

**BOARD OF REGENTS  
BRIEFING PAPER**

**1. AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Nevada State University Honorary Degree Recipient, 2026 Commencement**

**MEETING DATE:** March 5-6, 2026

**2. BACKGROUND & POLICY CONTEXT OF ISSUE:**

Nomination of an individual to receive an honorary degree at 2026 commencement ceremony.

**3. SPECIFIC ACTIONS BEING RECOMMENDED OR REQUESTED:**

Nevada State University Acting President Amber Lopez Lasater requests approval to present Jon Porter with an honorary degree at NSU's 2026 commencement ceremony.

**4. IMPETUS (WHY NOW?):**

Nevada State University's commencement is scheduled in May 2026. Procedures and Guidelines Manual Chapter 8, Section 1(2) requires approval by the Board of Regents for honorary degree nominations.

**5. CHECK THE NSHE STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL THAT IS SUPPORTED BY THIS REQUEST:**

- X Access (Increase participation in post-secondary education)
- X Success (Increase student success)  
Close the Achievement Gap (Close the achievement gap among underserved student populations)
- X Workforce (Collaboratively address the challenges of the workforce/industry education needs of Nevada)  
Research (Co-develop solutions to the critical issues facing 21<sup>st</sup> century Nevada and raise the overall research profile)  
Not Applicable to NSHE Strategic Plan Goals

**INDICATE HOW THE PROPOSAL SUPPORTS THE SPECIFIC STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL**

This nomination aligns with key NSHE strategic goals of Access, Student Success, and Workforce Development through Jon C. Porter's foundational support for expanding higher education opportunities in Southern Nevada. He played a pivotal role in the establishment of Nevada State College as Nevada's first state teaching-focused institution, and his continued support helped guide the institution's growth and transition to Nevada State University.

Porter's public service and civic engagement also reflect NSHE's emphasis on workforce preparation by strengthening local and regional partnerships among government, business, and educational institutions, creating pathways that support student success and regional economic development.

**6. BULLET POINTS TO SUPPORT REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:**

- Served at the local, state, and federal levels, including Mayor of Boulder City, Nevada State Senator, and U.S. Representative for Nevada's 3rd Congressional District.
- Played a pivotal role in establishing Nevada State College as Nevada's first state teaching-focused institution.
- Supported the institution's growth and transition to Nevada State University.
- Advanced public policies and regional partnerships that expanded access to higher education in Southern Nevada.
- Demonstrated bipartisan leadership strengthening education, workforce development, and public institutions.

**7. POTENTIAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:**

None

**8. ALTERNATIVE(S) TO WHAT IS BEING REQUESTED/RECOMMENDED:**

None

**9. RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE:**

The Chancellor's Office recommends approval.

**10. COMPLIANCE WITH BOARD POLICY:**

- Consistent With Current Board Policy: Title # 4 Chapter # 1 Section # 15
- Amends Current Board Policy: Title # \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter # \_\_\_\_\_ Section # \_\_\_\_\_
- Amends Current Procedures & Guidelines Manual: Chapter # \_\_\_\_\_ Section # \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: Consistent with Procedures and Guidelines Manual Chapter 8, Section 1(2)
- Fiscal Impact: Yes      No   
Explain:



## Honorary Degree Nomination Form

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1. Degree to be Awarded:

X \_\_\_ Honorary Masters \_\_\_ Honorary Baccalaureate \_\_\_ Honorary Associate

2. Please state the name and address of your nominee for an Honorary Degree.

Jon Porter

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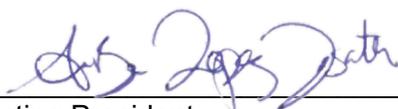
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3. Honorary degrees shall be awarded to persons who have made significant contributions to the improvement of the quality of academic programs and academic life at one of the NSHE's institutions. Persons currently holding public elected office are not eligible for the degree except in extraordinary circumstances.

What are your reasons for nominating this person? (Attach additional pages, if necessary.)

Jon C. Porter is a distinguished public servant whose leadership at the local, state, and federal levels was pivotal to the establishment and early success of Nevada State College, now Nevada State University. As Nevada's first state teaching-focused institution, Nevada State expanded access to four-year public higher education in Southern Nevada, and Porter's advocacy and support were instrumental in creating the conditions necessary for its founding and early development.

Throughout his public service career, including service as Mayor of Boulder City, a member of the Nevada State Senate, and as the United States Representative for Nevada's Third Congressional District, Porter consistently advanced policies and partnerships that strengthened higher education, workforce development, and regional economic growth. His sustained support during Nevada State's expansion and transition to university status reflects a lasting commitment to educational access, institutional advancement, and student opportunity, making him a highly deserving candidate for an honorary degree from Nevada State University.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Acting President

2.03.2026

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Nevada State University

**Bio: Jon Porter**



Jon Christopher Porter is a distinguished public servant, civic leader, and business professional whose career spans local, state, and federal service. He began his public service in Boulder City, Nevada, where he served on the City Council from 1983–1993 and as Mayor from 1987–1991. Porter later represented Southern Nevada in the Nevada State Senate from 1994–2002, advancing public policy focused on community development, governance, and regional growth.

In 2002, Porter was elected as the first Representative for Nevada’s newly created 3rd Congressional District, serving three terms in the U.S. House of Representatives from January 3, 2003, to January 3, 2009. During his tenure in Congress, he served on key committees including the Ways and Means Committee and the Budget Committee and was known for his pragmatic, bipartisan approach to issues affecting economic development, public infrastructure, and community well-being throughout Nevada.

Beyond elected office, Porter has maintained extensive civic and institutional engagement through leadership and advisory roles. His board and council affiliations have included Chairman and Trustee of Las Vegas Events; Charter Board Member of the Southern Nevada Water Authority; member of the District Board of Health for Southern Nevada; Board of Directors of the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority; Board of Directors of the Nevada League of Cities; member of the Civilian Military Council at Nellis Air Force Base; Board of Governors of The Valley Health System; Board of Directors of Farmers New World Life Insurance Company; and the Music Maker Relief Foundation. Through these roles, he has contributed to regional planning, public health, water resources, economic development, and community resilience.

Porter has also demonstrated a longstanding commitment to education and institutional development across Southern Nevada. His public leadership and civic engagement supported efforts to expand access to post-secondary education.

Outside of public service, Porter remains active in business and community affairs. He is an accomplished musician, having played keyboard in bands since junior high, and his personal interests include music, boating, and family.