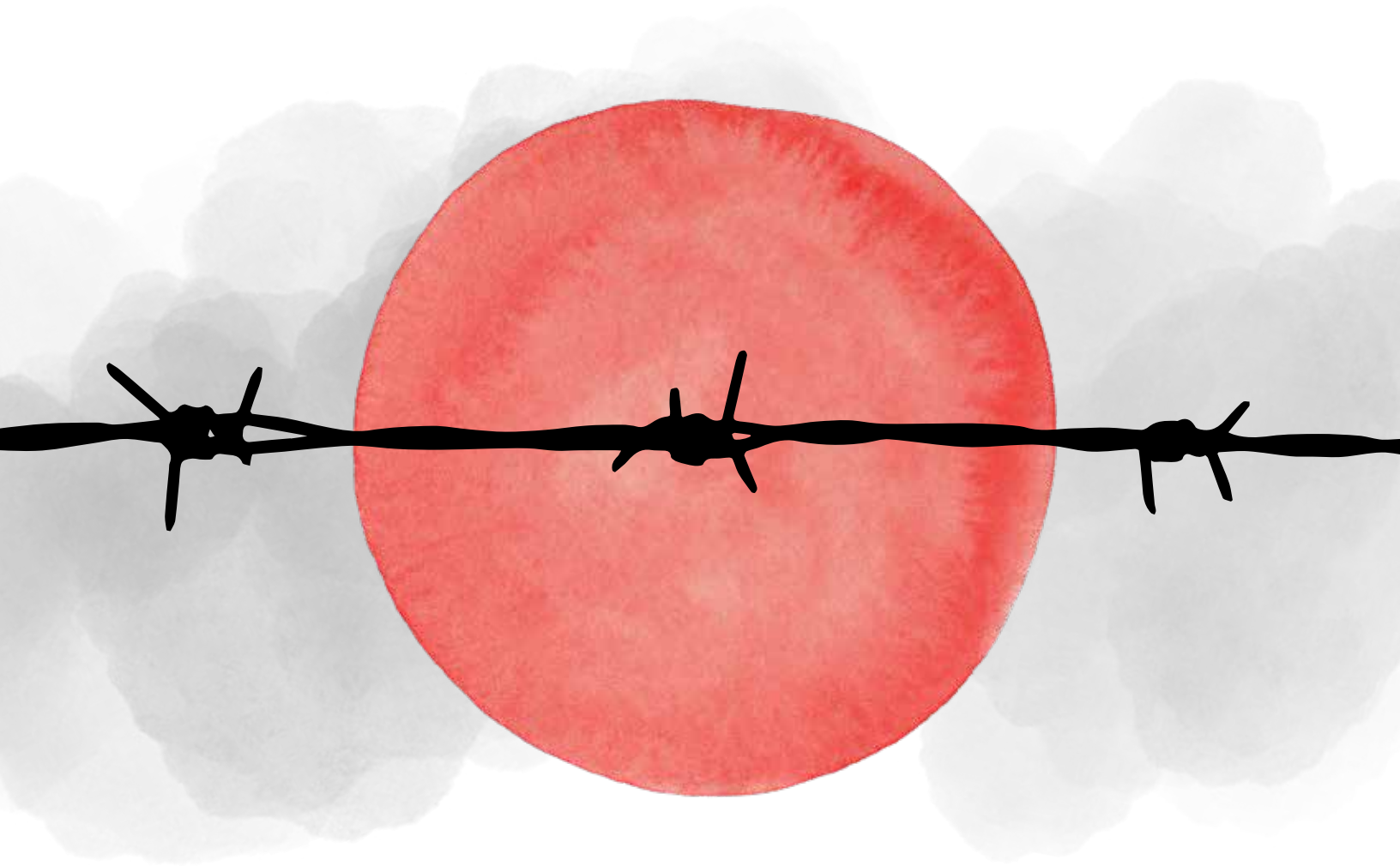


# WILDCAT

WSU Alumni Magazine | SPRING 2023



## Why We Remember

Wildcats recall the World War II  
Japanese American experience

# Brilliant education for in-demand careers

**Robert Walker BS '79** enrolled in Weber State's X-ray program as an undergraduate student, and later became a faculty member while earning his master's degree and doctorate.

Over his 40+ years of teaching radiology, MRI and other modalities at WSU, he has served as radiologic sciences department chair since 2002, became the inaugural Dumke Endowed Chair, and helped launch the school's bachelor's and master's degrees.

But no career accolade matches the feeling of seeing students improve their lives.

Walker's students come from all backgrounds, including those living in rural communities and in the Navajo Nation, single parents and first-generation students.

And, when they graduate, healthcare organizations seek them out.

"They would rather come to us for their employees than try to go anywhere else," Walker said.

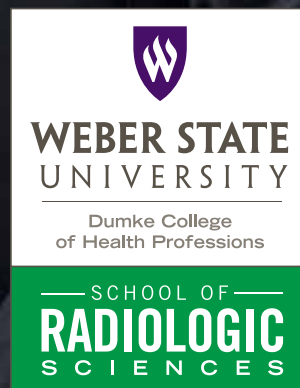
For a fast-paced career in an in-demand field, join the School of Radiologic Sciences. With three levels of education to climb the career ladder, graduates are always welcome back.

**"Employers are coming to us looking for our graduates."**

— **Bob Walker, BS '79,**  
R.T.(R)(CT)(MR)(QM)(ARRT), FASRT

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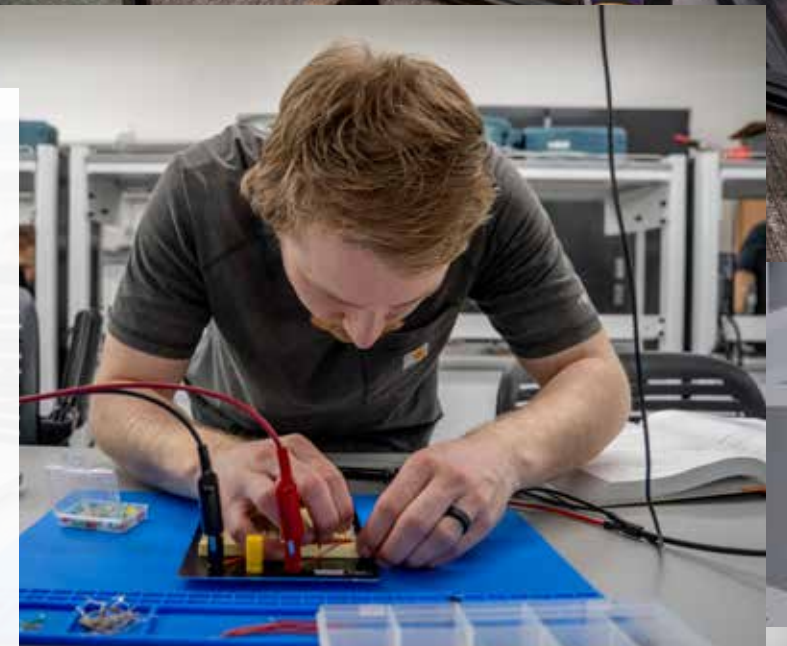
Staying in touch with Weber State alumni and friends

### A NEW SPACE TO BE BRILLIANT

College of Engineering, Applied Science & Technology students have a new space at Weber State's Ogden campus that will help them develop skills to shape the future. Funded by the state of Utah and a naming gift from the Ray & Tye Noorda Foundation, the state-of-the-art Noorda Engineering, Applied Science & Technology Building opened in October 2022.

WSU preserved a portion of the Technical Education Building that previously occupied the space and updated it to match the new building's design. Together, the spaces cover 155,000 square feet.

The new building, a stunning addition to the campus, features large waveform designs on the exterior and a dynamic sculpture inside with 119 moving origami elements hung from a floating frame, representing the forces of nature and reminding students that the sky is the limit.





### WSU SEEKS TO IMPROVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER SUCCESS

Weber State offers future teachers and education professionals the skills to help students who are not native English speakers thrive in school.

Along with offering an ESL (English as a Second Language) endorsement for undergraduate and graduate students, the Jerry & Vickie Moyes College of Education received a \$2.78 million grant from the Department of Education. The grant will help teachers and administrators improve instruction for students who are learning English in a general classroom setting.

Professors **Melina Alexander, David Byrd** and **Shernavaz Vakil** will lead the professional development in public and charter schools throughout Utah. The five-year grant will support up to 100 teachers and administrators, admitting a cohort of 25 educators annually beginning the summer of 2023.

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

Byrd said a significant achievement gap exists between English language learners and their native-speaking peers, and that gap widens as children change grade levels.

**Amy Thomas MED '17, GCT '18** earned her Utah teaching license for grades one through eight in 2018 and ESL endorsement in 2019 at WSU. As an ESL teacher, she has seen that achievement gap first-hand.



**Amy Thomas working with a student in her adult English as a Second Language (ESL) course**

“Think of how many words your average native-English-speaking child knows before kindergarten versus a child coming from another language background,” she said.

Thomas currently teaches ESL for adults in Weber School District, and previously taught fifth grade for Ogden School District and in WSU’s Learning English for Academic Purposes (LEAP) program. “ESL is my favorite topic to teach,” she said. “I love working with students from all over the world.”

Thomas’s students have come from countries such as China, Democratic Republic of Congo and Afghanistan. Her ESL education has made her mindful, recognizing students may not understand cultural references like “The Three Little Pigs,” and some will be challenged by academic language used to explain math, science and other disciplines.

She hopes more teachers are able to access ESL training.

“We serve a lot of students who are coming from other language backgrounds, and, in the Ogden area, we’re starting to see more refugees,” she said.

### WEBER STATE A CENTRAL HUB FOR CYBERSECURITY

Weber State University’s Cybersecurity Initiative (WSUCI), housed in the School of Computing, is northern Utah’s central resource for everything related to internet safety.

In addition to supporting future IT professionals earning degrees in network management technology, WSUCI provides outreach and training to the community at large so individuals and businesses can better protect their information.

“It doesn’t matter where you are on your cybersecurity journey,” WSUCI Director and Assistant Professor of Networking/Cybersecurity Matt Paulson said. “Weber State can help out with that.”

In September 2022, WSU was formally recognized as a Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense Education, a program sponsored jointly by the National Security Agency and the Department of Homeland Security.

The CAE-CDE designation provides Weber State national cybersecurity expertise recognition and helps provide more grant opportunities to expand WSUCI’s training offerings.

The designation also strengthens Weber State’s partnerships with the local defense and aerospace community, including Hill Air Force Base, Boeing, BAE Systems, Northrop Grumman and Raytheon.

“We teach Weber State students how to protect information on an enterprise level, so when they join the workforce, they can hit the ground running from day one,” Paulson said. “They’ll provide the sort of protection that companies need when managing their information.”

For more information about degrees, business training and the other resources WSUCI offers, visit [weber.edu/wsuci](http://weber.edu/wsuci).

### Weber’s first environmental science graduate SETS THE BAR FOR DIFFERENCE MAKERS



Weber State University taught **Kaila Lemons BS '22** how to change the world.

As WSU’s first Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science graduate, she realized her power through experience — researching issues impacting the community, developing and refining plans to tackle them, and getting others involved.

“Anyone is capable of starting a project. You just have to make sure that you are thoughtful about your planning and you’re staying in scope and on track,” she said.

Working with the Energy & Sustainability Office, she became WSU’s first Zero Waste coordinator, helping the university stay on track for 50% of its waste to be diverted from landfills by 2025. In this role, she helped launch Wildcats Go Zero Waste, collecting recyclables at basketball and football games, and educating fans on sustainability. She also led a “free swap,” where Wildcats could either donate or take home lightly used household items.

“Experiences like these allowed me to be very comfortable in a leadership position and identifying and solving problems in a way that results in real measurable change.”

— **Kaila Lemons**

don’t have pots and pans, or if you don’t have silverware, you can only do so much.”

