

# UVU magazine

ALSO INSIDE

ACADEMICS IS A TEAM SPORT | PG. 32

QUALIFIED IN THE COCKPIT | PG. 44

## FROM THE GROUND UP

Student success,  
community support  
fuel growth of  
UVU's Woodbury  
School of Business

PG. 24





contents

p 18 THE MOST PASSIONATE PERSON IN THE ROOM  
UVU theater grad Chase Ramsey brings zest to Broadway role



p 32 ACADEMICS IS  
A TEAM SPORT  
UVU student-athletes get significant  
support to point them toward graduation

UVU magazine  
WINTER 2019 volume 10 issue 2



QUALIFIED IN THE COCKPIT  
UVU Aviation is filling the need  
for pilots with efficiency — and putting  
more women in the air  
p 44



p 12 PENGUIN PATERNITY  
UVU students and faculty are helping to change the way  
penguin populations at zoos and aquariums are managed —  
nationally and internationally

FROM THE GROUND UP  
Student success, community support  
fuel growth of UVU's Woodbury  
School of Business

p 24

EXECUTIVE EDITOR  
Stephen Whyte  
PUBLISHER  
Kevin Walkenhorst  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF  
Layton Shumway  
ART DIRECTOR  
Emily Weaver  
STAFF WRITERS  
Barbara Christiansen  
Amanda Taylor  
Jay Wamsley  
PHOTOGRAPHY  
Jay Drowns  
August Miller  
Savanna Richardson  
ILLUSTRATION & DESIGN  
Kylie Crosby  
Kimberlee Forsgren  
Shari Warnick  
UVU MAGAZINE ONLINE  
uvualumni.org/uvumagazine  
PRODUCTION  
University Marketing  
& Communications  
AD SALES  
Amie Huntsman '09  
uvumagazine@uvu.edu  
FEEDBACK  
uvumagazine@uvu.edu  
801-863-8179

FROM THE PRESIDENT 4

UVU NEWS 5

UVU ENGAGE 8

FEATURE STORIES 12

THRU THE LENS 38

ALUMNI NEWS 48

ALUMNI MESSAGE 49





DEAR UVU COMMUNITY,

What an extraordinary few months it has been for me as president of Utah Valley University! Thank you for the kindness, warmth, and genuine friendship that you have extended to me since I began my tenure in September. My family and I have had smooth and rough spots in our transition to a new life, but not once have we doubted that UVU is exactly the place where we want to be. We have been energized by the people here, and have loved every musical, academic, art, and athletic event we’ve attended.

During these last few months, I have spoken to our faculty, staff, and students in large and small settings, soliciting candid feedback in a still-continuing “listening tour.” These conversations have helped me better understand the culture, needs, and strengths of our university. I have also had the opportunity to speak to numerous external stakeholders and now better appreciate UVU’s role as an economic engine for our service region and state, as well as a critical player in Utah’s higher education landscape.

As we celebrate the accomplishments of the past and pivot to meet the challenges of the future, I would like us to focus on UVU as a place where we INCLUDE all who want to receive a meaningful postsecondary education. We are in the business of preparing people for work and life. We remain committed to open admissions and to the integrated mission of a community college and university.

UVU is also a place where we ENGAGE in rigorous and meaningful academic preparation and experiential learning. But our engagement does not stop there. Each of us engages deeply by bringing our best selves to work every day; owning our responsibilities as students, staff, faculty, and administration; and harnessing our resources for the most impactful use.

Finally, UVU is a place where we help one another and our larger community to ACHIEVE dreams and aspirations in education, employment,

and a dignified life. We are focused on student success. This means not only terminal degrees, but an overall positive university experience that helps each member of our community move forward with hope and resilience.

To INCLUDE, ENGAGE, and ACHIEVE, we will focus on a culture of exceptional care, exceptional accountability, and exceptional results. We will always aspire to be better than what we are. Among other things, this means stretching ourselves to promote the well-being of our students physically and mentally; improving student completion and retention rates; helping our students develop character; behaving with the highest integrity and ethics; using our resources wisely; achieving greater victories in athletics; and setting new standards in the arts. As president of UVU, I am committed to reinforcing and living our values and working with all of you so UVU can shine brighter.

As you read this edition of UVU Magazine, I hope that you will see the exceptional culture that allows our students to thrive, and the efforts we make to include, engage, and achieve. This is evident, for example, in the programmatic excellence of our Woodbury School of Business and in the academic success of our student-athletes. You will also see the strengths of UVU’s culture and mission as you read about our theater alumnus, Chase Ramsey, now a star on Broadway. And I’m sure you will smile as you learn why, according to The New York Times, “penguins are human too,” an insight from novel research into penguin paternity done by students and faculty in our biology program. Finally, articles on our aviation and forensics programs, as well as our Outdoor Adventure Center, will underline that we are doing exceptional work in supporting student success.

Thank you for the support that you provide the nearly 40,000 students who call UVU their academic home. We are proud of the institution and culture that we are building. We are part of a story and a purpose truly greater than ourselves.

Warmest regards,

Astrid S. Tuminez  
President

PHOTO BY AUGUST MILLER



ASTRID S. TUMINEZ OFFICIALLY BEGINS SERVICE  
AS SEVENTH UVU PRESIDENT

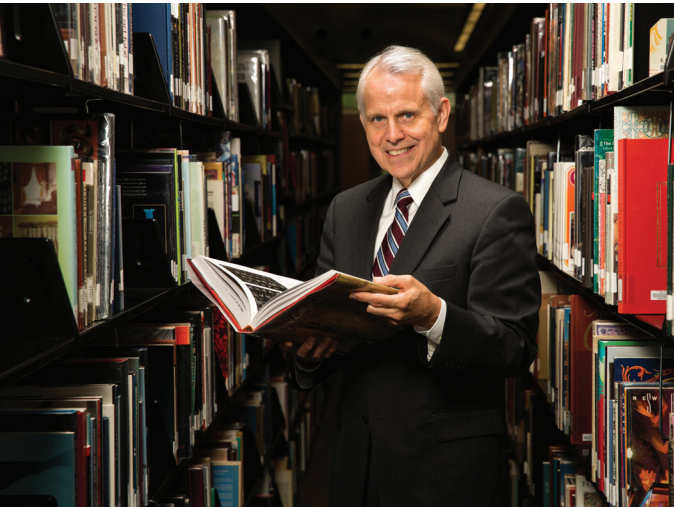
Dr. Astrid S. Tuminez officially began her service as the seventh president of Utah Valley University on Sept. 17, 2018. She took the reins from UVU interim president Dr. Jeffery E. Olson, who returned to his role as UVU’s senior vice president of academic affairs.

President Tuminez had been in communication with Olson and other UVU leaders while finishing her work for Microsoft in Singapore as the company’s regional director for corporate, external, and legal affairs in Southeast Asia. She was chosen as UVU president in April 2018 by the Utah State Board of Regents after an international search.

“I want to say thank you to the amazing students, faculty, staff, and community at UVU,” Tuminez said. “I am grateful for your service and your willingness to bring your energy, creativity, and life experience to UVU. There are many challenges ahead, but I am extremely excited to start this new chapter at UVU. Together we can do amazing things.”

“President Tuminez has a remarkable story that exemplifies UVU’s mission — a life transformed through educational opportunity,” Olson said. “She is very committed to UVU’s open-admission, integrated community college and university mission. She could have chosen to be president of any of a number of universities, many with longer histories of academic renown, but she was able to recognize how remarkable UVU is and the extraordinary value of what it is doing.”

PHOTOS BY AUGUST MILLER, JAY DROWNS



DR. JEFFERY E. OLSON, UVU SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT  
OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT

After a distinguished career in higher education, Dr. Jeffery E. Olson, senior vice president of Academic Affairs at Utah Valley University, announced he will retire following the conclusion of the 2018-2019 academic year. A university search committee is in place with the goal of having the new provost and academic vice president in place by June 2019.

During his five years at UVU, Olson oversaw the development of the university’s current Academic Master Plan, which outlines the university’s commitment and strategies to meet all postsecondary educational needs of Utah, Wasatch, and Summit counties. The plan addresses credit and noncredit courses; high school concurrent enrollment and enrollment of traditional and nontraditional students; and one-year certificates, associate degrees, bachelor degrees, and graduate degrees and certificates.

“Dr. Olson has played a pivotal role at UVU over the last five years,” said President Astrid S. Tuminez. “He served as interim president when President Matthew Holland stepped down, and worked tirelessly to make sure UVU was meeting the educational needs of our service area — including making higher education available to our nontraditional, first-generation, and minority students.”





