Higher Education, Research, and the Future of Nevada

"May you live in interesting times."

This Chinese proverb comes to mind lately, as we are indeed living through some interesting times at UNLV.

It’s been quite a year. I was deeply honored to receive Board of Regent approval to continue serving as UNLV’s president, and I consider myself lucky to serve.

Not so lucky, however, is my timing. During my presidency, the university has been assailed by budget cuts no other UNLV president has had to face. In this session we are being asked to prepare for $47.5 million in further funding cuts from the state of Nevada over the next two years.

Realizing that Nevada is facing an unprecedented fiscal crisis, we are committed to demonstrating to our state leaders the vital importance of higher education in economic recovery and to the future of Nevada.

Higher education is one of surest ways to improve a person’s quality of life, and economic diversification is one of the best ways to enhance the financial health of a region. Research fuels business opportunities by building a sophisticated work force, producing intellectual property with commercialization potential, and attracting investments. It generates funding for the university and benefits students tremendously. It addresses community issues while building institutional reputation.

For all of these reasons, UNLV remains committed to research and development – the discovery and the application of new knowledge – not in spite of the dire financial times we face, but because of the dire financial times we face. It is precisely during such “interesting” times that the work of higher education must be supported. We hope you will do so; one way you can help is to become an ambassador for UNLV. To find out more, visit http://go.unlv.edu/ambassadors. Meanwhile, please enjoy UNLV Innovation.

Sincerely,
Dr. Neal J. Smatresk
UNLV President

A Commitment to Research

UNLV Innovation, the university’s annual research magazine, was established to inform Nevadans and other stakeholders about the outstanding research being performed by UNLV faculty and students.

Even in these challenging times, something special is happening in Las Vegas. We are seeing UNLV become a central hub for activities that diversify our economy, develop our human capital and social systems, and create the critical infrastructure that Nevada needs for a sustainable future.

We are ever mindful that our ability to succeed is built upon years of efforts by our faculty and students. In this sense, this issue of UNLV Innovation celebrates both our past and our future.

Dr. Ron Smith
Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate College