



Annual Report 2015-2016

The Bennion Center's mission is to foster lifelong service and civic participation by engaging the University with the greater community in action, change and learning. To accomplish that mission and to work in collaboration with the University of Utah as a whole, the Bennion Center seeks to support the University's goals to:

1. Enhance student success to transform lives.
2. Generate new knowledge and discovery
3. Improve health and quality of life in the community
4. Ensure long-term viability of the Bennion Center and the university.

To meet that challenge, the Bennion Center is committed to:

- Provide transformational engaged educational and service experiences for students and develop civic leaders who exemplify excellence.
- Lead efforts to promote community engaged teaching, research and scholarship.
- Address community needs, especially in the areas of health and ability; environment, art and recreation; international service; social justice; and literacy and education.
- Strengthen Bennion Center operations to maximize potential outcomes, reach and results while serving as an ambassador for the University of Utah.

Part 1: Key Activities

Key Activity 1: Student Service and Leadership Programs

This includes Student-directed Programs, Service House, Student Board, Community Outreach, Legacy of Lowell, Issue Education (Service House Dialogues, Issues and Action Lunches, Bennion/Hinckley Forums).

a. Goals:

Engage university students with the community in service.
 Students participate in a variety of training options.
 Provide platforms to discuss social issues.

i. Outcomes:

Student-directed Programs: 738 Students / 51 Student Leaders / 42 Programs / 986 Hours Leadership Development and Training / 24,584 Hours of Service
 Service House: 12 Students / 1,143 Hours of Service
 Student Board: 7 Students / 1,800 Hours of Service

Community Outreach: 1,615 Students / 6,921 Hours of Service
 Legacy of Lowell: 516 Students / 1,800 Hours of Service
 Issue Education:
 Service House Dialogues: 3 Dialogues / 212.5 Hours of Service
 Issues and Action Lunches: 2 Lunches / 90 Students Attending
 Bennion Hinckley Forum: 1 Forum / 25 Students Attending

ii. How these outcomes have been achieved or modified

In 2015-2016, three new programs were launched, bringing the total to 44. New programs include:

- Education and Advocacy: First Lego League Utah
- Environment, Arts & Recreation: Rides for Wellness
- International: Malileh Free Clinic – Spanish Medical Translation

This year we expanded the Environmental Stewardship issue area to Environment, Arts & Recreation to more fully serve the community partners and key issues. Rides for Wellness, Arts for Youth, Music 4 the Masses, Running Forward, Utah Development Academy and Utah Symphony | Utah Opera joined Edible Campus Garden, Environmental Action Team, Green Urban Lunchbox and Social Justice Gardens in this new issue area. Another exciting addition to the menu of opportunities in Student-Directed programs was First Lego League Utah in partnership with The Leonardo museum, making it the first volunteer program offered geared towards engineering (and the first to own a robot).

Issue Area Coordinators (IACs) planned 4 leadership workshops, attended or facilitated by 37 student leaders. The workshops focused on recruitment and recognition, managing program budgets, ensuring a smooth program transition between Program Directors and volunteering with greater awareness. On top of helping IACs develop their facilitation and leadership skills, the workshops are a great opportunity to explore in depth topics and issues that help student leaders succeed in their roles.

Collectively, Service House residents contributed more than one thousand hours to community engagement projects, dialogues, workshops/trainings and Bennion Center events. The projects expose the residents to local issues and spark action and conversation about community needs. 2015-2016 Service House Residents participated in seven Saturday Service Projects focused on a variety of social issues, such as children's literacy, youth homelessness, environmental restoration, hunger and poverty, substance abuse and recovery, and refugee support services. Service House residents also served as team leaders for the Bend-in-the-River Earth Day site.

The student board is composed of one representative from each emphasis area. Selected by their respective staff partners, these students meet monthly, under the guidance of Bryce Williams, to address issues that impact students serving with the Bennion Center. In 2015-2016, the student board implemented a Winter Reception, designed as a mid-year leadership seminar. The event featured Salt Lake Mayor Jackie Biskupski in her first speech at the U as mayor. In her remarks the mayor challenged students to join city boards and become civically engaged in their own community. Throughout the year student board representatives also attended staff meetings and weighed in on discussion items like professional development for students and scholarships.

In 2015-2016, students contributed more than 2,000 hours above the 2014 volunteer service hours, a phenomenal effort in and of itself. Some of the most significant changes in Community Outreach centered around Project Youth. As students worked to re-imagine how Project Youth could inspire Title I elementary school children, they restructured the classroom curriculum, built stronger professional relationships with school administrators, and made the event more environmentally sustainable.

