



WSU NEWS

Weber State University News & Events

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Bus Rapid Transit Breaks Ground

After 20 years of planning, the Ogden/WSU Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) officially breaks ground at Weber State on April 13, but construction is already underway to bring the future of public transportation through the WSU campus.

The \$120-million BRT project promises to combine the capacity and speed of light rail with the low-cost construction of a bus route. Riders will enjoy 11 clean-air, all-electric buses running from McKay-Dee Hospital to the FrontRunner Station in downtown Ogden. Stops along the way will include three at Weber State: one at the Dee Events Center, one north of Wildcat Village and one just west of the Browning Center, called the Central Campus Station. The bus will then run along the east edge of Lindquist Plaza and exit campus at 3600 South.

“After many years of planning and collaboration, it is exciting to see the Ogden/WSU BRT project begin construction,” said President **Brad Mortensen**. “Bringing a dedicated transit route to campus improves accessibility for students, provides an eco-friendly transportation alternative and minimizes the impact of commuters for our surrounding community. We appreciate the partnership with UTA, Ogden City, McKay-Dee Hospital and the Federal Transit Administration for making this project a reality.”

UTA crews began irrigation work at the Pine View Canal in February and will continue soon with demolition on the marquee and art feature in front of the Dee. Additional curb, gutter and sidewalk work begins mid-March between the Browning Center and the Kimball Visual Arts Center. Construction will

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CENTRAL CAMPUS



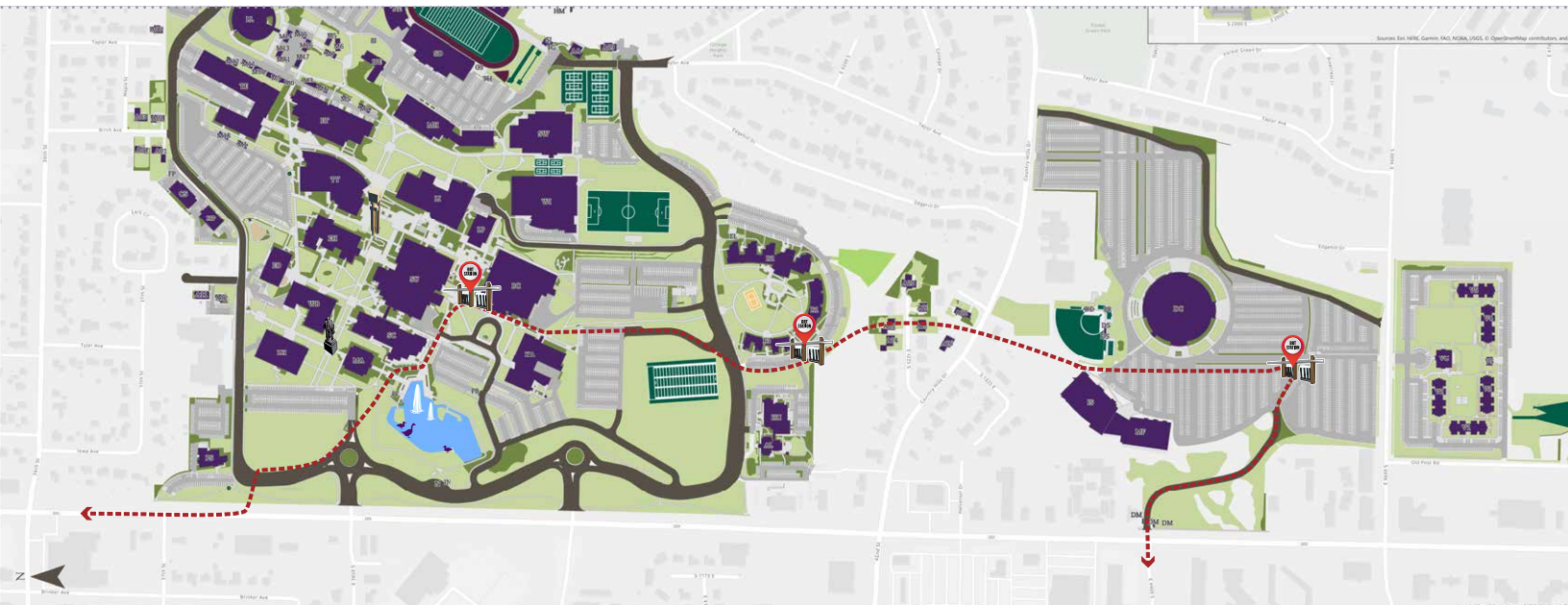
MINDFUL CARING MOTIVATES NEW AA/EO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The new executive director of the Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity (AA/EO) office said doing something meaningful for people in need, in the community she loves, is what attracted her to Weber State.