As president of the office’s Food Recovery Network, she hosted a kitchenware drive for the Weber Cares Pantry, which provides food for any student in need.

“An often-overlooked part of food insecurity is not having the means to prepare your food,” she said. “If you

Lemons also worked on a number of other events and sustainability projects. She estimates that during her last academic year she recruited and coordinated 50 volunteers.

“Experiences like these allowed me to be very comfortable in a leadership position and identifying and solving problems in a way that results in real measurable change,” she said.

Lemons spent her first two years of college at a larger university before switching to WSU, where she developed close relationships with faculty members, including her microbial ecology instructor **Katrina Twing**, who guided her in crafting her own research project.

The Clark and Christine Ivory Foundation selected Lemons as a 2022 Ivory Prize award recipient for her leadership and dedication to the community. Additionally, she was chosen as the student speaker for the university’s commencement ceremony last spring. She received a scholarship for her education through the Boys & Girls Clubs of America’s Youth of the Year competition.



Lemons now lives in Vancouver, Washington, and works for The Cannabis Conservancy, which certifies cannabis companies for meeting sustainability standards. “To me, when it comes to sustainability and being responsible, there’s really no topic that’s taboo,” she said.

She is still active in the community, and volunteers with the Vancouver Bee Project. For anyone else who wants to make a difference, Lemons wrote a guide to get started.

Find a link to her guide at [weber.edu/wsumagazine](http://weber.edu/wsumagazine).



## Weber State enhances INCLUSIVE TEACHING PRACTICES

Last year, **Brenda Marsteller Kowalewski**, associate provost, and **Nicola Corbin**, Teaching & Learning Forum director, launched two courses to enhance inclusive teaching practices at Weber State University.

Faculty feedback so far shows that their efforts are paying off.

WSU offers the courses, Inclusive Teaching for Equitable Learning (ITEL) and Effective Teaching Practices (ETP), in partnership with the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE). The courses use evidence-based teaching practices to help faculty promote student success within their classrooms. By the end of the 2022–23 academic year, about 160 faculty members will have completed at least one of the ACUE courses.



**Brenda Marsteller Kowalewski**



**Nicola Corbin**

Of the faculty who completed the ITEL course in summer 2022, 58% reported increased confidence in using evidence-based inclusive teaching practices, and 85% reported improved expertise in inclusivity, equity and diversity as educators.

“I think our faculty are interested in becoming inclusive teachers, but they need more confidence to do that,” Corbin said. “It’s a fraught world, so doing this work can be scary. But I think we have great teachers, so hopefully this provides them with more confidence to bring this important work into the classroom.”



## Meet Tammy Nguyen, A NEW ADDITION TO ACCESS & INCLUSION

With a passion for working with diverse student populations, **Tammy Nguyen** has stepped into a new role as Weber State’s executive director for Access & Inclusion.

In this role, she oversees newly established cultural centers — the Black Cultural Center, Native American Cultural Center, Pan-Asian Cultural Center and Pacific Islander Cultural Center — along with the GEAR UP and Upward Bound programs.

She comes to WSU with a Ph.D. in educational leadership and policy, along with years of experience in higher education, most recently as director of academic advising and student success at Utah Valley University.

### HOW DID YOU BECOME INTERESTED IN EQUITY ISSUES IN HIGHER ED?

“I wanted to eliminate the barriers I experienced when I was looking into college. During my transition from community college to four-year college, I had a falling out with my family, experienced homelessness and was unable to find funding for college. When speaking to administrators at the university, I saw my options were limited to getting married, having a child, joining the military or hiring a lawyer to help declare independence from my parents. These weren’t viable options for me, and I felt isolated and alone. I want to make sure today’s students don’t face these same issues, and do my part to help make college accessible to everyone.”

### WHAT CHANGES DO YOU SEE ON THE HORIZON AT WSU?

“With the creation of the EDI division, along with the new cultural centers, I’m hoping to see higher enrollment, retention and graduation rates for students of color. Additionally, the cultural centers will be a space where anyone can come to learn about each affinity group and participate in different events. I’m optimistic that cultural awareness on campus will continue to grow and we become a more inclusive place for everyone.”

### WHAT DREW YOU TO WEBER STATE?

“Weber State is an open-enrollment university and has equity, diversity and inclusion at the heart of its strategic plan, which aligns with my belief that everyone should have a chance to attend college. Whatever your experiences, background or identity, you can find a place at Weber State.”

### WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT YOUR NEW ROLE?

“When this position became available, I knew I had to apply. I love working with students and having the opportunity to make a positive impact through my work. I also love the connections and collaboration across campus. I couldn’t do my job alone, and I feel like I’m part of a big family at Weber State. I can’t think of a better place I’d rather be.”

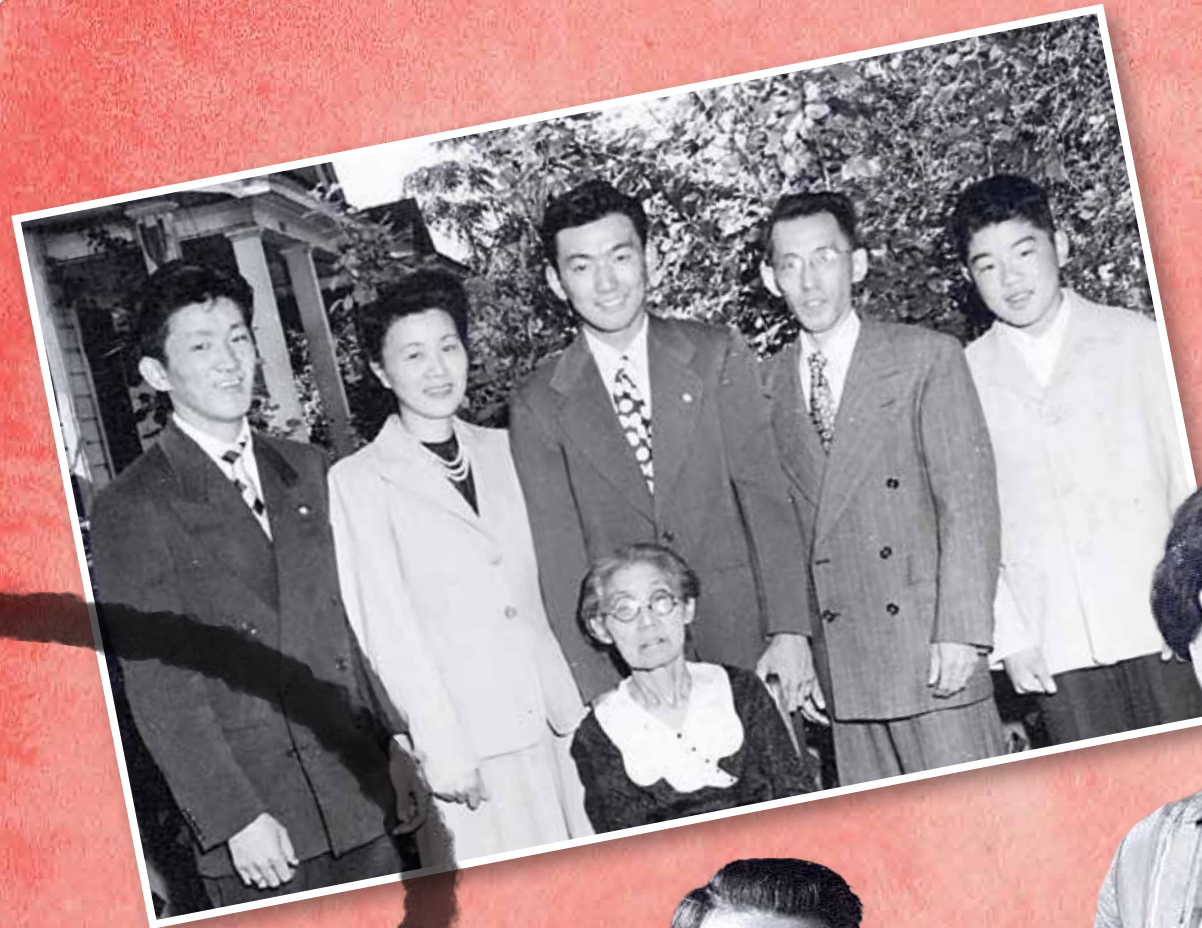




# **PRESUMED** **GUILTY**

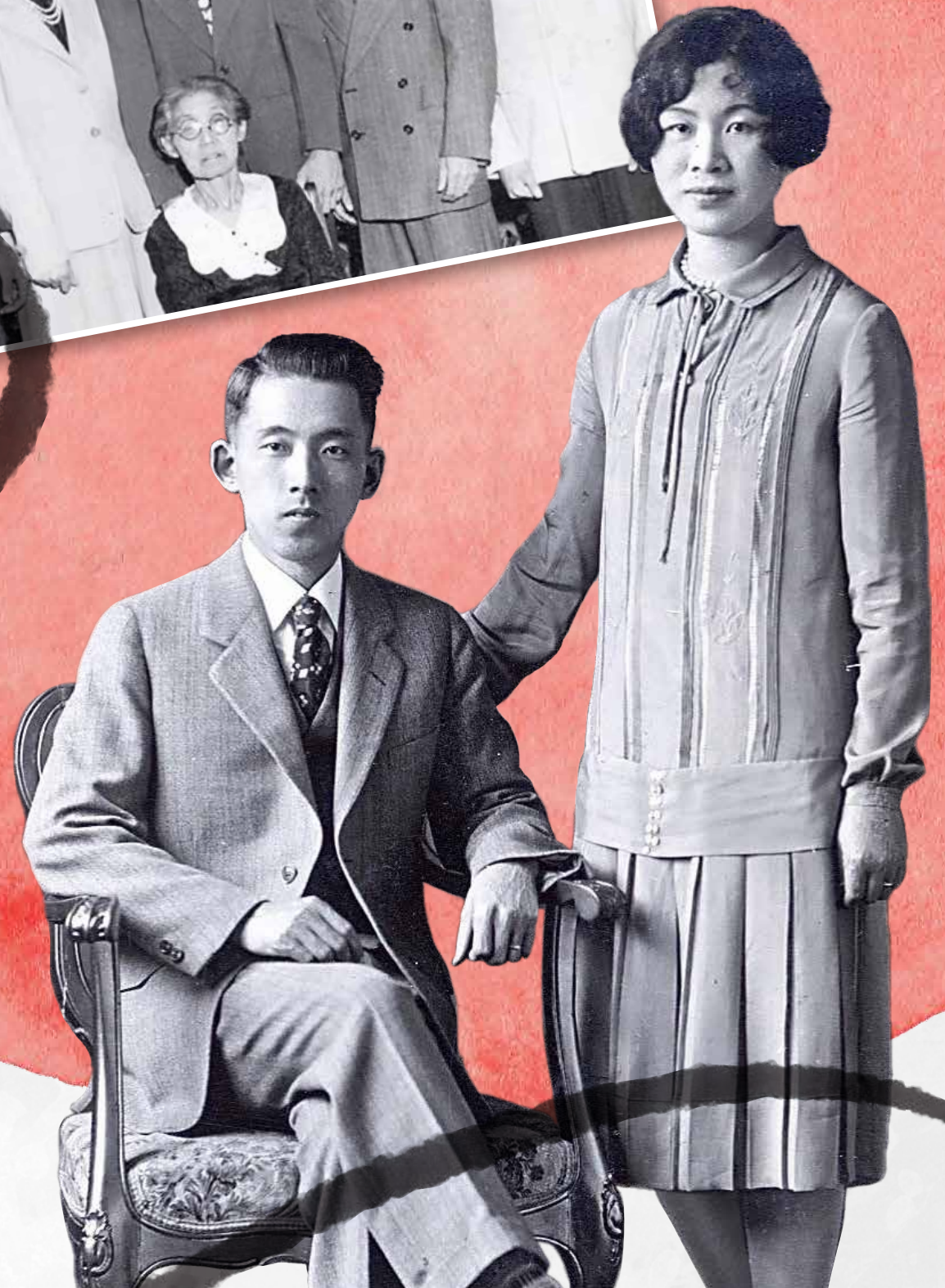
**Wildcats remember  
the World War II  
Japanese American  
experience**

**JAIME WINSTON**



**LEFT:** The Shimomura family at their Ogden home after Yukio Shimomura's brother, Kenichi (center), returned from military service

**BELOW:** Yukio Shimomura's parents, Toshinaga and Taka, before the war







Yukio Shimomura (far left) takes the role of a sunflower in a school play at Raphael Weill Public School in San Francisco, 1941.

