



## UNLV International Gaming Institute Celebrates 16 Years

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The UNLV International Gaming Institute (IGI) started 16 years ago as both a response to a problem facing the Nevada State Gaming Control Board and as a vehicle to provide educational outreach to the gaming industry. With the expansion of gaming in the early 1990s, the Board was inundated with requests for meetings and training from new jurisdictions. Since members of the Board were frequent guest lecturers at the William F. Harrah College of Hotel Administration at UNLV, they approached the College with the concept that perhaps UNLV could assist in responding to the training need of the new gaming jurisdictions. Vince Eade, a professor in the hotel college, already had the same idea and was in the process of contacting the Board. This synergy created the first of a series of training courses for regulators. As the classes grew in number and scope, UNLV approached the Board of Regents for approval to create the International Gaming Institute, which continues today as a part of the UNLV hotel college and is widely regarded as the premier source of information and training for the gaming industry.

IGI's history and success can be attributed to many factors, including a dedicated staff, industry support, and excellent instructors. In 1996, philanthropist Stan Fulton provided a substantial donation for the building that now houses IGI, allowing it to expand its course offerings to further meet industry demands. Now, the Institute has an on-site surveillance room, gaming lab with equipment, numerous instructional rooms, a restaurant, and a prominent location at UNLV, the corner of Swenson and Flamingo.

IGI is a non-profit academic facility. It is self supporting with professional staff paid from program revenue, not state funds. Since the Institute started as a training center for new regulators, it still considers regulator training to be

one of its primary purposes.

### REGULATOR TRAINING

The regulatory training is done in concert with the Nevada State Gaming Control Board and conducted at the Stan Fulton Building or in the gaming jurisdiction, depending on the need. Core classes include “Pre-Licensing and Background Investigations,” “Financial Investigative Techniques for Non-Financial Professions,” and “Law Enforcement and Criminal Activity.”

IGI strives to keep the classes small and interactive with the instructors. Participants come from throughout the world. This year IGI offered a new week long program, “The Gaming Regulators Development Program,” which was specifically designed to increase knowledge and gaming skills while enhancing a participant's knowledge of gaming regulation. The program curriculum encompasses case studies for gaming regulators to increase knowledge in the areas of organizational management, problem solving, and strategic analysis of the gaming industry. To qualify for participation, a regulator had to be in a decision making role and have less than three years experience as a regulator. The program was offered via scholarship, with twenty-five U.S. and international regulators selected to participate. The program was created with the assistance of an international advisory board of regulators which included: Jenny Williams, Commissioner and Chief Executive, Gambling Commission Great Britain; Peter C. Bernhard, Chairman, Nevada Gaming Commission; Dennis K. Neilander, Chairman,



Nevada State Gaming Control Board; Linda Kassekert, Chair, New Jersey Casino Control Commission; Larry Gregory, Executive Director Mississippi Gaming Commission; Manuel Joachim



das Neves, Director, Gaming Inspection and Coordination Bureau, Macau; and, Michael Sarquis, Executive Director Queensland Office of Gaming Regulation.

To continue to be the leader in regulatory training, IGI will this fall begin offering regulatory seminars online and through webinars. With state budgets decreasing the funding for education and travel, IGI hopes these new offerings will continue its history of excellent training for regulators in a cost effective manner.

### GAMING COURSES

IGI has evolved from being a center for regulator training to a full service gaming and hospitality institute. The best place to review the varied course offerings is the course catalogue, which can be accessed on IGI's website: <http://igi.unlv.edu>. Different levels of instruction are offered with classes at the executive, intermediate, and basic levels. Core gaming courses include “Casino Management,” “Gaming Device Management,” “Surveillance,” “Casino Marketing Theory,” and “Casino Accounting and Finance.” However, a few examples will establish the depth of the course offerings. The course “Responsible Gaming” explores best practices and suggests a specific and possible plan for the attendee's jurisdiction. “Psychology of Gambling” looks into the research on gambling motivation and the psyche of different types of gamblers. “The Effects of Restaurants on Gaming Volumes” studies the analytical process of reviewing restaurant costs and gaming volume. The course on “Loyalty Programs” covers in-depth research on customer loyalty programs and whether they create an emotional connection to the company.

