

SPRING 2018

THE MAGAZINE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

# CONTINUUM

## THE DISAPPEARING SELF

An academic's  
'field notes' on her  
own dementia.

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**NOBODY puts ketchup on my chili!"**

**MEMORIES OF BIG ED'S**

["One More," Winter 2017] I went into Big Ed's one day in summer of 1970-something, and there was jazz piano legend Marian McPartland sitting at one of those little two-seat tables. She dipped her head in permission for me to pull up the vacant chair and join her. I'd seen her play across the street in Kingsbury Hall. . . . And now, there she was eating a salad at Big Ed's. Years later, when I heard her talking and playing on NPR, I thought of Big Ed's.

*Marshall Ralph BA'68  
Fairfield, Idaho*

A friend of mine (Alan Weight) went into Ed's one day and ordered chili. Alan took a bottle of ketchup and began pouring it (rather liberally) into the chili. From across the room, Ed saw him. Seconds later, he came out with another bowl of chili, went straight to Alan's table, switched the bowls with a loud 'clunk,' and said 'NOBODY puts ketchup on my chili!'

*Dan Waldis ex'73  
Salt Lake City*

**HUMANITIES**

["Why Humanities Matter," Winter 2017] I studied metallurgical engineering, and a class in humanities was required. I thought it was a waste of time and not relevant. However, the U-printed two-inch-thick book of required reading was interesting. I read it all. Over the years I have many times recalled something from the material, and I must agree that the class influenced my thinking in a positive way. . . . So from an old grad, I

highly recommend the topic be included in the required classes.

*Steven Cochran BS'68  
Loudonville, Ohio*

I agree with [Diane Harris's] argument that the integrity of democracy depends on an informed public. Exposure and understanding is important, at the very least because we decide whether to fund the humanities, or the arts, or even public science.

*Jake Peterson BS'08  
Salt Lake City*

**ADDICTIVE GENES**

["Genes and Addiction," Winter 2017] Are there any addictions that if genetically the person is not susceptible but engages in repeated prolonged use, they will become addicted? Your article and numbers seem to

suggest less personal accountability and more genetics?

*Joseph Vreeken BA'98  
Dolores, Colo.*

[In response] It is impossible to know if you are genetically susceptible until it's too late—it is like testing how strong a rope is by pulling on it until it breaks. Genetic susceptibility does not mean that someone who is not susceptible will never be addicted. And genetics is maybe 60 percent of a person's vulnerability. This will be different from one person to the next, as well. . . .

*Helge Moulding  
Scappoose, Ore.*

*\*Excerpted from longer comments made in response to articles online at continuum.utah.edu. Visit the site to read more.*

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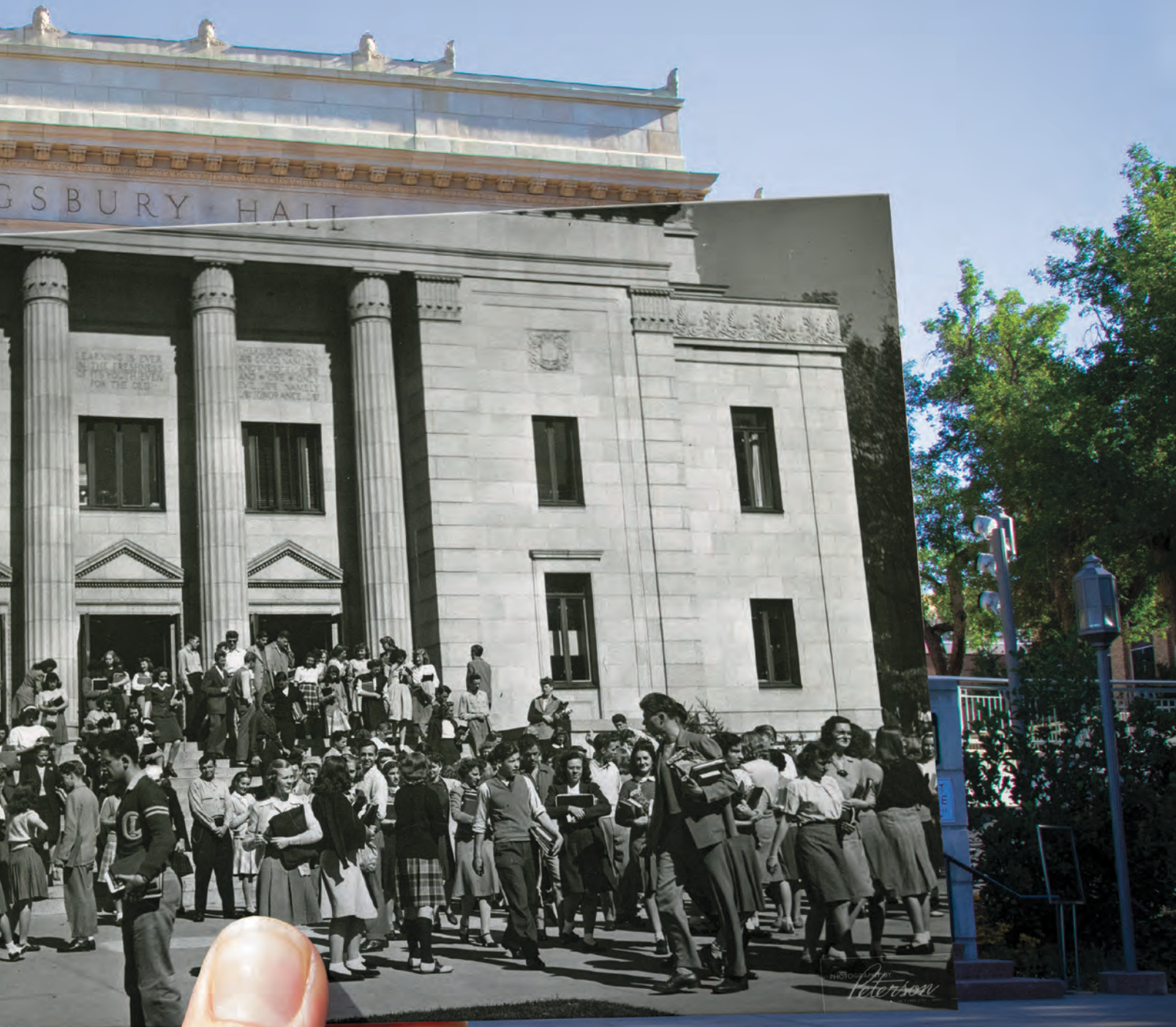
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## Then & Now

The hours spent hovering over historic photos in the Marriott Library's Special Collections were well worth it—this year's campus calendar was so popular it sold out in record time. Produced by University Print & Mail Services, the calendar displays a different historic photo for each month juxtaposed against a similar photo of campus today. Here, we see Kingsbury Hall, the university's longstanding epicenter for music and performing arts. Completed in 1930 in Egyptian Revival style and named after former U president Joseph Kingsbury, the venue has also been used for classes and assemblies, as seen here in the 1940s.



Visit [continuum.utah.edu](http://continuum.utah.edu) to see a gallery of all the 2018 campus calendar images.

# WELCOME, MADAM PRESIDENT



In January, the Utah State Board of Regents announced the selection of Ruth V. Watkins as the 16th president of the University of Utah. In our summer issue of *Continuum*, readers will get an in-depth look at our new leader, but for now we'll give you a brief introduction.

For starters, Watkins is the first woman to serve as president of the university in its 168-year history. (Jerilyn S. McIntyre served as interim president of the U twice, for two months in 1991 and all of 1997.) On April 2, Watkins takes the helm, succeeding David W. Pershing, who has served as president since 2012 and will officially step down to rejoin the U as a faculty member.

A 25-member Presidential Search Committee, co-chaired by David Burton BS'67, chair of the U's Board of Trustees, and Board of Regents Vice Chair Harris H. Simmons BA'77, selected Watkins from a pool of national candidates. "In all measures, Dr. Watkins rose to the top

in our national search for the next president to lead the U," says David L. Buhler BS'83 PhD'14, commissioner of higher education. "She is a superb and energetic administrator and a proven fundraiser who understands our community and will be able to continue the momentum of our flagship university."

Watkins has served as senior vice president for Academic Affairs at the U since August 2013. In that role, she has worked closely with campus leaders to set the university's strategic direction and align the U's resources with its academic priorities. She has been an advocate for advancing the success and impact of the U as a top-tier research university, including enhancing student success through degree completion and expanding research and creative activity.

"I am deeply honored to have this opportunity to lead the University of Utah and offer my thanks to the Board of

Regents, the university's Board of Trustees, and the search committee for their confidence in me," Watkins says. "The University of Utah plays a vital role in the state, and increasingly the nation, in path-breaking research that solves societal challenges and educational opportunities that transform lives. My goal is to ensure that we continue and accelerate this trajectory in the years ahead."

Watkins came to Utah from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, where she spent 20 years in leadership and faculty roles, including associate provost for Undergraduate Education, vice provost and chief of staff, and dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. She began her academic career at the University of Texas at Dallas. She received her bachelor of arts in speech-language pathology from the University of Northern Iowa, and her master's degree and a doctorate in child language from the University of Kansas.

## AND THE 'OSCAR OF SCIENCE' GOES TO...

Photo courtesy Breakthrough Prize



Yes, Christopher Hacon wore a tuxedo to receive his Breakthrough Prize in Mathematics. After all, the event was hosted by actor Morgan Freeman in Silicon Valley. The \$3 million prize, shared with James McKernan of the University of California, San Diego, recognizes Hacon's work in algebraic geometry. Awarded in physics, life sciences, and mathematics, Breakthrough Prizes honor important and recent achievements in fundamental science.

Hacon was born in England and grew up in Italy. He arrived at the U as a post-doctoral scholar in 1998 and returned as a professor in 2002. He is particularly interested in objects that exist in more than three dimensions, and he and his colleagues have applied studies of these objects to extend the "minimal model program," a foundational principle of algebraic geometry, into higher dimensions. The American Mathematical Society has lauded their work as "a watershed in algebraic geometry." His Breakthrough Prize citation acknowledges his "transformational contributions to birational algebraic geometry, especially to the minimal model program in all dimensions."

First awarded in 2012, the Breakthrough Prize was founded by tech executives including Google's Sergey Brin, Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg, and 23andMe's Anne Wojcicki. Previous laureates include physicist and author Stephen Hawking, 2017 Nobel laureate and Utah native Kip Thorne, and gene editing pioneers Jennifer Doudna and Emmanuelle Charpentier.