For 17 years, **Laura Thompson** worked in the Civil Law Division of the Utah Attorney General's Office as the senior legal advisor for the executive director of the Department of Human Services (DHS), a department that serves the most vulnerable citizens: children, those with disabilities and families disrupted by abuse and neglect.

She understands that people in crisis need immediate attention, so a top priority of WSU's AA/EO

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BRT, continued from page 1

not affect parking lots or access to buildings before spring semester ends.

Major construction for the Central Campus Station will be completed between May and August. During fall semester 2021, work will move south to WSU Housing. Village Drive and the Dee Events Center construction will continue into 2022.

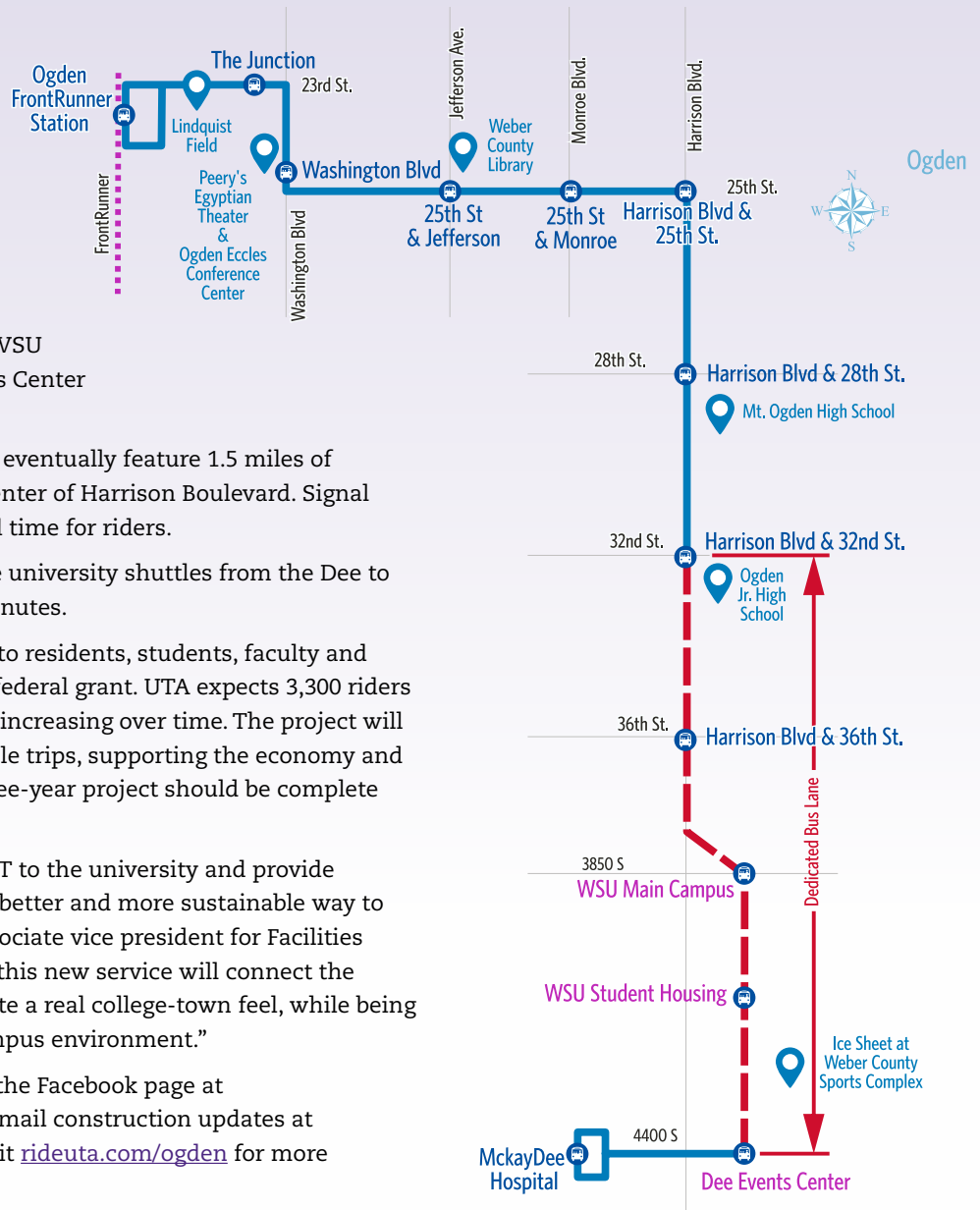
The 5.3-mile long Ogden BRT project will eventually feature 1.5 miles of dedicated bus lanes running down the center of Harrison Boulevard. Signal priority for buses means decreased travel time for riders.

