

SPRING 2022
m



**“We Love You Most!”
Bonnie Cordon and
Michelle Craig on
Choosing Daily to
Abide with God**

P. 12

How to Form Loving, Lifesaving Personal Bonds p. 6

Alumni Share Tales and Tips on Returning to Teaching p. 18

Advice on Achieving Real and Lasting Wellness p. 10



Quality Teaching

Richard D. Osguthorpe
Dean

President Spencer W. Kimball’s 1975 address “The Second Century of Brigham Young University” has been the topic of focused discussion in our McKay School leadership meetings this year. In his prophetic description of our university’s future, there is a clarion call for placing “heavy and primary emphasis . . . on the quality of teaching at BYU.” For teaching to be of quality, it must be both effective and good (in a moral sense) (see Gary D Fenstermacher and Virginia Richardson, “On Making Determinations of Quality in Teaching,” *Teachers College Record* 107, no. 1 [January 2005]: 186–213). In other words, quality teaching must be successful in realizing its intended learning outcomes, but effectiveness is not enough. The nature of the subject matter cannot be dismissed, nor do successful outcomes justify the means. Thus quality teaching must be effective, but it also entails morally good content and methods of instruction.

President Kimball’s revelatory discourses over the decades provide important possibilities for refinement of this conception of quality teaching for our work in the McKay School. In his 1967 address “Education for Eternity,” President Kimball made a prophetic plea for our subject matter to be “bathed in the light and color of the restored gospel” (morally good content). In 1975 he asked for our instruction to be characterized by a “gospel methodology” (morally good methods). Teaching morally good subject matter with morally good methods is a challenging responsibility, but it is the most exciting part of teaching on this unique campus and the only way to make a claim for quality teaching that leverages spiritual power and fully realizes the mission and aims of a BYU education.



Godspeed to a Kind, Humble Leader

The McKay School joins his wife, Janet, his eight children, and countless others in mourning the death of K. Richard Young. After earning several degrees, serving in the U.S. Army, and working as a principal, Young served in the College of Education at Utah State University before a 20-year career at the McKay School, including 10 years as dean. He was an esteemed teacher, professor, psychologist, researcher, and mentor.

At a 2005 BYU devotional, Young called kindness “a celestial touchstone,” referring to the use of a hard, black “touchstone” to test the quality of gold. The higher the gold’s quality, the more yellow the mark that gold made on a touchstone. He added: “As we reflect on both our imperfections and our acts of kindness, we might ask ourselves: Are we sensitive enough to the needs of others? . . . Do we brighten the day of those who are discouraged, commend those who are becoming stronger in their struggles, or encourage those who have experienced failure and want to give up just short of success? . . . I pray that we may be more aware of our actions and devote ourselves to achieving constancy in kindness.”

BRADLEY SLADE

ABIGAIL WHITE

COURTESY THE YOUNG FAMILY

FEATURES ▼

- 6 *E PLURIBUS UNUM: “OUT OF MANY, ONE”*
Stacey Kratz
- 12 ORDINARY PEOPLE, EXTRAORDINARY OPPORTUNITIES
Stacey Kratz
- 18 RETURNING TO TEACHING: STORIES FROM ALUMNI
Cynthia Glad

HIGHLIGHTS ▼

- 10 SELF-CARE FOR OUR DAY
- 4 ACHIEVING YUÁNFEN: CELEBRATING THE MCKAY SCHOOL IN CHINA

DEPARTMENTS ▼

- 2 SCHOOL NEWS
- 22 ALUMNI HAPPENINGS



SIX THINGS YOU’LL LEARN IN THIS ISSUE:

- Pleasant surprises on the road of returning to teaching, p. 18
- How two Church leaders conquered youthful loneliness and other life challenges, p. 12
- Ways to lengthen your life and boost its quality with meaningful relationships, p. 6
- How yoga, wellness, and mental health meet in schools, p. 3
- A McKay School grad spreads the love of seminary across Asia, p. 23
- Tips for staying fit, fighting fatigue, and managing stress, p. 10



DEAN Richard Osguthorpe	EDITOR Cynthia Glad	COPY EDITOR Karen Seely	CONTRIBUTORS Livy Andrus, '22 Savannah Kimzey, '23 Abigail White, '23 Adeline Yorgason, '21
PUBLISHER Michael Leonard	ASSOCIATE EDITOR Stacey Kratz	ART DIRECTOR Olivia Juárez Knudsen	

School News

The McKay School is continually producing outstanding research and events. For more school news, please visit education.byu.edu/news.

COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

Going forth to serve: Professor Ellie Young, a mentor for 20 years to budding school psychologists, was called “an absolute titaness” in school psychology when receiving the Utah Association of School Psychologists’ Lifetime Achievement Award in November 2021.

Building Islander mental health: Counseling psychology and special education professor Kawika Allen and his Polynesian psychology research team are working with the state of Utah and Utah’s Pacific Islander (PI) community to better address Pacific Islander residents’ mental health. “A majority

of Pacific Islanders use mental health counseling as a last resort,” Allen’s team wrote. “When they decide to attend counseling, compared to other

ethnic groups who use counseling services, the intensity and elevated distress levels for PI clients are much higher.”

INSTRUCTIONAL PSYCHOLOGY AND TECHNOLOGY

3D teaching in rural schools: Instructional psychology and technology professor Heather Leary is coprincipal investigator for a National Science Foundation grant of \$2,998,817 to integrate three-dimensional science teaching into Utah’s rural schools—an effort that could improve rural teaching across the country. Leary and other BYU faculty will host summer workshops for 88 teachers, including members of Utah’s indigenous nations.

Leary’s team will follow up with a technology-mediated lesson study—a technique to evaluate, revise, and create new lesson plans.

TEACHER EDUCATION

Revision adds strength and flexibility: In a change two years in the making, elementary education faculty revised their program, effective winter semester 2022, “to create a greater link between the classroom experience and what goes on at BYU,” says department chair Kendra Hall-Kenyon. Student-faculty practicum interaction was boosted, some courses are offered earlier, and students can enroll even before admis-



3D RST
BRIGHAM YOUNG
UNIVERSITY

sion into the program. The changes should increase flexibility for students, facilitate a stronger link between theory and practice, and reduce time to graduation.

