

# ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024



*Community matters.*





## Director's Letter

I am thrilled to celebrate the Bennion Center's outstanding accomplishments in promoting student leadership, enhancing community engagement, and advancing student skill development and sense of belonging. Over the past year, the Bennion Center has truly exemplified our mission by providing transformative community engagement experiences that make positive impacts on both student development and community needs.

Thanks to exceptional staff members and quality programming, the Bennion Center has empowered students to grow as leaders, equipping them with essential skills such as critical thinking, effective communication, and collaborative problem-solving. These opportunities not only prepare students for future successes but also inspire them to become proactive contributors to their communities.

The center's efforts in fostering meaningful community partnerships have been particularly impactful. By connecting students with local organizations and initiatives, the Bennion Center facilitates engagement that addresses real-world challenges while fulfilling community needs. This dynamic approach has not only strengthened the ties between students and the communities but also demonstrated the profound value of mutual support and cooperation.

Thanks to the longstanding support of key donors and campus partners, the Bennion Center awarded 8 different scholarships to 48 students during the 2023-2024 academic year totaling an impressive \$59,400 in direct student support. These scholarships helped offset tuition and housing costs and also provided the financial flexibility for students to engage in meaningful volunteer work instead of being tied to paid employment. This invaluable support empowers students to focus on their studies and contribute positively to their communities.

Central to all these achievements is the Bennion Center's ability to create a welcoming and supportive environment where students feel a strong sense of belonging. This sense of community is vital for their overall well-being and academic success.

As we reflect on the year's successes, we extend our deepest gratitude to everyone involved. The Bennion Center's transformative work is a shining example of how dedicated leadership and community engagement can drive positive change. Congratulations to all for a year of exceptional accomplishments and meaningful impact!

Yours in community,

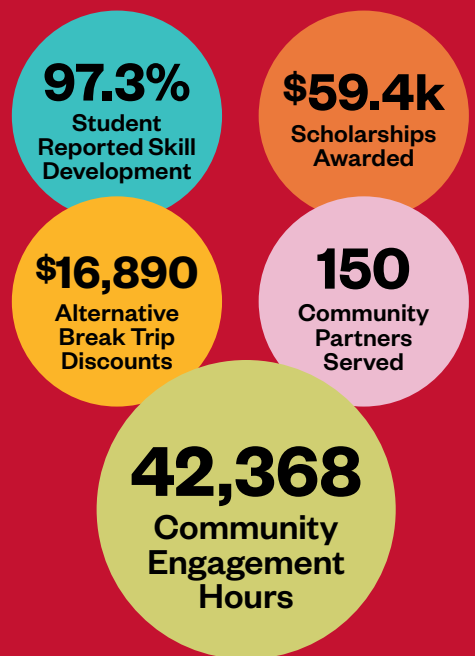
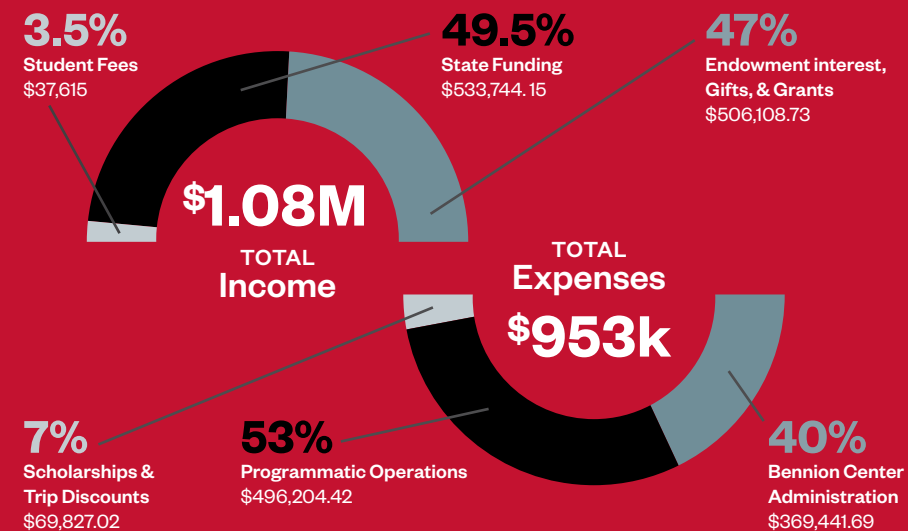
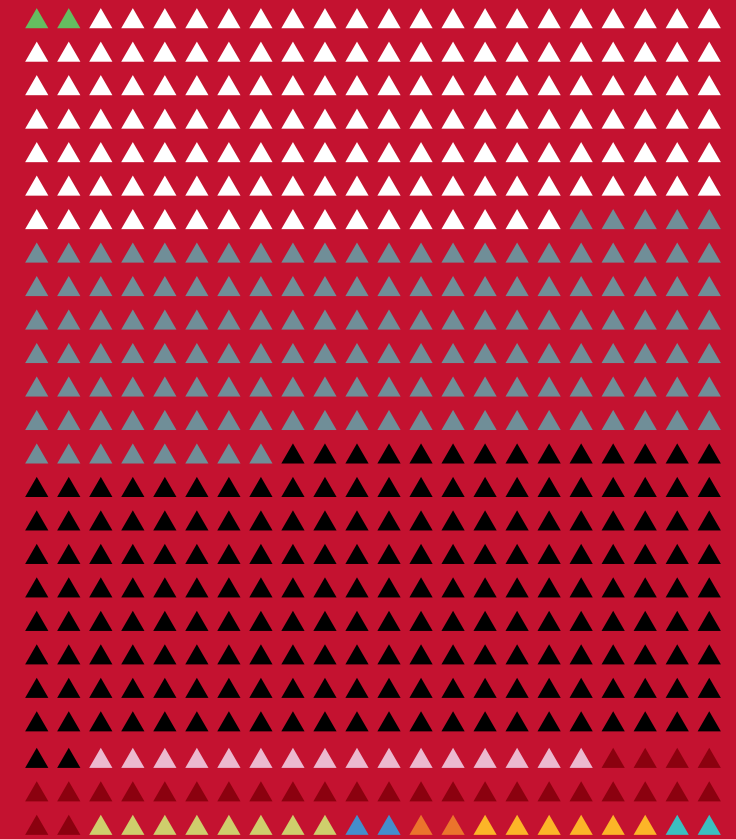
BobbiJo Kanter

