Many colleges fail to prepare students for work

By Jeffrey J. Selingo, New York Times

It’s the middle of October, and many college campuses nationwide are observing their traditional fall break with a few days off from classes. Even as the 21st Century economy demands more from college graduates and the price of a higher education skyrockets, today’s college students are spending less of their time on academic pursuits.

Various surveys of students show that they dedicate just a fraction of their time in college studying and going to classes. One study of UC undergraduates found that students spend 13 hours a week studying, some three times fewer hours than they devoted to socializing with friends, watching television, and exercising.

By the time students graduate from college, their brains are hard-wired to the cadence of the daily life laid out by the nine-month academic calendar. They tend to think about their work in terms of 50-minute classes and five courses during 15-week semesters, with plenty of lengthy breaks in between.

But the working world is unstructured, with competing priorities and decisions that need to be made on the fly. College is very task-based: take an exam, finish a paper, attend a club meeting, go to practice. The workplace is more of a mash-up of activities with no scheduled end.

Read the whole story

Nev. firms rake in venture capital money

By Daniel Rothberg, Las Vegas Sun

Venture-backed companies headquartered in Nevada raised more than $18 million in five financing deals during the first three quarters of 2015, according to a Dow Jones VentureSource analysis released Thursday.

The amount falls about $4 million short of investment at this point last year and is low in comparison to other startup-heavy states, such as California, New York and Massachusetts. Companies raised more than $5 billion in each of those states in the first three quarters of 2015.

Because of confidentiality agreements, VentureSource could not release the names of all the Nevada firms that received venture capital. But a spokesperson was able to confirm the names of two companies.

Read the whole story

Christmas Valley controlled burns to last for weeks

The U.S. Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit will begin prescribed fire operations this weekend in Christmas Valley.

Operations may take place near Grass Lake Road off Highway 89 beginning today and may continue for the next several weeks as

conditions allow.

Smoke from prescribed fire operations is normal and may continue for several days after an ignition depending on the project size and environmental conditions.

Before prescribed fire operations are conducted, agencies post road signs around areas affected by prescribed fire, send email notifications and update the local fire information line at 530.543.2816.

Conner: ‘There is absolutely no proof to anything I have been accused of’



South Lake Tahoe City Councilwoman JoAnn Conner on Oct. 16 says she is the one being bullied, not the other way around. Photo/Jessie Marchesseau

By Jessie Marchesseau

The South Tahoe Chamber of Commerce met Friday evening to allow JoAnn Conner, former chamber president and South Lake Tahoe city councilwoman, to tell her side of the story.

Conner was **banned last month** from having interaction with city staff as a result of a list of allegations including verbal attacks on city employees and the city manager, being disrespectful to other councilmembers, and being hostile and demeaning to people during public meetings.

“There is absolutely no proof to anything I have been accused of,” she told the chamber group Oct. 16. “I would like to categorically state I have never, ever sworn, yelled at or threatened or done anything to intimidate a city employee including the city manager.”

However, *Lake Tahoe News* has been told proof will be forthcoming in the form of verbal testimony and emails from Conner during Monday’s special council meeting.

Conner said she is a passionate and straightforward person and realizes that there have been times when people felt she was too harsh. “And for that I apologize,” she said.

Conner went on to point out that none of her colleagues is without fault and they have all done things that were rude or inappropriate. She said she doesn’t know why they are focusing these accusations on her.

“I believe we have some issues with our employees, yes. But I don’t believe I am the cause of that. I think it is coming from another source, and have encouraged my fellow councilmembers to talk to our employees,” Conner continued.

She then addressed each of the seven allegations listed on the resolution which state that she has been:

1. On numerous occasions been disrespectful to councilmembers

during public meetings;

Conner's response: "I think that's a matter of perspective. I think some of the other councilmembers have also been rude."

2. Verbally attacked employees, including the city manager, resulting in a pattern of behavior that may constitute a potential hostile work environment;

Conner's response: "Not true. Absolutely not true. No proof has been presented."

3. Caused employees to seek advice and assistance from the city attorney and/or city manager arising out of confrontations or interactions with Councilmember Conner;

Conner's response: "Where is the proof? When I asked the city attorney, 'Where is the proof?' the only instance he gave me was related to parking enforcement over two years ago .…"

4. Potentially subjected the city to litigation for the alleged behavior;

Conner's response: "Not true."

