

FALL 2022

Nurses Needed

Amid a dire nursing shortage, the U is stepping up to bring more RNs into the workforce. p. 22

College Matters

Which classes had an impact on you? From screenwriting to scuba diving, we share some of the most powerful. p. 34

Ken Garff Red Zone

Get an inside look at the next-level facilities for players and fans at Rice-Eccles Stadium's new addition. p. 12

Impact in the Air

With a bold vision to improve the lives of all Utahns, the U is building partnerships in every corner of the state. p. 28





Outside

Land-Use Lesson

If you were to visit the Great Basin and Colorado Plateau a thousand years ago, you'd find similar warm, dry conditions as today. So you might expect to see the same type of wildfires now common in the West—infrequent, gigantic, and devastating. But a study led by the U paints a different story. Researchers looked at environmental and archaeological data in Utah's Fish Lake Plateau, shown here. The evidence indicates that the Fremont people living in the area set small, frequent fires

to support crop growth. This "cultural burning" cut down the amount of fuel in the landscape, lowering the risk of large-scale wildfires.

"The Fremont likely created long-lasting legacies on the Fish Lake Plateau through their cultural burning," says lead study author Vachel Carter BS'07 MS'10 PhD'16, postdoctoral research assistant at the U. "Moving forward, more 'good fire,' like prescribed fire, will be needed to mitigate against wildfire risk."



From studying human anatomy to launching tech ventures, the breadth of knowledge available at the U is astounding. We heard from readers across the country about which classes had the biggest impact on their lives. p. 34

ILLUSTRATION BY LUCI GUTIÉRREZ



FEATURES

22

Nurses Needed The United States is facing a critical nursing shortage. And as the demand for care continues to far outstrip the supply, an already stressed workforce is facing increased pressure on many fronts. See how the U is taking charge and expanding its nursing program to help meet health care needs.

28

A 29-County Impact As the state's flagship university, the U has major reach—and major responsibility. Now, with a new president at the helm, the school has made a bold promise to improve the lives of all 3.3 million Utahns. Learn how we're moving beyond the hill to partner with communities in every county.

34

College Matters Higher education is about more than a degree. Some of the greatest value comes from exploration that expands horizons and serves as a bridge to a more fulfilling life. We asked readers about impactful classes at the U, and from culinary medicine to dinosaurs, we share some of your most potent experiences.



ON THE COVER

Artist Cristiana Cousseiro depicts the air above the Great Salt Lake. The U is building partnerships to help solve Utah's most pressing issues, like the threat of toxic dust from the shrinking lake's bed.

WEB EXTRAS

More available at magazine.utah.edu

After a life of abuse, addiction, incarceration, homelessness, and health problems, Adolphus Nickleberry finally sought help at the Intensive Outpatient Clinic, which provides compassionate health care to patients with complex needs. Go to magazine.utah.edu/meet to watch Nickleberry's moving story in a short documentary produced by U of U Health that debuted at the 2022 Sundance Film Festival.



Curious about the Ken Garff Red Zone at Rice-Eccles Stadium? Get an inside look at the new addition's state-of-the-art player facilities, premium seats, private event areas, and more. Plus, learn how you can become a member and enjoy all the perks at magazine.utah.edu/zone.



Actor Claybourne Elder BA'06 gives us the scoop about life as a stage and screen star. Visit magazine.utah.edu/elder and check out the extended interview to learn more about his work on HBO's *The Gilded Age*, how he balances Broadway and fatherhood, and his birthday bond with *Company* costar Patti LuPone.

DEPARTMENTS

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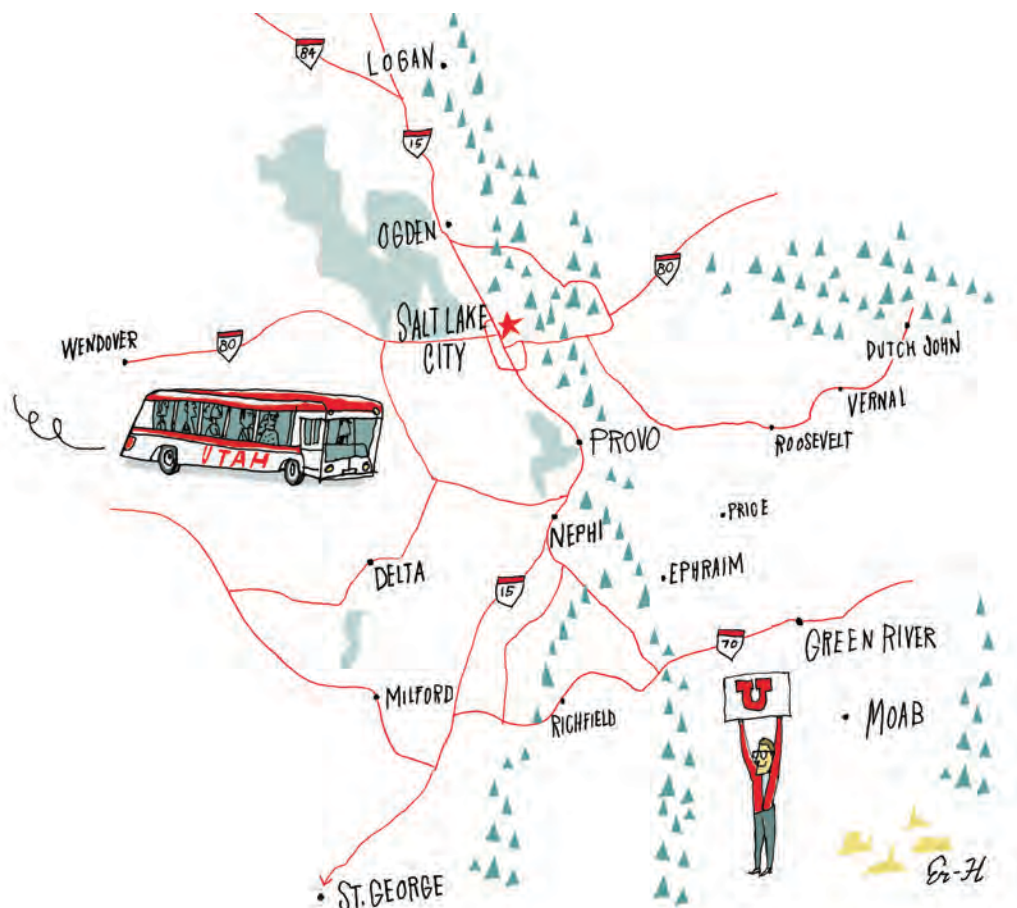


ILLUSTRATION BY ERIC HANSON

Impacting Our Communities Together



What does it mean to be Utah's flagship university? I believe it means that we have an obligation to serve the people of this great state. And that we can—and must—have a positive impact on the lives of *all* 3.3 million Utahns. Earlier this year, the U signed a new compact with the state, committing to lead; to deliver excellence in teaching, research, patient care, and community service; and to unify with our sister higher ed institutions.

Like U presidents before me, I recently embarked on a statewide tour to meet with business owners, public officials, higher education leaders, and others to listen to their needs and discuss how we can work together to better serve their communities. I saw firsthand how our existing affiliations are flourishing—like aerospace internship programs in Weber County and the telehealth services we provide in

Beaver County—and we came away with numerous ideas for new collaborations. You'll find more examples of current and future initiatives in these pages (see p. 28). We are committed to growing these efforts until we have a presence in all 29 counties in Utah.

One of the highlights of the tour was meeting with our remarkable alumni across the state and hearing your ideas for how our university can expand its impact and improve lives. Our alums are a powerful force in carrying out the U's mission, and I see evidence of that through the stories in every issue of this magazine. Whether you live in Utah or elsewhere in the country or world, your talents and expertise are helping individuals, businesses, and communities prosper.

Thank you for the incredible work you're doing. I'm excited to see the impacts we make together as we continue efforts to improve lives in Utah and beyond.

PRESIDENT TAYLOR RANDALL HBA'90



Preserving History

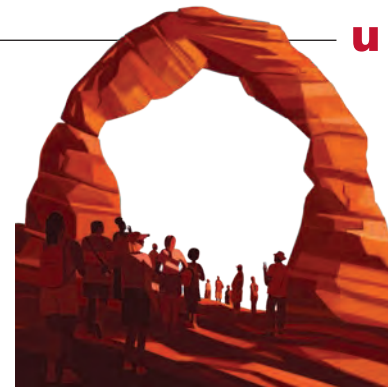
A story about alums and other community members making strides to reinvigorate Japantown in Salt Lake City ["Restoring Historic Japantown," Summer 2022] prompted many to share their own histories and experiences.

My grandfather owned the *Rocky Mountain Times*. I believe it was the first Japanese newspaper. My father was born there. My grandparents were some of the founders of the Japanese Church of Christ as well. My family was a big part of the Japanese history in Utah, so this article was very interesting, and the preservation of their history is so important.

ELEANOR MISHIMA (IIDA), EL CERRITO, CA

I am 86 years old. I was 7 in late 1942 and was incarcerated in Topaz. I lived the Japantown lifestyle for 15 years (age 15 to 30) until it was destroyed in 1965. There were many businesses, including JW Brewer Tire Co., the Colonial Hotel, a series of dry cleaners, SL Judo Club, two barbershops, California and Family Markets, a series of office spaces, an appliance store, GW Amusement, Mihoya Confectionary, and a series of restaurants.... The committee has done a marvelous job in research.

TED NAGATA BFA'59 MFA'60, SALT LAKE CITY



A Precious Resource

Great and timely article ["A Delicate Balance," Summer 2022]. Sustainable planning and design opportunities at a city and community scale are abundant. Natural resource management and tourism are integral parts of Utah's future. However, popular parks, monuments, and public lands have been successfully advertised to the planet without commensurate planning to address the consequences.

PAUL FUHRMANN, CEDAR CITY, UT

SOCIAL SPOTLIGHT

Take a stroll down historic 25th Street in Ogden and you may bump into a new sculpture commemorating U basketball legend Wat Misaka BS'48. He helped the Utes win the storied 1944 NCAA and 1947 NIT championships. And in 1947, he became the first person of color to play professional basketball. This horse with a tribute to Misaka sits in front of Tona Sushi, which is now in the building where Misaka grew up.

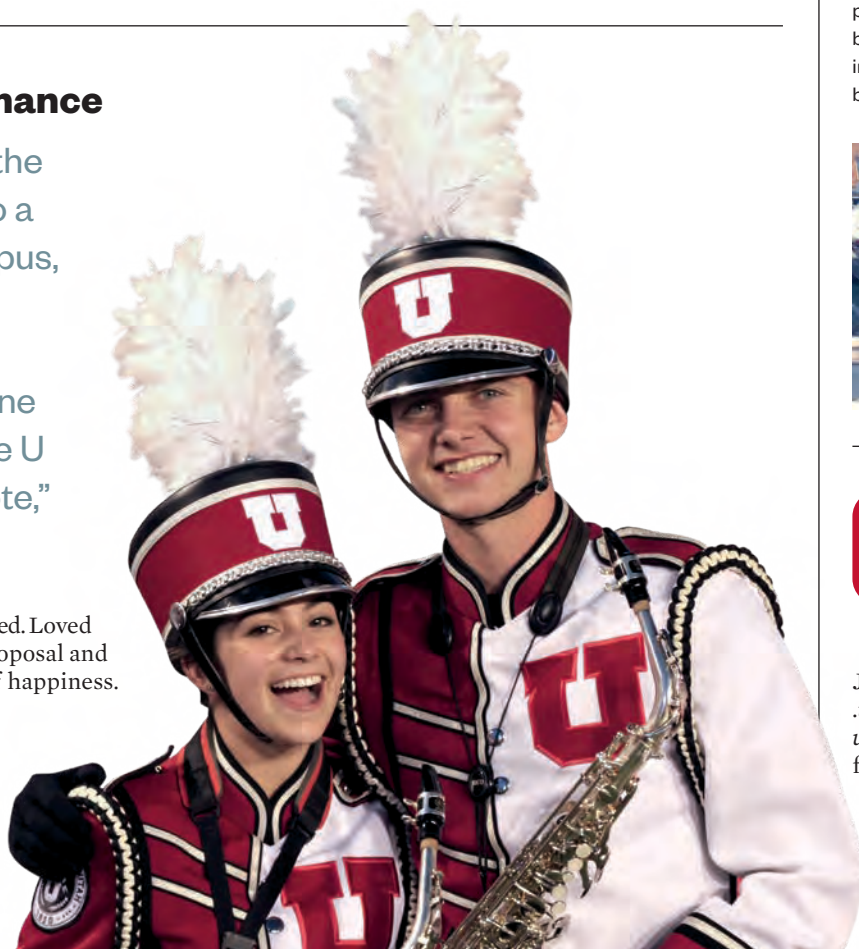


A Campus Romance

From meeting in the marching band to a proposal on campus, Michael Nielsen and Sara Wilson share a love for one another—and the U ["Love at First Note," Summer 2021].

