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Prazen delivered on his promise and flew to Newport Beach, Calif., to present his “True Grit” sculpture to the King of Western movies. The story and photos were covered by the API wire service where Prazen’s gift to Wayne was seen throughout the world.

“This small gesture of art,” Prazen wrote, “changed the direction of my life. If it was not for John Wayne, I doubt I would be where I am now.”

Always busy, he was a county commissioner, managing Pioneer Welding and Machine Co., active in the Jaycees and Elks clubs as well as teaching welding classes at the College of Eastern Utah.

He quit it all and went into full-time designing and building his bronze foundry and equipment. He incorporated his business under the name Original Creations, Inc., in 1980. He also attended his first mining show to display his first miner sculptures.

At that time, the popular subject for bronze sculptures in art galleries were cowboys and Indians, wildlife, modern abstracts and almost every subject besides mining. No artist had sculpted mining subjects to any degree that would compliment this industry. “No artist realized what an important role mining played in the history of the U.S.,” Prazen wrote.

Almost 40 years later, besides mining, his repertoire includes animals, birds, prehistoric dinosaurs, sports figures, trains, Christmas figures, Kokopellis, oil and gas field workers, angels and anything Prazen’s imagination could dream up. He created one-of-a-kind artwork, custom belt buckles, custom metalwork, exclusive art for companies

A chance encounter
Sculptor Gary Prazen meets John Wayne

A chance encounter with western actor John Wayne in 1978 propelled Carbon County native Gary Prazen into international fame for his realistic bronze sculptures. Prazen died last November at 80, leaving behind a legacy of artwork.

According to his bio, Prazen was attending a water meeting at the Carbon Country Club. He was elected Carbon County Commissioner and was talking to some constituents after the meeting.

That day, actor John Wayne toured several local mines and was the talk of the town.

One of Prazen’s friends who escorted Wayne to the mines later challenged Prazen to do a bronze sculpture of the famous Hollywood actor. Prazen called this his “Jack Daniel’s inspiration” because it reminded him of a scene from the movie “True Grit” where Wayne put reins in his teeth and with a rifle in one hand, pistol in the other, and shouted, “Fill your hands, you SOB.”

Without thinking that he had never done a bronze sculpture before, he said, “I will.” With those two words, Prazen went from supplementing his income part time with metal artwork to becoming a world-renowned bronze sculptor.

Gary Prazen’s first bronze sculpture presented to Hollywood legend John Wayne.

Photo by Tyson Chappell
including engraving, plaques and trophy awards.

Hardly any areas throughout Carbon County are not graced with Prazen’s work. On the USU Eastern campus, Prazen’s fierce, fighting dinosaurs perch outside the prehistoric museum, describing what was happening in Southeastern Utah 160 million years ago.

Most recently he, along with his grandson-in-law, Danny Blanton, created monuments dedicated to the 1,524 people killed in mining accidents in Carbon and Emery counties over the past century.

Blanton is married to Gary’s granddaughter Patricia, and said it was a chance encounter that paired Prazen and him together.

Patricia was dating Blanton and asked him if he had seen her grandfather’s art work. They toured Prazen’s studio and Blanton saw first hand the talented artist’s work.

Next she introduced Blanton to her grandfather who asked him to help with Prazen’s thriving bronze-sculpture business. Blanton saw that as a way to spend more time with Patricia, plus make extra money on the side.

Blanton, who was working a full-time job, started helping Prazen after work and on weekends. His first-solo projects were bronze belt buckles.

For the past 17 years, the pair created thousands of pieces of art work that they shipped throughout the world. Blanton said only one percent of their business is from Utah and the rest is shipped throughout the United States and foreign countries.

Reminiscing, Blanton said he told his mom in the second grade that he wanted to be an artist, but never took an art class. In high school he took a welding class at CEU, but smiled when he failed it, only because he missed so many classes going hunting and fishing.

“I have to give Gary 100 percent of the credit for instilling creativity in me. He could make something out of anything. He collected a bunch of coffee can lids and made roses out of them,” Blanton said.

In describing Prazen, Blanton said he was strong, hard working and giving. He always worked six and half days every week. Sometimes he would take time to garden or do something fun, but then he would always work late into the night.
“Gary made a living, but did not make huge profits on his pieces.” He would always ask why people want to charge so much. “Money is like water, you don’t need the whole ocean,” Prazen would say.

“He always wanted to leave behind a legacy, a feat not many in the art field are able to achieve the type of notoriety Gary did,” Blanton said.

Prazen’s sculptures are known for their details and intricacies. Later in his life, he experimented with abstracts. He sometimes would draw his sculptures on paper or he would totally design from what he envisioned in his mind. Blanton said Prazen was ambidextrous; he could draw and sculpt with either his right or left hand. He also took up oil painting.

One year Prazen and Blanton shipped 1,200 statues throughout the world, but their average was 450. Austria, Canada, England, Scotland, Germany, South Africa, Mexico, India and China are all countries Original Creations shipped statues to recently.

The two artists needed more space to create and build, so a 6,800-square-foot building was erected in 2016 on their four- and half-acre parcel of land located in Carbonville. It was almost complete before Prazen died.

In the new building, Blanton hopes to build another train to scale, similar to the one Prazen and he built in 2010 at the Tie Fork Rest Area on U.S. 6 in Spanish Fork Canyon. The rest stop was voted one of the best architectural structures in Utah, largely because of his life-size sculpture of an early 1900’s locomotive resting on a narrow-gauge track, the type of track that was often used to access distant coal mines at Scofield, Utah.

Blanton also plans to turn Prazen’s hexagon house next to the Original Creation’s Building into a museum and art gallery so people can witness some of Prazen’s work. A scholarship in Gary and Janet’s name is in the works to give to USU Eastern’s welding department to help students achieve their educational dreams.

“Gary seemed to work longer and harder as he aged,” Blanton said. “His last sculpture he completed was Judge Roy Bean (1825-1903), “the hanging judge.” Legend notes that Judge Bean held court in his saloon along the Rio Grande on a desolate stretch of the Chihuahuan Desert in Southwest Texas and after his death, Western films and books cast him as the hanging judge.

Prazen will be remembered as enjoying the simple life. He was super modest, and after 60 years of marriage, when he lost the love of his life, he died three months later.

~ Susan Polster
Judging WISELY

Paige Petersen, appointed to the Utah Supreme Court in November, is proud to have USU Eastern (CEU) on her resume next to the University of Utah and Yale Law School.

Imagine families forced from their homes at gunpoint by soldiers. Women and girls are pushed to one group, and the men and boys separated into another. The women are told to leave town on foot without looking back. As the women walk away, the men and boys are lined up and shot at point blank. The women sob as they hear the shots; never to see their husbands and sons again.

This unimaginable horror sounds like one of the travesties that happened in World War II, but this scenario is recent history. In 1999, more than 800,000 ethnic Albanians were pushed out of their homes in Kosovo, and thousands of them were slaughtered by the military, police and private militias.

In the aftermath of the tragedy, international courts tried to bring political murders to justice. Petersen was a part of that effort. She served as a war-crimes prosecutor at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague, Netherlands.

“One victim described being forced to turn away from her husband, teenage son and uncle. I thought of having to walk away from my own dad, brother and nephews. It was heartbreaking. I can’t imagine living through what they lived through. I felt compelled to document their stories and help them have some sort of justice.”

Petersen was instrumental in convicting a police chief of mass deportation and mass murder. After appeal, the defendant ended up with 18 years in prison. Beyond the conviction, Petersen considers the court’s official records historically significant. The three-judge panel that tried the case wrote a 1,500-page document that created a lasting record of the victim’s experiences.

Petersen’s family life

It would be easy to boast of her accomplishments, but Petersen is down to earth and more interested in others. She is characteristically humble and grateful. Her serene, happy attitude is an intrinsic part of who she is. Her parents, Geri and Michael, taught her to work hard. Petersen embraces many of her parent’s best qualities.

“My dad has a love of education. He is so engaged in history and politics. He is a calm, steady and optimistic person. When things are tough, he is the glue that keeps the family together. My mom is very compassionate. She is so good at empathizing with other people and caring for them.”

Petersen grew up next door to her grandmother in Castle Dale, Utah. In this small town without a shopping mall or movie theater, Petersen and her friends had fun floating on inner tubes down the river, sleeping outside in the summer, playing softball and riding bicycles on back roads to Orangeville.

When she was in the ninth grade, her family moved to Price. Competing for Carbon High School, Petersen was a state champion and national contender in debate. After graduating from high school in 1990, she had many scholarship offers. With a multitude of possibilities, the decision to go to college in Price, her hometown, was easy. Her father was president of College of Eastern Utah, and she was eager to contribute to his efforts to build the college.

“I have always been so proud of my dad and everything he did for College of Eastern Utah. I wanted to go to his school because I was so proud of what he did there.” Petersen explained. She enrolled in many exciting courses, including one her father taught: comparative politics.

During the year that Petersen finished her associate degree at CEU, she was a driving force on the nationally ranked debate team. Assistant debate coach, Scott Pullan, was a strong mentor pointing Petersen toward law.

“I have used what I learned in debate more than anything else. As an attorney, I had to organize the evidence and present it in a logical and persuasive way. CEU was a great start because of the small campus size and the attention that faculty members give to students.”

The University of Utah was a natural step for Petersen after her graduation from CEU, but when she went to law school in New York where she pushed herself outside of her comfort zone.

“I had been to the East Coast only once on vacation. It was a huge change to move to Connecticut. It really stretched me, but it was good for me.” Petersen earned her Juris Doctor degree from Yale in 1999. She clerked for a federal district judge in Cincinnati, Ohio, and moved to New York where she stayed seven years.

After working two years at a private law firm in New York, Petersen quit civil litigation to work as a criminal prosecutor at the U.S. Attorney’s Office in Brooklyn, New York. She sacrificed her lucrative salary, but felt the greater payoff came from giving back to the community and spending more time in the courtroom. In Brooklyn, she prosecuted members of the New York mafia and international drug traffickers for five years.

War-Crimes prosecutor

Petersen decided to make a momentous change in her life by moving to The Hague, Netherlands.

Ultimately, she accepted a job as a war-crimes prosecutor at the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. It was an intimidating step to make, moving across continents, to live in a place where everything was foreign to what she had grown up with. Though it was difficult, living in a different culture helped expand her understanding of newcomers everywhere.

“I grew as a person and learned to empathize with others who are new to...
decided to try it. After some time in the a place. When you don’t know your way around, the language, the customs, the unspoken rules ... it is very humbling.” Every culture has different ways of doing things and Petersen found that those dissimilarities are part of what makes the human race delightful.

One simple example, that surprised Peterson, is the way Dutch people get around. Most of them ride bikes to work instead of using cars. “I would see a man in a business suit riding a bike, with his child in a wooden box on the front, taking her to school before he headed to work,” Petersen said.

At first, she wondered how they did it. She hadn’t been on a bike for 15 years, but decided to try it. After some time in the Netherlands, she began cycling everywhere and loved it. Ever embracing the new experience, Petersen decided to stayed in Holland three years.

At times it was incredibly difficult for her to be alone, away from her family in a foreign country, but wouldn’t exchange the experience for anything. “There are inevitably peaks and valleys in life. When I’m in a valley I think, I’m just in a valley and it won’t last forever. I can walk through it and out of it. There are peaks ahead.”

As her work (and adventure) in Europe drew to a close, Petersen realized she wanted to live closer to her family. She joined the U.S. Attorney’s Office in downtown Salt Lake as an assistant U.S. attorney.

Working in the violent crimes section she prosecuted violent crimes committed on Native American reservations, firearms violations, child pornography and bank robberies. Seeing familiy often is sweeter for Petersen, because she had been away for so many years. She calls her nieces and nephews the light of her life. “Being an aunt is a wonderful role. I get to have a relationship with these kids who I love to pieces.”

