



*Summary Report on the Native  
Youth College Camp  
Nevada Native Youth Community Project*

July 2022

**PREPARED FOR:**

Nevada Native Youth Community Project

**PREPARED BY:**

RMC Research Corporation  
Tampa, FL



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**Overview of the Native Youth College Camp**

The three-day-long *Native Youth College Camp* was held from June 23 through June 25, 2022, at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV). It was funded by the Nevada Department of Education’s Native Youth Community Project (NYCP), which partnered with UNLV and the Palms Resort and Casino to provide Native students from Nevada with information and experiences related to college and career readiness. Along with her colleagues, Devan Harris, the Associate Director for Early Outreach in UNLV’s Office of Admissions, served as the primary designer and planner of the college camp. Forty-five Grades 6–12 students and 13 chaperones from Clark County and the towns of Wells, Winnemucca, McDermitt, Yerington, Schurz, and Owyhee participated in the camp.

An overview of session topics and activities is reported in Table 1. A detailed explanation of many of the sessions is presented in the following section.

**Table 1**

*Overview of Session Topics and Activities*

Day	Session Topics and Activities
1. Day One Evening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orientation, dinner, and guest speakers</li> <li>• Keynote speaker Chance Rush and his daughter, Abby Rush, motivated students with their opening remarks.</li> <li>• They were joined by Rudy Indigenous, a Native entrepreneur and DJ.</li> </ul>
2. Day Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guided Campus Tour</li> <li>• Barrick Museum Tour and Guest Artist Presentation</li> <li>• Harrah College of Hospitality Tour and Presentation</li> <li>• Greenspun School of Journalism and Media Studies (Home of UNLV TV and KUNV Radio)</li> <li>• UNLV Native Student Panel</li> <li>• Dollar Loan Center Arena Tour and Vegas Knight Hawks Indoor Football Game</li> </ul>
3. Day Three	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNLV Admissions Presentation</li> <li>• Center for Gaming Innovation Presentation and Lab Tour</li> <li>• Palms Resort and Casino Tour and Presentations</li> <li>• Native American Scholars Day Recognition Ceremony</li> </ul>

## Session Topics and Activities

### Day 1

#### *Orientation, Dinner, and Guest Speakers*

The College Camp officially began on the evening of Thursday, June 23, with a keynote address featuring Chance Rush, a nationally known Native motivational speaker who has worked extensively with tribal communities and organizations. His presentation was preceded by two brief talks given by Rudy Indigenous and Abby Rush.

The first speaker was Rudy Indigenous, a Native entrepreneur and DJ who handles the sound system for Chance Rush's presentations. He asked students to create the future they wanted by repeatedly telling them, "You have to have a plan." He described how soon after he began a job, he decided he didn't want anyone telling him what to do and aspired to be the manager. He worked hard until he obtained that position and had employees reporting to him. After working in management for some time, he realized he wanted something more—to be independent and have his own business. He fulfilled that dream by designing and starting a new venture. He concluded his talk by stating, "Having a mentality that there is nothing you can't do will skyrocket your dreams."

Chance Rush's daughter, Abby Rush, spoke next with a compelling message about the crucial importance of addressing mental health issues. She began by saying, "I had a dream that I wanted to follow. Little did I know that it would carry me through some of the hardest times of life." She spoke about a period when her mental health was dangerously unstable and she felt alone, depressed, and scared. "I called my dad and mother...I was struggling," she recalled. "I brought my family around me; I brought my friends around me." She said that asking for help is often difficult, but it is the bravest thing a person can do. "If you need help, call on someone," she urged the youth in the audience. She encouraged the young people "to lean on each other, to call on each other, to reach out." She is a published poet and writer and read several of her poems at the end of her talk.

Next, Chance Rush stepped in front of the group and described a painful turning point in his life: the day four years ago when his mother was killed by a drunk driver going 140 miles per hour. He said the sudden and devastating loss of his mother was an event that made him rethink his own life and motivated him to actively pursue new directions he had only considered before. He said that "an idea is only an idea" unless it is acted upon.

Rush said that "It is a privilege to be indigenous," and all Native people need to be mindful of caring for their minds, bodies, and souls. Now, he said, the average age of Native men dying is 43. "We are dying of health differences," he stated and labeled the health crisis the "big huge elephant in the room." He called on health issues to be addressed and for young people to be more mindful of the food they eat, their connections with their culture, and the ways they take care of themselves. He said that people must love the Creator, love themselves, and not wait for success to show up but earn that success through action. He told the students, "Whatever you put into your life is what you get out of it."

He spoke about a long-held dream that he decided to realize, which was to become an actor. After appearing in local theater productions, he studied acting professionally and did numerous commercials and TV series roles in Oklahoma, where he and his family lived. However, he was unsatisfied with the limited opportunities available to him. So with his wife, he made the decision to uproot their family and move to Dallas, where he would have access to a larger market. He shared that he went to many auditions and experienced multiple rejections. However, he persisted and was finally cast in the Martin Scorsese film “Killers of the Flower Moon,” starring Robert de Niro, Leonard DiCaprio, and Jesse Plemons. The film tells the story of the mysterious murders in the Osage Nation in Oklahoma after oil was discovered on tribal lands in the 1920s.

He ended his talk by saying, “If you believe that it will happen, there is a good chance that it will.” He encouraged students to believe in themselves and not settle for being like others. Rather, he said, each person should be someone different and unique.

## **Day Two**

### ***Guided Campus Tour***

#### **Figure 1**

*Students and chaperones tour the campus of UNLV with their student guide, Jason.*



Photo by Linda Fredericks

Students took a student-led walking tour of the UNLV campus. They learned that UNLV was founded in 1957 and serves approximately 30,000 students. It offers more than 200 undergraduate, masters, and doctoral degree programs. UNLV is considered one of the leading research universities in the nation and is the tenth most ethnically diverse university in the country, with students from all 50 states and 94 countries.

## Figure 2

*Students learn about the Academic Success Center during their tour of the UNLV campus.*



Photo by Linda Fredericks

During the tour, the guide described the supports available to them to assist their learning and personal development outside the classroom. They learned that the Division of Student Affairs is committed to enhancing academic success, wellness, and campus life for UNLV students. During their visit to the Lied Library, they witnessed first-hand the latest technologies in place for library services, including interactive maps, a system that allows students to find available computers, and the automated retrieval system used by the library. Students learned that the Lied Library is the largest building on campus, intentionally designed to be larger than the university's iconic basketball arena. It serves as the center of the university and the most important building on campus. Students also visited classrooms, the student union, and the student recreation center during their tour.

