

## In the Year 2019: WSU, World, Culturally

2019 was a year of "groundbreaking" momentum for Weber State University, characterized by massive investments in engineering, a shift in university leadership, and historic success on the football field.

### Leadership and New Frontiers

- **Inauguration of Brad Mortensen:** In early 2019, Brad Mortensen was officially inaugurated as the 13th president of Weber State. He succeeded F. Ann Millner and Chuck Wight, focusing his early tenure on community "anchoring" and expanding the university's reach into Davis County. [\[source\]](#)
- **The Noorda Gift & Building:** One of the biggest news items of the year was the Utah State Legislature's approval of \$50 million (combined with a massive private gift from the Ray & Tye Noorda Foundation) to build the Noorda Engineering, Applied Science & Technology Building. This replaced the outdated Technical Education Building and signaled WSU's commitment to the regional aerospace and tech industry. [\[source\]](#)
- **Davis Campus Expansion:** In May 2019, the university broke ground on the Computer & Automotive Engineering Building at the WSU Davis campus in Layton, a \$20 million project designed to meet the high demand for tech graduates in that area. [\[source\]](#)

### Athletics: The "Cat" dominance

2019 is remembered as one of the greatest years in the history of Weber State Football.

- **Quarterfinal Victory:** Under coach Jay Hill, the Wildcats advanced to the NCAA FCS Semifinals for the first time in school history after a thrilling quarterfinal win against Montana at a snowy Stewart Stadium. [\[source\]](#)
- **National Recognition:** Defensive end Jonah Williams was named the Big Sky Defensive Player of the Year, leading a defense that was ranked among the best in the nation. [\[source\]](#)

### Campus Culture

- **Lindquist Hall Opens:** In January 2019, the university officially opened the renovated Lindquist Hall (the Social Science building). It featured state-of-the-art labs for anthropology and criminal justice, as well as the new Hurst Center for Public Service. [\[source\]](#)
- **Outdoor Adventure Center:** In October 2019, WSU broke ground on the Outdoor Adventure & Welcome Center. This facility was designed to house the university's massive equipment rental program and a 55-foot climbing wall, reinforcing WSU's identity as an "outdoor-focused" campus. [\[source\]](#)

### Sustainability Milestone

- **Solar Expansion:** Continuing its goal to be carbon neutral by 2040, WSU expanded its solar arrays and continued transitioning the campus fleet to electric vehicles, maintaining its status as a national leader in campus sustainability. [\[source\]](#)

## 2019: Protests and Impeachment

- **Hong Kong Protests:** Massive demonstrations erupted in Hong Kong over a proposed extradition bill, sparking a long-running pro-democracy movement.
- **First Image of a Black Hole:** The Event Horizon Telescope released the first-ever photograph of a black hole, specifically the supermassive black hole.
- **Notre-Dame Fire:** A massive fire severely damaged the historic Notre-Dame Cathedral in Paris, resulting in the collapse of its spire.

## 2019: The "Endgame" Era

- **Film: *Avengers: Endgame*** became the highest-grossing film of all time (briefly), concluding over a decade of Marvel storytelling.
- **Music:** "Old Town Road" by Lil Nas X broke the record for the most weeks at #1 on the Billboard Hot 100, fueled largely by TikTok.
- **Streaming:** Disney+ launched, significantly shifting the "streaming wars" as everyone raced to own their own content.