Dear Friends and Alumni of The Graduate School:

The approach of the holiday season offers all of us the opportunity to pause and reflect on the successes of the past year, and look forward to new challenges in the coming year. The faculty and staff of The Graduate School are, therefore, pleased to send you this short newsletter detailing some of the activities and accomplishments of graduate and professional students of the University of Utah.

As a graduate/professional school alumni of the University of Utah, you have personally experienced the myriad opportunities and challenges faced by our students. Students often find themselves balancing their deep commitment for their academic studies with larger financial and social responsibilities to spouses, children, and parents. The mission of The Graduate School is to assist our students through these challenges, by providing support from admissions through graduation. The Graduate School is a strong advocate for graduate student success, promoting campus-wide “best practices” for graduate, professional and post-doctoral education. We also provide tuition benefits, medical insurance subsidy, fellowship and travel opportunities, assistance with thesis completion, and career services for our graduate and professional students.

Many of our alumni have benefitted from long-term, endowed graduate fellowships administered by The Graduate School, including the Steffenson Cannon Scholarship (celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2015) and the Marriner S. Eccles Fellowship (celebrating its 40th anniversary this year). These fellowship opportunities have allowed many students increased freedom to fully concentrate on their academic studies, reducing the need for outside employment and the financial burdens on their families.

We have been working to develop and grow partnerships that support high quality graduate education across the entire campus. We ask that you consider building upon our growing success with a year-end gift, either to your own department or college priorities, or directly to The Graduate School to support campus-wide graduate fellowships. The Graduate School has arranged for 2:1 matching for donations made to The Graduate School, thereby tripling the impact of your support on graduate students across campus. Your generous support provides the key to opening up the benefits of high quality graduate and professional education to the larger community.

In closing, we thank you for your ongoing interest and support of high-quality graduate and professional education at the University of Utah. Our faculty and staff send warm wishes for you and your family during this holiday season.

Dave Kieda
Dean, The Graduate School
Fellowship and Award Opportunities

The Graduate School administers several scholarship and fellowship awards, as well as two prizes. The awards allow us to recognize and support students at the U who display the utmost academic integrity, excellence in teaching, innovative research, and artistic merit. We join the recipients of the awards in expressing our gratitude to the generous people and organizations that make it all possible.

**Ellen Christina Steffensen Cannon Scholarship**

The Ellen Christina Steffensen Cannon Scholarship supports several graduate and undergraduate students in the Colleges of Education and Humanities each year. Established in 1990, the award has supported 203 undergraduate students and 309 graduate students, for a total of 512 students. One of this year’s 12 graduate recipients, Sarah Davies, plans to use her award to explore “how and when student-produced video explanations of physics concepts are beneficial to students themselves and to their peers.” While the award supports students in humanities and education, its influence tends to extend beyond those fields. We are grateful to the Cannon family for their continued support and involvement in this effort.

**Garr Cutler Energy Prize**

Chengshang Zhou from the Department of Metallurgical Engineering is this year’s recipient of the Garr Cutler Energy Prize. The certificate and $1,500 cash prize is awarded to a University of Utah graduate student who has published a paper that makes a significant contribution in an area of energy. Zhou’s paper, “Thermodynamic and Kinetic Destabilization of Magnesium Hydride by Using Mg-In Solid Solution Alloys,” addresses problems related to hydrogen storage. The paper was published in the Journal of the American Chemistry Society, one of the world’s preeminent chemistry journals.

**Marriner S. Eccles Graduate Research Fellowship**

The Marriner S. Eccles Graduate Research Fellowship supports graduate students pursuing research in banking, business, education, finance, humanities, law, and social sciences; and the impact of such research on relationships among politics, public policy and the economy. This year’s recipients are: Richard Haskell – Economics, Larissa Lee – Law, Lucas Matthews – Philosophy, and Diana Bennett – Psychology. Both the Eccles and the Steffensen Cannon awards support students studying in fields that tend to have fewer funding opportunities available.

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25th Anniversary

This Spring will mark the 25th Anniversary of the Ellen Christina Steffensen Cannon Scholarship. The University of Utah Graduate School will be holding a special celebration in honor of the scholarship and its 200+ awardees!

