

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

UNLV | FOUNDATION





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Hope. Inspiration. Opportunity. Motivation. Peace of mind. Our generous donors help UNLV students thrive, persevere, and fully engage in their academic journeys.



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Rebels Forever! Our generous alumni never forget where they came from, reaching back to help hard-working students achieve their goals and chase their dreams, regardless of their financial circumstances.



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Our donors are focused on the future, building legacies that last. For many, planned giving — inclusive and customizable, with no minimums — is how they'll be remembered.



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Our enrollment continues to rise, as more students seek out UNLV for an affordable, first-rate, dynamic education. Our commitment to keeping the university accessible is also holding strong.



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Legacies

The UNLV community grieves the losses of former UNLV Foundation Chair Elaine Wynn and Selma Bartlett, known as the “Queen of Scholarships.”

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas wishes to acknowledge and honor the Indigenous communities of this region, and recognize that the university is situated on the traditional homelands of the Nuwuvi, Southern Paiute People. We offer gratitude for the land itself, for those who have stewarded it for generations, and for the opportunity to study, learn, work, and be in community with this land.



The Power of Partnership

As I enter the final months of my term as chairman of the UNLV Foundation Board, I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to serve this dynamic and rapidly evolving institution and community. It is a privilege to work alongside a dedicated board, foundation staff, and passionate campus partners who share a common belief in the power of higher education to change lives.

UNLV’s momentum is made possible by the generosity, trust, and commitment of our donors and alumni. Your support fuels student success, drives research and innovation, and strengthens the university’s role as a cornerstone of Southern Nevada’s future. **Every gift—no matter the size—represents confidence in UNLV’s mission and faith in what our students, faculty, and programs can achieve.**

This annual report highlights just a few of the many ways that philanthropy is making an impact. Each story is a powerful reminder that philanthropy is not simply about giving—it is about partnership, possibility, and progress.

Serving as chairman during this period of growth and ambition has been both humbling and inspiring. Together, we are helping UNLV expand access, elevate excellence, and prepare the next generation of leaders for a rapidly changing world. I am proud of what we have accomplished so far and excited for what lies ahead.

Thank you for being part of this journey and for believing in UNLV. I hope the stories that follow inspire you as much as they have inspired me.

Sincerely,

Tony F. Sanchez III '88
Chair, UNLV Foundation Board of Trustees



Photo by Anjanette Arnold/UNLV



STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS



Student Statistics

STUDENTS

33,706

student headcount Fall 2025

51%

of students will be the first in their family to earn a degree

**according to U.S. News & World Report*

DEGREES

27,963

undergraduate students

4,682

graduate students

1,085

professional students

INFO

TOP 5

for campus ethnic diversity

#29

top 100 graduate and professional programs*

1,850+

active-duty and military veteran students

TUITION & FEES

\$4,998

undergraduate
Nevada resident

\$3,808

graduate
Nevada resident

\$14,314

undergraduate
non-Nevada resident

\$13,124

graduate
non-Nevada resident

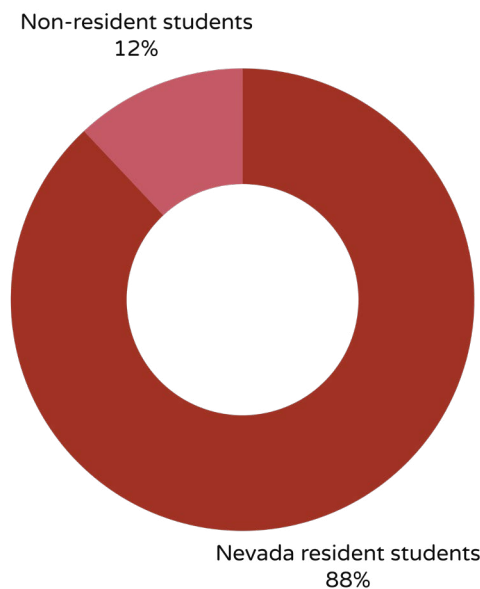
DEMOGRAPHICS

88%

of students are Nevada residents

12%

of students are non-residents



Scholarships by the Numbers FY25



47

New Scholarships
Created



\$6.9 Million

Donor-Funded
Scholarships Awarded



2,254

Student Scholarship
Recipients



\$10.3 Million

Scholarship Support
Raised



1,713

Scholarship Gifts &
Pledges Made



\$3,070

Average Scholarship
Award

REBELS
FOREVER

The Power of Scholarships



Jonatan Hailemariam, Business Management

2025-2026 Faculty and Staff Holiday Card Scholarship

“ This (scholarship) helped me as a senior studying Business Management by alleviating financial stress and worry about any tuition. Thank you so much. Go Rebels! ”



Aimee Coello '25, Fine Arts

Rick Parks Scholarship

“ With this support, I've been able to supply myself materials that elevated my work. My scholarships and aid have allowed me to focus fully on developing my craft without financial barriers holding me back. I'm deeply grateful for this investment in my future as an artist. ”



Mark Robles '25, Information Systems

Dr. Jerry Cha-Jan Chang Memorial Scholarship

“ When I learned what this scholarship was about and its affiliation with Dr. Chang, I felt really privileged to accept it. I'm even more honored to be the first recipient and to know that my name will be tied to Professor Chang. I feel honored that I will be part of his legacy. ”



Rising Star Filmmaker

Hisonni Mustafa Turns His Lens on UNLV

UNLV gained some extra star power this year when Emmy Award-winning student director Hisonni Mustafa joined the College of Fine Arts Film Department.

Hisonni, who transferred in from The College of Southern Nevada, created the debut feature *Take Out Girl* with producer and UNLV Film alumna Melissa Del Rosario. The film debuted at Cinequest and streamed on Hulu.

A first-generation student, Hisonni is now a Cynthia Bunker/Joy McClenahan Memorial Scholar at UNLV, demonstrating exceptional promise as an artist and scholar.

His resume is already impressive. He received an Emmy Foundation Scholarship, was named a CDDP Directing Fellow, was chosen as a Writers Guild Foundation Veterans Writing Project Fellow, and was inducted into the Rideback Rise Circle, a community of trailblazing storytellers. His PSA *Bang Bang* won the 2025 Professional Emmy for Best PSA, while his student films broke the Pacific Southwest Student Emmy record with 10 nominations across two projects, resulting in three wins, including Best Director.

Last August, Hisonni beat out hundreds of applicants to train at Tyler Perry Studios in Atlanta, Georgia. During his six-week paid “Dreamers Program” internship he sharpened his skills with top industry professionals and learned how to run a major production studio.

Now, his UNLV film community is benefiting from his experience, creativity, knowledge, and generous spirit. His message? **“Opportunities on the highest level are within our reach, even from right here in Las Vegas.** I hope that my work here and beyond reminds my professors that we’re always listening, taking in not just what they teach us, but also how they make us feel.”

“One day, I’d like to become a film professor, so this is the perfect opportunity to start mentoring my peers now.”



Photo courtesy of Hisonni Mustafa

Neilsen Scholar

Yasmeen Hawatmeh Turns Pain into Purpose

When Yasmeen Hawatmeh crossed the stage at commencement last year, she did so with her mother's words painted across her cap: just nafas. "Just breathe," in Arabic.

"My journey hasn't been easy, but every challenge has shaped me into someone who's resilient, focused, and deeply committed to making a difference," she said. **"Being in a wheelchair hasn't stopped me, but it's made me more determined to fight for others who've felt overlooked or powerless."**

Yasmeen was 16 years old when a mentally ill neighbor broke into their Henderson apartment and opened fire. Her mother and their family housekeeper were killed, and the shooter took her younger brother hostage. Police shot and killed both the attacker and her brother during the standoff that followed.

Yasmeen was left paralyzed from the waist down and taken to the renowned Craig Hospital in Denver for rehabilitation. "My dad was sitting with me, and I remember crying, and I remember him just saying 'This is not the end of your story,'" she said.

The following months were filled with intense therapy and hard physical and emotional work. Yasmeen had to learn to "transfer," using her upper body to move between chairs, the bed, and her wheelchair.



She completed high school remotely and graduated a year early. In fall 2021, she enrolled at UNLV after receiving a Neilsen Scholarship, which supports students with spinal cord injuries. The scholarship helped cover tuition, medical expenses, and adaptive technology, including hand controls that allowed her to drive again.

As Yasmeen regained her independence, she also helped others, advocating for friends from physical therapy. She also excelled academically and graduated with her marketing degree.

Last fall, she began online law classes at Southwestern Law School in California. She wants to advocate for victims of violent crime. "This next chapter is about turning my pain into purpose and making sure no one feels alone in their fight."



Photos by Anjanette Arnold/UNLV

Student Stories



For These Rebels, Financial Support is Everything

Carlos Tcacz

English

Dorothy Freischel English Scholarship

The scholarship provided me with some financial breathing room, allowing me to focus more on my work. My plan is to pursue teaching. I believe in the power of education. It changed my life for the better, and I want to be a part of that possibility for others.

Tzitzlalli Rivero

Emergency and Crisis Management

Yellow Ribbon Fund

One of my biggest accomplishments at UNLV has been earning my bachelor's degree as a first-generation Mexican American and continuing my education at the graduate level. After graduation, my goal is to secure a position on campus, allowing me to continue contributing to the UNLV community. I want to give back to the institution that has supported me throughout my educational journey and help future students navigate their own paths to success.

Tamara Henderson '25

Social Work

Crankstart Re-Entry Scholarship

My proudest accomplishment as a non-traditional student at UNLV has been my continued resilience in pushing through, even when I felt defeated or challenged. Receiving the scholarship gave me hope and inspired me to push through my last semester.

Tal Schlesinger

Doctor of Medicine

Children's Heart Center Nevada Scholarship

Becoming a mother has been one of the most transformative milestones of my life, teaching me resilience, patience, and the ability to balance multiple responsibilities. I am deeply proud that despite the challenges, I've been able to continue pursuing my academic and professional goals. The support of this scholarship has significantly enhanced my experience at UNLV, allowing me to achieve personal growth, academic success, and make a meaningful contribution to society.

Kimberly Smith '25

Criminal Justice

Osher Reentry Scholarship

I'm very proud of maintaining straight As in all of my classes with a 3.9 GPA, while working full-time. It takes a lot of discipline to stay on top of my schoolwork, and I'm proud of myself for consistently doing my best. Thank you so much for your kindness and generosity.

Raphael Cohen

Doctor of Medicine

Dr. Corey Brown Memorial Scholarship

Thank you for your kindness and support. This investment in my education means more than words can fully express. This scholarship has not only alleviated some of the financial pressures of medical school but also encouraged me to continue striving toward my goal of becoming a compassionate and skilled physician. Your generosity inspires me to give back to others in the future, just as you have given to me.

