

Sky Sweepers

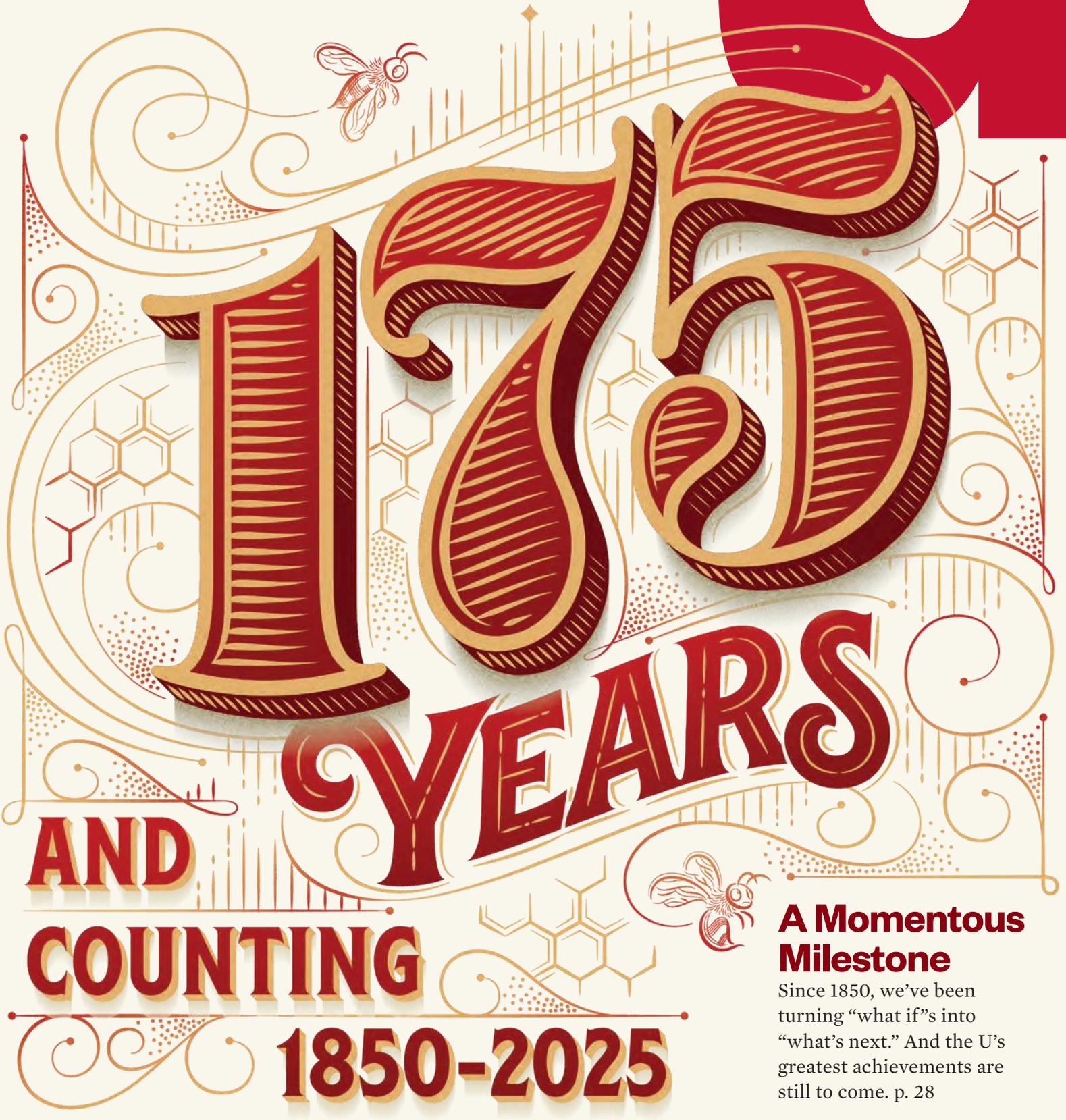
A U professor and his team aim to clean up space junk orbiting our planet with futuristic technology. p. 13

Creating Worlds

A top-ranked U program teaches students how to design captivating video game worlds and compete in a tough industry. p. 22

Degrees of Impact

Universities help shape the fabric of our communities. What would we lose if these institutions faded away? p. 34



A Momentous Milestone

Since 1850, we've been turning "what if's into "what's next." And the U's greatest achievements are still to come. p. 28



Outside



Gear Up with Outdoor Adventures

Did you know the U boasts one of Utah's largest outdoor equipment rental shops—and one of the biggest on any college campus in the country? Outdoor Adventures offers an impressive array of gear, from rafts, mountain bikes, and rock-climbing equipment to skis, snowboards, and winter clothing. Equipment rental is open to all, and students get some gnarly discounts. But that's not all—they also organize over 15 student group trips each semester, perfect for meeting fellow outdoor enthusiasts and learning new skills.

With seven world-renowned resorts within a 45-minute drive, you can go from campus to slopes in no time. Just ask Christian Raguse BA'20, our new @UtahAlumni social media manager and an outdoor sports photographer, who captured this exhilarating image of John Michael Fabrizi on a jump in Little Cottonwood Canyon.

When you're ready to get outside and gear up for any season, visit campusrec.utah.edu and give @uofuoutdooradventures a follow on Instagram for rental and trip information.



U University of Utah Magazine

WINTER 2025
Volume 34, No. 1

No field trip required: The U's museums bring scientific and cultural wonders to hundreds of classrooms statewide—one of the countless ways the U enriches communities. p. 34



FEATURES

22

Creators of Worlds The video game industry generates more revenue than movies and music combined, making it both big business and a battleground for talent. In the U's top-ranked Division of Games, students master storytelling, design, and technology to craft immersive gaming worlds—and gain a competitive edge in this booming field.

28

175 Years and Counting In 1850, the University of Deseret started out with a handful of students and teachers gathering in private homes. Today, the University of Utah is a powerhouse of knowledge and innovation, its impact as extensive as its campus. Trace the milestones and meet some notable changemakers as we celebrate 175 years of the U.

34

Degrees of Community Impact If the U disappeared tomorrow, we'd lose a whole lot more than just a place of learning. From innovative projects to extensive community outreach, the U serves as a cornerstone of our collective well-being. Explore some powerful examples of how the university improves life for Utahns and shapes the fabric of our society.



ON THE COVER

U crimson meets honeybee yellow in artist Martina Flor's hand-lettered illustration commemorating 175 years of the University of Utah serving as the Beehive State's flagship institution.

WEB EXTRAS

More available at magazine.utah.edu



The U turns 175 years old this year, and you're invited to join the celebration! All year long, the university is hosting 175th anniversary events, from days of service to TED-style talks to a grand gala. Visit magazine.utah.edu/175 for the full details.



Immerse yourself in the interactive worlds created by students in the U Division of Games. All students in the undergrad and graduate programs publish a video game before they graduate, and many are available to download and play for free. Find a selection of games at magazine.utah.edu/games.

Calling all readers! It's been five years since we transformed *Continuum* into *University of Utah Magazine*, and we want to know what you think. What stories are catching your eye? What topics do you want to hear more about? What can we do to improve? Take our quick survey at magazine.utah.edu/survey and help shape future issues.

DEPARTMENTS

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 08 News from the U | 19 Humans |
| 09 Ask | 40 Forever U |
| 10 Trending | 41 Expert |
| 13 Imagine | 42 Panel |
| 15 Stats | 44 Class Notes |
| 16 Diagram | 48 Reflect |



PAPER OR PIXELS?



Let us know how you prefer to get *University of Utah Magazine*.

Use the QR code or visit magazine.utah.edu/subscription to update your preferences.

STAFF

Christopher Nelson BS'96 MPA'16 **PUBLISHER**

J. Melody Murdock **EXECUTIVE EDITOR**

Seth Bracken **EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

Lisa Anderson BA'02 **ASSOCIATE EDITOR**

David E. Titensor BFA'91 **ART DIRECTOR**

Marcia C. Dibble **SENIOR EDITOR**

David Meikle BFA'94 MFA'06 **SENIOR DESIGNER**

Brian Rasmussen BA'80 **BUSINESS MANAGER**

UMC Digital **WEB DESIGN**

Pentagram, Austin **FEATURE DESIGN**

CONTRIBUTORS

Patricia Brandt, Amy Choate-Nielsen,

Elena Gardner, Jasen Lee, Evan Lerner,

Brian Maffly, Matilyn Mortensen,

David Pace MA'94, Andrew Thompson BS'08,

Rebecca Walsh BA'93 MPA'18

UPDATE ADDRESS

magazine.utah.edu/subscription

CONTACT US

magazine@utah.edu | 801-213-1253

75 Fort Douglas Blvd.

Salt Lake City, UT 84113

VISIT US ONLINE

magazine.utah.edu

UNSUBSCRIBE FROM PRINT

If you prefer reading online and no longer wish to receive a print copy, visit magazine.utah.edu/subscription

University of Utah Magazine (formerly *Continuum*) is published three times a year by University Marketing & Communications. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the university administration.

© 2025 University of Utah

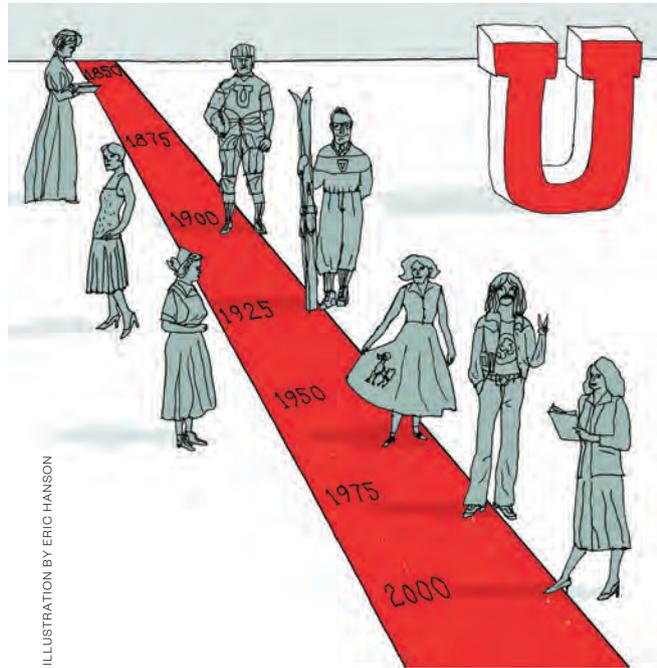


ILLUSTRATION BY ERIC HANSON

An Enduring 175-Year Legacy



When I think of the University of Utah's history, I'm filled with awe at the extraordinary societal impact we've made over the past 175 years.

Brigham Young and other leaders established the University of Deseret with a simple belief: that the sharing of ideas and knowledge would help their young community grow and prosper. They understood that education is vital to building a thriving society.

Their vision has blossomed into remarkable reality. Take our legacy of health care innovation. Martha Hughes Cannon BS1878, the first woman state senator in the country, laid the groundwork for medical advancement when she helped build Utah's State Board of Health. Decades later, Willem Kolff, who created the first artificial kidney dialysis machine, became head of the University of

Utah's Division of Artificial Organs and Institute for Biomedical Engineering. Robert Jarvik MD'76 followed with helping create the first permanent artificial heart successfully implanted in a human patient. Today, in these same labs, Nobel Prize and MacArthur "Genius Grant" winners are discovering new frontiers in medicine and biotechnology.

Our commitment to human understanding and protecting the world runs just as deep. Wallace Thurman (ex'20) left Salt Lake City to become a vital voice of the Harlem Renaissance. George S. Dibble (teaching certificate, 1925) was an influential painter, professor, and art critic for decades. Meanwhile, Pulitzer Prize-winner Wallace Stegner BA'30 helped preserve America's wild places through his powerful words and advocacy—a legacy that continues in our climate research today.

In every corner of society, our alumni have transformed

their fields. WordPerfect co-founder Alan Ashton BA'66 PhD'70 helped revolutionize word processing, and Ray Noorda BS'49 advanced network computing through his company, Novell. Emma McVicker BS1888 championed public schooling and became the state's second superintendent of education. Chief Justice Roger McDonough JD1922 led the Utah Supreme Court through crucial decades, and David O. McKay BS1897, a devoted educator, and Russell M. Nelson BA'45 MD'47, a renowned heart surgeon, both became presidents of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Our graduates have shaped iconic companies—from J. Willard (BA'26) and Alice (BA'27) Marriott, who founded Marriott International, to Oliver Zipse ex'85, Doug Bowser BS'84, and Kirk Tanner BS'92, who today lead BMW, Nintendo of America, and Wendy's. Our influence extends to Hollywood, with alumni such as Academy Award-winner Leigh Harline BA'27 (composer of "When You Wish Upon a Star"), Oscar-nominated filmmaker Lee Isaac Chung MFA'04, and Critics Choice Awards winner David G. Derrick, Jr. ex'00 (director of *Moana 2*).

When I look back at these remarkable individuals and look forward to our future, I'm filled with excitement. Today's graduates tackle contemporary challenges with the same innovative spirit—in laboratories and studios on campus, in Utah's communities, and around the globe. The dream that began 175 years ago continues to evolve through your work. Together, we're not just celebrating our history—we're building on it, every single day.

PRESIDENT TAYLOR RANDALL
HBA'90

Value of Higher Ed

In the first of a three-part series, we dig into the stats that make the case for college and show that the U is an especially smart investment [“Is College Still Worth It?,” Fall 2024].

Loved this article in print. Came to download the page of stats, so thanks for making that available. Going to share that with my nephew trying to decide if he should go to school. Obviously, I’ll be pushing him toward the U. Go Utes!

ANONYMOUS



The value proposition of higher education has changed over the last 10-15 years. And while I appreciate that college cost growth has slowed since 2020, the years leading up to that painted a very different picture, especially nationally. That being said, I’m glad my alma mater has this top of mind and is making adjustments to adapt to a shifting job market. Thanks for the interesting article. Very well done.

ANONYMOUS

The Goff program sounds interesting. That’s something I’d want my kid to pursue. I love seeing my alma mater adapt and help students as the job market gets more and more difficult.

ANONYMOUS



Vital Vision Care

The Moran Eye Center’s work bringing essential vision services to the Navajo Nation shows the critical importance of accessible health care [“Visionary Outreach,” Fall 2024].

