

From an economic development perspective, the engine of our economy is the University of Nevada Reno, and the spark plug in that engine is the College of Engineering. While there are several great Colleges and Schools at the University, the College of Engineering has the most direct impact on our economic development efforts for several reasons: the College produces the graduates that are most in demand for the types of jobs we are attracting to the region, the college has a direct link to the success and growth of our existing industries, and the College (in concert with the other Colleges) has research and development assets that help existing industries and entrepreneurs advance their technology. With enrollment more than doubling over the past 10 years, there is no doubt it is time to invest in the growth of this valuable asset.

Jobs filled by the College of Engineering: With all of the current programs available, such as Biomedical, Chemical, Electrical, Civil, Environmental, Computer Science, Material Science, Mechanical Engineering, it is no wonder that the graduates of the College fill the needs of our growing advanced manufacturing and technology sectors. We, at EDAWN, typically connect potential employers in these sectors to the University so they can get a real feel for the quality, talent and programs there. After a routine tour of the College of Engineering, they are often “blown away” by what they find, and on more than one occasion, what they learn there is the ***deciding factor*** in their decision to relocate here!

Support for Existing Industries and Employers: In addition to all the excellent work the College does to educate the workforce of the future, they are very much engaged in the here and now with existing and new employers. They have targeted the industry growth in the region with a special emphasis on data centers, advanced manufacturing and unmanned autonomous systems, while setting up new educational and research opportunities in areas like batteries and energy storage or cyber security. Additionally, the College has significantly increased the number of students that intern with existing companies to strengthen their relationships and improve the job opportunities for students upon graduation.

College of Engineering Entrepreneurial Support: While the University is very supportive and engaged with innovation and the growing entrepreneurial ecosystem, the College of Engineering has many programs that are also directly linked to these endeavors. The new high-tech entrepreneurship class, the robotics lab and the Unmanned Autonomous Systems (UAS) minor are just a few examples of the many ways the College helps to advance entrepreneurship and innovation. Innovation Day, hosted by the College of Engineering, features projects by engineering seniors who finish their degree program with a course where they design solutions for real life challenges, create a product and many times prepare it to be brought to market. With dozens of research labs and plans for many more, the College provides a receptive environment for this innovation.

It's Time to Invest in the continued growth of the College of Engineering: So there you have it! We have a world class College of Engineering that has doubled their enrolment in less than 10 years, has programs that provide amazing talent, and conducts research directly linked to the needs of our current and future employers. ***It may be time to help them move to the next level***

with their building infrastructure. They are in desperate need of renovations, new offices, classrooms, labs and a “clean” room. With the exception of the earthquake lab, it has been decades since they have added any new space or state-of-the-art labs. President Johnson has led the charge for a new College of Engineering building, one that has been on the books for years and currently sits on the top of the University’s list of infrastructure needs. Unfortunately, at the last legislative session, the funds requested for planning were not available, and even with state funding support in each of the next two legislative sessions; the bulk of the funding must come from the community – foundations and donors. So while our economic engine and our economy are roaring, it may be time to give our spark plug some attention.