

# Alumni News

Lowell Bennion Community Service Center Alumni Program

Volume 1, Issue 3

## Special points of interest:

- Bennion Center hosts anniversary gala dinner
- Bend-in-the-River celebrates winter solstice
- Mentor Program kicks off in January
- Alternative Spring Break extends to include alumni

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## The Bennion Center Celebrates 20th Anniversary with Gala Dinner

On January 11, 2008 we are celebrating the Bennion Center's 20th anniversary with a gala dinner. The dinner will be in the Rice-Eccles Stadium & Tower and will begin at 7:00 pm.

The theme for the evening is *Reflecting 20 Years of Service*. We're gathering reflections from our students, alumni, community and campus partners, advisory board, and community members. The reflections will be displayed at the dinner and used in Bennion Center publications.

We'd love for you to share a reflection with us! The following questions may help you begin the process of reflecting:

- How did your Bennion Center experience influence the person you are today?
- What did you discover about yourself as a result of your Bennion Center experience?
- How do you "reflect" the Bennion Center mission to "...foster lifelong service and civic



participation...?"

You can submit your reflection in one of three ways: via e-mail to [AGeesman@sa.utah.edu](mailto:AGeesman@sa.utah.edu); on-line at [www.BennionCenter.Org/Reflections](http://www.BennionCenter.Org/Reflections); or via U.S. post to Bennion Center, Attention: Alicia Geesman, 200 S. Central Campus Dr. Room 101, Salt Lake City, UT 84112-9100. Please include your name and affiliation with the center including years involved and any specific programs you worked with.

Invitations to the dinner will be mailed mid-December. If you don't receive an invitation, and want one, please call 801.581.8436 to be sure we have a current address for you.

## The Bend-in-the-River Organizes Winter Solstice Celebration

The Bend-in-the-River was established to celebrate the Bennion Center's 10th anniversary. The two-acre site, located on the Jordan River, serves as a natural green space and urban environmental education center. Members of the community, local elementary students and volunteers enjoy the setting through recreational and educational events, including the Bend's annual Fall Project, Winter Solstice and Earth Day Celebrations.

Last year, nearly 100 people celebrated winter solstice at the Bend, commemorating the longest night of the year and the return of longer days. Luminaries guided visitors to a blazing fire, hot drinks and treats, live music, and a chance to look through a giant telescope. There was also an opportunity to adventure throughout the grounds to learn about the history of winter solstice and how various cultures celebrate the event.

## The Bend-in-the-River Organizes Winter Solstice Celebration (cont)

This year, the Bend's Winter Solstice Celebration will take place on December 21st, from 5:00-7:00 pm (sunset is at 5:03 pm!). There will be hot drinks and treats, a warm fire, entertainment, and plenty of educational activities for all ages. So, bring your family and friends to this free, fun-filled evening of learning about the winter solstice! The Bend is located at 1030 W Fremont Avenue (1100 S) in Salt Lake City.

The Bend's Events Committee has a variety of outdoor activities planned to make the celebration a fun and educational outdoor experience

for all ages. In order to make this event a success, the Bend needs volunteers to assist with setting up, tearing down, and running activities during the event. This is a great celebration that offers community members a way to celebrate the season outdoors in the dark, and it's been well-attended in the past, so the Bend will take all the assistance it can get!

If you would like to help with this magical evening (unlike any other seasonal celebration in the area!), please contact Tara Poelzing at [TPoelzing@sa.utah.edu](mailto:TPoelzing@sa.utah.edu) or 801.587.9027.



We'd love to see you at the following events:

- On December 1st at 4:00 pm, ASB is holding a **Huntsman Center Clean Up** after the men's basketball game to help raise funds to offset the cost of ASB trips. This is a great way for you to support the efforts of ASB! For more info or to volunteer, contact Brent at [BSpencer@sa.utah.edu](mailto:BSpencer@sa.utah.edu) or 801.585.9104
- On December 4th and 5th, the Bennion Center's holding a **Hygiene Drive!**

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## Alumni-Student Mentor Program Kicks Off Spring Semester 2008

Our Alumni Program is unveiling a new Alumni-Student Mentoring Program in January 2008. The program will allow Bennion Center alumni and current students to connect in positive one-on-one mentoring relationships.

As an alum of the Bennion Center, you will have opportunities to re-connect with the center, serve as a role model and make an important difference in a student's life! As a mentor, you will share your experiences, give feedback, guidance and encouragement to a student interested in an area you have experience in.