## The United States forcibly relocated Yukio Shimomura when he was 7 years old.

A former Wildcat, Shimomura returned to Weber State last April to speak about the two and a half years of his childhood at Topaz War Relocation Center, near Delta, Utah.

He showed family photos taken before the camp — his parents young and in love, him goofing off with his older brothers, the time he was a sunflower in a school play.

Then he discussed how life changed as the U.S. went to war with Imperial Japan.

Wartime paranoia — not evidence — painted all people of Japanese ancestry, including those born in the United States, as possible traitors.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066 in February 1942, resulting in the incarceration of West Coast Japanese residents without due process. About two-thirds of those placed in 10 inland relocation centers were natural-born citizens.

Digital media major **Andrew Kyed** listened to Shimomura's story, thinking of his own family.

"My grandmother was interned at Topaz," he said. "She must have been in her mid 20s, so, she was pretty much in the best years of her life, and it was all taken away."

Saburo, Yukio and Kenichi Shimomura growing up in San Francisco



## An American Family

The Great Kanto Earthquake shook Japan to its core.

The magnitude 7.9 quake struck the Tokyo-Yokohama metropolitan area at lunchtime on a late summer day in 1923, according to *Encyclopædia Britannica*, bringing more than 140,000 estimated deaths, fires and a tsunami that destroyed 155 homes.

The earthquake also shattered Japan's economy. Shimomura said this convinced his father, Toshinaga, to accept his sister's offer for immigration sponsorship. Together with Shimomura's mother, Taka, and grandmother, Natsu, he settled in San Francisco.

Toshinaga and Taka soon welcomed two sons. Their third, Shimomura, was born in 1935.

While his brothers, Kenichi and Saburo, were also given Christian names, Jacob and Samuel, Shimomura didn't receive one. "You know, I've always wished I had an English name, like John," Shimomura laughed, reflecting on how difficult "Yukio" was for other Americans to pronounce.

Taka worked as a seamstress, and Toshinaga was a travelling salesman. Though living on minimum wage, "the family was happy," Shimomura said. "I was riding my scooter up and down the streets, and my brothers were in the Boy Scouts."



Andrew Kyed, WSU digital media major and grandson of a Topaz detainee



Topaz War Relocation Center barracks built to house Japanese detainees in the desert near Delta, Utah

Photo by Department of the Interior War Relocation Authority (1944-1946), provided by the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration

Life changed for the family after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor.

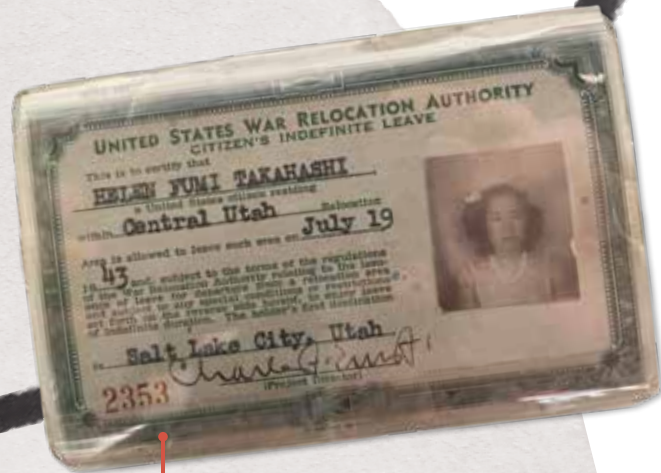
"Bystanders went with the flow, and the flow was panic against Japanese," Shimomura said.

Executive Order 9066 resulted in Japanese Americans being placed in temporary detention centers, referred to as assembly centers, and from there, being brought to more-permanent camps. Shimomura calls those second locations "concentration camps," which he writes as an improper noun to distinguish them from the Nazi-controlled camps of Europe.



A portrait of the Shimomura family taken at the Topaz War Relocation Center, May 1944





Topaz detainees were required to apply for clearance to leave. Jane Beckwith, Topaz Museum founder, said this certificate granted Helen Fumi Takahashi permission to go to Salt Lake City to work as a nanny in 1943. After returning to Topaz, Takahashi again received permission to leave for a Japanese language teaching position to help the U.S. prepare for the military occupation of Japan at Stanford University. Photo by Demetrio Gallegos



Yukio Shimomura during his U.S. Army service in South Korea

Toshinaga Shimomura receiving an award from Anderson Jewelry Company, where he worked after leaving Topaz



In his book, *Concentration Camps: North America*, historian Roger Daniels wrote that shortly after the executive order was issued, a series of Congressional hearings were held in San Francisco, Portland, Seattle and Los Angeles to gain a cross section of community opinions on the matter. “The overwhelming majority of the witnesses supported, unequivocally, the necessity of getting all Japanese, alien and citizen, off the Coast,” he wrote.

This included all six residents of the Shimomura household.

The family was given boards and nails to build boxes for their belongings and told to bring only what they could carry, including bedding, toiletries, clothes and silverware.

They were first brought to live in barracks at Tanforan Assembly Center, the site of a horse racing track in San Bruno, California. Others were housed in converted horse stables.

“The tough part was that they just washed out the stables and put linoleum on the floor,” Shimomura said. “You can imagine, the many decades of racing that they had at the stables, the amount of urine and manure that had gone through the floor; all of that was seeping up.”

While living conditions alone were a health hazard, Shimomura said he couldn’t imagine what those with chronic illnesses faced without advanced medical services.

“Most of the time, people with chronic illnesses passed away early,” he said.

## Behind Barbed Wire

The family boarded a train for Utah months later.

At Topaz, the living area covered one square mile, surrounded by barbed wire fencing and guard towers. Shimomura remembers covering his face as he slept to avoid breathing in the dirt blowing in through the floorboards of his family’s barracks.

Barracks were divided to house six families, and noise travelled easily. “If anybody was ill, you heard the moaning and groaning,” Shimomura said. “The humorous part of the whole thing is that over 300 kids were born in the camp, so... the procreation process still happened.”

Shimomura attended Desert View Elementary at Topaz, and still has his third-grade class picture. He remembers playing hide-and-seek and kick the can with friends.

He also recalls all of the similar clothing styles at the camp, since most clothes were ordered from the *Montgomery Ward* or *Sears, Roebuck & Co.* catalogs.

Residents could obtain passes to shop in Delta, and a dry goods store and co-op for services and supplies were established, added Jane Beckwith, founder of Topaz Museum. “The most unusual service was importing fresh fish from the coast to sell in Delta and at the site,” she said.

Beckwith said leaving Topaz for college or a job required applying and waiting for clearance.

In her book *Jewel of the Desert*, historian Sandra C. Taylor wrote “The apparent tranquility was due in part to the establishment of the institutions of community life—schools, self-government, a newspaper, public health services, churches, and an opportunity for work, self-improvement and recreation.”

Despite efforts to portray a normal life, residents of the camps were still prisoners.

One Topaz resident, James Hatsuaki Wakasa, was killed by a guard after coming too close to the perimeter fence. Shimomura’s cousin, who was incarcerated at Heart Mountain Relocation Center in Wyoming, suffered from ulcers and died after being diagnosed with “stomach problems.” Another of his cousins, also detained at Heart Mountain, went blind due to eyesight issues Shimomura suspects weren’t properly cared for by the camp.

Yukio Shimomura in 2022, photo by Karen Jimenez

The Shimomura family was allowed to leave Topaz in November 1944. On Jan. 2, 1945, the U.S. revoked its Japanese relocation orders.

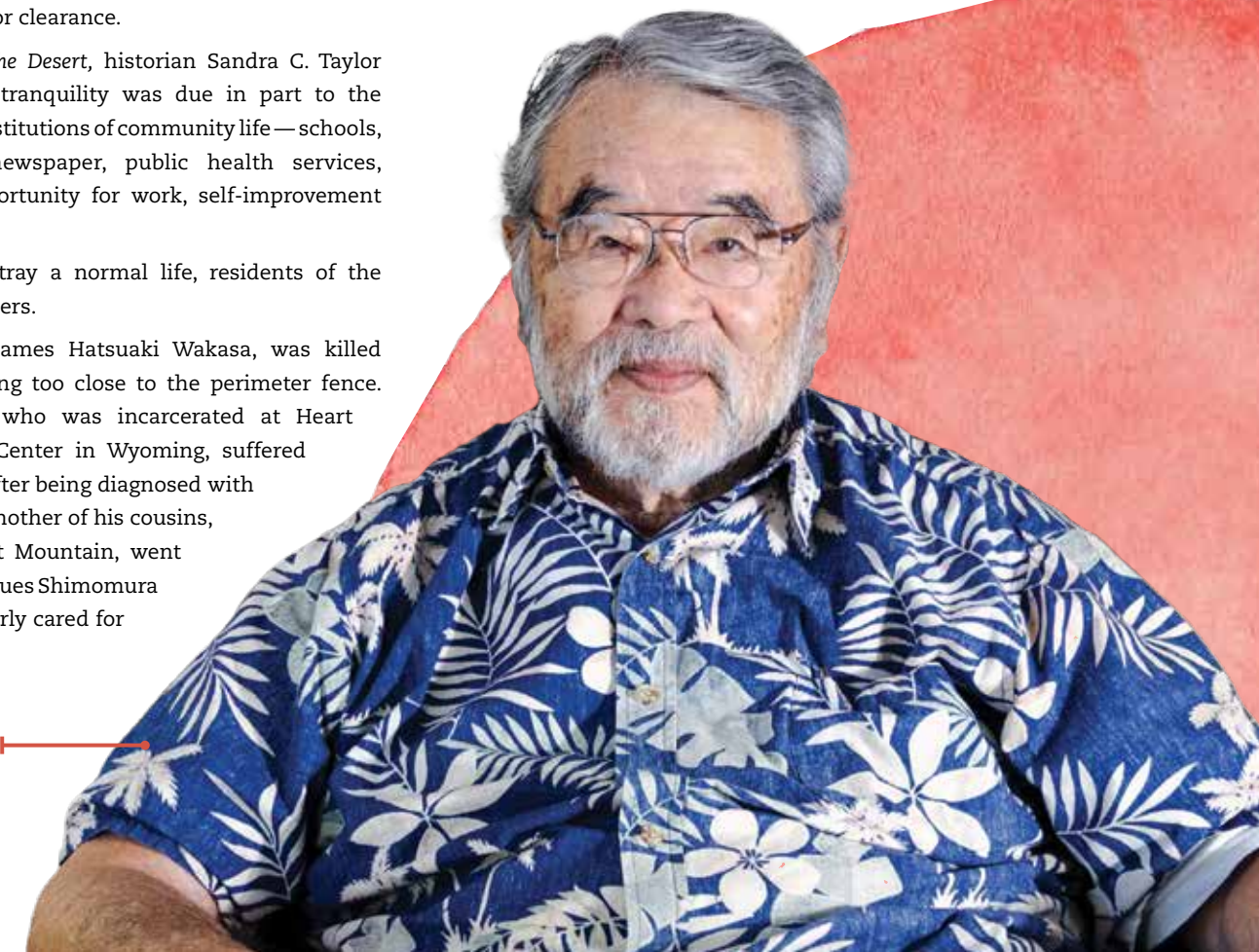
They settled in Ogden. Shimomura played football in junior high and high school and generally felt accepted by peers. “The only problem I had was asking a girl on a date,” he said. “Parents didn’t like to have their daughter go out with Japanese.”

