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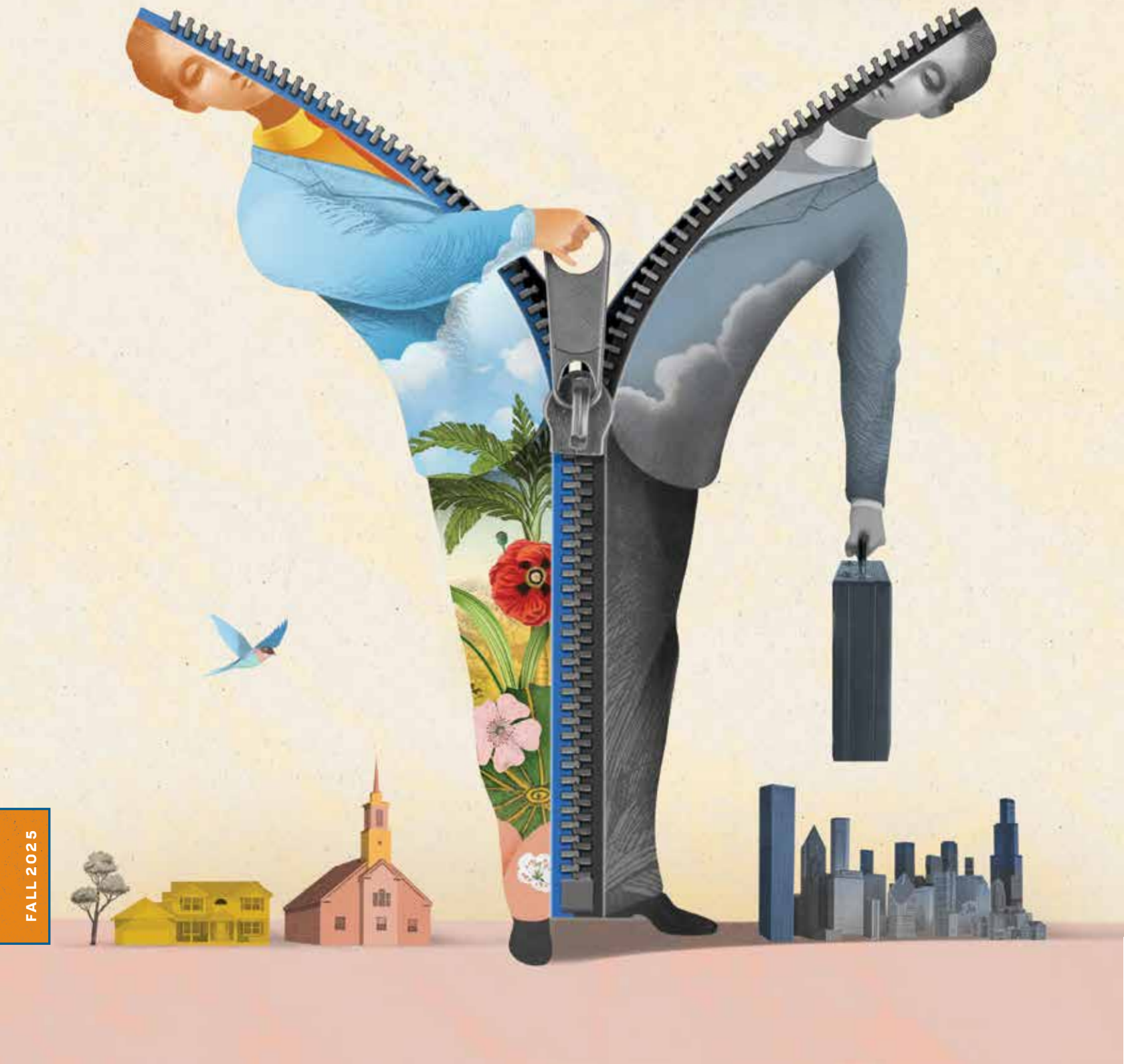
ALUMNI MAGAZINE



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PUBLISHER Brigitte C. Madrian
MANAGING EDITOR Andrew P. Cuthbert
EDITOR Shannon Keeley
ASSOCIATE EDITOR Emily Edmonds
ART DIRECTOR Jon G. Woidka
COPY EDITOR Shirleen M. Saunders

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS, EDITORS, DESIGNERS, AND PHOTOGRAPHERS
Sarah Griffin Anderson
Stephanie Bentley
Aubry Black
Katie Brimhall
Kathryn Cragun
Nicholas Day
Melissa Een
Robert G. Gardner
Alayna Hanna
Chadwick Little
Emma Jean Nelson
Elijah Pearce
Bryan Ross
Elizabeth Walker
Aubrey Zalewski

MAGAZINE DESIGN BYU Brand & Creative

ALL COMMUNICATION SHOULD BE SENT TO
Marriott Alumni Magazine
490 Tanner Building
Brigham Young University
Provo, UT 84602
PHONE: 801-422-7696
EMAIL: marriottmag@byu.edu

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◀ **ON SEPTEMBER 10, 2025, THE TANNER BUILDING FLOODED WITH LIGHT TO HOST MARRIOTT NIGHT, AN ANNUAL FALL EVENT THAT SHOWCASES THE BUSINESS SCHOOL'S MAJORS, STUDENT ASSOCIATIONS, AND CENTERS. ADMINISTRATORS HANDED OUT 1,200 BENTO LUNCHBOXES PACKED WITH TREATS, AND STUDENTS LEFT WITH SWAG AND A BROADER SENSE OF OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE SCHOOL. PHOTO BY BROOKLYNN KELSON**

OVERHEARD IN THE TANNER

There's no synchronized swimming in Louisiana. • I finished it last night, and I was like, "This love will never happen to me." • I heard the Hershey's spa has chocolate in every treatment. • I'm not a commemorative-cup person. • You probably didn't need all that information; nevertheless, I provided it. • It's so weird that adults have siblings. • Keep on that yo-yo grind and you'll go places. • Don't cause an international incident. • Here are the symptoms of scurvy. • Did you know you can get cited for not wearing a life jacket on the Provo River? I got pulled over on a tube the other day. • These Lego stop-motion videos are making me cry. • I have ice cream every single day, and it's great. • One day, I will have answers to all the questions people ask me. • Thank you. *I did nothing, but you're welcome.* • I just need someone to hold my hand and say, "Yes, a comma goes there." • I have one more thing to say on behalf of the Amish. • I'm over this construction. • Is he incredibly unstable and not ready for a relationship? *Yes. But he's not mean!* • You should *not* be able to take your shoes off in public. That should be illegal. • I have a cucumber. *That's not a snack.* • Last night I went on a date, and we talked about three topics: communism in China, Chernobyl, and how he hates it when people say "hi" on sidewalks. • How heavy do you think the head is on this Eldon Tanner statue? • It's been a month since I've been in Utah elevation. • I think I *am* predisposed to dislike people. I'm working on it, though, by asking myself "What if I liked this person instead?" That's all it takes. • My water bottle is way louder than it needs to be. *I was wondering what that noise was.* • Just have a conversation and be like, "Why are you so weird?" • I feel like I have the personality of the Pacific Northwest. • There are different kinds of positive reinforcement, but that wasn't even positive. • All this pumpkin has done is embarrass me. • Either there are some highly enthusiastic birds using keyboards on the other side of the glass or the office is haunted. • I'd rather have a little bit of something than a whole lotta nothing. • Whenever he quotes Elder Bednar, it warms my heart. • You are who I wanted to be when I was, like, five. • Who needs a sticky note when you have a pillow? • Wait, this is the most vibe thing I've seen in my whole life. • I'm just making sure that my kids have things to fight over in 50 years. • Quick, say something unhinged!

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Supercharged Problem-Solving

By Brittany Rogers

Illustrations by Antonio Sortino

Get talking, get creating, get moving

It was the best kind of problem: Missionary applications spiked by more than 400 percent in the weeks following the October 2012 minimum-age change, Missionary Training Centers (MTCs) were maxed out, and Ross Storey was asked to get creative.

"We were charged with rethinking missionary training from start to finish," says Storey, then a curriculum development manager who went on to become manager of missionary experience for the Church. "You can imagine the questions that came up." Among them: How might they do without an MTC altogether?

By the end of 2013, Storey had delivered the concepts and designs for a mobile-ready, fully remote MTC experience—which came in handy during a global pandemic *seven years later.*

Storey is quick to credit his team and how they deployed the creative problem-solving tactics he had honed during his career working for Fortune 500 companies and startups. Storey now teaches—make that preaches—these tactics as an associate teaching professor in BYU Marriott's experience design and management program.

He's not alone. Storey is just one voice in a chorus of faculty members who are emphatic about developing the problem-solving prowess to meet wicked problems with wild ideas. As Degan Kettles, BYU Marriott associate teaching professor of information systems, puts it, "Problem-solving is the most important skill in the job market." It's also a growth area for BYU grads, who, according to Jeff Dyer, a professor in the strategy program, have historically scored higher in categories such as ethics but lower in creativity and challenging the status quo.

How can individuals better approach complex problems? How are creative workplaces cultivated? And how do the world's most innovative leaders help their teams? Here, we cherry-pick BYU Marriott for research and practical tips on how to unleash creative genius both professionally and personally.

Start with Two "Storms"

Virtually every problem-solving framework begins with defining the problem. Dyer, who spent eight years meticulously studying the world's most innovative organizations—Amazon, Apple, and the like—says you first need to *nail* the problem, and he proposes "questionstorming" (brainstorming questions) to do it.

A simple example: Maybe initially you are trying to improve the experience of ironing clothes, he says, but through questioning, it becomes clear that the job to be done is producing a pressed shirt—which could be resolved many ways.

Barrage the problem with questions: Give it the who, what, where, when, and why. Aim for 20 or more, and don't forget "Why not?" and "What if?" Questioning your problem invites curiosity, and it can expose important unknowns. You may identify a problem that eclipses the original. "There are questions you need answers to before you'll be able to get to an effective and a creative solution," says Dyer. It's zooming out before zooming in.

Brainstorming potential solutions should be equally expansive. Many are familiar with divergent and convergent thinking; Storey worries that we aren't divergent enough. "Too often, groupthink happens," he explains. Depending on the hierarchy and personalities in the room, one idea quickly snowballs.

Brainstorm right, says Storey, by setting some ground rules. Everyone comes prepared with ideas. "The key is they come having thought about the problem before they hear everyone else's ideas." And everyone shares "an equal privilege," he says, with a nod to Doctrine and Covenants 88:122. "There are quiet people who spend more time inside their heads. Those people often have some of the best ideas."

Perhaps most important, Storey says, is to keep the room supportive. If people can share without fear of retribution or judgment, "the likelihood for sharing wild ideas is much higher."

Wild—and wildly different—ideas are the goal. Storey cites the Torrance Tests for Creative Thinking, which contends that the quality of the final solution depends on how many ideas—especially unique ideas—are generated.[1] How you frame the session can grease the wheels: Try a hackathon or a creative sprint. The idea is to take the pressure off, to make room for experimentation, he says. Another boon: diversity. "Tons of research supports this," says Storey, who notes the importance of "having diverse skill sets and backgrounds in the room."

Trade Seats, Trade Insights

One of the best ways to prime the pump for creativity, says Dyer, is to observe others responding to similar problems.

Google and Procter & Gamble, Dyer learned through his research, systematically did departmental swaps, sending their marketing and HR people to other companies for four to six weeks to study their best practices. These "observing excursions," says Dyer, "provide opportunities to gain insights into new ways of doing things." He encourages looking for surprises and breakthroughs by asking: "What's different from what you expected?"

Another approach is to seek input from frontline employees. They hold a trove of insights but are often overlooked by company leaders. Put frontline employees in situations where they can see the broader business environment, says Kettles. "If you're interacting with customers and hearing what executives are worried about, you start to see where there are opportunities for you to add value."

Finally, focus on the customer experience. Tuning in to your customers is a major tenet of design thinking, which Storey teaches at BYU Marriott. The framework prioritizes gathering "empathy data, getting in the customer's shoes," says Storey. At multiple points while reworking the MTC format, he would pull a missionary into the meeting. "You want the user's voice in your head. The better you understand their thoughts and their needs, the more you can fully experience their feelings and the more likely you will find creative solutions—and the right solutions."

Stoke Creativity

It's hard to let the right brain tackle a problem without the left brain chirping about practicalities and constraints. Storey has tricks to let the creativity flow.

A favorite: the Stanford Stoke Deck—a free online tool created by the university's design school.[2] It's a virtual deck of cards, each outlining a short icebreaker activity to boost collaboration and engagement in a group. "I'll do it in class if our energy is low," says Storey. "It gets our brains fired up."

Aye Aye to Risk

The task: Make Microsoft's latest Xbox game, Sea of Thieves, *stand out at the video game industry's biggest trade event at the time, the Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3).*

"This was right when game streaming was becoming a thing," says Brandon Wells, a BYU Marriott MBA alum and now a director of global product marketing at Microsoft. For the 2016 Sea of Thieves *trailer, his team broke from tradition, live streaming the game to show the gamers themselves on E3's big screens.*

Internal reviews nearly killed the out-of-box idea, but Wells and his colleagues fought for it. And the E3 crowd ate it up. "In a show of back-to-back game trailers, ours stood out," says Wells.

Creative solutions are inherently risky, acknowledges Wells. "Take risks when you firmly believe in them. Whenever somebody comes to me now with an idea that they're passionate about, I have learned to worry less about corporate structure and think more about, 'Is this right for our product? Is this right for our consumer?'"

