

 Touro University Nevada

Touro YOU

CONNECTING YOU WITH THE TOURO COMMUNITY

TO SERVE. TO LEAD. TO TEACH.



Home
Means
Nevada
EDITION

ISSUE 4
JUNE 2019



SPRING COMMENCEMENT

More than 250 Touro University Nevada graduates received their degrees during Spring Commencement on May 13.



I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support in helping to make Touro University Nevada one of the most prestigious universities in the nation.

Although I wasn't born in Nevada, I have been fortunate to call Nevada my home for most of my life and I am proud to be a Nevadan. My family came to this small desert town in the 1960s, and it has been a privilege to see how much Southern Nevada has blossomed.

With nearly 3 million people living in the state, we are growing at a very fast rate. With more and more people deciding to move their families here, having strong healthcare and education systems are imperative to our future growth and success. At Touro University Nevada, we are doing a remarkable job training the next generation of professionals in healthcare and education to meet the needs of our ever-growing population.

Keeping our graduates in Nevada is key. As our population continues to grow, it is more important than ever that we have enough doctors, nurses, physical therapists, occupational therapists, physician assistants, and teachers to meet the needs of the state.

It has been the honor of my life to serve the people of this fine state for more than 30 years. From my beginnings as a state legislator until the day I left Congress, I have cherished every opportunity to help improve the lives of my fellow Nevadans. Now in my capacity as CEO and Senior Provost of Touro, I am honored to continue my life-long commitment to our wonderful state.

In this issue of Touro YOU, our "Home Means Nevada" edition, I invite you to read and learn about the impact we are having in the state we call home.

Shelley Berkley
CEO and Senior Provost
Touro University Western Division

CONNECTING WITH OUR COMMUNITY

Building Blocks

Touro University Nevada Connects with 'Differently Abled' Communities During "Building Blocks" Party and "Light It Up Blue"

Although Touro University Nevada has only been in town for 15 years, it has always been honored to have been a part of the Las Vegas Valley.

Touro already provides free healthcare services to some of the community's most vulnerable populations, but the university wanted to engage with a different population.

Complete with bounce houses, police cruisers, cotton candy, carnival games, a mini-Raiders football camp, and more, the university hosted its first "Building Blocks" Party for 'differently-abled' children and adolescents on April 7.

The university partnered with Henderson Police Department and Special Olympics Nevada for the special event. Touro also worked with several sponsors to offset the costs, including Healthcare Partners, Henderson Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Emerald Island Casino, Siegel Cares, Current Events, Latin Chamber of Commerce, Got Turf, Balloons with a Twist, and Zippy Shell.

Additional partners included the soon-to-be Las Vegas Raiders, the Las Vegas Lights, and others.

Students from the Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine and Health and Human Services also worked together to create unique low/limited/full sensory carnival games specifically for the party.

"We wanted to bring our daughter Azlynn to the Building Blocks party so she could experience a carnival with other children like her," said Kimberlie Oipari, whose two-year-old daughter Azlynn has Down Syndrome. "She had a great time playing games and we're so glad that Touro had this type of carnival for kids like her."

The Building Blocks Party was also attended by families who brought their neuro-typical children to engage with the 'differently-abled' community.

More than 75 students across Touro's programs volunteered during the event. While some worked near the carnival

games and food court, others gave tours of the university's three mobile healthcare clinics.

"I wanted to participate in the Building Blocks Party because I love interacting with children," said first-year medical student Yesenia Vasquez. "It also gave me the opportunity to put my bilingual skills to good use in the community."

Touro has also been proud to work with children and families in the Sharon Sigesmund Pierce and Stephen Pierce Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities (CADD).

On April 1, Touro celebrated the beginning of Autism Awareness Month with the annual "Light It Up Blue" party, hosted by Caesars Entertainment, inside the Linq.

CADD families had a blast riding The High Roller and celebrated with a party that included face painting, balloon animals, healthy snacks, and more. Shortly before 8 p.m. that night, families and Touro staff, students, and administrators gathered outside for a group photo in front of The High Roller as it turned blue in celebration of Autism Awareness Month.

"Our 'Building Blocks' carnival and 'Light It Up Blue' party were wonderful events for our very special populations," said Shelley Berkley, CEO and Senior Provost of Touro University Western Division. "At Touro University Nevada, we will always do our best to help improve the lives of all Nevadans."



