

SUU SOUTHERN UTAH UNIVERSITY

College of Humanities & Social Sciences



Dean's Corner Message

Dean Jean Boreen

Greetings from all of us in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. We are just back from our holiday break and ready to get started on the Spring 2023 semester. A new year brings new opportunities and, often, resolutions. Mine is to get out and meet as many of our alumni as I can in the upcoming year. That said, if you're on campus, please see this as an invitation to come up to the Dean's Office in Braithwaite and introduce yourself.

This newsletter focuses on several events that HSS hosted during Fall 2022 as well as many student engagement activities. One of the clear highlights of the fall was the culmination of our "Year of Grace" celebration which included award-winning actress Geena Davis's fantastic speech. We will also be sharing our TEDx event, sponsored by the Speech and Presentation Center, learn and discuss, celebrate and plan....

[Read more...](#)



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HSS Tiktok Challenge

HSS Student Senator

On October 10th, the Communication department held a TikTok contest for HSS students. The contestants were required to submit a video under 30 seconds long that showed what makes SUU special to them. Entries ranged from heartwarming videos of student life on campus to humorous edits showcasing all of the relatable things about SUU. The videos can be found on Tik Tok under the hashtag #SUYou for anybody interested in watching them.

Congratulations to the contest winners, Sierra Arroyo (I Want to go to There), Hannah Wall, Tanner Savage (Running into Professor), McKay Bradshaw, Keiko Schwartz, Carter Coombs (The Wonders of SUU), Jessi Bird (I Will Always Love You), Bryson Oleson (Spiderman), Lillian Puckett (Best Chairs), Cassidy Larsen and Sara Morley (SUU Makes Sense) and a big thanks to everybody who participated and attended the watch party.

[Watch the final videos here!](#)



Meeting HSS Alumni

Sam Frank

My name is Samuel Frank, I am a member of the Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah, and I attended Southern Utah University from 2013-2018. While at SUU I majored in History and minored in Anthropology. Following graduation I attended Northern Arizona University to pursue a Master's degree in History. Which I received in May 2022. While benefiting from attending and graduating from NAU, SUU provided me with the solid foundation I needed to attend graduate school and pursue the Mellon Fellowship at the Field Museum in Chicago.

While at SUU I had the opportunity to work with, and learn from, amazing professors in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. The professors who most helped to guide me academically and personally were Dr. David Lunt, Dr. Michelle Orhiel, Dr. Larry Ping, Dr. Mark Miller, and Dr. Emily Dean. These professors helped me to better understand how to define myself both professionally and academically. In addition, they were always willing to take time out of the day to engage with me on an individual level, and to help build and nurture my curiosity through an interdisciplinary lens. With their insight and guidance I have managed to achieve many goals in both my professional

and personal lives. They greatly aided me in carrying on the SUU motto of Learning Lives Forever. An idea that I have continued to keep with me both professionally and personally. Without their mentorship, guidance, and aid in building a solid academic foundation, and special acknowledgement must be given to Dr. David Lunt, I would never have had the confidence to apply to NAU and to later apply for the Mellon Fellowship.

The Mellon Fellowship is an early career fellowship for those interested in the North American Anthropology Collection housed at the Field Museum. This Fellowship is specifically designed for recent graduates that have lived a cultural experience and who are interested in careers centered around museum collections management, registration, conservation, and curation. In addition, Fellows are provided with mentorship by staff, and will be introduced to other museum professionals in order to build a professional network. There will be opportunities to work with Native community members, cultural liaisons, the conservation team, and the repatriation department. With that being said this opportunity will allow me to pursue a career that I am passionate about, and aid Indigenous communities, while at the same time spreading the Indigenous narrative to many outside communities.

A Special Thanks

Natalie Coffman

This semester we had the chance to get in contact with Natalie Gunn Coffman, a 2009 alumna from SUU, after she sent a gift to the college. It was wonderful to hear about where life has taken her post-graduation. When asked about her experience at SUU, Natalie stated "there is no comparison to my time spent at SUU. I have waited a long time to be able to give back to the university, and I hope to continue to do so for many years! The history professors there really changed my life and inspired me to continue my education. I come from a long line of SUU graduates, and we are very proud to be T-Birds."

A Year of Grace

2021-2022

The Fall of 2022 marked the conclusion of the Year of Grace—the 40th anniversary—of the Grace Adams Tanner Center for Human Values. It included a variety of programming to celebrate and document Grace’s life and lasting impact. These events also reflect the Center’s mission to promote access to scholarly and scientific learning in all areas of human values which embrace moral, artistic, intellectual, and spiritual concepts. This was a year of firsts for the center.

Documenting Grace’s life and impact was achieved with the public premiere of a documentary commissioned by the Tanner Center entitled Grace. This film (the Tanner Center’s first commissioned film) about Grace’s life and travels was created by SUU communications professor Jon Smith. A number of Grace’s descendants were able to take part in the film’s production and screening.

The Grace A. Tanner Lecture in Human Values was delivered by Academy Award-winning actress and founder of her institute on Gender in Media, Geena Davis. Davis spoke on “The Ripple Effect of Intersectional Representation in the Arts,” and took part in a discussion with SUU-alumna and Utah Shakespeare Festival actor and director, Melinda Pfundstein. Davis’s visit was preceded by a public screening of one of her most celebrated and relevant-to-the-lecture films, “A League of Their Own.”

