

# UVU magazine



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Astrid S. Tuminez*

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**GREETINGS,** Wolverines! As I begin my presidency at Utah Valley University this fall, I have been thinking about three different words: you, me, and us. First, I want to say thank you to the amazing students, faculty, staff, and community at UVU. I am grateful for your service and your willingness to bring your energy, creativity, and life experience to UVU.

As for the second word, me: Things have been a whirlwind for me over the last six months, but I wouldn't change it for the world. While finishing my time at Microsoft and saying farewell to friends and colleagues in Asia, I have spent each night learning about UVU and communicating with the team. During the application process, it occurred to me that UVU is a dynamic place where I could utilize my competencies and skills, my passion for education and the student experience, and my fundamental love and respect for professors and what they do. There are many challenges ahead, but I am extremely excited to start this new chapter at UVU.

The third — and most important — word is us. The reason I am so excited is that you and I can only go so far individually, but together we can do amazing things. The stories in this issue of UVU Magazine show what can be accomplished when students and educators come together. From business to medicine, to public service and the arts, we can all achieve our dreams through the power of education.

Thank you again for everything you do. I am excited for what we will create together.

With admiration,

Astrid S. Tuminez  
President



### CLASSROOM BUILDING RENAMED IN HONOR OF ANDREA AND JAMES CLARKE

Andrea and James Clarke, two of Utah Valley University's foremost supporters, announced at a campus luncheon in April they would make a \$5 million donation to benefit university colleges and programs.

At that same luncheon, then-UVU President Matthew S. Holland announced the university is renaming the Classroom Building to the Andrea and James Clarke Building, to honor the couple. In addition, to pay tribute to Clarke's parents, the former Oquirrh Mountain Rooms on the fifth floor, 510 and 511, have been renamed the Labor and Honor Rooms. This unusual name comes from the extraordinary lessons James Clarke learned as he worked for his parents.

For centuries, the Latin phrase "labore et honore" — which translates to "Labor and Honor" — has adorned the Clarke Family Coat of Arms. As a young boy, Clarke gained practical meaning from the phrase as he collected his weekly paycheck from working summers for his parents.

Far more important than the sum of money at the end of each week were the words on his paycheck, Clarke says. Had he been honorable and hardworking in his efforts, the memo section of the paycheck would read "LABOR and HONOR." Had he worked but been late or given a halfhearted effort, the memo section of the check would simply read "LABOR," a singular word that he says made his heart sink. He learned early that only labor and honor together would suffice throughout his life.

PHOTOS BY AUGUST MILLER

PHOTOS BY AUGUST MILLER



### UVU RECEIVES INCLUSION CULTIVATES EXCELLENCE AWARD

Utah Valley University has received the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR) 2018 Inclusion Cultivates Excellence Award.

This award recognizes institutional initiatives and programs that have made a significant impact with respect to inclusive and equitable workplace practices. UVU has also been recognized for bringing about cultural change throughout the organization.

UVU Vice President of Student Affairs Kyle Reyes, who formerly served as UVU's chief diversity and inclusion officer, says, "From its inception, the UVU Strategic Inclusion Plan and efforts have been focused on campus-wide ownership of issues of inclusion, diversity, equity, access, pluralism, and opportunity. That's why we've been so successful — every school, department and individual has a part to play."



### GROUND BROKEN ON NEW I-15 PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

The Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT), Utah Transit Authority (UTA), UVU, Orem City, and Mountainland Association of Governments (MAG) broke ground for a 1,000-foot pedestrian bridge over Interstate 15, with estimated completion in August 2020. The bridge will connect UVU's main campus with the Orem Central FrontRunner station west of I-15.

UDOT is leading the construction project in partnership with UTA, UVU, MAG, and the City of Orem. The bridge is expected to alleviate the growing traffic demand on University Parkway directly east of the I-15 off-ramp, and will give commuters who park on the west side of the freeway a safe and convenient way to walk to campus.

"This is a historic day for UVU and the City of Orem. The pedestrian bridge is a key piece of the university's master plan to accommodate our growth and serve the needs of our community," then-UVU President Holland said. "We are excited by the new opportunities the bridge opens for the development of our west campus."

The bridge will be 1,022.5 feet long, 15 feet wide, 90 feet high, and accommodate pedestrians and cyclists. Both sides of the bridge will be accessible by elevators and stairs. It will have a covered roof, a heated deck to melt the snow, and perforated steel siding. Funding for this project is shared by UDOT, a UTA bond, and UVU.

RENDERING BY METHOD STUDIO

PHOTO BY AUGUST MILLER

### UVU SCIENCE STUDENTS EARN HONORS IN PORTUGAL

Three students from Utah Valley University have been honored with an award for a presentation they gave at an international conference in Portugal, held June 11-14.

Matthew L. Trappett, Jessica E. Carlson, and Michael J. Bennett received the "Excellent Shotgun Communication Award" for their project titled, "High Frequency Ultrasound for Carcinoma Detection: Software Development, Data Analysis, and Engineering." In layman's terms, it is using ultrasonic "forceps" to pinch a piece of tissue while a breast cancer patient is in the operating room. It is an improved way to quickly determine whether tissue needs to be removed.

"It is instant diagnostic information," says Phil Matheson, chair of UVU's Physics Department.

"This is quite an honor, since the students were competing against professional researchers, scientists, and faculty in the international ultrasonics community," said professor Timothy Doyle, who helped oversee the project.

### UVU STUDENTS EARN MARSHALL PLAN SCHOLARSHIPS IN VIENNA

Two Utah Valley University students received the Marshall Plan Scholarship at a ceremony in Vienna, Austria, in June.

Peter Beard and Ashley Stephenson, both seniors in UVU's Department of Digital Media, were the first two Americans to ever win the prestigious scholarship.

The newly appointed U.S. ambassador to Austria, Trevor D. Traina, presented the Marshall Plan Scholarships to Beard and Stephenson during the Marshall Plan Symposium. The scholarships are each valued between 4,000 and 5,000 euros.

UVU's Department of Digital Media is a global exchange partner with St. Pölten University of Applied Science in Vienna. In turn, selected students from St. Pölten UAS come to UVU for summer study as exchange students. This is the third year that UVU students have gone to St. Pölten UAS.

"We look for exchanges with universities worldwide for our best students," says Michael Harper, UVU digital media associate professor. "We seek out the best universities that align with us and our engaged learning methodology. St. Pölten UAS fits that mold perfectly."



### UVU CULINARY CHAIR WINS NATIONAL CHEF OF THE YEAR AWARD

Chef Todd Leonard, Utah Valley University's Culinary Arts Institute department chair, was named the 2018 National Chef of the Year at the American Culinary Federation national convention held in New Orleans July 14-19. Leonard beat out four other regional winners for the first national title of Chef of the Year in UVU history.

As part of the rigorous competition, Leonard had 90 minutes to prepare a four-course menu. Assisted by two student apprentices, AnnaLis Nielsen and Lydia Harris, Leonard used every second of his allotted time, finishing just before time expired. The judges — all master chefs — then huddled and compared tastes, presentation skills, and sanitation scores.

Leonard's complicated menu consisted of:

First course: Southern braised pork cheek with dauphine potatoes, sautéed mustard greens, red pepper puree, and Cajun fried shallots and peppers.

Second course: Oyster stew with bronzed redfish, Cajun pork cheek sausage, and summer vegetables stew.

Third course: Jambalaya à la chef, pork cheek and tenderloin roulade with pork cheek sausage and redfish collar jambalaya, Creole heirloom tomato compote, Cajun cream and spicy tomato sausage with buttery sautéed asparagus.

Fourth course: Seafood trio — smoked Creole butter redfish, CT oysters rockefeller, and Cajun redfish mousseline with cayenne butter sauce, summer root vegetable puree, sautéed sweet corn medley, glazed carrots, and butternut squash.

"I knew I needed to make a big impression on the judges with an over-the-top menu, and leave no doubt who was the best chef this year," Leonard said. "It was intense knowing that one mishap, one misstep, one tiny little thing going wrong would have cost me the title. But clearly, it was a risk worth taking."



# A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

## Design students at UVU helping Vineyard become better living space

By JAY WAMSLEY



**PUTTING** on paper some plans for, say, the year 2050, is almost a pure definition of working with a blank canvas. But for a handful of Utah Valley University students — and the up-and-coming city of Vineyard, Utah — that canvas provided a high-level undergraduate learning experience.

And may provide the city with a unique living space.

David Barker teaches UVU's architectural design classes, and often incorporates outside activities in his special projects class. One of the more recent class projects was to provide the city of Vineyard some speculation drawings of a possible library design — again, for years in the future — but the positive outcome of that presentation was a continuing relationship between Vineyard and the UVU architectural design students.