### Figure 3

*The Lied Library's automated resource retrieval system*

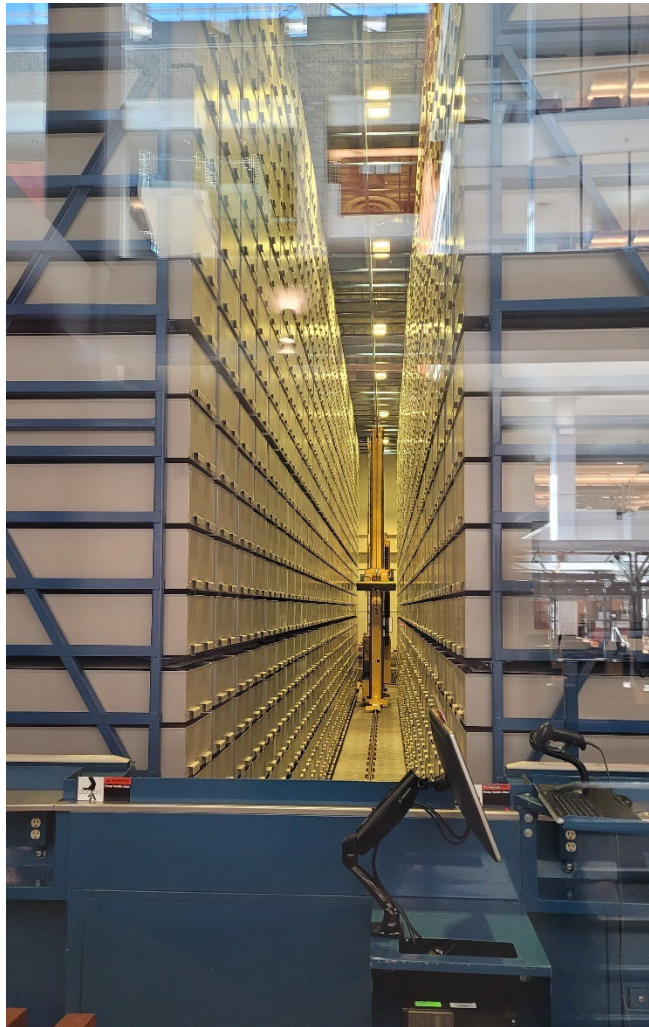


Photo by Linda Fredericks

### ***Barrick Museum Tour and Guest Artist Presentation***

Southern Paiute Artist Fawn Douglas shared information with the students on some of the initiatives she is involved in. She described her “artivism” practice as one that includes the interactions of art, social justice, community, education, culture, identity, and place. She presented information on *nuwuart*, a community hub where families, friends, and allies gather to enjoy the cultural arts. It includes art studios, performance spaces, and gathering spaces. More information is available at [nuwuart.com](http://nuwuart.com).

Following her talk, students toured the museum and visited the exhibit focused on the Mojave Desert.

**Figure 4**

*The Barrick Museum currently has an exhibit on the Mojave Desert Region.*



Photo by Linda Fredericks

***Harrah College of Hospitality Tour and Presentation***

The two presenters, one the administrator in charge of academic programs and the other a student at the Harrah College of Hospitality, showed a brief film about various majors available at the college and how instruction mixes classroom learning with practical experiences. According to the film, the Hospitality Management degree allows students to take on management roles in the hospitality industry and is one of the top three programs throughout the world. The college produces leading experts in the field and has graduates who lead every sector of the hospitality industry. On top of classes and internships, students can get work experience and build their resumes. The program offers extensive financial aid to students. The college offers both undergraduate and graduate degree programs. The administrator encouraged students to meet with the guidance counselor at their high school and discuss careers in the hospitality industry if they are interested in attending the Harrah College of Hospitality.

**Figure 5**

*The UNLV Harrah College of Hospitality's Hospitality Hall, which was specifically constructed for hospitality programs*



Photo by Linda Fredericks

The speakers further described how the program provides internship and travel opportunities that facilitate the hands-on experiences required for degree completion. They said that students take 40 hours of didactic courses to go deep into their major area of interest, which includes event management, finance, and a food and beverage concentration. It is one of two colleges in the country with a program in golf resort management. The speakers emphasized that college administrators are constantly looking at what the field needs and adjusting their programs accordingly. For example, the college has an increasing number of internships with the local medical industry because of the need for food services in different medical facilities.

**Figure 6**

*A view of the Marriott Foundation Executive Kitchen in the Hospitality Hall.*



Photo by Linda Fredericks



The college has a dedicated career center that helps students find jobs and internships. Many alumni run major resort organizations based in Las Vegas, such as Nobu at Caesar's Palace, Penn National Gaming, and Bedford by Martha Stewart at the Paris, Las Vegas Hotel. Probably the most famous graduate of the college is Guy Fieri, the Food Network star who has hosted such popular programs as *Diners, Drive-Ins, and Dives*, as well as *Rachael vs. Guy: Celebrity Cook-Off*.

Hospitality scholarships are available to students. The following information about scholarships was shared:

- New and returning students must fill out the Hospitality College Scholarship application to be considered for college-based scholarships each year;
- The deadline for incoming freshmen is December 31;
- Last year, the college awarded over \$400,00 in scholarships; and
- University and independent scholarships are available; students apply for these directly.

More information is available at: [unlv.edu/hospitality/scholarships](http://unlv.edu/hospitality/scholarships).

### ***Neuroscience Lab Tour and Presentation***

Students toured the Neuroscience Lab and learned how undergraduate and graduate students are studying the impact of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, traumatic brain injury, and other diseases of the brain to inform treatment.

