

worklife ELEVATED

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Meet the Director

Interview by: Debra Valentine, DHRM

Todd Kiser: Commissioner, Utah Insurance Department

Tell us about yourself.

I was born in Salt Lake City, but grew up in a number of other places. When I was young, my dad was a fighter pilot, which meant that I went to many different schools before eventually settling in Texas during high school. I went to Ricks College (now BYU Idaho) on a basketball scholarship, but finished my schooling at the University of Idaho. After college, I entered the real estate industry and also got my insurance license. Eventually, I began to focus solely on insurance, and started the Kiser Insurance Agency in 1976. Along the way, I married Julie Driggs and we started our family. We have 9 children and 32 grandchildren to keep us busy, as you can imagine.



What do you like to do in your free time?

Family is a big thing for me. My wife and I recently purchased a home in Manti and we've had a lot of fun getting our kids and grandkids acquainted with the Manti-La Sal National Forest. One of the things I most like to do is have a barbecue with the whole family. Grilling up chicken, burgers and polish dogs for everyone is an afternoon well-spent. I also like to golf. I used to take my kids — the ones who were interested in golf, anyway — to chip and putt at Murray Parkway Golf Course. Murray is my favorite everyday course, but my favorite in the state is Wasatch Mountain Golf Course in Midway. It's inside Wasatch Mountain State Park, and the scenery up there is unbeatable. I love the exhilaration of riding motorcycles too. There's nothing quite like it. I've owned seven different bikes over the years, but lately I haven't been able to get out as much as I'd like to.



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How did you begin working for the State?

I started my public service with Sandy City as a Community Coordinator working with the city's Planning Commission. In 1998, I was asked to join the Planning Commission, which was invaluable in helping me learn how to represent the community. One year, the Planning Commission heard a proposal for high-density walkable communities, like condos. I opposed the proposal, thinking everyone would want what I wanted: land and open space, not packed-together condos. A week later, the city development director drove me around Sandy to show me the condos, apartments and retirement communities that were already right there in my city. He explained that Sandy has an aging population that doesn't want to take care of property anymore. I was surprised to learn that not everybody wants what I want. It was a real ah-ha moment. From then on I worked to understand what's best for the whole community, not just myself. To listen and understand all sides by getting the best information before making a decision. It felt like a natural transition to use that skill set to serve the state, so I ran for a seat in the House of Representatives in 2002 and won. I served as a State Representative until 2013. That year, I chose not to run for a sixth term and Governor Herbert appointed me as the insurance commissioner.

What experience do you bring with you to your position?

Insurance is what I've focused on during my entire career. I owned my own insurance business, so I understand the perspective of the insurance agent. I know the insurance industry inside and out, and I believe that experience is valued by the industry. They see one of their own in charge, someone who understands the reality of the business. I think that helps make the regulations that we enforce seem more palatable to them. I've also had experience with raising and managing a large family, which has helped me lead the Department. I truly feel like the Insurance Department is one big family, and I know many of my people feel the same way. My management style revolves around the Golden Rule. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. I believe that if people feel appreciated and respected, they will perform at a higher level.

What do you envision for you agency's future?

Last year we did an advertising campaign to let people know that the Insurance Department is here to help them. Many of the people who called us told us that they didn't even know we existed before they saw the ads, so we're pleased that the campaign was successful. Even though the campaign ended in June, we're still seeing a high number of residual calls.

One big issue we'll be working on for the foreseeable future is how to stay on top of healthcare reform. There has been a lot of turmoil in the insurance industry lately and a lot of people are unsure of how it's going to affect them. We want people to know that we're here to help them, and we're working on how to

Meet the Director (continued)

minimize issues here in Utah. Our position is that each state must have the ability and authority to regulate their own insurance markets. What works in New York or Oregon or Kansas won't necessarily work in Utah. Utah needs the ability to take care of its own population, and the Insurance Department is working with the Governor's Office and our legislators in DC to make that understood.

I also expect to have several members of my staff earn designations that will help them do their jobs better. I'm a big proponent of education within the department, and am happy that many of my people are driven to find ways to do their jobs better. In just this past year, Insurance Department employees have earned more than a dozen new designations in areas that will help them be more effective, efficient, and consumer-focused. I anticipate that next year we'll have even more.

Why do you enjoy working in public service?

