

Grad Rebel Advantage Mentees



Congratulations to the 2023-2024 cohort!

YVETTE MACHADO-TUINIER



Class Standing: Senior

Department: Honors College

Major: Psychology



Academic Bio

Yvette (she/her/ella) is a proud feminist and first-gen student from Ecuador and Guatemala. She's lived in Vegas for 20+ years and hopes to one day serve in Public Office. As an Indigenous Latina, she majors in Psychology to explore the intricate interplay of discrimination, trauma, and mental health through an intersectional lens. Member of: DSAC, Psi Chi, & RSTO

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Yvette believes that law, advocacy, and policy can play a critical role in developing interventions to support healing and build equity in communities that have suffered the devastating effects of systemic oppression. Equipping herself as a legal ally, she pursues an MSW/JD degree to protect human rights, & share platforms for justice.

KAIJU MANERA



Class Standing: Junior

Department: School of Public Health

Major: Public Health



Academic Bio

Kaiju Manera was born and raised in Las Vegas. As a public health major with a minor in biology, he plans to obtain a career in infectious disease epidemiology after graduation. He currently serves as the vice-president for the Public Health Student Association and as the fundraising chair for the Filipinx American Student Association.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Kaiju plans to pursue a Master of Public Health program to continue his education revolving around epidemiological and biostatistical concepts needed to foster his career path.

JOSHUA MARANON



Class Standing: Senior

Department: Psychology

Major: Psychology



Academic Bio

Joshua is involved with the Dean's Student Advisory Council, Senator and Chair for CSUN, Chair of Special Events for AED, and volunteers at his local hospital. He majors in Psychology due to his interest in abnormal states of mind and desire to pursue a fun subject before entering medical school.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Joshua anticipates applying to medical school. His enjoyment of the medical setting, satisfaction of assisting patients, and biological interests in human anatomy and function pushes him towards the surgical field. He hopes to gain a residency in cardiothoracic surgery due to his experiences with family with heart diseases.

KRISTINA MARTIROSYAN



Class Standing: Senior

**Department: Honors College &
College of Liberal Arts**

Major: Psychology

Minor: Neuroscience



Academic Bio

Kristina, a Las Vegas native and first-generation Armenian, is a senior majoring in Psychology and minoring in Neuroscience. Passionate about understanding human behavior, she actively participates in the Hixson-Lied Scholars scholarship program, works as a pharmacy technician, is a peer mentor for UNLV's Academic Success Center, and volunteers for the UNLV Infant and Child Music Lab and Love Yourself Foundation. In her free time, Kristina enjoys dancing, singing, and spending time with loved ones.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

After graduating in 2024, Kristina aims to apply to UNLV's graduate school for a master's or Ph.D. in social work or clinical psychology. Kristina's long-term goals entail becoming a therapist and opening her practice.

SHANA MASTOON



Class Standing: Junior

Department: Engineering

Major: Computer Engineering



Academic Bio

Shana is a transfer student who recently moved to Las Vegas from Los Angeles. After working for several years in an unrelated field, Shana decided to pursue her passion in engineering full-time at UNLV. She chose this major to build the foundation needed to pursue a career in space technology.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

After graduating from UNLV, Shana plans to obtain a Master's degree in engineering and ultimately work in space science technology. She dreams of making an impact in the field of space exploration and the study of the outer solar system.

Jayla Masumura



Class Standing: Junior

Department: College of Liberal Arts

Major: Computer Psychology



Academic Bio

Originally born in Hawaii, Jayla was raised in Las Vegas most of her life. She was part of the Rebels RISE Scholar Program during her sophomore year and is now currently involved in the COLA Woman Empowerment Program, a cohort of women preparing for their futures while empowering themselves and others. Jayla chose psychology because of its endless possibilities to make a difference in people's lives.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Jayla plans to pursue a Master's in the School Consoling Program. Her end goal is to help children understand their feelings and behaviors, grow from their experiences, and feel supported during crucial stages in their lives. She is passionate about advocating mental health and educating young minds. Jayla believes that the graduate program will help her develop meaningful connections and be successful in the future.

