The Fall of 2017 brought on new change for the UNLV Athletics Life Skills Programming. Re-branding occurred as the R.E.B.S. Life Skills Program transformed into The Whole Rebel Academy. This coincided with new vision around the student-athlete experience and what life skills programming can encompass. A full, holistic approach including four areas have been defined: Whole Reb! (personal growth), Rebels Go Pro (career development), Rebels with a Cause (community engagement), and Rebels Lead (leadership development). The below summary details the Whole Reb! programs from the Fall 2017 semester.
The Whole Rebel Academy

The Whole Reb! Semester Report

At a glance:

6 WHOLE REB! programs

36 Average number of student-athletes in attendance at optional programs

91% Average in attendee satisfaction rate

476 Total number of student-athletes in attendance at mandatory programs

3 Perfect attendance: Jaycee B, Amberly N, Ashlee N

216 Fuel for Finals bags handed out during finals

71 Bellies fed during programming

100% Student-Athletes listed 2 seminars to be helpful
SEXUAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION: CHANGING THE CULTURE TEAM BY TEAM

Pillar/Topics: Defining Consent, Sexual Violence, Communication, Social Norms
Date/Time: Aug. 22- Sep. 5;
Assigned Time by Sport
Location: Student-Athlete Locker Rooms
Attendance: All Student-Athletes

UNLV Athletics partnered with Green Dot and The Jean Neiditch Women's Center to better facilitate conversations with each of the intercollegiate teams during what experts call the “Red Zone” timeframe - the time at the beginning of the academic year when a student is more than half as likely to become a victim of sexual violence. Conversations were facilitated by Green Dot trained Athletics Department personnel to ensure that these conversations occur with familiar faces to each team. The purpose of having these conversations is to help create a safe and educated community within UNLV Athletics when it comes to sexual violence. These team-by-team conversations reinforce information heard at each compliance orientation but delve deeper than the basic information given as this is the sole topic and serve to enhance future programming while optimizing the timing of the “Red Zone”. Conversations were held in team-specific areas, such as locker rooms and team rooms, to keep the feeling less formal and more conversational.

The format of the discussion creates a space that treats each person as an ally rather than a potential victim or a potential perpetrator. Student-athletes discussed the prevalence of sexual assault and resources specific to both UNLV and the greater community. The workshop ended after each team had a space to discuss, plan and strategize ways to shift the culture around sexual violence on the UNLV campus not only within themselves, but with their teams and within their community.

Many student-athletes provided anecdotal feedback that they appreciated that they were being "talked with instead of talked at" for this difficult topic.

All student-athletes walked away from the meeting with the UNLV CARE Line programmed into their personal cell phone as well as a better understanding of the role of the Title IX office on the UNLV campus.
OPTIMIZING PERFORMANCE

Pillar/Topics: Alcohol and Drugs, Social Development; Health & Wellness, Substance Abuse, Athletic Excellence, Social Norms

Date/Time: Sep. 18 & 19; 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.
Location: Lied Auditorium
Attendance: All Student-Athletes

The first Whole Rebel Academy program of the 2017 Fall semester was a mandatory session, “Optimizing Performance”, headlined by content expert Holly Godden from the Rebel Wellness Zone. This program was mandatory for all student-athletes as we looked at the physiological effects of alcohol and marijuana on athletic performance.

This seminar was divided into two evening sessions to better address the different barriers and obstacles that upper and underclassmen face. Topics discussed included individual & team values, the physiological effects of alcohol & marijuana consumption on the body and how it pertains to sport performance, and social norms regarding consumption.

We discussed what each person’s individual values were for their performance along with their teams values. We also went over statistics based off of the social perception on campus (and nationwide) on drugs and alcohol. Students were asked to guess whether the statistic would be less than 50%, about 50% or more than 50%. Most students prior to the given statistics believed that their college peers engaged in more drugs and alcohol than in actuality. We later addressed that there is less partying, drugs and alcohol going on than what was perceived. So the social norm of what the student-athletes thought was going on was an overestimation of what is actually happening in reality. Toward the end of the session each student-athlete was given a commitment card to write down their goals for the season, a commitment to themselves to keep track on what their values are and how they can use this for optimizing their performance.

We measured student-athletes level of comfort maneuvering situations in which drugs and alcohol were present. 82% of student-athletes responded that they were ‘very satisfied’ with the seminar. Student-athletes unable to attend “Optimizing Performance” were provided a recording of the event and had a follow-up meeting with a Whole Rebel Academy team-member.
The Whole Rebel Academy chose to host “Financial Wellness 101” based on 2016 feedback from student-athletes identifying financial wellness as a topic of interest. This event was presented in conjunction with Northwestern Mutual who identified 5 components of financial basics, and gave a general overview of saving, spending, growing, protecting and giving. The Northwestern Mutual presentation was followed by an interactive money management game. This game took the student-athletes through a typical month of budgeting using play money, while practicing good habits of setting aside savings, paying bills on time, and handling unexpected charges. The student-athletes were then shown Mint, a visual budgeting app that helps users to set budgets, pay bills, & track spending habits as an example of a tool that they can use both now and in the future.

