To teach is to touch a life forever.
From the Dean

Dear Friends of the UNLV College of Education:

Whether our graduates enter the field of teaching or support the mental health and well-being of our community, they are the backbone of Southern Nevada and beyond. In essence, developing and sustaining a high-quality Nevada educator and mental health workforce yields Nevada a future full of promise and innovation. As the college’s graduates begin their careers, they will touch the lives of countless youth and families.

That’s why support from our community partners including you—enables the college to attract, retain, and graduate high-achieving students at all levels with scholarships and fellowships. Unfortunately, many students are discouraged from pursuing careers in education and mental health because the fear of student loan debt and general costs of higher education looms too large. Financial support demonstrates a commitment to the future of our community. The facts are simple: When we provide resources to our students, we remove barriers that yield high retention and graduation rates and produce a more diverse workforce. Throughout their training, UNLV College of Education students engage in school and other settings to provide 250,000+ hours of educational and clinical services annually to other Nevadans—crafting their skills while solidifying their commitment to our state.

I am pleased to bring you the third edition of Recognizing and Inspiring Student Excellence (RISE), an annual showcase of our scholarship and fellowship recipients. In these pages, we celebrate these beneficiaries and highlight the multiple partners who give generously as an investment in education. As the name of the publication suggests, RISE is a collective story featuring students with financial need as well as those with exceptional potential to rise to the challenges and opportunities of their profession.

Thank you for your interest in supporting our students. If you are interested in investing in the future generation of education and mental health professionals, I invite you to contact us at education@unlv.edu to explore scholarship and other giving opportunities.

In community,

Danica G. Hays, Ph.D.
Dean
UNLV/CSUN Preschool Teacher Named 2022 Early Educator of the Year

The Nevada Department of Education (NDE) has named UNLV’s Carl Esteban as the state’s Early Childhood Educator of the Year for pre-kindergarten. Esteban was a pre-kindergarten teacher at the UNLV/CSUN Preschool at the Lynn Bennett Early Childhood Education Center, a five-star National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accredited preschool.

Esteban, affectionately known as “Mr. Carl” around the UNLV preschool, earned a bachelor of science degree in early childhood education at UNLV’s College of Education in 2019 and is currently working on a master’s degree in special education. He began working at the preschool in 2017 as a student worker, moving quickly into roles as a teacher’s assistant and substitute teacher. He has led his own inclusive early childhood education classroom with 3-5-year-old children since 2019.

The NDE’s Office of Early Learning and Development and UNLV President Keith Whitfield notified Esteban of the award during a surprise visit to the UNLV preschool Aug. 22. Esteban, surrounded by preschool students and staff, received a monetary award from the NDE along with a gift bag from Lakeshore Learning. He’ll also serve as an early childhood education ambassador in Nevada throughout the 2022-23 school year.

“I never thought I would be a pre-kindergarten head teacher,” Esteban said. “But not just that, a male pre-kindergarten color. A male pre-kindergarten teacher of color with his eyes laser-focused on making a positive impact on all those who enter my classroom and, ultimately, within the field of early childhood education.”

Esteban was selected in part because of his relentless enthusiasm for creating a learning environment that is safe, welcoming, and enriched with cultural and developmentally appropriate material. An advocate for inclusion, Esteban prioritizes working in a welcoming environment and practices simple and effective methods to foster a positive learning experience for his students and their families.

“It’s the simple, yet meaningful moments that really stand out to you where you tell yourself this is why I do what I do,” said Esteban. “I want young children to know that they should never put limits on themselves.”

The Early Childhood Educator of the Year award was spearheaded by the NDE Office of Early Learning and Development. Now in its second year, the award honors early childhood teachers and recognizes their efforts in providing quality education to the state’s youngest learners as well as partnering with their families.

“Carl Esteban is a talented educator who brings incredible spirit into his classroom every day, and he epitomizes why UNLV’s preschool is among the best in the region,” said UNLV President Keith E. Whitfield.

“Carl sees and respects each person’s individuality, celebrates their strengths, and helps them overcome challenges. He’s making a positive impression on our youngest learners that they’ll carry with them throughout their educational journey – a journey we hope brings them back to UNLV as college students one day.”
Dynamic Academics
to Prepare the Next Generation

With innovative, pedagogically rich undergraduate- and graduate-level programs across a broad range of disciplines, we proudly prepare students to serve as educators, researchers, and clinical human service professionals in today’s diverse communities.

Department of Counselor Education, School Psychology, and Human Services
Offering bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degree programs as well as graduate certificates, we prepare advocates and leaders who apply theoretical, educational, and clinical models to practice and research within a variety of mental health and human service professions.

Department of Early Childhood, Multilingual, and Special Education
We are dedicated to preparing professionals for specialized services in schools, community agencies, and higher education settings. In our bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degree programs as well as two dual Ph.D./J.D. degrees and graduate certificates, we promote cultural diversity and affirm our commitment to the ethical standards of our respective disciplines.

Department of Educational Psychology, Leadership, and Higher Education
We provide instruction in and the delivery of innovative research to inform the educational process from early childhood through higher education via our master’s and doctoral degree programs as well as graduate certificates, including the Intercollegiate and Professional Sport Management program.

Department of Teaching and Learning
We are focused on educational research and the preparation of educators at all levels. In addition to our bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral degree programs, our professional education programs focus on essential knowledge, established and current research findings, and sound professional practice.

Learn more about our departments and academic programs.
Centers, Labs, Institutes, & Offices

Our centers, labs, institutes, and offices serve as go-to resources to improve the academic, research, and practical challenges of students, parents, and teachers. These centers also work with the community to create transformative change across multiple disciplines.

Argumentation Lab
- Supports research on the use of argumentation in educational settings to promote conceptual learning, scientific practices, and argumentative writing.

Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders (CASD)
- Conducts community-focused research and training on individuals with autism spectrum disorders and other developmental disabilities.
- Project F.O.C.U.S. (Forming Occupational & Community Understanding for Success) is a comprehensive post-secondary education program for college-aged students with intellectual/developmental disabilities, including autism. The program provides an inclusive, accessible, and productive career education program to prepare these individuals for competitive, paid employment and independent living.

Center for Mathematics, Science, and Engineering Education (CMSEE)
- Strengthens the collaborative grant activities in STEM education at UNLV's Colleges of Education, Sciences, and Engineering.
- Increases capacity to improve undergraduate STEM education.
- Provides leadership in K-12 STEM education regionally and nationally.

Center for Multicultural Education (CME)
- Facilitates PK-20 multicultural education-focused scholarship-to-practice efforts.
- Serves as a campus and community resource for training, education, and professional development on issues of social justice.
- Produces and disseminates critically-conscious scholarship to inform local, state, national and international education policy.

