

Unpacking Gen Z

The next generation is changing the world. But does that power come at a cost? p. 28

Hope Corps

When businesses struggled this past year, U students were there to help, p. 34

Props to the Crew

Pull back the curtains and see what it takes for PTC to put on a show, p. 12



Popping the Pandemic

COVID vaccines are helping reduce the anxiety that's been ballooning for many. History shows how we got here.

Zoom Towns

Just as mining led to western boomtowns, the pandemic has led to the rise of “Zoom towns.” Even before lockdowns began, areas near world-class outdoor offerings, sometimes called gateway communities, were struggling to accommodate an influx of people. As rural communities grow, they tend to experience a suite of big city challenges, like housing affordability and transportation issues, according to a study of 1,200 small towns in the West. “Some of Utah’s

gateway communities are at risk of being loved to death,” says study co-author Danya Rumore, a research assistant professor of city and metropolitan planning (and research associate professor of law) at the U. Those problems are only exacerbated by the flood of remote workers fleeing big cities to ride out the pandemic in places like Moab (pictured here). To help, the U is joining with others through the Gateway and Natural Amenity Region Initiative, which Rumore founded, to provide tools, trainings, and other resources for Western gateway communities.





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When the pandemic struck, U students needed internships and work experience, and local businesses and nonprofits needed help adjusting to changing economic conditions. The solution to both issues? Hope Corps. p. 34



HEATHER NAN

FEATURES

20

The Sticking Point Vaccines have come a long way from the days of using scabs and animal scrapings to inoculate patients. Scientific advancements have paved the way for immunizations to be developed at lightning speed and distributed more efficiently, but even so, challenges remain. By revisiting our past, we can better understand our future.

ON THE COVER

In a time when COVID-related anxiety has ballooned, the benefits of new vaccines bring hope for the future. Illustrator Doug Chayka captures the bubble of apprehension many carry and imagines that it may soon burst.

28

Unpacking Gen Z Don't underestimate this rising generation. They're savvy, they're empowered, and they're poised to impact the world with a touch of their fingertips. Sure, they're on the phone, using Snapchat, TikTok, and Instagram—but they're watching out for you, too. Still, all that connectedness has a cost.

34

Activating the Hope Corps When local businesses began battling to stay afloat during the pandemic, who came to their rescue? Hope Corps! Like a bat signal for struggling companies, the program linked hero university students with weary entrepreneurs and nonprofit leaders to provide support, while the students gained real-world experience.



SIMONE KORONHA

WEB EXTRAS

More available at magazine.utah.edu

Hear words of wisdom, take a walk down memory lane, and see the impact of this year's seven honorees who received the U's Founders Day awards. Watch videos featuring each recipient at magazine.utah.edu/founders2021.



Performances by Pioneer Theatre Company are known to be engaging and entertaining, but take a step behind the curtain and you'll discover a world that's even more magical. See more photos of the magic at magazine.utah.edu/backstage.



As adorable and romantic as it is to get engaged on campus, that moment was just the tip of the iceberg for the love between these two and the U. Visit magazine.utah.edu/proposal to read more of this love story.

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Shaykayla Smith graduated with a degree in entrepreneurship from the Eccles School and experience as a student leader at the Lasonde Entrepreneur Institute.

ENTREPRENEUR AT A TOP 10 PROGRAM



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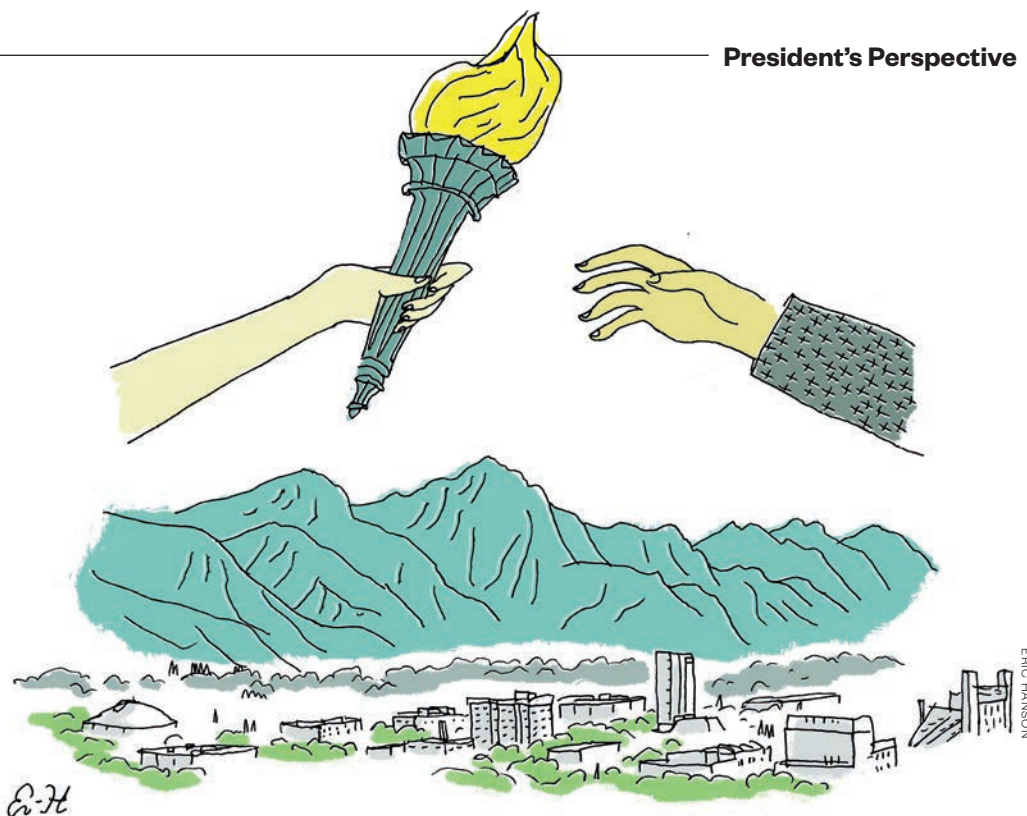
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ERIO HANSON

Do more, be more, imagine more!



By the time you receive this issue of *Utah Magazine*, Dr. Michael Good will be in a new role as interim president at the University of Utah.

As I announced in

January, I have assumed a new position as president of Strada Impact, which is dedicated to improving students' college access, degree completion, and career connections. At Strada, I will be able to broadly share innovative strategies for driving student success, including those implemented at the U with outstanding results.

Dr. Good is widely respected on our campus and in our community, and he will provide the steady, confident guidance the university needs to thrive in the months ahead. He and a talented team of senior administrators are working hard to ensure that the U's momentum continues even as the search for a new president proceeds.

When the search is completed, the U's 17th president will find a campus community that is welcoming and united, one that

is eager to do more, be more, and imagine more. This is a university that is leading by example in our state and our nation, making remarkable strides on all measures. Our student body has increased in size and diversity. Our six-year graduation rate hovers at an impressive 70 percent. Research funding hit a milestone of nearly \$603 million in 2020. University of Utah Health, which now serves 2 million patients a year, continues to be a top-ranked system in patient quality. We reached our Imagine New Heights capital campaign goal of \$2 billion at the end of 2020, two years ahead of schedule.

As alumni, you have played a key role in our success. You helped lift our university during your time here and now continue to be change agents in your careers and in your communities, bringing recognition and accolades to the U.

For all these reasons, I leave knowing that the University of Utah is in excellent hands, that its progress will continue to accelerate, and its reputation will continue to rise. I wish you all the very best.

RUTH V. WATKINS
PRESIDENT, STRADA IMPACT
16TH PRESIDENT, UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

Winter Issue

I graduated from the U in 1960 and went off to seek my fortune in California. I finally ended up with my doctorate, teaching at BYU, and retiring as Emeritus Professor. I have been receiving the U magazine for these many years and can still sing “I am a Utah man, sir” and not miss a beat. I have taken the time to peruse the Winter 2021 publication. I just want to express the delight I felt after doing this. It brought me up to date and kept me involved due to size, color, and expert layout and journalism. I usually skim the publication when it comes and toss it out, but not this time. Keep up the good work.

CONNIE BLAKEMORE COOK BS'60,
OREM, UT



SOCIAL SPOTLIGHT

When Michael Nielsen met Sara Wilson at marching band camp three years ago, it was love at first note. But it wasn't just Wilson's captivating smile and charming personality that grabbed his heart. After gliding across Rice-Eccles field with their saxophones at home games, cheering for the Utes, and donning uniforms of red, Nielsen fell in love with the U, too. When it came time to pop the question, the drum major could think of no better place to propose than at the Block U on campus. They later shared photos of the moment on Twitter. Read more at magazine.utah.edu/proposal. Spoiler alert: She said yes!



Artist in Residence

Last issue we featured artwork from Dave Meikle BFA'94 MFA'06, a nearly 30-year employee of the U. Turns out many of you were already fans.

Wonderful to see David featured! I loved seeing his colorful artwork on university publications back in the early '90s. My kids can all recognize his style, and sometimes when we see a beautiful Utah landscape out the window as we're driving, one of them will say, 'Hey, that looks like a David Meikle painting.' David's a gifted artist who has honed his talents well!

WILLOW JEPSON BA'94, SALT LAKE CITY



Vietnam Protests

Wow, this brought back memories [Reflect, Winter 2021]. As a returning Army Combat Medic Vet. (VN '67-68), I had been recently hired by the Marriott Library. Hearing about the student demonstration that day, I decided to make my way around Marriott's north side overlooking the protest. Upon seeing the vast number of students protesting the war and Kent State, my emotions were mixed, with anger for the many losses I witnessed and experienced in Vietnam. I tried to understand these students' empathy and that they just wanted to stop that crazy, misguided war.

NICHOLAS MILLER BS'77, HURRICANE, UT



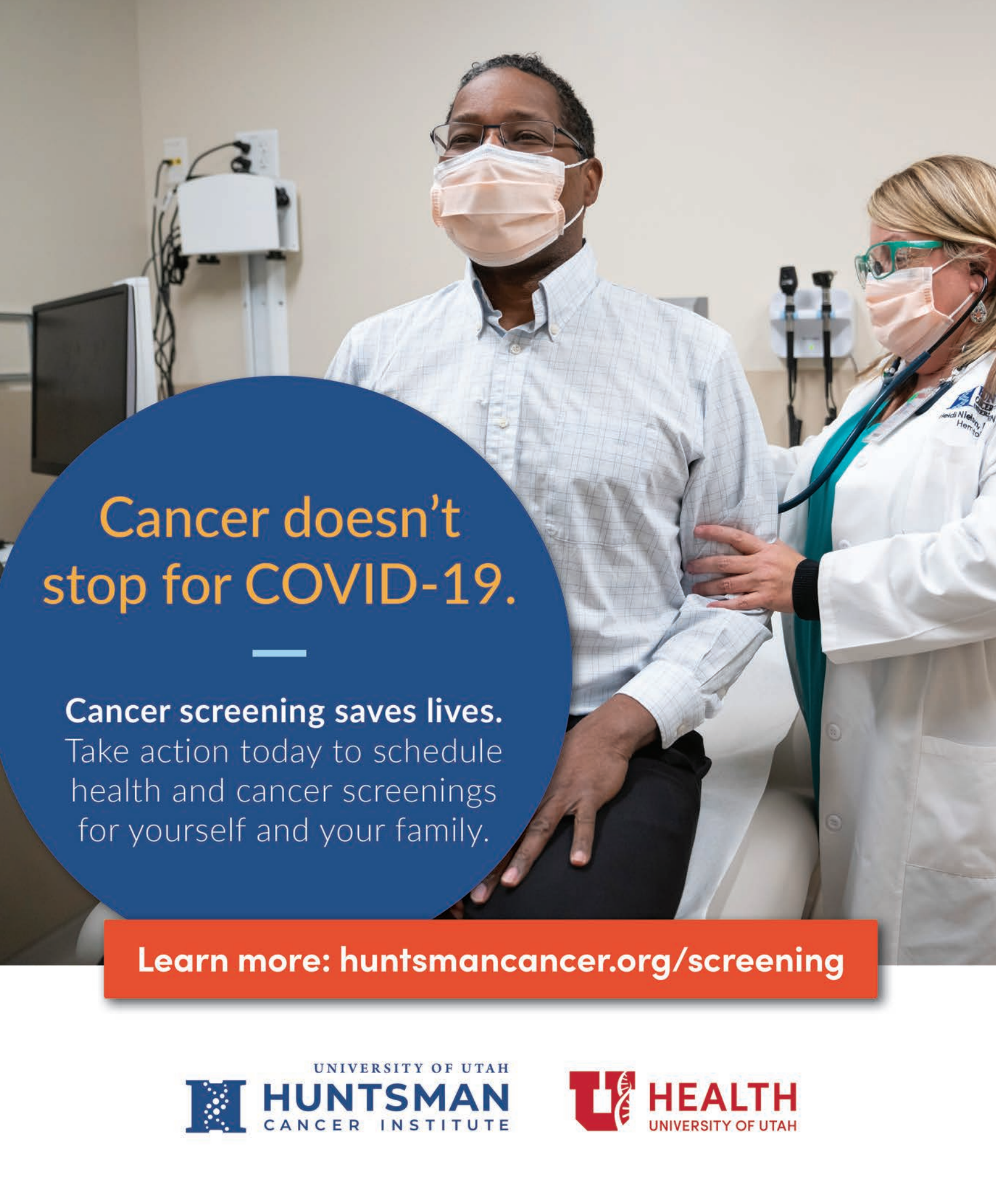
Awards & Honors

University of Utah Magazine took home top honors in a recent competition for communication and fundraising efforts. It was awarded three gold, one silver, and one bronze award in the latest contest from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE). Additionally, it was honored last fall in several national competitions, including Content Marketing World and Ragan's PR Daily awards.

