Grad Rebel Advantage Program

Congratulations to our incoming 2021-2022 Mentees
Academic Bio

Delia is a Las Vegas local, born and raised. She went to Las Vegas Academy for high school and majored in dance. After arriving to UNLV, Delia bounced between majors momentarily. From psychology to elementary education, she landed on kinesiology, and is happy to say she has finally found her place.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Delia plans on pursuing the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program. She found love in the art of physical therapy since she was young. Growing up, Delia dealt with scoliosis and severe ankle injuries. She hopes to be able to help kids struggling with similar issues in the future.
DEJA DANZY

Class Standing: Sophomore
Department: Division of Health Sciences
Major: Nutrition Sciences

Academic Bio
Deja was born and raised in Ohio and moved to Las Vegas, Nevada at the age of 12. Deja works for UNLV Housing. She is apart of SNDA, and a sports nutrition intern. Deja decided to become a Nutrition Science major after choosing to live a healthier lifestyle, leading to a desire to learn more about nutrition.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?
Deja plans on pursuing The Ohio State University graduate program in Nutrition and Dietetics. She sees that this program seeks to give students hands-on experience and knowledge that will prepare her for the field, while completing her Dietetic internship, also offered at The Ohio State University.
Academic Bio

Briauna is a local Las Vegan. She is a first-generation college student pursuing an undergraduate degree in Kinesiology. Briauna is a McNair Scholar and president of Lambda Kappa Delta, a pre-physical therapy honor society. On her free time, Briauna enjoys spending quality time with family and friends.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Briauna is interested in a physical therapy graduate program. She enjoys helping others and advocating for them. Briauna is passionate about teaching people how to improve their lives by using their bodies. Her ultimate career goal is to become a physical therapist and fight against racial disparities in healthcare.
ANGELICA DIAZ

Class Standing: Senior

Department: Physics & Astronomy

Major: Physics

Minors: Mathematics, Biology, Neuroscience

Academic Bio

Angelica was born in Mexico and is a first-generation college student. She loves science and is passionate about advocating for women in STEM. She is the vice president of a Women in STEM club called UNLV Scientista and is a McNair scholar. She is currently an undergraduate researcher in Dr. Pravica's lab where she is using electrochemistry to study plant viruses. When she was in middle school, she attended a GEAR UP Space Camp program at UNLV, which piqued her interest in science and inspired her to study physics and mathematics.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Angelica is interested in teaching and conducting research. She plans on pursuing a PhD in biophysics and using her background in physics to develop new techniques for synthesizing vaccines. She also hopes to encourage the next generation of young women to pursue careers in science.
Jessica Diaz-Acuna is a third year Kinesiology major at the University of Nevada Las Vegas. Jessica is first-generation college student who plans to use her bachelor's degree to become a physical therapist as well as attain a certification in personal training. Jessica Diaz-Acuna plans on pursuing a Masters of Science in Kinesiology. She plans to further her education by attaining a masters and eventually a doctorate degree, in hopes of becoming a professor in the College of Health Sciences in the Kinesiology Department.
SABRINA DITTUS

Class Standing: Senior
Department: College of Education
Major: Secondary Mathematics Education

Academic Bio
Sabrina was born and raised in Las Vegas, Nevada. She is currently a member of the UNLV Scientista Foundation, an organization that supports women majoring in STEM fields. Sabrina chose her major because of her love of mathematics and the hope of inspiring students through her teaching.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?
Sabrina plans to pursue a Master's Degree in hopes of gaining the knowledge to improve education in her classroom. She is still deciding on what program she wants to pursue, but she has interest in Educational Psychology and potentially teaching AP Calculus in the future.
Adrianne Dizon

Class Standing: Senior
Department: School of Life Sciences
Major: Biological Sciences

Academic Bio

Adrianne has been a long-time Las Vegan who was originally from the Philippines. She currently works as a Supplemental Instruction (SI) leader under the Academic Success Center. She is also involved with Alpha Epsilon Delta, Life Science Student Association, and Rebel Dance Marathon.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Adrianne plans to attend a graduate program for Human Development and Family Studies. After taking a few Couples and Family Therapy (CFT) classes, she became fascinated in learning relationships, families, and humans in general. She hopes to contribute to the body of family research.
Genesis works in a rehabilitation hospital and a children's adaptive recreation program. She was raised in Las Vegas but lived in Guatemala for part of her childhood. She chose to study psychology and anthropology because of her interests in the social and cultural processes that influence human behavior and wellbeing.

