



# ROWING, NOT DRIFTING 2030

**STRATEGIC PLAN | PHASE II**  
**JULY 1, 2022 - JUNE 30, 2024**



UNIVERSITY OF  
NORTHERN COLORADO



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# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Fellow Bears, partners, and friends:

In developing the University of Northern Colorado's **Rowing, Not Drifting 2030** strategic plan, the faculty, staff, and students collectively envisioned UNC as the institution that Colorado looks to as the future of higher education. This bold vision simultaneously draws on our fundamental mission to empower people and communities to realize their fullest potential and positions the university over the next decade to better serve our community, region, and state.

When we launched our plan at the beginning of 2020, we could not have anticipated the many changes the subsequent two years would bring. While some of our immediate priorities necessarily shifted and specific actions and tactics associated with the first phase of the strategic plan evolved, our university community continued "rowing" together in the same direction, united by resilience, determination, and our shared vision.

At UNC, we are guided daily in our teaching, learning, and collective work by the five vision elements that are vital to realizing our vision: **Students First, Empower Inclusivity, Enhance & Invest, Innovate & Create, and Connect & Celebrate**. Our community comprises talented, creative, and dedicated individuals who share a deep commitment to these priorities and continuously demonstrate that anything can be accomplished when we work together.

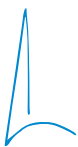
I am proud of the many successes we achieved over the past two years. The extraordinary contributions of our students, faculty, and staff have created a strong foundation to dive into the next phase of our strategic plan. In this document, you will learn about our accomplishments from Phase I and how that work evolves and continues into Phase II.

As we transition into this important second phase, I see a new level of excitement, optimism, and opportunity with the next set of key actions and tactics. These were developed with careful consideration of feedback from the university community, strategic priorities that university leaders identified, and opportunities to build on the good work from Phase I. The university community came together to engage in thoughtful discussions and offer valuable insight into Phase II of our strategic plan. I appreciate everyone who shared their ideas about how we can continue our forward momentum.

I invite each member of our university community to reflect on the key actions and tactics in this next phase, consider where there is alignment with your own work, and identify ways you will help realize our vision for UNC. As we diligently work together toward the 2030 outcomes, we will remain focused on our shared vision and common purpose as a Students First university. We will do this in how we serve students and foster their excellence as well as the excellence of our faculty and staff, the actions we take that reflect our deep commitment to equity and inclusion, our ability to innovate and inspire, and the strong partnerships we forge in our community and beyond.

I am pleased to present Phase II of **Rowing, Not Drifting 2030**, signaling the university's priorities for the next two years. I look forward to continuing this journey with you toward realizing our vision and celebrating our successes along the way.

**Rowing, Not Drifting,**



Andy Feinstein  
UNC President







# OUR VALUES: A STUDENTS FIRST UNIVERSITY

UNC believes its distinctive service to society can only be offered in a student-centered atmosphere of integrity grounded in honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. For this reason, the university is committed to promoting an environment with six central values:



- 1 Academic integrity is valued and expected
- 2 Excellence is sought and rewarded
- 3 Teaching and learning flourish
- 4 Diversity of thought and culture is respected
- 5 Intellectual freedom is preserved
- 6 Equal opportunity is afforded





## OUR COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

The diversity within UNC is a distinct advantage that the university celebrates and nurtures. Learning occurs through meaningful discussion of shared and different experiences, viewpoints, and ideas because our community of Bears is composed of individuals with many different perspectives and identities. UNC believes in providing access and educating the community, empowering individuals, and developing leaders and responsible global citizens. Students learn and grow in a spirit of multiculturalism with resources and support services that enhance the student experience.



# VISION STATEMENT

The University of Northern Colorado will be the institution that Colorado looks to as the future of higher education. Our students will experience a personalized education grounded in liberal arts and infused with critical and creative inquiry; establish relationships with faculty and staff that nurture individual development; gain the skills and knowledge that provide upward mobility among alumni; and share a commitment to the values of inclusion, equity, and diversity.

## FIVE VISION ELEMENTS:



Students First



Empower Inclusivity



Enhance & Invest



Innovate & Create



Connect & Celebrate



### STUDENTS FIRST

We exist to transform the lives of our students. We focus on all aspects of their success by making intentional decisions to meet their needs and the needs of the community.

