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◀ **BYU CAMPUS OFFERS AN INSPIRING BACKDROP FOR STUDENTS THIS TIME OF YEAR. THE COLORS OF AUTUMN CREATE A WELCOMING ATMOSPHERE AS THE SEASONS CHANGE. PHOTO BY JAREN WILKEY.**

The first time I was engaged, **it lasted only about thirty seconds.** The second time lasted a little longer. • We can go either way, but going through the business center is a lot more fun. • I called it. **I knew as soon as we left she'd have the baby.** And by the time we got home, the baby was here. • Those who have no concept of reading didn't do very well on the test. • **He was texting and ran right into a tree.** I've only seen that happen online. I didn't know it happened in real life. • I can talk for one more minute, then I have to go. I'm always late for this class. • **I wish Amazon could just ship straight to the Tanner Building.** It will soon—a drone will just bring things straight to us. • Wait to say anything until they walk by. Then we can talk about them all we want. • **Let's call a modeling agency and go to an interview.** They'd sign us up so fast! • **That was an evil laugh.** Are you as happy about that as you sound? • They wrote a huge article about her, **so she'll for sure succeed.** • He bopped over to the lab. He invited me to go with him, but I was like, uh, no. • Will you just take my stuff so I can **take the test without all this weight hanging on me?** • I just assumed we'd all be on the same page. Well, you should know better than that. • **I completely faded out**—right while he was talking. • You can do it that way if you want, but if the professor doesn't like it, you're in trouble. • **I just want to put a puzzle together.** • I can't believe they expect me to come back after seeing that. • I'm just sitting here doing nothing. Come join me. • **She scares me just a little bit.** • I have one day to do six assignments. I'm never going to miss school again! • **Look at how toned this muscle here is.** • Every time I hear that sound, it makes me want to eat. **I'm as bad as Pavlov's dog.** • I think it's time to put the flannel shirts away. • He said it was a closed group, but everyone who walks in is part of it. • **That crying baby distracted me**—even though it was cute. • I'll look over here, and you look over there. **Yell loud if you find him.** • She has some rich friends, so she's not even worried about how much it will cost. • Maybe someone already did it. But if they did, they weren't supposed to. **Do we have to do it again if it's already done?** • They want us to "rise and shout," **but sometimes I can't even sit and stay awake.** • You're just going to have to wait in line, even if you don't like lines. **There's no way around the lines.** • Some days a job on the grounds crew sounds pretty good.

**OVERHEARD  
IN THE  
TANNER**



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Cover illustration by Michael Waraksa

LEADING  
ALUMNI

Brian Carini  
MISM, 2001





# ONLY IN NEW YORK

*By Kellene  
Ricks Adams*

*Photography by  
Bradley Slade*

**T**he day Brian Carini's first child, Isabella, was born, Carini emerged from the hospital in the early morning after being by his wife's side throughout the night. His wife, Kiasa, had urged him to go eat breakfast, so after making sure mother and baby were fine, Carini ducked outside to grab a quick bite to eat.

“I was walking along, thinking about what had just happened to our family, when I started to notice that things looked a lot different than usual,” remembers Carini. “The usually bustling streets and sidewalks were absolutely deserted. Grass was growing up in cracks in the middle of the road, and cars abandoned in the streets were covered in a layer of dust. I was in a fog from being up all night, but even as exhausted as I was, I knew that something wasn’t right.”

Moments later, a man wearing a headset emerged from a hidden alcove and ushered Carini off the street. It didn’t take long for Carini to realize that he had inadvertently wandered onto the set of *I Am Legend*, an apocalypse movie starring Will Smith.

“The phrase ‘only in New York’ is uttered constantly—for better or worse—in this town,” Carini says. “That morning was one of the more bizarre only-in-New-York moments I’ve had. I was genuinely stunned by how quiet and deserted everything was, and I was amazed that they had been able to pull that off in this city that never sleeps. But that’s one of the reasons I have loved living and working in New York. Things happen here that wouldn’t happen anywhere else.”

### The Dream Begins

A 2001 BYU Marriott MISB grad, Carini along with his family—which now includes four children—spent almost a decade walking the streets of the Big Apple and treasuring the moments that make the city such a unique place to live. Carini and Kiasa arrived in New York in 2005 after spending three years at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh.

“I had pretty much finished the coursework for my PhD at CMU,” Carini explains. “I had studied technology and cybersecurity and had even started my research, but it was moving slow. My wife and I had some goals—including starting a family—that we couldn’t accomplish on a student stipend, so we decided to take a detour from academia for a couple of years, gain some industry experience, have some adventures, and then go back and finish the degree.”

In Carini’s mind, there was only one place to go: New York City. His love for the City That Never Sleeps began when he was a boy growing up two hours north in Connecticut. Carini already had a few months of city

living under his belt; he had completed an internship with Deloitte & Touche in New York City before starting his PhD program at CMU. So he and Kiasa headed back to the largest city in the United States. “We didn’t expect to stay for long,” he says. “The plan was to spend a year or two in the city and then move on.”

What the Carinis didn’t plan on was feeling so at home in New York. “We met many people who were building careers, raising strong families, and making it,” Carini says. “So we decided to stick around for a little bit longer, assuming we’d move once we had a baby.”

However, with Isabella tucked in what they called a “junior” (400 square feet) one-bedroom apartment in Hell’s Kitchen, Carini and Kiasa reassessed the situation. “We had gotten to know people in our ward who were successfully raising their families in the city, and the children seemed to thrive on the experience. We decided to stay ‘just another year or two’ until we had a second baby, and



**WE DRANK EVERYTHING IN.  
WE HAD THESE INCREDIBLE FUN-FILLED DAYS,  
AND WE WERE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR SOMETHING  
NEW THAT WE HAD NEVER EXPERIENCED.**



then a third. Then we figured we’d certainly move when the kids started school, but we found the public school in our neighborhood was as good as many of the private schools, so we stayed a little longer.”

### Drinking Everything In

In fact, the Carini family stayed in New York for almost a decade, moving from Hell’s

Kitchen to Harlem to the Upper West Side, where they lived just a block from Central Park and the American Museum of Natural History.

Their living space never got bigger than one thousand square feet, but that didn’t seem to be a problem. “We definitely learned some tricks for fitting a family in a small city apartment,” Carini says, “but people in Manhattan have a knack for optimizing space. A walk-in closet becomes a bedroom, a Murphy bed converts to living space during the day. Everything gets folded up and put away, and you develop a different attitude about stuff.”

You also learn to embrace what’s outside your front door, notes Carini. “You create a life out in the city, instead of entertaining at home,” he explains. “Instead of watching movies in a home theater with your friends,



you meet at a theater down the street. And instead of scheduling playdates in the backyard, you meet up in Central Park.”

There was always something to do, see, or eat in the big city, Carini notes. Always thinking they would stay in New York for “just one more year,” they savored each year as if it were their last in the city. “We drank everything in,” Carini remarks. “We had these incredible fun-filled days, and we were always looking for something new that we had never experienced.” Packing in as many city adventures as one possibly could into a single day became known, among their friends, as a “Carini” day.

### Designed for Families

Carini and Kiasa have passed on that same love for adventure and discovery to their children. Friday daddy-daughter dates were often spent at free open-air concerts, where a preschool-aged Isabella learned about every genre of music, from jazz and blues to country and classical. And the family tried foods from all over the world.

But New York City offered the growing family more than music and food. Mom groups were plentiful, and many organizations created programs and activities that catered to young children. Family home evenings were spent in myriad museums and libraries and playgrounds.

“It may seem hard to believe, but New York is actually pretty family friendly,” Carini observes. “Enough people are raising families here that there is a definite demand and need for activities and services designed for family entertainment.”

Another key to the Carinis’ success in New York was the community they found among Church members. “The ward was cohesive and close,” Carini says. “Part of that came from this experience that we were all sharing. Living in New York City is hard. Most everyone’s apartment is too small and too expensive. Schlepping groceries and laundry through the streets and up four flights of stairs, navigating around crowds of tourists in the summer and through giant slush puddles in the winter, dealing with all the unexpected absurdities of urban life—all this brings people closer together. And you see many acts of service and kindness, not just among ward members but among neighbors and even strangers.

“The wards have a good number of long-time New Yorkers,” he notes, “but there were a lot of people who came to the city with temporary plans to work, just like us. And then, just like us, they decided to stick around for a while. We found good friends in the Church and enjoyed the experience of attending meetings with such a diverse group of people.”

### The Adventure of It All

Carini has also enjoyed rich diversity throughout his thirteen-year career in information technology. “I had a strong interest in technology from an early age,” explains Carini, who earned his undergrad at BYU in statistics, in part because, at the time, the statistics department had some of the most advanced computing on campus. “After getting my MISM at BYU, I enrolled in a PhD program in information technology management at Carnegie Mellon, and my research emphasis was in the economics of information security.”

When Carini and his wife decided to go to New York, a close friend introduced him to a CIO at Morgan Stanley who hired Carini as part of the firm’s IT administration. “It was there that I learned much of what I still use today,” says Carini, who currently works as an information security manager at American Express. “I learned about managing a large global technology organization, presenting to senior management, strategic planning, and financial management. I also had a strong interest in IT risk and led a global team of risk officers for our infrastructure group.”

Carini was at Morgan Stanley three years later when the economy took a severe downturn. “I felt like I had a front-row seat during the 2008 financial collapse,” he says. “Our building was across the street from Lehman



Brothers, and we could see out the windows as everybody packed up their boxes and walked out of the building. For days I walked past newspaper reporters and photographers lined up on the sidewalks reporting the news, using the Lehman Brothers building as their backdrop. And then one day they moved across the street and started filming my building because Morgan Stanley was expected to be the next to fail.”



Morgan Stanley survived, and Carini stayed on until 2011, when he joined a boutique consulting firm advising hedge funds and private equity firms. Then in 2014, he cofounded a health-tech startup. “I welcomed the entrepreneurial opportunity,” he explains. “I’d always had a strong interest in entrepreneurship, probably instilled by BYU Marriott and my involvement in the program there as well as with the Rollins Center.

At the health-tech startup, Carini and his colleagues developed an innovative platform for mental-health practitioners to provide exercises to, monitor the progress of, and increase communication with their patients between sessions. “The initial product was a mild success,” Carini says, “but not enough to sustain further investment. So after my foray into the startup world, I reentered financial services.”

Carini has been with American Express since 2016. “I had been looking to focus more on the fields of information security and technology risk,” he says. “Information security had been my area of research in

graduate school and had remained at the top of my newsfeed since then. I was fortunate to find a role that covers both areas.

“I’d love to say that my career has been part of a master plan,” he adds, “but it’s really been kind of experimenting, making things work, figuring things out as we went along, and seeking guidance along the way. And then, of course, having fun with the adventure of it all.”

### **A Creative Work Environment**

Carini has also been fortunate to work in organizations that have been receptive to a more flexible work arrangement because, after stretching their “just one more year” New York adventure into almost ten years, the Carini family left New York City behind in 2013. “First, we moved just outside the city to a town in Westchester,” Carini says. “But our youngest son was born in a New York City hospital, so we consider all four of our children native New Yorkers. Then in 2016, we moved farther out to Connecticut.”

Despite the move, Carini kept working in the city. In order to make the new arrangement work, he found a small bedroom to rent. He works from home a day or two every week and then commutes into the city for a few days. “My days in the city are long ones,” he acknowledges. “I start early and finish late. But it’s worked out well for us. It minimizes my commute, and I actually end up spending more time with my family.”

### Where We Should Be

In a way, Carini, Kiasa, and their children—Isabella, age eleven; Oliver, age nine; Simon, age seven; and Elliot, age two—have gone back to where it all began. “We moved back to my hometown,” Carini explains. “Our kids had a taste of life in New York City, and we decided to give them a taste of the rural life that we both grew up in. Plus we now live closer to a lot of extended family.”

While Kiasa isn’t from the Northeast (she grew up in California), she is familiar with Connecticut: she served her mission there. “We both attended BYU and were in the same ward before she left on her mission,” Carini says. “We were friends, but we didn’t really



**FOR THIS PHASE OF OUR LIFE, WE’RE WHERE WE SHOULD BE. BUT WE’VE TALKED ABOUT GOING BACK ONCE THE KIDS ARE GROWN.**

**IT WAS SUCH A GREAT EXPERIENCE FOR US, AND WE COULD DEFINITELY SEE OURSELVES BACK THERE.**

date. We just played tennis and hung out.” When Kiasa got her call to his home state, Carini was excited for her.

Near the end of her mission, Kiasa actually served in his home ward. “I was home for the summer,” explains Carini, “and she and her companion were at my parents’ house, and I said, ‘I’ll give you a call when you get off your mission.’” Carini’s father served as a counselor in the mission presidency, and the mission president encouraged Carini to follow up on that promise.

“I didn’t need much encouragement,” he admits. “When she got off her mission, I called her up, and the rest is history.” Carini soon started his PhD program in Pittsburgh, so the couple dated long distance for a time. Ultimately, however, Kiasa followed Carini to Pittsburgh, finishing up her last semester at BYU through independent study. The two were married in 2002.

The family now lives in Glastonbury, Connecticut, where Carini’s Italian ancestors settled when they immigrated three generations ago. And while they loved their time in the Big Apple, the children seem content in Glastonbury. “Honestly, I was thinking they would miss the city more than they have,” Carini remarks. “Whenever we ask them, their preference is to be right where we are. It’s mostly because of family and cousins—I guess playing with cousins outweighs eating the world’s best pizza.”

Carini wouldn’t be surprised, however, if each of his kids ends up living in New York City again someday. “You can do almost



anything there,” he says. “There’s so much opportunity to become whatever you want to be.”

In fact, he and Kiasa may also end up back in the Big Apple. “For this phase of our life, we’re where we should be,” he acknowledges. “But we’ve talked about going back once the kids are grown. It was such a great experience for us, and we could definitely see ourselves back there. We go back as a family frequently already—for family work events, during the Christmas season, and many other times. And we never miss Summer Streets.”

For now, Carini is enjoying the best of both worlds. “My family and I live in a lovely part of Connecticut, only a few miles from my parents and other relatives and the place where I grew up,” he says. “Yet during the week, I still get to work in this city I love and enjoy all it has to offer.

“New Yorkers often get teased for being a bit myopic,” he concludes. “We have a hard time seeing beyond the big city. But once you live there, you can understand why. New York is so big and so loud and so—well, New York. Even when you leave, it will forever be part of who you are.” **M**

# Falling for Foliage

Apple picking, corn mazes, and pumpkin patches make fall an exciting season—and those fun activities are more glorious against the backdrop of stunning fall foliage. Despite being a desert state, Utah becomes surprisingly colorful when the leaves start changing. Take a stroll through these vibrant stats to discover more.



# 92

**THE NUMBER OF TYPES OF TREES IN UTAH WITH LEAVES THAT CHANGE COLOR IN THE FALL.**

From the ash to the zelkova, Utah is home to two hundred and forty-two species of tree, both native and introduced.

One hundred and eighty-two of those species are deciduous, meaning the trees shed their leafy coats when the weather starts cooling down, but only ninety-two of these species have the colorful characteristics that draw a crowd.

Sources: [treebrowser.org](http://treebrowser.org), [slgov.com](http://slgov.com)



MARRIC

# 14,000

**THE APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF TREES ON BYU CAMPUS.**

BYU has a vast tree spectrum that contributes to its dreamy fall landscape. But there's more to the trees than a pretty trunk: a team of six to eight student arborists, typically from BYU's landscape management program, works with BYU's full-time arborist to care for each individual tree on campus, along with the trees at the MTC and both of Provo's temples.