Additional electric BRT buses will replace university shuttles from the Dee to central campus and will run every 6-8 minutes.

The Ogden/WSU BRT project will be free to residents, students, faculty and staff for the first three years thanks to a federal grant. UTA expects 3,300 riders on the first day of service, with ridership increasing over time. The project will benefit the community by reducing vehicle trips, supporting the economy and providing transportation choices. The three-year project should be complete with a grand opening planned for 2023.

“We are really excited to welcome the BRT to the university and provide students, faculty, staff and community a better and more sustainable way to get to campus,” said **Mark Halverson**, associate vice president for Facilities and Campus Planning. “Our hope is that this new service will connect the university with downtown Ogden to create a real college-town feel, while being an amenity and enhancement to the campus environment.”

To stay up-to-date on the project, follow the Facebook page at facebook.com/OgdenBRT or sign-up for email construction updates at OgdenBRT@rideuta.com. You can also visit rideuta.com/ogden for more information about the project.



Presidential Outstanding Staff Awards

Five Weber State employees were presented with the Presidential Outstanding Staff awards. This year's committee selected winners from a record number of peer nominations. The honorees each received \$2,000, a plaque and reserved parking.



MATT CAIN

Matthew Cain manages the Classroom Technology Services team in IT, with 10 full-time and eight hourly employees. He leads out on high-level campus

technology projects with deans, NUAMES administration, faculty and staff.

Cain has been an active contributor to the digital fluency and Digital District efforts since 2016. He and his team were responsible for upgrading approximately 200 classrooms and labs. Cain managed the ordering, purchasing, receiving and installing of approximately \$2.5 million dollars' worth of equipment to support academic endeavors.

Cain used his innovative abilities to lead Weber State's deployment of Zoom. His commitment, organizational and interpersonal skills, and technical dexterity have helped the university fulfill its educational mission in the midst of a worldwide pandemic.

RC CALLAHAN

As executive director of WSU Online, RC Callahan works to provide faculty with the tools they need to succeed as instructors. Tapping into the



science of learning, Callahan's team provides workshops, webinars and online courses to help faculty employ Canvas effectively.

Callahan's leadership positioned WSU to move almost all courses online in just three

business days in spring 2020. His team had Canvas training sessions ready for faculty to complete at their own pace. Callahan also supported 63 faculty members participating in 24 grant-funded virtual course-design projects. He has coordinated teams of faculty coaches in each college.

Callahan has been building the infrastructure to support an online campus for years. His foresight made the dramatic transition possible.



DEBI LARSON

As the administrative specialist for the math department, Debi Larson's answer to the question, "Can you help me with...?" is always "Yes." She

is responsible for organizing large annual events, sorting out travel reimbursements, managing grant funding, finding supplies and responding to hundreds of obscure questions.

Larson serves on the University Quantitative Literacy Task Force, and with her help, the committee changed the university's math placement tool; piloted an experimental course that allows students to complete quantitative literacy in one semester and revised the prerequisites for Math 1010.

Larson understands and can articulate both the need for math standards and the importance of finding creative ways to prepare, advise, tutor and teach students to successfully complete those requirements.

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GINA NAISBITT

Gina Naisbitt provides administrative support to nine individuals including the Dean of the College of Engineering, Applied

Science & Technology as well as to the EAST Concept Center, EAST Center for Outreach & Technology and the National Center for Automotive Science & Technology.

In 2019, Naisbitt initiated a monthly meeting of the college administrative staff. Under her direction, everyone shares best practices, receives training and strives to achieve college goals.

