

UVU magazine



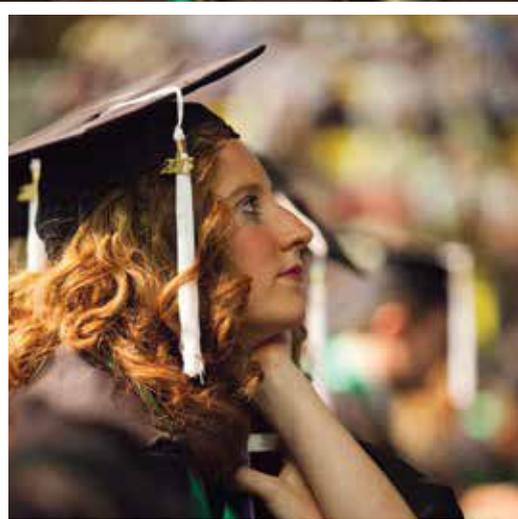
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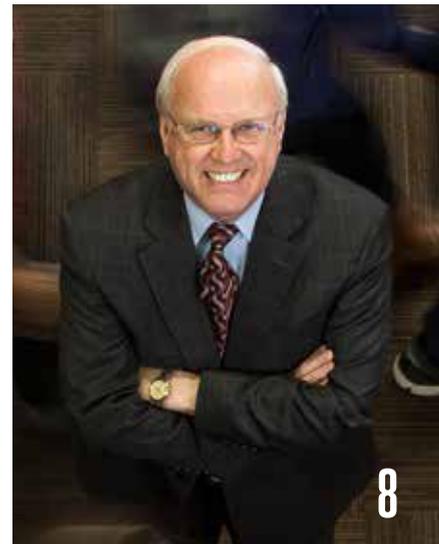
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ON THE COVER: TEACHING STEM

UVU students make science, technology, engineering and math fun for elementary students with an innovative robotics program.

Cover photo illustration by Joshua Mack Storer.



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UVU: Olympic-Size Aims

PHOTO BY AUGUST MILLER



This year, Utah Valley University made history. We cheered on two talented alumni as they competed in the Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia — and medaled. Congratulations to our very own Noelle Pikus-Pace for winning silver in the women's skeleton and Chris Fogt for winning bronze in the four-man bobsled. We

are proud to call you part of our UVU family.

Much like our Olympic alumni have done in athletics, UVU is looking to achieve true greatness in the world of education. In recent years, UVU has positioned itself to compete with the biggest and most dynamic institutions. By breaking molds and forging its own path, the University is establishing itself as a unique institution with an educational mission and footprint distinct from any other in the nation.

Our priorities, as always, are based on the University's core mission: being inclusive, engaged and serious in order to promote student success. In my recent State of the University address, I outlined several of the programs and initiatives we are working on to maintain and actively pursue greater student success. Those initiatives include, among other things, the development of a strategic inclusion plan, the creation of the engaged learning university distinction, and the implementation and sustaining of advanced technology. In addition, we continue to look to the future with plans for building a permanent home for the arts on the main campus.

I am thrilled to report that UVU notched a similar victory of its own this winter and, consequently, now has considerably more means to achieve these initiatives. The Utah Legislature appropriated — and Gov. Gary R. Herbert has since signed off on — \$50 million in new, ongoing funding to help address the funding inequities in higher education, \$21 million of which has been awarded to UVU.

As we build on our initiatives and continue to make history, we solidify our role as an important point of access to higher education for the state of Utah. Thank you for your support as loyal alumni. Your dedication allows the diverse mosaic of students at UVU to connect with the world, leave a mark and make an impact.

Sincerely,

Matthew S. Holland
President

Alumni Take Olympic Silver & Bronze Medals



PHOTO BY AUGUST MILLER

UVU alumni Noelle Pikus-Pace '05 and Chris Fogt '08 represented the United States in the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia.

Pikus-Pace, a former All-American track and field athlete at UVU, went into this year's Olympics ranked third in the world in women's skeleton and focused on redeeming herself after a fourth-place finish at the 2008 Winter Olympics. Pikus-Pace won silver with a combined time of 3:53.86.

Former UVU sprinter and multiple school record holder in track and field Fogt competed for the medal on the four-man USA-1 bobsled team known as "The Night Train" and came away with a bronze medal and a combined time of 3:40.99.

Both Olympians will receive honorary doctoral degrees at Commencement.

New Student Life & Wellness Center Becomes Campus Hot Spot

UVU President Matthew S. Holland, university officials and community members cut the ribbon on the new Student Life & Wellness Center in April, just shy of two years after ground was broken for the 170,000-square foot student haven.

"The center adds a new dynamic to campus for our students to participate in wellness activities that engage their mind, body and spirit," says Shad Sorenson, UVU associate vice president of student life. "It will allow students to connect to campus and their friends while they participate in activities that enhance their learning experience. The hub of activity will increase the time students spend on campus and provide a holistic university experience."

The four-story building has quickly become a destination for thousands of students eager to try out its fitness areas (including three basketball courts, an indoor track and a 45-foot climbing wall) and explore its reflection rooms, bowling alley and student government and student life offices.



PHOTOS BY AUGUST MILLER

WITH FOUR STORIES OF FITNESS AREAS, THE NEW STUDENT LIFE & WELLNESS CENTER PROVIDES DEDICATED SPACES TO HELP UVU STUDENTS GROW AND DEVELOP PHYSICALLY, MENTALLY AND SPIRITUALLY.

UVU Men's Soccer Program Gets First Official Signing Class



PHOTO COURTESY UVU STUDIOS & BROADCAST SERVICES

UVU PREPARES FOR AN EXCITING FIRST SEASON FOR THE MEN'S SOCCER PROGRAM AS 14 INCOMING FRESHMEN JOIN 15 CURRENTLY ENROLLED STUDENT-ATHLETES TO ROUND OUT THE TEAM'S INAUGURAL ROSTER.

The UVU men's soccer program has taken another giant step forward with its first-ever signing class. Fourteen incoming freshmen will join 15 currently enrolled student-athletes for a 29-man initial roster.

"I am very excited for our recruiting class, not only because it's our first, but it's very deep in soccer talent and personal character," head coach Greg Maas said. "Our recruiting class will feature top-level players from 11 different states and three different countries. The depth of talent we've been able to sign will provide UVU men's soccer the opportunity to be very competitive in the WAC in our first year."

The first game, a non-conference match, will take place at home against University of Massachusetts on Aug. 30. For more information on the UVU men's and women's soccer teams, visit wolverinegreen.com.

UVU Receives \$21 Million Ongoing in Equity Funding

When the final gavel fell on Utah’s Capitol Hill ending the 2014 legislation session, the Utah System of Higher Education received an infusion of \$50 million ongoing toward its acute equity funding initiative. The initiative was the top legislative priority this session for Utah Valley University, whose portion of the equity funds will be \$21 million ongoing.

State tax fund revenue-to-tuition revenue ratios have long varied greatly from institution to institution, and one of USHE’s top budget priorities the past several years has been to narrow these funding gaps within the system and establish a minimum floor of state funding of \$4,800 annually per student (FTE) across all institutions.

The discrepancies have been most acute at the system’s growth institutions, with UVU – which currently receives \$3,268 tax funds per student – having the most pronounced difference among them. For that reason, UVU was scheduled to

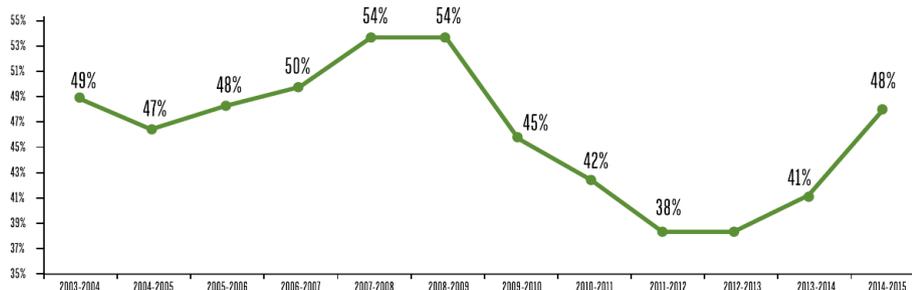
tion, however, this funding will be game changing for an institution that has experienced so much recent growth and is charged with being a point of educational access as the state continues to work toward its goals for 2020.”

For perspective, the equity funding granted to UVU is twice the amount it received when it was granted university status and is slightly more than the total of all the tax funds the legislature has granted UVU in the last eight years combined.

The acute equity funding will help UVU preserve academic quality, increase student support to graduation, improve faculty- and adviser-to-student ratios, increase academic programs and course offerings, and expand capacity for STEM-related programs to better meet workforce demands and expectations. It will also help provide adequate human and technology resources for instruction, student support and administrative needs.

“Absent the presidents remaining unified

UVU TAX FUNDS HISTORY



receive just over 42 percent of the total amount appropriated this year for acute equity for the system, as prescribed by the Board of Regents. USHE’s request going into the session, and the amount needed to bring all institutions to the \$4,800 floor, was \$69 million. This year’s allocation from the legislature will bring UVU’s state funding per student to \$4,361.

“We couldn’t be more thrilled,” said UVU President Matthew S. Holland. “We understand that there are many important yet competing interests each session and that resources are precious. It was no different this session. Without a funding mechanism for growth in higher educa-

on this issue throughout the system and the leadership of the Commissioner and Regents, we wouldn’t have received the support needed. I’m absolutely convinced of that,” Holland said. “The same can be said of the yeoman’s work of Higher Education Appropriations Committee chairs Rep. Grover and Sen. Urquhart and the foresight of Gov. Herbert and legislative leadership in both bodies, particularly Speaker Lockhart. She helped lead the charge going into the session, and equity remained one of her top priorities throughout.”

Holland also credited the State Board of Regents, Commissioner of Higher Education, the UVU Board of Trustees, and Utah Valley business leaders.

Theater Department Makes History at National Festival

UVU recently made history when faculty and students from the Department of Theatrical Arts for Stage & Screen became the first to earn top honors two years in a row in the 46-year history of the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival.

“THIS IS SIMPLY ANOTHER AFFIRMATION THAT THEATER STUDENTS AT UVU ARE SERIOUS ABOUT THEIR WORK, WILLING TO MEET AND SURPASS THEIR COMPETITION.”

—K. NEWELL DAYLEY, DEAN OF THE SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

UVU received Outstanding Production of a Musical for its performance of “Next to Normal.” Last year, the University was awarded Outstanding Production of a Play for “Vincent of Brixton.” More than 600 colleges and universities throughout the country compete in the Kennedy Center’s annual festival.

For directing “Next to Normal,” UVU’s David Tinney was awarded Outstanding Director of a Musical. UVU as a whole won Outstanding Performance and Production Ensembles, while UVU student Michael Grey won Outstanding Lighting Design and Jacquelyne Jones won Outstanding Performance by an Actress. Faculty member Rob Moffat won Distinguished Achievement in Music Direction.

