

WILDCAT

WSU Alumni Magazine | FALL 2022



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Kim Parkinson, MSRS, advises the School of Radiologic Sciences' Honors students, who never settle for good enough.

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Along with their clinical hours at local hospitals and medical centers, you may see them in the community as volunteers with food drives, children's charities and more. They share their radiologic sciences knowledge with high school students, at professional conferences and elsewhere. In return, Honors students receive special recognition at graduation, practical experience in their fields and close relationships with faculty.

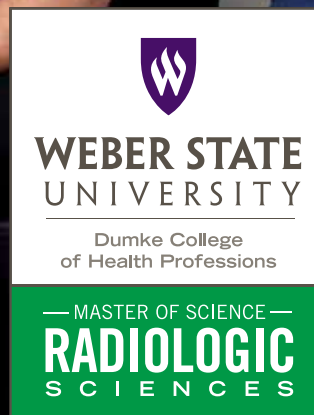
"I'm so impressed with them," Parkinson says. "They inspire me."



The Honors program is awesome. It's a great way to be involved in your program, but also in the community.

— Emilee Scott, senior in radiology

Top row: Associate professor Tanya Nolan, Emilee Scott, Jillian Pugh, Reece Richardson, Lacy Harris, instructor and advisor Kim Parkinson Bottom row: Iami Sabin, Brayden Crismon



weber.edu/radsci

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TAKE OUR SURVEY



to help shape the future of Wildcat.

WEBER WATCH

WEBER WATCH

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MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Unveiling the Wildcat Den

Ogden's seniors have a new space to show WSU pride.

With a \$5,000 budget, hundreds of volunteer hours, and nearly 20 months of planning and remodeling, the Golden Hour Senior Center transformed its outdated — and under-utilized — game room into the Wildcat Den. The room now includes its original 1968 pool table refurbished with purple felt; ample space for games; new lighting, flooring and electronic equipment; and historic WSU memorabilia.

“To really appreciate it, you had to see it a couple years ago,” said **Fred Stettler**, WSU Emeriti Alumni Council member who coordinated volunteers for the project. Ginger Myers, recreation facility supervisor for Golden Hours, agrees the purple makeover is a refreshing change from the old “yellowy-brown” aesthetic. She particularly loves the décor. “We ended up getting some amazing pieces, and it was important to us to highlight those pieces instead of just a collage of things,” she said.

Wildcat Den memorabilia includes a letterman jacket worn by WSU Hall of Fame basketball player **Mike Sivulich BS '64**, a photo signed by Hall of Famer and NBA star **Damian Lillard BS '15**, historic WSU photos and artwork, and more.

Golden Hours unveiled the Wildcat Den on June 13, 2022, with a ribbon cutting honoring the many WSU departments, companies and individuals who helped create the room.

In addition to the den, Ogden residents over 50 years old enjoy an indoor golf simulator, wellness activities, classes and more at the senior center.



Ogden City Mayor Mike Caldwell and WSU President Brad Mortensen enjoy the Wildcat Den's refurbished pool table.



Fred Stettler, WSU Emeriti Alumni Council member, and Ginger Myers, Golden Hour recreation facility supervisor, cut the purple ribbon to open the Wildcat Den.

Miller Advanced Research and Solutions **MARS** Center

WSU opens MARS Center near Hill Air Force Base

Weber State University recently opened the Miller Advanced Research and Solutions (MARS) Center, formerly the USTAR Building, thanks to a generous gift from the Larry H. & Gail Miller Family Foundation.

Students and faculty at the center, located at the Falcon Hill Aerospace Research Park, assist Hill Air Force Base in accomplishing national defense objectives by conducting research and completing engineering projects.

It also provides a space to bring together industry and government partners, and support northern Utah aerospace and defense businesses.

“With the opening of the MARS Center, we’re bringing the university to the forefront of our aerospace ecosystem in northern Utah,” said WSU President **Brad Mortensen**. “Thanks to a substantial gift from the Larry H. & Gail Miller Family Foundation, this center has the potential to transform our economy and set us up for success in the future.”



Event speaker Elaine Cope BAS '17 and David Brown use Oculus headsets to play a virtual reality simulation game. Brown represented Weber State's Center for Technology Outreach at the event.



Kim R. Wilson, WSU President Brad Mortensen, Gail Miller and President of the Utah State Senate Stuart Adams at the ribbon cutting



Interactive displays and information booths from industry partners

OGX offers a *new ride to class*

Wildcats have a new, efficient, environmentally conscious way to get to class on Weber State's Ogden campus.

In August, the Utah Transit Authority and WSU opened the first segment of the Ogden Express Bus Rapid Transit (OGX) line. The Wildcat Shuttle provides three stops on campus: the Dee Events Center, Wildcat Village and central campus near the Val A. Browning Center for the Performing Arts and Shepherd Union Building.

The all-electric shuttles run every 10 minutes from 6:30 a.m.–8:30 p.m., Monday–Friday, and are free to ride with a UTA Ed Pass. Campus-inspired art created by Weber State staff is on display at all three stations.

“Utah Transit Authority is excited to see the OGX Wildcat Shuttle opening fall semester,” said James Larson, UTA public relations specialist. “We are at the halfway point on this project, and the entire OGX line will open late 2023.”

The all-electric shuttle was made possible through the Department of Transportation; Federal Transit Administration; Ogden City; Stacy and Witbeck, Inc.; Wasatch Front Regional Council; Weber County; and WSU Facilities Management. When finished, the full OGX line will include stops at the Ogden Intermodal Transit Center, The Junction, downtown Ogden, along 25th Street and Harrison Boulevard, and McKay-Dee Hospital.

The \$120 million bus rapid transit project will be funded through federal, state and local funds, including funding from Ogden City, Weber County and UTA, along with in-kind funds, such as land contributed to the project. The project aims to combine the capacity and speed of light rail with the low-cost construction of a bus route.

For more information, visit weber.edu/shuttle.





Leading the way to becoming an emerging Hispanic-Serving Institution

Weber State University has brought a new face on board to lead the charge to become an emerging Hispanic-Serving Institution (eHSI).

Yudi Lewis came to Weber State in September from Utah Valley University, where she also earned two bachelor's degrees before going on to earn a master's in business administration and becoming a doctoral candidate in educational leadership and policy from the University of Utah.

Lewis's goal at Weber State is to increase access and equitable opportunities for Latinos, the largest underrepresented student population in Utah.

“We are transforming generations, one student at a time.”

“Weber State made a bold statement in creating this position to not only do the work that is needed to meet that population's needs, but also to send a message to the state of Utah that we need to pay attention to this population,” she said.

In the university strategic plan, Weber State *Amplified*, a 5-year plan for growth, WSU has committed to increasing the percentage of students of Hispanic or Latino descent to 15% by fall 2025. To help reach this goal, the university hired Lewis as director of HSI Initiatives, thanks to a generous \$500,000 commitment from Ally Financial Inc.

Recognizing the hard work that has already been done, Lewis plans to look for opportunities to advance by meeting with individuals across campus, in K-12 schools and in the community.

“We're not just preparing students to take college classes, we're helping Hispanics or Latinos transition from high school to a certificate or college degree to a career they're passionate about,” she said. “We are transforming generations, one student at a time.”

WSUSA creates LGBTQ+ student senator position



In spring 2022, **Garrett Potokar**, a professional sales student, made history as Weber State's first LGBTQ+ student senator, filling the inaugural role as an advocate for previously unrepresented students.

“A lot of other groups have senators, which is amazing,” Potokar said. “I think every group should be represented in the senate and that every

student deserves a voice. LGBT students didn't have a voice before now.”

While working as a graphic designer for the Weber State University Student Association (WSUSA), Potokar realized there was little LGBTQ+ representation in the group.

“I saw there were changes that needed to be made, and I've had past leadership positions,” Potokar said. “As part of the

student senate, I wanted to help pass legislation, get things going and make campus a safer space for everyone.”

In order to move forward quickly for spring 2022, Potokar was selected through an interview process. During his semester in the role, Potokar passed several pieces of legislation, making it easier for students to change their names and identifying pronouns, providing easier access to LGBTQ+ resources and supporting transgender athletes.

“It's been amazing being in close collaboration with constituents and senators alike. It's truly been a labor of love from not just me, but also from everyone I've worked with,” Potokar said. “I really hit the ground running, and it was exhilarating to pass such large legislation in such a short time.”

Potokar now serves as the executive vice president for WSUSA and as acting parliamentarian, ensuring proper parliamentary procedure is followed by the student senate.

Jazmyne Olson, a public relations and advertising major, was selected as LGBTQ+ senator for the 2022-23 academic year.

WSU alum returns to Utah as a Broadway sensation



From the Austad Auditorium at Weber State University to the theaters of Broadway, **Andre Ward BA '95**, has performed his way to becoming a successful stage actor.

For Ward, performing came naturally. Raised Pentecostal, he began singing at an early age in his church choir, learning to carry a tune long before acting ever seemed like a possible career. When a school teacher suggested his parents enroll him

Photo by Curtis & Cort Photography

in acting classes because of his energetic personality, Ward took to the stage and quickly excelled.

From elementary through high school, Ward's passion for acting grew. A talented actor, singer and dancer, he was offered multiple scholarships from various colleges when the time came. But it was Weber State that caught his attention after he auditioned in the Val A. Browning Center. He found a welcoming community and was offered a full scholarship for the theatre arts program. It was an offer he couldn't refuse.

“I feel like Weber State chose me,” Ward said. “I auditioned for a scholarship, and I just loved my experience there. Then, when I was offered a full scholarship, it felt like an opportunity to repay my family for all the sacrifices they had made for me through the years.”

Mentored by his professors and supported by his peers, he graduated with a full portfolio and network of connections that helped him quickly launch his career in the professional realm.

A few years after graduating, he landed his first big role on Broadway in a production of *Saturday Night Fever*. More than 20 years later, Ward's portfolio has continued to grow. He has starred in stage productions that include *Rock of Ages*, *Xanadu*, *Escape to Margaritaville* and the national tour of *Dream Girls*, as well as guest starring on several TV shows, such as *Inventing Anna* and *Pose*.

Ward will return to Utah in November 2022 to perform in *Moulin Rouge! The Musical* at the George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Theater in Salt Lake City. He plays Toulouse-Lautrec, an eccentric screenwriter who finds himself in the middle of a tragic love story between his friends. Ward took on the role earlier in 2022, traveling the country for the production's first national tour.

“I feel so fortunate to be a part of this show and to share the beauty and energy of it with the audience every night,” Ward said. “It's such a diverse group of people, and everyone is celebrated and represented. This show is about truth, beauty, freedom and love, and who can't get on board with that?”



See *Moulin Rouge! The Musical* in Salt Lake City, Nov. 30 through Dec. 11, at the George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Theater. Tickets are available at saltlakecountyarts.org.

A New Head Coach

Eric Duft, a native of Kansas, grew up playing, and later coaching, basketball in the Sunflower State. But for the last 16 years, as an assistant coach for WSU's men's basketball team, he has called Ogden his home. During those years, he has had many opportunities to pursue higher positions elsewhere, but one ambition kept him a Wildcat. In May 2022, that ambition became a reality.

"The reason I stayed is because I wanted to be the head coach," Duft said, following the retirement of longtime head coach **Randy Rahe**. "I wanted to be loyal to Coach Rahe and help him every way I could, but, when he decided to move on, I wanted to be in a position to be the next head coach."

Duft's decision was also about family. He and his wife Sherri have four children, Jaret, Halle, Easton and Kourt. "My wife has been an unbelievable supporter of me throughout my career," Duft said. "Our kids have grown up here and they have lived and died with every win and loss."

Rahe retired with 316 career wins, the most in WSU and Big Sky Conference history. As an assistant coach, Duft helped the Wildcats to five Big Sky titles and three trips to the NCAA Tournament.

As the 10th head coach in Weber State's Division I history, Duft has high expectations for his squad.

"We want to be fearless in our pursuit of excellence, on and off the court," he said. "We want to be a championship team on the court and be a championship team off the court, in every area of life. We want our players to develop as people, as students and as players, and give a great product to the university and the community that people can be proud of in every way."

REMEMBERING RANDY RAHE

Share your favorite memory of Coach Rahe's many years with the Wildcats for our letters section. Send your message to magazine@weber.edu.



"I have certainly learned a great deal from the program. It has helped to round out areas that I didn't even understand I had a gap in."
— Darcy Siebenaller, eMHA graduate

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A Record-breaking Softball Season

Among its many accomplishments, the Weber State women's softball team scored a Big Sky Conference Championship during the 2022 season without allowing a single run.

The team was then selected as the third seed going into the NCAA regionals, the highest any Big Sky softball team has earned for the tournament. The Wildcats ultimately went 0-2 in the tournament, but still set several records while they were there.

The championship marked the ninth overall for the program. With the 13-1 conference record, the Wildcats had a .929 winning percentage — the highest in Big Sky Conference history.

Head coach **Mary Kay Amicone** was named Big Sky Coach of the Year for the third consecutive year. This season also brought her 100th career Big Sky Conference victory, making her the only coach in conference history to reach that mark.

"Our team and coaches have tremendous buy-in to our team culture," Amicone said. "I'm very fortunate to have amazing coaches who really support me and our student athletes."

Pitcher and first-base player **Arissa Henderson**, a transfer from Brigham Young University, was named Big Sky Conference Newcomer of the Year and led the conference with a 14-1 record.

13-1
CONFERENCE RECORD

2022
BIG SKY CHAMPIONS

100TH
CAREER VICTORY FOR
HEAD COACH MARY
KAY AMICONE

WSU'S HIKE OF HIKES TURNS 100

Written by
KARIN HURST

2022

Over 200 students and Weber State University community members trekked to the top of Mount Ogden for the 100th anniversary of the Mount Ogden Hike on Sept. 24, 2022.



1970

Remnants of the 1922 flagpole



Among the items you'd least expect to see displayed in President **Brad Mortensen's** conference room is a 100-year-old hunk of oxidized steel. Yet, there it lurks — a jagged-edged, 24-inch cylinder bathed in a rich palette of rust, silver and charcoal — unabashedly greeting visiting donors and dignitaries, and silently presiding over official gatherings of administrators, faculty, staff and community leaders.

Those unfamiliar with Weber's past would not likely guess the corroded curiosity is a precious relic of a venerable school tradition. But it is.

A CHANGE IN THE AIR

Weber College was undergoing a pivotal transition in the autumn of 1922. At the end of that school year, high school classes would no longer be offered. For President **Aaron Tracy**, Weber's imminent adoption of college-only academic curricula was the fulfillment of a dream. College student body president **J. Willard Marriott** and high school student body president **Llewelyn McKay** teamed with sociology faculty **Harvey L. Taylor** to plan a fitting celebration. They settled on the audacious idea of leading a march to the 9,579-foot summit of Mount Ogden to "crown the peak" with a steel flagpole. In its Oct. 3, 1922, edition, the *Weber Herald* student newspaper, urged all 630 students enrolled to participate in the Oct. 4 event and sign sheets of paper that would be placed in a glass jar and encased at the foot of the flagpole "as a sign that you love your school and share in her gift to those that are to follow."

WSU professor emeritus **Gary D. Willden**, aka "Dr. Fun," taught outdoor adventure and recreation for 35 years and understands the appeal of blister-bursting, muscle-cramping hikes. "It's in some ways almost a spiritual experience," he said. "The sights and sounds and sensations in places like that, you just don't find in valleys."

According to Willden, marking an important milestone with a large group trekking to a single destination wasn't uncommon in an era that pre-dated TV and social media. Large groups of Utah hikers had been scaling the 12,000-foot summit of Mount Timpanogos together yearly since the summer of 1912. What amazes Willden about Weber's inaugural Mount Ogden Hike is the ruggedness of the original route, the large turnout (an estimated 350 to 365 participants) and the fact that their mission was accomplished in one day.

"Snowbasin was not developed in 1922, so the original hikers came up the Taylor Canyon side," he explained. "From that side, you've got a nice trail up to Malan's Basin, where there are remnants of Malan Heights, a Gilded Age hotel and resort. But once you get out of there, it's pretty much bushwhacking and boulder hopping the rest of the way up to the saddle."

AN EXPLOSIVE START

Technically, the original trekkers had some assistance, courtesy of a six-member vanguard crew that traveled to Mount Ogden Peak by horseback on Saturday, Sept. 30, to forge a rudimentary trail and sledgehammer a hole deep enough to bury a charge of dynamite. The explosion created a three-foot crater to accommodate the base of the flagpole.

Between 4 and 5 a.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 4, a noisy swarm of students, faculty and trustees gathered near a rock landmark at the mouth of Taylor Canyon. The students split into groups according to age, each charged with a specific task. The high school sophomores would carry water, sand and cement; juniors would haul the 300-pound steel flagpole in three sections. (A team of six horses was brought in to carry the heavy load, but as the trail grew steeper and more treacherous, the students had to transport the pole sections themselves.) Once they reached the peak, seniors would set the pole; student body leaders would splice the pole pieces; and college students would raise the United States and school flags.

The hikers began their ascent as the school band cheered them on with lively tunes. Faculty led the way, followed by high school sophomores, junior and seniors, with college students bringing up the rear.

Nine grueling hours later, the weary masses reached their destination. They paused long enough to eat lunch before raising the flagpole to its 20-foot height, placing it into the prepared hole and packing it tightly with concrete mixed on the spot.

An inscription on a bronze plaque bolted to the bottom of the flagpole read, "Presented by the Associated Students of Weber College, 1922."



Historic photos courtesy of Weber State University Archives



1922

Top: Hikers at the peak of Mount Ogden for a flag ceremony

Left: Students resting during the hike to Mt. Ogden



1922

David O. McKay (center) and Weber College president Aaron Tracy (left) speaking to hikers during the flag ceremony



Admiring what they considered their gift to future generations, the hikers listened attentively to remarks from President Tracy and student leaders. Llewelyn McKay's father, Weber College Board of Trustees president, alum and former principal, David O. McKay, complimented the students on their miraculous feat, reminding them that "all things worthwhile in life are difficult of attainment, just as the reaching of the peak had been." McKay, a Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints apostle, then offered a dedicatory prayer. Accompanied by the wail of a bugle, college students hoisted the two flags. The program concluded with the group singing the "Star-Spangled Banner" and "Purple and White," Weber's newly composed school song.

For the next decade, the trail through Taylor Canyon, past Malan Heights and up to the summit of Mount Ogden was known as the Weber Trail. However, by 1932, an alternative campus tradition had emerged. It involved a much easier hike to Malan's Peak and culminated in the lighting of a large bonfire after which participants hiked back down the trail in moonlight. This activity became known as the Flaming W Hike.

WHAT WENT UP MUST COME DOWN

Clearly, the intent of those who erected the steel structure on Mount Ogden's windy peak in 1922 was for it to last forever. So, you can imagine alum Ted McGregor's angst close to five decades later when he burst into then-alumni association director Dean W. Hurst's office claiming the U.S. Forest Service had enforced a law mandating the removal of all unauthorized structures on northern Utah mountains, including Mount Ogden. (McGregor was among the vanguard unit that created a hole for the pole's foundation.)

To confirm the rumored demolition, McGregor and Hurst flew over the peak in a private plane. They saw that the flagpole had, indeed, been knocked down in sections and hurled over the eastern cliffs. Hurst said he visited the site a short time later in hopes of finding the Mason jar that contained the

signatures of the hike participants, but only managed to recover a piece of concrete that appeared to bear the impression of a glass jar lid, and a rusty, two-foot fragment of flagpole. While the current whereabouts of the concrete remains a mystery, the chunk of pole was disinterred from a long-forgotten storage box in the basement of Lindquist Alumni Center shortly before Mortensen's 2020 inauguration. He has displayed it as a symbol of school pride and student tenacity ever since.