Although IGI is proud of the breadth of its course offerings, here is a sampling of other titles that might whet the appetite: “Direct Mail Offer,” “Introduction to Slot Clubs,” “Cross Cultural



Consumer Research,” “Match Play Coupon Offers,” “Optimizing Game Hold to Increase Revenue,” and “The Effect of Bingo on Slot Business Volume.” IGI also offers longer specialized programs. The “Slot Leadership Seminar” is comprised of ten specific classes that provide a person interested in or already working in slots the necessary background and analytic tools to move into slot management. The “Surveillance Directors’ Academy” is a unique and highly specialized course designed to give surveillance professionals the tools they need to operate a casino surveillance system in the “digital age.” It is a week long comprehensive program to develop surveillance leaders for the 21st century and focuses on how surveillance can add value to an organization. Both of these programs have restricted enrollment that ensures participants an enjoyable learning experience gained from knowledgeable instructors and the opportunity to share ideas with their peers.

#### **HOSPITALITY COURSES**

As IGI expanded to instruct regulators from throughout the world, gaming facilities expanded in a different way. Properties became larger, the cost of building them became almost prohibitive, and amenities started to overtake gaming as a source of revenue. The UNLV hotel college addressed these changes by offering, in addition to its hospitality management and gaming management majors, undergraduate majors in culinary arts management, meetings and events management, recreation and

sport management (which includes a PGA Professional Golf management Program), beverage management, lodging and resort management, food service management, and a minor in entertainment management. As the college grew, UNLV hired faculty with new and varied expertise, most of whom helped IGI deliver a new array of classes.

One such course is “Culture and Cuisine,” which explores both the seasonings and flavors reflective of world cultures and the service expectations of diners from varied cultural backgrounds. “Introduction to the Timeshare/Vacation” provides a foundation for understanding how to enter and succeed in this fast-growing market segment. Another course, “On Becoming a Global Leader” uses case studies, short video segments and small group discussion to explore personal leadership styles and determine development activities to further advance leadership skills and ability. Classes are also offered in convention sales, food and beverage trends, technological influences on the meeting industry, destination marketing, retail loss prevention, and numerous other options. Additionally, classes are offered based on the rapidly growing legal arena in the hospitality industry, such as “Employment Law,” “Hospitality Law-Tort Analysis,” “Hospitality Law-Contract,” and “Legal Liability of Bedbugs, and Legionnaires’ disease.”



#### **CUSTOM PROGRAMS**

Although IGI will attempt to meet all requests, the most popular for international groups are the custom programs, which usually consist of one to three weeks of training taught by UNLV professors

and industry professionals. The classes are selected by the attendees from the IGI course catalogue which can be found at <http://igi.unlv.edu>. Each program is tailored to meet the needs of the participants. Translators are utilized if requested. Often participants in these programs are from jurisdictions that are considering enacting gaming



or new to gaming. Additionally, operators outside of the U.S. find this type of training efficient for executives and managers. Since the programs are designed with the input of the participants, they can be as general or focused as requested. During the summer, participants can be housed in the UNLV dorms. IGI also provides customized training off-premises to gaming industry professionals worldwide.

#### **COURSES FOR NEVADA LICENSEES**

With the assistance of the Nevada State Gaming Control Board, the Institute offers numerous programs for Nevada licensees: "Regulatory Compliance for Group I and Group II Licensees," "Restricted Licensees Regulatory Compliance," "Gaming Device and Associated Equipment-The Approval Process" and "Gaming Employee Registration Training." Gaming agents instruct these courses so licensees are assured that training is consistent with ongoing practice and interpretation by the Board. The classes also allow for discussion on the requirements and the philosophy supporting the need for the requirement. Additionally, it allows a forum to interact and question gaming agents outside of the licensing arena.

#### **ONLINE AND WEBINAR COURSES**

This year IGI began offering online courses in "Casino Management," "Surveillance," and "Human Resources." This new product was an instant

success with participants enrolling from around the world. This fall the online courses will include "Best Practices in Casino and Gaming Protection," which discusses overall surveillance department operation and the core skills necessary for both the individual investigator and the department to succeed in the protection of the business. Another course offering,

"Introduction to Casino Management," is designed to identify, contrast, and compare basic casino department management procedures and will focus on game selection, controls, layouts, gaming development, and customer service. Eventually, IGI will bundle course offerings to provide specialty certifications.

