USU ambassadors help high school students navigate college during a pandemic

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Utah State University’s student ambassadors are attempting to paint an exciting college experience for potential Aggies, despite concerns over attending college during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“With COVID and everything, everything was going to be a little bit different,” said Abigail Orison, an ambassador for freshmen at USU.

Orison wants high school students to feel eager for college, especially during the pandemic. She and other ambassadors stressed the importance of adapting.

“Something can change with the snap of your fingers,” Orison said.

George Garcia, a three-year veteran of the ambassadors program, said he tries to excite students by staying positive.

“If you want kids to get excited about school, you don’t talk about the problems,” Garcia said. “If they bring them up, you offer solutions because there are solutions to every problem.

Tyelor Wilson, a teacher at Ben Lomond High School in Ogden, said many students face hardships while making the transition to college and need the positive influence ambassadors can provide.

“A lot of these kids — if they did choose to go to college — they’d be first-generation college students,” Wilson said. He noted some students are stressed about financial stability, online education and a university setting in general.

USU ambassadors are equipped with knowledge to help students who are unsure about moving forward with their education. Orison said her hope is to make students feel safe and fully informed.

“We had a live stream so anyone could ask questions,” Orison said. “Students were able to hop on and we were able to tell them about anything — any questions that they had for us or about any of our experiences up here so far.”

The uncertainty of this year has increased the need for ambassador guidance.

“We do have an optimistic perspective that things will go back to normal,” Garcia said. “You’ve gotta roll with the punches at the end of the day.”