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND FOUNDATIONS

Innovative redesign trains leaders: The BYU School Leadership committee has elevated the Educational Leadership and Foundations Department’s already world-class program. Faculty and district partners invited outside analysis, studied similar programs, and clarified essential standards and skills. The result, says chair David Boren, is “more aligned, more streamlined, more focused on what’s essential, more focused on skills and dispositions, and a lot more focused on partnering with our local districts.” The redesign converted the 22-month program to the 14 months that follow the K–12 school year, and Boren looks forward to more evolution: “I hope . . . there’s this cycle of continuous improvement.”

GETTY IMAGES/SERRNOVIK



CENTER FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF TEACHER EDUCATION AND SCHOOLING

Outer Support, Inner Peace *Yoga and Wellness Centers Build Resilience in Students*

Adolescent mental health is in crisis, with some studies finding that more than 30 percent of teenagers struggle with anxiety. Providing in-school yoga and wellness centers for high school students could help boost teenage mental health, according to two projects described by Paul Caldarella, McKay School counseling psychology and special education professor, and others who presented at the Teacher Educators for Children with Behavior Disorders conference.

While research into yoga as a mental health benefit is in its infancy, early

signs are encouraging, according to the review of 22 studies Caldarella conducted with Saanya Rajesh Lulla. The studies found that yoga showed physical, social, academic, and mental-health benefits, including for at-risk students and those struggling with mental health.

“School-based yoga requires minimal time, effort, and financial resources,” the authors wrote. “Given the encouraging results in past studies and the positive impact on adolescents evident in the literature so far, we encourage long-term implementation and evaluation of high school yoga.”

Additionally, in a first-of-its-kind exploratory study of the wellness cen-

ter at Utah’s Westlake High School, presenters Malka Moya, Caldarella, Jennifer Bitton, and Paul Feyereisen found that wellness centers help students calm down, decrease stress, relieve anxiety, relax, and address school pressures.

“Results were generally positive across student, staff, and parent perspectives,” the presenters noted. “Female, genderqueer, Asian, and Black students perceived the wellness center as more beneficial [than White male students]. . . . We encourage additional studies to further strengthen the literature on this topic.”

COMMUNICATION DISORDERS

Students sharing research: Thanks to funding from an experiential learning grant, several students and faculty presented papers at the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association convention in Washington, DC. Two undergraduate and five graduate students of assistant professor Tyson Harmon spoke on aphasia and cross-cultural peer mentoring. “It was so rewarding to see our students present their research!” Harmon says, noting that the students’ work drew interest from “seasoned researchers” and practicing clinicians. “I hope they better appreciate their professional responsibilities to both learn from others and share what they are learning with others.”

COURTESY KAWIKA ALLEN

STAY CONNECTED!

CHECK OUT OUR ACCOUNTS ON SOCIAL MEDIA



Comments or updates for the magazine?
mckaymagazine@byu.edu

MCKAY SCHOOL ONLINE education.byu.edu

SCHOOL NEWS education.byu.edu/news

BYU | CONNECT

JOIN BYU CONNECT

Mentor BYU students and post job opportunities. It is a great place to stay connected with fellow Cougars!

connect.byu.edu



Achieving Yuánfen: Celebrating a 100- Year Relationship

By Stacey Kratz



PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRADLEY SLADE



Yuánfen, 缘分, is a potent concept in Chinese thought, encompassing the power of life's interwoven chances to create natural bonds among friends.

The fruits of *yuánfen* were on display at the seventh BYU China Conference, sponsored by the BYU McKay School and celebrating the centennial of President David O.

McKay's visit to China. The roots of BYU's relationship with China extend back more than a century to President McKay's 1920–1921 trip around the Pacific Basin.

With companion Hugh J. Cannon, President McKay toured China and, in a grove of trees outside Beijing's Forbidden City, reverently offered a prayer setting aside the spot "as a place

of prayer and dedication . . . held sacred in thy sight." Since then, Brigham Young University and the McKay School have deepened ties with China through teacher and curriculum training with Beijing Normal University, student teaching in Guangzhou, the BYU China Conference, and tours by performing arts groups.

"This is the continuation of a long history," said Peter Chan, chair of the BYU China Conference advisory board. "Our friendship has a strong foundation and will continue in the years to come."

Read more about the McKay School's China weekend by searching at education.byu.edu/news.

E PLURIBUS UNUM: "Out of Many, One"

Professor Tim Smith's work reveals a prescription for curing life-threatening loneliness in America: investment in relationships and community.

Joining a book club or a recreation league softball team or planning a family dinner might not seem like essential activities. But the absence of the bonds formed through these activities could not only hurt the quality of your life but shave years off its span as well.

That's the conclusion of years of work by counseling psychology professor Timothy Smith, who has spent 21 years at BYU and has extensively studied how social relationships impact both physical and mental health.

"It is always more interesting in the moment to get on social media and watch someone do a backflip off a 30-foot-tall building than it is to take the time to engage in our relationships," he says. "It's a classic case of a short-term, literally 10-second gain destroying the gains of decades. We're letting the immediacy of entertainment prevent us from experiencing joy, which necessarily requires sacrifice and engagement."

Scholars have long known that the absence of social relationships can hurt mental health, Smith says.

When studies began on that subject, early results were disturbing, such as the finding that "almost half of people who go to a first-time medical appointment have some related mental health condition," Smith says. "That's a 50 percent comorbidity rate. It's obvious that when you're feeling low emotionally, you have less energy; what we didn't know yet is if that actually could influence premature death."

BY
STACEY
KRATZ



ILLUSTRATED BY BOMBOLAND



Early efforts to answer this question were promising but flawed; for example, one paper in the journal *Science* indicated that mortality was, indeed, affected by the quality of a person's social relationships, but the findings were based on only five studies.

"Having five studies is nice, but it's not abundant evidence," Smith says. "We sought to verify those findings."

