WELCOME TO THE PACK

by JOANNA TRIEGER and CURTIS VICKERS ’07 M.A.
For freshmen, creating solid connections to campus in their first semester is a strong predictor of success over the next four years. During this critical period, the University’s mission is to help every student find their place in the Pack.

In August 2016, 4,608 members of the Class of 2020 joined the University of Nevada, Reno Wolf Pack. They brought with them their hopes and dreams about what the future might hold and how the University could help them achieve their goals in life. Many also arrived with concerns about whether they would be able to cut it in the classroom, whether they would find like-minded people on campus, whether they would, in short, be able to thrive in an environment that is unlike any they had experienced before.

Vice President of Development and Alumni Relations John Carothers spoke directly to these concerns and expressed a sentiment common among administrators across campus: “We invest time, money and heart in our students. We are trying to help them gain the confidence and skills necessary to succeed.”

Shannon Ellis, vice president of student services, continued this thread, describing her philosophy on student success. “One of the things we have learned is that student success is inextricably linked to their feeling connected to campus and to their peers,” she said. “The key is engagement. If we can get you engaged, if we can get you connected to campus, your chances of persisting and being successful throughout your time at the University are significantly increased.”

To help students connect to each other and to campus, the University provides a robust array of programs, clubs and initiatives. These programs and clubs run the gamut, providing support for students in every facet of their lives — from health and nutrition to money management to study skills and everything in between.

Ellis said, “Our standards are high. On average, our incoming freshmen hold a 3.6 [core] GPA. By the time students arrive to campus, we know that they’re capable of success. They have the academic chops. We know our students should succeed; our job is to help them persist. How do we keep them from feeling homesick and lonely but rather engaged and supported?”

During NevadaFIT (see page 5), we asked several freshmen why they chose the University of Nevada, Reno and what they were looking forward to in the semester.

“I’ve never lived away from home before, so it’s exciting. I chose Nevada because it’s a great school and really affordable.”
- Maurice Brewster

“I hadn’t really been seriously considering Nevada, but then I took a tour of campus and saw everything that’s here for students and I was like, ‘Whoa, this is where I need to be.’
- Rachel Ribeiro

“I’m looking forward to checking out the clubs on campus, especially ultimate Frisbee and the math club. I chose Nevada because it’s such a great school and it was a really affordable option. This was the closest Tier 1 school for an unbeatable price.”
- Jacob Kingsley

“I feel like I’ve met a ton of great people already. I can’t wait for classes to start — everything is just going to get bigger.”
- Lexi Aldrich

To learn more about any of the sixteen events, services and programs we discuss in the following pages, visit: www.unr.edu/silverandblue/welcome.
On Aug. 26, Assistant Professor Albert Lee offered a rousing keynote address to incoming students at the Opening Ceremony. Students then lit the candle of knowledge and passed the flame throughout Lawlor Events Center. After the Opening Ceremony, students were invited to a barbecue lunch with their parents before they broke off to meet the deans of their respective colleges and divisions.

Parents Chris and Beth Burch and a dozen Dorm Storm volunteers help freshman Kyra Burch move into Nye Hall. Every year, hundreds of volunteers from across campus offer their time — and strength — to help new students move into their dorms. Jerome Maese, director of residential life, remembers his own student experience: “I was a clueless first-generation college student. I met amazing people at the University who made me feel welcome — from resident assistants to the residential director. They were all friendly, and they helped me through a new environment, a whole new world. I want to do the same thing for every student on campus,” he said. “There is a reason why wolves form a pack. The more numbers on your side, the better off you’ll be, flat out. The University Resident Hall experience provides that pack for students.”
Kevin Carman, executive vice president and provost, speaks with incoming students at the NevadaFIT barbecue on the historic Quad Aug. 25. NevadaFIT is a five-day residential program for incoming students designed to help them transition from high school to college. Students meet professors, participate in classes, familiarize themselves with campus and earn a full academic credit, even before school has started. Program administrators have found a correlation between NevadaFIT attendance and both classroom performance and persistence from one year to the next. “Students who participate in NevadaFIT are retained at higher rates than those who do not, regardless of their academic credentials. Among the more than 400 students who participated in the fall 2015 version of NevadaFIT, 87 percent returned as sophomores. Students who did not participate were retained at 80 percent,” Carman said.

