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Sushi Go is on the go

By Josh Wilkinson
NEWS SENIOR WRITER

Utah State University students and other Logan City residents now have another option for satisfying their cravings for sushi — an option likely to be closer to home to residents on the south end of Logan.

On Nov. 7 and Nov. 8, Sushi Go, formerly known as Aggie Sushi, held a grand opening for a new location at 981 S. Main St. in Logan. The former location at 141 E. 1600 N. in North Logan is still open for business, making the new restaurant an expansion for the business rather than a relocation.

According to Sam Park, restaurant owner and sushi chef, the new location is meant not only to attract new customers but to make their business more accessible to repeat customers living south of Logan's Main Street.

"We've been thinking about [opening another location] for the past couple of years," Park said. "The customers from the south area keep telling us that it's kind of tough for them, since Main Street has gotten a bit crazy in the last couple of years."

"It's almost 30 minutes to go back and forth," Park said. "It's really hard to make that journey just for sushi."

According to Park, locals have been giving positive feedback via social media about the new location. Another employee said some locals have even given their approval in store.

"A lot of people are excited because it's on the south end," said Jennifer Gonzales, a staff member at the new location. "We just need to get the word out about [the new restaurant] more."

According to Park, between 40 and 50 people came to the new location on both days of the grand opening. Compared to the 10 people who came to the first store's grand opening nearly two years ago, Park said the new store's opening qualified as "big progress."

Still, Park sees further room for expansion. According to Park, his goal is to get his sushi onto USU campus, where it will be even more accessible to USU students. However, Park is aware he faces stiff competition in vying for a position as a food vendor on campus.



FILE PHOTO

"I know that there is an existing sushi service on campus. So, I respect that. There's nothing I can do," Park said. "Maybe students or campus will want us because it's \$5. It's a good price for college students."

Park said he first started making sushi while working as a sushi vendor in 2016 at Smith's

Marketplace in Logan. While working at Smith's, Park began thinking of ways to attract more customers.

"I realized this is a college town," Park said. "[While] some people can afford sushi prices, for the majority of people, it's too expensive."

However, because of the low-

er price of sushi, and due to his agreement with Smith's, Park began bringing in less of a profit. Park decided to open his own restaurant, and despite being less profitable due to the restaurant's lower pricing, Park still feels that his business plays an important role in the Logan community.

"It's been this location for two years. It's not super busy, but it's okay. It pays the bills," Park said. "Maybe someone with a minimum wage can now have sushi."

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A WEEK OF INCLUSION

Utah State University celebrates its first Trans Awareness Week

By Karcin Harris
NEWS STAFF WRITER

Utah State University had several events to celebrate its first Trans Awareness Week, including a drag show, Pronouns and Pastries, crafts and an Ask a Trans Person Panel.

Nathon Taylor, the drag show host and planner, said the show had about 800 attendees and the goal was to make this show "bigger and better" than last year's.

"This year, we had over 20 amazing performances from students and community members from USU and the Cache Valley area," he said. "We also had an amazing keynote presentation from Joel Arvizo-Zavala, a two-spirit identifying individual who works at the University of Utah. They provided some amazing insight on trans issues in Utah."

Taylor said the trans awareness week events were important because they provide "a safe space for all individuals, no matter their gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation."

"In Northern Utah, it can be difficult to come to terms with our

identity and accept ourselves for who we are," he said. "Events like this provide a safe space for all individuals and to promote an inclusive university climate."

Taylor said Trans Awareness Week is a great time for alliance and acceptance.

"Trans Awareness Week is another example of how we can contribute to a world that is accepting to all," Taylor said. "As a cis-gender gay man, I can't speak to how this event impacts me personally, but I can speak on the importance of being a great ally. Allyship shows solidarity and affirmation towards your peers, and everyone should have that feeling."

Caity Moellendorf and Jared Gheen, interns from the USU Inclusion Center, shared what Trans Awareness Week means to them.

"It's all about awareness," Moellendorf said. "We are an awesome campus, but we need to work on our inclusion. The fact that we're making all these events and we're inviting not just queer students but all students to come participate is really important because then it brings out the awareness that there are

trans and queer students here. We're here. We're sitting in classes with you and it's really important that you know how to be an ally and how to make campus a better place."

Gheen said Trans Awareness week would help cis students become more involved, inclusive and educated.

"Having Trans Awareness Week is especially important for cis people to recognize there are people on the trans spectrum all over," Gheen said. "In their classes most people have encountered them. Having a week where we can really celebrate that and raise awareness and education is crucial for students here at USU."

Both Moellendorf and Gheen said their favorite event was the drag show, but that the new events like Pastries and Pronouns and Ask a Trans Person Panel were important better educate USU students and promote inclusion.

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PHOTO BY Nichole Bresee

A drag queen performer performs in the Utah State University annual drag show, which was held as part of Transgender Awareness Week.



PHOTO BY Nichole Bresee

Two drag queens perform in the anual Utah State University drag show, held during the university's first Transgender Awareness Week.

Meet your Senator — Tiffanee Bird

A lifelong Aggie finds her place as the CEHS Senator



PHOTO COURTESY OF USUSA
Tiffanee Bird is serving as the 2019-2020 Senator for the College of Education and Human Services.

By Kortni Wells
STUDENT LIFE STAFF WRITER

Tiffanee Bird is no stranger to Utah State University. Raised an Aggie football fan, Aggie blue runs deep in her veins. Her mom and older sister are Aggie alumni. Her brother-in-law is a current student and her younger sister is a freshman.

But surprisingly enough, Bird’s top choice of school wasn’t originally USU. Although she grew up with the Aggie spirit, the Tooele native thought she had settled on Weber State University.

It wasn’t until she talked to a friend before starting her freshman year that she realized Weber didn’t quite fit where she wanted to be.

