



FALL 2025 REBELS
R.I.S.E
SCHOLAR COHORT

UNLV



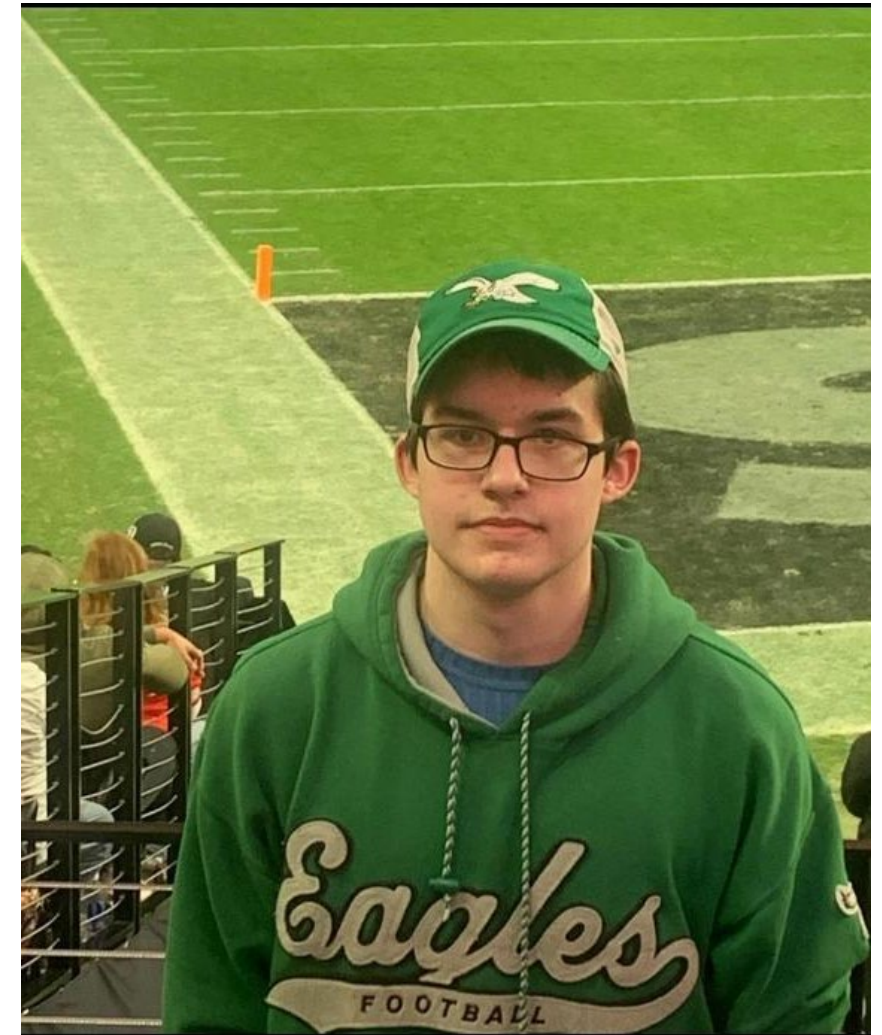
Jacob Rothrock

Major: Secondary Education

My interests include gaming, fitness, watching sports, and trivia!
I'm really excited to meet new people this semester!

Why did you apply to the Rebels R.I.S.E. Scholar Program?

As a freshman, I was part of the political science club. I have heard a lot of positive things about what R.I.S.E. does, and how it prepares undergrad students for their careers. Participating in this program has been a goal of mine since I started college



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Melvin Taylor



Major: Human Services

I enjoy Sunday dinners with the family, playtime with my grandchildren, and live music whenever I can. I also love a good mystery, comedy shows, and a wide-range of music! I am looking forward to connecting with each of you throughout the semester and beyond!

Why did you apply to the Rebels R.I.S.E. Scholar Program?

I was motivated to apply for this program because of the engaging, motivating and fulfilling experience I had as a First Year Experience (FYE) student



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Katelyn Chan

Major: English with Creative writing and Professional Writing Concentrations

Hi! I'm a sophomore at UNLV with a Junior credit standing,

Why did you apply to the Rebels R.I.S.E. Scholar Program?

