



**Clark County Board of Commissioner's Meeting  
Culinary Academy of Las Vegas Agenda  
October 7, 2025**

**Terry Greenwald**  
Chairperson  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Bartenders Union Local 165

**Wendy L. Nutt**  
Secretary  
SVP of Labor Strategy  
MGM Resorts International

**Mario Heidke**  
Trustee  
SVP Human Resources Operations  
Caesars Entertainment

**Franz Kallao**  
Trustee  
SVP of Hospitality  
Bellagio, Park MGM, NoMad

**Matt Krystofiak**  
Trustee  
Chief Human Resources Officer  
The Venetian Resort Las Vegas

**Adam Miller**  
Trustee  
SVP of Hotel Operations  
Caesars Palace Las Vegas

**Troy Mitchum**  
Trustee  
VP of Guest Services  
Wynn & Encore Las Vegas

**Ted Pappageorge**  
Trustee  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Culinary Union Local 226

**D. Taylor**  
Trustee  
Special Advisor to the President  
UNITE HERE

**J.T. Thomas**  
Trustee  
Director of Legal Affairs  
Culinary Union Local 226

**Diana Valles**  
Trustee  
President  
Culinary Union Local 226

**AB309 CCWEST Presentation**

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**Introduction of Presentation**

Dr. Bobbi Damrow, Chief Executive Officer, CALV

**AB309 CCWEST Outcomes**

Jennifer Kabat, Executive Director of Student Services, CALV

**Moving Forward**

Dr. Bobbi Damrow, Chief Executive Officer, CALV

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**Featured Graduates**

Jolene Daggett, CALV Graduate

Luis Zacarias Jr., CALV Graduate

Joan Camejo Benitez, CALV Graduate

**Collaborating Guests**

Jamie Sorenson, Director Social Services  
Clark County

Culinary Academy of Las Vegas Trustees





## AB309 CCWEST Outcomes

### Opening: Why We're Here

- The AB309 CCWEST Project has been a lifeline, creating the structure to serve every student at CALV and open doors to family-sustaining hospitality careers for those most in need. We want to thank you for investing in our community.

### Who We Serve

- Unemployed/underemployed Clark County residents from the lowest-income zip codes.
- Student body profile:
  - 60% female
  - 77% Hispanic or African American
  - 61% from lowest-income zip codes

### What AB309 CCWEST Built (Infrastructure)

- County funding transformed CALV from a training program into a full support system — adding case management, career services, wraparound resources, and ESL/digital literacy supports.

### Community Collaboration

- AB309 funds complemented, not replaced, other resources — ensuring no student slipped through the cracks and maximizing impact through strong partnerships.
- Scale of impact has been increasing year over year since 2021.
- Over 3,600 assessed, 2,600+ enrolled, 1,300+ graduates, and 1,100+ employed — with AB309 students achieving 80% graduation, 90% employment (75% at union hotels), and high retention.

### Why It Matters

- Removing practical barriers leads to completion, employment, and retention—stabilizing families and strengthening the hospitality workforce pipeline.
- Employment leads to less reliance on public assistance and greater personal well-being.

### What's Next – 2027 Forward

- CALV Forward Project will increase annual capacity by doubling the number of students we can serve.
- Strengthen strategy with local agencies, including transitional housing partners.
- Renew AB309 CCWEST funding beyond 2026 to sustain the infrastructure that is delivering countywide, high-impact results for our community.





## **Jolene Evonne Daggett**

District F  
Professional Cook Graduate  
Employed at Red Rock Country Club-  
Oasis Grill

Before starting the Professional Cook program, I felt lost. I wanted my life and my work to mean something. Struggling in many ways, I decided to visit the Academy for a tour. The moment I walked into the school's kitchen, I knew this was where God had led me.

I didn't know how I could afford tuition, but I was determined to find a way. With the help of my guidance counselor Ursula, I applied for funding. I will never forget the day she called with the good news that I had been accepted. That phone call opened the door to everything I needed to succeed. The Academy provided me with tuition assistance, uniforms, food, gas cards, and through the Completion to Career Incentive program, a check after graduation that helped me make the transition into employment. Most importantly, they gave me their full support and dedication.

My greatest challenge was income, since I had to attend full time. But I never gave up. The Academy helped supplement what I sacrificed, which gave me hope and allowed me to stay focused on my training.

The program prepared me with everything a future chef could need. I learned patience, structure, and most of all, that it is never too late to achieve your goals. After graduating this past January, I was placed in a full-time job and given a professional knife bag so I could walk into any kitchen with confidence. I am now continuing my journey through the Apprenticeship Program, and I will graduate again this December.