#### **Figure 7**

*Drawing on the wall of the neuroscience lab depicting brain neurons*

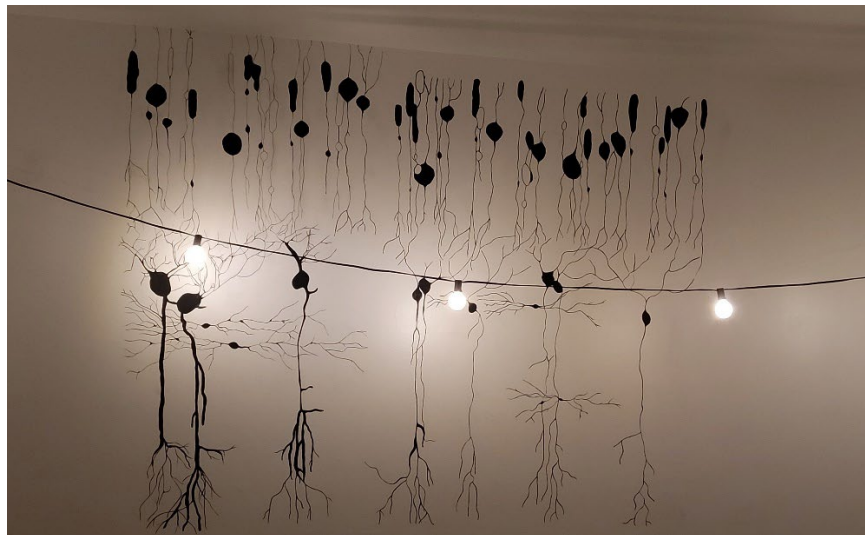


Photo by Linda Fredericks

Students visited the histology/analysis lab and the tissue preparation lab. Here, they learned how samples from the brains of mice are prepared to be used in research.

**Figure 8**

*Students learn how researchers prepare samples from the brains of mice for their research.*



Photo by Elizabeth Bright

***Greenspun School of Journalism and Media Studies***

At the Greenspun School of Journalism and Media studies, students learned about television and radio broadcasting. First, they visited the set of UNLV TV and learned about camera angles, teleprompters, broadcast news, and talk shows. They also learned about how images are projected onto the green screen, including the weather forecast.

**Figure 9**

*One of the sets visited by students at UNLV TV*



Photo by Elizabeth Bright

Students were able to try their hand at being a meteorologist, camera person, talk show host, and news anchor. Students then visited the production room, where they learned how the finished news show, including the addition of captions and the editing process, is produced.

**Figure 10**

*Students learn about camera angles and teleprompters at UNLV TV.*



Photo by Elizabeth Bright

Next, students visited the KUNV 91.5 radio station, where they talked with radio personality Galaxy. He explained the importance of providing his listeners with an uplifting experience and how this can be difficult to do on some days. Galaxy further explained that he has very little interaction with others as he broadcasts from his studio. He introduced the group to his on-air listeners and joked that he was going to give each of them a new car, and he dedicated the song “Little Red Corvette” to the students.

**Figure 11**

*The sign outside of the KUNV 91.5 Jazz radio station*



Photo by Elizabeth Bright

***UNLV Native Student Panel***

The panel was composed of three people: Bridget Tallsalt, an admissions counselor at UNLV who is a Native from Arizona and serves as the Native American Student Liaison; a member of the Yerington Paiute Tribe who graduated from Yerington High School; and a Native graduate of McDermitt Combined School.

Questions for the panel had been collected the previous night from students before the opening keynote. Below are the questions that were asked of panel members and the answers they gave.

**Q: How do you choose the right college or major for you?**

I began in anthropology but ended up in educational policy. I was much happier when I changed.

It's not the end of the world if you change majors. Many students do it.

**Q: What drove you to go to college?**

I feel like it was just a natural thing. My father and mother encouraged me to go to college. I wanted to go in-state. I had high standards for myself. I wanted to challenge myself. I struggled but would talk to a teacher, find a tutor, whatever I had to do to get through.

Find someone who believes in you and who will support you.

**Q: Why did you choose this college?**

I came from a reservation. I didn't know how to navigate a city bus, how to get around a city. You learn time management. I lost my father when I was in high school, so at the same time I was deciding on a college, I was grieving. You learn as you grow.

**Q: Was it a big change for you?**

It was a culture shock coming to Las Vegas from McDermitt.

The most important thing to learn is time management: when you study, when you can be with your friends.

**Q: Is it required that college freshmen stay in the dorms?**

Yes, it is required for all freshmen to live in the dorms. It helps with the transition to college.

**Q: Is college how you thought it would be?**

Yes, in some ways, but I didn't know how hard it would be.

**Q: What classes would you recommend for math?**

It depends on your major. For something like Spanish, you would be taking less math. For science and engineering, it is more math.

Professors are honest and will help you find the right classes.

**Q: Is college expensive?**

It is expensive if you don't apply for scholarships. Some scholarships are based on grade point average, and some are based on income.

The tribe gave me a scholarship. College is expensive, but you can get scholarships, and you can get the university to waive fees.

The admissions counselor encouraged students to contact her for information on financial aid.

## Day Three

### *UNLV Admissions Presentation*

Bridget Tallsalt, an admissions counselor at UNLV, gave a presentation on majors available at UNLV, opportunities available to students, and requirements for financial aid and admissions. She said that the undergraduate population is comprised of 30,000 students and most students come from Nevada and California. There are more than 300 undergraduate and graduate majors.

### Figure 12

*Students hear about the opportunities available at UNLV during the Admissions Presentation.*



Photo by Linda Fredericks

The admissions counselor explained that some of the major areas of study at UNLV include Business, Dental, Education, Engineering, Fine Arts, Health Sciences, Hospitality, Law, Liberal Arts, Sciences, Physical Therapy and other Medical Sciences, and Urban Affairs. Additionally, there is an Honors College for high-achieving and highly motivated students. The priority deadline for admissions is January 15.

Opportunities at the university include study abroad, unique academic programs, research opportunities, internships, a strong sense of tradition, more than 400 clubs and organizations, and no-cost tickets to the many athletic events. The admissions counselor further explained that there are numerous opportunities for recreation and entertainment, including cultural and music festivals, the Hoover dam, Lake Mead, the Las Vegas Strip, Mount Charleston, Red Rock, the Smith Center, and Springs Preserve.

Support programs available to students include the Academic Success Center, advising centers, the CARE Center for well-being, career services, the Disability Resource Center, Financial Aid and Scholarships, the Health Center, Library Services, Multicultural Center, Police Services, and Residential Life. She further explained the costs associated with room and board at UNLV and

that on-campus housing is \$2,940, and dining is \$2,548 per semester. She also pointed a housing grant available to Clark County students of approximately \$2,000 per semester.

