

November 4, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Regents  
FROM: David L. Buhler  
SUBJECT: "Expect the Great" Conference

Background

The "Expect the Great" Conference has been a Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) statewide effort for the past four years. The free event is a college and career awareness conference providing African and African-American students and families with information, resources and other support to increase college participation, retention, and graduation. It started with the leadership of Board of Regents Vice-Chair France A. Davis seeking an outreach event to increase college access for African-American students. Expect the Great also includes a convening of current Black Student Association Officers from throughout the state for a powerful networking session.

Presidents of the USHE institutions and Westminster College each provide \$2,000 of financial support for the annual conference and assign staff members who work collaboratively as a planning team, with support from the USHE Office of Outreach and Access and Assistant Commissioner Julie Hartley. Last year, the conference was hosted by Salt Lake Community College.

Issue

This year, the fifth-annual Expect the Great College and Career Fair was held on October 9-10, 2015, at Weber State University (WSU). This year's conference was chaired by Betty Sawyer, WSU's Transition Programs and Partnerships Coordinator.

The Friday October 9<sup>th</sup> events were held in conjunction with Weber State University's Diversity Conference. The keynote speaker was Michael Eric Dyson. WSU President Wight gave opening remarks and Adrienne Gillsepie Andrews, Chief Diversity Officer, provided an institutional welcome and introduction.

Following the Diversity Conference was an overnight Black Student Union/Club leadership training retreat. Black Student Association Officers from all of our USHE institutions participated in roundtable discussions on current issues, leadership training, and collaborating on common agenda items and events. Students shared helpful hints and strategies that have kept them in college, despite the challenges many of them face as first generation college students or attending a predominantly white institution.

On October 10<sup>th</sup> Utah's Commissioner of Higher Education, David Buhler, gave opening remarks and Weber State University Provost, Madonna Miner, gave the institutional welcome. The keynote speaker was Jack Hesleph, Director of Student Employment & Cooperative Education at Salt Lake Community College. Registered participants from across the state of Utah then attended their choice of workshops in three sessions, which included:

- Applying for financial aid
- Navigating college from start to finish
- College, career, and life
- Career profiles
- Black Greek letter organizations

An additional professional development session for counselors and administrators focused on trends in the juvenile criminal-justice system and how to prevent a school-to-prison pipeline.

A lunch was facilitated by Eddie Baxter, the Vice-President of Weber State University's Black Student Union, who led a panel of college students through a discussion of their college experiences and successes.

The conference concluded with a college and career exposition, featuring staffed information tables for Utah colleges and universities, financial aid, and area employers.

Registered participants, totaling 230, attended the event. The majority were college students, high school students, and junior high school students, followed by interested community members.

#### Next Steps

The planning committee will meet again at the beginning of 2016 to start planning for next year's event.

#### Commissioner's Recommendation

This is an information item only; no formal action by the Board is required.

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David L. Buhler  
Commissioner of Higher Education

DLB/JH  
Attachment



# Expect the Great

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[weber.edu/expectthegreat](http://weber.edu/expectthegreat)

UTAH SYSTEM OF  
HIGHER EDUCATION  
*Building a Stronger State of Minds*

WEBER STATE  
UNIVERSITY

*Expect the Great  
College and Career Conference  
October 10, 2015*

*Weber State University  
Shepherd Student Union*

*Expect the Great College and Career Conference & Career Expo*  
*Saturday, October 10, 2015*  
*"Build, Invest, Connect...Pathways to Success"*