Now we'd like to find out what YOU think! Take a few minutes to give us your feedback at magazine.utah.edu/survey. Enter for a giveaway!

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.



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ALUMNI

FOREVER UTAH

News from the U



Recognitions of the discoveries and innovations of U faculty and staff are on display on 1300 East, University Street, and South Temple in Salt Lake City.

Banner Achievements

Flags hanging on streetlamps in Salt Lake City celebrate accomplishments of U faculty and staff

Sometimes long-term, basic research is made immediately relevant by current events. COVID-19 and social disparities have transformed everything from the way Americans buy groceries to how we work and play. U faculty are responding with projects that explore virus transmission, unequal access to health care, and how members of our community talk about their lives during a time when the country faces critical social issues.

To celebrate this vital work, more than 20 researchers, teachers, and librarians are featured on banners hanging on streetlights on 1300 East, University Street, and South Temple.

"The faculty members working on these projects deserve recognition for taking on some of the thorniest problems facing our society," says U Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs Dan Reed. "This scholarly work will help us improve COVID-19 treatments; weather this global health crisis;

expand access to health care; and bridge the social, economic, and racial differences that divide us."

The Banner Project recognizes mid-career faculty who are intellectual and thought leaders, not only at the U but also in the community. "The goal is to put faces to the world-class scholarship, groundbreaking discoveries, unique innovations, and creative works generated by our scholars," adds Reed.

Last year's first cohort of Banner Project honorees were recognized for their work with data, business innovation, inspiring community through art, and understanding addiction. For Rebecca Utz, co-director of the Consortium for Families and Health Research (C-FAHR) and associate professor of sociology, her 2020 banner served as an unexpected mode of community outreach.

"People saw the banner and wondered what kind of research I was doing that may help them as they deal with challenging diagnoses, caregiving, or the death of someone they loved," Utz says. "In some cases, these people have become part of my research."

NEWS ROUNDUP



In 1,850 minutes (or just more than 30 hours), the U raised \$1.2 million from more than 4,000 individual donors in its third annual U Giving Day this past February. Held in honor of the year the U was founded—1850—U Giving Day helps people give directly to their favorite programs, departments, and colleges at the U.



HUNTSMAN
MENTAL HEALTH INSTITUTE
UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

Launched in January 2021, the Huntsman Mental Health Institute (HMHI), formerly University Neuropsychiatric Institute

(UNI), provides comprehensive mental health care, drives breakthroughs in research, and works to end the stigma surrounding mental health. The creation of HMHI was made possible by a \$150 million gift from the Huntsman family along with support from U leadership and the state. See p.17 for an example of HMHI research.



The first all-female ticket to be elected to ASUU leadership has been sworn in. After a mostly virtual campaign and an all-online election, the new presidential administration says their focus will be on safety, accessibility, and accountability. From left to right, Tiffany Chan, vice president of university relations; Jess Wojciechowski, president; and Maryan Shale, vice president of student relations.

Heat Beneath Our Feet

A new well is testing ways to harness unlimited energy

Outside a town of 1,700 people in southern Utah, a well reaching thousands of feet underground was drilled and completed last December. But instead of searching for water or even oil, this well near Milford, Utah, extends deep into the earth to access an energy source in the form of rocks as hot as 440 degrees Fahrenheit.

The well is helping researchers test tools and technologies used to create geothermal reservoirs where none exist naturally. These reservoirs will consist of interconnected fractures that allow injected water to heat up as it circulates through the hot rock. The water can then be pumped to the surface, where its thermal energy can produce electricity before it is reinjected, says Joseph Moore, principal investigator for Utah Frontier Observatory for Research in Geothermal Energy (FORGE), which drilled the well. The underground lab is run by the U's Energy & Geoscience Institute.

The total length of the well is about 11,000 feet, with the deepest part at a vertical depth of just over 8,500. Beginning at 6,000 feet, it was steered to the east, eventually deviating 65 degrees.

Although geothermal power is not a new concept, it's typically found only near natural geothermal systems, like hot springs or volcanoes. Funded by \$200 million from the U.S. Department of Energy, this project aims to make geothermal power more readily available, says Moore.

What's so unique about this work is accessibility, he notes. The current project takes up a few acres of land, and there are almost no limits to where it could be placed. "Imagine, all the energy you need from anywhere you want it. That's the potential of this project," says Moore. A second well is slated to be completed in 2022, with more testing efforts set to begin.

Seasons of Sneezing

Yes, seasonal allergies are getting worse. Blame climate change.

If you live with seasonal allergies and feel like pollen lingers longer and longer every year, you may be right. New research shows that pollen seasons now start about 20 days earlier, are 10 days longer, and feature 21 percent more pollen than in 1990—which means more days of itchy, sneezy, drippy misery.

Led by William Anderegg, an assistant professor of biology at the U, researchers found that human-caused climate change has played a significant role in pollen season lengthening and a partial role in pollen amount increasing. “The strong link between warmer weather and pollen seasons provides a crystal-clear example of how climate change is already affecting people’s health across the U.S.,” says Anderegg.

Allergies to airborne pollen can be more than just a seasonal nuisance to many. Allergies are tied to respiratory health, with implications for viral infections, emergency room visits, and even children’s school performance. More pollen hanging around for a longer season makes those impacts worse.

The team compiled measurements between 1990 and 2018 from 60 National Allergy Bureau pollen count stations across

the United States and Canada. These stations collect airborne pollen and mold samples, which are then hand-tabulated by certified counters.

Nationwide pollen amounts increased by around 21 percent over the study period. Pollen seasons by the end started nearly three weeks earlier than about 40 years ago, suggesting that warming is causing the plants’ internal timing to start producing pollen earlier in the year.

But can we say that the changes in pollen are a result of climate change? The researchers answered that question by applying statistical methods to pollen trends in conjunction with nearly two dozen climate models. The results showed that climate change alone could account for around 50 percent of the pollen season lengthening and around 8 percent of the pollen amount increasing. The researchers also found that the contribution of climate change to increasing pollen amounts is accelerating.

“Climate change isn’t something far away and in the future. It’s already here in every spring breath we take and increasing human misery,” says Anderegg. “The biggest question is—are we up to the challenge of tackling it?”



Juniper trees are a source of highly allergenic pollen that causes wheezing, sneezing, itchiness, and general misery.

PICTURE

Growing up in the Navajo Nation, Revina Talker MPS’08 never saw health care providers who were Navajo. Talker’s mother told her that she had to go to school so she could return and help her people. She’s now the sole provider at the Navajo Mountain Community Health Center in Tonalea, Utah. Here she checks in with a well-respected elder in his home. See a *UtahMed* photo essay depicting Talker’s experience caring for Navajo patients during the COVID-19 pandemic at utahmedicine.org/revina-talker.



VANCE JACOBS

Scott Leech Woodworker

I have a passion for working with a specific type of wood: I recover it from dying or damaged trees on the U campus. I worked as a carpenter and construction manager at the U for 28 years, and I retired in 2019 to focus on crafting platters, boxes, tables, and more out of reclaimed wood. Trees hold special meaning for so many in the U of U community. They provide a sense of time and place as they mark the changing seasons.

After a windstorm downed trees across campus last September, the grounds department called about several they thought I could use. I was feeling bad after hearing the news, but when I saw the devastation of the trees where I had spent so many years of my career, it really hit home.

Right now, I'm processing some wood recovered from a sycamore near the bookstore, a Kentucky coffeetree from Presidents Circle, and a velvet ash from Cottam's Gulch—a gully between the William Stewart Building and University Street. I'm usually in the shop by 6 a.m., and I can't wait to make something new or improve upon what I've already made. I love turning gorgeous wood into useable items that others can enjoy. Later this summer, when I have some bowls from trees from the September storm available, I'll list them on my website, utahbowls.com.

The upcycling of a tree into a beautiful new object is invigorating, knowing that the wood isn't going to the landfill. And when I craft an item using wood from campus, I enjoy sharing the history of the tree and its connection to the university.

Peek behind the curtain at Pioneer Theatre Company. (1) Wigmaster Amanda French preps a wig for an upcoming production. (2) The costume shop staff works on garb for current and future productions. (3) The backstage crew installs the set of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* in 2017. (4) The hair and make-up shop keeps hundreds of moustaches, beards, and sideburns to complement any character. (5) PTC Development Director Diane Parisi MFA'80 shows off a fraction of the thousands of hats in different styles, sizes, and colors in inventory.



Props to the Crew

What does a milliner or a fly operator have to do with your theater experience? Well, someone has to design the hats the actors wear, and scenery doesn't move itself. It's not an understatement to say it takes a village for Pioneer Theatre Company (PTC) to put on a performance.

As a fully professional theater—one of only two in Utah—PTC plans and executes every aspect of production

using the skills of technical directors, prop artists, electricians, wardrobe managers, stitchers, sound operators, and more—all masters of their trades.

And make no mistake, these artists are just as talented as the ones we see on stage. “You’ll find directors, designers, and actors who might be working on Broadway one year and at theaters like PTC the next,” says Karen Azenberg, artistic director. “They’re at the top of their game.”

A walk through their workspace is like a journey through time. You might see a

wig mistress coiffing a Medieval hairstyle, a carpenter reupholstering Victorian furniture, or a tailor hemming a pair of '60s bell-bottoms. Every detail you see on stage is well-thought-out, down to the consistency of stage blood and the weathering of the shoes.

Moving forward after the most unconventional season in its 59-year history, PTC welcomes back audiences and its professional crew for the 2021-22 season. “We’re calling this season ‘A Ticket to Feel... Good!’ ” says Azenberg—a sentiment we can all get behind.



Web Extra See more behind-the-scenes photos at magazine.utah.edu/backstage

The African crested rat is a rabbit-sized rodent that is the only known mammal to sequester plant toxins as a chemical defense.



Deadly Fur

And the secret social lives of giant poisonous rats

The African crested rat is not exactly the continent's most fearsome-looking creature. The rabbit-sized rodent resembles a gray puffball crossed with a skunk—yet its fur is packed with a poison so lethal it can fell an elephant, and just a few milligrams can kill a human.

The crested rat is the only mammal known to sequester plant toxins for chemical defense. And the rodents have an unexpected social life—they appear to be monogamous and may form small family units with their offspring, according to a new study by U researchers and scientists from the Smithsonian Institution and the National Museums of Kenya.

"It's considered a 'black box' of a rodent," says Sara Weinstein, lead author and Smithsonian-Mpala postdoctoral fellow and postdoctoral researcher in the School of Biological Sciences at the U. "We initially wanted to confirm that the toxin sequestration behavior was real and along the way discovered some completely unknown things about their social behavior."

When threatened, the crested rat erects a ridge of hair on its back to reveal a warning on its flanks—black and white stripes running from neck to tail on each side of its body. A 2011 study hypothesized that the rats chew bark from the *Acokanthera* tree and lick the plant toxins into specialized hairs at the center of these stripes.

In the new study, researchers trapped 25 crested rats, the largest sample size of the species ever captured. They recorded nearly 1,000 hours of rat behavior with motion-activated cameras. For the first time, they documented multiple rats sequestering *Acokanthera* toxins and discovered many traits that suggest that they are social, and likely monogamous.

The research team is planning future studies to learn more about the rats' physiology and behavior, as well as the genetic mechanisms that allow them to withstand the toxins.



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5

Restorative Justice

The Enga use village magistrates to reintegrate offenders back into society

All human groups create systems for regulating cultural norms to maintain cooperation in society. Most large-scale populations employ a punitive judicial system. Advocates have long called for a more restorative justice system that repairs harm done to victims and reintegrates wrongdoers back into society, such as is done by the Enga of Papua New Guinea.

The Enga, a small-scale society, navigate western-style and customary village courts. The vast majority of disputes go through village courts. U anthropologist Polly Wiessner and a team of Enga researchers analyzed 10 years of records and documented 333 village court cases concerning assault, marriage, and land and property violations in a recent study.

Results of the study show that village courts overwhelmingly emphasize restorative justice, allowing both sides and community members to share their perspectives. There was no instance of summoning the police or recommending a jail sentence. Instead, the community assisted the wrongdoer in paying compensation to the victim and supported reintegrating the offender back into society.

As one senior Enga magistrate, Anton Yongapen, explained, “We have no law books. We must just listen to the different sides and use our heads and hearts to apply custom in appropriate ways to bring about justice today. Justice must not only be done but be *seen* to be done by community, else our goal of bringing about peace and harmony will not be achieved.”

Restorative justice has some drawbacks—it fails to remove truly dangerous people from society, and it’s hard to apply this small-scale approach to larger populations. But though difficult, the U.S. and other countries have seen considerable success with restorative justice in youth courts.



A woman raises her hand during a village court hearing. The community is invited to share relevant testimony.

Inspiring Curiosity for Teens in Custody

Research conducted at the U has shown that exposure to nature can improve mood and reduce acts of violence. And the scientist behind the findings has been bringing those benefits to incarcerated youth by connecting them with the outdoors, art, and science since 2017. U biology professor Nalini Nadkarni’s STEM Community Alliance Program (STEMCAP) recently received a \$1.2 million grant from the Utah State Board of Education to continue encouraging incarcerated teens and those in treatment to pursue their interests in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM)-related topics.

