



2021-2022 Annual Report

Center for Community Engagement

UtahStateUniversity.

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

Sean Damitz

The mission of the Center for Community Engagement is to develop active citizens through community engagement and scholarship. When our department talks about engagement, we're not talking virtual and social media. I think we've all had a little bit too much of that type of engagement over the past two years. The engagement of our department, this student body, Utah State University, and the greater community is not about clicks, likes, and retweets. The engagement featured in this annual report is about reciprocal relationships that benefit all involved. These relationships build community as well as enhance and enrich students' learning experiences. These relationships make us face outward, not inward, to meet the challenges that confront us. Thank you for your support of the Center for Community Engagement as we continue to build and execute our mission of engagement.

2021-22 STUDENT IMPACT SURVEY



96% of students surveyed said their CCE program prepared them to listen to the perspectives of people from different backgrounds in an effort to understand and collaborate.



88% of students surveyed understand the root causes and community contexts relevant to their community engagement.



100% of students surveyed said the CCE encouraged them to explore ways in which they can make a contribution to the public good.



80% of students surveyed understand how to work with community partners to identify community assets, opportunities, and challenges.



94% of student surveyed understand how their coursework or degree can be applied to the greater good.



86% of students surveyed said the CCE enabled them to work with the community to create measurable positive impact.

CCE Mission, Vision & Values

Mission

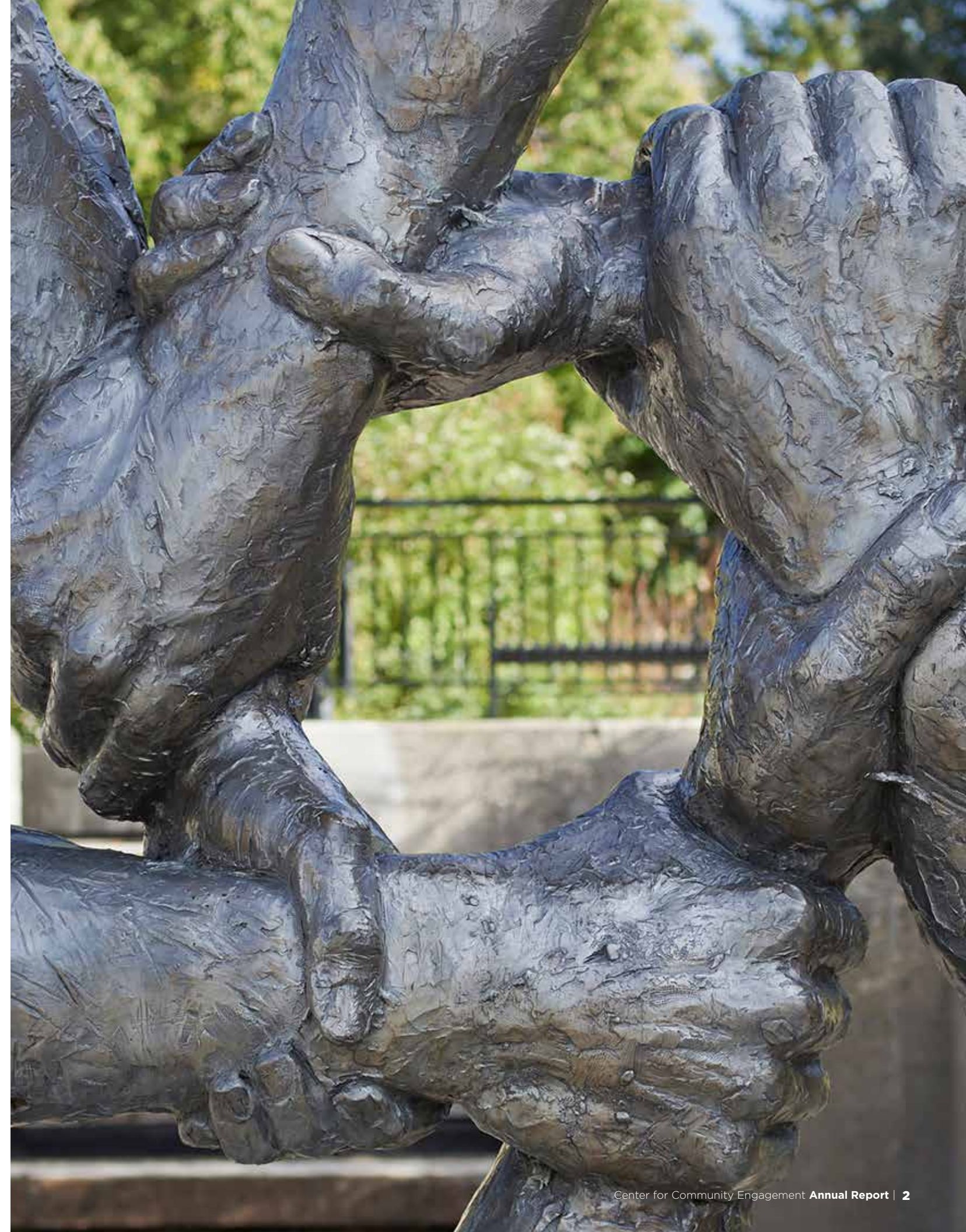
To support student development as active citizens and generate positive, community-driven change locally and around the world.

