



THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH DEVELOPMENT NEWSLETTER

WINTER
2015-16

Rio Mesa Center

An Outdoor Lab on the Colorado Plateau

Imagine an ancient floodplain with a wild river, surrounded by towering cliffs and red-rock canyons...

A place to learn about the ecological, cultural, and geological wonders of southern Utah...

A place served by ecologically-sensitive facilities for research, education, and other academic pursuits...

This is the vision for Rio Mesa Center.



Looking east from the Rio Mesa campground

Photo by Philippe Cohen

The University of Utah received an early Christmas present in mid-December when it took ownership of the Rio Mesa Center, located in the red-rock country of southeastern Utah. The 400-acre property is a gift to the U from Texas businessman and philanthropist David Bonderman, who bought the property in 2008. David serves on the boards of several national environmental organizations and was committed to protecting the site from development. He found an enthusiastic partner to join him in that effort in the University of Utah, which had been managing the site since 2006. Now, with the transfer of ownership to the U completed, David's initial intention to protect the land is assured. Written into the site's master plan is a pledge to preserve the integrity and open "wildness" of the site while promoting restoration and exploration of the natural world.

Rio Mesa Center is located about 40 miles northeast of Moab along a three-mile stretch of the Dolores River. Archaeological findings indicate that the area has been occupied, at least intermittently, for the last 4,000 to 5,000 years. More recent history of the property dates back to the late 19th century when it was the site of a pioneer-homesteaded cattle ranch.

For the past decade, under University of Utah management, the property has become a gathering place for students and researchers to work on projects that explore issues around water, ecology, and human interactions with the environment on the

continued page 2

Recent Major Gifts

We thank the following supporters for their generous gifts received between October 1, 2015 and December 31, 2015.

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Rio Mesa Continued



Environmental science students play volleyball near the shade pavilion.

Colorado Plateau. Courses offered range from bird and plant ecology and landscape painting to civil engineering and architecture studios. The center also provides opportunities to engage with the local community by offering GIS training for K-12 teachers, arranging artist-in-residence visits, and engaging Grand County High School students.

With capacity to accommodate up to 40 people, the center’s campground is completely off-grid and offers a solar-powered bathhouse, shade pavilion, outdoor cooking facility, and canvas safari tents on raised platforms. Additional space allows visitors to pitch their own tents. Classes are held in a 30-foot yurt. (Funds are still needed to build a multi-use field house, which will allow the center to be fully operational year-round.) For researchers, two indoor facilities offer electrical service and a local Wi-Fi network served by satellite Internet. There is no cellular or LAN line phone service on the property.

The vision for Rio Mesa Center is to become a modern, multi-disciplinary, outdoor laboratory where science, architecture, engineering, and art come together to question the notion of what it means to live on the Colorado Plateau. It’s off to a great start.

Learn more about Rio Mesa Center online at www.riomesa.utah.edu.



Students gather around a campfire to hear from locals about ecology on the Colorado Plateau.

A Q&A with Philanthropist Bruce Bastian

Gracious, generous, compassionate, brilliant, and loyal, Bruce has never sought the spotlight with regard to any of his giving. He gives with his heart. We hope that, through funding from the Bastian Foundation, our impact builds bridges, richer partnerships, and greater understanding of the communities we support.

Michael Marriott
Executive Director
B. W. Bastian Foundation

For the past 20 years, Bruce Bastian, cofounder of WordPerfect, has generously supported a wide range of initiatives at the University of Utah through personal donations and the B.W. Bastian Foundation. Examples include a gift of 55 new pianos for School of Music students in the College of Fine Arts; support for public broadcasting through KUED and KUER; programming at the LGBT Resource Center; and formal staff LGBTQ training by the University Hospital Foundation. We had an opportunity to ask Bruce some questions about his philanthropy and are pleased to share his response with you here.

IMPACT Newsletter: In a nutshell, what is your philosophy on giving back? Why do you do it?

