

# NEVADA AREA HEALTH EDUCATION CENTERS



WWW.HIGHSIERRAAHEC.ORG

# Ensuring Access to Care and Population Health Issues



**Expanding health care coverage**, making sure everyone has insurance and the option to access services

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Dealing with high costs of care, even for the insured



**Balancing Spending:** Figuring out how to control healthcare costs, especially with programs like Medicaid

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Addressing the high prices of prescriptions and making costs more transparent



**Mental Health Crisis:** Tackling the many challenges related to mental and behavioral health

+

Addressing Nevada's opioid epidemic



**Post Pandemic Health System:** Adapting the public health system after the pandemic, "returning to normal"

+

It's impacts to providers and facilities; unwinding flexibilities, policies and system changes





# Health Workforce Demand vs Supply in Nevada

## Demand

Population growth, aging, diversification

Gains in public and private insurance

Economic growth and diversification

Current and emerging population health needs

Health system and technological advancements

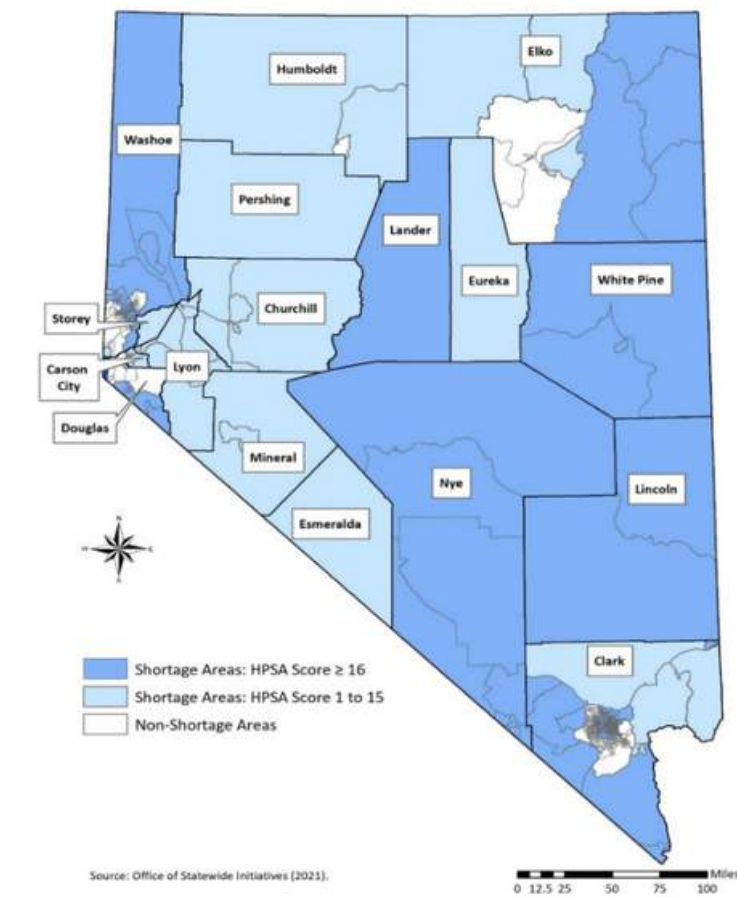
## Supply

Persistent workforce shortages in medicine, nursing, behavioral health, public health, and many other health professions

Steady growth of licensed health professionals, yet “treading water” in per capita growth of licensees in many professions