Smith and his fellow researchers, who include BYU psychology professor Julianne Holt-Lunstad, looked at more than 42,000 studies done between 1980 and 2020, screening them for factors such as the study of psychosocial support interventions and the inclusion of survival data in both inpatient and outpatient healthcare settings.

Of those thousands of studies, 106 fit the authors' criteria. These studies, which included 40,280 patients, provided a compelling sample size for extensive analyses. Their conclusions were clear: patients who were receiving psychosocial support and promoting healthy behaviors had a much greater likelihood of survival—a 29 percent better chance—compared to "control groups receiving standard medical care."

"It turns out that, yes, the results are very conclusive. People who have strong social networks live longer," Smith says.

The key word there is *strong*: having lots of acquaintances is not that powerful in creating the bonds that seem to tether people to life.

"Our most enduring, impactful, intimate relationships are family, and so we assume it's actually family making

up most of that difference" in quality of life, Smith says. "Let's be honest, how often are we all spending really good quality, deep times with friends? When it happens, it's great, but it's not typically our friends who challenge us on stuff or make us take our pills."

Smith and Lunstad's work establishes scientifically that people need deep personal relationships as they age in the same way they need lifesaving drugs or long-term physical care. Unfortunately, Smith says, society is trending away from the institutions and practices that best nurture such relationships.

"With social media, people are finding ways to spend time that are not directly social," he says. "They're indirectly social, but you don't have the same level of intimacy. Just as physical health requires being *planfully* aware of exercise, diet, and things like that, people need to become *planfully* aware of their social engagement."

By "planfully," Smith means that just as people seek out and prioritize a healthy diet and exercise, they should seek out and prioritize meaningful, nurturing social engagement. And while loneliness among the elderly is at epidemic levels, the need to connect applies to people of all ages—especially in the current moment, dubbed "the Great Resignation," as people

quit or distance themselves from jobs, churches, professional organizations, political parties, social groups, and even personal relationships.

"The mental health costs of that are what people are not seeing, as well as the physical health costs that accompany those," Smith says. "When people say, 'I'm going to quit my marriage and discontinue friendships and stop doing my service activities so I can do whatever,' they're really saying, 'I'm willing to give up about five years of my life to have a less fulfilling life.' They're trading quantity *and* quality. They're losing both."

People who find themselves over-relying on their phones for entertainment and engagement are actually craving real, face-to-face engagement and connection, he says.

"We're getting these microbursts of neurochemicals by whatever is witty or funny or outrageous or horrific on our phones, but it's just a signal that we're craving something we're not getting," Smith says. "The brain does respond to what feeds it, and short-term satisfaction really does cause havoc with long-term well-being."

"It is always more comfortable to kick around in our PJs on our couch. But that doesn't help our neighbor get their fence painted, and it doesn't help us feel the way we feel when we help our neighbor paint their fence."

What it comes down to, he says, is that science is increasingly validating some age-old notions.

"It's an absolute 100 percent endorsement: both the Golden Rule and the charge to love our neighbor are literally true," Smith says. "We are designed, physically and spiritually, to connect. Our brains are wired for connectivity. When we go against that, we're not being fully human."

He pointed to the Harvard Study of Adult Development, started in 1938 and expanded and continued across generations to the present day. The study seeks "clues to leading healthy and happy lives,"¹ according to the *Harvard Gazette*, and its most strong and enduring finding has been that happiness in relationships is a key component to a fulfilling life.

"All the advice we've been getting in general conference—simplify, slow down, connect, do the small things that put you in touch with other people, and minister out of love, not out of duty—these are all designed to help us feel experiences and share that love. We actually need each other. We need *e pluribus unum*."

NOTE

1. Liz Mineo, "Good Genes Are Nice, but Joy Is Better," Health and Medicine, *Harvard Gazette*, 11 April 2017.

"IT IS ALWAYS MORE COMFORTABLE TO KICK AROUND IN OUR PJS ON OUR COUCH. BUT THAT DOESN'T HELP OUR NEIGHBOR GET THEIR FENCE PAINTED, AND IT DOESN'T HELP US FEEL THE WAY WE FEEL WHEN WE HELP OUR NEIGHBOR PAINT THEIR FENCE."

—TIM SMITH

WHAT WE CAN DO

Here are a few suggestions from Tim Smith for rebuilding the power of relationships in our lives and our society. Find more on our website, education.byu.edu/mckaymagazine.

- **Adopt clear protocols** for medical professionals to evaluate patient support systems and establish support programs at hospitals and clinics that include caregivers.
- **Promote civil discourse**, including positively enforcing internet etiquette and engagement rules, encouraging media companies to change algorithms that bring out what Smith calls "our base natures," and building skills to help people to invite loved ones "back to the middle" when they exhibit extreme opinions.
- **Foster pro-social organizations**. "Towns used to get together in groups based on shared interests: a book club, a fraternal organization, or high school events. We increasingly don't avail ourselves of those. That community ethos just isn't there anymore. Connections can easily be fostered, but they're not being fostered. So the rising generation lacks that foundation—which is other people, and particularly people different from themselves."
- **Encourage and reward** engagement in service. "Social service is one of the best forms of social connection, devoting yourself to the well-being and happiness of other people. Doing service is more beneficial to our well-being than receiving service, although receiving service is helpful too."

SELF-CARE FOR OUR DAY

BY KEVEN PRUSAK

Keven Prusak has done research and taught physical education teachers since 2002. Here he offers advice on improving health with basic lifestyle changes.

The westernized lifestyle—lack of physical activity combined with poor diet—has led to rampant levels of heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and early death. The reasons for this are well documented: time, money, fatigue, stress, and lack of desire. Chronic disease is largely preventable, but we must think differently about our lifestyle—and luckily, lifestyle management has become a trendy thing to do.



Take care of yourself all day.

Some 76 percent of Americans do not get the recommended amounts of daily exercise. We often think exercise happens at the gym, where for 30 minutes we run ourselves into exhaustion. This can be effective, but few stick with it for more than a few weeks. Lifestyle physical activity, on the other hand, accumulates throughout the day. Walking is one of the most physician-recommended forms of exercise, and daily physical activity can take other forms. Gardening and yard work combine exercise and enjoying the outdoors—plus gardening has the potential for a

delicious, nutritious harvest. Inside chores also provide physical activity. Hiking is inexpensive, with quality time for socializing.