After graduating from Ogden High School in 1953, Shimomura joined the U.S. Army. Following his service, he earned his airplane mechanic license at the Northrop Aeronautical Institute. He married his late wife, Chizuko, in 1958, and began studying part-time at Weber State while working as a ramjet engine technician. He later attended Utah State University, and earned his bachelor’s degree in manufacturing engineering in 1965.

While acknowledging blemishes in the country’s past, he said he’s proud of the freedom the United States offers and that he was able to serve in the military.

If there’s a lesson from his incarceration, he said it’s to advocate for any ethnic groups the country labels “the enemy”; it could happen again.

Today, he has three children and five grandchildren. He lives in Morgan Hill, California, about 70 miles south of where his family left their home in San Francisco.





## Fleeing Home

Linda Oda BS '67, Weber State professor emeritus of education, has dedicated her career to improving education in Utah, but her family's arrival in the state was never a choice. While more than 110,000 people of Japanese ancestry were placed in relocation camps, others fled their homes beforehand to protect their families, including her parents.

Oda said her father and uncle were leaders in Los Angeles' Japanese community, making them potential targets for the FBI following the attack on Pearl Harbor.

When word came that authorities were looking for her uncle, the two began searching for a place to move their families. Her father, Kunimatsu, soon returned to Los Angeles to gather their families and all the belongings they could fit in two cars bound for Utah.

Kunimatsu abandoned the lucrative five-story apartment building he ran, and with his wife, Norma, and Oda's two older siblings, moved into the Corinne Buddhist Church with seven other families. He worked at a cannery in Perry, Utah, and, later, opened a grocery store.

The family later welcomed Oda, the second youngest of four children.

While her parents escaped incarceration, most of Oda's extended family went to camps, including her aunt, late WSU emeritus professor of English, **Mildred Miya BA '66**.

After World War II, the family moved to Ogden, where Oda's father opened Kay's Market, a grocery store on 25th Street. Sadly, prejudice lingered. She recalls hearing people being called "Japs" while in town. "I think our parents and our families suffered, but the community stuck together," she said. "And that was really, really, really important."

One snowy morning in 1961, tragedy struck when an intruder entered the store, stole \$100 and beat her father who died later that day. While completing her education, Oda and her siblings were left to balance caring for her mother, who had suffered a stroke, with minding the store.

Like Shimomura, Oda's history strengthens her advocacy.

As administrator of the teacher quality program for Davis School District, she worked with fellow educators to write curricula about the Japanese American experience during World War II for elementary, middle school

“You need to make people understand that you are a person, too.”

— LINDA ODA

and high school students. She has been a professor, teacher, administrator, governor's director of Asian Affairs, and, now, a volunteer with WSU's Peer Mentor Program, and she has advocated for marginalized groups in each role.

Once while supervising for a student teacher, a young boy saw her face and mockingly yelled "Ching chong Chinese!" Oda sat down with the student, told him that her grandparents immigrated from Japan, helped him find Japan on a map, and discussed the culture with him.

"You need to make people understand that you are a person, too," she said. When she returned for another visit, the boy drew a picture for her and wanted to be friends.

## A Salute to Linda Oda

Linda Oda received the Emeriti Alumni Lifetime Achievement Award in the 2022 WSU Salutes ceremony. Read more about her background and the honor on page 34.



Children at the Raphael Weill Public School in San Francisco recite the Pledge of Allegiance in April 1942. Soon after, according to *The New York Times*, Hideno Nakamoto (left), and Yoko Itashiki (center), were sent to the Tanforan Assembly Center before they were detained at Topaz War Relocation Center. Yukio Shimomura also attended the school.

Photo by Dorothea Lange, provided by the Library of Congress



Barbed wire spells out "Topaz" on a fence at the site of Topaz War Relocation Center near Delta, Utah, reminding visitors of the desolate area's history. Photo by Jaime Winston

## Why We Remember

Today, the land where Topaz was built appears barren. A closer look, however, reveals rusty nails, utensils and even the remnants of pathways those inside once walked.

As many who still remember grow older, Kyed explained, the World War II Japanese American experience is "something that we need to talk more about."

Kyed attended Shimomura's presentation at the Wildcat Theater with his Japanese language instructor, **Tomono Adachi**, who learned about Topaz on a trip to the site in 2019.

"I didn't research before I went," she said. "I thought they only brought Japanese nationals to the camp, but they put American citizens in the camp, too. I was shocked."

She has arranged for Japanese language students and Japanese international students to tour the site and nearby Topaz Museum twice, and plans to continue the trips annually.

Adachi's students often worry it could happen again; she agrees.

"We have to educate people not to make the same mistakes," she said.





# PREPARING NURSES FOR TODAY AND THE FUTURE

The School of Nursing still meets industry needs after 70 years.

by Shaylee Stevens





As the Annie Taylor Dee School of Nursing celebrates its 70th anniversary, the faculty, staff and students who make up the hallmark program at Weber State University are building on the school's legacy of care and service to continue innovating for the future.

### Meeting Industry Demand

During the early 1950s, the lingering effects of World War II and the ongoing conflict in North Korea led to the most severe shortage of nurses in modern history. To combat the need for registered nurses, Weber State was selected in 1953 to host one of seven pilot associate degree nursing (ADN) programs as part of a research project led by Adelphi College in New York.

Now, 70 years later, the School of Nursing continues to meet the demands of the industry. With nine degree programs, including the Doctor of Nursing Practice program, the school produces more registered nurses than any other institution in Utah, training hundreds per year to serve in communities nationwide.

The school helped **Cutter Bergman ADN '22** transition from student to medical professional. Thanks to classes that worked around his schedule, affordable tuition and networking opportunities, his education ultimately helped him land a job after graduation. He now works at Intermountain McKay-Dee Hospital, where he treats patients recovering from surgeries and inpatient visits.

"The way Weber State's program works, you start learning about nursing skills early on, while you're still new to the program," Bergman said. "As you move up through your courses, you work with community partners to practice your skills in facilities,

which makes it great when it's time for graduation because you're already familiar with everything."

To ensure students are prepared to meet industry demands, WSU's nursing program adapts to student needs, with a key component being stackable credentials.

A student could potentially earn an associate's degree, work for several years in a clinic and return later to earn a bachelor's degree, master's degree and doctorate. This style of program gives students a variety of paths, whether they are starting with no experience, advancing their credentials from a local technical college or enhancing their career with a doctorate.

In addition to offering flexible degree paths, Weber State collaborates with multiple campuses to increase accessibility for students across the region. Courses are offered on WSU's Ogden and Davis campuses, online and at three regional technical colleges: Bridgerland, Davis and Ogden-Weber. The flexibility, combined with innovative teaching practices, helps students enter the industry efficiently and well-prepared to help patients.

"I think the success of our programs really boils down to our faculty and staff," said **Rieneke Holman**, School of Nursing chair. "We're constantly looking at new ways to be innovative and teach our students better, whether that's new technology or working with community partners to understand their needs. Our focus is always on preparing students to go from being a student to being a nurse."

### Focus on the Community

Beyond meeting industry needs, the School of Nursing allows students to serve the off-campus community.

From its inception, the school has invested in relationships with regional facilities and hosted outreach programs for rural areas. Today, engaging in their communities remains a primary focus for students. Their work outside the classroom helps them gain practical experience under the supervision of faculty, seasoned medical professionals and, often, alumni.

"As a student, you get to go out to all these different facilities to learn about different types of nursing and work with real patients," Bergman said. "That experience really helps you understand the career better, and it also gives you an opportunity to practice what you're learning in classes and hone your skills."

While in school, Bergman gained experience working with patients in emergency room, psychiatric and nursing home settings. His experience is not uncommon, as students work in community facilities throughout the region.

Beyond the more traditional areas for nursing, WSU also focuses on lesser-known avenues, providing students with unique learning opportunities and fulfilling a community need.

"The great thing about Weber's program is we don't just collaborate with hospitals," Holman said. "We have strong affiliations with other facilities too, like county jails, home health agencies and surgical centers. We try to maintain relationships with all kinds of partners."



"We're always looking for ways to innovate and improve because we want to continue helping our students be successful while staying at the frontline of community needs for the years to come."  
— Rieneke Holman, School of Nursing chair





# LARGEST

**PRODUCER OF NURSES**

**IN THE STATE OF UTAH**

**2022–23**

# NATIONWIDE

**RANKINGS**

*U.S. News & World Report's*  
**BEST COLLEGES FOR  
NURSING (BSN) PROGRAMS**

*Fortune's*  
**BEST ONLINE MASTER'S  
IN NURSING PROGRAMS**

*The Princeton Review's*  
**BEST ONLINE NURSING SCHOOL  
MASTER'S PROGRAMS**

*The Best Accredited Colleges'*  
**#12 – BEST ASSOCIATE DEGREES  
IN NURSING IN THE NATION**

**#1 – BEST ASSOCIATE DEGREES  
IN NURSING IN UTAH**

Holman noted that the school's community engagement is driven by the desire to provide meaningful service to community partners while also giving students practical experience.

"As the faculty and staff in the program, we're nurses too. So we understand both the benefits and the challenges of working in nursing facilities, which is why we want our students to have those experiences outside the classroom," Holman said.

Faculty and staff engage with partners in the community to ensure collaborations can continue and flourish. Administrators and teachers regularly serve on local advisory boards and committees, seek and provide feedback regarding student-provider relationships, and continually seek new ways to help foster better community health. The community-centered education ensures students have an easy transition into the workforce, giving them a network of peers, mentors and potential job opportunities before they graduate.

"By the time I started my capstone project, I felt really prepared and had already made so many connections in the community," Bergman said. "All my teachers made sure I knew what to expect outside of my classes and they were really upfront about the demands of the job."

## Healthcare for the Future

While the School of Nursing is excited to celebrate 70 years of rich history, faculty are also looking ahead to continue building on the foundation set by the early educators.

"It's important for our students to have good opportunities and intentional learning experiences," Holman said. "Our goal is to provide excellent nurses that can then benefit our partners and communities long into the future."

Between teaching and tending to the needs of the school, faculty and staff are planning new programs, updating curriculum and increasing community collaborations. An occupational health nursing certificate is on the way, while a mental health nurse practitioner track is in the planning stages for the doctorate program. The school hopes to add additional specialties as the industry demands, while continuing to improve existing programs.

"The needs of the industry and the community are ever-evolving, so our focus is keeping up with the national needs and training our students for that," Holman said. "We're always looking for ways to innovate and improve, because we want to continue helping our students be successful while staying at the front line of community needs for the years to come."



Jill Heiner Garrison Davis (front, center), class of 1955, wrote about her experience as a Weber nursing student. Read her letter on page 46.

## Celebrating Seven Decades of History

Established in 1953, Weber State's School of Nursing served as a pioneer for two-year nursing degrees, overcoming initial industry worry about the shortened amount of time students spent in class to become one of the leading schools for nursing in the nation.

The first class consisted of 36 women, with only two dedicated faculty to serve them. Today, the school has about 950 students, 56 faculty and multiple degree options.

Thousands of alumni have gone on to successful careers. The school has trained graduates who have served overseas, assisted communities during environmental disasters, and, more recently, aided patients during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The school will celebrate its long history with a 70th anniversary party during the fall 2023 semester. More details will be available closer to the start of fall semester.

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Lindquist College of Arts & Humanities

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# A FOCUS ON SERVICE

WEBER STATE'S PLAN TO STREAMLINE SERVICES FOR UTAH'S FASTEST-GROWING DEMOGRAPHIC WILL BECOME A MODEL FOR SERVING STUDENTS OF ALL BACKGROUNDS.



Among the many acronyms Weber State faculty and staff use every day, eHSI has become increasingly prevalent in conversations about the university's future.