"In their official government language, the Forest Service referred to the flagpole as 'an unauthorized protuberance,' so they tore that out," Willden lamented. "Well, in the years since then, all kinds of 'protuberances' have been authorized and the place

1970

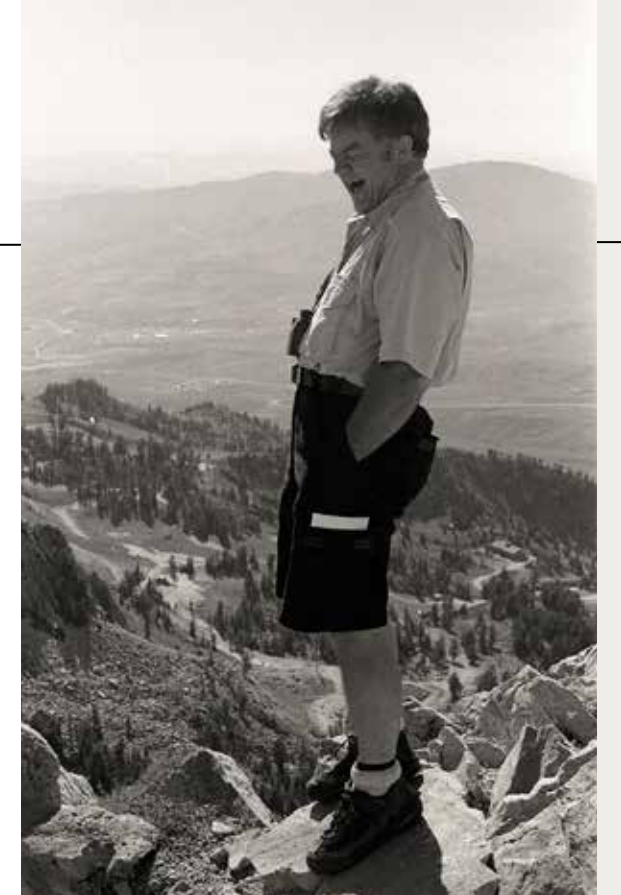
Russell Croft (left) and Dean Hurst (right) on Mount Ogden holding the remnants of the 1922 flagpole



now looks like an airport!" In 1975, the Forest Service granted alumni leaders permission to secure a bronze memorial plaque to an outcropping of rocks on the peak, but an early mountain snowstorm delayed that effort until August of 1976.

2002

Gary Willden standing at the top of Mount Ogden



REVIVING A RUGGED ADVENTURE

In 1987, then Weber State president, Stephen Nadauld, asked Willden to revive the legendary hike. Despite atrocious weather and a meager turnout, the activity generated enough enthusiasm that Nadauld promoted the following year's hike as part of the college's 1988 centennial celebration.

"He came up with some private funding to pay for a helicopter and we were able to locate four elderly gentlemen who had made the inaugural hike and transport them up to the saddle to greet the roughly 300 hikers," Willden reminisced. "It was beautiful weather. There were some folding chairs and a PA system so we could have a nice program."

2022

Hikers making their approach to the peak of Mount Ogden





A HIKE WORTH REMEMBERING

In its current iteration as in its past, Weber's trek to Mount Ogden Peak is more than a pleasure hike. At its core, the Mount Ogden Hike is a metaphor for Weber's remarkable trajectory from Weber Stake Academy to Weber State University. In 1922–23, as high school courses yielded to junior college curriculum, students and faculty were hopeful, yet largely uncertain about the future of their beloved institution. The community at large also wondered what would happen next. By staking a flagpole at the summit of Mount Ogden, Weber staked its claim to the past, present and future.

"Here's a group of 350 faculty, staff and students that, by establishing that flagpole on that mountain top that day, said, 'Weber is here to stay,'" Turner said.

As the editors of the *Acorn Souvenir* yearbook noted so prophetically in their 1922–23 publication: "Ogden City realizes as this school year ends, that Weber College is established to remain and that it has attained that true spirit which will mean growth for the community, for the college, and for the individual."

Turner said he believes that someone at WSU will always assume the mantle of overseeing an annual hike.

"The beauty of this tradition is that we'll continue to pick up that flag and carry it up the mountain year after year, era after era."

— Daniel Turner



2022

Top Left: President **Brad Mortensen** (top row, center) holds a remnant of the original flagpole erected in 1922 in a group shot at the top of Mount Ogden.

Bottom Left: Mount Ogden Hike participants totaled over 200 students, faculty, staff and community members.

CELEBRATING A CENTURY

On Oct. 4, 2022, the Mount Ogden Hike turned 100. WSU Campus Recreation associate director **Daniel Turner** and a 15-member committee spent nearly two years planning a commemoration that was bigger and more elaborate than anything ever done.

"We tried to make 2022's hike as similar as possible to the 1922 hike," Turner said. "We continued the tradition of carrying the Weber State flag with us, but by using the Snowbasin route instead Taylor Canyon, we were better able to manage the risk associated with hiking that mountain with a large group of people."

The event, held Sept. 24, 2022, began at Earl's Lodge patio with a light breakfast, a greeting from President Mortensen and the introduction of special guests, including 95-year-old **Quinn G. McKay**, a David O. McKay family representative. The marching band provided a rousing send off as participants split into advanced, intermediate and beginner hiking groups. Some folks chose to ride the gondola to Snowbasin's Needles Lodge, which eliminated three quarters of the distance. "One of our key goals was to meet people where they were in terms of age and ability," Turner explained.

An afternoon program at the saddle, just below the summit, featured the unveiling of a 100th anniversary plaque. The crowd sang "Purple and White," as well as the school's familiar fight song, which has declared Weber State "great, Great, GREAT" since 1965.



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A Chance to Reinvent Yourself



A collaboration between Jerry & Vickie
Moyes Center for Supply Chain Excellence
and Red Barn Academy expands
students' future possibilities

By Rachel Badali



Jeffrey Reese is a student at Red Barn Academy and manages Red Barn Thrift. Red Barn Academy is a vocational training and residential therapeutic community in Farmington for men who have battled addiction. Faculty from Weber State University's Moyes Center for Supply Chain Excellence teach classes for students in the academy.

Three years ago, Jeffrey Reese was in a hotel room in Florida with “no money and no hopes.” He was deep into his battle with alcoholism, and he left his home state of Utah in an attempt to escape failed relationships and burned bridges.

“Something needed to change, or else I was going to start committing crime to get by,” Reese said. “I was most likely going to end up dead, either from drinking myself to death or by taking my own life.”

In Utah, Reese’s mother heard about a local program she hoped could help, and, fearing for her son’s safety, got him an interview. Reese boarded a plane back to Utah and hasn’t looked back since.

At Red Barn Academy, a residential therapeutic center in Farmington, Utah, Reese found a community for men with a history of substance abuse or crime who are seizing chances to create a better future for themselves.

The academy operates at no cost to insurance or taxpayers. Most of the funding comes from Red Barn’s various enterprises, where many participants work, including a thrift store, restaurant, construction company and moving company, all located near Station Park, the city’s trendy shopping, dining and entertainment district.

Red Barn students, like Reese, are expected to work hard and take on increased responsibility in the academy’s farm setting for two years or more. They also take part in leadership and job-readiness training. Students can apply for the academy on their own accord, or a judge can grant the option in lieu of jail or prison. Regardless, everyone must go through an interview process and demonstrate a willingness to improve.

There’s a power in helping people see themselves and their futures differently.

— NANCY TOMON

Reese calls Red Barn a chance to reinvent himself. He said it represents hope — a place to relearn life skills he describes as being “lost along the way,” and completely new ones. For example, every Friday night, after a week of regimented work from sunrise to sunset, a small group of students meet to learn about supply chain management. They’re part of a collaboration between the Jerry & Vickie Moyes Center for Supply Chain Excellence at Weber State University and Red Barn Academy.

The program, a 40-week training led by Weber State professors, first opened in September 2021. Reese and 11 other students were part of the program’s first graduating class in August 2022. A new cohort began this fall.

Reese was already a Red Barn Movers manager and house leader, helping guide other students, when he learned about the supply chain program. Not wanting to miss a chance to learn new skills, he signed up.

“We all wanted to do the same thing, which is to do something different,” Reese said about himself and his classmates. “Our lives were unmanageable before, because, when times got hard, we turned to our addictions or bad behaviors.”

The course offered possible entry to in-demand career fields such as logistics, warehousing or e-commerce. But, perhaps more important to Reese, it expanded options for the future.

“My personal goal is financial stability so I can have a family one day,” Reese said. “I want a career, and now I just have more knowledge of different aspects of the world that will be crucial to helping me get there.”

Already, Reese is putting that knowledge to good use. He is now a manager at Red Barn Thrift, the program’s thrift shop. And, while he admits he has a busy schedule, he likes the responsibility.

Red Barn students’ work ethic is part of what inspired WSU supply chain faculty to pursue a partnership. “You give them an assignment or you give them a challenge and they will rise to the occasion,” said François Giraud-Carrier, WSU supply chain management associate professor.

Giraud-Carrier helped create the supply chain curriculum and taught two of the program’s modules. The rest of the course content was split among WSU supply chain faculty members Evan Barlow, Alicia Ingersoll, Ben Neve and Shane Schvaneveldt. Together, they created a program that offers career preparation and college credit.

The program was created with a \$110,212 grant from Learn & Work in Utah, an initiative from the Utah Governor’s Office of Economic Development that focuses on upskilling and returning individuals to the workforce. The idea came from WSU alum Matt Williams, a member of the Moyes Center for Supply Chain Excellence advisory board and past Red Barn Academy board member.

Williams was impressed with Red Barn Academy’s work, and he wanted to explore how WSU could help expand Red Barn students’ future employment options. As someone with experience in warehouse operations and other aspects of supply chain, he also recognized valuable qualities, like grit and willingness to learn, within Red Barn students that he believed would allow them to be successful in the supply chain career field.

For Williams and faculty members, the collaboration was also a chance to put WSU’s vision, “transforming lives by meeting all students where they are,” into action.

“There’s a power in education,” said Nancy Tomon, WSU Department of Supply Chain & Management Information Systems administrative specialist. “And there’s a power in helping people see themselves and their futures differently.”