**Judge Peterson**

Becoming a judge wasn’t something Petersen planned on, but she started to consider it when Deno Himonas, a Carbon County native, encouraged her to apply for an open-trial court position in the Third District. Himonas, had been a judge in the Third District (which serves Salt Lake, Tooele and Summit counties) before he was appointed to the Utah Supreme Court. He was an encouraging mentor and helped her believe she could do it.

In February 2015, she was nominated by Gov. Gary Herbert to serve as a judge in the Third District Court. By May 2015, she was confirmed by the Utah Senate and on the bench at the Matheson Courthouse in Salt Lake City handling civil cases. Once a week, she travels to Summit County and handles the criminal docket there.

“Every day sitting as a judge is new. It’s never the same. I am loving it. It’s really challenging.” The breadth of knowledge required to be a judge has been an exciting test Petersen conquered. A federal-criminal prosecutor for most of her career, Petersen specialized in federal criminal law. As a judge she hears every type of case from probate, to family law, to complex corporate contract disputes. She runs the courtroom and makes decisions that affect people. Petersen's goal is to understand the positions of both parties. It calls on numerous skills.

“Being a judge asks a lot of a person. It calls upon you to be prepared, focused, patient, fair, wise and to interact in a constructive way with the many people who appear before you -- the lawyers, parties, victims and witnesses. I am constantly learning and seeking to improve.” Petersen says that working with people every day is the most rewarding part of the position. Fundamentally, people go to court because they have a dispute they can’t resolve on their own. Her goal is to understand where both sides are coming from and make the best decision she can. Petersen takes the responsibility seriously.

One of the most fulfilling parts of Petersen's job was her work was on the Summit County Drug Court, which requires criminal offenders with substance addictions to complete 18 months of intensive rehabilitation and treatment while they report to the court every week. “I saw them go from having real problems with addiction to becoming clean, moving on and having a happy, productive, healthy life. They repair the relationships that have been damaged. They build stronger connections with their children. When I saw that, there is no better feeling in the world.”

**Utah Supreme Court Justice**

In an October 2017 news conference, Gov. Herbert nominated Peterson to be the next Utah Supreme Court Justice where she will join her mentor, Deno Himonas.

Herbert introduced Peterson as his nominee and said she has “great intellectual firepower.”

When Peterson spoke, she acknowledged her family and teachers for making her accomplishments possible. She also promised the governor that she will work hard in her new role, “I will have the fidelity of the law.”

On Nov. 15, 2017, Peterson unanimously was approved by the Senate Judicial Confirmation Committee to the Utah Supreme Court. She replaced retiring Justice Christine Durham, the first female Utah Supreme Court justice who was appointed in 1982 and served as Chief Justice from 2002-12.

In a speech following the vote, Peterson said, “I am just so humbled today to join the high court.” That’s not even the end of it. “I am going to be taking the seat that’s vacated by Christine Durham. I want you to know I understand the magnitude of that. That is not lost on me.”

~ Renee Banasky
If you resided in Utah in the decades between 1996-2016, you probably heard about the Warburton sisters from Helper, Utah, who put Carbon High School on the women’s sports map. Or the Warburton sisters whose basketball careers started at the College of Eastern Utah, Southern Utah University, Weber State University and University of Utah. Or the Warburton sisters who played professional basketball in Netherlands and Spain. Or if you did not hear about any of the Warburton sisters, you had to be living under a rock.

Ask any of Warburton neighbors in Helper what it was like to live on the street their parents raised their children on. The basketball hoop in their backyard was used steadily by each sibling where they were given the choice to do chores or shoot hoops. When they were not playing sports at Helper Junior High and CHS, they were practicing until after dark each night: dribbling, guarding and shooting baskets.

They worked summers at Fossat’s Drive Inn, where its owner, Ralph Fossat followed each of their careers from high school through college, hardly missing a local game. The sisters said a lot of their neighbors followed their careers and would attend games at home and on the road.

And what most don’t know about the Warburton sisters is they have two brothers in the family of six children: the oldest and the youngest. The four sisters are a year and a half apart.

**Their parents: John and Stacy Warburton**

Their incredible athletic ability might be attributed to their parents who attended college on athletic scholarships in the ’70s. A graduate of Granger High School, John Warburton played basketball for Snow College, where his soon-to-be-bride, Stacy, from Green River High School, played volleyball, basketball and softball for the Badgers.

After Snow, John accepted a scholarship to play at Montana, but decided to marry Stacy. The couple moved to Green River, Utah where he took a job working for the highway department. After a few years, the Warburtons moved to Helper because “I had the opportunity to get more overtime,” he said.

“All my kids were raised in a gym as I played rec ball, city ball, any type of sport involving a ball. They didn’t have a chance to not be athletes because all the family did was hang out in gyms or shoot baskets at the house,” John said. “We worked on fundamentals: dribbling, ball handling and keeping the ball from the defender.

“Their brother Chase was one heck of an athlete and made the sisters the athletes they are today. He pushed each sibling to develop basketball skills from an early age and spent hours playing ball with him or her,” he added.
The six children: Chase, McKell, Cassie, Morgan, Chelsey and Cole grew up playing sports on the streets of Helper with both parents actively coaching each sibling.

“We had a tiny pad of cement in the back yard with a basketball hoop. I would watch the kids for hours shoot hoops through my kitchen window. As long as they would get along and not fight, I let them play all day,” Stacy said. “I didn’t have much help with the house because they could decide to do chores or play basketball.”

The neighborhood boys would join the six Warburtons as they spent their days playing basketball. “We had a lot of black eyes and broken bones” as the competition between all the players got intense,” Stacy said. “Each one of my children are fiercely competitive.”

“We were at a family reunion in Colorado and the girls took on their four-male cousins in a four-on-four game of hoops. My girls don’t do anything just for fun. In life you have to be willing to fight and they beat their cousins that day, something everyone talked about for years.

“Because John and I were athletes, I wanted my girls to experience other things than sports, so I enrolled them in clogging classes. They were the cutest cloggers and when we got together even to this day, we have clogging fests as a family joke.”

By 10 years old, Chelsey and Morgan were competing in the Elks Free-Throw National Contest in Massachusetts. Morgan is in its Hall of Fame for making 23 out of 25 free throws in 2000-2001 while Chelsey took second place by hitting 24 out of 25 in 1997-98, with her second-to-last shot rattling in and out of the net. That year’s winner hit 25 out of 25 shots.

By the time the girls were in junior high, their parents convinced the school district that ninth graders should be allowed to play high school ball.

Stacy was an assistant coach at Helper Junior High and moved onto CHS to be an assistant to Coach Bruce Bean.

Playing at Carbon High School

The Warburton girls put CHS in the record books as they led their teams to a state championship, region titles and scholarships to CEU, SUU, Weber and the U of U.

At Carbon High, McKell lettered in three sports and was selected as all-state and MVP. Cassie, Chelsey and Morgan earned all state and all-region honors in basketball and volleyball. Morgan’s team won the state championship and she was named 3A MVP. Each sister led her team in scoring each year.

Coach Bean, said, “I think I was able to help them balance their fierce competitive spirit and the joy that comes from that competition and being part of a team. Not just focusing on their own achievement or the win/loss, but enjoying the ride.

“They were much more than talented. They elevated their talent, but also elevated their teammates. They truly made each player better, even those who played against them.

“I knew they were talented enough to play D-1. What sometimes happens with this level of talent is that the athlete may not have the drive needed with the talent. They had tremendous drive, work ethic and personal discipline to achieve at the collegiate level and professionally.”

Discussing Chelsey and Morgan, he said, “Even though they both had this talent, drive, focus etc., they were different types of athletes and young women. Chelsey was more of a true point guard/floor coach than Morgan, more serious of a personality. She helped ‘run’ the team on the court. She saw the “big picture” of the game.

“Morgan has the ability to ‘loosen up’ her teammates with her humor/personality. She took the entire team on her shoulders at times and just took over games. She was able to play multiple positions since she was a taller, more physical player.”

Twice in high school, three Warburton girls were playing at CHS. By the time they went to college, three of the daughters were playing at three different universities. “I put 33,000 miles on my 99 pickup in 13 months trying to attend all of their games. If more than one daughter played on any single day, we chose to attend the oldest daughter’s game. Sometimes Stacy and I would split up so we could catch more than one game a night,” John said.

Off to play college basketball

McKell, Cassie and Chelsey accepted scholarships at CEU to begin their college career under the tutelage of Coach Dave Paur while Morgan accepted a full-ride scholarship to play at the University of Utah.

McKell was the first Warburton to play for the Eagles and was named most improved player. She continued her education at SUU and was named All-New Comer plus honorable with a degree in criminal justice. She spent a year coaching at Ben Lomond High School in Ogden before accepting a position with the Boys and Girls Club in Ogden. She helped launch the Boys and Girls Club of Carbon County.

Cassie played volleyball and basketball for the Eagles where she was named First Team All Region. She continued her education at SUU and was named All-New Comer plus honorable...
Morgan played professional ball in Spain.

It was never in Chelsey’s plans to stay in Price to play basketball, but she blew out her ACL her senior year of high school and all the coaches recruiting her stopped calling.

She used her freshman year of college to rebuild her knee and hone her shooting skills. “Chelsey is the best three-point shooter I have ever seen,” Paur said. “She proved that at Eastern and later at Weber State.”

While playing her freshman year for the Eagles, Chelsey reflected upon her collegiate experience and said her confidence in shooting came from her shooting skills. “Chelsey is the best three-point shooter I have ever seen,” Paur said. “She proved that at Eastern and later at Weber State.”

The competition was good in the Scenic West Athletic Conference. Her teammates included Lyndsie Arnoldus, Viva Whither, Janell Casey, Cami Blackburn and Sherill Grant.

In high school, Morgan was highly recruited by Matt Legerski, assistant basketball coach at Utah, where her freshman year her team made it to the elite eight during March Madness. She played with seniors Kim Smith, Shona Throburn and Julie Wood, who Morgan believes was a lights-out shooter on the team. The Utes made it to the Elite Eight that year before falling to the eventual NCAA champion, Maryland.

About her playing ability, her dad said, “Morgan hit the last minute shots against New Mexico twice one season; once in New Mexico’s ‘Pit’ and once in the conference championship in Las Vegas. A guy came up to me after the game and remarked that he wished Morgan would hurry and graduate so the Utes wouldn’t be so tough to beat.”

About coaching, Morgan learned life lessons from her coach, Elaine Elliot, who “never panicked in a game and was always confident. She knew what she was going to do and was a really good coach.”

Coach Elliot loved Morgan’s brother Cole and recruited him to be the team manager for the women’s team. The two Warburton siblings worked side by side as Morgan continued to hone her skills on the court with her brother just a few feet away at practices and games.

Morgan was grateful for the U of U athletic scholarship that allowed her to earn an education and play a sport she loved. “Kids don’t realize that somebody is paying for their education and to get a degree. In those years at Utah, I learned so much as a student athlete.”

Before she left Utah, her basketball prowess brought accolades including being named to the first team All-Mountain West Conference twice and leading the conference in free-throw percentage at .891. She was named honorable mention All-American by the Associated Press her junior year and returning Honorable Mention her senior year where she was Utah’s 20th 1000-point scorer. She was named the Mountain West Player of the Year that year plus named to the Utah Sports Hall of Fame.

The Sacramento Monarchs selected her in the third round, 33rd overall in the 2009 WNBA Draft where she played before being waived. She next found herself in Spain spending the next two years playing for Gran Carnaria and Girona.

“Since it was on the boarder of France, most everyone spoke Catalan and Spanish. Krystal Kelle, from Kentucky and Anika Henry from the University of Florida played on the team so we could communicate with each other. A lot of people also speak English so that helped a lot,” she said. In her free time, she toured Barcelona, Spain, and spent time on the beach, which she thought was beautiful.

