



WSU NEWS

Weber State University News & Events

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Weber State launches MASTER'S PROGRAM FOR FUTURE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS

Weber State University now offers a master's degree in physician assistant studies, with the first class of students starting coursework in January 2023. The newly accredited program offers an integrated, hands-on curriculum focused on primary care and adult hospital medicine that will help prepare students for careers in healthcare.

"For several years before this program launched, many Weber State graduates were applying and getting into PA schools around the country," said Yasmen Simonian, dean of the Dr. Ezekiel R. Dumke College of Health Professions. "This prompted us to explore the possibility of having our own PA program to keep those students here."

The new program is housed in a renovated building on the WSU Ogden campus that offers state-of-the-art classrooms, simulation labs and study spaces.

"We're beyond excited for our students and our community," said **Sandra Stennett**, program director and chair of the Department of Physician Assistant Medicine.

Stennett said the healthcare industry is facing a primary care physician shortage in the coming years that could threaten patients' access to care.

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WEBER STATE CUTS RIBBON ON NOORDA ENGINEERING BUILDING

Weber State University celebrated the opening of its state-of-the-art Noorda Engineering, Applied Science & Technology Building with a ribbon-cutting on Oct. 7.

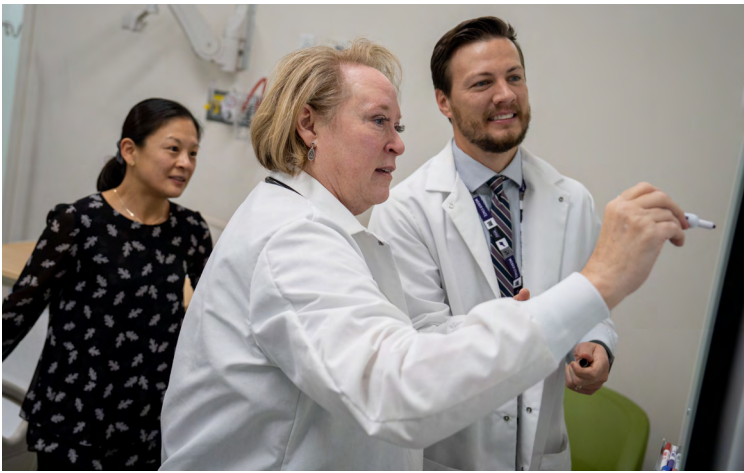
Funded through the state of Utah and a generous gift from the Ray & Tye Noorda Foundation, the building boasts over 130,000 square feet, contains intentionally exposed architecture and is organized around a central community forum where students can collaborate and develop the skills and relationships that will help shape their future careers.

The building features 15 engineering labs, 14 classrooms and nine computer labs used by programs within the College of Engineering, Applied Science & Technology. A portion of the second floor is home to Ogden's Northern Utah Academy for Math, Engineering & Science, better known as NUAMES, and contains seven high school classrooms and one lab.

"The learning and innovation spaces that this building provides for our students, faculty and staff to unleash their creative potential are real game-changers for our programs and the industries we serve," said WSU President **Brad Mortensen**. "We are so grateful to the Utah State Legislature and Noorda family for making the dream of this facility become a reality."

Designed by VCBO Architecture, the Noorda building exterior is decorated

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Physician Assistant, continued from page 1

“With thousands of hours of intensive medical training, PAs can ultimately help fill that gap and improve healthcare access and quality,” she said.

Faculty in the PA program said they’re committed to recruiting more students who identify as Hispanic or Latino, a demographic that makes up roughly one-third of Ogden’s population, who can then go on to work as providers in underserved communities.



Noorda Opening, continued from page 1

by large waveforms. Inside the building, visitors can watch the interactive sculpture “Between the Currents,” which features 119 moving origami elements hung from a floating frame, representing the invisible forces of nature.

“Ray and Tye Noorda would be proud of how we are engaging students,” said **David Ferro**, dean of the College of EAST. “I think the citizens of Utah will see they will be getting a great return on their investment for our state’s promising youth and economy.”