Katherine Cutie

Psychology

Warrior Queen Mentorship Program

Balancing school and working as a barista left me exhausted and unable to focus on my growth. I knew I had potential, but financial strain held me back. Scholarships changed that—they allowed me to pursue an unpaid internship at a psychiatric clinic, which led to a paid job. Without the scholarships, I wouldn't have been able to take that opportunity.

Jenna Roebbelen '25

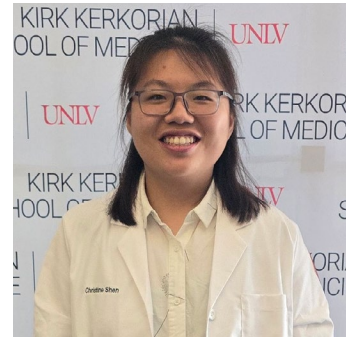
Anthropology

Angela Peterson Memorial Scholarship

Thanks to this scholarship, I gained a unique experience studying abroad in Malta. This opportunity not only enriched my academic journey but also helped me grow personally and build confidence. Your generosity made it possible for me to pursue this time abroad without financial stress, and for that, I am truly grateful.



Photos courtesy of students. From top left to right: Carlos Tcacz, Tzitzilalli Rivero, Tamara Henderson, Tal Schlesinger, Kimberly Smith, Raphael Cohen, Katherine Cutie, Jenna Roebbelen, Rakshitha Mohankumar, Christine Shen.



Rakshitha Mohankumar

Clinical Psychology (Ph.D.)
Patricia Sastaunik Graduate Scholarship

Your generous support is truly appreciated and will have a lasting impact on my academic and professional journey. This scholarship has and will allow me to continue my research and clinical work, with a focus on improving mental health outcomes for marginalized communities, particularly older adults and veterans. Your investment in my education not only helps me advance in my studies but also fuels my passion for making meaningful contributions to the field of clinical psychology. I am excited to continue my work and aim to honor your support by making a positive impact in the lives of those I serve.

Christina Shen

Doctor of Medicine
Clark County Medical Society Scholarship

UNLV has made my dream of becoming a physician a reality. As an immigrant who now calls Las Vegas home, I'm grateful for the opportunity to train here for four years, and eventually serve Southern Nevada. Over the past year, I've thrived thanks to UNLV's incredible resources: a virtual anatomy lab, hands-on cadaver training, and brilliant professors who challenge and inspire me. This scholarship doesn't just ease debt. It empowers me to become the kind of doctor Southern Nevada deserves, one who can focus wholly on patients, not personal financial strain.





Photos courtesy of students. From left to right: Chloe Akiona-Bannan, Anthony McCulloch-Howard, Todd Jennings, Tania Rose.

Chloe Akiona-Bannan

Doctor of Physical Therapy
Mary S. and D. Keith Kleven, P.T., M.S. Scholarship

I am incredibly grateful for this investment in my education and future. My ultimate goal is to give back to the communities that have equipped me with the wings to soar and provided me with the opportunities to turn my dreams into a reality. I aspire to open my own private practice, where I can share the knowledge, skills, and insights I acquire throughout my career as a physical therapist. I envision a clinic that caters to a diverse range of populations, ensuring that everyone receives personalized and effective care.

Anthony McCulloch-Howard

Athletic Training and Kinesiology
Carrera-Joffe Scholarship
Philip J. Cohen Scholarship
John and Rochelle Gray Family Foundation Scholarship

I am humbled to be graduating with a degree that I was able to afford thanks to the generous support of many donors. My scholarships are the primary reason I was able to attend numerous conferences, shadow events, and gain valuable clinical experiences. Thank you for believing in investments toward the future.

Todd Jennings

Clinical Psychology (Ph.D.)
President’s Graduate Fellowship

I am deeply grateful for your support. Through my training in the clinical psychology Ph.D. program at UNLV, I am developing the skills necessary to make a meaningful impact in this field. Your generosity has been incredibly helpful for me in pursuing this important work and developing my research and clinical skills as a clinical psychologist who serves LGBTQ+ individuals.

Tania Rose

Psychology
The Neon Pacific Initiative Program
Engelstad Scholars’ Program

My scholarship has been a tremendous blessing. It’s allowed me to focus more on my academics and community involvement without the constant stress of financial strain. Because of this, I’ve been able to take on leadership roles, invest time in volunteering, and lay the foundation for the future I’m working toward. It’s more than just financial support; it’s peace of mind and motivation to keep striving.



“Little by Little”

Francisco Sy's Donations Add Up

When Dr. Francisco Sy came to UNLV in 2016 and was asked to consider donating to the School of Public Health, he replied with a joke: “Can I pay it in installments?”

It was a common practice in the Philippines, where he was born.

The answer was yes. So, the professor set up \$500 monthly payroll deductions, which later became \$1,000. Over ten years, his donations grew to endow three scholarships for School of Public Health students.

“Little by little, you have the whole amount,” he said. **“I try to help as much as possible. I wouldn't be here if not for the help other people gave me.”**

Francisco's public health journey began 50 years ago, with a medical degree from the University of the Philippines. Next, he served six months in a rural area, supported by a generous stipend for food and housing.

He emigrated to the United States to attend Harvard, then later Johns Hopkins University, where he also benefited from scholarships. Today, he is the chair of UNLV's School of Public Health's Department of Environmental and Occupational Health, following a career at the

National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

He credits his giving in part to the School of Public Health's development team. Director Erika Christensen approached him with sincerity and a warm smile, making it easy to give, Francisco said. “All the universities I went to, I try to pay it back,” he said. **“I wish I had more money to give to students.”**

For students, his generosity means more than money.

Miklo Alcala, a UNLV School of Public Health alumnus, was also born in the Philippines. After coming to the U.S., his mother was the family's sole earner, so he relied on financial aid, including Francisco's graduate scholarship.

The money helped him pay for school and support his family. But it also introduced him to Francisco, who he described as grandfatherly, with a wealth of experience and influence.

“Overall, he's just been there. He'll text me and just say ‘How are you?’ Just yesterday he took me out to lunch. He's very generous,” Alcala said. “I look up to him. I want to be like him. I want to give back. If Dr. Sy could do it, I could do it.”



Photo by Becca Schwartz/UNLV



GGRM Law Firm

Answers the Call for First Responders

First responders who dream of becoming lawyers now have a clear path.

GGRM Law Firm, a local firm committed to community service, pledged \$1 million last year to establish a scholarship endowment at UNLV's William S. Boyd School of Law, aimed at supporting first responders who want to transition to legal careers.

"First responders are deeply committed to public service and justice. We want to provide them with the opportunity to carry that commitment into the legal profession," said Toby Yurek, Managing Partner at GGRM. "This initiative is not just about financial support; it's about opening doors for leaders who have already proven their dedication to our communities."

The inaugural GGRM scholarship will be awarded during the 2026-2027 academic year. Eligible applicants include current and former law enforcement officers, firefighters, paramedics, EMTs, and emergency dispatchers. Scholarship recipients will receive financial support toward tuition and related educational expenses.

Additional information about eligibility criteria and application procedures will be available through the Boyd School of Law financial aid office in early 2026.

"First responders bring real-world experience, empathy, and leadership to the classroom," Boyd School of Law Dean Leah Chan Grinvald said. "This program will enrich the classroom and the legal community. We are grateful to GGRM for their philanthropic leadership."

Founded in 1970, GGRM Law Firm has assisted tens of thousands of clients with personal injury and workers' compensation claims throughout Nevada. The firm has a long-standing commitment to pro bono work, including providing free legal clinics and supporting access to justice initiatives. The firm views this endowment as part of a broader effort to promote non-traditional pathways into the legal profession and strengthen the diversity of experience within the legal community.



Photo courtesy of GGRM Law Firm. From left to right: GGRM Senior Partners Jason Guinasso, Lisa M. Anderson, Jason D. Mills, and Thaddeus J. Yurek III.

A Courtside Seat:

Lisa Kelleher Evens the Score for Women in Sports

People rarely spend an entire career in one place, particularly in intercollegiate athletics. In the early 1990s, it was even less common for women. But Lisa Kelleher proved unique in so many ways during her 30-year career at UNLV.

Last year, Lisa retired (for the second time), leaving a lasting impact through the Lisa Kelleher Intercollegiate Professional Sport Management (IPSM) Legacy Scholarship.

The scholarship honors her remarkable career in UNLV Athletics and the College of Education's IPSM program, where she was a powerful advocate for women's sports. She also played a vital role on UNLV's Women's Council and numerous campus committees. "Perseverance over persistence" was her motto.

Lisa's passion for sports began with her family's sporting goods store, where games were rehased in detail. She worked alongside her brothers and played multiple sports, never questioning whether she belonged.

At UNLV, Lisa held several roles, including deputy and associate athletic director. She said her most influential role was senior woman administrator, one of four positions with a seat at the NCAA decision-making table. It's kind

of a "glass ceiling position because it assumes that the senior woman will never be the athletic director," she said. **"But I always teach my students, you've got to get access to the table — get in the room."**

She was most proud of helping UNLV overcome its Title IX challenges in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Rather than cutting men's programs, Lisa worked to expand women's sports, restoring NCAA volleyball and adding women's soccer and golf.

The effort required careful negotiation and collaboration around funding and facilities, Lisa said. But her solutions resulted in new resources and practice spaces for both men and women. After retirement, Lisa returned as an instructor and visiting associate professor. She helped develop the IPSM program and taught several courses, including e-sports, which she designed with students.

Lisa's scholarship will ensure students entering the sports industry benefit from access and leadership opportunities. "We want our students to be able to get in the door so the next generation can start driving decisions."



Photo by Kia Cummings/UNLV



Service is a Calling

for this Public Health Alumna

Faria Tavacoli's commitment to public service is rooted in her own experiences.

"As a young person who faced significant financial and physical adversities, I entered college as a public health major to promote equity of services and strengthen the Las Vegas community to ensure that the same experiences would not continue for others," she said.

She graduated in May 2025 with a bachelor's degree in public health and returned to earn a second undergraduate degree in neuroscience. She most recently earned an Obama-Chesky Voyager Scholarship for Public Service, a two-year program to develop the next generation of public service leaders. She's the first Nevada college student to receive the honor.



Photo by Josh Hawkins/UNLV

Faria joined UNLV as a HOPE Scholar, a program that provides students experiencing housing insecurity with secure housing and support to complete their degrees.

Her story demonstrates the impact of student support, with one success leading to another.

Now, Faria aims to research discrimination in healthcare and help people increase literacy skills, working with the Annie E. Casey Foundation to build generational partnerships. She was one of only 32 youth leaders nationwide selected to serve on the advisory board of Lady Gaga's Born This Way Foundation, where she championed initiatives promoting youth mental health. She's part of the Reporting Responsibly On Campus Suicide (RROCS) group with the Media Mental Health Initiative at Stanford School of Medicine, and part of the student advisory committee for Active Minds.