Diversity mismatch between providers and populations

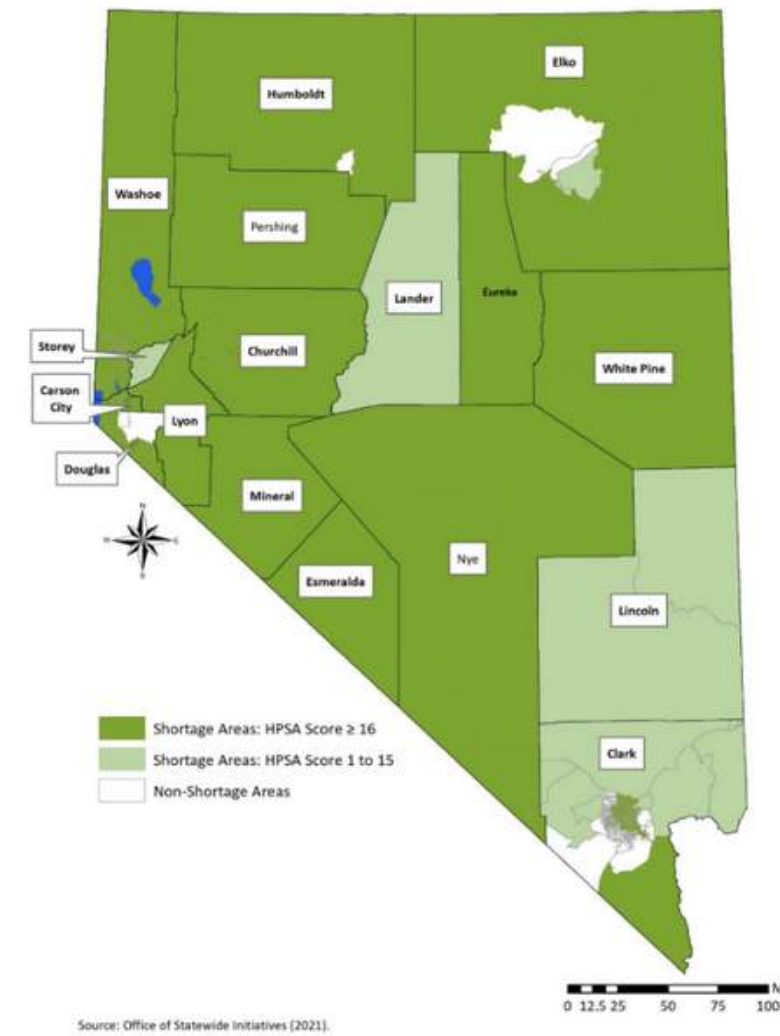
Geographic maldistribution of health professionals



## Primary Care Workforce Shortages

- 1.95 million Nevadans reside in a primary care health professional shortage area (HPSA) or 57.6% of the state's population
- 11 of 14 rural and frontier areas of Nevada are single-county primary care HPSAs

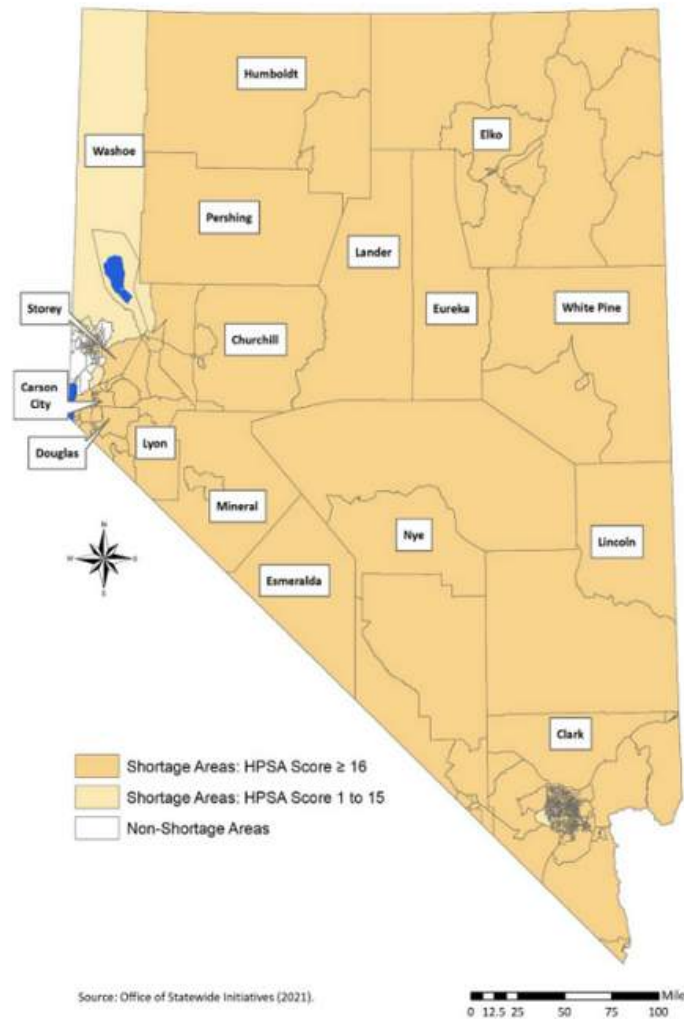
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## Dental Workforce Shortages

- 2.2 million Nevadans reside in a dental HPSA or 70.0% of the state's population
- 12 single-county dental HPSAs in Nevada, including 11 of 14 rural and frontier counties of Nevada