Center for Research, Evaluation, and Assessment (CREA)
- Improves evidence-based decision making through the design and implementation of expert, nonpartisan, research-based evaluation and assessment services.
- Offers expert consultation on quantitative and qualitative research design.

Content Area and Language Learning Lab (CALL)
- Improves the integration of content, language, and learning conditions for English and dual language learners.
Centers, Labs, Institutes, & Offices (continued)

Interaction & Media Sciences Lab (IMS)
- Focuses on research in understanding technology from the human perspective via interdisciplinary lab approaches to explore the context of human learning, behavior, and socio-emotional competencies.

Lynn Bennett Early Childhood Education Center (LBECEC)
- Combines research and educator preparation to provide UNLV and surrounding community families with world-class high-quality early childhood education.

National Institute for the Advancement of Education (NIAE)
- Identifies and disseminates next-generation practices in urban education and educator preparation across PK-20 contexts.

Office for Youth Rights & Educational Justice (OYREJ)
- Addresses and advocates for the educational and legal rights of children and youth
- Conducts ongoing research aimed at maximizing the capabilities of children and youth in educational and legal settings.

Office of Learning Analytics (OLA)
- Improves learning and decision making in educational environments by combining learning science and analytics to provide descriptive, diagnostic, and predictive information to stakeholders.

Partnership for Research, Assessment, Counseling, Therapy, and Innovative Clinical Education (UNLV PRACTICE)
- Provides accessible, high quality mental and behavioral health care.
- Prepares the next-generation workforce to serve through research-informed, affordable, and culturally competent care.
- Applies innovative, interdisciplinary, and team-based training approaches.

Gayle A. Zeiter Literacy Development Center (ZLC)
- Designs and implements professional development and teacher learning engagement.
- Engages families in supporting children’s joy toward literacy.
- Supports one-on-one and small group literacy tutoring.

Learn more about our centers, labs, offices, and institutes.
Holmes Scholars

The college participates in the AACTE Holmes Scholars Program as a member institution of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE). The Holmes Scholars Program supports students who self-identify as racially and ethnically diverse and are pursuing graduate degrees in education. The program provides mentorship, scholarship, professional development, and networking opportunities for those interested in obtaining academic positions upon graduation. The 2022-23 class of Holmes Scholars includes:

Kamihah Bywaters
Kamihah Bywaters is a doctoral student in Early Childhood, Multilingual, and Special Education and a Rodman Scholars Fellow. She earned her bachelor’s degree as well as a Master of Divinity from Howard University, School of Divinity and a Master of Education from UNLV. As a Holmes Scholar, Kamihah enjoys the mentorship, and believes that she has received the necessary skills to flourish as an emerging scholar.

Adriana Hernandez
Adriana Hernandez is in the fourth year of her doctoral studies in Teacher Education. Her research focuses on the experiences of teachers of color and their preparation, recruitment, and retention in the education field. She is excited to be a part of the Holmes Scholars Program as it offers the necessary support, mentorship, and professional development opportunities to be successful.

Averill Kelly
Averill Kelly is a graduating doctoral student in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in cultural studies, international education, and multicultural education. His research interests focus on educational equity within multicultural, civic, and social studies educators. “The Holmes Program is a great way to network with, collaborate with, and learn from scholars making an impact in this field.”

Elizabeth Lean Zaragoza
Elizabeth Lean Zaragoza is a Ph.D. candidate in the Higher Education program. Her research addresses disparities in access to healthcare and athletic training higher education. Elizabeth is a certified athletic trainer and founder of Latinx Athletic Trainers, a community that engages students and professionals from Latinx backgrounds in sports medicine.

Mayra Marquez-Mendez
Mayra Marquez-Mendez is a doctoral student in Educational Psychology, finishing the second year of her Ph.D. program. Being a Holmes Scholar has empowered her in so many ways. As a Holmes Scholar, she has had the opportunity to meet other scholars, travel to various conferences, and build community at UNLV and other institutions.

Adjua Mensah
Adjua Mensah is a third-year doctoral student in the Teaching Education program. Originally from Canada, Adjua is bilingual and the daughter of Ghanaian immigrants who instilled in her the importance and impact of education. Being a Holmes Scholar gives her the opportunity to connect and build a community with scholars of diverse backgrounds. She is interested in researching technology integration practices that emerge in the classroom from theoretical teacher learning.

Sarah Monique Somma
Sarah Monique Somma is a mother, Holmes Scholar, Honors Society member, and Phi Kappa Phi affiliate. A doctoral student in the Career and Technical Postsecondary and Higher Education program, her research interest focus on the lack of Black women in STEM careers and occupations. As a Black female STEM professional herself, she is invested in helping more Black women join the field and thrive in these white male-dominated spaces. Through CTE research, inclusive pedagogy, and practical policy implementation, she believes that Black women will thrive in STEM-centered trades and occupations. She is proud to be a Holmes Scholar because representation matters.
Rodman Scholars

The Rodman Special Education Cohort Program is an intensive one-year program in which undergraduate special education majors can complete their Bachelor of Science degree and be licensed as generalist special educators. Here is a look at this year’s scholars.

Jonathan Hull
"My dream of being a special education teacher is so close thanks to being a Rodman Scholar! To be able to go through this with peers that I admire immensely has made this experience so very meaningful to me."

Crystal Mendez
"My goal is to become a special education teacher at an elementary school and help students with disabilities pursue higher education."

Mukadder Kocabiyik
"I am honored and humbled to have been chosen among so many qualified applicants, and I cannot thank you enough for your generosity and support."

Hailee Reif
"I am so thankful to the Rodman Scholarship Program for allowing me the opportunity to finish up my special education degree and continue to get hands-on work experience within our schools."

Carlton McGee
"My time as a Rodman Scholar reminds me of a quote from Bob Proctor. ‘When you have a strong desire to do something, you will always have the energy to do it.’ Thank you for supporting my desire to be an educator."

Yaping Yang
"I will keep working hard to reach my goal to become a special education teacher and help my students to improve their academic performance."

Not Pictured: Adela Abdelaaziz, Debra Andreassi, Janet Boyer, Jeremy Dooms, Christine Granda, Sha Heilman, Tracey Lewis, and Kayla Swartz
Rodman Fellows

The Rodman Special Education Cohort Program is supported by Rodman Fellows who serve as mentors for undergraduates in the program.

Jessica Ain
I have been at UNLV since I was an undergraduate in education and psychology. Eleven years later, I am getting my master’s degree in early childhood special education. Between my undergraduate and Ph.D. program, I worked with children with disabilities and their families. Being awarded the Rodman Fellowship is an honor and an amazing opportunity. I look forward to supporting students pursuing their degrees in special education. These new teachers will directly benefit our students, families, and communities.