Barker says city officials wanted some visionary ideas regarding a promenade through the heart of the city, from UVU's property on the east, to the planned UTA FrontRunner station in Vineyard, and then on to the lake, connecting with a trail there.

"This idea has a lot of backing behind it," Barker explains. "They are actually putting this trail in the general plan and it's been kind of marked out already, with possible locations. They want to start construction on it after they have some engineering services done on it. They needed some ideas for it — what it could look like, how they can show and sell this to the public, how it can be different from anything else any other city has — so that's where it started."

Barker says he had a lot of trust in the students to get things done.

"It was all pretty self-directed," he says. "I just made sure the ship was going in the right direction. It was very 'real world' — it was not just a class. They got to meet with the client, find out what they want, and how to respond to it. The students came up with the graphics and visuals to tell this story."

Student Amy Miller, 29, says the class experience helped her feel like a "creative visionary, which is what most people in the architectural field want to do." She said it was fun to come up with the ideas and let other people execute them, and perhaps one day she will be able to see those things in place.

"I was very interested in the Vineyard trails because I love nature, I love the outdoors," Miller says. "It's cool to think that this could actually be built. Vineyard is hoping to have the whole promenade, the main part of the city, completed by 2050, so that's still far off, but it's still cool to be a part of. It's fun to be a part of the planning because I really want to live there. The whole city is going to be so different from anywhere else."

Spencer Weakley is two semesters away from his associate degree in architectural design, and is hoping to finish later with a bachelor's degree. Though he admits the presentation to the Vineyard City Council was "a bit intimidating," he says he enjoyed the planning that went into the proposed promenade.

"It just flows down from UVU's Vineyard Campus to the lake, and it's really a mix of everything," Weakley says. "There are different sections that are more park and natural areas, and a section in the middle that has businesses and high-density projects. It's a pedestrian-only promenade about a mile long. It's not a little walking or bike trail, but a wide trail with businesses down the side, with lots of attractions."

Barker says he told students — and presented to the council — the idea that the promenade was like a "river flowing through the city."

"There needs to be swift current, there's slow water, there are places to stop and relax, there are little eddies and pools you can go into," Barker says, "and we used that metaphor throughout the design process. We created places in the city center where it was narrower, and a tendency to move faster through there. Then we open up to parks and community pavilions, an amphitheater, and we slow down, so to speak, with parks in more open spaces."

**THAT'S WHY I'M REALLY GLAD TO BE AT UVU. I FEEL LIKE THEY ARE MORE OPEN TO DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY THAN MOST UNIVERSITIES.**

There are lots of little bridges and waterways and features. And the students came up with all of that."

Both Weakley and Miller say the class relied on a series of deadlines to get things accomplished, but all class members worked on their own a lot to accomplish the final goal.

"In class, we did a lot of talking and brainstorming," Miller says. "The majority of the work we did was outside of class. In class, we set up who was doing what and found out who was struggling. We helped one another, set deadlines, that sort of thing. Dave said it was more like a graduate-level class structure because it was very open-ended — you could get your work done when you needed to get it done."

"That's why I'm really glad to be at UVU," Miller continues. "I feel like they are more open to doing things differently than most universities. They are not so staunchly set in how they go about teaching."

Weakley said one of the main reasons he went into this special project was because he envisioned it as a "resume-building opportunity." He said it ended up being "a real-life experience, with a client, who tells you what they want, and you are able to bring it to life for them. I thought it was awesome." ■

PHOTOS BY SAVANNA RICHARDSON

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# THE NEXT LEVEL OF MEDICINE

*UVU's paramedic program is leading students on an unconventional path toward medical school*

WRITTEN BY **KIM BOJÓRQUEZ**  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY **JAY DROWNS**

**WHEN** Utah Valley University alumna Summer Grace goes to work as an emergency medicine physician, she says she's ready for anything to roll in.

"When I go to work, I don't know what I'm going to see that day; it's a mystery," Grace says. "It keeps me on the edge of my seat and requires that I stay current on my medical knowledge."

From the time she was 14 years old, Grace knew she wanted to be a physician. After attending UVU's Firefighter Recruit Candidate

Academy, she enrolled in the first paramedic class UVU offered in 2000. Grace was the first and only woman in the class.

"I have a lot of pride in the fact that I was in the very first class," she says.

Grace says after working as a paramedic for several years, her experience with different illnesses and emergency scenarios made her interested in becoming an emergency medicine physician.

"Being a paramedic was great because it gave me a foundation in medicine," Grace says.

"It really helped in medical school because of my background."

Now almost two decades after its inception, UVU's paramedic program focuses on that experience as a way to prepare for future careers in medicine. About half of UVU's paramedic students have intentions of furthering their education by attending medical school, dental school, or physician assistant school.

"One of the really nice things about going to paramedic school is that it exposes you to many realms of medicine," Grace says. "Working as



*Even now, as a physician, the confidence I gained working as a paramedic helps me when I have to make difficult decisions.*

— SUMMER GRACE

a paramedic requires you to make emergent, life-altering decisions about patient care in a few seconds. Even now, as a physician, the confidence I gained working as a paramedic helps me when I have to make difficult decisions.”

#### **A SENSE OF COMMUNITY**

Looking through paramedic class rosters going back a decade, Steven Allred, director of UVU’s paramedic program, can point at each student’s face as if he were looking through photos of his children.

“She just began medical school, this one finished nursing and is trying to become a flight nurse, and these two just got into physician assistant school — I need to give them a call,” he says.

While UVU’s program maintains a reputation for rigor and real-world application, what makes the program special — according to Allred, who has 32 years of experience in the emergency room and as a firefighter paramedic — is a sense of community not found at other universities.

“Steve was fantastic,” says Alexandra Perry, who graduated from the program in the summer of 2015 and is about to start as an operating room nurse at St. Anthony Hospital in Pendleton, Oregon. “I was the only female in the class, and after my husband graduated from

the program, I was on my own.”

Knowing this information, Allred introduced Perry to his daughters, who were the same age.

“I hung out with his family, and it was really nice. It was a nice break to get away from the business of the program and not to go home by myself,” Perry says.

Perry says Allred is known for creating a family-like environment within each cohort. For example, Allred says he once drove to Wyoming to attend the funeral of the grandfather of one of his students.

“I still talk to Steve to this day,” Perry says. “I use him as a reference for anything.”

Mat Goebel, a current medical student at the University of California, San Diego, thinks of Allred as a father-like figure.

“The closeness is very uncommon in these types of programs and it’s really something that’s unique about UVU,” Goebel says. “That culture comes from the top down, and it never goes away. Steve sets that tone.”

#### **‘IN YOUR BLOOD’**

Prior to joining UVU’s paramedic program in 2015, Perry had just been denied admission to Oregon Health and Science University’s nursing program.

Perry and her husband, whom she met while

attending Chemeketa Community College in Oregon, were looking for a paramedic program with a student focus, and applied to UVU’s program after learning about it. She enrolled at UVU three months after her husband, with intentions to eventually pursue a nursing career.

“The faculty was amazing. They really worked with the students, and that’s what we loved about it,” Perry says.

Perry says UVU faculty and instructors helped students “individually to get them where they needed to be.”

Perry also enjoyed getting to spend hours in hospitals and work with nurses to get hands-on experience, which is something other programs don’t offer.

“We got to do time in the operating room, emergency room, and the intensive care unit,” Perry says. “We were all over the place. We were literally all over the Salt Lake area and Provo.”

Perry believes her eight-month stint in the program helped set her apart from other applicants — she was able to reapply to the school in Oregon and get accepted.

The paramedic program, which is part of UVU’s College of Health and Public Service, and is located at UVU’s Provo Airport campus, is comprised of two semesters. The first is lecture and book-heavy, and in the second semes-

ter, students participate in hospital rotations that include time spent in the operating room, labor and delivery, and the emergency room. Prior to joining the program, students must complete a year of prerequisite coursework and candidates are admitted through a competitive process.

Clinical rotations are unique because students go into an environment where they learn to intubate patients in the operating room (with the direct supervision of an anesthesiologist) to secure their airways prior to surgery.

“It gets in your blood, and it’s a lot of fun,” Allred says. “You get kind of a taste for medicine, and I think that’s what happens to a lot of my students.”

In the labor and delivery rotation, students have the opportunity to participate directly in the delivery, or observe or assist with post-delivery care using respiratory therapists.

Allred says his program emphasizes that students earn multiple certifications, which is extremely valuable to them once they are in the field.

“I think what sets us apart is the strong faculty and outstanding staff, as well as the additional certifications that we offer paramedic students,” says Barbara Burr, assistant dean of CHPS. “I’ve seen our faculty and staff go above

and beyond to help students succeed... that is not typical with a relatively short program.”

“The idea is that these students absolutely need to know how to do this in a situation beyond just reading it in a book,” Allred says.