Thank you for shining a light on this issue! The University of Utah does some great work helping the Indigenous community in Utah. I would love to see more about this program and the other programs that support such an important community in Utah’s history.

SAM JONES, SALT LAKE CITY

SOCIAL SPOTLIGHT

From hidden gems to must-know campus hacks, the new @utahstudentlife is your Instagram companion for crushing the student experience at the U—whether you’re already here or planning to be.



Campus Upgrade

The Ken Garff University Club offers something for everyone—from gourmet dining to family nights to game-day celebrations [“Welcome to the Club,” Fall 2024].

That restaurant looks so nice! I used to work on campus and would’ve loved a dining option like this. I ate at the Panda Express way too many times. Love seeing my U growing up! And that illustration is just adorable!

ALISSA PETERSON, OGDEN, UT

It’s shocking to me how much campus has changed since I graduated back in 1976. I’m too old to make a membership make sense, but 20-30 years ago, this would’ve been very appealing. Thanks for the great article.

CLARK JOHNSON BS’76

SALT LAKE CITY



 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.

BY UTAH. FOR UTAH.

GREAT EDUCATION ✓

GREAT HEALTH CARE ✓

GREAT HEALTH INSURANCE ✓
(yeah, we offer that too)



HEALTH PLANS
UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

Viral Shah enrolled in the MBC program to grow HelloGM, a hotel-management software company.

Now Enrolling for

Fall
2025

ENTREPRENEUR A MASTER'S DEGREE ONLINE OR IN PERSON

M | B | C
— MASTER OF —
BUSINESS CREATION.

AN AFFORDABLE PROGRAM TO GROW YOUR BUSINESS



ENTREPRENEUR IS A VERB. START DOING.

ECCLES.UTAH.EDU/MBC

News from the U



A map of the area from 1888 showing the original location of Fort Douglas

The U Acquires Final Fort Douglas Acreage

Historic land transfer marks new era for the U and U.S. Army Reserve

The U is set to expand its footprint in a historic land deal, acquiring the last 50 acres of Fort Douglas in a move that will reshape the campus landscape for generations to come.

The complex transfer required action from both the Utah State Legislature and the Utah Governor's Office, as well as the U.S. Congress. Using state funding, the U will build a \$100 million headquarters for the Army Reserve at Camp Williams in Bluffdale, Utah, clearing the way for the military to vacate the remaining acres it occupies just east of the university campus.

"This land transfer is a testament to the strong relationship between the University of Utah, our elected leaders, the Utah National Guard, and the U.S. Army Reserve," U President Taylor Randall HBA'90 said at a groundbreaking at Camp Williams last August.

For more than 150 years, the fort and the university have been intrinsically linked. At one point, the fort stretched over 10,500 acres, and in 1898, the U received its first 60 acres of Fort Douglas land, which became its permanent home. Now,

the U surrounds the remaining 50 acres of original fort property.

Over the years, the land transfers have significantly shaped the university's growth. In 1962, land for the University of Utah Medical Center was granted to the U, now home to the University of Utah Hospital, Spencer Fox Eccles Medical School, College of Nursing, College of Pharmacy, and more. In 1968, 320 acres for Red Butte Garden and Research Park became U property. The historic Officers Circle, transferred to the U leading up to the 2002 Winter Games, served as part of that year's Olympic Village and is now student housing.

As the U plans for the future use of the final 50 acres, it remains committed to preserving the fort's legacy while creating more "college town magic." The U envisions projects including research and lab space for the health sciences, additional student housing, and recreational spaces. Fort Douglas' historic chapel, parade field, cemetery, and museum will be maintained, ensuring that this shared history continues to be honored as the university grows and evolves into the future.

NEWS ROUNDUP



Last fall, the U launched Utah Direct, a guaranteed admissions pilot program for high-achieving high school seniors in four Utah school districts. Students with a 3.5 GPA or higher will receive guaranteed admission letters before applying. The initiative aims to reduce anxiety about the admissions process and encourage more Utah students to pursue higher education.



The U's College of Architecture and Planning unveiled Studio Spaces at Einar Nielsen Field House. This renovated facility features the Talmage Studio, work areas for over 150 students, flexible classrooms, and research centers. The expansion addresses the college's growth and enhances collaborative environments for architecture, design, and planning students to develop their projects and skills.



The Wilkes Center for Climate Science and Policy at the U awarded the \$500,000 Wilkes Climate Launch Prize to Applied Carbon last fall. The company developed a mobile robot that converts crop waste into biochar, improving soil health and providing long-term carbon storage. This innovative solution addresses agriculture's potential to remove carbon from the atmosphere while benefiting farmers.

a

Ask

Deconstructing LEGOs

Not every professor has a LEGO-filled office. Then there's Chris Ingraham. His shelves are lined with builds, from a red VW bus to an entire Japanese village dotted with pink cherry trees. The U associate professor of communication and environmental humanities was only a lukewarm LEGO fan until recently, however. While co-editing the book *LEGOified: Building Blocks as Media* with fellow academic Nicholas Taylor, Ingraham gained a newfound appreciation for the colorful bricks and what they represent. Here, he shares his insights.

How did you initially start studying LEGO academically?

My colleague had been playing LEGOs with his kid and sold me on the idea that there's more to these little plastic bricks than we realize. We came up with the concept that a single 1x1 LEGO brick is the equivalent of a pixel in physical form.

Why is this physical toy so popular in such a digital world?

Part of it is precisely the dominance of digital culture. With toy blocks like LEGO, you're playing with your hands. You're hearing them click together. You're trying not to step on them. It's a sensory experience that a flat screen doesn't quite give you.

What do you mean by "LEGOified"?

We define "LEGOfication" as "the process of translating material—a photograph, a sentiment, an architectural diagram, a cultural icon, an idea, and so on—into LEGO form." The basic idea is that nearly anything can be translated into LEGO.

You point out that the reverse is true, too.

There are whole worlds in a bunch of bricks. You can make a castle, then say, "the heck with this, I'm going to make a spaceship." I like to believe we can apply this concept of plasticity to life. One of LEGO's recent campaigns was "Rebuild the World." That nails it. You can build something, take it apart, try again, and make it better. We're trying to use LEGO to explain complex ideas that can help people understand the real worlds that we build and destroy.





U Asia Campus Celebrates 10 Years

The University of Utah Asia Campus is celebrating a decade of transforming college experiences in Incheon, South Korea. This milestone year marks its evolution from a small cohort of 14 students into a vibrant community of over 600 international learners, supported by more than 100 faculty and staff. Located just an hour's train ride from bustling Seoul, this extension of the University of Utah offers the same world-class education as its Salt Lake City counterpart, but with a unique global perspective.

Tuition, financial aid, registration, and credits all follow the same process as the Utah campus. Courses are taught in English by U faculty, ensuring students don't miss a beat. Thought-provoking lectures, exciting cityscapes, and classmates from around the globe make the U Asia Campus a place where U students really spread their wings. With nine majors available, it's not just education—it's a passport to the world, stamped with a big red U. Visit asiacampus.utah.edu to learn more.



Web Extra See more photos and a video celebrating the anniversary at magazine.utah.edu/asia10



A rendering of the new 1,400-bed housing facility that's slated to open in fall 2026

U Launches Innovative Housing

A public-private partnership will add a 1,400-bed facility as part of our major campus transformation

New student housing is coming to the U through an innovative public-private partnership, fostering the development of campus into an even more vibrant residential environment. The \$155 million project will add over 1,400 beds just south of Kahlert Village, kicking off a long-term initiative to bring more housing to campus.

This public-private partnership (P3) model allows the U to collaborate with American Campus Communities (ACC), a private developer, to expand student housing rapidly while transferring development risks and preserving its financial resources for other critical initiatives.

Under the agreement, ACC will construct and manage the facility under a 55-year renewable ground lease, with the land and buildings ultimately belonging to the university.

"These new facilities will address the lack of on-campus housing supply, waitlists, and undersupply of private market student housing, as well as help the university reach its goals of 40,000 student enrollment and all first-year undergraduates living on campus," says John

Creer BS'86, the U's chief real estate officer.

The six-story residence hall, spanning 349,342 square feet, is designed for first- and second-year students. It will feature a mix of double and single rooms, as well as semi-suites and full suites. The design is inspired by the colors and textures of the Wasatch Front canyons.

The U will manage and program the ground floor space, which includes 17,000 square feet of amenities such as a gaming hub, dining areas, and fitness facilities. Construction began last fall, with the facility expected to open in fall 2026.

The agreement also considers the possible role of the new housing during the 2034 Winter Olympics, with provisions for the facility to potentially accommodate athletes, should Salt Lake City's recently won bid to host the Games necessitate additional housing options.

This project is a significant step toward achieving what U leaders term "college town magic," transforming the U into a vibrant residential campus that enhances the overall student experience.

Utah's Housing Crisis Threatens the Public's Health, Study Finds

The state's ongoing housing crisis isn't just hitting wallets—it's making people unwell.

With 40 percent of renters and 18 percent of homeowners struggling to afford housing, a new study from the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute at the U reveals that the state's housing affordability issues are directly impacting Utahns' health.

"Lower-quality housing and neighborhood conditions can lead to negative health outcomes, and higher housing costs reduce individuals' and families' ability to pay for necessities such as health care," says Melanie Beagley MS'18, lead author of the report.

The study found that over 7,100 Utah households lack proper kitchen facilities, while more than 3,200 live without adequate plumbing, conditions linked to increased respiratory illnesses and other health problems.

Neighborhood quality also plays a crucial role. Areas with high poverty and crime rates expose residents to higher levels of stress and trauma, leading to worse mental and physical health outcomes.

The research highlights another growing concern among health experts—as housing costs continue to rise, more Utahns may be forced to choose between a roof over their heads and necessary medical care.

With 11.6 percent of Utahns already reporting skipping needed medical care due to costs, the study suggests that addressing the housing crisis could be a key step in improving the public's health across the state.



Mapping the Creative Spark

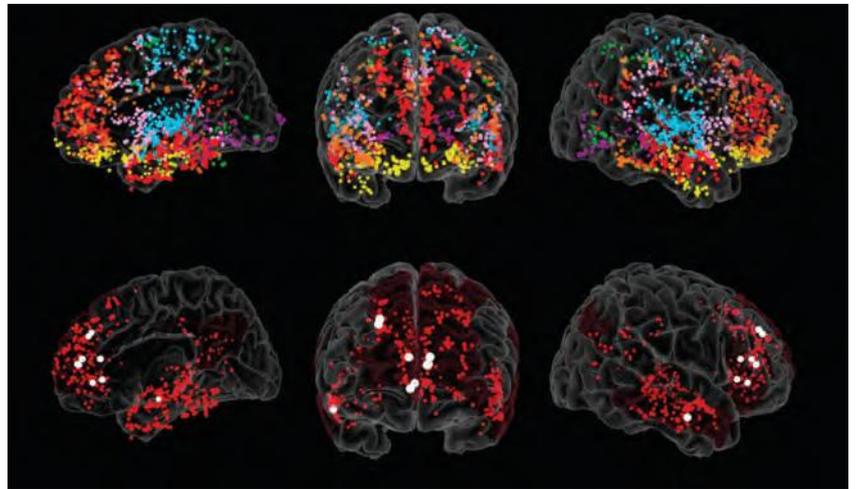
New research uncovers how our brains generate innovative ideas by observing neural activity during imaginative tasks

Have you ever had the solution for a tough problem suddenly hit you when you're thinking about something entirely different? Creative thought is a hallmark of humanity, but it's an ephemeral, almost paradoxical ability, striking unexpectedly when it's not sought out.

And the neurological source of creativity—what's going on in our brains when we think outside the box—is similarly elusive.

But now, a research team led by a University of Utah Health researcher has used a precise method of brain imaging to unveil how different parts of the brain work together in order to produce creative thought. Their findings were published in the journal *BRAIN* last summer.

Ben Shofty, assistant professor of neurosurgery in the Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine and senior author on the paper, suspected that creative thought might rely strongly on the default mode network (DMN), associated with daydreaming and internally focused thinking. Using electrodes implanted in the brains of epilepsy patients, the researchers tracked brain activity during creative tasks. They found that the DMN



activated first, then synchronized with regions involved in complex problem-solving.

“We could see what’s happening within the first few milliseconds of attempting to perform creative thinking,” Shofty notes. When researchers temporarily dampened DMN activity, participants’ ideas became less creative, showing the network’s crucial role in creativity.

The researchers say understanding the DMN’s normal operation could lead to better treatments for conditions like ruminative depression, where the network is overactive. Additionally, Shofty hopes this research will eventually inspire interventions to enhance creativity. “The goal would be to understand what happens to the network in such a way that we can potentially drive it toward being more creative.”

Electrodes at multiple brain regions give a better picture of brain activity in real time.



PICTURE

For over 60 years, Building 521 (pictured here under construction in 1962) has been the heart of countless medical miracles, housing what is now the Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine. This iconic structure, which saw conjoined twins separated and the first artificial heart implanted, is making way for three new buildings. Dive into its fascinating story at magazine.utah.edu/521 and bid farewell to a true medical legend.

Sweeping Our Skies

Tractor beams, the stuff of sci-fi lore, are getting a real-world makeover at the U. But these aren't for pulling the Millennium Falcon into the Death Star. Instead, U professor of mechanical engineering Jake Abbott MS'01 and his team are aiming their futuristic technology at a more pressing problem: the growing cloud of space junk orbiting our planet.

This isn't just about tidying up, says Abbott. Scientists worry about a scenario called the Kessler Syndrome, where colliding debris in low-Earth orbit creates a cascading effect, potentially rendering entire orbits unusable and jeopardizing satellite communications, weather forecasting, and space exploration for generations.

At the heart of Abbott's innovation is the Omnimagnet—a cube-shaped device housing three nested electromagnetic coils. By controlling the electric current through each coil independently, Abbott's team can create a magnetic field pointing in any direction. When rapidly changed, this field induces electric currents in nearby non-magnetic but conduc-

tive materials, like aluminum. These induced currents, called eddy currents, then interact with the magnetic field, allowing manipulation of the object without physical contact.