Working remotely during the pandemic, Naisbitt arranged to have the school of computing, automotive technology, and professional sales relocated, so the Technical Education Building could be demolished in preparation for the Noorda Engineering building.

Naisbitt is critical in managing relationships with community partners and donors to enhance support and scholarships for the college.



KAYCEE PASKINS

As director of Academic Software Design & Development, Kaycee Paskins helps facilitate secure testing for

the university. Through her focus on customer service, she ensures students testing needs are met.

Paskins was a key contributor in supporting all-virtual testing in response to COVID-19. She and her team spent long hours developing the tool to effectively proctor virtual tests.

The departments of math, developmental math, health sciences, computer science, and nursing all praised Paskin's assistance. One weekend Paskins manually added close to 100 health sciences students into the testing system and helped troubleshoot problems individually. Colleagues report that Paskins has a great grasp of the big picture while still taking care of small details, which make a project work.

office is conducting timely investigations that find resolutions to help individuals move forward as quickly as possible.

Thompson said they also want to help prevent problems before they occur by providing meaningful training and information about difficult topics, such as hostile work environment, sexual assault and harassment, and discrimination.

A leader in the DHS System Equity program, Thompson brings experience and passion for diversity to the university and is already working with Human Resources and the Office of Diversity to ensure equity in each step of the admissions and hiring process.

As a volunteer, Thompson has established yoga programs at the YMCA, Tranquility Home through Weber Human Services, the women's shelter and local schools. For her, the practice of yoga and the work of the AA/EO office are surprisingly similar.

"When I get the opportunity to pay something back to the community through yoga, I'm all over that," Thompson explained. "Being mindful in the way we do this work and approach individuals with respect and caring and consideration applies to everybody in any situation."



Fake Commuting

PROVOST'S
MESSAGE

In this column, I want to recognize Team Weber State! It is quite a story of sacrifice, persistence and grit — behaviors perhaps more observed on a battlefield. As it turns out, we are fighting the battle of our lives. The one-year milestone of the pandemic underscores the sobering and grim reality we have faced.

Against all odds, our students have stayed resilient. We experienced an increase in the retention rate from fall 2019 to fall 2020. These are students who started college pre-pandemic, survived last spring and thought well enough of the Wildcat experience to return. While we did see a small drop in overall FTE this spring, there was also a modest increase in the persistence rate from fall 2020 to spring 2021. These students started college in the pandemic and returned, despite the challenges.

These positive numbers are a testament to the incredible efforts of everyone in the Weber State community. I have heard many stories of how our faculty, academic advisors, chairs, administrative assistants and other staff have stepped up to help our students. And let's not forget the tireless work of individuals that not everyone sees — the work of financial aid staff to enable the timely delivery of CARES student grants; the individuals behind Zoom and Canvas technologies; facilities staff who secured PPE supplies and sanitized and retrofitted buildings; registrar's staff to manage special grading options; tutors; COVID task-force members; and testing volunteers, to name a few.

Often in crisis moments, it is easy to get lost in the transactional nature of our jobs. Instead, our students persisted, were retained and graduated because of a collective campuswide ethos that values relationships with students. To that extent, we are all educators — educators who, despite personal adversity, have committed to make sure our students get the best possible instruction and academic support.

At the same time, I have also worried about the mental toll the pandemic has exacted on all of us. While technology and the ability to work from home have indeed provided for much more flexibility, it has also taken away the social and emotional touch points needed for our psychological

well-being. I recently read about a growing trend of “fake commuting” where individuals intentionally seek to replace their pre-pandemic commute with some other routine. Organizational behavior research suggests that such strategies are a great way to reclaim personal time that commuters normally took for granted, whether they listened to music in the train, or drove or walked to work. It is critical to have this separation to transition from a home identity to a work identity. In the early months of the pandemic, when I was mostly working from home, my fake commuting strategy was to drive to the coffee shop every day. It was a deliberate action on my part regardless of whether I wanted coffee or not. One time, it even cost me a traffic citation.

Yale University professor Laurie Santos, host of the Happiness Lab podcast and a scholar on the science of well-being, shares other coping strategies such as practicing mindfulness, taking the time for a social connection, exercising and resting, doing an act of kindness and practicing gratitude.

This spring, I hope you can figure out your own “fake commuting” coping strategy, and I encourage you to seek a balance and take some time for yourself. I also hope you can reach out to a colleague, thank them and simply inquire about their well-being. Empathy and gratitude can go a long way to building our mental resilience.