## BASTIAN ESTATE BECOMES HOME TO UVU MUSEUM OF ART AND LEARNING CENTER

The sons of beloved philanthropist and community activist Melanie Bastian are providing a lasting tribute to their mother through the donation of her Orem home to Utah Valley University.

“Melanie was a lifelong supporter of arts and education. The gift is a tribute to her generosity. She built this huge, beautiful home, but she didn’t build it for herself — she built it for us, and she built it for the community,” her son Darren Bastian says. “She wanted it to be used by people she loved, and for her that included a lot of people.”

As the new home of the UVU Museum of Art, Lakemount Manor offers an innovative, active learning space in a unique setting, and provides opportunities for the community to engage in a variety of public education programs and family events.

Margaret Dayton, former state senator and friend of Melanie, says, “It’s exciting to realize that this lovely home is going to be utilized in a way that Melanie often utilized it — to be inclusive and to focus on that which is uplifting, beneficial, and beautiful.”

The new vision for the estate adds to a robust legacy of the family’s opening their home to Utah Valley University in support of education and the university’s mission. Melanie hosted numerous events and receptions on behalf of UVU. Her children say she wanted her home to be a place for the community to gather and share in cultural experiences. “It’s a place of inspiration and a place of welcome, and people will come here and enjoy being here. It’s a very inclusive space, and I think my mom intended it to be that way from the get-go. She wanted us to be here, and she wanted us to want to be here with other people. So, I think everybody will feel connected to this building,” Darren says.

The Bastian home will continue to be full of life as the UVU Museum of Art, with exhibitions and activities that involve the community. Robbie Bastian says it’s as his mother would have wanted it. “That’s how I believe Mom treated this place. It was a place she wanted everyone to love, and everyone to enjoy, and she succeeded at that. This just seems like a great opportunity to keep that legacy going, and keep it a part of everyone’s life,” he says.

PHOTO BY JAY DROWNS

## UVU ANNOUNCES INITIAL \$3 MILLION IN FUNDING FOR NEW \$15 MILLION FIRST-GENERATION INITIATIVE

At the conclusion of the 2018 President’s Scholarship Ball, UVU President Astrid S. Tuminez announced a new \$15 million First-Generation Initiative aimed at raising funds for scholarships and programming that supports UVU’s first-generation students. President Tuminez noted that generous donors have already committed \$3 million. UVU plans to secure full funding of the initiative in the next three-to-five years.

“UVU says to every person in this valley, ‘Come as you are — bring your dreams,’ and we will help you with the support, structure, and care to make those dreams a reality,” she said. “With this First-Generation Initiative, we want to underline that the dreams of first-generation students are not only valued, but they are achievable.”

According to a 2017 report, 38 percent of UVU students are first generation, meaning neither parent/guardian has completed a bachelor’s degree in the United States. UVU provides mentoring, events, and support through its I Am First program, which automatically includes all first-generation students at UVU. In 2018, 1,280 first-generation students graduated from UVU. First-generation students are also a key factor in the university’s Strategic Inclusion Plan, which aims to provide accessible and equitable educational opportunities and resources for all students.



PHOTOS BY AUGUST MILLER, JAY DROWNS



## UVU’S CAPITOL REEF FIELD STATION CELEBRATES 10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

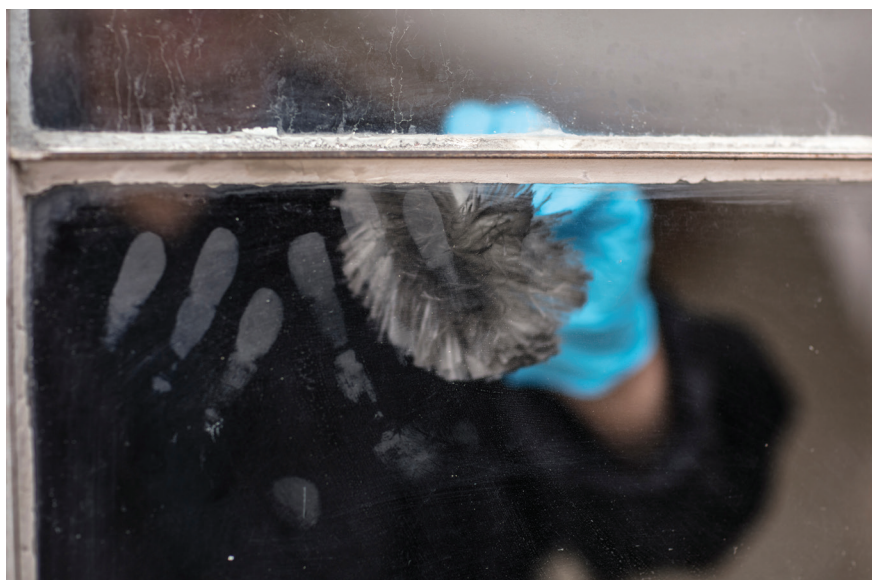
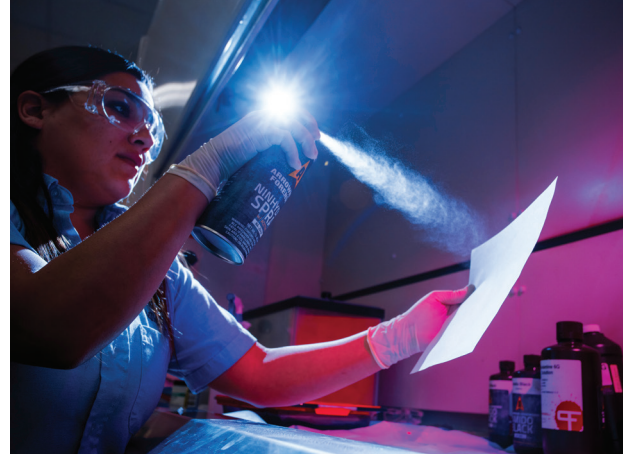
Utah Valley University’s Capitol Reef Field Station has been an effective teaching and learning center for UVU faculty and students for a decade. Dignitaries, donors, national park employees, and UVU faculty and leaders, including President Tuminez, gathered there Nov. 9-11, 2018, to celebrate the station’s 10-year anniversary.

The two-day celebration included a musical performance by a student cellist and a zero-light-pollution star-viewing experience. Part of the festivities featured a tour of the field station’s new, soon-to-be-finished classroom building, which will enhance the station’s ability to support the missions of both Capitol Reef National Park and the university.

UVU faculty and students use the facilities to study and do research about geomorphology (the study of streams), macrolichens (small growing plants that grow on rocks), optical instruments (cameras, telescopes, etc., that process and analyze light waves), entomology (study of insects), the ionosphere (study of Earth’s atmosphere containing high concentration of ions and free electrons that reflect radio waves), environmental conservation, and other physics and science-based topics.

The field station consists of four solar-powered buildings that overlook Pleasant Creek. “It’s a great place to demonstrate solar technology and water conservation,” says Michael Stevens, Ph.D., UVU biology professor and director of the station. “Since its opening a decade ago, it has served all eight colleges at Utah Valley University. It’s a stellar and excellent example of engaged learning.”





PHOTOS BY JAY DROWINS

# STUDYING THE SCENE OF THE CRIME

Students in UVU's forensic science department learn how to solve puzzles with evidence

By BARBARA CHRISTIANSEN

**FOUR** years ago, Chelsea Gipson was drugged and raped. Because of problems with the evidence, the suspect went free. She moved to Utah to study forensic science at Utah Valley University, in part, she says, to help “put away the bad guys.”

“Evidence doesn’t lie,” she says. “In my case there was physical evidence, but it wasn’t used correctly. In forensics, we are providing the facts. It also helps provide closure for others.”

Mentioning evidence and forensics can conjure up images of Sherlock Holmes with a magnifying glass, searching out clues. The field has evolved significantly since those days.

There are two parts to forensic science, and UVU — the only university in the state to offer a degree in forensic science — has incorporated both of those in its major. The program started out teaching students to take evidence obtained from a crime scene and analyze it in the laboratory. Courses included a lot of science, such as chemical analysis. The program has recently been modified to add a second track, with emphases on the investigative work done in the field.

“The program provides access to state-of-the-art laboratory equipment, a practical crime scene facility, and professors with extensive backgrounds working in the forensic field,” says Amie Houghton, an assistant professor of forensic science. She handles the side that focuses on field work. One of those classes emphasizes crime scene processing.

“My class is made for mostly hands-on experience, not just theoretical knowledge,” she says. “My motto has always been, ‘You can be as book smart as you want in this field, but if you can’t put your knowledge to practical use, you will not succeed in your job.’ I have strived to make an engaged, real-life classroom experience.”

And she should know, having spent 11 years in the profession, working as a special agent at NCIS, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service.

