

Dr. Keith E. Whitfield  
PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS  
PERIODIC REVIEW- SELF-ASSESSMENT

**Table of Contents**

I.	Preamble	page 1
II.	Productivity	page 2
	a. Student Achievement	page 3
	b. Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity	page 15
	c. Academic Health Sciences	page 20
	d. Socio-Economic Development, Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Small Business Engagement	page 24
	e. Community Partnerships	page 26
	f. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice	page 28
	g. Workforce Development	page 32
III.	Campus Environment and Shared Governance	page 35
IV.	Digital Transformation	page 41
V.	Institutional Well-Being and Management Effectiveness	page 46
VI.	Infrastructure Enhancements	page 46
VII.	Assessment of the Financial Status of the Institution	page 49
VIII.	Communications	page 51
IX.	Institutional Relations to External Communities	page 51
X.	Government Affairs and Community Engagement	page 52
XI.	Relations with NSHE Board of Regents	page 54
XII.	Challenges and Opportunities	page 54
XIII.	Conclusion	page 55
XIV.	Addendums	page 56

**I. PREAMBLE**

One of the greatest honors in my life was to become the 11<sup>th</sup> President of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) on August 24, 2020. I began this role six months into the pandemic that represented one of the biggest disruptions to the normal operations of universities in higher education. During my presidency, my focus has included student wellness, creating a leadership team, fostering innovation in teaching and research, growing the grant profile, and improving the reputation of the university locally and nationally. I am a self-identified student success president and focus considerable time on growing and improving student experiences, which include central themes of:

- Student Achievement
- Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Leadership Development
- Mental Health and Wellness; and
- Community and Workforce Connections

This document provides qualitative and quantitative assessments of the performance of initiatives undertaken during my time in office. It also includes budgetary strategies, reorganizations, and management of external relationships, in addition to my goals for the future of (UNLV).

In preparing this document, I want to acknowledge and thank my leadership team for the incredible work that has propelled the university on a trajectory of academic and research excellence. In addition, there are countless people that have been contributing to the success our university has experienced over the last few years including current and former Regents, NSHE Officials, donors, alumni, community members, government officials, and most importantly our tremendous faculty, staff, and students. I am honored to share our collective accomplishments in this report that evaluates the institution under my leadership. I also want to emphasize the countless contributions and leadership of my predecessors who laid a foundation of excellence embedded in the vision to propel UNLV to a premier, Carnegie R1 “very high research” university. Only 3% of all research universities in the country hold such designation.

## **II. PRODUCTIVITY**

Among my first priorities was to ensure that we, as a university, are measuring and assessing our progress on the key metrics associated with the university’s strategic plan and in tandem with the five NSHE strategic goals. The initial strategic plan entitled “Top Tier” included many important areas for growth and improvement. As I began my tenure, I wanted to make sure that the plan still represented the goals and aspirations of both the university community and my own aspirations for UNLV. After a three-month long listening tour, we adjusted and added to the original plan and named it “Top Tier 2.0.”

Our Top Tier 2.0 strategic plan is forward-looking and builds upon our progress while identifying potential opportunities as we continue on our path toward achieving greatness. It also frames our decision-making and the basis for identifying priorities and the allocation of resources.

The core areas of our Top Tier 2.0 strategic plan focus on:

- Student Achievement
- Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity
- UNLV Academic Health
- Socio-Economic Development

- Community Partnerships
- Social Justice, Equity, and Inclusion

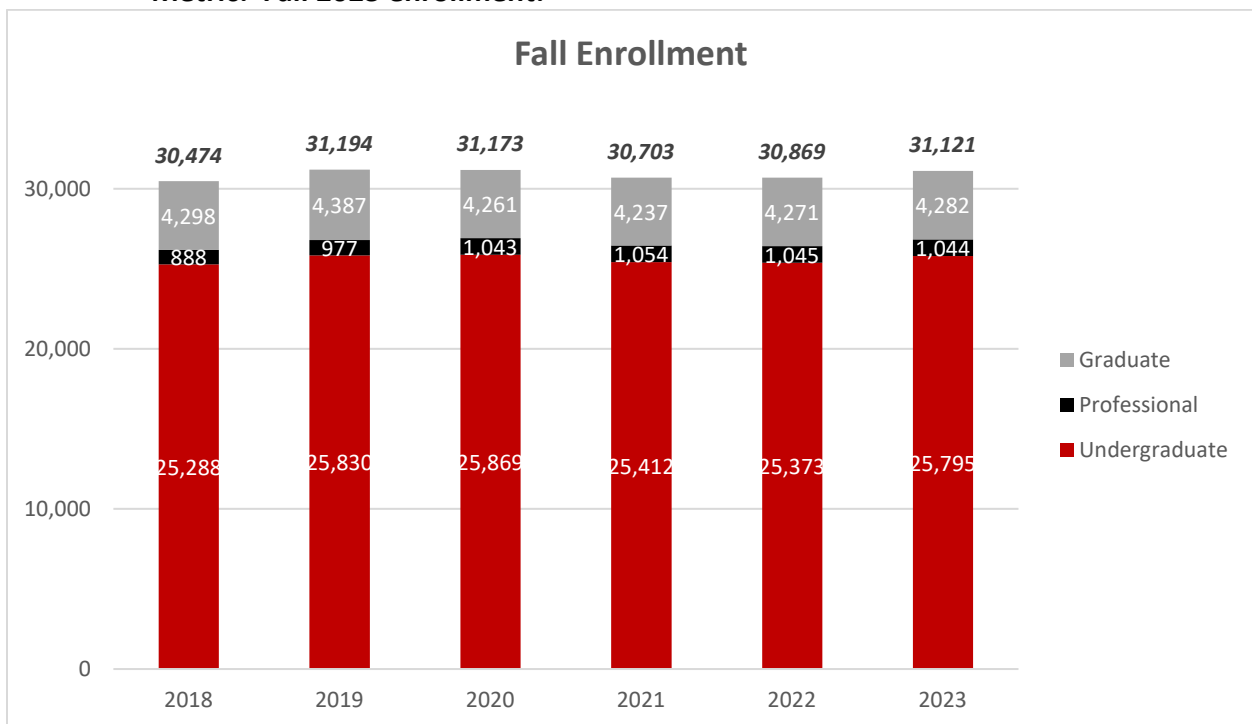
Each of these core areas has associated metrics for assessing current progress in addition to targeted future goals.

**STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**- UNLV recruits, retains, and graduates a diverse body of students through innovative learning experiences, access to mentoring and research opportunities, and the vibrant campus community. **The primary objectives** identified in this category include:

- increase enrollment to 40,000 by 2030
- improving student outcomes while maintaining and strengthening our mission of full and open access,
- improving undergraduate retention rates,
- improving 4 year and 6 year graduation rates,
- and closing graduation gaps. This objective aligns with the **NSHE Strategic Goal #1- ACCESS**; to increase participation in post-secondary education through better access.

- **Objective- Increase enrollment to 40,000 by 2030 and improve graduation rates.** UNLV has thus far managed to largely avoid the national trend of declining college enrollment, and in 2023 we were within 2% of our all-time high in undergraduate enrollment set back in the fall of 2019 and before the pandemic.

- **Metric: Fall 2023 enrollment:**



- **Initiatives designed to continue to increase access**, especially for our in-state students, who are more likely to be first-generation, include, but are not limited to the following:
  - **Early Outreach Programming through the Office of Admissions** has annually served more than 12,000 kindergarten-10 students in the Las Vegas Valley over the past three years. This last year alone, more than 17,000 students were served through programming in Clark County School District (CCSD) schools, through community partnerships and through on-campus programs. The programming has the goal of increasing college awareness and access at younger ages in order to facilitate and strengthen a college going culture.
  - **Financial Aid Presentations and Workshops** facilitated by Office of Financial Aid and Scholarship has more than tripled in the past two years – both in number of offerings as well as the number of students served. Presentations highlighted applying for federal aid, scholarships, maintaining aid eligibility, and completing the verification process. The presentations corresponded with hands-on completion workshops that focused on the same topics and were offered at high schools and various locations in the Las Vegas Valley, on the UNLV campus, and virtually. In the last year alone, more than 225 outreach events were staffed by the Financial Aid team. This has contributed to an increase of more than 12% in the number of FAFSAs submitted by both new and continuing students for Aid Year 2024 over Aid Year 2023 and nearly a 14% increase over Aid Year 2022.
  - **Simplification of the Admission Application Fee Waiver Process**- Removing the barrier of needing pre-approval for a fee waiver prior to being able to submit an application for admission meant that students had to go back to the application at a later time and complete the submission. By streamlining the process, students can now submit an application and request a fee waiver at the same time, thus removing the barrier of needing to complete additional documents for the waiver request, wait for approval, and then go back and submit the application.
  - **Recruitment of Underrepresented Minority Students** has specific plans, targets, and planned outreach. These efforts have grown over the years, but have gained significant momentum in the last two years. In 2022- 2023 alone, the Office of Admissions participated in and/or organized more than 100 events geared toward the recruitment of minority student groups; including, but not limited to Native American, Black/African American Students, Latinx, Women in STEM, and Foster/Homeless Youth.
  - **Addition of online degree options**- In addition to improving access and affordability for traditional college-going populations, UNLV continues to add fully online degree options to expand access for working adults and others who cannot attend on-campus programs. Accelerated by the creation of the MGM

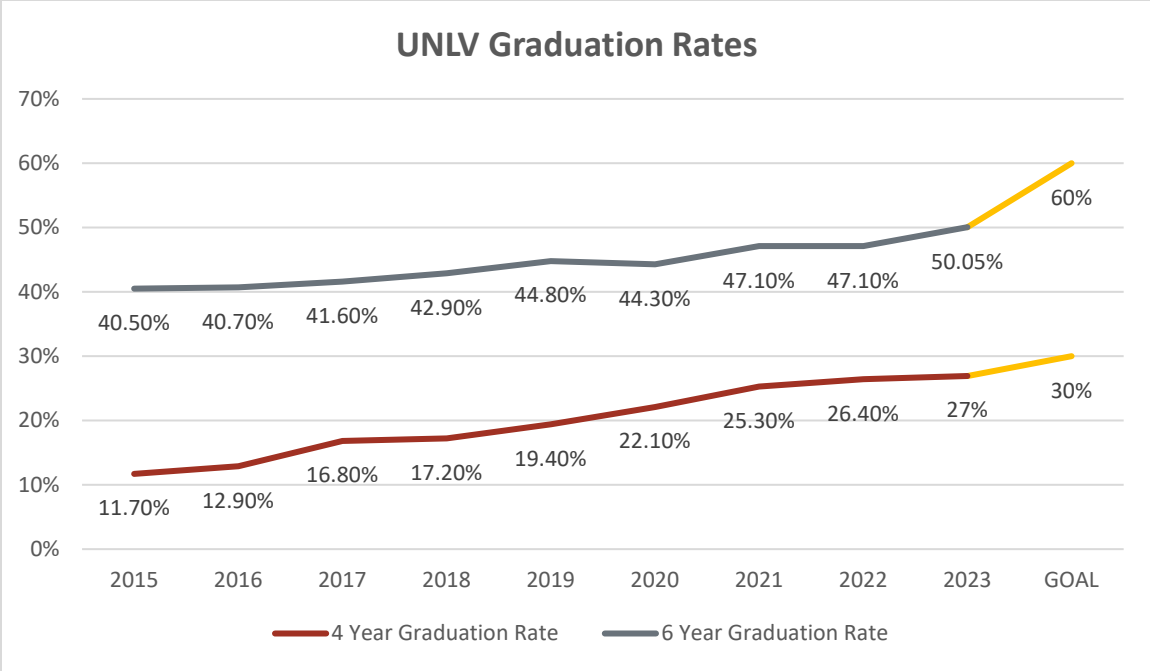
College Opportunity Program, the number of undergraduate certificates and degrees available fully online stands at 14 with an additional 29 certificates and degrees available at the graduate level.

- **Online General Education Academy-** was developed in 2021 to consistently provide a set of high-quality general education asynchronous online courses. Creating the academy empowers all undergraduate programs to consider offering a fully online option since progression will not be stalled by the availability of courses that fulfill general education requirements.

The online general education academy courses were developed as “agile” courses. The 35 fully-online, asynchronous courses each include an instructor manual that describes how to use the materials to teach the course in a hybrid modality and an in-person modality. The instructor manuals include ideas or in-class activities and suggestions on when to release the digital learning materials to the students. This has enabled the university to provide concurrent enrollment teachers with a complete suite of materials to use when teaching high school students.

- **The Early College Program** was initiated in 2021 to expand access to earning college credit while in high school for CCSD students and others from Clark County. The Early College Program has grown over 58% in unique student headcount in the past year. UNLV’s partnership with high schools in Clark County have grown significantly, and we now offer over 21 concurrent courses in cooperation with 13 high schools, serving more than 1,000 students from collaborative conversations between the Superintendent of CCSD and myself. Many of our concurrent and dual enrollment seniors plan to continue their studies as full-time UNLV students in the fall. For the 2021/2022 school year, over 30% of our concurrent enrollment students applied and attended UNLV in the fall of 2022.

- **Metric: Graduation Rates.**

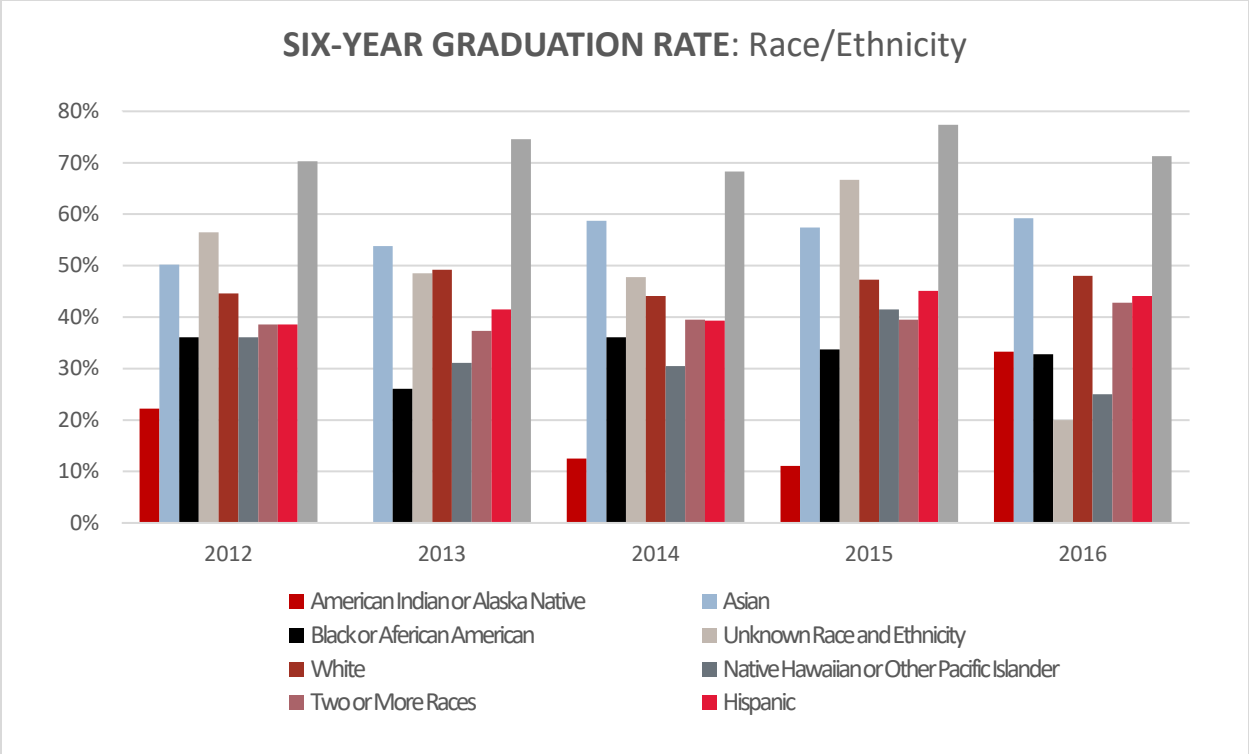


Six year graduation rates have steadily increased at UNLV from 41.6% (cohort fall 2012, graduated by fall 2018) to 50.05% (cohort fall 2017, graduated by 2023). Over the same period, the percentage of first-time, full-time students who graduate within four years has increased from 17.2% (fall 2013 cohort, graduated by 2017) to 26.4% (fall 2017 cohort, graduated by 2021).

