

Growing Minari

An alum filmmaker taps a personal story for a breakout Sundance hit, p. 22

Sharp Contrast

Women have borne the brunt of the pandemic. How can we do better? p. 34

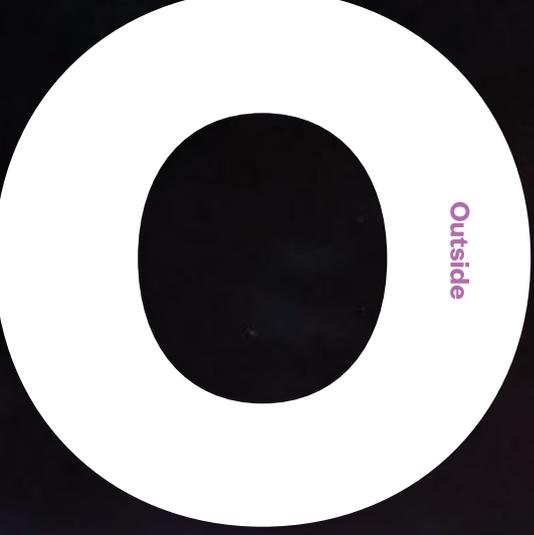
Rising Need

A search for his father led one U alum to fight against hunger, p. 44

Gaming to Get Well

The merging of video games and health care is leading to new treatments for medical conditions





Outside





A Comet's Tale

While most events last summer were canceled, Mother Nature put on her own spectacle. Comet NEOWISE passed by a safe 64 million miles from Earth, making it visible with the naked eye for weeks. This photo of the comet above Kodachrome Basin State Park was taken by Paul Ricketts BS'12, director of the U's South Physics Observatory. "Catching NEOWISE in the dark sky with its tail so bright and prominent was definitely a sight to see! It seemed to stretch across the whole night sky," he says.

The ball of ice and rocks came from the outer reaches of our solar system in a frigid field of icy bodies called the Oort Cloud. As the comet neared our sun, it expelled gas and dust, creating the glorious double tail extending 10 million miles. If you missed it this time, mark your calendars: NEOWISE will be back around in about 6,800 years.

U University of Utah Magazine

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Some have dubbed it the “she-cession” as more women than men are exiting the workforce. But the effects of the pandemic on women go beyond job losses. Read five ways the U is making fundamental changes to help women, starting on p. 34.



WEB EXTRAS

More available at magazine.utah.edu



From the paintings on the Welcome to Utah roadside signs to landscapes hanging in the Salt Lake City airport, you're probably familiar with artist Dave Meikle's work. What you may not know is that he's an alum twice over and has been working at the U for nearly 30 years. See his studio at magazine.utah.edu/painting.



Last year, nearly 5,000 people donated a total of more than \$630,000 to their favorite U programs, areas, and colleges during our second annual Giving Day. And organizers hope to raise even more this Feb. 23-24. Watch the video and learn how to get involved at magazine.utah.edu/givingday.

The Craig H. Neilsen Rehabilitation Hospital is one of the most advanced rehabilitation centers in the country. Take a virtual tour and learn about how the facility is being used to enhance and restore the quality of life for people with disabling conditions at magazine.utah.edu/rehab.

FEATURES

22

Growing Minari The buzz for *Minari* started after its first screening at the Sundance Film Festival. The movie by U alum Lee Isaac Chung, set in Arkansas in the 1970s, was picked up for wide release. It's a fictionalized version of Chung's childhood as his family moved to a tiny farm in search of their own American Dream.



28

A Healthy Dose of Gaming On any given day, U students write code and design cutting-edge graphics for apps and games. But not all are solely for fun—some are designed to improve health. From treating depression to empowering kids with cancer, these games are the latest in digital medicine.

34

Sharp Contrast In many ways, women have faced disproportionate burdens during the pandemic. More have left the workforce, and women continue to take on the bigger share of caregiving and housework. Hard-won gains of gender equality in the workplace are at risk. U researchers are studying the fallout to help women long after the pandemic ends.

ON THE COVER

From improving psychological therapy outcomes to helping with pain and facilitating physical activity, video games have moved out of the basement and into labs and exam rooms. Illustrator (and self-proclaimed gamer) Tavis Coburn captures the confluence of gaming and health care.

DEPARTMENTS

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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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STAFF

William Warren **PUBLISHER**J. Melody Murdock **EXECUTIVE EDITOR**Seth Bracken **EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**David E. Titensor BFA'91 **ART DIRECTOR**Marcia C. Dibble **SENIOR EDITOR**Dave Meikle BFA'94 MFA'06 **SENIOR DESIGNER**Brian Rasmussen BA'80 **BUSINESS MANAGER**UMC Digital **WEB DESIGN**Pentagram, Austin **FEATURE DESIGN****CONTRIBUTORS**

Brooke Adams BS'91 MS'12, Morgan
Aguilar, Karen Ashton BS'80, Jeff Bagley,
Charlie Ehlert, Paul Gabrielsen, Elena
Gardner, Julie Kiefer, Lisa Potter

PLACE AN AD

brian.rasmussen@utah.edu | 801-581-3051

UPDATE ADDRESS

giving.utah.edu/updates

CONTACT US

magazine@utah.edu | 801-213-1253
75 Fort Douglas Blvd.
Salt Lake City, UT 84113

VISIT US ONLINE

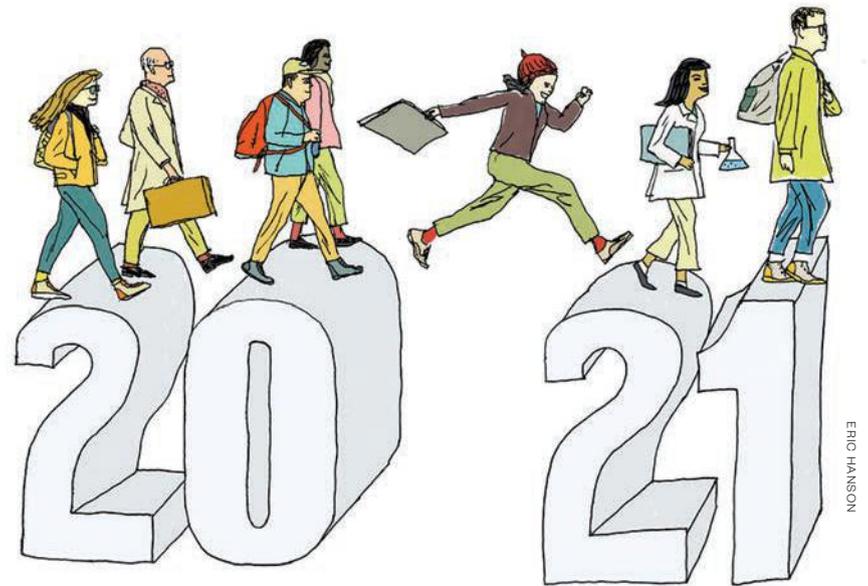
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ERIC HANSON

Growing Through Adversity

A resilient U community continues to excel and adapt to new challenges



There is no question that 2020 challenged our students, staff, and faculty in unprecedented ways. We welcome this new year with optimism and hope that the pandemic will soon be behind us.

I am so proud of the creativity, determination, and resilience our campus community showed throughout 2020 in working as One U to stay focused on our important educational and research missions. I want to give special accolades to the university's health care workers who have been at the forefront of the pandemic. They have worked under enormous strain to provide outstanding care to patients and the community. We owe them such gratitude.

We continue to adapt to the pandemic, with ongoing adjustments to instruction, testing of our on-campus community, and strong messaging about health protocols that will help us promote well-being.

Despite the challenges, the U continues to excel. A few highlights include:

- Reaching a milestone of \$603 million in research funding
- Welcoming the largest and most diverse first-year class last fall
- The commendation of evolutionary geneticist Nels Elde as a MacArthur Fellow—one of the most significant awards received by faculty
- The recognition of many of our programs as among the best in the country—from entrepreneurship to elementary teacher preparation to computer science
- Receiving the 2020 C. Peter Magrath Community Engagement Scholarship Award from the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities for our work with University Neighborhood Partners

And last but not least, we shine a spotlight on the exciting One U effort involving The GApp Lab—a collaboration between our Center for Medical Innovation, Entertainment Arts & Engineering program, and Spencer S. Eccles Health Sciences Library. These three entities are developing video games to manage and treat chronic disorders and diseases. The future, as you'll learn in this issue, is here!

PRESIDENT RUTH WATKINS



Fall Issue

I devoured the magazine! Pages ripped out for my teenager, photos of pages sent to colleagues, pages saved for my COVID-19 journal. Great content.

BRYN FRAZIER RAMJOUE BA'90, SALT LAKE CITY

I've noticed a profound shift in the quality of the magazine. Even the tactile quality seems to have improved. The layout, features on individuals, and focus of the articles is as good as any magazines I've read, and I love magazines. The features around current matters, especially EDI, dang near brought me to tears. Good job, folks.

ANGELA CARLSON BA'92, SALT LAKE CITY

Drop and Cover

In our Fall feature "Our Fault," we shared how the U responded to a startling earthquake in the midst of a pandemic. And readers had their own experiences to share.

I experienced a 4.5 magnitude in the early 1980s in the same area, but the intensity of this one was truly tenfold. Violent and loud! I've never had anxiety issues, but this quake resulted in months of strong PTSD symptoms. Just recently have I started to feel better. The pandemic truly exacerbated this experience, not only from a stress

standpoint, but also due to the fact that my fight-or-flight response was fully engaged. You can't fight an earthquake, but due to the pandemic, there was no flight either.

BEN DAVID GEERTSEN BS'02
SALT LAKE CITY

I can imagine that it was a very scary situation. I felt a 4.7 many years ago as an aftershock to the Big Northridge, CA, quake in 1994. It felt like the house was being raised and dropped from five feet in the air!

DAVID TYBURCZY BS'96, ST. JOSEPH, MI



We want to hear from you!

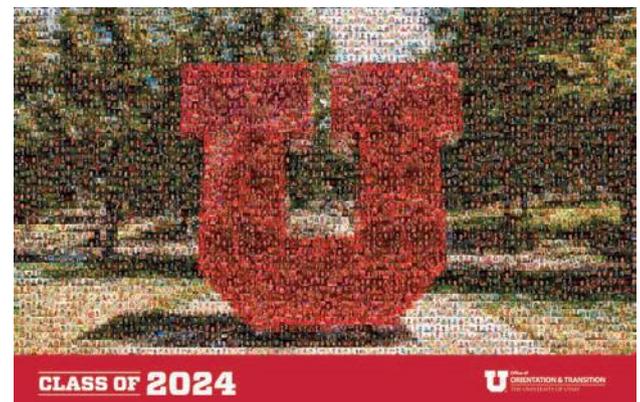
Join the discussion at magazine.utah.edu or email us at magazine@utah.edu. Comments may be edited for length and clarity.



Debate Highlight

The Fall issue of *Utah Magazine* had an unusual and exciting audience: all the VIPs attending the vice presidential debate. The magazine was part of the kit given to 5,000 members of the media, lawmakers, and politicians in town for the big event. The cover story, "Opposing Arguments," was cited on several newscasts and in news articles as media explored the same question as the feature—do debates change people's minds?

SOCIAL SPOTLIGHT



Look closely at this picture. No, it's not a magic eye illustration with a hidden 3D image. Under normal circumstances, the incoming class would form a gigantic block U on the Rice-Eccles Stadium field. But these are not normal circumstances. So, to make this collage, hundreds of incoming first-year students submitted a selfie flashing the U to kick off the semester. The image was shared on the @UUUtah social channels and had thousands of likes and re-shares. Learn more about the largest class in the U's more than 170-year history on p. 19.

A mammogram
saved my life.

JESSICA RIVERA
Breast Cancer Patient



Schedule lifesaving cancer screenings—
even during the pandemic.

HUNTSMANCANCER.ORG/SCREENING



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U of U license plates produce some pretty serious scholarship torque—more than \$600,000 for deserving students across campus each year. Learn more at utahplate.info.



ALUMNI

FOREVER UTAH

News from the U

PHOTO BY JACQUELINE FLORES, SWINERTON RENEWABLE ENERGY



The solar site in Emery County, Utah, provides 20 megawatts of energy, putting the U in the top five for clean energy among colleges in the country.

Let the Sun Shine

With a new solar power contract, the U is on its way to being carbon neutral by 2050

Flipping on a light at the U just got a whole lot more sustainable. The U signed a new 25-year solar energy contract, which will bring it to 71 percent of all electrical energy coming from renewable sources. Already the first public university in the state to receive more than half its electricity from renewable sources, with this new contract it's now in the top five for sustainable energy use among all colleges and universities nationwide.

In 2018, the U went from about 5 percent of its power coming from renewable energy sources to 54 percent with a geothermal energy contract. That contract is presently ranked as the number one largest long-term contract of any college or university under the Environmental Protection Agency's Green Power Partnership. All of these efforts are part of a goal for the university to reach carbon neutrality by 2050.