Both Chelsey and Morgan appreciated their time in Europe playing ball, but hated looking up in the stands and not seeing their family there. Their entire careers focused on family and friends supporting them, and it did not seem right to not have any family or friends in the audience at their games. So they returned to the United States to begin coaching careers.

Morgan said she wished she would have extended her playing career longer, but a coaching position opened at Utah in ’11 and she felt it was the right time to accept the job and work towards her ultimate goal of being a D1 head coach.

Coaching at the U of U & USUE

In 2012, Chelsey returned to her alma mater after being named head volleyball coach and assistant basketball coach where she spent the next three years. When Paur decided to retire in ’15, he wanted one of his favorite players to take over his program and Chelsey fit the bill.

The first item on her to-do list was hiring an assistant. The U of U had just released its women’s basketball staff, including her sister Morgan. With Morgan looking for a job and Chelsey needing a coach, the sister-playing bond turned into a sister-coaching bond.
One problem with hiring Morgan: nepotism. Once Utah State University’s HR office saw Morgan’s resume, it was a slam-dunk to let her work as an assistant for her sister Chelsey.

Both sisters admit to their competitive nature. “Winning is big in our family. We think about it every day and try to get our athletes to work towards having the same goal.”

Coaching in the SWAC is not easy and the Warburton sisters worked on their team, getting better with every game. “Every player on our team is special and the hardest thing for us is to say goodbye at the end of the season.

“This past year we had to transfer our expectations and goals to each member of the team and sometimes it worked, sometimes it did not. In the end, we made progress with each member of the team and that in itself made the season worth it,” Chelsey said.

Spending countless hours each day as coaches first and sisters second, the two spent their off season recruiting this year’s team. “I put my list of recruits together and Morgan put her list of recruits together. When we compared the lists, they were almost identical,” Chelsey said. “Sure we agree to disagree on some topics, but we always try to do the best for the group… we’re family and get over it.”

The two have been voracious at recruiting their team. “Sure we have to work harder to get recruits, but we try to be smart about getting who we want. We are both approachable and focus on what we have, not what we don’t. We are texting, calling, emailing our recruits constantly and have some great recruits committed,” Morgan said.

Separated in age by 18 months, the two admit to being able to read each other’s thoughts. “What a better way to share one’s life with someone we have grown up with. We are both doing what we planned to do after our years of playing ended and continue to share that experience,” Chelsey said.

About this season, the two hope to figure out their team’s personalities sooner and what works with each athlete. “We will be prepared sooner and our caliber of practices will be tougher, stronger.” With two seasons under our belts, we know what did not work and will work harder at making it work in ’17-’18.

They both learned as coaches, that they must break down every aspect of the game, and get their players to have basic instinct of plays, plus work on mental toughness. This past season they hoped for more firepower offensively, and loved the fact their defensive team worked great together and held the scores down on explosive teams.

Chelsey still bounces ideas off coach Paur who guided the Eagles 27 seasons. “I respect what he thinks. He knows what we are up against and what we need.”

In five years, Chelsey hopes to be still coaching at Eastern. She loves the game and wants to spend her career in the basketball world.

Morgan hopes to be a D1 coach and plans to move up the ladder as she pursues her love of the game.

Their parents still come to all their games with John, who they say is an X’s and O’s type of coach, gives advice on how to get the most out of each player.

John said he has a different vantage point than his daughters and talks to them after each game.

Stacey said it is harder watching her daughter’s coach than play basketball. “As players, I never worried about them getting it done mentally or physically. As coaches they have to instill this instinct in each of their players.”

She knows what the game of basketball did for her daughters and how each love the game. The sport made each one a better human being. She said a good coach “must care about their players as a person first, then as an athlete second.

“An athlete will give their all to a coach as long as the coach trusts them and treats them with respect,” she said. “Making athletes into better people, makes them into better players. Then a coach can start teaching the players the game. We have to remember that there’s a lot of life’s lessons taught in sports.”

Coming to games also allows Stacy to meet all the players. “Whether it’s the mom or grandma in me, I like to bring the athletes treats. I still love the fact that my daughters are helping someone else get what they received in life.”

“Our parents are encouraging and after each game, make sure we know that our team is getting better,” Morgan said.

Using their family as a team, Morgan said their dad would be the power forward, McKell would play post, Cassie would be the three guard, Chelsey the shooting and point guard, and Morgan the small forward. Their mom would also be a power forward.

At the end of the day, Chelsey said, I hope my players feel that I was fair and honest. I care about them both as a coach and friend,” Chelsey said.

“I hope my players feel that I was fair and honest. I care about them both as a coach and friend,” Chelsey said.
A USU Eastern welding student has done what no other welder in the 80-year history of the school has done before, nor any other Utah welding competitor for that matter. . . . Chandler Vincent was named the top welding competitor in the United States and the fifth best in the world at the WorldSkills competition.

The jet-lagged 19 year old was back on the Utah State University Eastern campus a day after returning from his 17-hour flight. After competing in six categories on four-straight days at the 44th WorldSkills competition in Abu Dhabi of the United Arab Emirates, Vincent finished in fifth place and returned with a medallion of excellence. He was also awarded a medallion for “Best of Nation” during the closing ceremonies for scoring higher than any other United State’s competitor in their respective competitions.

At the opening ceremonies, Vincent served as the U.S. flag bearer representing TeamUSA. With only 11 members, USA had the second smallest team at the competition. He was one of the 1,300 students from 59-WorldSkills-member countries and regions showcasing their talent across 51-skills competitions. This was the first time the competition was held in the Middle East and North Africa region.

Instructors Lon Youngberg, Mason Winters, Austin Welch, plus classmates, kept tabs on Vincent as they streamed the classmates, kept tabs on Vincent as they streamed the WorldSkills ceremonies live in the welding classroom for everyone to watch. “It’s tough mentally to adjust to the time difference and high level of competition,” Vincent said. “Knowing
that everyone who helped me get there was watching me throughout the week was cool.”

“When one competes on the world’s stage, it is a great motivational factor. It takes an insane amount of welding to round me into the welder that I have become. It’s almost unrealistic how much I have learned so fast to be well prepared for the levels of competitions this past year.”

Throughout the week of competition he averaged five and a half hours of welding each day, but said he never felt stress. Vincent scored more points than he has ever scored in nearly every category.

Out of the 800 points possible, there was a nine-point spread between first and fifth place. A student from China placed first, Korea second, Japan third, Taiwan fourth and the U.S. fifth. The Chinese competitor who placed first has been welding since he was 8, Vincent said.

The always humble Vincent loved the way everyone was treated at the competition and believed the best part was learning from all the competitors. “I got to weld with the best welders in the world and gave them a run for their money…It’s crazy how good everyone was and the high level of competition.”

Youngberg is ecstatic over each of Vincent’s accomplishments. In an all-campus email, he wrote, “He’s a fine young man and wonderful representative for USU and USA.” He thanked everyone who supported Vincent. “It is a lot of work to engage at this level (but worth it), much of that work fell to Mason [Winters], who has the skill, experience and willingness to make a difference.”

Winters added, “I feel incredibly fortunate to have been able to work with such a dedicated and talented young man that was so willing to put everything aside and strive for the pinnacle of excellence. This is such an incredible achievement that Chandler will be extremely proud of and reflect upon for the rest of his life. This was truly the experience of a lifetime that helped to advance his career in ways that will be unknown for years to come.”

In Vincent’s hometown of Roosevelt, Utah, he is a rock star who everyone in the community knows. He is remembered at Union High School as the kid who only wanted to hunt, fish and stay outdoors. He detested school and every class he took. When he explained to his mother that he was dropping out of school, she begged him to go to school and take just one class he loved. At 15 years old, he registered for a welding class at the Uintah Basin Applied Technology Center and the rest is history.

It’s been four years since that pivotal moment, and since then he was named the best welder in the U.S.
Classmate Tom Dalpiaz jokes with Vincent after a class.

Best of Nation, Medallion of Excellence, SkillsUSA medals

Both Eastern alumni instructors won many competitions, they offered expert advice to Vincent.

A USUE Eagle rests on top of the welding recycle bin.

Vincent continues to weld and get better.

Vincent’s 500-pound-tool box was mailed to Abu Dhabi.
in February 2017 and fifth best in the world in October 2017 . . . quite an accomplishment for a guy who hated school.

He said he’s not done with classes at USU Eastern until graduation in April 2018. In his final semester, he wants to learn more about the science and theory behind welding, take a machine shop class to help with fabrication, plus an accounting class to help his business.

He also wants to become a certified welding inspector by passing the six-hour certification test. With his education and experience, he plans to reopen his welding business in May 2018, a business he put on hold after high school to attend USU Eastern.

He’s received a number of job offers, but chooses to be his own boss and live where he can hunt, fish and be outdoors.

“I realize I’m still 19, but my body feels like its 40. The stress and discipline of preparing for national and world competitions has taken a toll on me,” Vincent said. For the past year and a half, he often practiced 10 or more hours a day, seven days a week. “As grueling as my training schedule has been, I received a lot of help along the way and have a lot of thank you notes to complete. Industry and community support has been awesome.”

In June, he traveled to Australia with two of his instructors to compete with other national welding competitors in preparation for the world competition. He has traveled to Lincoln Electric’s headquarters in Cleveland to work with their specialists. He was in Washington D.C. with other TeamUSA competitors and met with the Undersecretary of Education. Possibly his favorite practice sessions were in St. Louis Missouri with Ray Connolly, the TeamUSA welding expert and former WorldSkills gold medalist.

Reflecting upon USUE’s program, Vincent said, “I think welders coming out of this program are way above average on the knowledge and welding techniques. There are definitely top-grade welders coming out of Eastern.” Philosophically, he is wise beyond his years. He advises students to, “Push yourself to the limits and soon you will find you have none. I had no purpose for math, no purpose for anything. I was a kid who didn’t want to do anything but go hunting every day of my life. I didn’t care about the future until I found welding and then I was like, holy crap I am going to need this now.”

Vincent cannot say enough good about the welding department at USU Eastern and its instructors. “The biggest thing that I have learned from this program, is learning how to learn... I learn from my own mistakes and better myself from the things that I have screwed up. I thought I was pretty good at welding and thought I knew everything. I came into here and it was a big awakening for me.

“They [the instructors] opened up this huge world on the theory side and now I understand what is going on in the metal and how the machines get the power. “These instructors definitely teach a one-of-a-kind program. The things students learn will last them a lifetime. I have seen a lot of people in the industry think they know what is going on and there are a lot of problems that can be solved coming out of this program. Besides making great welders, the instructors develop character here.”

His advice to students, “Find your passion. If you find your passion and work hard towards your goals, there is nothing that is impossible.”

“I want to let everyone know that there is nothing that you can’t achieve with hard work. There are no limits.”

What’s next for this talented 19 year old? He wants to give back to the welding community. “I’ve already volunteered to help train the US competitors for the next WorldSkills competition,” he said. Russia hosts the
next WorldSkills competition in two years, and Vincent plans to help make sure the U.S. welders prove they are the best on the world’s stage.

Editor’s note: In January 2018, Vincent’s photo was on the cover of Welding Journal, published by the “American Welding Society” to advance the science, technology and application of welding and allied joining and cutting processes worldwide.

Chancellor Joe Peterson likened Vincent’s cover photo on the largest welding magazine in the United States to a musician making the cover of “Rolling Stone.”

Vincent was quoted in the magazine about how surprised he was to find out competitors from other countries, especially Asian countries, outperformed the United States. “They are winning everything,” he said.

A reason for staying in school was why Vincent started welding. “It gave me a reason to stay and push myself,” he said in the magazine.

He said welding let him know that his skills were worth something.

Lon Youngberg, one of Vincent’s instructors at USUE, was quoted in the magazine, “WorldSkills helps promote workforce development amongst the younger generation by getting them involved in meaningful activities.”