#### 2030 OUTCOMES:

- UNC is student ready. We know and care about our students, we meet them where they are, and nurture their growth
- We eliminate institutional barriers to our students' progress
- We are known for excellence in career readiness evidenced by the professional achievements and adaptability of our alumni
- We empower students to make a difference through leadership, involvement, and advocacy
- We acknowledge that all faculty and staff are educators who contribute to our students' success



### EMPOWER INCLUSIVITY

The diversity within our university and state is a distinct advantage that we celebrate and nurture. We ensure learning occurs through meaningful discussion of shared and different experiences, viewpoints, and ideas.

#### 2030 OUTCOMES:

- UNC celebrates the diverse backgrounds and intersecting identities of our community members and recognizes that we benefit from the talent and energy of all students, faculty, and staff
- We reflect upon and learn from the experiences of historically marginalized communities
- All individuals and perspectives are an integral part of our success and identity
- Community members engage in robust discussions and share their experiences, viewpoints, and ideas in respectful ways





## ENHANCE & INVEST

The success of students relies on a healthy and strong team. We provide our faculty and staff with the support they need to succeed as professionals, educators, and in life. We foster an environment where their individual well-being and sense of belonging are vital to our collective success.

### 2030 OUTCOMES:

- UNC is a desirable place to work where we attract and retain talented staff and faculty who feel their contributions are valued
- We provide and support personal and professional development opportunities and recognize those who seek enrichment through learning on and off campus
- Scholarship is an essential part of informed learning occurring in and out of the classroom
- We share a responsibility to continuously improve campus climate and culture to ensure a collective sense of belonging



## INNOVATE & CREATE

Learning occurs through critical inquiry, discovery, and creation. We leverage technology and capitalize on opportunities to innovate and improve instruction. We anticipate and address societal needs by transforming the campus into a creative laboratory that asks questions, solves problems, and shapes Colorado's future.

### 2030 OUTCOMES:

- UNC delivers the highest quality student experience in Colorado through our personalized approach to instruction
- We provide distinctive educational experiences that address workforce, environmental, and societal opportunities and challenges
- We contribute to and benefit from local and regional organizations to deliver an educational experience that equips students to successfully transition from college to career
- Students, faculty, and staff engage in a purposeful approach to supporting creativity and discovery



## CONNECT & CELEBRATE

Strong community connections provide authentic learning experiences and reciprocal partnerships and collaborations. We set the standard for how engaged universities enrich the lives of those on campus, throughout Colorado, and beyond.

### 2030 OUTCOMES:

- UNC is the first-choice institution for students because of the quality of our programs, faculty, staff, and strategic relationships
- Our alumni actively support UNC through advocacy, volunteerism, philanthropy, career advice, and employment opportunities
- Arts, athletics, entertainment, cultural, and intellectual experiences are gateways to our university
- We leverage our collective voice to promote UNC and Greeley with pride



# MEASURING SUCCESS

***Rowing, Not Drifting 2030*** is much more than a static document. It serves as a guide on the journey toward realizing our vision for UNC. As we progress toward our 2030 outcomes, we will track, measure, and report progress for each two-year phase and the entire strategic plan.

In the spring of 2022, the UNC community came together to reflect on progress during the first phase. We identified a number of accomplishments, some of which are highlighted in the following pages. Members of the university community also shared feedback on priorities for the second phase and ideas about tactics that, when realized, will demonstrate progress toward our shared goals. Everyone in the UNC community is encouraged to continue sharing their input and ideas and to contribute in meaningful ways to advance our vision elements, actions and tactics.









# PHASE I: ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In 2020, UNC transitioned from visioning and planning to implementation. The first two years of **Rowing, Not Drifting 2030** focused on completing the foundational work necessary to move the university toward our shared vision of becoming the institution that Colorado looks to as the future of higher education.

During the first two-year phase of implementation, we prioritized investments in the people, processes, technologies, and tools necessary to support efforts in subsequent phases to achieve our 2030 outcomes. To accomplish this, we identified ten foundational actions and a number of associated tactics. You can read about our numerous Phase I Accomplishments in more detail on our website.