“My family didn’t push me one way or the other. I knew they would be coming up for the games whether I came to school here or not, and, plus, just knowing about the student life and how different it is convinced me to switch,” Bird said.

Bird felt connected to USU in a way she hadn’t felt anywhere else. She enjoys that USU is very student-oriented, with a very friendly atmosphere and a constant hub of activity.

“There’s always something going on, there’s always something to go to. There’s a club to join. There’s somewhere to go,” Bird said. “There’s always a spot for everybody.”

Bird has always felt comfortable in and around Cache Valley.

“Utah State cares so much about their students and they want them to succeed and do well,” Bird said. “I feel like everybody’s so friendly. Everybody’s going to talk to anybody. Everyone is so open with one another.”

In her small increments of free time, she can usually be found watching Friends or New Girl on Netflix while munching on chips and salsa or quesadillas.

When she isn’t getting sucked into the latest drama between characters, she devotes time to her studies and her role as the College of Education and Human Services senator, which she serves as for the 2019-20 school year.

Her decision to run for senator came from a pep talk with Deidre Thomas, the past CEHS senator, who reminded Bird that with a little bit of courage, she had the drive needed to succeed.

“It was one of those decisions where I was like, ‘You know what? I should just go for it

and try it, because I feel like it’s something that I want to do,’” Bird said.

Sydnee Bird, an elementary education major at USU and Tiffanee Bird’s younger sister, has always looked up to Tiffanee as someone she wanted to be like.

The two spent much of their younger years together playing soccer, running track and participating in drill team. They also served in student government together.

As a close observer of Tiffanee Bird’s role as CEHS senator, she has learned the importance of getting involved.

“Even though our majors are not the same, I see Tiffanee is willing to go out of her way to help every single person in the College of Education,” Sydnee Bird said. “She wants to make a difference.”

Sydnee Bird described her sister as a hard-working, dedicated and determined person.

“If Tiff puts her mind to something, she is going to make it happen,” she said. “She puts in long hours and always goes above and beyond in everything she does.”

Because CEHS is home to a broad variety of majors, Bird’s main focus as senator has been to bring unity within the college.

“There’s eight different departments and they range from teaching to consumer sciences to nursing and exercise sciences, so I’ve been trying to work on finding common interests between all of those things,” Bird said.

Bird currently works with Calli Weeks, the CEHS council president, on monthly newsletters to bring awareness of the diversity of the college to its students.

Weeks became acquainted with Tiffanee after meeting during their freshman year at the Aggie Blue Leadership Conference three years ago. The two connected instantly and have remained good friends ever since.

“Tiffanee is someone who is always looking outward,” Weeks said. “As president of her council, I am amazed at her ability to work well with others. She is always involving our council and looking for ways to include us.”

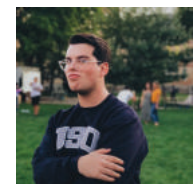
Weeks admires Bird for her commitment to the College of Education and Human Services, and the organization she provides in her position as senator.

“She is one of the hardest workers I know,” Weeks said. “She is always striving to do the best for our college.”

As the CEHS senator, Bird has learned that anything is possible.

see “Tiffanee” PAGE 8

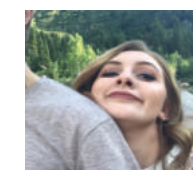
TWEETS of the WEEK



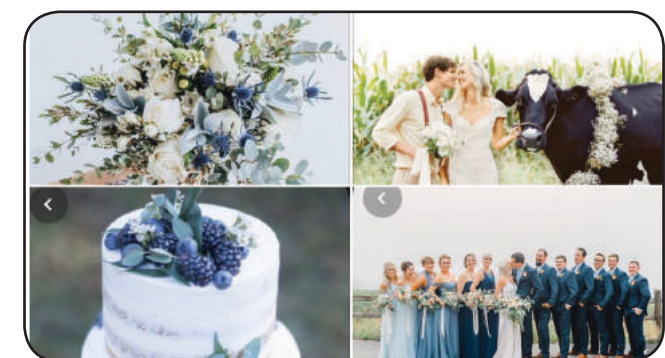
@GageCarling
I have a crush on this building



@lewnitedstates
I love parking at USU. It’s like “we know you have class and we only have ~3~ parking spots so part of your degree requirements means just figuring it out! Good luck, meet the challenge lmao and remember Go Aggies!”



@laurenrazmussen
Just because I missed my chance to have an Aggie themed wedding doesn’t mean you have to ladies @USUAggies



New information technology building planned for USU

Construction planned to begin in May



GRAPHIC BY Cameron Mathews

By William Bultez
STUDENT LIFE STAFF WRITER

An information technology building set to begin construction in May on Utah State University’s Logan campus is expected to increase the effectiveness of the school’s IT services.

Currently, USU IT’s staff and services are spread out across campus.

“There will be more communication among IT staff,” said Eric Hawley, USU’s chief information officer. That should result in more efficient IT services, he said.

Hawley said, however, that the services will not be changed.

According to Hawley, IT currently employs about 70 full-time workers and 80 to 90 students, mostly in its student labs.

“Utah State University doesn’t exist for servers and wires,” Hawley said. “Servers and wires and technology services exist to help students and faculty and staff get done what they need to get done.”

Among the services IT offers at USU are tech-

nology support and hardware repair for students, faculty and staff, as well as computer labs where students can go for software and technical help.

While the building will combine IT staff and resources, the associated labs across campus will remain where they are.

The IT Services Building will replace the parking lot just north of the Nutrition and Food Science Building, which houses the Aggie Creamery.

Project Manager Lorin Wilcox said his team just finished determining user requirements and is now in talks with Hawley about the schematics. Wilcox anticipates the project to be “substantially complete” in July 2021.

Although Ben Berrett, the director of planning, design and construction, says the weather is already a challenge to construction, Wilcox asserted the project is on schedule.

