



**WEBER STATE
UNIVERSITY**

ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021

Dear Weber State Family:

One hundred years ago this fall, seated among the first-year students at Weber Normal College was a young man who did not attend high school and whose family farm had financially collapsed. Fortunately, a Weber faculty member helped him enroll in school and find odd jobs to pay tuition. This pivotal step enabled **J. Willard Marriott** to complete his two-year degree, then his four-year degree, and then go on to build what would arguably become one of the world's largest hospitality companies.

Recently, his son **Richard Marriott** expressed his appreciation.

"It all started with **Aaron Tracy**," he told me. "If Aaron had not worked with my dad and gotten him into Weber... we might still be out in Marriott, Utah, herding sheep."

Over the last century, many have taken up the mantle of Aaron Tracy: meeting students where they are, challenging and guiding them to meet their goals academically and in life. These stories continue to unfold at Weber State year in and out, as our faculty and staff unleash their creative potential to help students seize the best life offers, even during a global pandemic.

WSU graduates featured in this issue include **April Callister**, a renowned nutrition expert, **Mindy Robert**, who launched an adaptive yoga program for MS patients, and **Timber Erickson**, who developed the idea of a wildlife overpass along I-84. They represent just a few of the stories that demonstrate how students go Ever Upward at Weber. It's the Weber way, and, in this issue, we happily share news of continued progress at the university.

Through the pandemic, we carry on our tradition of student success.

Best,



Brad L. Mortensen



Our Plan in Action

WSU faculty, staff, students and other key stakeholders recently helped inform and craft Weber State University's new strategic plan, guiding the institution through 2026. Along with marketing and branding, goals were set in the following areas:



EQUITY,
DIVERSITY &
INCLUSION



RETENTION &
COMPLETION



PERSONAL
CONNECTIONS
& ACADEMIC
EXCELLENCE



COMMUNITY
ANCHOR
MISSION

Throughout the publication, look for these symbols where stories connect to our strategic plan goals.

For more details on the plan's goals and strategies to achieve them, visit weber.edu/strategic-plan.

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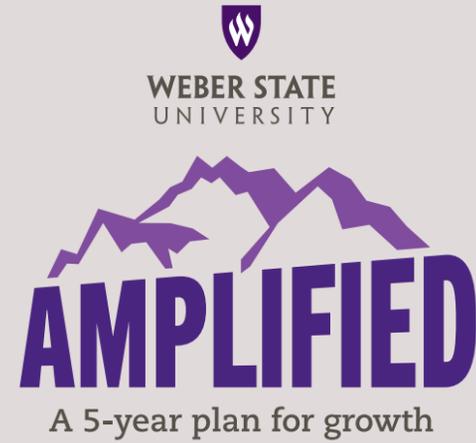
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LEARNING

at Weber



AMID UNCERTAINTY, TOWN HALL DIRECTED *Dreamers* TO RESOURCES

WSU's Office of Access & Diversity committed itself to helping Dreamers find answers about their DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) status amid uncertainty this past year.

In June 2020, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of DACA, allowing new applicants to apply and current recipients to renew their status without fear of losing renewal funds. Even then, many Dreamers were living in uncertainty, waiting to see if another method would be found to take away their protected status.

In the same month, the Office of Access & Diversity held a town hall with immigration attorneys, diversity officials, mental health advocates and others to answer questions and direct undocumented students to available resources. Students were allowed to attend the virtual meeting anonymously, so they could ask any questions without fear of repercussions.

"It's up to us to try to guide students in the right direction and help them find answers when none are being given," said **Cristian Gutierrez**, WSU's DACA/undocumented specialist with the Office of Access & Diversity.



Estimated number of
WSU DACA students

50

Town Hall attendees

27



APRIL CALLISTER *found her passion at WSU* AND BECAME A RENOWNED EXPERT IN IT

The title of spring 2021 graduate **April Callister's** 15-page academic manuscript is impressive: *Effect of Indigenous Diet Iron Content and Location on Hemoglobin Levels of Ghanaians*. Equally impressive, as an undergraduate studying sports nutrition education, she had her manuscript published in the journal *Nutrients*, a big deal in science and nutrition fields. Perhaps even more impressive are the invitations Callister received to present her work at some of the world's largest gatherings of food and nutrition experts, including The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' 2020 Food and Nutrition Conference and Expo, and The American Society for Nutrition's annual flagship meeting, Nutrition 2021. But what's truly astounding, is that Callister volunteered to write the research paper; it wasn't a class assignment.

Previously, she had partnered on a required project with **David Aguilar-Alvarez**, assistant professor of nutrition. Later, he asked if she'd be interested in a second collaboration. "He said, 'Hey, I think this would be an opportunity; it would give you a lot of great experience,'" Callister recalled. "So, I was able to work on the project with a group of professors who thought I was up to the task."

Callister's research involved analyzing data previously collected by Weber State professors who traveled to Ghana to record food consumed by people in five different Ghanaian cities. The researchers also drew blood samples. Once Callister's team analyzed the data, they found that the people who ate more iron-rich foods had higher hemoglobin levels, which meant they were less likely to suffer from iron-deficiency anemia. The goal was to find community-specific solutions to the widespread problem of the condition. "Because something that may work in Ogden, Utah, probably isn't going to work in Ghana," Callister said. Given her passion for her topic and her exciting opportunities to discuss it with global audiences, you can only imagine her disappointment when every conference she planned to attend was moved to an online format because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"I was kind of bummed," she admitted. "I think there's lower engagement when it's online, but the fact that I was accepted alongside these bigger researchers was pretty crazy."

Callister's next educational adventure awaits at the University of Costa Rica, where she will pursue a master's degree in clinical nutrition of noncommunicable diseases. Then, hopefully, it's on to a physician's assistant program. "My hope is to use the understanding of nutrition and medicine to improve healthcare wherever I'm living," she said. Wherever that is, Callister will remember WSU's nutrition program and Aguilar-Alvarez. "I would have had no idea how to be able to do this or even that it was a possibility had he not approached me," she said.

Callister's story is an inspiring example of what makes Weber State so great, Great, GREAT: professors who know how to challenge their students and care enough to do it, and students who are willing to go the extra mile to enrich their college experience. "I've actually gone to three different universities, and the opportunities and mentorship I've had at Weber State are not available everywhere," she maintains. "They are so incredibly unique to Weber."





First Class OF DOCTORS

The Dumke College of Health Professions and the Annie Taylor Dee School of Nursing celebrated the graduation of 12 Doctor of Nursing Practice students, the first cohort to complete the program, as part of the class of 2021.



Creating A CROSSING

TIMBER ERICKSON'S SENIOR THESIS COULD HELP SAVE ANIMALS AND MOTORISTS



For his senior thesis, Timber Erickson BS '20 examined locations in Davis, Weber, Morgan, Cache, Summit and Rich counties for a wildlife overpass similar to the one built in Parleys Canyon in 2018. If built, it would eliminate a death trap for deer, elk and moose along a stretch of I-84, making the road safer for motorists and animals.

Using the DNR roadkill data, Erickson estimated that there were 353 car collisions with deer, elk and moose near the Henefer site, totaling at least \$1.2 million in insurance claims over a three-year period.

Drawing upon the skills he learned while earning his advanced certificate in geospatial analysis in Weber State's geography department, Erickson used roadkill data and animal habitat maps from the Utah Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to find habitat areas that are fragmented by major roads.

Though he submitted his thesis in November 2020, Erickson plans to continue work on the project for several years. He wants to publish his research in a scientific journal, share the results with several government entities that would need to approve the overpass, and collaborate with Dorsey and other Weber State advisors to explore raising private funds for the project.

"Essentially, he's looking at how to connect wildlife migration corridors that sometimes cross state, or even interstate, roadways," said Erickson's advisor, Bryan Dorsey, professor of geography.

The project gave Erickson a chance to apply his lifelong passion. He's loved geography and maps since he was 4 years old.