“This is simply another affirmation that theater students at UVU are serious about their work, fully engaged in meeting and exceeding the standards of a challenging profession and willing to meet and surpass their competition,” said K. Newell Dayley, dean of the School of the Arts. “It also affirms the strong mentoring they receive from a dedicated and thoroughly professional faculty and staff.”



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HIS ONLY CONSTANT IS CHANGE

by Melinda R. Colton
photography by August Miller

Ian Wilson reflects on the changing landscape of higher education and leaves a significant academic legacy for UVU students and faculty

CHANGE has been the hallmark of Ian Wilson's career in higher education. And this is not likely to change anytime soon.

Utah Valley University has experienced some major transformation during Wilson's 25 years here. More importantly, he believes additional transitions are ahead for one of Utah's largest public institution of higher education.

In 1989 Wilson was hired as dean of the business school when UVU was a community college with 7,700 students. In June he will retire as senior vice president for academic affairs from a university with more than 31,000 students.

Although his career began in industry the Toronto-born Canadian has always loved the classroom. "I've always enjoyed teaching and had a desire to pursue a career in education."

With a doctoral and bachelor's degree in sociology and a master's degree in organizational behavior, Wilson began his career working in human resources for Canadian Industries Limited, and while he enjoyed the challenges that came with working in industry, he found himself always looking through the classified advertisements for a potential teaching position. He eventually applied for a position in the business administration department at Mount Royal College in Calgary, Alberta.

After teaching for six years, he became the department chair for an additional six years. "There came a point when I needed to de-

cide if I would continue in education or return to industry," he says.

In the summer of 1988, his friend J. Bonner Ritchie, a former professor at BYU who also taught at UVU later in his career, asked Wilson to teach at the BYU Marriott School of Management. Later that fall, he applied for the position of dean of the School of Business opening at Utah Valley Community College. He's been at the Orem Campus ever since.

In addition to serving as dean of the business school, Wilson's career includes stints as vice president over Institutional Advancement and marketing and director of the UVU Foundation before returning

"Ian's fingerprints are all over the rise and flourishing of this institution. I will be forever grateful for the leadership he has provided institutionally and the support and council he has given me personally."

- Matthew S. Holland,
UVU President

to the classroom to teach. "I thought I had died and gone to heaven. I was teaching and keeping up on the latest research," he says.

He loved teaching and probably would have been content finishing out his career in the classroom, but that wasn't to be. Wilson had become a household name as a leader on campus and, consequently, again began being tapped for his administrative acumen.

In 2010, after two years of teaching, he was asked to serve as interim dean of the School of Business and later as interim vice president for academic affairs. Shortly thereafter he was permanently appointed vice president. Last summer the position was elevated to senior vice president. He has relished both roles — as a faculty member and administrator — throughout his career.

"In the classroom you are energized by the students. You stay current in your field of study. It's very fulfilling." But, he says, administration is equally exciting. "You are involved in the planning and the direction of the University," he says. "You have the opportunity build new programs and have an impact on the future of the institution."

Wilson has seen his share of change during his tenure at UVU. The biggest transition occurred when UVCC became a state college in 1993. As more faculty came aboard holding doctoral degrees, more professors wanted to do research. "It becomes a tricky balance," says Wilson. "We are a teaching institution. Teaching should always be our first priority. We also want to encourage scholarship but in the context of teaching."

Growth presents its own challenges. Enrollment continues to rise and is projected to exceed 43,000 by 2020. "As the institution grows and develops more policies and procedures to regulate activity," Wilson explains, "we need more policies. In turn, we run the risk of becoming more bureaucratic and less personal if we're not careful."

1989

Hired as dean of business school — UVSC enrollment 7,700

2001

Appointed associate vice president of Institutional Advancement Chair

2002

Appointed vice president of Institutional Advancement and Marketing — UVSC enrollment 23,600

2006

Professor of Management, Department of Finance & Economics

2008

Named interim dean of the Woodbury School of Business — UVSC becomes a university — enrollment 26,600

2010

Named interim vice president of Academic Affairs (June–October), then appointed vice president of Academic Affairs

2013

Promoted to senior vice president of Academic Affairs — UVU enrollment 31,000

The delivery of education has changed dramatically. When he started at UVU there was no such thing as the Internet. Today, Wilson can't imagine doing his job without his laptop, smart phone and iPad.

"Technology will continue to play a major role in the delivery of education. All of these changes over the years have great advantages, but they also bring challenges with them," Wilson says. "The way technology is used in the classroom today wasn't even imaginable when I came. At the same time I'm concerned that we don't lose the personal connection between the student and the faculty member. How do we continue to provide that personal learning? I'm hopeful technology will find a solution."

The challenges of change are what have motivated Wilson to work even harder. And that unflinching commitment shows. Wilson is especially proud of the part he played in the business school earning its prestigious accreditation from the Association of Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB),

which is awarded to the top 30 percent of business schools in the nation. He was also instrumental in the development of the Center for the Advancement of Leadership and the Culinary Arts Institute.

"I couldn't have come at a more exciting time. I had no idea we would ever become a four-year institution, let alone a university. [As the business dean] I was right at the heart of the first bachelor degrees," he says.

Today the University offers 66 bachelor degrees as well as three master degrees.

Wilson loves that UVU is a vibrant university that has remained a point of access simultaneously and continues to fill the role of a community college.

"Not all students want bachelor degrees, so we provide one-year certificates and two-year associate degrees," he says. "For other students the University offers advanced degrees to meet their educational objectives."

He is certain UVU's future includes more change, including the development

of its satellite campuses and expansion of its online offerings. "I think we will continue to offer more degrees, but those that are carefully crafted to meet a specific educational need. We have such a bright future. One thing that might limit our ability to reach our potential is the availability of financial resources."

And what advice would he give his successor? "It's important that he or she reach out to the faculty and staff and build a collaborative team of people to move things forward. Work with them. Support them. Be seen by the faculty as a help and support and not a hindrance."

The one thing that hasn't changed is his respect for the faculty at UVU. Wilson gets emotional when he speaks about his team. "I have always worked with great faculty, staff, department chairs, deans and associate vice presidents. We are a team. I couldn't have asked for better support. I have loved every minute at UVU. There isn't a better place to work."

In Their Own Words

Professional influences remember Ian Wilson's contributions to UVU

"What an incredible career he has had at Utah Valley. One of Ian's most valuable talents is his ability to work with all constituencies to move the University forward, and to help our students achieve their goals. He is an amazingly dedicated and versatile professional. His willingness to accept change and new challenges and his eagerness to provide the very best for our students were unflinching. What a joy to work with."

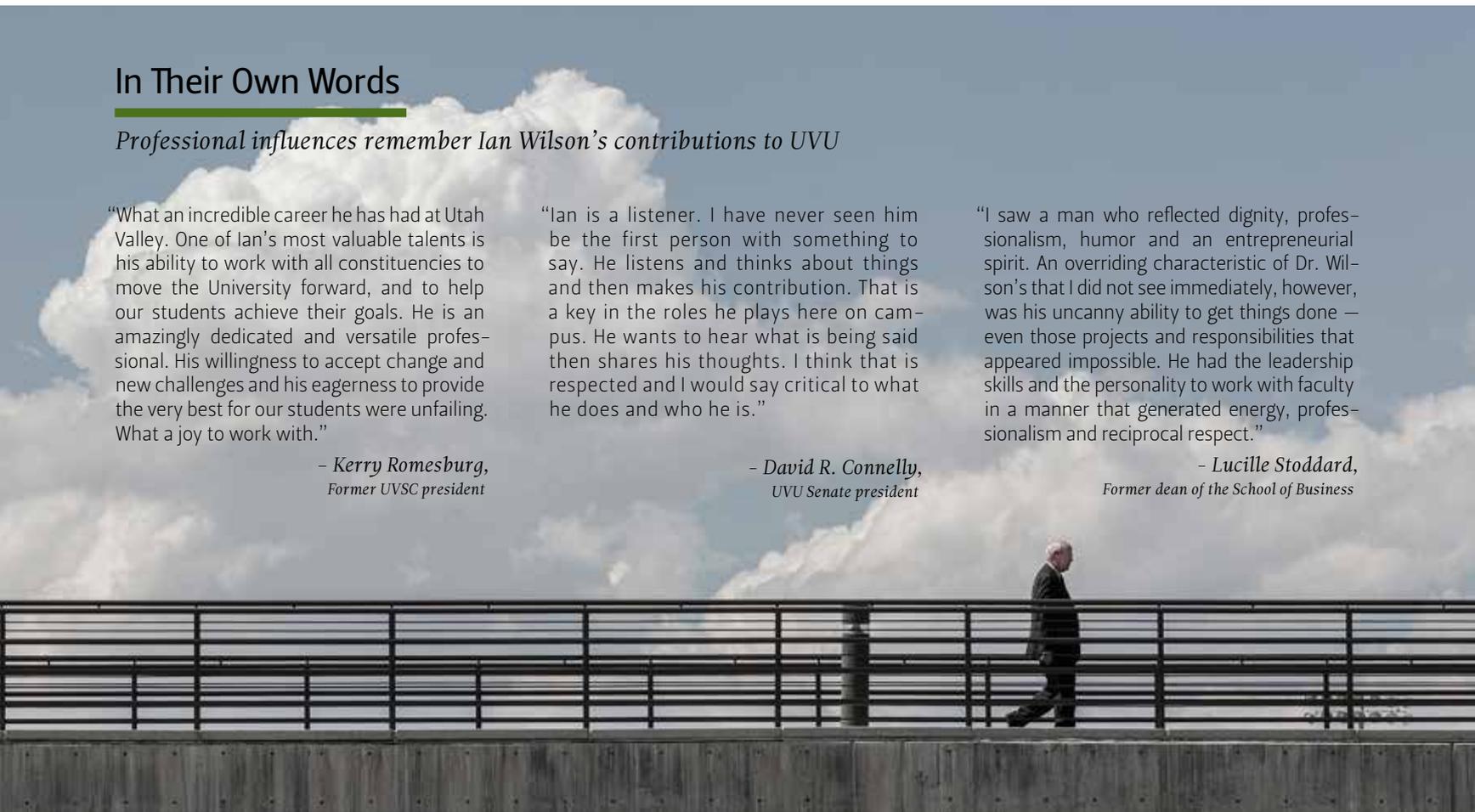
– Kerry Romesburg,
Former UVSC president

"Ian is a listener. I have never seen him be the first person with something to say. He listens and thinks about things and then makes his contribution. That is a key in the roles he plays here on campus. He wants to hear what is being said and then shares his thoughts. I think that is respected and I would say critical to what he does and who he is."