Source: *Max Darrington*, BYU's head arborist



# 33%

## THE APPROXIMATE PERCENTAGE OF THE UNITED STATES' LANDSCAPE COVERED BY FORESTS.

There are an estimated one thousand different types of trees in North America, with the red maple being the most common. And in 2004, Congress officially named the oak America's national tree. Utah has fifteen different types of forests, which are defined by the tree that is most common in the area. Pinyon-juniper woodlands cover the most ground in Utah, and aspen forests, covering more than 1.4 million acres throughout the state, are the second most common.

Sources: [forestry.usu.edu](http://forestry.usu.edu), [fs.fed.us/rm/ogden/pds](http://fs.fed.us/rm/ogden/pds), [statesymbolsusa.org](http://statesymbolsusa.org), [venerabletrees.org](http://venerabletrees.org)



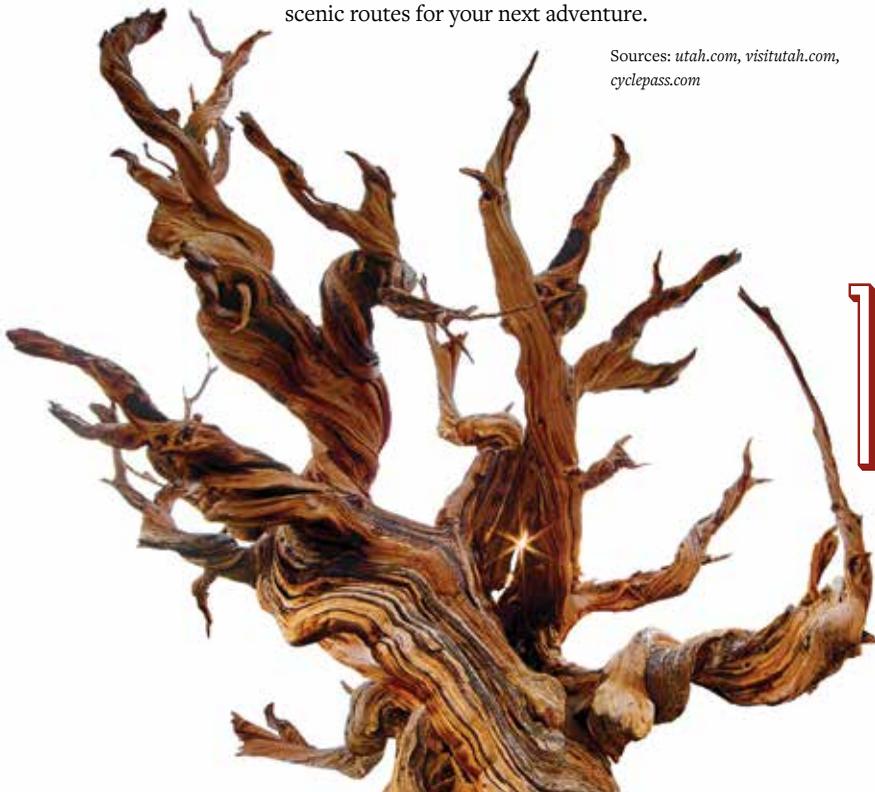
# 3,430

## THE NUMBER OF FEET THE ALPINE LOOP GAINS IN ELEVATION.

This twenty-mile drive winds through gorgeous canyons in the Uinta National Forest, drawing countless admirers every year. The loop is particularly popular during September and October, when vibrant fall tones light up the canyons. Visit [utah.com/scenic-drive/fall-colors](http://utah.com/scenic-drive/fall-colors) to find an extensive list of scenic routes for your next adventure.



Sources: [utah.com](http://utah.com), [visitutah.com](http://visitutah.com), [cyclepass.com](http://cyclepass.com)



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## THE NUMBER OF TYPES OF TREES ON BYU CAMPUS.

BYU campus boasts an impressive arboretum for students and visitors to enjoy. The large number of different tree species makes fall a colorful season on campus. The bald cypress is among the most unique because it is a deciduous conifer, turning a bright red-orange in the fall. The sugar maple transforms from green to yellow to orange and finally to red. And let's not forget the quaking aspen, a famous tree native to Utah with green leaves that turn a shimmering golden color.

Sources: [treetour.byu.edu](http://treetour.byu.edu), [arborday.org](http://arborday.org)



## 1 OLDEST TREE SPECIES IN THE COUNTRY.

Until 2013, the oldest tree was believed to be Methuselah, a 4,847-year-old bristlecone pine tree growing in Inyo County, California. Since then, an even grander tree has been discovered in the White Mountains of California. Also a bristlecone pine, the unnamed tree is more than five thousand years old. If trees could talk, imagine the things this granddaddy would say.

Source: [newyork.cbslocal.com/2016/06/29/top-5-oldest-trees-in-us](http://newyork.cbslocal.com/2016/06/29/top-5-oldest-trees-in-us)

# THE POWER *of* POSITIVE

+ *How Fishing for Compliments  
Can Change Customer Behavior* +

+ BY SARA SMITH ATWOOD PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRADLEY SLADE +

**F**or anyone who's been a customer, these scenes might be familiar: A grocery clerk asks, "Did you find everything you were looking for?" A link at the bottom of a receipt promises a free drink in return for feedback. A restaurant manager passes by a table and asks if the steak tastes OK.

Seeking customer feedback is nothing new. Most companies use surveys to collect customer comments and to measure customer satisfaction. And many of these surveys, according to a group of BYU Marriott researchers and their colleagues, are priming customers to look for the negative—what they couldn't find in the store, when customer service failed, and how the meat was too tough.

What if instead restaurants asked, "Do you have any compliments for the chef?" It's a simple shift that, according to research, could have huge payoffs—both for a company's bottom line and for the overall well-being of customers.

In research that's spanned a decade and produced seven papers (and counting), this research team—which includes BYU Marriott marketing professor Bruce Money and organizational behavior and human resources professor Kristen Bell DeTienne—has gathered what Money calls groundbreaking findings in the field of customer experience research. Simply by adding an open-ended question to the beginning of existing customer feedback surveys, organizations may see an increase in customers' satisfaction, repeat business, and spending.



## LOOKING FOR GRATITUDE

Lead researcher Sterling Bone first came upon the potential for positive survey research when he was serving as a gospel doctrine teacher in Provo nearly a decade ago.

Now an associate professor of marketing at Utah State University, Bone was then “one of BYU Marriott’s young bright scholars asking good questions,” Money says. With advice fresh from a new-faculty training—which encouraged him to seek gospel inspiration in his research—Bone prepared for an upcoming Sunday School lesson about the ten lepers.

“I was intrigued by the value of gratitude in deepening the relationship between the Savior and the leper who returned,” Bone says. “I saw that thank-you as coming from a customer to—if you will—the provider, the Savior.”

That insight sparked a question: if customers were encouraged to say thank you to service providers, could that opportunity in turn strengthen the relationship and loyalty between consumers and organizations?

The default approach to customer feedback surveys, observes Bone, is typically to ask what went wrong and then provide some sort of recovery, usually financial, to compensate. Bone found himself wondering why we can’t we encourage customers to give compliments and express positive feedback rather than condition them to look for the negative and seek restitution.

+

*Encouraging a compliment  
at the beginning of the  
satisfaction survey raised the  
scores even when the customer  
had a negative experience.*

+

Although asking for positive feedback wasn’t unheard of—many companies actively solicit and value positive feedback—no research had been done on the impact of that approach. “We found anecdotal evidence,” says Money, “but there was no science behind it or any measurement of its impact.”

Bone reached out to colleagues at BYU Marriott and beyond, and the team got to work. In addition to Money and DeTienne, team members include BYU Marriott adjunct professor Katie Liljenquist, Katherine Lemon from Boston College, Clay Voorhees from Michigan State University, and Paul Fombelle from Northeastern University.

## CHANGING THE FUTURE

The team’s initial investigations revealed that by simply asking customers to reflect on a positive aspect of their experience, companies could impact the customers’ perceptions of the experience—and influence future purchase behavior.

“When we first ran our initial studies, we couldn’t believe it,” Bone says. “We ran nearly a dozen to be sure it wasn’t just an artifact of our design.”

The team’s pinnacle paper, “‘Mere Measurement Plus’: How Solicitation of Open-Ended Positive Feedback Influences Customer Purchase Behavior,” published in the February 2017 issue of the *Journal of Marketing Research (JMR)*, details the strongest evidence for the influence of inviting customers to think positive. Working with a large portrait-studio chain, the researchers added a single open-ended question to the beginning of an existing feedback survey: “What went particularly well during your most recent visit?”

Customers who were asked for a compliment made 9 percent more purchases and spent 8 percent more money at the studio over the next year than those who took the same survey without a positive solicitation. Traditional numerical satisfaction measures were also significantly higher when preceded by a compliment request.

“We didn’t even create a new survey,” DeTienne says. “It was the same survey the company was already doing, just with one added question at the beginning. The effect, we feel, is pretty strong.”

The results held as the team extended its research in a business-to-business context: users who were asked at the end of a software trial to describe features they particularly liked spent 32 percent more on the products over the next year than users who weren’t asked for a compliment.



The researchers noted that it makes sense to expect great results from a positive solicitation when the customer has a great experience—for example, when the photographer captures great smiles and memorable portraits from shy children. But what happens when a customer has a two-hour wait with a fussy child and no good photos to show for it? You might not expect the request for a compliment to go over too well, says DeTienne.

The data, however, tells a different story: “We actually found that the positive solicitation approach worked well, regardless of whether the experience itself was positive,” DeTienne says. Encouraging a compliment at the beginning of the satisfaction survey raised the scores even when the customer had a negative experience. A compliment request, suggest the researchers, could potentially mitigate and even repair service or product failures.

Asking for the positive “opens up the mindset of the customer to think what did go well and maybe takes a little bit of the poison out of the pie,” Bone adds. “Even those who expressed lower satisfaction in the portrait-studio survey after a positive solicitation still saw lifts in repurchase behavior.”

### RE-CREATING THE PAST

The researchers aren’t sure exactly why positive solicitations have so much power to influence future customer behavior—but they have a few ideas.

“Perceptions of customer experiences are malleable,” says Money. While it has been traditionally held that satisfaction surveys capture a customer’s static experience, the researchers suggest that by asking customers to concentrate first on the positive aspects of their experience, a survey can, in a way, mold their memory enough to affect perceptions of the past and behavior in the future.

How the question is asked also makes a difference. Responding to an open-ended question, versus choosing a number on a scale to determine “how likely are you to recommend this to a friend,” gives customers a chance to re-remember the experience—with a positive twist.

“Numerical scales impose an artificial ceiling on satisfaction,” Bone says. “With an open-ended request for a compliment, you can raise the satisfaction level and loyalty of even a highly satisfied customer. As they share their story, there’s no limit.”

### SEEING THE GOOD

For the research team, investigating the power of positive surveys is about more than giving organizations better tools to solicit feedback and influence perception. They see distinct benefits for the customers as well, including an increased level of optimism and happiness.

“Customers really want to feel good about their experiences, commercial or not, and inviting them to think positively has positive psychological effects,” says Bone. “As a society and as a marketplace, we’ve become so negative, and that takes a toll on our individual and collective welfare.”

Encouraging customers to reflect on the positive in their day-to-day commercial experiences can help alleviate this negativity. “Through positive psychology research, we learn that looking at the good tends to make people happy, so you’re improving lives and literally increasing happiness by helping people see the good,” DeTienne adds.

### BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Even with all the benefits a simple compliment request can bring, the researchers caution organizations to take care in applying these results.

“We know this is a powerful effect, we know it has an impact on the psychology of the consumer; therefore, I think there needs to be good stewardship on the part of the businesses in how they use it,” Bone says. He worries about the potential for even well-meaning corporations to use the research to manipulate performance measures—and even customers.

“We need to be careful that we aren’t distorting the actual experience, that we aren’t manipulating customers just to increase incentives,” Bone says. The healthcare field, for example, uses patient satisfaction data to qualify for funding, and other sectors use positive feedback to compensate and recognize employees. Bone considers it inauthentic and ineffective for companies to push too hard for high ratings.

To avoid manipulation, the researchers suggest a partial rollout of positive solicitations: add a compliment request to an existing survey, but give it to only a portion of customers initially. That way, companies can measure the impact the solicitation has and recalibrate their data analysis accordingly, without comparing results from the new survey to past numbers.

A focus on soliciting compliments and building loyalty doesn’t mean a customer survey can’t also be used to highlight areas for improvement, which is why many companies engage in market research in the first place. DeTienne recommends constructing a short survey (three to five questions) that begins with a positive solicitation and ends with an open-ended request for any other feedback, trusting that the customer will point out any product or service failings without encouraging them to look back for negative aspects of the experience.

### INVESTIGATING MORE

Even as their results are garnering attention in academic and real-world forums, the research team has more to investigate. “We are looking into some basic questions: when does this effect work, how does it work, why does it work, under which circumstances does it work best, and when should it be avoided?” says DeTienne. The team is also examining the effect of positive solicitations across various cultural and minority experiences.

So far, the researchers have yet to find the limit for bringing positivity and gratitude into market research. Their next (and currently unpublished) study examines what they term the you’re-welcome effect. Initial results suggest that responding to compliments, like by giving the customer a coupon, takes the effect of positive solicitations up another notch.

“There’s no ceiling to this effect so far,” Bone says. “Inviting individuals to give positive feedback, and then turning around and saying thank you for that feedback, opens up a dialogue that extends the relationship and deepens loyalty over time.” **M**

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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# Scoring Big with



## *Blockchain.*

Google the word, and you'll find a plethora of analogies attempting to explain the concept. And no wonder. While the definition appears fairly straightforward—it's a digital, openly accessible ledger that can be concurrently added to, forming a permanent chain of data "blocks"—understanding how people use blockchain is anything but simple.

By Christopher K. Bigelow  
Illustrations by Michael Waraksa

However, utilizing blockchain may be vital in a world where the technology has already spread from its first application—verifying the electronic currency Bitcoin—to being used to create smart contracts, prevent voter fraud, and track healthcare (to name just a few).

At its core, blockchain technology provides increased efficiency and trust because it eliminates the need for a central authority by creating a space where an entire community is aware of and involved in the action taking place. Blogger Martin Jee shared a blockchain analogy that may be helpful:

*You know how in a playground football [American soccer] game each player knows what the score is at any one time, and you can't change the score without convincing everyone playing that there's a very good reason for doing so? Well, in a very similar way, each node [computer] in a blockchain-based peer-to-peer network has an identical copy of the network's ledger of events, and that ledger is immutable.*

*So both playground football and blockchain achieve a situation where you have multiple participants who have an agreed-upon historical record of events, and that record cannot be tampered with. . . .*

*In a playground football game, there is no referee (that would be a centralised authority) and yet the game is played successfully because it's a group of kids playing a game where everyone knows the rules, and they play by those rules because otherwise they're not "playing football." When a kid fouls in some way, a decision is quickly made amongst the kids as to whether to act upon the foul or [whether to] simply let the game continue by passive consent (consensus is constantly achieved). The "ledger part" is the current score that all the kids are keeping in their heads, and every kid doesn't actually need to see each goal being scored as long as they all agree what the current score is.*

*The ledger is immutable because a single kid cannot change the score without convincing a majority that his view of events is the right one. . . .*

*And it's in that way that all those games of footie in the playground were actually examples of a peer-to-peer network achieving immutable, synchronized, and decentralized consensus via a distributed ledger!*

Who knew a neighborhood soccer game could be so educational?