~ Susan Polster

“I think welders coming out of this program are way above average on the knowledge and welding techniques.”
One cannot talk about higher education in Price, Utah, without mentioning LaVell and Mayzell King. The renowned educators were honored by Utah State University Alumni Association as two of six alumni inducted into the 2017 Hall of Honor on April 8, in Logan.

The Kings helped shape the landscape of higher education in Eastern Utah as they continue to help students achieve educational dreams at USU Eastern.

LaVell began his quest for higher education in 1951, attending Carbon College and playing basketball and baseball for the Golden Eagles. After graduation, he transferred to Brigham Young University where earned a bachelor’s degree in biology.

After completing his master’s degree in entomology at BYU, he was hired to teach biological sciences at Carbon College. After a few years of teaching, he was granted a sabbatical leave to work on his doctorate degree in genetics and graduated from the University of Utah with a Ph.D.

He returned to Price to teach at Carbon College which had morphed into College of Eastern Utah, a name change that reflected the college serving the students of Southeastern Utah. He continued teaching 34 years, including serving in the administration as well as an emeritus professor several years.

Mayzell supported LaVell during his education and career while she focused on their four young children. When her eldest son enrolled at the CEU, so did Mayzell. She earned her associate degree in 1972 and began taking elementary education classes through USU Extension. She earned her bachelor’s degree in 1974, enabling her to begin her journey of teaching in the Carbon School District for 20 years.

Together, the Kings continued to support their alma mater. They served on the CEU Alumni Board and were instrumental in the successful transition from CEU to USU Eastern.

The LaVell and Mayzell King Family Endowment honors their legacy and work in the education field. With higher education in their blood, the children of LaVell and Mayzell continued the expectation of higher education, each graduating from CEU.

Michael, earned a doctorate degree and is a wildlife biologist associate professor at USU Eastern. He also served in administration at CEU/Eastern and was interim president before and during the merger with USU.

Brad, earned a master’s degree and worked at CEU/Eastern 33 years, the last as vice chancellor of administration and advancement.

Baird recently retired following a career with the federal government and speaks six languages.

Lorilyn King Vogel earned a master’s degree in audiology and speech pathology.

Additionally, 12 grandchildren graduated from CEU/Eastern.

USU Eastern Chancellor Joe Peterson met the Kings while growing up in Price. “LaVell and Mayzell King’s service to the college spans many decades. It started when LaVell was 19, studying and playing on the college’s baseball and basketball teams.

“Later, LaVell joined the science faculty at the college. And even later, Mayzell got her degree at the college and became a teacher. Their four children all studied at the college, and two of them, Mike and Brad, eventually became important leaders at the college.

“Over the course of many years, they have pooled their finances to create a wonderful scholarship endowment at the college. Indeed, their service to the college has been long, illustrious and important,” Peterson said.

~ Susan Polster

The others inducted into the 2017 USU Hall of Honor with the Kings included Betsy and Marty Judd, Logan; Dr. Jay Monson, Logan; and Nikkel Skinner Nielsen, Gilbert, Arizona.
The name Jan Young has been synonymous with Utah State University Eastern – and before that College of Eastern Utah – for 34 years. Anyone who had business with, interacted with, worked at, or attended the institution, knew Jan Young.

Her coworkers call her a great friend. Erin Rowley, who worked as a staff assistant for Young said, “When working at the college, Jan was very knowledgeable in her field, she helped so many coworkers, but most of all the students. Jan is a busy person between work, volunteering, being a small business owner and holding various positions in her church and city, she cared for everyone.”

Young gave 100 percent in everything she did. She led the college in the Banner conversion, and the merger with USU Banner. She single-handedly earned the institution a Military Friendly School Designation. She was the expert at the institution – and statewide – in everything from regent’s policies, FERPA, residency, athletic eligibility, transcripts, graduation and international students, to name a few.

She was instrumental in her community and donated countless hours to the Children Justice Center, The Dinosaur Mine Park, baseball at all levels (Little League, American Legion, USU Eastern, etc.), Carbon County’s Planning and Zoning Commission, Ascension St. Matthews Church, the pancake breakfast, Price City and so much more.

Debbie Boone, who Young supervised, said, “Jan’s been the best of the best supervisors.” She noted her work with veterans, saying, “She took a lot of pride working with veterans and advising them and easing the transition from military service to academics. She took the time to work with them when they came into her office setting aside other things. She has even gone out of her way to follow up on those who were struggling when they had come home from serving our country. She loved her veterans and I admired her dedication to those who served our country.”

Young served on countless statewide boards and committees, ranging from UACRAO, ACT, Residency Officers, and many more. But what really stands out about Young, is how much she cared about those around her. Cirie Noyes, “Jan was one who always looked out for her staff and supported us in whatever our dreams were. No one is perfect and she sometimes reminded me of that whenever I made a certain mistake. Sometimes she would point her finger with her eye glasses to her nose and in a humorous teacher-like way say; ‘Don’t ever do that again,’ but I always knew she had my back.”

As the queen of FERPA retired, a hole is left at USU Eastern that cannot be filled. Others will come and take on the day-to-day duties, but Young will forever be one of the cornerstones that the institution of USU Eastern was built upon.

~ Loren Miller
On a quiet stretch off highway 123, just outside East Carbon, Utah, Timothy Riley, Utah State University Eastern Prehistoric Museum anthropologist, felt at home.

He was not in a particularly scenic spot - nothing near the splendid granaries and pictographs of Nine-Mile Canyon farther up the road - but the same people who left their trace in that famous canyon at their peak 900 years ago, did something even more noteworthy at this particular place: they put down roots.

For Riley’s part, he put down stakes. The nondescript excavation site, 30 minutes east of Price, consists mainly of sagebrush and rice grass. The area is mostly uninhabited, except for a sprawling waste storage facility a half mile away. The irony is not lost on him. In fact, there is a bit of double irony when he explains what the blue-plastic strips are staked to the ground next to the excavation site. They mark what he calls a decent abundance of Fremont trash, albeit bits and pieces.

These middens, or refuse sites, are little treasure troves containing a scattering of tiny ceramic parts, stone tool debris, pieces of projectile points and other “semi-important evidence for showing what’s beneath,” he said. Important, because where ancient trash heaps are found, dwellings are not too far away. In this case, 10 yards to the west. It is here the Martinez Pithouse site is beginning to emerge.

It was the curious way the rocks were piled at this location that first caught the attention of Paul Martinez, a dentist in Price who also runs a small cattle operation in the area around East Carbon. He asked Riley if he would be interested in taking a look. It was a good hunch by the dentist. What he stumbled upon was the remains of an old pithouse foundation.

It was no surprise to Riley that such a house once existed here, and no doubt many more close by. The Fremont people tended to live in small communities and dwell in the same places where people today like to live - mostly in the valleys. This particular pithouse is located along an ancient floodplain - an ideal spot for Fremont farmers to plant their crops and build their homes. Canyons, such as Nine Mile, hold treasures that came later in Fremont chronology. They were mostly summer places - a respite from the heat and a good place to store food for winter.
Riley began preliminary excavation in the fall of 2015, ramping up efforts in early spring of 2016. The 538-square-foot structure was roped off into smaller 4-square-foot sections. He hoped to uncover at least 129 square feet of the plot before winter. It is slow, tedious work. He digs in 40-square-inch increments that are no more than 4 inches deep. He says he only gets one chance at this and so haste is never an option.

Already the site was beginning to take shape. He had dug down deep enough to find what appeared to be compacted sediment of clay plaster used for a bench. In another section, a vein of charcoal-rich sediment was slowly emerging from careful brushwork, suggesting that this home, like so many other pithouses, was burned to the ground before being abandoned.

“I am coming out of the roof fall, with some fairly large timbers, and into the interior of the house in a couple of units,” he said in an update. “I am starting to encounter some interesting artifacts such as a bone gaming piece (something like a domino), a very small bead and various stone tools.”

Typically, these ancient structures - the main form of housing for the Fremont people - are dug some 3-feet deep by 12-feet around. Their roofs are supported by four main beams held up by an equal number of sturdy posts buried 2 feet down. Small logs that comprise the roof beams are evenly placed from main beams to ground around the circumference of the circle. Branches and willows are interwoven in perpendicular and parallel directions to form a sturdy shell that makes up the mound-shaped roof. The frame is then topped off with an adobe mixture of mud and grass to bind and harden the roof strong enough to eventually walk on.

A pithouse diorama at the USU Eastern Prehistoric museum brings to life what these structures looked like inside. It includes life-size mannequins, complete with sound effects, of a Fremont family awaiting a dinner cooking in a ceramic pot over a small fire while a woman is grinding cornmeal on a metate.

What makes the display feel so real is its careful attention to detail and accuracy - a reflection of the academic attentiveness and continuous curiosity of Riley, archaeology curator, and his boss Ken Carpenter, museum director and curator of paleontology. Both of these scientists devote much time in their respective fields puzzling through pieces of the past found in the rocks and dust of eastern Utah. Inevitably, an answer to one question leads to another. They know, for example, what pithouses look like, but what did they feel and smell like inside? Were they smoky? Were they cold? Gazing through a window into the past is great, but pithouses don’t have windows. What they needed was an actual door to climb through.

“We couldn’t find answers in the literature,” Carpenter says. “We decided we needed to take more of an approach to reality and build a pithouse ourselves.”

So on June 22, 2014, in a fenced-in pasture on Carpenter’s property, they commenced to do just that. Twenty-four days later on July 15, they finished up. Other duties, such as running a museum, kept them from being able to work steadily on it, but it was enough time and heat (temperatures soared to 102 degrees during construction) for them to upwardly revise their original labor estimates - and appreciation - for what Fremont families had to go through to build these structures.

Before intentionally burning it to the ground last spring, the pithouse stood almost extraterrestrial in the pasture, blending with the vermillion soil amid the alfalfa, thistle and morning glory. Its inconspicuousness merely added to the wonder.

As you climbed down into the room, the shadows gave way to a surprising amount of light. The single hole at the top let in just enough sunlight to cast a pleasant golden glow about the cozy quarters. A distinct and pungent aroma greeted your nostrils. Carpenter explained that it was caused by fresh willows used to bind the sticks and logs that made up the roof. He said the willow meshing was used to keep the adobe from falling through.

It did an equally good job at keeping the temperature down. Outside it was 84 degrees Fahrenheit, but a comfortable 68 degrees inside. Indeed, it would be easy to get used to a place like this. Throw down some bedding and get dinner simmering over a small fire and you’d be set - even in the dead of winter. Carpenter knows this because he monitored inside and outside temperatures in one-hour increments for the full month of June 2015, and then again in December of that same year.

June outside temperatures fluctuated between 40-104 degrees, compared to 65-75 degrees inside. In December, when the temperature dropped to minus 4 degrees, it was a survivable 35 degrees inside, and that was without heat. When the temperature further plunged to minus 7 degrees, Carpenter placed a 600-watt heater inside to mimic a small fire. It warmed the house to a relatively comfortable 47 degrees.

The same heat source warmed the structure to around 60 degrees on another winter day when it was 14 degrees on the outside.
“You can see it would not take much to keep the inside of the pithouse comfortable,” he said. “This does not even consider what body heat would add.”

In addition to measuring temperatures by simulating heat from a fire, he and Riley also wanted to know how the Fremonts kept from smoking themselves out. They knew they cleverly used vent systems at the base of their structures to pull in fresh oxygen, but how efficient was the hole at the top for drawing out the smoke?

To test this, Carpenter used colored smoke bombs at various outside wind speeds and at different times of year. The smoke bombs proved that slight breezes of 6-8 miles per hour in the summer and 5 mph in the winter were enough to effectively vent the smoke. By building a scale model of a pithouse and placing it in a wind tunnel, he was able to approximate what he witnessed with the smoke bombs. It turns out that when wind blows across a dome-shaped structure, it creates a low pressure area over the opening - just enough to suck out smoke.