She was also one of two undergraduates awarded the coveted Barry Goldwater Scholarship in 2023 and was a part of the Newman Civic Fellowship, helping students develop strategies for social change.

But amidst all the accolades, Faria remains humble. **"I don't think my community involvement or change is about these accomplishments or titles, but it's really about how you show up, how you treat others, and how you protect your own heart along the way.** Give it your all, but...allow joy and fun to be a part of that journey."



Bright Smiles Ahead

Acadental Creates New Scholarship for Dental Students

UNLV's dental students now have access to more educational opportunities and support, thanks to Acadental.

The dental education innovator recently committed \$50,000 to UNLV's School of Dental Medicine for a scholarship fund supporting dental students. The permanent endowment reflects Acadental's mission to advance dental education and empower future dental professionals.

"The purpose of establishing the Acadental scholarship is to directly support the next generation of dental professionals by alleviating the financial burdens of dental education," according to a company statement.

"As educators and students globally rely on our products to hone essential skills, Acadental's mission remains centered on improving dental education and empowering individuals to excel in their careers. **This scholarship aligns with our ongoing commitment to foster excellence in the dental field, ensuring talented and dedicated individuals have access to the resources they need to thrive.** Through this gift, we aim to make a tangible difference in shaping the future of dental care by providing both financial assistance and continued innovation in training tools and technologies."

The scholarship fund creates significant opportunities, said Shawn Gerstenberger, dean of the School of Public Health and acting dean of the School of Dental Medicine. "Acadental's commitment strengthens our ability to support talented students preparing to become the next leaders in oral health. This endowment not only eases financial burdens for our students, but also reflects the shared dedication to excellence, innovation, and the advancement of dental education."

Acadental General Manager Jeff Scott said, "Each day educators and students around the world are using our products to learn the necessary skills to become an outstanding dental professional. Giving back to dental education in the form of a scholarship is consistent with our vision of making better dental professionals in addition to helping with the cost of dental education."



Photo by Josh Hawkins/UNLV

PROGRAM SUPPORT



UNLV Foundation FY25 Points of Pride



Overall giving increased 40% year-over-year



\$57M+ went to programs, scholarships, and capital projects — an increase from \$29.1M year-over-year



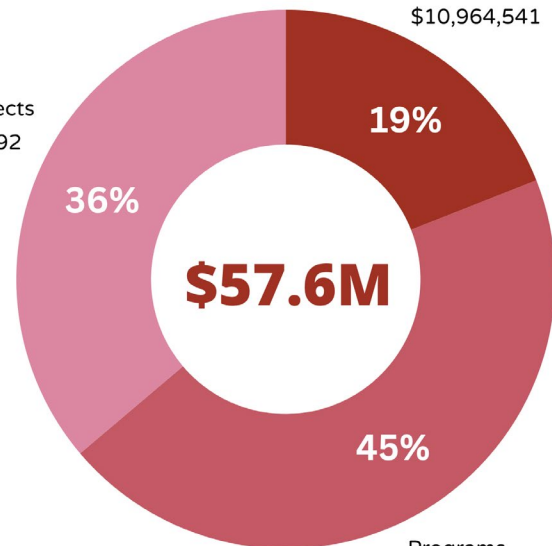
Rebels Give 2025 campaign increased participation



The Foundation endowment grew 11.75% after accounting for fees, distributions, and gifts

Capital Projects
\$20,862,992

Scholarships
\$10,964,541



Programs
\$25,830,297

Learning Through Language:

Dunn Community Talks Focus on Multilingual Education



Photo courtesy of UNLV College of Education. Guest speaker Yiyang Fan, founder of dual Mandarin Chinese/English schools Baby University and Noble Collegiate Academy, presents at a Dunn Community Talk in April 2025.

Meaningful conversations spark impactful ideas.

For the past few years, Dunn Community Talks — sponsored by the Dunn Family Foundation through UNLV’s College of Education — have created that space, fostering much-needed dialogue on assessment in multilingual education.

Educators, researchers, administrators, practitioners, families, and community members have come together from diverse disciplines and backgrounds to build understanding and skills to navigate their multilingual work and interactions.

“Assessment in multilingual education is crucial because it allows educators to validate identity

while testing knowledge,” said Sharolyn Pollard-Durodola, Dunn Endowed Chair for Educational Assessment in the UNLV College of Education and host of the talks.

The talks featured topics and expert speakers from across the country, highlighting different perspectives in assessment and multilingual education. The first two events in 2024 explored best practices for supporting young multilingual learners in early childhood education and their assessment challenges. Participants also explored how to support multilingual learners with special needs, particularly those struggling in reading, science, and social studies.

In 2025, participants tackled additional issues, from reading assessment for multilingual learners with learning disabilities to the three pillars of developing a multicultural orientation. Navigating multilingualism in early childhood leadership was also discussed.

Participants gave the talks high marks.

“As an educator, I believe it is essential to be a lifelong learner,” said Wendy Reyes,

a regular participant and school counselor.

“Staying informed about current research and best practices allows us to bring up-to-date knowledge to our students and support their success in meaningful ways.

The series’ lessons led to better connections with families and students and more effective advocacy, she said.

The Nevada-based Dunn Family Foundation has supported UNLV since 2016, focusing on programs that develop a better society through education and devising innovative ways to leverage testing and support materials.

By supporting the Dunn Family Chair in Educational Assessment and Dunn Community Talks, the foundation has made a deep impact on Southern Nevada educators and provided a consistent space to engage national experts in meaningful community conversations on complex educational issues.

From the Classroom to China

The Sands Institute for Chinese Language and Culture Expands Global Learning

In Chinese tradition, the mooncake represents harmony, gratitude, and unity. So, it felt auspicious that Huajing Maske, new director of the Sands Institute for Chinese Language and Culture at UNLV, shared the pastry with Chinese language students on her first day on campus.

The Sands Institute, established in December 2024, launched programs last year, fueled by a \$15 million commitment from Las Vegas Sands Corp. UNLV Foundation honored the company as a 2025 Palladium Ruby Honoree for its decades of support for the university, including major gifts to UNLV Football, Hospitality Hall, and the Sands Center for Professional Development.

The Sands Institute will serve our diverse region through free, public Chinese language and cultural education, global exchanges, and intercultural dialogues, Huajing said. The local tourism and gaming industries, agencies, and workforce are all expected to benefit.

The institute can “build a bridge for people to people connections” to change lives and create a foundation for positive U.S.-China relations, she said.

“Our young people deserve every opportunity to have open minds, to learn different perspectives. We can start at the grassroots level to de-escalate tensions, and when the political climate changes, our students will be ready. They will have a foundation that will let them succeed as global citizens.”

“We’re giving students meaningful ways to engage with the world,” said Kate Korgan, acting executive vice president and provost. “Through the Sands Institute, students will encounter new ideas and perspectives that can help shape their communication and collaboration.”

UNLV Interim President Chris Heavey says the initiative reflects a strategic direction. “The Sands Institute strengthens UNLV’s role and visibility on the global stage,” he said. **“It advances our mission to open doors, build understanding, and position UNLV as a leader in international education.”**

Huajing imagines vibrant collaborations, partnering with the Department of World Languages and Cultures. The possibilities are endless, or “wúxiàn” in Mandarin.



Photo by Claire Hart

Industry Leaders Support Groundbreaking AI Research

at UNLV's International Gaming Institute

For more than 30 years, UNLV's International Gaming Institute (IGI) has tracked trends in gaming, analyzing technological issues and building a global reputation for rigorous, trustworthy research.

Across industries, artificial intelligence has emerged as a focal point as more companies adopt and integrate it into their technology. Gaming is no exception, with AI adoption stirring stakeholder conversations on current and future uses, and what regulations are needed to meet industry-standard ethical guidelines.



Photos by Josh Hawkins/UNLV

IGI launched the AI Research Hub (AiR Hub) in May 2025 to answer those questions. The collaborative effort examines AI's impacts, risks, and opportunities in gaming, bringing together a diverse group of industry experts. Founding members include Action Gaming, Aristocrat, Axes.ai, Evoke Plc, Gaming Analytics, Kindbridge Behavioral Health, Playtech Plc, the Responsible Online Gaming Association, Walker Digital Table Systems, and Yaspa.

AiR Hub leaders say it's designed as a collaborative research ecosystem that maintains academic independence. Founding members serve on an industry advisory panel and contribute expertise and financial support, but do not influence research outcomes.

"AI is giving the gaming industry a chance to rethink everything — from innovation and customer experience to responsible play," said Kasra Ghaharian, IGI director of research and a triple alumnus ('07 BS, '10 MS, and '22 Ph.D. Hotel Administration).

AiR Hub was co-founded by Kasra and Simo Dragicevic, an industry veteran with decades of experience in business, technology, research, and development. Dragicevic said the hub reflects the growing need for shared understanding as AI becomes more deeply embedded in gaming operations.

"As countries and corporations invest hundreds of billions of dollars into AI in a bid to become first to develop AGI [artificial general intelligence] in the next five years, it's critical to ensure all aspects of the technology are researched and its impact understood, both from a product and commercial perspective, as well as a policy and safety perspective," Simo said.

AiR Hub aims to release a first-of-its-kind "State of AI in Gaming" research report this year.



From left to right: IGI Director of Research Kasra Ghaharian, students Samantha Wells, Cesar Lozoya Martinez, Melissa Swinehart, and Antonio Le, and lead data scientist Dr. Piyush Puranik.

Local Family Foundation

Makes Transformational \$6M+ Donation to UNLV's Music Program

The opportunity to learn, innovate, and unlock “uncompromised expression” on 86 world-class pianos — that is the promise of a transformational donation of more than \$6 million to UNLV’s School of Music by the Las Vegas-based KJS Family Foundation.

Finalized last year, the foundation’s gift funded the purchase of 86 Steinway pianos — instruments universally recognized throughout the music world for their superior craftsmanship, quality, tone, and versatility.

The foundation’s donation came in two parts. First, the Las Vegas-based foundation gave \$2.5 million to purchase 25 pianos through the Southern Nevada Music Company. Then, it gave approximately \$3.6 million more, allowing the School of Music to purchase a total of 86 pianos in all.

In December, surprised passersby enjoyed a stunning visual, as workers unloaded and moved dozens of boxed pianos, shipped from the east coast, into the fine arts building.

“The Smith family is proud to make this contribution to the UNLV School of Music,” said Jeanne Smith, of the KJS Family Foundation.

“Music has always been a part of our family’s life, and we are honored to support the education of current and future generations of UNLV music students by providing them the opportunity to perform on these world-class instruments.”

UNLV Foundation Trustee Randy Garcia ’77 played a key role in the project, initiating the Music Piano Fund that led to the KJS Family Foundation gift.

College of Fine Arts Dean Nancy J. Uscher said she’s thrilled students and staff now have access to so many best-in-class instruments.