- 8:30 **Check-In**, Shepherd Union Lobby  
**Continental Breakfast**, Shepherd Union Mezzanine
- 9:00 **Institutional Welcome**, Ballroom B  
Introduction: Larry Robinson, President, Black Scholars United, WSU  
Dr. Madonne Miner, Provost, Weber State University
- Opening Remarks**  
David L. Buhler, Commissioner, Utah System of Higher Education
- Introduction of Speaker, Shekinah Stanton, BSU President, SLCC  
**Keynote Speaker** – Jack Hesleph, Director, Career and Student Employment Services, SLCC
- Overview of the Day**  
Betty Sawyer, "Expect the Great" Chair, Coordinator of Transition Programs and Partnerships
- Break for workshops**
- 9:30-12:10 **Workshops**
- A. Take the Money & Run: Discover the tools that will help you get in and pay for your college education (Presenters: Sherri Melton, WSU & Tino Diaz, UHEAA)- **SU305**
  - B. Watch Me Succeed: Increase your knowledge and learn to navigate college, from start to finish (Presenters: Dr. Tamara Stevenson, Westminster College & Dr. Gregory Roberts, SLCC) **SU321**
  - C. College, Career, Life: Your Pathway to Success (Presenters: Damien Pitts, U of U, & Jack Hesleph, SLCC) **Ballroom C**
  - D. Black Greek Letter Organizations: Student Retention through a Legacy of Service, Scholarship, & Leadership (Dr. Kathleen Christy and representatives from the Divine Nine) **SU312**
  - E. Professional Development Session: Finger Paint to Finger Prints; School to Prison Pipeline in Utah (Rebecca Tierney, WSU Facilitator – Presenters: Utah Public Policy Clinic) **SU320**
  - F. Career Profiles: So you want to be a...(Facilitator, Winn Stanger, WSU - Local African American Professional Roundtable and Q&A) **SU316**
- 12:10-1:00 **Lunch, Ballroom B** - Eddie Baxter, Vice President, BSU, WSU, Presiding  
Lunch & Table Talk Session
- College Student Panel: Voices from Within, Moderator, LaShawn Williams
- Closing Remarks**  
Adrienne Andrews, Chief Diversity Officer, Weber State University
- Convene College and Career Expo**
- 1:00-3:00 **College and Career Expo- Shepherd Student Union, Mezzanine**  
Representatives: Dixie State College, Southern Utah University, Utah Valley University, Westminster College, Weber State College, University of Utah, Salt Lake Community College, Snow College, Utah State Eastern, Utah Educational Savings Plan, StepUp to Higher Education; local employers

## *Workshop Descriptions and Learning Objectives*

- A. Take the Money & Run: Discover the tools that will help you get in and pay for your college education **SU305**
- a. Apply to College
  - b. Apply for Financial Aid (FAFSA)
  - c. Discover Other Funding Sources
- B. Watch Me Succeed: Increase your knowledge and learn to navigate college, from start to finish **SU321**
- a. Time Management
  - b. College Jargon
  - c. Advocacy & Resources
  - d. Persistence & Grit
- C. College, Career, Life: Your Pathway to Success  
**Ballroom C**
- a. Internships
  - b. Working while in College
  - c. Winning Resume (have students & others bring with them or possible online help prior to conference)
  - d. Understanding Pathways to Career Success
  - e. Matching Passion, Skills, & Employability
- D. Black Greek Letter Organizations: Student Retention through a Legacy of Service, Scholarship, & Leadership **SU312**
- a. Historical Perspectives
  - b. Utah Perspectives
  - c. Impact on Student Engagement & Retention
- E. Professional Development Session: Finger Paint to Finger Prints; School to Prison Pipeline in Utah  
Rebecca Tierney, WSU - Facilitator; U of U, Utah Public Policy Clinic **SU320**
- a. Review newly published Finger Paint to Finger Prints report
  - b. Review Utah Data
  - c. Roundtable discussion on low-moderate effort and cost to implement change
- F. Career Profiles: So you want to be a...Facilitator, Winn Stanger, WSU - Local African American Professional Roundtable and Q&A **SU316**
- a. Introduce students to practicing professionals in various fields
  - b. Interactive discussion on career paths
  - c. Networking & other opportunities for school to career connections



## *2015 Expect the Great Planning Committee*

Adrienne Andrews  
Naredos Almaw  
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Glory Shekinah Stanton  
Tamara Stevenson  
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Cheryl Williams  
Noelle Wilson

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