A Win-Win

After working at KPMG and then in private equity, MAcc grad Greg Christopher struck out on his own to consult for growing businesses.

In his work, Christopher, founder of Boosted Books, discovered that the small business community was often underserved because they had difficulty finding competent bookkeepers. Even after redesigning his firm for bottom-up accounting, hiring remained tough—domestic talent was costly, and offshore training was inconsistent. His breakthrough? A mentor pointed Christopher toward a talent pool he hadn't considered before: BYU–Pathway grads.

As BYU–Pathway launched a vertical to help grads start accounting careers, Christopher partnered with the program to develop a training pipeline that includes full-time roles at Boosted Books. Now he employs BYU–Pathway grads from all over the world. It's not just solving the problems of small businesses, Christopher says. "I can give someone in Africa a stable work opportunity. It's an underserved population serving an underserved population."

Building the model has been a refinement process. "You don't solve the problem the first time," he says. "You keep talking to other people. You listen and observe. You act and then you iterate."

He also advises tossing a ball around as a team, walking together—any kind of movement—while problem-solving; Apple CEO Steve Jobs was known to hold walking meetings or hit the pavement when something stymied him for more than 10 minutes. "If you can occupy your subconscious brain with activity, you can actually be more focused, more creative," says Storey. It's a research-backed strategy: Movement—especially when it happens outdoors—gives ideas legs.[3]

To that end, plan an off-site retreat, says Storey. "Get your people out of their usual space. Get out in the wilderness." Work hard, break hard, so to speak—ideas often come during what psychology calls the incubation period, when you've stepped away from the problem (such as that flash of clarity in the shower).

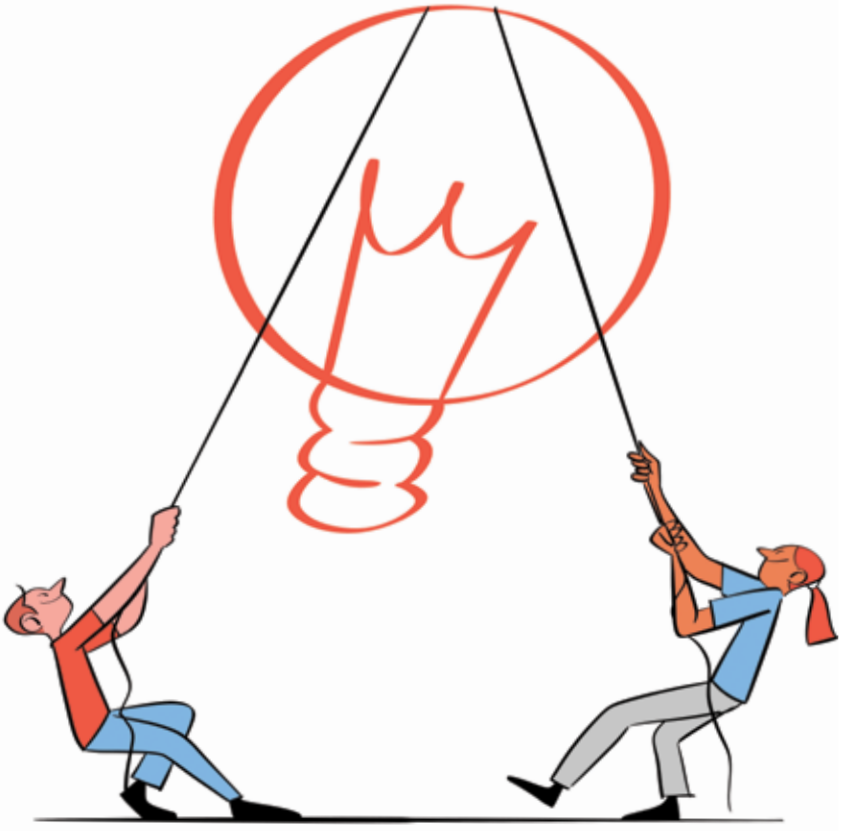
Remember that creative problem-solving is deep work, Storey adds; shallow work is often easily repeated and can be done in a distracted environment. Creativity can't be done on cue. To facilitate deep work, try timeboxing, he says. "Block off a dedicated amount of time to allow you to deeply focus." He even prohibits phones in such a space. "If you're in the middle of a creative endeavor and you get interrupted, it can take 20 minutes or more to recover that lost momentum."

Be Psyched to Solve

One asterisk here, and it's a big one: Your organization's culture may be putting the freeze on creativity.

It starts at the top, says John Bingham, professor of organizational behavior. "Many leaders feel they have to be the innovation chiefs," he says, but there is no turf to protect here; the most innovative firms draw on the knowledge at every rung, "the innovative potential of employees doing the work."

Rigid cultures also stem from a lack of "procedural justice"—the fairness and transparency of how



decisions are made within the company. Bingham's research suggests that procedural justice drives collaborative problem-solving.[4] If people feel undervalued, unheard, or disrespected, Bingham says, they'll often do the bare minimum. Create an environment of support and transparency and the tables turn—people are "more willing to persist with problems, to work harder, to be more creative, to collaborate with coworkers," Bingham says. "And that is what organizations today need desperately."

What does procedural justice look like? Leadership explaining decisions and providing channels to challenge or give feedback—not just in a group setting but one-to-one.

According to Bingham's research, ensuring that every employee has a "line of sight" to the firm's strategic goals can also help.[5] "There's something really powerful about a rank-and-file employee understanding how we create value and win as a company and how they specifically contribute," he says.

Practices that invite two-way communication help create "psychological safety," a parallel topic coined in Harvard Business School research and cited heavily by BYU Marriott experts.[6]

"Psychological safety is the new catchphrase for building the foundations of trust," says Storey. "It's having teams who watch each other's backs, care about each other's lives, and assume the best intentions." This environment creates a kind of nirvana from which teams can tackle problems. People on psychologically safe teams are more willing to take risks, he says, be it experimenting with a new idea, surfacing concerns, or disagreeing.

As this safety increases the flow of feedback, could the volume of ideas become overwhelming? "It all comes down to leaders within teams," says Bingham. It's essential to train supervisors to "draw out those insights, distill the best information, and elevate it toward execution."

Develop a Culture of Candor

Dyer can't underscore the importance of disagreement enough. In an article for *MIT Sloan Management Review*, he advocates for psychological safety but points out that it often comes at the expense of intellectual honesty, which leads to better solutions.[7] Safe, cohesive teams are great at generating ideas, but ideas are refined only through honest evaluation, says Dyer. The best solutions require candor.

Take Pixar: In Ed Catmull's book *Creativity Inc.*, he expounds on how Pixar prioritizes incisive feedback to make its films better. Or take Amazon, where employees and teams are expected to be candid, says Dyer, "even when it's uncomfortable, even when it's exhausting, even when it's with Jeff Bezos."

Dyer details how Amazon's former head of retail, Jeff Wilke, was unafraid to voice his qualms to Bezos and the board about developing the Kindle—a sign of psychological safety. Wilke's concerns deepened the discussion with valuable intellectual honesty.

How can organizations move toward this kind of culture? Draw out healthy debate, says Dyer. "As a leader, ask others to disagree and explain why that's helpful and model how to do it." He makes that a practice as a YSA ward bishop. "I tell my ward

council, 'I like it when you disagree with me because that means you have different information.'" By disagreeing respectfully, he says, "we can get to a better solution."

Break the Box

"There are organically creative people," says Kettles. He sees them coming through his classes. "But there are a lot more people who need coaxing, preparation, and practice."

The good news: Practice works. Anyone can cultivate creative problem-solving skills, say the experts. If you're ready to start, try these tactics.

First, give yourself permission to think outside the box. It sounds basic, but Dyer has even run experiments on this: MBA groups that are directed, specifically, to be creative in solving a case study—to really reach for a novel solution—outperformed their counterparts, as judged by independent evaluators. "Teams were much more likely to come up with something novel when I legitimized that it was okay to think outside the box," says Dyer.

Next, network. Dyer's research reveals that this is one of the top skills of the world's best innovators. But instead of networking for resources, network for ideas. "It's really fast; it's efficient," says Dyer. "Reach out to a lot of different types of people to get their perspective on an issue or a problem."

Third, write down questions every morning for a few weeks about the challenges you're facing. Better yet, make it an ongoing practice. Dyer taught this principle in a workshop, and an executive MBA attendee circled back four months later to report the ripple effect. "His boss came to him and said, 'There's something different about you. You're a more strategic thinker. You're helping us address important issues.'" The same EMBA student reported a promotion a few months later. "And the only thing he knew that he was doing differently was writing these questions down," notes Dyer.

Storey adds two final takes: the importance of a growth mindset and a willingness to fail. "Some people see a glass half full, some half empty," he says. "Be the person who is instead focused on, How do I get more water?" Then allow "a dumb idea" along the way. "Trying something that is a total bust is really important," says Storey. It informs the next prototype. "Focus on the growth, the opportunity to learn."

And don't be afraid of your wild ideas, continues Storey. Going back to his MTC revamp, he cites the solution for training missionaries who have autism and may suffer from severe social anxiety. "Ultimately we gave the Church the wild idea to give them a personal tutor," says Storey. "It's wild because it's exceptionally expensive," he admits, but it worked best, and "it made sense with the mission of the Church. And that's what they now do."

At any stage, they could have doused the idea and "inadvertently put out the creative flame before it went anywhere," says Storey. Fan your creative endeavors. Deliberately. "Culture either emerges or it is crafted. And usually if it emerges, it's not the culture you necessarily want." In Storey's world, a creative culture isn't just welcomed—it's designed. M

About the Author

Brittany Rogers, a freelance writer in American Fork, Utah, is locked in a creative problem-solving duel with her three-year-old, who keeps finding new ways to release the neighbor's bunnies.

Notes

1. See E. P. Torrance and Z. L. Rockenstein, "Styles of Thinking and Creativity," in *Learning Strategies and Learning Styles*, ed. Ronald R. Schmeck (Plenum Press, 1988), 275–90, link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-1-4899-2118-5_10.
2. Taylor Cone, Tania Anaissie, and Ashish Goel, Stoke Deck, version 2.0, 2019, stokedeck.io/.
3. See Marily Oppezzo and Daniel L. Schwartz, "Give Your Ideas Some Legs: The Positive Effect of Walking on Creative Thinking," *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition* 40, no. 4 (July 2014): 1142–52, apa.org/pubs/journals/releases/xlm-a0036577.pdf.
4. See Haiyang Li, John B. Bingham, and Elizabeth E. Umphress, "Fairness from the Top: Perceived Procedural Justice and Collaborative Problem Solving in New Product Development," *Organization Science* 18, no. 2 (March–April 2007): 200-216, pubsonline.informs.org/doi/10.1287/orsc.1060.0231.
5. Wendy R. Boswell, John B. Bingham, and Alexander J. S. Colvin, "Aligning Employees Through 'Line of Sight,'" *Business Horizons* 49, no. 6 (November–December 2006): 499–509, doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2006.05.001.
6. Amy Edmondson, "Psychological Safety and Learning Behavior in Work Teams," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 44, no. 2 (Sage Publications, June 1999): jstor.org/stable/2666999.
7. See Jeff Dyer, Nathan Furr, Curtis Lefrandt, and Taeya Howell, "Why Innovation Depends on Intellectual Honesty," *MIT Sloan Management Review* 64, no. 3 (Spring 2023): 66–72, sloanreview.mit.edu/article/why-innovation-depends-on-intellectual-honesty/.

Don't Copy and Paste

Problems often land in familiar categories or buckets—even across clients from different industries, says Eden Peterson, a BYU MBA alum and management consultant at PwC. "It's easy to fall into, 'Okay, we've seen this before,'" she says, "and jump right to solutioning."

The problem-solving process she touts: Stop and ask some good questions and resist the instinct to treat similar problems in the same way. After wrapping a recent organizational redesign for a pharmaceutical company, Peterson dove into a near-replica issue for a hospitality chain. But her go-to questions—"Who is my audience?" and "What unique situations do they face?"—revealed unexpected nuances. For one, frontline hospitality workers take a lot of flack. "Guests are not usually nice," she says. That insight shaped PwC's advice, especially around how leaders support frontline staff.

Peterson realized that her team would have solved the problem incorrectly if they had assumed that hospitality employees were as autonomous as pharmaceutical employees. "Questioning and deep thinking always make for better work outputs," she says.

The Good Egg

Whether or not the chicken or the egg came first, one fact is certain: Eggs are having a newsworthy year. The cost of these headline-grabbing ovals skyrocketed in early 2025, but what's even more striking than their price volatility is their culinary versatility. Whether scrambled for morning fare, hardboiled for holidays, or whipped for texture, there's no denying that eggs are all they're cracked up to be.

3

TABLESPOONS OF AQUAFABA TO REPLACE ONE WHOLE EGG.

What is aquafaba? Egg-cellent question. A relatively new culinary discovery, aquafaba is simply the residual liquid in a can of chickpeas. (The literal Latin translation: bean water.) It's an especially adaptable egg substitute in baked goods. Although lacking the nutritional punch of an egg, aquafaba freezes well and is a cheap swap if chickpeas were already on your grocery list.

Sources: *thekitchn.com/the-most-magical-egg-replacement-and-how-to-use-it-234588*

6

GRAMS OF PROTEIN PER LARGE EGG.

Eggs are a nutrient-dense powerhouse—one that's hard to beat. Protein is essential to build and maintain muscle—benefiting kids, adolescents, and adults alike. Sustaining a high-protein diet (20–40 grams of protein per meal) aids weight loss, lowers blood pressure, and improves bone health. Eggs are also high in B12—a vitamin that boosts energy—and selenium—a dynamic antioxidant.