She further explained the freshman admissions requirements. Applicants must complete 13 core academic units and meet one of the following:

- 3.0 weighted core GPA
- 1120 SAT
- 22 ACT
- Advanced diploma

In-state tuition is \$9,102. With the Nevada Scholarship, \$2,400 is awarded annually. There are various other scholarships that will cover most or all of the cost of tuition and fees. Families need to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). It opens annually on October 1; the application can be found at [fafsa.ed.gov](http://fafsa.ed.gov).

The freshman application deadline to receive priority consideration for financial aid and scholarships is January 15. In order to have full consideration for financial aid, students must be admitted, have test scores on file, and complete a FAFSA. June 1 is the fall admissions applications deadline.

The project staff emphasized the importance of filling out the FAFSA form every year to qualify for scholarships. One staff member said it is important for students to think about what they are passionate about, as there are scholarships for all types of groups and subjects. She said that when applying for a scholarship, students need to ask themselves, “What can I do to make myself stand out?”

All students were encouraged to join UNITY and the American Indian Science and Engineering Society, which provides scholarships. Students were encouraged to speak with project staff if they had questions about scholarships.

### ***Center for Gaming Innovation Presentation and Lab Tour***

Dr. Daniel Sahl, the director of the Gaming Innovation Institute, said his job is to work with students to prepare them for work in the gaming industry. He pointed out that the various types of games are extremely diverse as people have different motivations for playing. He showed several videos of storytelling games that were structured for people to play against others for rank or prizes and pointed out that other games involved working with someone else to win. He said that many people are drawn to word games or puzzle games. All games, he stated, are designed to help players feel an emotion—some games trigger anxiety or apprehension, while other games promote feelings of confidence and accomplishment. Games, he continued, can be competitive or collaborative, and player motivation helps game designers create attractive games. The Gaming Institute, he said, gives people a pathway to design games based on different motivations.

“You can only build skills if you try,” he said. “You learn through building.” He said he was a good game designer but not an artist. He shared that if one has a vision for a game, it is not

necessary to be a good artist, as others can create the artwork that is needed.

### Figure 13

*The lab at the Center for Gaming Innovation*



Photo by Linda Fredericks

Dr. Sahl spoke about the characteristics that every game must have:

- The player must do something and take actions;
- The game must have mechanics, for example, solving a puzzle, exploring a world, driving/flying/teleporting, building, or destroying. One of the biggest challenges is to create levels of difficulty, to make something challenging but not too complex. Designers need to avoid boredom but not create games that are too difficult and discouraging;
- In order to create action in a game, consideration must be given to controllers, screen, haptic feedback, virtual reality, and augmented reality; and
- Every game has a theme: it tells a story in some way, it provides context, it motivates players, it changes themes, and it changes the experience.



He further explained that game developer skills include the following:

- Programming and coding;
- Art and graphic designing;
- Story creating and writing;
- Sound and music creating; and
- Marketing and promoting.

**Figure 14**

*Students learn how virtual reality games are created.*



Photo by Elizabeth Bright

Next, a recent graduate of the program spoke about a game he developed called *VR: Game of Cards*. He mentioned that there were many different programs used to create this game, including Unity, Blender, Visual Studio, and Audacity. He shared the different steps involved in developing the game. He said that there are three basic steps to the process: Design, Test, and Build, and explained that it is a circular process that allows for continuous monitoring and changing. Dr. Sahl added that a game developer needs to have hardcore coding skills, and the program displayed by the student took almost a year to build.

**Figure 15**

*A student experiences a virtual reality game.*



Photo by Elizabeth Bright

### ***Palms Casino and Resort Tour and Presentations***

The Native-owned Palms Casino Resort had its grand opening on April 27, 2022. First, students viewed an introductory video produced by the San Manuel Gaming and Hospitality authority. Next, they participated in the interactive presentation, *Exploring Resort Operations and Career Pathways*. Through a role-playing exercise, they learned about many of the aspects of hotel operations from Brandon Breach, the director of the hotel. He emphasized that it takes an entire team of people to create the client experience. This involves reservation agents, front desk clerks, housekeeping staff, catering staff, and many others.

## Figure 16

*Students participate in a role-playing exercise to learn about careers in the hospitality industry.*



Photo by Linda Fredericks

Next, Christine Gorlin, the lead lifeguard, explained how she chose her career and what is involved in ensuring guests' safety at the pool. Students also heard from the entertainment staff, including Bob Capucci, Director of Production; and two entertainment managers—Kristen DeBenedetti and Stephanie Sanchez. They explained how entertainment acts are chosen and booked, what a contract and “rider” to a contract are, and what some of the most unique requirements that have been requested by acts they have worked with. They stressed that since the acts are traveling a great deal of the time, they prioritize making them feel at home while they are at their hotel. They are all part of their team for the day. “Entertainment is always a job. It’s real, and it’s wonderful, but we are all a bigger piece of the puzzle...there’s a lot of work and a lot of service that goes into this industry,” said Stephanie. “When you see a crowd leave a show with smiles on their faces, it’s very spiritual,” Kristen shared.

Students learned about the culinary aspects of the hotel from Marcus O’Brien, an Executive Chef, and Tammy Purdy, an Executive Pastry Chef. Marcus O’Brien explained, “It takes a lot of work to do what we do, but it is fun work.” He also stressed that they use a lot of science in their work and demonstrated this by carefully using liquid nitrogen to make ice cream that was served to the group. Tammy and Marcus both emphasized to the students that if they like to work with their hands, the culinary field may be for them. They added that one does not necessarily have to go to culinary school, as skills may be learned on the job. They emphasized that even with a degree from a culinary school, employees do not start as a chef but rather begin at the bottom and work their way up.

Students were also treated to a tour of the hotel, including time in a \$25,000-per-night, 10,000-square-foot suite, which included a basketball court.

**Figure 17**

*A student tests her skills on the basketball court of the luxury suite.*



Photo by Elizabeth Bright

Students also learned about the resort’s Brenden movie theater, the largest IMAX theater in Las Vegas. They learned about the history of IMAX theaters and how technology has progressed to provide the most immersive experience yet. Students were treated to popcorn and soft drinks and reclined in one of the theater’s 170 luxury seats. They learned that the theaters are often rented out for corporate gatherings and parties, and some companies have been known to rent out a theater for an immersive gaming experience. It was further explained that the pay for entry-level positions is \$13/hour, \$4 more than minimum wage. Many UNLV students work here, and school remains a priority of the theater management, with college scholarships offered to theater employees.

