Federal Grants Give Support to Weber State Programs

Thanks to the efforts of tireless faculty and staff, Weber State has received nearly $3.2 million in federal grants recently to help students succeed in a variety of disciplines.

The largest grant, $2.18 million, from the Department of Education, will support Wildcat Scholars. Associate provost Eric Amsel worked with many on campus to create a program for “dev-dev” students, those students who arrive at Weber State needing pre-college courses in both English and math. Nearly 56 percent of dev-dev students drop out their first year. Wildcat Scholars not only helps them with core competencies, but it also helps students learn how to learn.

“The Wildcat Scholars program recognizes that students arrive with assets they can leverage to be successful,” Amsel said. “But they need support to learn how to use those assets to be successful in college. They don’t need to be held back; they need to move forward.”

An additional $165,000 from the Department of Education will be used to enhance business-language education in foreign languages, including supporting the new bachelor of arts in Spanish translation.

Two National Science Foundation (NSF) grants totaling nearly $1 million will help efforts to increase recruitment, retention and graduation of students studying physical sciences, which includes chemistry, geosciences, mathematics, physics, computer science and engineering.

The first NSF grant of $648,000 will provide scholarships to 30 low-income, high-achieving students. Over the course of five years, the scholarships will help students, with demonstrated financial need, studying the physical sciences, in both the College of Science and the College of Engineering, Applied Science & Technology.

“Guy Letendre wants to strengthen regional public/private partnerships, accelerate business development, drive research ideas to market and ensure that graduates have skills and knowledge to meet the needs of the workforce.

“Webster State continues to do great things for Northern Utah and has the talent and resources to provide an even greater economic impact,” Letendre said. “A strong and growing economy will ensure the best and brightest come to our region.”

Working with business, government and elected officials, Weber State is actively participating in discussions...
This differs from other scholarships in that it focuses on sustained support for the recipients. Students will complete their course work in groups, attend a weekly science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) seminar course, meet regularly with faculty mentors and participate in leadership opportunities.

The second NSF grant of $350,000 went to a project called “GP EXTRA: GETUP – Geoscience Education Targeting Underrepresented Populations.” Specific activities to support students will include early college advising and recruiting through concurrent enrollment geosciences courses at local high schools; continued development of a geology summer bridge program with trips to Yellowstone and Bryce Canyon national parks; early access to paid undergraduate research projects of the Great Salt Lake; development of a geosciences course that will connect students to the local community through outreach and research.

All the federal grant money will have immediate and long-term benefits. “The greatest impact will come from the research and implementation of support systems specific to our student population,” assistant chemistry professor Tracy Covey said. “These grants have potential to positively impact students now and in the future.”

Letendre has an extensive background in operations and supply chain management for biotech and transportation companies, including Autoliv, Alexza Pharmaceuticals and Infinia Corporation.

Early in his engineering career, he helped develop airbag inflation devices for Autoliv. After earning an MBA, Letendre switched his career focus to business administration and consulting.

“Weber State’s mission identifies the university as an economic leader for the region, and we take that role seriously,” said Brad Mortensen, University Advancement vice president. “Our commitment encompasses workforce preparation for our students — many of whom come from and stay in Northern Utah.”
As most readers of WSU News know, Academic Affairs (AA), with the help of the Academic Master Planning Task Force, has been developing a map to chart WSU’s academic future. The work has involved information gathering, data analysis, discussions with programs, departments and colleges, as well as some centralization of salary funding in order to support new or growing programs.

Last spring, AA instituted a policy with college deans that requires deans to return some salary dollars when a tenured faculty member resigns or retires. Essentially, a college retains the amount needed to hire a new assistant professor; it also retains 75 percent of the remainder. For this coming spring, AA has adjusted the formula, so colleges will retain 50 percent.

With funds coming to AA from last year’s resignations, retirements and some legislative funding for high-demand positions, AA ended up with approximately $220,000 in salary funds. We invited all deans to submit proposals for those dollars. Almost all did so. Deans were given a week to read all proposals; we then met as a group to discuss, evaluate and determine how the funds would be allocated. Because so many of the deans have served on the Academic Master Planning Task Force (or have received reports from their college representatives), they are familiar with program analysis documents submitted last spring and, thus, have an informed perspective on programs’ strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats and needs.

The discussion and eventual ranking of proposals was collegial and friendly. Ultimately, the deans recommended four proposals for salary funds; interestingly, each one of these proposals, to a varying degree, will support a faculty member whose work is interdisciplinary and innovative. In no particular order, salary funds will support the following:

1. The College of Social & Behavioral Sciences and the College of Science for the joint appointment of a faculty member in geography and geosciences, who will help implement the Northern Utah Geospatial Education (NUGEoTec) program at WSU. In their proposal, professors Eric Ewert and Michael Hernandez noted that “Geospatial technologies comprise a huge and growing toolbox (Geographic Information Systems, Global Positioning Systems, cartography, phone/vehicle navigation, drones, satellites, etc.) that find more uses and users every year.”