I am deeply grateful for the love and generosity that was shown to me. None of this would have been possible without God, the funding that made my training possible, and the staff who believed in me when I felt lost. Thank you, and God bless.



## **Luis Zacarias Jr.**

District E  
Kitchen Steward Graduate  
Employed at Venetian Resorts  
Las Vegas

As a person who was once homeless and lost in addiction, I can attest to how important CALV is to this community. If it wasn't for CALV, I know I would not be here today.

From the beginning, CALV helped me secure my tuition, transportation to get to school, and even my health card. Everything I needed to become a kitchen steward was provided. All I had to do was be accountable. I have learned many skills as a student, and as a former employee of CALV.

CALV has taught me to be responsible, to be accountable, and most of all, to be a team player. I have taken these lessons and have applied them to my personal life. CALV has been, and forever will be a huge part of my recovery. Thanks to CALV I have been 15 months clean and sober.

CALV's training for the real world is second to none. I'm not the only alumni CALV has helped to achieve their career goals. CALV's dedication to the students and employees is truly inspiring. With the encouragement of CALV, I have been allowed to continue to grow in my career, now working in the heart of hospitality, at the Venetian Resort, Las Vegas. Looking at my life, where I have come from, where I am now, I know that I am blessed.

CALV has done so many great things for me. And I know it will continue to do many great things for others in our community.



## **Joan Camejo Benitez**

District D  
Kitchen Steward Graduate  
Employed at Binions Hotel & Casino

Arriving from Cuba just over a year ago, I was fortunate to join the Culinary Academy of Las Vegas, where I was welcomed with kindness and dedication. I began with ESL classes, followed by Kitchen Steward training. Beyond learning technical skills, I discovered the importance of treating people with respect. At CALV, I felt as though I became part of a family, and I am deeply grateful for everything I learned.

As soon as I completed my course, I was hired as a steward at Binion's Hotel and Casino, where I still proudly work today. None of this would have been possible without the support and commitment of the Academy.



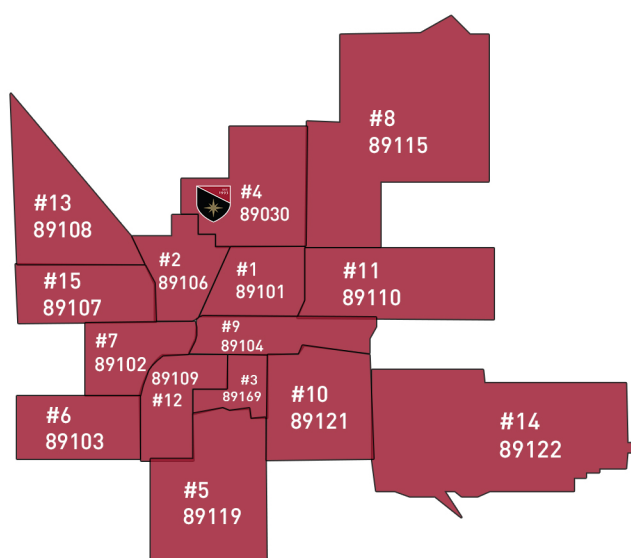
# AB309 CCWEST Initiative

## July 1, 2021 — June 30, 2025

[Years 1-4 of 5]

### Objectives

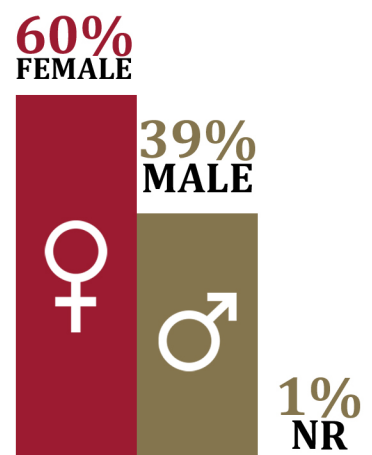
- Educate community about CALV training opportunities.
- Expand access and remove barriers for training and employment.
- Equip Clark County Residents with skills.
- Provide a pipeline of skilled hospitality worker.