# BENNION CENTER IMPACT SUMMARY

Total Students Engaged:  
**2,749\***

- 7** Bennion Center Student Board
- 737** Community Partner Program
- 725** Saturday Service Projects
- 958** Service Corner
- 83** Utah Reads
- 141** Alternative Breaks
- 40** Issue Education, Dialogues, & Conferences
- 9** Program Coordinators
- 8** Residential Engagement—Gail Miller Tower RA's
- 31** High Impact Volunteer Experience (HIVE) LLC
- 10** Bennion Service House

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT



\*The number of students engaged in Bennion Center programs reflects a unique count rather than the total number of student encounters in the 23-24 fiscal year. This data pertains specifically to the Bennion Center's co-curricular programs, as curricular programs are now administered by Academic Affairs, Undergraduate Studies.

The provided insert includes data on the number of students participating in curricular programs and community engaged learning at the University of Utah. All community engagement efforts (curricular and co-curricular) work closely together, providing seamless access for students to both engagement areas.

**STAFF**



**BobbiJo Kanter**  
Director



**Bryce Williams**  
Associate Director,  
Student Engagement & Outreach



**Rebecca Tolentino**  
Associate Director,  
Student Leadership & Development



**Ann Lopez**  
Alternative Breaks  
Program Manager



**Brett Gaffney**  
Community Events  
Program Manager



**Blue Cook**  
Community Partner  
Programs Manager



**Alex Griffin**  
Utah Reads  
Program Manager



**Pam Giebler**  
Administrative Manager



**Kristi Thompson**  
Advancement Officer

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*Mighty Penguin*

**Franci Taylor**  
*4-C Education Consultations*

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*University Neighborhood Partners*