She teaches her students, the majority of whom are women, to accurately document all

aspects of a crime scene, including the trajectory of a bullet, the pattern of blood spatter, and exact locations of fingerprints. The students measure and record the information so it can be used in a court proceeding, if that becomes necessary.

In many cases it is easy to know what to document, but in others there is room for flexibility.

“Sometimes you use your gut feeling,” Gipson says. “A thing may feel out of place. You have to figure out whether something is normal or not. Each case is different. There is no one way to go about every case. You stand outside of the picture and decide what you need to look at, and what has been going on here.”

In the case of a death, until a medical examiner has made an official determination of the cause of death, the investigators document the evidence as if it were a homicide.

“People can try to manipulate the scene and make it appear like a suicide, for example,” Gipson says.

Carolyn Brown also majored in forensic science at UVU, with minors in chemistry and criminal justice. She graduated in December with a bachelor’s degree. She plans to go for a doctorate in forensic anthropology, which she anticipates will take another five years. In that field she will analyze skeletal remains to determine characteristics about the deceased.

“Much of it is used for mass grave situations where they need to identify a lot of people,” she says.

“I grew up watching TV shows,” she says. “I looked into what a career in forensic science would entail. I started taking classes and fell in love with it. It is intriguing to be able to solve puzzles and problems. Forensics is doing that for a criminal mindset.”

The forensic investigator needs to do a rapid analysis of the surroundings of a crime scene, she says, since not all that is important is always readily visible.

When Brown first started the program, she was intrigued — but her interest continued

“**MY CLASS IS MADE FOR MOSTLY HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE, NOT JUST THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE. I HAVE STRIVED TO MAKE AN ENGAGED, REAL-LIFE CLASSROOM EXPERIENCE.**

to increase because of the teachers, she says. “They really helped me fall in love with forensic science. What I am grateful for in the program is that aspect. They really want you to succeed.”

In turn, Houghton loves teaching the skills. “I love when students come to love the classes and tell me they are glad we included them,” she says.

With that inclusion, they may find careers in the growing field as crime scene investigators, medicolegal death investigators, latent print examiners, impression evidence examiners, or firearms and ballistic evidence examiners. They won’t need Sherlock’s magnifying glass.

But they will be helping to put away the bad guys. ■



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# PENGUIN PATERNITY

*UVU students and faculty are helping to change the way penguin populations at zoos and aquariums are managed — nationally and internationally*

*Written by* **BARBARA CHRISTIANSEN**  
*Photography by* **SAVANNA RICHARDSON**

**PENGUINS** have long been thought to be monogamous, but, as it turns out, sometimes they're not. It's not a chorus of "Your Cheatin' Heart," but it is important information to keep the worldwide population of penguins thriving into the future.

That's according to the surprising results of Utah Valley University research on gentoo penguins, which could impact their care for decades to come. Steve Vogel, director of zoological operations at the Loveland Living Planet Aquarium in Draper, Utah, says it was a once- or twice-in-a-career discovery.

"Am I excited? Oh my goodness, I am," Vogel says. "I have been 30 years in the field, and this is the first time I have been involved in something like this."

As with humans, penguins can pass on health concerns if they mate with one who is closely related to them. Being aware of those actual relationships, zoologists can help ensure the wellness of their charges. The animals with more diverse parentage are more resistant to disease and changes in the environment.

Vogel is not only excited about the discovery, but by the UVU students and faculty involved in it.

"When you are involved with bigger schools, you are dealing with post-docs all the time," he says. "I thought it was so cool that we were working with undergraduate students, ironing out all these details with folks who wouldn't have gotten this opportunity otherwise. It was really cool that they were involved

all the way through. It was great to see their faces as they were involved in the physicals, being part of the sample collection, and more."

Vogel's not alone in his excitement about the findings. Eric Domyan, an assistant professor of biology at UVU, oversaw the actual genetic testing of the penguins.

"Talking to Eric was just lots of fun," Vogel says. "He was excited about the students' involvement with things that had never been done before."

## ***Baby Steps***

The research showed that sometimes those penguins who performed the duties as dads weren't actually the genetic parents of the chicks. The findings drew attention from zoos and aquariums across the nation and from national publications, including The New York Times. Professional interest remains, and is expected to increase.

"The way to move forward is to start presenting this paper to the zoo and aquarium fields at large and get the idea out there, so that people who do have penguin colonies like this will think about it," Vogel says. "It is going to take us years. It will be baby steps until we get there. We see the potential benefit down the road."

"There are groups of people from other institutions who work on the traits and genetics," he says. "This quite frankly could change the way these populations are managed."

Until the UVU research uncovered the







“

*I realized that we had accomplished a new method of doing something, and it had worked. What an experience to know that you’ve done something no one else has.*

unexpected relationships, the staff members of zoos and aquariums were simply watching the behavior of penguins to determine which ones were related.

“Our study found that isn’t entirely accurate,” Domyan says. “Some of them were reproducing with others. The records aren’t as accurate as you would like them to be.”

He explains that most animals who give a lot of parental care to their offspring have monogamous relationships. The UVU researchers had to sequence almost 200,000 locations in the penguin genome and identify 38,000 differences that were used to determine the relationships. The research uncovered the fact that infidelity does occur, and that chicks are sired by those other than the ones who serve as social fathers, Domyan says.

The scientific community is already showing interest. So far, Domyan has received DNA samples from a facility in Texas, and his students have started analysis on its penguins. Domyan anticipates being asked to do more research. “The staff at Loveland has been very active trying to contact these other institu-

tions, and we expect to hear from some of them,” he says.

The relationship between UVU and the Loveland Living Planet Aquarium is expected to continue.

“Each year they have several more penguin babies,” Domyan says. “We would continue to test the babies born there.”

Based on the results at Loveland so far, Vogel says he will have to start sending some of his penguins out to other zoos and aquariums for breeding, in order to maintain healthy penguin populations.

#### **Breaking New Ground**

Christian Burrell, Loveland’s director of education, has been with the institution since the day it opened its Draper location in March 2014. An alumnus of UVU, he had previously been a school teacher. When he was at UVU, he had been a teaching assistant for Daniel Horns, associate dean of the College of Science.

“We stayed in contact even after I was teaching in public school,” Burrell says. “Dr. Horns and I spent a lot of time discussing edu-

*The groundbreaking nature is a plus, but the real value has come from having a mentor who spent time involving his students, and letting us gain knowledge and experience from failure so that we appreciated the effort and savor of success.*

”

cational opportunities. At Loveland, we wanted to partner with local universities, so it was a good fit to go with UVU.”

They started by brainstorming, settling on the penguin paternity project. After determining the exact scope of the work they wanted to do, they began the testing. Burrell says the aquarium regularly does wellness checks on the animals. For the penguins, that included blood samples, some of which came to UVU and Domyan’s group.

“They were able to conduct the sequencing that had never been done before,” Burrell says. “It was breaking ground in a lot of ways.”

Observation techniques suggested a male penguin named Gossamer was the father of chicks Poppy and Scamper, as he had been caring for them during the 90-day period before they left the nest.

“In the penguin’s home, the chick will stay right there by the nest until it is done fledging,” Burrell says.

Testing the DNA, however, indicated a male named Roto was the chicks’ biological father, and he had fathered three other chicks

at the aquarium.

Burrell says Loveland plans to continue the project.

“Every time we have chicks born within this population, we hope to have Eric test those and verify the paternal relationships,” he says. “I want to ensure that every chick is genetically healthy to maintain a sustainable population.”

Not only is it good for the penguins, but the penguins are good for the public, he says.

“People really enjoy learning about these animals as individuals,” he says. “People develop connections with a lot of these animals and like learning about their lives.”

#### **The Savor of Success**

Two UVU students were involved in the engaged learning research project. Lauren Lee, a junior studying biotechnology, and Nathan Tirrell, who recently graduated and is planning on becoming a physician’s assistant, helped with the time-consuming effort. They both expressed appreciation and enthusiasm for the project.

“The penguin paternity project was an absolute blast from start to finish,” Lee says. “I learned valuable hands-on lab experience and data analysis skills that have helped to prepare me for a career in biotechnology. It also gave me the chance to develop a sense of professionalism in academic research. It was fun and inspiring being part of something bigger, and it’s gotten me one step closer to achieving my goal of one day working on projects that will help the lives of others.”

Tirrell says it was important to keep a focus on the full scope of the project, even though it was easy to get caught up in the everyday work.

“Even with those extended hours in the lab, I never felt that I lost my enthusiasm for the project,” he says. “The fact that we were able to accomplish something not yet done makes that effort even sweeter. I did not fully appreciate the uniqueness of the project until we were nearing the end, and we were writing our paper. It was then that I realized we had accomplished a new method of doing something, and it had worked. What an experience to know that you’ve done something no one else has.”