Besides Project Youth, Saturday Service Projects provided student and community volunteers monthly opportunities to engage. Hundreds of U students honored the memory of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by joining forces with community members to volunteer at five different community agencies. Working with the U's Office of Equity and Diversity, volunteers donated more than 500 hours at that project alone. Earth Day activities at three community sites resulted in almost 200 volunteers working together to contribute 375 hours of service that beautified our community in River District neighborhoods near Bend-in-the-River, at Red Butte Gardens and the Social Justice Gardens.

At the 2015 Legacy of Lowell Day of Service more than 561 students combined with community members and others to complete our 12th annual event. In our first-ever partnership with KSL NewsRadio and Select Health, students and committee members did on-air interviews to promote the event. Links from KSL and Select Health led directly to our registration site. Our partnership efforts extended to 40 different community organizations, resulting in 24 service projects and 16 sponsors.

To increase opportunities for issues education, Service House residents worked in teams of four to plan and facilitate three Service House Dialogues, highlighting relevant topics that included mental health, women in STEM and animal rights in the food industry. Each dialogue required student research and relationship development between appropriate community partners as they engaged in dialogue with community and campus members. The dialogues play a significant role in the Service House experience.

The Bennion Center's Community Engaged Scholars also worked to increase student and community awareness. That group sponsored Issues and Action lunches. Held once each semester at the Bennion Center, these gatherings unite students and community and campus experts for an exploration of topics of concern to our communities. Each lunch event is designed to not only enlighten students and community members but also to identify specific action steps volunteers could take to make a difference. This year's December discussion focused on how the world-wide refugee crisis is impacting Utah. The panel discussion focused specifically on the unique needs of women and children who fled their native lands and now call Utah home. The Spring Semester luncheon featured an examination of Salt Lake's affordable housing picture in terms of what is happening now and what lies on the horizon.

In partnership with the Hinckley Institute of Politics, the Bennion Center presented a discussion on social entrepreneurship – keeping good going after college. Community partners shared their strategies for getting involved and staying involved with community service while meeting the demands of busy professional lives.

iii. Student quotations:

“Over the last three years, I have been privileged with being able to experience the joys, difficulties, and challenges of directing a program from a student perspective. Not only was I able to expand my understanding of the community around me, but I was also able to meet some amazing people who are committed to bettering the community in which they live. I would not have the understanding I have today if it were not for my time with the Bennion Center. I was able to make an impact in the lives of underprivileged youth in my community through teaching them something I love, the sport of soccer. I have to say, however, they taught me far more than I ever did them. Because of my interactions and experiences with UDA, I am happy to say that I have an awareness of the needs and challenges my community faces, as well as how those problems are being met through programs like UDA. Overall, I cannot express in words how grateful I am to have been a part of those children's lives, and am even more for them being a part of mine.” – Austin Anderson, Program Director, Utah Development Academy

“Learning about Social Justice terminology during the April Workshop was a very enlightening experience... What was most meaningful to me was learning on how to address the individual/person first and avoiding labels.”– Program Director

“Until taking on the role with Saturday Service Projects, I never realized the true magnitude of service and benefit that the Bennion Center gives to the community. It is truly inspiring to see both students and community members partner up for a big event month after month to give back to the community. In a world where the differences between people seem to overshadow their ability to work together, it is motivating to see people of all backgrounds coming together to answer an important call to action in the community. I have made so many new friends through the service projects, and strengthened the friendships I had beforehand by doing service with those I love and admire. My first year with the Saturday Service Projects has been an unbelievably enriching one, but I cannot wait to see what opportunities await next year for the generations of innovators and community-builders that come together to make a positive change in our neighborhoods and city.” – Naveen Rathi, Student

“We’re trying to increase literacy skills in homeless youth. Education is what you can use to climb that ladder and get out of what you’re in. This is a really cool way to be involved and hopefully inspire someone.” – Julie Chassé, Student

“I made so many connections and friends. Volunteering opened up so many doors for me. It added purpose.” – Cindy Kuo, Student

“It’s a sacrifice but that’s the whole point of service. It’s not just about yourself.” – Dallin Parker, Student

“You get to meet people and help the community. How could I say no?” – Nichole Faught, Student

“Working with internationals is super rewarding and helps you be grateful. The administrative part is not my favorite part of volunteering. The face to face with the refugees is the best part.” – Hyrum Mitchell, Student

“I have loved the dialogues. Both planning and participating in them have helped me grow and develop useful skills that I will use for the rest of my academic and personal career.” – Student

