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WEBSER STATE UNIVERSITY
News for Alumni & Friends

ALUMNI EVENTS
Alumni Golf Classic
8th Annual Drive for Scholarships
June 12, 2009

Reserve your tee time now! You’re not just playing golf; you’re investing in the future. Proceeds fund scholarships for WSU students.

ATHLETICS
January 3, 2009
MASCOT NIGHT
Men’s Basketball vs. Northern Colorado

February 19, 2009
Women’s Basketball vs. Montana

TRAVELING WILDCATS
PARIS and the French Riviera
March 20–28, 2009
Starting at $1,849 plus airfare

From the glitter of the French Riviera, to the “City of Lights,” this trip is filled with French treasures. Arrive in Cannes and enjoy days of Mediterranean breezes and nights exploring magical Monte Carlo. After a high-speed trip to Paris on the famed TGV train, visit the Louvre and smile back at the Mona Lisa, or stroll the Champs-Elysées. It’s the springtime trip you’ve always dreamed of.

For additional information, visit alumni.weber.edu or call 801-626-7535.

CULTURAL AFFAIRS SERIES
January 27, 2009
L.A. Theatre Works,
The Great Tennessee Monkey Trial

February 21-22, 2009
Tomas Kublenk

March 7, 2009
Hurst Artist in Residence Donald Byrd and Spectrum Dance Theater

CONTACT INFO

WSU Alumni Association
801-626-7335
alumni.weber.edu

Tickets for Cultural Affairs, Performing Arts and Wildcat Athletics events:
801-626-8500 or 1-800-WSU-TIKS
weberstatesports.com

On the Web: weber.edu/culturalaffairs
weber.edu/performingarts
weberstatesports.com
GAME ON

Last summer, 27 area high school students spent a week on the Ogden campus, learning about the tools, code and collaboration necessary to design and create the next generation of video games. The video game camp, offered by the Department of Computer Science, is designed to teach prospective game designers what it takes to succeed in both the academic setting and video game industry. As part of the camp, WSU alumnus John Blackburn ’92 spoke about his 15-year career creating video games (see story on page 8).

Earlier this year, WSU became the first and only school in the state to offer a computer science game development certificate. The new program responds to the needs of local industry leaders, who anticipate Utah’s demand for computer game developers will surge in coming years.

UP, UP AND AWAY

A team of WSU students and professors are sky-high following the successful launch of a high-altitude weather balloon in July. The later helium-filled balloon, with a global positioning system on board, took off from the Duchesne Municipal Airport and rose approximately 15 miles over 2.5 hours. When the balloon eventually burst due to decreased atmospheric pressure, a parachute opened and carried a capsule containing a modified digital camera and several other scientific experiments safely back to earth.

HELPING CHINA BREATHE EASIER

Three Chinese professors from the Xi’an Medical College in China’s Shaanxi province spent fall semester at WSU learning how to establish the first respiratory therapy program in northwest China. The visiting professors shadowed students at clinical appointments and monitored class and laboratory sessions to gain an understanding of the profession. They also spoke in WSU courses, presenting information and insight about Chinese culture and that nation’s medical system.

Lisa Trujillo, director of clinical education in the Department of Respiratory Therapy, arranged for the extended visit after discovering a lack of respiratory therapists in her travels to China. The Chinese professors hope to have their respiratory program established by fall 2009.

GIFT BENEFITS FACULTY RESEARCH

Thanks to a generous gift from WSU alumnus H. Raymond Bingham ’70, WSU has established a faculty collaboration and research fund in his name. The Bingham fund encourages and supports WSU faculty members to work together on research projects or ideas that will ultimately benefit their students. The award publicly acknowledges and rewards the extra time and energy expanded by faculty who provide their students with an excellent education while fostering collaborative research ventures with their colleagues.

The inaugural recipients of the Bingham research awards are: John Armstrong (physics), Lauren Fowler (psychology), Colin Inglesfield (physio), and Michelle Zerolinski (microbiology).

VITAL GIFT

Twenty years ago this December, the Hemingway Faculty Development Trust was established at WSU by the family of Richard and Shirley Hemingway. Each year, the Hemingway Trust funds projects that enhance faculty vitality and improve student education. Faculty can use the funds for research, course development or to offset the cost of attending professional conferences and workshops. The trust annually provides $30,000 for faculty grants, and awards an additional $20,000 for collaborative projects and general excellence.

Assistant political science professor Leah Murray received a Hemingway Assistant professorship in the fall of 2008, and has been named vice president for Information Technology at WSU, following a national search. Ellis comes to WSU from Brigham Young University Hawaii, where he served as dean of the school of computing and that university’s chief information officer. The North Ogden native has more than 20 years of experience in higher education.

While some familiar names are adjusting to new roles:

This spring, Brad Mortensen became the vice president of University Advancement. Mortensen, who first joined the university in 2004, leads the university’s alumni relations, communications, development and government relations departments. Mortensen has held a variety of roles and responsibilities in the division of Administrative Services at WSU, and previously worked as an assistant commissioner in the Utah System of Higher Education.

Longtime Clinical Laboratory Sciences professor Yassen Simonian is the new dean of the Dr. Ezekiel R. Dumke College of Health Professions. An award-winning professor and administrator who came to WSU in 1986, Simonian has more than 27 years of experience as a faculty member, academic leader and clinical health care practitioner.

CONVINCING SENIOR PROJECT

The Utah Highway Patrol turned to engineering expertise at WSU to encourage people to “buckle up.” Eight students, who graduated this spring with degrees in manufacturing engineering technology, spent nearly a year conceptualizing, designing and building a senior project that vividly illustrates the importance of wearing seat belts.

The seat belt convincer—an educational outreach tool for UHP—features two separate single-occupancy carriages that collide with each other at a speed of 5 mph.

21,674 STUDENTS!

Fall semester 2008 marked the first time the number of students enrolled at WSU exceeded 20,000. The previous high for enrollment was 18,821, set in 2003. The Board of Regents projects that enrollment at Weber State could reach 30,000 by 2020.

Enrollment milestones:

1946: Enrollment reaches 1,000 students in the post World War II boom
1964: Enrollment exceeds 5,000 students; President John F. Kennedy assassinated
1990: Enrollment tops 10,000 students; Ronald Reagan elected to first term
2008: Enrollment hits 21,000; Michael Phelps wins a record eight Olympic gold medals
BITTERSWEET FINISH

The WSU women’s soccer team won a crucial matchup in its final game of the regular season, topping Idaho State to clinch the Big Sky regular-season championship and the right to host the postseason conference tournament in November.

After winning their tournament semifinal match 1-0 over Montana, the Wildcats fell 2-1 to Northern Arizona in the championship game. Despite outshooting their opponents by a large margin in that championship game, the Wildcats couldn’t find the back of the net in a late-game offensive flurry. The loss ended the Wildcats’ season and sent the Lumberjacks on to the NCAA College Cup.

The Wildcats finished the season with a 9-10-2 record. WSU senior midfielder Hayley McCoy was named the Big Sky Offensive MVP, and WSU junior goalkeeper Rebecca Ritchie was named the Big Sky Defensive MVP.

PLAYER EXPLORES GREEK ROOTS

WSU forward Steve Panos traveled to Greece in late June and early July with a men’s basketball team sponsored by the American Hellenic Education Progressive Association.

The team was made up of current collegiate basketball players who are of Greek descent. They played four games in 11 days: three against Greek professional teams and one against the Greeks-Junior National Team. The Greeks-Americans earned a split record, defeating one of the pro teams and the junior team.

Panos, who will be a junior for head coach Randy Rahe’s Wildcats in 2008-09, held his own. He scored 23 points in the win over the junior team and was named the game MVP. He also had 35 points in the win over the professional squad.

READY TO PITCH IN

Director of Athletics Jerry Graybeal introduced Tina Johnson as the head coach of the Wildcats’ new women’s softball program.

Johnson is the fourth coach in the history of Weber State softball and will restart the program that was dropped in 1983 after nine years of play.