The latest move toward that goal is a solar power contract with Castle Solar Project near Huntington, Utah. The contract will deliver 20 megawatts of solar energy to campus. "We

simply can't be carbon neutral without sourcing our energy from clean and renewable sources," says Chris Benson BS'08, associate director of sustainability and energy. "Off-site production is a great way to build and leverage economies of scale. With a combination of geothermal, our baseload, and solar for peaking, loads are well-matched, and costs remain well-managed."

The university operates nearly 300 buildings that support health care, research, education, and housing. And until now, it has consumed about 1 percent of all electricity and natural gas in the state. But with the latest moves, the U is significantly reducing the environmental impact of the electrical grid.

"We want to demonstrate what is possible by leading with sustainable choices in our operations," says Kerry Case, chief sustainability officer at the U. "We recently launched an effort to identify additional strategies that will reduce the university's greenhouse gas emissions and increase our community's resilience to climate change."

NEWS ROUNDUP



For exactly 1,850 minutes in honor of the year the university was founded (1850) the U community will come together to support their favorite programs, areas, and colleges in the third annual Giving Day on Feb. 23-24. In the 30-hour Giving Day last year, nearly 5,000 people raised \$635,000. Learn more at givingday.utah.edu.



The Craig H. Neilsen Rehabilitation Hospital opened last September. The 75-bed hospital is one of the most advanced rehabilitation facilities in the country and is helping patients heal from and adjust to life-altering injuries and conditions. It was made possible thanks to a \$47.5 million gift from the foundation created by late alum Craig Neilsen MBA'64 JD'67.

College of Engineering Dean Rich Brown PhD'85 was installed as the inaugural holder of the H.E. Thomas Presidential Endowed Dean's Chair. Brown has been recognized for his role in tripling student enrollment and overseeing research funding growth from \$30 million to \$97 million per year. The endowed deanship was established thanks to a \$4 million gift from longtime supporter of the college H.E. "Ed" Thomas.





Expert

Bridging the Gap

More than 60,000 K-12 students in Utah spend up to half their school day learning a second language as part of the state's Dual Language Immersion program. Started in 2008 at 15 elementary schools, DLI expanded quickly. By 2016, more than 220 programs were running, and the first cohort would soon be in high school—but there was a small catch: the advanced language classes hadn't been created yet.

That's when Jill Landes-Lee MEd'06 EDD'19 and the U came into the picture. Landes-Lee was appointed director for Utah's Bridge Program, housed in the U's Second Language Teaching and Research Center. Her team develops the upper division college courses taught in DLI high schools (in six languages) for students who pass the AP exam in 9th grade. "By the time they finish high school, they almost have a minor," she says. "They're not only demonstrating language ability at a high level but also trying out college culture and behaviors."

Landes-Lee says Utah's DLI is the only statewide program in the country that offers a K-16 language pathway—thanks to the extraordinary partnership between the state legislature, K-12, and higher education in Utah. "It's such an empowering opportunity for these students."

Landes-Lee's Language Tips

- 1** You're never too old to learn. The human brain is wired for languages. At any point when we start to learn a new language, our brains automatically make the connections.
- 2** Everybody learns differently. Try a combo of methods, like an app for grammar and a personal conversation teacher for speaking.
- 3** Be a little fearless. You don't need perfection to communicate and connect. People are typically delighted when you make an effort to speak their language.



What lasting impacts will the COVID-19 pandemic have on education?



Naina Phadnis, assistant director,
School of Biological Sciences

The pandemic unveiled that technology can enhance learning, increase interactions, and make quality education accessible to a greater audience. Previously, students had to come to campus and muster up the courage to walk into a professor's office to seek guidance. Now, students can get help from the comfort of their home. But many students have also struggled in this format and need the personalized one-on-one aspect of education in order to succeed. It has also revealed disparities where access to technology, space, childcare, etc., have impacted access to online education for some students.



Aaron Fischer, assistant professor,
Educational Psychology

One of the biggest barriers to effective online education is the stigma that “online education doesn't work” or isn't as effective as in-person. I resist that notion. Like any teaching, even in-person teaching, the instructor's pedagogy is critical to the course being effective—how they teach, particularly their discourse and engagement strategies, set the tone and influence learning outcomes. Online educators can provide robust and highly effective teaching experiences if they commit to learning innovative ways to refine and enhance their teaching as well as to being open to student feedback.



Miguel Chuaqui, director,
School of Music

We had to ask ourselves how to deliver our curriculum and provide important music experiences for our students under these circumstances. We worked hard to develop a student-centered plan. For example, our choir director has 10 choir members at a time in separate rooms connect digitally to him and each other. Each part is mixed with the others to produce recordings of the choir members singing together. But the reality is that although we can teach many music subjects online, and our students are resilient, performing music in a group is likely to never work as well online.



Deborah Keyek-Franssen, dean,
Continuing and Online Education

Like the U's degree-seeking students, many continuing education students had to quickly transition to fully remote learning. One of the biggest lessons is that online teaching requires a different design—asynchronous videos need to be shorter than traditional lectures, opportunities for peer interactions need to be intentionally created, and assessments need to be tightly aligned with outcomes. A silver lining is that we're having conversations about the importance of being deliberate in designing for interactivity and authentic assessments of learning.

Student Start-up

A U telehealth business has boomed during the pandemic



Not many businesses see demand grow a thousandfold in less than a month. But telehealth startup doxy.me saw astronomical growth and quadrupled its staff to serve some 274,000 providers and 6 million patients last March alone.

The company was launched by Master of Business Creation students Dylan Turner and Schuyler Welch, who say the support they received in that program allowed them to prepare for and manage the flood of new customers. Unlike other programs, the MBC allows founders to focus full-time on their start-ups.

Doxy.me provides a simple, free, secure, and HIPAA-compliant connection for patients and their health care providers. Almost anyone can sign up and learn how to use it within minutes.

“We accomplished almost everything we set out to do,” says Turner, speaking about their participation in the MBC program, which is provided by the Department of Entrepreneurship & Strategy at the David Eccles School of Business in partnership with the Lassonde Entrepreneur Institute. Turner is the co-founder and chief product officer of doxy.me. “We are more organized now, we have a comprehensive sales strategy, organizational charts, strategic objectives, and oversight,” he notes. “We have a plan, and now we know how to implement it. In short, we went from a startup to a ‘real’ business.”

Demand for the services accelerated as regulations and behaviors changed to embrace remote health services. “This company was already in a good place before the pandemic, and they were ready for the growth when it came,” says Troy D’Ambrosio BA’82, a faculty executive director of the Lassonde Entrepreneur Institute.

“Now that we’re so confidently moving forward, we’re going to keep moving forward,” Turner says. “We want to build a sustainable business and help as many people as we can.”



A Genius in our Midst

Nels Elde has a new accomplishment to add to his résumé: certified genius. The evolutionary geneticist was awarded the MacArthur Fellowship, popularly known as a “genius grant.” The highly regarded honor goes to talented individuals who have shown extraordinary originality and dedication in their creative pursuits and a marked capacity for self-direction. Elde is one of 21 Fellows for 2020, each receiving \$625,000 in stipends. Elde says he may invest some of the funds into a storytelling project highlighting the ingenuity and humanity of science heroes.

“Dr. Elde has achieved a hallmark in the scientific community. His innate ability to think creatively about unsolved problems inspires all of us to do the same in our quests to advance knowledge,” says Michael Good, senior vice president for Health Sciences.

Elde has been with the U since 2011, and his investigations stem from the fact that an organism’s genome—the complete set of genetic instructions—bears evolutionary changes that have occurred over millennia. Viruses drive many of these changes as animals evolve new ways to survive microbial infections. Studying how these virus-animal conflicts have changed biology is providing insights into how the body’s defenses, including the immune system, are built and how they work.

“Someday we may get to a point where we can look in the genetic medicine cabinet and select genes off the shelf that will short-circuit a virus,” Elde says.

He’s previously been named a Pew Scholar, and research from his lab has been highlighted by *The New York Times*, *The Atlantic*, and *National Geographic*.

PICTURE



Before women in the U.S. could even legally vote, Martha Hughes Cannon became the first woman elected as a state legislator, in 1896. This statue of Cannon is temporarily on display at the Utah State Capitol. It will soon be exhibited in the National Statuary Hall in Washington, D.C. Cannon graduated with a degree in chemistry from the University of Deseret, now known as the University of Utah, in 1878.

d

Diagram

Esteemed Education

32,000+ students

8,600+ graduates last year

100 undergraduate and
90 graduate fields of study

30+ nationally ranked programs

Trained **two-thirds** of practicing physicians in Utah



The U Effect

The benefits of getting a college degree are immense. It leads to increased earnings, economic mobility, healthier lifestyles, volunteerism, even voter participation. But what about beyond the individual benefits? Researchers at the U's Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute looked past the basics and quantified the impact of having a Tier 1 research institution right here in Utah. Not surprisingly, they found that the U has an enormous economic and societal impact on the entire state, making it one of Utah's largest and most important economic assets. Here are just a few highlights.

Driving Discovery

Joining Harvard, Stanford, MIT, and others, the U was invited to the **Association of American Universities**

\$603 million

in research funding in fiscal year 2020

3,809

papers published in peer-reviewed journals



Arts & Entertainment



The U makes Utah a better place to live in many ways—not the least of which is being home to **premier venues**, including:

Start-up & Commercialization

404 inventors

5 new start-ups from technologies developed by faculty and students

Top 10 in the country for entrepreneurship

54 new issued U.S. patents



\$4.6 billion

paid in wages and benefits

39,000+

employees

Largest employer in the state

Patient Care

2 million patient visits

5 hospitals **12** community health centers

One of the nation's **largest** reference labs—ARUP Laboratories

No. 1 hospital in Utah

Contributed **\$190 million** in uncompensated patient care



\$56.6 million

annual off-campus spending by nonresident students

Kingsbury Hall

Simmons Pioneer Memorial Theatre

Red Butte Garden

Utah Museum of Fine Arts

Natural History Museum of Utah

Rice-Eccles Stadium

Huntsman Center

National Stage

Tweaking lyrics from the musical *Hamilton*, one could say, “History had its eyes on the U” last fall for the lone vice presidential debate of the 2020 election. Approximately 60 million viewers tuned in on Oct. 7 to watch Vice President Mike Pence and Sen. Kamala Harris face off live in Kingsbury Hall—making it the second-most-watched vice presidential debate ever.

The U was announced as the venue in October 2019. For the next 11 months, campus was abuzz

with planning, ranging from implementing robust safety and security protocols to running student involvement initiatives to preparing large-scale PR and marketing efforts.

“The eyes of the world were on our campus, and the University of Utah delivered,” says Jason Perry JD’99, vice president for government relations and director of the Hinckley Institute of Politics. “Hosting the debate was a massive undertaking, and we’ve never been more proud of our campus community.”



Web Extra Read more about what it took to put on the vice presidential debate and see photos from the big day at magazine.utah.edu/vpdebate



million



What Hair Says

Your hair knows what you eat and how much your haircut costs

Millimeter by millimeter, your hair is building a record of your diet. As hair strands are built from amino acids that come from your food, they preserve the chemical traces of the protein in that food. It's a strong enough record to show whether you prefer veggie burgers or double bacon cheeseburgers.

A study led by U researchers finds that this record reveals a divergence in diet according to socioeconomic status (SES). Lower-SES areas display higher proportions of protein coming from cornfed animals. It's a way, the authors write, to assess a community's diet and their health risks. The study is published in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

"This information can be used to quantify dietary trends in ways that surveys cannot capture," says Distinguished Professor Jim Ehleringer, of the U's School of Biological Sciences.

To collect samples, the researchers went—where else?—to barber-shops and hair salons in 65 cities across the United States and 29 ZIP codes in the Salt Lake Valley. Barbers and salon owners were supportive, Ehleringer says. "They would let us go to the trash bin and pull out a handful or two of hair, which we then sorted into identifiable clusters representing individuals." All together, they collected samples representing nearly 700 people.

Surprisingly, carbon isotopes in hair correlated with the price of the haircut at the sampling location. And researchers went a step further. Using driver's license data to calculate trends in body mass index for particular ZIP codes, the authors found that the isotope ratios also correlated with obesity rates. This, they write, draws potential connections between diet, SES, and health.

ILLUSTRATION BY EDEL RODRIGUEZ



Help at the Border

Law students volunteer with immigrants in need

Scenes from immigrant detention centers at the border of the U.S. and Mexico hit home for Amitay Flores.

Children separated from their parents and crammed in tight cells, sometimes sleeping on cement floors. Unsanitary conditions that don't permit a clean place to change a diaper or wash a bottle. Cold temperatures that leave those locked up prone to the flu and other illnesses. The troubling situation in photos flashed in news stories about the immigration crisis left Flores feeling helpless and angry.

Flores, a second-year student at the U's S.J. Quinney College of Law, could easily picture her own family behind the chain-linked fences had circumstances played out differently at the time her parents arrived in the U.S. from Mexico years ago. So, as the debate over detaining immigrants in ICE facilities continued on the political stage nationwide, she sought a way to make a difference.