8



## Mental Health Workforce Shortages

- 2.8 million Nevadans reside in a mental HPSA or 74.1% of the state's population
- 15 single-county mental HPSAs in Nevada, including all 14 rural and frontier counties of Nevada

10

## What it Takes to be Average – Nursing

To meet national population-to-provider averages, Nevada would need an additional:

- 3,439 licensed practical nurses (LPNs)
- 4,290 registered nurses (RNs)
- 5,719 certified nursing assistants (CNAs)
- 323 certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs)
- 817 nurse practitioners (NPs)

Source: Packham, et al., *Health Workforce in Nevada: A Chartbook* (June 2021), Nevada Health Workforce Research Center.

# Office of Statewide Initiatives

## Nevada Health Workforce Research Center



### Nevada Instant Atlas

Nevada's County-Level Health Database offers intuitive interactive data maps. Users can explore accurate and current data and discover disparities between social groups and health behaviors.

<https://med.unr.edu/statewide/nevada-instant-atlas>



### Rural and Frontier Data Book

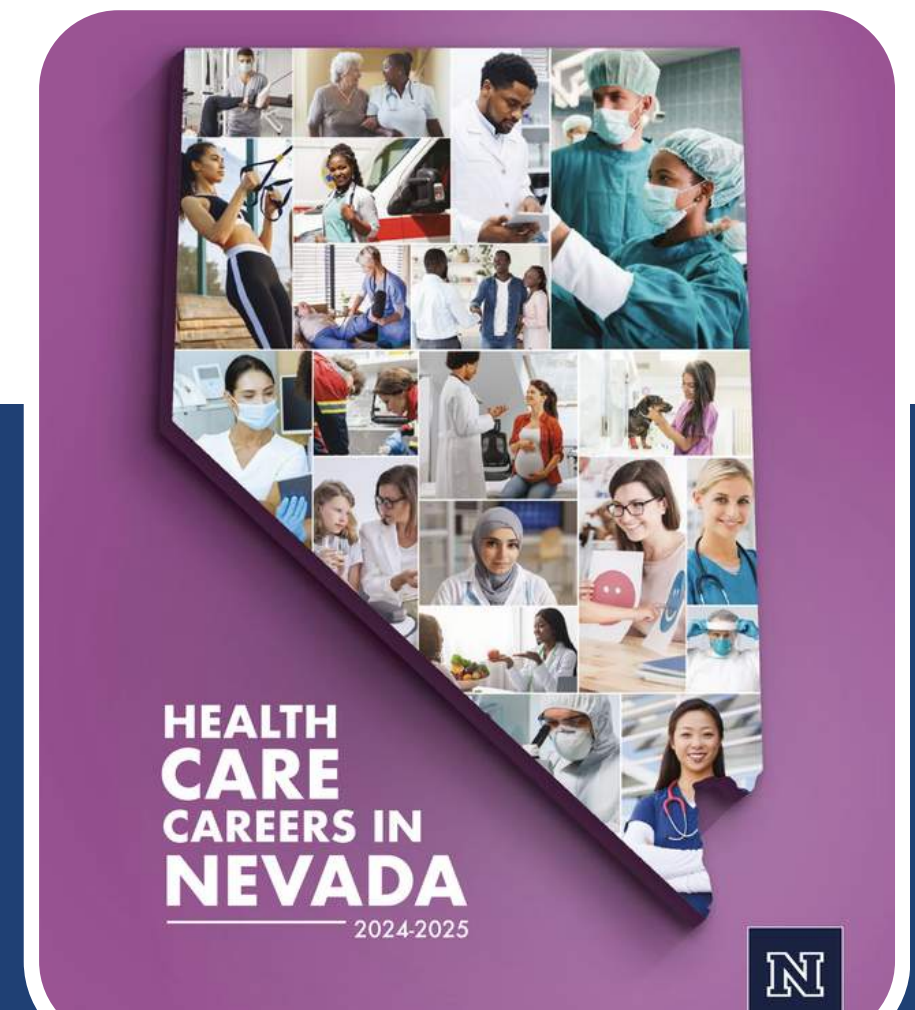
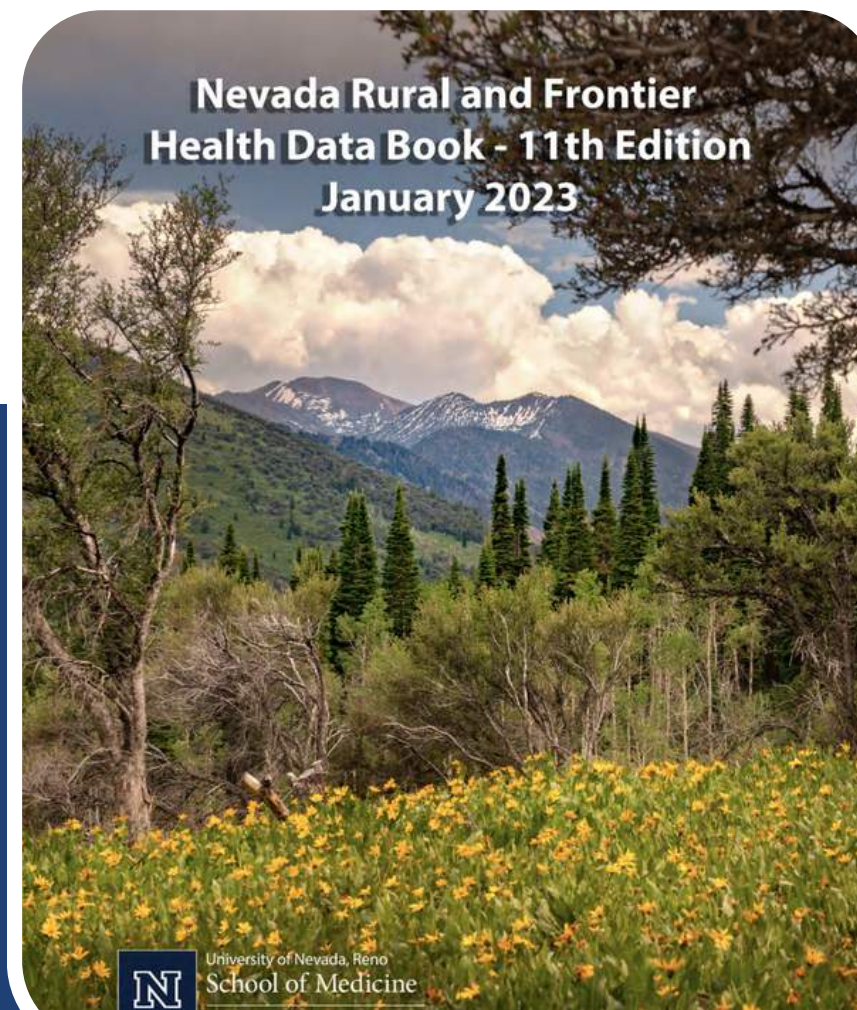
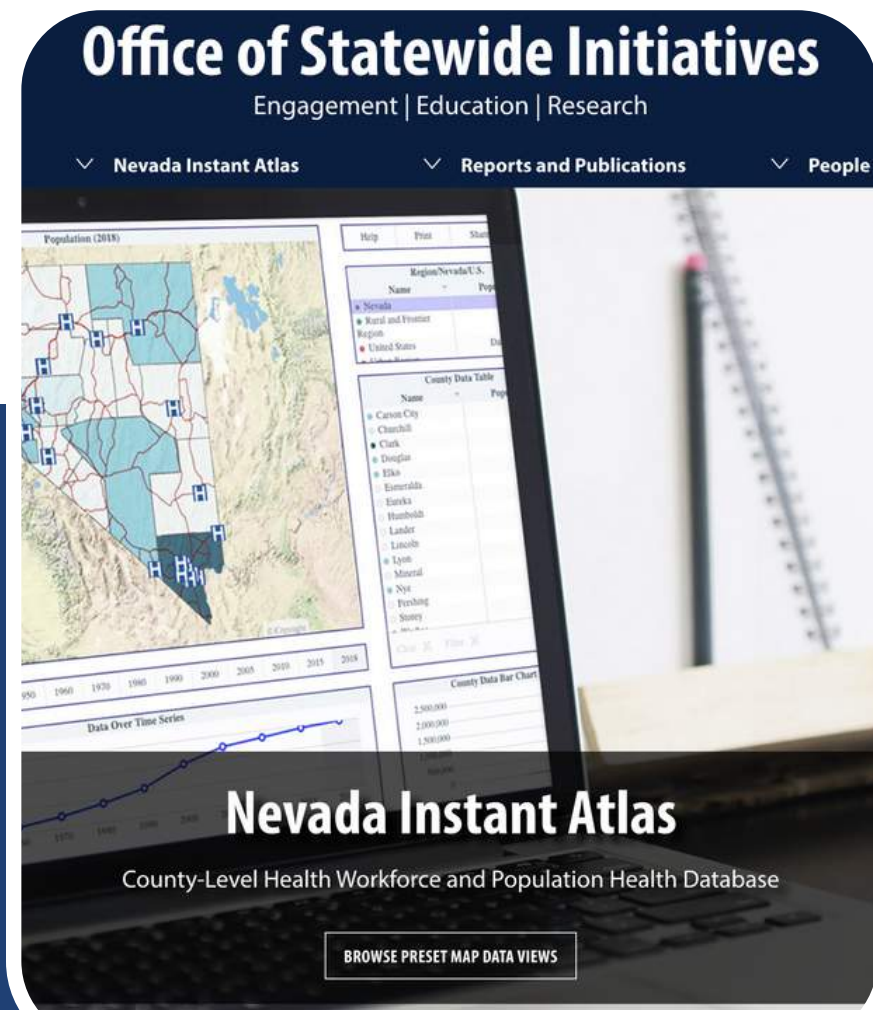
This data book offers concise, up-to-date information at the county level, covering resident population, economy, social environment, population health, health workforce, and the healthcare delivery system in rural and frontier Nevada. It serves as a valuable resource for public policy makers, healthcare professionals, administrators, rural health advocates, and residents, aiming to provide accurate insights into health and healthcare in Nevada.