## NEW REHAB HOSPITAL ON THE HORIZON THANKS TO FORMER PATIENT

Craig Neilsen MBA'64 JD'67 was no stranger to the rehabilitation hospital experience. In 1985, a car accident left him paralyzed from the neck down with only minimal use of one hand. The U became a home for him during much of his rehab. Now, more than 20 years later, his foundation is donating \$47.5 million for a new hospital as part of the redevelopment and modernization of the U's health sciences campus. The 75-bed facility, to be named the Craig H. Neilsen Rehabilitation Hospital, will be one of the most advanced rehab facilities in the nation. It has a target completion date of spring 2020.

"Although the auto accident severely impacted my father's life, it was not the end, as many people might think. It was a new beginning," says Ray Neilsen, Craig's son and co-trustee and chairman of the board of directors of the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation. "My dad had incredible tenacity. He was a force of vision and passion who wanted nothing more than to help people like him. This hospital perfectly emulates his legacy."

Prior to the accident, Neilsen was the owner of a thriving construction and real estate development business in southern Idaho and had recently acquired control of two small casinos on the Nevada-Idaho border. Following his injury, he became laser-focused on his businesses, including the founding and expansion of Ameristar Casinos, which he took public in 1993. In 2002, Nielsen established the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation, which through his personal generosity has become the largest private supporter of spinal cord injury causes in North America.

Craig had several relationships with the U throughout his lifetime that continue to be honored through the philanthropy of the Neilsen Foundation. The university received several grants from the foundation during Nielsen's lifetime supporting the Rehabilitation Center and providing scholarships for students with spinal cord injuries. After his passing in 2006, Craig was honored with the Distinguished Alumnus Award from the university, the highest honor conferred on a graduate.



Visit [unews.utah.edu](https://unews.utah.edu) for more on these stories and other campus news.

# WESTERN STUDIES TO EXPAND WITH NEW GRANT



Painting by Albert Bierstadt, courtesy of UMFA

**T**he J. Willard Marriott Library and the Utah Museum of Fine Arts have been awarded a \$500,000 grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation—the largest Mellon grant the U has ever received and the only one it has been awarded in the arts and humanities.

The grant will provide partial funding for a four-year collaborative project that will establish the U as a global resource hub for artists and scholars studying the West and create access to the U’s remarkable collections, resources, and knowledge.

The project, titled “Landscape, Land Art, and the American West: A Joint Research and Engagement Initiative of the Utah Museum of Fine Arts and the J. Willard Marriott Library,” will fundamentally change how the library and museum work together. As leaders in the region for scholarly research, exhibition design,

and collections care, the library and museum curate extensive—but separate—holdings related to environmental and cultural histories of the Intermountain West. Through this new initiative, these collections will be linked, making content more accessible for students, faculty, and researchers.

The half-million-dollar grant will be matched by \$200,000 from the Office of the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and additional support from across campus, including from the colleges of Fine Arts, Health, Humanities, and Mines and Earth Sciences.

“The project will increase the visibility and value of these overlapping collections, energize faculty, and support students to excel as informed and engaged citizens,” says Alberta Comer, dean of the J. Willard Marriott Library and university librarian.

## NOW YOU CAN STUDY LAW WITHOUT BECOMING AN ATTORNEY

Didn't go to law school but have always wanted to understand law better? This new degree may be just what you need.

This fall, the S.J. Quinney College of Law will launch a Master of Legal Studies (MLS) executive degree program. The three-semester program is specifically designed for working professionals who may benefit from legal training but do not wish to practice law. Because interaction with the legal system is a critical part of many professions—from human resources to land use planning, business management, and financial advising—the degree is expected to have broad appeal.

The U’s program, the first of its kind in Utah, will offer intensive courses every other Friday and Saturday—similar to how the business school’s Executive MBA program functions. It will take approximately one calendar year to complete the degree, and students will have access to the same top-notch legal expertise

as students following a traditional law school path. While the degree does not allow graduates to obtain a law license or practice law, it will equip them with skills critical in almost every industry and important to advancing their careers, including how to interface with legal and regulatory systems and how and when to optimize use of professional legal counsel.

Market research conducted as the College of Law developed the new degree program revealed that Utah in particular is a prime location for such an option. Many companies increasingly provide employees with specific funding to earn degrees that will advance their careers and add value to the company. And, law schools are pointing to growth in the compliance industry as a major driver of market demand.



## TOOTING OUR OWN HORN

We're pleased to report that *Continuum* won several top awards from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) at this year's District VII conference, which includes all schools in Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Guam, and Utah.

"We received a large number of submissions this year, and your excellent work stood out among the best," said the congratulatory letter from Jane Edie, CASE Awards chair and senior director of external engagement at UC Davis. "Your work truly represents best practices across our district."

CASE received more than 500 entries in 13 categories (66 subcategories) recognizing a wide variety of outstanding programs, communications, and individuals.



### Silver Award in Digital Magazines

For our recently redesigned website [continuum.utah.edu](http://continuum.utah.edu). If you haven't seen it

yet, check it out! It's easier to navigate, has fun web extras, and is more visual than ever.



### Silver Award in Best Articles of the Year

For our feature article "Facing the Teacher Shortage: Why Utah

struggles to keep educators, and what the U is doing to help," published in Winter 2017-18.



### Bronze Award in General Interest Magazines

For the print magazine in our circulation category. This award covers a comprehensive look at the magazine including content, design, cover, and more.

## KUDOS FOR CANCER INSTITUTE CEO



Mary Beckerle, CEO and director of Huntsman Cancer Institute (HCI), just joined the ranks of several Nobel laureates as this year's recipient of the Alfred G. Knudson Award in Cancer Genetics from the National Cancer Institute (NCI). The prestigious award is presented by the NCI each year to a scientist who has made significant research contributions to the field of cancer genetics.

"It's a tremendous honor to have the cancer research accomplishments of my laboratory recognized by the National Cancer Institute" says Beckerle. "I have been fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with many talented graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and colleagues at HCI, the University of Utah, and around the world as we have worked to understand fundamental aspects of cell biology with the goal of improving cancer treatments."

Beckerle's research has discovered a new pathway that is critical for the ability of cells to respond to mechanical signals in their environment. Such signals are now known to regulate cell growth and movement, two behaviors that are critically important in tumor biology. Her lab is currently focused on understanding the impact of this pathway on tumor progression, particularly in Ewing sarcoma, a rare but deadly bone cancer that typically affects children and young adults.

## IT'S A BIRD, IT'S A PLANE. IT'S...



Well, you can't miss it if you've been to the Jon M. Huntsman Center lately. Thanks to a new tech display that adorns the center of the arena and additional tech throughout the bowl, the spectator experience is even more immersive and engaging for Utah fans.

The size of the new boards alone is impressive—your dance cam images will be bigger and more defined than ever. But what really makes the technology come to life is the ability to provide in-game live stat content and additional real time social media experiences to fans.

"With the addition of ANC's technology, the university is following through on our goal to offer the most innovative arena in collegiate sports," says Chris Hill MEd'74 PhD'82, U Athletics director. "Increasing the number of video displays will offer fans further opportunities to experience the game, receive updates, and engage with each other."

# READING AND THINKING WITH A PHILOSOPHER

When it comes to life's big questions, here is one Matt Haber faced: philosophy or biology?

Haber has loved biology since childhood; picture him sprawled on the ground watching ants on the march. Fast-forward to Haber as an undergrad in a class on philosophy, which he also is coming to love, when the instructor says Descartes believed the soul was located in the pineal gland. Haber raises his hand and says that makes no sense; the instructor tells him that's more of a biological question than a philosophical one.

Then picture Haber in a population biology class, where the discussion is focused on reverse-engineering an animal trait. Haber says that doesn't make sense given the laws of evolution. The professor tells him that is more of a philosophical question than a biological one. But she also directs Haber to a local philosopher of biology and tells him about grad programs in the history and philosophy of science.

Question answered. He didn't have to choose. Haber became a philosopher of biology and currently serves as chair of the U's Philosophy Department.



## DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE BOOK?

I don't have a favorite book, but I do love a graphic novel called *Logicomix*—so much so that I order several copies at a time so I can give it out to people. It's about the development of modern logic and math, telling the story of Bertrand Russell working with other

philosophers and mathematicians to resolve contradictions generated by the axioms of mathematics. In their attempts to solve this foundational crisis in math, Russell, along with the mathematician Alfred North Whitehead, developed a sophisticated system of logic that we still teach today and that serves as the basis for contemporary computer science. It does a wonderful job of bringing to life the excitement around core problems in logic, philosophy, mathematics, computer science, and metaphysics.



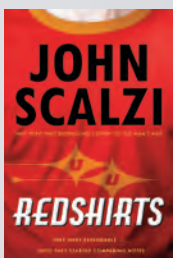
## WHAT ARE YOU READING NOW?

I love reading with my 10-year-old son, and we try to read together every day. We are working through the fourth book in *The Secret Series* by Pseudonymous Bosch. It's a great series with engaging characters, clever dialogue, and lots of jokes. I particularly appreciate some of the play-on-word logic puzzles and the breaking of the fourth wall (the author routinely warns readers away due to the inherent danger of the story, interrupts chapters for emergency drills, and includes lots of entertaining self-referential footnotes). The first book in the series, *The Name of This Book is Secret*, teaches kids how to create secret codes and cleverly features synesthesia as a central plot device.



## IS THERE A BOOK YOU THINK EVERYONE SHOULD READ?

*Native Son* by Richard Wright. I read this in high school, and it was deeply impactful. It pushed me to view things from a different perspective than my own. It is a tragic story of Bigger Thomas and the crushing structural racism he faces growing up on the south side of Chicago. I think it's an enormously important book and as timely today as ever.



## WHAT'S A GOOD READ FOR THE LAY PHILOSOPHER?

*Redshirts* by John Scalzi is a fun, quick read. Scalzi was a philosophy major, and it shows. It starts with an amusing premise, but what separates it from other pop fiction is the way he faithfully tracks the internal logic of his story. In doing so, he explores an interesting little metaphysical problem about truth-in-fiction. It's a good entry point into some of the more fun philosophical problems. For those looking for a more challenging read, Iain M. Banks' *Culture* series explores lots of philosophical themes.

"*Native Son* pushed me to view things from a different perspective."



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## FIGHT DIABETES WITH THIS ACTIVITY APP

**T**wenty-nine million Americans with type 2 diabetes are constantly navigating the ever-present minefield of treats, drinks, and meals. Many patients have stepped up to meet the challenge of moderating their diet, but fewer embrace the benefits of physical activity in controlling their blood sugar.

Now, a U of U Health research team has developed an online interactive app to help motivate patients to manage their disease by being more physically active.