TOURO DAY AT THE LEI

Touro University Nevada Students Met with State Legislators to Learn About the Legislative Process



Touro University Nevada was well-represented in the state capitol as students, faculty, and others met with numerous Nevada lawmakers during Touro Day at the Legislature on March 27.

Donned in their white coats and flanked by one of the university's mobile healthcare clinics at the front of the building, students, faculty, and Touro Board Members made

their way through the doors of the Nevada State Legislative Building on a rainy Wednesday morning.

Throughout the day, students had one-on-one meetings with legislators, participated in Senate and Assembly floor sessions, and sat in on committee meetings to learn more about the legislative process. These interactions gave students, faculty, and administrators the opportunity to

discuss how Touro was working to address the state's critical healthcare shortages.

"I wanted to speak with them about the importance of funding more graduate medical education," said first-year medical student and Southern Nevada native, Matthew Shoemaker. "I was born and raised here and would love to stay here and make a difference when I graduate from Touro."



For those who attended, the eye-opening experience helped them learn why it's important to be informed about the legislation that affects their professions.

"The best part of this experience was watching the process of how bills get passed," said Elizabeth Kennelly, a student in the Medical Health Sciences (MHS) program. "I also loved seeing our CEO & Senior Provost Shelley Berkley speak about the future of medicine and how we are going to improve upon it in the future."

After leaving the state legislative building, the Touro group hosted a reception at a neighboring event venue.

"It was great to have an opportunity to witness this in action," said Paula Cook, Assistant Professor in the School of Occupational Therapy. "It was also a great reminder on why it's so important to join your professional association when you're finished with your studies."



Touro University Nevada is saddened by the passing of Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson.

Assemblyman Thompson was a fierce advocate for education and took the time to sit down with our students and faculty to learn more about Touro University Nevada during March's Touro Day at the Legislature. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family during this difficult time.



Justin Madriaga
School of Physician Assistant Studies

"My first time visiting Carson City was an awesome experience. We highlighted how Touro actively plays a role in addressing Nevada's healthcare demands by training medical professionals who will eventually practice in our state."



Nicole Clifton
College of Osteopathic Medicine

"Legislative Day was a great experience because it helped me realize how going to Touro helps me give back to the state where I grew up. It taught me how many medical decisions are made through the legislature, as well as the impact I can have on my state. Nevada offers many connections and a sense of belonging to me, so I am eager for when I can practice as a DO and give back to Nevada."



Alyssa Adams
School of Occupational Therapy

"It was very rewarding to be able to learn and immerse myself in the Nevada legislative process. I now have a better understanding of how to make a difference within my community from speaking to my Nevada legislative representatives."



Touro Programs Work Together to Bring Healthcare to Las Vegas's Tunnel Populations

Under Las Vegas is a labyrinth of tunnels where some of Southern Nevada's most vulnerable populations live, as well as bacteria that can make that life painful.

The populations living in these tunnels have been well-documented throughout the last decade. Touro University Nevada is working to make life easier for those living in the tunnels by learning more about the bacteria living in their soil and water.

Assistant Professor Amie Duford, PA-C and Dr. Oksana Matvienko from the Touro School of Physician Assistant Studies began this initiative by asking the Basic Sciences Department for their help collecting samples of soil and water near the tunnels. Medical students Benjamin Savanh and Jacob Brucker were later recruited to assist with the project as well.

"We are hoping to identify which tunnel locations have human pathogens so when we go out to provide healthcare for these populations, our students will be able to look at a wound and identify a certain bacterium so they can properly treat it," said Dr. Amy Stone, Assistant Professor in Touro's Basic Sciences Department.

"We want to find out how to properly treat these wounds," Duford said. "The people living in these tunnels use that water for drinking and hygiene purposes, so we want to know

what's in it. After we run these tests, it will help our faculty and students be better prepared for when they treat these patients."

In 2017, Duford was the recipient of a five-year \$1 million federal grant to help improve healthcare for disadvantaged populations. Although this particular project was paid through the university's strategic planning fund, Duford said it aligns perfectly with the basis of her federal grant's purpose.

"Community outreach is the basis of our PA program," she said. "Conducting these tests will eventually lead to us providing much-needed healthcare for those living in the tunnels."

Touro also partnered with HELP of Southern Nevada's Crisis Intervention Team and the Las Vegas Metro Police Department's Homeless Outreach Team during the sample collecting.