PAINT THE “N” Freshmen Mackenzie Shevlin and Jacob Nis-wonger (left) show off their painting skills on Aug. 28, when hundreds of students hiked Peavine Peak to paint the Nevada “N” (above). This annual tradition began in 1915. “I heard it was a great way to meet people,” said freshman Monika Moe (lower left), of her motivation to join the hike.
CLUBS, EVENTS & ORGANIZATIONS The University is home to more than 300 clubs and organizations designed to bring students and faculty with similar interests together in sustained communities.

JOB AND INTERNSHIP EXPO On Sept. 1, the University hosted the Part-Time Job and Internship Expo in the Joe Crowley Student Union. More than 1,200 students made connections with 114 on-campus and off-campus employers, ranging from KUNR to Boreal Mountain Resort to the on-campus Writing Center. The Job and Internship Expo is one of a number of programs provided by the Nevada Career Studio, which offers career development support for students, from resume creation to mock interviews.

CLUBS FAIR Hundreds of students came together Sept. 1 at the Thursday Fest Club Fair on the Quad. This annual event gives students an opportunity to see the breadth and depth of club offerings for every interest, from the Entrepreneurship Club to the Wolf Pack Comedy Club. ASUN President Brandon Boone encourages all new students to dive in: “Clubs can singlehandedly alter the course of your college career. They will introduce you to friends, mentors and mentees. And they will provide you a way to gain experiences outside of your major and outside of your academic experience.”

NEVADA SAGEBRUSH Freshman Dominique Kent and sophomore Emily Fisher collaborate during a Nov. 7 editorial meeting, preparing for the next morning’s printing of The Nevada Sagebrush. Established in 1893, The Nevada Sagebrush is the student-run University newspaper. Printed every week, The Nevada Sagebrush covers all aspects of campus life and reaches 3,500 readers across the University, supplemented by a vibrant online presence.

ROTC Ethan Carpenter, Josh Bailey, Jonah Wood, Daneil Correa and Josh Malech represent the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps at the Club Fair Sept. 1. ROTC provides current students with military and officer training and awards merit-based scholarships. “Being involved in ROTC has really helped me to transition to college life in my first semester,” says freshman ROTC cadet Cody Beato. “I have met amazing people, learned how to manage my time when it comes to academics, and created a four-year plan for graduation.”
CAMPUSS LIFE There’s always something happening on the University of Nevada, Reno campus. Whether it’s the annual hot-air balloon launch from the Quad or a late night (free!) movie at the Joe, campus life offers students the opportunity to participate in traditions, meet new friends and get involved in their community.

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— Vice President of Student Services SHANNON ELLIS

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— ASUN President BRANDON BOONE

Students want to know 'Do I fit in? Does someone look like me, like what I like?' I want to assure parents and students that this is a friendly, warm and welcoming environment. The Joe is very diverse, and we are dedicated to making students feel comfortable from the beginning — and sustaining that comfort.”

— JCSU Director CHUCK PRICE

I met amazing people at the University who made me feel welcome — from resident assistants to the residential director. They were all friendly, and they helped me through a new environment, a whole new world. I want to do the same thing for every student on campus.”

— Director of Residential Life JEROME MAESE

THE JOE Named for the University’s 13th president, the four-story Joe Crowley Student Union provides services and events while housing a diverse array of support programs. In it you will find the ASUN Bookstore, a number of eateries, a Wells Fargo banking branch, as well as the Graduate Student Association, the Associated Students of the University of Nevada (ASUN), and The Center, Every Student. Every Story. Blane Harding, director of The Center, offers advice for all students: “Be visible. Go to cultural events, even if they’re not for ‘your’ culture. Travel. Study abroad. Meet people in the residence halls that aren’t necessarily the ones you’d naturally gravitate to, and invite them out for a coffee, have a conversation.”

