

A Positive Outlook

WORKING TOGETHER



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**APPLIED
ANALYSIS**

For more than a decade, Touro has been working to fill some of Nevada's most pressing health care needs. Our number of medical doctors and registered nurses per resident ranks among the worst in the nation. In fact, as a state we have only two-thirds of the medical professionals necessary just to meet the national average, and our population is again among the fastest-growing in America.

More help is on the horizon with the forthcoming UNLV School of Medicine, a new campus that will educate and train future doctors and nurses in Las Vegas with the hope most of them will stay after graduation. But the public medical school is still securing funding and won't open for at least two years. That's about the same timeline for a new College of Medicine planned by the private nonprofit Roseman University of Health Sciences.

Meanwhile, Touro University Nevada will continue with its mission of educating future doctors and nurses for a community that desperately needs them. But the school's commitment to improving southern Nevada health care goes beyond the classroom. Touro runs a number of community outreach and clinical programs that help underserved and vulnerable people access health care. The school's Mobile Healthcare Clinic makes regular visits to the Las Vegas homeless corridor to give basic health screenings and care. It runs a clinic at The Shade Tree shelter for battered women and children. Its Active Aging Center provides outreach and education for senior citizens, and its Center for Autism and Developmental Disabilities helps assess and treat children with developmental disabilities.

These are important medical services that would be left unfilled without Touro University Nevada. And they show the university's commitment to southern Nevada both now and in the future, filling immediate health care gaps while educating the medical professionals who will serve our community and create a more diverse economy. Yet, the demand for medical education is still great. Touro University Nevada gets more than 3,000 applications each year for just 135 medical school spots. And of the 135 graduates, only 90 can train at the university's residency program at Valley Hospital. Residencies are important because doctors tend to stay and practice in the city where they train.

Given our community's looming needs now and into the foreseeable future, we should look at Touro University Nevada not as a competitor to the UNLV School of Medicine, but as a complement. That's how Touro University officials see it, and they support the new medical school. The fact is, southern Nevada will require both private and public investment in our medical education infrastructure if we hope to not only meet the expanding health care needs of an aging population, but also continue to diversify our economy through a growing health care industry. The only surefire way to guarantee that our economy and health care system will fail to benefit from needed public and private investment is to support the belief that mutually beneficial investments are mutually exclusive.