Prior to joining WSU, Johnson spent two seasons at Colorado College, taking over a program that historically struggled and building a strong foundation for athletic and academic success. Prior to her stint with the Tigers, she was the head coach at Lake Forest College in Illinois for three seasons. As a player, Johnson competed at Culver-Stockton College in Missouri and at Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville, where she graduated with a bachelor’s degree in Biological Sciences in 1990. She earned her master’s degree in Educational Administration from the University of Missouri-St. Louis in 1993.

BOARDER TAKES NATIONAL TITLE

WSU snowboarder Sara Baca was named the women’s combined national champion at the 2008 U.S. Collegiate Skiing and Snowboarding National Championships at the Sunday River Resort in Maine last March.

Baca, who competed with the WSU Snowboard Club, tore the AC joint in her shoulder in a practice run on the day before she competed. She still participated, despite not being able to feel or move her hand.

Baca finished first in boardercross, fourth in slopestyle and first in giant slalom to win the title, beating the second-place rider by four-tenths of a second in the giant slalom. WSU’s Rachel Neil also finished in the top 10 in the combined competition.

RUNNING DOWN A DREAM

GENTRY REINHART, CONTRIBUTING WRITER

WHEN LINDSEY ANDERSON graduated from Morgan High School in 2003, the five-time track and cross country state champ wasn’t even sure she wanted to continue competitive running. Luckily for the Wildcat athletic program, she did keep running, accepting a scholarship from Weber State University over a competing offer from Southern Utah University.

Anderson credits WSU women’s track and field head coach Jim Blasdel for recruiting her and motivating her to have bigger dreams about running—dreams that would eventually include Beijing and the Games of the XXIX Summer Olympics. She also thanks WSU coach Paul Pilkington for preparing her to make that dream a reality.

“I know I could not have made it this far without him,” Anderson says. “He took my training to the next level. When he came to Weber and I was able to work with him, it changed my whole perspective on running and training.”

One of the biggest leaps in her running career came at the U.S. Olympic Trials in July. Anderson finished second in the finals in the women’s 3000-meter steeplechase, a new Olympic sport in 2008. “It was so exciting to come down knowing that I was going to make the Olympic team on that last straightaway,” Anderson said after the race. “There are no words to describe that feeling.”

Anderson’s family, including her husband Mark, made the trip from Utah to Beijing in August to watch as she competed in the qualifying heat of her event. She fell short of making the finals, but proved she was more than qualified to compete with the best in the world.

While in China, Anderson attended many other events with complimentary tickets the U.S. Olympic Committee distributed to athletes in the village each morning.

“It was so cool to be able to go watch the other athletes,” Anderson says. “I was able to go to four other sporting events. Just to be a part of it, to be over there and experiencing things firsthand, was awesome.”

Anderson also spent time with her family taking in sights and experiencing Chinese culture. “I got to go to the Great Wall with them,” she says. “It was so neat to have them there.”

Two weeks after returning from China, Anderson was off to compete again, this time in Paris for the annual multinational DecaNation meet. She took first place in the steeplechase.

Now, the woman who once had doubts about continuing her competitive running days has a different perspective. “I’ll always be a runner,” Anderson says. “It’s in my blood, I’m sure I’ll do it forever.”

In addition to spending three hours each day training, Anderson works as an assistant coach for WSU’s track and field and cross country teams. The 2007 math teaching graduate also is teaching developmental math at WSU this semester. “The head of the department contacted me a few days before the semester started,” she says. “We talked about it, and everything worked out with my schedule, so I said, ‘Let’s do it.’ It’s been really fun so far.”

From the track to the classroom and beyond, Anderson’s contributions to WSU are far-reaching. The student-athlete once recruited by the university now, through her achievements, gives others good reason to consider becoming a Wildcat.

“For one of our athletes to gain national attention in her respective sport is just phenomenal,” says WSU athletic director Jerry Graybeal. “Being able to boast to prospective student-athletes we may be recruiting that we turned out an Olympian, that’s outstanding.”

Over the next few months, Anderson is scheduled to run several road races, including a 10K in Boston. And of course, there’s always the possibility of London in 2012.
‘I love creating entertainment’

John Blackburn ’92
Vice President, Studio GM of
Avalanche Software

Avalanchesoftware.go.com

WHEN JOHN BLACKBURN sits down with his children to play a video game, he feels a sense of accomplishment. Not because of the points he scores or the levels he passes, but because, chances are, he had a hand in creating the game they’re playing.

“I love creating entertainment,” Blackburn says. “At the end of the day, it’s cool to know that kids are excited about what you did.”

For 16 years Blackburn has worked as a video game developer. In 1992, he graduated from WSU with a bachelor’s degree in computer science. “I started out working in banking software after I graduated, and then got a job with Sculptured Software in 1992 doing video games,” he says.

The first project Blackburn worked on at Sculptured was the conversion of Mortal Kombat from the arcade version to the Super Nintendo home console platform. After three years with Sculptured Software, Blackburn and some friends decided to start their own video game design studio, forming Avalanche Software in 1995.

Blackburn has continued developing games at Avalanche Software, which Disney bought in 2005. Avalanche has produced 26 games on nine different platforms, including NFL Blitz 2001, Mortal Kombat Trilogy and Chicken Little.

One of the games Blackburn is most proud of, however, is the Tak and the Power of Juju franchise, which has sold more than 3 million copies and was adapted into a television series by Nickelodeon. “That’s probably the biggest one that we’ve done sales-wise,” he says.

The process of creating a video game has transformed since 1992. When Blackburn entered the field, developing a game took a four-man production team one year to complete and cost studies about $500,000. Currently, production teams consist of 75 people working on two-year production cycles, with 100 times the budget for the best games.

“If you’re looking at a Halo or an Assassin’s Creed game, companies are paying more than $50 million for those games,” Blackburn says.

The production of a video game requires an operatic-like cooperation of computer programmers, artists, writers and mechanical engineers. “If you look at what we make,” Blackburn says, “it goes across all the different disciplines of technology and art.”

As studio general manager, Blackburn plays the role of conductor, ensuring all of the development team’s parts are coming together harmoniously. “I’m in charge of the Avalanche studio, and making sure the team composition is correct,” he says. “I’m basically the last word on the creative vision on the products we’re creating.”

The job isn’t always glamorous, however. “Once we finally get a video game done, we might have to redo parts of it several times to make it feel correct and make it feel fun,” Blackburn says. “So that’s a very unpredictable amount of additional time.”

That quest for perfection can lead to long hours and weeks. “As we keep fixing things over and over again, it adds time into the schedule, but oftentimes, since we have to get games done by Christmas, there’s no slip in the schedule. So that means we just keep working more and more overtime.”

Normally, crunch time requires working 70 hours in a week, but Blackburn has worked a 120-hour week in his career.

Ultimately, Blackburn continues to develop games because of the rewarding aspects of the work. “If you think about all of the different things you could be doing as far as programming—financial applications or programming missiles—the really fun part of this business is knowing you entertained somebody,” he says.

And it’s especially rewarding when the people being entertained are his own children.

FROM MICROORGANISMS TO shrimp to shorebird populations, Weber State University faculty and students are studying the unique microcosm of the Great Salt Lake and using their findings to help government agencies as well as local industry.

Zoology major Lucas Hall spent most of the last two Mays traversing deep, sticky mud on the shores of the Great Salt Lake to determine the number of snowy plovers—a shorebird classified as threatened in parts of the United States under the Endangered Species Act—living in the wetlands bordering the lake.

His data has been submitted to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and will help give wildlife managers the information they need to better protect the species, which is extremely sensitive to human traffic and development.

“This data will have implications for the snowy plover’s status and how best to increase conservation efforts,” Hall says.

Hall worked on the project with John Cavitt, director of undergraduate research at WSU and associate professor of zoology. "We had been studying shorebirds for seven or eight years when the Fish and Wildlife Service asked us to help design and implement the survey," Cavitt says. "It was a successful survey that will give us a good population estimate. We have a pretty good idea of where they are breeding and where they are not."
Microorganisms living here could lend themselves to industrial applications.