In speaking about the role the Joe plays in the University, Director Chuck Price says, “Students want to know, ‘Do I fit in? Does someone look like me, like what I like?’ I want to assure parents and students that this is a friendly, warm and welcoming environment. The Joe is very diverse, and we are dedicated to making students feel comfortable from the beginning — and sustaining that comfort.”

Reno is home to the largest free hot-air ballooning event in the world. Students Ricardo Aker, McXine Salva, RJ Griffin, Madeline Mitch, Gina Featherstone, James Treischel, Casey Omaye and Yodit Atsbeha participated in the University’s contribution to the festivities on Sept. 8.
We encourage a growth mindset in our students. We want them to say, ‘I can develop, learn and build upon my intelligence and talents. I am capable of growing, changing and building on what I have.’

— University Tutoring Director MARSHA URBAN

ACADEMIC LIFE Founded in 1874, the University of Nevada, Reno offers 160 degree programs across 10 colleges and schools on the historic campus. In addition to traditional classrooms, the University offers more than 200 online courses and extensive study abroad opportunities. Students also have the opportunity to learn alongside faculty members and researchers in 60 laboratories across campus and in the field.

TUTORING The University Tutoring Center, located in the William N. Pennington Student Achievement Center, offers a wide variety of academic help for students of all levels. The popular Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS) were implemented for traditionally difficult classes, like introductory chemistry and sociology. The sessions are led by fellow students who have previously done well in the class and can offer tips and tricks for success with a particular subject. Here, PASS Leader and chemical engineering student Brianna Peacock works with biology student Kyle Tkach on a challenging chemistry problem. “My first test for this class didn’t exactly go as planned,” says Tkach. “I started coming to PASS sessions after that, and I’ve seen a huge amount of improvement.”

PSAC Opened Feb. 2016, The William N. Pennington Student Achievement Center brings together vital student centers formerly scattered throughout campus under one roof. With services like the Nevada Military Support Alliance Veterans’ and Military Center, the University Tutoring, Math and Writing Centers and the Nevada Career Studio, and with extended evening and weekend hours and a central campus location, students can visit the Pennington Student Achievement Center to get the help they need, when they need it.

A HUB OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The William N. Pennington Student Achievement Center is the single, central resource for students looking to improve their academic performance. Here’s what you’ll find at the PSAC:

University Tutoring, Writing and Math Centers
Nevada Career Studio
University Advising Center
Counseling Services
Student Veterans Affairs Office
Disabilities Resource Center
Trio & McNair Scholars Program Offices
Reflection and meditation rooms
Study rooms and collaboration spaces
Hundreds of computer stations
DeliNV
STUDENT SUPPORT Transitioning to the independence of college life can be tough, so the University provides a variety of student support services to help students manage their money, their health and their safety.

NEVADA MONEY MENTORS Transitioning to college comes with new responsibilities, and many freshmen find themselves overwhelmed by managing their money for the first time. Enter Nevada Money Mentors, the University’s free one-on-one financial coaching service that helps students (as well as faculty and staff) work toward their financial goals. The group also holds workshops and presentations about money management at NevadaFIT and throughout the year. “Our goal is to break the taboo surrounding finances. We want students to feel comfortable talking about the financial questions they have and the issues they’re facing, because through these conversations we help empower them to make the most informed and confident decisions about their money,” says Financial Specialist Amy Nelson ’04, who heads the Nevada Money Mentors program. Here, Nelson hosts a tabling event where students can tie-dye t-shirts and ask their financial questions in a casual setting.

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ASUN The Associated Students of the University of Nevada (ASUN) supports more than 300 clubs, organizations, programs and services. Located on the third floor of the Joe Crowley Student Union, ASUN is funded through a $5 per credit student fee. Its mission is to provide resources and services to ensure Nevada’s students succeed personally, academically and professionally. One of its most important services is Campus Escort. With a fleet of ten minivans, two 12-passenger vans, a 25-passenger shuttle and 50 student employees, Campus Escort offers more than 46,000 free rides every year. Students can request a ride through the Campus Escort app (powered by TapRide) and, on average, will be on the way home or to a volunteering opportunity within thirteen minutes.

