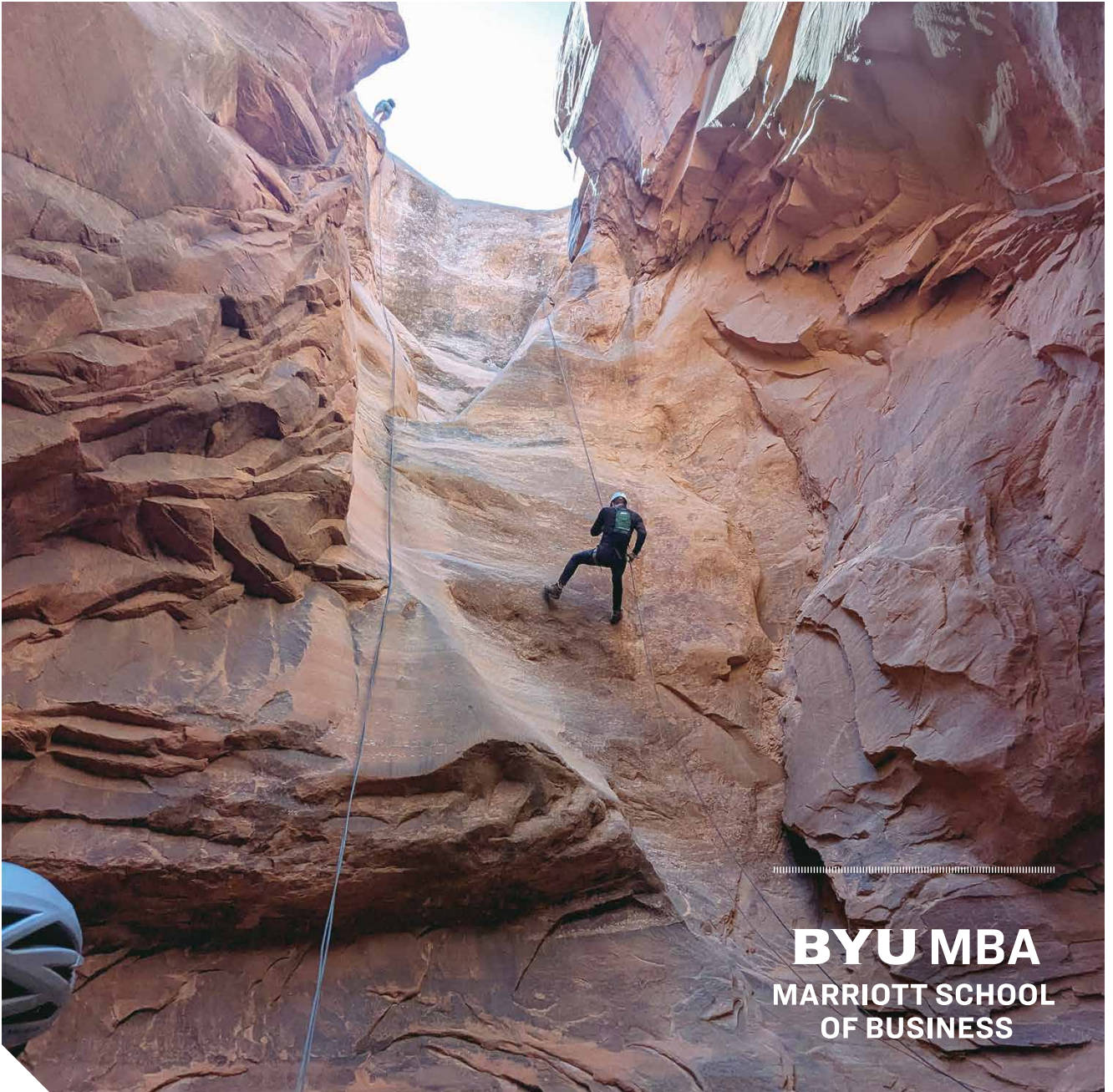


MBA

2023-24 MBA ANNUAL REPORT
BYU MARRIOTT SCHOOL OF BUSINESS



BYU MBA
MARRIOTT SCHOOL
OF BUSINESS



Contents

Feature Story <i>The Evolving MBA Program</i>	4
Student Life	10
Faculty/Staff News	18
Alumni Updates	26
Program Support	36

All communication should be sent to:

MBA Program
BYU Marriott School of Business
W437 Tanner Building
Provo, UT 84602

Phone: 801-422-3500 Email: mba@byu.edu

This report is published by BYU Marriott's MBA program with help from the BYU Marriott Marketing, Communications, and Technology Office and BYU Brand & Creative. ©2024 Brigham Young University. All rights reserved.

◀ Graduates from BYU Marriott's MBA class of 2023 file into the Marriott Center to receive their diplomas.

The 2023-24 Year at a Glance



August

Jumping In

New MBA students attended an orientation and Track Trips, during which they prepared their first team case presentations.

October

Connecting for Good

MBA and EMBA alumni gathered on campus on October 20 to reconnect with each other and meet current students. Alumni also participated in professional seminars, listened to a presentation from professor Tom Peterson, and enjoyed dinner. Students in Mark Widmer's leading and thriving class completed an epic learning adventure in southern Utah's Snow Canyon State Park.



January

Winter Ventures

MBA Career Services staff accompanied students on business visits to the Bay Area and elsewhere to learn about postgraduation and internship opportunities.

March

Networking Time

BYU Marriott hosted its first-ever women's conference for MBA students, EMBA students, alumnae, and prospective students on March 15. MBA students also participated in the Growth Venture Connect career fair cohosted by Silicon Slopes.



AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL



September

Just in Case

On September 5, Marc Cosentino presented on preparing for case interviews and competitions. Students also had the opportunity to attend MBA conferences for professionals.

November

Empowering and Engaging

In addition to November's fall business trips, the MBA program sponsored a women's recruiting dinner and panel during the month. Prospective and current MBA students were invited to the event, in which second-year MBA students facilitated a panel of alumnae.



December

Holiday Mirth

MBA students celebrated the holiday season with treats, games, and an MBA choir performance on December 8.



February

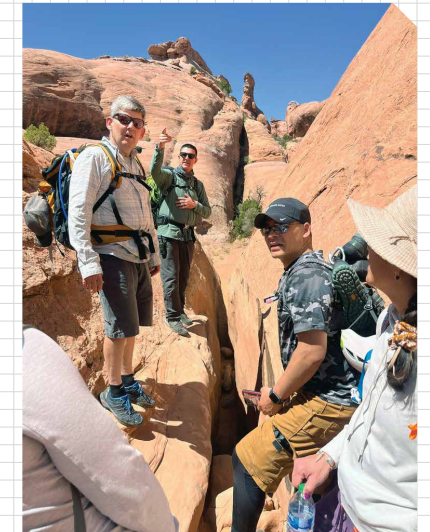
Finding Faith

Sixteen MBA programs from across the country sent student teams to BYU Marriott for the Faith and Belief at Work case competition. A variety of religions were represented, including Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Scientology, and Sikhism.

April

Wrapping Up

EMBA students listened to a variety of speakers at a Career Boost event, and first-year EMBA students completed an epic learning adventure, which included whitewater rafting, canyoneering, and mountain biking in Moab, Utah. As graduation approached, recipients of the Director's Scholarship, Stoddard Prize, Gary P. Williams Leadership Scholars, and Hawes Scholar Award attended a banquet on April 9.





The EVOLVING MBA Program

By Christopher Bigelow

Pivoting to Meet the Changing Needs of Students and Business

It was more than a decade ago when Grant McQueen, BYU Marriott finance professor and former MBA program director, began noticing four trends in the business world—trends that would be catalysts for evolving BYU Marriott’s MBA program. McQueen says:

These four trends signaled that we needed to up our technology game. First, Silicon Slopes firms started needing MBA talent, particularly employees who understood both business and technology. Second, all business jobs started requiring better tech skills, including data analytics. Third, an exciting new job, product manager, took off, and it required a broad

set of business skills together with the ability to understand technology and interact with customers. Fourth, a growing number of international students were interested in STEM-related business programs because they allow for a longer opportunity to gain work experience in the US.

The MBA program responded to these trends by increasing the number of tech electives, requiring a core analytics class, hiring an industry product manager as an adjunct professor, and establishing a STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) management specialization within the MBA program.

What Is Silicon Slopes?

The term was coined to describe the area of Lehi, Utah, where dozens of tech startups are centered—a sister area to Silicon Valley, California. It now includes the entire startup and tech ecosystem of Utah. These businesses include information technology, software development, and hardware manufacturing.

The BYU Marriott MBA program has developed a symbiotic relationship with Silicon Slopes firms, feeding companies with a steady supply of well-prepared interns and employees. The companies, in turn, provide the MBA program with a real-time view of the forces shaping the business world, allowing BYU Marriott to nimbly adjust its program to better meet the needs of students.

Trend 1

Silicon Slopes needs MBA talent that understands both business and technology.

Daniel Snow, the Lee Tom Perry Distinguished Fellow and an associate professor of marketing and global supply chain, is the director of MBA programs at BYU. “The rise of Silicon Slopes in Utah has been critical for our students and for the university,” he says. “If you rewind five or six years, we had quite a few students who were headed into tech but had to figure out their own way in the program, piecing together something that was like a tech-focused MBA.” Those students would take a coding class in information systems and an econometrics class for analytics, trying to get the skills they needed. “It



Collin Burton

Leader in: Data science and machine learning

Current work: Data scientist at Meta

BYU Marriott MBA: 2016

Emphases: Management, analytics

Skills: Negotiation, data storytelling

Insights into MBA program: “One of the great things about the program is that the students are more mature in their careers. They can handle large problems, and they work independently. The program gives students hands-on experiences to solve real-world problems, and the students rise to meet the challenges and deliver impressive results.”

felt like they were being asked to swim against the tide,” Snow says. “Meanwhile, we were hearing from Silicon Slopes firms that they needed graduates who had these tech-crossover skills.”

