



# ENGELSTAD FOUNDATION

— SINCE 2002 —

RALPH AND BETTY'S LEGACY OF GIVING

May 14, 2024

Keith E. Whitfield, Ph.D.  
President  
University of Nevada, Las Vegas  
4505 S. Maryland Parkway  
Las Vegas, NV 89154

Dear Dr. Whitfield:

Please be advised that The Engelstad Foundation will no longer support, financially or otherwise, any initiatives, projects, or future endeavors for UNLV beyond the already existing Engelstad Foundation Scholar Program.

This decision is the result of the poor and unacceptable behavior exhibited by the University's leadership. Despite numerous attempts to forge a collegial and productive relationship with UNLV for the benefit of all its students, I have been greatly disappointed. As a supporter and alumni, I have always believed in the importance of education and contributing to the growth and development of future generations. However, due to the unfortunate actions of the UNLV's leadership, I am no longer able to align The Engelstad Foundation with the University. Specifically, I have been exasperated in my interactions with the past five University presidents (except for Len Jessup). It seems to me that UNLV is not interested in considering the opinions of others or making progress.

The actions taken by you, along with the Dean of the Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine (Marc Kahn, M.D.), have effectively stifled the following much needed projects:

1. The construction and operation of a mental and physical health building planned by the Nevada Health and Bioscience Asset Corporation (NHBAC) to proceed on the campus where the Kerkorian School of Medicine (KKSOM) is located.
2. The children of Nevada lost the opportunity for pediatric mental health services to double their space and add additional services to the mental health programs currently being provided by several colleges at the UNLV main campus, as well as the SOM couples and family therapy program and child psychiatry program.
3. The Ackerman Autism program will not be able to expand their services.
4. Needed expansion for the children's heart centers and the pediatric cardiology program, which treats all the congenital heart disease patients in Nevada, will not be possible. Adults in Southern Nevada will not have access to a private, patient

psychiatric service or general and subspecialty cardiac service, provided by the clinical faculty. Neither of these programs currently exists due lack of clinical space. I note that you previously ensured us this would not happen.

5. The KKSOM has now lost the opportunity to provide new space for a private practice adult psychiatric service, as well as a general and sub-specialty cardiac service. Both services would have been provided by the academic faculty of the KKSOM. Neither of these programs currently exist.

Note: The first four programs have long waitlists and have families that desperately want and need care.

Upon completion of the Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine, NHBAC felt its mission was complete. It presented a building for the University's use that was completed under budget and faster than the proposed timeline. NHBAC provided UNLV with a beautiful shining example of what private/public partnerships can look like. Additionally, the Medical School was rightfully given its name by the estate and family of a gentleman who was directly responsible for helping the community we all call home. It was an incredible honor that not only did the Kerkorian family finance a building for UNLV's medical school, they allowed it to bear his name. All NHBAC expected in return was a simple thank you; instead, it received demand letters from the UNLV legal department (initiated by Marc Kahn) forbidding representatives of NHBAC from entering the building and threatening that if those representatives did enter the building, they would be escorted out. To call this an unwelcome partnership is an understatement and is indicative that no one in leadership at UNLV truly understands what partnering means.

I personally chose to continue supporting UNLV even after I was slandered, referring to me as "the person who colluded with Len Jessup". The university's history of adversarial behavior has morphed over the years, but never dissipated. I know of two potential donors who made multiple calls to your office with every intention of making substantial donations only to have their calls go unanswered.

To be clear, I appreciate the opportunity The Engelstad Foundation and my family has had to contribute to the University, but we can no longer support an institution that does not align with not only our values and beliefs, but the values of the community.

Sincerely,



Kris Engelstad, CEO  
The Engelstad Foundation