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UNLV, LVCVA LAUNCH EFFORT TO RALLY COMMUNITY AROUND PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE

Campus and Community to "Let Freedom Ring"

LAS VEGAS – January 13, 2016 – The eyes of the nation – and many around the world – will be on Las Vegas Oct. 19 for the final 2016 presidential debate as candidates tackle issues inside UNLV's Thomas & Mack Center that could decide the election.

UNLV and the LVCVA hosted a kickoff event today at the university to unveil a community awareness initiative to rally support leading up to the debate. Business leaders and local and state elected officials, including Nevada Gov. Brian Sandoval, and Commission on Presidential Debates co-chair Frank Fahrenkopf, joined UNLV President Len Jessup and LVCVA President/CEO Rossi Ralenkotter at the campaign-style rally.

In addition to the branding elements for the upcoming debate – including a logo, website, social media campaign and the slogan "*Let Freedom Ring*," – the group also spoke of the impact the debate will have on UNLV and Las Vegas, and the important role of community involvement.

"The presidential debate, and the many activities leading up to it, will be an incredible way for our students and our entire campus to experience the political process on the biggest stage," said Jessup "It will also provide tremendous exposure for our university around the country, and even throughout the world."

Ralenkotter, the longtime president/CEO of the LVCVA, asked the community to rally together and show its Las Vegas pride by supporting activities leading up to and on debate day.

“This is an incredible honor for the university, Las Vegas and the State of Nevada,” said Ralenkotter. “Las Vegas is the No. 1 destination in North America for meetings and conventions and the Presidential debate only reinforces that we are a serious place to do business. We are excited to be a partner with UNLV.”

As an early caucus site, battleground state, and host of the final presidential debate, Nevada will be front and center in the political narrative throughout the election season. Las Vegas has been in the election spotlight over the past year as the city hosted primary debates for both the Democrats and Republicans in 2015 and numerous appearances from the candidates.

Kanani Espinoza, UNLV student body president and emcee for the kickoff rally, said Las Vegas’ elevated political presence offers a unique opportunity for students.

“The debate will draw the world’s attention, but it will also create a sense of pride for UNLV students and alumni and an opportunity for individuals to learn more about our university,” said Espinoza. “As students, we’re expected to dream big in college, and UNLV clearly dreamed big when we partnered with the LVCVA on our bid to host the debate.”

Southern Nevada has previously hosted primary debates, Presidential appearances, and has long been considered as a host city for a political convention by both parties. The upcoming Presidential debate is expected to draw 2,500 media representatives and draw millions of viewers and tremendous publicity value for UNLV. Estimates from the 2012 presidential debate in Denver brought close to \$56 million in publicity for the university, with more than 67 million television viewers tuning in.

Las Vegas Presidential Debate information, activities, and opportunities to get involved will be listed at www.lasvegasdebate2016.com

Editor’s Note: For images, b-roll, and interviews from the rally, [click here](#)

ABOUT UNLV

UNLV is a doctoral-degree-granting institution of 29,000 students and 3,000 faculty and staff and ranks as the second most diverse university in the nation for undergraduates. Founded in 1957, the university offers more than 220 undergraduate, master’s and doctoral degree programs. UNLV is located on a 332-acre campus in dynamic Southern Nevada and is classified in the category of Research Universities (high research activity) by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. For more information, go to www.unlv.edu.

ABOUT THE LVCVA

The Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority (LVCVA) is charged with marketing Southern Nevada as a tourism and convention destination worldwide, and also with operating the Las Vegas Convention Center and Cashman Center. With more than 150,000 hotel rooms in Las Vegas alone and almost 11 million square feet of meeting and exhibit space citywide, the LVCVA’s mission centers on attracting ever-increasing numbers of leisure and business visitors to the area. For more information, go to www.lvcva.com or www.lasvegas.com.