

MBA

2018-19 MBA ANNUAL REPORT
BYU MARRIOTT SCHOOL OF BUSINESS





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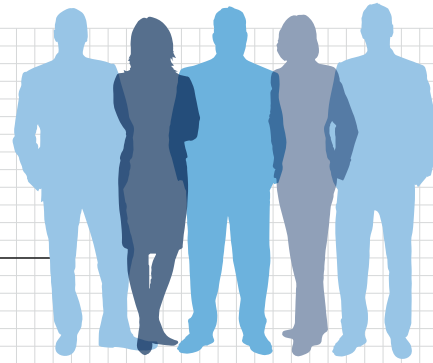
◀ *Michael Thompson, then serving as BYU Marriott interim dean, welcomes BYU MBA students to the annual Camp Williams kick-off activity. Photo by Bradley Slade*

The 2018-19 Year at a Glance

September

Women's View

Ruth Todd, Liz Wiseman, and Sariah Toronto participate on a women's leadership panel, sharing advice about succeeding in their fields while staying true to personal values and priorities.



October

Diverse and Mighty

At the third annual Go Pro diversity event, guest speakers Shaun McAlmont, Marc Chenn, and Carine Clark discuss how diversity differentiates—and strengthens—an organization.

January

Starting a New Year

Both first- and second-year MBA students start the year off right by attending reorientation events. Students meet their new team members, section, and core professors, then participate in team challenges before enjoying insightful state-of-the-program addresses that prepare them for the upcoming semester.



Bloomberg Businessweek

March

No. 1 in Training Grads

When it comes to who best trains their graduates, the BYU Marriott MBA program is awarded a No. 1 worldwide ranking by *Bloomberg Businessweek*, above schools such as Harvard Business School, Stanford Graduate School of Business, and the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

AUGUST

SEPTEMBER

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

JANUARY

FEBRUARY

MARCH

APRIL

August

A Teamwork Tradition

As part of new student orientation, students from the class of 2020 complete challenges together in their first-semester core teams at Camp Williams. This MBA tradition helps students bond.



November

Tech-Trek Time

A group of students heads to Portland and Seattle for one of several tech treks scheduled throughout the year. The three-day trip provides valuable recruiting opportunities as students visit Intel, Nike, Columbia Sportswear, HP Inc., PepsiCo, Amazon, and Microsoft.

December

It's a Wrap

EMBA Students celebrate finishing their capstone projects at an end-of-year luncheon; representatives of their partner companies also attend.



February

The Formal Event

MBA students take a night off of studying to attend the 2019 MBA Formal. Students dance the night away with dates, spouses, and fellow students during the formal, which is one of the program's social events of the year.

April

Diploma Day

More than 200 students graduate as BYU Marriott's MBA and EMBA class of 2019. Congratulations to our grads and all those who support them.



ILLUSTRATION
BY BRIAN STAUFFER

CONNECTIONS, RELATIONSHIPS, AND PEOPLE

When BYU Marriott MBA alum Marc Chenn talks about the power of his 2007 MBA degree, he uses the words *connections*, *relationships*, and *people* because, as he says, “That’s what my career, and my life, has boiled down to: a passion for people, meaningful relationships, and deep connections with those who have crossed my path.”

Chenn isn’t the only MBA grad to live a life and build a career on those ideals. Connections, relationships, and people could be adopted as the MBA program’s mantra, a mantra that certainly supports the program’s purposeful effort to prepare its graduates to lead the way forward—in both their careers and their lives. So while BYU Marriott students certainly receive world-class business training during their time on campus, they leave with more than an academic foundation for their future endeavors; they leave understanding that leadership is an act of stewardship and that connecting with people may be the most important work they do.

The following four alumni are great examples of the positive impact a BYU Marriott MBA grad can make.

MAKING PEOPLE FEEL SPECIAL

WYMAN ROBERTS, CEO AND PRESIDENT,
BRINKER INTERNATIONAL

You might say Wyman Roberts's path is just as defined by near misses as by bull's-eyes. Roberts almost didn't attend BYU. After growing up on Maui, he headed to the US mainland to attend the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. After a year there, he transferred to Ricks College in Rexburg, Idaho. Finally, he landed in between the two—at BYU in Provo, where he caught a vision he hadn't found anywhere else.

"When I hit BYU, I thought, 'This is what a real academic environment feels like,'" recalls Roberts. "I met fellow students and professors who were engaging and challenging, who inspired me in the way they reached out and interacted with each other." So he stayed at BYU, completing his undergraduate degree in finance and then earning his MBA degree in 1984. By the time he left school, he had a deeper understanding of what he wanted to accomplish in his career—and how he wanted to do it.

"I obviously gained education and knowledge, which is helpful, but you can get that in a lot of places," Roberts says. "My MBA helped me fine-tune my work ethic and gain real-world experience integral to my future success. My experience at BYU Marriott also taught me how to be a leader who inspires those I work with while caring deeply about them as well. I was so much more prepared to enter the workforce because of my decision to attend BYU Marriott."



"I always look at that experience as divine guidance," Roberts says.

Accepting the job with General Mills set the new grad on track for a career in the hospitality industry that has involved working closely with several well-known brands, including Red Lobster, Olive Garden, and Universal Studios. Today Roberts is the CEO and president of Brinker International, the Dallas-based parent company of Chili's and Maggiano's Little Italy.

Roberts recognizes that while his work may not be of the same caliber as cancer research or humanitarian efforts, it is nonetheless meaningful. "We work to provide places for families and friends to connect, celebrate, and spend time together," he observes. "Our passion is making people feel special. It's a simple concept to grasp, but it takes planning and work to make it happen."

Helping people connect with each other, make memories, and feel good about themselves is also something he wants his own employees to experience. As a CEO, he recognizes that whatever the company is able to accomplish is dependent on what its employees are able—and willing—to do. "Everything we do is a group effort," Roberts says. "And as a leader, my job is to engage our team and all the people we are responsible for and provide a vision."



When Roberts initially entered the workforce, he wasn't looking for a career in the food industry. He had worked in restaurants growing up, and while he hadn't hated it, it wasn't the career path he'd imagined for himself. In fact, when a representative from General Mills in Minneapolis called to set up an interview, he already had multiple job offers and didn't consider it a serious option. "It was a throwaway interview," Roberts recalls. "Nothing was going to make me take that job."

But during the interview process, the General Mills CFO told Roberts that he thought an opportunity in Florida rather than Minnesota might be a great fit, and Roberts instinctively knew the CFO was right.



PASSION FOR PEOPLE

MARC CHENN, FOUNDER AND CEO,
SALTSTACK

The first thing Marc Chenn talks about in his life is the people. When asked about his career history, he starts with his immigrant parents and grandparents. When asked about his résumé, he mentions mentors who helped him secure life-changing internship and job opportunities. When asked about his BYU Marriott MBA education, he recalls an influential professor and his fellow students at Cougar Capital. For Chenn, his path to leadership is marked not by events but by people.

Chenn grew up on stories of his entrepreneurial grandparents, who emigrated from China to Taiwan and later to California in the 1940s. His grandfather started a photography business in China, and his grandmother started a bookstore in Taiwan. In California, the enterprising couple opened a photo lab and a restaurant.

