Contributors

Brittany Bingeman studied family and consumer sciences and nutrition/dietetics and she is passionate about health and wellness with a holistic approach. She enjoys teaching about mindful and intuitive eating to help people improve their relationship with food as well as other important family and life skills. Originally from Georgia, she enjoys spending time exploring beautiful southern Utah and the western states. She enjoys spending time with her husband, cooking, reading, listening to podcasts, hiking, jogging, and yoga. Brittany can be reached at brittany.bingeman@usu.edu or 435-634-5706.

Naomi Brower is an Extension Associate Professor in Weber County specializing in helping others improve the quality of their lives through creating and strengthening their relationships. She earned her master’s degree in Family and Human Development from Utah State University and she is a Certified Family Life Educator. She enjoys hiking, traveling (especially anywhere green) and playing with her husband and adorable little boy. Contact Naomi at naomi.brower@usu.edu or check out videos and other content at relationships.usu.edu.
Amanda is a USU Extension associate professor and personal finance expert. She loves empowering people to make sound money decisions. Amanda has authored blog posts, YouTube videos, webinars, news articles, Studio 5 segments, and is author of a two-time, national award-winning financial literacy curriculum. She is the author of the FamFinPro.com blog.

Zuri Garcia directs 4-H youth development programs with Utah State University Extension in Davis County. She is passionate about providing youth with opportunities to learn, grow, and thrive. Zuri studied family and human development at USU where she earned her bachelor’s (2005) and master’s (2013) degrees. In her work, she strives to address critical youth needs and issues through education. She presently leads courses and camps that strengthen community mental health and wellbeing. Her husband, son, and daughter are the source of her greatest joy. Zuri loves music, food, and dancing – especially from her Puerto Rican heritage.
Ginger Lee Hack is the Family and Consumer Science Educator for Juab County. She is from Orem and has lived there since childhood. She is thrilled to be working with Extension on the Wasatch Front because this region is home. Ginger has worked for many years in retail and retail management, which have prepared her for Extension work through the leadership and customer service experience she gained. Ginger received her bachelor’s degree in Family and Consumer Science Education from Southern Utah University, her master’s degree in AST Education from USU, and she worked as an intern for Utah County Extension. Ginger enjoys spending time with family, especially her four nieces, and anything to do with FACS, especially cooking, sewing, interior design, and gardening.

Heidi LeBlanc is the Food $ense, a.k.a. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education, SNAP-Ed Director for Utah. She provides oversight to nutrition education programming in all counties in Utah. She brings in over $1,500,000 a year for Food $ense. She started as a county Extension faculty in San Juan County, where she received tenure at USU. Shortly after receiving tenure, she became the Food $ense state director. She is passionate about her work, loves Food $ense, Extension, and USU. Her Husband, Joel LeBlanc, and her parents, Wayne and Diane Reese, have continually supported her as she’s worked to achieve tenure, promotion, and other
honors. She has two adorable children who continually believe in her. She enjoys weight lifting, hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, playing with her family, and reading.

Jaqueline Neid-Avila has lived all over the west coast, including Alaska and Hawaii, and is currently based in Salt Lake City. She graduated with a Master’s in Dietetic Administration from USU and became a Registered Dietitian. Jaqueline almost majored in engineering, however sitting in front of a computer all day crunching numbers and solving problems did not seem appealing, so she switched to food and people, which she loves. However, ironically, she still sits in front of a computer most days, crunching numbers and solving problems. Teaching people about how easily they can adapt their current routines to make them more nutritious is a passion for Jaqueline. Since she teaches people about how to make changes in their food, she often experiments. Ask anyone in her office — they love sample days!

Cindy Nelson is the Beaver County FCS/4-H agent. She grew up on a farm in Beaver, Utah. She earned her bachelor’s degree from Brigham Young University and completed her master’s degree at Southern Utah University. Her main programming areas
are health and wellness and youth leadership. Cindy loves working with teenagers, learning more about health and wellness, and being active. She stays busy working, spending time with family, and being in the mountains whenever possible.

Marta Nielsen is the editor of Live Well Utah. She did not attend Utah State University (she graduated from another university whose colors are red and white), but loves working for USU Extension. Marta loves to cook and eat, garden, craft, travel, and read. She makes specialty cakes for family and friends as a hobby, and has been talked into making a few wedding cakes in the past. She and her husband have two small children, and live in Salt Lake County.

GaeLynn Peterson is a long-time resident of Wayne County where she serves the residents as Utah State University faculty with an emphasis in FCS and 4-H. She has an M.S. in Psychology and has worked with at-risk students before joining the USU family. As a mother of seven and grandmother of 28, she has had a lot of experience working with youth, and she loves it! She enjoys traveling, camping, Lake Powell, and any beach.
Julene Reese is a public relations specialist for USU Extension, where her responsibilities include writing, editing and media relations. She has worked for Extension in different capacities for nearly 30 years, beginning when she was a USU student. Her father also worked for Extension, and she is happy to carry on the family tradition. She loves her diverse job and being part of the Extension marketing team. She and her husband have four sons, three daughters-in-law and three darling grandchildren. Her hobbies include biking, wake surfing, cross-country skiing, traveling and hiking with Mildred, their goldendoodle.