



April 22, 2005

## Commissioner's Report Highlights of Notable Accomplishments in USHE

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As detailed in the Regents' General Consent Calendar, \$14.7 million in research grants has been awarded – \$3.2 million to the University of Utah and \$11.5 million to Utah State University – since the last Board meeting.

**University of Utah:** \*A week filled with academic and cultural events including an inaugural ceremony on April 15 honored the University of Utah's fourteenth president, Michael K. Young.

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute announced in April its 43 new investigators (the nation's most promising biomedical scientists). Among these prestigious scientists are two from the University of Utah: Alejandro Sanchez Alvarado, Ph.D, associate professor of neurobiology and anatomy; and Erik M. Jorgensen, Ph.D., professor of biology.

**Utah State University:** Utah State University engineering students designed and built a moonbuggy that captured victory at NASA's 12<sup>th</sup> Annual "Great Moonbuggy Race" in Huntsville, Ala, Saturday, April 9. A super light-weight aluminum design allowed the Aggie team to pedal to victory and earned a \$3,500 check. Utah State topped 28 other college and university teams from 14 states, Germany and Puerto Rico, with a winning time of 3 minutes and 59 seconds. The team, comprised of undergraduate and graduate mechanical and aerospace engineering students, encountered some of the same challenges conquered by the original lunar rover team in the 1960s.

**Weber State University:** The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities has reaffirmed Weber State University's accreditation on the basis of the fall 2004 comprehensive evaluation. The commission commended WSU for its strong and coherent mission and the university's commitment to that mission, new facilities and facility planning, the library, and its successful capital campaign. The final report also included two recommendations.

**Southern Utah University:** Ryan VonWoerkom, a chemistry and biology major at Southern Utah University, has been accepted to conduct research this summer at the Mayo Clinic in Arizona. VanWoerkom has not only won SUU's undergraduate research competition, he has conducted cancer research at the University of Utah and HIV/AIDS research at SUU. The senior from Salt Lake City has also completed research on

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antibiotic resistance and its correlation with heavy metal tolerance.

**Snow College:**

Snow College's Department of Theatre Arts has received full accreditation and membership in good standing from the National Association of Schools of Theatre. Snow College learned of the accreditation at the 40<sup>th</sup> annual conference of NAST held in Louisville, Ky. Snow College joins Brigham Young University as the only other NAST-accredited institution in Utah and is one of only four junior colleges to achieve NAST accreditation.

**Dixie State College:**

Deric Holden, a sophomore at Dixie State College, was recently named Utah's 2005 New Century Scholar by Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society for two-year colleges, and was honored as such April 11 at the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) convention in Boston. Holden's selection was based on scores earned in PTK's annual All-USA Academic Team competition. The highest scoring All-USA applicant from each of the 50 states was named a New Century Scholar. The honor carries a \$2,000 scholarship. More than 1,700 students nationwide were nominated for the competition this year.

**Utah Valley  
State College:**

The Northwest Commission of Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) accreditation team conducted UVSC's ten-year reaffirmation of accreditation April 4-6. The outcome was very positive, noting specific commendations of how student-oriented UVSC is in structure and practice. The official findings will be finalized and given to UVSC later this summer.

**Salt Lake Community  
College:**

Salt Lake Community College's School of Developmental Education earned Advanced Certification status from the National Association for Developmental Education (NADE). This certification is valid for seven years and there are only 16 other elite programs nationwide that have received NADE certification. SLCC's Development Education program is by far the largest and most comprehensive of these programs. The NADE Certification recognizes developmental education programs (those designed to assist students to succeed in college academic areas such as

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mathematics, writing and reading) that meet or exceed criteria of good practices as defined by professional research and literature of the field.

**Utah College of Applied  
Technology:**

Two SLTATC high school aged students, Evan Sorensen and Cory Weiss, successfully passed the Ford/AAA Auto Skills Competition's written exam and qualified to participate in the upcoming, hands-on state-wide competition. First-place teams from each state get an all expense paid trip to compete in the national finals in Washington, D.C. in June. The competition encourages talented students to pursue an automotive career, repairing today's complex and high-tech computerized vehicles.