The firsts continued in the form of the Center’s first Grace A. Tanner Visiting Writer, Sean Hill. Hill, a Cave Canem Fellow and recipient of a Minnesota Book Award for Poetry, gave a public reading and two creative writing workshops integrated into English Department classes. Hill’s visit headlined the 2022 Creative Writing Conference on campus, a collaboration between the Tanner Center and SUU’s English Department.

To conclude our “Year of Grace,” SUU celebrated Grace’s birthday on November 30th with the Day of Grace. These festivities began with a guided tour of the Southern Utah Museum of Art’s exhibit, “Reclaiming Agency: Ukrainian Women Photographers Today;” was followed by a lecture from the inaugural Grace A. Tanner Faculty Fellow, Dr. Corey L. Twitchell, entitled “The Almost-Lost Story and Danger of a Single Story: Trauma and Narrative in a Post-Holocaust World;” and concluded with a reception in Grace’s honor complete with cake and commemorative gifts for attendees.



Grace A. Tanner



TEDxSUU Imagine

Congratulations to Director Melissa Funk and the SUU Speech and Presentation Center for hosting the 2022 TEDxSUU event. In the spirit of ideas worth spreading, TED has created a program called TEDx. TEDx is a program of local, self-organized events that bring people together to share a TED-like experience. Our event is called TEDxSUU, where x = independently organized TED event. At our TEDxSUU event, TEDTalks video and live speakers will combine to spark deep discussion and connection in a small group. The TED Conference provides general guidance for the TEDx program, but individual TEDx events, including ours, are self-organized.

This year's theme was "Imagine." While this event is supervised by a committee made up of SUU faculty and staff, the event is organized and overseen by student interns. This year, almost all speakers who participated in the event were also current SUU students. Their videos were recorded and published by the TEDxTalks YouTube channel. They can be watched here:

[Reclaiming your Creativity: The Disadvantages of Media Consumption by Brynne Byars](#)

[See Beyond Appearances: Imagine What's Possibly by John Buckner](#)

[8 Schools in 8 Years: Lessons Learned From Chasing the Thrill by Maris Gaudins](#)

[The Evolution of the Africanist Aesthetics by Destiny Adams-Watt](#)

[How Choices Change Us: And How One Changed Mine by Mahala Sutherland](#)

Sport Industry Internships

With Hayden Coombs

Are you an HSS student interested in sports and internships? Professor Hayden Coombs has something to say about that! Coombs is an assistant professor of communications, primarily teaching sports management courses. He has taught for six years, and prior to that, he worked for SUU Athletics and was a sports writer and NBA Draft analyst for the sports media organization *Bleacher Report*.

Most of Coombs' time is spent outside the classroom, finding and arranging internships for students who want to work in the sports industry. "The best way to get a job in the industry is through networking and internships, so I really encourage all my kids to do as many internships as they can while taking advantage of my personal network to help them succeed," Coombs recommends. Coombs also mentioned the value of the SUU athletics Department is to get the students experience, specifically Jeff Tukuafu, the Senior Associate Athletic Director.

SUU boasts alumni working in every major professional sports league in North America



HSS Honors Spotlight

Hagen Tuft

After conducting research by analyzing various films that depict domestic violence, and determining the film's depiction of domestic violence as accurate or inaccurate, senior Criminal Justice student, Hagen Tuft, has set out to write his own screenplay for a short film he plans to shoot in the future. Tuft, also minoring in film studies and who will be graduating in December 2022, has been researching the topic for several semesters and this project fulfills the requirements for his Honors Capstone. His aim is to create a screenplay/film more accurately representative of the victims of domestic violence. Conjoining his research within the criminal justice field as well as real life experience he hopes to create a more informed approach to the filmmaking process and create stories that do not result in public misinterpretation. Tuft has been working closely with Dr. Jeanne Subjack, a professor at SUU in the criminal justice program, in order to receive a professional opinion on domestic violence and the victims of crime

and how those relationships actually are. A large concern with current films is the possibility of a false rhetoric of what these relationships should look like. Tuft hopes this project will set in motion a more educated Hollywood that allows for accurate representation through these stories to allow a more educated populace on domestic violence. Tuft says, "victim's voices often get lost within the criminal justice system, I would want to allow them a voice to speak through the art of film." This capstone project has allowed Hagen the opportunity to research a serious complex topic that directly relates to the criminal justice field and present it through the lens of a filmmaker. After graduation, Tuft plans on entering the criminal justice field as either a crime scene investigator or a victim advocate. He plans on continuing his journey with filmmaking and eventually enter that field using his experience from the system to influence Hollywood. Tuft's creative honors capstone project was presented at the Fall Honors Graduate Symposium on December 7, 2022.



Giving

[Please consider a gift to the HSS Dean's Fund for Excellence.](#)

Gifts to the Dean's Excellence Fund immediately enhance the educational experience for our students by strengthening the College of Humanities and Social Science's programs, faculty, and facilities. These gifts are among the most important and valuable forms of support to the College of Humanities and Social Sciences because they can be accessed quickly and used where the need is greatest. Gifts to the Dean's Excellence Fund provide some of the following:

- Competitive scholarships for promising undergraduate and graduate students
- Support for the Dean's strategic initiatives
- Student study abroad and internship opportunities

Last year, 42 scholarships provided over \$60,000 in scholarship support to HSS students.