– David R. Connelly,
UVU Senate president

"I saw a man who reflected dignity, professionalism, humor and an entrepreneurial spirit. An overriding characteristic of Dr. Wilson's that I did not see immediately, however, was his uncanny ability to get things done — even those projects and responsibilities that appeared impossible. He had the leadership skills and the personality to work with faculty in a manner that generated energy, professionalism and reciprocal respect."

– Lucille Stoddard,
Former dean of the School of Business



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Raising the Curtain

Students study Shakespeare's original practices and contribute to scholarly research on Elizabethan London

Between 1597 and 1599, the Curtain theater was the premier venue for Shakespeare's company, the Lord Chamberlain's Men, and gained some notoriety as the "wooden O" mentioned in "Henry V." In 1622, the Curtain closed its doors and fell into disrepair; it was dismantled, and its precise location was lost — there is no record of the theater after 1627. In 2012, excavators from the Museum of London Archaeology uncovered the remains of the theater. And now, students in Kate McPherson's Shakespeare's Histories and Comedies course are uncovering some things of their own. The class is creating a comprehensive encyclopedia entry about the historic theater for the Map of Early Modern London (MoEML), a digital resource used around the world by students and scholars of Shakespeare.

McPherson, an English professor and director of the UVU Honors Program, teaches her Shakespeare course with original practices in mind, which means students get to know Shakespeare's plays the way they were most likely presented in Elizabethan London. And while McPherson always incorporates some degree of engaged learning in her courses — in the past, her students have taught and discussed Shakespeare at a local youth correctional facility, and she regularly requires her students to get up and perform Shakespeare in class to better understand the drama and techniques they are learning about — this year is especially exciting to her, her students and the Shakespearean community at large.

"Research is part puzzle and part treasure hunt," says Emily Simmons '14, a student in McPherson's class who has been researching the Curtain theater's

architecture for their encyclopedia entry. Simmons, an English literature major from Eldersburg, Md., has been amazed at the opportunity McPherson has provided for the class to participate in real scholarly research. "The MoEML project is like a mini-internship — we get the experience of working on a professional project without leaving the classroom. It has enhanced my appreciation for Shakespeare because I can see how modern scholars are interacting with his plays, his characters and his city. Of course, MoEML isn't just about Shakespeare, but about the time and place where Shakespeare created these

are really well positioned to do this successfully. This is the perfect way to get them to think about what London was really like during Shakespeare's time — what the neighborhood was like, what other plays might have taken place there — to get their heads back into history and make learning about his works now more meaningful."

Students in the class are collaboratively writing the entry on the Curtain, and McPherson will act as guest editor to polish it up before it is submitted to MoEML. Once the article has been reviewed, it will be available on the website, which receives almost 40,000



PHOTO BY JAC SCOTT

UVU PROFESSOR KATE MCPHERSON DISCUSSES SHAKESPEARE'S ORIGINAL PRACTICES WITH STUDENTS TO MAKE THEIR CURRENT STUDY MORE MEANINGFUL AND RELEVANT.

texts we're still studying. The history and the literature go hand in hand."

"The students are a little intimidated by this assignment because it's not just for class," admits McPherson, "but they

unique site visits each month.

Visit mapoflondon.uvic.ca to learn more about Shakespeare's London and to read the class's entry on the Curtain. — *Kaitlyn Tolman*

Strengthening Through Mediation

Students create a safe space for individuals to communicate and solve problems

It's 8 p.m. on a Tuesday and Marjie Lopshire '13 from Springville, Utah, is just finishing up another mediation session for 14 local high school students and their parents.

Lopshire is an advanced mediator and site supervisor for Utah Valley University's innovative mediation program, created by Grant Richards, professor of behavioral science, and administered by the students enrolled in his mediation classes. Each semes-

"THESE STUDENTS ARE MAKING A REAL DIFFERENCE"

ter, students come to the first day of class expecting to learn the basics of mediation. By the end of the period, they leave knowing it isn't a course that relies exclusively on books to teach them those basics. Within weeks, they are in schools and courts, mediating for families, parents and teens, and other disputing parties. Together with school administrators and alumni facilitators like Lopshire, these student mediators provide a safe space for problem-solving and facilitate positive communication.

Richards began the mediation program 10 years ago, offering two mediation sessions to students with truancy issues at Provo's Independence High School. Today, Richards' students administer four-week parent-teen mediation programs at six local high schools and Provo School District's attendance court, as well as an 11-week Strengthening Families Program available at four local schools.

Demand for mediation is more than



UVU STUDENTS ADMINISTER MEDIATION CLASSES AND A STRENGTHENING FAMILIES PROGRAM AT LOCAL SCHOOLS TO PROVIDE A SAFE SPACE FOR POSITIVE COMMUNICATION.

Richards and the 120 students in UVU's mediation classes can currently facilitate, but that doesn't stop UVU students, alumni, local schools and program participants from working together to create big change.

"We see respect and cooperation within the family unit increase on a weekly basis right before our eyes," says Lopshire. "There was one young man I worked with who no one was making much headway with. During our time together, he was able to turn his attendance and grades around. Mediation

helped this young man find his voice and be able to share with his dad what was important to him. I really enjoyed hearing all about his triumphs."

"These students are making a real difference," Richards agrees. "They're not just sitting in class to get a grade and move on. We're really doing something that matters." — *Kaitlyn Tolman*



Michelle Taylor: Passion and Purpose

Utah Valley University's new vice president of student affairs shares her vision for student success

In June, Utah Valley University President Matthew S. Holland implemented a series of strategic changes to his executive team. One of those forward-thinking transitions was to name Michelle Taylor vice president of student affairs, replacing Cory Duckworth, who was selected as the president of Jamestown Community College in New York. Taylor combines an academic seriousness — she has a doctoral degree in social work administration and two master degrees in social work and public administration — with an instinct for inclusive outreach. Her 18 years at UVU include time as the director of accessibility services and associate vice president of student services and enrollment. Now overseeing enrollment management, student success and retention, recruitment and student life, she's putting her teaching philosophy — “all students can succeed” — into practice every day. *by Kaitlyn Tolman // photo by August Miller*

Q: What made you want to become involved with Utah Valley University at the administrative level?

A: I have always loved school: I was the kid in the front row with my paper, my little pencil, and I was so excited to be there. I saw the announcement for a position at Utah Valley Community College and realized I could be at a place where students want to be there. And I was right. Students want to be here. They're excited to be here, and I love that environment.

Q: What aspects of your job with student affairs at UVU motivate you?

A: One of the things I love about this job is that it is different every single day, and it's a surprise every single day. I never wake up bored. Every day I hear a problem that I have never heard before, so I have to solve something that I have never solved before. That keeps me excited and motivated. And the students! They are so amazing. They are so determined to do well and to make something of themselves. I am in awe of our students, and you couldn't ask for anything better than that.

Q: What are some ways you think student life at UVU is unique?

A: We are trying to constantly engage our students in real-life activities so that when they start that job, they're not going in there without any experiences. We are trying to embed that in every single area of UVU.

Q: What resources does UVU offer for student success?

A: UVU is a place where students feel at home. The new Student Life & Wellness Building addresses the body, mind and spirit of our students. Our goal is to have our students connect with us in a deeper way so they feel at home here and know this is a place that believes in them and wants them to succeed. Our First Year Experience program has a student success class, which provides a transition from high school to university. Even very good students get overwhelmed that first year of university. I know I did. The different activities through the First Year Experience are designed to help freshmen gain the confidence to succeed that first year.

Q: What advice should alumni and other parents give their children for their first year at UVU?

A: Get to know your teachers. Know them by name and have them know you by name. It makes all the difference. Those faculty members are an incredible resource, and many times students don't take advantage of that. The second piece of advice I would give is to get involved on campus. Get involved in whatever your passion is, because that will give you the spark to keep you motivated and to have purpose in your life. It all starts by getting involved and trying different things, learning different things. The opportunities for men and women are limitless, but if you don't know about

those opportunities, you can't take advantage of them. Especially during those first couple years of college, that's your chance to discover, explore, look around, try something you've never tried before.

Q: What are some ways alumni can be more involved in student affairs?

A: There are so many ways alumni can be involved! For one thing, UVU has a lot of committees that we would love alumni to be a part of and give feedback on. We are always looking for alumni that can help us in recruiting — we have a lot of recruitment activities out of state that we would love to have alumni at. Let us know what you're interested in and we'll find that place for you where your passion lies. We'd love to brainstorm with you.

Q: Any final thoughts?

A: I don't think there has ever been a more exciting time for UVU. We have grown from a community college to a state college to a university, and we're not done yet. We're still excited to grow and to innovate. It's part of who we are. I think that's one of the most exciting things about UVU: our innovation.

If you are interested in getting involved with student affairs, visit uvu.edu/studentaffairs or call 801-863-6158.

THE FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE

UVU'S FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE PROGRAM HELPS NEW STUDENTS MAXIMIZE THEIR FIRST YEAR AT UVU AND MAKE THE MOST OF THE UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE

There's nothing quite like your first year of college. Utah Valley University's First Year Experience program was specially developed to help new students make the most of this new experience by providing a smooth transition to college life and a foundation for educational success. From Freshman Orientation to Freshman Convocation, the Fresh-

man Reading Program and beyond, UVU's FYE programs support students during their first year at UVU and all the way to graduation. Service days, learning communities, personalized academic advisement and a year-end celebration help students get familiar with campus, connect with the University and become lifelong Wolverines.

UNIVERSITY PHOTOGRAPHERS FOLLOWED EIGHT NEW FRESHMEN DURING THEIR FIRST YEAR AT UVU TO CAPTURE THE EXCITEMENT OF UVU'S FYE PROGRAMS.



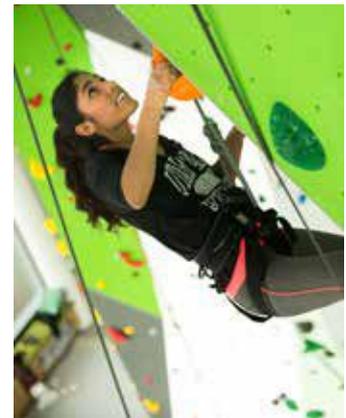




AS FRESHMEN ADJUST TO THEIR NEW LIFE AS COLLEGE STUDENTS, UVU'S FYE PROGRAMS WELCOME STUDENTS TO CAMPUS AND PROVIDE A TRUSTED CONNECTION TO OTHER FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS, ADVISERS, AND CAMPUS LIFE AND RESOURCES.



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Investing in Real-World Innovation

Vivint gift helps UVU launch a cutting-edge professional sales program

by Melinda R. Colton



Todd Pedersen knows a thing or two about rejection. When a pest control company refused to hire him for a sales position, he launched his own product and his own team. With a loan of \$5,000 from his mother, he and 10 of his friends sold pest control door-to-door. He told his mom he would earn at least \$10,000 that summer, so imagine their surprise when he ended up making \$80,000.