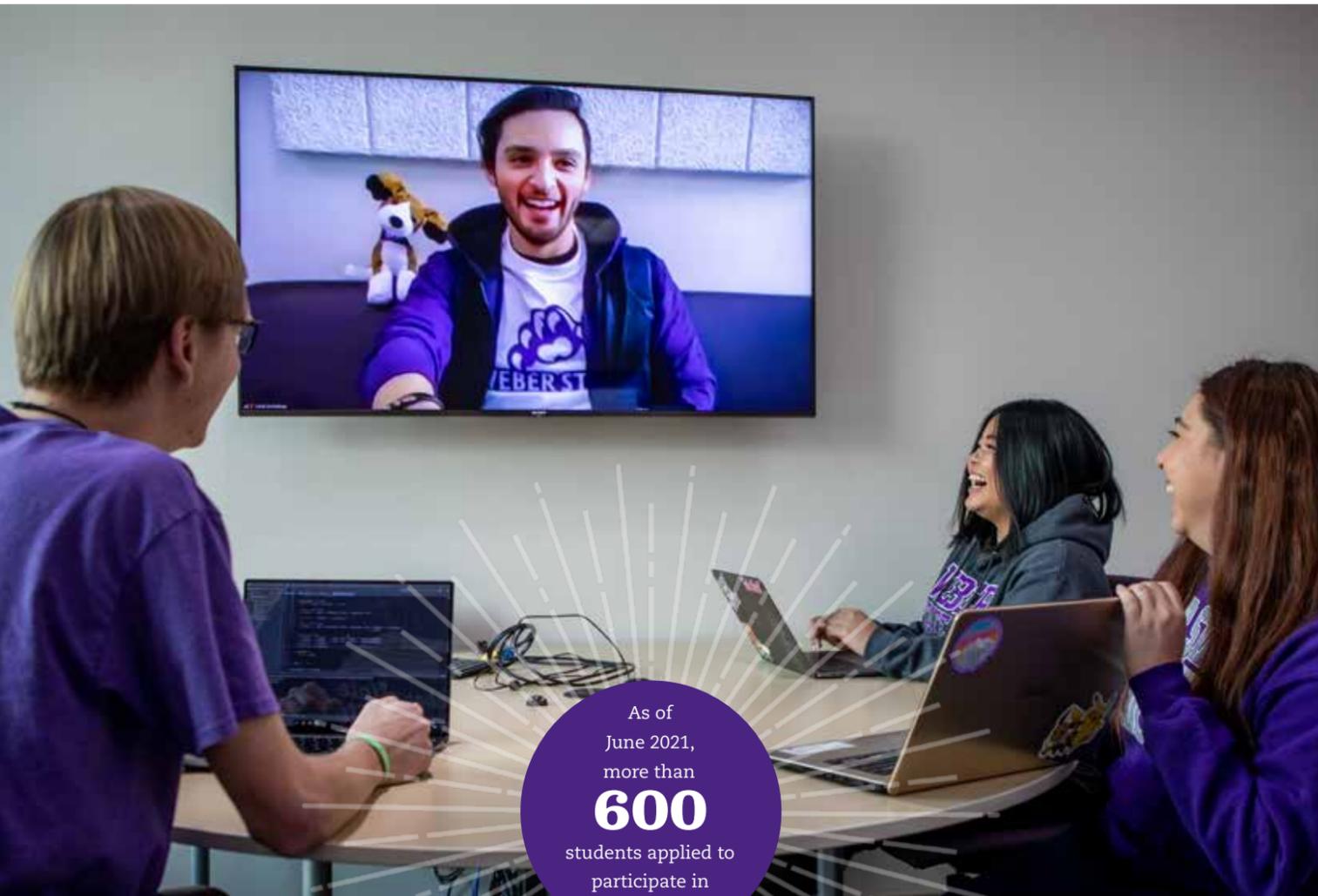
Erickson's approach yielded a list of three potential locations for an overpass. After assessing these sites using a drone and other tools, Erickson concluded that the best location with the highest need was southeast of Henefer, near Leonards Canyon.

"I saw that Weber State had a really established technical geography program with cartography, or map skills, and geospatial data," he said. This sealed the deal in his choice to attend — and he's glad he did.

"It was overwhelmingly the most important area in my research," Erickson said.

"Weber State gave me the tools to do what I envisioned," he said.





As of June 2021, more than **600** students applied to participate in CS Flex.

CS FLEX PROGRAM MORE THAN *Quadruples Expected Enrollment*

The School of Computing in the College of Engineering, Applied Science & Technology (EAST) launched its CS Flex Program in fall 2020 with plans to enroll just 90 students, but 400 registered.

“This is more than we expected. It seems this flexible approach to learning is meeting student needs,” said **Linda DuHadway**, CS Flex coordinator.

The program offers flexible start dates, facilitates accelerated progress and allows students to spend more time on material they do not understand. Students can customize their CS Flex and standard computer science courses to take the classes they need in a way that fits their life.

Husband and wife **Alexander “A.J.”** and **Jungeun “Angela” Herold** are among the students who enrolled to gain skills

for a new career path. “We do have really busy schedules, and the thing we’ve liked about the program is it allows us to pause when we need and take our time getting through a section of the course,” A.J. explained.

With funding support from the Provost’s office, the Office of Continuing Education and EAST, the program added additional sections to accommodate all the students who enrolled.

“The CS Flex Program has received long-term funding from the Utah Legislature through the Strategic Workforce Initiative (SWI) Program,” DuHadway said. “We will continue to offer classes using the CS Flex model. We are also developing curriculums for new CS Flex courses.”



FROM INTERN TO *Respected Leader*

Emily Nelson BS '14 said finishing her degree at Weber State while holding an internship at L3Harris Technologies was tough but she was determined to succeed.

Now the software lead of a \$500 million program at the Salt Lake City company, her determination paid off. Nelson is in charge of software that controls hardware for some of the U.S. Department of Defense’s electronic warfare activities.

WSU knew how to challenge her, and cared enough to do it.

Nelson, the mother of two now-teenage sons, enrolled at WSU in part because it was affordable, but she also really liked the computer science program.

“The professors are really great there, they’re really one-on-one,” she said. “The classes were small so you get that attention you need to actually excel.”

John Hirschi AS '95, BS '95, Nelson’s manager at L3Harris, praises her for leading the software effort for the largest program their company has ever been awarded.

“She gets results,” he said. “She’s a respected leader and gets the job done.”

Nelson also received the National Women in Aerospace Award in 2020.

“It’s good to be recognized for your sacrifice, and if something like that can inspire other women to go into aerospace, that’s even better,” she said.

WSU computer science department chair **Kyle Feuz** said his department encourages under-represented groups to enroll in the program through K-12 outreach efforts and ensuring students don’t feel alone or isolated.

“Our enrollment numbers aren’t going to change overnight, but we’ve seen a steady increase in our female student population over the last several years, and that is a trend we hope to continue,” he said. “I love seeing Emily and students like her go on to be successful, and that success is what will ultimately drive progress forward.”



Learn & Work Funding SUPPORTS STUDENTS AND UTAH'S ECONOMY

While COVID-19 brought economic challenges worldwide, Weber State worked to help Utah come out of the pandemic with a renewed sense of hope for the state's economy.

Utah allocated a portion of the state's funding from the CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security) Act toward an initiative called "Learn & Work in Utah," which, in August 2020, gave colleges and universities, including WSU, the opportunity to compete for funding to train Utah residents affected by the pandemic. Sixteen WSU programs received grants from this initial funding after applying at the state level, bringing in nearly \$2 million to the university.

Most of those funds went toward student tuition for courses during fall 2020 and spring 2021 semesters, supporting more than 1,200 Utah residents pursuing certificates, including those in instructional design, law enforcement and cybersecurity.

Many of the certificates were designed to address long-standing regional shortages in the technology workforce and can be stand-alone credentials, qualifying students to work immediately upon completion, said **James Taylor**, director of Weber State's Office of Sponsored Projects and Technology Commercialization. "These programs will grow and prosper even after this funding ends because they're fulfilling a need," he said.

A second round of funding was approved in June 2021 with more than \$1.7 million.



Round 1 Funding

August 2020

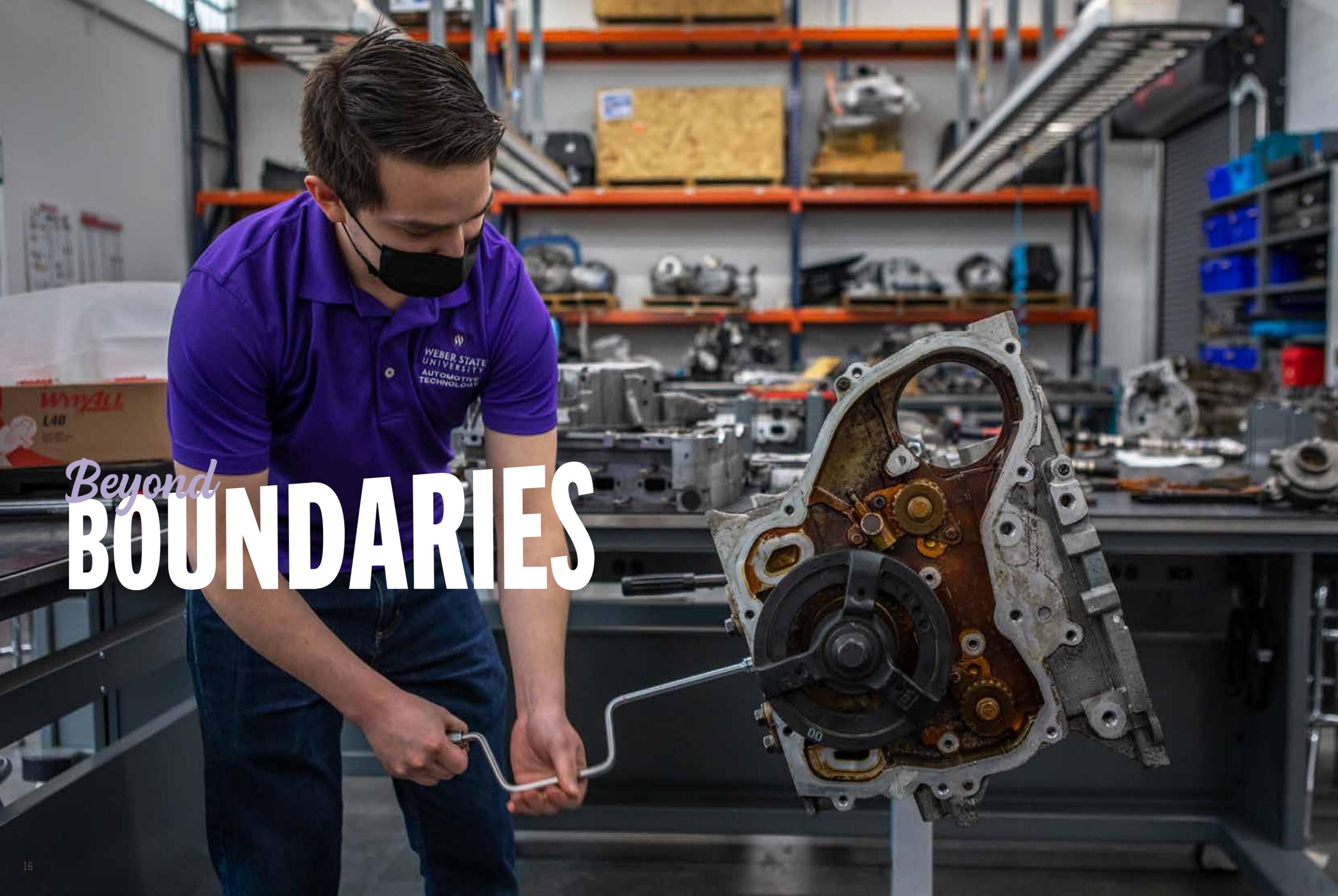
Round 2 Funding

June 2021

TOTAL
\$3.6 million +

Certificate and Credit-Granting Programs





Beyond
BOUNDARIES

Addressing Racism WITH CONVERSATION

After the deaths of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd and many other people of color, James Zagrodnik, associate professor of physical education, decided he wanted to be a part of the conversation about race.