TAMIAH MCBEAN



Class Standing: Junior

Department: Health Sciences and Honors College

Major: Biology



Academic Bio

Tamiah is a New York native and first-generation college student. She decided to major in biology because she aspires to be a physician. She is a member of AMWA and hopes to become more involved at UNLV before she graduates.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

After completing her bachelor's degree, she intends to apply to UNLV's Doctor of Medicine Program. She found comfort and security in her physicians as a child and wishes to help others receive excellent care from their medical professionals.

Karissa L. McCurn



Class Standing: Senior

Department: Psychology & Brain Health

Major: Psychology / Neuroscience



Academic Bio

Karissa is a First-Generation Black & Indigenous American who has a perpetual passion for mental and brain health. Community and altruism are an immense part of her mission. This is evident from her campus involvement and academic strides. She is a McNair Scholar, the VP of the NURO club, an active member of Psi Chi & the Psychology Club, an OUMP member, a peer mentor, a volunteer, a teaching assistant for a Couples & Family Therapy class, and a senior research assistant.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Karissa's central goal is to make mental and brain health more accessible and less stigmatized by perusing a PhD in Clinical Neuropsychology with the hopes of one day owning her own practices.

Tania Medrano

Class Standing: Senior

**Department: Department of
Communication Studies**

**Major: Communication Studies;
concentration in Organizational
Communication**



Academic Bio

I am a first-generation college student & Air Force veteran. I first began my college journey in 2015 but it's just not something I was ready for at the time. So instead, I decided to enlist. After my enlistment ended I became a full-time student and joined the AFROTC program in pursuit of a commissioning. I'm also a member of UNLV's fantastic Debate Team and I work on campus at Boyd School of Law. My experience thus far at UNLV has been nothing short of amazing and I contribute that to all the faculty & staff at Greenspun who have dedicated themselves to their students. .

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

I'm unsure if I want to pursue a program in Business Administration since it's a very flexible degree or if I want to continue my education in Communications. Right now I'm 80% leaning toward an MBA & 20% toward Communications.

Tania Merolla



Class Standing: Junior

Department: Communication

Major: Communication



Academic Bio

Tania was born and raised in California. She recently received her ADT – for Transfer, as well as four certificates in Communication and Media Studies from Foothill college. She participates in activities such as acting, filmmaking, screenwriting, and spending time with her family. Thanks to her experience at Foothill College, Tania settled on Communication as a major because of the connection to film and acting. In the future, Tania hopes to use her Communication knowledge to tell stories through film that reach audiences across the globe.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Tania plans on pursuing a graduate program in Film Production, with an emphasis on Writing and Directing. Going for a graduate degree will allow her to expand her creative ability to a new level, making her well-rounded as a storyteller who is ready for anything that comes her way.

HANNAH MISSEL



Class Standing: Senior

Department: Life Sciences

Major: Biological Sciences



Academic Bio

Hannah is a first-generation college student who transferred to UNLV from her hometown of Bloomington, Illinois. When Hannah is not at school or studying, she is involved with S-STEM scholars, AANAPISI, CAEO SRI, McNair, and Dr. Van Breukelen's research lab. Hannah chose a degree in Biology for future hopes of running a biotechnology company one day.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Hannah has chosen to pursue a Masters in Business Administration so that she can apply her biological background to the management of a successful biotechnology company.

MORGAN MURPHY



Class Standing: Senior

Department: College of Liberal Arts

Major: Anthropology



Academic Bio

Morgan is a first-generation college student who was born and raised in Las Vegas. They chose anthropology because of their never-ending desire to learn. Their passion for archaeology started from basic curiosity but excelled to the desire to help humanity know more about itself.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Morgan plans on pursuing a degree in biological archaeology. They would like to work in the backrooms of museums reanalyzing specimens that have been forgotten and misplaced. Morgan would specifically like to work on getting these specimens back to the respective cultural groups.

NIKO NAVALTA



Class Standing: Senior

Department: Art

**Major: Art with a Concentration
in Painting, Drawing, and
Printmaking**



Academic Bio

Niko is an LGBTQ+ art student who moved to Las Vegas from Kentucky in 2012. They are vice president of the A4 Zine Club, and they are currently participating in the Research Honors Thesis program. Niko chose to pursue art because of their creative spirit and endless imagination.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

After graduating, Niko will pursue a Master of Fine Arts in order to teach at the college level.

