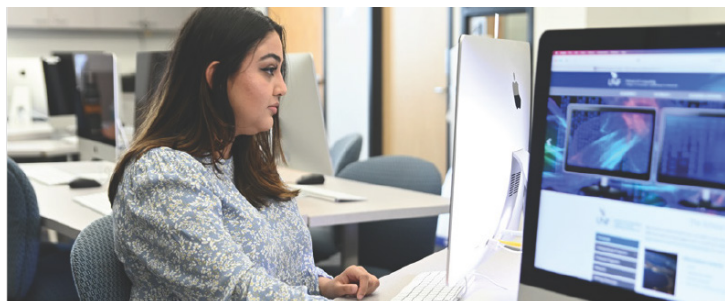




## **UNF Esports Expanding the Next Generation Workforce for Jacksonville**

**Esports is the fastest growing sport genre globally and nationally. Total revenues for esports are expected to reach \$3 billion by the end of 2025.**

UNF's new Strategic Plan includes growing enrollment to 25,000 students by 2028 to strategically address critical workforce shortages in the region, with a focus on STEM. To meet that goal, UNF must effectively compete for new students, who have high expectations for their college experience.



**UNF is seeking \$5 million in support from the City of Jacksonville to create its Esports Arena in the John A. Delaney Student Union. This investment will allow UNF to:**

- Attract more students into STEM careers from education to careers in Jacksonville
- Expose Arena high school students to college opportunities and job pathways
- Host regional and national competitions, bringing visitors to Jacksonville

### **Esports Pathway from Jacksonville High Schools to College, then into High-Demand Careers**

In collaboration with Duval County Public Schools, UNF will focus on inspiring high school students who are interested in technology to pursue STEM degrees right here in Jacksonville. Nearly 70% of UNF graduates remain in our area.

Esports is a rapidly trending way to engage young students who may not otherwise get excited about science, technology, engineering or mathematics. By bringing local high school teams to UNF's campus to compete, students have an opportunity to see themselves on a college campus — many for the very first time — and explore new pathways to a career in this exploding field or other high-demand areas:

- |                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Computing</li> <li>• Software Engineer</li> <li>• Network Engineer</li> <li>• Data Analytics</li> <li>• Cybersecurity</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• FinTech</li> <li>• Game Design</li> <li>• Public Relations</li> <li>• Marketing</li> <li>• Graphic Design</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content Creation</li> <li>• Broadcasting/<br/>Journalism</li> <li>• Event Planning</li> <li>• Esports Management</li> </ul> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## Critical Thinking and Leadership Skills

UNF's esports program will develop leadership and communication abilities among students. Participation in esports requires team coordination, strategic thinking and effective communication, all skills used during gaming sessions and competitions. These skills are transferable to the workplace, enhancing students' employability and preparedness for professional roles, particularly in leadership positions within STEM fields.

## Esports is for Everyone

UNF can help Jacksonville become a leading hub for digital innovation and gaming. Esports creates a competitive environment and level playing field where all individuals, regardless of their physical ability or background, can participate and thrive.



## UNF Esports Benefits Jacksonville Community

Esports events draw large audiences. Jacksonville is the largest city in Florida without a public university Esports program and arena. With this funding, our City can boast a state-of-the-art facility which:

- Supports local businesses through increased economic activity
- Enhances local commerce and tourism
- Provides economic benefits through patronage and visibility
- Offers opportunity to attract businesses related to the gaming industry to Jacksonville
- Helps UNF attract more students to help meet enrollment expansion
- Boosts engagement with the UNF campus and provides higher education awareness

Esports is a business, more than just video games. The rise of esports is good for schools, students and employers, with collegiate esports programs offering scholarships and attracting students interested in high-paying STEM fields valued by employers. Average starting salary in related jobs is \$60k.

Esports is a significant contributor to the development of a skilled and adaptable workforce, which is essential for the economic growth and competitiveness of our city. The time to look toward the future of Jacksonville and UNF Esports is now. Esports is more than just video games. It's business.