

Education Society

In October, 1975, Spencer W. Kimball, revered prophet and President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, delivered a powerful devotional address entitled “The Second Century of Brigham Young University.” In his address, President Kimball noted that BYU was becoming an “educational Everest... because of the unique light BYU can send forth into the educational world.” He noted the Brethren of the church are given guidance by the Lord for “the benefit of mankind.” This guidance represents a vision of engagement in the world through a lens of learning and service, bathed in the light and color of the restored gospel.

Recognizing the positive influence BYU alumni can have to benefit of the world, the David O. McKay School of Education has taken President Kimball’s prophetic counsel to heart by forming the nationwide *BYU Education Society*. By engaging alumni who are willing to become “anxiously engaged in a good cause,” opportunity abounds to benefit the world no matter where alumni reside. President Kimball quoted President Dallin H. Oaks who said, “Brigham Young University seeks to improve and sanctify itself for the sake of others—not for the praise of the world but to [better] serve the world.” The vision and goal of The BYU Education Society is to *engage* and *mobilize* alumni to make a positive difference in their communities through learning and service.

Because the McKay School of Education is focused on instructing and edifying, one particular comment from President Kimball was extremely significant. He stated “there is no reason why this university could not become the place where, perhaps more than anywhere else, the concern for literacy and the teaching of English as a second language is firmly headquartered in terms of unarguable competency as well as deep concern.”

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints further emphasizes the significance of literacy both in scripture and in initiatives. For example, in Moses 6:6 we read, “And by them their children were taught to read and write...” and in 1 Timothy 4:13 it states, “Till I come, give attendance to reading...”

In order to infuse purpose and action into The BYU Education Society, special emphasis will be placed on *supporting an agenda of literacy*. As alumni of the McKay School of Education and Brigham Young University, efforts will be made to render service via literacy projects in locales across the nation, and eventually the world. This service may include supporting activities in communities, collaborating with various agencies to support literacy, building literature access points in neighborhoods, providing early childhood literacy software, or organizing children’s book clubs. There are a multitude of ways to make a difference and benefit the world.

The Society will continue to sponsor and support an annual conference held on the BYU Provo campus. Additionally, the Seek Learning podcast featuring faculty in the McKay School of Education and beyond is focused on research and best practices produced by the McKay School of Education and others. The BYU Education Society is focused on providing both learning and service opportunities, with an aim to nurture the full potential in others.

Finally, and most importantly, our inspiration is Jesus Christ, the Master teacher. We recognize every person as a child of God with a divine nature and destiny. As such, we honor the value each lifelong educator, clinician, and learner brings to the world. The BYU Education Society aims to build a global community committed to learning, service, and improving the lives of children. As devoted alumni work together to achieve this goal, we are confident the Lord’s blessings will be abundant.