As a Utah alum, I also bleed red. Loved hearing about your fun proposal and want to wish you years of happiness. Congratulations!

JOHN HANSEN BS'70,
BOUNTIFUL, UT



We want to hear from you!

Join the discussion at magazine.utah.edu or email us at magazine@utah.edu. Comments may be edited for length and clarity.

در اینجا به روی
همه باز است

Qofwalba Ku
soo dhowoow

**EVERYONE IS
WELCOME**

Todos são
bem-vindos

مرحبا بالجميع هنا

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HEALTH PLANS
UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

Lung Cancer Screening



Lynette Phillips, a former smoker, and her doctor, Chakravarthy Reddy, MD, discuss the results of her lung cancer screening.



**If you are a current or former smoker
over age 50, talk to your provider
about lung cancer screening.**

huntsmancancer.org/lungscreening

News from the U

ILLUSTRATION BY JING TSONG



Professional Aspirations

Sixth-graders experience their dream careers at the U with a new community partnership

Imagine, and then do—that's the U's raison d'être. And nothing embodies that more than inspiring the next generation of scientists, artists, and leaders. This past spring, University of Utah Health and University Neighborhood Partners teamed up with Whittier Elementary in West Valley City to pilot a new tailored career-exploration experience for local sixth-graders. Dubbed "Imagine U Day," it aimed to illustrate to the nearly 70 students that a secondary education is obtainable when they follow their passions.

Students wrote essays on what they would like to be when they grow up. The major employment themes from the essays helped organizers determine the six career experiences scheduled across the U campus.

For Whittier Elementary School Principal Jennifer Bodell BS'04, Imagine U Day presented a unique opportunity to encourage her students to think about college. "As a new principal, I'm constantly imagining new and improved ways to spark an interest in my students to further their educations and open unique opportunities," says Bodell. "When I connected with

the team from U of U Health and University Neighborhood Partners, a wide world of connections opened for these students."

Imagine U Day is part of efforts to build lasting partnerships with residents of all ages near the future U of U campus in West Valley City, which will include a world-class hospital and a variety of education and career pathway opportunities. Much like the city, Whittier Elementary has a minority-majority student population, with close to 40 percent of students identifying as Hispanic or Latino. "The new hospital and clinics can address community priorities in creative and innovative ways," says RyLee Curtis BA'12 MPP'14, community engagement director for U of U Health. "But only if we truly partner with the community and build on existing assets. Imagine U Day is an example of working with some of the community's most important residents—our young people."

The university will build on the first Imagine U Day as the relationship between the university and the West Valley City community evolves.

NEWS ROUNDUP



This past summer, the U got a new chief safety officer. Keith Squires is the second safety expert to hold this position. His years in public safety include serving as the Utah Commissioner of Public Safety as well as homeland security advisor to two Utah governors, leading the State Bureau of Investigation and Utah Highway Patrol, and serving as a local law enforcement advisor to the U.S. Director of National Intelligence.



Lavinia Taumoepeau-Latu BS'14

has received a Fulbright award to conduct research as part of an emergency and disaster preparedness project to develop a

cultural curriculum and training focused on tsunami and volcanic eruptions in Tonga. Taumoepeau-Latu—a Larry H. and Gail Miller Enrichment Scholarship recipient (see p. 46)—will conduct research, document the project through film, share knowledge, and foster meaningful connections across communities in the United States and Tonga. She first visited Tonga as an undergrad with the Hinckley Institute of Politics.



The College of Mines and Earth Sciences

merged with the College of Science this year. The College of Mines and Earth Sciences will retain its name and identify as a unit of the College of Science, and all faculty, students, buildings, and research programs in both colleges will remain in the combined unit.

The Science and Art of Play



People often think of games as a form of fiction, even much like cinema. “That doesn’t quite capture the full picture,” contends C. Thi Nguyen, associate professor of philosophy. “Games offer something much more important and distinctive—participatory action and the ability to experience different agencies.”

Author of *Games: Agency as Art*, Nguyen says games can be autotelic, where the activity is done for its own sake, or technical, where the purpose is the outcome. Consider a marathon—if the point were simply to get from point A to point B, it would be most

efficient to travel along the shortest possible route rather than run a seemingly arbitrary distance. Many games succeed by relishing in the journey. “So much of the joy of life is being caught in the struggle. It brings rich texture to our lives,” says Nguyen.

Games also give us a chance to experience a set of values where someone tells us what to care about and to pursue only those goals. “Life in a game can be incredibly crisp and clear.” But they can also be a cautionary tale, and to get that feeling elsewhere in life, you must have an incredibly artificial and narrow set of values, he says.

“Social media, education, work, and many other facets of life are trending toward increased gamification,” he remarks. And much of the splendor of life can be lost in that encroachment. Think about Twitter, where measures of popularity are tracked for short periods of time. “When you let yourself and your tenets be set by external metrics, you’re outsourcing your values—they’re off-the-shelf.”

His advice? “Learn from games and their structures, then go out and find what counts for you.”



Web Extra Listen to the *New York Times* podcast with Nguyen at magazine.utah.edu/agency

Scientists Trace Earliest Cases of COVID-19 to Market in Wuhan, China

The earliest cases of COVID-19 in humans arose from a live animal and seafood market in Wuhan, China, in December 2019, according to findings from an international team of 18 researchers, including one from University of Utah Health. They linked these cases to infected bats, foxes, and other live mammals sold in the market either for meat or for their fur.

The findings published in *Science* align with early reports that live animals sold at the Huanan

Seafood Wholesale Market were the likely source of the pandemic that has claimed at least 6.4 million lives since it first emerged in China nearly three years ago.

“These are the most compelling and most detailed studies of what happened in Wuhan in the earliest stages of what would become the COVID-19 pandemic,” says study co-author Stephen Goldstein, a postdoctoral scientist in the department of Human Genetics at U of U Health.

The researchers say that moving forward, public officials should seek better understanding of the wildlife trade in China and elsewhere and promote more comprehensive testing of live animals sold in markets to lower the risk of future pandemics.



PHOTO BY BAILEY MILLER

Life after Death for the Human Eye

Vision scientists revive light-sensing cells in organ donor eyes

Scientists have revived light-sensing neuron cells in organ donor eyes and restored communication between them as part of a series of discoveries that stand to transform brain and vision research.

Billions of neurons in the central nervous system transmit sensory information as electrical signals; in the eye, specialized neurons known as photoreceptors sense light.

“We were able to wake up photoreceptor cells in the hu-

man macula, which is the part of the retina responsible for our central vision and our ability to see fine detail and color,” explains John A. Moran Eye Center scientist Fatima Abbas, a postdoctoral fellow in the lab of Frans Vinberg and lead author of a study detailing the research. “In eyes obtained up to five hours after an organ donor’s death, these cells responded to bright light, colored lights, and even very dim flashes of light.”

While initial experiments revived the photoreceptors, the cells appeared to have lost their ability to communicate with other cells in the retina. The team identified oxygen deprivation as the critical factor leading to this loss of communication.

To overcome the challenge, researchers procured donor eyes in under 20 minutes from the time of death and designed a special transportation unit to restore oxygenation. Vinberg also built a device to stimulate the retina and measure the electrical activity of its cells.

With this approach, the Vinberg Lab was able to restore a specific electrical signal seen in living eyes, the “b wave.” It is the first b wave recording made from the central retina of postmortem human eyes.

“Past studies have restored very limited electrical activity in organ donor eyes, but this has never been achieved in the macula, and never to the extent we have now demonstrated,” says Vinberg. “It’s a transformative technical advance that can help researchers develop a better understanding of neurodegenerative diseases, including blinding retinal diseases such as age-related macular degeneration.”

Sea Corals Found to Be Source of Anti-Cancer Compound

For 25 years, drug hunters have been searching for the source of a natural chemical that in initial studies had shown promise for treating cancer. Now, researchers at University of Utah Health report that easy-to-find soft corals—flexible corals that resemble underwater plants—make the elusive compound.

Identifying the source allowed the researchers to go a step further and find the animal’s DNA code for synthesizing the chemical. By following those instructions, they were able to carry out the first steps of re-creating the soft coral’s chemical in the laboratory. The advance could one day result in a new tool to fight cancer.

“This is the first time we have been able to do this with any drug lead on Earth,” says Eric Schmidt, professor of medicinal chemistry. He led the study with Paul Scesa, postdoctoral scientist and first author, and Zhenjian Lin, assistant research professor.

Soft corals have thousands of drug-like compounds that could work as antibiotics, anti-inflammatory agents, and more. But getting enough of these compounds has been a major barrier to developing them into drugs for clinical use. These other compounds could also now be accessible using this new approach.

Unlike animals that inject venomous chemicals into prey, corals use their chemicals to ward off predators that try to eat them. Similarly, drugs derived from these types of compounds could be ingested as pills, rather than given by injection.



Frans Vinberg and Fatima Abbas of the John A. Moran Eye Center



T-G-I-Flash the U

If you follow the University of Utah on social media, you know what the end of the week means: it's time to flash the U! Every Friday, the U shares photos of fans showing their Utah pride by making the "U" hand sign and reppin' the school from mountaintops to the ocean bottom and everywhere in between. To join in on the action, snap a pic of yourself flashing the U, post it to Twitter, Instagram, or Facebook, and tag #FlashTheUFriday. You just might find yourself in our feed. Until then, check out some of our favorite flashes.



Web Extra Learn how the viral sensation got started and see more examples at magazine.utah.edu/flash

On Another Level

You'd be forgiven if you mistook the new Ken Garff Red Zone at Rice-Eccles Stadium for an NFL facility. The locker room, sports medicine facilities, hospitality areas, and other spaces are truly exceptional. It also added nearly 5,000 new seats, including premium and box, bringing capacity at Rice-Eccles to 51,444. "This really put us on the next level for our fan and student-athlete experience," says Associate Athletics Director Sean Farrell BA'07 MBA'12. Completed last year, it was possible thanks to a \$21.5 million gift from the Garff family—the largest single gift in U Athletics history.

The expansion on the south end of the stadium is meant to be used year-round through the Ken Garff Scholarship Club, adds Farrell. Starting at \$30 per month, club membership includes a complimentary hospitality station in the mornings, access to an upscale restaurant, events, and private areas for meetings, seminars, weddings, and more. All initiation membership fees and a portion of club revenue go to fund U scholarships. Members also have the opportunity to join the Champion League, a group of donors committed to supporting long-term student scholarships.



Web Extra See additional photos and learn more about the Ken Garff Scholarship Club and Champion League at magazine.utah.edu/zone



Continental breakfast and quiet spaces are available free for members. And the restaurant is open for lunch and dinner.



When it opened in fall 2021, the facility expanded capacity by more than 10 percent, with traditional, premium, and box seats.



The Ken Garff Red Zone at Rice-Eccles Stadium offers unparalleled panoramic views from the south end zone.



A spirited hallway leads into the facility.



Its 19 luxury suites have indoor/outdoor seating.



The top-tier amenities welcome student-athletes.



Take a look at the locker room where the Utes get pumped up before taking the field for each home game.



Futuristic technology woos potential recruits.

A Decade of Dentistry

Since its accreditation in 2012, the U's School of Dentistry has grown into one of the nation's most unique dental programs. Students receive substantial clinic experience and treat many underserved groups, including low-income families, those experiencing homelessness, refugees, rural residents, and others. And the school boasts the largest clin-

ical network of any dental school in the country, with locations across the state.

"We are proud to celebrate a decade of providing exceptional education to our students and exceptional care to our communities," says Dean Wyatt Rory Hume. Here's a look at the School of Dentistry's nearly 10 years of serving Utah.