BRUCE BASTIAN: I didn't have some emotional moment when I thought I needed to give back. I saw issues and situations where I thought I could make a difference, so I started trying to do just that. I realized that giving my voice, my support, and my money can indeed make a difference. There are many good organizations to which I do not contribute, and that is because I feel many people support that organization. I tend to give my money to organizations and issues that need my support.

IMPACT: What made you decide to lend your support to U-sponsored initiatives and what have you been especially gratified in seeing come to fruition through your support?

BASTIAN: I think my first donation to the U was made to the LGBT Resource Center, which I believed needed support at that time. I believe the U supports diversity, which is very important to me. I certainly cannot and do not support everything that I am asked to support, but I do have many shared goals with the U and therefore want to support it when I can. In addition to the growth of the LGBT Center, a gratifying gift was the Steinway pianos because that gift continues to benefit the U and bless the students who use them.

IMPACT: You have provided support for many diversity initiatives, including annual programing support to the U's LGBT Resource Center. Why does this cause matter to you? Why now?

BASTIAN: I think being different is normal. I believe being different is a blessing in our lives. For many years, I was told I needed to change and become "normal" like others. It took me a long time (and a lot of counseling) to realize I was okay the way I am. People and organizations who do not support diversity or try to change people into being "normal" get too much support in Utah (in my opinion) and need someone or something to counter them. Why now? Now is all we have. We can't change the past, but we can try to mold the future. Supporting diversity is my number one goal when it comes to philanthropy.

IMPACT: Why are the arts so important to you?

BASTIAN: I believe the arts are the key to a person's soul. If you go through life only experiencing things with your mind, you miss out on the greatest emotions of your life. The arts open up the soul and the heart to feelings and emotions. On the flip side, the arts are the best training tools we have for younger people. For example, learning to read, play, and write music is the best training we can give young people to prepare them for studies in math, physics, and computer science. And yet the arts are the first thing legislatures cut funding for. So it takes philanthropy to try to make up the difference.



Utah Philanthropist Bruce Bastian

IMPACT: What are you most passionate about?

BASTIAN: I am most passionate about trying to counter lies and untruths that are out there, and there are many. It is easy to use lies to cause fear and anger. It takes time and effort (and money) to really educate and promote truth. I think I can link my fight for truth to my goals to support LGBT equality, diversity, and even the arts. My goal of promoting truth is also significant in my political views.

Philanthropy was never a goal of mine. I became a philanthropist because I started supporting people, organizations, and issues I believe in and want to fight for. I have learned that even small amounts of money can make big differences in doing good in the world. I would encourage everyone to get more involved in things they believe in. Not only can they really make a difference, they will also have a lot of good come back into their lives as they do it.

Major Gifts continued

- The Etta Keith Eskridge Trust
- The Fang Family Foundation
- First Security Foundation
- The David L. and Bettie E. Francis Trust
- David P. and Sheila S. Gardner
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- The Douglas G. Mortensen Living Trust
- Judith Burton Moyle
- My Good Fund Trust
- The Craig H. Neilsen Foundation
- The Ray and Tye Noorda Foundation

Scott Scholarship Supports Students of Fine Arts

Last fall, David R. Markland made a generous and thoughtful gift to the College of Fine Arts to establish the William K. Scott Memorial Scholarship Fund in Art and Art History. The scholarship is named to honor his cousin, a talented sculptor and artist who didn't have the opportunity to attend college due to a debilitating illness. Bill Scott suffered from Hodgkins Disease and, instead of continuing his formal education, took an alternative life course and became the protégé of a well-known sculptor, Elena Karina Canavier. An acclaimed ceramics artist, Elena exhibited her sea-inspired work in various galleries around the country, wrote for several art publications, and worked for the National Endowment for the Arts and the Public Art Trust in Washington. "She was instrumental in encouraging and supporting Bill's artistic talent and many of his opportunities in the art world came as a result of their professional and personal relationship," says David. The two were partners in their art and in life for nearly four decades. Bill's disease went into remission and he lived about 40 more years.



