



GRADUATE RESEARCH IMMERSION SUMMER EXPERIENCE (GRAD RISE)

A Pathway to a Professoriate and Beyond

Presented by
Dr. Joanna Jezierska
Director, Graduate Research Pathways
UNLV Graduate College

The Year 2025 in Review



UNLV Graduate College

- STEM Faculty Training The logo for CIMER, featuring the word "CIMER" in blue capital letters inside a blue circular graphic, with the full name "Center for the Improvement of Mentored Experiences in Research" in smaller black text to the right.
- Alfred P. Sloan Foundation's Sloan Centers for Systemic Change Award-Dr. Crittenden (PI)
- Developing Research Pathways to Doctoral Programs in STEM - new role

NSHE Mentoring Institute

Theme: Creating a Culture of Support for Research and Learning Through Mentorship, Collaboration, and Effective Communities of Practice

- Leadership and Institutional Change - Transition from Management to Coaching Culture
- Stronger Support to Faculty
- Emphasis on Tiered and Peer Mentoring Strategies
- Diverse Environment Socialization
- Sustainable, Collaborative and Multicentric Professional Identity

Pilot Program

Dr. Matthew Lachniet, UNLV Geosciences, Dr. Matthew Lachniet hosted a three-day residential seminar for four Fort Valley State University undergraduates focused on cave geochemistry, paleoclimate records, and mass spectrometry techniques.



Test Trial Program

June 7-13, 2026

- One-week Residential, Highly Competitive and Research-Intensive Summer Opportunity for 9 Scholars from UNLV and Partner Institutions: Fort Valley State University (FVSU), and California State University, Bakersfield (CSUB)
- RISE Scholars' Research Interest Aligned with Faculty Mentors' Research Focus & Current Projects
- Mosaic Mentoring Strategy - under Direct Guidance of Faculty Mentors and Peer Mentor Coaching and Support
- Skill-Based Career & Employment Strategy & Professional Development Opportunities
- Self-Care and Mental Wellness Hub



Supporters and Collaborators



PEER MENTORS

Kady, Mekha, Ivan, Elizabeth, Madison, Belen, Jacob, Timothy, and Baekseok



Academic Focus

- Opportunity to Experience Independent Scientific Inquiry
- Introduction to Lab Work Environment
- Five-day Research Project (Monday-Friday) with a Guided Literature Review
- Opportunity to Present Students' Projects at the Conclusion of the Summer Program



Measuring Success-The Most Meaningful Part of the GRAD RISE:

- Community and Peer Connections:
 - Building Lifelong Friendships
 - Forming a Supportive Cohort
 - Sharing Experiences with Peers from Diverse STEM Backgrounds to Create a Strong Sense of Belongings
- Hands-on Research Experience:
 - Gaining Confidence in Research Abilities
 - Increasing Interest in Pursuing Doctoral Studies
 - Experiencing a Graduate Student Lifestyle through Packed Schedules and Lab Work
 - Working Alongside Inspiring GAs, PIs, and Workforce Experts

Future Directions:

- Launching 8-week Program Modeled after NSF REUs
- Retaining Wellness Hub and Social Aspects
- Retaining GAs Panels to Give Students a Clear Picture of Doctoral Studies and Future Paths

GRAD RISE SCHOLARS

UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS



ABIGAIL OROZCO-CARRILLO



CAIO ABIUGAUCK



GABRIELLA ZUPANCIC



JAVIER PEREZ



KYLE QUARNBERG



KYRA HUTCHINS



LAURA PARDO



RAVEN MCRAE



SKYLAR SNOW

Thank you!





University of Nevada, Reno

Research & Innovation

From Participation to Implementation



UNR Undergraduate Research

October 7, 2026

Challenges/ Opportunities

- New to position
- Too many challenges and opportunities!
 - Coming in to NSHE MI 2025: Mentor Support (broadly defined)
 - Training for mentors
 - Mentors overwhelmed by student requests



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Connection from MI2025

- Clarified two related challenges:
 - Mentor support
 - Expand student opportunities without overburdening mentors
- Can't pin down to a specific moment
 - Learned about existing mentor resources
 - Discussions on models of undergraduate research, including CUREs
- Thinking about it later . . .
 - If current model of one-on-one mentorship couldn't meet needs, need to find a new, scalable model



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Actions Taken

- Short-term: increase support for mentors via email
 - Existing web resources (including NSHE and CUR)
 - Program specific mentor info
- Long-term: Research different models
 - Undergraduate Research
 - CUR Transformations Project
 - Backward design STEM majors to include research-intensive courses (CUREs)
 - What will work at my institution?
 - NSF IUSE grant opportunity
 - Applied for capacity-building level