Her passion to help those in dire circumstances inspired Flores to raise money for the Student Immigration Law Association to send a group of law students to the border

in spring 2020 and offer assistance to those held at the South Texas Detention Complex in Pearsall, Texas. Ten students along with U professors Melissa Moeinvaziri BA'12 HBA'12 JD'17 and RonNell Andersen Jones offered services to many housed in the 1,904-person facility for a week, shortly before the COVID-19 pandemic shut the country down temporarily.

Students were mentored by their professors and licensed attorneys to provide a range of assistance to immigrants who were representing themselves in asylum proceedings. They partnered with the nonprofit American Gateways, which connected them to immigrants in need.

"I believe law students have a crucial role to play in tearing down these barriers and assisting immigrants to apply for relief from detention," says Flores, who aspires to practice immigration law. "I look forward to the day when the United States government stops placing immigrants in detention. Until then, I will continue to do everything in my power to serve those who come to our country looking for a better future."

MELINDA ROGERS

Center for Violence Prevention Named to Honor Lauren McCluskey

The U's recently launched violence prevention center has been named the McCluskey Center for Violence Prevention in honor of Lauren McCluskey, a U student-athlete who was killed on campus in 2018. The center brings together researchers, prevention educators, community stakeholders, and students and aims to become a national leader in the effort to eliminate relationship and sexual violence among college students.

Renaming the center was part of the settlement of two lawsuits filed in McCluskey's death. The agreement also includes a \$10.5 million payment to her parents by the state of Utah through its risk management agency and its insurance provider, and a \$3 million charitable donation to the Lauren McCluskey Foundation. The U also pledged to seek funds for an indoor track facility to be named in honor of McCluskey, who was on the Track & Field team. No state-appropriated funds or tuition will be used for the payments.

"The university acknowledges and deeply regrets that it did not handle Lauren's case as it should have and that, at the time, its employees failed to fully understand and respond appropriately to Lauren's situation," President Ruth Watkins said at a press conference announcing the settlement.

Since McCluskey's death, the U has made steps to improve safety on campus, including changes to safety operations; new personnel; revisions to policies, practices and procedures; and investments in infrastructure.

The settlement announcement took place on the two-year anniversary of McCluskey's death, and hundreds of students and community members attended a memorial walk in her honor on the same day.



a

Ask

Enriching the Narrative

How do you create a history out of paper scraps and ashes? It took six years for Darius Bost, associate professor of ethnic studies, to complete his book *Evidence of Being: The Black Gay Cultural Renaissance and the Politics of Violence*. Much of the history was lost or burned after writers and artists died from AIDS, and their families either thought there was no need to keep records or were too ashamed to do so. The book pieces together Bost's meticulous research to examine the confluence of activism and literature during the AIDS epidemic in the gay Black communities of New York City and Washington, D.C., in the 1980s and '90s.

Why is examining literature from this time so important?

Literature allowed these men to hold onto trauma and abjection, and at the same time to be hopeful and optimistic. Narrative can reckon with the systems that would pathologize and devalue entire groups of people. By focusing on these men not as statistics but as subjects who experience the world from their embodied perspectives, we challenge racial, gender, and sexual stereotypes. Fiction and poetry are just as important to understanding the HIV and AIDS epidemic as the biology of the virus.

What does violence mean in this context?

I'm not just talking about Black gay men who were beaten in anti-gay violence. We need to ask ourselves, "why are these things happening?" and situate contemporary occurrences in a longer view. The consequences of slavery continue to affect Black people in the form of structural violence. Black people never really achieved full humanity in the eyes of the state. That continues to haunt us as we grapple with questions around police violence. So the question becomes, how do we dismantle a social structure that organizes bodies in hierarchical ways?

How do we effect real change?

When I get on the elevator in my building where I work as a professor, people often grab their purse or bag. Folks have to actively engage in anti-racism. And it's those in the majority who have to do the work. That's why the U's School for Cultural and Social Transformation [which houses ethnic, gender, and disability studies] is so important. Anti-racist, feminist, and disability studies pedagogy is more important now than ever.



In Vogue

LED lights are in this year. The stringed baubles are adorning dorm rooms all over campus. While resident capacity is limited due to the pandemic, students still love making spaces their own, as pictured here during fall move-in week.

And with everyone spending more time at home these days, redecorating and remodeling are booming. We spoke with alumna Kristin Rocke BS'98, founder and owner of K. Rocke Design, to get some tips for adding aesthetic appeal and comfort to our surroundings.



Decorating Tips

No. 1: Less is more. Especially in small spaces. Don't just buy pretty new things at box stores. What you take away can add more than bringing in new things.

No. 2: Limit your colors. Stick to a tight segment of the color wheel, and use colors that look alike. Contrasting colors in confined places can be headache-inducing.

No. 3: Bring the outside in. Get some greenery and life in there. Even a few succulents can help you relax when you're stuck inside.



BY THE NUMBERS



Class of 2024
Largest enrollment in U history

65% from Utah
24 counties

31% from out of state
50 states

4% international
38 countries



4,483
first-time freshmen

3.65 average GPA

31% students of color



August

Most common birth month



Samuel and Olivia
Most popular names

PICTURE



PHOTO BY BRANDON HORROCKS

During a pandemic, the School of Music adopted a new motto: The show must go outside. Rather than the traditional indoor venues for the school's student showcases this year, the musicians performed outdoors in Presidents Circle. Listeners also tuned in as the serenades by Richard Strauss and Arthur Bird were streamed live on YouTube.

Blowin' in the Wind

U chemical engineers help get the Utah Symphony safely back onstage



PHOTO BY TONY SAAD

The next time the Utah Symphony performs at Abravanel Hall, the seating chart might look a little different. That's because the wind and brass musicians will be strategically placed to make sure the air and emissions they breathe out are caught in the current of the ventilation system and end up outside.

U chemical engineers James Sutherland and Tony Saad, supported by a team of students, spent most of last summer investigating the potential risk of the emissions from the musicians by first measuring the flow rates through the air vents of the performance venue. They also obtained the air flow measurements of various wind instruments.

Using high-powered computers at the U, the team developed simulations of how air flows

through and, ultimately, off the stage via the HVAC system. They also developed a computer model of how emissions from each of the wind instruments—such as trumpets, flutes, oboes, and clarinets—interacted with the air flow from the HVAC system.

“We would look at the results of the simulation and learn that this particular instrument was problematic. Then we would ask where we can move it to mitigate the risk,” says Sutherland. “We would move the musician around, then perform a new simulation.”

Their recommendations also included suggestions to improve the flow dynamics of the HVAC system. The team of researchers estimate they can reduce the potential concentration of the virus onstage by more than 100 times.

What is the Honors College?

Commonly asked questions, and how it can set students up for success after graduation



Honors College students are engaged learners with a strong sense of community. One of the ways that's fostered is through the Honors College Living Learning Community.

It's been around for more than 50 years. But there are still a lot of misconceptions about the U's Honors program. "People mistakenly think it's harder, more expensive, or only for the high school valedictorians," says Sylvia Torti PhD'98, dean of the Honors College. "But that's just not the case."

The Honors College is about looking at college education from a different perspective, says Torti. "The world would have us believe the college experience happens a certain way: Find your interest. Find your major. Find what makes you comfortable," she says. The Honors College challenges that idea with deeply engaged learning and a strong sense of community. "The richer path is through others: seeing disparate thinking, views, and people."

So, what is an Honors degree? We asked Torti some of the most common questions to get a better idea of what it's all about.

Can you complete an Honors degree with any major?

Absolutely. There are more than 2,000 students enrolled in the Honors College, representing 136 different majors.

What is expected of an Honors student?

The Honors program is an eight-course, 24-credit hour curriculum that represents a particular way to approach general education. Courses include two intellectual traditions courses, one writing, one science, and three Honors electives. Every Honors

student must complete a thesis project housed within their major. And although not required, Honors students can choose to live in Honors-specific on-campus housing.

How can an Honors degree benefit students in the future?

An Honors bachelor is the highest undergraduate degree conferred by the U. It can boost a graduate school application. More than 70 percent of U Honors graduates report getting into their top choice graduate schools. And the likelihood to be accepted to medical school jumps by 30 percent. Honors College graduates include 31 Goldwater Scholars, 22 Rhodes Scholars, and five Churchill Scholars. Many Honors alumni note that the thinking and writing skills developed in Honors have helped to propel their careers as graduates in every major.

Are Honors classes harder?

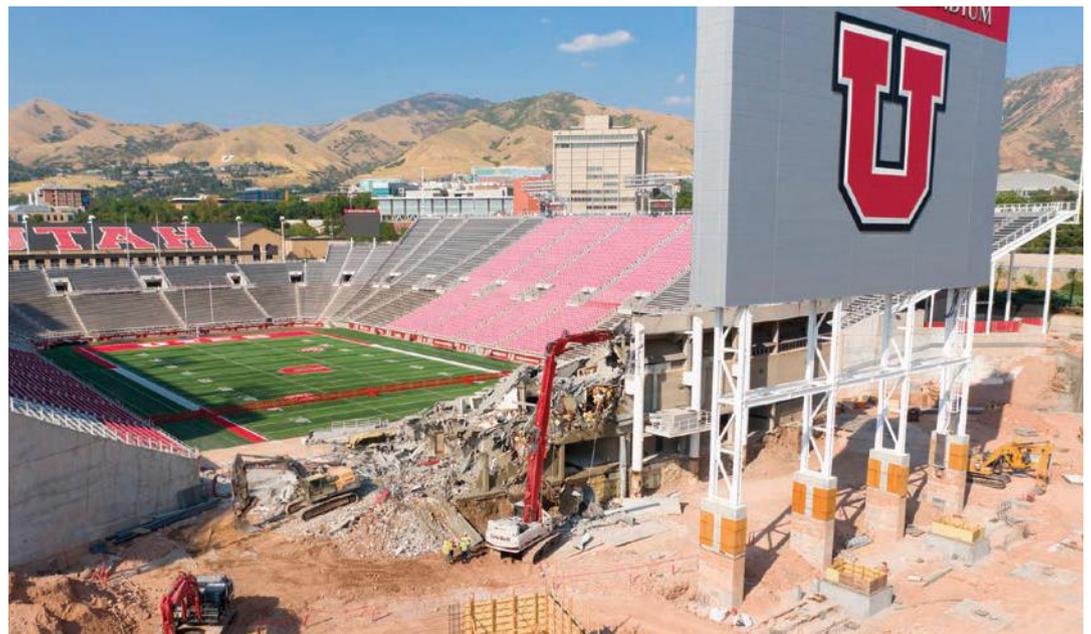
They're just different. The classes offer more support from the professors, as well as fellow students. Since class sizes are small, students develop strong communities. Classes are discussion-based and require students to think deeply about what they are reading, talk about it, and situate the ideas historically, in our contemporary world, and within their own major.

Is it more expensive?

There is no extra tuition charge, but there is a \$75 per semester fee to support Honors-specific mentoring, events, etc.

PICTURE

After fall athletics were postponed due to safety precautions for COVID-19, the south end zone of Rice-Eccles Stadium was demolished several months ahead of schedule, clearing the way for construction on the Ken Garff Performance Zone to begin. Slated to open in fall 2021, it will add 5,000 new seats, bringing the capacity to 51,444. The zone is named in honor of a record \$17.5 gift from the Garff family.



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GROWING

Minari



ONE U ALUM'S PATH TO A BREAKOUT SUNDANCE HIT

By Elaine Jarvik • Photography by Damon Casarez

A FEW WEEKS AFTER he graduated from Yale with a degree in biology, Isaac Chung went to Disney World with his parents. So, as it turned out, it was at the happiest place on Earth that he told them the unhappy news: he wasn't going to be a doctor after all. He was going to make movies.

The lines at Disney World are many and long, providing ample chance for a father and mother to try to convince their son, ever so gently, that he was making a big mistake. Hadn't he always wanted to do something beneficial for the world, they asked. And how would he make a living?

Chung MFA'04 not only wanted to make movies, he wanted to make *art films*: those sometimes bleak, often enigmatic movies that hardly ever make their directors rich or famous, the kind of minimalist movie he first saw his senior year at Yale in a filmmaking class that changed his life; the kind of movie that might win him a prize at a film festival but would still keep him on the fringes of a bountiful career.

But this story has what you might call a "Hollywood ending," one of those improbable finales where the hero gets the girl or solves the crime or wins the prize. In Chung's case it was two prizes: both the Grand Jury Prize and Audience Award for U.S. drama at the Sundance Film Festival last January, for his tender narrative feature *Minari*, which he both wrote and directed.

The buzz for *Minari* started after the very first screening—where the movie got a standing

ovation—and kept getting stronger. Even before Chung left Park City, famous producers started calling, wanting to collaborate. On Rotten Tomatoes, *Minari* made the list of "16 Movies That Could Be Oscar Contenders in 2021." And the critics' aggregate on the Tomatometer was a rare 100 percent.

...

Set in Arkansas in the 1970s, *Minari* is a fictionalized version of Chung's childhood. Like his own father, the film's Korean immigrant father—Jacob Yi—uproots his family to follow his American Dream of owning a vegetable farm in the heartland of his new country. "It's the best dirt in America," he tells his skeptical wife, Monica.