To help Utahns become more aware of underlying racism, Zagrodnik launched a video podcast about racism at Weber State. He was joined by assistant professor of teacher education Andrea Garavito Martinez and associate professor of physical education Ryan Zimmerman.

“We’re trying to create a space where any person — student, faculty, staff, administration, just some person out there — could participate and learn something,” Zagrodnik said.

The podcast, “Wildcat Conversations: Racism,” features guests from across Utah. In May 2021, 21 episodes had been released since it launched in fall 2020. In February 2021, Gregory Noel and Juancarlos Santisteban, both therapists at the WSU Counseling & Psychological Services Center, who had been interviewees, took over as hosts.

Noel said he wanted to get past the uncomfortability of talking about race and move forward.

“Oftentimes there is a misconception that even though we’re brown or black people, we’re comfortable having these conversations when in all reality we’re not,” he said. “We need to address the elephant in the room.”

Due to their uncomfortable nature and importance, Noel and Santisteban often refer to these dialogues as courageous conversations.

The hosts plan to continue recording in fall 2021. Episodes are available at weber.edu/wildcatconversations.



LEFT TO RIGHT: ANDREA GARAVITO MARTINEZ, JUANCARLOS SANTISTEBAN, GREGORY NOEL, JAMES ZAGRODNIK

Boosting Latino/Hispanic ENTREPRENEURSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Weber State University’s Wildcat Micro Fund and the Alan E. Hall Center for Sales Excellence are partnering with community organizations to grow and support the Latino/Hispanic entrepreneurial ecosystem.

“This is another example of our commitment to economic development in northern Utah, and to grow our efforts around equity, diversity and inclusion,” said Guy Letendre, WSU Director of Economic Development.

The Suazo Business Center, a business resource center for Latino/Hispanic and other underserved communities, received grants through U.S. Bank and the Micro Fund to help increase awareness of the Micro Fund’s grant program, which provides grants in the form of cash or services to local entrepreneurs. Additionally, the center has begun offering mentoring services during the grant process at the WSU Community Education Center in Ogden.

“By focusing on these clients with a more refined, one-on-one approach, we can help end cycles of poverty and allow for greater self-reliance for some of the most

vulnerable members of our community,” said Silvia Castro, Suazo Business Center executive director.

Furthering efforts to support Latino/Hispanic entrepreneurs, the Hall Center has partnered with the MarketStar Foundation to provide a community education course for the next five years in sales and customer service excellence that will target enrollment within the Latino/Hispanic community. Scheduled to begin fall of 2021 at the WSU Community Education Center, the course will help students improve their interpersonal and professional sales skills and position them for success in the sales industry. Last year’s pilot course included 10 students, including nine students who spoke English as their second language.

“We are actively focused on community engagement and developing from within the Ogden area,” said Brock Adams, Hall Center director. “This program absolutely exemplifies

that approach, and we will continue to see its success unfold in the coming years.”

As of spring 2021, the Micro Fund had provided 48 grant awards to entrepreneurs in northern Utah totaling approximately \$70,000.



STUDENTS GAIN IN-DEMAND BUSINESS SKILLS FROM THE SUAZO BUSINESS CENTER, WHICH IS ALSO AMPLIFYING AWARENESS OF WEBER STATE’S MICRO FUND GRANT PROGRAM.

UNLEASHING CREATIVITY

WSU UNVEILS *Virtual Innovations* AMID PANDEMIC

Despite the challenges of the 2020–21 academic year, Weber State found innovative ways to continue prioritizing student success.

“Our students, faculty and staff truly unleashed their creative potential,” said President Brad Mortensen. “They faced all pandemic challenges with grit and determination, effectively expanding the history of innovation at Weber State.”

The College of Social & Behavioral Sciences formed a COVID-19 outreach team, dubbed “Team Awesome,” to keep student workers employed. The group contacted all 2,100 CSBS students and faculty to ensure they were doing well and had the necessary resources to continue succeeding in their courses.

Seniors in the automotive program, housed in the College of Engineering, Applied Science & Technology, completed their capstone projects remotely. They developed new technology, such as a device to aid automotive technicians in identifying common vehicular problems.

Student Services held many events virtually, including the annual Career Fair and the Student Services Expo.

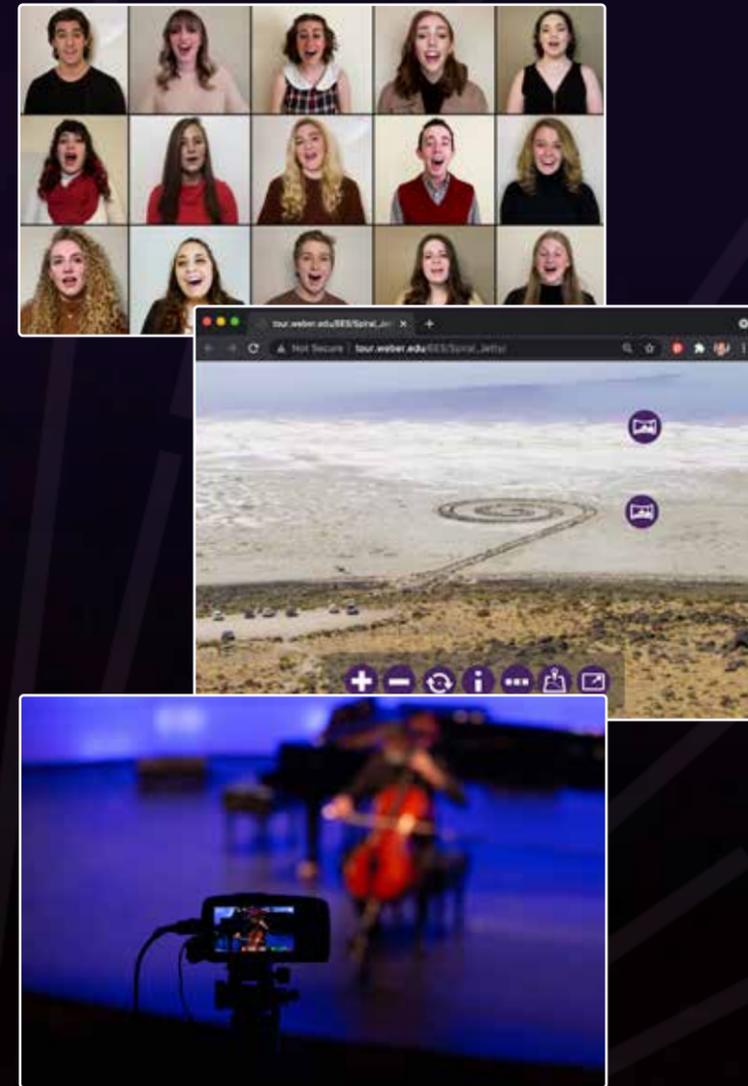
Counseling & Psychological Services also offered new virtual options, including a Mindful Meditation Group for faculty and staff.

Other areas used hybrid methods to reach students, such as tutoring services, which hosted 3,578 face-to-face sessions and 5,034 virtual sessions.

The College of Science created 3D geological field trips to the Discovery Loop, Antelope Island and Spiral Jetty. The telescopes on the roof of Tracy Hall were utilized for virtual astronomy courses and community star parties. A virtual Mars landing watch party was also held, allowing students to learn about the physics behind the landing. The college also provided 1,000 hands-on micrometeorite kits to local schools. The Science in the Parks program handed out 15,000 science kits over the summer to local students too.

The Goddard School of Business & Economics used the opportunity of working remotely to officially launch their online MBA program, as well as an online entrepreneurship minor, both 100% virtual. They also held Zoom Career Bites, which hosted a different industry professional each week to provide support for those searching for work.

The Department of Performing Arts hosted 79 virtual events throughout the year, attracting more than 60,000 viewers.



Events included digital theatre experiences, Orchesis Dance Theatre and dozens of music recitals streamed via Facebook. The Shaw Gallery utilized 3D technology to offer tours, allowing the community to view exhibitions from home.

The WSU Storytelling Festival was held online, celebrating 25 years of storytelling with 25 days of stories. Throughout the festival, new links were posted on the festival website that took users to recorded stories. While storytellers were not able to visit schools this year, the program still brought the magic of storytelling to students around the state.

In addition to virtual demonstrations, students in health professions worked with state-of-the-art technology that enhanced their clinical simulation experience. The new technology included the Butterfly IQ probes used in the School of Radiologic Sciences, which offer increased accessibility and decreased cleaning demands, allowing students to identify human anatomy, including the vascular system.

Many of the innovations from the past year will be carried into future semesters to continue enhancing student learning experiences and innovating at WSU.



COMMUNITY EDUCATION Covers Hot Topics

The College of Social & Behavioral Sciences, in partnership with WSU's Division of Online & Continuing Education, held a series of virtual community courses, exploring relevant world issues with about 100 or more registered participants in each course.

"We offered these courses because we wanted to enrich our own — and our students' — understanding of the issues shaping our lives," said **Susan Matt**, history professor.

The first course, "Pandemics and People," offered an overview of the effects of a global pandemic. Other courses examined polarization around the country, as well as the history of the civil rights movement and the continued fight for racial equality.

