

A background image showing two students sitting on the floor, working on laptops. The student on the left is wearing a plaid shirt and a watch, and the student on the right is wearing a dark long-sleeved shirt and jeans. The laptops are open, and the screens show various data visualizations and charts. The image is slightly blurred and has a semi-transparent dark grey overlay in the center where the text is located.

Grad Rebel Advantage, 24-25

Mildred Abarca

Social Work

I am thrilled to be a part of a graduate program to help me navigate with Grad school. I am **currently working on getting my Bachelor's in Social Work** and hope to graduate Spring of 2026. When I heard about this program I got excited and nervous at the same time because I am close to my academic goal and what better way to be surrounded by a supporting team to help me through Grad school. I want to obtain my Social work degree to help others in need.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Samantha Adame-Alvarez

Class Standing: Senior
Department: Lee Business School
Major: International Business
Minor: Marketing

Academic Bio My name is Samantha, and I was born and raised in Las Vegas. I am currently a senior pursuing a bachelor's degree in International Business with a minor in Marketing. During my studies, I had the opportunity to study abroad in Bilbao, Spain, where I interned at Talio, an IT company. There, I conducted research on IT practices in top universities. I also interned with AUVE, an Electric Mobility organization, where I collaborated with global electric mobility firms. Additionally, I have work experience in sales within the industrial sector. Outside of academics, I enjoy reading, video games, shopping, and traveling.

Graduate Program Goals After completing my undergraduate degree, I plan to pursue an MBA and possibly a Master of Science in Accounting.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Jevaughn Caesar Aldana

Political Science, College of Liberal Arts

Hi all, I am a Political Science major currently in my third year at UNLV. I am undecided into which area of law I would further my studies in, however throughout the length of this program I am sure that I can come closer with an answer to that and much more. With the Grad Rebel Advantage Program, I hope to gain more insight with this profession. The study of law can be a broad and vast concept, with this program I am optimistic in gaining a deeper insight of the field and taking another step in my professional career.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Aria Azimee Osmani

Major: Biology

Minor: Neuroscience

Department: School of Life Sciences & College of Liberal Arts

As a pre-medical student majoring in Biology with a minor in Neuroscience, I am passionate about studying the connection between biology and neurological sciences as they relate to healthcare. I am committed to pursuing a career in medicine. I am participating in this program to advance my academic journey and preparation for medical school. The Grad Rebel Advantage program offers the perfect opportunity to guide me through decision-making, preparing me to be a competitive candidate for my dream medical school. The mentorship and professional development opportunities will provide valuable guidance from experienced mentors who were once in my position. I am eager to use the available resources to improve my skills and succeed in medical school.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Nicole Baptista

Bachelor's of Science in Business Management with a concentration in Human Resource Management at Lee Business School

I am currently pursuing my bachelor's degree in Human Resource Management at UNLV and plan to graduate in May 2025. As a senior, I am passionate about working in HR and am eager to make a meaningful impact in this field. Being a first-generation college student, I'm exploring the possibility of pursuing a master's degree, but I'm unsure where to begin with the graduate school process. That's why I'm interested in participating in the Rebel Grad Advantage program—it offers the guidance I need to navigate grad school applications and prepare for the next steps in my academic journey.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Sarelia Benitez

UNLV DEP. OF PSYCHOLOGY- BA IN
PSYCHOLOGY-MINOR: Family Studies

- Hello everyone! I'm currently a senior majoring in psychology. My plan is to eventually go to grad school. I'm not quite sure what route I would like to take in terms of grad programs but my goal is to find which one works best for me! My interests are doing research-based psychology, therapy, and cognitive psychology!



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Dale Brooks

I am a psychology student at the college of Liberal Arts

I am interested in researching ways help sleep better in order to get back to better health. In studying ways to sleep better we can improve people's health.



Hazel Jane R. Cadiz

Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Psychology,
with a minor in Neuroscience

Department of Psychology

My research focuses on Clinical Psychology, with an emphasis on serious mental illnesses (SMI) in adolescents and emerging adults. I am interested in Clinical-High Risk for Psychosis (CHR-P), the intersections between SMI, disabilities, stigma, and resilience, as well as early interventions and treatment of SMI. My research aims to develop culturally-informed, evidence-based interventions.

So far, I have coauthored research focused on cognition, stigma, and social and occupational functioning in first-episode psychosis (FEP). Additionally, I have conducted a literature review on the PRIME screen, a tool used to assess individuals at CHR-P.

The Grad Rebel Advantage Mentee Program offers essential mentorship, advanced research resources and opportunities, and a network of scholars, aligning with my goals as a first-gen student. The guidance and preparation for grad school would be crucial in my journey to pursue a PhD in Clinical Psychology after graduation.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Princess Rhyne Cania

Business Administration,
Information Systems

Hello! I'm currently studying Information Systems. My interest in technology and its application in business has led me to this path. I'm excited to apply the skills I learn in my program to streamline business activities. As I explore my options beyond my undergraduate studies, pursuing a Master's degree is a possibility. I'm actively seeking advice and guidance from mentors to help me make an informed decision about Graduate school.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Graciela Cardoza

Elementary Education, College of Education

My name is Graciela Cardoza and I'm currently studying Elementary Education at the College of Education here at UNLV. As a future educator, I am passionate about inspiring young minds I teach, aiming to make a long lasting impact in their education and how they view the world. I love working with young students as I believe education is a powerful tool for change, and I aspire to create a loving and well inclusive classroom where every child can feel valued and safe.