Tomon helped secure the grant funding and worked with Red Barn to get the program up and running.

While a few course participants had past college experience, most didn’t, and this was a way to give them their first taste of higher education. It also provides a pathway to new job experience, as students have the opportunity to begin a supply chain internship once they’ve completed the coursework.

Providing Opportunity

Along with WSU’s supply chain management program, Red Barn gives students a wide range of career-training opportunities.

Work on the farm: Students care for the Red Barn animals, which include chickens, ducks and goats. They also tend their on-campus garden and maintain campus grounds.

Technical training: Local trade schools work with Red Barn to offer students training like culinary arts and welding.

Life skills: Residents take workshops on topics such as team building, public speaking and conflict resolution.

Enterprises: Students can work at Red Barn Thrift, Red Barn Construction, Red Barn Movers and the restaurant Sticky Bird. The businesses give purpose and self-worth to students while providing goods and services to customers.

Tomon is helping to set up some of the company partnerships, and there is already high demand for Red Barn graduates, which doesn’t come as a surprise to her.

“It’s inspiring,” she said. “They have high expectations of themselves, they hold themselves accountable, they show up.”

After completing what feels like a job well done, supply chain faculty are excited to begin working with the next cohort of students. The program received another round of Learn & Work grant funding and will continue through 2023.

Now a supply chain training program graduate, Reese said he will keep putting in the work to get closer to his goals. Even when the demands of life build — as they did when he was balancing coursework, multiple jobs and Red Barn responsibilities — he said he’s proving to himself that he can keep going.

“That’s what we do here,” Reese said. “We don’t give up.”

WSU RESEARCHERS EXAMINE THE GREAT SALT LAKE'S CONCERNING FUTURE

Uncharted Territory

BY JAIME WINSTON

> Students in WSU's GETUP Summer Research Experience spend a month studying the Great Salt Lake and how shrinking water levels are impacting the microbialite ecosystem.

It's hard to imagine Utah without its Great Salt Lake.

The lake has existed in — more or less — its current form for the past 11,000 years.

It was an important landmark for the Ute, Goshute, Shoshone and Paiute nations before white settlers arrived.

Spectacularly preserved petroglyphs cover rocks on Stansbury Island.

Brigham Young is said to have remarked “This is the right place; drive on” upon viewing the lake and surrounding valley before founding Salt Lake City.

Today, as the largest saltwater lake in the Western hemisphere, it's a major tourist destination, supports a thriving brine shrimping industry, houses migrating waterfowl and shorebirds, and serves as a breeding ground for songbirds.

Unfortunately, the state's distinctive landmark has been drying up.



➤ Carie Frantz (right) measures a lake water sample with student Kayla Whipple on Antelope Island on July 19, 2022.

“We’ve entered uncharted territory... It’s at a scary tipping point right now, and we don’t know what’s going to happen.”

— Carie Frantz

Carie Frantz, WSU associate professor of Earth and environmental sciences, leads student researchers in examining the impact of the lake's declining water levels and increased salinity. While she admits the outcomes of the lake drying up are not a certainty, what could likely occur is frightening.

The food chain relying on the lake's microorganisms and brine flies could be broken. Humans could be impacted, too, since a “toxic dust soup” could be kicked up into the air.

A TIPPING POINT

“We’ve entered uncharted territory,” Frantz said. “It’s at a scary tipping point right now, and we don’t know what’s going to happen.”

Frantz attributes the Great Salt Lake's lower water levels to a megadrought gripping the southwestern United States, global climate change and overuse of water from the Jordan, Weber, and Bear Rivers that would otherwise flow into the lake.

For the past two summers, she led the GETUP Summer Research Experience, giving geoscience students the chance to research the impact of the lake's water and salinity levels on the ecosystem as full-time research assistants.

Frantz and her students collect lake samples at Antelope Island and analyze them at Weber State. At the end of the program, the students present their results at a symposium, and some serve as peer mentors in the GETUP Summer Bridge Program, a hands-on learning program for first-generation or low-income students interested in geoscience and environmental science who plan to attend Weber State.

Maggie Nguyen, a geology major, learned about last summer's GETUP program from **Marek Matyjasik**, Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences chair.

“I want to go into hydrology and look at water systems,” said Nguyen, who will graduate in 2024. “So, monitoring and researching the Great Salt Lake directly ties into that.”

Over the summer, Frantz led Nguyen and five other students in studying microbialites, rock structures that house photosynthetic microorganisms that are an important food source for other organisms in the lake. As the lake dries and more microbialites are exposed to the air, the organisms on them no longer contribute to the lake's food chain, impacting brine shrimp, birds and other animals.

Since 2012, over half of the microbialites in the lake have been exposed.

Nguyen warns that the drying of the lake could also put dust from the lake bottom into the air, possibly harming air quality for anyone downwind.

“Have you noticed that when it rains and it dries there's this film on your car?” she asked. “That's from the dust that gets suspended into the air, and the more the lake dries up, the more that sediment gets suspended into the air.”

Usually seen in winter inversions, Frantz said Utahns should expect to see more of that “particulate matter pollution” year-round, and it's possible the dust may contain high concentrations of metals above EPA levels, including arsenic. Some of the metals have entered the lake through agriculture, mining and industrial discharge.

“There's a bunch of other metals of concern as well in Great Salt Lake sediments, so it's basically a ticking time bomb of health hazards sitting out there,” Frantz said.

➤ **Maggie Nguyen** collects dust and soil samples from the dried-up lakebed of the Great Salt Lake near Antelope Island.





» GETUP student and applied environmental geology major **Rebekah Nilson** uses a refractometer to measure salinity at the Great Salt Lake.

ANOTHER CAUSE FOR CONCERN

Since 2019, **Rebecka Brasso**, associate professor of zoology, has also led Weber State students in studying the lake's ecosystem.

Each summer she brings students to Antelope Island to collect brine flies and western spotted orb weaver spiders — an increasingly difficult task.

"I have been shocked by the degree the water level in the lake has changed over the past four years," Brasso said. "A few years ago, it was a half mile walk to the edge of the water to collect flies at one location. This year, the walk is almost a mile."

She continually changes her plans, as spiders or flies in one area may not be in the same spot the next year, or month, as the shoreline moves farther away.

Brasso is concerned with the potential loss of localized populations of invertebrates that are important food sources for breeding birds.

"As these invertebrates make up the near entirety of the Great Salt Lake aquatic food web, species that rely on their abundance are at great risk of low food levels or starvation," said Brasso, adding that millions of birds prey on the shrimp and flies.

After collecting spiders and flies, Brasso and her students analyze their mercury levels at Weber State labs. Their goal is to create a long-term data set to track the changes in the lake's mercury availability. They have found mercury levels in brine flies increase from June to August, and, with lower water levels, suspect mercury concentrations could increase year to year. "Mercury concentrations in orb weaver spiders that consume brine flies seem to depend on the availability of brine flies near their webs," Brasso said. "The spiders build webs in shrubs that are usually along the water's edge, but are now increasingly distant, making this food resource less abundant, altering the mercury exposure."

Wetlands, like those surrounding the lake, are known to be "mercury hotspots," Brasso said, adding that the likelihood of methylmercury, a more toxic form of mercury, being produced increases as water levels begin to go down. "The main question now is 'what will this mean for the movement of mercury from the Great Salt Lake into the associated terrestrial food webs?' It could go up or even down," she said.

Even low levels of mercury have been known to affect reproductive success, Brasso said, "meaning the birds feeding on the brine flies could be laying and hatching fewer eggs, and having fewer chicks that will survive."



» **Cody Ellsworth**, a student in the GETUP Summer Research Experience, examines samples collected from Antelope Island to study the impact of the shrinking Great Salt Lake.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

While it may not fix everything, Frantz strongly encourages Wasatch Front residents and organizations to take part in water conservation efforts.

Weber State University is heeding the advice. The university has reduced its total water use per acre by 40.3% compared to a 2016–2018 average baseline, while the university has grown by 265,699 square feet from the baseline years.

Drew Hodge BS '16, water conservation and stormwater coordinator, developed the university's Water Action Plan, which offers best practice guidelines. Along with consulting for renovations and new construction projects, Hodge works with WSU's in-house landscaping team on two xeriscape projects each year and the Water Warrior program, a competition among landscapers to conserve water.

"We've got some cool projects," he said. "We are in the process of switching our cooling towers over to secondary water. They have historically been run on culinary water."

Stormwater collected on the Ogden campus is retained in WSU's duck pond. Pollutants in the water settle at the bottom of the pond before the water is used for other purposes. Hodge and his team are working on a project to deepen the pond, which will make the water in the pond cleaner by allowing it to circulate more efficiently.

"With the added water, we can use it more effectively," he said. "This allows us to use less irrigation water on campus, and, with the pond water quality improving, it will be better for Ogden City as well as the Great Salt Lake."

Weber Basin Conservancy District, which serves Davis, Weber, Morgan, Summit and a portion of Box Elder counties, restricted residential irrigation to two days per week for unmetered customers during the summer. Those with

meters were restricted by a certain volume each month based on their contract with the district.

In addition, residents could take part in the Flip Your Strip program, which incentivized them to replace grass parking strips with rocks and/or water-wise plants.

Salt Lake Water Elevations

The United States Geological Survey has measured lake surface elevation levels (feet above sea level) 3.4 miles northwest of Saline, Utah, in the Great Salt Lake, since the 1960s. A steady decline in elevation has been shown over the last several decades.

Jan. 1, 1990: 4,203.8 | **Jan. 1, 2000:** 4,202

Jan. 1, 2010: 4,193.69 | **Jan. 1, 2020:** 4,193.1

Measurement as of Jan. 1, 2022: 4,190.3.

To see levels going back to 1966, visit webapps.usgs.gov/gsl/data.html.

Darren Hess, assistant general manager and COO of the conservancy district, said although soil moisture and runoff levels were higher this year than the previous, he sees a need for continual conservation as Utah becomes an even drier state. However, he said just diverting more water to the lake may not fix the problem, since so much evaporates due to the lake's low depth and wide surface area. "It's like pouring water on a plate versus a bowl," he said. "We likely need help from Mother Nature to put us into a wet cycle where we can fill our reservoirs and then spill them to the Great Salt Lake."

