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During spring break I had a chance to take a group of WSU students, faculty, and staff to Kenya for a humanitarian project. Our group totaled 38 people and we helped with the design and building of a community center, plus we interacted with the beautiful Kenyans and learned about their culture. Our project was located in the village of Taru, an area of Kenya that is experiencing extreme drought.

The WSU group visited a Maasai tribe living on the outskirts of Taru, who normally lead a nomadic lifestyle, but the drought has forced them to locate near a water source established by the Kenyan government - abruptly changing a centuries old lifestyle. The tribe had been able to adapt to their new reality and were embarking on a variety of business ventures to help provide income for their village. The resilience of the Maasai tribe was inspiring.

Our WSU group visited the local schools in Taru and interacted with the children who were so keen to learn that it was palpable. Their schools were constructed of mud brick, with dirt floors and a lattice of sticks for windows. The drying and enhanced wind from the drought created very dusty classrooms, but having a place to learn and get an education was such a gift that students would just dust off their books and papers and continue learning.

Observing the challenging conditions these students and the Taru community faced instills a deep sense of gratitude for our optimal conditions that we have on campus - each room is climate controlled, comfortable and has state of the art technology to create the best learning environment for our students. We have adequate water and food sources. Our lifestyle has not been abruptly altered by drought like the Maasai. Important lessons were learned while in Kenya. We have a tremendous amount to be grateful for and that we can choose to be resilient and adaptable.

I am grateful for each of you and all you do to help make our college thrive and our students succeed. As the Kenyans say, “asante sana”, or “thank you very much”.

- DR. JULIE RICH
DEAN, COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES
The Women & Gender Studies program hosted The 2nd Annual Utah Southwest Regional Conference on Student Research in Gender and Women's Studies on March 30-31, 2023. Thirty student presentations were given on research projects related to women, gender and queer studies with topics ranging from history and literature to art and religion. Devon Isaacs gave the keynote address, "(Re)imagining Selu: Healing our communities through healing ourselves." The inaugural conference was held at Brigham Young University in 2022, and the 2024 conference will be hosted by another university in Utah.

For the third year in a row, the College of Social & Behavioral Sciences won the college division of the Clear the Air Challenge at Weber State University. Many of our faculty and staff choose to take alternative routes to and from campus, such as e-biking, carpooling and walking, to help reduce vehicle emissions and improve air quality in our local community. Our college continues to implement sustainable practices to further showcase our commitment to sustainability.
**CSBS NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS**

**VOTER FRIENDLY CAMPUS**

The Walker Institute of Politics & Public Service continues to be a center of civic education and voter engagement. The Walker Institute's initiatives helped encourage voter turnout and engagement, even in a mid-term year, allowing WSU to be designated as a Voter Friendly Campus. Only 258 institutions received this designation nationally.

**WHAT WERE YOU WEARING EVENT**

Professors Kathryn Sperry (PSY) and McKenzie Wood (CJ) and their Honors 3900 students presented a "What Were You Wearing" exhibit for Sexual Assault Awareness month that sought to break down the stigma of sexual assault while dispelling victim-blaming behaviors. They brought representatives from Safe Harbor and the Special Victims Unit of the Ogden Police Department to present about the topic as well.

**CSBS ENDOWED PROFESSOR**

The CSBS Endowed Professor for 2023–26 is Richard Price, associate professor of political science. This award recognizes outstanding accomplishments of faculty in the areas of teaching, scholarship and service. Price's academic interests include law and courts, American politics and LGBTQ politics.
Since its official launch in fall 2021, the MSW program has quickly gained a reputation for its community-focused curriculum and clinical specialization. The number of applicants continues to rise; This year, more than 170 individuals applied for the program’s 45 available spots for the fall 2023 semester.

MSW graduate director Corina Segovia-Tadehara has been in the Department of Social Work & Gerontology at WSU for more than 20 years, and she expressed how exciting it has been to be part of the launch of this groundbreaking program.

“It’s exciting for us because we started with 20 students, and there has been so much growth in the past two years alone. In the next few years, we plan to add new faculty, which would allow us to accept and graduate more students each year,” Tadehara said.

Social work faculty at WSU sought to launch this program for many years because of the growing demand for mental health and substance abuse providers. In Utah alone, the demand for healthcare social workers has increased by 14% and mental health and substance abuse specialists by 19% (utahmec.org).
The MSW program gets students involved with the local populations' needs by offering internship opportunities with community partners, such as Weber Human Services and Davis Behavioral Health. A majority of MSW graduates from WSU choose to take the skills they have learned and work in local communities rather than accept out-of-state jobs, which is what graduates like Sariah Pineda have done.

“I’m fortunate enough to have been hired on by the agency with which I’ve done my internship. I have learned so much by having the opportunity to do real work with real people and apply the things I have learned in both the BSW and the MSW programs,” Pineda said.

As the program continues to grow, faculty and staff in the Department of Social Work & Gerontology and in the College of Social & Behavioral Sciences as a whole look forward to seeing how MSW graduates are able to impact the communities they serve.