I am trying to get more involved in campus and find areas in myself that could use growth.



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Nerissa Lee

Major: Sociology

I would like to build positive and engaging connections in my last few semesters at UNLV.



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Rinor Emini

Information Systems

I am a part time substitute, part time student, working towards my Bachelors and eventually Masters degree. I am a first generation student as my parents are from Albanian and I want to leave my mark on not just UNLV but the world!

I joined the rebel scholars to gain insight and make connections with various people and majors across the UNLV campus.



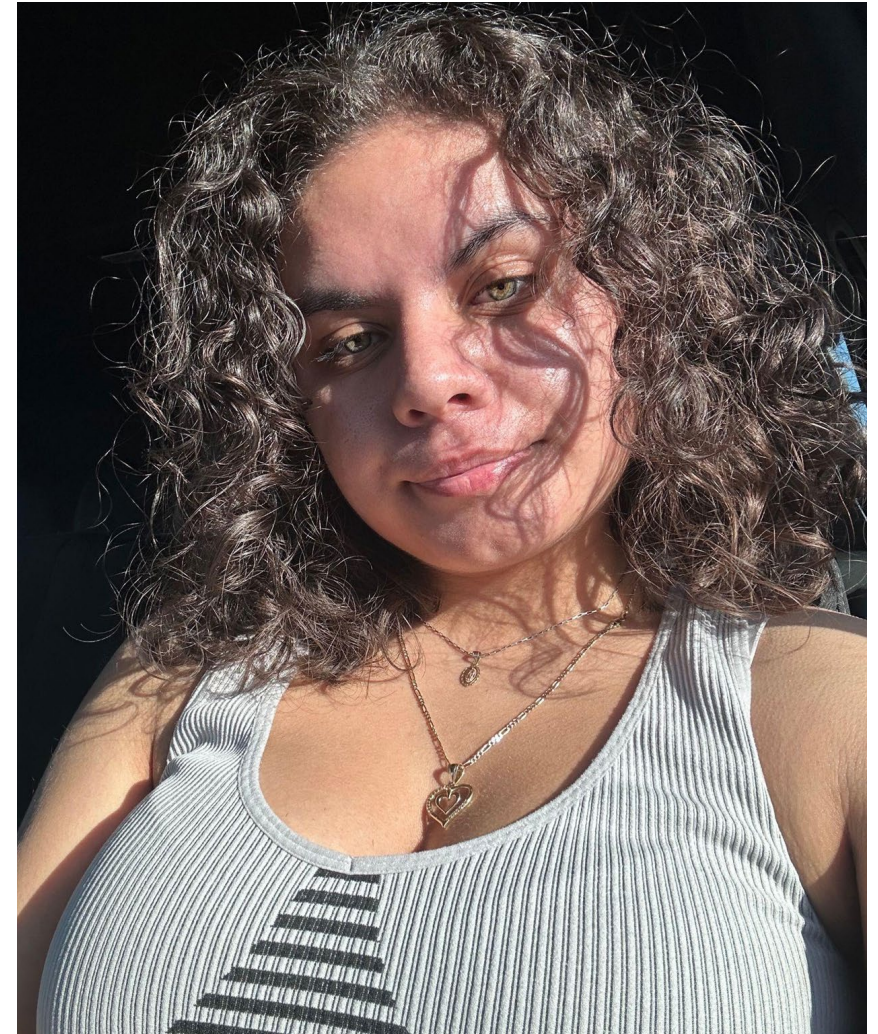
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Major: Healthcare Administration & Policy & Political Science

Hi everyone! I'm a first-generation student, currently working part-time as a clinical floater, and I'm passionate about pursuing pre-law studies. I'm excited to learn and grow alongside all of you in this program!

I applied to the Rebels R.I.S.E. Scholar Program because I want to grow my skills and connect with like-minded peers who are passionate about learning and leadership. It's a great opportunity to challenge myself and prepare for future success.