**Alyssa Dairsow**  
*Curly Me!*

**STUDENT BOARD**



**Melody Liu**  
Alternative Breaks



**Abdel Boukari**  
Community Engagement  
Cohorts



**Brenda Lee**  
Community Partner  
Programs



**Sydney Kincart**  
Community Engaged Learning  
Leadership Team



**Mirko Villaneuva**  
Residential Engagement  
(Fall)



**Madelyn Bossarte**  
Residential Engagement  
(Spring)



**Danni Briosos**  
Utah Reads



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMS

The Bennion Center's programs offer University of Utah students, staff, faculty, and community members opportunities to engage in initiatives that strengthen our communities. We provide options for both one-time and ongoing volunteer efforts, emphasizing the importance of community engagement in enhancing student development and making a positive impact on crucial community needs.

Participation in these programs not only contributes to the betterment of our communities but also fosters the development of essential skills and personal growth for students. Through hands-on experiences and meaningful interactions, students **develop leadership abilities, teamwork skills, and a deeper understanding of social issues, all while building lasting relationships with their peers.** Our initiatives are driven by a dedicated team of student leaders who facilitate volunteer recruitment, facilitate programming, and maintain primary relationships with many of our community partners, ensuring a transformative experience for all involved.



## Community Partner Programs

allow students to select an area of ongoing engagement that resonates with them and become catalysts of positive change by collaborating with community partners to drive positive impact. These programs provide participants with insights into specific community issues, opportunities for professional development, and connections with fellow volunteers who share similar interests.

**45**  
PARTNERS  
**8,602**  
HOURS

## Utah Reads

provides effective, quality tutoring in literacy to the elementary aged students of our community partners. The program provides comprehensive tutor training in partnership with the University of Utah Reading Clinic (UURC), develops leadership skills, and fosters mutually beneficial community partnerships.

Utah Reads involvement grew by 22% in 2023-2024 which resulted in a **69% growth in the number of hours spent tutoring** at our partner sites. This is particularly valuable as we were able to support more U of U students in utilizing their Federal Work Study awards—and using a higher percentage of their available awards—while making valuable impacts in the community.

**7**  
PARTNER SITES  
(6 SCHOOLS, 1 COMMUNITY CENTER)  
**12,573**  
HOURS

## Community Events

Saturday Service Projects (SSPs) are the Bennion Center's single-day community engagement events. Saturday Service Projects are designed to engage volunteers to work alongside local community partners and address a variety of capacity building needs. These events are open to the public as well as the University community and are a great way to get started with community engagement.

The Bennion Center **added a new SSP** for 2023-2024 and were thrilled with turnout and impact of the Fall into Service project in November. We partnered with a number of local organizations including the U of U Veteran's Support Center for an outstanding day of service!

- Legacy of Lowell Saturday Service Project (September)
- Fall into Service (November)
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service (January)
- Spring into Service (April)

The Service Corner focuses on addressing needs in our local community with projects that are impactful and also simple enough that people can pick them up quickly. We have two Service Corner locations on campus, located inside Kahlert Village and the Union Building. By offering near weekly Service Corner Hours with a variety of partners and projects, students had more opportunities for engagement. This resulted in 958 individual student participants engaging in 1,109 experiences—a **76% increase in the number of participants and a 258% increase in the number of hours served!**

**Saturday Service Projects**  
**22**  
PARTNERS  
**2,758**  
HOURS

**The Service Corner**  
**14**  
PARTNERS  
**3,979**  
HOURS

*I have built invaluable relationships and skills with the support of the community that have greatly benefitted my **sense of belonging** on campus.*

*The Bennion Center has truly been **the highlight of my undergraduate experience!***

During 2023-2024, the Bennion Center engaged **2,749 individual students** resulting in over **42,475 hours** of volunteerism and student leadership.



## Alternative Breaks

connects University of Utah students and faculty/staff partners with community engagement and experiential learning opportunities during school breaks. Teams work on projects with non-profit organizations and community-driven initiatives across the western United States. By combining the strengths of both the community and the students, Alternative Breaks fosters lifelong engagement, equipping students with the experiences and skills needed to build and organize communities through meaningful engagement, education, dialogue, and reflection.

