

# HIGHER ED MATTERS

Utah System of Higher Education, December 2011

## Getting students ready for college and career

### Utah Scholars takes college preparation into classrooms

It's that time of year where eighth grade students throughout Utah are visited by volunteer business leaders and higher education representatives to discuss preparing for the future. This outreach program, **the Utah Scholars Initiative, inspires middle school students who desire a successful future by motivating them to complete a Core Course of Study in high school to prepare for college and beyond.**

Provided as a service to over 60 partner middle and Jr. High schools in Utah, **the Utah Scholars presentation pairs students with successful local business leaders right in the classrooms.** Students learn information about why it's important to go to college, options for postsecondary education and how students get on the path for college readiness. Information on earning a Regents' Scholarship is also discussed. **Students are shown the benefits of increased earning potential by earning a postsecondary degree or certificate and why they need to start getting ready for college as early as in the ninth grade.**

The Utah Scholars Initiative is coordinated through the Outreach and Access division of the



Utah System of Higher Education working with partner schools to organize classroom presentations, volunteer training, outreach support, technical assistance and publications. "Part of what makes the Utah Scholars Initiative so successful is the association with volunteers who take time out of their busy days to visit these students and have a real discussion about the importance of higher education," said Andrea Cox, Utah Scholars Program Coordinator. **"We are also grateful for our partner schools, and their counselors, who help our volunteers strengthen relationships between Utah's businesses, schools and communities."**

American Fork Junior High School Counselor Adele Whitely adds, "Many students are excited to see the big picture of how their work in high school will help them plan for their future."

**Last year, approximately 200 Utah Scholars volunteers and community leaders from area businesses and higher ed institutions spoke to over 20,500 eighth graders about their futures.**

## For more information, visit [utahscholars.org](http://utahscholars.org)

Published by the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education  
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#### Accolades...

"The Utah Educational Savings Plan raises the bar... The plan's 'Top' rating reflects the straightforward, low-cost investment options and strong management." — *Morningstar, Inc., October 2011*

## Utah's college students: Portraits of success

There are a number of standout student successes at each of Utah's colleges and universities who are making a difference and putting Utah on the map. From Cache to Washington counties, Utah's college students are nothing short of extraordinary. For example, SLCC's Christopher F. Thompson has been selected to travel to NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center to develop a prototype vehicle to roam Mars and promote STEM careers for the future. That's just the beginning; here are more inspirational student success stories:



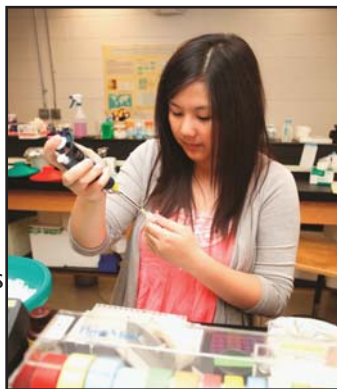
At Utah State, LaDonya Jackson is a first-generation college student, pursuing her dream of becoming a veterinarian.



Utah Valley University English major Daniel Parkins aspires to write about how he went from living in his car on the streets to scholarship-winning honors student and UVU writing center tutor.



Childhood Leukemia survivor Stephen Moore graduated in 2011 with a MSW from the U of U-- with hopes of helping kids at the low-cost grief center he and his mother founded.



Research at Weber State led Amanda Truong to Japan to present at one of the most important molecular genetics research conferences in the world.



Dixie State College's Landon Terry went back to college to pursue aerospace engineering, and ended up watching a 2011 rocket launch from a control console at NASA.



Between battling Lupus and raising her two children, single mother Michelle Eaton attends Southern Utah University to become a paralegal while earning a bachelor's degree in political science.

As the first transfer student from Snow College to the Julliard School of Music, Andrew Wangemann's musical talent paired with his education is helping him reach his dreams.