Another aspect of fire that intrigues Carpenter and Riley is how common it is to find pithouses that had been burned to the ground, such as the one Riley has been excavating. Why is it that so many of these structures succumbed to fire? Were they deliberately set ablaze by raiding parties or was burning them down part of a ritual when abandoning a home? Answers to those questions eluded them, which is why they intentionally burned it down last March. They at least wanted to determine, with some certainty, what it would take to reduce one to ashes. They already know a pithouse takes a lot longer to build than what they originally anticipated. They timed the construction every step of the way. For accuracy, Carpenter even built a replica of a primitive wood-carved shovel that the Fremonts likely used in digging out their pits. Shoveling honors were bequeathed to Riley. He began by breaking up the compacted soil with a digging stick and then shoveling through the loosened earth with the dull wooden blade. It took about 30 minutes to remove 75 pounds of soil before they brought in a backhoe to do the rest (12 tons of soil in all was excavated). It was just enough dirt and time to extrapolate that it would have taken at least 211 hours to do what they did with the back hoe in just two hours, not counting an additional hour to dig the four postholes.

And that is just the pit.

“The biggest controlling factor on time is not how long it would take to dig the hole in the ground, but how far to get resources, such as logs, willows and water for the adobe,” Carpenter said.

It seems that close access to riparian areas was not only necessary for Fremont farming, but equally necessary for Fremont home-building, Carpenter said.

That is because these structures, simple as they may appear, are comprised of numerous materials that add up to copious amounts of time when having to find them and haul them out by hand. For example, basing time estimates on a 15-minute walking distance, Carpenter said it would take at least 56 hours for one person to locate, prepare and haul back the 112 poles and four upright posts that were used for the reconstructed pithouse. Cutting, preparing and transporting willows: 32 hours. Tying the willows onto the roof: 21 hours. Hauling 423 gallons of water for the adobe: 70 hours. Mixing the adobe, adding the straw and applying it to the roof: 94 hours.

When you tally it up, a staggering 485 man-hours are needed to build one pithouse. So more likely than not, these structures were built with a lot of help over several days.

“The number of actual days it would take to build such a structure would depend on how many hours per day was expended with the pithouse, taking into account the need to get food, care for the crops, etc.,” Carpenter said. “A couple of weeks by a small band of several families per pithouse seems reasonable to me. Of course any point in our calculations can be quibbled, but ultimately, none of this is really testable since we don’t have any Fremonts living today in the
To see photos of pithouse construction from start to finish: https://www.flickr.com/photos/prehistoricmuseum/albums/72157644987472907/with/24355670250/

traditional lifestyle.”

No quibbling, however, over the fact that this would NOT have been some weekend project by a lone Fremont. Riley and Carpenter agree that a good deal of cooperation was highly likely. Relatively short time and time to these people, whose lifespan averaged only 30 years, was exceedingly precious. Mutual cooperation would allow them to devote more time to other survival needs such as caring for children, planting crops, hunting and building food storage facilities in nearby canyons.

For Riley and Carpenter, all the fresh knowledge they gleaned from the reconstructed pithouse, combined with their work at the Martinez pithouse excavation site, has helped them to fill in knowledge gaps, like adobe on a thatched roof. The fact remains, though, these two detectives are sleuthing over a very cold case.

At this juncture, Riley has not uncovered a complete basket or pot at the Martinez excavation site, nor does he expect to, despite his certainty that the area surrounding the site likely once held many more artifacts than those found in Nine Mile. The problem is that it has been picked through by settlers for more than a century now. Any jaw-dropping finds have likely already occurred or have been slowly dismantled by rodents, wind and erosion.

Nonetheless, real evidence, however small its form, still exists in abundance and that is what keeps Riley, in his floppy-brimmed hat, down on hands and knees scraping and sifting. He knows the ashes he finds points to the wood these Ancients used for cooking and constructing their houses. The seeds, animal bones and pieces of tools he uncovers helps him to paint a clearer picture of diets, preferences and even free-time activities. He knows the more evidence he accumulates, the more complete and compelling will be his narrative of the family who lived here 1,000 years ago.

“They have an important story I want to tell,” he says. “This is a house not that much different from houses today. They were built by people, just like you and me. They deserve our respect. They’re human beings who loved and lusted, fought and died – all the things that we do today.”

~ John DeVilbiss
Teresa and Curtis Frazier’s 10-year-old son is in the local grocery store looking for his mother. His search proves more challenging than anticipated. “Mom,” he says, when he finally finds her, “I came in here looking for you, but everybody looks just like you.”

Teresa smiles as she hears Curtis recount that incident of 17 years ago shortly after they moved from American Fork (where Teresa lived 36 years) to Blanding, Utah. Their son Shea, a young Navajo boy, found himself thrust into a world in which those of his Native American culture were all at once more common than not. Ironically, it was this blending moment that drove home just how distinct they were as a family, just how different they once were without fully realizing it.

“It’s funny because I don’t see color,” Teresa says. “I don’t ever see that I am a different color or that my boys are a different color, that is, until I look at a picture of us and then: ‘oh my gosh, we’re like brown!’” she laughs. “It just does not even occur to me.”

Teresa and Curtis are not interested in making skin color an issue in their lives. They are proud of their Navajo heritage, but struggle to understand the language. They are equally proud of their adopted Anglo-American heritage, but are not particularly keen on its maniacal aspects. They hold dear the Western-world education they have received, but remain curious students of the cultural traditions it supplanted. Like the symmetry in a Navajo rug, they found themselves seeking greater balance in their lives that eventually brought them to Blanding -- a place of European pioneer stock with a campus mostly made up of Native Americans, prominently Navajo.

Teresa Curtis spent a lifetime walking between two cultures she loves and values.

“**We want native students to know that they can achieve success**”
They are employed at Utah State University Eastern, Blanding. Curtis is in the technology and engineering education department over the engineering portion of the college’s science, technology, engineering and math initiative. He also teaches mathematics. Teresa is director of the campus Upward Bound program. Both specialize in helping students qualify and succeed in college once enrolled. They are engaged in occupations in which they blend with the students and in a cause that perfectly meshes with their personal belief that education is the great equalizer.

“I know we are role models,” Curtis says. “We want Native students to know that they can achieve success and that nothing is given, but earned. I think that’s the message that we provide.”

Part of that success story includes their college degrees (a bachelor’s for Teresa in elementary education and a master’s in education leadership; a BA in engineering and master’s in math for Curtis), a comfortable home, four-flourishing sons and pathways of opportunity stretching before them.

Their oldest, Curtis (Bud), a highly regarded ICU nurse at Mountain View Hospital in Lehi, completed a bachelor’s of nursing degree from the University of Utah; their second-born, Tyler, graduated in 2006 from Utah Valley University with a bachelor’s degree in business leadership. He works for Service Titan, a Los Angeles marketing firm.

Their third child, Travis, earned a bachelor’s degree in French from Brigham Young University and earned a certifications as a nursing assistant and medical assistant. He attends the University of New Mexico School of Medicine after being accepted to three other medical schools, where he is studying to become a general practitioner.

Their youngest, Shea, graduated with his associate of science in 2015 from the Blanding campus. His interest is in music. All four boys are Blanding campus alumni.

The “nothing is given, everything is earned” part of their message speaks to sacrifices. It was a sacrifice for the Fraziers to give up a generous six-figure-annual income to move to Blanding, but that’s only the half of it. The other half “their beginnings” on the reservation and transition into “white culture” makes it all the more remarkable. They say the reservation looks much the same as when they left as children, but now it feels entirely different to them. While they may look the part, they can’t act it. Not for a lack of trying, but for a lack of mannerisms, intonations and humor (yes, humor) that only comes by living on the reservation. They both get that and appreciate it when they see it. These are precious moments of self-realization, “like gazing into a mirror and seeing who you are even though you might not recognize the voice if it spoke back to you.”

Today, they work on a college campus with a core mission of serving the underserved, “a particularly important focus to them because only one percent of Native Americans receive a college degree each year.” This, despite the fact that the one factor that does the most to increase the odds of employment for Native Americans is higher education.

“American Indians with advanced degrees have seven times the odds of
language and they tried to be more in tune with their grandma, who still weaves rugs … I wish they would have had more of that. I think that would have helped them a lot. They had such a difficult time going from one world to another world that I do think they missed out on that.”

She recounts an incident when Travis was in middle school. One day after class he walked into a friendly snowball fight between his friends from church and his Navajo-school friends. “When they spotted Travis, both sides began yelling ‘come over here, Travis,’ ‘No! Come over here!’ And Travis was like: ‘I didn’t even know where to go.’”

Their church was one place they knew they could go to escape the dissonance. It provided comforting familiarity in their new surroundings. They were both raised in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Unique to the Mormon faith is its scriptural ties to Native Americans that refers to them as “Lamanites” in the Book of Mormon.

The LDS Church has always felt an obligation to care for Native Americans. One way to do this was to provide social and educational opportunities that led to the establishment of the Indian Placement Program in 1954. The unique program peaked in the 1970s and ended in the 1990s, due to increased opportunities for schooling on the reservation, according to Genevieve De Hoyos in a 1992 publication, “Indian Student Placement Services.”

In all, more than 70,000 young Native Americans participated in the placement program. Collectively, they walked away with significantly higher educational attainments than those who did not participate, according to Bruce A. Chadwick and Thomas Garrow writing in the “1992 Encyclopedia of Mormonism.”

Curtis and Teresa both attest to this. They wonder where they would be today without the education and social opportunities afforded them through the LDS Placement Program and its members.

From place to placement

Curtis says he thinks the LDS Church achieved amply its objective of providing opportunities that were not readily available on the reservation at the time. Indirectly, the program also ensured these children were well-fed and clothed, something he knows was a serious concern for his mother. He says it was likely her reason for sending him (fifth of nine children) to the Sanostee Boarding School in Shiprock, New Mexico, at the tender age of 6, and further impetus for her, who by then was a young widow, to send him at 9 to Trenton, Utah, to be on the placement program.

It was not a traumatic experience for Curtis, despite his young age, maybe because he got to ride on the bus with his two older sisters bound for Ogden where their placement families were waiting for them. Curtis, easy-going by nature, quickly adapted to his new rural surroundings. Even though he was farther from home than he had ever been, he says he was much happier to be on the dairy farm than be on the reservation stuck in a boarding school.

“Boarding school was loneliness and isolation because of a separation from parents at an early age,” he says. “My foster parents provided a safe and healthy home for me, where I was valued as an individual. Of course, there was a period of adjustment, but I was a quick learner.”

His foster parents, the late LeLand and Clara Cottle, were Cache Valley mainstays and a new staying power in the life of a young Curtis. He wasn’t their first placement student though. His oldest brother, Herb, had already lived in the Cottle home three years, a stay cut short by the sudden death of their father during his sophomore year in high school. Curtis came along a year later. Herb would eventually go on to earn a doctorate in education.

Typically, placement students lived with their LDS families for the school year and would go back to the reservation for the summer. Many (from 8-years-old and up) would return to their foster homes year after year until graduating from high school.

For Teresa, it was different. She was 4 when she was sent to live with the Williamson family in American Fork, Utah. She was too young to be on the Placement Program, so Junior and Gladys Williamson took her in as their foster daughter. And unlike placement students who would go home for the summer, Teresa would stay year-round.

“So I went into this new home in American Fork and it was traumatizing to me, she says. “I was 4 years old and I didn’t know what I was doing. I was just left in this home and I remember crying and crying. My foster mom would later tell me that she had to finally buy a radio to put by my bed and so ….” As Teresa reflects on that time, tears well in her eyes and the room becomes still. “My mom was … um … she was just busy, she just…” She stops again and takes a deep breath as she dabs tears from her eyes. “My foster parents were my mom and dad.”