## A Whole Different Ball Game

The need for a technology that could be trusted in the world of finance has never been more evident than in the last decade. On 9 October 2007, the US stock market reached an all-time high, with the Dow Jones Industrial Average exceeding 14,000 for the first time in history. Yet only two months later—in December 2007—the Great Recession began, shattering world financial markets and banking and real estate industries.

Over the next eighteen months, the Dow fell to 6,547 points, losing more than half its value, while millions of people lost their jobs, homes, and life savings.

Throughout history, obstacles and challenges have resulted in progress. Minted coins, paper money, and even entire banking systems have been created to protect those involved in the exchange of assets. Along the way, technological innovations such as telephones, credit cards, and mobile apps have improved the convenience, efficiency, and speed of those transactions.

The Great Recession would prove to be an opportunity for change. With this devastating financial downswing as a backdrop, wary Americans were open to alternative methods of handling financial transactions.

## The Kick-Off

Enter Satoshi Nakamoto, a pseudonym for the author—or authors—of a nine-page white paper designed to transform the world of finance.

Published on 31 October 2008 and titled "Bitcoin: A Peer-to-Peer Electronic Cash System," the document described a revolutionary technology that created the world's first genuine peer-to-peer, decentralized monetary system. The internet-based money, or cryptocurrency, could be sent directly from one party to another without going through a financial institution and with all transaction information secure, time-stamped, and viewable to everyone.

This novel concept—replacing the role of banks as the trusted intermediary with a community of participants who work together to



*The number of people in the world who have computers and mobile devices is increasing dramatically, and blockchain puts the power of transaction  into the hands of people around the world.*

*Ultimately, trust—a key element that people seek in any transaction—is inherent in blockchain.*





verify transactions and provide system integrity—was revolutionary and captured the attention of many who had been devastated by the Great Recession.

The technology that made this new idea possible was blockchain. Initially written separately in Nakamoto's original paper, the two words—*block* and *chain*—succinctly described the technology and, by 2016, were ultimately combined through popular usage.

One of the clearer explanations of how blockchain works states it this way: "Blockchain owes its name to the way it stores transaction data—in blocks that are linked together to form a chain. As the number of transactions grows, so does the blockchain. Blocks record and confirm the time and sequence of transactions, which are then logged into the blockchain, within a discrete network governed by rules agreed on by the network participants."<sup>2</sup> Using timestamps and unique identifiers, the blocks cannot be deleted, rearranged, or modified in any way, and every player can see each move in the game.

"For example, if you bought a computer today, the company you purchase it from will have a record of your purchase in their internal systems," explains John Gardner, a BYU Marriott associate professor of operations

and global supply chain management who is researching blockchain. "The company will give you a receipt of the transaction generated from their system, but they are the ones who maintain that record.

"If you purchase that computer using blockchain technology, the blockchain will house that record of your purchase, and participants in the blockchain will share that record jointly," he continues. "If the company tried to change the record, all participants in the blockchain could view the discrepancy, and the system would not make the company's request valid unless the majority of participants agreed to it. Also, if you later sold the computer to someone else, the blockchain could be used to track the history of who has owned it, connecting it from owner to owner in a traceable record."

### No Referees Needed

Blockchain technology offers solutions to some of the most significant challenges in the world of traditional financial transactions:

**Cost.** Traditional business transactions can be expensive. Intermediaries often charge fees for their services, whether it's a credit card company adding a surcharge to run a card or a mortgage broker charging fees to

close a loan. Blockchain eliminates the need for any middleman involvement and the accompanying cost.

**Timeliness.** It's not unusual for some financial transactions to take days to finalize. Banks may need to verify funds, and title companies need to confirm ownership. Each step of a transaction can take time. Using blockchain technology, transactions of any kind—financial or otherwise—are processed much more quickly, sometimes in mere minutes.

**Immutability.** No participant in a blockchain transaction can alter any of the information after it's been recorded to the ledger. If a mistake on a transaction has been made, a new transaction must be created to correct the error. Both transactions must be validated by—and will be visible to—everyone involved.

**Ownership.** Participants can clearly track where an asset came from and how ownership has changed over time.

**Transparency.** A single, shared ledger becomes the decisive resource to see and verify all the information regarding any transaction.

**Accessibility.** Half of the people in the world don't have access to a bank account or other methods of facilitating transactions. However, the number of people in the world who have computers and mobile devices is increasing dramatically, and blockchain puts the power of transaction into the hands of people around the world.

Ultimately, trust—a key element that people seek in any transaction—is inherent in blockchain. Because each block builds upon the one before it and is visible to every participant, then fraud, cyberattacks, and corruption become immediately apparent. As a result, the community of participants polices itself, much like the group of neighborhood soccer players keeps score, calls out fouls, and assesses penalties.

### Running with It

“What the internet did for communications, I think blockchain will do for trusted transactions,” IBM president and CEO Ginni Rometty explained in a June 2017 interview.<sup>3</sup> Much of the initial growth and excitement behind the internet stemmed from the fact that this new technology provided an amazing way to connect across the globe.

The same might be said about blockchain and the possibilities it opens for smoother transactions across every industry. “Blockchain has many potential applications for sharing transaction information immediately between parties,” observes Gardner. “Parties can set up smart contracts that automatically transact when specified conditions are met. These features have the potential for reducing how long it takes for customers (individuals or organizations) to make and receive purchases. It could also enable multiple parties to share desired levels of information across entire supply chains. For example, blockchain could be used to provide needed traceability on the sources of food or drugs.”

And that's just the beginning.

At the root of this newly tapped potential lies the ability of blockchain to facilitate the process of recording transactions and tracking a wide variety of assets, from the tangible (such as houses, cars, cash, or land) to the intangible (such as patents or copyrights). Virtually anything of value can be tracked and traded on a blockchain network,

reducing risk, cutting costs, and providing trust for every player in the game.

In addition, there is not just one type of blockchain, Gardner says: “There are several types of blockchain that can be adapted to many different uses. Bitcoin operates on a blockchain that relies on the exchange of cryptocurrencies by users with pseudonymity, using encrypted identities on a public network. Whereas businesses may use blockchain in a private, permissioned network with known identities.”

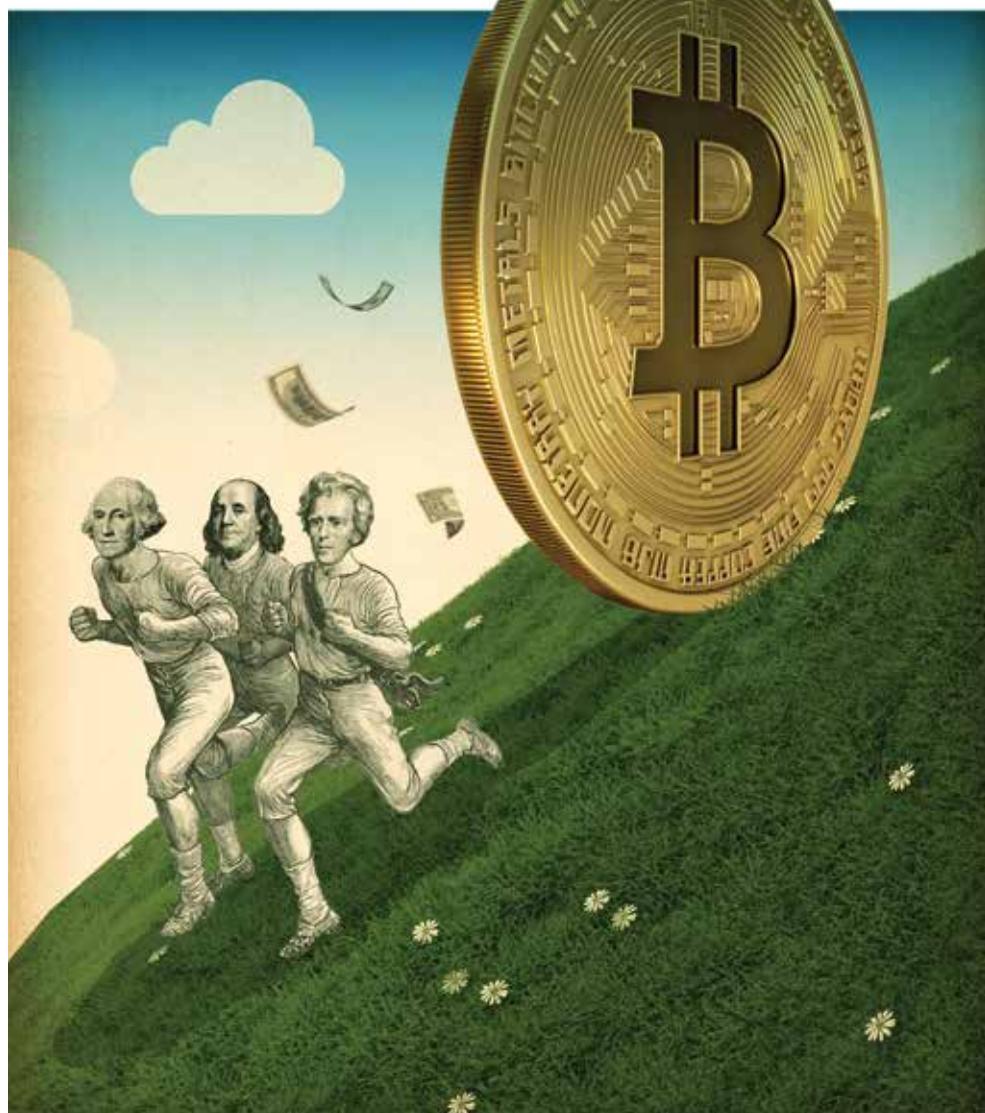
For example, Daimler, the company that makes Mercedes-Benz cars, borrowed \$114 million using blockchain technology. A traditional loan would have required drawing up contracts, communicating with investors, and extensive administration.

Instead, Daimler executed the loan between the two companies using smart contracts that relied on a private blockchain to automate the loan's order book, create agreements, and check on payments. With this blockchain-based loan, all involved parties have instant access to an identical, distributed record.

### A Business Hot Shot

A private blockchain is created around four main concepts: a shared ledger, permissions, consensus, and smart contracts.

The idea of a shared ledger is the same for both public and private blockchains.





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Transactions are recorded only once, eliminating the duplication of effort that has long been part of doing business. The record of the transaction is shared among everyone in the network through replication. Finally, the ledger is permissioned so participants can see only those transactions they're authorized to view.

While a private blockchain can be permissionless, just like a public blockchain, it also offers organizations the option of creating permissions in order to restrict network input and access to transaction details for certain participants. This type of control allows companies to comply with data protection regulations such as those required by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

In a business network where the participants are known and trusted, transactions can be verified and committed to the ledger through a variety of different consensus methods—including proof of stake, meaning validators must hold a certain percentage of the network's total value; multi-signature, meaning a majority of validators must agree that a transaction is valid; and practical Byzantine Fault Tolerance, which is an algorithm designed to settle disputes among network participants when one participant generates different output from the others in the same network.

Lastly, in private blockchain networks, organizations can create a smart contract, or an agreement or set of rules, that will govern transactions. Contracts are stored on the blockchain and executed automatically

when the criteria are met. Smart contracts can have numerous clauses that provide security superior to traditional contract law while decreasing the delays and costs that often accompany traditional contracts.

### Just the First Half

The true potential of blockchain has yet to be determined. Although Gardner is quick to point out that he is not an expert on blockchain, as a global supply chain professor he is especially interested in how blockchain might be used in his field.

“Blockchain is certainly a dynamic, expanding technology with applications that change every day,” he points out. “We are in the early stages of its development.”

The 2018 annual report from the Global Blockchain Business Council notes that “blockchain technology could be the most transformative technology since the internet.” The report continues,

*The World Wide Web revolutionized commerce, communication, and media, but so many assets of value—currency, passports, votes, and land titles—have yet to be digitized. The delay in progress has been tied, in large part, to the lack of security offered by legacy platforms. Blockchain technology provides an elegant solution to that—and many other flaws in existing systems.*

. . . [Blockchain technology] provides a secure, efficient solution whenever individuals or organizations need to store or transfer assets or information. As it is adopted across sectors and geographies, blockchain technology

*will reshape many of the systems powering contemporary life.<sup>4</sup>*

Blockchain may indeed profoundly change how the world works—and how we work in the world. The next time you buy a house, you may not have to sign a huge stack of papers that need to be sent to several different stakeholders. In five years, your primary care physician may be able to track—and share—medications and treatments with other key healthcare providers. And someday, you may even use bitcoins to purchase groceries. **M**

### Notes

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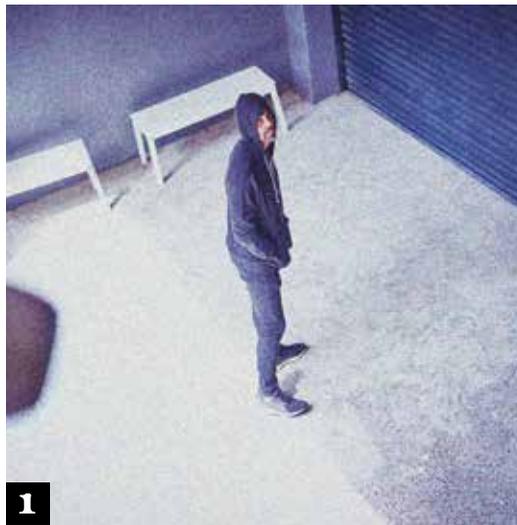
### About the Author

Christopher K. Bigelow works as a freelance writer, editor, publisher, and university instructor. He got his master’s in creative writing at Brigham Young University. A father of five and grandfather of one, he lives with his family in Provo, Utah.

## around the COOLER

### 1. IDENTIFIES FLIGHT RISK

A judge typically determines whether a criminal defendant should await trial in jail or at home. But using data from hundreds of thousands of New York City cases, a group of economists and computer scientists trained an algorithm to predict whether defendants were a flight risk—and the algorithm dramatically outperformed rulings of experienced judges.



# Powered by AI

*The term artificial intelligence may conjure up images of robots whizzing around in the future. But the truth is, AI has already arrived and is impacting our everyday lives by performing tasks normally handled by humans. Chances are you've already done something today that was powered by AI, and you didn't even realize it. And what's even more surprising, many AI algorithms can actually learn and become even more proficient at the tasks they are designed to perform.*

### 2. FILTERS EMAIL

Once upon a time, junk email wasn't filtered. The tedious task of identifying spam was left to us—and it took up precious time. Today basic artificial intelligence filters emails before we even see them, sending unwanted messages into a junk folder. AI even learns from our personal preferences and adjusts its rules based on our individual behavior.



### 3. OFFERS ONLINE SUPPORT

When shopping online, have you been invited to chat with a customer service rep? Turns out that rep on the other end may not be human. In many cases, you're talking to an AI chat-support bot. While many bots are programmed for simple automated responses, some can actually share info from a website.

### 4. PREDICTS EARTHQUAKES

Each year, hundreds of people die in earthquakes, so predicting the strength and location of earthquakes could potentially save lives. Scientists at Los Alamos National Laboratory created a simulation to train an AI algorithm that listens for tremors and earthquakes. The model performed with astonishing accuracy.

### 5. DETECTS FRAUD

Most of us have received a text or email asking if we've made a particular purchase on a credit or debit card. To detect possibly fraudulent purchases, many financial institutions use an AI system, which learns to identify signs that a transaction may be fraudulent based on a large sample of both legitimate and fraudulent purchases.

### 6. PROMOTES MENTAL HEALTH

Facebook previously maintained a suicide-prevention tool that relied on users to report concerns about a friend's risk of suicide. Now the social media network has an AI algorithm that automatically detects suicidal tendencies and then notifies a human team who reviews the case and reaches out.