Don't worry about joining a fitness club.

Club memberships can be expensive, especially when you add in the cost of clothing and water flasks. Instead, enjoy local parks. Throw a Frisbee to the family pooch. Kick a soccer ball. Play pickleball. Walk or bike local trails. Take a friend and talk through life's joys and challenges. Many lifestyle choices cost little to nothing.

Cook from scratch when you can.

Food is another lifestyle trap. We may eat pre-prepared dishes with long shelf lives. They are handy but expensive and less nutritious! Add eating out to our food choices and we have a high-calorie, budget-busting recipe for chronic disease.

Fight fatigue in a healthy way.

An occasional nap is a great idea. But the real key to fighting fatigue is to *produce* real fatigue. What you do when you are tired gets you in shape. If you stop

when you are getting tired, your body doesn't change. This is the overload principle. Do a little more than you are used to doing to get in shape. Start easy and work your way up. In hardly any time, you will have the energy you need to get through the day.

Recognize your stress.

Not all stress is bad stress, or *distress*. Certain types of stress are good stress, or *eustress*: meeting a challenge, say, or starting a job. Physical stress can be good, such as physical activity, or bad, such as catching the flu. The same

goes for emotional stress. The key is identifying the type of stress and using an appropriate coping strategy. If you are emotionally or mentally exhausted, get physical! This releases brain chemicals called endorphins. For half of people with depression, exercise is as effective as medication. Students can lessen mental fatigue with physical activity. For physical stress, such as having a cold, curl up with your favorite book or movie for emotional therapy. This cross-therapy approach to stress is often overlooked. Choosing the right kind of therapy for our stresses takes practice, but it really helps.

Find the payoffs that motivate you.

Exercise for exercise's sake is not the greatest motivator. So find some other payoff: hike to fish a quiet stretch of mountain stream. Or walk with a loved one to build companionship. Gaining good health is about ensuring that you can continue doing things that bring you joy. It is about quality and longevity. Make room for things that matter most—family, friends, and memories. It really is about choosing your lifestyle.



Keven Prusak has spent the past 34 years in the field of physical education and coaching. After graduating from BYU in 1986, he taught math and physical education and coached four sports for 11 years at the secondary level. He holds master's and doctoral degrees in physical education and, since coming to BYU in 2002, has published dozens of scholarly articles and served as the administrator of the Learning and Teaching Technology Lab in two departments.

Ordinary People, Extraordinary Opportunities

Bonnie Cordon and Michelle
Craig Seek Lifelong Learning
Through Christ's Light

BY STACEY KRATZ

It's a brisk, sunny day on Temple Square, and groups of sister missionaries stride along the Main Street Plaza. Many pause as they pass President Bonnie Cordon, '87, and Sister Michelle Craig, '87; a few say hello. But one group of four missionaries is bolder. "We love you!" one calls to Cordon, Young Women general president of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and Craig, her first counselor.

"We love you more!" Cordon calls back.

But the missionaries are having none of it. "We love you most!" another shouts, before the two groups, laughing, pass one another, the sisters heading south to their work and Cordon and Craig, arm in arm, heading north to theirs.

In their loving greeting, those young women salute leaders they admire. But perhaps they also see their own possibilities in the two women, just as Cordon and Craig see their younger selves in those missionaries.

Cordon and Craig have taken disparate journeys to arrive at the helm of an organization that guides more than 500,000 young women worldwide. But their paths have points of connection: accompanying their parents as they served as mission leaders, experiencing uncertainty and loneliness, and studying at the BYU David O. McKay School of Education.

And, above all, this: setting their feet each day on the path God lays out for them.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRADLEY SLADE





“Being intentional about teaching and learning has been a blessing from my time at the McKay School.”

— MICHELLE CRAIG

“It’s the consistency of allowing the Lord to be in our lives—just choosing Him,” Cordon says.

“The Lord takes ordinary people and gives them extraordinary opportunities,” Craig adds. “We give Him our hearts and trust that He will make up the difference.”

Craig grew up in Provo, the oldest of seven children of BYU professor Robert Daines and his wife, Janet. “I grew up close to BYU and remember going to the Creamery and the swimming pools at Helaman Halls and Deseret Towers. I loved BYU. I enjoyed school. I babysat a lot. It was a pretty idyllic childhood.”

Cordon grew up in Idaho, the third of seven children of orthodontist and later Elder Harold Hillam and his wife, Carol. Wanting his children to learn how to work, Elder Hillam had built the family home on 80 acres outside Idaho Falls. “It wasn’t a huge farm, but we thought it was huge!” Cordon says. “Everyone had responsibilities, and mine was the chickens. And I hated it!”

Cordon, a gymnast until she got too tall and still an exercise lover, remembers trekking across fields to the chicken coops, gathering eggs, and taking them to sell to teachers at school. “They called me the chicken girl, or the egg girl, depending on the day.”

Craig describes herself as “quiet”; Cordon jokes, “I probably should have been more quiet.” Both were drawn to teaching.

“I loved school, I loved reading, I loved children, and I just thought, ‘I want to be a teacher,’” Craig says. “When I got my patriarchal blessing, some things were mentioned that sealed the deal.”

And Cordon? Her mom told her to do it. “She always told me, ‘You need to be a teacher.’ She was an educator. She put my father through school by teaching.”

Cordon planned to study education despite lacking Craig’s love of reading. “That’s one thing I love about Sister Craig,” she

says. “For me, if I’m in a position in which I need inspiration, I get out and start running, and ideas come.”

“I wish I liked to run!” Craig laughs.

Before they started college, Bonnie Hillam and Michelle Daines accompanied their parents “into the field” when their parents were called to lead missions: the Daineses in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, and the Hillams in Lisbon, Portugal. Both women remember struggling with loneliness as teenagers.