While we are seeing positive signs with our overall six-year graduation rate, we have work to do when we split out the graduation rates by ethnicity. By ethnicity, the highest six-year graduation rate in 2022 (excluding international students and students with unknown race/ethnicity) was for Asian students (59.2%) with the two lowest graduation rates being American Indian/Alaska Native at 11.1% and Black or African American at 33.7%. The groups experiencing graduation rates at or above our overall institutional rate are international students and students indicating Asian or White Ethnicities.

Recognition of these disparities in graduation rates has led to some efforts to improve support for African American and Native American students. These efforts include updating UNLV’s Diversity and Minority- Serving Institution webpages and the online campus calendar to improve the visibility of resources and programming specifically designed for African American and Native American students, and increased staffing and programming in the Center for Social Justice (Houssels House).

- **Metric: Six-Year Graduation Rate by Ethnicity.**



Goal: I have committed to raising graduation rates to 60% by 2030.

- **Initiatives developed to increase graduation rates.** During the course of my tenure, we have developed a number of Student Success initiatives targeting the improvement of graduation rates include the following new programs and policies:
  - **Rebel Ready Week**- - This year we introduced Rebel Ready Week, a comprehensive college readiness program that took place the week before classes began. We began the first Monday with about five thousand students and parents in attendance. From there, they spread out across campus for their college welcome where they met their deans, faculty, and advisors to learn more about their academic college and what they would need to do to be successful in their first year of college and beyond. Students spent Tuesday through Thursday attending a wide array of plenary and “passport” sessions to learn about all aspects of campus life, from how to find their classes to how to take advantage of the countless extracurricular activities across campus. The final day began with UNLV Creates, our high-energy academic convocation during which we welcomed our record-breaking classes of undergraduate and graduate students, as well as almost two thousand transfer students. We finished the week with the new students and their parents joining faculty and staff for the President’s Barbecue on the academic mall.

- **Rebel Success Scholars (RSS)** launched in 2021 and is designed to support continued enrollment for students facing financial challenges. The program was initially sponsored by the President's Excellence Fund that is generated from student fees, but now receives some donor support. The first cohort of 176 first year students from UNLV's Fall 2020 class received one-time grants (average of approximately \$3,000) to clear past-due balances and allowed them to stay enrolled for the Fall 2021 semester. In addition to financial support, RSS Scholars were connected to a variety of campus resources to support holistic success, including financial literacy workshops, Career Services, academic success coaching and tutoring, and academic advising.

As of spring 2022, 75% of these students were still enrolled, with an average GPA of 2.93. The estimated impact on UNLV's overall first-year retention rate for the fall 2020 cohort was an increase of 3%. To date, the RSS program has supported more than 230 students, and we continue to build communication that is more sophisticated and programming to enhance the program's impact.

- **Student Outreach Specialists** are part-time staff with assigned caseloads of undergraduate students who, at the time of admission, have three or more characteristics that have historically been associated with lower retention rates (e.g., ACT/SAT below college-readiness benchmarks, first-generation status, Pell recipients, etc.). The SOS team texts, calls, and emails students at key times during their first year at UNLV to offer support, provide reminders for important deadlines, answer questions, and direct them to campus resources.

Since its inception, the SOS program has helped to improve first-year retention for this student population by upwards of eight percentage points, compared to pre-program rates. Furthermore, students served by SOS in their first year continue to show retention benefits in year two and beyond.

Because the group of students who enter UNLV with three or more pre-college factors makes up approximately 40% of our first-time-in-college cohort, this program has a major impact on UNLV's overall first-year retention rate.

- **First Year Experience-** UNLV's First Year Experience (FYE) includes a variety of academic, co-curricular, and engagement activities designed to help first-year students develop a sense of belonging, acquire and hone academic success skills, and identify their path to graduation. FYE components include required first-year seminar courses, a campus common read experience, UNLV Creates (convocation), peer mentoring, and FYE Connection awards for students who participate in multiple FYE activities during their first year. First-year freshmen as well as transfer students are included in this integrated program that allows students to build a community of support while promoting academic and social integration.

- **First-Year Seminars**- First-Year seminars are required for all first-time undergraduate students and are offered by each college at UNLV. These courses introduce students to the University Undergraduate Learning Outcomes, help students to develop college success skills, and build community with their peers. The Academic Success Center offered approximately 55-60 sections annually to serve over 1300 students per year that achieved a fall-to-spring retention rate of approximately 91%.
- **Financial Literacy**- We are working to create a Financial Literacy Institute which will help provide students with the opportunity to complete micro credentials and certificates in financial literacy and help them earn digital badges to document their skills. Unlike other similar financial literacy institutes, ours will look beyond our student population and provide financial aid counseling and financial literacy to faculty, staff, and the broader Southern Nevada community. We aspire to grow the Institute into a transformational enterprise where lives are changed through the power of financial education, both inside and far beyond our UNLV classrooms.
- **Increased Advising Intensity**- Consistent with Board policy, UNLV requires all new first-year and transfer students to meet with an academic advisor before enrolling in classes. During my tenure, UNLV has made a major investment in advising to reach the board-mandated 350:1 student-to-advisor ratio (in 2022 our ratio was 316:1) to enhance our capacity to serve students. In addition, we track and report the percentage of students who surpass the minimum requirement and meet with an advisor at least twice per academic year. This data is also shared with our Advising Centers and the Deans. As a result, we have increased the percentage of students in our college cohort who see an advisor at least twice in the first year from 63% to 72% since 2019, and we continue to work toward a goal of 90%.
- **Graduate Rebel Advantage**- The program provides cohorts of undergraduate students with mentorship, workshops, and professional development opportunities designed to build their base of knowledge about educational options after the bachelor's degree and prepares them for graduate study.
- **Research and Mentorship Program (RAMP)** - Undergraduate students are paired with doctoral or MFA graduate student mentors to work one-on-one on a research, creative, or scholarly project for an entire academic year.
- **President's Innovation Challenge**- This is a multidisciplinary student team competition that began in 2021. It encourages innovative problem solving and team building to help solve major problems for Southern Nevada and beyond.

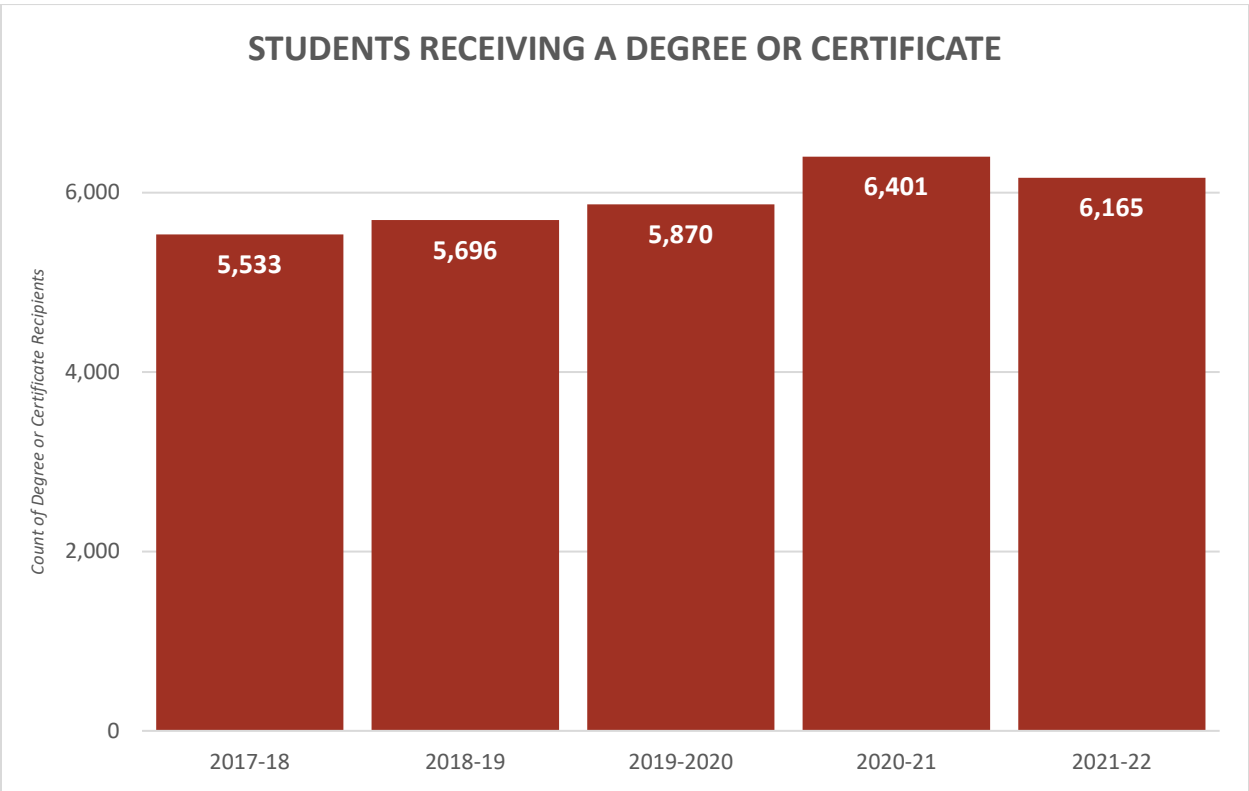
The competition generates ideas from students for how to address the challenge – ideas that could win them a significant cash prize and even a life-changing path for their future.

- **Student Success Summit**- In 2021 we held our Inaugural Student Success Summit, which has now become an annual university-wide program to highlight and grow innovative approaches to supplement student success in an equitable and inclusive learning environment.
- **First Robotics**- In 2020, the leaders of First Robotics reached out to the president's office to restart and grow the relationship with the university. In 2021, the competition was held at UNLV's Thomas and Mack arena. The Howard R. Hughes College of Engineering collaborates with many K-12 schools in Southern Nevada, CCSD, and several local companies by helping with the FIRST Robotics programs at various events throughout the year. We host an all-day season kick-off event on the first Saturday of January for the local high school teams that includes STEM robotics workshops (estimated 150 participants). We also host an all-day kick-off event in September for all of the local middle and high school teams who participate in the FIRST Tech Challenge competition (Estimated 100 participants). We also help the Lee Business School organize an all-day robotics team development workshop that focuses on the soft-skills necessary to complete the STEM robotics competition activities (estimated 100 participants). This program provides an opportunity for UNLV faculty, staff, and students to develop meaningful working relationships with K-12 educators.
- **Simplification of Aid Retention Processes and Adjustment to Aid Retention Policies**- The Financial Aid Office restructured policies and processes to allow more students to keep their aid in order to increase the ability to pay, which directly impacts retention. While maintaining federal compliance, the Financial Aid Office reduced the length of appeal documents to only 2 pages of required information. The requirement had been 6-to-12 pages. Additionally, the pace requirement for earning credits was adjusted to meet the minimum requirements by the U.S. Department of Education (UNLV used to employ a higher than necessary minimum for percentage of course completions.)
- **Digital President**- We created a digital president in the spring of 2022. The goal was to provide a 24 hour/7 day a week concierge for our students, their families, and our community to aid with finding sources of assistance at our university. In the summer of 2022, we added a module that focused on mental health. It provided some personal insights about my own views on the importance of well-being and ways to deal with stress, anxiety, and feelings of depression. This work grew out of one of my trips to our research park where I met two alumni who were creating an artificial intelligence service. I decided that we could use this technology better connect with students in the days of COVID by

using a digital avatar. So, I worked with AI Media Lab and created “Digital President Whitfield.” We used AI to allow the Digital President to converse with students and help them identify resources, address challenges, and understand more about the university. It can answer more than 1,000 questions and the more it interacts with students, the more it grows in ability.

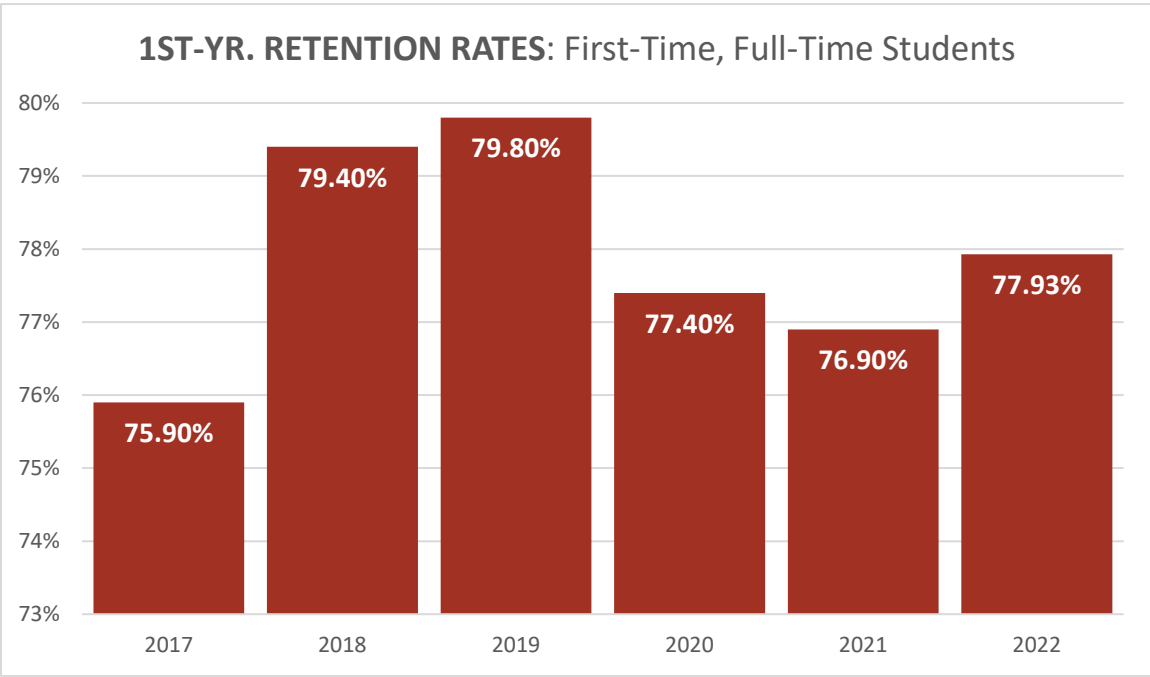
Through data analysis, I know what students were searching for and the kind of questions they asked the most. I have been amazed at not only how many students and faculty have used it, but also how people from the community have engaged with the Digital President. It gives us the look and feel of a 21st century university. It is also an example that we are changing our mindset and venturing into the “what might be” rather than remaining in the world of “this is the way we have always done it.”