"This isn't what you promised," she complains when they first drive up to the "farmhouse" Jacob had purchased—a single-wide on wheels—on uncultivated land in the middle of the Ozarks. "It just gets worse and worse," she says, although she doesn't yet know how much more worse it will get.

The "minari" of the movie's title is a Korean herb with the kind of kick that spices up dishes like kimchi. In the movie, as in Chung's childhood, a young boy's grandmother comes from Korea bearing minari seeds, and plants them in the woods. Life may be unraveling back at the trailer, but the minari flourishes on the creekbank.

"As I researched the plant," says Chung, "I learned that it dies away in the first year and thrives in the second, which is an incredible reflection of many immigration experiences."

The story unfolds, in large part, through the

eyes of 7-year-old David, who traipses after the grandmother in his thrift store cowboy boots, drawn to her even though he complains that she smells like Korea and doesn't bake cookies. Flooded with all this charm—newcomer Alan S. Kim and veteran actress Yuh-jung Youn nearly steal the show—it's hard to watch the movie and not wonder how much of the story parallels Chung's life.

But Chung resists. "I want to avoid listing out the parts that didn't happen in case it creates confusion that the parts that did happen were recreated in an exact way," he says. "The truth is that all the scenes are fabricated through creative license, and the characters are very different from my family because the actors, with all my encouragement, recreated their roles in new ways." But, he adds about his real life, "I will say that there was a water diviner, there was a tractor, and my grandma really loved to watch wrestling on TV." There was also a local man who spent his Sundays carrying a wooden cross down the highway. And there was chicken sexing.

Like his own parents, Jacob and Monica are low-paid chicken sexing workers at an egg farm, doing the tedious but crucial job of separating future egg-laying hens from soon-to-be incinerated male chicks. The technique, developed in Japan, relies on a kind of sixth sense to be able to differentiate male from female in the 20 percent of chicks where there is, as Chung puts it, no "male protrusion." Chung's father did chicken sexing for 19 years while also eventually



*Filmmaker and U alum Isaac Chung outside his home in Los Angeles. His breakout film, *Minari*, is a fictionalized version of his own childhood.*

creating a successful farm that grew Korean medicinal herbs.

“I’ve read many scripts about families of immigrants,” the actor Steven Yeun, who plays dad Jacob (though many may recognize him from his role as Glenn on TV’s *The Walking Dead*), told the Associated Press during Sundance. Often, he finds a script overexplanatory or written for a nonimmigrant audience. “When it does that, it loses its authenticity and romanticizes in some ways, idealizes in other ways.” But when he first read the script for *Minari*, he says, “I was like: This is unabashedly a truthful telling of these human beings.”

...

In 2001, after Chung told his parents the bad news about his future career, he moved to New York and made a short experimental film that he submitted to graduate film programs, picking schools that were a combination of good and affordable. “I liked Isaac’s application,” remembers Kevin Hanson MFA’84, director of graduate studies in the Film Studies Division (now the Film and Media Arts Department) at the University of Utah. “I believe he said in his letter something like ‘I think I can make people’s lives better through film.’”

“I prided myself on making very minimal films that cost about \$20,” says Chung about his MFA days, then laughs: “I can’t watch them now.” What Hanson remembers, though, is a talented, idealistic, deeply moral young man who loved to talk endlessly about whatever aesthetic principle he was studying at the time. “I knew,” says Hanson, “that he was much smarter than your average human being.”



(Top) The cast of *Minari* at the premiere in Park City, Utah

(Bottom) Walking Dead actor Steven Yeun and newcomer Alan Kim. Photo courtesy of Sundance Institute

After getting his MFA, Chung flew to Hong Kong, ostensibly to make a documentary but mainly to ask his former girlfriend to marry him. He and Valerie, who had met their very first day at Yale, broke up when he decided a real artist would choose grad school over romance. They married in 2005, and Chung followed her to New York, where she was doing graduate work in art therapy. During the next year, Chung made education videos, on topics such as “how to be polite.”

“This is unabashedly a truthful telling of these human beings.”



Previously, Valerie had spent several summers doing art therapy in Rwanda, working with survivors of the 1994 genocide of Tutsis and moderate Hutus during the Rwandan Civil War. Over a decade later, the country was still reeling. Come to Rwanda and teach filmmaking, she urged him. It turns out that, despite (or maybe because of) all the poverty and grief, wedding videography in Rwanda was a thriving business; so that’s where Chung’s mentorship began.

And then he wrote a script. And he hired locals who had never acted before, and shot a low-budget feature film in just two weeks, with dialogue completely in Kinyarwanda. Released in 2007, *Munyurangabo* won the Grand Jury Prize for international features at the AFI Film Festival and these thumbs-up words from the late film critic Roger Ebert: “It is in every frame a beautiful and powerful film—a masterpiece.”

Chung (who goes by his full name, Lee Isaac Chung, in movie credits) is a gentle filmmaker, a director and writer who is not afraid of silence or the mundane details of an ordinary life. He doesn’t mind long, slow shots—or taking risks. His 2012 feature *Abigail Harm*, starring Amanda Plummer, quietly follows the hapless Abigail

through a fantasy relationship. Based on a Korean folk tale, it is decidedly odd.

Like many indie films, *Abigail Harm* and the 2010 *Lucky Life* are minimal and nonlinear, often shot through tall grasses or windows, the characters sometimes half-hidden by kitchen appliances—as if we’re spying on them. Like *Munyurangabo*, these movies got some notice, but they left Chung wondering if he should give up filmmaking altogether.

He figured he’d make one last film, one that his own 7-year-old daughter might like. The story of an immigrant family in Arkansas.

...

Minari, though still a quiet film, is a new direction for Chung: a beginning-middle-and-end narrative with a powerful climactic scene and a bittersweet denouement. “I quite like this idea of classical narratives now,” he says. “These days I just love Billy Wilder and Frank Capra movies. ...There’s a certain cynicism that’s healthy, but they still reach for some hope. They feel very wise to me.” His list of favorite directors also includes John Ford and Yasujiro Ozu. The movie he watches over and over is Charlie Chaplin’s *City Lights*, moved always by the ending.

Chung has submitted features and shorts to Sundance in previous years, but they weren’t selected. The *Minari* script was different and had already gotten the attention of Christina Oh, executive producer with Brad Pitt’s Plan B production company. At Sundance, amid all the buzz, the movie was picked up by distributor A24 (*Moonlight*, *Lady Bird*, *The Farewell*). Release nationwide is planned for early 2021.

Minari, says the U’s Hanson, “doesn’t suffer from the stylistic tricks of the moment,” tricks like montages, rapid cuts from one scene to another, and the use of drones. “There is no showing off in *Minari*,” he says. “It’s as if he said, ‘I’m going to tell this story in the most restrained, thoughtful way possible.’ And that’s because there’s no ego there.”

The movie, Hanson adds, “looks like a film made by a 75-year-old man. A film by Ingmar Bergman, full of wisdom.”

Sometimes, Sundance, for all its hype, doesn’t lead to anything. But for Chung, everything fell into place last winter. Because of *Minari*, Chung is now writing the screenplay for and set to direct a live-action remake of the Japanese animated movie *Your Name*, a project of J.J. Abrams’s Bad Robot Productions and Paramount Pictures. And he’s developing another movie with Plan B, this one a romantic comedy set partly in Utah. It’s got an actual Hollywood ending for sure.

Two decades after choosing movies over medicine, Chung thinks maybe his parents have finally stopped worrying about his future. **U**

Elaine Jarvik is a Salt Lake City-based freelance writer and playwright.



Chung is a thoughtful director and writer, frequently tapping into the beauty of ordinary life. His latest work is a tale of how his childhood family moved to a small farm in Arkansas in search of their own American Dream.

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We're bringing it to life with the addition of a Senior Director of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion to our Human Resources team.

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

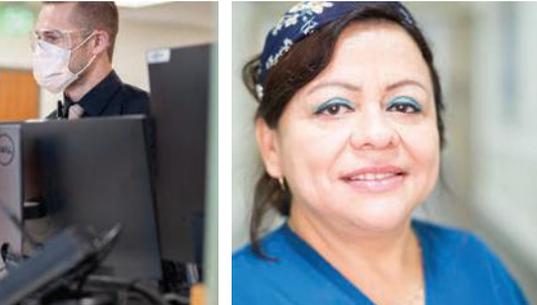
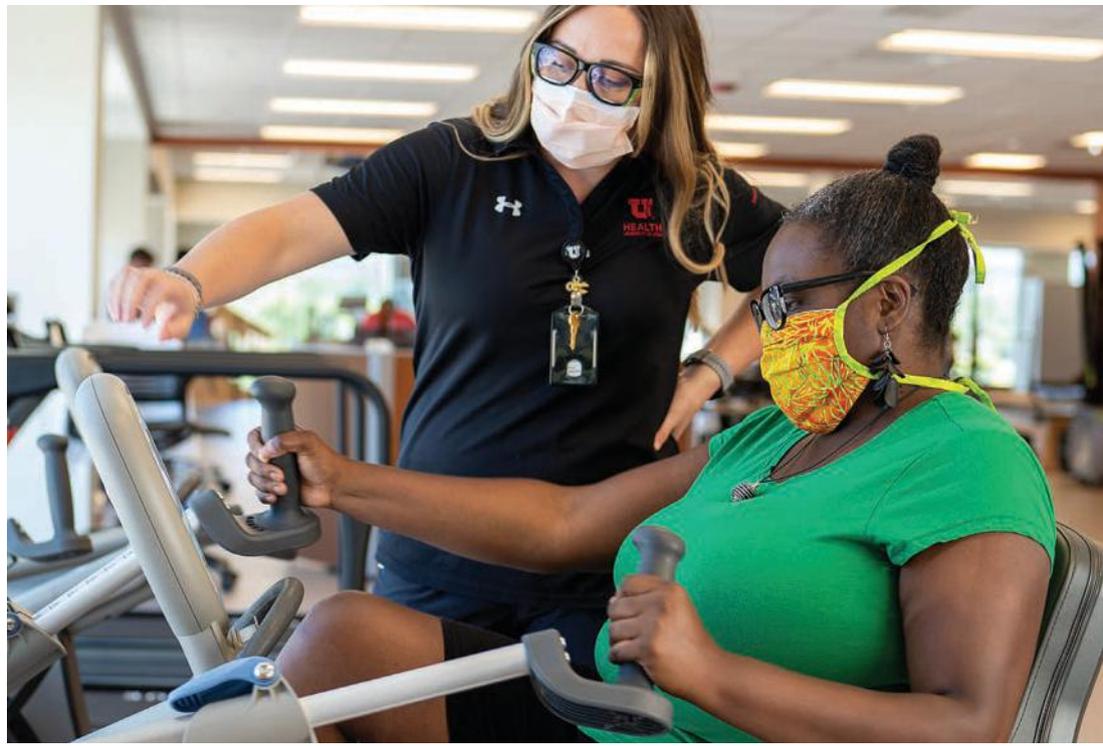
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A

BY BENJAMIN GLEISSER

ILLUSTRATIONS BY
TAVIS COBURN

HEALTHY

DOSE

OF

GAMING

The latest in digital medicine gives new life to video games as treatments for diseases and conditions





ho would ever think that making fish dance could be so much fun? Johnny Staples loves doing it. The 33-year-old with autism is a great fan of the virtual reality game *Choreografish*, developed in the U's Therapeutic Games and Apps Lab, aka The GApp Lab. *Choreografish* is just one of the many therapeutic and instructive apps and games

students and instructors in the lab have created to help children and adults deal with issues like cancer treatment, cognitive impairment, and motor skills development.

Choreografish isn't a game in the sense of skill, strength, or luck determining a "winner." Instead, *Choreografish* helps players tune out the often-overwhelming stimuli of the outside world and create a soothing environment they can control, helping them experience a sense of well-being.

Ready, Player One

Staples dons a virtual reality headset, selects a favorite piece of music to accompany his virtual undersea voyage, and holds the consoles that allow him to manipulate the patterns of fish as they swim through the water, around a sunken ship, or even into an octopus garden.

Afterward, he flashes a smile that could light up the Salt Lake City skyline. "It feels very cool being in control [of how the game plays out]," he says. "Whenever I play it, I feel better. It calms me down."

Staples' mother, Meg, will never forget the first time he played *Choreografish*. "When he took the goggles off, his face was pure and complete joy," she says. "I'd never seen that before. As a parent, that memory still chokes me up."

"It's great for people who have special needs," he adds. "If I had the game, I'd probably play it every day."

Johnny Staples played *Choreografish* several times during its development, and after each round, GApp Lab engineers, designers, and students solicited his feedback. His suggestions were often incorporated into the game. And Staples now has another idea: "In the octopus garden, I'd like to see them add a yellow submarine and some Beatles songs."

Roger Altizer MS'06 PhD'13, director of The GApp Lab, and director of digital medicine in the Center for Medical Innovation, loves the idea. "That would be awesome!" he says with a chuckle.

Quick! Someone call Paul McCartney!