NUMBER OF
GRADUATES:

167

8 CLINICS
LOCATED
ACROSS THE
STATE AND
1 MOBILE
OUTREACH
PROGRAM

100%
STUDENT PASS
RATE ON
NATIONAL
DENTAL BOARD
EXAMS

70,000+
UTAH ADULTS
ELIGIBLE FOR
TREATMENT
THROUGH
MEDICAID
PARTNERSHIP

PATIENT
VISITS TO
DATE:
233,677

**35% ARE
MEDICAID
PATIENTS**





First Study of LGBT+ Physicists Reveals Red Flags

LGBT+ physicists often face harassment and other behaviors that make them leave the profession, according to a study published this spring in the journal *Physical Review of Physics Education Research*. The authors found that the two biggest factors that influence a person's decision to leave are the overall climate of their organization and observing exclusionary behavior.

"LGBT+ people are inherently a part of this field. If you want physics to be a place where anyone can participate, we have to talk about these issues," says Ramón Barthelemy, assistant professor of physics at the U and co-lead author of the study.

The study surveyed 324 LGBT+ people in physics, who reported observing and experiencing shunning, homophobia, and harassment at high rates. About 15 percent of LGBT+ men reported an uncomfortable experience, while 25 percent of women and 40 percent of gender nonconforming people reported similar experiences. Women and gender nonconforming people are three to four times more likely to experience exclusionary behavior.

Almost half of participants who identified as transgender experienced exclusionary behavior, compared with 19 percent of cisgender peers. Transgender interviewees encountered face-to-face harassment and institutional barriers, such as discriminatory health insurance plans.

Co-lead author Tim Atherton, associate professor of physics at Tufts University, says physics has lost valuable talent, but he still has hope. "I see a promising vista if we can begin to address these issues."

The researchers are planning future studies to understand how best to keep LGBT+ physicists in the field.

Pet Tech

How robotic companions can help with memory care

You might think it was a typical therapy session at a long-term care facility. In a quiet room, a therapist sets down a pet carrier, brings out a cat, and sets it on a resident's lap. As the resident gently strokes the cat's fur, it purrs, and the therapist asks the resident questions about their childhood pets, accessing long-ago memories.

The resident's enjoyment of the session and the benefit for their well-being is real. But the animal is not. It's a robotic pet with synthetic fur and programmed movements and sounds. But researchers are finding that robotic pets can be useful in therapy, without some of the disadvantages and unpredictability of real animals.

In a paper published in the *Canadian Journal of Recreation Therapy*, U researcher Rhonda Nelson and graduate student Rebecca Westenskow BS'20 developed a protocol for using robotic pets with older adults with dementia. The protocol uses a low-cost robotic pet, establishes ideal session lengths, and identifies common participant responses to the pets to aid in future research.

All the participants of the study said they enjoyed the activity, with several responding that they liked it "very much." The questions that spurred the most response related to



personal reminiscences and directions for interacting with the pet.

Why does engaging with robotic pets provide such an enjoyable experience?

"People in long-term care facilities are in a position where everybody provides care to them," Nelson says, "and I think it's psychologically very comforting for people to feel like, even though they know that [the pet] is not live, they're the person who's giving love and compassion to something, and it's responding."

Robotic pets can get around many of the risks and drawbacks of live animals in long-term care settings. Many facilities don't allow personal companion animals because of allergies, the potential for bites or scratches, and other reasons.

PICTURE

After nearly 30 years of abuse, addiction, incarceration, homelessness, and serious health issues, Adolphus Nickleberry decided it was time to seek help. His moving story is the subject of *Meet Me Where I Am*, a documentary short film produced by University of Utah Health that debuted during the 2022 Sundance Film Festival.



Web Extra Watch the Sundance documentary short at magazine.utah.edu/meet



PHOTO BY CALEB TIMMERMAN, COURTESY OF USA CLIMBING



In the Heights

The U's champion team is helping drive Salt Lake City's ascent to the top of the competitive climbing world

For college students with lofty rock climbing dreams, fewer places are proving more ideal than the U. Besides an abundance of outdoor rock nearby and an impressive campus climbing gym known as The Summit, the U is home to one of the country's most successful climbing teams. The student-run team formed in 2014 and for the past five years has placed either first, second, or third in individual categories at the USA Climbing Collegiate National Championships.

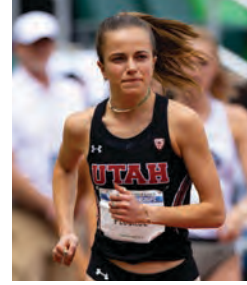
The team had its best showing yet in this year's championships, grabbing gold in all categories—bouldering, lead, speed, and overall. After divisionals, 16 members of the 40-person team moved on to nationals, where Cloe Coscoy (pictured), Stefan Fellner, Audrey Miller, Charlie Osborne, and Darren Skolnik earned spots on the podium. Nine team members went on to the FISU World University Sport Climbing Champion-

ships in Innsbruck, Austria, with Skolnik taking second in men's speed.

The strength of the U team is contributing to the region's growing reputation as a mecca for competitive climbers. Utah's mountains and red rock cliffs have always been a draw for hobbyists, but the state leveled up when USA Climbing moved its headquarters to Salt Lake City in 2018. As the national governing body of the sport, USA Climbing hosts elite events and Olympic hopefuls. Rock climbing became an official Olympic sport in 2020, and USA Climbing's top-tier gym serves as Team USA's training center.

Rock climbing may someday become an NCAA sport (USA Climbing is working on it), but until then, U students will continue to steward the team's success. Says team member Fellner, "The climbing team is looking to maintain our status as the best place for students to pursue climbing at a high level."

SPORTS BRIEFS



Cross country and track & field sophomore Simone Plourde placed sixth in the 1500m finals at the Canadian Championships in June. Plourde crossed the finish line with a time of 4:20.37 against some of the top veteran runners in Canada.



Colorado Rockies first baseman C.J. Cron ex'11 was the first U alum to be named an MLB All-Star this past summer. He played for Utah from 2009-11, and he's currently in his ninth MLB season.



Utah Athletics saw 72 student-athletes from eight sport programs honored by the Pac-12 Conference with placement on the 2022 Spring Academic Honor Roll. For the entire 2021-22 school year, the Pac-12 recognized 245 Utah student-athletes for academic success.



First baseman Alex Baeza was named an ABCA/Rawlings Gold Glove award winner (the U's first) as the top defensive player in our NCAA division. The West Jordan native came to the U as a graduate student for his final year of eligibility following a career at Hawaii. He started all 54 games in 2022.



Utah spring sports programs excelled in competition. The men's golf program qualified as a team for the NCAA Championships for the first time since 1988; lacrosse won the ASUN regular season championship in its first year in the conference and came within one win of making its first NCAA tournament appearance; men's tennis qualified for the NCAA tournament and won its opening round match; and women's track and field qualified two student-athletes for the NCAA Championships meet.

Stats

A Last Hurrah

In one of the Utes' most successful seasons in program history, tight end Dalton Kincaid was consistent and dependable—especially in the red zone. As the U's 2021 receiving touchdown leader, Kincaid gave the team a big boost in their bid to secure a second consecutive Pac-12 Championship when he—and fellow powerhouse TE Brant Kuithe—opted not to pursue a spot in the 2022 NFL draft.

We caught up with Kincaid and asked why he chose to spend one more season at the U. “I want to go as far as we can—as far as we’re capable,” he says. “Whatever happens, happens. But I want to know we gave it our all.”

HOMETOWN
Henderson, NV

YEAR IN SCHOOL
Senior

MAJOR
Business Administration

FAVORITE CLASS
Operations & Supply Chain Management

WHAT DREW HIM TO THE U
The consistency of the coaching staff and legacy of the program

2021 SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

- 14.2 yards per reception ranked him third among tight ends in the Pac-12
- 8 receiving touchdowns landed him third in the Pac-12 (first among TEs), and fifth among tight ends in the FBS
- 4 receptions for 61 yards and a touchdown against Oregon in the Pac-12 Championship game

FAVORITE FLICK(S)
The iconic series like *Star Wars*, *Lord of the Rings*, and *Harry Potter*; and honorable mention to *The Great Gatsby*

GO-TO TV
The Office

PREFERRED PODCAST
Chasing Scratch—about two men working their golf game down to a 0 handicap

BEST PRE-GAME PUMP MUSIC
Taylor Swift

New Campus Housing

The demand for on-campus housing is surging—and the U is responding. Over the next two years, capacity will increase by more than 2,200 units, which is in addition to the 5,000 already available. The expansion includes the Ivory University House along Mario Capecchi and South Campus Drive, which will bring 550+ beds starting in summer 2023. The partnership between the Clark and Christine Ivory Trust, the U, and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints will use net proceeds from that housing to fund a scholarship for first-generation college scholars and those forced to drop out because of financial hardship. It's expected to generate more than \$1 billion in help for students over 99 years. "This type of partnership

is key to our future growth, allowing us to provide expanded opportunities for Utah students," says U President Taylor Randall HBA'90.

The Impact and Prosperity Epicenter, expected to open by fall 2024 near the Eccles Student Life Center, will include 755 new beds and house the headquarters of the Sorenson Impact Center and the Center for Business, Health, and Prosperity. Other soon-to-open housing facilities include the fourth wing of Kahlert Village (430 new beds, opening in fall 2023) and two brand-new buildings replacing old structures in the University West Village (504 units for family and graduate-student housing, coming summer 2023, with many additional replacements planned over the next several years).

Number



Did Meat Make Us Human?

A new study challenges the theory that greater meat consumption led to larger brains in human ancestors

The shift toward human-like traits, such as large brains, is often linked to more meat eating in human ancestors. A new

study published in January 2022 in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, however, says the evidence



A new study from U researchers challenges previously held assumptions about the role of meat in the development of human-like traits.

doesn't necessarily support the "meat made us human" theory.

Large brains first appear in *Homo erectus* nearly 2 million years ago. Though the amount of evidence of meat eating rises sharply after the appearance of *H. erectus*, the study authors argue that this fact can largely be explained by sampling bias—meaning a greater amount of research has been done on sites associated with this time period.

"Generations of paleoanthropologists have gone to famously well-preserved sites in places like Olduvai Gorge looking for—and finding—breathtaking direct evidence of early humans eating meat," says lead study author W. Andrew Barr, assistant professor of anthropology at the George Washington University.

"We took a broader view of the archaeological record, synthesizing and analyzing all of the existing evidence for hominin meat consumption in eastern Africa," explains study contributor J. Tyler Faith, curator of archaeology at the Natural History Museum of Utah and associate professor of anthropology at the U. The researchers found that, when accounting for variation in sampling effort over time, there is no meaningful increase in the relative amount of meat-eating evidence after *H. erectus* appears.

The evolution of human-like traits could be explained by other theories, such as the use of fire to cook food, which increases nutrient availability. But the study authors say more research needs to be done.

Study: Overconfidence in News Judgment Associated with False News Susceptibility

False news is pervasive online—that much most people seem to agree on. What's not so clear is our own ability to identify it, according to a new study from Ben Lyons, assistant professor of communication. He and his colleagues found that individuals who falsely believe they can identify false news are more likely to fall victim to it.

"Though Americans believe confusion caused by false news is extensive, relatively few indicate having seen or shared it," says Lyons. "If people incorrectly see themselves as highly skilled at iden-

tifying false news, they may be more likely to consume, believe, and share it unwittingly, especially if it conforms to their worldview."

Lyons and his colleagues used two large nationally representative surveys with a total of 8,285 respondents. Individuals were asked to evaluate a series of Facebook headlines and then rate their own abilities to discern false news content. Lyons used these two measures to assess overconfidence among respondents.

"Our results paint a worrying picture. Many people are simply unaware of their own vulnerability to misinformation," says Lyons.

Most respondents—about 90 percent—reported they are above average in their ability to discern false and legitimate news headlines. Three in four individuals overestimated their ability.

"Using data measuring respondents' online behavior, we show that those who overrate their ability more frequently visit websites known to spread false or misleading news, are less able to distinguish between true and false claims about current events, and report higher willingness to share false content."

Our ability to identify fake news may not be as clear-cut as we think.



PICTURE

Running through Dec. 11, the Utah Museum of Fine Arts' *Air* features works by 16 artists, poets, engineers, and designers from around the globe and the Mountain West region. The exhibit includes three Utah-based artists whose work addresses the region's unique relationship with air. Some of the works are objects made from, measuring, or meant to transform smog. *Air* features art that explores the impacts of uranium mining on air quality, works that project a vision for how humans might deal with environmental consequences in the future, and more.