Convincing patients to increase their physical activity to maintain their blood sugar levels is, it turns out, easier said than done. There is an emotional component to behavior change. In addition, this disease commonly co-occurs with obesity, which sets off a dangerous cycle. Overweight patients experience joint pain, which can limit their engagement in physical activity and cause them to gain more weight, worsening their disease.

The app is designed to help overcome these hurdles by gauging the patients' understanding of the effect of physical activity in



managing their disease and motivating them to make this important behavioral change. Patients can use the app to explore how time of day and length of physical activity affect blood sugar levels. After noting their expectations on the app, they can actually see the results. Through this process, they can pinpoint the optimal time for their exercise to reap the most benefits. Using the app, study participants increased their plans to exercise by an average of more than 30 minutes each week.

The research team hopes to integrate this personalized approach into the clinical care setting to give providers additional tools to help educate their patients.

## COULD MAKING TEA POWER UP YOUR CELL PHONE?

Thanks to the discovery of a new material by U engineers, jewelry and your body heat could generate enough electricity to power a biosensor (e.g. a heart monitor), or a cooking pan could charge a cell phone in just a few hours.

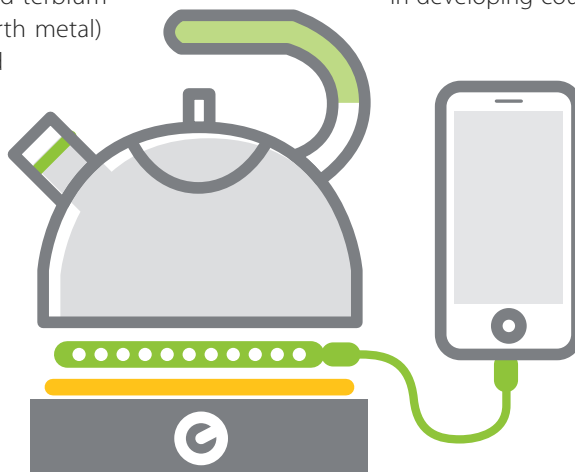
The team, led by materials science and engineering professor Ashutosh Tiwari, has found that a combination of the chemical elements calcium, cobalt, and terbium (a silvery-white and malleable rare earth metal) can create an efficient, inexpensive, and bio-friendly material that can generate electricity through a thermoelectric process involving heat and cold air.

Here's how it works. When one end of the material is hot and the other end is cold, charge carriers from the hot end move through the material to the cold end, generating an electrical voltage. Although materials already exist that can generate power this

way, they are toxic to humans. The new material produced by Tiwari's team is inexpensive, bio-and eco-friendly, and efficient at generating electricity.

Tiwari says the application possibilities are endless. Airplanes could generate extra power by using heat from within the cabin and the cold air outside. The material could be used in developing countries where electricity is scarce

and the only source of energy is the fire in stoves. Power plants—which waste up to 60 percent of energy just in generating heat that then escapes—could use the material to produce additional electricity from that heat. Tiwari says the team plans to try the material out first in cars and biosensors.



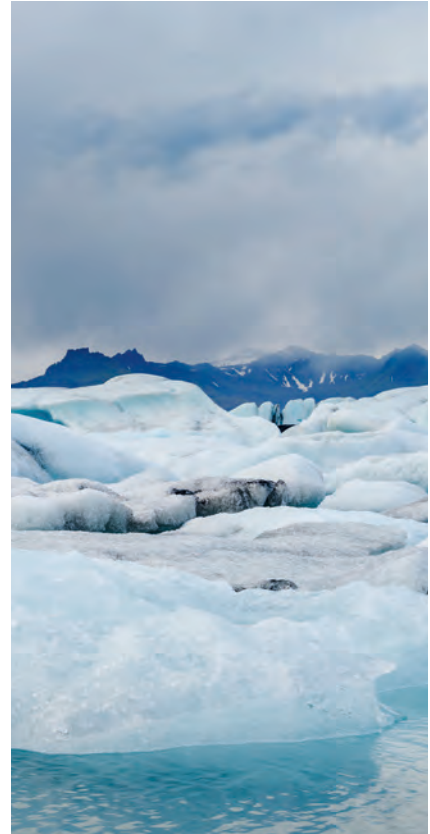
## ARCTIC CLOUDS GET POLLUTED, TOO

In 1870, explorer Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld, trekking across the barren and remote ice cap of Greenland, saw something most people wouldn't expect: haze. His observation was among the first evidence that air pollution around the northern hemisphere can degrade air quality in the Arctic. Now, a study from U atmospheric scientist Tim Garrett and his colleagues finds that clouds in the Arctic are extraordinarily sensitive to air pollution and could further warm an already-changing Arctic.

For 150 years or more, air pollution has been following the dominant circulation pattern from lower latitudes toward the poles. Northeast Asia is a significant contributor to Arctic pollution, as are sources in the far north of Europe. Scientists have been especially interested in understanding the pollution's effect on Arctic clouds which, according to Garrett and his colleagues, are two to eight times

more sensitive to modification by air pollution than those at other latitudes. The clouds are especially affected by air pollution attributable to human activities (such as particulate matter), which may spur formation of new clouds that then act as a blanket, warming the surface more. Garrett notes that once in the Arctic, pollution becomes trapped under a temperature inversion, much like the inversions that Salt Lake City experiences.

The findings give Garrett both hope and concern. Particulate matter is an airborne pollutant that can be controlled relatively easily. However, gains in pollutant reductions could be offset if the Arctic becomes a shipping route and sees increasing development. "The Arctic is changing incredibly rapidly," says Garrett. "Much more rapidly than the rest of the world, which is changing rapidly enough."



## A NEEDLE THAT TAKES BRAIN PHOTOS

With an inexpensive micro-thin surgical needle and laser light, U engineers and biologists have discovered a minimally invasive, inexpensive way to take high-resolution pictures of an animal brain, a process that could lead to a much better method for humans.

A team led by U electrical and computer engineering associate professor Rajesh Menon has proven the process works on mice, promising future help in studying neurological disorders such as depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and aggression, the mechanisms for which lie especially deep in our brains.

The new photo method involves taking a tiny surgical needle about a quarter-millimeter in diameter and inserting it into the brain. Laser light shines through the needle and into the brain, illuminating certain cells like a flashlight. "This technique is particularly useful for looking deep inside the brain where other techniques fail," says Menon.

Menon believes the procedure could potentially replace endoscopes, which can be 10 to 100 times thicker than a needle and very damaging.



# MIND FULNESS 101

STRESSED OUT?  
IN CHRONIC PAIN?  
DISTRACTED?  
TRY THIS.



*Guide by Trinh Mai  
Illustrations by André Jolicoeur*

# “Shhhh”



urges a gold sign posted in a wide hallway. “Research in progress.”

**T**here are actually five big research projects—backed by more than \$24 million in grant funding—presently under way at the University of Utah’s year-old, interdisciplinary Center on Mindfulness and Integrative Health Intervention Development (C-MIIND). Most of the center’s current studies focus on finding ways to safely address two issues that impact millions of Americans: chronic pain and the opioid medications often used to manage it.

Eric Garland, director of the center and associate dean for research at the College of Social Work, notes one promising solution: Mindfulness-Oriented Recovery Enhancement (MORE), a research-based therapeutic intervention that Garland developed more than a decade ago, and a key centerpiece of C-MIIND’s research efforts.

At the heart of MORE is the use of mindfulness training to change the way the brain processes pain, stress, and the need for medication. Garland explains that study participants learn to use mindfulness and related practices to cope with life’s challenges and increase their sense of well-being. “An awful lot of people from all walks of life have to cope with serious pain every minute of every day. We have to have better ways to manage that pain,” he says. “The research happening at C-MIIND has the potential to do that and literally save lives.”

But mindfulness isn’t just for those in chronic pain; it’s a practice that can benefit just about anyone willing

to give it a try. To find out more, we consulted another campus expert, Trinh Mai, associate professor and director of MSW field education at the College of Social Work. She teaches a Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction course and was willing to share some guidance for readers who might be interested in starting their own mindful meditative practice.

## A BEGINNER’S GUIDE TO MEDITATION

### Why meditate?

We know that physical exercise is good for our health. And now research has verified what spiritual practitioners in many contemplative traditions have experienced for thousands of years: meditation—an exercise focused on qualities of the mind and heart—is also beneficial for our health. Meditation allows the nervous system to rest and revitalize, while reducing stress, improving focus and attention, and developing positive relationships with ourselves and others. In doing these things, regular practice of meditation leads us to improved health and well-being.



## So how do we meditate?

Meditation is the practice of bringing calm, nonjudgmental attention to a point of focus in the present moment, such as attending to the breath, physical sensations, sounds, a candle flame, a word, or a phrase/mantra.

It is an exercise in letting go of distractions and returning again and again to an object of focus. Finding this calm focus is a simple concept, and yet so hard to do. Our attention often tends to be divided and hurried, with limited awareness of what we are attending to. But mindfulness is the awareness that results from a regular meditation practice.

## Choose a place and time

In the beginning, it is helpful to create some structure for yourself, setting a time and a place. Many people like to practice first thing in the morning or last thing at night, when it is easier to find a quiet space with few distractions. Some also find it helpful to practice with the support of an app, a teacher, or a group.

On your own, setting a timer can also help. When first starting, try five to ten minutes, and then, as you're ready, increase that time.

## Find your seat and settle in

Take a comfortable seat on a chair or cushion. If sitting on a chair, allow both feet to be on the floor; if sitting on a cushion, allow legs to cross, knees lower than your hips. Your spine and neck are straight, but not stiff. Your head is held in a balanced position over your neck, chin lowered a bit. Arms rest softly by your sides, and hands can be placed on your legs.

Settle into your grounded posture, feeling the support of the cushion/chair, the points of contact between it and different parts of your body.

Now check in with yourself and see what is in your field of awareness. Are there thoughts, bodily sensations, emotions that are occupying your attention? Acknowledge what is present for you without judgment, then gently and firmly direct your attention to your breathing.

## Breathe

See if you can feel the entire cycle of the breath, escorting the air as it moves into the nostrils, through the body, and back out. Be with each breath, not needing to control or change it in any way.

The mind will wander from your breathing, because that's what minds do. When you notice the mind wander off, acknowledge where it has wandered to and then gently and firmly redirect your attention back to the breath. Each time you bring your mind back to the breath, you are cultivating awareness and presence.

Your breath is your anchor to the present moment. Each inhale is a new beginning. Each exhale is a letting go. When the mind wanders, bring it back. Again and again. This is the practice.


## Transition with awareness

When the timer rings, practice maintaining awareness as you transition to the next activity. Check in with yourself to see how you feel after the meditation and intentionally proceed to the next moment.