Opening The GApp

Altizer founded The GApp Lab in 2013 after University of Utah Health approached him about developing digital programs to help train health care workers. Altizer, a forward thinker fascinated with the interplay of technology and health care, knows that the future of medical diagnostics includes video game technology.

A 2012 *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* study found that using video games improved 69% of psychological therapy outcomes, 59% of physical therapy outcomes, 50% of physical activity outcomes, 42% of pain distraction outcomes, and 37% of disease self-management outcomes.

That same year saw the launch of *Games for Health Journal*, a peer-reviewed publication highlighting game research and technology in the health care industry.

In June 2020, the FDA approved the first game-based digital therapeutic, *EndeavorRx*. Developed by Boston-based Akili Interactive Labs, the video game helps treat children with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. FDA support is important because it allows physicians to prescribe the game—just as doctors prescribe approved medications—and makes it possible for insurance companies to cover the cost of games for patients.

EndeavorRx's success gives hope to Altizer and others in The GApp Lab that the government has begun taking seriously the idea that video games can be used as treatment for some medical conditions.

Briefly, The GApp Lab is a collaboration supported by the U's Spencer S. Eccles Health Sciences Library, Center for Medical Innovation (CMI), Population Health Sciences department, and the College of Engineering's Entertainment Arts and Engineering program (EAE). The EAE program teaches students not only how to design video games, but how to cooperate with others to produce those products. In addition, students learn the business side of game and app production. And the idea for *Choreografish* grew out of the CMI, which is focused on developing and advancing medical digital technology.

"IT FEELS VERY COOL BEING IN CONTROL. WHENEVER I PLAY THE GAME, I FEEL BETTER. IT CALMS ME DOWN."

The U's EAE program was rated the world's No. 1 program of its type in a public university by The Princeton Review in 2020, and so far has generated more than 100 published student projects.

On any given day, The GApp Lab hums with activity as students and their mentors write code and design cutting-edge graphics that colorfully splash across video screens. The *thok-thok-thok* sounds of fingers hitting keyboards is like a musical soundtrack to all the intellectual creation.

Altizer says he started GApp because "I really want to make a difference in people's lives using digital medicine." And to those who question whether therapeutic video games have a place in the health care industry, he answers with a shrug, "In life, we all work too hard, and when medicine looks too much like work, people lose interest in it. I want to make health care playful again. When you ask patients when they were healthiest or happiest, it's those moments when they're at play, not at work."

From helping kids with cancer to treating older adults with depression, video games developed at the U are empowering patients and leading to better health.

But that doesn't mean he's all work and no PlayStation. "It's okay to shoot zombies and aliens once in awhile," he says with a laugh, referring to students whose goals are creating games worthy of inclusion in an Xbox console. "I spend half my day working on EAE students' games, and the other half on playful digital medicine at U of U Health."

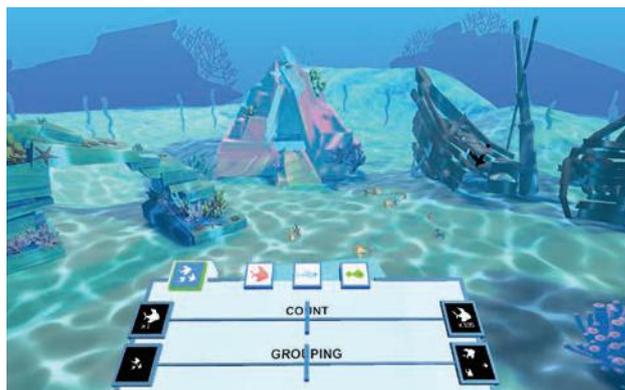
Controlling Reality

Eric Handman MFA'03, associate professor of modern dance, envisioned a video game played on a tablet that would help people on the autism spectrum develop an appreciation for dance. His idea: players would use music to create movement patterns among flocks of birds.

"I was intrigued with the idea of how pattern thinking was important both in dance and in those with autism," he says. "Dance is a social art form, and I wondered how people on the spectrum could access choreography on their own, without the social stress of being in an audience with other people."

He took his idea to Altizer; Cheryl Wright, professor of family and consumer studies; and Greg Bayles MA'16, a GApp Lab project manager. Altizer proposed changing the graphics to schools of fish, as research showed water was more calming to people with autism. In addition, the game went from being screened on a tablet to played with a virtual reality headset so users could tune out the outside world and create their own peaceful inner sanctum.

Bayles says feedback from players like Johnny Staples helped improve *Choreografish*. "What the users were most struck by was their ability to control the scene," Bayles says. "They wanted to stay longer and explore the environments we created. They liked being right in the middle of the fish as they virtually swam around the player."



Choreografish helps people with autism tune out the often overwhelming stimuli of the outside world.

The GApp Lab unveiled *Choreografish* at the Sundance Film Festival in 2017, and "we got a marvelous response," Altizer says. The game is currently looking for venture capital to help bring it to market, "but if that doesn't happen, we might just put it on the Internet for people to download," he says.

Empowering with Play

An 8-year-old boy fighting brain cancer inspired Grzegorz Bulaj, associate professor of medicinal chemistry, to create a video game to empower the youngster's mind against his illness.

"The boy, a nephew of my friend, enjoyed playing the prototype game," Bulaj remembers. "Later, I thought, 'What if we could create a therapeutic game to help children undergoing chemotherapy become mentally and physically stronger?'"

Collaborating with U pediatrician Carol Bruggers, The GApp Lab, and Spy Hop (a local nonprofit youth media organization), Bulaj's idea morphed into *Empower Stars*, a mobile game where kids can imagine themselves as superheroes on a mission to restore a barren planet while overcoming various challenges. The game is played on an iPad with motion sensors that detect hand movements, and daily rounds last for 30 minutes—long enough for children to get some mental and physical exercise but not to tire them out.

"TENDING A GARDEN IS LIKE TENDING TO YOUR AGING BRAIN. TO STAY HEALTHY, IT NEEDS ATTENTION AND CARE."

The game has its roots in the concept of patient empowerment, where players feel they can learn to control situations that may seem overwhelming, mirroring the serious illnesses they're dealing with.

Empower Stars was clinically tested by children with cancer, their parents, and health care providers. Bruggers and Bulaj hope to secure funding for further development, and ultimately to gain FDA approval of *Empower Stars* for pediatric oncology patients.

Nursing professor Lauri Linder BSN'89 MS'94 PhD'09 and The GApp Lab are developing another game for children facing tough medical issues. Because youngsters often are hesitant to talk about their illnesses with doctors, The GApp Lab introduced *Color Me Healthy*, where children describe the sensations and symptoms they feel in their bodies by coloring pieces of an avatar's body displayed on a tablet.

Bayles is excited by the interest generated by *Color Me Healthy*, which has received a number of grants from the National Institutes of Health and St. Baldrick's Foundation. "Our research shows the app has generated 40 percent more conditions and symptoms than just talking to the doctor," Bayles says. "Children see it as a fun and cool way to generate a report for clinicians."

Recharging the Brain

When Scott Gutting was diagnosed with mild cognitive impairment, he became depressed, fearful that he was on a slow slide toward more serious cognitive decline.

"After the diagnosis, the doctor basically sent me home saying there was nothing he could do to help me," Gutting remembers. "Well, no one was going to tell me that at my age I couldn't do anything to help myself. I decided to find some type of cognitive remediation."

His daughter, a professor at Columbia University, told him about studies of remediation in older adults—using specially

created video games—conducted at the U by Sarah Shizuko Morimoto, an associate professor of population health sciences. For more than a decade, Morimoto has designed video games that rejuvenate damaged circuits in the frontal lobe that seem to block the effectiveness of antidepressant medication. The brain games appear to improve cognitive functions while decreasing players' disability.

With The GApp Lab, Morimoto created *Neurogrow*, which involves planting and tending a virtual flower garden with actions like watering, fertilizing, and eliminating pesky bugs. Players get points for cultivating bouquets, which they can then award to friends, and move on to more complicated levels and garden plots.

"*Neurogrow* has a deeper, double meaning," Morimoto says. "Tending a garden is like tending to your aging brain. To stay healthy, your brain needs attention and care."

In their first clinical trial, Morimoto's team found that four weeks of *Neurogrow* provided relief for 60%-70% of patients who hadn't previously responded to antidepressant medication. In a subsequent clinical trial testing *Neurogrow* against another mentally stimulating computer program, 60%-70% of patients reported a 50% reduction in depressive symptoms.



Neurogrow is designed to help older adults with depression by planting and tending to a virtual garden.

"The game creates hope in patients, which is incredibly important for them to improve their mental abilities in the face of cognitive decline," she says. "We've optimized the game for seniors because aging brains react differently to medication than younger brains. Plus, using the game is a way to treat vulnerable people at home cost-effectively with evidence-based medicine."

Like *Empower Stars*, *Neurogrow* is undergoing clinical trials to prove its efficacy.

Gutting finds *Neurogrow* fun yet challenging. "Sometimes I get mad at the machine," he says with a chuckle. "The game really works my brain, but I do see a definite improvement. In fact, I find that when I take a week or two off, I miss it and my memory functions aren't as sharp."

Though Gutting's wife, Lesley Jones, isn't dealing with cognitive impairment issues, she plays the game, too. "Why wouldn't I do this?" she asks. "I want my brain to stay young."

Keeping people mentally fit is what The GApp Lab is all about, says Altizer, who takes pride in the people around him and the games they produce. "I work with so many talented people: artists, doctors, engineers, programmers, patients, and clinicians. And when I see how the games are helping people—that's an awesome, wonderful feeling." **U**

Benjamin Gleisser is a Toronto-based freelancer.

HOUSE OF GAMES

More than three dozen games and apps sure to significantly impact the way students will learn in their disciplines are in various stages of development in The GApp Lab. Here are just a few recent creations:

It's said that George Clooney knew nothing about hospitals when he began working on the TV show *ER*. Too bad he didn't have *TraumaXR*, which creates a virtual operating room for training surgeons and nurses. The app can also be used to prepare health care workers at rural or smaller urban hospitals for emergencies they may one day encounter.

Athletes with serious spinal cord injuries no longer have to leave the sports they enjoy. *TetraSail* is a game simulation jointly developed by the lab and the U's TRAILS program to provide systems that help tetraplegic individuals (those who are unable to move their upper and lower bodies) learn to control a modified water vessel by using a joystick and/or sip-and-puff controls. Similarly, *TetraSki* helps users master an alpine sit-ski chair. The goal of both games is to prepare players to get out on the open sea or onto the slopes.

What should a newly hired social worker look for when making an in-house inspection to check on the welfare of a child? Is a messy room *always* a red flag? To answer those questions, social worker Chad McDonald MSW'12 reached out to The GApp Lab to develop *Virtual Home Sim*, a game overseen by Jesse Ferraro MFA'13 that presents an array of virtual house interiors with embedded clues for social workers to remember when making real in-house visits.

To see more fascinating games developed in The GApp Lab, visit games.utah.edu/research/sampleprojects/





Sharp Contrast

The pandemic has widened the inequality gap for women, and the U is working to change that.

By Heather May | Illustrations by Hanna Barczyk

ASK YOURSELF, is it as socially acceptable for a man to hold a baby on a work video call as it is for a woman? That's just one scenario Jennifer Workman found herself wondering about last spring when the pandemic unexpectedly pushed her and her husband to work from home with no childcare.

"I think gender roles really come into play here," says Workman, a clinical researcher in pediatrics at the U. "If a baby cries during a Zoom meeting with the father on the call, the subtle undertone is: Shouldn't your wife, nanny, fill in the blank deal with this problem?"

It is precisely these kinds of unspoken, often subconscious assumptions that have led not only Workman but also millions of other women into taking on a disproportionate share of household duties since the pandemic hit. And while it may be true that men are more likely to become seriously ill from the coronavirus, when it comes to living through the social and economic upheavals of this situation, women arguably have it worse—especially those in the workforce.

More women have lost jobs during what some are calling the "she-cession." In September alone, 865,000 women left the job market, compared to 216,000 men, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. And women of color have fared the worst. In 2020, unemployment rates hit 16.4% for Black women and 20.2% for Hispanic women.

Mothers paid for work outside of the home have also shouldered the bulk of the unpaid labor of cleaning, caregiving, and overseeing schoolwork. This has led many to consider quitting or reducing work hours—putting at risk hard-won gains in achieving gender equality in the form of greater workforce participation and more equal pay. A recent UN report about the impact of COVID-19 on women and girls says that these issues, along with a lack of access to reproductive care and a spike in domestic violence, are worldwide concerns.

“Everybody who is vulnerable is more vulnerable. Everything that is unequal is more unequal: racial disparities, health outcomes, the digital divide, gender pay gap, domestic responsibilities,” says Claudia Geist, associate dean for research in the U’s School for Cultural and Social Transformation.

Researchers at the U are studying the fallout in real time, with the goal of making fundamental changes that could help women long after the pandemic ends. Here are five areas where the U is trying to do just that.