ANGELINA GRACE PAONI



Class Standing: Junior

**Department: Civil and
Environmental Engineering and
Construction**

Major: Civil Engineering



Academic Bio

Angelina Paoni is a native Las Vegas who is an active member in the American Society of Civil Engineers. She also works as a mentor for Learn to Be Civil. Angelina chose civil engineering because she loves to admire and understand how structures can withstand all their external forces.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Angelina plans on going into the Master of Science in Engineering - Civil and Environmental Engineering graduate program. In this program she plans to pursue a structural emphasis in civil engineering so that she is better prepared to enter the career force and successfully take engineering licensing exams.

KATHERINE ANNE PARAJES



Class Standing: Senior

**Department: Department of
Electrical and Computer
Engineering**

Major: Computer Engineering



Academic Bio

Originally from the Philippines, Katherine has called Las Vegas home since age nine. As a Research Assistant in the Biomedical and Microdevices Lab under Dr. Zhai's guidance, she explores diverse areas ranging from tissue engineering to artificial intelligence. Her research delves into intricate topics such as acoustics, fluid dynamics, and nanofluid droplets. Additionally, Katherine applies her electrical engineering background to innovate conductive hydrogel testing in biomedicine. Furthermore, she leverages AI and machine learning for health assessment within Internet of Medical Things (IOMT). Her chosen major reflects her passion for contributing to the medical devices field working to pursue a career in R&D, with interests spanning from tissue engineering, medical imaging, robot-assisted surgery, and embedded systems integration.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Katherine's aspiration lies in pursuing a Master's degree in Electrical Engineering at UNLV, driven by her commitment to advancing research under the esteemed guidance of Dr. Shengjie Zhai. Her overarching goal is to harness her knowledge to develop cutting-edge technologies that have a transformative impact on the lives of chronic patients and healthcare practitioners.

MA. JULIANNE PEREZ



Class Standing: JUNIOR

Department: HEALTH SCIENCES

Major: KINESIOLOGY



Academic Bio

Julianne Perez, an international student from the Philippines, offers a unique perspective. Curious and adventurous, she embraces urban dance, video games, K-dramas, movies, and camping. Her love for dancing greatly influences her Kinesiology major. Actively contributing to her field as a student researcher, she aspires to make substantial contributions to Occupational Therapy, aiming to bridge academia and practice.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Julianne plans to pursue a graduate program in Kinesiology, with a strong emphasis on Occupational Therapy. Her profound passion for dance and movement has led her to choose this path. She aims to bridge academia with practice, ultimately obtaining a doctoral degree in the field.

ISABELLA MERCADO



Class Standing: Senior

**Department: College of Liberal
Arts**

**Major: Psychology, minoring
in Family Studies**

Academic Bio

She is a first generation college student who was born and raised in East Las Vegas. She is currently interning with the National Alliance of Mental Illness as a Social Media Intern and undergoing training to work in different programs with them. She spent the first four years of undergrad working in education at a Title-I School in Downtown Las Vegas. Working with 1st-5th grade students, this experience that has served as the driving force behind her pursuit of a degree in her chosen field.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Recognizing the increasing achievement of 11% of Latinos who have earned Master's degrees, she is eager to contribute to this growth as a first-generation student by pursuing her MSW. Her ultimate goal is to become an LCSW and specialize in working with young adolescents, offering support to families in the Las Vegas Valley through her own private practice.

RILEY RAMOS



Class Standing: Junior

Department: Engineering

Major: Computer Science



Academic Bio

Riley is a Filipina-American born and raised in Las Vegas, Nevada. She is currently a Research Assistant at the UNLV Auditory Cognition and Development Lab and a Peer Mentor for the Office of Undergraduate Research. She chose to study Computer Science because the field involves creativity and problem-solving, and its limitless applications offer her many opportunities to explore how technology can improve standard knowledge and enhance human living.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Riley is interested in pursuing a Master's Degree in Computer Science with a concentration in Data Analytics to conduct research and explore her passion for data analysis. In her career, she hopes to inform policy-making that fosters a more sustainable, human-centered environment. She also aims to serve as a mentor to others and bridge the gender divide present in STEM fields.

