

0:00:08.791,0:00:10.916

Welcome, everybody, to the Ogden Way  
podcast,

0:00:10.916,0:00:13.041

the place  
where we tell the stories about Ogden

0:00:13.041,0:00:15.375

by telling the stories about Ogden's  
people.

0:00:15.375,0:00:16.916

I'm Ogden city mayor Ben Nadolski.

0:00:16.916,0:00:20.458

And today I'm joined by Weber State  
University president and alumni,

0:00:20.916,0:00:22.666

Brad Mortensen. Brad.

0:00:22.666,0:00:24.833

Welcome aboard. Thank you. Mayor.  
Great to be here with you.

0:00:24.833,0:00:27.791

I appreciate you coming in  
pretty hard to get a

0:00:27.791,0:00:30.458

this much time on someone's calendar  
like a president.

0:00:30.458,0:00:31.791

That's a big deal.

0:00:31.791,0:00:33.208

I'm glad you think that.

0:00:33.208,0:00:34.916

That means, you know, my efforts

0:00:34.916,0:00:37.541

to make everyone think  
I'm busier than I am are are succeeding.

0:00:37.541,0:00:40.458

There you go.  
Well, you're doing a good job. Keep it up.

0:00:40.458,0:00:42.083

Brad, you and I go a long ways back.

0:00:42.083,0:00:44.875

Actually, quite a few years. Yeah.

0:00:44.875,0:00:46.500

And you work professionally  
for a lot of years.

0:00:46.500,0:00:48.083

With my wife, too? Yes. Right.

0:00:48.083,0:00:48.666

We have.

0:00:48.666,0:00:53.166

So, even back to, like, I remember  
late night, you know, our kitchen table.

0:00:53.166,0:00:54.750

Even working on a youth recreation  
initiative

0:00:54.750,0:00:57.291

together a long, long time ago  
for your own kids. Yeah.

0:00:57.291,0:01:00.291

And now we're in that grind, right?

0:01:00.291,0:01:00.916

Yeah.

0:01:00.916,0:01:04.208

Have you for a long time, you guys,  
your kids are in that same age bracket

0:01:04.208,0:01:06.000

that ours  
were when we were talking about it.

0:01:06.000,0:01:06.625

That's right.

0:01:06.625,0:01:09.083

But we've made a lot of progress for sure.

0:01:09.083,0:01:10.041

More to go.

0:01:10.041,0:01:11.083

Thanks for your work.

0:01:11.083,0:01:12.625

Well, a lot of people's work.

0:01:12.625,0:01:13.916

Right. But including yours.

0:01:14.916,0:01:16.583

And, you know, you've been a

0:01:16.583,0:01:19.583

strong partner and a really strong  
ally for Ogden for a long time.

0:01:20.750,0:01:23.458

People often ask me, like, what is it  
like working with Brad and the University?

0:01:23.458,0:01:26.750

How does working with the university  
help the community?

0:01:27.041,0:01:27.458

Right.

0:01:27.458,0:01:29.875

Yeah, that's

that's really why I should be here.

0:01:29.875,0:01:32.458

So thanks for coming in. Now, of course,  
happy to.

0:01:32.458,0:01:33.791

Happy to be part of it.

0:01:33.791,0:01:36.416

Appreciate  
all the energy that you bring to the city

0:01:36.416,0:01:39.416

and the partnership that we have,  
and trying to do good things together.

0:01:39.750,0:01:42.291

All the energy is a polite way of saying  
I'm a spaz.

0:01:42.291,0:01:44.750

No, you bring energy, though  
I know there's energy

0:01:44.750,0:01:47.750

and it never ends when  
when Ben's in the room, there's energy.

0:01:48.375,0:01:51.291

I might be criticized a little bit  
because it never stops

0:01:51.291,0:01:55.041

until I fall face down at night,  
and then I wake up and it's like, bam!

0:01:55.708,0:01:57.500

But it's one of my gifts I guess it is.

0:01:57.500,0:01:58.375

It is a gift.

0:01:58.375,0:02:01.375

It's it's a good thing  
and a cross to bear, I'm told.

0:02:01.875,0:02:04.500

But the key is like, what do we  
what do we do with the energy?

0:02:04.500,0:02:05.083

Right. Right.

0:02:06.083,0:02:08.333

So the Ogden way,

0:02:08.333,0:02:10.166

the Ogden way is a framework

0:02:10.166,0:02:13.583

for human success, encapsulates our values

0:02:13.583,0:02:16.875

and the things that are most important

to us, like service to others.

0:02:17.666,0:02:18.750

Grit. Right.

0:02:18.750,0:02:20.833

Innovation, drive.

0:02:20.833,0:02:25.375

Making sure that we take accountability

for ourselves so that we can, you know,



0:02:25.375,0:02:28.500

elevate ourselves while making sure  
that we elevate those around us.

0:02:29.416,0:02:31.166

Those are the things that the Ogden Way  
encapsulates.

0:02:31.166,0:02:33.375

But it's also a mission for our staff here

0:02:33.375,0:02:36.166

in order to help  
deliver a vision for our city.

0:02:36.166,0:02:39.166

And it's not just about the city  
as a city corporation.

0:02:39.833,0:02:43.708

It's what parts do we play relative  
to the parts of all of our partners.

0:02:44.125,0:02:47.250

And so we've got these  
seven pillars of human success.

0:02:48.250,0:02:50.875

They are that encapsulate  
all the major pieces

0:02:50.875,0:02:55.000

that people need access for opportunity  
in order to succeed in life.

0:02:55.708,0:02:59.291

And the framework is there to make sure  
that we can align ourselves as partners

0:03:00.458,0:03:01.708

all toward

0:03:01.708,0:03:04.708

the same goals, the same vision, right?

0:03:04.916,0:03:07.916

And in service to the same mission.

0:03:08.333,0:03:11.250

And so, that's where you come in,

0:03:11.250,0:03:14.125

because one of those main pillars  
is education.

0:03:14.125,0:03:16.916

And it's not just about getting a degree.

0:03:16.916,0:03:19.916

It's like, what about K through 12?

0:03:20.041,0:03:22.041

What about workforce development?

0:03:22.041,0:03:24.416

What about lifelong learning. Right.

0:03:24.416,0:03:27.416

So we've had Luke Rasmussen,  
superintendent, the school district on

0:03:28.333,0:03:29.958

we got Brad Mortenson. Here.

0:03:29.958,0:03:33.250

We have Jim Taggart,  
president Jim Taggart, I should say.

0:03:33.750,0:03:36.375

Right. That's right. Those are our anchor.

0:03:36.375,0:03:39.750

Anchor

education partners in addition to others.

0:03:40.583,0:03:43.083

But you three are huge anchors

0:03:43.083,0:03:46.083

in this community, and we couldn't  
ask for a better president.

0:03:46.250,0:03:48.833

Well, it's very kind of you thanks. Yeah.

0:03:48.833,0:03:53.125

So, when we talk about workforce  
development and higher ed,

0:03:54.000,0:03:56.541

what are some of the things  
and the pathways that you and I work on

0:03:56.541,0:03:59.625

together that you want to share  
from the Weber State perspective?

0:04:00.083,0:04:00.750

Yeah.

0:04:02.708,0:04:04.208

How many hours do we have?

0:04:04.208,0:04:06.000

So, no. It's great.

0:04:06.000,0:04:08.000

I have 35 minutes. 35 minutes.

0:04:08.000,0:04:10.166

Okay. I'll hit the highlights.

0:04:10.166,0:04:12.833

Because there's a lot we,

0:04:12.833,0:04:15.083

you know,

the thing that I love about Weber

0:04:15.083,0:04:18.791

State is just

how we're so focused on the community.

0:04:18.833,0:04:21.958

We have three core themes access,  
learning, and community.

0:04:21.958,0:04:27.958

And, so I always say that we wouldn't  
be here without the community of Ogden.

0:04:28.000,0:04:31.166

There have been so many times  
in our history, 130,

0:04:31.833,0:04:37.000

135 years now, that Ogden City folks  
have risen up to support the university.

0:04:37.000,0:04:40.875

And so we have that obligation  
to reciprocate that back, to make sure

0:04:40.875,0:04:45.125

that we're doing our part  
to help the city be, vibrant and,

0:04:46.375,0:04:48.583

and make sure that is working  
well together.

0:04:48.583,0:04:51.583

So, in partnership and,

0:04:51.916,0:04:55.791

Luke and Jim and I are meeting together  
all the time with our other,

0:04:56.791,0:04:59.791

in northern Utah with our other, tech  
college and,

0:04:59.791,0:05:03.375

and school districts, just to make sure  
that we're really responding to that need.

0:05:03.375,0:05:09.291

But, you know, some of the specific things  
that we've worked on, really, mayor, Mr.