“I’m so glad I had the opportunity to work on this penguin project, and that I was able to personally gain so much from it,” he adds. “The groundbreaking nature is a plus, but the real value has come from having a mentor who spent time involving his students, and letting us gain knowledge and experience from failure so that we appreciated the effort and savor of success.” ■





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# PASSIONATE PERSON

The Most  
in the Room

EUGENE O'NEILL

THE BOOK OF MORMON

9 WINNER TONY AWARDS INCLUDING BEST MUSICAL

By AMANDA TAYLOR  
Photography by JAY DROWNS

UVU THEATER GRAD CHASE RAMSEY BRINGS ZEST TO BROADWAY ROLE





Chase Ramsey believes that hard work and passion are the primary components for a creative and fulfilling life. And, as a successful actor-writer-director, this multihyphenated Utah Valley University graduate would know.

The host, husband, and father of two left California in 2018 to move across the country in a whirlwind of opportunity — because Ramsey was offered a job on Broadway. He joined the cast of “The Book of Mormon” in the role of Elder Cunningham, a part that challenges him as an actor and an individual every single day.

### CALIFORNIA FOODIE IN NEW YORK

Chase Ramsey is a food lover. His popular “California Dream Eater” web series, which he hosts for the tourism organization Visit California, has been the recent focus of his life. Now that he lives in New York City, one of his favorite things is exploring the cuisine, which he has to fit into his hectic schedule.

“I get a lot of takeout,” he says. “It’s really fast, and the food out here is amazing.”

Ramsey speaks fondly of his job as host, which he will be reprising during a two-week break from Broadway later this year.

“I guess I’m a guy people want to chill with,” he says. “I’m good at holding my own, and I’m a big foodie and a chef, so the world of food just came naturally.”

After requesting a Cali turkey sandwich from a local restaurant — more of his California food love — he recalls the fateful phone call that brought him to The Great White Way.

### GETTING THE PART

“Broadway was my dream at one point, I guess,” Ramsey says. “I’ve always been more interested in television.”

In Los Angeles and the surrounding area, he had focused on acting on screen. Television, movies, commercials, and hosting had become his primary work. But Ramsey hadn’t entirely abandoned the stage. He did a couple of shows at Berkeley Rep, an award-winning regional theater.

“And someone saw me. My manager got a call from ‘The Book of Mormon’ and asked me to come out and meet with them,” he says. “It

really just happened overnight.”

His family had been gearing up to move to a new apartment in California, so they took their packed boxes a bit farther than anticipated and uprooted their lives.

“As I’m sitting here right now, I still feel like I’m on vacation — a really intense vacation,” Ramsey says.

Though he had been working his acting muscle on a regular basis through writing and directing, and even teaching acting at Disneyland, this level of theater wasn’t something he was necessarily prepared for. Especially the fact that “The Book of Mormon” is a musical.

“When I came out here, everyone was a little bit shocked,” Ramsey says. “I had never had a voice lesson before. I’m coming out here super cold. I guess I just got lucky, and it happened to be there, but this is a really hard role.”

Natural ability worked in his favor, as well as the right look, experience, and connections. But Ramsey has a strict philosophy.

“One thing I will say — as human beings, if we show up and have grit, don’t psych ourselves out on what we can’t do, and focus on what we can, it tends to work out,” he says.

That precise determination to make this opportunity into a positive one is what has led to Ramsey’s shining onstage for eight shows a week. He speaks of his experience with an easy tone, a manner of someone who is not intimidated by or overly grateful for the role — he knows he cannot only handle the challenge, but thrive in it. And that confidence is key.

### A TYPICAL DAY FOR ‘ELDER CUNNINGHAM’

“I have to wake up, do my stretches — get my body warmed up, vocally and physically,” Ramsey says of his morning routine. It’s a regimen prescribed to him by veteran Broadway vocal coach Liz Caplan, who has worked with Hugh Jackman and Neil Patrick Harris. “I spend time with my family during the day, which is wonderful. The only time I wouldn’t be at home is if I have a meeting, a voice lesson, or an audition.”

Next, he finds himself on the train to the show.

“If you’ve ever done community theater, call times are an hour to an hour and a half before curtain,” he says. “On Broadway it’s 30 minutes early, period. Then I do eight shows a week, our day off is Monday, and we repeat. The show is very consistent.”



Ramsey speaks of the schedule as though it is old hat at this point, but getting stage-ready was certainly a journey. When he was cast as the goofy, desperate Elder Cunningham, he said many of his friends thought the role was perfect for him.

“And I was like, ‘I don’t... think so.’ It has been a challenging role because Elder Cunningham is loose, can’t put a lid on his thoughts, has no friends, is not very cool — but he is trying his hardest, and really just wants a best friend,” Ramsey explains. “Not that anyone has ever called me cool in my life, but during this process a lot of my direction was that I was playing it way too cool.”

Setting aside his own confidence and the balance he has honed as an individual, Ramsey threw himself into Cunningham’s shoes.

“A lot of it came from studying the physicality and energy of the character. How hard is he trying to get another person’s attention? For him, it’s 100 percent. Maybe even a thousand,” he says. “I realized I couldn’t play him the way I had played 90 percent of the roles I’ve played in my life. I had to figure out how to tap into this human being who is really light on his feet and is really off-balance.”

The show’s working atmosphere is the exact blend of professionalism and cheerfulness you might expect offstage at a satirical musical comedy.

“Apparently there are a lot of shows on Broadway that can be a grind, like, ‘New Yorkers are mean.’ For this show, it’s the opposite,” Ramsey says. “It’s a comedy, so backstage we have to be happy. There is a lot of camaraderie and messing around. But the amazing thing about the messing around is that it happens at the right time — nobody misses an entrance. They’re all spot on.”

Dedication to making the show perfect goes without saying when performing on the most famous stages in the world, but Ramsey is still in awe of just how good it really is. For example, he says this production includes no “sweetening,” which involves mixing prerecorded vocals with live sound.

“There is none of that in this show,” he says. “Every time I hear those beautiful voices, it shocks me. It’s just people singing backstage.”







*(Previous page, left to right) While the schedule of a Broadway actor is hectic, it does allow Ramsey to spend time with his wife, Janessa, and his children, Jude and Beckett, during the day. It also gives him time to rehearse with Liz Caplan, his vocal coach. Ramsey also enjoys exploring the culture of New York City, especially the food scene.*

# KNOW WHAT YOU KNOW, BUT SURROUND YOURSELF WITH PEOPLE & BE WILLING TO ASK TO LEARN WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW.

## KNOW WHAT YOU KNOW

“All the things I learned from UVU that I had taken from my mentors, they’re with me every moment, no matter what the performance is or what room I’m in,” Ramsey says.

His time at UVU was spent as most college experiences are — exploring, excelling, failing, learning, and feeling out what was going to work for him. He recounts a story of putting in a lot of extra time to write a term paper for Department of Theatre Chair and Associate Professor Lisa Hall Hagen’s class, though writing was a struggle for him and he knew it wouldn’t end up being very good. Surprisingly, he was awarded the first-place prize for his efforts, which Hagen praised for being exactly that: effort.

“It’s a reminder that if I give extra time, I’m probably the one that’s going to book it,” he says. “They’re going to want me back in the room because they know that I’m the one who’s going to show up.”

When Ramsey was leaving school, he asked Professor Dave Tinney how he could become an artist.

“And he, of course, said, ‘There is no secret, but I will tell you this: I know what I know, and I know what I don’t know.’ And that has really become my motto,” Ramsey says. “Know what you know, but surround yourself with people and be willing to ask to learn what you don’t know.”

In his role as Elder Cunningham, Ramsey says he has tried to remember what he doesn’t know, and be open to questions and vulnerability as he learns from fellow cast members, audience feedback, and himself.

## ADVICE FOR ARTISTS

Being in the industry is definitely a unique challenge, Ramsey says, but with all his experience in various capacities, he has developed some mantras and philosophies he sticks to in order to succeed and stay happy.

“If I could, I would wear a shirt every day that says, ‘Always be the most passionate person in the room.’ Find the reason you are living this life, and if there’s no passion, don’t do it. You can’t do it. I would say that to anybody who holds a job and has zero passion for that job. You can’t do it — it’s going to kill you.”

Though he says he does run into bad days where he doesn’t love what he is doing, he has found passion in providing for his family, and that keeps him just as motivated.

Additionally, he emphasizes being willing to go where the wind takes you. He never would’ve pictured himself on Broadway, and yet there he is, six days a week.