Seeing how hard his parents worked, Chenn's father encouraged his young son to take a more stable route, perhaps as a doctor or a lawyer. Initially Chenn followed his father's advice, starting out with his eye on a pre-med degree. But his natural interest and passion led the young student toward business and entrepreneurship. After an internship at Cisco Systems in 1998, the deal was sealed. "It was lights out," Chenn says of being in Silicon Valley during the tech boom. "Connecting with people who shared my interest and enthusiasm in that kind of charged environment and in a position where almost anything seemed possible



was intoxicating." He received his undergrad at BYU in international studies with an emphasis in global economy before returning for his MBA, earned in 2007.

As his career progressed, he went from a small startup in Utah to the financial services industry in New York City. He continued to foster relationships and build his leadership skills at every step, including a stint as president of New York LDS Professionals. "BYU has one of the strongest networks of financial services professionals in the world, outside the Ivy League," he points out.

But after weathering the financial crisis of 2008, Chenn took a serious look at his life plan. A lifetime of being surrounded by entrepreneurs had convinced him that entrepreneurship was the best way to "control your own destiny—even though control is an elusive thing," Chenn observes. He decided to return to his passion for tech and invest his efforts and time into building something of his own.

Chenn's robust network ultimately led him to his current business partner, and in 2012 the two founded SaltStack, a company that develops intelligent automation software to help businesses secure and manage their digital infrastructures. As CEO, Chenn is able to take full advantage of the leadership expertise developed at BYU Marriott and refined through his years of experience.

And as all good leaders do, when he talks about his company, he focuses on people—the people he works alongside and the people the company helps. "We improve lives through intelligent automation," Chenn says. "Driving efficiency, saving people time and money, getting them home at 5 p.m. so they can see their families."



FROM MENTEE TO MENTOR

MIRANDA BARNARD, VICE PRESIDENT OF MARKETING,
VIVINT SOLAR

Her first gig was as the writer, editor, and chief typist (using the electric typewriter she got for Christmas) of her school newspaper. She was in the fourth grade, and her paper had a circulation of ten. But this little self-published periodical foreshadowed Miranda Barnard's career in communications, marketing, and advertising. Today her reach has grown from ten readers to millions of people around the world.

Barnard currently works as vice president of marketing for Vivint Solar in Lehi, Utah. As a graduate of Southern Utah University with a degree in communications, Barnard had worked for more than a dozen years in both ad agencies and in-house marketing departments. But as her responsibilities increased,



she began to see the value of adding to her business management skills. While she was working as the head of marketing for the Children's Miracle Network

Hospitals, a couple of BYU Marriott alumni helped her decide that an MBA from BYU would be the best next step in her leadership journey.

"Both my boss and the company's CEO were BYU Marriott graduates," Barnard says. "After speaking to them about their experiences, I knew that was where I wanted to study and where I could find the experiences and opportunities to best help me grow and become the leader and person I wanted to be." So she headed back to school, graduating from BYU Marriott with her Executive MBA in 2016.

Now Barnard has joined the ranks of MBA alumni who are anxious to lead the way forward in their organizations and to mentor and serve others. "Watching people work hard to achieve their personal and professional goals is incredibly fulfilling and by far one of the favorite things I do," she says.

And her ability to become that kind of leader came, at least partially, from her experience at BYU Marriott. "The group I had as a cohort was filled with high-achieving, competitive people, and yet I watched as they unselfishly and willingly did whatever was necessary to help each other," Barnard explains. "That is one of the elements of my BYU experience that continues to stay with me: how committed my classmates were to help one another while we were in school and how, years later, that is still true."

BACK TO THE MOUNTAINS

MATTHEW C. PETERSON, ENTREPRENEUR



Creating companies comes naturally to Matthew C. Peterson; he started his first company when he was in only the second grade. "I drew pictures for my friends, who would pay for the pictures with leftover change they had from lunch," he says. He had to work hard to convince his mom that the business was legit. "She thought I was bullying the other kids for money," Peterson says.

His elementary-school enterprise planted entrepreneurial seeds that would later blossom. During his undergraduate at BYU, Peterson started a software engineering company that built "pretty much whatever people needed," says Peterson, who has a knack for seeing people's needs and finding a way to meet those needs.

Even with his experience and instinct, Peterson didn't plan to continue as an entrepreneur after he earned his bachelor's degree in management information systems in 2001. Instead, he looked for a place to land where he could connect with people, make a difference in their lives, and be the leader he had learned to be. Unfortunately, in a post-9/11 economy, jobs were scarce, and nothing he found felt like the right fit. He decided to continue working on his tech startups.

Eventually, he went back to BYU for an MBA. "I was interested in the education and the network that a BYU Marriott MBA provides," says Peterson. He notes that opportunities to connect with others was the best part of his experience. "The academics were challenging, but the real value of



BYU's MBA is the people you get to take with you on your journey."

After graduation in 2009, Peterson reconnected with his business partner from his undergraduate startup and helped create a new software company called Jive Communications, a company specializing in cloud-based VoIP and unified communication services. Once again, Peterson had found a company that filled a need and created an opportunity for him to lead the way forward in an emerging industry.

"The people I worked with were outstanding, and building Jive into the company we envisioned was an incredible experience and opportunity," Peterson notes. "The relationships that resulted from working together on a shared vision and end goal were greatly enhanced because of the collaborative opportunities and skill set I received at BYU."

In 2018, Jive Communications was acquired by LogMeIn, and Peterson is now unemployed ("Unemployable," quips his wife, Andrea). But as all entrepreneurs know, that's just code for "working on the next big thing." This time around, Peterson is moving away from tech and starting a



project closer to his outdoorsy heart: a private ski resort and wildlife preserve in the mountains of northern Utah. "Our goal is to preserve open space and mountain experiences for future generations," he says.

"My father took me hunting and fishing and four-wheeling since before I could walk," explains Peterson, who currently lives in Spanish Fork, Utah. To make this newest venture possible, he has partnered with a group out of Eden, Utah. Once again, he looks forward to connecting with others and making a lasting impact in the world around him.

WHERE CHANGES HAPPEN

Leaders such as the ones who emerge from BYU Marriott are needed out in the corporate and entrepreneurial spaces, points out Barnard. "The world needs leaders more than ever who are not only committed to creating success for their organizations but who are also focused on making positive change to improve the lives of others," she says.

Roberts adds to that sentiment: "If I were to challenge all of us, it would be to pay it forward in any way possible: Sometimes it's in the work environment, sometimes it's in the academic department, and sometimes it's in your life. But paying it forward in the way we lead, and even just in the way we live our lives, comes through connections, relationships, and people. That's where changes happen."



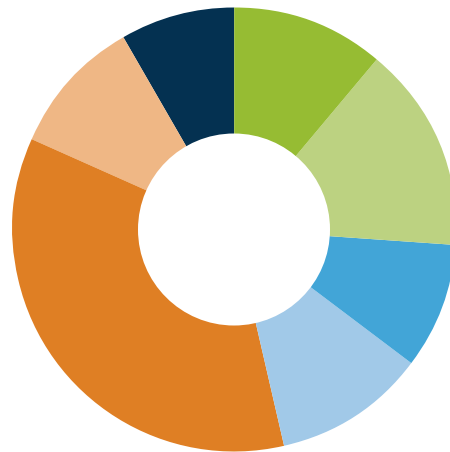
Student Life

Tech treks—trips that provide BYU Marriott MBA students with a chance to visit high-tech companies while networking with company executives and MBA alumni onsite—offer invaluable experience to those who attend. On a recent trip to Seattle, more than thirty students visited seven companies, participating in panel discussions, interviews, and tours. These trips are only one component of the top-ranked MBA program, which prepares its grads to lead the way forward with incisive strategy, transformative mentoring, and inspiring optimism.