## Be present and accepting

Often, people equate meditation with relaxation, and this can indeed be a benefit of the practice. However, the purpose of meditation is not just to relax, but rather to be with your experiences as they unfold in the present moment. So let go of any expectations of how you think you are supposed to feel.

In befriending your breath, you are also getting to know yourself more intimately and learning to be with yourself, whether you find calmness and ease or a racing mind and a fearful heart. Allow yourself to be in the moment as you are—this is what is ultimately relaxing. This self-acceptance also yields clear and accurate data about yourself and cultivates skillful and wise responses to life's situations. **U**



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# Defending

## LAW ALUMS AND STUDENTS JOIN FORCES TO FREE AN INNOCENT MAN WHO SPENT 22 YEARS IN PRISON.

By Melinda Rogers

**D**eMarlo Berry walked out of a Las Vegas prison last summer after spending half of his life behind bars for a crime he didn't commit. Dressed in prison blues, he hardly recognized the city that greeted him, a place he'd last stepped foot in two decades before in 1995, when he was sentenced to life in prison for fatally shooting a man outside a Carl's Jr. during a robbery.

At the time, there was no physical evidence linking Berry to the crime: No gun, no fingerprints, and no DNA. However, there was a jailhouse snitch who falsely claimed that Berry had confessed to the crime while they shared a jail holding cell. Four eyewitnesses also provided inconsistent and only general descriptions of the perpetrator—but those descriptions were enough to convince a jury that Berry was guilty. And for years, there seemed to be no hope for Berry, who maintained his innocence.

But in 2011, a group of University of Utah alumni and students, working with the Rocky Mountain Innocence Center (RMIC), took on Berry's case and set out to bring new evidence to light that a jury had sent the wrong man to prison.

The RMIC is a nonprofit organization that partners with the U's S.J. Quinney College of Law to match students with cases that could potentially prove the innocence of the wrongfully convicted. Students receive not only academic credit but also valuable and unparalleled hands-on legal experience. Once they have completed an investigation and a case is ready for litigation, the center recruits local attorneys to help bring the case to court.

The innocence center agreed to take Berry's case from the many requests it receives each month because his had several signs of a wrongful conviction—unreliable eyewitness identification, incentivized informant testimony, the failure to investigate

alternative suspects, and possible untested DNA evidence. Although it soon became clear that no DNA was available to exonerate Berry, other information pointed distinctly to his innocence. Thus, after the center gathered new evidence in Berry's case—including a confession from the actual killer—the law firms of Richards Brandt Miller Nelson and Weil & Drage joined in litigating the case and ultimately proved Berry innocent of all charges. A judge signed an order that Berry immediately be released from prison in June 2017.

College of Law Clinical Professor Jensie Anderson BFA'85 JD'93 was among the group of Utah attorneys who began a post-conviction investigation on Berry's behalf. "It was a long, hard fight for DeMarlo, but he never lost his faith," says Anderson, who also serves as pro bono legal director of the RMIC. For her—as well as U alums and attorneys Craig C. Coburn BS'77 JD'80, Jennifer Springer BS'09 JD'14, Samantha Wilcox JD'14, and Lynn S. Davies BA'77 BA'78 JD'81—fighting to bring the truth of Berry's innocence to light and succeeding in freeing him will be forever memorable.

"Upon first hearing DeMarlo's story, I was horrified by the apparent miscarriage of justice that had sent an innocent man to prison for his entire adult life. As I examined the evidence more critically, I became convinced of his innocence and knew I had to help," says Davies, who was with the rest of the legal team in Nevada to pick up Berry from prison, fittingly just before Independence Day. "Seeing DeMarlo stand in the sweltering Las Vegas sun, finally a free man, was beyond gratifying—it was a major highlight of my legal career."

Davies learned about the case from his colleague Wilcox, who signed on to it while a law student at the U. At the heart of Berry's exoneration were endless hours of work by Wilcox and several other U students who,

*Photo at right by Richard Brian,  
Las Vegas Review-Journal*

# Innocence

as part of their clinical experience with RMIC, painstakingly built the case that proved Berry's innocence. A key part of the evidence that would ultimately persuade Nevada prosecutors to ask that the case against Berry be dismissed was gathered by Wilcox as a student.

"I really believed in him, and I wanted to keep helping him," Wilcox says of Berry. "I think all innocence stories are intriguing," she adds. "Students are really exposed to the grittiness of the situation. We get to go visit with the clients and hear their stories. You get to look into their eyes and gauge their sincerity and honesty."

It was Wilcox who elicited a confession from Steven Jackson, the real killer in the case that landed Berry behind bars. In 1994, Jackson had been a gang leader who police believed had been involved in, but not responsible for, the fatal shooting at the Carl's Jr. Wilcox tracked Jackson to a California prison—where he was serving a sentence of life without parole for another murder—and traveled there to interview him in

person. When she explained she was investigating Berry's claims of innocence, Jackson answered simply, "I've been waiting for you for 15 years."

Jackson eventually confessed to the crime, which led to an affidavit that started the proceedings to finally clear Berry. That evidence—along with several witnesses, including a forensic expert corroborating Jackson's confession, a recantation from the incentivized jailhouse informant, and a close examination of nine additional eyewitnesses—gave the innocence center what it needed to bring Berry's case back to court.

Springer, who was also a student when she started working on the case and ultimately joined the RMIC as its managing attorney, recalls the

powerful emotions of the team members, who had spent thousands of hours working to free the man. "Everyone was just ecstatic. There were many, many tears of joy."

"Achieving justice for DeMarlo tops everything," adds Coburn. He recalls first meeting Berry in person at the prison in 2014, when Coburn told Berry he'd one day walk out a free man. The day Berry was released, he shared a moment with Coburn. "Amidst the tears, hugs, and smiles, he reminded me of what I had said to him as we parted ways after our first meeting," Coburn recounts. "He smiled and said, 'Here we are.' For a lawyer, it doesn't get any better than that."

Berry—now pursuing a career as a barber (a job he held in prison)—says he's grateful the team from Utah gave him his life back. He also married while in prison and today enjoys a peaceful existence in Las Vegas. "If they wasn't as thorough as they were, we wouldn't be here," says Berry about his attorneys' efforts. "Nobody would be concerned about me or anything. I'd just be another number in prison." **U**

—Melinda Rogers is communications manager for the U's S.J. Quinney College of Law.

***"Seeing DeMarlo finally a free man was beyond gratifying—it was a major highlight of my legal career."***

*DeMarlo Berry (right) shares an embrace with attorney Lynn Davies.*





# THE DISAPPEARING SELF

AN ACADEMIC'S 'FIELD NOTES' ON HER OWN DEMENTIA

**Nine months after her diagnosis of early-onset dementia,** Gerda Saunders PhD'96 retired from her position as the associate director of the U's Gender Studies program. As a goodbye present, her colleagues gave her a leather-bound journal. In it, she began jotting down notes about her "daily misadventures." With a wink at her background in the sciences, she called it *Dementia Field Notes*. Like an anthropologist, Saunders set out to objectively observe one member of a strange tribe, "the Dementers." The result of this endeavor eventually led to her 2017 memoir, *Memory's Last Breath*. "The more you know, the better you're able to love," she writes in the introduction. With that in mind, we offer you an excerpt.

By Gerda Saunders

**O**n September 21, 2010, five days before my sixty-first birthday, I was given a diagnosis of microvascular disease. Following Alzheimer's, microvascular disease is the second leading cause of dementia. I was—as my rather blunt neurologist put it—already “dementing.” Insofar as I had thought about dementia before that day, I was unaware that the word had a verb form: I dement, you dement, he/she/it dement, they dement, we all dement. Now, six years later, “the cloake sitteth no lesse fit” on my chastened back.

The denial with which I initially met my diagnosis will seem disingenuous in light of the fact that I knew the symptoms of dementia even then—and recognized them in myself. Also, my mother had a form of mental disconnect that made her increasingly out of touch with reality until her death at eighty-two. Given that, why did my doctor's utterance fall so dissonantly on my ear? It took me a long time to understand how profoundly the diagnosis threatened my sense of identity.

My pursuit of a PhD in English in my forties introduced me to the Enlightenment philosophers. I remember being intrigued by John Locke's and William Whewell's quest for, as Locke puts it, the “originals from whence all our ideas take their beginnings,” which took both men back to Adam's expulsion from the Garden of Eden. Locke describes fallen Adam as lost in a “strange Country” with “all Things new, and unknown about him”; Whewell pictures Adam doing the first work of postlapsarian orientation by giving names “distinct and appropriate to the facts” to newly encountered objects and concepts.



## A SELECTION OF FIELD NOTES

**2/5/2011** During my going-away meeting with Gender Studies, the faculty gave me this journal. In it I'll report my descent into the post-cerebral realm for which I am headed. No whimpering, no whining, no despair. Just the facts.

**8/24/2011** I could not combine the up and sideways movements of our bathroom tap to make cold water come out. Instead fetched cold water from the kitchen in the plastic jug.

**3/3/2012** Saturday at the mall I performed the physical motions of shoplifting—walked out of Macy's with a pair of pants over my arm. I only noticed when I was inside Dillard's on the opposite side of the mall. I hurried back, ready to explain. There were no salespeople around, and no one noticed when I put them back.

**6/11/2013** Since I started having trouble remembering which items go with what when I pick something to wear for the day, I have started now and then writing down the components of the outfit.

>> Visit Saunders' blog at [gerdasaunders.com](http://gerdasaunders.com) to watch a series of short *RadioWest* films about her experiences, including a moving video about coping with her wardrobe.

I knew something about this project. Having emigrated in 1984 from South Africa to Salt Lake City with my husband, Peter, and our two children, I had experienced the discombobulation of having to decipher situations that must appear mundane to residents equipped with the requisite cultural vocabulary. What, for example, are you supposed to do when an acquaintance drops by your house with her own beverage in tow? How do two people proceed from acquaintance to friendship without that most crucial foundation of South African hospitality: a fresh pot of tea? Why is letting your kids run naked through the sprinklers in your own backyard or

displaying baby pictures of your kids naked regarded by visitors as tantamount to sexual exploitation? What about the forlorn feeling when hosts with whom you have had a marvelous evening say goodbye to you at the door rather than walking you to your car?

By my mid-fifties, I had cracked these and other social codes to a great extent. I knew that having coffee meant heading to the nearest Starbucks. I had built up a scaffolding of friends so dear they had become family. Most of the time I no longer felt like a foreigner. I had developed an American self and was settling into it. But before I had even reached my sixties, I had begun again to feel like an alien of sorts, a stranger even to myself.

