A college education is synonymous with opportunity. It opens the door to financial independence, a choice of careers, and most of all, the chance for a better life.

These benefits extend beyond campus borders: The University of Nevada, Reno’s growing enrollment—climbing quickly to 22,000 students—will infuse millions into Nevada’s economy and contribute significantly to the state’s growing need for an educated workforce.

As the state’s economy improves, the University has the opportunity to expand in ways that benefit our students and contributes to Nevada’s financial recovery while realizing its full potential as Nevada’s land-grant university.

The University’s future plan focuses on creating a remarkable culture of student success; expanding basic and applied research programs; and enhancing Nevada’s quality of life throughout the state and beyond.

LEARNING: CREATING A REMARKABLE EXPERIENCE

The ultimate measure of a university is the success of its students. A record growth in enrollment has created a vibrant campus community. In the past five years, the University has recruited more students with outstanding academic backgrounds than ever before and attracted its highest level of students of diversity. This effort has seen more students graduating at Commencement than ever before.

“These successes are no accident,” says University President Marc Johnson. “The University’s path of creating a remarkable student experience has included a heavy investment in its student success infrastructure. This effort has included more than 1 million square feet of new facilities that have enhanced the campus’ residential footprint, increased opportunities for personal engagement, and provided the best in technology and innovation in the classroom.

“The momentum and promising gains must continue,” Johnson adds. “If the University’s students are expected to continue their record level of achievement, the University must provide the necessary resources and the continued deep investment that has characterized the institution’s recipe for success.”

To support these successes, the University is embarking on several endeavors to enhance the student experience. A more comprehensive network of effective and interconnected support services for Nevada students will ensure that the University will fully develop the talent level of its students so they will engage, persist and graduate in four years.

The William N. Pennington Student Achievement Center—made possible through a $6 million naming gift from the William N. Pennington Foundation and an additional $6 million in philanthropy, as well as the support
The William N. Pennington Student Achievement Center, set to open January 2016, will allow the University to bring under one roof a myriad of services that are now scattered throughout campus, including the Disability Resource Center, the writing, math and tutoring centers, a veterans center, counseling services and a career studio, among others.

Shannon Ellis, vice president for Student Services, says it is wise to invest in activities that contribute to student success which translates to higher student retention rates and timelier paths to graduation.

“The time and energy students devote to connecting with educationally purposeful activities is the single best predictor of their learning and personal development,” Ellis says.

“The programs and services in buildings such as the William N. Pennington Student Achievement Center are known to lead to high levels of student engagement and satisfaction.”

Backed by an $8 million naming gift from the E. L. Wiegand Foundation and a goal of an additional $8 million in philanthropy, as well as student fees, the E. L. Wiegand Fitness Center will offer multiple fitness areas for weightlifting, training and a multitude of other fitness classes and activities, plus an indoor, 1/8 mile, three-lane running track. Three full-court gymnasiums will be utilized for basketball and other indoor sports. The center is estimated to open in winter 2017 and will be available to students as well as faculty and staff.

“With the E. L. Wiegand Fitness Center, the final piece in the mind/body platform will be in place, enabling our students to emerge in the competitive, multi-dimensional world both disciplined and strong,” says Kristen Avansino, president of the E. L. Wiegand Foundation.

A new Fine Arts Building will add to the growing landscape, with a goal to elevate the arts to a new level of prominence at the University of Nevada, Reno and enrich the arts both for students and for the community as a whole.

In 2014, the School of the Arts successfully completed Act One, a $4 million modernization project funded entirely through philanthropy, including lead gifts from the Nell J. Redfield Foundation and the Edna B. and Bruno Benna Foundation. Expansion efforts for the school now moves into Act Two, which is also funded by philanthropy. The construction of a new fine arts building that will connect to Church Fine Arts and be a central hub of the Arts Center is part of Act Two.
Arts through a skywalk, and elevate the arts to a new level of prominence to enrich the arts both for students and for the community as a whole.

The 35,000 square-foot building will enhance the University’s music and art programs by creating a new 300-seat recital hall; an art museum; digital media spaces including a maker-space, electroacoustic lab and classroom; offices for art faculty; an instrumental rehearsal room and storage area; a choral and opera rehearsal room; a recording studio; additional teaching studios and offices for music faculty; and multiple new music practice and rehearsal rooms.

“Act One created a modern venue with updated technology, allowing the Nell J. Redfield Proscenium Theatre to secure the University’s reputation as an innovative theater program,” says School of the Arts Director Larry Engstrom. “Upon completion of Act Two, students will benefit from new creative spaces that will inspire them to achieve artistic excellence in music and art. Together, the two projects will enhance the University’s ability to attract talented students and faculty, providing support for them to create their best work. In addition, Act One and Two will greatly amplify the role of the arts in the Reno and northern Nevada community and enhance the public’s access to world-class performances and exhibits.”

**SUPPORT: ACCESS TO EDUCATION**

Increased scholarship support, both need and merit-based, will help the University compete for quality students who help sustain a campus culture centered firmly on the success of its students. Undergraduate scholarships help students realize their educational dreams and avoid accruing large amounts of debt during their college career.

Today, philanthropy provides more than 3,000 donor-funded scholarships and awards for Nevada students, totaling more than $7 million.

“The generous scholarship support I have received eliminated one more worry that keeps many students from finishing their education and has allowed me to stay focused on mine,” says student Jalen Dixon, a community health sciences major and recipient of the Aaron Arnoldsen Memorial Scholarship. “It has also relieved the financial burden from my parents as well. I am very thankful.”