**62**  
PARTNERS  
**10,591**  
HOURS

“

*Planning and coordinating a trip on Mass Incarceration pushed me to expand upon my own knowledge and leadership skills and imbued a **greater sense of accountability and empathy** in me as I continue community advocacy work.*

”



## Residential Engagement

### SERVICE HOUSE

Each year, twelve motivated students dedicated to making impactful service contributions to the University of Utah and the surrounding community are selected to live in the Bennion Service House on historic Officers Circle. Residents benefit from a unique living and learning environment that encourages self-reflection on their civic engagement while actively participating in and promoting a variety of community engagement experiences throughout the year.

### GAIL MILLER TOWER

Gail Miller Community Engagement Tower at Kahlert Village is the home for first-year students who want to connect with fellow students and local partners to strengthen communities through learning, scholarship, and advocacy. Residents explore community engagement opportunities and pathways, develop awareness about community issues, and build connections with other students to foster a sense of belonging at the University of Utah.

### H.I.V.E.

In 2023-2024, the Bennion Center launched the High Impact Volunteer Experience (H.I.V.E) Living Learning Community (LLC). This LLC built a strong cohort of 31 students who participated in education, action, and reflection throughout the year.

“ *A safe place where **reflection and growth** are encouraged* ”



# COMMUNITY PARTNERS

## ALTERNATIVE BREAKS

A.B.O Comix  
 Advocacy Denver  
 Alliance San Diego  
 Atlantis Community Inc.  
 Barona Museum  
 Black Farmers Collective (YesFarm)  
 Border Angels  
 Centro Cultural  
 City Fruit  
 Colorado Center for the Blind  
 Compass Housing Alliance  
 Cupcake Girls  
 DIRT Coffee  
 Flying Over Walls  
 Food Lifeline  
 Heart of Los Angeles  
 House of Neighbors  
 Interim CDA  
 Jubilee Women Center  
 KCBA Housing Justice Project  
 La Maestra  
 Legal Services for Prisoners with Children  
 LGBTQIA+ Community Center of Southern Nevada  
 Lifelong  
 Little Tokyo Service Center  
 Los Angeles County Museum of Art  
 Los Angeles LGBT Center  
 Love Yourself Foundation  
 Low Income Housing Institute  
 Mainstay  
 Midnight Mission  
 Moab Museum  
 Moab Valley Multicultural Center  
 Nevada Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Violence  
 Noah's Animal House  
 Northwest Nikkei Museum  
 Nuzzles and Co.  
 Operation Sack Lunch  
 Phamaly Theater Company  
 Portland Parks and Recreation  
 Power Blossoms  
 PUENTE Learning Center  
 Refuge for Women

Root and Rebound  
 SafeNest  
 Sage Mountain Farm Sanctuary  
 San Francisco Public Library Jail and Reentry Services Initiative  
 Seattle Central College  
 Seattle YIMBY  
 Sound Foundations  
 The ReBuilding Center  
 The Recovery Cafe  
 The Shade Tree  
 The Street Trust  
 The Wetland Conservancy  
 Tilth Alliance  
 UCLA Undocumented Student Center  
 Weber State University  
 West Oakland Mural Project/Women of the Black Panther Party Museum  
 Wild Heart Sanctuary  
 Youth Garden Project  
 Zenger Farm

## COMMUNITY PARTNER PROGRAMS

American Red Cross  
 Best Buddies

Best Friends Animal Society  
 Big Brothers Big Sisters of Utah  
 Brain Injury Alliance of Utah  
 Canyon Hospice Musical Therapy  
 Catholic Community Services of Utah  
 Children's Service Society  
 The Children's Center  
 Food Recovery Network  
 Friends for Sight  
 Girl Scouts of Utah  
 Glendale - Mountain View Community Learning Center  
 Green Urban Lunchbox  
 Guadalupe School  
 Health Access Project  
 Hispanic Chamber of Commerce  
 Homecare & Hospice Association of Utah  
 Housing Connect: Bud Bailey  
 International Rescue Committee  
 Maliheh Free Clinic  
 Primary Children's Hospital  
 Promise South Salt Lake  
 The Road Home  
 Ronald McDonald House