STEMCAP pairs the youth with U scientists, community educators, and artists. Helping them grow their academic capacity also opens opportunities for self-discovery, says Nadkarni. “People in prison and jail have the least access to nature, even if they want to have access to it,” Nadkarni says. “I thought I could work to bring science and nature to them.”

Students across the five STEMCAP partner facilities have met scientists from NASA, grown milkweed habitat for monarch butterflies, written climate-change poetry, sent letters to conservation groups, and produced a three-part podcast: *Wake-up Call!*

In the coming year, STEMCAP hopes to make the program available to students in custody statewide via video and initiate a scientist-student “pen pal” program.



Youth in the STEMCAP program studied the history and practice of botanical illustrations and then made their own.

Diagram

a

1,725

classes offered to Utahns at no cost in 2020, as part of a one-time COVID-19 relief program to help individuals learn new skills

FREE



People participate from all 50 states, and outside the U.S., students from Kuwait, China, and Congo have enrolled



7,079

Spring 2021 enrollment

1,323 Courses

20+

professional certificates



Most Popular Classes/Programs:

- English Language Institute program
- ACT Preparatory Course
- Web Coding Boot Camp
- Cybersecurity Boot Camp**
- Project Management
- Digital Photography
- Club U summer camp for youth



67%

increase in online courses

Some courses can be completed in as little as eight hours

8

Lifelong Learners

From learning how to be a better beekeeper to understanding the fundamentals of business law, the U's online and continuing education offers a host of opportunities for those looking to develop a new talent—or upskill toward a new career. With an increase in digital offerings, classes provide trainings to help people reenter the workforce, tools to help parents learn how to handle online learning, and even certification programs to expand professional horizons. It's never too late to keep learning.

Changing Conversations

The year she graduated, Nubia Peña BA'06 JD'16 was named one of the top 25 law students in the country by *National Jurist* magazine. She was appointed by Gov. Gary Herbert in 2019 to be the director for the Utah Division of Multicultural Affairs and was recently tapped to serve in a concurrent role as Senior Advisor of Equity and Opportunity. For the last year, she's helped oversee the Multicultural Advisory Committee of Utah's COVID-19 response, which brings together dozens of diverse partners weekly to address some of the pressing concerns for Utah's historically underserved populations.

What is the next challenge for Utah?

It's vaccinations. We have to make sure no family is left behind and work with partners to ask questions that address different levels of access. Can people get them without a driver's license, will interpreters be available? Can people without internet access call to make an appointment? Is the information distributed in plain language, is transportation access considered? Does the plan address concerns held by many who are historically distrustful of the government?

How has the state response been?

Because of preexisting disparities in health care access, communities of color were hit disproportionately hard. We're now discussing equity in a way that has not always been the practice. Instead of approaching everyone the same way, the conversations are now considering what help we can provide that is culturally inclusive and how we effectively reach those most in need so that we can all recover from this together. I'm so grateful for the shift in this direction, and it makes me immensely hopeful for the future.

What comes next?

Utah is unique, and the values of the people in this state genuinely are to help one another. As we consider what comes next, we have to continue to think about our most vulnerable—those with less access, and people who have to navigate socio, cultural, economic, and systemic barriers. If we are to rebuild stronger than before, we have to consider the people and communities that have largely existed at the margins and center their voices.



Jazz On Demand

A visiting professor taps students for an original composition to promote the movie *Soul*

As the premiere of the Pixar and Disney film *Soul* drew near last December, Visiting Director of Jazz Studies John Petrucelli got an unexpected phone call. The team in charge of promoting the flick asked him to compose an original track inspired by its themes and setting. The movie features the contemporary jazz community in New

York, and Petrucelli played bass for the film's soundtrack.

He was sent some shots of pivotal scenes in the movie and tasked with writing something inspired by its general ambiance from his perspective as a modern jazz musician. "They wanted it in five days, the day before the movie went out," he says. To make the urgent

deadline, he turned to some musicians he knew he could trust—current and former U students.

Petrucelli and his impromptu band created an original piece called "Coming Home." Although it wasn't featured in the movie, the song was used in its promotion. For Petrucelli, the whole ambiance of *Soul* is deeply familiar. "New York is really where I came of age as a jazz musician. It's one of the most storied cities in terms of the evolution and development of jazz. And to start performing in New York when I was 12 or 13 years old was daunting in some ways, but it pushed me, and everyone who came up with me during that time, to be serious and make strides in pursuing our individual artistry."



Pixar and Disney's animated film *Soul* features a jazz musician based in New York City, similar to Petrucelli.

The Science of Suicide

Every 11 minutes, an American dies by suicide. That's 132 people a day, or more than 48,000 annually. For those left behind, the haunting question is "Why?"

One emerging factor is family history. In a new analysis of the genetics of suicidal acts, researchers at U of U Health's Huntsman Mental Health Institute detected more than 20 genes that could have a role in these deaths. The study, among the first comprehensive genome-wide analyses of suicide death ever completed, also found significant genetic cross-connections to psychiatric diseases and behaviors sometimes associated with suicide, such as bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, and autism spectrum disorder.

The study establishes that suicide death is partially heritable and that it tracks in families independent of the effects of a shared environment. Identifying these genetic risk factors, they say, could lead to better ways to predict who might be at risk of suicide and inform new strategies for preventing the worst from happening.

"What is important about this study is that, using the whole genome, we have created a genetic risk score for suicide," says Anna Docherty, quantitative geneticist and lead author of the study. "It can also help us study how genetics and environment interact to increase suicide risk. We are far from using any genetic risk score in the clinic, but this is the first step to quantifying biological risk for suicide in an individual."

Although stress, loneliness, financial strains, childhood trauma, and other environmental issues can contribute to death by suicide, scientists have long thought that other factors are involved. "When I tell people that suicide risk is estimated to be 45 to 55 percent genetic, they look very surprised," says Douglas Gray, professor of child psychiatry and co-author of the study.

To get a comprehensive picture of the genes potentially involved in suicide, Docherty and colleagues used computer technology to analyze millions of DNA variants in 3,413 samples. This is the largest suicide death sample in the world, a major improvement on previous genetic studies. However, the researchers stress that genetics is just one of many factors that can contribute to death by suicide.

Elite Level

The U ties Harvard with consecutive Churchill Scholars



Students at the U are on a roll. For each of the last five years, one undergrad has been chosen to receive a coveted spot as a

Churchill Scholar at the University of Cambridge in England. This year, Isaac Martin, a senior honors student majoring in mathematics and physics, brings the U's consecutive total to six—tying Harvard's streak set from 1987-1992.

The U's record is second only to Princeton's seven-year streak from 1994-2000. For 2021-22, Martin is one of just 17 students nationally to receive the award. "I would not be where I am today without the incredible faculty at Utah and their willingness to devote time to undergraduates," Martin says.

The back-to-back run of Churchill Scholars at the U demonstrates the exceptional undergraduate research and mentorship experiences available. While at the U, Martin, a recipient of an Eccles Scholarship and a 2020 Barry Goldwater Scholarship, worked with professors to study F-singularities and developed this work into a single-author paper.

"That sensation of understanding, the feeling that some tiny secret of the universe was suddenly laid bare before me—that's something I've only felt while studying math and physics, and it's a high I will continue to chase for the rest of my life," Martin says.

The Churchill Scholarship, established in 1963 at the request of Winston Churchill, provides undergraduates in STEM fields a one-year master's program at Cambridge. Students go through a rigorous endorsement process in order to apply, but only after their home institution has been vetted with the Churchill Foundation. The U was added to the foundation in 2014.



PICTURE

Friends, teammates, coaches, and family gathered inside AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas, to honor U-freshman running back Ty Jordan, who died last December. During the celebration of life, Jordan was remembered as a superstar on and off the field. "The simplest thing I can say is that I love Ty. I am going to miss him," said Coach Kyle Whittingham. A scholarship has been established in Jordan's honor.

Pollution, Inside Out

Just when you thought you could head indoors to be safe from the air pollution that periodically plagues the Salt Lake Valley, new research shows that elevated air pollution events, like horror movie villains, claw their way into indoor spaces.

In a long-term study in a Salt Lake-area building, researchers found that the amount of air pollution that comes indoors depends on the type of outdoor pollution. Wildfires, fireworks, and wintertime inversions all affect indoor air to different degrees, says study co-author Daniel Mendoza, a research assistant professor of atmospheric sciences.

"We all know about the inversions," Mendoza says. "We all know how large of a problem wildfires are. But do we really know what happens when we're inside?"

During a wintertime inversion event, the pollution levels inside were about 30 percent of what they were outside. And in late August 2018, when three active wildfires were burning in California, indoor air pollution rose to about 78 percent of outside pollution levels. "For nearly 48 hours," the researchers wrote, "indoor air quality reached levels considered problematic for health-compromised populations and nearly reached levels considered unsafe for all populations."

The smoke from fireworks is somewhere between inversion pollution and



wildfires. It contains primary smoke particles as well as the gases that can combine to produce secondary particulates, which can come from the chemicals used to produce fireworks' bright colors. On the night of July 4, 2018, air quality sharply deteriorated once fireworks shows began and stayed in the red range, with spikes into the purple "very unhealthy" range, for about three hours. Indoor air quality reached orange levels, registering about 30 percent of the outdoor air pollution.

Even indoor air can spike into the unhealthy range as a result of fireworks, wildfires, and inversions.

Number

We Want to Hear from You!

Ten minutes. That's all we ask from you to fill out a short survey about the *University of Utah Magazine*. In 2018, we embarked on a journey to rename, redesign, and reimagine this publication—and we're eager to learn what you think. The few minutes to share your thoughts could also have a big impact on not just this magazine, but on how the U shares information with our community. Visit magazine.utah.edu/survey to give us your feedback. And besides helping us improve *Utah Magazine*, there's something in it for you, too! Enter your email at the end for a chance to win a \$50 gift card to the U's Red Zone.





THE STICKING POINT



What
the
history
of
vaccines
can
tell
us
about
the
COVID
crisis.



By Riley Black
Illustrations
by Doug Chayka

about three milliliters of liquid and a syringe. That's all there seemingly is to the COVID-19 vaccines. But the years of scientific development and centuries of research that helped scientists arrive at this moment tell a much broader story. From the time a worldwide outbreak of the novel coronavirus was recognized in early 2020, scientists and medical experts have worked urgently to create vaccines capable of slowing and stopping the virus' spread. And the fact that not just one but several COVID-19 vaccines have been invented and distributed is an immense feat—a testament to human cooperation.

"One of the reasons we have so many vaccines in the U.S. is that the government subsidized the different companies and vaccine platforms to maximize the likelihood of success," says Sankar Swaminathan, an infectious disease physician at the U. "Medical corporations, doctors, federal and state governments, and more all came together to create safe and effective immunizations."

The total number of lives saved by vaccines is incalculable and spans generations. We no longer have to fear being crippled by polio. We can safeguard ourselves against tetanus. Every fall, flu shots help us stave off winter sickness. Measles, mumps, and chicken pox don't have to

be a regular part of childhood. Vaccination has either virtually eradicated these diseases or provided protection against them, turning ailments of decades past into memories.

Now COVID-19 is our newest opponent. But even in this moment, with so much hanging on the promise of remarkable scientific discovery, misunderstandings and misinformation about vaccines can run as rampant as any virus. For some, whether to get vaccinated at all is a hot-button issue. According to a Pew Research Center survey in late 2020, about 40 percent of Americans said they probably or definitely wouldn't get a coronavirus vaccine if made available to them. Overturning that fear and mistrust is a tall order, but there is a way to do so, says Nadja Durbach, a U professor of history who wrote the book on vaccines—literally. It's called *Bodily Matters*, and it describes how vaccines were developed and the anti-vaccination movement that followed.

Part of what makes vaccines so potent is the way our bodies naturally cope with disease. "Cultures all over the planet have independently come to realize how

set the stage for the emergence of uncountable amounts of life-saving medicine."

OFF THE BOVINE

Do you know what the word "vaccine" means? Even before the pandemic, parents had to consider vaccinations for their children, and anyone looking to travel abroad was often recommended MMR, flu, and tetanus shots. But the etymology of the word doesn't have anything to do with needles. Vaccine has its root in the Latin word *vacca*—"cow."

We pay homage to cows every time we get an inoculation thanks to English physician Edward Jenner. "During his time, no one really knew what viruses were. Jenner was working decades before the germ theory of disease—that microorganisms, or germs, cause illness—became understood and accepted," says Durbach. Doctors could see that people got sick, and they developed treatments for those ailments, but the basic mechanics of what diseases truly are and how they spread was unknown.

"This was an era during which terrible diseases like cholera and even the Black

"A particular scientific experiment in rural 18th-century England set the stage for the emergence of uncountable amounts of life-saving medicine."

exposure to a mild or similar illness can shield us from deadlier ones," says Durbach. "And a particular scientific experiment in rural 18th-century England

Death were thought to have been caused by miasmas or 'bad air' that came from the rot and decay of organic matter," notes Durbach.



This doesn't mean that doctors were totally in the dark. During his rounds, Jenner heard that dairymaids who caught cowpox didn't catch smallpox, which caused a terrible fever, rashes, and a steep death toll. With that in mind, Jenner set about an experiment. What if exposure to one less-lethal illness could make you resistant to a similar, deadlier disease? To find out, in 1796 Jenner scraped matter from the cowpox lesions of dairymaid Sarah Nelms and inoculated 8-year-old James Phipps.