“You can try to say where your path is going, but it’s never going to end up that way,” he says with a chuckle. ■





# FROM THE GROUND UP

STUDENT  
SUCCESS,  
COMMUNITY  
SUPPORT  
FUEL GROWTH OF  
UVU'S WOODBURY  
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

BY *Layton Shumway*  
ILLUSTRATIONS BY *Dave Cutler*



# W

hen the Woodbury School of Business at Utah Valley University interviews candidates for new faculty positions, the conversation often comes down to a single question: What will you do for our students?

The question catches many by surprise, according to Woodbury Dean Norman Wright, but it quickly becomes a differentiating factor.

“I’ll ask faculty about their teaching record, I’ll ask them about their research record,” Wright says, “and then I’ll say, OK, now beyond that — what are you passionate about? What would you create for our students that you’ve been dreaming about doing but didn’t know if you’d ever get the chance?”

Some applicants struggle to respond, Wright says, because they’ve never had to consider the concept before. The ones who have an answer ready? They’re the ones who have helped the Woodbury School of Business grow into the exceptional institution it is today — by building student-focused programs, from the ground up.

## PROGRAM BUILDERS

Despite UVU’s relative youth as a university, Woodbury is the largest business school

*People want to be a part of building something from the ground up. They see UVU as a place where they can contribute their time and treasure and make a difference.*

in Utah by student population, with more than 5,000 enrolled students. In part, that size — which matches UVU’s overall status as the largest public institution of higher education in Utah — is a reflection of the university’s structured open enrollment policy. But Wright says it’s also due to the freedom Woodbury has to be adaptable, responsive to community need, and to put students first.

“Our faculty aren’t just researchers and teachers,” Wright says. “They are program builders. And they’re working together as teams of program builders to create a really great experience for the student.”

Here’s an example: for several years, WSB’s hospitality management program has included

a class in event planning. But as Wright and Hospitality Management Program Director Doug Miller listened to the demand from students and the job market, they saw the opportunity to make event planning its own minor. They approached Jessica Ballard, who was then serving as UVU’s own senior director of executive events, to become a professional-in-residence and build the program from scratch.

“Event planning is now seen as a full profession,” Ballard says. “When I first started in it, it was always seen as a secondary piece of PR, or marketing, or hospitality. But now there is an increase in people actually hiring in-house event planners. It’s a very different skill set.”

Ballard says she uses her connections in the field to make sure students hear from industry professionals on a regular basis. And she’s partnering with companies and event venues so her students get hands-on experience creating real, large-scale events. Long-serving UVU Hospitality Management Professor Yang Huo is also supporting the effort by preparing students to take the exam for a well-recognized industry certification so that students graduate with an academic and an industry qualification.

“With this program, what we’re wanting to do with it — there isn’t another program like that here in the state,” Ballard says.

Wright says the freedom to involve students in creative ways and build new programs are attractive selling points for faculty.

“We have the luxury of doing good research, but not being research-focused,” Wright says. “We get to be student-focused. And as a result, our faculty are creating exceptional engaged learning activities for our students.”

Here’s another example: in 2018, global e-commerce giant eBay partnered with faculty in Woodbury’s human resources program on an opportunity for students to conduct research on eBay’s call center employees. Students created survey questions, collected and analyzed data, conducted interviews with current and former eBay employees, and presented their findings in a three-hour meeting with eBay’s CEO.

That kind of experience isn’t common at the undergraduate level, says Bernd Kupka, associate professor of management at Woodbury.

“For a CEO of a company of that magnitude to devote three hours to listening to students presenting to him was very impressive,” Kupka says.





More than **150**  
students studying  
abroad and working  
on international  
consulting projects

**12.4**  
SQUARE FEET PER STUDENT IN  
CURRENT BUSINESS BUILDING  
(STATE AVERAGE IS 36)

**5,294**  
NUMBER OF ENROLLED WSB STUDENTS

## BUSINESS BY THE NUMBERS

**95**  
MEMBERS  
FACULTY  
FULL-TIME

**DEGREES**  
**11 BACHELOR'S**  
**2 MASTER'S**  
**10 MINORS**

*A few facts that show how much the  
Woodbury School of Business has grown —  
and where it's headed*

**9%**  
WSB AVERAGE ANNUAL  
GROWTH

**\$1.5 million**  
AMOUNT SAVED IN STUDENT  
TEXTBOOK COSTS THROUGH  
WOODBURY TEXT INITIATIVE

**1,600**  
Students  
involved in  
engaged  
learning  
projects

“It gave us a real feel for how seriously they took the work that the students had done.”

Kupka credits Woodbury Human Resources Program Director Jonathan Westover for creating an environment in which engaged learning can thrive. “To me, bookwork alone is not education,” Kupka says. “Together with Jon and the rest of the HR faculty, we are very fortunate that we are given this opportunity to help our students also see, hear, feel, and do. And I think that’s the way people learn the best.”

Some of WSB’s new programs have already risen to exceptional heights. The personal financial planning program, which only began less than a decade ago, is now considered in the top 10 nationally, with students routinely winning national competitions against more established institutions and being placed with top financial advisors around the nation.

That burgeoning reputation is paying off in creative ways. In 2017, UVU Assistant Professor Qianwen Bi began a program called Financial Literacy Camp. A native of China, Bi knew some Chinese cultural attitudes toward investment and credit presented unusual dangers for students. With support from Woodbury Assistant Dean Mikki O’Connor,

and the Silicon Slopes Entrepreneurship Lecture Series — team members research the company represented and find out how many UVU graduates it employs. The lecturers are often blown away by the percentage.

“They say, ‘Wow, I knew we were hiring a lot of UVU grads, but I had no idea that UVU

***What we’re hearing is that UVU is particularly receptive to the needs of the local community. UVU’s come to the point now where they are absolutely confident that they can partner with us effectively and develop the workforce the state needs.***

Bi invited students from Dalian Maritime University in China to visit Utah for three weeks and learn from UVU personal financial planning faculty and students.

“Since we are already one of the leading financial programs in the nation, why not create something that increases international impact?” Bi says. “This shows we’re really one of the leading financial planning programs that has a passion to improve the general financial literacy education, not only for the U.S., but also for other countries that need help.”

Because of the personal financial planning program’s achievements, companies are more willing to provide students with internship and employment opportunities — even before they’ve finished their degrees, in some cases.

“A few years ago, the firms we work with now would’ve laughed at me if I had tried to get them to come to campus,” says Associate Professor Luke Dean. “Now, they’re beating down our doors.”

### LISTENING TO THE COMMUNITY

UVU has a long history of responding to community demand. For a business school — especially one that aims to send so many of its graduates into the local workforce — that’s particularly important. Fortunately for Woodbury, the word is out.

“What we’re hearing is that UVU is particularly receptive to the needs of the local community,” Wright says. “They’re saying that UVU’s come to the point now where they are absolutely confident that they can partner with us effectively and develop the workforce the state needs.”

Wright says when industry leaders come to speak at UVU — Woodbury has a variety of programs, including the Executive Lecture Series

students are driving so much of our success,” Wright says.

To deepen those ties to local and national business, Woodbury created a National Advisory Board, a collection of nearly 100 business leaders chaired by entrepreneur and investor Amy Rees Anderson. The board helps shape Woodbury’s strategic direction by providing guidance, financial support, and mentoring and placement for students.

Anderson says UVU attracts the support of such industry leaders because of its mission and emphasis on engaged learning.

“I believe we can make education the most useful for students by providing them hands-on experiences as early as possible in their schooling,” Anderson says. “Too many students pursue a path having never gotten real-world exposure to the jobs they will someday fill, and, as a result, many end up eventually going into careers outside the field of study they pursued in college. UVU isn’t just teaching students how to learn — they are teaching students how to do, and that sets them up for the best chance of success.”

Wright says that, like Woodbury’s new faculty members, the National Advisory Board has drawn attention and support be-



cause people want to be a part of building something from the ground up.

“They see UVU as a place where they can contribute their time and treasure and make a difference,” Wright says. “The dollars just go so much further here.”

“For anyone desiring to give back in a way that can really move the needle, there is no better place to have the greatest impact on the largest number of students than being involved with UVU,” Anderson says.

STUDENTS WITH SKILL SETS

On top of important financial support, Woodbury’s National Advisory Board also provides direct information on which skills students need to succeed in today’s job market. Bonnie Mortensen, WSB’s undergraduate talent sourcing coordinator, says that gives UVU grads a vital leg up.

“Our students want to stay here. They want to be part of Utah’s job force,” Mortensen says. “So, we can ask our National Advisory Board members, ‘What do you need from us? What do you need our students to learn?’ That’s important feedback to get from these giants of industry.”