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Third school’s the charm

Eric Munoz’s journey to Utah State and unlikely rise to impact starter

By Jason Walker
SENIOR SPORTS WRITER

Utah State redshirt junior linebacker Eric Munoz stood behind a podium, addressing the media after USU’s 26-21 win against Wyoming on Saturday afternoon. At first, his manner is rather subdued, especially given how Munoz led the defense with 13 tackles and picked off two passes. One of those passes he stole from Wyoming quarterback, Tyler Vander Waal, ended the Cowboys’ attempt at a game-winning drive in the fourth quarter.

Munoz was the hero of the game. He held the coveted trophy — Bridger’s Rifle — symbolic of victory in the rivalry between the Aggies and Cowboys. But in the middle of answering a question, the facade broke. Tears welled in his eyes and the emotion of the day carried.

Just a few weeks prior, such a scene could hardly be predicted, even by Munoz. For years, Munoz’s career remained in a state of continuous flux. From Upper Iowa University to junior college at San Diego Mesa and now as a walk-on in Logan, uncertainty has been the constant

companion of the Illinois native. With each decision came the possibility that it would spell the end of his career. A lot of sacrifices came with each passing choice.

“Transferring three different times is tough,” Munoz said, “financially, academically, mentally and physically.”

His decision to leave Upper Iowa had been particularly bold. It meant giving up a scholarship, his avenue to success after football. It was a decision that didn’t come without opposition from his parents.

“My dad was pretty mad at me at first,” Munoz said. “We kind of butted heads for a good amount of time.”

Standing in the team room, facing a small crowd of media members, Munoz held the proof that he had been right. Right to leave Iowa and later San Diego for the unknown that lay in Cache Valley. His parents didn’t wait for that proof, however, rallying behind their son in his quest for gridiron glory.

“When your parents are behind you and believe in you when you are rolling the dice, it means a lot,” Munoz said.



Redshirt-junior linebacker Eric Munoz (38) celebrates with Utah State junior linebacker Kevin Meitzenheimer (33) and junior safety Shaquon Bond (4) after making a play versus Wyoming on Saturday.

Upon arrival in Logan, Munoz didn’t have any answers as to how he would make his way onto the field. At each stop along his football career, Munoz had seen success; an all-conference linebacker in both high school and in the California Community College Athletics Association. With the latter, he recorded 69 tackles, 7.5 for loss, with 2.5 sacks in aiding the Olympians to the Southern California Bowl Championship.

That success had driven him to try playing Division I. And having heard tale of Utah State’s reputation for turning walk-ons into contributing players, Munoz packed his bags. A glimmer of hope lighting the way.

Unfortunately, a redshirt junior season did its best to drive all that hope out of Munoz. The 6-foot linebacker appeared only appeared twice in the 2018 season, in blowouts against Tennessee Tech and San Jose State. Munoz finished his fruitless year with six tackles.

few fleeting plays at the end of USU’s win over Fresno State. His three solo tackles caught the eye of someone on the coaching staff as Munoz earned himself a starting role in the crucial Mountain West matchup with Wyoming.

Munoz had his chance, and he couldn’t let it pass by. He couldn’t disappoint himself, his parents or his friends. Least of all, his adamant-ly stated best friend, fellow linebacker, Kevin Meitzenheimer, who started alongside Munoz.

“I couldn’t let them down, especially not Kevin,” Munoz said, with the tears and emotion reaching its climax, “He has believed in me since I got here. When I wasn’t getting much playing time or I wasn’t getting an opportunity, he was always cheering for me, telling me to keep my head up.”

Several hours and one victory later, Munoz proved he deserved the trust placed in him by his parents, his friends and finally his coaches.



Utah State redshirt-junior linebacker Eric Munoz celebrates a play in the Aggies’ 26-21 win against Wyoming Saturday, Nov. 16. Munoz made the most of his first-career start with a team-high 13 tackles and two interceptions.

“*I couldn’t let them down, especially not Kevin.*”

– Eric Munoz

Heading into 2019, prospects fared little better. All-American linebacker David Woodward saw the bulk of snaps within the Aggies’ two-linebacker base defense. A few weeks into the season, having hardly stepped foot between the sidelines, Munoz walked into the office of head coach Gary Andersen, asking how he could get playing time.

“I didn’t really have an answer for him,” Andersen said, “other than keep on fighting and keep on battling.”

Such an answer didn’t make anything better. But when Woodward went down for the season after Utah State’s loss to Air Force, a window opened. The Aggies played nearly two full games before Munoz got a small chance, a

“Eric was awesome tonight,” said Andersen. “He patiently waited for his opportunity. He never pouted. It is a great story.”

A great story for a great man. After his tear-filled and sobering press conference, Munoz entered the locker room a hero and was lifted onto the shoulders of his coaches and teammates who chanted his name. Munoz found the gridiron glory he chased for years and almost from coast to coast.

@thejwalk67

ATHLETICS HOME EVENTS

WOMEN’S VOLLEYBALL

WAYNE ESTES CENTER

VS

SAN DIEGO STATE

11. 21. 19 - 7 PM

VS

FRESNO STATE

11. 23. 19 - 1 PM

VS

BOISE STATE

11. 23. 19. - 8:30 PM

#AGGIESALLTHEWAY

“Bowling” FROM PAGE 1

ton on the opening play of the game was the highlight of Utah State’s offense through nearly 20 minutes. In total, the Aggies managed just 30 yards in the first quarter and weren’t showing signs of clicking on the offensive side of the ball. The Aggies put that behind them and trudged forward and found a way to exploit Wyoming’s aggressive coverage style. This was demonstrated most notably on an 80-yard touchdown pass and reception from Love to Siao-si Mariner that put the first points on the board for Utah State.

