dilemma. It's the "December grad syndrome."

You work hard for four or more years only to find that you will receive your diploma in the mail with a small note saying, "Have a nice life, send us alumni money when you get a job."

Your parents are the most disappointed. They have waited and saved for a good part of their lives just to see you in your cap and gown. My parents were deflated, to say the least, when I told them that I wouldn't have a ceremony when I finished this December.

A significant number of students at UNLV graduate in December. In '93 a total of 1,870 students graduated, of which 736 graduated in December (including post-graduate degrees).

Last year 2,011 students graduated altogether, 811 of them in December. That's an increase of 75 December graduates compared to the year

Living at Large
VINCE CALIGUIRE

before. If these figures hold true, December graduates could someday equal the May graduates.

It's not fair to be denied such a significant ceremony when almost half the students graduate early. The University likes to consider itself a modern institution. We should follow the example of other universities and establish a December ceremony.

There are many legitimate reasons to graduate in December. Students may finish ahead of or behind schedule. Being a commuter school, varied schedules make December graduation an attractive choice for many.

Why wait six months for a ceremony? A job could be waiting or perhaps you have a different agenda. The college job rush isn't as heavy in December. The chances for success in finding a job are higher. People who graduate in December are usually motivated to finish up, taking a full load rather than spreading it out over a year.

The only setback is the ceremony. Many people have to take time off from work to attend the spring ceremony for their December diploma. Most don't even bother. They just take the diploma and run.

The administration should establish a December ceremony. Money could be the source of their reluctance, but I don't think most students would

mind paying for the ceremony. Perhaps the administration is afraid that it might start a trend for students finishing in December, even though that's already well entrenched.

The recent changes around school in campus structure and staff should allow for the inclusion of a ceremony in December.

The only way to make it happen in time for this December is to take action now. This can be done by talking it up with your fellow classmates and instructors. The student senator in the discipline you're enrolled in can help too. Make student government work for you.

Addressing the issue to the dean of your college, or President Harter is a good avenue also. Write letters to *The Rebel Yell* about how you want this ceremony, or better yet, to one of the Regents. You get the picture, Bubba?

Don't be apathetic to this issue! If you want it to happen, a huge response is needed. Otherwise, don't whine about it later this year when your diploma arrives third class mail.

Mom and Dad are counting on you.

—Vince Caliguire is an Opinion Writer at *The Rebel Yell*.

Letters to the Editor

Student lobbyist loses sight of students' interests

To the editor:

In a recent letter to the editor, David Turner of Nevada Student Affairs defended his lobbying trip to Washington, D.C. The Student Government Association is paying \$4,800 for Mr. Turner and two others to lobby our Nevada legislators at the nation's capital.

While Mr. Turner is eager to defend his field trip, each of his arguments is either irrelevant or incorrect.

First, the primary goal of the trip is to lobby elected Nevada representatives regarding the federal educational funding system. But didn't the US House and Senate both just have their August recess, where the congressmen left Washington for three weeks?

If Mr. Turner is so adamant about seeing these people, why didn't he simply call them when they were in town? I'm sure the students would rather fork over a few dollars in gas money than \$4,800 on a plane trip.

While Mr. Turner's lack of financial responsibility makes me question his qualification to show others how to spend their

money, his concept of basic statistics is even worse.

His claim of 100,000 students in the UCCSN system? Nope. The System Administration Office puts the number at roughly 66,000. Although Mr. Turner asserts this is 7 to 9 percent of the state's population, it is actually about 4 percent. He should double-check his numbers through the State Demographer's office in Reno.

Mr. Turner further digresses in his editorial, speaking of "out-moded aircraft in these peaceful times." I guess the hundreds of airstrikes around Sarajevo recently were my imagination.

His quote "this is not to imply every janitor should have a college degree" is insulting. What sort of educational background would you allow your janitorial staff, Mr. Turner? High school? Grade school? May they read and write?

To be sure, the issue of student financial aid is worthy of debate. But students should not pay for an out-of-state field trip for a lobbying trio armed with faulty math and incorrect assumptions.

Frank Barnas
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Hero & Zero of the Week

Hero-props go out this week to Joe Mills, vice president of student government, for showing up to work this month.

In our Opinion...

Zero of the week goes out to the "Dan Quayle" of student government, Joe Mills, for showing up at work this month.

—Opinion Staff

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