Kamilah Bywaters
Kamilah Bywaters is a doctoral student in Early Childhood, Multilingual, and Special Education and a Rodman Scholars Fellow. She earned her bachelor’s degree as well as a Master of Divinity from Howard University and a Master of Education from UNLV. Serving as a Rodman Fellow is truly special because she gets an opportunity to impact the field of special education by training new special education teachers to enter the profession.
Teach Nevada

Teach Nevada Scholarships support both traditional undergraduate and Alternative Route to Licensure candidates in the college's teacher preparation programs. Upon completion of their degree program, scholarship awardees pledge to teach for at least five consecutive years in a Nevada school, three of which must be in a high-needs Nevada school. Here’s a look at three of our 2022 Teach Nevada Scholarship recipients.

This scholarship meant everything to me! I have been working towards getting my degree since 1999. But like so many of us, obstacles just kept getting in the way. So over time I just gave up. I have been in CCSD for over 15 years as a support staff. And almost every teacher would tell me that I should become a teacher myself. But of course that was easier said than done. I could not afford school. To be honest I never thought I ever would. But when this program presented itself it was like a dream come true. I am so honored to have been a part of it. And for that I am forever grateful.

- Jovona Undewood

"I have always loved school. As a single adoptive, foster mom, life is busy. When the opportunity was available to receive this scholarship to go back and get my master’s degree in education, it changed my life. I no longer let anything get in my way of pursuing my dream. I feel empowered by returning back to school, and love the fact that my children can witness that. My vision is that I can make a positive impact on my children, and all the students that I will come in contact with. Thank you so much Teach Nevada for a scholarship that has inspired me and helped me make a dream come true!"

- Lisa Virga

"This scholarship has given me an opportunity of a lifetime and the ability to pursue my dream of becoming a licensed teacher in Nevada. I would like to thank you for selecting me for the Teach Nevada Scholarship. Through this scholarship I will be able to receive my bachelor's degree in the early education program at UNLV. Becoming an elementary school teacher is a goal I will reach because of your generosity. This scholarship has been a blessing to me and my family financially. I’m thankful for the opportunity of this wonderful PPP Cohort program."

- Latasha Lewis

"Education policymakers are expecting our students to have these skills because the private sector is expecting students to have these skills. Without these skills, our students are not prepared. This scholarship has given me the opportunity to pursue a master’s degree in education and learn how to incorporate technology into my teaching. This scholarship has given me the opportunity to become a better teacher and make a positive impact on my students."

- Adjoa Mensah
SMART Boards and some teachers only use tech resources in one-off instances. “Some CCSD schools have a cart of laptops and tablets for multiple classrooms to share, others have wasn’t an issue [...]. Here, teachers generally don’t use tech in the learning environment unless they have it readily available.” Nevada teachers and students do not have equal access to tech. “My school was one [device] to one [student], so access wasn’t an issue. After leaving Canada, Adjoa came to the U.S. with a diverse perspective on education. Though the two nations share a border, the education systems in Ontario and Nevada are very different, especially when it comes to tech. For example, teachers still have negative or limiting attitudes toward tech in educational environments. But how could this be possible? How could an incoming wave of teachers dubbed “digital natives,” who were raised with tech, not use it in their own classrooms? For a while, there was an assumption that this would just happen naturally. Adjoa’s research has determined this to be a myth.

Transformative Uses of Technology

Teachers claim to be continually exposed to endless possibilities. As a child of Ghanaian immigrants who were also teachers, the value of education was ingrained in her from the start. But she didn’t see her future in the classroom. Instead, she studied psychology at Western University where she earned her first degree. Adjoa’s journey to academia wasn’t always straightforward. Growing up in a city just outside Toronto, Canada, she was a scholar well as a scholar began. After graduation, Adjoa began volunteering at an elementary school to bolster her resume. She recalls enjoying the experience. She noticed a disconnect between education’s use of technology in contrast to its use at large. Teachers claim to be using technology in the classroom, but often fail to do so in a transformative way. Instead, Adjoa’s research shows they are using tech as a replacement. For example, many teachers point to their use of PowerPoint to present topics as an effective use of technology. While many of us would agree, Adjoa regards PowerPoint as a replacement for a poster presentation. Given that the use of the software is not hands-on for the student, it does not change their learning.

Adjoa went on to become a K-8 teacher for 15 years, teaching both French and English with a growing interest in STEM education. Soon she began experimenting with technology in the classroom, and facilitating professional development courses for primary teachers. She discovered a passion for teaching that many ways she could use her creativity to design interesting lesson plans. She noticed a disconnect between education’s use of technology in contrast to its use at large. Teachers claim to be using technology in the classroom, but often fail to do so in a transformative way. Instead, Adjoa’s research shows they are using tech as a replacement. For example, many teachers point to their use of PowerPoint to present topics as an effective use of technology. While many of us would agree, Adjoa regards PowerPoint as a replacement for a poster presentation. Given that the use of the software is not hands-on for the student, it does not change their learning.

Adjoa's research focuses on preparing future teachers to integrate technology into K-12 classrooms. Through her research, she shows the education world how to stay relevant and reach new heights. Now in the third year of her doctoral studies, Adjoa Mensah is set to make waves. Hailing from a different country with diverse perspectives, she is just the woman to question the current transformative uses of technology to meet the needs of their students and our ever-evolving world.

**Nevada Institute on Teaching & Education Preparation (NITEP) Fellows**

This initiative’s goal is to enroll new students and aspiring scholars into programs that will prepare them for a professional environment that demands constant innovation. Students undertake an advanced study program to gain skills and serve as mentors and leaders in Nevada K-12 school systems. Our 2021 NITEP Scholars include:

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<tr>
<th>Jessica Alley</th>
<th>Raina Ladislaao</th>
<th>Justice Alexa Tiguelo</th>
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<tr>
<td>Erin Ayers</td>
<td>Julia Maranville</td>
<td>Leilah Torres</td>
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<td>Kendra Beach</td>
<td>Alana McCall</td>
<td>Fae Ung</td>
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<td>Kamilah Bywaters</td>
<td>Colleen Narayan</td>
<td>Azul Ureno</td>
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<td>Claudia Chilson</td>
<td>Borna Nemet</td>
<td>Sofia Vieira</td>
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<td>Fayth Dean</td>
<td>Drew ONeil</td>
<td>Ariana Walcott</td>
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<td>Jackson Ellsworth</td>
<td>Alina Oranchak</td>
<td>Lesly Zecena</td>
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<td>MaryKate Enciso</td>
<td>Sara Pearson</td>
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<td>Alex Faucheux</td>
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<td>Miranda Garcia</td>
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<td>Michela Gearin</td>
<td>Frank Schmidt</td>
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<td>Jaiden Kurz</td>
<td>Samuel Self</td>
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*Scholars include: Jaiden Kurz, Michela Gearin, Miranda Garcia, Alex Faucheux, MaryKate Enciso, Fayth Dean, Jackson Ellsworth, Claudia Chilson, Kamilah Bywaters, Kendra Beach, Erin Ayers, Jessica Alley.*
College of Education Scholarships

Thanks to the sustained support of generous community donors and their families—many of whom are former educators themselves—the College of Education is able to offer scholarships to future practitioners who will make a difference in the field of education and in the lives of children and families for generations to come. Here are the 2022 scholarship recipients listed with their degree programs.