That said, I joined this program to help identify **my best match for my master's degree.** As someone who wants to expand their knowledge, I want to continue growing as an educator that can make lasting impacts on my student's lives.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Linda Carrera

Hospitality concentrating on
Innovative Restaurant Management

Harrah's College of Hospitality

My field of study is in the restaurant industry. My hopes are to have my own restaurants and catering company. My reasons for joining the program are because I want to further the research done on restaurant sustainability. Due to the industry being a major contributor to environmental damage, I would like to lessen that effect on our planet.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Nicolas Brahms

Major: Psychology; Biology

Department: College of Liberal Arts;
College of Sciences

I am preparing to graduate with a degree in Psychology in the fall of 2024. Throughout this major, I have spent time studying developmental psychology, mental disorders, and the psychology of the law. In the spring of 2025, I will begin my second degree in Biology. **I'm interested in the branches of biochemistry and regeneration.** I intend to apply to medical school and become a neurosurgeon. My aspirations are to research treatments for **neurological disorders, such as Alzheimer's disease and Multiple Sclerosis, and paralysis.** I want to participate in the Grad Rebel Advantage Program because of the valuable information and education it provides in graduate school. The level of mentorship and resources available are extremely useful and verifiable. I hope that this program will help me organize and prepare my academics and extracurricular activities so that I can present a robust application to medical school.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Juan Charry Zapata

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Information Systems

My field of study is Information Systems, an interdisciplinary program that combines core business principles with cutting-edge technology. As a first-generation student from Colombia now living in Las Vegas, I am passionate about leveraging IT solutions for business challenges and bringing a unique international perspective to the field.

I am eager to participate in this program to deepen my understanding of graduate school **and explore the world of UNLV's Graduate College**. My goal is to pursue a Master's degree in Management Information Systems, and this program will be invaluable in guiding me through the graduate school application process, including test preparation and other requirements. I believe this opportunity will not only enhance my academic journey but also benefit my professional career by connecting me with like-minded peers and faculty.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Hunter Clark

Class Standing: Junior
Department: Department of Chemistry & Biochemistry
Major: Chemistry BS
Minor: Mathematics

Hunter is a first-generation college student working to finish his BS in chemistry while minoring in mathematics. He works with the Clark County School District helping teachers and kids with any behavioral issues. After graduating with his degrees, he plans to pursue a career teaching at the collegiate level while researching and improving zero-emission power.

After Hunter completes his chemistry BS degree he will be applying to a PhD degree program in order to further the research in solar cell and nuclear power. He believes solar and nuclear power is the future and wants to help make it happen while teaching others the importance of chemistry in these fields.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Pilar Cohen

Studying as a Psychology major and Neuroscience Minor

Academic Bio: I am a senior who is currently studying as Psychology Major and Neuroscience Minor. I'm planning on applying for my PsyD once I have finished undergraduate degree.

Sport Bio: I am part of the UNLV Swim and Dive Team. I have been competing in the sport since I was 6. I'm in my senior year and last year of competing.



Katherine Cutie

Class Standing: Junior

Department: College of Liberal Arts

Major: Bachelor of Arts in Psychology

Academic Bio:

Katherine is a first-generation American and college student majoring in Psychology. She works as a research assistant at the CHARISMA Lab, focusing on child and adolescent development, and as an intern Wellness Coach at the Calm Clinic, where they help clients manage their mental health. Katherine is also **involved in the Women's Empowerment Program** and serves as a peer mentor for the PSY 200 course, supporting fellow students with psychological concepts and academic challenges. Her roles reflect a commitment to research, wellness, and support.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Katherine aspires to pursue a PhD in Clinical Psychology to combine research expertise with clinical practice to address mental health challenges and promote well-being across diverse communities.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Keane Davis

Psychology B.A.

Aloha everyone,

I am studying to become a Pediatric Neuropsychologist or a Clinical Psychologist. I joined this program to network and meet as many people as I can. I am hoping this program can teach me different views and perspectives from students on how to get into and succeed in doctoral programs.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Sky Denson

BSBA Real Estate, BSBA Finance

Minoring in Global Entrepreneurship

Sky Denson, a native Galvestonian, a small barrier island near Houston, Texas, chose the University of Nevada, Las Vegas to pursue the incredible commercial real estate program. Sky has gained valuable experience through internships with Howard Hughes Holdings and Valtus Capital. Additionally, he has entrepreneurial experience from running an e-commerce business and starting a liquidation retail storefront. As president of the UNLV Real Estate & Business Society, Sky has implemented educational opportunities, coordinated industry tours, networking events, and volunteer projects.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Katalin Dian

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology &
Minor in Philosophy

College of Liberal Arts

I am in my senior year here at UNLV, completing my bachelor degree in psychology, while also pursuing a minor degree in philosophy. I would like to work in the field of addiction, possibly with juveniles. I would like to earn my LDAC and I know for that I need a master degree, **however I really don't know which route to go,** as there are so many options, and I definitely could use some help. This is why I believe that this program could be of tremendous benefit to me, and I am grateful to be a part of this mentorship.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Laisha Diaz

Bachelor of Science in Business
Administration, International Business
Lee Business School

I am currently pursuing an undergraduate degree in International Business with a minor in Brookings Public Policy.

What attracted me to participate in UNLV's Grad Academy – Rebel Advantage Mentee Program is its unique foundation to provide a challenging, but welcoming environment that pushes students to reach their full potential, while offering guidance from experienced mentors. I am confident that this program will provide me with the skills, knowledge, and essential foundation necessary for both professional success and preparation for graduate school.

