



# WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY



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Dear «Formal\_Salutation»,

On September 24, more than 250 Weber State family members and friends gathered at Snowbasin Resort to celebrate the **100th anniversary** of the **Mount Ogden Hike**, a homecoming activity steeped in history and tradition.



In fall of 1922, to mark Weber College's pivotal transition from combined high school and college to junior college only, student body presidents **Llewelyn McKay** and **J. Willard Marriott** hatched an audacious plan to crown the 9,579-foot summit of Mount Ogden with a 300-pound, 20-foot-tall, steel flagpole. They encouraged every Weber student — all 630 of them — to come along.

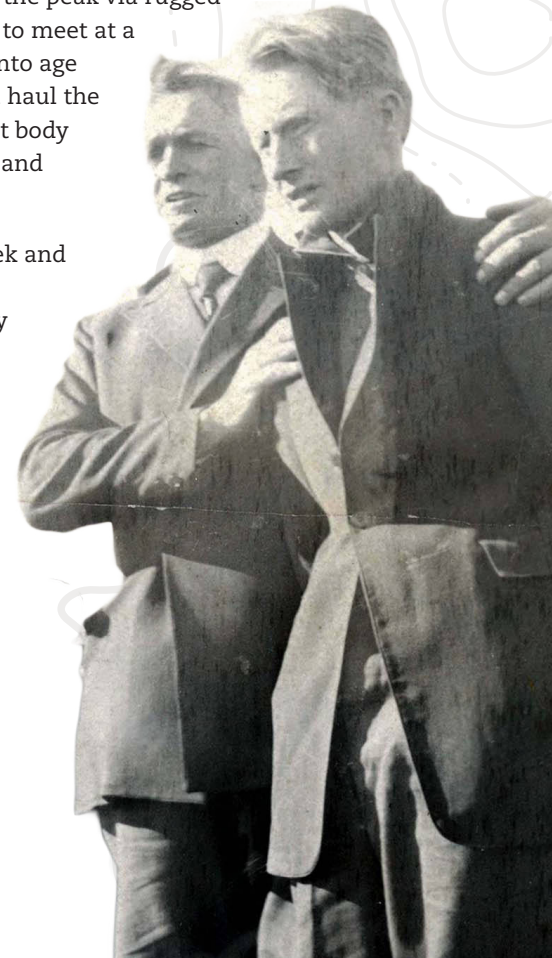
Snowbasin had not been developed, which meant hikers would need to bushwhack and boulder-hop their way to the peak via rugged Taylor Canyon. The plan called for everyone to meet at a

rock landmark at the mouth of the canyon at 4 a.m. on Oct. 4, 1922, before splitting into age groups. High school sophomores would carry water, sand and cement; juniors would haul the monstrous flagpole in three sections. At the peak, seniors would set the pole; student body leaders would splice the pole pieces; and college students would raise the American and school flags.

McKay and Marriott relied on the student newspaper to spark enthusiasm for the trek and disseminate critical details. But shortly before the scheduled event, while organizers scrambled to finalize logistics, the editor of the newspaper suddenly resigned. McKay was devastated, seeing no other alternative than to cancel the hike.

That night at dinner, Llewelyn's father, **David O. McKay**, a Weber Stake Academy alumnus and former principal who later became the ninth president of the LDS Church, noticed his son's downcast face and asked what was wrong. He listened thoughtfully as Llewelyn confided his troubles, then said, "Never give up, my boy; difficulties will always come in your way. With the help of your classmates, you can put the paper out yourself." Then, with a twinkle in his eye, he added, "You know, I rather look forward to going with you."

That simple confirmation of support energized Llewelyn. The next day, he and his friends teamed up to write and publish the needed edition of the newspaper, and Weber's inaugural Mount Ogden Hike was back on track.



In his later memoirs, Llewelyn reflected on seeing his father's signature headlining the list of hikers who added their names to a document that was placed in a bottle and sealed in cement at the base of the flagpole: "At that moment I came to the realization that had Father not stated, 'I'll take part with you,' I would have given up the venture."

**Isn't it amazing what can be accomplished with someone's encouragement and support?**

Weber's legendary Mount Ogden Hike is a metaphor for the school's remarkable trajectory from Weber Stake Academy to Weber State University. With only 150 college students attending Weber in 1922, completing a grueling, nine-hour mission to plant a 300-pound flagpole at the summit of Mount Ogden signaled a tiny junior college's determination to grow into a significant institution of higher learning. Today, WSU's enrollment is a record-breaking 29,914!

Please know that **your support is a surge of energy to Weber State students.** In 2022, as in 1922, there is strength in numbers. Combined, philanthropic gifts of all sizes turn a good university into a GREAT university. Just as tenacity and teamwork propelled students, faculty and trustees to the top of Mount Ogden 100 years ago, your generosity TODAY will launch Weber State to the summit of educational excellence in the coming years. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Amber Robson BS '05, 'MPC 17  
Director, WSU Annual Fund  
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**YOUR SUPPORT LIFTS US EVER UPWARD!**

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