MONIQUE RAVEN



Class Standing: Senior

Department: College of Education

**Major: Secondary Education,
English**



Academic Bio

A lifelong Southern Nevada resident, Monique is a resolute advocate for transformative experiences through education. As a first-generation student, Monique embarks on a journey of liberation for herself and those underserved and underrepresented. Pursuing a teaching career helped her recognize the importance of multicultural exploration, community engagement, and student involvement. She aims to nourish students with the feeling and knowing of being heard and valued.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Monique plans on pursuing a Master of Education degree for Educational Policy and Leadership. This degree offers many opportunities for Monique's commitment to provide an equitable quality of education to all. It will also allow her time to obtain her Graduate Certificates in Multicultural Education and Social Justice Studies.

JACQUELYN RODRIGUEZ



Class Standing: Senior

Department: Liberal Arts (COLA)

Major: Psychology



Academic Bio

Jacquelyn Rodriguez is a local Las Vegas and first-generation college student. She is the Literary Genre Editor at From the Brush Arts and Literary Journal, a creative arts publication created by UNLV Honors Students. Additionally, she is working on a public-health related Honors Research Thesis under the direction of Dr. Amanda Morgan. Jacquelyn chose to study psychology to understand how thought and behavior influence health outcomes.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Jacquelyn plans to pursue a Master's degree in Public Health. After witnessing health disparities at work in her own community, she became invested in advocating for health equity. She plans to use her Master's degree to work as an epidemiologist and address health disparities in underserved communities.

ANYELINA RODRIGUEZ LOMBEIDA



Class Standing: Senior

Department: LEE Business School

**Major: Economics BA &
Communication Studies BA**



Academic Bio

Anyelina is an enthusiastic and determined student who moved from Ecuador to the United States with the aim of advancing her personal growth through higher education. She chose to major in Economics and Communication Studies, as they lay a solid groundwork for his future aspirations and potential endeavors. She currently works as a Peer Mentor for the LEE Business School and a Student Outreach Specialist at UNLV.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Following her completion of undergraduate studies, Anyelina intends to embark on an MBA program to enhance her qualifications before venturing into the competitive job market. She perceives UNLV as an ideal institution for this purpose, as it offers ample opportunities to network with local employers and gain valuable insights in this vibrant city.

ALCIDES SALGADO



Class Standing: Senior

Department: Philosophy

Major: Philosophy



Academic Bio

Residing in the vibrant city of Las Vegas, Alcides Salgado, a dedicated philosopher and esteemed academic, explores the intricate realms of human thought and existence. With an insatiable curiosity, they delve into philosophical depths, implementing a profound understanding of life's profound questions contributing to the realm of intellectual discourse.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

In pursuit of philosophical wisdom and effective communication, Alcides Salgado has embarked on a significant journey within a graduate program that seamlessly marries these two disciplines. Their intellectual odyssey aims to decipher the nuances of thought and language, bridging gaps between ideas and individuals in our intricate world.

ADELE SALIBI



Class Standing: Junior

Department: College of Liberal Arts

Major: Psychology



Academic Bio

Adele is a Lebanese-American first-generation college student that moved to the United States from Lebanon in her senior year of high school. She works part-time as a Peer Mentor at the COLA. She chose to study psychology due to past experiences and interest in learning about human cognition, behavior, and emotion.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Adele plans on pursuing a master's program in Marriage/Couples and Family Therapy. She chose this program due to having a strong belief on the importance of relationships and environment on mental health. She hopes it will aid in her goal of becoming an MFT and gaining a better understanding of those dynamics to help others.

LAURA SANCHEZ ZAVALA



Class Standing: Senior

**Department: UNLV School of
Public Health**

Major: Public Health



Academic Bio

Laura is a local Las Vegas and first-generation college student. She has worked for the City of Las Vegas, the Executive Master's of Business Administration department, and Nevada Gold Mines. Laura chose her major because she is passionate about expanding technology within health to access more vulnerable populations in need.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Laura is intending on pursuing a master's degree in Management Information Systems or a related field due to the versatility of informatics, the rapid growth of the technology industry, and her desire to narrow the gap between the public health world and tech.

RIANNA SANDOVAL



Class Standing: Senior

Department: College of Sciences

**Major: Biological Sciences with a
Concentration in Pre-Professional
Studies**



Academic Bio

Rianna Sandoval is Las Vegas born and raised and enjoys hiking in the desert landscapes in the surrounding areas. She is an active member of UNLV's Hillel, and the co-creator of a local women's book club. Rianna chose to major in biology because of her deep-rooted love of science!