She would not return to the reservation again until she was 11 when the Williamson family drove her down for a short visit. Now, as they look back on those long separations, they better appreciate how much their birth parents had given up to let them go. If the tables were turned, Teresa says it is a sacrifice she would never make with her own children.

“Because we didn’t live on the reservation, it created an isolation between us and our families,” Curtis says. “I remember when we would go to my mom’s place and she would say, ‘I wish more of my kids would come and visit me, you know? I’m lonely; there’s nobody here.’”

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those long separations, they better appreciate how much their birth parents had given up to let them go. If the tables were turned, Teresa says it is a sacrifice she would never make with her own children.

“Because we didn’t live on the reservation, it created an isolation between us and our families,” Curtis says. “I remember when we would go to my mom’s place and she would say, ‘I wish more of my kids would come and visit me, you know? I’m lonely; there’s nobody here.’”

It was not until Teresa was in high school that she would actually go and stay with her mom for extended periods. Curtis says that it was during those times that Teresa’s foster parents were apprehensive about those lengthier reservation stays. Once, after Teresa had been away for more than four days, they became so anxious about her that they drove down and picked her up.

Teresa chuckles as she recalls that incident. “They were scared that I was going to be hurt and they were scared, I think, of the poverty. I don’t know.”

Curtis says it is an example of how wholeheartedly the Williamson family had taken Teresa into their lives and hearts. “And you know, the thing is, it extends to our kids because they look at Junior and Gladys as their grandma and grandpa,” Curtis says. “I don’t know how many times we’ve been to restaurants where our sons would say something like ‘hey grandpa, pass me the salt’ and the waitress would give a double take. I remember one even asking, ‘now how are you related?’”

This story is played out many times over across both families. On Curtis’s side, eight of his nine brothers and sisters were on the placement program. While all of them still consider the reservation to be their traditional home, all remain scattered and off the reservation save for one sister who recently returned.

His two youngest brothers were eventually put in the same foster home in Huntsville, Utah, “and to this day, though they are no longer living with them, they are considered ‘regular members of the family,’” he says. “All my brothers and sisters (and all but three with college degrees) are having their own kids and grandkids and when we get together for holidays, it’s with our foster families, not with each other.”

That likely has amounted to a great deal of double takes over the years. But it is not turning heads that matter to either of them. It is turning minds, through education, that makes up for the sacrifice of family and culture they missed along the way.

**Go my son**

The Fraziers credit education for helping to shape the people they are today and bundled into that is their LDS Church upbringing and its emphasis on higher education. No surprise that both found themselves at Brigham Young University in the early ’80s, but what was a little surprising was how many other Native Americans who were also there. Native American enrollment at BYU was peaking. In all, more than 300 Indian students, mostly LDS, from 71 tribes were there each year of the 1970s, according to Chadwick and Garrow.

Curtis and Teresa felt at home with their mostly Anglo-student peers, but they also formed tight alliances with Native Americans, many of whom participated in clubs and entertainment organizations such as the “Tribe of Many Feathers” (where Curtis first laid eyes on Teresa) and the “Lamanite Generation.” It was not the fervor of the feathers that bonded them as Native Americans, however, as much as it was a shared yearning to earn their feathers for the betterment of their people.

No song captured that sentiment more ably than “Go My Son,” a crowd favorite performed by the Lamanite Generation throughout Utah and many parts of the nation. It was written and performed by two BYU students, Arlene Nofchissey Williams and Carnes Burson, a Navajo and Ute respectively. It begins with a spoken introduction: “Long ago an Indian war chief counseled his people in the way they should walk. He wisely told them that education is the ladder to success and happiness. ‘Go my son, and climb that ladder...’”

The song remains a favorite among many Native Americans to this day and, in recent years, was even included in the repertoire of a short-lived Blanding campus Native American performing group. Teresa says her foster parents especially loved it and played a recording of it often. Maybe because they knew Teresa, whom they loved as their own, was also a beloved daughter of a Navajo mother and father.

“We are kind of unusual and odd,” Teresa says with a grin. “It’s been a good journey. I’ve learned a lot about my people and my culture even though there’s so much more to learn, but just being part of the student’s lives has really been good. It’s taught us a lot.”

If that ladder to success is education, it is also a bridge for Curtis and Teresa between two cultures in the form of unyielding aspirations held for a son and daughter by parents on both sides of the void. “… From on the ladder of an education, you can see to help your Indian Nation, then reach, my son and lift your people up with you.”

It is a lofty view the Fraziers share. Perhaps that is why, from way up there, the color of a person’s skin is so hard for them to see.

~ John DeVilbiss
For Puerto Rico student athletes;  
A WAITING GAME

Schedules, exams and textbooks became almost non-existent fall semester for five Utah State University Eastern student athletes from Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria wiped out much of their homeland.

With the electrical grid and cell phone towers destroyed in Puerto Rico, each student anxiously watched the news and social media sites for updates on their families after the hurricane left much of the country’s 4 million Americans without power, fresh water, food, fuel or phone service.

“We’ve been hit by hurricanes and tropical storms before, but never one of this magnitude,” said sophomore Lionel Colon Adams. The hurricane that hit Puerto Rico was a category-four storm and dropped a foot of rain on the island and damaged 80 percent of the structures.

Kenneth Maisonet, Steven Ortiz Torres, Joseam Rivera, Rafael A. Nunez and Adams are all from Puerto Rico and recruited by Eastern’s head baseball coach Scott Madsen to play for the Eagles. Four of the players graduated from Pro Baseball Academy, an all-male high school on the island.

The students were born in Puerto Rico and have large-extended families living throughout the island. Because Hurricane Maria was one of the biggest catastrophes in modern history for Puerto Rico, the five-baseball players spent days waiting for someone from their families to contact them. By Sept. 25, they were all contacted that their families were safe.

Officials said 1,360 of the island’s cell towers collapsed and 85 percent of above-ground and underground phone and Internet cables were knocked out. Roads were blocked, phones dead and hospitals at capacity, making the situation even more dire. Over 155-mile-an-hour winds pounded the island for hours.

Adams explained when a hurricane or tropical storm is forecast, most people buy gas and canned food. They cover their home’s windows with plywood or metal. Signs are placed throughout the island saying “Prepare Yourself.” We get up to a week warning to prepare for these events. We’ve gone through many strong storms every year… but not one this bad.”

Families are celebrated in Puerto Rico and the family with the largest house is where most family members congregate during storms. Everyone brings food and wine as we stay inside and catch up with family and friends while riding out the storm. Our culture makes this experience positive for each family member, Adams said.

Those who live in homes made totally of cement should be okay, except for the flooding and mud slides. When the flood waters in the homes recede, people throw away the furniture and anything that gets wet. Most of the floors are tile and will eventually dry. Adams estimates 80 percent of the homes in Puerto Rico have cement walls, floors and roofs.

The homes made from wood are not usually salvageable. Between the water and wind, there is usually nothing to save after a hurricane, Adams said. Because the north and south areas of Puerto Rico are mountainous (4,390 feet above sea level), people living along the mountain ranges usually do not get as much flooding as those in the coastal areas.

Adams and Torres arrived on Eastern’s campus in fall 2016. During the first month of college they found themselves, along with their baseball teammates, shoveling sand in bags for area residents after torrential rain flooded many areas of Carbon County for a week. They had helped clean up flood waters in Puerto Rico many times, and last year, the two freshman helped fill sand bags to prevent flooding in homes throughout Southeastern Utah.
Torres’ father works for one of the power plants in Puerto Rico and has access to a satellite phone. “He called me to let me know my family is okay, but lots of trees and poles are down.”

On the day of the interview, Coach Madsen received a phone call from Adam’s uncle in New York. The uncle told Madsen that he had been in contact with Adam’s mom in Puerto Rico and they were safe. Within seven days, all the students had been contacted by family members that they were okay.

Throughout the week, each student talked about trying to focus on academics and baseball while thinking about their families and wondering if they were safe, had food and a place to stay.

Nunez saw a message on Facebook a couple days after the hurricane hit the island and saw his hometown was destroyed, no trees, no construction. The waterfront hotels were all gone. The cement houses were all that were standing.

All five students agree attending college on America’s mainland is better for them. “The U.S. offers the best education and a better life for us,” Nunez said. “We feel safe at USU Eastern, but do not like the political climate in America. We are afraid that America is going into a war.”

Taking their education serious, two of the students plan to major in electrical engineering, one in biology, one in business and one has not decided his major.

Three of the students speak fluent English and two are enrolled in English as a Second Language class. Most Puerto Ricans speak Spanish and take conversational English classes in elementary school.

The language barrier is not a problem in sports. According to these student athletes, it’s the same baseball rules in Puerto Rico, only everyone who plays there tries to make it look easy. Hopefully, as in playing the game of baseball, life will become easier for these five athletes knowing their families survived September’s “apocalyptic” catastrophe.

~ Susan Polster
The buzzer sounds, a horse and its rider stampede from the chute. Mud flies, hearts pound and crowds cheer. It is difficult to find adrenaline-packed seconds like in rodeo. A minuscule space of time stretches on for minutes, and then it is over. Whether it’s steer wrestling, barrel racing or riding bulls, rodeo competitors spend hundreds of hours training, traveling and warming up to test skills for few short ticks of the clock. Each competitor gets one attempt to show what they are made of. There are no “redos” in this sport.

Rodeo teammates spend 15-20 hours practicing during the rodeo season, so that when they are under pressure, they can perform. They ride their horses nearly every day to keep them in shape and have to get to the point where the animal and rider automatically know what to do when the heat is on.

Even with the severely lopsided performance versus practice time, competitors love their few seconds in the arena.

“It’s an addiction. There is a rush when I nod my head and get a good time, there’s not a better feeling in the whole world,” Tyler Olsen said, a sophomore on the team who transferred from Snow College.

Utah State University Eastern’s fledgling rodeo team is midway through their third season and things are looking bright. Several members of the team are ranked in the Rocky Mountain Region and Morgan Jensen, one of the team’s barrel racers, is in first place overall.

“My dream is to go to the National Finals Rodeo… I know that everyone says that, but I really do want to get there,” Morgan said. With her excitement and drive, the possibilities are real - it’s not a pipe dream.

Hard luck helped Morgan out this year. In barrell racing, the rider and racer become one in movement, purpose and will. A strong relationship between cowgirl and her horse is what wins races. Her veteran horse she raced on consistently over the past few years, became shockingly ill when he laid down one day without warning. She took it to the emergency veterinarian and found he ran with a hole in his diaphragm causing him to use only one lung.

“He gave me his best all this time on one lung,” she said. Without her stellar horse, Morgan had to switch to a novice horse she had hardly practiced on.

“I’ve owned her since she was 3, but she was kind of the horse I left on the back burner. I hadn’t worked with her much,” she said.

Something clicked between Morgan and her new horse. Together, they placed first or second at every college rodeo this semester. There is a break in the winter, and rodeo resumes spring semester. During the break, she plans to compete in pro rodeos to keep in shape - she will be ready for the college circuit in a few months.

Dejavu - success returns

Morgan is a part of a growing number of students drawn to Eastern’s rodeo program. The program was on hiatus for a decade because in 1994, it came to an unexpected end. Leon McEleprang and Monte Jensen were both members of the College of Eastern Utah team when they were students in the ’90s, and they did not get to finish their years of eligibility when the team ended mid-way through their college careers.

Three years ago, they noticed seven high school students from Carbon and Emery counties went to the National High School Rodeo Finals in 2014. They watched helplessly as local students were recruited to join college teams in Texas and Arizona.

The idea of giving Castle Country students the opportunity to attend USUE and compete in rodeo was welcomed by Vice Chancellor of Enrollment
Management, Greg Dart. He wholeheartedly supported bringing the team back. McElprang and Jensen acted quickly and a rodeo team rolled into motion.

**The team is growing**

Last year, Eastern’s team had two members. This year, the coaches built their scholarship offers to recruit four men and three women. Two of the students are from out-of-state.