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Ranazha Webb

Major: Criminal Justice

I am a first generation college student studying Criminal Justice with a minor in Human Services. I am dedicated in becoming a victim advocate and creating long lasting change in community, especially in social issues like poverty, homelessness, and human trafficking.

I applied to the Rebel R.I.S.E Scholar Program as an opportunity to engage with other students like myself and be more involved.



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Karla Zelaya

Major: Pre-Nursing

I am a first-generation college student studying Pre-Nursing at UNLV. I am passionate about healthcare and aspire to become a neurosurgeon, using nursing as the foundation to gain experience and skills to better serve others, especially underrepresented communities.

I applied to the Rebels R.I.S.E Scholar Program to engage with other students like myself, gain mentorship, and build opportunities that will help me succeed academically and personally.



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Ariana Villalonga

Major: Psychology

I am a first generation student in my family studying psychology in hopes of getting into Clinical psychology work in the future to help those in need. I have a passion for conjoining my faith and mental health resources to provide safety and answers to those who need it.

I applied to the Rebels R.I.S.E program to become more involved in campus while also being aware of how I can become better and grow in my leadership.



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Alejandra I Jaimes Barahona

Major: Business (Accounting)

Hello everyone! I'm Alejandra, a first generation student from El Salvador and I'm starting my sophomore year. Accounting is the language of business that offers many careers paths, as a math person I like solving problems, analyzing data, and being organized.

I applied because I want to becomes more involved in campus, network, and build significant relationships. I also want to know more about internships and the many career opportunities the world of business has to offer.



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Sebastian Rios

Major: Criminal Justice and Political Science (Public Policy Minor)

I am a born and raised Nevadan and am also a graduate from one of our other excellent NSHE schools, Truckee Meadows Community College (earned my HS Diploma and Associate's in May 2025)! I have a deep interest in civic and legislative affairs, and plan to pursue a career in the legal field!

Through the Rebels R.I.S.E. program, I hope to gain a deeper understanding of how to succeed in the college environment, and make the most of my time here at UNLV! Learning about everything from good study habits, to making important connections with faculty and staff here at UNLV, and finally, finding opportunities and getting involved are all items I am hoping to explore!



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Nirel Gonzalez - Montes

Hello, Everyone!

I am a Pre-Graphic Design major, and I'm passionate about creating for and connecting with people. I love learning in all its forms, and I'm excited to be a part of this program. One of the main reasons I applied to the R.I.S.E. Scholars Program is to challenge myself to build meaningful connections and grow my skill set by making the most of the resources available to me.