The solution? Increase the number of tech electives. “When I was the MBA associate director,” Snow says, “we came up with the idea of tech horizontals.”

The verticals of the program, the majors and minors students declare and work toward, are well established. Within BYU Marriott’s MBA program, students have five majors to choose from: marketing, finance, strategic human resources, entrepreneurship, and operations and supply chain. They can also choose to supplement their major coursework by earning minors.

Tech horizontals, however, are courses that cut across all majors and minors, open to any MBA student who wants to strengthen their technology acumen.

“The horizontals allow students to focus on the kind of primary tech jobs that people are going into,” Snow says. “The emphasis adds to their tool kit coming out of an MBA program.”

Trend 2

All business jobs are starting to require analytics.

Jeff Dotson, former professor of marketing, was an early champion of making an analytics course part of the MBA’s core curriculum.

“Analytics are starting to play a very dominant role within businesses,” Dotson says. “So the MBA program created a core class in analytics for all the incoming students. It exposes them to the fundamentals of business analytics across a variety of domains, techniques, and applications, including the new generative artificial intelligence.”

Beyond adding analytics to the core curriculum, the faculty also added more elective courses. One such course covers a full year of instruction and pairs students with companies for practical execution of analytics projects.

Jason Alleger, who earned his MBA in 2018 and is now an adjunct professor in the program, praises the new approach. “When I was in the program, it was already shifting more toward analytics,” he says. “I’ve seen big improvements now that it’s part of the core.” Increasing access to analytics coursework has elevated the MBA program and made its graduates more marketable.



Jason Alleger

Leader in: Strategy, pricing, and consumer insights

Current work: Head of pricing and monetization at Weave, adjunct professor at BYU Marriott (course: Storytelling with Data)

BYU Marriott MBA: 2018

Emphases: Marketing, analytics

Skills: Pricing, promotions, data analytics, AI, consumer segmentation, marketing attribution

Insights into MBA program: “BYU’s MBA program is one of the best in the country. It offers a unique blend of academic rigor, real-world experience, and spiritual growth. It makes it extremely easy to place students in top companies. I absolutely love being part of this program.”

Trend 3

The product manager position is expanding, requiring a broad set of business skills and the ability to understand technology and interact with developers.

Johny Wudel, COO at JobNimbus, is a Harvard-trained adjunct professor of product management and strategy in the MBA program, and he has seen several new developments in this discipline.

“Product manager is a newer role in tech companies,” Wudel says. “If you go back seven or eight years ago, there were very few universities that had any kind of classes or programs around product management.” But the MBA program is adapting. “BYU has really been pushing hard on adding more curriculum around the discipline. It’s definitely an emerging critical component of tech companies.”

A product manager takes ownership of a product’s success from the beginning of its life cycle to the end, encompassing market analysis and other research. This role might include defining metrics for success, using analytics to better understand and anticipate consumer needs, and working with engineers, developers, designers, and marketers, among others.



Ethan Shipp

Leader in: Product management

Current work: Product manager at Dell Technologies

BYU Marriott MBA: 2021

Emphases: Marketing, product management

Skills: Understanding consumers' needs via ethnographic studies, usability tests, qualitative/quantitative surveys, and telemetry/analytics to deliver innovative digital products and experiences

Insights into MBA program: "My area of interest and passion has always been product management. I began the MBA program with the hope that I could grow and develop that interest, and I'm happy to say that it was successful. I interned with Dell, and I got a full-time offer based on the work I was able to do."

Wudel sees his BYU Marriott role—a professor brought in specifically to impart his expertise in product management—as indicative of the MBA program's adaptability: "I feel like the MBA program is always looking at what's changing in the industry and marketplace, and it's constantly adapting to match student needs, which will in turn meet the needs of the companies that eventually hire those students."

Ethan Shipp, who earned his MBA from BYU Marriott in 2021, agrees. Shipp benefited from the new coursework on product management and was able to secure an internship and a job in this emerging field.

Trend 4

International students are interested in STEM-related business programs because they allow for a longer opportunity to work in the US.

In fall 2021, the BYU Marriott MBA program began offering a specialization called management science and quantitative methods—STEM management.¹ This new specialization is available to all MBA students, regardless of their chosen tracks of study.

The STEM management specialization requires students to take 15 credits of specific electives in addition to 12 credits of STEM-related classes already present in the MBA core.

These electives were chosen based on the descriptions of Classification of Instructional Programs that the United States Department of Homeland Security identifies as STEM-designated courses. The approved topics include applications of statistics, modeling, forecasting, data analysis, and risk management to business problems. The students must take at least one coding or programming elective, one analytics or statistics elective, and nine additional credits from a selection of approved tech-related or quantitatively rigorous electives.

McQueen, who originally advocated for the STEM management specialization, sees this as a positive step. "The specialization will better prepare our MBA students to enter the workforce," he says.

In addition to improving student placement and creating a more competitive program, the STEM management specialization will also benefit international students, Snow notes. With this specialization, international students on F-1 visas can obtain three years of optional practical training in the United States instead of just one, making the students into more-attractive candidates for employers.

"We love our international MBA students," Snow says. "They bring a wealth of unique ideas and insights into the classroom. The new STEM specialization will increase our number of international students, enhance the quality of education for all students, and expand the pool of companies hiring our students."

Dunia Alrabadi not only benefited from the new STEM specialization, but she also helped McQueen pursue and receive the distinction through her participation in Kaizen—a special class in which students execute improvement projects for BYU Marriott. The required STEM coursework enhanced Alrabadi's skill set and gave her leverage during the job hunt. "When recruiters asked if I needed sponsorship, obviously the answer was yes," Alrabadi recalls. "But then I immediately followed up by explaining that I had three years because of the STEM program. I became more favorable to recruiters."

Alrabadi is now in her dream job, but she holds a special place in her heart for BYU Marriott. "Seattle is great, but nothing will ever replace the MBA floor of the Tanner Building," she says.



Rising to Meet the Challenges

The MBA program's evolution and agility have allowed it to respond to a variety of trends in the business world. By increasing the number of tech electives, requiring a core analytics class, hiring

product managers to teach product management, and establishing a STEM specialization, the program is positioned to deliver a higher quality of education and produce a higher caliber of graduates.

The quality and caliber of BYU Marriott's MBA graduates come not only from the program's academic excellence but also from its faith-based foundation. "The thing that I love that's different about BYU is the religious aspect," Wudel says. "It's amazing to have the opportunity to start class with prayer and weave in religious and faith-based components, especially when I talk about career and life. Those have been some of the most precious moments for me, and that is when I get some of the best feedback from students."

Thomas Peterson, associate teaching professor of entrepreneurship, adds, "We're trying to drive students toward places where they can be very successful. Those places include spiritual growth, introspection, and action."

As MBA alums enter the business world—at Silicon Slopes or elsewhere—Wudel hopes that their time at BYU Marriott has given them the latest tech and analytical skills coupled with the proclivity to seek the divine. "I'm just a big believer that truth is truth," Wudel says. "I advise my students to pray and ask for help when they encounter problems at work. Seek a higher power to help navigate it. You shouldn't compartmentalize your career and your values and religion. It's a work-life balance that allows you to leverage it all together."



Dunia Alrabadi

Leader in: Speaking both engineering and business, product development, customer communication

Current work: Technical product manager at Amazon Web Services (AWS)

BYU Marriott MBA: 2021

Emphases: STEM, product management

Skills: Data management, product strategy, customer interaction, SQL, Tableau, Adobe

Insights into MBA program: "I can't even begin to tell you how important it is that you speak the lingo of engineers. As you try to market, data is everything. And getting to the data is hard. You have to know structured query language (SQL) to know how to pull that data. I learned most of my SQL and data management through the 15 credits of STEM requirements. Anybody who's going into tech—if they know this, they'll unblock themselves and become such a huge asset for themselves and for the company."

Note

1. See Sarah Calvert, "MBA Program Introduces New STEM Management Specialization," BYU Marriott news release, marriott.byu.edu/news/article?id=1915.



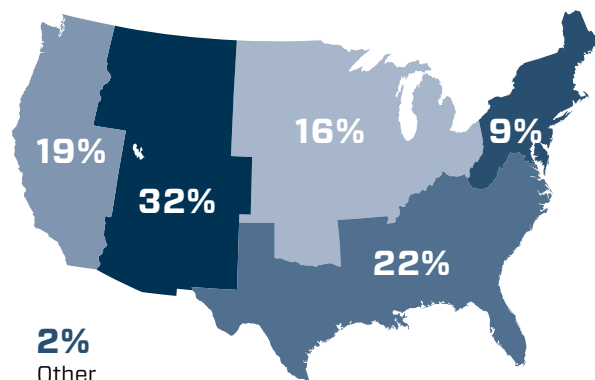
Student Life

Upon graduating with a BA in Asian history, **Candice Rail** was drawn to entrepreneurship because of its flexibility. She built an assisted care company with her husband, Andrew, and expanded it to five locations in Idaho and Utah before deciding it was time to also expand her skill set. The BYU Marriott EMBA program gave Rail the unique opportunity to quickly implement her newfound business knowledge to scale and improve her company. Read more about Rail's experiences on page 15.

Student Report

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS	MBA	EMBA
Class of 2023	99	48
Female	26%	33%
Married	55%	65%
International	32%	8%
US Minority	13%	15%
Bilingual	68%	71%
Average years of experience	4	12
Average entering GPA	3.52	3.40
Average GMAT	667	623

Where BYU Marriott students work after graduation



As students enter industry in jobs across the country and around the world, they expand the program's impact. This map reflects a decade of job placement data, from 2013 to 2024, for students who are placed within three months of graduation.