I first noted an irksome absentmindedness in my work as the associate director of gender studies at the University of Utah, a position I took at age fifty-two after a foray into the corporate world. Like the troublesome serpent in Genesis, an impairment in my working memory—the ability to maintain and manipulate information “live” in a multistep process, such as remembering to carry the tens when you add numbers—slunk into my intellectual Eden.

My love of teaching was the reason I left my corporate job in 2002 for academics, gladly taking a 25 percent salary cut. After fewer than five years in my dream job, forebodings that not all was well started to cloud my class time: I would lose the thread of a discussion or forget the point toward which I had intended to steer the students' thinking. Often, the name of a novel or author I used to know as well as my children's names would not come to mind. Not infrequently, a student would remind me during the last moments of class that I had failed to distribute notes or an assignment.

I began to prepare scripts for my lessons, but even these did not prevent me from losing my place in my own mnemonic system. Though I had not yet sought a diagnosis, I took our program director into my confidence about my memory difficulties and she graciously supported me in negotiating smaller teaching loads. Soon there was only one class per year. During my last two years of working at the university I was not teaching at all and was instead bogged down in management and meetings, just like in my corporate days.

On the administrative front, too, my fraying memory caused me stress. During the first gathering of a Women's Week committee that I chaired, I had created a detailed agenda to keep me on track: welcome, make introductions, review themes covered in past years, brainstorm ideas for this year, and so forth. At some point between the welcome and the review of previous themes, my mind flipped into confusion. Someone was talking. His voice was distant, and syllables flowed from his mouth without coalescing into meaning. I panicked. I had no idea where we were in the agenda. Desperately scanning my notes, my eye fell on “Introductions.” When the speaker paused, I suggested we introduce ourselves. As the words left my mouth, I remembered with horror that we had already gone around the table. My insides cramped at the realization that I had committed the cardinal sin of academia: not thinking accurately on my feet. A colleague from the Women's Resource Center tried to take the edge off my embarrassment by saying that we all had so many things on our plates it was no wonder we sometimes got confused. The nodding heads around the table conveyed empathy, but also confirmed that everyone had noted my loss of face.

And so my downward slide continued. I knew I had to retire.



*Peter and Gerda  
Saunders at their home  
in Salt Lake City.*

At home, too, my various slips proliferated. I spoke to my family and closest friends. “Senior moments,” my peers knowingly declared. Even my then-twentysomething children, Marissa and Newton, assured me they, too, experienced similar lapses. As the incidents accumulated, though, my immediate family acknowledged that they noticed a change. As I approached my sixtieth birthday, they agreed that my deficits might be adding up to a diagnosable disease. I started considering making a doctor’s appointment, my mother’s mental unraveling never far from my mind. . . .

My mother’s deterioration had gone without a name. What, then, to do about my own unhinging? Even though much had been learned about dementia in the decade after my mother’s death, all but the most occult sources concurred that there is ultimately no cure for dementia, or any other brain disorder with symptoms adding up to the gradual loss of intellectual function thereby “depriv[ing] sufferers from be[ing] able to think well enough to do normal activities, such as getting dressed or eating,” “the ability to solve problems or control their emotions,” as well as the adroitness to distinguish between things that are real and “things that are not there.”

Despite the lack of anything approaching a “cure,” there are medications thought to slow the progression of Alzheimer’s and other dementias. However, my preliminary research confirmed what Peter and I had learned anecdotally: no existing medications could stave off the inevitable decline that catches up with even the most diligently monitored patient. We were afraid that the quest for diagnosis could trap us in what writer and physician Atul Gawande once described as “the unstoppable momentum of medical treatment.” Still, we are both the kind of people who want to know, always drawn like moths toward enlightenment. Also, confirmation of our suspicions might help us prepare. If the unnamable loomed ahead, we could plan for expensive care, diminished quality of life, and a way to end my life at the right time.

I asked Peter to come along for that initial doctor’s appointment in 2010. Our primary care doctor politely entertained our doubts about the value of diagnosis. She heard out our pontifications about what we regarded as a worthwhile quality of life, and let us stew our own way into following her suggestion that I have an MRI. . . .

One neurologist, one neuropsychologist, dozens of tests, and many hundreds of out-of-pocket dollars later, my neurologist uttered the d-word. She projected that two more neurological evaluations at two-year intervals would be needed before I would officially meet the criteria of dementia.

But in my heart I already knew: I am dementing. I am dementing. I am dementing. . . . **U**

*Excerpted from Memory’s Last Breath: Field Notes on My Dementia by Gerda Saunders, published by Hachette Books. Copyright © 2017.*

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A young woman with dark hair, smiling broadly, is the central focus. She is holding a large, circular red award plaque in front of her. The plaque features a white silhouette of a city skyline and the text "REGIONALS 2017" at the top and "SUNBELT CONFERENCE" at the bottom. The background is a warm, yellowish-orange gradient. In the top right corner, there is a small circular inset image showing a person in a dark uniform standing on a red carpet.

# THE RISE OF CLUB SPORTS

*Sierra Jensen*



## STUDENTS PLAY FOR A LOVE OF THE GAME AND SO MUCH MORE.

*Story and photos by Stephen Speckman*

Sierra Jensen calls joining a club sport at the University of Utah the best decision of her college career. “And I would even go so far as to say in my young adult life,” adds Jensen, 21. The senior, majoring in civil engineering, plays Ultimate Frisbee, one of 24 clubs currently active at the U.

Best friends. Better grades. Bonding. The thrill of elevated competition. Road trips. Lasting memories. Growth experiences. And great views, at least for outdoor sports at the U. They’re all part of the club sport experience that student-athletes say draws them to compete at the club level versus taking part in intramural sports, pick-up games, or even NCAA-sanctioned play.

“Club sports represent a critical opportunity for students to stay engaged, to stay healthy, to develop new habits and experiences, make friends, and benefit from all of the social components of being engaged in team sports,” says Barbara Snyder, vice president of student affairs. “We are very convinced that a well-rounded undergraduate’s experience can be enhanced by engagement with club sports.”

So, maybe Jensen’s claim doesn’t seem too lofty, even when you factor in the sometimes high cost to students.

### AN INVESTMENT

A small amount of funding for each sport comes from student fees collected by the Associated Students of the University of Utah, but Jensen, like all students who play club sports throughout the country, pays plenty out of her own pocket. There are no scholarships in club sports, which also rely on team fundraisers to keep them going. Jensen estimates she



spends about \$500 to play with Spiral Jetty, the U's Ultimate team. Some of that money covers travel, but it also pays for renting indoor practice facilities on campus during the winter.

Ultimate is one of the less expensive club sports. Others, like hockey, can cost a student upwards of \$1,800 in dues per semester. Women's lacrosse player Audrey Burns, majoring in kinesiology, pays \$400 for the fall season and \$2,000 in the spring, when the team competes and travels more. Burns, 21, notes that her fees pay for travel, accommodations, field space, coaching staff, referees, tournament and league fees, gear, and uniforms. "It's hard to raise money on our own, but it is also rewarding to show people our passion for the sport," she says.

The dividends in the investment, as students report over and over, are many. If they're not practicing, competing, or traveling together on a long road trip to the next game, they're studying with each other or just hanging out. Lots of time together forms tight bonds. Those road trips for Jensen have included destinations like San Diego, Calif.; Eugene, Ore.; Missoula, Mont.; Boulder, Colo.; and beyond.

And don't let the "club" aspect make you think students are in it just for fun. These athletes are competitive. Jensen's club qualified in spring 2017

for the Northwest Regional tournament. The men's Ultimate team, called Zion Curtain, qualified for nationals in 2016, finishing 13th. Other campus clubs, such as the pistol team, compete on regional and national stages every year. The U's climbing club took the national championship at the 2017 USA Collegiate Climbing Series competition in San Diego.

## A DECIDING FACTOR

The popularity of club sports at the U factors into why some students choose Utah in the first place. Seth Hughes, a sophomore majoring in kinesiology, picked the U over several other schools because it had clubs in both swimming and water polo, both of which he plays. "This is just an awesome way to stay involved with the sports you grew up loving in high school," says the Chicago native, 22.

Jeff Whipple flew in from Bellevue, Wash., with his son, Patrick, last fall to check out campus and watch the rugby club beat Colorado University-Boulder 52-22 on a warm, sun-drenched McCarthy Track and Field. "Rugby will be a factor in deciding which school Patrick will choose," Jeff says. "I look for a program that's going to be good for my son. The type of community you get into is a big deal. What's

**"STUDENTS WHO PARTICIPATE [IN RECREATIONAL PROGRAMS] REGULARLY DO BETTER ACADEMICALLY, THEY PERSIST TO GRADUATION MORE QUICKLY IN GREATER NUMBERS, AND THEY'RE MORE LOYAL ALUMNI."**



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# CLUB SPORTS AT THE U

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- Wakeboarding
- Men's Water Polo
- Women's Water Polo
- Wrestling

the personality like? What's the culture of the team? Are the coaches supportive of academics as well as rugby and fitness? Those are the kinds of things we're looking for when we're on campuses." His son wants a good school that happens to have a rugby club. "I don't want to end up at a school that has a D1/varsity team and then I don't make the team and, as a result, I have nothing to do with the school."

Patrick's point about forming a connection with the school he chooses is one that Snyder echoes. "If you look at involvement in recreational programs in general, students who participate regularly do better academically, they persist to graduation more quickly in greater numbers, and they're more loyal alumni," Snyder says. "For a lot of students, club sports may be one way that they're going to be involved on campus outside of classes."

## FORMING A CLUB

Club sports is now a big presence—and growing—on campus and requires oversight, guidance, and support, even though each sport is student-formed, and student-led once they're up and running.

U sports clubs are under the purview of Campus Recreation Services, which also oversees intramural sports. Sean Michael Monnier, manager of Intramural Sports & Sports Clubs, provides a lengthy handbook that lays out best practices and policies to govern clubs as well as covering areas like risk management, insurance, injuries, financial guidelines, and facility use. "Club sports help students develop skills such as leadership, organization, responsibility, time management, teamwork, and decision making," Monnier says. His department helps students with forming new clubs, which can start as

easily as a click of a mouse on the campus recreation website, followed by paperwork and a few other hoops.

Madi Tripp, Ella Johnson, and Zion Levister joined men's volleyball practices inside the HPER complex last fall as part of their quest to form a women's team. They began talking to leaders of the men's club for tips on how to start a club, held tryouts, and will need to give a presentation to administrators this spring to justify the need. "I hope it's a chance for people who are like me, who aren't playing at the collegiate level, who just want to keep their skills up and be with other girls who enjoy playing volleyball," Tripp says. She hopes her club will be up and running in fall 2018.