0:05:09.291,0:05:12.291

Mayor, gets back to,

0:05:12.500,0:05:16.750

how do we help leverage  
the opportunities that we have around,

0:05:17.666,0:05:21.291

some of the natural industry strengths  
that we have in Ogden

0:05:21.291,0:05:24.875

and in northern Utah,  
particularly around aerospace, defense,

0:05:26.250,0:05:28.958

outdoor a little bit, manufacturing

0:05:28.958,0:05:31.958

more broadly, building on Weber State's,

0:05:33.333,0:05:36.250

strong programs in health professions.

0:05:36.250,0:05:40.791

You know, we have a great partnership  
to really try to expand,



0:05:42.375,0:05:44.541

access,

0:05:44.541,0:05:46.333

within Ogden City itself.

0:05:46.333,0:05:49.500

It's called the Ogden Civic Action

Network, where we partner

0:05:49.500,0:05:54.333

together with the city and other community

anchors, the hospitals, school district,

0:05:54.541,0:05:57.750

the health department,

to make sure that the

0:05:57.875,0:06:01.625

I think of it as pushing

both ends of the educational spectrum.

0:06:01.625,0:06:01.833

Right.

0:06:01.833,0:06:05.291

We want access on a very basic way  
for more folks

0:06:05.291,0:06:08.291

to be able to get in at the front end,  
but then we want to innovate

0:06:08.291,0:06:11.541

at the highest ends and be competitive  
with excellence so that,

0:06:13.083,0:06:15.208

industry knows that they can

0:06:15.208,0:06:19.000

know that they can come to Ogden  
and find a talented, prepared workforce,

0:06:20.541,0:06:22.791

that rivals any place in the country.

0:06:22.791,0:06:23.125

Right.

0:06:23.125,0:06:27.833

And, so we're really trying to

to hit on all cylinders there.

0:06:28.250,0:06:31.166

And, and in doing so, provide great

0:06:31.166,0:06:34.416

economic mobility

for the people in our community.

0:06:35.083,0:06:37.375

Because that's really what it's all about.

0:06:37.375,0:06:43.375

And, you know, we can transform

lives and generations, if we can provide

0:06:43.375,0:06:46.916

someone with the education and I just

I see it all the time.

0:06:46.958,0:06:49.333

It's not about the intelligence

somebody has.

0:06:49.333,0:06:52.125

It's about the opportunity

and the confidence.

0:06:52.125,0:06:55.125

And, that's where

I think it ties in a lot with what's,

0:06:56.708,0:06:59.208

with the Ogden Way vision.

0:06:59.208,0:07:02.500

And we can

if we can unleash that potential, then,

0:07:03.500,0:07:04.416

you know, sky's the limit.

0:07:04.416,0:07:07.500

You said opportunity right in confidence.

0:07:07.708,0:07:10.500

Yeah. And I think it has a lot to do

with confidence.

0:07:10.500,0:07:14.000

To take this, to bet on yourself

is what you're saying, right?

0:07:14.000,0:07:14.583

Exactly.

0:07:14.583,0:07:16.541

And then having the grit and the grind,

0:07:16.541,0:07:18.958

like the mentality of investment  
and accountability yourself

0:07:18.958,0:07:21.958

to go and like,  
take advantage of that opportunity

0:07:21.958,0:07:24.958

that what you're hinting at is critical.

0:07:25.500,0:07:28.500

We can create all the opportunities  
we want, right?

0:07:28.708,0:07:31.708

But if someone doesn't  
just take the opportunity

0:07:32.125,0:07:36.250

right and earn it right, like that's  
not something we can do for anybody.

0:07:36.666,0:07:38.791

You know,  
we can support them along the way.

0:07:38.791,0:07:39.625

Right?

0:07:39.625,0:07:40.416

And we do that.

0:07:40.416,0:07:42.833

Like Ogden is really  
good at that as a community.

0:07:43.833,0:07:46.833

But you have to like, own it. And,

0:07:47.000,0:07:48.291

and work for it.

0:07:48.291,0:07:48.625

Right.

0:07:48.625,0:07:51.958

And if,

if you have that inside you here the city,

0:07:51.958,0:07:54.958

you're the your limits are

there are no limits.

0:07:55.375,0:07:57.375

You know,

I mean the sky is just your limit.

0:07:57.375,0:08:00.375

It's unbelievable

how many opportunities we have here.

0:08:00.625,0:08:03.500

Sometimes it takes intentionality

for connecting people to it,

0:08:03.500,0:08:06.750

but it always takes that level

of confidence and that grit and that grind

0:08:06.958,0:08:08.500

and accountability to just do it.

0:08:08.500,0:08:11.375

Do it right. Yeah, absolutely.

0:08:11.375,0:08:12.833

Because the accessibility is there.

0:08:12.833,0:08:15.833

You like

you're an open enrollment university,

0:08:15.916,0:08:20.416

but that doesn't mean that you, don't  
have the excellence when you get there.

0:08:21.125,0:08:22.166

Right? Yeah.

0:08:22.166,0:08:24.291

And we take pride in ourselves,

0:08:24.291,0:08:27.708

because, you know, a lot of a lot  
of colleges and universities,



0:08:28.875,0:08:30.833

in the rankings and other things,

0:08:30.833,0:08:35.750

they, take pride in who they exclude,  
and that's how they define

0:08:35.750,0:08:39.708

their level of excellence is by is

0:08:39.708,0:08:42.833

we always look at the top 5%.

0:08:43.000,0:08:44.666

Right. We're trying to flip that model.

0:08:44.666,0:08:47.083

We want to let everybody in  
and then raise them up.

0:08:47.083,0:08:50.208

And that's really  
what higher education is, is

0:08:50.208,0:08:53.833

I think should be the true mission

of of excellence in higher education.

0:08:53.833,0:08:54.041

Yeah.

0:08:54.041,0:08:57.083

It's helping people reach their full potential, their greatest human potential.

0:08:57.083,0:08:58.291

Stepping into their own greatness.

0:08:58.291,0:09:00.125

That's those are the terms I use.

0:09:00.125,0:09:01.458

But yeah, you're right.

0:09:01.458,0:09:03.458

They do talk about the exclusivity.

0:09:03.458,0:09:03.958

Oh yeah.

0:09:03.958,0:09:08.125

And we're trying to take

the fully inclusive access to opportunity

0:09:08.666,0:09:13.333

and put those people in that 5%  
in terms of performance

0:09:13.333,0:09:17.166

and outcome and ability  
to, to drive impact in the world.

0:09:17.166,0:09:17.916

Right.

0:09:17.916,0:09:20.500

And we do we have incredible

0:09:20.500,0:09:24.250

world class impact  
through our graduates at university.

0:09:24.250,0:09:24.833

Right.

0:09:24.833,0:09:29.083

Well, and that's why I like to brag  
about our return on investment, the ROI.

0:09:29.083,0:09:33.375

There have been three studies in the last four years now that have ranked Weber

0:09:33.500,0:09:36.583

State at the top of the heap, within the state of Utah.

0:09:36.583,0:09:42.125

We're in the top 10% of 4500 institutions in the country in terms of the value

0:09:42.125,0:09:45.875

we provide for graduates earnings after their,

0:09:46.666,0:09:49.666

you know, ten, 20, 30, 40 years out of college.

0:09:50.083,0:09:53.166

And compared to how much they paid to get their education.

0:09:53.583,0:09:57.041

And to me, that's really  
the measure that we should be looking at

0:09:57.041,0:10:01.583

is that type of economic mobility  
and the return on investment

0:10:01.583,0:10:02.958

that a graduate gets.

0:10:02.958,0:10:08.000

And there's there's some things  
starting to happen nationally that will

0:10:08.000,0:10:11.958

recognize institutions like Weber State  
who are investing in that,

0:10:12.625,0:10:15.750

part of the higher ed

0:10:16.708,0:10:19.041

machinery, if you will.

0:10:19.041,0:10:22.458

And but we can only be successful of that

to the extent

0:10:22.458,0:10:24.583

that we have communities to support that.

0:10:24.583,0:10:28.708

And, partners in the community  
who help us get out the message

0:10:28.708,0:10:31.708

and, and reinforce that ability  
for folks to,

0:10:33.166,0:10:35.416

innovate and build upon themselves

0:10:35.416,0:10:38.916

and have the grit and the grind to right,  
to really make a difference.

0:10:39.291,0:10:41.083

Well, I think it's important  
you don't just have a community

0:10:41.083,0:10:44.458

that supports it,

but we actively align ourselves with it,

0:10:44.750,0:10:47.666

with your mission and you with ours.

0:10:47.666,0:10:50.000

And you brought up aerospace and defense.

0:10:50.000,0:10:53.708

And when you the term opportunity  
can be used in a couple different ways,

0:10:54.000,0:10:57.000

having access  
to an opportunity to level up, but also

0:10:57.125,0:10:59.458

there's an economic opportunity  
in an engine that we are

0:10:59.458,0:11:03.291

so well poised for and have been  
and are only just beginning to start

0:11:03.291,0:11:06.291

on our upward

trajectory of capitalizing on that

0:11:06.500,0:11:08.541

with our proximity to Hill Air Force base.