- **Summer Math Bridge Program**- The Academic Success Center (ASC) offers the Math Bridge Program, which is an online program designed to help students gain the skills to succeed in college-level mathematics and receive the placement scores they need to enroll into their majors. Most students who participate in Math Bridge find success in raising their ALEKS score to their goal level, which allows them to enroll in a different 100- level math course for their desired major. In the fall of 2022, the first-ever NSHE-approved 0-credit Fall Math Bridge was launched to assist students who are unable to enroll in a fall corequisite math course.
- **Campus-Wide Learning Support Services**- The ASC partners with the entire campus to offer Supplemental Instruction, Tutoring (online and in person), and Academic Success Coaching. These services provide academic support to undergraduate students. In spring 2023, the Supplemental reached an all-time high 5,748 visits by 869 students.
- **Web Campus Student Resource Access**- To ensure students have easy access to student support resources when studying online, the offices of online education and information technology created universal access to a host of student support services. Located in the Web Campus platform, students can find resources related to academic, career, cultural, emotional, environmental financial, physical, and social wellbeing. The area also provides students with access to the Rebel-Ready program where students can earn digital badges in a variety of topics. The Rebel Ready program is broken down into unique and engaging modules that provide knowledge and skills in areas such as academic integrity, study methods, time management, community values and self-care. This program includes a series on effective communication and collaboration presented by the UNLV Ombuds Office.
- **Metric: Degrees and Awards**

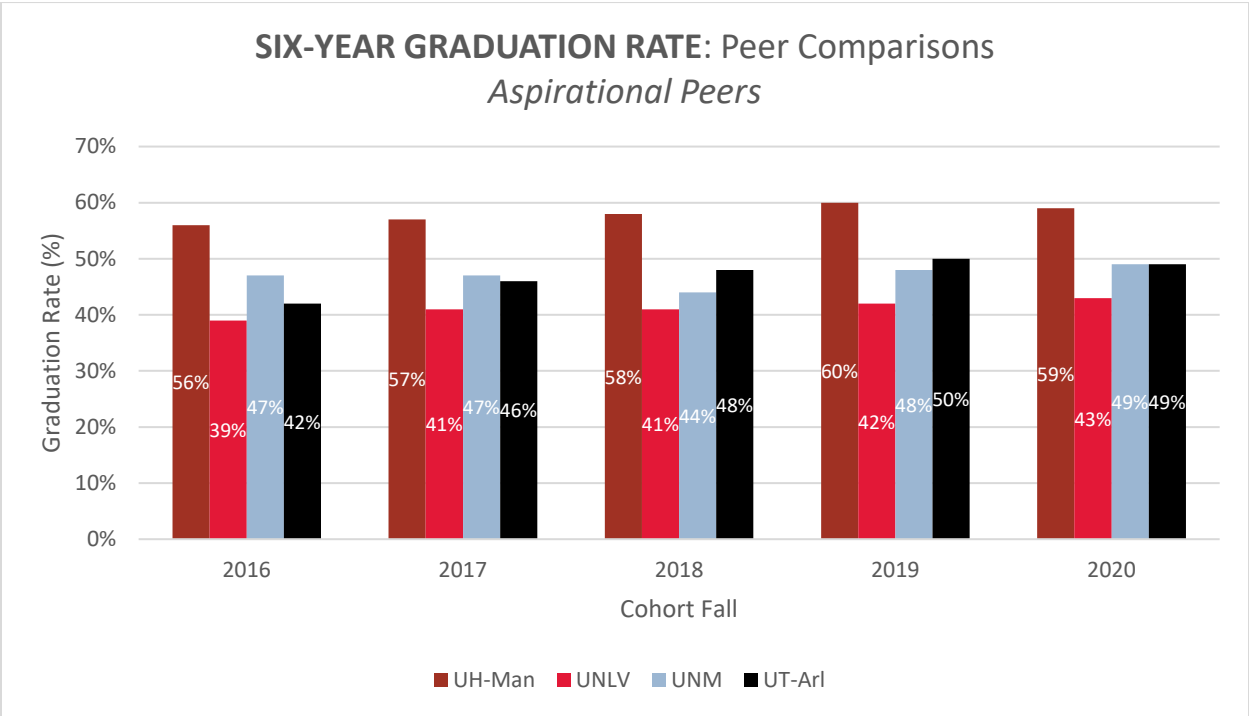


- **Objective- Increase Year-to-Year persistence rates**

The graph below represents the percent of first time, full-time (12 or more credits) freshmen that persist to the following fall semester. Persistence rates are calculated system wide and include a student who starts at one NSHE institution and enrolls at any NSHE institution the following fall.



- Objective-Six Year Graduation Rate Comparisons-** Our graduation rates match up well with two of our three aspirational peers. We'll continue to pay close attention to this metric as we make further progress in degree outcomes.

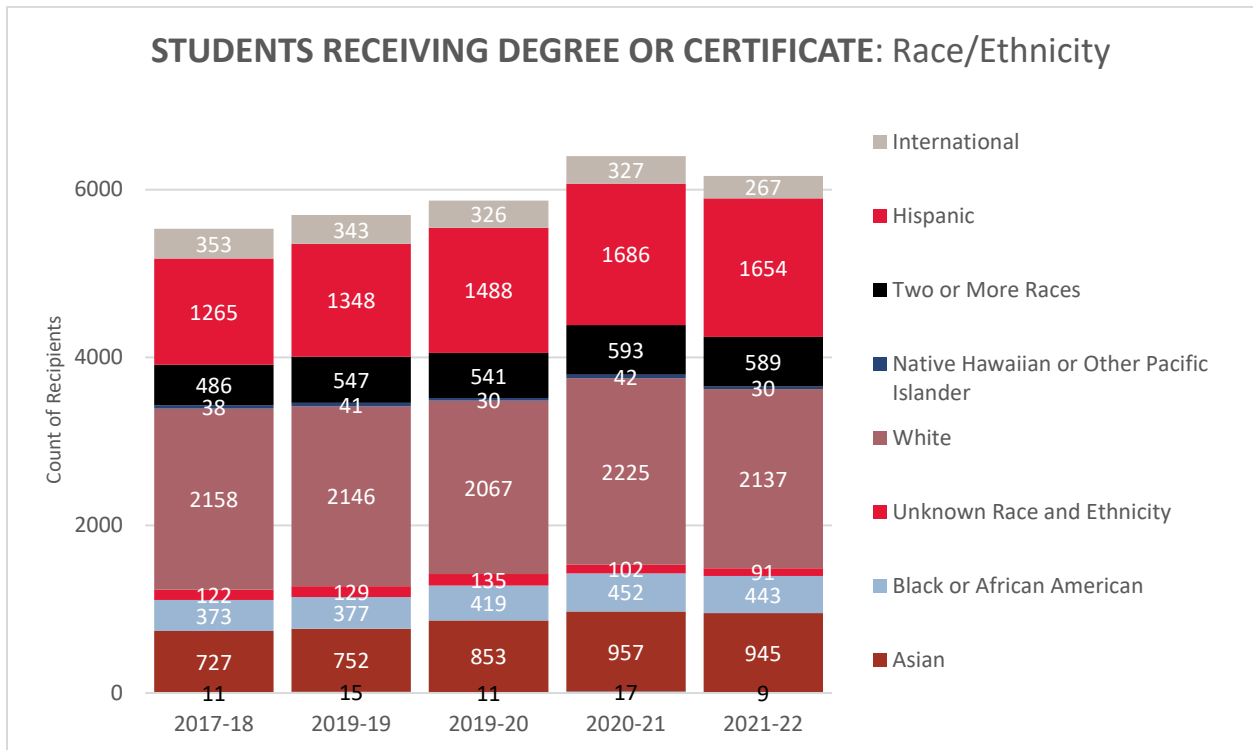


- **Top Tier 2.0 Objective and NSHE Strategic Goal #3- Close the Achievement gap among underserved populations.**

UNLV recognizes that as a minority serving institution, variation in achievement between demographic groups is unacceptable. We are striving to increase the number and percentage of underrepresented students graduating with a degree or credential by 2025.

First-year cohorts continue to grow in diversity and we're also seeing consistent progress in the graduation rates for minority groups. Degree growth for Hispanic students is 30.8% higher this year than in 2017-18. Black or African American students receiving degrees is up by 18.8% relative to 2017-18.

Though some overall numbers are down slightly year-to-year, they are generally consistent as a percentage of the overall cohort.



Efforts to close achievement gaps among underserved student populations include the creation of the **UNLV Equity Institute**. The Equity Institute, launched in 2019 as a two-day workshop, helps faculty to better understand the diversity of the student population we

serve and the causes of achievement disparities. Participants learn strategies to create more inclusive classroom environments and learning experiences that support success for all students. The Institute has been converted to an online course, and to date, more than 200 faculty have completed it.

In 2021, UNLV held its first **MSI Student Success Summit**. This campus wide event brought together faculty, staff, and students to explore what it means for UNLV to truly serve students who identify as members of racial or ethnic minority groups and to promote equity-minded practices in our work with students. The MSI Student Success Summit is now an annual event and the marquis academic event of UNLV's National MSI Week programming.

The APLU and Coalition for Urban Serving Universities, along with a handful of private and non-profit learning partners, collaborated on a funded initiative called the **Student Experience Project (SEP)**. The Student Experience Project (SEP) is committed to transforming the college student experience and creating equitable learning environments through innovative, evidence-based practices that increase degree attainment. In early 2023, UNLV was selected to be one of the few second round universities to collaborate on the implementation of SEP through a series of faculty communities of practice during the 2023- 2024 academic year. By promoting practices, communications, and pedagogical tools that focus on student belongingness, evidence based SEP practices have been shown to increase student success and improved student outcomes, particularly for at-risk and minoritized students.

○ **RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY**

**The primary objectives** identified in this category include:

- Grow Interdisciplinary Research
- Increase Higher Education R&D Expenditures
- Rankings

I remain an active interdisciplinary researcher and I have brought that perspective to our scholarly direction. I have committed UNLV to becoming a leader in interdisciplinary research designed to address challenges pertaining to the interactions amongst social, ecological, biological and physical systems that affect quality of life. This approach demands encouraging and supporting new ways for faculty to work together between the STEM fields, health sciences, social sciences, education, arts and humanities to solve complex problems requiring multiple perspectives. I have charged our Research Division to create interdisciplinary research teams and the Provost to lead the deans to develop research areas that could be the areas to hire future faculty. To achieve this vision the areas needed to be ones that contribute solutions to some of the most pressing grand challenges facing science, industry, our community and state.

Originally, there were seven interdisciplinary research development areas (iRDAs). An additional area has been added to draw on interdisciplinary expertise that already exists at UNLV thereby expanding our engagement as an HSI/MSI granting institution by developing research and educational opportunities critical to the students and community we represent.

- The iRDAs are listed below with a brief description of the colleges that contribute faculty to the research missions and goals. Internal funding has been set aside to support the teams of interdisciplinary researchers identified below and faculty opportunity awards will provide additional support and resources for developing and identifying additional areas of interdisciplinary research expertise.

- **Sustainability in Arid Lands** - Colleges of Urban Affairs, Engineering, and Sciences

Ensuring sustainability in arid lands requires research in STEM fields and social sciences to interact with each other to inform policy decisions. Similarly, public policy requirements drive innovation that influences the quality of life. Our goal is developing solutions and approaches for sustainability through research spanning this multidisciplinary area in ways that mutually inform and shape each approach. Social and scientific problems associated with this topic range from developing innovative solutions for water reclamation and resource management to understanding and addressing social consequences of the heat-islands in cities including juvenile and adult homelessness. Faculty will collaborate on translational research, strategic planning, and communication approaches to facilitate urban sustainability and community resilience to address sustainability in arid lands.

- **Racial Equity and Social Justice** - Colleges of Liberal Arts, Education, and Urban Affairs

The complex interplay between race, ethnicity, and justice and its social implications provides the motivation for this broad topical research area. Objectives include, but are not limited to; expertise in the history of or community-embedded engagement with U.S. based African American, Latinx, Indigenous, and/or Southeast Asian youth and families. The research initiatives for this group are designed to develop policy recommendations and potential solutions to a wide range of social issues including creating and reporting on social equity for underprivileged and disadvantaged populations, addressing challenges facing foster youth and homeless individuals, facilitating workforce development to create successful life pathways for disadvantaged individuals, developing

effective reentry and diversionary program to reduce incarceration rates, and providing trauma-informed care to vulnerable populations.

- **Aging and Health Disparities: Brain Health** - Schools of Integrated Health Sciences and Public Health, and College of Liberal Arts

Optimizing the health of an aging population characterized by vast differences in socioeconomic conditions and access to cutting-edge health care is a leading challenge of our time. Brain Health takes the form of interdisciplinary research in neuroscience, aging, and health disparities to advance the science, education, and practice to benefit the health, care, and treatment of people with brain disorders across their lifespan. The research approaches within Brain Health include the development of teams that specialize in several areas ranging from basic and clinical research in neurodegenerative disease, neuropsychology, and the study of clinical trial design and outcomes to address critical needs that exist in urban and rural environments where health disparities exist.

- **Addictions** - College of Liberal Arts and Schools of Nursing and Public Health

Research in this complex area strives to inform and advance addiction prevention and treatment practices through constructive engagement between psychology researchers and practitioners who directly serve the Las Vegas and Southern Nevada communities. The ambition includes yielding research and practice outcomes that will benefit not only citizens of this region, but of the nation. Preventative studies are focused on the relationship between developmental theories and successful prevention program strategies that have been established. Focused treatment of addictions includes specialization in substance use, gambling, and other addictive behavior disorders for all populations. This area builds on established UNLV strengths in serving the Las Vegas community and in foundational research.

- **Ubiquitous Data** - Colleges of Engineering, and Schools of Business and Public Health

With the advances in computing, a huge amount of data is generated every day from all aspects of life, emerging from sources ranging from wearable sensors to medical and satellite images. These data would remain of limited use without the development of methods to move and process it. Ubiquitous data approaches are designed to move and process the data centrally as well as distribute computing locally, thereby achieving

autonomy at the device level. To achieve these goals, contributions from multiple disciplines are necessary to ensure the successful translation and use of the data at all levels.