"This wasn't like vaccination today," says Durbach. Inoculation involved taking matter from a diseased person and creating a small cut or wound on an uninfected person's arm or leg to introduce the disease-carrying tissue

wouldn't allow anything like Jenner's casual experiment today, says Durbach, and we get injections by needle instead of being cut with lancets. But the underlying, basic science is still the same.

By introducing a small amount of dead virus or the prompt for creating proper antibodies into ourselves, our immune systems are stimulated to respond. A vaccine doesn't cause the disease but creates an immune response in which antibodies and cells specific to that disease are created—a kind of bodily memory so that if we come into contact with the virus, we already have antibodies specific to the pathogen, says Swaminathan. Some vaccines will prevent you from getting sick if you come into contact with the virus but might not completely stop the spread of the virus to other people. The COVID-19, rotavirus, whooping cough, and other vaccines may not provide sterilizing immunity—meaning viruses or bacteria may still replicate inside your body—but the immunizations can reduce transmission, he says.

Essentially, vaccines are a human-made way to help what our bodies naturally do when they encounter diseases. Vaccines only work because our bodies already have the ability to "remember" particular viruses and mount a specific response. In the case of the new COVID-19 vaccines, Swaminathan says, "They do have different mechanisms, but ultimately they all present the body with spike protein, eliciting an immune response."

A MATTER OF TRUST

After Jenner described his experiments in 1798, other doctors began to try his methods of inoculation against smallpox. The method worked. Within a few years, vaccination was becoming more popular in England and other European countries. Finally, there was a way to fight against the scourge of smallpox that had killed so many.

But the professionalization and spread of vaccination wasn't always welcomed by the public. Smallpox vaccination became compulsory in 19th-century England. Social class impacted how

people complied with state-mandated vaccination. "The rich could buy themselves out of vaccinations or afford doctors who inoculated patients with small incisions," says Durbach. Poorer classes, however, were often required to be vaccinated by government doctors who made multiple cuts in babies' arms, evoking claims of mutilation. Mistrust built, with many people feeling like they were being forced to endure a torturous procedure in the name of "public health."

"The resistance to vaccination originally was twofold," she says. In treating smallpox, people were wary of putting cowpox scrapings—an animal product—into their bodies. The second concern was government mandates. Some felt that the government was telling them that they had to endure a risky procedure, while the more affluent could get access to better treatment or avoid it if they wished. "The original anti-vaccination movement was highly political," centering on a distrust of both the science and the government, says Durbach.

INOCULATING AGAINST FEAR

Similar concerns exist in some communities today, says cancer researcher Deanna Kepka, an associate professor of nursing. Her area of expertise is the human papillomavirus, or HPV, a very common sexually transmitted infection that can lead to different cancers. The disease can be prevented by a vaccine, but, as with others, there's some resistance to vaccination.

"I think there's anxiety around what we put into our bodies," Kepka says. To someone who might not have heard of HPV or who is unaware of how vaccines work, she notes, "understanding which invisible substances can cause our bodies harm and which are protective is complicated."

And misinformation about vaccines in general has run rampant in the past, confusing the issue. For example, a debunked 1998 study falsely suggested vaccines can cause autism. These discredited findings have led to outbreaks of whooping cough and measles, despite these diseases having previously been largely under control.

"Vaccines can help us save countless lives. We just have to choose to let them."

into. That's what Jenner did in his experiment. Two months later, after Phipps recovered, Jenner injected the child with smallpox—and the boy did not get sick. In honor of the cow's contribution to medical history, the word vaccine was born.

People have been trying different methods of inoculation for centuries. In the 1600s, Chinese Emperor K'ang Hsi had his children inoculated against the same disease by having smallpox scabs ground up and blown into the children's nostrils. Doctors in Ethiopia, India, Turkey, and elsewhere developed their own methods of inoculation, as well, which inspired western doctors.

Methods have changed quite a bit since even Jenner's time. Medical ethics boards

VACCINES'

GREATEST

HITS

"The science is abundantly clear, and vaccines are both safe and life-saving," Kepka says. But this issue isn't about science alone. Facets of race, class, and even political affiliation can affect how people respond to being vaccinated. In a 2018 experimental study of 2,500 people to see how hypothetical case counts of a disease in their community would affect their willingness to be vaccinated, Juliet Carlisle, associate professor of political science, and her colleagues found that people with conservative political views were more likely to shun vaccination than others on different parts of the political spectrum.

That isn't to say that everyone opposed to or unsure about vaccinations fits into one category—racially, politically, or otherwise. And there are fears built off injustices practiced against underrepresented communities, says Durbach. For example, in the Tuskegee syphilis study, hundreds of African American men were denied treatment and deliberately misled so doctors working with the U.S. Public Health Service could study the natural course of syphilis in the Black population.

"While many are mistrustful of government, in our other related work we've found that trust in primary care physicians is very high," Carlisle says. "There's an opportunity there for people to have conversations with their doctors and put any doubts to rest. Family doctors can play a big role in positively impacting vaccination rates."

Even what a virus makes us think of by association can complicate matters. "HPV is complicated because of the relationship to sexual behavior," Kepka says, as there can be a sense that vaccinations will encourage young people to take more risks and be more sexually active. Even though this isn't the case, and the vaccine truly is protective, the urge to protect children and maintain their innocence leads some to distrust and/or avoid the medicine.

The rollout of the COVID-19 vaccines is another case in point. Current mistrust can have more to do with unequal access to medical care in underserved communities than the vaccine itself, Kepka says. This makes it all the more

important to not only educate but to work closely with community partners and advocates. "We need alliances with community health workers centered around persistence, patience, consistency, and not being negative or critical," Kepka says. "Talking with community members is key to building trust and understanding barriers."

People might be wary of vaccination for an entire host of reasons. To overcome that, Durbach says, "We should focus on why people feel targeted or disenfranchised or frightened and think about the ways in which class and race shape people's experience of their bodies and the government."

Part of what will build trust is the success of the vaccines themselves, says U infectious disease specialist Andy Pavia. In the case of COVID-19, virus cases in Utah and around the country are falling as the vaccines reach people. "I've been really pleased that the FDA has done a spectacular job of being transparent, of waiting until the data were pretty complete before reviewing it. And to make sure that outside experts had a voice, people who had no commercial ties, no political ties whatsoever," Pavia says. "Hundreds of vaccine experts have been poring over these data and coming to the same conclusion—that the vaccines work and that they're safe."

"Pause for a moment to consider how remarkable that is—that after one year, effective and safe vaccines are going out to people all over the world," Pavia adds. Getting a vaccination isn't just a wonder of medical research encapsulated in a shot. All the research and testing that goes into each vaccine has another half—your own body.

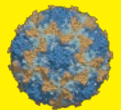
Vaccines are not a standalone fix but a prompt that brings our bodies into action to defend ourselves against disease. "Vaccines are a form of preparation, of safeguarding the people we care about by safeguarding our own bodies," Pavia says. "Vaccines can help us save countless lives. We just have to choose to let them."

Riley Black is a Salt Lake City-based freelance writer.

From just 1995 to 2015, the CDC estimates that vaccines prevented some 750,000 deaths and 322 million illnesses, saving more than \$1.38 trillion in health care costs. And according to a study from UNICEF, vaccines prevent the deaths of 3 million children worldwide each year. These are only a few of many diseases that have been kept in check, or virtually eradicated, thanks to vaccines.

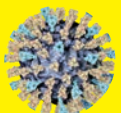
POLIO

Jonas Salk famously invented the first polio vaccine in 1955. In severe cases, polio can cause paralysis; it's what put former U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt in a wheelchair. The disease is 99% eradicated worldwide, and the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that more than 16 million people have been saved from paralysis because of the vaccine. The U.S. has been polio free since 1979.



MEASLES

Fever, a runny nose, and a blotchy red rash are common signs of this highly communicable virus. Prior to the vaccine, 3 million kids a year would contract the disease. The WHO estimates that between just 2000 and 2015, more than 20 million deaths were prevented thanks to vaccination. Yet about 400 children per day still die from the disease as the goal toward eradicating measles has slowed since 2010, due in part to vaccination reticence.



WHOOPING COUGH

Whooping cough gets its common name from the sharp intake of breath after long, painful coughing bouts that can make it very difficult to breathe. That's what makes whooping cough, aka pertussis, so deadly for infants and small children. But mothers can get vaccinated and pass the immunity on to their children. Cases have dropped dramatically in the U.S. thanks to the vaccine, bringing the number of annual cases down from 200,000 to fewer than 50,000.



THE MORE WE REPRESENT THE WORLD, THE MORE WE MOVE HEALTH CARE FORWARD.

University of Utah Health believes society thrives when we give those who have been historically excluded the opportunity to succeed and live a healthy life.

Here, it begins by ending racism and bias in our workplaces—because health care performs at its best when equity, diversity, and an inclusive employee community become an essential part of our mission.

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We're reimagining our hiring programs to build pipelines for people of color to establish careers with us.

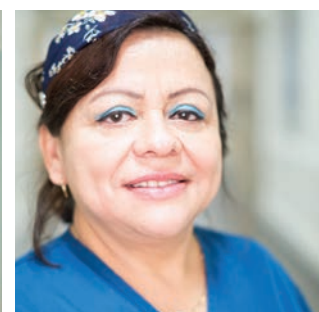
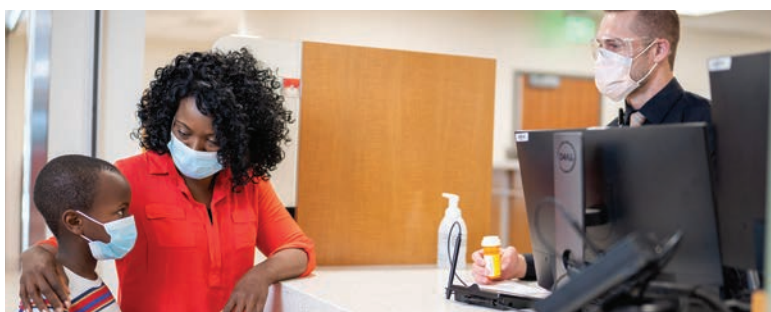
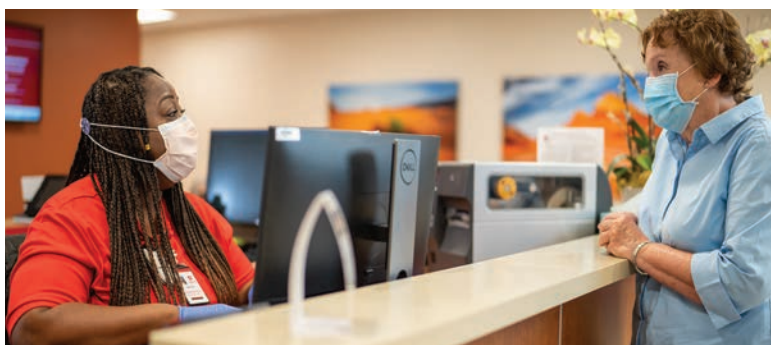
We're keeping dollars in our community to create jobs and help rebuild oppressed economies.

And we're listening to colleagues and patients of color to learn from their experiences.

At U of U Health, we're committed to being advocates and partners in the change we all want to see in the world.

