



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**244 High School Seniors Become Utah Scholars Recipients Tonight  
Former Commissioner of Higher Education Richard Kendell to Speak**

SALT LAKE CITY -- Tonight, Former Commissioner of Higher Education Richard E. Kendell will address the second graduating class of Utah Scholars at a banquet held in their honor. Salt Lake Community College President Cynthia Bioteau will also attend the event, which takes place from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Miller Campus of Salt Lake Community College.

“This honor is well-deserved and rightfully earned,” said Interim Commissioner of Higher Education David L. Buhler. “These students are committed to ensuring they have appropriately prepared for college and for work by taking rigorous high school courses and persisting to graduation. The Utah Scholars program continues to grow as students and their parents see the benefit of commitment and preparation in education.”

The banquet recognizes 244 qualifying seniors in the nine participating Utah Scholars school districts, including the Early College High Schools. Those districts include, Alpine, Davis, Granite, Jordan, Park City, Ogden, Provo, Salt Lake and Washington County. The number of Utah Scholar recipients has grown from 160 in 2007 to 244 in 2008.

Following the Utah Scholars launch in September 2006, local business leaders and education leaders have teamed up to encourage high school students to take a more rigorous course of study, starting in the ninth grade. This recommended core curriculum has been shown to better prepare students for college and the workplace. The Utah Scholars core includes:

- Four years of English
- Four years of Math (including Algebra II)
- Three years of lab-based science (Biology, Chemistry and Physics)
- Three and one-half years of social studies
- Two years of a language other than English

Utah was one of eight states in 2006 to win \$300,000 in federal funding to participate in the national State Scholars Initiative. Last year, the State Legislature appropriated \$500,000 in one-time money to expand the Utah Scholars program beyond its four pilot school districts. Twenty-four states currently participate in the initiative. The Utah System of Higher Education partnered with the Office of the Governor, the Utah State Office of Education, the Utah K-16 Alliance and four school districts to apply for the State Scholars Initiative, which is administered by the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE).

*\*The names of the students and their schools will be available online at [www.utahscholars.org](http://www.utahscholars.org).*

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