Student Report

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS	MBA	EMBA
Class of 2018	140	70
Female	21%	18%
Married	70%	89%
International	23%	8%
Minority	6%	9%
Bilingual	71%	69%
Average years of experience	4.3	11.6
Returned missionaries	77%	69%
Average entering GPA	3.54	3.38
Average GMAT	671	614

Class of 2018 placement by profession



CLASS OF 2018	MBA
Average base salary	\$110,000
Placed by 3 months after graduation	90%
Average signing bonus	\$32,000

11% Consulting	35% Marketing & Sales
15% Finance	10% Supply Chain/Operations
9% General Management	9% Other
11% Human Resources	

MBA Rankings

RANK	PROGRAM	SOURCE
1st	MBA (Training Graduates)	<i>Bloomberg Businessweek</i>
1st	MBA (Most Family Friendly)	<i>The Princeton Review</i>
3rd	MBA (Human Resources)	<i>The Princeton Review</i>
3rd	MBA (Value for Money)	<i>Financial Times</i>
5th	MBA (Salary Percentage Increase)	<i>Financial Times</i>
6th	MBA (Entrepreneurship)	<i>The Princeton Review</i>
16th	EMBA	<i>The Economist</i>
19th	MBA	<i>Forbes</i>

Head Sherpa Leads Students to Great Heights

Jesse Myrick, a 2013 BYU grad and former documentary filmmaker, decided to come to the BYU Marriott MBA program because he wanted doors opened in his career. However, Myrick is getting a lot more than just a career launch out of his MBA education; he is gaining confidence and assurance that he is capable of achieving his dreams.

As a kid from a small town in California, Myrick loved making short films with his friends. His passion for filmmaking got him into the media arts major at BYU, where he learned how to tell inspiring stories through documentary films. He worked on a BYU-produced TV series called *Beehive Stories* and on a film called *Peace Officer*, which ended up on a long list of potential Oscar nominees and won Grand Jury and Audience Awards at the South by Southwest Film Festival in 2015.

A few years and a lot of experience later, Myrick was redesigning an online program for Stringham Schools, an online realty school. He loved what he was doing, and he wanted to do it on a larger scale. He decided to go back to BYU for an MBA.

MBA applicants are required to complete the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT), which tests reading comprehension, writing, and mathematics. Myrick hadn't taken a math class in years, so to prepare for the

GMAT, he hired a tutor. During the first session, his tutor evaluated Myrick's math skills and told Myrick that he had major reservations about Myrick's ability to be accepted into an MBA program that year. Myrick was determined to stick to his plan. Despite the lack of confidence shown by his tutor, Myrick did well on the GMAT and was accepted to BYU Marriott. However, he didn't begin the program with a lot of confidence.

"I came into the program feeling like I was way behind, like I was unqualified to be there, and like I was fooling people," Myrick says. But all that changed when he met his sherpa, **Erika Nash**. In the BYU Marriott MBA sherpa program, second-year MBA students mentor first-year students by answering questions, providing support, and helping them find internships. Nash encouraged Myrick and helped him realize that he was smarter and better prepared for the program than he thought. "You can do this," she told him. "Let's go get you the best job possible."

Myrick's insecurity was quickly transformed into confidence. "Within the course of three months, I went from feeling like I didn't have the necessary skills I needed and feeling super self-conscious about myself to being hired for an internship at Amazon," Myrick says. "The sherpa program taught me that the only thing I



was lacking was self-confidence. It was so empowering to find that confidence inside me. It changed everything. That transformation is why I came to the BYU Marriott MBA program—the experience, the jump, and the career pivot."

Myrick loved the sherpa program so much that he's become the head sherpa, determined to do for others what Nash did for him. As head sherpa, Myrick's vision is to not only give first-year students an education but also to build their confidence and find them their dream jobs.

As for Myrick's postgraduation plans, he isn't sure what he'll be doing yet—and he's okay with that. "I am realizing that I don't have to commit to one specific industry," Myrick says. "I am more versatile because of my MBA from BYU Marriott."

2018 Case Competition Highlights



Baylor competition team members: David Tensmeyer, Reenu Raj, Kyle Woodhouse, and Sara Picard

Four BYU Marriott MBA students took first place at the twelfth annual National MBA Case Competition in Ethical Leadership hosted at Baylor University in Waco, Texas. The competition, held 8-9 November 2018, was designed to advance the development of ethical leaders through experiential learning. Event organizers wanted to also recognize and promote MBA students and their programs.

A cash prize of \$5,000 was awarded to the winning team from BYU Marriott. Team members included **Sara Picard** from Greenacres, Washington; **Reenu Raj** from Bangalore, India; **David Tensmeyer** from Houston; and **Kyle Woodhouse** from Denver.

This student team from BYU Marriott competed against MBA teams from eleven other universities, including the University of Georgia, which took second place, and Auburn University, which took third place.

During the competition, teams were given the opportunity to present their analyses for ethical leadership in response to a case created specifically for the event. A panel of graduates of Baylor University's executive MBA program judged the presentations.

"I was encouraged to see how many bright and talented people from across the country are interested in issues about business ethics," says Tensmeyer. "I am confident that these students will go on to be strong leaders of integrity in their organizations."

The MBA ethics class at BYU Marriott, taught by **Dave Hart**, an associate professor in the Romney Institute of Public Service and Ethics, was the most important preparation for these students, says **Bradley Owens**, the faculty advisor over this case competition. "We also met with these students and discussed ethical frameworks and strategies that had worked for previous competitions to help prepare them even further," Owens says.

"I loved getting to heavily integrate ethical principles and theories into a traditional business solution," says Picard. "Being able to creatively do that integration was fun, and it stretched us to do our best work."

BYU Marriott's MBA program prepares students to excel at competitions and also to study real ethical issues that they could potentially face. "This program has given me the necessary tools to think through a business problem correctly," says Woodhouse. "Our team was able to come up with deep and well-thought-out recommendations because of what we've learned from the MBA program."

Sawtooth Competition Sweep

BYU Marriott's MBA team claimed victory in the Buckeye State at the Sawtooth Software Marketing Analytics Consulting Challenge; not only did the MBA team take the top spot, the school's undergraduate team took second overall. The competition was open to both graduate and undergraduate students.

The MBA team included first-place winners **Candace Child** from North Ogden, Utah; **Steve Martin** from New York City; **Avisikta Sahoo** from Bhubaneswar, India; **Sam Swain** from Orem, Utah; and **Doug Ward** from Centerville, Utah, who were awarded a cash prize of \$3,000.



BYU Marriott's Sawtooth competition MBA and undergrad team members celebrate success.

"It is great to win the competition, but the best thing is that it provides an excellent opportunity for students to apply things we learn in the classroom in a concrete setting," says **Jeff Dotson**, associate professor of marketing.

At the two-day event, students dealt with real-world problems and solutions surrounding conjoint analysis, a market-research technique that helps business owners make decisions on product rollout by determining consumer preferences.

"Competing in the Sawtooth competition taught me about humility and confidence, a necessary dichotomy," Martin says. "I had to rely on my teammates' strengths to make up for my weaknesses, especially in the complex world of analytics. We won because we were unified in purpose and diversified in ability."

Cardinal Health, a Fortune 500 healthcare-services company, cosponsored the competition, and market-research experts from Sawtooth Software, Cardinal Health, and Procter & Gamble made up the panel of judges.

BYU Marriott Hosts, Wins Competition

BYU Marriott hosted and won the inaugural Adam Smith Society Case Competition—a three-day event that welcomed nine top-tier MBA programs from schools across the nation, including Yale, Chicago Booth, and Darden.

