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Research and the Path to Tier One

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Donald D. Snyder
UNLV President

Research and the Path to Tier One

It is a time of transition at UNLV as we welcome our incoming president, Dr. Len Jessup, to our campus. Formerly the dean of the Eller College of Management at the University of Arizona, Dr. Jessup will join us in early January as UNLV's 10th president. He is an innovative, entrepreneurial leader in higher education and an excellent choice to lead our university as it continues its progression toward greater distinction. I know he shares my view that we cannot have a great community without a great university. UNLV has already built strong and lasting connections throughout the state, and we continue to play a vital role in our region's economy and to serve as an important resource for our citizens.

One of the university's most significant contributions is the research that it performs. The research of faculty members and their teams is designed to broaden our understanding of the world and to solve important and complicated problems. Much of the collective progress of civilization has depended on the advances of leading scholars. For this reason, research activity is considered the key measure of prestige at universities around the world.

Because research is so integral to our own reputation and future, it is also central to our pursuit of what we have termed a "Tier One" ranking, and it is central to our plan to be a Carnegie Research/Very High University. Identified by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, this ranking places tremendous emphasis on several factors that focus on research. The Carnegie Foundation currently places UNLV outside the range of Tier One, but still in the top 4.5 percent of universities across the country. To achieve top-tier status, however, UNLV must join the ranks of the 108 institutions that have earned Carnegie's highest distinction.

To achieve this level of excellence, UNLV is developing a long-term plan that will expand and enhance its research endeavor by focusing on the quality and impact of our scholarly works, increasing grant funding, and dedicating resources and infrastructure to research. The plan also includes an increased focus on partnering with our community and state to enhance our capacity for performing more sophisticated research and a greater emphasis on the development of research teams. Part of our Path to Tier One is designed to bring greater national attention to the valuable work being done here, both to communicate that work to our stakeholders and to attract and retain the very best faculty, staff, and students.

All of these are lofty goals, but we are building a path toward them with our current strategic planning effort. It is my hope that you will embrace our Tier One initiative. As the quality of our university continues to rise, remarkable benefits emerge: We advance the reputation of our city and state, improve our economy, better educate our children, and enhance our quality of life. We can also take pride in yet another important institution in our community. I doubt there is another investment that has such sweeping or wonderful effects.

Donald D. Snyder
UNLV President



Thomas Piechota
Vice President
for Research
and Economic
Development

Welcome to *UNLV Innovation*!

We are pleased to offer another new issue of *UNLV Innovation*, the university's annual research magazine. In this publication, we share stories that demonstrate the type of research that yields discovery, expands existing knowledge, contributes to the economic development of our community and state, and demonstrates the connection between research and community wellbeing. We seek to promote the value of research both through examples of research and the context in which it is performed.

As you will see in this issue, UNLV research covers wide-ranging subjects, from the invention of energy-saving materials and promising cancer therapies to thought-provoking historical scholarship on the civil rights movement. The diversity of topics is matched only by the insightful perspectives shared by our faculty and students.

Please enjoy this issue, and visit our website to learn more about UNLV research: <http://research.unlv.edu/>.

Thomas Piechota
Vice President for Research and
Economic Development