Ceramist Elena Karina Canavier and her protégé William Scott in the 1970s

Photo courtesy of David Markland

In addition to his work as a sculptor, Bill worked in a variety of related disciplines, including graphics, exhibition, and architectural design—and played both guitar and flute. In 1975 he received a visual arts fellowship grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, and in 1977, was commissioned by the U.S. General Services Administration to design a monument to commemorate the opening of the new Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. "Vigil" was installed in 1978 on the building's east plaza. The kinetic sculpture is composed of three curved, stainless-steel panels mounted on swiveling bases, which allow the faceted surfaces of the metal to reflect light as they rotate in the wind. "Vigil" survived the April 19, 1995, bombing of the Murrah

Building by domestic terrorists, where 168 lives were taken, including 17 children. After the attack, the sculpture was restored and placed back in its original location, which is now near the Oklahoma City National Memorial.

After Bill succumbed to lung cancer in 2013, David paid tribute to his cousin's life by establishing the new scholarship. "It was merely a gesture of love and my desire for young artists to be able to complete their education at the U with a little help," says David. "My cousin was a talented artist who was taken from us before his time. He is worthy of being remembered with a scholarship to aid young artists."

Thanks to David's generous encouragement, more students of fine arts will have an opportunity to fulfill their dreams through education.



Photo courtesy of David Markland

William K. Scott's monument "Vigil" was designed to commemorate the 1977 opening of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. It survived the tragic bombing in 1995.

Promoting Critical Thinking in the Next Generation

Rosenblatt Fund helps launch Natural History Museum program for young students



Photo courtesy of the Natural History Museum of Utah

Sixth graders participate in Research Quest, a program designed to enhance critical thinking skills of middle school students.

Improving education—by investing in it—has been a longtime priority of the Rosenblatt Charitable Fund. The Rosenblatt family’s many efforts to support superior education range from the 1984 creation of the University of Utah’s prestigious Rosenblatt Prize for Excellence, to its decision, three years ago, to support the launch of the Advancing Critical Thinking (ACT) project at the Natural History Museum of Utah. “The Rosenblatt Charitable Fund believes that rigorous critical thinking skills are essential for students to become healthy, engaged, and contributing members of the communities of tomorrow,” says Toby Rosenblatt, president of the fund. “We searched for an organization to develop an innovative, scalable program to advance these skills and realized the team at the museum would be a most effective partner. They have a tremendous track record in youth education and are producing just as we had hoped.”

Under the ACT umbrella, the museum designed *Research Quest* — a program to enhance the critical thinking skills of middle school students. The first *Quest*, “The Mystery of Cleveland Lloyd Dinosaur Quarry,” invites students to help solve one of the greatest mysteries in paleontology—what happened, 150 million years ago, that caused so many dinosaurs to die near what is now Cleveland, Utah. The museum developed the *Quest* in collaboration with two campus programs—Entertainment Arts and Engineering, which assisted with 3D and game technologies, and Instructional Design and Education Technology, which developed an assessment tool to track students’ critical thinking behaviors.

With guidance from their teachers, 3D images of fossils, and videos featuring museum paleontologists, students use critical thinking to develop their own theories for what happened, and why. They study images of bones taken from the site, manipulate those images using 3D technology, and share their ideas with classmates.

“At first [the students] were skeptical about the program because they didn’t like sharing in a group, but it forced them to think and get out of their comfort zones, and they loved it,” says Vae View Elementary teacher Jodi Rees.

With Rosenblatt Fund support, museum staff developed the *Research Quest* concept in 2013-2014. The following year they tested *Research Quest* in selected schools. To make that possible, a longtime partner, also passionate about education—the I.J. and Jeanné Wagner Foundation—joined the project. The Wagner Foundation, with the Rosenblatt Fund, helped transform *Research Quest* from a concept to a curriculum. With their combined support, 250 sixth graders from Title I schools in rural and urban areas tested *Research Quest* in their classrooms. When researchers examined the results, they found students increased their critical thinking skills, which they hope the students will apply to other areas in their lives. Now in the program’s third year, the museum is bringing *Research Quest* to students statewide with additional support from the Utah State Legislature and the Utah Division of Workforce Services.