I am very excited to be apart of this fantastic organization.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Sebastian Espinoza Zavala

B.S. Mechanical Engineering

As an undergraduate Senior pursuing a degree in Mechanical Engineering, I have wended the road of confusion plenty times simply trying to understand how to graduate in a timely manner.

By being in a program such as the Grad Rebel Advantage Program, I will receive the guidance desired as a graduate student to pursue a degree in either Mechanical Engineering or Materials and Nuclear Engineering.

As a student, I have worked under the National Nuclear Security Administration, furthering my curiosity about pursuing a degree in Nuclear Engineering.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Aaron Fleming

BS in Mechanical Engineering

Department: Engineering

I chose to study engineering because I enjoy problem-solving and technology is something I've been passionate about from a young age. I want to continue my education because I love learning about the subject and I want the opportunity to make my own contributions to the field.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Michael Frailey

Pre-Professional Biology

Department of Biology

I am in my third year of studying Biology at UNLV. My goal is to get accepted into medical school and become an orthopedic surgeon. I joined this program as a continuation of the guidance that the Kirk Kerkorian Pre-Med Gateway Cohort provided. I hope that this program helps me understand how to utilize all of the resources UNLV has to offer to help me navigate my path toward medical school. As a native of Las Vegas and a former athlete, I enjoy giving back to my community through volunteering with The Miracle League of Las Vegas. I would like to continue serving my community after the successful completion of medical school in the field of orthopedic surgery. I believe that being a Mentee in the Grad Rebel Advantage program would be a positive step in the right direction.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Taylor Gauthier

Majors: Computer Science and Mathematics

Department: College of Sciences and
College of Engineering

I am currently interested in research of autonomous vehicles and the applications of machine learning. I am also interested in studying math education and how we can better it for future generations.

I hope to use this program to learn more about graduate schools and the process to become a graduate student. I want to work with my fellow peers, who are interested in similar topics as me as we enter this next stage of our lives.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Jagger Goldberg

Class Standing: Senior
Department: Engineering
Major: Computer Science

Academic Bio:

Jagger Goldberg is a native to Las Vegas and a first-generation college student. His early passion for technology is what led him to successfully establish an LLC, which he continues to manage while pursuing a **bachelor's degree in computer science**. Motivated by his desire to expand his expertise, he sees technology as a potential for endless innovation that can be used to optimize and enhance everyday life.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Jagger plans on pursuing a Master's Degree in Computer Science with an emphasis of database design and information retrieval. From this program he looks to develop the skills and knowledge necessary to work with large-scale data systems.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Alexis Gomez

Class Standing: Senior

Department: Liberal Arts Major Psychology

I'm interested in participating in the Grad Rebel Advantage program because of its focus on providing structured support and research experience for aspiring graduate students. My research interest lies in psychology, where I aim to investigate behavioral and cognitive patterns, with the goal of contributing to a better understanding of human behavior. This program offers the opportunity to develop advanced research skills, network with experienced faculty, and gain insights into the graduate school process. Participating would allow me to refine my research approach, strengthen my academic profile, and prepare me for the competitive nature of graduate studies in psychology.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Gina Mireya Gonzalez

Class Standing: Junior

Department: College of Sciences

Major: Biological Sciences with a concentration in Pre=Professional Studies.

I am pursuing a bachelor's degree in biology with the intent to go to medical school and become a Cardio-Thoracic surgeon. I have a passion for helping those in need and giving back to our under-served and under-insured community. Working in medicine will bring me the satisfaction to give back to my community while loving science and educating those around me about the importance of health.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Romeo Guevara

Class Standing: Junior
Department: Liberal Arts
Major: Psychology

Academic Bio:

Romeo Guevara has been a resident of Las Vegas for 20+ years and a student at UNLV for 3 years. His keen interest in mental health and illnesses is what helped to spark his passion with Psychology, specifically interested in Child Psychiatry. He is currently Vice President Internal of Alpha Psi Rho and used to serve as Secretary. He is also a proud member of Alpha Phi Omega, a service fraternity, and a Peer Mentor for COLA100LA students.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Romeo plans to pursue medical school in order to become a Child Psychiatrist. He believes that childhood development and mental health is pivotal to their well-being as children and when they become adults. He strives to help children in need.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Zoe Hardge

Psychology

As a dedicated psychology professional, my research focuses on the intricate connections between mental health, trauma, and recovery. I aim to deepen my understanding of human behavior, especially in trauma and resilience contexts. Through my work at the College of Southern Nevada, I have seen firsthand how critical mental health support can be in fostering personal growth and well-being. I am eager to participate in UNLV's Grad Academy program because it aligns with my passion for providing high-quality psychological care. This program will equip me with the advanced skills and knowledge necessary to serve as an effective clinician and contribute meaningfully to the field of psychology.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Michelle Hedden

Major: Psychology
Minor: Human Services

Department: Psychology

Michelle transferred to UNLV from a community college in Southern California to pursue a **bachelor's degree in psychology with a minor in human services**. After working in the interior design field for several years, she returned to college to change careers and follow her passion for helping people with mental health challenges and those going through difficult times in their lives. **She aspires to pursue a master's degree in clinical mental health counseling or a doctorate degree in clinical psychology.**

Michelle is excited to participate in the Grad Rebel Advantage Program to learn how best to **prepare for grad school**. **More specifically, she's interested in researching different graduate programs and learning how to make her application stand out.** She's also looking forward to having a mentor who can support her through the process.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Cas Hill

