





UServeUtah

Utah Commission on Service & Volunteerism

The UServeUtah High School Council is a youth-driven advisory board composed of young Utahns from across the state dedicated to fostering community engagement among Utah youth. The 2022-2023 High School Council was comprised of 13 high school students. They had the opportunity to collaborate with and learn from each other, develop leadership skills, and gain an in-depth understanding of the Community Engagement Pathways.

Council members made a difference in their local communities all across Utah. They planned and executed community engagement projects involving youth volunteers. Not only did these activities promote youth volunteerism, but they also addressed global and local community issues. Council members completed a needs assessment, logic model, and final report of their projects, which will help influence UServeUtah's youth volunteerism initiatives.

UServeUtah is pleased to publish a final report containing the 2022-2023 High School Council Member's individual project reflections. All council members who completed their capstone project received the Lt. Governor's Volunteer Recognition Certificate. We commend them for their service and look forward to their continued leadership and engagement in the community.

From September 2022 through June 2023:

129

volunteers were engaged in
youth-led community projects

85

volunteers were age 25 and younger

751

total volunteer hours were served

438

hours were served by UServeUtah
Youth Council members

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Middle School Club Fair

Brylee Cruz

West High School

The Need:

The project was selected to address how Hispanic students struggle in social life and academics within middle and high school. The purpose was to encourage students to join extracurriculars to urge them to be more active in school.

The Project:

It was a middle school club fair at Northwest with clubs from West High School. This was to help facilitate the transition from middle school to high school.

Volunteer Roles:

They had posters or other informational material that advertised their clubs to the middle schoolers.

Impact:

It encouraged students at Northwest to join clubs once they transition to West High. Although it's still being determined how many will join the clubs, they know the possibility. Many students joined SLCC's PACE program, which will aid them in the college process. The volunteers could reach more than just one high school and learn about other clubs/programs within their community.

33
total volunteers

29
volunteers age 25
and younger

19
youth council
member hours
served

50
project volunteer
hours





Mic Night Dreams

Kellen Hunnicutt

West High School

The Need:

LGBTQ+ teenagers face higher suicide rates than the average teenager, and I've seen many of my friends who are members of this community struggle with mental health issues. I believe that poetry and music are exceptional ways to release and express negative emotions that may build up in a person. I wanted to provide a safe place where youth LGBTQ+ members could present artistic works, feel a sense of pride and accomplishment, and build a sense of community. I thought an open mic night would be the perfect way to achieve this goal. I worked with the Utah Pride Center to offer LGBTQ+ teenagers a stage to perform any songs, poetry, standup, etc. that they would like to share.

The Project:

The open mic night was held on March 11th, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. at the Utah Pride Center. A few volunteers and I arrived early to set up decorations and snacks. I selected a dreamy theme for the night and titled the event "Mic Night Dreams." The beautiful decorations had been made by teenagers at the Pride Center earlier in the month. The room was filled with fluffy clouds, tea lights, and colorful stars and a snack table was set up.. The outside area had heat lamps, firepits, tables, and a microphone. There were approximately twenty-eight attendees and a multitude of performances. There were songs, poems, comedy acts, and even a PowerPoint presentation!

Volunteer Roles:

The volunteers created and set up decorations for the night, and the adult volunteers set up chairs, tables, fire pits, and the microphone system. A few volunteers set up and managed the snack table. One youth volunteer helped with brainstorming and created the flier for the evening. The flyers were put up around my high school, West High, LGBTQ-friendly cafés, and the Utah Pride Center.

Impact:

Overall, everyone had an amazing time! The group was celebratory and supportive, and applauded all the performers. One of the singers came up to me after the night and told me that was their first time ever singing in front of other people,

9

total volunteers

4

volunteers age 25
and younger

19

youth council
member hours
served

20

project volunteer
hours



and how happy that made them. This night gave individuals an opportunity to express their art and people were proud of what they had performed. Cloe Butler, the Pride Center's Youth and Family Programs Manager, personally thanked me for putting the night together.

Many of the volunteers had never been to the Utah Pride Center before, including me. This opportunity opened doors for us to connect with the Pride Center more in the future. I also learned what the Pride Center offers to youth members of the community, and made connections with people I had never met before. This event helped convince one of the volunteers to help raise money for the Pride Center in the future by selling handmade art.