5. As a representative of the city and City Council, has acted in a manner that has caused the agency partners to decline to or be reluctant to work with Councilmember Conner;

Conner's response: "Again, where is the proof of that?" She said she could think of one instance concerning the senior subcommittee when she had a bit of a disagreement with El Dorado County Supervisor Sue Novasel.

6. Been hostile and demeaning to persons who have provided testimony or opinions in public meetings;

Conner's response: "I don't think so, but that's possible. I

think that’s a matter of perspective. And certainly there are people who could testify that just about every council member up there has done the same thing at some time.”

7. Has acted in a manner during public meetings that has been alleged in an **editorial in local media** to be bullying, ridiculing and scolding, which impacts the respect the public has for the city and the City Council.

> *Conner’s response:* “Seriously? ‘Alleged in a local publication.’ None of that was true. The he-said, she-said, somebody-said is ridiculous. The comment about my having a CCW [carry concealed weapon] and the employees feeling threatened because I bring a loaded gun to government property: Mr. (Kenny) Curtzwiler investigated that. It was very simple to prove I have never applied for, much less have I ever received a CCW. And I would like to know who has seen me carry a gun, because I have never carried a gun loaded or unloaded onto any government property.”

However, prior to it being published that Conner had a concealed weapon permit she told councilmembers, department heads and others she had one. Because there is no statewide registry for concealed weapon permits and the fact they expire it is not known if she was telling the truth when she previously boasted of having one or now when she denies having one.

Conner said when she requested information from City Attorney Tom Watson on specific instances of the alleged behavior, she was told employee complaints are confidential and he did not have exact dates or documentation of the behavior in question.

When attorney and former Councilman Bruce Grego asked Conner how she was supposed to defend herself against the allegations when the city won’t release the confidential information they are based on, Conner said she didn’t know. She went on to say she has been approached by several employees away from work

who told her they don’t feel threatened by her. She claims she is the one being bullied, not the other way around.

Conner said she believes this all came to a head when she challenged City Manager Nancy Kerry on what Conner believed were erroneous charges on some temporary activity permits and also had a disagreement with Kerry concerning the lease for the senior center.

Councilman Tom Davis was also in attendance Friday as a member of the chamber, but declined to join the discussion beyond saying: “There’s two sides to every story, and you’re going to hear both sides on Monday. So that’s the time to come and listen, and whatever evidence there is will be presented to both sides.”

A special meeting concerning the possible **censuring of Conner** is scheduled for Oct. 19 at 3pm at Lake Tahoe Airport.

Letter: Conner knows how to listen

To the community,

John Runnels, Mile Wallace, three good people who shall remain nameless at this time, City Councilperson JoAnn Conner and now me, have, or have had, a target securely affixed to their back side.

I received an email that stated, “Angie harassed, abused and yelled at a city employee and must be banned- the employees need to be protected from her.”This is a lie. Never happened.

Not even close, but it sounds suspiciously close to the lies being said and written about JoAnn Conner. Close as well to what has been reported about every other person walking around with that aforementioned “target”.

In my case, I never raised my voice, abused or harassed anybody at the city. I did however use a bad word while discussing the city’s new fee schedule, which raised the cost of a sign permit from $145 to a whopping $878. This is what was said, verbatim, “The city promised to readdress the permit fee in September, now you are saying that the city has decided to adopt the TRPA’s sign ordinance instead? Where did that come from? It would be a huge mistake to throw away our sign ordinance, please don’t do that, the businesses of South Lake Tahoe will be so _____ (pseudonym for screwed).”

There you have it, one bad word, which I would apologize for, to the person I said it to, but I am banned from the city. Makes me wonder just how many ridiculous lies were generated to discredit JoAnn Conner?

I will not apologize for speaking the truth or speaking out for my customers. Nor should JoAnn Conner apologize for standing up on behalf of the small businesses in our community. She has done a lot of good work for us and, by the way, was voted into office fair and square because she does speaks up. Look, we know how she is going to vote and represent us, she is honest and forthcoming. She is also accessible, something extremely important in a councilperson. In fact, she’s the only council member that called me regarding the city’s new fee schedule, after my letter, after the press letter and after my call to the city attorney. Let me say this again, Councilperson JoAnn Conner read my letter, responded and listened – thank you JoAnn – when no one else did.