2. The Telitha E. Lindquist College of Arts & Humanities for a college-level faculty appointment to teach digital media/film. While this faculty member most likely will be housed in Communication (where enrollment figures have increased 3.6 percent each year over the past decade), he or she will collaborate with faculty in visual art and design. The digital media industry is growing by leaps and bounds, and students find employment immediately after graduation if they are not already working in the industry.

3. An instructor for the Outdoor & Community Recreation Education (OCRE) program in the Jerry & Vickie Moyes College of Education. Launched only a year ago, OCRE already has attracted 53 majors and eight minors, far surpassing the program’s estimate of 50 majors by 2022. To meet student demand in this program that involves field-based courses, technical skill and a multitude of industry certifications, OCRE requested a full-time instructor. Readers were impressed with the program’s growth and its alignment with Ogden and Northern Utah’s development of outdoor recreation industries.

4. All departments in the College of Science, for a new interdisciplinary line in environmental science. According to the proposal, the College of Science seeks an individual who, in addition to being an excellent teacher, “will build a vigorous undergraduate research program that combines field-based research with computational modeling of the ecosystems of our region, including how these ecosystems are affected by anthropogenic climate change.” The program will attract new students and will contribute to the protection and care of our local environment.

I am very pleased with the results of this funding process. Look for it to continue in the future.
Community Invited to

Lindquist Hall Grand Opening

Weber State will have something extra special to celebrate on its 130th Founder’s Day — the grand opening of Lindquist Hall. Join in the celebration, watch the ribbon-cutting and tour the renovated building beginning Jan. 7 at 2 p.m.

John E. Lindquist, president of Lindquist Mortuaries and Great Western Insurance, gifted $5 million to help with the $35 million renovation. The building will have an additional 13,000 square feet, a welcoming main entry, natural lighting, modern labs, classrooms and collaboration spaces. The heavily used building has been a landmark at Weber State for nearly 50 years and houses all 12 departments and programs in the College of Social & Behavioral Sciences, including archaeology, history, political science, psychology and the Olene S. Walker Institute of Politics & Public Service.

“Winston Churchill is credited with this quote, ‘We shape our buildings and then our buildings shape us,’” said Frank Harrold, Social & Behavioral Sciences dean. “The new Lindquist Hall will both increase the quality of the educational experience and will promote interdisciplinary collaboration that’s increasingly part of higher education.”

Community Education Center Grand Opening

The much-anticipated Community Education Center will host a grand-opening celebration Nov. 15 from 5-7 p.m. at 2605 Monroe Blvd., Ogden.

Everyone in the campus community is invited for the ribbon-cutting, program, entertainment, tours and light refreshments.

“The goal is for people to feel they are in a safe space and they have people who they can relate to help them access the education they need,” said Luís Lopez center director.

The Community Education Center will help WSU further integrate into central Ogden by offering residents classes in English as a second language and basic computer courses, as well as interviewing, resume and cover letter writing. All courses will be offered in English and Spanish.

The new facility will house the Community Education Center, the Melba S. Lehner Children’s School extension, the Ogden Civic Action Network and the Center for Community Engaged Learning community partnerships extension.
Faculty & Staff Accomplishments

Shelly Belflower, Academic Technology Services and IT Business Services director, earned the Distinguished Toastmaster international award. She has been a charter member of Wildcat Toastmasters, a club devoted to speaking and leadership, since 2000.

Nursing faculty Sally Cantwell, Melissa Neville and Susan Thornock presented “Our School of Nursing's Journey with Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN): A 360 Degree View” at the 2018 ACEN Conference.

Zoology associate professor Brian Chung and professor emeritus Robert Okazaki accompanied students Arusa Ashfaq, Rachel DuBose and Augustus Malan and graduate Kirsten Peterson to the 9th International Conference on Nemertean Biology in Sylt, Germany. The students gave three presentations on their research of the histology, molecular biology and physiology of ribbon worms.

Zoology professor Jonathan Clark was elected to a three-year term on the Board of Directors for the International Society for Salt Lake Research and will help plan the 2020 conference in Spain.

Assistant professor of business administration Jeff Clements and associate professor of management information systems Randy Boyle had their paper, “Compulsive Technology Use: Compulsive Use of Mobile Applications,” published in the October issue of Computers in Human Behavior.

Dental hygiene associate professor Shelly Costley was elected president of the Utah Dental Hygienists’ Association.


Matt Gnagay, economics assistant professor, published “Wetlands and Open Space: The Impact of Environmental Regulations on Land Use Patterns” in the Journal of Environmental Management in November.


Assistant communication professor Hailey Gillen Hoke published “Sensitive issues, religion, and respect in the gender and communication course” in the Journal of First Amendment Studies.

Physics professor Adam Johnston was elected to a three-year term as the Utah Science Teachers Association’s higher education representative. The association strives to advance, stimulate, extend, improve and coordinate teaching in all fields of science at all education levels.