Cara Romero (Chemehuevi, born 1977), Evolvers, 2019, archival pigment print, purchased with funds from the Paul L. and Phyllis C. Wattis Fund

Postage Praise

'Living legend' honored in Philippine postage stamp

Folks in the Philippines might just be putting celebrated U scientist Baldomero "Toto" Olivera on their envelopes the next time they mail a letter. Olivera was recently selected as one of 10 Outstanding Filipinos for a set of commemorative stamps.

The Distinguished Professor at the U's School of Biological Sciences originated research on marine cone snails, demonstrating the therapeutic potential of their venom, already resulting in an FDA-approved drug. The U's biochemistry and pharmacy departments (U of U Health) are currently expanding on some of this work.

Olivera's early research contributions include the discovery and biochemical characterization of *E. coli* DNA ligase, a key enzyme of DNA replication and repair that is widely used in recombinant DNA technology.



The Post Office paid tribute to five Philippine cinema queens, two legendary athletes, two internationally recognized scientists, and one critically acclaimed painter who have uplifted the nation with their excellence.

"The 10 Outstanding Filipinos honored by the Post Office have dedicated their lives and talents to the Filipino people. So, they deserve to be immortalized in our stamps, to inspire not only Filipinos but every nationality who will see our stamps. We are proud of their accomplishments," Postmaster General Norman N. Fulgencio said in a news release.

Business Creation Program Adding New Online Option to Its In-Person Offerings

Entrepreneurs, fire up that laptop. The U's one-of-a-kind Master of Business Creation (MBC) program will soon be offering a virtual option. Starting in January 2023, startup founders can enroll online in this program from the David Eccles School of Business. "We know founders are busy and need flexibility to get the support they need, and that is why we created this new option," says Rachel Hayes, dean of the David Eccles School of Business.

The online program expands on the successful in-person option. It offers the same benefits, intense focus on the founder's startup, applied curriculum, personalized mentorship, substantial scholarships, peer support and discussion, access to \$5 million in startup funding, and more.

The online option allows founders to complete the program on a part-time basis with a flexible schedule and over a longer period. The online program can be completed in 14 months compared to nine months for the full-time, in-person option.

The MBC is an academic offering of the Department of Entrepreneurship & Strategy in partnership with the Lasonde Entrepreneur Institute. Both are part of the Eccles School, which is ranked among the top 10 schools for entrepreneurship by *U.S. News & World Report*. Learn more about the MBC program and apply at eccles.utah.edu/mbc.



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THE COUNTRY IS RUNNING OUT OF NURSES.
THE U IS HERE TO HELP.

NURSES ~~WANTED~~ **NEEDED**

BY AARON LOVELL | ILLUSTRATIONS BY SALLY DENG

IF YOU WERE hospitalized, Kenedee Le Prey is exactly who you'd want at your bedside. She's been caring for people her whole life. Growing up with an older sister who has complex physical and cognitive disabilities, Le Prey saw nursing as a natural fit.

"My sister was a major influence in my choosing to become a nurse," she says. "I recognized my privilege in having an able body and mind and my ability to use them to help others."

Now a third-semester student and College Council president in the U's College of Nursing, Le Prey looks forward to "a career where you are directly part of patients' healing experience, where you can't be stagnant." But

such a career didn't always seem a sure thing. When Le Prey first applied to nursing school—before the COVID-19 pandemic—she didn't get in.

How is this possible at a time when demand for nurses has never seemed higher?

A DIRE SITUATION

Numbering 4.3 million, registered nurses are the largest group of health care providers in the nation, according to the American Nurses Association. They are crucial at every point of care delivery, from hospital acute care to home health.

But the current workforce is still not enough. Bureau of Labor Statistics data project 9 percent employment growth for nurses through 2030. That equates to nearly 195,000 job openings for registered nurses every year for the next eight years.

The causes of nursing shortages are complex. In short, they include low compensation, remarkably high-stress environments, and skyrocketing demand for care.

There have always been staffing shortages in nursing, says Tracey Nixon BSN'06 MSN'16, chief nursing officer for University of Utah Health. "But what we're facing today is different," she notes. More nurses are retiring early

due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and more early and mid-career nurses are leaving the profession entirely. “Before, you just worried about having enough students to replace the retiring workforce. Now, we need to cultivate the passion, purpose, and impact of nursing to build interest in it as a profession to ensure we *have* a future workforce.”

Nixon points to several problems in the profession leading to the recent exodus. Wages don’t always reflect the value of care nurses provide. It requires long hours—sometimes on weekends and holidays—that disrupt work-life balance. She also notes increases in violence against health care workers, which nurses bear the brunt of.

The U.S. may face a shortage of up to 450,000 registered nurses by 2025, according to a May 2022 report from consulting firm McKinsey. The report noted that the COVID pandemic had altered career plans for many nurses, with nearly a third of RNs indicating a likelihood of leaving roles in direct patient care.

And Utah is far from immune to the shortage. Right now, the Beehive State has nearly 3,000 job openings for registered nurses. “It’s important that people in Utah, as well as the rest of the country, have an adequate number of nurses to meet their health care needs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year,” says Marla De Jong, dean of the College of Nursing.

“Vacant nursing positions put stress on an already stressed workforce,” Nixon notes. “We will eventually fill that gap, but it’s years in the making.”

BEING PART OF THE SOLUTION

There’s no easy fix. But the U is searching for solutions. The College of Nursing is boosting enrollment by adding a summer track option and bringing on 36 more students each year—an increase of 25 percent. Previously, 72 students were in fall and spring cohorts, and now all three have 60 students.

“As Utah’s flagship nursing school, we are trying to ensure there are enough nurses in Utah to provide quality care for patients today and into the future,” says De Jong. This means more than just accepting additional students, though. The college is adding new personnel, including full-time and adjunct faculty, a student advisor, a clinical placement coordinator, and patient simulation specialists. It has committed more than \$400,000 annually to cover the costs.

The college has also sought additional preceptors (a kind of supervisory mentor) in community hospitals and clinics to oversee students’ clinical experience. At least 900 clinical hours are required for each nursing student before graduation.

“We’re grateful to our health care partners in the Salt Lake Valley for helping accommodate

the experiential aspects of our nursing education,” says Melody Krahulec BSN’05 MS’08 DNP’13, assistant dean for undergraduate programs.

De Jong acknowledges the distinct benefits the College of Nursing enjoys. “The fact that we’re affiliated with an academic health care system gives us an advantage over many other programs,” she says. University of Utah Hospitals and Clinics provide numerous clinical placements for nursing students.

In addition to building relationships with new preceptors, the college has adapted in other ways. It supplements time in clinic with simulation and has changed how it schedules clinical work, expanding to Saturdays, for instance.

“We’re very grateful for the partnerships we have that facilitate student learning,” adds De Jong, recognizing that it takes more than just college administrators and faculty to educate the kinds of nurses Utah needs.

TURNING THE TIDE

And the U isn’t done. There are plans to possibly expand the class size for each cohort, says Sonja Jensen BS’01, the College of Nursing’s director of student services. “We have a great applicant pool already,” she notes. “We want

and have come to expect. This new approach to nursing education will be beneficial to all.”

HOPE FOR THE FUTURE OF NURSING

But a limited, short-term solution will not solve an expansive, long-term problem. “We can’t unilaterally solve the nursing shortage,” admits De Jong. “We’re fully aware that a 25 percent increase in our enrollment barely puts a dent in the number of graduates needed to fill vacant positions. But we care about the people of Utah who need health care, and we’re doing our best to be responsive.”

Nixon looks forward to those new nurses graduating. “It means nearly 40 more people than we’ve seen as potential applicants,” she says. But increasing the size of nursing cohorts is only one piece in a host of changes needed to reverse the nursing shortage.

“The entire profession needs to build excitement around nursing again,” Nixon notes. “We need to shift the narrative to talk about the great things nurses do.”

Despite immense challenges awaiting her post-graduation this December, Le Prey is a clear-eyed optimist. “After what we went through during the last two years, it would be impossible to not come out better,” she remarks.

THE CAUSES OF NURSING SHORTAGES ARE ~~SIMPLE~~ COMPLEX.

to create pipelines for people who wouldn’t otherwise have opportunities. We’re trying to identify ways to help students see themselves in the profession early and help them be prepared for our program.”

Patient outcomes are better with nurses who have bachelor’s degrees in nursing, which is why the college is looking to expand other opportunities, like its RN-BS program for registered nurses practicing with associate degrees, Jensen adds.

“This initiative is a major undertaking,” says Michael Good, CEO of U of U Health. “It is the right thing to do given the contemporary challenges we face. It’s vital that we educate, train, and deploy enough nurses in Utah and elsewhere in the Mountain West to provide the health care that residents of this region deserve

Nixon shares that optimism. “The reason I come back every day is to help us navigate the next five to 10 years,” she says. “This is a moment of both great change and great possibility. We have to step in and shape what our profession needs to look like.”

Luckily, future nurses like Le Prey are aspiring to be the change Nixon hopes to see in the field. Le Prey recognizes that education doesn’t stop after graduation—to be a great nurse, a person must continue learning through their whole career. And she’s excited about it.

“We are the next wave, and we’re here to fill those gaps,” she says. **U**

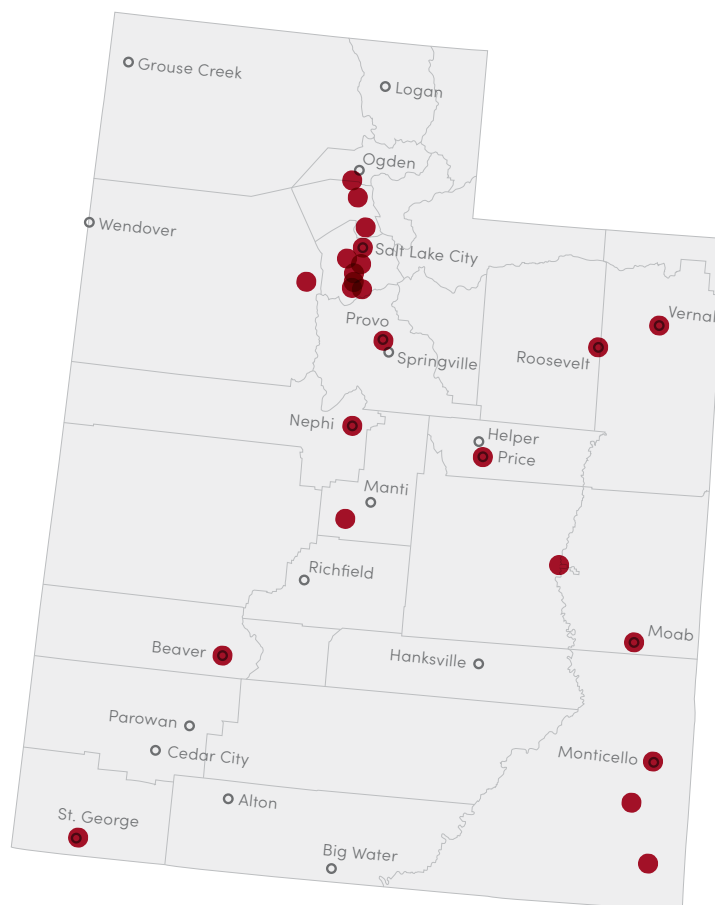
Aaron Lovell is associate director of marketing for U of U Health.



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- + We touch every one of Utah's 29 counties through partners, affiliates, and telehealth.
- + U of U Health is passionate about delivering excellent care throughout Utah — when and where it's needed.