Today, the company that began in a single-wide trailer in the Arizona desert in 1992 is the largest home automation services provider in North

America. Based in Provo, Vivint Inc. was acquired in 2012 for \$2 billion and recently expanded into solar energy systems.

Whether it's selling door-to-door or hiring his employees, Pedersen's personal approach is key to his success — success he wants to share with students at Utah Valley University by teaching them the value of making personal connections and meeting customer needs. He has personally donated \$1 million to UVU, with Vivint donating an additional million, under the leadership of Alex Dunn, Vivint president, and Matt Eyring, chief strategy and innovation officer.

Both donations will go to support UVU's new professional sales program, which will operate out of the newly renamed Vivint Business Resource Center.

"The Vivint organization is known for its innovation, foresight and commitment to Utah Valley and the state," says UVU President Matthew S. Holland. "This investment is one more example of those values in action."

Pedersen believes Utah has a talent pool of students with amazing sales potential.

A missing part of the equation has been a professional platform to foster skills that equate to exceptional salesmanship. "I am honored to help establish a sales program that will provide students with training, education and communication skills that will benefit them throughout their entire careers," he says.

The program will include coursework in personal selling, sales management and sales analytics as well as sales internships. The program, the only of its kind in the region, will also include a unique sales research component, all while focusing on the development of real-world skills. When the program officially launches in fall 2014, it will include a sales and marketing research center and laboratory that will incorporate the latest eye-tracking equip-

ment and facial coding technology.

"This is a game-changing gift that puts us on a path to emerge as a top five sales program in the country," says Norman Wright, dean of the Woodbury School of Business.

In addition to making the latest technologies and techniques available, the gift will create a research director position, establish a scholarship program and help fund an additional faculty member.

"The skills students gain from participating in a program like this will allow them to create new opportunities for themselves and others."

The program will also train an estimated 200 students, help support 50-plus internship experiences, afford the means for students to participate in national collegiate sales competitions and provide more than 50 merit and need-based scholarships over the course of the next five years.

"The skills students gain from participating in a program like this will allow them to create new opportunities for themselves and others," Pedersen says. "Whether they're selling a product to consumers or selling themselves in a job interview, the things they learn here will help them succeed in every aspect of business and life in general."

UVU PRESIDENT MATTHEW S. HOLLAND AND VIVINT CEO TODD PEDERSEN EXCHANGE HATS AT VIVINT'S RECENT GIFT ANNOUNCEMENT. PEDERSEN IS KNOWN FOR THE FLAT-BILLED HATS THAT HE WEARS EVERY DAY TO WORK.



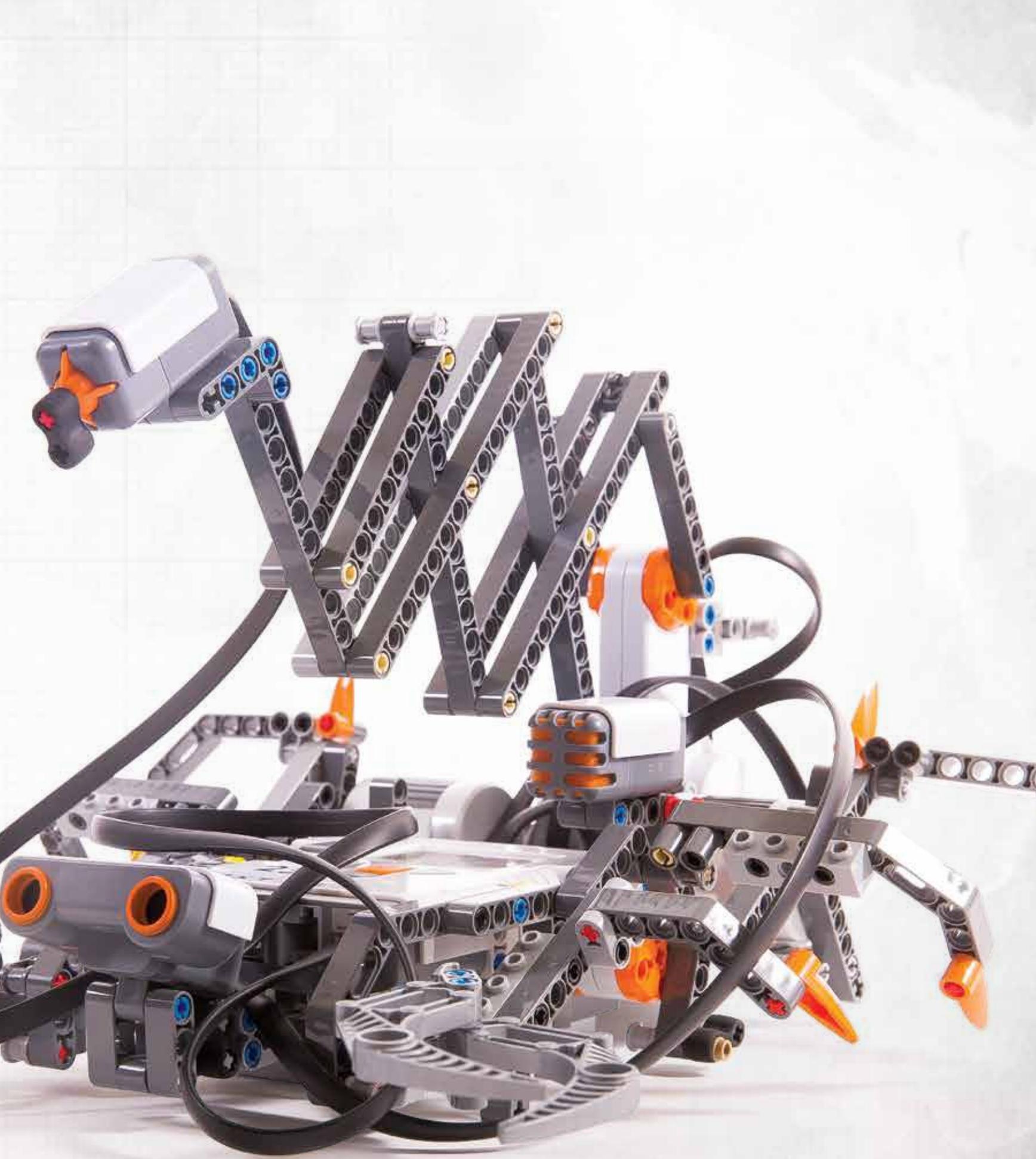
PHOTO BY AUGUST MILLER

GENERATION

STEM

UVU education students ignite the rising generation's curiosity in science, technology, engineering and math

by Heather Wrigley
photography by August Miller



It's like a scene out of the mechanistic mayhem of "Transformers" — two robots close in on each other, pincers extended.

Except these robots are only half a foot tall. . . . And they're built, programmed and controlled by 11-year-olds. . . . And their goal is to be the first to complete that day's challenge — modify and program a robot to independently follow a course and transfer a packet of candy into a box on a mat.

Welcome to Utah Valley University's inaugural robotics program. This spring nearly a dozen elementary education majors from UVU teamed up with Utah County's Alpine School District and local business Learning Through Robotics to offer the program, one of just a few of its kind in the state. Their goal is to open the minds of young Utahns to the boundless oppor-

tunities available in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) and create better teachers of those same subjects in the public education system.

During the 10-week program, fifth and sixth graders didn't rush home to video games and mobile apps; they rushed to classrooms to handle servo controllers and program robotics software. For 10 weeks, UVU education majors got hands-on experience teaching in a real classroom setting and becoming comfortable with STEM subjects. And for the foreseeable future, UVU will continue to cultivate local and global partnerships to build a strong STEM-savvy workforce.

It's Merely Elementary

Ten-year-old Avery leans over the mass of Lego blocks, wires and wheels she's named "Robot Bob." She and her program partner, 12-year-old Sadie, have built a compound wheel with tread to replace the insubstantial plastic back wheel they've been using to help steer the robot. They've set the parameters for speed, duration, direction and rotation, and they're ready to test it on the mat.

"It probably won't work the first time, but that's OK," Avery says. "It's trial and error. It's not failing; it's learning what to do, how to change it to make it work the next time."

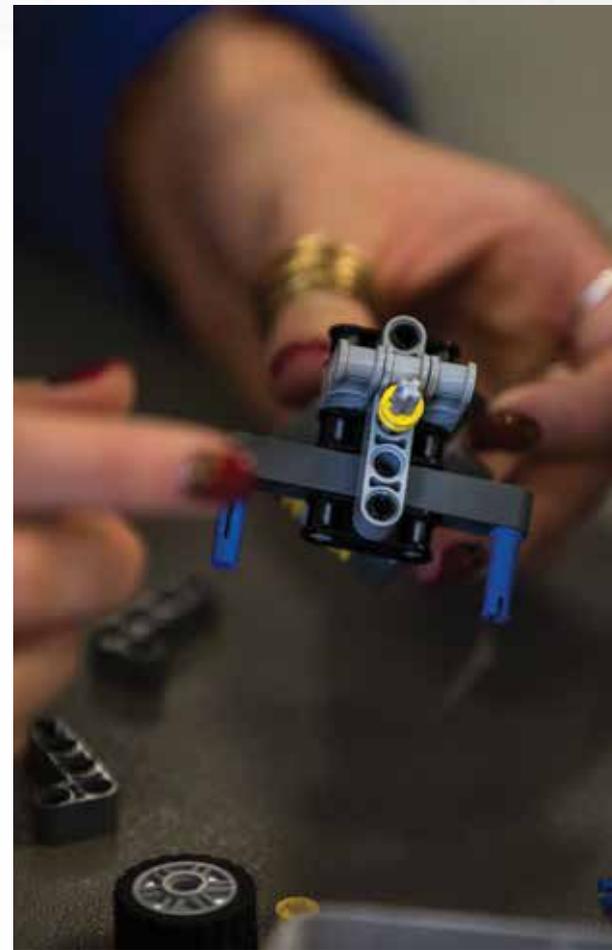
Her attitude embodies the perspective Elaine Tuft and Vessela Ilieva, professors from UVU's School of Education and creators of the robotics program, hope to generate in children who are exposed to STEM subjects early on in their education.

"Research shows us that by the time students reach middle school, their interest in science and math is set; they like it or they don't," Tuft says. "Elementary school is the time to build interest and excite their natural curiosity, to show them that the STEM subjects are all connected and to bring them to life."

That observation rings true as Ashley Heaton, one of UVU's student teachers, a junior from San Dimas, Calif., asks a classroom of 30 students at Highland Elementary: "Who remembers the five steps to download?" A mass of hands — belonging to girls, boys, gamers, athletes, budding artists and more — shoot into the air.