-Craig Oberg, Professor of Microbiology

EXPLORING THE FOOD CHAIN

Dustin Ingraham, a 2008 zoology graduate, and Nicole Okazaki, assistant professor of zoology, studied the effects of mercury on brine shrimp. The Great Salt Lake has some of the highest mercury levels in the world, Ingraham says. "Brine shrimp in the lake are a very important part of the food web and also support a large industry that harvests their cysts."

Okazaki and Ingraham tested the vitality of brine shrimp larvae by exposing them to varying levels of mercury chloride and observing mortality, fertility and maturation rates.

"For the higher concentrations, there was a 100 percent mortality rate after 24 hours," Ingraham says. "At the current levels of mercury in the lake, we didn't see any significant differences in shrimp mortality, fertility or maturation times; but at higher levels, we did start to see unfavorable physiological changes in the shrimp."

Okazaki says one reason for concern about mercury levels is the potential for it to enter the human food chain in Utah and throughout the world. "The state has issued advisories not to eat certain types of waterfowl found at the Great Salt Lake," she says. "I've even had contact with a researcher in Australia who is wondering if the brine shrimp cysts could be affecting the health of his tropical fish."

Ingraham sees his research as a call to action for local natural resource managers. "We need to do something to slow the increase of mercury in the lake before we start to see larger problems in the ecosystem," he says.

ONLY THE STRONG SURVIVE

While some of the university’s research at the lake focuses on conservation efforts, other projects seek knowledge that could help local industry. Microbiology students and faculty have been studying the lake’s microorganisms for several years looking for novel and unique organisms that could have industrial benefits.

"Most of the enzyme catalysts used in industrial processes are damaged in the making of the product," says Craig Oberg, professor and chair of WSU’s Department of Microbiology. "The Great Salt Lake is such a harsh environment that microorganisms living there could lend themselves to industrial applications."

Everything from making vitamins and paper to leaching gold out of other ores requires a catalyst. Oberg explains. "Microbial enzymes can be used over and over again as renewable catalysts," he says. "They not only help the environment, but they make it easier for companies converting one compound into another."

Students and professors have been bio-prospecting at the Great Salt Lake in areas where organisms have not been cultured previously. Oberg says evaporated pond deposits left behind by local industries offer a rare opportunity to study organisms that can survive in harsh conditions. The research team has collected preliminary data showing the existence of organisms in that environment.

"The Great Salt Lake is a unique microbiology habitat, and we’re lucky to have it in Weber State’s back yard," Oberg says.

Research Reveals Workers’ Natural Rhythms

EVERY SUMMER SINCE 2005, Lauren Fowler, an associate professor of psychology at Weber State University, has studied the impact of fatigue on performance in law enforcement, medical and military personnel throughout northern Utah.

Fowler’s inspiration for the project, a 10-week research program for undergraduate students and faculty mentors, originated more than a decade earlier when she was a middle school science teacher in Georgia.

Fowler noticed her students’ performance varied based on when they attended her class. “I started getting interested in why performance might be different at different times of day,” Fowler says. “As I researched it, I realized there were these things called circadian rhythms.”

Circadian rhythms are the body’s daily cycles of eating, sleeping and other functions, which are generally tied to the 24-hour cycle of the sun. Fowler became so interested in the daily cycles she decided to study behavioral neuroscience in graduate school, followed by a teaching position in the Department of Psychology at WSU. After arriving in Ogden, she immediately began looking for ways to continue her research locally. “I wanted to do a community-based research project, because the results can be applied by local agencies,” she says.

Fowler eventually received a grant from the National Science Foundation to bring the Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) program to WSU. The program initially focused on a few agencies but has grown to include organizations throughout northern Utah such as Hill Air Force Base and the Utah Highway Patrol. “Once we worked with one agency, they told us about others,” Fowler says. “Then other agencies started contacting us on their own.”

McKay-Dee Hospital and its employees have benefited from the research project. WSU researchers studied the effects of fatigue by having hospital employees wear a light therapy device, a light visor, when they began a night shift.

Light minimizes the effects of disruptions to a person’s circadian rhythms. When the project was finished, WSU left the light visor with the hospital. “We had one employee who told us she uses it every day,” Fowler says. “She says she can’t function without it.”

The Weber-Morgan Children’s Justice Center, which offers child crime victims a comfortable environment for interviews with law enforcement investigators and social workers, also has reaped the project’s benefits.

Last summer, assistant professor of criminal justice Julie Buck and her student researchers studied the transcripts of interviews done with children at the center and found a drop-off in the quality of the interviews after workers had performed two in one day. “There are certain characteristics of a good interview that provide more accurate information for prosecution,” Buck says. “Good interviews have non-leading, open-ended questions, and the investigator doesn’t interrupt the child.”

Rod Layton, the center’s director, believes the findings help his staff. “We’re always interested in improving our interview skills,” he says. “Sometimes, the investigator has no choice, but when there is the possibility to spread out the interviews and keep them to two in a day, we encourage them to do that.”

Although the REU project funding is scheduled to end following the 10-week session in summer 2009, Fowler will continue to conduct research with community partners in the future. “This program has led to numerous others that can take place outside of the summer REU,” she says.
A FEW MONTHS AGO, Toby Hazelbaker and business partner Luke Reichert were selling pressurized hydration systems for cyclists out of a garage. Today their company, Pressure Products, is a thriving small business in Ogden.

Pressure Products won the first “Concept to Company” contest, jointly sponsored by Zions Bank, Grow Utah Ventures, Ogden City and Weber State University’s Northern Utah Technology Outreach Center of USTAR, the Utah Science Technology and Research initiative. Pressure Products was chosen as the best outdoor product innovation from among nearly 130 retail product ideas in the contest.

Hazelbaker credits Curt Roberts, director of the Northern Utah Technology Outreach Center at WSU and a graduate of the John B. Goddard School of Business & Economics, with providing the expertise to help Pressure Products develop a business plan. Roberts also introduced Reichert and Hazelbaker to investors at Grow Utah Ventures who provided start-up funding. The prize for winning the competition gave Pressure Products an additional $10,000 in working capital and $10,000 worth of consulting services from USTAR.

With the help they received from WSU, as well as the publicity and financial rewards that came with winning “Concept to Company,” Pressure Products is well on the way to becoming a key player in Ogden’s growing outdoor recreation industry.

THE ‘CATCHER’S MITT’ OF NORTHERN UTAH

Created in 2006, USTAR is a long-term, state-funded investment designed to strengthen Utah’s knowledge economy. The initiative has three primary goals: attracting top research talent to the state’s research universities; connecting university research innovations with local entrepreneurs and investors who will create jobs in Utah; and providing technical and business expertise to local inventors and entrepreneurs.

Weber State houses the USTAR Technology Outreach Innovation Programs (TOIP) for the northern region of the state, “stretching from Davis County, north to the Idaho border,” says Roberts, who holds joint appointments as the center director for USTAR and as vice provost for innovation and economic development at WSU.

The outreach centers play a valuable role in helping to spread the growth of technology- and innovation-driven businesses throughout the state. “Ordinarily, many of the research innovations developed by universities in the state migrate to companies in other areas,” Roberts explains. “One of our purposes in the Technology Outreach centers of USTAR is to help create a kind of catcher’s mitt to ensure that innovations benefit regional economies throughout the state.”

“The efforts are already making an impact.” According to Dinesh Patel, chair of the USTAR governing board and managing director of vSpring Capital, “Curt Roberts and his team have made great gains in building the ‘innovation infrastructure’ in Northern Utah.”

The success of USTAR, Patel says, depends heavily on the people in charge of outreach: “Curt brings years of business experience to this effort. The depth of expertise and credibility of our directors have helped them serve as creative catalysts to growth.”

Roberts estimates that WSU’s TOIP center has provided entrepreneurial support to 58 companies in the past two years. That support ranges from helping companies with marketing and business plans, to introducing them to investors, to designing and testing products and services.

WSU faculty and students in the colleges of education, science, and applied science and technology are working on six inventions at various stages of development, including a soccer helmet, longboard stick, and a computer program that simulates emergency situations to train first responders.

Most students work on these projects with faculty mentors such as Kelly Hayward, an associate professor in manufacturing engineering technology who is managing the longboard stick project. Roberts also employs five student interns who help companies with business planning, marketing, and branding.

