



Vice President for Diversity Initiatives & Chief Diversity Officer

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), a thriving urban research university with a highly diverse student body, invites nominations and applications for the inaugural role of Vice President for Diversity Initiatives & Chief Diversity Officer (VP & CDO). Reporting directly to President Keith E. Whitfield and serving on his leadership team, the Vice President & Chief Diversity Officer will provide both high-level strategic vision and pragmatic expert counsel with the goal of ensuring that the University is an inclusive community in which all can thrive, regardless of race; culture; ethnicity; religion; gender, gender identity, and gender expression; sexual orientation; immigration status; or ability.

The elevation of the former Chief Diversity Officer role to Vice President for Diversity Initiatives is yet another milestone for UNLV which is proud to be one of the most diverse institutions in the country for undergraduates (*U.S. News & World Report*). As an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI) and a Minority-Serving Institution (MSI) since 2012, and a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) since 2015, UNLV has a history of being an affirmative and dynamic academic environment for students from historically underrepresented backgrounds. The inaugural VP & CDO will build upon the momentum across campus for the work of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) through their leadership of the Division of Diversity Initiatives, guidance of the University Diversity Council, and partnership with leaders across the University and in the greater Las Vegas community.

The new Vice President for Diversity Initiatives & Chief Diversity Officer will be the chief architect of the University's strategy for ensuring that the campus climate reflects its deepest values of access and equity; excellence and integrity; collaboration and stewardship; and compassion and inclusion.

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) is a public research institution committed to rigorous educational programs and to promoting well-being and achievement through education, research, scholarship, and creative activity. Founded in 1957, UNLV has rapidly grown from a small branch campus to a thriving, ambitious institution. One of eight institutions in the Nevada System of Higher Education, and one of the System's two Research I institutions, UNLV has an endowment of \$245 million and is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. The University enrolls more than 25,000 undergraduate and 5,000 graduate and professional students, and it employs over 4,000 faculty and staff. The University offers 290 bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree programs and 100 certificate programs. UNLV is home to more than 300 majors and academic offerings that span several fields across the following academic units:

- [Academic Success Center](#)
- [College of Education](#)
- [College of Fine Arts](#)
- [College of Liberal Arts](#)
- [College of Sciences](#)
- [Division of Educational Outreach](#)
- [Graduate College](#)
- [Greenspun College of Urban Affairs](#)
- [Honors College](#)
- [Howard R. Hughes College of Engineering](#)
- [Lee Business School](#)
- [School of Dental Medicine](#)
- [School of Integrated Health Sciences](#)
- [School of Medicine](#)
- [School of Public Health](#)
- [School of Nursing](#)
- [University Libraries](#)
- [William F. Harrah College of Hospitality](#)
- [William S. Boyd School of Law](#)

UNLV is one of the nation’s most diverse universities, with more than 65 percent of its degree-seeking undergraduates identifying as part of a racial or ethnic minority. *U.S. News & World Report* ranks UNLV as the nation’s second-most diverse university for undergraduates. UNLV meets federal Minority Serving Institution requirements as an Asian American, Native American, and Pacific Islander-Serving Institution and a Hispanic-Serving Institution and is dedicated to providing education access and opportunity in southern Nevada. The University is also committed to academic success for its students – from the day they arrive for orientation, during their time on campus, and into their chosen careers. This includes a vibrant Honors College, an innovative curriculum with a defined course path for undergraduates, and access to academic and career advising – including a dedicated Academic Success Center as well as a thriving Graduate College. UNLV has more than 175 graduate programs and certificates, approximately 5,000 graduate and professional students, more than 1,200 graduate faculty members, and more than 1,000 Graduate Assistants.