Sources: *incredibleegg.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/ENC-Protein-2019-Web-1.pdf* and *healthline.com/nutrition/proven-health-benefits-of-eggs#TOC_TITLE_HDR_9*

3–6

MONTHS A FRESH EGG CAN BE SAFELY STORED.

Backyard coops are soaring in popularity, and you can't deny the appeal of having eggs delivered on-site. Fresh eggs have a protective layer on the shell, a "bloom" that shields them from salmonella and keeps them good for months when stored in the fridge. Once that protective layer is removed—either by washing at home or in commercial processing—eggs have a much shorter shelf life.

Source: *dailychickens.com/how-long-do-farm-fresh-eggs-last/*

30 MILLION

HENS KILLED EARLY IN 2025.

It was a classic case of supply and demand. Customers scrambled to stock their fridges with eggs after an uptick in bird flu in late 2024. When 30 million hens were killed as a precaution in January and February 2025, shoppers were left shell-shocked at the egg shortages and consequent price hikes. Prices have eased since the recent peak, but relatively higher costs may be here to stay.

Source: *apnews.com/article/egg-prices-bird-flu-cpi-b0ded420e9f7c0a707277c9c63396a76*

$1.39

AVERAGE PRICE OF A DOZEN EGGS IN OCTOBER 2016.

Waxing nostalgic about expenses is easy, especially after several years of steady inflation. Even so, it's hard to imagine that nine years ago we paid, on average, less than 12 cents per egg. Eggs might not always be cheaper by the dozen, but even at their highest prices, they're still a budget-friendly protein compared to other sources, such as meat and nuts.

Source: *data.bls.gov/timeseries/APU0000708111*

250

APPROXIMATE NUMBER OF EGGS A HEN LAYS IN ONE YEAR.

Hens have a two- to three-year window of high fertility, and during this time they typically produce about one egg every 24 hours. While production dips in the autumn, the palette of egg colors—from light beige to sea green and robin's-egg blue—stays consistent throughout the year. A chicken's breed affects its personality, which can be docile, skittish, curious, friendly, or smart.

Source: *grow.ifa.coop/chickens/best-egg-laying-chickens*

Ginger Belnap
2003, ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Digging In

BY EMILY EDMONDS

PHOTOS BY BRADLEY SLADE

In a gold frame on Ginger Belnap's desk sits a quote—a directive from Brigham Young to enhance the world. "Your work," it concludes, "is to beautify the face of the earth until it shall become like the Garden of Eden."

Belnap's mom framed the quote that sits on Belnap's desk today, adorning Brigham Young's words with a floral cross-stitch.

Belnap memorized the full quote as part of a college assignment 25 years ago and continues to draw on it for inspiration. As owner and principal designer of Meadow Brook Design, Belnap built her landscape business from the ground up. "I love making spaces for families to make memories. What makes me the most proud is getting a text or call from a former client who tells me how their landscape brings their friends and family together," says Belnap, whose work has garnered several People's Choice awards at the Utah Valley Parade of Homes. "That's the whole goal: to create places of sanctuary."

Being a landscape designer is more than digging in the dirt. It's understanding what a client wants, making calculations, and, ultimately, being a problem solver. "Every day has a new challenge," Belnap says. Whether the obstacle is slopes, elevations, lot designs, or an unexpected gas line, "there's always something fun to figure out." And when it all comes together, she notes, "it just feels so good."

Continual learning is as foundational to Belnap's work as the plants themselves. As a teen, she learned (the hard way) about poison ivy. Last spring she joined a local farmer in his orchard for a master class on pruning. Weeks later she took a deep dive into the world of pavers so she can be a better bridge between her clients and contractors. "People are always willing to help others grow," she says, "and there are so many things to learn."

No matter the subject or project, Belnap is eager to dig in—and her purple boots are at the ready in her SUV because you never know when things are going to get muddy.

UPROOTED

Belnap's early years were filled with outdoor adventures with her four siblings. "We'd take the four-wheeler up the hillside behind our house to explore," she says of her childhood in Farmington, Utah.

Those growing-up years also included some rudimentary entrepreneurship. When the local school district switched to a year-round schedule, Belnap's mother transferred her children to the lone school that kept a traditional schedule. "She wanted us to have our summers," Belnap explains.

The free time also helped launch the Belnap kids' snow-cone business, which thrived thanks to steady business from the year-round students. "Everyone walking home from school in the summertime wanted a 25-cent snow cone," Belnap says.

The siblings, who also eventually started a lawn-mowing business and a turkey-raising enterprise, earned enough money to buy themselves a trampoline and a Nintendo. But summers in their household weren't just about earning money—they were also filled with chores. "Mom woke us up every morning at six to garden," Belnap says. "It was the worst, but eventually it became something that I really enjoyed."

When Belnap was 15, her father, an electrical engineer, was transferred to Hudson, New Hampshire. Belnap's backyard changed from a desert hillside to a dense forest—a setting ripe with new opportunities. "I fell in love with the East Coast and the culture," she says.

Belnap explored the areas near her Hudson home with her two older brothers and two younger sisters. "We would go out to the forest and pick wild blackberries and raspberries and come home and make pancakes and pies," she remembers.

Living in the East was a turning point for Belnap in multiple ways. Spiritually, it strengthened her, as there was only one other church member in her graduating class. "Even before I stepped into my high school, people knew I was the 'new Mormon girl,'" Belnap recalls. She learned how to explain her temple trips to Washington, DC, to her friends, who came to respect her beliefs. "I never had to turn down a drink at a party because my friends did it for me. They watched out for me."

Likewise, Belnap came to appreciate her friends' and neighbors' perspectives: "I enjoyed conversations with people who had different opinions—it's great to work through your different beliefs and still respect friends for who they are."

NURSERY SCHOOL

Another turning point came when Belnap took a floral design class in high school. Her teacher, Ms. Raiti, not only handpicked Belnap to join the Future Farmers of America team—which won the state horticulture award during Belnap's senior year—but also introduced Belnap to the school's horticultural vocational program.

The program blended part-time school with part-time work at a local nursery. The hands-on experience deepened Belnap's growing interest in the field. "It was eye-opening to see how intricate each plant was," says Belnap, who was tasked with watering plants and flowers with her friend Kate.

"I became enthralled with understanding plant material—the different textures and colors."

While working at the sizeable nursery, Belnap also got her first taste of design. "The owner allowed Kate and me to decorate the entry using whatever plants we wanted," she says. When a neighbor suggested that Belnap consider landscape design as a profession, Belnap was surprised. "I had no idea it was even a career," she admits.

The seed that was planted in that conversation came to fruition when Belnap enrolled at Ricks College and majored in landscape horticulture. "My dream was to either be a CEO in New York City or to run my own company," she says. "When I finished my associate's degree at Ricks, I had the technical knowledge to be a designer but lacked some of the skills to be a successful business owner."

Belnap transferred to BYU, eager to expand her expertise and find her footing in the business world.

FIELDWORK

As the last fans trickled out of LaVell Edwards Stadium, Belnap and her cohorts had their own task to tackle: postgame stadium cleanup.

Although Belnap had pivoted to study entrepreneurship at BYU Marriott, she kept her horticulture roots strong through working as a TA for a landscape design class and participating in BYU's Plant and Landscapes Systems Club. To earn funds, the club's members cleaned sections of the football stadium after each home game. In addition to picking up the trash, students also swept and hosed down the aisles—often on dark nights and in freezing temperatures.

"If it was a late game, we'd be there until 3 a.m.," Belnap recalls. "You don't think about things like that when you're a fan. To this day, I still cringe going to football games because cleaning up the trash was disgusting—and I make sure that my family cleans up after themselves."

As a BYU Marriott student, Belnap was fascinated by the weekly Entrepreneurship Lecture Series, where founders of companies such as Little Giant Ladder Systems and Cow-Pie Clocks would share their experiences and insights. "I love reading nonfiction and biographies, so the entrepreneurs' experiences resonated with me," she says. "It was intriguing to hear about who they were and how they overcame challenges. I could see myself in some of them as I figured out what I wanted in my life."

By April 2003, Belnap had earned her BS in business management with an emphasis in entrepreneurship. Becoming her own boss was just a season away.

TRANSPLANTED

Twenty-five-year-old Belnap worked for a Utah County landscape company, Mountain Mist, as a lead designer after graduating from BYU Marriott. She was also dating Dan, a pilot in the Air Force. One weekend he came to Utah, and Belnap sensed that something needed to change.

"I thought, *Either I'm going to marry Dan or I'm going to start my own business,*" Belnap recalls. Not long after she picked him up from the airport, Dan admitted that he didn't feel like the relationship would work out, and Belnap's next step became clear. "I was like, *Okay, here I go. I'm starting my own business,*" she says.

Although it felt daunting, Belnap knew it was the right move. "I had the capabilities, talents, and knowledge but had to find the courage," she says. She began to edge forward: building clientele, valuating her time, hiring an accountant, and communicating with subcontractors. Belnap bought a $50 drafting table at a garage sale—one that she still uses—and Meadow Brook Design was officially formed.

The first few years were rocky, as they are for many emerging businesses. It was 2006, just before the economy went downhill, so Belnap taught snowboarding lessons to supplement her income. But by 2010 the side gigs ended as her company grew, and Belnap's business has kept her busy year-round ever since. "Entrepreneurship has been a good fit for me. I like having parameters that allow me to have freedom," she says. "I can make this company as big or as small as I want—and right now, I like it small."

In 2015, Joseph Wing became Belnap's first employee. They met when Belnap was a guest speaker in a landscape architecture class at Utah State University. "Ginger was

an incredible mentor, guiding me on how to create thoughtful, client-centered designs," says Wing, now a senior associate at G Brown Design. "Everyone loves working with her."

Belnap treats everyone equally, Wing continues, which is part of what makes her a fantastic leader. "She has a natural ability to resolve issues calmly and effectively, and people truly listen to her. It's no surprise that her business has grown steadily through word of mouth."

OUT ON A LIMB

Building her business wasn't the only time Belnap stretched beyond her comfort zone. As a student, Belnap learned how to create landscape designs by hand. "Anytime I made a mistake or a client wanted to make a change, I redrew the whole thing," she says. She continued this practice as a professional—until a builder came to her with a directive: "You need to learn AutoCAD."

Belnap was reluctant, but she "finally bit the bullet" and enrolled in an AutoCAD drafting class at Utah Valley University. "I still draft by hand sometimes," she admits, "because that feels good to me. But everything goes into AutoCAD so it's easy to make changes and get measurements for contractors."

That lesson reinforced the importance of staying competitive. Even in the landscape industry, Belnap says, there is always new plant material to evaluate or a new computer system to master. "You can't stay in the same place; you've got to keep moving forward."

As Belnap was adapting to the challenges and making a name for herself professionally, her personal life was on the brink of a change.

FAMILY TREE

Your future husband is speaking right now. Where are you?

Belnap rubbed her eyes as she read the text message from a young woman in her ward. Belnap—who had bought a home in American Fork, Utah, and was attending a family ward—had slept through her alarm on a Sunday morning after returning from a mountain-biking trip in southern Utah at 3 a.m.

Still groggy, Belnap picked up her phone to respond: *There's no one single in our ward.*

For real, the teen wrote back, *the guy giving a talk right now is.*

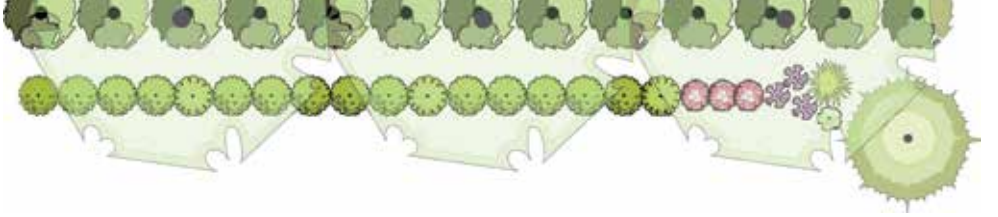
About six months later, the speaker, Covy Jones, reached out to Belnap. "You probably don't know me," Jones said when he called, "but I'm in your ward."

Belnap, not wanting to beat around the bush, replied, "You're the hot guy that all the Young Women want me to go out with."

Their first date was going on a run, followed by eating leftovers at Jones's house. "What I loved about the date was that Covy was open and honest, and spending time together was super easy," she says.

Belnap and Jones, who had three children from his previous marriage, tied the knot in March 2018. "The decision to be married was hard—it wasn't a typical love story," Belnap recalls. But once she made the decision, she was all in.

"We still had to find tools to work through difficult situations that neither one of us knew how to navigate," she says. "Sometimes those tools came through prayer, and sometimes those tools came through a great marriage counselor."



Belnap helps build homes in Guatemala through Project Homes of Hope.

Pro Tips

Belnap shares three principles to help homeowners who are plotting landscape projects:

1. ***Landscape design is not done when it's installed, so plan—and maintain—accordingly.*** It takes time for plants to develop. Plant material is not a piece of furniture—it's not going to stay the same size. If you want a 15-foot tree for privacy, you must decide whether you want privacy now or whether you're willing to wait.
2. ***From design to reality, expect a 20 percent change.*** Unforeseen challenges are part of every project. Be willing to work with your contractor and your landscape designer to get the right direction, but know there will always be little tweaks.
3. ***Understand your space and what your goals are for it.*** There have been many times when I show up to a remodel and the owners have a $10,000 firepit that hasn't been used in years. Prioritize items your family will love and use and set realistic budgets.