The online courses last from five to eight weeks, so IGI will also offer webinars which will provide short detailed information on narrow, well-defined topics.

#### **TRIBAL GAMING**

Individuals employed by tribal gaming casinos or tribal gaming members participate in the courses offered for regulators and gaming executives. However, for many years, IGI has offered a specialized training option. This program sends an instructor to the tribal gaming facility once a month for 10 months. The tribal gaming facility sends 20 to 30 employees



to each session. At the conclusion of the 10 months, the participants receive an IGI certificate. The course offerings differ each year and are approved in advance by the tribal gaming facility. The selection of topics usually depends on operating issues and the management depth of attendees.

#### **PARTNERSHIP WITH GLOBAL GAMING EXPO (G2E)**

Since 2006, IGI has assisted in the educational portion of G2E and in 2008 expanded this Role to include G2E Asia. IGI participates in the selection of

topics and speakers for the programs and offers certificates of completion to participants. G2E is considered the premier gaming expo and the addition of new and innovative educational offerings and training continues to attract an ever increasing number of participants.

In 2007, G2E teamed with IGI to offer a scholarship program for students. The program provides 50 talented students with a chance to experience G2E. The students selected for the G2E Scholarship Program receive a four-day conference pass to G2E, access to the exhibit floor, admission to a special group session on gaming and hospitality career opportunities, and the opportunity to have their resumes made available to G2E exhibitors and industry professionals for potential internship opportunities. In addition, The G2E Scholarship Program allows participants to see first-hand how the conference is organized by working to assist with on-site logistics for one full day. IGI is proud to assist in this unique and valuable educational opportunity.

The Scholarship Program has benefitted college students from throughout the world. In addition,



with IGI's assistance, a class was created specifically for UNLV hospitality and convention majors in the events and meeting management program. This class allows the students to work with Reed Exhibition Companies in planning and working at G2E.

#### **STUDENT PARTICIPATION**

In addition to the G2E Scholarship Program and class, the Stan Fulton Building is used as a training and employment experience for students. The

gaming lab and surveillance room are used for instruction for the gaming management students, and we utilize student help on programs and for service. The Chef for the Stan Fulton Building teaches a class for students earning a culinary arts degree and the executive director of IGI teaches gaming regulation to the gaming students.

Finally, there is nothing that says "hospitality" better than good food, drink and conversation. Since the Stan Fulton Building houses a full service kitchen, the students train in the facility. You can join students, faculty and chef artists for a range of culinary experiences. The Chef Artist Series invites chefs to prepare a four-course dinner to include their hand-picked signature menu items, pair them with wines, and visit with the guests. "Modern," "colorful" and "fun" would all describe the Bistro at the Stan Fulton Building. This well-designed lounge serves small plates, appetizers, and a wide selection of beverages twice weekly throughout the regular school year. Proceeds from the events provide student scholarships, funds for faculty development opportunities, and money for the purchase of new equipment. The Institute and Stan Fulton Building is a valued-added experience for the students of

UNLV's hotel college and is used as a recruiting tool to entice students to attend UNLV.

#### **RESEARCH, GAMING JOURNAL, AND LIBRARY**

IGI also conducts gaming research and publishes the twice-yearly "UNLV Gaming Research & Review Journal," a publication that reaches inside the gaming industry to cover up-to-date laws and regulations, management techniques, technology, trends and developments. The research arm of IGI provides services for both the public and private sector. In 2007 it issued a report on internet gaming in Nevada. The research was conducted at the request of the Nevada State Gaming Control

Board and a formal presentation of the report was made before the Nevada Gaming Commission. IGI also excels in research in responsible gaming and has published numerous studies in the journal and on IGI's website.

For the first 10 years of operation, IGI maintained a library for research. In 2004, the contents were transferred to the UNLV Libraries Gaming Collection which is the largest research repository of information relating to gambling and commercial



gaming. These collections document the history and statistical basis of games and gambling, the economics and regulation of the gaming industry, the psychological, social, and political effects of gambling, and the history of specific hotel and casinos throughout the world.

#### **GAMING EXECUTIVE ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM**

IGI has commenced an oral history program to detail the lives and professional accomplishments of gaming executives. The purpose of the program is to conduct and collect audio and videotaped interviews of persons who have contributed to the gaming industry that can provide first-hand observations on a variety of historical topics relating to gaming. IGI hopes to have the interviews available for research and for instruction.

