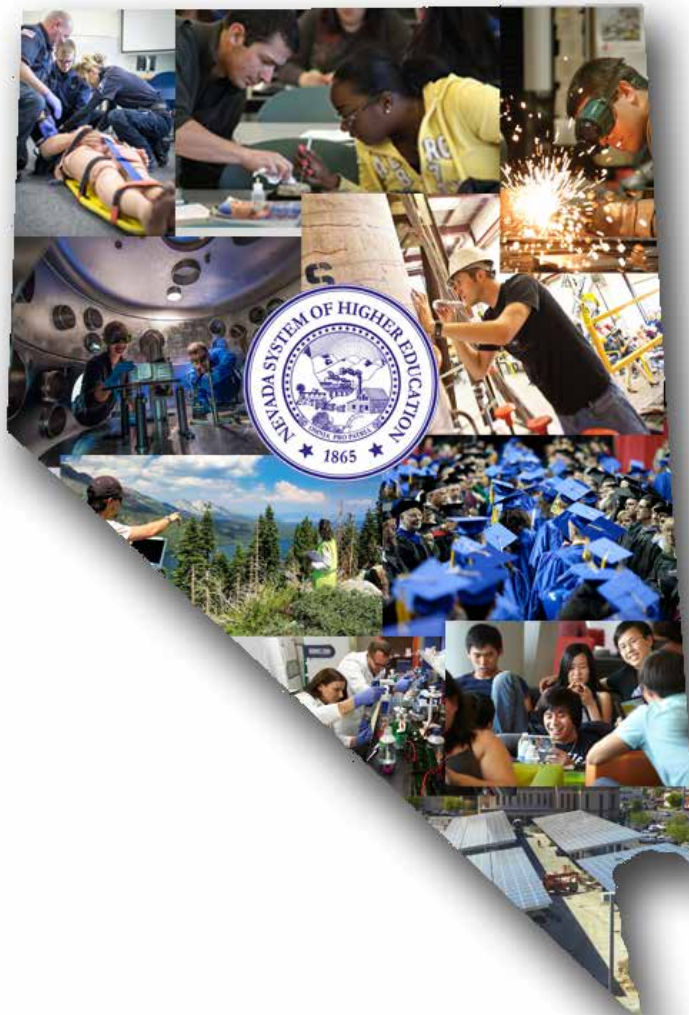




NEVADA SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Expanding by Degrees

NSHE's Role in Building a New Nevada



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Letter from the Chancellor

In the fall of 2011, the Board of Regents released The *State and the System: NSHE Plan for Nevada's Colleges and Universities*. That plan, commonly referred to as the Board's "Strategic Directions," outlined specific goals for combining excellence and austerity to achieve student success. Since that time, the State and the Nevada System of Higher Education have been laser-focused on a broad completion agenda grounded in an expectation of increased performance at every level. We've come a long way since then. But despite the successes of the last several years, there is much work to do.

In his State of the State address, Governor Sandoval called on all Nevadans to join him in building a New Nevada, and he laid out a bold vision and aggressive agenda to achieve that goal. The Nevada System of Higher Education applauds the Governor's continuing leadership and understands the challenging role for higher education if, together, we are to achieve the Governor's goal.

It is clear that increasing college attainment remains one of our greatest challenges. Nevada continues to face a skills gap as a growing percent of projected jobs will require a college degree or credential in the years to come. Our state's college attainment rate was 27.5 percent for young adults when Strategic Directions was originally issued. By 2012, 30.1 percent of Nevadans between the ages of 25 and 34 held an associate degree or higher, well below the national average of 41.1 percent. It is estimated that by 2020, 58 percent of all jobs in Nevada will require a degree of post-secondary training. The skills gap in Nevada must be closed if we are to build the diversified and stronger economy that we desire.

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Public higher education is central to this statewide effort. Not only is a college degree the ticket to a better job, better pay, and long-term stability; it is the foundation for a stable, stronger and more diversified economy. If we are to build a New Nevada by expanding and diversifying our economy, it must be by degrees – more certificates, associate, baccalaureate, and advanced degrees that are closely aligned with our state's economic development plan.

This is the challenge the Nevada System of Higher Education faces. This is the challenge we embrace.

As we reflect in this report on what we have recently accomplished and take note of the considerable work that remains to be done, it is clear that we must expand performance, access, success, opportunity, efficiency, and alignment.