“It is exciting to see our growth the last couple of years, and we have had some success early at fall rodeos this year. We have more students coming to tour the school and see what we have to offer. I really think we are becoming contenders to go the college nationals finals this year,” Monte said.

Two of this year’s students were on rodeo teams at other colleges. They chose to transfer to USUE when they saw the school’s small program as an advantage.

Tailon Crane was competing for Eastern Wyoming College in Torrington, Wyoming. When she came to Eastern’s rodeo in Price to watch her sister compete; she was impressed. “I really liked the school, its atmosphere and how small it is - so I contacted the coaches about coming here,” she said.

She hasn’t looked back, “The team is small enough that members can get the help they need from the coaches. The situation makes it possible for rodeo competitors to reach their full potential.” With three more years of eligibility, Crane is excited to see where the program takes her. Eventually, she plans on becoming a pharmacist.

Organizing and running a college-level team is not an easy business, USUE competes in the Rocky Mountain Region against 10 colleges and universities. Competitors load their horses into trailers and drive to rodeos throughout Utah, Colorado and Idaho.

One of last year’s competitors, Zach Jensen, said, visiting new places is one of his favorite parts of the sport, “I like the travel. I have enjoyed meeting new people and becoming good friends with my competitors from all over the West because we see each other every weekend at rodeos.”

“It is really nerve racking. A lot of people don’t get nerves, but I do when I rope. A few minutes before I rope, it’s almost like my brain blacks out. My mind goes completely blank and I rely on muscle memory pretty much.” Zach said.

**Roping a degree**

Rodeo is about more than riding and roping. For Zach, competing on the USUE rodeo team will change his future. “I always wanted to go to college, but when it came down to it, I wasn’t sure if I would go or just get a job. The rodeo scholarship at USU Eastern made all of the difference. It made the decision clear about going to college. Rodeo has helped me get an education, and make myself better. I want to push my friends to compete in college rodeo, and get college educations. It is really worth it. I’m so glad that I did it.”

“It has taught me to work hard for my dreams, they’re not just going to come to me;” Lacey McElprang, a roper who graduated spring 2107, added.

The team’s goal is to produce a winning-rodeo team and support students through the educational process. “It’s the most expensive bad habit to have, but it is sure a great way to raise kids and teach them to have responsibility. We get a lot of support from the community with many volunteers that came out to our rodeo and gave us a hand. We couldn’t do it without them,” Monte said.

~ Renee Banasky

The Grand Entry flag for USU Eastern’s rodeo is brought in by Tailon Crane.
Local businessmen, Mark Morley and Jared Haddock, spearheaded bringing an authorized marble cast of the Renaissance statue to Utah State University’s campus.

The story of how a Pieta replica came to Price began when Morley and his family traveled to Rome to visit a foreign exchange student. They visited Vatican City. Seeing the Pieta was an unexpected highlight, “I was honestly moved to tears when I saw it and I’m not an art person,” said Tasha Morley. Her husband, Mark, had similar feelings, “Michelangelo sculpted it in such a way that it looks soft. It evokes a lot of emotion. It’s breathtaking,” he said.

Years later, Morley came into contact with the foundry that owns the official rights from the Vatican to replicate the Pieta. He remembered the way that he felt looking at the original, and was driven to find a way to bring a replica to Utah.

But, securing a replica of one of the world’s most famous sculptures was not an easy undertaking. There are 100-authorized-marble replicas in the world and more will not be created because the Vatican is not granting any new rights. The copies are full-sized, extremely expensive and obviously require a large building for display. Morley enlisted one of his friends and colleagues, Jared Haddock, in the effort. As director of a nonprofit organization called, Vertex, Haddock threw his time and connections into the project.

For Haddock, he felt a personal connection to the artwork. “I have lost a son and felt something when I looked at this sculpture. I felt for Mary’s sacrifice losing her child. The neatest thing to me was to realize that while Christ was hanging on the cross, in the greatest agony, his thoughts were to his mother. It was important to him to make sure that his apostle John took care of his mother even though he was in pain. She knew that he loved her. I was in total agony when I lost my child, It comforted me to see that in the sculpture... Mary looks like she understands why her son died.”

When Morley and Haddock secured the Pieta replica, they did not know exactly where to house it. As alumni, they both wanted to see it displayed at USUE. Time constraints did not allow for long-range planning; they had to find a location in one day. If the university declined, they had a backup plan.

“As the statue was loaded onto the truck we called the Chancellor Joe Peterson. It was the day of his father’s funeral. He answered the call and gladly accepted the offer,” Haddock explained. Within hours it was on display in the Central Instruction Building’s foyer adjacent to Gallery East.

“It is an amazing piece of artwork. I thought it would give an opportunity to give extended exposure to a significant piece of art. It was practical for the people who owned the art and it was practical for us,” Peterson said.

~ Renee Banasky

Michelangelo’s “Pieta” REPLICA ON USUE

Hundres of thousands of people travel to Rome each year to see the Colosseum, St. Peter’s Basilica and the Pantheon. The culmination the Vatican tour ends with viewing what many argue as Michelangelo’s best work, the Pietà (pronounced pē-ā-ˈtā). This 500-year-old marble sculpture of Mary holding the crucified body of her son, Christ, is breathtaking on many levels. A rare opportunity to see an exact replica of the Pietà is available to without airfare or the exhausting trip to Rome.

A replica of the “Pieta” is displayed in the lobby of the CIB.

Photo courtesy Jason Olsen
Finding a “work around”

At 12 years old, all Jason Dunn cared about was sports, football in particular. His life revolved around it. He and his friends spent all of their time playing football, baseball, soccer and basketball. It was all he thought about in his waking moments and his dreams.

This world came crashing down around him when doctors informed him that he had a spinal-birth defect. Because his spine was very susceptible to injury, his youthful football career abruptly ended out of necessity. This was an epic moment for Jason. All of his friends suited up and went to play without him. The leader of the pack was a mere spectator for the first time in his life. Dunn was crushed.

“It was the first time that I can remember that I made a conscious decision to change my focus from the adversity I was experiencing and to dwell on solutions,” he said. “I call them work arounds. I needed to find a way to work around the problem.”

Dunn asked the coach if he could be a manager for the team. He could be a part of the football effort even if he couldn’t be out on the grass.

One day, before practice, Jason was out on the field with his friends kicking field goals. The coach, Bruce Bean, took notice of Dunn’s talent. He approached Dunn to join the team as a kicker. Dunn was thrilled with the idea, but his parents were understandably concerned and opposed any chance of a disabling injury. Bean visited Jason’s house to convince his parents that his players would protect their son from a spine-crushing tackle. They consented.

Pouring himself into this new opportunity, Dunn finished his high school football career as a first-team-all-state kicker.

Caption Call

At an early age, he learned that the power to overcome challenges starts with mental focus. Now, as vice president of operations at Caption Call, when he his faced with impediments, he chooses to look at the possibilities, not the roadblocks. There is no doubt that he has a clear vision of where Caption Call is headed. He is determined to find the work arounds in every area of his life.

“I am blessed to work in one of the most rewarding businesses in the world,” he said. “Few businesses can
give people back something that they have lost and that is exactly what we do.”

Caption Call serves the deaf community by providing phone-relay services.

Dunn loves his work, no doubt. His eyes are teary as he relates a story about one customer’s phone that was returned. With the phone came a letter explaining that this woman and her daughter lived in distant cities. They could not communicate much before she began the Caption Call service. After they began using Caption Call, they were able to reconnect and the last few years of her life, they were able to reconnect and communicate often. It gave them back time together that disability had taken away.

The customer’s daughter thanked Caption Call for giving them a vehicle to be close again.

“Caption Call gives back what a disability takes away,” he said. “It has a direct impact on people’s lives.”

Because Caption Call is a communication industry tied to phones, it faces tight government regulations. Dunn’s goal is to keep his eye on the goal and find a work around when regulations provide roadblocks.

Dunn is handsome, kind, unassuming, people-oriented and extremely competitive. His unique personality traits make him an outstanding businessman. Sorenson Communications (which was the parent company of Caption Call) has utilized his energy to grow several businesses. When he started 12 years ago, they brought him on to be the operations manager of a small corporation that developed video phones for the deaf. He worked to grow the operations into a nation-wide business.

Then Dunn moved on to new challenges in Canada’s market. He testified before Canada’s regulatory agency, much like the FCC in the United States, to bring Sorenson’s services there. He led the opening of eight offices throughout Canada. Breaking ground in new territory was exciting for Dunn and he was extremely successful.

In 2011, the CEO at Sorenson Communication pulled Dunn off of his assignment and asked him to grow a small startup called Caption Call, an internat protocol or text relay service for the deaf. At the time, Caption Call had five employees. In five years, the company has grown frantically. Caption Call now employs 3,500 people.

One thing that Dunn enjoys about working hard to grow Caption Call is the opportunity to give back. “I’ve been able to come to my hometown and open an office here in Price.” The office has been open for seven years and employs 160 people.

Price roots run deep in Dunn’s heart. He recognizes that growing up in a close-knit community was an amazing way to start life. The schools in Price gave him confidence to excel in many areas: socially academically and in sports. He graduated from Carbon High in 1995 and went to College of Eastern Utah after a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

As his college education began, Dunn remembers one of the most important lessons that he learned - outside of the classroom. He was on an adult softball team with Brad King, now retired from USU Eastern and formerly a Utah State legislator representing District 69. King pulled Dunn aside and asked him how things were going. Dunn indulged in some negativity and told King about some difficulties that he had experienced. Dunn said King’s reply to him struck him deeply, “Just remember that you have the ability to determine your happiness with your college experience.”

As a result, Dunn said he chose to put the time and effort into making the experience at CEU amazing. He focused on academic excellence and making the most of the moment by attending activities and reaching out to make friends. He looks back on those years as the time when he found his career calling.

Pre-medical was his designated major. A business leadership class looked interesting, so he signed up. The professor’s classes were so entertaining and engaging. Dunn realized that he had a hidden passion for the business world. The professor took students off site to analyze real businesses. He
realized that his competitive personality fit the business world perfectly and that he could make a positive difference in other people’s lives. Dunn chose to change his major and hasn’t looked back with a moment of regret.

After graduating from the University of Utah, Dunn worked for American Airlines. He loved moving his way up through the managerial staff. He got to the point where if he wanted to continue his upward career path, he would have to move from Utah to Palm Springs, California. He and his wife, Sarah Smith, paused for a moment to evaluate their goals. They decided that they wanted to stay near extended family and raise their children in the safe environment Utah offers. Dunn started to search for employment that would keep his family in the state.

One of Sarah’s relatives approached Jason about considering a job with Sorenson Communication. After a grueling interview process with four executives and then the chief operations officer, the company offered him a job.

Dunn immediately entered an intense-training program he equates to an on-the-job-MBA, master’s in business administration. He quickly picked up on the skills needed to lead in many areas: operations, segmenting, human relations, seeking opportunities to add value to the company and customer service.

Now as a leader in the business world, Dunn is traditional about what matters most. His goal is to be the best husband and father he can, and to help others do the same. The business centers on family at work and home. Professionals are invited to bring their families to conferences and spend a few days together vacationing after the business is complete. As a leader in the company, he looks to hire individuals who support the team goals. His mantra is, “Nobody has a personal agenda, and our focus is the team.” He is willing to take a gamble on people whom he can trust if they are hard workers, he said.

If the culture of the company and the environment for employees is excellent, it will have an impact on creating a better bottom line. As a team they work and play hard. Occasionally they even have a dodgeball completion to blow off steam, he said.

Dunn served as a trustee for CEU starting in 2008 during the transition-discussion phase prior to the merger of CEU with Utah State University. It was a difficult situation, but the two institutions were able to resolve issues surrounding the partnership in a way that was in the community’s best interest, he said. Currently he serves on the Regional Advisory Board. He takes time out of his hectic schedule because he loves serving the students. In the end, he feels, “proud of the school and community for finding a work around to serious problems.”