“I was lonely even before we moved [to Pennsylvania],” says Craig, who would later serve a mission herself in the Dominican Republic. “Once I ran the mile really fast in a PE class, and I thought maybe I could be on the track team, but I was too scared to try out. And then my family moved. I felt so lonely. I started BYU while my family was still in Pennsylvania; that was such a blessing.”

In Portugal, Cordon, too, felt isolated: “I had never had to make new friends because I lived in the same place all my life. I moved to a spot in which I didn’t know anybody, . . . and I couldn’t go to the parties they had. I had to create a space in which people could come to me and in which we could be friends.”

Through extraordinary circumstances, she began a full-time mission in Portugal at age 17—just before she would have graduated from high school. “I thought, ‘In 18 months I’ll come back and figure out how to graduate,’” Cordon says. “But the Missionary Training Center president, Joe J. Christensen, brought me in and said, ‘I understand you haven’t graduated from high school yet.’ I was mortified! But he said, ‘I can help you.’ I realized that what mattered to me mattered to the Lord, because I matter to the Lord.

“On preparation days, I would go to the testing center and test out of courses. I graduated from Orem High School, and I’ve never set foot in Orem High School. They never invite me to their reunions!”



Top: Bonnie Cordon, right, as a missionary in Portugal.
Bottom: Michelle Craig, right, as a missionary in the Dominican Republic.

Cordon loved her mission, from training as a 17-year-old with a 27-year-old companion to serving in Portugal with her own sister, Linda, as her companion. But loneliness returned when she began attending BYU.

“I was so used to having a companion—a buddy—and now I didn’t know anyone,” she says. “I walked around thinking, ‘I’m lonely, surrounded by thousands of people.’ At least when I was lonely in Portugal, I was with my family. I remember getting on the bus and taking it to the mall, walking around the stores, and getting back on the bus to return to my apartment. It was such a lonely feeling.”

Both women worked doggedly to change. “I made a real, intentional shift once I started college,” Craig says. “My younger brother told me to learn the names of three people a day. That became a goal for me. I saw a flyer for a dorm leadership council for Deseret Towers. I applied, and I got it. BYU was a place to grow, find communities, take opportunities, and make new friends.”

Cordon took a similar approach: “I remembered my time in Portugal, and I thought, ‘Everybody needs a friend.’ I decided I would be the friend. That changed things for me. I’d see someone in class by themselves and go sit by them. The Lord has His hand in everyone’s life. I think—I hope—I carry those pieces of that time with me now.”

Cordon and Craig loved their major, elementary education—they graduated the same year—though Craig was scared to perform in front of an instructor in music education class, and Cordon feared the critiques that followed being filmed while teaching. They know today’s students face similar fears, plus the anxieties of navigating a complex world.

“The Lord sends us down, but He doesn’t send us down unprepared,” Cordon says. “Today’s students have to navigate



some very hard, complicated, heavy, heart-stretching, and soul-stretching things, but we have complete confidence in them.”

During their BYU years, Cordon and Craig each got married, which affected their post-graduation plans. Craig was expecting her first child with her husband, Boyd, when she graduated. She worked as a substitute teacher for several months before devoting herself to full-time motherhood.

Craig learned at the McKay School about the importance of reading, so she bought a children’s poetry book and read aloud 20 minutes each day to her unborn baby. Decades later, she read aloud from that same book in a hospital NICU to a grandchild born prematurely.

“BYU taught me to be a lifelong learner,” she says. “I involved my kids in learning with file-folder games, flannel boards, laminated activities, and singing songs. Being intentional about teaching and learning has been a blessing from my time at the McKay School.”

After her graduation, Cordon moved to the Bay Area with her husband, Derek, who attended graduate school there.

“The Lord’s hand is in everything,” Cordon says. “I didn’t teach right away in California because Utah’s license was not effective there. I had to take a test to get licensed in California, and the test wasn’t offered until months after we had moved. So I thought, ‘I’ll get a job for now, and then I’ll go teach.’ But then I got a job, and I said to myself, ‘Oh, I am not teaching. . . . But I’m supporting my family; I can’t afford to go teach!’”

Cordon worked at management-software giant Oracle, putting teaching skills to use in a new arena. “One thing I loved about classes in the McKay School was that they were helping us think outside the box and find that learning isn’t the same for everyone,” she says. “That was very helpful in business because I realized that I couldn’t just verbally give instructions and that learning sometimes has to be visual. Sometimes we need to do something hands-on or do role-playing. Learning these things has been valuable in this calling because we get a chance to instruct and love and train people all over the world. I walk in a room and think, ‘How many types of learners are here?’”

Cordon also used her education to help her balance the demands of her career, family, and church callings. “I had an instructor who would say, ‘You’ll never have enough money and you’ll want things to happen in your classroom. So look for your resources. Could it be a parent? Could it be in the community? What could it look like?’ That is really useful even now.”

Cordon even leveraged group work into a professional asset for mentoring her colleagues: “I hated group projects as a student. But those projects taught me to think about how you can creatively, with long-suffering and gentle persuasion, encourage people to get the results you hope for. That was fascinating. When I was with a corporation, I found it was a lot like school—trying to get people on board and get the vision of what needs to happen to make the organization a success.”

Cordon went back to full-time motherhood when her husband was transferred to Indiana. “I was on the plane with my two boys. One was six and one was about four. And the six-year-old said, ‘Mom, who is gonna take care of us?’ because they always had a nanny. And I said, ‘I am!’ And my oldest son looked at his brother and said, ‘Tanner, we are in trouble.’”

Cordon missed her job while also relishing her chance at full-time motherhood. When the family moved to Boise, Idaho, some years later, she started a small business selling Oracle products to niche markets.

Craig says, “I love how there isn’t one way to be. There isn’t one way to use your education. There isn’t one path that is *the* right path. The truth is, we all have different opportunities that the Lord provides, and those are the things that are right for us.”

Cordon agrees. “I’m always intrigued when women say, ‘I don’t fit in.’ I’m like, fit in what? There is always a place for you. You take Michelle and me: we are two totally different experiences. And guess what? We’re both disciples of Christ. Diversity is unity in the gospel of Jesus Christ.”

In that commitment to diversity and unity, both Cordon and Craig say, they are following the lead of the youth they serve.