- **Entertainment & Media Research Development & Education** - College of Fine Arts and the Lee School of Business

This innovative cluster leverages our institution's and our region's expertise to facilitate bold interdisciplinary approaches to the arts, science, and business of film and media. The multidisciplinary team will combine the study of important business practices including marketing, operations/supply chain management, and/or organizational behavior/human resource management to the entertainment and media industries, particularly the film industry. The initiative will advance Las Vegas' role as a global entertainment leader and film production hub, building a strong foundation for careers in the dynamic worlds of entertainment business, film, and education.

- **Neuroscience** - Colleges of Sciences & Liberal Arts

Neuroscience is a diverse field that collectively investigates the organization, development, and function of the nervous system. It is one of the fastest growing fields of science with research ranging from mechanisms responsible for basic neuronal function to investigations of behavior, cognition, and neurological/psychiatric disorders. Development of research teams with broad disciplinary contributions are required when investigating complex neurological processes that influence behavior and cognition.

- **Hispanic, Minority, and AANAPISI Serving Research Development** – Colleges of Engineering, Education, and Sciences

Research opportunities that focus on advancing and serving these populations through undergraduate and graduate research are the focus of this interdisciplinary group.

## **2) Objective- Increase Higher Education R&D Expenditures**

In 2018, UNLV earned the prestigious ranking of “Research University- Very High” from the Carnegie Classifications and retained its classification in 2021. The next review will be in 2024. Research is not only a critical component of higher education, but also an economic driver for the State of Nevada.

## **3) Metric: Research Expenditures**

**Research expenditures (\$M) support** a specific research and development project; funding is typically used for equipment, consumables, limited personnel time. The economic and educational impacts and institutional excellence grows with increasing research expenditures.

FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY25	Goal
42	62.8	66.3	83.8	99.4	106	101	95	150	161	174	174

*Red numbers are future goals.*

#### 4) RANKINGS

The annual release of U.S. News and World Report rankings provides a recognition of our progress in several areas. For 2023, the following UNLV programs were ranked:

- Lee Business School Part-time MBA: Top 75
- Boyd Law School
  - #1 in Legal Writing
  - 67/192 in Accredited Programs
  - 20<sup>th</sup> for Part-time Program
  - Saltman Center for Conflict Resolution placed 8<sup>th</sup> in the dispute resolution category
  - Clinical training- 35th
  - Health Law- 40th
  - Contracts/Commercial Law- 45th
  - Tax Law- 55th
  - Business/Corporate Law- 69th
  - Constitutional Law- 71st
  - Criminal Law- 72nd
  - Intellectual Property Law- 72nd
  - Environmental Law-96th
- Graduate Programs
  - Social work- 79th
  - Geology- 81st
  - Public Affairs- 88th
  - Nursing masters- 90th
  - Doctor of Nursing Practice- 99th
- Engineering
  - Nuclear Engineering- 28th
  - Aerospace studies- 65th
  - Environmental Engineering- 84th
  - Civil Engineering- 98th

- Online Programs
  - Nursing Master’s program- 10th
  - Bachelor’s in Psychology- 20th
  - Business Program- 32nd
- Sciences
  - The Department of Physical Therapy is now ranked in the top 50

Other notable rankings and awards include:

**Hospitality-** For the fifth consecutive year, the Harrah College of Hospitality ranked best in the nation (and second in the world) for hospitality and leisure management, according to the annual QS Top Universities ranking of worldwide institutions. The Harrah College of Hospitality also ranked number one in the *2023 CEO World* ranking of hospitality and hotel management schools.

**Goldwater Scholarships-** Two UNLV students were selected in 2023 to receive the Barry Goldwater Scholarships, the nation’s premier undergraduate award in STEM. Vesper Evereux, a mechanical engineering major, and Faria Tavocoli, a public health major and member of the Honors College, are among a select group of awardees chosen following nominations by colleges and universities nationwide.

**Truman Scholarship-** Zach Billot, an Honors College student majoring in Political Science, is the 2023 Nevada recipient of the prestigious Truman Scholarship. The high-profile national honor helps support graduate school for students pursuing careers in public service. This is the second consecutive year a UNLV student has claimed a Truman award. In 2022, Kelsey Elizabeth Matthews won the award.

**Fulbright Fellow-** UNLV geoscientist Matthew Lachniet was selected by the U.S. Department of State as a 2023-2024 Fulbright U.S. Scholar for New Zealand. Lachniet is professor and chair of geoscience and a leading expert on paleo environmental and paleo climatic change.

**Military Friendly-** UNLV is ranked among the nation’s Top 10 “Military Friendly” campuses of its size by veteran-owned non-profit *Victory and G.I. Jobs Magazine*. More than 1,800 schools nationwide were evaluated for annual rankings, and UNLV was included among the nation’s best in the category of “Tier 1 Research Universities”.

○ **ACADEMIC HEALTH SCIENCES**

There is perhaps no greater way we can serve the community’s workforce development needs than by doubling down on our commitment to health sciences to match both rising student interest and support the health and wellness of our residents. We’re leveraging the work of multiple health science disciplines at UNLV to advance health research and education, and to provide high-value and high-quality care for the community.

**The primary objectives** identified in this category include:

- Develop and grow Medical School
  - Improve Health Sciences Schools/Colleges
  - Develop and Academic Health Center
- Develop and Grow Medical School

The School of Medicine began in 2017 after a number of years of planning. In 2022, I was approached by the donor group responsible for funding the construction of the Medical Education Building (MEB) to name the school after Kirk Kerkorian. I requested board approval and UNLV received permission to name the school The Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine at UNLV. The school received Full Accreditation by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME). The Graduate Medical Education program also has received full accreditation with commendation.

    - The first two classes attended tuition-free due to philanthropic support and we remain in the bottom 20% of student indebtedness.
    - Between 25 – 30% of the medical students are first-generation college students.
    - Class size has increased from 60 to 66 with a plan to have 120 students per class by 2030.
    - We have graduated our first three classes and have matched every graduate into residency.
    - The 130,000 square foot, \$140 million Medical Education Building opened and currently is the largest gift to date to the university.
    - The first two endowed Chairs have been created; Orthopedics \$2.5 million and OB/GYN4 \$2.0 million.
  - Academic Programming
    - Fellowships were started in Endocrinology, Geriatrics, and Pediatric Emergency Medicine.
    - We are preparing to launch Fellowships in Forensic Pathology, Hematology/Medical Oncology and Rheumatology.
    - Two combined programs have been started: MD/MBA and MD/MPH.
    - The medical school is about to start an early acceptance enrollment program with the Honor’s College.
    - Multiple pipeline programs have been established with local middle/high schools to ensure we have diverse classes.
  - Dental Medicine
    - The School of Dental Medicine (SODM) is accredited by the Commission on Dental Education (CODA)
    - There is an average rate of 40% for new dental graduates beginning careers in Nevada.
    - During the COVID-19 pandemic period of March 23, 2020 and June, 30, 2020, dental school faculty, staff, students, and residents in the Emergency Room and

Oral Surgery, Orthodontics, and Pediatric Dentistry areas screened more than 2200 patients with emergent, urgent, and other oral healthcare needs, and treated more than 1,400.

- Celebrated 20 years of providing oral health care to Nevada residents, and educating the next generations of future dentists (2002-2022).
- During the past four years (Jan., 1, 2019 to Dec. 31, 2022) the dental school completed more than 213,000 patient visits, which includes screenings, oral health maintenance, and dental procedures.
- Partnering with NASA, Colgate-Palmolive, and UNLV Engineering, the SODM is studying oral biofilms (dental plaque) at the International Space Station.

- Nursing

- We have grown our undergraduate nursing program by more than 50% since 2017.
- In response to a state-wide nursing shortage, the School of Nursing created an apprentice program to provide students with first-hand experience, while also helping to support staffing at local hospitals.
- Roughly 90% of UNLV's nursing graduates go to work in local hospitals.

- Public Health

- **UNLV becomes a smoke-free campus** - In the fall of 2022, UNLV became a smoke-free and tobacco-free campus, solidifying our commitment to providing a safe and healthy learning and working environment for our students, faculty, staff, and visitors on all UNLV properties. Led by the School of Public Health in collaboration with many organizations, we are now able to protect our community from unwanted and involuntary exposure to tobacco and passive smoke and establish a supportive atmosphere for those trying to quit using tobacco. This milestone has set an example for other institutions to follow as we are now providing guidance and resources to Nevada State University and the College of Southern Nevada who are also working toward becoming smoke-free campuses.

- **Establishment of EAB and SBH departments**

Two departments were created within the past few years, including our Epidemiology & Biostatistics (EAB) and Social & Behavioral Health (SBH) department. The EAB department's formation during a critical time of the pandemic reflected the school's dedication to advancing public health and addressing health issues in our community. The establishment of the SBH department recognizes that understanding and addressing the many social determinants that influence health is essential to improving public health outcomes. These departments have helped to establish necessary identities

within the school and enforce our positioning as a leader in public health education and research.

- **Launch of online degrees and interdisciplinary dual programs**

We recently launched a couple of online degrees including the Healthcare Administration & Policy and generalist Master of Public Health degree to meet the diverse educational needs of our students and address the demand for flexible and accessible learning opportunities. These online degrees also are helping to increase enrollment.

The School of Public Health worked with the Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine to offer the MD-MPH program to bridge the gap between medicine and public health, working to produce healthcare professionals who are skilled clinicians and advocates for public health. We also partnered with the Lee Business School to offer the MBA-MHA program, combining healthcare and business to prepare students to be leaders in the healthcare industry, ensuring the highest quality of patient care.

- **Contact tracing team**

In spring 2020, the contact tracing team led by School of Public Health graduate students were at the forefront of Southern Nevada's COVID-19 response, having investigated more than 43,000 cases (reported August 2021). In collaboration with the Southern Nevada Health District, the team employed over 250 UNLV students who put their training and knowledge from the classroom into real action as they set up protocols, managed daily operations, and interviewed individuals exposed to COVID-19. The university also had the first fully integrated website to monitor the infection rate among staff and students on its campuses. The website was a model for other public agencies and higher-ed institutions.

- **Nevada Minority Health and Equity Coalition (NMHEC)**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we worked with NMHEC, housed under the School of Public Health, to develop the #OneCommunity campaign to educate and inform minority and underrepresented communities in our state. With COVID-19 impacts being the most pronounced among our most marginalized communities including racial and ethnic minorities, sexual and gender minorities, communities with lower income, and people who suffer from chronic conditions, the #OneCommunity campaign aimed to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and increase vaccine uptake among communities at greatest risk.

- **CEPH Accreditation** - The School of Public Health maintained its accreditation after a comprehensive site visit by the Council on Education on Public Health

(CEPH) in 2020. The CEPH evaluated both the quality and effectiveness of our public health programs.

- **Grants** – We have received over \$32 million in grants within the last three years to serve our students and our community. One of the recent notable awards is a \$1.5 million HRSA grant received in 2022 that will provide \$500,000 a year to qualified students within the School of Public Health. We have started awarding scholarships, with 75% of the scholarship recipients being students who identified as being racial and ethnic minorities.
- Integrated Health Sciences
  - In 2023, Dr. Jeffrey Cummings, research professor in the Department of Brain Health; and Jamie Schwartz, director of industry and business engagement for UNLV’s Office of Economic Development, were awarded a \$1.5 million INNOVATOR grant from the National Institute of Aging (NIA).
    - Over the course of the five-year grant, the university will host workshops, business collaborations, and healthcare partnerships to grow student involvement in careers that assist Alzheimer’s patients through medicine, technology, business, and more. This grant will supplement the university’s existing infrastructure with the hopes of expanding the scope to students in non-academic scientific careers and other industries.
  - Our brain health team also operates the world’s largest Alzheimer’s clinical trials observatory – which gives our community an inside track on promising treatments and a role in helping to accelerate the process of drug development.
  - The School of Integrated Health began an Occupational Therapy Doctoral degree program which is now fully accredited.
- **SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, INNOVATION, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SMALL BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT**

Higher education institutions are meant to be places where “out of the box thinking” and “grappling with the big issues” are part of their foundation. To do this, it is imperative we incentivize faculty to be more fearless and re-think many of our past practices to move innovative thinking forward. Faculty are often concerned about trying and failing. Scholarship tends to reward those that show success. But innovations advance from both successes and failures. We have to teach and reward our faculty – and perhaps even more importantly our students– that failure is part of the journey and that failure does not define them unless they give up. To teach individuals how to strive through failure is not something that can just be read in a book. It is something you have to experience.

Experiential learning is a goal for many of our university curricula and infusing it in a way that links experiential learning with foundational concepts to advance knowledge is key. But those universities really advancing innovation are utilizing co-curricular activities to do it.

For example, here at UNLV, we hold a president's innovation challenge. I have launched similar initiatives at two other institutions and it has been quite successful at each. This challenge pairs students into interdisciplinary teams of undergrad and graduate students to address an issue of social import – for example, this prior year's topic was "sustainability". We have varied the topics students address such as "How to make our city more competitive," and "Bringing technology to the world." These topics challenge students to think deeply about problems and how one might solve them. This format challenges students to focus on problem solving rather than just amassing information from a traditional lecture. We judge these events in a shark tank sort of environment that students find nerve racking and fun. In its current evolution, we ask people from industry, local government, the community and even other local universities to serve as judges. This adds a real-world component to the students' work and business, local government, and industry like to see how students perform in a real-world environment.

Over my years of doing these types of innovation challenges, some students have even brought their idea to market and commercialized their product. That is an additional and important outcome that seems to align with another emerging trend we see in our students – they are very entrepreneurial in their thinking, including how they are navigating the higher education landscape. Many students get their "hustle on" to generate enough money to pay for college. Meaning, they may carry an extra job or might have their own small business. This reflects the growing gig economy that many who pursue college are engaged in before, during, and after they get that sheepskin. Also, for the challenges that our students will face, this kind of experience helps to prepare them for the world and job market they will be competing in when they graduate, putting UNLV students a step ahead.

Innovation at UNLV is occurring on a multitude of levels, with several of our recent accomplishments being:

- Blackfire Innovation at the 120 acre Harry Reid Research Park has emerged as a place for research and industry to work together.
  - The building is now at capacity, with partners at the facility including Boyd Gaming, Intel, Panasonic, Adobe, LG, Zoom, and more.
  - More than 100 companies, which together are worth more than \$2 trillion dollars, now have an office space or a project tied to Black Fire.
- Established a Tourism Business Igniter in the Historic Westside of Las Vegas.
- Partnership with City of North Las Vegas to launch the Small Business Connector, housed in City Hall.
- UNLV incubator powered by the Hughes Center.
  - This unique off-campus space will help aspiring student entrepreneurs bridge the crucial stage of the innovation process between concept and reality.