It connects with the strategic plan, Weber State Amplified, a 5-year plan for growth, which commits to increasing the percentage of students who identify as Hispanic or Latino to **15% BY 2025**. Reaching this goal would make WSU an eHSI (emerging Hispanic-Serving Institution).

As of fall 2022, Hispanic and Latino students made up 12.5% of full-time equivalent undergraduates. **WSU PLANS TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN MORE STUDENTS BY INCREASING SERVICES AND SUPPORT.**

Becoming an eHSI, however, isn't about placing one group over another. It's about helping WSU better reflect its surrounding community, **CREATING A SERVICE MODEL** that can be adapted for all students and improving the local economy.

Utah's K-12 public education system is about 20% Hispanic or Latino, and over 50% of Ogden School District's students represent the demographic. Making sure more of these **STUDENTS FEEL WELCOME** at Weber State will mean more youth from local schools go to college, gain in-demand skills employers are looking for and achieve greater economic outcomes.



**Yudi Lewis**, Hispanic-Serving Initiatives executive director, said the most important part of eHSI is the "S," since it will lead to improved services across the board.

"In trying to streamline access and support services for one segment of our student population, we are, in turn, creating streamlined access and support services for all segments of our student population," she said.

**"WE ARE INCLUDING EVERYONE."**

**YUDI LEWIS**  
Weber State University executive  
director of Hispanic-Serving Initiatives



## EXAMINING eHSI

To understand eHSI, you must first understand HSI (Hispanic-Serving Institution).

An HSI designation is outlined by Congress in the Higher Education Act as a higher-learning institution with a full-time equivalent undergraduate student body that is at least 25% Hispanic, according to the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities.

Once institutions obtain that status, they're eligible for additional federal funding.

In 2020-21, there were 559 HSIs in 29 states, Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico, but none in Utah, where the Hispanic and Latino population is the fastest-growing demographic group.

While there is no federal definition for eHSI, *Excelencia in Education*, a nonprofit organization supporting Latino student achievement, identifies an eHSI as an institution with an undergraduate Hispanic enrollment between 15% and 24%.

Weber State officially adopted its eHSI goal in its strategic plan in spring 2021.

"While other colleges and universities in Utah are now working to achieve HSI status, nobody was willing to be the brave one to make the first public statement; we were the first," said **Adrienne Andrews**, vice president for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and chief diversity officer. "The rest of the institutions in the state have followed our lead."

The declaration resulted in a \$500,000 grant from Ally Financial Inc.

"Our support of Weber State is part of our organization's deep commitment to creating pathways to economic mobility in diverse communities," said **Jan Bergeson**, Ally Bank executive director and Community Reinvestment Act officer.

Weber State used the funds to create Lewis's position, identify gaps in student recruitment and retention, and coordinate resources for underserved students.

Lewis said she is now collaborating with university departments, other Utah institutions and partners in the community to help serve students.





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

## STUDENT SUPPORT FROM DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

Weber State’s goal is not without its detractors.

Lewis and Andrews acknowledge that public discussions about diversity and inclusion can trigger criticism and pushback leading to misconceptions.

“But we need to go beyond the negative comments and be mindful that we’re trying to create a space in educational settings for individuals who have not often had that space,” Lewis said.

A low number of Hispanic and Latino students participating in concurrent enrollment programs, which offer high school students classes where they earn college credit, is one reason Lewis said many do not go on to college.

“Concurrent enrollment students engage in college courses early on in their life. These students are likely

to be motivated to make that transition from high school to college,” she said.

According to the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) and the Utah System of Higher Education, 83.9% of students in concurrent enrollment courses were Caucasian while only 9.9% were Hispanic and Latino during the 2020–2021 academic year, despite making up about 18% of 2021 high school graduates based on a USBE report.

Andrews emphasizes that becoming an eHSI signals a desire to anticipate demographic shifts and a willingness to amend a higher educational system to support more students.

It is not about taking something from one group and giving it to a different group.

“There are some students who do just fine with the system as it exists,” she said. “We don’t need to change anything for them in terms of how they’re receiving support; but for the students who were not having success at Weber because the system wasn’t created for them, there must be a structure and a framework put in place that recognizes an unintentional bias and closes systemic gaps in student support and services.”

## FORECASTING POSITIVE OUTCOMES

The following is not an exhaustive list of what Weber State hopes to achieve by **reaching eHSI status**, but rather a bird’s-eye view of anticipated outcomes from a campus-wide effort the university hopes students and employees will embrace and support.

### 1. IT WILL ADVANCE WSU’S DUAL MISSION.

As assigned by the Utah Legislature and Utah Board of Higher Education, Weber State serves a dual mission, providing every academic amenity associated with a four-year university in addition to the two-year programs and certifications offered at a community college. As an open-enrollment institution, WSU allows all students an opportunity to pursue and complete a college degree or certificate.

“Our goal is to be able to meet all our students where they are and give them the challenges and tools they need to be successful,” Andrews said.

She maintains that identity impactors, such as ethnicity, gender or income, are emphasized in current discussions only because they have proven to be so consequential to student success.

“Once we’re aware that there’s an obstacle to somebody’s learning, then we can find a way to minimize it,” she said. “Our goal is to set up a successful proposition for any student who wants to take advantage of it, and, if we fail to do that, we fail to fulfill the mission of our legislative charter.”

### 2. IT WILL BOOST ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION.

At a time when U.S. college enrollments are declining, Weber State’s goal is to enroll 32,000 students by the 2025–26 academic year.

However, demographers are predicting fewer high school graduates starting in 2025. They warn that unless colleges and universities bring in and retain more students, they will struggle to remain viable. Education analysts say colleges need fresh strategies to attract populations they have previously underserved: high school students taking college courses, community college transfers and working adults. These same experts say new students will show up when they see campuses committed to delivering what they want and need.



— **YURITZI ROSAS HERNANDEZ** majors in marketing and economics. She serves on the WSUSA Diversity and Unity team and was recently elected 2023–24 vice president of community engagement. As a student leader, she supports WSU’s goal to make college more accessible to Hispanic and Latino students.

While enrolling students is part of the plan, Lewis added that supporting students to complete their degrees is equally important. “What we want at Weber State is for every student who walks through our doors to know that they belong in our institution, and we are willing to do everything possible to create a welcoming and supportive space for everybody,” she said.

### 3. IT WILL ADD TO THE VALUE OF A WSU EDUCATION.

Part of what Weber State hopes to achieve by pursuing eHSI status is to ensure a stimulating mix of intellectual, cultural and educational perspectives on its campuses.

Research shows that students who explore culturally diverse views and interact with people from different backgrounds become more creative thinkers, better problem solvers and more accepting members of society.



“  
**THESE STUDENTS HAVE DREAMS & ASPIRATIONS. WEBER STATE OFFERS EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND SUPPORT SERVICES TO ENABLE ALL STUDENTS TO COMPLETE A COLLEGE EDUCATION.**  
 — ADRIENNE ANDREWS

“We need to stay away from that deficit mentality that students from historically underserved backgrounds are not college material,” Lewis said. “These students have dreams and aspirations. Weber State offers educational opportunities and support services to enable all students to complete a college education.”

Andrews adds that the effort is also driven by a desire to prepare a job-market-ready workforce for a global economy. “Students can learn all that in team-building experiences where they have to work on some kind of classroom project with people who are like them and people who are not like them, and that’s important because the ability to work collaboratively and think critically are the kinds of skills that employers seek,” she said.

**4. IT WILL HELP WSU SERVE ITS COMMUNITY.**

Weber State’s Ogden campus is located in Weber County, home to the second highest concentrations of Hispanic and Black populations in Utah. However, the composition of WSU’s student population doesn’t reflect the community’s diversity.

Ogden School District 2022-23 Hispanic and Latino headcount enrollment

SCHOOL	HISPANIC STUDENT %
Ben Lomond High School	59.98%
George Washington High School	52.30%
Ogden High School	47.17%
Highland Junior High School	61.92%
Mound Fort Junior High School	51.04%
Mount Ogden Junior High School	39.74%
Weber State University	11.8%

Source: Utah State Board of Education and Utah System of Higher Education

Ogden High School, which has a nearly 50% Hispanic and Latino student population, boasted 393 graduates in 2022, but only 75 came to Weber State. Of those 75 students, 25 identified as Hispanic or Latino. Lewis finds the statistic alarming. “Where are the rest of those graduates? Why aren’t they at Weber State? Did they even go to college?” Lewis asked.

“As we figure out the pieces that will be meaningful for this particular Hispanic demographic of students — to not only enroll at Weber State, but to remain and

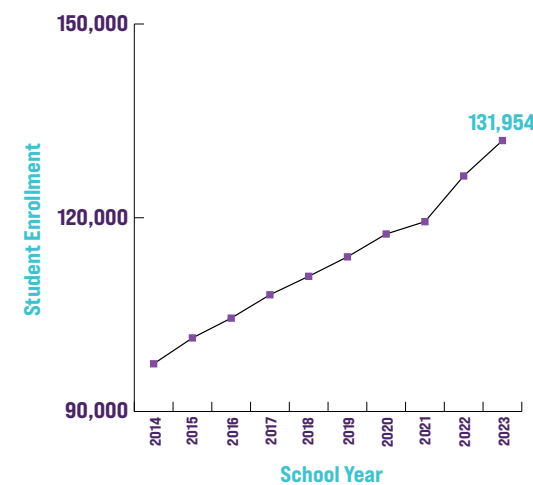
persist until they graduate — we’ll create a model that will benefit other marginalized populations as well,” Andrews said. “If we don’t make this shift, we are holding back the earning potential of our own communities and the citizenry of the nation.”

**5. IT WILL INCREASE UTAH’S ECONOMIC PROSPERITY.**

Higher education constitutes one of the most significant influences on the state’s economy, consistently producing the labor supply that powers economic momentum.

An estimated 439,000 people of Hispanic or Latino descent live in Utah — the actual number could be higher. According to the Utah State Board of Education, 131,954 Hispanic and Latino students are in Utah’s K-12 public education system.

K-12 Hispanic and Latino enrollment growth



Source: Utah State Board of Education

Informed by forecasts of Utah’s economic and workforce needs, the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) calls for the following:

1. More Utah high school graduates enrolling and graduating from USHE institutions
2. More students completing college degrees in a timely manner
3. More students earning college degrees that align with high-wage, high-demand occupations

A 2021 Economic Report to the Governor, prepared by the Utah Economic Council, anticipates the percentage of people of color ages 18-35 in Utah will nearly double by 2065.



The report notes the need for significant changes to address a degree attainment gap within the USHE system. “Multi-dimensional strategies will be used to increase the system’s positive contribution to workforce development with a specific focus on closing equity gaps that inhibit the full realization of our state’s workforce and economic potential,” the report stated.

**MOVING FORWARD**

Weber State President **Brad Mortensen** recently announced the university’s efforts have been working. “We have legitimately made progress towards our 15% goal as our Latino and Hispanic student enrollment percentage has increased by about half of a percentage point in fall 2021 and, again, in fall 2022,” he said. “But I think the real progress has been in the culture of Weber State faculty, staff and students embracing the goal and working collaboratively to achieve such a significant milestone.”





# COACH HILL'S TOP 10

# MEMORABLE WINS

By Paul Grua

**FOLLOWING THE 2022 SEASON**, when Weber State's football team again ranked in the top 10 in the FCS, Jay Hill stepped down as head coach. During his nine seasons with the team, Hill transformed the program. He led Weber State to four Big Sky championships and six trips to the Football Championship Subdivision playoffs. He also coached multiple All-Americans and All-Conference players.

He left Weber State as the Big Sky Conference's all-time leader in football coaching wins with 68. Coach Hill had many memorable WSU victories, and it's difficult to narrow them down to a list of the best, but we gave it a shot.

Here is our list of the top 10 memorable wins in Coach Hill's career:

## 10 // OCT. 23, 2021

**Win at #2 Eastern Washington:** The Wildcats forced three turnovers and had three successful fake punts when they defeated second-ranked Eastern Washington 35-34 in Cheney, Washington. Eastern Washington was the highest-ranked team WSU defeated during the Hill era.