“We saw the defense in cover two and Tyler Hall, really good corner and really aggressive corner too, kind of jumped the arrow route and it kind of freed me up and made the safety be one-one-one and I had to go make a play and help my team win the game,” Mariner said.

If the first quarter was a let-down, the second quarter should be considered a resounding success. The Aggies amassed a total of 223 yards, 20 points and 10 first downs in the quarter alone. Utah State closed the time of possession gap to just five in advantage of Wyoming and was putting together a performance reminiscent of 2018’s stellar campaign. Mariner’s touchdown was followed by a 35-yard wheel route touchdown to running back Gerold Bright. If



Utah State's punt return unit lines up to attempt to block a punt from Wyoming during USU's game on Saturday.

you had to point to one, this stretch was the turning point in the contest and even though Utah State’s offense slowed down in the later stages, this outburst proved to be enough to carry them across the finish line.

Having one of the most consistent kickers and special teams groups in the nation helps a team pull out a win in battle like the one Utah State faced tonight. The leader of that group, senior kicker Dominik Eberle who converted four-of-five field goals and set a Mountain West career conversions record at 61 made field goal attempts.

“He’s a very powerful weapon,” Andersen said. “Dom

lines up there and has ice in his veins. Go back on this year in the conference games and see what he’s done making field goals. It happened again tonight, it happened at San Diego State, he wins the game last week.”

When Utah State’s offense wasn’t looking nearly as glamorous in the second half — 114 total yards in the third and fourth quarters — the defense stepped up to hold down the fort and retain the rifle in the Bridger Battle. But truthfully, the defense kept the Aggies alive throughout the entire game. Before tonight’s matchup, Wyoming had given up just five turnovers all season. The Aggies nearly

matched that by creating four of their own Saturday night and putting massive amounts of pressure on quarterback Tyler Vander Waal. When asked if this was the best performance of the season from the defensive line, Andersen agreed saying “I would think so, yeah.”

With All-American linebacker David Woodward out for the season, players have had to step up, and no player filled that void better than redshirt-junior linebacker Eric Munoz. In his first start of the season, he had a performance a lot of players would dream of having in one game across their entire career. Munoz led the team with 13 tackles, was

instrumental in putting pressure on Wyoming’s offensive line and had a pair of interceptions, including the one that effectively sealed the game for Utah State late in the fourth quarter.

“It felt good. Honestly, seeing the ball is kind of surreal when it’s coming right into your hands, because it’s such a gimme,” Munoz said. “It was kind of right to me, so it felt good to drop down on it and let the clock roll. It felt really good.”

For Munoz, this start meant more than just getting minutes on the field. It was a minor victory in what has been a majorly difficult process of getting to Utah State.

“Honestly, I was kind of getting choked up earlier,” Munoz said as he fought back tears. “It’s been a long time coming to be honest with you. This is the third school I’ve been to, redshirt-junior having to sit behind some guys has been tough, and then coming here and having to walk-on... god blessed me with an opportunity.”

Utah State will celebrate this win for the night, but face its toughest challenge to date in Mountain West play against no. 21 Boise State a week from today in what could be a winner-takes-all match of Mountain Division contenders.

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Newcomers finding footing for USU women’s basketball

By Joseph Crook
SPORTS STAFF WRITER

This past week the Utah State Aggies Women’s Basketball team split its two games, earning a 70-63 win against the Seattle University Redhawks and taking a 109-52 loss against the no.1 ranked Oregon Ducks. The two games put the Aggies record at 1-2 on the season and while the two results are near polar opposites — winning by seven and then losing by 57 — the Aggies were up against two completely different levels of competition. Coming into the match-up, Seattle had a 10-point win over the Saint Martin’s Saints, a division-two team. Coming into its matchup against the Aggies, the Oregon Ducks

had logged a seven-point win against the United States Women’s National Team. It is, therefore, not overly surprising that the Aggies would have such a wide swing in their performances.

In their game against Seattle, the Aggies came out of the gates quickly, scoring first, and ending the quarter with a score of 19-to-7. While the Redhawks never gave up — they would go on to tie the game in the third quarter — the Redhawks were never able to take a lead, and except for a few tense minutes throughout the game, the Aggies were able to pull away with a win comfortably.

Against Oregon, it was a completely different story. The Ducks put their foot on the gas coming out of the gate and didn’t let up. They increased their output every quarter except for the third scoring 25 in the first quarter, 27 in the second, 25 in the third, and 31 in the fourth. The Aggies followed this trend as well until the fourth quarter scoring 10, 16, 18, and eight respectively. While the Aggies did have four players in double figures — sophomore guard Steph Gorman lead the team with 13 — they only received eight total points from the rest of the roster. The lack of depth scoring didn’t hurt the Aggies in their matchup against the Redhawks, but against the number one school in the country, that lack of help showed as a glaring weakness.

Statistically, the two games are hard to put together. The Oregon game is an outlier that will likely not be seen again this season, but the numbers do tell a story. The paint was not kind to the Aggies, in both games, the Aggies lost the rebound battle; in the two games

combined, the Aggies were out rebounded 90-to-65, letting both Seattle and Oregon pull down 45 rebounds a piece. Combined, the Aggies allowed 37 second-chance points, gifting 15 points to Seattle on 18 offensive rebounds and 22 points to Oregon on 14 offensive rebounds. Ball security was also an issue as Utah State would turn the ball over 30 times over two games; however, they were able to improve from the 17 turnovers that the team gave up against Seattle, only letting the ball go 13 times against Oregon.

Despite the flaws, the Aggies were able to do a lot of things right. From the free-throw line the Aggies enjoyed a fair amount of success, shooting 70-percent on 20 shots. They also were able to play solid defense against the Redhawks, stealing the ball 15 times. But against Oregon, the Aggies weren’t able to take the ball away with consistency — only getting one steal — but the team did force the Ducks to turn the ball over 10 times.