"We showed we can reach out and pull an object in," Abbott notes with a grin. "But don't expect to capture a spaceship that's trying to get away. We're talking about gently manipulating tumbling space debris."

Backed by U.S. Space Force funding and partnering with Rogue Space Systems, Abbott's team is aiming to launch a prototype in the coming years. And they are already pushing the boundaries of the technology, brewing up algorithms to synchronize multiple magnets for more powerful manipulations. They're also joining forces with U heat transfer experts to overcome the challenge of keeping those hard-working Omnimagnets cool in the unforgiving environment of space.

As satellites continue to crowd our skies, Abbott's down-to-earth solution might just be the ticket to keeping the final frontier from turning into an impenetrable barrier of debris.



Utah's Ice Age

With the 2034 Winter Olympics and a new NHL team, hockey is booming in Utah—and the U's program is riding the wave

With its reputation for winter sports, the Beehive State was primed to embrace hockey, says University of Utah Hockey president AJ Boldan BA'04. "All we needed was something to break the dam," he comments. That something was the Utah Hockey Club. The state's new NHL team has sparked a surge of enthusiasm for the sport that's sure to intensify when the Winter Games return to Salt Lake in 2034. It all comes as welcome news to the U's hockey program. "I'll use the proverbial 'A rising tide lifts all boats,' " says Boldan.

Competing in the American Collegiate Hockey Association with three teams—men's D1 and D2, and women's D1—University of Utah Hockey has been steadily skating its way to success. Though not an NCAA varsity sport at the U, the program operates like one, recruiting talent from across the globe and building championship contenders.

The women's D1 team, added in 2019, has made the playoffs every year and is

chasing a spot in nationals this season. "My first year, we barely had enough players for a full roster. Now, we have a ton of potential," says Halle Hansen, team captain and all-time leading scorer with 47 goals and 49 assists. Hansen will also represent Team USA at the 2025 World University Games.

The men's D1 team, led by captain Michael Urtis (pictured), is on a similar upward trajectory. Urtis, last season's MVP, led the team to its highest-ever national ranking—12th out of 73 teams—and an appearance in the national tournament. "We've gotten better every year," says Urtis. "I believe we're destined for nationals again."

With the growing hockey culture in the state, the U program hopes to one day earn NCAA status. Says Boldan, "I'm extremely optimistic about the future of hockey in Utah."

Learn more and purchase tickets at utahhockey.com.

SPORTS BRIEFS



Utah Baseball fans will soon be able to root for the home team on campus at the America First Ballpark, the program's future location on Guardsman Way. Construction of the \$35 million facility began in July. The field is slated to be available for team practice in spring 2025, and the 1,200-seat stadium is expected to open for the 2026 season. For renderings, visit ballpark.utah.edu.



The 17th-ranked Utah Volleyball team completed a stellar season by advancing to the second round of the NCAA Volleyball Tournament. After a 24-5 regular season record, the fourth-seeded team swept the College of Charleston 3-0 in the first round but fell to Marquette in a tough five-set battle. This was the 19th NCAA Tournament appearance in the program's history.



Utah Football hired the New Mexico Lobos' Jason Beck as offensive coordinator. Beck's 2024 offense was a powerhouse, ranking fourth nationally in total offense (484.3 yards per game) and dominating the Mountain West in red zone efficiency. He also developed standout quarterback Devon Dampier, who finished 12th in the FBS in points responsible for.

Utah swimmer Marshall Odom earned the team a silver medal at the Toyota U.S. Open with his 100-yard butterfly, coming in at 47.14. His finals performance moved him up to the eighth position in the Utah record books. Jones Lambert earned the Utes a bronze medal after he dropped more than two and a half seconds in the 500-yard freestyle to bump from fifth to third with a finals time of 4:20.43.



The Utah cross country team concluded its 2024 season with a 19th-place finish at the NCAA Cross Country Championships. Sophomore Anna Peters led the team in the 6000m, coming in with a time of 20:08.0. Peters now owns the fifth- and seventh-fastest individual times by a Ute at the championships.



Stats



Digging Deep and Rising Higher

For five seasons, Vanessa Ramirez hasn't just played for Utah Volleyball—she's helped define it, setting a standard that few can match and no one can ignore. As the only U competitor to start every match and play in every set in the 2023 season, Ramirez's consistent presence as libero has made her a force to be reckoned with on the court—and a fan favorite off it. When asked what drew her to the U, Ramirez recalls the high-octane volleyball camp that first got her attention. "I loved seeing that level of play," she reflects. "And then I came for a visit and experienced the family culture here. It just felt right."

HOMETOWN

Pasadena, California

YEAR IN SCHOOL

Senior

MAJOR

Psychology

FAVORITE CLASS

Stress Management

2023 SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

- Only player to start all 30 matches and play in all 117 sets
- Finished fifth in the Pac-12 with 3.56 digs per set
- Posted 416 digs, ranking 10th all-time for most digs in a single season
- Led Utah in digs or tied for the lead in digs in 28 of 30 matches
- Recorded 25 matches of double-digit digs
- Season-high 24 digs against Weber State
- Totaled 30 aces (second on the team) and 111 assists

BIGGEST CHALLENGE

Always being ready for anything—line shots, tips, and reacting fast to read hitters

CAREER DIGS

1,632

PRE-GAME SOUNDTRACK

Bad Bunny

GO-TO GRUB

In-N-Out

BEST RESTAURANT IN UTAH

Urban Hill

BINGE-WORTHY PICK

The Bachelor

OFF-COURT HOBBY

Pickleball

LEADERSHIP STYLE

Staying positive and keeping the team focused through ups and downs

ACADEMIC ACCOLADES

Pac-12 Fall Academic Honor Roll multiple times

5 Things You Didn't Know about Prescription Drug Pricing

When Joey Mattingly remembers the time his grandmother got very sick, one figure stands out: \$600. That was her monthly expense for a single medication. With her husband self-employed, the couple lacked health insurance and spent most of their discretionary income on prescriptions.

"I would get so mad," says Mattingly, now associate professor and vice chair of research at the College of Pharmacy. "In my head, the drug company was the culprit."

The frustration fueled Mattingly's passion, propelling him into a career in pharmacy and, later, health economics. Years in the field have led him to a more nuanced conclusion: "It's complicated." Now an expert tapped by U.S. Congress for his insights, Mattingly is eager to share his knowledge about the complexities of drug pricing to help the public and legislators make informed decisions. Here, he shares five things we need to consider when asking, "What's a fair price for treatment?"



Bringing a drug to market costs about \$2 billion.

To incentivize spending on research and development, the U.S. grants pharmaceutical companies a temporary monopoly on new drugs, allowing them to charge higher prices. "The tradeoff is that we get drugs that cure hepatitis or extend the lives of cystic fibrosis patients by decades," explains Mattingly. Without this incentive, we need to consider who would fund R&D for innovative treatments.



Around 90% of drugs never make it to market.

Failure is part of the process, Mattingly emphasizes. "We have to invest in the failures to get the successes."

The U.S. has some of the world's lowest generic drug prices.



When patents expire, competition drives down prices. "My research shows that comparable countries pay more on generics than we do," Mattingly notes. However, tactics like "evergreening," where slight changes to a drug's formula allow for new patents, can keep prices high longer.



a



The pharmaceutical industry doesn't work like a typical free market.

Factors like inelastic demand set the health care market apart. While consumers can opt out of buying a product in other sectors, patients often have little choice but to pay for essential medications.

Patient decisions affect everyone in the insurance pool.

"When I ask my insurance to pay for a drug, I'm asking everyone else to pay," says Mattingly. "We have to realize it's not just about the individual. But we can't just deny drugs to people who need them." The challenge, he says, is figuring out a fair system for determining who gets access to expensive medications.



The Air We Breathe

Health concerns expand as Great Salt Lake shrinks, a U study finds

As the Great Salt Lake continues to shrink, a new threat looms over the Wasatch Front: potentially harmful dust blowing from the lake's exposed playa. Scientists at the U have found that sediments from the lakebed could pose a greater risk than other major dust sources affecting the Wasatch Front's air quality, according to a recent study published in the journal *Atmospheric Environment*.

"You're talking about a very large dust source located next to a very large population, and you've got elevated levels of manganese, iron, copper, and lead," says senior author Kerry Kelly PhD'15, a professor of chemical engineering. "Lead is a concern for developmental reasons."

The Great Salt Lake is a terminal body that collects runoff from a vast area, leading to an accumulation of metals also including arsenic and lithium. In another recent study led by U sociology professor Sara Grineski, researchers also found that dust from the lake disproportionately affects disadvantaged neighborhoods in Salt Lake County.

The study was the first to analyze the dust's "oxidative potential"—a measure of its ability to react with oxygen and cause lung damage. "When you breathe in something that's really reactive, it's going to interact with the cells inside your lungs, and it's going to cause damage," notes Kelly.

The study also examined how dust from the Great Salt Lake might interact with human lung fluid. Using a synthetic lung fluid solution, researchers simulated the environment inside human lungs to see how quickly and easily metals from the dust particles could dissolve. This process, known as bioaccessibility testing, helps predict how much of these metals could potentially enter the bloodstream if inhaled. The results showed that metals from Great Salt Lake dust were more readily released in this simulated lung environment compared to dust from other sources.

Of particular concern were high levels of reactive metals, such as copper, manganese, and iron, detected in the dust. These metals dissolved more easily in the simulated lung fluid and can lead to lung irritation and inflammation, potentially contributing to health issues like asthma. The higher bioaccessibility of these metals in Great Salt Lake dust suggests a greater potential for absorption into the body and subsequent health impacts compared to dust from other sources.



Navigating College Completion

Streamlined advising and services aim to boost student retention and success

PICTURE

Meet Volley, the U's certified facility dog, who provides a calming presence during one-on-one student therapy sessions and lends his paw in group sessions like Navigating Anxiety Together. This adorable and cuddly two-year-old yellow lab is trained in over 40 commands. Follow his comforting adventures on Instagram @uofucounseling.



Paul Fisk MS'09 PhD'18 knows what it's like to enter the swirling waters of becoming a transfer student. Every day, he helps new students embark on their journey at the U with community college credits in hand and a plan to graduate quickly. As a transfer program manager in the Office of Transfer Student Success, his job is to make sure their transition is smooth, and that every credit counts.

"It's an often confusing and complicated process," Fisk says.

Until this summer, Fisk worked largely siloed from other advisors. Now, with a unified process that connects advisors and success coaches, he can see where students may fall through the cracks so he can intervene. This shift is one of several initiatives under the new Navigate U project, based on recommendations from the National Institute for Student Success (NISS). These initiatives aim to tackle barriers that can delay graduation and help the U achieve its Strategy 2030 goals, including raising the six-year graduation rate from 64 percent to 80 percent.

For Fisk, the changes are already showing results. "This is much faster to identify how to help students," he says. "Catching problems

early can mean the difference between switching a class in time or having them complete an entire semester."

The goal of Navigate U is to build on existing student support efforts, identify obstacles to success, and create solutions to help students graduate on time. "We do not accept the status quo as good enough," says Vice Provost Chase Hagood. "Navigate U means we can do more of this work together."

NISS identified four key actions to close gaps at the U: standardizing advising, aligning student communications, using better data to inform decisions, and creating clear pathways for first-year students. Work on these recommendations has begun, including launching Navigate Hubs for integrated student services in key colleges, addressing high-failure classes, and aligning academic advising. Leadership groups across campus are also focused on creating pathways for students to graduate in four years and developing interventions for those who delay enrollment.

"With all of that information, and the knowledge of where our students are and how to empower them, we are getting ready to knock it out of the park," remarks Hagood.

Savhannah Carpenter BS'24

"I visited the Natural History Museum of Utah a lot as a kid, and it ignited a huge interest in geology and paleontology in me. However, I didn't fancy myself a 'science person' because I struggled with math and didn't like chemistry and physics. My interest in science dropped off as a teenager. But when I took a geology class in community college, it opened my eyes up to what science is—a lens for looking at the natural world and trying to understand it.

While attending community college, I was looking to get more STEM experience, so I started volunteering at NHMU. Eventually, the collections manager asked if I wanted to do an internship. The catch was that you had to be a University of Utah student. I applied and luckily got in.

I started taking classes like World of Dinosaurs, taught by Mark Loewen [PhD'09]. When I got to know him better, he asked if I would be interested in researching horned dinosaurs with him and his team. I was really excited to get some research experience, so I took him up on the offer. That led to my being included as co-author on a paper identifying a new dinosaur, *Lokiceratops rangiformis*. That was really exciting, because it's rare for an undergraduate student to contribute to something as meaningful as naming a new species. And it's been awesome to get to share *Lokiceratops* with the world.

My goal is to work with kids and show them that science can be incredibly accessible. I want the younger generation to realize that not only can anybody be a scientist, but everybody is a scientist. We all want to know more about the world around us."



Decoding Mysterious Seismic Signals

U scientists track mysterious 'speed bumps' deep inside the Earth

For decades, scientists have been puzzled by mysterious seismic signals from deep within our planet. Now, U geophysicists have shed new light on this phenomenon, potentially uncovering a network of zones scattered throughout the globe's interior.

When earthquakes happen, they send waves racing through Earth's layers. Some of these waves get scattered when they hit unusual spots in the mantle—the thick layer of hot rock between Earth's crust and outer core. These scattered waves, called PKP precursors, arrive before the main waves and hold clues about what's happening deep inside our planet.

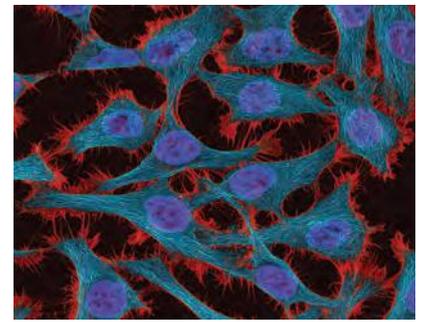
Way down in the lower mantle, there are regions called ultra-low velocity zones (ULVZs). These areas slow down seismic waves by a whopping 50 percent, acting like enigmatic speed bumps. "These are some of the most extreme features discovered on the planet. We legitimately do not know what they are," says Michael Thorne, associate professor of geology and geophysics.