Vision

Furthering USU's land-grant mission, CCE empowers students to explore civic identity, develop leadership skills, and address community-identified needs, locally and around the world.

We Value:

- *Mutually beneficial partnerships that inform community-driven change*
- *Equality and meeting full potentials*
- *Critical and reflective thinking*
- *Active and informed citizenship*
- *Traditions of national service in American society*



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AWARDS

2022 Community Engagement Awards: Each year, USU recognizes individuals who are committed to outstanding service. Three categories were awarded during the ceremony: the Presidential Awards for Community Engagement, the Ivory Prize, and the Crista Sorenson Award for Outstanding Civic and Community Engagement.

Crista Sorenson Award for Outstanding Civic and Community Engagement

Megan Wilson

Senior, Printmaking
1,700+ Service hours for AmeriCorps



Megan Wilson received the first annual Crista Sorenson Award for Outstanding Civic and Community Engagement. Wilson received the award for their dedication to social and environmental justice through the arts. While completing their degree, Megan contributed over 1,700 AmeriCorps service hours through the Student Sustainability Office. Through their efforts with the Utah Conservation Corps, the Student Sustainability Council, True Blue Reuse and USU Farmers Market, they have advanced local causes of sustainability and social equity.

Ivory Prize for Excellence in Community Engagement Award

Nicole Burnard

Senior, Social Work
Developer of the Cache Valley Warming Center



The Ivory Prize was awarded to Nicole Burnard for the development of the Cache Valley Warming Center project. The Ivory Prize recognizes extraordinary accomplishments in community engagement. Established by the Clark and Christine Ivory Foundation, the prize includes a \$2,000 scholarship for the recipient and an additional \$10,000 to be invested in the community program developed by the student.

Community-Engaged Alumni Presidential Award

Casey Snider

Utah State House of Representatives, District 5



Since graduating from USU, Snider has worked in Washington, D.C., for Sen. Bob Bennett and Rep. Rob Bishop and served in numerous community leadership positions with Trout Unlimited, Bear River Land Conservancy, Blue Ribbon Advisory Council, Paradise City, and Utah Cattlemen's Association. Snider is currently the youngest person to be elected to the Utah Legislature.

Community-Engaged Partner Presidential Award

The Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation



The Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation have worked with faculty, staff and students from across every college, including the NSF-funded Daigwade project, the Bear River Massacre site restoration project, a Community-Engaged Learning class on language revitalization, and a Community-Engaged Learning design class that partnered with the cultural center.

Community-Engaged Faculty Presidential Award

Roslynn McCann

Associate Professor, Sustainable Communities Extension Specialist



Awarded for their work to improve Utah's air quality through the annual Utah High School CleanAir Poster Contest.

The contest integrates environmental science, art, and savvy marketing, giving teens the opportunity to learn about Utah's air pollution problems and craft persuasive clean air social messages that resonate with their peers and Utah residents. In 2022, almost 1,000 teens from across the state of Utah participated.

Edwin Stafford

Professor, Marketing & Strategy



Community-Engaged Student Presidential Award

Annika Thorup

Senior, Music Department



While completing her music degree at USU, Thorup has engaged with the community in a variety of ways, including teaching in the Youth Conservatory, serving in Utah Music Teachers Association leadership positions, and working with various local music programs and teachers as a pianist and teacher.

Community-Engaged Staff Presidential Award

James Coburn

Laboratory Specialist, Physics Department



Bringing the community closer to the planets, stars and galaxies through Public Nights at the Observatory.

These events regularly host 300-400 USU and community members. James also engages the public with his Annual Physics Demo Show, bringing upwards of 500 students and community members to the Eccles Science Learning Center to be wowed by exciting and educational physics demonstrations. This audience ranges from children to grandparents and James' display of STEM phenomena gets each and every one of them excited about science and physics.

UTAH HIGHER EDUCATION AMERICORPS NETWORK (UHEAN)

UHEAN has been supporting strategic plans from Utah universities for more than 10 years. The top 4 areas of concern outlined in university strategic plans are 1) Recruitment, 2) Student Success, Retention and Completion, 3) Generating demand for Knowledge, Growth, and Education, and 4) Engaging Communities. The Utah Higher Education AmeriCorps Network has responded to these concerns with the following implementations:

- UHEAN AmeriCorps Members in Education Outreach support pathways of education for K-16 students, encouraging academic success and preparing students for higher education.
- The Financial Award earned by UHEAN AmeriCorps Members supports current and future education, including school fees and student loans.
- Students are encouraged to participate in Member Development Hours during their term of service which is personal and professional development as well as career preparation events hosted by the State Service Commission, UServeUtah.
- The community service completed by students during their terms of service instills a life-long commitment to civic and community engagement.
- All AmeriCorps terms with UHEAN are partnerships with government and non-profit sites. Students are placed according to their educational plans or personal interests.
- The standard requirements of AmeriCorps members ensure strong relationships are built between students, schools, and the community.