Running Forward  
 Salt Lake City Public Library  
 Salt Lake County Aging and Adult Services  
 Special Olympics Utah  
 Take Care Utah  
 The Sharing Place  
 UAF Legacy Health  
 U of U Department of Special Ed - UFit  
 U of U Edible Campus Gardens  
 U of U Feed U Food Pantry  
 U of U Tanner Dance  
 Utah Naloxone  
 Utah Symphony|Utah Opera  
 William E. Christofferson Veterans Home  
 Volunteers of America, Utah  
 YWCA

## SATURDAY SERVICE PROJECTS

Center for Native Excellence and Tribal Engagement (formerly American Indian Resource Center)  
 American Red Cross, Sound the Alarm

Coconut Hut  
 Crossroads Urban Center  
 Edible Campus Gardens  
 Feed U Food Pantry  
 Green Urban Lunchbox  
 IRC New Roots  
 National Residence Hall Association  
 Ruff Haven  
 Salt Lake Harm Reduction Project  
 The Children's Center  
 The Road Home  
 The Sharing Place  
 Tree Utah  
 Utah Community Action  
 Utah Food Bank  
 Utah Refugee Goats  
 Veterans Support Center  
 Volunteers of America (VOA)  
 Wasatch Community Gardens  
 YWCA

## SERVICE CORNER

Best Friends Animal Society  
 Coconut Hut

Huntsman Cancer Institute  
 Project Read Utah  
 Recovery at the U  
 Ronald McDonald House Charities  
 Salt Lake Harm Reduction Project  
 University of Utah LGBT Resource Center (Closed June 30, 2024)  
 University of Utah Seed Library  
 Utah Community Action  
 Utah Naloxone  
 Utah Prison Education Project  
 VA Nursing Home  
 Victim Survivor Advocacy

## UTAH READS

Bennion Elementary  
 Edison Elementary  
 Liberty Elementary  
 Riley Elementary  
 Mountain View Elementary  
 Glendale Community Learning Center  
 Mary Jackson Elementary





# THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

Every individual, foundation, and corporation that supports the Bennion Center has a significant impact on our students and the community. The Bennion Center exists thanks to the incredible support we have received from our donor community over the

years. We are proud to continue this journey, offering enriching and meaningful community engagement experiences that foster a sense of belonging, enhance academic performance, and support persistence toward graduation. The Bennion Center lays the groundwork for students' deep commitment to community building while aiding over 100 community partners who are addressing society's most critical needs.

Anonymous Donors (3)  
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 Heba Alhamdani  
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## Alumni provide invaluable support!

Top: Lowell "Ben" and Sherilyn Bennion, son and daughter-in-law of our namesake Lowell Bennion and longtime supporters of the Bennion Center participating at the 2023 Legacy of Lowell Saturday Service Project.

Bottom: Deborah and John Wunderli, founding donors of the Wunderli endowment and BC Student Leaders 1990-1994.



# ENDOWMENTS & SCHOLARSHIPS

## Gifts in Perpetuity

The Bennion Center thrives thanks to the incredible generosity of our donors. We are deeply grateful to those who have established and contributed to endowments that sustain the Bennion Center in perpetuity. These endowments are vital, providing essential funding for programs and student scholarships. Below, you'll find a list of the Bennion Center's endowments and a brief description of their impact during the 2023-2024 academic year.



Founding donors of the Bennion Center, Dick and Sue Jacobsen, hosting a Bay Area Alumni Dinner at their home in Palo Alto, March 2024.

### BARBARA STUBBLEFIELD ENDOWMENT

Established in 2003, this lasting legacy endowment provides scholarships to Bennion Center Service House residents.

### BARBARA L. TANNER COMMUNITY SERVICE FELLOWSHIP AND ENDOWED FUND

Established in 2006 in honor of Barbara Tanner, this endowment reduces financial barriers to students participating in Alternative Break and Learning Abroad community engagement opportunities.

### BENNION COMMUNITY SERVICE CENTER SPONSOR ENDOWMENT AND BENNION CENTER ENDOWMENT

Established in 1991 and 2000 by founding donors, Richard and Sue Jacobsen, and built by generous donors from the community, these endowments support stable and reliable operating funds for the Bennion Center.