#### **NO WALLFLOWERS**

Traditionally, students who strive to get into medical school major in sciences related to biology or biochemistry during their undergraduate careers and work hard to earn nearly perfect GPA scores. At UVU, Allred points out the ongoing trend where half of UVU’s paramedic school cohort plans on furthering their education.

“Medical schools are sensitive to the fact that being a biochemist and getting straight A’s isn’t a good indicator anymore,” said Goebel, who has participated in interviews with students who have applied for UC San Diego’s medical school. “I wish people took that sort of less traditional path to get some more clinical experience before they jumped into med school.”

Goebel didn’t always know he wanted to go into emergency medicine. He says he became interested in the field after graduating from Brigham Young University’s theater program, where a lot of accidents occurred.

“Working in the theater environment is actually an industrial-work environment; people get hurt all the time,” Goebel says. “I’ve seen a lot of accidents, and I wanted to learn more about what to do when people get hurt.”

Goebel’s curiosity toward medicine eventually led him to UVU’s paramedic program, which he joined in 2011.

Recently, Goebel faced a situation where he needed to manage a patient’s airways. Unlike other medical students in the room, he was able to jump in and do what needed to be done.

“I was able to step up rather than be a wallflower,” Goebel says. “Most medical students haven’t had that experience.”

Goebel credits UVU’s paramedic program for preparing him for these types of situations.

“That experience has still been incredibly valuable even now as a medical student — I’m able to jump in when people need it, and people recognize me for it,” Goebel says. “The experience makes me stand out as a medical student.”

Goebel says he chose UVU because it was one of the few paramedic programs in the region that was associated with an institution of higher education.

“It was the most rigorous and academic,” Goebel says. “It was the kind of challenge that I wanted.” ■

*The faculty was amazing. They really worked with the students, and that’s what we loved about it.*

— ALEXANDREA PERRY





# ***THE BUSINESS OF HOPE***

**UVU graduate  
overcomes NBA  
team's struggles  
to hit top of sports  
business world**



**TWO** years ago, the Philadelphia 76ers of the National Basketball Association had a record of 10 wins and 72 losses, a .122 winning percentage. The year prior was only slightly better for the iconic Eastern Conference team, at 18-64, ending the season 14th in a conference of 15 teams.

During these same years, however, the Sixers made changes to the team's sales and service departments, which put the NBA team near the top of the league for new season-ticket membership and related businesses quantifiers.

Right in the middle of the activity of those years — some struggling on the court while others were overachieving behind the scenes — was a young alumnus of Utah Valley University, Jake Reynolds. With the title of Chief Revenue Officer, Reynolds is responsible for the corporate partnership sales and activation, ticket sales and service departments, and strategy and revenue generation for the Philadelphia team. Reynolds has worked his way into being a success in the NBA, not by being an athlete, but by being a driven businessman.

Reynolds was recently named to Sports Business Journal's "Power Players" list, and has been named an international "Forty Under 40" by the Leaders in Sport conference.

"I consider myself to be incredibly fortunate in the sense that I have been able to combine two of my passions — business and sports — and call it work," Reynolds says. "I wake up every morning and do something I truly love — work for a dynamic company with incredible people, help grow individuals' careers, and use the platform that we have as a professional sports organization to make a difference in the community."

The team's rebuilding process — fully transparent to fans and clients — was just underway when Reynolds joined the organization. The phrase "Trust the Process" became a battle

cry of the team and their fan base. Reynolds was tasked with stimulating season ticket holder interest and increasing sales during one of the franchise's most challenging periods.

Reynolds' first step was to hand-select a 115-person sales and service team, the largest in all of professional sports. Reynolds' signature employee achievement programs, focusing on recognition, reward, and growth, led the NBA team to an 90 percent retention rate, the highest in the NBA.

Reynolds' attention to his employees' personal and professional growth and a competitive and collaborative office environment has generated a positive impact on the company's bottom line. The core pillars of Reynolds' management strategy were "People, Commitment, Development, Hustle, and Fun."

For most professional sports teams, there exists a direct correlation between team wins and ticket sales. Over a three-year period during which the 76ers were 47-199, Reynolds led a sales team that tripled new season-ticket memberships, increased group sales, and achieved a No. 2 ranking in NBA Season Ticket Member Customer Satisfaction Surveys (2016).

"We have a saying that you're only selling one of two things: hope or championships. I understood when I took this job that we were going to need to build this from the ground up, but that's also what was so appealing to me," Reynolds explains. "Every business goes through different phases, and you can learn

unique lessons from each situation. Early on, selling hope and working for a team that may not be contending for a championship allowed me to hone my skillset and find creative ways to drive our business forward."

By the end of the 2017-18 season, the Sixers won 52 games, ended up third in the conference, making the playoffs and battling the Boston Celtics in the NBA semifinals for the opportunity to continue toward a championship, finally losing in seven hard-fought games.

Many have noted the success Reynolds has had while facing the obvious challenge of selling hope. Even before the Sixers were granted the No. 1 overall pick in 2016, Philadelphia ranked third in the NBA in new season-ticket sales for the 2016-17 campaign. Early in 2016, the Sixers saw the largest single-sales day in organization history, and they have renewed more than 90 percent of its season ticket members each of the last three years.

"The culture of the Sixers' sales staff has been the main driver of their success," says Brendan Donohue, the NBA's senior vice president of Team Marketing and Business Operations. "It's vibrant, fun, and contagious, with a terrific group of hard-working professionals who want to be a part of something bigger than themselves."

Reynolds is responsible for putting together and motivating that contagious group, approximately 130 people. Reynolds is quick to point out — in an almost Dale Carnegie-type vision — that a team has to work together, high

draft picks or low, in order to succeed.

"I am a firm believer that people are our most important asset, and our success will be built upon the foundation of people, process, and culture," Reynolds says. "I believe that my

to reinvent themselves" to stay at the forefront the industry. "Whether that is investing in our people, working with our marketing team to connect with new fans, or exploring new opportunities for growth," he says, "it takes a



**LEFT:** Jake Reynolds, a UVU alumnus, is chief revenue officer for the Philadelphia 76ers, leading a 115-person ticket sales and service department, pictured here at the NBA team's practice facility. **ABOVE:** Jake Reynolds with Chris Heck, president of Business Operations for the 76ers.

## ***I AM A FIRM BELIEVER THAT PEOPLE ARE OUR MOST IMPORTANT ASSET AND OUR SUCCESS WILL BE BUILT UPON THE FOUNDATION OF PEOPLE, PROCESS, AND CULTURE***



career success and future legacy is predicated on my ability to hire, train, and develop the next wave of world-class leaders. It's my responsibility to hire the right people, give them the resources necessary to be successful, invest in their development every step of the way, and give them the freedom to operate."

Score.

Reynolds, a 2005 graduate of UVU's Woodbury School of Business, says he doesn't have an average or routine day. He says each day is different for him and brings a unique set of opportunities and challenges, "which is what makes it fun." He says his overall responsibility is concentrated on how the team and its affiliates — which includes the New Jersey Devils and the Prudential Center in which both teams play — can grow their business and "continue a

village, and I'm fortunate that we have such incredible people."

Prior to his position with the Sixers, Reynolds was the director of inside sales for Monumental Sports and Entertainment, overseeing the ticket sales, servicing, and sales staff efforts for the Washington Wizards, Washington Capitals, Washington Mystics, and Georgetown men's basketball. His first job out of UVU was an internship with the Indiana Pacers, then experience in sales management with the Pacers, followed by being named premium sales manager for the New York Giants of the National Football League.

"I have a saying with my team: 'Control the controllable.' We cannot control whether the team wins or loses," he says, "but we can control how we develop our people, the

customer experience, and the culture we create in our office every day. Though we've sold out every game this past season and created a waiting list, the challenges of how we grow our business remain, they have just taken a different form, but it's a challenge we're meeting head-on."

A recent Sports Illustrated magazine article detailing the 76ers' rise in the league highlighted Reynolds and his staff and their propensity toward internal staff motivational meetings and positive mental attitude activities. The SI story details "hands-slapping-knees drum rolls," staff giveaways, prizes and awards for goals met, and "rock-paper-scissors tournaments" to claim incentives. The sports magazine described Reynolds as entering one sales meeting "materializing out of a fog machine and entering a sea of screaming 20-somethings."

"We do that before every game," Reynolds told SI writer Jake Fischer. "We walk a very fine line between having fun and having too much fun." Fisher wrote that the Philly corporate culture is spawned from a concoction of hope, zany energy, and innovation, and at the heart of it is Reynolds' sales force. The magazine noted that the Sixers employ strict criteria when hiring new sales associates, looking specifically for the "three C's" they deem congruent with their unique culture: competitiveness, coachability, and curiosity.