Only through a concerted effort in all of these areas will we be successful in expanding capacity, and meeting our role in building a New Nevada.



Daniel J. Klaich
Chancellor
Nevada System of Higher Education
January 2015

Expanding Performance

Following the 2011 Legislative session, the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) commenced work on a funding model based on performance. Performance funding for NSHE was finalized by the 2013 session of the Nevada Legislature in conjunction with a new funding formula, equitably allocating state support for instruction within NSHE. Instructional funding changed from a formula based on input (enrollments) to a new formula incorporating national best practices on output as measured by completion and performance improvements. A critical aspect of the new formula is a performance pool derived through a carve-out of General Fund dollars allocated to teaching institutions. For Fiscal Year (FY) 2015, five percent of the institutions' base formula funding

was set aside and could be earned back by achieving performance targets. The carve-out amount is set to increase each year by five percent until 20 percent of the institutions' appropriated funding is subject to the Performance Pool in FY2018. Systemwide performance increased under this model. Targets have been set for each of the teaching institutions to further incentivize their efforts. Measurable progress has been made, but more needs to be done.

Performance extends far beyond funding in the NSHE. In 2010, Nevada joined the [Complete College America \(CCA\)](#) alliance, made up of 33 states, the District of Columbia, and the Commonwealth of the

Northern Mariana Islands. Member states committed to increase the number of students graduating with a degree or credential of value by 2020. In addition, Complete College America strongly emphasizes closing the attainment gap for historically underrepresented populations.

To join the Alliance of States, Governor Sandoval, in partnership with the Nevada System of Higher Education, pledged to make college completion a top priority and commit to the following three actions:

- *Setting statewide completion goals;*
- *Collecting and reporting common measures of progress; and*
- *Developing action plans to move key policy levers.*

Through its involvement in Complete College America, NSHE systematically pursued the policies recommended by CCA, including the new funding formula with its performance funding component, limiting maximum credits for baccalaureate and associate degrees, and co-requisite models (which merge remedial concepts with gateway course material) for remediation, to name but a few. These and other efforts are designed to create a culture of completion in Nevada, ensuring that every student has a path to graduation.

One such effort designed to ensure that more students not only graduate, but graduate on-time is the [15 to Finish campaign](#). Students who enroll full-time (15 credits per semester) are more likely to progress from freshman to sophomore status (retention), are more likely to graduate, will pay less in college fees and living expenses, and will gain additional years of earnings. It is clear from NSHE and national data that undergraduate students enrolled full-time are more likely to graduate than students who completed fewer credits per year (National Beginning Postsecondary Student Survey, 2004-09).

NSHE institutions face an epidemic in the number of part-time students who



do not graduate, particularly at community colleges. On average, only 2.6 percent of students starting at a Nevada community college enrolled in fewer than 12 credits their first semester graduate within four years (fall 2008 cohort of first-time, degree-seeking students). That means 97 out of 100 part-time community college students fail to achieve their academic goal of graduating with a degree or certificate of value within those four years.

This rate of failure is unacceptable and the 15 to Finish campaign is one example of the NSHE using data to identify barriers to graduation. While it is too early to fully evaluate the result of this campaign, early data indicates a level of success.

Expanding Access and Success

Access no longer means a seat in a classroom. Access entails making postsecondary education available to students when they want it, in a format that they expect, and as soon as they are prepared for the rigors of college-level coursework. It also means that artificial boundaries based on years of “seat time” must be erased. The NSHE is moving aggressively to provide this critical access to Nevadans, and at the same time, investing in partnerships with K-12 to ensure that Nevadans are ready for college when they graduate from high school.



Partnerships with Public Education

Preparing our state’s K-12 students for the

rigors of a college education through Nevada’s adoption of the Common Core State Standards (also known as the [Nevada Academic Content Standards](#)) is a top priority for NSHE and our partners in the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) and Nevada Board of Education. Together, we have launched a new communications campaign - [Nevada Ready!](#) - to raise awareness of our state’s public school standards and what those standards mean. The goal is to ensure that all students graduate from high school prepared to enter credit bearing college-level courses or to enter the workforce, and reflect the knowledge and skills most valued by employers and higher education.

Today’s students are being taught under more challenging standards to prepare them for college and the modern workplace. This places Nevada’s education system on par with every other state in our nation. Nevada’s Academic Content Standards are about increasing expectations of what our students know and the skills they need to master to be college and career ready. Raising academic expectations for students will lead to a stronger system of public education in Nevada and ensure all Nevadans are ready for success in the 21st Century.

