

Your name	Email Address	Your institution	Program Name	What student success challenge or opportunity were you trying to address? Briefly describe your context and the need you identified.	What did you learn/gain from previous mentoring institute or workshop. Share a key idea, connection, framework, or conversation that influenced/inspired your work.	What action did you take ? Describe the program, mentoring practice, partnership, training effort, research support, mentoring constellation, or other initiative you implemented.	What impact did it have on student success? Consider outcomes related to student/faculty/stakeholder engagement, professional development, or other measures of success.	What advice would you offer others? Share one or two key lessons learned, challenges encountered, and recommendations for institutions seeking to strengthen mentoring capacity.
Holly Martin	holly.martin@nevada.state.edu	Nevada State University	Undergraduate Research	One challenge I wanted to address was helping undergraduate students make the transition from learning science in the classroom to seeing themselves as capable, independent researchers. Many students are excited about research but have limited experience with the uncertainty and independence that come with authentic scientific work. I wanted to create a mentoring environment that provides enough structure for students to succeed while deliberately helping them develop confidence, independence, and ownership of their research.	One of the most valuable ideas I gained was to think more intentionally about mentoring as a progression toward independence. Good mentoring is not simply providing students with answers or showing them how to perform a technique; it is gradually shifting responsibility to the student. The Institute helped me think more deliberately about when to provide structure, when to ask questions instead of giving answers, and how to create space for students to develop confidence in their own scientific judgment.	I shifted from relying primarily on one-on-one meetings with individual research students to holding regular full-lab meetings. These meetings give students opportunities to discuss their projects, troubleshoot challenges together, share expertise, and learn from research beyond their own project. I have also become more intentional about peer mentoring, encouraging experienced students to help newer researchers learn techniques and navigate the research process. This has helped make mentoring a shared responsibility and build a stronger research community.	I have seen students become more comfortable turning to one another for help and recognizing the expertise that each person brings to the lab. More experienced students have taken on leadership roles by teaching techniques, helping troubleshoot experiments, and sharing lessons from their own projects. Lab meetings have also given students regular practice explaining their research and responding to questions. Together, these changes have helped create a more collaborative environment while giving students opportunities to develop communication, leadership, and mentoring skills themselves.	One lesson I have learned is that effective mentoring does not have to happen only one-on-one or flow exclusively from faculty to students. Creating opportunities for students to learn from and support one another can strengthen the entire research environment. I would encourage mentors to think intentionally about building a community rather than simply managing individual projects. It takes time to establish that culture, but peer mentoring can provide students with valuable opportunities for leadership, collaboration, and growth.
Pamela Zeiser	pzeiser@unr.edu	University of Nevada, Reno	Undergraduate Research	The challenge -- and opportunity -- we were trying to address was "mentor support," broadly defined at that point. I was new to my position as director of Undergraduate Research and had learned through initial individual meetings that mentors received little training in/few resources about mentoring undergraduate researchers. Mentors also reported frustration due to being overburdened by requests for mentorship from undergraduates, particularly given their other responsibilities.	NSHE MI2025 helped me clarify two related challenges: providing better support for faculty mentors and expanding undergraduate research opportunities without overburdening faculty. The institute introduced me to existing mentoring resources that could address immediate needs without reinventing the wheel. More importantly, discussions highlighted the limits of the traditional one-on-one mentoring model as participation grows. MI2025 encouraged me to explore scalable approaches, including course-based undergraduate research experiences (CUREs) and tiered mentoring models.	For the first challenge, a student worker and I together gathered and reviewed existing online resources for undergraduate research mentors, disseminating them via email at the beginning of this academic year. For the second, I applied for and received an NSF IUSE capacity-building grant to first assess the landscape of a culture toward undergraduate research at UNR and then apply or adapt the Council on Undergraduate Research's Transformation Project model for backward design of STEM curricula to include CUREs.	Both actions are new and in progress, making measures of success or student impact premature. At the end of the 2026-2027 academic year, we will use a pre- and post-program survey to measure student satisfaction with mentors as well as feedback from mentors to assess our efforts to support them with provision of resources. That the NSF IUSE grant was awarded is a wonderful result of research into alternative models and the writing of the grant proposal; the grant-funded efforts themselves will begin later this semester.	As a new director, I was overwhelmed by requests to assess, track, and expand undergraduate research while also increasing faculty mentor engagement. At MI2025, conversations with colleagues facing similar challenges helped me step back and view the larger institutional picture. Rather than focusing on individual initiatives, I realized I first needed to assess UNR's existing culture and capacity for undergraduate research. Learning about CUR's culture-change framework and, later, NSF IUSE funding opportunities provided a valuable path forward.