Giuseppe Huaman, 27, and Jeff Larsen, 37, helped reestablish a men's volleyball club after the team was suspended, which can occur for a variety of reasons from conduct violations to unauthorized use of certain logos. (Clubs can use the block U, for example, but the drum and feather logo is off limits.) Larsen, who is pursuing a bachelor's degree in accounting, found it would be easier to start a new club rather than try lifting the former club out of suspension. Huaman, born in Peru and seeking a master's in education toward his dream of becoming a teacher like his late mother, has seen club volleyball improve his academic trajectory. "When I first started playing, I saw a change in my grades," he says. "Other players have helped me to achieve my goals for school."

Sometimes a club is formed out of the passion of a single individual, like Vivian Bentley, 20, a junior seeking a degree in Parks, Recreation, and Tourism. Finding a place to practice the Japanese martial art of Kendo, initially for just four people, was difficult when Kendo was not an official club. Bentley bounced around from the A. Ray Olpin





University Union to the Naval Sciences Building, and finally, when Kendo was designated an official club, the Student Life Center, where clubs are offered free use of the facilities. Kendo now has 18 members.

Students also have to go out and find their own coaches, who wind up working for very little payment. But for the coaches, it's not about the money. "I'm terribly excited to be involved in this. The fact that they're doing this on their own, organized it on their own... it's fantastic," says Will Reeves, who coaches the swimming and diving club. He is well known in the community for having coached at the high school and master's levels. "I love to see these kids given an opportunity to compete." The men's volleyball club team found their coach, kinesiology advisor Loren Finn, by noticing evidence in his office of a lifelong connection to the sport. "And I use volleyball as a medium to life," says Finn. "Everything that I do, I say, 'How can we use this in our everyday life?'" Women's lacrosse coaches Brooke Erickson and Glee Corsetti,

former players and then coaches elsewhere, have ambitious goals for their athletes. "We're actually going to change the world, starting right here on this field," Corsetti says. Their philosophy is to help their players to be "powerful, well-rounded women who go into the real world with tools they wouldn't otherwise have."

### PLAYING BY WHOSE RULES?

After a team is established, the level of involvement from other outside entities varies. Neither the National Collegiate Athletic Association nor the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics oversees club sports. Governance for some clubs can come from the National Collegiate Sport Committee or the National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association. Other sports take their cues from specific groups—Ultimate Frisbee, for example, answers to USA Ultimate. Governing bodies can help with determining eligibility of athletes, organizing tournaments, and providing officials during competition.





Competition and ambition can reach a fever pitch, compelling those involved to seek NCAA status. That's what happened with coach Brian Holman's men's lacrosse team, which is slated for its first official NCAA-level game in spring 2019. When the change from club to NCAA takes place, that's when the Athletics Department takes over—and it's a whole new game.

"Once you switch, it's a gigantic switch," says Athletics Director Chris Hill MED'74 PhD'82. Beginning July 1, 2018, his department will kick in support services and marketing for men's lacrosse, along with training facilities and sports medicine resources, promotions, and ticket sales.

The main reason Hill says the U was able to raise men's lacrosse to Division 1 status was money—as in a \$15 million endowment to fund the team. Otherwise, he says, his department would not have been able to afford adding it to their roster. Also, he says, there are rules under Title IX that dictate when a university can add a sport.

The downside for students who once qualified to play at the club level, however, is that when their sport graduates to NCAA status, the level of competition and recruiting increases. "I think that there are people who are on the lacrosse club team now who aren't going to be able to play at that level," Hill says. (Sometimes, though, there is enough interest to have

both a club and NCAA-level team, as with sports such as swimming and soccer at the U.)

It's estimated that more than two million students participate in upwards of 50 different club sports on college campuses throughout the country—and they draw crowds of cheering fans. At the U, rugby, hockey, men's and women's lacrosse and soccer, climbing, and cycling seem to attract the most spectators. "The Salt Lake City community loves to come out and support us," Monnier says. "The clubs with the biggest crowds seem to have really figured out how to market themselves."

For the athletes, however competitive they may be, the experience is as much about creating lasting memories and friendships—as well as the way it can push them to achieve in not only their sport but elsewhere in their lives. In short, joining a club sport *could* be the best decision they make during college. "These women make me a better student and make me want to achieve more by seeing how much each of us accomplishes in our lives outside of Frisbee," Jensen says. **U**

— Stephen Speckman is a Salt Lake City-based writer and photographer and a frequent contributor to Continuum.

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# SHIFTING THE NARRATIVE

BY ELAINE JARVIK

"I'm here to pick up an order of potassium nitrate," the boy announced.

Earlier that morning he had dressed in a gray shirt and gray pants that maybe looked like a uniform, then had driven his motorcycle to a chemical company in downtown Salt Lake City, where he handed them what he hoped looked like an official piece of paper.

He was bored by school, but he had been captivated by President John F. Kennedy's speech about putting a man on the moon, and he daydreamed of being an astronaut himself. (It would be an excellent way to meet girls, was his line of reasoning.) First, though, he would build a rocket.



Photo by Bill Cramer



Photo by Sheryl Hedman

*Russell Redenbaugh outside San Francisco, where he founded an investment management firm now worth \$6 billion. And to think, it took him 49 interviews to land his first job out of college.*

And so on a sunny morning, in his parents' garage, he packed the potassium nitrate, some sulfur, and charcoal into a 16-inch length of metal pipe. This was in 1962, so the boom that happened next caused neighbors even blocks away to glance nervously up at the sky for Soviet bombers. But his next-door neighbor, who was taking laundry off the line in her backyard, ran toward the sound, hauling sheets and towels with her.

Something had ignited the chemicals prematurely, and inside the garage the young rocket builder was bleeding profusely. The neighbor, who happened to be an army surgical nurse, used her clean laundry to make tourniquets to keep him from bleeding to death.

The explosion blew off four fingers of one hand and the thumb and one finger of the other; it destroyed the sight in one eye and partial sight in the other. Over the next nine months there were nearly 30 surgeries. And, in the end, when the doctors had done all they could, 17-year-old Russell Redenbaugh was completely blind. His mother wept for his future.

N

Now he's 72. His résumé includes a B.S. ('67) from the University of Utah, an MBA from the Wharton School of Business, co-ownership of a flourishing investment advisory and research company, 15 years on the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, a black belt in Brazilian jiu-jitsu,

and three world championships against sighted opponents.

He doesn't want to inspire you with these facts so much as pour them over you like a bucket of cold water. And he wants to offer you a no-frills mantra, clearly written by the economist that he is: "The rate of return on being a victim is very low."

The problem with inspirational speakers, he says, "is that what they say usually wears off by the time you get to your car." So instead of urging you to have positive thoughts, or to adopt a list of successful habits, Redenbaugh wants you to first investigate whether your life has an underlying narrative that is holding you back. That's the bottom line of his 2017 book *Shift the Narrative: A Blind Man's Vision for Rewriting the Stories That Limit Us*. It's part memoir, part low-key manifesto.

"I continue to look on with amusement (and a slight amount of pity)," he writes, "at the people who are on a lifelong search for the holy grail of self-improvement, the completely painless, risk-free, transformational 'life change' pill. There is no return without risk and effort."

"Find the obstacle and clear it," he says. "It's like road building: first, cut down the trees."



During the six weeks immediately following the rocket explosion, his father sat by his hospital bed every evening and read to him from novels and poems full of can-do heroes. His favorite was William Ernest Henley's "Invictus": *It matters not how strait the gate,/ how charged with punishments the scroll,/ I am the master of my fate,/ I am the captain of my soul.*

Six months later, in the winter of 1963, he was again in the hospital, this time in San Francisco, where doctors tried to save his partially damaged eye but failed. His mother sobbed at the news, envisioning that he would be unemployable for the rest of his life. But he already he knew what he would not tolerate: "I will not be poor," he announced; "I will not be dependent on others; I will not live at home, be led to the bathroom, fed and walked." He would live an active life, "in a sighted world doing sighted things." He now calls these pronouncements "declarations."

"Declarations," he says, "are the closest thing there is to magic."

"He just wanted to keep on living," remembers his high school buddy Darryl Milczarek BA'70, who took him snow skiing and waterskiing after the accident. While he was still in the hospital, Redenbaugh applied for a guide dog. With Minka at his side, he finished high school, entered the U, pledged Sigma Nu, and convinced his fraternity brothers that if they read his textbooks to him they would get better grades.

He had been a lackluster student in high school. But now, with new motivation, he excelled academically, winding up No. 1 in his class in the U's business school. And then he made another declaration: "I will get an MBA from a prestigious university."

He applied to Harvard and Stanford and was turned down by both. Each explained that a blind student wouldn't be able to complete the program—although, as Redenbaugh pointed out, how could they know that if they had never admitted a blind student? (Years later, after he had made a lot of money as an investment adviser, he sent the dean of admissions at Harvard a copy of his tax return, as well as a yearly \$5,000 scholarship, named after his grandmother.)

Rejected by his top two schools, he applied to the third school on his list: the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, taking the train from Salt Lake to Philadelphia to make his case in person. He graduated from Wharton fifth in his class.

And then he couldn't find anyone who would hire him. There were 49 interviews and not one job offer. Finally, with the help of a Wharton classmate, he was hired at a small money management firm in Philadelphia, Cooke & Bieler—with this proviso: he would in turn hire a sighted assistant, out of his own pocket. If that didn't work out, Redenbaugh would be let go.

It was an arrangement that would be illegal now under the Americans with Disabilities Act, notes Redenbaugh, who then launches into what at first seems to be a counterintuitive argument—by a one-handed blind man—against the ADA.

"The economy responds to changing incentives," he begins, "and one of the incentives of the ADA was that it made it hard to hire people who were seriously disabled. No company wants to hire anyone who is 'fire-proof.'" That, he asserts, is the unintended consequence of the act's provision that if companies don't provide "reasonable accommodation" to a disabled employee they can be found guilty of discrimination.

Yes, the ADA also had positive consequences, he says, including changing the way Americans think of and talk about persons with disabilities. And, he adds wryly, "it got curb cuts in the streets, which helps people who pull their suitcases." But the unemployment rate for the seriously disabled has increased (from about 60 percent to over 75 percent) since the ADA was passed in 1990, he says.

Redenbaugh's politics lean libertarian, based on his belief that the government should get out of the way and let people be responsible for themselves. His credo: "Take care of your own. Mend your own fences. Don't milk your neighbor's cow."

His mother's younger brother, Jake Garn BS'55, served as Utah's U.S. Senator for three terms, and it was Garn who introduced him to Sen. Bob Dole, who suggested to President Ronald Reagan that Redenbaugh be appointed to the U.S. Civil Rights Commission. He served as commissioner for 15 years but resigned in protest in 2005, charging that the commission was spending money irresponsibly. His letter of resignation was blunt: "The commission, once the nation's conscience, is now a national embarrassment beyond repair." He urged that it be shut down.