In addition, the State Board of Education recently selected the ACT for statewide administration to all high school juniors in April 2015. This landmark decision reflects the strong partnership between NSHE and the State in ensuring that all students have access to a college-readiness assessment. NSHE continues to partner with the NDE and local school districts in supporting students who do not achieve college-readiness benchmarks. These students are counseled to take appropriate steps in their senior year of high school to correct the identified deficiencies.

Nevada’s colleges continue to expand dual enrollment programs throughout our high schools, providing opportunities for students to get a jumpstart on their college

degrees. At the same time, NSHE community colleges have entered into agreements to expand career and technical education, all providing more access to the education that Nevada needs.

Remediation and Gateway Course Completion

Nevada utilizes remedial education instructional models and course designs that are the most effective in ensuring that students are successful in completing the gateway mathematics and English courses within the first year of enrollment, significantly improving student success. The efficacy of co-requisite models in remediation have been demonstrated both nationally and in Nevada through the work of the University of Nevada, Reno.

Nevada is one of 22 states that have made a commitment to dramatically increase the percent of students placed into remedial education who complete gateway courses within one academic year. That means a wholesale commitment to ensuring that students enroll in gateway courses as soon as they set foot on an NSHE campus, which in turn requires changing the way we not only place students, but changing the way remedial courses are taught. The co-requisite model is one example, as campuses work to embed the necessary content support into the college-level course that would otherwise be placed into a remedial course, essentially killing two birds with one stone – increasing student success along the way.

eLearning Initiative

The NSHE will continue expanding access to higher education through eLearning initiatives across the state. For many Nevadans, public

higher education is not attainable due to geographic proximity to higher learning or

to work and family obligations. According to the Lumina Foundation, in 2010 almost 378,000 Nevada adults started college but did not obtain a degree. NSHE's eLearning initiative will help all students – including adults in the workforce who desire to complete their degree through one of the NSHE campuses. The NSHE will continue providing expanded access to the state's exemplary higher education programs.

Starting in January 2015, the NSHE, in collaboration with partners in public education, will provide all students and instructors a vast repository of online courses and materials that are open and accessible to the public through membership in [The NROC Project](#) – a community guided, non-profit project focused on new models of digital content development, distribution and use. As members of the NROC Project, the NSHE will have unlimited access to NROC content and systems. Our instructors will have the ability to customize NROC's EdReady modules for remedial mathematics. This includes a variety of teaching resources, professional development resources, direct support and access to a collaborative community of education leaders nationwide. EdReady modules from NROC in mathematics are already available, and English modules are slated to become available soon. An added benefit of NROC membership is access to HippoCampus, a repository of high-quality, multimedia learning objects from The NROC Project, Kahn Academy, PhET, SIATech, and others. NROC membership will include access for Nevada's eleventh and twelfth grade students, providing a tool to assist these students in better achieving college readiness.

Access and Affordability

If we are to be successful in building a New Nevada, we must include all Nevadans. Through its Complete College America efforts, NSHE extensively examined issues related to [access and affordability](#), starting with a few basic questions. How accessible are NSHE institutions to low-income families in Nevada? Can NSHE achieve its



CCA goals if it does not increase access for low-income families? The reality is that historical conversations on the cost of college in Nevada focused on the base registration fee only. When comparing the base registration fee to tuition paid in western states, Nevada always looked inexpensive. However, this approach of focusing solely on the base fees ignores the other significant costs associated with going to college, including living expenses and other mandatory fees. In addition, the public conversation on affordability in Nevada has not historically included a review of the role of financial aid in making college affordable to low-income families.

The unfortunate reality is that Nevada is last in the nation in terms of college affordability with respect to median family income for students attending two-year institutions. The total unmet need for all NSHE institutions in 2012-13 was \$434.5 million, based on Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) filers who enrolled at least one term during the academic year. This unmet need figure represents the

unfunded gap that students must make up on their own to cover the total cost of education. As a state, we cannot reasonably expect to achieve our long-term CCA attainment goals if we do not address the issue of access and affordability, particularly at our two-year institutions.