Cordon says, “This generation is hungry for a cause because they were prepared by the Lord to have a cause. They were prepared differently. They were prepared to take up this cause of Christ. They really help us see things fresh, they help us have renewed energy, and they are already a force. I love sitting down with the youth and listening to learn. Our challenge is that we don’t listen enough to our youth, and often we don’t implement what they suggest. But truly, as we get out of their way, they surprise the adults.”

Living in joyful surprise, despite challenges, is a goal of any disciple. And Cordon and Craig appear to have achieved that delicate balance more than most.

“The Lord needs everybody. You are a disciple of Jesus Christ, and that might look different for you than it does for the person next to you,” Craig says as Cordon takes her arm.

“We are salt of the earth. No big deal,” Cordon says. “But what we *do* do is love the Lord. We are all kind of just rocks. But the Lord takes us up, and He will touch each one of us with His finger. He will fill us with His light. I just think Michelle and I have enough courage to give Him all we have, which is our hearts, and that’s about all we can do.”



ILLUSTRATED
by
ABIGAIL
WHITE, '23



RETURNING to TEACHING

By CYNTHIA GLAD

We hear it from so many of our alumni: you took time off from teaching for family care or other reasons and then you're not sure how to return to the workforce, even though you feel ready. In this issue we've gathered wisdom from your fellow alumni to encourage anyone who might be stepping back into teaching territory.

Stories from Alumni

Hiring and Supporting Relationship Experts: One Principal's Perspective

Joseph Jones, '08, principal of Southgate Elementary in Washington's Kennewick School District, knows what he is looking for to fill a vacancy in his staff.

"You're looking for someone who understands that relationships are key with kids—someone who really knows it's more than just teaching math and science," Jones says. "You've got to know your content, but you've got to know that it's all about developing relationships with kids and that social-emotional relationships right now are so key."

Jones doesn't think that a person who has been away from the classroom for a while is at any disadvantage in the hiring process.

"Not at all," he continues. "They've just taken some time off for family, but they've got all the tools in the tool belt, and they're ready to get back at it." In fact, he thinks they could have some advantages. "You can see the energy that they bring, wanting to get back in the profession. They're excited to be back in the workplace, so it's refreshing."

In Jones's current school district, he does everything from posting positions, screening, checking references, interviewing, and hiring, with input from his team. Other district

offices post and screen before principals interview candidates in groups.

Once hired, a new teacher is never left to struggle alone. The grade team is part of hiring, so they are committed to each new hire's success. They formally plan weekly, but they talk and coordinate much more often. Administrators, technology representatives, and a help desk are all resources usually present to help a returning teacher get a smooth start.

In the state of Washington, first-year teachers are on a comprehensive evaluation plan to ensure all goes well. Jones says, "For three years, people have a probationary period. Once they get up to level three, or a proficient level of teaching, then we focus on

one criterion instead of eight. It gives them a chance to focus on growth. Then, every six years we cycle to a comprehensive evaluation. That first year is very critical and somewhat intense. There's extra support given to that teacher to help them out."

Jones encourages those thinking about returning to teaching to start volunteering: "We have had some people who have wanted to get back into teaching, and we have asked them to come volunteer in our building, get into classrooms, work with teachers, and do some of those types of things. If you're not comfortable being in front of kids or it has been a long time, it can take a little bit to get your feet wet."

Preparing for Strategic Reentry: One Teacher's Experience

This year, Jennifer Shearer, '02, has renewed her license to work as a paraprofessional at Utah's Mountain Heights Academy, an online high school, while she looks for an opening in one of her endorsement areas.



"My work in PTA and volunteering at my children's schools counted."

—JENNIFER SHEARER

"While I have children at home, I am really hoping to continue teaching for an online school. I love the flexibility to be available to my own kids."

After graduation, Shearer taught at an alternative high school for a year, and then she taught at West Jordan High School in Utah for four years before staying home with her children.

Starting in 2017, she taught English to Chinese children online. She loved the work, but the early morning hours became more difficult as her children got older.

Shearer says, "I was excited to find out that last year the state of Utah changed the license renewal process. It is now significantly easier to relicense! I found that I didn't need to do anything else. My work in PTA and

volunteering at my children's schools counted. My paraprofessional hours pushed me well over the required hours. The application process itself was fairly easy."

Shearer encourages others to "start looking at the license renewal requirements now! Keep track of everything you do that could count as relicensure hours. Become familiar with the changes that have happened in education since you last taught."

Following That Good Impulse: One Teacher's Return

Because of recent health problems, Chris Andy Andrus, '90, had considered waiting to figure out how to return to work. But something kept pushing her to get an application in to the Ogden School District in Utah as she looked at part-time staff assistant positions.

Andrus had taught kindergarten and first grade in Utah's Nebo School District for five years before having her first child and moving to Florida. Five more kids and 17 years later, she and her husband decided she should go back to work part-time to help pay for upcoming college and mission expenses.

"I had been active in PTA and community council at the schools my kids attended," Andrus says. "One principal I had worked closely with supplied a letter of recommendation. She contacted me about a position in the Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports room. It was the perfect fit for my schedule and health, and I was excited to work for someone I was familiar with."

"Later that year, my principal approached me about an opening in kindergarten," she continues. "But I had never renewed my license, thinking I needed to do 200 hours of college credit. What mom with young kids has time for that? The principal said that I could do a 'return to licensure.' I could be hired provisionally for one year, and then if I did well, my license could be reinstated to the level I left at."

"I had a steep learning curve and am so thankful for a patient, knowledgeable, and caring team! My principal was extremely helpful during classroom observations. I made it through that first year largely due to the team, and I was reinstated at a level 2. My retirement benefits were reinstated to what I was receiving in 1997."

Despite how it all may seem different and challenging, Andrus tells others to not be intimidated at the thought of reentering the profession: "Whenever things get extra challenging, I remember why I became a teacher in the first place: to make a difference in children's lives! I feel I am still doing that—one day at a time."

The full series of the Returning to Teaching articles can be found on our website.