However, anything done to help save water can benefit, if not save, the lake.

Students like Nguyen are learning about this first hand.

"If we don't change our ways, then the lake will continue to dry up and things will start to spiral," Nguyen said. "As pessimistic as that is, I think it's the truth."

+ Follow @Fletcherovac on Twitter for updates from the Fletcher Afghan Evacuation & Resettlement working group.

A GRASSROOTS EFFORT TO SAVE AFGHAN ALLIES

BY JAIME WINSTON

If Lark Escobar BS '06 takes a day off, people could die.

In August 2021, as the United States withdrew after a 20-year presence in Afghanistan and the Taliban seized control, she went to work helping people escape.

As founder of the Fletcher Afghan Evacuation & Resettlement working group (FAER-WG), based at Tufts University, she leads a team of volunteers in preparing documentation for American allies trying to escape the country. The documents are sent on to the U.S. Department of State for review.

Before the withdrawal began, she had helped four families resettle to the United States and was working with a fifth. Today, her list of people who need help is in the thousands.

Handling just one person's intake and visa application can take eight or more hours, she said.

"I collect all of the threat evidence, I make sure that they've got all of the required pieces of their application, I explain the different parts of the application to them, we make sure they've got all of their credentials in order," said Escobar about the process.

FAER-WG is made up of Tufts students, as well as Harvard and Massachusetts Institute of Technology students. Along with collecting documentation, they work to gain government support and raise funds to help evacuees.



Photo by Humberto Hernandez

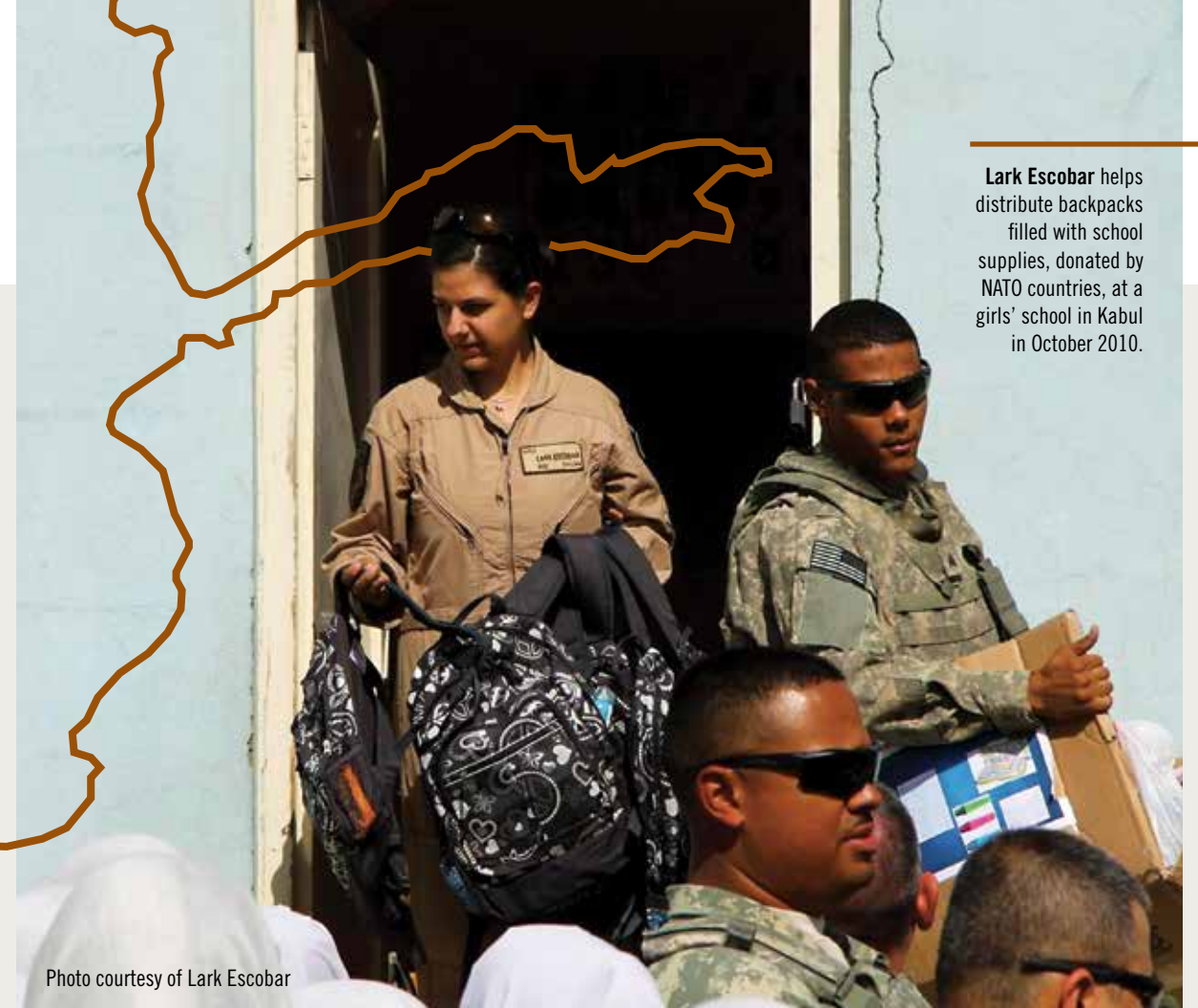


Photo courtesy of Lark Escobar

Lark Escobar helps distribute backpacks filled with school supplies, donated by NATO countries, at a girls' school in Kabul in October 2010.

The group is part of the #AfghanEvac coalition, a network of over 180 volunteer-based organizations dedicated to helping United States allies flee Afghanistan, and the Evacuate Our Allies Coalition, a legislative advocacy group.

While Escobar's Weber degree didn't prepare her for evacuation work, it eventually led her to Afghanistan. At WSU, she learned to teach English. Later she became educated in Arabic and Middle Eastern studies and went on to earn a graduate degree in international education systems and English as a second language. She has taught English in high school and across the world through NATO and the United States military. Over two academic years, she ran a culture and language program for the Afghan National Army, which included integrating women into the Afghan Air Force, designing curriculum and establishing tri-lingual libraries around the country.

Today, she splits her volunteer work with being a full-time graduate student and working as a writing tutor. She recently held an internship for the U.S. Army War College.

Being both a student and volunteer helping evacuees has its dark days.

While studying for a midterm in October 2021, she received evidence of 18 cases of torture and learned that two people on her evacuee list died from a lack of aid. She failed the exam.

Despite the setbacks, government bureaucracy and seemingly endless list of people who need her help, she knows she is making a difference.

Last summer, a family she helped welcomed its ninth child while safely awaiting their chance to come to the United States at a Qatar processing center.

“JUST GETTING 20 OR 30 PEOPLE OUT, IT DOESN'T SEEM LIKE A LOT, BUT IT'S PROGRESS.”

— LARK ESCOBAR

THE ROARING '20s

WSU Alumni Association leaders kicked off 100 years of the Mount Ogden Hike (page 14) by paying homage to the 1920s, a decade of silent film, newsies, flappers and fedoras.



*Board of Directors
President*
ROB HIGGINSON
BS '80

Speaking of the '20s, what has been your favorite moment of the 2020s? The 2020s started out as a wild ride to say the least. I have enjoyed the closeness of family relationships that

the pandemic has provided. I feel my family is more united than any time I can remember.

If you could bring an object back 100 years to show your ancestors, what would it be? A flat-screen TV.

If you could take a time machine to any decade, when would it be? I would love to revisit the 1970s and attend a few more rock concerts at the Salt Palace.

Tell us about an annual tradition you take part in. My family loves Lake Powell; we have had an annual trip for many years.

Coollest thing about the WSU Alumni Association? I have very much enjoyed serving on the Alumni board and making new friends and reacquainting with old classmates. It is great to be back on campus and be involved with great alumni.



On Location at the Eccles Art Center

We couldn't think of a better location for our alumni leader photo shoot than the Eccles Art Center in Ogden, a Queen Anne-style Victorian mansion where David and Bertha Eccles raised their 12 children in the late 19th and early 20th century. Before her death, Bertha made it known she wanted the home to benefit the community and local arts and education. Through the years, it has done so, becoming a Weber State College women's dormitory in 1935 and community art center in 1959. Today, Eccles Art Center hosts performing and visual arts classes, exhibits and more.





**Emeriti Alumni
Council President
JOE BARRETT BA '73**

Speaking of the '20s, what has been your favorite moment of the 2020s so far? Probably my favorite moment was being able to take off the face mask and return to somewhat normal. We've been able to travel by air and visit our family in New York and Connecticut.

If you could take a time machine to any decade, when would it be and why? I would like to have been present to hear the debates and discussion around the founding of our nation. I would like to meet those men and women who risked their lives and fortunes for this cause.

Share a memory of the Great Salt Lake. As a little boy, my parents would take me to Saltair. We would change in changing tents that were set up on the beach, and then go out into the water and just lay back and float.

Which Weber State sports team is your favorite to watch? I've always enjoyed Weber State Basketball, but, having played soccer at Weber, I enjoy watching the soccer team play as well. I especially remember the years that Phil Johnson was the coach and Willie Sojourner was the star for the men's basketball team.

Coolest thing about the WSU Alumni Association? The coolest thing is the excitement of people, young and old, who are working toward a goal in their lives and the excitement when they finish. Reconnecting with old friends also ranks really high.



**New Alumni
Council President
CHARLES BOWKER
BA '18**

Speaking of the '20s, what has been your favorite moment of the 2020s? It would have to be getting married to my wife... or was it the pandemic? No, my wife has been the highlight of the '20s for me.

If you could bring an object back 100 years to show your ancestors, what would it be? A smart phone. Their minds would be blown.

What is the biggest hike you've taken? With a 70-pound backpack? Twelve miles up Granite Canyon in the Tetons in a thunderstorm. Non-backpacking related? Twenty miles round trip to Union Falls in Yellowstone.