One stand out performer for the Aggies was sophomore guard Steph Gorman. She scored a career high 28 points against the Redhawks and a solid 13 against Oregon, giving her 42 points in two games for an average of 21 points per game. She was also able to average 5.5 rebounds per game, pulling down six against the Redhawks and five against the Ducks. She earned three steals against the Redhawks and only turned the ball over twice in the course of the two games. Gorman led the team in points in both games and had eight three-pointers overall on 57% shooting. The Aggies also had key scoring from senior guard Lindsey Jensen-Baker (26), senior forward Marlene Aniambossou (23), and senior forward Hailey Basset (18).

In all, the Aggies came away from the two games

with the expected result. They demonstrated that they can win the games that they should and they also helped demonstrate why Oregon is so feared throughout the NCAA.

The Aggies will stay on the road to play against the Long Beach State 49ers on Monday and the Cal State Fullerton Titans Wednesday.

@crooked_sports



PHOTO BY Samuel Woubshet
Utah State’s Hailey Basset blocks a shot during USU’s game versus Seattle on November 9, 2019 in Logan. USU won 70-63.

Merrill-y, Merrill-y, Merrill-y, Merrill-y, life is but a dream

By Sydney Kidd
SPORTS STAFF WRITER

Senior guard Sam Merrill has a target on his back, there is no question about it. The Mountain West Preseason Player of the Year has won far too many awards and boasts too impressive of a stat sheet to fly under the radar. As such, opposing teams have dared Utah State’s supporting players

around Merrill to beat them offensively.

So far, USU’s roster has taken advantage of those dares. Utah State is currently 4-0, in spite of teams making an effort to corral Merrill — like North Carolina A&T, who prevented Merrill from scoring for the first 15 minutes of play time on Friday. While USU’s star senior may not be lighting up scoreboards himself, the rest of the Aggies have more than picked up the slack.

SPREADING THE BALL AROUND

In each game, the Aggies have had a different player lead the team in scoring. Merrill has not led the team since its first game of the season, when he knocked down 28 points against Montana State. “I think it’s great to have depth,” head coach Craig Smith said. “It’s hard for the other team to key on specific guys... when we have all the different guys that can do so many different things. It certainly opens up the floor, makes it much more difficult for a scouting report.”

In the past three games, sophomore forward Justin Bean, sophomore guard Brock Miller and junior forward Alphonso Anderson each took a turn at Utah State’s helm — recording 18, 27 and 21 points, respectively. The Aggies have won each of these games by margins of 27 points or more.

“We thought coming into the year, we’d have a lot of versatility with this team,” Smith said. “I think it’s showing with some of the stuff we can do on the floor, but also being able to attack teams in different ways than we were able to do that last year.”

ALPHONSO ANDERSON PRODUCING OFF THE BENCH

One of the surprises of the season so far, Anderson

has proven to be a solid backup for the Aggies, averaging 13.3 points and 5.5 rebounds a game so far. A junior college transfer, the power-forward has also shown his versatility by spending some time at the center spot, cleaning up the glass and providing solid defense both in the paint and on the perimeter.

Offensively, Anderson has also shown a knack for play-making, averaging 3.2 assists per 40 minutes of play. Anderson has also proven reliable at the free throw line, shooting over 88 percent from the charity stripe for the season.

JUSTIN BEAN AVERAGING A DOUBLE-DOUBLE

Bean was the leading scorer in a 89-34 blowout win over Weber State and is averaging a double-double this season. He said there isn’t any competition between his teammates over who can sink the most shots.



@SydChap

“We just care what it says by our logo at the end of the game,” Bean said. “It’s all team-ball.” Coach Smith also noticed the Aggies’ unselfish attitude when it comes to racking up points and spreading the role of lead scorer around the roster.

“Our guys, I think, are very just genuinely happy for one another,” Smith said.

That cheer and willingness to spread the offensive burden has been a key part of the Aggies’ early-season success. USU will look to maintain that momentum as the schedule turns tougher. LSU, St. Mary’s and Florida all loom large as marquee matchups on Utah State’s non-conference schedule in the next few weeks.

The magic returns to the Dee Glen Smith Spectrum

By Joseph Crook
SPORTS STAFF WRITER

There’s electricity in the air; it fills every square inch of the Spectrum, like a lightning strike you can feel just before the light splits the sky. And then the tension breaks. And all that can be heard is the roar of thunder; this thunder is not provided by rolling clouds nor storming deity, but by 10,270 people all united in a single cause, to cheer the Utah State Aggies to victory. The air in the Spectrum is electric, yes, but it goes deeper than that. The Spectrum is magic.

The Dee Glenn Smith Spectrum houses one of the greatest home-court advantages in college basketball. The Hurd is known throughout the country as one of the loudest, one of the best stu-

dent sections in the NCAA. That’s a fact acknowledged by many, including ESPN and Bleacher Report. Opposing teams fear it, opposing fans envy it, and true-blooded Aggies revel in it.

The spectrum has stood for 49 years and has been named for Dee Glenn Smith for 48, and while it has always had the magic in its structure — always had the greatest fans within it — the Spectrum didn’t fully show it until a man named Stew Morrill brought out its true potential, until he came in the 1998-1999 season and harnessed the magic.

In his tenure as Utah State men’s basketball head coach, Stew Morrill brought the Aggies glory. The Aggies overall home record with Stew Morrill as head coach was a nearly unheard of 248-39, a win percentage of 86. To put that in perspective,

during coach Krzyzewski’s tenure, Duke has had a home win percentage of 85 percent. The Aggies tore through the Big West Conference until they were simply too good for it, and had to seek out a higher level of competition. And so, without moving an inch, the Spectrum moved up. The Hurd became even louder, the building became even more revered, the Spectrum became even more magical.