0:11:08.541,0:11:12.333

Being a big city with a lot of big city offerings, but also having a

0:11:12.500,0:11:13.583

university of your,

0:11:14.875,0:11:16.916

scale and scope and ability

0:11:16.916,0:11:21.083

like this makes us a world class place to leverage aerospace and defense, right?

0:11:21.500,0:11:22.333

Yeah, absolutely.

0:11:22.333,0:11:24.750

There is, there's so much happening.

0:11:24.750,0:11:27.083



And when I talk to,

0:11:27.083,0:11:31.708

the other presidents around the state,  
they just they don't even know, you know,

0:11:31.708,0:11:36.083

they come to Ogden and they start ducking  
when they hear the F-35 flying over.

0:11:36.083,0:11:39.583

And I mean, right.

We just we embrace that.

0:11:39.583,0:11:43.166

And that's such a small

I mean, the F-35 mission is big,

0:11:43.166,0:11:47.458

but it's such a small part, really,  
of what's happening at Hill, which is Utah

0:11:47.500,0:11:50.958

F-35,

the greatest fighting weapon in the world.

0:11:51.833,0:11:54.333

And it's a small piece  
of what happens at Hill Air Force Base.

0:11:54.333,0:11:56.125

That's how significant the mission is.

0:11:56.125,0:12:01.166

Yeah, in the world  
down to people don't know about this \$140

0:12:01.166,0:12:05.583

billion contract  
to generate the next generation

0:12:05.583,0:12:09.583

of intercontinental ballistic missiles  
to replace the Minuteman threes that's

0:12:10.125,0:12:12.791

being developed here in northern  
Utah right here.

0:12:12.791,0:12:13.250

Yeah.

0:12:13.250,0:12:16.791

And we have we've been able to stand up  
software developers.

0:12:16.791,0:12:19.791

And Weber State downtown, the facility  
that the city and the university developed

0:12:19.791,0:12:24.333

together in 2013 were not necessarily  
seeing what was in the future.

0:12:24.333,0:12:27.041

Just knowing that, you know,  
there was technology.

0:12:27.041,0:12:29.458

Let's plant this tree now. Yeah.

0:12:29.458,0:12:31.291

And then we were able  
to take advantage of that.

0:12:31.291,0:12:36.250

And that is mushrooming into all kinds  
of different, ventures that.

0:12:36.291,0:12:36.500

Yeah.

0:12:36.500,0:12:41.000

Now we're scrambling to create more,  
yeah, more space based on more space.

0:12:41.208,0:12:43.208

And they want it in downtown Ogden.

0:12:43.208,0:12:46.916

And, we hear that over and over again  
in the legislature supported that.

0:12:46.916,0:12:49.250

And we've worked real hard.

0:12:49.250,0:12:52.166

Hard, you know,  
and we're getting closer every day.

0:12:53.250,0:12:54.875

Well, it's a huge move, but

0:12:54.875,0:12:57.875

yeah, in partnership  
with the county to correct and,

0:12:58.791,0:13:04.250

that could really be transformative  
to bring high paying jobs to downtown

0:13:04.250,0:13:08.458

Ogden for software development,  
high level classification stuff.

0:13:08.666,0:13:11.083

Right. That we,

0:13:11.083,0:13:14.291

we'll have a lot of,  
I take a lot of pride in that,

0:13:14.291,0:13:15.875

not just for the economic opportunity.

0:13:15.875,0:13:19.291

It provides the opportunity  
for people to level up, but the,

0:13:20.333,0:13:21.708

the importance of that is.

0:13:21.708,0:13:24.000

And especially right now,  
we see this on the world

0:13:24.000,0:13:27.000

stage for our peace and prosperity  
as a country.

0:13:28.166,0:13:30.666

And the ability to support,

0:13:30.666,0:13:34.541

the warfighter  
and the whole nuclear deterrence mission.

0:13:34.541,0:13:35.416

Yeah.

0:13:35.416,0:13:36.250

I mean, we're doing it.

0:13:36.250,0:13:40.458

It's and and people talk about cool tech  
sector stuff

0:13:40.458,0:13:42.458

happening in other parts  
of the state, in the country.

0:13:42.458,0:13:43.750

And it is cool,

0:13:43.750,0:13:46.750

but it doesn't have that same impact  
that we're talking about right here.

0:13:46.791,0:13:48.750

Yeah,  
we're talking about world peace. Right.

0:13:48.750,0:13:52.375

Like the interesting thing is, you know,  
you talk about the military

0:13:52.375,0:13:57.333

is so mission driven, but the mission  
of that contract, I think I've been

0:13:57.333,0:14:00.625

told, is the biggest contract

in the history of the world, is

0:14:01.750,0:14:04.750

that the mission of world peace  
through deterrence?

0:14:05.125,0:14:08.250

Well, I've say  
and you've probably seen this too, right?

0:14:08.250,0:14:12.958

From the Sentinel program directors,  
the slide that they do that show,

0:14:13.250,0:14:17.208

the number of casualties lost to war since

0:14:18.166,0:14:21.208

nuclear weapons were invented in 1945.

0:14:21.208,0:14:24.500

And it just drops off right dramatically.

0:14:24.500,0:14:26.583

And it's scary, right?



0:14:26.583,0:14:29.583

But the fact that we have this,

0:14:29.750,0:14:32.416

mutually assured destruction, right.

0:14:32.416,0:14:33.750

Kind of.

0:14:33.750,0:14:35.750

Sorry if you don't want to go

here, Mr. Mayor, but I.

0:14:35.750,0:14:38.750

I get excited about it.

0:14:38.833,0:14:41.125

Because

0:14:41.125,0:14:43.166

it's good for humanity and.

0:14:43.166,0:14:45.416

What you're talking to in that context.

0:14:45.416,0:14:47.750

Because

0:14:47.750,0:14:49.625

what we see on

the TV is not good right now,

0:14:49.625,0:14:52.000

and there's a lot of conflict in the world

and so on.

0:14:52.000,0:14:56.166

But it could be so much worse if

there wasn't this deterrent element right?

0:14:56.166,0:14:58.666

That's clearly being discussed every day.

0:14:58.666,0:15:00.541

It's on everybody's mind. Right?

0:15:00.541,0:15:04.125

And the technology that we're relying on

today was developed 70 years ago.

0:15:04.375,0:15:04.916

Right.

0:15:04.916,0:15:07.916

And we've got to find a new ways to do  
the world knows it.

0:15:08.666,0:15:11.666

And so you can't take a second off  
from the software

0:15:11.666,0:15:15.000

development  
side of this to the hardware side of it.

0:15:16.666,0:15:17.541

I it's

0:15:17.541,0:15:21.291

really cool that northern Utah and Weber  
State and Ogden

0:15:21.291,0:15:24.291

City and Weber County are playing in  
both of these lanes right now.

0:15:24.375,0:15:27.208

And it's a we have to. Yeah.

0:15:27.208,0:15:30.500

For the benefit of the world's  
mission and world peace, the mission

0:15:30.500,0:15:33.500

of the United States of America  
and our military and our allies,

0:15:33.500,0:15:37.041

but also for the mission and the purpose  
and the fulfillment of our people.

0:15:37.208,0:15:38.666

Right. That's the opportunity.

0:15:38.666,0:15:42.666

And so you're talking about massive  
opportunities, massive sectors.

0:15:43.000,0:15:46.000

And it's it's  
my job and our job here at the city.

0:15:46.083,0:15:49.791

We go out and we work so hard to sell that

and to recruit for that

0:15:49.791,0:15:52.250

and to create those opportunities  
to bring them here.

0:15:52.250,0:15:53.583

But what's the number one thing  
they look at?

0:15:53.583,0:15:56.125

They look at our people and our workforce  
opportunity.

0:15:56.125,0:15:58.458

Who can they work with?

0:15:58.458,0:16:01.500

The people that are here to create  
and have access to the workforce.

0:16:01.500,0:16:03.041

They need to serve their mission. Right.

0:16:03.041,0:16:06.958

And if, if wherever they're looking to go

doesn't have that, they don't come right.

0:16:07.375,0:16:10.208

So they look at our numbers,  
they look at our demographics,

0:16:10.208,0:16:13.208

and then they immediately want to know  
about our program and our partners.

0:16:13.250,0:16:14.000

Right.

0:16:14.000,0:16:15.666

So I don't have to go and create all that.

0:16:15.666,0:16:17.333

I have that with you.

0:16:17.333,0:16:17.833

Right? Yeah.

0:16:17.833,0:16:19.041

And with and with Doctor

0:16:19.041,0:16:22.875

Taggart, Jim Taggart at the tech college  
that we just bring in our partner Mike.

