

From Campus to Clean Energy: The Next Chapter of North America's Sustainable Future

The morning sun casts long shadows across the northern Nevada high desert as engineers gather for their daily briefing at our Lithium Technical Development Center pilot plant in Reno. Among them are several [University of Nevada, Reno](#) (UNR) graduates who, just a few years ago, walked the same halls and sat in the same classrooms as today's engineering students. Now, they're helping build America's largest lithium carbonate production facility – and they're eager to welcome the next generation of talent and passion.

"There's something special about working on a project that will help secure our country's national security and energy future," said LAC Research & Development Manager, Ryan Ravenelle, and UNR engineering alum. Ryan expanded on specific examples of how Lithium Americas is helping solve complex challenges that will create thousands of new jobs in rural northern Nevada to accelerate America's energy transition. "Mineral extraction can be done responsibly, and LAC has designed Thacker Pass with this in mind. We are passionate about what we do, but more importantly how we do it. We have incorporated best practices such as extensive water recycling, dry-stack tailings, concurrent reclamation and best available emissions control technologies."

This spirit of innovation and sustainability is what drives us, and we're excited to announce our Summer 2025 Internships. We're not just offering summer jobs – we're offering students the chance to be part of an energy revolution happening right in their backyard.

Intern Spotlight: Natalie L., 2024 LAC Intern & UNR College of Engineering Class of '24

Natalie, a UNR Environmental Engineering student joined as a summer 2022 intern and worked alongside Jenna Schonlau, Manager, Sustainability and Environmental Engineering.



"My professors taught me the fundamentals but applying that knowledge to real-world challenges at LAC made things click and was incredibly rewarding," said Natalie.

Following completion of Natalie's internship, Jenna continued to support Natalie by serving as an industry advisor mentor to Natalie and her team. They were completing their senior capstone project, a two-semester design project for Civil and Environmental Engineering students.

The team designed a bioretention basin at the Manzanita Bowl of the UNR campus to mitigate flooding problems that have recently occurred due to the urbanization of the university and the surrounding area. The bioretention basin cleans polluted stormwater through a filter system before slowly releasing it to natural drainage and creates an environment for local flora to thrive.

Natalie with her bioretention basin model



Natalie, fourth from left and Jenna Schonlau, Manager, Sustainability and Environmental Engineering (far right) at UNR Innovation Day in 2024.

On May 3, 2024, Natalie showcased her capstone project at [UNR Innovation Day](#), which showcases College of Engineering senior capstone projects often done in conjunction with industry partners, and the resulting products that are ready for the marketplace. Jenna, with members of the Tech Center, were in attendance to support the engineers of the future!

Today, Natalie continues to stay connected with her mentors at LAC, building a professional network that will serve her well into her career.

Our Wolf Pack Connectivity Charge is Strong

The connection between LAC and UNR runs deeper than mere geography. Our Tech Center team is working with UNR on multiple research projects to investigate potential beneficial uses of various by-products from the process of making battery-grade lithium carbonate at Thacker Pass. Our General Manager serves on the Steering Committee for the School of Engineering's new Industrial Engineering program. Our offices and facilities are filled with Pack Pride, as numerous UNR graduates have chosen to build their careers with us, transforming their academic foundation into real-world impact. These alumni now serve as mentors, ready to guide the next generation of engineers and scientists who will help shape our sustainable future.

The path from UNR to LAC is more than just a career trajectory – it's a chance to be part of Nevada's proud mining tradition while helping write its sustainable future. As we advance Thacker Pass toward production, we're looking for passionate students who share our vision of creating sustainable value through responsible resource development.

Hands-on Experience at North America's Largest Lithium Deposit

At LAC, our interns aren't just observers. Our Tech Center-based interns are active participants in validating the Thacker Pass flowsheet and proving production of battery-quality lithium carbonate from Thacker Pass ore via a continuous-production process. The Tech Center is conducting research for continual process optimization and beneficial uses for byproducts.

We're mastering the chemistry of lithium production and as we grow, we'll be focusing on the chemistry of great teams. Great innovations are powered by great teams and this summer, we'll welcome our first-ever HR intern to help build our exceptional workforce. Our operations aren't just about geology, chemical processing and engineering. It takes innovative HR strategies and sharp business skills to build and sustain a world-class operation.

From optimizing processing techniques to sustainable operations, every project our interns touch contributes to reducing North America's carbon footprint and strengthening our energy security.

For students who are ready to turn their education into impact, transform classroom theories into real-world solutions, and join fellow Wolf Pack alumni as well as a team of experts from around the world who are working together to power our future, LAC's summer 2025 internships are now open!

Interested applicants may apply on our [LAC Careers page](#) for the following internship opportunities:

[Analytical Chemist Internship](#)

[Process Engineer Internship](#)

[Human Resources \(HR\) Internship](#)