

The Heravi Legacy Editorial: A Message from President Brad L. Mortensen

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At Utah State University, we often speak about our land-grant, research university as an institution to solve the world's most pressing technical challenges. But today, some of our most urgent challenges are not found in a lab. They are found in how we speak to, listen to, and live with one another.

The Heravi Peace Institute (HPI) is the heartbeat of this effort. A powerful example of this work in action is the HPI's Mountain West Center partnership. Through this program, students not only read about conflict, but also actively facilitate community dialogues on sensitive local issues like land use and water rights. By taking these conversations out of the classroom and into Utah's town halls, our students are learning that peace is not the absence of disagreement, but the presence of respect and skillful communication.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. Mehdi Heravi. His vision ensures that as we prepare students for careers, we

also prepare them for the "thoughtful participation" our democracy requires. This commitment will only deepen later this year with the opening of the Center for Civic Excellence, which will weave civil discourse directly into our general education curriculum.

The work of building a more peaceful, civic-minded state begins with the simple, courageous act of listening. I invite every member of our Aggie family to join us in this pursuit.