0:16:22.916,0:16:24.125

Here you go.

0:16:24.125,0:16:27.083

And literally, I mean,  
and we've had this happen so many times

0:16:27.083,0:16:30.625

that literally like takes a text message  
and we all show up, right.

0:16:31.541,0:16:35.666

Like the past several hundred  
and people kind of I think it kind of

0:16:37.041,0:16:38.708

throws off,

0:16:38.708,0:16:43.291

the expectations of some of these outside  
groups have that we just

0:16:43.291,0:16:47.458

so easily come together and we're already  
talking about what we're working on.

0:16:47.458,0:16:49.541

Right? So it's,

0:16:49.541,0:16:52.125

that's a fun way to do it and  
actually gets back to a theme that I had.

0:16:52.125,0:16:54.208

And my prayer,  
I guess, with Murray that you met.

0:16:54.208,0:16:55.166

Yeah.

0:16:55.166,0:16:59.125

Like this notion  
of how our perfect size, like, you're

0:16:59.125,0:17:02.958

a large university, public university,  
but you're not so big that you're lost.

0:17:03.083,0:17:05.083



Your your professors know your name.

0:17:05.083,0:17:07.708

I can say that

because I graduate from there.

0:17:07.708,0:17:10.708

And like, we're a 90,000

0:17:11.000,0:17:14.708

people city, a little less

and that's the big city for this area.

0:17:14.708,0:17:17.666

We're not a big city in the big picture,  
right? Right.

0:17:17.666,0:17:19.416

We we carry ourselves like a big city.

0:17:19.416,0:17:21.458

We have big cities, resources,

0:17:22.541,0:17:24.541

we have big city goals and dreams  
in a lot of ways.

0:17:24.541,0:17:25.541

Right.

0:17:25.541,0:17:27.541

But we're small enough  
that I can text the president.

0:17:27.541,0:17:30.500

President shows up,  
but it's more than just the president.

0:17:30.500,0:17:32.791

It's president Mortenson,

0:17:32.791,0:17:36.750

president Taggart, superintendent  
Rasmussen and commissioner, you know.

0:17:36.750,0:17:38.375

And then we bring on the people in the

0:17:38.375,0:17:40.458

at least from Weber State  
who really know how to get stuff done.

0:17:40.458,0:17:43.458

That's right. God, I bring stuff. Yeah.

0:17:43.583,0:17:46.500

But that but I think that is an important  
part of our,

0:17:46.500,0:17:49.333

our pitch is that we show up,

0:17:49.333,0:17:52.791

that we have the partnerships and the  
and the fabric, the community fabric

0:17:53.541,0:17:56.250

that they're looking for  
and the accessibility to it all.

0:17:56.250,0:17:58.041

It's like it's so easy.

0:17:58.041,0:18:00.250

And that accessibility  
we have for each other

0:18:00.250,0:18:02.625

actually translate  
to the accessibility for them.

0:18:02.625,0:18:05.541

And then, oh yeah, when they get here,  
they have the same experience like, wow,

0:18:06.583,0:18:09.250

how easy was that to get in touch  
with the university in the,

0:18:09.250,0:18:10.375

you know, I mean,

0:18:10.375,0:18:13.375

because we were intentionally making these  
connections to create these pathways,

0:18:13.791,0:18:15.291

it's really impressive.

0:18:15.291,0:18:19.958

So but why would I go out and recruit  
all those different jobs, opportunities

0:18:19.958,0:18:23.875

if I didn't have a workforce  
and an education partner like you, right.

0:18:24.125,0:18:24.875

Yeah.

0:18:24.875,0:18:28.291

But I mean,  
there are things we can do better.

0:18:28.291,0:18:30.500

We know that,

0:18:30.500,0:18:33.541

that there are still people  
who are, you know,

0:18:33.541,0:18:35.833

wanting to access their education  
or the university

0:18:35.833,0:18:39.250

and they don't quite know how to do it,  
or they they come up to campus,

0:18:39.250,0:18:42.250

they can't quite navigate our systems or,

0:18:42.750,0:18:45.208

they hear on the news

that college is too expensive,

0:18:45.208,0:18:46.500

so they don't realize all the

0:18:46.500,0:18:49.791

opportunities that we have to make it

affordable and accessible.

0:18:50.250,0:18:54.166

And so we have to, like,

find ways to get around all those barriers

0:18:54.166,0:18:58.625

so that we can deliver on our side of this

for the for the prepared workforce.

0:18:58.625,0:19:02.625

There's there's a lot of people

in Ogden City and Weber County

0:19:02.625,0:19:04.791

who started their degree  
and they haven't finished

0:19:04.791,0:19:08.875

and they've sunk their time and money into  
that and haven't gotten the benefit yet.

0:19:08.875,0:19:09.750

So we're trying to figure out

0:19:09.750,0:19:13.875

how to reach back out to those folks  
and provide bridges for them to,

0:19:15.041,0:19:15.833

wrap up their

0:19:15.833,0:19:18.833

education,  
get the benefit of their degree.

0:19:19.083,0:19:22.083

And that's associate bachelor's, master's,

0:19:22.541,0:19:26.708

level level at the doctor level, in health

professions and nursing.

0:19:26.708,0:19:29.333

But but still,

we know we know that we can do better

0:19:29.333,0:19:33.083

and appreciate the input that we get from  
you and other community partners on

0:19:33.083,0:19:33.875

how to make that happen.

0:19:33.875,0:19:36.375

Well, some people say

0:19:36.375,0:19:39.375

only a little bit on the doctorate  
and it's like, no, that's

0:19:39.833,0:19:42.833

that's

part of the mission of the university.

0:19:43.041,0:19:46.500

But the broad mission



is the accessibility, affordability.

0:19:47.041,0:19:50.125

It's not just that it's affordable  
and that there's ways to make affordable.

0:19:50.125,0:19:51.666

It starts affordable,

0:19:51.666,0:19:53.125

it's accessible, it's affordable,

0:19:53.125,0:19:54.833

and there are ways to make it  
even more affordable.

0:19:54.833,0:19:56.333

Right? Right.

0:19:56.333,0:19:58.583

And like so

0:19:58.583,0:20:01.583

all the work you explain,  
we have our own things to

0:20:01.708,0:20:03.208

how do I make it easy  
to get a business license?

0:20:03.208,0:20:06.250

How do I make it easy to get inspected  
and get your certificate of occupancy?

0:20:06.250,0:20:09.583

How do I make it easy for land  
use and planning perspective?

0:20:10.208,0:20:11.166

You know, I mean, right?

0:20:11.166,0:20:12.375

How do I set the vision to make sure

0:20:12.375,0:20:15.375

all the mechanisms are in place  
so that when you do come here, it's easy

0:20:15.500,0:20:16.583

to do business here?

0:20:16.583,0:20:18.041

That's a big challenge of mine. Right.

0:20:19.041,0:20:22.083

You've got the same like when  
you do choose to become educated here.

0:20:22.083,0:20:22.958

How do I make that easy

0:20:22.958,0:20:26.583

just to find us to get plugged in  
and then to get down your pathway.

0:20:27.333,0:20:29.666

Right. We were at a,

0:20:29.666,0:20:33.875

kind of a convening of schools  
that are like Weber State, dual mission

0:20:33.875,0:20:36.875

institutions, we call that have both  
that community college for your role.

0:20:37.250,0:20:40.208

And, there's a person from the Gates

Foundation

0:20:40.208,0:20:43.500

there, and they, they said,  
summed it up really nice for us.

0:20:43.500,0:20:47.333

They said, you know, education,  
the challenge of education should be

0:20:47.750,0:20:51.416

mastering your academic discipline  
or your training, whatever that is.

0:20:51.416,0:20:56.000

It should not be navigating the university  
or college process right.

0:20:56.000,0:20:58.583

And so that like really sunk in.

0:20:58.583,0:21:01.000

And and so we've been working hard,

0:21:02.583,0:21:05.208

you know, streamlining those pathways

for students.

0:21:05.208,0:21:05.458

Right?

0:21:05.458,0:21:08.458

It's like we want

I mean, I have the exact same mindset

0:21:09.125,0:21:11.666

if you're going to put energy

into building a business and building

0:21:11.666,0:21:14.666

success, I don't want you putting

that energy into overcoming us.

0:21:14.958,0:21:15.250

Right.

0:21:15.250,0:21:17.916

And and we're

we've made a lot of improvements that way.

0:21:17.916,0:21:19.916

More work to do. Right.

0:21:19.916,0:21:23.750

But also I'm never going  
to stop improving in that way.

0:21:23.750,0:21:26.250

We're always going to be driving  
toward that.

0:21:26.250,0:21:29.750

That mindset of continual growth and  
improvement should never leave any of us.

0:21:29.750,0:21:30.500

Right.

0:21:30.500,0:21:33.500

But we need that same mindset  
at the district, which we do have

0:21:33.833,0:21:35.958

that same mindset at the tech college,  
which we do have.