LGBTQIA+ TEEN OPEN MIC

mic night dreams

1380 S Main St, Salt Lake City, UT 84115
March 11 7:00 PM



SIGN UP TO PERFORM POETRY, MUSIC, ETC. OR COME SUPPORT THE PERFORMERS! SNACKS PROVIDED AND PAJAMAS ENCOURAGED!





PCHS Food and Clothing Drive

Nicholas Johnstone

Park City High School

The Need:

Park City, like many communities, faces the challenges of homelessness and individuals experiencing difficult circumstances. My project aims to alleviate some of their struggles by bridging the gap and offering a helping hand. By partnering with the local food bank and Christian center, I have established a collaborative effort that maximizes our impact and creates a strong network of support for those in need. Through this initiative, we are able to address both the immediate and long-term needs of the homeless population. The provision of clothing ensures that individuals have warm attire for the harsh winter months, allowing them to withstand the elements and maintain their dignity. Additionally, the distribution of nonperishable goods provides sustenance and nutrition, offering a lifeline to those facing food insecurity. Working closely with the food bank and Christian center has been crucial in ensuring the effectiveness and sustainability of our project. Their expertise, resources, and established networks have allowed us to extend our reach, identify those in dire need, and ensure that the items we provide are reaching the most vulnerable members of the community. Together, we are not only addressing the immediate needs of the homeless population but also striving to empower individuals and pave a path towards stability. By supporting them in their journey, we aim to break the cycle of homelessness and offer a sense of hope and possibility for a better future. I am deeply honored to be a part of this project and to have the opportunity to make a tangible impact in the lives of those who need it most. The resilience and strength exhibited by the less fortunate individuals in Park City have inspired me to work tirelessly to create a sustainable and compassionate support system. Together with the food bank, Christian center, and the generosity of the community, we are building a brighter and more inclusive future for all.

The Project:

I initiated a local food and clothing drive within my school community to support the local food bank and Christian center. With the active participation of students, teachers,

22
total volunteers

14
volunteers age 25
and younger

96
youth council
member hours
served

81
project volunteer
hours



and staff, we raised awareness and collected nonperishable food items, clothing, and essential supplies. Our collaborative efforts resulted in an overwhelming response, with volunteers sorting and organizing donations. We worked closely with the local organizations to coordinate the delivery of our contributions, ensuring that those in need received much-needed support. Witnessing the impact of our donations and the gratitude it generated reinforced our commitment to this project and inspired us to continue giving back to our community. This project exemplified the power of unity, compassion, and collective action, reminding us of the profound difference we can make when we come together for a shared cause.

Volunteer Roles:

Our dedicated volunteers played a vital role in the success of our project. They enthusiastically engaged in various tasks, such as creating and organizing clothing collection boxes, ensuring that the process of donating clothing was seamless and convenient for everyone involved. Additionally, they took charge of designing and distributing eye-catching fliers throughout the school, effectively raising awareness about the drive and its purpose. These passionate volunteers also went above and beyond by actively encouraging school-wide participation, motivating their peers to donate nonperishable food items, clothing, and essential supplies. Their unwavering commitment and enthusiasm were instrumental in generating a strong sense of community engagement and fostering a spirit of compassion and giving.

Impact:

My food and clothing drive at Park City High School made a profound impact on our community's less fortunate. The overwhelming support from students, teachers, and staff allowed us to provide essential resources to those in need. Donated food items stocked the local food bank, ensuring nourishing meals for families facing hunger, while warm clothing brought comfort and dignity to individuals during the winter months. Witnessing the gratitude and relief on their faces reminded us of the power of compassion and unity within our school community. The drive not only made a tangible difference in the lives of the less fortunate but also fostered a sense of empathy and togetherness among us. It was a powerful reminder of our ability to create positive change and support one another. Through our food and clothing drive, volunteers learned firsthand how easy and rewarding it is to give back to the community. They experienced the impact of their actions, realizing that even small contributions can make a significant difference. Organizing the donations taught them valuable skills in management and attention to detail, while kindly asking for donations honed their communication and empathy. They also discovered the power of determination, overcoming challenges and achieving their goals. Overall, the drive transformed their perspective, empowering them to continue making positive contributions and inspiring others to join in creating change.