Stone and Dr. Terry Else collected water and soil samples from five different locations across the Las Vegas Valley, including in North Las Vegas and near Flamingo and Interstate 15. Dr. Karen Duus, Associate Professor in the Basic Sciences Department, has also been assisting with the project.

The Touro team should have the test results completed this summer.

HONORING HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS

"I always felt like I was missing something in my life because I never had the opportunity to further my education."

- Henry Kronberg



Daniel Szafran grew up in a small Polish town with two loving parents, five brothers, and two sisters. At the age of 11, his world was turned upside down when the Nazis invaded his native Poland in 1939. Like millions of other European Jews, Szafran was forced to go on a "death march" as he did the best he could to survive in Auschwitz. By the time WWII ended in 1945, only he and one of his brothers had survived.

Szafran was one of 17 Holocaust survivors to receive an Honorary Doctorate from Touro University Nevada during Spring Commencement on May 13. The idea for the special ceremony was proposed to Touro University Nevada CEO and Senior Provost Shelley Berkley by Esther Finder, President of the Holocaust Survivors Group of Southern Nevada. The daughter of Polish Holocaust survivors, Finder remembers her father putting on her cap after she graduated from college.

"My father was 16 when the war started and 22 when it ended," Finder recalled. "Prime time for an education." Finder's father passed away two years ago, but her dream of honoring Holocaust survivors with a college degree was born.

"I immediately said yes to Esther when she called me with the idea," said Berkley. "As a Jewish sponsored

institution, it is fitting that we honor these men and women with a degree of Honorary Doctorate of Letters. These remarkable individuals had dreams of pursuing careers, college, medical school, and more. Those dreams ended because of prejudice, racism, and anti-Semitism."

Henry Kronberg, a 99-year old survivor from Germany who came to Las Vegas in 1962, was never afforded the opportunity to extend his education past grade school.

"If you wanted to go to high school, you needed to fill out an application, and the first question it asked was your religion," he said.

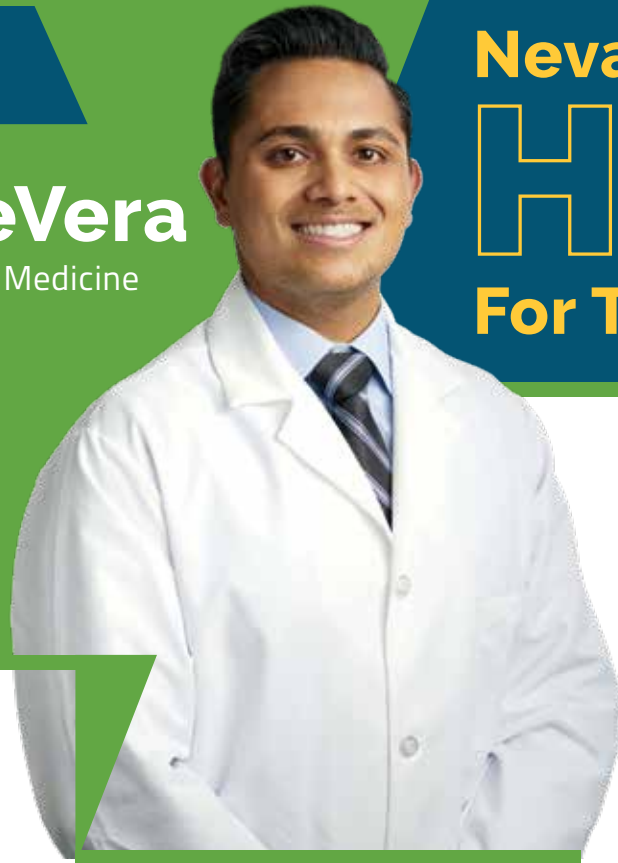
Self-proclaimed as "99 years young," Kronberg spoke softly as he delivered the Commencement address to his fellow survivors, as well as the nearly 4,000 graduates and guests in attendance.

"I always felt like I was missing something in my life because I never had the opportunity to further my education. I was always jealous of the people who were able to get their education," he said. "Now, I have a diploma. That piece of paper...I'm going to frame it and hang it on my wall. I'll look at it every single day. I'm not jealous anymore."