Childcare and Education

COVID-19 has exposed Utah’s (and the nation’s) serious childcare crisis. Even before the pandemic, Utah was ranked as one of the three worst states for lack of access to licensed childcare providers. The school closures and shifts to online and hybrid learning are highlighting how the modern workforce depends on children being in school. “There’s always been a presumption that women will be around to pick up the mess, and the mess is bigger this time,” says Jessie Richards PhD’16, assistant professor (lecturer) of management.

Geist says the care burden falls on women because in a dual-income household, “of course it makes sense that the person with the lower earnings cut back. And that is typically women in straight couples.” In Utah, women receive 70 cents per dollar received by men, leaving the state with the second-worst pay gap in the nation.

“Everybody who is vulnerable is more vulnerable. Everything that is unequal is more unequal.”

Because of added duties at home, many women are putting certain projects or initiatives on pause. Workman delayed submitting a grant to the NIH and is considering delaying seeking tenure, she says. “Will this be one more little hiccup along the road? Probably. It’s all these little things that add up along the way. Does it mean I will never be promoted? No. Will it take me longer to get there? Maybe.”

For many working mothers, the situation is bleak. Angie Fagerlin, chair of the Department of Population Health Sciences, surveyed nearly 6,000 U doctors, staff, and trainees about the pandemic’s impact on their careers and found childcare to be a top concern for U employees.

A large portion are considering leaving the workforce (42%) or reducing their work hours (51%) and are worried the pandemic has reduced their productivity and career development (39% and 77%). Women were twice as likely to say they considered leaving work altogether. “We are very concerned that we could lose a generation to three of women in science and in medicine,” says Fagerlin.

Parents said their top child care needs include tutoring, in-home childcare, and consultation with an education specialist. The top work-balance needs found in the survey include flexibility to work at home, as well as in scheduling meetings and clinic time; a work schedule plotted out at least a month in advance; and managers who understand their work struggles.

The U is now offering 10 hours of in-person tutoring per employee, reading assessments, and help for employees to find childcare and in-home providers. Future goals include deciding which policies could be changed statewide to help working parents.

Pregnancy Care and Research

More than 4,000 babies are delivered at U of U Health each year. When the pandemic began, the U already had the groundwork to offer virtual care to expecting mothers, thanks to a program launched two years ago by maternal-fetal medicine physician Erin Clark HBS’98 MS’09. Most patients now use the program, but before the pandemic, only about 10%-20% did.

“We know that pregnant women are more likely to have severe illness from COVID-19 and are more likely to require intensive care and to die,” Clark says. “The program was initially introduced as a way to provide more patient-centered prenatal care. Now it’s instrumental in our efforts to keep mothers and babies safe.”

But with so much rapid change, it’s still unknown if increased virtual visits for expecting mothers will affect outcomes. Torri Metz MS’12, associate professor of obstetrics and gynecology, is leading a national study to analyze medical records of 21,000 pregnant women to understand if the changes made to health care in the wake of the pandemic resulted in higher rates of complications and cesarean deliveries. It will also determine the risk of COVID-positive mothers passing the virus to their fetuses.

“The questions we will address in this study are ones that a lot of practitioners and women who are pregnant or are considering getting pregnant are asking themselves,” Metz says. “Hopefully, this study will illuminate some of the answers so that we can better counsel women on what to expect.”

U researchers have also been studying whether women even want to get pregnant during a pandemic. It’s a question Rebecca Simmons BS’05 MPH’11 PhD’16, a research assistant professor in family planning, has been asking in conjunction with a research partnership called the HER Salt Lake Contraceptive Initiative, which helps provide free birth control to women.

“A significant number reported it’s much more important for them to delay pregnancy right now than it was a year ago,” she explains. The women report being concerned about access to their providers, getting prescriptions, and being able to pay for birth control. The results suggest making a wide variety of birth control methods easily available to couples, says Simmons.

Division of Housework

On paper, 75 percent of heterosexual couples say they want to equally share the jobs of maintaining a household. When





asked why they don't, men normally cite lack of paid leave and an inability to telecommute, says Daniel Carlson, associate professor of family and consumer studies. But when the pandemic hit, those barriers disappeared. "You're now in the home. We're cutting all the domestic supports you have like childcare and schooling. What are you going to do?" Carlson asks.

The answer is mixed, according to a national survey Carlson led of 1,025 U.S. parents in heterosexual relationships last April. Both mothers and fathers reported an increase in sharing during the pandemic. Some 40% of couples reported sharing housework more equally (up from 26%) and about half (56%) reported sharing childcare equally (up from 45%). Men who worked from home exclusively, reduced their hours, or left their jobs spent more time doing childcare. They also stepped up when mothers were the primary earners.

Only a third of mothers reported that they shared domestic duties equally with their partners. Some women who did the majority of housework and childcare before the pandemic did even more during the shutdown.

"Egalitarianism isn't going to fall into your lap. Crafting this takes work, and it requires a very concerted effort by partners to communicate with each other to make this happen," Carlson says. "When things are ambiguous, we have these gendered constructs in our head. We have schematics of what men and women should do and what's appropriate for men and women to fall back on."

Domestic Violence

Domestic abuse jumps during times of crisis, and the COVID-19 pandemic has been no exception. Police departments and shelters in Utah and around the country recorded spikes of crisis calls during the spring when emergency orders closed workplaces and schools, leaving individuals isolated with their abusers.

While the lockdowns have lifted, the stressors that can lead to conflict have continued, with many Utahns still unemployed or working reduced hours, and children at home for school some or all of the time. These are also factors that isolate victims from potential helpers. At the same time, gun and alcohol sales, known predictors of domestic violence, are increasing.

"Ultimately, we are looking at many social forces combining at once: COVID-19, domestic violence, criminal justice reform, and the skyrocketing firearm sales in this state," says Sonia Salari, professor of family and consumer studies. "For families and organizations holding on by a thread, there is a perfect storm brewing. It is likely we will not understand the full magnitude of its consequences for years to come."

She and others are studying the impact of COVID on victims, shelters, police, and the courts. The goal is to make recommendations on what can be done to protect victims of intimate partner violence, elder abuse, child abuse, sexual assault, stalking, and human trafficking as we cope with the virus spread. "In a time of pandemic, there are other crises that happen too that are ongoing and can be exacerbated," says Annie Isabel Fukushima, assistant professor of ethnic studies, who is part of the study. "If you're losing jobs or being furloughed or your housing situation is precarious, you're more likely to stay in an abusive situation."

Last fall, the U also launched a new center focused on prevention of relationship and sexual violence on college campuses. The McCluskey Center for Violence Prevention now brings together the expertise of researchers, prevention educators, and students to bridge the gap between research and practice.

Mental Health

While almost no one is spared from COVID-19 stress, women are about three times as likely as men to report suffering from significant mental health consequences (27% vs. 10%), according to a study by nonprofit aid organization CARE. And 83% of women reported a significant increase in depression, compared to 36% of men since the pandemic began in a new study from Total Brain, a mental health app. Stress is even higher among communities of color, where individuals are more likely to have lost their jobs, been sickened, or died because of COVID-19.

Erika George, director of the Tanner Humanities Center, has been struck by how differently she and her Black friends are experiencing the pandemic—many are mourning loved ones lost to the disease—compared to some of her white friends who haven't been as impacted. "Universally, the people who've been disadvantaged in societies across the globe have borne the brunt of this."

"This is an opportunity to change how it's always been. Let's imagine something different..."

Lauren Weitzman BS'84, psychologist and director of the U's counseling center, says the chronic stress of the pandemic is "eating away at all of us in ways we're not aware of." She has been offering workshops to various departments to help the U community find ways to reduce stress, strengthen relationships, and practice self-compassion during this new normal.

Some tips she emphasizes include making rituals to divide work and home life and focusing attention on things within your control. You can't end the pandemic, for example, but you can decide which media to consume and find helpful distractions like browsing healthy recipes, updating your résumé, or taking part in an online book club.

Maintaining structure can also boost well-being. Schedule regular breaks, write weekly goals, identify a few "most important tasks" each day and cross them off as you go, write a to-do list the night before, tidy up workspaces at the end of the day, and create new weekly family traditions. Last of all, be kind to yourself, says Weitzman.

Along with the monumental changes we're all facing, the pandemic presents a chance to reimagine a new world, says George. "This is an opportunity to change how it's always been. Let's imagine something different that doesn't leave women with disproportionate care burdens." **U**

Heather May is a Salt Lake City-based freelance writer and former Salt Lake Tribune reporter.



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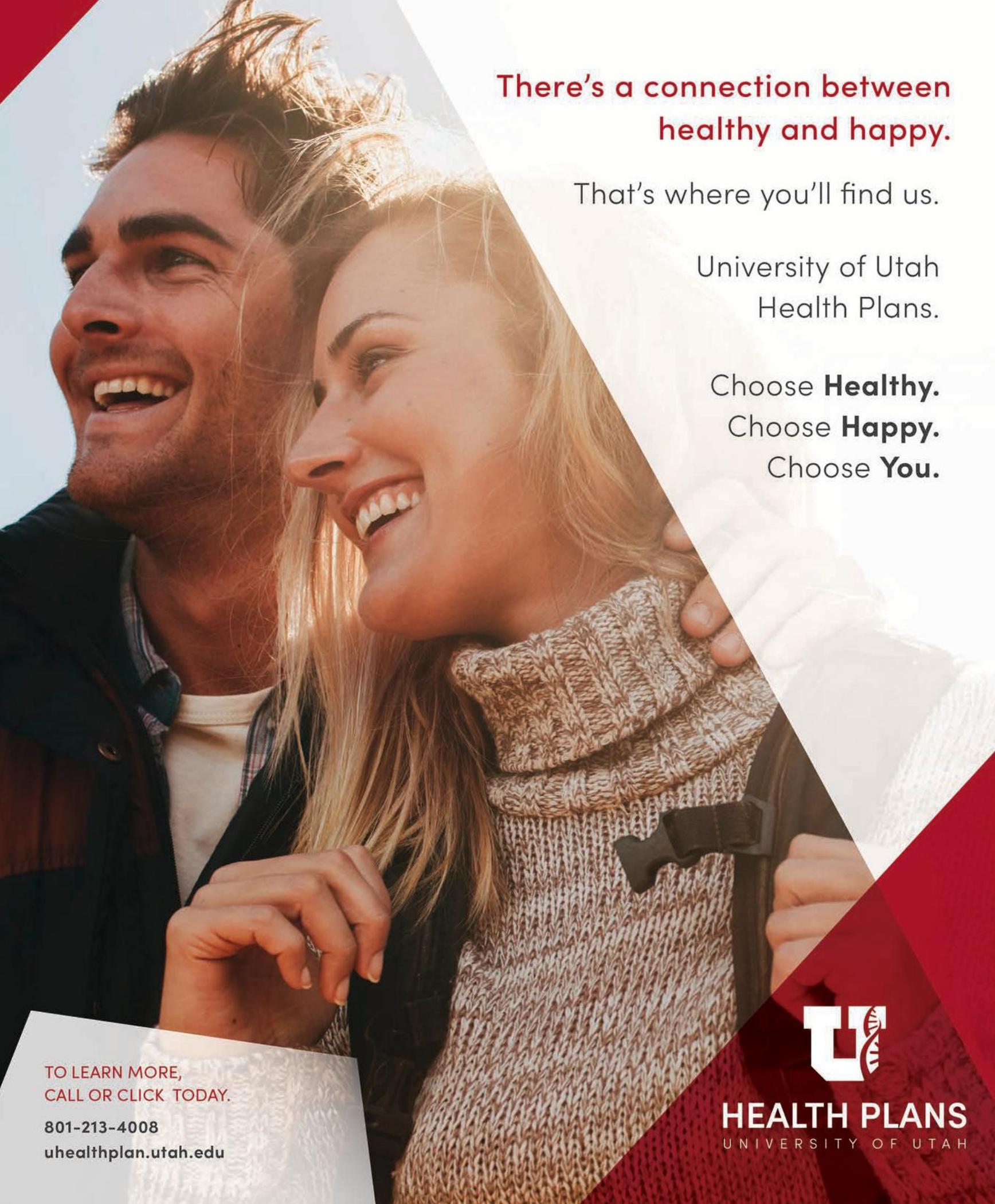
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PHOTO COURTESY SAN ANTONIO FOOD BANK

Feeding a Need

Deeply personal experience led this alum to helm one of the largest food banks in the country

Eric Cooper BA'98 had tracked his estranged father for weeks. At a shuttered transmission shop near Portland, Oregon, the trail went cold. Defeated, Cooper sat in the rental car sulking, wondering, praying: What now?

A homeless man ambled across the alley next to the shop. "Looking closer," Cooper remembers, "I realized it was my dad." Cooper's father had been staying in a trailer and survived thanks to the kindness of a local cannery owner who helped struggling people in the area. What began as a journey for Cooper to scold his father for having left his family with nothing became a catalyst. Returning home, the 24-year-old volunteered at the Utah Food Bank, where he was quickly hired and rose to deputy director. "Finding him homeless caused me to pivot from working for a startup to nonprofit," Cooper says. "I could no longer see someone in need as a stranger. I saw them as my dad."