IN HER ELEMENT

Ask Belnap about her hobbies and you'll get a list of activities that have two common elements: nature and adventure. From hiking and biking to rock climbing, snowboarding, skiing, hunting, and boating, it's clear that the outdoors is Belnap's happy place. "The mental release that comes from being outside is something that my body and my mind crave," she says.

Belnap starts every morning with an outdoor activity, such as hiking or taking her dog on a walk near her home in Pleasant Grove, Utah. "If I'm not outside for the first part of the day, it's hard for me to focus," she says.

The fresh air not only helps Belnap thrive, it also helps her segment her work life from her homelife. "When your office is in your home, it can be hard to separate the two. Going for a walk is helpful," she explains. "Even after a hard day of work, sometimes I still have to go outside so I can transition to focus on my family."

Family is another common thread in Belnap's hobbies, as family members often join her on her adventures. "I didn't want to give up my hobbies when I got married, but I also wanted to spend time with my family," Belnap says. "I realized I ought to combine the two."

Jones, who works for the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources as a wildlife section chief, shares Belnap's love for the outdoors. The couple enjoys fishing, skiing, snowboarding, and mountain biking together and has plans to hike the W Trek in Patagonia in 2026. Working hard is important, Belnap says, "but not so hard that your career becomes your only passion."

DOWN TO EARTH

Another passion of Belnap's combines her love of creating and exploring with her desire to do good. In 2009 her singles-ward bishop traveled to Guatemala to provide cleft palate surgeries. While there, he saw more opportunities to serve, so he gathered additional volunteers to return and build homes. Belnap got involved and has been on most of the group's excursions in the past two decades.

The organization, originally called Hirsche Homes and renamed Project Homes of Hope, completes upward of 20 homes during each excursion. "It's so nice to give back and be reminded of what we can offer others," Belnap says. "My problems seem petty when compared to what other people around the world experience."

The homes the volunteers build are basic: 30-inch cinder-block foundation walls, two-by-fours, corrugated metal, solar lights, and concrete floors to reduce diseases. The concrete is donated by a company in Utah, and ticket sales from Utah County's annual Alpine Living Nativity cover the other expenses.

"One of the women we built a home for had six children and lost her husband to suicide," Belnap says of the spring 2025 excursion. "Another home went to a girl who was beat by her father, so she could have her own place."

The volunteer group has grown close over the years. "We're like family," describes Belnap, who also serves on the Project Homes of Hope board of directors. "I got my husband to come along in 2024, and he fell in love with the experience too."

SECOND NATURE

As Utah begins to thaw each spring, Belnap's work schedule becomes saturated. "Everyone gets excited to landscape because they want to enjoy their yards through the summer," she says. Despite the extra-busy season, the effort pays off not only for clients but also for Belnap. "I love seeing what we envision come to reality."

Belnap still finds herself intrigued with nature's beauty, just like when she was a teenager admiring plants at the local nursery. "What God has created is incredible—the interesting little details of each plant and how they all work together," she says. "There's nothing more beautiful than an untouched mountain range or a summertime meadow in bloom. I'm humbled by the simple beauties that God has given us. There is healing being in the dirt and being with the Earth." M

CELEBRATING 150 YEARS OF BYU

By Emily Edmonds

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY will never get old—especially when *Young* is part of its name. But in 2025 the university hits a particularly venerable milestone: its sesquicentennial.

In the upcoming months, students, faculty, staff, and alumni will gather—both on and off campus—to celebrate 150 years of combining secular and spiritual learning, conducting impactful research, and sending graduates out in the world to serve.

"I want you to begin to feel the excitement about this important mark in time as we begin this 150th year," shared BYU President C. Shane Reese at a campus devotional early this year. "As we approach this milestone in our history, we want to focus on the light with which you all shine as we look forward to this next chapter in BYU's history. And we will do so by saying, 'That light groweth brighter and brighter'—'that all may be edified of all.'"[1]

BYU Marriott will join the campus community in festivities that honor BYU's past, celebrate its present, and look forward to its future. After all, you only turn 150 years young once.

PHOTO BY BRADLEY SLADE

150

BYU | 150

PHOTOS BY BYU PHOTO

GIFTS OF LIGHT

The tagline of BYU's sesquicentennial—Celebrating Gifts of Light—underscores the ways that people not only share the light of Jesus Christ but also receive it in their lives.

At BYU's centennial celebration in 1975, President Spencer W. Kimball acknowledged the university's distinct gifts of light. He explained, "There are many ways in which BYU can tower above other universities—not simply because of the size of its student body or its beautiful campus but because of the unique light BYU can send forth into the educational world."[2]

President Kimball had a strong vision of what the future of BYU should look like, "but we're the ones who get to implement it," says BYU Marriott Dean Brigitte Madrian. "Visions don't make themselves happen. Visions happen because people work hard to make them happen."

The Tanner Building itself embodies light, Madrian points out. "At the business school, we're in a building with a huge atrium, and we benefit from all the natural light that comes in," she says. "Light is part of our environment when we come to work, to teach classes, or to study every day."

In addition to being housed in a space full of light, BYU Marriott builds upon the university's divinely inspired mission through seeking, connecting, and sharing light.

SEEKING LIGHT

"I love research because it increases our knowledge and understanding of the world," says Ryan Elder, chair of the Department of Marketing and Global Supply Chain. "At BYU specifically, it's a search for light and truth."

Knowledge generation at BYU is often big-picture oriented, Elder notes. "A lot of the research that goes on here asks, 'How do I bless the lives of God's children? How do I uncover these truths that ultimately help people?'"

This broad focus is the gift professors are giving back to society. "When we think about BYU's mission, we're looking at radiating truth in a world that needs this type of clarity and understanding," Elder says.

The research process can also have consequences for the students involved. "The aha moments that you share are rewarding and could potentially change the students' career trajectory," Elder says.

Seeking truth is a fully active process, Elder continues, that leads to discoveries that help

us understand the world a little bit better. "A university exists to advance knowledge, to create new knowledge, and to disseminate that knowledge," he says. "Some of the best researchers we have on campus—especially at BYU Marriott—are also our best teachers because they're motivated to share these new and exciting findings with students."

CONNECTING LIGHT

For the last decade, Steven Fox has been "fascinated with light," studying the topic in the scriptures and in other writings. "Light has a greater impact upon us than we think," says Fox, a manager in the Ballard Center for Social Impact. "I'm not sure there's a huge difference between the sunlight in the sky and the light that we feel when we belong and appreciate and love each other—maybe it's one and the same."

Fox explains that the Ballard Center's motto—"Do good. Better."—is about creating lasting light in the world. "Christ created a community, and if we purport to be disciples of Christ, we should learn the skills of developing community," he says. "Putting them into practice can be difficult, but it's well worth the effort to create a community of belonging and respect."

Every week, Fox hosts experts from social impact organizations who visit his class to share insights about community building. "It's one of the best parts of my job," he says.

Fox also proactively looks for meaningful opportunities to add value and build community in his classroom by maximizing diversity. "It's incumbent upon BYU employees—whether we're teaching or are in an administrative role—to see what diverse elements people bring to the table for the benefit of all," he says.

At a BYU devotional in 2022, Steven J. Lund, Young Men general president, spoke about "flashes of light"—which he defined as "flickering assurances of God's love"[3]—and Fox found himself inspired by that verbiage. "I've been given a unique opportunity to engage with students at BYU," he acknowledges. "I view it as my blessing, opportunity, and obligation to provide meaningful flashes of light in their day."

Light should permeate every part of our lives, Fox says. "I want to be one who shares light and receives light and views it in such a very positive way. I'm grateful for light and am looking forward to the day that I understand it even better."

SHARING LIGHT

One important aspect of becoming a Christlike leader, Madrian says, is the word *becoming*. "It's not something we're going to achieve in this lifetime," she says. "It's a process of repentance in the broadest, most wonderful sense of that word. As BYU's business school, we influence the world for good by encouraging people to have the aspiration, the confidence, and the desire to become Christlike leaders."

Light is a transformational force, Madrian explains. "The light of Christ giveth life to all things. It enlightens our minds and quickens our understanding," she says. "To transform the world through Christlike leadership is to transform the world through 'Christ-light' leadership—by leading with and through the light and power of Jesus Christ."

Madrian points to BYU Marriott Professor Kim Clark's research on disciple-leadership, specifically, the activities and behaviors Clark has identified that generate darkness or light in an organization.[4] "When people are operating in a dark organizational environment, they don't feel safe to do their best work and are constantly second-guessing themselves," Madrian says. "You end up with organizations and employees who can't meet their potential."

And that's where BYU Marriott alumni come in. "We want our students to graduate as beacons of light," Madrian says. "They share their light through the way that they lead in organizations, whether in a formal leadership position or by informally exerting influence in whatever they're doing." M

NOTES

1. C. Shane Reese, "God Loves Underdogs," BYU devotional address, January 14, 2025, speeches.byu.edu/talks/c-shane-reese/god-loves-underdogs/; quoting Doctrine and Covenants 50:24; 88:122.
2. Spencer W. Kimball, "The Second Century of Brigham Young University," BYU devotional address, October 10, 1975, speeches.byu.edu/talks/spencer-w-kimball/second-century-brigham-young-university/.
3. Steven J. Lund, "Flashes of Light," BYU devotional address, September 20, 2022, speeches.byu.edu/talks/steven-j-lund/flashes-of-light/.
4. See Kim B. Clark, "Becoming a Disciple-Leader," *Marriott Alumni Magazine*, Fall 2022, 10–16; marriott.byu.edu/magazine/feature/becoming-a-disciple-leader.

Centenarian Celebrations

BYU and its entities will host several birthday-related activities and campaigns. Details about the worldwide events will be posted online at 150.byu.edu, and information will also be disseminated through the sponsoring programs and centers.

In particular, the BYU community is inviting alumni, students, and friends to participate in a service campaign that began in August 2025 and runs through April 2026. Those who log volunteer hours—up to 150—earn various gifts (it is a birthday celebration, after all). For more details, visit 150.byu.edu/service.

"There are so many exciting things that are going to be happening over the course of the next several months in conjunction with the university's sesquicentennial," Madrian says. "I would love to extend an invitation to all of our alumni and friends to watch for opportunities and ways that you can engage with these celebratory activities and be a beacon of light in your own little corner of the world."

PHOTO BY BRADLEY SLADE

around the
COOLER

BY SHANNON KEELEY

1. STUDIOUS SOUND-TRACKS

If you like to hit the books *and* the play button, make sure your music is helping rather than hijacking your focus. Though some researchers find that any music hinders working brain function, others suggest that simple, repetitive, lyric-free tracks can help your brain shift into a calmer or more alert state to support memorization. Tracks with binaural beats—where each ear hears a slightly different tone—may be especially helpful. Keep your tunes chill while studying and save your favorite hype song for a study-break reward.

1

2

Sound Advice

When it's time to really focus, sometimes your brain needs a little extra help. Cue the background music—a timeless tool for managing minds and moods. From worship music in ancient Egyptian temples to Muzak piped into World War II–era factories, background sound has aided concentration, relaxation, and productivity for centuries.

Thanks to streaming technology, we now have endless ways to curate soundscapes. Whether you're diving into deep work, deep cleaning, or deep thoughts, these sound-based strategies can help you get—and stay—in the zone.

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5

2. RAINBOW OF NOISE

Creating your own soundscape is an art—and, yes, it comes in colors. White, pink, and brown noise are steady streams of sound that can mask distractions, a useful strategy when people need a little help zooming in or zoning out. White noise covers the full sound spectrum evenly (think TV static), pink noise softens the high frequencies and boosts the lows (think gentle rain), and brown noise contains the most bass (think a rushing river).

3. I'M ALL EARS

Sure, audiobooks are great for squeezing in a chapter while folding laundry, pulling weeds, or commuting, but they're more than just a multitasking tool. Audiobooks tap into our deep-rooted storytelling tradition and offer a way to rest our eyes from the page or the screen. Voice inflection, timing, and tone bring books to life, adding nuance that can be missed in print. Research even shows that listening to audiobooks can boost mental health, especially for adults over 65.

4. SOUND BITES

Restaurateurs have long used music's tempo to influence how quickly people eat and how long they linger. But the more recent rise of interest in sonic seasoning—the science of how sound influences taste—has taken the food-sound connection to new depths. Studies show that low-pitched tones enhance bitterness, high-pitched tones boost sweetness, and loud environments can dull flavor. It turns out that sound may be the most overlooked seasoning of all.

5. THE SCIENCE OF SILENCE

They started in cockpits, but noise-canceling headphones are now just as likely to be found in cubicles and carry-ons. These headphones detect incoming sound waves and produce inverse waves that block the noise before it reaches your ears. Kids and teens shouldn't rely on noise-canceling devices all the time, though, as research suggests these devices may hinder developing brains from learning how to filter and process everyday sounds.

Partner *with the* Lord *in Your* Career

by Lee Bird

ILLUSTRATIONS *by* BRETT RYDER

What an honor it is to be here today and to celebrate your accomplishments. Graduates, you are an inspiring sight, and I'm excited to be able to share a few thoughts with you.

Some 27 years ago, President Gordon B. Hinckley shared a thought that I'd like to affirm today:

Education is the key to economic opportunity. The Lord has laid a mandate upon us . . . to acquire learning "by study, and also by faith" (D&C 109:14). It is likely that you will be a better provider if your mind and hands are trained to do something worthwhile in the society of which you will become a part.[1]

You've all done that. You've been trained well. You've gained a great education, and it has prepared you to compete in the modern business economy today. You've also taken religion courses, served in your wards, and built a closer relationship with your Savior, Jesus Christ.