**Figure 18**

*The group visits the movie theater to learn about its operations.*



Photo by Elizabeth Bright

*Native American Scholars Day Recognition Ceremony*

**Figure 19**

*Students visit with representatives from UNLV departments.*



Photo by Linda Fredericks

The closing keynote, on the night of Saturday, June 25, was delivered by Kyle Ethelbah. He is Director of College Programs at the Center for Academic Enrichment and Outreach and a Native from Arizona tribal lands.

In high school, he was a participant in Upward Bound program, designed to help minority

students apply for and attend college. He shared that he was accepted at all three of the Arizona state institutions he applied to and chose the University of Arizona. He earned a bachelor's degree in Anthropology and later completed his master's degree in Public Health. He said the biggest asset he had when he graduated was his education because he was marketable. Ethelbah stated that he possessed "a good path" forward because of education. "My ultimate vision," he said, "was to help my people." He had originally planned to enroll in law school and become a tribal Arizona attorney to help the tribe with policy. However, it was after he received his bachelor's degree that he was faced with enormous personal challenges.

## Figure 20

*A slide shown during the closing presentation*

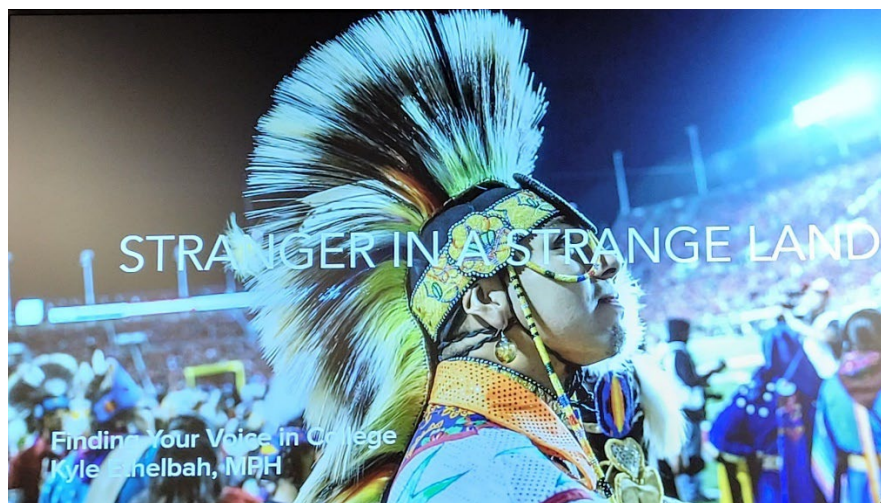


Photo by Linda Fredericks

He shared part of his life story to explain the barriers he encountered after receiving his undergraduate degree. He was raised by his grandmother because his mother died when he was three, and his father was in prison and later passed away from alcoholism. He said he came from an alcoholic family and that alcohol was a constant in his life with his family and all his neighbors. He sadly recalled, "There were things that happened to me as a child that shouldn't happen to children. I was not equipped to handle that." He recalled working through some of the internal issues he faced and doing his job but still feeling depressed. He said he did not know how to ask for support. "Those issues I was running from on the reservation I still had to run through," Ethelbah declared. Yet, in time, he found the support he needed because "there were people who came into my life and helped me because they knew I had the potential. They were my extended family, my community. Those people cared about me and listened to me." With the care received from others, he was able to find the strength he needed to continue.

He explained the "cultural capital" that Native people possess, such as their Native language, their traditions, and sense of communal responsibility. He compared that to the messages broadcast from the majority culture, which emphasized the English language, money, and individual actions. "I didn't know I could learn from my community," he added. "The message I got from others was you pull yourself up, do it yourself. This is why I thought I was a failure; I

did not think I could ask for help.” But eventually, he was able to call upon the help being offered by others.

He told students that there was support all around them:

- Academic support programs—take advantage of these!
- Student organizations—get involved!
- Working while in school—it’s okay to work, but remember you are a student first!

He told the students to turn to the people sitting at their table, staff from the university, and people in their community and view them as part of their support network. He concluded his presentation by saying, “Life is good. If there is something going on, you can get through it. You make a decision about how you respond to it...whether they are people from home or people you meet where you live, there are many people who will be waiting for you to help you.”

Following the keynote, all students received certificates of completion for the Native Youth College Camp.

### **Participant Perceptions of the Native Youth College Camp**

At the conclusion of the camp, participants were asked to complete an electronic survey (Attachment A). The 36 respondents provided consent and had obtained parent permission to participate in the survey, representing a response rate of 80%. There were slightly more Grades 6–8 students than Grades 9–12 students who completed the survey (56% versus 44%, respectively). Approximately one-third of the respondents come from the Yerington and McDermitt areas, the two areas that have been the primary focus of the NYCP grant. The remaining two-thirds of respondents come from a variety of areas around the state, including greater Las Vegas and Reno. Attachment B contains all respondent comments.

Eighteen survey items pertained to the impact of the college camp on students, one item asked if they would recommend the college camp to a friend, and five open-ended items asked students about what they learned, what they would like to learn and experience in the future, and suggestions for improving the college camp. Results are reported in Table 2. Overall, participant perceptions of the college camp were very favorable, with at least 83% agreeing, at least somewhat, to all 18 survey items relating to the impact and quality of the camp. All agreed that the camp helped them to increase their ability to control their future and to better understand the options for student dining at UNLV. Additionally, at least 50% of the respondents selected *strongly agree* on 14 of the 18 survey items relating to the impact and quality of the camp. Ninety-two percent would recommend this college camp to a friend.