## 9 // NOV. 13, 2021

**Shutout win against Southern Utah:** WSU dominated Southern Utah in every aspect of the game, beating the Thunderbirds 62-0 in Cedar City.

## 8 // APRIL 10, 2021

**Clinched fourth straight title:** WSU won its first outright championship ever and its fourth-straight Big Sky title with a 20-15 win over Idaho State. With this win, the Wildcats earned an undefeated regular season record.

## 7 // NOV. 25, 2017

**Playoff win over Western Illinois:** WSU hosted its first-ever FCS playoff game and defeated Western Illinois 21-19 at Stewart Stadium.

## 6 // OCT. 10, 2015

**Win at Montana:** Weber State did something it hadn't done in 28 years, win a game in Missoula. The Wildcats beat the Grizzlies 24-21 in overtime for their first win in Montana since 1987.

## 5 // OCT. 22, 2016

**Comeback win at Southern Utah:** With under eight minutes to play in the game at Southern Utah, the Wildcats trailed the Thunderbirds 36-14. But WSU scored 23 unanswered points as the minutes ticked by to beat Southern Utah 37-36. The victory also gave WSU a 4-0 record in Big Sky play.

## 4 // MARCH 27, 2021

**Hail Mary win over Northern Arizona:** WSU pulled out a miracle win as Randall Johnson found Justin Malone for a last-ditch 50-yard touchdown pass as time expired to lift the Wildcats to a 28-23 win over the Lumberjacks at Stewart Stadium.

## 3 // DEC. 2, 2017

**Playoff win at Southern Utah:** The Wildcats got revenge for a regular season loss as they went to Cedar City and beat Southern Utah 30-13 in the second round of the FCS playoffs. During the first quarter, WSU trailed 10-0 before outscoring SUU 30-3 the rest of the way. The win moved WSU to the quarterfinals of the FCS playoffs for the first time.

## 2 // SEPT. 10, 2022

**Win at Utah State:** WSU dominated Utah State 35-7 for the first Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) win of Hill's career. It was also the first win for the Wildcats over an FBS team in 29 years and the first win against Utah State since 1978.

## 1 // DEC. 13, 2019

**Playoff win over Montana:** On a cold, snowy night, WSU made history at Stewart Stadium with a 17-10 win over archrival Montana in the quarterfinals of the FCS playoffs. The Wildcat defense had six sacks and forced five interceptions. The win advanced Weber State to the semifinals of the playoffs for the first time ever.

Did we miss a victory? Do you disagree with our list? Let us know at [magazine@weber.edu](mailto:magazine@weber.edu).





# WSU Salutes



## WSU SALUTES 2022 HONOREES

*Photo by Robert Casey*

**Back row:** Cristina P. Ortega BA '98, Steve Ballard, David G. Thomas BS '77, Kathleen Thomas BS '78

**Front row:** Patricia Child, William H. Child AS '51, Todd Rose BS '00, Jacqueline Thompson MS '97, Linda Inouye Oda BS '67



# WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY HONORED NINE OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUALS FOR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY AT THE 2022 WSU SALUTES CEREMONY.

“ The 2022 WSU Salutes recipients exemplify all that’s great at Weber State. This distinguished group of individuals embodies the uniqueness, service, talents and generosity that make up our incredible WSU friends and alumni family. ”

— Nancy Collinwood, Alumni Relations executive director

## EMERITI HOMECOMING ROYALTY

**David G. “Dave” BS ’77 and Kathleen “Kathi” Thomas BS ’78**

**Dave Thomas** and his fellow Weber Trumpeteers — a contingent of young Ogden brass instrumentalists — appeared destined for fame as they prepared to take center stage on Ted Mack’s *Original Amateur Hour* in 1969. Unfortunately, the TV network canceled the show a week after taping, and the Trumpeteers’ performance was lost to the ages. Undaunted, Dave returned home, attended Weber State and married the woman of his dreams, fellow Wildcat Kathi Alford. After five years of teaching school, Dave started composing jingles for radio and TV commercials. He founded an advertising agency in 1982 and sold it seven years later to Evans Group. He served as president and CEO of the company’s Salt Lake City, Los Angeles and Denver operations before Evans Group was sold to Publicis in 1998, and Dave became president of its Salt Lake City office. Following a run for a seat in the U.S. Congress, Dave founded marketing and communications firm ThomasARTS. His professional accomplishments and community service have been recognized by the Utah Advertising Federation, the Arthritis Association’s Utah/Idaho chapter, Salt Lake Community College and the WSU Emeriti Alumni Council. After taking the lead in raising the couple’s three active sons, **Kathi Thomas**, a gifted early childhood educator, established Mrs. T’s Preschool in Farmington, Utah. Over the years, she has acquired an extensive collection of children’s books that she has ingeniously displayed in the family’s home.

## DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

**Steve Ballard**

A proud, fifth-generation Ogdenite, **Steve Ballard** owns and operates the Sonora Grill, as well as Ogden Produce Company, an indoor hydroponic farm. In 2013, he partnered with Weber State to create Dining for Dollars at Sonora Grill, an annual fundraiser that benefits the university’s Oportunidad Scholarship Fund. The scholarship promotes educational opportunities for students who do not qualify for federal aid and is intended to remove financial barriers for low-income or undocumented immigrants who dream of becoming the first in their family to earn a college degree. So far, Dining for Dollars has contributed more than \$193,000 to the fund, which has provided scholarships to more than 52 students. Steve has served on numerous community boards, including the Ogden-Weber Chamber of Commerce, Visit Ogden and the Ogden Downtown Alliance. He lives in downtown Ogden with

his wife, Emily, and their four children. They enjoy traveling, skiing and gardening.

## LEWIS W. SHURLIFF AWARD FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO EDUCATION

**Dr. Jacqueline “Jackie” Thompson MS ’97**

**Jackie Thompson** championed groundbreaking policies as Davis School District’s first African American assistant superintendent. These policies provided a foundation on which to build a deeper appreciation for equity, diversity and inclusion. Originally from Nashville, Tennessee, Jackie is the oldest of nine children. Much of her childhood was spent living in various states and abroad while her father served in the U.S. military. She earned a bachelor’s degree at Idaho State University and taught elementary school in Idaho and California before relocating to Utah to work at Hill Air Force Base. She pursued a master’s degree at Weber State and later received a doctorate in education curriculum and instruction from Utah State. Jackie was hired by Davis School District in 2000 and retired in 2017 as director of educational equity. Four years later, the district persuaded her to come back and oversee equity and diversity issues. Jackie also worked as a gender equity and education specialist for the Utah State Office of Education. Jackie maintains an ambitious agenda of civic engagement and motivational speaking in the wake of her second retirement. She has received numerous awards and recognitions, including the YCC Spirit of the American Woman Award for Public Education and the Utah Women’s Achievement Award presented by the Governor’s Commission for Women and Families. In 1999, she was chosen to be Mrs. Utah. Jackie and her husband, Eddie, have two sons, two daughters-in-law and four grandchildren.

## DISTINGUISHED ALUMNA

**Judge Cristina P. Ortega BA ’98**

**Cristina Ortega** graduated from Weber State University with a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice, magna cum laude, with an emphasis in law enforcement and a dual minor in Latin American studies and legal studies. She earned a Juris Doctor degree in 2002 from the S.J. Quinney College of Law at the University of Utah. After graduation, she served as a deputy district attorney in the criminal division of the Salt Lake County District Attorney’s Office. She prosecuted narcotics, general felony and special victim offenses. Cristina then worked as a deputy county attorney at the Davis County Attorney’s Office, where she continued in the specialized prosecution of special victim cases involving sexual assault, domestic violence and child abuse. Prior to her appointment

as a Second District Court judge in 2021, Cristina served as an assistant United States Attorney for the District of Utah. In that capacity, she coordinated the Project Safe Childhood program and focused on the federal prosecution of child exploitation offenses. She also served a one-year detail as counsel to the United States Attorney for the District of Utah. Cristina is active in her community with a focus on higher education. She was appointed by Governor Gary R. Herbert to serve on the University of Utah Board of Trustees and as a regent for the Utah System of Higher Education.

## DISTINGUISHED ALUMNUS

**Dr. Todd Rose BS ’00**

Before coming to Weber State, **Todd Rose** was a high school dropout and a father-to-be, living in Layton, Utah, making less than \$5 an hour and subsisting on government welfare checks. Although schoolteachers and principals had labeled Todd a class clown and troublemaker and encouraged his parents to temper their expectations about what he would be able to achieve in life, Todd felt sure he had something special to offer. At WSU, Todd forged his own path to the American Dream. He traces his academic transformation to three psychology professors who mentored and believed in him, even when he didn’t fully believe in himself. He found out, after graduating with a bachelor’s degree in psychology in 2000, that one of them had even taught an extra class and donated his pay to the psychology department so Todd could be hired as his research assistant. In 2007, Todd earned a doctorate from Harvard University and soon became a professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, where he led the laboratory for the science of individuality. He was also the faculty director for the Mind, Brain, and Education program. Currently, Todd is the president of the Boston-based think tank, Populace, and the author of three best-selling books.

## EMERITI ALUMNI LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

**Dr. Linda Inouye Oda BS ’67**

**Linda Oda’s** Japanese American family made a life in Utah not by choice, but out of necessity after fleeing Los Angeles to escape internment during World War II. Her parents opened a successful market on Ogden’s 25th Street, but one morning in 1961, an unidentified intruder entered the store, stole \$100 from the cash register and beat her father so savagely, he died later that day. The family managed to keep their store open as Linda navigated high school and graduated from Weber State with a bachelor’s degree in elementary education. She balanced what little time she had to study

with minding the store and caring for her mother, who had suffered an incapacitating stroke, alongside her siblings. Linda taught school for a few years before working as a reading specialist for several Utah school districts. She earned a doctorate in education at Brigham Young University while serving as principal at C.H. Taylor Elementary in Ogden. She joined the faculty at Weber State, oversaw the Davis School District’s Quality Teaching program, and was asked to develop materials to educate children about World War II internment camps. Linda directed the Office of Asian Affairs during Utah Governor Jon Huntsman Jr.’s tenure. She coordinated the Utah State Board of Education’s English Language Learner program, and spearheaded numerous efforts at Weber State to improve curriculum for children from underrepresented populations. She currently volunteers with the university’s division of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. Read more about Linda and her family in our feature story on page 10.

## WSU PRESIDENT’S AWARD

**William H. “Bill” AS ’51 and Patricia “Pat” Child**

**Bill Child** grew up on a small farm in Syracuse, Utah, and attended Davis High School before enrolling at Weber College in 1950. A talented track athlete, Bill joined Phoenix social club and enjoyed his professors so much, he decided to become a teacher. He married Darline Willey in 1951 and continued his education at the University of Utah while working for his father-in-law, Rufus Call “R.C.” Willey, who owned a tiny store next to a cornfield and sold appliances from the back of a pick-up truck. In 1954, Bill was offered a teaching position in his hometown, but the dream evaporated with the unexpected death of his father-in-law. Shortly before passing, R.C. had given Bill the key to his store and asked him to look after it. What Bill didn’t know then was that the IRS was auditing the business and a local bank sought to recall the loan that financed the store’s inventory. An even greater tragedy occurred in 1965 when Darline died from a rare medical condition. She was only 31 and left behind four grieving youngsters and a broken-hearted husband. A blind date with **Pat Wright** in 1966 proved to be Bill’s salvation. Pat, from Salt Lake City, eventually accepted Bill’s marriage proposal. She moved to Syracuse and helped raise Bill’s children while adding four more to the family. Bill poured his time and energy into growing his late father-in-law’s store into Utah’s largest furniture and appliance chain. In 1995, Warren Buffett’s Berkshire Hathaway company purchased R.C. Willey, and Bill continued to serve as CEO until his retirement in 2002. The “tiny store” that Bill took over in 1954 now boasts more than \$1 billion in annual sales. Now living in Salt Lake City, Bill and Pat support numerous charitable organizations and educational programs in Utah and other states.