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Impact/ Outcomes

- Too soon to tell!
 - Short-term resources:
 - Good reception
 - Increase in follow-up meetings
 - Fall 2026 and Spring 2027 pre- and post-program student surveys (year 2)
 - Spring 2027 pre- and post-program mentor surveys (year 1)
 - Long-term research:
 - Awarded NSF IUSE
 - Starts later this month



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Advice

- I lost the forest for the trees . . . NSHE MI2025 gave me time, information, input from others to refocus on the bigger picture
 - Individual initiatives --> institution's culture and capacity for undergraduate research and different models/approaches
- NSF IUSE – Was strategic:
 - CUR model/previous NSF grant
 - Compared to CUR project institutions
 - What was *not* discussed
 - Land-grant institution



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From Individual Mentoring to a Research Community

Holly Martin, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Microbiology

Nevada State University

The Challenge: Developing Independent Researchers



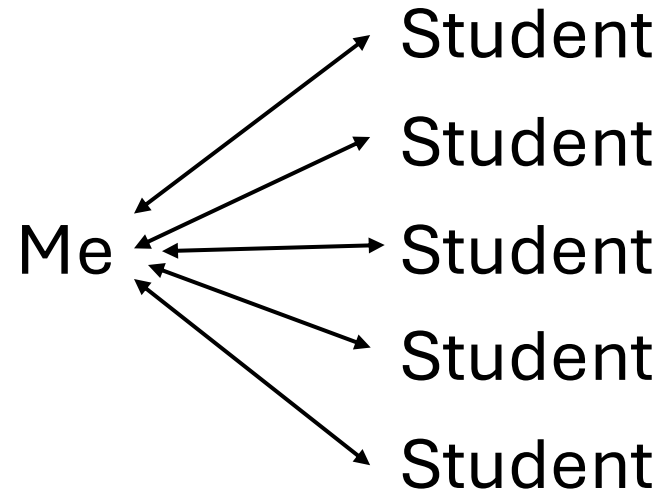
What I Took from the Mentoring Institute

“Mentoring can be a community rather a series of individual relationships.”

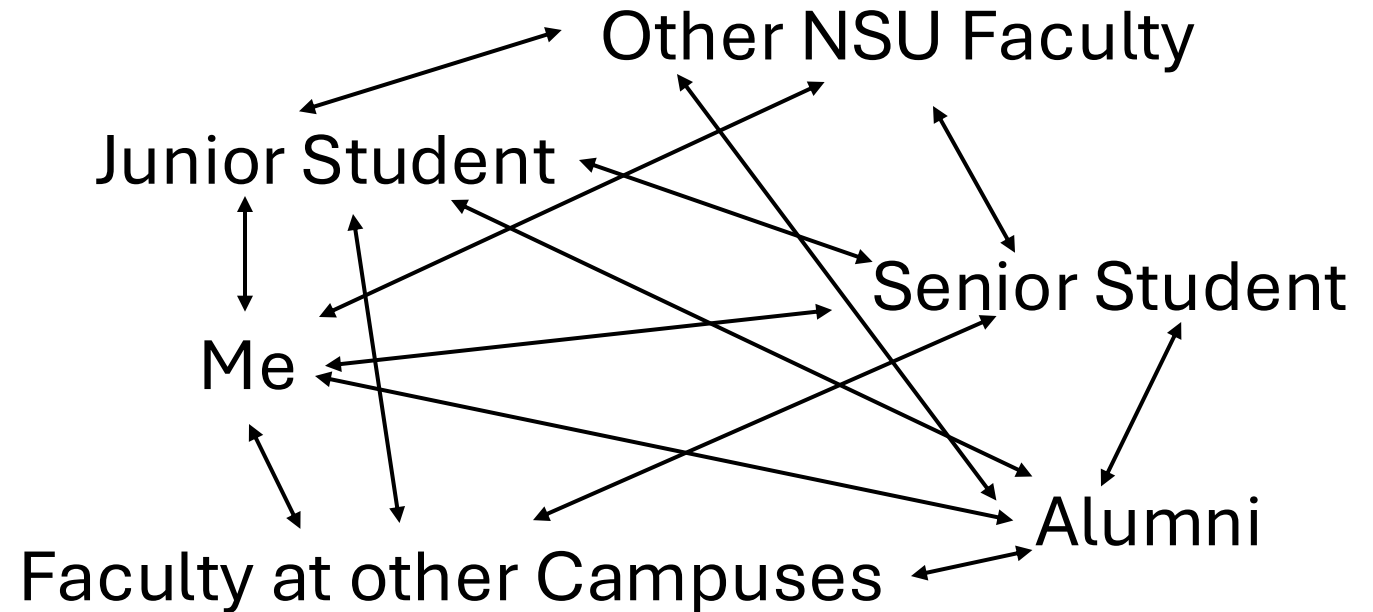
- Mentoring does not have to flow only faculty → student
- Students benefit from a constellation of mentors
- Independence requires intentionally creating opportunities to practice it