"I have always loved running toward challenging situations," Reynolds explains, "as I have felt it's the best way to learn, and provides an incredible spotlight when you succeed. I have always believed sales is marketing and marketing is sales. If you view business as a car, I look at sales as the engine that drives business forward and marketing as the gas — you have to have both operating efficiently if you want to go anywhere."

A native of Salt Lake City, Reynolds is quick to thank those he calls "mentors that have invested in me" who have helped the father of three to go to the top of a special niche in a special form of business. He notes, also, that he met his wife, Emily, in a class at UVU.

"I loved my time at UVU and was fortunate to have phenomenal professors and advisers during my time there," he says. "Whether it was class case studies, presentations, or connecting with other students, I developed skills during my time at UVU that I feel prepared me to hit the ground running once I graduated. The school's community has continued to grow. The network I formed while there has served me well and created relationships that I'll have for the rest of my life." ■

# THE POWER

# O DREAMS

*New UVU  
President  
Astrid S. Tuminez  
is an example  
of education's  
ability to free the  
human spirit*



*BY Layton Stummweg | PHOTOS BY August Miller*

**L**ONG BEFORE ASTRID S. TUMINEZ BECAME A COLLEGE GRADUATE — LONG BEFORE SHE LIVED IN NEW YORK CITY AND THE SOVIET UNION AND HONG KONG AND SINGAPORE, BEFORE SHE PUBLISHED A BOOK AND MANY ARTICLES AND HELPED BROKER PEACE NEGOTIATIONS AND HELD LEADERSHIP POSITIONS AT UNIVERSITIES AND CORPORATIONS, AND BEFORE SHE WAS CHOSEN AS UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY'S SEVENTH PRESIDENT — SHE LEARNED TO DREAM.

From a tiny hut on the beach in the Philippine city of Iloilo, through holes in the grass roof that always needed patching and from which water poured during rainy weather, sending her scrambling for the shelter of the family table, Tuminez could look up and see the stars. For her, she says, the stars symbolized dreams. And dreams were free.

"I realized no matter how poor you are, you could actually dream," she says. "Nobody can stop you from dreaming about where you want to be, and what you want to do with your life."

If that sounds unrealistic, you haven't met Astrid Tuminez. Her life is a flourishing example of the power of dreams — and the role education plays in achieving them. As she begins her service as UVU president this September, her goal is to pass on that transformative power to all the people whom she can reach.

"To believe in what is possible, whatever the hurdles and challenges are — that's the culture I'd like UVU to have," Tuminez says.

#### A MIRACLE

Astrid Tuminez was the sixth of seven children born to Redencion Segovia and Lazaro Terre Tuminez, in a village called Pali in the Philippine province of Iloilo, an hour south of Manila by air. When Astrid was 2 years old,

the family moved to the city in search of better educational opportunities. After helping a local politician win an election, her mother received a land allocation in a squatter area by the sea. There, the family built a hut from bamboo and nipa grass, suspended on bamboo posts above the ocean.

While neither parent was formally educated beyond high school, Tuminez describes them both as intelligent and curious — "They had opinions about everything," she says — and singles out her mother in particular as inventive, creative, and resilient.

"My mother was the one with the ambition to move us to the city," Tuminez says, "even though we had to live in the slums. She knew that her children's future would be in the urban area. My father was more relaxed about the future. He was the kind of person who could be quite content to just sit under a coconut tree and dream."

Her father showed Tuminez the art of equanimity along with positive thinking. He could be unruffled even under the worst circumstances. When her baby sister suffered a high fever for several days, and they had no means to take her to the doctor, Tuminez and her siblings feared the worst. But her father reassured them.

"My father sat on the balcony of our hut, told us we should all be calm, and that whatever will happen will happen," Tuminez says. "I thought, 'Wow, how can he think like that?' But there's also a certain strength to that. That was my father. He was a gentle soul, and I loved that about him."

Tuminez inherited her mother's inventiveness and her father's positivity. Both served her well in the slums of Iloilo, where the problems created by poverty required practical solutions. For example, Tuminez describes stuffing her tattered shoes with lollipop wrappers, because the waxy paper seemed better at plugging the holes and keeping water out.

"When you are poor, you learn to be very inventive — even as a child," she says. "You really learn to be a problem solver because you just can't sit there and buy your way through your problems."

One problem the family couldn't solve on their own, though, was access to education. For that, they had to rely on what Tuminez describes as "a miracle" — a chance encounter with a group of Catholic nuns belonging to the Daughters of Charity, a religious community that traces its roots to mid-17th century France. While on a visit to the slums to donate food and clothing, one of the nuns, Sister Elvira Correa, became particularly impressed by how



Before joining UVU this fall, President Tuminez traveled to the Philippines to visit some of the key places in her life's journey, including her first school classroom (previous page), the rural island where she was born, and the nuns (top) who reached out to her family and made her education possible.

well-spoken and intelligent the children were. She offered Astrid and her sisters the chance of a lifetime.

The nuns gave Tuminez a solid foundation in values. "I remember one young nun who told me one day, 'Astrid, God is in every person,'" Tuminez says. "And I thought that was such a profound, amazing statement, and it made such an impression on me. They saw God in me and my sisters and my mother. And I had to do the same: see God in every person I encountered."

The Daughters of Charity ran a local school, Colegio del Sagrado Corazon de Jesus, which normally would have been prohibitively expensive for the Tuminez family. But the school had just started a new program for underprivileged children to attend tuition-free. Tuminez was



a perfect candidate. So at the age of 5, with no prior schooling, she took the first step in an educational journey that would take her around the globe.

#### FROM LAST TO THE HEAD OF THE CLASS

Tuminez's lack of preparation became immediately apparent on her first day at her new school: she didn't know how to spell her name.

"We wrote down A-S-T-R-E-D," she says. "I had no idea."

Next came the classroom seating, arranged with the smartest student in the first seat, first row, and ending with the least competent student in the last seat, last row. Tuminez was placed in the last seat, last row. And on her first few assignments, she received a grade of zero — which she didn't know was bad.

"I kept getting a zero on all these quizzes, and I thought that was a really great grade," Tuminez says. "I'd run flying home to my hut, telling my father, 'Hey, look at this wonderful grade!' He never told me a zero was a very bad grade."

Soon, however, she began to catch up, and the shame-inducing seating chart awoke a competitiveness in her. Within a few months, she was reading and writing. A few months after that, she earned the first seat in the first row — head of the class. And by the end of her first year, she was allowed to skip first grade

and move straight into second.

Later, when the school integrated the children from its free program with the rest of the students, Tuminez continued pushing herself. While other children spent their recess playing and buying roasted peanuts and Coca-Cola from vendors in the cafeteria, Tuminez hid in the library, reading every book, shelf by shelf, left to right.

Classmate Roberto Villanueva, now a successful doctor, lawyer, and professor himself, recalls Tuminez as "a skinny kid with a faded uniform, and her hair was tied with a rubber band, like a fountain or a spring. She wasn't really the silent type — she was brilliant back then."

Her achievements gave Tuminez a sense of pride and accomplishment she hadn't thought possible.

"I think every child wants to feel validated, and every child wants to feel that they're good at something," Tuminez says. "In the Philippines, if you grow up on a lower rung in the socio-economic ladder, you end up being almost invisible. Your life means almost nothing. To be able to say that I could beat the richer girls — the girls who came from rich families with cars and maids — it was an amazing boost to my identity and to my confidence, and to my ability to believe that I could be so much more than what I thought I was."

#### COMING TO AMERICA

As Tuminez continued through high school, she still wasn't sure what she wanted to do with her life. Learning in itself was a powerful motivator, but she lacked the role models in her life to show her a career path.

"I reflected on what I would do with my life, and realized I had to continue my education because, at that point in time, the value of education was already very, very clear to me," she says. "Education also became the foundation of my own personality because it was the one thing I was good at. To be poor but to know you're good at something is wonderful; it gives you a lot of self-esteem and courage to keep moving."

From her reading, Tuminez learned of a place called New York City, and by age 10, she made a goal to live there. Around that time, her family also met missionaries from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and Astrid first heard of a place called Utah. By age 15, she had finished high school and was studying at the University of the Philippines in Manila, on a full government scholarship, but she dreamed of emigrating to America and attending Brigham Young University.

She was accepted to BYU and, in November 1982 — at 18 years old, wearing a faux silk



*Far left: Tuminez points to the roof of a nipa-grass hut like the one she grew up in. Top: While other children played outside, Tuminez read every book in her school library. Bottom right: The church in Iloilo where Tuminez attended as a teenager.*

# E DUCATION

**ALSO BECAME THE FOUNDATION OF MY OWN PERSONALITY, BECAUSE IT WAS THE ONE THING I WAS GOOD AT. TO BE POOR BUT TO KNOW YOU'RE GOOD AT SOMETHING IS WONDERFUL; IT GIVES YOU A LOT OF SELF-ESTEEM AND COURAGE TO KEEP MOVING.**

blouse and a self-described “big, poofy perm” — Astrid Tuminez first set foot on American soil.