#### **FUTURE**

The International Gaming Institute's mission is to provide educational programs and conduct gaming research through seminars, webinars, classes, distance education, and publications to businesses, governments, and industry professionals throughout the world. This mission statement remained consistently valid as the past 16 years have shown continued growth in Las Vegas and the gaming industry. The creation of worldwide gaming companies and the use of the internet for education provide new and different opportunities. IGI will continue to grow and meet industry demands. This article began with a note that IGI is self funded and a nonprofit. Its growth is only limited by the success of our current operations and cash flow. IGI is always interested in educational partners, new instructors and new course concepts, and, naturally, donations. As IGI celebrates its 16 year history of growth and accomplishments, it continues to evolve

for the benefit of UNLV, students, the Las Vegas community, and the gaming industry. **NGL**

*Patricia Becker is the Executive Director of the International Gaming Institute and a Boyd Distinguished Professor at UNLV. She has over 30 years of experience in the gaming industry. Her public sector experience includes serving as a member of the Nevada Gaming Control Board, Chief of Staff for Governor Bob Miller, Chief Deputy Attorney General for the Nevada Gaming Control Board and Commission, and law clerk for the Chief Justice of the Nevada Supreme Court. Her private sector experience includes serving as an Independent Director on three public companies and holding the positions of Senior Vice President and General Counsel for Harrah's Hotels and Casinos and Senior Vice President of Corporate Affairs and Legal for the Aladdin Hotel and Casino. In addition, Ms. Becker has operated a gaming consulting company, Patricia Becker & Associates, since 1995. Ms. Becker is an internationally recognized expert on gaming law and past president of the International Association of Gaming Attorneys. In 2003, Ms. Becker was inducted as a Counselor into the International Association of Gaming Attorneys.*



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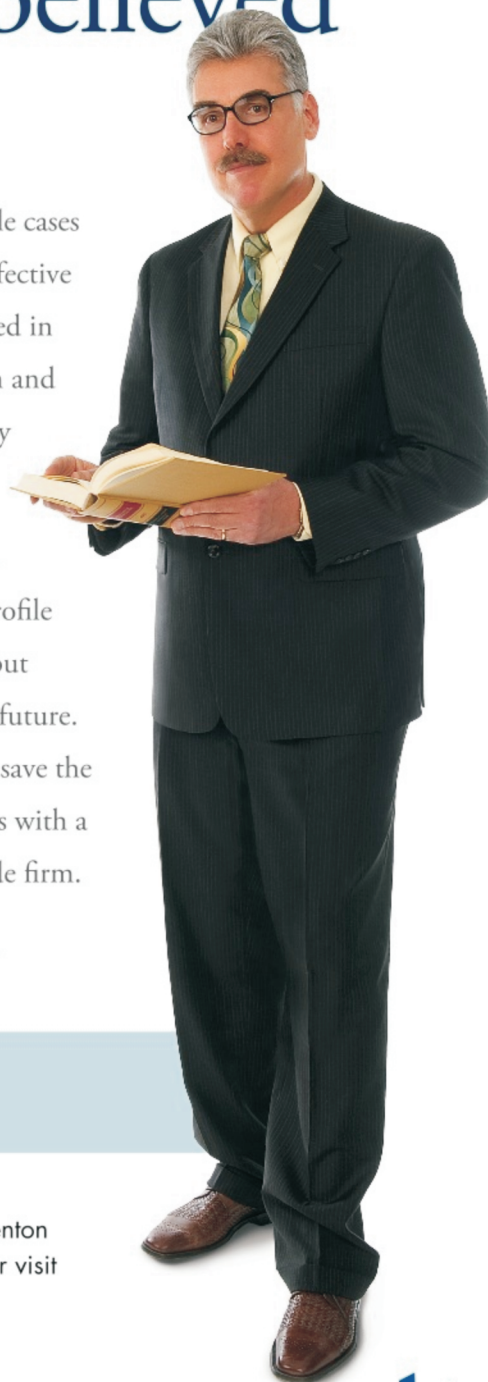
As a partner at White & Wetherall, LLP, I handle cases of Nevadans who are seriously injured by defective products. Over the years, the one-man shop I started in Reno has expanded – with inspiration, perspiration and some help from City National – into a five-attorney litigation firm with offices in Las Vegas and Reno.

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