Affordability limits participation rates for students from low income families in Nevada. Specifically, Nevada has one of the lowest community

college participation rates in the country for students from low income families. At 6.4 percent in 2012, Nevada is well below the national average of 15.0 percent for participation rates of students from low income families. When considering the percentage of family income required to pay for one year of full-time enrollment at a community college, it is understandable why Nevada's low income student participation rates are unacceptably low. Specifically, in 2011-12 the percent of median family income required to pay for one year of full-time enrollment at a community college, including living expenses and less financial aid, was 18.9 percent. That is significantly higher than the national average of 13.5 percent. For families in the lowest income quintile, paying for college is even more challenging, requiring 62.4 percent of family income.

NSHE strongly urges the State to consider establishing a state-supported need-based financial aid program. Nevada will not achieve its aggressive goals for graduating more students if affordability is not adequately addressed to ensure access to higher education for all Nevadans.

Expanding Opportunity

Serving our Diverse State

Nevada is now a state with no ethnic majority. We must ensure that our institutions are reflective of the state's population and that they serve and graduate all Nevadans regardless of race or ethnicity. NSHE recognizes that diversity is essential to the education of each student, and it emphasizes inclusion as we strive to help students overcome challenges, celebrate differences, and prepare to be engaged citizens. Between 2002 and 2012, NSHE went from a 39 percent enrollment gap to a 7 percent enrollment gap between white and minority students. In



addition, minority students are earning an increasingly larger proportion of the awards conferred by NSHE institutions. The number of awards conferred to minority students System-wide has increased by 171 percent in 10 years. Much has been accomplished, but there is much work left to do, and the NSHE launched a number of initiatives to help create diverse and inclusive policies, practices, and institutions.

Diversity Summits

Now in its third year, annual diversity summits are daylong events which include track sessions related to diversity and inclusion, student success initiatives, workforce and economic development, and community engagement. Each summit emphasizes the overarching theme of examining pipelines to higher education and how they can be expanded. The summit is free of charge and open to students, staff and faculty of the NSHE institutions and the public.

Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI) Task Force

The HSI Task Force provides a system-wide approach in supporting its six emerging Hispanic-serving institutions: UNLV, UNR,

NSC, CSN, TMCC, and WNC as they work toward receiving full HSI designation, enabling them to compete for federal grants. CSN is our first institution currently applying for HSI designation. In addition, CSN, NSC

and UNLV have received Minority Serving Institution (MSI) status.

The task force concept was born out

of a meeting with the Latin Chamber of Commerce and Latino Leadership Council in southern Nevada, and is focused on providing a statewide view with full collaboration as our teaching institutions move toward HSI status.

Chancellor's Diversity Roundtable

A Chancellor-appointed, 19-member group of volunteer community and business leaders representing diverse communities provides insights, suggestions and recommendations on how NSHE can significantly increase college participation and completion among its most vulnerable and underrepresented student populations. The roundtable engages the community and solicits their input on NSHE initiatives and policies. The roundtable has been instrumental in providing recommendations for steady improvement in diversity efforts and will continue to serve that crucial purpose.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Council

This council of campus presidents and system diversity officers provides statewide leadership in best practices and proposes policies and practices for the improvement of equity, diversity and inclusion. The council encourages regular collaboration among employees and institutions on matters related to equity, diversity, and inclusion. It provides regular reports, supported by current research and related data on the work of the council. In addition, the council provides input to the Board's Cultural Diversity Committee for all matters related to diversity policy.

Through all of these efforts, the NSHE strives to be reflective of, and to better engage and serve, the communities it represents.

Serving our Veterans

All Americans owe a special duty to those who have protected our freedom and defended our way of life. In the Nevada System of Higher Education we take our



obligation very seriously. In recognition of the sacrifice members of our military have made for us, tuition and fees are reduced or in some case eliminated for:

- *Active duty members of the Armed Forces of the United States stationed in Nevada, as well as their spouses and dependent children;*
- *Veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States who were honorably discharged and who on the date of discharge were on active duty stationed in Nevada;*
- *Honorably discharged veterans who enroll in a NSHE institution within two years of leaving active duty;*
- *Family of an active duty member of the U.S. Armed Forces killed in the line of duty;*
- *Active members of the Nevada National Guard;*
- *Children and spouse of a person who was killed while performing duties as a member of the Nevada National Guard; and*
- *Children and spouse of a member of the U.S. Armed Forces who has been identified as a prisoner of war or declared missing in action.*

In addition, all NSHE institutions have offices dedicated to the service of veterans. Our mission is to provide responsive academic, social, and administrative support to student veterans, as well as active duty military members.