“My point of entry was California. My sister and her husband, who was in the Air Force, picked me up,” Tuminez says, “and as we drove on the highway, I first saw the arches of McDonald’s, and I got so excited and wanted them to stop. They told me it was nothing special, but I was so thrilled to be in America.”

At the University of the Philippines, Tuminez began and then dropped majors in chemical engineering and pre-med. (Any notion of becoming a doctor ended swiftly when a teacher asked class members to catch, kill, and dissect a cat as a class assignment, she says.) At BYU, she discovered an aptitude for languages, especially Russian, and chose to double major in Russian literature and international relations. Both would come to define her future career.

“I was in the first batch of BYU students that went to Moscow to study Russian, led by Prof. Gary Browning, who has been a lifetime mentor to me,” Tuminez says.

By her senior year at BYU, Tuminez was already looking forward to graduate school. She applied to three: Harvard, Georgetown, and Yale. All three accepted her, but Harvard offered a full-ride scholarship. So she headed east, and, at a church gathering near campus,



“To be very honest, I could never see myself as a mom,” she says. “I just couldn’t see myself being pregnant. That just seemed so alien. And raising children was just...how do you do that? I couldn’t do that. I felt that I was not qualified to do that at all.”

While both parents were working full time and Tuminez was trying to finish her doctorate, Tuminez found out she was pregnant. Her new challenges, she says, were the best thing that could have happened.

“I wanted to have that doctoral degree before I delivered the baby,” Tuminez says. “It just fired me up. It was probably my most productive time in life. When I first found out I was pregnant, I was just falling apart. I thought I could handle anything but having a child. But that’s because I didn’t know what I was capable of doing.”

The experience, Tuminez says, taught her the full potential that women possess. She and Tolk would go on to have three children total, all while both parents worked full time.

“It made me realize, ‘Wow, women can do this!’” she says. “I was doing three things: working full time in New York City, writing the dissertation at night and on weekends, and dealing with a pregnancy. For the first time in my life, I actually understood the strength of women at a very granular level. Because to work was nothing for me. To study was not much. But adding a pregnancy and delivering a baby, and continuing everything else — to me, that was an amazing discovery.”

The support of her husband was key, Tuminez says. Both had to make sacrifices for each other to achieve their goals.

“I don’t think I would have done as well as I’ve done without Jeff,” she says. “When people ask me, ‘How did you do all this? How did you have three kids and still carry on a very demanding professional life?’ I always say, without hesitation, that my husband is fully integral to that success. It’s a partnership.”

“When we were dating, Jeff said to me, ‘You’re responsible for your own happiness,’ and that just stuck so well in my head. I wasn’t marrying a man so that he could be responsible for my happiness. That’s a really, really important message. Jeff respects and honors all of my dreams and aspirations, and, in fact, no one is prouder of me.”

she met a young Harvard undergrad, Jeffrey Stuart Tolk. Reports differ as to who noticed whom first, but the two hit it off.

“In my mind, the first time I met her was at a dance,” Tolk says. “I saw her dancing, and she was beautiful, and a good dancer. Just a sparkly, witty personality. I was pretty much smitten.”

The following summer, Tuminez was working in Europe for Harvard’s “Let’s Go” budget travel guide and staying with a friend’s parents in Paris, when she got an unexpected phone call on her birthday. It was Tolk.

“I was like, ‘How did you get this phone number?’” Tuminez says. “Jeff was working for Senator Al Gore, and it was before the days of the internet. He’d gone to the Library of Congress, found a Paris phone book, and looked up the last name of the people I was staying with. That was the moment I decided I was going to date him, because if he could find me in Paris on my birthday, then he was definitely dating material.”

## EQUAL PARTNERS

Tolk and Tuminez married on June 13, 1988, just two days after Tuminez completed a master’s degree in Soviet Studies at Harvard. Tolk finished Harvard Law School and began work as a legal clerk for the Supreme Court of Massachusetts, while Tuminez worked on her doctorate in political science at MIT. Over the next several years, the couple juggled jobs — some requiring long-distance travel — and education, as well as discussions on when to start having children. Tuminez was intimidated by the idea.



*Far left: Tuminez and her mother Redencion walk through the Philippine forests near her home. Above: Tuminez’s visit to Iloilo included stops in the poor neighborhood where she grew up, as well as the vibrant outdoor markets.*



*Her achievements have required a lot of sacrifice, but Tuminez says she wants UVU students to dream big, no matter the obstacles. "To believe in what is possible, whatever the hurdles and challenges are — that's the culture I'd like UVU to have," she says.*



#### AROUND THE WORLD

Work took Tuminez around the world over the next two decades. Most of that time was spent in New York City, fulfilling her childhood dream of living in Manhattan. In the early '90s, however, Tuminez was working for Harvard in Moscow, putting her Soviet expertise to good use. Tuminez describes her relationship with Tolk as a "commuter marriage." Without email or the internet, communication meant transatlantic phone calls, usually in the middle of the night for one person or the other.

By 1992, Tuminez moved back to New York full time, where the couple would both work for the next 13 years. Tuminez served in positions with the Carnegie Corporation of New York, as a research associate and program officer, and with AIG Global Investments as a research director.

Both Tuminez and Tolk were working in lower Manhattan on September 11, 2001 — a

very harrowing experience for the country, and both of them firsthand. Tolk said he actually had a meeting scheduled in the World Trade Center for that afternoon. Tuminez, five months pregnant and also working on Wall Street at the time, was fortunate enough to have been picked up by a livery driver shortly before the first tower fell. They drove to the Upper East Side, where she picked up their daughter from school. Tolk had to walk home almost all the way.

"No phones would work," Tolk says. "Landlines didn't work, cell phones didn't work, so I couldn't contact Astrid, I couldn't contact my family, I couldn't contact anyone. It was a very sobering moment."

The family would eventually move further uptown, residing there until 2005, when Tolk was offered a position with Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) in Hong Kong.





After the birth of their second child, Tuminez thought she might take a one-year sabbatical. But only two weeks after leaving her job on Wall Street, she was asked to serve as a consultant to the U.S. Institute of Peace, which was involved in facilitating peace negotiations between the government of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

Having lived in New York for so many years, and lacking familiarity with the Muslim areas of the southern Philippines, Tuminez struggled at first in her new role.

“When I first went in, I was very much in a New Yorker frame of mind,” Tuminez says. “I was very formal and official—making appointments and sticking to official protocols, and I



*Tuminez and her husband Jeffrey Tolk (above) have supported each other in their respective careers and in raising their three children. “We’re partners,” Tuminez says. “I don’t think I would have done as well as I have done without Jeff.” Right: Tuminez walks through the halls of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore, where she taught and served as assistant dean of executive education and vice dean of research.*



fell flat on my face. It was just a huge failure at the beginning. One of the Philippine officials told me the Muslims had sent a cable to Manila saying, ‘Who is this woman and what planet is she from?’”

Humbled, Tuminez had to start from scratch, seeking to earn the people’s trust by listening to them and learning their history. She also led a program to bring in negotiators from other parts of the world to learn their stories and how they dealt with and negotiated grievances related to history, land, and identity.

“I came to discover a very important part of Filipino history and culture that I did not know as a Christian Filipino,” Tuminez says, “and to this day I’m deeply appreciative of what I learned about listening to people, why they’re hurting, and why they’re fighting. I learned that conflicts are rarely, if ever, a clear division of the good people and the bad people — there are so many variables that create violent situations.”

#### COMING HOME

In 2008, Tolk accepted a job in Singapore, and Tuminez was considering an offer to join a big tech company at the same time. But a meeting with Kishore Mahbubani, the founding dean of the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore, drew her back to her first love: education.

“Within 15 minutes of meeting me, he said, ‘What would it take to get you to work for this school? You could be faculty, you could be an administrator, you could be anything,’” Tuminez says. “I was so impressed by that, that someone could spot me as a talent for the institution and could make up his mind so quickly.”

Tuminez held several positions at the LKY School, where she taught more than 2,000 government and business leaders and served as assistant dean of executive education and

vice dean of research. As vice dean, she helped support faculty in getting funding and disseminating their research results. While at the LKY School, she also founded a publication called *Global-Is-Asian* (a play on “globalization”) to help advance public policy discourse in Asia.

“That was really a very wonderful four years,” Tuminez says. “It was a great way to get to know Singapore, as a public policy lab in particular, and also get to know the rest of the emerging markets in the region.”