Noorda replaces the Technical Education building, which was demolished in 2020. Portions of the old building were salvaged and used in the new construction.

Weber State emerges AS HUB FOR INTERNET SAFETY RESOURCES



Be wary of what you post online.

It’s a simple web safety tip, but a valuable one. As director of Weber State University’s Cybersecurity Initiative, **Matt Paulson** wants the WSU campus and community partners to know that simple steps matter when it comes to protecting their information.

“Everybody’s at risk, no matter what you’re doing on the internet,” Paulson said. “A lot of the problems we see are social media scammers who go and gather information on people from their posts. Be aware of what you’re sharing, why you’re sharing, and who you’re sharing it with.”

WSU’s Cybersecurity Initiative is northern Utah’s central resource for all things internet-safety related. In addition to producing future IT professionals with degrees in network management technology, WSUCI also provides outreach and training to the community at large so individuals and businesses can better protect their information.

“It doesn’t matter where you are on your cybersecurity journey,” Paulson said. “Weber State can help out with that.”

In September, WSU was formally recognized as a Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Education, a program sponsored jointly by the National Security Agency and the Department of Homeland Security.

Weber State marks 100 YEARS OF SUMMITTING MOUNT OGDEN

Hundreds of students, faculty and staff from Weber State University climbed to the top of Mount Ogden on Sept. 24 to continue a century-old tradition.

On Oct. 4, 1922, over 350 Weber College students and faculty climbed the hills above what is now WSU alongside community members and planted a Weber flag on Mount Ogden.

“We’re reliving the tradition of how Weber State made its presence known in Ogden,” said **Hayley Prine**, Weber State’s Outdoor Program coordinator. “It was a big deal when those folks hiked the mountain in 1922 and made their mark. This hike reminds folks who we are and also welcomes new people into our story.”

Prine has participated in the hike for several years and described it not only as an opportunity to take in incredible views of the Ogden area, but also as a bonding experience for hikers.

“It’s powerful being up there in the mountains, it’s a real connecting experience,” Prine said. “Whether it’s your first time, whether you’re a Weber State student or a community member, this brings people together.”

Kicking off the milestone anniversary was the traditional singing of “Purple and White” and the WSU Fight Song, along with remarks from WSU President **Brad Mortensen**.

Mortensen also unveiled a new commemorative plaque, which will be installed to remind future Mount Ogden hikers about Weber State and what it stands for.



“The people at Weber State have a large capacity for caring and it’s such a welcoming place,” Prine said. “It’s our strong sense of community that has really carried this tradition through.”

CONTINUING EDUCATION SEES NEW LEADERSHIP



The Division of Online & Continuing Education’s new dean has student success in mind.

James Hedges came to Weber State University from Westminster College, where he was the director of professional and continuing education. His experience includes curriculum development of competency-based courses and programs, partnerships with other institutions, and chairing Westminster’s Innovative Learning Council, which recruits adult learners and oversees a transfer initiative with Salt Lake Community College.

“Weber’s commitment to equity for adult learners and non-traditional students is essential to meeting students where they are at today,” Hedges said. “I look forward to collaborating with internal and external stakeholders to help meet students’ needs and prepare them for personal and professional success.”

Hedges has bachelor’s and master’s degrees in communication from California State University, Sacramento, and a doctorate in communication from the University of Utah. He succeeds **Brian Stecklein**, who served as the interim dean since December 2019.



RAVI KROVI

***“Learning
should be
the only
challenging
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education”***

This month, I had the opportunity to attend the Dual Mission Summit in Glenwood Springs, Colorado. The summit was hosted in a beautiful and scenic location nestled in the mountains along the Colorado River. It was a great opportunity to interact with peers from other universities as well as national experts from philanthropic foundations and government agencies.