I have a great staff who make it enjoyable to come to work. I've been the beneficiary of great predecessors who hired capable people. We have people in this department who know Utah's laws and regulations like the back of their hand and work together to accomplish our goals as a team. It's a joy to learn from them every day and to see them get the job done. It's an honor to come to work every day and work with such great people.

What advice would you give to your fellow State of Utah employees?

Have confidence in your ability to do your job and work hard. I believe that most people want to work hard and at a high level. If you're a manager, trust your people and make it known that you appreciate their efforts. I would also counsel everyone to treat each other how they would want to be treated, regardless of position or level. I make every effort to treat my people with respect and kindness, and I know they appreciate it. I firmly believe that applying the Golden Rule in the workplace has a cyclical effect. If people respect each other, work improves; as work improves, people have more respect for each other. Over time, that positive trend leads to greater and greater heights of satisfaction and success, both personally and in the workplace.



Deep Work: A powerful practice to achieving your New Year's goals

Many of us will set resolutions for the new year. Hopefully, some of these goals will include opportunities to grow and develop professionally. The sad news is that research shows most of us will not achieve those goals. The list of reasons we fail is long and there is no shortage of answers as to how to overcome these challenges. However, one practice, if learned and practiced regularly, could make the biggest impact at helping you become more efficient and achieve your goals. This practice is known as “Deep Work,” a term coined by best-selling author Dr. Cal Newport.

“Deep Work” is the ability to engage in “real intense focused work.” One of our most significant challenges to achieving goals and being successful is that we spend most of our brain power battling distraction and interruption as modern-day workers. The constant ping of devices and draw of social media and other technological distractions, disrupt our ability to really focus our energy and efforts on what matters most.

For a more effective and fulfilling new year consider experimenting with these “Deep Work” practices:

- 1. Know What You Want** - Take time to really identify what is important to you and what you hope to achieve. You will never accomplish your goals and objectives if you haven't taken the time to really know what you want.
- 2. Schedule It** - Carve out time each day to focus on those items most important to you and your success. Put it on your calendar. Your time is valuable and development is important. Give yourself permission to make time to focus on your growth and development. It will pay off.
- 3. Put the Phone Away** - Let's be honest...our phones tend to be our biggest distraction culprits. During time of deep work, turn on airplane mode or even tuck it away in a desk drawer.
- 4. Get Over FOMO** - FOMO, or “Fear of Missing Out”, is one of the main reasons we are distracted. Don't be afraid to “miss out” on the less important to focus more on the essential. This includes shutting down email, news feeds and other distracting computer programs for a time.

As we work to remove distraction and move beyond “shallow work” we will be more equipped to reach great levels of performance and achieve our developmental goals in 2018.

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Out with the old, in with the new – telemedicine vendor that is!

On January 1, 2018, Amwell will no longer be the telemedicine provider for PEHP. [Intermountain Connect Care](#) will be available for all PEHP members on all networks (not just Advantage members).

- Traditional Plan is only \$10 per visit.
- STAR Plan is only \$49 per visit, or \$10 after meeting your deductible.

