

# PRESS RELEASE

**Contact:**

Marilyn Thomsen

909-838-4578

[mthomsen@laverne.edu](mailto:mthomsen@laverne.edu)

## **University of La Verne Will Open New Center for Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Social Impact with Gift from Randall Lewis**

**La Verne, Calif.** – March 31, 2021 – The University of La Verne has received a gift of \$2 million from prominent real estate executive and philanthropist Randall Lewis. The gift will establish the Randall Lewis Center for Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Social Impact. The nonprofit venture will focus on increasing the economic power and impact of University of La Verne students, alumni, regional businesses, not-for-profits, and community organizations. It will provide entrepreneurial training for several learning cohorts each year and will integrate academic and hands-on approaches to job creation and long-term career support. The center will have a special emphasis on underserved communities in the region.

“I am delighted to partner once again with the University of La Verne on a project that will generate real and positive change in the communities of Inland Southern California,” said Mr. Lewis. “By blending academic excellence with on-the-ground training and experience, we will empower students and existing business owners alike to strengthen their own economic health, and by extension, that of the region as a whole. The university’s commitment to underserved communities, as well as its proven track record in social and economic innovation, make it the perfect home for this new center.”

The center will be located in Ontario, California, where the University of La Verne already has a strong presence through its College of Law. The new Lewis Center will complement the city’s own Innovation Center, a state-of-the-art business facility, and enable the university to expand its innovative educational outreach to the surrounding community. Additional locations are also possible at regional University of La Verne campus sites such as Bakersfield, Irvine, and Burbank.

“Randall Lewis has done it again,” University of La Verne President Devorah Lieberman said. “As one of our most actively engaged supporters, Mr. Lewis shares our mission for serving and

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supporting inland Southern California and beyond. We are profoundly grateful to partner with him to create an unparalleled and impactful economic resource for our region.”

The new Randall Lewis Center for Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Social Impact will integrate faculty expertise from all four existing University of La Verne colleges and partner with offices such as the Small Business Development Center, the Office of Civic and Community Engagement, and The La Verne Experience. Its programming will be guided by a cadre of professors, community advocates, and investors. Strategic partnerships will be developed at the local, regional, national, and international levels, with a special focus on current and future businesses owned and operated by women, minorities, and veterans.

Quentin Strode, currently chief operating officer of NEW Community Investments, will help shape programming at the center and will assist in creating a wide network of resources. For 25 years, Mr. Strode has focused on building innovative economic development solutions.

This is the second major investment that Mr. Lewis has made in the University of La Verne. The Randall Lewis Center for Well-Being and Research opened in 2019 on the La Verne campus. It is a unique hub for teaching, researching, and promoting healthy lifestyle and well-being habits for students, faculty, staff, alumni, and partnering regional organizations.

The center includes indoor and outdoor spaces for fitness activities and well-being programs that promote good nutrition, stress management, sleep hygiene, sound finances, and mindfulness. Residents of inland Southern California also benefit from research and programming partnerships with leading community and health organizations.

If you would like to support the work of the Randall Lewis Center for Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Social Impact, please contact Sherri G. Mylott, Vice President of University Advancement, at [smylott@laverne.edu](mailto:smylott@laverne.edu) or 909-448-4513.

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## **About the University of La Verne**

Founded in 1891, the University of La Verne is a private, nonprofit, comprehensive institution founded on four core values: lifelong learning, ethical reasoning, civic and community engagement, and diversity and inclusivity. The university serves nearly 7,000 students on the historic La Verne central campus as well as across nine regional campuses and online.