Over the entire ten-year span of **Rowing, Not Drifting 2030**, UNC will align our work with the five vision elements that serve as a framework for realizing our vision. Highlighted below are some notable achievements that the UNC community realized together during the first phase of implementation, organized by these five institutional priorities.















## STUDENTS FIRST

Students First is our commitment to transforming the lives of our students, and Phase I focused on making decisions and investments that contribute to our students' success.

### ***Enhancing First Impressions:***

Knowing that future success begins with students' earliest interactions with UNC, we created a more collaborative and streamlined orientation process and revised our welcome activities and programming to include a week full of events aimed at forming connections and creating a sense of belonging.

### ***Aligning Expertise:***

We focused on establishing the staffing levels and organizational structures needed to support student recruitment, retention, and graduation. Most significantly, we realigned Enrollment Management under Student Affairs, creating a new Division of Student Affairs and Enrollment Services. We also restructured and revitalized the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning and Instructional Design and Development, which are now part of a new Division of Academic Effectiveness.

### ***Making Data-Informed Decisions:***

We developed data analytics tools and created new dashboards with enrollment data, course fill rates, and graduation and retention rates. These data are being used by faculty and staff across the university to make decisions about course offerings, recruitment efforts, and retention efforts, particularly pertaining to closing equity gaps.





## EMPOWER INCLUSIVITY

A central element of our vision for the future of UNC is nurturing and celebrating the diversity within our university and state, and Phase I focused on university policies, practices, and programmatic initiatives that influence the climate and culture of the campus.

### ***Establishing Central Leadership:***

We emphasized the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) by elevating the chief diversity officer role to a vice president, cabinet-level position with responsibility for leading the newly formed Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. With a vice president leading this critical work, UNC was able to truly prioritize DEI and make important strides to demonstrate our commitment.

### ***Building Capacity:***

We focused on numerous ways to create systems of accountability, effectiveness, and collaboration across the university. This included providing training and education on a number of DEI topics to university leadership, using external and internal experts; developing standards for inclusive search and hiring practices and requiring bias training for search committees; and creating several new positions dedicated to enhancing our DEI work.

### ***Becoming a Hispanic Serving Institution:***

As an emerging Hispanic Serving Institution (HSI), UNC made consistent progress during the discovery phase. Steps taken included launching a DEI and HSI readiness survey, establishing relationships with key partners in the region and across the state, and engaging the campus community in conversations about servingness—the idea that we must move from simply enrolling Latinx students to truly serving them.











## ENHANCE & INVEST

Knowing that the success of our students relies on the health and strength of our faculty and staff, we focused in Phase I on investments to support their success as professionals, educators, and in life.

### ***Making Investments:***

During the first phase of the strategic plan, we made significant investments in our dedicated employees. This included directing resources to fund compensation increases, extending paid holiday leave, implementing a modified summer work week, and providing paid time off for faculty and staff to participate in volunteer activities.

### ***Expanding Offerings:***

We are committed to supporting our talented employees by providing ongoing access to professional development opportunities. To achieve this, we enhanced our catalog of trainings available to support faculty and staff in their careers and convened representatives from leadership and governance groups to inform the identification of career readiness priorities.

### ***Fostering an Environment of Belonging:***

To support our employees' well-being and sense of belonging, we prioritized efforts to create an environment of employee support and recognition. For example, through the Build a Bear Up initiative, UNC established a way for faculty and staff to recognize the contributions of their colleagues by sharing a personalized greeting.







## INNOVATE & CREATE

Delivering high quality student outcomes requires providing distinctive educational experiences, and a focus in Phase I was on enhancing our offerings to better anticipate and address societal needs.

### ***Enhancing Academic Offerings:***

We added and adapted a variety of majors to ensure that our students are ready to address workforce, environmental, and societal opportunities and challenges upon graduation. This included revising several programs in our College of Performing and Visual Arts, adding a degree program in the College of Natural and Health Sciences, and creating two new areas of concentration within our MBA program. Additionally, each college engaged in initial efforts to review and update their program offerings to enhance and refine career readiness in the curriculum.