Which WSU sports team is your favorite to watch? Jay Hill has brought a lot of positive energy to the football program, making it exciting to be a Wildcat. That being said, the women's soccer team is by and far the most enjoyable team to watch. Each woman on that team is giving 110% each and every second they are on the field, and the passion shows.

Coolest thing about the WSU Alumni Association? Sometimes, in college, I would find myself mentally pigeonholed in associating with people within my program, but, being a member of the alumni association, I have been able to connect with Wildcats from all walks of life and that has been amazing.

**Student Alumni
Association President
HANNAH OLSEN
BS '22**



Speaking of the '20s, what has been your favorite moment of the 2020s? I got engaged and graduated from Weber State with my associate's and bachelor's degrees.

If you could take a time machine to any decade, when would it be? The 1970s, because it was a crucial time in the legal world.

In the year 2120, what tradition do you hope Wildcats still participate in? Rubbing Louis Moench's boot for good luck before an exam.

Which Weber State sports team is your favorite to watch? Football and hockey.

Coolest thing about the WSU Alumni Association? Staying connected!

CLASS NOTES

ALUMNI UPDATES

'50s

Niles W. Herrod AS '59 is a retired oral/maxillofacial surgeon. He earned his doctorate of dentistry at Northwestern University. He practiced in San Diego, California, for five years before moving to Provo, Utah, where he practiced from 1972–2007. He received the Navy Commendation Medal for surgeries performed at the First Marine Division Hospital in Vietnam from 1967–1968. He has served multiple callings with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, including stake president and patriarch. He and his wife, Janet Edmunds Herrod, live in Provo, Utah.

W. Dirk Raat AS '59 graduated from Weber

College and went on to earn his Bachelor of Arts in 1961 and doctorate degree in 1967 from the University of Utah, where he majored in history and minored in American studies. Upon graduation, he taught Latin American and Mexican history at several universities, including State University of New York at Fredonia and Arizona State University. He recently published his ninth book titled *Lost Worlds of 1863: Relocation and Removal of American Indians in the Central Rockies and Greater Southwest*. Of special interest to Utahns are excerpts in the book about the Southern Paiute, Northern Ute and Cache Valley Shoshone peoples, as well as a chapter on the Bear River Massacre. Dirk has served as a docent for the Heard Museum in

Phoenix, Arizona. He lives in Surprise, Arizona, with his wife, Gerry. They have two children and three grandchildren.

'60s

Charles Schmalz AS '61 is a third-generation Wildcat who attended Weber College from 1959–1961. He went on to earn a bachelor's degree in chemistry from the University of Utah. In 1965, he began working for Utah-Idaho Sugar Company. Charles began working for the Amalgamated Sugar Company in 1977, first in Ogden and later in Idaho as a chemist and assistant superintendent. After 11 years in Idaho, he returned to Ogden and continued with Amalgamated until retiring in 2005. Charles

is an avid historian of the sugar industry in Utah and Idaho. He and his late wife, **Jo Ann Nielson Schmalz AS '61, BS '79**, met in 1959 while attending Weber. Jo Ann studied gerontology and became a social worker. During their time in Idaho, she worked in a hospital nursing home. After returning to Utah, she continued as a social worker at McKay-Dee Hospital, retiring in 2002. Jo Ann served on the Emeriti Alumni Council for the WSU Alumni Association.

Fred Stettler AS '67 served in the United States Air Force for 37 years, in active duty for six years and in the reserves for 31 years. He was activated during Operation Desert Shield, Operation Desert Storm and the 9/11

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attacks. He also worked in the pharmaceutical industry with Organon for many years. After his pharmaceutical experience, he went on to a successful 25-year career in medical equipment sales. Fred volunteers his time as a teacher's assistant with the Renaissance Academy, a residential school that works to change students' quality of life and help them fulfill their potential. He currently serves on the WSU Alumni Association Emeriti Alumni Council. He has taken on duties and been active in his church throughout his life. He and his wife of 55 years, Linda, have six children, 21 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

'70s

David Trujillo BS '70 is retired after a successful 40-year career with Weber State University. From 1973–2014, David worked to establish many of the student support services, including, but not limited to, Veterans Upward Bound, Supplemental Instruction and Disability Services. He came to WSU as a student-athlete, with a four-year track and field scholarship. He was twice named Most Valuable Track Athlete. He is the recipient of numerous awards and recognitions, including Layton City Hometown Hero, Utah High School Activities Association Super Fan Award, the H. Aldous Dixon Award, recognition for outstanding

service to the TRiO programs, the Art Quinn Memorial Award and the Toni Weight Lifetime Achievement Award. In addition to his career at WSU, David was a Layton City recreation coach and started the women's and girls' softball programs. He coached Davis County junior high school basketball at Central Davis, North Davis and Fairfield junior high schools. He is a Central Davis Junior High School Hall of Fame inductee. He and his wife, **Neweleen Barnes Trujillo AS '70**, met while they were attending Weber. She graduated from the nursing program and worked for Davis Hospital and Medical Center for 35 years. She is a recipient of the Miss Holstein Award of Utah. They have five sons, 22 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Linda Carver BS '77 began her career in special education. After a few years of teaching, she became principal of Canyon View School. She earned a master's degree in secondary education and an administrative/supervisory endorsement from Utah State University. She was later appointed Weber School District director of student services and retired as the assistant superintendent. She received the Principal of the Year Award and Excellence in School Management award. She has been a presenter at several educational

conferences and authored various articles relating to education. She is currently the chair of the Board of Directors for America First Credit Union. She received the Distinguished Director Award from CUES, a national organization for credit union leaders. She is a founding trustee of Northern Utah Academy for Math, Engineering & Science (NUAMES). She has served on a variety of other boards throughout the community and as chairperson of the Weber Morgan Children's Justice Center. She was recognized in *Utah Business* as one of "30 Women to Watch." She is married to **David Carver BS '74**, who worked independently in the financial services industry for 30 years. They have traveled to over 100 countries, and have three children and 11 grandchildren.

'80s

Leland "Lee" Burkett BS '83 served in the U.S. Air Force from 1959–1982. During his 23 years as active-duty military, he spent 18 years stationed abroad in countries including Vietnam, Thailand, South Korea, Japan, Germany and England. He was a jet fighter mechanic and later supervisor. Lee attended Weber State while stationed at Hill Air Force Base, where he was the chief of maintenance of combat air rescue helicopters.

After retiring from the military, he worked for the Northrop Corp, now known as Northrop Grumman, supporting the Federal Aviation Administration. After retiring from that chapter of his career, Lee began working for H&R Block where he learned the tax industry. He later started his own tax consultation business, named Lee the Tax Man. He recently sold his business and now considers himself officially retired.

Michael Beach BS '88 has been appointed to serve as vice president of finance and administration for Park University. In his role, he oversees the financial, accounting and administrative operations of the university. He is also responsible for oversight of the Office of Human Resources, Office of Information Technology Services and Office of Facilities. Before joining Park University, he served as vice president of finance, chief financial officer and treasurer

at Kansas City Kansas Community College. Beach also served as assistant vice president for finance and treasurer at Southern Utah University. He earned Master of Business Administration and Master of Accountancy degrees from SUU, and a Bachelor of Science in Accounting from Weber State University. He lives in Kansas City, Missouri.

Monica Schwenk AA '89, BA '92, MPC '13 serves as the vice president for student services at Ogden-Weber Technical College, where she began working in 1995. Prior to her vice president position, she served as the college's Custom Fit Training and Roy Campus Business Link manager. She successfully cultivated business relationships with hundreds of companies in providing industry-driven training. Her leadership has been recognized by the college, including awards for Outstanding Employee of the Year and Outstanding Organizational Leadership.

She is an active member of the Ogden-Weber Chamber of Commerce. She has chaired Leadership Northern Utah Academy, the executive board of the Women in Business Committee, and the Women Empowered Conference. She also is a member of the Board of Trustees for McKay-Dee Hospital. The chamber has recognized Monica with the prestigious Volunteer of the Year Award.

'90s

Brian Wiser BA '92 is a producer of books, films, games and events. Best-known for the *Firefly* documentary *Done The Impossible*, he was an extra in *Serenity*, and brought the *Firefly* cast aboard his Browncoat Cruise convention. He has raised money for many charities. Brian is an Apple consultant, historian and archivist, designing and editing retro computer books at Call-A.P.P.L.E., an online group for Apple users. Books he has designed include *The WOZPAK*, *Nibble Viewpoints*,

and *Cyber Jack*. Along with speaking about his adventures at conventions, he has interviewed and worked with many luminaries such as Adam Baldwin, Ron Glass and Steve Wozniak. Recently, Brian completed a book about the monks and charitable endeavors of the Abbey of Our Lady of the Holy Trinity in Huntsville, Utah.

Paula Livingston BS '96 is the dean of instruction and occupational education at Estrella Mountain Community College in Avondale, Arizona. In this role, she oversees both academic and occupational programs including, but not limited to, STEM programs, nursing and business. She has volunteered with organizations such as the March of Dimes; Natalie's House, a project of Arizonans for the Protection of Exploited Children and Adults; and West Valley Mavericks Foundation. Through her work, she is connected with many

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community organizations to enhance workforce and economic development, including the Westmarc West Valley Workforce Pipeline Project. In 2015, she received her master's degree in educational leadership from Northern Arizona University, and she is currently working on her doctorate in community college/higher education Leadership from NAU.

Jenn Rapp BA '96 is a musical theatre director and choreographer living and working out of New York City. Jenn has worked on Broadway, London's West End and the Sydney Opera House of Australia. She was recently a creative producer on America's Got Talent Las Vegas Live at Luxor Hotel & Casino. She is the current creative director

for DCappella, Disney's a cappella group that tours both in the U.S. and Japan.

Jolene Zito AS '97, BS '00, MED '13 is retired from Weber School District after teaching theater at Orion Junior High School for 10 years. She is a longtime member of the Drama Club of Ogden. She has served on numerous arts boards throughout the community. She currently serves on WSU's Arts & Humanities Advisory Council, Roy City Arts Council and the Ogden Musical Theatre Board. Jolene has served on the RAMP committee for Weber County the past six years. She and her husband, Chad Zito, are lifelong residents of Roy, Utah.