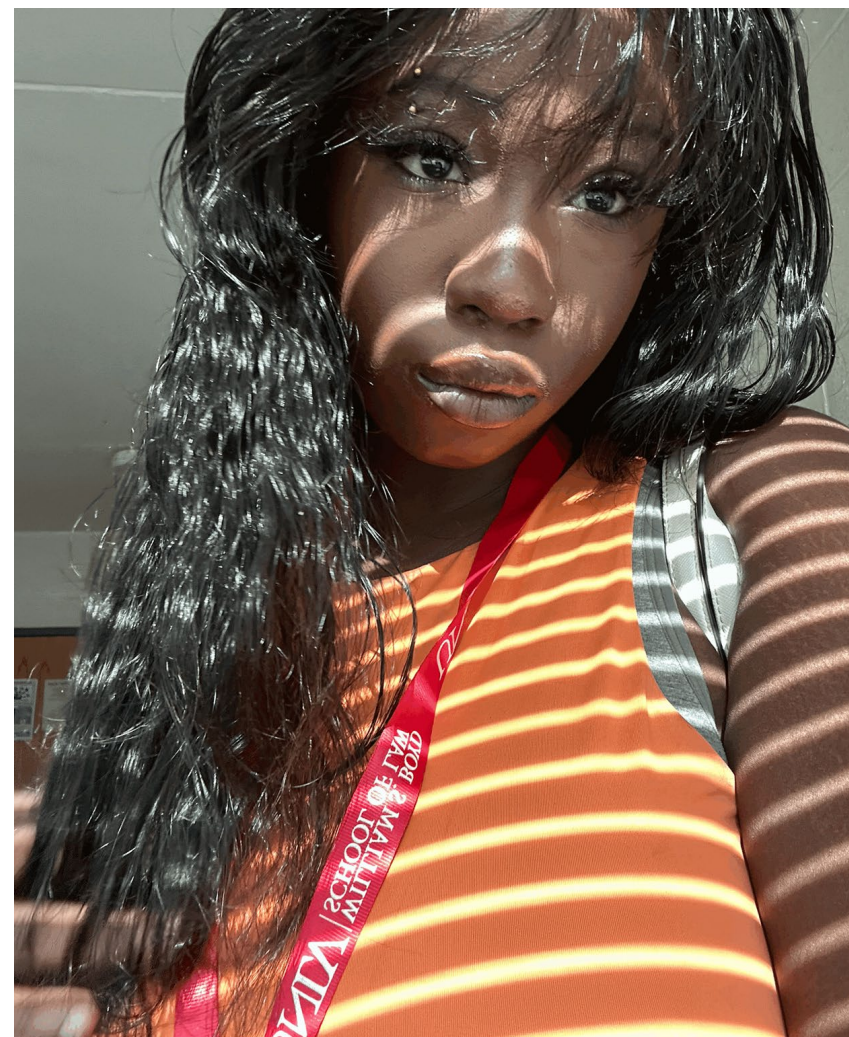
UNLV



Elizabeth Fakoya

Hello everyone! My name is Elizabeth and I'm a Criminal Justice major. I'm really excited to meet all of you. I'm Nigerian but I'm also a Vegas native.

I've been coming to UNLV campus since I was just one year old because my father earned two master's degrees and a PhD here. Over the years I've seen the campus change so much and I've been able to build a lot of meaningful connections. That's one of the reasons why joining a program focused on supporting students really appealed to me and I'm so glad I went for it.



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Ayma Malik

Hello everyone! I'm a first generation college student with Journalism & Media Studies major and a minor in Criminal Justice. I have a passion for reading, writing, and studying law. I applied to this program to connect to those around me and utilize my resources to the best of my ability.



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Tatyana Odobasic-Cuevas

Hey everyone! I am a second year Film Major graduating next year. I am a first generation college student born and raised here in Vegas!

I applied for RR to get the most out of my time here and to expand my skill set while interacting with new types of people from different fields!

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Ashley E. Devin

Major: Anthropology with a focus in linguistics and cultural resource management.

I am a second generation Nevadan, born and raised in Las Vegas and am currently living 80 miles outside of city limits. In December 2024, I graduated with High Honors from the College of Southern Nevada where I received an Associates of Arts and Letters degree.

I applied to the Rebel R.I.S.E program to help me connect with the UNLV campus and my peers in a meaningful way since due to my current location, I am a remote learning student.



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Melinda Rangel

Major: Earth and Environmental Science

Hello my name is Melinda. I was born and raised in Las Vegas. I'm a first generation college student who wants to become a geoscientist to help preserve the environment. I like playing video games and hanging out with my family.

I applied to the Rebels R.I.S.E Scholar Program to meet new people and to get more involved on campus. The program seemed overall interesting to me.

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Annika De Lima

Political Science, minors in Asian American Studies and
Brookings Public Policy

Like many of us, I'm a first generation college student who
aims to go to law school and work in the legal field,
preferably entertainment law! Outside of academics, I love
to reads, sing, listen to music, and hang out with my friends!

I applied for the Rebel RISE program so that I can expand my
network as a student and further contribute building a
community here at UNLV and the Las Vegas Metro.



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Alejandro Hernandez

Major Pre-Business

Hi everyone, my name is Alejandro, and I'm a Marine Corps veteran and first-generation student studying business administration. I'm really interested in analytics and hope to pursue a career in information systems. when I'm not studying , I love to workout, travel, and play the occasional video game.