Using advanced techniques, Thorne's team analyzed data from 58 earthquakes that struck New Guinea but were recorded in North America. This allowed them to pinpoint where seismic waves scatter along the core-mantle boundary, about 1,800 miles below the surface.

Their findings suggest ULVZs are more widespread than previously thought, particularly beneath North America. Thorne suspects these thin layers form where tectonic plates sink deep into the Earth.

"What we've now found is that these ultra-low velocity zones do not just exist beneath the hot spots. They're spread out all across the core-mantle boundary beneath North America," Thorne explains. "It really looks like these ULVZs are getting actively generated. We don't know how."

This discovery of widespread ultra-low velocity zones could change how we view Earth's interior and how geological processes shape our planet.



New Math Model Reveals Cancer's Hidden Social Life

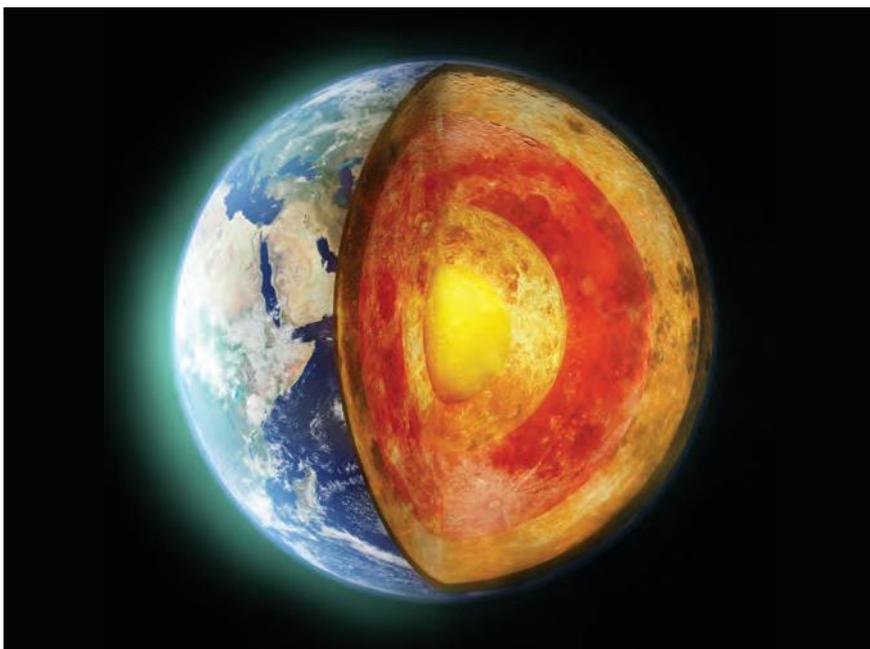
Cancer's inner workings are more complex than we once thought, and Fred Adler, professor and director of the School of Biological Sciences, is using math to unravel the mystery. His research reveals that cancer cells aren't just lone rebels, but part of an intricate cellular ecosystem.

Adler, who bridges mathematics and biology, has developed a model that challenges traditional cancer theories. Instead of focusing solely on mutations in individual cells, his latest work, which was published in the *Journal of the Royal Society Interface* and *Nature Communications*, examines how cancer interacts with its surroundings.

"Cancer cells are often thought of as maverick cells that break the rules and by doing so end up damaging or even killing their host," says Adler. "But cancer cells in fact continue to depend on other cells in their environment to survive, particularly when subjected to the intense stress we place them under with drug treatment."

This new perspective sheds light on why cancer often strikes later in life, Adler notes. As we age, not only do mutations accumulate, but the body's ability to keep abnormal growth in check also weakens. Adler's model shows how these factors work together, opening new possibilities for treatment.

In a surprising twist, Adler's team discovered that in breast cancer, drug-resistant cells can positively impact the fitness of non-resistant cells. This cellular cooperation complicates treatment but also suggests new ways to outsmart cancer. By viewing cancer through an ecological lens, researchers might develop more effective therapies that target not just the cancer cells, but also their relationships with surrounding tissues, he adds.



Number



Your Insights, Our Future

It's been half a decade since this publication underwent a complete transformation. New look, new content, new vision—all aimed at better connecting you with the U's evolving story. As we mark this five-year milestone, we turn to you, our readers. How has *University of Utah Magazine's* makeover resonated with you? What's working? What isn't?

We value your perspective and invite you to share it through a brief 10-minute survey. Your feedback isn't just appreciated—it's the compass guiding our next five years of innovation. Please visit magazine.utah.edu/survey to share your thoughts. As our way of saying thanks, every survey participant will be entered to win a \$100 gift card from the Campus Store.

CREATORS

You're in a dark, abandoned research facility, surrounded by rubble and broken equipment. Picking up a document on a nearby desk, you discover supernatural beings have escaped the facility, causing mass destruction. Your mission: to rescue civilians and destroy the beings. As you move through labs illuminated by dim yellow emergency lights, fiery orange creatures appear and rush at you. Luckily, your special flashlight frightens them away... for now.



STUDENTS IN THE U'S **VIDEO GAME PROGRAM**
LEARN TO FORGE CAPTIVATING EXPERIENCES
WHILE PREPARING TO ENTER A COMPETITIVE INDUSTRY

OF WORLDS



BY LISA ANDERSON



___: In another world, you're an adorable cartoon bear in a sunny national park campground. Your goal: to steal food for your "UBear Eats" service without getting caught by park rangers. You sneak among green pines and yellow aspens toward a beehive, pick up a rock, and take aim. Success! As bees swarm and pandemonium ensues, you snatch a watermelon from a picnic table. Now it's time to hide in the bushes and plan your next scheme.

The examples to the left are two of the many video game universes created by students in the University of Utah's Division of Games. The contrasting worlds—from the eerie *Dissonance* to the whimsical *Your Average Bear*—couldn't be more different. But they share characteristics of a successful digital playground: a compelling narrative, impressive visuals, well-designed gameplay, and a smooth user experience.

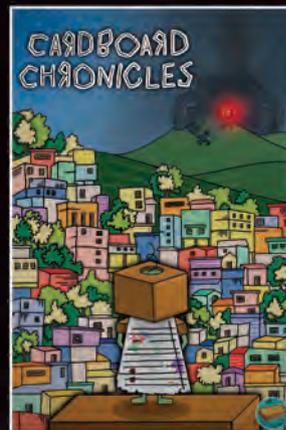
According to national rankings, there's no better place than the U to learn the art and science of creating immersive worlds. In 2024, the U's Division of Games, or Utah Games (formerly known as Entertainment Arts & Engineering), was ranked No. 1 among U.S. public universities by *U.S. News & World Report*. Meanwhile, *Princeton Review* ranked its undergrad program No. 1 and graduate program No. 2 for public universities worldwide.

Perhaps it's no surprise given the U's legacy as a computer graphics pioneer with alumni who blazed video game trails. Take Nolan Bushnell BS'69, co-founder of Atari, the company that launched electronic games into the mainstream with *Pong*. (Campus proudly boasts an original *Pong* console signed by Bushnell himself.)

Games have come a long way since *Pong*'s white square bouncing between two lines, and the industry has evolved with it. With top-ranked faculty, strong industry ties, and a curriculum that evolves with the latest innovations, Utah Games gives graduates a clear edge in a field as competitive as a battle royale.



No two worlds are the same in the games created by U students, as shown in these imaginative examples.



B

BEYOND FUN AND GAMES

When Jennifer Egan MEAE'21 was seeking a career change, her mother suggested video games. "I was like, 'Mom, that's not a real job,'" says Egan. But after researching college programs and attending a games division exhibition at the U, the life-long gamer was convinced of the career potential—and of the quality of the U's program. Living out of state at the time, she thought, "It looks like I'm moving back to Utah."

Gaming is serious business, generating \$228 billion in revenue in 2023, and it's projected to exceed \$300 billion by 2028. "The video game industry worldwide generates more revenue than the movie and music industries combined," notes Michael Young, director of Utah Games.

Despite recent industry layoffs, experts expect the job market to bounce back as gaming continues to grow in popularity. Salt Lake

City stands out as particularly promising—*The Wall Street Journal* ranked it as the hottest job market in 2023, with tech making up a large piece of the pie. The Beehive State is home to 21 game companies, many located in Salt Lake, and the proximity is a boon to U students and grads. Egan, for instance, landed a job at Utah-based Warner Bros. Games' Avalanche Software after interning there, joining many U alumni. She was one of about 30 Utah Games grads at Avalanche who contributed to 2023's top-selling game, *Hogwarts Legacy*.

MULTIFACETED MAGIC

The biggest misconception about a career in video games, says Preston Phung BS'23, is that you need to be a computer programmer. "There are tons of different roles in game design," he says (see "It Takes a Village to Create a World," opposite).

Phung found computer science wasn't his thing, so he pursued a different path to the gaming world. The U's undergrad program offers tracks in four main game development roles: engineering (programming), art, design, and production. With strong leadership and organization skills, Phung chose production. Game producers manage the overall project, coordinating tasks and overseeing timeline and budget. Now in the master's program, he's refining his project management skills.

Utah Games is expanding its scope and establishing itself as a

leader in game studies. Since its undergraduate degree, the BS in Games, launched in 2017, the program has skyrocketed in demand and is now the eighth most popular major on campus. It achieved division status recently, allowing for the addition of research faculty. It also moved to the College of Architecture + Planning (CAP) to support its growth.

"The move to CAP underscores our commitment to advancing Utah Games as a distinctly interdisciplinary enterprise," says Dean Arnab Chakraborty, noting that CAP's structure supports faculty with widely different disciplinary backgrounds and research and teaching practices. Chakraborty adds that the move will continue to

THE VIDEO GAME INDUSTRY WORLDWIDE GENERATES MORE REVENUE THAN THE MOVIE AND MUSIC INDUSTRIES COMBINED.

promote gaming as entertainment arts and engineering, while opening new applications for games, from health care to city planning. According to the Utah Games announcement, the move also "al-

lows for greater collaboration and synergy between game design and architectural principles, fostering innovative approaches to interactive and immersive environments."

The program also recently expanded to the U Asia Campus in South Korea, a global gaming hotbed that generated \$16 billion in 2021. The demand is certainly there—enrollment surged from 2 students in 2023 to 46 in 2024. Chakraborty adds that the opportunity to attend both campuses offers Games students a unique cultural perspective that "enriches their educational experience a great deal."

Utah Games employs faculty with expertise in every facet of game creation, from computer science and engineering to social science and humanities. "People create meaning around their play, and that type of meaning is deeply understood by humanists," explains Games director Young.

In fact, Egan says her undergraduate English degree and love of storytelling prepared her well for her current role as a game designer. Not to be confused with artists, designers craft gameplay experiences, such as narrative, objectives, and how the player interacts with the environment.

"You need to anticipate players doing the unexpected," says Egan. "The whole point is that you're letting someone play in the world you've created."

Game psychology and philosophy classes help students understand what pleases and motivates



Utah Games alumni work on ultra-popular games such as Hogwarts Legacy (left), Diablo (right), Minecraft, Fortnite, World of Warcraft, and many more.



players. Phung says he found these courses especially eye-opening. Covering everything from how eyes interpret colors to the brain's reward system to the role of play in humans' lives, "these classes changed the way I look at games," he says. With this insight, students learn not just to build games, but also to create experiences players crave.

FROM CONSUMERS TO CREATORS

With an estimated 3 billion gamers in the world, it's no wonder the video game job market is so competitive. "Kids grow up wanting to transition from content consumers to content creators," Young says. The program's "secret sauce" for preparing grads to break into the field, he notes, is project-based learning. Every student must publish at least one game, working in interdisciplinary teams over an entire semester or year. That means graduates leave the university with a portfolio as well as significant experience.

Understanding that internships are a golden ticket into gaming, Utah Games dedicates staff to industry relations, connecting students with local opportunities. The division also brings in high-profile mentors like Nintendo of America president (and U alum) Doug Bowser BS'84, who offer insight into industry expectations and skills studios seek in employees.

As gaming evolves, the division plans to remain at the forefront. With a \$25 million investment from

the U's Office of the President, Utah Games intends to hire new faculty and expand its research and teaching lab facilities. "We believe in the power of games to change people's lives for the better," Young says. "Our research mission is to develop a much deeper understanding of where that power comes from and how we can use it to make the world a better place." **U**

Lisa Anderson is associate editor of Utah Magazine.

IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO CREATE A WORLD

"GAMES ARE AN ENORMOUS TEAM EFFORT," SAYS JENNIFER EGAN. TAKE A LOOK AT THE MANY PLAYERS:



Artists create models for characters, props and settings



Tech artists handle visual effects and cinematics



Engineers program the underlying systems and mechanics



Designers conceive missions, levels, rules, and player behaviors



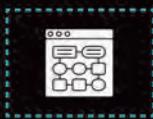
Audio team supplies music and sound effects



Writers craft the narrative and story



User researchers run playtests with focus groups to gather data



UI/UX designers create user interfaces and optimize the play experience



Producers coordinate tasks and manage schedule and budget



Quality assurance team runs playtests to check for software and gameplay issues





THEY AREN'T PHOTOGRAPHS.
THEY'RE THANK YOU NOTES.