“It has been one fast, yet exhilarating year with the Bennion Center. Being part of Saturday service projects and Legacy of Lowell has greatly involved me in the community. Not only did I see myself develop, but I saw how others around me be change and grow. I have always loved volunteering, but it was always difficult for me to be fully committed and being part of SSP and Legacy of Lowell has definitely changed that. It has challenged me to get out and involve myself in various volunteer activities among different communities. My thoughts have been filled with great inspiration as I’ve learned more about what the meaning was behind Legacy of Lowell. As time flies, it’s great to see such motivated individuals commit one Saturday to do service. It has inspired not only me to do better around the community, but my family and friends as well.” – Jessica Bounsanga, Student

“The Service House is my favorite place on campus! I love being with like-minded students who are engaged in their academics, volunteerism, and ability to have a fun time. I like that we do service projects locally and knowing we are helping people right in our community and realize that there are issues here in SLC that we can help solve. I love the diversity of the projects as well.” – Student

“One of the most valuable aspects of (serving on the board) was the sense of fulfillment through both the BC staff and students’ expectations. It’s a great way to implement new ideas to help the center grow, as well as having students find themselves through service! If I were to use that experience going forward, I’d say by applying my leadership and communication skills in my daily life. I also find that I had

more and better awareness in our community, and through that I found things that should be done, changed or improved on.” - Kayleen Chen, Student

“When I first started my Girl Scout troop I didn't know what to expect. It was a little new at first but after a few meetings I really enjoyed the time I spent with the girls. I started to see how happy the girls were to be in the troop. They would constantly tell me how much fun they were having and how they never wanted to leave. I was really touched when I heard that and I felt like I made a difference. I really do enjoy leading my troop and I am excited to get more volunteers involved so they can also make a difference.”– Sydney Chan, Student Program Director, Girl Scouts Outreach

“Twenty-three volunteers gathered together to make duct tape wallet kits for children to create while they are confined to their hospital rooms. The volunteers also made a variety of therapy projects for the rehabilitation clinic’s occupational therapists. Some of these projects included: ribbon snakes, button boards and pincer grasp letters. I would like to give a big thank you to those who were able to attend the project. None of this would have been possible without volunteers generously donating their time. I am exceedingly thankful that this project was able to bring joy to children being treated at these centers.” – Shelby Goodfellow, Student Program Director

b. Utilization Data

- i. Count
- ii. Career (Undergraduate, graduate, professional)
- iii. Year in school (e.g. Freshmen)
- iv. Gender
- v. Race/Ethnicity
- vi. Veteran status
- vii. International
- viii. Other demographics that your department collects and uses

None of our current data reflects any of this information. We have data about how many hours of service, how many blankets or pounds of food. We have discussed the viability of using an assessment kiosk but worry that most of our locations may not have strong enough Internet access to make that gathering system effective.

We do request some of this information on the Volunteer Information Form (VIF). We do not currently have a centralized database available to easily report or utilize this information. In addition, while we request this information on the VIF, we do not have method of tracking which students convert from “interested” (submitted a VIF) to an actual program volunteer.

If we had an easier method for tracking and reporting some of this information (college/major, etc.), it might be helpful for us to target recruitment. It also may be helpful in soliciting funding from sources who seek to support specific demographic groups.

Currently, it would be possible to obtain some of this information for student leaders (Issue Area Coordinators, Program Directors, Service House residents). It would be a VERY time intensive process to create aggregate data as we would need to work record by record to compile the information.

Key Activity 2: Alternative Breaks

a. Goals

Cultivate an ethic of lifelong community service and engagement.
 Provide students with meaningful opportunities to develop leadership skills.
 Develop & maintain strong, reciprocal community relationships.

i. Outcomes:

160 Students / 60 community partners / 7920 Hours of Service / 18 locations
 18 Student leaders / 18 U staff

- ii. All Alternative Breaks experiences are student-planned and led. Each student site leader learns valuable leadership and management skills by working with a U faculty/staff and community partner to arrange all travel, meals, lodging, training, service and reflection logistics.

This year the Alternative Breaks program introduced an AB Weekend experience. The weekend experience made it possible for students to participate in issue-based community projects closer to home but with the same focus: helping students develop civic competencies – skills, habits, values and attitudes that will shape their community engagement for a lifetime. Assessment indicates upon their return 92% of student participants are more likely to become involved in their community through volunteerism. In 2015-2016, the Bennion Center was one of 100 organizations nationwide to be awarded a \$6,500 grant from Noble Cause. The grant was awarded to mobilize volunteers in addressing challenges facing local communities. The award will help reduce student costs by approximately \$39 per student beginning in 2016-17, the Alternative Breaks program's 20th anniversary, thus helping make trips more accessible to students who may otherwise be unable to participate.

iii. Student quotations:

"My knowledge was broadened and my passions were ignited! I cannot wait to implement and utilize all the education and skills that I acquired throughout my AB experience!" Student

"I have been engaged in service before but this trip made me reflect on what our communities in SLC need and methods to reach those needs." Student

Key Activity 3: Utah Reads

a. Goals

Cultivate an ethic of lifelong community service and engagement.
 Provide students with meaningful opportunities to develop leadership skills.
 Develop & maintain strong, reciprocal community relationships.

i. Outcomes

68 Students / 7 Locations / 17,620 Hours of Service

- ii. Working at seven different sites, all serving Title I school children, tutors spend thousands of hours helping children improve their reading skills and their chances at successfully completing school. The program is a partnership with the federal Work Study program, the Salt Lake City School District, the University of Utah Reading Clinic and the Bennion Center.

b. Utilization data

- i. Count: 68
 ii. Career (Undergraduate, graduate, professional):
 a. Undergrad: 63

- b. Masters: 4
 - c. Doctoral: 1
- iii. Year in school (e.g. Freshmen) *New Baccalareate Students Only*
 - a. Freshman: 4
 - b. Sophomore: 10
 - c. Junior: 7
 - d. Senior: 20
- iv. Gender
 - a. Female: 52
 - b. Male: 16
- v. Race/Ethnicity
 - a. Asian: 5
 - b. Black: 2
 - c. Caucasian: 30
 - d. Foreign: 1
 - e. Hispanic: 20
 - f. Polynesian: 1
 - g. Mixed (2 or more races): 6
 - h. Unknown: 3
- vi. Veteran status *Not available.*
- vii. International *Not available.*
- viii. Other demographics:
 - a. At Least Full Time Status:
 - 1. Fall: 61
 - 2. Spring: 58
 - b. Major College: Fall (Spring)
 - 1. Architecture & Planning: 1 (1)
 - 2. [Business](#): 1 (3)
 - 3. [Education](#): 4 (4)
 - 4. [Engineering](#): 6 (6)
 - 5. [Fine Arts](#): 3 (3)
 - 6. [Health](#): 5 (6)
 - 7. [Humanities](#): 16 (15)
 - 8. [Medicine](#): 1 (0)
 - 9. [Mines & Earth Sciences](#): 2 (2)
 - 10. [Nursing](#): 1 (1)
 - 11. [Social & Behavioral Science](#): 14 (12)
 - 12. [Science](#): 3 (3)
 - 13. [Social Work](#): 2 (3)
 - 14. Undeclared: 9 (6)

Program director Cassandra Simmons requested utilization data from the Office of Budget and Institutional Analysis. She was seeking a greater understanding of the Utah Reads program and the students involved with it. Her hope is to use the data to see what kinds of students are currently in the program and who Utah Reads may be excluding. As an example, she notes many of the tutors are majoring in a humanities degree, but very few come from the colleges of architecture, nursing, and medicine. Also, there are many seniors, but comparatively few freshmen. This anticipates this data will help her outreach planning as she moves forward.

Key Activity 4: Community Engaged Scholars

a. Goals

Cultivate an ethic of lifelong community service and engagement.
 Provide students with meaningful opportunities to develop leadership skills.
 Develop & maintain strong, reciprocal community relationships.

i. Outcomes:

89 Scholars Enrolled / 14 Graduates / 17,444 Hours of Service / 11 Community Capstone Projects

ii. In 2015-2016, 89 students participated in the program. Fourteen scholars graduated, 11 of whom completed capstone projects. Three graduates were recognized with certificates for their service hours. Besides a health fair community capstone project, scholars worked to improve access to nutritional foods, develop educational programming for refugee youth, establish a social network for teens with traumatic brain injuries to reduce social isolation, build sexual assault awareness and develop bystander training, and provide financial literacy training for refugees.

iii. After a year of research, 2015-2016 saw a revision of the Community Engaged Scholars curriculum, making it more rigorous and centering learning outcomes on developing four Civic Competencies: civic skills (research, communication, etc.); civic awareness (the ability to recognize connections between individuals and systems); civic habits (regular civic behaviors); and civic values (social commitment and responsibility). When scholars were asked to evaluate the revised program, 94% felt they have a greater responsibility to contribute to society since joining the program. Eighty-two percent of the scholars surveyed say they now have an increased knowledge of a community issue as a result of their participation and that they are more likely to be engaged in the community in the future.

iv. Student quotations:

“I’m constantly in the process of rediscovering myself, and redefining and refining what’s most important to focus on. I’m confident that this will make me a healthy person, and an entrepreneur, artist, and innovator with much to offer in the future.” - J Abubo, Student

“While I might not choose to live there myself right now, Cubans seem to love their neighborhoods and cities. They want improvements, but we all do, no matter what country we live in. Who am I to tell others what will make them happy? They don’t need to live like me to be happy.” - Chelsea Haviland, Student

“No place is perfect but every place has people that are working to improve living conditions and work for social and environmental justice. I think if we can bridge the gaps that have prevented us from talking it can really benefit everyone. It starts with just being open to start that dialogue.” - Christianna Johnson, Student

b. Utilization data

i. Count: 89

ii. Career: 86 undergraduates, 1 graduate, 2 professional degrees

iii. Year in school: Not possible to determine at this time. Students submit their anticipated graduation date but that is subject to change.

iv. Gender: not determined

v. Race/ethnicity: not determined

- vi. International: not determined
- vii. Other demographic information: The scholars program would like to collect demographic information but is under the impression they are not allowed to collect micro-demographic data. The programs has never sent UNIDS to the registrar's office for data assessment but would like to have that information.

Key Activity 5: Community Engaged Learning

a. Goals

Advocate for and facilitate meaningful community engagement that enhances student learning as well as faculty teaching and research opportunities.

Provide students with meaningful opportunities to develop leadership skills.

Develop & maintain strong, reciprocal community relationships.

i. Outcome

226 Courses / 3,463 Students / 93,501 Hours of Service / 14 New Courses Approved

29 CEL Teaching Assistants

Lunch and Learn faculty training events: 67 faculty / 3 events

- ii. The Bennion Center has dedicated a staff partner to the development of community engaged learning campus-wide. Dr. Kimberley Mangun is responsible for reviewing curriculum and course proposals to make certain they meet the required criteria for CEL designation. Additionally, the Bennion Center worked with donors to create micro-grants and monetary awards for professors engaging in distinguished CEL teaching. In recognition of the superior work faculty all across campus are doing with community engaged teaching and learning, Dr. Mangun collaborated with President David Pershing and Senior Vice President Ruth Watkins, who hosted a special reception in their honor at the president's home in April. More than 50 faculty members were recognized for their community engagement work.

iii. Student quotations:

"My experience at The Burrito Project has exposed me to many things, both directly through my service and indirectly through my research. It has given me a greater understanding of what environmental justice means and how it is applied. I feel a much stronger connection with the place that I live and a much greater responsibility toward the people that make up my community. I think that because I had such a good experience I will be much more prone to participate in future volunteer opportunities."

Student

"Overall my CEL project helped me better understand the issue of water and water rates here in Utah. It taught me to see a real life example of equity vs equality. I ended up learning that how one solution that sounds like a good idea environmentally didn't take into account the social justice aspects of the situation." Student

iv. Faculty quote:

During my first year as an Assistant Professor at the University of Utah I have been fortunate to have had the opportunity to teach three Community Engaged Learning (CEL) courses through the Bennion Center—that is, 'Leadership and Community Engagement,' the 'Westside Studio' and this summer, I was

able to incorporate the whole of my knowledge base into the creation of ‘ChicagoLAB,’ a course at the College+Architecture and Planning that took place in Chicago, Illinois.

In all of these courses my students conducted primary research outside of the classroom with the main goal of tracing community assets, not by themselves but along with community-based organizations in primarily Latino communities, to entice students to learn more about these communities and propose critical public policy solutions that were sensitive to the particular groups with which they engaged.

I teach CEL courses because I am pedagogically disposed to the conviction that knowledge should engage students as well as the community they will eventually come to design, plan and represent. I chose to join the University of Utah specifically because of its commitment to community engagement and the institutions that exist to support it like the Bennion Center and the University Neighborhood Partners. – Ivis Garcia, Professor

Key Activity 6: Development

a. Goals

Ensure continued financial support for Bennion Center student-centered programs.

Maintain high level of donor stewardship.

Support Bennion Center Advisory Board and Executive Committee

i. Outcome

12 Corporations / 24 Foundations / 136 Individuals / 3 New Grant-funders / \$252,863.22 Raised

ii. New funding was secured from three new grant funders and new employee payroll deduction donors. The GiveWell Community Foundation gave \$6,500 to support the Alternative Breaks program, the Utah State Board of Regents gave \$5,750 to support Bennion Center operations helping to foster community engagement and ensure affordable participation and timely completion, and Select Health generously gave \$9,000 over the course of the year to support Student-Directed Programs.

iii. New tracking systems are helping to manage grant requests and in-kind donations. The five committees of the Advisory Board welcomed new community members and alumni to broaden the circle of Bennion Center donors.

iv. Student quotations:

“Walking the streets in South Central Los Angeles I felt that there was more going on than what I saw. Every day at least one homeless person would ask me for money. There were some people who came up to me asking for the time and I would end up talking to them about the area. Many would say the area is plagued with gang violence, injustices, cop violence and no peace.”

– Alejandra Hernandez, Student Fellow

“My first staff meeting at OUV (Our United Villages) was an entertaining experience and like no staff meeting I had ever attended before. The room itself was constructed from all reused materials, every piece hiding its own story. The people are just as diverse with staff, interns, volunteers and the executive director present but really, anyone who cared about the organization would be welcomed in.” – Courtney Dean, Student Fellow

v. Alumni quote:

“The Bennion center service experience changed my life because it gave me opportunities to serve in the community and helped me realize the benefits of serving in the community or serving the public good. I talk a lot about the public good. The Bennion Center early on helped me realize what that was and why it was important.” – Chris Russell

Key Activity 7: Communication

a. Goals

Ensure that communication and publications from the Bennion Center are current, up-to-date, and well-disseminated to increase knowledge of Bennion Center and increase participation in activities.

i. Outcome

5 Students / 32 Media Stories Published or Broadcast

ii. In 2015-2016 student volunteers awakened the social media sleeping giant and doubled our Facebook “likes” to more than 1,500. Instagram also moved to the forefront in our efforts to communicate with our students, friends and alumni with hundreds of pictures added to the sites. Besides expanded reach via social media, the Communication team implemented a new tabling tool which allows students to sign up for program information on-site via iPads. All of these improvements were part of a strategy to expand the Bennion Center’s presence across multiple media platforms. Our website underwent an overhaul to better capture web surfers and help users navigate. The new bennioncenter.org focused on visual navigation tools and also included Alternative Breaks, eliminating the need to visit a separate website.

iii. Student quotation:

“I came to the US in the fall last year. The student leaders told us about the Bennion Center and all the volunteer opportunities available. I have always been interested in volunteering so I applied for it the next day. My role in the Bennion Center as a photographer is to capture moments. Moments of people working together to create a better future for others. Moments where people are engaging with each other and always having a smile on their face...These moments become memories that live forever. As a person, I have learned a lot by getting involved with the faculty and students at the Bennion Center. I see myself as a nurtured person, able to do things I once hesitated to do. Leadership, management and a passion to work are the skills I developed while working with the Bennion Center. As a global citizen I have learned to treat people with kindness and help them in any way I can. Volunteering is the best position you’ll find, it helps you engage with people from different areas of the world and in building your skills.” – Tayyeb Mubarak, Student

b. Utilization data

i. Gender: 2 female, 3 male students

ii. Ethnicity: 1 Pakistani, 1 Chinese, 1 Caucasian, 2 Asian-American

iii. Year in School: 1 freshman, 2 seniors, 2 sophomores

iv. Veterans: None

v. Communication majors: 1

vi. Other data: Students with more than one year of service at the Bennion Center: 1

Number of volunteer hours: approximately 500

Key Activity 8: Professional Development

a. Goals

Engage in activities that further staff knowledge and skills in the use of best practices and disseminate best practices of the Bennion Center.

- i. Dr. Kim Mangun, Bennion Center Associate Director, was recognized by the American Historical Association with the Eugene Asher Distinguished Teaching Award. Kim's work on minorities and journalism also won her the Journalism Historians Association's J. William Snorgrass Memorial Award for the Outstanding Paper on a Minorities Topic. In January, 2016, she presented "*Covering a Protest, Rallying a People: Editor Emory O. Jackson and the Birmingham Bus Boycott*" at the American Historical Association Annual Meeting, Atlanta.

Bryce Williams was selected to serve on the Sugar House Community Council Executive Committee. Bryce also serves on the U's Diversity Council and is an Engaged Citizenship retreat group facilitator.

Morgan Byrne served on the boards of the University of Utah Staff Council and the Utah Society of Fund Raisers.

- ii. Bennion Center staff are encouraged to participate in professional organizations which build their skills. Opportunities for webinars, conferences and other professional development activities are publicized to staff via email and through staff meetings. Additionally, the Bennion Center has budgeted conference registration reimbursement for staff members selected to participate to help incentivize continuing education.

- iii. Conference Attendance:

Dean McGovern: Association of American Colleges and Universities, Washington, DC; NASPA, Indianapolis, IN.

Kimberley Mangun, American Historical Association, Atlanta, GA;

Laura Schwartz, Alternative Breaks Citizenship School, Atlanta, GA.

Chris Jensen, IMPACT, Los Angeles, CA

b. Utilization data

- i. 11 full-time staff members, 1 graduate assistant
- ii. 8 female, 4 male staff
- iii. 12 Caucasian
- iv. Staff with veterans status: None
- v. Level of education: 2 doctoral degrees, 6 master's degrees, 2 bachelor's degrees
- vi. Staff with 2 years or greater employment in the Bennion Center: 3
- vii. Staff hired for the 2015-2016 academic year: 5

Part 2: Plan for the future:

Anticipated Challenges: The compilation of this report has reinforced the Bennion Center's decision to completely restructure our assessment methods and practices. Although we have data about how many students have been involved in programs but we know little about their backgrounds or how deeply their service experiences impacted them. We also have no data about what students did following their service

experiences. Since the Bennion Center’s mission is to foster lifelong service and civic participation among our students, data in this area is crucial to determine whether or not we are, in fact, accomplishing that objective.

Anticipated Opportunities: The preparation of the annual assessment report revealed goals outlined last year were clearly too vague and too broad. There was no specific action associated with a goal like this one from Community Engaged Learning: “Provide students with meaningful opportunities to develop leadership skills.” Most of the goals outlined for the 2015-2016 academic year reflected similar ambiguity. They were not SMART: specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic or time-based. There was no indication of how goals were to be accomplished and by what date. There was also no indication of what would constitute success. Student-directed programs included the dream of, “Students participate in a variety of training options.” But it was only a dream. There was no accounting for how many training options had been held in the past, how many would be held in the year being assessed or how those trainings might differ from previous training opportunities. Additionally, there was no plan to use the data in meaningful ways prior to the compilation of the annual report. With the exception of the Alternative Breaks program and limited marketing applications, it is doubtful any other staff partners were aware of data that may have helped shape recruiting, programming, and training decisions.

To some degree, this lack of specificity may be influenced by a fifty-percent staff turnover among Bennion Center personnel. Staff partners who had crafted previous annual assessment summaries were replaced by new staff unfamiliar with what data the Bennion Center had hoped to collect and where to locate that information. However, even using old methodology, staff partners recognized that being able to identify how many more hours of service were donated in a given year still did not provide a window of understanding to how that service impacted the individual student. A second missing component was identified as how community partners were impacted.

Sensing the ambiguity of previous assessment strategies, at the beginning of the 2015-2016 academic year, Bennion Center Director Dean McGovern formed an assessment committee to review what kind of data was being collected and how. Comprised of Bennion Center staff members, the committee determined that the most powerful information would be two-fold:

- 1) The depth and breadth of student learning.
- 2) The impact of student volunteer service on the community.

Using national best-practices research and the work of Bennion Center Scholars coordinator Chris Jensen, the committee recommended the following as learning outcomes:

Student learning: Students will acquire and demonstrate the following four civic competencies:

- Civic skills – abilities that help students influence positive community change. These skills include research, project management, critical thinking, communication, leadership, intercultural competence and democratic engagement.
- Civic awareness – cognizance of interconnectedness among individuals, society and systems.
- Civic habits – regular behaviors related to community engagement.
- Civic values – expressed desires and beliefs related to social responsibility.

Community impact: using qualitative and quantitative data, community partners will be assessed in two areas:

- Reciprocal relationships – was the relationship with the Bennion Center collaborative, respectful, and realistic? Did students participate full and demonstrate a high level of cultural competency and sensitivity?
- Mission support – how did collaborating with the Bennion Center allow community partners to address community identified needs in keeping with that organization’s mission or purpose?