**Ann Horvath Memorial Scholarship**
- Eden Wolde

**Barbara L. Lochridge Scholarship**
- Margaret Luna
- Christian Perez

**Catherine Vaglio Scholarship**
- Mackenzie Baack
- Shannon Jones
- Kiara Yzabelle Ocampo
- Heather Thompson
- Kaya Vestuto
- Eden Wolde
- Erin Woods

**Chester D. Simms Scholarship**
- Christina Carr
- Vernetta McGregor
- Erin Woods

**Chris Guinchigliani Special Education Graduate Scholarship**
- Erin Woods

**Dorothy A. Dawson Estate Scholarship**
- Brenda Angeles
- Cheyenne Beaver
- Chloe Bolduc
- Tyler Chalkner
- Sarisha Flowers
- Dana Griffio
- Joseph Hangge
- Jessica Landeros
- Kiara Yzabelle Ocampo
- Stephanie Ortega
- Christian Perez
- Serena Perkins
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- Eden Wolde
- Erin Woods
- Christina Carr
- Vernetta McGregor
- Erin Woods
- Brenda Angeles
- Cheyenne Beaver
- Chloe Bolduc

### Dr. Bea Babbitt Scholarship
- Heather Thompson

### Edward Pierson Memorial Scholarship
- Mackenzie Baack
- Safiyya Hintali
- Skylar Jones Spearber
- Allison Long
- Serena Perkins

### Ned and Eva Bortman Scholarship
- Britney Martinez

### Evelyn Semling Scholarship
- Kaya Vestuto

### John M. Vergiels Scholarship
- Sarah Monique Somma

### Monti Carlin Tettamanti Scholarship
- Thomas Gormley
- Kiara Yzebelle Ocampo
- Sarah Wells

### Rosemarie Hartle Scholarship
- Chloe Boldac
- Joseph Hangge
- Rhiannon Routsong

### Willard Rollings & Barbara Williams-Rollings Scholarship
- Fae Ung

### Wolzinger Family Foundation Education Scholarship
- Jimmy Yan
The Future of Education is Digital: Ph.D. Candidate Preparing Teachers to Succeed

Adjou Mensah is set to make waves. Hailing from a different country with diverse perspectives, she is just the woman to show the education world how to stay relevant and reach new heights. Now in the third year of her doctoral studies, her research focuses on preparing future teachers to integrate technology into K-12 classrooms. Through her research and role within the College of Education, she looks for ways for pre-service teachers, who are undergraduate students preparing to enter the classroom professionally, to understand and develop strategies to facilitate relevant and transformative uses of technology to meet the needs of their students and our ever-evolving world.

Questioning the Current

Adjou's journey to academia wasn't always straightforward. Growing up in a city just outside Toronto, Canada, she was continually exposed to endless possibilities. As a child of Ghanaian immigrants who were also teachers, the value of education was ingrained in her from the start. But she didn't see her future in the classroom. Instead, she studied psychology at Western University where she earned her first degree.

After graduation, Adjou began volunteering at an elementary school to bolster her resume. She recalls enjoying the many ways she could use her creativity to design interesting lesson plans. She discovered a passion for teaching that would shape the rest of her life. “When I was using tech and loving tech in the classroom, I started to question, ‘why isn’t everyone else doing this?’” And so her journey to teaching and later becoming a teacher of pre-service teachers as well as a scholar began.

Adjou went on to become a K-8 teacher for 15 years, teaching both French and English with a growing interest in STEM education. Soon she began experimenting with technology in the classroom, and facilitating professional development courses for primary teachers.

She noticed a disconnect between education's use of technology in contrast to its use at large. Teachers claim to be using technology in the classroom, but often fail to do so in a transformative way. Instead, Adjou's research shows they are using tech as a replacement. For example, many teachers point to their use of PowerPoint to present topics as an effective use of technology. While many of us would agree, Adjou regards PowerPoint as a replacement for a poster presentation. Given that the use of the software is not hands-on for the student, it does not change their learning experience.

Bridging a Bumpy Digital Landscape

After leaving Canada, Adjou came to the U.S. with a diverse perspective on education. Though the two nations share a border, the education systems in Ontario and Nevada are very different, especially when it comes to tech. For example, Nevada teachers and students do not have equal access to tech. “My school was one [device] to one [student], so access wasn’t an issue [...]. Here, teachers generally don’t use tech in the learning environment unless they have it readily available.” Some CCSD schools have a cart of laptops and tablets for multiple classrooms to share, others have SMART Boards and some teachers only use tech resources in one-off instances.

In truth, teachers sometimes misuse tech access treating it as a reward or even as a behavioral tool when dealing with disruptive students.

Debunking the Digital Native Myth

Compounding the challenge is the fact that many pre-service teachers don’t know how to use the tech they have. There are even instances where teachers still have negative or limiting attitudes toward tech in educational environments. But how could this be possible? How could an incoming wave of teachers dubbed “digital natives,” who were raised with tech constantly within reach, not use it in their own classrooms? For a while, there was an assumption that this would just happen naturally. Adjou’s research has determined this to be a myth.
“Before teacher preparation, and sometimes after, preservice teachers have not yet received training on how to incorporate technology into their teaching methods effectively.”

To change the narrative, Adjoa has experimented with various technology integration strategies, such as using apps, and interactive SMART Boards, and facilitated professional development courses for primary teachers. She’s learned that elementary students are willing, capable, and eager to use tech tools like Minecraft, a highly popular video game, to improve and present their in-class themes and learning objectives. Adjoa continues to investigate and address the divide in classroom environments that aren’t implementing tech and combats negative attitudes about tech by demonstrating relevant and impactful uses of it for her students.

Crossing Cultures

Her time within the college is marked by impressive accomplishments, including being accepted into the CADRE STEM Fellowship, becoming a Holmes Scholar, and having her work published in the Journal of Urban Education. She hopes to contribute to the continued improvement of elementary teacher preparation by designing and teaching courses on technology integration in math, science, and across different cultures.