What I Changed

Before



Now



What It Looks Like in Practice



What Changed for the Students?

I have seen growth in:

- Scientific communication
- Confidence
- Leadership
- Collaboration
- Scientific independence

What I've Learned

- Build a lab community, not just a collection of projects.
- Give students expertise.
- Create opportunities for peer mentoring.
- Be willing to step back.
- Start even if your lab is small.

NEVADA EPSCOR RESEARCH EXPERIENCES & MENTORSHIP



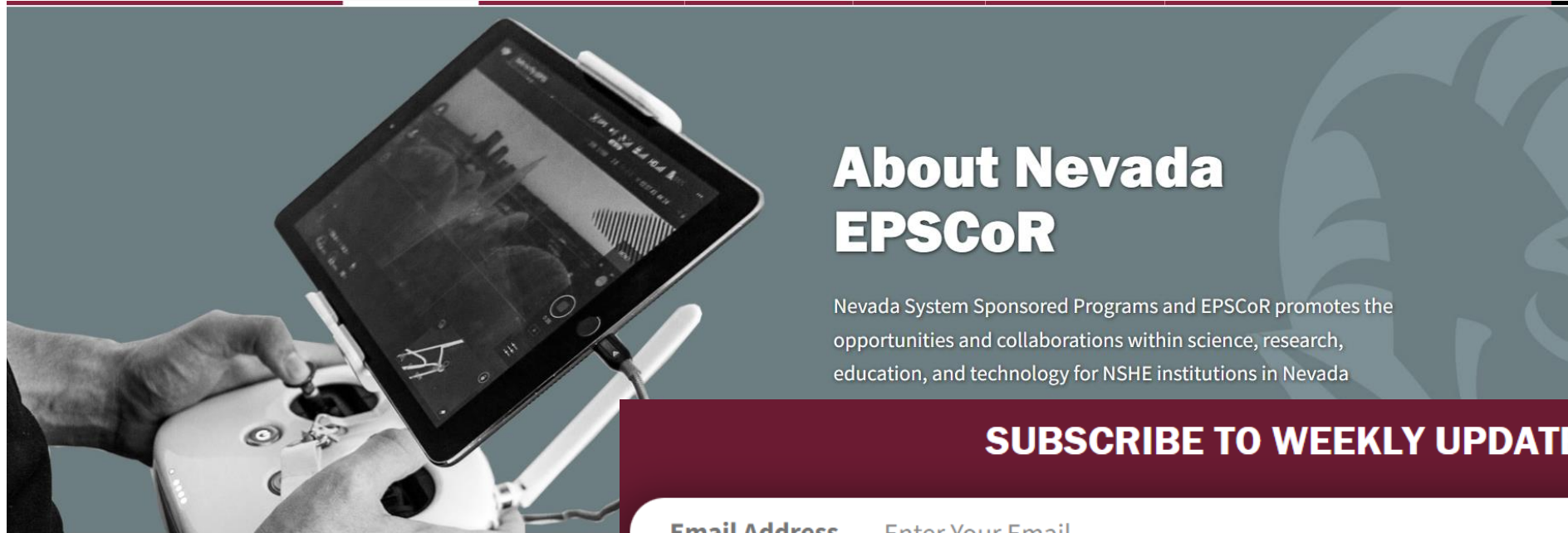
Opportunities for NSHE students & faculty

NSF Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research (EPSCoR)

Michele Casella, NSF EPSCoR Education & Workforce Development Administrator

mcasella@nshe.nevada.edu





About Nevada EPSCoR

Nevada System Sponsored Programs and EPSCoR promotes the opportunities and collaborations within science, research, education, and technology for NSHE institutions in Nevada

SUBSCRIBE TO WEEKLY UPDATES

Email Address

SUBSCRIBE

TO PROMOTE THE OPPORTUNITIES AND COLLABORATIONS WITHIN SCIENCE, RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND TECHNOLOGY FOR NSHE INSTITUTIONS IN NEVADA