“We are incredibly grateful to the KJS Family Foundation for their generous gift, which has enabled the university to purchase many magnificent Steinway pianos,” she said. “These instruments will transform the lives of our students and enhance the work and performing lives of our faculty.”



Photo courtesy of UNLV College of Fine Arts. UNLV College of Fine Arts faculty and staff, along with Dean Nancy J. Uscher and Denise Wunderlich of Southern Nevada Music Company, celebrate the generosity of the KJS Family Foundation.



Generosity Creates Possibilities

Our Palladium Society Welcomes New Honorees

Through their invaluable generosity, UNLV's 2025 Palladium Society honorees are expanding opportunities for students and faculty across campus to explore, learn, and thrive.

The honorees were recognized at a reception hosted by the UNLV Foundation and UNLV Interim President Chris Heavey.

Las Vegas Sands Palladium Society Ruby Member Honoree

Las Vegas Sands is strengthening our community and enriching global engagement. In 2024, its \$15 million commitment established the Sands Institute for Chinese Language and Culture at UNLV (more, page 27). The landmark partnership between Las Vegas Sands and the university will advance the appreciation of Chinese traditions and history. Over the course of their decades-long support of UNLV, Las Vegas Sands has also made major contributions to UNLV Football, Hospitality Hall, and the Sands Center for Professional Development.

Aramark

Aramark's core belief in putting "people first" and giving back to communities has made the company an exceptional partner to UNLV in its mission to improve lives through education and engagement. Aramark understands that helping students meet their essential needs enables them to focus more fully on their studies. It established the Aramark Scholarship in 2011, which has helped hundreds of students earn a college degree. It has also addressed food insecurity on campus by providing significant support for events and programs.

Catherine G. Bellver

Catherine Gullo Bellver, Ph.D., is a distinguished professor emerita in the College of Liberal Arts. Since joining the faculty in 1972, she has taught more than two dozen different courses in the Department of World Languages and Culture. Dr. Bellver is an accomplished scholar and a tireless advocate for women in academia. She established an endowed chair in the humanities

and an endowment for the Women's Research Institute at UNLV, while supporting faculty, scholarships, and programs across campus through her philanthropy and service.

Jon E. Cobain

In 1964, the late Jon E. Cobain made history as the first graduate of UNLV. He served as student body president and led by example through his lifelong leadership and service. Cobain was the first in his family to receive a college degree, which inspired him to establish a scholarship in Lee Business School for first-generation students. He also supported University Libraries, Black Mountain Institute, KUNV Radio, and other programs across campus. His philanthropy reflected his deep belief in equitable access to education and his determination to provide opportunities for students in need.

Findlay Management Group

Findlay Management Group is a champion of athletic and academic excellence at UNLV. Its commitment to UNLV Athletics has advanced marquee programs, including football and basketball, and enriched the experience of countless student-athletes. As leaders in the community and the auto industry, Findlay Management Group embodies the drive and teamwork that define Rebel Athletics. Since 2006, it has helped fuel a competitive spirit at UNLV, ensuring that student-athletes succeed not only on the playing field but also in the classroom and in life beyond graduation.

KJS Family Foundation

The KJS Family Foundation's gift of 86 Steinway pianos to the UNLV School of Music will enrich the daily practice and elevate performances of countless musicians (more, page 21). The foundation's vision gives UNLV students the opportunity to learn on instruments that reflect the highest standards of the musical profession, preparing them to pursue their dreams with confidence. Students, faculty, and visiting artists will all experience the inspiration and joy that comes from performing on an instrument that is itself a work of art.



Left to right: The Sands Institute for Chinese Language & Culture advances global partnerships; Professor Emerita Catherine G. Bellver; Findlay Management Group builds teamwork at UNLV Athletics; the KJS Family Foundation gifted 86 Steinway pianos; Jon E. Cobain, right, with Gov. Grant Sawyer in 1964; Ph.D. student Martin Arguelles Perez is one of nearly 400 UNLV alumni employed at NNSS; John E. Peiser, right, with his son John; Aramark supports healthy eating on campus.

Nevada National Security Sites

For 75 years, Nevada National Security Sites (NNSS) has played a pivotal role in ensuring our nation’s nuclear security. Through its operating entities Bechtel Nevada, National Security Technologies LLC, and Mission Support and Test Services, NNSS has prepared generations of UNLV students for a multitude of prestigious positions that support our nation’s security. Its significant contributions to workforce development, research, and community outreach make NNSS a valuable partner to the university and its College of Sciences and Howard R. Hughes College of Engineering.

John D. Peiser

John Peiser’s life was profoundly influenced by UNLV. An accomplished alumnus, hospitality executive, and faculty member, he has helped shape the lives of generations of students through his engagement with his alma mater. Following a distinguished 25-year career as a hospitality executive, Peiser served on the UNLV Alumni Association Board of Directors and as a professor in the College of Hospitality. He established the Peiser Family Endowed Scholarship to honor his UNLV education and that of his son, also a UNLV graduate.

Korte Company

Helps UNLV Build a Bright Future

Greg Korte learned to work hard, persevere, and give back by watching his father.

President of the Korte Company's Las Vegas Division, Greg said his father earned his college degree in night school after serving in the Army, all while supporting his family and running a construction company.

"He always installed in us that you need to give back to the community," said Greg, whose company and family have contributed roughly \$92,000 to UNLV over the past 20 years. "I'm here to stay. What's good for Las Vegas and UNLV is good for me and my family."

The construction company has supported the UNLV Fund, the College of Engineering, and UNLV Athletics, and Greg has served on university advisory boards. The company has also completed several campus construction projects, including the baseball fields and a biomechanics lab in the School of Medicine.

Greg came to Las Vegas 38 years ago on a college graduation trip gifted by his father. Within four days, he'd landed a construction job and decided to stay. He worked his way up in the business before opening a local Korte Company branch.

Over the years, Greg has enjoyed watching the university grow, along with his own family — he and his wife Nicole have three grown children: Gavin, Rachel, and Grant. He's also enjoyed growing his company to 43 employees and bringing them along to Rebel sports events.

"I'm definitely proud that what started as primarily a commuter campus, with not much there for student life, has continued to develop and attract more full-time students," Greg said.

"There's a real shortage of talent in the trades and construction. It's an old-fashioned occupation. We're constantly looking for new talent, the next generation. There are certainly great opportunities in construction, so we want to do whatever we can to support students in these areas."



Photo by Anjanette Arnold/UNLV



Aristocrat Supports UNLV Tribal Education Initiative

& Student Success

Tyler Bell was looking for a path back to school.

A member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, he was working as a manager at a Tribal resort when a fortuitous meeting opened the door.

“I was having trouble working and finding an online program in gaming and hospitality,” Tyler said. “Then I connected with Tammi Tiger (Director of UNLV’s Tribal Education Initiative) at the American Indigenous Tourism Conference. She told me about UNLV and the scholarships available. It was really exciting and it gave me something to look forward to.”

Tyler, now a UNLV sophomore, is the first recipient of the new Aristocrat Tribal Student Endowment, established by the gaming company to support students in UNLV’s Tribal Education Initiative Endowed by Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation. The program is part of the William F. Harrah College of Hospitality.

The gift was celebrated at a check presentation for \$42,000 during Native American Heritage Month, attended by Tyler, Tammi, and Aristocrat leaders.

“We are so grateful for this endowment that will support our students’ educational journeys toward leadership in Tribal gaming and hospitality,” Tammi said.

For Tyler, the scholarship will alleviate financial pressure. He visits UNLV several times per year for his program and would like to secure an internship at a Las Vegas property in the future.

“It allows me to focus more fully on my academics and long-term goals,” he said. “And it helps address the financial barriers that could hinder Native students. It’s an investment in students’ future success.”

Casey Flair ’08 presented the check at UNLV. As Director of Community Engagement for Aristocrat, the former UNLV football player enjoys connecting his company with his alma mater. Aristocrat is a significant partner of UNLV, contributing generously to the Tribal Education Initiative and International Gaming Institute.

“Aristocrat’s giving has increased through strategic initiatives driven by our team’s desire to be more engaged in the communities where we work and play,” Casey said. “Native American relations and Tribal partnerships are our largest giving pillar, reflecting our commitment to supporting future generations.”

At UNLV, Aristocrat also supports the Native American Alumni Club’s annual powwow and the Native Youth College Camp, hosted by the Tribal Education Initiative, Admissions, and Early Outreach, as well as sustainable and responsible gaming initiatives, he said.

“The most rewarding part of my role is connecting a company which wants to do good, with a university doing impactful work,” said Casey, who also serves as president of the UNLV Football Foundation. “I love my job and working with this community.”



Photo by Anjanette Arnold/UNLV. Aristocrat leaders present a check to support the Aristocrat Tribal Student Endowment. Left to right: Lara De Guzman, Tammi Tiger, Tyler Bell, Casey Flair, Kylelain Corinth, and Irazu Velasquez.

A Powerful Ask & Generous Response:

Business Students Secure \$650K for Scholarships

When James Sarmiento and Jacinto Alfaro-Martinez stepped into John Starkey's Business 103 class, they embarked on a path to new studies, prestigious internships, and securing big money for student scholarships.

Making a major donor pitch was not on his bucket list, said James, a senior. But last spring, he and Jacinto got a call from John Starkey, asking them to present to the Nevada Surplus Lines Foundation. Lee Business School's Department of Finance was launching a degree in insurance and risk management. The assignment: help secure \$650,000 to support student scholarships.

The Nevada Surplus Lines Foundation was instrumental in founding the business school's Kerestesi Center for Insurance and Risk Management through a \$5 million gift in 2023. Named for Thomas F. Kerestesi, former president of the historic Cragin & Pike Insurance Agency, the center provides a pipeline to an industry in need of new and diverse talent.

The Nevada Surplus Lines Foundation has a long history of supporting UNLV scholarships. The organizations were initially connected through former alumnus of the year Greg McKinley, chair of both the Kerestesi Center's Board of Advisors and the Nevada Surplus Lines Foundation. McKinley is chairman emeritus of Cragin & Pike and served on the UNLV Foundation and Alumni Association boards.

James and Jacinto spoke from the heart to the foundation board. Professor Starkey said they were critical in securing the gift, which will support the first cohort of insurance and risk management juniors and seniors with up to \$10,000 per year. (The new donation brought the Foundation's total support for UNLV scholarships to \$735,000, as it already contributes \$85,000 annually to the business school through an NSHE endowment.)

Jacinto shared his experience as a first-generation student, raised by parents who rebuilt their lives after financial hardship. He is now a triple major in accounting, finance, and insurance and risk management, and completed an internship at Ernst & Young.

James described immigrating from the Philippines, unsure if college would ever be



Photo by Anjanette Arnold/UNLV. From left to right: Nevada Surplus Lines Foundation Board Member Justin Manning, students Jacinto Alfaro-Martinez and James Sarmiento, and board member Quincy Branch.

financially feasible. Now a peer mentor, he will graduate this year with a finance degree and a completed internship at Cragin & Pike.