We understand that veterans and their families have unique needs and responsibilities, and we support their academic efforts by

providing one-stop, integrated resources to guide them toward success.

With the support of a recent grant, the Nevada Community College Consortium will enhance the Veterans Resource Centers at each college in Nevada. Our goal is to build a system of credit for prior learning across NSHE, fortified with training across institutions and Nevada workforce partners. NSHE plans to not only honor and leverage the experience active duty military and veterans re-entering higher education, but to help make dramatic improvement in their ability to earn higher wages and in their retention outcomes.

Through a collaboration with the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR) and NSHE, the Veterans Resource Centers at each of our community colleges will be provided with access to two important evaluation and education planning tools: ACT WorkKeys and Burning Glass – Careers in Focus.

WorkKeys scores help veterans compare their skills to the skills jobs require. WorkKeys test questions are based on situations in the everyday workplace, and employers across the country are using these assessments to find the most qualified candidates for their jobs.

Burning Glass provides various tools within its platform of data systems for matching people with jobs. Veterans can search a database of job listings via an intelligent job matching engine component, allowing them to upload, build, or store resumes. Veterans can also configure job notification alerts which execute regular search queries against the database in order to identify and notify the veteran of promising opportunities. The technology also provides veterans with information about current job market demand in key Nevada metropolitan statistical areas and nationwide for occupations, skills, degrees, or employers, along with tools for identifying typical skill profiles, qualifications, and career



pathways needed for placement, for searching for job openings in areas of interest, for analyzing different kinds of internships and their requirements, and for identifying local programs of study directed toward targeted occupations.

With all of these services and tools, we will continue to seek ways to honor the service of our returning veterans by fostering a welcoming environment which assists their transition to civilian life and which allows them to easily access the opportunities provided by higher education in Nevada which they so richly deserve.

Expanding Efficiency

Nationwide and in Nevada, the period of the great recession brought about significant reduction in the budgets of public higher education institutions. While states have begun to reinvest, it is clear that higher

education will be expected to continue to do more with less in the future. This “new normal” means that efficiency, transparency and accountability in higher education are more important than ever.

NSHE has a number of ongoing initiatives in the area of efficiency.

iNtegrate 2

iNtegrate is the brand given to the system-wide implementation of new information systems for all NSHE institutions. The first phase of the project implemented was the Student Information System, giving

priority to improving student services.

The name, iNtegrate, was chosen because it represents the means to a functioning and unified system of information and the efficient management of administrative services for students, faculty and staff. In fall 2011, the iNtegrate project’s first phase was successfully implemented. All seven NSHE teaching institutions now use the new student system.

Building on this success, NSHE is now moving forward with the next phase of the project, [iNtegrate 2](#), to replace the existing legacy finance and human resources systems with technology that will reflect highly efficient and effective business practices. The iNtegrate 2 project will reduce unnecessary duplication of our back office functions across our institutions, while ensuring that consistent and effective operating policies are in place. Current human resource business processes such as recruiting, benefits administration, payroll processing, personnel administration, position budget and control, and financial business processes will be evaluated for ways to reduce transactional costs, improve the flow of business operations and streamline operations while increasing service levels across NSHE. This will require significant adjustments to the current set of practices at each institution. Through this implementation approach we will significantly improve business operation efficiencies and establish a platform for shared services among our institutions, where appropriate.

Nevada College Collaborative

In early 2011, the three northern Nevada community colleges, Great Basin College, Western Nevada College and Truckee Meadows Community College, faced several challenges that threatened to make it impossible for them to remain viable institutions. Among these challenges were both a significant change in the higher education funding formula and very limited enroll-



ment growth.

To address these daunting challenges, college and NSHE leaders identified specific strategies to achieve cost savings and efficiencies at each institution while maintaining or enhancing their academic programs, service to students, and value to the communities they serve. Each strategy was reviewed to determine effectiveness in meeting the following goals:

- *Achieve cost savings to allow reallocation of resources to institutions' core missions;*
- *Develop long-term sustainability strategies by evaluating new revenue streams;*
- *Gain economies of scale through centralized transaction processing;*
- *Standardize practices, processes and policies among the community colleges; and*
- *Refocus college staff on mission-critical functions.*

The three presidents of northern colleges and the Chancellor designed a three-pronged strategy for meeting these challenges.