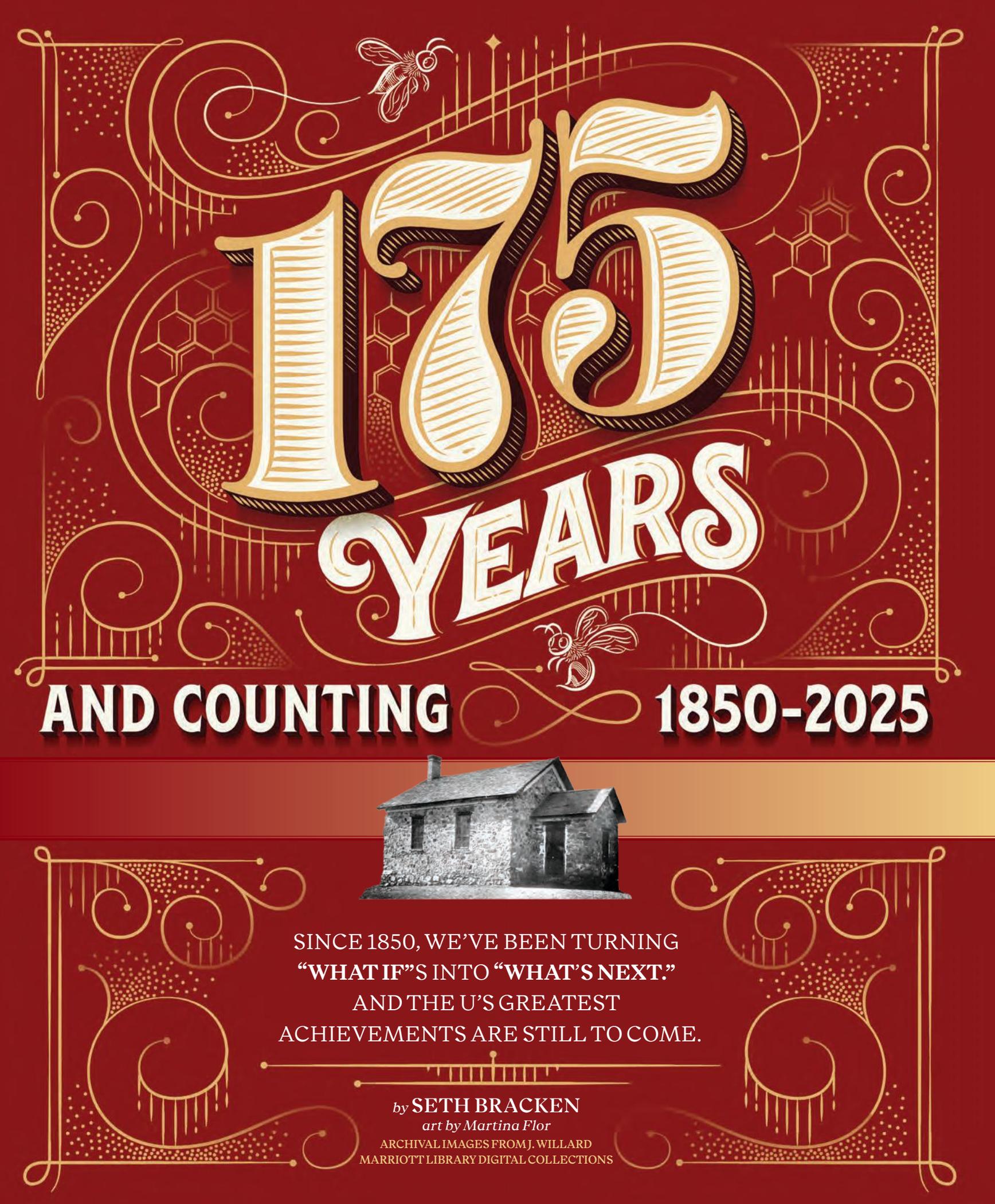
Celebrating 20 years of
University Orthopaedic Center



After 300,000 ortho surgeries, you'd think we might pause to take a well-earned breath. Not us. Since 2004, we've been helping people get back to the lives they love. We're driven to enhance the health and well-being of our patients through unmatched care, education, and research.



LEARN MORE



175 YEARS

AND COUNTING

1850-2025



SINCE 1850, WE'VE BEEN TURNING
"WHAT IF'S INTO "WHAT'S NEXT."
AND THE U'S GREATEST
ACHIEVEMENTS ARE STILL TO COME.

by **SETH BRACKEN**

art by *Martina Flor*

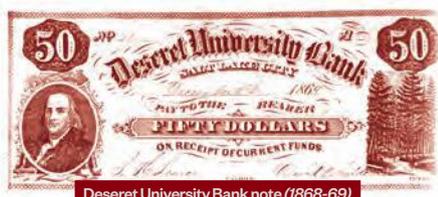
ARCHIVAL IMAGES FROM J. WILLARD
MARRIOTT LIBRARY DIGITAL COLLECTIONS

- \$8,224.26 in private donations help start the university, including \$1,200 from Brigham Young



circa 1890

- After the first quarter, the U becomes one of the first universities in the West to admit women



Deseret University Bank note (1868-69)

- Tuition is \$8 per quarter

- Facing page: The first classes were held in a house owned by the father of faculty member Dr. Park



The university's first dedicated building (1884)

- Student enrollment: 25

“**A** PERPETUAL INCREASE IN KNOWLEDGE.” This mandate, laid down 175 years ago by the General Assembly of the State of Deseret, has guided the University of Utah from its inception as the University of Deseret in 1850. Born in a fledgling territory, just three years after pioneers first surveyed the valley, it emerged as the region’s inaugural beacon of higher learning.

From these ambitious beginnings, the University of Utah has burgeoned into a crucible of innovation and a catalyst for change. As we mark this milestone, we look to a future ripe with possibility. Who will follow in the footsteps of Alan Ashton BA’66 PhD’70, Ray Noorda BS’49, and John Warnock BS’61 MS’64 PhD’69, whose computer software has empowered millions? Warnock stated, “I owe it all to the education I got at the University of Utah.” Or how will the next generation lead like Russell M. Nelson BA’45 MD’47—renowned heart surgeon and president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints? On donating his medical journals in 2023, Nelson reflected, “I am deeply grateful for the important role the University of Utah played in my education and surgical career.”

What groundbreaking discoveries await in our laboratories? Whose aspirations will be kindled in our lecture halls and clinics? As the University of Utah steps into its next chapter, it stands ready to shape the lives of Utahns and global citizens alike. This institution’s story, 175 years in the making, is still unfolding.

- **1884** The university moves into its first building, now the site of West High
- **1886** The first degrees—10 in education (from what was known as the Normal School) and two bachelors of science—are awarded
- Alumni Association forms
- **1892** The Territorial Legislature changes the name from the University of Deseret to the University of Utah
- The first issue of *The Daily Utah Chronicle* is published
- Utah football debuts with a 1-2 season, playing Utah Agricultural (now Utah State) and (twice) the Salt Lake City YMCA
- **1895** The first four-year engineering degree is introduced

1850

1860

1870

1880

1890

TRAILBLAZERS THROUGH TIME

In 175 years, countless U alumni, faculty, staff, and students have left an indelible mark on the world. While it’s impossible to capture every story of innovation and leadership, we present a glimpse into our rich history with a few of the remarkable individuals who have shaped our university’s legacy.



What and who would you add to this timeline? Comment at magazine.utah.edu/175



JOHN R. PARK

University President, 1869-92

Park was the first president of the University of Deseret and the University of Utah. He helped the university significantly expand its infrastructure and educational scope. Park also launched plans for the U’s current site.



ELLIS REYNOLDS SHIPP

University of Deseret Alumna

The “grand old lady of Utah medicine” founded a nursing school in 1879 and trained over 500 women. Shipp also traveled to settlements to teach women about health and delivered more than 5,000 children.



1912 The Titanic sinks

1914 The Great War begins



1919 Zion National Park established

1924 Bryce Canyon National Park established

1920 Women in the U.S. gain the right to vote nationally

Inventions & Advances

1902 Air conditioning

1903 Wright Bros. first flight

1913 Stainless steel

1920 Traffic lights

1900 The U holds the first classes at its current location

Student clubs, fraternities, and professional societies flourish

1909 The first master's degrees are awarded

Student enrollment: 1,500



1901 The Associated Students of the University of Utah (ASUU) is established

1913 The law school forms

1914 The new administration building, along with the civil engineering, mechanics, and gymnasium buildings, are completed



Theater class (c. early 1900s)



1904 The U fight song is written by football coach Harvey Holmes

1905 A two-year medical program is established

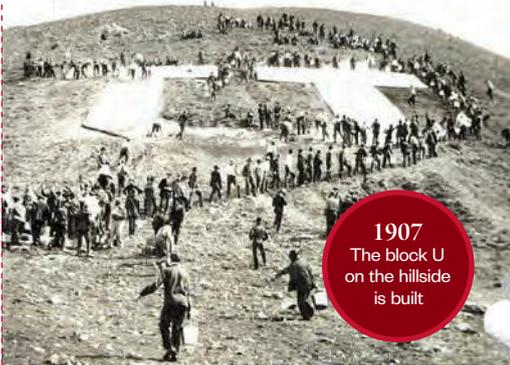
1910 The U enters its first athletic conference, the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference

1917 Pharmaceutical education begins

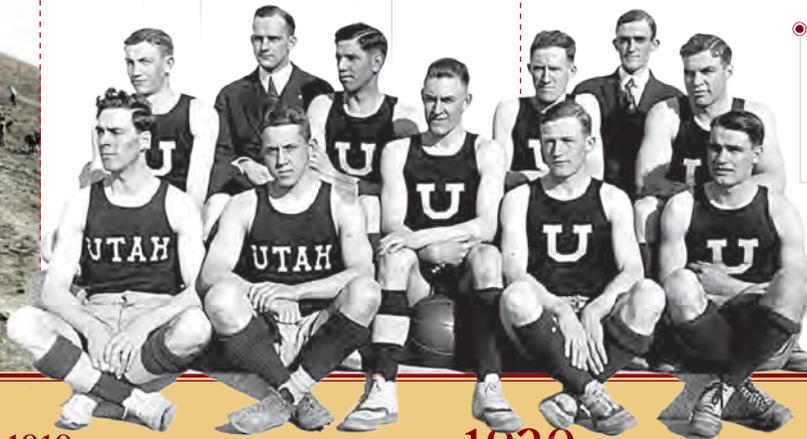
1918 The School of Business is organized



Cheer squad (1920s)



1907 The block U on the hillside is built



1927 A stadium with capacity for 20,000 spectators opens with remarks from Prince William of Sweden

1900

1910

1920

1930



LUCY MAY VAN COTT

U Alum and U Dean of Women (1907-31)

The first dean of women at the U, she sponsored programs for needy students, established the first cafeteria, and raised funds for a girls' dormitory. Students successfully petitioned to rename the peak east of the U Mount Van Cott in her honor.



J. WILLARD MARRIOTT

BA'26

From a nine-seat root beer stand to a hospitality empire, Marriott and his wife, Alice (BA'27), transformed a small business into Marriott International, now with world-class accommodations across 36 hotel brands in 9,000 locations.

REVA BOSONE

JD'30

One of the first women elected to U.S. Congress, Bosone served as a Representative from Utah (1949-53), advocating for social welfare programs including Social Security for military personnel. In the 1940s, Bosone hosted a weekly radio show, Her Honor, the Judge, where she presented legal case studies.



HELMET: NICKYBLADE/ISTOCK/TITANIC; FRANCIS GODOLPHIN OSSBOURNE STUART; SUFFRAGISTS: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



Army training unit (1943)

1941-45

The U becomes a center for military training, with accelerated engineering programs and a significant drop in male enrollment due to the WWII draft

Student enrollment: **3,600**

Commencement (1946)



1938

Carlson Hall, the first dorm on campus, and one of the first in the western United States to be built for women, opens



Carlson Hall

1944

The Laboratory of Human Genetics is established with a \$92,000 federal grant for the study of muscular dystrophy

Men's basketball wins the NCAA championship

1945

The NIH awards its first-ever non-federal grant to U researcher Max Wintrobe for study of hereditary disorders

1946

The Graduate School is created

1947

Wataru Misaka BS'48 is drafted by the New York Knicks and becomes the first person of color in modern pro basketball

1948

The School of Fine Arts and the School of Nursing are organized

Utah Symphony moves to Kingsbury Hall

The U expands with 300 acres from Fort Douglas

The U takes over management of an 18-hole golf course built by the U.S. Army at Fort Douglas. Green fees are \$2 on weekdays and \$3 on weekends

1951

The Utah Museum of Fine Arts is organized



Research funding tops **\$1M...**

and doubles to **\$2M+** by 1953

1953

On Thanksgiving, in the U's first nationally televised game, the Utes defeat BYU with a final score of 33-32

'50s-'60s

Notable celebrities—including Harry Belafonte, **Ella Fitzgerald**, and Allen Ginsberg—perform and speak at the U

The '50s and '60s see 30+ new structures, including the Huntsman Center, A. Ray Olpin Union Building, and Merrill Engineering Building

50+ alumni chapters are formed across the country with several thousand participants



Mid-'60s student enrollment: **12,000**



1965

Subterranean **Bimbo's Pizzeria** (later The Pie) begins selling \$2.20 pizzas

The Hinckley Institute is founded

University of Utah Hospital opens



1969 The Natural History Museum of Utah opens



1940

1950

1960

1970

H. TRACY HALL

BS'42 MS'43 PhD'48

The chemist created the first reproducible synthetic diamonds in 1954. His work revolutionized high-pressure research and founded the modern diamond industry. Today, over 100 tons of synthetic diamonds are produced annually for industrial use.



FITZGERALD, WILLIAM P. GOTTIER COLLECTION (LIBRARY OF CONGRESS); SLINKY; STEVENS; CO BY-NASA 20.



WILLAM CHRISTENSEN

University of Utah Ballet Department Founder, 1951

He co-founded the oldest ballet company in the West, the San Francisco Ballet, then created the first accredited university ballet program at the U. He co-founded Ballet West in 1963, starting as Utah Civic Ballet. Known as the Grandfather of American Ballet, his work significantly elevated the arts in Utah and nationally.

1970 The College of Letters and Science is divided into the three separate colleges of humanities, science, and social and behavioral science

320 acres of Fort Douglas are set aside for a research park

The U earns a reputation as a major research hub, driving breakthroughs in computer science, medical innovation, flight simulation, and much more



1981 Women's gymnastics wins six straight national titles from 1981-86



1988 The Obert C. and Grace A. Tanner Humanities Center is founded

1989 Alice Sheets Marriott Center for Dance opens

1990 Student enrollment: 23,500

1991 Every student and employee gets a UTA transit pass

1994 U researchers successfully clone the BRCA1 breast cancer gene



1996 The Edible Campus Garden is started

A 200,000-square-foot addition to the J. Willard Marriott Library is finished

'90s-'00s

A construction boom includes Huntsman Cancer Institute in 1999, the Languages and Communication Building, and new dance, athletics, and biology buildings, as well as the renovation of the 45,634-seat Rice-Eccles Stadium



1981 Utah skiing wins the NCAA title—the first of five in the '80s

1983 The first campus computer lab opens at the Spencer S. Eccles Health Sciences Library



1982 William DeVries BS'66 MD'70 performs the world's first permanent artificial heart transplant at University of Utah Hospital

1970

1980

1990

THOMAS G. STOCKHAM, JR.