In conversation, Redenbaugh is direct, sometimes brusque. "You can't have an ego and work for Russell," says Charles Williams, who has known him for 25 years and last year became a sales and marketing specialist at Redenbaugh's firm, Kairos Capital Advisors. "He's demanding; but he doesn't demand more of you than he would of himself."

**"FIND THE OBSTACLE  
AND CLEAR IT. IT'S LIKE  
ROAD BUILDING: FIRST,  
CUT DOWN THE TREES."**



*Redenbaugh sharing a laugh with his wife, Natalia, who is also a Brazilian jiu-jitsu competitor.*

Williams describes him as “at his core an investor; and he likes to invest in people.” He recalls sitting in Redenbaugh’s backyard years ago talking about ambition; at the time, Williams was a technician at IBM. “He said, ‘You’re black and I’m blind. It is what it is. You won’t ever be president of the United States’—this was pre-Obama—‘but you can always be more.’”

The big takeaway from his thousands of interactions with Redenbaugh, he says, is this: “It’s not what happens to you, it’s what you’re going to do about it.... He’s got a very low tolerance for people being victims. He’ll try to coach them out of it. But if they can’t hear him, or are high maintenance, he’ll just move away.”

**I**n 1988, on a cross-country flight, Redenbaugh struck up a conversation with an executive from Eastman Kodak, the photographic film powerhouse. “What are your plans for digital photography?” Redenbaugh asked his seatmate. “We don’t see it as an alternative to film at all,” the Kodak executive answered. “The quality is so terrible I think it’s a nonissue.”

Redenbaugh’s point: Even big corporations—and investment firms—can be limited in the way they see the world. In the late 1980s, after rising to chief investment officer and a partner at Cooke & Bieler, he thought the firm was operating on an old narrative, one that was afraid to take risks even when the economic landscape shifted after the fall of the Berlin Wall. He had been spending a lot of time in California analyzing tech companies and saw a different kind of future.

Despite his mother’s fears, he left his secure job in Philadelphia and moved to Silicon Valley. He became CEO of Action Technologies, which was designing software that would be a combination of project management and email.

But not all new ventures, even those based on bold declarations and rewritten narratives, are successful. “There are few lessons in easy victories,” he says now to sum up the ultimate failure of both his job as CEO and the product itself, which he says was ahead of its time. Faced with a risk that doesn’t pan out, he says, it’s time to make new declarations and take new actions. Not long after his Silicon failure, he and James Juliano co-founded Kairos Capital Advisors, a now \$6 billion investment management firm.

“Courage isn’t the absence of fear, it’s acting in spite of it,” says Redenbaugh. Which brings us to his decision, in his 50s, to take up Brazilian jiu-jitsu, a martial art that’s a cross between judo and wrestling.

“What I discovered was, being blind wasn’t the problem—as long as I didn’t let go of my opponent,” he explains in his droll fashion in a TEDx Talk he gave in 2013. The bigger problem was not being able to grip with his hands; so he modified the technique and fought with his legs and feet. He won his first gold medal in the world championships in Rio in 2003, and golds again in 2004 and 2005. His second wife, Natalia, an international business consultant, is also a Brazilian jiu-jitsu competitor.

At 72, he no longer competes, and aging has forced him to deal once more with narratives that need shifting. But jiu-jitsu reinforced what he learned from his accident a half-century ago: it’s possible to be larger than one’s fears and circumstances. Life, like jiu-jitsu, isn’t static; it’s about making a move, reassessing, making new declarations, moving again.

“I’m not special,” he says. “I’m proof that anyone can do this.” **U**

—Elaine Jarvik is a Salt Lake City-based freelance writer and frequent contributor to Continuum.



Visit [continuum.utah.edu](http://continuum.utah.edu) to watch Redenbaugh’s TEDx Talk “Post-Traumatic Gifted.”

# ANOTHER STUDENT SUCCESS STORY

Meet Taylor, a biomedical engineering student, an EMT, and a Red Cross volunteer. Supported by a Jorgensen Scholarship, she is working to make her goal to become both an engineer and a neurosurgeon a reality by participating in research and device development. For her, engineering is what drives the world towards a better quality of life. Support student success like Taylor's at [giving.utah.edu](https://giving.utah.edu).



# BACKSTAGE AT THE OLYMPICS

Alum Lyndsay Young, physical therapist to world-renowned skier Mikaela Shiffrin.

By Amanda Taylor

Photo by Bill Keshelear/College of Health

When she was in seventh grade, Lyndsay Young had to write an essay about her life. It included a portion about what she saw for her future. Thirteen-year-old Lyndsay wrote about how she wanted to be a physical therapist for Olympic-level athletes in Park City, Utah.

So, maybe she possesses a psychic ability—or maybe she's the kind of person who stops at nothing to get what she wants. A driven therapist who loves helping others succeed, Young is an integral part of the small group that surrounds Mikaela Shiffrin, elite alpine ski racer with the U.S. Ski Team, 2014 Olympic Gold medalist, and reigning Overall World Cup champion. At our press date, Shiffrin had just won her first gold medal at the PyeongChang 2018 Olympic Winter Games and still had several races to go.

Speaking to *Continuum* this winter from Lake Louise in Banff, Canada, Young BS'11 DPT'14 had recently returned from travel with the U.S. Ski Team to Austria, Italy, Finland, and Switzerland. She spent one day in Park City in between all the team trips. Young says she's on the road nearly 75 percent of the year, and she's learned quickly what she does and doesn't need to take with her. "I'm really good at folding now," she jokes. "I just pick one color and make sure everything matches."

And all that packing includes not just personal items but her physical therapy gear and her ski supplies. Since she is up and out in the open air with Shiffrin every single day, she has to be sure she has the right stuff—and the right mindset. "I make sure I'm taken care of, so I can take care of the athletes," Young says.

Her average day starts at 6:30 a.m., when she does some yoga and meditation. "Then, whenever the sun rises, we're on the hill."

She is a first responder, so she is with her athlete the entire time she's skiing—meaning Young is strapped into a pair of skis herself, going up and down the mountain during warm-up and training runs. Then she oversees Shiffrin's conditioning, sometimes in a pool, some dancing, and weights.

Shiffrin was injured in 2014, an experience that brought her and Young together. Young says that while her favorite part of the job used to be travel and exploration, she now especially embraces the therapy itself. "It's cool to be able to prevent an injury and learn the patterns that create them," she says.

She's also learned a lot about the mental process of recovery. "Your whole brain changes. I had to make sure Mikaela had the facts. From day one, I was educating her on the injury, preparing her so she could anticipate the recovery." Now, Young says, Shiffrin passes that knowledge on to fellow athletes, which makes Young proud.

The travel and tight quarters can be stressful, but Young says she is always conscious of being positive at the right times. "With elite athletes who are so hyper-focused, I know I also have to always be attentive."

Looking back on her journey, Young says the U was hugely instrumental in helping her get what she wanted. The location, encouragement from professors, and program that trained her all contributed to making her seventh-grade dreams come true.

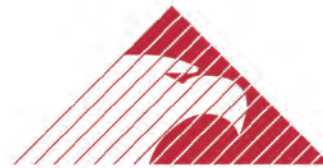
"I just try to remember to always stay playful and grateful. I'm here to help these guys be their very best," says Young. **U**



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# LIFE AFTER THE GAME

Former Ute and NFL player Lauvale Sape opens up about mental health.

By Ann Floor

Leaving the NFL was difficult for Lauvale Sape BS'02. After being drafted by the Buffalo Bills in 2002 and playing with other pro teams, including the Oakland Raiders and Tennessee Titans, the former Utah defensive tackle was released from the NFL in 2012 with multiple injuries.

He tried to stay busy and maintain the “high” he had experienced when he was playing, but he didn’t know how to go about everyday life without the game he loved. All he knew was football. Sape began spiraling into depression.

And there was more: He had been keeping a secret. From the time he was 6 until he was 13, Sape had been abused. He had never told anyone, but had found an escape in football. “I could go out on that field and focus all my energy on football,” he says. Sape explains that his family and his Polynesian culture had taught him to rely only on close family and friends to work through troubles, and to first deal with things himself. So his support network was small, and he kept much hidden away.

Then in 2013, new heartbreak struck. When he and his wife, Sarah, were expecting their first child—after trying unsuccessfully to conceive for 11 years—their son was stillborn. “The emotions I felt that day, when I saw my wife’s pain and held my lifeless son in my arms, haunt me,” says Sape. “It’s a deeply seated wailing that I don’t want to forget, because it changed who I am.” This pivotal moment is when he fell farther down the hole to depths where he felt there was no hope. “I hid my depression and pain so well. Those who knew me would probably say you were lying if you told them I was severely depressed.”

In early 2016, without telling anyone but wanting to help himself, Sape started looking for a therapist. At about that same



Photo by Malia Akinaka

time, Sarah contacted The Trust—an organization that helps eligible former NFL players successfully transition into life after football—to find out if their resources and services could help.

Resistant at first, Sape finally realized that Sarah’s idea was right, and he contacted The Trust himself. From there, he learned about a partner program called After the Impact, an intensive and transitional residential wellness program developed by The Eisenhower Center in Michigan to educate and care for individuals with health or behavioral issues. He began to learn about mental illness for the first time and received tremendous support. “I owe my life to them,” he says of The Trust’s staff, and to Sarah for urging him to get help. Through group counseling, Sape learned he was suffering from PTSD.

“It’s not that it’s ‘bad,’ it’s just that we have to understand... where we stand with

our illness. PTSD, depression, and other illnesses do not discriminate. You could be anyone,” he says. “Recognizing the signs and being honest about your thoughts and feelings with someone who cares for you is a great starting place to seeking help.” One member of Sape’s support network is his former coach at Utah, Ron McBride, who told him, “Don’t do this alone. Talk to us, and let us know what can help.”

Sape hopes his story will help others who have left a college or professional sport: those who “are hurting and hiding behind a closed door. I want them to know that if they trust the process, it will all work out. I’m happier now. I can be that ‘happy-go-lucky’ guy without having to feel like I’m not being myself. I am focused on being me, staying in my lane, and loving my family.” **U**

*Our thanks to The Trust for collaboration on this article.*



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## '30s

**Ruth Strampe**

BS'38, of Arcadia, California, celebrated her 100th birthday on February 15. Born in 1918, she entered the U at

16, majoring in education with a minor in Spanish. She was freshman editor of the *Utonian* yearbook, joined Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority, received freshman scholastic honors as a member of Alpha Lambda Delta, and was a member of the U's pistol club. Elected secretary of the junior class, and in her senior year, voted secretary of the Associated Students of the U, she was a member of Mortar Board and chosen Homecoming Queen of 1937. Of her active college experience, Strampe says the honor she holds most dear is her membership in the Alumni Association's Beehive Honor Society. Strampe went on to teach in the Arcadia Unified School District until she retired in 1974. Happy 100th birthday!