The presidents fully embraced the Nevada College Collaborative that will create a new toolkit for college leadership through the following mechanisms:

- **Talent Sharing:** *Maximize staff by creating opportunities for them to lead in their area of expertise across the three colleges.*

- **Purchasing Power:** *Combine large purchases into a single purchase order to take advantage of economies of scale.*
- **Shared Services:** *Consolidate eight*

business operations into stand-alone cross-college entities.

The presidents further defined the Nevada College Collaborative as a set of centers that provide non-core services to the colleges by employing a specialized team and focusing on the business requirements of each college. The goal of the Collaborative is to provide high-quality, back office functions at a lower overall cost and with greater efficiency than each college can otherwise continue to provide. The Collaborative will achieve cost savings and higher-quality service over time by leveraging organizational re-alignment, economies of scale, technology, standardized business processes and best practices.

Expanding Alignment

Under the leadership of Governor Sandoval, the State has a clear vision for building a New Nevada ([*Moving Nevada Forward: A Plan for Excellence in Economic Development*](#); 02/01/2012). This plan, as implemented in statute, includes higher education as a critical element. Never before has it been more important for alignment between public higher education and the state economy, and the Nevada System of Higher Education exemplifies that alignment on a daily basis.

- *NSHE offers over 700 degrees and certificate programs aligned with the nine industry sectors as identified within Nevada's 2012 economic development plan;*
- *Over 860 research projects from DRI, UNLV and UNR are aligned with single or multiple industry sectors;*
- *NSHE is an active member within all nine industry sector councils established by the Governor's Office of Economic*



Development and leads the health sector council; and

- *UNLV, UNR and DRI were active participants in the successful application of Nevada to be one of only six states to lead the national effort on unmanned aerial vehicles.*

NSHE is active on a daily basis with regional development agencies throughout the state in attracting new business and working to retain and expand current businesses. A very high-profile example is the successful attraction of Tesla Motors to Nevada. Over the next decade, the company is expected to produce thousands of jobs for Nevadans, many of which will require training by public higher education.

Meeting the Tesla Opportunity - Construction

Construction at the Tesla Gigafactory is underway, creating significant demand for skilled building trades workers. Tesla estimates 3,600 jobs will be created during its three-year construction schedule and has made a commitment that at least 50

percent of the workforce will consist of Nevada residents. Many skilled workers who were displaced by the recession are expected to return to the region, but the numbers will not be adequate to

fill the need. CSN, TMCC, and WNC have collaborative agreements with building trades apprenticeship programs, which are already ramping up to meet the increased demand. Enrollment in TMCC's and WNC's apprenticeship courses is expected

to increase dramatically starting as early as Spring 2015.

TMCC is also collaborating with the Northern Nevada Building Trades Council to offer certified pre-apprenticeship training starting in February 2015. This intense, four-week program will recruit unskilled workers and prepare them for entry to one of the building trades apprenticeships. Besides the apprenticeship training, CSN, TMCC, and WNC operate academic programs geared toward construction management, including the Bachelor of Technology degree at WNC.

Meeting the Tesla Opportunity - Operations

Planning for the training needs of the Gigafactory's operations continues to be a target that is progressively coming into focus. Tesla officials provided representatives from NSHE, GOED, DETR, and Nevada works with a packet of job descriptions. A northern Nevada task force organized by the Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada (EDAWN) is preparing a study on the broad community impacts of the Gigafactory. The study begins with an initial set of assumptions based on GOED projections and various statements made by Tesla and other stakeholders about the composition of the Gigafactory workforce, and will project the following demand in specific training programs:

- *Approximately 35 percent of the Gigafactory jobs will be engineering positions;*
- *Approximately 60 percent of the Gigafactory jobs will be technician positions;*
- *At least 50 percent of the positions will be filled with Nevada residents; and*
- *10 percent of the Nevada residents at the technician level will need no additional training.*

Based on the information we currently have available, the community colleges cur-



rently have, or can quickly develop, training programs for technicians that the Gigafactory needs. The expertise and much of the curriculum already exist at each college. TMCC and WNC are increasing offerings in areas that support advanced manufacturing (Production/Industrial Systems Technology, Welding, and Machining) and will add robotics and automation systems. TMCC is also researching the feasibility of a Certificate of Achievement in Battery Storage Technology. GBC has available capacity in their industrial trades programs and stands ready to assist with their existing Electrical, Millwright, Welding and Instrumentation programs.