### ***Refining Review Processes:***

We took initial steps to clarify our curriculum process and the program review process, and to align these processes and set clear expectations regarding ongoing evaluation. An initial focus was on clarifying the goals, benefits, and outcomes of the Liberal Arts Curriculum, which is the foundation of a UNC undergraduate degree.

### ***Meeting Critical Needs:***

We took a bold step to innovate and meet regional community needs by completing the initial actions necessary to open a College of Osteopathic Medicine. This included completing a feasibility study, working with state leaders to pass legislation allowing UNC to offer specialized degree programs in osteopathic medicine, hiring the founding dean, and beginning work on a program plan.



## CONNECT & CELEBRATE

Knowing the value of strong community connections, we focused during Phase I on actions that help set the standard for how engaged universities enrich the lives of those on campus, throughout Colorado, and beyond.

### ***Defining Our Strengths:***

We completed a comprehensive brand audit in the spring of 2022 that gave us a better understanding of how UNC is viewed by internal and external stakeholders and audiences. This helped us clearly articulate our strengths and value; highlight our unique offerings to strengthen our brand across the region and the nation; and attract and retain exceptional students, faculty, and staff.

### ***Positioning Ourselves:***

We completed the planning work for a major fundraising campaign that will help us realize our vision for the future. We began by engaging an external consultant to guide these preparatory efforts, including completing a readiness assessment and developing a compelling case for philanthropic support. Additionally, deans and other campus leaders worked to create philanthropic priorities that will serve as the basis for the campaign.

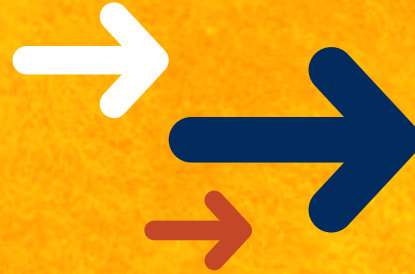
### ***Engaging Alumni and Friends:***

We closed the books June 30, 2022, on our best fundraising year in history, with gifts surpassing \$20 million to advance university priorities. Thanks to the ongoing generous support and engagement of alumni, friends, faculty, and staff, UNC is well positioned to continue to create philanthropic investment opportunities and realize community engagement and fundraising goals in the future.



# **PHASE II**

## **KEY ACTIONS & TACTICS**









## KEY ACTION 1:

### Develop and implement a Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan.

**DEFINITION:** Strategic Enrollment Management is a comprehensive process designed to help the university achieve and maintain optimum recruitment, retention, and graduation rates. As such, SEM is a university-wide process that embraces virtually every aspect of UNC's function and culture. The SEM plan will serve as critical foundational work to position the university for sustained success.

#### TACTICS:

- Create and empower a SEM committee comprised of representatives from across the university to serve as the leaders and driving force of the plan.
- Establish clear goals for the number and types of students needed to fulfill the institutional mission.
- Leverage and expand access to data to inform decisions to support our strategic enrollment management goals.
- Complete a Campus Master Plan that aligns with the SEM plan key outcomes and academic program priorities, focusing on the student campus experience and environmental sustainability. Explore external funding for key capital projects.
- Using the results of the Brand Audit completed in Phase I, update UNC's marketing and communications plan to support the goals created through the SEM plan.

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## KEY ACTION 2:

### Build on Phase I foundational work to ensure UNC is a Students First university.

**DEFINITION:** Student success is often connected to a student's sense of belonging, their quality of engagement, and how it impacts their progress toward graduation. From the traditional academic setting to campus life and support services, UNC will continue to better understand how students engage inside and outside of the classroom – and implement strategies focused on enhancing our student's experience and their success.

#### TACTICS:

- Continue to work from the Students First Framework to make progress on reaching UNC's retention and graduation goals as established in Spring 2022.
- Implement practices, programs, and services that help students translate their academic accomplishments, learned knowledge, and campus experiences into being engaged citizens and lifelong learners post-graduation.
- Expand and adapt student services and programs to meet the needs of today's students, including undergraduate, graduate, and extended campus students at UNC.
- Enhance university events and traditions that unify the UNC community and create new events and traditions that build Bear spirit and pride.
- Identify, cultivate, and solicit philanthropic gifts in support of UNC's people and programs in alignment with campaign priorities developed through Phase I.