In discussing ASUN’s wide range of student services, Sandy Rodriguez ’01 M.Ed., director of the ASUN Center for Student Engagement, says, “We are all about fostering persistence in our students and helping them graduate. Whatever obstacles to connecting to our campus you may face, we can help you overcome them.” She continues, “If students know they matter, their aspirations increase and they are encouraged to achieve more than they thought they could.”

FITNESS Freshmen Fiona Day, Emily Freund and Noah Auyong participate in a fitness class in the Lombardi Recreation Center, where students enjoy a discounted rate. In winter 2017, Lombardi will be redesigned as a team sports facility when the new midcampus E. L. Wiegand Fitness Center opens. Students will have access to a wide range of group exercise classes — from CrossFit to yoga — and state-of-the-art solo equipment so that they can prioritize their physical fitness along with their academic success.
WHERE GREAT MEMORIES COME HOME

Homecoming brings thousands of students, alumni and community members together for three days of memorable events on campus. Every year, the Nevada Alumni Association partners with ASUN on what has become a Homecoming tradition: the March from the Arch parade and pep rally on the Quad. From student clubs and organization floats, to local businesses and law enforcement, March from the Arch connects the City of Reno and its residents with the University, something the Nevada Alumni Association and ASUN take great pride in. And it doesn’t stop there. The week’s events also include honoring our outstanding alumni and friends at the annual Homecoming Gala as well as during halftime of the highly anticipated Homecoming football game in Mackay Stadium. Homecoming demonstrates the deep connections students make at Nevada and the strong partnerships between alumni, the community and the University.
For freshmen, finding their place at the University is critical. Becoming engaged as new students will help them through academic challenges, emotional hurdles and the tough transitions that are a neces-sary part of college and a successful life beyond. But from academics to clubs to money and jobs, new students don’t have to navigate this crucial time alone. Once they arrive at Nevada, they are a part of the Pack for life.

Cairn Lindloff ’91 (interior design), assistant dean of new student initiatives, spends her days thinking about students at the beginning of their college experience. But making connections as a freshman isn’t just about getting through college. It’s about learning how to be successful long beyond your university experience.

“The most successful students are living a full-time life. They have a full course load. Maybe they are balancing a part-time job with commitments to clubs and volunteer organizations they care about. This is great practice for the lives they will lead after graduation: balancing work with friends with volunteer and community projects and family commitments. We are teaching students to be successful for the long-term.”

With this long-term success in mind, the University continues to support its students at graduation and beyond. With the connections they made on campus and through resources like the Nevada Career Studio, graduates are prepared for a strong start in their careers. Through the alumni chapter programs, alumni can connect with groups of likeminded graduates and form professional relationships grounded in a common Nevada history. Alumni continue to enjoy the campus experience when they return for Pack Picnics, Football Tailgates and annual traditions like the balloon launch and March from the Arch. Through the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension and other initiatives, Nevada graduates never stop learning from their alma mater. Programs like the Nevada Small Business Development Center (see Page 20) and resources like the Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center provide ongoing engagement and support to Nevada alumni for life.

Former ASUN President Casey Stiteler ’12 (political science) was passionate about student engagement during his time at the head of the ASUN. “I came across so much data that demonstrated that students were more likely to persist from year to year and to graduate when they were involved with campus outside the classroom. So by engaging new students, we are killing two birds with one stone: students can enjoy a great experience and also be more likely to stay on track academically and to graduate.”

Stiteler’s own engagement with the University as an undergraduate has served him well:

“I got into ASUN and went down the path of legislative affairs, and that opened me up to the idea of going to law school, because I learned that this was what I was passionate about. I graduated, went to law school, and now I’m starting with a law firm. That path opened up to me from my involvement with ASUN, and I couldn’t be more grateful.”