I applied to Rebels R.I.S.E. Scholar Program as an opportunity to grow my professional skill-sets, make new connections, and be more involved on campus.



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Shannon Ferry

Major Hospitality

Hi my name is Shannon and I am a first generation college student from San Francisco, CA. I love to swim and hike and hope to work in the Sports and Entertainment industry!

I applied for the Rebels R.I.S.E Scholar Program to stay connected with the UNLV community and get the most out of my education. Coming from out of state I want to meet new people and get involved. I also hope to grow personally and professionally through mentorship and various activities.



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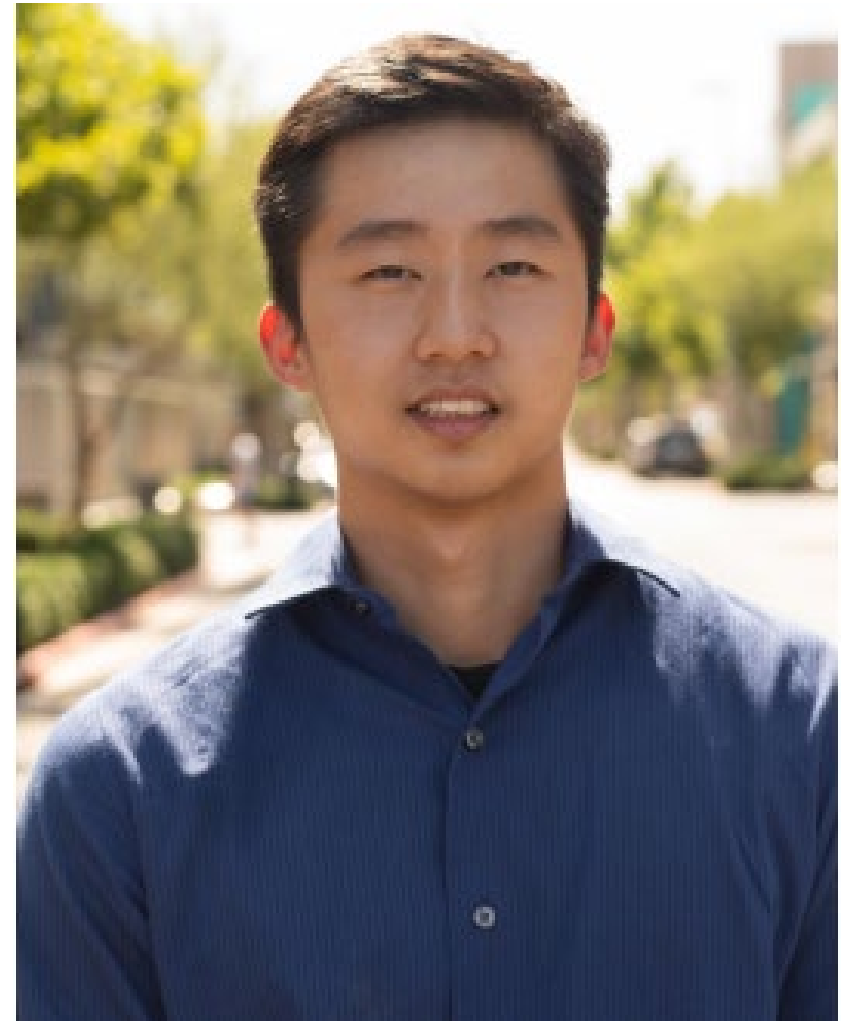


Kyle Yeung

Major: Electrical Engineering

I am born and raised in Las Vegas and have been living here for 22 years. I love to exercise, meet new people, and learn new things.

To build new skills and connections. I feel I can learn a lot from this program.