The event included a welcome reception the first night and then an initial round of the competition

on the following day, with a brief recess in the afternoon in which students participated in a ski trip to Sundance. The competition concluded the third day, when MBA students **Richard Bobo**, **Sam Fisher**, **Danny McCracken**, and **Seth Randall** were awarded a \$3,000 cash prize for first place.

"For me, this win demonstrates that BYU Marriott MBAs not only understand free-market principles, they can also articulate them and put them into practice," Fisher says. "It is important that, as we study business, we understand the free market along with the rights and principles that make it all work. This contest was a welcome opportunity to engage in that learning."

Paul Godfrey, William and Roceil Low Professor of Business Strategy, helped organize the case competition, which challenged contestants to explore how Facebook's executive team should respond to issues arising from the 2016 US presidential election.

"I thought it was a powerful opportunity for students to deal with this big issue about business and capitalism, and our students did well," Godfrey says. "They looked at the business and the social impact, and they presented well. I was proud to be a Cougar on Saturday."

The Adam Smith Society is a national MBA association that works to help students foster a meaningful dialogue around complicated business issues that impact society.



Adam Smith competition team members: Richard Bobo, Sam Fisher, Danny McCracken, and Seth Randall

BYU Marriott MBA Scholars

BYU Marriott MBA students are recognized for their uncommon maturity, confidence, and experiences. They excel in many ways, including academically. Top MBA scholars are honored annually through the Hawes, Stoddard, and Eccles Scholars programs.



Hawes Scholars

The Brigham Young University Marriott School of Business named ten 2018 Hawes Scholars, an honor that carries the highest distinction given to MBA students at the school and a cash award of \$10,000.

The 2018–2019 Hawes Scholars are **Derek Croft, Fernanda Sayavedra, Jared Haynie, Jesse Myrick, Jonathan Hardy, John Rozan, Megan Brewster, Reenu Selva Raj, Sara Picard, and Shawn Merrill.**



Stoddard Scholars

Twelve Brigham Young University Marriott School of Business students were honored with the George E. Stoddard Prize, a \$5,000 award given to exceptional second-year MBA finance students.

The 2018 scholars are **Bryce Pinder, Chad Olesiak, Christopher Davis, Dan Visser, Daniel Gore, Eban Beltran, Jordan Tesimale, Logan Rahn, Mark Johnson, Olivia Prochazka, Richard Maxwell, and Spencer Clegg.**



Eccles Scholars

Eleven students were honored as Eccles Scholars, an award presented by the school's Whitmore Global Management Center. Each recipient was awarded up to \$9,000 of financial aid for schooling expenses, international projects, and global career exploration.

The 2018–2019 Eccles Scholars are **Alex Zhang, Andrew Daniels, Austin Pollard, Ben Anderson, James Ngai, Josh Brooks, Matt Lipps, Michael Moore, Sophie Zhang, Tiago Triumpho, and Wilson Moreno.** (Not all scholars are pictured.)

Elevating the Possible

Megan Brewster, a second-year MBA candidate from Salt Lake City, has had a transformational experience at BYU Marriott. Her goal as president of the MBA Women in Management club (WIM) is to focus her passion for helping women gain self-confidence and overcome barriers in a way that enables other women to enjoy the same experience.

“I had no idea what I could accomplish in the business world until I came here,” she says. “The support from the faculty and the experiences I’ve been involved in here—both inside and outside of the classroom—have opened my eyes in powerful ways that I am excited to share with others.”

Though Brewster’s undergraduate degree was in English literature, she fell in love with business while working in a job at the crossroads of public policy and academic research in St. Louis. “I realized that it was business leaders who had the power to make the differences that I cared about,” she observes. “So I decided to get involved in business myself.”

BYU Marriott was particularly attractive to Brewster because she saw women filling important roles in the school. “I was attracted to the idea of ‘coopetition,’ where it’s cooperative but we also challenge each other to be progressive and excel,” she says. Brewster has also found BYU Marriott to be a supportive place. “That’s one of the reasons why I am so passionate about WIM,” she says.

In order to help all women feel welcome at WIM events, Brewster has made a conscious effort to invite speakers with diverse backgrounds. “Often we think that women’s experiences are all universal. While there are similarities, women are not one monolithic group,” she says. “The women in our program have diverse personalities, interests, and struggles, so we try to create a variety of events to ensure that there is something for everyone, regardless of what challenges they face.”

Another of Brewster’s main accomplishments in WIM is involvement in the male-advocacy group HeForShe, an organization designed to increase the conversation between men and women about representation and equality in the business world.

“It’s frustrating when we have an antagonistic attitude towards men,” she explains. “They’re inheriting the same culture that we have as women. It doesn’t have to be a versus thing. It’s actually beneficial for both genders when women have better opportunities.”

Brewster, who is married and expecting her first child, is looking forward to her future in business. She is planning on a career that combines social innovation, strategy, and healthcare. “An MBA is a diverse degree that I can use in a variety of settings,” she says. “I just wish more women could have this opportunity earlier in their careers and leverage their own strengths to make a successful leadership career.”

“I never saw myself pursuing an MBA, but it’s been an amazing choice with life-changing opportunities,” she continues. “Through my experience here, I’ve gained skills and knowledge, and now I have exciting job options to consider. And even more beneficial, it’s helped me conceptualize myself more as a leader and raise my sights in terms of what’s possible for me.”



Faculty News

One section of **Kristen DeTienne's** office features letters and emails from grateful students who have benefitted from her instinctive curiosity, natural tendency to examine people's behavior, and passion for helping students succeed. DeTienne often draws upon her own experiences as a struggling student to help those she teaches reach their highest potential. Read more about her story and her impact on others on page 25.



Faculty Awards

Professorships

PROFESSORSHIP	2018-19 RECIPIENT
<i>Albrecht, W. Steve</i>	James D. Stice
<i>Beesley, Horace Pratt</i>	Jeffrey H. Dyer
<i>Brown, Denny L. & Jerri</i>	Hal B. Heaton
<i>Christensen, Don M. & Arda Jean</i>	Michael J. Swenson
<i>Covey, Stephen Mack</i>	Gary K. Rhoads
<i>Deloitte</i>	Monte R. Swain
<i>Driggs, Douglas & Effie</i>	Bonnie B. Anderson
<i>Edwards, William F.</i>	Grant R. McQueen
<i>Jones, Alice Belle</i>	Kirsten B. DeTienne
<i>LeRay McAllister/Deloitte</i>	Douglas F. Prawitt
<i>Low, William & Roceil</i>	Paul C. Godfrey
<i>Meyer, Fred G.</i>	R. Bruce Money
<i>Norm & Cindy Nemrow Excellence in Teaching</i>	Cassy J. Budd
<i>Passey, James M.</i>	Barrett A. Slade
<i>Peery, H. Taylor</i>	Steven R. Thorley
<i>PwC</i>	Earl K. Stice
<i>Romney, George W.</i>	Bradley R. Agle
<i>Second Mile</i>	Craig B. Merrill
<i>Staheli, Donald L.</i>	Thomas S. Foster
<i>Thorsell, Hazel Speirs</i>	Scott E. Sampson