TELEHEALTH AND SATELLITE CLINIC SITES

Beaver	Price
Blanding	Provo
Bountiful	Riverton
Draper	Roosevelt
Green River	Roy
Gunnison	Salt Lake City
Layton	South Jordan
Moab	St. George
Montezuma Creek	Tooele
Monticello	Vernal
Murray	West Jordan
Navajo Mountain	West Valley
Nephi	
Olijato-Monument Valley	

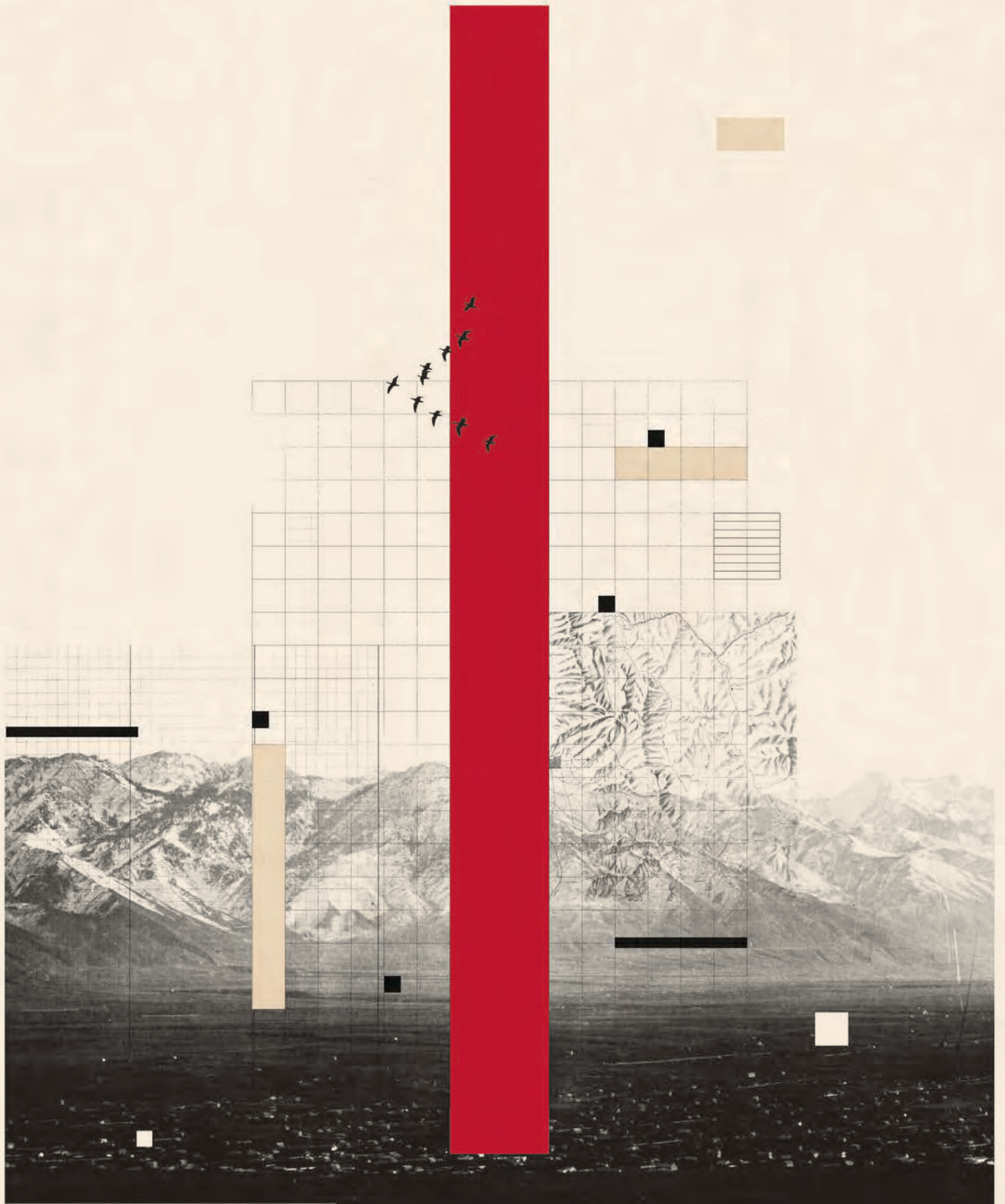
For more information visit
uofuhealth.org



County Impact

**The U has a bold
vision to help all
3.3 million Utahns.
In new efforts to
move beyond the
hill, we're
partnering with
communities in all
29 counties.**

By Lisa Anderson
Illustrations by
Cristiana Couceiro



SALT LAKE

IT ALMOST SOUNDS like a line from a Marvel movie. “As Utah’s flagship university, we have a lot of reach, but also tremendous responsibility,” says University of Utah President Taylor Randall HBA’90.

But before you start picturing that scene where Uncle Ben imparts his wisdom to Peter Parker, Randall would tell you his vision of the U’s role in the state is not that of a superhero swinging down from lofty heights to rescue the citizens. “There’s nothing more obnoxious than somebody coming into your community and saying, ‘This is what we think you should do,’ ” he says at a breakfast with Cache County leaders at Logan’s Herms Inn.

There’s no question the U has significant impact and resources (see Utah’s Flagship University, p. 32). The state invests heavily in the school, giving it an obligation to lead and share its expertise, says Randall. But it should lead with humility, partnership, and a listening ear.

This meeting with local organizations and elected officials is the first stop on his Utah Across Utah tour, taking him from northern pastoral valleys to southern red rock country, eastern mountain ranges to the West Desert. The tour is a chance to share his vision for how the university can deliver on higher education differently, with the goal of improving the lives of all 3.3 million Utahns. To do that, the U will need to extend even farther beyond the

The volume of responses makes it clear there’s an eagerness for more collaboration with the U.

“In general, there’s a perception of the ‘university on the hill’ that doesn’t come down off the hill as often it should,” says Logan City councilmember Amy Anderson. “So we appreciate that you’re coming all the way up here.” Even Provo City councilmembers admit to wanting to “see more red past the Point of the Mountain.”

Randall explains that the U has rededicated its compact with the state through six commitments: to lead as the flagship university, to educate for the benefit of individual students and society, to apply our research expertise to the state’s pressing issues, to serve communities as a public university, to provide expert medical care, and to partner with sister institutions of higher education. “We all have resources to bring to the table to improve the lives of Utahns,” he says. “Let’s work together to make it happen.”

To that end, we bring you just a few highlights of how the U is creating and strengthening partnerships with businesses, governments, colleges, and universities in counties throughout Utah.

Preserving a Precious Resource *Davis County*

Above the Great Salt Lake’s wetlands, a hawk soars in a field of blue sky. Fledgling ducks skim the waters, their gold feathers bright against the marsh grass. Backlit by this sunny June day, a group of Utah legislators, scientists, and U administrators are holding a conversation in stark contrast to the peaceful scene.

“I don’t think we have to exaggerate the gravity of the issue we’re facing,”

determining next steps, they need more data. “We need the academics to identify what those critical research questions are, help us answer them, and then feed that back to us,” says Representative Tim Hawkes.

The questions are numerous and complex. But the U’s breadth of expertise helps provide a comprehensive picture of the problem. U geographer McKenzie Skiles MS’10, for example, measured the impact of Great Salt Lake dust on snowpack at Alta. The dark dust absorbs more sunlight, and Skiles found it accelerated snowmelt.

U atmospheric scientist Kevin Perry has extensively researched the dry soil surrounding the Great Salt Lake, measuring it for harmful heavy metals and determining where the “hot spots” are—areas of exposed lakebed where toxic dust plumes are most likely to occur. He and his colleagues have identified what the lake level would have to be in order to cover up the dust hot spots.

“Higher education is uniquely positioned to leverage our expertise for exactly this type of effort,” says U College of Science Dean Peter Trapa. “We can help prioritize ideas and solutions.”

Now lawmakers will be able to benefit from the collective expertise of Utah’s two Research 1 universities. Just weeks after the meeting at the wetlands, the U formed a Great Salt Lake Strike Team in partnership with Utah State University. The strike team will provide data and policy recommendations so legislators can make informed water management decisions.

“The problems facing the Great Salt Lake are large enough that they will require effort from all of us to solve,” says Brian Steed JD’02, executive director of the Janet Quinney Lawson Institute for Land, Water, and Air at USU. “Combining the knowledge base and capabilities of the two research universities to help find solutions just makes sense. We expect great things to happen from this partnership.” —*With Paul Gabrielsen*

Building Sustainable Economies *Carbon and Emery Counties*

When coal production began to decline in Utah’s coal country, the region started heading the way of Appalachia—the veritable canary in the United States’ coal industry. The effects of coal mine closures in Appalachia served as a predictor for the economic futures of similar areas in the United States.

Colorado River Basin tribes have historically been left out of water rights discussions. Members of the U community are helping change that.

“We’re here to listen and ask how we can be there for you.”

Salt Lake Valley, establishing a presence in all 29 Utah counties.

“We’re here to listen and ask how we can be there for you,” Randall tells higher education, business, and community leaders at each stop on the tour. “What opportunities would you like us to bring to your communities? How can we partner with you? What problems can we tackle together?”

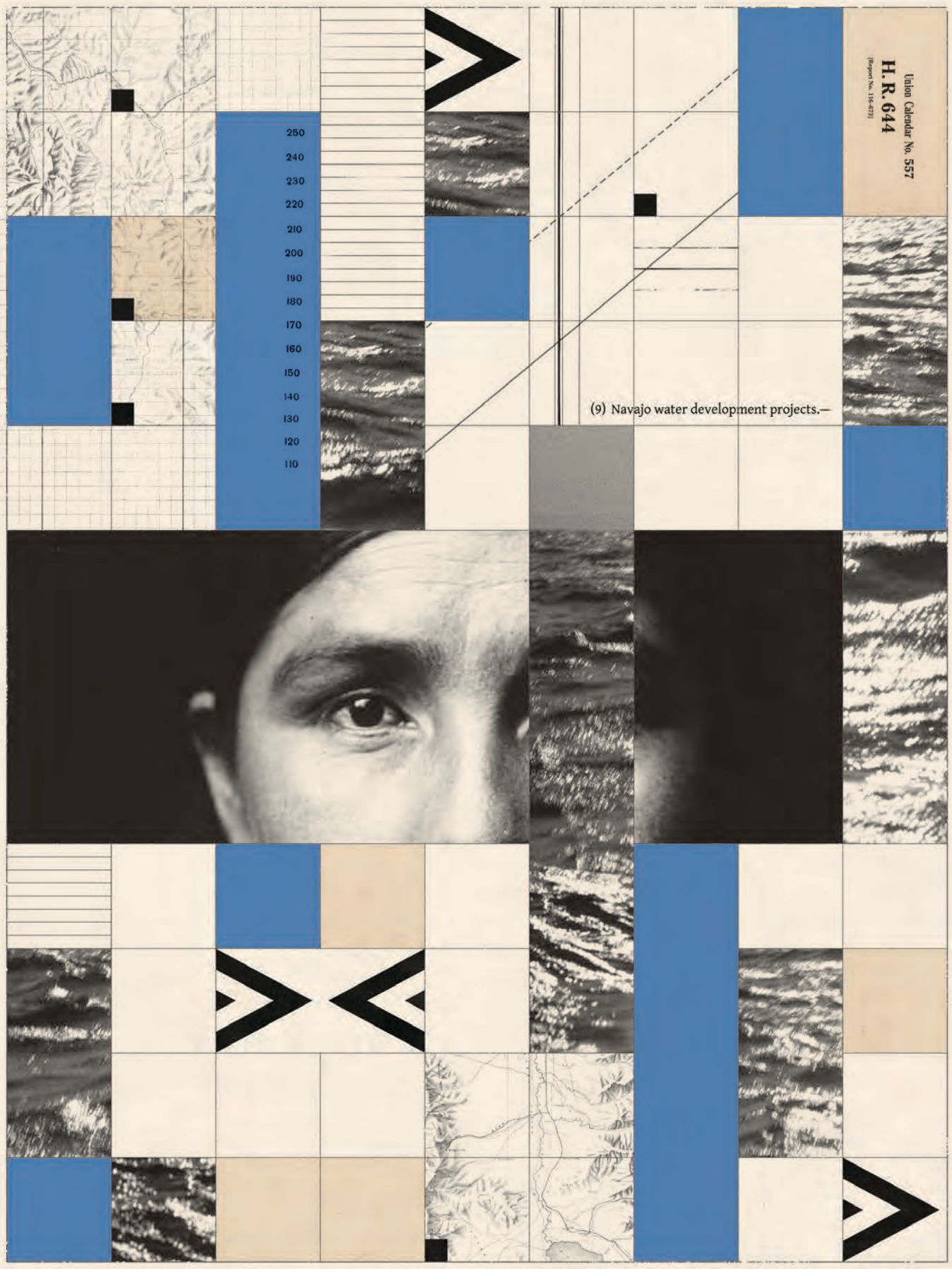
says Randall. With the lake at its lowest recorded level, the environmental, economic, and health implications are, in Randall’s words, “hemispheric.”

In March 2022, the Utah legislature passed several water-related bills, setting aside \$50 million for water conservation efforts. The policymakers in the room say it’s just the beginning. Before

(9) Navajo water development projects.—

250
240
230
220
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110

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2/3 of Utah's
physicians

Home to the state's

- Medical school
- Dental school
- Cancer institute
- Mental health institute
- Pharmacy school
- Law school
- Art museum
- Natural history museum
- Arboretum

That includes Carbon and Emery counties. Coal production in Utah's high eastern desert has gone down by 47 percent since its peak in 2001, and in recent years the counties have seen significant economic decline, rising unemployment, housing problems, and a growing opioid crisis.