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Rianna plans on attending medical school after graduating from UNLV with her bachelor's degree. She has a passion for helping people and thinks that working in medicine is the perfect way to combine that and her love of science!

JAMES ROBERT SERNAS



Class Standing: Senior

Department: Liberal Arts

Major: Anthropology



Academic Bio

James is a first generation college student pursuing a career in Forensic Anthropology. James was born in Los Angeles, California to Indigenous parents from Oaxaca, Mexico. James has a background in health sciences as he has a degree in Medical Lab Technology. He enjoys playing basketball on the weekends as well as card games such as Pokemon on his spare time. James is a two time cancer survivor and has completed over ten 5k runs a century road bike race and a half marathon to raise money for children with cancer. James is also a Food Server at restaurant on the Las Vegas strip. James chose this major due to his interest in the human body and the evolution of the human species over time.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

I plan on pursuing a graduate degree in Anthropology to pursue a career in Forensic Science. I have a huge interest in Human Paleontology and learning about the human body will help me learn how we evolved and where we are going.

MARIANA SERVIN



Class Standing: Senior

Department: Fine Arts

Major: Architecture



Academic Bio

Originally from El Paso, Texas, they are a first-generation college student. Their interest in architecture began with a desire to assist people by designing for their specific needs. Their fascination with history has also enabled them to delve into the chronology of architecture.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

They have plans to pursue a Master of Architecture degree, focusing specifically on the Hospitality & Entertainment Design Track. This decision aligns with their ambition to attain licensure as an architect in order to fulfil their career goal.

AIMEE SEVOIAN



Class Standing: Senior

Department: Liberal Arts

Major: Political Science



Academic Bio

Aimee is proud to have grown up in the very epicenter of Las Vegas. She is an active member of the Trio SSS Career Development program, NSLS, and SCLA. She also works for U.S. Bank. Aimee gravitated toward her degree because she is interested in navigating the socioeconomic and governmental systems across the globe.

What graduate programs do you plan on pursuing and why?

Aimee intends to enroll in William S. Boyd School of Law's Juris Doctor program. Her goal in earning a J.D. is to acquire the knowledge and abilities required to practice law. Aimee has a strong desire to discover a multitude of information and resources that are useful to many people. She is at her core a problem-solver, analyzer, and creative thinker.