Soaps, Suds and Smiles

Sophia Mun

Hillcrest High School

The Need:

The influx of refugees in Utah has been increasing due to the number of conflicts occurring globally. Many of the families that enter Utah come with nothing and do not have access to basic necessities from hygiene products, to housing items. There are about 60,000 refugees living in Utah currently in need of such items. The project I created was a fundraiser and donation drive of cleaning items to the refugee families living in Salt Lake City. I had decided I wanted to help fundraise cleaning items (specifically needed in Salt Lake City) like Clorox Wipes, Dish Soap, Kitchen Sponges, to bottles of laundry detergent and Lysol cleaning sprays. I had collaborated with the International Rescue Committee in Salt Lake City so that all donations would go to them. This project also was able to get more of the community to acknowledge the issues refugees are going through here in Salt Lake City.

The Project:

My project was a fundraiser and a donation drive with the goal of collecting cleaning products from dish soaps to kitchen sponges for the refugees in Salt Lake City. In kind donations were received from individuals to large corporations like Walmart, Scheels, and Costco. These items are then all to the International Rescue Committee in Salt Lake City where refugees can come and pick up any items they are in need of. A fundraiser website was also established with the IRC so that people could donate to my project which goes straight to the IRC.

Volunteer Roles:

There were various roles and many processes that my volunteers were needed in. Some of these roles included helping establish this project. This meant helping the website get created as well as planning and projecting the fundraiser in order to get noticed by larger corporations. Another role in this project was going around to businesses and gathering as many donations as possible as well as establishing connections and forms of communications to gain even more donations. One role was specifically in charge of getting all of the in kind donations to the International Refugee Committee while another was to go through larger corporations and pick up the in kind donations. They had spent numerous hours traveling around to many corporations and the heavy load of picking and dropping off

20
total volunteers

6
volunteers age 25
and younger

200
youth council
member hours
served

70
project volunteer
hours



donations. All my volunteers had a key impact on how well the process was going. They were used for better flow and communication so that the project wouldn't have to go through many obstacles. For example contacting businesses to donate as well as going in person to communicate with managers and officials for donations.

Impact:

This project was able to help fundraise over \$1500 worth of in kind donations and checks. Many corporations from small to large were able to get involved in this community project. Some of these corporations include Costco, Scheels, and Walmart. Many of the workers were able to get more connected to the problems refugees go through and worked hard to help. This project was able to aid the International Rescue Committee in providing goods and services to the refugees in Salt lake City. It was also able to teach the volunteers as well as spread the word and information about the refugees so that communities would be more entailed to get involved. This is why I'm continuing my project throughout this whole summer to fundraise more money for the IRC to provide even more goods for the refugees. My volunteers had changes in themselves as well as changing those around them. While collecting donations, they were able to change the views of many individuals in their community. Especially when advocating for the project, we were better able to educate and help many understand the needs of refugees and what they are in need of. They had a better sense of those around them and they had a stronger aptitude for wanting to get involved in more projects.



Building Bridges: Connecting Youth and Lawmakers for Civic Engagement

Marina Peng

Rowland Hall

The Need:

Utah has one of the lowest youth voter turnout rates in the nation. Utahns under 40 are less likely to vote simply because they do not think their vote matters. Specifically, Utah's predominantly conservative political climate discourages young people who hold more progressive views from actively participating in politics. The absence of policies and initiatives that address youth's interests contributes to their disengagement. Issues such as education, employment, climate change, and social justice are important to younger generations, and a perceived lack of attention to these matters in Utah discourages their involvement. Despite having a slight upward trend in youth voting this past midterm election, there still needs to be more improvement in increasing youth voice in governance. I wanted to address the lack of youth-driven participation in local politics through my volunteer project.