Dr. Ori DeVera

College of Osteopathic Medicine
Class of 2015



Nevada Is HOME For This Alum



Dr. Ori DeVera, a 2015 graduate of Touro University Nevada's College of Osteopathic Medicine, is an Urgent Care Doctor at Southwest Medical Associates in Las Vegas. Born in Los Angeles, Dr. DeVera moved to Southern Nevada with his family in 1997.

Dr. DeVera is board-certified in family medicine and returns to campus to give lectures to Touro University Nevada students and faculty.

Can you explain your journey and why you wanted to become a doctor?

My parents were always involved in the medical sciences and promoted the fact that I could become a doctor ever since I was a kid. When I was 3, I remember telling them that I wanted to be a doctor, and everything I've done in my life has been to fulfill that dream. Everything was about becoming a doctor: the people I surrounded myself with, the classes I took, the clubs I joined, the ways I volunteered within the community...I always wanted to help people and the only way I thought I could was by becoming a doctor.

What was your educational experience like before coming to Touro?

After graduating high school from The Meadows in 2004, I went to Bucknell University in Lewisburg, Penn. I had

quite a few academic scholarship offers and chose to try something new. It wasn't a good fit for me, so I transferred to USC after my freshman year. I went to USC for two years before taking a two-year leave of absence to work here in town as an administrator, program director, and teacher at a health education school. I eventually went back to finish at USC before applying to Touro.

I always wanted to help people and the only way I thought I could was by becoming a doctor.

Why did you decide to attend Touro University Nevada?

It was always my goal to stay in Las Vegas. One of my mentors, a chiropractor, told me that if he could go back to school again he would become a D.O. He told me I had a diverse background and openness to different

modalities of healthcare and the connection to the mind, body, and spirit. He told me he thought I would flourish as a D.O.

At the same time, Touro was right here in my hometown. I knew I could become a doctor, train, and do rotations with doctors in my community. I only applied to Touro.

Anytime I needed a faculty member to talk to, I always had one at Touro.

What was your Touro experience like?

What I can say for certain is that any time I needed a faculty member to talk to, I always had one at Touro. I remember that I didn't do as well as I thought I did on my first biochemistry test, and Dr. Sadik went over the entire test with me afterward. Just to have someone take an hour of their day and do that with me made me feel much less intimidated by medical school. Dr. Krishna and Dr. Guadagnoli did the same exact thing for me. Touro just has very supportive people who know how hard medical school is and are willing to help.

I became my first-year class representative to help bridge the gap between students and faculty. I eventually became Student Government President-Elect and then President. I did three years of student government to help cultivate the relationship between the faculty and students.

Why is it so important for you to stay connected with the university?

I remember how hard applying to medical school was, and I remember how hard it was being in medical school. In some ways, medical school was even harder than my residency, so I understand that it's a difficult experience. I know there are students who need a safe space to ask their questions free of judgement, and I want to help provide that space for them.

What are your plans for the future?

My ultimate goals are not involved in what I'm actually doing right now. I want to keep working as an urgent care doctor and learning as much as I can about healthcare. I work with a lot of students right now, including many from Touro, so I want to eventually get into the clinical education realm of medicine. Whether that involves being part of a residency program or just training students, that's my ultimate goal.

Your fiancée just matched at Mountain View Hospital. How does it feel to know that you'll both have started your careers in the place you call home?

The nicest part about all of this, for me, has been watching someone who isn't from Las Vegas fall in love with my community; the place where I grew up, where I went to school, where I played sports and volunteered. It's so nice to share that with somebody else. To have my girlfriend be a Touro graduate and get her OB/GYN residency locally, the same way I did, I just feel like it strengthens our bond.

We are building a future in the place that I love. She's going to be a huge part of this community. She's going to be bringing life into the world. I'm very proud of her.

Monterey Brookman



BORN And Raised In Las Vegas

You were born in Nevada, but have you experienced life outside of the state?

Except for my college years at Pepperdine University and then my husband's time in medical school and training when we lived in Missouri, Las Vegas has been home. I really never expected to come back to Las Vegas after leaving for college, but Jeff and I met at Pepperdine, fell in love, and when I brought him home to meet my family, he immediately fell in love with the wide-open spaces and big sky of Vegas. Las Vegas was also wide open with opportunity for doctors here in 1980, so we came back to open his practice and have made it our home ever since.

How did your family arrive in Southern Nevada?