The sessions were informative, insightful and thought-provoking. One of the most interesting sessions was a panel of students from Colorado Mountain College, a Hispanic-Serving Institution. The group included a returning student who dropped out of college after her first semester, a single mother, a transfer student, and a student who never attended college. They all had a nontraditional path to college and would fall in the category of underrepresented students typically defined as students from underserved populations, low income or first-generation students.

I came away thinking that these students had to deal with considerable adversity and challenges as they navigated their way back to college. Travis Reindl, senior communications officer at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, who moderated the session, summarized it aptly when he said, “Learning should be the only challenging part of education.” It should not be about how to navigate financial aid, housing needs, co-curricular experiences, food insecurity, or even mental health. Our students have many similar stories about their individual challenges.

We have to rethink and redesign our systems, policies and procedures so we can anticipate better and meet the needs of all students, but in particular our underrepresented students. A big part of this will be to provide an integrated student experience that transcends divisions and functional areas.

As we move forward, I would like to continue our efforts to meet our strategic goals of increased enrollment, retention and completion, personal connections and becoming a Hispanic-Serving Institution.

This fall, we are discussing four related areas:

- Enhance faculty/student engagement: This includes continuing to focus on building mentoring relationships with students in and out of the classroom, refining and enhancing high-impact educational experiences, and encouraging students to complete FAFSA and utilize resources on campus.
- Recruit, retain, and engage adult learners: This includes developing completion pathways and offerings that meet the needs of adult learners (i.e., guaranteed times, locations or modalities in which students can complete each degree). Our 25+ population has declined for over a decade as many of our students work to balance completing a degree with their existing employment.
- Become an emerging Hispanic-Serving Institution: This includes opportunities to expand family engagement, Spanish language marketing and outreach, and work to increase the hiring and retention of underrepresented faculty and staff. Our goal is to attain emerging HSI status by 2025-26.
- Reduce student equity gaps in academic performance: This includes solutions such as ACUE workshops for reducing equity gaps and DFWI rates, pairing courses as part of a learning community, encouraging innovations in academic support services and examining the pedagogical approach to classes to provide personalized learning experiences.

I am proud of our campus-wide efforts to increase our retention rates this fall, and in particular for underrepresented students. I welcome your ideas and suggestions on the above issues or other ways you feel can help our students.

Thank you again for your willingness to listen and meet our student success goals.

FACULTY & STAFF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

#LouderandProuder

The American Association of College and Universities selected Weber State as an Institute for Open Education Resources, a year-long initiative to advance the university's use of openly licensed textbooks and learning resources that are free for students. The Stewart Library provided over \$100,000 in grants for faculty to adopt, adapt or create OER for their courses. The team includes **Melina Alexander**, teacher education professor; **Isabel Asensio**, Spanish professor; **Sean Cummings**, instructional designer; **Ashley Hilton**, affordability advocate; **Wendy Holliday**, library dean; **Jim Hutchins**, health sciences professor; and **Andrew Stapley**, course materials specialist.

Eric Amsel, associate provost and psychology professor, accepted the Beacon Award recognizing Weber State's Wildcat Scholars program. The award is presented by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities for programs demonstrating excellence in student achievement and success.

Chair of the Department of Social Work & Gerontology **Mark Bigler** and social work student Haley Miller presented "Children on the Boat: Child Trafficking in Ghana" at WSU's inaugural Human Trafficking Symposium.

Three WSU professors were awardees during the third annual Research, Impact Success and Entrepreneurship Awards, each winning \$1,500 for the contributions to research and innovation in their fields: **Julian Chan**, mathematics professor; **Taylor Foss**, instructor in the College of Engineering, Applied Sciences & Technology's Concept Center; and **Madeline Mackie**, assistant professor of anthropology.

Bryan Dowdell, assistant professor of exercise and sport science, co-authored "The gamer identity scale: A measure of self concept as a video gamer" in *Computers of Human Behavior*, establishing a "gamer identity" measure to help better define "gamer" in future research.