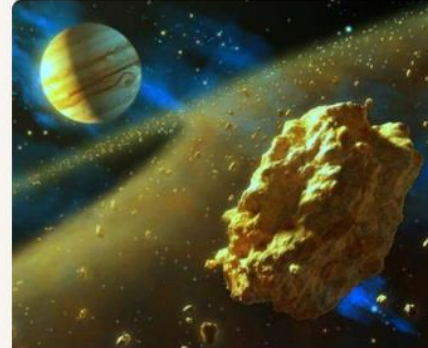
[HTTPS://EPSCORSPO.NEVADA.EDU/](https://epscorspo.nevada.edu/)

[HDRFS](#)
[SPO & EPSCoR](#)
[NASA EPSCoR](#)
[NASA Space Grant](#)
[Nevada GEAR UP](#)


Academic Year 2026-2027
Undergraduate Research
Opportunity Program (UROP) -



2026-2027 NVSGC Graduate
Research Opportunity
Fellowship - 03/13/2026
Deadline to apply



2026-2027 NVSGC
Undergraduate Scholarship
Program - 03/06/2026 Deadline
to apply



2026-2027 Pre-College Teacher
Training (TT) and Hands-On-
Training (HOT) Program -
02/27/2026 Deadline to apply



2026-2027 Higher Education
(HE): Curriculum Development
(CD) and Hands-on-Training
(HOT) Faculty Competition -

PROGRAMS & OPPORTUNITIES

NSF EPSCoR



Increasing the capacity of Nevada for
wildland fire research, education and
workforce development

NASA EPSCoR



It's all about building research
infrastructure

NASA Space Grant
Consortium



It's all about STEM education

GEAR UP



Designed to increase the number of
low-income students prepared to enter
and succeed in postsecondary

EPSCoR: THEN AND NOW...



E-CORE and E-RISE programs created to replace the singular Track-1 awards

EPSCoR Collaborations for Optimizing Research Ecosystems Research Infrastructure Improvement Program (E-CORE RII)

- Supports the strengthening of jurisdiction-wide research ecosystems by fostering interconnected networks & building research infrastructure to grow research capacity & competitiveness aligned with jurisdictional priorities.

EPSCoR Research Incubators for STEM Excellence Research Infrastructure Improvement Program (E-CORE RII)

- Supports the development of sustainable research infrastructure & capacity in EPSCoR jurisdictions through collaborative, hypothesis-driven or problem-driven research & workforce development to improve competitiveness in a selected STEM field.

THE FUNCTIONS OF E-CORE & E-RISE

- NSHE SPO-EPSCoR submitted first E-CORE in July 2026 to support research capacity building and collaboration for 2027-2031
- To learn more about NSF E-CORE and E-RISE programs, visit

<https://www.nsf.gov/funding/initiatives/epscor/epscor-live>

NSF EPSCoR: Program Comparison

E-CORE

(The Infrastructure Foundation)

Full Title

Collaborations for Optimizing Research Ecosystems

Primary Focus

Strengthens the jurisdiction's baseline research capacity, infrastructure, and administration.

Direct Research Support?

 **No.** Strictly funds the operational scaffolding, facilities, and pathways.

Funding Ceiling

Up to \$16 Million

(\$2M/year for 4 years + 4-year renewal option).

Key Deliverables

- Shared equipment cores
- Centralized tech-transfer offices
- Broad K-16 STEM workforce pathways

E-RISE

(The Innovation Engine)

Full Title

Research Incubators for STEM Excellence

Primary Focus

Incubates highly targeted, multi-sector research teams to drive regional economic growth.

Direct Research Support?

Yes. Directly funds hypothesis-driven or problem-driven scientific exploration.

Funding Ceiling

Up to \$11.5 Million

(\$7M for 4 years + \$4.5M 3-year renewal).

Key Deliverables

- Scalable commercial/tech products
- Deep multi-institutional networks
- Active industry-academic partnerships

NSF EPSCOR UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM (UROP)

Applications for UROP Summer 2027 –
Release January 18, 2027

- 10-week intensive research experience
- Applicants must enroll in 1-3 credit summer course to receive the scholarship

Application Writing Workshops, hosted in partnership with UNLV, UNR & NSU Writing Centers, to be held February 2027.



