

UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, RENO

Honorary Degree Nomination – John Farahi

The University of Nevada, Reno is pleased to nominate John Farahi for the Honorary Doctorate of Letters in proud recognition of his significant contributions to the University and the state of Nevada.

Farahi earned his bachelor's degree in political science from California State University Hayward. During his academic career, Farahi spent his summers working in a motor lodge hotel then known as the Golden Road Motel and now known as the Atlantis Resort & Spa Casino. Forty-five years later, Farahi is the chief operating officer of Monarch Casino & Resort, a publicly traded company, which owns both the Atlantis and Monarch Casino Black Hawk in Colorado. Under Farahi's leadership, the Atlantis was recognized in the 2017 Forbes list of America's best mid-size employers, and Farahi's management has also earned him recognition as the 2011 Entrepreneur of the Year (Reno Gazette-Journal) and the 2012 Most Respected CEO (Nevada Business Journal). In 2013, Farahi's leadership skills led President Obama to appoint him to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Council.

Farahi's involvement in non-profit organizations and on boards in service to his community is extensive. He has served multiple terms on both the Reno Tahoe International Airport Authority Board, with a term as chairman, and the Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors' Authority Board of Directors, where he currently serves as the chair of the RSCVA Finance Committee. Farahi has also served on the boards of the Nevada Commission on Tourism and the University of Nevada, Reno Foundation as well as the V&T Railroad. He sits on the board of the Nevada Resort Association. Through these roles, he has fostered economic development and advocated for policies that help businesses of all sizes excel, as well as advocating for quality of life issues for the citizens of northern Nevada. He has contributed to the education landscape of northern Nevada in numerous ways, including founding the David and Parvin Farahi Jewish Day School in Reno. He has also served as chairman of northern Nevada's AIPAC pro-Israel lobby chapter.

Farahi has also dedicated his 45 years as a member of the northern Nevada community in building education, understanding and awareness in the community of the Middle East. He has personally led dozens of group trips to Israel for hundreds of community members and leaders alike. The participants in these Farahi-led group trips have returned to northern Nevada with a greater appreciation and understanding of Israel and of the Middle East and have commented on numerous occasions how the trips enriched and broadened their worldview. Farahi has also played an instrumental role in bringing the arts, events and culture of the Middle East to his community. These gatherings have helped northern Nevadans experience first-hand the richness and vibrancy of Middle East arts and culture.

In gratitude for decades of philanthropic support, Farahi and his wife Catherine '80 (Art) have been recognized as Silver Benefactors in the University's Honor Court, and the Atlantis has separately been recognized for its contributions as a Gold Benefactor. Farahi has supported initiatives across campus through the years, from athletics to the arts, most recently with a gift to the University Arts Building.