0:21:35.958,0:21:36.625

Yeah.

0:21:36.625,0:21:39.625

And with our

0:21:39.833,0:21:43.083

with our goals and our vision  
aligned with our opportunities

0:21:43.083,0:21:44.708

that we can leverage  
as a city and a community,

0:21:45.750,0:21:48.750

one with  
our anchor education institutions.

0:21:49.208,0:21:53.125

We have tremendous opportunity  
and economic future.

0:21:53.250,0:21:54.000

Right? Yeah.

0:21:54.000,0:21:56.250

Oh, yeah.

Absolutely. It's very exciting. Yeah.

0:21:56.250,0:21:59.333

And the thing I love about what you do  
is you like, you want to help our people

0:21:59.333,0:22:03.125

that are here, like, people are going to  
come here because they follow opportunity.

0:22:03.416,0:22:04.875

That's going to happen.

0:22:04.875,0:22:07.875

But the more we can build who we have  
and what we have too,

0:22:08.083,0:22:11.875

the more we hold on to  
who we are and step into our greatness.

0:22:12.000,0:22:12.833

Right?

0:22:12.833,0:22:15.291

That's an  
that's a very intentional desire for me.



0:22:15.291,0:22:16.666

For me.

0:22:16.666,0:22:17.666

I won't do it in that way.

0:22:17.666,0:22:20.541

And we're trying to,

0:22:20.541,0:22:24.458

you know, sometimes our students  
who are here locally, they want to,

0:22:25.250,0:22:27.458

go off to another institution

0:22:27.458,0:22:32.125

and have a, a different type  
of college experience, and that's great.

0:22:32.750,0:22:34.375

But we're trying to up our game

0:22:34.375,0:22:37.833

so that we're more appealing

to, those students so they can stay here.

0:22:38.125,0:22:42.041

A lot of times those students go away  
and they realize it wasn't everything

0:22:42.041,0:22:44.958

they had hoped it might be.

And so we welcome them with open arms.

0:22:44.958,0:22:46.708

Well,

I think that's an important factor, right?

0:22:46.708,0:22:49.541

Yeah,

that was my mindset when I came here.

0:22:49.541,0:22:52.375

I came here from Arizona

to go to school for what we were saying.

0:22:52.375,0:22:53.166

Right.

0:22:53.166,0:22:55.458

My mindset was,  
I want to experience the world

0:22:55.458,0:22:58.250

because I didn't ever hardly at all  
travel as a kid.

0:22:58.250,0:23:00.583

We were not able to.  
We weren't. We don't have the means.

0:23:01.583,0:23:03.500

Like, I,

0:23:03.500,0:23:05.875

I'd go to like 2 or 3 places  
outside of my city.

0:23:05.875,0:23:07.458

And that was about it.

0:23:07.458,0:23:08.750

And I was really curious.

0:23:08.750,0:23:09.458

I wanted to grow.

0:23:09.458,0:23:12.625

I want to see and experience,  
you know, and boy, am I glad I did.

0:23:13.041,0:23:14.625

Right? Right.

0:23:14.625,0:23:17.125

Once I came here, this was where I was  
supposed to be, is where I wanted to be.

0:23:17.125,0:23:19.500

And I never went back.

0:23:19.500,0:23:23.708

And I don't think that's quite the dynamic  
for people that leave here.

0:23:23.708,0:23:24.875

They they come back.

0:23:24.875,0:23:25.541

Yeah.

0:23:25.541,0:23:28.541

Or people that leave and come here  
never go back.

0:23:29.208,0:23:29.541

Yeah.

0:23:29.541,0:23:32.541

We saw that with folks at Weber State  
all the time.

0:23:32.666,0:23:35.375

There's a lot of people who said,  
you know, I came here,

0:23:35.375,0:23:38.916

I thought I'd be here 3 to 5 years,  
and now it's been 30 or 40 or.

0:23:39.000,0:23:40.625

Yeah, it's sticky here. It right.

0:23:40.625,0:23:42.458

Look at all my teammates. I'm still like,

0:23:43.708,0:23:46.916

I got 3 or 4 dentists that were teammates

like that I can choose from.

0:23:46.916,0:23:48.958

And my daughter had her

0:23:48.958,0:23:51.750

front teeth knocked out in softball.

0:23:51.750,0:23:55.583

I called Cam Coyle,  
former tight end and NFL tight end.

0:23:55.583,0:23:58.583

I played with, he was up in the mountains,  
so I called Ben Hale.

0:23:59.708,0:24:01.750

Right.

0:24:01.750,0:24:03.625

Ben answered,  
and he's like well shove them back in.

0:24:03.625,0:24:06.625

So I did, and then,

0:24:07.208,0:24:10.333

we got that done,  
took her to the to the ER.

0:24:10.333,0:24:12.791

And then Cam called on the on his way down  
the mountain.

0:24:12.791,0:24:14.750

He's like, bring her on in.  
And then he's got it bridged up.

0:24:14.750,0:24:19.500

So anyway, that's a small story,  
but that's the example of what Ogden does.

0:24:19.500,0:24:22.375

It brings people  
from all all over the place.

0:24:22.375,0:24:25.208

And, we build our lives  
and our success here

0:24:25.208,0:24:28.208

Weber State is a powerful place

in that way, right?

0:24:28.916,0:24:31.916

We we strive to be every day special.

0:24:32.041,0:24:32.666

Yeah.

0:24:32.666,0:24:35.666

And if you if you go to school there,  
you feel that way.

0:24:35.666,0:24:36.833

That's what brought me here.

0:24:36.833,0:24:39.541

Like I felt it and I was like,  
I don't know what it is, mom.

0:24:39.541,0:24:41.458

This is where I want to be.  
I'm sorry. I'm supposed to be.

0:24:41.458,0:24:43.708

I felt it at Weber State  
and I felt it in Ogden.



0:24:43.708,0:24:44.666

So different, you know? Yeah.

0:24:45.791,0:24:48.083

But I always keep it in mind when we're talking about bringing companies here.

0:24:48.083,0:24:51.166

And they come in visit to do, like, site selection, visit

0:24:52.541,0:24:55.541

and then remember, how do they feel when they're here.

0:24:55.708,0:24:56.666

Right.

0:24:56.666,0:24:59.666

It's easy to take for granted when you've been a part of it for so long.

0:24:59.875,0:25:00.208

Yeah.

0:25:00.208,0:25:01.583

It's you know,

0:25:01.583,0:25:05.541

so when we talk about creating  
these pathways through the university,

0:25:06.291,0:25:09.083

what are some of the degree programs  
that you guys focus on

0:25:09.083,0:25:12.083

to align with our workforce opportunities?

0:25:12.208,0:25:13.625

Right.

0:25:13.625,0:25:16.708

So, you know,  
our biggest programs are in health

0:25:16.708,0:25:19.833

professions nursing,  
biggest nursing program in the state.

0:25:19.916,0:25:23.833

And, they've done a lot to innovate.

0:25:24.000,0:25:28.375

I mean, there's serious innovation  
happening there to admit more students.

0:25:28.458,0:25:33.291

And, we, now admit 492 students

0:25:33.291,0:25:37.666

every year into different  
branches of our nursing program.

0:25:37.666,0:25:41.666

We teach at six different sites  
and we have a great partnership with Ogden

0:25:41.666,0:25:44.958

Weber Tech College, where  
you can start there and finish your LPN.

0:25:44.958,0:25:46.708

And if you make it through that program

0:25:46.708,0:25:50.666

and next week you come back around

and you're in Weber State's associate

0:25:50.666,0:25:55.166

degree, registered nurse program  
and can just continue on that pathway.

0:25:56.458,0:25:59.708

But we're really training,

0:25:59.750,0:26:04.208

trying to maintain that leadership role in  
and health professions across the state.

0:26:04.208,0:26:05.125

It's not just nursing.

0:26:05.125,0:26:10.125

It's, radiological sciences,  
medical sciences, emergency health care,

0:26:10.125,0:26:12.250

paramedics,

0:26:12.250,0:26:15.958

and respiratory therapy, dental hygiene,  
our new PA program

0:26:15.958,0:26:20.541

that is put out, our first cohort  
of graduates, this last year.

0:26:20.541,0:26:23.541

And then we have the

0:26:23.916,0:26:27.291

nurse practitioner program, the doctorate,  
and that that's doing well.

0:26:27.541,0:26:30.583

Our fastest growing programs,  
however, are in engineering,

0:26:30.625,0:26:35.041

computer science, and that ties directly  
back to aerospace and defense here.

0:26:35.041,0:26:38.958

And, I was just meeting  
with General Bell earlier this week,

0:26:39.291,0:26:43.708

our commander of the Ogden Air Logistics

Complex and, with some of his staff.