"I really enjoy watching the students get excited to be a part of this program. I love watching them come into the classroom ready to participate and learn all that they can," Heaton says. "The students are doing STEM without even realizing it. They think





they are playing with the robots when they are really participating in various learning activities. As teachers, we can then relate what they're learning back to STEM and show the students that it can be fun, and they can be excited about it."

According to the National Math and Science Initiative, 16 of the 30 fastest growing occupations through 2016 will require substantial mathematics or science preparation.

"The way the world is changing, there is going to be more and more demand for people with skills in these areas, and Utah has to meet this demand by producing more of those people. We need to be at the forefront, and we need to start early," Ilieva says. "Utah is rich in technology-based companies. We need to begin building the people they need to continue progressing."

As for those students who may not end up in a STEM career, research by the national Afterschool Alliance indicates that children who participate in STEM programs benefit in other ways, with improved

"Elementary school is the time to build interest and excite their natural curiosity, to show them that the STEM subjects are all connected and to bring them to life."

grades as well as higher rates of high school graduation and college attendance.

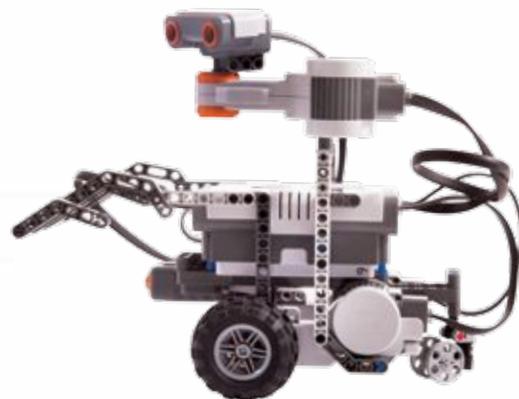
For parent Randy Matthews, it's all about giving his son the opportunity to create, to work with his hands and to interact with others. Twelve-year-old Cason likes math — once he "gets" it.

"It's a great program as far as teaching social skills and getting him away from just looking at a screen to actually working physically with a computer," Matthews says. "He's shown some interest in construction, but whatever he does, this program is great for making him a more well-rounded and confident individual."





During each of the four days a week UVU student teachers hold robotics classes, they can expect to teach between 30 and 40 elementary schoolchildren for at least an hour. In addition to managing a classroom full of energetic youngsters and learning to co-teach, student teachers also participate in a three-hour training each Friday to learn the materials and lesson plan they will be teaching the following week.



According to the National Math and Science Initiative, 16 of the 30 fastest growing occupations through 2016 will require substantial mathematics or science preparation.

“It’s been great hands-on experience to manage a classroom,” says Ben Everitt, a senior from Saratoga Springs, Utah, who decided to return to school and major in elementary education following many years of managing development teams that designed and produced high-tech products throughout the world.

Everitt may have a background in technology, but many educators do not. Because of this, NMSI — launched in 2007 by leaders in business, education and science to reverse the recent decline in U.S. students’ math and science educational achievement — has stressed that teachers need more training, especially in STEM subjects.

UVU’s robotics program is preparing elementary teachers to overcome their anxiety about teaching STEM subjects and is giving them the confidence to succeed in the classroom now and in the future.

“When I first began, I was intimidated by all of the parts and programming that were involved,” says Johanna Martinez, a senior from Kearns, Utah. “I did not have a lot of knowledge in working with STEM subjects, and this experience has allowed me to become skilled at teaching more difficult subjects as well as gain more self-assurance in teaching subjects that many of us often shy away from.”

Learning Through Robotics previously worked with engineers and scientists to

facilitate similar after-school robotics programs, but found it didn’t work so well.

“There were two issues,” explains Jay Jayaseelan, owner of Learning Through Robotics. “First, they didn’t know how to teach kids, and second, they were very demanding. So we turned to education majors. The struggle there is that they generally have less experience in STEM, but that is very easily taught. The teachers from UVU have learned very quickly, and they are very good with kids.”

“This experience will allow me as a teacher post-graduation to bring the passion and love I have developed for STEM into the classroom,” Martinez says. “The confidence I have gained while teaching in the robotics program will help me incorporate STEM into my teaching in a way that will allow my students to learn important concepts in a hands-on and interactive manner.”

Everitt agrees that managing 30 to 40 students a day, teaching a lesson, adapting it to individual student’s needs and managing the expectations of the school and students, has been a great experience.

“Being able to place this on a résumé as part of my education background will definitely provide me with an additional tool when I enter the workforce,” Everitt says. “I am confident when I interview, the opportunity I have been provided will be a point of discussion.”

An Exact Science

It’s not just the elementary students who are getting a confidence boost from the robotics program. UVU’s student teachers have also grown in their self-assuredness as future educators.

“The robotics program has given them a lot more opportunity to practice teaching elementary-aged children,” Ilieva says. “It’s increased their confidence in teaching STEM subjects, and it’s prepared them to integrate STEM subjects into their own classrooms in the future. Because of these things, these teachers will be more marketable after they graduate.”

More Than the Sum of Its Parts

As UVU's robotics program drew to a close for the semester, students from all 14 schools came together at the Alpine School District's robotics showcase, where educators, legislators, peers and proud parents watched students' custom creations come to life.

"One other outcome of this program is the important partnerships that have been formed," Tuft says. "In addition to working with Alpine School District, we've reached out to local companies and even gotten support from international businesses."

STEM education has been a key priority of lawmakers and Utah Gov. Gary Herbert as the state moves forward on a goal to increase degree attainment among Utah's working adults.

During the 2014 legislative session, HB150 designated \$20 million to Utah's STEM Action Center. The bill was sponsored by UVU's vice president of finance and administration, Rep. Val Peterson, and co-sponsored by more than 40 other representatives. Tamara Goetz, assistant dean for external relations at UVU's College of Science & Health is director of the center, whose purpose includes finding best

practices for teaching STEM and implementing them in Utah schools to interest more students in those fields.

"If we're going to give our children and our youth the skills to be competitive in the global marketplace, we've got to make sure they have strong math and science backgrounds," Peterson says. "Developing competitive STEM skills in our students will make us globally competitive and keep us globally competitive and ensure that Utah's economy remains strong."

UVU's robotics program began with a desire right in line with the state's goal to integrate more math and science curriculum into elementary schools, to give students a head start in exploring STEM careers. When Tuft and Ilieva first contacted Jayaseelan, whose company offers STEM-focused programs for children in school, at home, in summer camps, at competitions and elsewhere, he jumped at the opportunity to get involved. At no cost to UVU, the company provided the laptops, Lego Mindstorm™ kits, specialized software and science equipment used in the classroom and even conducted teacher training for the student teachers.

"We partnered with UVU because it has the most robust outreach program for education majors in the area," Jayaseelan says. "The School of Education is preparing about a thousand teachers, and they specialize in different subjects. The people at UVU are very supportive, visionary people."

As the robotics program has grown to include more people and partners, more opportunities have been opened up to the School of Education. Other school districts have contacted Tuft about expanding the program to their school, and another educational technology company, Japan's Learning Systems,

"We need programs like the robotics class that transfer knowledge into doing."

with whom Jayaseelan is affiliated, has donated \$40,000 in support of it.

"The future will require our students to innovate, invent, solve problems, collaborate, use technology, think logically and communicate," Parker Fawson, dean of the School of Education says. "These are functional skills that must be embedded in their learning experience at all levels. Our desire is that as a result of this project, our elementary students begin to develop these important skills so they will not shy away from deeper STEM work as they proceed through their years of preparation for future opportunities."

The possibility of expanding UVU's robotics program into other local schools in the near future will depend on the availability of grants and other funding, but Ilieva and Tuft are hopeful the program will continue to develop and spread. Further down the road, an exchange program between local students and students from Japan might be in the works.

Whatever the outcome, one thing is certain — through the robotics program and other strong collaborative projects, UVU will continue to cultivate a legacy of engaged learning that will have a lasting global impact.

"Teaching students to love learning is vital to the future of our society," Everitt says. "We need programs like the robotics class that transfer knowledge into doing. If we can inspire these youth and push their understanding, our society will benefit — they are the future."



To see more photos of UVU's robotics program, please download the UVU Mag App in the iTunes store.



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WAC Attack

From the track to the diamond, UVU athletes excelled in **2013–14**

The UVU men's basketball team wasn't the only group to excel in the Wolverines' first year in the WAC. In games and in the classroom, UVU athletes continued the tradition of excellence known as the Wolverine Way.

2 **WAC CHAMPIONSHIPS**
(men's basketball and men's cross country)

18 **UVU RECORDS BROKEN DURING INDOOR TRACK**

4 **WRESTLERS QUALIFIED FOR NATIONALS, A SCHOOL RECORD**

24 **WOLVERINE STUDENT-ATHLETES NAMED TO ACADEMIC ALL-WAC TEAMS**

45% **OF UVU STUDENT-ATHLETES HOLD A 3.5 GPA OR HIGHER**

23 **WAC ATHLETE OF THE WEEK AWARD WINNERS**
(12 in track and field, three in cross country, three in basketball, two in softball, two in volleyball, one in women's soccer)

.935 **FREE-THROW PERCENTAGE FOR WOMEN'S BASKETBALL PLAYER KATIE KUKLOK, FOURTH OVERALL IN THE NATION**

0 **HITS GIVEN UP BY UVU SOFTBALL PITCHER JOSI SUMMERS DURING A MARCH 2014 WIN OVER ALBANY**

1999 *Last time a college basketball player in the state of Utah was named to a Division I Academic All-America team, as **HOLTON HUNSAKER** was in 2014*



WELCOME

TO Fabulous
LAS VEGAS
NEVADA





AGAINST THE ODDS

**LED BY FOUR SENIORS,
THE UVU MEN'S BAS-
KETBALL TEAM MADE
HISTORY IN ITS WAC
DEBUT SEASON**

by Layton Shumway // photography by August Miller



THIS WASN'T SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN.

Before the start of the 2013–2014 men's basketball season, the Utah Valley Wolverines were predicted to finish no higher than fourth in the Western Athletic Conference. Neither the coaches nor the media gave UVU much of a chance in its first year in the WAC – the first year the team could compete for an NCAA Tournament berth.

The end-of-year trophies and record books will tell a different story. They will show multiple UVU players on the All-WAC First Team. They will show a Coach of the Year Award for Wolverines head coach Dick Hunsaker. And most importantly, they will show UVU where the experts never thought they could finish: in first place as regular-season WAC champions.

"No one had any expectations for us," says senior guard Holton Hunsaker. "In our first year in WAC play, to be able to do what we did was pretty amazing."

With Hunsaker and three fellow seniors – center Ben Aird, guard Keawe Enos and forward Taylor Brown – leading the way, UVU continued its tradition of beating the odds. And the foundation is set for the Wolverines to keep defying expectations for years to come.