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— Darcy Siebenaller, eMHA graduate

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# CLASS NOTES

ALUMNI UPDATES

## '70s

### William “Bill” Watanabe BS

'70 was born on the island of Maui, Hawaii, and moved to Tampa Bay, Florida, in the late 1980s to open a new mortgage branch for Barclays American Mortgage Corporation. He recently sold his realty company, Under the Sun Realty, which he owned for 17 years. He is currently working for Century 21 Real Estate Champions in St. Petersburg/Clearwater, Florida, where he is a consultant and trainer for new real estate agents. Concurrently, he has been a commercial broker for 10 years. He is a member of the Certified Commercial Investment Institute, the commercial real estate industry's global standard for

professional achievement. He has one son, one daughter and six grandchildren. He lives in Seminole, Florida.

### Manuel “Manny” Cantorna

BS '71 is a retired licensed clinical social worker. During his early career, he provided group and individual therapy for substance abuse patients at St. Francis Hospital in Honolulu, Hawaii. He went on to supervise a unit of counselors who provided drug and alcohol therapy with the Salvation Army Detox Unit. He also worked for the State of Hawaii, supporting children with special health needs. He later worked with individuals struggling with substance abuse at American Psych Systems (now APS Healthcare, Inc.). Before retiring, he worked for a

health insurance company, AlohaCare, where he oversaw local agencies receiving federal funds to assist people dealing with substance abuse. He has volunteered for the American Red Cross since retiring in 2019. Manny earned his Master of Social Work from the University of Utah in 1973 and his Master of Public Health from the University of Hawaii in 1986. He has one daughter and four grandchildren, and lives in Honolulu.

Bill Allred BA '72 is a morning talk show host for the Salt Lake City-based radio station, X96. For the past 30 years, he has co-hosted the “Radio from Hell” show, which has produced over 8,000 episodes and continues to air. Bill began his career with

the station in 1980, when it was a small Ogden-based operation known as KJQ. Prior to his career in radio, Bill was an accomplished actor. He acted with the Utah Shakespeare Festival while attending Weber State College. After graduating, he studied acting in the Master of Fine Arts program at Penn State University. He went on to act with the Long Beach Repertory Theatre Company of California, before touring with Children’s Repertory Theatre based at Florida State University in Tallahassee. Before returning to Utah, he also acted in several New York City productions. In 2014, Bill spoke at the TEDxWeberStateUniversity event. He lives in Salt Lake City.



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**Greg Bell BA '72** is president and CEO of the Utah Hospital Association. He serves as founding chair of Get Healthy Utah, a nonprofit promoting healthy eating and active living. He formerly chaired Utah Transit Authority, USTAR and Envision Utah. Greg served as lieutenant governor under Utah Gov. Gary Herbert from 2009 to 2013 and two terms in the Utah State Senate. Greg is a past mayor of Farmington, Utah. A graduate of the S.J. Quinney College of Law at the University of Utah, he practiced law for 30 years. His wife, **JoLynn Bell BS '72**, has served in her church and community. She and Greg are inner-city missionaries for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They reside in Fruit Heights, Utah, and have six children and 28 grandchildren.

**Carolyn Wold AS '72** has worked in the nursing field throughout her career. She began in 1954 at St. Benedict's Hospital, serving in the orthopedic polio and infectious disease department, and later became head of that department. She then transferred to Ogden Clinic, where she worked from 1959 to 1964. In 1964, she moved over to the original Thomas D. Dee Memorial Hospital, working as a float nurse. When the Dee hospital moved to a new location in 1969, Carolyn worked in the open heart surgical rooms and later became head nurse

of the operating rooms and director of surgical services. Carolyn earned her bachelor's degree in nursing and a master's degree in nursing administration from the University of Utah. She also taught operating room nursing as an adjunct instructor at Weber State. Before retiring from McKay-Dee Hospital in 1993, she worked as the director of education for operating room nursing. In this role, she ensured that the hospital's accreditation standards were upheld. She lives in Ogden.

## '80s

**Steven R. Harris BA '82**, is the dean of libraries at Northeastern Illinois University on Chicago's North Side. After graduating from WSU, he earned a master's degree in English from the University of Utah, and continued on to earn a master's degree in library science from the University of Arizona. Since then, he has served in many roles at university libraries across the country, including Texas A&M University, Louisiana State University, University of Tennessee, Utah State University, University of New Mexico and University of Nevada, Reno. He lives in Chicago.

**Frank Nolden BA '87** recently retired after a successful 34-year career with the IRS. From 2008 until his retirement in 2022, he held various positions in the IRS Senior Executive

Service. Most recently, he served as executive director of Stakeholder Partnerships, Education and Communication. He oversaw the national Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program, which works with volunteer organizations, such as the United Way and AARP, to prepare income tax returns for underserved populations. Prior to that role, he was the director of the IRS Service Center in Atlanta, Georgia, where he oversaw approximately 2,000 employees. He is currently a stake president with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. His wife, **Nannette Shayne (Slade) Nolden BS '93**, went on to complete her master's degree in 1995 at Portland State University, where she studied psychology with an industrial/organizational emphasis. She has held various positions, including human resources manager and Realtor. She most recently served nine years on the Board of Directors for View Point Health, a community service board in Georgia that provides mental health services for underserved communities. Additionally, she has served two years on the board of directors for Behavioral Health Georgia. She has also spent time lobbying for mental health legislation in Washington, D.C. Frank and Nannette have seven children and 11 grandchildren with two more on the way.

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**Andy Veasey BS '88** works in the legal and compliance department of a U.S. hedge fund within the London-based office of Davidson Kempner Capital Management, LP. Andy came to Weber State from London with a tennis scholarship and played for the university for four years, helping to win the Big Sky Championship in 1985, 1986, 1987 and 1988. After graduating from Weber, he earned a master's degree in international business from Pepperdine University in California. He then returned to London, taking a position with Goldman Sachs for the next 10 years. This led him to a successful career in legal and compliance with major financial institutions, including Credit Suisse; Millennium Management, LLC; HSBC and Morgan Stanley. His wife, **Cynthia "Cyndi" Sahleen-Veasey BIS '90**, met Andy while studying pre-med at Weber State on a Presidential Scholarship. She was involved in the choir and Orchesis Dance Theatre. She graduated magna cum

laude. When she moved to London, she worked as a biochemist for the National Poisons Unit before completing her medical training at King's College London in 2001. She was a recipient of the Goldman Sachs Academic Scholarship during her medical training and specialized in neurodevelopmental pediatrics with a special interest in neurorehabilitation. She has worked in various National Health Service hospitals, including University College Hospital, The Children's Trust and Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children. She currently works at the Evelina London Children's Hospital, where she provides support for children and young people with neurodisabilities and their families. Andy and Cyndi have two daughters and one granddaughter.

## '90s

**James R. Taggart AS '91, AS '92, BS '00** received the Ogden-Weber Chamber of

Commerce 2022 Chairperson of the Year Award. He has led the chamber's Legislative Affairs Committee for the past four years. As president of Ogden-Weber Technical College since 2017, he has been involved in numerous local, state and national organizations. He sits on the board of directors for the Utah Defense Alliance, Northern Utah Economic Alliance and Northern Utah Chamber Coalition, as well as the Ogden-Weber Chamber of Commerce Executive Board, and as a commissioner for the Council on Occupational Education.

**Russ Porter BS '94, MED '05** is a health science, current events and driver's education teacher at Bonneville High School in South Ogden, Utah. He is serving in his sixth year as the Mayor of South Ogden City. He also serves as the chair of the Weber Area Council of Governments, as well as on the McKay-Dee/Layton Hospital Board of Trustees and the Weber Area Dispatch 911 Board of

Trustees. He and his wife, Sherri, have four children and four grandchildren.

**Doug Heer BS '97** has served as president of Precision Pools & Spas, a company of 35 employees, for the past 25 years. The company is a member of the Master Pools Guild and the Pool and Hot Tub Alliance. Doug has been recognized by Continental Who's Who for his professional excellence in the pool and spa industry. He volunteers in his community, supports his church and lives in Eagle Mountain, Utah.

**Melissa Trotter BA '97** is a procurement analyst and small business specialist with the Bureau of Reclamation headquarters in Denver, Colorado. Previously, she was a branch chief for an Air Force Nuclear Weapons Center branch at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, and the director of business operations at the 460th Contracting Squadron at Buckley Air Force Base, Colorado. In 2001, she





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completed a Master of Science in Psychology at Utah State University. Melissa is married to Chris Trotter, U.S. Air Force, retired. They have two daughters.

### '00s

**Susan Cummings BS '02** is a medical technologist with the Associated Regional and University Pathologists at the University of Utah, where she has been part of the cellular immunology lab for the past 20 years. In 2017, she earned a second bachelor's degree in medical laboratory science from the University of Utah. In June 2020, for her work with indirect COVID-19 testing, she was named employee of the month and later employee of the year,

a distinction among 4,000 employees. Her husband, **Casey Cummings BA '02**, is an online marketing manager for Harvest Right, a Salt Lake City-based company that sells freeze dryers. Prior to this role, he spent nine years as a marketing manager for Sky Properties, a commercial and residential real estate company in Bountiful, Utah. After graduating from Weber State, he became a marketing manager for RXAmerica, a prescription benefit management company. He earned a Master of Science in Communication from the University of Utah in 2006.

**John Summers BS '02** is the director of quality at Nutraceutical Corporation in Salt Lake City. In this

role, he oversees production quality, process monitoring and compliance with federal regulations. He is also responsible for process improvements to increase efficiency and quality. Prior to this role, he was a process engineer and senior quality manager for 25 years with Fresenius Medical Care, which provides kidney dialysis services. He is a certified quality engineer with the American Society for Quality. John served as a scoutmaster with the Boy Scouts of America for 12 years.

**Nancy Summers BS '02** is a doctor of veterinary medicine in northern Utah. She completed her doctorate at Washington State University in 2006. She has

practiced at Bayview Animal Hospital and Fairfield Animal Hospital, and is currently practicing at Antelope Animal Hospital. She is a member of both the Utah Veterinary Medical Association and the American Veterinary Medical Association. Her husband, **Jason Judd West BS '00**, is a freelance commercial photographer. He has worked with clients such as *Sundance Catalog*, *Polaris*, *Costco*, *Amazon*, *Deseret Book* and *Mrs. Fields*. They live in Ogden.

**Derrick Glum BS '04** has recently been named chief executive officer of Saint Mary's Health Network, a member of Prime Healthcare, in Reno, Nevada. Prior to joining Saint Mary's, Derrick served as regional chief operating officer of Steward Health Care in Mesa, Arizona. There he oversaw Mountain Vista Medical Center and Florence Hospital for two years. He has also served in various executive positions for Gila River Health Care in Phoenix, Arizona, as well as system vice president of post-acute care at Renown Health and as CEO of LifeCare Hospitals in Reno.

**Bryan Magaña BS '06, MA '09** is the public relations director at Weber State University. Before returning to his alma mater, he served 15 years in the 419th Fighter Wing Public Affairs office at Hill Air Force Base, Utah. Bryan is active in his church, leading a team of musicians each week and organizing

an annual gift drive for Operation Christmas Child.

**Angela Petersen Nelson BS '08** is a forensic scientist and crime lab supervisor with the Salt Lake City Police Department. She teaches Fingerprint Processing and Intro to Forensic Science at Utah Valley University. Before joining the SLCPD, she worked as a forensic investigator for the West Valley City Police Department. Angela served with the Department of Defense, Afghanistan Camp Leatherneck, from 2012 to 2013, where she used her forensic expertise to support the U.S. Marines. Prior to her time overseas, she served the Weber County Metro Crime Scene Investigation Unit as a crime scene investigator, and as a legal secretary and victim witness advocate for the Weber County Attorney's Office. She is a certified senior crime scene analyst as well as a certified latent print examiner and a member of the International Association for Identification Crime Scene Certification Board.