To help the two counties transition away from coal production, the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute at the University of Utah organized the Coal Country Strike Team, a coalition of elected officials, public policy experts, business and community leaders, and higher ed leadership.

The Strike Team says the move away from coal is rightfully placed. Nevertheless, it carries consequences.

"The benefits of combating a warming climate are widespread, but the costs are concentrated," says Coal Country Strike Team co-chair and Gardner Institute director Natalie Gochmour BS'84 MS'88. "Utah's coal country is the most economically distressed area of our state."

Diversifying the economy is key. One Strike Team goal is to bring Utah's Silicon Slopes tech hub southeastward by providing technology workforce training programs and IT degree scholarship funds. The region's tourism economy has

to help us create a more well-rounded economy moving forward."

Expanding Health Care in Rural Communities *Washington County*

Cradled by the craggy, red-rock Vermilion Cliffs, the isolated community of Short Creek is located 30 minutes from clinics in Hurricane, 50 minutes from hospitals in St. George, and two hours from health care in Arizona. Combine that with high levels of poverty and it's no wonder the community is as much a health care desert as a literal one. By the time Richard Bennett arrived, it was hard to picture an area more in need. Diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, dental problems, and many other chronic health conditions were running rampant.

University of Utah Health hired Bennett in the summer of 2017 to open the first satellite office of the physician assistant program in St. George, part of its mission to extend reach to underserved communities. A partnership with Utah Tech University and St. George Regional Medical Center helped bring the No. 4-rated PA program in the country to this largely rural region. The campus acts as a hub, with the program's 24 students rotating to remote

The Utah Across Utah tour included stops at local businesses, where U leadership discussed projects such as internships for students.



significant potential for growth as well. Known as the Red Rock Gateway, the area includes natural treasures like the San Rafael Swell and Nine Mile Canyon. Strike Team grants have helped with Green River restoration projects and Main Street revitalization for the cities of Price and Helper.

"We have a vision to diversify and invest in a bright future for our children and grandchildren," says Price City's mayor, Mike Kourianos. "We value partnerships like we have with the University of Utah

clinical sites throughout the area.

Short Creek became one of the first benefactors of the program when Bennett organized two health fairs in the community in 2018 and 2019. PA students, U of U Health physicians, and the School of Dentistry—which also operates a St. George campus in cooperation with Utah Tech—provided what was the first medical and dental care in years to many residents. Today Short Creek has its own federally qualified health center, and U of U Health serves as a community partner.



The St. George campus is helping fill a need for more rural health care providers, with 44 percent of graduates going on to work in rural areas. Eliezer Bermudez, dean of Utah Tech's College of Health Sciences, says the partnership between the two schools has benefited Utah Tech students by giving them more hands-on experiences.

"Students in the PA program and other health care programs collaborate in inter-professional education activities and learn from and with one another," says Bermudez. "This collaboration is a victory for students, patients, and the community."

Partnering to Protect Workers *Weber County*

There's a U program that tends to fly under the radar—the campus radar, at least. But it's one of the most visible faces the university has in the business world, impacting an estimated 8,000 companies in a six-state region.

The Rocky Mountain Center for Occupational and Environmental Health is one of just 18 educational research centers designated by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. It doesn't just train the workforce—it also conducts research on workplace hazards from carpal tunnel syndrome to chemical exposures. The center even researches occupational psychology (turns out it's more than just annoying when your co-workers are late to meetings—it affects productivity and morale).

Now, an innovative partnership with Weber State University is enabling the center's growth, adding an undergraduate degree and occupational health nursing program to its graduate degree offerings. The partnership is expected

to add about 30-40 professionals to the workforce annually.

"This partnership allows us to expand efforts relating to research, educating students, and ultimately helping businesses while protecting worker health and safety in Utah and the surrounding region," says Weber State University President Brad Mortensen PhD'09.

Advocating for Tribal Water Rights *San Juan County*

In May 2020, the Navajo Nation surpassed New York for the highest COVID cases per capita. A contributing factor was lack of access to clean water for hygiene and sanitation, says Heather Tanana JD'10 (Diné), assistant professor at the U's S.J. Quinney College of Law. "An estimated 30-40 percent of Navajo

Nation residents don't have piped water in their homes," she says.

The Water & Tribes Initiative—a policy group focused on advancing sustainable water management for Indigenous peoples—turned to the U for help. The group recruited Tanana to report on clean water access for Colorado River Basin tribes. Her report helped inform the Tribal Access to Clean Water Act, introduced in the House of Representatives in 2022.

A legal expert and citizen of the Navajo Nation, Tanana understands the area and the importance of including tribal voices. "Historically, tribes have not been involved, and not by their choice," she says. "We want to provide tribes with the information they need to be able to meaningfully negotiate."

President Randall and other U leaders tour Uinta Wax in Vernal to learn more about eastern Utah's energy industry.

Bringing Museums to a One-Room Schoolhouse *Juab County*

Driving out to West Desert Elementary requires preparation, says Katie Seastrand. "You have to make sure you have plenty of gas and that your car can handle the dirt roads."

As manager of school programs for the Utah Museum of Fine Arts (UMFA), Seastrand brings art projects and lessons to schools all over the state, including this one-room schoolhouse in Juab County near the Utah-Nevada border. At 50 miles from the nearest paved road and 90 miles from the nearest grocery store, it's one of the most remote schools in the lower 48.

It means a lot that UMFA makes the long trek to share a museum experience with students, says West Desert teacher Eleazer Murphy. "In our rural environment, we work hard to expose our students to experiences that will help them connect to important historical and cultural concepts," he says. "The exposure they are able to get from wonderful groups like UMFA really helps us in our efforts of expanding their horizons."

The Natural History Museum of Utah also visits West Desert Elementary as

"The collaboration is a victory for students, patients, and the community."

part of its K-12 outreach program, bringing fossils and artifacts to an average of 300 schools per year. For its part, UMFA tries to visit every school district in the state within three years. Seastrand tells students and teachers that while UMFA is part of the U, it actually belongs to the state. That means, she says, "We're your art museum." **U**

Lisa Anderson is associate editor of Utah Magazine.





College Matters

U courses and time on campus can provide life-changing experiences well beyond that final piece of paper.

BY SETH BRACKEN

ILLUSTRATIONS BY LUCI GUTIÉRREZ

WHEN YOU LOOK at it, getting a college degree is a no-brainer. Graduates with a four-year degree earn an average of about \$32,000 more each year than those with just a high school diploma. They have 57 percent more job opportunities, as well as higher rates of voter participation, lower unemployment, and reduced health care costs, according to the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

But there's much more to it than that, says Interim Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Martell Teasley. "We all have to pay rent. And a college degree helps with that," says Teasley. "But it's not just for earning a living, it's also for living a life."

The breadth and depth of knowledge available at the U is staggering, he says. And tuition gets students much more than a few hours in class. "Being a student at the U opens the door for access to all the university—the insights and connections of its professors, fellow students, its programs and support, and so much more. I think people forget that."

What advice does Teasley have for students to get the most out of their degree? "Knock on doors, meet people, go to events, develop relationships, and find mentors," he says. "It's not just the professors at the front of the lecture hall that help, but all the people who dole out kernels of wisdom along the way that will shape and mold you into a better person."

Momentous Mo

From dissecting human cadavers to studying ecology in East Africa, classes at the U make an impression. We asked our readers for some of the most influential courses that helped shape their careers and lives. Here are some highlights.

Most Global ▶

Ecology and Legacy Integrated Minor Program

HONORS COLLEGE

Patagonia, Montana, Utah, and East Africa—disparate locations with at least one thing in common: they're all sites for the U's Ecology and Legacy Program. Housed in the Honors College, this minor is a series of interdisciplinary courses that culminate in a place-based experience to learn about humankind's impact on our environment, says Winona Wood HBS'17 MS'22, integrated minors program manager, who was in the first cohort in 2015. "It was the single most impactful part of my undergraduate experience," she notes.

Fellow program alum Danielle Beatty HMS'20 agrees. "These classes helped me realize ecological thinking can and should play into every major and job," she says. "This shift in my thinking is what led me to my current research and position in a PhD program, and it is still shaping who I am, what jobs I will look for after grad school, and what impact I want and believe I can have."



ments



Most Plot-Driven

Screenwriting

COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS

It might not be a surprise that a class that opens with watching either *The Matrix* or *Groundhog Day* has grown a strong following. What may be a bit more unexpected are the lessons non-film majors take from it, says Paul Larsen, associate professor (lecturer) of film and media arts. "This class shows how you can use language and writing to get ahead in

whatever you pursue," says Larsen—although, he is quick to note, some notable alums *have* gone on to Hollywood, including Oscar-nominated Lee Isaac Chung MFA'04, who told Larsen's students on a recent visit that this was his favorite class.

Participants begin writing their own 120-page manuscript virtually from day one. And the classes are almost entirely focused on reading and providing feedback on peer work, all under the watchful eye of Larsen, who has been teaching the course for nearly three decades.

Most Media

Exploring Social Inequality through Music & Film

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES, SCHOOL FOR CULTURAL AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

Media can entertain and instruct, reinforce or counter negative stereotypes, even illustrate issues of social inequality. "I can talk to students until I'm blue in the face about the difficult lives of many people who immigrate to America," says course instructor Theresa Martinez, associate professor of sociology. "But when I show them *A Better Life* [a film about an undocumented immigrant in Los Angeles], it drives that story home and makes it real to them."

From *12 Years a Slave* to horror hit *Get Out*, and from Tupac to Death Cab for Cutie, the material runs the gamut and challenges students to place current events in historical context with the aid of media. "The world is more polarized than ever, and experiencing film and music together is a rare opportunity to find commonality," says Martinez. "After all, media is all around us. It shapes everything we do. So why wouldn't we learn about it in college?"

Honor Roll

There's no way for us to list all the unique and impactful classes at the U in these pages, but here are a few other favorites.



Center for Emergency Programs

Ski patrol, swift-water rescue, avalanche rescue, and EMT courses are just some of the certificates and trainings available to students.

The Cultural Aspects of Food

How people around the world select, prepare, and eat food can be a striking reflection of society. Explore the relationships between food, history, culture, and traditions through topics such as nutritional needs.



Love and Relationships

Social science has much to say about the phenomena. Students discover how to apply cutting-edge findings to their own relationships.

Poverty Alleviation and Entrepreneurship

A program of the Center for Business, Health, and Prosperity, this class teaches how countries around the globe tackle economic development. Students spend a week working with companies in Ghana, one of the leading nations in Africa.

Cont'd on p. 39



Most Gaming ▾

Aesthetics and Philosophy of Play

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING,
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

Games are powerful. They can tear us out of our practical attitudes and make us experience something from a new perspective. This course, which is a collaboration between Entertainment Arts & Engineering and the Department of Philosophy, challenges students to think about the role of play in society as they explore more than just mainstream games and the lessons behind them while creating their own. “Games can communicate ideas, challenge our values, and be a powerful creative outlet,” says co-instructor Jose Zagal, professor (lecturer) in the College of Engineering.

At the end of the semester, the students host a showcase for the nondigital board, card, and other games they invent. “Games can provide

a palette of value concepts and comment on societal standards,” says co-instructor C. Thi Nguyen, associate professor of philosophy (profiled on p. 9). “We want students to expand how they think about what makes a game successful.”



▲ Most Lively

Principles of Human Anatomy

COLLEGE OF SCIENCE

Although a human cadaver has often been peacefully laid before him while he teaches, Mark Nielsen’s tone is conversational and his method Socratic. Nielsen BS’83 MS’89 has served as a guide for more than 32,000 students who, among other tasks, have dissected cadavers to get firsthand experience with what constitutes the human body. The retiring professor (lecturer) of biology is one of those legendary instructors who graduates remember wistfully for years to come. “His teaching changes the way people’s brains work. It gives them a new understanding of who they are and who humans are as a species. He gives students a ‘Eureka!’ moment,” says David Carrier BS’80 MS’82, professor of biology.