“For linguistically diverse students, technology usually functions as a way for them to use the language they’re learning.” She regularly integrated text-to-speech and audiobooks offering translation between both languages. Students also used tech software to record audio, so they could hear themselves speaking the language and demonstrate oral dictation. Using tech in her classrooms gave students a new way to grow as storytellers. Students even produced their own video trailers highlighting the lives of famous heroes during Black History Month. Integrating tech in classes will only open up the world for students, giving them access to different people and cultures through virtual video conferencing and learning how to safely navigate instant messaging platforms.

Finding Support

But Adjoa has not achieved all this on her own. Her mentor, Assistant Professor Dr. Tina Vo, has been instrumental in shaping her academic and personal growth. As a fellow woman of color, she understands the unique challenges they face in academia. They anticipate having to present themselves a certain way, write more articles, fight harder for opportunities, and break-through spaces often dominated by white males.

“She sometimes when you’re interacting with others, you’ll say something that makes sense and true, and they’re like ‘Oh, thank you’ and they receive the message but it’s never used. The perspective you’ve shared becomes another anecdote that’s never applied.’”

In the midst of navigating the academic world, Adjoa’s advice to fellow students is to find a support system within classmates and cohorts. “Seek out faculty members who care about your success, and never be afraid to ask for help.”

Innovating for Maximum Impact

No matter the challenges she faces, Adjoa knows she’s making a difference for future teachers and students. “I loved witnessing student progression and improvement.” Integrating tech into the classroom is not a luxury that can be reserved for some or a skill afforded only to teachers who seek out continuing education units or other career development resources.

“Education policymakers are expecting our students to have these skills because the private sector is expecting students to have these skills.” Adjoa is determined and has confidently embarked on a journey to train future teachers to do this properly.

“I want to be that person who is involved in training teachers to use tech, which is a big deal in our society. It’s clear that we need to have these skills, and our students need to have these skills.” Though her research area is specific, Adjoa’s advice and the example she sets apply to all teaching disciplines. With her commitment to education, passion for creative uses of technology, and dedication to creating diverse and inclusive environments, Adjoa Mensah is poised to leave a lasting impact on the field of education and the world at large.
Dean's List

Students taking a minimum of 12 credits and earning at least a 3.50 semester grade point average are awarded Dean's List honors.

Spring & Fall 2022

Adela Abdelsattar
Fatemeh Abdolahi
Jorge Aceves
Sahbi Acioglu
Samuel Acosta
Milagros Acosta Carmona
Payim Adams
Sheila Agbonony-Paccea
Edith Agapio
Jose Aguirre
Diana Aguilar
Diana Agustin Pedro
Souding Al Bias
Hannah Alcino
Justice Alexa Tigrad
Ashley Allen
Samantha Almazan
Natalie Alvarez
Vanessa Alvarez
Monique Alves Da Silva
Melanie Antunez
Jordan Andreu-Clark
Alyson Anderson
Gabriella Anderson
Sydney Anderson
Gabriela Amonde
Vicente Andrade
Debra Anderson
Avana Andreadis
Brenda Angulo
Laure Maniste Antor
Alexandre Aznabulum
Alicia Archer
Carmen Aria
Cecilia Arias
Cindy Attorre-Serrano
Brandon Arnold
Cristina Arriola
Janet Arroyo-Moreno
Valentina Artale
Elizabeth Arturo
Ingrid Asconcio-Torres
Basil Assaf
Danielle Atkinson
Maria Antaide Salgado-Rivas
Edunke Avelio Avila
Brittany Avila
Vivian Avila
Almir Ayala
Abd Ayale
Amor Ayers
Erin Ayers
Shern Ayers
Mackenzie Baeck
Piper Baeck
Ryia Bahan-Yamaguchi
Blanca Baca
Anthony Bade
Helena Baird
Branden Bales
Marisol Ballarino
Lindsey Banks
Chloe Barber
Pauline Banks-McCoy
Chris Barriga
Vanessa Barrios
Isabell Barton
Sahiba Bashkowary
Aaron Basilio
Gina Bastida
Skye Baton
Rachel Baumwell
Carly Bavaro
Amy Baxter
Kendra Beach
Stephany Belet
Ayana Bellantonito
Maya Bendick
Brittany Bennett
Lydia Bethan
Lara Bentzke
Morgyn Blackbird
Eric Bizans
Safaicta Bizana
William Black
Chance Blackler
Yousna Blue Garcia
Kyn Bogaard-Lund
Brenda Boppo-Martinez
Fantasia Brinko
Chloe Bokos
Heather Bome
Brisa Botello-Calhoun
Kara Bowes
Bradley Bowes
Eritha Booke
Emily Brauchberger
Laymisha Briggs
Yvonne Brinse
Nicole Brulovsky
Jony South
Sidney Brooks
Journey Brooks
Sydney Brouce
Gillian Browne
Ronald Brown
Hannah Brown
Nicole Babang
Darian Buzman
Shafee Bufton
Shawson Bulk
Dillian Burkhart
Emily Bushe
Emma Burnham
Stephanie Burns
Kyle Burr
Morgan Butler
Estefania Cabral
Christina Cabalos-Stevens
Bilal Cabak
Ingrid Cajabon
Michaela Calder
Michelle Caldeiro
Kayla Calvert
Kristina Camacho-Morales
Gabrielle Cameron
Brittany Cameram-Wins
Rachel Campbell
Kasondra Campos
Josephine Canfield
Bethany Canby
Carrie Canum
Samantha Capuano
Becca Cardenas
Cerel Cardenas
Kayla Carma
Crystal Carlson
Christina Carr
Kara Carlucci
Anastasia Carillo-Mariano
Ryan Carus
Ashley Carter
Shanae Cather
Carla Casas
Mena Cristina-Castillo
Manuel Kim Caspilian
Meghan Cassani
Paola Castillo
Laura Castellan
Brittany Castro
Karla Castro
Angelica Castro-Reses
Chriztelle Ceza Dinamay
Andrea Cortes
Madison Cuthley
Marlyn Cutil
Antonia Casas
Maxon Cavanaugh
Mia Carner-Arenda
Priscilla Cereca
Alejandra Cervantes
Alex Chack
Tyler Chakler
Rachel Chambers
Meghan Chandler
Kalma Charanza-Santana
Jessica Chavez
Ivy Chen
Abigail Childers
Hannah Childs
Chandra Chilson
Alexa Ching
Amber Chinn
Heather Chuniewilski
Kristine Cho
Stephanie Chin
Alicia Claborn
Alexis Claborn
Thomas Clark
Grace Clarke
Rizan Clement
Christine Cloge
Delaney Cobb
Soledad Coelho-Ferreira
Jessica Coll
Sofia Coleman
Alysa Colligan
Collie Collins
Shelene Connors
Taylor Conti
Brenda Contreas
Bridgette Contreras
Dani Contreras
Stephanie Contreras-Rodriguez
Camryn Cook
Jack Cook
Melanie Cook
Elizabeth Cooper
Taylor Corbett
Ashley Coyle
Bayler Corrado
Gaby Corral
Kari Correa
Sarah Coto
Makala Cothran
Megan Cortinas
Tracey Counts
Brandon Cowen
Kameron Cox
Samuel Cox
Sydney Cox
Maris Cristina Casimiro
Sean Crichtfeld
Valerie Crosswhite
Samantha Crampton-Medina
Koti Cruz
Tania Cruz
Crystal Cuddler
Ella Dart Camacho
Jasmyn Carl
Kacey Dai
Julia Dalalas
Sally Damm
Daniel Dandian
Desiree Dawson
Ashley Davies
Sierra Davies
Stacy Davis
Abonia De La Cruz
Foyth Dean
Taylor Dean
Jacob Decker
Sara Del Mundo
Zoe Deluca
Josh Deluca
Ariel Diaz
Yanely Diaz-Orozco
Haley DiBona
Lisa Dickson
Shelby DiGiacomo
Chloe DiGiacomo
Christelle DiNan
Tataya Ding
Salena Ditto
Skye Dixon
Christopher Kyle Dixon
Vanessa Dominguez
Jeremy Doms
Taylor Doss
Kathleen Dotsen
Adyn Doyle
Kylie Druker
Sydney Dube
Kelsey Dudley
Jennifer Dunn
Kyle Dwor
Madylin Eckels
Juliane Elliott
Jackson Ellsworth
Sara Elual
Kaley Emeray
Tori Emmons
MaryKate Emnico
Pearlene Eser
Lybheit Escobar
Lorena Escobar-Oliva
Alyssa Marie Escobar
Lois Espinosa
Nicole Espitia
Tayra Espy
Celeste Estrada
Raby Ewim
Justice Evang
Loren Everson
Collette Fanning
Jaima Sandra Fajardo
Altho E faction
Sahbi Falls
Janice Farmar
Angela Felder
Stephanie Felix
Drew Ferguson
Sonnay Fernandes
Danielle Fernandez
Isley Fernandez-Cinco
Alexander Fields
Yurika Figueroa
Brandon Fishley
Allayna Fitzg
and support.”

