



2018-2019 ANNUAL REPORT



Bennioncenter
U THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH*





Dean McGovern
Executive Director



Dear Friends,

Maya Angelou once persuasively stated, “I don’t believe an accident of birth makes people sisters or brothers. It makes them siblings, gives them mutuality of parentage. Sisterhood and brotherhood is a condition people have to work at.” Similarly, at the Bennion Center, we believe that inclusive, healthy, resilient, and just communities must be intentionally created by and for all. We have to work at it every day.

Our vision requires the many hands and hearts among University of Utah students, staff, and faculty. We must foster learning, scholarship, and advocacy that strengthens communities.

In the following pages you will meet the people and read about the work that inspired and mobilized effective community engagement on- and off-campus over the past year.

We trust that you will recognize in the stories and images our deep commitment to Bennion Center values—hope, integrity, collaboration, and action. As always, we are guided by hope for a better future. We move throughout each day with integrity. We are witness to the power of collaboration. And, we know that without action there can be no results.

So, like Maya Angelou, we go forward with intention and we are so glad that you are on the journey with us.

Yours in Service,
Dean

Advisory Board 2018-2019

*The Bennion Center gratefully acknowledges
the support and direction provided by our Advisory Board.*

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Anthony Morgan
Sarah Morton Taggart
Alex Stayner
Heidi VanOtten



**STUDENT BOARD
BY THE NUMBERS:**

Participants:

7

Hours:

260

Bennion Center Leadership: **Student Board**

The Bennion Center’s Student Board is composed of a student representative from each of our student program areas: Alternative Breaks, Bennion Scholars, Communication Team, Community Outreach, Service House, Student Directed Programs, and Utah Reads.

During the 2018-19 academic year, the board hosted a screening of the movie ‘Believer’ and a panel discussion as part of the University of Utah’s Pride Week events. Working in partnership with the Residence Hall Association, they organized a Taste of Waste dinner and service event to help students gain a new understanding of issues surrounding hunger and food insecurity. The Board also restructured the annual student recognition awards process and Service Celebration.

“The Bennion Center has been one of the most incredible, supportive, and impactful communities I’ve been a part of during my time at the University of Utah. The challenges and triumphs I have experienced as a BC student leader have improved me for the better. I have become passionate about ways we can include others in community engagement.” - Carly Shields, Student



**STUDENT-DIRECTED
PROGRAMS BY
THE NUMBERS**

Participants: **1,095**
 Hours: **33,068**
 Community Partners: **48**

***Student-Directed Programs:
Student Leaders***

ARTS & RECREATION

- Arts for Youth
- Elevate Theatre Company
- Running Forward
- Special Olympics Utah U.L.E.
- Special Olympics Utah Team
- Utah Symphony | Utah Opera

EDUCATION & ADVOCACY

- ACT Preparation @ Marmalade
- American Red Cross
- Best Friends Animal Society
- Bud Bailey Youth Tutoring
- Children's Center Mentoring
- First Robotics
- Literacy Action Center
- Ronald McDonald House
- Utah Development Academy

HEALTH & ABILITY

- Friends for Sight
- Hospice and U
- Hospice OneCare
- Primary Children's Hospital
- Rides for Wellness
- Utah Brain Injury Alliance
- Utah AIDS Foundation
- Utah Naloxone
- VA Nursing Home

INTERCULTURAL ENGAGEMENT

- Catholic Community Services
- ESL Guadalupe
- Health Access Project
- Hser Ner Moo
- International Rescue Committee
- Maliheh Free Clinic

SOCIAL JUSTICE

- Best Buddies
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of UT
- Girl Scouts Outreach
- Palmer Court Kids' Book Club
- Road Home Kids' Book Club
- Road Home Playroom
- Take Care Utah
- Youth Resource Center
- YWCA

SUSTAINABILITY & FOOD JUSTICE

- Edible Campus Gardens
- Environmental Action Team
- Feed U Pantry
- Food Recovery Network
- Green Urban Lunchbox
- Meals on Wheels
- Real Food Challenge
- Social Justice Gardens Mountain View



Student-Directed Program: **Utah Naloxone**

Katie Barber started the Utah Naloxone program after an Honors course introduced her to a community group working to fight addiction. She approached the Bennion Center with the suggestion of starting a Student-Directed Program. She took the lead in developing a working relationship with the community partner, recruiting volunteers, and teaching people how to assemble the kits. Her initial efforts were frustrating, when she launched the program fall semester no one showed up to the first meeting! Katie is committed to educating others and saving lives—she didn't give up! As word about the program spread, the numbers of volunteers grew.

Katie says, "In the course of two hours, we put together around 1200 kits. From computer science students to University employees, all of the volunteers expressed such an amazing interest in wanting to help play a positive part in the opioid epidemic narrative. I have hope for a healthier future."



Community Outreach: Utah Reads

Mary W. Jackson, Riley, and Bennion. Liberty, Mountain View and Rose Park. Park View, Glendale and Neighborhood House. Each name represents more than a learning site. Each is a constellation of students, families, educators, and community members impacted by the Bennion Center's Utah Reads program.

"I used to actually come to this elementary a while ago so it's kind of full circle," Ivana Martinez explains as she looks around the school library at Mountain View Elementary School. "I remember being mentored. I think the one-one-one attention and helping children develop the skills that they need to succeed is a really important aspect of Utah Reads."

Cassie Palmer agrees. "I've always been really passionate about reading. I'm also very passionate about kids so when I saw this was a job opportunity, I thought this was the most perfect job ever for me so I can pass on my passion of reading to the kids."

UTAH READS BY THE NUMBERS

Sites:	9
Tutors:	81
Students:	240
Hours:	16,357





Saturday Service Projects: Legacy of Lowell, MLK & More

Some things just go together. Rock ‘n roll. Cookies and milk. Saturdays and service. The Bennion Center has been pairing Saturdays and service since its inception. In 2018-19, staff partners Bryce Williams and Eric Nhem took the helm, guiding students through five Saturday of Service events that included 1,390 students in 4,186 hours of volunteerism.

As student program managers, Bryce and Eric say they advise and guide students on which partners and projects are best suited for this type of event. Bryce says, “We also help the student leaders assess what volunteers can realistically do during a Saturday Service Project.” Eric says, “The community partners are very grateful for the support and these single-day events make a huge difference for capacity-building.”

“My Bennion Center experience has informed me of social issues and made me aware of different ways to be engaged to give back to the community.” - Student

SATURDAY SERVICE PROJECTS BY THE NUMBERS

Participants: **1,390**
Hours: **4,186**





Service Corner: Days for Girls, Bags to Beds, & Hats for Newborns

Drop-in service at the Bennion Center grew in 2018-2019. Student leaders Alex Week, Brenda Sanchez, Brooke Osborne, Jessie Rabe, and Omar Huq not only maximized the program's physical space but also developed a new project collaboration with Days for Girls, which provides feminine hygiene products to those who may not have access to them. Accommodating even the busiest of schedules, the Service Corner provided meaningful activities to volunteers.

"My involvement with the Bennion Center has given me a community within campus that inspires me to actively work to make positive changes to myself and my neighbors within the Bennion Center, campus, Salt Lake, and the global community." - Dani Boser, Student

SERVICE CORNER BY THE NUMBERS

Participants:	732
Hours:	2,691
Days for Girls Kits:	570
Hats:	761
Beds:	63





Project Youth: Experiencing Higher Education

The buses rolled up one after another. Again and again and again. Hundreds of Salt Lake City School District fifth- and sixth-graders spilled gleefully onto campus. For many, it was their first-ever visit to a university. And then the Granite School District students started arriving. Project Youth volunteers were ready and waiting to welcome them all to a day on campus designed just for them.

In its 28th year, Project Youth was bigger than ever. Generous donors made it possible for the Bennion Center to include four elementary schools from the Granite School District for the first time. These new schools, plus our long-time partners in the Salt Lake School District, allowed us to host 1,000 students for this incredible day of inspiration, engagement, and excitement.

"I first volunteered for the Bennion Center when I was in middle school. Ever since, I have looked for opportunities to engage in my local community and the campus community." - Student

PROJECT YOUTH BY THE NUMBERS

Participants:	225
Hours:	2,398
Schools:	15
Children:	1,000



SEATTLE



ALTERNATIVE BREAKS BY THE NUMBERS

Participants:	229
Hours:	15,572
Community Partners:	89
Trip Experiences:	19

Alternative Breaks: Connecting Communities

The Bennion Center's Alternative Breaks program has a streamlined purpose and new social media & advocacy platform (@uofualtbreaks). With some of the strongest student leaders in the nation, the Bennion Center's Alternative Breaks program again gave U students exceptional educational experiences across the Western United States and Canada over Fall and Spring breaks.

A participant who travelled to San Diego to engage in immigration issues this past Spring reflected, "I was unsure of what to expect, but this trip served as a pivotal moment for both my undergraduate experience and in my life."

Another student who tackled hunger and food justice in Seattle remarked, "This was an amazing life experience. I got to be a part of the change and not just learn about it. I was able to bring my experiences and knowledge back to Utah to help ensure more people receive nutritious meals."

SAN DIEGO





BENNION SCHOLARS BY THE NUMBERS

Scholars Enrolled: 55
Scholars Graduating: 6
Hours: 7,797



Bennion Scholars: Engaging for Change

You know that feeling you get in the pit of your stomach when you hear bad news—people experiencing homelessness, poor air quality, not enough access to good food, environmental degradation? Many of us think, “How could we have let this happen?” Problems like these seem too big to fix, especially to a college student. But students find they are not too big for our Bennion Scholars.

Our Bennion Scholars complete a rigorous program that aligns with the major, conduct a community engaged capstone project, and develop tremendous civic awareness, skills, habits, and values along the way.

“I knew there was more I could be doing for our community while I was earning my degree. Through the Bennion Scholars program, I have been able to design and implement a project to help nonprofit newspapers.” - Megan Peterson, Student



SERVICE HOUSE BY THE NUMBERS

Participants:	12
Hours:	2,284
Dialogues:	3



Service House: **A Living Learning Community**

This year, in the charming Bennion Service House nestled in historic Fort Douglas, 12 residents discussed, debated, and opined on the topic of their next Bennion Service House Dialogue. These committed students represent a variety of ages and majors, and each is passionate community engagement.

Service House residents opened their doors to the campus and community for three dialogues featuring guest experts who co-led discussion and reflection.

Samira Gholami has been a Service House resident for three years. She served as resident advisor at the House in 2018-2019. "Community is a big thing here," she says. "Being able to rely on other people and learning other people are there for you. You really do build a family in this house which I think is unique and important. We do things together. There's always someone to talk to. We are family."



ZAHRA SAIFEE

FIRST-YEAR SERVICE CORPS BY THE NUMBERS

Participants: 35
Hours: 542

First-Year Service Corps: New or Transfer Students

"It was comfortable enough to get uncomfortable." That's how Zahra Saiffee describes the First-Year Service Corps (FYSC). When Zahra arrived at the University of Utah after high school graduation she was a little nervous. "Campus was so big," she recalls. "The Bennion Center made it smaller."

The First-Year Service Corps gave her a chance get out of her comfort zone without feeling overwhelmed. Working alongside her fellow students at community projects she realized, "This feels good. I have a support system and people that are fun to talk to. Yes, I made the right decision coming to the U."

Zahra gained the experience and confidence to apply for a student leadership position in 2019. She was selected to lead the FYSC next year. "The FYSC is the perfect way for first year or transfer students to get involved with the Bennion Center, see the opportunities it has to offer, and make friends with people who are passionate about the community."





Community Engaged Learning: CEL Designated Courses at the U

This year, the Bennion Center moved towards its priority of ensuring every student at the University of Utah has a deeply engaged community learning experience during their educational journey. To get there, we know we need more community engaged learning (CEL) offerings across disciplines and a robust community of CEL faculty. Amy Sibul joined the Bennion Center part-time in 2018 as the assistant director of community engaged learning. Some highlights include:

COMMUNITY ENGAGED LEARNING (CEL) BY THE NUMBERS

CEL Courses:	215
Instructors:	168
Departments:	98
Students:	3,905

- Offered 18 faculty education events to promote CEL and expand CEL course offerings.
- Updated and implemented the five-year review process for CEL-designated courses.
- Updated the CEL course designation process to prioritize reciprocity and mutual collaboration.
- Approved new CEL designation for 19 courses in 14 departments.
- Awarded funding for 29 CEL teaching assistants.



“Community Engaged Learning in my classroom provides an outstanding experience for students to learn about and work with passionate and dedicated people in our communities that are taking on very challenging issues, and community organizations receive serious and smart recommendations and products from students that help create more effective and powerful organizations. It is more than creating a real-world experience in the classroom. CEL develops an invaluable connection between the university and our communities.” - Tony Mastracci, professor, Department of Political Science



AMY SIBUL



Community Engaged Learning Abroad: CELA Designated Courses Overseas

In 2018-19 the Bennion Center engaged students in five community engaged learning abroad courses. Students learned about and engaged in community experiences in Havana, Cuba; London, England; Sydney, Australia; and Monteverde, Costa Rica. These intercultural community engagement experiences engaged students in the cultural, social, political, parts of the communities they visit. As they worked alongside local community partners, students gained an understanding of the interdisciplinary nature of community problem-solving and capacity building.

“Someone can obtain all the knowledge in the world, but unless they do something with it, it is useless. I need to act on what I have learned so that it can help me, but also help those around me.” - Spencer Ward, Student

COMMUNITY ENGAGED LEARNING ABROAD BY THE NUMBERS

Participants:	83
Hours:	2,490
Trips:	5





Community Engagement in Action: Disaster Mitigation & Recovery in Puerto Rico

Dr. Ivis Garcia Zambrana, professor in the College of Architecture + Planning uses community engaged learning in her courses. This year, Dr. Zambrana provided students with a first-hand look at how complex and multi-dimensional disaster recovery can be. Students in her Environmental Studies and Engineering class spent the 2019 Spring Break learning about disaster recovery in the wake of Hurricane Maria's 2017 devastation.

Dr. Zambrana says, "Over the course of a week the students met with many stakeholders and engaged in several recovery projects. Through stories, first-hand observation and discussions, our students learned about the human capacity to rise above challenges, take collective action, and build community resilience in the face of disasters."





ISSUE EDUCATION BY THE NUMBERS

Participants: 337
Events: 11



Issue Education: Forums, Dialogues, Discussions & Workshops

The Bennion Center’s issue education forums and dialogues provide a space for students to discuss and learn more about topics of concern to them. Whether they were headline-grabbing subjects such as political redistricting or First Amendment rights or topics like Utah’s approach to sex education, students helped organize seven different events to better educate community members and campus partners.

The Bennion Center partnered with the Hinckley Institute of Politics to host three forums. The Bennion Scholars also hosted an Issues and Action discussion at the Bennion Center.

“My participation in Bennion Center workshops has changed my view on issues that I really only knew one side. I’ve recognized the importance of expanding one’s world view in order to be inclusive and appreciative of those different from me.”
- Student

MADELINE "MAX" FLOM



MISSY REINSTADTLER

Awards: Utah Athletes in Service

For two years, soccer forward Madeline "Max" Flom has been visiting veterans at the William Christoffersen Salt Lake Veterans Home. She listens. She leaves notes of encouragement. She's a favorite of patients and staff alike. "Being a volunteer at the VA nursing home is simply being a friend," she says.

Missy Reinstadtler, Utah gymnastics, volunteers with U-FIT, a program that provides youths with disabilities a chance to engage in physical activities in fun, non-competitive way. Volunteers support the youths as they engage in a variety of activities including swimming, softball, and dance.

Flom and Reinstadtler were honored as the 2018 Utah Athletes in Service on Nov. 10 at the Utah vs. Oregon football game. The award recognizes athletes who excel in their sport, in the classroom, and in the community.



2018–2019 Faculty Awards: **Public Service Professor & Distinguished Faculty**

Dr. J. Steven Ott, Professor of Public Administration – Distinguished Faculty Service Award

Since arriving at the University of Utah in 1992, Dr. Ott has worked tirelessly as what he calls “a pracademic,” bringing theory and practice together in ways that benefit students and the community. By generously giving his time, Dr. Ott forms strategic partnerships that improve the community and help his students advance their careers. This award is possible by the generous endowment created by Susan and David Jabusch.

Dr. Sara Hart, Director of Student and Community Engagement at the College of Nursing – Public Service Professor Award

Dr. Hart will work closely with the Bennion Center to create a community engaged learning hub in Health Sciences. This hub will serve as a centralized resource for community engaged learning activities such as CEL-designated courses, co-curricular inter-professional community service, and research projects. Five colleges in Health Sciences will participate in the hub, as well as community partners and stakeholders.

DR. J. STEVEN OTT



DR. SARA HART





BRYAN LUU



IVY CHRISTOFFERSON



AUSTIN WATERS

Alumni Bennion Summer Fellowship: 6–8 Week Community Engagement Opportunity

Bryan Luu, Ivy Christofferson, and Austin Waters were selected as the 2018 Alumni Bennion Summer Fellows. They worked in Chicago and San Francisco, studying community programs that improve lives in each city. Thanks to the generosity of the University of Utah Alumni Association, all three students spent six weeks in their respective cities working with their community partners.

Bryan worked with the Puerto Rican Agenda in Chicago. Ivy partnered with the National Alliance on Mental Illness in San Francisco (NAMISF). Austin also worked in San Francisco with the San Francisco Aids Foundation.

“I have been working with the Puerto Rican Agenda, a community collective that serves the Puerto Rican population in Chicago with various resources, such as access to healthcare, education, and housing. As I interact with members of the Humboldt Park community and some of the community leaders, I have noticed a strong sense of cultural community. The people are proud of their rich heritage established in the area for decades, and they are fighting for what is right in the sense of cultural preservation and combatting gentrification. Before diving into this experience, I had a surface level of knowledge about gentrification. I’ve learned it is not something that can be wiped away, but with the correct precautions and resources, it can be mitigated to prevent having local tenants immediately evicted from their homes. As I gain more depth in the concept of affordable housing, I have developed the belief that housing is a human right.”



Bennion Center Alumni Experience: **Eva Hunter Witesman**

When Eva Hunter walked onto the U campus as a first-year student, she knew she wanted to serve somehow. She wasn't quite sure how or where until she found the Bennion Center. "The Bennion Center made it really easy," she remembers. She started with community engaged learning (CEL) classes that tied coursework to service outside of class. She became a Service Learning Scholar (now called Bennion Center Scholar) and was among the first to graduate with that distinction.

Today, Eva is an associate professor of public management at the Romney Institute of Public Service and Ethics at BYU's Marriott School of Business. She has taught volunteer management, fundraising, and nonprofit management, "All of which have roots in the service I did with the Bennion Center," Eva adds. "I also run what's called the GoodMeasure program. It's basically community engaged learning. It's working to accomplish the same kind of real service we were trying to achieve with the service learning projects I did at the Bennion Center."

Eva explains, "We do all of our statistics and program evaluation projects with real data for real organizations." Nonprofit and government organizations apply to partner with her graduate students to measure the effectiveness of their programs. The data is leveraged to help programs see opportunities and shortcomings. "That's when I feel the most proud of the work we do here," Eva says. "It's great when students present to their community partners and are then told that they will use that information to grow."

Eva Hunter Witesman
Bennion Center Alumni

2018–2019 Participant Numbers & Hours

PROGRAM	# OF PARTICIPANTS	# OF HOURS
Alternative Breaks	229	15,572
Bennion Center Scholars	55	7,797
Communications/Marketing	17	216
Community Engaged Learning	3,905	78,100
Community Engaged Learning Abroad	83	2,490
Development, Advisory Board & Committees	83	1,328
Fellowships, Scholarships & Awards	31	733
First-Year Service Corps	35	542
Issue Education	337	531
Office Support Volunteers & Administration	107	2,265
Project Youth	225	2,398
Saturday Service Projects	1,390	4,186
Service Corner	732	2,691
Service House	12	2,284
Student Board	7	260
Student-Directed Programs	1,095	33,068
Utah Reads	81	16,357
TOTALS	8,424	170,818

MISSION

Inspire and mobilize people to strengthen communities through leadership, scholarship, & advocacy

VISION

Inclusive, healthy, resilient, and just communities

VALUES

Hope. Integrity. Collaboration. Action.