“Dr. Tuminez is not only an academic, or just a simple adviser,” says Vu Minh Khuong, an associate professor at the LKY School and a Harvard Ph.D. “She easily stands out in terms of vision, in terms of ideas, and in terms of energy to push things through. Rather than just academic discussion, she is very action-oriented. That’s a good thing.”

Tuminez left the LKY School in 2012 to join Microsoft in Singapore as regional director of corporate, external, and legal affairs for Southeast Asia. In that role, her team supported 15 countries, driving government affairs, policy and regulatory engagements, academic and nonprofit relations, and other activities to enhance understanding and use of technology for the public good.

While she enjoyed her position at Microsoft, Tuminez was intrigued when a friend from UVU informed her of the presidency opening. At first, she didn’t think the position was right for her.

“I knew the university as UVSC, Utah Valley State College,” Tuminez says, “and I thought, no, it’s not a good match.”

But her curiosity led her to further research, and the more she read, the more intrigued she became. Programs like UVU’s Center for National Security Studies, Center for the Study of Ethics, Center for Constitu-



*Tuminez is an avid runner — although she says she didn't enjoy it at first, she loves proving to herself that she can overcome obstacles. "I love realizing there are still things to learn and discover," she says.*



tional Studies, and the 70-plus countries represented in UVU's student body, along with the institution's integrated mission model, piqued her interest.

"I became more and more intrigued, and more and more impressed," she says. "Although I had spent an enormous amount of time with elite institutions, whether that's Harvard, MIT, or the National University of Singapore, I realized that UVU could be even more dynamic and inventive in ways that would truly transform lives."

"I did have doubts initially about the fit between me and UVU, but it occurred to me that if I could bring to one place my competencies and skills and my passion for education, my passion for students, and my fundamental love and respect for professors and what they do — this was the place to do it."

With self-described trepidation, Tuminez submitted her application. She was selected as one of four finalists on April 12, and, a week later, the Utah State Board of Regents appointed her as the seventh president of Utah Valley University.

"Dr. Tuminez has proven to be a dynamic

leader across academic, nonprofit, public policy, and corporate sectors. Throughout her storied career, she has focused on bridging gaps in education and opportunity to make a difference in people's lives, which seamlessly aligns with UVU's institutional mission and core themes," said Daniel W. Campbell, chair of the Board of Regents at the time. "Dr. Tuminez's experience, vision, and dedication to student success will ensure that UVU continues to thrive in the years ahead."

Tuminez will officially start her presidency at UVU on Sept. 17, and while the Orem campus is a long way from that nipa hut in the Philippines, she already knows what she wants UVU to feel like — a home, for every student.

"Home is a place where I feel supported, safe, and accepted," she says. "Home is also a place where I can articulate my dreams, and feel that I have the support to make those dreams come true. Finally, home to me is always an unforgettable place. To every freshman, and every parent, and all of the students and others in our community today, I hope that you come to UVU feeling that this is your home." ■

HOME IS A PLACE WHERE  
I CAN ARTICULATE MY DREAMS,  
AND FEEL THAT I HAVE THE SUPPORT TO MAKE THOSE

# DREAMS

COME TRUE. I HOPE THAT YOU COME TO UVU  
FEELING THAT THIS IS YOUR HOME.



# a

# sense of belonging

By Barbara Christiansen Photos By Savanna Richardson

**Since** the Melisa Nellesen Center for Autism opened its doors at Utah Valley University slightly more than a year ago, people have been coming for several reasons. Some are seeking help, some want to help, and others want to learn.

As expected, the university provides an education for those who want a career helping individuals with autism, and gives assistance for its students with autism. But there is another aspect — that of helping the larger community through its resources.

Families who are affected by autism might feel isolated, rather than excited or inspired, says Laurie Bowen, associate director of community outreach at the center. It may be difficult to be in public because their child may

Autism center  
at UVU  
provides a  
win-win situation  
for students  
and  
the community



“It gave me  
a home, a  
sense of  
belonging.”

run away, have mannerisms that are unique, or may be overwhelmed by crowds and loud noises. However, they find understanding when they come to UVU, with programs, classes, and activities that offer help.

“We are here to provide assistance and hope as a place where people can connect and find support,” Bowen says.

The center and its initiatives provide a safe place for individuals impacted by autism to come and be who they are, without any judgment, she says. “We provide a home base for people to know where to start.”

### Passages

Resources for autism are usually limited, but they are extremely difficult to find once an individual leaves high school. It’s known as a “services cliff,” Bowen says. UVU has a program called Passages to fill that gap, for students and non-students.

Josh Olivas is one of the adults who have found help through the Passages program.

“I didn’t know what I was struggling with,” he says, explaining that the diagnosis did not provide the help he needed. “I had come back

to the Utah County area and was looking for a program for adults with autism. The needs for adults are definitely different from those of children.

“Up to that point I had been really frustrated with my diagnosis. I was struggling to work, and not sure what my future would be. I couldn’t seem to keep a job. I felt really isolated and reached out on Facebook.”

Bowen contacted him and told him about Passages. He says it was exactly what he was hoping for.

“It gave me a home, a sense of belonging,” he says.

With Passages, he got the answers to a lot of his questions, and perhaps just as important, it made him feel he wasn’t alone.

“When I started Passages it gave me hope,” he says. “It is manageable. You find you have something to offer. It gave me the motivation to help others.”

That has led to a career. He got involved as a volunteer at Scenic View Academy, which helps children with autism. He teaches life skills and transportation skills there.

An annual autism conference also provides resources to the public, along with a chance for them to network with each other. There are

volunteer mentors who help the autistic learn skills, including social interaction. At various times during the year, there are activities and events for families affected by autism to find help, and enjoy companionship. Some of those began before the center was created, while others have been added.

### Activities

“We have coordinated with the Noorda Theatre on campus to offer sensory-friendly performances,” Bowen says. “They make sure there are not as many sudden noises that might disturb the attendees. They have sensory toys available for kids, and places where they can go if it does get overwhelming.”

Other activities have included baseball, basketball, and soccer camps, geared toward those on the autism spectrum.

Each summer at UVU, there is a soccer camp for kids with autism, in which they have mentors who work with them individually. It was created by Kylee Wunder when she was just 12 years old. Utah Valley University provided help for her.

“My twin brothers were diagnosed with autism when they were 2 years old,” says Kylee. “They have always loved sports, but it was hard to go on a regular team. They were a little different, and got frustrated easily.”

Kylee wanted to help her brothers, Ethan and Jaron, so she and her mom, Jenny Wunder, contacted UVU, which helped her create “Moving Mountains Soccer Camp.” This June was the third summer she has offered a two-day camp.

“We have a lot of volunteers, and they partner one-on-one with the kids,” Kylee says. “We provide training how to handle the autistic kids and how to respond to them. It’s amazing, but by the end of the two days they are closer to those little kids than they ever thought they could be.”

She may have only been 12 years old when she started the first camp, but she was able to get 100 volunteers signed up to help the approximately 80 campers who attended.

Although the camp has grown yearly, Kylee does not consider the numbers significant. “It is not how many kids come, it is how many smiles I see,” she says. “I would rather have all of them happy.”

“I will walk around and make sure everyone is OK,” she says. “They are having the time of their lives. It is so awesome to see the connection between the campers and volunteers. They are best friends, and it is so cool.”



To contact the  
Melisa Nellesen  
Center for Autism:  
  
Visit: [www.uvu.edu/autism](http://www.uvu.edu/autism)  
Email: [AutismCenter@uvu.edu](mailto:AutismCenter@uvu.edu)  
Call: (801) 863-7620

Cover photo from Autism Awareness Fair and balloon launch taken by Emily Drew.

Children and community members gather for the Moving Mountains Autism Soccer Camp and for the Autism Carnival hosted by the Utah Autism Academy.





Another example is a group of dental hygiene students who gained understanding and respect through their interaction.

“They had to come up with an activity they could do with individuals who had autism,” Bowen says. “They created a healthy teeth carnival. They had an opportunity to meet about 60 kids with autism. It is another win-win situation.”

Increasing the understanding about autism, what individuals may be facing, and how to respond has additional benefits for society.

“I feel like we have this amazing opportunity to help with bullying,” Bowen says. “If you get to have a one-on-one experience with someone and learn why they have different experiences with language and social impairment, you will be more understanding and compassionate.”

UVU’s lacrosse coach, Brian Barnhill, learned from Bowen that many autistic students had been bullied in their high schools — often by athletes. To help offset this, he had his players become allies at the center. Even with their busy schedules, they developed a love for the experience.

“We are committed to giving our student-athletes a much different experience beyond lacrosse,” Barnhill says. “Our program is designed to build our athletes as selfless leaders. We subsequently learned that it did much more for our lacrosse program than we had hoped.”

