The Young Executive Scholars (YES) Hospitality & Tourism Program is the educational vision of the UNLV International Gaming Institute (UNLV IGI) and CORE, powered by The Rogers Foundation.

YES brings together UNLV IGI’s gaming-hospitality expertise with the project-based mentoring approach of CORE to touch the lives of Las Vegas’ under-resourced youth.

Mission

Our hope is that through exposure and access to a diverse pool of successful executives and leaders, we will create a strong pipeline of homegrown talent who will become the next generation of Nevada hospitality industry trailblazers.
Modeled after IGI and University of Nevada Reno’s renowned Executive Development Program for industry professionals, YES is a rigorous four-week summer program of applied learning, team collaboration, and a mentor-guided, case-study analysis of the global hospitality-tourism industry.

Rising stars in the Clark County School District discover the managerial and executive-level career opportunities available to them in the industry of their backyard, gain insight into the UNLV college experience, and develop new skills to excel in the classroom today and the workplace tomorrow.

IN A WORLD FULL OF NOS, WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF YES.
In the Classroom...

Scholars learn from and engage with some of the most prominent figures in the hospitality industry, including senior-level executives from across Las Vegas’ multiple Fortune 500 integrated-resort companies and leading academic experts in the field, as they mentor them through their challenging hands-on project.

INDUSTRY MENTORING + EXPERIENTIAL OUTINGS = YES

“I didn’t know Las Vegas offered so many things.”

— OSCAR, YES CLASS OF ’17
...And the Workplace

We believe in the power of learning through experience. Students participate in experiential moments outside of the classroom, such as exclusive back-of-the-house tours and field trips to the Strip, to apply the knowledge learned in the UNLV classroom to the business world of Las Vegas Boulevard.

“I learned a lot about Las Vegas through the YES program. I started to see my hometown differently when I really started to look close. Las Vegas is a place that opens up many doors for those who want to learn more. It’s a place that isn’t defined by one thing, but by so many things.”

—JIMENA, YES CLASS OF ’17
YES students take on a challenging academic project with real-world business implications. This mentor-guided, hands-on team project frames learning throughout the program by asking the next generation of leaders to imagine and design their own world-class integrated resort.

Students are asked to apply key lessons from the course to respond to a mock request for proposal for the City of Las Vegas’ next integrated resort. Here, they explore the diverse career sectors available in the industry, including finance, marketing, communications, public relations, architecture, community relations, environment and sustainability, diversity, government relations, leadership, and much more.

At the end of the four weeks, teams pitch their business plan to a panel of industry and academic experts, competing for the winning team prize of $10,000 individual scholarships. All students receive a $5,000 scholarship for completing the rigorous YES program and celebrate their success afterwards at a fun and well-deserved awards banquet.
A Day in the YES Life

Take a peek at the day in the life of a YES student on Innovation Day:

8:30 a.m.  Arrival

9:00–10:00 a.m.  Everyday Innovation: Turning Your Property into a Hospitality Lab

Robert Rippee — DIRECTOR, UNLV HOSPITALITY LAB & ESPORTS LAB

Rippee, a longtime hospitality executive with companies like the Ritz-Carlton, Hyatt, and Las Vegas Sands, will help Scholars create innovative experiences and leverage emergent technologies to expand and transform the customer experience in their resorts.

10:30–11:30 a.m.  Lessons from Video Games: Bringing Esports into the Resort

Brett Abarbanel — DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH, INTERNATIONAL GAMING INSTITUTE
Blaine Graboyes — CEO, GAMECO
Chris Grove — PUBLISHER, ONLINEPOKERREPORT & BOARD OF ADVISORS MEMBER, UNIKRN
Seth Schorr — CEO, DOWNTOWN GRAND CASINO

A panel of industry experts will discuss how to incorporate the dynamic universe of esports into the heart of Scholars’ resort design, while outlining some of the business challenges that accompany one of their favorite pastimes.

12:00–1:00 p.m.  Lunch

2:00–4:00 p.m.  Experiential Outing: UNLV Robotics Lab

LED BY: Dr. Paul Oh — LINCY PROFESSOR FOR UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEMS, UNLV DEPARTMENT OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING

Scholars will tour the UNLV Drones and Autonomous Systems Lab to learn about the future of robotics and drones in hospitality, gain student insight into the UNLV engineering program, and learn how to incorporate robotics and drones into their own project.

5:00 p.m.  Departure