Graduate Program to be Pursued

Genesis is currently exploring different potential career pathways, including community and clinical social work.
Haley is a first generation college student. She is currently a member of the Phi Eta Sigma National Honor Society. She is also a volunteer for SafeNest, working as a domestic violence victim advocate. Haley is majoring in psychology because of her interest in human behavior and mental processes.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Haley plans on pursuing a degree through the Educational Specialist - School Psychology graduate program. She has a passion for working with children and adolescents and strives to help them succeed at home, at school and in life.
DAVID DUVAL

Class Standing: Senior
Department: Engineering
Major: Computer Science

Academic Bio
David Duval is a first generation college student at UNLV studying Computer Science. He also happens to have a visual impairment, which has inspired him to want to help other people with disabilities by using his knowledge in Computer Science and Software Engineering.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?
David would like to either pursue a Master’s Degree in Assistive Technology Engineering from California State Northridge or he would like to pursue a PhD in Computer Science from UNLV with a focus in Accessibility. This will allow him to make a positive impact on the lives of those who have disabilities.
Class Standing: Senior
Department: Electrical and Computer Engineering
Major: Electrical Engineering

Academic Bio

Anayeli is an undergraduate student majoring in Electrical Engineering looking to gain valuable research experience in battery technology, nanotechnology, optical devices, sensors, and sensor systems. She is a first-generation college student born and raised in Las Vegas, Nevada. Anayeli chose this major because she likes to be challenged and enjoys learning STEM.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Anayeli plans on pursuing a graduate program in battery and energy storage. She is currently looking to stay in Las Vegas and apply to UNLV but is also considering applying to universities in Montana, Utah, Texas, and New York.
KayLee is a Hawai'i born and Nevada raised first-generation college student. She spends her time as the Chair of Membership at UNLV AMWA's Pre-Medical Branch and as a Humanitarian Officer of UNLV AED’s Pre-Health Honors Society. KayLee chose Biology because of the diverse layers of understanding the world it encompasses.

Academic Bio

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

KayLee plans on pursuing the Doctor of Medicine Graduate Program at UNLV because of her passion that stems from personal and family experiences highlighting the impact of physicians, that led her to not only exploring the field of medicine but to giving back to the community as a physician herself.
ARELY FUENTES RETOLAZA

Class Standing: Junior
Department: Urban Affairs
Major: Social Work

Academic Bio

Arely was born in Los Angeles, California but was raised in Vegas. She is a first-generation student, minoring in global entrepreneurship and philosophy and is involved with First Generation Club as their resource specialists. Arely chose her major because she loves how expansive the field of social work is and being able to enhance human well-being and help those who are most vulnerable.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Arely plans to either pursue dual degrees and obtain a master of social work and juris doctor. Arely feels obtaining a background in law will allow her to better understand what area of social work she wishes to pursue and will help her make a deeper impact.
Katie Gilbertson

Class Standing: Senior
Department: Lee Business School
Major: Economics, Brookings
Public Policy Minor

Academic Bio

Katie is originally from Reno, Nevada. She came to UNLV for its endless number of opportunities. She currently works for Brookings Mountain West and the Lincy Institute and has held internships with the Governor’s Office of Economic Development and Applied Analysis. Katie chose Economics because of its applicability to many different fields.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Katie is actively exploring graduate programs for Econometrics, Economics, and Data Analysis. Her dream is to obtain an MBA from Stanford University. No matter where she goes, Katie wants to use her degree to help others through academic research and public policy.
TONEKE GRAHAM

Academic Bio

Toneke was born in Jamaica and emigrated to the U.S as a child. She is currently a member of various student orgs on campus, including NSBE where she is the sitting treasurer. She enjoys volunteering, sewing, outdoor activities, and watching horror movies in her free time. Toneke chose Computer Science as her major because it provides her with a challenge and combines creativity with logic.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Toneke plans on pursuing a degree in Management Information Systems. She plans on pursuing this graduate degree to pursue a career in project management.
Jewel Granados is a senior kinesiology undergraduate student who moved to Las Vegas from Cavite, Philippines at six years old. She chose kinesiology as a major, stemming her interest in the field from her experience playing high school softball and observing the athletic trainers that her team diligently worked with.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Jewel plans on pursuing the physical therapy program because she wants to be able to engage with people and help lead them into a life that they can navigate with as little pain as possible and improved function. She wants to better daily lives and encourage healthy lifestyles.
Class Standing: Senior
Department: Business
Majors: Marketing, International Business