Fellowships

FELLOWSHIP	2018-19 RECIPIENT
<i>Alumni</i>	Mathew D. Duerden
<i>Alumni</i>	Ryan S. Elder
<i>Brown, Denny L. & Jerri</i>	Colbrin A. Wright
<i>Christensen, Don M. & Arda Jean</i>	Jeffrey P. Dotson
<i>David & Knight</i>	Mark J. Keith
<i>Edwards, William F.</i>	Michael P. Thompson
<i>EY</i>	Jacob R. Thornock
<i>Farr, Loran</i>	Nile W. Hatch
<i>Ford/Cook</i>	James B. Oldroyd
<i>Garrett, J. Earl & Elaine</i>	Glenn L. Christensen
<i>Garrett, J. Earl & Elaine</i>	Peter M. Madsen
<i>Goldman Sachs</i>	Taylor D. Nadauld
<i>Grow, Stewart L</i>	Eva M. Witesman
<i>Jones, Warren F. & Alice B.</i>	Curtis D. LeBaron
<i>Jones, Warren F. & Alice B.</i>	Darron M. Billeter
<i>National Advisory Council</i>	David G. Kryscynski
<i>National Advisory Council</i>	Troy R. Nielson
<i>Perry, Lee Tom</i>	Daniel C. Snow
<i>PwC</i>	Michael S. Drake
<i>Smith, Robert J.</i>	William Tayler
<i>Sorensen, David E. & Verla A.</i>	John W. Gardner
<i>Staheli, Donald L.</i>	John B. Bingham
<i>Thorsell, Hazel Speirs</i>	Cynthia J. Blair
<i>White, Georgia</i>	Jeffrey S. Bednar
<i>White, Georgia</i>	Shad S. Morris

The Path to Real-Estate Success

When it comes to understanding the ins and outs of real-estate investment, BYU Marriott professor **Barrett Slade** is your guy. With plenty of professional and educational background in real estate, it is apparent that he is more than qualified to teach on the subject.

Of the many experiences that have been fundamental in getting him to where he is today, Slade specifically credits his missionary service for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for putting him on the path of ambition and success. “I grew up in a remote and rural part of Arizona where higher education wasn’t stressed much,” Slade says. “Thankfully, I had a wonderful

mission president who inspired me to pursue higher education. As a result, after I finished my mission, I headed to BYU.”

In addition to receiving an undergraduate degree in economics, Slade earned a master’s degree in managerial economics from BYU in 1989 and a PhD in business administration with an emphasis in real estate from the University of Georgia in 1997. Those achievements ultimately paved the way for him to come to BYU as a professor, but not before gaining some industry experience along the way.

Following his undergraduate studies, Slade spent five years with a commercial-valuation and consulting firm. He later worked as the vice president and chief appraiser for First Interstate Bank of Arizona and eventually started his own valuation and consulting firm.

“My ten years of work experience has had a great impact on the course curriculum and my teaching,” Slade says. “My background drives a real hypersensitivity of relevancy and practical application.”

Slade teaches two courses at BYU Marriott: Finance 413, Real Estate Finance and Investment, and MBA 686, Real Estate Analysis: Finance and Investment. His courses are beneficial for students because of the significance of real-estate decisions. Some researchers estimate that one-half to two-thirds of the world’s wealth is invested in real

estate, which is by far the largest asset class across the globe.

Fortunately, these crucial decisions don’t have to be made in naivety. Slade’s desire is to prepare students to make wise real-estate decisions both personally and professionally. “I love interacting with students and answering their questions,” Slade says. “I also enjoy teaching and seeing the light bulbs go on.”

In addition to teaching, Slade is involved in real-estate research, specifically in relation to land markets. He recently published a paper on what happens to land values near new Walmart stores and is currently examining the same for Amazon fulfillment centers. He does this by constructing price indices that monitor and track those specific land markets. “I am having a lot of fun trying to wrap my arms around urban land,” Slade says. “I want to know what drives it, how you think about it, and how you measure and monitor it.”

While this ambition for learning certainly plays an important role in Slade’s research, it is also the driving factor that has led him to where he is today. From education to industry to research, Slade’s experiences and expertise in real-estate investment enable him to prepare students for what’s next. And in a world where money is primarily invested in real estate, that knowledge is key.



From South Africa to BYU



As a child growing up in South Africa during apartheid, **Curtis LeBaron**, associate professor of organizational behavior and human resources, was exposed to the circumstances and attitudes that defined the era.

Later, as he served a mission in South Africa, LeBaron came to realize the impact apartheid had on his thinking about race relations. “I came to more fully understand the injustices and the horrible violence that apartheid imposed on people, both body and spirit,” LeBaron says. “I grew to love people who I had formerly been racially estranged from.”

LeBaron’s introspection eventually led him to study how people use language to influence others. After his mission, he earned a bachelor’s degree in English from BYU in 1989 and then went on to

earn a master’s degree in organizational communication from the University of Utah and a PhD in language and social interaction from the University of Texas at Austin.

“All of my research falls under the umbrella of the question ‘How do we create the realities that we reside in?’” LeBaron says. “That relates directly to my South African experience.”

Specializing in video-based research, LeBaron now teaches a leadership class for BYU Marriott MBA students. He films and analyzes situations that people don’t usually get permission to video record, where communication is key. For example, LeBaron has done video-based research on therapy groups, architects, surgical teams, job interviews, top management teams, and more.

LeBaron also analyzed recordings of FBI interrogations from a department with a history of getting confessions from innocent people. “The question was how on earth they get confessions from people who are innocent,” LeBaron says. “The answer is that they create realities in which the suspects feel like they have no other option but to confess.”

LeBaron’s work has helped numerous organizations with communication, especially the leaders within those organizations who create meaning out of inherently ambiguous situations.

“When I sit down and start watching people interact on

video, for me there’s nothing more interesting in the world,” he says. “I feel like I’m watching the most intriguing, multidimensional game of social chess where people say things and move and maneuver in ways that advance themselves.”

Drawing on his research and life experiences, LeBaron created three pieces of advice for MBA students:

- **Take control of your environment.** “If you ever find yourself in a situation or context that you’re unhappy with, look for ways that you might be actually creating the context that you dislike. If you’re ever faced with a problem you’re having a hard time solving, you might ask yourself how it is that you’re helping to create that problem in the first place and how might that change.”
- **Remember that you only live once.** “If there’s something you want to do, you need to go after it. If you don’t like what you’re doing, you need to change it, because we only get one shot at this.”
- **Don’t underestimate the power of face-to-face interaction.** “In an age of digital communication, I would encourage all leaders and professionals to not underestimate the power of face-to-face interaction. Any time leaders have truly wanted to make a difference in the minds of people, they’ve done it face-to-face.”

Always Asking What’s Next

Many universities don’t require professors to conduct top-tier ongoing research as well as carry a heavy class load and connect with each student, but BYU does—and it’s not easy. However, for **Cindy Blair**, her students are what make all the hard work worth it. “BYU professors are deeply invested in the success of our students,” Blair says. “We genuinely love our students and want them to do well.”

Blair believes in preparing her students with real-world application, so she strives to apply her experience in global supply chain to teaching her students information she wishes she had known while working in the industry. Her favorite part of teaching is hearing her students tell her that they are applying things they learned in her class to their careers. “That’s the real payoff,” she says.

Blair wasn’t always sure she wanted to teach, and her life has not gone the way she thought it would. However, she believes it’s gone according to God’s plan for her. When life is uncertain, Blair asks, “What’s next?” and keeps moving forward. This mentality has shaped the course of her career and continues to inspire her teaching and research at BYU.

Blair received her undergraduate degree in accounting from BYU in 1989 and then served a mission to Argentina for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. When she returned, she decided to go back to school for her MBA, which launched her into a career in purchasing at Intel. After eight years there, she felt the need to return to school to get her PhD, which she received from Arizona State University. “I got my PhD at age forty, which is kind of late, but you never know what life will bring,” Blair says. “Even though it wasn’t typical, it was right for me.”