### Health Care Careers in Nevada

Contains information on over 70 health care occupations in Nevada, including an overview of job requirements, Nevada employment outlook, and average salary in Nevada for each occupation. The guide also provides a detailed inventory of educational certificates and degree programs in Nevada for each health occupation, as well as information on state boards responsible for licensing health professionals in Nevada.

<https://med.unr.edu/statewide/reports-and-publications>



# Introducing the Nevada AHEC Program

For over **40 years**, the Nevada AHEC Program has been steadfast in addressing Nevada's health care workforce shortages through recruiting, training, and retaining health professionals committed to increasing access to primary care in underserved urban and rural communities.

The Area Health Education Centers' (AHEC) mission is to enhance access to quality healthcare, particularly primary and preventive care, by improving the supply and distribution of healthcare professionals through community/academic educational partnerships.



**Health workforce development = economic development and diversification**  
**Working with multiple systems – secondary, postsecondary, workforce**



# Our Vision

01

**Empower the next generation** of Nevada's healthcare leaders by engaging with K-12 students in our community. Through dedicated efforts, we aim to **grow our own** skilled and compassionate future healthcare workforce, contributing to the well-being of our communities.

02

Foster the growth of committed healthcare students in Nevada through advanced education, **emphasizing mentorship and skill development** to drive excellence in healthcare services and shape the industry's future.

03

Promote **health equity**, compassion, and inclusive healthcare by empowering healthcare professionals with education and tools for safe, culturally aware practices, ensuring **equitable and empathetic care** for Nevadans.

04

Forge **strong statewide partnerships** to bolster the state's healthcare workforce ecosystem, fostering **collaboration** and unity to effectively address the evolving healthcare workforce development needs of Nevada.

# Administered Pathway Programs



Specific to K-12



Community Health Worker Training Program



Over the past four years, my diverse experiences, including participating in programs like ROC shadowing, Project Prevent, and The Pre-Professional Healthcare Summit, have deepened my passion for community health sciences and medicine. My focus on rural medicine has grown, and I aspire to contribute to healthcare in rural Nevada after completing my medicine degree. Embracing principles of community-based medicine and education, these values have become my core beliefs. The student ambassador program played a crucial role in keeping me on track and motivated during challenging times in my undergraduate journey. As I await admission to the University of Nevada Reno School of Medicine, I will be applying for the Masters of Business Administration program this summer. Once admitted, I plan to continue my involvement with High Sierra AHEC as a scholar. This program has significantly shaped my identity as a future medical professional, and I highly recommend it to those interested in healthcare.