▼ Most Social Impact

Nonprofit Consulting

DAVID ECCLES SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

When Danika Borcik BA'16 MBA'21 entered her master's program at the U, she didn't have social impact in mind for her long-term career strategy. But this class transformed the trajectory of her life. "I didn't even know this field existed before enrolling," she says. "It changed my perspective on how to form a life and career around social good." Borcik now works full time for the Sorenson Impact Center, where the course is housed.

The 10-week class is primarily for MBA candidates, though some law, medical, and other students participate, says instructor Fraser Nelson, who is also a co-founder of the National Trust for Local News nonprofit. Students are broken into groups to serve as consultants to local nonprofits, usually dealing with complex societal issues, such as helping those who are unhoused. "This class is a chance for students to see how their experience and knowledge can make an immediate impact, and hopefully help more people consider devoting part of their lives to public good."



Most Delicious & Nutritious

Culinary Medicine

COLLEGE OF HEALTH,
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

A lot of classes take place in lecture halls. Some happen in labs. But this one is held where nourishment and health take center stage—the kitchen. From Thai red curry to Tunisian pepper stew, the course uses food and nutrition to bring together 24 students from across health sciences—including pharmacy, medicine, nutrition, nursing, and more—to help them teach one another and learn to work together, says instructor and registered dietitian and nutritionist Theresa Dvorak MS'07, assistant professor of nutrition and integrative physiology. "This is a learning laboratory—not a lecture hall with 200 people," she says. "Students are taught to see a whole person, including recognizing how cultural background may play a role in health. They learn to give practical tools for meaningful change, rather than just saying, 'You need to lose weight.'"

Salsa Dancing, Archery, Scuba Diving, and More!

That dance class might do more than teach you how to pirouette. And you'll do more than just learn the rules of a new sport on the pickleball court. Multiple studies show that students who make connections on campus are more likely to stay engaged, avoid burnout, and graduate. So go on, sign up to learn how to shoot an arrow, salsa dance, play pickleball, or explore the depths. **U**

Seth Bracken is editor of Utah Magazine.



Web Extra What classes made the biggest difference in your life? Chime in at magazine.utah.edu/matters

Cont'd from p. 37

Bookbinding

Hear about Eastern and Western traditions, along with the history of the book. Construct a variety of book forms and enclosures and complete creative final projects.



The World of Dinosaurs

These remarkably diverse animals inhabited every major continent, persisted for more than 150 million years, and evolved numerous bizarre forms of bodies. Study major dinosaur groups and place them into temporal, biogeographic, and ecological context.

Cognition in the Wild

Mental thought and the natural environment are intertwined—and pupils explore that relationship in this course, which includes a five-day trip to Southern Utah.



History of Rock and Roll

This class covers the gamut of rock music and its influences, from jazz to rhythm and blues to Norwegian second-wave black metal bands and everything in between.

Launching Tech Ventures (Engineering)

Absorb the arts of presentation, negotiation, and branding to prepare for the pivotal precondition of high-tech venture launch: attracting capital.

SWITCH FOR STUDENTS

Through the University of Utah license plate scholarship program, the Office of Alumni Relations gives hundreds of students the financial support they need to begin their U journey—or finish their degree and begin their alumni career. If you don't already have your U plate, now's a great time to switch! Visit utahplate.com to order.



Love,



“I love empowering students of all backgrounds to understand the role they want to play in medicine. Scholarships are a critical part of that. We’re not just investing in students, we’re investing in the future health care professionals who will take care of us.

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Sarah Lamb, MD

*Vice Dean of Education,
Spencer Fox Eccles
School of Medicine*



love.utah.edu

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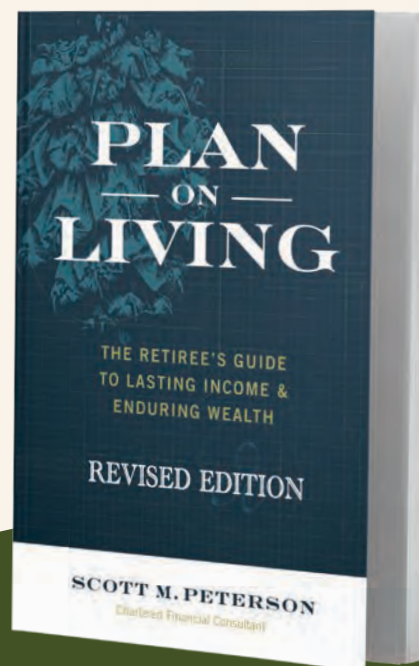
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PHOTO COURTESY OF UPLIFT AEROSPACE



Above: Alum Josh Hanes (left), Otis Kwame Kye Quaicoe (middle), and artist Amoake Boafo. Right: Image of suborbital triptych panel.



PHOTO BY SHIVA LYNN BURGOS

Art Trek

An alum launches a start-up combining art, commerce, and an exploration of the final frontier

Josh Hanes HBS'16 has boldly sent paintings where no artworks have gone before. Hanes, the CEO and founder of Uplift Aerospace, commissioned Ghanaian artist Amoake Boafo to decorate the Blue Origin *New Shepard* rocket with three paintings to see how traveling into outer space would affect the pictures.

Once the rocket, launched in August 2021, left the Earth's atmosphere, the three-foot-by-three-foot triangular paintings returned to Earth with the capsule. Later, researchers studying the cosmos' effect on the paintings found—they were different!

Don't worry: no scary alien life-form was attached.

"We sent the paintings to labs, where microscopic analysis found silicon particles on them after traveling through atmospheric levels," Hanes says. "And they had several microcraters, which were probably caused by high velocity impact with atmospheric elements."

After further research is completed on the art, the pieces will be put on public display.

Hanes has been working with NASA on many forward-thinking proposals that combine space travel with art, industry, and commerce. But what else might you expect from someone who, as a youngster growing up in Draper, Utah, loved nothing more than staring with wonder at the starry night sky and watching *Star Trek: The Next Generation*?

Hanes took his love of the final frontier to the U, where the honors physics major was president

of Students for Space Entrepreneurship and Technology. He also volunteered with the U's Electrical Engineering Outreach Team, where he inspired high school students to study engineering and science.

Today, he encourages everyone to pursue the dream of living in outer space.

"I've always viewed space as the place that gives us hope to continue improving our lives and encourages us to reach the pinnacle of human aspirations," Hanes says. "The beauty of space is that it has no boundaries, and our possibilities for creativity with it are endless. That's why kids look up into space and talk about becoming astronauts when they grow up."

One of Hanes's latest projects involving NASA is Luna-crete, a compound that aims to use moon dirt to make concrete on the lunar surface. This concrete could be used to manufacture building materials that would one day support our living on other worlds.

"Uplift's goal is to build the infrastructure that will connect communities on Earth with communities in space," Hanes says. And the fact that countries like China have entered this new space race doesn't bother him. "Space is the one place that promotes international cooperation. That's our hope—that we can remove all borders that exist and work together for humanity."

BENJAMIN GLEISSER

ALUMNI NEWS ROUNDUP



Have a business idea? Lassonde for Life is here to help. All U alums can take free workshops by alumni experts from anywhere in the world. Topics include identifying a market opportunity, building a customer profile, and more. It's a collaboration between the Lassonde Entrepreneur Institute, U Alumni, and PIVOT Center, a university office dedicated to innovation and economic development. See the class lineup at lassonde.utah.edu/life.



Homecoming came back, and better than ever. Highlights included the annual U5K, the Osher Beehive Cheese Tasting & Social, the golf tournament—and of course, the alumni tailgate and game against Oregon State University. Stay up to date on future U Alumni events by visiting alumni.utah.edu.



If you're looking for a spot for your next conference, reception, wedding, or other event, look no further than the Cleone Peterson Eccles Alumni House. The stunning 34,000-square-foot building has a spacious ballroom, multiple meeting rooms, and boardrooms in the heart of campus. Visit ecclesalumnihouse.utah.edu to learn more.

a

Ask

Stage and Screen

Actors live at the intersection of luck, talent, and hard work. At least that's been the experience for Claybourne Elder BA'06. And he ought to know. This summer, he finished playing a leading role in the five-time Tony Award-winning revival of Stephen Sondheim's *Company*, and he has recently been busy filming season two of HBO's Emmy-nominated *The Gilded Age*. "Studying at the U gave me the skills I needed as an actor, but it was up to me to go out there and put them to use," notes Elder, who was the U's 2019 Horizon Award recipient from the College of Fine Arts.

What are some of the unexpected challenges of being on Broadway?

It's both thrilling and exhausting. Lots of people must do their jobs when they're sick, but in theater you have to do it with a big smile on your face. As an actor, you're lucky if you're in a Broadway show every three to four years, though, so you enjoy it while you have it.

What was it like to film *The Gilded Age* while also being on stage every night?

It was funny to spend the day in 1880s New York and be in a present-day musical on Broadway at night.

On *The Gilded Age*, my character, John Adams, is part of the wealthy New York elite but has a deep secret: he's gay. Being gay was still illegal at this time, and so the danger of being discovered was real. He must balance his love and his desire to live an authentic life with obligations to his family and societal pressures. Being a gay man myself, it was easy to draw from my personal experience for this role.

Do you make it back to Utah often?

I love coming back to Utah! When I do, I teach a master class for the acting students because I want them to know that it's possible. Also, I feel like I am reminded who I was and where I came from, which is always a good thing.



Web Extra Read more from our interview with Elder at magazine.utah.edu/elder

Funding a Brighter Future

For 20 years, the Larry H. and Gail Miller Enrichment Scholarship has helped students from underserved groups attend college

At just 12 years old, Vicky Nguyen BS'20 found herself acting as a medical interpreter. Her sister had been experiencing seizures, and Nguyen's parents, whose first language is Vietnamese, needed someone to translate as the pediatrician explained the MRI results.

"The doctor was saying my sister had a tumor in her head," Nguyen says. "I thought, I don't even really know what that means. How do I say this to my parents?"

Her sister underwent surgery and eventually recovered, but the experience stuck with Nguyen.

"Seeing the language barriers and other health disparities that my family went through made me recognize that this is something I felt passionate about," she says.

"I wanted to help other people who experience the same issues."

After earning a bachelor's in kinesiology and nutrition from the U, Nguyen enrolled in the physician assistant program. She aims to go into family medicine and work with the Vietnamese community and other underserved populations.

Growing up, Nguyen always knew she would go to college. Her parents emphasized the importance of earning a degree, saying it was the key to more opportunities and financial security. Nguyen's father had been scrambling to earn money since he was a child. At 10 years old, he would cook sweet potatoes to sell at school so his family could afford dinner.

"My parents wanted my sisters and me to not live the same life," Nguyen says. "They want us to have good careers and be happy."

Though going to college was a given, being able to afford it was not. She credits the U's Larry H. and Gail Miller Enrichment Scholarship for making her education possible. For 20 years, the program has been providing funds for students from groups underrepresented in higher education and those who are first in their families to attend college.

"Receiving an education can help transform a young person's life," says Gail Miller, chair of the Larry H. & Gail Miller Family Foundation. "It's amazing to see each student grow and accomplish their goals throughout their time at the University of Utah. The world needs more leaders like these students who aspire to make the world a better place."

Nguyen says that without the scholarship and the generosity of the Miller family, "I wouldn't be where I am today. It means the world to me."

Vicky Nguyen plans to become a physician assistant and work with the Vietnamese community and other underserved populations.



Space Biology

From blastoff to splashdown, astronauts are exposed to a withering array of health hazards—exposure to cosmic radiation, loss of muscle mass, and lowered immunity, to name a few. Yet much remains unknown about the long-term effects of space travel on humans.

In hopes of finding more answers, several University of Utah Health scientists, who happen to be U alums, are collaborating with NASA to launch an experiment to the International Space Station. The researchers will evaluate the effects of space travel on megakaryocytes—aka bone marrow cells—and platelets, which curb bleeding and help dampen the effect of infectious diseases.

The study is one of 10 space biology research projects selected by NASA in 2021. Such research poses more challenges than Earth-based studies, notes principal inves-

tigator Hans Schwertz MOH'19, an adjunct professor of family and preventive medicine at U of U Health who practices at the Billings Clinic in Bozeman, Montana.

"All the experiments must be precisely set up for space, which is a totally unforgiving environment," he says. But the researchers say the unique study will provide vital information about how to protect space travelers. It could also have implications for health care on Earth.

"What we learn from this experiment could broaden our understanding of what role megakaryocytes and platelets have in inflammation, wound healing, immunity, and tissue regeneration," says Matthew Rondina BS'98 MD'03 MS'12, professor of internal medicine and pathology at U of U Health and a study co-investigator. "This knowledge could potentially lead to new treatments for autoimmune diseases and other disorders."