From there she came to BYU, where she has been teaching ever since. “It was never the plan, but I just kept asking myself—and God—what’s next?”



Blair’s current “what’s next” is her research. She is now working with her colleagues to connect impoverished countries with valuable materials to the global supply chain. Countries that don’t know the value of their resources often sell those resources cheaply to businesses already connected to the supply chain. Blair wants to help people in this situation elevate themselves by cutting out the middleman and connecting directly to the chain. “I always wanted to get involved in humanitarian work after I retired,” she says. “But then I realized there is something I could be doing now.”

Blair shares her interest in other parts of global supply chain with her students on the annual GSCM study abroad. The trip takes them to visit every step of a supply chain in Asia, which helps the students gain a better idea of the types of people they will be interacting with in the field.

“Our students in global supply chain management come to us already with a love for people beyond our borders. They embrace differences in other cultures, and that makes them easy to place,” Blair says. “You’re getting this mature, well-educated, well-qualified student.”

Advancing Eternal Learning

While pursuing a master's of accountancy at BYU, **Michael Drake** worked as a teaching assistant for well-known accounting professor **Norm Nemrow**. Although the opportunity may have seemed ordinary to some, the experience proved to have a profound impact on Drake's future.

One of Drake's responsibilities was to hold review sessions, where he taught large groups of students. Drake quickly began to discover that these teaching experiences were having a significant influence on his life goals. "The natural 'buzz' I experienced after each of these sessions was clear," Drake says. "This is when I set my sights on a PhD and life as a professor."

After graduating from BYU with his master's degree in 2003, Drake focused on acquiring valuable experience. He worked in public accounting at Arthur Andersen and EY before heading to Texas A&M to earn a PhD. Drake then took a faculty job at the Ohio State University, working in the Fisher College of Business for two years.

In 2011, Drake left Fisher College and joined BYU Marriott as an assistant professor of accounting. "The mission of BYU and BYU Marriott are what attracted me back to campus," Drake says. "To teach what I love in the light of the gospel I love is the dream."

Drake is now an associate professor and a distinguished PwC Fellow in the School of Accountancy at BYU Marriott. He teaches MBA 501, Corporate Financial Reporting, and MBA 527, Financial Statement Analysis. His efforts in the classroom and in research led him to receive the BYU Young Scholar Award in 2016 as well as the MBA Core Professor of the Year Award in 2017 and 2018.

One of Drake's favorite aspects of teaching is interacting with the many students who have a desire to learn. "The students at BYU inspire me," he says. "I leave each class session in awe of their potential."

When he is not teaching, Drake is actively engaged in research that explores the role of information in capital markets. His current projects examine the information-gathering activities of different types of investors and how those activities influence their trading decisions.



One of his most interesting papers examines market activity during the NCAA basketball tournament March Madness. The paper, titled "March Market Madness: The Impact of Value-Irrelevant Events on the Market Pricing of Earnings News," illustrates just how far-reaching the tournament's distracting effect actually is. What Drake and his fellow researchers discovered is that trading volume significantly drops and market reaction to news announced is muted during the games. "Our evidence suggests that markets are distracted by the tournament just like people are," he says.

The ability to be involved in notable research is just one of the many advantages Drake appreciates at BYU Marriott. "To succeed in this profession, you need time and resources," Drake says. "BYU Marriott provides me with both, which allows me to engage in the two professional activities I love most: researching and teaching."

Figuring Out What Fits

A section of **Kristen DeTienne's** office features letters, notes, and emails from previous students expressing their thanks and mentioning how her instruction in the classroom prepared them well for their future endeavors. She saves them.

"At BYU, our students are quick to appreciate," says DeTienne, a professor of management. The BYU environment fosters that type of appreciation, she notes, and the meaningful relationships she has developed with both her students and her colleagues have positively impacted her life.

Another thing DeTienne admires about BYU is the work ethic exhibited by the many students she has taught through the years. "Many of them are trying to raise a family and even work while attending school at the same time," she says. "I can relate to many of the challenges our students face."

DeTienne grew up in Southern California and worked multiple jobs to pay for her education at California State University, Long Beach, becoming the first person in her family to graduate with a bachelor's degree. As a young student, DeTienne found herself wondering why people—especially leaders—behave the way they do. Her decision to study management and behavioral patterns in the workplace seemed like a natural result of those ponderings.

During her undergraduate program, one of her professors approached her about pursuing

a PhD. DeTienne wanted to continue her education, but it was simply too expensive, she told him. The professor explained that DeTienne could channel her passion for research and teaching into a way to pay for her education. Following his advice, she decided to pursue a PhD and to attend the University of Southern California. The school hired her to teach classes and agreed to cover the cost of tuition while she conducted her research.

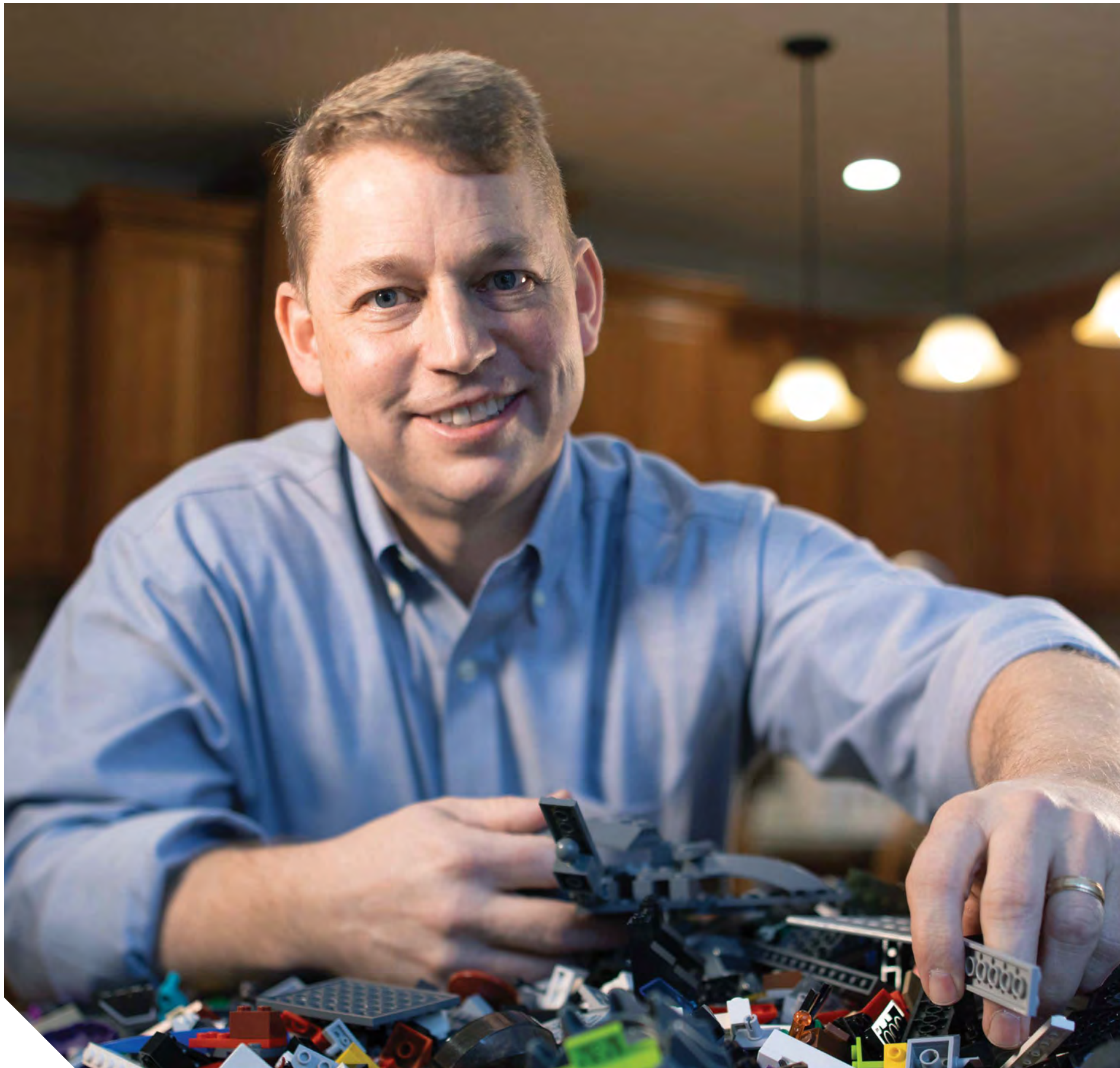
While working her way through school, DeTienne also got married. Though she had a lot to balance, her passion for learning and for continuing her education helped her gain perspective. As an assistant professor at BYU,

