



UALR students Jodi Hunt, Stefanie Difrancesco and Rebecca Champion (front) and Matthew Hartley, Don Butler and Will Jones (back)



Phil Kaplan, Doug Buford, Ruthe Kaplan and Charles and Betty Hathaway

## UALR Finale no mere encore

Supporters of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock's fine arts programs were treated to an evening of dinner theater, as the UALR Opera Theatre's casts of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Pirates of Penzance* and Lerner and Loew's *My Fair Lady* performed selections from each show at the Finale benefit April 28. The Jack Stephens Center's practice basketball court was transformed into a formal backdrop for the night's festivities, which raised \$80,000 for the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences' programs.

The first Finale last year raised \$50,000.

KTHV meteorologist and UALR alumnus **Tom Brannon** served as master of ceremonies. He introduced the 400 guests to UALR's Friends of the Arts, a volunteer organization, and its seven arts partners in central Arkansas, the Accademia dell'Arte, Arkansas Arts Center, Arkansas Chamber Singers, Arkansas Festival Ballet, Arkansas Repertory Theatre, Arkansas Symphony Orchestra and Wildwood Park for the Performing Arts.

**Provost David Belcher** discussed the importance of ensuring the presence of "first-class cultural opportunities" in central Arkansas, which he said are enhanced through the partnerships UALR's arts department shares with community arts organizations. He named UALR alumni **Donna and David Cone** as winners of the Bringing the Arts Together Award for their commitment to leadership in the arts community.

"Art is one medium that allows man to express his God-given talent," David Cone said in his acceptance speech.

As a surprise to the Cones and to last year's honorees, **Cindy and Chip Murphy**, Belcher announced the establishment of the David and Donna Cone Fi-



Judge Audrey Evans and Janet Aronson with Amy Blackwell Bennett's *Venus Figure*

nale Scholarship and the Chip and Cindy Murphy Finale Scholarship, which will provide financial support to talented UALR arts students.

UALR representatives at Finale included Belcher and his wife, **Susan**; **Chancellor Joel Anderson and wife, Ann**; **Deborah Baldwin**, dean of the College

of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, and her husband, **Jim**; **Bob Denman**, executive director of development; **Laurie Ann Ross**, the corporate and foundation gifts officer, and her husband, **Charlie**; and **Charles Hathaway**, chancellor emeritus, and his wife, **Betty**.

— *Samantha Friedman*



Donna and David Cone