### 7. GENERATES NEWS

The AI software Wordsmith is actually generating financial summaries and sports reports distributed by Yahoo, Fox, and AP. While these AI-written stories still need to be set up by an actual person, simple articles such as those written for data-driven industries that don't require a lot of synthesis can be quickly and easily generated.

# TRANSFORMING TODAY'S C DETS INTO TOMORROW'S LE DER'S



BY KELLENE RICKS ADAMS  
PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF  
BYU ROTC AND BYU PHOTO

Six months before he returned home from serving an LDS mission, Tyler Meidell started thinking about what his next steps in life should be. Through his mission experience, he had discovered a passion for serving and leading others, and he wanted to pursue that course when he came home.

“I had a strong desire to be a good leader,” says Meidell, now a senior in accounting at BYU Marriott. “I had heard my dad talk about how the military—and especially the ROTC—is a great place to develop leaders, so I decided to explore my options there.”

Meidell’s father had gone through the ROTC (Reserve Officer Training Corps) program and then flown Apache helicopters for six years before leaving the service when Meidell was a toddler. “I was young when he got out,” Meidell says, “so I wasn’t familiar with the military life and never had any intention of going the ROTC route. But when I came home focused on developing my leadership skills and abilities, that’s where I looked.”

His first semester at BYU, Meidell got involved in the Army ROTC program and was immediately impressed with the caliber of people he met and the experiences he had. He’d found what he was looking for. Now a platoon leader at BYU, Meidell finished cadet training at Fort Knox this past summer, where he was ranked in the top fifteen of his platoon.



“This is exactly the kind of experience I was looking for when I chose BYU’s ROTC program,” Meidell notes. “I had been told it was one of the best leadership development opportunities around, and that’s definitely been the case.”

### CHARACTER BUILDING

Through the years, BYU’s ROTC program has built a reputation as one of the strongest in the nation, regularly emerging among the top performers when competing in the Ranger Challenge and other competitions, such as honor guard, drill team, and Sandhurst. In addition, on a consistent basis, approximately 50 percent of BYU’s graduating cadets rank in the top 30 percent of graduating cadets nationwide.

Just this year, the US Army Cadet Command awarded BYU’s Army ROTC unit with the MacArthur Award, an honor given annually to the top programs in eight different regions. The schools are selected from among the 275 senior Army ROTC units nationwide and are recognized for their ideals of “duty, honor, and country.”

Those ideals line up perfectly with the values that BYU students bring with them to the program, says Army Lt. Col. Chip Cook, a professor of military science and director of the Army ROTC battalion. “In my opinion,

our cadets are head and shoulders above the rest because they are already committed to those values,” he says. “In fact, our cadets are often committed to an even higher set of standards because of their upbringing in the gospel. We don’t have to try to convince them to follow certain standards, because they are already living them.”

Air Force Major Benjamin Snell, an aerospace studies instructor and assistant director of the Air Force ROTC detachment, agrees. “Our mission is to develop cadets of character into leaders with honor,” he says. “The cadets here are outstanding to begin with. We provide experiences that help them become even better, so that when they raise their hand to the square during their commissioning, they have a sense of duty and patriotism, a greater understanding of leadership principles.”



### PREPARING TO LEAD

The ROTC program is one of three pathways that individuals can follow to become commissioned officers in the US military (the other two are service academies and officer candidate schools), and it is the largest source of officers during times of peace. One of the largest in the nation, BYU’s ROTC program includes both Army and Air Force battalions; both units also include students from Utah Valley University, the Army program also includes students from Southern Utah University.

Coursework for Army and Air Force units is similar: freshmen sign up for a one-hour physical training class that meets three times a week, as well as an introductory course that includes a weekly one-hour session of classroom instruction and a three-hour leadership lab. That course load continues through the sophomore, junior, and senior years but intensifies as students advance through the program, shoulder added responsibility, accept a variety of leadership assignments, and become increasingly involved in program activities.

“In the ROTC program, not only do you get countless opportunities to show you can lead, but afterwards you receive invaluable feedback from others—both those who have done the same thing you are doing as well as those you led,” says Stephen Bohn, a sociology junior in the Air Force program. “And while it can be uncomfortable to put yourself out there when you may not know exactly what to do, the opportunity to figure it out for yourself and then learn how to improve and do better is amazing.

“The ROTC provides a place for you to learn to lead when consequences are small so that eventually you’re prepared to lead when



the consequences are big,” he continues. “I’m looking forward to sharing what I’ve already learned in my time here and helping others get to where I’m at. At the same time, I’m learning from those above me, so I can get where they are.”

### IMMEDIATE CAMARADERIE

The number of students involved in the program varies from year to year, but on average, both programs have more than one hundred cadets. The freshman class is the largest, as incoming students are encouraged to experience the program and become familiar with the expectations and commitments before they decide whether to continue in the program.

Becoming familiar with the program was both daunting and exciting for Cathryn Emily Guzzwell, a senior majoring in sociology. “I didn’t know much about the program at all,” says Rollins. “In fact, at my high school graduation, the principal had everyone stand up who was planning on going into the armed forces. I leaned over to my friend and said, ‘I would never do that.’ Two months later, I had signed up with the National Guard.”

That change of heart came from Guzzwell’s desire to be pushed out of her comfort zone. She began her service in the National Guard and started attending BYU–Idaho

before deciding to serve a mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Upon her return, she realized that she wanted to become an officer. “As enlisted personnel, you work hard to accomplish a mission, but in the end, it’s the officer who is making the decisions,” she explains. “I love the idea of changing something for the better and helping an organization work more efficiently. I was also drawn in by the possibilities of serving others, and I realized that I could do that best as an officer.”

When Guzzwell transferred to BYU, she looked into the ROTC program. “I was super nervous,” she admits. “One of the biggest things that almost stopped me from joining was fear. I’ve always been afraid of trying out for things—sports teams, choir, musicals, whatever. I was afraid of doing this, but other than serving my mission, this is the best decision I’ve made in my life so far. I’ve learned never to let fear of the unknown stop you from doing what you want.”



***“THE ROTC PROVIDES A PLACE FOR YOU TO  
LEARN TO LEAD WHEN CONSEQUENCES ARE  
SMALL SO THAT EVENTUALLY YOU’RE PREPARED  
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One of the things that helped Guzzwell overcome her fear was the almost immediate camaraderie she felt upon entering the program. “Incoming cadets are divided into cohorts, so from day one, you have fifteen to twenty instant friends who are there to support you and who are invested in your success as a student, cadet, and future officer,” says Cook. “In addition, older cadets are assigned to lead these groups in various capacities as well. And as they get more involved in the program, our cadets find an incredible support system.”

In fact, overseeing and helping incoming cadets is one of the first assigned leadership responsibilities in the program. “We encourage our leaders to be right there for the first-year cadets, asking them how they can help and what they can do,” says Cook. “They become friends. That’s one of the key aspects of leadership: caring about your people and motivating them to do challenging things.”

As the cadets meet together in their classroom instruction, leadership labs, and physical training, their relationships fortify. The labs are particularly designed to help cadets get to know each other better. “In the labs, students learn how to work as a team and

have opportunities to enhance their leadership abilities,” Cook says. In the Army program, much of the lab training involves using paintball or airsoft weapons while conducting squad- and patrol-size missions. These missions include reconnaissance, ambushes, and raids and also make use of land navigation and first-aid skills.

On the Air Force side, the labs typically cover a wide variety of topics. “We have guest speakers come from across the nation,” explains Snell. “They are experts in their field and cover everything from health and wellness to the different career opportunities available.”

#### THE DEGREE AND BEYOND

While the ROTC program is designed to be demanding and transformative, cadets are encouraged to focus on their primary objective: earning their degrees. “Our cadets are involved in a wide range of colleges and programs,” observes Cook. “We have students involved from BYU Marriott majors, but we also have students studying languages, sciences, the arts. We probably have students in just about every college on campus.”

In many instances, significant financial assistance and scholarships are available, sometimes even before a cadet has committed to the program. As cadets progress through the program and sign on the dotted line, they become eligible for scholarships to cover things like tuition, room, board, books, and living expenses.

Upon graduation, ROTC cadets become commissioned officers in the US military, entering as second lieutenants and usually signing an agreement to serve for at least four years of active duty, although sometimes National Guard and Reserve commitments are also available. Cadets can pursue a wide range of careers based on their aptitude and interest. Meidell’s first choice of service is as an infantry officer, while Bohn hopes to work as a personnel officer and Guzzwell plans on working in hospital administration.

Guzzwell’s time with the ROTC has changed not just her future career but also the way she will live her life moving forward. “When I joined the military, I learned that it’s not all about me,” says Guzzwell, who grew up as the only girl in a family of four brothers. “I never realized how spoiled I was, but when you’re in the military, you learn pretty quickly that it’s not about what you want to do. It’s about helping the organization and the people you are with to be successful. It’s completely changed me.

“The ROTC’s focus on teaching leadership skills has given me confidence that I didn’t have before, even in difficult situations,” she continues. “I know that I can make good decisions under pressure, that I can work with other people, that I can do hard things. And that confidence helps me in every aspect of my life, not just in the military. I’ll be a better wife, a better mother, a better person because of my ROTC experience.” **M**

## SUITS AND FATIGUES

BYU’s Air Force ROTC was instituted on 18 September 1947; four years later, the BYU unit became a detachment. The Army joined the ROTC program on 29 April 1968. That same year a building was constructed specifically for the ROTC program; the Daniel H. Wells ROTC Building was dedicated in October 1968.

Extracurricular activities at that time included a drill team, rifle marksmanship team, color guard, and the sponsor corps. At various times, ROTC choirs, bands, and ranger companies have also been organized.

Currently the BYU ROTC program is part of the BYU Marriott School of Business, which makes perfect sense, says Army Lt. Col. Chip Cook, who graduated from the school’s Executive MBA program in August 2018. “BYU Marriott is dedicated to building leaders of business, and the ROTC is dedicated to building leaders of the military,” he says. “We share the same mission—our leaders just end up working in different spaces.”





# Building a Tech PM Bridge

**AS GRANT MCQUEEN**, director of the MBA program, spoke with MBA students during their exit interviews, he perceived a common thread: many students wanted to develop stronger tech product management (PM) skills. Meanwhile, McQueen also noticed that companies wanted to hire graduates with PM talent and experience. He knew BYU Marriott was up to the challenge.

Tech PM is an emerging field in which professionals oversee the creation of a digital product. Product managers supervise the PM life cycle, which includes researching, designing, defining product requirements, and engineering the product.

To give students more PM experience, the MBA department created an MBA tech product management course in Winter 2018 semester. “This class offers students a unique opportunity to focus solely on overseeing the

management of a project,” McQueen says, “and it also generates great support from the local community.”

Professionals from companies such as Ancestry, Microsoft, Amazon, and Adobe enter the classroom to teach about tech PM in their respective fields and to interact with students, which provides a unique and treasured dynamic.

“My favorite part of the class is the guest lectures,” says Debahuti Panigrahi, currently a second-year MBA student from Phulbani, India. “I

learned different perspectives from professionals representing a variety of companies.”

The professionals bring not only industry expertise but also tech PM projects. Groups of three to five BYU students each tackle a different project for the companies by approaching it through one of the elements of the PM life cycle. For instance, one group was assigned to work on WeRemember.com, a project for Ancestry. The students focused specifically on the research portion of the life cycle by reaching out to Ancestry’s potential users to gather data about what features to include on the website.

“I landed my summer internship with Ancestry mostly because of my project from the class,” says Nate Johnson, a second-year MBA student from Spokane, Washington. “This class was valuable, as it gave me access to one of Utah’s top-tier tech companies and had practical application.”

The professionals were impressed with the results from the student groups. “Having a smart, engaged team of students perform user research and deliver a product design based on that research was amazing,” says Brian Hansen, senior vice president of emerging businesses at Ancestry. “We are currently implementing many of the team’s proposed elements in our initial launch.”

Because wait lists for future sections of the course are growing and Silicon Slopes companies are asking for additional opportunities to participate in the class, the MBA program is in the process of adding sections of the course. “The goal of the class is to build a better bridge between BYU Marriott and tech leadership careers in PM,” says Jaekob Chenina, a product manager at Adobe and the adjunct professor who teaches the course. “We have been successful in achieving this goal since we created stronger relationships with project sponsors and several students landed jobs with the sponsor companies. And, of course,” he adds, “there was a tremendous amount of experiential student learning that took place.”

—SYDNEY ZENGER

*“This class offers students a unique opportunity to focus solely on overseeing the management of a project, and it also generates great support from the local community.”*



GREATNESS



MILK CHOCOLATE

FAITH

JOB

PARKING TICKETS



DIPLOMA

FRIENDS

LOVE





# BREAD FOR LIFE'S JOURNEY

BY JEFF STRONG ILLUSTRATIONS BY SHAW NIELSEN

A graduation speaker should give graduates a glimpse into who they are—supplying an anchor that allows them to stand firm in the storms of life. Providing that anchor requires unbelievable intelligence, insight, and wisdom—or, if a speaker doesn't have those, answers from a really good questionnaire!

For that reason, I conducted a survey to gain a small glimpse into the hearts, minds, and souls of the students in BYU Marriott's graduating class of 2018.

To begin, why did these students say they chose Brigham Young University, and specifically BYU Marriott? Well, the most common answers were what you might expect:

- The school offers the major I wanted.
- BYU Marriott was the best place to get a good job.
- The BYU Marriott name looks good on a résumé.

However, only 3 percent admitted to coming for BYU Creamery's chocolate milk. What shocked me is that "because accountants have more fun" was cited by only 2.6 percent. And not a single student chose BYU Marriott for the great parking at the Tanner Building.

Of course, students have hopes and dreams when they arrive on campus. What were the ones most commonly cited in the survey? Overwhelmingly, to

- Get a good education.
- Land a great job.
- Make great friends.
- Learn in a faith-based environment.

Those dreams evolved during the time they were at BYU. Many students responded that they began to realize they were more capable than they had originally thought. They also made major life decisions about love, faith, majors, friends, and how to move forward with the rest of their lives.

Many of our BYU Marriott students also experienced disappointment. I have a special place in my heart for these students. My disappointments—especially the big ones—have been some of the most constructive experiences of my life. My advice to these graduates, as well as to each of us, is to own those experiences. Learn from them. Do not let them define or overwhelm you. Use the energy they stoke in you to forge ahead with greater wisdom and determination.

Most of our students come to BYU with not much other than their dreams and talents, yet year after year, they leave with far more than that. This year's class indicated they would be taking many things with them when they walk out the doors of the Tanner Building for the last time:

- A degree (100 percent)
- New friends for life (82 percent)
- A good job (71 percent)
- Extra pounds (56 percent)
- A spouse (38 percent)
- Children (24 percent)
- Unpaid parking tickets (9 percent)

Education is supposed to change people. How has a BYU Marriott education changed our students in the class of 2018? Here are some of the things they shared:

- I have new and better priorities.
- I am better at critical thinking. (At least I have some.)
- I am more confident.
- I am at peace with my choices.
- I am more aware of my potential.
- I know who I am and what matters to me.

Based on these responses, it seems to me that these students received the best kind of education here—much more than just an academic one.

With this picture of the BYU Marriott class of 2018 providing a backdrop of sorts, I would like to share six thoughts that hopefully will be a little bread in the satchels that these graduates—and each of us—carry as we go forward in our life's journey.

## FAITH

Fear is the most limiting force in life. Ralph Waldo Emerson purportedly said, "Fear defeats more people than any other one thing in the world." I agree. Because of fear, far too often we don't reach for the stars, believe in ourselves or others, give of ourselves completely to people and causes, express ourselves freely, try new and difficult things, or even dream.

Too often we choose not to do these things because we are afraid of the disappointment or pain we may feel if things don't work out.

Faith is the antidote. It starts with wanting something enough to take a stand against fear. We choose faith—faith that God created us to take on challenges, to make and overcome mistakes, to learn and grow, and to achieve the righteous and necessary things we need to accomplish in life. And faith that the world is not too crazy for us to handle.

I am not suggesting that we won't encounter difficult and painful things, including failure. We will. But far too often we underestimate ourselves, feel fear, and fail to act.

When it comes right down to it, some things can only be learned by doing them. And the learning is greatest right on the edge of where our knowledge ends and uncertainty begins. We have to step beyond the light into the darkness. Don't be afraid of this. Be willing, for wise and good purposes, to take that step. If you do, you will learn lessons reserved only for those who are willing to act without having all the answers.

" The learning is greatest right on the edge of where our knowledge ends and uncertainty begins. "

## DREAM

I believe in the power of dreams. I heard this quote once: *There is nothing like a dream to create the future.* That's powerful.

In my spare time, I coach high school track, specifically hurdlers. Jensen was one of my hurdlers. During his junior season, Jensen made a lot of progress, and by the end of the year, he was competitive, though nothing close to a champion. But he had a dream. He came to me and said, "I want to stand on the medal podium in the state championships next year. I am willing to do everything I can to achieve that."

Candidly, I thought it was a pretty audacious goal. But I was inspired by his desire and humility. So we devised and began to implement a plan.

The short version of his story is that, fueled by the thought of standing on that podium, he threw himself into his training with extraordinary determination. Along the way, he experienced many setbacks. Races he lost. Injuries he suffered. Doubts he faced. But he pressed forward, and steady improvement came. In the last meet of the year prior to state, he ran the best race of his life, securing the last qualifying spot for the state championships.

Eighteen hurdlers qualified for state. To stand on the podium, he needed to finish in the top six. In the semifinals, he ran the fifth fastest qualifying time in the field of eighteen, posting his personal best time by a wide margin. It was a spectacular performance for him. Perfection. With this, he was one race and about fifteen seconds away from realizing his dream.

The finals came. It was incredibly exciting. The starter's pistol fired. I wish I could tell you that he made the podium that day. He didn't. He had needed to run a perfect race—like he had in the semifinals—to take his place on the winner's podium. Instead, he came out of the blocks, made a minor mistake on one of the early hurdles, lost a bit of momentum, and never recovered.

I have never coached an athlete who took a defeat so hard. Jensen was inconsolable. His grief seemed exactly proportionate to the size of his heart and the sacrifices he had made to chase his dream. But what he didn't realize at that moment is that he had already won before he ever stepped in the starting blocks that day. He had already achieved something that no one except himself really thought possible. He also learned a life lesson that was more valuable than one hundred medals: he could accomplish extraordinary things if he dreamed, believed in himself, and went to work.

Jensen is now serving a mission in Fiji. He recently sent me an email. With his permission, I share part of it:



*I remember one thing you repeatedly told us regarding race day. "Practice is the time to think and prepare, but race day is the time to just run." I am disappointed I lost, but there will always be another mountain ahead, and sometimes the peak won't be the best view. But every climb prepares us for the future. The things that I have learned—and will learn—as I go through life are much bigger than the one race I lost. So I guess the secret to this life is just to enjoy every mountain or challenge as it comes, including the bad views and rocky paths, the victories and defeats. Always remember who is in charge and who the Lord wants us to become. And above all, when it is time to race, have faith and "just run."*

Having dreams that ignite us is powerful. Dreams lift us above uncertainty, fear, opposition, failure, disappointment, pain, and weakness. And whether a dream is achieved or shattered doesn't ultimately matter. We can always create a new dream and begin again. The point is to move forward with great purpose, fueled by a steady stream of exciting dreams, chased with passion—and more often missed than realized. The value is in the creating and chasing.

## MAPS

I am a believer in what Elon Musk once said: “You should take the approach that you’re wrong. . . . Your goal is to be less wrong.”

Two years ago, I took a group of young men on a fifty-mile hike in the Uinta Mountains. We had maps and a GPS system to help us, but generally we just followed the trails. Along our way, we periodically chose to leave the trail and hike through the forest, mostly for the adventure. In spite of having great tools, we frequently got lost, which was frustrating. Much of our energy and strength was misdirected and wasted as we floundered.

Metaphorically, the most common factor I have seen that causes people to fall short of their potential or desires in business—and in life—is having inaccurate maps. Maps that do not represent things “as they really are” (Jacob 4:13). What do I mean by inaccurate maps in this context? Here are a few examples:

- Diagnosing incorrectly why a business is working or not working
- Having only a superficial understanding of a customer’s needs and wants and how to best meet them
- Underestimating one’s competitors
- Setting goals that are either far too easy or far too difficult to achieve
- Or, perhaps most importantly, relying on personal maps that indicate that the reason for *our* failure is *someone else’s* fault

When our maps are inaccurate, all of our positive attributes can actually work against us. A great sense of urgency just means we get lost faster. A sense of determination means we just go farther off track. Great enthusiasm means we are excited about being lost.

When our maps are accurate, our chances for success are obviously much better. So be skeptical about your maps—be brutally honest with yourself, be humble, and listen and learn from those who know the territory better than you do. Go out of your way to validate your maps, and be willing to change them when they are wrong.

## SACRIFICE

There is little that is worthwhile that doesn’t require great sacrifice. Enthusiastically sacrifice the things that are not important—you know (and will know) what those things are. Knowing is usually not the issue; rather, it’s having the discipline to eliminate the unimportant things from your life. However, never sacrifice the things that *do* matter: people you love, principles you believe in, your own health, your vitality, and your reputation.

I believe that, ultimately, we become what we truly desire. The issue is that we sometimes mortgage what we desire in the long run for what we desire in the moment, and then we are surprised and disappointed when our real dreams, our long-term dreams, are not achieved. Make sure you sacrifice the right things for the right things.

## GREATNESS

Over the years, I have frequently engaged with students and other young people about the question of what it takes to be successful. All of us, in our hearts, want to be great. Over time, my understanding of

what it means to be great has changed. “Everybody can be great,” said Martin Luther King Jr., “because everybody can serve. . . . You only need a heart full of grace, a soul generated by love.”

Many years ago, my family moved from Arkansas to Australia. Our nine-year-old son, Zach, had experienced some challenges adjusting and “fitting in” in Arkansas. My wife and I were concerned that moving to a foreign country would amplify his challenges. The time came for the first day of school in Sydney, and we took Zach to meet his new teacher. Zach was nervous. We were nervous.

This skilled and caring teacher had a gift to see inside Zach and help unlock Zach’s skill, potential, and confidence. In a matter of moments, the challenging and complicated world of our son turned into a safe, happy, and supportive place. This teacher “got” Zach. He saw Zach’s



“ I see this same kind of greatness all the time in people who we will never hear about and who will never be seen through the lens of our popular culture as ‘great.’ ”

talents rather than his limitations. He made sure Zach’s classmates, who could have easily rejected the new foreigner, also saw what made Zach great. In the coming months, we watched our young son find himself in the most unlikely of places: a country and a school where he, in actuality, didn’t really fit. All because of a gifted teacher who may never achieve any degree of fame or fortune—except in our lives and our memories.

Many years removed from this important moment in his life, Zach, who is now a student at BYU, observes this about that life-changing teacher: “There is a big difference between people who are supposed to care and those who actually do care. The difference in their impact on you is massive. I knew that teacher genuinely cared about me.”

I see this same kind of greatness all the time in people who we will never hear about and who will never be seen through the lens of our popular culture as “great.” But they are great. Truly great in ways that truly matter. These individuals are regular people who make the world a better place in small but incredibly meaningful ways because they care and they take action. In all my time hanging out with industry titans, I never saw any of them do anything I considered greater than what Zach’s teacher did for him. Anyone can be great.

## YOU

One of the absolute certainties of life is that, someday, it ends for all of us. Hopefully, it will be after a very long and abundant life, but that doesn’t always happen. In the last ten years of my career, four of my colleagues have passed away long before their time, leaving behind friends and loved ones and an avalanche of questions about why they were taken so young.

Take care of yourself. Savor every minute of every day of your life. There is only one you. You are not immortal. You can and will wear down and wear out, physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. Get a good night’s sleep as many nights as you can. Drink plenty of water. Eat healthy and nutritious food. Exercise.

Make sure you take the time you need to disengage from work, to re-energize, and to connect with the people and experiences that fill you with love and energy. Invest in your relationships; they are what provide happiness and meaning to your life. Challenge and stretch your mind by learning new and difficult (but worthwhile) things—things that don’t have anything to do with your job.

Feed your soul with love, truth, light, and service. Love and lift others along the way.

## REMEMBER

Thirty years ago, I too was a graduate of this great school. For the past two years, I have had the privilege of actually sitting with our students on campus, watching them in action, day by day, up close and personal. It has been a thrilling and eye-opening experience. I consider this place and my time with these students to be sacred. I love this place and the possibilities it creates for all of us.

I love who our BYU Marriott family is. I love what we stand for. I love what I know these students from the class of 2018 will do in the next thirty years for their families and friends, their communities, and their work. Because of them, I am optimistic about their future—and ours.

I have learned that our lives do not turn out exactly how we have planned. But when we remember these six pieces of bread—have faith, be a dreamer who acts, strive for more accurate maps, make the right sacrifices, be great (but remember what true greatness is), and take care of yourselves and the people who need you—we can find sustenance, happiness, and meaning in life. And we can make a difference. **M**

## ABOUT THE SPEAKER

A twenty-nine-year-old veteran in the consumer packaged goods industry, Jeff Strong is the former global president and chief customer officer for Johnson & Johnson. A National Advisory Council member, Strong retired in 2016 and joined BYU Marriott, where he launched the highly successful BYU Marriott Marketing Lab, a student-run marketing consulting firm. In July, Strong began his service as mission president in the Arkansas Bentonville Mission. This text is adapted from his convocation remarks given 27 April 2018.

# School News

## BYU Awarded for Support of CMA Program



Parker Davis (center) with IMA national leadership. (Photo courtesy of the IMA)

BYU received the Institute of Certified Management Accountants Board of Regents Recognition Award for the university's long-time support of the certified management accountant (CMA) program. Each year, the institute identifies one organization that supports its employees or students in their pursuit of the CMA certification. The first university to earn the award, BYU joins the ranks of Hormel, Johnson & Johnson, Kimball International, and Lafarge North America as recipients of the recognition award.

"BYU Marriott faculty and student leaders were excited when we received the news," says **Monte Swain**, professor of accountancy. "We weren't anticipating this at all because no university has ever received the recognition, but it's not extremely surprising because BYU students have unbelievable success taking this exam."

The number of students who take the CMA exam has increased to approximately fifty students each year, more than any other US university. BYU's 80 percent pass rate far exceeds the national average of 50 percent. In the past five years, three BYU students have received the highest student exam scores for their testing window.

According to Swain, all efforts to prepare students for the two-part exam are student-led initiatives, as the university has no formal training program or preparation course in place. Formed by students in 2012, the BYU chapter of the Institute of Management Accountants (IMA) helps students prepare for the exam by hosting speaker events, information sessions, and study groups. Students also arrange for study materials to be made available at the campus library to alleviate some of the costs of the exam.

"They have established a powerful community of students working together and supporting each other to take this exam," Swain says. "Professionals, not students, typically take the CMA exam, but BYU has flipped the script. Students are coming out of BYU with a professional certification behind their names, which will open doors for them."

On 17 June, the award was presented at the IMA Annual Conference and Expo held in Indianapolis. **Parker Davis**, a 2015 accounting graduate and former IMA student chapter officer, accepted the award on behalf of his alma mater.

The IMA previously endorsed the university for its excellence in management accounting education in 2014.

## Publication Ranks EMBA No. 25 Internationally

*The Economist* has ranked the BYU Marriott EMBA program No. 25 in the world and No. 16 among US and joint US-international programs.

"We appreciate recognition by *The Economist*," says **Grant McQueen**, MBA program director. "Our EMBA program has a lot of momentum and excitement due in large part to our new curriculum and our association with fast-growing companies in Utah's Silicon Slopes community."

The BYU Marriott EMBA scored high in numerous subrankings as well, including No. 1 in percentage of students who have been promoted or grown their own company since graduation, No. 2 in career progression, and No. 10 in quality

of faculty. Rankings were tabulated from school data and survey responses from recent graduating classes.

## STUDENT NEWS

### Establishing a Name in Venture Capital



Team members Taylor Murphy, Corbin Coil, Rachel Whitlock and her baby, Sarah Wasden, Jared Fowler, and Matt Phillips.

Some observers of the BYU Marriott MBA team's victory at the global finals of the Venture Capital Investment Competition (VCIC) thought that the group's secret weapon was their experience making real investments through an experiential learning course back in Provo. Others believed it was the help of alumni, including members of the BYU Marriott team that won the same event two years ago. Still others guessed it was the team's faculty advisor, **Gary Williams**.

Or maybe it was the baby.

Regardless, judges and fellow participants alike agreed: the four men and two women on the BYU Marriott team were the undisputed champions, further solidifying the program as a leader in educating the next generation of venture capital professionals.

"BYU has entered a different era now in the VC world internationally," says Williams, who has helped guide BYU Marriott MBA teams to three consecutive top-three finishes at VCIC. "There's something about competing there and doing well often that changes the perception some people have of the university. It solidifies the quality of the program."

Of course, the team's strong performance can't be traced to one single factor. But it does all relate to Cougar Capital, an MBA course offering participants the

chance to invest millions of real dollars in real companies. Twenty-two companies are currently in the Cougar Capital portfolio, including Chatbooks, Homie, and Neurala. The fund has had numerous successful exits, leading to a three-times money-on-money return, which would place it in the top quartile of its peers.

“After the competition, we talked to other teams who asked us, ‘How do you prepare for this? What does your school

do to get you ready?’” says team member **Matt Phillips**, a recent MBA grad from Midvale, Utah. “We tell them about Cougar Capital, and they’re floored that we are investing real money, making real decisions, and being held accountable for the outcome of those decisions. That’s a fundamentally different learning experience than a lecture or a textbook.”

That experiential learning proved valuable at the VCIC finals. Teams

simulate the investment process, including interviewing entrepreneurs, choosing who they deem is the best to invest with, and negotiating terms—all while being judged by some of the top professionals in the field.

However, the BYU Marriott students had top professionals advising them as well. “BYU alumni and BYU Marriott alumni are generous with their time,” says team member **Taylor Murphy**, a

## New Dean, Interim Dean Announced



BYU’s academic vice president, James R. Rasband, announced that **Brigitte C. Madrian** has been named the ninth dean of the BYU Marriott School of Business. Madrian is currently the Aetna Professor of Public Policy and Corporate Management and the chair of the Markets, Business, and Government area in the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. She will join the school and begin her five-year term as dean on 1 January 2019.

“Dr. Madrian has a distinguished record of scholarship, teaching, and public service,” Rasband says. “She pairs her impressive record with wise judgment, deep roots at BYU, and a commitment to the mission and aims of the university. I am confident that she will lead the BYU Marriott School of Business with wisdom, energy, and vision.”