she looked for creative ways to balance her family and career. "I would take my kids to the play place at the local fast-food restaurant, and my kids would be running through the tubes while I sat doing research," DeTienne remembers.

For DeTienne, research and helping people in her field are lifelong passions that have aided her personal journey to success. She continues to conduct research about negotiation and behavior in the workplace and often finds examples around her. While she didn't expect to be a professor, she loves teaching at BYU Marriott.

"You have to figure out what fits you and what will make you happy," DeTienne says.



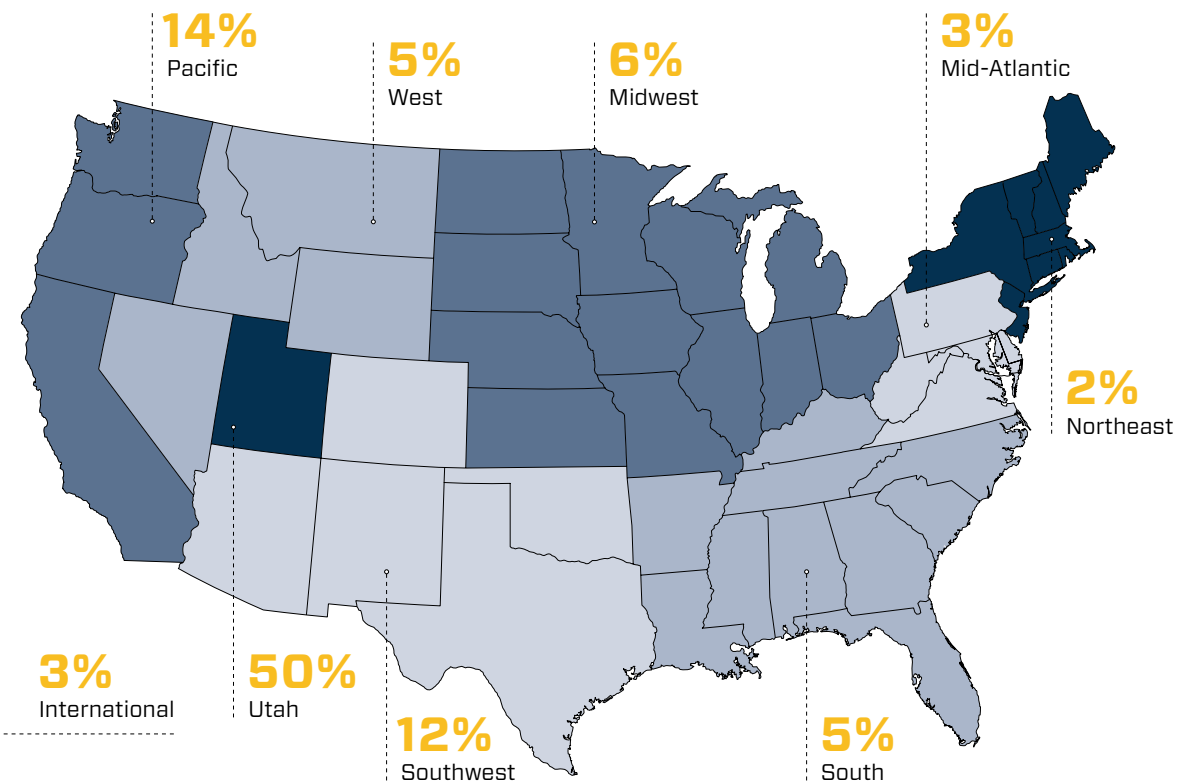


Alumni Updates

Steve Van Wagenen's creativity and innovation—traits strengthened by his experience at BYU Marriott—enabled him to turn time spent with his sons building LEGO models into a rewarding side gig. And the rewards aren't just financial. Van Wagenen says the most important benefits can't be quantified. Read more about Van Wagenen's LEGO ventures on page 34.

Alumni Report

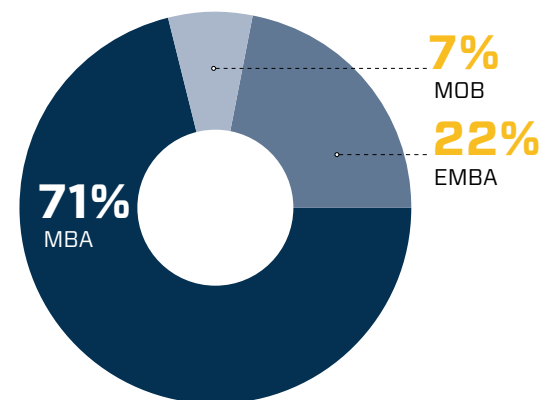
Where BYU Marriott MBA alumni reside



BYU Marriott alumni at a glance

- **8,195** total alumni (as of January 2018)
- First class graduated in **1963** with **15** students (nine still living)
- First EMBA class graduated in **1986**
- **14** MBA directors (Grant McQueen is no. 14)

Alumni by degree



Moved by a Time-Out



New Orleans Hornets and a trip to Sydney for the 2000 Summer Olympic Games.

“I had many amazing experiences,” Waters says. “Two of my most memorable are watching the Olympic opening and closing ceremonies in person and standing on the floor of an NBA arena watching twenty thousand fans go crazy over what I spent my days working on.”

While Waters enjoyed her routine and found great satisfaction in her work, life ultimately took her in a different direction. After ten rewarding but grueling years in the sporting world, Waters made the difficult decision to take a time-out. She returned home to Utah to reflect on what she wanted to do next from both a work and a life perspective.

“I started looking at opportunities in Salt Lake City and happened to find a posting for a position with Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals,” Waters says. “The job spoke to my skill set and what I had been doing in sports. I thought testing out my skills in a completely new industry would be interesting, and working for a cause would have a nice reward to it.”

When she was offered the job, Waters decided she was ready to make the move from sports sponsorship to nonprofit. Little did she know that the career pivot

would stick. “My intention was to spend a couple of years expanding my experience and then move on,” Waters says. “That was eleven years ago, and I’m still here. Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals has given me so many opportunities to develop as a professional. That’s what has kept me here.”