Bachelor of Arts

English Department

I am a third-year English student with a focus in literature, but I am particularly interested in contemporary media studies and cross-media analysis with a basis in literary elements. I sought out this program because, though I plan to further my education beyond undergrad, the process has always seemed daunting to me. I have no previous knowledge of grad school, so I am grateful to have access to such an amazing resource that will ease my worries. I hope to leave this program with a better understanding of how graduate programs function, and a plan to prepare myself for grad school both academically and professionally.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Marcella Johnson

Major: Psychology

Minors: Neuroscience, Family Studies

Department: College of Liberal Arts

I am a third year Psychology major, with minors in Neuroscience and Family Studies. Currently, I am focused on understanding how the brain, behavior, and family dynamics all connect. Right now, I am working toward a career where I can help advocate for children, especially in a school setting. After graduating from UNLV, I plan to get my Ed.S. in School Psychology. My goal is to be a School Psychologist, so I can support children and make a real difference in their lives as they grow and learn.

I hope to gain valuable experience to help me navigate through graduate school, and be prepared for the next steps in my academic and professional journey!



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Sara Kiros

Psychology

College of Liberal Arts

My experience as a first-generation student has shaped my passion for mental health advocacy and social justice. I am pursuing a degree in psychology with the goal of becoming a substance abuse counselor. I am committed to using my education to address disparities in mental health and substance abuse treatment. I am driven to not only achieve academic success but also to make a meaningful impact in my field. My focus is on understanding the complexities of human behavior, mental health, and addiction, particularly in marginalized communities. By pursuing research and gaining hands-on experience, I aim to contribute to the development of more inclusive, culturally sensitive interventions that promote recovery and well-being for all individuals.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Drex Labajo

Third-Year Undergraduate
Psychology Major

- Hi there everyone! My name's Drex Labajo. I'm a third year Psych Major, and in my spare time I work as a Behavior Technician!
- I'm attending UNLV in hopes of getting into my ideal career as a Licensed Mental Health Counselor. I find a lot of fulfillment in helping those in need and I hope to use the resources in this program to help me get into a Masters Program for prospective LPCCs!
- Some (hopefully) cool things about me are that I compete occasionally in Fighting Game tournaments (ex. Street Fighter/Tekken) and I'm really into the Dream Indie genre of music!



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Megan Lopez

Psychology – College of Liberal Arts

Criminal Justice – Greenspun College of Urban Affairs

I am currently a junior double majoring in Psychology and Criminal Justice. After **graduating with my bachelor's degrees, I plan** on going to Graduate School to pursue a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology with an emphasis in Forensics. I joined the Grad Rebel Advantage Program so that I can become better prepared for what Graduate School has to offer.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Cora Marinos

Cora is an Anthropology undergraduate student with a minor in Great Works. They are focusing in Biological Anthropology and Archeology. She grew up in California but moved to Las Vegas in 2022 to attend UNLV. Cora wants to work in a library or museum and is interested in getting her master's in Library and Information Sciences after finishing school at UNLV.



Tanya Martinez Valiente

Department: William F. Harrah
College of Hospitality
Major: Hospitality, Event Design &
Management concentration

My field of study is Hospitality, specifically in the Event Design and Management industry. This field focuses on one-on-one interactions with people, management, leadership, cost control, and more. My concentration covers the planning and execution of events ranging from conventions to weddings. As a first-generation Latin-American student, it is daunting to embark on a path that no one else around me has taken. Participating in this program will help me get a feel for grad school and determine if this is the right path for me. With involvement in over five organizations and leadership positions in a few of them, I am determined to stay involved and take on every opportunity this college offers, including the Grad Rebel Advantage Program.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Paris Mathews

Social Work

Greenspun Hall

My field of study is Social Work which is a profession that helps people and communities with the difficulties they are facing in life and to improve their wellbeing. I want to participate in this program because I know it would help me reach my goal of getting a master's degree. When I started college, I did not learn the resources and support I had until later. Because of that, I was stressing about situations I was in that could have been prevented or solved with the resources I have now. Having a mentor, peer support, workshops, and other resources will not only ease my mind and allow me to focus more on my program; But I will also enjoy having a supportive community and not feel like **I'm doing this alone. I look forward to this program and meeting the main goal of graduation!**



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Katherine Melbourne

Class Standing: Senior
Department: College of Liberal Arts
Major: WLC in Spanish
Minor: Creative Writing

Academic Bio

An interdisciplinary artist based here in Las Vegas, Nevada, Katherine is aspiring to develop her creative writing skills, particularly in poetry and poetry translation. She is a nontraditional student who is a mother to her toddler and works two jobs outside of school.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Katherine is deciding between attending graduate school to continue her studies in Spanish Language & Culture or Creative Writing with an emphasis in poetry. Because creative writing MFA's come in all shapes and sizes, she's looking into the possibility of an MFA with an international or bilingual component to continue her poetry writing with a bilingual c. She plans to use her time in the Grad Rebel Advantage program to learn more about graduate school and her options.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Kayla Vea Mina

Bachelor of Science in Chemistry

Department of Chemistry and
Biochemistry

I am a 4th year Chemistry major and have enjoyed the analytical aspects of the subject as well as studying the electronic states of atoms and their structures. Witnessing the once small-scale chemical/scientific trials develop to something larger that benefits various industries has always enticed me, and contributing to it is my aim.