In 2001, Cooper took the reins of the San Antonio Food Bank as the youngest

CEO in its history. Since then, the food bank has grown from a staff of 18 to a powerhouse of more than 250 employees moving 85 million pounds of food to people in need across 16 counties in southwest Texas.

"We run on just 2 percent administrative overhead and are normally among the top 10 nonprofits in the U.S.," Cooper says. "For every \$1 we take in, we can provide seven meals. That kind of ROI is encouraging to 'investors' who support the food bank. Those are business principles I learned at the U."

But it's not just business for Cooper. Those who work closely with him note his genuine care for those in need. "The food bank has weekly mega-distributions where we provide food for 1,000-2,000 families," says Alejandra Sanchez, Cooper's assistant. "Eric has been to every single distribution." At one, Sanchez recalls, Cooper met a family who also needed food for their cat. "He personally made sure their whole family—including their pets—didn't go hungry."

Cooper's philosophy on hunger involves adopting a three-tier strategy. Food for today means addressing the immediate need for nourishment with groceries or a hot meal. Food for tomorrow seeks to stabilize households by connecting them to long-term resources, like SNAP. Food for a lifetime is about helping people become self-reliant through workforce development and job placement as well as nutrition and meal preparation classes.

"Hunger is a bigger symptom of poverty," Cooper says. "But when someone is hungry, you can't start to address their other problems until you've solved that one."

The economic hardships posed by the COVID-19 pandemic have challenged food banks across the country, including in San Antonio. Over the course of 2020, Cooper notes, "We went from feeding about 60,000 people per week to 120,000."

Pondering the role of the food bank and helping the poor, during the pandemic and beyond, is a nearly ever-present reality for Cooper. "People have to choose whether to insert themselves into that equation," he says. "Time and again, I see that when they do, they receive more than they were offering. That's certainly been true for me."

AARON LOVELL



Giavonni Lewis MS'16

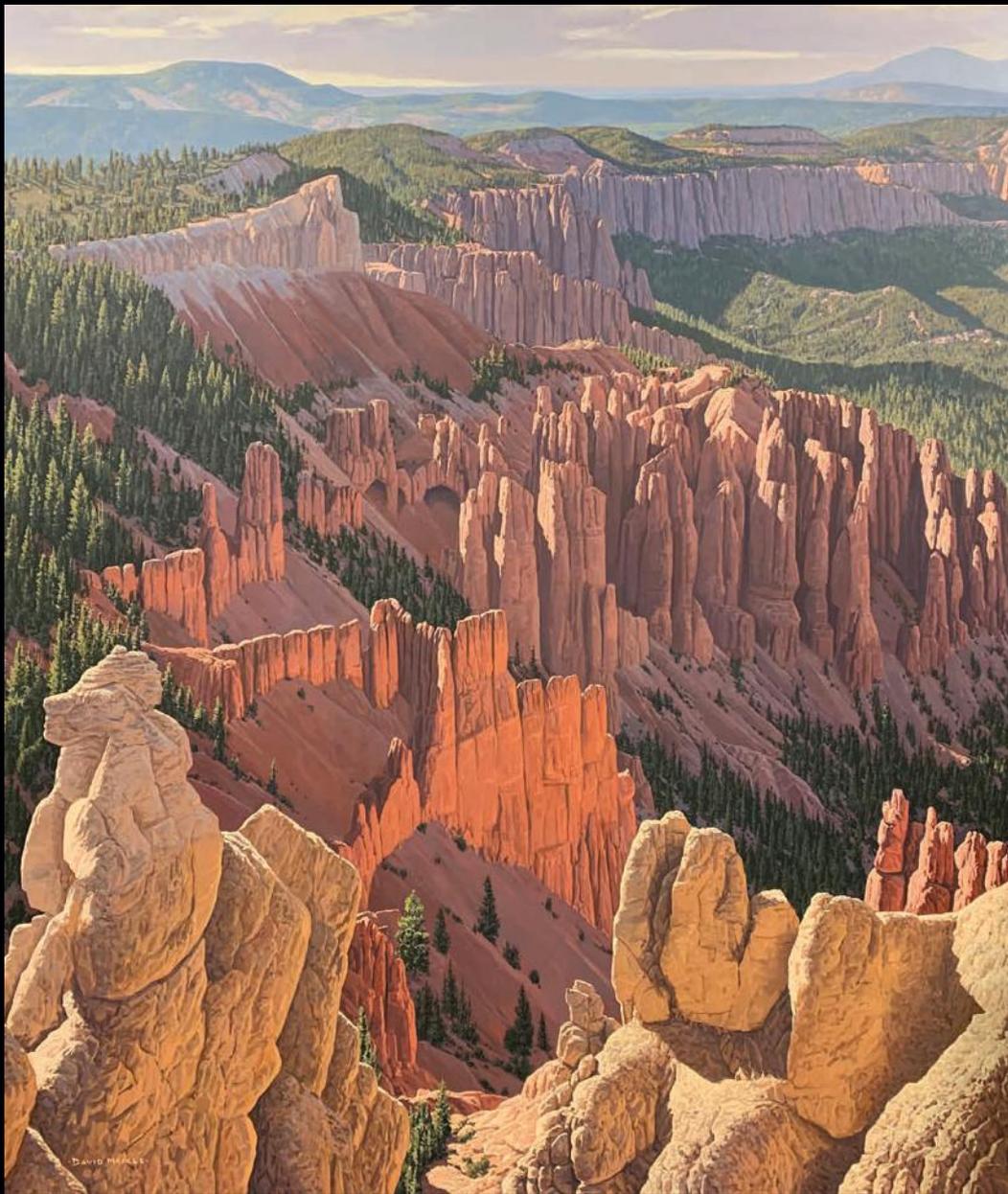
A burn surgeon with U of U Health

“I’m originally from Florida. I completed my general surgery residency at Loyola Medical Center in the Chicago area. That’s where my interest in burn began. Many of the burn patients came in with what seemed insurmountable psychosocial issues. They barely had the ability to cope with normal life—and now they have burns on top of that.

For me, surgery has always felt like a gift, in a way. Every procedure is a moment where you impact someone’s life. I think about the individual that I’m operating on and try to channel what each patient needs from me in that moment. I feel hugely responsible for their surgery and their outcomes. If it’s a kiddo, I’m with them until they’re 18 and they’ve grown through all of their grafts. For adults, it’s at least a year or two, when their grafts are stabilized. They will see the grafts forever. It’s a part of their life. And I want to make sure they have as good a result as possible.

I try to remember that each person who arrives in my clinic is already feeling vulnerable. It’s important to have a nonjudgmental space that’s open for communication.

To do that, I have to remind myself that I’m more than just my job. For example, triathlons remind me that I have physical capabilities beyond being a surgeon. When I dance, paint, or play my clarinet—or do anything outside of work—I’m reminded of the beauty of life and why people want to get back to it. My hobbies help me keep an even temper and provide a calm, safe space for the patients to thrive.”



The U's Own Monet

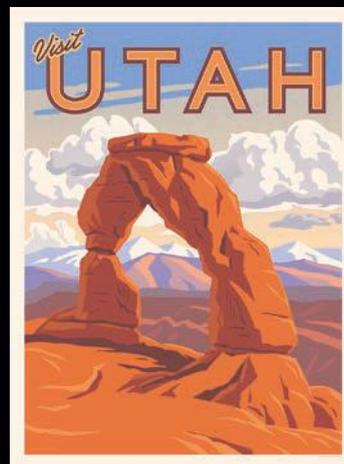


You've seen his artwork on the Welcome to Utah signs as you drive into the state. And you've probably strolled past it at the City Creek

Center mall and Salt Lake City Airport. You may have even bought one of his postcards from the 2002 Olympics. But what you may not know is that the artist behind these memorable landscape paintings is an alum and a nearly 30-year employee of the U.

David Meikle BFA'94 MFA'06 has worked for his alma mater as a graphic designer and now art director while he honed his skills as a landscape painter on the side. "I love the red rocks and the mountains. I love painting what I live with, what I understand, and how I see the world around me," he says. A few of his paintings are shown here.

Another place you've seen his work is as a designer and illustrator for this very publication on and off since 1992, just a year after its inception as *Continuum* magazine.



(TOP) *BRYCE CANYON*, 72" X 84" OIL ON CANVAS, 2019; (LEFT) *WELCOME TO SALT LAKE CITY*, DIGITAL, 2018; (RIGHT) *DELICATE ARCH*, DIGITAL, 2002



Web Extra See his studio and learn more about one of the U's most accomplished resident artists in a video at magazine.utah.edu/painting

ROUNDUP



Founders Day 2021

What started in 1850 as the University of Deseret with just 25 students has grown to provide education for 30,000+ students annually as the University of Utah. To celebrate 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 annually by the U. This year's event on Feb. 25 is virtual and open to all. For more info, visit alumni.utah.edu/foundersday.

Pay it Forward

Did you receive a scholarship from U Alumni? We'd love to hear about it. We'll be posting some of the highlights on social media to promote the U's Giving Day this Feb. 23-24. Help pay it forward to future deserving U students by sharing your story with scholarshipstory@alumni.utah.edu.



Meals to Heal

More than 150,000 meals down, and under 850,000 to go. The Office of Alumni Relations and U of U Health

launched Meals to Health with the goal of donating one million meals to the Utah Food Bank by June. Visit alumni.utah.edu/mealstoheal to see the many ways you can participate.

Alumni Connection

Stay connected with our alum e-newsletter, *Alumni Connection!* Read stories from fellow alums, info about virtual events, ways to get involved with your alma mater, and more. If you're not receiving this email, subscribe at alumni.utah.edu/alumniconnection.



KRISTIN MURPHY, DESERET NEWS

Lucas, a 6-year-old boy with cancer, was able to fulfill his dream of being a policeman thanks to Make-A-Wish Utah. He patrolled the streets and even fought off bad guys with the help of some Marvel superheroes.

Granting Wishes

U alums are making dreams come true for severely ill kids

The COVID-19 pandemic isn't stopping Make-A-Wish Utah CEO Jared Perry BS'01 from creating magical experiences for kids with critical illnesses.

"Before COVID, 80 percent of wishes involved travel," says Perry, who also serves on the Make-A-Wish Foundation of America's advisory board. "Today, we're doing things closer to home, like making over a child's bedroom or spending time in a recording studio. One child in a wheelchair dreamed of being a firefighter for a day, and I'm happy to say we made that happen."

Perry and his team—including several U alumni—work with more than 250 volunteers to produce lasting memories that take children's minds off the difficult medical issues they're facing. "The experience takes them from where they are to where they could be," he says. "It gives them the emotional and physical strength to look forward."

Perry takes part in as many wishes as he can. One of his favorites: Allowing Lucas, a 6-year-old boy with cancer, to fulfill his dream of being a policeman. Lucas was deputized by the mayor of Salt Lake City, given his own uniform, taken on a street patrol... he even visited a donut shop. Then his squad car got a call—help was needed at Hogle Zoo. Pronto! A helicopter flew Lucas to the zoo, where costumed Marvel superheroes were waiting. Together, they rounded up the bad guys, and Utah Gov. Gary Herbert

proclaimed Lucas Day in his honor.

"Seeing the happiness on Lucas's face made everything worthwhile," remembers Perry, who previously served as executive director of the University of Utah Hospital Foundation. "Make-A-Wish is all about people coming together to make wishes possible." He pauses a moment, then adds, "It's the kind of job that makes me go home and hug my kids."

Two of the physicians on the National Medical Advisory Council that Perry works with are also part of the U community: Deborah Bilder, a child psychiatrist with U of U Health (who completed the U's triple board residency program in pediatrics and psychiatry), and Debra Regier MD'09. Bilder specializes in planning wishes for youngsters who can't communicate their desires due to cognitive disabilities. "I'll walk into a child's room and see what the child loves," she says. "What pictures are on the walls, which animals are there, which books are they enamored with? Then we'll make plans around that."

And Regier, the director of education at the Children's National Rare Disease Institute in Washington, D.C., says her greatest joy is helping realize wishes not just for children, but also their parents. "Being able to show a family that the community supports them in creating happy memories is a really beautiful thing," she says.

BENJAMIN GLEISSER

Class Notes

'50s

Kenneth “Larry” DeVries BS'59 PhD'62, an Emeritus Distinguished Professor of Mechanical Engineering with the U, was awarded the Distinguished Examination Service Award from the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying. DeVries, who served at the U for more than 55 years, was honored for dedicated service to the organization as well as the engineering and surveying professions.

'60s

The National Academy of Inventors has released a new video about the legacy of **Gerald Stringfellow** BS'64, a Distinguished Professor of both Electrical and Computer Engineering as well as Materials Science and Engineering at the U. The video profiles Stringfellow's contributions to the development of light-emitting diodes, a technology that came to benefit everything that uses LEDs, from traffic lights to computer monitors.

'70s



Maureen O'Hara Ure

Maureen O'Hara Ure BFA'70 MFA'79 was featured in Phillips Gallery's video series highlighting artists whose work was included in their exhibit *Our Global*

Climate Crisis. A professor (lecturer) in Art/Art History at the U, O'Hara Ure's primary creative works are paintings on panel adapted from her travel sketchbooks. She has a book on Romanesque Burgundy and more recently has worked on paintings and a book in response to travel in Spain.