Learning from an Expert: Five Tips for Returning to the Classroom

By

DEREK JACK

Career Director for the McKay School of Education

Don't minimize or devalue time spent with your family or fulfilling other obligations. This shows maturity and can be extremely helpful in the workplace. These five tips are essential to presenting yourself as a qualified educator ready to return to the classroom:

1. Keep your license active: Completing 100 hours within a five-year period keeps you connected to the profession's current methods and curriculum. If your license has expired, reactivate it through the state and do things such as help in a school or online training.
2. Get involved: Serve on school committees, volunteer in the classroom, do substitute teaching, or work part-time.
3. Seek professional development: Reading professional literature and education blogs indicates that you have been involved in current educational practices.
4. Notify your network: When you are ready to return to teaching, reach out to local principals and teachers to let them know you are seeking reemployment.
5. Prepare your application materials:
 - a. a current letter of recommendation
 - b. a résumé reflecting your most related work/volunteer experiences
 - c. a cover letter explaining your work history/gap in employment and helping the employer understand your life experiences and the value you bring to the position

Remember, you have an education degree and are still very marketable. Life experience can be as valuable as teaching experience—you may have just what a team needs.



For more help on getting back into the classroom and preparing your application materials, contact Derek Jack at 801-422-3000 or careers.byu.edu.





Alumni Happenings

McKay School Magazine helps connect you to your former classmates and teachers.



Lifelong Leader Helps Restore Hawaiian Language

CHARLES NAUMU first worked as a teacher while serving in the Southern Far East Mission. The Republic of China asked Naumu to teach English at Merchant Marine Academy in Taiwan and the Textile University in Zhongli.

Before his mission, Naumu earned a degree in teacher education from the McKay School. He returned to BYU to earn a master's in geography and then taught at Waipahu High School in Hawaii. In 1986, a century-long ban on teaching Hawaiian was lifted,

and Naumu was assigned to teach a Hawaiian language and culture class.

He did not speak Hawaiian fluently and took classes at the University of Hawaii to catch up. He later was vice principal and then principal at Oahu's Kula Kaiapuni 'o Anuenue School, which hosts a Hawaiian language immersion program. Anuenue students even make their calls on the football field in Hawaiian. "That was a real privilege," Naumu says. "I was able to help students gain an education but also keep the Hawaiian language alive."



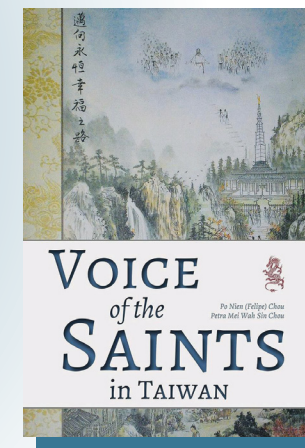
Teacher Navigates Life's Storms with Degree as a Rudder

SUZANNE RUCHTI earned a special education degree from the BYU McKay School in 1990, but she planned to stay home, especially after discovering she was going to have twins only two weeks before the babies were born.

Those plans abruptly changed when Ruchti's husband died unexpectedly. At 28 years old, she had five-year-old twins and a two-year-old to provide for. She worked as a substitute teacher before taking a job in a photography lab. About 11 years ago she returned to teaching.

As a student, Ruchti had resolved to earn her degree before having children and was among the first in her family to graduate. She was grateful to have her degree already when her life turned upside down, and she was relieved she didn't need to return to school as a single mother.

She also has had great positive impact at school, cultivating relationships with entire families in a career she plans to pursue until she retires.



"One Drop of Honey" EdLF Graduate Builds Seminary, Institute Programs Worldwide

PO NIEN (FELIPE) CHOU'S life has taught him to root himself purposefully in his work and then to uproot and replant himself in new roles. His work for Seminaries and Institutes of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has had worldwide influence.

Born in Taiwan and raised in Brazil, Chou immigrated to the United States as an adolescent. He joined the Church at 18, served a mission in California, and earned a bachelor's degree in emergency management from George Washington University.

He enrolled at BYU in 1996 with three goals: get married, get into the seminary program, and earn a master's degree in health science. He accomplished those goals, then taught seminary in Utah before moving his family to Taiwan. As an institute director and coordinator for five years, Chou taught courses, supervised programs across Asia, and tripled

Taiwan's institute enrollment. "My wife and I felt like pioneers as we moved around," he says.

Chou and his family later returned to Utah, where Chou earned his PhD in educational leadership and foundations at the BYU McKay School of Education. "I thought that after I finished my degree, I would just go back in the classroom," Chou says. "Instead, I was asked to serve at Church headquarters."

While there, he conducted more than 170 research studies and projects. Chou describes his PhD degree as a professional blessing but says it would be useless without his "spiritual PhD": *P* for "parent," *H* for "helpmate," and *D* for "disciple of Christ."

This helps Chou—now a religious educator at BYU-Hawaii—continue changing lives while embodying Christ's humility. He considers himself part of a larger team: "one drop of honey to the whole jar."





TEACHING MATH in the SAVIOR'S WAY: *Cognitively Guided Instruction Makes Math Approachable*



JAMIE SCHROEDER, '23, a Wisconsin native earning her bachelor's degree in elementary education, is determined to make math a more approachable subject in elementary schools.

"While you don't hear highly intelligent people proclaiming that they can't read, you do hear many of these same individuals talking about 'not being a math person,'" Schroeder stated during her presentation at the BYU President's Leadership Council last October. "This is something that we are working to change."

Together with Brandon McMillan, assistant professor in the Department of Teacher Education, Schroeder is working to reduce the anxiety caused by math instruction by implementing a method called *cognitively guided instruction*, or CGI.

According to Schroeder, the core precepts behind CGI echo the ministry of Jesus Christ, "the Master Teacher." Much as parables were meant to be subjectively interpreted according to the faith and personal needs of the listener, CGI "guides students to understand math in a way that makes sense to them."

Much like parables, cognitively guided instruction "guides students to understand math in a way that makes sense to them."

"This type of instruction is based on the student's way of thinking," Schroeder explained. "The teacher poses a problem for the students to solve in whatever way makes sense for them. They are allowed to use any strategy to solve that problem, so they are really able to make sense of and understand the problem, the solution, and what actually happens when you add, subtract, multiply, or divide numbers."

Parables met listeners where they were and helped them build upon a strong foundation of faith until they could understand more complex gospel principles. Similarly, a growing body of evidence shows that CGI motivates students to continue learning more advanced mathematical concepts.

"The Savior helps all who He teaches understand the gospel in the way that makes sense to them," Schroeder says. "This is what cognitively guided instruction does as it guides students to understand math in a way that makes sense to them without explicitly telling them what they need to know or how they should be solving a problem. This way of teaching is teaching in the Savior's way."

SCHOLARSHIPS AND STUDENT SUCCESS

Connecting donors with students is common at universities, but it takes on special dimensions at BYU, where donor funding combines with shared faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Here are the thoughts of three students on the ways their scholarships have blessed their lives.



Chloe Tweed, '22, Elementary Education

"I am an international student from Northern Ireland and a convert to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. After joining the Church, I [applied] to BYU so that I could be immersed in the gospel while I studied for my degree. Without this scholarship, I would have struggled to continue to pay for college myself."



Stephany Barrios, '23, PE Teaching and Coaching

"When I [was] chosen as the beneficiary of your scholarship, I was ecstatic. Both of my parents are from Mexico. They never had the opportunity to finish school because they had to provide for their families. While I was growing up, college was always the goal my parents set for us. As a little girl, I couldn't decide if I wanted to be a coach or a police officer, and when I heard that I got accepted to BYU, the decision was already made for me, since BYU has a really good physical education teaching and coaching program."



Katilyn Heaps, '22, PE Teaching and Coaching

"I would not be graduating anytime soon, if at all, if it were not for your generous contributions to this scholarship. . . . My education at BYU has been unique and perfect for me. The application of spirituality in the classroom and the acknowledgment of spiritual principles in our learning and teaching has been eye opening and meaningful to me."

This rising generation is full of promise and will soon be in classrooms, in leadership roles, and on policy-making bodies—their promise realized, thanks to donor support, excellent instruction, and the gospel of Jesus Christ!

If you feel inclined to give, please visit education.byu.edu/alumni/giving.



p. 6

“When people say, ‘I’m going to quit my marriage and discontinue friendships and stop doing my service activities so I can do whatever,’ they’re really saying, ‘I’m willing to give up about five years of my life to have a less fulfilling life.’ They’re trading quantity and quality. They’re losing both.”

—TIMOTHY B. SMITH, '91

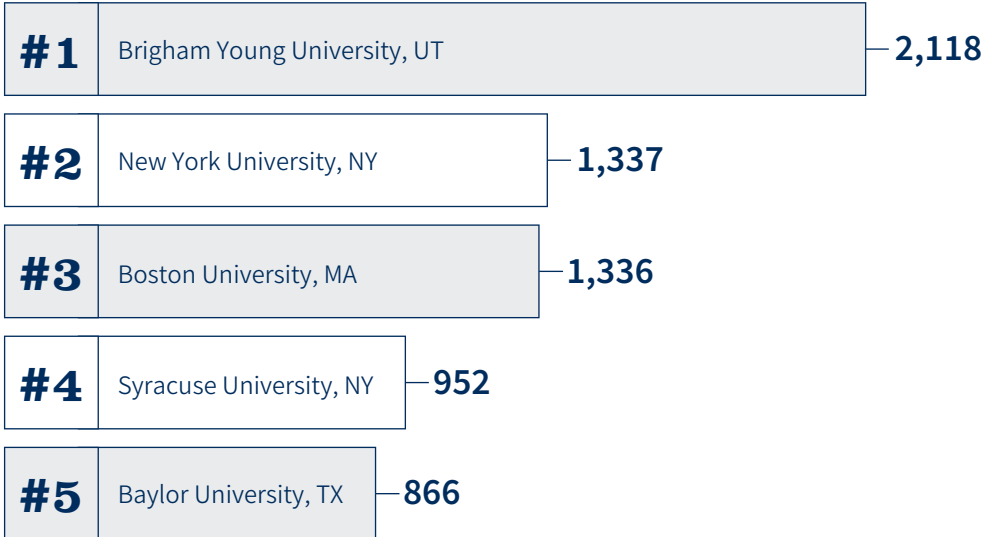


[TEAR HERE]

Launchpad for Doctoral Students

Brigham Young University's McKay School faculty produce world-class research while maintaining a strong commitment to teaching and mentoring undergraduate students.

BYU IS THE **TOP PRODUCER** OF FUTURE DOCTORAL STUDENTS IN EDUCATION AMONG PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES.



Higher Ed Datastories: "Baccalaureate Origins of Doctoral Recipients," 9 December 2020. Total students 1958–2018.

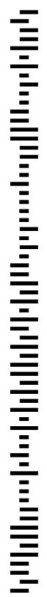
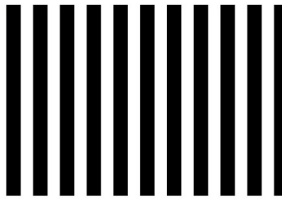
BUSINESS REPLY MAIL
FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 1 PROVO, UT

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

David O. McKay School of Education
Brigham Young University
175C MCKB
Provo, UT 84604-9950



NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES





PLEASE DETACH HERE

ALUMNI UPDATE

Please fill out this form if your address or name has changed, or send changes to mckayalumni@byu.edu.

NAME (FIRST, MIDDLE, LAST) _____ (MAIDEN NAME, IF APPLICABLE) _____ DATE OF BIRTH (MM/DD/YY) _____

SPOUSE _____ TELEPHONE _____

STREET ADDRESS _____ CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

GRADUATION DATE (MM/YY) _____ EMAIL _____

Are you currently employed in education? Yes No City/State/Country: _____

Your position (check all that apply): _____ Length of time: _____

- Administrator Counselor Media specialist
- Resource specialist Other: _____

- Level: Preschool Elementary Sign me up for McKay School Alumni News, the McKay School email newsletter.
- Secondary College/University

To read McKay School news online, visit education.byu.edu/news.

STAY CONNECTED!