I decided to join the Grad Rebel Advantage program to mainly explore more available opportunities post-graduation and possibly solidify a path. Additionally, having exposure to the resources offered by the program would not only allow me to be involved in new experiences, but also promote growth to my skills.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Aqeelah Muhammad

Class Standing: Senior
Department: College of Sciences
Major: Biological Sciences
Minor: Psychology

Academic bio

Aqeelah is a first-generation student from Portland, Oregon. As a biological sciences major with a minor in psychology, she hopes to become a teacher. She is involved in SSTEM but hopes to become more involved in other programs UNLV has to offer before she graduates.

What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Aqeelah wants to pursue a Master's in Education to teach at the high school level. Aqeelah spends her free time coaching high school volleyball, she enjoys teaching and being a role model for students and would like to continue that in a classroom.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Giovanni Nunez

Psychology and Chinese Studies

I'm a third year student majoring in psychology with a minor in Chinese. I decided to join Rebel Grad Advantage to help guide me towards graduate school in counseling to hopefully become a school counselor. I aspire to become a mentor to the youth who are struggling to figure out what they'd like to become and help them find a suitable path to the future. I'm a volunteer peer staff for the Latino Youth Leadership Conference, mentoring high school students in a week long conference to help develop professional skills, build a network, and receive information on higher education as well as career fields. In my free time I enjoy creating music, hanging out with friends, and playing sports. I'm also the president for UNLV Ping Pong Club so I'm regularly at the SRWC!



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Gianna Ortiz

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology,
College of Liberal Arts

I am interested in pursuing a master's degree in Couples & Family Therapy and potentially a doctorate in Counseling Psychology. I want to participate in this program to prepare for graduate school and my future career. I am excited to seek mentorship and build connections in this program!



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Dilmi Perera

Master of Public Health

School of Public Health

I am pursuing a Master's in Public Health, with a focus on health policy and administration to address systemic healthcare challenges in underserved communities. My research centers on chronic disease management, particularly obesity and heart disease, which disproportionately affect vulnerable populations in Las Vegas. As a pharmacy technician, I have gained valuable insight into the barriers patients face in managing their health and accessing resources. This has fueled my passion for improving health equity through patient education and healthcare reform. I aim to pursue a career as a healthcare administrator or policy analyst, working to develop policies and programs that improve healthcare access and outcomes. Participating in this program will provide me with the mentorship and skills necessary to drive meaningful change within the healthcare system.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

JESSICA PIERRETTE

Bachelors of Psychology

College of Liberal Arts

Hi, I'm Jessica Pierrette. I started college early like in my junior year of high school. I received my associate of arts in psychology from the college of Southern Nevada or better known as CSN. I transferred to UNLV to complete my **bachelor's in psychology and will be graduating in the spring of 2025.**

After obtaining my bachelors, I plan on going to Law school. My dream school is UNLV Boyd law school. The whole process of law school is a little stressful and that is part of the reason I joined the grad academy program here on campus. I know this program has amazing resources and can connect me with someone who has been through this whole process before.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Grace Pinon

Department: Criminal Justice

Degree program: Criminal Justice

I am currently majoring in Criminal Justice in hopes of becoming a Criminal Investigator. I plan on going to grad school in order to increase my knowledge in the field more in depth; something I believe only grad school can offer me. I am interested in participating in this program because I believe it will allow me to gain the mentorship needed to succeed in a higher institution. I also believe it will allow me to network and meet many different people with different areas of study which is something I look forward to. I look forward to the knowledge I will gain while participating in this program.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Gage Moore Pompa

Bachelor of Arts in Psychology

Department of Psychology

I am a third-year student studying psychology and I became extremely interested in the field of neuroscience after joining Dr. Hymans HIVE lab. I wanted to join this program because I **plan on applying to UNLV's medical school** and want to know more about the process and how to become a more competitive applicant. I believe by having a mentor it will help me a lot as a first-generation college student.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Mateo T. Portelli

History B.A. & Military Science minor
UNLV College of Liberal Arts

After moving to the U.S. at the age of four, Mateo is the first in his family to attend University. He enlisted in the Nevada National Guard in 2020 as an Information Technology Specialist. His passion for law was sparked during his time as an Army Cadet, leading him to set his sights on law school. Mateo is interested in cyber law, aiming to contribute to policies and legal infrastructures vital to national security.

Mateo views graduate education as a tool for developing both the technical knowledge and leadership skills required to address the dynamic challenges facing modern society. Mateo also serves on the Nevada Attorney General's **Technological Crime Advisory Board**. He plans to continue his service as an Army National Guard Cyber Warfare Officer while pursuing a legal career as a criminal prosecutor.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Emma Alysia Ramírez

Bachelor of Science in Hospitality
Management

College of Hospitality

The UNLV hospitality program has given me the opportunity to explore the hospitality industry. In my four years at UNLV, I have been able to gain knowledge and research industry trends, operations management, customer service, event planning, financial management, tourism management, technology within hospitality, and cross-cultural management. I see that all my gained knowledge at UNLV is just the beginning of something bigger. The reason I want to participate in the Grad Rebel Advantage program is because I want to continue learning, grow professionally, expand my networking possibilities, and better prepare myself for the next chapter in my life after UNLV. I intend to take advantage of this once in a life-time opportunity and reach my full potential.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Lisette Reyes-Montes

Major: Kinesiology

Department: Health Science

I want to pursue a master's degree in biomedical engineering. I want to specialize in medical devising. In pursuing my dream, I hope to make an impact in the advancement of medical devices. I hope to inspire more upcoming people to also want to better our medical industry.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Daphne Rios