Patrick Feeney BA '98 is the Southeastern United

States regional manager for Kenan Advantage Group Specialty Products, which is one of the largest bulk transporters of chemicals and specialty products in North America. Patrick also serves on the Florida Freight Advisory Committee for the Florida Department of Transportation. He and his wife live in Lakeland, Florida.

Kase Johnstun BA '99 lives and writes in Ogden, Utah. He was named the 2021 Ogden Mayor's Awards in the Arts recipient for the literary arts. He earned a Master of Arts in Creative Writing and Literature from Kansas State University and a Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing from Pacific University. His work has been published widely by literary journals and trade magazines. He was literary chair for the Ogden

City Arts Advisory Committee from 2014–2018, and named to the *Standard-Examiner's* 40 under 40 list. He is the founder of the Ogden Pub Runners group. Kase hosts a literary podcast called LITerally, where he interviews authors about all things publishing and writing. He teaches for the Creative Nonfiction Foundation, the creative writing graduate program for Southern New Hampshire University, Barton Community College and Weber State University.

'00s

Stuart Carver BS '02 was born and raised in Ogden. He served the community as an adult probation and parole officer with the Department of Corrections for 20 years. Before retiring from law enforcement in 2016, his

role was to ensure that conditions imposed upon release were upheld and communicated to the State of Utah State Courts and the Utah Board of Pardons and Parole. He currently works as a transportation technician with the Utah Department of Transportation. He and his three children live in Ogden.

Stacy Probasco BS '02, AS '07 is a physician assistant at Tanner Clinic in Layton, Utah, where she practices physical medicine and rehabilitation focused on neck and back pain. Prior to earning her Master of Physician Assistant Studies from the University of Utah in 2016, she worked as a registered nurse at Mt. Ogden Surgical

Center in South Ogden and at McKay-Dee Hospital. While earning her nursing degree from WSU, she was the activities director for residents at Washington Terrace Health Services (now Washington Terrace Care and Rehabilitation Center). She received the C. Hilman Castle scholarship for clinical excellence while attending the U of U. Her husband, **Stuart Probasco BS '00** has worked for Autoliv North America Inc. for the past 22 years. He began his career as an intern for the company in manufacturing engineering. He is now the director of Industrial Engineering and Launch for the Autoliv American plants, which include locations in Brazil,

Mexico, Canada and the United States. In his role, he is responsible for launching new production assembly lines, which produce airbags, steering wheels and seat belts, and implementing a higher level of automation with these new launches. Stacy and Stuart love living in Ogden and are proud Weber State alumni.



Tamara Davies BS '04 is a senior manager of internal communications at Pluralsight, where she has worked for the last five years. Prior to Pluralsight, she worked at O.C. Tanner, KSL-TV, FranklinCovey and Western Governors University. She earned a master's degree in communication from Westminster College in 2015. Her husband, **Derek Davies BS '04, MPA '05** leads Petzl's North American finance and accounting teams as their finance director. Tamara and Derek live in Centerville, Utah, with their son, and two dogs.

MaryKay DeCaria Hall BFA '05 teaches digital photography and art foundations at Fremont High School in Plain City, Utah. She is the yearbook advisor and teaches WSU concurrent enrollment course Art 1010. She has been an educator with Weber School District for 17 years. MaryKay completed her master's degree in secondary education from Utah State University in 2011. During the summers,

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Alumni Association 

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she has volunteered with Weber School District summer extended learning camps, which teach art and photography skills for elementary, junior high and high school students. She also chaperones students at an annual yearbook camp led by Jostens. She and her two sons live in North Ogden.

Julie Dexter Hernandez BS '06 is an application support analyst with Haemonetics Corporation, which develops medical technology products and services that improve the quality and effectiveness of healthcare. In her role, she supports many hospitals and labs throughout the United States and Canada with technical support for software applications. Prior to her role at Haemonetics, she worked as a traveling clinical laboratory scientist for 10 years. She lived primarily in east coast locations, such as New York City, Boston and Rhode Island. She currently lives in San Antonio, Texas, with her husband and their two daughters.

Khalil Gatlin AS '08 served 24 years of active military duty before retiring as a master sergeant with the United States Air Force. He earned both his bachelor's and master's degrees in business administration from the University of Phoenix. He earned his doctorate in business administration from California Southern University in 2020, graduating Magna Cum Laude. He is a

member of the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce and an adjunct professor at Park University. After leaving his home in Brooklyn, New York, as a young man, Weber State served as a foundation of his success where personal accountability helped him develop both academically and personally to become an added value asset in society.

Shannon Musgrave BA '08 has joined the Carnegie Mellon University School of Drama as the director of marketing and communications. Prior to her role at Carnegie Mellon, she spent three years as communications director for the Allegheny Regional Asset District in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. Shannon has worked as the associate artistic director for the Salt Lake Acting Company in Salt Lake City. She earned her Master of Arts in Arts Management from American University in Washington, D.C. Shannon currently serves on the advisory boards of WQED educational public media and the National New Play Network. She lives in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Morgan Voet AA '08, BA '09, MA '13 is an assistant director for the First Year Experience Program at Weber State University, where she helps incoming students make a successful transition into the university community. She also teaches the Peer Mentor section of FYE, which develops

leadership skills in students. Her husband, **Steffen Voet BS '16**, is an electrical engineer at Hill Air Force Base. They live in Ogden Valley and have young twin children.

'10s

Teresa Martinez BS '10, MHA '14, played for the WSU women's soccer team as an undergraduate student. Upon graduation, she began working for the university in the Multicultural Student Center. She went on to complete a master's degree while working for Diversity and Inclusive Programs at Weber. She is currently the student engagement coordinator in the Center for Community Engaged Learning. In her role with CCEL, she co-coordinates the Engaged Learning Series, where she has brought notable speakers to campus, including Bill Nye. Additionally, she supports students as a First Year Experience and Wildcat Scholars instructor. Teresa is currently working on a Doctorate of Philosophy in Education, Culture, and Society at the University of Utah.

Kevin Taylor BS '12 currently works for Layton Construction Company in preconstruction estimating and development. Since graduating, he has worked for many notable construction companies such as Kier Construction and Ivory Homes. He works

with clients to plan, develop and construct multifamily apartment units, which has become his specialty. He has worked with clients on projects with as few as 100 units, and up to 2,000 units at a project he is currently working on in the Boise, Idaho, area.

Fanya Lin BA '13 is a top prizewinner of the Hastings International Piano Concerto Competition, Concours International de Piano France-Amériques, New York International Piano Competition, and Seattle International Piano Competition. Fanya earned her doctorate degree at the University of Minnesota, a master's degree at The Juilliard School and a bachelor's degree at Weber State University. In fall 2019, Fanya joined the University of Arizona as assistant professor of piano practice. She teaches applied piano

lessons, chamber music and a Yoga for Musicians course. She has recently returned from Poland where she performed and recorded her first concerto album with the Lublin Philharmonic.

Chris Livingston BS '13 began working as a senior network engineer at the University of Utah after graduating from WSU. In this position, he manages the Tonaquint and Enterprise data centers located in Salt Lake City and St. George, Utah, which provide centralized data for the university and the university hospitals. Prior to returning to Weber State in 2010 to pursue his bachelor's degree, Chris worked as a technical support representative for AOL and later managed email marketing campaigns for Second City Enterprises in Chicago. Chris is an avid runner and has completed both the Skyline Mountain

Marathon and the Skyline Mountain 50K in Eden, Utah.

Caitlyn Johnston BS '18 is a radio talk producer for KSL NewsRadio where she regularly produces content to share with listeners. She is the producer of the Dave & Dujanovic morning show. She is also a social media manager for the VidSummit company. VidSummit is an event that takes place each year in Los Angeles that brings content creators together to share strategy. She has met many influential people through VidSummit and KSL, opportunities that were built upon her experience at Weber State University.

'20s

Jonah Williams BS '20 is an American football defensive end for the Los Angeles Rams. He signed with the National Football League

after graduating from Weber State in 2020. While playing for WSU, he was named the 2019–20 Weber State Male Athlete of the Year and a Big Sky Conference Scholar-Athlete. He also earned Big Sky Academic All-Conference honors four times and was named to the Hampshire Honor Society by the National Football Foundation as a senior. Jonah won his first Super Bowl ring when the Rams defeated the Cincinnati Bengals in Super Bowl LVI. He recently volunteered for the D1 Valley summer youth football camp in Idaho. Jonah is married to **Kennedy Williams**, who played three seasons with the WSU volleyball team. They reside with their son in Vineyard, Utah, and Los Angeles, California.

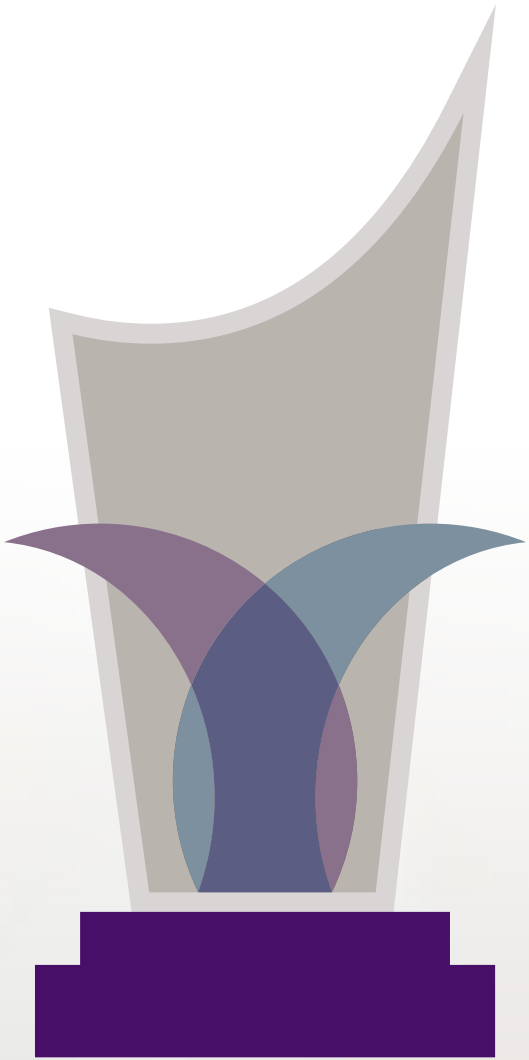
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weber.edu/strombergcomplex/memberships.html





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Named in memory of the former Weber president, the H. Aldous Dixon Awards have been presented annually since 1970 to honor faculty and staff who have demonstrated careers of excellence and have gone above and beyond the call of duty to support students. Dixon served as president of Weber College from 1919 to 1920 and again from 1937 to 1953.