Of those in attendance, about 75% of student-athletes did not have a budgeting strategy prior to attending the seminar. Student’s confidence about finances are generally not strong, though almost 1/5 felt very confident about financial wellness. About 50% would have enough money saved if their income came in late, while 40% of student-athletes would need to ask for financial support. 51% of student-athletes rated budgeting as their #1 financial concern, and 87% rated it as their #1 or #2 topic. Savings was also rated important, as 31% rated it #1, and 64% rated that as their #1 or #2 topic. 82% stated they were extremely satisfied with this seminar.
SELF-DEFENSE VEGAS STYLE WITH UFC'S FORREST GRIFFIN

Pillar/Topics: Self-Defense
Date/Time: Nov. 6th, 2017; 9-10am
Location: MPE - North Gym
Attendance: 36 Student-Athletes, 15 Staff

Self-defense was provided as a response to campus climate concerns regarding public safety. In conjunction with Detective Paul Velez of UNLV Police Services, Forrest Griffin, a professional mixed-martial artist and UFC Hall-of-Famer as well as former police officer, joined us to provide some self-defense skills similar to the moves that UFC fighters utilize.

Learning self-defense boosts self-esteem and creates a sense of empowerment through the mind-body connection. This workshop tackled topics including awareness, assertiveness, verbal confrontation skills, safety strategies, and physical technique, aiming to empower student-athletes both physically and emotionally. Coach Forrest Griffin was able to teach the moves in a way that our student-athletes found very relate-able.

Prior to the seminar, 85% of participants did not have any prior experience with self-defense and only about half (52.5%) felt that they were equipped in taking action during an uncomfortable scenario. Some prominent reasons that stood out as to why people attended were “To become more aware of my surroundings” at 43% and “To build confidence in myself in uncertain situations” at 39%. This workshop seemed to be very effective as 97% found this workshop to be helpful and 85% were more confident in their self-defense skills afterward. There was a lot of positive feedback even requesting a part II session and 88% of those attended suggested this to be recommended for all student-athletes.

UNLV Police Services promoted the RebelSafe App as well as clarified the best number to call while in an emergency on campus.

The Softball team poses for a picture with UFC star Forrest Griffin.

Jaycee Blankmeyer of UNLV Pom (left) and Gala Hernandez practice self-defense techniques at the Self-Defense w/ Forrest Griffin workshop in the MPE.
The Whole Rebel Academy was thrilled to welcome UNLV's new Chief Diversity Officer Dr. Barbee Oakes who led a down-to-earth conversation in a "Real Talk" format called, "Rebel Fireside Chat: Navigating our Identities and Cultural Intelligence in Today's Society". The Whole Rebel Academy created this seminar to allow space for Rebel student-athletes to explore what it means to be an individual and represent something bigger than themselves all while having a safe space to converse about the challenges that often come along with the responsibility of these identities. This seminar was facilitated with recent and current social justice events in mind.

The Whole Rebel Academy measured student-athlete comfort level discussing diversity issues with coaches, teammates, advisors and staff both before and after the chat. Student-athletes rated their overall comfort level much higher post-chat. Student-athletes were asked to identify specific topics that were relevant to improve diversity awareness, and are listed in order of preference as follows: race, gender, culture, religion, sexuality, class, & age. Seventy-nine percent of student-athletes strongly agreed that this was a helpful seminar, the remaining 21% agreed. Responding to the statement, “I feel more comfortable with my own identity”, 52% of student-athletes strongly agreed, 34% agreed and 14% stated neutral. In our final measure, “I feel more willing and open to discuss culturally diverse topics with others similar and different to my experiences”, 38% student-athletes strongly agreed, 52% agreed, and 10% were neutral.

Many comments included a highly positive response to the topics as well as to Dr. Barbee Oakes. Other comments include one athlete stating, “I hope to share this with [my] team” and another expressing, “I hope to be able to expand on this through athletics".
LESSONS THROUGH THEATRE
NAOMI IIZUKA'S "GOOD KIDS"

Pillar/Topics: Social Media Awareness, Drugs and Alcohol, Sexual Violence Prevention, Communication
Date/Time: 7:30 pm on November 2nd and 2 pm on November 5th
Location: Nevada Conservatory Theatre
Attendance: First come, first serve to 40 Student-Athletes

Student-athletes were given tickets to the play “Good Kids” based off Naomi Iizuka's novel and directed by UNLV’s Darren Weller. The story is set at a mid-western high school where the world of social media, like Facebook, Twitter and Youtube, changes Chloe’s life dramatically through a casual sexual encounter. This play explores how social media can falsely exaggerate and undermine one’s true self and gives the audience an unique way to understand how to protect against false media accusations, how to keep their private lives off social media and how to stay confident in a world where people can attempt to do wrong.

Formally on Broadway, it is a drama weighing student responsibility and choices in the aftermath of a rape by a high school athlete. Based loosely on the Steubenville High School and Columbia University rape incidents of a few years ago, the story line focuses on not singling out athletes; rather, student choices and behavior.

Although this play covers a very heavy topic, it lends itself as a good way to continue the important conversation about sexual violence that we started with every team in the beginning of the year. Student-Athletes are a major figure in the public eye and can quickly have their perception changed through social media and it is important to give them the proper tools to navigate how to promote themselves in a positive way.