Bachelors of Arts in
Psychology, College of
Liberal Arts

I am a motivated and detail-oriented bilingual social sciences student currently pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, with a strong foundation in qualitative and quantitative research methods, information management, analytical thinking skills, and social skills, such as inclusivity, and service-oriented. Possessing hands-on experience in community outreach **and public health. Ready to pursue my master's** in Public Health next Fall semester. I am confident that the Grad Rebel program will provide me with guidance, knowledge, and tools to succeed professionally and academically in graduate school. I am also eager to participate in the workshops and mentorship process and network with others. Finally, this opportunity motivates me to further my education as a first-generation student.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Isabella Romero Yusti

Bachelors in Biochemistry,
Department of Chemistry and
Biochemistry

Isabella is pursuing a Biochemistry major and a Family Studies minor as a member of the UNLV Honors College. She is passionate about biochemistry and hopes to become a research Professor one day. She joined her first research lab during Freshman year, where she researched molecular mechanisms of **Alzheimer's disease with Dr. Jefferson Kinney.** Nevertheless, due to her interest in biochemistry, she decided to move to Dr. Gary **Kleiger's** biochemistry and proteomics lab. Here she conducts research on the molecular mechanisms of action of ubiquitin ligases and ubiquitin-conjugating enzymes, in short, how cells dispose of trash.

Isabella hopes that becoming part of the Rebel Grad Advantage Program will help prepare her to be a strong candidate for graduate school, where she plans to pursue a Ph.D. in Biochemistry.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Cameran Rynearson

Nutrition Sciences Major

Department of Kinesiology and
Nutrition Sciences

I plan on attending graduate school for a master's degree in nutrition sciences in order to become a dietitian. My goal is to own my own private practice and specialize in working with clients struggling with binge eating disorder. I chose to enter this program in order to help demystify the grad school application process, as well as learn how to make myself a more competitive applicant. I am also excited about the potential opportunity to enroll in graduate courses. I believe that entering this program will help me become a versatile student, in addition to the advantages that it provides for entering my master's degree.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Shaday Chance Sams

University of Las Vegas, Nevada
School of Social

Hello! My names is Shaday Sams. As of now, I'm in my last year of my BSW program at University of Nevada Las Vegas. Once I started on this journey to go back to school, I knew I wanted to help my community and positively impact people's lives. After discussing my career goals with a colleague, i decided becoming an LCSW was my path towards achieving that vision. In order to complete that vision in the career of social work, I need to obtain a Master's degree in social work. As I get ready to begin that journey next year, I knew that I needed some more support and guidance as I begin that process and I though this program would be an excellent opportunity to find that! I'm truly hoping to learn and grow from this experience and succeed in my Master's program.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Nevaeh Sanford

Third Year Kinesiology Major –
Pursuing Athletic Training

I'm excited about joining this program because I'm eager to dive deeper into the field and get the support I need to succeed. Having a mentor would be incredibly valuable for navigating complex research and refining my work. Plus, **it's a great opportunity to connect with professionals and explore different career paths within kinesiology.** I'm looking forward to developing specialized skills, receiving honest feedback, and finding inspiration to push my academic and career goals forward. Overall, this program would be an amazing way to get the guidance and encouragement I need to make a real impact in the field.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Lorie Sayegh

Bachelors of Arts

Major - Psychology - Pursuing Dental School

I am currently pursuing a degree in psychology, a field that has provided me with a deep understanding of human behavior, communication, and empathy- skills I believe are crucial for a successful career in dentistry. My experience as a dental assistant has solidified my passion for dental care and patient interaction, inspiring me to further my education by attending dental school. The Grad Rebel Advantage program would offer me invaluable guidance and resources to navigate the transition from undergraduate studies to dental school helping me achieve my goal of becoming a dentist.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Camila Schettini

Bachelor's Student,

Psychology Major

Neuroscience Minor

I'm a third year undergraduate student with prospects of graduating on Fall of 2025.

Majoring in Psychology and minoring in Neuroscience, I plan to pursue a Ph.D. in either Neuropsychology or Brain and Cognitive Sciences.

I migrated from Ecuador to the United States 3 years ago. My journey has shaped the way I think and wish to carry on with my life, I'm grateful for every experience I've had.

In the long term I wish to help people with neurocognitive disorders, understand the brain, and contribute to the field to a great extent.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Melanie Solorio

Degree: Business Administration,
Information Systems

Department: Lee Business School

Hello, my name is Melanie Solorio, a second year student who is a first generation student studying Information systems. I am eager to learn about my program in hopes of continuing further education and learning more about cybersecurity to pursue this as my profession. I am passionate about this program as I am dedicated to learn more about higher education and I want to take the right steps to accomplish my goal!



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Alexyz Stokes

Major- Kinesiology

Department- Division of Health Sciences

Hello everyone! I was hoping to join the Grad Rebel Advantage Program! Many of us are first-gen students so navigating through college has been an experience. So a program such as the Grad Rebel Advantage program seems to be a great opportunity to know more about grad school, and meet other people who are in similar situations in their educational career!

The field I wish to go into is getting into the Physical Therapy program right here in UNLV. With a focus in Geriatric Physical Therapy it's a dream to work with our older adults and improve their quality of life.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Faith Stratton

Class Standing: Senior
Department: College of Liberal Arts
Major: Psychology
Minors: Addiction Prevention, Addiction Treatment, and Problem Gambling Counseling

Faith, a Las Vegas native and first generation student, is a senior majoring in Psychology and minoring in Addiction Prevention, Addiction Treatment, and Problem Gambling Counseling.

She is passionate about understanding how addiction and psychology intersect, and is a proud member of both PSI CHI and NAMI. In the future, Faith wishes to complete a thesis program researching how families are impacted mentally when a close relative struggles with addiction.