Academic Bio
Ryder Hankins is a first-generation college student from Northern California. While at UNLV, he has participated in many involvement activities, such as studying abroad, the Honors College Rebellion, CSUN Student Government, Lee Ambassadors, and most recently, re-founding the Newest Chapter of Phi Delta Theta on campus.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?
Moving forward with his collegiate career, Ryder has learned that he is most passionate about understanding people, culture, and consumer decisions. With this as his focus, Ryder is most interested in the Lee Marketing MBA program to continue his studies.
ALEXANDRA HARVEY

Class Standing: Senior
Department: School of Life Sciences
Major: Biology with a Concentration in Pre-Professional Studies

Academic Bio
As a local Las Vegan, Alexandra is currently a Senior pursuing a degree in Biology with a concentration Pre-Professional Studies. That originated from her passion of helping others. In her free time, she shadows doctors in the Las Vegas Valley.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?
After completing her undergraduate degree, Alexandra plans to pursue Medical School. With the current COVID-19 Pandemic, many people all over the country have been affected by their access to health care. Alexandra is pursuing a career in medicine in hopes to be a part in the solution against health disparities.
Lilian is a first generation college student and a native of Las Vegas. She is an active member of AmeriCorp serving her community by working with individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Lilian chose to pursue a degree in Public Health because she wants to bridge the inequalities that devastatingly affect the health of so many and positively impact the lives of people around the world.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Lilian plans to pursue a Masters of Public Health in Environmental and Occupational Health because she has witnessed many people within her community fall victim to issues that could’ve been prevented, therefore wanting to make a change and an impact in the overall health of those within her community.
TIA “TIKO” HEMSLEY

Class Standing: Junior

Department: Liberal Arts

Major: Philosophy with Law and Justice Concentration

Academic Bio

Tiko Hemsley is a Las Vegas local and a first-generation college student attending the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. They are a member of UNLV’s Political Science Club. While attending UNLV full-time, Tiko also works part-time as a clerical assistant. They chose to be a philosophy major to strengthen their critical thinking skills.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Tiko plans on pursuing concurrent degrees in law and a master’s in public administration. They plan on pursuing a law degree in hopes of practicing environmental and criminal procedural law. Tiko wants to ensure fairness for those standing trial and to protect public health.
Class Standing: Senior
Department: Engineering
Major: Mechanical Engineering

Academic Bio
A Las Vegas Native, Cameron is pursuing a degree in Mechanical Engineering. He works at local firm Love Engineering, is the secretary of Engineers Without Boarders UNLV, and is training to run a marathon. Cameron is passionate about the future of transportation, energy, and innovating the technology we use everyday.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?
Cameron is currently in his first semester of the Integrated Bachelors-Masters Mechanical Engineering program within the College of Engineering. This will cut down the time to get both degrees by one year. He wants to run his own company and give back to the communities who inspired him.
JOI JONES

Class Standing: Junior

Department: Health Sciences

Major: Health Care Administration

Academic Bio

Joi is a first-generation student here at UNLV entering her junior year as an official Health Care Administration major. She is a local in Las Vegas although she was born and raised in Detroit, Michigan up until she began junior high. She is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated. She’s also a member of UNLV Health Care Administration Student Association (HCASA) & UNLV Women of Color Coalition (WOCC). She is an Engelstad Scholar which consists of volunteering for a nonprofit organization every semester. She has volunteered with the Public Education Foundation since January 2020 to present. Outside of school she is a member of the American College of Health Care Executives Nevada Student Chapter. She also works part time as a Guest Advocate at Target. She chose her major as HCA because she’s always been intrigued by the business side of healthcare and health insurance. She wants to be able to make the rates of health disparities in minority communities decrease.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

When she graduates from undergrad in 2023, she plans to pursue the MHA or EMHA master’s program through UNLV or another university in Michigan where she is from.
SANDRA JOSEPH

Class Standing: Junior
Department: Geoscience
Major: Geology

Academic Bio
Sandra is a first generation college student born & raised in Las Vegas. The center of her life has always revolved around a desire to protect the environment, so it is her goal to apply her knowledge in geology to research topics relating to the Earth.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?
Sandra aims to get her Master’s then Ph.D. in geoscience. She hopes to share her passions through teaching at the college level someday while also actively engaging in research throughout her career.
KAZIM JULIAN

Class Standing: Senior
Department: Economics
Major: BA Economics

Academic Bio
Kazim Julian is an immigrant who moved to Las Vegas from Cancun, Mexico at the age of 12 in 2011. Kazim is the first person within his family in over 4 generations to graduate high school and the only person in his family to enroll and soon graduate from University. Kazim chose his major because he wants to use the knowledge to help the people.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?
The graduate program I plan on pursuing is my master’s degree in economics from UNLV.