PAVING THE WAY

This season's WAC championship is the culmination of UVU's unprecedented rise through collegiate athletics. In 2009, the University was granted full Division-I status by the NCAA, and UVU remains the only athletic program to have ever jumped directly from the junior college ranks to the highest level of NCAA competition.

More importantly, joining the WAC meant the Wolverines could at last compete for automatic berths in NCAA postseason

tournaments – a hugely significant factor in recruiting new student-athletes.

"Our being in the WAC really erases a lot of roadblocks for athletes who like who we are and where we're going," says Dick Hunsaker.

"NO ONE HAD ANY EXPECTATIONS FOR US."

Hunsaker himself is no stranger to the road to NCAA prominence. His 30-year coaching career has led him to such diverse schools as Ball State, Weber State, and Utah, where he was named the Mountain West Conference Coach of the Year in 2001. This year marked his 12th season as UVU head coach, and his career at the head of the Wolverines has included landmark wins like a D-I Provisional National

Championship in 2004, a road victory over Arizona State in 2005, and numerous conference championships.

Hunsaker is familiar with teaching excellent point guards, too, including current NBA player and UVU Hall of Famer Ronnie Price and former UVU All-American Isiah Williams. But no point guard has been quite like his son, Holton.

The Wolverines' floor leader had originally planned to play at Louisiana Tech (itself then a WAC school), but he changed his mind while on a mission in Fiji. Since then, Holton has started every game of his Wolverines career, including 31 games this season.

"He's the hardest-working guy on the floor," Aird says of Holton.

That hard work extends to the classroom as well. This February, Holton was named to the Academic All-America second team – the highest academic honor for a student-athlete in UVU history, and the first men's basketball player from a Division I program in Utah to earn the honor since 1999.

3,090

**TOTAL CAREER POINTS
SCORED BY MEN'S
BASKETBALL PLAYERS
HOLTON HUNSAKER AND
BEN AIRD**

This ends their Wolverine careers in second and third place, respectively, on UVU's all-time scoring list

Holton carries a 3.88 GPA and will graduate in April with a degree in accounting. And like a true point guard, he's quick to pass the accolades on to others.

"I'm very thankful for the support of my wife and of my mother, and especially that of my professors," Holton says of his academic success. "They've always been more than willing to give me the extra help I need when I've been on the road with the team."

On the court, Holton has undeniably been the Wolverines' best player. His season averages of 14 points and 4.2 assists per game are tops on the team, and he earned first-team All-WAC honors for the second straight season.

Aird, also a two-time All-WAC first-teamer, stands in stark contrast to Holton, and not just because of the differences in height (Aird is 6 feet 9 inches tall, compared to Holton's even six feet). While Holton is a fiery, energetic presence on the court as he yells instructions and spars verbally with opponents, Aird delivers a quiet, upbeat brand of leadership. He's al-



ways ready with a wry smile and a quick wit, helping his teammates feel at ease.

"We're a very close team; there are just a bunch of high character people on this team," Aird says. "Our time spent together has been something I will remember for the rest of my life, and these are some of the best friends I will ever have."

While Aird specializes in scoring, rebounding and defense, fellow senior Keawe Enos is the team's designated sharpshooter. A Mesa, Arizona native, Enos shot a sparkling 45 percent from long range this season. He's also an impeccable free-

"WE KNEW HE WAS GOING TO MAKE THEM. WE HAD NO DOUBT."

throw shooter; in a key matchup with New Mexico State in February, Enos calmly sank three straight free throws to force the game to overtime, where the Wolverines emerged victorious.

"We knew he was going to make them," Aird says. "We had no doubt."

The fourth member of UVU's senior quartet is Taylor Brown, a 6-foot-5 guard/forward who saw action in 22 games this season for the Wolverines. But while he played a smaller part, Aird and Hunsaker are quick to point out that the strength of this year's team is the willingness of each individual to sacrifice.

"This group accepts its roles," Hunsaker says. "Their feet are firmly planted, and they've enjoyed being with one another. They're a pretty special group, to be honest."

"There are so many who maybe took a step back in minutes because they knew as a



PHOTOS, BOTTOM LEFT, BY LINSEY CRAIG

unit we could accomplish more than we ever could individually,” Aird adds. “I think that is a very valuable lesson that each one of us can learn and take into our lives.”

HOW THE WAC WAS WON

While the season started slowly for the Wolverines, they showed flashes of brilliance even in early losses. The team lost five straight road games in November and December, but four of those losses were by five points or less. UVU surprised Oregon by battling hard and trailing by just four at halftime, and strong performances at Pepperdine, Tennessee Tech and South Dakota State gave the Wolverines momentum.

Once WAC conference play began, however, UVU really began to shine. The team reeled off seven consecutive wins, including four on the road, to leap to the top of the WAC standings. As rivals like New Mexico State stumbled, the road to a WAC championship – and the NCAA Tournament – started to feel like more of a reality.

Inside the UVU locker room, though, it was all business.

“Leading that way as a point guard, you can’t let that excitement get to you,” Holton says. “You have to stay level-headed and run the team.”

But as the wins started to pile up, the buzz around UVU campus grew. Attendance at home games, which had hovered around 2,000 fans for much of the season, suddenly shot up near 5,000 as UVU students and community members rallied behind the Wolverines.

“We were just happy to see it grow throughout the season and get more and more fun to come to the games,” Holton says.

That thrill reached its peak on March 7, as UVU took the UCCU Center floor in front of a season-high crowd of 5,068. With a win that night over Bakersfield, the Wolverines could do what few thought possible: clinch the regular-season WAC title outright.

Behind a balanced scoring effort, UVU took a 33–21 halftime lead, and fans in attendance could sense the victory within the team’s grasp. But Bakersfield battled back in the second half, grabbing a six-point lead late in the game and pushing UVU’s championship hopes to the brink.

But the Wolverines would not be denied. Behind 10 second-half points from junior

70.5%

SHOOTING PERCENTAGE FOR UVU IN ITS FIRST-EVER WAC TOURNAMENT GAME

This would hold until the end of the game, setting an all-time WAC conference record

forward Mitch Bruneel and nine free throws from Holton Hunsaker, UVU snatched a 64–55 victory and etched their names into WAC history.

“This team has fight and a terrific inner spirit to compete,” Dick Hunsaker says. “A team like ourselves did a lot of overachieving, and maybe we were underrated by many until they finally had to permanently put our name on top of those WAC standings.”

As fans flooded the court, UVU players celebrated with the WAC championship trophy, cutting down the nets and posing for photos. Hunsaker says it was the perfect achievement for the team’s senior leaders.

“That was a special night for many reasons, but maybe none more so than that we were able to secure a championship for our four special seniors in front of their friends and family,” Hunsaker says.

LEAVING LAS VEGAS

With the top seed secured, UVU entered the WAC Tournament in Las Vegas as the favorites to claim the all-important NCAA bid. But with every team in the conference competing, the regular-season champion doesn’t always prevail.

The Wolverines’ chances looked bright, though, after a first-round 83–63 thumping of Texas Pan-American in which UVU shot a stunning 70 percent from the floor – an all-time WAC Tournament record. With 24 points and seven assists from Hunsaker, the Wolverines seemed poised to carry over their regular-season success into another historic first.

But it was not to be. UVU’s semifinal opponent, Idaho, ended the Wolverines’ dream with a 74–69 result. Although UVU had defeated Idaho twice in the regular season, in-

cluding an 89–88 thriller at the UCCU Center in February, the Wolverines fell short.

“I’ve been in conference tournament my entire career,” Hunsaker says. “So I understand what they mean and how difficult they are. There are very few regular-season champions that continue and run through their conference tournament.”

“Obviously there is some disappointment,” Aird adds. “But looking back on the year, there’s nothing but good memories with some of the best people I know.”

Even after losing in the WAC Tournament, however, the Wolverines had one last historic moment. Their regular-season championship earned them an automatic bid to the NIT and a matchup on the road against California from the Pac–12.

“The opportunity to play in the NIT is more than what Ben and I ever thought we were going to get coming to UVU,” Holton Hunsaker says.

And while UVU lost that game to end the season, the Wolverines impressed the ESPN production crew with their performance as Holton Hunsaker and Aird capped their amazing UVU careers with 22 and 19 points, respectively. The two finished in second and third place on the all-time scoring list at UVU.

More than their incredible achievements, though, this year’s Wolverines say they will remember the personal bonds they forged and the legacy they leave.

“With hard work, you really can achieve more than people might expect of you,” Aird says. “There wasn’t an expectation for us to achieve what we did, and I think a lot of credit needs to go for how hard each member of

“THIS TEAM HAS FIGHT AND A TERRIFIC INNER SPIRIT TO COMPETE.”

this team worked throughout this season.”

“I think, as next year’s team sees success as well and continues to work, the fans will keep coming,” Holton Hunsaker adds. “Hopefully they will have the same good memories we did and understand that this is just the start.”

ONE GOOD PROJECT LEADS TO ANOTHER

UVU digital media senior projects emphasize engaged learning and international service

WRITTEN BY TRUDY CHRISTENSEN

PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRENDAN LARKIN AND AANOR LOUIS

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Trudy Christensen, associate professor of digital media, traveled to Ghana with two UVU digital media students to further the work and vision of Acacia Shade, a Provo-based nonprofit concerned with the welfare of children with disabilities in Africa.*

There's always a mixture of exhilaration and exhaustion in the air the night the Utah Valley University Digital Media Department hosts its Annual Senior Projects Showcase.

I've watched this ritual play out for nine years now, and each year the projects get better. Small and large teams of senior students complete around 20 projects ranging from producing live concerts, websites, games and apps to creating promotional videos, independent films and animated shorts. Each year, 80 to 90 percent of these projects include students producing digital products for nonprofit organizations.

At the end of the school year, I always wonder if we'll come up with enough good projects the next year. But somehow our students reach out and find deserving and valuable projects that not only benefit the community, but have a profound impact on them, as well. This is the story of just one of those projects.

It started when Kim Daley, a former student, contacted me and told me she was on the board of Acacia Shade, a nonprofit that helps disabled children in Ghana. She wondered if – similar to a project we had done last year – some of our seniors might produce a promotional video for Acacia Shade.

I put out the word and in no time had five volunteers eager to begin work.

We wrote a grant and received partial funding through UVU's Grants for

es where there is limited care and where they are neglected and often abused. Acacia Shade has worked with the Ghanaian government to rescue some of the most endangered children and provide a home with trained caregivers. Since coming to the Acacia Shade Home, which is located in Accra, the children are happy and more engaged with their surroundings, and they demonstrate skills they previously didn't have.

Zuma, a child with severe physical

with rugs and pads on the floors for play areas and stimulating books and toys on nearby shelves. And there are enough caregivers to spend time interacting with each child one-on-one.