The college plans to unveil a new set of hot topics in fall 2021.



2020–21 COURSE ENROLLMENT (APPROXIMATE)

"Pandemics and People"	"The Ongoing Struggle for Civil Rights in America"
180	100
"Politics and People: Election 2020"	"Why Are We So Polarized?"
85	100

A New Home FOR ENGINEERING, APPLIED SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

You won't have to be a student to learn something inside the Noorda Engineering, Applied Science & Technology (EAST) Building when it opens in June 2022. Transparent screens throughout the 135,000-square-foot structure and visible heating, ventilation, air conditioning and electrical elements will be a "living lab" for anyone interested in sustainability. Construction on the LEED Gold certified, net-zero facility began in June 2020. **David Ferro**, dean of the College of EAST, predicts the building will be a showpiece for the university's energy-conservation efforts and a magnet to attract promising new EAST students.

For more information, visit weber.edu/east/noorda.html.



ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY IN *Sustainability*

While most Utahns are familiar with the long list of negative consequences associated with climate change, WSU sustainability manager **Jennifer Bodine** wants the community to know that the knowledge and technology exist to solve the crisis.

For her innovative work sharing and promoting sustainable solutions, Bodine was honored with the John A. Lindquist Award for 2021 from the Center for Community Engaged Learning.

"Everything I work on is a collaborative effort with a fantastic team of students, faculty and staff, so I feel very honored to have been recognized, but I want this amazing team to be recognized, too," she said.

Thanks to their collaborative effort, WSU has cut its carbon footprint by more than 30% since 2007, while simultaneously saving more than \$15 million in avoided utility costs. The university is on track to meet its commitment to becoming carbon neutral by 2040, 10 years ahead of its original goal.

As advisor for the Environmental Ambassadors Club, Bodine works with students and groups on and off campus to host events such as the "Clear the Air Challenge." In 2015, she and the student ambassadors initiated the Green Department Certification Program, which now has 84 campus Green Teams committed to sustainability practices in everyday activities. Ambassadors also help support Weber State's Intermountain Sustainability Summit, and recently launched the WSU chapter of the Food Recovery Network, which collects fresh, unused food from WSU events and delivers it to the Weber Cares Food & Resources Pantry and to Ogden's Lantern House.

Bodine works with community programs like the Empower Northern Utah Light Bulb Exchange, and, as a member of the Ogden Civic Action Network subcommittee, supported WSU students in designing and constructing a net-zero home in central Ogden. Additionally, she advises students in the Community Garden Club and partners with students and faculty on sustainability class projects.

Prior to joining WSU as its first sustainability manager, Bodine worked with the Forest Service, Ohio Department of Natural Resources and the Planning Department in Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

WSU has given her the opportunity to see the impact she makes.

"When WSU students realize the university is successfully deploying sustainable solutions, they see this otherwise paralyzing problem turn into an opportunity," Bodine said. "This is what truly makes my job a joy; watching students grow, become empowered, and move on to be future leaders within our community."



80%
FACULTY WITH
TERMINAL DEGREES



Gifts to WSU
in fiscal year 2021 totaled
\$22,557,151

STUDENT TO
FACULTY
RATIO:
21:1



630
VETERANS
ATTENDED WSU
IN 2020-2021



**WORLDWIDE
RANKINGS**

U.S. News & World Report:

- Top Public Schools
- Best Regional Universities West
- Top Performers on Social Mobility

Intelligent.com:

- The Best Online Colleges and Universities
- The Most Affordable Colleges
- The Best Colleges in Utah

The Education Magazine:

- The 10 Most Admired Universities and Colleges to Watch in 2020

Washington Monthly:

- One of America's Best Colleges for Student Voting

WSU has **REDUCED*** its

NATURAL GAS CONSUMPTION BY	ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION BY	DIRECT EMISSIONS BY
35%	36%	47%

while the university has grown by more than
566,751 square feet
* as of fiscal year 2020, when compared to a 2007 baseline

29,596
Fall 2020
ENROLLMENT

WSU PROVIDED MORE THAN
\$96 MILLION
IN SCHOLARSHIPS AND FEDERAL FUNDING
TO **13,034** STUDENTS

LendEDU's
Schools with the
Lowest
STUDENT LOAN DEFAULT RATE

\$10.2 MILLION
IN PRIVATE SCHOLARSHIPS
TO **5,129** RECIPIENTS
for the 2020-2021 Academic Year



More than
\$2,596,000
The amount WSU **SAVED** on
its electric, natural gas and
water bills in fiscal year 2020

**Top 10
Degree Programs
5-year total**

(Degrees awarded for academic years 2017 through 2021)

- 1 Nursing.....3,747
- 2 School of Computing.....1,721
- 3 School of Radiologic Sciences...1,258
- 4 Professional Sales.....1,065
- 5 Medical Laboratory Sciences.....858
- 6 Health Administrative Services.....855
- 7 Health Sciences.....756
- 8 Communication.....657
- 9 Manufacturing and Systems Engineering.....627
- 10 Teacher Education.....618

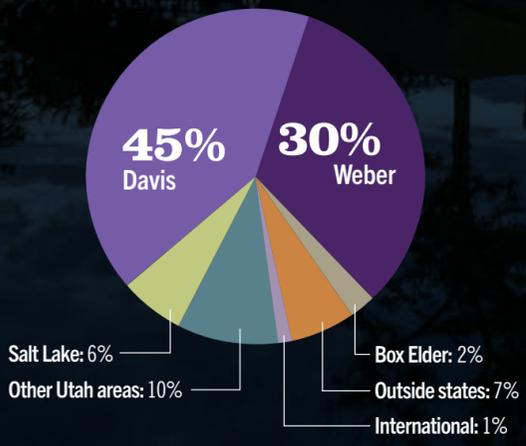
*As of June 2021, general studies not included

MORE THAN
225
DEGREE PROGRAMS

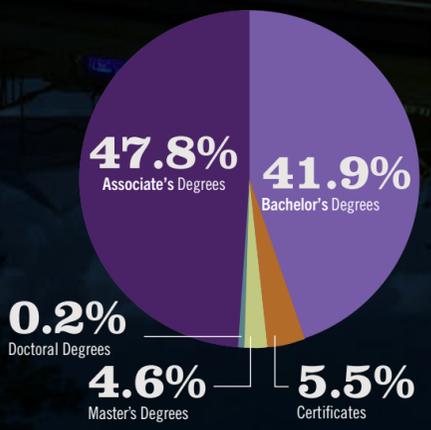
17
GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS

\$54,722
MEDIAN GRADUATE SALARY
Based on fifth-year median wages for bachelor's degree recipients

Fall 2020 Enrollment by
COUNTY OF ORIGIN



Distribution of
DEGREES & AWARDS for 2020-21



COMMITTED TO SUSTAINABILITY
**CARBON NEUTRAL BY
2040**
A decade ahead of our
original goal of 2050

\$15,984,811
The total amount WSU has saved on its electric,
natural gas, and water bills since 2007.

2012-2020
NAMED TO:
The Arbor Day Foundation's
**TREE CAMPUS HIGHER
EDUCATION LIST**



WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY

Facts & Figures

Our Graduates

Weber State set an all-time record by awarding more than

6,400

DEGREES AND AWARDS

during the 2020–2021 academic year, one of the toughest in WSU history due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Amid socially distanced classes, canceled study abroad trips and concerns over the health of friends and loved ones, Wildcats displayed their grit all the way to graduation day.

Congrats. WSU class of 2021!





RENDERING OF THE DUMKE ARTS PLAZA IN CENTRAL OGDEN, OPENING FALL 2021, IMAGE COURTESY OF OGDEN CITY

WEBER STATE FOSTERS Visual Art IN OGDEN

Ogden's art and design scene is flourishing.

The Dumke Arts Plaza, a public art space in downtown Ogden, is opening in fall 2021. It's named after the Dr. Ezekiel R. and Edna Wattis Dumke Foundation, which contributed money toward construction and pledged a generous endowment to WSU to support arts programming in the plaza.

Mary Elizabeth Dee Shaw Gallery Director **Lydia Gravis** said the endowment will allow the WSU Department of Visual Art & Design to curate and install several art pieces every year.

Another new addition, Weber State's Matthew S. Browning Center for Design will support experimental and collaborative project-based learning in an effort to promote creative problem solving, cross-disciplinary collaboration, visual literacy, innovation, design research and community engagement.

The new center will also focus on supporting applied design projects and curating public art installations at the plaza, said **Matt Choberka**, Matthew S. Browning Center director and WSU art professor.



GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY FOR THE DUMKE ARTS PLAZA IN DOWNTOWN OGDEN, FEB. 26, 2021



DUMKE COLLEGE AND TEAM OF VOLUNTEERS Tackle COVID Crisis

While the numbers alone are impressive, nearly 100,000 vaccine doses administered at the Dee Events Center and 17,000 COVID tests conducted at the WSU Davis and Ogden campuses, it was the volunteer effort of Weber State faculty, staff and students that offered the campus community the help it needed most during the pandemic.

Before broad testing was mandated, **Matthew Nicholaou**, chair of medical laboratory sciences (MLS), and **Sally Cantwell**, chair of the Annie Taylor Dee School of Nursing, set up a COVID-19 testing protocol under the authorization of **Dr. Stephen Scharmann** of Intermountain Healthcare.

They worked with their teams, including MLS lab manager **Kent Criddle** and assistant professor **Kendal Beazer** and nursing faculty **Amy Buckway**, **Monica Bottelberghe**, **Connie Merrill**, and **Trisha Small**. The leadership team devised a system for testing symptomatic students, faculty and staff in a mock clinic, so when the state began requiring both symptomatic and asymptomatic testing, Weber State was ready.