CLASS OF 2023	MBA
Starting base salary (top 25%)	\$153,379
Placed by 3 months after graduation	90%
Average signing bonus	\$26,208

MBA Rankings 2023-24

RANK	PROGRAM	SOURCE
#2	MBA (Human Resources)	The Princeton Review 2023
#4	MBA (Accounting)	U.S. News & World Report 2024
#13	MBA (Entrepreneurship)	Bloomberg Businessweek 2023
#14	MBA (Entrepreneurship)	Poets&Quants 2024
#23	MBA (Learning)	Bloomberg Businessweek 2023
#23	MBA (Entrepreneurship)	U.S. News & World Report 2024
#32	EMBA	Fortune 2024
#32	MBA	Poets&Quants 2023
#32	MBA (Compensation)	Bloomberg Businessweek 2023
#33	MBA (Networking)	Bloomberg Businessweek 2023

BYU Marriott Hosts Faith at Work Competition

Sixteen interfaith MBA student teams from across the country participated in BYU Marriott's second annual Faith and Belief at Work case competition—a unique event focused on workplace inclusivity of religious beliefs.

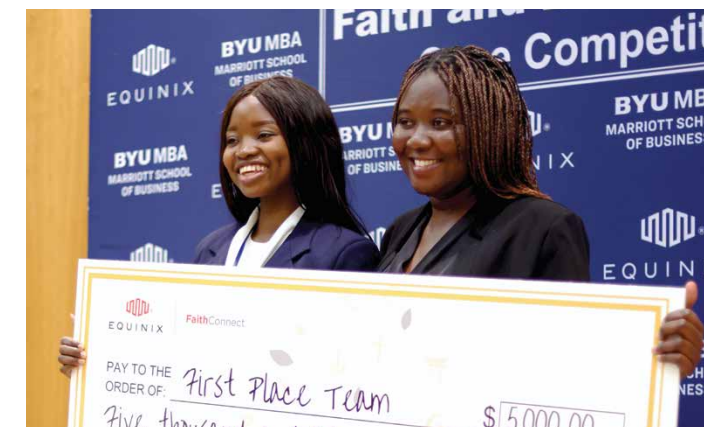
“Research shows that work satisfaction, happiness, and drive are affected by your ability to bring your whole self to work, including your spirituality,” explains **Ben Williams**, an MBA student from Mesa, Arizona, and co-organizer of the event.

The competition was hosted by the BYU Marriott MBA program and sponsored by BYU's Wheatley Institute as well as a diverse group of other organizations, including Equinix, Allymar, Interfaith America, Accenture, PayPal, and BYU's Sorensen Center for Moral and Ethical Leadership.

For the competition, student teams were asked to assume the role of plant manager as they created a strategy to increase employee wellness, morale, and productivity by bringing faith and belief into the workplace. Judges also asked how each team's interfaith initiatives could drive the company to accomplish their business goals and increase profitability. The case competition spanned three days and culminated with the winning team presenting its case recommendations to all participants and judges.

The 64 student participants represented a range of faiths, including Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Scientology, and Sikhism. Event speaker Weslie Ricks, a representative from Equinix, says the variety of beliefs fostered a sense of creativity and inclusivity. “It was a beautiful experience to show up as an agnostic woman and connect with such a diverse group. We found a lot of common ground in three days, and I left inspired by the students,” Ricks reports.

Not only did the competition's theme emphasize belonging in the workplace, but the event itself also created a safe space that nurtured mutual understanding. “There's a fundamental need for people to be understood,” Williams says. “When you understand



Students representing Indiana University's Kelley School of Business took first place at the 2024 competition.

each other, you're able to build a bond. And when you build a bond, you're able to work better together.”

The inaugural event in 2023 was the first-ever MBA case competition to focus specifically on faith and belief in the workplace. **Christina Bates, Sarah Lyman, Brenna Porter, Matt Singer, and Matt Young**—all BYU Marriott MBA students at the time—conceived and pitched the idea and then organized the event.

This year the competition grew to include five more teams and 20 more participants, drawing MBA students from Baylor University, Boston University, Carnegie Mellon University, Columbia University, Iowa State University, Indiana University, Kansas State University, Oklahoma State University, Pepperdine University, Texas A&M University, the University of Alabama, University of Arkansas, University of Florida, University of Notre Dame, and University of Utah.

Reflecting on this year's event, **Zac Decker**, BYU Marriott MBA student and director of the case competition, says, “I believe that every person has the right to worship or not worship how they choose. I also believe that businesses are better when their employees are able to bring their whole selves to work.”

Educational Roots of Business Pursuits

After growing up in Burundi, Belgium, and Canada, MBA student **Ben Nzojibwami** has found belonging and hope for the future during his time at BYU Marriott.

Born in the African nation of Burundi, Nzojibwami understood from a young age that education can empower. “My father grew up in rural Burundi in really poor circumstances. He credits his education for enabling him to overcome his circumstances and to create a better life for himself and his family,” Nzojibwami explains. “He always taught us the importance of getting an education.”

Education is so important to Nzojibwami that he earned a degree in elementary education from the University of Alberta—on top of his kinesiology degree from the University of Calgary. “Studying education was just a natural flow into what was important and meaningful in my life,” Nzojibwami says.

After earning his second bachelor’s degree, Nzojibwami enjoyed teaching fifth and sixth graders at a French immersion elementary school in Canada for two years. But he began to wonder if his future might lie in a different field.

Nzojibwami’s brother suggested a career in business, but Nzojibwami was hesitant: “To me, business was accounting and finance, and that was not what I was interested in. But my brother told me there’s a lot more to business than just finance.” This conversation helped Nzojibwami take a leap of faith and accept an instructional designer job at a startup company.

“I applied my education and teaching background to a business setting to see if the business world was where I wanted to be,” Nzojibwami recalls. In his new position, he created training materials aimed at helping people improve their mental health, and the experience prompted an important realization: “I discovered that business is definitely where I want to be,” he says.

The importance of education once again drove Nzojibwami’s next steps: pursuing an MBA at BYU Marriott. “It definitely was a big move,” Nzojibwami says, especially since his wife had never lived outside of Canada. “But we both felt like it was the right choice.”

Since he started the MBA program in the fall of 2022, Nzojibwami has seen how business stretches beyond numbers and spreadsheets. “Every class teaches me something that is valuable to the business person I am becoming,” he shares. “The professors are willing to make time for you and just talk about life and plans.”

Leadership opportunities, including serving as the class president, have also helped Nzojibwami feel and create belonging. “Being MBA class president is all about building and maintaining a positive culture of belonging among the students,” he says.

The positive experience Nzojibwami has had at BYU Marriott has empowered him to find his way forward in business. After graduation, he plans to work in human resources or leadership training. “I have only good things to say about the BYU MBA program,” Nzojibwami says. “Everyone is hoping for your success. I have loved my time here.”



Starting an assisted living company was a daunting task for **Candice Rail** and her husband, Andrew. Neither of them had experience in that field, so they relied on each other and their faith to grow a thriving business. Rail also relied on her BYU education, which gave her a foundation and helped her take her business to the next level.

Rail graduated from BYU in 2000 with a bachelor’s degree in Asian history. Her husband graduated two years later in humanities with an emphasis in English. As the couple decided where to take their careers, they chose to pursue entrepreneurship. “Andrew and I knew we wanted to be entrepreneurs because of the flexibility,” Rail says. “I remember being amazed that we could be sleeping or on vacation and our business would still earn money for us.”

Despite their certainty about taking an entrepreneurial route, the couple never expected that they would start an at-home assisted living company. “The idea

From Asian History to Assisted Living

for our company was complete revelation. Assisted living wasn’t something we had in mind, but God knew that the community where we live desperately needed care for the elderly,” she explains. Their company, 1 Assist Care, started in Rexburg, Idaho, where Rail and her husband live, and now has five locations in Idaho and Utah.

Rail and her husband worked hard to succeed in their new business. “I found that once you know what you’re supposed to do, the answers come,” she says. “At first, we were on our own to find many answers, which we did by seeking information everywhere, including online education, certification, and networking.” Ultimately, their dedicated efforts paid off and 1 Assist Care grew. Rail is proud of the expertise she and Andrew have developed; the two have become safe, competent caretakers and business owners through their love for and commitment to the mission of their company.

While she enjoyed success with 1 Assist Care, Rail also wanted to expand her technical abilities by earning an MBA. Acquiring the advanced degree was also the result of following spiritual promptings. “I’d never really considered myself a businessperson,” Rail says. “But while I was on my mission in the Philippines, God said to me, ‘You’re going to earn an

MBA one day.’ I felt He wanted me to earn an MBA at BYU Marriott.”

Rail appreciates the opportunities BYU Marriott provides to EMBA students. The program meets every other weekend at BYU’s Salt Lake Center. This schedule allowed Rail to continue running her business during the week. She commuted from her home in Rexburg, grateful that her husband had the flexibility to take care of their five kids while she was in class.

As Rail applies the skills that she gained in the EMBA program, 1 Assist Care continues to evolve. Most recently, Rail has been using what she learned about user experience design to develop software specific to the assisted care industry. Her coursework in accounting and business acquisition also prepared her to expand 1 Assist Care by purchasing similar small businesses.

The company has now pivoted from hiring caregivers to helping patients’ family members become paid caregivers through a Medicaid program. Rail appreciates how her degree helps her navigate these types of transitions. “My BYU Marriott MBA has opened doors, sparked ideas, and given me confidence as a woman in business,” she says. “I cannot say enough good about BYU and its business school. I am so grateful.”



BYU Marriott MBA Scholars

BYU Marriott honors individual students for their excellence and for their efforts in furthering the school's mission to develop leaders of faith, intellect, and character. Top MBA students are recognized annually through the Hawes Scholars Award, the Gary P. Williams Leadership Award, the George E. Stoddard Prize, and the Eccles Scholars Award.

Hawes Scholars

Eight MBA students at BYU Marriott received the 2024 Hawes Scholars Award—an honor that carries the highest distinction given to BYU Marriott MBA students. Created in 1998, this \$10,000 award is named after Rodney A. Hawes Jr. and Beverly Hawes.