Professor of Electrical Engineering, 1968-75, '86-'94

A founding figure in digital audio, he developed key methods for digitized recording and playback. His innovations underpinned technologies like CDs, iPods, and video game sound. His work earned him an Emmy, Grammy, and Oscar. He also identified gaps in the Watergate recordings, leading to the recordings' release to Congress.



ALBERTA HENRY Honorary Doctorate '71, BS'80

The first Black woman to receive an honorary doctorate from the U, she founded the Alberta Henry Education Foundation, led the Salt Lake NAACP, and became the first Black employee of the Salt Lake City School District. Her honor society encourages college attendance.



LILY ESKELSEN GARCÍA

BS'80 MED'86

From school lunch lady to National Education Association president (2014-20), Eskelsen García has been a tireless education advocate. A past Utah Teacher of the Year, she served on the U.S. President's Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanics and led the Utah State Retirement System.



VOICANG, UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



1996

Swoop becomes the U's mascot

1998

Women account for 50% of the student body for the first time outside wartime



Utah's population tops **2 million** in the 2000 Census and grows to over **3 million** by 2020



2002

Olympic opening and closing ceremonies are held at the U's Rice-Eccles Stadium

The Mighty Utah Student Section (MUSS) forms



2007

U molecular geneticist Mario Capecchi is awarded the Nobel Prize in Medicine

2008

Utah football goes undefeated and beats Alabama in the Sugar Bowl

2012

School of Dentistry opens

U of U Health opens the South Jordan Health Center in 2012, eventually growing to five hospitals and 12 community health care centers



2014

The U Asia Campus opens in Incheon, South Korea

The U signs its first MOU with the Ute Indian tribe

2015

The Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute launches

2019

Following a historic gift to the University Neuropsychiatric Institute by the Huntsman family, Huntsman Mental Health Institute is dedicated

The U joins the prestigious Association of American Universities

2024

The U acquires the final 50 acres of Fort Douglas



2024 The U joins the Big 12

2023 Student enrollment: **35,000**

Campus life evolves with new student traditions like Redfest, the Grand Kerfuffle, Crimson Nights, and Friday Night Hype



2011 The U joins the Pac-12

2000

2010

2020



RYAN GELLERT

JD'05

As Patagonia's CEO since 2020, Gellert has led the renowned outdoor apparel company's growth to 3,000+ employees and \$1 billion+ in earnings annually. In 2023, Patagonia ranked as the most trusted brand in an Axios-Harris poll, surpassing Costco and Apple.

MONICA BERTAGNOLLI

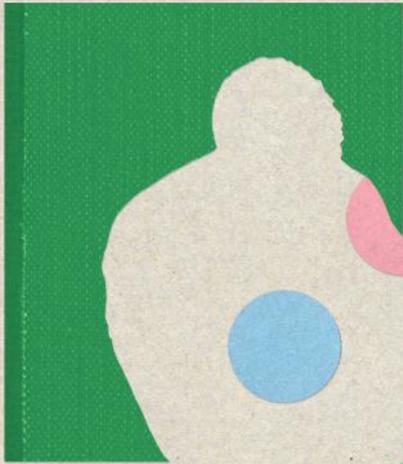
MD'85

Serving from 2023-25, surgical oncologist Bertagnolli was the 17th NIH director. Previously, she led the National Cancer Institute and held positions at Harvard Medical School and Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. Her groundbreaking cancer research earned her election to the National Academy of Medicine.



Web Extra Join the celebration!

Discover all the exciting 175th anniversary events at 175.utah.edu



A Degree of Community Impact

Beyond classrooms and research papers, universities help shape the fabric of our communities. What would we lose if these institutions faded away?

BY Seth Bracken AND Elaine Jarvik

ILLUSTRATIONS BY Blake Cole PG. 35

PICTURE WAKING UP TOMORROW and poof—the University of Utah has vanished into thin air. What happens to Utah then? How does our community shift? What do we all stand to lose?

Beyond merely being a launchpad for careers, universities like the U are crucial in crafting well-rounded individuals. They're not just about teaching job skills and nurturing critical thinking. They also foster empathy and resilience, stitching these qualities into the fabric of our society.

Did you know: Utahns with degrees are almost twice as likely to volunteer and give about 3.5 times more to charity than those without? Plus, they generally report feeling happier, healthier, and more optimistic about life, according to a recent survey from Cicero Group for the Utah System of Higher Education.

If the U just disappeared, we'd lose a whole lot more than just a place of learning. It would ripple through society in ways we might not even fully realize. From innovative projects to extensive community outreach, the spirit of improving the world is deeply ingrained here—and it's growing even stronger with U President Taylor Randall's challenge for the university to have unsurpassed societal impact and reach every one of Utah's 3.5 million residents. Here are just a few examples of how the university isn't just part of Utah—it's a cornerstone of our collective well-being.

Let's imagine
something wild
for a moment.

COMMUNITY CLASSROOMS

As a senior accounting major, Hannah Hickman could have easily confined herself to spreadsheets and financial models. Instead, through the U Service Corps, she found herself forging new community partnerships for Special Olympics Utah and helping with health screenings on the Navajo Nation.

"The U Service Corps has completely changed my perspective on what it means to be a student," Hickman reflects. "I'm not just learning in a classroom anymore. This experience has been incredible and has reaffirmed my goal of eventually working in the nonprofit sector."

Hickman's story exemplifies the transformative power of the U Service Corps, a program that's deceptively simple at its core: students engage in 120 hours of service per semester and receive \$5,000 in scholarships and wages, along with school credit. Yet this straightforward premise belies a bigger picture of how higher education can model community engagement, says Morgan Lyon Cotti BA'01, associate director of the U's Hinckley Institute.

Launched last fall as part of the statewide One Utah Service Fellowship, the U Service Corps represents a novel approach to addressing multiple

The second in a three-part series exploring the value of higher education in Utah. Visit magazine.utah.edu/value to read the first.

challenges simultaneously. Starting with 200 students this academic year—and with goals to expand to 1,000 students in the coming years—it gives participants a path to reduce debt while gaining valuable practical experience. At the same time, it channels the energy and talent of these students into local nonprofits, creating a symbiotic relationship between the university and its surrounding community.

"By intertwining education with service, we're not just shaping careers—we're cultivating engaged citizens who understand the power of knowledge applied to real-world challenges," says Lyon Cotti. "This program represents our belief that a university's success should be measured not only by the achievements within our campus, but by the positive change we foster in our broader community."

LEARNING THAT LIFTS COMMUNITIES

For her first 10 years in prison, Lia Olive was a rule-breaker and a brawler, the kind of incarcerated person who was periodically sent to maximum security and didn't care.

Now, at age 43, she has a new definition of herself: scholar. She also has a new goal: to be an advocate for other prisoners, both those still inside and those who eventually get out—all the women and men whose futures could include a college education.

Olive's own journey to academia began at the Utah State Prison in 2018 with the U's then-fledgling University Prison Education Project (UPEP), which brought professors inside to teach rigorous college-level courses. Olive's first class was Introduction to Microbiology. It was the first time she had ever looked through a microscope, and the first time she had encountered a teacher like Dustin Williams PhD'12.

Here was a man not just standing at the front of the room rattling off facts. "It felt like he was in love with the topic he was teaching," Olive says. "It made me fall in love with it as well."

The next semester, she took anatomy and physiology, then neuroscience. As the list of challenging courses grew—sociology of education, history, literature and the law—she discovered that she loved to grapple with new ideas, and when she was released from prison in 2021, after 18 years locked up, she enrolled at the U full time. This summer she's on track to graduate with a bachelor of science in communication studies.

WHEN SHE WAS 19, a car accident killed her father and left her mother in the hospital for



eight months; Olive had to drop out of Salt Lake Community College to take care of her younger siblings. She began hanging out with a bad crowd, and on a spring evening in 2002 her life took a devastating turn. As a result, she was given two consecutive sentences, five-to-life and 15-to-life. She entered prison full of regret, sorrow, and anger.

Her transformation began a decade later, after a visit from her mother and younger sister. Olive was in maximum again, so the visit was through bullet-proof glass. She tears up now when she remembers her sister's question: Why do you keep picking these other people instead of us?

SHE EVENTUALLY AGREED to see a prison therapist, then learned how to train dogs for veterans with PTSD. And then, in 2018, the U's Erin Castro showed up at the prison to recruit students for UPEP. A little over a year before, Castro had taught a U Honors praxis lab where she and 10 undergraduate students researched what later became the prison education project. The goal was to bring the rigor of uni-

This artwork asks what's lost without higher education in our community—opportunity, innovation, and a lifeline to progress.

versity classes to incarcerated people. In the years since then, UPEP's faculty—from every college on campus—have taught a total of some 300 female and male incarcerated people.

In the summer of 2024, UPEP expanded its reach. For the first time, it enrolled 15 incarcerated women as matriculated U students, all working toward a degree from inside the prison. Castro and her colleagues are also getting ready to launch a national center to research the role of higher education in prisons. It will be the only center of its kind in the United States.

"WE SEE A LOT of folks with the best intentions leave prison and disappear, not because they don't want college but because we make it impossible for them to be successful," says Castro, associate professor of education and associate dean of undergraduate studies. One of UPEP's goals is to help formerly incarcerated students navigate life on the outside.

As UPEP re-entry coordinator, Olive's part-time job is to help ex-incarcerated people figure out the intricacies of student loans, housing, food vouchers, and childcare. She's also their cheerleader when school gets overwhelming. Olive's own plans include graduate school; her long-term goal is to help create prison education policy.

Now the mother of a toddler, she wants to show her daughter that "just because she's a brown body in Utah," she doesn't lack options. "I want her to know that education will help her move forward," she says, then adds, "I want her to find that out in a more timely manner than her mom did." **U**

Seth Bracken is editor of Utah Magazine, and Elaine Jarvik is a Salt Lake City-based writer and playwright.

Building Stronger Communities Together

From the Utah Education Network's school broadband services to Utah Poison Control's 24-hour crisis hotline, the U's service programs form a wide-reaching web of support, education, and societal enhancement. An exhaustive list would be impossible, so here are just a few ways the U improves life for Utahns every day.

*University of Utah
Health provided
\$232 million in
uncompensated
care for patients in
fiscal year 2023.*

HEALING HEARTS, MINDS, & BODIES

College of Nursing

Juvenile Justice and Youth Services provides comprehensive medical care and psychiatric services for youth aged 12-18 in statewide juvenile justice facilities

- **CARING CONNECTIONS**

Trains community providers on bereavement care and offers grief support to 350+ participants annually

- **THE FAMILY CAREGIVING COLLABORATIVE**

Partners with various community and state entities, such as the Utah Development Disabilities Council and Utah Caregiver Support Program, to raise awareness about caregiver services; supports and advocates for Utah family caregivers

Center for Community Nutrition

Runs the Driving Out Diabetes Initiative, which assists 30,000 Utahns annually, offering free nutrition education and diabetes prevention through family workshops, cooking classes, school curricula, and support for unhoused individuals

Consultation Access Link to Utah Psychiatry (CALL-UP)

State-funded service that improves mental health care in rural Utah counties by offering expert psychiatric phone consultations at no cost to primary care providers and pediatricians

Huntsman at Home

Huntsman Cancer Institute's home care program delivered 3,595 visits across 1,654 square miles in four Utah counties in 2023, providing daily cancer care services from symptom management to acute care as an alternative to hospital visits

John A. Moran Eye Center

The following are funded solely by generous donors.

- **UTAH OUTREACH CLINICS**

Performs free/low-cost eye exams, surgeries, and eye-glasses for uninsured, low-income, unhoused, and former refugees across the Salt Lake Valley and patients on the Navajo Nation in partnership with the Utah Navajo Health System

- **OPERATION SIGHT PROGRAM**

Has conducted over 600 free cataract surgeries for those in need since 2012

- **INTERNATIONAL OUTREACH**

Trains eye care professionals in over 25 low-resource countries across Asia, Africa, and the Americas, restoring vision to patients and providing hands-on experience for local trainees

Huntsman Cancer Institute Mammography Clinic

Mobile clinics bring cancer screening to rural, urban, and underserved Utah communities, providing over 7,000 breast cancer screenings since 2019, with 60 percent of patients receiving government assistance or charitable vouchers

Utah Poison Control Center

For 70 years, has managed over 2 million poison cases and currently handles 40,000 calls annually, providing free, expert advice 24/7 to combat the leading cause of unintentional injury death in Utah

Rocky Mountain Center for Occupational and Environmental Health

Trains 3,000 professionals annually across six states, with a new Weber State University partnership adding nursing programs that produce 30-40 new professionals yearly

Mental Health Crisis Care

SafeUT, a 24/7 crisis intervention app, is a program of Huntsman Mental Health Institute that has been downloaded by over 885,000 Utah students; handles 30,000 chats and 9,000 tips annually while providing immediate support through its Mobile Crisis Outreach Team, with 536 lifesaving interventions conducted in 2023 alone

School of Dentistry

- **STATEWIDE OUTREACH**

Operates clinics across Utah, including Ogden, Rose Park, and St. George, serving underserved communities and Medicaid recipients

- **COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**

Serves Salt Lake City School District students and underserved communities, including refugees, through clinics at Liberty Community Learning Center and South Main

- **RURAL MOBILE DENTAL CLINIC**

Serves low-income and uninsured rural residents

- **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Offers the Oral Health Assistance Program, which has

provided over \$645,000 worth of care to disadvantaged patients not covered by Medicaid

• MEDICAID NETWORK

Coordinates with over 400 Medicaid-associated dental providers statewide

Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine

• C.A.R.E. FAIR

Yearly event where family medicine residents and attendings conduct health services for underserved citizens in Salt Lake County

• MIDVALE CLINIC

Primary and specialty care for 3,000-5,000 low-income and uninsured patients annually, provided by medical students

• FOURTH STREET CLINIC

Provides health care to 6,000 individuals who are unsheltered and low-income each year with residency rotations for medical trainees

• MALIHEH FREE CLINIC

Partly staffed by U physicians and trainees; delivers care for 2,000+ uninsured and low-income Utahns