To run the testing, they first solicited volunteers from the Dumke College of Health Professions, but then expanded across campus as the need grew. Eventually more than 450 Wildcat volunteers, organized by **Jessica Oyler**, assistant vice president for Human Resources, signed up and trained.

"All of a sudden, when you have to test 1,000 people five times a week, we needed a massive team," Nicholaou said. "We put the word out, and it was really cool to see faculty, students and staff from all over campus step up with testing."

Another critical component of campus COVID containment was contact tracing. Associate professor of nursing

Kathleen Cadman helped **Mike Davies**, emergency manager, establish the protocols, work out the logistics and carry out contact tracing for the 642 people who tested positive within 14 days of being on campus.

Weber State has a long history of engaging with the community to prepare and react to emergencies. COVID Task Force chair and Public Safety director, **Dane LeBlanc**, helped coordinate the university's first pandemic response back in 2009 with an H1N1 vaccination clinic at the Dee. He said that training and collaboration made the connection easy when, beginning in early January 2021, Weber-Morgan Health needed a facility to host the community vaccination site.

More than 200 faculty, staff and students from the Dumke College were trained, screened, credential-certified and enrolled with the Weber-Morgan Medical Reserve Corps with help from nursing professors **Valerie Gooder** and **London Draper-Lowe**. The group, with organizational support from **Sherie Thornton**, WSU's biosafety/emergency response specialist, provided 50% or more of the staffing for the vaccination area at the Dee for six months, including for the days specifically planned and reserved for Weber State faculty, staff and students.

Another 30 non-medical employee volunteers from various departments including police, fire, Facilities Management, Dee Events Center, Human Resources, Marketing & Communications and Environmental Health & Safety, also helped with the process.

Caring for each other and for the community is a Wildcat hallmark that was on full display during the worst moments of the pandemic.





WSU LAUNCHES DIGITAL DISTRICT, Adobe Creative Campus

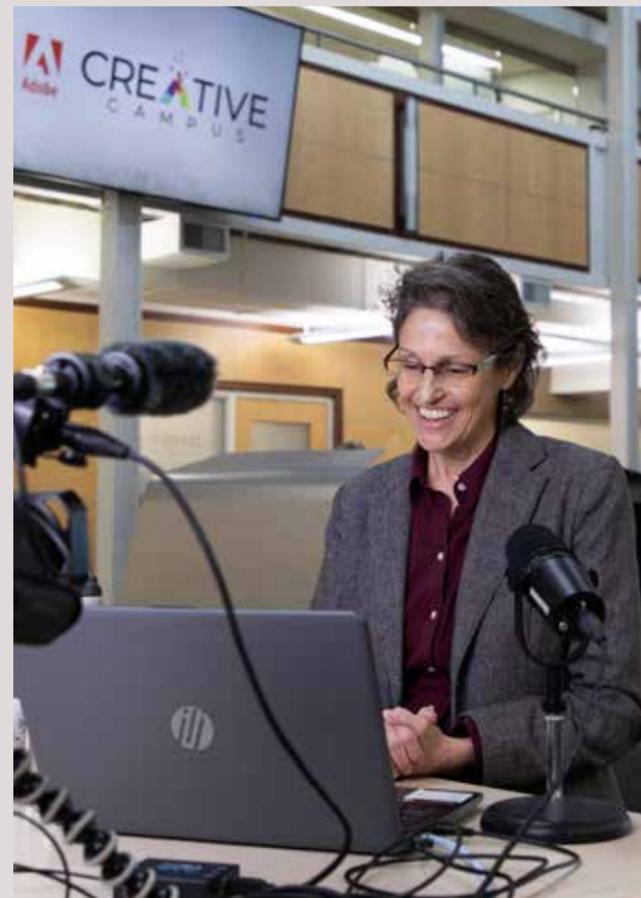
Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Weber State initiated long-term strategies to promote digital literacy, and the shift to online learning and an infusion of CARES Act funding enabled plans to move forward ahead of schedule.

In March, the university opened the Digital District and announced Weber State as the newest Adobe Creative Campus, a designation given to a select group of colleges and universities worldwide.

The Digital District provides a wide array of tools for faculty in Lampros Hall, including a podcast studio, mobile SMART Board TVs, technology-enhanced collaboration spaces, and an active-learning classroom. This classroom can quickly shift from accommodating a lecture to fostering group work in high-tech pods.

Resources for students are located at Stewart Library, where students can check out laptops and hot spots. They can also access an enhanced computer lab with double monitors and high-powered processors. Staff are located nearby, available to provide assistance to students when they need it.

“We already had envisioned this Digital District and done years of planning,” said **Brenda Kowalewski**, associate provost. “When the pandemic hit, we had all of our plans in place and could leverage CARES funding for this very purpose.”



NEW ONLINE MBA AND CERTIFICATES OFFER *More Opportunity* FOR TOMORROW'S LEADERS

The John B. Goddard School of Business & Economics launched its online MBA program at the beginning of the summer 2021 semester, along with three new certificate programs. These new certificates in cybersecurity, business analytics and business development will provide students with an opportunity to specialize their MBA.

The certificates will help grow Utah's business community and make students more competitive when looking for jobs, said **Niki Tonks**, marketing manager of the Goddard School.

MBA graduate **Jessi Dōne**, who lives in Colorado, is a mother of three and has multiple jobs, proving the need for an online/virtual MBA.

Growing up in New Jersey, Dōne often got in trouble for her stubborn, yet driven, mindset. She says she ended up in the juvenile justice system, lived in shelters, foster homes and girls group homes, and she was legally emancipated after graduating high school at the age of 16. Because of her inquisitive nature and desire to learn, Dōne ended up at Weber State, where she earned her Associate of Science in Criminal Justice, Bachelor of Science in Microbiology, minor in chemistry and zoology and an MBA. She is currently completing two MBA graduate certificates in contract

management in business and business development. Dōne has also participated in three study abroad experiences.

“She's just the epitome of lifelong learning. And it's not that she has nothing else to do, she has a really busy career, she has a family, and still finds time for roller derby,” said **Matt Mouritsen**, Dean of the Goddard School.

Although the MBA program now has virtual classes, Dōne attended the hybrid format because of her busy schedule. Her experience in the MBA program was exceptional.

“The skills I learned are skills I use every day in one way or another; not to mention the networking and connections established across the MBA program,” Dōne said. “Juggling a family, multiple commitments from volunteer organizations, work and the list goes on, the flexibility to participate in an AACSB (The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business) accredited school was incredible.”

Dōne uses the skills she learned at WSU to run multiple businesses in the medical device field and food manufacturing industry, and works for the State of Utah

as the Pete Suazo Utah Athletic Commission Chief Inspector, upholding regulation of unarmed combat.

“The mindset that got me in trouble as a youth is what people pay me for now — leadership,” said Dōne.



JESSI DÖNE, MOTHER OF THREE, WSU STUDENT AND PETE SUAZO UTAH ATHLETIC COMMISSION CHIEF INSPECTOR WITH FIGHTERS AND PERSONNEL AT A STEELFIST FIGHT NIGHT EVENT AT THE UNION EVENT CENTER IN SALT LAKE CITY IN 2018.



WELCOMING *Outdoor Adventure*

The 16,000-square-foot Outdoor Adventure & Welcome Center opened Feb. 3, 2021, allowing WSU's Campus Recreation Outdoor Program to expand its equipment rental center, along with a three-story rock wall and state-of-the-art rope access training center. Admissions will also use the building to welcome prospective students and their families as they tour the Ogden campus.



Welcoming TWO NEW DEANS

Understanding, articulating and solving the great social issues of the day takes smart thinking and dedicated effort, and that's what Weber State's two newest deans say guide teaching and learning in their colleges.

Following national searches, **Deborah Uman** was selected as dean of the Telitha E. Lindquist College of Arts & Humanities, and **Julie Rich** as dean of the College of Social & Behavioral Sciences.

Uman holds a bachelor's in English literature from Yale and her master's and doctoral degrees in English literature from the University of Colorado at Boulder. At St. John Fisher College in Rochester, New York, she chaired the Department of English. She also directed the women and gender studies program. As WSU's dean since January 2021, she plans "to work together on a vision for the college that uses equity and inclusion as its guiding principles."

Rich earned her undergraduate degree from Weber State and holds a doctorate from the University of Oxford in geography. Rich has served as interim dean since 2019 and helped the college develop new certificate programs and a Master of Social Work. "All of the challenges we face in the world deal with societal issues," Rich said. "The importance of what we teach and learn in this college is critical. We are ready for the future."



DEBORAH UMAN



JULIE RICH



NEW DEGREE IN *Outdoor Leadership*

Students can sign up for the new outdoor leadership Associate of Applied Science starting in fall 2021. While the current outdoor leadership bachelor's degree focuses on the administration side of outdoor and community recreation, this associate's degree will make sure students acquire the technical skills they need for entry-level employment in the outdoor industry.

"This is important, because the typical frontline positions when you first graduate are field-based and require significant outdoor technical training," said Cass Morgan, program director for Outdoor & Community Recreation Education at Weber State.

Students will be able to earn certifications such as wilderness medicine, rock climbing, mountain biking, avalanche education, leave no trace and swiftwater rescue.



CONNECTIONS

strengthen us



WILDCATS REIGN AT 2020 MAYOR'S *Awards in the Arts*

The 2020 Ogden City Mayor's Awards in the Arts shined a spotlight on eight members of the Weber State family. The annual event recognizes artists and arts organizations that uplift the Ogden community.

Joseph "Jo" Blake, assistant professor of dance and director of the joBdance performance company, received the Performing Arts award. Blake throws his passion for educational theory, community engagement and social justice into numerous community outreach programs.

Artist **Lydia Gravis**, who directs and curates the Shaw Gallery within the Department of Visual Art & Design, was given the Visual Arts award. Also of note, Gravis was selected for a summer 2021 artist residency at the Fremantle Art Centre in Western Australia.

