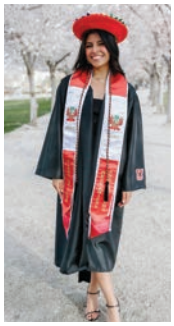
The University of Utah
2026 Annual Commencement
APRIL 30 – Jon M. Huntsman Center




















#UtahGrad26

@universityofutah

Procession – 6 p.m. Commencement – 6:30 p.m.

THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH

GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Graduates of 2026,

On behalf of the entire University of Utah community, congratulations! You have reached an incredible milestone on your educational journey. Today we celebrate the passion, hard work, and dedication that brought you here.

Your graduation comes during a time of rapid social and technological change. Though the future may be uncertain, your time at the U has prepared you to meet the challenges you may face. The critical thinking, problem-solving, and social skills you have earned will guide you as you navigate the road ahead.

As the U has shaped you, you have also shaped the university—and we're grateful for the unique talents and perspective you have contributed to our campus community. As you make your mark on the world, I encourage you to carry forward the U's vision to inspire, innovate, and serve.

Today, we also honor the family, friends, mentors, professors, and peers who helped you throughout your journey. Their encouragement has made a lasting impact on your life, and we hope you can pay it forward by guiding and supporting the next generation of students.

Now that you have reached this summit, you face a new horizon with optimism and excitement. Remember that you will always be part of the U. You join a strong network of University of Utah alumni across the globe who stand ready to mentor, support, and champion you.

Again, congratulations! I know your ideas, talents, and leadership will make the world a better place. We wish you the very best as you embark on a new adventure. Your University of Utah family is rooting for you.

Sincerely,



Taylor R. Randall HBA '90
President, University of Utah

COMMENCEMENT PROGRAM

Prelude Music
Performed by the University of Utah Wind Ensemble — Jason Missal, Conductor

Processional of Official Party, Faculty, and Degree Candidates

The National Anthem
Karley Swallow

Welcome
Taylor R. Randall, President

Presentation of Rosenblatt Prize
Bob S. Carter, CEO of University of Utah Health and Executive Vice President for Health Sciences

Recognition of Faculty Award Recipients
Mitzi M. Montoya, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Introduction of Student Speaker
Lori McDonald, Vice President for Student Affairs

Student Speaker
Gerald A. Parrott

Conferral of Honorary Degrees
Katie Eccles, Chair, Board of Trustees

Honorary Degree Recipients
Clark D. Ivory, Ronald A. Rasband, Meeche White

Introduction of Speaker
Alex Rose, ASUU Student Body President

Commencement Address
Arthur C. Brooks

Welcome to the U Alumni
Jamie Sorenson, Alumni Board of Governors, President

Presentation of Candidates and Conferral of Graduate Degrees and Certificates
Darryl Butt, Dean, Graduate School

Presentation of Candidates and Conferral of Baccalaureate Degrees and Certificates
Academic Deans

Utah Fight Song
University of Utah Marching Band

Commencement Recessional

Calvin S. and JeNeal N. Hatch Prize in Teaching

Robert B. Keiter
Distinguished Professor and Wallace Stegner Professor of Law
S.J. Quinney College of Law

Community Engaged Teaching and Scholarship Award

Akiko Kamimura
Professor, Department of Sociology & Criminology
College of Social and Behavioral Science

Distinguished Faculty Service Award

Adrienne M. Cachelin
Associate Professor, School of Environment, Society & Sustainability
College of Social and Behavioral Science

Tino Nyawelo
Professor (Lecturer), Department of Physics & Astronomy
College of Science

Distinguished Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Mentor Award

Micah Drummond
Professor, Department of Physical Therapy and Athletic Training
College of Health

Jim Steenburgh
Professor, Department of Atmospheric Sciences
College of Science

Jeanine Stefanucci
Professor, Department of Psychology
College of Social and Behavioral Science

Monica Vetter
Professor and Chair, Department of Neurobiology
Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine

Distinguished Professor

Christoph Boehme
Professor, Department of Physics & Astronomy
College of Science

Brett Clark
Professor, Department of Sociology & Criminology
College of Social and Behavioral Science

Lynn Jorde
Mark and Kathie Miller Presidential Professor,
Department of Human Genetics
Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine

Wanda Pillow
Professor, Department of Ethnic, Gender, and Disability Studies
Dean, College of Humanities

Florian Solzbacher
Professor, Department of Electrical & Computer Engineering
John and Marcia Price College of Engineering

Ling Zang
Professor, Department of Materials Science & Engineering
John and Marcia Price College of Engineering

Distinguished Research Award

Sarah Creem-Regehr
Professor, Department of Psychology
College of Social and Behavioral Science

Z. Zak Fang
Professor, Department of Materials Science & Engineering
College of Science

Adam Gordon
Department of Internal Medicine
Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine

THE ROSENBLATT PRIZE

The Rosenblatt Prize, a $50,000 cash award, is presented annually at commencement to "recognize, encourage, and honor excellence in teaching, research, and administrative efforts, collectively or individually." The prize is granted through an endowment established by the late Utah industrialist Joseph Rosenblatt. The endowment was created to honor Nathan and Tillie Rosenblatt, on the centenary of their immigration to Utah, and in recognition of their legacy of civic leadership and generosity. The award has been given annually since 1984. The most recent prize was awarded in 2025 to Henry White, Distinguished Professor of electrochemistry in the College of Science. The 2026 recipient will be announced during today's program.

Distinguished Teaching Award

Erin Carraher
Associate Professor, School of Architecture
College of Architecture and Planning

Michael Grünwald
Associate Professor, Department of Chemistry
College of Science

Susan Johnston
Professor, Department of Special Education
College of Education

Natalie Stillman-Webb
Professor (Lecturer), Department of Writing and Rhetoric Studies
College of Humanities

Michael White
Professor (Lecturer), Quest and Honors
Undergraduate Studies and Honors College

Early Career Teaching Award

Adrienne Carey
Associate Professor (Clinical), Department of Internal Medicine,
Division of Infectious Diseases
Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine

Katherine Durante
Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology & Criminology
College of Social and Behavioral Science

Bradley King
Assistant Professor, Department of Health & Kinesiology
College of Health

Yao-Yuan Mao
Assistant Professor, Department of Physics & Astronomy
College of Science

Jacqueline Sheean
Assistant Professor, Department of World Languages & Cultures
College of Humanities

Saskia Spiess
Assistant Professor (Clinical), Department of Family Medicine & Public Health
Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine

Honors Professor

Christopher Miller
Assistant Professor (Lecturer)
Honors College

John R. Park Teaching Fellowship

Tuba Yilmaz
Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Culture, and Society
College of Education

Outstanding Public School Teacher

Kirsten Federico
Howard Driggs Elementary School
Granite School District

Public Service Professor

Katharine Osborn
Assistant Professor (Clinical), Department of Pediatrics
Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine

Presidential Societal Impact Scholar Award

Susanna Cohen
Research Associate Professor, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology
Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine

Amos Guiora
Professor (Lecturer)
S.J. Quinney College of Law

Kensaku Kawamoto
Dr. Helmuth F. Orthner Endowed Professor,
Department of Biomedical Informatics
Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine

Michael Morgan
Assistant Professor (Clinical), Department of Emergency Medicine
Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine

Paul Reeve
Professor, Department of History
College of Humanities

John G. Francis Prize for Undergraduate Student Mentoring

Lisa G. Aspinwall
Professor, Department of Psychology
College of Social and Behavioral Science

Pania Newell
Associate Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering
John and Marcia Price College of Engineering

HONORARY DEGREE RECIPIENTS



Clark D. Ivory

Doctor of Humane Letters

A self-described slightly above average student in high school, Clark Ivory credits his time at the University of Utah with helping him learn to focus, build meaningful relationships, and balance competing priorities. He graduated in 1988 with a degree in political science and later earned his MBA from Harvard Business School.

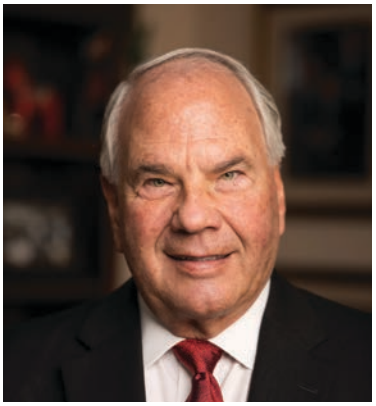
In 2000, Clark purchased Ivory Homes from his father and has grown it into Utah's largest homebuilder—completing over 25,000 homes and 4,000 apartments.

Deeply committed to addressing housing challenges, Clark co-founded Ivory Innovations with his daughter Abby in 2017 to advance solutions in housing affordability.

Following their service as mission leaders in Romania and Moldova, Clark and his wife, Christine expanded their impact, providing more than 4,000 scholarships to Utah students and establishing Ivory University House, which houses 623 students at the U with all proceeds supporting scholarships, internships, and housing stipends.

Clark has served in numerous leadership roles, including chair of the Salt Lake City Branch of the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, the Salt Lake Chamber Board of Governors, and the University of Utah Board of Trustees. He currently co-chairs the advisory board of the Ivory-Boyer Real Estate Center and serves on the advisory board of the Kem C. Gardner Policy Institute.

He encourages students to build trusted relationships, seek out opportunities to learn, and find ways to make a lasting impact. "If students focus on those three areas," he says, "they're going to love life."



Ronald A. Rasband

Doctor of Business

Elder Ronald Rasband has achieved the highest of heights in his professional career and calling as a world faith leader.

But one thing has always felt unfinished.

In 1976, he left the University of Utah just shy of a degree in business to join the Huntsman Container Corporation. He likes to joke—kind of—that's he's a college dropout. Which is why receiving an honorary degree from the U means everything is "coming full circle," he says. "This is very humbling."

In college, Rasband studied pre-med for a time before shifting to business. Then, three years in, Jon Huntsman came calling with a job in Ohio. Rasband made his career with Huntsman for the next 20 years, including serving as president of the corporation, before being called to serve as a mission president and general authority for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Since being named a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles for the church, Rasband has become a critical advocate for higher education in Utah. He served on the advisory boards of the U's International Center and Marriott School of Business at BYU. And he served as the chairman of the LDS Church Board of Education's executive committee, overseeing all education facilities and operations.

In 1995, Utah Valley University awarded Elder Rasband an honorary Doctor of Business and Commerce degree.

Rasband advises the Class of 2026 to take the world with love. "Look for the good in people."



Meeche White

Doctor of Humane Letters

Meeche White knows firsthand the power of nature and sports to transform and build self-confidence.

Shy and self-conscious when she was growing up in Connecticut as the youngest of three siblings, White searched for an education and career to match her life experience.

"I had a dream that if we could get kids into an environment where they would be outside and building self-esteem and self-confidence through outdoor activities, all of a sudden, the world of possibilities opens wide," she says.

After graduating from Florida State University with a degree in recreational therapy, she quickly moved west—first to Colorado for an internship at an adaptive ski program, and then to Park City, Utah, to build her own. In 1985, she and her former husband, Pete Badewitz, founded the National Ability Center.

Over time, White expanded her reach internationally. In 1993, she was the head coach of the U.S. Special Olympics Alpine Ski Team. And in 2002, she served on the Salt Lake Organizing Committee for the 2002 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games as the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) manager.

While she retired in 2008, White continued to work in developing international adapted sports programs for people with disabilities around the world. And since 2023, White has directed Tierra Village in Leavenworth, Washington—a retreat for adults with mental disabilities.

Retirement is relative.

COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER

Arthur C. Brooks

Best-selling author and Harvard professor



Arthur C. Brooks is not a naturally happy person.

And yet he is one of the world's leading experts on the science of human happiness—appearing in media and traveling the world to teach people in private companies, universities, public agencies, and faith communities how they can live happier lives and bring greater well-being to others.

Brooks, Harvard Business School professor, long-time conservative thought leader, and, since 2023, a University of Utah Impact Scholar, will draw from his extensive writings about the search for happiness and meaning to inspire the Class of 2026.

Brooks' newest book, "The Meaning of Your Life: Finding Purpose in an Age of Emptiness," was released on March 31. In it, Brooks addresses the modern crisis of meaninglessness and offers his practical, science-based approach to finding purpose. Brooks takes on the technological changes he says have rewired our brains with a six-part plan, including his unique blend of philosophy, faith and social science, to combat a sense of emptiness with renewed focus and a search for fulfillment.

"Getting happier is a skill like any other," Brooks wrote in his inaugural column for The Free Press. The self-described "miserable wretch" continued, "To get enduringly happier, you need to understand the science, change your habits and behavior in tangible ways, and explain what you have learned to others."

"For the first time in my life, I feel I have a sacred vocation: To lift others up and bring them together. Life feels richer than it ever did, more alive, more full of love."

Brooks is the author of 16 books, including The New York Times No. 1 bestsellers "Build the Life You Want," co-authored with Oprah Winfrey, and "From Strength to Strength: Finding Success, Happiness, and Deep Purpose in the Second Half of Life."

In his role as an impact scholar at the U, Brooks visits the state each semester and meets with students, staff, faculty, business and community leaders, and elected officials to share insights about human flourishing. In that role, he's addressed the State Legislature, Utah League of Cities and Towns, the U's Council of Academic Deans, and higher education partners at Brigham Young University and Utah Valley University.

GRADUATING CLASS PROFILE 2025-26

(Summer 2025 & Fall 2025 awarded, Spring 2026 applied)
These numbers are based on data available prior to graduation and are subject to change.

Total Number of Graduates **9,506**
(includes dual-degree recipients)

Total Number of Degrees Awarded **10,266**
- Bachelor's 6,679
- Master's 2,551
- Doctorate 636
- Juris Doctor 100
- Doctor of Medicine 126
- Doctor of Nursing Practice 81
- Doctor of Pharmacy 44
- Doctor of Dental Surgery 49

Bachelor's Degree Statistics
- Average Age 24
- Youngest Class Member 18
- Oldest Class Member 79
- Grade Point Average 3.495
- Grade Point Average of Students Graduating with Honors 3.974
- Number of Degrees Conferred with Honors 642
- Summa Cum Laude 175
- Magna Cum Laude 83
- Cum Laude 384

Graduate Degree Statistics
- Average Age 31
- Youngest Class Member 20
- Oldest Class Member 67

Counties, States, and Countries Graduates Represent
- Utah Counties 26
- U.S. States (including U.S. Territories) 51
- Foreign Countries 61

Race/Ethnicity/Origin
- Native American/Alaska Native 29
- Asian 563
- Black/African American 119
- Hispanic/Latinx 1,201
- International 935
- Pacific Islander 32
- Two or More Races 513
- White 5,945
- Unidentified/Unknown 169

Gender (Self-Reported)
- Male 4,650
- Female 4,815
- All Others 41

Top 10 Undergraduate Degrees
- Psychology 581
- Communication 324
- Computer Science 309
- Biology 285
- Health and Kinesiology 285
- Finance 283
- Nursing 245
- Games 201
- Marketing 179
- Mechanical Engineering 179

Veterans Receiving Degrees 373

COLLEGE CONVOCATIONS

College convocations will be held at the times and in the locations indicated below. Recipients of both undergraduate and graduate degrees should attend the convocations of the colleges in which their major departments are located. Graduation programs will be distributed at individual convocation exercises.

THURSDAY, APRIL 30

College of Architecture and Planning (undergraduate students)
8 a.m., Kingsbury Hall

College of Social Work
8 a.m., Jon M. Huntsman Center

College of Architecture and Planning (graduate students)
11 a.m., Kingsbury Hall

College of Science
11 a.m., Jon M. Huntsman Center

College of Social and Behavioral Science (graduate students)
2 p.m., Kingsbury Hall

FRIDAY, MAY 1

College of Social and Behavioral Science (undergrad students)
8 a.m., Jon M. Huntsman Center

College of Nursing
9 a.m., Kingsbury Hall

College of Humanities
11 a.m., Jon M. Huntsman Center

College of Fine Arts
12 p.m., Kingsbury Hall

College of Health
2 p.m., Jon M. Huntsman Center

College of Education
3 p.m., Kingsbury Hall

John and Marcia Price College of Engineering
5 p.m., Jon M. Huntsman Center

SATURDAY, MAY 2

David Eccles School of Business (undergrad students)
9 a.m., Jon M. Huntsman Center

David Eccles School of Business (graduate students)
12 p.m., Jon M. Huntsman Center

David Eccles School of Business (Executive MBA students)
3 p.m., Robert H. and Katharine B. Garff Bldg. 4th Floor

FRIDAY, MAY 8

S.J. Quinney College of Law
9:30 a.m., Kingsbury Hall

College of Pharmacy
12:30 p.m., Kingsbury Hall

FRIDAY, MAY 15

Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine
10 a.m., Jon M. Huntsman Center

School of Dentistry
2 p.m., Kingsbury Hall

ACADEMIC REGALIA

Academic regalia evolved from the robes, hoods, and caps worn by clerics, monks, and priests—the first students—in the European universities of the Middle Ages. American schools, as a result of their English heritage, have generally standardized the black gown.

Various styles, ornaments, and colors are used to signify levels of academic attainment and areas of academic specialty.

The bachelor's gown is worn closed at the neck. The master's and doctoral gowns are worn opened; both feature hoods that display the colors of the academic institution or field of study. The origin of the mortarboard has not been definitely determined, but it existed as far back as 1564. The colors of tassels on the mortarboards of candidates indicate the colleges/schools from which they expect to receive degrees.

The Graduate School (Ph.D. and Ed.D.) ..... Yellow
College of Architecture and Planning ..... Blue Violet
David Eccles School of Business.....Light Brown
School of Dentistry ..... Lilac
College of Education .....Light Blue
John and Marcia Price College of Engineering... Orange
College of Fine Arts..... Brown
School of Music .....Pink
College of Health..... Sage Green
College of Humanities.....White
S. J. Quinney College of Law ..... Purple
Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine ..... Kelly Green
College of Nursing..... Apricot
College of Pharmacy.....Olive Green
College of Science..... Golden Yellow
College of Social and Behavioral Science.....White
College of Social Work.....Citron

Various ribbons and cords are worn to designate the receipt of honors and other awards.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The University of Utah has both historical and contemporary relationships with Indigenous peoples. Given that the Salt Lake Valley has always been a gathering place for Indigenous peoples, we acknowledge that this land, which is named for the Ute Tribe, is the traditional and ancestral homelands of the Shoshone, Paiute, Goshute, and Ute Tribes and is a crossroad for Indigenous peoples. The University of Utah recognizes the enduring relationships between many Indigenous peoples and their traditional homelands. We are grateful for the territory upon which we gather today; we respect Utah's Indigenous peoples, the original stewards of this land; and we value the sovereign relationships that exist between tribal governments, state governments, and the federal government. Today, approximately 60,000 American Indian and Alaska Native peoples live in Utah. As a state institution, the University of Utah is committed to serving Native communities throughout Utah in partnership with Native Nations and our Urban Indian communities through research, education, and community outreach activities.

THE MACE

The mace—historically a symbol of authority and peaceful leadership and now a ceremonial object used at formal academic occasions—will be carried before the president and dignitaries as they convene the proceedings. The U's mace is carved from dark walnut, stands 48 inches tall, and is embellished with copper elements that represent the university seal, the various colleges, and presidents of the institution. The spiral-carved base evokes the nautilus—an organic model of change and growth—while the beehive-shaped endcap symbolizes the state of Utah.

ORDER OF PROCESSIONAL

The official party is composed of the president, members of the university's Board of Trustees, the commissioner of higher education, representatives of the Utah Board of Higher Education, deans, administrative officers of the university, student body leaders, elected officials, former university presidents, honorary degree recipients, and other special guests.

Candidates for degrees, officials, and faculty enter the Jon M. Huntsman Center from the west entrance at floor level. Candidates are seated according to the academic degree received and the college or school awarding the degree. Degree candidates are led by banner carriers and faculty representing the various colleges.

UNIVERSITY GIFT

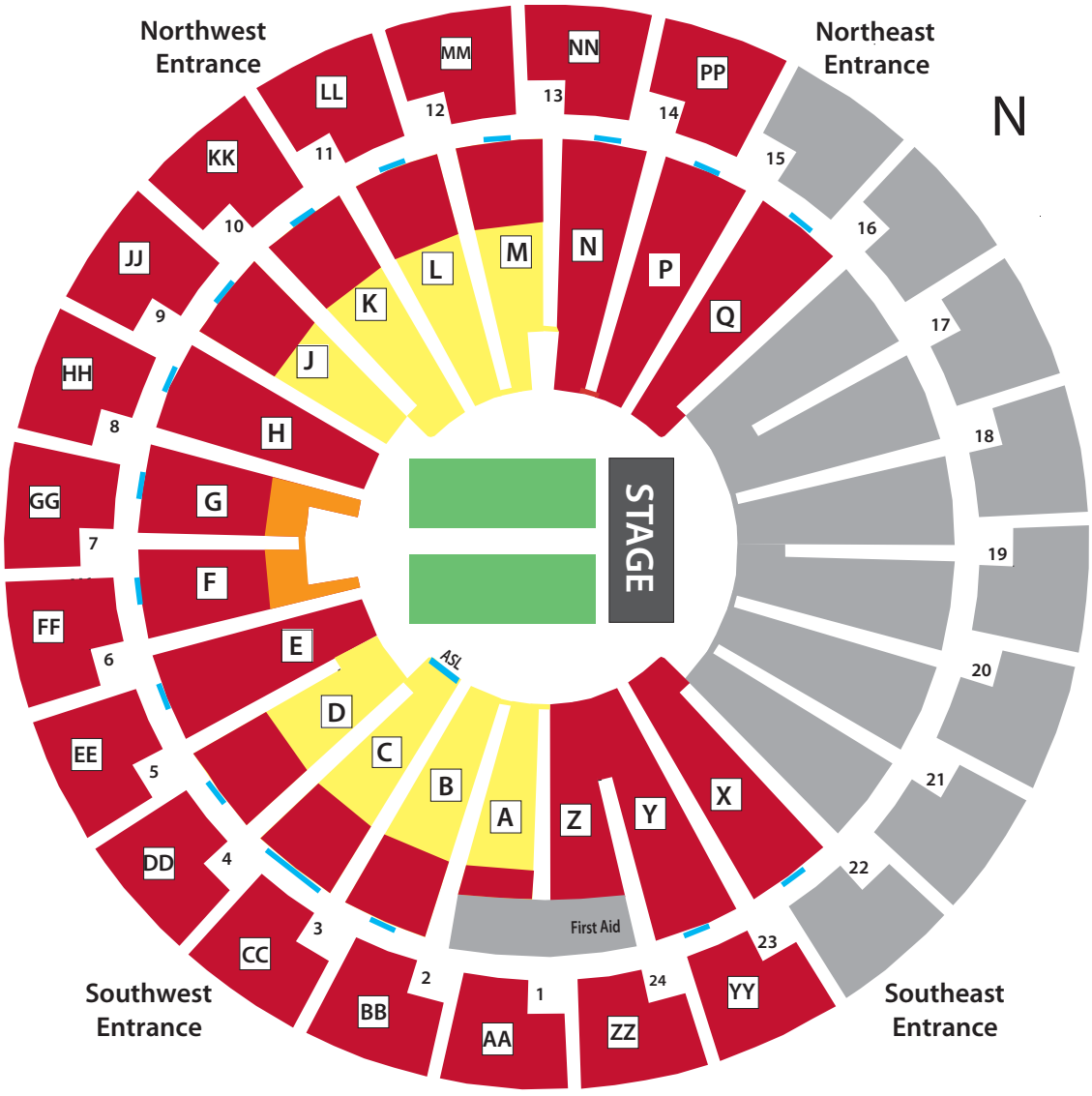
On behalf of the student body, the Associated Students of the University of Utah are proud to support a $10,000 initiative providing healthy snacks to students studying at the J. Willard Marriott Library during the Spring 2026 final exam period. This gift is intended to support student well-being and academic success by offering nourishment and encouragement during a demanding time in the semester.

ALUMNI

Congratulations on your graduation from the University of Utah and welcome to the U Alumni community! The Office of Alumni Relations exists to support your lifelong relationship with the U. We provide opportunities for alumni to connect with one another, engage in activities that are fun, enriching, and benefit the U, and foster education and advance alumni careers. Learn more about U Alumni by visiting **alumni.utah.edu**.

JON M. HUNTSMAN CENTER DETAIL – APRIL 30, 2026

GUEST SEATING	FACULTY & GRADUATE SEATING	NO SEATING
HONORED GUEST SEATING	UNDERGRADUATE SEATING	ADA SEATING



UNDERGRADUATE SEATING KEY

Architecture	Sections A & B	Health	Sections A & B
Business	Sections L & M	Humanities	Sections C & D
Education	Sections A & B	Nursing	Sections L & M
Engineering	Sections L & M	Science	Sections A, B, C & D
Fine Arts	Sections A & B	Social & Behav Science	Sections J & K
		Social Work	Sections A & B

Restrooms are found throughout the concourse area
Elevator is located by Portal 7
Lost and Found is located in the Ticket Office by Portal 23
Stroller parking is located at Portal 23

University Marketing and Communications will be taking photographs and/or video recordings of this event for use in official university marketing materials. Visit bit.ly/UUgrad26 to view photos of this event.