**Table 2***Participant Perceptions of the Native Youth College Camp*

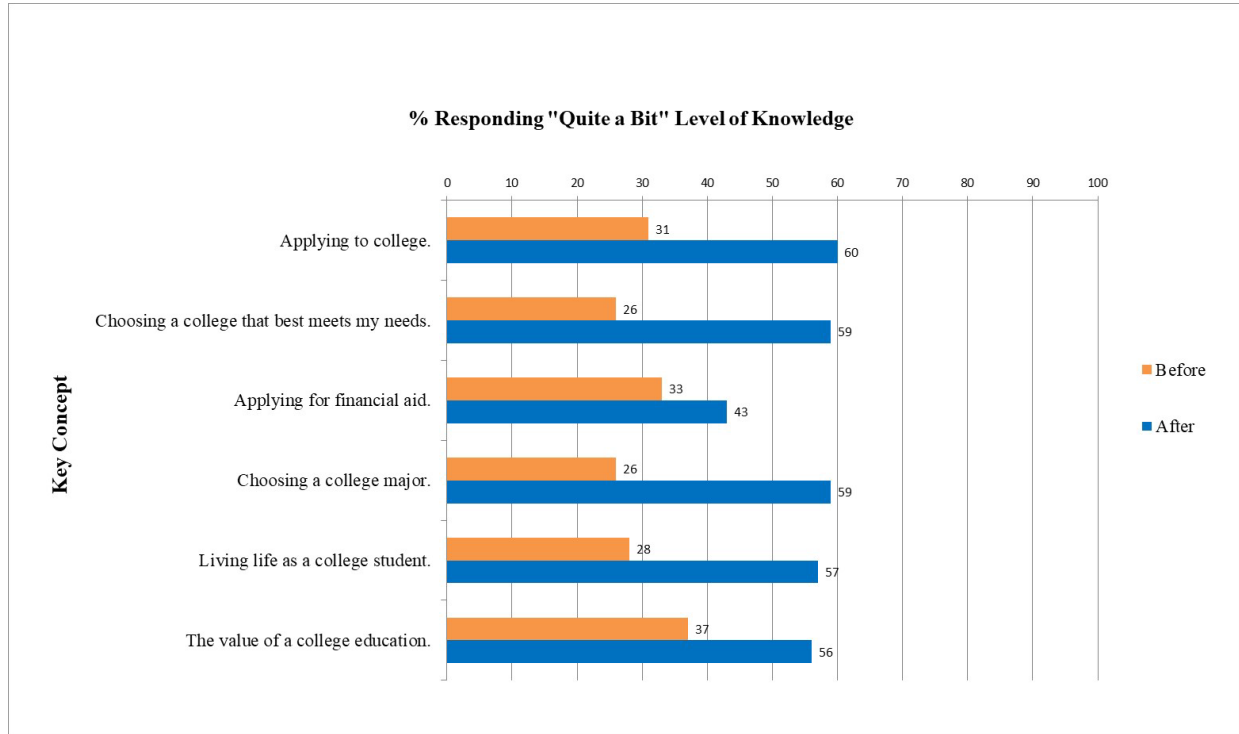
Item	N Respondents	% Strongly Agree	% Somewhat Agree	% Somewhat Disagree	% Strongly Disagree
Overall, attending the College Camp helped me to...					
a. Develop my leadership skills.	36	28	61	11	0
b. Better understand how to advocate for myself.	36	42	42	17	0
c. Increase my ability to control my future.	36	64	36	0	0
d. Improve my relationships with other students.	36	36	53	8	3
e. Increase my confidence in my academic ability.	36	44	47	6	3
f. Increase my commitment to graduate from high school.	36	83	14	3	0
g. Increase my motivation to attend college or technical school.	36	67	25	8	0
h. Increase my readiness to attend college or technical school.	36	54	40	3	3
I would recommend this College Camp to a friend.	35	61	31	8	0
The College Camp and tour of UNLV helped me to better understand...					
a. How to prepare for college.	36	78	19	3	0
b. What it would be like to be a UNLV student.	36	81	14	3	3
c. The major areas of study that are offered at UNLV.	36	75	22	3	0
d. How to research potential majors of interest.	36	61	33	6	0
e. Options for student housing offered at UNLV.	36	67	28	6	0
f. Options for student dining at UNLV.	36	69	31	0	0
g. Clubs and activities available for students at UNLV.	36	72	22	3	3
h. Programs and activities specifically for Native students at UNLV.	36	67	28	6	0
i. What to expect from the college experience.	36	61	36	3	0

## Perceived Impact on Participant Knowledge

Participants were asked to rate their level of understanding of key concepts covered during the college camp using the following scale: *Little or None*, *Moderate*, or *Quite a Bit*. The percentage of participants rating their level of knowledge as *Quite a Bit* before and after the camp is presented in Figure 21.

**Figure 21**

*Participant Perceived Knowledge Gains*



Prior to the college camp, participants' perceived knowledge level of the six key concepts was low to moderate, with between 26% and 37% rating their knowledge level as *Quite a Bit*. Following the college camp, these percentages increased between 10 and 33 percentage points. Reported knowledge gains were highest in the areas of applying to college, choosing a college that best meets their needs, choosing a college major, and living life as a college student, with reported gains between 29 and 33 percentage points for these concepts. Reported knowledge gains were lower for the concept of applying for financial aid (a gain of 10 percentage points).

## Figure 22

*Students enjoy a view of the Las Vegas Strip from the rooftop of Hospitality Hall.*



Photo by Elizabeth Bright

Participants were asked to provide commentary on the most important things they learned at the college camp. Thirty-three participants responded to this item and expressed that they had learned about a variety of topics. These generally centered around three main themes: (a) what it's like to be a college student, (b) information on majors, and (c) financial aid and scholarship information, as evidenced by these comments:

*[I learned about] the possible things that I can do here and what it's like living and staying at college.*

*[I learned about] different scholarships and which specific ones cater to my need and it expanded my interest in majors more.*

*One of the things that was most important that I learned at college camp was that my Native tribe can pay for my college. Another thing that was important was that I can go into classes at different times.*

*[I learned that] you can always change your major, and there are lots of ways to get help for different things at the university.*

*[I learned that] you have to be prepared for anything and always be on time. You can only live once and make your choices wisely.*

Participants were also asked to provide commentary on the topics they would like to learn more about. Thirty-two participants responded to this item and expressed interest in learning about a

variety of topics. These were predominantly centered around four themes, including (a) majors and careers and the course requirements for these; (b) how to prepare for and apply to colleges; (c) financial aid, including scholarships and Nevada's Native American fee waiver; and (d) sports and clubs. Representative comments from the students include:

*[I would like to learn more about] the classes you have to take to be a neurology scientist and how to properly use my Native American waiver.*

*[I would like to learn more about] what classes would I have to take to become a chef or a vet.*

*[I would like to learn more about] the major that I want to go to college for, like the programs and classes. And how long it would take.*

*[I would like to learn more about] how to apply and get ready for college and have a better understanding of what to expect.*

*[I would like to learn more about] what different scholarships I can apply for.*