The 2024 Hawes Scholars are **Brittany Bennion, Bette Benson, Benjamin Dowdy, Maggie Jensen, Melissa King, Adam Navar, Benjamin Nzojibwami, and Jared Sturgell.**



From left: Adam Navar, Bette Benson, Benjamin Nzojibwami, Melissa King, Jared Sturgell, Steve Hawes, Benjamin Dowdy, Brittany Bennion, Mike Bond, Maggie Jensen, and Daniel Snow.

Gary P. Williams Leadership Scholars

The Gary P. Williams Leadership Award is given to students who have been nominated by their peers for their demonstration of extraordinary leadership abilities and embodiment of the BYU Marriott values. The students selected receive a cash award of \$10,000 in recognition of their efforts. The award was established by Gary Williams, who is an active angel investor, a BYU Marriott alum, a faculty member in the MBA program, and the founder of and faculty advisor for Cougar Capital.

This year's recipients of the Gary P. Williams Leadership Award are **Caio Andrezzo, Aaron Daines, Kelsee Gates, Kirsi Jarvis, Gretel Chung Ling Tam, and Benjamin Cole Williams.**



From left: Aaron Daines, Gretel Chung Ling Tam, Benjamin Cole Williams, Gary Williams, Kelsee Gates, Caio Andrezzo, and Kirsi Jarvis.



From left: Daniel Snow, Aaron Ranger, Christina Yadan Zhang, Tanner Mask, Chad Larson, Tesla Welch, Patty Stoddard Welch, Taylor Nadauld, Jesús Mata, Coralee Choules, Preston Neilson, Nathan Vance, and Ryan Cottrell.

George E. Stoddard Prize Scholars

The George E. Stoddard Prize in Finance is given to second-year MBA students who study finance and display leadership and academic excellence. A committee of MBA finance faculty makes selections based on students' commitment to a career in finance, professional experience and pursuits, and ability to serve as representatives of the BYU Marriott MBA program around the world.

The 2024 Stoddard Prize winners are **Coralee Choules, Ryan Cottrell, Chad Larson, Tanner Mask, Jesús Mata, Preston Neilson, Aaron Ranger, Nathan Vance, and Christina Yadan Zhang.**

Eccles Scholars

The Eccles Scholars Award offers financial support to MBA students who are interested in and committed to international business. After a rigorous application process, students are selected based on academic performance, international experience or interest, and fluency in a second language. Each award recipient receives up to \$9,000 of financial aid, which goes toward tuition, international study experiences, and global career exploration.

The 2024 Eccles Scholars are **Julian Antuña, Julio Cesar Augusto, Val Fulton, Tyler Johnson, Natalie Koon, Ling-Yu Lee, Chris Maljanovski, Kjerstin Roberts, Ryan Ruth, Kaavya Sawhney, and Altyn Zhekey.**



From left: Kjerstin Roberts, Ling-Yu Lee, Julian Antuña, Kaavya Sawhney, Ryan Ruth, Altyn Zhekey, Tyler Johnson, Julio Cesar Augusto, Chris Maljanovski, Natalie Koon, and Val Fulton.

Faculty/ Staff News

As the academic program manager, **Christine Roundy** has touched the lives of countless BYU Marriott MBA students. For nearly three decades, she has counseled students on classes, listened to their worries, cheered them on, and celebrated their wins. Roundy guides students one by one, adapting her approach to fit the needs of each individual student. Her commitment to individual growth exemplifies the heart of BYU Marriott's mission. Read more about how she transforms students' journeys, one interaction at a time, on page 24.



Faculty Awards

Professorships

PROFESSORSHIP	2023-24 RECIPIENT
<i>Beesley, Horace Pratt</i>	Jeffrey H. Dyer
<i>Edwards, William F.</i>	Jeffrey P. Dotson
<i>Garrett, J. Earl & Elaine</i>	Neil R. Lundberg
<i>Jones, Alice Belle</i>	Kristen B. DeTienne
<i>Low, William & Roceil</i>	Paul C. Godfrey
<i>Meyer, Fred G.</i>	R. Bruce Money
<i>National Advisory Council</i>	Kim B. Clark
<i>Passey, James M.</i>	Barrett A. Slade

PROFESSORSHIP	2023-24 RECIPIENT
<i>Peery, H. Taylor</i>	Taylor D. Nadauld
<i>Peterson, Joel C.</i>	James C. Brau
<i>Romney, George W.</i>	Bradley R. Agle
<i>Second Mile</i>	Craig B. Merrill
<i>Skousen, K. Fred</i>	Michael S. Drake
<i>Sorensen, David E. & Verla A.</i>	Karl B. Diether
<i>Thorsell, Hazel Speirs</i>	Scott E. Sampson

Fellowships

FELLOWSHIP	2023-24 RECIPIENT
<i>Alumni</i>	Mathew D. Duerden
<i>Alumni</i>	Ryan S. Elder
<i>Brown, Denny L. & Jerri</i>	Colbrin A. Wright
<i>Covey, Stephen Mack</i>	W. Chad Carlos
<i>Edwards, William F.</i>	Shad S. Morris
<i>Ford/Cook</i>	Benjamin C. Iverson
<i>Garrett, J. Earl & Elaine</i>	Glenn L. Christensen
<i>Garrett, J. Earl & Elaine</i>	Peter M. Madsen
<i>Grow, Stewart L.</i>	Eva M. Witesman
<i>National Advisory Council</i>	Troy R. Nielson

FELLOWSHIP	2023-24 RECIPIENT
<i>Peery, H. Taylor</i>	Brian H. Boyer
<i>Perry, Lee Tom</i>	Daniel C. Snow
<i>PwC</i>	Travis A. Dyer
<i>Sorensen, David E. & Verla A.</i>	John W. Gardner
<i>Warnick/Deloitte</i>	Steven D. Smith
<i>White, Georgia</i>	Jeffrey S. Bednar
<i>Whitman, Robert A. & Wendy</i>	Benjamin M. Galvin

Investing in Relationships

The mentors that **Ian Wright** had 20 years ago as a student at BYU have changed the course of his life. For Wright, who became the finance program director and an assistant professor at BYU Marriott, these mentors modeled the encouragement he now gives to his own students to “be awesome in everything you do.”

Before serving his mission in Washington, DC, Wright was studying math on the pre-med track at BYU. Shortly after he returned to BYU, however, he found a new passion for economics. “I took Econ 110 for my social sciences general elective, and after three weeks, I knew I wanted to do that for the rest of my life,” Wright shares. He decided to double major in math and economics.

Wright soon realized that working with great mentors was just as important as learning the

coursework. One of these mentors was his math professor, David Wright. Although the two Wrights are not related, they shared more than just their last name. The professor understood Wright’s unique skill set and encouraged him to apply to be a research assistant at BYU Marriott. Wright got a position assisting **Keith Vorkink**, who was a BYU Marriott finance professor at the time and now serves as the university’s advancement vice president.

The mentoring he received from Vorkink and David Wright prompted a powerful realization. “Surrounding yourself with really strong, altruistic people,” Wright says, “can positively influence you on the path to figuring out your life.” These relationships exposed Wright to new possibilities for the future and inspired him to pursue a PhD in financial economics.

As a PhD candidate in economics at Stanford University, Wright realized he loved interacting with people through teaching, working with data, and using research to get an actionable result. This realization propelled him to pursue work in the private sector after he finished his PhD, and he spent six years in London working for Goldman Sachs and later BlackRock.

Summer visits to Utah gave Wright the opportunity to reconnect with the professors he had collaborated with as an undergrad. It was during one of those visits that Wright met another

finance professor, **Taylor Nadauld**, current chair of BYU Marriott’s Department of Finance. Nadauld suggested that Wright apply for a position as a finance professor.

Eventually Wright, along with his wife and four children, left behind the life they had built in London to return to Provo. Although the transition presented challenges, Wright was motivated by the impact his professors had on him years earlier, and he wanted to be like them. “My family came to BYU because we wanted to contribute and make a difference in students’ lives,” Wright says.

Working at BYU Marriott as a professional faculty member allows Wright to focus solely on teaching. In the MBA program, he teaches international finance and the Silver Fund—a course where second-year MBA students manage BYU Marriott’s stock portfolio. Wright also advises various student associations and teaches financial fluency and professional development classes. In his teaching and mentoring, Wright draws from his work experience to help students understand the real-world implications of concepts in his lectures.

Wright encourages his students to form deep connections with those around them, just like he did as a BYU undergraduate student. “If you get to know the people around you, you will make your life happier and richer,” Wright shares. “I’m grateful to all my past and current colleagues. I work with phenomenal people.”



Blending Professionalism and Connection

Students, employees, and executives typically work hard to present themselves professionally, ensuring that their blazers are sharp and their handshakes are firm. Yet BYU Marriott professor **Kristen DeTienne**, who has more than three decades of professional experience, calls for something beyond professionalism. “What’s that extra edge that helps you be effective and enjoy what you’re doing? It’s personal connection,” DeTienne explains.

The California native has consulted businesses on management and negotiation since 1989 and has taught at BYU since 1991. In her successful career as an academic and a consultant, what DeTienne values most is reaching above the standard expectations of professionalism and creating meaningful relationships.

After earning a PhD from the University of Southern California in 1991, DeTienne joined BYU Marriott as a faculty member in the Department of Management, where she now works as a professor of organizational behavior and human resources. DeTienne also owns KBD Management Consultants and has nearly 30 years of experience guiding business leaders toward creating better interpersonal relationships.

DeTienne helps her clients and students improve their negotiation skills, develop influence tactics, and navigate interpersonal communication. She strives to be on the cutting edge of management and negotiation research. DeTienne has published work in prestigious journals, including *Harvard Business Review* and *Academy of Management*. Her research covers topics such as business ethics, communication strategy, and business feedback.

For DeTienne, the highest form of effective leadership comes from following Jesus Christ’s example. “I want my students to be better leaders in the workplace. I want them to use their power and influence in a Christlike manner,” she says. “I want the students to be able to listen to people on their team. I want them to have a mindset of looking for win-win solutions rather than ramming their own ideas down someone’s throat.” She invites her students to think about their professional relationships not as transactions but as opportunities to lead like the Savior.

