

2012

## Our Commitment to Economic Development

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### Repository Citation

Smatresk, Neal J. and Piechota, Thomas C. (2012) "Our Commitment to Economic Development," *UNLV Innovation*: Vol. 5, Article 2.

Available at: <https://digitalscholarship.unlv.edu/innovation/vol5/iss1/2>

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**Dr. Neal J. Smatresk**  
UNLV President

## Our Commitment to Economic Development

When I arrived at UNLV, I gave considerable thought to how the university could better embrace the identity of our city. What I didn't quite anticipate at the time was just how much the city wanted to embrace UNLV.

Since then, I've witnessed an outpouring of support for the university from a wide variety of individuals, businesses, agencies, and other organizations that recognize the value of a thriving research university. Their support is much appreciated, and we are likewise committed to the success of those in our surrounding community. We recognize that our support is particularly important during the difficult economic times we are experiencing. UNLV wants to help lead the way back to greater prosperity.

Most research universities across the country are engaged in various forms of economic development, many involving partnerships with businesses and the public sector. Some of these partnerships result from faculty working to address private-sector challenges through industry-sponsored research. Others grow out of faculty discoveries of inventions, drugs, or processes that may be commercialized, thus producing revenue for the institution and creating a climate that invites investment in the area.

These are just the kinds of mutually beneficial partnerships that we are interested in expanding at UNLV. Our newly formed Office of Economic Development is helping the faculty to attract industry-sponsored research and to develop, protect, and commercialize their intellectual property.

These endeavors remain clearly linked to our mission of education. Students are integral contributors to these projects; their experiences on such projects enable them to expand their skill sets, learn the research process, and ultimately become more employable in high-paying sectors of the economy.

It is clear that research fuels business opportunities in a variety of ways – by building a sophisticated work force, by producing intellectual property with commercialization potential, and by developing research that solves real-world problems. With a combination this powerful, we can hardly go wrong. And, what better way to embrace the identity of our community than with plans to become more innovative, responsive, and entrepreneurial? These are qualities that have made our city and state what they are today, and we're proud to embrace them.

Dr. Neal J. Smatresk  
UNLV President



**Dr. Thomas Piechota**  
Interim Vice President  
for Research and  
Dean of the Graduate College

## Welcome to UNLV Innovation!

It's a pleasure to introduce another issue of *UNLV Innovation*, the university's annual research magazine. Year after year, we provide in-depth stories that capture why it's so critical for UNLV to conduct research. In these pages, we explore not just what research is being done, but why it's being done, how it benefits students, and what impact it has on the community and beyond. We want you to come away with more than just interesting stories of research; we want you to understand the *value* of research.

In this issue, you'll meet some of our most respected scholars, scientists, and engineers. You'll learn about the far-reaching effects of their research and the originality with which it was conceived. In short, you'll see why we named this publication *Innovation*. Please enjoy this issue, and visit our website to learn more: <http://research.unlv.edu/>.

Dr. Thomas Piechota  
Interim Vice President for Research and  
Dean of the Graduate College