Allison Barlow Hess

Former Public Relations Director

Allison Barlow Hess dedicated 30 years of her life to helping Weber State students achieve more than they first thought possible. She began her career at WSU in 1992 as an adjunct professor, having worked previously as a reporter for KSL-TV in Salt Lake City.

In 1997, the Department of Communication offered Hess a full-time faculty position. In addition to teaching print and electronic media, public relations, editing and visual communication, she advised students working at KWCR, the university's radio station and the student newspaper, *The Signpost*. Under her watch, *The Signpost* earned top accolades from the National Society of Professional Journalists and the Utah Press Association.

Hess was a longtime board member of the Utah Chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists, serving two years as vice chair and two years as chair. For six years, she penned a monthly newspaper column for the *Standard-Examiner* and used the stipend she received to create an editorial scholarship for student writers at *The Signpost*.

In 2010, Hess switched gears to become the university's public relations director. In this role, she was heavily involved in planning and securing media coverage for major university events, including two Dream 125 campaign celebrations, the Crystal Crest Awards and the inauguration of President **Brad Mortensen**. Amidst a global pandemic, she helped organize a successful "socially distanced" graduation event in Stewart Stadium.

Nearing her retirement, Hess worked with University Archives to identify and honor 12 "Women of Weber," alumni or friends of the university who made an indelible impression on campus and the community and whose stories motivate current and future Wildcats. She also helped shape the university's Ever Upward campaign, which spotlights inspiring stories of students and alumni through news releases, videos and social media.

As public relations director, Hess advised interns in the Office of Marketing & Communications who have used their internships to build solid foundations for satisfying careers.

Hess' teaching has been honored with a George and Beth Lowe Innovative Teaching Award, a Hemingway Vitality Award and a Crystal Crest Master Teacher nomination. She also received a Weber State University Presidential Staff Award for exemplary service.

Prior to her retirement on April 29, 2022, Hess supported Weber State students once more by announcing their names as they were honored at the Lindquist College of Arts & Humanities' spring 2022 commencement ceremony.

Susan Matt

Professor of History

Susan Matt began her career teaching history at Weber State in 1999. She has taught subjects ranging from U.S. history to the history of emotions to interdisciplinary courses co-taught with colleagues. She has also mentored hundreds of students through the history program and supervised their senior capstone projects. Matt believes students have the power to change the world and endeavors to make history relevant to each one by extending the study of the past to as many people as possible.

As a social historian, Matt focuses on the history of ordinary Americans — how they lived and experienced large-scale historical events, like revolution, war and economic depression. Her students examine the past through the eyes of immigrants, enslaved people, farmers, factory workers, soldiers, families and children.

"When students understand that history is not merely about the actions of presidents and generals, but also about people like themselves, they come to see themselves as historical actors, with the ability to make changes in their lives and the larger society," she said.

In addition to teaching WSU students, Matt has provided a range of educational opportunities to the community. She was part of the Venture program, which offered free college courses to adults with low incomes. After completing the program, many participants went on to become full-time students at Weber State.

In 2020, Matt harnessed the global pandemic as a springboard to a successful series of free, interdisciplinary classes on hot topics. More than 100 people signed up for the first course titled, *Pandemics and People*. Subsequent courses included *The Ongoing Struggle for Civil Rights* and *How Did We Get So Polarized?*



Allison Barlow Hess



Susan Matt

Matt has held numerous administrative roles at the university including history department chair and interim associate dean of the College of Social & Behavioral Sciences. In July 2021, she was selected as director of the Office of Interdisciplinary Collaborations.

Since arriving at Weber State, she has written two books, co-authored a third, edited another two, and published dozens of scholarly articles, many of which appeared in highly respected media outlets, including the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *Salon*, *Slate*, and the *Wall Street Journal*.

Wildcat Inbox

Staying in Touch with Alumni & Friends

Reaching New Heights

Weber State's influence extends across the world. Recently, professor **Michael Wutz** wrote to us about sharing his purple pride in Tanzania and Italy.

For the Weber State community, "Making the Climb" is synonymous with hiking Mount Ogden, where then-president Aaron Tracy planted a flag in October 1922. While WSU is celebrating the 100th anniversary of this tradition, I recently had the privilege of participating in two strenuous ascents, so to (s)peak, reminding me that the age-old image of climbing a mountain as a metaphor for hard work, while being almost clichéd, is no less truthful for all that.

In December 2021, I hiked Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania together with our son Christian, a small group of fellow backpackers, and a team of porters and guides. Measuring 19,341 feet, Kilimanjaro is the highest mountain in Africa and highest single free-standing mountain in the world. While not Mount Qomolangma/Everest, which is for extreme alpinists only, Kilimanjaro is a popular destination for hikers looking for a dash of adventure and test of their physical limits. The hike, from lush rainforests to the climate zones of the Alpine Desert and the Arctic Summit, is not technical requiring specialized gear and expertise, but rather a, well, hike, albeit a strenuous one. In truth, the climb is doable by most everybody in good condition and attitude. (That being said, nearly 1,000 rescues and 10 deaths on the mountain occur each year.) "Pole Pole," the Swahili phrase for "slowly, slowly," was the refrain of our guides as we trudged upward, and our bodies registered the effects of the altitude. After six days along the so-called Lemosho route and a seven-hour midnight climb to the top — darkness has its blessings when you are huffing and puffing on what feels like infinite steepness — we finally reached Uhuru Peak, named for the Swahili word for "freedom." (Trekkie fans may remember the word from the name of communications officer, Lieutenant Uhura). It was a sweet feeling mixed with tears of relief. We didn't plant a flag, but Weber State was with us all the way.

My second climb took place a short 10 days later, when I assumed a residency at the Bogliasco Foundation outside Genoa, Italy, there to work on a research project during my sabbatical. Nestled on the Ligurian Sea, with the southwestern flank of the Alps in the background, the hills of Bogliasco ascend right from the coastline and invite vigorous hiking as well. Cinque Terre, the legendary coastal strip connecting villages through a maze of trails, is a short train ride away as well and gives even the best conditioned trekkers a workout. My more strenuous day job, however, was working among a group of accomplished writers, composers, dancers and performance artists, who spurred me on to reach my peak, and represent WSU in the best possible way. Following the rules of the house, we had a scheduled cocktail hour — yes, you read that right! — most every evening and shared our work over dinner prepared by in-house chefs. The setting of the foundation's home, the Villa dei Pini, on the edge of the Riviera, provided a front-seat window onto the Mediterranean, from where my nebulous thoughts crystallized, slowly, into some of the best writing I had ever done.

— **Michael Wutz**, Brady Presidential Distinguished Professor of English; Editor of *Weber - The Contemporary West*

Where have you traveled while representing Weber State? Write to Wildcat Inbox with your story at magazine@weber.edu.

Mount Ogden Hike 100

This year, we celebrated 100 years since students and faculty joined then Weber president **Aaron Tracy** to plant a school flag on top of Mount Ogden (read the hike's history on page 14).

Since then, the hike has become a memory-making tradition for the WSU community.

We asked readers for their hike stories in print and on social media.



Jack Magdiel AS '62 wrote to us about his experience on the 2022 hike. Read his letter at weber.edu/wsumagazine.

Alum **Ted Woolley BS '74** shared photos of his father, **Edwin Woolley '23**, having fun on the first Mount Ogden Hike, along with a history of Ed's experience written by his niece, Laurel Cunningham

"While Ed attended Weber Academy, he participated in the school's first trek to the top of Mt. Ogden Peak. Ed and 365 other Weber Academy students hauled a 300-pound steel flagpole a vertical mile from the city below and planted it into the peak on October 4, 1922... Ed was the editor of Weber Academy's school newspaper — Weber Herald."



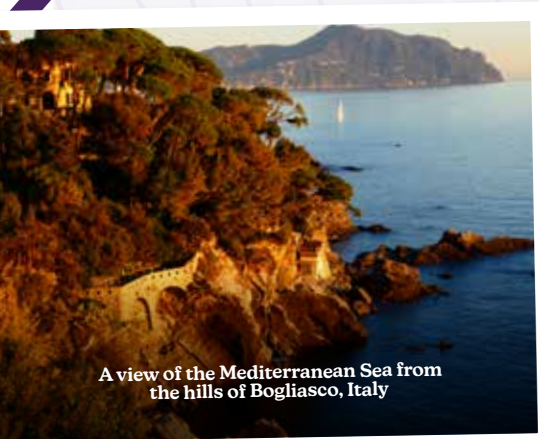
"One of the first things I ever did at Weber State, it was also the longest hike I had done at the time. On the hike I met friends and created opportunities to become a part of the WSU Outdoor Program. Now instead of being a participant, I am a trip leader!"
— **@nesrac09** via Instagram



Former hike leader and WSU professor **Gary Willden** sent us his photos taken at the saddle point just below the summit with hikers in 2009, and with **Ruth Orton**, a regular hike participant, in 2004.

Want to share your thoughts on something you read? Email us at magazine@weber.edu.

*Please note that letters may be edited for length or clarity.



A view of the Mediterranean Sea from the hills of Bogliasco, Italy



Sitting amongst the clouds on Mount Kilimanjaro



The Bogliasco community, located southeast of Genoa, Italy



Michael Wutz and his son Christian representing Weber State at Mount Kilimanjaro's summit

Photos courtesy of Michael Wutz





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