I've found that career building and kingdom building are not mutually exclusive. In fact, when brought together, they create a powerful combination. Today, I'd like to share a few principles that I have applied in my life that can help you in your career as well:

- First, don't bifurcate your life.
- Second, work hard.
- And third, counsel with the Lord in all thy doings.

1. DON'T BIFURCATE YOUR LIFE

What does "don't bifurcate your life" mean? It means don't divide your life—don't separate it into two parts. Have the courage to bring yourself as a disciple of Jesus Christ into the office.

This was brought to my attention a few years ago when I was working at Gap Inc. and was selected as one of four executives who could potentially become a CEO. To invest in my professional development, the company arranged for an executive assessment and then career coaching from an executive coach. Stephen Drotter, who cowrote the book *The Leadership Pipeline*, did the assessment. After that assessment, which, to be honest, was brutal, Terry Gilliam was assigned to be my executive coach.

Terry observed me at work for a few weeks and then came to my home to watch me engage with my family. He ate dinner with us, hung out with us on the weekend, and went to church with us. He saw me leading in the ward, serving, and worshipping.

I knew that after this observation period I would have a coaching session with advice on how to improve as a leader. So early one morning, Terry sat me down in my office at Gap, which overlooked the San Francisco Bay.

I was initially excited to hear what he had to say but was somewhat disappointed when he said he had only one piece of advice. I thought, *You spent all this time with me, and you've only got one thing to say to me?*

He said, "Don't bifurcate your life."

I looked at him. I didn't really know what he meant.

He simply said, "Just bring the guy who was at home and church to work."

I thought about that. It was really interesting. "You come to work ready for battle, wearing your armor," he explained. "You're very focused, clinical, and analytical, but you're impersonal. You don't let people get to know you, and you don't know them either. At home and at church, you're very warm, genuine, caring, and sincere. Bring that person to the office."

He shared with me that great leaders can lead not just the minds of the people but their hearts as well; if I learned to lead people's hearts, they'd follow me anywhere.

It was the best career advice I've ever heard. It seemed simple, but it was hard to implement, especially given my career thus far. I'd worked in some pretty tough industries—automotive and aerospace—and I wasn't sure that I could bring the two parts of me together.

But I had some great examples. The first was my boss at Old Navy, Jenny Ming, one of the brand's cofounders. Jenny was the matriarch for the whole business. She was an amazing leader, a first-generation American who would bring her home-baked cookies to our executive team meetings. After my first performance review with her, she stood up

"I've found that career building and kingdom building are not mutually exclusive. In fact, when brought together, they create a powerful combination."

and gave me a hug. I'd never had a hug after a performance review—I didn't know how to handle it. But I was grateful for it because it was very authentic and sincere. I'm so grateful for her servant-leader example.

The best example all of us have is our Savior, Jesus Christ. He knew His disciples intimately. He knew them personally. He knew their families. He knew their imperfections and their weaknesses, and He wanted to help them, serve them, and love them.

He gave His all for them, and as the Savior and Redeemer of the world, He gave His all for us. My hope is that you will partner with the Lord in your career by bringing your whole self to the office as a disciple of Jesus Christ. As you do this, you will be blessed.

Remember, don't bifurcate your life!

2. WORK HARD

This principle has been around since the beginning of time—since Adam and Eve came to the earth. Once Adam and Eve partook of the forbidden fruit, the Lord cast them out of the Garden of Eden. He told them: "By the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread" all the days of thy life (Moses 4:25).

So it is with us. We'll need to work hard to provide for ourselves and our families. The principle of hard work is an eternal principle. As Elder F. David Stanley, a member of the Seventy, said:

Hard work is a blessing of God. It involves going after it "with all your heart, might, mind and strength" (D&C 4:2). That alone is the difference between the average and the excellent.[2]

Each of you already knows how to work hard. You had to work really hard to get into BYU. Then you had to apply to get into BYU Marriott. Then you had to work hard to graduate. You clearly know how to work hard. Your muscles are trained and ready for what's ahead. And guess what? You'll get to work hard in your careers.

I love to work hard, and I knew early on that I was going to have to outwork those whom I worked with just to get noticed.

When I graduated with my MBA, I went to work at Ford Motor Company. My peer group in finance at Ford Motor Company came from schools like BYU, Harvard, Wharton, Columbia, Berkeley, Stanford, and other amazing schools—not little old Babson College where I went to night school. My wife and I had two kids at the time, and night school worked best for us.

To make my mark at the company, I knew I was going to have to work hard. At Ford we were encouraged to go to the factory and get manufacturing experience early in our careers. Most of those folks who I graduated with—and those working at Ford who came from fancy schools—had no intention of getting their hands dirty at a factory. But I did—as did Mark Hansen, a fellow Ford finance MBA who is now a faculty member here at BYU Marriott.

I was transferred to the Indianapolis plant, and I was an area controller as the finance guy for one quarter of the plant. That's about a half-million square feet, which is the size of eight football fields.

A few months later, I also volunteered to work as a midnight shift foreman on the factory floor, which I did for the next three months, pulling 16-hour double shifts.

I'd go to work early—technically late at night—and work as a foreman during the midnight shift. Then I would shower and get dressed to work the day shift. I was also serving in the ward bishopric at the time, so I was super busy. But I wasn't sleeping anyway.

Why wasn't I sleeping? A few weeks after we moved to Indianapolis, my wife, Linda, gave birth to our third child—our daughter Kelsey. She was born with an irreparable

heart, which was going to require a full heart transplant. As we prayed to find out what was right for her, we made the difficult decision with the Lord to bring Kelsey home and let her die with us, which she did early one morning 13 days later.

I was brokenhearted, but with the saving and healing power of our Savior, Jesus Christ, and with my knowledge of the plan of salvation, I found that hard work helped me to heal.

As I look back on this challenging chapter, I see three takeaways. First, working at the Ford factory taught me more about business than any other workplace. Doing dirty things and hard things at work helps you better understand how the whole organization works.

The second takeaway came from pulling a double shift. The people at Ford saw that I knew how to work hard, which helped accelerate my career going forward.

Last, these experiences reminded me that I can do hard things—and you can too. Life is hard at times, and pushing through hard times allows us to stretch and grow. After you get your foot in the door, employers really don't care where you went to school, but they do care that you know how to work hard and want to work hard for them.

The Lord appreciates those who work hard too, so work hard and He will bless you and your career.

3. PRAY DAILY FOR DIRECTION

In the Book of Mormon, the prophet Alma gave the following advice to his son Helaman: "Counsel with the Lord in all thy doings" (Alma 37:37). I've followed this advice throughout my nearly 40-year career.

Five years ago when we all went through COVID-19, each of us had our own experience. I was chairman and CEO of At Home Group, a home decor retailer. We had been growing at a 20 percent clip for a decade—so fast that we were plowing our profits and our extra cash back into the business. When you have a high-growth business, it burns through a lot of cash.

All of our sales were transacted in our stores, and for a variety of reasons, we had no e-commerce. Once COVID struck, we closed all of our stores and suddenly had no revenue and thus no cash to pay for our product, our employees, our rent, or construction of our new stores.

I remember a conversation I had at that time with Gregg Nabhan, the vice chairman of Bank of America Merrill Lynch. He said, "Businesses weren't wired to survive without revenue." We had no revenue and no idea when we could reopen our stores.

During that time, I counseled with the Lord about this situation. In fact, I got up early in the morning—just as I always do—to read my scriptures. But then I read two additional quotes to myself out loud every day to give me the courage to move forward at a very challenging time. The first was from President Hinckley:

It isn't as bad as you sometimes think it is.
It all works out. Don't worry.
I say that to myself every morning.

"There were 10,000 employees counting on me. I was hoping the Lord would hear my prayers—and He did. Ideas and creative solutions came."

It will all work out.
Put your trust in God,
and move forward with faith
and confidence in the future.
The Lord will not forsake us.
He will not forsake us.
If we will put our trust in Him,
if we will pray to Him,
if we will live worthy of His blessings,
He will hear our prayers.[3]

The second quote is from King Solomon. In Proverbs 3:5–6 he shares: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths."

After I read those things to myself out loud, I would kneel to pray. I would follow the adage "Pray as if everything depends on God, then get up and act like everything depends on you."

I was so grateful for the strength that I received from those personal devotionals. I prayed with all my heart and then got off my knees and worked to help At Home survive. I encouraged my entire executive team to do the same, including my chief information officer, who is Hindu. I said, "We all pray to the same God." We all prayed for direction, and direction came.

I took no salary for more than eight months, and I cut my executive team's salary in half. We furloughed all store employees except for four per store, laid off a significant number of home-office employees, and called all of our partners and asked for patience in paying them. Those actions left us with about 10 weeks of cash. We were a public company at the time, and fear was raging across Wall Street. Our market cap dropped $1 billion in a four-week period.

Needless to say, it was stressful. But the Lord was in the details, and it all worked out, just as President Hinckley promised. There were 10,000 employees counting on me. I was hoping the Lord would hear my prayers—and He did. Ideas and creative solutions came. We rolled out e-commerce in weeks versus months and opened our stores by municipality when each city would allow it. You all were stuck at home and decided to decorate. Thank you! Since we had warehouse stores full of product, our business rocked once we reopened. We had a record year that year, doing more than $2 billion in sales—record profits as well as cash flow.

We were able to pay everyone who we owed money to. We brought back all of our employees and compensated them for the time that they weren't working. We paid all our partners back. We paid off all of our short-term debt and a portion of our long-term debt—which totaled more than $250 million—in just six months. Our stock shot up as well. The Lord was listening and was willing to provide a miracle at that moment.

The Lord wants to be your partner, and as you counsel with Him in your career, He will direct your path. As a side note, my family and I have learned over the years that the Lord used my career to get our family where we needed to be. The job was just the facilitator to build the kingdom of God.

In conclusion, you entered BYU to learn, and as BYU Marriott graduates, you've been instructed in Christlike leadership. Now is the time to leave and to serve. I pray that you will have amazing careers and lives. I know that if you partner with the Lord in your careers and follow these three principles—don't bifurcate your life, work hard, and pray daily for direction—He will bless you beyond measure.

My wife and I have felt blessings in our lives in so many ways, and I can trace some of those blessings back to learning and applying these principles. The Lord has made more of me than I could have made of myself and has allowed me a career I could not have dreamt of. I say these things in the name of Jesus Christ, amen. M

Adapted from a BYU Marriott convocation speech given April 25, 2025.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Having worked nearly 40 years in consumer retail, Lee Bird has held leadership roles at Nike, Gap Inc., Old Navy, Gateway, Honeywell, and Ford Motor Company. He served as chairman and CEO of At Home Group from 2012 to 2023. He earned his MBA from Babson College and his bachelor's degree from Ithaca College, where he was also an All-American swimmer. Bird currently serves on several corporate and university boards, including the BYU Marriott National Advisory Council, and is a stake president in Dallas. Bird and his wife of 38 years, Linda, have eight children and six grandchildren.

NOTES

1. Gordon B. Hinckley, "Living Worthy of the Girl You Will Someday Marry," *Ensign*, May 1998, 50.
2. F. David Stanley, "The Principle of Work," *Ensign*, May 1993, 44, quoting Doctrine and Covenants 4:2.
3. Gordon B. Hinckley, "Put Your Trust in God," *Ensign*, February 2006, 63.

School News

During his keynote address at the Do Good. Better. Conference, Reverend Dr. Heber Brown III (right) shared how his efforts to alleviate food insecurity grew into a nationwide effort.

Do Good. Better. Conference

The 2025 Do Good. Better. Conference, hosted by the Ballard Center in March, gathered alumni, students, faculty, and community members for a two-day event that gave participants a chance to learn more about social impact.

For **Nick Romano**, a BYU MPA alumnus, participating in the conference allowed him to be surrounded by others interested in social impact. "It's about community—being with those who have like-minded passions, interests, and backgrounds—and feeling recharged by the insightful advice that helps us put ideas into practice."

Katelyn Stanger, a BYU master of public health student, collaborated with other conference attendees to examine food insecurity in the aging population. "I'm a volunteer with the Alzheimer's Association, so being able to meet with partners and others to help at-risk communities is really important to me," she explains.

Reverend Dr. Heber Brown III centered his keynote on this topic, describing his efforts to combat food insecurity in his Baltimore congregation. When Brown recognized his congregants' need for more nutritious food, his first thought was to partner with a local grocery store, but he didn't want to simply ask for free food. Then a new idea took root: The empty land next to his church was the perfect place for a community garden.

The 1,500-square-foot plot eventually began yielding 1,200 pounds of produce and took on a deeper meaning. "This garden became a magnet for more than just food," Brown recalls. "It became a magnet for ministry, relationships, and social transformation."

Motivated by this success, Brown began reaching out to churches and gradually built the Black Church Food Security Network, which now connects 250 churches nationwide. The organization also partners with a blueberry farm in Virginia and a citrus farm in Florida.

Brown encouraged conference participants to seek connections, even after the conference. "Save some energy to create and connect with others," he admonished. "Your most impactful and profound critique could be not in what you say but in what you build."

BYU Marriott Earns High Global Rankings for MBA Program

The BYU Marriott MBA program garnered new global rankings from The Financial Times.

The BYU Marriott MBA program came in at No. 2 in the world for Overall Satisfaction according to global MBA rankings from *The Financial Times.* BYU Marriott also landed at No. 10 for Best Alumni Network and No. 11 for Best Value for the Money in the 2025 report.