UHEAN's 2021-22 Impact



523 UHEAN AmeriCorps members served over 183,750 hours



69 USU students served as UHEAN AmeriCorps members



1,863 community volunteers were recruited to serve 3,000+ hours



\$767,574.21 was earned by UHEAN members in AmeriCorps education awards, and 81% used all or part of their education award to pay for their current associate, bachelor's, or post-graduate degree



UHEAN AmeriCorps members served at 72 sites across the state



Miyah Ngo's Story

Utah AmeriCorps Member of the Month

Miyah's site supervisor, Todd Milovich, spoke to the outstanding commitment she has shown throughout her terms of service. "Miyah's commitment to the kids in After School Club at Ellis Elementary is exemplary. The best example of Miyah's commitment came at the beginning of this school year. I offered her a supervisor spot that would have come with a significant pay increase and she turned it down because she would have had to move to a different school. She did not want to leave the kids at Ellis that she had been working with for years."

"I love working with UHEAN because it provides an opportunity for me to serve in my community in a rewarding and fun way! I also love that I am regularly learning new skills and life lessons that will stay with me and help me later on. But the best part is building connections with the kids and watching them grow and progress — they are so fun and teach me new things every day. Although difficult at times, I wouldn't change a thing about my experience working in the After School Club."



FOR MORE INFO ON UHEAN:

Janell Coleman Torres
Utah Higher Education AmeriCorps Network Program Director

Text Line: 385.988.5316
UHEAN Email: americorps@uhean.org



UTAH CONSERVATION CORPS

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Aidan's Story

Aidan Garrity, UCC member at Utah Clean Energy

My AmeriCorps term of service was a valuable and formative experience in my career. Coming from the architecture and construction field, I was excited about directing my professional and personal passions into an environmental justice-focused role within a community organization. I hit the ground running by connecting with various community leaders and their respective organizations.

One lesson I learned early on was the value of creating and maintaining quality relationships across a broad range of types of organizations. Utah Clean Energy excels at connecting with government leaders, businesspeople, faith communities, local nonprofits and community members. This wide scope of community input and involvement helps Utah Clean Energy's employees generate support for the advancement of clean energy in many sectors. Reflecting on this, I will be sure to prioritize community-based connections in my future work.

A goal of mine while beginning the term of service was to connect with community members at face-to-face events. Even though the first half of the term was still largely disrupted by COVID and the lack of vaccines, the second half of my term proved to be full of opportunities to connect with the community. I attended over 12 in-person community events, where I distributed over 1,600 energy-saving LED light bulbs and home energy checklists primarily to low-income folks and people of color.

Through my AmeriCorps term of service with Utah Clean Energy, I gained coordination and communication skills that will inform the rest of my career. This experience was very valuable and I am grateful for the opportunity.

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2021-22 Impact

233 AmeriCorps members served 128,973 hours to:

- **Improved** habitat on 6,736 acres of public lands
- **Built** and maintained 95 miles of trail
- **Constructed** and maintained 10 miles of fence
- **Recruited** 4,382 community volunteers who served 8,187 hours
- **Provided** natural history and conservation education to 19,725 individuals

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Stephanie's Story

Stephanie Hancey, UCC Member at USU Permaculture Garden

As I'm writing this, the first snow hit this month, and how bittersweet it is to transition out of active garden work.

I have seen such phenomenal growth in my volunteers that have come regularly. The healing capabilities of working with our hands and giving to others is apparent in them. One girl in particular has been on a path of sobriety this year, with multiple challenges in between, looking for ways to give back and get out of her shell. When she first came, she could barely look me in the face to have a conversation. By October, she was not only smiling, but willingly interacting with new volunteers, helping to show them what to do and keeping small conversations with all.

The garden built confidence and empathy in each and every person who came to share in the experience. The USU Farmers Market was another great experience. It was interesting to see the variety of different students the booth attracted. I gained a handful of new helpers and had so many great conversations about conservation and paths to the future with many good ideas being put forth by the students. I'm feeling grateful and hopeful for the future.

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THE VAL R. CHRISTENSEN SERVICE CENTER

Student Leaders Work with Communities Near and Far

The USU Alternative Breaks program, which was put on pause last school year due to COVID-19, came back with a bang for Spring Break 2022. Student program director Kyler Tolman took the lead in creating a program entitled “Queer Justice: Advocates and Allies” which took place in New York City.

To recruit participants, the Logan campus program partnered with the Serving Utah Network (SUN) Center, located at the USU Eastern campus in Price, for the first time. Five student participants from USU Eastern and staff member Michelle Mooney joined four Logan students in several pre-trip meetings over Zoom. Then they met each other in-person the day before they flew to NYC.

The group served meals at SAGE, the oldest and largest organization in the country dedicated to improving the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender older adults. They also served meals and participated in group enrichment activities at New Alternatives, which assists LGBTQIA+ youth and young adults experiencing homelessness as they transition out of the shelter system. They spent time

immersed in learning about queer artists and activists by visiting the Stonewall National Monument and the Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art.

The impact of this trip on the participants was deep and inspiring. One student expressed how important this combination of people was to the trip: “We were lucky to have a group of people... from many different backgrounds and each of us was able to bring a unique perspective on queer justice and allyship. Many of us are members of the LGBTQIA+ community and I really enjoyed learning from other people in the group and being in an environment where I felt comfortable being open about my sexuality and accepted for it.”

