

Report of the Chair

June 2007

- **University of Utah:**

Eleven students from the University of Utah's Honors Think Tank on Immigration spent 10 months studying the complex issues and controversies surrounding the debate over immigration. The result of their work, including 10 days conducting field research in Mexico, is a resource guide for Utah that will be made available to educators, lawmakers, and community leaders. The purpose of the guide is to bring greater understanding to an issue affecting thousands of people in Utah.

- **Utah State University:**

Jan Marie Andersen has been named a 2007-08 Fulbright U.S. Student Scholarship recipient. Anderson received her bachelor's degree this spring from USU, with a double major in physics and math, and was named Undergraduate Researcher of the Year for USU's College of Science. She will study physics this fall at the University of Copenhagen's renowned Niels Bohr Institute. Anderson will study astrophysics during her Fulbright sojourn, focusing on stellar evolution and the early universe.

- **Weber State University:**

Kristena Kons, who graduated in May with a bachelor's degree in psychology, was invited to present at the at the prestigious Undergraduate Research Posters on the Hill event in Washington, D.C. Kons presented her research on light therapy and its effectiveness in helping military shift workers reduce fatigue, which can help decrease errors on the job. She was one of fewer than 80 presenters selected from more than 390 submissions nationwide. Kons is the third consecutive WSU student to be invited to the annual event.

- **Southern Utah University:**

Marc Dotson, Southern Utah University's newspaper editor, has been selected to win the national Society of Professional Journalists Mark of Excellence Award for his editorials in the University Journal. Dotson will receive the award to the SPJ national conference in Washington, D.C. in October.

- **Dixie State College:**

Zachary Knudsen, a student in Dixie State College's paramedic program, was honored for his service by the Utah State Bureau of Emergency Medical Services (USBEMS) as part of "EMS Week." Knudsen, a 7-year EMT-Intermediate veteran, was nominated for the award following his on-scene work in response to a serious head-on collision this past December, on State Road 9 near Hurricane. He arrived on the scene, became the triage officer, and directed all care and extrication of the victims.

Student Success



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- **Utah Valley State College:**

Adam Torkildson. Graduating this spring with a bachelor's degree in integrated studies (communication and community health), Adam Torkildson is showing seasoned Utah Valley public relations professionals the ropes of an emerging communication genre called "social media." What started as an internship for The Walton Group, a Provo-based public relations agency, soon developed into a full-time position for Torkildson when he doubled traffic to the agency's Web site in a few short months — ranked both number one and two on Google.com. His success is grounded in social media: blogs, Internet marketing, community forums and sites like MySpace.com and YouTube.com. Torkildson's expertise with social media is already being noticed. After graduation, he received several job offers, including one from The Walton Group.

- **Salt Lake Community College:**

Andee Belyea. Salt Lake Community College student Andee Belyea's piece "Fairy Tale Endings are Built on a Foundation of Education," was featured on The Salt Lake Tribune's Opinion Page on May 20. Belyea considered her future, and the prospect of her dropping out of school to support herself and her boyfriend while he attends medical school. The thought of leaving school—no matter how important the reason—upset her, and the thought of becoming "[j]ust... another number to add to the mile-long list of female college dropouts," worsened things. Belyea eloquently wrote of the advantages that accompany an education, and the rewards of greater success and knowledge that a college degree provide. She urged women to "dream big" and made the case that college can improve everyone's involvement in the community.

- **Utah College of Applied Technology:**

Cristina Neilson lived in Romania and moved to the United States approximately eight years ago. She had acquired two years of college in Romania before moving to the U.S.; however, none of her credits was accepted in the U.S., including her high school diploma. Although it was very discouraging for her to start all over again with her schooling, while at the same time struggling with a language barrier, she enrolled in the drafting program at UCAT's Uintah Basin campus (UBATC) and in May of this year received her UCAT Certificate of Completion in Computer Aided Drafting and Design (CADD). Neilson is now working as a civil drafter for McKenna Land Surveying in Roosevelt while completing the general education coursework at Utah State University-Uintah Basin for her Associate of Applied Technology degree in CADD.

- **Utah Scholars:**

One-hundred-sixty students were recognized on May 8, 2007 as Utah Scholars graduates by Dr. Troy R. Justesen, Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of Education. Four school districts (Davis, Granite, Jordan and Park City) participated in the State Scholars program during its first year. Staff and business partners gave more than 60 presentations to 8th graders which led to approximately 460 students signing commitment forms, expressing their desire to become a Utah Scholar.

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