Madrian received a PhD in economics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and both a master’s degree and a bachelor’s degree in

economics from BYU. Before arriving at Harvard in 2006, she was on the faculty at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania (2003–2006), the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business (1995–2003), and the Harvard University Economics Department (1993–1995).

As an expert on behavioral economics and household finance, Madrian has focused her research on household saving and investment behavior. Her work in this area has impacted the design of employer-sponsored savings plans in the United States and has influenced pension reform legislation both in the United States and abroad.

Madrian is also currently serving as the codirector of the Household Finance Working Group at the National Bureau of Economic Research and is a member of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority Board of Governors, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Academic Research Council, and numerous additional advisory boards.

Rasband also announced that **Michael P. Thompson** will serve as interim dean of BYU Marriott from 1 July 2018 through 31 December 2018.

Thompson holds a bachelor’s degree in Greek from BYU in addition to a master’s degree in technical communication and a doctorate in rhetorical studies with a specialty in organizational communication from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in New York. A member of the BYU Marriott faculty since 1988, Thompson taught graduate-level management communication courses before serving six years as the chair of the Department of Organizational Leadership and Strategy. Thompson has served as an associate dean at BYU Marriott for the last thirteen years and was the recipient of the 2017 BYU Marriott School of Business Outstanding Faculty Award.

Madrian will replace **Lee T. Perry**, who served as dean from 2013 to 2018. Under Perry’s leadership, experiential learning opportunities were implemented and expanded; financial support for the school’s Whitmore Global Management Center and MBA scholarships, among others, was increased; and the school’s undergraduate programs were strengthened by the implementation of seven new majors. At the end of his term, Perry returned to the Department of Management as a strategy professor.

“I am grateful to Dean Perry for his dedicated service and outstanding leadership of the BYU Marriott School of Business,” Rasband says. “He has sacrificed much, not just during his deanship but throughout his career, to build the college. I admire his long record of setting aside his own passion for teaching and research to instead focus on providing opportunities for his colleagues and for our students. His committed service leaves behind a stronger college.”

# Jamaican Universities Take Home the Gold



BEASC Technologies won first place and \$30,000.

Usain Bolt, Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce, and the 1988 Olympic bobsled team aren't the only Jamaicans to bring home the top prize. BEASC Technologies, made up of students from Northern Caribbean University in Mandeville, Jamaica, took home first place and \$30,000 at the 2018 International Business Model Competition (IBMC), hosted by the Rollins Center for Entrepreneurship and Technology. During the competition, student teams compete for international recognition and prize money to help fund their startup companies.

BEASC Technologies aims to solve agricultural challenges in developing countries. The team's project helps local farmers use technology to manage beet armyworm infestations.

Second place and \$20,000 went to ECO-Structures Limited. Students from the University of the West Indies at Mona in Kingston, Jamaica, developed a way to repurpose plastic waste into construction aggregate. The environmentally friendly mixture will limit solid waste while advancing Jamaica's infrastructure goals.

"Our primary purposes for starting and continuing to champion the IBMC are to educate and inspire smarter entrepreneurs around the world, and this year's results are direct evidence of those purposes coming to pass," says **Jeff Brown**, IBMC director and Rollins Center associate director of operations. "It is so rewarding to see the impact this competition is making."

More than five thousand teams from five hundred schools in thirty countries—from Canada to Chile to Cambodia—participated in affiliated competitions throughout the year, vying for a spot at this year's final. In May, thirty-six finalists gathered in downtown Provo to present their business ideas.

second-year student from Alpine, Utah. "They want to give back and help lighten other people's loads. They want to be helpful, and they want to be part of a team. You aren't treated as an annoying college kid—because we both went to BYU Marriott, we're the same."

Joining Murphy and Phillips on the winner's stand were 2018 MBA grads **Corbin Coil**, from Carrollton, Texas; **Jared Fowler**, from Shelley, Idaho; **Sarah Wasden**, from Las Vegas; and second-year student **Rachel Whitlock**, from Orem, Utah. And don't forget baby

Allison, Whitlock's then ten-month-old daughter, who helped team members unwind through games of peekaboo and who became the inspiration for the group's name: Team Allison.

## Confidence the Key to Success



BYU Marriott team (left to right): faculty advisor Greg Anderson, Maya Roney, Haley Kirk, and Suzy Cox.

This past April, a team of three women from BYU Marriott's information systems program entered the invite-only CoMIS IT Competition held at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis.

Of the twenty teams competing—five of which rank in the top twenty IS programs in the country—BYU Marriott's team took third place overall and first place among US schools. The team excelled as the first group of BYU Marriott students to ever compete in CoMIS.

"They simply had confidence," says Greg Anderson, associate teaching professor and team faculty advisor. "These women went there with the idea that they were going to win."

Participants from all over the United States, Canada, Hungary, and Singapore had twenty-four hours to research and create an argument from a business case. "It was fun that you had a set amount of time to complete the business case," says Suzy Cox, an IS senior from Mesa, Arizona. "We stayed up as long as we could and got about two hours of sleep."

Joining Cox on the BYU team were Haley Kirk, an IS junior from Marina, California, and Maya Roney, an IS junior from Jackson, Wyoming. After twenty-four hours of diligent effort, the BYU team advanced from the preliminary round to the final round.

"A lot of teams came up to us after our presentation and talked about how our method was different," Kirk says. "We had a lot of people tell us they respected the way we approached the case."

Competitions such as CoMIS offer

students the chance to test their business expertise, teamwork ability, and problem-solving skills against other brilliant minds in simulated real-world business conditions. This competition gave BYU Marriott students the opportunity to showcase the skills they have developed within their programs.

In an industry where men have traditionally held most of the positions, the team distinguished themselves by being the only all-female team to compete in the final round. “BYU Marriott has prepared women to be able to hold their own in a business setting where women are likely to be outnumbered,” Cox says. “This was something I recognized, and I wanted to do well because of it.”

### BYU Marriott Takes First at Silver Lake



Team members Blake Hannesson, Jon Chichoni, Erica Valimaki, and Michael Ellis.

As demonstrated in the iconic movies *Rudy*, *The Karate Kid*, and *Seabiscuit*, an underdog can rise from bottom to top, surprising both friends and foes. A team of BYU Marriott students has joined that list, taking first place in the Silver Lake Private Equity Case Competition.

In a majority of past Silver Lake competitions, finalists have mainly been Ivy League and NYU students. Having a BYU team not only make it to the final round but also win the competition was a big surprise to the East Coast participants and judges.

“Our competitors were all surprised at first that BYU won, but in talking with them about what BYU does, there was a feeling of respect,” says **Blake Hannesson**, a 2018 finance grad from New Fairfield, Connecticut. “It was fun to stand out and feel a little bit different.”

Silver Lake is the largest nationwide competition offering students the opportunity to explore private equity. Students were challenged with picking a company

worth at least \$500 million and performing an LBO (leveraged buyout) analysis. Using their analysis, they were tasked with developing a thesis and presentation on the LBO research.

“The last night before the competition, we worked in the Tanner Building until we got kicked out at midnight,” says **Jon Chichoni**, a 2018 global supply chain grad from Elk Ridge, Utah. “Then we spent all night after that working at my

office. It was exciting but super high pressure and felt very ‘do or die.’”

Of the approximately seventy-five submissions sent in for the first round of the competition, only five—including BYU’s—moved on to the final round. After more than 250 hours of tireless effort, the BYU students boarded a plane and headed to the University of Pennsylvania, where the case competition took place.

Following the Silver Lake judges’

## Second-Time SEOY

For many BYU seniors, their last year of college will consist of final classes, graduate school applications, and job interviews. For entrepreneurship student **Sam Ballard**, however, senior year will also include income statements and business meetings as he manages his dental restoration company.

This year, Ballard’s second successful startup venture, Ballard Dental Laboratories, earned him the title of Student Entrepreneur of the Year (SEOY)—for the second time. The first time, in 2016, he entered with a different startup venture and won the competition as a pre-management student.

“It is an overwhelming honor to be recognized by BYU and BYU Marriott in this capacity,” Ballard

says. “It’s not an easy task to go to school and be building a business at the same time. SEOY gives student entrepreneurs a moment to look back and realize what we’ve accomplished.”

Ballard’s previous venture, Hopetown Dental Lab (named for Ballard’s hometown of Hope Town, Bahamas) first caught the attention of the entrepreneurship community for its use of CAD CAM systems and state-of-the-art materials to create tooth casts. Ballard earned the 2016 SEOY title for the lab and recently sold the company.

At Ballard Dental Laboratories, Ballard is currently working on creating a digital scanner to help simplify the impression and implant processes.

“These accomplishments more than qualify Sam as Student Entrepreneur of the Year,” says **Zach Hosman**, copresident of the Entrepreneurship Club (eClub). “As the winner, he received a website and social media services, as well as strategy consulting, which will help his business going forward.”

SEOY is an annual competition hosted by the Rollins Center for Entrepreneurship & Technology in conjunction with the eClub. Student entrepreneurs apply to the competition, and finalists are chosen based on their ideas, revenues, and growth projections.

This year’s second- and third-place finalists were **Maiur Anand** and **Matthew Holley**. Anand, a 2018 entrepreneurial management graduate from Foz do Iguassu, Brazil, was recognized for his eco-friendly, disposable camping grill, the Barbacoa. Holley, a finance and economics double major from Provo, impressed judges with his successful paintball store, Saints Paintball. Finalists were rewarded consulting and analytics services from GLOBALEZ, a local digital-marketing firm.



Sam Ballard

inspections of strength, accuracy, detail, insightfulness, and creativity in each of the finalists' executive summaries and presentations, BYU received the first-place prize of \$3,000.

Team members attributed their success to two major factors: the dedicated skills of each team participant and the rigor of BYU Marriott programs.

"I participated in this competition to represent the idea that students from BYU have the ability to perform at the same level as students from Ivy League schools," Chichoni says. "BYU can do just as well as any other school."

In addition to Hannesson and Chichoni, the team consisted of recent finance grads **Erica Valimaki** from Orem, Utah, and **Michael Ellis** from Indianapolis.

### Marriott Alum among Sego Award Winners

**Emily Jacobsen Smith** and **Whitney Horito Royal** were selected as finalists for the first-ever Sego Awards. The awards were announced 11 May 2018, and Smith



Emily Jacobsen Smith and Whitney Horito Royal

took second place in the Student Founder category for her company Mentionables.

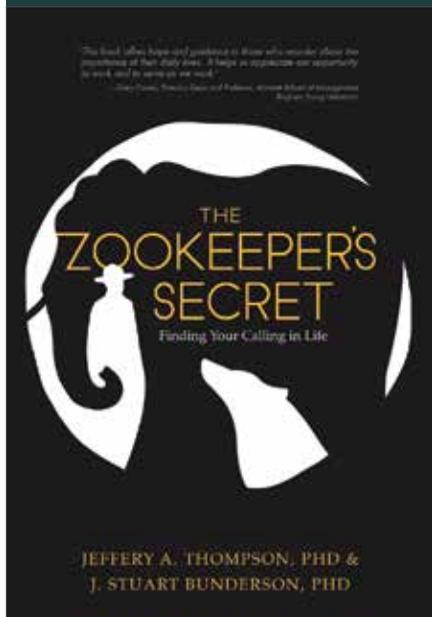
The Sego Awards were created to recognize women who found and head companies in Utah. The goal of the awards is to create visibility for female founders and CEOs because "visibility is the key to attracting the community, mentors, funding, and environment that will help fuel success," the Sego Awards website states. The awards "celebrate the bold and impactful female titans who have founded and are building great businesses."

The Sego Awards include seven different award categories for female founders and CEOs: e-commerce, fastest growing company under five years, highest overall revenue, innovation in technology, social innovation, top social media influencer, and student founder. An advocacy award was also given to a male or female who advocates for women founders and leaders.

Smith, an April 2018 BYU Marriott MBA grad, started Mentionables in March 2017 during her second semester in the MBA program; she founded the company with **Emily Apeland Kelly**, the wife of a fellow MBA student and a 2013 BYU Marriott marketing management alum.

Mentionables is a lingerie company that is completely model free. "There are no models on the website at all," Smith says. "There's no skin on the website anywhere." The women wanted to create a "safe place" to shop for lingerie. Mentionables, according to Smith, breaks down barriers for people who didn't know they wanted to buy lingerie or who couldn't find a safe place to buy it.

## The Zookeeper's Secret



KSL Newsradio's Doug Wright talked to associate professor **Jeffery A. Thompson** during a segment of KSL's *Everyday Lives, Everyday Values* podcast. The topic of the podcast was Thompson's new book, *The Zookeeper's Secret: Finding Your Calling in Life*, which he cowrote with **J. Stuart Bunderson**, a professor at the Olin Business School at Washington University in St. Louis.

The title of the book, explains Thompson, comes from what the two professors learned about zookeepers while conducting research on meaningful work: despite low pay and sometimes undesirable work conditions, zookeepers rated high in job satisfaction. "We were dumbfounded by what we learned and the relevance of the ideas that [zookeepers] shared with us," Thompson says, "and so it became an organizing theme for this book because we gleaned so many lessons from them."

The book combines academic research, anecdotal stories, prophetic counsel, and scriptures to provide basic principles that can help readers identify their dream jobs, find meaning in their careers, and recognize their purpose in life. Much of the book centers on what the authors call the "seven great heresies of work," or ideas that the world promotes surrounding jobs and careers.

Many people feel like they need to leave where they currently are, Thompson notes, but that's not usually necessary. "Most people find their

calling right where they are," he says. "Most people work themselves into their calling. It takes time to hone your craft and figure out what you love. So this pursuit of a calling—it's a long journey. And it's exciting because it comes from God-given gifts that you appreciate more and more as your life proceeds."

To start the company, the two women borrowed \$1,000 from each of their moms to buy inventory. They built the website and hoped the idea would take off. When the inventory sold out, they knew they were on to something.

Currently, the women are looking at adding new inventory products. “It’s not just a lingerie company,” says Smith. “There are other things that we can own in the bedroom space that make it approachable and follow the same branding that we’ve already built. [Customers] trust us that we’re never going to show them anything they don’t want to see or position it in a way that they don’t want it to be.”

Royal’s company—Quiet Riot—throws silent, headphone dance parties. Each attendee receives a pair of headphones to tune in to three different music stations. Royal says that this approach eliminates dull moments during a dance party because people can change what station they are listening to if a song comes on they don’t like.

A color indicator on the headphone changes color based on what station the person is listening to, says Royal, so when a popular song pops up, it’s not unusual to see all the headphones change colors as people tune into that station.

Royal came up with the idea for Quiet Riot when she attended a similar event during a school trip. The first Quiet Riot dance parties were held in February 2018. People are initially a little skeptical about the idea, Royal admits, but they end up having a blast.

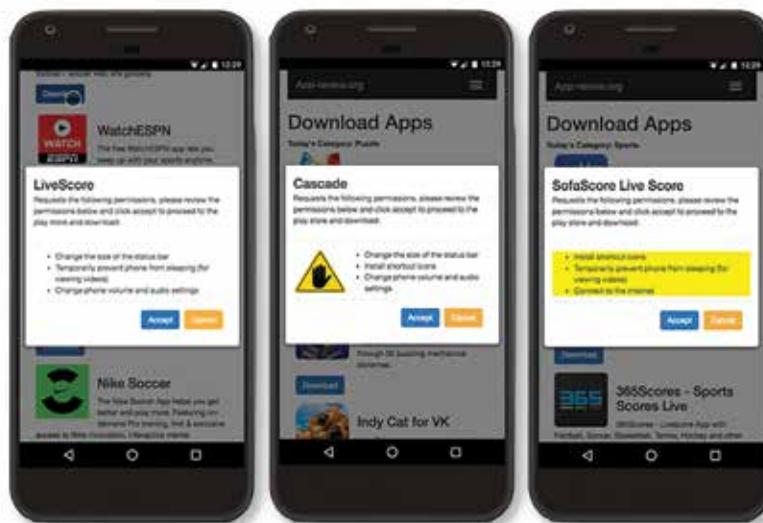
Royal, who is pursuing her MBA at BYU Marriott, was a finalist for the Student Founder award.