The students' presentation was powerful, board members Justin Manning and Quincy Branch said. Leaders in the Las Vegas insurance industry, they regularly evaluate funding requests.

"We really got captivated by the story," Quincy said. "Hearing their background resonated with us. Once they left, around the table the question was, 'We're doing this, so how much?'"

"They made a personal connection," Justin said. "Their authenticity... opened the door. **We all go through hard times and challenges to get where we are. The students were so vulnerable and so real, I just wanted to help them succeed.**"

New UNLV Letters and Signage

Bring Rebel Red and Las Vegas Flair to Campus

Last August, a long-nurtured dream lit up the Alumni Amphitheater, just north of the Student Union. The massive UNLV letters installation, inspired by the iconic Venetian LOVE sculpture, took center stage in campus' most popular gathering spot.

With a bold presence and programmable lights, the letters are more than a photo op. They're a love letter to Rebel pride and Vegas flair.

"[We] wanted to create a 3D sign that students could interact with — something iconic," said Deborah Bergin, director of planning and facilities partnerships. "Like the LOVE sign, we wanted a place where you can sit on the bottom of the 'U' or stand on the 'L.' because **it's about giving students a place for photos, memories, and moments that last.**"

The campus-wide signage overhaul, led by Planning & Construction (P&C), replaced decades of mismatched signage with a cohesive system that brings clarity and character to the university's terrain. The project was part of UNLV's 2021 Campus Master Plan and funded through a \$3 million donation from the UNLV Foundation.

"Our role was to manage the design and installation of the new signage across the entire campus," Deborah said. "We replaced every sign, from building identifiers to parking and wayfinding signs, with a unified system that's easier to understand and complements our architecture."

P&C identified 330 locations needing signage and coordinated with building occupants on names. Design work began in June 2022, with the first installation in June 2023.

P&C's approach included solar-powered lighting for key entry signs. It also included placing large gateway signage at major intersections. The upgrades address community feedback on difficulty recognizing campus boundaries.

"The signs do more than just help you find your way," Deborah said. "They visually unify the campus and reinforce our identity."



Photo by Josh Hawkins/UNLV

You Belong Here:

Cross-Campus Campaign Supports UNLV's International Students

You Belong Here. That was the message UNLV international students heard repeatedly last year, as they faced unprecedented challenges in an unpredictable American education landscape.

Launched in spring 2025, the You Belong Here campaign was created after seven UNLV international students saw their legal immigration status terminated, along with more than 1,000 students and recent graduates nationwide. UNLV Global, led by Executive Director Lindsey Gruber, sprang into action to support the affected students, along with the larger international student and scholar community. Through social gatherings, individual support, and fundraising, the Rebel community demonstrated its care and commitment to international students.

In November, the campaign culminated in a special art and storytelling event, kicking off International Education Week. The You Belong Here exhibition showcased the work of volunteer photographer Claire Hart and UNLV Foundation communications director Paysha Rhone, who spent eight weeks capturing the voices and journeys of international students navigating challenge and change.

The event drew support from multiple departments, including Student Life, Student Affairs, UNLV Foundation, and the Department of Student Connection and Engagement.

Claire first photographed UNLV international students at the initial You Belong Here gathering and was so moved that she volunteered to create student portraits.

"I am really grateful to be one small part of You Belong Here at UNLV," she said. "This project means a lot to me, but even more so because it highlights the real warriors, the international students who are finding their way through such uncertain times."

"There's a duality in their experience — so much uncertainty, yet so much hope — and that balance is what makes their stories so powerful.

There's also a quiet kind of helplessness that comes with not knowing how to help — seeing what others are up against and wishing you could do more. But more than anything, it deepens my empathy and reminds me how important it is to keep showing up — to listen, to learn, and to use my photography to help share their light."



Photos by Claire Hart

Breathtaking Chihuly Chandelier

Jumpstarts Campaign to Build New Learning Center for the Arts

When the future UNLV Learning Center for the Arts opens its doors, it will do so with an awe-inspiring centerpiece – a Chihuly Fire Opal Chandelier donated by the artist and his wife, Dale and Leslie Chihuly.

The unique blown-glass piece was created in 2018, following extensive experimental sessions in which world-renowned artist Dale Chihuly and his team explored the iridescent properties of a beautiful new garnet color.

“This extraordinary and unique piece will be a deeply significant expression of the essential role of the arts to humanity,” said Nancy J. Uscher, dean of the UNLV College of Fine Arts. “The Chandelier will be strikingly visible both inside and outside of the building, and, most importantly, will provide great inspiration for our students.”

The gift is conditional on the college realizing its vision to build the new learning center. The building is completely pre-designed, Dean Uscher said.

“This stunning building...will profoundly reshape the landscape and ecosystem of arts and culture in the state of Nevada and will prepare our students for the most compelling 21st and 22nd century careers,” she said. “Led by the visual arts and celebrating interdisciplinary opportunities and the most innovative technologies for research and creative activity, the building will have the flexibility required to match the trajectory of art studies over the next 100+ years.”



Photo courtesy of Chihuly Studio



Rendering courtesy of UNLV College of Fine Arts

The new building will stand where Grant Hall sits today. The plan features two new performance venues, studios, gallery and critique space, contemporary classrooms, a café, rooftop event space, and a front porch, providing several gathering spaces.

Dale and Leslie Chihuly are longtime friends of the university. “We are delighted with the plans to build a contemporary learning center for the arts on the UNLV campus and are thrilled with the initial design concepts. We believe this new facility will serve the students of the UNLV College of Fine Arts well, and will bring greater arts experiences to Las Vegas and the State of Nevada,” said the couple, in a statement.

ALUMNI GIVING



Alumni Statistics

UNLV has rapidly grown as an institution thanks to the support of the local community and alumni across the globe.

154,352

UNLV alumni

176,613

degrees awarded since 1964

TOP COLLEGE GRADUATES

Business.....	26,162
Education.....	25,356
Liberal Arts.....	22,222
Hospitality.....	19,987
Urban Affairs.....	19,335

GRADUATE AGES

20-29.....	15%
30-39.....	26%
40-49.....	24%
50-59.....	17%
60+.....	18%

UNLV ALUMNI LOCATIONS

16

Nevada counties

50

states

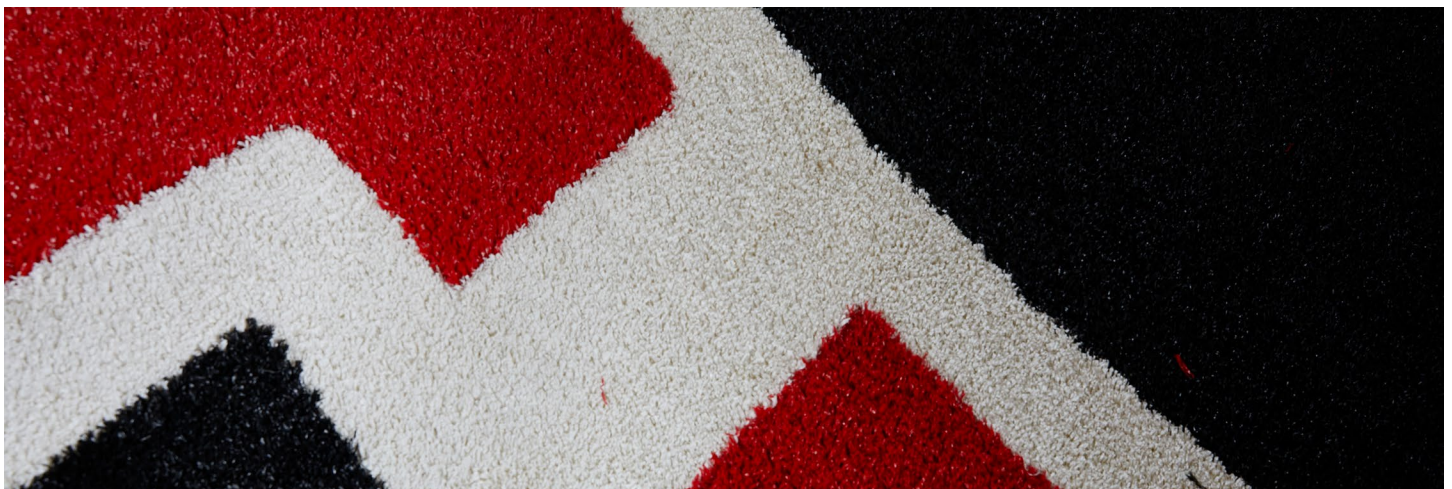
77

countries

TOP LOCATIONS

Clark County.....	90,670
California.....	12,736
Texas.....	4,332
Washington.....	3,210
Arizona.....	3,190
Utah.....	2,489
International.....	2,181
U.S. Total (Not NV).....	53,952

Data captured June 25, 2025.



Leading with Generosity

Our Alumni Board is All In on Rebel Success



Dr. Tya Mathis-Coleman '07 '22, President

UNLV Alumni Association Board of Directors

“...I want to celebrate the incredible strength and diversity of our network, with nearly 160,000 proud Rebels across the globe. Our alumni are leaders, innovators, and changemakers, and together, we embody the very best of UNLV. Whether through mentorship, networking, philanthropy, or simply sharing Rebel pride, our involvement is essential to building a vibrant and inclusive alumni community.



David Navarro '12 '13, Immediate Past President

UNLV Alumni Association Board of Directors, Founder of the Navarro Family Access for All Endowed Scholarship (with wife Marvelyn)

“UNLV shaped who I am today and made a major impact on my life. I have always been inspired by the generosity of those donors who supported UNLV throughout the years and I knew that if I ever found myself in a position to give back to my alma mater I would do it without hesitation. I contribute to give more students life-changing opportunities like the one I had through UNLV, especially our first-generation students. As a first-generation student and graduate myself I know firsthand the power of education. I have seen my fellow first-generation students and graduates be the disruptors of poverty in their family, generationally. Their education at UNLV not only elevates them but their parents, siblings, and children as well. I am glad to play my small part in helping our community thrive by supporting UNLV.



Photo by Anjanette Arnold/UNLV.

Aldo Madrigano

2025 Silver State Award Recipient Embraces New Home

Aldo and Dawn Madrigano have generously supported UNLV since moving to Las Vegas from Wisconsin 14 years ago. The couple, retired from the beer industry, immediately connected with UNLV, committing to making a positive impact in their new community. They started with a Loyalty Circle gift dedicated to women's golf, then created the Madrigano Family Endowment for Academic Excellence and an endowed fund for men's basketball. Next came other athletics gifts and a cornerstone donation to the Fertitta Football Complex, now home to the Madrigano Family Sports Medicine Center.