As a top-tier university, UNLV holds the nation’s highest recognition for both research and community engagement from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching – the gold standard for university metrics. UNLV attracts top students and faculty, educates a diversifying population and workforce, and drives economic activity through innovation, research, and community partnerships. UNLV stimulates economic development and diversification, fosters a climate of innovation, and enriches the cultural vitality of the surrounding communities. The University’s impact and economic presence is felt throughout the state as more than 60 percent of UNLV’s 120,000 alumni reside in Nevada.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Named by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education as a “very high research activity” or R1 institution in 2018, UNLV continues to press forward on its [Top Tier Initiative](#), a campus-wide strategic plan to join the ranks of the nation’s top public universities in research, education, and community impact. Under the leadership of President Whitfield, the institution recently re-committed to these initiatives through the creation of the [Top Tier 2.0](#) plan.

UNLV is committed to its core strategic goals: to enable student achievement and provide a superb educational experience; to establish Nevada’s first academic health center to advance the region’s healthcare; to promote research, scholarship, and creative activity amongst faculty and students; to facilitate more consistent and robust community partnerships and the socio-economic development of the region; and to promote and support a culture of social justice, equity, and inclusion.

LEADERSHIP

President Keith E. Whitfield is a seasoned university administrator and prolific scholar in the fields of psychology, health, and aging. He became UNLV's 11th president and first African American president on August 24, 2020.

Whitfield previously served as provost, senior vice president of academic affairs, and professor of psychology at Wayne State University in Michigan. There, he was responsible for faculty hiring, promotion and tenure, and budget and policies for faculty and staff. He also oversaw student affairs, including student success, curriculum, and housing. Under his leadership, the university achieved remarkable gains in its graduation rate, increased overall enrollment, launched an innovation and entrepreneurship hub, and strengthened multiple business and philanthropic relationships.

An active administrator and researcher, Whitfield has authored or co-authored over 200 publications and has earned nearly \$20 million in funding from agencies including the National Institutes of Health, National Institute on Aging (NIA), and the National Science Foundation. A psychologist and expert on the social, psychological, and cultural factors of cognition and healthy aging, Whitfield's current research focuses on the relationship between stress and longevity in African American families. He's a member of the NIA's National Advisory Council on Aging, and he has served on committees for the National Academies of Sciences and Medicine and the National Institutes of Health.

Prior to Wayne State, Whitfield served as vice provost for academic affairs at Duke University and held appointments as a professor in the Department of Psychology and Neuroscience, a research professor in the Department of Geriatric Medicine at Duke University Medical Center, and a senior fellow at the Center for the Study of Aging and Human Development. He also was the co-director of the Center on Biobehavioral Health Disparities Research.

THE CITY OF LAS VEGAS

One of UNLV's most valuable assets is its location. The Las Vegas Valley's many world-class resorts, desert destinations, and tourist attractions provide adventure, enrichment, and academic opportunities for the community. Known as the Entertainment Capital of the World, Las Vegas is also a top-three global leader in the hospitality industry and one of the most visited tourist destinations. Located just minutes from UNLV, the Las Vegas Strip provides the perfect setting for students to gain hands-on, once-in-a-lifetime opportunities not found anywhere else. Las Vegas is also a major transportation hub, with direct connections to major destinations around the world. Residents enjoy a high quality of life and low cost of living with no state income tax. With more than 300 days of sunshine a year and mild temperatures that make outdoor recreation possible throughout the year, Las Vegas is situated near the nation's most beautiful parks and attractions. Las Vegas is close to the Grand Canyon National Park, Hoover Dam, Red Rock Canyon, and several major cities such as Los Angeles, San Diego, Salt Lake City, and Phoenix.

THE ROLE OF POSITION

The Vice President for Diversity Initiatives & Chief Diversity Officer (VP & CDO) is the senior institutional administrator responsible for shaping, implementing, and promoting UNLV's strategies to advance diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) within the campus community. Reporting to President Keith

Whitfield and serving as a member of the [President's Cabinet](#), the VP & CDO will provide leadership and strategic management for policies and initiatives to foster an equitable and inclusive campus climate for all members of the University community.