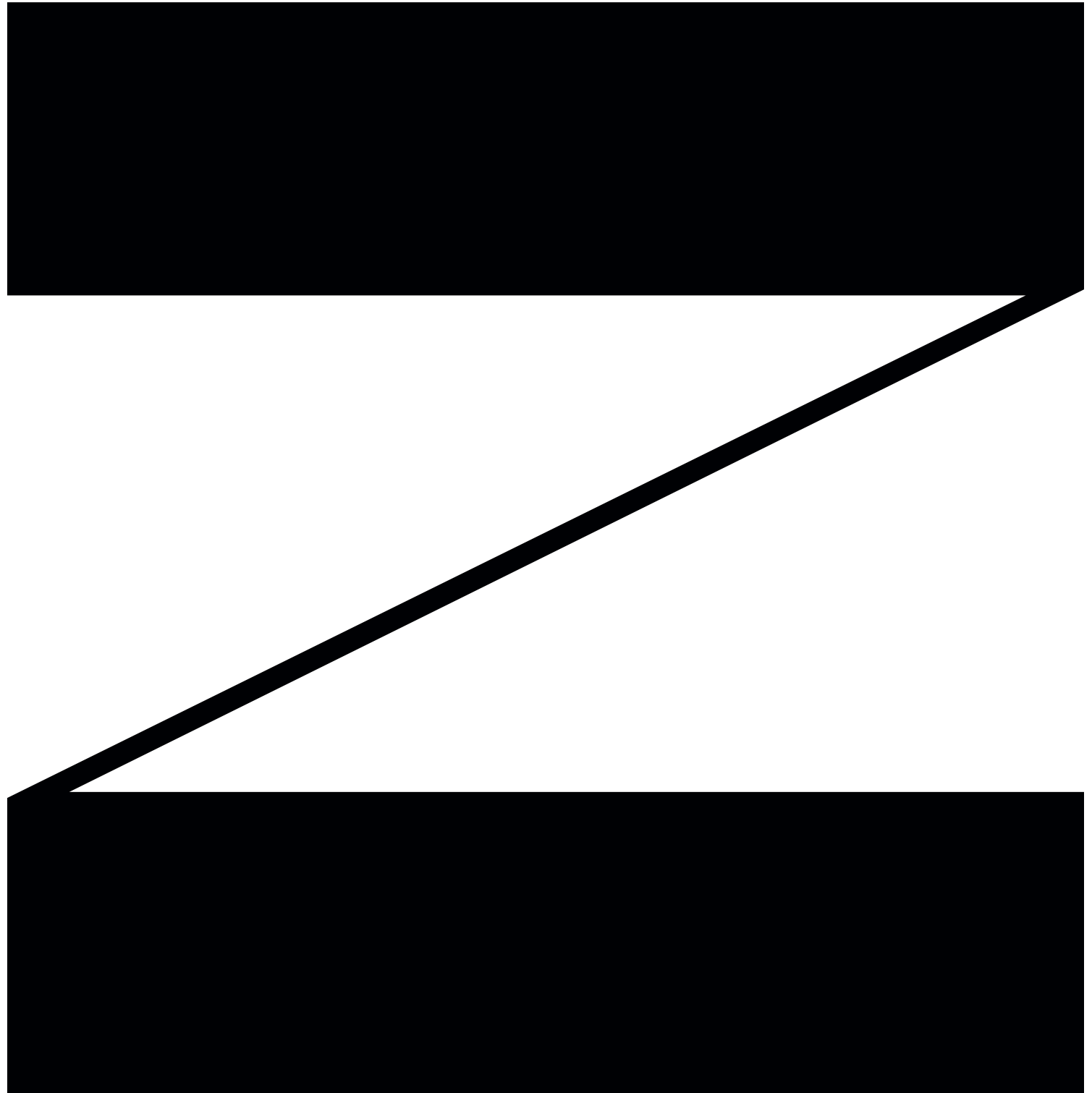
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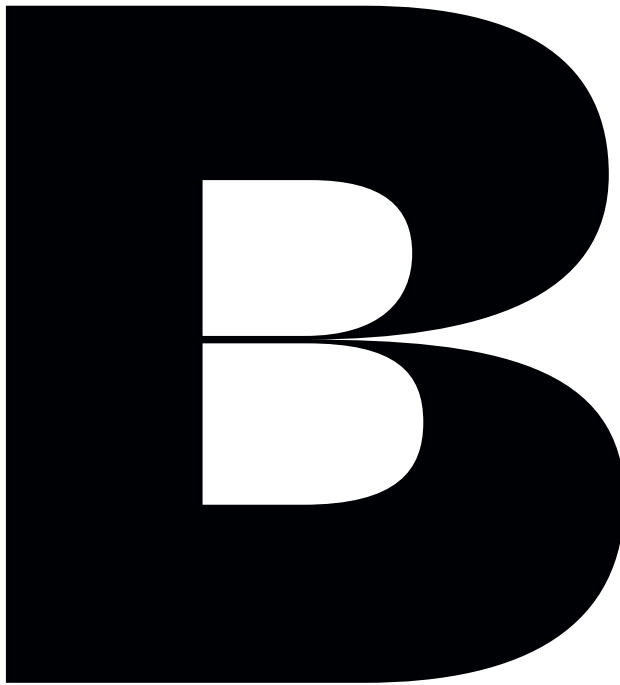




Unpacking Generation



A more educated, diverse, and socially conscious generation is coming of age.
Are we ready? **By Amy Choate-Nielsen** Illustrations by **Simone Noronha**



y the time Greta Thunberg, age 16, sat on the stage of the opening session of the 2019 UN Climate Action Summit, she was years into her crusade to help the environment. She had already organized school strikes, addressed European parliaments, and given a TED talk. She was ready with an answer when the convention's moderator asked her, "What's your message to world leaders today?"

"My message is that we'll be watching you," the teen from Sweden said with a sharpness in her eyes and a seriousness in her voice that silenced the room. And with 10.6 million followers on Instagram, the world is watching her, too.

Thunberg is part of the rising generation who came into this world with smartphones, the World Wide Web, and light-years of technological advancement at their fingertips. Generation Z—also known as Gen Z, iGen, or zoomers—ushered in the first era of "digital natives," and as a technically savvy, tuned-in populace, they find themselves in a unique position to be influencers, even at young ages.

More ethnically diverse and on track to be more educated than many of their predecessors, their influence is felt both commercially and politically on social media, as corporations have adapted specific strategies to reach them, and whole movements have formed and fallen around something as simple as a tweet. But Gen Z's digital presence appears to be both a blessing and a curse. They may be poised to influence the world, but with rising suicide rates and mental health challenges, their power comes at a price.

This generation could be better equipped to effectively solve some societal problems, but as Thunberg said in her remarks to the leaders gathered at the United Nations, they shouldn't have to. "This is all wrong," Thunberg said. "You all come to us young people for hope. How dare you?"

Who Are We? In a sorority house at the U, sophomore Reede Nasser is using social media for a different reason. She's vice president of marketing for the Panhellenic Council, and today, she's taking over the U's Instagram stories, letting followers know how they can get involved.

"I joined the Greek community because I wanted to find a group of people that would have my back every day all day," Nasser says from her bedroom, with white paper butterflies hanging on the wall. She has a ring on every finger, half-inch-long acrylic nails, gold-rimmed glasses, and a fuzzy, buttoned, cropped sweater. As a Gen Zer, Nasser is part of what some have called "the loneliest generation," but she smiles as she talks to the camera.

Gen Z babies were born between about 1996 and 2010, as email and the Internet became household tools. They have some similar tastes to the generations that came before them—for example, Gen Z shares Millennials' appreciation for the colors blush pink, peach, and mint—but their love of brightness has led to a proliferation of "Gen Z yellow," which can be seen everywhere from clothing to carpet.

This generation is on track to be more educated than previous birth cohorts at comparable ages. In 2018, 57 percent of Gen Zers were enrolled in college, compared to 43 percent of Gen Xers in 1987. Having the Internet and smart devices has conditioned Gen Zers to thrive on information and technology and sort through messages quickly. With an attention span of eight seconds, Gen Z is a demanding audience.

But there is a darker side to Gen Z. While every generation is defined and shaped by major events—World War II, the Great Depression, and 9/11, to name a few—Gen Z is facing its share of global challenges and an internal crisis as well. Suicide rates are at an all-time high among people age 10-24, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

They are setting themselves up to be the changemakers that the world needs.

With an increase rate of 56 percent from 2007 to 2017, suicide has become the second-leading cause of death for this generation, after unintentional injuries.

"In the last five years, the indicators for depression, self-harm, and suicide have continued to increase," says Jean Twenge, professor of psychology at San Diego State University and author of *iGen: Why Today's Super-Connected Kids are Growing up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy—and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood—and What that Means for the Rest of Us*. "Teen depression keeps

reaching all-time highs in the data every single year. The latest data available shows that those trends, unfortunately, have only grown worse.”

What Do We Want? When Reyes Aguilar JD’92, associate dean of admissions in the U’s S.J. Quinney College of Law, started his job 30 years ago, everything he did was on paper. The most thrilling technology he used was voicemail. Now, as the college has shifted its marketing approach to connecting with students digitally, voicemail seems like the only thing he gets when he makes a call. Even if times are changing, and students get acceptance texts or emails now instead of letters, there are some things Aguilar insists should stay the same. “I try to call everybody with our admissions decision before the email is sent,” he says.

Many companies have adjusted their marketing strategy to reach Gen Z, which has helped some and hurt others. For undergraduate recruiting on campus, the U has begun to supplement its traditional brochures and mailers with digital marketing, outreach on social media, and targeted advertising with messages that resonate better with Gen Z. Applications to the U rose to record numbers in 2021. At the College of Law, applications are up 43 percent so far this year, compared to 2020.

“Gen Z wants transparency. They want engagement, ‘Give me the facts, give me the truth, pull back the curtain and show me you’re being real,’ ” says Brian Rasmussen BA’80, marketing director at the U.

Companies who successfully connect with Gen Z benefit from the loyalty of a generation that has a spending power of \$140 billion. In fact, 68 percent of respondents to the Edelman Trust Barometer survey in 2021 agreed that consumers have the power to force corporations to change, and 86 percent said they expect CEOs to publicly speak out about societal challenges.

“Neutral is a bad stance,” says Jeff Fromm, author of *Marketing to Gen Z* and partner at Barkley, a national marketing and advertising firm. “The highest-performing brands have a heavy dose of empathy.” When marketing efforts fall flat or companies stay silent, Gen Z can use their own social media platforms to respond, and sometimes, demand action.

“Gen Z has had the foundation laid for them to embrace who and what they are,” says Emily Lyman HBS’07, founder and CEO of Branch and Bramble, a digital marketing agency based in Brooklyn, New York. “They are unapologetically saying, ‘This is what we want, and we’re not going to support you unless you give it to us.’ ”

As Gen Z responds to brands that demonstrate authenticity, Aguilar’s unwillingness to let go of his sincere, old-fashioned approach may just be a blessing in disguise. “When I first started doing this, 90 percent of the time the person I called would answer the phone and they’d be caught off guard,” Aguilar says. “It was very touching: some people would cry, some would excitedly scream at their partner, ‘You won’t believe this!’ Now it’s actually pretty rare that someone picks up, so I leave a voicemail.”

When Do We Want It? Austin Hendrickson BS’20 gets 20-30 breaking news alerts on his phone a day, and it’s exhausting. Breaking news is never good, he says. It’s just negative, and everywhere. Even though the constant barrage is overwhelming, he can’t unplug. “It makes me feel like a terrible person,” he says. “If I don’t know what’s going

10 Tips for the Rest of Us

Some 61 million Gen Zers are set to enter the workforce, and they account for nearly one-third of our country’s population. While these digital natives are more diverse, educated, and socially conscious than previous generations, they also face issues such as a shockingly high suicide rate and a host of mental health concerns.

“More young people are experiencing not just symptoms of depression, and not just feelings of anxiety, but clinically diagnosable major depression,” Twenge writes in her book. “The sudden, sharp rise in depressive symptoms occurred at almost exactly the same time that smartphones became ubiquitous and in-person interaction plummeted.” Working with and raising a new generation is no easy feat—here are some strategies to keep in mind.

HOW TO RAISE THEM

- 1 Ban devices (phones, tablets, laptops) in the bedroom after lights out.
- 2 Encourage and help your kids plan in-person activities and interactions.
- 3 Sneak in meaningful time with your kids with short activities like going for a walk or a drive to the store.
- 4 Even brief touches like a half embrace or fist bump can alleviate anxiety and create bonds. Give ‘em a hug.
- 5 If kids have phones, use parental controls and monitor for inappropriate content and cyberbullying on a regular basis.

HOW TO WORK WITH THEM

- 6 Don’t be surprised if your employees ask difficult questions about societal issues.
- 7 You can’t just focus on the customer. You also have to focus on other issues affecting your customers like environmental needs, social justice, and community issues.
- 8 Regularly check in. Even more used to instant reaction than previous generations, Gen Zers may thrive with more frequent and immediate feedback.
- 9 Create and then spotlight your equity and inclusion efforts.
- 10 Expect Gen Z employees to know more about the inner workings of your company—including typical salaries, work culture, etc.—than others, thanks to their digital skills.

Shaping the Zeitgeist

Most generations have defining events that monumentally shift how people view the world around them. Here are some from the last century.

Silent Generation

1925

Great Depression
Dust Bowl
WWII
McCarthyism
“Talkies”

Baby Boomers

1949

Vietnam
Woodstock
Civil Rights Movement
Kennedy Assassination
Space Exploration

Generation X

1965

Fall of Berlin Wall
Challenger Disaster
AIDS
MTV
Desert Storm

Millennials

1979

9/11
Columbine
Google
Social Media
Y2K

Generation Z

1996

COVID-19
Sandy Hook
Marriage Equality
First Black President
Rise of Populism

on in the world, then I can’t be doing what I can to make it better, even if that’s nothing more than knowing.”

At age 22, Hendrickson is on the older end of Gen Z. He’s enrolled in the Harvard Graduate School of Education, attending remotely during the pandemic. He works for the U’s Sorenson Impact Center, gathering input from students around the country about their higher education experiences and sharing it with higher-ed decision makers.

Since grappling with his identity as a gay man started him on a learning journey about social inequality, Hendrickson has spent a considerable amount of time seeking to understand the experiences of marginalized groups, and he feels a responsibility to take action against systems that perpetuate discrimination. Like Thunberg, his connection to knowledge and many opportunities to act on the issues that are important to him come from technology.

According to a study issued by Gen Z think tank Irregular Labs, 73 percent of respondents age 15-24 in 2018 said being politically active or socially engaged is important to their identity, and part of being a good citizen. They aren’t the first generation to protest and demand change, but they also aren’t stopping with the progress of their progenitors.

“Gen Zers as a whole face an uncertain future,” says digital marketer Lyman. “With COVID and the political landscape changing drastically recently, they are now in a less certain world and time. But they are very politically active and will likely be changing policy in the not-so-distant future.”

Teen depression keeps reaching all-time highs in the data every single year.

They are also setting themselves up to be the changemakers that the world needs, and I think that is something that needs to be celebrated.”

For Hendrickson, seeing fellow Gen Zers like Thunberg fight for what they believe in is empowering. It’s enough to keep the news alerts coming, with hope for the future. “Not all responses to this generation’s progressivism have been positive,” he says. “The knowledge that Gen Z has already accomplished powerful and important things despite the condescension of critics, however, is a constant force of inspiration for me in striving to do the same.”

Amy Choate-Nielsen is associate editor of Utah Magazine.



Web Extra Visit magazine.utah.edu/genz for a list of mental health resources from the U and beyond.