JoAnn Conner is an asset to this council and this community, and, I believe the wrong person is being censured.

Angela Olson, Meyers

Hwy. 50 head-on crash kills 1, injures 4

One person died and four people were injured in a head-on collision Friday night near Kyburz.

A woman was driving west on Highway 50 about two mile east of the 76 Station when she drifted across the center line into oncoming traffic.

California Highway Patrol Sgt. Chris Sahagun said the accident is under investigation and the cause is under investigation.

He didn’t know if the road was wet at the time of the 5:45pm Oct. 16 collision, but said it was when he arrived on scene an hour later.

The identities of the five people have not been released. All were wearing seat belts.

The male driver of the other vehicle, who is from San Pablo, was air lifted to UC Davis Medical Center in Sacramento with moderate injuries. His three passengers – two men and a woman – complained of pain and were taken by ambulance to area hospitals.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

Mechanical fire empties Stateline casino floor



Smoke from a mechanical fire forced MontBleu to be evacuated Oct. 16. Photo Copyright 2015 Carolyn E. Wright

Hundreds of people were evacuated from MontBleu casino's main floor Friday night when a fire started after an air handling unit burned out.

Many of the evacuees were all dressed up for the annual Soroptimist wine tasting fundraiser on Oct. 16.

"It was very calm and orderly. The party is continuing," Brenda Knox, president of Soroptimist International of South Lake Tahoe, told *Lake Tahoe News* from the event.

The casino floor and convention center were cleared out for about 30 minutes.

"There were no injuries and no substantial damage to the property other than the unit," Eric Guevin, Tahoe Douglas fire marshal, told *Lake Tahoe News*. "Quick response kept it to the unit of origin."

Mechanical failure was determined to be the cause of the fire.

South Lake Tahoe firefighters also responded to the Stateline property.

– Lake Tahoe News staff report

CDFW to set up checkpoints on I-80 in Truckee

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife will be conducting wildlife checkpoints in Truckee to promote safety, education and compliance with laws and regulations.

Wildlife officers will be at the agriculture inspection station on westbound Interstate 80 from 8am-4pm on Oct. 18, Nov. 14 and Nov. 22.

Officials say wildlife checkpoints encourage safety and sportsmanship by promoting voluntary compliance with laws and regulations through education, preventative patrol and enforcement.

All anglers and hunters will be required to stop and submit to an inspection. CDFW officers will also be providing informative literature about the invasive quagga mussel to anglers and chronic wasting disease to deer hunters.

Coroner stirs debate on mandating ski helmets

By Brandon Barrett, Pique

A coroner has called on the province to consider making snow-sport helmets mandatory at all British Columbia ski hills following the conclusion of an investigation into the 2013 death of a teenaged snowboarder on Grouse Mountain.

“The research reviewed during the course of this investigation indicates helmets can reduce the risk of serious injury in certain scenarios,” Coroner Timothy Wiles wrote in his report. “However, there are currently no regulations mandating helmet use in the Province of British Columbia.”

Whistler Blackcomb declined to be interviewed in the topic, but sent a statement from safety manager Kira Cailes.

“Whistler Blackcomb recommends the use of helmets to all guests. As for making helmet usage mandatory at B.C. ski resorts through legislation, we believe that encouraging safe skiing and boarding practices through education, awareness and example is a more effective approach to limiting head injuries.”

The coroner’s recommendations flow from an investigation into the death of 16-year-old exchange student Luca Cesar, who was snowboarding at the North Vancouver resort on Nov. 29, 2013, when he became separated from his friends.

Read the whole story

Nev. bans unlicensed daily fantasy sports sites

By J.D. Morris, Las Vegas Sun

Nevada regulators on Oct. 15 banned providers of daily fantasy sports, a booming but controversial industry that many argue is akin to gambling, from operating in the state until and unless they are licensed to do so.

Gaming Control Board Chairman A.G. Burnett wrote in a public notice that he and his staff have concluded that daily fantasy sports constitutes gambling under state law. Operators must possess a sportsbook license in order to legally offer daily fantasy sports in Nevada, Burnett wrote, because the industry requires its customers to wager on how well individuals collectively perform in sporting events.

In response to the gaming board’s notice, FanDuel and DraftKings, the two leading daily fantasy sports providers, announced Thursday night that they are ceasing operations in Nevada while they consider their options moving forward.

Read the whole story