During the post-war years, my dad was fresh out of the service and my parents were actually moving to Los Angeles from Grand Junction, Colorado. As they drove through Las Vegas, they noticed so many job openings. Along with the Baby Boom, the Nevada Test Site was booming and Vegas was booming. So, they decided to stay—my mom went to work at First National Bank and my dad went to work as a Clark County fireman.

What was it like growing up in Las Vegas before it held the prestige that it does today?

Vegas was a small, very provincial town. Its growth really exploded when the test site opened. In the 1960s, it was a rather nice, simple life in Las Vegas. The Strip was a place 'over there.'

I don't agree with the people who say that the mob built Las Vegas. The Mormons were the initial visionaries, and then Howard Hughes put Vegas on

Touro has contributed immeasurably to our being a better medically-covered state.

the corporate track. The Atomic Energy Commission built the Nevada Test Site and it made Vegas thrive—scientists and engineers gave Vegas a whole new vibe—and the magnitude of influence of the Hughes Corporation is incalculable.

I recognized my whole life that Las Vegas was a strange town. No matter where you went, when you told someone that you were from Las Vegas, people looked at you...differently. It's still an odd place to be from because we are known in even the most remote corners of the world. That hasn't changed.

How long have you been involved with Touro University Nevada?

My husband and I are very proud to have helped Touro get here. In the early 2000s, when Mayor Oscar Goodman asked us to be on a committee to talk with the Touro New York delegation about bringing a medical school to Southern Nevada, we were ecstatic. We absolutely begged the people from New York to establish a medical school here because we knew it would be a huge success.

We told them Las Vegas had a very dedicated Jewish population, that Las Vegas was diverse—we knew the medical school, Jewish and Osteopathic, would be a hit with the pioneer spirit here. I think Touro has contributed

immeasurably to our being a better medically-covered state and an all-around healthier community.

Why are you so personally invested in Touro?

In regards to the medical school, I believe in the value of osteopathic medicine, its philosophy, its education model, and the foundation that Andrew Taylor Still, M.D., laid out. After being a battlefield surgeon during the Civil War, then seeing families decimated by infectious diseases, he decided medicine had to offer more than pills and surgery—he conceptualized holistic, total person medicine. I believe it's the best medicine that's practiced anywhere.

Also, I am a devout believer of Torah; I think God has set before us the pathways to both healthy and unhealthy living. The history of Touro is beautiful: Steeped in the tradition of giving to do good in the world, Isaac Touro and his son Judah came to America in colonial times to escape anti-Semitism. They built synagogues and hospitals—Jewish doctors often were not always given full privileges, so something needed to be done—they gave and gave. Our university's founders decided that a medical school named to honor the Touro tradition was perfectly befitting. Great choice. I love this foundation and legacy.

As a member of Touro's Advisory Board, what do you hear about the university throughout the community?

For those who know about Touro, its reputation is fabulous. My husband works with doctors who constantly compliment the Touro students on their levels of expertise, caring, and depth. All we hear is, "Wow, those Touro students are the best!"

If you know about Touro, we're parting the Red Sea here. If you don't know about us, then you don't know about all of the great work we are doing, the quality of education, the growth and success of all our graduates in every discipline. When somebody discovers what we have going on within these walls, they understand how important we are to the community, and how dynamic this university is.

What do you think the university can improve on in the future?

We may not be perfect...yet! But we are really, really good. Not to take anything away from the other medical schools in the state, but we are hands-down the best. I think our history is glorious and our future more so. There will always be room for improvements, but everyone at Touro is doing a tremendous job—I see every school getting stronger and better each year. Every graduation signals a brighter, healthier world full of accomplishments and achievement.



DR. KESSLER RETIREMENT

Dr. Robert Kessler, Associate Professor in the Touro University Nevada College of Osteopathic Medicine and one of Touro's original faculty members from 2004, is retiring after a wonderful career in medicine and education.

Congratulations on an incredible career, Dr. Kessler. We wish you the best in retirement!

BRINGING NATIONAL CERTIFICATION TO NEVADA

Stephen J. Cloobek Regional Center for Disaster Life Support Receives National Certification

The Stephen J. Cloobek Regional Center for Disaster Life Support was recently named a certified training center by the National Disaster Life Support Foundation.

With this recognition, Touro University Nevada is home to the only active certified disaster life support center in Nevada.

The National Disaster Life Support Foundation, Inc. (NDLSF) oversees the National Disaster Life Support (NDLS) courses, a series of educational programs to better prepare health care professionals and emergency response personnel for mass casualty events. The NDLS courses are comprehensive, all-hazards, competency-based, standardized, and multi-disciplinary. These courses assist health professionals respond to mass casualty events regardless the cause.

