



Interim 2018

LEGISLATIVE NEWSLETTER

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Rep. Dunnigan



Discussing crime issues in Salt Lake County with County Prosecutor Nathan Evershed

September 11, 2001

A day of remembrance, for those that lost their lives and for all of those who gave their lives. We remember.





Operation Rio Grande Report

One year ago, the state began an operation to help improve access to services and increase public safety in the Rio Grande area. In August, leadership, community partners, business owners and residents gathered at The Gateway to hear progress reports on the successes, challenges and next steps for this one-of-a-kind operation known as Operation Rio Grande (ORG).

The goals of the operation include restoring public safety to the area, assisting individuals struggling with mental health and substance use issues and preventing and minimizing homelessness. The realization of these goals will allow for a transition from the current shelter model to the new resource center model set to take place in June 2019.

ORG is made up of three phases, the first one being to improve public safety and restore order in the Rio Grande area. Law enforcement officials have reported that serious and/or frequent crimes in the area have decreased by 44 percent compared to the three-year average. The safe space around services has had a positive impact and those seeking help have been able to do so successfully, despite an increased law enforcement presence, as usage numbers and feedback from providers demonstrate that utilization of services has remained high.

Mental health and substance use treatment is the focus of Phase Two. Salt Lake County reported that 243 additional residential treatment beds have been added in the past year and during that time, 784 unique individuals have entered treatment with Salt Lake County contract providers. Of those, 132 have entered the drug court program. Additionally, a new sober living program and expungement initiative have helped individuals continue recovery, maintain sobriety, stay out of jail and work toward employment and stable housing.



Operation Rio Grande Report Cont.

Phase Three, Dignity of Work, provides training and support for individuals experiencing homelessness to become employed or take steps to prepare for work. The Department of Workforce Services recently reported that 106 individuals have become employed with the support of Dignity of Work employment counselors.


Length of stay in the downtown shelter has been slightly reduced, from 48.5 to 43.5 days, and the number of successful exits from shelter to housing has increased from 119 to 138.

Operation Rio Grande, though, is so much more than just statistics; it is a reflection of our values as we help to lift our neighbors, friends, family and co-workers.

In January, Emily Leix began a drug treatment program and has now been sober for more than seven months. Through the Dignity of Work program, employment counselors at Department of Workforce Services were able to incorporate her skills from previous experience and help her secure a job at Nicholas and Company Inc. She is now happily working toward a successful future.

Employment counselors at the Department of Workforce Services are finding ways to impact the lives of people like Emily every day.

Amy Daeschel described how she once lived a “normal life” and had a career, a family and faith but for two years found herself addicted to heroin, homeless and living on the streets. Within two weeks of the launch of ORG, Amy was arrested, and that day the course of her life was inexorably altered.

A photograph of the Utah State Capitol building, a grand neoclassical structure with a prominent dome and a portico supported by columns. The building is set against a clear blue sky with a few wispy clouds. An American flag and a Utah state flag are visible on poles in front of the building. A dark green banner with white text is overlaid on the lower part of the image.

Operation Rio Grande Report Cont.

“I was offered treatment and resources all because of ORG. It is only because of ORG and House of Hope that I am here today,” said Amy recently.

Today she is clean, living in her own apartment, on track to graduate from drug court this October and working at the Volunteers of America detox center.

There are many stories like Emily’s’ and Amy’s. Though the operation has had many successes, this is not the end. Leaders acknowledge that there are still challenges ahead that will need to be address.

Visit operationriogrande.utah.gov to see statistics and a one-year history timeline.



Paying Tribute

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C. serves as a tribute to honor the brave members of the U.S. Armed Forces who fought in the Vietnam War and were killed or missing in action.

It is now possible for individuals to pay their respects with a visit to a replica of the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Davis County. The replica is 80 percent of the original size of the monument in our nation's capital and is the only one of its size west of the Mississippi, according to the Utah Vietnam Veterans of America.

The wall displays the names of the more than 58,000 men and women who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country during the Vietnam War, including 361 Utahns who gave their lives.

"It was a tremendous privilege to work with the Utah Vietnam Veterans' Association to secure a little funding in order to complete the replica wall in Layton's Commons Park," said Rep. Steve Handy, who helped secure funding to build the memorial in Utah. "The dedication ceremony was moving and already it has become a quiet place of honor and reflection. It's only right and fitting that we should honor these men and women who gave their last full measure in defense of our country so long ago. I'm very pleased to have had a little part in the success of this project."

The monument is free and open to the public at Layton Commons Park, 437 N Wasatch Dr. Layton, UT 84041.



Scooters

In the blink of an eye, rentable motorized scooters have flown into downtown Salt Lake City. Unlike GREENbike's, these scooters do not require docking a specific location. A user simply locates one on the street, rents it by scanning the scooter's QR code on a mobile device and leaves it upon arrival at their destination.

During the August Transportation Interim Committee, the Utah Transit Authority conveyed an interest in partnering with the scooter companies to provide another option to connect people to their *first/last mile of travel* when using mass transit.

One of the companies has already expanded beyond Salt Lake City, to include West Valley City to Millcreek.

Currently, ordinances relating to scooters can vary significantly from city to city. The Utah Legislature is considering enacting a statewide law to govern their use in order to provide consistency.

[Listen to the discussion here.](#)



Though each individual's journey to this day was unique, over 100 people from more than 40 countries took an oath to become U.S. citizens at the Utah State Capitol on August 3, 2018.

Chris Mann, a business owner, designer and a new U.S. citizen delivered the keynote address. He encouraged these new citizens to write down why it was that they decided to become Americans, to remind and inspire them during difficult times.

Congresswoman Mia Love gave the welcoming remarks and stated that naturalization ceremonies are her favorite event to attend as a member of Congress.

"It's truly a joy to see and meet the people who take that oath seriously and to share my family's story with them," said Love in her weekly newsletter. "They now have something that no one can take away: full, legal American citizenship."

We offer our congratulations to all those who have chosen to join with us, as citizens of this great country.

See pictures from the event [here](#).



The Utah House of Representatives offers access to live and previous coverage of House floor proceedings and committee hearings from the [legislative website](#). You can search the archive of past sessions, track bills, read proposed legislation and more at le.utah.gov.

Follow the Utah Reps on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) to stay connected to what is happening, get a behind-the-scenes look and receive updates. You can also contact your representative at house.utah.gov

Here is the link to August, 2018 OLRGC *Interim* Highlights:
<https://le.utah.gov/interim/2018/pdf/00003503.pdf>

September

10-15

Council of
State
Governments

September

29

Health Reform
Task Force

Upcoming Events

Remember 9/11



September

22

First Day of
Fall