### EQUITY IN ACCESS ENDOWMENT

Established in 2022 by anonymous donors, this fund continues to grow through community contributions, supporting equitable student access to transformative community engagement programs.

### DAVID AND SUSAN JABUSCH DISTINGUISHED UNIVERSITY SERVICE AWARD ENDOWMENT

Established in 2000, the endowment honors dedicated faculty who have demonstrated a commitment to the campus or to the community through a life of active community engagement.

### ELMO R. AND FRANCES BENNION MORGAN SERVICE CORP ENDOWMENT

Established in 2001, this endowment provides funding for direct service programs including Service Corner and Saturday Service Projects.

### ELMO R. AND FRANCES BENNION MORGAN SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Established in 2002, the endowment provides scholarships to student residents of the Bennion Service House.

### HELEN C. BOSCHARD MEMORIAL ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

Established in 1979 by James R. Boshard, this fund provides a scholarship to one exceptional, non-traditional Bennion Center student each year.

### HELPING HANDS ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP IN HONOR OF IRENE FISHER

In honor of the Bennion Center's first Director, Irene Fisher, this endowment, established by multiple donors in 2001, provides scholarships to student leaders who give countless hours to the Bennion Center.

### HUGH PINNOCK COMMUNITY ENGAGED LEARNING SCHOLARSHIP

Established in 2016, the endowment awards a scholarship to a student working to complete their capstone project as a Bennion Scholar.

### RICHARD W. JAMES (JOHN WILLIAMS JAMES FAMILY BEQUEST) ENDOWMENT

The James endowment, established in 2008, provides needed support to ensure reliable and stable operating funds to support the Bennion Center.

### TELITHA ELLIS LINDQUIST COMMUNITY SERVICE ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

In honor of Telitha Lindquist, the endowment, established by several donors, provides scholarships to student leaders living in the Bennion Center Service House.

### UNIVERSITY OF UTAH OFFICE OF ALUMNI RELATIONS: ALUMNI BENNION SCHOLARSHIP FOR EQUITABLE ACCESS

Thanks to a wonderful partnership with Alumni Relations, the Bennion Center provided 20 scholarships for student leaders to pursue their community engagement efforts.

### WUNDERLI ENDOWMENT FOR PROJECT YOUTH

John and Deborah Hannan-Wunderli established this fund in 2007 to support Project Youth, which was discontinued following the COVID-19 pandemic. The endowment now supports community engagement programs at the Bennion Center.

# AWARDS

## Exceptional Community Engagement

The Exceptional Community Engagement award is presented to Bennion Center and Community Engaged Learning student leaders who act in pursuit of positive social change, inspire and engage others, sustain their work through strategies for institutional and community commitment, and exhibit potential for effective long-term civic engagement.

### 2023-2024 AWARDEES

- Madelyn Bossarte**  
Residential Engagement & Student Board
- Danni Briosos**  
Utah Reads & Student Board
- Mercedes Johnson**  
Community Partner Programs
- Brenda Lee**  
Community Partner Programs & Student Board
- Mayzee Levett**  
Utah Reads
- Annabelle Rockne**  
Alternative Breaks
- Elizabeth Schilling**  
Community Partner Programs
- Jonah Simmons**  
Community Partner Programs
- Emma Taylor**  
Bennion Scholars
- Eunjae Yoo**  
Alternative Breaks



Brenda Lee, Melody Liu, Celine Cardena, Annabelle Rockne



Idaly Tapia, Mayzee Levett, Danni Briosos, Alondra Morales



Lori McDonald, Madeline Woznick, Summer Stanfield, Abdel Boukari (BC Student Board), BobbiJo Kanter

## Utah Athletes in Service

The Utah Athletes in Service Award recognizes student-athletes with a demonstrated commitment to community engagement. As athletes, the University of Utah community of students, faculty, staff and alumni supports them. In turn, many of them give back to our community in various ways.

The Bennion Center, in collaboration with U of U Athletics, honored the 2023 Awardees Summer Stanford and Madeline Woznick with this annual award during the first quarter of the California vs. Utah football game (Oct. 14, 2023).



2023  
2024



THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH  
**BENNION CENTER**