• PA STUDENT-RUN FREE CLINICS

Health care for uninsured patients at Maliheh Free Clinic, Urban Indian Center, and Doctors Volunteer Clinic in St. George, provided by physician assistant students

• TRAINING UTAH'S HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

Two-thirds of Utah's doctors trained at the U, which annually produces 125 new physicians, 40+ physician assistants, and via all its schools and colleges, over 1,000 other health professionals including nurses, dentists, and therapists

Utah School Mental Health Collaborative

Through research, training, and services, Huntsman Mental Health Institute and the College of Education partner to support student and educator mental health statewide, including a clinic at West High School that offers SLC school district students free counseling, screenings, and medication management

Utah Rural Opioid Healthcare Consortium

Delivers opioid treatment via care teams in rural clinics, trains emergency responders in mental health first aid, and supports high-risk families through the Strengthening Families program to prevent substance abuse

U of U Health West Valley City

Future hospital and health center in West Valley City integrating community partnerships, including programs to train local residents in health care fields and initiatives like back-to-school health screenings

The Wellness Bus

Statewide mobile health clinic offering care and education to underserved communities; conducted 12,417 chronic disease assessments in 2023

KNOWLEDGE FOR ALL

Economic Evaluation Unit

Policy research organization in the U's Economics Department specializing in forecasting, development, and regional analysis, with applied research targeting issues such as labor, health, education, and poverty

Gardner Institute

Provides essential analysis and insights on the Utah economy, public finance, demographics, public policy, and education, guiding informed decisions for lawmakers, businesses, governments, and the public

Genetic Science Learning Center

Produces free, award-winning online educational resources, including games, animations, and curriculum materials that have made genetics and biology accessible to millions of students and teachers worldwide through learn.genetics.utah.edu since 1995

Hinckley Institute of Politics

Places over 300 students annually in local, national, and international internships, fostering civic engagement and preparing future political leaders and public servants

Natural History Museum of Utah

• RESEARCH QUEST

Used by over 1,300 teachers and their students who have logged in more than 400,000 times; teaches critical thinking skills through solving scientific mysteries

• MUSEUM ON THE MOVE

Delivers 90-minute interactive sessions to 4th-grade classrooms across Utah, bringing fossils and artifacts to 300 schools annually and reaching every public school district every three years

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute

Enriches the lives of adults aged 50+ by offering 70+ some noncredit courses, lectures, and trips to 1,600 members, fostering intellectual growth and social connections

University of Utah Reading Clinic

Resource from the College of Education that annually serves over 9,000 Utah students, educators, and families by offering individualized tutoring for K-12 students and equipping educators with research-based literacy instruction methods

Refugee Community Debate League

Run by the Department of Communication's John R. Park Debate Society to help the U's refugee neighbors integrate into the broader community

REFUGES Program

(Refugees Exploring the Foundations of Undergraduate Education in Science) Supports students in 7th to 12th grade, especially refugees, with one-to-one tutoring, mentoring, college/career readiness, financial aid workshops, STEM curriculum, and field trips

Science & Engineering Fair

Annual 5th- to 12th-grade competition, featuring 470 projects from 592 students in 2024; stimulates STEM interest while developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills, with top seniors advancing internationally

The S.J. Quinney College of Law Pro Bono Initiative

Operates 14 monthly brief legal advice programs, serving 1,800+ clients annually with the help of more than 150 student and 100 legal professional volunteers

Utah Cancer Registry

Since 1966, has collected and analyzed data on millions of cancer cases to drive research, shape public health policies, and enhance prevention efforts in Utah

The Utah Education Network at the U provides Internet service to 2,000+ Utah schools, libraries, and telehealth sites.

U students completed 42,475 hours of community service in 2023.

Utah Education Network (UEN)

Provides essential broadband and digital broadcast services to 780,000 learners and 60,000 teachers across Utah's educational institutions

Utah Population Database (UPDB)

Links over 100 million pedigrees to health and environmental records, supports 400 research projects, and accelerates the discovery of genetic and environmental factors in disease

LIFTING LIVES

Bennion Center

Since 1987, has driven community engagement through various programs, now mobilizing over 8,000 participants annually to contribute more than 130,000 service hours

U of U Seismograph Stations

Monitor and analyze seismic activity across Utah to help reduce earthquake risks through research, education, and public service

University Neighborhood Partners

Enhances education, community well-being, and economic growth in Salt Lake City's west side through initiatives like after-school programs and community workshops; offers a K-12 Youth Center and lifelong learning classes for over 7,000 participants through its Hartland Partnership Center

Utah Atmospheric Trace Gas & Air Quality

This Department of Atmospheric Sciences and School of Biological Sciences lab collects and analyzes long-term air quality data to understand trends and spatial distribution in Salt Lake Valley and Northern Utah

ARTFUL LIVING, THOUGHTFUL GIVING

Tanner Dance Arts in Education Program

Serves 7,800 students in 40 schools, with a focus on underserved populations and individuals with disabilities

U-FIT

Offers fun, non-competitive activities for children with disabilities to develop sport, dance, and aquatic skills for lifelong physical activity and health

Utah Piano Outreach Program

A 28-week program taught by U piano graduate students that offers after-school group piano classes and private lessons to approximately 120 children from underserved communities at six Title I elementary schools

Utah Museum of Fine Arts Outreach

Served over 26,000 participants through 601 free programs in 2023, including 14,497 in K-12 school and teacher programs aimed at reaching every school district in Utah on a three-year rotation, 6,721 in adult and university programs, and 5,372 in family and community programs, while also launching a new Creative Aging initiative to bring arts enrichment to adults 55 and older

Wilkes Climate Center

Fosters collaboration among researchers, students, and leaders on climate solutions, with \$1.5 million in prizes awarded for breakthrough ideas so far

Forever U



Members of the New York City chapter enjoy a night on the town.

Reigniting Lifelong Connections

Carry your campus spirit wherever you go through the reimagined U Alumni Chapters program

From Seattle to Seoul, University of Utah alumni are scattered around the globe. But distance doesn't mean disconnection, thanks to the U's revamped alumni chapter program. These groups are the one-stop destination to connect with other alumni and stay in touch with the U through professional, social, and service events.

The reorganization of these programs came about, in part, because of your input. In a recent comprehensive survey of U alumni, one finding that stood out was a desire for stronger ties with your alma mater. So, we got to work on efforts to boost camaraderie, keep graduates informed about campus developments, and provide opportunities for volunteerism through our reimagined chapters. Some are based on geographic location. Others, known as Affinity Chapters, cater to shared experiences or identities, such as Black alumni and veterans. These groups aren't exclusive to members of these communities only—they're also open to anyone who wants to learn more about different cultures and identities or simply join in on some wonderful events.

"Chapters provide alumni the opportunity to build a lifelong community with individuals who share deep personal connections," says Riley Smith,

associate director of U Alumni Chapters. "During a time when connection seems to be more difficult, alumni chapters have become more important than ever before."

Since the relaunch last summer, more than 700 alumni have signed up for the new chapter program. It's free to join and comes with perks:

- **Instant notifications** about U Alumni area events via text message
- **Exclusive discounts** of up to 50 percent off select university events
- **A welcome gift** for new members
- **Monthly digital newsletters** with chapter updates
- **Leadership opportunities** in regional and affinity-based chapters

Join a chapter at ualumni.link/chapters. Further connect with chapter members and stay up to date on all alumni events in the Forever Utah Network (FUN) at forever.utah.edu.

"I truly love seeing people meet new friends, reconnect with former classmates, and draw closer to their alma mater," remarks Smith.

ELENA GARDNER

ALUMNI NEWS ROUNDUP



Mark your calendars for U Alumni events

this spring! Upcoming opportunities to network, connect with friends, and forge new connections include:

Big 12 Basketball Championship Event in Kansas City

Tuesday, March 11

New York City

Thursday, April 3

St. George, Utah

Monday, April 14

Las Vegas, Nevada

Tuesday, April 15

Orange County, CA

Thursday, April 24

Washington, DC

Thursday, May 8

European U Alumni Weekend in Copenhagen, Denmark

May 29-June 1

AFFINITY GROUP AND OTHER EVENTS ON OR NEAR CAMPUS

(Affinity groups are open to all who are interested.)

Women's Week Celebration

Wednesday, March 8

LGBTQ Alumni

Thursday, April 3

Young Alumni Spring Social

Thursday, April 10

U Alumni Family Easter Event

Saturday, April 12

U Alumni Day of Service

Saturday, May 17

Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

Thursday, May 22

Visit alumni.utah.edu to discover upcoming events in your area, join your local chapter, and connect with fellow alumni around the world. For the latest news and updates, follow us on social media @UtahAlumni.

Winning Mindset

Who do NFL players and Olympians call at 2 a.m. when they're grappling with pressure? Who do coaches turn to when they need coaching? Justin Su'a MS'11, for one. As a performance coach in the world of elite sports, he doesn't just help athletes and leaders improve their game but also sees their most vulnerable moments.

"They're willing to be very open and transparent with me," he says. "They disclose things they don't share with other people in order to problem-solve and strengthen their weaknesses." When the whole world is watching you, he notes, the stakes are high. Every advantage matters.

After earning a master's in sports psychology from the U, Su'a forged a career helping athletics professionals step up their game on the field and in the front office. With a client roster including the Cleveland Browns, Tampa Bay Rays, Boston Red Sox, and more, he guides elite performers in prioritizing their three finite assets: time, energy, and attention. "In high-pressure settings, mismanaging these resources can hinder decision-making and execution," he notes.

His approach starts with asking introspective questions ("You can't change what you're not aware of," he points out) followed by problem-solving. Sometimes the solution is as simple as sticky notes. For one coach struggling to disconnect from work, Su'a suggested placing questions like "How do I want to walk into my house right now?" on his steering wheel. This small step, the coach said, transformed his home life.

Also a podcast host and author, Su'a enjoys sharing his advice with a wider audience. He offers these tips to professionals in any field:

1. **Reflect on your values and needs.** Ask yourself, "What do I want right now?" and "What is my why?"
2. **Consider how you're spending your time, energy, and attention.** Ask, "What is the best use of my time? What drains my energy? Am I paying attention to the people and things I value most?"
3. **Use the G.W.O.P. model:**
 - a. Set **G**oals.
 - b. Know your **W**hy.
 - c. Identify **O**bstacles.
 - d. Make a **P**lan for overcoming those obstacles.

Three Grads We Wish We'd Met

As we celebrate 175 years of the University of Utah, we asked a few deans which alums they would have loved to engage in a thoughtful exchange with.



STEPHEN R. COVEY BS'53
1932-2012

Values-based leadership and the critical question of how leaders can effectively build trust in their organizations has been the central focus of my academic research during my career. No one brought those important topics into the mainstream conversation more powerfully than Stephen R. Covey.

His best-selling book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* took the principles of leadership out of the classroom and the boardroom and made them both accessible and attainable for everyone. With more than 25 million copies of that book sold worldwide, there are surely a lot of effective leaders out there thanks to Covey.

Helping our students develop as leaders of competence, character, and caring is core to our mission at the David Eccles School of Business. I would have cherished the opportunity to talk to Covey about how we can better help each student seek and reach their peak and prepare them to have positive impact in the world.



—Kurt Dirks, Dean,
David Eccles School
of Business



DAVID EVANS BA'49 PhD'53
1924-98

When David Evans graduated from the U, the concept of a “computer science department” didn’t exist. After teaching at Berkeley, Evans returned to establish such a department at the U in 1965, sparking a revolution in how we visualize the world.

Evans’ work in computer graphics laid the foundation for 3D animation, digital simulations, virtual reality, and data visualization—all technologies that began here at the U. His leadership ignited a spirit of innovation that permeated the Kahlert School of Computing, with ideas born in our labs leading to faculty and students founding industry-shaping companies like Evans and Sutherland, Pixar, Adobe, and Atari.

As another technological revolution emerges—this time in artificial intelligence, machine learning, and big data—I find myself wishing I could have met him. Understanding how he catalyzed innovation at the U during computing’s infancy could provide invaluable insights as we explore today’s exciting frontiers. His legacy inspires us as we strive to recreate that transformative energy in our current laboratories and classrooms.



—Charles Bruce Musgrave, Dean,
John and Marcia Price
College of Engineering



PAULA SWANER BA'49 MA'72 MS'78 PhD'86
1927-2021

Imagine meeting with someone who could seamlessly weave together discussions on Jungian psychology and Utah’s breathtaking landscapes. That’s the conversation I’d love to have with Paula Swaner, a visionary who saw the profound connection between mental health and our environment long before it gained widespread attention.

As dean of a college dedicated to inspiring human solutions to society’s biggest challenges, I fully appreciate Swaner’s ability to bridge seemingly disparate fields. Her approach inspires me to think about our state’s potential for enhancing our mental health toolkit to include more time immersed in the beauty of Utah’s stunning landscapes.

Swaner’s legacy is as expansive as the 1,200-acre nature preserve she helped establish in Park City. This haven, now known as the Swaner Preserve and EcoCenter, isn’t just a refuge for wildlife—it’s a living testament to her belief in the healing power of nature. In our hyper-connected yet often disconnected world, her holistic approach feels more relevant than ever.



—Michelle Camacho, Dean,
College of Social and
Behavioral Sciences



Red Letter Day

Mark your calendar for Giving Day, when the U community unites to support the university's mission

If you've noticed your social media feed turning red every spring, you're witnessing the University of Utah's annual Giving Day in action. For six years now, this 1,850-minute fundraising campaign (a nod to the U's founding year) has been uniting the U community to support countless campus initiatives.

"It's a fantastic time when the university comes together as one," says Rachel Robertson, senior director of annual giving. Ever since she launched the initiative in 2019, its impact has grown tremendously—from \$300,000 that first year to an impressive \$1.8 million in 2023.

Giving Day grew from a desire to engage alumni who are eager to pay it forward, whether by donating or sharing fundraising messages. "Our alumni are incredibly generous," says U Chief Alumni Relations Officer Kris Bosman BS'99. "When the U community unites with a shared purpose, the impact is truly remarkable."

With over 200 donation areas, the options for giving are extensive. "You can give to any passion project," Robertson explains. Donors can support

scholarship programs, specific schools and colleges, alumni programs, student support services, arts and culture programs, athletics, research, hospital and clinic areas, and much more.