Thousands of students pass through the Bennion Center each year engaged in service projects that may take only ten minutes or hundreds of hours. The center’s assessment committee determined it would be

unrealistic to try and survey all of these students. The Bennion Center simply does not have the staff capacity to review qualitative data from reflections that would be submitted from each of those students. The assessment team did determine surveying student leaders, approximately 100, was an attainable goal and that these leaders could be given pre and post service assessments. The assessment would include qualitative reflections along with quantitative data such as how many hours per week a student is volunteering. Qualitative data would focus on three core elements:

- Description – what did the student do? Who was involved and what happened? How did the student feel as a result of the experience? How do they think others felt?
- Meaning – what does the student feel are the underlying issues related to the experience? How does their perspective affect how they interpret the experiences?
- Commitment – how has the student’s perspective been impacted by the experience? What actions or behaviors would the student like to improve? What are some specific ways the student could improve them?

Student leaders would have been assessed at the beginning of their service year and then again at the end. The Bennion Center will continue to assess students participating in the Alternative Breaks program in a similar fashion. Students will be assessed prior to their service trips, when they return, and once again at approximately three months post trip.

With the volume of students volunteering throughout the year, Bennion Center staff members have questioned the feasibility of gathering data, often at off-campus locations, from those volunteers. The availability of data kiosks affords an opportunity to gather basic quantitative metrics that may prove valuable in terms of how the Bennion Center can attract new students to community engagement. Information such as major in school, race, gender, year in school, would possibly reveal just how valid the assumptions are about what types of students serve. It could also help form strategy for reaching out to those students to create a more inclusive program. Quantitative data from large numbers of students is believed to be the only type of data that could be reasonably processed. The center simply does not have the person power to review in any great detail qualitative reflections by hundreds of volunteers. This becomes even more problematic as the Bennion Center considers how to give every University of Utah student an opportunity to have a community engagement experience at some point in their academic career.

With a new assessment strategy, the Bennion Center staff has not yet set SMART goals for the 2016-2017 academic year. This decision was made, in part, to establish this academic year as a benchmarking tool, to determine what is actually being done right now before determining what could be done or should be done. It is anticipated the 2017-2018 academic year will be the center’s first opportunity to review data collected under the new model and chart a course into an even more informed and deliberately designed future.

Grants and new revenue: New funding was secured from three new grant funders and new employee payroll deduction donors. The GiveWell Community Foundation gave \$6,500 to support the Alternative Breaks program, the Utah State Board of Regents gave \$5,750 to support Bennion Center operations helping to foster community engagement and ensure affordable participation and timely completion, and Select Health generously gave \$9,000 over the course of the year to support Student-Directed Programs.

Part 3: Staff Excellence

Awards and Honors:

Kim Mangun, Bennion Center Associate Director, was recognized by the American Historical Association with the Eugene Asher Distinguished Teaching Award. Kim’s work on minorities and journalism also won her the

Journalism Historians Association's J. William Snorgrass Memorial Award for the Outstanding Paper on a Minorities Topic.

Bryce Williams was selected to serve on the Sugar House Community Council Executive Committee. Bryce also serves on the U's Diversity Council and is an Engaged Citizenship retreat group facilitator.

Morgan Byrne was selected as a board member of the University of Utah Staff Council. She's also a board member of the Utah Society of Fund Raisers.

New Hires:

Kimberley Mangun, Associate Director, Community Engaged Learning Manager

BobbiJo Kanter, Associate Director, Student Programs Manager

Morgan Byrne, Development Officer

Tammy Reque, Student Programs Coordinator

Jennifer Jones, Communications Specialist

Recruitment Strategy:

The Bennion Center recruits and retain quality professionals by careful crafting and wide dissemination job descriptions. The center encourages and invites people successfully working in similar positions to apply. Our search process is thorough. A chair of a search committee is assigned from either the Bennion Center board or staff. An initial screening checks for applicants qualifications and carefully reviews each resume and curriculum vita. Finalists are invited for interviews and each is evaluated by search committee and guests after a formal interview process. References are carefully checked.

Presentations:

Kimberley Mangun, (2016, January). Covering a Protest, Rallying a People: Editor Emory O. Jackson and the Birmingham Bus Boycott." Paper presented at the American Historical Association Annual Meeting, Atlanta.

Dean McGovern, (2016, June) *Talking over fences: Community reflections*. Experiential Learning Leadership Insitute. Bryce Canyon, Utah

Bryce Williams, (2015, October). *What's Social Justice Got to Do With It?* Seminar presented at Learning to Lead Conference, Salt Lake City.

Part 4: Department or AVP Additional Information

"We have loved our partnership with the Bennion Center and this year has been the best year by far in terms of volunteers and also our Program Director. I have appreciated the time the staff has taken to analyze our impact and role of volunteers at our charity so we are in the right program. We would be at a loss without these great, dedicated volunteers. Their support makes our mission possible." – Lauren Willie, Community Partner, Ronald McDonald House