

Kurt Thigpen is a passionate advocate for education, with a history of service as a Trustee on the Washoe County School Board and sponsorship of schools through the Education Alliance in northern Nevada. Currently, he leads Ace Studios as the CEO, where the agency focuses on uplifting brands that make a positive impact through social impact marketing.

In addition to his leadership at Ace Studios, Kurt serves as the Secretary/Treasurer for the Council of Governors of the American Advertising Federation (AAF), the largest membership association for the advertising industry and the unifying voice of the profession. Through his role at the AAF, Kurt has played a pivotal role in raising thousands of dollars for college scholarship programs, mentoring students and young professionals, and recognizing excellence within the industry. In 2024, he was awarded the esteemed Lee-Douthit-Levine Perseverance Award for his volunteer work.

Kurt is also a dedicated board member of the Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce of Nevada, where he advocates for and supports LGBTQ+ and allied professionals and businesses across the state. His commitment to workforce development is evident in his appointment by Governor Steve Sisolak in 2021 to the Community College Workforce Training and Programs Committee. This committee successfully established a \$5 million Workforce Investment Grant pilot program, aimed at making community college workforce programs more affordable and accessible.

A longtime resident of Reno, Nevada, Kurt was born and raised in Georgia. He holds an Associate's Degree in Website Design from Southeastern Technical College.