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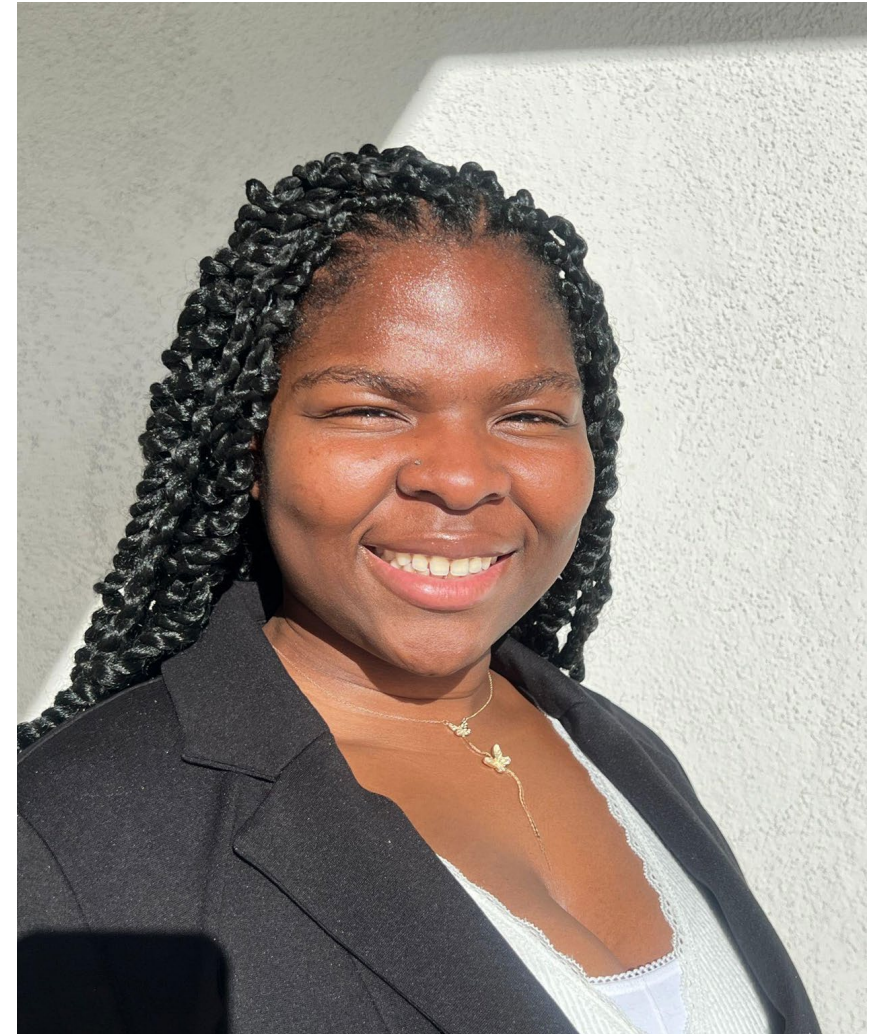


Grace Douvo

Major: Accounting

Hi everyone! My name is Grace Douvo, and I'm a first-generation college student studying accounting. I'm currently a third-year, but I plan to earn my master's, obtain my CPA, and pursue a full-time career in auditing. Outside of school, I love traveling, reading, and listening to music, really anything that helps calm my busy mind.

I applied to the Rebels R.I.S.E. Scholars program because I wanted to push myself out of my comfort zone and stay more connected on campus. As a commuting student, it's easy to fall into the habit of going to class and heading straight home, but opportunities like this give me a chance to make connections and find reasons to stay involved.



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Pooja Selvaraj

Major: Biology

Hi, my name is Pooja and I'm majoring in Biology with a minor in Psychology. I'm really interested in pursuing a career in medicine, specifically pediatrics.

I applied to the Rebels R.I.S.E. Scholar Program because I want to build connections, gain guidance as I navigate college, and take advantage of opportunities that will help me grow personally and academically.



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Alicia Lu

Major: Pre business

Hello! My name is Alicia and I plan on going into the Accounting major. I am passionate about the restaurant industry and plan on pursuing it later in my life.

I applied to Rebels RISE to be more involved with UNLV and meet new people because there are still so many people on campus that I have yet to meet. I think making connections and friends while in college is one of the most important things that make the college experience memorable and enjoyable.



