

# UTAHSTATE

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## DESIGNING HIS Life

Bibhu Mohapatra  
Finds His Path By Kristen Munson

Bibhu Mohapatra '98 started sewing by using scraps of old saris and bedsheets his mother gave him. Now the high-end fashion designer dresses some of the biggest names in Hollywood.



Photo collage by Levi Sim.

## A Tale of Two Injuries

By Jeff Hunter '96

**A decade ago, Michael McKnight broke his back skiing.** Now, he is one of the nation's top ultrarunners. **Jennifer Barker** nearly died after being struck by a truck while out running. In April, she ran the Boston Marathon. How running got two Aggies back to good.



Photo by Levi Sim.

## The Data's In: Meaning Points To Success

By Kat Webb '20

**When you were at college,** did you go to a football game? Live on campus in a residence hall? How about meet with an advisor? These are some of the aggregate data points analyzed by the **Center of Student Analytics** at Utah State University to determine what factors lead to student success.

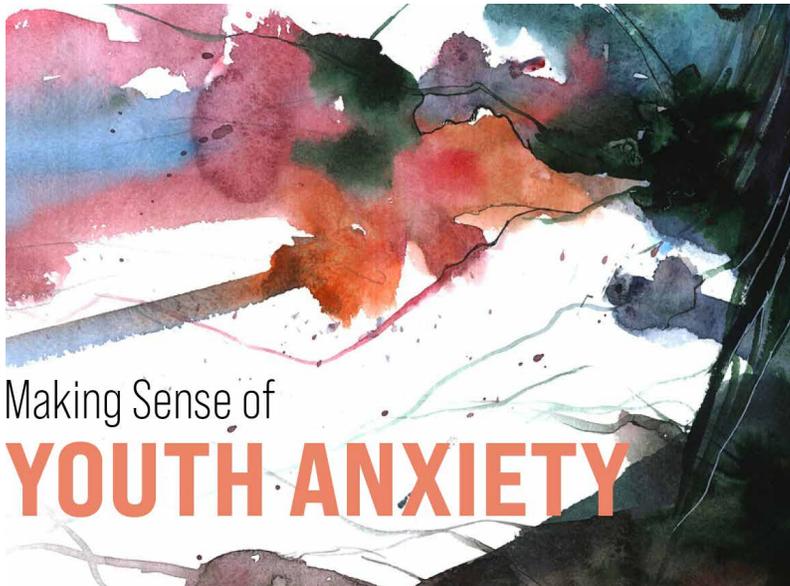


Illustration from Pixabay.

Making Sense of

## YOUTH ANXIETY

By Kristen Munson

**Two reports released by the CDC this spring confirmed what many parents around the country have felt deep in their bones: kids are struggling.** Here's what Aggie researchers say about interventions in schools and what we can do about it.



Photo by Levi Sim.

## Real Beef. Done Well: An Eco-Friendlier Meal Using 'Smart Foodscapes'

By Lael Gilbert

**Juan Villalba believes a more sustainable plate is possible.** Planting smart foodscapes could create healthier feed for cattle, improve biodiversity in the region, and reduce ranchers' need for supplementary feed.

## Finishing What They Started

By Steve Kent '20

**Rick Gomez went to college after his company restructured.**

**Melissa Jones** enrolled in college to become a nurse after a life-threatening illness.

**Steve Kent** could taste the finish line. But unexpected setbacks prevented all three from earning their degrees. Now they're back to tackle some unfinished business.

## Standing Up for Others

By Jeff Hunter '96

**Diana Meter studies bullying and the benefits and consequences of being an upstander.** She explains how to create safer schools for all students.

## Planting a Way of Life: Farm Grants for Native Americans and Refugees

By Julene Reese '88

**USU Extension was awarded a 3-year grant** by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture to support five incubator farms around the state.

## Keeping Joy in the Classroom

By Rebecca Dixon '08

**A recent poll of educators** found that 90% reported burnout is a major problem. Two recent graduates of the **STEP program** describe how they stay focused on what matters — the kids.



## Overcoming Trauma: “It’s Not Always Rainbows in Life”

By Jeff Hunter '96

**From a young age, Mary Phan,** a doctoral student in psychology, witnessed gang violence and experienced sexual assault. None of it has stopped her from trying to bring mindfulness techniques to the kids it could benefit most.

## The Fight For Disability Rights Goes Online

By JoLynne Lyon

### **COVID-19 upended the planet.**

Suddenly everything happened on-screen and in cars. But for those with disabilities, the rush online made some things hard and other things impossible.

## *DIY Life: “Just Say Yes, And”* By Kristen Munson

### **That mantra has served Zachary Ames '08 well.**

After graduating in the midst of a global recession, his focus on using any opportunity to refine his craft led him to New York, Singapore, and back to Utah where he started his company XYZ Leadership.



## *Field Notes: Undiminished – Resilience in the Undocumented Community* By Allyson Myers '19

**A 2020 survey of undocumented individuals** found that nearly half met the criteria for clinical levels of distress. Melanie Domenech Rodríguez, USU’s 2022 D. Wynne Thorne Career Research Award recipient, found something hopeful in the data.

## *A Note from Noelle: Planning for a More Stable Future*

**After years of dreaming,** USU gets the green light to start a College of Veterinary Medicine.

## *Campus Scene: A Day to Celebrate*

By Kristen Munson

**A look at the decades of effort** it took to build a dream and open USU Moab’s new campus.