“My parents taught their children at a young age that universities are the heartbeat of any city, and it’s important to do whatever we can to ensure those institutions thrive,” said Aldo Madrigano, who joined the UNLV Foundation Board of Trustees in 2020. “We do this because the education that UNLV provides is so important to the long-term health of this great city.”



Photo by Michael Roberts

An Exercise in Gratitude:

Alumnus Kevin Pitt Lends Hand to Future Rebels

Kevin Pitt didn't come to college with a rigid life plan. Instead, his love for physical activity led him to a physical education degree at the College of William & Mary in Virginia, then a job in recreation in California.

When he learned UNLV offered a master's degree in exercise physiology, he applied, was accepted, and packed up for the desert. He immediately felt at home, he said. "It was exciting to be in Las Vegas, and the program was set up so that there were always opportunities to gain hands-on experience."

The 2025 School of Integrated Health Sciences Alumnus of the Year earned his master's degree in 1995 and landed a job as a fitness program manager at Nellis Air Force Base, overseeing physical fitness testing for thousands of airmen.

Next, he worked in community health and wellness, where he came to better understand the relationship between exercise and nutrition.

Recognizing gaps in his training, Kevin returned to UNLV for a second undergraduate degree in nutrition sciences, graduating in 2008. "It was an absolute no-brainer to come back," he said. "The school again provided an excellent education through formal coursework and hands-on activities."

That experience proved critical for his work as a registered dietitian at the Veterans Home of California-Yountville, from which he retired in 2019. "Thanks to my comprehensive education at UNLV, I was able to work in a clinical capacity at different levels of care," he said.

In 2020, Kevin and his wife Angela expressed their gratitude for UNLV through a significant land donation in Esmeralda County. That land was sold to support the Dr. Larry Golding Exercise Physiology Endowment Fund and used to purchase equipment for UNLV's Exercise Physiology Lab. The couple also created a new endowment for the UNLV Nutrition Center, providing funds to compensate graduate students for providing services.

"I was fortunate to receive a graduate assistantship after my first semester at UNLV and taught physical activity classes to undergraduates while attending classes," Kevin said. **"This [endowment] is especially meaningful to me, as it supports students gaining practical experience as part of their education."**



Photo by Michael Roberts



The Grateful Rebel:

David Ross Operationalizes Generosity

Long before David Ross reached the pinnacle of casino industry leadership, he made a commitment rooted in gratitude.

A two-time graduate and 2025 Fred C. Albrecht Outstanding Alumnus, David credits UNLV with transforming his boyhood dream into a satisfying and successful career. Today, he repays that debt through sustained philanthropy and service to his alma mater.

With a family immersed in the casino industry, David got his start as a valet at Barbary Coast and rose to pit boss, joining the company's management training program. But he was incredibly ambitious and knew he needed a college degree to ascend the corporate ladder.

Enter UNLV. David earned his bachelor's degree in business administration and management in 1995 and a master's degree in hotel administration in 2005, completing both while working full time. A nontraditional student balancing long hours, marriage, and studies, he said his education proved pivotal.

"It was a promise I made as an undergraduate student, to give something back in some way," he said.

In the early 2000s, David made good on his pledge, returning to UNLV as a graduate student and teaching an introductory hospitality course in casino management. He donated his adjunct salary to charity, creating a pattern of two decades of giving.

His involvement deepened when he joined the UNLV Foundation, where he has served as trustee, vice chair, and chair. His entire family is committed to the university, he said; both his mother and daughter have earned multiple UNLV degrees.

David's motivation is simple: a strong university strengthens the community. As he once told [then-interim UNLV president] Don Snyder, "I hire a lot of UNLV students, I have businesses in Las Vegas, and **I firmly believe that a strong university is correlated to a strong local economy. I want to do my part to help UNLV.**"



Photo by Michael Roberts

After decades of leading operations with Coast Casinos and other regional gaming companies, David remains, at heart, a grateful Rebel who takes joy in giving back.



Nurse, Alumnus, and Donor:

Joe Cadiz is All Heart

When Joe Cadiz turned in his healthcare administrator badge for scrubs and a stethoscope, he wanted to help patients one-on-one. But the aspiring nurse also had a grander vision — to serve his community and create more caregivers.

“I could become a really great nurse and be really effective,” said the three-time UNLV alumnus. “But my real goal is to play a role in the development of other people who share the same values and have similar aspirations.”

Joe created a new scholarship for UNLV nursing students even before completing his Master of Science in the School of Nursing’s direct entry program in 2024. In 2025, he received his Master in Healthcare Administration degree, while pursuing a nursing doctorate and working full-time at the prestigious Cleveland Clinic in Ohio.

Funding scholarships creates a bigger impact, he said. “You can only do so much as one individual person. It’s like multiplying yourself.”

Born in Hawaii, Joe moved to Las Vegas at age two and first enrolled in UNLV as an undergraduate biology major in 2008. But he left school with one class unfinished.

For the next few years, he traveled the American southwest as a Seventh Day Adventist missionary, sharing his family’s faith. Eventually, he ended up teaching at a Bible college in Arizona and also worked in community health. His faith focuses on healthy living, so it aligned with his passion for healthcare.

When the opportunity arose to work in a small California clinic, Joe jumped. There, he learned administration. But drawn to patient care, he returned to UNLV in 2023 to finish his bachelor’s and enroll in nursing school.

After graduation, he was drawn to the cardiovascular Intensive Care Unit at the Cleveland Clinic because of his mother’s health challenges, he said. Someday, he hopes to teach and open his own clinic in Las Vegas, focused on serving the Asian American and Pacific Islander community; he’s interested in preventative care for chronic diseases and pain, as well as



Photo by Anjanette Arnold/UNLV

culturally responsive care, for those — like his Tagalog-speaking Filipino mother — who face language barriers at the doctor.

Joe also wants to support even more nursing students in the future. He knows firsthand the challenges they face, and that every little bit helps — from money for laptops and groceries, to scrubs and stethoscopes.

“Even though I was just graduating, I felt like I could give back immediately. If not with money, through mentorship and volunteerism. Every donation can be so meaningful.”





A New Legacy:

Scholarship Awards Hometown Legal Talent

A UNLV alumni couple has set a new record for largest donation from an individual alumnus and family to The William S. Boyd School of Law.

Sean and Louella (“Lou”) Claggett gifted the school with \$300,000 in December 2025, establishing the Claggett Family Endowed Scholarship through the Sean and Lou Claggett Charitable Foundation. Sean graduated with a bachelor’s degree in political science in 2000 and a juris doctorate in 2003, and Lou with a bachelor’s degree in hotel administration in 2000.

Combining both endowed and immediate-use funds, the new scholarship is specifically designed to support students with a strong connection to the Las Vegas community. The first scholarship recipient will be awarded this year.

The Claggetts grew up in Las Vegas and met at Clark High School. They built their firm, Claggett & Sykes, in the city over the past 20 years. For the couple, the gift is a personal commitment to their hometown.

“As a proud alumnus, I’m honored to help ensure this terrific institution continues to open doors for the next generation of students, just as it did for me,” Sean said.

Lou explained, **“We believe it’s necessary to help hard-working students from our hometown succeed and thrive, regardless of their financial circumstances.”**

Dean and Richard J. Morgan Professor of Law Leah Chan Grinvald expressed gratitude for the generous gift. “This transformational commitment from the Sean and Lou Claggett Charitable Foundation will help us recruit the most talented students from our community,” she said.

Tiffany Vickers, Interim Executive Vice President of the UNLV Foundation, praised the family’s impact. “Their donation is a profound statement about the power of paying it forward. Beyond the financial impact, Sean and Lou are serving as role models in personal philanthropy, demonstrating to every current and future alum the profound impact they can have.”



Photo courtesy of Sean and Lou Claggett

PLANNED GIVING



From Scholarship to Legacy:

Eric Chiang Invests in Student Futures

Like so many, economics professor and alumnus Eric Chiang was deeply affected by the December 6 tragedy on campus. It caused him to reflect on UNLV's importance in his life, ultimately moving him to incredible generosity.

“UNLV gave me so much,” Eric said. “Now it is my turn to give everything I can... so the next generation can succeed.”

Eric originally came to UNLV as a transfer student, intent on studying hotel management. A chance visit to the economics department resulted in a \$500 scholarship and a switch in his major. “Thirty years ago, that was a lot of money to me,” he remembered. “I wanted to create that opportunity for other students.”

Eric attended the University of Florida to pursue his doctorate, but he always stayed connected to UNLV. He continued to publish with his advisor, Djeto Assane. He traveled back to Las Vegas to visit his parents and sister (who had moved here) and to attend a monthly brunch club. In 2016, he was named Alumnus of the Year for the Lee School of Business. He then spent a sabbatical year teaching at UNLV.

When a position opened up in 2023, he jumped at the opportunity. “UNLV was the one place I always felt at home. This is my dream job.”

Since then, Eric became the first donor to the Lee Business School's Building Business Together campaign, pledging \$100,000 toward a new facility. He also donated \$35,000 to endow the Chiang Achieve Scholarship for economics students and arranged an estate gift naming UNLV as his primary beneficiary.

Raised in Indiana by parents who immigrated from Taiwan, Eric learned to love economics and investing from his father. Now, he's investing in Rebel success, when he's not globetrotting. (He's visited 99 countries, with Antarctica on the list for 2026.)

“I really feel I owe all my career success to UNLV,” he said. “Many of my students are struggling. I see some, a few weeks into the semester, still waiting to buy their books while they wait for a paycheck. I hope my donations will help make their studies a little easier.”



Photo by Josh Hawkins/UNLV



Award-winning Attorney and Alum

Bryan Scott Reaches Back to Uplift Others



Photo courtesy of Bryan Scott

Bryan Scott's legal career started with an unlucky car purchase.

As a UNLV undergrad, he bought his first car, a 1979 Plymouth Horizon, from a university employee. But after a smoke-filled ride home, he learned the engine block was cracked and "fixed" with sealant.

He consulted with now-Las Vegas Mayor Shelley Berkley (who then provided students legal advice) and took the seller to small claims court. Acting as his own lawyer and winning changed his life.

"I immediately changed my major from engineering to business and went on to law school," he said. "I thought, other people are getting cheated too, I could help them."

Now a UNLV Foundation Trustee and generous donor, Bryan began his academic journey in UNLV's Upward Bound program, enjoying the mentorship of Dr. William W. Sullivan. He graduated in 1988 with a degree in business administration and went on to law school at Lewis and Clark College's Northwestern School of Law. He then served as a Deputy City Attorney for the City of Las Vegas for more than 27 years, retiring as the first African American Las Vegas City Attorney in 2023.

His resume features numerous awards and accomplishments, including serving as the State Bar of Nevada's first African American president in 2016 and the first African American President of the Clark County Bar Association in 2005. He served as a member of the State Bar of Nevada's Board of Governors for 13 years. The State Bar created the Bryan K. Scott Trailblazer Award in his honor in 2021.