For graduate students, the University is able to recruit top graduate student talent by offering fellowships, which is imperative for the institution’s continued growth as a national Tier 1 university, and its ability to produce advanced-degree graduates who are fluent in producing world-improving research and scholarly activity. The private funds that support graduate students in this way help the University enhance its status as a national university that undertakes very high levels of research to benefit society.

Internships provide Nevada students with the opportunity to apply their classroom knowledge to the workplace. Learning beyond the classroom is further enhanced through research funds for graduate and undergraduate students to refine ideas, solve problems and provide new direction through the research they conduct.

“The momentum and promising gains must continue. If the University’s students are expected to continue their record level of achievement, the University must provide the necessary resources and the continued deep investment that has characterized the institution’s recipe for success.”

—President Marc Johnson
Travel funds support and encourage students to seek knowledge through collaboration and presentation in regional, national and international conferences.

**DISCOVERY: CREATING NEW KNOWLEDGE**

Great universities produce great ideas—ideas that inspire, create new products, build economies and change lives. The University serves the state as a top-research institution, with programs and people recognized nationally and internationally for world-improving results. The University’s undergraduate research program is designed to involve students deeply in research projects while attending Nevada.

Students are encouraged to collaborate with faculty already involved with cutting-edge research in areas that range from nanoscience and technology, energy and the life sciences, and engineering and new media. This partnership with their faculty mentor prepares them for a lifetime of creativity and productivity as scientists, engineers, physicians, entrepreneurs, educators and artists.

“Our vision is to create an environment that will enable the faculty and students to excel in their research, scholarly and creative activities, and enhance the status of the University as an internationally recognized research university,” says Mridul Guatam, vice president for research and innovation. “We want to continue to build a collaborative University setting where faculty can establish connections, form networks and work on interdisciplinary research that produces discoveries that impact society.”

Numerous faculty are uniquely positioned to sustain the quality and influence of the Uni-
versity’s research enterprise through productive scientific and scholarly inquiry. This growing research ambition includes creating new knowledge to solve issues relevant to Nevada, the nation and the world through nationally and internationally competitive work. Major research grants are awarded from the National Institutes of Health, the National Science Foundation and the Department of Energy, as well as through community partnerships with business and creative endeavors that enrich the lives of all Nevadans. In recent years, the University’s faculty has produced more than 70 active patents, with an average of 13 new patents each year. Many of these new technologies are “spun out” through the University’s Technology Transfer Office to qualified entrepreneurs and industries in need of new ideas and new approaches, helping to incubate the ingredients needed for a knowledge-based economy.

To continue moving forward, the University will increase faculty support through donor-established chairs, professorships and research funds; and increasing the University’s fundraising efforts for program support for undergraduate and graduate teaching facilities, including department, equipment and professional development funds.

“Great faculty ensure the future of the University,” says John Carothers, vice president for Development and Alumni Relations. “Recruiting and retaining a faculty of gifted and dedicated educators is paramount. In today’s extremely competitive environment, we need to invest substantial new funds to provide more opportunities for our faculty to advance their creativity and research, and inspire and transform our students. We are tremendously grateful to the individuals, corporations and foundations who have stepped forward to fund faculty support.”

ENGAGEMENT: STRENGTHENING THE WELL-BEING OF CITIZENS, COMMUNITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Engagement of the northern Nevada community and enhancement of the region’s quality of life have been among the core functions of the University and are driving a renewed awareness of the value a quality university brings to the community and the citizens it serves both locally, regionally and nationally.

“During the past five years, with a number of campus and community-based initiatives dedicated to sparking the regional economy, the University has helped touch and transform the future of its community,” says Executive Vice President and Provost Kevin Carman. This effort has included having the University partner with key organizations that include the Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada and in higher education initiatives from the Governor’s Office of Economic Development; strengthening service learning, coordination of student internships and civic involvement of the campus by providing new engagement resources on campus; and providing the arts, intercollegiate athletics, entertainment and cultural gatherings at the University to cultivate a true “college town” community.

By increasing the percentage of Nevadans who graduate from college, the University is at the forefront of creating a Nevada that will be healthier, more adaptable and better prepared to meet the challenges of the future. The University is producing record numbers of graduates, providing a solid foundation for Nevada’s knowledge-based economy. These graduates have the capacity and responsibility to work in the state’s most important businesses and organizations, start new enterprises, develop new processes and technologies, and to partner with agencies and organizations throughout the state.

“More than ever before, the knowledge-based
“More than ever before, the knowledge-based economy is within Nevada’s grasp. University students, faculty, and its most prized commodity of all—its graduates—are providing the key catalytic elements of talent, training and know-how in order to make this happen.”

—Executive Vice President and Provost Kevin Carman

“Individuals who envision the highest quality of life for Nevada’s future can make an enormous impact by joining with us as we move the University forward to even greater achievements. With everyone’s support, we can achieve our vision.”

“The future of our University and the state of Nevada are intertwined,” Johnson says.

To succeed in this bold enterprise, the University of Nevada, Reno must identify significant resources beyond its traditional funding sources. To make this venture a financial priority ahead of many other worthy philanthropic causes and organizations, it will need to secure philanthropic partners who share its vision for the future who are as passionately committed to the University’s long-term benefits for the state of Nevada and the country.

“Individuals who envision the highest quality of life for Nevada’s future can make an enormous impact by joining with us as we move the University forward to even greater achievements. With everyone’s support, we can achieve our vision.”

—Executive Vice President and Provost Kevin Carman