For the next two years, the colleges should be able to meet or exceed demand for most of these positions by increasing offerings and implementing innovative scheduling models. The bubble that is expected in 2017 and 2018 will, without further assistance to the colleges, exceed capacity of the northern colleges.

Connecting with our Communities

The NSHE recognizes the importance of our community colleges to create, expand and diversify Nevada's workforce. To ensure the relevance and connection of Nevada's two-year colleges to the communities they serve, the concept of a "System within a System" was developed and includes the following elements.

- *The creation of a Regents committee devoted to community colleges.*
- *The appointment of locally empowered Institutional Advisory Councils at each*

of our four community colleges. The committee charge and framework were approved by the Board of Regents, following input being extensively solicited from stakeholders in the public and private sector of every community served by our colleges, large and small, urban and rural.

- *A Vice Chancellor for Community Colleges position will be created with broad latitude to oversee the System within a System. The new Vice Chancellor, in collaboration with the various NSHE departments serving college administrations, faculty and students, will advocate for the colleges with the Board of Regents and other stakeholders, including legislators. In addition, the Vice Chancellor will interact with the Institutional Advisory Councils, along with the college Presidents, to achieve the progress that will best serve the community in which each college resides.*

The System within a System has already begun to bear fruit. In 2009, Congress passed the Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training (TAACCCT) Grant Program. TAACCCT provides community colleges and other eligible institutions of higher education with funds to expand and improve their ability to deliver education and career training programs and prepare program participants for employment in high-wage, high-skill occupations. Through these multi-year grants, the Department of Labor is helping to ensure that our nation's institutions of higher education are helping adults succeed in acquiring the skills, degrees, and credentials needed for high-wage, high-skill employment, while also meeting the needs of employers for skilled workers. Our four colleges under the Community College Collaborative recently applied for and were awarded \$9.9 million - virtually the maximum amount of \$10 million available



-under phase four of the TAACCCT grants. We received funding for every initiative applied for in the grant application.

Putting Nevadans Back to Work

In a unique collaboration, NSHE and DETR jointly licensed the nationally recognized Burning Glass Technologies workforce and education system. This initiative provides a cutting-edge resource offering:

- “Live” data on job market supply and demand;
- Highly intuitive artificial intelligence tools for matching Nevadans with relevant jobs and for resume building;
- Well-posted career pathways with guidance toward local postsecondary education and training programs.

The Burning Glass system also renders detailed insight into Nevada’s job market landscape in order to help assess how well programs align with state goals and employer demand. The platform’s patented artificial intelligence engine learned from millions of actual career patterns to analyze the kinds of skills, experiences, and credentials that lead to successful job placement.

This includes the middle skill jobs that are critical to Nevada’s competitiveness and to the futures of a range of DETR customers and NSHE community college students alike.

The [Focus/Explorer Career Exploration Portal](#) is a powerful tool for job seekers and students to explore their career opportunities and to find what training and experience they need to qualify for those jobs.

Specifically, Focus/Explorer™ provides job seekers with information on the skills, certifications, and qualifications employers are asking for right now as well as guidance on

next steps, all with an unprecedented level of specificity. Individuals – even those who have little expertise in job searching – can use up-to-date labor market information to inform their career and training decisions.

Through the Focus/Career Job Seeker & Student Placement Portal, job seekers can search a comprehensive database of listings via an intelligent job matching engine, leveraging actual transition patterns as well as underlying skills. In addition, Focus/Career™ helps job seekers build detailed resumes through a structured-response interview designed to articulate transferable skills in employers’ own language. Job seekers can also configure job notification alerts to notify themselves of promising opportunities.

Using these tools, NSHE institutions can work to prepare students for careers, not just their next job. Students and other jobseekers will be able to answer the crucial questions facing those navigating the job market:

- *Is there high demand for the occupations in which I am interested?*
- *What local programs of study or training will help me land my dream job?*
- *What kinds of internships are available and what do I need to qualify?*
- *Are there other jobs I should consider that can still lead to my career of interest?*
- *What is the pathway to advancement in my occupation, and what skills will I need to move ahead?*

NSHE will also have access to Labor/Insight™, Burning Glass’ market analysis tool for real-time labor information. Labor/Insight™ sits atop a historical database of nearly 200 million postings, and is able to analyze job postings on a far more granular level than traditional sources of labor information.

Institutions, ranging from the Lone Star Community College System and the



Kentucky Community and Technical College System to the University of Maryland and Harvard, have used Labor/Insight™ to assess program performance and build stronger relationships with employers. These insights have been used to shape curricula to ensure that programs are providing the right skills and producing graduates who are “ready to work” on their first day.