"We're always honored to be recognized for the quality of our MBA program, but the most important part of this recognition is that it shows we're meeting the high expectations of our phenomenal students," says **Brigitte Madrian**, BYU Marriott dean.

"These and other rankings are a testament to our strong focus on students," Madrian continues. "We are very intentional about creating an environment in which all students feel supported, hiring dedicated faculty who are exceptional teachers, and providing compelling experiential learning opportunities that prepare our students for great careers upon graduation."

One experiential learning opportunity is Cougar Capital, a second-year MBA course that doubles as a donation-based, evergreen-structured venture capital and private equity fund, allowing students to invest real dollars into real companies. Among the MBA program's other opportunities is the Faith and Belief at Work Case Competition, which brings top MBA programs from around the country to BYU to explore how supporting employees' faith and belief systems can improve business outcomes. Additionally, the Cougar Strategy Group is a student-led consulting boutique that spans three semesters and advises startup firms, their venture backers, enterprise clients, and emerging market businesses.

The Financial Times's new rankings complement a host of other recent rankings that highlight how the BYU Marriott MBA program provides a high-quality transformational education with a focus on "the things that matter most," says Madrian.

- No. 1 Best MBA for Human Resources (The Princeton Review, 2024)
- No. 2 Best MBA for Entrepreneurship (*Bloomberg Businessweek,* 2024)
- No. 7 Best MBA for Student Learning (*Bloomberg Businessweek,* 2024)
- No. 15 Best Global MBA for Entrepreneurship (*Poets & Quants,* 2025)
- No. 24 Best Executive MBA (*Fortune,* 2024)
- No. 31 Best MBA (*Poets & Quants,* 2025)
- No. 34 Best MBA (*Bloomberg Businessweek,* 2025)
- No. 35 Best MBA (*U.S. News & World Report,* 2024)

New Experiential SOA Courses

The School of Accountancy (SOA) recently designed two new courses for the junior core to help students bridge the gap between knowledge and application when they enter the workforce.

In Accounting 408: Critical Thinking in Accounting, Professor **Bill Tayler** helps students refine their decision-making processes by asking essential questions—What is a good decision process? How do you define a problem? How do you use good judgment?—and then exploring the answers through case-based learning. "We go through real-world examples where smart, educated, experienced people have made horrible judgment calls because of a bad process," explains Tayler, the SOA's Robert J. Smith Professor.

After ACC 408, students take Accounting 409: Integrated Topics in Accounting, which **Jonathan Liljegren**

Annual College Awards

BYU Marriott deans with faculty and staff award recipients, from left: Jeff Wilks, Brant Christensen, Mark Keith, John Bingham, Bonnie Anderson, Brigitte Madrian, Taylor Nadauld, Laura Muhlestein, Mike Hendron, Camilla Hodge, Matt Madden, Robert Gardner, Blair Morgan, Marianna Richardson, and Brooke Bradford. Not pictured: Sara Hubbs.

BYU Marriott recognized several faculty, staff members, and administrators for their exemplary leadership in teaching, research, faith, and service.

John Bingham, professor of organizational behavior and human resources, received the Outstanding Faculty Award. Bingham, who joined BYU Marriott in 2005, creates inspiring learning experiences for his MBA and undergraduate students. His research has been published in leading management journals and international news outlets, and he serves on the board of directors at O. C. Tanner and at Beta Technologies.

The Outstanding Administrator Award was presented to **Robert Gardner**, assistant dean of marketing, communications, and technology. Previously, Gardner served as director of Invest West Financial Corporation, a California-based real estate and private equity firm; worked on development for the Utah Symphony; and acted on stage and screen. He graduated magna cum laude in acting from BYU and earned an MBA from BYU Marriott.

Faculty and staff were also recognized with BYU Marriott Impact Awards for their demonstrated commitment to BYU Marriott's mission, vision, values, and guiding principle.

Mark Keith, associate professor of information systems, received the Impact Award for exemplifying Faith in Christ. The Respect for All award was given to both **Brooke Bradford**, business manager in the SOA, and **Taylor Nadauld**, chair of the finance department. **Matt Madden**, associate teaching professor of marketing, was honored for being Centered on Students.

The Excellence in Teaching award was given to **Brant Christensen**, Deloitte fellow and associate professor of accounting. **Marianna Richardson**, adjunct professor of management communication, received the Excellence in Adjunct Teaching award. And **Camilla Hodge**, associate professor of experience design and management, received the Excellence in Research award. Three employees were presented with the Excellence in Leadership award: **Mike Hendron**, associate teaching professor of entrepreneurship; **Sara Hubbs**, assistant dean of finance; and **Laura Muhlestein**, HR manager in the Deans Office.

At the award presentation, BYU Marriott Dean **Brigitte Madrian** underscored the collective effort behind student transformation: "With your hard work and dedication to our mission, vision, and values, our students can become leaders of faith and have a transformational impact in their families, in their communities, in their professions, and in the Church."

Student Awards

Eccles Scholars

The Eccles Scholars Award supports MBA students who have an interest in international business by providing up to $9,000 toward tuition, global career development, and international study experiences. Selected through a competitive application process, awardees are recognized for academic excellence, second-language proficiency, and meaningful global experience or aspirations.

From left: ***Curtis Lane Jensen, Guilherme Pila, Adjetey Wilson, Dallin McLean, Teancum Stafford, Rebekah Koster, Lorenzo Montanari, Joseph Lunt, Gregory Hutchins, Jessé Poffo,*** *and* ***Alessio Giolitto.***

Hawes Scholars

Nine students received the MBA program's highest distinction: the Hawes Scholars Award. The $10,000 award was established in 1998 and is funded by the Rodney A. Hawes Jr. and Beverly Hawes Endowment—a $2 million gift that continues to fuel innovation and excellence within the MBA program.

From left, award recipients in bold: ***Brandon Ward, Paula Kremser, Tricia Allen, Natalie Koon, Spencer Larson,*** *Holly Hawes,* ***Matthew Assily,*** *Steve Hawes,* ***Valeria Fulton, Harrison Christensen,*** *and* ***Kjerstin Roberts.***

redesigned to mirror an accounting firm's setup. Cases became "engagements," TAs became "managers," and Liljegren implemented nine AI "employees" to represent a fictitious company in real time, allowing students to practice detecting fraud and auditing. "We built this out, from technology to time sheets and performance management, so that when students go wherever they go, they understand what accounting practice is all about," Liljegren says.

For **Jay Davis** from Fort Collins, Colorado, the classes built skills for his internship. "I had a week and a half of training, where I did mini projects to practice before I got real projects," Davis recalls. "And every single thing I did, I had done in the junior core in integrated topics. Every single thing."

STUDENT NEWS

Drafting Success

BYU Marriott students are gaining hands-on leadership and communication experience through *The Marriott Student Review,* a publication produced in Management Communication 420. Adjunct Professor

Students in The Marriott Student Review *class create and publish a magazine and podcasts on current business topics.*

Marianna Richardson built the class to simulate the workplace, giving students the chance to write, edit, and design a business-focused print magazine and maintain its website.

The course is open to students across campus, and participants also produced two podcasts—*Measuring Success Right* and *Las Caras del Éxito,* a Spanish-language podcast highlighting Latino professionals. *Las Caras del Éxito* gave Provo native **Ivan Galindo** the chance to share business success stories while honing his leadership skills. "Because we're a small team, everybody has a leadership opportunity—we all have to step up," says Galindo, who is pursuing his degree in general studies with an emphasis in business management.

Marketing student **Josh Clawson** has taken the class three times, working his way up to marketing team lead and managing editor. These roles helped him develop the grit and skills he needed to apply for summer internships and eventually land a competitive spot with BambooHR. Clawson compares the process of pursuing and securing his internship to the writing process: "It takes editing. It takes time. It takes second drafts and revisions."

The course gives students a competitive edge that employers notice. "Students who work on *The Marriott Student Review* come back and say they're more valued in their organizations because of the skills they gained," says **Liz Dixon**, who oversees BYU Marriott's management communication courses. "Their experiences in the class help differentiate them in the workplace."

Clawson, originally from Salt Lake City, credits the class with shaping his mindset as much as his résumé. As he puts it, "This class is a platform to learn excellence."

Stoddard Prize Scholars

Awarded annually to outstanding second-year MBA students in finance, the George E. Stoddard Prize recognizes those who exhibit excellence in academics and leadership. A committee of MBA finance faculty selects honorees based on their professional finance experience, commitment to the field, and potential to represent BYU Marriott on a global scale.

From left, award recipients in bold: ***Diego Torres Erpel, Todd Lewis, Altyn Zhekey, Danny Gundersen,*** *Tesla Welch,* ***Jordany Farronay,*** *Patty Stoddard Welch,* ***Ian Smith, Erik Christiansen, Colton Bates, Eunice Gomez, Tyler Johnson,*** *and* ***Devin Despain.***

Williams Leadership Scholars

Chosen by their peers, Gary P. Williams Leadership Scholars demonstrate a commitment to living the values of BYU Marriott. The award was established by **Gary P. Williams**, who is a BYU Marriott alum, an angel investor, an MBA faculty member, and the founder and faculty advisor of Cougar Capital. Each awardee receives $10,000 in recognition of their impact.

From left, award recipients in bold: ***Alex Chamberlain, Josué Bustos,*** *Debbie Williams, Gary Williams,* ***Madeleine Reber,*** *and* ***Camila Costa.*** *Not pictured,* ***Benjamin Crockett.***

FACULTY NEWS

New Appointments Announced

Michael Drake

Dean **Brigitte Madrian** recently announced four new appointments at BYU Marriott.

Michael Drake was named an associate dean for the college, replacing **Bonnie Anderson** on July 1, 2025.

Drake graduated with both a bachelor's and a master's degree in accounting from the SOA in 2003 before earning a PhD in accounting from Texas A&M University in 2009. He joined BYU Marriott as a faculty member in 2011.

"I'm especially grateful for Bonnie Anderson's exceptional leadership over the past five years, and I look forward to supporting excellence in teaching and research as we work to fulfill our vision of transforming the world through Christlike leadership," Drake says.

As Anderson returns to serving full-time as a professor, Madrian shares, "I have come to depend on Bonnie's wisdom and judgment and to value and admire her love and concern for others. We will miss her in the Deans Office, but our students will benefit from her return to the information systems department."

Melissa Larson

In the SOA, **Melissa Larson**, the E. Dee and Patricia Hubbard Professor, replaced **Doug Prawitt** as director on July 1, 2025.

Regarding Prawitt's service, Madrian notes, "Doug has led the SOA through challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, triumphs such as the SOA 100th anniversary celebration, and opportunities such as the growth of the accounting junior core and MAcc program."

Larson graduated from BYU Marriott in 1998 with her bachelor's and master's degrees in accounting. She worked in public accounting then returned to teach in the SOA in 2001; she later earned a PhD in instructional psychology and technology from BYU.

As Larson steps into this new role, Madrian says, "Melissa exemplifies our BYU Marriott guiding principle of being centered on students."

Larson looks forward to building on the SOA's foundation of excellence. "My journey at BYU—both as a student and as a faculty member—has been shaped by the kindness, mentorship, and encouragement of so many within the School of Accountancy," she says.

David Matkin

Also on July 1, **David Matkin** took over as director of the Romney Institute of Public Service and Ethics, replacing **Robert Christensen**.

"David has a strong commitment to our students and to the public service mission of the Romney Institute. He is both ready and well qualified to serve as the next Romney Institute director," Madrian says.

Matkin earned an MPA from BYU Marriott in 2003 and a PhD in public administration from the University of

The Internship Effect

Stuart Christiansen

Ellie Draper

Kristen Hansen

Sydney Rasmussen

Thomas Smith

Internships aren't just part of the BYU Marriott experience—they're where careers begin. Five newly minted BYU Marriott graduates turned projects, mentorships, and even a morning run into jobs they love.

BYU's Army ROTC program not only helped **Stuart Christiansen** discover his calling in the military but also led him to an internship with the United States Department of Defense in Croatia. Under the direction of an army officer, Christiansen worked with Croatian leaders to coordinate joint training events and strengthen the US-Croatia alliance. "I'd love to know how many conflicts have been stopped before they even started just because of the things that the Department of Defense does to coordinate and maintain peace around the world," he says.

Following his internship, Christiansen served as a squad leader, platoon sergeant, and cadet battalion commander—leadership roles that contributed to his ranking as 15th out of 5,000 Army ROTC cadets nationwide. After graduating in April 2025, Christiansen commissioned as a field artillery officer with plans to move into military intelligence. "Everyone is capable of so much more than they realize," he says.

While the ROTC opened doors for Christiansen, it was the Ballard Center for Social Impact that pointed **Ellie Draper** toward multiple career-refining internships. Through the center's class Marriott School of Business 492R: Social Impact Projects, Draper secured an internship with Qualtrics during spring 2023. The next fall, Draper interned with the Policy Project, a Utah-based organization that promotes an in-school sexual abuse prevention program.

In spring 2024 another internship with the Church's Humanitarian Services brought Draper face-to-face with one of her biggest inspirations. "For a long time, I told people I wanted to be like Sharon Eubank and lead the humanitarian arm of the Church," Draper says. Eubank became Draper's supervisor as Draper contributed to the development, project management, and implementation of an initiative to prevent childhood malnutrition in 16 countries. She continued in this role after graduation and then began a full-time internship with NRG Energy.

Another center, the Rollins Center for Entrepreneurship and Technology, helped **Kristen Hansen** create a digital wellness startup, Ignite, through the BYU Marriott Sandbox program. "I'm interested in helping people live fulfilling lives. For me, that's most directly impacted by how we engage with the world," says Hansen.