Students will have opportunities for personal and professional development, civic engagement and network building through talking with you, hearing about your experiences and considering your advice.

Mentoring a student won't necessarily require a large investment of your time. Depending on what's most convenient or preferred, communication between you and your student can be done in person, via phone and/or email.

This is a great way for out of state alumni to get

involved with the center, since mentoring can happen via the web and/or telephone. Some students may prefer a mentor out of state because they are interested in a particular region.

After filling out the online application, you will be matched with a student according to their academic, professional or service interests. This may happen quickly or may take some time. Once matched, you will contact your student and begin your mentoring relationship.

Questions will vary from student to student and mentoring can cover a wide variety of topics including: career and personal goals, work and service experience, academics, talents and interests, internships, job hunting, and networking.

The program will kick off in January 2008, but an online application will be posted on the [Alumni Program website](#) in December. In the meantime, you can contact [Christy Tobolski](#) for more info.

We look forward to hearing your ideas and working together to get this new program going. It will expand the opportunities we provide Bennion Center alumni to make a difference!

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THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH  
LOWELL BENNION  
COMMUNITY SERVICE CENTER

## Alternative Spring Break 2008 Open to Alumni

Since 1997, Alternative Spring Break (ASB) at the U has placed students in communities all over the US to engage in service and learning during spring break. Host communities benefit from the work students perform, while students gain a broader perspective of the world.

This year, participation in ASB has been extended to include U of U alumni, faculty and staff. Whether you've volunteered for an ASB trip in the past or not, this is a great opportunity for you to take a week off from your day to day life and make a difference in someone else's.

This year's service trips, which run from March 15-22, 2008 include: restoring the dunes in Arca; repairing recycled bicycles for needy children in Portland; providing meals, childcare and services for the elderly in San Francisco; work-

ing with low income and immigrant populations in San Diego; restoring ecosystems in Point Reyes; ridding campsites of trash and invasive species along the San Juan River; providing education and food to people living with HIV, office support and special event preparation for AIDS Project in Los Angeles; and preparing meals for low-income and homeless populations in Seattle. Trips cost between \$300-400 but include transportation, meals while at trip site and lodging. A \$50 non-refundable deposit is required when you submit your application, found [here](#). The final day to apply is January 25, 2008. The balance of your trip is due February 8, 2008.

For more info, visit [www.ASB.utah.edu](http://www.ASB.utah.edu), or contact Brent Spencer at [BSpencer@sa.utah.edu](mailto:BSpencer@sa.utah.edu) or 801.585.9104.



alternative spring break

### We'd love to see you at the following events:

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- Volunteers will be in the Union Food Court collecting hygiene items from 10:00 am-3:00 pm. Donations will go to the Crossroads Urban Center, which will distribute them to homeless and needy individuals in Utah.
- On December 6th at 6:00 pm, the Bennion Center is hosting a **Seniors Ball** at the Federal Heights Rehabilitation and Nursing Center (41 S 900 E). Come have fun with the BC and seniors! For more info or to volunteer, call 801.581.4811.
- On December 8th from 1:30-3:30 pm in the Union Building's Bowling Alley, Best Buddies of Utah is hosting a **Bowling Event!** For more info or to volunteer, contact Justin at 801.419.5577 or [Jay\\_Man123@msn.com](mailto:Jay_Man123@msn.com) by December 5th.
- On December 21st, from 5:00-7:00 pm, Bend-in-the-River (1030 W 1100 S) is hosting its annual **Winter Solstice Celebration!** For more info or to volunteer, contact Tara at [TPOelzing@sa.utah.edu](mailto:TPOelzing@sa.utah.edu) or 801.587.9027