Again, thank you Wildcats, for what you do for our students. Every day working with you is a pleasure and an inspiration, and I am proud to be a part of this team.

Fake commute, stay positive and stay safe.

Ravi



RAVI KROVI

Presidential Teaching Excellence Honored

Twelve Weber State faculty members were selected as a recipient of this year's Presidential Teaching Excellence Award. Students and fellow faculty members submitted the nominations. President Mortensen visited each professor's class virtually or in person to present the awards amid tears and applause.

He read words of praise from the nomination letters:

The COVID crisis made it all the more obvious that he was always ready to go to whatever lengths necessary to have his students succeed.

Her passion in the nursing field and the difference in the lives of others is unparalleled.

He is a first-generation college graduate, and he often connects with students like him.

She is always willing to take on a challenge and does so with positivity and gratitude.

Clinton Amos

Business administration,
Robert L. Marquardt Teaching
Excellence Award

Elizabeth Baggord

Earth & environmental sciences

Kristy Baron

Nursing, Annie Taylor Dee
Teaching Excellence Award

George Comber

Manufacturing & systems
engineering chair

Jenny Kokai

Performing arts

Cory Moss

Health administrative services
program director

Craig Oberg

Microbiology

Jose Otero

English

Gavin Roberts

Economics,
Dr. Brian Davis Teaching
Excellence Award

Corina Segovia-Tadehara

Social work

Stephanie Speicher

Teacher education

Jamie Wankier Randles

MSN clinical coordinator nursing,
Annie Taylor Dee Teaching
Excellence Award

Welcome to WSU

Lisa Arner, *Communication*

Kelsey Call, *Browning Center*

Robert Conley, *Athletics
Admin & Support*

Ivonne Dabb, *Wildcat Stores*

Cooper Farnsworth, *Bursar and
Collection Services*

Ryan Hogge, *Facilities Management*

Stephanie Kawamura, *Academic
Support Centers & Programs*

Kathryn Langlitz, *Affirmative Action*

Jill Larsen, *Career Services*

Benjamin Neve, *Business
Administration*

Jaymee Owen, *Facilities
Management*

Michelle Parada, *Botany*

Taryn Pearce, *Social Work*

Kaylee Richards, *Nursing*

Scott Sands, *Academic Support
Centers & Programs*

Michael Stoddard, *University
Housing*

Laura Thompson,
Affirmative Action

Deborah Uman, *Lindquist College
of Arts & Humanities*

Shellie Weeks, *Criminal Justice*

Shawna Werner, *Disability Services*

On the Move/ Promoted

Debra Hansen, *Digital Learning &
Professional Education*

Andrea Hernandez, *Women's Center*

Kelly Roberts, *Facilities
Management*

Marisa Salazar, *Human Resources*

Andrew Stapley, *Stewart Library*

Ioana Vulpe, *International
Student Services*

Retired

Karen Baggs, *Financial Aid Office*

Barry Gomberg, *Affirmative Action*

Hilda Medd, *Criminal Justice*

Prasanna Reddy, *Academic Support
Centers & Programs*

Jane Stout, *College of Science*

Thanks to generous support of donors, Weber State established the award to honor teachers whose work helps students achieve significant success. Each faculty member received a \$5,000 award, either as a cash stipend or to enhance their teaching through professional development, curriculum development, research, or equipment and technology acquisition.

Recipients will be honored at the virtual Faculty Symposium, March 23, 2021. You can watch the video highlights of the presentations at bit.ly/wsu-teach-21.

Faculty and Staff Accomplishments

#LouderandProuder

Tamara Berghout, assistant professor of nursing, published “How are nurse educators prepared to teach interprofessional practice?” in the journal *Nurse Education Today*.

Assistant professor of early childhood education **Alex Collopy** was honored with “Dissertation of the Year” from the American Educational Research Association’s Critical Perspectives in Early Childhood Education (CPECE) Significant Interest Group for her year-long ethnographic case study of inclusion in a bilingual, universal pre-k classroom and Head Start program in Washington, D.C..

François Giraud-Carrier, assistant professor of supply chain management, co-authored, “Learn how to curb pollution without hurting businesses” in the journal *Management Science*.

