

UNLV and the Brookings Institution Announce The Brookings Mountain West Initiative

09/08/2009

UNLV - Dave Tonelli, (702) 895-3102, Brookings Institution - Melissa Skolfield, (202) 797-6105

Joint Initiative Will Bring High Quality, Independent and Impactful Public Policy Research to Bear on Key Issues Facing the Mountain West States

[Visit the Brookings Mountain West Initiative Website](#)

LAS VEGAS – September 8, 2009 – The University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) and The Brookings Institution today announced the formation of the Brookings Mountain West Initiative, a significant collaborative research and public policy analysis effort.

The Brookings Mountain West Initiative will bring high-quality, independent, and impactful public policy research to Las Vegas and the surrounding region, drawing on the expertise and insight of Brookings Scholars UNLV faculty and to address policy, infrastructure and quality of life challenges facing the Mountain West States (Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico and Utah). The initiative builds upon the work of Brookings’ Metropolitan Policy Program, which focuses on helping metropolitan areas like Las Vegas grow in robust, inclusive and sustainable ways. However, Brookings Mountain West will go farther by bringing to Las Vegas the perspective of Brookings experts on domestic and international economic policy, foreign policy and governance.

“Las Vegas’ role as a convention city makes it a critical commercial center, and its water and energy issues and economic outlook put it squarely in the middle of global policy questions, such as climate change, migration and the effort to recover from the global financial crisis,” said William Antholis, managing director of the Brookings Institution and director of Brookings Mountain West. “Brookings has an institutional interest in understanding the changes facing Las Vegas and the entire Mountain West region.”

“UNLV will serve as the home base for research and outreach that will contribute to solving human capital and sustainability issues affecting our entire region,” said UNLV President Neal Smatresk. “The Brookings Mountain West initiative, together with the proposed Lincy Institute announced last month, brings UNLV a comprehensive platform for addressing education, health care, social systems and public policy.”

The Brookings Mountain West Initiative, which is funded by private donations and other non-state sources, will focus on three areas:

- Advancing the findings of the Brookings’ “Mountain Megs” 2008 report, which identified critical issues facing the Mountain West States;
- Bringing Brookings Scholars to UNLV to conduct research, deliver lectures and interact with university faculty and students; and,
- Establishing a Brookings presence at UNLV through a research director and other staff, in an

effort to advance the Brookings Mountain West Initiative.

“I want to thank UNLV and the Brookings Institution for recognizing how important it is that Nevada and the west benefit from their quality public policy research and expertise,” said Nevada Senator Harry Reid. “This partnership is a big win for our state, and I look forward to working with both UNLV and Brookings to implement their many important findings as we continue to bring sustainable growth to Las Vegas and all of Nevada.”

The Brookings Institution is a nonprofit public policy organization based in Washington, D.C., which conducts independent research and provides innovative, practical recommendations to advance public policy. The Brookings Metropolitan Policy Program – the nation’s premiere research and policy institution dedicated to promoting the productivity, sustainability, and inclusivity of U.S. metropolitan areas – chronicles the dynamic demographic, economic, social, and cultural forces sweeping the country and interprets what these forces mean for cities and metropolitan areas.

###

UNLV is a doctoral-degree-granting institution of 28,000 students and 3,300 faculty and staff. Founded in 1957, the university offers more than 220 undergraduate, master's and doctoral degree programs. UNLV is located on a 332-acre campus in dynamic Southern Nevada and is classified in the category of Research Universities (high research activity) by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.