

Exemplary Collaboration Award

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Child and Family Studies Chair Paul Schvaneveldt leads both the Weber State Family Literacy Program and Healthy Relationship Project. The programs, housed in the Jerry & Vickie Moyes College of Education, have extensive collaborations with 16 agencies and groups that serve lower-income and ethnically diverse individuals and families in Weber and Davis counties.

Together the programs empower families to support and prepare children to be successful students and citizens, which helps break the cycle of poverty. The specific goals of the WSU Family Literacy Program are to mentor and train Ogden-Weber Head Start parents to be more engaged in their children's literacy activities and to teach discipline and child-guidance skills.

"Thanks to the concerted efforts of Dr. Schvaneveldt and the Family Literacy Program, children leave our program (Head Start) ready for kindergarten, and our parents improve their skills interacting and engaging with their children," wrote Shawnell Howard, Head Start program manager, in a nomination letter. "Dr. Schvaneveldt has clearly demonstrated his commitment to the children and families in our community."

The Healthy Relationship Project fosters communication and relationship skills for individuals and couples to prevent unhealthy or abusive relationships. Evaluations of the relationship project reveal increased communication and conflict resolution skills, healthy views of safe relationships and more positive family interactions.

Each semester WSU students actively participate in the programs' home visits, classroom teaching and evaluation. Together the programs serve more than 500 families annually. Some of the partnering community organizations include the Ogden-Weber Community Action Partnership, United Way of Northern Utah, Your Community Connection and Catholic Community Services of Utah.

Several foundations provide funding and supplies, including the Utah Department of Human Services, the Glasmann Foundation, UBS Optimus Foundation, George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Foundation and Deseret Industries.

The Hinckley and Collaboration awards were bestowed at a luncheon at WSU March 19.

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