Jake McIntire, an adjunct instructor in Weber State's visual art and design department, was honored with the Arts Advocacy award. McIntire founded Union Creative Agency, a design consulting business that facilitates arts-based community development and economic planning in northern Utah.

Betty Sawyer, who recently retired as community engagement coordinator for WSU's Office of Access & Diversity, accepted the mayor's Folk Arts award on behalf of Project Success Coalition. Sawyer co-founded the nonprofit, which offers education outreach for students in grades K-7, health prevention education and initiatives to address the needs of African Americans in Utah, in 1989.

Laura Stott, who teaches creative writing and poetry at WSU and is the faculty sponsor for "Sigma Tau Delta" English honor society, received the Literary Arts award. Weber State's writing program was recently ranked #2 in the nation by College Rank, a higher education guidance platform. The ranking was based on metrics related to return on investment, quality of education and support services.

The Lifetime Contribution award was given to blues musician, radio personality and storyteller "**Bad**" **Brad Wheeler**, who graduated from Weber State with emphases in archeology, anthropology and art. Wheeler is a self-taught harmonica player who has shared the stage with notable music legends, including the late Joe McQueen. He

estimates he has taught about 32,000 children how to play the harmonica.

The **WSU Arts Learning Collaborative** was selected to receive the Arts in Education award. The collaborative is a partnership between the Lindquist College of Arts & Humanities and the Moyes College of Education. It provides year-round learning opportunities in arts integration for K-12 teachers, instructional coaches, arts specialists and students. Program director **Tamara Goldbogen** accepted the award on behalf of the collaborative.

Daniel Mathews, a former Weber State student who studied public policy and creative writing and longtime fan of WSU's football and softball programs, received the Media Arts award for his work as *Indie Ogden Magazine* editor-in-chief. The magazine covers all things that make Ogden unique, from human interest stories to arts and events.

"I am a huge supporter of Weber State," Mathews said. "I believe that a strong relationship between Weber State and the community is key to Ogden's growth."



LYDIA GRAVIS, DIRECTOR OF ART EXHIBITIONS AND PUBLIC PROGRAMS AT THE MARY ELIZABETH DEE SHAW GALLERY



JOSEPH "JO" BLAKE, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF DANCE, TEACHES A ZOOM CLASS FROM HIS HOME.

WSU STUDENTS EXEMPLIFY *Community Engagement*

Lori Cummings BS '20 and **Finau Tauteoli** were selected as the first recipients of Weber State's Ivory Prize for Excellence in Student Leadership and Community Engagement, which recognizes students or recent graduates who go to extraordinary efforts to promote student success and engage the community.

The Clark and Christine Ivory Foundation founded the prize in November 2020 with a donation of \$12,000. The foundation has pledged \$60,000 over the next five years to continue the recognition.

Nominations are made through the Center for Community Engaged Learning (CCEL), and each of the winners receives a \$2,000 cash prize and up to \$10,000 to be split between the two recipients' cause or initiative.

"We have limited ways to incentivize this kind of work for students, they often do it out of the goodness of their hearts," said **Becky Jo Gesteland**, executive director of CCEL. "The more we can reward that, I think the better, more active and engaged citizens we create."

Cummings was selected as an Ivory Prize recipient for her work as an intern with the CAPES! program, a skills-enhancing program for children with developmental disabilities. Each week, WSU students work with the children to enhance their independence through a variety of physical, cognitive, social, emotional and behavioral skills.

During her internship, Cummings put her heart and soul into the program and was responsible for organizing events, pairing children with WSU students, and making sure the children were happy and engaged. She also developed a parent meet-and-greet, so parents could meet WSU students and learn about the program prior to the first week. This also helped WSU students learn more about the student they would be paired with at CAPES! prior to the program starting.

With a degree in physical education teaching, Cummings now works as an adaptive physical educator in the Davis School District.

Tauteoli was selected as an Ivory Prize recipient for her work as a member and president of The Ohana Association, which educates the community about Pacific Islander heritages and traditions, and offers support for students.

In addition to her responsibilities as president, Tauteoli found time to support her peers in other WSU clubs and organize community events. She played an integral role in helping establish several WSU Pacific Islander cultural events, including the first Pacific Islander College Prep Night in 2019, and the Pasifika Youth Talk Series for students in middle and high school.

She is passionate about reaching out to the younger generation of Pacific Islanders in Utah to help them connect to their culture and teach them about their options for higher education. Her share of the prize money will help fund events The Ohana Association has coming up, including an intercollegiate showcase and the next College Prep Night.

Finau is an accounting major and plans to graduate in fall 2022.



LORI CUMMINGS



FINAU TAUTEOLI



Improving MS Patients' Lives WITH YOGA

Weber State Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) graduate **Mindy Robert** received national recognition for her adaptive yoga program to help improve the quality of life for people with multiple sclerosis (MS).

Robert is one of 10 individuals to receive the 2020 International Organization of Multiple Sclerosis Nurses

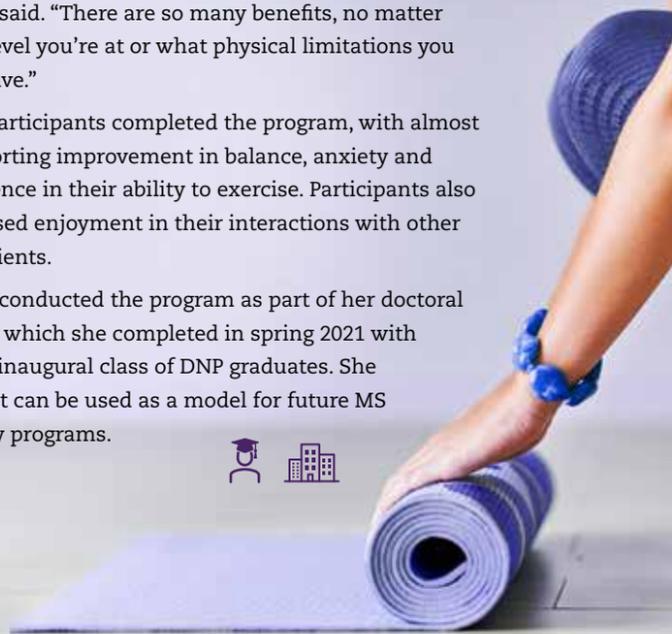
(IOMSN) Nightingale Award. The award honors significant achievements in MS nursing and provides a grant of \$5,000, which helped fund her project.

Robert, a certified IOMSN nurse and nurse practitioner at Ogden Clinic Neurology and Sleep, launched the eight-week pilot program in October 2020.

"I feel strongly that yoga is something anybody can do," Robert said. "There are so many benefits, no matter what level you're at or what physical limitations you may have."

Eight participants completed the program, with almost all reporting improvement in balance, anxiety and confidence in their ability to exercise. Participants also expressed enjoyment in their interactions with other MS patients.

Robert conducted the program as part of her doctoral degree, which she completed in spring 2021 with WSU's inaugural class of DNP graduates. She hopes it can be used as a model for future MS therapy programs.



Physics DOWN TO A Fine Art

STUDENT RACHELL LEMMONS DISCOVERED AND THRIVED IN PHYSICS AT WSU

Rachell Lemmons BS '21 loves a challenge.

In fact, she loves a challenge so much she switched her major from art to physics after two years of working toward her degree. Starting at WSU in 2014 as an art teaching major, she had an "aha moment" after taking an astronomy class from professor **Stacy Palen**.

"The difference between physics and art isn't as much as you'd think... It takes the same sense of exploration and the same sense of creativity."

— John Armstrong

In support of her new major, Lemmons volunteered and then was hired at Ott Planetarium where she worked with Palen, and later with physics professor **John Armstrong**.

"About two years ago, a graduating physics student mentioned he was trying to find a job," she said. "I referred him to the hiring recruiters, and they offered him a position. I was so happy that he got the job! He's still working at NG too and says he loves it."

Now working full time at Northrop Grumman, Lemmons is hopeful to one day pursue a doctorate in astrophysics with the aim of working for NASA.

Lemmons' daughter, however, appears to be taking a different path. Rubee, who is approaching 7 years old, prefers English and the arts.

"But she'll also ask questions like, 'Why does the earth turn?' and 'Why does the sun go across the sky?' and those questions are really fun to talk about," Lemmons said.



"The difference between

physics and art isn't as much as you'd think," Armstrong said. "I think it takes the same sense of exploration and the same sense of creativity, and it's obvious she has an eye for composition and an eye for different artistic things."

At the planetarium, Lemmons created an educational short film about terraforming Mars, "The Martian Initiative." The movie started out as a simple outreach project but evolved into a much bigger endeavor. She partnered with actors, video technicians, asked NASA for permission to use graphics, designed costumes and even won a grant to fund her efforts. Lemmons and her film crew shot footage in Moab shortly before COVID-19 hit the United States. Armstrong said while it would have been completely understandable for Lemmons to take a break or let the pandemic derail her project, she "went above and beyond."

On top of all her Weber State endeavors — along with running an online jewelry-making business and raising her young daughter, Rubee — Lemmons worked at Northrop Grumman. She has held several positions there over the years that have allowed her to work in areas including nuclear hardness and survivability as well as systems engineering for ground-based strategic deterrents, more commonly known as missiles.

"It is challenging, it really is, and I get excited for that challenge," Lemmons said.

Lemmons has used her position to help other WSU students find internships and other opportunities at the company.



WSU HOSTS 10TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE Empowering Black Students

Demitrius Sanders still recalls his first experience with the Expect the Great conference, while attending Snow College.

"I felt a different type of love, like this was a place I needed to be," said Sanders, recalling what it felt like to meet Black students from all across Utah. "It empowers us in a way we never see in our daily lives."