**61% AB309 Supported Students**  
**Live in Clark County's 15**  
**Lowest MHI\* Zip Codes**

*\*Median Household Income*

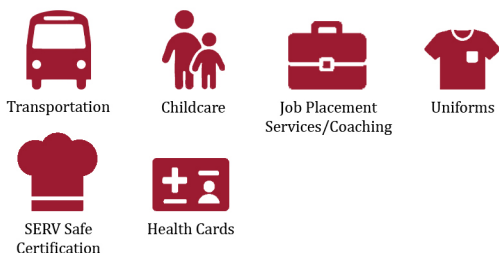
### Enrollment by Gender



### Enrollment by Ethnicity

- 41% Hispanic
- 36% African American
- 9% Caucasian
- 14% Other

### Wraparound Services Provided



### Community Referrals

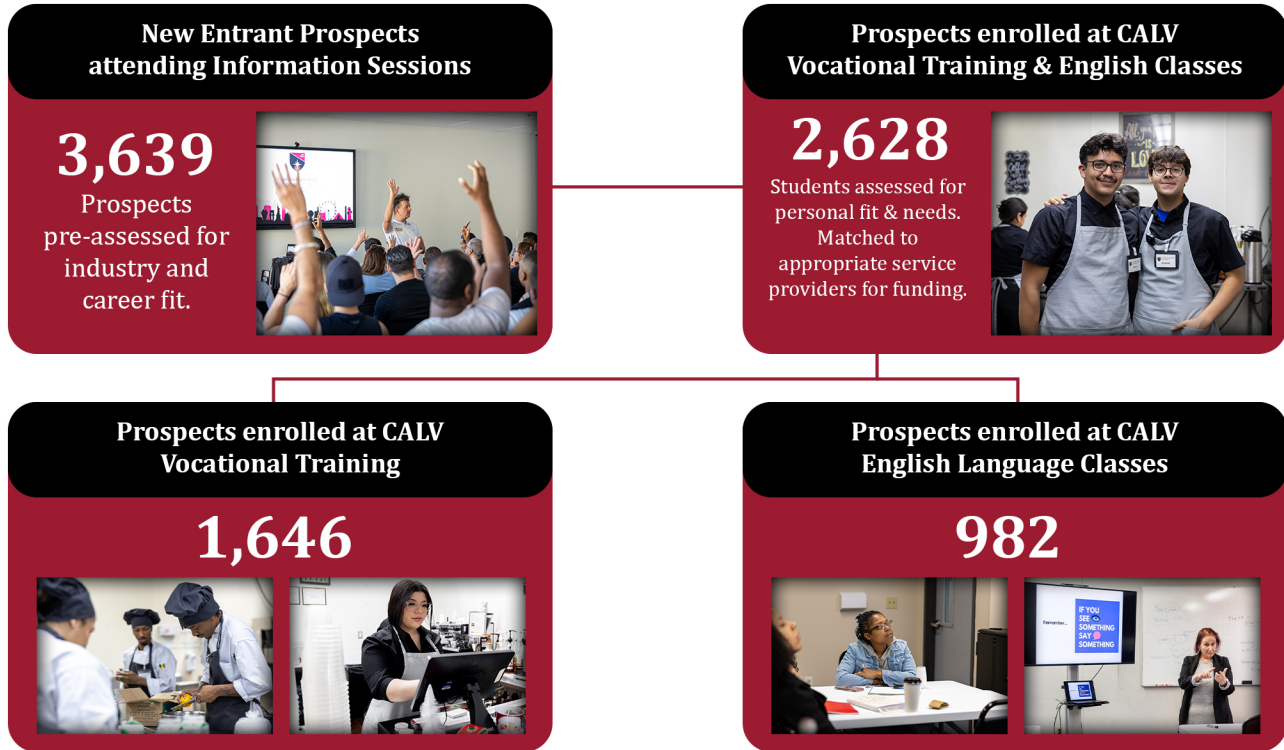


Licensed Social Worker case management is integrated to provide personalized, coordinated support for every student.

### Community Collaboration

Tuition Funding Sources	
Tuition Provider	# Students
AB309	655
Employ NV—DETR	588
Self-Pay	254
Salvation Army	40
EQUUS—WIOA	38
FIT	35
Vocational Rehab	11
Employ NV—Youth Hub	8
CALV Scholarship	6
Help of Southern NV	4
Hope for Prisoners	4
US Veterans	1
Youthbuild	1
Cap Voc	1
NyE Communities Coalition	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,646</b>

# Student Journey



## Outcome Comparative

CCWEST (AB309) Outcomes	Overall CALV Outcomes
80% Graduated (1,335)	81% Graduated
90% Employed (1,107)	88% Employed
75% Employed at Union Employer Partners	72% Employed at Union Employer Partners
89% Employed at 30-Day Follow-Up	86% Employed at 30-Day Follow-Up
75% Employed at 90-Day Follow-Up	74% Employed at 90-Day Follow-Up

### Right Time \* Right Place \* Right Training 2027 Forward

- Renovations underway at CALV will expand capacity and learning relevance.
- Strong strategy with local agencies: CCSS Rapid Rehousing—STAR SNRHA (FLEX), Salvation Army, Rescue Mission, Goodwill Industries, Catholic Charities, Foundation for Recovery, Campus for Hope, and others.
- Training goal of 1,000 Vocational and ESL students annually 2027 and beyond.
- Continuation of annual AB309 funding.