0:26:43.708,0:26:48.166

And they love that Weber State graduates  
because our engineering graduates

0:26:48.166,0:26:52.041

and computer science  
graduates are more hands on than, students

0:26:52.041,0:26:53.541

who are coming out of research  
universities,

0:26:53.541,0:26:57.916

who get a little more theory  
and a little bit less practice, practice.

0:26:58.000,0:27:01.666

And, they love our graduates,  
and they're just asking for more

0:27:01.791,0:27:04.041

all the time and all the time.

0:27:04.041,0:27:07.625

And how can we  
how can we set up more pipelines to help,

0:27:08.166,0:27:09.833

you know, not just this

0:27:09.833,0:27:13.250

traditional college students,  
but maybe people who are out working now

0:27:13.250,0:27:18.208

who want to upskill or retool a little bit  
and get that or change directions.

0:27:18.375,0:27:18.875

Yeah.

0:27:18.875,0:27:23.125

And so, we're always  
in those conversations, and that's led

0:27:23.125,0:27:26.125

to a lot of growth in that area  
in the legislature supported that.

0:27:26.125,0:27:31.166

And, and that's,  
really important to other areas.

0:27:31.166,0:27:34.166

I just want to talk about really quickly

0:27:34.208,0:27:37.625

a program that we started,  
not all that long ago.

0:27:38.083,0:27:40.166

But it has a tremendous community need.

0:27:40.166,0:27:44.458

I almost hear as much about need for it  
as I do for engineers.

0:27:44.458,0:27:47.041

Is our masters of social work.

0:27:47.041,0:27:49.500

The mental health needs of our community

0:27:49.500,0:27:53.333

folks are real, and there are just  
not enough practitioners,



0:27:54.458,0:27:55.458

who are out there.

0:27:55.458,0:27:59.666

And so we've made a big investment  
in that area with legislative support.

0:27:59.666,0:28:02.833

And that program is growing rapidly  
and doing really well.

0:28:03.291,0:28:04.333

They're doing a great job.

0:28:04.333,0:28:06.416

And that's an important area of need.

0:28:06.416,0:28:10.916

And then, we know I mean,  
this doesn't work at all if we're not,

0:28:12.416,0:28:15.083

partnering well with,

0:28:15.083,0:28:18.083

school district K12 partners to put out  
great teachers

0:28:18.333,0:28:21.333

and, it's a hard sell.

0:28:21.916,0:28:23.250

It's hard to be a teacher.

0:28:23.250,0:28:24.958

It's a really hard times, a hard job.

0:28:24.958,0:28:27.583

And and your pay is increased.

0:28:27.583,0:28:29.250

There's been some attention  
devoted to that.

0:28:29.250,0:28:32.125

But just with,

0:28:32.125,0:28:35.208

political dynamics that teachers  
have to encounter in the classroom

0:28:35.208,0:28:38.875

and parental dynamic  
sometimes, and mental health

0:28:38.875,0:28:41.875

issues and still, you know,

0:28:43.166,0:28:45.000

seeing young people

0:28:45.000,0:28:48.208

who still have learning loss  
because of what transpired during Covid.

0:28:48.333,0:28:48.958

Yeah.

0:28:48.958,0:28:51.750

It's it's a really challenging job  
to be a teacher right now.

0:28:51.750,0:28:53.166

But we're going to open up,

0:28:54.208,0:28:57.333

the state's most modern, technologically

advanced,

0:28:57.958,0:29:01.166

teacher education facility, this fall

0:29:01.708,0:29:06.458

is, the renovated McKay education building  
comes online, and we're really invested

0:29:06.458,0:29:09.666

in making sure that, teachers  
that come out of Weber State

0:29:09.666,0:29:13.000

are here to, to help  
be that backbone of our community.

0:29:13.000,0:29:13.333

Yeah.

0:29:13.333,0:29:13.625

I mean,

0:29:13.625,0:29:17.458

that was such a big part of the mission,  
even when I was there 25, 30 years ago,

0:29:18.458,0:29:21.083

the education department was always

0:29:21.083,0:29:24.250

turning out so many good teachers, right?

0:29:24.625,0:29:24.875

Yeah.

0:29:24.875,0:29:29.250

But the need and then what it takes to be  
a teacher sure changed over time.

0:29:29.250,0:29:30.250

And it

0:29:30.250,0:29:31.666

I would say that being a teacher

0:29:31.666,0:29:34.375

and being a police officer,  
are the two hardest jobs right now.

0:29:34.375,0:29:37.041

Oh, yeah,

we just asked so much of those two roles

0:29:37.041,0:29:41.666

to help, like raise and respond  
to our kids and respond to our, our needs.

0:29:41.958,0:29:43.916

You know, like, okay,

0:29:43.916,0:29:47.000

I don't know how anybody does it,  
but I'm sure thankful they do.

0:29:47.375,0:29:48.000

Right?

0:29:48.000,0:29:48.375

Right.

0:29:48.375,0:29:51.416

It's it's unbelievable  
the situations they find themselves in.

0:29:51.833,0:29:52.041

Yeah.

0:29:52.041,0:29:54.750

They keep showing up  
and they keep proving up.

0:29:54.750,0:29:56.583

Yeah. It's amazing.

0:29:56.583,0:29:56.791

Yeah.

0:29:56.791,0:29:59.875

The rock rockstars and,  
unsung heroes 100%.

0:29:59.875,0:30:02.875

And it's a testament to the  
the grit and the grinding in,

0:30:03.375,0:30:04.500

that people have within them.

0:30:04.500,0:30:06.500

It's really amazing. Those are

0:30:07.500,0:30:08.291

big moves that

0:30:08.291,0:30:11.291

the university is making right.

0:30:11.333,0:30:14.333

On the aerospace and the the defense.

0:30:14.958,0:30:18.208

I mean,

when we, when you and I unpack the,

0:30:19.666,0:30:22.291

the opportunities

and the needs you, inevitably,

0:30:22.291,0:30:25.291

if we backtrack, we look at

where are the pinch points.

0:30:25.375,0:30:28.708

And essentially what you're saying is,

how do we get more and more people

0:30:28.708,0:30:30.916

into the program as possible,



0:30:30.916,0:30:33.791

not just because you're looking  
for revenue, you're looking for graduates.

0:30:33.791,0:30:37.500

You're looking for skilled  
workforce of workers, because the mission

0:30:37.500,0:30:41.625

of the United States of the world  
can match in the beginning, needs you to

0:30:42.708,0:30:44.666

feed as many as you guys can,  
take as many as you can.

0:30:44.666,0:30:45.708

Right? Right.

0:30:45.708,0:30:47.458

Because that's  
what the workforce is looking for.

0:30:47.458,0:30:49.041

Yeah. General Bell as example.

0:30:49.041,0:30:49.291

Yeah.

0:30:49.291,0:30:53.083

We and we really we are not at the point  
where we're turning people

0:30:53.083,0:30:54.083

away by any means.

0:30:56.125,0:30:57.541

What what

0:30:57.541,0:31:01.000

limits the pipeline of people  
into that program is the preparation,

0:31:01.000,0:31:04.000

the and the confidence, again,  
that they have in math.

0:31:05.291,0:31:08.000

And they think it's too hard

0:31:08.000,0:31:11.000

and they, they don't see,

0:31:11.750,0:31:12.958

that they can do that.

0:31:12.958,0:31:16.208

But we have great resources  
and great folks to work with them.

0:31:16.208,0:31:20.416

We I mean, and it starts in junior high  
and in high school.

0:31:20.416,0:31:23.958

And that's why our partnerships  
with the school district are so important.

0:31:24.458,0:31:28.041

But, there are so many opportunities  
there.

0:31:28.041,0:31:30.833

And it's it's,

0:31:30.833,0:31:33.291

I don't know if this is a fair comparison,  
but it's what I tell myself,

0:31:33.291,0:31:35.583

and it keeps me motivated. It's like this.

0:31:35.583,0:31:39.125

This is big for northern Utah when the transcontinental railroad was being built.

0:31:39.125,0:31:40.208

Yeah.

And if we don't

0:31:40.208,0:31:43.625

capitalize on this opportunity,  
then shame on us as leaders right now

0:31:43.958,0:31:47.541

that we need to take that mindset  
to doing everything we can and,

0:31:48.166,0:31:51.375

leveraging,  
this opportunity for our people

0:31:51.375,0:31:55.583

and our economy, international defense

around aerospace and defense right now.

0:31:55.583,0:32:01.666

And, if we do, we can have a really bright  
future for a lot of folks

0:32:01.708,0:32:05.833

right now, I view it similarly in terms  
of magnitude, an impact, the

0:32:06.875,0:32:07.500

if we

0:32:07.500,0:32:10.500

the this is a generational moment in time,

0:32:10.583,0:32:13.583

and that time doesn't  
last forever to strike.

0:32:13.583,0:32:15.375

Well that our job you know, I mean right.