'80s

Kris Newby BS'81 published *Bitten: The Secret History of Lyme Disease and Biological Weapons*, which recently won a Nautilus Award for Journalism & Investigative Reporting. *Bitten* dives into the mystery surrounding Lyme—one of the

most controversial and misdiagnosed conditions of our time—and of Willy Burgdorfer, the Lyme microbe's discoverer, who developed bug-borne bioweapons during the Cold War and believed that the Lyme epidemic was started by a military experiment gone wrong.

Kevin Hanson MFA'84's short film *ibex* had its international premiere this September at the 10th annual Festival de Cine—Arte en la Frontera, held for the first time in two cities, Cúcuta, Colombia, and San Cristóbal, Venezuela. An associate professor in the U's Film & Media Arts Department, Hanson has a diverse mix of professional film credits and has produced his own narrative, documentary, and experimental film projects.



Cindy Furse

Cindy Furse BS'86 MS'88 PhD'94, professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, received the 2020 Chen-To Tai Distinguished Educator Award for motivating, challenging,

educating, and inspiring the next generation of electromagnetics engineers. Furse is a fellow in the National Academy of Inventors, co-founder of LiveWire Innovation, and a groundbreaking leader in the flipped classroom teaching method.

Salt Lake City attorney **Michael Patrick O'Brien** JD'86 authored *Monastery Mornings*. The book documents his spiritual formation, exploring his childhood memories of the monks in Utah's former Trappist monastery, which became a second home to his family. Now a shareholder in the Salt Lake office of Jones Waldo, O'Brien is a litigator with specialties in employment law and First Amendment law.



David Grainger

David Grainger PhD'87 received the European Society for Biomaterials International Award for his dedication to research and global collaboration. Grainger is a

Distinguished Professor and chair of the Department of Biomedical Engineering as well as a Distinguished Professor of Pharmaceutics and Pharmaceutical Chemistry at the U.

John Kimball ex'89, a founding executive of Real Salt Lake, took leave

SPOTLIGHT



Three U alumni were involved in a University of South Carolina project to erect a statue of Richard T. Greener, the university's first Black professor, who went on to become a widely recognized lawyer, scholar, U.S. diplomat, and activist. In 2001, **Jon Tuttle** BS'82, a professor at Francis Marion University, wrote a play about Greener as part of USC's bicentennial. Several years later, **Katherine Reynolds Chaddock** PhD'94 discovered Greener's legacy and began a dialogue about honoring him, involving others including fellow USC faculty member **Christian Anderson** BA'95 MPA'98. Anderson notes, “None of us knew each other at the U... it was just a funny coincidence that we all ended up in S.C. and doing this work related to Greener.” Making the statue a reality required a grassroots process that took more than seven years. As Anderson explains, “It all must start with two simple questions: Who is and isn't recognized on our campus? And why?”

from his role as president of Vivint Arena to return to the club as interim president of Utah Soccer, providing experienced leadership during an ownership transition.

Lauri Linder BS'89 MS'94 PhD'09 developed a game-based symptom reporting app called *Color Me Healthy*. Linder and her team at the U's College of Nursing co-designed the app with elementary school-age children with cancer.

'90s

Cheyenne physician **Robert Monger** MD'92 has been named the new clinical dean for the WWAMI (Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho) Medical Education Program at the University of Wyoming. A rheumatology specialist, Monger has about 30 years of experience in medicine.



Kam Leang

U Mechanical Engineering Professor **Kam Leang** BS'97 MS'99 has been elected a fellow of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers—a status

only about 4 percent of its 83,000 members nationwide achieve. Leang's research focuses on mechatronics (combining dynamic systems, control, and robotics engineering), including autonomous drones. He has published more than 135 technical papers and is an associate editor for the *Mechatronics* journal.

'00s



Michael C. Wright

Michael C. Wright BA'02 now heads W. W. Norton & Company's College Department, which publishes textbooks and digital courseware used by students

around the world. Its publishing list also includes the legendary Norton Anthologies, Norton Critical Editions, and outstanding books in composition such as *The Norton Book of Composition Studies* by well-known U professor Susan Miller.

Steven Smith BS'04 is the senior vice president of team security for the Utah Jazz. He has spent about 10 years in se-

curity, guest experience, and more with Larry H. Miller Sports & Entertainment.



Sara Wallace

Sara Wallace BS'04 DPT'09, a U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs physical therapist, was awarded the Signe Brunnström Award for Excellence in Clinical Teaching from the American Physical Therapy Association. Wallace practices at the Wahlen VA Medical Center in Salt Lake.

Dustin Updike PhD'06 is conducting research at the MDI Biological Laboratory in Bar Harbor, Maine. Updike's work could offer an alternative to stem cell therapy for the regeneration of organs and tissues damaged by disease or injury. The research, recently published in the journal *Genetics*, is aimed at recreating the properties of germ cells, which have the potential to create an entirely new organism.

Nicholas Dunn BFA'07 won the annual Risk Theatre Modern Tragedy Competition with his play *The Value*, besting 134 other playwrights and earning a \$9,000 cash prize. Dunn has acted onstage with Pioneer Theatre Company

and on film with Magnolia Pictures. His playwrighting has also been featured at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in Scotland, he has a script coordinated for HBO, and he also owns his own film production company.

Makenzie Peterson BS'07 MS'09 is a well-being specialist with the Association of American Veterinary Medical Colleges, a position created as part of an initiative to support the mental health of students, faculty, and staff at member institutions.

'10s



Mayra Cedano

Mayra Cedano BA'10 is executive director at Comunidades Unidas, which is at the forefront of the immigrant rights and justice movement in Utah. Born in Jalisco, Mexico, Cedano immigrated to the U.S. at age 11. "I started my activism in the immigrant rights movement when I was 15 years old, when, for the first time, I marched to the state capitol to demand a halt on immigration raids," she notes. "A few months after graduation, I started working at Comunidades Unidas."

Abby Ellis BA'11 directed and produced a FRONTLINE documentary, *Flint's Deadly Water*, which was nominated for a Peabody Award. The awards honor the most powerful, enlightening, and invigorating stories in television, radio, and online media. The documentary unfolds the unreported toll of Flint, Michigan's water crisis.



Kris Macias

Kris Macias BS'11 MED'19 works with undocumented students and mixed-status families from college access to graduation as the new director for the U's Dream Center. Macias was a part of the U's TRIO Programs as both a student and leader for nearly 17 years.

Adam Wallace BS'14 published a children's book about COVID-19, *The Day My Kids Stayed Home*, to help parents and teachers discuss the virus with children and teach them about how we can stay healthy. Wallace has been an emergency medical technician for 11 years and is pursuing a master's degree in public health at the University of South Florida.

SPOTLIGHT



STEVE GRIFFIN, DESERET NEWS

John Arthur BA'10 is Utah's 2021 Teacher of the Year. With mostly students of color in his sixth-grade class at Salt Lake's Meadowlark Elementary, Arthur seeks to demonstrate that they can grow up to be and do anything. A big part of his strategy is encouraging them to push themselves with competitive chess. Growing up "a shy Korean boy," Arthur himself was finally urged in ninth grade to join the Model United Nations, changing his trajectory. He now wants his own students to learn that nothing is off-limits to them just because of the color of their skin. He also advocates for more minorities in the state's teaching force, as well as "more culturally responsive practices in the classroom."

Kyle Kuzma BS'17 became just the fourth Utah men's basketball alum to go on to win an NBA Championship, joining **Arnie Ferrin** BS'66, **Michael Doleac** BS'02, and **Andrew Bogut** ex'05. Kuzma's Los Angeles Lakers defeated the Miami Heat in six games to capture the title in the NBA Bubble in Orlando, Florida, last fall. Kuzma's three years at Utah from 2014 to 2017 were a huge part of his development, and he made first-team All-Pac-12 in 2016-17 before graduating from the U with a degree in sociology and being drafted. "Congrats to our guy Kuz," Utah Men's Basketball Coach Larry Krystkowiak wrote on Twitter. "Been in that bubble a long time, and we are proud of you and the Lakers for your perseverance."

Brendan Darraugh BA'19 received a Fulbright Study Award to Germany. Darraugh used his grant to enter the master's program in national and international public administration and policy at the University of Potsdam.



Daneesha Provo

Former U women's basketball shooting star **Daneesha Provo** BS'19 BS'20 signed a pro contract with Eisvögel USC Freiburg in Germany's Damen-Basketball-Bundesliga (DBBL), the country's premier women's basketball league.



Kaedan O'Brien

Kaedan O'Brien MS'19 was awarded a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship. Now pursuing a doctorate in anthropology at the U, O'Brien researches African Pleistocene paleoecology, ecomorphology, and paleoanthropology, with particular focuses on Equidae and migration in eastern Africa.

'20s

Outstanding former U gymnast **MaKenna Merrell-Giles** BS'20 is a club coach at All American Gymnastics in Lindon, Utah, the same gym she grew up in. A 2019 U team co-captain, she was a nine-time All-American, Pac-12 vault champion, and regional floor champion, and earned two perfect 10.0 scores, among numerous other gymnastics honors. Merrell-Giles was also recognized several times for her academic achievement.



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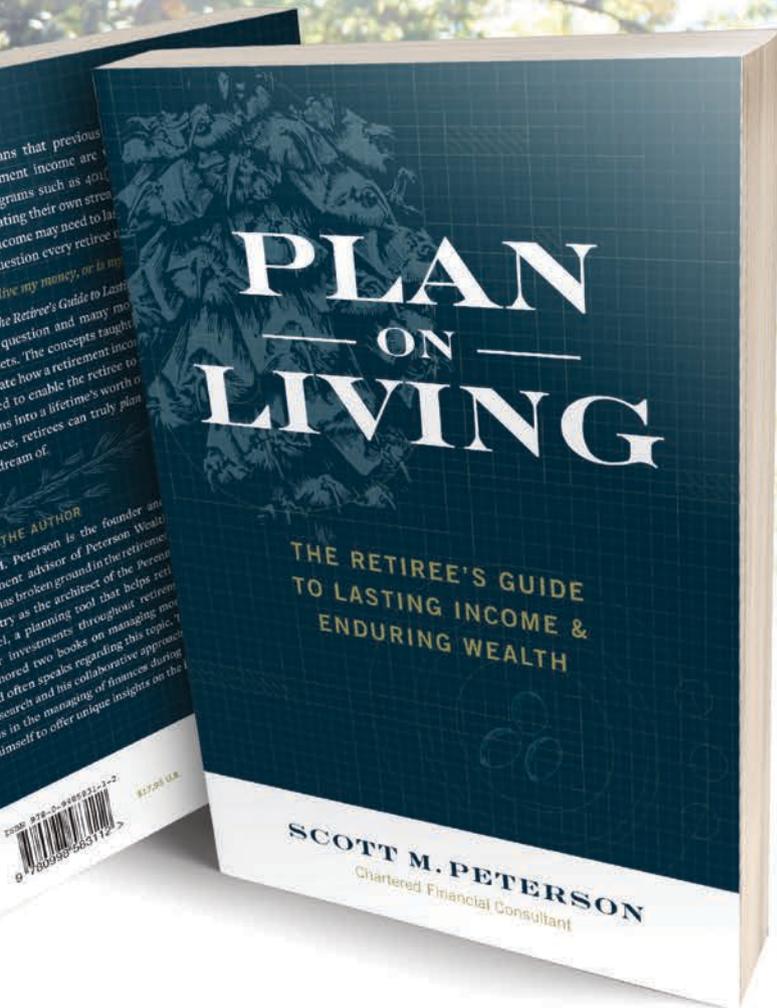
SPOTLIGHT



Jeremy Horton BS'01 has devoted his career to the design, development, and manufacturing of medical devices. He is currently general manager of the thermoplastics division of Flexan, LLC, which pivoted to become a key player in the battle against the novel coronavirus. "We realized that we had the equipment and ability to produce nasal swabs for COVID-19 testing," he says. "The only problem was, we had never made one before!" His company developed, scrapped, and redeveloped manufacturing processes until they figured it out. "There were early mornings and late nights—many of them," he adds, but "within just a few weeks of kicking off the idea, we were shipping over 100,000 nasal swabs per day to testing locations around the country."

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* Sharpe, William E; Scott, Jason S; & Watson, John G. "Efficient Retirement Financial Strategies." July 2007 - Sharpe, Scott and Watson are not affiliated with Peterson Wealth Advisors.

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Turbulent Times

Just over 50 years ago, *Daily Utah Chronicle* offices were occupied, the ROTC building was fire-bombed, classes were disrupted, and, as shown in this photo, thousands of students marched on campus to protest the Vietnam War and shocking killings at Kent State. On May 7, 1970, several hundred students attended a sit-in outside administration offices, and 81 of them were arrested for refusing to leave. The students sought agreements from university leadership including greater freedom of speech and barring the National Guard from campus. In a letter to the editor in the *Chronicle*, student Max Smart said, "Our protests will show Salt Lake, Utah, and America that we will not allow Americans to be needlessly killed."



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