“For decades our family has been a supporter of programs pursuing excellence in educational leadership at the University of Utah,” says Toby. “We are pleased that this project is very much continuing to meet that goal—and are delighted to be collaborating with other funders to make this project possible.”

Major Gifts continued

- Kirk M. Ririe and Mary Jane O'Connor-Ririe
- James E. and Debra S. Pearl
- William K. and Julia D. Reagan
- Research to Prevent Blindness, Inc.
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* Deceased donors (listed if the University of Utah continues to receive support from their foundations, trusts, or estates).

Louise Degn Leaves a Legacy

Planned Gift Establishes Scholarship for Communication Students



Photo courtesy Rick Egan/Salt Lake Tribune

Broadcast journalist Louise Degn taught at the U for 20 years.

Louise Degn, a journalist, documentarian, archivist, and University of Utah professor—known for her great sense of humor—was a broadcast journalist in Utah who won high acclaim for her investigative reporting. Before she died of bone cancer in May 2015, she made a planned gift to the U to establish The Louise Degn Endowed Scholarship in the Department of Communication for undergraduate students. “I suspect she wanted to make sure that a strong education in journalism was available to every undergraduate student who wanted it, regardless of financial resources,” says her good friend, Ann Darling, assistant vice president of undergraduate studies and a former chair of the department. The first recipient of the Degn Scholarship will be selected this spring.

After graduating from Utah State University in 1968 with a degree in political science, Louise became only the second female broadcast reporter employed by Salt Lake City’s KSL Television. In 1970 she received a master’s degree in journalism from Northwestern University and began her 23-year career as a journalist. As a produc-

er, she documented Utah issues ranging from the emerging women’s liberation movement, demolition of the LDS tabernacle in Coalville, Utah, and the Teton Dam break, to Howard Hughes’s will, Gary Gillmore’s execution, Rulon Allred’s assassination, and Mark Hofmann’s forgeries of early Mormon papers. Her stories appeared on TV news programs including “Dimension Five,” “TalkAbout,” and “Prime Time Access.”

The groundbreaking documentary *Mormon Women and Depression*, produced by Louise in 1979, broke the silence on mental health issues in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints community and generated requests for copies of the program from Mormon congregations throughout the world.

When a downturn in the economy in 1990 affected the local broadcasting industry, Louise left KSL to join the U’s communication faculty where she was an associate professor and served as associate department chair, and then director of the department’s undergraduate studies. She was passionate about teaching and her students consistently placed among the top 10 in the nationally respected Hearst Journalism Awards Program. “Louise had exacting standards,” says Ann. “She loved great writing and she struggled with tolerating anything less from her students.” She taught at the U for 20 years.

“Louise continues to inspire many of us,” says Glen Feighery, associate chair and director of undergraduate studies in the U’s Department of Communication. “Her guiding principle was ‘Do what’s right for our students.’ Louise helped shape a curriculum that is rigorous and challenging. She also helped shape a department that is welcoming, caring, and closely tied to the communities it serves. We are proud of the legacy that Louise Degn left our department and the scholarship in her name will honor her accomplishments.”

Much of Louise’s broadcast work is archived in the Marriott Library’s Special Collections and online at <http://nwda.orbiscascade.org/ark:/80444/xv16961>.

New Jon M. & Karen Huntsman Basketball Facility

Utes are Set for Success



Photo courtesy of Utah Athletics

Fans tour the new Huntsman basketball facility at its grand opening on October 1, 2015.

