

# Commissioner's Report

January 2007

Prepared for the State Board of Regents and the Utah System of Higher Education

## University of Utah:

The University of Utah's College of Pharmacy has received a \$20 million donation from the ALSAM Foundation to assist with the design and construction of a new research and education building. The new building, to be called the L.S. Skaggs Hall, will foster interdisciplinary research on treatments for diseases such as cancer, epilepsy, diabetes, pain, and other genetically related diseases.

## Utah State University:

USTAR professor Krishna Shenai was elected a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. A member of USU's Electrical and Computer Engineering Department, Shenai was recognized for his pioneering contributions to high-frequency, solid-state electric power management technologies and applications.

## Weber State University:

The 13<sup>th</sup> annual Weber State University Multicultural Youth Conference was held Jan. 5. The conference, organized by WSU's Services for Multicultural Students, is designed for ethnic minority high school juniors and seniors interested in learning more about WSU's support services, early college, concurrent enrollment, financial aid and scholarships.

## Southern Utah University:

Southern Utah University students will be the beneficiaries of an Intergovernmental Internship Cooperative recently awarded by the National Park Service. The seven partners, including Bryce and Zion National Parks, Cedar Breaks and Pipe Springs National Monuments, and Utah State Parks, will work with SUU's Outdoor Center and Utah State University's Institute for Outdoor Recreation and Tourism to award scholarships to pay for student internships. The U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management will also play a role implementing this program that will assist many park managers and (most importantly) students pursuing a career in outdoor recreation. This program will enhance the experience of the students in SUU's new bachelor's degree program in Outdoor Recreation in Parks and Tourism. There are eight park units within close proximity to SUU where students will be able to immerse themselves in the real world job experience to enhance their classroom experiences.

## Snow College:

Six Snow College music students recently played with the collegiate band for the International Association of Jazz Education. Students compete for the spots in blind auditions, and there are only 18 positions available nationwide. Securing six of the 18 seats is a compliment to the students, the department, and the college.

## College of Eastern Utah:

A \$1.2 million grant was recently awarded to the College of Eastern Utah, San Juan Campus, to expand nursing education and other health services programs. The funding came from the U.S. Department of Labor and the President's Community-Based Job Training initiative. The grant will make it possible to hire new instructors, upgrade facilities, and improve classroom technology.

### **Dixie State College:**

Dixie State College will host its first visiting professor. Dr. John Farrington, Scientist Emeritus of the Marine Chemistry and Geochemistry Department at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute in Woods Hole, Mass., has accepted an appointment for spring semester. During his time at DSC, Professor Farrington will teach a new course, "Introduction to Oceanography," which will cover the essential principles of ocean sciences.

### **Utah Valley State College:**

President Sederburg and a group of campus, community and state leaders in higher education outreach and economic development recently visited Northern Kentucky University. NKU is a national leader in community engagement and curriculum outreach to meet the needs of its constituents. Following the NKU model, UVSC looks to further establish its culture of collaboration between its educational offerings and the "talent force" needs of its constituents, to strengthen its support of regional economic development initiatives and organizations, explore ways to increase educational collaboration from a K-16 perspective within its service region, and partner with local "civic entrepreneurs" to envision and achieve a quality of life that celebrates education and the distinctiveness of the region.

### **Salt Lake Community College:**

The Department of Labor has announced that Utah is the recipient of two community-based job training grants focused on Life and Human Sciences. The combined grants of \$3.2 million will be used to train more than 800 students and to create well-equipped lab and teaching facilities. Salt Lake Community College (SLCC) will receive nearly \$2 million dollars for a Biomanufacturing Education Training Partnership. In collaboration with Granite Technical Institute, grant dollars will be used to provide critical hands-on training for students in Biomanufacturing.

### **Utah Higher Education Assistance Authority:**

As of December 31, 2006, UHEAA has awarded \$699,606 to New Century Scholarship recipients in the first six months of the 2006-2007 fiscal year. This represents a 150 percent increase in the amount of dollars over the same year-to-date totals for the 2005-2006 fiscal year. The New Century Scholarship was created by the 1999 Utah Legislature to provide scholarships for Utah students who have completed the requirements of an associate's degree prior to high school graduation. Since the scholarship's inception, 1,231 students from throughout Utah have received a New Century Scholarship.

### **Utah Educational Savings Plan:**

UESP experienced a banner month with record dollar volume of contributions received and new accounts opened. From Thanksgiving through New Year's Eve, UESP received more than \$84 million in contributions and opened more than 4,500 new accounts. The total balance at year end was nearly \$1.9 billion. UESP also received national media attention with an article in the *Wall Street Journal* featuring the unique "backpack brochure" distribution campaign in public and private Utah schools.

### **Campus Compact:**

Melissa Miller Kincart has been named executive director for Utah Campus Compact (UCC). She replaces Linda Dunn, who has served since January 2003.