Carie Frantz, earth and environmental sciences professor and environmental science program co-director, was highlighted by the Geological Society of America for her research and work with undergraduate researchers on the Great Salt Lake. She also presented their findings at the GSA Connects meeting.

Valerie Herzog, chair of the athletic training department, presented "Recruiting and Retaining Diverse Students: Preparing Professionals for Clinical Care in a Multi-cultural Health Care System" at the Virtual Athletic Training Educators' Conference, National Athletic Trainers' Association.

Ogden Peak Communication, Weber State's student public relations firm advised by **Leslie Howerton**, assistant professor of communication, is a Golden Spike Award finalist for its work with Utah Transit Authority.

Stewart Library personnel **Marina Kenner**, **Lorrie Rands**, **Alyssa Kammerman** and **Sarah Langsdon** presented on the library's "Queering the Archives" oral history project at the annual conference of the Oral History Association in Los Angeles. An exhibit based on the project is currently on display on the first floor of the library.

Provost **Ravi Krovi** teamed up with **David Ferro**, dean of the College of Engineering, Applied Science & Technology, and **James Taylor**, director of Sponsored Projects and Technology Commercialization, as key speakers at the National Defense Entrepreneurs Forum Conference in San Francisco.

London Draper Lowe, nursing professor, published "Active Shooter in the Workplace: A Brief Guide for Occupational Health Nurses" and "Looking Back on 9/11: Looking Forward to 2022" in *Workplace Health & Safety* and also published an op-ed on disaster preparedness in the *Standard-Examiner*.

Scott Moore, assistant professor of medical laboratory sciences, was recognized as a Fellow of the American College of Lifestyle Medicine for his outstanding achievements in the field and dedication to advancing the college's mission. He also published "The Interleaving Trails of Lifestyle and Wilderness Medicine" and "Lifestyle Strategies to Boost Total Body Iron" in the *American Journal of Lifestyle Medicine*.

John Mukum Mbaku, professor of economics, published "Uganda's Owen Falls dam: a colonial legacy that still stings, 67 years later" in *The Conversation*, which was also republished in *The Citizen* and *The Africa Report*. Mbaku held an interview with EnCompass LLC, which is helping the U.S. Department of State restructure its Political Accountability, Inclusivity, and Resiliency Support program. He was also interviewed by *Debating Africa* on the history of monarchies in Africa and their place in modern society.

Assistant professor of philosophy **Paul Neiman** published "Nurses' role model duties for health and COVID-19 pandemic precautions" in the journal *Nursing Ethics*.

Richard Price, associate professor of political science, was a panelist among Utah academics, librarians and authors during Banned Book Week in Salt Lake City.

Nathan Rives, history instructor, published his book *The Religion-Supported State: Piety and Politics in Early National New England* with Lexington Books.

Associate professor of history **Matthew Romaniello** received a Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Connection Grant to fund a workshop on Russia's climate at the University of Toronto in February 2023.

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FACULTY & STAFF ACCOMPLISHMENTS (CONT.)

#LouderandProuder

Shane J. Schvaneveldt, Presidential Distinguished Professor of supply chain management, and co-authors published “The AI-extended consumer: Technology, consumer, country differences in the formation of demand for AI-empowered consumer products” in *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*.

The print work of visual arts professor **K Stevenson** was exhibited at IMPACT 12 International Printmaking Conference in the United Kingdom.

Janicke Stramer-Smith, assistant professor of political science, moderated a collaborative project with the Richard Richard’s Institute, the Richard Richard’s Foundation and WSU’s Olene S. Walker Institute of Politics & Public Service that discussed interparliamentary transatlantic efforts in stopping Vladimir Putin’s war in Ukraine.

Eric Swedin, history professor, was interviewed by *Newsweek* for the article “Lessons From the Cuban Missile Crisis in Dealing With Putin’s Nuke Threats.”

Jim White, safety manager for Environmental Health & Safety, successfully completed the National Fire Academy’s Chemistry for Emergency Response certification.