A student from USU Eastern said, “This trip has given me more motivation to start some sort of queer student group on the Price campus. I know and have seen how queer spaces can be very beneficial, and I’m glad I got to see this in New York. In some places we served, the numbers in these communities were few, but it helped me realize that numbers don’t lessen the value of these spaces.”





First-Ever partnership with USU Statewide Campuses for Alternative Spring Break



1,021 units of blood donated with the American Red Cross during 17 blood drives



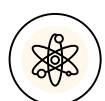
Over 500 service hours completed by AmeriCorps members



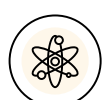
USUSA Organization of the Year awarded to SNAC



18 community organizations participated in spring and fall Community Volunteer Fairs



2,000 lbs. of baking and cooking supplies collected for Cache Community Food Pantry for MLK Day of Service



200 Iftar meals served to support USU students, faculty, and staff observing Ramadan



Over \$1,000 raised for the Cache Community Food Pantry

NEW OPERATIONAL MODEL FOR SERVICE CENTER

The Val R. Christensen Service Center piloted a new model this school year, navigating the terrain of student and community landscapes that have been shaped by the current pandemic.

Drake Fresh, Josie Tollefson, Thomas Smith, and Evan Noble worked on connecting existing student clubs and organizations to community engagement opportunities, hosted community partners on campus at various volunteer fairs, and promoted the use of USU's community engagement database, AggiePulse, to every student who would listen.

As the Service Center's inaugural group of Social Action Leads, they also led service roundtables and focus groups to collect feedback from their peers about their desires to connect with the wider community. These Social Action Leads chose to measure their impact this year by tracking how many individuals used AggiePulse, how many clubs and organizations they interacted with to do community work, and how satisfied community partners were with the volunteers who signed up through AggiePulse.

By year's end, 925 unique users logged into AggiePulse 1,003 times, the Service Center listed 65 opportunities in the database, 30 campus-based organizations had reached out for information about work their clubs could do, and 80% of community partners were satisfied with the volunteers that came from AggiePulse listings (the remaining 20% weren't sure if their student volunteers came through the database).

Though the work was slow at times during this pilot year, the Social Action Leads gathered valuable feedback that will influence the trajectory of the Service Center for the foreseeable future. Drake, Josie, Thomas, and Evan leave the Service Center in a better position to meet the changing needs that students and community organizations have as they connect and work together to address the most pressing challenges facing our communities.





“The renovation of SNAC has greatly facilitated our ability to do what we do. It would have been impossible to continue serving the increased number of USU students without our new space.”

- Sarah Moore, SNAC Co-Director

STUDENT NUTRITION ACCESS CENTER (SNAC)

In the spring of 2021, SNAC received funding from the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriation Act (CRRSAA). The Center for Community Engagement utilized this funding to renovate the Val R. Christensen Service Center into the Student Nutrition Access Center (SNAC) and fund the new Food Security Coordinator position.

The renovation significantly improved the space for transporting, recovering, sorting, and repackaging food in SNAC. The area has updated flooring for easy clean-up and desk stations to prepare and organize SNAC operations and education. With the increased space, staff chose to purchase an additional fridge and their first-ever freezer. In addition, SNAC added a three-compartment sink to rinse produce and wash dishes rather than using a sink across the building.

Kara Bachman began the Food Security Coordinator position in May 2021. Kara’s experience working with SNAC for the last four years gave her the knowledge and skills to propel the program forward and improve processes and practices. Kara immediately implemented a new ordering system that includes photos of available options and tracks inventory, and she developed a partnership with the Utah Food Bank to receive truckloads of donations. Kara also worked with the

United States Department of Agriculture to certify SNAC as an official food establishment.

Kara understands the value of partnerships to enhance program goals and meet community needs. In the fall of 2021, SNAC began collaborating with the PEER project, which gives community members with disabilities between the age of 18 and 22 job training and experience. Another new and important partnership has been with Kneaders Bakery & Cafe. Kneaders donated excess bread and pastries four times a week throughout the year. Kara also created a referral system with the Student Money Management Center and the Utah Health Policy Project to put students in contact with essential resources.

In addition to the pantry, SNAC will continue to expand food security initiatives in four key areas. First, SNAC plans to assist individuals applying for food assistance programs such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Women, Infants and Children (WIC). Second, SNAC plans to host educational opportunities on topics such as nutrition and food preparation. Third, SNAC supports local farmers. The program now prioritizes purchases of wholesale and tax-exempt commodities from local farmers and producers with monetary donations. Finally, SNAC aims to improve the selection of halal products, vegetarian and vegan substitutions, and gluten-free items.

Learn more about pantry use, volunteering, and donations at snac.usu.edu.





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Noah's Story

Noah is a PhD student and Graduate Research Assistant with the Utah State University Crop Physiology Laboratory. Three days a week, Noah recovered unsold food from USU Dining Services for SNAC and was a key player in keeping SNAC's shelves stocked and ready for patrons.

Noah says, "Tackling the issue of food insecurity has been an important part of my life for many years. I grew up working on a farm where providing fresh fruits and vegetables to our local community was a top priority. I started volunteering at SNAC in Fall 2021 because I felt giving a few hours a week could make a big difference in the lives of many students. Volunteering at SNAC allows me to directly assist my peers by helping fulfill a basic human need. Combining this mission while also helping to reduce food waste from dining locations makes this an all-around perfect match for my desire to serve. Volunteering at SNAC makes me feel like I am a true part of the solution. I appreciate how everyone at SNAC is working together to minimize food insecurity in a sustainable manner."

