

Biology Researcher, Single Mom Named CSN Regents' Scholar

The honor comes with a \$5,000 award

March 5, 2020 – College of Southern Nevada Student Jennifer Stevens earned the coveted Regents' Scholar award today from the Nevada System of Higher Education's Board of Regents.

Stevens, 34, is a single mom of two who's studying biology at CSN. She has maintained a 3.73 GPA while working full-time.

"I know that I'm really passionate about wanting to help people," Stevens said. "I feel like I've had some bad luck in my life, but also lucked into something really great. I got lucky."

Orphaned as an infant, Stevens suffered abuse as a child, finished high school divorced and pregnant, and found a job in the casino industry. Like many non-traditional students who enroll at CSN, she longed for a formal education, which she knew would be a pathway to prosperity.

"Jennifer is a testament to what hard work, determination, a passion for knowledge and a drive to succeed can mean for a student," said CSN President Dr. Federico Zaragoza. "I congratulate her on the Regents' Scholar award, and I thank the Board for recognizing her talent. We're proud to have her at CSN."

In addition to serving as the vice president of the biology club at CSN, Stevens is also part of a groundbreaking research team at the college studying bacteria-killing viruses, part of the national SEA-PHAGES Program. The team's research was published in an online microbiology journal. Stevens hopes to conduct research to help advance the human species.

Each year, the Nevada Regents' Scholar Award is given to an undergraduate student from each university and community college and the state college, as well as to one graduate student at each of the public universities in Nevada. The award includes a \$5,000 cash stipend, and is based on academics, leadership, service contributions and the recipient's potential for continued success.

In addition to the Regents' Scholar award, the Board also honored two CSN professors today; Mark Wherry, the director of vocal music at CSN, was awarded the Nevada Regents' Creative Activities Award and Cris Aguilar, a surgical technology instructor at CSN, was awarded the Nevada Regent's Teaching Award.

About CSN: Founded in 1971, the College of Southern Nevada is the state's largest and most diverse higher education institution. CSN is accredited through the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities and specializes in two-year degrees and workforce development that lead directly to high-demand careers or transfer to a university. It also offers seven bachelor's degrees in specialized fields and is the state's largest provider of adult basic education and literacy training. CSN is a Minority Serving Institution and Nevada's first Hispanic Serving Institution. Our students create flexible schedules with day, evening and weekend classes taught on three main campuses and multiple locations throughout Southern Nevada or online. CSN is an Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action institution.