Mortensen says Woodbury uses a variety of tools and milestones to

*By the time they graduate, they’ve had mentoring, and tons of interview experience, and built all kinds of skills. When they leave, they’re ready.*

help students “design” their future careers. During a student’s freshman year, Woodbury faculty and staff help students complete a strength-finding assessment, attend seminars, and set up digital profiles on LinkedIn and other social media sites.

Woodbury also uses a unique web-based service called Hub IQ — co-founded by Woodbury graduate Jordan Linford — to provide students with an easily shareable digital portfolio of their work. Mortensen says the platform makes it easy to share information with students in certain degree programs, or all Woodbury students at once.

As students progress into their third and fourth years, Woodbury provides opportunities for mock interviews and mentoring visits, and faculty and staff help students form personalized strategic career plans — all incorporating that invaluable feedback provided by the National Advisory Board and other partner companies.

“By the time they graduate, they’ve had mentoring, and tons of interview experience, and built all kinds of skills,” Mortensen says. “When they leave, they’re ready.”

ROOM TO GROW

According to Wright, over the last five years the Woodbury School of Business has grown at a rate of about 9 percent per year, “which in academic circles is simply exceptional.” That growth, Wright says, is partially driven by the growth of UVU as a whole, but also because of Woodbury’s response to the needs of the community. The school’s graduate programs, including an MBA course designed for working professionals and a new Master of Accountancy degree, have also been carefully selected to address what Wright calls a “backlog” of demand in Utah County and beyond.

“We’re meeting a real need that allows us to grow pretty rapidly,” he says. “And that was a new step for us, requiring us to develop a new set of

capabilities to service that need. I think we’ve largely done that — we’re not perfect at it yet, but we’re continuing to improve.”

However, in order to improve quickly enough to match its growth, Woodbury has to expand physically as well as academically. The building the WSB occupies on UVU’s Orem Campus is bursting at the seams, with many key services, like the writing lab or tutoring facilities, operating on a rotating basis of inconsistent times and locations due to a lack

of space for a permanent home.

Consequently, UVU is currently seeking funding from the Utah State Legislature for a new building to house the Woodbury School of Business, with features and facilities that will allow the school to continue meeting the needs of the Utah community and beyond.

“We’re just out of space to engage our growing student population in the activities that are making the difference in their educational experience,” Wright says. “We’re out of space for the faculty we need to add so that we can teach these students. We are out of space for classes.”

No matter what, Wright says, UVU and Woodbury will continue its mission to serve any student at any level, whether they’re seeking a two-year, four-year, or graduate degree.

“The reality is, if people don’t get an education, we know what the outcomes are: they have higher unemployment rates, they’re underemployed, they have higher divorce rates, they just don’t make the money they need to support their families,” Wright says. “Those are all things that nobody wants to see happening. We don’t care if they were in the top 1 percent of the students graduating from high school that year, or if they’ve come in after having been out of the workforce, or out of the education system. We want to service and help each of them experience personal and professional growth.” ■







UVU STUDENT-ATHLETES GET SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT TO POINT THEM TOWARD GRADUATION

# ACADEMICS IS A TEAM SPORT

**THERE'S NO "I" IN TEAM, AS THE OLD SPORTS CLICHÉ GOES.** But as it turns out, at Utah Valley University, there aren't many "Fs" in team, either.

But there is a lot of collaboration, effort, and, eventually, graduations among Wolverine athletes, to be sure.

"We consistently have one of the highest cumulative athletic GPA in the Western Athletic Conference," says Veronica O'Brien, assistant athletic director for student-athlete academics. "Environment is everything. If you create a positive space that inspires confidence and wrap that around these students, amazing things are going to happen. It is a collective effort by all — we hold each other to a high standard to make sure that we are not only winning on the field but are champions in the classroom and graduating our students."

O'Brien says the last three years, every Wolverine student-athlete who was eligible to graduate has. She says two are still finishing their degrees, so she puts the overall graduation rate at approximately 95 percent.

"We make students champions in the classroom by challenging them, helping them collaborate, helping them feel included, having

By Jay Wamsley | Photography By University Staff





# WE HOLD EACH OTHER TO A HIGH STANDARD TO MAKE SURE THAT WE ARE NOT ONLY WINNING ON THE FIELD BUT ARE CHAMPIONS IN THE CLASSROOM AND GRADUATING OUR STUDENTS.

*(Previous page, from left) UVU coaches Mark Pope, Greg Williams, and Sue Nyhus motivate their student-athletes. Student-athletes often utilize a packed tutoring center (above and above right) to keep up with their classes. Coach Cathy Nixon (right, below) feels academic success is the most important goal for her team.*

access to things, and teaching them how to really own their own college degree,” O’Brien says. “It really is a tremendous collective commitment of our academic staff, student services, our administration, our head coaches, and student-athletes to prepare students for their life journeys. We talk a lot about championships on the field, but we also talk about academic success being a team sport.”

## A PATH TO SUCCESS

Having high GPAs and accompanying graduation rates is the result of day-to-day monitoring of a student-athlete’s activities in the classroom and making sure that athlete knows the best path to academic success. Classroom success — and the resultant graduation — is a particular challenge for athletes, who have to add hours of practice, performance time, travel time, and other demands into their schedules.

“I think a lot of students come in and find it’s a learning process,” says O’Brien, a former Division I soccer coach for 20 years and six-year veteran of providing academic support at UVU. “They just don’t know what they do not know. They have to go through that learning process to learn to guide themselves and be responsible and accountable now, whereas in the past they probably had a lot of support systems, from family and such. They have a lot of time demands with their athletics and are still expected to stay at the same level that all students stay at in the classroom. Student-athletes will have to know they will have the same expectation to do well in their chemistry class, say, as all the other students. The others might have a job. But for you, the athlete, your job is your sport. So, a lot of it is learning how to navigate that process.”

O’Brien says that by the time they get past their freshman and sophomore years, most student-athletes are “self-sustaining and have learned to not only lead themselves but to lead their fellow students and athletes.”

She notes that in addition to UVU requirements, the athletes also have to meet NCAA academic standards. Students must pass a certain number of credits per semester, credits per year that are degree-applicable, and achieve certain GPA markers each year, “just to maintain eligibility to compete on the field.”

“Our number one thing is to always maintain academic integrity, and that’s what we do,” she says. “We do a lot of assessments before students come into UVU. We do transcript evaluations to determine their risks, whether they are high or low, what resources we think the student is going to need coming in to be



successful. Because at the end of the day, we don’t want to bring someone into our institution who is not going to graduate — we want to give them the best opportunity to do that.”

## GETTING TO GRADUATION

Graduation is the ever-present goal of the academic advisors who work in O’Brien’s office. Ashley Hansen, learning specialist and athletic academic advisor, says getting student-athletes started in the correct lane right out of the block is a key. She said student success classes taken in partnership with the Student Leadership Center — particularly SLSS 1000-University Student Success — are a perfect starting point.

“I always tell the student-athletes that my job is to help them to maintain and guard their eligibility — I want to keep them on track,” Hansen says. “To me, the NCAA requirements will keep them on track to graduate, and that’s always our number one goal for student-athletes: to help them graduate.”

Hansen says a main point of oversight is to

make certain student-athletes are taking the classes that best lead them to graduation, using Degree Audit and Wolverine Tracks applications and other programs.

“We talk a lot about time management, scheduling, making sure they turn in assignments, majors and career exploration... where they can get started on the right foot,” Hansen says. “And then we follow our student-athletes all the way through. We make sure we are checking to see they are staying on track as far as NCAA standards are concerned. And, of course, we make sure they are headed for graduation.”

Athletics Academic Advisor Chalese Hadley says a study hall area is provided for student-athletes, where computers, tutors, and other resources are available.

“It’s a good way to follow whether or not they are studying,” Hadley says. “They can stay on task here, and it gives them a place outside of their apartment to come and study and use the computers, and it helps us determine their studies and their hours.”

O’Brien says additional staffing and computer resources in the study hall were made possible by UVU’s being the recipient of an NCAA Accelerating Academic Success Program grant in 2014. Before that three-year infusion of money, she says, there were only two advisors “and a room full of tables with run-down computers.”

On a periodic basis, advisors are also able to travel with teams to provide test proctoring, tutoring, and study support to student-athletes. Depending on the length of the trip (tournaments, for example, often last several days) and the timing (games often happen during finals week or near to it), advisors share the team bus or plane. The advisors also work via Skype and other contact applications to assist athletes who are off campus.

Both Hadley and Hansen say that many of their student-athletes could be described as “high achievers,” which presents other challenges.

“We also have very high-achieving student-athletes who come in knowing they want to do medical school, for example,” Hansen says. “Well, that brings its own challenges, as we are trying to balance that with their sport. It’s very difficult to do anatomy, for example, for any student, but when you add in travel time and practice schedules and things like that, it makes it more challenging. Being able to help even those high-achieving students reach their goals is a lot of fun.”