*[I would like to learn more about] the clubs maybe, like a listing of all of the clubs.*

Participants were also asked to provide suggestions to improve the college camp. There were 23 responses. Of these, several offered praise for the college camp, and others suggested featuring more information on additional majors, including medicine, engineering, and physical therapy; others would like to hear more about the personal experiences of college students, several suggested less walking, and others would like more breaks and time for "fun" activities and shopping. These sentiments are evidenced by these sample comments:

*I don't have anything to provide, in my opinion the tour was the best one I had so far.*

*Extending to four full days to tour the school and show more majors that can be taken for more depth of what future students can do here at UNLV.*

*Having more undergraduate and graduate students sharing their personal experiences.*

*I didn't like the walking.*

When asked to provide suggestions for speakers, performers, or topics at future events, 22 participants responded. Of these, several offered praise for the college camp, and particularly for the hospitality presentation at the Palms Resort and Casino. Five respondents indicated that they would like to see Chance Rush again, as well as Rudy Indigenous, Emcee One, and Abby Rush. Several respondents mentioned that they would like to see what the actual classes are like and to learn more about core classes. Others mentioned specific areas of interest that they would like to

learn more about, including engineering, business, veterinary school, and the radio station.

Several participants provided additional commentary on their experiences, including:

*I had an amazing time and learned way more than I was expecting. I was glad to have students talk to us about their personal experience, it helped me a lot. I also enjoyed being able to talk about a specific career path that I am looking forward to learning more about.*

*The college camp was a fun experience and I would like to do it again.*

*The tour was better than I thought it would be. Only thing, it was hot, but when you would go into other buildings it's nice and cool.*

*The UNLV tours were very informative, but the whole tour was very tiring and I found myself losing concentration after getting half way through the tour.*

### **Summary of the Native Youth College Camp**

The *Native Youth College Camp*, held from June 23 through June 25, 2022, at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), sought to provide Native students from Nevada with information and experiences related to college and career readiness. The camp was very well received by participants, with at least 83% agreeing, at least somewhat, to all 18 survey items relating to the impact and quality of the camp. All agreed that the camp helped them to increase their ability to control their future and to better understand the options for student dining at UNLV.

Additionally, at least 50% of the respondents selected *strongly agree* on 14 of the 18 survey items relating to the impact and quality of the camp. Ninety-two percent would recommend this college camp to a friend. Reported knowledge gains were highest in the areas of applying to college, choosing a college that best meets my needs, choosing a college major, and living life as a college student. Reported knowledge gains were lower for the concept of applying for financial aid. Students offered commentary on topics they learned about, topics they would like to learn more about, and their experiences during the college camp.

**Introduction**

Dear Participant,

RMC Research Corporation is conducting an evaluation of the Nevada Native Youth Community Project (NYCP). The project is designed to help prepare students for college and careers through intensive counseling and tutoring, parent and family engagement, and community outreach. The project is overseen by the Nevada Department of Education and is funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The purpose of the evaluation is to measure the value and effects of the project; results will be used to document impacts and improve the program.

The College Camp in which you have participated is sponsored by the NYCP grant. This survey contains questions about your experiences with the College Camp. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions on this survey. It is only about what you think is true. About 100 people are expected to take part in this study. Answers to the survey questions are completely confidential, and all responses are combined in our report with those from other participants. Individual answers will not be shared with anyone. No names are used in our report. Any information about you that is collected as part of this research study will not be used or shared in any other research studies. Your participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw your consent and stop participating in the study at any time without any negative consequences. Your decision to participate or not participate in this study will not affect your relationship with the school or the NYCP grant.

If you have any questions about the survey, please raise your hand, and the person giving the survey will help you. If at any time before, during, or after the study you have questions, please contact Dr. Elizabeth Bright, Principal Investigator at RMC Research Corporation, at (800) 762-5001, and she will be happy to answer any questions you have. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a participant in the study, you may contact Solutions IRB (the organization that oversees the protection of study participants) at 1-855-226-4472 or email [participants@solutionsirb.com](mailto:participants@solutionsirb.com).

The survey will take about 10-15 minutes to complete. Please click on the "done" button at the end of the survey to submit your responses. We thank you for your participation.

**1. During the school year that just finished, I was in the following grade level:**

- 7th Grade
- 8th Grade
- 9th Grade
- 10th Grade
- 11th Grade
- 12th Grade
- Other (please specify)

**2. I attend school in the...**

- Yerington area.
- McDermitt area.
- Other (please specify)

**3. Overall, attending the College Camp helped me to...**

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. develop my leadership skills.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. better understand how to advocate for myself.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. increase my ability to control my future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. improve my relationships with other students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. increase my confidence in my academic ability.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. increase my commitment to graduate from high school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. increase my motivation to attend college or technical school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. increase my readiness to attend college or technical school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**4. I would recommend this College Camp to a friend.**

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

**5. The College Camp and tour of UNLV helped me to better understand...**

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
a. how to prepare for college.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. what it would be like to be a UNLV student.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. the major areas of study that are offered at UNLV.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. how to research potential majors of interest.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. options for student housing offered at UNLV.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. options for student dining offered at UNLV.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. clubs and activities available for students at UNLV.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. programs and activities specifically for Native students at UNLV.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
i. what to expect from the college experience.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**6. Think about your depth of understanding of each of the following BEFORE you participated in the College Camp. Then, reflect on your level of understanding AFTER you participated in the College Camp.**

	BEFORE the College Camp	AFTER the College Camp
a. Applying to college.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
b. Choosing a college that best meets my needs.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
c. Applying for financial aid.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
d. Choosing a college major.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
e. Living life as a college student.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
f. The value of a college education.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

**7. The TWO most important things I learned at the College Camp are:**



**8. I would like to learn more about:**

**9. Please provide us with any suggestions you may have for improving your experiences at the College Camp.**

**10. Please list any speakers, performers, or topics you would like to see at future events in the box below.**

**11. Please provide any additional feedback in the box below.**

## Attachment B: Participant Comments on the Native Youth College Camp

*[Note that the student quotations in this attachment appear exactly as they were entered by the students via the online survey.]*