- Sports Innovation Institute
    - The initiative is designed to embrace and engage with the growth of sports in Las Vegas. This initiative has three components: Research, Education, and Outreach. The overarching goal is to optimize health and maximize performance through research, education, innovation, and economic development. Being a premier sport research hub means being the leader at leveraging institutional and regional sports expertise to drive excellence in sport-related research and innovation.
    - A Master’s Degree in Sports Management has been launched and one cohort have graduated already.
    - A federal grant through earmark monies by Congressional Representative Susie Lee has been awarded to fund data analytics in the Institute.
  - President’s Innovation Challenge (see page 23)
  - Small Business Development Center-
    - The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at UNLV has seen new businesses served increase nine fold, going from serving 92 small businesses in 2015 to 767 in 2023.
    - Jobs created through the SBDC have skyrocketed during the past 8 years, increasing from 59 in 2015 to 2,290 today.
    - Our disadvantaged business support has increased to 1,597 with 66 additional disadvantaged businesses being served during the past year, an increase of 4.3%
  - Patent and Trademark Center- opened in the Lied Library in 2023.
- **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**
- **Building Community**

Soon after my arrival at UNLV, I engaged on a campus listening tour to gain feedback and input directly from constituency groups comprised of students, faculty, staff, alumni, donors, and community members and government leaders. These conversations addressed a variety of topics during which I affirmed my overarching commitment to building upon student success initiatives designed to increase student accessibility, and to enroll, retain, and graduate more students. I walked away from the listening tour more determined than ever to engage with as many of our students as possible, many of whom were diverse, first-generation college goers experiencing university life for the first time – at home – while juggling the uncertainties of work and family obligations.

The listening tour also helped provide me with additional awareness of the potential untapped opportunities that lie within our stakeholder communities for creating partnerships, leveraging resources to address the disruption caused by the pandemic, and the future challenges that lie ahead for our sustainability and growth as a university.

Building community is about building connections, and I feel it is important that we strengthen our stakeholder relationships to gather resources and intellectual capital for collaboratively addressing the needs of our community.

Coming into the UNLV presidency during the pandemic was an unprecedented situation never previously encountered in modern higher education leadership. Some naysayers were wringing their hands and contemplating the impact of the disruption to higher education caused by such abrupt transitions from in-person to remote learning. I chose to do otherwise, and encouraged our campus leadership to look for the hidden opportunities that may emerge during this disruption.

I am proud of the manner in which our School of Public Health, School of Nursing, and the Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine personnel stepped up during the pandemic to administer one of the most comprehensive vaccination programs which has ever occurred in Southern Nevada,- providing over 100,000 COVID vaccines to our community in addition to offering curbside testing. Our community experienced first-hand the benefits of having a newly established medical school in addition to the benefits of a strong R1 university.

Throughout this report, you will find countless examples of the measures we are taking to build an even stronger UNLV, aligning the mission of our R1 University along with the priorities of our community. In conjunction with this mission is the importance of building connections, and I have actively worked to increase the visibility of our leadership through participation on a number of local and national boards, and by forming and nurturing partnerships.

- **Board Memberships**

- Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce, Trustee
- Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance- Member
- UNLV Practice Plan Board of Directors- Member
- Urban Serving Universities- President lead on basic needs learning community
- Junior Achievement USA- Member
- College Football Playoff- Member
- Chair-elect for the Mountain West Conference Board of Directors (presidents)
- American Federation of Aging Research Board, Washington D.C.- Member

**National Institute of Health Committees**

2022-2023	Member, Committee for National Advisory Committee on Aging review of National Institute on Aging Division of Geriatrics and Clinical Gerontology.
2022	Chair, Review of National Institute on Aging Intramural Research Program Director, Baltimore, MD.

2021-2022	Co-Chair, NACA Task Force on Minority Aging Research, National Advisory Council on Aging, National Institute on Aging, Bethesda, MD.
2022	Member, National Advisory Council on Aging, National Institute on Aging. Bethesda, MD.

**Membership in the Alliance of Hispanic Serving Research Universities-** One of the initiatives I'm most proud of is my work with other presidents across the country to form an elite group of 21 Carnegie R-1 institutions that are designated as HSIs. UNLV is a founding institution of this alliance. We're committed to increasing opportunity for those historically underserved by higher education- with goals to significantly boost Hispanic doctoral student enrollment and faculty at member institutions by 2030. As part of this effort, UNLV recently collaborated with Arizona State University and the University of Illinois Chicago to further advance the work of this alliance by creating a UNLV-based center for community coordination and shared practice. The goal is to generate positive, institutional change at Hispanic Serving institutions at all levels throughout the country, and improve undergraduate interest and engagement in STEM initiatives.

A strong sense of community with both our internal and external stakeholders is vital to both the growth and sustainability of our university and I immediately set out to re-establish connections with partners who may have felt distanced during the pandemic. Following are some of those relationships which I have sought to re-energize through my outreach and engagement.

### 3. Board Memberships and Community Partnerships

- Las Vegas Metro Chamber Board Member
- Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance Board Member
- Safe Cities Network Board Member
- MGM College Opportunity Program
- MGM Public Policy Institute
- NAACP Las Vegas
- First Nevada
- Junior Achievement of Southern Nevada
- Las Vegas Metro Police Foundation
- First Annual Men's Leadership Summit (Fall of 2021) - UNLV hosted this conference in the student union ball room. This effort was in conjunction with CCSD. Approximately 300 young men came for this all day event to hear inspirational speakers and local community leaders and business owners.
- Southern Nevada Leadership Summit -UNLV hosted the inaugural-leadership summit in August 2022, and again in August 2023. The summit provides an

opportunity to speak face-to-face with private industry leaders to ensure that UNLV offers high-demand degree and certificate programs for the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy. We want to continue integrating workforce readiness into all academic programs, and promote active student participation in career planning through a lifecycle approach. The feedback from potential employers indicated they would like: a referral program that pre-screens candidates, for expanded internship opportunities offered to students at all levels, and for more opportunities to engage in career-readiness workshops and in-classroom speaking opportunities.

- Inaugural Young Women’s Leadership Conference (March, 2022)- UNLV hosted this annual conference at the Thomas and Mack Center in partnership with Wes Hall, County Commissioner Marilyn Kirkpatrick, and CCSD. Approximately 400 Clark County high school students attended this all-day event with local politicians, business and community leaders, and educators as speakers and panelists.
- Southern Nevada Diversity Summit (October, 2022) - Breakout sessions throughout the day covered a broad range of topics around the theme, “Embracing Community Care: Higher Education’s Role in Addressing Health Inequities.”
- Brookings Mountain West is a partnership between UNLV and the Washington D.C. based Brookings Institution. The purpose of Brookings Mountain West is to bring the Brookings tradition of high-quality, independent, and impactful research to the issues facing the dynamic and fast-growing Intermountain West region. Building upon work at Brookings and UNLV, the community engagement and research initiatives focus on helping metropolitan areas like Las Vegas grow in robust, inclusive, and sustainable ways. Brookings Mountain West provides a platform to bring ideas and expertise together to enhance public policy discussions at the local, state, and regional level.
- Mountain West Conference Board of Directors-I represent UNLV on the board of directors and serve on the executive committee. Next year, I will serve as the Chair of the Board.
- College Football Playoff Board of directors-I serve as the Mountain West Conference representative. This committee decides the structure of the national college football playoff.
- Institutional Marketing and Branding, including research with key stakeholder groups, and outreach through tools such as a twice monthly “Rebel Impact” e-blast that highlights faculty and student achievement and a 2023 President’s Annual Report.
- Engagement and outreach to other R1 university presidents and provosts.

- Partnership with Junior Achievement of Southern Nevada to develop Financial Literacy programming.
- National Board of Junior Achievement-I serve as a member on the national board to provide insight and direction from a higher education perspective.
- **Adult Programs**
  - Funded by the U.S. Department of Education, the Veterans Upward Bound, Trio Training Institute, and Educational Opportunity Centers serve approximately 2,800 adult participants, military veterans and Trio professionals. The annual budget is \$1.5 million. These programs assist individuals and military veterans 19 years of age and older in GED attainment and pursuit of post-secondary education, as well as host professional development seminars for TRIO professionals across the nation.
- **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice**
  - i. **Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer**- upon my arrival, it was apparent that Diversity programming lacked clear organization and leadership. There were good programs and offices but each worked in a siloed fashion and did not capitalize on synergies that could have been used to advance diversity efforts on campus. With the retirement of of the VP for Diversity, I used that moment in time to begin improving the alignment of offices designed to support diversity efforts. The primary effort was to connect student-oriented offices under the VP for Student Affairs, and faculty and staff efforts and programs under the VP for Diversity Initiatives and Chief Diversity Officer. The institution is improving efforts to recruit diverse faculty and support our current diverse faculty and staff programs.
  - ii. Diversity partnerships include:
    - a. Kennivision Marketing will create up to 5 videos per month, at no cost, to promote our diversity initiatives in national social media platforms and to corporate audiences. KUNV Radio continues to be a supporter of UNLV Diversity for marketing and promotions.
    - b. Native American Student Support - We are currently in talks with UNR to collaborate and partner in Native American Student Support. As part of this initiative, Diversity Affairs continues to collaborate with Liberal Arts and Integrated Health Sciences to identify and obtain more funding resources for support positions for this population.
    - c. National Council of Jewish Women, Los Angeles (NCJWLA)- UNLV students have been accepted to participate in the MCJWLA scholarship applicant pool. This special exception allows students to apply for scholarships in support of LGBTQ, Nursing, Teaching Credentials, and Theatre and TV. There is no requirement of Jewish affiliation or residence in Los Angeles.

- d. Outreach to multiple community organizations includes:
  - i. The 17<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade
  - ii. The Boys and Girls Club
  - iii. Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department
  - iv. Southwest Gas
  - v. Hosting “Toy Giveaway” daylong event
- iii. Minority Student Success Summit-On March 3, 2023, I presented at our second Minority Student Success Summit held on campus. At the summit, I shared my vision for student success at UNLV, and the university’s role and responsibilities as minority-serving, Hispanic-serving, and Asian-American and Native American Pacific Islander serving institution. The summit kicked off a series of activities that were geared towards innovative and creative approaches to bringing equity and inclusion to the classroom, and fostering a passion for learning and a sense of belonging. Open to faculty, staff, and student, the summit showcased teaching techniques, support service models, and faculty and student research that can help students succeed.
- iv. Prayer Room - Upon my arrival in 2020, I received multiple requests to address the needs of our Muslim students. My office established a Prayer Room to support students in search of a quiet space for prayer, meditation, and reflection. During academic year 2023, the space was utilized by 1,107 students. The Student Union and Event Services team collaborated with the Muslim Student Association to install and operate a footbath in the closest all-gender restroom and new prayer rugs for the room were obtained. Prayer Room guidelines are reviewed on an annual basis for general operational improvement.
- v. Hate Uncycled Program- Hate Uncycled was a four-part series of campus conversations highlighting how UNLV and its students, faculty, staff and alumni are engaging with and responding to some of today’s most pressing issues. I have participated in this program as a panelist and kicked off three of these events. Beginning early 2020, the series was only able to host one in-person program before COVID-19 affected the world. But from the coronavirus pandemic and health disparities to protests, riots, and cries for social justice and policing reform following the police-involved deaths of George Floyd and other unarmed Black Americans, the time was ever needed for this series. Hate Uncycled persevered, through an online live stream, and covered a range of topics, including the effects of racism on public health, indigenous and land justice, and the First Amendment and policing. The series was organized by the College of Liberal Arts and the offices of the Executive Vice President and Provost, Diversity Initiatives, and Student Diversity, while being emulated from the Anti-Defamation League’s model for responding to hate and bias incidents by introducing a new cycle of education and prevention.
- vi. Search Advocate Pilot Program- A two-year pilot program to support the search and hire process for academic and administrative units. The advocate program has three

- priorities: increase the diversity of candidate pools, ensure equitable practices and treatment of all parties participating in the search process, and collaborate with the Human Resources team and the Title IX/Office of Equal Employment Opportunity to ensure that university search and hire policies and procedures are in compliance.
- vii. Trio and Upward Bound Programs- Funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Serve approximately 900 of UNLV undergraduate students. These programs assist college students with persisting in their degree programs, earning postsecondary credentials, and enrolling in post-baccalaureate studies. While promoting high quality undergraduate experience through research, conference travel, civic engagement and service learning, financial assistance and counseling, and many other services, these programs significantly contribute to institutional efforts for persistence, retention, and graduation. During the past four years, the TRIO programs have received over \$64 million in federal funding, and they have served over 18,000 participants between middle school and doctoral degree seeking and they remain one of the best-funded programs in the country.
  - viii. Women’s Center (The Jean Nidetch Care Center)  
 Named and dedicated to Jean Nidetch after her generous donation in 1994, the Jean Nidetch Care Center’s vision is to end power-based personal violence by engaging the campus community in education, programming, and transformative action. The Care Center serves students, faculty, and staff from UNLV, CSN, and NSU who have been impacted by sexual violence, relationship violence, family violence, and/or stalking. Operating from an anti-oppression framework, the Care Center provides trauma-informed and healing-centered care. In the long-term, the Center’s goals include establishing itself nationally as a leader in providing access to holistic healing from trauma and engaging in individual, community, and systemic anti-violence advocacy through an anti-oppression lens.
  - o **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**: - UNLV graduates make a difference every day throughout Nevada as engineers, scientists, educators, health professionals, artists, policy makers and entrepreneurs. Their impact may be felt in boardrooms, courtrooms, exam rooms, and classrooms around the world, but especially in the Silver State where more than 60% of our 140,000 alumni choose to remain.
- Workforce development is one of the five strategic goals adopted by NSHE, and UNLV is committed to strengthening the talent pipeline that helps to drive the state’s economy. The university’s strategic plan emphasizes “student placement into preferred employment or post-graduate educational opportunities” as a key educational outcome. Our commitment to this work is acknowledged through CollegeNet, Inc.’s Social Mobility index where we are ranked in the top 15 percent of higher education institutions advancing the social mobility of its students.

UNLV has been actively engaged with workforce development through several initiatives including:

- i. **MGM Public Policy Institute**- In 2017, the generosity of MGM enabled UNLV to create the MGM Public Policy Institute with the mission to advance job creation innovation, empower workers, and energize sustainable communities.
- ii. **Foster Youth Initiative**- On an average, there are over 4,300 youth in the Nevada foster care system, and over 3000 of these foster youth are in Clark County. The Institute's Foster Youth Initiative was formed with a partnership among the Institute, Clark County Family Services, and MGM and focuses on supporting foster youth as they transition out of the foster care system into independent living. The initial launch provided support to nine foster youth admitted to the program who then went on to begin careers with MGM. In 2021, with support from a grant from the Walter S. Johnson Foundation, UNLV launched Fostering Scholars, a campus-based program to support students who have experienced foster care as they pursue their UNLV degrees. This program is student-led based on best practices and is the first of its kind in the state of Nevada. The UNLV Fostering Scholars Program draws together resources from across the institution, the local community, Clark County, and the state of Nevada to help address the educational, social, emotional, physical, and financial needs of this special student population.
- iii. **MGM College Opportunity Program (COP)** focuses on developing 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce skills by providing educational opportunities to MGM employees through tuition assistance. UNLV participates as a COP institution by offering a variety of degree and certificate programs for MGM employees to achieve their educational and career goals. In 2020, over 750 MGM employees utilized the COP to enroll in higher education programs across various NSHE institutions. More than half of these program participants identify as a racial or ethnic minority, and 37 percent of these students are the first in their families to receive a college degree.
- iv. **Offering more micro-credentials to the community and UNLV students.** As part of our workforce readiness initiative, we are developing a micro-credential policy that will allow us to offer a wide array of micro-credentials to the community and UNLV students. This program allows them to document their skills and expertise through digital badges reflecting the UNLV Career Competencies, focusing on career-relevant skills that are now accessible to all students. Currently there are multiple for-credit microcredentials in the curricular pipeline. In addition, "for credit" micro-credentials are intended to be "stackable" toward certificates and/or degrees, thereby contributing to NSHE Strategic Goal #2- increase student success.
- v. **Creating new programs to ensure our students are career ready by Commencement.** In August 2022, UNLV hosted the inaugural **Southern Nevada Leadership Summit** with close to 200 industry and academic leaders, as well state elected officials and local city and county administrators. Representatives included

senior management from media, hospitality, healthcare, construction, engineering, law enforcement, non-profit, technology, banking, manufacturing, business, education, and the public sector. These leaders represent industries that hire the overwhelmingly majority of our graduates. This is now an annual event, with our second Southern Nevada Leadership Summit occurring on August 1, 2023.