~ Renee Banasky

“Just remember that you have the ability to determine your happiness with your college experience.” ~ Brad King
Nine students from Utah State University Eastern Blanding spent two weeks in Cambodia during their summer break helping promote health programs and sharing cultures with the local Cambodians.

The trip was coordinated through Youthlinc, a non-profit organization with the mission to provide students and youth with opportunities to provide service and leadership to societies around the globe. In total 19 students from Utah State University participated in the trip, along with faculty and staff leaders from the university.

During the trip students participated in several service projects including building desks at Sustainable Cambodia (a local NGO primary and secondary school), teaching English and public health lessons, and rebuilding classroom infrastructures for the Sustainable Cambodia campus. Prior to the trip, USU students worked to raise funds to acquire the supplies needed for projects in Cambodia.

Jessica Roueche, a staff member and student at the Blanding campus, was a key player in coordinating and recruiting for the trip. Roueche has volunteered internationally with Youthlinc since 2011, and in 2016 she traveled with USU to Honduras for a summer study abroad and service trip. Her experience in Honduras and passion for service led her to work toward introducing more students from the Blanding campus to the service programs with Youthlinc.

“Having been exposed to the study abroad programs with USU, and with volunteer services through Youthlinc, it was my goal to have these opportunities available to students here in Blanding,” Roueche said.

The 2017 study abroad Cambodia program was led by Steve Hawks, Ph.D., a faculty member and administrator at USU Moab, and by Justin Powell, executive director at Youthlinc.

Several students in the program came from Native American communities in the Four-Corners Region, served by the Blanding campus. The trip provided an opportunity to share the Native American culture with the people of Cambodia. The Cultural Ambassador Performance Program dance group from the Blanding campus shared performances of Native American dances while in traditional dress to the communities visited in Cambodia.

Beyond the service projects, the students were able to visit and tour several historic sites while in Cambodia. Their trip started in the capital city, Phnom Penh, where they toured the city, the Killing Fields and the Royal University of Phnom Penh. Near the end of the trip, they had the opportunity to visit Siem Reap to visit the Angkor Wat Temples, Angkor Children’s hospital and the Cambodian Landmine Museum.

“The impact from the exchange
of cultures is an experience I had never had before,” said Roueche, speaking of the trip as a whole. “I was very impressed to see our students not hesitate to help, despite the language barrier. When there was a project issue, they were quick to communicate and work with the Cambodian people.”

Based on the success of the trip the Office of Global Engagement through Study Abroad at USU plans on continuing the study abroad program to Cambodia each year, providing students with further opportunities to study and provide service abroad.

The Global Community Leadership (GCL) program to Cambodia will be offered in May 2018 for students at USU in Logan, as well as for the USU Eastern Price and Blanding campuses.

~ David Mathis

Sharing Native American culture with the people of Columbia

(L) Quisheima Brown leads students in a traditional dance. (Top) Mason Kemp & Ryan Temp help in an Elephant Sanctuary in Thailand.
Joel Garvin, ’10

Garvin grew up plugged into videogames, took his first 3D and digital art classes at Skyview High School in Smithfield, Utah. Enrolling in CEU, he built an art foundation and experienced college life. At CEU, he was an RA and in student leadership. He played euphonium in the Wind Symphony and sang in the choir. He worked in Gallery East and participated in student art shows and pottery sales. He spent late nights working in the printmaking and graphic design labs.

After three years, he graduated summa cum laude and named Art Student of the Year, with an AA and AAS in graphic design. He moved to Seattle, Washington, and earned a BFA in visual communication at the Northwest College of Art & Design. Graduating as valedictorian, he started a videogame studio with friends to build portfolios and find jobs. He and his partners worked on a game for over a year, were invited to multiple trade shows and events. He works for Microsoft on the Minecraft team as a 3D artist making content for the game, and its education initiatives like the Minecraft Hour of Code and hopes to foster the same kind of creative ambition in kids like him.

Barbara Garvin, ‘10

Barbara Garvin, MS, LMFT, is a licensed marriage and family therapist working in Seattle. She attended CEU as an international student from Germany and sang with the choir as well as worked at Gallery East. She focused on fine arts and psychology classes and received the Psychology Student of the Year in 2010.

After graduation, she completed her BA in psychology with a minor in art history at Seattle Pacific University maintaining a 4.0 GPA. She remained at Seattle Pacific University for a graduate program in marriage and family therapy which she completed in 2014. She has been working at a community mental health non-profit agency providing therapy to low-income children, families and young adults from diverse backgrounds. She is married to Joel Garvin.

Nathan Davis ‘10

Davis attended CEU three years before transferring to Weber State University. While at CEU, he studied music and journalism and worked on The Eagle as sports editor and played in the band. At WSU, Davis continued studying journalism and served as sports editor and editor-in-chief of The Signpost. During his time at WSU, he won a Utah Society of Professional Journalism award for deadline sports writing.

Since leaving college, Davis worked as a reporter for The Post Register, in Idaho Falls, Idaho, as well as working as a freelance writer. During his time at The Post Register, he covered arts and entertainment and wrote weekly articles on upcoming concerts and plays. He is a content producer for news radio station and covers politics.

In his spare time, he enjoys playing and watching sports, hiking and playing the guitar. He has a passion of music and literature, both of which he traces back to his time at CEU.

MJ Gardner, ’02

Gardner comes from three generations of coal miners. From an early age, he realized he didn’t want to be a coal miner, mainly because it’s hard to tell a joke when you have black lung. He received his AS from CEU, his BS in English Literature from Westminster College and his MS from the Academy of Art in San Francisco for film production. The best part of being a student at CEU, he said, was being a part of The Eagle newspaper staff. In 2013, he joined Cougar Town as the showrunner’s assistant. The writers took notice of his talent and started having him sit in the writer’s room. Over the next two years: Gardner pitched jokes, helped develop arcs and break stories.

During Cougar Town’s hiatus, Gardner assisted Jeff Lowell in putting together a writer’s room for ABC’s pilot, “Manhattan Love Story.” Shortly after, Gardner signed with the Kaplan Stahler Agency. Last year, he was a finalist for the ABC Diversity Writer’s Program and a semi-finalist for NBC Writer’s on the Verge.

Leona Christensen Long, ’92

Long attended CEU on a journalism scholarship. She covered hard news and served as editor of The Eagle. Long graduated with AS degree in journalism and named Journalism Student of the Year in 1996. She earned her BS in English and communications from Weber State University.

As the public information officer for the University of Alaska Fairbanks’ College of Rural and Community Development, Long designed and implemented the first public relations effort for the university’s five-rural campuses and indigenous programs. As an individual competing against teams, Long won five-Public Relations Society of America Alaska Chapter Aurora Awards and an Award of Excellence for writing. In 2016, she placed first in public service for a pro bono campaign that kept Beaver’s Cruikshank School open after losing state funding due to low enrollment. Long serves as pro bono public relations counsel for several Alaska Native villages and writes for First Alaskans magazine.

Todd Green ’87

Green attended CEU on a cheer
scholarship. He served as the editor of The Eagle and was named Outstanding Journalism Student, yell leader and sophomore student in ‘87. He continued at Southern Utah University where he was cheer captain and worked summers for Spirit International Association.

Green moved to Seattle in 1992 beginning his career with PEMCO Insurance. He has held a variety of roles from customer service to principal business analyst. He works on the company’s websites, implementing strategies that improve online sales and customer service through digital channels.

In 2015, he dusted off his megaphone and joined Cheer Seattle, a nonprofit organization of adult volunteer cheerleaders. The team raises funds and spirits for people with life changing conditions in the LGBT community.

Cindy Green Powell, ‘86
Powell came to CEU to cheer for the Eagles from Taylorsville, Utah. After graduation, she moved to Las Vegas, Nevada, where she followed her passion of health and fitness at a mom and pop company for 10 years. The acquisition of the company by a larger fitness company expanded her management skills and she was named manager of the year worldwide, twice in 10 years, plus received many other awards and honors in this field. She earned a MBA at Grand Canyon University (GCU) and shared the graduation stage with her daughter who graduated with her BS degree the same day.

Powell works at GCU as a counselor manager assisting people go back to school to complete their degree. She is starting an online business in the health and wellness field, plus assists at a customizable online business.

Sam Lucero, ‘80
A native of Ogden, Utah, Lucero received a journalism scholarship to attend CEU. He served on The Eagle newspaper staff and was editor his sophomore year. He was also active in the Newman Club, a Catholic student club, serving as president his sophomore year.

After graduating from CEU, Lucero transferred to USU in Logan, where he earned a BA degree in journalism and a Spanish minor. He served on The Statesman newspaper staff, was active in the Newman Club and met his wife, Laurie, a Wisconsin native. Upon graduation, he began a career in Catholic journalism. In 1983, he was hired as staff writer for the Intermountain Catholic newspaper for the Diocese of Salt Lake City. Other positions he held included assistant editor, the Southern Cross, Diocese of San Diego, 1986-87; editor, Superior Catholic Herald, Superior, Wis., 1987-2001; managing editor, Milwaukee Catholic Herald, 2002-2007; and editor, The Compass, Green Bay, Wis., 2007 to present.

Over his 30-plus years in the Catholic press, Lucero earned numerous awards for writing, photography, print and website design.

Brad Monks, ‘72
Monks attended CEU on an athletic scholarship and was a member of the Golden Eagle basketball team coached by Curt Jensen. He continued his education at USU where he earned a BS degree in secondary education and MS in education with an administrative endorsement. He taught and coached basketball at Union High School in Roosevelt, Utah. He was an assistant principal at UHS when he was hired to fill an assistant principal vacancy at Timpview High School in Provo, Utah. Part of his administrative assignments at THS was to oversee the athletic programs. During his tenure, the athletic teams at Timpview garnered 41-state championships. “I was lucky to have a dedicated group of coaches and talented student athletes.” He is currently serving as the principal of Provo eSchool and is the district-wide YIC Coordinator, which includes administrative duties at Slate Canyon Youth Center.
January 2018
- Gallery East
  - Utah Watercolor Society Paintings, Jan. 8-Feb. 2, 8am-5pm

February 2018
- Gallery East
  - Mike King’s Photographs, Feb. 5-March 2, 8am-5pm
- Theatre Production
  - “Steel Magnolias” Feb. 22-23, Peterson Black Box, 7:30pm
- Band
  - 2018 National Tour of U.S. Navy Band, Feb. 27, BDAC, 7:30pm

March 2018
- Theatre Production
  - “Steel Magnolias,” March 1-3, Peterson Black Box, 7:30pm
- Choir
  - Jr. HS Solo Ensemble, March 2, CIB Music Rooms, 8am-5pm
  - ECPTA Piano Festival, March 3, CIB Music Rooms, 8am-5pm
- Gallery East
  - Lori Wait’s Photographs, March 12-April 6, 8am-5pm
  - Exhibit Reception, March 16, 6pm
- Choir
  - HS Solo Ensemble, March 22, CIB Music Rooms, 8am-5pm
- Dance
  - Dance Team/Cheer Squad Concert, March 22-24, GEC, 7:30pm

April 2018
- Gallery East
  - USU Eastern Student Art Show, April 9-27, 8am-5pm
  - Exhibit Reception, April 26, 6pm
- Theatre Production
  - “Guys and Dolls,” April 12-14, 16, 19-21, 26-28, GEC, 7:30pm
- Women’s Conference
  - 39th Annual Conference, April 13, campus, 9am-3pm
- Choir
  - Piano/Vocal Student Recital, April 27, CIB 120, 1:30 pm
- Commencement
  - Speaker: Mack Wilberg (Mormon Tabernacle Choir Director)
    BDAC, 10:30am B April 28, BDAC, 10am