### 7. The two most important things I learned at the College Camp are:

- Housing cost 2. Clubs that would be interesting
- Learning more about what is offered for the career path I wish to partake in 2. How to apply to this specific college
- Always apply for Financial Aid. It's okay to change your major.
- Ask for more help get in clubs
- Different scholarships and which specifics ones cater to my need and it expanded my interest in majors more.
- Don't fall from the bed and don't forget your room key
- finding a major you are passionate about And finding as many scholarships as possible
- Focus on what you want to do. It's ok to change your Majors if you do not like them.
- How much help you can get to afford college, It's not as bad as it seems to be
- How to change my major if i need to. Also how to Apply for student aid such as scholarships and grants.
- I learned that you have to do you're fasfa every year for four years. And that AP classes aren't really that important.
- It isn't easy, college can be fun and lead to success.
- Keep my grades up and be responsible with what I choose
- Learning the different facilities and how people interact with each other.
- lifestyle as a college student and what we could do
- One of the things that was most important that I learned at the collage camp was that my native tribe can pay for my college. Another thing that was important was that's learned at the collage camp was that I can go into classes at different times.
- That anyone can apply to college
- That you control your schedule and that I I UK ld have to apply to multiple scholarships to pay off college
- The importance of maintaining your grades and that there is no rush in figuring out what you want to do.
- The lay out of the campus How you have to pay attention
- The possible things I can do here and what it's like living and staying at college
- The school campus is big. & how to apply to collage.
- To be respectful and also learn more about college's.
- To be wise with your decisions and worker harder and maintain your life
- To bring money
- We walk a lot, and College is difficult
- What I learned is to apply for as much as scholarships as I can, and also how much safety is important here.
- what is was like to be a college student
- What it's like to go to unlv and what it's like to live like a student
- What my major would be and the job I could have within the school.

## Attachment B: Participant Comments on the Native Youth College Camp

*[Note that the student quotations in this attachment appear exactly as they were entered by the students via the online survey.]*

- Where the library is what leaving here is like
- You can always change your major, and there are lots of ways to get help for different things at the university
- You have to be prepared for anything and always be on time you can only live once and make your choices wisely

### **8. I would like to learn more about:**

- A college that offers automotive or autobodg
- all the classes i have to take to graduate college
- Collage
- College
- Depths of what I can find for myself within college for my careers. I would also like to learn more about sports that surround the college.
- Engineering
- Hospitality
- how hard the classes are
- How I would be benefited as an indigenous woman going into the specific career path I choose.
- How the classes work
- How to apply and get ready for college and have a better understanding of what to expect.
- I would like to learn more about what my work would be in my classes.
- I've learned enough as a future senior
- Law
- Native Clubs
- Neuroscience from the professor
- Perks of what being native are
- ROBOTS
- Sports
- Sports
- The classes you would have to take to be a neurology scientist and how to properly use my native american waver.
- The clubs maybe, like all the listings of the clubs.
- The gaming community in UNLV.
- the gaming coportation and how to learn to be a chef
- The law in forcements
- The major that I want to go to college for like there programs and classes. And how long it would take.
- The student life; types of job and time management.
- To be a chef

## Attachment B: Participant Comments on the Native Youth College Camp

*[Note that the student quotations in this attachment appear exactly as they were entered by the students via the online survey.]*

- What classes would I have to take to become a chef or a vet.
- What different Scholarships I can apply for
- What major to pick
- Why the native Americans scholarship only covers people in Nevada tribes ?

### **9. Please provide us with any suggestions you may have for improving your experiences at the College Camp.**

- A more organized system of communication and to iron out the wrinkles of timing.
- Bigger beds for bigger people
- breaks in between activities, spending time at the dorms more
- Everything was perfect to me
- Extending to 4 full days to tour the school and show more majors that can be taken for more depth of what future students can do here at UNLV.
- Go more into detail abt the work and other things you have to do in these areas of education.
- Having breaks at least once a day and even if it's for an hour would be good.
- Having more undergraduate, and graduate students sharing their personal experiences.
- I didn't like the walking
- I don't have anything to provide, in my opinion the tour was the best one I had so far.
- I don't really have any suggestions for the college.
- I suggest teaching more about what happens in a day in a life of a collage kid.
- i think you did good overall
- I want to study more and more so I could get a great education
- I would suggest going to other areas like medical and engineering.
- More chaperones, and more opportunities to buy souvenirs.
- More fun activities other than tours like games or sports
- native tribe from other states where they don't get the same financial benefits as the tribes that live here. Probably inform the students that there tribes are elsewhere if there are other money benefits for college elsewhere.
- Organization people were all over the place maybe less people
- Some sports stuff like physical therapy
- The walking
- there should be water fountiens outside and indoors.
- Transportation

### **10. Please list any speakers, performers, or topics you would like to see at future events in the box below.**

- 1. Chance Lee Rush 2. Rudy Indigenous 3. Emcee one 4. Abbey Rush
- A lot
- Alec Benjamin or Orchestra.

## Attachment B: Participant Comments on the Native Youth College Camp

*[Note that the student quotations in this attachment appear exactly as they were entered by the students via the online survey.]*

- Chance Rush
- Chance rush
- Chance rush, the lady at hospitality.
- Classes
- classes
- Drake
- Engineering.
- Harry styles, lil uzi vert, the voice actor of SpongeBob, and black cloud
- I don't want to see any
- I like all of the speakers and performers
- I love all the hospitality speakers.
- I love the presentation at the palms
- I would like to see a business tour of the business programs. This is because it is a very big program here at UNLV.
- I would like to see anything about core classes talked about.
- I would like to see Chance Rush, Rudy indigenous, and also Abby. I didn't get to see them for that long but I would like to see them here more.
- I would like to see myself doing swimming classes in the future
- Kevin heart and the rock
- Maybe something for veterinary school
- The radio station

### 11. Please provide any additional feedback in the box below.

- A lot
- Choose cooler days
- I had a lot of fun.
- I had an amazing time and learned way more then I was expecting, I was glad to have students talk to us about their personal experience it helped me a lot. I also enjoyed being able to talk about a specific career path that I am looking forward to learning more about.
- If was fun and I think it shoud be like 4 or 5 days I think that will be fun
- It felt very unorganized at some points. The schedule kept changing and there where things on the schedule that weren't what the were.
- It was a great time and I will come back next year
- More funding for meals
- The college camp was a fun experience and I would like to do it again
- The tour was better than I thought it would be. Only thing it was hot, but when you would go into other buildings it's nice and cool.
- The UNLV tours were very informative, but the whole tour was very tiring and I found myself losing concentration after getting half way through the tour.