DeTienne believes that interpersonal connection should go beyond traditional professionalism in a way that coincides with BYU Marriott’s singular vision to “transform the world through Christlike



leadership. BYU Marriott is just such a special place,” DeTienne says. “I hope that people understand what a blessing it is to be in a place where everyone’s trying to support one another.”

Taking direction from BYU Marriott’s unique mission to develop Christlike leaders, DeTienne publishes research on how business leaders can better care for their employees. Some of her research focuses on mental health in the workplace. She’s found that mental health issues often come to a manager’s attention only when a manager begins to investigate an employee’s poor performance. DeTienne’s research calls on managers to take *proactive* rather than *reactive* approaches to mental health by creating flexible work schedules, simplifying work demands, and showing sensitivity to negative employee feedback.

Through teaching and consulting, DeTienne empowers people to deepen and elevate their relationships. She believes this rapport makes BYU Marriott special. “That’s one more thing I like about BYU,” DeTienne says. “The hope is in the air.”

Faith-Filled Grit

Taylor Nadauld thanks his 25-year-old self for choosing to leave a lucrative position on Wall Street to earn a PhD. Now the department chair and a professor of finance at BYU Marriott, Nadauld teaches the valuable lessons he learned about faith and finances to his undergraduate and MBA students.

After he graduated from BYU with a bachelor’s degree in economics, Nadauld accepted a position at Goldman Sachs and moved to New York with his wife. While working on Wall Street, Nadauld interacted with people he admired, many of whom had PhDs. This experience motivated him to pursue a PhD in finance from The Ohio State University.

“One of the reasons I wanted to get a PhD is because I felt like I didn’t understand the way the world worked to the depth that I wanted to. I wanted to satisfy my intellectual curiosity,” Nadauld says. “When I was an undergraduate student, I had an inkling about going on to earn a PhD, but after working in New York for two years, I decided to make it happen.”

So, Nadauld and his wife moved from the Big Apple to Columbus, Ohio, to begin his advanced degree. Their lifestyle was instantly and drastically different. “We went from two New York incomes and no children to no incomes and two children within the span of two years,” Nadauld shares. “It was really hard.”

Aside from financial challenges, Nadauld felt academically overwhelmed. “Grad school was terribly difficult for me. I wasn’t as prepared as I should have been,” he says. “During my PhD program, I often felt like I was drowning in the middle of the ocean with no land in sight. I relied heavily on my faith to help me feel a sense of peace, balance, and optimism for what my career could be.”

The five years of hard work paid off. Nadauld graduated from his PhD program and secured a teaching position at BYU Marriott. “When I finished my PhD, I was debating whether to go back to the industry or take an academic job. We decided to come back to BYU because I had a really strong conviction about the role that BYU plays in the world,” Nadauld explains.



In each of the classes he teaches, Nadauld makes a point to incorporate both financial and gospel principles into his lessons. “I want to help students understand why I have faith in God and our Savior,” Nadauld says.

He explains that finance graduates take jobs all over the US, contributing not only to their workplaces and neighborhoods but also to their local church communities. “That’s a really important part of the gospel—creating families who also have a stable economic situation so that they can lift other people,” Nadauld remarks.

Nadauld tries to impress upon his students, in both the finance and MBA programs, the impact that faith has on happiness. “Having a really successful, ambitious career does not have to conflict with being a person of faith,” Nadauld says. “My life now is a direct result of the grit I had to find while getting a PhD. My 45-year-old self is super grateful to my 25-year-old self for having the faith to do it.”

Guiding Students One by One



With nearly three decades of experience at BYU Marriott, **Christine Roundy** diligently seeks to care for and inspire confidence in students. As the MBA academic program manager, she accomplishes that goal by meeting students' needs one by one.

"You're going to get through it," Roundy gently reassures students when they enter her office with a challenge or a setback. Roundy has found that students need more than just a graduation plan to be successful in school; they also need reassurance that they are supported by someone who will help them navigate graduate school amidst life's challenges. Roundy adapts to offer personalized advising that meets each individual's needs.

"When a student comes in, they're usually coming to me with a problem, such as wanting to adjust their schedule while making sure they'll still graduate," Roundy says. "It's hard to be a student because you have all these stressors. My goal is to remove one of the stressors."

Roundy started as an administrative assistant at BYU Marriott in 1996 and has worked in various administrative positions in the 27 years since, which ultimately led to her current position with the MBA program. She helps MBA students to keep their academic lives on track, meet their graduation requirements, and plan their educational goals.

Roundy has met with countless students during her time at BYU Marriott. During those many meetings, Roundy has seen just about every type of setback a student can face, and she has helped worried students find their path forward. Roundy describes in one word how she hopes students will feel after visiting with her: secure.

These personalized, one-on-one meetings inherently promote an advising style that is less about driving outcomes and more about helping individuals. This approach both models and builds on BYU Marriott's vision to "transform the world through Christlike leadership."

Roundy provides practical answers for students on tasks such as adding a class, adapting a schedule to their needs, and pivoting

logistically when unexpected needs arise. But Roundy looks at advising as more than strictly administrative.

"There's also the mental welfare of our students, and I'm concerned about that too," Roundy says. Relieving worries about the path to graduation is just one way that Roundy helps students feel secure. "I try to make sure certain problems have been addressed and that students feel better about their situation than when they came in," she adds.

The seasoned academic program manager knows that an MBA experience is much more than what classes you take and when. A student's mindset and confidence also shape their MBA experience and affect their wellbeing.

"I feel that sometimes people build up the expectation that their MBA experience will be the same textbook process as everyone else's," Roundy says. Part of Roundy's job includes helping students appreciate their own unique journey. She explains, "It's fun when, by the end, they see the joy in their journey, even though going through it was challenging at times."

Ultimately, Roundy has high hopes for the MBA students she helps. By focusing on the individual, she helps students work through obstacles to achieve what's important to them. Roundy says, "My vision for the students here is for them to become the best at what they want to become."

Using Ethics to Understand the Savior

As an undergraduate student at BYU Marriott in 1983, **Brad Agle** was puzzled and intrigued by why people act unethically. After graduating and amassing expertise and renown in the field, Agle returned to the school in 2008 as a professor. He now helps students crack tough ethical questions.

Agle credits his interest in human behavior—inhumane behavior, in particular—to one shocking experience. As a 19-year-old missionary, he visited a Nazi concentration camp in Dachau, Germany. "This was a life-shattering experience," Agle says. "I've never felt evil so palpable. I was absolutely struck." The organizational behavior classes Agle took at BYU when he returned to school heightened his fascination with the subject.

Despite that interest, Agle pressed forward with his bachelor's degree in information management. However, he soon grew unsatisfied with his first position—a job in banking. Only two years after graduating, Agle began looking for ways to pursue his interest in human behavior.

One of the options he considered was teaching. Growing up, Agle had admired his neighbor, who was a professor. "He was the dad who always attended everything," Agle says. "I distinctly remember thinking, 'I want his job!'"



Agle sought his PhD in business management from the University of Washington and started teaching at the University of Pittsburgh prior to his graduation in 1993. As a budding professor, Agle worked hard to have career victories early on.

This tenacity paid off. In his first few years of teaching, Agle published several highly cited articles; the foremost has been cited more than 18,000 times. His teaching, writing, and community contributions were recognized by several entities, and he served as director of the David Berg Center for Ethics and Leadership at the University of Pittsburgh for more than seven years.

Despite Agle's strong ties to Pittsburgh—including tenure at the school and his calling as a bishop—an invitation from BYU Marriott in 2005 led him to consider a move. After joining the faculty for

one semester in 2008 as a visiting professor, Agle accepted a full-time position at BYU Marriott.

Agle set out to implement a stronger academic focus on ethics. For the past 16 years, Agle has strengthened the school's focus on ethics by organizing conferences, giving speeches, establishing advisory councils, and creating awards. Most significant, Agle, with the help of BYU Marriott dean **Brigitte Madrian**, was the driving force behind the creation of the university's Sorensen Center for Moral and Ethical Leadership.

Additionally, Agle enjoys teaching, especially his EMBA business ethics course. Driven by the need to provide his students with practical material, Agle analyzed hundreds of his students' real-life ethical situations to create 13 categories into which all ethical dilemmas fall. He then cowrote a book, *The Business Ethics Field Guide*, to discuss those categories. The book was so successful that the US Department of Defense Joint Chiefs of Staff invited Agle, along with original coauthor and fellow BYU Marriott professor **Aaron Michael Miller**, to adapt the field guide for military use.

Even as an expert in the field, Agle admits that ethical decisions can be difficult, but focusing on living ethically is essential. "It's all about becoming like Jesus Christ," he says.

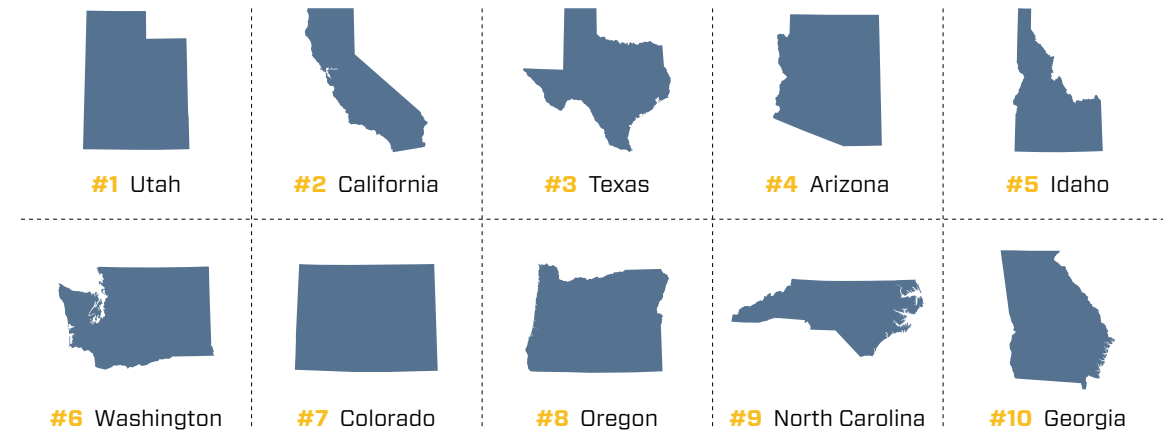
Alumni Updates

Ronell Hugh measures success by the quality of his relationships—not the length of his résumé. Although he has held marketing roles at Walmart, Adobe, and Microsoft and now works as the chief marketing and product officer at Deseret Book Company, Hugh finds purpose and fulfillment through being a father, husband, and friend. Many of his closest friends come from his time in the MBA program as he worked toward receiving his degree in 2010. Today, Hugh pays it forward by actively contributing to inclusivity initiatives and championing a Christlike approach to business. Read more about Hugh's family and career on page 32.