Expanding Public Medical Education

In 2012, Nevada ranked 46th out of 50 states in the number of physicians per

100,000 population and 48th in the United States in the number of primary care physicians per 100,000 population. These numbers highlight an immediate opportunity to improve quality of care issues that are ever-present in the Nevada

health care economy, which will, in turn, support growing economic development and diversification of this significant sector.

The health care economy is the fastest growing sector in the U.S. today, and Nevada stands to benefit from this reality. In fact, the health care sector is listed as one of the top priorities in the most recent Nevada State Economic Development plan. Within this context, it is important to note that public medical education expansion has the potential to become a centerpiece asset, with dynamic abilities to leverage existing health care investments consisting of the hospitals, clinics, labs, and diagnostic centers through-

out urban and rural Nevada. The impact for greater learning and community health services through such a concerted effort is immense. This enhanced coordination between health care assets will also stimulate the development of new infrastructure to meet the needs of the existing and burgeoning patient population, with a special ability to focus on the underserved populations throughout the state.

In response to this clear need, in September 2013, the Board of Regents began an intense, statewide collaborative planning process to expand public medical education in Nevada. A cornerstone of this initiative stressed the vital importance and significance of coordination and collaboration among the System’s university presidents to effectively expand medical education in Nevada. After more than a year of planning and coordination, the Board of Regents approved a statewide public medical education expansion plan focused on the elements required to support two separately-accredited, fully-developed, coordinated and complimentary, and financially sustainable schools of medicine. UNLV and UNR formally joined forces through a statewide approach facilitated by the NSHE to:

- *Develop a separately accredited, full-scale, research-intensive, M.D.-granting medical school at UNLV;*
- *Strengthen the University of Nevada School of Medicine (UNSOM) to allow for a research-intensive program where the majority of undergraduate medical education is accomplished primarily in northern Nevada; and*
- *Expand graduate medical education (residency and fellowships) through the continued sponsorship of UNSOM and future sponsorship of UNLV School of Medicine.*

The vision to expand public medical education statewide by establishing a separately-accredited, full-scale, four-year



M.D.-granting medical school at the UNLV, along with continued development of a comparable full-scale, four-year medical school at the UNSOM, is responsive to the critical need to expand and broaden the health care workforce in Nevada.

Expanding Capacity

Over the six years of the great recession, all Nevadans suffered greatly. Our economy has permanently changed. During that time, no state budget lost more as a proportion of its general fund appropriations than higher education; its legislatively approved budget shrinking by some \$210 million or just about 30 percent of total state general fund appropriations. As detailed above, the NSHE used this period of contraction to selectively and strategically reform itself to a leaner, more efficient and effective organization with a renewed focus on graduating more students. As demonstrated by the results summarized above, we literally did more with less while developing a clear plan defining our role in building a New Nevada.

However, if higher education and the State are to move forward together, now is the time for reinvestment as so many other states have recognized. In response, the Nevada System of Higher Education proposed a [moderate growth budget](#) consistent with its central role in growing the State's economy:

- *A 3.5 percent reinvestment in the instructional budgets of NSHE;*
- *Bridge funding for small rural colleges*

and DRI to enable transition to their new roles and reality;

- *Base budget support for the Boyd School of Law to maintain its tradition of, and commitment to, excellence;*
- *Continuation of the Knowledge Fund overseen by the Governor's Office of Economic Development;*
- *Enhancing workforce funding at our community colleges and STEM education statewide;*
- *Expanding public medical education; and*
- *Ensuring affordability through the establishment of a state-supported need-based financial aid program.*

As the State and NSHE continue to embrace goals related to improving college attainment in a state that remains among the least educated in the country, we must recognize that we cannot continue to do so without significant investment. The last several years have been about austerity and reform - doing more with less. Now it is time to turn the tide and reinvest in higher education. College attainment is a long-term investment that pays dividends to individuals and the State as a whole. Students and their families continue to join in that investment as fees systemwide will be increased on the average by four percent per year for four years beginning in the fall of 2015. Having survived one of the greatest economic downturns in history, it is time for Nevada to follow suit, to take stock and continue in the direction of prosperity, and to reinvest in higher education. This is a time to grow and diversify our economy – expanding by degrees – until we have indeed built a New Nevada.



NEVADA SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION

