

College of Education NEWSLETTER



We are future ready

The College of Education is proud to offer two new programs: Teach for Utah for a strong pipeline of STEM educators and a new BS/BA in Educational Psychology to address the coming shortage of mental healthcare providers



Education Meets Professional Development in the Mountain Plains PTTC

Learn about the resources Dr. Jason Burrow-Sánchez is developing for educators, healthcare professionals and others in the helping fields



Shaping the national conversation on race

The work of Dr. William Smith is shaping academic and public conversation on the effects of racism



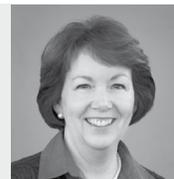
A Message from Dean Nancy Songer

Learn about Dean Nancy Songer's research [here](#), including her student science-citizen, [Life Right Here & Everywhere project](#).



How we are learning from the pandemic through research.

The College of Education is having a positive impact through our research and programs.



Donor Spotlight

CeCe Foxley supports CoE students with fellowships. Find out why paying it forward matters to her.

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Student Spotlight

Adebimpe Deji-Olatunde shares her incredible educational journey from being an educator in Nigeria to a laundress in UT to ELP grad.

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Education is for improving the lives of others and leaving your community and the world better than you found it.
—Marlan Wright Edleman

A Message from Dean Songer: We Are So Much More

Welcome, to our first CoE Newsletter of 2021. I hope that as you read these words, you and your loved ones are safe, happy, and reconnecting with friends near and far. There is no doubt that 2020 and the first half of 2021 were full of the unexpected, and it is likely the normal we make for ourselves and our communities will be different than the one we knew before as we respond to these historical events.

Learning from the Pandemic and Coming Out Stronger

And so it is with the College of Education (CoE). I am proud of how quickly our faculty, staff, and students adapted to challenge after challenge with compassion, flexibility, and creativity. We are emerging from these events stronger and more than we were before. Indeed, some of our faculty are using the pandemic as an opportunity, with one researcher evaluating what works and what doesn't in online learning and another studying resiliency practices in educators, and yet another starting a new undergraduate program to increase the pipeline of mental health providers. We are also well-positioned to address post-pandemic challenges like the anticipated shortage of STEM educators in public schools. With a generous \$2.5 million gift from the Emma Eccles Jones Foundation, our Urban Institute for Teacher Education (UITE) established the Teach for Utah program, which will recruit students interested in becoming STEM educators directly from local high schools and cover 50% of tuition costs, among other benefits.

Our Work Makes the World a Better Place

Other faculty are focused on issues of social justice with work that is actively shaping the national conversation on race, with still others tackling substance abuse, suicide prevention, and workforce development, and another expanding physical fitness programs for children and adolescents with disabilities and their families.

I want to thank you for all the ways you support the College of Education and the work we do. I hope you enjoy catching up with us through these pages and learning about how we are emerging more than we were before. I look forward to meeting you and other partners face to face in the coming months.

Until Next Time,

Nancy Patterson

Cultivating Health and Wellbeing in Utah's Kids with Disabilities

The benefits of physical activity are well-known. In children and adolescents, exercise helps in the development of cognitive abilities (e.g., concentration and thinking skills), strong bones and muscles, social skills, motor skills, and self-esteem. It also helps establish healthy patterns for later in life. Unfortunately, data show that children with disabilities are **4.5 times** less likely than their non-disabled peers to engage in physical activity! One driving force in this gap of physical activity in kids with disabilities is the lack of inclusion in physical education programs.

Thank goodness for researchers like Dr. Wesley Wilson, Assistant Professor in the Department of Special Education and Director of the U-FIT program. Recognizing that there is a major lack of opportunities for kids with disabilities to be physically active, as well as the fact that physical activity can foster a sense of inclusion, Wilson is expanding the U-FIT program that was started 20 years ago by Hester Henderson, PhD. The program follows an inclusion model outlined in Wilson and colleagues' **recent publication** and is designed to serve children aged 3 – 18 years of age and their families. Kids in the U-Fit program, including their non-disabled siblings, receive one-on-one instruction from trained University of Utah student volunteers. Families are able to set and achieve their physical activity goals with support and guided instruction, and there are a numerous activities to support a range of abilities and interests, everything from visual arts and games to gym games, dance, swimming, and water safety.

With funding from the Sorenson Legacy Foundation, the Daniels Fund, the Autism Council of Utah, and UServeUtah, U-FIT will help 80 children and adolescents with disabilities and train 100 volunteers through the recently expanded U-FIT offerings of USwim and UDance in the 2021-22 academic year.

While **much research** has described the positive impacts of programs like U-FIT from the perspectives of college-aged

volunteers (e.g., improved attitudes toward people with disabilities), far less research has included the perspectives of the participants themselves. For this reason, U-FIT aims to elevate the experiences and voices of kids with disabilities—through research and program evaluation—to create an inclusive environment where healthy physical activity habits, self-care, recreation, socialization, and participation are enhanced. And because siblings without disabilities get to participate, the whole family benefits.

U-FIT also addresses the financial, societal, and even logistical barriers that parents face when keeping children with disabilities fit by providing the tools (e.g., exercise equipment, balls, weights, etc.), spaces (e.g., exercise buildings and swimming pools), and resources (e.g., trained volunteers) families need. Planned by Wilson and other scholar researchers, the various activities in the program are designed to improve cardiovascular health, muscle strength, motor control, flexibility, and balance, all tailored to the abilities and interests of the participants. Setting healthy habits now is important for maintaining health later in life, especially in a population that tends to be more sedentary. Through U-Fit, kids gain self-esteem in an inclusive environment and learn the joys of being physical active.

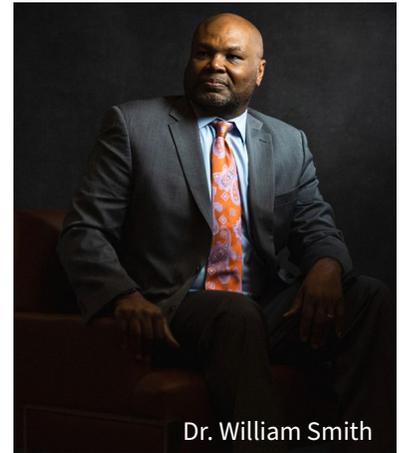
If you are interested in the U-FIT program, contact the Program Coordinator, Lauren Schriener, at ufit@utah.edu.



Kids in the U-FIT program having fun and getting fit!



Dr. Wesley Wilson



Dr. William Smith

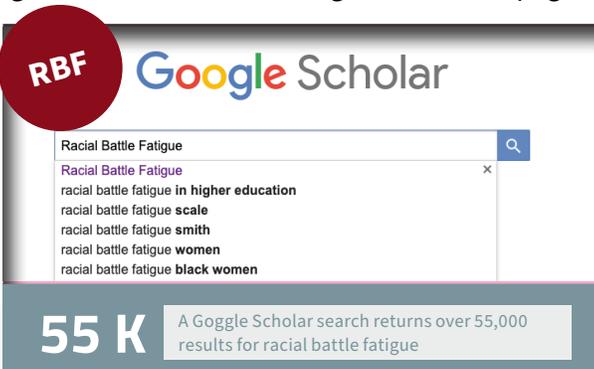
Shaping (Inter)National Conversations: Racial Battle Fatigue

Naming things, breaking through taboos and denial is the most dangerous, terrifying, and crucial work. — Eve Ensler

The act of naming is powerful, at once creative and developmental. To name something is to deepen the human experience through meaning, understanding, and communication. What was the significance then, in 2004 when Dr. William Smith, Professor and Department Chair of Education, Culture, and Society, coined the term racial battle fatigue (RBF)? We can now confidently say that it was significant enough to help shape an entire nation's conversation on race, specifically how people experience being from a racially underrepresented and marginalized group in America, especially African Americans.

In its most simple meaning, RBF refers to the physical, mental, and emotional toll that results from the continual navigation of and exposure to racism. Smith first presented RBF in a book chapter (Black Faculty Coping with Racial Battle Fatigue: The Campus Racial Climate in a Post-Civil Rights Era), looking at racism in higher education. However, over the last 27 years, RBF has grown in its application, with Smith applying RBF to contexts outside the (predominately white) halls of academia, and other research scholars, the media, and public using RBF to describe how racism taxes individuals physically, mentally, and emotionally. For example, a recent article on how the murders of Daunte Wright and George Floyd had affected some therapists' business explained that African Americans were [seeking out therapy in greater numbers due to RBF](#). Another work, a collaboration between The Hechinger Report and ESPN's Undeclared, used [RBF to explore the reasons Black educators are fleeing the classroom](#).

RBF has entered the national conversation on racism because it provides a powerful framework for understanding racism as an experience beyond a momentary flight or fight physical response to seeing anti-Black violence or the depression and frustration of a microaggression. Smith's theory of RBF understands that witnessing and/or experiencing racism will simultaneously include physical, mental, and emotional responses, always. Overtime, RBF leads to mental and emotional fatigue, professional burnout, and even adverse health outcomes. No wonder, then, that RBF has become such a widely used term. At the time of this writing, a Google Scholar search for "racial battle fatigue" returns 55,100 results, and Smith has received 4 awards, been featured in various media over 10 times, and given 15 presentations since August 2021. RBF even has its own Instagram account (not created by Smith or any College of Education faculty, staff, or students). Earlier this spring, Smith was notified that his article, ['You make me wanna holler and throw up both my hands!': Campus culture, Black misandric microaggressions, and racial battle fatigue](#) had the third-highest research outputs for 2020 in the International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education. His Attention Score, an indicator of how much research and media attention any individual article garners, was an astounding 222 (see next page).



RBF Google Scholar

Racial Battle Fatigue

- Racial Battle Fatigue
- racial battle fatigue in higher education
- racial battle fatigue scale
- racial battle fatigue smith
- racial battle fatigue women
- racial battle fatigue black women

55 K A Google Scholar search returns over 55,000 results for racial battle fatigue

Smith has fulfilled the promise of research: to discover, to describe, to inform, and to educate. RBF is empowering other scholar researchers, the media, and the public by providing a deeper understanding of how racism affects the health and well-being of African Americans and other people of color. Through RBF, we are able to more fully grasp the threats of racism to our individual and collective physical, mental, and emotional health. And this understanding is spreading; the conversation Smith began has already surpassed our borders, with his recent presentations in Canada, Australia, Europe, South America, and Africa. Learn more about RBF and Smith's other research at [link](#).



? About this Attention Score

In the top 5% of all research outputs scored by Altmetric

MORE...

Mentioned by

- 27 news outlets
- 4 tweeters
- 2 Facebook pages
- 2 Wikipedia pages

Citations

- 61 Dimensions

Readers on

- 140 Mendeley

The Altmetric Score, also known as the Attention Score, of Dr. William Smith's article, 'You make me wanna holler and throw up both my hands!': Campus culture, Black misandric microaggressions, and racial battle fatigue was an impressive 222! It was not only cited by other scholar researchers, it was also picked up by the media and shared across social media.

Dollars to Knowledge



54%

The Department of Educational Psychology's Funding Success Rate

Our Department of Educational Psychology has a 54% funding success rates, which is higher than the national average of 30 - 40%. Funding through various private, university, state, and federal organizations supported over 65 different research projects from 22 researchers over the last 2 years—that's a lot of new knowledge to share!



\$481,110

The amount awarded in the 2020-21 academic year for scholarships.

We are proud to have supported 67 students with donor-funded scholarships in 2020-21, including through the Student Emergency Hardship Fund. Many students faced significant challenges because of Covid-19 and without this support would have been unable to continue their education. Thank You!

Legacy Gifts Support the Future

When you designate the College of Education at the University of Utah as a beneficiary in your will, you'll be helping to educate our future teachers, administrators, school psychologists, clinical mental health counselors, and social justice advocates long into the future.

For your convenience, we've provided some suggested language for you to use in your trust or will. With legal counsel, please feel free to adapt it to fit your individual situation.

To make updates to a current legacy gift or for more information, including establishing a new legacy gift, email safia.keller@utah.edu.

I bequeath \$___ or ___% of the rest, remainder, and residue of my estate that I own located at ____ to The College of Education (list any particular department or program here) for its general purposes. The College of Education is a charitable organization located in Salt lake City, UT, and is exempt from federal taxation under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS. Our Tax ID number is: 87-6000525.

A New Program from the Urban Institute of Teacher Education: Teach for Utah

PROVIDING UTAH WITH HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATORS

Earlier this year, the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ) released new data that found the Urban Institute of Teacher Education (UITE) undergraduate teacher preparation program was among the top 2 in Utah and in the 28th percentile of all 1,276 programs across the nation. We received top rankings in admissions requirements, early reading, clinical practice, and classroom management.

In addition, our program has increased our diversity recruitments each year for the past 10 years.

We are very proud of the UITE team and grateful for Professor Burbank's leadership for making our teacher preparation programs one of the top ranked programs in the United States and in Utah!

All citizens can contribute to our nation's progress and vibrancy. To be prepared for the STEM careers of the future, all learners must have an equitable opportunity to acquire foundational STEM knowledge. The STEM Education of the Future brings together our advanced understanding of how people learn with modern technology to create more personalized learning experiences, to inspire learning, and to foster creativity from an early age.
—National Science Foundation Vision Statement for STEM Education of the Future

The Jobs of Tomorrow are STEM

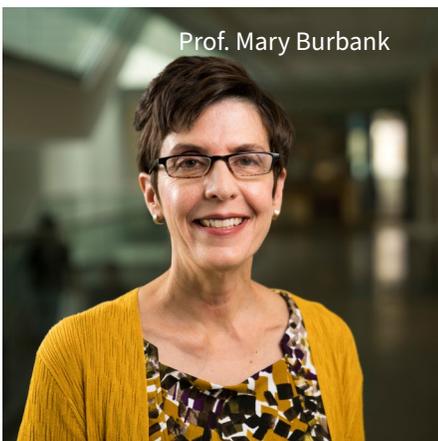
The fields of science, technology, engineering, and math, commonly known as STEM, will drive future jobs and economies, even eclipsing the innovations of the Silicon Valley boom in the mid-1990s. In fact, the National Science Foundation (NSF) predicts that the vast majority of jobs will soon require at least a foundational understanding of STEM.

But how does our state ensure its students have the STEM background they'll need to compete in a STEM-driven future? Especially in the face of teacher shortages, which are expected to increase due to the COVID-19 pandemic with U.S. Department of Education predictions that shortages in math teachers for grades 6-12, among other fields, will continue in the future? This is where the Urban Institute of Teacher Education (UITE) steps in. The brainchild of a team of teacher educators and leaders, Teach for Utah is a new program developed with financial support from the Emma Eccles Jones Foundation to establish a pipeline of highly skilled STEM educators in the State of Utah.



About the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ)

NCTQ is a non-partisan, non-profit organization that has been evaluating teacher preparation programs for over 20 years. NCTQ is committed to modernizing the teaching profession through research, teacher prep program evaluation, and addressing teacher quality issues.



Prof. Mary Burbank

Creating the Future of Education Today

“We can't wait until STEM shortages become a crisis; rather, we have to prepare for our future in the here and now, and that's exactly what Teach for Utah does,” says Professor Burbank. To prepare for that future, the Teach for Utah program will recruit junior high and high school students interested in STEM educator careers, identifying and engaging students early. As many as 25 students each year will enter the accelerated program, which offers students the chance to get a bachelor's and master's degree simultaneously. “The idea is to begin connecting high

school students who are getting ready for college with the field of teaching, and specifically, teaching in STEM,” says Burbank. “Early recruitment and a STEM focus aren’t the only things that make Teach for Utah unique. We are also addressing the main obstacles students face in becoming STEM educators. For example, with support from the Emma Eccles Jones Foundation, the program offers 50% paid tuition, is open to students across the state, and offers a high-quality education at a Tier 1 Research Institute.” Indeed, the program is designed to address the three main challenges identified by the NSF in recruiting and retaining STEM educators: 1) the cost of attending college; 2) unequal access to education; and 3) education quality. First, generous support from the Emma Eccles Jones Foundation ameliorates tuition; second, the program will recruit statewide including from rural counties, and, finally, collaboration with the College of Science will see training in math, chemistry, biology, earth science, and physics in addition to students earning a master’s degree in educational psychology for a robust STEM education.

And the program doesn’t stop with tuition support and an exceptional curriculum. “To ensure we retain educators, we will have the Teach for Utah cohorts in a mentoring program for 2 years once they begin teaching,” says Burbank. “This support network will pair early STEM educators with experienced educators who help them navigate the world of teaching inside and outside the classroom. Plus, data show that when you recruit from rural counties you increase the likelihood of those students staying and teaching in those areas. Recruit and retain for a strong STEM future in all of Utah’s schools; that’s our approach,” says Burbank.

Teach for Utah represents an interdisciplinary means of problem-solving, bringing together the College of Education’s UITE and Educational Psychology departments in the College of Sciences, and a private foundation, the Emma Eccles Jones Foundation. Through collaboration, philanthropy, and an eye on the future of Utah’s education, Teach for Utah will ensure Utah’s kids have the STEM foundation they need to thrive and compete through the coming years.

Learn more about the
Teach for Utah program at
teachforutah.utah.edu

A LEGACY OF GIVING

THE EMMA ECCLES JONES FOUNDATION

The Teach for Utah funding provided by the Emma Eccles Jones Foundation continues the family’s legacy of philanthropy and commitment to education. Emma, the foundation’s namesake, was the first kindergarten teacher in northern Utah, starting her career at the Whittier School in Logan. Emma would use her first paycheck to buy desks for the children and would go on to dedicate much of her life to improving education in the State of Utah.

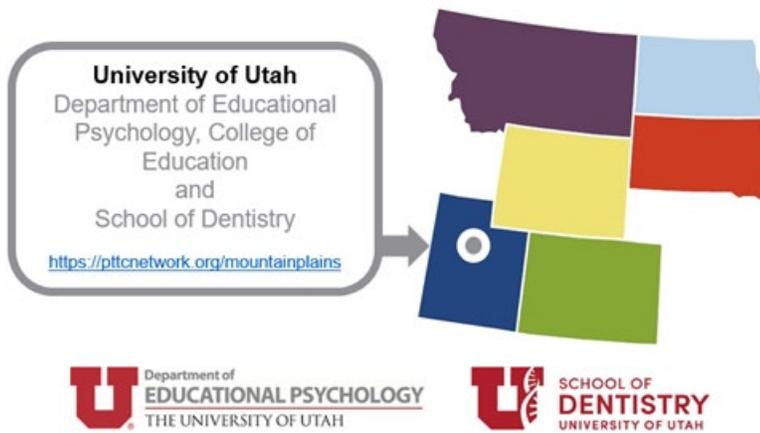


(Above) Emma in the 1920s with a group of her young students.



The Emma Eccles
Jones Foundation
supports education,
human services, arts,
and culture.

Mountain Plains PTTC



ACCESS RESOURCES & LEARN MORE

The Mountain Plains Prevention and Technology Transfer Center (PTTC) offers a wider range of resources to those working in the helping professions (e.g., education, healthcare, social work, etc.). Resources include virtual learning, evidence-based resources for equity, diversity, and inclusion, suicide prevention, alcohol and other drug prevention. These resources can be accessed [here](#).

Mountain Plains Prevention Technology Transfer Center: Improving Workforce Development

The College of Education prepares future teachers, but we do lots of other important work, too. A great example is the [Mountain Plains Prevention Technology Transfer Center](#) (MP-PTTC), which provides workforce development to pre-professionals and professionals. The MP-PTTC is a partnership between our Department of Educational Psychology and the School of Dentistry at the University of Utah. Serving the whole of Health and Human Services Region 8—which covers CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, and WY—the Mountain Plains PTTC is part of a more extensive national network funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA). The Center’s mission is to “strengthen the workforce pipeline for pre-professionals and professionals in the substance misuse and prevention and health care fields by delivering evidence-based trainings and technical assistance.”

Dr. Jason Burrow-Sánchez, Department Chair of Educational Psychology and the MP-PTTC Director, says, “The Center is an important part of delivering evidence-based training and technical assistance to pre-professionals and professionals in the prevention workforce. Education and psychology are natural parts of the college’s work, so it makes sense to have the MP-PTTC housed in the College of Ed.” Training and technical assistance are provided on such topics as preventing adolescent substance use, self-care for professionals, understanding telehealth technology for substance use prevention, suicide prevention across the educational continuum, school-based preventative interventions, adolescent brain development and alcohol use prevention, cannabis prevention and policy, and vaping (e-cigarettes) prevention among adolescents.

“Prevention is a key component in youth and adolescent behavioral health, and the resources the Center provides are a critical form of education and training available for professionals working in their fields, as well as students who are still in their educational training programs,” says Burrow-Sánchez. In the past 2 ½ years, the Center has been busy; they’ve provided more than 170 trainings, events, and presentations to over 9,000 individuals. The Center employs a fantastic staff who are knowledgeable and dedicated to working with each of the six states

in Region 8 to identify and deliver key trainings and technical assistance, many of which are offered for free. You can learn more about the Center and access



The Department of Educational Psychology offers 12 different degrees and 2 certificates. Learn more [here](#).

the resources they offer [here](#). Please encourage your colleagues and contacts in the prevention, education, and healthcare fields to take advantage of the MP-PTTC trainings, events, and resources.

The national Prevention Technology Transfer Center network is comprised of 10 domestic regional centers, including the Mountain Plains PTTC, 2 National Focus Area Centers, and a Network Coordinating Office. This national network serves all 50 U.S. states, Washington D.C., Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Pacific Islands of Guam, American Samoa, Palau, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, and the Mariana Islands.



Dr. Jason Burrow-Sánchez

Special Appointments



Dr. Laurence Parker

Dep. Chair and Professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy

Dr. Laurence Parker Awarded AERA Fellowship

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Dr. Laurence Parker, Department Chair and Professor in the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy, as an American Educational Research Association Fellow. This prestigious fellowship recognizes Parker's "distinguished and sustained research achievements." Nominated by his peers, Parker then had to be selected by the AERA Fellows Committee and approved by the AERA council, which is AERA's governing body. This well-deserved recognition is a result of his "exceptional contributions to, and excellence in, education research." Please join us in congratulating Dr. Laurence Parker on his AERA Fellowship and his scholarly research, which has contributed much to the field of education.

Dr. Veronica Valdez Appointed Chair-Elect of AERA SIG

Early this spring, Dr. Veronica Valdez, Associate Professor in the Department of Education, Culture, and Society, was elected chair of the American Educational Research Association's (AERA) Special Interest Group (SIG) Executive Committee by her peers. Valdez will serve from 2021-2022, and while chair, will also serve as a member of the AERA Council. Her election to SIG Executive Committee represents a continuation of Valdez's work with AERA, which began in 2003 with a fellowship. Valdez brings to the position a wealth of interdisciplinary research in educational language from the policy and planning phase to its impact on students and teacher prep. Please join us in congratulating her on this significant accomplishment and her contributions to education.



Dr. Veronica Valdez

Associate Professor in the Department of Education, Culture, and Society

Post-Pandemic and Creating a New Normal: What Can We Learn from Covid-19 Driven Changes

Turning the Pandemic into an Opportunity to Learn

Spring 2019 and a Global Pandemic

March 2019 saw an abrupt and immediate change to the way the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy (ELP) did. . . well, just about everything! Responding to the unfolding COVID-19 pandemic, the ELP faculty and staff had to find new ways to teach classes, conduct research, grade class assignments, mentor students, and more. Like the rest of Utah and the country, ELP was grappling with a new reality governed by physical distancing and connecting socially in virtual spaces.

But for a department committed to training the next generation of ethical PK-12 to higher education researchers, leaders, and policy makers and improving educational systems and processes, such adaptations also represented a critical research opportunity. Herein we share with you just two examples of how ELP faculty capitalized on the changes ushered in by the pandemic to study how Utah can improve two critical issues in education today, teacher well-being and online learning.

Both Dr. Laura Rogers' (\$15,000) and Dr. Woo's (\$24,111) studies were made possible by ULEAD Grants from the Utah State Board of Education. Utah Leading through Effective Actionable and Dynamic (ULEAD) Education is a program that funds research and "development of accessible electronic resources designed to improve practices in the public schools" of Utah. The program emphasizes innovation, efficacy, and efficiencies in the development of electronic resources that improve educational practices and process. Improvements can then be widely distributed.



Dr. Laura Rogers

Utah Principal and Teacher Well-being during the Covid-19 Pandemic

Prior to the pandemic, one [study](#) reported that 85% of educators felt that they had a work-life imbalance. [Another](#) found that 30% of educators leave the profession within the first 5 years of teaching. Of course, the pandemic forced educators to manage unprecedented challenges like teaching class through technology, a student body attending class virtually in distant and in differing environments, and, in addition, many educators were juggling all of these challenges while managing their own kids at home all day. "In a state like Utah that has a young population, the need to attract

and retain effective teachers will only become more urgent over the next decade. One way we can keep effective teachers in classrooms is to create conditions that protect and promote their well-being, but first, we need to learn more about what those conditions are,” says the study’s lead researcher, Dr. Laura Rogers. “Our Utah Principal and Teacher Well-being study will investigate the well-being of education professionals across Utah in order to identify 1) patterns in well-being across schools and educator contexts and find 2) exemplar schools that may offer lessons for how well-being can be nurtured and sustained.” Ultimately, the study will provide evidence-based data for state officials and practitioners to use in implementing policies and initiatives that improve educator well-being. Using data from Rogers’ study, we will be able to identify how to improve and sustain teacher well-being, even in the face of massive challenges like the pandemic. And addressing teacher well-being is the first step in retaining teachers in the field of education.

Bright Spots in Utah’s Expanded Distance Learning

Many see online learning playing an ever-greater role in the future of education, and there is little doubt that learning in virtual spaces accelerated in response to pandemic health guidelines. A [study](#) by the RAND corporation found that 20% of school districts had started an online school already, and others were planning to do so post-COVID. Still, this is new territory, and



Dr. David Woo

Welcoming Our Students Back to Campus

It’s been a long time since students were on campus, interacting with faculty, staff, and fellow students face to face, so we held a Welcome Back Ice Cream Social! Each social had nearly 50 students in attendance, where they had a chance to catch up with or meet faculty, staff, and their peers. Students also got important program information and were entered to win a UofU swag basket. Basket winners Haylee Heller (EdPsych) and Cassandra Bateman (UITE).



and a sound evidence base for what works and what doesn’t is needed, especially as some [early research](#) had a full 53% of educators (n=941) reporting a significant loss of student learning and 44% reporting some loss of student learning when using virtual learning modules. Utah, however, is in good hands. Lead researcher Dr. David Woo is gathering data about online learning practices and outcomes to ensure Utah can learn from how local policy makers responded to the pandemic. “We need to start by understanding what works in online learning, which takes research on the instructional practices at established providers of virtual learning models. In this project, we are working with the Utah Virtual Academy (UTVA) to study student responses to educational experiences specifically designed for online delivery. UTVA is an online-only academy, which is the ideal setting for identifying and understanding ‘bright spots’ specific to online teaching and learning. By isolating these bright spots, we can distill best practices and principles so that they are transferrable to public schools around the state,” says Woo. With a sound evidence base, Utah will have the best chance of maximizing the potential of online learning. A move Woo sees as progress in better serving Utah’s students, parents, and teachers.



Donor Spotlight on Cece Foxley: Why I Fund Scholarships

Dr. Cecelia Foxley, current CoE donor & former Commissioner of the UT System of Higher Education & Chief Executive Officer to the UT Board of Regents.

Knowing how important education has been to me, I want to help many other students complete their education by funding scholarships for them.

My education has enabled me to have a career I never dreamed I would have. I served for 18 years in the Utah System of Higher Education, 8 years as Associate Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner and then 10 years as Commissioner. Thus far, I have been the only woman to serve as Utah Commissioner of Higher Education. I also served in faculty and administrative positions at the University of Minnesota, the University of Iowa and Utah State University. At the University of Iowa, I was appointed as the first Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Officer at a major university in the country. In that role, I made certain all faculty, staff and students were treated fairly regardless of their race, gender, sexual identity, religion, socioeconomic background, age, etc. Equality and affirmative action have been major goals throughout my career.

I have received many honorary degrees and awards due to my work in higher education. One of the most visible recognitions is to be included in the five-story “Utah Women 2020” [mural](#) installed in Salt Lake City to celebrate the diverse contributions of women spanning the history and geography of the Beehive State.

I have been a consultant for several higher education organizations and have authored or co-authored six books and numerous journal articles on topics such as educational management, non-sexist counseling, human relations education and equal opportunity.

I enjoy keeping in touch with my scholarship recipients. It is exciting to see how the scholarships have helped them attain their educational goals.....and then their professional goals. I would not have had the career I have enjoyed if I didn't receive my PhD in Educational Psychology/Counseling Psychology at the University of Utah.



An article about Cece's work on affirmative action at the University of Iowa was written when she was appointed the assistant to the provost for affirmative action, which was a new position focused on issues of discrimination. You can access that article [here](#).



The mural in downtown Salt Lake City (37 W 100 S) featuring Cece and 268 UT women from the past and present.

A New Degree Program

BS/BA in Educational Psychology

2025

The year by which the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration estimates there will be widespread shortages in the number of qualified mental health providers.



We are pleased to share the announcement of a new undergraduate degree in educational psychology. As of Fall 2021, we are accepting students into this new BS/BA in Educational Psychology Program, the only such program in the State of Utah and Pac-12.

The BS/BA in Educational Psychology will prepare students to work in a variety of fields, including education and healthcare by providing an understanding of the social, emotional, and cognitive aspects of human development and learning. Graduates of the program will have the skills required to work in individual and group counseling, behavior change, consultation, collaboration and multicultural settings.



What is Educational Psychology?

Educational Psychology is a branch of psychology that seeks to understand human growth, behavior, and learning from multiple perspectives.

In working with people, it is important to understand differences in physical, cognitive, social, emotional, and cultural development.

Educational psychological principles of motivation, learning, and behavior are integral skills for careers in which people teach, train, assess/evaluate, counsel, manage, consult, and collaborate with a variety of clients (children, adolescents, parents, teachers, employees) in multiple contexts (homes, schools, community agencies, hospitals, business).

What's the Difference between a BS and a BA?

A **Bachelor of Science (BS)** degree demonstrates proficiency in math. The B.S. degree requires two Quantitative Intensive (QI) courses.

A **Bachelor of Arts (BA)** degree demonstrates proficiency in a second language. The B.A. degree requires fourth semester proficiency in a second language. You can take a [language proficiency test](#) to prove language proficiency or be placed in the appropriate level class.

The program also offers the following certifications:

- **RBT:** While in the program, students have an opportunity to be credentialed as a Registered Behavior Technician (RBT). The RBT is a paraprofessional certification in *behavior analysis.
- **BCaBA:** Upon graduation, students have an opportunity to be credentialed as a Board Certified assistant Behavior Analyst (BCaBA). The BCaBA is an undergraduate-level certification in behavior analysis.
- **BCBA:** Through additional coursework in a graduate program, students have an opportunity to be credentialed as a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). The BCBA is a graduate-level certification in behavior analysis.

*Behavior Analysis is concerned with describing, understanding, predicting, and changing behaviors. It's been used to help people in areas of diet, exercise, drug addiction, juvenile delinquency, classroom learning, social skills, skill acquisition, behavior reduction, and organizational change.

Learn more about the BS/BA in Educational Psychology, including the numerous career pathways available with this degree by

visiting: <https://ed-psych.utah.edu/edpsych-undergrad/>

Student Spotlight:

Adebimpe Deji-Olatunde

Adebimpe uses the nickname Beam. She graduated with a Doctor of Education (EdD) from the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy on May 8, 2021. Following is an interview with Beam and Tracy M. Rees, CoE Marketing and Communications.

Rees: Hi, Beam. Thanks for meeting with me today and congratulations! What's next for you?

Beam: Thank you; thanks for taking time to interview me. I am trying to look for what I can do to impact life positively and be happy. I love diversity, I love inclusion, and I love action. I was an administrator in high school in Nigeria. I have worked as an educator for 27 years. I have also been thinking about becoming an administrator here.

Rees: You came with a background from high school administration. What made you enroll in the Educational Leadership and Policy program?

Beam: I have always wanted my doctoral degree. I have always wanted to be at the top of my career in education. In 2016, I was volunteering at University Neighborhood Partners (UNP), and the director, Sarah Muro, saw my skills and said, "Beam, why don't you go back to college?" and I said, "Why not!" Sarah took me on a ride to the college. I met with Dr. Larry Parker [CoE faculty], and he told me everything that I should do to apply to the program [Educational Leadership and Policy]. It was rough; the Admissions Office had lots of questions and requirements, and they kept interrogating my ability to be proficient in English. But English is the official language in Nigeria! There were over 250 languages spoken there, and we use three main languages as a common way to communicate: English, Yoruba, and Igbo. So, I have been speaking English since I was young!

Rees: What was your experience like at CoE?

Beam: The experience was from my heart. It was very motivational and encouraging, and supportive. One hard thing was that I even had to learn the technology. It was very tough for me. But because of my relentless efforts, I made it. I had tried to take some technology



Beam at the College of Education



courses in Nigeria, but because of the electricity outages, I didn't get much out of it. Dr. Andrea Rorrer [Associate Dean at CoE] enrolled me in a Continuing Education class, which was helpful. My colleagues at UEPC [Utah Education Policy Center] were also ready to answer my questions, especially as regards technology.

Rees: What do you see for the future of education here in the United States?