## '60s

**Michael Garibaldi**

BS'68 MS'69, a member of the U's athletics Crimson Club Hall of Fame, continued his athletic career last

April by finishing in the 70+ age group in swimming events at the Oregon State Masters swimming championship: 50 free (3rd), 100 free (4rd), 200 free (3rd), 500 free (2nd), 1650 free (2nd), and 200 free relay (1st). As a life member of the San Francisco Dolphin Club (47 years), Garibaldi swam in the club's 100th anniversary Golden Gate bridge swim in September, his 26th crossing, with 13 wins after a 24-year layoff, finishing 33rd. His record of 18 minutes 25 seconds from 1978 remains intact. Garibaldi is a retired Screen Actors Guild actor and model, and coaches swimming and water polo. He lives in Bend, Oregon.

**FOUNDERS DAY CELEBRATES REMARKABLE UTES**

The Founders Day awards for Distinguished and Honorary alumni are some of the highest honors from the University of Utah, alongside only honorary doctorates. On March 8 in Salt Lake City, the annual gala celebrated U graduates and friends by recognizing their outstanding professional achievements and/or public service, as well as their support of the university. The event also honored our inspiring 2018 Founders Day Scholar.

**DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI**

**Kate Conyers** BA'03 JD'08 MPA'08 excels in public service as a



felony attorney at the Salt Lake Legal Defender Association, where since 2011 she has represented hundreds of indigent defendants. She also provides extensive pro bono work, including spearheading the Veterans Administration Legal Clinic at the VA Hospital on the U campus. Conyers has been recognized for her service and contributions at both the local and national level, including with the prestigious American Inns of Court Sandra Day O'Connor Award for Professional Service.

**Skip Daynes** ex'66 left the U to take over his family's Daynes



Music Company in 1967, becoming its fourth-generation leader and taking it to new heights, allowing him to widely support performing arts companies, music festivals, arts competitions, classes in underserved areas, and more. His generosity to the U's School of Music includes numerous pianos, competition prizes, and graduate assistantships, and he was key to it receiving the prestigious All-Steinway School designation. He has also donated grand pianos to the U Hospital, Huntsman Cancer Institute, and Primary Children's Hospital.

**Marcia Madsen** HBA'72 (J.D., Washington College of Law, and



LLM, Georgetown University), a partner in the international law firm of Mayer Brown LLP, has been named to the list of Washington (D.C.)'s Top Lawyers by *Washingtonian Magazine* every year since 2009. A member of the U.S. Court of Federal Claims Advisory Council, she co-chairs the American Bar Association's procurement fraud committee and has led numerous other committees and special task forces. With a high-level security clearance, her areas of concentration include aerospace and defense contracts.

# Founders Day

A CELEBRATION OF INNOVATION



**Charles Sorenson** BA'73 (M.D., Cornell University) is president emeritus and former CEO of Intermountain Healthcare, where he helped create its integrated practice of some 1,500 doctors. He now directs Intermountain's Leadership Institute and continues a practice focused on urologic oncology. Sorenson has also served as an adjunct associate professor of surgery at the U's School of Medicine and as educational director of LDS Hospital's Urologic Residency (a joint program with the U). He has repeatedly been recognized by *Modern Healthcare* as among the top health care executives in the country.

## HONORARY ALUMNI



**Sam and Diane Stewart** are generous supporters of education, the arts, and international efforts to improve quality of life for the disadvantaged. Sam (B.S., Northwestern; MBA and Ph.D., Stanford) is founder, chairman, and portfolio manager of Wasatch Advisors, an internationally respected financial and investment firm. Previously a chief financial analyst with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, he has taught finance at the U and Columbia University. Diane (B.S., BYU) owns Modern West Fine Art Gallery and is a civic activist. She volunteers her time on boards including the Utah Museum of Fine Arts.

## STUDENT SCHOLAR



**Brenda Ramirez** is a first-generation undergrad and a certified phlebotomist who intends to major in nursing. And in 2017, her father was deported to Guatemala. In her father's absence, she has been helping provide financial assistance to her family and assists with care of her four-year-old sister while her mother keeps the family landscaping business afloat. She also has a part-time job, and still finds time to volunteer. Ramirez is determined to both help support her family and to finish her education. "I want to make everything my parents sacrificed for myself and my siblings be worth it," she says.

## '80s



### Kate Kendell

JD'88 received Salt Lake's Key to the City Award from Salt Lake City Mayor Jackie Biskupski last October, in

recognition of her longtime efforts to advance gay rights and her significant role in the national fight for LGBTQ equality. The award is presented to individuals who have used their voices, talents, or resources to improve the local community in a significant way. A native Utahn, Kendell has been with the National Center for Lesbian Rights based in Washington, D.C., since 1994 and currently serves as its executive director. As a nationally recognized spokesperson for LGBT rights, she has an active voice in major media, including *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Advocate*, NPR, and CNN.

## '00s



### Jessica R. Kramer

HBS'04, bioengineering assistant professor at the U, has been awarded The Dream Chemistry Award from the Czech

and Polish Academy of Sciences in Prague, Czech Republic. Established in 2013, the award, which includes a monetary prize of 10,000 EUR, recognizes visionary projects in the field of chemistry and related disciplines that have the ambition and potential to make the world a better place. Encouraged to submit bold ideas for solving scientific puzzles and problems, Kramer investigated the protective saccharide coat of cell membranes (glycocalyx) as a tool to design new cancer therapeutics. Found on the surface of most cells but not well understood, glycocalyx undergoes changes in its structure that correlate with tumor growth in tissues. The aim of the project is to design specific cancer therapeutics based on an artificially synthesized glycocalyx.



### Brian Steed

JD'02, a former prosecutor and professor who most recently served as chief of staff for U.S. Congressman

Chris Stewart, was tapped in October as second in command for the U.S. Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management. Steed also holds a doctorate from Indiana University and previously worked as an economics professor at Utah State University's Jon M. Huntsman School of Business. He also is a former deputy county attorney for Iron County. Steed will oversee programs and policy of the federal agency, which manages 245 million acres of land in the country—more than any other agency. Steed became the second Utahn tapped in 2017 for a leadership role in federal agencies with oversight of public land.



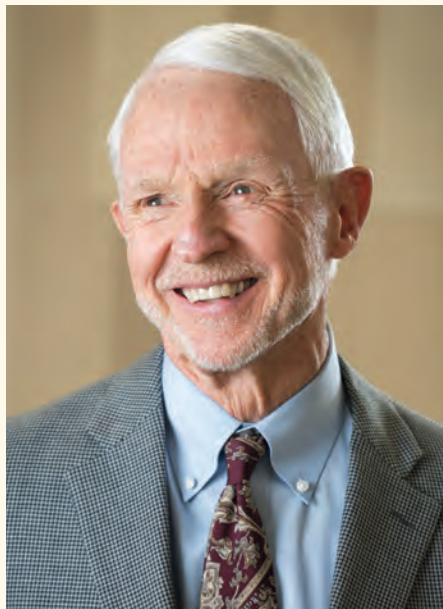
### '10s

#### Aden Batar

MPA'15, director of immigration and refugee resettlement for Catholic

Community Services of Utah, and a member of the U's Alumni Association board, has received the 2017 Gandhi Peace Award, which is presented annually by the Utah Gandhi Alliance for Peace to recognize someone in the community who exemplifies the well-known quote by Gandhi, "You must be the change you want to see in the world." After losing a son during the civil war in Somalia, he and his family fled and became the first refugees from Somalia to resettle in Utah. Batar took a job with Catholic Community Services in 1996 to help with resettlement and became director of the refugee program in 2001. For more than 20 years he has fought to bring refugees to Utah and to protect their rights and identities.

## ALUMNI EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO BEGIN A NEW CHAPTER



**A** Utah Man through and through, John Ashton has served as executive director of the U's Alumni Association for nearly 30 years. Now, he's decided to hang it up and move on to new adventures this spring. "At first it felt quite strange, because I've been doing this for so long," says Ashton BS'66 JD'69. "But as more time goes by, I realize it's time for fresh eyes and a fresh attitude."

He and Fred Esplin MA'74, vice president for institutional advancement, have known one another since

the late 1980s, when Esplin was manager of KUED-TV and Ashton was the Alumni Association's newly appointed leader. "Because of the many new programs and activities John implemented, thousands of alumni have become involved with the U through board service, volunteer leadership, and financial support," says Esplin.

Indeed, Ashton has accomplished a great deal in the world of alumni relations. Beginning in the early '90s, he helped establish *Continuum* magazine and has since served as executive editor. He also founded the alumni scholarship program, which today has a \$2.5 million endowment. Under his tenure, the annual food drive was started and now garners enough donations to feed more than 100 families of four for a year. And, it was his idea to begin a legislative advocacy committee, which has impacted successful legislation on behalf of higher ed for many years.

Before his role as executive director, Ashton served as president of the Alumni Association and as a member of the university's board of trustees. In addition, he was a member of the boards of Red Butte Garden, KUED, and the Hinckley Institute of Politics. He also served on the University of Utah Hospital board for 11 years and the Utah Hospital Association board for five years. Ashton credits Lee Ence, his predecessor, who served 23 years as executive director, and Ted Capener, former vice president of community relations at the U, as the two people who most influenced him for success leading the association. And during his tenure, he says, he has especially enjoyed interacting with the many alumni board members.

"John has a keen, dry sense of humor that puts people at ease, and he's very careful to consider all sides of an issue," says John Fackler BS'89 BS'94 MprA'95, director of business and outreach for the association. "We know he will stay active in the campus community and will remain a proud Utah fan and supporter." Ashton's wife, Linda, can attest to that. "The football and basketball games are 'must-attend' events." John adds that staying involved with the U and doing community service are things both he and Linda look forward to.

Ashton's ties to the U are long and deep, and most would agree with Esplin, who says, "In his retirement, John should take great pride in how he has successfully engaged countless alumni and students with the U." **U**



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# Legacy Lives On

It's been more than 15 years since the George S. Eccles Legacy Bridge was constructed for the 2002 Olympic Winter Games. Now a campus icon, the 300-foot bridge is a favorite photo op for students and visitors alike. The path not only has a very practical purpose of bypassing a busy road to connect lower and upper campus but also serves as a beloved reminder of when the games were in our own backyard.

Photo by Andrew Thompson Landerghini

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