Robertson says some of the most inspiring success stories come from students. Last year, Honors transfer students raised scholarship funds through Giving Day contests. The Basic Needs Collective, which helps students access essentials like food and housing, started with Giving Day seed money. The U's Reading Clinic, a resource for struggling readers in Utah schools, has also flourished thanks to Giving Day support.

Making a difference isn't limited to large donations, Robertson notes, pointing out that last year, gifts under \$100 collectively totaled more than \$150,000. "At the end of the day, every gift matters," she says. "No matter the size, it really does have an impact."

Join the entire U community and support your alma mater this Giving Day, April 8 to 9, at donate.utah.edu/giving-day-2025.

PICTURE

The fierce Utah-BYU rivalry took a heartwarming turn last fall as students channeled their competitive spirit into fighting hunger. The annual Tackling Hunger Together, a longstanding tradition at the U organized by the Student Alumni Board, transformed campus spots and local grocery stores into donation hubs, with both schools racing to collect food. The drive resulted in the equivalent of more than 35,000 meals for Utahns at the Feed U Pantry and Utah Food Bank.



Class Notes

SPOTLIGHT



Larry Echo Hawk JD'73, who built his career as one of the first Native American attorneys, spoke at the U's S.J. Quinney College of Law's 2024 convocation ceremony. Following service as the Bannock County, Idaho, prosecuting attorney and two terms in the state's House of Representatives, Echo Hawk was elected attorney general of Idaho in 1990, the first American Indian elected to the position. He later became assistant secretary of the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs. He was asked to serve a second term but left to serve as a General Authority Seventy of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Echo Hawk was also a tenured professor at the law school at Brigham Young University and general legal counsel for the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall (Idaho) Reservation. A member of the Pawnee Nation, he founded and is now of counsel at the Echo Hawk law offices in Pocatello, Idaho, where one of his sons now leads the Indian law practice group. Echo Hawk has served since 2018 as Utah's special counsel on Native American affairs. Speaking about Dean Elizabeth Kronk Warner in his convocation speech, he said, "When I was admitted to law school in 1970, it was a class of 147 students, and five of them were women. Now I stand before you in the presence of the second Native woman to ever be a law dean and the first-ever at the University of Utah. It makes me very proud to see that. She is a bright star."

'70s



Ron Perla

Ron Perla PhD'71 was recognized with the Distinguished Alumni Award from the U Department of Atmospheric Sciences. Known for discovering the "30-degree threshold," where slopes of 30 degrees or more are much more likely to cause avalanches, Perla conducted research while working ski patrol at Alta Ski Resort and as a snow ranger with the U.S. Forest Service Alta Avalanche Study Center. His pioneering models of moving avalanches and lifelong contributions to snow science have significantly im-

proved safety for backcountry adventurers. Now based in Alberta, Canada, he continues his impactful research.

'80s

Christie Potter Sloane BSN'80 is a school nurse in the San Diego Unified School District. She holds a master of science in community health nursing from San Diego State University and was previously a telemetry registered nurse at Scripps Memorial Hospital Encinitas. Sloane says a treasured memory from her time at the U was developing a lifelong best friendship with a fellow alumna, with whom she went on to job share a nursing position and raise children in the same community.

'90s



Todd Campbell

Todd Campbell BMU'93 MMU'03 received the 2024 Utah Music Educators Association Outstanding Music Educator award. Currently in his 31st year teaching band in Davis County School District, he teaches at both junior high and high school levels while serving as adjunct faculty at BYU and the U. Campbell has earned six Citation of Excellence Awards and four Outstanding Jazz Educator honors from the National Band Association, and co-directs the Davis County Jazz Messengers.



Nikhil K. Bhayani

Nikhil K. Bhayani BS'98 received the International Association of Top Professionals' 2024 Presidential Award in Healthcare, presented for exceptional dedication, innovation, and leadership in the field. Bhayani is an infectious disease physician and an assistant professor at Texas Christian University, where he teaches and mentors medical students and residents, conducts research on various infectious disease topics, and collaborates with other faculty and staff. He practices infectious disease medicine in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, serving a diverse patient population and offering consultation services to hospitals and clinics.

'00s



Kevin Emerson

Kevin Emerson BS'02 is the lead for energy efficiency programs, partnerships, and energy efficiency policy and regulatory activities at Utah Clean Energy, which advocates for solar and other clean energy technologies. Emerson played a pivotal role in the design and construction of the nonprofit's new office headquarters, the Climate Innovation Center, in downtown Salt Lake City. The center exemplifies climate-smart, zero-emission adaptive reuse building construction.



Laura Hanson

Laura Hanson BS'03 BS'03 MS'05 is Governor Spencer Cox's new senior advisor for long-range planning. Hanson was most recently managing director of planning coordination within the Governor's Office of

SPOTLIGHT



Elizabeth Heider BS'00 has published her debut novel, *May the Wolf Die*, which *The Washington Post* named one of the 10 best mystery novels of 2024 and *The New York Times* listed among the year's best crime fiction. Set in present-day Naples, the thriller follows a female detective tasked with solving a murder involving organized crime and the U.S. military. Heider lived in Naples for several years as part of her job with the U.S. Navy. She notes, "Unfortunately, the transcendent beauty of the city has a bleak shadow: rampant poverty and the Commora mafia infesting all aspects of society." During her time as a civilian researcher for the Navy, Heider wrote and ran wargames and assessed at-sea exercises. She was later a scientist with the European Space Agency, where she was part of a group helping put ESA science experiments and technology demonstrations into operations aboard the International Space Station, and she has also worked for Microsoft's AI4Science Research Program. At age eight, Heider began taking adult-learning creative-writing lessons in the evenings, and she began high school early. At 16, she entered the U's Actor Training Program before jumping fields into physics, going on to a master's and PhD at Tufts University, conducting research at the Fermilab National Particle Accelerator Laboratory and at a high-field magnet laboratory. She authored a comic series developed by the ESA, and her short fiction has been recognized with several awards.

SPOTLIGHT

PHOTO BY STEVE ZYLUS/UC IRVINE



Elizabeth N. Bess BS'09 PhD'15 has helped make remarkable strides in discovering a cure for Parkinson's disease. Bess is lead researcher on a team at the University of California, Irvine, that has found that the protein chunks that aggregate in the brain and lead to Parkinson's appear to form in the intestine as a result of the *E. coli* bacteria. "So, if you can stop the aggregates from forming in the gut, there's a chance that the proteins won't reach the brain and cause Parkinson's," she notes. "And now that we know a way that these protein aggregates form, we can find ways to prevent their formation." The concept that a treatment for a disease like Parkinson's that afflicts the brain may begin in the gut is a new one. "But our research is charting a map for how this is possible," Bess explains. "We hope our work will open new avenues for better treatments to help people with this disease." Now an assistant professor of chemistry at UC Irvine, Bess earned her bachelor's in biological chemistry and her doctorate in organic chemistry before going on to a postdoc in microbiology and immunology at UC San Francisco.

Planning and Budget. Previously, she served as planning director for the Utah Transit Authority and executive director of the Jordan River Commission.



Jamie Sorenson

Jamie Sorenson BA'05 JD'08 is the new president of the U Alumni Board of Governors, where he is working on ways to reconnect with and support our alumni community. After graduating from the university in French and political science, and relying on his experience with the Hinckley Institute of Politics, Sorenson went back to Washington, D.C., for law school. Since graduating, he has practiced in the bankruptcy and litigation sections of Ray Quinney & Nebeker and has been a part of groups committed to increasing and supporting diversity in the law and community, including the Utah Minority Bar Association.

Darin Mano BA'08 BS'08 is a member of the Salt Lake City Council and co-founder of Uncommon Architects, a diverse, forward-thinking group of architects and designers based in Salt Lake County, Utah. Mano taught at the U's College of Architecture + Planning for six years.

'10s

PHOTO BY JASON SHELDON



Rebecca Lindenberg

Rebecca Lindenberg PhD'11 has a new poetry collection, *Our Splendid Failure to Do the Impossible*. Lindenberg is an associate professor at the University of Cincinnati, where she is also poetry editor of *The Cincinnati Review*. Her previous work includes *The Logan Notebooks*, winner of the 2015 Utah Book Award. She's the recipient of an Ohio Arts Council Individual Artist Excellence Award and a National Endowment for the Arts literature grant, among others. She has also been a Fellow at the Fine Arts Work Center in Provincetown and the MacDowell Arts Colony. Her poetry, lyric essays, and criticism appear in *American Poetry Review*, *The Missouri Review*, *Poem-a-Day* from the Academy of American Poets, *Tin House*, *McSweeney's Quarterly*, *Third Coast*, *Smartish Pace*, *Iowa Review*, and elsewhere and have been anthologized widely, including in *The Best American Poetry* series.



Dennis Connors

Dennis Connors MS'14 won silver for the United States as a paracyclist in the 2024 Summer Paralympic Games in Paris. Connors has won the U.S. Paracycling Men's Trike National Championship six times and became the MT2 road race world champion with competition in Zurich in September. He is also a member of the U.S. Paraclimbing Team and is considering adding other sports. Connors served nine years in the Marine Corps and completed three deployments in Iraq. He suffered multiple TBIs and a stroke while in the military, and he continues pushing his physical and mental limits to show that you should never give up on the things you love.



Claudia Restrepo

Claudia Restrepo DMA'17 was recently appointed assistant principal librarian with the New York Philharmonic. Restrepo had previously been a librarian with the Utah Symphony since 2021, following two seasons with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra Library. She has also worked with the Civic Orchestra of Chicago, the Aspen Music Festival, the National Symphony Orchestra, and the Tanglewood Music Center.



Hollie Morales

Widowed at 34 and left to raise four children alone after her husband passed away from a brain tumor (and after having lost her father to glioblastoma brain cancer when she was 20), **Hollie Morales** BS'19 turned her moment of greatest darkness into motivation, starting school at age 35 determined to make a positive impact against cancer. Morales is now a doctoral student in oncology at the U. "If I am able to make a difference in just one life, all the years of studying, sleepless nights, and sacrificing a social life will be worth it," she says. "Don't let others tell you what can't be done. Chase your dreams."



Savannah Talbot

Savannah Talbot BS'19 (MA in applied behavior analysis, Ball State University) is a licensed and board-certified behavior analyst and therapeutic recreation specialist working with

children with autism spectrum disorder at the Carmen B. Pingree Autism Center for Learning. She also volunteers at non-profit organizations that help people of all abilities participate in outdoor activities such as skiing, climbing, and more, and sits on the executive board of the Utah Recreation Therapy Association.

'20s



Cameron Gallagher

Cameron Gallagher BMU'21 recently secured a record deal with Mountain Road Records and collaborated with guitar phenom Grace Bowers on his latest EP release with his band,

Cam Gallagher & The Tasty Soul. This past summer, he embarked on his first headlining tour out West, culminating in a homecoming show at Soundwell in Salt Lake.



Hailey West

Hailey West BS'21 now works in sports broadcasting in labor relations HR, negotiating union contracts with crews across the U.S. for Program Productions, North America's largest

independent production crew and labor management firm. West holds a master's in HR and employment law from Arizona State University. After being based in Chicago for three years, she recently relocated to Pittsburgh.



Kandis King Taylor

Kandis King Taylor PhD'23 was recognized with the Superior Accomplishment Award in the 2024 Utah Music Educators Association awards. Taylor is both percussion instructor at Brigham Young University and director of bands and percussion ensembles at Lakeridge Junior High.

Her research interests focus on leveraging educational technology as a tool for music learning, and she has presented both nationally and internationally. With more than 18 years of experience teaching, directing, and adjudicating public school musical groups, Taylor also composes music and has published several pieces.



What's new with U?
Send updates to
classnotes@utah.edu



THE #1 COLLEGE LICENSE PLATE IN UTAH.

Ride with pride and support students. Every dollar from every University of Utah license plate on the road drives student scholarships—and the U has a bigger fleet than anyone else.

Visit ualumni.link/plates to get yours today.





YOUR LEGACY BEGINS WITH

When you include a bequest to the University of Utah through your will or trust, you ensure the values you live by today continue to shape tomorrow.

Ways to give to the U through a will or trust:

- Leave a specific amount as an asset to the university.
- Designate a percentage of your estate to be given through your will or trust.
- Give the remainder of your estate after bequests to loved ones have been made.

“Life and college are challenging enough. If our gift can make that challenge just a little bit easier, it is well worth it.”

—Rudy Barela (BS '83) and David Karjola



LEARN MORE ABOUT
LEGACY GIFTS

Heritage Commons Turns 25

A quarter century ago, Heritage Commons emerged on the U's campus, nearly tripling student housing and launching a trend of community living that continues to grow today. This \$120 million-plus project not only gave more students a place to call home—it also served as the Olympic Village for the 2002 Winter Games, housing some 3,500 world-class athletes. The U is set to reprise this role when Utah hosts the Olympics again in 2034.

Nestled in historic Fort Douglas, Heritage Commons comprises six “neighborhoods” with 21 buildings. As Heritage Commons celebrates its silver anniversary, the U has embarked on an even larger housing expansion and is in the process of adding beds for over 5,000 more students, including through new public/private partnerships (see p. 11).

The first glimpse of a rendering of Heritage Commons' brick-and-mortar masterpieces graced the pages of *Continuum* in 1998.



CHEER FOR THE
CUISINE
THEN CHEER FOR UTAH.



The Ken Garff University Club is way more than just a pre-game destination. A private club with member-exclusive events, space for remote work and study, and even hosting your private events, we truly are where you and your family want to be.



KEN GARFF
UNIVERSITY CLUB
AT RICE-ECCLES STADIUM



University of Utah
Magazine

75 Fort Douglas Blvd.
Salt Lake City, UT 84113

NON PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE PAID
PORTLAND OR
PERMIT No 2160

EVERYTHING
GOES BACK TO



THE STUDENTS,
THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH,
& UTAH ATHLETICS



SHOP ONLINE OR AT ANY OF OUR LOCATIONS
(MAIN CAMPUS, SANDY, AND HEALTH SCIENCES)



CAMPUS STORE
THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

THE OFFICIAL RETAILER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH