

SUU SOUTHERN UTAH UNIVERSITY

College of Humanities & Social Sciences



Dean's Corner Message

Dean Jean Boreen

It's a lovely sunny day here in Cedar City as I extend greetings to you from all of us in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. Graduation is just behind us and it was a wonderful day of celebration for students, families and faculty alike. We also recently hosted our Faculty and Student Awards Banquet and came together to celebrate the wonderful academic work our graduates have participated in and acknowledge the academic and service work of our faculty and staff. You can see all of our awardees in this newsletter.

We are also highlighting three of our students who have made a difference here on campus or using what they learned here with us to make an impact on the world. You will love hearing about Sara Jade (Psychology), Justin Conrad (Psychology) and Daniel Whitcloud (Anthropology and History).

Speaking of opportunities to share insights with others, we will be heading to France—Paris, Normandy, Mont St Michel, Chartres, Giverny, Versailles—in October 2026 with the experience curated and led by Associate Dean Grant Corser...

[Read more...](#)



The HSS Faculty Recognized and Awarded

The College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Southern Utah University recognizes faculty who demonstrate exceptional commitment to student connection, mentorship, and professional support. This semester's featured photo highlights two individuals whose work reflects the college's emphasis on building meaningful relationships that extend beyond the classroom.

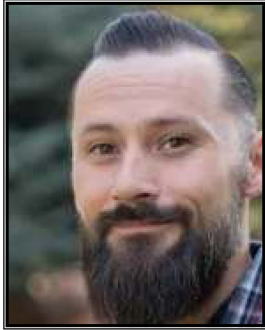
Dr. Iliana Portaro of the Languages and Philosophies department and Dr. Jeanne Subjack of the Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice are this semester's recognized faculty. Dr. Portaro, a Spanish professor

and Director of Interdisciplinary Studies, is known for her leadership and interdisciplinary approach. Dr. Subjack, a professor of Criminal Justice, emphasizes applied learning and sustained student mentorship.

This recognition reflects the broader mission of HSS to highlight faculty who create lasting impact through teaching, guidance, and support. Dr. Portaro and Dr. Subjack represent the engaged, student-centered approach that defines the college.

We also recognize the generous contribution of Telton Hall and Kaden Keller of Advanced Financial Planning, LLC.

2025-2026 HSS Faculty & Staff Awards



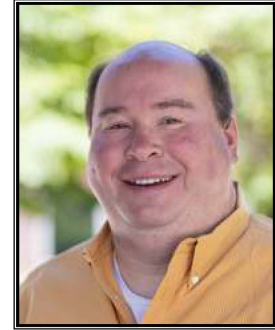
Matthew Newsom

Outstanding Scholarship



Todd Pettersen

Outstanding Scholarship



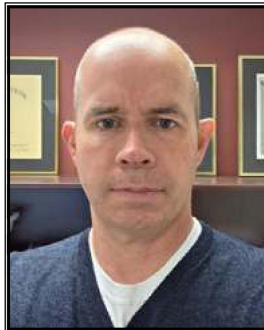
Ryan Paul

Collaboration Award



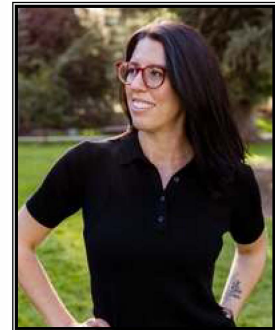
Melissa Funk

Outstanding Staff



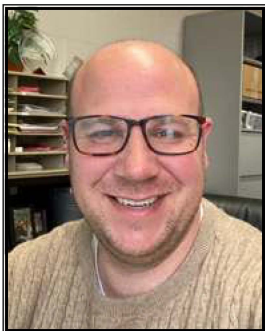
Rusty Parson

Early Career



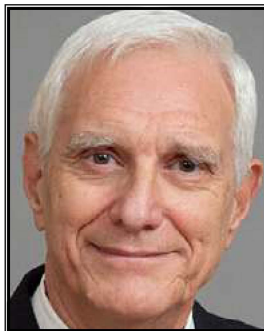
Diane Darling

Early Career



Kevin Stein

innovative Pedagogy



Stephen Blumenthal

innovative Pedagogy



Stacie Stein

Outstanding Staff

2025-2026 HSS Valedictorian



Hayden McCoy, Philosophy

From Las Vegas, Hayden McCoy chose Southern Utah University for its proximity to home and Cedar City's smaller-town setting and natural surroundings. At SUU, his most meaningful experiences came through the relationships he built in small philosophy classes, where progressing with the same peers fostered strong academic and personal connections. He credits that community as central to his success.

