A partnership between Utah State University Kaysville and Davis Technical College is proving fruitful. Four faculty and one staff member at Davis Tech have completed their Master of Education degrees in Career and Technical Education (CTE) from USU Kaysville. The group was able to bolster their teaching credentials while also receiving tuition assistance from Davis Tech.

"The Career and Technical Education program, specifically the master’s program, is important for USU Kaysville and a great asset to our local teaching community within the field," said Jaron Smith, USU Kaysville director. "Melissa, our academic advisor and success coordinator, is essential in providing information, assistance and support to students entering the program."

The cohort was able to complete their degree requirements via USU Online, with USU Kaysville helping provide key student support, such as academic advising and student success. The students were grateful to have the flexibility of online education available to them while also having the support of USU in their own neighborhood.

"I always wanted a master’s degree, but I always thought that it would be out of my reach," said program graduate Curt Cooper, academic development instructor at Davis Tech. "I never knew how I would balance full time work with school. Plus, the cost was a little intimidating. Through this program, I was able to realize an important educational and career goal. It has allowed me to be more useful and helpful to my students."

USU Kaysville’s Melissa Thomas, academic advisor & admissions specialist, as well as Steve Williams, lecturer in the College of Agriculture and Applied Science, met with Davis Tech faculty and staff to promote the program. Five members of Davis Tech decided to pursue the CTE master’s degree.

"I knew I wanted to pursue a master’s degree but hadn’t decided the best pathway for me," said program graduate Amanda Hollingsworth, faculty member in the Davis Tech Medical Assistant program. "Melissa and Steve’s presentation opened up an opportunity to work towards my degree, with a realistic approach to balancing work and school. When the opportunity came open to learn more effective ways at teaching students, it was a moment I couldn’t pass up."

The five students found it challenging, yet fun to work toward their degrees, while also having other colleagues working towards the same end.

"The USU Kaysville campus is only a couple of miles away from Davis Tech, so it was incredibly fortunate for me to be offered such an awesome opportunity," Cooper said. "I was also able to go through the program with other Davis Tech teachers. It was very nice having colleagues that I could work with and get to know better."

Hollingsworth also commented on how the people she worked with at USU Kaysville helped her make some tough decisions. Hollingsworth was faced with the challenge of not only completing her degree while teaching full time, but also leading Davis Tech’s COVID-19 response and testing. She met with her academic advisor and also a professor, wondering if she needed to put her education on hold. They encouraged Hollingsworth to answer her own question as if she were advising another student.

"They put me in the driver seat," Hollingsworth said. "They challenged me to think about this situation and what advice or counseling would I give to a student who may be faced with similar situations. They both said they would support whatever I decided but also encouraged me to think of the growth I may experience during that time, if I had decided to tackle both. I am so thankful for their confidence and the advice they gave. I was able to tackle a challenging nine credits that semester, coordinate COVID-19 testing at Davis Tech, all while having an entire USU village support and cheer me on."

Located in the center of Davis County, Utah State University Kaysville offers students the personalized attention and small class sizes of a small-town college.
with the resources of a large university. With degree options ranging from associate to doctorate degrees, plus technical education offerings, USU Kaysville offers programs that help fuel local economies and empower individuals and their communities. Learn more at kaysville.usu.edu.

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