# December 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Huntsman Center Clean Up
	<i>Donate bedding for homeless families; Road Home Community Winter Shelter (801) 328-8756</i>					
	<i>—OR— Help offset elderly residents' utility bills; Lend-A-Hand/Rocky Mountain Power Utility Assistance Program (800) 328-9272 or (801) 323-7000</i>					
2	3 Hygiene Drive	4 Hygiene Drive	5 Hanukah Begins	6 Seniors Ball	7	8 Best Buddies Bowling Event
	<i>Be a foster grandparent to a child with special needs; SL County Aging Services (801) 468-2855</i>					
	<i>—OR— Knit warm hats and scarves for low-income and homeless individuals and families; Crossroads Urban Center (801) 359-8837</i>					
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	<i>Donate new toys or craft/art supplies to a hospital playroom</i>					
	<i>—OR— Call BINGO at a senior living facility; Multi-Ethnic Senior Citizen High-rise (801) 328-2090 ext 13</i>					
16	17	18	19	20	21 Winter Solstice Celebration	22
	<i>Take pledges during a local public TV fundraiser; KUED-TV (801) 581-7777</i>					
	<i>—OR— Donate dog/cat food; Utah Animal Adoption Center (formerly Wasatch Humane) (801) 486-6210</i>					
23	24	25 Christmas Day	26 Kwanzaa Begins	27	28	29
	<i>Read to the visually impaired; Utah Council for the Blind (801) 292-1156</i>					
	<i>—OR— Help serve meals to the homeless, St. Vincent de Paul Center (801) 363-7710 ex 1418</i>					
30	31 New Years Eve					
	<i>Provide and prepare evening meals for families at the Ronald McDonald House; contact Beth (801) 363-4663</i>					
	<i>—OR— Volunteer at a local hospice and help provide companionship and other services for terminally ill people and their families</i>					

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Read more  
about Kim and other  
Bennion Center  
alumni at  
[www.BennionCenter.Org/Alumni](http://www.BennionCenter.Org/Alumni)



Kari Ellingson

What have you been up to since graduation? Have you gone back to school? Started a family? How did your time at the Bennion Center influence who you are and what you do now? What's your favorite memory of the center? Let us know! Email your responses and any other info to [CTobolski@sa.utah.edu](mailto:CTobolski@sa.utah.edu). If you could include a photo, too, that would be great!

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## Alumni Spotlight: Kim Paulding, BS'98

Kim (Hooper) Paulding graduated with an Organizational Communication Degree from the University of Utah in 1998. During her time at the U, she volunteered at the Bennion Center, directing the Literacy Action Project, Best Buddies Program and Special Olympics.

Kim says that time she spent at the Bennion Center was *"a life changing experience for me and the only reason that I ended up working in nonprofits."* Since graduation, she has worked for numerous nonprofits including the Legal

Aid Society of Salt Lake and the Utah Food Bank. For the past seven years, she has run the Utah Bar Foundation, a charitable foundation that provides funding for legal services for the poor and disabled as well as for law related education in Utah. Kim also serves as Vice-Chair of the PRATT organization (Parley's Rails Trails and Tunnels).

Kim also enjoys time with her family - she and her husband, Jon, have five children, one of whom is adopted from Honduras.

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## Staff Update: Kari Ellingson, Interim Director of the Bennion Center

Kari Ellingson, Associate Vice President (AVP) for Student Development, is serving as Interim Director of the Bennion Center.

Kari is originally from Philadelphia. In 1987, she moved from Chapel Hill, North Carolina to Utah to complete a pre-doctoral psychology internship at the U's Counseling Center. *"I fell in love, both with the place and with my husband, and decided to remain,"* she confesses. Kari worked at the Counseling Center for many years and served as Interim Director for two years before becoming AVP. Eleven offices report to her, and she has adjunct faculty appointments in Educational Leadership and Policy and Educational Psychology. Most importantly Kari *"has two teenagers, a 9th grade boy and an 8th grade girl!"*

The Bennion Center Director has reported to Kari for the past ten years. *"I met with Marshall and, before Marshall, with Irene on a regular basis,"* she says, *"Sometimes I was needed to help solve problems, other times I was just a sounding board."*

Knowing there would be a several month gap between Marshall and the new director, Kari decided it was a good time for her to learn more about the Bennion Center from first-hand,

rather than second-hand experience. At her request, Curt Larsen will serve as Operations Coordinator, handling the center's day-to-day issues. Kari says, *"With his many years of experience at the Bennion Center, Curt will be invaluable to both me and to others in the center."*

Local and national advertising for the position will begin in early January. Review of applications will start around January 23. The goal is to narrow the pool to three or four top candidates for on-campus interviews during the third and fourth weeks of February. Each of these interviews will take two days and will include meeting with each of the groups invested in the future of the Bennion Center, including alumni.

*"We're looking for a candidate who has a demonstrated long-term commitment to community service, a deep understanding of higher education, an experienced collaborator and a proven administrator—in other words, someone who can do it all!"*

If you or someone you know is interested in learning more about the position, you can check the U's Human Resources website in early January or contact Kari Ellingson at 801.587.9600 or [KEllingson@sa.utah.edu](mailto:KEllingson@sa.utah.edu)