The advisors also work with other campus resources, such as the Office of Accessibility Services for students with learning disabilities or related issues. There are five full-time advisors who work with approximately 300-325 students on average. Hansen notes that a few students may come to UVU unpre-





*UVU Wrestling Head Coach Greg Williams congratulates a student-athlete as spectators cheer in the Rebecca D. Lockhart Arena. Coaches and academic advisors monitor a student-athlete's academic program throughout their stay at UVU.*

## IT REALLY IS A TREMENDOUS COLLECTIVE COMMITMENT OF OUR ACADEMIC STAFF, STUDENT SERVICES, OUR ADMINISTRATION, OUR HEAD COACHES, AND STUDENT-ATHLETES TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR THEIR LIFE JOURNEYS.



pared, but are soon taught the most important lessons from the advising staff.

“Because we are an open-enrollment institution, our athletes actually have to meet higher standards for the NCAA than they do to get into UVU,” Hansen says. “So obviously we are still seeing some students coming in from high school that are maybe academically unprepared. For those students, the lessons of time management and helping them figure out what they are passionate about beyond their sport — as well as helping them see that they have to learn how to study to be successful — become the lessons that are most important.”

### A FOUNDATION FOR LIFE

Cathy Nixon, UVU women's basketball head coach, and Mark Pope, men's basketball head coach, say the most important element of their work is focusing on the long-term implications of academic success.

“The academic success of our student-athletes is of paramount importance,” Pope says. “In the last two years, we have had three players graduate and complete their MBA while they were still playing for us. Last May, we also had two players graduate who were transfers from other Division I institutions and both the first in their family to ever graduate from college. These are amazing success stories. Our players' academic experience at UVU is setting the foundation for their life.”

Pope notes that even with a pro basketball career, should that happen, most players will retire around age 30 and will have to turn to “an academic-based career. When they leave here, they are prepared for that, and that is important.”

“We keep it pretty simple,” Pope says of implementing academic advising into his program. “First, we have extraordinary advising, tutoring, and mentorship for our guys. Second, if guys are not putting forth the effort in the classroom, we run them. This has proven to be great motivation.” He also says the UVU academic success “begins and ends” with O'Brien.

Nixon says she could “talk all day about academics and our commitment to helping our girls be successful.” She says she believes it is critical that young women get a quality education to give them the opportunity for a successful career and life.

“We are passionate about education for women,” she says. “We emphasize academics from the very beginning of the recruiting process. Not everyone we recruit is a 4.0 student, but they all understand they are expected to work and apply themselves to achieve their potential in the classroom.”

Katherine Sulentic, the associate director of the NCAA Academic Integrity Unit, recently said of UVU's program: “UVU does more with less. But most important is the dedication the athletic academic staff has shown to both the program and the student-athletes. That is something money can't buy.”

O'Brien says the NCAA has a new “academic values-based revenue distribution plan” that will begin in 2020. With that, university athletic departments will actually earn money based on academic performances. UVU's success in the classroom may mean as much as \$500,000 over five years, she says. This, though, will not change O'Brien's goal to keep putting students first.

“We have a lot of expectations. These students have a lot of standards to meet,” she says, “but we always put them as a student first. We have had great success, and we definitely need to keep elevating.” ■

## ATHLETIC ACADEMIC ACCOLADES

*Here's a partial summary of 2017-18 honors given to Wolverine athletes for their success in the classroom:*



Men's and women's track and field teams earned U.S. Track and Field Coaches Association All-Academic Team honors (men's 3.40, women's 3.29 GPA), with three Wolverines earning individual All-American honors.



Women's basketball landed on the Women's Basketball Coaches Association Division I Academic Top 25 Honor Roll, ranked 16th in the nation (3.508 team cumulative GPA), the ninth time under Coach Nixon. Twice the team has had the number one GPA in the nation.



Men's golf, honored by the Golf Coaches Association of America with All-Academic Team honors (team GPA of 3.0 or better), the seventh consecutive year under Coach Chris Curran.



Wolverine women golfers Carly Dehlin and Bailey Henley were named All-American Scholars by maintaining cumulative GPAs of 3.8 and 3.7, respectively.

For the first time in UVU men's golf history, three players earned the All-America Scholar award in a single season during 2017-18. UVU led the WAC with three players earning the academic honor.

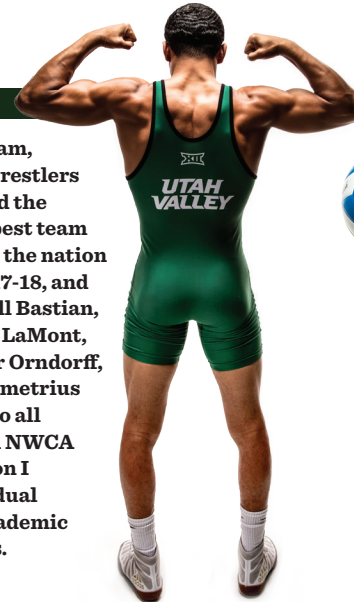


The Wolverine softball team tied for the 30th-best team grade-point average out of 296 NCAA Division I institutions in 2017-18, with a 3.50 team GPA. A program-record 14 softball student-athletes earned national scholar-athlete honors.

The UVU volleyball squad earned a team academic recognition for the fifth time in the past seven years, after posting a 3.43 team GPA for the 2017-18 academic year.



As a team, UVU wrestlers boasted the sixth-best team GPA in the nation for 2017-18, and Kimball Bastian, Taylor LaMont, Tanner Orndorff, and Demetrius Romero all earned NWCA Division I Individual All-Academic honors.





# ADV ENT URE

Photos by Jay Drowns

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# STUNNING

mountain landscapes, beautiful lakes and rivers, and abundant wildlife surround Utah Valley University's Orem Campus. With some of the nation's greatest outdoor recreational opportunities located just minutes away, UVU's Outdoor Adventure Center helps students and the campus community find their own wild side.

UVU Magazine's photo staff accompanied the Outdoor Adventure Center on a few recent excursions, including nighttime canoe rides, challenging climbs, and hikes to incredible mountain vistas. For more information on activities and equipment rental — including skiing and snowboarding this winter — visit [uvu.edu/oac](http://uvu.edu/oac).



PREVIOUS PAGE, LEFT: **Students enjoy an evening canoe ride on Utah Lake.**

RIGHT: **With equipment provided by the Outdoor Adventure Center, students ascend a section of Dry Canyon, near Lindon, Utah.**





LEFT: No expertise required — Outdoor Adventure Center staff lead students on excursions like this fly fishing trip in the Provo River near Heber, Utah.

RIGHT: The Peak-a-Week series takes students on a different hike each week, like this one to the top of Provo Peak last June.





A photograph of two young women standing on an airfield at sunset. They are wearing black polo shirts and blue jeans. Behind them is a white twin-engine propeller plane with green and black stripes. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and dark blue. In the distance, another plane is visible in the sky.

# Qualified in the Cockpit

*UVU Aviation is filling the need  
for pilots with efficiency — and  
putting more women in the air*

*By Jay Wamsley  
Photography by August Miller*



**M**ANY airline industry observers are anticipating an impending pilot shortage, and the Utah Valley University aviation program is among those trying to make sure air travelers will always have a cockpit full of confident, well-trained professionals.

As they address this national problem, among the solutions UVU has taken on is to increase the number of female pilots, as well as looking at ways to make flying through the program just a little more efficient for students.

Aviation Department Chair Randy Johnson said the pilot shortage is due to many factors, not the least of which is deregulation.

“Yes, it’s absolutely real. It is severe and predicted to get a lot more severe, because of all the Vietnam-era military-trained airline pilots retiring, and deregulation,” he said. “Deregulation started in the early ’80s. Everyone wanted to get in the business, airlines were making money and they were expanding worldwide, and therefore we currently have a pilot shortage. And not just a shortage of pilots, but mechanics and aviation technicians. So, the whole industry is expanding.”

With a desire by aviation schools — not just UVU — to “backfill that vacuum,” as Johnson puts it, safety has to remain at a high standard. UVU Aviation Program Manager Ryan Tanner agrees.

“We certainly aren’t going to cut any corners as far as training goes,” Tanner says. “While we try to streamline as much as we can, there’s no way we will risk the quality of our pilots or condense that down just so we can produce more of them.”

Tanner said UVU is looking at ways to ex-

pand the aviation program through entrance requirements and making sure the right candidates are selected, so those who begin the program can finish it. “We used to let more in and had more dropouts,” he says. “Now very few people drop out. In that way, we are improving the quality and the actual number of people who make it through.”