Pastor France A. Davis originally created Expect the Great (ETG) as an outreach event aimed at increasing college access, participation, retention and graduation for the state's African, African-American and Black students and communities. In 2021, ETG celebrated its 10th year, albeit in a virtual format.

Sanders, one of the organizers for this year's event held by Weber State, was skeptical of whether the event would

work without the energy of in-person connections. Not only did it attract more than 230 participants, but Sanders said the format allowed more people to speak and share their voices.

Today, Sanders has "a lot more hope for what I can do.

I've realized that education is forever."

As a senior completing his sociology degree at WSU, Sanders said he can better appreciate the wide range of experiences he encountered growing up Black in Ogden, Utah. "Having an event for Black people in Utah isn't exclusive — it's inclusive — because we feel excluded every day," he said.

"I've realized that education is forever."

— Demitrius Sanders



WSU PROFESSOR JOINS *Exclusive Leadership* PROGRAM

Nicola Corbin, associate professor of communication, is one of 35 professionals nationwide accepted to the American Association of State Colleges and Universities 2021 Emerging Leaders Program (ELP), a nine-month program offering higher education leadership skills, like managing budgets and staff, with a focus on equity, diversity and inclusion.

Recently, Weber State approved a new strategic plan prioritizing equity in university practices. In spring 2021, Corbin was selected as director of the Teaching and Learning Forum (TLF), which offers development opportunities for faculty. Corbin will begin her new role in January 2022, following a sabbatical leave. She hopes to use her ELP experiences to advance both the strategic plan's equitable practices and TLF endeavors.

"I'm really interested in learning about ways to build and promote the TLF as the place that the faculty feel is their very own to grow and flourish," she said.

The 2021 ELP is being held virtually through November.



STRENGTHENING *Political Engagement* DURING A PANDEMIC

The new leadership team at WSU's Olene S. Walker Institute of Politics & Public Service hit the ground running with activities and events geared toward getting WSU and the surrounding community more engaged in and excited about the political process.

Devin Wiser and Leah Murray both took on leadership roles at the Walker Institute in 2020. Capitalizing on the political energy after the 2020 election, they planned virtual events and initiatives to get the community involved in civics and politics.



DEVIN WISER



LEAH MURRAY

WALKER INSTITUTE ACTIVITIES DURING THE 2020–2021 ACADEMIC YEAR

- **Voter Friendly Campus:** WSU was designated as a Voter Friendly Campus for working to increase student voter registration through education and initiatives. The Walker Institute helped register 1,100 student voters before the 2020 election.
- **Citizen's Academy:** WSU held a semester-long Citizen's Academy course directed at community members, for which 95 students signed up. Attendees heard from speakers in different levels of government, including city, county, state and federal.
- **Walker Civics Symposium:** The center hosted a monthly symposium that featured high-profile speakers including Congressman Blake Moore, who attended to share his first-term priorities.
- **Walker Economic Forum:** This forum featured a panel discussion titled The Drying of the Great Salt Lake, which discussed current and future demands on the Wasatch Front's water supply.
- **Presidential Art Competition:** Local elementary schools submitted student art projects about students' favorite presidents. Waldo visited the winning classrooms.
- **Solve Climate by 2030:** The center co-hosted Weber's Solve Climate by 2030 event with the university's Sustainability Practices and Research Center (SPARC). Speakers included Congressman John Curtis.

For information on upcoming events and initiatives or to donate, visit weber.edu/walkerinstitute.

Economics Researchers BRING POLICY PITFALLS TO LIGHT

While the pandemic and protests of 2020 brought great societal unrest, they also brought the opportunity for scholarly research, and economics faculty at Weber State took advantage and shared their expertise widely.

Laws banning price gouging aim to prevent exorbitant prices while increasing access to critical goods during a state of emergency, but research published by Gavin Roberts suggests these laws likely cause shortages, and undermine some of their own goals.

Roberts, who was also honored as one of Weber State's Presidential Excellence Award winners for 2020, said, "We knew shortages caused by COVID would be a rare opportunity to look at the effects of laws banning price gouging because emergencies rarely happen in so many different places at the same time."

His co-authored article, published in the *Journal of Private Enterprise*, was the basis of a number of local and national

television and newspaper stories, where Roberts helped explain the economics behind laws that may seem counterintuitive.

Media also turned to Weber State experts to discuss more economic issues. Andrew Keinsley discussed unemployment, CARES funding, and recovery efforts with print, radio and television audiences.

François Giraud-Carrier's co-authored article in the scholarly journal of *Management Science* found that government-mandated pollution regulation can benefit companies under certain circumstances. He spoke to the media regarding this finding that counters the common claim that all pollution regulations are burdensome and hurt businesses.

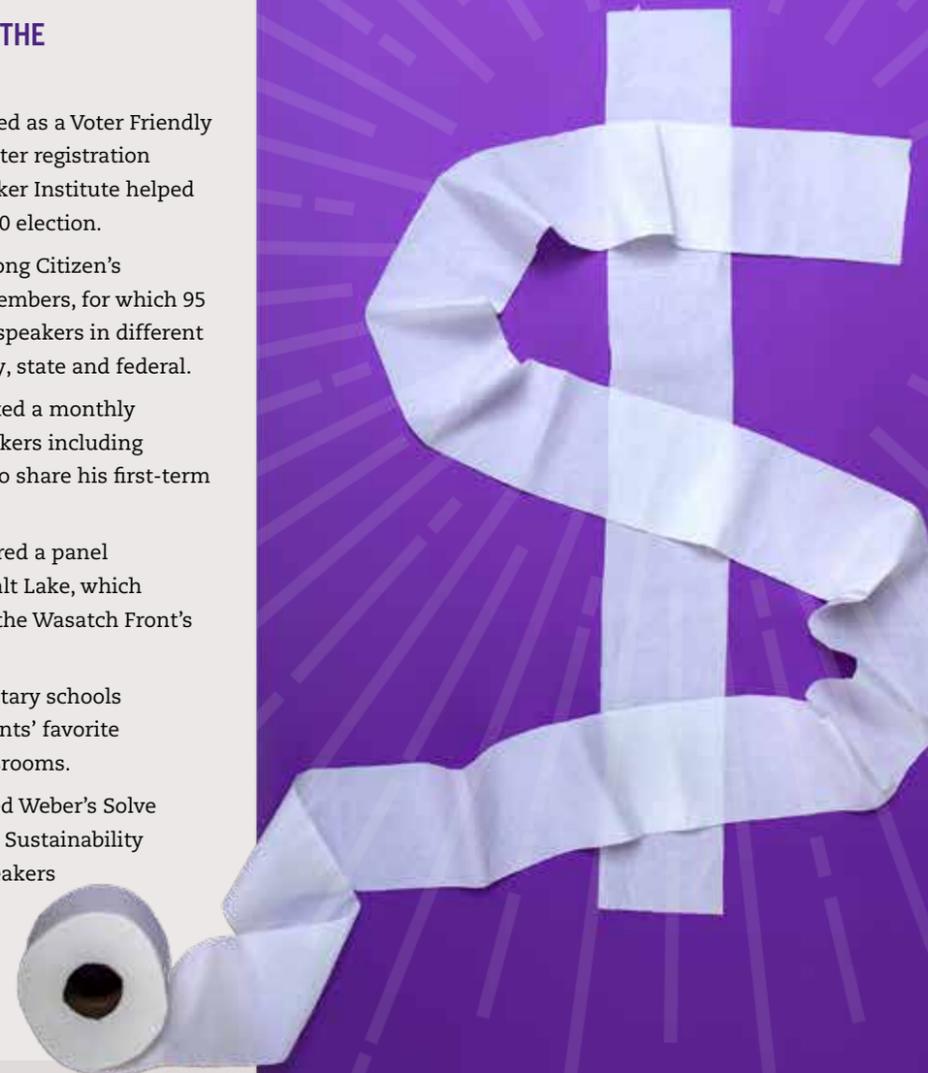
Jennifer Gnagey and her undergraduate research assistant have been delving into the history of housing discrimination in Ogden and Weber County. She is raising awareness about the project through interviews and presentations. "Numerous policies and practices in northern and western states were used to create and sustain racially segregated neighborhoods," she said.

Wendy Fox-Kirk's research focuses on corporate policies that proclaim a commitment to gender equity, but often mask practices that hinder women's advancement at work and in society. Local and international journalists sought to learn more about Fox-Kirk's co-authored article, "Genderwashing: The Myth of Equality," published in *Human Resource Development International*.

"Organizations were talking about how they were improving things for women while at the same time allowing continued violence and discrimination against them for years," Fox-Kirk explained.

During the pandemic, John Mukum Mbaku continued as an internationally recognized source on economic and political issues in Africa. As a Brookings Institution Nonresident Senior Fellow, Mbaku speaks regularly to the BBC, Aljazeera and other outlets. Most recently, he discussed the fragility in Chad and counterterrorism strategies in West Africa. For exceptional research, teaching and service in the humanities and social sciences, the Utah Academy of Sciences, Arts & Letters honored him with the 2021 John and Olga Gardner Prize.

Although the topics are disparate, economics faculty say their research is conducted with the unified goal of shaping informed policy to help individuals for generations.



COMMUNICATION PROFESSOR EARNS *Fulbright*

Sarah Steimel, Weber State professor of communication, was selected as a 2020 Fulbright Specialist to conduct scholarly work in Belarus.

The planned project with Polotsk State University was designed to expand higher-education opportunities to more of the country's citizens through quality online programs.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic prevented her travel.

She hopes for a future chance to research and teach as a Fulbright Scholar. Until then, she will continue to share her passion for online and international education with Weber State students as the director of the Master of Professional Communication program.

Steimel is the 12th Weber State Fulbright recipient since 1999.



Through therapy, Patrick Luo found ways to accept failure and celebrate his accomplishments.