2026 UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM (UROP)

Scholarship opportunity promoting intensive undergraduate research opportunities for NSHE students

ELIGIBILITY:

- Undergraduate NSHE students
- Enrolled full time
- Must have a faculty mentor
- Students in STEM fields

SCHOLARSHIP BENEFITS:

- \$4,000 for students
- \$750 for faculty mentors

APPLICATIONS DUE:
Monday, March 9, 2026 at 5:00 PM PDT

<https://hdrfs.epscorspo.nevada.edu/urop-ay26-27/>



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BUILDING RESEARCH MENTORSHIP CAPACITY

NSHE Mentoring Institute 2026 (MI2026): Connected Mentoring Communities: Scaling Research Growth and Student Success Across NSHE

🕒 October 7, 2026
8:15 AM – 5:00 PM
October 8, 2026
8:00 AM – 12:00 PM

📍 UNLV – Foundation Building – Blasco
Room
4505 S. Maryland Pkwy.
Las Vegas, NV 89154

OCTOBER 7-8, 2026, UNLV FOUNDATION BUILDING

- Space is limited and attendance is capped to ensure a collaborative experience
- Participants are expected to attend the full workshop to maximize learning, networking, and mentoring outcomes
- Registration closes September 8, 2026

- Connect with NSHE faculty, administrators, postdocs, and graduate researchers
- Learn from expert facilitators from the Council on Undergraduate Research (CUR)
- Share evidence-based mentoring practices and collaboration strategies
- Develop sustainable mentoring frameworks across NSHE

Key Goals

- Strengthen faculty mentoring and professional development
- Advance inclusive supervision and student engagement
- Integrate mentoring into workload, recognition, and promotion
- Promote research excellence and student success

Interested? Email mcasella@nshe.nevada.edu

NEVADA STEM MENTOR NETWORK

**Provides access to Nevada's
finest mentors and premier
research projects in the STEM
fields.**

**Committed to helping
connect students and faculty
to research opportunities
statewide.**



<https://stemmentor.epscorspo.nevada.edu/>



WHY DOES MENTORING MATTER?

Why does mentoring matter?

What are the benefits of mentoring?

Who can be a mentor?

WHY DOES MENTORING MATTER?

- ✓ Enables growth, learning, transformation, and accomplishment in education and research
- ✓ Improves subject knowledge and communication through teaching
- ✓ Builds a dynamic community while fostering research growth and collaboration
- ✓ Impacts the lives of those being mentored, promoting change and growth

[SEARCH FOR A MENTOR](#) →



1. SEARCH 2. CONNECT 3. JOURNEY 4. ASSESS 5. EXPLORE

STEP 1: SEARCH

How do you decide who to enter into a mentoring relationship with and how do you do it? In choosing a mentor, remember that mentoring is a multifaceted relationship. It involves a need for guidance for the mentee and the interest in and ability to provide such guidance on the part of the mentor.

MENTEES

- ✓ What do you want to research?
- ✓ Do you have a faculty member in mind that you would like to mentor you?
- ✓ Do you have a clear definition of the support and help you think you need?
- ✓ Do you have the commitment to make an effort to enable the relationship to develop and function?

RESOURCES

✓ [Assessing Fit](#)

✓ [Questions For Your Potential Mentors](#)

MENTOR SEARCH

[SEARCH FOR A MENTOR](#) →

<https://stemmentor.epscorspo.nevada.edu/>

Mentor Search

Filter available mentors using the options below. If you prefer, you can also use the [advanced search](#) option for more precise results.

INSTITUTIONS

+

DISCIPLINES

+

LOCATIONS

+

FUNDING AGENCY

+

SWITCH TO THE ADVANCED MENTOR SEARCH



John "Jay" Arnone



Gayle Dana



Ernesto Abel-Santos



Scott Abella



Kumud Acharya



Sajjad Ahmad



Thomas Albright



Penny Amy



Jeff Angermann



William Arnott



Yahia Baghzouz



Erick Bandala



Scott Bassett



Jacimaria Batista

SEARCH FOR A MENTOR

ADVANCED MENTOR SEARCH

ADVANCED MENTOR SEARCH

TO BEGIN, SELECT YOUR SEARCH CRITERIA USING THE FORM TO THE LEFT AND THEN CLICK ON THE SUBMIT BUTTON

Enter your search criteria in the form and then click on the submit button. Alternatively, you can use the [quick filter](#) search for less targeted results.

Mentor Name

First Name
Last Name

Locations / Counties

Please Select

Institutions

Please Select

Funding Agencies

Please Select

Disciplines

Please Select

Choose up to 3 keywords for your search. To add another keyword click on the plus sign.

Keyword

SEARCH MENTORS
→

<https://stemmentor.epscorspo.nevada.edu/>