### KEY ACTION 3:

**Continue development and implementation of faculty and staff recruitment, engagement, and retention plans.**

**DEFINITION:** In order to effectively prioritize student success at UNC, we must create an environment in which our students learn and grow from a strong team of highly-skilled, knowledgeable, and dedicated faculty and staff across the institution. Just as we develop plans and strategies for recruiting and retaining students, we must also do so for our faculty and staff.

#### TACTICS:

- Implement a multi-year equitable and competitive compensation plan for faculty and staff that builds on the compensation analysis from Phase I.
- Assess the effectiveness of the classified and exempt staff evaluation process implemented as part of Phase I and adjust as appropriate.
- Identify and implement policy changes and programs to address **1)** work life balance, including but not limited to policies regarding hybrid and remote work and workload expectations **2)** healthy working relationships, including but not limited to supervisor training and healthy conflict resolution and **3)** career development, including but not limited to improved internal professional development opportunities and articulation of career ladders.
- Improve the candidate recruiting and onboarding experience – using an equity lens – including the development of a recruiting toolbox for hiring authorities and search committees and review of administrative barriers in the search process.
- Develop, seek funding for, and implement a holistic, equity-minded, faculty professional development plan that supports faculty teaching, scholarship, and service, and that builds upon the existing efforts in the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning (CETL), the Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and Human Resources.







#### **KEY ACTION 4:**

**Create plans, structures, and programs that foster an inclusive environment at UNC where all individuals feel welcomed and supported.**

**DEFINITION:** In Phase I, we made it clear that the university would be taking important measures to prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion across the institution. Fostering a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment is ongoing work that never ends and is not done in silos. Therefore, we continue to emphasize our commitment to ensuring that UNC is a place wherein all students, faculty, and staff feel welcomed – and that we offer a supportive environment well suited to collective and individual success.

#### **TACTICS:**

- Create a comprehensive university-wide diversity, equity, and inclusion strategic plan, which will serve as the foundation for the creation of such plans at each college/division level.
- Complete the next stage of UNC's Hispanic Serving Institution 2025 plan which includes developing HSI assessment metrics, preparing a pre-application for federal designation, and investigating HSI grant funding opportunities.
- Implement the English Language Learner Support Initiative and develop a training for supervisors on the Equity-Minded Teaching and Service Reflection Guide developed in Phase I.
- Administer and iterate a university-wide Campus Climate Survey.
- Examine the faculty and staff evaluation process to determine the extent to which DEI work (in teaching, scholarship, or service) is recognized and rewarded, and to identify ways in which there might be obstacles to the success of faculty and staff members from marginalized groups.
- Develop a process in which faculty and staff are publicly recognized for their contributions and innovation specifically related to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Create faculty and staff DEI Associates/Fellows responsible for serving as facilitators and resources to their colleagues on matters related to DEI within their areas/divisions.



## KEY ACTION 5:

### Create and implement an academic portfolio management plan.

**DEFINITION:** UNC must be responsive to the evolving expectations and desires of our students and the needs of our community and state. In order for the university to be well positioned for long-term success, UNC will develop and refine processes that ensure our portfolio of academic programs are up-to-date and relevant. Our academic portfolio management plan will provide clarity and direction on proactively evaluating current programs and streamlining processes in developing new educational opportunities. The plan will also provide guidance on effective communication strategies in sharing changes to our academic offerings.

### TACTICS:

- Refine the criteria by which proposed academic programs are evaluated and ensure that they are aligned with those used in the program review process.
- Review, modify, and streamline the process by which proposed academic programs are developed to ensure that the process is responsive and efficient.
- Include annual health checks in the existing program review process to inform the ongoing needs of each program, and aid in determining if a program should be enhanced, held constant, downsized, or eliminated.
- Create a communication plan by which decisions about academic programs and the rationale for them are shared with stakeholders.
- Make progress in the pursuit of establishing a College of Osteopathic Medicine at UNC, which will expand upon our offerings in the health sciences and meet a critical need our state currently faces by producing more physicians in service to our communities.