Beam: I am very impressed with what is happening here, although it's not perfect. I worked with the bridgeworks team at UEPC. We worked to support school leadership and school improvement efforts. I can see that there are resources, yet I know we need more. Also, we need to put those resources in the right spaces, especially when we are looking at differentiated learning for all students. It is my desire to make a positive difference in Utah education and U.S. education. From my research findings on school-family engagement during the COVID-19 pandemic, if educators can leave their biases behind and believe in all students and in themselves, it will make a difference to bridge the existing gap in education. Although my research had a small sample, it was clear that educators have good hearts; they just need the tools to be able to engage families who are racially and culturally different. For example, it helps when educators focus on who students can become instead of their shortcomings in the here and now. Teachers can set high expectations for students of color, hold them accountable, and still have compassion. As we invest tangible resources into education, the need for human support is vital to the success of our young ones.

Rees: You mentioned your research on school, family engagement. Can you say a little more?

Beam: The title of my research was "Disrupted sense of place: School-Family Engagement during the Pandemic." My research identified barriers to family engagement; facilitators of family engagement; and school leadership support during the COVID-19 pandemic. I found that, yes, there is a digital divide, language barrier, family economic context etc., but I also found biases, especially unconscious biases. Some educators attested that they do not know how to help or include families who are marginalized, and many Utah public schools are diverse. So, there must be better family/student engagement to achieve our mission of "equity and excellence" in education. Genuineness and respect go a long way because they lead to relational trust. Think: if you invite me to your house for dinner, I am going to be looking at your countenance more than the food you serve. If I get the sense you do not really want me to come for dinner, then no matter how good the food looks, I would not want to eat because "your food should be as good as your countenance." [Both laughing.] It is the same between educators and families, particularly families of color. If there is no respect, then there is no communication.

Rees: Beam, it has been so great to talk to you today. Is there anything else you want to share?

Beam: People that are of low-socioeconomic status or English learners should not be seen as less or less intelligent. There is no menial work, and English is just one of the languages in the universe. We should value people. When I came here, I had to set my education experience aside to make ends meet. If someone saw me working in laundry when I first arrived, they might not know the level of my education. It is tough for people to integrate. People should never assume anything about someone because of their socioeconomic status. As educators, we should be ready to collaborate with all stakeholders. Families are our friends. We cannot educate children without collaborating with families. I feel it is our duty as educators to invite families to join us in making our noble work a reality. Educators are nation builders, and we should be ready to earn the respect of others. It may not come on a platter of gold anyway!

Due to space limitations this interview has been edited and condensed but you can read the full interview [here](#).

New Inaugural Dean: Frankie Santos Laanan

The College of Education is pleased to announce the appointment of Frankie Santos Laanan as the inaugural associate dean for faculty and student affairs in the College of Education (CoE).

Laanan, a Professor in Education, Culture, & Society and Educational Leadership & Policy, is an educational scholar whose research focuses on the impact of college on individuals and society. Specifically, his research investigates the role of

community colleges as educational pathways for women and historically underrepresented students in STEM disciplines, career and technical education, transfer, and accountability.

In his new role, Laanan will provide leadership and direction for the college's retention, promotion, and tenure processes for both tenure- and career-line faculty; develop a strategy for the college's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI); and collaborate with faculty and staff in the college to create a culture that supports student success.

The leadership in the college is committed to academic excellence and ensuring that everyone thrives and is successful in their education and professional endeavors. Central to Laanan's work as associate dean is EDI, which serves as a foundation that will ground his work with faculty and students.

The position was created to provide EDI leadership within the college. Laanan will lead initiatives to integrate EDI into all aspects of the CoE culture, including curricula, research and scholarship, hiring and training of faculty and staff, recruitment and retention, hiring and promotion, policies and best practices, and increasing collaboration with community partners. "Dr. Laanan's appointment is affirmation of the value of diversity, equity and inclusion as foundational pillars for all of our work in the college," says Dean Nancy Songer. "The experience and expertise he brings will help us strengthen our ongoing EDI efforts while also implementing new strategies that help the college and the university come closer to our ideals."

"We are extremely excited to share the announcement of Dr. Laanan's appointment as associate dean. This is the first step in increasing our support for faculty and students both within and beyond the university," says Songer. "The college takes EDI seriously, as reflected in our curricula, programs, research and scholarships. With Dr. Laanan, we can strengthen our efforts while also forging new growth and opportunities."

Laanan has conducted research and published work with a focus on postsecondary educational opportunities for first-generation, low-income, and historically underrepresented students. He has received and managed a grant portfolio of over \$3.5 million and been associated with nearly \$6 million in grants from the National Science Foundation.

Prior to his appointment at the U, Laanan was the department head of Educational Leadership, Policy, and Technology Studies at The University of Alabama (UA) in Tuscaloosa, and a Professor of higher education administration. He has held faculty positions at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Iowa State University, and Florida Atlantic University. Laanan earned his doctorate in Higher Education and Organizational Change from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).

Laanan was born and raised on the island of Guam. A Pacific Islander scholar and first-generation college student, he is passionate about engaging in educational research to investigate critical questions about college access and success of diverse students and committed to translating research into practice and policy to effect transformational change in colleges and universities. "I am honored to take on this leadership role and look forward to working with the leadership, faculty, staff, and students to achieve our goals."



Dr. Frankie Santos Laanan