

Go Tesla – Our Home Team – Changing the World While Investing in Nevada’s Future!

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On a weekly basis, I get questions on the viability of Tesla. “Someone” told “someone” there are layoffs planned, or some national media story or blog highlights a mishap of some sort or comes right out and declares Tesla a failure. My response is normally, “have you been out there lately?” Anyone that has been to the Gigafactory in the past year knows that Tesla is doing just fine. In fact, what you may not know from all the negative media’ is that they are well on their way to accomplishing their mission “*to accelerate the world’s transition to sustainable energy*” and recently launched their program to support public education in the state with \$37.5 million in education grants.

So how is Tesla doing? They completed over 5 million square feet (30%) of the Gigafactory, which will be the largest building in the world when complete. They already hired thousands, mostly Nevadans (in addition to thousands of construction workers), as they continue to produce an unimaginable number of batteries, along with over 5,000 new Model 3 Teslas each week. When you add on the production of tens of thousands of Powerwall and Powerpack batteries, there are plenty of good things going on at Tesla and no need to worry from a community perspective.

Tesla’s commitment to Nevada’s education: Tesla recently announced the initial \$1.5 million in funding grants of their \$37.5 million commitment over five years to K-12 education in Nevada. The investment will help encourage students to consider a career in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), and to develop the next generation of engineers in Nevada. “The demand for STEM jobs in Nevada will continue to grow dramatically over the next few years,” said JB Straubel, Tesla’s Chief Technology Officer. “That is why we’re investing in initiatives that inspire students to choose a career in STEM.”

How does this help Nevada? Having a STEM trained workforce could seriously accelerate Nevada’s success, from both an education and employment standpoint. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, computing jobs are the #1 source of new wages in the United States. In Nevada specifically, growth in STEM jobs is projected to be 40 % higher than non-STEM jobs and 48% of new job openings will be Middle-Skill (less than four-year degrees) with a current gap of 28,000 jobs today. These are real numbers that require smart, strategic programs to help give students a foundation for success.

So, What Are These Education Initiatives? The list is long and growing, but consist of things like: robotics education and competition, with the goal of establishing a quality robotics program at every school in the state; the development of a statewide teacher training program focused on robotics and STEM; support for mentoring, skills development and job placement service for students across the state; and a high school graduate apprenticeship program that encourages Nevadans to learn about manufacturing fundamentals. This apprenticeship program trains 50 to 60 students from across the state and includes transportation support, pay, benefits and the opportunity to start at Tesla as a full-time production associate upon graduation from High School. In short, Tesla is investing in the education of Nevadans. (To partner with Tesla, reach out to educationprograms@tesla.com.)

This is Our Tesla, and They Deserve Our Support: Much like the great steel towns of the past that embraced their steel producing companies, it's time we got behind Tesla and their vision to change the world. As a major employer in our region and a leader in the reinvention of our economy, we should be excited and supportive of their efforts and proud of their success. Like it or not, Tesla is a member of our family now and part of our brand. They employ our neighbors and friends, and they deserve our support. Their vision to change the world is happening right here, in our backyard. So, let's cheer them on any way we can. **Go, Tesla!**