

# USU Extension Presents Friend of Extension Award to Rep. Carl Albrecht

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Utah State University Extension presented its Friend of Extension Award to Rep. Carl Albrecht, Utah House of Representatives District 70, at the Extension annual conference held this month.

The award is presented annually to honor individuals, businesses or organizations outside of Extension for their outstanding support and personal involvement in furthering Extension efforts.

“Rep. Albrecht is a legislative innovator, and many of our Extension programs exist because of his dedication and support,” said Ken White, USU Extension vice president. “His support for funding public lands research, buildings for statewide campuses and the Rural Online Initiative (ROI) has been invaluable to us.”

White said under Rep. Albrecht’s stewardship, the ROI and the Rural Economic Development Incentive (REDI) were signed into law in 2018, changing the landscape of Utah’s rural economic development. In addition is the Rural Co-working Innovation Centers (RCIC) program in rural Utah, with centers most recently opened in Vernal and Panguitch.

“The ROI program provides Utah’s rural workforce and businesses with education, training, and services for online opportunities in remote and freelance work,” White said. “This very innovative program was in place well before COVID-19, so many people in rural counties were already established in remote work.”

Albrecht said he grew up in rural Wayne County and knows and appreciates the importance of programs that serve rural communities.

“It’s been a great opportunity to be involved with these programs, and I’m proud of what’s been done,” he said. “Along with ROI, the REDI bill was also passed. We call it the second leg of the three-legged stool, and it provides a tax incentive to companies that hire folks from rural Utah. The RCIC grant is the third leg. It provides funding for infrastructure and equipment for those working in rural communities so they can participate in the online workforce.”

Albrecht said there have been a lot of great success stories throughout rural Utah.

“We have people working remotely for companies based in Utah, across the nation and worldwide,” he said. “I’m happy to see people in rural Utah get a chance to work from home and supplement the family farm income, or whatever the case might be.”

Albrecht said he likes what USU does as the land-grant university with Extension programs throughout the state.

“You’ve got great people working for Extension who are trying to make life better for people throughout the state, and particularly in rural Utah,” he said.

White said Rep. Albrecht has truly been a champion for USU Extension, and because of his commitment to Utah’s lands and people, he was a natural fit for the Friend of Extension Award.

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