Johnson says regardless of the numbers in the program, one standard remains: “We are not allowing anyone to graduate who we don’t feel would make a safe, well-educated pilot. If they don’t meet those standards, they won’t pass the courses.”

Johnson says both a four-year and a two-year degree are offered in aviation, but, for “long-term viability in the industry,” students ought to have a four-year degree.

“Could [a student] get through faster? Maybe, but one would still need the four-year degree,” he says. “Without a degree from an approved university, students need 1,500 hours of flight time. With a two-year degree, 1,250 flight hours, and with a baccalaureate degree the flight-hour requirement is reduced to 1,000 hours. So trying to get students through our program faster is not necessarily an advantage because they need that four-year degree. But we do get students through rather quickly. They usually complete flight training in five semesters. And we are trying to get that down to four semesters, but we need the simulators to help us to do that.”

He says UVU’s program could use more simulators, as well as a “different mix of airplanes” to continue to expand offerings to more students.

Tanner notes that students can “get a whole lot more done in an hour of simulation time than you can in a plane. You get a lot more approaches done in a simulator than you can in a plane. It’s more efficient. I always tell students to maximize the simulator time — use it to save money and time.”

Johnson says the UVU program is also looking to increase enrollment of female students to help fill the shortage of pilots. He said UVU Aviation “markets to that end.”

“We were recently asked by the Air Force to be one of the universities to take on the challenge of bringing in more underrepresented groups and help them get their private pilot certificate,” he said. “We are in the initial stages of that right now. We reach out to the local high schools to let them see what aviation is all about, and maybe help them enter that industry.”

UVU has a strong Women in Aviation (WIA) chapter. WIA is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to the encouragement and advancement of women in all aviation career fields and interests. The current WIA president at UVU, Marlena Cromwell, said she was not sure Utah Valley was the school for her until she found the club.

“It has given me the opportunity to meet many wonderful people, and given me the encouragement and support that I needed to thrive in the aviation program. I love talking to people, so being able to go out to new places and meet young kids who are interested in aviation is immensely gratifying,” she says. “Flying at UVU has been so incredible. I love the casual yet professional atmosphere of our school. I truly feel as though the aviation department supports its students and wants to see them succeed.”

Cromwell says she hopes to transition her training into aerial fire-fighting soon — it is her dream “to be able to fly air tankers with the U.S. Forest Service.” She says she enjoys encouraging women to try aviation, one of the highlights of her current WIA assignment. WIA participants often make pitches and presentations to female high school students.

“I think that encouraging women to join the aviation field will greatly help with the pilot shortage,” Cromwell says. “While it is unlikely that we will ever reach a true equality in numbers, I am happy to support any other woman who wants to be a part of this industry. UVU can help

**“We were recently asked by the Air Force... to take on the challenge of bringing in more under-represented groups and help them get their private pilot certificate. We are in the initial stages of that right now.”**

—Randy Johnson



UVU Aviation Chair Randy Johnson says the entire airline industry is feeling a shortage of qualified personnel.



Marlena Cromwell checks out a UVU plane’s cockpit. She hopes one day to fly tankers involved with fighting forest fires.

address this issue by supporting future aviators and giving everyone equal access to the same training. The only way to fix the pilot shortage is to create more pilots, so if UVU was able to expand its program with a bigger fleet and more instructors, it would be able to allow access for more students.”

Joy Appelbaum, a senior at UVU, is a past president of the WIA chapter. She says she has made friends across the country through that association.

“The Women in Aviation chapter here has introduced me to some of my best friends, women that I am looking forward to flying with for years to come. I love being surrounded by strong and inspiring women,” she says. “One of my favorite things about this club is that I am able to share my passion to inspire other women to pursue their dreams.”

Appelbaum had been a Delta Air Lines gate agent for four years and a human resource specialist with the Utah Army National Guard for five years. Her hope is to become a commercial airline pilot, “to end up back with Delta Air Lines, become a captain, and eventually a line check airman for Delta.”

UVU has women in the airline management courses as well, not pilot training only. Johnson says with a different mix of aircraft and more simulators, UVU can do even more to meet students’ dreams of flying.

“We’re doing our part,” he says. “We have about 130 students who are flying right now, and we are trying to expand to about 225. We hope to do that within the next year or so. We had to turn away approxi-

mately 70 students this fall who couldn’t fly because we don’t have the capacity, but soon we hope to be able to accept more students. We will be able to do that when our aircraft fleet is different than it is now, and when we get more simulators.”

Johnson and Tanner say graduates used to have to contact airlines for jobs after course completion, but now UVU is well-known as a trainer of pilots, and airlines are coming here looking for pilots. Johnson says the regional airlines especially will come to UVU students and work through an agreement to give them a chance to get hired by that regional airline as soon as they graduate.

“I’ve noticed over the past couple years that the airlines are contacting us relentlessly,” Tanner says. “Since I’ve been here, back in the ’90s, that wasn’t the case. We used to reach out to them, but they are constantly in touch with us now trying to get in touch with our students. That’s a great thing for our graduates and our students. It’s evidence of the need out there for pilots.” ■

**“Flying at UVU has been so incredible. I truly feel as though the aviation department supports its students and wants to see them succeed.”**

—Marlena Cromwell



UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY ALUMNI BOARD WELCOMES THREE NEW MEMBERS



*Karen Cushing*

Karen Cushing was appointed to the Utah Valley University Alumni Board in May 2018. She works as an executive assistant to the senior vice president of academic affairs. Although she did not graduate from UVU, her husband, daughter, and son-in-law are all graduates, and another son is currently attending UVU. She has also taken classes at UVU as a nontraditional student.

Cushing says she wanted to serve the university beyond her employment. “I wanted to start really giving back to the university,” she says. “I am very dedicated to UVU. I love what it stands for. I love the integrated mission that we have. We are working to build good, quality programs and pathways so that we can serve not only the community but also our region.”



*Mark Preston*

Mark Preston has recently joined the university’s Alumni Board. In 2000, he graduated from Utah Valley University with a degree in business management and an emphasis in marketing. He has spent most of his career as a digital media executive, with a total of 12 years as a vice president at Bonneville International Corp. and Hubbard Radio.

In 2017, he cofounded Elytics, a technology startup company. It has a vision of providing greater transparency to broadcast advertisers. Its analytics software enables advertisers to track the customer’s journey, from seeing or hearing broadcast ads to purchasing products.

His daughter, Karlee, is an ambassador for the UVU Foundation and invited him to several alumni events. “I am very excited to participate on the Alumni Board,” he says. “I had an amazing experience at UVU thanks to the incredible professors.”



*Rick Moore*

A former two-term mayor of Payson, Rick Moore is also new to the UVU Alumni Board. He attended Utah Valley University from 1978 to 1982 and studied refrigeration. He then worked for a family business, Moore Sheet Metal, until he started his own company, BCB Heating and Air.

Moore met then-UVU President Matthew S. Holland, about two months after Holland began his role.

“I offered him some property in Payson that day,” Moore says. “I worked with President Holland and the cabinet for eight years about putting a new campus in Payson.”

“UVU has done such neat things,” he said. “It is an honor to be on the board and be involved with the university, to help get the new facility that is going to be in Payson.”



AS WE WELCOME our new president, Astrid S. Tuminez, to Utah Valley University, it goes without saying that she will become acquainted with some of the finest alumni found anywhere.

Our alumni are successful business leaders, civic leaders, governors, Olympic athletes, CEOs of billion-dollar companies, entrepreneurs, homemakers, nurses, teachers, lawyers, doctors, accountants, pilots, dancers, musicians, scientists, and more.

What are some of the things that make our alumni so distinctive?

A majority of our alumni **(84 percent)** stay in Utah for at least one year, **83 percent** make Utah their home permanently, and **58 percent** live in Utah County.

**Thirty-eight percent** of our UVU students are first generation, which means they are the first in their family to attend an institution of higher learning.

Our alumni enjoy giving back — UVU volunteers gave **171,838** hours of community service during 2016–17.

We have a rich heritage of hard-working and pragmatic alumni. **Twenty-seven percent** of our students work full time, and **51 percent** work 21 hours per week or more.

Our alumni are also serious and focused. The UVU PR Student Society was named Top Chapter in the Nation, and **55 percent** of UVU students passed the Chartered Financial Analyst exam. (The national pass rate is 8 percent.)

We are proud of our alumni. As the university maintains its focus on student success, we are encouraged that our alumni will continue to be an extraordinary force for good here at home and around the world.

Join with me in welcoming President Tuminez to UVU. As alumni we are proud to support her as she leads us through a new era of growth and excellence.

Sincerely,

Kevin Walkenhorst  
Senior Director, Alumni Relations and Annual Giving



# Carry UVU Pride!



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