# PRIDE POINTS

*\*Based on data from Final Enrollment Report, Spring 2022*



**FIVE** Colleges



A total of more than **200** undergraduate and graduate degree programs



**9,000** undergraduate and graduate students



**41%** of all UNC students are first-generation (*degree-seeking students*)



**72%** of current students said UNC was their first choice



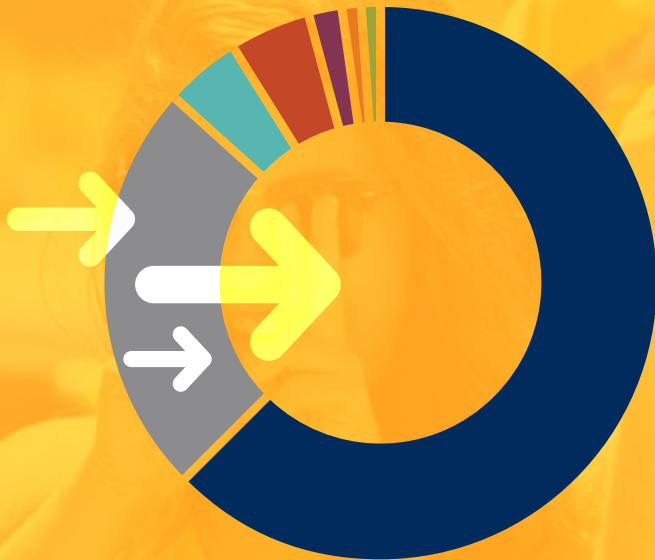
**91%** of students are employed, in graduate school, or are in a volunteer/service position within six months of graduation



Ranked **#1** in social mobility in Colorado by CollegeNET's Social Mobility Index, 2021

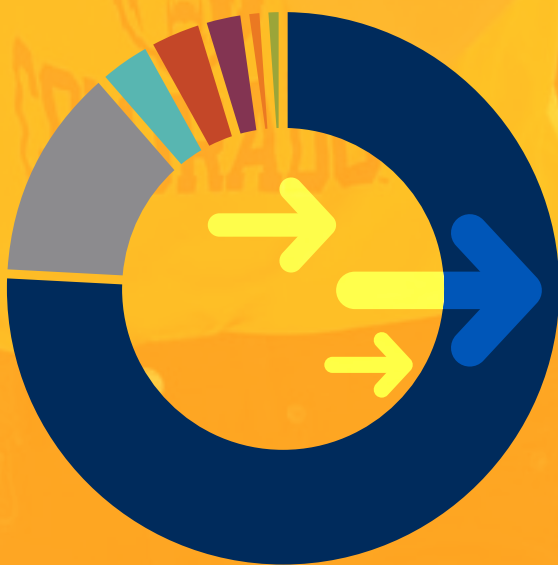


## UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT ETHNICITY/RACE (%)

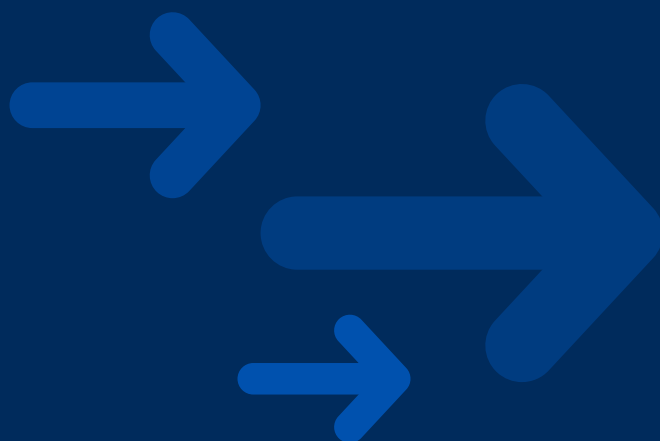


- 62.5% White
- 24% Latinx/Hispanic
- 4.6% African American
- 4.6% Multi-racial
- 2.1% Asian
- <1% Native American
- <1% Hawai'ian

## GRADUATE STUDENT ETHNICITY/RACE (%)



- 73.5% White
- 12.4% Latinx/Hispanic
- 3.4% African American
- 3.1% Multi-racial
- 2.5% Asian
- <1% Native American
- <1% Hawai'ian



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