Now, Bryan sits on the Justice Douglas PreLaw Program Advisory Board at UNLV's William S. Boyd School of Law and organizes the annual Public Interest Attorneys Day for students. The pipeline program introduces first-generation and underserved students to legal careers.

He's leaving several planned gifts to UNLV and other entities, including \$100,000 each to the Justice Michael L. Douglas Prelaw Fellowship Program, the William S. Boyd School of Law, and the Dr. William W. and Sherri B. Sullivan Family Scholarship Endowment.

"I have had a wonderful 42-year history with UNLV. It's important to me," Bryan said. He's proud to build on Dr. Sullivan's legacy of mentorship and life lessons. "Doc really built a generation of successful participants. He taught us to uplift and reach back to help others."

All That Jazz:

Shared Passion for Music Creates Historic Gift

Their love for jazz music brought them together. Now, David Mulkey and Laura Taylor Mulkey are sharing that love with the UNLV College of Fine Arts.

Director of Jazz Studies Dave Loeb now holds The David Mulkey, M.D. & Laura Taylor Mulkey Endowed Chair in Jazz and Commercial Music, made possible through the couple's legacy gift. It's an "incredible milestone" for the School Music, Dean Nancy J. Uscher said.

"The gift by David Mulkey, M.D. and Laura Taylor Mulkey that led to this first endowed named chair in the college will generously support the stellar education provided to our jazz and commercial music students at the present time, and for many, many years to come. This is a thrilling moment for the College of Fine Arts and the School of Music!"

David, a lifelong music aficionado who began playing trumpet in junior high school, has a long-held interest and appreciation for UNLV music programs. "I have played in the UNLV community band with (music professor) Tony LaBounty for 15 years, and I enjoy every minute of it," he said. "I have great respect for the professors there. We love the work Dave Loeb and Nathan Tanouye do."

Laura, a professional musician, has worked as a singer, pianist, and composer, and has performed with UNLV jazz musicians many times. Her composition "Spellbound" is featured on a UNLV jazz album and was also adapted for the wind orchestra.

The couple met through music.

"I was performing at the grand opening of the Clark County amphitheater, and we met at a party afterwards," Laura said. "Two years later, we were married. We have been sharing music ever since."

Students will benefit from the Mulkeys' generous spirit. Their cash donations, along with naming UNLV as a beneficiary of their trust, will provide opportunities for passionate, young musicians for generations to come.

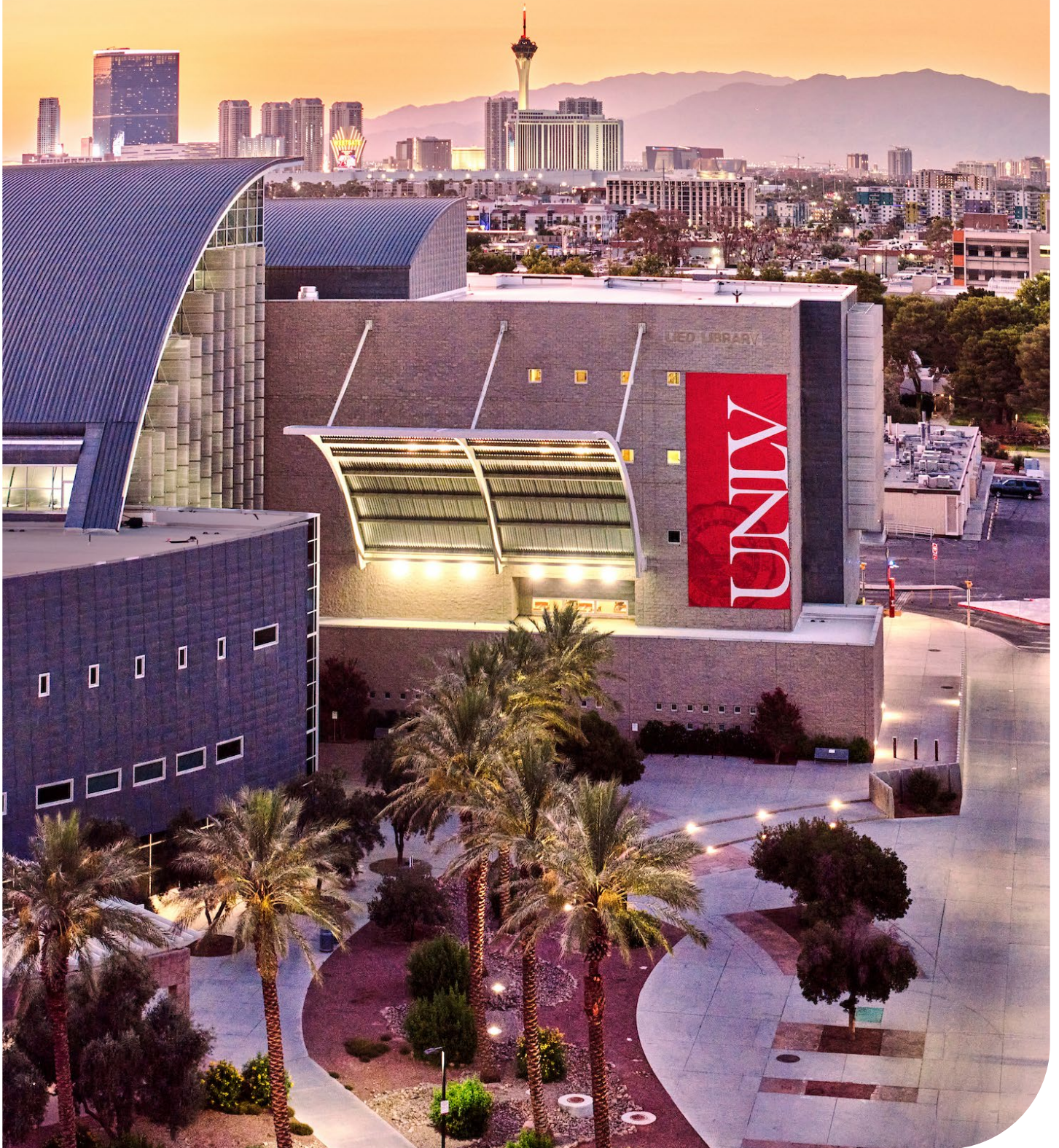


Photo courtesy of David Mulkey and Laura Taylor Mulkey

It's exciting to position students for careers in Las Vegas' unique creative environment, Laura said. **"It's incredible to be in a city where students can study and perform with working artists of such high caliber.** Some of the musicians the students aspire to play like, I know personally. **We speak the same language. It transcends age."**

David agreed. "It keeps us young!"

FINANCIAL DATA & LEADERSHIP

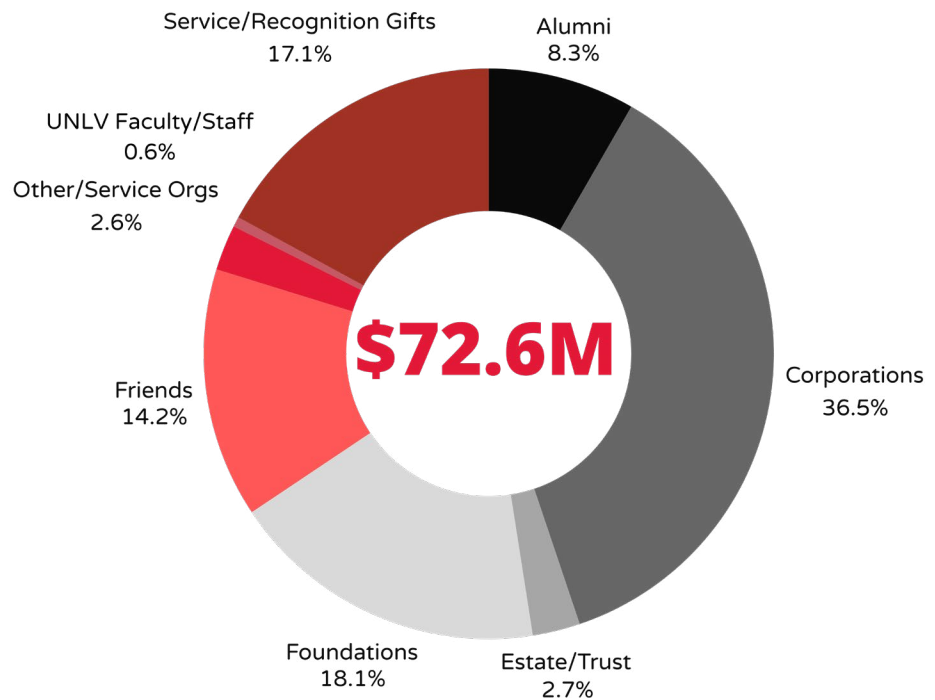


Financial Data

In FY25, the UNLV Foundation raised more than \$72.6 million in cash, stocks, service/recognition gifts, and pledges.

Sources of Giving FY25

Corporations	\$26,527,603
Foundations	\$13,152,857
Friends*	\$10,295,384
Alumni	\$6,056,660
Estate/Trust	\$1,960,739
Other/Service Orgs	\$1,869,360
UNLV Faculty/Staff	\$419,195
TOTAL	\$60,281,798
Service/Recognition Gifts**	\$12,404,715
GRAND TOTAL***	\$72,686,513



*The Friends Category includes Friends plus all other primary constituency codes outside of the Source Codes listed here to total up to FY25 fundraising dollars.

**Service/Recognition Gifts include nonfinancial donations such as professional or technical services, expertise, or other assets in which ownership is not transferred, but the benefit of use or a discount is granted.

***Financial figures herein are calculated in accordance with fundraising industry counting standards, whereas the UNLV Foundation audited financial statements are calculated in accordance with the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB).

Financial Data Contd.

ENDOWMENT PERFORMANCE

7.6%

The UNLV Foundation Endowment Fund net return for all assets. This compares to the benchmark policy index of 7.1%.

\$393,493,197

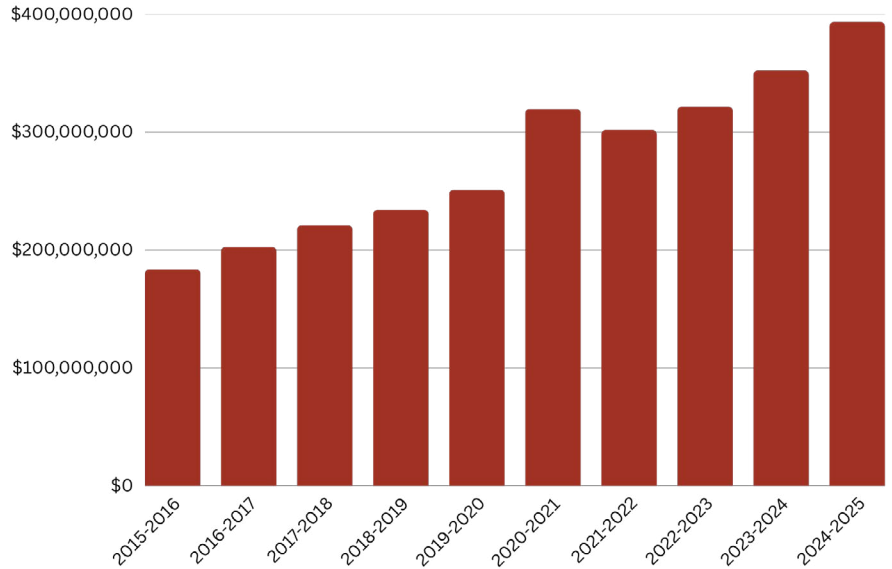
Fair Market Value as of June 30, 2025.