By overseeing the Division of Diversity Initiatives and steering the University Diversity Council (UDC), the VP & CDO will cultivate organizational capacity for diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice. The individual will champion the value of a diverse campus environment, ensuring that the elements of DEIJ are embedded throughout the conceptualization and implementation of the University's mission, vision, and strategic plan. For instance, the VP & CDO will promote systemic changes that emphasize diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice throughout the full range of institutional operations, including teaching; research and creative activity; public service and community engagement; recruitment and hiring; tenure and promotion; resource allocation; and more.

The VP & CDO will collaborate with faculty, staff, administrators, students, alumni, and external partners to enhance diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice across the institution. Through continual engagement with stakeholders, the incumbent will build consensus, forge connections, and integrate efforts. The VP & CDO will be a proactive and visible leader, providing guidance and inspiring change.

By driving cultural change through active programming, education, and communication, the Office of Diversity Initiatives will become known as a hub of institutional resources and services for diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice. The unit will produce training for student cultural competency, create programs for faculty and staff professional development, and establish forums for meaningful campus-wide dialogue.

The VP & CDO is expected to lead measurable progress in organizational climate and advancement of campus priorities related to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice. Through continuous monitoring and a data-informed, metrics-based approach, the incumbent will strive to create a robust culture of assessment and accountability. As part of this work, the VP & CDO is responsible for conducting periodic briefings to campus leadership and other stakeholders and for preparing comprehensive annual reports. The individual will also pursue external funding opportunities to support DEIJ programs and initiatives on campus, including those specifically available to universities with designations as a Minority Serving Institution (MSI), Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI), and Asian American, Native American, and Pacific Islander-Serving Institution (AANAPISI), all of which are held by UNLV.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The Vice President for Diversity Initiatives & Chief Diversity Officer will have the opportunity to address the following priorities:

- **Lead the development of a unifying strategic vision for the future of DEIJ at the University:** In alignment with the University's Top Tier 2.0 plan that includes a core focus area of promoting and supporting a culture of social justice, equity, and inclusion, the VP & CDO will advance university-wide progress toward the creation of an ever more inclusive campus environment by providing high-level strategic vision for continued growth and progress on multiple fronts. The VP & CDO will work to increase the number of students, staff, administrators, and faculty from a range of underrepresented groups and ensure that they have the resources and support to thrive in their studies and/or work on campus. In addition, the VP & CDO will be asked to lead an inclusive and

collaborative process for developing a strategic plan focused specifically on diversity, equity, and inclusion directed toward establishing equitable structures and processes, removing barriers, developing anti-racist leaders, creating a welcoming environment, achieving curricular diversity, and increasing diversity representation in all areas of the University community. This process must be broadly inclusive and bring together individuals and groups from a wide range of constituencies for candid and productive dialogue on questions of climate, race and ethnicity, gender, ability, identity, and other issues that are currently at the forefront on campuses across the nation.

- **Collaboratively develop strategies for addressing recruitment challenges impacting campus diversity:** The VP & CDO will help to identify policies and practices that support the recruitment and retention of diverse faculty, administrators, staff, and students. Currently, UNLV's faculty, administration, and staff do not reflect the diversity of the student body. The VP & CDO will work with University and department leadership to enhance recruitment and retention practices in these areas in particular. These efforts might range from helping staff supervisors strengthen their skills as mentors and managers to assisting deans, departments chairs, and members of the faculty with the challenge of developing robust, diverse pools of candidates for their searches. Additionally, while the student body is highly diverse, there is always more work to be done, particularly around retention efforts. The VP & CDO will also partner across the University to consider new strategies to best support all students at UNLV through to graduation.
- **Bring together the current array of DEI-related programs and initiatives into a cogent, powerful whole:** UNLV is proud of its highly diverse student body and the many programs and offices that support all of its students toward academic and socioeconomic success. As is typical in a large and complex university setting, there are multiple, perhaps overlapping, programs and initiatives in place related to support for students from underrepresented backgrounds, accommodation for individuals with disabilities, resources for individuals who identify as LGBTQIA, etc. As the leader of the Office of Diversity Initiatives, the VP & CDO be charged with developing new programs as well as linking together current programs across and throughout the University in a manner that allows them to become greater than the sum of their parts. Additionally, the VP & CDO will identify and develop new funding sources for DEI-related programs.
- **Serve the entire University community as an accessible, trusted, and responsive subject matter expert on diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice:** The VP & CDO will bring to their work expert knowledge of and hands-on experience with the many facets of DEI work, including the relevant federal policies and regulations as well as nationally recognized campus best practices. One key area of diversity-related leadership will pertain to the recruitment, hiring, tenure/promotion, and retention of historically underrepresented faculty. The VP & CDO will build credibility and trust in the community by understanding how to deploy this expertise with tact, diplomacy, and respect for the varying needs and priorities of the many different offices and departments on campus.
- **Establish and maintain a culture of data-driven assessment and evaluation in relation to DEI:** The VP & CDO will create systems for tracking and evaluating the progress made on institutional diversity and inclusion goals university-wide using data-driven metrics. Working in collaboration with University leadership, the VP & CDO will review DEI efforts on an ongoing basis and ensure that all initiatives are directly and meaningfully aligned with UNLV's mission statement, policies, and strategic plan.