Alumni Report

Top 10 States Where Alumni Reside



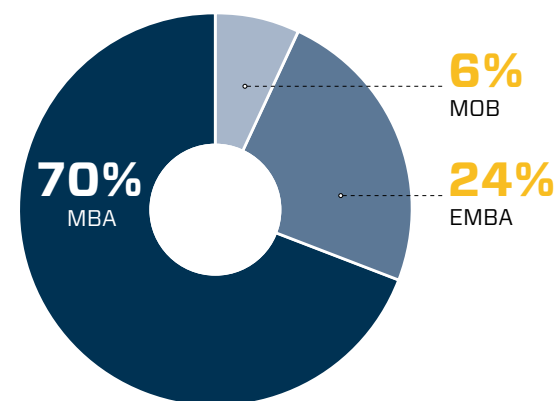
Top 5 Countries Where Alumni Reside



BYU Marriott MBA Alumni at a Glance

- **9,615** total alumni (as of April 2024)
- First class graduated in **1963** with **15** students
- First EMBA class graduated in **1986**
- **15** MBA directors to date

Alumni by Program



Keeping Pace at the Ground Level

Whether in an executive board room or at a Ukrainian refugee camp, alumnus **Shawn Pace** helps meet people’s needs by working shoulder to shoulder with others at the ground level.

Pace graduated with a bachelor’s degree in management with an emphasis in marketing in 2010. After several years in sales and business development, he began working as a sales executive at human resources software company ApplicantPro, an Inc. 5000 corporation.

Pace returned to BYU Marriott in 2017 to complete the EMBA program—no easy undertaking considering that he and his wife had five children under the age of seven at the time, and they had their sixth while Pace was in the program. He completed the program while also serving in a volunteer church role, working full-time, and supporting his classmates as an elected student leader.

In his current role as manager of the sales team at ApplicantPro, Pace steers clear of what he calls “looking from the ivory tower”—the managerial pitfall of not understanding the real challenges of employees and clients. “It’s about getting down in the trenches where our clients are and trying to stand shoulder to shoulder with them,” he says. “It’s asking, ‘What’s hard for you?’ And then listening.”

Pace and other members of ApplicantPro’s executive team regularly field inbound support inquiries from clients, which are typically reserved for sales agents. By keeping a pulse of what’s going on at the ground level, Pace manages his sales team not from above or behind but alongside his colleagues.

When the war in Ukraine broke out at the end of February 2022, Pace and his wife, Megan, were celebrating their 15th wedding anniversary by traveling through Europe and Africa. The couple scrapped their original plans and booked a flight to Poland to help in refugee camps. Once there, they observed that a large number of refugees, many of whom had fled with nothing but what they could carry, had no



way to transport their new supplies. Ever-focused on meeting ground-level needs, Pace and his wife started purchasing all the luggage they could and dispersing the bags to refugees.

Pace and his wife alternated between Poland and Ukraine before they flew home, but by the end of April, they found themselves returning for a second service trip. The couple also helped a Ukrainian family they met in Poland receive a sponsorship to move to the United States.

In addition to preparing him for professional and humanitarian opportunities, BYU Marriott also helped Pace develop a supportive network. Years after graduating from the EMBA program, he stays in close contact with classmates. He meets every month with a group from his former cohort who work in a variety of fields and industries.

Pace credits much of his success to his time spent at BYU Marriott. “If I hadn’t received the education I did, I wouldn’t have had the kind of employment opportunities I’ve enjoyed or the flexibility to travel and serve,” Pace says. “BYU Marriott inspires me to want to do better and be better in all facets of my life: as an employee, father, and citizen. BYU has made a huge impact on me for good.”



A Lifelong Love of Storytelling

In the fourth grade, **Miranda Barnard** pulled out the typewriter she received for Christmas and started her own newspaper about endangered animals. She called it *Vanishing Tracks* and distributed copies to her friends at school. From there, Barnard's love of storytelling grew, leading her to a career using communication to benefit others.

Barnard earned an MBA from BYU Marriott in 2016, but her career path began long before she entered the Tanner Building—and even earlier than the fourth grade. “I come from a long line of storytellers,” she explains. “My grandparents and my father are phenomenal at telling interesting stories. Their power to connect through communicating in a meaningful way stood out to me.”

Barnard continued to pursue storytelling in college, double majoring in journalism and public relations at Southern Utah University. After graduating in 2001, Barnard gained as much work experience as possible. In

2011 she joined Children's Miracle Network (CMN) as vice president of communications and was later promoted to vice president of content development.

“I loved the resourcefulness and push for innovation that is necessary to make transformational change at a nonprofit,” Barnard says. “I became hooked on the opportunity to use my career to do good.”

Barnard's career has provided her with several unique opportunities and amazing stories to tell. “I've done events at the White House with President Barack Obama and a lot of influential business leaders from across the country,” she adds. “I have too many amazing experiences to count, but none of them are as meaningful to me as talking to the parents of the kids who our hospitals helped.”

While working for CMN, Barnard was inspired to earn an MBA. Her desire to earn the degree started when she was asked to work on a project to redesign the organization's operating model to raise more funding. “The finance-heavy project was unfamiliar to me as a communications major, but I found that I loved what I was working on,” she explains.

Barnard was further encouraged to attend BYU Marriott's EMBA program by two mentors and friends who were alums of the program: the late **John Lauck**, CMN's

then-CEO, and **Craig Sorensen**, Barnard's manager and then-CMO. “John and Craig gave me a huge boost of confidence,” Barnard says. “I appreciate their encouragement because attending the EMBA program was one of the best things I've ever done.”

Barnard has continued to focus on others. After completing her MBA in 2016, she worked for two more years at CMN, and then she served as vice president of marketing at Vivint Solar for two years. Barnard now has her own consulting company, which focuses on projects she is passionate about, such as ensuring vaccine accessibility to underrepresented communities in Salt Lake County, including her own Hispanic community. She currently works as senior director of strategic marketing for CHG Healthcare while still consulting on the side.

Outside of work, Barnard helps with refugee resettlement, and she also volunteers for Special Olympics Utah as well as Village Book Builders—a nonprofit that builds libraries and provides mentors for children in developing countries. As someone who loves telling stories, Barnard would agree that the focus of her life story has been her desire and ability to do good. “I'm grateful for my experience at BYU Marriott because service was such a core component of the program,” she says.

Shifting Gears: Engineering to Human Resources

Empowered by BYU Marriott, MBA graduate **Betsy Rose** always strives for positive impact. Whether she is working on human resources (HR) projects from a New York City office or cheering up the elderly with her therapy dog, Rose is all about making a difference.

But Rose, who worked as a human resources leader for the NYC-based financial institution Citigroup for more than a decade, was not always in Manhattan high-rises. After completing her bachelor's degree in engineering from Utah State University in 1999, she worked for the United States Bureau of Reclamation. After four years, Rose decided to make a career switch to human resources, earning her MBA from BYU Marriott in 2005.

Rose's engineering coworkers played a key role in influencing this decision. Many of them were nearing retirement, and their preparation and foresight rubbed off on Rose. She was also influenced by the government's method of operation. “The government had HR,” she says, “but its approach was more administrative.” Intrigued by the impact an organization with a strategic approach could have on its employees, Rose dove into the world of human resources.

Upon earning her MBA, Rose began working for Citigroup. She quickly climbed the ranks and stayed with the company for nearly 15 years, working mostly in various vice president capacities. Rose's time at the company was full of highlights, including meeting her husband and working in Hong Kong for six months. She credits her successful career at Citigroup to the abilities and confidence she gained from BYU Marriott.

“My time at BYU helped me understand who I am and what I can do,” Rose says. “The network I gained at BYU Marriott—my BYU family—will always help me feel that I can make a difference in whatever I'm doing.”

Her proudest career accomplishment was a massive project that she calls a “game changer.” The task, a multiyear endeavor, revolutionized the way Citigroup

managers access and report on employee records. This project increased the transparency and accessibility of employee records, reduced report reconciliations, and had a major positive impact on the organization—something Rose constantly strives for.

Rose's impact is not limited to the workplace. No longer at Citigroup, she and her family now reside in Knoxville, Tennessee, where Rose volunteers in her community. One of her favorite ways to serve is visiting an assisted living facility with her therapy dog, Rufus, who brings smiles to residents in need.

“These individuals are barely mobile, but they make an effort to pet my puppy,” Rose says. “Seeing the difference Rufus makes in their lives is amazing.”

Rose has been an engineer, an HR leader, and an eager community volunteer, but her career is far from over. “I know my connections and experience—especially from BYU Marriott—will help me prepare for whatever comes next,” Rose says. “I'm not sure what that is, but I do know that I have a foundation I can rely on.”



Finding More Meaning in Marketing

When **Ronell Hugh** worked as an account manager after graduating from college, he quickly realized that he wanted to make decisions about products instead of simply oversee the customers using them. Hugh was told he would need an MBA for such a goal, so he applied to BYU Marriott. While the degree, which he received in 2010, put Hugh on the career path he was looking for, other aspects of the program ended up being much more meaningful to him.