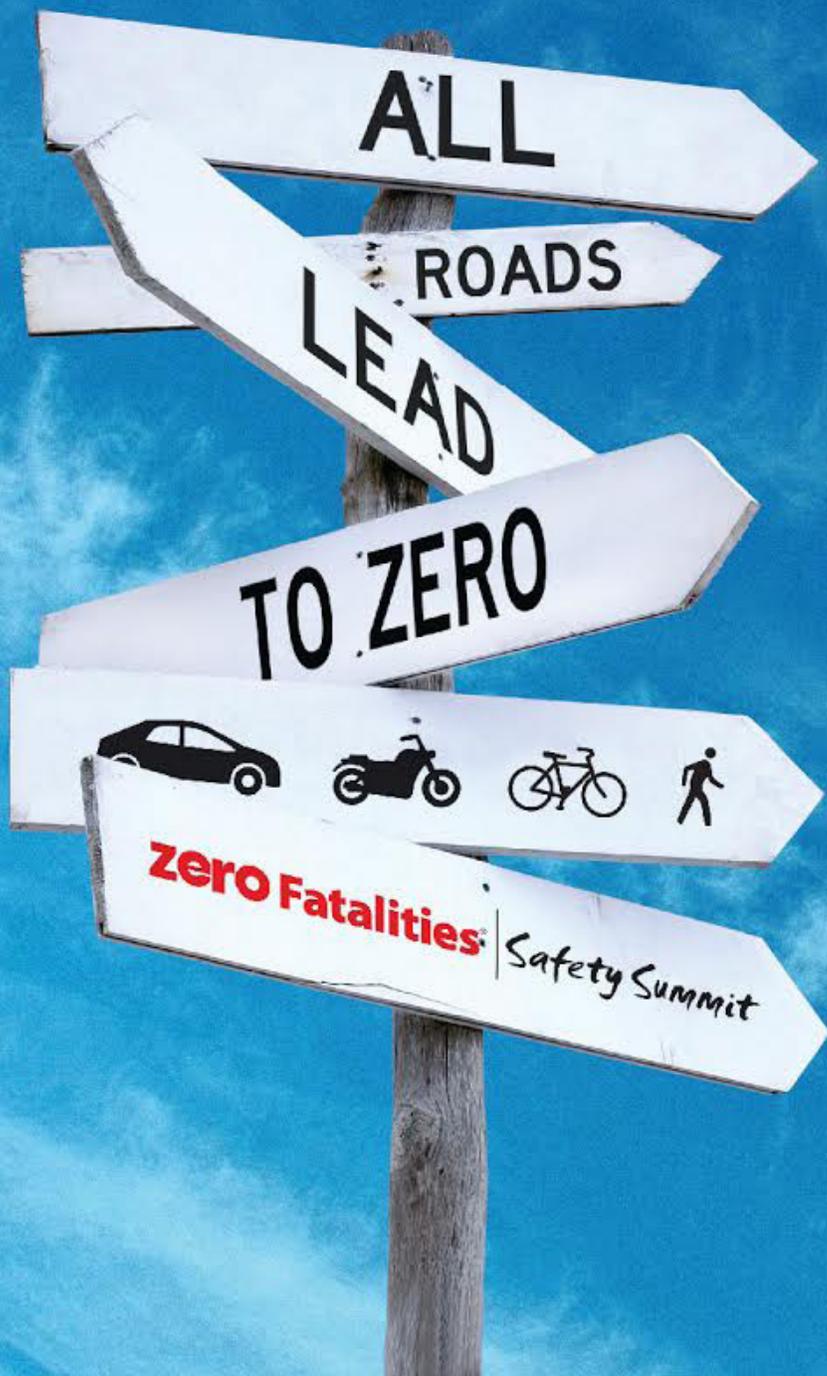
With Connect Care, you will only pay for the service if you're treated for your condition by the virtual doctor. If they refer you elsewhere for your condition, you pay nothing.

Download the Intermountain Connect Care app from the [Apple Store](#) or [Google Play](#). If you currently have the Amwell app on your devices, please replace it with Connect Care.

You may continue to use Amwell at the discounted rate until the end of December. However, no later than January 1, 2018, remove the Amwell app from your smart phone, tablet, and/or computer and replace it with the [Intermountain Connect Care app](#) to consult an Intermountain Clinician 24/7/365 for a variety of non-emergency medical conditions from anywhere, anytime.

Click here to learn more about [Connect Care](#).





ZERO FATALITIES SAFETY SUMMIT

APRIL 11-12, 2018, AT THE UTAH VALLEY CONVENTION CENTER IN PROVO, UTAH

Join us for the 2018 Zero Fatalities Safety Summit on April 11-12, with pre-conference workshops held on April 10. This is an opportunity for safety officials and advocates to share opportunities and successes in improving traffic safety in Utah.

REGISTER TODAY
ZeroFatalities.com/summit

- Registration fee is \$90
- CPS pre-conference fee is \$45
- Crash reporting pre-conference is free for law enforcement personnel



Keeping Kids Safe in the Kitchen

When it comes to keeping your kids safe in the kitchen, there are more ways to do it than just fancy child locks or expensive safety consultants. See how communicating with your kids and taking certain precautions can make your family time in the kitchen more enjoyable, with less worry. To learn more about Liberty Mutual Auto and Home Insurance or get a free, no obligation quote, please call 800-699-5298.

A Message from Liberty Mutual Insurance - Liberty Mutual is proud to partner with the State of Utah to provide you with relevant auto and home safety tips for the way you live today.



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