DOUG DOLLEMORE



PHOTO COURTESY OF NASA

Class Notes

'70s

Robert Poirier BS'73 has published his first novel, *The Killings at Halls Cove*, a gritty thriller set partially in Salt Lake City in 1968 and 1969. Poirier was among the group of Naval Enlisted Scientific Education Program sailors who graduated with the U's Department of Naval Science class in 1973. He began writing in 2018 with a small creative writing group at the Veterans Affairs medical clinic in Martinez, CA. He has since published short stories in the annual statewide California Writers Club Literary Review; in *SURVIVAL: Tales of Pandemic*, a CWC anthology; and in the CWC Mount Diablo Branch newsletter *The Write News*.

'80s



David Oehler

David Oehler MFA'82 (PhD, Iowa State) is now the vice chancellor of academic affairs at Ivy Tech Indianapolis. He was previously vice president of instruction and student services for Metropolitan Community College's Longview campus in Kansas City, MO.

'90s



Jodie Hewitson

Jodie Hewitson BS'96 MPR'97, a tax partner at Tanner LLC in Salt Lake City, has been appointed tax practice head of the firm. In this new role, she provides leadership and direction to Tanner's growing tax services and oversees 50 tax professionals.

Paul C. Burke JD'97 is general counsel, shareholder, and director at Ray Quinney & Nebeker, where he complements his labor and employment litigation practice with an impressive pro bono docket. He has represented religious minorities, Dreamers, a Black Lives Matter activist, and LGBTQ youth. For his latest public-interest challenge,

Burke draws on a lifelong passion for soccer to take on homophobic chants at soccer stadiums. While these matters might seem to vary, Burke notes that they all touch on his sense of justice and desire to be part of something larger than himself.

Tracy S. Cowdell BS'97, partner in the Cowdell & Woolley law firm, was awarded Sandy City's highest honor at its One Sandy Awards this year. The Noal Bateman Award, named for a noted volunteer and humanitarian, recognizes longtime service to the Sandy community. Cowdell was instrumental in preserving the history and integrity of the Sandy Museum, serving as general counsel for its foundation; served two terms as an elected member of the Canyons School District, which he helped create in 2007; and was the first president of the Canyons Board of Education. Tracy's father, former City Council Member Scott Cowdell, received the same award in 2013. They are the first father and son to receive the award, established in 1986.

Lindsay Barenz HBS'99 is now president of Oakland Roots Sports Club professional soccer team, part of the National Independent Soccer Association, in CA. She was previously with the Washington Spirit women's pro club and the National Women's Soccer League, where she served in various business operations and business development leadership roles.

'00s

Heather L. Thuet BA'01 JD'04 has opened her own law firm, Key Legal Group, LLC, and this summer ended a term as president of the Utah State Bar. A trial attorney with more than 17 years of experience persuading juries in both federal and state court, she is currently serving her third term as Judge Pro Tempore in the Salt Lake Justice Court. She is also the co-owner of Endurance Real Estate, a boutique real estate brokerage.



Eddy Thompson Jr.

Eddy Thompson Jr. BS'04 is a member of the Utah Martin Luther King Jr. Human Rights Commission, and at L3Harris, where he is a compliance trade and logis-

SPOTLIGHT



J. Aaron Sanders BA'98 MFA'01 is the writer/director of *Garage*—a short suspense/horror film based on his experiences as a survivor of childhood sexual abuse—which won Best Drama Short at the 2021 Atlanta Underground Film Festival. Sanders is an award-winning novelist (*Speakers of the Dead*), screenwriter, and short story writer who left a tenure-track university position in the Southeast to pursue writing full time in Los Angeles. Shortly following his move, and four decades after his abuse, the trauma of Sanders' experience burst out in crippling post-traumatic stress disorder. He immediately sought help—and started writing about it all. As he struggled to recover, he began to turn his experience into creative work and advocacy that he hoped could help others. Besides *Garage*, he and his partner created the website *72hourhold.com*, where they documented their own PTSD/secondary trauma and recovery process and now share a recovery "toolkit" and fellow survivor stories.

tics manager, directs L3Harris Employees of African Descent (L.E.A.D.), working to improve company diversity and promote equity. In 2021, he helped lead creation of Utah's MLK Jr. license plate, now available through the state DMV.



Sheena McFarland

Sheena McFarland BA'05 EdD'19 MPA'19 is marketing and communications director and an adjunct instructor at the David Eccles School of Business. McFarland worked

for *The Salt Lake Tribune* for a decade as a reporter and editor, covering topics such as immigration and LGBTQ rights, among many others. "As a woman of color growing up in Utah, I have faced discrimination in plenty of situations, so equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) work has always been important to me," she says. Since joining the Eccles School in 2015, she has served on the U's MLK Week planning committee and helped the school in its EDI efforts.

Tara Harrison JD'08 was promoted

to director of public affairs and government relations at Regence BlueShield of Idaho. Harrison has been active in public policy and advocacy for more than 15 years, having worked with all levels of government, from municipal to international, and having served in all three branches of government.



Kerstin Tenney

Kerstin Tenney MMU'09 has recorded her first solo violin album, *Light*, featuring four newly commissioned pieces and eight new arrangements. Tenney is a professional violinist and plays with the Tabernacle Choir and Orchestra at Temple Square. She also teaches violin, covering the mental, physical, and emotional aspects of playing. Recorded at Wyastone Hall in Monmouth, England, and featuring the English Symphony Orchestra, *Light* was produced by Simon Kiln, who worked at the legendary Abbey Road Studios for 25 years and edited music for the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy.

SPOTLIGHT

'10s

The fourth annual Queer Spectra Arts Festival took place in May at Salt Lake City's Sunset Studios and online. Many alumni helped to organize the event or were featured in the fest, which showcases self-identified LGBTQIA artists' works and engages audiences in conversation regarding art and queer identity. The organizing team included **Max Barnewitz** BA'13 MA'16, **Aileen Norris** BA'19 HBFA'19, **Emma Sargent** BA'19 HBFA'19, **Arin Lynn** BA'20, and **Jayde Chase** BFA'22. Featured artists included **Rae Luebbert** BA'18 HBFA'18, **Nick Weaver** BFA'22, **Hunter Hazard** BFA'21, **Eliza Kitchens** BFA'20, **Tori Meyer** HBFA'21, **Nora Lang** BFA'19, and **Becca Speechley** BFA'20.



Karem Orrego

Kareem Orrego BA'16 directed a multi-screen documentary experience titled *Shattering the Pictures in Our Heads*, which premiered at the Utah Museum of Contemporary Art earlier this year. The film deconstructs the mythic Indian stereotype with genuine perspectives from members of the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of the Duck Valley Indian Reservation, on the border of Nevada and Idaho. Orrego has previously worked with the Sundance Film Festival and says one of her favorite past projects was the Crisol Film Initiative, a series of events she created to celebrate Latin American contemporary cinema and other art forms.



Kara Roseborough

Kara Roseborough BA'17 was awarded a Make a Wave grant from 3Arts, a nonprofit organization that supports Chicago's women artists, artists of color, and deaf and disabled artists who work in the performing, teaching, and visual arts. Roseborough is a multidisciplinary dance artist and the artistic director of Evanston Dance Ensemble 2. She is also a longtime artistic associate of Fleetwood-Jourdain Theatre, for which she has performed and written plays.

Madison Day DDS'19 was recognized among the 2022 "40 Under 40" top young dentists in the U.S. by *Incisal Edge* dental magazine. Fewer than 700 of America's best young dentists have

earned this designation, including the 2022 inductees, who were celebrated with a high fashion photo shoot in Manhattan. Day is a general dentist in Riverton, Utah.

'20s



Demetrius Kourtides

Demetrius Kourtides BS'21 was a NASA research scientist for 33 years—mainly working on the heat shield that protects the space shuttle when it re-enters the atmosphere—and has been using his retirement to explore a whole new field. "I grew up in Greece during the Second World War, and we have a lot of old, beautiful buildings and a lot of history. But when they become run-down, they are rarely preserved....I took a noncredit class in history of architecture, and that got me hooked on wanting to be able to preserve historic buildings." Then, a major fire in a Greek resort town

pushed him further. "There were dead ends, and they couldn't get out—it was mayhem. The roads were haphazardly planned, and more than 100 people died. That was a big factor in my decision to study architecture and city planning."



Connor P. Brown

Connor P. Brown BA'22 received a 2022-23 Fulbright Award and will be a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant in Germany's Nordrhein-Westfalen region. At the U, Brown studied German and music (specializing in piano performance) and was recognized as the 2022 Outstanding Senior in German. He has recently been working as a high school German teacher and was recruited by U faculty to help build a year-long after-school German program in 2020, excelling despite the challenges of teaching middle schoolers via Zoom.



What's up with U?

Send updates to classnotes@utah.edu

SPOTLIGHT



PHOTO BY FRANCISCO KJOLSETH

Work by Salt Lake artist **Katie Mansfield** BA'15 is among the winners of Pabst Blue Ribbon's annual can art contest. Some 7,000 artists from 120 countries entered this year; the field was narrowed to 25 finalists, from which online voters picked the 10 winners. For her efforts, Mansfield received \$10,000 from the company, and her work will appear on some of the 140 million cans of Pabst hitting store shelves this fall. Mansfield's art has a cheeky, feminist vibe and is inspired by vintage comic books and horror movies but flips the often-sexist messages of the originals. She is now re-focused on her art and apparel company, Tragic Girls, which she started in her bedroom in 2017. Mansfield says she likes drawing "powerful women, with a little bit of evil thrown in there, because I have fun doing that kind of stuff." She also aims to promote social equality and positive mental health, making images that, as she told *The Salt Lake Tribune*, "explore mental health in a relatable way, so people don't feel alone. But I try to make them funny and quirky at the same time."

Artist, activist, and post-colonial academic **Mary Anne Mohanraj** PhD'05 recently published *Vegan Serendib*, the latest addition to her cookbooks of Sri Lankan dishes. Born in Sri Lanka, raised in Connecticut, and now a clinical associate professor with the University of Illinois at Chicago, Mohanraj explores a breathtaking range of subjects and genres with her work, frequently diving into both cultural and sexual identity, in science fiction, fantasy, poetry, nonfiction essays, and more. Mohanraj was one of the world's first bloggers and has long been an open and vocal sexuality activist. She founded and moderates the Internet Erotica Writers' Workshop and was the co-founder and first editor-in-chief for the online erotica magazine *Clean Sheets*. She has had stories published in the *Wild Cards* science fiction shared universe edited by George R.R. Martin, helped found and was the first editor-in-chief of the Hugo-nominated and World Fantasy Award-winning magazine *Strange Horizons*, and founded and directs the Speculative Literature Foundation. In support of South Asian and diaspora (or "desi") literature and other arts, she is a founding member and executive director of the DesiLit organization, founded and directs the biennial Kriti Festival, and is editor-in-chief of the DesiLit journal *Jaggery*.

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UTAH'S WEEKLY POLITICAL ROUNDUP

THE HINCKLEY REPORT

— WITH —
JASON PERRY

In partnership with the Hinckley Institute of Politics at the University of Utah, The Hinckley Report provides insight and analysis into Utah politics, covering the most pressing political issues facing our state. Hosted by Jason Perry, director of the Hinckley Institute of Politics, each week's guests feature Utah's top journalists, lawmakers and policy experts.

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Resonating Impact

Maud May Babcock, a fierce advocate for women's rights, wasn't afraid to be first. She was the first female faculty member at the U, founder and the first female chair of the departments of Physical Education and "Elocution" (which evolved into Communication and Theatre), the first female chaplain in a state senate, the first female to preside over trustees of a state institution, and, with her production of over 800 plays, the "First Lady of Utah Theater."

Pictured here in 1892, Babcock (leaning against the pole) is seen teaching a physical education class filled with women wearing the revolutionary "bloomer suit," which allowed them to move more freely in activities including basketball, a then-new sport she brought to the U.

ELENA GARDNER



Web Extra Read more about her impact on theater at the university in our prior feature at magazine.utah.edu/babcock

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THE LUXURY

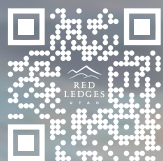
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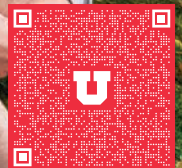
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