0:32:15.375,0:32:19.791

But we have all the parts and pieces  
in place, mostly more work to do.

0:32:20.708,0:32:23.250

But this is a big deal.

0:32:23.250,0:32:26.916

And if people put themselves  
into these opportunities and,

0:32:27.291,0:32:30.291

and do the work,  
this is a place to find success.

0:32:30.833,0:32:33.375

Oh yeah, oh yeah. And it's,

0:32:33.375,0:32:35.708

if you will, just if you

0:32:35.708,0:32:39.625

if you put yourself in that stream,  
you'll just fall into it.

0:32:39.625,0:32:42.583

There's no lack of opportunity right.

0:32:42.583,0:32:45.625

And places in need like big time need.

0:32:46.125,0:32:46.791

Right. Yeah.

0:32:46.791,0:32:49.958

You'll never go hungry a day in your life.

0:32:49.958,0:32:53.041

You just have to just just get in,

0:32:53.041,0:32:57.000

get in the in the queue

and will help take you there.

0:32:57.000,0:33:01.000

And then you go on and beyond.

0:33:01.000,0:33:06.208

Places where our students even imagine,

see themselves right now.

0:33:06.208,0:33:07.333

And that's what's so cool.

0:33:07.333,0:33:11.666

When you talk to alumni  
who've kind of maybe started that

0:33:11.666,0:33:12.916

a little bit humbly and didn't

0:33:12.916,0:33:18.583

realize or didn't have all that confidence  
and then found it, and it's like boom,

0:33:18.583,0:33:22.375

boom,  
big boom bust or mind being blown away.

0:33:24.125,0:33:24.750

That's right.

0:33:24.750,0:33:29.125

And, so, you know, and that's where I,  
you know,

0:33:30.750,0:33:33.750

get excited about the work  
that I get to do.

0:33:33.750,0:33:36.791



I do, you know, for anybody  
that's listening,

0:33:36.791,0:33:39.791

that's getting excited as well, hopefully  
they're feeling they're excitement.

0:33:40.041,0:33:40.583

That's right.

0:33:40.583,0:33:41.708

I mean, this stuff really does.

0:33:41.708,0:33:45.333

When you get back to my energy  
that never ends, this stuff energizes me.

0:33:45.333,0:33:46.000

It motivates me.

0:33:46.000,0:33:47.375

It totally inspires me.

0:33:47.375,0:33:49.291

I can't stop, I don't want to.

0:33:49.291,0:33:50.250

I love it too much.

0:33:50.250,0:33:52.083

Yeah, there's too much opportunity.

0:33:52.083,0:33:52.708

We can't stop.

0:33:52.708,0:33:56.291

But so anybody that's listening,  
that's getting excited with us,

0:33:57.500,0:33:59.250

this isn't the only way.

0:33:59.250,0:34:02.000

And that's why we're that's why we have  
President Taggart on another episode.

0:34:02.000,0:34:04.916

So that's why we have, superintendent

0:34:04.916,0:34:07.916

Rasmussen too

because the pathway starts early.

0:34:08.250,0:34:11.291

But it doesn't always have to go through  
university either.

0:34:11.500,0:34:13.000

You know there's other pathways

0:34:13.958,0:34:14.333

and it's

0:34:14.333,0:34:18.500

so diverse and opportunity driven  
that anybody can choose a pathway.

0:34:18.500,0:34:19.333

You know well.

0:34:19.333,0:34:25.041

And we're working really hard  
to make sure that across our institutions

0:34:25.666,0:34:28.583

from the school district  
to the tech college

0:34:28.583,0:34:31.791

to the university, all of those pathways  
kind of merge, right?

0:34:31.791,0:34:34.291

Right.

And you can be on any one at one point.

0:34:34.291,0:34:37.291

And just how it transition over  
really seamlessly, whether it's,

0:34:37.833,0:34:40.041

concurrent enrollment  
that students can do in high school

0:34:40.041,0:34:44.333

for \$5 a credit hour, take advantage  
of every opportunity you get.

0:34:44.375,0:34:47.333

You can graduate high school  
with an associates

0:34:47.333,0:34:50.625

degree

with or all of the credits, right, for \$5.

0:34:50.625,0:34:53.625

a credit hour,

best deal on the planet, on the planet.

0:34:54.125,0:34:57.333

The way the tech college and and school

0:34:57.333,0:35:01.250

districts through O-Tech high are working  
together is is really awesome.

0:35:01.291,0:35:03.416

Literally co-located. Yes.

0:35:03.416,0:35:08.250

And, that's

that's a great pathway where, you know,

0:35:09.625,0:35:10.041

giving

0:35:10.041,0:35:14.208

credit, you know, you don't have to go

to, well-defined

0:35:14.208,0:35:17.250

articulation agreement

like we used to make students do.

0:35:18.625,0:35:22.166

We'll give you credit at Weber State

for the tech college, certificate

0:35:22.166,0:35:25.583

that you've completed up to 21 credits now

and maybe more in the future.

0:35:26.625,0:35:29.625

So if you've got your cosmetology degree

from the tech college,

0:35:29.875,0:35:32.458

it used to be you would have to start over

to come to Weber State.

0:35:32.458,0:35:35.750

But now we'll give you credit for that,

and you can come to us and get your,

0:35:36.291,0:35:39.375

entrepreneurship certificate

and really help you,

0:35:40.166,0:35:42.833

raise your knowhow of of how

0:35:42.833,0:35:46.625

to run the business side of the skill

that you've acquired.

0:35:46.625,0:35:50.208

So, we're we're trying to blend

all those two pathways.

0:35:50.750,0:35:53.625

Last fall, we admitted

0:35:53.625,0:35:58.333

10,000 high school seniors from Weber,

Davis and Morgan counties,

0:35:58.750,0:36:02.291

to Weber State, Ogden Weber

Tech and Davis Tech without them

0:36:02.291,0:36:06.375

filling out an application  
fee or form or paying an application fee,

0:36:06.833,0:36:09.750

you wouldn't think that a \$30 application  
fee would be a deterrent.

0:36:09.750,0:36:11.833

But it was for a lot of our students.

0:36:11.833,0:36:15.625

And so we just removed that barrier  
and we work together to do it.

0:36:15.625,0:36:17.583

And I said,  
we said, we don't care where you go.

0:36:17.583,0:36:19.833

Come to Ogden Weber, come to Weber State.

0:36:19.833,0:36:20.750

Go to Davis Tech.

0:36:21.958,0:36:24.750

You can get anywhere from starting at any



one of those places.

0:36:24.750,0:36:26.416

That's important. What you just said.

0:36:26.416,0:36:28.791

I don't care which which path you choose.

0:36:28.791,0:36:31.250

Meaning? I don't care which one you go to.

0:36:31.250,0:36:34.250

And in my experience,  
there is no competition between

0:36:34.625,0:36:37.625

you and Luke and,

0:36:38.041,0:36:38.833

President Taggart.

0:36:38.833,0:36:40.250

It's not a competition, right?

0:36:40.250,0:36:41.916

It's literally a collaboration.

0:36:41.916,0:36:43.416

It's complementary. It's not competitive.

0:36:43.416,0:36:45.625

I think historically there has been.

0:36:45.625,0:36:49.083

I know, but we've, And

0:36:50.125,0:36:53.000

It's it just it doesn't make sense.

0:36:53.000,0:36:55.083

Right?

We're stronger when we work together.

0:36:55.083,0:36:56.041

We absolutely are.

0:36:56.041,0:36:59.041

And, it benefits all of us,  
and it benefits students,

0:36:59.041,0:37:01.875

and it benefits our communities

and our industry partners.

0:37:01.875,0:37:04.583

So we just we try not to react.

0:37:04.583,0:37:08.000

And that same mindset translates  
both Luke and I in particular, because,

0:37:09.083,0:37:09.541

the school

0:37:09.541,0:37:12.958

district in the city  
share the same boundaries completely,

0:37:13.375,0:37:17.166

which means we share and we serve the same  
families, kids, stakeholders.

0:37:17.166,0:37:20.166

We have the same constituency completely,

0:37:20.166,0:37:23.250

which means that the same people  
will pay taxes to them and to to us.

0:37:23.875,0:37:26.583

And we have got to be  
the kind of organizations

0:37:26.583,0:37:28.916

and the kind of leaders  
that don't tax people twice

0:37:28.916,0:37:31.041

and then make them do the same thing  
twice. Right?

0:37:31.041,0:37:35.125

We are actively looking for where  
those opportunities for collaboration are.

0:37:35.500,0:37:36.916

So that one, we're not redundant,

0:37:36.916,0:37:39.916

but we've got to be synergistic  
in our investments, in our actions

0:37:40.041,0:37:43.708

so that we can further leverage

tax dollars from our community.

0:37:43.708,0:37:46.583

We can't do that to our people,  
right? Otherwise. Right.