The Cloobek Center offers a Basic Disaster Life Support and Advanced Disaster Life Support training for students, faculty and staff at Touro, healthcare providers, first responders, and other interested community members. Upon completion, attendees will be well-prepared to assist in a disaster or mass casualty scenarios.

"Natural disasters and mass casualty scenarios can happen anywhere, and a better prepared community will help save lives," said David Clegg, Administrative Director of the Cloobek Center.



Learn more about classes at tun.touro.edu/ndlsf

CLASS NOTES

OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE GRADUATES

JAVOID KHAN, DO08

Dr. Javid Khan works at Kaiser Permanente in Marin and Sonoma Counties in the field of Allergy and Clinical Immunology. He is dually board-certified in Internal Medicine as well as Adult and Pediatric Allergy and Clinical Immunology. He lives in the Mission Bay neighborhood of San Francisco.

JESSICA ZARNDT, DO08

In October of 2018, Dr. Jessica Zarndt left her position as the Associate Team Physician for the University of Texas Longhorns and started as an Assistant Team Physician for the UCLA Bruins, as well as an Assistant Clinical Professor in the Departments of Family Medicine and Orthopaedic Surgery at UCLA's David Geffen School of Medicine.

Dr. Zarndt is also proud to have matched her first D.O. into the UCLA Sports Medicine Fellowship, former Touro University Nevada student, Dr. Sabrina Sawlani. Dr. Zarndt taught Dr. Sawlani at Touro as a faculty member during the 2012-13 school year. She is very proud to be her teacher again.

MALLORY NOVACK, DO12

Dr. Mallory Novack completed her OB/GYN residency at the University of California San Francisco, Fresno (UCSF). She currently works in private practice in Montana and works as a faculty for the UCSF Fresno OB/GYN residency.

BARBARA KIERSZ, DO14

Dr. Barbara Kiersz works in a group family practice doing osteopathic manipulative treatment in Austin, TX.

Move to a New CITY?

EDUCATION GRADUATES

JESICA KUDISCH, EDU07

Jesica Kudisch, who graduated with a Master's degree in Special Education, is the Assistant Principal at Western High School in Las Vegas.

Did you receive a NEW PROMOTION?

Get MARRIED?

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT GRADUATES

DENNIS DEY, PA12

Dennis Dey works in the Ear, Nose and Throat Outpatient Department at John Peter Smith Hospital in Fort Worth, TX.

MOUSUMI DEY, PA13

Mousumi Dey works as a gastroenterologist PA at John Peter Smith Hospital in Fort Worth, TX.

Do you have NEWS TO SHARE?

NURSING GRADUATES

LINDSAY CASCI (NEE SMITH), BSN11

Lindsay Casci works in the PICU and Pediatrics Acute Care units at Renown Children's Hospital in Reno. She is dual certified as an Acute Care Pediatric Nurse Practitioner and a Family Nurse Practitioner. She is married with a 2-year-old daughter and has another one due in July.

JOANNE FALSETTA, DNP17

Joanne Falsetta teaches critical care/cardio-pulmonary at Grossmont Community College and recently started as a course instructor with Western Governors University.

We'd love to hear from you and your fellow alumni!

Please send your class notes to Steven Slivka, Communications Coordinator at steven.slivka@tun.touro.edu.

Touro YOU

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

6/21

**DPT
Commencement**

Congregation
Ner Tamid

7/1-5

**CHHS & MHS
New Student
Orientation**

Touro University
Nevada

7/3

**CHHS & MHS
Day of Service**

7/24

DO Pre-Orientation
Touro University
Nevada

7/25

DO Day of Service

7/26, 29-30

DO Orientation
Touro University
Nevada

9/13-16

Alumni Reunion

SAVE THE DATE

9/16

**White Coat
Ceremony**
Rio All Suites Hotel
and Casino

Touro YOU

Schyler Richards
Vice President of Advancement

Melody J. Crickman
Director of Marketing & Public Relations

Stories by:

Steven Slivka
Communications Coordinator

Photos by Mona Shield-Payne

Design and layout by Virgen Digital Brand Marketing

For more information on Touro YOU stories
or how you can join our mailing list, contact:

advancement@tun.touro.edu
702-777-3100

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