Individuals who work in recreation and youth development prepare young people to capitalize on life’s opportunities and successfully meet its challenges through a “coordinated, progressive series of activities and experiences which help them to become socially, morally, emotionally, physically, and cognitively competent.” (National Collaboration for Youth Members, 1998).

The Department of Recreation and Sport Management prepares students for careers in the leisure service industry, including Recreation and Youth Development careers.

The curriculum consists of the recreation management core, university general-education requirements, specialized concentrations, and electives. In addition, students culminate their degrees with a single full-semester, 40 hour-per-week professional internship.

Employment Opportunities

Graduates who pursue the Recreation and Youth Development concentration will follow a variety of exciting and satisfying career paths. A sampling of the types of positions are provided on the next page.

To be successful, students must be able to:

- Apply principles of positive youth development.
- Establish constructive and supportive relationships with youth.
- Plan and facilitate activities that promote positive youth development.
- Evaluate effectiveness and efficiency of services.
- Understand and respect cultural and human diversity.
- Work with families and communities.
- Secure and manage financial and human resources.

The number and scope of youth programs are increasing. Contemporary youth programs often include a focus on academic enrichment, social and emotional growth, healthy lifestyles, character development, community engagement, and having fun.
All entry-level, full-time positions with benefits require prior experience.

Salaries: In 2008 in Las Vegas, the approximate salary for an entry level recreation professional working in the non-profit sector was $30,000. A unit director earned approximately $45,000.

There are many opportunities for employment in youth development, including:

**Nonprofit Center-Based Programs**
- Boys and Girls Clubs
- YMCA of Southern Nevada
- Girls and Boys Town
- Salvation Army – Las Vegas
- Girls, Inc.
- After-school All-Stars

**Nonprofit Specialized Agencies**
- Easter Seals of Southern Nevada
- UNLV Gear Up
- 21st Century Community Learning Centers
- Big Brothers and Big Sisters
- The Arc
- Junior Achievement

**Youth Serving Outdoor Organizations**
- Boy Scouts
- Girls Scouts
- 4-H Youth Programs
- National 4-H Council
- Camp Fire USA

**Military Programs**
- Nellis AFB Youth Program
- Morale, Welfare, and Recreation programs with the Navy, Army, and Air Force
- Positions as center directors

**Public Parks & Recreation**
- Las Vegas Department of Leisure Services
- Clark County Parks and Recreation
- Henderson Parks and Recreation
- North Las Vegas Parks and Recreation
- Reno Parks and Recreation

**Government Funded Programs**
- AmeriCorp
- 4-H Programs and Camps
- Corporation for National Community Service

**Organizations in Support of Youth Development**
- United Way of America
- Point of Light Foundation
- Volunteers of America
- March of Dimes

**Youth Based Camps**
- Camp Adventure
- American Camping Association

**For Profit Organizations**
- Skymania
- Activity based sites such as gymnastics, dance, combatives, fitness
- Sport clubs

**Faith Based Organizations**
- Religious based youth organizations
- Religious camps
- Religious recreation and community centers