Dr. Joanna Jezierska	joanna.jezierska@unlv.edu	UNLV	Graduate Research Pathways	As an R1 institution recognized for Very High Research Activity, UNLV is dedicated to expanding its doctoral cohort and increasing annual research degrees awarded. To achieve this, the UNLV Graduate College is building dynamic new recruitment pathways designed to attract top-tier scholars, particularly in the STEM fields. A new pilot program was launched in June 2026.	Participation in the 2025 NSHE Mentoring Institute provided me with a direct opportunity to expand my professional network while opening doors for collaborative learning. The program served as a powerful forum to share my own mentoring experiences and absorb diverse best practices from other professionals across the system. By engaging with peers, I gained a deeper understanding of varying mentoring programs, refined my communication strategies, and brought back actionable knowledge to enhance my daily professional practice.	The purpose of a new recruiting program at the UNLV Graduate College, the Graduate Research Immersion Summer Experience (GRAD RISE), is to inspire and prepare talented undergraduate students from UNLV and partner institutions to pursue doctoral studies in STEM at UNLV. It is a week-long, residential and research focused initiative during which scholars gain immersive exposure to doctoral level scientific inquiry directly under the guidance of a Faculty Mentor and supported by a Graduate Peer Mentor.	The GRAD RISE program provided a transformative preview of the graduate school experience. Scholars highlighted that the rigorous and packed schedule successfully simulated a true graduate student lifestyle, forcing them to develop critical time management and problem-solving skills. A central pillar of the program's success was its emphasis on community and collaboration. Participants deeply valued the diverse cohort, and that the cross-disciplinary networking among various STEM fields sparked unique research perspectives and helped to build a professional network of peers and lifelong friendships.	Engage in holistic and empathetic mentoring- see the whole person. Acknowledge the broader context of students' lives, their academic and professional experiences, create a safe environment and a culture of acceptance and belonging. Share your own experiences including failures. By normalizing struggles and challenges you can help students reduce stress level and increase resilience and retention.
Michele Casella	mcasella@nshe.nevada.edu	NSHE Sponsored Programs & EPSCoR	Nevada EPSCoR: Building Research Capacity through Experiences & Mentorship	We identified an opportunity to strengthen student success by increasing access to undergraduate research experiences, meaningful mentoring relationships, and clear pathways into STEM careers and graduate education. Through Nevada EPSCoR programs such as UROP, the NSHE Mentoring Institute, and the STEM Mentor Network, we work across NSHE institutions to connect students with faculty mentors, research opportunities, and professional development resources. Our goal is to broaden participation in research, support student persistence and achievement in STEM, and build Nevada's future research and workforce capacity.	A key takeaway from previous Mentoring Institutes was the importance of intentional, evidence-based mentoring and the role it plays in student success. The conversations reinforced that effective mentoring extends beyond research supervision to include fostering belonging, professional growth, and clear pathways to graduate education and STEM careers. Those insights helped shape our efforts to expand mentoring resources, strengthen mentor training, and connect students with research opportunities through programs such as UROP and the Nevada STEM Mentor Network.	We implemented a coordinated approach to strengthening research mentoring and student engagement through several Nevada EPSCoR initiatives, including the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program (UROP), the NSHE Mentoring Institute, and the Nevada STEM Mentor Network. These efforts connect students with faculty mentors, provide hands-on research experiences and professional development, support mentor training, and create pathways to graduate education and STEM careers while building mentoring capacity across NSHE institutions.	The impact has been increased student engagement in research, stronger mentoring relationships, and greater access to professional development opportunities. Through programs such as UROP, the NSHE Mentoring Institute, and the STEM Mentor Network, students have gained hands-on research experience, expanded their academic and professional networks, and strengthened pathways to graduate education and STEM careers. Faculty have also benefited through mentor training, collaboration opportunities, and increased capacity to support student success.	Advice: Start by viewing mentoring as a skill that can be developed, not just a responsibility. Providing mentors with training, resources, and opportunities to learn from one another can significantly improve the student experience. One lesson we've learned is that meaningful research experiences and strong mentoring go hand in hand. Programs are most successful when they intentionally connect students with mentors, professional development opportunities, and clear pathways to future academic and career goals. Building a community of mentors across institutions also helps sustain momentum, share best practices, and expand opportunities for students.