The Western Athletic Conference didn’t know what hit it; it was entering the WAC when the Spectrum began its golden age. The Aggies could not be conquered at home. The sound of the Hurd echoed in the rafters, encompassed the court, and reverberated in the hearts of fans and players alike. Bringing pride and courage to the Aggies, and fear and trembling to whoever stood in their

way. Their first two years in the conference, March 2005 to March 2007, the Aggies would lose only three games at home. A record any team would have been proud of, a record any team would hope for, but it wasn’t enough for the Spectrum and the Aggies.

In the 2007-2008 season the Hurd held their merciless reign atop the nation’s student sections. They got into the head of the opponents and they did all that they could do to ensure that their team would win, and, with the Hurd’s help, the magic of the Spectrum took over. The Aggies would not lose a game that season. In fact, the Aggies would not lose a single game in the 2008-2009 season either. Going into the 2009-2010 season, the Aggies had won 34 straight games at home, and would add three more before Saint Mary’s

College was finally able to do what 37 opponents could not. Beat the Aggies at home.

But the Spectrum would not be deterred. The Aggies would not lose another game at home that season, nor would they lose in the 2010-2011 season, but like all golden eras, this one had to end.

The Spectrum was still magic, but the magic was starting to fade. They would lose four games in the 2011-2012 season, and they would lose five games in each season between then and the 14-15 season. Then Coach Morrill retired. The Hurd, which had been so energized, had been so revered, began to diminish. They were still there, there was still the feeling of electricity, but it was like a storm that had already passed, had already seen its glory, and was going into the distance to dissipate, only remembered by those who had

gloried in it.

But the magic refused to die. Refused to allow the storm to fade, and the Spectrum brought a man who knew how to reignite the magic: Craig Smith. As the former head coach of the University of South Dakota, Smith received many accolades for his work and won a few conference championships, but there was a higher call. A call to come to Utah State, to come to the Spectrum, and that is what he did.

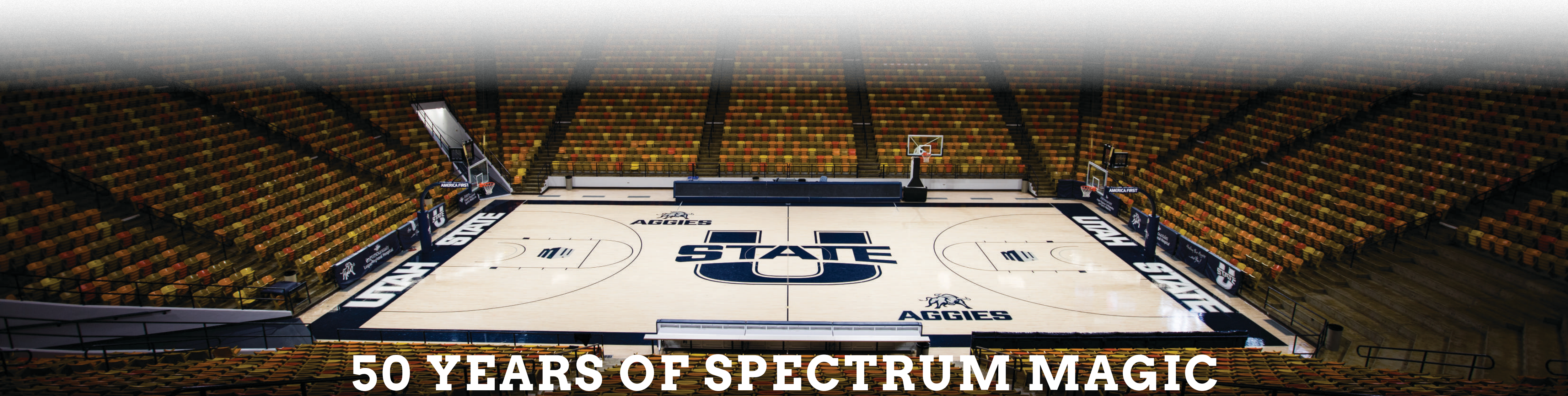
Hired on March 26th, 2018, Coach Smith has made bringing the Spectrum magic back one of his top priorities. In a recent interview, he told reporters that the team “really want[s] to bring the spectrum magic back.” That it’s “fun to see the enthusiasm around campus,” and that “the Hurd is incredible... they are so creative and so impact-

ful on our game, and in turn, we have one of the best home-court advantages in the country.”

Coach Smith recognizes what the Spectrum can do with the Hurd in full force, and it shows. Last season the Aggies went 14-1 in the Spectrum. Their best home record since the 2010-2011 season; the Aggies not only had success at home, they carried the magic with them wherever they went. They would end the season 28-7, the best record for any first-year coach in Utah State history. They carried the magic and made it to the NCAA Tournament; the Aggies had hope, they had life, and they had a spirit that wouldn’t die. But it wasn’t meant to be that year. The Aggies would fall in the first round. However, the Aggies have no intention of stopping, the Spectrum won’t let them stop.

Utah State is poised to win the Mountain West this year, for the second season in a row. They have the talent and they have the entire school behind them. For years, the Aggies have taken pride in their school. From north to south, east to west, school spirit can be felt in every corner of campus, and this year is no exception; it can be seen in the faces of the students as they walk to class in the freezing rain and wind. It can be felt. It is a palpable force. Utah State is a special place, and the Dee Glenn Smith Spectrum seems to be a focal point of that spirit. It has taken the energy, taken the electricity that crackles in the air, and has turned it into something greater, it has turned it into magic.

@crooked_sports



50 YEARS OF SPECTRUM MAGIC

“Drag Show” FROM PAGE 1

the audience about what being LGBTQ meant to them and their journey of self-discovery, as well as others they have witnessed.