If you are a Steffensen Cannon Scholar, please visit http://tinyurl.com/ocpjyrq to reconnect with us!
Graduate Research Fellowship

The Graduate Research Fellowship is one of the most competitive awards on campus. Each year we receive over 80 proposals (each department can only submit 2) and must choose only 15-18 winners. It is an arduous task to choose among the university's top student researchers! One of this year’s 18 winners, Lam Nguyen from Mechanical Engineering, is hard at work on developing “an integrated energy management system for urban areas that is environmentally effective, economically affordable, and socially acceptable.” Lam plans to complete her PhD by 2015, and explains that, “…the GRF has allowed me to dedicate more time to my research. What could be better than being paid to work in the field of renewable energy that I am passionate about?” We are happy to play a small role in making that possible for Lam.

University Teaching Assistantship

The University Teaching Assistantship (UTA) allows graduate student teachers, paired with faculty mentors, to develop innovative teaching models and new undergraduate courses. Adam Halstrom is one of 16 recipients this year. “Without the UTA award I would not have had any opportunities to teach this year, and teaching is a very important part of my career plan.” Adam also created a very ambitious hybrid learning model for undergraduate English courses. “My project, which at its core is a pedagogical experiment, has the potential to greatly benefit the undergraduate student body by producing a scalable and customizable model that meets diverse student needs while maintaining academic rigor.” We could not support these passionate student teachers without the UTA Program.

Stockham Medal for Conspicuously Effective Teaching

The Stockham Medal for Conspicuously Effective Teaching is named after the late Thomas G. Stockham, who is considered the father of digital audio recording and who taught for many years at the University of Utah. In 1999, Dr. Stockham was corecipient of an Oscar, a scientific and engineering award from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for work in digital audio editing. His many other awards and recognitions included MIT’s prestigious Goodwin Medal for conspicuously effective teaching, which was the inspiration for the Stockham Medal. Thomas Stockham was passionate about teaching, and has left a legacy that survives in every student that was touched by his efforts. This year’s recipient, Jennifer Y. Macias, was nominated for the award by Dr. Eric Hinderaker, who says “Jenn has demonstrated a command of the material, a maturity of judgment, and a level of classroom effectiveness that gives us enormous confidence in her ability.” Ms. Macias was presented with an engraved medal and a $1,000 cash award. We are grateful to the Stockham family for their continued support of excellence in teaching.

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The Diversity Office provides resources to recruit and retain students from communities historically underrepresented in higher education. Our office’s recruitment initiatives include the University Visit Program, the Excellence Through Diversity Fellowship, and a STEM Graduate Preparation Institute. Our retention initiatives include the Emerging Diversity Scholars Fellowship, Celebrate Diversity mini-grants, conference travel awards, and student advising and advocacy. We partner with academic departments across campus to offer students support and resources.

**Excellence Through Diversity Fellowship**

The Excellence Through Diversity Fellowship (ETDF) is designed to help recruit historically underrepresented graduate students to the University of Utah. The fellowship award supports three scholars whose engagement will contribute to diversity in higher education.

Diana Askings is a doctoral student in the Educational Psychology Department. The Excellence Through Diversity fellowship has been a major source of financial support that has allowed her to focus on her coursework and research. After graduate school Diana plans on working with children with special needs, families, and teachers as a licensed school psychologist.

**Emerging Diversity Scholars Fellowships**

This year we created and awarded three Emerging Diversity Scholars Fellowships, which is a retention fellowship designed to offer support to promising historically underrepresented graduate students who have successfully completed their first-year of full-time graduate studies at the University of Utah. This fellowship is partially funded by the University of Utah and donations from individuals/foundations.

Yasin Fairley is a master’s student in the Modern Dance Department. Yasin said, “I don’t think that I would be able to be here pursuing my master’s, at all, if it were not for this diversity fellowship. I have been able to focus solely on my dance movement research and student teaching.”
**Graduate Preparation Institute**

The Graduate Preparation Institute (GPI) is a four-week intensive summer research program for 11 college juniors and seniors from historically underrepresented communities in STEM fields across the Western states. GPI students conduct research, attend a GRE preparation course, and learn how to create a competitive graduate school application. This past summer we had 11 students from 10 universities from 10 STEM majors. The GPI program is partially funded by the University of Utah, the Western Alliance to Expand Student Opportunities, and donations from individuals.