Associate professor of accounting **Andrea Gouldman** co-authored two articles: “Effects of Supervisors’ Compensation Structures on Psychophysiological Responses and Real Earnings Management Decisions of Subordinate Managers” for the journal *Management Accounting Research*, and “Exploratory Examination of Positive Distractions as a Method for Improving Students’ Quiz Performance,” in the *Business Education Innovation Journal*.

Athletic training department chair **Valerie Herzog** was elected as distinguished fellow of the National Academies of Practice in Athletic Training.

Weber State Upward Bound director **Samantha Hill** was selected as interim president-elect of ASPIRE, a statewide organization representing Utah’s TRIO programs, which bring educational opportunity to the state’s disadvantaged youth and adults.

Presidential Distinguished Professor of Zoology, **Chris Hoagstrom**, co-authored the book, *Standing between Life and Extinction: Ethics and Ecology of Conserving Aquatic Species in North America Deserts*, published by The University of Chicago Press.

Associate dean of the Dumke College of Health Professions **Ken Johnson** co-authored the book *Healthcare in the United States: Clinical, Financial and Operational Dimensions*, published by Health Administration Press.

Keith Osai, child and family studies assistant professor co-authored “‘To Be, or Not to Be, That Is the Question’: Modeling and Differentiation Among Siblings Participating in Organized Youth Sport” in the *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*.

Physics professor **Stacy Palen** published the fourth edition of her introductory astronomy text “Understanding our Universe.”

Associate professor of English **Julia Panko** authored the book, *Out of Print: Mediating Information in the Novel and the Book*, published by the University of Massachusetts Press.

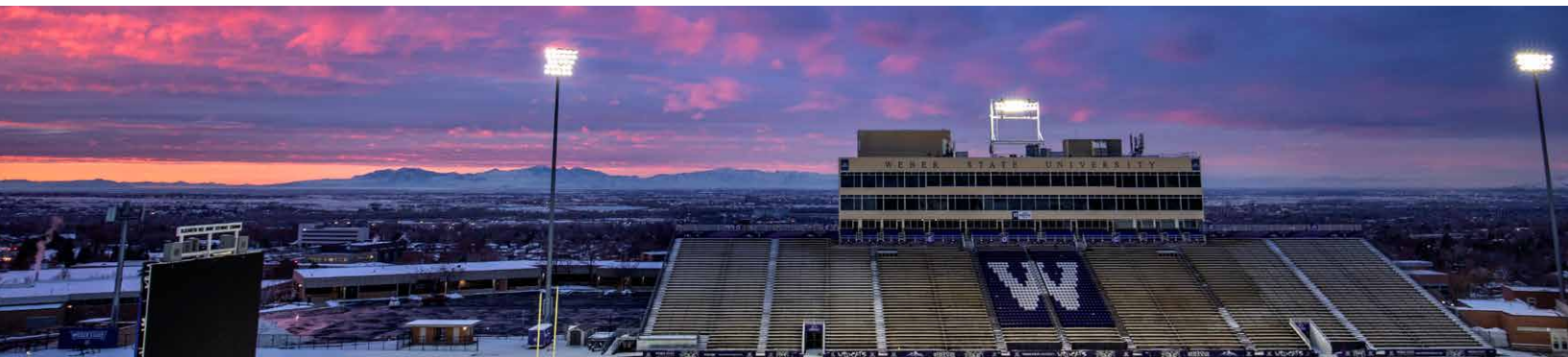
Physics faculty **Kristin Rabosky**, **Colin Inglefield** and **Kiley Spirito**’s article “Interference and Diffraction in Modern Technology: A New Approach for an Introductory Physics Laboratory Experiment” was published in *The Physics Teacher*, a publication of the American Association of Physics Teachers.

Teacher education associate professor **Sheryl Rushton** was elected Secretary-General of the International Society for Teacher Education in 2021.

School of Radiologic Sciences chair **Robert Walker** co-authored the article “Comparison among Japan & U.S. Education Systems for Radiological Technologists in the journal *Radiography*.

Writings on War, Weapons, and Media,” by Friedrich Kittler, was published by Duke University Press.

Goddard School of Business & Economics faculty **Grace Zhang**, **Eric Smith** and **Andrea Gouldman** co-authored “The Effects of Individual Values on Willingness to Pay and Fairness Perceptions of Use Tax on Internet Purchases” in the journal *Advances in Taxation*.



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