“These projects provide excellent learning opportunities for students as they work with faculty to help local business,” says WSU President Ann Millner.

THE SKY’S THE LIMIT for a new program partnering Weber State University with Northern Utah aviation and aeronautics businesses.

Weber State University’s Aviation Initiative offers companies with expertise in life sciences, physical sciences, and mechanical and electrical engineering, where faculty members work alongside professional engineers and scientists to apply their knowledge of these classic disciplines to contemporary aviation issues.

“If a company doesn’t have the time, equipment, lab space, or employees with the particular expertise to solve a problem or conduct research, we’re available to help,” says program director Brad Stringer, who graduated with a math degree from WSU.

The program was created in response to Utah Gov. Jon Huntsman’s economic cluster initiative, in which similar businesses benefit from proximity—sharing resources, distribution channels, suppliers, and employee talent pools. Thanks to Hill Air Force Base and the large number of flight-related companies in Weber and Davis counties, the area has been deemed an aviation/aerospace cluster. WSU’s program was put in place to help support that industry.

And even though the program began offering its services just this past spring, it is already well-received by local industry leaders. “It’s clear that companies had been hoping for a resource like this,” Stringer says. “There has been a very enthusiastic reception.” The program is working on nearly a dozen different technical projects for firms like ATK Aircraft Structures, Barnes Aerospace, ITT, Hill Air Force Base, the Utah Test and Training Range and Parker-Hannifin Corporation.

TESTING, TESTING

When the Boeing Company asked ATK to enhance the door springs on its 767 and C-17 aircraft, without compromising its rigorous safety standards, ATK turned to WSU’s aviation initiative for assistance.

Looking to move from titanium springs to a lightweight composite material, Boeing developed a new foot-long spring that weighs only five pounds. Replacing the metal spring with a carbon-fiber unit saves 110 pounds per door. Boeing requires ATK to document that every spring will stand up to the job, so each one must be tested.

“We had a testing and evaluation process that needed to be modified and updated to this century,” says Nate Weeks, a Weber State alumni who graduated with a degree in manufacturing engineering technology and is now in charge of the spring project for ATK. “The aviation initiative offered people who could do the work.”

Faculty from the university’s mechanical and electronics engineering technology departments helped develop a torque tester for ATK that evaluates the integrity of composite/graphite springs prior to their installation in the aircraft. The testing device places each spring under tension at 200 percent of its rated capacity and precisely measures its performance throughout the test.

“The project is going quite well,” Weeks says, adding that ATK, with the help of the aviation initiative, should be able to meet its late-winter deadline from Boeing for project completion.

Already off to a strong start, the aviation initiative hopes to soar even higher. “We’re very proud of what we’ve accomplished so far,” Stringer says, “and we’re excited about where we go from here.”

‘It’s clear that companies had been hoping for a resource like this. There has been a very enthusiastic reception.’

-Brad Stringer, WSU Aviation Initiative
Good Neighbors

WSU reaches out to Ogden community

AMY HENDRICKS, UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

ON THE CORNER OF 23rd Street and Grant Avenue in Ogden sits a quaint brick and glass building. On the door, bright red lettering reads: “Youth Impact: A Safe Place to be a Kid.” Visitors must be buzzed into the lobby, where, except for the TV, it’s quiet and calm.

But then again, it’s only 2:30 p.m. An hour and a half later, it’s controlled chaos when more than 100 students from the Ogden City School District flood through the front door, scattering to the study hall, the basketball court, the bike shop, the arts and crafts room and the science center.

“Thank goodness for our Weber State University volunteers,” laughs director Robb Hall as he gives kids high fives except for the TV, it’s quiet and calm.

Individual attention. That’s what Youth Impact is all about. The nonprofit program exists solely to impact the lives of at-risk youth by nurturing their emotional, physical and social needs.

“We have 12 people on staff,” Hall says. “You can see why we absolutely cannot do this without volunteers, so many of whom come from Weber State. The university is one of our most sound partners.”

Donnell Butler, Youth Impact’s volunteer coordinator, agrees. He estimates WSU sends the program anywhere from 350 to 400 volunteers each year. “They’re great for our kids,” he says while refereeing a lively game of Capture the Flag. “The volunteers help open their minds to other possibilities.”

Take 10th-grader Daymien “Clay” Hobson, for example. “I want to do something big with my life,” he says, explaining how he wants to one day get his automotive technology degree. “(Youth Impact) helps me move in the right direction. It’s like a second family.”

Caitlin Draney, a Youth Impact volunteer and WSU freshman, says the extra attention really helps the kids. “Just the simple act of letting them tell us their stories makes a huge difference because they often don’t have anyone to tell them at home.”

On Adams Avenue sits Midtown Community Health Center, another place where WSU students are making a difference. Students like Darek Eggleston, a volunteer translator who will never forget the look on the elderly Hispanic woman’s face when she got unsettling news from her ophthalmologist.

She was terrified, he recalls, noting her English was limited at best.

What happened next—or actually didn’t happen—was even scarier.

“The doctor told her she had severe glaucoma and needed an operation,” recounts Eggleston, who graduated in May 2008 with a dual degree in pre-medicine and Spanish. “That was it. He didn’t explain anything further. Any patient who could’ve spoken for herself would have said, ‘Wait! What do I do now?’ But this woman couldn’t.”

So Eggleston spoke for her. “I got the opportunity to look out for someone who was naïve and scared. I often wonder what would’ve happened if she hadn’t found out where to go, what to do.”

Mike Baker hears about cases like this every day, which is exactly why he feels Midtown’s connection with WSU’s Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures is vital.

Baker is the director of Midtown’s Health Access Team. The clinic provides subsidized primary health care to residents of Northern Utah, especially those facing economic, geographic, cultural and language barriers. About 18,000 patients are served there each year, of which approximately 65 percent are Hispanic. While the doctors at Midtown speak Spanish, the specialists they refer patients to sometimes don’t.

“Webster State volunteers have helped our patients break down language barriers so they can get the care they need,” Baker says. “Because they can communicate with health care providers and have their needs met, they can do the things they need to do, like work and take care of their kids.”

NOT EVEN A MILE AWAY...

On Adams Avenue sits Midtown Community Health Center, another place where WSU students are making a difference. Students like Darek Eggleston, a volunteer translator who will never forget the look on the elderly Hispanic woman’s face when she got unsettling news from her ophthalmologist.

She was terrified, he recalls, noting her English was limited at best.

What happened next—or actually didn’t happen—was even scarier.

“The doctor told her she had severe glaucoma and needed an operation,” recounts Eggleston, who graduated in May 2008 with a dual degree in pre-medicine and Spanish. “That was it. He didn’t explain anything further. Any patient who could’ve spoken for herself would have said, ‘Wait! What do I do now?’ But this woman couldn’t.”

So Eggleston spoke for her. “I got the opportunity to look out for someone who was naïve and scared. I often wonder what would’ve happened if she hadn’t found out where to go, what to do.”

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Donnell Butler (right) works with a student in Youth Impact’s after-school program.

‘We absolutely cannot do this without volunteers ... from Weber State.’

-Robb Hall, Youth Impact

WHY SERVICE LEARNING?

Service learning is a teaching and learning approach that integrates community service with academic study. The university’s Community Involvement Center, which also coordinates the Volunteer Involvement Program and AmeriCorps at WSU, helps professors incorporate service-learning components into their courses.

Volunteering is required in these classes, and students are glad to do it.

Eggleston, who helped Midtown as part of professor Alicia Groll’s Spanish for Social Workers course, says service is both rewarding and eye-opening. “If I knew someone majoring in pre-med or Spanish or both, I would say, ‘Go exercise that Spanish in the real world. Go translate. Go help.’”

Grail, who requires 20 hours of service per semester from students in her upper-division Spanish classes, says service learning helps her students feel like they can make a positive impact on the world. “Students not only practice what they learn in class, but also see that they have a lot to offer. Many times young people feel like they can’t make a difference, but they can.”

WSU English professor Victoria Ramirez also requires 20 hours of service from students in her English 1010 class, a course she structured around the subject of poverty. They volunteer at Youth Impact, the Discovery Clubhouse and Ogden City Schools.