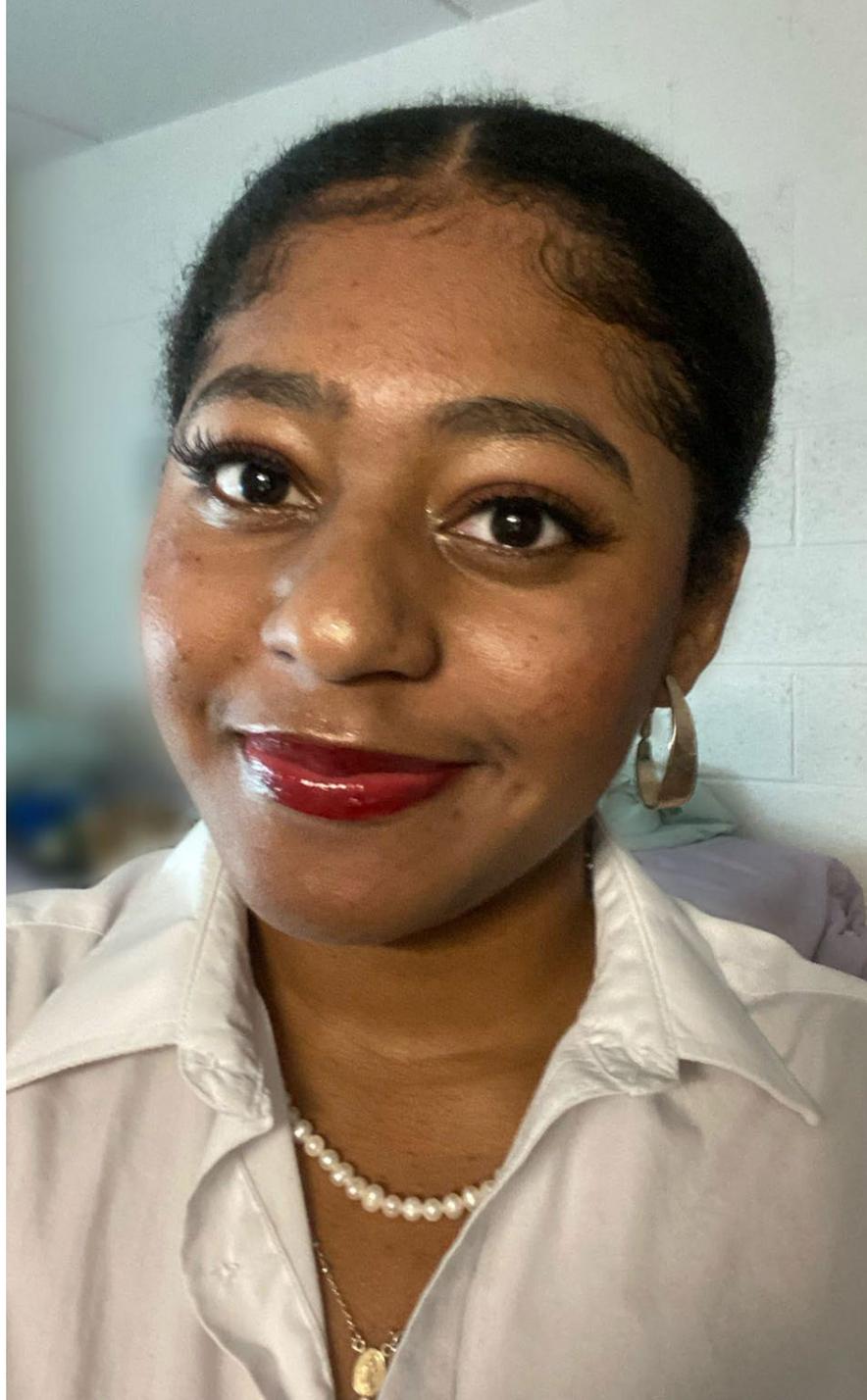
MONICA SOUZA SUE



Class Standing: Sophomore

**Department: Physics and
Astronomy**

Major: Physics



Academic Bio

I've lived in Vegas for over a decade now, but for the other half of my life I lived Brazil. My parents moved to America when I was 10, and ever since then I've just fallen in love with school and learning. Best evinced by my impulsive membership of a variety of clubs. At UNLV I am part of Model UN, Badminton, Spanish, French, Japan, Rebel Reads YA, Digital Darkroom, Hip Hop, Capoeira and many other clubs. I am the first person to attend college from both sides of family, and I'm proud to represent both Cameroon and Brazil.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

I plan to pursue a graduate program in STEM. More specifically, one that deals with Astrophysics. UNLV currently does not offer a Bachelor's degree in Astrophysics so I was counseled by leadership in the Physics department to pursue higher education. Thus I am here to explore my options and decide what is the best course for my person.

CAROLYN STREB



Class Standing: Senior

Department: College of Liberal Arts

Major: Psychology



Academic Bio

My name is Carolyn, I was born and raised in Las Vegas, Nevada. I decided on the psychology major while living on base in Camp Pendleton. After seeing how the pandemic affected myself and military families around me, I became passionate about the importance of mental health and especially the significant correlation in played in physical symptoms of the body.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

After completing my BA in Psychology I will apply for the Ph.D program to pursue a doctorate of Clinical Psychology with a focus in Neuropsychology. I hope to intern with the VA hospital in Las Vegas and work with veterans overcoming mental challenges specifically in health hurdles they are facing due to mental illness. I hope that during my time at UNLV I can help end the stigma of seeking help as a college student.

SAVANNAH SULLIVAN



Class Standing: Senior

Department: Health Sciences

Major: Public Health



Academic Bio

Savannah transferred to UNLV in 2022 from the San Francisco Bay Area in California. She's taken part in STARS and RTSO and is becoming a peer mentor for the health sciences department this semester. She chose public health in the hopes to spread information on health and wellbeing in her future career.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Savannah intends to pursue a graduate program in library/information sciences. This will open the door for her to become a public health librarian where she intends to pursue her goal of helping people by guiding them towards quality knowledge about health.