Mukadder Kocabiyik licensed as generalist special educators. Here is a look at this year’s scholars.

If you desire to do something, you are able to go through this special education teacher experience within our schools.

“My dream of being a Rodman Scholar! To be a Rodman Scholar! To be

Boyer, Jeremy Dooms, Christine Granda, Sha Heilman, Yaping Yang

I will keep working hard to continue to get hands-on work experience within our schools.

Hailee Reif

Garcia

Gomez

Angel

Gonzalez

Gonzalez

Daniel González-Agüero

Jennifer González-Delgado

Cynthia Hon

Tae Geon

Sharazeen Ghez

Kevin Grieve

Diamond Gray

Mitsi Gray

Jesse Greenstein

Katherine Griffin

Khalid Groomen

Theo Guasti

José Guelden

Wendy Gant

Taylor Gaubl

Celeste Guzman-Clemente

Yi-Tien Guzman

Betina Guzman-Martinez

Sarah Haak

Micael Haji-Sheikh

Haley Halbera

Catherine Hall

Taylor Hall

Sage Hamilton

Anam Hashch

Joseph Huang

Sydney Hansen

Lakshmi Harden

jasmine Harger

Amanda Harrell

Michelle Harrison

Autumn Hurard

Vannessa Heald

Mrinalin Henry

Allysa Herman

April Hernandez

Evelyn Hernandez

Luam Hernandez

Margaret Hernandez

Maribeth Hernandez

Maribel Hernandez

Christina Hill

Makara Hill

Shaqueille Holland

Humna Horvat

Ruby Howell

Mackenzie Howie

Chanelle Hubbard

Casey Hubbard

Hailey Hubbard

Maia Hughes

Mackenzie Hughes

Makende Humfrey

Antoinette Iandella

Ana Ivanou

Diane Irish Devos

Danielle Ivey

David Ivis

Amy Jackson

Tamera Jackson

Devin James

Sara James

Courtney Jacobs

Roselle Jewell Reginaldo

Stanna Jimenez

Yvette Jimenez

Jason Johnson

Moira Johnson

Natalia Johnson

Richard Johnson

Sara Johnson

Saeed Johnson

Stephen Johnson

Shannon Jones

Skyler Jones Sprader

Jacob Jones

Kashmir Kaiser

Alder Kaelson

Megan Kauli

Taylor Keary

Caroline Keating

Gage Kettani

Brittany Kiefer

Arianna Keith

Aubriet Keller

Wandalee Keller

Catherine Kelly

Sera Kelly

Hailey Keilhauer

Savannah Kennedy

Maia Kerner

Serah Khoza

Kiana Khoo

Madison Kidd

Nicole Kim

Maeve Klinstra

Brittany Kincade

Jiali King

Noah Knebel

Aitiya Kirn

Amethyst Klepper

Kelsey Knott

Monique Koon

Alexis Koon

Rachel Kramer

Rikki Kraus

Allison Kreu

Anita Krista Alban

Amber Kuechik

Natalie Kubala

Thomas LaClair

Daniele Lalonts

Cory Lamb

Erica Landers

Jessica Landers

Elida Laude

Grace Lange

Andy Larsen

John Jensen

Alexandra Lavelle

Michael Lawson

Andra Le Van

Carla Leary-Buesi

Melinda Leake

Jordyn Leal

Jor-ang Leal-Gutierrez

Kaila Leary

Vivica Leaskas

Isabella Leavitt

William Ledesma

Aubelis Ledesma

Jasmin Lee

Erica Lee

Saulo Lee

Rayna Lee

Victoria Leigh Leinart

Claudia Lemmon

Virginia-Lena Lemus-Garcia

Skyler Jones Sprader

Marcus Leon

Denny Leung

Jaquita Lewis

Bebehi Li

Elaina Libretti

Molly Limburg

Kalli Lindsey

Renee Lipkens

Caroline Linn

Andrea Llamas-Monroy

Darby Loando

Ian Lodge

Jamie Lohnmeyer

Kaela Long

Roxiay Long

Vincent Long

Andy Lopez

Nicole Lopez

Yanela Lopez Amador

Amelia Lopez Gonzalez

Gerardo Lopez Hernandez

Avramia Luckie

Daisy Long

Emma Lupan

Lillian Luke

Margaret Luna

Arabel Luna Hernandez

Jazmin Macias

Lemando Macias

Kanita Macke

Angela Majano

Tilly MacKinnon

Mackenzie Malia

Andrela Mandujano-Torres

Makayla Jordon

Kihaya

Gallow

Allison Marzocchi

Jessica Marco

Ellia Marcussen

Angela Marchi

Tilly Marie

Evelyn Martinez

Jaci Martinez

Mackenzie Martin

Jaret Martinez

Janet Martinez Camarero

Ashley Marrone

Jordan Markita

Misty Matthews

Marcha McCarth

Joyce Maynugh

Elyssa McIlwain

Shaghayegh McNeill

Alana McCall

Mia McCarthy

Ronald McCall

Mary McDaniel

Brooke McLea

Lauren McDonald

Sarah McIlhan

Carlo Meier

Neil McGee

Harley McGuire

Brittany McKinstry

Thomas McKee

Ozzy McKeown

Hannah McMillian

Gabrielle Melina

Kelley Medina

Cymbal Mejia

Manuel Mejia

Kara Mejia

Melinda Melendez

Thalia Melville

Catalina Menendez

Jonas Minchou

Crystal Menendez

Manuel Menendez

Benedict Menendez

Rodrigue Mendez

Catherine Meng

Jessica Meraz

Jonathan A. Metra

Jordan Meyers

Jordan Middleton

Jocelyn Miller

Ethan Mills

Lexie Midday

Hilda Mohna

Brooke Monshoff

Amber Montgomery

Nathalie Monilla

Grace Moore

Alexa Morales

Gina Maria Morales

Melissa Morales Anbelez

Jacob Morgan

Marya Morgan

Katelyn Montgomery

Chelsie Montoya

Andrea Monteiro

Frya Monial

Hana Most

Tanam Munnah

Olivier Munoz

Zulma Munoz

Nancy Munoz-Avila

Alison Murdock

Maria Muro

Morgan Murphy

Kristina Murrieta

Lukayia Myers

Mikhail Naccelli

Alexandre Najaro

Jace Nakamoto

Colin Natansohn

Lucas Navarrette

Edward Navarro

Judith Navarro

Leslie Navarro

Jaemon Neal

Natalie Navarrete
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE). The Holmes Scholars Program is an integral part of this institution, offering students the opportunity to engage in advanced studies and research. This program supports students in their educational endeavors, providing them with necessary resources, mentorship, and networking opportunities to enhance their learning experience.

Sarah Monique Somma is a mother, Holmes Scholar, Honors Society member, and Phi Kappa Phi affiliate. A doctoral student interested in researching technology integration practices that emerge in the classroom from theoretical teacher learning. Being a Holmes Scholar has empowered her in so many ways. As a Holmes Scholar, she has had the opportunity to meet other scholars who share her interests and to collaborate with them on various projects. Her research interests focus on equity and social justice in education.