“I have learned that success for me is rooted in how good my relationships are with my family members, friends, and peers. Those relationships are the most rewarding parts of my day,” Hugh explains. “The best thing that came out of my time at BYU Marriott was the friends I made; they’re like an extended family.”

Hugh had already seen how important relationships were at BYU; in 2004 he earned a bachelor’s degree in public relations from the university. He chose BYU again for his MBA because he knew that the program would support him as a father and a husband while he attended as a student. He and his wife, Briawna, have four children. As a family, they love traveling, trying new food, playing games, and spending one-on-one time together at their home in Highland, Utah.

Because his family is his top priority, Hugh ensures that any job he accepts provides him with the flexibility to continue building his relationships with his wife and children. Since completing his MBA, Hugh has worked in a variety of marketing positions at several companies, including Walmart, Adobe, and Microsoft—where he was the global product manager for Xbox games such as *Halo*. Hugh is now a senior vice president for product and marketing at Deseret Book Company.

Hugh is grateful for the way BYU Marriott enabled his transition to a job where he could be involved in making product decisions. “My MBA gave me a



well-rounded experience, and I was able to learn a variety of business principles,” he says. “The program afforded me the opportunity to gain insight and think about how to operate at a management level.”

Hugh also values how BYU Marriott helped him realize what was possible as a first-generation college student. “The first thing I did after starting the program was go on a trip with recruiters from well-known companies. That moment opened my mind to a new world,” he observes. “The experiences I’ve had, the people I’ve met, and the expertise I’ve developed since then are all because I went to BYU Marriott.”

Throughout his career, Hugh has found ways to give back. He has served on and supported nonprofit organizations focused on inclusivity and belonging, and he also sits on the boards of various companies. In addition, Hugh is a member of the school’s Marketing Program Advisory Board and assists **Brigitte Madrian** as an advisory member on race initiatives.

Giving back to his alma mater is especially meaningful to Hugh, who appreciates the university’s potential for improving inclusivity. “BYU is one of the few institutions in the world where people can talk about religious topics and use those as the basis for doing good business and for being good people,” Hugh says. “I believe wholeheartedly that BYU, its faculty, and its students can be examples throughout the world of how to be inclusive in a Christlike way.”

2011



Laura Tevaga’s life story has come full circle—twice. The first time was at BYU Broadcasting, when Tevaga returned to her original job after taking a parenting hiatus. During this second stint, Tevaga enrolled in the EMBA program, which supplied her with new skills to employ as she managed BYU Broadcasting’s fundraising and marketing. After completing her MBA in 2011, Tevaga advanced to director of development at BYU Broadcasting. Then she made her second return—this time to her Polynesian roots. Tevaga is part Tahitian, and her husband, Nofoa, was raised in Hawaii, so when Tevaga had the opportunity to become BYU-Hawaii’s director of communications in 2016, she embraced it. In 2022 she was appointed advancement vice president of BYU-Hawaii. She now works to advance the university’s mission to prepare future leaders of Oceania and Asia. Tevaga has two children and looks forward to serving a mission with her husband in the future.

2015



Boubacar Barry leverages his international experience and perspective to provide personalized solutions in global roles. Originally from Conakry, Guinea, Barry earned his bachelor’s degree in communications from BYU in 2007. Following his graduation, he worked in various roles in public relations, marketing, sales, and IT. Barry’s interactions with HR professionals inspired a career change, leading him to earn an MBA from BYU Marriott in 2015. After graduating, Barry quickly landed a role as an HR manager with General Electric (GE), where he has been part of the business turnaround at GE Gas Power over the past few years. In 2021, Barry became an HR partner with GE Gas Power over the Middle East and North Africa services area. Barry lives in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, and has three children with his wife, Vania. He enjoys traveling and gardening.

2018



Susannah Duke will be the first to tell you she never planned on working in venture capital. Duke earned a bachelor’s degree in environmental science from BYU in 2013 and then started BYU Marriott’s MBA program. After working on consulting projects with a few startups, Duke was convinced to do an internship with Pelion Venture Partners, a business that invests in early-stage software companies. She found that she loved supporting startups through venture capital. She completed her MBA in 2018 and then accepted her current position as a venture capital investor at Pelion. Duke is proud that she is making an impact not only with her investments but also with her family, which includes her husband, Matt, and their two children. The family resides in Cottonwood Heights, Utah, and they enjoy skiing, reading, and traveling.

2018



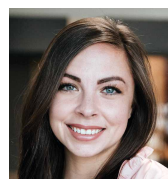
While many would consider a position at Boston Consulting Group (BCG) as the pinnacle of professional success, for **Matt Phillips** it was a stepping stone to new ventures. A native of Midvale, Utah, Phillips earned a bachelor’s degree in business management from BYU in 2011. He worked for education technology startup Cegment Inc. for several years before returning to BYU Marriott to earn an MBA in 2018. After graduation, Phillips landed the management consultant position with BCG and went on to work for Chatbooks for several years before partnering with former BYU MBA students **David Bishop**, **Cody Campbell**, and **Rich Hoopes** to acquire two manufacturing companies. Phillips first led the sales team at ADR Packaging and then became CEO of Allied Electric Sign & Awning Company in 2023. He lives in Provo with his wife, Kelsey, and their four children.

2018



Flexibility in both school and work is key for **Brady Richards**. Originally from Sandy, Utah, Richards earned a bachelor's degree from BYU-Idaho in 2016, supported by BYU-Pathway Worldwide. The online program allowed him to attend school while working full-time for Wells Fargo in various management positions. Richards had a knack for turning around problematic branches, and he received seven promotions at Wells Fargo in a three-year period. Ready for a career change, Richards earned an MBA from BYU Marriott in 2018 and landed a job with American Family Insurance, where he works as a senior regional general manager. Richards and his wife, Lisa, live in Sun Prairie, Wisconsin. He enjoys coaching his kids' sports teams and taking road trips across the country.

2018



While working on her MBA at BYU Marriott, **Emily Smith** cofounded the lingerie e-commerce company Mentionables. Smith says bringing Mentionables to life is one of her proudest accomplishments, along with the two children she has with her husband, Jordan. Smith earned her bachelor's degree in communications from BYU in 2014. While in the MBA program, Smith interned with venture capital firm Album VC. She graduated with her MBA in 2018 and worked alongside the founding team at Kiln to open its first startup coworking space. She then went on to work at expense management company Divvy as director of strategic partnerships. When Divvy was acquired by BILL, Smith helped with the transition. She now resides in Lehi, Utah, and recently joined venture capital firm Convoi Ventures, where she invests pre-seed money into Utah tech startups.

2019



If you have an iPhone sitting in your pocket right now, **Elise Hardle** is one of the people to thank. Hardle was a global supply manager for Apple, where she managed the supply of the silicon chips Apple makes for its various products. Hardle double majored in environmental science and mathematics at BYU, graduating in 2014. She and her husband, **Clifton Hardle**, went through the MBA program together, graduating from the BYU Marriott School of Business in 2019. Her MBA enabled Hardle to land a position at Bayer Pharmaceuticals as a regional sourcing manager. Hardle then joined Apple in 2020. During her years at Apple, she enjoyed living in San Jose, California, and having close proximity to the beach. In 2023, Hardle left California to accept a new position as a software category manager at Adobe in Lehi, Utah. Hardle is the mother of two boys, and she enjoys hiking, camping, gardening, and traveling.

2021



Pedro Larreal finds balance by making time for both spiritual and professional endeavors. While serving as an institute director for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in his home country of Venezuela, Larreal earned a bachelor's degree in business and a master's degree in education. Following graduation, Larreal began working with Nature's Sunshine Products, an herbal product manufacturer based in Lehi, Utah. A series of promotions brought Larreal and his family to Utah. During that time, Larreal also accepted a call to serve as an area seventy for the Church. Ever busy, Larreal earned his EMBA through BYU Marriott. Larreal and his wife, Sariah, embarked on a new adventure in July 2022, when they began serving as mission leaders in the Texas McAllen Mission.

Managing at the Table



While her network connections helped her land a job at Adobe, Portwood believes that the principles she learned in the classroom have been just as important to her career success. "The skill classes gave me confidence. Even though I've been done with the program for more than 15 years, the things I learned there still resonate with me," Portwood explains.

Working at Adobe is enjoyable for Portwood in multiple ways. "I am a creative person, and at its core, Adobe is a creativity company," she says. "Plus, I love the people with whom I work. My team pushes me to be better every single day."

Another thing Portwood appreciates about her position is the flexibility. She recently returned from a sabbatical—which Adobe provides to employees every five years—to Europe. Portwood also enjoys giving back to her alma mater and her community. She returns to BYU Marriott on a regular basis to give guest lectures, help with mock interviews, and judge team presentations.

She also hosts music nights for her neighbors and leads teenagers in skiing, cycling, and equestrian activities at the National Ability Center in Park City, Utah, her hometown. Of this busy lifestyle, she says, "My activities allow me to keep my passions alive." Portwood's experience at BYU Marriott and drive to pursue her passions have helped her build a life she loves.

As a group manager of tech partner marketing at Adobe, **Ivy Portwood** oversees a group she calls her "dream team." Twenty years ago, when she was a music major at BYU, Portwood never would have imagined she would be working in such a position.

During her senior year, Portwood began thinking about her career path. She realized she would not enjoy being a music teacher, despite her skill set. As Portwood researched other options, her dad encouraged her to consider an MBA.

"I came to the conclusion that earning an MBA would set me up for success in many different areas," she explains. Consequently, Portwood enrolled in the MBA program at BYU Marriott in 2004.

Portwood was always curious about the marketing side of business, and she realized that the field also resonated with her creativity, so she decided on a marketing emphasis. After graduating in 2006,

Portwood accepted a position at Dell, where she worked in a variety of marketing positions. She says her time at BYU Marriott gave her the confidence to market herself when applying for jobs.