The purpose of the summit was to speak face-to-face with private industries to ensure UNLV offers high-demand degree and certificate programs for the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy. We want to continue to integrate workforce readiness into all academic programs, and promote active student participation in career planning through a lifestyle approach.

The feedback was informative and eye-opening. Employers asked about teaching courses on location at local businesses, providing more continuing education certification and certificates and engaging in “reverse career fairs” where employers go to student organizations to meet students. They stressed the need for referral programs that pre-screen candidates, for expanded internship opportunities offered to students at all levels, and for more opportunities to engage in career-readiness workshops and in-classroom speaking opportunities.

More than anything, this demonstrates the willingness of private industries, and the community at large, to share ideas and feedback if we invite them to engage with us. We will do more of that- ask for input. It reinforces feedback we heard during the president’s listening tour.

**Expansion of online programs in support of state workforce priorities-** This is a multi-year project (3 to 4 years). UNLV currently has 14 undergraduate degree or certificate programs and 29 graduate degree or certificate programs available fully online. Many of these programs address critical workforce needs in Nevada (e.g. Elementary Education and Nursing/Nursing Education), and others will continue to produce graduates who will serve the evolving needs of industries that are already cornerstones of Nevada’s economy (e.g. Hospitality and Cybersecurity).

- vi. **Workforce aligned programs and career-ready graduates-** Beginning in summer 2022, we have convened a working group to focus efforts on a number of initiatives to promote workforce and career readiness within our curriculum and in virtual, hybrid, and in-person co-curricular programs. This involved four key areas:
  - 1) Creation of rolling 3-year program innovation conversations to assess program delivery, success, and outcomes, as well as ensure strategic curriculum mapping and integration of workforce aligned learning objectives and scaffolded career preparedness experiences for students,

- 2) Establishment of Rebel Career Champions Network composed of administrative and academic faculty from all schools and colleges, as well as key administrative units, to build a “career everywhere” model to support student career readiness in the classroom, across program curricula, and in co-curricular environments,
  - 3) Scaling up the availability, tracking, and promotion of high impact practices for all undergraduate students. Our goal is to build an infrastructure to scale up internships, service learning, study abroad and global experiences, student research opportunities, and leadership roles, so that every student has the opportunity to engage in to or more of these high impact practices before graduation.
  - 4) 4) curricular mapping and modifications to ensure that students in all majors have strategically scaffolded career and professional development opportunities across their lifecycle from initial onboarding and orientation through graduation.
- vii. **Grow our interdisciplinary programs (GIDP)** to meet student interest and workforce demand. We now have approximately 60 faculty participating in six GIDPs: Ph.D. Neuroscience, Ph.D. Interdisciplinary Health Sciences, Ph.D. Water Resources (coming fall 2023), M.S. Biomedical Engineering, M.S. Cybersecurity, and M.S. Data Analytics. In spring 2023, we also established an infrastructure for undergraduate interdisciplinary programs (UIDP) and expect to roll-out our first UIDPs in AY23-24

### III. **CAMPUS ENVIRONMENT AND SHARED GOVERNANCE**

**Great Colleges to Work For-** The 2022 Great Colleges to Work For campus climate survey, administered by ModernThink, consisted of questions grouped around 14 themes. These themes, as well as the specific questions asked for each theme, are given in the first column below.

Responses to those questions (positive, neutral, negative)\* as a percentage of the total number of survey respondents are given in the next three columns on the right. They are color-coded from excellent (green) to poor (pink) based on ModernThink’s standard categorical groupings. The exact numerical group percentage brackets, as well as the adjectival descriptor for each range, are given at the bottom of each page.

\*Positive responses include strongly agree and agree; negative responses include disagree or strongly disagree.

	Overall % Positive	Overall % Neutral	Overall % Negative
	Strongly Agree, Agree	Sometimes Agree/ Sometimes Disagree	Disagree, Strongly Disagree
<b>Job Satisfaction &amp; Support</b>			
1. My job makes good use of my skills and abilities.	69%	19%	12%
2. I am given the responsibility and freedom to do my job.	75%	15%	10%
4. I am provided the resources I need to be effective in my job.	55%	23%	22%
11. I am paid fairly for my work.	35%	22%	43%
24. The work I do is meaningful to me.	83%	12%	5%
31. The facilities (e.g., classrooms, offices, laboratories) adequately meet my needs.	62%	21%	17%
34. This institution's benefits meet my needs.	50%	26%	24%
<b>Job Satisfaction &amp; Support - Average</b>	61%	20%	19%

- We are using these results to continue to improve the culture of the university. The implementation of the 12% COLA we believe will help address the issue referenced in question 11 related to fair pay. We also have other programs to help improve employee satisfaction. I do my part to help improve morale and culture with a number of activities:
- Faculty
  - I appreciate the strong partnership extended by our Faculty Senate leadership, and I meet with their Executive Committee on a monthly basis, in addition to attending general Senate meetings when my schedule permits. My presence, I hope, signals my strong support and belief in the importance of shared governance.
  - Through a series of activities and communications, I keep faculty informed about institutional issues. These activities include:
    - i. Annual State of the University Address
    - ii. Periodic campus town hall meetings
    - iii. UNLV Official Emails
    - iv. Inviting faculty, staff, and students to join me in the president's box at campus athletic events.
    - v. Attending College and Unit meetings and events when possible.

- President’s Advisory Council (PAC)
  - This group is comprised of representatives from campus Affinity groups, who meet with me on a quarterly basis to discuss and get their input on key issues of interest.
- Student leadership
  - I make myself available to meet with our undergraduate (CSUN) and graduate (GPSA) student leaders as needed, maintaining an “open door” policy.
  - I frequently attend student events and also spend time traversing the campus on an informal basis to get direct input from our general student population.
- Employee Development
  - New initiatives have been created to contribute to a culture of engagement, coaching, and development.
    - i. **Rebel Reset**: Originally developed to be a menu of no-cost, wellness programming for all UNLV faculty and staff to help faculty and staff prioritize their journey toward wellness and a different normal since the COVID-19 pandemic. Rebel Reset has offered a range of activities to faculty and staff to include, meditation sessions, step challenges, Jiu Jitsu, culinary medicine, child care grants, mind body medicine modules, nutrition classes, trauma recovery yoga, cardio kickboxing, weight watchers, chair massages, stress relief skills, and yoga. Rebel Reset continues to offer programming to assist employees in these areas.
    - ii. **Leadership Coaching Program**: Leadership coaching is an effective tool for developing leaders at all levels of the organization. The Leadership Coaching Program connects university employees at all levels with a certified leadership coach to help them implement personal and professional change. Coaching is delivered through a series of one-on-one sessions as outlined in an individualized coaching plan.
    - iii. **HR Professional Development Seminars (HRPD)**: Virtual professional development seminars for all UNLV employees. Seminars are designed to build skills in a wide-range of topics that directly relate to the work being done at UNLV.
    - iv. **Rebel Applause**- Rebel Applause is UNLV’s employee recognition platform that allows colleagues to send notes of

gratitude to one another for a job well done and for exemplifying our Campus values.

- v. **Learning Management System (REBELearn)**- UNLV's enterprise-wide learning management system (LMS) focused on employee professional development. REBELearn delivers, consolidates, and tracks campus-training activities including required compliance-based courses and professional development offerings.
- vi. **Real Colors Facilitation**- A four-color personality assessment and workshop designed to help people better understand themselves and each other. It creates a common language that helps improve communication and create an environment in which everyone's motivations and perspectives are better understood. UNLV offers these dynamic and engaging workshops to departments and units on campus. Each fun, fast-paced workshop is facilitated by UNLV certified UNLV Real Colors facilitators.
- vii. **UNLV Leadership Experience**- The UNLV Leadership Experience is a program designed to help emerging leaders expand their knowledge and skills while providing a glimpse into university administration. This is the second in a series of progressive leadership development programs at UNLV following MTA. It educates participants about the complex operations of a large research institution and introduces them to various leadership roles. The program also invites diverse ideas and promotes inclusion at the highest levels of the university.
- viii. **Administrative Assistant Academy (A3)**- a program designed to foster a culture of continuous improvement through professional development regardless of Administrative Assistant level. This program outlines eight competencies that UNLV Administrative Assistants, supervisors, and leaders have deemed essential.

- Ombuds-

One of the notable additions at UNLV has been the revived Ombuds Office, which returned to UNLV in June 2021. Operating under a charter I signed in July 2021, the office functions in compliance with the International Ombuds Association's Standards of Practice and Code of Ethics. Ombuds David G. Schwartz has achieved Certified Organizational Ombuds Practitioner (CO-OP) certification, reflecting his continued commitment to operating under the

principles of independence, impartiality, informality, and confidentiality. The Ombuds offers visitors to the office (both in-person and remote) a place to confidentially discuss their concerns, explore their options, and develop their conflict resolution skills. Common issues brought to the office include problems with communication in supervisory channels; communication with peers; departmental climate; performance appraisal; and scheduling/work assignments. Schwartz helps visitors understand all of their options, and champions their self-advocacy and ability to effect positive resolutions using informal channels rather than formal administrative and dispute resolution processes.

Accessible to all in the UNLV community, including faculty, staff, and students, the Ombuds Office has grown steadily in its current incarnation. In the final seven months of calendar 2021, the office logged 219 contacts, or meetings with visitors. In 2022, that number was 563. As of September 27, 2023, the office has had 524 contacts, a substantial increase for the same period the previous year. Thus far in calendar 2023, 60% of visitors have met the Ombuds in person, with the balance meeting via video chat or telephone. Demographically, 52% of visitors were White, 19% Black, 16% Asian, and 13% other or mixed-race; in addition, 13% of visitors identified as Hispanic/Latinx. Looking at gender, 72% of visitors were women, 28% men, with 1% identifying as other. The population of visitors is drawn from administrative faculty (23%), academic faculty (20%), academic leaders (chairs, deans, etc; 14%), classified staff (13%), undergraduates (10%), administrative leaders (vice presidents, directors, etc; 8%), graduate students (4%), professional students (4%), community members (2%), and temporary employees (1%).

The office's unofficial motto, "Be Heard Here," expresses its value to UNLV as a place where any member of the community can speak their mind candidly and get a better understanding of their options, lessening the need for them to clog formal channels with interpersonal conflicts and procedural misconceptions. Providing this option has resulted in tangible strides towards an improved campus climate and more engaged colleagues.

- Housing and Food Insecurity
  - Emergency Loan programs- Funded by Charles Schwab Bank, the S.O.S. Emergency Relief Fund provides students with financial assistance when face with an unexpected emergency. All current undergraduate, graduate, and professional students are eligible for assistance for a variety of emergencies, including but not limited to, accidents, death of a family member, fire damage, food and housing insecurity, and illness. With an average award of \$300, the S.O.S.

Emergency Relief Fund allows students who face hardship or an emergency some financial assistance, so that they can not only continue their studies, but stay afloat through their emergency. Furthermore, colleges such as the Lee Business School, the College of Liberal Arts, and Public Health also run emergency relief funds for their students.

- Hope Scholars- Established in 2016, the program is designed to support UNLV students experiencing homelessness by providing 12 month housing and meal support in addition to personal and academic coaching, skill development, and community building events. United Way is in its third year of supporting the Hope Scholars Program, and The Degree apartments has provided an in-kind donation of eight beds for 12 months. Fifteen students are enrolled for Fall 2023 with six having graduated from UNLV thus far.
- Food Pantry- During 2010, several members of the President's Advisory Committee organized a holiday food drive to benefit members of the UNLV community who were facing economic duress due to the forced pay cuts and furloughs. The response from both donors and recipients was tremendous and the UNLV Food Pantry was born. The Food Pantry is supported by UNLV, CSUN, GPSA, and the School of Integrated Health Sciences. The School now operates the food pantry and has supported it primarily through grant supports and summer revenue received by the School. I have used personal funds to offer support for the efforts of this program and have worked to better connect them to community efforts by Three Square (a community food pantry). During the past year the Food Pantry had more than 3,000 visits.
- Take What You Need (TWYN) was established in 2019 and provides monthly pop-up basic needs pantry serving all UNLV students. Complementary to the UNLV Food Pantry, the TWYN events focus on toiletries, personal hygiene, clothing, bedding, school supplies, and other household goods. In AY 23, these events served 982 students. Recently secured a \$900k grant from the Department of Education over the next three years to significantly bolster this initiative. We are working to identify a permanent resource space for a pantry in the Student Union. This is another effort that I have provide financial support for in the last year.
- The Student Basic Needs Committee collaborates across departments to link our most vulnerable students to essential programs and services. We strive to maximize connections to campus and

community resources while working to centralize, streamline and simplify processes so students can easily access vital benefits. We are committed to ensuring that students can remain focused on their academic success and educational goal by minimizing the impact of hardships and unforeseen crises.

- Sustainability
  - The University climate action plan (Rebel CAP) launched in 2023 to develop an equity and climate justice lens to use as an official guide for integrating sustainability practices into university operations to reduce our carbon emissions and make our environment more climate resistant.
- Water conservation - In response to federal mandates impacting the Colorado River Basin states, we have developed water conservation strategies including turf reduction and converting to desert landscaping in more areas.
- Wellness and Mental Health- A great university must be responsive to the immediate needs of its community, and I have a personal dedication to helping improve the mental health challenges facing many of our students and local community. Student mental health in particular is on the mind for many university leaders today, and having my Ph.D. in psychology, the topic really resonates with me. This past summer, I worked with our AI media team and campus consultants to look for common themes around mentorship, wellness, and mental health. This effort culminated in the development of a mental health module incorporated into the Digital President that allows for interactive responses to wellness concepts, with also the ability to make referrals when requested.

IV. **DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION**- Early in the pandemic, ad-hoc measures to address digital deficits, bolstered by federal funding, were crucial to sustaining educational services in the short-term. However, such siloed approaches are ineffective in producing cost-effective, sustainable, deeply transformative growth. Under my leadership those reactive approaches have shifted to a comprehensive, coordinated foundation for UNLV to develop cost-effective approaches to strengthening cyberinfrastructure and student-focused IT foundations required to be a leading R1 institution.