Team captain Chad Renslow says he gained a new perspective on service. “The Passages students were helping me become more selfless, and I realized these students genuinely care about other people,” he says.

Remington Peterson was initially hesitant to be an ally. “The first couple of times we went I really just stuck with the lacrosse guys — but the more we went and the more we bonded, it became an opportunity that I looked forward to every week, and I really hope we get the opportunity to help out again,” he says. “I learned how to communicate and befriend someone who may be different from me, or who grew up in a different background than me. That is something I hope I can continue to use in my daily life.”

Barnhill says the players’ experiences were practical. “The odds are that these players more than likely will have someone in their family or circle of influence who will have a child with autism,” he says. “They will now have a better understanding of the challenges facing an individual on the autism spectrum, and be able to have a positive, understanding influence on that person.”

## Center and program — both built with love

“What we have in this community is unique,” Bowen says. “In this building, you see all the names of people who donated to build it — almost \$8 million. It came from moms and dads and grandmas and grandpas. This might be the only building on campus that was built with love.”

UVU’s center is not the only resource available to families with members on the autism spectrum, but UVU often helps bring various resources together to better serve the public. As groups might otherwise compete for funding, UVU unites them.

“Everybody contributes so we can do something bigger,” Bowen says.

One example of that collaboration is an annual awareness event called an Uplifting Celebration for Autism. The first year, 400 individuals attended. There were games and activities. At the conclusion, the uplifting became literal as there was a balloon launch, with different colors of balloons representing various manifestations of the disorder.

At the celebration this spring, there were more than 1,300 attendees and 37 booths with games and activities.

Marty Matheson is the executive director of Scenic View Academy in Provo, Utah, which assists those with autism. He says he often refers families in need to UVU’s autism center, calling it a great resource. Those families come from the local area, across the state, even across the country. He told of one family from Vernal, Utah, that contacted him for help.

“I told a mom about the resources available at UVU for their 10-year-old son,” he says. “I let her know about the uplifting celebration, the carnival, and the soccer camp. She brought her family and participated in all three events. She felt comfort. Anything she needed she could come to the autism center at UVU. She immediately had a built-in support system. As a result, this family has now moved to Lehi to be closer to the center.”

As those at the center look back over the past year, they are also looking to the future.

“It is amazing to see how much has happened in this amount of time,” Bowen says. “I am excited to see where we go from here.” ■

**“Everybody contributes so we can do something bigger.”**



## Increasing understanding

“The volunteers come away with a better understanding of autism,” Kylee says. “They didn’t quite realize what they were going through until the camp.”

Siboney Fowler is an adult who has helped the Wunder family put on the soccer camp. “It has changed our family for the better,” she says. “It helped me become a better mother, and my kids who have also helped have changed. It was totally cool.

“I am more understanding at the grocery store if I hear a massive meltdown. I am more aware of the kids that I interact with in my church callings, and make more of an effort to understand what their needs are even if they aren’t autistic. This camp has made me a better person in the sense that I have learned to be more patient with those I come in contact with.”

As the volunteers participate, they learn more about those who are autistic and how to relate to them. And the word spreads.



# FOCUSING ON THE HEART

BY JAY WAMSLEY | PHOTOS BY JAY DROWNS



*Fabio Sagebin is currently in the final year of a residency at the University of Rochester Medical Center. Opposite Page: Fabio Sagebin and his wife Christa spend a moment with their children, walking near their Rochester home.*

A DOZEN years ago, soon-to-be UVU student Fabio Sagebin was doing research — on whether or not higher education was for him and, if so, where he should enroll. A dozen years from now, Dr. Sagebin will again likely be doing research — this time on better ways to repair hearts.

Currently a member of the University of Rochester Medical Center's cardiothoracic surgery integrated residency program, Sagebin says a decade ago, he was "fully intending to finish high school, go on a mission, and come home and work construction with my dad." His family — who had emigrated when he was 3 years old to Utah from a small city in southern Brazil, near the Uruguayan border — had begun a successful business, building steel-frame homes. His mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Lat-

ter-day Saints had taken him to New York City, specifically Brooklyn and Queens.

A visit with his mission president "changed the trajectory for me," Sagebin remembers. "I worked closely with my mission president, and during that mentorship he planted the seed that I really needed a formal education.

"Unfortunately, I had not really prepared for that at that point. My parents were wonderful people, hardworking people, but we didn't have the social infrastructure necessary for college prep. It was not something that was inculcated in my family culture. I didn't take the SAT or the ACT, and I really hadn't prepared for college. So, when I came home, I just looked for an open-enrollment college."

After a semester of working in Salt Lake City and studying part-time at Salt Lake Com-



AN UNEXPECTED  
CLASS HELPS UVU  
GRADUATE FABIO  
SAGEBIN FIND HIS NICHE  
IN THE MEDICAL WORLD

Right: Fabio Sagebin with Dr. Igor Gosev at URM. Below right: Inside the surgical suite at the University of Rochester Medical Center.



munity College, Sagebin was engaged to be married and living in Utah County, staring again at the prospect of beginning a trek into higher education.

"I was now more serious about my education," he says. "I decided to become a full-time student, and, to help pay for school, I managed a group home for kids with disabilities. This gave me the flexibility and latitude to tailor my education around work and still take full-time credits. UVU was open enrollment so it was a no-brainer; I started the journey there."

The first step was to meet with a counselor and start a core of university classes, Sagebin says, so he began with an introduction to biology course and other standard introductory classes. He says he registered for Dr. Wayne Whaley's biology class, thinking it was an intro-level class. "Back then, there was intro to biology and a much different course, biology for pre-med, which was the one that I ended up matriculating in," he says. "And I just remember it being really hard, and I was surrounded by kids who were pre-medical and pre-dental, and I had no idea that was what was happening."

After confirming with several fellow students over lunch that they were, indeed, pre-medical students, the light toward the future came on for Sagebin. He says though it was a very hard class for him, he worked hard and was one of only a few students who received an A. An adviser in the biology department showed Sagebin several paths to take if he wanted to be a physician.

"I had no aspirations to do anything medical until then," he says. "But after that happened, it was like the first time it occurred to me that if I tried really hard I could be a good student. I had no professional aspirations at all — I was really expecting just to take over my dad's business. So, at that point, when the whole coursework was laid out for me, it was the first time I had considered doing anything medical."

As semesters passed, Sagebin and his wife, Christa, began to look at possible medical schools, including the University of Utah. Sagebin remembers that a graph on a webpage at the U of U showed averages in several categories for students in their program, including the average GPA, average MCAT scores, average courses taken, average hours in clinic, service hours, and so on. "I took that document and said, 'Well, if I can double these averages, exceed the average expectations...that would be our goal,'" Sagebin says. "Our theory was that if I did that in every one of those metrics, I can probably get into a good medical school."

Sagebin was one of three students offered "early acceptance" by the University of Utah, but he instead chose to go back to New York City for his continuing education. With his mission background there, Sagebin said a return to New York to attend NYU became "an exciting prospect for us."

During his time at NYU, Sagebin participated in clinical and basic science research, focusing his efforts on bone-tissue engineering. He was also affected by his experiences surrounding Hurricane Sandy. He was involved in the evacuation of the NYU Medical Center — which was right in the middle of a massive power outage in lower Manhattan — carrying

Fabio Sagebin hopes to specialize in minimally invasive cardiac surgery. Bottom right: Dr. Sagebin checks on Michael Moody, one of his patients at URM.



patients down flights of stairs to waiting ambulances, including a patient who had recently received an artificial heart. This helped galvanize his decision to pursue a career in surgery.

"It was one of those formative experiences that steered me toward acute, serious, kind of life-and-death surgery, and I couldn't find anything more elegant and life-changing than cardiac surgery," Sagebin says. "At the time, they were developing and offering these new integrated residencies — where before it used to take about 10 years, these new residencies were offering the same experiences in six years. There were only a few of them nationally and luckily through a lot of hard work and persistence, I was able to get one of them. That's how I ended up at the University of Rochester as part of one of these integrated surgical residency programs."

Sagebin, now 35, has been at the University of Rochester for five years, with one year left, and then plans to move on to a new career, for which he is actively interviewing. At URM, in addition to clinical training in the operating room, he is involved with a number of research projects, including less-invasive approaches to heart surgery, and creating improved strategies for managing patients who need artificial hearts or who are suffering from advanced heart failure. He is also heavily involved in surgical education research, which focuses on surgical simulation and the training of surgical residents by developing training tools to help teach residents the craft of cardiac surgery.

Sagebin also works with a team at the University of Rochester biomedical engineering department to develop surgical devices for minimally invasive cardiac surgery — "the university actually got one of our devices patented," he says — and is continuing to hone in on that topic as his sub-specialty.