Hansen's goal to transition Ignite into a for-profit enterprise drove her to pursue an internship with Leland, a startup based in Lehi, Utah, that helps people achieve career and education goals. That internship turned into a full-time job offer at Leland. "Without the mentors at BYU Marriott, I truly would not have had any of the opportunities that I've had," says Hansen, who graduated in April 2025 with her BS in strategic management.

For **Sydney Rasmussen**, it was an ExDM class that gave her hands-on practice applying design principles to real-world problems. Through a course project, she worked with the My Study Zen app, which led to an internship with a virtual holistic health clinic where she improved the user experience for Parkinson's and Alzheimer's patients.

During her internship, Rasmussen created a printed study notebook to help patients who struggled with technology and preferred tangible materials. "One of the patients even told me that she would have paid hundreds of dollars for the notebook because of the value that it brought her," recalls Rasmussen. She went on to develop a virtual cooking class to help patients achieve their nutrition goals. "I saw this need as an opportunity," she says. "I love cooking, so it was a great merging of strengths and needs." Rasmussen then accepted an internship at nCino as a product-design intern after graduation.

While others landed internships through classes and centers, **Thomas Smith**'s breakthrough came the old-fashioned way: through networking and persistence. A morning jog with his father-in-law's running group connected Smith with a construction company HR officer who hired Smith as a data analytics intern in 2023. The skills Smith had learned in the junior core of the information systems program came in handy during his internship. "The program is awesome at teaching you how to learn on the fly," he explains.

A contact from that same running group helped Smith get a second internship a year later at Snowflake, a company that hosts a cloud-based data platform. As a sales engineer, Smith expanded his skillset by implementing software rollouts and helping clients grasp how the technology would support their success. "A sales engineer needs to communicate well but also be attuned to the technical aspects and capabilities of the software," he explains. Thanks to the internship, Smith transitioned seamlessly into a full-time sales engineer role at Snowflake after his April 2025 graduation.

Kansas in 2007. He held faculty positions at Florida State University and the University at Albany before coming to BYU's Romney Institute in 2018.

"I look forward to building on this legacy to equip a new generation of public service professionals, ethical managers, and impactful communicators," Matkin says.

After three years serving as MPA program director and a member of both the BYU Marriott Leadership Council and the BYU Marriott Chairs Council, Christensen stepped down from program administration to focus full-time on teaching and research.

"Rob has been a visionary leader of the Romney Institute, driving the process to create a new Romney Institute vision, mission, and values and thinking creatively about how the Romney Institute can better meet its purpose at BYU," Madrian says.

Colonel Trigg E. Randall

On July 14, 2025, BYU Marriott welcomed Colonel **Trigg E. Randall** as the new chair for the Department of Aerospace Studies and as head of BYU's Air Force ROTC, following the retirement of Colonel **Jonathan Creer**.

Randall graduated from BYU with a bachelor's degree in Asian studies and a minor in Japanese. He earned his Air Force commission through BYU's Air Force ROTC program in 2001. As a command pilot with over 4,300 flight hours in the C-130, KC-10, and T-1, he flew missions around the world, including almost 500 combat hours in Afghanistan.

Randall also served as an exchange officer with the Royal Air Force in the United Kingdom, led the US Transportation Command's contingency planning division, and served as the regional security studies director and mobility air forces chair at Maxwell Air Force Base's Air University in Alabama.

Most recently, Randall led the 515th Air Mobility Operations Group at Yokota Air Base in Japan and served as the senior representative for Air Mobility Command in the Western Pacific region.

"I am thrilled to be coming home to BYU where I learned the tools that launched my Air Force career," Randall says.

Randall will take over for Creer, who served for three years as department chair. "Colonel Creer and the whole Air Force ROTC cadre provide excellent training to our Air Force ROTC cadets, as evidenced by the many recognitions they receive and the assignments they are given after they commission," says Madrian. "Because of the cadre's efforts and those of their predecessors, we are fortunate to host one of the top Air Force ROTC detachments in the country."

New Mission, Same Dedication

Major Jake Johnson joined the Department of Military Science in 2024.

After two combat deployments in Afghanistan, Major **Jake Johnson** embraced a mindset that now guides his work as an assistant professor of military science for BYU's Army ROTC. "What matters is that you're still showing up, you're still trying, and you're still actively serving," he says.

Johnson brings 15 years of experience as a transportation officer; he has served throughout Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. Along the way, he obtained a bachelor's degree in business leadership from Southern Virginia University, a master's degree in operational studies from the US Army's Command and General Staff College, and a master's degree in supply chain management from the University of Kansas.

At BYU, Johnson combines tactical preparation with a spiritual perspective, emphasizing real-world application and gospel-centered leadership. "I want to help cadets understand what they have the potential to do, regardless of the fears and anxieties that they might have," he says.

Embracing Uncertainty

Trent Williams

Trent Williams, who joined BYU Marriott as an associate professor of entrepreneurship in 2023, studies how businesses are born and how they survive in the chaos caused by civil war, natural disasters, or economic instability.

As a BYU undergraduate, Williams played football, majored in English, and minored in philosophy, planning to go on to earn a PhD in continental philosophy and postcolonial literature. At the start of his senior year, a career-ending injury altered his athletic path; at about the same time, he began feeling burned out academically. "I was feeling lost," Williams remembers.

Things changed when an entrepreneur visited one of Williams's philosophy classes, sparking Williams's interest in business. After graduation, Williams worked with several startups and applied to a PhD program in business at Purdue University. Although he wasn't accepted to that program, Purdue offered him a spot in its MBA program.

Looking back, Williams sees how these detours shaped his path. The injury that ended his football career gave him the time to work as a writing consultant, which later helped him secure a critical assistantship during his MBA. And that rejection from Purdue's PhD program ultimately redirected him to Indiana University's PhD program, where he could study entrepreneurship—a track that Purdue didn't offer.

The twists helped Williams uncover his passion for studying how businesses navigate uncertainty. "In entrepreneurship, we don't know if an idea is going to work," he says. "If we're unwilling to let an idea morph, then we're probably going to fail."

Williams compares this process to life. "We don't always see the end of our experiences," he explains. "I'm grateful that I've let it play out."

Alumni News

CLASS NOTES

1982

Mike Hoer was studying Chinese at BYU when he was one of the first 17 Americans selected to study at Beijing Language and Culture University. "I loved Chinese, but all my job offers were translating or teaching jobs," he says. "I realized in order to work in China, I needed to add to my skills, so I got a BYU Marriott MBA." Hoer was hired postgraduation to set up one of China's first engineering and business management programs, which led him to a consulting job with Andersen Consulting (now Accenture) and then to Schlumberger. In 1989, Hoer accepted a job at Continental Grain Asia in Hong Kong, where he stayed for 18 years, retiring from the organization as president and managing director of Asia. He served as president of the Taiwan Taichung Mission from 2007 to 2010 and worked for Latter-day Saint Charities in Sudan, Egypt, and other countries in the Middle East. Hoer, who has been to 148 countries, lived in a village in Kenya while doing humanitarian work for Feed the World (now CHOICE Humanitarian). He currently volunteers as a humanitarian services specialist for the Church in Pakistan. Hoer and his wife, Laurie, love scuba diving, hiking, and snowshoeing. They have four children and four grandchildren.

1989

While studying economics at the University of Utah, **Reid Millerberg** was struggling to pick a career path, so he decided to apply to graduate school. When he visited BYU Marriott and learned about the MPA program's emphasis on HR, something clicked. "At that moment I knew what I wanted to do for my career," Millerberg says. "My MPA has been invaluable. It has opened so many doors for me, and I am eternally grateful for the excellent education I received." Upon graduating, he took a role as a college recruiter at Novell, followed by HR positions at Microsoft, TenFold, AMI Semiconductor, and Boart Longyear. In 2018, Millerberg began working at BYU–Hawaii as its human resources director. He finds great fulfillment in supporting the mission of the university by assisting students in their journey to become lifelong disciples of Jesus Christ and leaders in their families, communities, and chosen fields. Millerberg also teaches business classes at BYU–Hawaii. He resides in Laie, Hawaii, with his wife, Leigh Anne. They have three married children and seven grandchildren. Millerberg enjoys golfing, scuba diving, traveling, and spending time with his family on Hawaii's magnificent beaches.

1995

Since earning her BS in management from BYU Marriott, **Kathryn Bennett Walker** has raised a family and worked with her husband, Robert, in running Walker Orthodontics in Chandler, Arizona. For the past 25 years, Walker has been instrumental in handling the management and marketing aspects of their business. Additionally, she and her husband run two small real estate companies together. Early in her career, Walker briefly worked in a bank, and later she was a clinical coordinator at UCHealth University of Colorado Hospital in Denver. Walker and her husband reside in Gilbert, Arizona, and are the parents of five daughters. Two of their daughters have graduated from BYU, two are currently attending the university, and the youngest—a high school student—hopes to attend BYU. "My daughters are my greatest joy and accomplishment," Walker says. "They are beautiful, kind, super smart, and they are amazing musicians." In her free time, Walker enjoys reading, traveling, quilting, and spending time with her family. She also plays the piano, takes harp lessons, serves in ward callings (currently as a ward missionary), and continues to volunteer with the orchestra program all of her daughters have participated in.

2000

Jonyce Bullock is CEO at Squire, a Utah-based, nationally recognized accounting firm, where she oversees the firm's vision and strategic plan, leadership development programs, succession planning, and overall operations. Bullock, who was promoted to CEO in 2018, began as a tax intern at Squire in 1999 while completing her MAcc; she moved into a full-time position there upon graduation. In 2024, *Forbes* named Bullock one of America's Top 200 CPAs, the only CPA in Utah to receive this recognition. Other honors include being named to the *Utah Business* CEO of the Year list (2020) and being honored as Executive of the Year (2025) by *Utah Valley BusinessQ*. Bullock founded the Women Improving Professionally group at Squire to empower women within the firm and beyond. She has mentored emerging professionals through the Utah Association of CPAs, BYU, and the University of Utah. "My time at BYU Marriott instilled a commitment to lifelong learning and ethical leadership," she says. "Those lessons continue to shape my approach as I mentor the next generation of accounting professionals." Bullock resides in Orem with her husband, Greg; they have two children and one grandchild. She enjoys traveling, swimming, and attending BYU sports games.

2002

After earning a BS in management with an emphasis in marketing, **Kirk McKnight** worked in sales but quickly realized he couldn't get behind the products he was

pushing. He decided to focus on writing, subsequently securing an agent and a publishing contract. Over a period of 12 years, he wrote three sports-based books and worked as a valet in Las Vegas. When McKnight was furloughed during the COVID-19 pandemic, he and his family turned the challenge into an adventure. They sold their home and traveled in an RV for 14 months, visiting several states before settling in Wickenburg, Arizona, where McKnight became a reporter and editor for *The Wickenburg Sun*. In 2025 they moved to Cathlamet, Washington, where McKnight is editor of *The Wahkiakum County Eagle*. "As a full-time writer, I'm doing what I love and not really seeing it as work," he says. McKnight's most successful book, *The Voices of Baseball: The Game's Greatest Broadcasters Reflect on America's Pastime*, was updated and rereleased in 2023; his second book, *The Voices of Hockey: Broadcasters Reflect on the Fastest Game on Earth*, is available on Audible. McKnight enjoys watching sports, reading, and playing the drums. He and his wife, Colette, have one child, Adaira.

2013

Since 2021, **Plinio Santana** has worked as a risk management specialist at Daimler Truck Financial Services, where his responsibilities include managing projects, monitoring financial results, and overseeing scorecard performance. Santana previously spent almost 10 years at Mercedes-Benz Financial Services, first as a regional operations project manager and later as a risk intelligence and decision analytics specialist. Before earning his BYU Marriott MBA, Santana held IT roles for Citigroup and for InduSoft in Brazil. Earning an MBA, Santana says, taught him essential skills. "It gave me the ability to move away from IT and start working on the business side of companies, especially in finance and credit operations," he notes. "The degree also gave me an overview of organizational functions, their interactions, and the skills to succeed." Santana earned his BS in computer science from Universidade Federal de São Carlos

From Grandpa's Lap to Global Impact

James Fletcher learned his first investing lessons in his grandfather's armchair. As he and his grandpa spent each Saturday morning flipping through *The Wall Street Journal* together and discussing stock picks, the real investment wasn't in equities—it was in Fletcher himself.

The experience stuck with Fletcher, who ended up building a career upon the belief that investing in people creates the greatest return. Fletcher, who earned his BS in management in 2007 with an emphasis in corporate finance, eventually founded two impactful organizations: a nonprofit that teaches high school students how to manage money and a social impact investment firm that hires and trains BYU–Pathway graduates in underserved countries.

That weekend ritual with his grandfather became a weekday routine for Fletcher; during high school, he was up before dawn checking his mock portfolio on dial-up internet before heading to class. His mission to Brazil then introduced him to the complexity and potential of emerging markets, and he carried that perspective into his finance studies at BYU Marriott. After graduating, he stepped into positions that brought together his financial skill set and his interest in emerging economies—first as senior analyst at Westwood Global Investments, then as the lead portfolio manager at Kayne Anderson Rudnick's emerging markets small cap fund, and later as the director and senior portfolio manager of the emerging markets small- and mid-cap fund at APG Asset Management.

It was during Fletcher's time at Kayne Anderson Rudnick that he received a letter from a high school student named Edgar who had heard a finance presentation Fletcher gave while volunteering at a Los Angeles inner-city school. "Adults don't really do that anymore, especially for teenagers," the student wrote to Fletcher. "Your 45-minute presentation has changed my goals for my life. It has given me something to strive for."