- **Maintain existing and build new relationships with the Las Vegas community:** UNLV is a major economic and cultural engine in Las Vegas and within the region and has many important connections to the local community. The VP & CDO will work closely with leaders in local and state government, communication organizations, and local schools to sustain existing relationships and seek further opportunities for mutual benefit.

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS

The inaugural Vice President for Diversity Initiatives & Chief Diversity Officer will bring high-level strategic thinking, subject matter expertise, and exceptional interpersonal and communication skills to their role on the President's senior leadership team. The ideal candidate will hold a terminal degree and have a well-conceptualized understanding of the faculty experience at a research university. They will bring many of the following complementary skills and experiences to their work:

- A sophisticated understanding of the national conversation around diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in higher education and a keen sense of best practices and emerging issues;
- Demonstrated subject matter expertise in the state and federal laws, regulations, and policies relevant to the position;
- Experience collaboratively developing and implementing a shared strategic vision across a complex institution;
- A track record of creativity and innovation in approaching complex and/or difficult conversations;
- Demonstrated knowledge, expertise, and experience with the process of the recruitment, hiring, tenure/promotion, and retention of historically underrepresented faculty;
- Experience setting and achieving long-term goals and objectives to respond effectively to pressing issues as they arise;
- The broad institutional perspective expected of a Vice President, including a collaborative spirit and the ability to contribute to discussion on a wide range of university issues;
- A willingness and inclination to attract additional friends and resources to the Division of Diversity Initiatives and UNLV through effective grant-writing and cultivation of relationships, specifically with individuals, foundations, and corporations;
- The ability to quickly build relationships of trust and shared purpose with faculty, students, staff, and administrators on campus as well as key community partners in the surrounding area; and,
- Exceptionally strong communication skills, including the ability to credibly present data both orally and in writing to a wide range of audiences.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The search committee for the University of Nevada, Las Vegas Vice President for Diversity Initiatives & Chief Diversity Officer will begin accepting nominations and reviewing applications immediately. Requested application materials include a letter of interest, curriculum vitae, and professional reference list. References will not be called without explicit permission. Although applications will be welcomed until a new VP & CDO is selected, for best consideration all candidates should submit materials by Friday, February 18, 2022, to the following address: UNLV-CDO@storbecksearch.com

For more information about the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, please visit <https://www.unlv.edu/>.

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas is being assisted in this search by [Storbeck Search](#). For additional information, please contact:



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UNLV is an Equal Opportunity / Affirmative Action educator and employer committed to achieving excellence through diversity. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to, among other things, race, color, religion, sex, age, creed, national origin, veteran status, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity, gender expression, or any other factor protected by anti-discrimination laws. The University of Nevada, Las Vegas employs only United States citizens and non-citizens lawfully authorized to work in the United States. Women, under-represented groups, individuals with disabilities, and veterans are encouraged to apply.