

# Celebrating Swenson Park Donors

relatives are of her legacy and just as touching to see how deeply her work continues to resonate with our faculty and students in the English Department.”

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English Department students and faculty gathered with the community on August 28, 2025, for the Swenson Park Donor Celebration two years after the park’s opening in April 2023. Swenson Park, a space to honor poet and USU alum May Swenson, was constructed on the site of her childhood home, and donors, faculty, and staff have continually supported the park and its developments.

At the celebration, voices of the USU English Department were invited to read a selection of Swenson’s poetry alongside remarks and readings from her relatives. “The four readers brought to the event not only a variety of Swenson’s poems but also a range of voices: a stellar undergraduate English major, two practicing poets on the department faculty, and a distinguished professor emeritus and scholar of Swenson’s work,” English Department Head Brian McCuskey comments.

The readers included Associate Professor Ben Gunsberg, Assistant Professor C.R. Grimmer, Professor Emeritus Paul Crumbley, and undergraduate student Ella Stott. “It’s encouraging to me to be part of a department that not only celebrates the success of its students and faculty but of its alumni,” Ella reflects. “May Swenson is an honorable example of striving for excellence in both writing and life — an example I find inspiring in my own craft and writing journey.”

Stacy Danczak, the College of Arts & Sciences advancement events coordinator, helped plan the event along with Justin Barton, executive director of advancement, who has been working with the Swenson family throughout the development of the park. “Planning the Swenson Park Donor Celebration alongside the Swenson family was a true collaboration,” Stacy says. “It was so moving to witness how proud May Swenson’s