Learn more about the Master of Social Work program at weber.edu/masocialwork.
AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

BRADY PRESIDENTIAL DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR
Leigh Shaw
Professor, Psychological Science

PRESIDENTIAL TEACHING EXCELLENCE AWARD
Kathryn Sperry
Instructor, Psychological Science

PRESIDENTIAL STAFF AWARD
Jenna Daniels
Administrative Specialist III, History

SUPER STAFF AWARD
Tracy Hicks
Administrative Associate, Dean's Office

FACULTY CAREER CHAMPION
Christopher Merritt
Adjunct Professor, Anthropology

STAFF CAREER CHAMPION
Nicholas Ferré
Academic Advisor, Dean's Office
At the 2023 Rocky Mountain Psychological Association Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico, 47 students from the Department of Psychological Science were accepted to present their research at the regional conference. Students, faculty and staff came together to raise money for the selected students to attend the conference at the Pie the Professor event. In total, they raised nearly $1,500.

Assistant professor of psychology Sarah Herrmann said that attending the conference offers students opportunities to present and discuss their research with students and faculty from other universities, which can help with future collaborations and graduate school applications. Through the Psychological Science program, Herrmann has seen students grow professionally, academically, and watched as they expand their knowledge & curiosity.

“It’s thrilling to see students as budding researchers,” she said. “Attending conferences like this is something very unique for students. This is something not everybody in their academic careers gets to experience.”

Two students, Jamie Heiner and Jaime Steenblik received the prestigious Psi Chi award at the conference for their research project "Cultivating Compassion in Education: A Burnout Intervention Program." Jaime Heiner is an educator of six years and an assistant principal at a special education school, which made the research project quite personal for her.

"The teachers at our school were really burned out, and I was looking for something we could do to help them,” she said.

Exploring educator burnout through the lens of psychological science allowed Heiner to find her passion in the field of psychology. Before entering the psychological science program she planned to continue working in elementary education, but after completing a full research project, she plans to work toward a Ph.D. in psychology.

The students accepted to the RMPA conference were able to work with multiple psychological science faculty, who provided their mentorship and expertise, which was one of the highlights of the experience for Heiner. Each of the 47 students accepted for presentation was able to gain valuable skills from their hands-on research projects that are applicable for an array of career paths.
CRIMINAL JUSTICE

- Michelle Jeffs: Organized a training opportunity for criminal justice students that allowed them to role play as the "bad guys," helping Ogden Police Department investigators improve their investigative techniques and skills.

- Jean Kapenda: Presented "Bridging Two Continents: Finding Lost Cousins Through Historical Data and DNA Research" for the CSBS Black History Month Lecture.

HISTORY


POLITICAL SCIENCE & PHILOSOPHY

POLITICAL SCIENCE & PHILOSOPHY (CONT'D)


PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE

- **Aminda O’Hare**: Published article in *PLoS ONE*: "The effects of short interventions of focused-attention vs. self-compassion mindfulness meditation on undergraduate students: Evidence from self-report, classroom performance, and ERPs," which was then highlighted in the February 2023 issue of *Mindfulness Research Monthly*. Utilized the Presidential Innovative Teaching Award to attend the Portenier-Wertheimer Teaching Conference.

- **Cade Mansfield and Leigh Shaw**: Poster presented at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development: Exploring the developmental underpinnings of wisdom in adolescence: A short-term longitudinal study. Presented their research to adolescents at the Biennial Meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development held in SLC.

- **Leigh Shaw**: Developed a new Associate of Science degree in Psychological Science, effective for the 2023-2024 catalog.

SOCIAL WORK & GERONTOLOGY

- **Kerry Kennedy**: Receiving a Master of Business Administration degree in Leadership and Innovation from the University of Mount Union on May 13, 2023.

- **Heidee Miller**: Accepted to Baylor University and granted a full ride scholarship to complete her Ph.D. in social work.
SOCIAL WORK & GERONTOLOGY (CONT'D)

- **Corina Segovia-Tadehara and MSW faculty**: Completed and submitted the final accreditation benchmark for the Master of Social Work program.
- **Steven Vigil**: Keynote speaker at the Utah College and University Professional Association for Human Resources Conference. Topic: A mindfulness approach to inclusivity.
- **Lizbeth Velazquez and Corina Segovia-Tadehara**: Will present at the Latino Social Workers Organization National Conference May 18-20, 2023. The title of the presentation is "Authentic Cariño Between Students and Educators: Voices From Latinx Students in Utah."

SOCIOLOGY

- **Huiying Hill**: Presented “From ‘Model Minority’ to ‘Model Target’ “ at the Utah Academy of Letters, Arts and Sciences Conference. Presented an ongoing research paper “Loud Thunder but Little Rain Fall” at the Annual Conference of Pacific Sociology Association.

MILITARY SCIENCE

- **Army ROTC Cadre Officers & Cadet Students**: Eight Cadre and 20 Wildcat Army ROTC Battalion Senior Class flew to Hawaii for the annual Staff Ride & Battlefield Tour. Military Decision Making Process (MDMP), Operations Order (OPORD), and Operation Magnificum Ultimo (OPMAUL) were successfully planned to organize them into a task force, TF-ATHENA. All seven steps of MDMP (and most of Mission Analysis) provided their required briefs and Warning Orders (WARNO). The Cadre and Cadets also completed the Rehearsal of Concept (ROC) Drill for the Joint Field Training Exercise (JFTX) which all the above helps them successfully be able to commission as a 2LT Officer.
THANK YOU

MAKING DREAMS HAPPEN

Make a gift to the College of Social & Behavioral Sciences.

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