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Job Buenrostro-Diaz

Major: Pre-Business into Accounting

Hi my name is Job I am a first-generation student hoping to pursue a career in Accounting. Numbers and math were always a subject I would excel in and would like to study later on!

I applied to the Rebels R.I.S.E. Scholar Program to meet new people with the same passions and interests as me. Making friends and building new relationships is always something I loved and meeting a new community is what I hope to experience here at UNLV.



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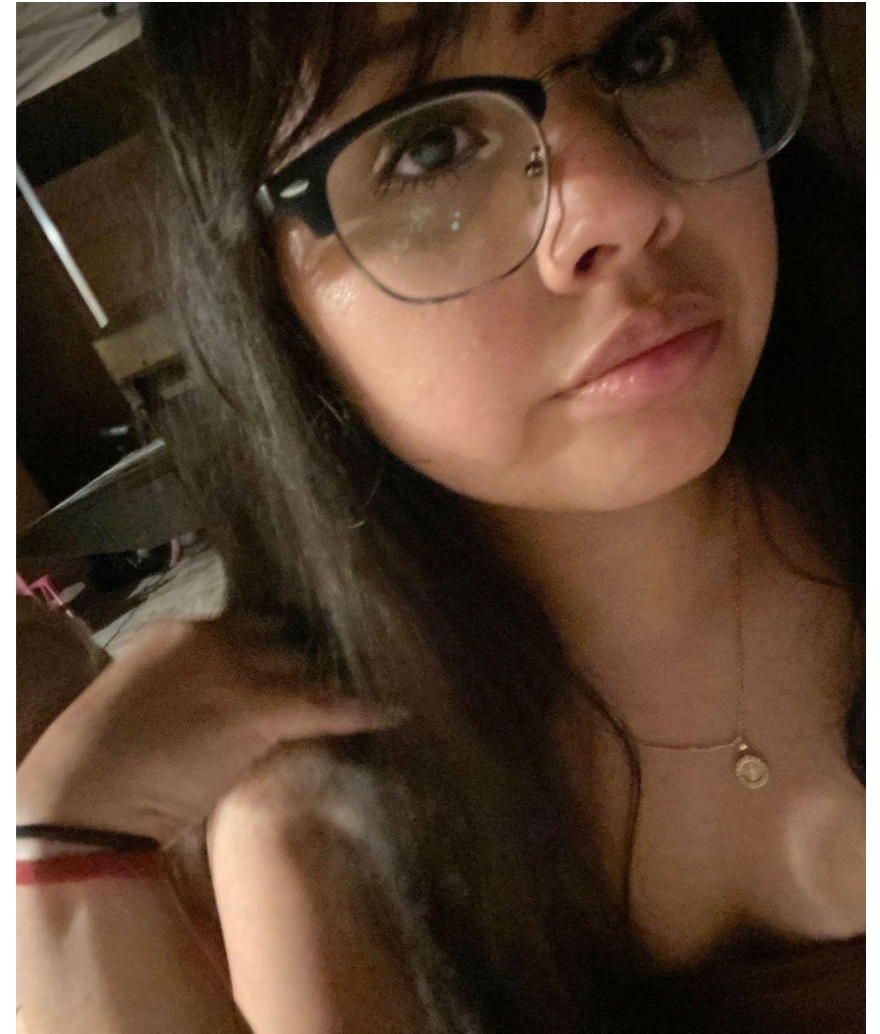


Heidee Pavon

Major: Social Work BSW

Hi! My name is Heidee and I am a first-generation student studying social work. I have a passion for helping others and I hope one day I can pursue a career as a children and family therapist.

I am a very shy person and I wish I would've attended more events to meet new people. I hope this program can help bring me out of this shell and become the best version of myself.



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Katelyn Kerman

Major: Applied Health Sciences

Hello! My name is Katelyn and I have aspirations of becoming a Physical Therapist. I love being active in my community and going on adventures with friends and family.

I applied to the Rebels R.I.S.E. Scholar Program to get more involved on campus and meet some new people. Each semester I like meeting new people and becoming more involved with the campus community.