We then traveled to other orphanages and homes to better understand some of the challenges Acacia Shade and Ghana face and to gather interviews detailing those trials. In doing so, we witnessed both symbols of loss and signs of hope for the disabled in Ghana.

In one orphanage, we saw children with disabilities languishing with confused, sorrowful stares. It seemed difficult enough in the spartan surroundings to care for the children who did not



"WE WITNESSED BOTH SYMBOLS OF LOSS AND SIGNS OF HOPE FOR THE DISABLED IN GHANA."

Engaged Learning program. With that, two students (Brendan Larkin, our director/cinematographer, and Aanor Louis, our audio engineer) and I set off for Ghana for 10 days in January.

In our first interview, held almost immediately after we stepped off the plane from our 16-hour flight, Dr. Emanuel Kissi, the doctor who donates medical services to the children who live in the Acacia Shade Home, informed us that in Ghana, disabled children are often viewed as bad omens or curses. Many are abandoned and end up in orphanag-

and intellectual disabilities, came to the Acacia Shade Home practically inert and completely helpless. When we visited her, four months after her arrival, she was sliding herself around the floor and even maneuvering herself up stairs to get to the action near us and the other children.

At the Acacia Shade Home, we recorded the children's activities and captured interviews with some of the caregivers. Unlike the dark cement floors and sterile walls of many orphanages, the surroundings in the Acacia Shade home are bright and inviting,

have disabilities, so those who could not fight with the rest for limited attention and resources suffered in the shadows.

We met Kofi, who suffered from cerebral palsy and lived on the cement floor of a small room where he had spent the last 30 years. With virtually no use of his arms he would lean over a wooden pallet to eat his food from a plate. Yet Kofi's bright eyes shone with intelligence, and his mind was intact. I wondered: "What if he had been able to go to school and learn to read?"

Not everything we witnessed was discouraging. In Ho, we visited a school where units for disabled children are drums and danced with the other students. We also met Mawunyo, who has lived in a plastic laundry basket most of her 17 years. She is a pioneer of sorts. She was the first child with a disability to attend a local public school in Ho, and



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: JULIE RENEER, CO-FOUNDER OF ACACIA SHADE (BACK LEFT), AND CARRIE BROWN, DIRECTOR OF KEKELI FOUNDATION (RIGHT OF JULIE), MEET WITH TEACHERS AND STUDENTS AT THE ADAKLU HELEKPE SCHOOL, WHICH HAS A UNIT FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES; AYARIGA, A YOUNG BOY WITH SEVERE AUTISM, PLAYS AT THE ACACIA SHADE HOME IN ACCRA, GHANA; UVU ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF DIGITAL MEDIA TRUDY CHRISTENSEN AND RENEER BRAVE THE CANOPY WALK NEAR CAPE COAST; YOUNG GHANAIAN CHILDREN STAND BY THE SIDE OF THE ROAD ON THE WAY TO THE ACACIA SHADE HOME.

shortly after, several other children with disabilities started to attend school.

In Cape Coast, we visited another progressive school where trained instructors taught engaging classes for children with disabilities. We delighted in the lively interactions among all students at recess and were impressed by the job training classes, where older students with disabilities created beaded jewelry and colorful cloth bags and purses to sell in the markets. We were sobered and touched

by the 13 parents of children with disabilities who traveled at their own expense and waited several hours to tell us their challenges raising their children and their gratitude for the difference the school was making in their lives.

We returned from this odyssey determined to help Acacia Shade carry out its important mission by producing promotional videos the organization can use to raise awareness and educate others about its mission. Our stories, photos

and video footage also inspired the rest of the team — project film editors Jared Bridegan and Drew Harris and project manager Geraldine Riding — broadening their horizons and helping them recognize that we could make a difference.

So, what about next year's projects? I'm more confident than ever that we'll be able to find other great projects, because I've seen once again how one good project leads to another.




ALUMNI AWARDS
 2014

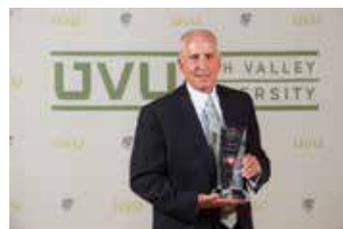
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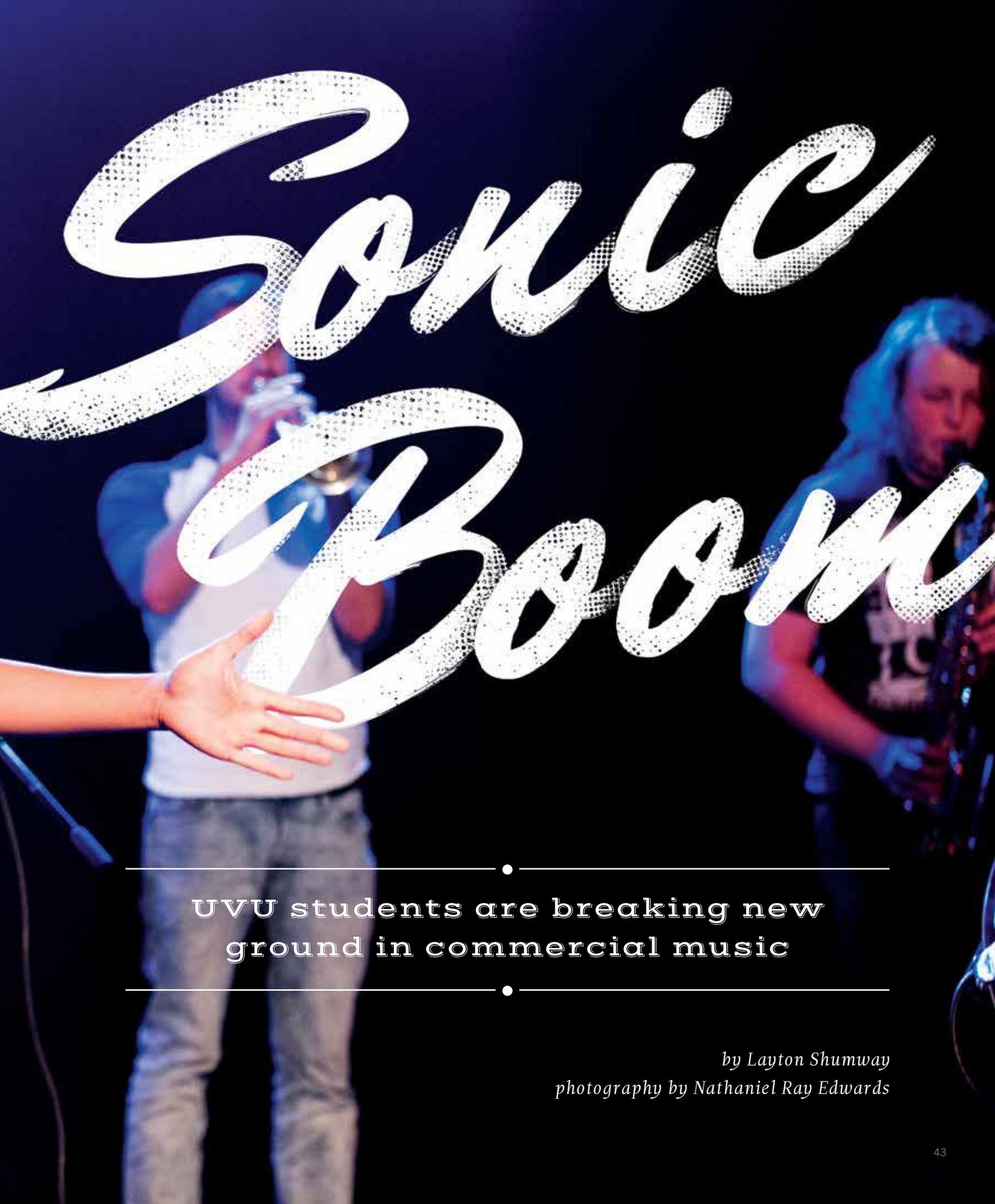
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Clockwise, from top: Culinary Arts Institute catering; Patrick Milligan and Norman Wright, dean of the Woodbury School of Business; Branden and Jennifer Miller; Danny and Amie Huntsman; Martha Wilson; UJU Grande Ballroom; Culinary Arts Institute catering, James Cardall; LarVar Rockwood; Curtis Morley; Alejandro Perez.







Sonic Boom

UVU students are breaking new
ground in commercial music

*by Layton Shumway
photography by Nathaniel Ray Edwards*

“Our approach is fully immersive”



Sonic Exchange’s rehearsal space goes far beyond the usual college band room. Rows of lights hang high above the raised stage at one end of the room. Speakers surround the performance area, with cables leading to amplifiers, microphones and instruments. At the far end, a sound booth sits ready to mix, blend and record.

This is the studio of renowned musician, author, producer and educator Caleb Chapman. He’s the director of Sonic Exchange, a brand-new ensemble composed of nine student musicians in UVU’s innovative commercial music program. And as Sonic Exchange plays through its own version of a popular Katy Perry song, Chapman likes what he hears.

In fact, every toe in the room is tapping. Young students from Chapman’s other music groups have gathered to listen as Sonic Exchange works through the song. This is the first time they’ve ever played it together, but you’d never know it by listening to them. After just a few weeks of practice, they are able to pick up new tunes like profession-

als. And according to Chapman, that’s the point.

“Our approach is fully immersive,” Chapman says. “With this group, we’re committed to giving them the entire experience, preparing them to be professional working musicians.”

Chapman knows exactly what that entails. He has shot up through the national music-education ranks, leading student ensembles on international tours, selling out Carnegie Hall and earning the 2013 Governor’s Performing Artist Award, given to one Utah artist annually for significant contributions to the arts in Utah. He is a finalist for the first-ever Grammy Music Educator Award.

With all that experience, Chapman understands that modern musicians need to know more than how to hit the right notes.

“We spend a lot of time working on the actual performance,” he says. “We turn on the stage lights, and we practice doing the show. We talk about where they stand on stage, how they move and how they interact, their facial expressions, all that stuff.”

And that’s still just a small part of Chapman’s approach. Plans are in place for Sonic Exchange to record full albums, shoot music videos and write original songs. The band will play venues across the country, including national conferences and festivals. Even the marketing tasks and social media presence have been assigned to band members, under Chapman’s tutelage.

The comprehensive curriculum is unique among universities nationally, Chapman says. “As far as I know, those things really aren’t being addressed even in some of the major commercial music programs in the country. I really think that UVU is a pioneer in that regard.”

The chance to be a part of something so innovative was what drew Chapman to UVU. He had turned down offers from other universities multiple times because they weren’t posing the same challenges. Chapman says the ambitious pitch from UVU School of the Arts dean K. Newell Dayley and music professor David Fullmer changed his mind.