Faith works full time as a Quality Specialist at a plasma donation center, and has worked hard to find a balance between her education and work. In her free time, she enjoys reading, bowling, and spending time with her boyfriend and three dogs.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Amber Stringer

College of Urban Affairs

Urban Studies with a minor in
Communication

I am currently working towards completion of my degree in Urban Studies with a minor in Communication. I have always found my passion in public service and serving my community. I also believe that solid communication skills can carry me through almost any scenario. As a non-traditional, first-generation college student, I recognize the benefit of a strong support system when it comes to completing my education, especially while maintaining a full-time career and raising a family. I am looking forward to building an even stronger support system as I navigate applying for and attending graduate school.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

LeeAnna Marie Sueno

Class Standing: Senior

Psychology and Anthropology with a minor in Sociology.

LeeAnna (she/they) aims to graduate in Spring 2025 and attend graduate school for Anthropology with a focus in Forensics. Their current goal is to become a medicolegal investigator and conduct research that promotes deconstructing the current justice system and promoting equity for marginalized communities in the system. In their free time, LeeAnna works as an intern for the nonprofit IndigenousAF and enjoys reading.



Melissa Swinehart

Degree: Computer Science

Department: College of Engineering

My field of study is Computer Science, with a special focus on Machine Learning and AI. My enthusiasm for this area began during my research at Ohio State University, where I developed various AI models and explored their applications. This experience inspired me to explore the different ways to implement AI for innovative and beneficial use in society. Participating in this program will offer me valuable insights into graduate-level research and help me take a significant step toward my **goal of pursuing a master's degree in Machine Learning and AI.**



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Remay Tecklay

Preprofessional Biology,
Neuroscience Minor

Department of Biology

A Biology major with a Neuroscience minor at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, aspiring to become a physician focusing on health equity. I have experience as a Patient Care Technician with the USPI Surgery Center, where I have provided direct patient support. I have also completed breast cancer research at Weill Cornell Medicine, focusing on early prevention strategies.

Currently, I volunteer at Southern Hills Hospital and actively participate in community service through Alpha Epsilon Delta (AED), contributing to healthcare initiatives like blood drives and outreach programs. I also serve as a board member of the Habesha Student Association, promoting cultural and healthcare advocacy. I joined the Grad Rebel Advantage in hopes of making the most out of my undergraduate experience and further my knowledge of what it means to be a physician.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Aliyah Thomas

4th year Kinesiology

Department of Kinesiology and
Nutrition Sciences

My field of study is Kinesiology. I am passionate about sports medicine and working with rehab patients and athletes. My dream job is a physical therapist for athletes or children. I want to be apart of this program to prepare myself for success in the future. I plan to apply to graduate/PT school within the next year. This program will help me be proactive in setting up my future and allow myself to get ahead in the process. Being mentored by people who have already been in my position is the most useful resource I could have in achieving my goal!



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Tam Tran

Class Standing: Junior

Department: College of Science

Major: Biological Science, Pre-med

- Academic Bio

Tam was born and raised in Vietnam, and immigrated to the United State in 2020. He is a second-generation college student, who is majoring in Biological Science with Pre-professional Studies and minoring Neuroscience. He is currently a Vice President of Vietnamese Student Association and a third-year scholar of Hixson-Lied Success Scholars Program.

- What graduate program do you plan on pursuing and why?

Tam would like to pursue a Doctor of Medicine at Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine at UNLV, where he can stay in-state while continuing giving back to the Las Vegas community. Upon graduation from medical school, he would like to become a family medicine doctor to provide high-quality patient care for all underrepresented members of our community.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Mariana L. Valencia Ochoa

Harrah College of Hospitality

Event Design & Management
Concentration

Hi ! My name is Mariana and I am a Senior in the Hospitality College. My passion is events and it is something I have been doing since middle school. My dream is to open my own event company that does work both domestically and internationally. Because of this, I am interested in getting my Masters because I need the most knowledge I can get before I set off on my own. My main fear in getting a Masters Degree is the imposter syndrome and struggles of being a 1st gen college student. I am hoping Grad Academy helps me gain confidence and a support system for Grad School



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Nathaniel Valentine

B.S. Geology, minor in Biological Sciences

Department: College of Sciences

I aspire to become a paleontologist, studying the fossils of organisms that once lived on Earth millions of years ago. Through my research, I aim to unravel a clear picture of the wonderful organisms that once lived in the past and the diverse environments where they thrived. I hope that in my time on Earth, however short it **may be, that I may contribute to humanity's** knowledge of the complete picture of life.

To achieve my goals, it is important that I develop proper research skills. Fortunately, the Grad Rebel Advantage Program organizes research workshops that will help me develop the skills necessary to achieve my professional and personal goals.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Luis G. Vazquez Gonzalez

Majoring in Psychology BA w/ a
Minor in Family Studies

College of Liberal Arts (COLA)

The field of psychology studies the mind to further understand the nature and behavior of people within our current society. My interest in psychology came about from experiencing personal mental hardships that I am grateful to say I have overcome. Nevertheless, I know what it is like to suffer mentally in a way that is difficult to communicate to others. So, it is with this knowledge and experience in mental illness that I intend to help others **know that they aren't alone or without hope** in this world. Currently, I am pursuing my Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology with the goal of afterward pursuing a Master of Science Degree in Couples and Family Therapy. The latter degree will secure my opportunity to become a Marriage and Family Therapist



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Maya Velazquez

Department: College of Liberal Arts

Major: Psychology

I am a junior pursuing a degree in Psychology with a minor in Family Studies. I am an active member of the Psychology Club and the Psi Chi chapter, where I engage with my peers and advance my understanding of the field.