**NEVADA AHEC PROGRAM**  
A Member of the National AHEC Organization



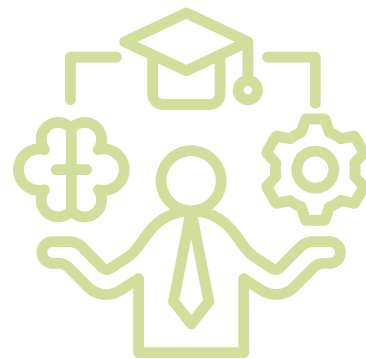
**AHEC**  
**SCHOLARS**

**AHEC Scholars is a program designed to prepare future health professionals with the leadership skills necessary to better serve vulnerable populations in rural and medically underserved communities.**



AHEC Scholars participate in clinical and non-clinical, didactic and community-based activities and projects with a focus on:

- ➔ Interprofessional Edu/Training
- ➔ Behavioral Health Integration
- ➔ Virtual Learning & Telehealth
- ➔ Social Determinants of Health
- ➔ Cultural Competency
- ➔ Practice Transformation
- ➔ Current & Emergent Health Issues



## **Nevada Scholars Eligibility.**

Alcohol, Drug, Gambling Counselor  
Clinical Mental Health Counselor  
Clinical Social Work  
Certified Nursing Assistant  
Clinical Professional Counselor

Dentist  
Medical Assistant  
Marriage & Family Therapist  
Nursing  
Public Health  
Community Health Worker

# Number of Students Reached

FY 22-24 (projections to FY close)



227

Project  
Prevent

247

Project  
ROARR

93 CHW Trainees  
Certifications

71% Certified  
Nevada Certification Board  
4 Job Placements

Employer Partnerships,  
supporting direct hire

729

Student  
Ambassador  
Volunteer Hours

45

Nevada AHEC  
Scholars  
21 Patients Reached  
(Oct-Dec 2023)  
Rural Health Clinics

Participants who have interest in  
pursuing higher education after  
completion of program

91%

Students who represent underserved  
and underrepresented Title I and/or  
rural communities

67%

Students who agreed that our  
programming motivated them to  
pursue a career in healthcare

76%



## MEET JESSICA



# Further Emphasis on Growing Our Own

- Expand publicly supported health care education programs
- Create new publicly supported health care education programs
- Support innovative industry-higher education partnerships and programs
- Apprenticeships and new paths to licensure
- Broaden and expand GME programs for physicians
- Create residency and fellowship programs for advanced practice clinicians
- Scholarship programs for current health care students
- Loan repayment and forgiveness programs for health care graduates
- Support and expand health care career pipeline programs and STEM
- Maximize use of federal health workforce development programs

### Program Success Story:

Jessica, facing adversity and living in poverty, started with High Sierra AHEC during her junior year of high school. She has successfully completed all of our pathway programs and is now very successful in leading change within her organization as the Director of Resident Care at Five Start Senior Living.

The leadership skills and competencies Jessica gained throughout our programs have supported her efforts in organizational change, enhanced benefits for her employees, and measurable retention and boosted morale of her staff.

# 12 Month Priorities



## Diversification of student cohorts

Intentional recruitment that mirrors state workforce needs (discipline and geography) and focuses on proper representation of our communities

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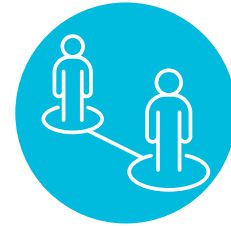
Enhanced IPE, peer-to-peer mentoring, leadership development, employability skills, and culturally compassionate health care professionals

**Highly Skilled, highly trained employable assets**



## Program Expansion & Sustainability

develop the state's first CHW Apprenticeship Program, collaborate with BeHERE Nevada (AB 37) to advance behavioral health workforce development, collaborate with GWDB, expand Rural Outreach Clinics/patient care services, implement and sustain our ability to offer tuition reimbursement to our students, comprehensive wrap around services and barrier elimination to support retention



**Bridge the gap**, strengthen employer partnerships

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Enhance our ability to develop training programs to meet direct employer need

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Experiential Training/student placement opportunities