Hayden served as co-president of the Philosophy Club, focusing on creating an inclusive environment where students felt welcomed and their ideas valued. He chose philosophy after an introductory course his first year, drawn to its discussion-based format and focus on ethics and political theory, and shifted his studies to philosophy and economics. After graduation, he plans to remain in Cedar City while preparing to apply to graduate school.

Outstanding Student Awards

Outstanding Student Award, Communication | Kale Nelson

Outstanding Student in Message Design & Human Interaction |

Emily Garret

Outstanding Student in Media Studies | Chris Cha

Outstanding Student in Strategic Communication | Ada McKeehan

Outstanding Student in Sports Communication | Kolby Farley

Outstanding MaPC Student Award | Lane Findlay

Outstanding English Department Student | Francis Le

Outstanding Literature Student | Ainsley Marshall

Outstanding English Education Student | Francis Le

Outstanding Creative Writing Student | Rayne Hallstrom

Outstanding Rhetoric and Writing Student | Dillan Bryan

Outstanding Film and Screen Studies Student | Fanny Felixine

Outstanding Technical Writing Student | Dilynn Engbarth

Outstanding History, Sociology, & Anthropology Student | Bryn

Zachreson

Outstanding Anthropology Student | Leah Hamblin

Outstanding History Student | Miriam Williams

Outstanding History Teaching Student | Melody Morrissette

Outstanding Social Science Teaching Student | Tate Talbot

Outstanding Sociology Student | Zo Harmer

Interdisciplinary Studies Outstanding Student | Jordyn

Finlinson-McBride

MIS Outstanding Student | Hana Park

L&P Outstanding Student | Alexis Simkins

Outstanding Spanish Student | Alexis Simkins

Outstanding German Student | Jacey Norman

Philosophy Outstanding Student | Shannon Allan

Outstanding French Student | Tanner Corbridge

Outstanding Chinese Student | Aurianne Poirot

MPA Outstanding Student | Brett Pruitt

Political Science Outstanding Student | Emely Rodriguez

Criminal Justice Outstanding Student | Giulia Gilbert Colombi

PSCJ Outstanding Student | Allen Bouchard

Legal Studies Outstanding Student | Danielle Nix

Psychology Outstanding Student | Alexis Whaley

Psychology Outstanding Scholar | Keelie Stewart

Applied Psychology Student | Emma Streadbeck

Psychology Student Contributor | Madison Ward



Alumni Spotlight: Sarah Jade, Psychology 2008

SUU graduate advocates for education and safety for women in Kenya

Sarah Jade, a 2008 psychology graduate from Southern Utah University, is using her education to support vulnerable communities abroad. Through her work in Kenya, she has helped establish a refuge for girls and women escaping violence related to female genital mutilation. Located in a remote area several hours inland, the center provides safety for individuals who have often traveled for days after being attacked and rejected by both their families and communities.

During her time in Kenya, Jade contributed to both immediate and long-term support efforts. She helped deliver medical supplies and assemble birthing kits, worked alongside residents to prepare food, and supported the development of essential infrastructure, including a kitchen and a multipurpose classroom. Her organization has also played a role in opening a hospital at the site by significantly improving access to care in a region where basic resources, such as indoor plumbing, were previously unavailable.

Jade's experience underscores the role of education in creating change. She and her team have engaged with local tribal councils to advocate for the importance of education and to address harmful practices affecting women and girls. Reflecting on her work, Jade emphasized how access to education in the United States shaped her perspective and prepared her to make a global impact. She continues to support efforts that empower young women, many of whom now aspire to become doctors, scientists, and pilots.

Student Veterans Recognized

Two students honored during Veterans Day Program

The Southern Utah University Veterans Center recognized two students from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences as Outstanding Veterans during the SUU Veterans Day Program on November 11, 2025. Justin Conrad, a psychology major, and Daniel J. Whitecloud, a double major in anthropology and history, were selected for their service and contributions as student veterans within the university community.

Both students were featured in the program video, with Conrad appearing from 55:20 to 56:53 and Whitecloud from 58:22 to 59:18. The full recording of the event is available [here](#).



Travel with us through *HSS Learn on the Go*

France, October 10-18, 2026

Join us for an unforgettable 8-night journey, starting in Paris, The City of Lights. We will be immersed in rich history, stunning architecture, and the vibrant culture that is Paris. Planned activities in Paris include exploring the Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame, The Louvre and other iconic places.

More information about this trip, past trips, and future trips, can be found at:

<https://www.suu.edu/hss/learn-on-the-go/>



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. For questions on the giving process, contact the advancement office at giving@suu.edu or call 435865-8196.