“I’m really, really grateful they invited me to attend,” Zabala said. “I was born and raised in Utah, and it can be conservative, but I’ve always wanted to do drag myself. I knew I just needed to do my best at the event and share some stories, but after this experience, I’m making it a goal for myself that a year from today, either here or somewhere else, I’m going to do drag.”

Zabala encouraged students to remain open-minded to the world around them and to be themselves and do what makes them happy, highlighting how they proudly carry a purse into court no matter the stares they get.

“Expectations can be good sometimes; they can help us learn and grow and become exactly who we are, but sometimes those expectations aren’t ours,” Zabala said. “So you just have to say, I’m interested in something different, and be open and honest enough with yourself to pursue whatever it might be and look for inspiration everywhere.”

The show opened with the host, Ms. Gigi, performing a lip-sync mashup of Miley Cyrus hits. The queens and kings performed a variety of different lip sync styles, from slow ballads to throwback bops. Drag king Marlone even took the chance to send a message about consent at the end of their performance, while drag queen Jathiccc Wellz hyped the crowd up with a charismatic and death-drop filled performance.

“I absolutely loved Jathiccc’s performance,” Stack said. “She was awesome. She had so much personality and I loved her outfit.”

Following the show, the queens and kings sat down for a Q&A session with questions sent in by audience members. They answered a variety of questions, from how they got their drag name and first times in drag to whether someone could do drag without having to be sexy.

“I got my name because I wanted to go off of Lizzie McGuire, who’s my favorite,” Lizzie Mc-

Queen said. “Just last year, when I did this show, was my first time in drag. The outfit was okay. The makeup was questionable. And the hair was a choice.”

“My favorite part about drag is being funny,” Marlone said. “Some of the best drag performances I’ve done are all about humor, not sexy. So if you don’t want to be sexy, be funny, or if you don’t want to be funny, be dramatic. There’s a lot of different ways you can do it.”

Drag queen Brandy Champagne also shocked the crowd by revealing that her two-in-one dress to jumpsuit outfit was hand-sewn and designed by herself. She said that she largely learned to sew by taking fashion classes during her time at USU.

Closing the event, the queens and kings offered some final words of advice for any aspiring drag performers in the audience.

“Be yourself,” Jenna Say Kwah, a drag queen, said. “There’s plenty of people to guide you and there’s plenty of people to listen to you cry and hear your problems, and they will lead you to be better, but you have to start with yourself first. That’s where you truly find an art that you enjoy.”

Brandy Champagne added to that, encouraging audience members to not compare themselves to other performers and be themselves, while drag queen Madam Lacrude told them not to let the expenses of drag stop stop them. But no matter their reasoning, the overall consensus was clear: just try it.

“If you’re nervous about getting into drag or performing, I encourage you to just do it,” Emerald, a drag queen, said. “It’s always scary stepping up on this stage, but the more you do it, the more you look out on the crowd, have them cheer you on or tip you, the more appreciation you have of your bravery. It’s very brave to step on the stage, but every time it’s been worth it for me, and it’ll be worth it for you.”

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@breseenichole



PHOTO BY Nichole Bresee
This year’s annual USU Drag Show, put on by USU Resident Life in partnership with Logan Pride, featured 22 performances.

“Tiffanee” FROM PAGE 3

“Students have a voice and anything can happen,” Bird said. “Any student can talk to someone about issues and be led to the right sources to make a difference.”

Ellie Sutton, a current roommate of Bird’s, characterizes her as someone who is a competitive and intelligent leader, with a contagious smile.

“She is quick to love, easy to follow and enthusiastic about pretty much anything she does,” Sutton said. “I admire her goodness, her determina-

tion and happy nature.”

As an exercise science major, Bird will graduate with three years under her belt this May and is looking forward to the world of opportunities that are beginning to open up for her.

She often spends time dreaming of her down-the-road career goal of running a non-profit organization that develops health programs in other countries.

But for now, she’ll continue researching graduate school opportunities in the western United States, with the goal to start an occupational therapy program in the near future.

As Bird begins her last semes-

ter at Utah State in January, she hopes that students take her advice to have confidence and courage in themselves, something she has aimed to develop from her freshman year.

“Just have confidence and courage that you can go out there and you can get involved,” Bird said. “You can talk to your professors. You can make friends. You can do anything as long as you have confidence in yourself and 10 seconds of courage to put yourself out there.”

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@kortniwells

“Huntsman” FROM PAGE 1

serve on their economic development board and got a front row seat to how “a competitive nation makes it happen.”

“Back then, the big issue is that we were lacking economic vitality,” he added.

As a former member of Singapore’s economic development board, he was able to apply what he learned and create the Governor’s Office of Economic Development, which is still around today.

Huntsman said when you think of the economic success that Utah has, think of Singapore.

“Think about a governor who had been inspired by the best of the best in the world, and who was able to apply those competitive principles and make it happen.”

In addition to economic policies, Huntsman also hopes to address issues in education.

“What is going to be important to our future? Keeping good people here,” Huntsman said.

The only way to keep good people in Utah, according to Huntsman, is to have an outgrowth of strong communities, strong schools and an educational system that recognizes the competitive world we now live in while preparing kids for that reality. In order to succeed, Huntsman said we “must do something about our teachers.”

“Do you realize we have a 40-45 percent turnover after five year, two and a half times the national average?” Huntsman said.

Huntsman said he believes that compensation is

a big part of that, and he wants to take action to ensure that Utah’s teachers want to stay and become part of the community.

Speaking with Sami Ahmed, USUSA student body president, Huntsman said that there is no opportunity without risk.

“The thing that is the heartbreak for me, is when someone hasn’t found their passion and they are advanced in life and they are just kind of drifting,” Huntsman said. “Everyone of you is a genius in some way. Every one of you has something that is totally unique that only you can do.”