“If you’re going to ask your students to do service, you want to make a good case that the population really needs it,” Ramirez explains. “Bottom line: People, including myself, don’t understand poverty. Service learning gets my students out there, out of their comfort zones, helping those they might not otherwise ever know existed.

“They enjoy the hands-on learning. It’s live. It’s now.

It gives them opportunities to learn about the world they live in.”

CIC FAST FACTS

For the 2007-08 academic year:

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<tr>
<th>STUDENTS PARTICIPATING</th>
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<td>VALUE OF SERVICE HOURS*</td>
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* Calculated by Independent Sector, a leadership forum for charities, foundations and corporate giving programs.
Discovering Tomorrow’s Teachers

WSU inspires and trains the next generation of Utah educators

NATALIE CLEMENS, CONTRIBUTING WRITER

WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY’S Teachers of Tomorrow program is helping inspire the next generation of educators as it works with local high school students who are interested in teaching.

Teachers of Tomorrow was launched in area high schools in January 2008 and consists of three parts. The first is a concurrent enrollment course taught at high schools in Davis, Weber and Ogden City school districts. About 150 students are enrolled in the course across the three districts this fall.

The course, EDUC 1010-Exploring Teaching, discusses what it is like for teaching each grade level. “They are also learning from the different teaching styles of all of the teachers they are observing,” Wilkes says.

The second aspect of Teachers of Tomorrow is the connection to a national organization, Future Educators Association. All students enrolled in EDUC 1010 become members of FEA, which gives them opportunities to meet others interested in teaching, and participate in activities and competitions.

And if those students move on to attend WSU, they’ll find the same organization on campus. “Weber State started a chapter of FEA so that when students make the transition from high school to college, they will still be able to connect with that organization,” Mayhew says.

The third part of Teachers of Tomorrow is WSU’s partnership through the concurrent enrollment course and the university’s dedication to helping young students succeed in the education department.

“We want to help students go from high school into the university without having any sort of stress along the way,” says Stephanie Heath, recruiter for the Jerry & Vickie Moyes College of Education at WSU.

Last year Heath worked with 20 Ogden High School FEA students. They learned about college admissions, financial aid and the College of Education. Out of the 20 students, nine were seniors. All nine went on to enroll in college. Seven enrolled at WSU in programs in the College of Education, four of whom were first-generation college students.

“The idea is that we start younger and we start developing a program that allows students to pursue a career in education in an educated way,” Heath says. “We are, in a sense, growing our own teachers.”

Other Utah school districts, such as North Summit and Morgan, have shown interest in starting the program.

The Teachers of Tomorrow program was created to combat the teacher shortage crisis that is crippling education systems locally and nationally.

“The university has to support the community,” Heath says. “We have to produce enough graduates to support the demand for teachers. In order to get enough graduates, we need to go out and get the students.”

Michael Jacobsen, Weber School District superintendent, says helping students get scholarship money and encouraging high school students to enter teaching are two of the best ways to help the local education community. “Weber State is helping do both of those,” he says.

This year the College of Education was able to give a limited number of tuition waivers for the fall semester to freshmen students pursuing degrees in education. Usually, scholarships are only available for junior- and senior-level students who have been accepted in the teaching program. The university is actively seeking to develop more scholarship funds for future teachers.

BUILDING A PATHWAY

The Teachers of Tomorrow program is not the only way WSU is contributing to local education needs.

The Teacher Assistant Pathway to Teaching program helps provide working paraprofessionals in the school districts with the necessary financial and academic support to obtain a teaching license.

According to Mayhew, about half of those who go into teaching leave the profession within the first five years for various reasons. He says those involved in TAPT are more likely to stick with teaching: “They are the ones who will get their teaching license and stay in the profession; they already work in the schools, so they know what to expect.”

Other WSU programs include a family literacy program designed to help parents with young children obtain GED certifications, as well as prepare young children for school, and the licensure after degree program, which allows those who have bachelor’s degrees to work toward a teaching license.

With the growth of programs like Teachers of Tomorrow and TAPT, demand for private scholarship support grows as well. That support is key for education students, whether they just graduated from high school or work in area schools and desire a teaching license.

RESPONDING TO DEMAND

Jacobsen says WSU is excellent to work with in addressing local education needs. Lynn Ekstrom, who works in human resources at the Ogden City School District, agrees. “Weber State is in constant communication with the school districts in the area and is concerned about our needs,” Ekstrom says.

Not only do WSU’s teacher education graduates help area school districts, but its student teachers fill local needs as well. “Weber State places a lot of its student teachers in our district, and we tend to hire people we have already had exposure to,” Jacobsen says. “We do in fact offer early contracts to student teachers who we know would be successful teachers.”

Ekstrom says many student teachers work in Ogden City School District as conditional hires. “They teach under a regular contract with us in lieu of their student teaching,” she says. “The university has been wonderful in working with us on that.”

Jacobsen says WSU has been proactive in helping resolve the teacher shortage.

“We have been very pleased with Weber State graduates,” he says. “That’s why we keep hiring them, and that’s why we keep asking for as many as we can to student teach in our district. They are good people who are getting a solid background in their teacher education program.”

‘We have been very pleased with Weber State graduates. That’s why we keep hiring them.’ -Michael Jacobsen, Weber School District
Goddard School Students Lend Expertise to Local Businesses

JENNIFER PHILION, UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

IN A CLASSROOM AT Weber State University Davis, students in an MBA E-Business course present local businesses and organizations with various services related to their Web sites.

Students focus on three points: confirming the strengths of a site, identifying opportunities for improvement and making recommendations, showing examples of how clients could incorporate various features into their sites. The clients can then use this feedback to help grow their businesses or expand their visibility. “It could cost thousands of dollars to get a consultant to do this kind of analysis,” says associate professor and MBA program director Matt Mourtisen. “But it doesn’t cost these clients a dime.”

In the past three years, students in the course have worked with 27 businesses and organizations in Weber, Davis and Salt Lake counties. Clients include companies such as Marie Cavanaugh, Ed Kenley Ford and McKay Dee Hospital, along with government or private organizations such as Kaysville City Recreation and LDS Church Educational Services.

This E-Business course is just one way that WSU’s John B. Goddard School of Business and Economics impacts the local business community. Well before students graduate, they are using their classroom-learned skills to help companies in the real world.

“The Goddard School is a valuable part of the business and economic climate of the area,” says local entrepreneur Alan Hall, founder and chairman of Ogden-based MarketStar. “Faculty members are available to lend their expertise and give advice to businesses. Also, the school provides a quality pool of students who can work with local companies and organizations through internships.”

Hall has a lot of experience working with student interns. After finding his own success as an entrepreneur, in 2005 he founded Grow Utah Ventures, which provides educational, financial, and management support to local entrepreneurs and businesses.

Nearly as soon as GUV was formed, Hall sought out a partnership with the Weber Entrepreneurs Association—a student organization in the Goddard School—with the idea of involving students in hands-on work with his organization. As the relationship grew, Hall created an endowment to fund scholarships for the students involved.

“We’re all about economic development and helping build local companies, which can then hire more employees,” Hall says. “The students help us evaluate proposals from people and businesses that are seeking funding. Thanks to their work, we can invest in companies that are likely to be successful.”

Davis County’s office of Economic Development also has tapped into Goddard School students’ expertise. After recently receiving an analysis of the office’s Web site, director Kent Sulser says the county is requesting a policy review that will clarify whether his department can implement recommendations from the E-Business students.

“We can’t put anything on Davis County Web pages that is not directly related to the county’s mission,” Sulser says, “which prevents us from showing many illustrative things available in the county that could be offered to the business community. The students’ analysis helped us realize the need to review this policy.”

“We have opportunities to sell the strengths of our county, highlight our relationship with Hill Air Force Base, market our business parks, and increase the visibility and accessibility of information,” Sulser says. County attorneys are reviewing the policy to see if it is possible.

“These students were able to recommend strategic improvements for our site that will greatly enhance our ability to attract businesses to Davis County and help grow our economic base,” Sulser says. “They’ve been a great resource.”