We are so grateful for the dedication and time that Noah puts toward assisting SNAC.

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Testimonials

"I work for the university as a student worker and I don't get paid a livable wage. Without SNAC I wouldn't be able to eat."

"I live on a stipend but half of it goes to bills at the start of the month. SNAC helps me cut costs on groceries and helps me eat healthier."

"SNAC has been really helpful to reduce some of my financial loads. It's really difficult as an international student with a dependent wife to manage expenses. SNAC also enabled me to worry less about the expenses and focus on my studies."

2021-22 Impact

-  93 unique SNAC volunteers
-  Over 550 volunteer hours served
-  Over 9,000 student patron visits
-  12,859 lbs. of food recovered (SSO partnership)
-  120 basic needs referrals

19 Partnerships

- Student Sustainability Office (SSO)
- Cache Community Gleaning
- Student Money Management Center
- Department of Nutrition, Dietetics, and Food Sciences
- Aggie Blue Bikes
- Permaculture Garden
- University Advising
- Project PEER
- USU Men's Basketball Team
- Hunger Solutions Institute & Create Better Health
- Summer Citizen Program
- Dining Services
- Utah Food Bank
- Kneaders Bakery & Cafe
- Utah Health Policy Project
- Cache High School
- Utahns Against Hunger
- Cache Community Food Pantry
- Health Policy Project

STUDENT SUSTAINABILITY OFFICE



“ Megan’s Story

Megan Wilson, CCA Sustainability Fellow

When I first came across the Student Sustainability Office, I was a freshman and new to just about everything. I cared about the earth and art and that was all I had figured out, so I applied to work as the student sustainability marketing intern. I was welcomed by the staff and introduced to unexpected opportunities for sustainability engagement around campus. I saw for the first time that when we stick together and care about a cause, sustainable and positive change is achievable for all.

After some time, I returned to the SSO as the Caine College of the Arts Sustainability Fellow and was given supportive encouragement for my own goals and socially-engaged art initiatives. Before this experience, I always assumed that leadership was for other people, for the straight-A kids, but through this team I’ve learned that leadership roles can be attained by anyone who is passionate and committed. It’s been an absolute delight to serve side-by-side with members of campus and the Cache Valley community and grow with them. The SSO introduced me to the empowering momentum of community action and the value of steady, channeled passion, and I can’t wait to carry these tools with me into my future.



“ Emma’s Story

Emma Watts, Sustainable Food Intern

Working as the Food Sustainability Intern — specifically heading up the Cache Community Gleaning program — was a huge opportunity for me to get out of my comfort zone. I’m a pretty quiet and reserved person, but I had to open up in order to be effective in my leadership role. I learned organizational, leadership, creativity, and coordination skills that will be useful to me in every setting I find myself in in the future. I was able to become more involved on campus as well as in the community, and I thoroughly enjoyed talking to everyone I met about the gleaning program and how they could participate. I never met anyone who didn’t think the whole concept of gleaning (harvesting and donating food that would otherwise be wasted) is one of the neatest things in the world.

I feel like all the volunteers who came gleaning with us had a wonderful experience and enjoyed being out in nature doing something fun and useful with cool people. I also loved getting to know tree owners across the valley and seeing how grateful they were for the opportunity to give back to the community. It was particularly impactful to see how happy our elderly tree owners were that we were able to collect their fruit so it didn’t go to waste, because oftentimes, they weren’t physically able to collect it themselves. Picking their excess fruit didn’t only benefit those in need within the community, but it also benefited the tree owners because we were helping them take care of their trees when they couldn’t or didn’t have enough time to do on their own. Leaving all the fruit on trees, especially if there’s a lot, can damage them and stunt future growth. Overall, it was a very fulfilling experience and I would encourage everyone to get involved with a gleaning program if they can, assisting SNAC.

2021-22 Impact

 **Worked with SNAC** to recover 12,859 lbs. of food

 **Gleaned 11,978 lbs. of fruit and produce** for the SNAC pantry and local community

 **Over 1,500 students** participated in Earth Week events and activities

 **Hosted first annual** Holiday Farmers Market



10 Student Sustainability Grants were awarded for the following:

- Bike Wash Station at Aggie Blue Bikes
- Advertising & Music for USU Farmers Market
- Winterize Your Wheels Workshop Series
- Fine Arts Water Bottle Refill Station
- Gear & Clothing Repair Workshops
- Earth Week Coordinator
- Caine College of the Arts Water Bottle Refill Station
- Artists in Action Conference
- Earth Week
- Farmers Market Double Your Bucks program

AGGIE BLUE BIKES



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Jo's Story

Kiersten Jo McDonald, AmeriCorps Member

I was hired at Aggie Blue Bikes in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Just like the rest of the world, Blue Bikes had to adapt to the changing times. People had to make appointments to come in, we could only check out a few bikes every day, and we had to limit the amount of people inside at all times. However, people still wanted to check out bikes, fix up their bikes, and ask questions. Riding bikes was one activity that felt “normal” and safe during the pandemic, and I’m grateful Aggie Blue Bikes was able to continue helping people get outside on two wheels.