"The biggest thing I learned was how to represent myself," Portwood says. "Especially as a woman, learning how to sit confidently at the business table and be a part of the conversation is invaluable."

Portwood's time in the MBA program also helped her build a network, which ultimately led to her current job at Adobe. While earning her MBA, she developed relationships with individuals at Dell through BYU Marriott's connections at the company. When one of her friends at Dell earned his own MBA from BYU Marriott and accepted a position at Adobe, he invited Portwood to interview with the company. After the interview, Portwood joined Adobe as a digital marketing consultant in 2015.

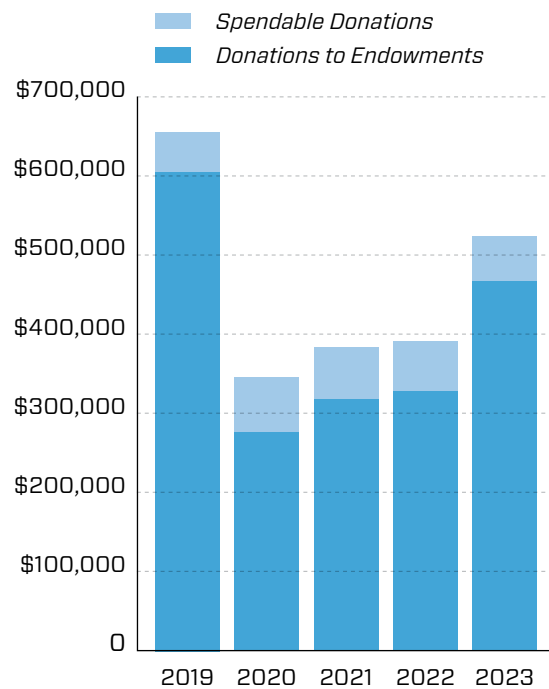


Program Support

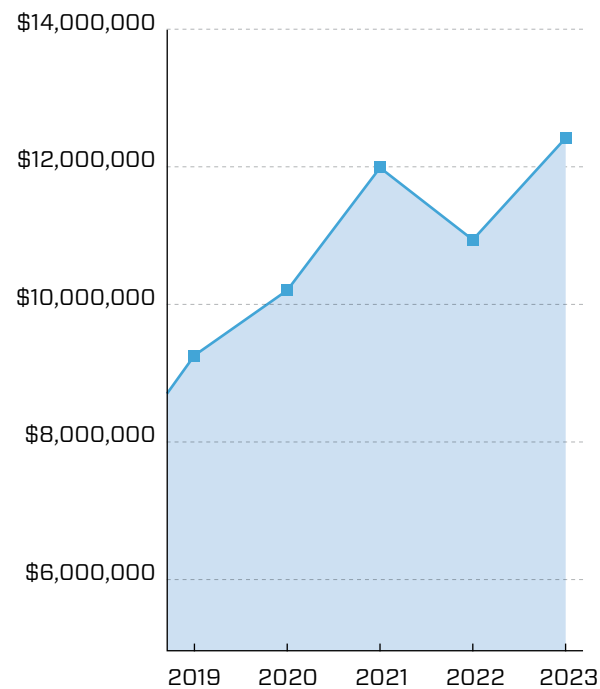
Competing at the Venture Capital Investment Competition (VCIC) global finals is no small feat, and BYU Marriott MBA students consistently make their mark. What's their secret? Cougar Capital—a unique venture capital and private equity fund designed by **Gary Williams** and run by second-year MBA students. Students on the VCIC team are selected from the Cougar Capital class, which gives them real-world investment experience and sharpens their critical thinking skills. Read more about how Williams helps these Cougars turn theory into tangible returns on page 39.

Fundraising Report

Total Donations to MBA Program



MBA Endowment Funds Growth



Student Endowment Fund

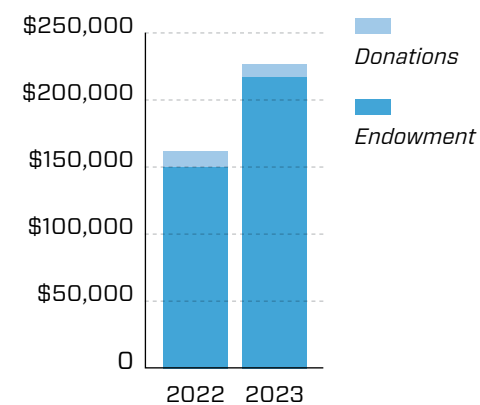
The **MBA Student Endowment Fund**, created in 2016, allows MBA classes to set goals and donate toward the following needs:

1. Student scholarships
2. Case competitions and other student events
3. MBA Association activities and needs
4. Other student-related opportunities

The **EMBA Student Endowment Fund** was created in 2022 with the specific objective of supporting EMBA student scholarships.

To participate, set a class goal as a group, choose where donations will be directed, and then reach out to mba@byu.edu.

Total Donations to EMBA Program



Learning by Doing: Venture Capital the Cougar Way

In April 2024, BYU Marriott's MBA team claimed a trophy at the world's largest venture capital competition, held in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. And it's not the first time.

Just making it to the global finals at the Venture Capital Investment Competition (VCIC) is a feat. MBA programs from 13 countries, including the US, send teams of students to compete and to do what venture capitalists do—listen to pitches from real CEOs, analyze companies, and decide whether to invest. A year-long series of regional competitions narrows the number of teams from 72 to just 12. BYU Marriott has earned a spot at the global finals 8 times in the past 10 years.

In addition to this year's second-place title (a ranking the team has earned four times now), the BYU Marriott MBA team has won first place three times. During the past decade, BYU's MBA students have won first or second place at VCIC competitions more than any other university in the world.

What sets up the BYU Marriott team for success? Two things, says **Maggie Jensen**, who competed on the 2024 team: "One, we practice all year. Two, we have Gary."

Gary Williams, a professor in the management department, pioneered an MBA course called Cougar Capital, which provides the training and the talent pool for the VCIC team. When Williams shifted from a successful career running tech companies to teaching at BYU Marriott, he knew right away that he wanted to help students learn by doing. "What we learn, we forget. What we experience, we retain," he says. "That was the genesis of Cougar Capital."

Cougar Capital started in 2005. Over the years the portfolio has invested in 75 companies ranging from



startups to seasoned enterprises. Investment money comes from donations, and returns feed into an ever-green fund, giving future MBA classes the chance to invest and grow the money.

Although venture capital (VC) is the framework for this class, Williams's goal is not to produce a dozen venture capitalists each year. "The top hierarchy in this class is developing critical thinking skills and teaching students how to make decisions with the best information they've got," he emphasizes. "The venture capital industry is a unique space where we get to look at all these different companies and have a full diligence review. This class is a capstone experience for all tracks in the MBA program."

What does this diligence process look like for a Cougar Capital cohort? The class evaluates pitches from about 25 real companies each year and then decides whether to invest real dollars after analyzing the company's financial model, the competition, the size of the market, and additional factors.

External VC companies partner with Cougar Capital, which gives the group both critical feedback and also access to deals that would otherwise be out of reach. "We have world-class involvement with top firms in the industry," Williams says. "I want the

students to be involved with the best practices and learn at the feet of the very best people.”

Given the value of these opportunities, students are eager to be invited into the class. “My husband earned his MBA at BYU Marriott” Jensen says. “His one regret was that he didn’t do Cougar Capital.” Jensen earned a seat in the class and was then one of six chosen for the VCIC team, but she also realized that Cougar Capital isn’t about spotlighting individual students; it’s about building synergy.

“Gary Williams is a chemist,” Jensen says. “He’s creating the right mix to make a good team. He watches us from the minute we walk into his prerequisite class. He’s looking for people who will mesh well together and will play off each other.”

Jensen, who was an English teacher before pursuing an MBA, joined a diverse group in the 2023–24 class. “We have a doctor of audiology in the class this year,” Williams says. “We have two schoolteachers, two mothers, and a JD/MBA, just to name a few. It’s this beautiful mix of all this talent coming together, trying to make decisions and respecting each other.”

In spite of their different backgrounds, the group must reach a super majority on all investing decisions, which requires an intense research and negotiation

process. As Jensen puts it: “If you want a crash course or the most reps in understanding business strategy, due diligence, market, sizing, and all of that, Cougar Capital is ideal. Because of VCIC and Cougar Capital, I understand how businesses work and why they fail. It’s been the best way to learn business from a holistic perspective.”

Given this holistic—and rigorous—training that Cougar Capital students receive, it’s no wonder they have dominated VCIC, where they are asked to perform the same process on a tighter schedule.

And VCIC is not the only place where these students stand out. At the end of an investment round for SimpleRose, a computing optimization company, the CEO and chairman acknowledged Cougar Capital alongside other investors, describing it as “the most successful student-led fund in the world.” The CEO went on to say in the press release, “I can tell you without a doubt that if you have gone through the very thorough due diligence process Cougar Capital runs, you’ve seen the best there is in the industry.”

Although this student-led fund achieves returns that parallel those of a top quartile VC firm, it’s the people—not the performance—that Williams values most. “I love the students like family,” he says.



Want to give back to the BYU Marriott MBA program?

The success of the program now and into the future is singularly influenced by the generosity and support of alumni like you who are willing to help us:

- Interview MBA candidates
- Host lunches or local events
- Present at our live and virtual info sessions
- Hire BYU graduates for internships and full-time positions
- Refer prospective students to the MBA program
- Donate to help fund scholarships for MBA and EMBA students

You already know that BYU Marriott offers a transformational, prestigious, and academically excellent program with world-class professors, top-tier placement, and an incomparable alumni network. But it’s our singular focus on developing Christlike leaders—men and women of faith, intellect, and character—that changes the trajectory of the lives of our graduates and creates an impact for good in the world.



We appreciate your support, and we value your ongoing connection to BYU Marriott and this increasingly distinctive MBA program. Scan this QR code to find out how you can volunteer in your area and give back to help future BYU Marriott MBA alums!

BYU MBA
MARRIOTT SCHOOL
OF BUSINESS