**Nikki Reeder AS '06, BS '18** is an American Academy of Nurse Practitioners board-certified family nurse practitioner. Nikki earned her bachelor's degree in nursing from Weber State in 2018 and her Master of Science in Nursing from Maryville University in 2021. She works for TruHealth, providing care for patients with Medicare Advantage health plans in

long-term care communities. Concurrently, she practices medical weight loss with a specialty in bioidentical hormone replacement therapy at OptiHealth. Nikki is certified in basic life support, advanced cardiac life support and pediatric advanced life support. While attending Weber State, she participated in a foreign language-based study abroad in Spain as well as a nursing-based study abroad in Ecuador. She has two children and lives in West Haven, Utah.

### '10s

**Matthew Zacher BFA '11** is the creative director for Weber State's Department of Marketing & Communications. Prior to his role at Weber, Matt worked for the Ogden-based advertising agency Out of Bounds Creative for 15 years. He started at the agency as a junior designer, and spent the last eight years as the art director. The agency focused on the outdoor industry including clients such as Atomic, SITKA Gear, and W.L. Gore and Associates, as well as promoting Ogden's 25th Street, Ogden Contemporary Arts, Ogden Convention and Visitors Bureau and the GOAL Foundation. Matt and his wife live in Ogden, and they have two children.

**Morgan Saxton BS '13** has worked in the news industry for nearly a decade. Morgan graduated from Weber

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**Lori Belnap Pehrson BS '87**, retired aerospace leader and WSU National Advisory Committee member, with her mentee, 2022 computer science graduate **Dallin Welch**

State University at age 20 with a bachelor's degree in communication. Following graduation, Morgan worked for the *Standard-Examiner* newspaper in Ogden, writing daily breaking news stories. She now co-hosts a lifestyle show, *The PLACE!*, at FOX 13 in Salt Lake City. Previously, Morgan worked as a morning reporter for over five years at KUTV, where she won her first Emmy Award for reporting on a wildfire in southern Utah. Morgan also spent a year in the Midwest as a multimedia journalist covering a wide variety of stories including the 2016 Iowa presidential caucus.

**Elizabeth Bizzell BA '14, MHA '19** is the graduate programs clinical/marketing coordinator with WSU's Annie Taylor Dee School of Nursing. In 2015, she began her work at WSU with the Department of Health Sciences, and her responsibility in marketing roles has grown over time. Prior to coming to Weber, she worked in retail management. She is a 2022 recipient of the Wildcat MicroFund, which helped her to found Give Again, a local nonprofit dedicated to redefining gift giving.

**Julia Saxton BS '15** is a major gifts officer at Primary Children's Hospital in Salt Lake City. In this role, she oversees fundraising for various projects including a new location in Lehi, Utah. Concurrently, she

is the program director for the Children's Miracle Network Hospitals. After graduation, Julia served as an associate development director for the College of Engineering, Applied Science and Technology at WSU. As a student, she served as student body vice president of service. She was highly involved with the Center for Community Engaged Learning (CCEL), raising money for and participating in a service trip to Thailand, where she helped build an orphanage and education center. In 2022, CCEL awarded her the Presidential Award for Community Engaged Alumni. She is currently raising a puppy who will serve as a hospital therapy dog. She credits her love of philanthropy and community to the educational and extracurricular experiences she had at Weber State.

**Natalie Slater BS '15, MPC '17** returned to Weber State after a 25-year hiatus, during which she raised seven children. While earning her master's degree, she was on the dean's list. She graduated summa cum laude. She is currently the director of admissions at Ogden-Weber Technical College. She began her career at OWTC with an internship as a job coach in the career center. She was soon promoted to the manager of the career center. She then concurrently took on the recruiting team for the college, which soon

merged with the enrollment team, becoming the Department of Admissions. Natalie also serves on the Admissions Task Force Committee for the Utah System of Higher Education.

## '20s

**Amy Hajdas MPC '20** is the marketing strategist for Weber State University's Department of Marketing & Communications. She earned a Bachelor of Arts from the College for Creative Studies in Detroit in 1992. After graduation, she worked for various advertising agencies in Detroit and Chicago before taking a marketing and design position with Roosevelt University in Chicago. This began her career in higher education. Amy is actively involved in the art communities where she lives. She also oversaw marketing strategy and design for galleries she owned and operated with her husband in Ogden, Philadelphia and Chicago. Amy and her husband moved to Utah in 2013.

**Matthew Taylor BIS '20** is a sales manager with Lifetime Products, where he has worked in various roles for the past six years. Concurrently, he is a first lieutenant medical services officer in the Army Reserve, where he operates as a platoon leader for a dental unit in Salt Lake City. He has served in the Army Reserve for the past seven

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years. Matthew is also a musical theater performer with the CenterPoint Legacy Theater in Centerville, Utah. He has played a lead role in his past three shows, *Newsies*, *Cinderella* and *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. Matt uses all three of his BIS areas of

study, musical theater, marketing and military science, in his professional and personal pursuits.

**Hannah A. Olsen AA '21, AS '21, AS '21, BS '22, BS '22** is finishing her Master of Education at Weber State. She will be attending law

school beginning fall 2023, with plans to become an attorney. She is the current president of the Weber State University Alumni Association (WSUAA) Student Alumni Council. Hannah is the Salt Lake City fellow for IGNITE, a national political leadership organization for young women. She has been an intern or fellow for the Office of U.S. Senator Mitt Romney, the United Nations Office of Human Rights Education Switzerland, Utah Second District Court Judges DiReda and Bean, WSU Admissions and WSU Legal Counsel. She is engaged to **Dekklan MacKay BS '22**, who is pursuing a career in banking. He is currently working for the First Community Bank in Layton, Utah. Dekklan also served on the WSUAA Student Alumni Council. Together, they were involved at WSU. They both participated in clubs and organizations and took on leadership roles, and they never missed a football or hockey game.

**Tyson Pendleton BFA '21** is a program supervisor at WayPoint Academy in Huntsville, Utah, where he helps students with depression, obsessive compulsive disorder and anxiety. He has volunteered for the past seven years for the nonprofit Ogden Friends of Acoustic Music as a committee member and a campground coordinator. In October of 2022, he presented his first solo art exhibition, "Personal Space," at The Monarch in Ogden. The well-attended exhibit was a collection of expressionistic oil paintings.

**Donette Taggart Huff BS '22** is a health coach for Orriant, a corporate wellness provider. She is also an office manager for the Utah Army National Guard's Environmental Resources Management office. Donette is an inducted member of the National Society of Leadership and Success, an honor society with more than 700 college chapters. She has two children.

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# Wildcat Inbox

## STAYING IN TOUCH WITH ALUMNI & FRIENDS

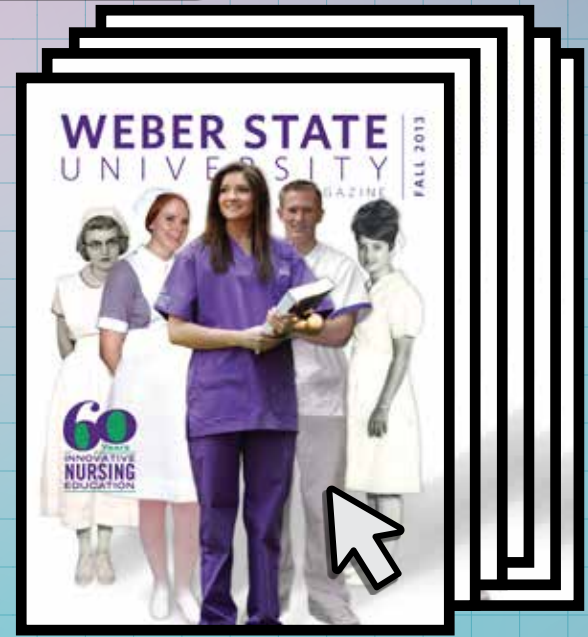
### WSU NURSING PIONEER |

As the Annie Taylor Dee School of Nursing celebrates 70 years of nursing education (page 18), an early graduate reminded us of how far we've come.

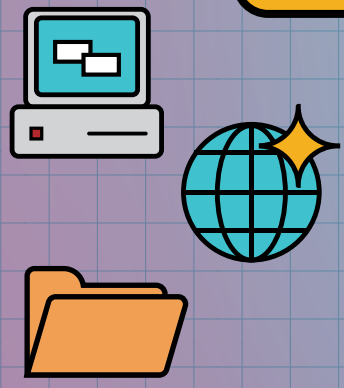
We didn't hike up to Mount Ogden, but we did hike back and forth to the old campus and to the Dee Hospital the first year. I'll never forget taking samples out of the swimming pool and finding all the bacteria and bugs in the water under our microscopes. I was also a member of the Otyokwa Social Club. Our professor was Mrs. Stewart. She kept us all in line with white aprons, white shoes and white hose. I remember the clunky white shoes that were supposed to save our feet and especially the price, \$25. It was a big deal in those days. I remember I dumped the dirty laundry down the chute at the hospital, but it went to the kitchen because it was the food dumbwaiter, but we all graduated, so we must have done something right.

— Jill Heiner Garrison Davis, ADN '55

Jill was one of five students representing six decades of nursing education at WSU for our fall 2013 cover. She is the student on the far left.



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To better serve you, our reader, give us feedback on the magazine and what you'd like to see in it. You can also enter for a chance to win WSU gear. Use the QR code or find a link at [weber.edu/wsumagazine](http://weber.edu/wsumagazine).

The survey closes on **May 15, 2023**.

★★★★★



**CORRECTION** \_ □ ×

Alumni Association leaders paid homage to the 1920s in our fall 2022 issue with a '20s-style photo shoot at Eccles Art Center in Ogden. The location was once the Eccles family home, where David and Bertha Eccles raised their 12 children, and, for a time, a Weber College women's dormitory. We incorrectly listed the year the home became a dormitory. Along with more information on the family and home, we received the following correction.

OK



Bertha Jensen Eccles, my grandmother, died in the fall of 1935. The house was then occupied by her son, my uncle, Joseph Eccles, until he died in 1945. It was then in 1948 that it became a dormitory for girls at Weber College.

— Myrelle Eccles Thomas

The Eccles family has had a tremendous influence on Utah and Weber State. Myrelle compiled *Our Eccles family: Eccles family information*, featuring more on the family's history. The book is in Stewart Library's special collections.

### MEMORIES OF TOPAZ |

This issue features the story of former Wildcat, Yukio Shimomura, who was detained as a child at the Topaz War Relocation Center near Delta, Utah (page 10). Were you or someone close to you held at Topaz? Do you have a personal story related to the camp? Please share your story at [magazine@weber.edu](mailto:magazine@weber.edu).



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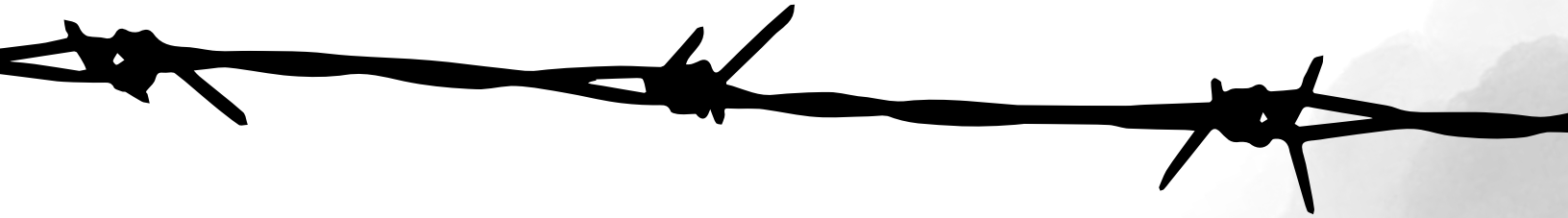




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