Activating the Hope Corps

A pandemic-born project pairs students in need of job experience with local businesses, nonprofits.

BY BENJAMIN GLEISSER

PHOTOGRAPHY BY HEATHER NAN

ERIN CUTSHALL NEEDED help. She had just bought the Koelle Institute for Equus Coaching, a life-skills coaching company, and was set to publicize her services. But the COVID-19 pandemic punched a big dent in her business, which as the name implies incorporates horses with life coaching.

Talking with clients in the presence of a horse “helps to get people out of their comfort zone and opening up about personal issues,” says Cutshall BS’96. The company’s success depends on in-person contact, and some potential clients were leery about face-to-face sessions, even though they are conducted outdoors and in line with physical distancing guidelines.

An email from the Utah Small Business Development Center put Cutshall back in the saddle. The missive included an announcement about Hope Corps, a new program run through the U offering

help to small businesses and nonprofits struggling through the pandemic in the form of summer virtual internships from college students.

Through the Hope Corps, marketing major and major horse lover Claire Hurty came to Equus’ rescue. Hurty learned about the program through a social media post from the David Eccles School of Business and jumped at the chance to begin using the skills she’d learned in her classes.

“With the pandemic, I knew I wouldn’t have a ton of opportunities to begin working in the real world, and I wanted to help a small business affected by COVID-19,” she says. Working with horses—albeit virtually—appealed to the former summer camp counselor. “Equus Coaching seemed like a cool job.”

Cutshall had more than 11 years of experience as a life skills coach, but when it came to developing a marketing plan, she needed a lifeline. “Claire and I started brainstorming ideas about how to use various platforms to market myself,” Cutshall says. “I wanted to create a brand and told her, ‘I really want to make videos, but I don’t know how consumers would use and view them.’ Claire came back with the answers.”

Hurty helped develop a social media strategy for Equus Coaching, including a total reorganization of its website. For example, every Monday, the site posts pictures of a different horse; Wednesdays, it features a bio of one of the company’s coaches; and on Fridays, it shares a session or a course offering.

The Hope Corps internship was a great learning experience, Hurty says. “It gave me a greater understanding of what I’d be doing if I had a job in marketing. I learned a lot about leadership and working independently. And I really felt good helping someone improve their business.”

Hurty says that doing all her work virtually was not a problem. “For sure, I definitely missed in-person contact, but we were able to work around that.”

Creating Hope

As the saying goes, hope is often born from adversity. This was the case in March 2020, when Clark Ivory BA’88, chief executive officer of Ivory Homes and founder of the Clark and Christine Ivory Foundation, reached out to Taylor Randall HBA’90, dean of the David Eccles School of Business. The two were concerned about how COVID-19 lockdowns were affecting students and harming small businesses and nonprofit organizations.

“We were in the eye of the storm of the pandemic and talked about how we could help Utah weather the storm,” Ivory remembers. “I said, ‘What we need is our own version of the Peace Corps.’ We needed to take our students who are suffering and give them the opportunity to contribute to the community at a time when they’re most needed.”

Sixty years ago, President John F. Kennedy organized the Peace Corps to empower students by having them serve in developing areas and spread goodwill around the world. Since its inception, more than 235,000 Americans have volunteered in 141 countries.

Hope Corps went on to become an extension of the Utah Health & Economic Recovery Outreach (HERO) Project, whose goal was to keep people informed about COVID-19 and help in the state’s fiscal recovery.

To fund Hope Corps Ivory and Randall reached out to groups including the Boyer Company, Utah Community Builders, and Latter-day Saint Charities. In the meantime, information about the project was disseminated on social media platforms, and interested students began applying. The program is shepherded by the U’s Eccles School and the Salt Lake City Chamber of Commerce and has now expanded to eight other colleges and universities around the state.

In summer 2020, some 220 students were enrolled in the program, and most participants were paid hourly for their work, says Morgan Lyon Cotti BA’01, associate director of the Hinckley Institute

Student Claire Hurty (left) helped business owner Erin Cutshall with marketing when the pandemic struck. The horse in the middle is Elton.

of Politics. Another 110 students secured internships in fall 2020 and spring 2021 and received scholarships between \$2,000 and \$3,000. So far, dozens of organizations have been helped.

“Our business and university leaders were concerned that small businesses—especially businesses owned by people from underrepresented groups in our community—were falling through the cracks and needed assistance to help them through the economic crisis,” Lyon Cotti says. “For our students, the goal was to provide them with transformative internships where they would learn to build networks and gain leadership skills.”

The internships took place via Zoom, which at first gave some businesses pause. “We told potential employers that if they needed support setting things up, we were there to step in and help,” says Katie Abby, assistant dean of business career services and corporate outreach at the Eccles School.

One of Hope Corps’ success stories is the company Brownies, Brownies, Brownies, a Salt Lake City bakery with a knack for making every kind of the goodie you can imagine. The business faltered with the onset of pandemic restrictions, but a Hope Corps intern found a way to keep the baked goods seller afloat. “The intern helped the company remain viable through the pandemic by talking to bakeries, setting up curbside pickup, arranging distribution to brick-and-mortar stores, and coordinating sales to coffee shops,” Abby says. “It’s just so rewarding to see students find a job and get started on their careers.”

Ivory echoes that sentiment. “We feel gratified to support businesses and give students the opportunity to gain real-life experience by helping businesses get through this time of crisis. And who knows? Maybe they’ll draw on this experience when, years from now, they’re running their own businesses.”

“We hope to continue the program,” adds Lyon Cotti. “The future focus of the Hope Corps will really emphasize assisting businesses and nonprofits that are operated by or serve underrepresented populations.”

Community Involvement

The student interns haven’t just helped small businesses; they’ve also logged countless hours for nonprofits and impacted the community in big ways.

Case in point: Shayma Salih BS’20, a psychology major who worked at the Utah Muslim Civic League and helped organize community outreach programs.

“The Muslim Civic League is a really special cause to me,” Salih says. “The Muslim population here is underserved, and many in the community don’t know how to access their services. We helped several small Muslim-owned businesses in the area that were affected by the pandemic secure loans to stay afloat. We cherish these businesses, and helping them was amazing.”

In addition to videoconferencing with small business owners, Salih played a key role in energizing several impactful civic engagement projects, such as initiating a voter registration campaign and helping to open the first polling place in a Salt Lake City-area mosque, at the Khadeeja Islamic Center.

Another project involved reaching out to people to make sure they understood and filled out census forms.

“Many local Muslims have been American citizens for 10 or more years, yet they had never voted,” Salih says. And when it comes to government forms, “There’s a stigma among immigrants around filling out government forms. Many people in the refugee population are scared of them, because they think they’re here illegally, even though they are lawful citizens. We had to convince them that myth was not true.”

And as if that wasn’t enough, Salih created Project Rahma (“Project Peace”), a digital literacy class that also functions as a youth mentorship program. Salih’s stint with Hope Corps was a win-win—she made a positive impact in the community, and the work experience made a great impact in her life.

“The internship helped me find my passion for working with nonprofit agencies and how they impact underserved communities,” she says. “I learned a lot about leadership skills and what it takes to build a community. And now I’m using

those skills in my new job, as the community coordinator for University of Utah Health.”

Luna Banuri, executive director of the Utah Muslim Civic League, says Salih did “an amazing job. She was very good at penetrating different communities and spreading our message by encouraging people to get involved and be civically engaged.”

If there is a common theme within the ranks of Hope Corps’ student army, it’s that nothing beats knowing you’ve impacted people’s lives in a positive way. Ashmita Shanthakumar, an English and political science double major, found her time at the United Way of Salt Lake tutoring at-risk students online made her want to dedicate her career to working for nonprofits. “I saw how my work really made a difference,” she says. “One of the kids I worked with passed his math class after failing several times. That made me feel really good.”

Cutshall says Hurty was a terrific resource that helped keep her business afloat during tough times. “She was very professional, and I’d love to keep in touch with her,” she says. And when it was safe to do so, she adds, there was a horse named Elton (see photo) waiting to thank her with a gentle nuzzle.

Benjamin Gleisser is a Toronto-based freelance writer.

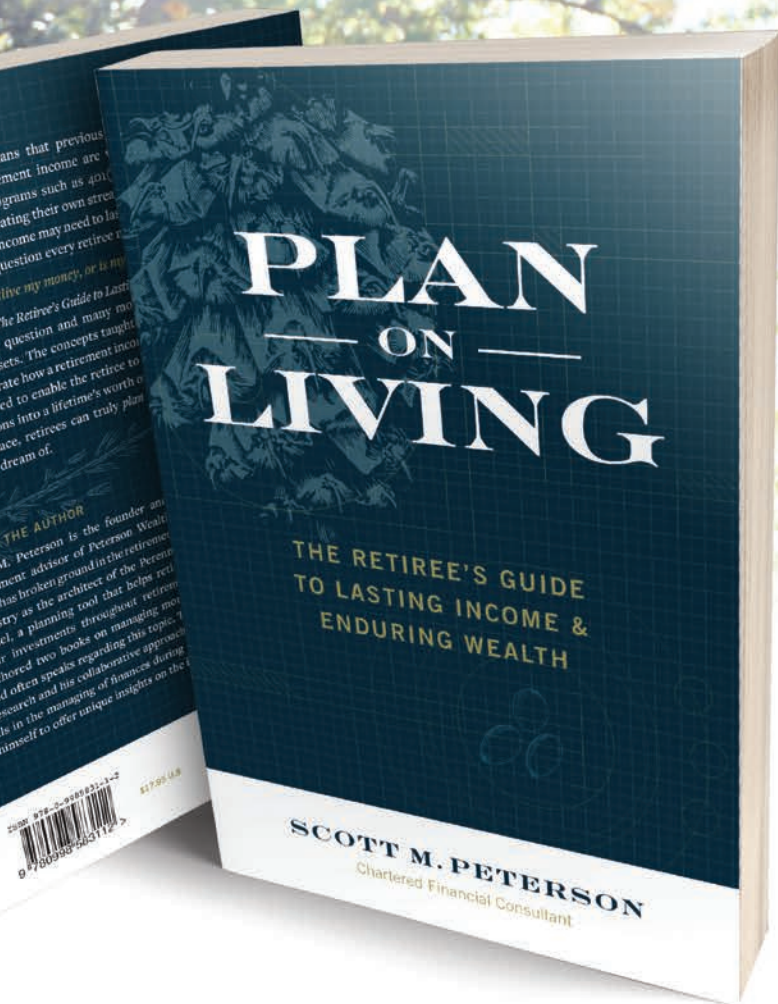
Shayma Salih (left) and Luna Banuri, Utah Muslim Civic League executive director, stand in front of a Salt Lake City mosque that received emergency loans thanks to help from the Hope Corps.

“I learned a lot about leadership and what it takes to build a community.”



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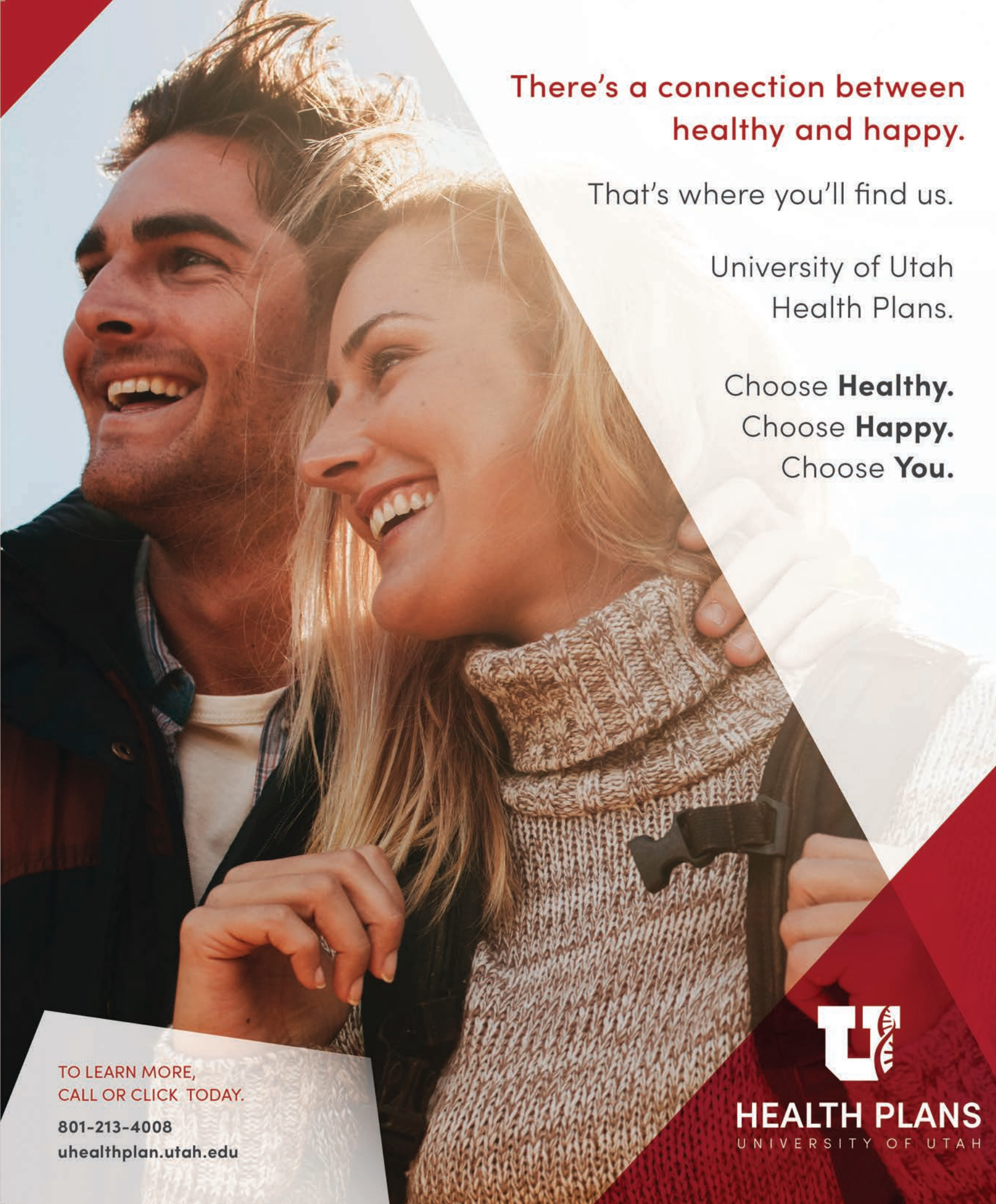
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A man and a woman are smiling and looking off to the side. The man is wearing a dark jacket over a plaid shirt, and the woman is wearing a brown knit turtleneck. They are both wearing winter gloves. The background is a bright, sunny outdoor setting.