Driven by a lifelong passion for strong relationships, both familial and intimate, I aspire to become a marriage and family therapist. I aim to open my own practice, dedicating myself to helping individuals and families navigate and strengthen their relationships.

I believe that pursuing a Master's in Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT) will allow me to develop the essential skills needed to excel in my field and prepare for my future career.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Kira Vellos

Psychology Bachelors/Psychology Department

Participating in the Grad Rebel Program is a step for me to earn a doctorate in psychology with hopes to launch a prison reform organization. This program can provide me with valuable opportunities to develop advanced research skills and gain insights into innovative practices within psychology. By engaging with a network of like-minded peers and mentors, I can refine my research focus, gain academic and professional growth, as well as be more competitive in graduate school. The program's emphasis on mentoring can also help me integrate psychological theory with practical reform strategies, enhancing the effectiveness of my future dreams. Furthermore, the exposure to real-world challenges and solutions within the program will equip me with the tools to address systemic issues in the prison system, ultimately supporting my mission to drive change.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Selina Ventura

Social Work, Greenspun College of Urban Affairs

My ultimate goal is to become a well-rounded social worker. What calls me the most is to work with the public school system especially higher education. I believe that I can provide support and relief to students and their families especially in times of crisis. I would like to provide a safe environment for students where they can grow and thrive in. In addition, I want to work with the immigrant population within the school system. Being an undocumented immigrant myself, I struggled with finding resources throughout my educational journey. Therefore, I hope I can be a light to others in any situation they face so that they can prosper in their personal and professional life.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Navaeh Vicente

Department: College of Liberal Arts

Major: Psychology

I am planning to study how brain injuries impact behavior and trying to enhance treatment possibilities for these individuals. My minor is in Neuroscience, starting next semester I will have Neuroscience as my double major. I am originally from Rhode Island and see how the lack of mental health professionals negatively impacts a community. I want to help those lacking in mental health resources get the help they need. This program I hope to help me prepare for Graduate School and hear firsthand experience from Mentors.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Bisa Irie Welch

Bachelor of Arts in Journalism and Media Studies with a double concentration in Audio/Podcasting and Digital/Social Media

With graduation so close, I am sure unsure what I want to do in regard to my degree. I would have the ability to have opportunities with my degree but in a field like journalism, it would be a disservice to not expand my skillset to further myself going into other avenues.

Journalism involves knowing the power in words and how you can use them to prompt change, action, and empathy. Why not pair this with more knowledge that can enhance the beauty of our communities?



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Kierianna S. Wells

Bachelor's of Science: Geology
Geoscience Department

I want to research improving water treatment technologies in my Native American community in New Mexico and other Native American communities. I also want to help other non-Native American communities regarding their water treatment system. Overall, I want to study water remediation and water treatment technologies.

I want to be part of this program because I **want to apply for a Master's in Water Resources Management**. This is my last semester before I graduate, and I want to be prepared and learn more about what the graduate program has to offer. Furthermore, this program gives me the opportunity to learn more about the application and research aspects into the graduate program.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Prince Wesley

Bachelor's of Arts- Psychology

Prince Wesley is a third-year undergraduate student at UNLV as a psychology major. In 2021 he graduated from the College of Southern Nevada with an associate of arts degree in psychology. During his academic tenure at the College of Southern Nevada he held the position of Vice President of their respected Psychology Club. Prince is moved and driven by the field of psychology and therapy due to the lack of representation it holds within his Black community and Black culture . With hopes to incorporate the importance of the psychological self and develop structures that uplift and help individuals like him and people who need mental health services– that may be underrepresented– through the foundation of psychology and cognitive-behavioral psychological approaches and therapy. He is a member of the Psi-Chi at UNLV club with the hopes to immerse himself as a research assistant within other research labs on campus. His goal is to obtain his PhD in psychology and become a clinical psychologist specializing in depression, mood disorders, and grief.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Zach Wilcox

Department: Liberal Arts

Major: Psychology B.A

Minor: Neuroscience

My biggest goal following graduation with a **Bachelor's Degree is to attend graduate school** and acquire a PhD in Clinical Psychology. The Rebel Advantage Program seems vital and informative regarding the process and important aspects of applying for such a competitive graduate school option. As I work as a BST (Basic Skills Trainer), I have been able to receive exposure to the community and mostly the developmental side of psychology firsthand. With the help of the program, I hope to learn how to become a more qualified applicant. I also hope to narrow down which specific field garnishes my most interest.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Lorenzo Williams

Major: Art

Minor Art History

I am a first-generation college student with an anticipated graduation date of Fall 2025. After earning my bachelor's degree, I plan to persue a master's degree in art history. This program provides a solid foundation that will facilitate a smooth transition to graduate school. My research interests focus on the art of ancient Europe, specially examining how art has influenced societal norms and challenges established conventions. I am passionate about not only creating art and inspiring others to do the same but also understanding the historical context and motivations behind artistic expression. In my free time, I enjoy watching films and engaging in abstract drawing, often depicting my friends and family.



THE GRAD ACADEMY

Nicklaus Yoo

Communication Studies
5th Year Undergraduate

Hi! I am interested in going to grad school because I am fascinated by human behavior (especially in the realms of communication, consciousness, and belief) and hope to one day research and teach on what it means to be human. I enjoy reading philosophy, playing and listening to music, writing poetry, eating new foods, and spending time with my family and dogs.



THE GRAD ACADEMY