- **Technology transformation** - I have helped to championed technology changes that positively impact student success. These include:

- **RebelFlex Hybrid Classroom Technology** - (fall of 2020) UNLV utilized specialized funding to upgrade technology in 66 classrooms and 6 computer labs. The new technology replaced end-of-life classroom systems with new integrated classroom technologies designed to enable faculty to teach in-person and remote students simultaneously. This technology enables UNLV to offer more options for classes that meet degree requirements for both in-person and remote students, as well as providing alternatives for active military or disabled students that may not be able to attend all classes in person.
- **Salesforce as the enterprise CRM system** - (2021) Supported the expanded adoption of Salesforce as the enterprise customer relationship management (CRM) system continuing the move from disparate systems and processes for student information to an integrated system and student-centric processes to support recruitment, admissions, registration and financial aid services.
- **Rebel Success Hub** - (May 2023) Expansion of Salesforce to support student-centric services for continuing students. Providing a 360 degree view of student experience empowering faculty and academic advisors with comprehensive information to help students resolve complex problems and proactively make choices that address their specific circumstances.
- **Improved Student Communication:** Since 2021 UNLV has been increasingly leveraging student data to drive personalized student communications. This relevant, timely, specific information, allows students to take advantage of opportunities that they are uniquely eligible for and engage in activities that match their interests and goals. These processes improve engagement, increase eligible students applying for grants, and provide students personalized information about deadlines relevant to their individualized progress towards their degree requirements.
- **Digital President Whitfield** Adopting a digital version of the university president allowed students to safely ask questions and feel connection to the university while highlighting AI and university innovation.
- **Transition to Zoom** (June 2023) is part of a new focus on addressing faculty feedback to select the best tools for teaching and learning. When UNLV evaluated alternatives to renewing its current WebEx contract, faculty and industry feedback indicated that Zoom was an educational focused video conferencing tool, with features to reduce faculty

workload and integration with new tools for student engagement. Using a student-centered focus UNLV transitioned to the preferred software at a lower cost than the renewal and is using the savings to add new tools for online engagement.

- **Class.com** (*Fall 2023 Pilot*): Because of the change to Zoom, UNLV has expanded its opportunities to enhance its hybrid and online learning approach. Class.com is built on top of Zoom architecture and enables greater student engagement (including real-time student engagement tracking), a more robust faculty toolset for teaching (classroom management, student dashboards), and enhanced eLearning tools. In the fall of 2023, UNLV will pilot this tool with several colleges (Education, Law, and Nursing) to measure its overall impact on our online learning.
  - **InSpace.chat** (*fall 2023 Pilot*): As part of a focused effort to increase online student engagement, UNLV will be piloting an online engagement tool focused on more organic student interaction. This tool breaks out of the talking box model of traditional video conferences and uses proximity audio to create that space where students can move freely and engage in real-time much in the same way they would in a physical space.
  - **Upgrade UNLV Mobile Application: (2023)** Students expect everything to be available on their phone and the President has been a strong supporter of helping students to navigate university systems in the manner that digital natives expect. By upgrading the university's infrastructure UNLV can now securely provide the information students need for student success directly on their mobile devices.
- 
- **Digital Equity**- Committed to helping students overcome barriers to digital equity UNLV has committed to expanding and operationalizing pandemic programs that provided students with access to the devices, internet connectivity, and skills to fully utilize academic technologies. Advancing digital inclusion is a critical component of student success.
  - **Student Device Loan**: Expansion of student device loan program to 1100+ devices to cover all students with access to learning resources.
  - **Accessible learning technologies**: Deploying technologies to improve accessibility of learning materials has increased inclusion for those with disabilities as well learners without disabilities. Blackboard Ally, as well as promptly adding closed captioning and other accessibility features to the learning management system and ensuring all websites and documentation meet WCAG standards.

- **Faculty Development:** While faculty development often centers on tenure track-faculty, many in January of 2021 this was Instructor training for best-practices in engaging students, supporting students with special needs, and assessing online learners.
- **Community Network:** Working with Nevada government consortiums to bring NTIA funded network connectivity to Nevada last mile locations with insufficient internet connectivity, Connecting communities to online learning and university resources.
- **RebelApps:** Operationalizing and expanding the availability academic software to students for anytime, anywhere availability to software required for academic success,
- Network Infrastructure enhancements
- Expansion of wired and wireless (3500 WAPs) technology to provide ubiquitous network connectivity across campus
- Support for campus expansion of new buildings and satellite locations with fiber and networking, and wireless connectivity
  - AEB (Advanced Engineering Building)
  - MAB2 (Maryland Administrative Building)
  - CRC (Campus Resource Center)
  - FAB classroom environment (Flamingo Auxiliary Building)
  - Medical Education Building
  - IST
  - Blackfire research park
  - PRACTICE medical district
  - Immigration clinic
- **Virtual Private Network** (2023) The number of VPN licenses increased to Reduced costs while increasing coverage to all university employees, allowing greater flexibility for secure network connection supports
- **High speed campus connectivity:** (2022) Upgrade of UNLV network infrastructure from 20GB to 100GB. This is five times faster throughout campus and increases the ability to support high capacity data intensive academic and research endeavors.
- **Upgrade of Physical Network Infrastructure:** (2021) Upgraded the deep and sometimes invisible infrastructure including the vault lids covering underground fiber, firewalls, and IDF rooms that offer the hidden connections and protections that only come into play when there are serious outages that might have been avoided.
- **Campus safety and security:** Cyber attacks have increased exponentially since COVID began. Upgrading cyber defenses to keep the university's community, systems, and data protected against this growing threat have been a key focus since president

Whitfield assumed leadership. These efforts are helping UNLV proactively prepare for escalating security and privacy compliance requirements for financial aid, financial transactions, accreditation, grant acquisition, and cyber liability insurance.

- **Hired chief information security officer** (2021) to provide comprehensive leadership for strengthening UNLV's cyber defenses.
- **Enhanced cybersecurity awareness** - developing reporting to improve compliance with UNLV's required employee annual cybersecurity awareness training, expanded cybersecurity training for remote workers, engaged campus and IT leadership in ransomware tabletop exercises, implemented phishing exercises to evaluate effectiveness of cyber training, and developed a cybersecurity liaison program to provide trusted local cybersecurity resources within university departments.
- **Enhanced employee desktops and laptops security:** with rollout of encryption, least privilege to university computers in 2023
- **Enforced multifactor authentication-** In 2023 UNLV completed a project to add critical enterprise systems to UNLV's identity management system with industry standard multifactor authentication required for login. This upgrade to industry standard best practice for identity verification is increasingly required by agencies for grant funding, financial aid, accreditation, and compliance.
- **Improved monitoring** of systems with implementation of a new Security Incident Event Management (SIEM) application.
- **Student Internships and Academic Support:** The new CISO and his security team have been actively engaged in preparing the next generation of cybersecurity specialists guest lecturing at several graduate-level UNLV courses. He also instituted and supervised the creation of a security internship for students in the UNLV Cybersecurity program, providing the interns hands-on experience to complement their academic preparation.
- **Security Operations Center (SOC):** Unlike many higher education institutions who have moved to a cloud service for enhanced SOC services UNLV is looking to expand this service on-campus to provide workforce development opportunities for UNLV students. In keeping with the CIO's plans to combine expansion of high demand technical services with UNLV's research, academic, and workforce development vision, OIT is planning the development of a grant-funded student workforce SOC that can serve as a model for other R1 universities.
- **Cyberinfrastructure-** I placed a new and high emphasis on providing cyberinfrastructure (computing resources, software, technical support, networking, data management support, and security) to help stimulate an increase in UNLV research activity. Leading to:
- **Research Computing Symposium:** (March 2022) UNLV convened the first ever research symposium bringing together the Division of Research, Super Computing Center, Office of Information Technology, Universities Libraries and faculty to increase awareness of available technology services for researchers and identify gaps in available services.

- **Federated InCommon Identity:** (2022) Compliance with REFEDS Research and Scholarship standard release of attributes for trusted eduGAIN/InCommon Service Providers
- **UNLV cyberinfrastructure plan:** (2023) Developing a campus cyberinfrastructure plan to identify UNLV's current research technology infrastructure, staffing, a assets.
- **New Director of Research Technology:** (2023) UNLV has leveraged its collaboration with the state EPSCoR project team to utilize National Science Foundation funding to establish a faculty position to liaison with other faculty researchers in building a cyberinfrastructure that will facilitate faculty research and grant-acquisition.
- **Digital Efficiency-** Increasing enrollment and providing more individualized services to students requires an increase in automations and services that increase efficiency so that UNLV faculty, staff, and students can employ their energies on the accomplishments and relationships that matter. Some of these new initiatives include:
- **Rebel Learn:** {March 2021} Learning management system for human resources. Providing a one-stop system for faculty and staff employee development provides tracking for compliance and easy access for UNLV employees to coordinate and encourage legitimate professional development.
- **New business intelligence tools:** (2021) Upgrading end-of-life business intelligence tool provide and infrastructure required to identify opportunities and needed changes.
- **DocuSign E-signature:** [2023] Providing secure validate identity management integrated with a digital signature offers improved security, accountability a
- **Case Management/Ticketing System:** (2022) Developing an IT and case ticketing system that offers enterprise centralized knowledge base and self-service options for service ticket share among campus service providers to support a positive customer experience,
- **One IT:** Moving from a siloed approach to delivering IT services to a collaborative seamless unified customer IT provides improved services to campus.

## **V. INSTITUTIONAL WELL-BEING AND MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS**

### **A. Strengthening our Leadership**

During my leadership term, I have continued to promote the growth and development of my Cabinet leadership team. We hold bi-weekly group meetings, in addition to individual one-on-one appointments. I encourage professional development through periodic group retreats where we share big-sky thinking and cultivate new ideas. My leadership team reflects the diversity of our university and has grown into a very cohesive group of colleagues who work well together.

To better address the responsiveness of our internal structures for providing the important support to our campus community, the following leadership adjustments have been made:

- I. Reorganized Office of Economic Development to directly report to the president, and elevated it to a vice president.
- II. Re-established Ombudsman position with accompanying level of staffing support.
- III. Reorganized the Office of Diversity Initiatives and had the Chief Diversity Officer directly report to the president.
- IV. Reorganized office of Human Resources and had the vice president directly report to the president, and changed the title of the position to Chief People Officer/Vice President of HR.
- V. Moved Title IX and EEO reporting to Office of Human Resources.
- VI. Hired new Director of Intercollegiate Athletics- Eric Harper was formally selected as UNLV's next athletics director on January 1, 2022. Mr. Harper is a longtime university athletics administrator who has served as interim UNLV athletics director prior to being selected to continue permanently in the position following a national search.
- VII. Created the position of Vice President for Health Sciences to lead the creation of an Academic Health center. The Dean of the Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine was named for this position to generate economies of scale and natural integration.
- VIII. Hired permanent Executive Vice President and Provost.
- IX. Hired Vice President of Digital Transformation- I elevated the role of technology in shaping UNLV's future by establishing a vice president for digital transformation and CIO position to oversee UNLV's vision for digital transformation. This cabinet-level IT leader, hired in 2021, is charged with:
  - a. Building a cutting-edge research and academic cyberinfrastructure
  - b. Upgrading cybersecurity defenses
  - c. Leveraging technology to boost student success
  - d. Expansion of intelligent business systems that reduce labor-intensive administrative tasks and provide data for improved services.
- X. Hired Vice President for Student Affairs.
- XI. Hired Vice President for Government and Community Affairs.
- XII. Named Interim Vice President for Research.

## **VI. INFRASTRUCTURE ENHANCEMENTS**

During the past three years, we completed a number of infrastructure enhancements; all focused towards enhancing our delivery of academic programs, services, and support structures. These efforts include:

2021

- Obtained Board of Regent approval for the Maryland Parkway Campus Master Plan that establishes a framework for both short term (3-5 years) and long term (7 – 10 years) physical and structural improvements on the Maryland campus.
- Created the UNLV incubator at Howard Hughes Center for the Office of Economic Development to provide space and resources to support aspiring student entrepreneurs.
- Converted 165 single fixture restrooms to all gender restrooms with 129 of these spaces also having added baby-changing stations.

## 2022

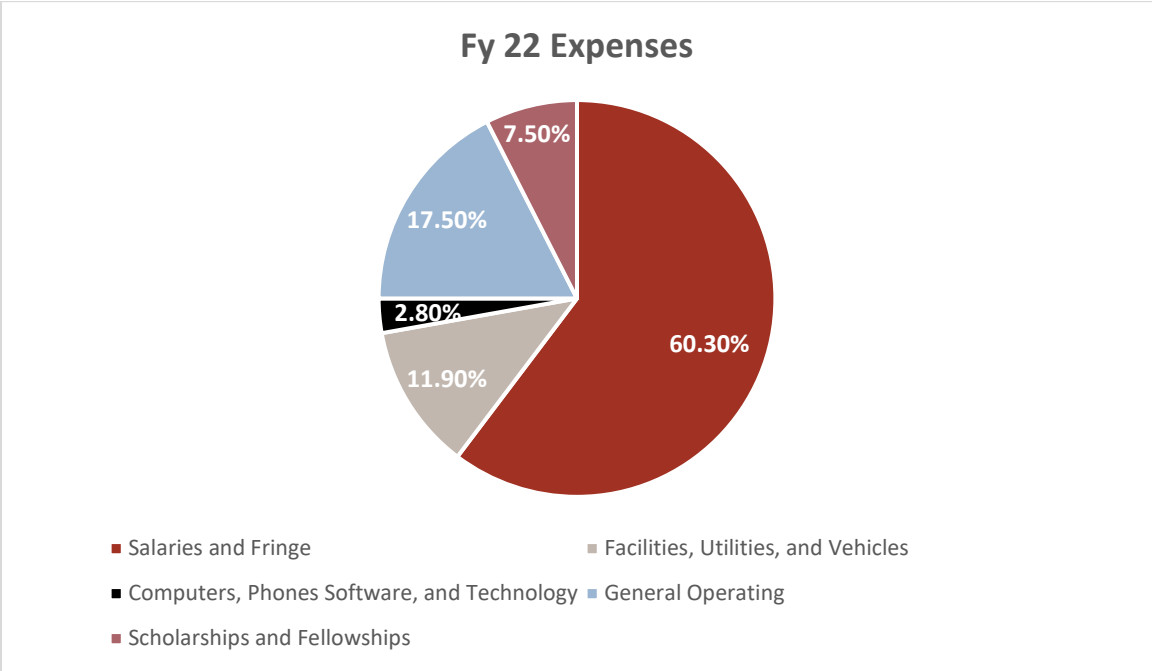
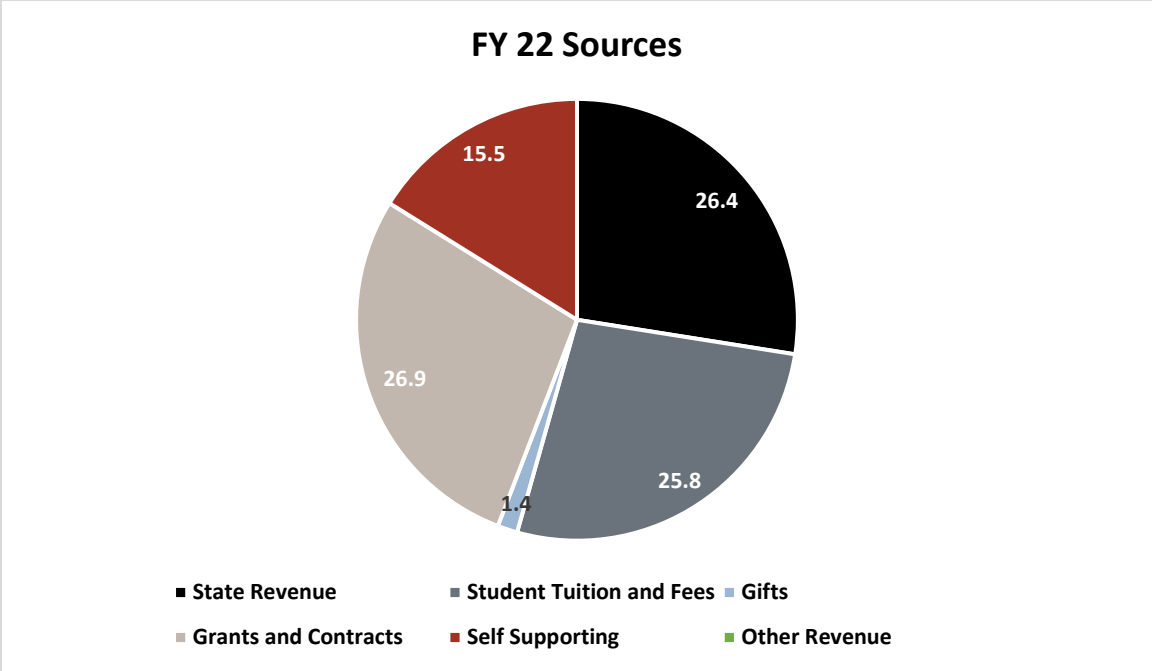
- Completed the Tropicana Garage expansion that added approximately 760 spaces to campus inventory.
- Purchased four strategic properties that will support future campus growth:
  - (i) Runnin’ Rebel Plaza
  - (ii) 1403 Harmon Ave
  - (iii) Public Education Foundation (PEF) Building
  - (iv) Rebel House Apartments
  - (v) Briova Building located within the Harry Reid Research and Technology Park
- Supported the Medical Education Building construction by acting as the campus liaison to ensure the building met standards for construction and furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FFE).
- Launched a campus wide strategic asset management plan (SAMP) to align the university’s physical assets with our Top Tier mission and goals.
- Advanced Engineering Building- commenced construction and should be completed in early 2024.