**Allison Lew**, cofounder of the Sego Awards and a 2015 BYU Marriott MPA alum, explains that the sego lily was chosen as a symbol for the awards because it is the Utah state flower and because “it blooms despite the harsh conditions that it grows in, not unlike our female founders here in Utah.”

## FACULTY NEWS

### Paying Attention to Notifications

Using brain, eye-tracking, and field-study data, a group of BYU Marriott researchers have confirmed something about our interaction with security warnings on



computers and phones: the more we see them, the more we tune them out.

But the major study, led by information systems professors **Anthony Vance**, **Bonnie Anderson**, and **Jeff Jenkins**, also finds that making slight changes to the appearance of warnings helps users pay attention to and adhere to warnings 20 percent more of the time.

Sponsored by the National Science Foundation, the study includes a longitudinal experiment that discovers how habituation develops over the course of a week. The results of the study appear in the June 2018 issue of *MIS Quarterly* and provide the most complete view to date of the problem of habituation to security warnings.

“The problem—and something everyone has experienced—is that warnings just fade away and disappear over time in our consciousness because we’re exposed to them so often,” says Vance, lead author and associate professor of information systems.

Vance, Anderson, and Jenkins, along with BYU neuroscience professor Brock Kirwan, have been studying habituation for years, with their research focusing on a single snapshot of behavior or neural response. This study, however, combined a five-day lab experiment, where subjects’ neural and visual responses to warnings were recorded with a three-week field study of users interacting naturally with privacy permission warnings.

For the field study, the team required participants to install and evaluate three apps every day for fifteen days from an

Android app store the team designed.

Each time subjects selected an app to download, a warning popped up that listed permissions the app requested to access or modify data, some of which were risky (e.g., “sell your web-browsing data” or “record microphone audio any time”). Some participants got the same-looking warning every time, while another group got warnings that changed in appearance each time.

Android users who installed apps with risky permissions were recorded as disregarding the warning. The researchers found that participants who were exposed to the changing set of warnings still adhered to them 76 percent of the time at the end of the fifteen days. Those who saw static warnings only adhered to them 55 percent of the time.

“Even using a few variations can have a substantial effect over time,” says Anderson, professor and chair of the Department of Information Systems. “The trick is to get the variations to the point where people pay attention without being annoyed.”

Researchers said that while users should remain vigilant about security warnings, the findings are not an indictment of their behavior. For them, the bigger application is for those creating the software. “System designers need to understand this is how the brain works, and they need to be as judicious as possible with the number of warnings they present,” Vance says. “Secondly, if they can add some visual novelty to the warning, that really helps the brain recapture attention.”

# Alumni News

## MANAGEMENT SOCIETY

### Salt Lake Celebrates Silver Jubilee

The Salt Lake Chapter celebrated twenty-five years of recognizing moral and ethical community leaders while raising funds for students in need during its annual Distinguished Utahn Award Gala, held 7 June.

More than three hundred people attended the event, where over \$100,000 was raised by business sponsors and attendees. All funds are awarded as need-based scholarships for local high school seniors, who qualify through their academic achievements and community service.

“This year we awarded forty-two scholarships to high school students to attend college,” said chapter president and BYU alum **Y. Andrew Wan**, who graduated with a master’s in professional accountancy in 2007. “These students are exceptional, and the chapter is honored to be able to assist young people like this further their education and then, in turn, go out and make a difference in their communities.” The students will all be attending universities and colleges in Utah.

The chapter presented the Distinguished Utahn Award to **Gary L. Crittenden**, who is currently serving as managing director of the Church’s Missionary Department, where he oversees the operational activities of approximately

70,000 missionaries who are serving around the world. Prior to accepting that assignment in 2017, Crittenden worked at HGGC, a California-based middle-market private equity firm, where he served as managing director, chair, and then CEO. Crittenden remains an executive director of HGGC and serves on numerous boards.

To mark the silver jubilee, several past award winners also attended the gala alongside **President Dallin H. Oaks** and Elders David A. Bednar and Neil L. Andersen. Val Hale, executive director of the Utah Governor’s Office of Economic Development, was also in attendance.

## CLASS NOTES

### 1975



**Gregory Andrew** graduated with a BS in management and minors in business composite and Italian in 1975. He first took

a job at Empire Real Estate in Salt Lake City, where he gained knowledge of the real estate industry. In 1978 he started his own business, Andrew Corporate Realty, and for more than forty years, Andrew has been helping clients in Utah and Cache Counties buy and sell their homes. Owning his own business has also provided flexibility so he can spend time with his family. Andrew and his wife, Gwen, had been married for twenty-eight years when she passed away in 2004. A few years later, he met his current wife, Julie. The couple married in 2008 and served an LDS mission in Rome in 2013. They both served missions in Italy as young adults, and their language fluency enabled them to better serve the people. The couple has nine children and sixteen grandchildren and lives in Providence, Utah.

### 1982

**Steve Barnes** landed a job at Parker Hannifin because of his ability to speak Spanish. Thirty-four years later, he’s still at the motion and control technology



company. He has served in a variety of positions over the years, including division marketing manager and supply chain planner.

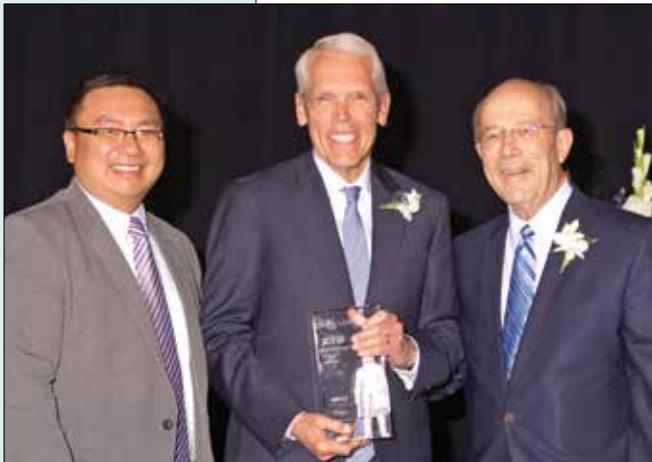
Currently he is the vice president of operations and the integration leader and is overseeing the billion-dollar acquisition of CLARCOR. In his career, Barnes has also had the opportunity to serve as a mentor, encouraging and guiding many employees toward success. He got his start in the business world while a student at BYU, where he graduated with a BS in marketing. In 2009, Barnes completed the advanced management program at Harvard Business School. Barnes and his wife, Shelly, live in Heber City, Utah. The couple has four children—who all served Spanish-speaking LDS missions—and two grandchildren. Barnes enjoys golfing, fishing, and serving in the Church.

### 2002

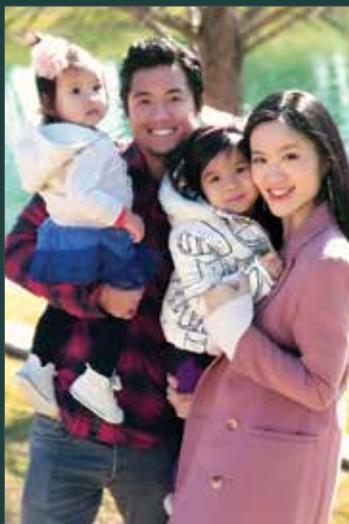


**Jim Carlson** was born into a family anchored in the real estate industry. After graduating with a degree in management with an

emphasis in entrepreneurship, Carlson decided to follow in his family members’ footsteps and earn his real estate license. He worked for two different property management firms before opening his own company, One Stop Property Management, in 2011. As a real estate broker, Carlson provides residential leasing and property management services to landlords and tenants in Kansas City, Missouri. Owning his own business enables Carlson to support his family while pursuing his hobbies and serving in the Church. He also serves as the 2018 president of the Heart of America chapter for the National Association of Residential Property Managers. Carlson enjoys being outdoors, investing in real estate, and volunteering with his local Scout troop. He and his wife, Marissa, have four children.



# The Wonders of Learning



Growing up in the slums of Hong Kong, BYU Marriott alum **Cecilia Yiu** and her sister, Alice, were the first in their family to attend college—thanks in large part to their parents, who emphasized the importance of education and provided their daughters with the best education they could afford. Yiu now hopes to encourage children to pursue learning through her startup business, Discover Wonders.

Discover Wonders was inspired by Yiu's own daughters, ages five and two, who constantly ask questions as they explore the world around them. Through Discover Wonders, Yiu wants to fuel that natural curiosity and empower her daughters and other children to learn at their own pace. Yiu has created a series of books about everyday objects, such as water, toothbrushes, and balloons. Through the books, children learn about the history and science behind different topics.

"In my career as a management consultant, I was working with some of the top minds," Yiu says. "I love seeing how people innovate, and I wanted to provide children with a way to connect the dots across subjects."

The book series comes with the Discover Talking Pen, an audio device to assist children through their learning process. Children can point the pen at the page and hear text, sound effects, and dialogue. Each book comes with more than three hundred audio hotspots, so children can learn the material without being limited by reading ability or parental availability. Parents can also record their own voices for an added personal touch.

Yiu began working on Discover Wonders a year ago and launched a Kickstarter campaign in February 2018 that earned more than \$32,000. The company is scheduled to begin distribution of the books later this year.

"We can't wait to see people's faces when they open the books for the first time," Yiu says. "So far, every parent and child who has seen the prototype has been completely impressed."

The world of entrepreneurship is a new adventure for Yiu, who worked as a market researcher for companies in Hong Kong and as a management consultant for PricewaterhouseCoopers in Dallas.

"Working on a startup means I have no branding behind me—it is just me and my product," Yiu says. "It takes a lot of soul-searching to figure out how to help others understand what I'm trying to do. I'm challenged every single day."

Each of Yiu's professional positions can be traced back to her own educational experiences. She graduated with a BS in psychology from BYU–Hawaii in 2006 and an MBA from BYU Marriott in 2012. While at BYU, Yiu took every opportunity to be involved. She served as vice president of the MBA Strategy and Consulting Club and participated in various business competitions, including the Wake Forest University Marketing Summit case competition and BYU Marriott's Miller Business Model Competition. For her achievements, Yiu was selected as both a Hawes and an Eccles scholar.

After graduating with her MBA, Yiu consulted with top companies at PwC and supported her husband, Nelson Chan, through chiropractic school. She now stays at home with her children, homeschools her eldest daughter, and works on Discover Wonders.

"If Isaac Newton had watched the apple fall from the tree and had just eaten it, we might not have discovered gravity," Yiu says. "I want to help my children maximize their potential and make sure that when an opportunity falls into their laps, they recognize it and know to grab it."

2003



Lifelong computer programmer **Lincoln Cannon** learned to code as a child. He believes technology, when used ethically, can enhance the human experience. Cannon's philosophical nature led him to earn a BA in philosophy in 1998. He returned to BYU and graduated with his MBA in 2003. Using his business education, Cannon has led a successful career working for various technology companies and startups, including Novell, WordPerfect, and Ancestry. In 2016 he and his wife, Dorothee, started Thrivous, a nutritional supplements company that promotes brain performance. The Orem-based company—where Cannon currently serves as CEO—combines his passions for technology, business,

and philosophy. When he's not working, Cannon enjoys board games, science fiction, hikes through southern Utah, and time with his three sons.



As a financial analyst and a mother of two, 2003 finance graduate **Cathy Hollist** has a lot on her plate. A self-proclaimed sports fanatic, Hollist was excited when her husband, Tyler, received a basketball scholarship at Portland State University in 2005. At that time, she took a job at Nike, where she's been for almost thirteen years. She is currently a senior financial analyst for the company, developing strategy and mitigating risk. Hollist also owns her own bookkeeping firm, where she helps small businesses prepare their monthly financial statements, and serves as the CFO of

Utah training center Grind Athletics. She and her husband have two adopted children, ages eight and five, and Hollist acts as a mentor for other adopting couples. The family lived in the Portland area until last year, when they relocated to Saratoga Springs, Utah.



You could say that 2003 information systems graduate **Sam A. Larson** is quite the family man. Around the time he graduated, Larson started a real estate company with his two older brothers, Mark and Adam. He viewed the job as temporary while he applied to Big Four accounting firms. However, seventeen years later, Larson is still working alongside his brothers, and he can't imagine his life any other way. Larson & Company Real Estate, as their

## Preparing for the Worst



While he studied at BYU Marriott, information systems alum **Dean Atkinson** enjoyed every opportunity he had to network with professors, alumni, and other students. Now working as an advanced systems engineer, he rubs shoulders with executives from Walmart, the largest retailer in the world. He's doing what he loves, but it took a unique path and a few detours for him to get there.

Atkinson started at BYU in 1994 but didn't graduate

until 2009. He took two years off for his LDS mission and, after a few poor semesters, quit going to school in 1998. In the following years, he worked a series of odd jobs to provide for his wife, Edie, and their growing family.

It wasn't until 2005 that Atkinson decided it was time to return to school. "I realized it was important to have an education for what I wanted to go into and how I wanted to support my family," he says. "I'm grateful for the second chance."

After returning to BYU, Atkinson began shopping around for a major. He had an interest in technology, so he explored the related programs on campus. Atkinson determined that information systems was his best option, and he worked hard to get accepted into the competitive program.

"I was drawn to data communications and the networking-related aspects of the IS program," Atkinson says.

While on campus, Atkinson found his niche: working with both technology and people. He ran the audio, video, and lighting for various BYU events, including devotionals, football games, graduation ceremonies, and concerts. He worked behind the scenes to ensure that the technology functioned properly. Through that position, Atkinson had the opportunity to interact with BYU leaders, athletic coaches, and even Church apostles.

As a student, Atkinson was interested in working for Walmart, but as graduation approached, he worried he wouldn't be hired because of the difficult programming tests. He ended up getting a job with the company but in a different department, where his extensive experience in audio and video was needed. Atkinson, Edie, and their five children relocated to Centerton, Arkansas, and they've been there ever since.

"I've loved every moment in this role, through its changes and progress, for the past nine years," Atkinson says.

Atkinson has been promoted several times and in his current position interacts with Walmart's top executives, including board members, the CEO, and the Walton family. Atkinson is responsible for making their video conferences and webcasts run smoothly—though sometimes things don't go as planned.

"The first time we had a major technical failure, my boss told me that I looked like a deer in the headlights," Atkinson says. "I took that to heart, and now I look at all the different things that could possibly go wrong and try to be prepared for any stressful situation."

Despite the pressure of working with senior management, Atkinson enjoys learning from their examples. "I'm grateful to be a trusted resource for the company's top executives," he says.

business is called, has closed more than twenty-five hundred real estate transactions along the Wasatch Front. Larson and his wife, Stephanie, live in Sandy, Utah, with their five young children. He enjoys coaching his kids' sports teams and taking them to BYU athletic events to cheer on the Cougars.