Averill Kelly is graduating doctoral student in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in cultural studies, with a focus on educational equity within multicultural, civic, and social studies education. "The Holmes Program is a great way to network with, collaborate with, and learn from other scholars who share similar interests. The program has provided me with many opportunities to grow as a scholar and a teacher." His research interests focus on educational equity within multicultural and social studies education.

Kamilah Bywaters is a doctoral student in Early Childhood, Multilingual, and Special Education and a Rodman Scholars Fellow. She earned her bachelor's degree as well as a Master of Divinity from Howard University School of Divinity and a Master of Education from UNLV. As a Holmes Scholar, Kamilah enjoys the mentorship and community that the program offers. She believes that she has grown both professionally and personally through her involvement in the program.

Adriana Hernandez is a master’s student in Multicultural and Social Studies Education. Her research interests focus on educational equity within multicultural, civic, and social studies education. "The Holmes Program is an excellent opportunity for me to connect with other scholars who share similar interests and to learn from them. The program has provided me with many opportunities to grow as a scholar and a teacher." Her research interests focus on educational equity within multicultural and social studies education.
Altering Course: Former Airman Finds a New Duty Station in Special Education

Discipline and integrity drive Jonathan Hull. After serving seven years in the U.S. Air Force, he’s logging a new flight plan – the path to becoming a special education teacher.

“All I want to do is help.” His kindness and innate zeal to support others was the driving force that prompted his career change.

After finishing his military service, Jonathan overcame some personal hurdles and worked in a variety of customer service-centric roles. Eventually, he earned an associate’s degree in education from the College of Southern Nevada and began substitute teaching with long-term plans of earning a bachelor’s degree (with assistance from the Kitty Rodman Scholarship for Special Education) and taking charge of his own elementary school classroom.

Changing Course

While observing a classroom at a local school, Jonathan interacted with two students who, unbeknownst to him, were on the autism spectrum. After learning about their instructional needs, he wanted to engage and connect with each student and help them succeed in a classroom environment. At that point, he knew his service-driven military background and his commitment to seeing things through would be best put to use in special education.

While he recognizes that the challenges of being a special education teacher are as unique as the students he works with, he looks forward to the intrinsic rewards and fulfillment he’ll receive in helping others reach their potential. He’s excited to have a class of his own where he can cultivate an environment built on discipline, integrity and trust.

Securing the Perimeter

“I want there to be trust between me and the student and trust amongst their peers.” Jonathan explains. “When they walk into my classroom, it’s a positive space where they can be themselves, be creative, and be safe from opinions or preconceived notions that might try to deter them from going for their dreams.”

This spring, Airman Hull will become Mr. Hull and he’ll be off to his new duty station, but Jonathan won’t be gone for long. He’s already planning his return for more learning in the college’s graduate degree program. Until then, we wish him and his students blue skies and tailwinds.
Supports research on the use of argumentation in educational settings to promote conceptual learning, scientific practices, and argumentative writing.

Conducts community-focused research and training on individuals with autism spectrum disorders and other developmental disabilities.

Project F.O.C.U.S. (Forming Occupational & Community Understanding for Success) is a comprehensive post-secondary education program for college-aged students with intellectual/developmental disabilities, including autism. The program provides an inclusive, accessible, and productive career education program to prepare these individuals for competitive, paid employment and independent living.

Strengthens the collaborative grant activities in STEM education at UNLV’s Colleges of Education, Sciences, and Engineering.

Increases capacity to improve undergraduate STEM education.

Provides leadership in K-12 STEM education regionally and nationally.

Facilitates PK-20 multicultural education-focused scholarship-to-practice efforts.

Serves as a campus and community resource for training, education, and professional development on issues of social justice.

Produces and disseminates critically-conscious scholarship to inform local, state, national and international education policy.

Improves evidence-based decision making through the design and implementation of expert, nonpartisan, research-based evaluation and assessment services.