Alexia Perryman is a biochemistry major, who dedicated her summer to researching “Understanding pulmonary injury in response to air pollution through transient receptor potential potential channels” in Dr. Christopher Reilly’s research lab.

“The GPI program was perfect for someone like me who did not have formal research experience. I now have wonderful experience to add to my CV and personal statements. The accommodations were great, and I felt well taken care of during the whole time. Utah will be a special place for me now, due to GPI” said Laura Hernandez, an environmental biology student.

**GPI Graduate Assistant**

Precious Cantu is originally from Houston, Texas. She received her Bachelor of Science degree from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, where, with the support of the Ronald McNair Scholars program she studied optics and nanotechnology. After completion of her BS degree, she was awarded several doctoral fellowships in 2011 such as the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, Graduate Training Program in Nanotechnology from the University of Utah, and the National GEM Consortium Fellowship. “I chose to attend the University of Utah as it facilitated my strong desire to pursue interdisciplinary research amongst various departments on campus.” Currently she is a fourth year PhD candidate in electrical and computer engineering in the Optical Nanotechnologies Laboratory under the direction of Dr. Rajesh Menon. Her research focuses on extending the spatial resolution of optics to the nanoscale with biological applications. During the summer of 2014, Precious was the Graduate Assistant for the Graduate Preparation Institute, administered through The Graduate School Diversity Office. After receiving her PhD degree, she plans on attending a postdoctoral research assignment for one to two years, then entering the professorate.
As competition for jobs increases and research funding dollars decrease, graduates are under increasing pressure to explain the value and impact of their research to a variety of non-specialist audiences. 3MT (Three Minute Thesis) is a program designed to help students develop the skills necessary to quickly articulate the how and why of their research to potential employers, funders, and others outside of their field. The Graduate School is committed to ensuring the success of students not only during their programs, but also after graduation; 3MT is a unique program that aims to assist students in the development of the communication skills they will need in the search for employment, research funding, and as higher education activists post-graduation.

For more information, including the history of 3MT and profiles of this year’s competitors, please visit: http://gradschool.utah.edu/3MT

Three Minute Thesis

Simon Currie
Winner of the inaugural 3MT Competition

An important part of the graduate student experience is the presentation of their creative works and research discoveries at academic meetings and conferences. Attendance at meetings raises the level of recognition of the student’s accomplishments, and introduces the student to new ideas and approaches that they may incorporate in their own work. Attendance at conferences may also develop new collaborations, as well as post-doctoral employment opportunities.

The Graduate School provides generous travel awards for graduate students across campus to present their work at national and international conferences. During 2014, 368 students were supported by The Graduate School to present their work at conferences across the world. We continue to work to increase the number and amount of travel awards available each year using both internal funds as well as donation from supporters of The Graduate School. Our long-term goal is to provide at least one opportunity for each graduate student to attend a conference and present their results, regardless of the funding available in their academic discipline.

Travel Awards
New Graduate Fellowship Initiative

In 2014, The Graduate School received funding from ARUP Laboratories to support graduate student fellowships across the University of Utah campus. The funding provided by these scholarships is administered across campus, allowing students to devote more time to their academic studies, and reducing the impact of the financial burden on the student’s family. This support is especially important for students who are pursuing graduate and professional degrees from rural and tribal communities; the reduced debt allows the students to bring the benefits of their graduate and professional education to their local communities, where it is needed the most.

As part of this new program, The Graduate School and ARUP Laboratories will each provide 1:1 matching funds for your donation to The Graduate School that supports graduate fellowships. Consequently, a single $100 donation would be matched by an additional $200, providing a total impact of $300 towards enabling student access to high quality graduate education. This 2:1 matching opportunity allows a single donor to fully fund a full year, $15,000 graduate fellowship for as little as $5000!

We are grateful for your tax-deductible support at any funding level. We are especially thankful for your willingness to partner with The Graduate School and ARUP Laboratories to increase the success of all students across campus.

http://gradschool.utah.edu/giveback

“"I am a fulltime graduate student completing my internship year and a mother of two children. Receiving the Fellowship this year has allowed me to focus… My plan is to become a leader in School Psychology, training other students, and provide a living example for Native American youth. Investing in my community is part of my personal responsibility as an educated Native American woman.”

Monique Thacker