WHAT DO A SMALL veterinary practice and a hazardous materials cleanup company have in common? On the surface, not much. But like most businesses in Northern Utah, they are “small businesses.” And as such, they have grown and succeeded thanks in part to the Small Business Development Center based at Weber State University’s John B. Goddard School of Business & Economics.

According to SBDC director Beverly King, the category of small businesses generally includes those with fewer than 500 employees or less than $23 million in annual sales. “Only a small percentage of businesses in the counties we serve (Weber, Davis, Morgan and Box Elder) are not small businesses,” she says.

The SBDC partners with the U.S. Small Business Administration and the Utah Governor’s Office of Economic Development, providing information, advice and planning assistance for local business owners or entrepreneurs.

Christine Johnson owns the PetsFirst! Wellness Center in Brigham City, Utah, with her husband, veterinarian LaMar Johnson. She says King and the SBDC provided invaluable assistance when the couple decided to take the leap into business ownership.

“I was feeling a fair amount of stress about all the unknowns,” Christine says. “I needed an instruction manual for buying a business!”

A neighbor recommended the SBDC, and Christine calls the Johnsons’ consultation with King “one of the smartest things we did.”

“Beverly helped me finalize our business plan ... She was the instruction manual I was looking for.”

- Christine Johnson, PetsFirst! Wellness Center

contracts to provide emergency response services for the Intercontinental Ballistic Missile Program at Hill Air Force Base.

Even though the business was established in 1994, the complexities of government contracting led manager James Grover to the SBDC for guidance in 2002. Grover credits King with revamping the company’s accounting system so it could meet government guidelines, saying, “Her contributions are a large part of our business success as a federal contractor.”

King can easily express why an organization like the SBDC is important to a community. “When you consider how much of our economy is based on small business owners and entrepreneurs,” she says, “you can see why giving those people training and advice is key to the success of our economy.”

To better serve to the business community, the SBDC has expanded its offerings to include an online “Biz Smart” course and “Inicio Inteligente,” a Spanish-language version of “Start Smart.”

“We reach out to specific populations such as minorities, women, veterans and disabled people,” King says. “We try to get the message out that we are open to everyone.

That includes existing businesses as well as start-ups.

Lincoln Environmental Services is an Ogden company that
Giving Health Care a Hand

Natalie Clemens, Contributing Writer

Hospitals throughout the country are faced with the dilemma of providing increased services for an aging population, at a time when the number of trained nurses and other health care professionals is not sufficient for the demand.

But thanks to the Weber State University Dr. Ezekiel R. Dumke College of Health Professions, the shortage of health care practitioners is minimized in Northern Utah. The college is helping shape the nature of health care in the area by training highly qualified graduates who care strongly about their work and the people they serve.

More than 900 students graduated with a certificate or degree from the Dumke College of Health Professions in 2007. They received their education in a number of health care fields such as nursing, respiratory therapy, radiologic sciences, clinical laboratory sciences, emergency care and rescue, health administration and dental hygiene.

The nursing program is the college’s largest area of study, with nearly 300 students graduating as new registered nurses in 2007.

Jennifer Tom, of Roy, Utah, graduated as a registered nurse in 2004. She says she became a nurse because she wanted to make an impact on people’s lives. Tom works on the medical floor of the Davis Hospital and Medical Center in Layton, starting IVs, giving blood transfusions and supplying medications to patients ranging in age from 18 to 90.

“I just like helping people and knowing that I helped them get better,” Tom says. But one of the hardest things about her job is watching someone deal with bad news.

“When they find out they have something serious, that can be hard,” she says. “I wish I could just be with them the whole time, but I have other patients to work with, too.”

Whether she’s having a hard day or an easier day, Tom says her education at WSU helped prepare her for her career—a career she thoroughly enjoys.

Partnerships with Local Hospitals

From local hospitals to area clinics, WSU graduates work in a wide variety—and large number—of facilities. Nearly 100 percent of the university’s health care students find placement after graduation.

Nancy Nowak, vice president for clinical operations and chief nursing officer for Intermountain Healthcare, says Intermountain is well staffed, but always aware of supply and demand. She works with local colleges and universities to address the organization’s staffing needs.

“WSU’s nursing department is a major partner with us in terms of helping us get new nurses and helping us continue to educate our current nurses,” Nowak says. “We probably have Weber State nurses in all of our facilities across the state.”

“McKay-Dee Hospital has a great staff because we are so close to Weber State,” - Chris Dallin, McKay-Dee Hospital

Catherine Earl, chair of WSU’s Department of Nursing, says WSU’s nursing students have several strengths that help them in the workforce: “They are quality-driven, very conscious of the safety of the public and well-prepared to handle the most current technologies,” she says. “They are also very mature in their leadership and ability to manage care.”

Many graduates of the Dumke College of Health Professions go on to work less than a mile from the university, at McKay-Dee Hospital. Chris Dallin, hospital spokesman, says, “When we need to replace an employee, it’s nice to be able to choose from a pool of candidates right across the street. I believe McKay-Dee Hospital has a great staff because we are so close to Weber State.”

Dallin, a graduate of WSU’s MBA program, says McKay-Dee Hospital has a symbiotic relationship with the university. Not only does it hire a lot of WSU graduates, but many WSU students gain experience at the hospital through clinical training or internships. These experiences allow students to serve local patients while still in school.

Clinical Training Makes the Difference

Candace Martindale of North Ogden, Utah, is working toward an associate’s degree in radiography. Each week she completes 24 hours of clinical training at Ogden Regional Medical Center. Martindale likes “the mixing of theory and real-world application.” She says the learning in class and the clinical application at the hospital complement each other, making her education well-rounded.

During her clinical training, Martindale does everything from taking X-rays to transporting patients to taking patient histories. Her hands-on training not only gives her experience but an opportunity to change patients’ lives, even before graduation.

“I think that what Weber State is teaching me now is definitely going to have an impact on the community because what I learn here will help people,” Martindale says. She has met a lot of amazing people through her WSU training. “When you get a patient that has the energy and the spark of life, it just rubs off on you, and you have a better day,” she says. “The same thing goes with health care workers. No one who is in a hospital for care wants to be there. If you can bring to their day a little happiness and comfort … that’s what every health care worker wants to do.”

Weber State students also serve local residents through the WSU Dental Hygiene Clinic. There, patients receive dental care at reduced rates. Each month, more than 300 patients visit the clinic for discounted cleanings and X-ray services.
On Sept. 11, 2008, the Weber State University Alumni Association celebrated Homecoming by honoring these outstanding WSU alumni and friends. Some teach, some lead, some volunteer their time, but each honoree gives heart and soul to his or her endeavors—and the community around us. We salute their accomplishments and are proud of their affiliation with Weber State University.
SMALL CHANGE, BIG IMPACT

You don’t have to make a large donation to have a big impact. Whether you give $25 or $25,000, your gift to the WSU Annual Fund goes directly to student support in the areas of greatest need.

Every gift matters. Make yours today.

“I give to Weber State because I want to help others in a similar situation.”

A single mother of two young boys, Stephanie Craghead ’02 barely made ends meet during her college years. Stephanie believed a degree would open the door to greater opportunity—and that belief became her inspiration when times got tough.

Today Stephanie is a successful human resource professional who contributes to WSU’s Annual Fund.

To read more about Stephanie and others who contribute to the WSU Annual Fund, or to make a gift, visit weber.edu/annualfund or call 801-626-6138.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION LEADERS

Ruby Raccasi ’74
President, WSU Alumni Association

Ruby Raccasi grew up in Eden, Utah, and attended Weber State College, majoring in Spanish. Following graduation, she moved to Washington, D.C., and then to Geneva, Switzerland, as an employee of the U.S. State Department. Raccasi recently retired from Hill Air Force Base Human Resource and Labor Relations after 34 years of federal service.

As WSUAA president, Raccasi’s focus is on increased communication and planning to promote alumni outreach and involvement. A strong advocate for alumni, Raccasi serves on the WSU Board of Trustees while she is president of the association.