## 2023

- I. Purchased or leased strategic properties
  - Completed the purchase of the remaining components of the University Gateway property on Maryland Parkway, and entered into a revenue generating master lease agreement for these property components.
  - Completed an RFP for a ground lease for the UNLV 42 acre site at Tropicana Avenue and Deckow Lane.
  - Pursuing the purchase of the Methodist Church on Maryland Parkway
  - Working with Clark County officials and CCSD leadership on potential sale of Sam Boyd Stadium.

## **VII. ASSESSMENT OF THE FINANCIAL STATUS OF THE INSTITUTION**

### A. Sources of Revenue



Despite numerous financial challenges over the past years, UNLV has managed its resources judiciously and responsibly, and has remained financially stable based on key indicators of financial health and performance. UNLV’s resource planning group strives to manage limited resources in alignment with the Top Tier 2.0 Vision and Goals.

- Revenue Stability:** The pandemic resulted in significant financial challenges for the State of Nevada, and substantial reductions in state appropriations

revenues. The Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund authorized by the American Rescue Plan (ARP) enabled UNLV (and our sister institutions) to maintain stability. UNLV was able to maintain stable enrollment through this period, and has continued to grow its enrollment.

- **Responsible Spend Management:** UNLV implemented measures, including hiring freezes and operational budget reductions, to manage costs during the pandemic. The institution was a strong supporter of implementing the full 12% COLA increases for our staff, which required additional spend management measures. We are continually evaluating opportunities to implement efficiencies and add value through digital transformation. However, these measures have placed some constraints on our ability to strategically invest in key initiatives that would enhance the campus and student experience. For example, UNLV plans to delay capital investments to accommodate the increased compensation costs.
- **Cash Balances:** Too little cash on hand increases the risk that the institution will be unable to meet its cash flow needs, while too much cash on hand can negatively impact the university's ability to fundraise and may raise concerns that resources are not being appropriately spent on campus needs.
  - UNLV has been able to maintain responsible levels of cash balances. UNLV's cash balance of \$335M as of June 30, 2023 represented approximately 40% of operating expenses, within the target range established by institutional leadership of 30% - 50% of operating expenses. Additionally, it is important to note the cash balance and/or accompanying resources are obligated or restricted for specific purposes.
- **Liquidity:** The liquidity ratio measures the institution's ability to pay its short-term financial obligations with its current assets. This ratio is used to determine if an institution has enough cash on hand to pay its debt and/or if the institution is in a position for growth.
  - A liquidity ratio greater than 1.0 indicates that the institution is in good financial health and is less likely to face hardships. UNLV has been able to maintain a liquidity ratio between 2.6 and 3.48 over the past five years; **as of June 30, 2023, the ratio is 2.6.**
- **Viability:** The viability ratio measures the ability of the institution to cover its financial obligations and debt, such as leases, notes payable and bonds payable, with its available assets. It also indicates the institution's ability to take on new debt.
  - A ratio between 1.25 and 2.00 indicates there are sufficient resources to cover current obligations. UNLV's viability ratio has ranged between 1.3 and 1.57 over the past five years; as of June 30, 2023, the ratio is 1.41.

- **Debt Coverage:** The debt coverage ratio is calculated by dividing pledged revenues by annual debt service commitments. UNLV's debt coverage ratio as of June 30, 2023 is 8.88, well above the statutorily mandated ratio of 1.95.

## VIII. COMMUNICATIONS

Created a Campus Operations Update monthly meeting for departments involved with supporting infrastructure operations; supplemented with a weekly newsletter delivering Workday, business process and procedure updates to approximately 2,000 UNLV employees.

## IX. INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS TO EXTERNAL COMMUNITIES

- I. **Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement-** During my tenure, I have participated in regular meetings of the UNLV Foundation and the Alumni Association. This work includes small group breakfasts and lunches, and attending numerous campus and community events with members of the Foundation Board's Executive Officers and various committees to strengthen and enhance the relationship between the Foundation and the university. I have also engaged with alumni at campus and community events and have traveled to meet with donors, alumni, and friends of the university. Targeted alumni populations have included those in Washington D.C., Chicago, Phoenix, Hawaii, Los Angeles, San Diego, and others.
- II. As of March 2023, the current Foundation endowment is \$308 million.
- III. The UNLV Foundation Board has provided
  - i. a \$3 million dollar gift to upgrade and enhance signage on campus.
  - ii. A \$2 million dollar loan to build an immersive learning area with in Lied Library.
- IV. Noteworthy donor gifts include:
  - i. An additional donor made an anonymous gift of \$50,000 to place information kiosks out in the community; exemplifying the willingness of donors to partner with us in communicating our messaging to the local community.
  - ii. Working with the family of a donor who wishes to remain anonymous, we were fortunate to secure a \$10 million dollar gift to the Early Childhood Development Center.
  - iii. A \$5 million dollar gift to create the Kerestesi Center
  - iv. A \$1 million dollar gift to name the team room in the Fertitta Complex was recently made by the Las Vegas Raiders.

## **X. GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

UNLV's Office of Government Affairs and the Office of Community Engagement have joined forces, merging into the Office of Government and Community Engagement in August of 2022. This merger will enhance UNLV's effort to support, facilitate, and promote collaboration, partnership, and engagement between the university and its many communities.

### STATE

The 82<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Nevada Legislature began on February 6, 2023. During the Fall 2022 Semester, campus-wide discussions occurred to identify UNLV's key legislative priorities.

Achievements included:

- Over \$577M granted to UNLV over the next biennium
- Base budget \$531M
- Budget Cuts Restored \$18M
- Graduate Student Funding \$14M
- KKSOM for Expansion \$9.2M
- NV Institute for Teacher Prep \$1.6M
- Boyd Immigration Law Clinic \$1M
- Tourism and Safety Institute \$1M
- Expanding the Leaderverse \$750K
- Summer School Funding for Teachers \$320K

### FEDERAL

- UNLV was successful in securing more than 8.5M in federal appropriations for Fiscal Year 2023, which included funding for the projects below. We thank our federal delegation for their support and advocacy.
  - Sports Research Funding for the Office of Economic Development
  - Magnetic Resonance Imaging System for Integrated Health Sciences
  - Water Analyzing Equipment in the Department of Geoscience
  - Small Business Administration Funding for the College of Engineering Cyber Camp.

UNLV Hosts Panel Discussion with the following federal officials:

- Secretary of Health and Human Services Becerra (July 2023) - UNLV had the pleasure of hosting The Honorable Xavier Becerra, U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services, for a panel discussion about Medical Redetermination.
- U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC) regarding Rapid Ultra-Lightweight Infrastructure Manufacturing (RULIM) Fiscal Year 2024 appropriations request. The main objective of this program with the ERDC is to develop "indigenous Resources/Practices with Modern Science" through the

generation of big data on natural materials around the globe and other areas of military interest.

- The Honorable Alan Davidson, U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce to share how UNLV students and staff are leveraging digital learning initiatives and to discuss ways to further support student success through technology.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Forest Service awarded UNLV a \$5M Tree Grant in September 2023 for work by the College of Sciences work on the UNLV-led Las Vegas Urban Forest Center to help counteract the growing impacts of extreme heat. This was achieved in partnership with the City of Las Vegas.

#### LOCAL

- Advocacy for expanding the Las Vegas Medical District
- Support of the revitalization of the Historic Westside to include office to support economic development at Nevada Partners.

#### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- February, 2023- UNLV hosted a President’s Town Hall and Mental Health Resource Fair. UNLV faculty experts, including myself, partnered with Rosemary Lombard, Executive Director of The Center for Mind-Body Medicine, and Mason Turner, Senior Medical Director for Behavioral Health at Intermountain Healthcare.
- April, 2023- UNLV entered into a partnership with United Movement Organized Kindness (UMOK) to help meet the needs of some of our most vulnerable campus and community members, with an emphasis on student basic needs, the Food Pantry, our partnership with Lewis E. Rowe Elementary School, and several community-focused events.
- On August 25, 2023, UNLV collaborated with Opportunity Village to support their Employee Health and Wellness Fair. This event connected Opportunity Village employees with a variety of UNLV offerings, including medical, dental, and mental health services available to them and their family members.
- UNLV and several community partners will be facilitating President Whitfield’s Holiday Village, on December 9, 2023 on the UNLV campus. This community-wide event provides holiday cheer and resources designed to improve quality of life to those residing in low/no income households throughout Southern Nevada, with an emphasis on youth, ages 18 years and younger.

#### **XI. RELATIONS WITH THE BOARD**

Regular and effective communications with the members of the Board of Regents is a top priority for me. We provide ongoing, timely Regent Alerts when there are

issues of substance that the Board should be aware of. Additionally, I offer to meet with each Regent prior to every Board meeting to discuss UNLV agenda items, and to answer any questions they may have. I also make myself available for meetings with Regents at their convenience outside of Board meetings.

Members of the Board of Regents are routinely invited to campus events which provides them with an opportunity to become more familiar with the fine people that study, teach, and work at our great university.

## **XII. CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FACING THE INSTITUTION**

The landscape of higher education nationally and within the state is constantly changing, challenged and advancing. The goal the next few years will be addressing some of the social, financial and existential challenges facing the university. We will address these challenges guided by our values of 1) access and equity, 2) excellence and integrity, 3) collaboration and stewardship, and 4) compassion and inclusion. While we do not know all the challenges we will face, we will do our best to capitalize on the opportunities we are offered in the goal of increasing the success of our students, faculty and staff, and our community and state.

### **A. Challenges**

- a. Homelessness-increased homelessness has been observed around campus.
- b. Artificial Intelligence-faculty and instructors are concerned about abuse of AI
- c. Retention of diverse faculty-increased competition for limited diverse faculty.
- d. Decreasing state funding-concerns that state funding might be reduced due to economic fluctuations.
- e. Deferred maintenance-lack of state support to full fund maintenance of campus facilities
- f. Funding COLA-the incomplete state funding of recent and impending COLA funding
- g. Mental Health vulnerability-the mental health issues brought on by the pandemic and other current issues are resulting in increased experiences of mental health issues.

### **B. Opportunities**

- a. Economic development-increase offering for local entrepreneurship, assisting LVGEA in attracting and supporting new businesses to the region and the state including technology, movie studios, and manufacturing.
- b. Sports Innovation- work with existing and new sports teams moving to Las Vegas with research on sport performance, provide an educated workforce through educational programs and create community partnerships.
- c. Medical Tourism-expanding our capability to address medical treatments for issues such as addiction and cosmetic surgery, cardiac procedures, dental treatments, fertility treatments and orthopedic surgeries.

- d. Community Partnerships-create new and improve existing community partnerships in areas such as food insecurity, healthcare, homelessness, and K-12 education.
- e. North Campus-The 2000ac located in North Las Vegas offers the opportunity to expand our reach and create public private partnerships.

#### PERSONAL GOALS FOR THE INSTITUTION

I've been unwavering in my goal of shaping the leadership of UNLV with a primary focus on student success initiatives. It's not just about increasing first-year graduation rates; I've set my sights on dismantling unnecessary roadblocks in student services, optimizing financial aid and enrollment processes for maximum efficiency.

Breaking down the silos within the university has been a top priority for me. I firmly believe in fostering collaboration and teamwork to build interdisciplinary research areas across the entire campus. This approach is not only forward thinking but can has led to innovative solutions and a more cohesive academic environment.

Equally important is our pride in diversity that is more than just a statement or numbers; it's a cornerstone of our strength. I recognize the value it brings to our interactions, enriching our community and the overall university experience. One of my top priorities is to engage with the community, increasing their awareness and appreciation for the benefits that higher education, specifically a research institution, contributes to our region.

Moving forward, I will continue to champion these priorities, encouraging a culture of inclusivity, collaboration, and excellence at UNLV. By staying dedicated to these goals, we can ensure a positive and impactful leadership that resonates throughout the entire university community.

#### CONCLUSION

The last three-plus years have been the most exciting of my 35 year professional career. This document lists the incredible progress the university has made under my leadership but it is critically important to note that many of these are not individual accolades. The progress has come from a talented group of administrative leaders, innovative and committed faculty/staff and hard-working, brilliant students who make up the UNLV community. We have also advanced the mission of the university with incredible collaborations and partnerships with community organizations, elected officials and other universities like CSN, NSU, and UNR. As can be deduced from the metrics shared in this document, great progress toward our 2030 goals have been made but more is needed to realize the incredible potential of our great university. If renewed for another contract, I personally plan to deepen and grow our external relationships, increase our commitment to developing our faculty and staff, and refine and improve our ability to support, encourage and increase student success.