Now with the pandemic (hopefully) just about over, more students than ever are visiting Aggie Blue Bikes to check out bikes. When the weather warmed up after the long winter, our AmeriCorps mechanics had a hard time keeping up with demand. It was amazing to see the increased desire to get on a bike.

Through my time working at Aggie Blue Bikes, I’ve witnessed all of the reasons why the Aggie community wants to get on bikes. Some are only visiting the country for a few years, so they need a bike for transportation. Some are low-income students and can’t afford to buy a car, so they turn to biking. Some just enjoy the freedom that they feel when they can zip around town on a bike. Whatever the reason is, it’s a good one!

I have also been able to bring back the monthly Women & LGBTQIA+ nights at Aggie Blue Bikes again. The last Wednesday evening of every month is purely dedicated to getting marginalized groups more comfortable working on and riding their bikes. Some months it has been a full house and other months we’ve only had one person show up — but that one person now feels more comfortable in a community that hasn’t always been for them.

2021-22 Impact

-  **470** three-month bike checkouts
-  **739** students used the tool boards at Aggie Blue Bikes
-  **13 volunteers** mobilized at Aggie Blue Bikes
-  **365 hours** served by said volunteers at Aggie Blue Bikes
-  **420 people** attended events and workshops at Aggie Blue Bikes
-  **48 kid's bikes** refurbished and donated to community programs (Sub for Santa, Athletics United, The Family Place)
-  **34 kids** participated in safe riding and skills building workshops
-  **3 kids** taught how to ride a bike for the first time by ABB staff
-  **9 adult bikes** refurbished and donated to community programs (Cache Refugee & Immigrant Connection)
-  **14 bicycles** checked out to USU Commuter Club members to encourage bike commuting for a full year
-  **120 lbs. of food** donated through “Cranksgiving”

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COMMUNITY-ENGAGED LEARNING

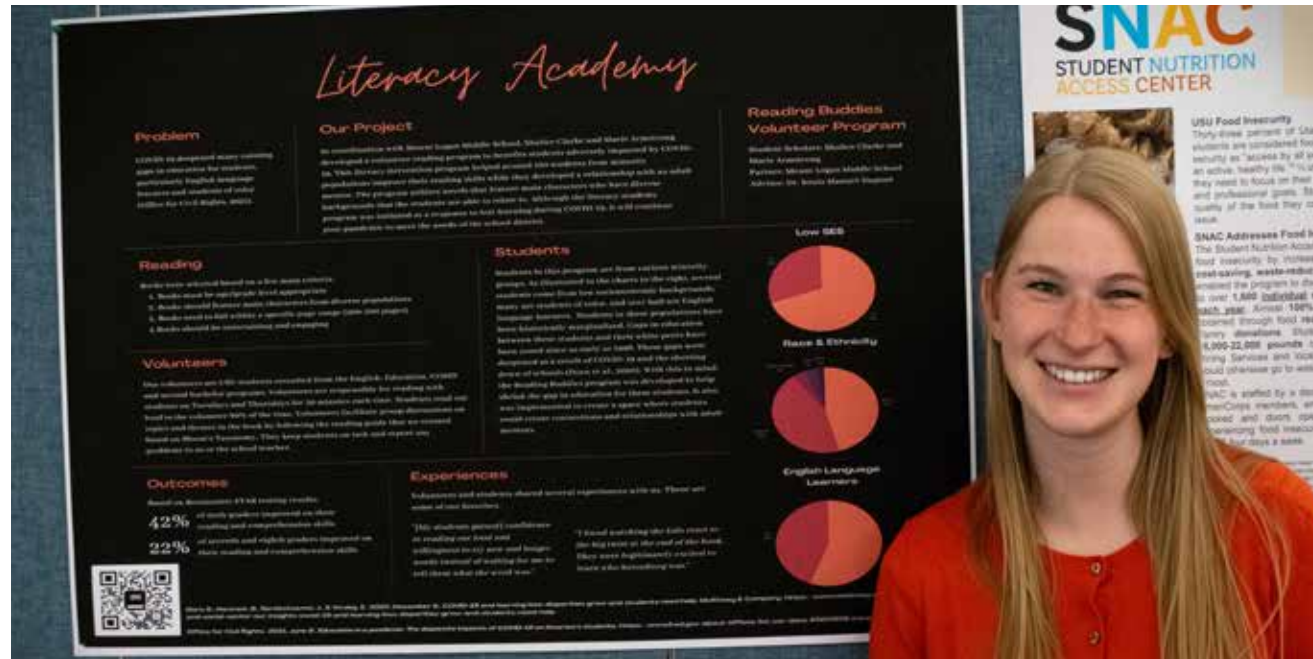
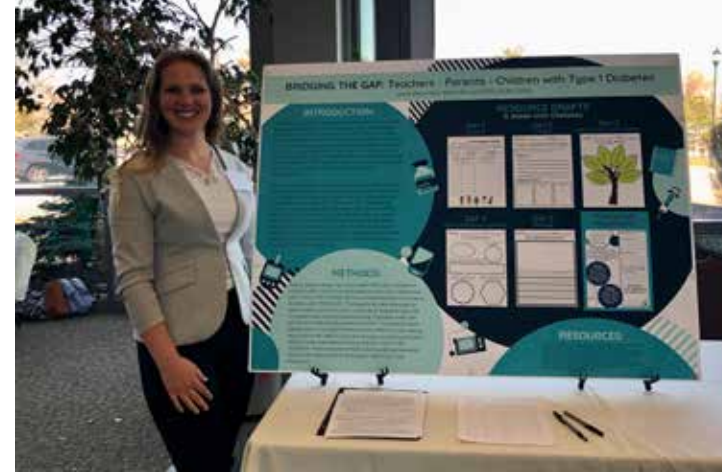
Peace Corps Prep Completes Successful Inaugural Year



