

HOMECOMING
SUU

2006 Alumni Awards

Visit with these fellow SUUans at the
Homecoming Banquet

Friday, September 22 • 5:30 p.m.
Great Hall • Reservations: 888-586-1997

OUTSTANDING ALUMNI

■ **Gordon Topham** ('72

Biology/Zoology) grew up and attended school in Cedar City, Utah. After graduating from SUCS, he taught for a year at Duchesne High School. He then returned to full-time employment with the National Park Service which included assignments at Bryce Canyon National Park, Zion National Park, and Mt. Rushmore National Park. While at SUU, Gordon served as Student Senator, Sophomore Class Vice President and Student Body Vice President, and was selected Outstanding Male Student in 1971. Gordon was also president of the Sigma Pi Fraternity when it received its national charter. Recently retired from 31 years with the Utah Division of Parks and Recreation, his most recent position being Deputy Director, Gordon oversaw the planning, development, and operation of 42 state parks located throughout the State. He had served as Park Manager at the Edge of the Cedars State Park, Newspaper Rock State Park, Goosenecks of the San Juan State Park, Escalante Petrified Forest State Park, Dead Horse Point State Park, and Fremont Indian State Park. He also served 10 years as Region Manager for Southwestern Utah stationed in Cedar City. In the course of his duties, Gordon has authored several processes to improve the efficiency of the Utah State Parks operations, many of which have been adopted by other parks throughout the country. One such substantial system proposed a more efficient way



of using appropriated, operational funds. His system is still used and is affectionately referred to as the "Gordeenie Plan." His favorite responsibility in his career has been helping people understand and enjoy Utah's great outdoors. He's been known to state, "A smiling face on a happy park visitor is worth more than the paycheck." Gordon continues to serve SUU. He has supported the College of Science with his solicited advisement. He also has been bringing his knowledge to the table to help establish one of SUU's newest degree programs in Outdoor Recreation in Parks and Tourism. The son of Waldo and Afton Topham of Cedar City, Gordon, and his wife JoAnn, have made Monroe, Utah, their home for the past 21 years. They have five children and 13 grandchildren. Gordon's family is the accomplishment of which he is most proud. We're happy to have Gordon serve as the Grand Marshal of the Homecoming Parade this year!

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

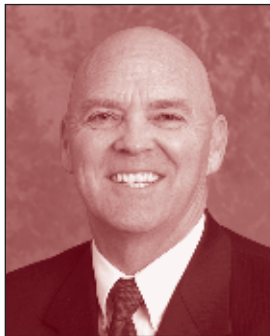
■ **Greg Pitt** ('77 *Music*

Education) first graduated in 1971 from Cottonwood High School. He served a mission for his church in the North Carolina-Virginia area, and then after graduation from SUCS, taught school band for 20 years. His bands received many state championship awards and also were honored nationally. He continues to perform with groups at the University of Nevada Las Vegas and the Clark County Community College. Greg has been in the real estate business in Las Vegas for the past nine years, where he founded and developed Home Quest U.S.A. with his wife **Connie** and son **Seth**. Connie is a loan officer with Direct Access Lending. Greg served as the president of the SUU National Alumni Association for the last three years, which also lent his time to membership of the SUU Board of Trustees. During his service as president, Greg enthusiastically led the effort of increasing participation of alumni, especially with the National Board and chapters. Greg has always felt strongly about the educational experience of SUU and never declined on an opportunity to remind students—alumni, current and prospective—of what a great choice SUU is to get an education. Greg's sincerity was so motivating, that his regard for SUU became a focus for the entire Alumni Association. "Under Greg's leadership," Mark Barton, Vice President of Advancement and Regional



Services, comments, “the National Alumni Council has taken the directional advances needed to see SUU Alumni development to the next level and has made a huge difference in Alumni growth.” Greg brought rejuvenating ideas to the National Alumni Board. For example, he was a force behind the fresh redesign of the Alumni web page at www.suu.edu, which is now more navigable and conducive to alumni needs and wants. Greg and his wife Connie (*'84 Elementary Education/Physical Science*) are also actively involved in the Las Vegas Chapter of the SUU Alumni Association. Additionally, they enjoy activities with their church and love to golf, travel and spend time with their family. SUU's Alumni Relations and Alumni Association are very grateful for all that Greg has given to the advancement and betterment of the program.

■ Most of you know **Marlo Jensen** as the SUU Alumni Relations Director, but now he will be remembered as one who gave Distinguished Service to SUU. After years as your forefront, friendly and dedicated contact for Thunderbird alumni needs, Marlo has moved on to take the position of Executive Director of The Foundation of Valley View Medical Center in Cedar City. Marlo first came to SUU as the Director of Development, by way of BYU (graduated from there in 1985), a short stint attending Louisiana State University, seven years as the executive director of the “Freedom Festival” in Provo, and originally, his birthplace, Stibnite, Idaho—a place, incidentally, that no longer exists. Stibnite, Marlo explains, is another name for Antimony, so when people from Southern Utah say they are from Antimony, he exclaims, “So am I!” Marlo is an active Cedar City community citizen. He has served on the community's economic development committee, the Chamber of Commerce board, and as president of the SUU Staff Association. He is a founding board member of the Canyon Country Western Arts Festival. Married to the former Virginia “Ginger” Furr, of Central Louisiana, the couple has six children and three grandchildren. Three of their children are SUU alumni! Marlo says: “I consider Cedar City home. I count it among my greatest blessings to live here and be a part of this community. SUU is, without question, the best place to get a University education. And, working with the alumni of SUU was. . .the best part of my association with the University. SUU students and graduates are simply wonderful—from the oldest to the newest!”



YOUNG ALUMNI

■ **Mechelle Mellor** (*'94 Physical Education, Music Minor*) has been with Zions Bank for the past seven years where she has quickly developed from a merchant services assistant to a private banking



assistant relationship officer to her present position of private banking officer. Before that she was the office administrator for Computer Task Group for two years. While at SUU she was so active, it could make the mind reel! She worked as a development assistant for three years, the chapter operations advisor for the Alpha Phi organization, and as an admissions advisor in which she enthusiastically helped recruit new students to SUU. This isn't Mechelle's first time being recognized as a valued alumna. In 2004 she was recognized by Alpha Phi Theta Sigma as a Distinguished Alumni. “Alpha Phi promotes the best in women. . .and I love to assist the women of SUU. . .I am able to see the leadership development (in them) and observe their attainment of their goals. . .it is a very rewarding opportunity for me.” When Mechelle walked across the stage to receive her degree, it certainly did not mean she finished at SUU. She has remained deeply connected to her alma mater and keeps giving back. For instance, three years after she graduated, she was nominated in the Thunderbird Awards program as Advisor of the Year. She has been an active member of the Salt Lake Alumni Chapter of SUU since its inception, and served two years as its first secretary. Additionally, her community service is just as dedicated and sincere. She has been a volunteer at the Utah Symphony & Opera for the past five years; a community trainer in finances for the last three years; and is a member of the Ronald McDonald House Committee Member. Mechelle says: “SUU provided me with an invaluable education. I was. . . shown that my education would reach far beyond my graduation. SUU afforded me with opportunities that some only dream of. I was involved with Acclamation, Presidential Ambassadors, (and) Student Government. I was provided with priceless leadership experience that assists me on a daily basis. Service opportunities were available throughout my college experience. I was provided all of this while receiving a first-rate education. I have such fond memories of professors, classmates and friends that made my experience at SUU one that could not be topped.”