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PHOTO BY KRISTAN JACOBSEN

Blazing Trails

Utah's first female Black state legislator brings community causes to Capitol Hill

Utah State Rep. Sandra Hollins MSW'09 is just an average person, trying to do right by her community. That's what the New Orleans native and U alum wants you to know.

But as the first Black woman to serve in the Utah State Legislature, Hollins—and her impact on the Beehive State—is anything but ordinary. Elected in 2015 as a Democratic member of Utah's House of Representatives, Hollins sponsored a

resolution in 2020 that removed slavery as punishment for a crime from the state constitution. The resolution, known as Amendment C, passed with an astounding 80 percent of the vote.

"I'm just so happy that it passed," says Hollins. "One of the things I'm very proud of is that both parties worked together to accomplish this."

Hollins didn't always have an eye on politics, but she has always had a desire to look after her neighbors. She grew up in a tight-knit, lower-income area with a strong support system.

"I grew up in poverty, but I always tell people that I didn't know I was in poverty until I had the opportunity to attend school outside of my community," Hollins says. "I had a really good childhood."

As her father worked at a local grocery store and her mother offered inexpensive day care services to working moms, Hollins saw that anyone can impact the world around them. She carried that insight with her when 30 years ago, her now-husband, David, asked her to come with him to Salt Lake City in pursuit of a job offer.

Moving to Utah was difficult for Hollins, who felt a lack of diversity in her new home. "I had problems finding just basic care products for Black hair," Hollins says. "I was thinking, I'm not going to be here too long." But as she began getting involved in the community, her feelings changed. She eventually got her master's in social work at the U with an emphasis in mental health and redoubled her efforts for community causes important to her, working in homeless shelters and substance abuse treatment programs.

Then she decided to run for office.

Now, as a member of the Abolish Slavery National Network, Hollins plans to build on the ground she gained and go after a similar provision in the 13th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. She's also working on legislation that would declare racism a public health crisis in Utah.

Trying to make a difference and better the lives of the people she serves is at the heart of what Hollins does, and she encourages others to make a difference, too. "Find out where you fit in, and then work it," she says. "Work to start making a change." ELENA GARDNER

BY THE NUMBERS

When times get tough, the tough get going... online. U Alumni—with help from campus and alumni partners—has taken many of its events virtual, and the response has been outstanding. A silver lining in these challenging times, the move to Zoom and YouTube has made it easier to connect with U community members from around the country, and even the world. Here are just a few highlights from some of the fantastic events held over the last year. Watch for more events at alumni.utah.edu and visit youtube.com/user/UofUAlumni/videos.

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MOST POPULAR EVENT TOPICS

1. equity, diversity, and inclusion 

 career development **2.**

3. arts & entertainment 

 athletics **4.**



Environmental Defender

Ryan Gellert JD'05 has rafted rivers in the European wilderness, scaled boulders in Mongolia, and bicycled through Amsterdam's tulip-lined streets, but Salt Lake City still holds a place in the Patagonia CEO's heart. Gellert grew to love the Beehive State and his alma mater while snowboarding, rock climbing, and

watching his son ride his balance bike all over campus. As the new head of the outdoor clothing company, appointed in September 2020, Gellert's personal and professional mission is to help save the planet, but the Florida native's path started simply by pursuing that which interested him most.



Transportation

I had a bike in Amsterdam, I don't know how many thousands of kilometers I rode on that thing. It was the way I commuted to work, the way I got to everything. It was pretty special, more so than any car I've owned.



Sport

Rock climbing, because of the places it takes you and the people you meet. What is really unique about rock climbing is the focus it requires. I always felt I could reach a state of mind climbing that was difficult to tap into doing other things. Castleton Tower and Little Cottonwood Canyon are my favorites in Utah.



Patagonia Product

The Nano-Air—you can use it in so many different ways. It's just functional, light, and packable. It's a really versatile piece of clothing that does a lot of things on its own.



Professor

I've known Jensie Anderson BFA'85 JD'93 for 20 years. She had a huge impact on my life. I helped support the volunteer work she organized on behalf of the homeless population. Her role at the U law school is part of what inspired me to attend.

Celebrating Our Founding

What started in 1850 as the University of Deseret with just 25 students has grown to provide education for more than 30,000 students annually as the University of Utah. To commemorate this proud history, the U holds a Founders Day celebration each year to recognize and award alumni who have excelled professionally, served their communities, and supported the university in its mission. The awards are among the highest honors given by the U, and we're proud to share the recipients' stories.



Web Extra Don't miss honoree videos online at magazine.utah.edu/founders2021



"After I graduated from the U with a bachelor's degree, I understood some things about sociology. But I left with a hole. I had no knowledge of myself as an African American male living in the United States of America. I found myself looking for identity. And I've had a chance as an educator to put some of what I learned from that search into the curriculum, back into the well whence I've drawn. And for that I'm very grateful. I am indebted to the faculty, colleagues, staff, and students whom I interacted with during my years on campus. Go Utes!"

Ronald G. Coleman BS'66 PhD'80 was honored with a Humanitarian Award by the Inclusion Center for Community and Justice. He's now an emeritus associate professor of history and ethnic studies. As a student-athlete he helped lead the Utes to their 1964 Liberty Bowl victory.

"Public service is in my DNA. I get it from my parents. My father was a Mexican immigrant, and my mother was first-generation Mexican American. My dad used to say to me, 'Take care of your people.' As we wrestle with the challenges from the pandemic, I've seen people stepping up to help—checking in on neighbors to make sure they have food, lending a hand after someone loses a job. I've seen a fearless and selfless commitment to the public good, and that is so inspiring."

Rebecca J. Chavez-Houck BA'82 MPA'06 was a decade-long member of the Utah House of Representatives. She now provides leadership coaching and community engagement consulting through her public affairs firm, Aspira Public Affairs. She's also an adjunct faculty member in the U's Master of Public Administration Program.



Sydnee Dickson

MEd'87 EdD'07 is Utah state superintendent of public instruction, with nearly 10 years' experience working in the office of the Utah State Board of Education. Dickson has provided leadership and guidance for Utah's K-12 system during the challenging times of the pandemic.



"I didn't start out to be an educator. In fact, I wasn't even sure I knew anything about college. I was just a small-town kid living the dream, climbing trees, fishing, and I loved learning. My grandmother was my first teacher in a little two-room schoolhouse in Antimony, Utah. Watching my grandmother create magic out of books instilled a sense of wonder in me. As an educator, I've tried to continue that tradition and help every student I come in contact with understand their potential."



“Find environments where your uniqueness is appreciated. Those are the communities that will lift you up and allow you the freedom to share perspectives based on your own life experiences. You don’t have to be anyone else. Be you, and that will always be an asset. Sometimes it feels like everyone else has it all figured out. I’m here to tell you they don’t. So, don’t hold back. Try new things. Take risks and do what you want with your life.”

Sara Jones HBS’98 is president of InclusionPro, which trains leaders on building inclusive cultures. She is passionate about women in STEM fields, and in 2007 she co-founded the Women Tech Council, a national organization focused on the economic impact of women in tech.

“We funded the first Wolf scholarship with University Neighborhood Partners in 2008. Since then, thanks to colleagues and friends, we now have more than 59 scholarships that have been awarded in the Wolf and Meritus scholarship programs and have raised more than \$125,000. These scholarships help underserved students in the west side community to pursue postsecondary education. We’re inspired by the many excellent scholarship recipients now working in professional roles back in their communities.”



Joan S. Wolf BS’60 and **Harold “Hal” Wolf** PhD’61: Joan is now professor emerita of the U’s Graduate School of Education; Hal was dean of the U’s College of Pharmacy from 1976–1989 and was on faculty and consulted with the college until 2014. They established an endowment for the Wolf Prize in the College of Pharmacy, as well as the Wolf and Meritus scholarships through University Neighborhood Partners.

“In my 13-year tenure as dean of the College of Pharmacy, we grew from four faculty members to more than 50 and achieved national recognition for research funding and productivity. I’m very proud of my work with the Anticonvulsant Drug Development (ADD) Program, which I directed for many years. With decades of continuous NIH funding, we participated in discovery of more than 20 new drugs for the treatment of epilepsy. It’s immensely rewarding to see the ADD Program continue to grow and expand.”

Honorary Alum



Anne Osborn Poelman, MD, is recognized internationally for her contributions to the establishment of the field of neuroradiology. She is a Distinguished Professor of radiology at the U and was the first female president of the American Society of Neuroradiology.

“I love teaching because at its core, teaching is storytelling. Whether it’s history, how to make a diagnosis, how to examine a patient, or any other topic—you’re telling a story. And I think the power of narrative drew me to radiology. A patient has a problem, and clinicians need an expert’s opinion. It’s like a game of Clue. We get to be the ones to open the envelope and tell people, ‘Mrs. Green did it in the dining room with the wrench!’”



As we mark the founding of the University of Utah in 1850, we want to recognize the work that is still ahead of us to critically review and question the histories related to the founding of our university. We recognize the enduring relationship between many indigenous people and their traditional homelands. We acknowledge that this land is the traditional and ancestral homeland of the Shoshone, Paiute, Goshute, and Ute peoples. The university remains committed to continued partnerships with Native Nations through research, education, and community engagement activities.

What are the most important facets of mentoring, in your experience?



Van Euclid Dy BS'19
Software developer and entrepreneur

I like to think of myself as a self-starter. It can be tough for me to ask for help. My mentors have helped me realize there are people out there who are smarter than I am, and they want to share their experiences and wisdom with me. Sure, I can be innovative and bring new ideas to the table, but that can't replace the knowledge of people who have years more experience than I do. My energy and innovation can work together with that experience for the best results. Working with a mentor has been so rewarding.



Neela Pack BS'13 HBS'13
Venture capital and M&A attorney, Dorsey & Whitney LLP

When I'm having conversations with the people I'm mentoring, I get so energized. We talk through big issues like career paths, job offers, and personal lives. It's so fulfilling to be able to advise someone in those contexts. In my work, I counsel corporations and investors, so I'm no stranger to giving advice. But when I'm helping a student, I get to clarify and reflect on my own experiences and share my 20/20 hindsight. Sometimes just offering a different perspective is all it takes to help.



Mark Hardy HBA'88 HBS'88
Managing director and owner of Deerwood Capital Group

You're not going to have all the answers or be able to make the one connection that causes someone's career to take off. Mentoring is about giving people the confidence to take the next step. Of all the things I've done with the U since I graduated, the most rewarding has been these mentoring relationships. I get the opportunity to meet young people who are going to make a difference in the world. If I am able to give a nudge that pushes a mentee toward a personal goal, then all the better.



Edith Hammond MBA'19
Data conversion consultant, Workday

The most important part of mentoring, for me, is having a human aspect in your professional development. Sure, I want someone who can help me get an amazing job. But at the end of the day, having someone who meets you where you are and engages with you as a human being is so inspiring. It's easy to question yourself and feel like you don't belong. Having a mentor who can see through that imposter syndrome and say, 'I see you. You belong here,' makes all the difference.



In the last 10 years

What a ride the last decade has been.

Just 10 years ago, as LMFAO strutted around in leopard-print pants with their Billboard-hit song “Party Rock Anthem,” the final installment of the Harry Potter franchise broke box office records, and the U joined the Pac-12. And since then, the U has made astounding progress. We want to share some highlights on how your alma mater is adding value to your degree—and a way for you to be entered to win a \$50 gift card.

1 Sharing Knowledge We’ve had tens of thousands of people join the U alumni community. In fact, the U awarded 78,854 degrees from 2011-2020—and more people who start studying are graduating. The six-year graduation rate has leapt from 55% to a peak of 70% in the last decade, making it one of the fastest-growing in the country. Outgoing U President Ruth Watkins made increasing the six-year graduation rate a hallmark of her eight-year tenure.

2 Advancing Science Funding for research at the U has nearly doubled in the last 10 years. In 2011, the U brought in about \$369 million. By last year, that figure skyrocketed to more than \$603 million. And that progress is getting noticed, as the U joined Harvard, MIT, Stanford, and others to become one of 65 world-class members of the Association of American Universities (AAU), an organization for institutions at the forefront of scientific inquiry and educational excellence.