James Miner ’11
President, WSU Student Alumni

Everyone who has completed classes for credit at WSU is considered an alumnus; that’s why there is an alumni organization for current students. James Miner, who will graduate with a degree in mechanical engineering technology, wants to see more involvement from WSU students at sporting events and student activities. Miner, formerly a student ambassador, is proud to be involved with WSUAA and appreciative of the support provided to students, such as scholarships, the Purple Pak fan club and Take a Wildcat to Lunch alumni mentoring.

Ed Allen ’63
President, WSU Emeriti Alumni Council

Ed Allen invites emeriti alumni who attended or graduated from Weber 40 or more years ago to become involved with EAC programs that include assisting students in emergency situations, reuniting former classmates and honoring emeriti achievements.

The EAC has established a new honor this year: the Purple Paw Award of Excellence, presented to past or present members of the WSU faculty and staff. Allen has served in the Utah State Legislature and has a dermatology practice in Ogden.

Greg Willis ’06
President, Young Alumni Council

Greg Willis graduated with a major in business administration/marketing and is now a marketing specialist for Bank of Utah. Greg is excited to lead a team of young alumni in creating a program that provides outreach to those who graduated within the past 10 years. Networking events will include guest speakers and a progressive online community. YAC supports the Jr. Cats program for children 4-12 years old and the Take a Wildcat to Lunch mentor program. A 5K run in spring 2009 will raise money for scholarships.

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The WSU Alumni Association champions Weber State University by fostering spirited and lasting ties among alumni and friends.

News and events online at alumni.weber.edu
E-mail us at alumni@weber.edu
or call 801-626-7535.
**CLASS NOTES**

**ALUMNI UPDATES**

**40s**

*Terri Andrew Wilson ‘34* worked for the Standard-Examiner for four years, then worked for Hill Field for more than 30 years as an item manager. She is 74 years old.

*Lois Huseman Roberts ‘56* has enjoyed serving the WSU Emeriti Alumni Council, teaching workshops and giving presentations on communication for Iomega. She has attended many class reunions and has enjoyed volunteering with class reunions.

**50s**

*Russell W. Carruth ‘50* served in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II and was stationed at the Island of Tinian in the South Pacific. Russell also graduated from the University of Utah and received a doctoral degree from Harvard. He worked in the Ogden City School District as a teacher of U.S. history and an administrator for many years.

**60s**

*Brent Gunderson ‘68* taught in the Weber County district. Ogden City and Job Corps before he began a 32-year career in government as a human resources manager. Although his degree was in secondary education, he eventually became the regional security and law enforcement chief for the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, protecting dams, canals and electrical generation sites. Brent has had four children attend WSU, and two played football. He is now retired and lives in Henderson, Nev.

**70s**

*Thomas B. Tolman ‘71* received one of Utah’s premier radio veterans with the “Somewhere” satellite. He has been a teacher for 27 years and lives with his wife in Huntsville, Utah.

*Robert G. Hyde ‘81* was the executive vice president of the Utah Jazz, chief financial officer of Larry H. Miller Sports and Entertainment and the president of Fanzz. He developed a statistics system for the Jazz to rate the most effective players in the NBA using game statistics. Hyde uses the rating system to project the best matching salary for players. A graduate in accounting, he has been a presenter for the Ralph Nye Lecture Series at WSU.

**80s**

*Jonathan A. Morrell ‘81* worked in Tokyo for a communications firm before completing a master’s degree in communications. Since 1988, he has worked at Dixie State College with the TRiO program, helping low-income, first-generation students prepare for and succeed in post-secondary education. Jonathan is a founding member and served as president of the Utah Higher Education Staff Association, has been a Utah ASPRE president and received the Dixie State College Reliance Award for Outstanding Service Staff.

Max S. Ferre “82 serves as vice chairman of the Weber State Credit Union Board of Directors. He volunteered at the credit union in 2002 on the supervisory committee and was later elected to the board. He has been a teacher for 27 years and lives with his wife in Fremont, Calif.

*Curtis Breitweiser ‘85* is a chief financial officer of NextG Networks. He also teaches finance classes at the LaVerne School of Business at Santa Clara University. Breitweiser recently completed his Doctor of Management and the Director Training and Certification Program at the UCLA Anderson School of Management. He and his wife, Susan, have two children and live in Fremont, Calif.

*J. Lucas* taught home economics and physical education in Aspen, Colo., where she lives with her husband, Frank J. Lucas. She taught home economics and family life at Weber, he attended the University of Utah. He worked as an engineer for IBM for 42 years.

Colleen Beas Tippets ‘88 celebrated her 80th birthday with family in Hawaii. She taught in Weber County and Opliden City schools for 12 years. She enjoys crocheting, doll-making and volunteering.

*Dan Jessop ‘79* received the Dixie State College Faculty Recognition Award. He served in the U.S. Army Air Corps during World War II and was stationed at the Island of Tinian in the South Pacific. Dan also graduated from the University of Utah and received a doctoral degree from Harvard. He worked in the Ogden City School District as a teacher of U.S. history and an administrator for many years.

*Lois Huseman Roberts ‘56* served as director, assistant director and food services cook for 22 years in Albany School District No. 1 in Laramie, Wyo., where she lives with her husband, Lois also taught home economics and physical education in Aspen, Colo., and Dubois, Wyo. Her favorite job was as an extension agent for Washakie County. Lois and her husband have traveled with the Wildcat Travelers.

**What have you been up to?**

**We’d love to know.**

Send us your updates for Class Notes.

Online: alumni.weber.edu

Email: alumni@weber.edu

Phone: 801-626-7535

Mail: WSU Alumni 3700 University Blvd Ogden, UT 84408

What have you been up to?

We’d love to know.

Log on to the new Alumni Online Community and find out what happened to your friends!

Sign up to help friends find you!

alumni@weber.edu
Insurance Company and national director for the Independent Insurance Agents and Brokers of America. Curtis lives in South Ogden, Utah, with his wife, Carrie, and four children. His oldest daughter attends WSU. Curtis received his Certified Insurance Counselor designation, and his agency has been named a Best Practices Agency for four years in a row.

Clack Irwin ’85 is president of Optimum, a financial advising firm. He lives in West Bountiful, Utah.

*Don G. Bodily ’86 is a construction supervisor for Chasen Construction, which is working with Midwestern University, a health care school. Don lives in Phoenix.

Bred G. Lund ’86 is the manager of materials and process technologies in the composite development segment for Boeing in Auburn, Wash.

*Jean M. Wilson ’89 graduated with honors from Weber State and worked as a registered nurse for Intermountain Health Care Dixie Regional, where she was honored as Nurse of the Year. She is retired and living in Ivins, Utah.

Douglas E. Nielsen ’92 owns Doug Nielsen Communications in Ogden. Doug is the “Take Ownership Specialist” as he helps individuals and companies with keynotes, training, and coaching. His 18-year speaking career has earned him the internationally recognized designation of Certified Speaking Professional.

Mark Richards ’92 is a loan officer for Academy Mortgage Corporation. His career in the mortgage industry began at United Savings and Western Mortgage in 1989. He spent five years as a loan officer for Washington Mutual and has more than 13 years of experience in the mortgage and financial services industry.

Glenn Webb ’92 received a master’s of music in percussion and is Dixie State College’s first Chair of Music. Glenn serves as music department lecturer and advisor, along with duties as director of the Dixie State Jazz Ensemble, the Percussion Ensemble and the Varsity Band. Webb has instructed bands and orchestras in Utah public schools for the past 14 years and served as conductor and music director for Sandy City summer musicals for nine years. He is a solo percussionist with the Canyonside New Music Ensemble and principal percussionist with Ballet West.

Richard “Rill” Williams ’95 is head of the College of Nursing, Health and Human Services at Indiana State University. Previously, Rill was associate dean of the College of Education at the University of Northern Iowa. At ISU, he has received the Outstanding Young Professional Award from the athletic training department and the Young Professional Alumni Award from the college of Health and Human Performance.

Alan Appelgren ’96 is general manager of Taylor Farms’ Pacific division. He began his career in the food-processing industry with Kraft General Foods while working on his bachelor’s degree. While overseeing the operations of Taylor Farms’ Nashville division, Alan completed his master’s degree at Vanderbilt University. Alan and his wife, Jennifer, live in the East Bay area of San Francisco, Calif., with their four sons.