The new Jon M. & Karen Huntsman Basketball Facility, opened in late September 2015, is already an indispensable feature of the University of Utah's growing number of state-of-the-art sports facilities for its student athletes and coaches. Thanks to a generous lead gift from the Huntsmans, and additional major contributions to the project from Kem and Carolyn Gardner, the Sorenson Legacy Foundation, and Brent and Ann Wilson, the facility's unrivaled amenities for men's and women's basketball teams, paired with spectacular views of Utah's natural landscape and Salt Lake City's downtown, make it an unsurpassable asset in recruiting premium talent to don the red and white.

Entering the new four-story facility through the Kem and Carolyn Gardner Legacy Hall, guests are greeted by a massive 30-foot Circle and Feathers logo mounted on the wall and large banners hanging from the 38-foot ceiling showcasing the Utes' most notable past coaches and players. Such an impressive welcome into the facility is indeed a "wow" factor for guests and recruits.

The new 101,000 square-foot facility houses first-rate practice courts, locker rooms, and theater rooms for the men's and women's basketball teams. The upper levels provide office space for the coaches and outdoor balconies for spectacular views, while the rooftop terrace offers a perfect location for hosting parties.

"The basketball facility is outstanding," says Kyle Brennan, deputy athletic director at Utah Athletics, who spearheaded the construction of the building. "The attention to detail and the quality gives the facility a feeling of magnificence that is unmatched. This facility is the best in the Pac-12 Conference."

For visitors, players, and coaches alike, the wonder is in the details—from the block U shaped door handles and crimson couches to the Utah athletics-themed wallpaper. The lockers—black wood for men's and ash-colored wood for women's—are personalized for each player with his or her name, team number, and home city illuminated on a sign above each locker. Attached to the locker rooms, the bathrooms boast custom showers and in-ground hot and cold tubs facing 80-inch TV screens. The theater rooms

offer projection screens, whiteboard walls, and customized chairs, while the teams can also relax in private lounge areas containing six 55-inch TVs, gaming consoles, and custom-built furniture. The women's practice court features a stunning welcome with the words UTE PROUD in huge letters on the wall spanning the length of the court. It also promotes wellness and reduces injury by providing a glass-enclosed yoga studio available for use by the men's team and other Ute intercollegiate teams.

"This facility is a tremendous benefit from a recruiting standpoint and puts us in a position to attract some of the best student-athletes in the country," says Kyle. "Furthermore, it provides our current athletes with the opportunity to train and compete at a higher level and that translates into competitive success for our teams."

The new facility would not be possible without the support from Jon M. and Karen Huntsman. The current and future success of the basketball program is owed to their considerable generosity. "These great new facilities are the best in America," says Jon. "They will make every student athlete proud to be a Runnin' Ute."



Photo courtesy of Utah Athletics

Women's basketball practice gymnasium at the new Huntsman facility

Photo by Andy Brimhall



Now you can Park *and* Play

Have you heard about the new multi-level parking garage in the east end of the Business Loop Parking Lot? Opened last fall, with a capacity for 800 vehicles (a net increase of approximately 550 stalls on campus) the structure was built in response to a growing need for additional parking on campus. But it’s more than a place just to park vehicles. Thanks to the generosity of University Federal Credit Union, its design includes a unique feature—an outdoor play field on its top level.

“University Federal Credit Union is dedicated to enhancing the student experience on campus. From the moment we heard the University was building a state of the art playfield on top of a parking structure, we knew we wanted to support it,” says Jack Buttars, credit union president. “The University of Utah cannot have too much green space and Vice President Barbara Snyder has found a way to make great use of a parking garage roof line.”

The decision to build the multi-level garage was made as a result of an effort to protect green space on campus. Construction on the structure began in late June 2014 and was completed last fall. The playfield was in use during fall semester.



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What’s Inside

| | |
|--|-----|
| U Acquires Rio Mesa Center | 1-2 |
| Q&A with Bruce Bastian | 3 |
| Scott Scholarship for Fine Arts..... | 4 |
| Rosenblatt Fund Supports NHMU student program..... | 5 |
| Louise Degn Leaves a Legacy | 6 |
| Huntsman Basketball Facility Opens | 7 |
| Now you can Park and Play..... | 8 |