Offers expert consultation on quantitative and qualitative research design.

Improves the integration of content, language, and learning conditions for English and dual language learners.

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**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

*By the Numbers*

**2021-2022**

**DEGREES CONFERRED**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**25** Graduate Certificates

**13** Undergraduate Certificates

**45%** First generation of CoE students are the first in their families to attend college.

**DIVERSITY OF DEGREE EARNERS**

- White: 36.4%
- Hispanic: 33.4%
- Black or African American: 10.2%
- Two or More Races: 8.5%
- Asian: 7.2%

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Dynamic Academics to Prepare the Next Generation

With innovative, pedagogically rich undergraduate- and graduate-level programs across a broad range of disciplines, we proudly prepare students to serve as educators, researchers, and clinical human service professionals in today's diverse communities.

Department of Counselor Education, School Psychology, and Human Services

Offering bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree programs as well as graduate certificates, we prepare advocates and leaders who apply theoretical, educational, and clinical models to practice and research within a variety of mental health and human service professions.

Department of Early Childhood, Multilingual, and Special Education

We are dedicated to preparing professionals for specialized services in schools, community agencies, and higher education settings. In our bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree programs as well as two dual Ph.D./J.D. degrees and graduate certificates, we promote cultural diversity and affirm our commitment to the ethical standards of our respective disciplines.

Department of Educational Psychology, Leadership, and Higher Education

We provide instruction in and the delivery of innovative research to inform the educational process from early childhood through higher education via our master's and doctoral degree programs as well as graduate certificates, including the Intercollegiate and Professional Sport Management program.

Department of Teaching and Learning

We are focused on educational research and the preparation of educators at all levels. In addition to our bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree programs, our professional education programs focus on essential knowledge, established and current research findings, and sound professional practice.

Learn more about our departments and academic programs.

Mapping Impact

Paraprofessional Pathways Project

The UNLV College of Education’s Paraprofessional Pathways Project (PPP) provides a fast-track, high-quality pathway for paraprofessionals and school support professionals to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in education and complete qualifications for teacher licensure in a single academic year.

- Indicates where incoming PPP students are located and or want to work upon graduation.
The Nevada Department of Education (NDE) has named UNLV's Carl Esteban as the state's Early Childhood Educator of the Year for pre-kindergarten. Esteban was a pre-kindergarten teacher at the UNLV/CSUN Preschool at the Lynn Bennett Early Childhood Education Center, a five-star National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accredited preschool.

Esteban, affectionately known as “Mr. Carl” around the UNLV preschool, earned a bachelor of science degree in early childhood education at UNLV's College of Education in 2019 and is currently working on a master's degree in special education. He began working at the preschool in 2017 as a student worker, moving quickly into roles as a teacher's assistant and substitute teacher. He has led his own inclusive early childhood education classroom with 3-5-year-old children since 2019.

The NDE's Office of Early Learning and Development and UNLV President Keith Whitfield notified Esteban of the award during a surprise visit to the UNLV preschool Aug. 22. Esteban, surrounded by preschool students and staff, received a monetary award from the NDE along with a gift bag from Lakeshore Learning. He'll also serve as an early childhood education ambassador in Nevada throughout the 2022-23 school year.

"I never thought I would be a pre-kindergarten head teacher," Esteban said. "But not just that, a male pre-kindergarten of color. A male pre-kindergarten teacher of color with his eyes laser-focused on making a positive impact on all those who enter my classroom and, ultimately, within the field of early childhood education."

Esteban was selected in part because of his relentless enthusiasm for creating a learning environment that is safe, welcoming, and enriched with cultural and developmentally appropriate material. An advocate for inclusion, Esteban prioritizes working in a welcoming environment and practices simple and effective methods to foster a positive learning experience for his students and their families.

"It's the simple, yet meaningful moments that really stand out to you where you tell yourself this is why I do what I do," said Esteban. "I want young children to know that they should never put limits on themselves."

The Early Childhood Educator of the Year award was spearheaded by the NDE Office of Early Learning and Development. Now in its second year, the award honors early childhood teachers and recognizes their efforts in providing quality education to the state's youngest learners as well as partnering with their families.

"Carl Esteban is a talented educator who brings incredible spirit into his classroom every day, and he epitomizes why UNLV's preschool is among the best in the region," said UNLV President Keith E. Whitfield. "Carl sees and respects each person's individuality, celebrates their strengths, and helps them overcome challenges. He's making a positive impression on our youngest learners that they'll carry with them throughout their educational journey – a journey we hope brings them back to UNLV as college students one day."
Dear Friends of the UNLV College of Education:

Whether our graduates enter the field of teaching or support the mental health and well-being of our community, they are the backbone of Southern Nevada and beyond. In essence, developing and sustaining a high-quality Nevada educator and mental health workforce yields Nevada a future full of promise and innovation. As the college's graduates begin their careers, they will touch the lives of countless youth and families.

That's why support from our community partners including you—enables the college to attract, retain, and graduate high-achieving students at all levels with scholarships and fellowships. Unfortunately, many students are discouraged from pursuing careers in education and mental health because the fear of student loan debt and general costs of higher education looms too large. Financial support demonstrates a commitment to the future of our community. The facts are simple: When we provide resources to our students, we remove barriers that yield high retention and graduation rates and produce a more diverse workforce. Throughout their training, UNLV College of Education students engage in school and other settings to provide 250,000+ hours of educational and clinical services annually to other Nevadans—crafting their skills while solidifying their commitment to our state.

I am pleased to bring you the third edition of Recognizing and Inspiring Student Excellence (RISE), an annual showcase of our scholarship and fellowship recipients. In these pages, we celebrate these beneficiaries and highlight the multiple partners who give generously as an investment in education. As the name of the publication suggests, RISE is a collective story featuring students with financial need as well as those with exceptional potential to rise to the challenges and opportunities of their profession.

Thank you for your interest in supporting our students. If you are interested in investing in the future generation of education and mental health professionals, I invite you to contact us at education@unlv.edu to explore scholarship and other giving opportunities.

In community,

From the Dean

Danica G. Hays, Ph.D.
Dean

UNLV’s College of Education appreciates the leadership and support of our Nevada System of Higher Education Board of Regents.

Byron Brooks, Chair
Joseph C. Arrascada, Vice Chair
Patrick J. Boylan
Susan Brager
Heather Brown
Amy J. Carvalho
Michelee “Shelly” Crawford
Carol Del Carlo
Jeffrey Downs
Stephanie Goodman
Donald Sylvanee McMichael Sr.
Laura E. Perkins
Lois Tarkanian

Keri Nikolajewski
Interim Chief of Staff to the Board of Regents
To teach is to touch a life forever.