Economics chair Brandon Koford co-authored “Increasing Knowledge Retention of Business Statistics through Discipline-Specific Case Studies” for the Journal of Education for Business.

History professor Greg Lewis presented “Education, Management, and Personalities in the China Committee for the Promotion of International Trade, 1952-1966” at Fudan University’s May 2018 conference. He also published a review of Wyoming Samurai in Pacific Northwest Quarterly. Lewis was elected to serve on the Association for Asian Studies’ Council of Conferences for the next three years.

Economics professor John Mukum Mbaku participated in The New Shape Forum in Stockholm, Sweden, organized by the Stockholm-based Global Challenges Foundation to find new models of global governance that can respond more effectively to emerging global risks. Mbaku also was interviewed on NPR’s “The World” with Marco Werman, as well as on BBC International, about the constitutional crisis in Cameroon. In addition, he appeared as an expert on TVC’s “Africa Today,” produced in Lagos, Nigeria, to speak on the presidential election in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the presidential election in Mali.

Engineering technology associate professor Julianne McCulley presented “AAS Controls Technology Stackable Degree: Education Requirements for Employees by Highly Automated Manufacturing Companies Drives a Collaborative Pathway at Weber State University” at the 2018 American Society for Engineering Education Annual Conference.

Zoology professor Ron Meyers presented the keynote address “Comparative Anatomy of the Postural Mechanisms of the Forelimbs of Birds and Mammals” at the 27th International Ornithological Congress in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Medical laboratory sciences assistant professor Scott Moore co-authored the book First Aid for the USMLE Step 1 2018, published by McGraw-Hill.

Geography faculty Alice Mulder and Dan Bedford presented their paper, “Climate Conversations: Engaging the Community in Discussions of Climate Change,” at the American Association of Geographers Annual Meeting in New Orleans.

Accomplishments - continued on page 6
WELCOME to WSU

Alexa Arnold, Admissions Office
Louis Arteaga, Facilities Management
Lindsay Beddes, Psychology
Davis Bitton, Browning Center
Bethany Brown, Career Services
Darryl Brown, Athletics Admin and Support
Okony Cham, Continuing Education
Amie Clawson, Medical Laboratory Sciences
Christopher Colvin, Infrastructure Services
Julie Couturier-VanRoekel, Affirmative Action
James Craig, Browning Center
Kaitlyn Crane, Academic Support Centers
Abigail Depperschmidt, Administrative Services
Amy Donovan, Athletics Admin and Support
Kaori Gale, Continuing Education
Cydnee Green, Browning Center
Natalie Hales, Center for Community Engaged Learning
Jonathan Harrell, Counseling & Psychological Services
Timothy Israelsen, Facilities Management
Kevin Jensen, Athletics Admin and Support
Richard Leary, Student Success Center
Guy Letendre, University Advancement
Amanda Musselman, Dental Hygiene
Jeffrey Page, Physics
Kylie Patton, Continuing Education
Estefani Perez Lopez, Continuing Education
Dustin Pike, Performing Arts
Savannah Price, Child and Family Studies
Danette Pulley, Development
KC Sanders, Communication
Sara Seefried, Academic Support Centers
Christopher Sessions, Facilities Management
Pamela Silberman, Health Sciences
William Soule, Academic Support Centers
Jennifer Tietz, Admissions Office
Jonathan Warren, Academic Technology Services
Hollie Wilson, Career Services

On the Move/Promoted

Kallie Bennett, Payroll
RC Callahan, Continuing Education
Bernard Cannon, Facilities Management

Regina Carver, Bursar and Collection Services
Heather Couturier, Facilities Management
Angela England, Human Resources
Shane Farver, Continuing Education
Michael Foley, Facilities Management
Joan Gustafson, Provost’s Office
Brittney Hicken, Human Resources
Nicholas Lambert, Academic Technology Services
Charles Lynch, Facilities Management
Emily Owen, Financial Aid Office
Kaycee Paskins, Continuing Education
Sara Pomeroy, Library
Jodi Shupp, Human Resources
Kellee Smith, Parking

Retired

Georgia Edwards, Communication
Shelley Hart, Communication
Kristie Nielsen, Continuing Education

Accomplishments - continued from page 5

Medical laboratory sciences chair Matthew Nicholaou received the Distinguished Author Award in Research and Reports from the American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science for his co-authored paper “Suppression of Antimicrobial Resistance in MRSA using CRISPR-dCas9.”


Sarah Steimel, communication associate professor, published “Core beliefs/content accommodation policies and teaching practice” in the Journal of First Amendment Studies.

Assistant professor of nursing Jamie Wankier presented “Faculty Mentoring: Innovative Methods to Inspire Mentors & Mentees” at the 2018 Nurse Educators Conference in the Rockies.


Zoology professor emeritus Sam Zeveloff published “A grim spot for a goose nest?” in the journal Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment and co-authored “Environmental drivers of raccoon (Procyon lotor L.) occurrences in Austria - established versus newly invaded regions” in the Archives of Biological Sciences.