3 Enhancing Health It’s no wonder more people are turning to U of U Health for their care. It was ranked among the top 10 academic medical centers for 10 years in a row, and in the past decade, patient visits skyrocketed from 569,000 to 2 million annually. To expand opportunities for patients, U of U Health now has 12 neighborhood health centers from Farmington to South Jordan and beyond.

4 Snagging Trophies In 2011, the U joined the Pac-12 and immediately got to work. The Utes have had a resounding and ongoing impact on the Power Five athletic conference, including:

- Football: Pac-12 South Division champs in 2015, 2018, 2019
- Skiing: NCAA champs in 2017, 2019, 2021
- Gymnastics: Pac-12 champs in 2014, 2015, 2017, 2021
- Baseball: Pac-12 champ in 2016

5 Rebuilding a Magazine Of course, our favorite accomplishment by the U in the last decade is what you’re holding in your hands. *Continuum* magazine became the standard-bearer for U news and insight from its founding in 1991, and we hope the newly redesigned and renamed *University of Utah Magazine* continues that tradition of excellence. But we want to hear from you! Fill out the survey at magazine.utah.edu/survey and be entered to win a \$50 gift card from the Red Zone.

Class Notes

'40s



Lawrence Norman

Lawrence "Larry" Norman BS'48 MBA'79 published the historical fiction novel *In Lincoln's Secret Service*. Set during the Civil War, the book leads the reader to visit

little-known people and places. Now 93, Norman was among the group of sailors who established the U's Department of Naval Science (NROTC) in 1945.

'70s

Richard Burrows BFA'74 is now the Arkansas Arts Academy's superintendent and chief executive officer. He is a former tenured associate professor of dance at The Ohio State University, where he taught, presented, performed, and supervised pre-service teachers, K-12 instructors, and masters and doctoral students. He most recently served as director of community outreach and engagement with The Historic Trust in Vancouver, Wash. Burrows began his career as a dancer and choreographer.

'80s



Monica Bertagnolli

Monica Bertagnolli MD'85 was appointed to the American Cancer Society's Board of Directors, and *Boston* magazine named her a "top doctor" for 2021. Bertagnolli is the

Richard E. Wilson Professor of Surgery in Surgical Oncology at Harvard Medical School and a surgeon at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, where she has worked for 21 years.

Kimberley Shoaf BS'85 is director of the health and safety branch of the U's incident management team, which is coordinating weekly testing of all U students. While at UCLA pursuing her master's and doctoral degrees in public health, the Northridge earthquake occurred and became the subject of Shoaf's dissertation. Her focus shifted from general global health to emergency public health, which at the time was not its own field. She became a faculty member at UCLA and started one of the first graduate programs in emergency public health.

SPOTLIGHT



TIM CASEY, FLORIDA COMMUNICATIONS

Brian Johnson BS'08 joined the NFL as quarterbacks coach for the Philadelphia Eagles early this year, just months after being promoted to offensive coordinator at the University of Florida—where he had been quarterbacks coach—and becoming the first Black offensive coordinator in Florida football history. Johnson previously coached at the University of Houston, Mississippi State University, and the U. He finished his playing career at Utah as the winningest quarterback in school history. Shortly after graduation, Johnson made the cover of EA Sports' *NCAA Football 10* video game for the PlayStation 3 edition, and he remains the only player from Utah to have been on an NCAA Football game cover.

Willard Cutler BS'89 is division vice president and commercial technology director for Corning Incorporated's Environmental Technologies Division, which focuses on ceramics for emissions control. Corning is a leading innovator in materials science.

'90s

Maximilian Werner BA'93 has published a new book, *Wolves, Grizzlies, & Greenhorns—Death and Coexistence in the American West*. Currently an associate professor (lecturer) at the U, Werner is an award-winning teacher and author of six previous books, including a poetry collection, a novel, a memoir, and two essay collections, along with other creative and scholarly work published in various journals and magazines.

Marc Benjamin BS'94 now leads the Oklahoma Panhandle State University softball program. Benjamin has more than 10 years of college coaching experience, most recently as an assistant at Pitt Community College and previously at two NCAA Division I schools.

Dawn Anderson-Butcher MSW'97 PhD'00 is a professor in The Ohio State University College of Social Work and an executive director of OSU's LIFE sports initiative, which works to help prepare youth from vulnerable circumstances for life and leadership through sports. The program was recently named regional winner of a W.K. Kellogg Foundation Community Engagement Scholarship Award.

'00s



Enzo Mileti

Enzo Mileti BA'00 co-executive produced and wrote on season 4 of FX's Emmy-winning *Fargo* series. The U Department of Film & Media Arts alum credits the courses he took with Paul Larsen as integral to his screenwriting journey. "He's such a kind, generous teacher," Mileti says. Mileti produced and directed the documentary *Pipe Dreams*, which premiered as an official selection at the 2003 Sundance Film Festival. He has also acted, edited, and served as a camera production assistant.

Lacie Peterson BS'02 MS'05 has been named a fellow of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Peterson is a

clinical associate professor in Utah State University's Department of Nutrition, Dietetics, and Food Sciences.

Rachel Otto MA'03 JD'08 is chief of staff for Salt Lake City Mayor Erin Mendenhall BS'04. Otto previously served two years as director of government relations with the Utah League of Cities and Towns. Before that, she worked as a deputy city attorney for West Jordan and an assistant city attorney with South Jordan and spent more than five years with the law firm of Strindberg & Scholnick.

S.J. Quinney College of Law Research Professor **John Ruple** JD'04 co-wrote an article selected as an *Environmental Law Reporter* article of the month, "A Road Map to Net-Zero Emissions For Fossil Fuel Development on Public Lands."



Jill Jim

Jill Jim MHA'08 MPH'08 PhD'17 is serving on President Joe Biden's COVID-19 Advisory Board. Currently, Jim is the executive director of the Navajo Department of Health. A member of the Navajo Nation and a fluent Navajo speaker, her previous work includes serving as an epidemiologist for the Utah Department of Health.



Ana Bretón

Ana Bretón BA'09 is currently working as a social media producer on *The Drew Barrymore Show*. Bretón is an Emmy-nominated director and producer who focuses on sketch and late-night comedy. She was previously the longest-tenured digital producer at *Full Frontal* with *Samantha Bee*. She has also produced video content for entities including *DETAILS* magazine, *GQ*, and *Brava*, and directed the hour-long pilot *RUN*.

Lindsay Kite MS'09 PhD'13 and **Lexie Kite** MS'09 PhD'13, recently published the book *More Than a Body: Your Body is an Instrument, Not an Ornament*, which gives women and girls tools to become resilient to objectification and unrealistic ideals about female bodies. The identical twins are co-founders and directors of Beauty Redefined, a nonprofit dedicated to promoting positive body image. The Kites say that their unique approach to helping girls and women improve their relationships with their bodies was honed at the U.

SPOTLIGHT



Efrén Corado García MFA'11 is the new diversity affairs officer for Salt Lake County. García has received numerous awards for his performance, choreography, and media work, in addition to grants for the development of creative dance projects on the role of the arts as a social service. A Guatemala native, he taught at the U and Utah Valley University and worked for Utah Humanities before joining Repertory Dance Theater in 2013. He left dancing with RDT in 2018 to become Salt Lake County's Arts for All program coordinator, promoting inclusivity and access for residents with challenges including homelessness. When COVID-19 closed performing arts venues, García re-deployed to support the county's Quarantine and Isolation Unit serving vulnerable populations, acting as a shelter site lead. García was a founding member and dancer with Bare Dance Company, among others, and his choreography has been performed throughout California and Utah. He has served as an appointee to the Salt Lake City Arts Council Board for five years.

'10s



Heather Tanana

Heather Tanana JD'10 (and MPH, Johns Hopkins) was named a Lawyer of the Year by the Utah State Bar for her work to help tribal communities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Tanana, who is Diné, is an assistant professor (research) and Wallace Stegner Center Fellow at the U's College of Law and associate faculty at the Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health.



Allen Tran

Allen Tran MS'13 is the current executive chef and team dietitian for the Boston Red Sox. Tran was previously head chef and dietitian for the U.S. Ski & Snowboard Team based in

Park City, Utah.

Macy Lewis BA'13 recently published her third book, the children's story *Nigel and the Festival of Flames*. The release of *Nigel* came just a few months after her novel *Imprisoned Hearts*, the second installment in her Hidden Hearts Series. Lewis made her publishing debut with the series' first installment, *Fevered*

Hearts, in late 2018. Blind since birth, Lewis works as a braille proofreader. She is currently writing the final volume in Hidden Hearts and has plans for *Nigel* to also be part of a larger series.

Miara Min Farnsworth BFA'14 illustrated the book *Nigel and the Festival of Flames*. Farnsworth loves her day job as a dental assistant but also enjoys sharing her artwork in painting and drawing through her Etsy shop Miara Min Studios, where she offers handmade mugs, prints, totes, and clothing. Half-Chinese, Farnsworth speaks fluent Mandarin and plays instruments including the Chinese zither.

Laya V. Smith BA'14, a new author in the mystery and thriller genre, announced the release of her debut book *The Lumbermill*, in which a Veteran fighter pilot turned detective faces off against government-sanctioned war criminals, human traffickers, and more in 1950s Los Angeles. Smith describes herself as a history nerd and WWII buff.



Hailee Corry

Hailee (Hansen) Corry BS'14 (*magna cum laude*) returned to U gymnastics as its director of operations. Specializing in the bars with the Red Rocks from 2011-14, Corry was a four-

time academic all-conference selection, two-time team captain and two-time CoSIDA Academic All-American, and was named Utah's Most Inspirational Senior Female Athlete among all sports. She has spent the past several years in event management, including as co-founder and managing partner of a busy wedding venue.

Colby Cooley BA'15 is vice president of business development at the Economic Development Corporation of Utah. He was previously lead fellow at the Governor's Office of Economic Development. Cooley is a Salt Lake native and avid Ute football fan.

Maria-Jose Endara PhD'15 was awarded the Pedro Vicente Maldonado Medal by the Ecuadorian Congress in recognition of her academic, scientific, and technological achievements, including selection by The World Academy of Sciences as a Young Affiliate, an honor given to 25 outstanding young scientists from developing nations. Endara has helped redefine textbook concepts in the field of plant-insect interactions and evolution. Her grants include an award from the National Geographic Society and Microsoft's AI for Earth, and she has published in peer-reviewed journals including the *Journal of Ecology*, *New Phytologist*, and *Science*.



Manusheela Pokharel

Manusheela Pokharel MS'15 PhD'19 recently won the Gerald R. Miller Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation Award from the National Communication Association, presented annually to no more than three of the most outstanding dissertations completed in the field of communication. Pokharel is an assistant professor in the Department of Communication Studies at Texas State University.



Wazir Suni Jefferson

Wazir Suni Jefferson EDD'16 was named the first-ever chief diversity officer for Ulster County, New York. Jefferson has dedicated his career to advancing dialogue, inclusion, and equity. He most recently served as the chief diversity officer at Dutchess Community College.

A study led by **Andy Lambert** BS'18 MS'20 was featured in *Science* magazine. The research details how dust levels in the Great Plains have increased significantly over the last two

decades and current trends may be resembling those of the 1930s Dust Bowl.



Parisa Kaliush

Parisa Kaliush MS'19 was recently awarded a National Research Service Award from the NIH for her project "Daily dynamics of suicide risk, dysregulation, and sleep disruption across the transition to parenthood." Kaliush is a mental health worker and research assistant at Towson University.



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Send updates to classnotes@utah.edu

SPOTLIGHT



Navy veteran and RN **Rachel Martinez** BA'18 (Russian) volunteered for an assignment in New York at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, and by chance, her work involved a patient population that was largely Russian speaking. "My education at the U allowed me to communicate and connect with my patients in their native language. In a gown, gloves, mask, and shield, I couldn't hold their hand. I couldn't give them a smile. But we could talk. The ability to discuss topics such as family, food, and literature brought the human connection back to my job," she says. "The U was integral to my success in life and in my career. I am so grateful for the family I found at the Veterans Support Center."

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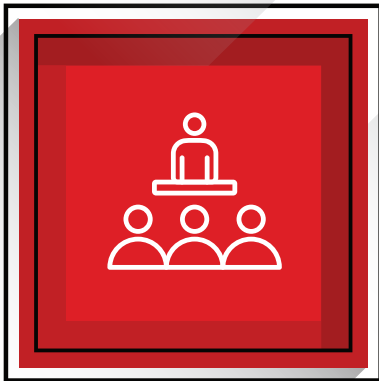
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Fond Farewell

For Ruth V. Watkins, students came first. During her eight-year tenure as the U's 16th president and senior vice president for Academic Affairs, Watkins worked to expand access to the state's flagship institution. She supported initiatives aimed at ensuring that every student has an excellent educational experience at the U. And she made degree completion a priority, recognizing that—as she often said—access without completion is a hollow promise.

The gaps in access and graduation rates for women and underrepresented students narrowed significantly under her leadership. Overall, the U's completion rate reached a record 70 percent. But what may have impressed students most about President Watkins was this: Once she meets someone, she never forgets their name.

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“I was grateful and just happy to be given this chance to pursue an education that for many people is questionable because of financial issues. I was extremely blessed to be given such aid.”

– University of Utah 1st Year For Utah Scholarship recipient, George Conde

George was co-captain of his debate team at Granger High School and a Sterling Scholar in social science with a 3.99 GPA. His parents are immigrants from Peru. His mother is a factory worker who was laid off in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and his father is a painter.

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