#### THE FUTURE

"I see myself being part of a busy clinical program doing high-volume cardiac surgery," Sagebin says. "The jobs I'm looking at now have a need for minimally invasive heart surgery, which is a newer branch of cardiothoracic surgery, where you are able to accomplish the same thing using minimally invasive approaches. Instead of opening the chest in the front, you're using smaller incisions on the side, using cam-

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# Building Our Community Together



Right: Dr. Sagebin visits with patient Michael Moody about his procedure.

Below: Fabio Sagebin reviews his day with Dr. Igor Gosev at URM. Dr. Sagebin's residency in Rochester will end within the year.



says. "It's something that we are very proud of. We started doing it while at UVU, and it's something we are passionate about."

Sagebin notes that the incoming UVU president, Astrid S. Tuminez, has been instrumental in taking the foundation to the next level, and led the effort in getting the foundation accredited as a nonprofit organization to help with the benefits and legalities of donations. President Tuminez is a sister to Sagebin's mother-in-law, Julie Ludlow.

Additionally, Sagebin notes that he and Tuminez also have shared thoughts about his history at UVU and the school's strong dual-mission role in education.

"I know [President Tuminez] well, and have spent time with her and her family. I love her family," Sagebin says. "We both believe UVU is a very unique place. It is filling very different needs. It is remarkable to me that it is a place where you might have a single mom trying to rebuild her life, you have a high school student learning a trade, and you have a fresh high school grad who is pursuing a career in law or medicine. It is really unique to have an institution filled with people with such varying and wide goals."

Sagebin says he also believes it is unique to have an institution that is filled with administrators and faculty so committed to the personal development of individual students.

"There were times I considered transferring, but every time I did I felt like the people at UVU were invested in my success," he says. "I remember walking into Dr. Whaley's office the day I got the early acceptance letter from the University of Utah, and he walked over to me and gave me a hug. It was that important. He was invested in my success. It meant a lot to me. This was an inspiring thing, that he took the success of his students personally. And I think you get that at an institution that is catering to many different needs. The administration needs to continue being that invested in identifying those students who have those ambitions, and creating an infrastructure that will allow them to succeed, and I think they will continue having these success stories."

Sagebin said he envisions a time when UVU will have a "robust pre-medical society" with clinical experiences and resources coordinated to help a growing fraternity of pre-medical students, many of whom are being accepted into prestigious universities. "I think that would be just incredible," he says. ■

eras and different tools to accomplish the same thing...so my goal would be to start a minimally invasive cardiac surgery program somewhere in the country, and grow it and make it successful, and maybe eventually transition back into academics where I'd be involved in teaching residents and research."

If all that doesn't sound like enough to keep the couple — who have three young sons, Asher, Luca, and Kai — busy, Sagebin and Christa also chair The Guimaras Foundation, a nonprofit that provides academic and scholastic aid to underprivileged schools in the Philippines. Begun by Marley and Bruce Sutton, an aunt and uncle to Christa, the foundation works with textbook suppliers in North America and donates thousands of textbooks to schools on the island of Guimaras.

Sagebin and his wife developed relationships with textbook publishers who were throwing away thousands of textbooks every couple of years that were considered outdated. "We were sending huge quantities of textbooks to this island in the Philippines and they were then distributing to elementary, middle school, and high school students," Sagebin

60%

of UVU students come from Utah County

75%

of Utah County students who go to a state school, go to UVU

84%

of UVU graduates stay in Utah for at least one year

38%

of UVU students are 1st generation



# ALUMNI AWARDS 2018



Jane Ostler

## YOUNG ALUMNI AWARD

*A recent graduate who continues to support the university in a profound and substantive manner, contributing time, energy, and/or money.*

Jane Ostler graduated from UVU in 2013 with a bachelor's degree in public and community health. She had previously finished a degree to be a certified medical assistant, with plans to become a nurse, and, eventually, a surgeon. "I took time off to raise a family, knowing I could always come back to UVU and there would be a place for me," she says. A hearing loss changed her focus, however, as she didn't want to risk mistreating people because she couldn't hear them completely. She now travels throughout the state for the Huntsman Cancer Institute, teaching cancer prevention.



Bobbi Kassel

## DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

*An individual who has served to further the purposes and the mission of UVU as an employee or volunteer, with recent service that had a profound effect on the university.*

Bobbi Kassel has been at UVU since 1995. She has associate and bachelor's degrees from UVU, and a master's in education from the University of Utah. The latter was earned while she was working at UVU as an academic adviser. She began teaching criminal justice at UVU while still advising, and became a full-time faculty member in 2014. In addition, she volunteers on the Utah County Rape Crisis Team, and is an adult adviser for the Provo Youth Court. She believes in service so much that she requires it of her students. "I have been able to get service opportunities for my students," she says. "That has been great."



doTERRA (David Stirling)

## CORPORATE CATALYST AWARD

*A business that demonstrates success, innovation, and contributions to the community and the mission of UVU, with strategic planning, employee development, community involvement, customer service, and corporate integrity.*

Founded in 2008, doTERRA has supported Utah Valley University in several different ways, including support for the Center for Constitutional Studies. David Stirling, CEO and founding executive of the company, praises the university for its efforts. "UVU is foremost on the Constitution in the state," he says. His company's reach and support don't stop there. "We also help fund the [Melisa Nellesen] Autism Center and the Women's Success Center," Stirling says. "I have an autistic nephew and have seen a tremendous increase in his functioning, so we support the center and its continuing research. I credit Janis and Corey Lindley [of doTERRA] for spearheading our efforts with the Women's Success Center."



Ian Wilson

## WILSON W. SORENSEN LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

*An individual who has continually served to further the purposes and the mission of UVU as an employee (past or present), making a significant contribution, and dedicating themselves to the growth and advancement of the university.*

Ian Wilson continues to support UVU during retirement, following service as dean of the School of Business for 12 years, associate vice president then vice president of Institutional Advancement and Marketing for five years, teaching in the School of Business several different times, then as vice president of Academic Affairs. He now teaches part time and serves on the Alumni Board. "I have been fortunate to have been a part of UVU at really exciting times," he says. "It always has been an exciting and innovative place to work. It has helped people grow and develop, offering new degrees and new opportunities for faculty and students. It's a unique institution."



Elder Quest (Ruth Hillam, Joan Hahn, and Fran Reiser)

## UVU LEGACY AWARD

*Alumnus/alumna or friend who has gone the extra mile to contribute time, energy, and/or money to UVU and/or the Alumni Association.*

Elder Quest recently celebrated its silver anniversary of helping senior citizens be lifelong learners. President Ruth Hillam, scholarship chair Joan Hahn, and past president Fran Reiser say they have added scholarships for nontraditional students in need. The group offers 12-14 semester-long classes for seniors, with a seminar in April, and throughout the year it has luncheons and dinners with speakers on various topics. "All of us are older. We keep our brains active. We want to learn. We see the importance of education for everyone — young and old. It has been a great thing," Hillam says.

Visit [uvu.edu/community/elder](http://uvu.edu/community/elder) for more information.

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# Carry UVU Pride!



**MONDAY, SEPT. 24**

**Founders Day**

1 p.m. to 2 p.m.  
 Plaza

**Drive-in Movie Night**

7:30 p.m.  
 Lot L14

**TUESDAY, SEPT. 25**

**Blood Drive**

10 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
 Grande Ballroom

**THURSDAY, SEPT. 27**

**UVUSA Speaker**

**Saroo Brierley**  
 Noon to 1 p.m.  
 Grande Ballroom

**Women's Volleyball vs.**

**Cal Baptist**  
 Noon  
 Lockhart Arena

**FRIDAY, SEPT. 28**

**Emerald Ball**

8 p.m. to 11 p.m.  
 Grande Ballroom

**Women's Soccer vs.**

**New Mexico State**  
 7 p.m.,  
 Clyde Field

**SATURDAY, SEPT. 29**

**Student Leadership**

**Reunion**  
 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.  
 SLWC

**Alumni Homecoming Fair**

4 p.m. to 7 p.m.  
 UCCU Center Visitor Lot

**Men's Homecoming**

**Soccer Match**  
 7 p.m.  
 Clyde Field

For a detailed list of events, visit  
[uvu.edu/homecoming](http://uvu.edu/homecoming)



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**COLONEL BRANDON TAYLOR.** Operations Group Commander, Utah Air National Guard. A.S. Aviation Science, B.A. Business Management, International Business emphasis, class of 1996.

"To be successful in aviation today, you need a four-year degree to do almost anything, and you certainly need a bachelor's degree to become a pilot in the Air Force. Fortunately, I was able to complete my UVU education with a bachelor of arts degree from the business school because, at the time, aviation was only a two-year program. That four-year degree was exactly what I needed to get me where I wanted to be and where I am today. UVU helped make everything possible for me. I am UVU."

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