PATRICK LUO CELEBRATES HIS 2021 GRADUATION WITH FRIENDS.

CREATING A FAMILY HOME *Built for Efficiency*

Weber State students were honored with first place for energy performance, second place for presentation, and third place for engineering in the international Solar Decathlon Build Challenge sponsored by the U.S. Department of Energy.

In the challenge, student teams designed and built high-performance, low-carbon-producing homes powered by renewables. More than 100 teams, including those from Yale and Harvard, submitted detailed design proposals. From those, nine international teams were selected to build.

For the decathlon, 50+ Weber State and Davis and Ogden-Weber Technical College students, under the direction of Building Design & Construction professor **Jeremy Farner**, contributed to construct a net-zero home in central Ogden.

Wildcat alumni **Melissa and Mark Haslam**, who bought the home, are now enjoying energy costs of just over \$100 annually or around \$9 per month to connect to the electrical grid.



Prioritizing Mental Health, NOT JUST ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Patrick Luo BS '21 remembers working eight- to 12-hour shifts every day at his family's restaurant in southern Utah to help them pay the bills and keep their home. Once, he recalls, his parents argued over whether the family would have to skip medical visits for a year to save money.

With little to spare, college seemed out of the question. Then, in 2017, he received the full-ride Daniels Scholarship and was accepted to Weber State. He knew he had to make the most of the opportunity. "I could not fail," he said.

That pressure drove him to become an academic success, receiving the Outstanding Student Researcher Award for the Dr. Ezekiel R. Dumke College of Health Professions in 2021. His mental health was another story. "When I did fail, I would essentially consider myself worthless, and meaningless," he said.

Luo found help processing his failures at WSU's Counseling & Psychological Services Center.

He discovered his coping mechanism had been getting involved in more and more activities to avoid thinking about failure. At WSU, he served as vice president of service for the WSU Student Association and vice president of the Asian Student Involvement Association and was involved in the National Society of Leadership and Success, First Gen Club, *The Signpost* and other organizations. Logging

more than 1,520 volunteer community engagement hours, he received the 2020 Presidential Award for Community-Engaged Student.

When COVID-19 put a hold on campus activities, his coping mechanism failed.

"I was just super-overwhelmed, and I thought 'I can't cope with this,'" he said.

It was then he asked for help. "I learned why I felt like an absolute failure and deserved to be punished whenever I didn't succeed at one thing or when I received a 99% on a test instead of 100%."

Through therapy, he found ways to accept failure, and he later shared his story through the Presidential Leadership Fellows, an exclusive group of nominated students who go through a highly selective process to serve as Weber State ambassadors while building leadership skills through monthly seminars.

"If people don't talk about mental health issues, the stigma and problems behind it are never going to be addressed," Luo said.

In fall 2021, he started the Doctor of Physical Therapy program at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. While processing his failures, he will also celebrate his accomplishments.



Achievements in
ATHLETICS



WSU VOLLEYBALL TEAM *Makes History*

The 2020–21 Weber State Volleyball team is one for the history books.

With a 19–2 record in their unprecedented spring season, the Wildcats won their first-ever Big Sky Conference regular season title and advanced to the NCAA tournament for the first time since 1988.

At the tournament, the team made history again, winning its first tournament match 3–1 against Bowling Green. The Wildcats fought hard, but lost in the second round to the No. 1 Wisconsin Badgers.



“I’m so proud of our team and what they have accomplished this season through all the things that were thrown at them,” head coach **Jeremiah Larsen** said. “We had a vision and a plan to build this program and build a culture of success and we were able to accomplish many goals this season.”

Larsen was named the Big Sky Coach of the Year for the 2021 spring season, becoming the third Weber State coach to earn the honor in the program’s 47 years.

Senior **Rylin Adams** earned multiple honors this season, becoming the first Wildcat women’s volleyball student-athlete to be named to the Spring 2021 AVCA Division I Honorable Mention All-America list. She was also named the Big Sky Conference MVP for the season, Big Sky All-Conference Tournament Team, and AVCA Pacific North All-Region.

Adams and three other Wildcats — **Dani Nay**, **Sam Schiess** and **Ashlyn Power** — were also named to the Big Sky All-Conference First Team.



WSU CATCHER LAUREN HOE, FROM WALLA WALLA, WASHINGTON, WAS NAMED THE BIG SKY PLAYER OF THE YEAR.

SOFTBALL TEAM *Wins Big Sky* WITH COACH, PLAYER, PITCHER AND FRESHMAN OF THE YEAR

Weber State University’s softball team captured its fourth Big Sky Conference regular season championship with three games left in the 2021 season.

Though the team was eliminated early from the post-season conference tournament, the Wildcats finished the season with a league-best 15-3 record and dominated the All-Conference team and individual awards.

Catcher **Lauren Hoe** was named the Big Sky Player of the Year, **Mariah Ramirez** was named Pitcher of the Year and outfielder **Mia Rushton** was named Freshman of the Year.

Hoe, Ramirez and Rushton joined teammates **Faith Hoe**, **Chloe Camarero**, **Amanda Sink** and **Noelle Foster** as selections on the All-Big Sky first-team.

Softball coach **Mary Kay Amicone** was voted the 2021 Big Sky Coach of the Year and led the Wildcats to their second-best win percentage (.833) in conference history. Amicone was also named coach of the year in 2015 and 2019, and is the first coach in league history to receive three Big Sky Coach of the Year honors.

TRACK AND FIELD HAS *Record-Breaking Season*

WSU broke all kinds of records during the spring 2021 track and field season.

The Weber State women’s team finished second overall at the 2021 Big Sky Outdoor Track and Field Championships in May held at Stewart Stadium. During the meet, the Wildcats captured several Big Sky titles and set five stadium records.

Emily Morgan-King won first place in the 100 meters and broke her stadium record with a time of 23.46 in the 200 meters. She also set a new stadium record in the 100 meters with a time of 11.37, the second-fastest time in conference history.

Lexie Thompson placed first in the 10,000 meters with a time of 34:23.55, shattering stadium and conference meet records. She also won the 5,000 meters with a time of 16:26.7, breaking the stadium record.

On the men’s side, the team finished fourth overall at the championship and received four conference titles. **Bronson Winter** won the 800 meters with a time of 1:50.99 and was named the Big Sky Men’s Outdoor Track and Field Freshman of the Year.

Xakai Harry set a new record in the long jump, posting a jump of 25-06 and became the first Wildcat since 2013 to win the conference title. **Caleb Whitney** won the decathlon with 7,061 points, the fourth highest total in Weber State history, becoming a third Wildcat to win the event.

Three Wildcats from the women’s team qualified for the NCAA Outdoor Track and Field Championships.



BRONSON WINTER

EMILY MORGAN-KING

CALEB WHITNEY

LEXIE THOMPSON

RUNNING *Ever Upward*

Summer Allen, mother, athlete and grad student, recently made WSU history. As a senior and new mother of one, she ran a record-breaking race at the 2020 NCAA Cross Country Championships. Competing on a 6K course, she finished in seventh place with a time of 20:23.3, marking the best cross country finish at the championships in WSU history and earning All-American honors.

During the 2020–2021 outdoor track and field season, Allen won the Big Sky title in the women’s 3,000 meter steeplechase and set a Stewart Stadium record at the conference championships. She finished eighth in the steeplechase at the NCAA Championships to earn first team All-American honors. She also broke WSU and Big Sky records in the steeplechase.

Along with football player **Jared Schiess**, she received the 2020–2021 Big Sky Conference Scholar-Athlete Award for Weber State University.





WSU RUNNING BACK DONTAE MCMILLAN, FROM SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, WAS NAMED CO-BIG SKY FRESHMAN OF THE YEAR.

WSU LINEBACKER CONNER MORTENSEN, FROM OVERTON, NEVADA, WAS NAMED THE BIG SKY DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR.

WEBER STATE FOOTBALL TAKES HOME *Fourth-Straight Title*

WSU football made the most of an unusual spring season. The Wildcats took home the Big Sky Conference title for the fourth time in a row in April after an undefeated 5-0 regular season; it was also the team's first outright conference championship. In the postseason, the Wildcats suffered a heartbreaking loss against Southern Illinois in the first round of the FCS Playoffs. Coach **Jay Hill**, who signed a two-year contract extension in 2021, was named the Big Sky Coach of the Year for the first time in seven seasons at Weber State. He was also named the Region 5 Coach of the Year by the American Football Coaches Association and a finalist for the Eddie Robinson Award. Senior linebacker **Conner Mortensen** was named the Big Sky Defensive Player of the Year, while running back **Dontae McMillan** was named the co-Big Sky Freshman of the Year. McMillan is just the second Wildcat to earn this honor. The Wildcats led all schools with 13 players named to the Big Sky All Conference Team. The team opened its fall 2021 season at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City.



WSU OPENS NEW *Golf Practice Facility*

The new Weber State University Athletics golf short game practice facility opened in April 2021 at the Ogden Golf and Country Club in South Ogden. The 2.71-acre facility has a main chipping and pitching green, a stand-alone putting green and five other fixed targets, offering various lengths and multiple targets so several players can practice at the same time.

SPIRIT SQUAD WINS *National Title* FOR FOURTH YEAR IN A ROW

YOU CAN'T SPELL WEBER WITHOUT THIS "W."

The WSU Spirit Squad earned its fourth-straight national title in the Advanced Large Coed division at the 2021 NCA and NDA Collegiate Cheer and Dance Championships.

The squad also earned the program's first Grand National Championship trophy, with the best score of any school in any division.

Stunt partners **Elsa Hassett** and **Kollin Cockrell** won the Partner Stunt national title. Additionally, the Wildcat dance team took home the Hip Hop national title.

More than 100 schools from across the country participated in the competition.





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