Sam Zeveloff, professor emeritus of zoology, published “A record of a North American Raccoon *Procyon lotor* charging at a Coyote *Canis latrans*” in *Small Carnivore Conservation*, which was based on a video recorded by Jim Jacobs, professor emeritus of visual arts. Zeveloff also published “Go Big or Go Extinct” about Bears Ears National Monument in Salt Lake City’s *City Weekly*.

Weber State receives RECORD GRANT TO SUPPORT ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Weber State University received a \$2.78 million grant from the Department of Education to train public school teachers on how to improve instruction for students who are not native English speakers.

Professors **Melina Alexander**, **David Byrd** and **Shernavaz Vakil** in the Jerry & Vickie Moyes College of Education at WSU will lead the professional development efforts for teachers and administrators in public and charter schools throughout Utah.

The five-year grant will support up to 100 teachers and administrators, admitting a cohort of 25 educators annually.

“Utah’s Hispanic population is growing faster than the national average and, as a result, our public and charter schools are seeing more English language learners,” said Byrd, professor of teacher education at WSU. “Academic success is increasingly linked with children’s mastery of a wide range of skills, including literacy.”

Byrd said there is a significant achievement gap between English language learners, or ELLs, and their native-speaking peers, and that gap widens as children move through the grade levels.

“This grant aims to help Utah teachers provide ELLs the best possible foundation for educational success,” he said.



James Taylor, WSU’s director of Sponsored Projects and Technology Commercialization, said the grant is one of the largest ever received at Weber State.

Weber State HOSTS INAUGURAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING SYMPOSIUM

Weber State University hosted its first Human Trafficking Symposium Oct. 27 to raise awareness and start an ongoing conversation about how to recognize and combat human trafficking in the United States and in Utah specifically.

“There is a misconception that human trafficking does not happen in Utah,” said Molly Sween, chair of WSU’s Department of Criminal Justice and co-organizer of the event.

Sween said the symposium served to raise awareness of risk factors for human trafficking. It covered a range of topics, from the human trafficking of immigrants and international human trafficking to local victim resources.

The symposium was hosted in partnership with WSU’s College of Social & Behavioral Sciences, Jerry & Vickie Moyes College of Education, Student Affairs and several community partners.

Welcome to WSU

Angela Anderson | Development

Bailey Anderson | Dumke College of Health Professions

Vanessa Beasley | Manufacturing - Systems Engineering

Graeme Beatie | Student Affairs Strategic Initiatives

Caraline Black | Concurrent Enrollment

Courtney Call | Online & Continuing Education

Tawny Choi | Student Success Center

Austin Christensen | Athletics Admin & Support

Sarah Doying | Disability Services

Leanza Driscoll | Administrative Services

Beverly Figueroa | Radiologic Sciences

John Godfrey | Facilities Management

Jennifer Greenlee | Communication

Maria Hofmann | Development

Amanda Jones | Center for Multicultural Excellence

Rachel Keyes | Dental Hygiene

Annile Kinney | Academic Support Centers - Programs

Alema Leota | University Legal Counsel

Yudi Lewis | Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Gisela Lopez Alonso | Equity in Access

Zachary Lore | Academic Technology Services

Story Mack | Student Success Center

Gisela Martiz | Online & Continuing Education

Jared McKeeth | Academic Technology Services

Mariah Moore | Facilities Management

Noah Morris | Browning Center

Taylor Mousley | Disability Services

Emma Nettleton | International Programs

Ted Peace | Application Development

Lindsey Pulver | Health Administrative Services

Megan Pyper | Nursing

Mercedes Rossiter | Facilities Management

Jessica Septon | Physician Assistant Medicine

Angelyn Snyder | Stewart Library

Mary Stacy | Child & Family Studies

Matthew Suekel | Wildcat Stores

Isabelle Vivier | School of Computing

Lisa Whiteley | Office of the Registrar

Boston Williams | Facilities Management

Robert Wolfley | Veterans Services

Retired

Patrick Malone | Facilities Management



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