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Talent Acquisition



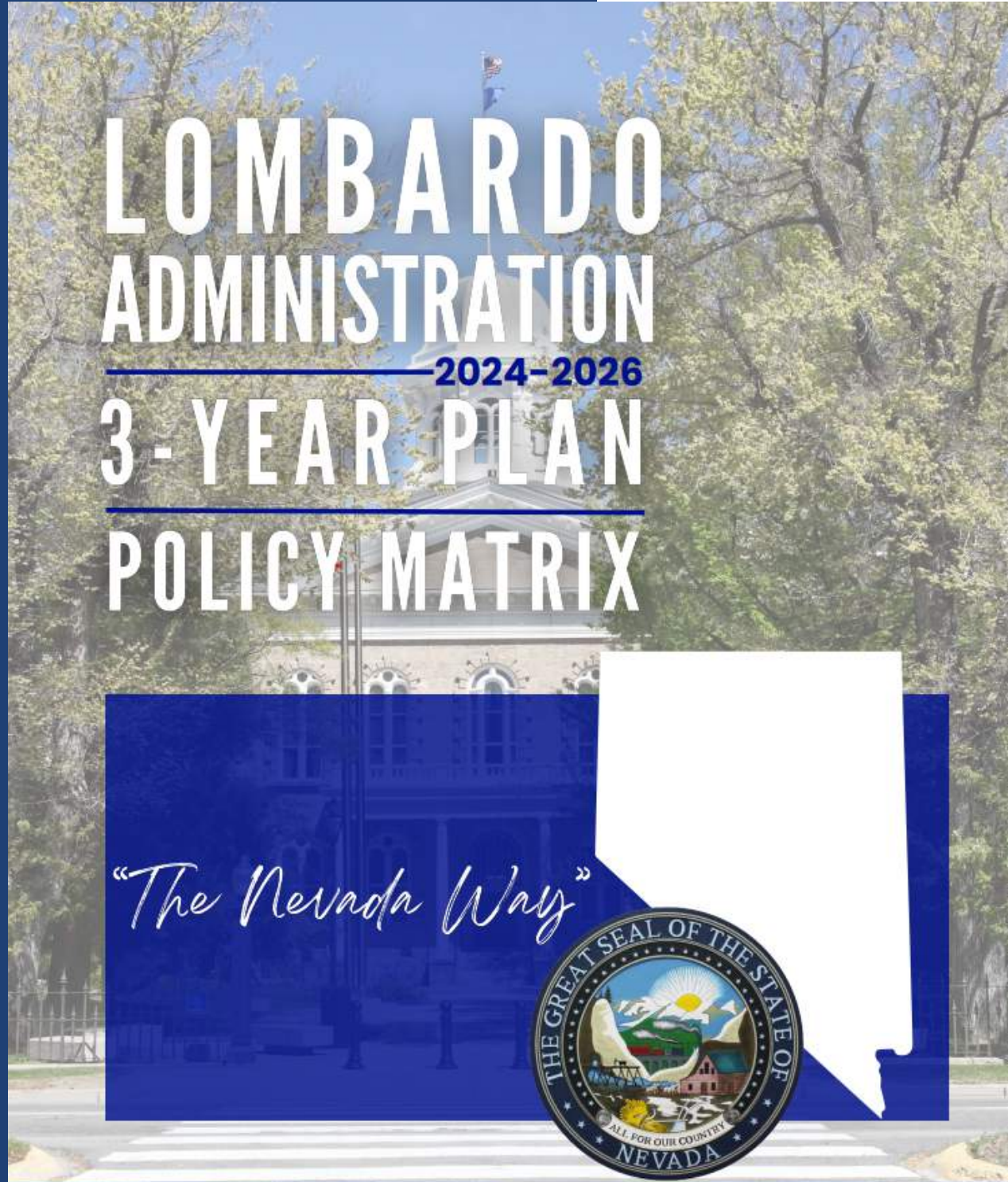
## Continue to strengthen Nevada's healthcare workforce ecosystem

through the continuation of the Nevada Health Care Workforce Pipeline and Development Workgroup. This Workgroup aims to **improve, grow, and diversify Nevada's public health, behavioral health, and primary care workforces and workforce pipelines** to ensure NV has a workforce capable of meeting current and future healthcare needs.

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Partner with GOWINN, Industry Sector Council





# Policy Alignment

## Education and Workforce:

- 1.1 Preparing students for college and career paths
  - 1.1.3 Establishing pathways from [education to workforce](#)
- 1.2 Coordinating and integrating work training activities to [meet the needs of Nevada Businesses](#)
  - 1.4.2 Facilitate cross-government workforce collaboration

## Health and Wellness:

- 3.1 Attracting talent to address healthcare workforce shortages
  - Earlier investments, supporting longer-term strategies
  - Development of healthcare workforce training programs
- 3.2 Improve access to primary care and public health services
  - Loan repayment & tuition reimbursement to support retention



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THANK YOU

Connecting Students to Careers, Professionals to Communities,  
and Communities to Better Health

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