0:37:46.583,0:37:49.875

But then it's just this mentality of  
abundance that we have here,

0:37:51.166,0:37:52.791

that people that come to visit Ogden

0:37:52.791,0:37:56.375

and also Utah is you see here,  
this is not a mindset of scarcity.

0:37:56.666,0:37:58.833

It's not about like  
coming to the university.

0:37:58.833,0:38:01.375

You don't want to go  
there. It's not about that.

0:38:01.375,0:38:03.500

It's like if you want to come here,  
we want you here.

0:38:03.500,0:38:05.583

And if you want to go there,  
we want to support you and going there.

0:38:05.583,0:38:08.416

And if you change your mind,  
we're always here for you,

0:38:08.416,0:38:09.291

right? Yeah.

0:38:09.291,0:38:11.083

And it reflects the abundance mindset

0:38:11.083,0:38:14.333

we have, the culture that we have here  
in Utah and and in Ogden.

0:38:15.000,0:38:18.000

It also reflects the amount of opportunity  
that's out there.

0:38:18.000,0:38:19.875

There's no limit.

0:38:19.875,0:38:22.166

There's just a limit of of people  
making it

0:38:22.166,0:38:25.166

through the pipelines  
to, to jump into these opportunities.

0:38:25.166,0:38:27.916

Well, and Jim  
Taggart is a great advocate for that.

0:38:27.916,0:38:29.500

And he's always I mean,

0:38:30.583,0:38:34.500

he pushes and just ever so strategic ways.

0:38:34.500,0:38:34.708

Right.

0:38:34.708,0:38:38.541

To help the university baker  
break out of our traditional

0:38:38.541,0:38:42.750

ivory tower model

a little bit more and just be more,

0:38:46.875,0:38:48.833

more easily integrated with each other.

0:38:48.833,0:38:50.958

And it's just like,

well, yeah, Jim, that's a great point.

0:38:50.958,0:38:54.041

Why why haven't we done that

for the last 50 years?

0:38:54.041,0:38:55.791

But we can start doing it now. Yeah.

0:38:55.791,0:38:58.791

Well, in your defense too,

and Jim would say the same thing you guys,

0:38:59.250,0:39:01.083

you don't have an ivory tower mentality.



0:39:01.083,0:39:04.708

You absolutely have that excellence  
in academic ability.

0:39:05.500,0:39:08.500

But you don't have that ivory tower  
exclusivity mentality.

0:39:08.875,0:39:11.875

But we have we do have our traditions  
and the way we've always done things.

0:39:11.875,0:39:12.750

Yeah. Right.

0:39:12.750,0:39:13.166

Yeah.

0:39:13.166,0:39:16.041

Again, some of that's built into higher  
in general.

0:39:16.041,0:39:16.541

Right.

0:39:16.541,0:39:19.583

And it's less of a critique about Weber  
as is it is about a higher ed.

0:39:20.250,0:39:24.125

But Weber State has been  
I don't know that we could ever ask

0:39:24.125,0:39:27.333

for a better partner in higher ed,  
right than you.

0:39:27.333,0:39:29.125

And Weber state university.

0:39:29.125,0:39:32.000

I wouldn't pick another one or another  
president, hope you're not going anywhere.

0:39:32.000,0:39:34.583

So I just got here. So don't go.

0:39:34.583,0:39:35.166

Don't go far.

0:39:37.708,0:39:39.208

I love just, you know, where I live.

0:39:39.208,0:39:41.125

So I have, you know,  
practically neighbors.

0:39:41.125,0:39:44.125

I have to be careful why?

0:39:44.666,0:39:46.375

You know, where I live. You. If I  
if that's right.

0:39:46.375,0:39:49.083

Something that's true. I mean, yeah,  
if I drove by your house every day so.

0:39:49.083,0:39:50.666

Yeah on you're way to work.

0:39:50.666,0:39:53.666

It's good to know.

0:39:53.750,0:39:55.458

Well, I really appreciate you being here.

0:39:55.458,0:39:56.875

Really appreciate everything that you are

0:39:56.875,0:39:59.875

and everything you do for the university  
and for Ogden.

0:39:59.916,0:40:03.625

Your contributions to Ogden  
are totally unsung.

0:40:04.083,0:40:07.083

They're under-recognized  
and underappreciated.

0:40:07.375,0:40:08.166

But your heart.

0:40:08.166,0:40:10.083

You are such an Ogden man.

0:40:10.083,0:40:12.958

Like you care so deeply for this city.

0:40:12.958,0:40:16.125

It's not just that you care deeply  
for the community, for the university,

0:40:16.916,0:40:20.458

of which you obviously do,  
but you care deeply for the university,

0:40:20.833,0:40:24.666

the students and the people in our city  
and the students that are in our city.

0:40:25.000,0:40:25.500

I mean,

0:40:26.791,0:40:27.833

you are Ogden.

0:40:27.833,0:40:29.000

You are the Ogden Way Brad.

0:40:29.000,0:40:31.583

Well,

that I that's very kind of you to say.

0:40:31.583,0:40:34.500

I was like I was doing a little bit of,

0:40:34.500,0:40:37.500

I don't know, just tracing back  
grandparents and stuff.

0:40:37.500,0:40:40.916

And, you know,  
my great great great grandfather, Daniel

0:40:41.083,0:40:44.125

Thomas Brown, is buried  
in the Ogden City Cemetery.

0:40:44.125,0:40:47.458

And then some of his generations,  
they wandered off to Idaho for a while.

0:40:47.458,0:40:49.583

But, you know, I found my way back  
in. Yeah.

0:40:49.583,0:40:50.375

Feels like home here.

0:40:50.375,0:40:51.000

Glad you did.

0:40:51.000,0:40:53.416

Yeah, but you share  
that Idaho lineage with my wife.

0:40:53.416,0:40:56.333

But we're glad you're back here  
with us again, right?

0:40:56.333,0:40:57.375

Yeah.

0:40:57.375,0:41:00.375

Brad Mortensen, president at Weber State  
thank you for being here.

0:41:00.583,0:41:02.625

We wrap up every episode  
with call to action.

0:41:02.625,0:41:05.625

So, if you're listening to this episode,  
you're

0:41:05.708,0:41:08.500

you're getting excited the way  
Brad and I are excited about all of that.

0:41:08.500,0:41:10.958

Pathways and access to opportunity.

0:41:10.958,0:41:14.208

What's the best way to plug in it  
at Weber State into those pathways?

0:41:15.083,0:41:17.875

So, our,

0:41:17.875,0:41:21.750

there's I can say to you,  
we've got the Community Education Center

0:41:21.750,0:41:25.000

at 26 and Monroe, you don't have to come  
all the way up to campus.

0:41:25.000,0:41:26.916

It's easy. Parking is free.

0:41:26.916,0:41:27.708

You know,

0:41:27.708,0:41:31.500

Monday to Friday that folks are there



and you can go in and start to access,

0:41:32.208,0:41:35.416

they can advise you on opportunities  
and connected to the right places

0:41:35.416,0:41:40.583

or go to our website Weber.edu check out,  
student access and success there.

0:41:40.583,0:41:44.666

The folks  
who are our gateway in to help everybody,

0:41:45.291,0:41:48.833

find opportunities  
whether you want a certificate degree.

0:41:49.166,0:41:51.458

Scholarships need help to get through.

0:41:51.458,0:41:54.083

They have some great, linkages.  
There you go.

0:41:54.083,0:41:58.291

So either step in or log  
in, step into that community center.

0:41:58.291,0:41:59.750

You said,  
you know, take care of you. Yeah.

0:41:59.750,0:42:01.583

Or log in to that website.

0:42:01.583,0:42:04.291

Just get started right now.

0:42:04.291,0:42:06.833

That's the thing is just take  
the first step. Have that confidence.

0:42:06.833,0:42:08.125

Take that first step. Right.

0:42:08.125,0:42:08.916

That's your call to action.

0:42:08.916,0:42:10.041

If this interest you takes

0:42:10.041,0:42:12.833

take one of those two

first steps will meet you where you are.

0:42:12.833,0:42:13.958

Right.

0:42:13.958,0:42:17.125

And then challenge you to achieve  
your goals academically and in life.

0:42:17.333,0:42:18.291

Right? Yeah.

0:42:18.291,0:42:21.291

And then that's how you can find success.

0:42:21.333,0:42:24.083

Find your greatness, find your purpose.

0:42:24.083,0:42:26.250

Here in Ogden. Here  
we were, state university.

0:42:26.250,0:42:29.083

Brad Mortenson, president, Weber

State University, thanks for joining us.

0:42:29.083,0:42:29.625

Thank you, mayor.

0:42:29.625,0:42:32.375

Thank you, everybody, for joining us  
on this episode of the Ogden Way Podcast

0:42:32.375,0:42:35.541

place where we talk about Ogden stories  
by talking about Ogden's people.

0:42:36.125,0:42:37.583

Brad Mortensen, one of the best.