USU Peace Corps Prep prepares students for international development fieldwork and potential Peace Corps service. In 2021-22, eight students were accepted into the program and two graduated with the Peace Corps Prep Certificate. To complete the program, students must demonstrate competency in the following four areas:

- Training and experience in one of six Peace Corps sectors
- Foreign language skills
- Intercultural competence
- Professional and leadership development

Students accepted into the Community-Engaged Scholars program can choose the Peace Corps Prep track and complete requirements for both programs.



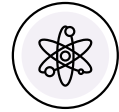
What's new?

- USU Empowering Teaching Excellence (ETE) developed a Community-Engaged Learning Master Teaching professional development track for faculty.
- Community-Engaged Learning is now an ETE subcommittee.
- USU Institutional Review Board (IRB) is now tracking Community-Engaged Research.
- CCE now provides faculty with documentation for promotion & tenure.
- 'Excellence in Community Engagement' distinction now offered to students obtaining associate degrees at Statewide Campuses.
- In an effort to increase numbers, build a stronger community, and allow for more diversity of majors, Community-Engaged Scholars is now offering workshop alternatives and experience equivalents to CEL coursework.

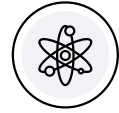
CEL'S
2021-22
Impact



251 CEL courses offered



623 students enrolled in CEL courses



24 Community-Engaged Scholars



9 students enrolled in Peace Corps Prep



Jayme's Story

Jayme Walters, Assistant Professor in the Department of Social Work



Growing up in poverty in a rural community, I started in the social work program as a first-generation college student who was inexperienced and naïve. My professors thrust me into the “field,” not only opening my eyes to the social and economic injustices that people in our communities were facing but also the collaborative, solution-building processes that were taking place. As a young social work student, I helped with the development of a children’s emergency shelter, wrote grants for higher education consortium, and conducted research on rural health issues. These experiences propelled me into a successful career in organizational and community social work practice. Now, as a social work professor, I strive to provide similar meaningful opportunities for students that are multi-purpose — imparting knowledge and skills while responding to community needs.

USU and the Department of Social Work have proved to be a great fit for me. The differentiated and experiential learning opportunities that I build into courses expose students to diverse service users, service providers, and social problems. The pragmatic projects are deliberately selected with their future practice in mind. For example, in the undergraduate social work research course, I work alongside Jess Lucero

to employ a collaborative, community-engaged project rather than students writing individual research proposals. Over the past two years, we have collaborated with our students and community partners to uncover landlord perspectives about local housing and homelessness issues and how they can help. Our collaborative efforts have led to the development of a landlord engagement program, which we will pilot in Summer 2022. After two full semesters of applied research and designing a real intervention, students have a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction that their work will result in positive change.

What’s more is that these projects and connections made with community partners lead to more collaborations and ventures — like helping our amazing student, Nicole Burnard, develop a much-needed warming center for Cache Valley, or conducting a social services assessment with the new Northern Social Services Coalition and MSW students. As I continue my role as a social work professor and the director of the growing Transforming Communities Institute, I look forward to building relationships with communities and mobilizing their stakeholders to help individuals and families who are oppressed and marginalized through research, teaching, and service.



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Kimberlee's Story

Kimberlee Whitworth, Site Supervisor for Adams Elementary

I have absolutely loved working with America Reads at Adams Elementary! I have learned lessons that I could not have learned anywhere else that will shape me for the rest of my life. I have wanted to be an elementary school teacher since I was a little girl, and this experience has solidified my desire to do that. There's nothing that I've done in my life that has felt like it has made a bigger difference than After School Club has. The kids who go to After School Club often do not have great home lives. Because of this, many times they turn to us, the teachers, as a source of support. They tell us what they're happy about, sad about, worried about. It is a true joy.

A great thing that I have learned from being an After School Club tutor is patience. A lot of the students that we work with are below grade level, and sometimes it can be challenging to teach them. It can be hard to explain certain aspects of the homework, and it can be hard to not get frustrated when they don't understand. This has been such a great lesson for me because I know I will encounter this while teaching school professionally.

Another really important thing I have learned is how to organize activities that will be fun for the largest number of students. This year I was able to start a puppet club, and the kids really loved it! They made their own puppets, wrote their own scripts, and then performed their own shows. This was a big hit with the students. However, I also did a World Travel Club, and that was much less of a hit — probably because I didn't prepare as well for it.

My time at Adams with America Reads has been so amazing, and I wouldn't trade it for anything!