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Harvard Atimalala Tagovailoa

Major: Political Science

Hello all! My name is Harvard Atimalala Tagovailoa, and I'm originally from Samoa. I hope to go to law school and become a lawyer.

I joined the Rebels R.I.S.E. Scholar Program because I wanted to take advantage of the opportunities offered to me to grow both academically and personally. I believe this program will offer me the mentorship and community allowing me to succeed both at UNLV and life.



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Bethylin Valmonte

I am currently in the pre-business program and hope to declare my major in accounting!

Hello, my name is Bethylin! I am born and raised here in Vegas and am starting my second year at UNLV. I am very excited to continue my journey here!

I applied to the Rebels RISE program to be able to meet more people on campus and get more connected to my school! I wanted to find more people who would help me grow and succeed further during my time at UNLV!



The official logo of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), featuring the letters "UNLV" in a white, serif font centered within a solid red rectangular background.



Milani Batiste

My major is Biological Sciences with a concentration in Pre-Professional Studies.

I'm currently a third year student here at UNLV. I was born and raised here in Las Vegas and some of my hobbies include playing video games, reading, and going out with my friends.

I applied to the Rebels R.I.S.E Scholar program in order to get more involved with different organizations on campus and to meet like minded people who are focused on personal growth.

The UNLV logo, featuring the letters 'UNLV' in white serif font on a red rectangular background.



Daisy Ruiz-Lopez

I'm a film major

Currently, I'm a sophomore and something that you should know about me is that I love to watch horror movies and play videogames. I was born here in Las Vegas, Nevada and I will soon be turning 20.

I applied to the Rebel R.I.S.E Scholar Program to have that additional support. Also to meet new people and get more involved in campus.



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Cristian Yanez

Exploring Major

Im Cristian Yanez a second-year exploring student planning to major in Construction Management. I am a vegas local love meeting new people and trying new things.

I applied to the program in order to become more involved and get more out of my college experience, as well as to gain support and meet new people



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Kahosha Kimwanga

Major: Business (Management)

Hi, I'm Kahosha Kimwanga, a first generation college student and a senior majoring in Business with a concentration in Management. I earned my Associate of Business from CSN. I was born in New Hampshire but raised in Las Vegas. I'm passionate about creative business, marketing, and entrepreneurship. Outside of school, I enjoy fitness, reading, traveling, photography/film, floral design, and growing in my faith.

I applied to the Rebels R.I.S.E. Scholar Program because I want to strengthen my leadership skills, connect with my fellow peers and scholars, and gain resources that will help me thrive both personally and professionally.



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Acorey Sims

Major: Computer Science

My name is Acorey Sims, a Computer Science major, veteran, and entrepreneur originally from East Las Vegas. I'm passionate about AI, community impact, and using every opportunity at UNLV to grow, build, and give back.

I applied because I want to stay grounded, connected, and intentional while navigating my journey at UNLV. This program aligns with my values of mentorship, community, and building a meaningful path forward as a student and future leader.



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Andy Hang

Major: Theatre; Stage & Screen Acting Concentration.

Biography:

Hi everyone! My name is **Andy Hang** (*he/him/his*). I am a first-generation college student who recently transferred to the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) from the College of Southern Nevada (CSN) with my Associate of Arts in Theatre. I am also actively involved in various student organizations here on campus! Foremost, I currently serve as the Publicity Chair, Events Coordinator, and Scheduling Liaison for the [Rebel Transfer Student Organization](#) (RTSO). Additionally, I am also the President and Founder of [The UNLV Fandom Fellowship](#), where I also serve as their respective Publicist, Events Coordinator, and Scheduling Liaison! Outside of academics and collegiate responsibilities, I am fond of trying a bit of everything to ensure I find new interests that keep me curious!

Why did you apply to the Rebels R.I.S.E. Scholar Program?

I applied to the Rebels R.I.S.E. Scholar Program primarily due to my status as a transfer student. I saw this program as an investment into my success and a supportive way to ease my transition into a new collegiate environment! I am excited to build connections, gain new skills, and make the most of this program as I continue my academics here at UNLV!