“I said the only way I was interested is if UVU was up for making a run at be-



ing the top commercial music program in the country,” Chapman says. “Colleges need to think differently about how they shape their music programs. UVU is very quick to adapt. They gave me their commitment that they’re willing to have UVU not just host a commercial music program, but allow it to flourish and become the national

“We’re committed to giving them the entire experience, preparing them to be professional working musicians.”

leader in commercial music education. And that did get my attention.”

Sonic Exchange guitarist and UVU junior Kevin Maynard can attest to the usefulness of Chapman’s approach. Maynard has returned to school after a career in music plateaued due to his lack of a degree.

“I was a sound engineer and I built guitars in California,” Maynard says. “But I had kind of reached a ceiling of what I could do. What I’ve learned in the workplace and what we’re getting

here is very much on the same level. It’s absolutely what we need to know in the music industry.”

And seeing his students employed as professional musicians is Chapman’s top priority.

“The reality of it is that our top graduates are working as commercial musicians, whether that’s studio musicians,

gigging musicians or touring musicians,” Chapman says. “Today, musicians need to have a very well-rounded skillset to be able to survive.”

The result of Chapman’s philosophy is a band that will be able to grow and adapt together, relying on each other for the creative spark musicians need.

“It was obvious from the very first time we met,” says UVU sophomore and Sonic Exchange saxophonist Steven Ramos. “We didn’t even bring our instruments the first time. We all

sat in a circle and talked about what we would be doing, how we would be playing shows, how this wasn’t going to be just a typical college band.”

“We’ve gotten to a place where we’re critiquing each other, giving each other ideas and suggestions,” Maynard adds. “And we’ve only had five rehearsals together. That’s the level of trust this group has.”

That trust extends to its director, too. Chapman insists on giving Sonic Exchange as much autonomy and freedom as possible to prepare them for the world of professional music.

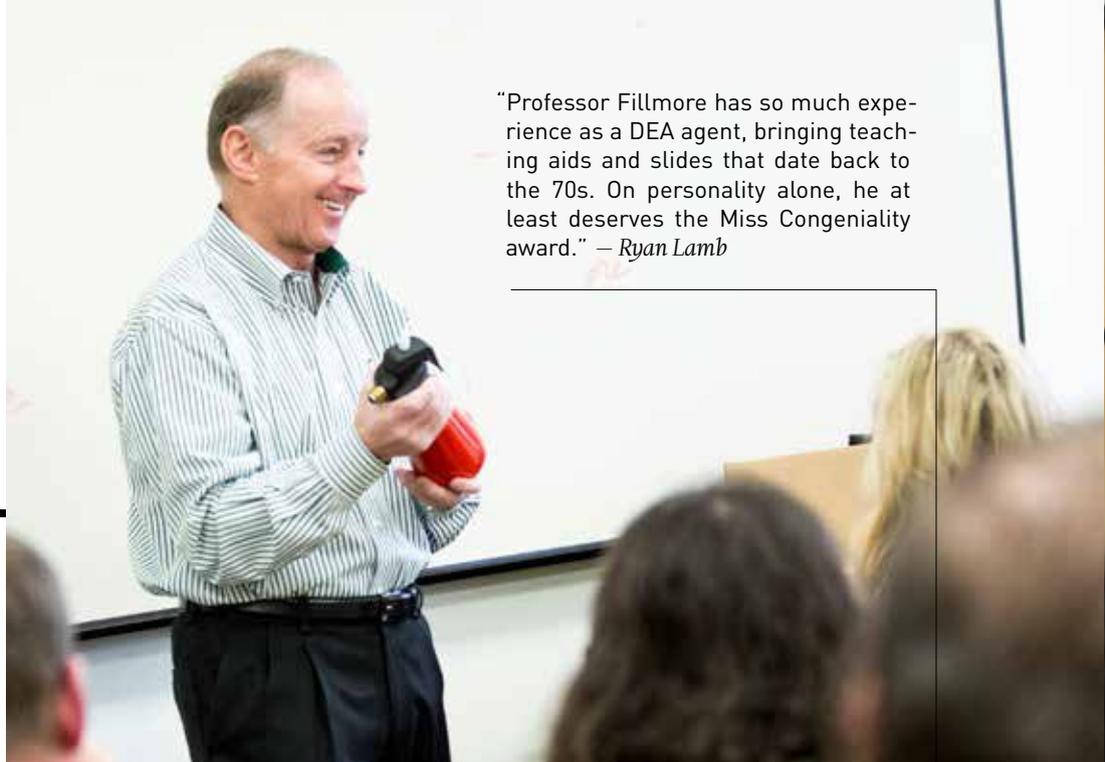
“They’re going to be fully on their own on stage,” he says. “They’re going to do their own thing. I’m not going to be up there leading them. It’s their show.”

That may sound scary for a group of student musicians, but it’s indicative of the confidence Chapman has in them. And judging by their sound, that confidence is easy to understand. In fact — to borrow a lyric from the Katy Perry song the band just played — the music world is about to hear Sonic Exchange roar.

2014 OUTSTANDING EDUCATORS

Each year, one faculty member from each of Utah Valley University's eight schools and colleges is presented with an Outstanding Educator Award. UVU students nominate and vote on the winners.

photography by Nathaniel Ray Edwards
and August Miller



"Professor Fillmore has so much experience as a DEA agent, bringing teaching aids and slides that date back to the 70s. On personality alone, he at least deserves the Miss Congeniality award." — Ryan Lamb

Curtis D. Fillmore *Criminal Justice — College of Aviation & Public Services*

Years at UVU: 17

Method: "I spent 26 years chasing organized crime, cartels, and drug smugglers in Salt Lake City, New York, and Copenhagen, Denmark, as a special agent with the Federal Drug Enforcement Administration. I incorporate real-life stories that emphasize the concepts in the class and make it more meaningful, and I try to make it light."



Lorilynn Brandt *Elementary Education — School of Education*

Years at UVU: 5

Inspiration: "Literacy is a gift that keeps on giving. For this reason, I help students understand the importance of being a strong teacher of literacy. Each semester, I give them the most current research-based knowledge and then assignments that give them practice to move forward as teachers." **Student Testimonial:** "Professor Brandt was always willing to meet outside of class time to answer questions or provide additional help. She provided us with real classroom experiences that taught us invaluable lessons. She was interested in our lives. She was, by far, my favorite professor at UVU." — Jessica Ross



Kevin Rhoads *Management — Woodbury School of Business*

Years at UVU: 2

Method: "I use my consulting experiences with NASDAQ, ExxonMobil, IBM and other companies to push my students to the point where they realize they can compete with anyone from any university in any market. I love to see the light come on when they realize they can do it." **Student Testimonial:** "He brings the business world into the classroom, closing the gap between school and business. He puts his students first and takes time to increase our understanding of the topics." — Robert Reilly

"Dr. Brown puts twice the time, effort and caring into her role as an educator, that she expects of her students. Even though she has the reputation of being the professor in her department with the most rigorous expectations of her students, she is a tremendous example of perseverance and hard work." — *James Fuqua*



Mary V. Brown *Public & Community Health — College of Science & Health*

Years at UVU: 18

Philosophy: "I expect my students to give their best, and I give them the support and feedback they need. By the end of the semester, they can see I really want to help them find their way in their careers."

Ben Moulton *Developmental Math — University College*

Years at UVU: 12

Method: "I want each of my students to get to a point where math is no longer a barrier to them choosing a career. I've gone so far as to teach some of the trickier math ideas by singing about a concept or formula. So many students come in hating math, and we give them the tools to say, 'Maybe I still don't like math, but now I can do it.'" **Student Testimonial:** "Professor Moulton made the task of completing Math 1050 manageable. He was knowledgeable and engaging. I have never taken more than one course from a mathematics instructor, but he was an exception." — *Paul Simpson*



Arlen L. Card *Digital Media — College of Technology & Computing*

Years at UVU: 5

Method: "I think students react well to me not because I'm the world's best teacher, but because I value them and think of them more as peers than underlings. I try to help students see the whole picture from the very beginning so they have context throughout the entire semester, and I try to see how what they're learning can better them in their practical life, relate it directly to their working future." **Student Testimonial:** "Dr. Card truly cares about his students and their success in the world. He makes sure his students know their stuff and are not just going through the requirements for the course. He learns the names of each one of his students and calls them by name." — *James McAllister*





Ron J. Hammond Behavioral Science — College of Humanities & Social Sciences

Years at UVU: 22

Motivation: “I didn’t grow up with a strong educational tradition, so I flunked out of college the first time around. The students I work with and appreciate the most are here for a second chance. At UVU, we’re always building, we’re always doing something new to help our students learn better.” **Student Testimonial:** “Dr. Hammond has sacrificed his own personal time to mentor me through school. I have never had an instructor make such efforts to help me get where I am today, and I greatly appreciate it.” — *Jacqueline Shriver*



Don Seegmiller Visual Arts — School of the Arts

Years at UVU: 5

Motivation: “I had gotten in a routine where I would spend up to 12 hours a day holed up, working on my art. Teaching keeps me on my toes. I never ask my students to do anything I’m not willing to do myself, and I’ve found that my own work has gotten better as I’ve taught my students.” **Student Testimonial:** “Don Seegmiller gives his heart and soul to his students. He spends countless hours preparing for classes, counseling students and finding creative ways to inspire and motivate us. He believes we are his legacy and does everything in his power to help us succeed in achieving our dreams. No one has given more of himself to us, and no one could be more appreciated.” — *Alicia Vannoy*

Meet Our Team



My experiences over the last 10 years have been enhanced by amazing co-workers, students and alumni.

I’m often given credit for UVU Magazine, but it’s compiled by a wonderful team of writers, designers and photographers from University Marketing & Communications.

This issue of UVU Magazine is the inaugural edition for Melinda Colton, who joined the marketing team in January. Melinda brings a strong writing, editing and publishing background to UVU.

After years of working alone with Linda Wickham, my administrative assistant,

we’re both thrilled that we’ve been joined by three other employees in the past four years. Kevin Walkenhorst is the assistant alumni director and has responsibility over the student programs and alumni groups. Kevin has a solid marketing background and a can-do attitude.

Amie Huntsman is our marketing coordinator and is also a loyal alumna who brings her love for UVU to the job. Amie organizes our marketing campaigns and seeks out sponsorships and partnerships.

Annual Giving was placed under my direction last year, which includes Justin Ferrell, the director of Annual Giving. Justin has found great success managing the call center and many of our annual campaigns.

In addition to these great full-time professionals, I also work with several

student interns and 18 dedicated alumni and friends who serve on the alumni board. They give hours of service to make sure that your alumni experience is positive and meaningful.

However, the largest and most significant impact on my career has come from you, our alumni. Thank you for making a difference in my life. I hope I’ve been able to keep you connected to UVU and to remind you of how it made a difference in your life.

Jeri Allphin
Senior Director, Alumni Relations & Annual Giving



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