The Project:

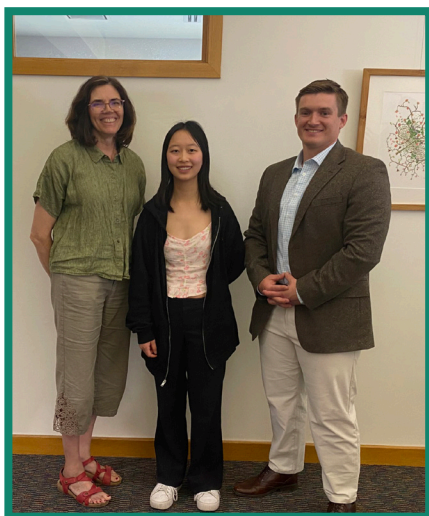
I created a forum where youth can directly connect with state representatives and learn about governmental regulations, current policies, and businesses that specifically affect youth. I partnered with the nonprofit Better Utah, an organization that holds politicians accountable and educates Utahns on issues of public concern for my event. I confirmed Representative Gay Lynn Bennion and Representative Tyler Clancy to lead discussions on bills that passed this past legislative session. Representative Bennion spoke about HB 217, the school energy and water reductions bill, and HB 311, the social media usage amendments bill. Representative Clancy discussed HB 197, the higher education financial aid amendments bill, and HB 324, the workplace violence protective orders amendments bill. These bills that they sponsored directly affect youth. Additionally, both representatives were also invited to speak about how they got involved in government and encouraged

17
total volunteers

14
volunteers age 25
and younger

58
youth council
member hours
served

69
project volunteer
hours



the audience to do the same. Representative Clancy, the current youngest Utah House representative, specifically spoke about his efforts in governance at a young age and how his firsthand perspective on how policy affects youth helps him represent his district.

Volunteer Roles:

In the initial stages of my project, volunteers helped me gather research on youth involvement and governance. They also helped me contact dozens of representatives to speak at the event. Volunteers were also used to promote my event by putting up flyers in schools and spreading the word to their clubs, youth councils, family, and friends. They also helped to recruit more volunteers to help at the event. At the event, volunteers took pictures and helped me set up and clean up the event.

Impact:

There were around 45 youths who attended the event. The two representatives shared how they can immerse themselves in lawmaking and policy through simple steps. The panel showed them that their voices can make a significant impact on the community and Utah law. The platform my project created connected young people and representatives and informed them about how to begin conversations and engage in policy and governance. By educating young generations about policy actions, we can ensure that in the future, all of our voices are heard, creating more inclusive and representative policies. Our voices play a vital role in shaping our future societies. The two representatives facilitated the attendees to gain knowledge about local government and how they can make an impact in their communities. The two speakers spoke on actions attendees could carry out to get involved in governance. Rep. Bennion said that all lawmakers need help year-round and it only takes a simple email to become engaged. Additionally, as the first bill she presented involved water and energy, two issues very prevalent in Utah, she said that youth could help Utah's water shortage by letting people know that simply turning off your sprinklers makes a huge difference. Overall, my event provided youth volunteers with the skills to become active in the lawmaking process and make an impact on their local communities.



Elexa VanArsdol and Zoe Thompson Memorial Mural

Lillian Scott

Grand County High School

The Need:

I originally had another project planned, but then two local high school girls passed away in two separate tragic accidents within a month of each other. Moab as a community was deeply shaken, so I felt the need to organize a project for everyone who was grieving, something in which they could come together and heal as a family and find support as a community.

The Project:

This project has the goal of commemorating two beautiful bright lights that were extinguished suddenly in Moab and bringing everybody together in joy instead of grief. The mural will be full of meaningful details and hopefully will inspire others to live as Elexa and Zoe did, with an excess of love for everyone in their hearts.

Volunteer Roles:

Volunteers thus far have brainstormed ideas and values that are meaningful and need to be expressed in the mural, collected supplies, and aided in finding a location for the project. In the next month, I expect volunteers will spread the news about the mural, help with the actual painting of it, and most importantly, help each other heal.

Impact:

If all goes well, I expect to see discussion around healing and love become expressed more widely throughout the community, and a positive event will leave people with a feeling of hope and togetherness instead of individual grief.

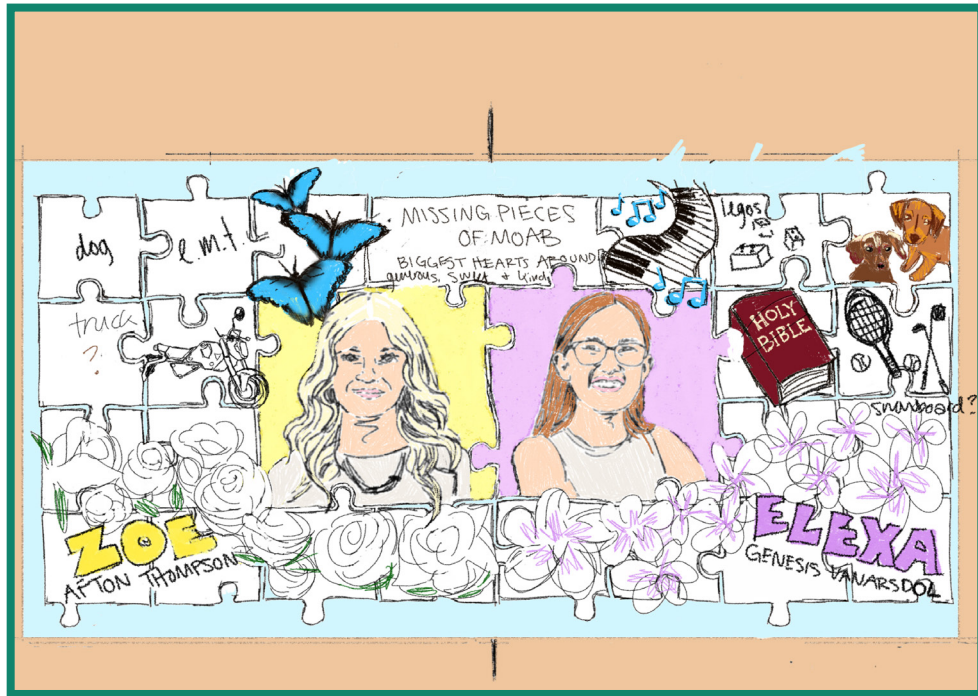
I want to see the participating individuals empowered to be emotionally vulnerable, and for them to instill a healing mindset as they work to move on with their lives, together, as a supportive family.

14
total volunteers

6
volunteers age 25
and younger

35
youth council
member hours
served

15
project volunteer
hours





Utah Lake Invasive Species Removal

Benjamin Stradling

Provo High School

The Need:

Since the introduction of the Common Carp (*Cyprinus carpio*) into Utah Lake in the 1800s, the ecosystem has changed drastically. Once beautiful, crystal clear, and rocky-bottomed, the lake is now murky, algae-infested, and has a bottom of mud. Crazy how one fish species can absolutely make or break an entire ecosystem just like that. Now, the carp make up around 90% of Utah Lake's total biomass with numbers totaling around 7.5 million. The carp also commonly make their way into major tributaries such as the Provo River, which affect surrounding neighborhoods with the nasty stench they emit when rotting. Overwhelming to consider what microscopic an effect (if any) one angler could do, even with a bow and arrow, however, consider what could happen if we brought a whole community together to battle this massive problem.

The Project:

Tournament to remove as many carp from Utah Lake as possible in one day.

Volunteer Roles:

Every participant went out either on the lake or into a tributary and basically caught as many carp as they possibly could, the tournament was run in duo teams, so we fished in groups of two and basically whoever had the most total weight in carp at the end won the tournament. The total weight removed was 303 pounds!

Impact:

Aside from providing temporary restoration for the local ecosystems of the tributaries, the tournament also brought together several members of the local community with a common goal. It helped them understand the impact of carp on the Utah Lake ecosystem and also helped spark a connection with their own abilities to make a difference.

The tournament brought us closer together as a community with a common interest and was able to bond over our love for fishing and our own wonderful Utah Lake.

14
total volunteers

12
volunteers age 25
and younger

11
youth council
member hours
served

8
project volunteer
hours



Carp Killers		Flopper Fisherman	
6.39 8.76 7.66 7.74 27.43 #14		5.83 5.19 11.02 #5	
Fishin for trash		Carp Catchers	
7.82 5.86 1 2.94 3.8 4.51 1.6 1.69 6.77 6.61 2.39 3.56 3.28 #3 51.72		8.18 8.59 7.6 6.6 6.86 8.89 7.52 6.45 6.46 5.74 8.1 7.02 7.02 8.63 7.67 8.04 #1 120.56	
Kick my butt		Insert awesome super dope cool sick fishing name here	
8.08 8.46 6.68 8.56 8.81 6.42 6.62 6.8 8.23 6.52 6.4 #2 84.6		1.66 5 2.74 7.3 #6 202.64	





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