

Commissioner's Report

March 2007

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

As detailed in the Regents' General Consent Calendar, \$11.39 million in research grants have been awarded – \$7.97 million to the University of Utah and \$3.42 million to Utah State University – since the last Board meeting.

Accreditation:

The University of Utah has received reaffirmation of its accreditation on the basis of a comprehensive evaluation. Utah Valley State College has received reaffirmation of its accreditation on the basis of a focused interim evaluation. The College of Eastern Utah has received reaffirmation of its accreditation on the basis of a regular interim evaluation.

University of Utah:

In the recent Faculty Scholarly Productivity Index report, which rated faculty members' scholarly output at nearly 7,300 doctoral programs around the country, the University of Utah appears in five categories of top 10 programs in the nation. The U ranked 3rd in Pharmaceutical Sciences and Medicinal Chemistry, 7th in Special Education, 8th in Anatomy, and 9th in both Bioengineering and Educational Psychology. The Faculty Scholarly Productivity Index ranked 7,294 individual doctoral programs in 104 disciplines at 354 institutions.

Utah State University:

Utah State University launched its first comprehensive fund-raising campaign, "Honoring Tradition, Securing Our Future: The Campaign for Utah State University." The campaign aims to increase the university's endowment and raise USU's reputation as a national center of academic excellence. The campaign will focus on raising money for scholarships, faculty endowments and facilities. President Albrecht said the campaign is among the most significant moments in the university's history.

Weber State University:

Weber State University's Department of Automotive Technology and the Ford Motor Company have entered a partnership to offer the Ford Maintenance and Light Repair program at the university. The 24-week program will be offered twice each year. WSU, one of only four universities in the nation to offer a comprehensive bachelor's degree in automotive technology, has similar partnerships with DaimlerChrysler, General Motors, Honda and Toyota.

Southern Utah University:

The Southern Utah University Department of Theatre Arts and Dance is reviving its production of Eugene O'Neil's *Beyond the Horizon* and will be heading to New York City to present it for an off-Broadway run. This trip to New York City extends the knowledge and skills development of the entire cast and crew in ways that will make it a lifelong learning experience by performing in the theater capital of the world. This opportunity has also been a big benefit and a great practical learning experience for the MFA Arts Administration students. The MFA students manage all the aspects of marketing and company management for the traveling show. "Horizon" was invited to perform in NYC by a theatre company called Handcart Ensemble. SUU students will also get to attend performance workshops throughout their week in NYC.

Snow College:

Snow College is working with local school districts to encourage college attendance. This week, nearly 600 middle and high school-aged students attended an open house on the Richfield campus, and next week the Ephraim campus will host 600 local sixth-graders in an Early Awareness program.

College of Eastern Utah:

The College of Eastern Utah Business Department recently competed in the statewide DEX (Delta Epsilon Chi) competition and walked away with several awards. Daren Larsen (Brigham City) and Kellan Stevens (Price) placed 1st in the Business Law event. This competition involved nearly 200 students from two- and four-year colleges and universities statewide. Also, Randon Kerr (West Jordan) placed 3rd in Travel and Tourism Management, and Ray Smithson (Orem) placed 4th in Sales Presentation. These students are now eligible to attend the national DEX competition and compete with 5,000 students from all over the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico. DEX is the national marketing fraternity headquartered in Reston, Virginia.

Dixie State College:

As part of its ongoing support of Dixie State College, Intermountain Healthcare has committed an investment of \$720,000 in the college's health education programs over the next three years. The financial commitment was announced at the St. George Area Chamber of Commerce Luncheon Feb. 7, where local IHC administrator Terri Kane presented Dixie State College with a ceremonial check for the first \$240,000 installment. The purpose of the financial assistance is to support hiring program directors for Dixie State's medical career programs, specifically respiratory therapy, medical technology and physical therapy assistant.

Utah Valley State College:

The Utah State Legislature unanimously voted for Senate Bill 70, changing the name of Utah Valley State College to Utah Valley University, effective July 1, 2008. A base funding increase of \$8 million was also appropriated with the bill (effective July 1, 2007). Governor Huntsman will sign the bill on March 19, 2007 at 11:30 a.m. in UVSC's Grande Ballroom. UVSC thanks and acknowledges the collaborative nature and support of Commissioner Kendell, the Board of Regents, the USHE institutions, and legislators in this endeavor.

Salt Lake Community College:

Salt Lake Community College plays a pivotal role in preparing students to enter the fields of engineering and computer science. A longitudinal study compiled by the University of Utah's Office of Budget and Institutional Analysis and SLCC's Institutional Research Office determined that of the 384 Bachelor of Science degrees awarded by the U of U in Engineering and Computer Science in 2004-2005, 157 (41 percent) were earned by students transferring from SLCC.

Utah College of Applied Technology:

Students of UCAT's Mountainland campus (MATC) were involved in producing "AM to FM: Three Decades of Radio in Utah," a two-hour video documentary that aired twice in January on KUED. The documentary tells the story of the major AM radio stations in Utah in the 1950s, '60s, and '70s and how Utah listened to favorite DJs spin vinyl records on the radio, the crazy promotions and stunts they pulled, and the bands and concerts they hosted. Media Design Technology students helped videotape current and former Utah DJs such as Skinny Johnny Mitchell, Lynn Lehmann, Tom Barberi, Danny Kramer, Doug Wright and more.

Utah Higher Education Assistance Authority:

UtahMentor.org, UHEAA's college planning Web site that guides Utah students in preparing and paying for college, is nearing five successful years of operation. UHEAA has provided numerous college planning and financial aid access workshops for students and educators. These efforts have resulted in a large increase in web traffic and the following milestones:

- **Averaging 2 million hits per month**
- **115,000 student accounts**
- **Over 10,000 online admissions applications processed annually**
- **Online Student Education Occupation Plan (SEOP) utility**

UtahMentor.org is provided free of charge by UHEAA.

Utah Educational Savings Plan:

UESP has reached an important milestone! The plan now has more than \$2 billion in total investments. The investments UESP holds have doubled in less than two years and the plan's growth in 2006 of 46 percent outpaced the 33 percent total growth of all national college savings plans. UESP was highlighted in a joint *USA Today/ABC News* article featuring *Morningstar's* top rated 529 plans. The article mentions the Dempsey family of California and their decision to select UESP for the best returns and low fees.

(The article can be viewed at: www.usatoday.com/money/perfi/college/2007-02-12-529-plans-usat_x.htm)