**2004**



**Andrea Hales** always had an interest in higher education. In 2001, she graduated from BYU Marriott with a BS in management with an emphasis in human resources. She continued her education at BYU, earning joint MPA and JD degrees in 2004. Following graduation, Hales served as the director of accountability and policy for the Utah System of Higher Education from 2006 to 2009. When her first child was born, she transitioned to full-time motherhood. As the self-proclaimed “queen” of her home, she spends her days caring for her beloved “subjects”—her husband, Mark, and their four children. Hales lives in Bluffdale, Utah, and helps with the city’s neighborhood emergency planning by teaching classes and hosting monthly meetings. She remains involved in higher education as a member of the Romney Institute Extended Board, where she has served since 2015.

**2005**



Though he didn’t start out in the marketing industry, **Brandon Jensen** has established a career as a successful marketing director. He graduated from BYU in 1998 with a BA in international relations and took a job as a service manager at Novell, a Utah-based software company. In 2005 he graduated with his EMBA from BYU Marriott and continued working for Novell—this time as a business analyst and then as senior manager of marketing operations. In 2014 Jensen was hired at Workfront, a work-management software company in Lehi, Utah, where he’s employed as the director of marketing operations. His favorite part of his job is seeing his

— Tell us about yourself. —  
 Email **MARRIOTTMAG@BYU.EDU**  
 — to submit a Class Note. —

team succeed. Jensen resides in Pleasant Grove, Utah, with his wife, Jennifer, and their six children.

**2008**



Through his career at LDS Philanthropies, **Tau Ioane** has had the opportunity to give back to his alma mater. Ioane graduated from BYU in 2005 with a BA in advertising and marketing communications, followed by an MPA in nonprofit management in 2008. He first took an interest in LDS Philanthropies after the organization’s current managing director spoke in one of his MPA classes. Soon after, Ioane applied for a job at the organization, and he’s been there ever since. In his position, he oversees marketing and communications and encourages donations for Church-owned schools through events such as Giving Cougsgiving. Ioane’s charitable efforts extend beyond his career: both he and his wife, along with their four children, volunteer for the Samoa Victim Support Group. The family plans to visit Samoa this fall to donate school supplies to children.

**2009**



**Barbara Leavitt** is no stranger to community involvement. She currently serves as the administrative director of United Way of Utah County. Leavitt has overseen various initiatives—all of which focus on families—including Help Me Grow Utah, Welcome Baby, and the South Franklin Center. While raising her four daughters, Leavitt realized she wanted to help other parents within her community find the resources and information they need to raise their children. This passion motivated her to return to school to complete an MPA in 2008. Leavitt first graduated from BYU Marriott in 1981 with a BS in management

with an emphasis in marketing. Prior to her career at United Way, she worked for her family business, ADP, while volunteering in her community. Leavitt lives in Orem, Utah. One of her favorite things is visits from her daughters and her granddaughter.

**2010**



**Rodney Rasmussen** has a passion for marketing, regardless of the industry. The 2010 marketing graduate got a taste of the fashion industry interning at a women’s clothing company and then took a job at a health-care company in Oahu, Hawaii, before landing at Zija International, a natural-wellness company in Lehi, Utah. During Rasmussen’s six years directing all marketing and communications efforts at Zija, the company earned several awards, including Utah’s Fastest Growing Company from *Utah Business Magazine*. While working full-time, Rasmussen also pursued an MBA, graduating from the University of Utah’s David Eccles School of Business in 2013. Last year Rasmussen entered the tech industry when he became Quali Inc.’s first product marketing director. Among other responsibilities, he develops marketing strategy to promote education cloud software. Rasmussen and his wife, Tanya, own a dance and fitness studio. They have two sons, ages three and one.

**2011**



**Tasia Marie Landon** has always thrown the best parties. She once organized an entire prom for her young adult church congregation, and it was an absolute hit. She currently works as an administrative assistant and project manager for Modern Exposition Services. Landon was offered

the job after the company saw how well she managed the UNPC Scout Expo. In her position, Landon helps find clients and plan events, including large expos, trade shows, and displays. She also photographs the events and manages the company's social media channels. Landon graduated from BYU in 2011 with a BS in management with an emphasis in entrepreneurship and a minor in family life. She now resides in Highland, Utah, and was married to her sweetheart, Joseph, in June.

**2012**



**Andrew D. Huntsman** decided to study global supply chain management because of the example of his father, who worked for

more than thirty years as a procurement manager for Provo City. Huntsman knew GSCM would open many opportunities for him, so as a student, he made every effort to get involved with the clubs and recruiting events on campus. In 2012 he landed a summer internship as a procurement analyst for Paccar in Bellevue, Washington. After graduating in December 2012, Huntsman took a job with Alcoa, an aluminum producer in Pittsburgh, where he worked for a year and a half. He then relocated to the Seattle area to work for Amazon Web Services, the company's cloud-computing platform. While working full-time for Amazon, Huntsman also earned his MBA in 2017 from West Texas A&M University. When he's not working, you can find Huntsman at home with his wife, Rebecca, and their three children—or on the golf course.

**2013**



Whether in her home or at the workplace, **Emily King Funk** loves to be organized. She currently maintains her home while looking

after her two young children, Ella and Landon. Funk's organizational skills also contributed to her successful career at Vivint Solar. While a student at BYU Marriott, she landed an inventory and supply chain internship at the solar energy company. She was one of Vivint Solar's first employees. Funk graduated in

2013 with her BS in management with an emphasis in global supply chain and then was hired as a full-time fleet administrator for Vivint Solar and its smart home security partner, Vivint. Funk helped Vivint Solar's fleet increase tenfold before the company went public. After two years, she decided to dedicate her time to her family, but she plans to return to work at some point. Funk lives in San Diego with her children and her husband, **Michael**.



In just a few short years, **Bradley D. Stoker** has already achieved one of his long-term career goals: working in human

resources. He graduated from BYU Marriott in 2013 with a BS in management and an emphasis in global supply chain management and took a job as a warehouse operations manager at Aramark in Chicago. After a year, Stoker joined Target as an engineering and facilities operations manager. He was quickly promoted to his dream job: HR business partner. In that position, he helped the Suffolk, Virginia, warehouse team grow to be Target's largest team in the country. Stoker currently works at Target's highest-volume distribution center, located in Rialto, California. He enjoys overseeing and training employees, and he was recently certified by the Society for Human Resource Management. In his spare time, Stoker enjoys reading, traveling, and playing the piano and organ.

**2014**



**Shelley Bruner** has always had a desire to serve and be actively engaged in her community. She followed that desire at BYU,

where she earned a BS in finance and a minor in nonprofit management. With talents for marketing and event planning, Bruner spent her college years volunteering and helping various organizations fulfill their missions of alleviating poverty, empowering refugee women, and building homes. Following her 2014 graduation, Bruner took a job with Select Bankcard, a credit card payment processor in Lehi, Utah. She worked at the Utah office for

two years before relocating to Houston so that her husband, Cameron, could attend medical school. She continues to work for Select Bankcard remotely and interacts with customers to audit their accounts. Additionally, Bruner does contract work with advertising agencies, tech companies, and other organizations. She enjoys the diversity of the projects and seeing the impact within her community.



**Gavin Tanner** didn't end up on Wall Street like some of his fellow finance graduates. The 2014 alum instead went on to pursue a

career as a digital marketer. Tanner's first job postgraduation was at Provo-based Novi Security as the vice president of sales and marketing. At the startup, he dabbled in digital marketing and found it fascinating, so when he left Novi, he decided to make digital marketing a full-time career. In 2016 Tanner took a job at Adduco Media in Lehi, Utah, running the company's paid media accounts. Shortly after, he became the digital marketing manager at Relic Advertising in Provo, where he leads a team and manages the marketing efforts of various clients. Tanner and his wife, Meredith, reside in Lindon, Utah; they enjoy cycling, reading, and playing volleyball.

**2015**



Growing up in Russia, **Max Borodin** experienced a lot of uncertainty about the future, which taught him to "be creative

and efficient in planning for tomorrow." That characteristic has benefitted him as he has started his career in global supply chain. Borodin earned his BS in management with an emphasis in global supply chain management in 2015. As a student, he gained internship experience as a project manager for General Mills and Marriott International. He took a job at Maxtec in Salt Lake City following graduation and has been with the company ever since. Maxtec develops oxygen products, and as a supply chain manager, Borodin manages the inventory of five warehouses. He uses statistical

# A Balancing Act

BYU Marriott alum **Alena J. Turner** quite literally bends over backward to help others. The 2013 therapeutic recreation graduate has influenced many children—including her own—during her successful career as a gymnastics coach.

Turner got her start on the uneven bars and balance beam as a six-year-old living in Rhode Island and enjoyed her time tumbling and cartwheeling. She started coaching other gymnasts when she was sixteen and continued coaching up until last year, when she decided to stay home full-time with her two young children.

"I love gymnastics and working with young girls and young women and helping them understand how to move their bodies, work hard, and gain confidence," Turner says. "Now I take my own daughter to a parent-participation gymnastics class, and I enjoy coaching her too."

Involvement in gymnastics gave Turner appreciation for the human body and for helping others, which guided her during her time at BYU. She searched for a major that would enable her to stay active, impact others, and pursue her goal of motherhood. When she discovered therapeutic recreation (TR), Turner knew it was the perfect fit.

At that time, the TR program was new to BYU Marriott, and a TR club was in the works. Turner interviewed for a leadership position only one day after she declared her major, and she was selected as the first vice president of the BYU Therapeutic Recreation Club. Then she served as president the following year.

Turner's involvement with TR spread beyond BYU Marriott. She combined her passions for gymnastics and TR with her work at AirTime Training Center in Springville, Utah, where she served as a gymnastics coach and as recreation director. She also ran health screening tests at the 2011 and 2012 Huntsman World Senior Games, and in 2013 she helped women recover from eating disorders during a summer internship at the Center for Change. After completing her degree in 2013, Turner became a certified therapeutic recreation specialist and continued coaching beginning gymnasts.

Turner's knowledge of TR has benefitted her beyond her career. She credits her education for giving her the confidence during her bout of postpartum depression and anxiety to reach out to another struggling mother, which helped them both to heal.

"BYU taught me to look at health and wellness from a whole different perspective," Turner says. "Health should be motivated not by how we look or what we can do but by a desire to improve our abilities to go and do and serve others."

Currently Turner focuses on raising her kids while her husband and fellow BYU Marriott graduate, **Jordan**, pursues his MBA at the Kelley School of Business in Bloomington, Indiana. Turner's other pursuits include writing books, creating art, and developing plans for a nonprofit organization that helps girls and young women gain confidence through yoga and outdoor activities. Fulfilling all these responsibilities is certainly a balancing act, but Turner nails the landing every time as she focuses on others.

"Life is stretching, but it's amazing how looking outward for ways to serve and lift someone increases our ability to do more," Turner says. "The world tells us to take care of ourselves. The Church and BYU help us learn how to take care of ourselves by caring for others, and that's a life-changing difference."



modeling and marketing strategies to help with production and inventory planning. Borodin resides in Salt Lake City, where he mentors LGBT youth and enjoys gardening, art, and musical theater.



As a student, **Rylin Patterson** knew he wanted to study business, but he wasn't sure which direction to take. He enrolled in

the introductory recreation management class and a sports management class, and

his path to recreation became clear. In 2015 Patterson graduated from BYU in recreation management with an emphasis in experience industry management and started as a sports intern for the Provo Parks and Recreation Department. Since then, he has served as a coordinator, a recreation specialist, and now as the department's sports coordinator. In his position, he manages the program budget, trains new staff members, and organizes sports activities for youth and adults within the community. Patterson also started the city's first Ultimate Frisbee program.

In addition, he is a certified parks and recreation professional and a certified youth sports administrator. Patterson and his wife, Shayla, live in Provo, where they recently purchased their first home.



**Devin Squires** graduated from BYU Marriott in 2015 with his BS in management with an emphasis in organizational behavior and human resource management.

While at BYU, he participated in the BYU

Business Strategy Club and interned at JobPiper, an HR technology company. Squire's first job out of college was as an HR generalist for Studies Weekly, where he oversaw employee benefits, trained interns, and attended job fairs. After a year with the company, he took a contract position with MetaSource, filling positions and conducting audits of background checks. Squires currently works as the HR manager for National MedTrans, a recently acquired division of UnitedHealth Group that provides non-emergency transportation for patients. He helped oversee the merger by creating and managing National

MedTrans's HR department. Squires and his wife, Nikole, live in Provo.

2016



Like many young boys, **Blake Marchant** grew up wanting to become a doctor. However, he quickly realized that the sciences weren't for him, so he switched to human resources, where he could still work with people, analyze causes behind symptoms, and help people become better. While in school, Marchant interned with eBay, General Mills, and the Cancer

Treatment Centers of America. He graduated from BYU Marriott in 2015 with a BS in management and an emphasis in organizational behavior and human resource management and took a job at BlenderBottle, a health and fitness company in Lehi, Utah. He was recently promoted to talent acquisition specialist, overseeing the hiring and training of new employees. Marchant also revamped the brand, including the BlenderBottle careers website, and helped earn the company a 2017 Top Place to Work in Utah award. In his free time, Marchant enjoys backpacking, traveling, and volunteering with the Special Olympics.

## Unexpected Entrepreneurs



**Preston S. Alder** and **Joseph Woodbury** never planned on being entrepreneurs; the opportunity fell into their laps when they saw a need and decided to fill it. Together the two Brigham Young University alumni are disrupting the \$38 billion storage industry with their business, Neighbor.

Alder, a 2017 strategy graduate from Mesa, Arizona, came up with the idea for Neighbor when leaving for a summer internship in Peru. He couldn't afford traditional storage options, so he and his wife drove their belongings from Provo to a friend's home hours away in northern Utah.

"As I was driving," Alder says, "I thought to myself, 'Why can't I be using a garage in Provo? There is available space in my community. How can I tap into that resource?'"

The self-described Airbnb of storage, Neighbor connects renters in need of storage space with members of the local community who have an empty closet, bedroom, or garage. Homeowners turn their unused space into revenue, while renters receive a safe place to store their belongings for an affordable price.

Woodbury, who graduated from BYU with a BS in economics in 2017, joined the Neighbor team while in a class for his strategy minor. The native of Boulder City, Nevada, teamed up with Alder and his business partner Colton Gardner, a 2016 University of Utah grad, to work on the project during the semester, and he has stuck around ever since. Woodbury now serves as the company's CEO.

"When I first told Joseph about the idea, he was excited," Alder says. "We loved working together in the strategy program and had a mutual respect. We would have been dumb to let this opportunity pass us by."

The team members entered their business idea into the Miller New Venture Competition Challenge, hosted by the Rollins Center for Entrepreneurship & Technology. As a competition finalist, Neighbor was awarded \$15,000. Participation in the competition also gave the students access to a wide network of BYU Marriott alumni who have become successful entrepreneurs.

Neighbor's founders credit their BYU Marriott connections for helping get their business off the ground. Alumni and professors provided advice for the young entrepreneurs and were some of Neighbor's first customers, eager to help students who were looking for storage space.

"We had great professor-mentors who took us under their wings," Alder says. "I felt that our professors were invested in our future and not so much in the grade. I am grateful for professors who were able to see the vision that we had."

The vision is catching as Neighbor grows. Neighbor has been featured by top-tier publications, such as *Business Insider* and *TechCrunch*, and has multiple billboards along Utah's I-15 freeway. The year-old company now has ten employees and recently received \$2.5 million in venture capital funding from local seed funds, which Alder and Woodbury plan to use to improve their technology and expand into new states.

"We're honored to bring on some of the state's biggest investors," Woodbury says. "This is a no-brainer product where people can monetize their unused space. The seed money will help us build awareness."

"We didn't pick an easy project," Woodbury continues. "We both gave up our jobs for this, but it's been an awesome experience. Neighbor is changing the world and putting money into people's pockets."





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