Jon Huntsman Jr. was the governor of Utah from 2005-2009. According to recent poll numbers from the Salt Lake Tribune, he is currently trailing Lt. Gov. Spencer Cox for the 2020 gubernatorial race.



PHOTO COURTESY of Steve Griffin/The Deseret News
Jon Huntsman Jr. speaks during a forum at the Michael O. Leavitt Center for Politics and Public Service at Southern Utah University in Cedar City, Utah, Thursday, Nov. 14, 2019, announcing that he is running for a third term as Utah’s governor Thursday, Nov. 14, 2019.

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In this Oct. 9, 2019, file photo, Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Elizabeth Warren speaks about the student loan debt relief legislative at South Carolina State University in Orangeburg, S.C. Warren has been rising in the polls for months, has become a Democratic presidential primary front runner who is being portrayed by Kate McKinnon on "Saturday Night Live." But for many, Warren is still a relative unknown.

PHOTO BY (AP Photo/Meg Kinnard, File)

State your case: Student loan forgiveness

Would forgiving student loans do more to help students or hurt taxpayers?

FOR

AGAINST

By Scott Froehlich
SPORTS CONTENT EDITOR

Earning a postsecondary degree or certificate these days is all but necessary to find a decent career, but it should not bankrupt students in the process.

According to a report by the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, 17.5 million graduate and undergraduate students enrolled during the Spring of 2019. Over that same period, the U.S. racked up \$1.4 trillion in student loan debt, according to data provided by the credit reporting company Experian.

In the state of Utah, individual debt is \$31,671 per person, up 25 percent from five years ago. That may not seem like much compared to the cost of a car, but the cost to pay off the loans over 10 years with the average interest rate of 5.8 percent brings the total to around 42 grand. Mind you, this is just the average and those seeking degrees beyond a bachelor's will owe much more: just ask your doctor.

This is where loan forgiveness comes in to save the day. Not only do these programs relieve the burden of student debt, they also incentivize hard work in school and allow students to follow through with career aspirations.

While implementing such policy in the U.S. seems like a

no-brainer, many people think loan forgiveness amounts to taking money from taxpayers and giving students a retroactively free ride in school. Except that isn't the full story.

It is fair to feel fleeced as a person whose taxes go towards tuition costs that are not their own. However, loan forgiveness programs are merit-based, in that they award people for successfully completing their schooling

“The formula then becomes simple: graduate from school, get a job within your field and stick with it for a few years.”

— Scott Froehlich

and going on to find a career within their specialized field. Not only are qualifying graduates working to earn forgiveness, they are also paying off their debt in the interim. For teachers, having some or most of their debt expunged requires a five-year gap between the time they start working until they become eligible. That amounts to roughly half the amount they owe, if they set up the aforementioned 10-year payment plan.

The formula then becomes simple: graduate from school, get a job within your field and stick with it for a few years.

Perhaps one of the most tragic consequences when it

comes to student loans is the rut it forces students to graduate in and the potential for delaying certain life events. The decline in homeownership is linked to millennials with student debt and many are holding off on getting married and starting a family due to their financial pitfalls.

In an ideal world, college would be affordable enough to enable students to work part-time or full-time jobs to

pay for tuition. Unfortunately, postsecondary education is not getting any cheaper and jobs available to the average student do not pay well enough to avoid taking out loans. It is imperative to continue funding programs that stimulate the workforce by ensuring students have a path to prosperity without the obstacle of debt to hold them back for the first 10-plus years of their careers.

Scott Froehlich is a junior who is studying print journalism. He moved to Logan with his wife and son from Price, Utah, where they attended school at Utah State University Eastern.

By Emily White
OPINION COLUMNIST

The democratic debates have renewed discussions about several hot-button issues, including the idea of student loan forgiveness. Forgiving student loans is a common proposal, especially within the campaigns of presidential hopefuls Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren. These plans are a lot easier said than done, and the promises politicians make often have unintended consequences. For example, both Warren and Sanders' proposals would require trillions of dollars in order to pay off debt that many taxpayers never agreed to shoulder. Because of this, the proposal to remove student loan debt promotes an enormous amount of inequality.

The way that these plans are set up is unfair. Let's consider those who get through school debt free. They spend copious amounts of time working in

order to pay for tuition and are likely to be making constant sacrifices so they can make ends meet. Ten years after they complete school, debt free, they have to pay tax money on someone else's student loans. These tax consequences would apply to all loans that were forgiven under PAYE, REPAYE, IBR and ICR, which are all basically pay as you earn programs. Americans can expect "a student loan forgiveness 'tax bomb' of between 10% and 37% of the amount forgiven, depending upon your taxable income after loan forgiveness." In other words, if student loans are forgiven, every American citizen will have to pay for student loans, regardless of whether or not they have student debt or even went to college. "Even Elizabeth Warren admits her plans would cost \$1.2 trillion over ten years — a tab taxpayers are expected to handle on top of everything else." By asking for student loan forgiveness,

we are "asking taxpayers to cover individual decisions regardless of how good or bad they are." Forgiving student loans fosters irresponsibility and creates a world that isn't fair to those who avoid debt.

Getting student loans is not a bad thing. Receiving a higher education is becoming more and more important, and student loans have helped many people attend college. However, these are personal decisions, and they should carry personal consequences. That means paying off your debts yourself. People pay off their student loans all the time; it's not impossible. Of course debt is hard to deal with and can be overwhelming, but that doesn't justify a debt forgiveness program that punishes taxpayers for a decision that wasn't theirs. You shouldn't be required to pay off my student loans, and I shouldn't be required to pay off yours. That's not fair. I believe in equality, do you?



Steve Marcus/Las Vegas Sun via AP,File

If you have a contrary opinion to the ones found in this article, please write a brief letter to the editor and email it to opinion@usustatesman.com. For specific guidelines about letters to the editor, please refer to the *Utah Statesman's* website.

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