Casey Madsen ’99 is director of employee relations in the people department of SkyWest Airlines. Madsen is responsible for employee relations, employment administration and workers’ compensation, as well as oversight of federal and state labor law compliance. He will oversee all company hiring and recruitment processes. Casey has nearly a decade of aviation industry experience and has been in several leadership positions at SkyWest since joining the company in 2004.


Charles Matthew Sauer ’99, a 10-year veteran of the aviation industry, has recently been appointed to the Transportation Research Board of the National Academy of Sciences. His work in aviation includes the preparation of tax returns for individuals, quarterly tax preparation, and accounting for corporations and partnerships.

Ryan Taylor ’00 is the head golf professional for Wolf Creek Resort. He has been a part of the Wolf Creek staff since turning professional in 2002. Currently a PGA level II apprentice, he is only a few weeks away from finishing his studies for PGA school. He and his wife are expecting their first child.

Amanda Evans Larsen ’01 graduated cum laude and is now an accountant for the Layton, Utah, firm of Adams & Peterson CPAs LLC. She is working on a Master of Accountancy degree. Her areas of expertise include the preparation of tax returns for individuals, quarterly tax preparation, and accounting for corporations and partnerships.

Mari Robertson Page ’01 works for Charter Communications as a fitness model, spokesmodel and coach. She lives in South Weber, Utah, with her husband, Jared D. Miller ’08.

*Leslie S. Taylor ’05, a 10-year veteran of the aviation industry, has recently been appointed to the Transportation Research Board of the National Academy of Sciences. His work in aviation includes the preparation of tax returns for individuals, quarterly tax preparation, and accounting for corporations and partnerships.

Lisa Christiansen Jackson ’00 lives in Washington Terrace, Utah, and started her own graphic design business, Lisa Jackson Design. She works from her home, which she shares with her husband and their three children.

*Jamey P. Myers ’05 is head of the member business services department for Alliance Credit Union. Jamey enjoys working with people and helping them succeed with their business plans and dreams. She lives in South Weber, Utah, with her husband, Jared D. Miller ’08.

*Jesse S. Taylor ’05, a 10-year veteran of the aviation industry, has recently been appointed to the Transportation Research Board of the National Academy of Sciences. His work in aviation includes the preparation of tax returns for individuals, quarterly tax preparation, and accounting for corporations and partnerships.

Lisa Christensen Jackson ’00 has been named a Best Practices Award winner of the Direct Marketing Association (DMA). Madsen currently lives in Benton City, Wash.

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Who is the Lord of the Ring?

JOHN KOWALEWSKI, UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATIONS

IN A FAIRY TALE or Hollywood movie, this story would be about a happy reunion. In reality, it remains open-ended.

Questions continue to surround a class ring (pictured) that was anonymously sent to WSU in late August. The envelope from an Austin, Texas, post office was addressed to “The Lost and Found Department.”

An accompanying note explained that the 1969 Weber State College man’s class ring was found in “the ladies restroom in Wiesbaden Germany at high school” back in 1966 or 1967. The anonymous letter writer said he put the ring away in a wooden box, where it resided until now.

The Alumni Association publicized the missing ring in advance of Homecoming ’08, but despite numerous phone calls and e-mails with possible leads, the rightful owner remains a mystery.

“We’ve heard from several would-be owners,” said Margie Esquibel, associate director for Alumni Relations, “but in each case, some details about their lost rings didn’t quite match, or their accounts couldn’t fully explain circumstances associated with this ring.”

Adding to the mystery are what appear to be initials engraved inside the ring that don’t match any of the names in the 1969 yearbook.

The Alumni Association hopes this ring, like Cinderella’s glass slipper, can be returned to its rightful owner.

“If only this ring could talk,” said Esquibel. “Imagine the story it could tell.”

If you have any information about this ring or its rightful owner, please contact the WSU Alumni Association at 801-626-7535 or alumni@weber.edu.

To be continued …

Who is the Lord of the Ring?

John Kowalewski, University Communications

Lighting the ‘Flaming W’

Jennifer Philion, University Communications

ON A FRIDAY AFTERNOON in early September, the week before WSU’s 2008 Homecoming celebration, Lynn Kraaima oversees a group of men loading a flatbed pickup with wires, light bulbs and a Coleman Powermate Vantage 8000 generator.

It’s time to head up the mountain to assemble the “Flaming W.”

And as ethereal as the glowing letter may appear during its annual appearance on the mountainside above Ogden, the process of putting the symbol together is a tough job—part puzzle, part problem-solving—that requires the workers involved to be part mountain goat.

Kraaima, coordinator of the Student Affairs Maintenance department, could easily be referred to as the “Father of the Flaming W.” Twenty-nine years ago, as a part-time electrician at Weber State, Kraaima was approached by J. Farrell Shepherd, director of the union building and student activities.

“He came to me and said, ‘We’d like to light a W on the mountain. Would you take on this challenge?’” Kraaima says. “I thought it would be interesting. I grabbed some buddies and headed up. We used CB radios to communi- cate with someone down in town. He’d say, ‘Move that line over to the left,’ or wherever, and eventually we got it kind of looking like a W.”

“I never expected it to turn into this tradition—I thought it would just last for a couple years. Now it’s an unwritten part of my job description.”

It’s a task Kraaima takes very seriously: He hasn’t missed a year in nearly three decades, working through rain, snow or even heat. He’s the one who stays on the mountain each night during Homecoming Week, keeping an eye on the generator that powers the lights.

After winding through the steep streets above WSU, Kraaima and his small caravan of trucks—this is a seven-man job—passes through a gate to a fire road. Bumping along, he reaches the bare stretch of land where the W resides. “That’s as far as we go,” he says. “It’s all uphill from here.”

Boy, is it. Suddenly far above the city, the only sounds are a train whistle in the distance, and the WSU marching band practicing on the field of Stewart Stadium.

The men quickly unspool wire and start heading uphill with supplies. For several, it’s their first time building the W, and there are a lot of nervous jokes about rattlesnakes and the steepness of the terrain.

Over the years, the design of the W has changed. Reeve & Reeve Engineering of Ogden surveyed the mountainside and created the “Flaming W” design to match WSU’s logo for 2001’s Homecoming. Since then, lengths of rebar have been pounded into the ground to mark the curves and corners of the design, and a thin strand of wire connects the dots to show the outline.

Tracy Thomson, who has worked for WSU since April, studies the metal and wires and cords, trying to picture the finished product. “I wonder what it will look like when it’s done,” she says. “I never seen it before.”

Bryant Jensen, on the other hand, is building the W for the fourth time. “You never think when you’re stringing it that it will come out looking like a W,” he says. “But it always does.”

Soon it’s the moment of truth: The generator rumbles to life, and the bulbs glow faintly. A lone cloud moves across the sun, and for a few moments, the entire W outline is visible, lit softly against the dried scrub and scree.

Of course, the true test will come a few evenings later. “When you throw that switch on that first night, you never know what will happen,” Kraaima says.

But that night, and every night of Homecoming Week when the W is lit, it’s Kraaima who is up there in the pickup truck, high above the lights of Ogden, watching over his “Flaming W.”

Next year, you’re welcome to hike up and say hello.
Wild Winning Season for 'Cats

Not bad for a team picked to finish fifth in the Big Sky Conference.

WSU’s football team went on a magical run through the 2008 season, finishing 10-4 overall and 7-1 in conference play to share the Big Sky championship for the first time in 40 years.

The magic continued into the Football Championship Subdivision playoffs, where the Wildcats earned their first postseason win since 1987, upsetting the powerful Cal Poly Mustangs. WSU’s playoff run ended in the next round, falling to Montana 24-13 in Missoula.

Outstanding individual performances were rewarded. Head Coach Ron McBride was named Big Sky Coach of the Year, while quarterback Cameron Higgins was conference MVP, and safety Beau Hadley was an Academic All-American.

Trevyn Smith (pictured) also had a standout season for the Wildcats. The running back scored 28 touchdowns, averaging nearly 169 all-purpose yards per game, and broke WSU’s career rushing record—as a junior.