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EDUCATION OUTREACH

New AmeriCorps VISTA

Education Outreach welcomed AmeriCorps VISTA Lindsey (Lin) Burbank to our team in February 2022. Lin is working to connect USU programs to our Afterschool clubs and helping recruit new USU student mentors.



“Growing up, I lived in a privileged community in which going to college wasn't even a question — it was a given. Working in a community where students are struggling to finish high school has been very eye-opening and has allowed me to push outside my comfort zone and become more empathetic with students who weren't given the same privileges I was given growing up. I have been learning so much, and I love being able to work with these students and provide them new experiences that they couldn't get otherwise.”

-Marina Brawand



EO'S
2021-22
Impact



85 AmeriCorps members earned \$126,849 in Education Awards to apply to their USU degree



96 America Reads tutors served 27,332 hours



Education Outreach served an average of 911 local youth every day through After School programs



Recruited 425 additional volunteers



“I learned the value of listening to children and striving to understand where they are coming from.”

~Kylie Corbett

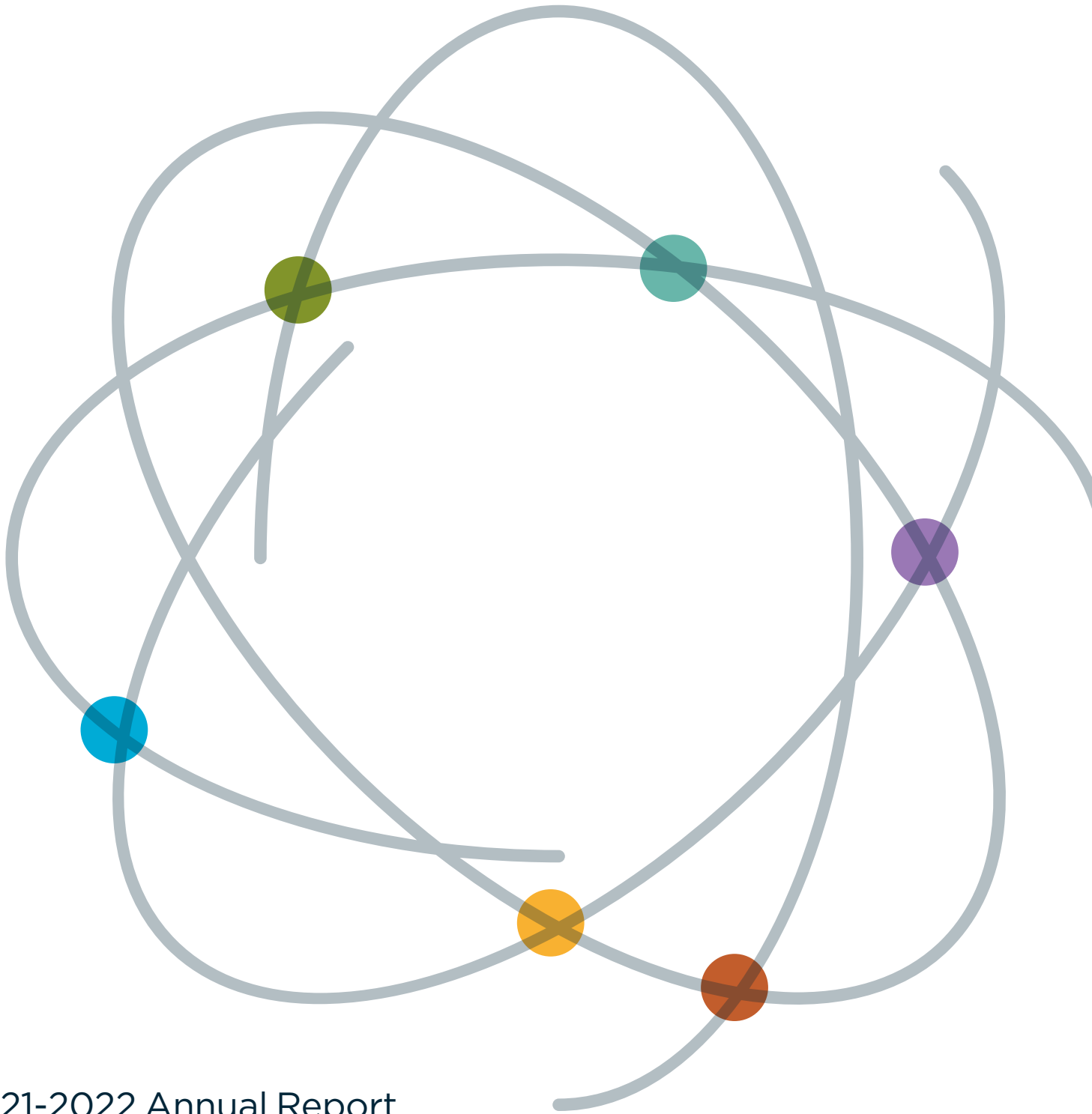
“It has been wonderful to see the feeling spread, to help others who needed to be lifted up.”

~Elizabeth DeWall



“After School Club makes a difference in every child’s life. As a mentor, we provide a safe place for students to be. We help each student develop the necessary academic and social skills to be successful in school.”

~Sophie Muhlestein



2021-2022 Annual Report

Center for Community Engagement

usu.edu/community-engagement

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