11.7%

The net change over the past year after earnings, fees, distributions, and gifts.

10 Year Historical Value (2025) \$393,493,197

2015-2016	\$183,750,373
2016-2017	\$202,580,367
2017-2018	\$220,940,755
2018-2019	\$234,142,036
2019-2020	\$251,099,729
2020-2021	\$319,660,364
2021-2022	\$301,873,273
2022-2023	\$321,623,080
2023-2024	\$352,284,955
2024-2025	\$393,493,197



ENDOWMENT ALLOCATION

35%

U.S. equity

24%

Fixed income

16%

International Developed Equity

12%

Private Real Assets

7%

Private Equity/Venture Capital

6%

Marketable Alternatives/Diversifiers

ENDOWMENT DISTRIBUTION

43%

Scholarships

40%

Programs

16%

Chairs & Professorships

1%

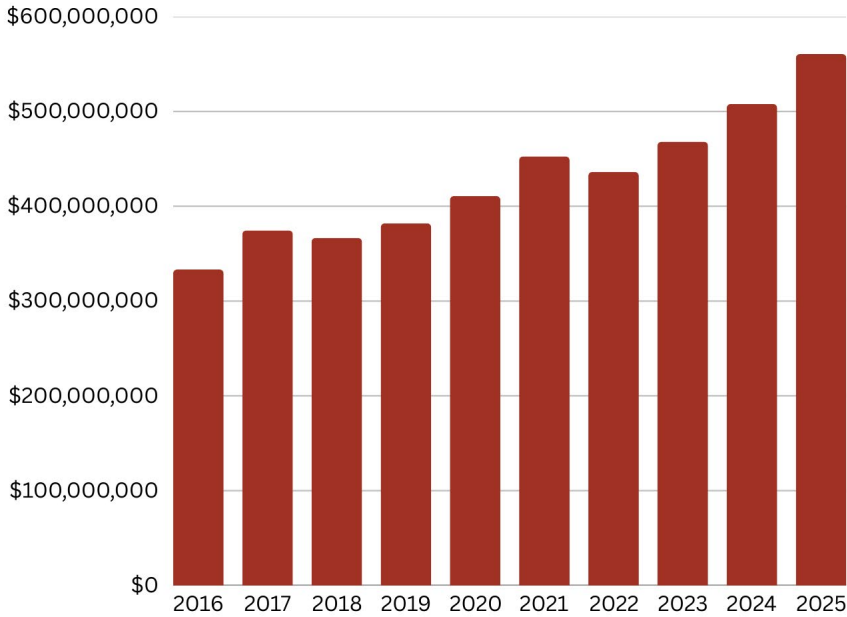
Charitable Gift Annuities



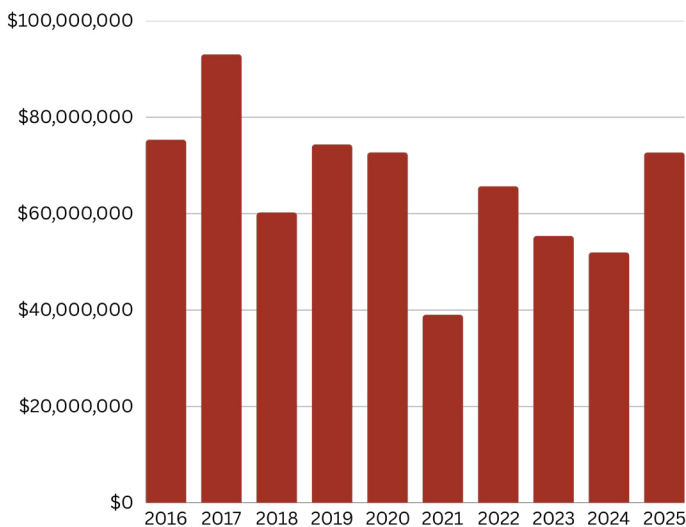
Financial Data Contd.

In fulfillment of its mission to support UNLV, the UNLV Foundation delivered \$57.6 million in program, scholarship, and capital project support to the university in FY25. As of June 30, 2025, the UNLV Foundation’s assets totaled \$560 million, compared to \$507.8 million the previous year.

FOUNDATION TOTAL ASSETS FAIR MARKET VALUE



10-YEAR GIVING HISTORY



Fiscal Year	Fundraising
2016	\$75,332,434
2017	\$93,027,019
2018	\$60,248,375
2019	\$74,350,736
2020	\$72,699,430
2021	\$39,034,911
2022	\$65,686,277
2023	\$55,064,734
2024	\$51,966,456
2025	\$72,686,511



UNLV Foundation Leadership

The UNLV Foundation was established in 1981 to raise and manage private donations that benefit UNLV and its colleges, schools, programs, and students.

2025 – 2026 UNLV Foundation Board of Trustees

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Jan Jones Blackhurst, Interim President, UNLV Foundation
Tiffany Vickers '99, Interim Executive Vice President, UNLV Foundation
Kellen Braddock, Corporate Secretary, UNLV Foundation

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Casey Flair '08, UNLV Football Foundation Chairman
Daniel Giraldo '01, UNLV Soccer Foundation President
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LEGACIES



In Memoriam: Selma Bartlett

College of Engineering's "Queen of Scholarships"
Saw Generations of Rebels Through College



Photo by Josh Hawkins/UNLV

Selma Bartlett was a pioneering local businesswoman, longtime supporter of UNLV, and tireless advocate for the Howard R. Hughes College of Engineering. A prominent banker credited for spurring Henderson's explosive growth in the 1950s and '60s, Selma was also an ardent community booster and philanthropist.

She passed away September 16, 2025, just days short of her 98th birthday.

Selma was one of the first female bank officers in Nevada. She moved here in 1954 when her husband, Troy, was stationed at Nellis Air Force Base. She began her banking career at Bank of Nevada's Henderson branch, becoming a bank officer in 1958. She facilitated millions of dollars in loans for real estate projects and businesses.

Selma left an indelible mark on UNLV through decades of philanthropy. The Gilman and Bartlett

Engineering Scholarship, the Selma and Troy Bartlett Electrical and Computer Engineering Scholarship, and many other programs she supported enriched the education and careers of hundreds of students. She also took great joy in interacting with students and faculty.

"Selma's scholarship and continued mentorship were pivotal to my studies and career progression, allowing me to focus on earning my bachelor's degree and continue my studies to earn a Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering," said Maria Ramos Gonzalez, a former scholarship recipient and current postdoctoral fellow at MIT. "Through the students she uplifted, Selma's contributions will live on for years to come."

Selma earned many accolades and awards. Selma F. Bartlett Elementary School in Henderson was named for her in 1992. She received the UNLV President's Medal in 2002, the Silver State Award in 2007, and was inducted into the Nevada Business Hall of Fame in 2016. In 2017, she was welcomed into the UNLV Foundation's Palladium Society for her philanthropic contributions exceeding \$1 million. She also received the Academy of Engineering Distinguished Community Partner Award in 2018. She worked as a private banker at Meadows Bank until retiring in 2021 at age 93.

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"Selma was unparalleled in her support of scholarship, helping many of our students and changing their lives for the better," said Rama Venkat, dean of the Howard R. Hughes College of Engineering. **"A great friend to all who were lucky enough to know her and a champion for those who needed her the most, UNLV Engineering will miss Selma — our very own 'Queen of Scholarship' — immensely."**

Selma was preceded in death by the love of her life Troy Bartlett, and survived by her nephew Ed Ratliff and his wife, Jane; nephew Michael Ratliff; and great nieces, Avery Gill and Robyn Gill.

In Memoriam: Elaine Wynn

Giving and Glamor: Las Vegas Legend Lived in Lights

On April 14, 2025, Las Vegas lost a legendary leader in the worlds of hospitality, arts, and education.

Elaine Wynn, pioneering business woman and generous supporter of UNLV, passed away at the age of 82. She was a founding member of the UNLV Foundation Board of Trustees, serving as chair from 1987-89 and again from 1989-91.

“Her advocacy for UNLV and education at all levels in Las Vegas could be seen in her dedication and generosity as a founding member of the UNLV Board of Trustees and active engagement with the university for 25 years, including her tenure as board chair,” UNLV Interim President Chris Heavey said.

She helped raise millions of dollars for the university and made significant personal contributions to UNLV, including funding and inspiring others to support the Elaine Wynn Valedictorian Scholarships. She also supported education, fine arts, and performance programs and was involved in establishing the Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine at UNLV.

Elaine is also fondly remembered for funding UNLV’s Lee Pascal Rose Garden in honor of her mother, planted with “Show Biz” roses.

The Elaine P. Wynn & Family Foundation called its leader **“a force of nature — a curator of dreams in a city built on aspirations.”**

Elaine, who moved here with her husband in 1967, was instrumental in shaping modern Las Vegas. Their business ventures included The Mirage, Bellagio, Wynn, and Encore properties, all of which she infused with her impeccable taste and vision. She was the largest individual shareholder of Wynn Resorts.

At the time of her death, UNLV’s Lee Business School named her one of the honorees for the Nevada Business Hall of Fame. She was posthumously inducted at the 2025 gala.

According to Wynn Resorts Ltd., “Her many talents and special touches are indelibly imprinted on the company and still evident throughout our resorts. Elaine cared deeply about the employees of our resorts.” Those employees cherish their memories of her.



Photo by Geri Kodey/UNLV

Elaine was a champion of the arts, a former trustee of the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Smith Center benefactor, and key partner in developing the future Las Vegas Art Museum. Through her family foundation, she supported educational reform and improving children’s lives.

She also served in leadership roles at the local, state, and national levels, as a supporter of Communities in Schools, and as president of the Nevada State Board of Education and co-chair of Nevada’s Blue Ribbon Education Reform Task Force. Elaine Wynn Elementary School is named in her honor.

Elaine is survived by two daughters, Kevyn and Gillian Wynn, who live in Southern California and are following their mother’s example through extensive charity work. She also has seven grandchildren.



UNLV

4505 S. Maryland Parkway
Box 451006
Las Vegas, Nevada 89154-1006
unlv.edu/philanthropy
702.895.3641

Cover photo by Becca Schwartz/UNLV