



News from the University of Nevada, Reno  
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## THE DAVIDSON ACADEMY OF NEVADA

### NEWS RELEASE

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### **University Police Services partners with Davidson Academy students for Pedestrian Safety Awareness** *Highway safety grant allows students to implement program developed for robotics competition*

**(Reno, Nev.)** – The Davidson Academy of Nevada, a public school on the University of Nevada, Reno campus for profoundly gifted middle and high school students, has partnered, for the third year in a row, with [University Police Services](#) to implement a Pedestrian Safety Awareness Campaign on high-traffic streets near campus.

The motto of the program, created by the Davidson students is, “Look Up, Unplug, Stay Safe,” which was just awarded an \$18,000 highway safety grant approved by the [Nevada Department of Public Safety](#) –Office of Traffic Safety.

“It’s a continued concern for us that motorists and pedestrians stay alert, obey posted speed limits and traffic laws, and use caution while traveling through adjacent roads or on the University,” said University Chief of Police Adam Garcia. “We are happy to partner with many community organizations and agencies, including The Davidson Academy, to improve pedestrian safety and possibly save lives.”

University Police and [The Davidson Academy](#) will continue to collaborate on the project, which was initiated in 2010 when the Nevada Department of Public Safety awarded the program \$12,000. The original grant has helped the students conduct safety surveys, host several events where the University community has been asked to sign a safer-practices commitment when traveling in the study area, and distribute safety information and incentives to citizens. Funds from the community’s Neighborhood Advisory Board helped bridge the program between the two Department of Public Safety grants.

“The Davidson Academy students are excited to see their hard work and creative ideas come to fruition,” said Jody Cram, parent advisor. “We have seen several close calls while observing the study area, and we look forward to continuing to work with the University Police Department to improve pedestrian safety in our community.”

The newest highway safety grant was awarded specifically to conduct the following activities:

- Increase enforcement of pedestrian crosswalk laws and distracted driving;
- Conduct an educational campaign encouraging citizens to use designated crosswalks, refrain from distracted walking (use of electronic devices), and use other means to walk safely (activating stutter flashes, obeying traffic devices, etc.); and
- Continue to ask students and others to sign the safety pledge to be a better pedestrian or driver.

At a Traffic and Pedestrian Safety Forum hosted by University Police Services on campus in February, Davidson Academy students reported more than 650 students, staff and faculty had already signed the pledge committing to stay safe. At the beginning of the semester, during move-in day on campus, they added about 200 more names and hope to add to that count at an event in the Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center at 3:30 p.m., Nov. 20, where they will encourage pledge signing, share safety information and give incentives, including safety flashers and whistles.

Pedestrian safety tips include:

- UNPLUG headphones when crossing the street.

- HANG UP your cell phone until you are out of the intersection.
- TEXTING CAN WAIT until you know you are safe.
- LOOK UP! Make eye contact with the approaching driver and make sure the driver sees you!

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*Nevada's land-grant university founded in 1874, the University of Nevada, Reno has an enrollment of 18,000 students and is ranked in the top tier of the nation's best universities. Part of the Nevada System of Higher Education, the University has the system's largest research program and is home to the state's medical school. With outreach and education programs in all Nevada counties and with one of the nation's largest study-abroad consortiums, the University extends across the state and around the world. For more information, visit [www.unr.edu](http://www.unr.edu).*

*In 1999, Bob and Jan Davidson founded the Davidson Institute for Talent Development, a national non-profit located in Reno that supports our nation's brightest young people. In 2006, they founded The Davidson Academy of Nevada, located in the Jot Travis Building on the University of Nevada, Reno campus. For more information, please visit [www.DavidsonGifted.org](http://www.DavidsonGifted.org) and [www.DavidsonAcademy.UNR.edu](http://www.DavidsonAcademy.UNR.edu).*