Inspired by that letter, Fletcher created Young Investor's Society (YIS) to reach more students like Edgar. "Many states do not currently have a curriculum for personal finance or investing," Fletcher points out, so YIS fills this gap with lesson plans, presentations, and instructional videos to assist teachers in delivering financial literacy education. "We help kids learn, then invest, and then inspire others to do the same," he says.

Fletcher brought this same mindset to Ethos Investment Management, the boutique investment firm he launched in 2022. "It's a unique social impact fund," Fletcher says of the organization, which invests in emerging markets and hires BYU–Pathway graduates to become analysts. "We set up the fund so that for every $1.5 million in assets, we hire one BYU–Pathway graduate for a full-time, three-year position in our associate's program. Our target is to help 1,000 graduates over the next 10 years."

Fletcher also shares his expertise as an adjunct professor at BYU Marriott, teaching portfolio management to MBA students in MBA 629R: Silver Fund. In his spare time, he enjoys being in nature, golfing, and strumming his guitar on his back porch in Springville, Utah, where he lives with his wife, Marné, and five children.

Just as Fletcher's grandfather invested in him, Fletcher has invested in others. Whether he's giving teens access to financial education or BYU–Pathway grads access to jobs, Fletcher is playing the long game. He is banking on a future where the next generation is equipped, empowered, and ready to give back.

Bouquets and Business

Gabrielle Sorensen doesn't just arrange flowers, she helps craft moments people remember forever. A 2019 experience design and management (ExDM) alumna, Sorensen founded Fleur Gabrielle with the goal of turning beautiful blooms into meaningful experiences.

Fresh out of BYU Marriott, Sorensen was hired to plan fundraisers for a golf foundation in Napa, California. The region's natural beauty and thriving events scene planted an idea that quickly took root: a floral business built to elevate life's most memorable moments. This idea—coupled with her experience as a floral design assistant during college—led Sorensen to begin creating arrangements for friends. From there, her business quickly blossomed through social media and word of mouth, with her designs eventually featured in outlets such as *Southern California Bride*, *Amber & Muse*, and *Utah Valley Bride*.

Sorensen traces her success back to a core principle from the ExDM program: Even the smallest business interaction can become a meaningful experience. "ExDM was such a great major for me because it opened my eyes to how you can cater a business to the consumer's point of view," she says.

Other experiences at BYU also shaped her leadership and entrepreneurial skills, especially her time as president of the BYU Cougarettes; she led her team to three national championships and one international title. "That experience grew my confidence as a dancer and an individual because I learned how to empower others," she reflects.

In addition to growing her leadership skills, dance also sharpened Sorensen's ability to think creatively under pressure—a skill that has been critical to her success. "In dance, I learned to improvise and get back on my feet in a beautiful way," she explains. "And with flowers, there have been several events where the weather was so strong that I had to creatively rig the flowers to maintain my design."

Today, Sorensen channels her creativity into building meaningful client relationships and crafting immersive moments before, during, and after each event. "Because significant milestones often call for floral arrangements, it's important for me to make a business that is not just about the product but about the relationships I build with my clients," says Sorensen, whose husband, **Nate**, is a BYU Marriott strategy alumnus.

Whether she's installing flowers for a wedding or meeting one-on-one with a client, Sorensen cultivates moments that last. "My business is not just about my profit, my offerings, or my creativity," she says. "It's about the experience that I can provide for someone else."

in Brazil. He earned a black belt in Taekwondo in 2024 after four years of training, and he enjoys trading stocks and coaching a community soccer team. He and his wife, Tatiana, reside outside of Detroit with their three children.

2014

Mary Dunn Einfeldt is a contract experience designer at Gospel & Games, where she creates escape games for youth groups, company retreats, and holiday parties. Her passion for designed events was ignited while interning with Provo City when she was earning her BS in recreation management and youth leadership at BYU Marriott. That internship led to roles within Provo Parks and Recreation, where she worked until 2019. From 2020 to 2022, Einfeldt was an event coordinator for BYU Marriott. She also served on the event board for United Way of Utah County and the advisory board for BYU Marriott's Department of Experience Design and Management. Einfeldt's proudest accomplishments include thriving in motherhood and consistently achieving her goals; she enjoys planning parties for her three children, organizing their daily activities, and teaching them to love the outdoors. "My major and work experience are perfectly applicable to motherhood. Whether leading a team to create a community event or designing a memorable day at the zoo for my children, the planning, attention to detail, and execution is the same," Einfeldt says. She resides in Saratoga Springs, Utah, with her husband, **Luke**, who earned his BS in management from BYU Marriott in 2016.

Derek Pando is director of marketing at Relay, a technology startup based in Raleigh, North Carolina, where he oversees teams responsible for product marketing, content, social, web, and creative initiatives. Upon graduating from BYU in 2010 with a BA in political science, Pando secured an internship at Omniture, which paved the way for

a full-time role at Salesforce in San Francisco. He returned to BYU in 2012 to earn his MBA, and, upon graduating, worked for LinkedIn and later Zoom. One of Pando's proudest professional accomplishments was leading Zoom's international response to the COVID-19 pandemic. He spearheaded a global task force to support surging demand in Asia, and he launched a program providing free Zoom access for more than 125,000 K–12 schools worldwide. Pando also built an international government affairs program to restore trust with governments and ensure Zoom's continued global operation. "This experience allowed me to make a difference during a time of unprecedented need, keeping schools in session, businesses running, and people connected," says Pando, who completed an MPA from Harvard Kennedy School in 2022. Pando resides in Holly Springs, North Carolina, with his wife, Stephany, and their four children. He enjoys running, camping, backpacking, and traveling. Pando has also participated in humanitarian aid initiatives in Cuba, his father's birthplace.

2015

Allison Jardine Oberle is the senior manager of customer excellence at Henkel, where she ensures that the company's supply chain meets customer expectations. Oberle leads a high-performing team focused on strategic customer collaboration. She monitors key performance indicators such as on-time delivery, store inventory levels, and distribution-center service levels. While earning her BS in management with a global supply chain management emphasis, Oberle was also a member of BYU's International Folk Dance Ensemble. Upon graduation, she accepted a supply chain specialist position at Henkel—a job she found through LinkedIn. "My degree helped me prepare for and stand out during the interview process," Oberle says. "You get a lot of chances for networking and presenting at BYU Marriott, which gave me confidence to apply and to interview for a job at an organization where I didn't have any prior connections. My degree also gave me the tools to negotiate the best possible salary and benefits for my family." Oberle's leadership and adaptability have led to multiple relocations and career advancements. Oberle currently resides in Riverton, Utah, with her husband, Tanner, and their two boys, Anders and Rhys. She enjoys reading, crafting, and holding family movie nights.

2016

When **Sanjay Bhatia** was 13 years old, his father passed away, leaving his mother—who had no job or income—to raise five children in New Delhi, India. "It was an incredibly difficult time, but instead of feeling defeated, I took responsibility," Bhatia says. "I had to grow up quickly, support my younger siblings, and ensure we all stayed on track with our education. Life has taught me that challenges don't define us—our response to them does." Bhatia is now cofounder and head of product at QuantiEdge, which specializes in AI-powered data analytics for the solar energy and manufacturing industries. He defines the company's product strategy, builds customer-centric solutions, collaborates with business leaders and investors, and conducts market and competitive analysis. Bhatia earned his undergraduate degree in computer science from the Delhi College of Engineering in India and began his career as a software engineer, gradually moving into software development management. His passion for building software products led him to pursue an EMBA at BYU Marriott. After several years in product and leadership roles, Bhatia cofounded QuantiEdge. Bhatia resides in Lehi, Utah, with his wife, Sandhya (Sunshine), their two children, and his nephew. He enjoys hiking, reading, and traveling to national parks with his family. He also volunteers with Product Hive to mentor early-career product managers.

Sophy Londoño, who earned her BS in recreation management, began her career with an internship at The Color Run; she later moved into a full-time role on the company's sponsorship team. Londoño then worked in corporate marketing events at Google Fiber and at Podium. She later joined Wheeler Machinery, managing employee and customer experiences. Seeking new challenges, Londoño completed a user experience design boot camp at Devmountain in 2019. This opened the door to a role as business operations director at the financial services company Kane Solutions, which took her to the island of Mauritius to open an office. There, Londoño managed teams, implemented marketing, and oversaw back-office administration. "Managing a team with different cultural work approaches was an interesting learning curve. As Americans, we're used to 'go, go, go,' but in Mauritius the work culture is very different," she says. After five years, Londoño returned to the United States and is now working remotely for Kane Solutions. She resides in Pleasant Grove, Utah, with her husband, Nadeem, whom she met in Mauritius, and their rescue dog, Lucy. In her free time, Londoño enjoys party planning, painting ceramics, and volunteering in animal rescue efforts.

Trent Winegar is a senior manager at ProfitOptics, where he oversees relationships and product development for domestic clients and manages international development teams. Winegar earned his BS in finance, and he credits BYU Marriott for preparing him to support and lead a small company. Upon graduation, Winegar accepted a consulting role at Deloitte in Charlotte, North Carolina. An opportunity to work in software and distribution at ProfitOptics led him to Virginia, where he spent five years before moving to Idaho to work remotely. The transition to Weiser, Idaho, allowed Winegar to maintain a professional career while fulfilling his dream to have a country lifestyle with his wife, Lindsay, and their four children. "I get to live the lifestyle I always wanted with the remote job I always wanted," he says. "If you're willing to get up early in the morning and work hard, you can live a life outside

of an office." His proudest accomplishment is raising his family around horses, cows, dirt, and crops. Winegar enjoys competitive rifle shooting, team roping, running, and playing with his kids. He is also active in his community, volunteering in church callings and coaching his children's sports teams.

2020

Since January 2024, **Nathan Hopkins** has worked as vice president of product at Remi, a Utah-based software startup that connects roofers with homeowners. Remi completed its Series A funding round last year, which raised $21 million. Hopkins says his favorite part about working for a startup is the speed at which employees operate and solve problems when they are unencumbered by large-organization bureaucracies. Hopkins previously worked at WeLink, a wireless internet service provider, finishing his time there as senior director of revenue and head of sales and marketing. He also was senior manager of business intelligence and analytics at Sunrun during the organization's acquisition of Vivint Solar. Hopkins, a 2023 MBA graduate from Cornell SC Johnson Graduate School of Management, earned his BS in business management from BYU Marriott. "BYU gave me the core training I needed to excel in many avenues in my career, and it provided the foundational education for my MBA program," he says. "BYU's strong academics certainly gave me a leg up in my classwork at Cornell." As a BYU student, Hopkins was a program director for Y-Serve, and he completed a church mission to San Jose, California. He resides in Eagle Mountain, Utah, with his wife, Kaylea, and their son. Hopkins enjoys writing fiction and playing with his two dogs.

Coding His Own Path

Cameron Moll's first big break in tech literally landed in his lap. As a BYU student in the late '90s, Moll never expected that the insert that fell out of *The Daily Universe* would eventually lead him to a career spanning the Church, Meta, and beyond. In a world just waking up to the web, Moll was already one step ahead.

By the time he spotted the job ad for a web-design position at Internet Development Inc. (IDI), Moll had already been building his skills. "I wanted to know what made the web tick," says Moll, who was captivated by the emerging digital world. While working as a campus computer-lab assistant, he taught himself HTML—and when the president of BYU Marriott's Finance Society asked him to create a club website, Moll was ready. "It was one of the first websites I ever created," he says, "and while it was embarrassingly simple and rudimentary, it was a start."

That early project helped him land the job at IDI, where he designed online sites for clients including Tupperware and Melaleuca while also pursuing his degree in management at BYU Marriott. Moll was a father of three and had risen from junior web designer to creative director by the time he graduated in 2003. He notes, "Those four years laid the foundation for everything that would follow in my career, now spanning 25-plus years designing for the web."

That foundation enabled Moll to take his talents to the Church, where he brainstormed, conceptualized, and launched the app Mobile Member—now known as Member Tools. "We never could have imagined it would blossom into the app used today by stakes, wards, and branches throughout the Church," he says.

Ready to channel his skills into something entrepreneurial, Moll moved on from church headquarters to found Authentic Jobs, an online job board to connect designers and developers with companies. Authentic Jobs was acquired in 2016, just as Moll was heading into his own new chapter at Facebook, where he led design for its events platform used by more than 700 million people to host private and public events.

Moll's post-Facebook career included leadership roles at Pendo.io and Buzzsprout, the world's largest paid podcast hosting platform. Since 2020 he has served as chief design officer for Desquared. He also shares his expertise as a speaker at design conferences, Fortune 500 companies, and universities, including a recent visit to user experience students at BYU–Idaho.

For Moll, success isn't just about being ready, it's about having the right support system. "I couldn't be more grateful for the role that BYU played in teeing up everything that would unfold in my career," reflects Moll, who lives in Sarasota, Florida, with his wife, Suzanne. They are the parents of five sons. "If my time at BYU Marriott laid the foundation for my career," Moll says, "Suzanne made possible every ounce of success I've achieved."

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A Sundae School Survey

Here's the scoop: Vote for your favorite BYU Creamery ice cream flavor and you'll be entered to win one of four BYU Creamery ice cream packs—delivered to your doorstep. Results will appear in a future* Marriott Alumni Magazine *article.*

Scan this code and submit your response by December 15, 2025.

**Deliveries available in the continental United States only. Four winners will each receive a six-pack of ice cream pints. One entry per household. Ice cream cones not included.*

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