Life has had many other fulfilling moments for Waters. During her time with Children’s Miracle Network Hospitals, she has helped raise more than \$3 billion. This accomplishment and others were a large part of the reason she was included on *Utah Business* magazine’s “30 Women to Watch” list in 2011 and its “Forty Under 40” list in 2018.

In addition to these achievements, Waters received her bachelor’s degree in business administration from Golden Gate University in 2005 and her MBA from BYU Marriott in 2016, both while working full-time. She considers earning these degrees her proudest accomplishment.

“Getting my MBA deepened my business knowledge bench considerably,” Waters says. “Those learnings directly apply to the work that I am doing, and I have been able to bring that experience into my job and lean on it as I navigate my role and am able to bring more value to my company and the mission that we have.”

The Wonders of Learning

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

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

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

Yiu began working on Discover Wonders a year ago and launched a



Kickstarter campaign early in 2018 that earned more than \$32,000.

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

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

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

Each of Yiu’s professional positions can be traced back to her own educational experiences. She graduated with a BS in psychology from BYU-Hawaii in 2006 and an MBA from BYU Marriott in 2012. While at BYU, Yiu took every



opportunity to be involved. She served as vice president of the MBA Strategy and Consulting Club and participated in various business competitions, including the Wake Forest University Marketing Summit case competition and BYU Marriott’s Miller Business Model Competition. For her achievements, Yiu was selected as both a Hawes and an Eccles scholar.

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

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

From Race Cars to Chatbooks

Dan Jimenez didn’t originally plan to get an MBA from BYU Marriott, but his choice to do so launched him in an unexpected career and helped him develop the skills needed to raise more than \$20 million in venture capital in the first year of Chatbooks, a mobile app that creates photo books from your digital photos.

Since Jimenez was a young boy growing up in Alpine, Utah, he dreamed of working with race cars. That dream led him to study and graduate in mechanical engineering from BYU in 2011 and then find a job in the industry he’d always wanted to work in.

After graduation, Jimenez moved to South Carolina and worked for Ford designing, testing, and racing cars. He excelled in his work and was part of a team that won the Daytona 500. However, over the course of his time in the fast-paced world of racing, his vision for his future began to shift. He realized he had an acute interest in creating and growing his own business. To do that, he decided he needed to go back to school.

“When I was considering the different schools that I could attend, BYU stood out in different ways,” says Jimenez. He returned to BYU and earned his MBA in 2015.

Jimenez noticed a difference in himself from the beginning of the program to the end. And he wasn’t the only one; his wife, Adrienne, saw a change in him as well. Throughout the program and as president of the MBA strategy and consulting club, he gained skills in strategy, consulting, finance, and entrepreneurship, and his experience at BYU Marriott instilled a confidence that gave him an intense belief in the possible—and the insight to achieve it.

“I started the program as an engineer, and I was pretty introverted,” he says. “BYU Marriott taught me how to open up, how to be more outgoing, and how to get to know people.” He also learned how to take his skills of innovation—which he developed in the race car industry—and apply them to business.

As he was getting close to graduation, Jimenez was introduced to a local startup company called Chatbooks. After working for a couple weeks as a contractor, he decided he wanted to stay on long term.

Because the company was less than a year old, the founders were primarily focused on marketing and product development. Jimenez became responsible for everything else: finance, operations, legal, and HR. “I loved the vibe of a younger company and the idea that I could come in and make a difference,” he says. “There were no limitations to what we could try.”

Jimenez brought a cool head and insight to the team at a time they needed it. He successfully led the raising of more than \$20 million in venture capital, displaying a deep maturity by learning what investors were looking for and shaping the Chatbooks story to fit that.

Now Chatbooks COO, Jimenez is excited to see what the future brings. And he can’t help but remember the initial journey that brought him to Chatbooks. “I think I had every possible opportunity afforded me because of BYU Marriott and its brand and reputation,” he concludes.



1992



Each spring, world-language teacher **Lori LeVar Pierce's** work takes her out of the classroom and into the gladiator ring. There her Latin students study a different side of ancient culture while competing at the National Junior Classical League Convention and participating in gladiator fights, javelin throws, and even a chariot race. After Pierce graduated with her MBA from BYU in 1992, she worked for several years in marketing research, including as a director of marketing research for UPS, before taking time off to be at home with her children. Later she used her BYU undergraduate degree in French teaching with a minor in German teaching to land a teaching job in Mississippi. She also serves as the president of the Mississippi chapter of the American Association of Teachers of German and as a board member for the Columbus Choral Society. She and her husband, Daniel, have three children.

1993



Charles Amonett channeled his business education in an unlikely direction—fueling a writing career exploring the role of ethics in business. Amonett graduated magna cum laude from BYU in April 1975 with a degree in university studies. After working for eighteen years for a variety of companies, Amonett returned to BYU and graduated with his MBA in 1993. He then jumped headfirst back into business. As Amonett traveled with his new job, he decided to use his experience in the business world to write about a futuristic businessman in a series of self-published mystery novels. Amonett also published *12 Good Leadership Values Which Dumb Managers Don't Understand* and a collection of poems. Since retiring, Amonett has begun a YouTube channel, on which he narrates children's books.

2001



When **Neal Courtney** graduated from BYU Marriott's MBA program in 2001, the last thing he envisioned was a career in children's haircuts, yet that's precisely what he's doing—although Courtney isn't actually cutting hair. "When my wife, Alexis, first suggested we buy a Cookie Cutters Haircuts for Kids franchise, my first response was, 'Are you crazy?' But now here I am, running the fastest-growing kids' hair-care franchise in the country." Courtney's journey to Cookie Cutters CEO started at BYU Marriott, where he gained confidence and learned to think analytically on his feet. After graduation, he nabbed a job as a senior financial analyst at Kmart Corporation; he then moved to Frito-Lay and eventually landed as the CEO of Mrs. Fields Famous Brands before branching off into the Cookie Cutters world. One of his favorite parts of being an entrepreneur is the flexibility it provides to make his family a top priority.

2005



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

When Class Notes Pay Off

While many students are tempted to toss away class notes at the end of a school year, BYU MBA alum **Jason Barron** kept his and is actually making a profit from them.

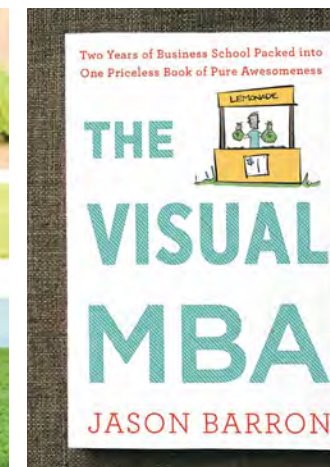
Earlier in his education, Barron had begun taking notes in a different way. Instead of frantically writing lecture notes, he drew key concepts during class, a form of notetaking called "sketchnoting." Barron first heard about sketchnoting from a work friend, and when he tried it out, he noticed his ability to remember the information was better. He decided to pursue the notetaking art by practicing and even attending conferences that taught the skill. When he started the MBA program, Barron decided to further apply the acquired technique.

"I was pursuing an MBA and realized that, as far as I knew, no one had tried sketchnoting an entire MBA class," Barron says. "I thought it was worth trying."

After receiving positive feedback from family members and classmates, Barron decided to compile his visual notes into a book, *The Visual MBA*, which he completed in fall 2017, just after graduating from BYU. Barron planned to create the book for fellow classmates and the incoming MBA class at the time. To cover editing and printing costs, he started a Kickstarter campaign requesting \$7,000.

In twenty-eight days, the campaign raised more than \$70,000, with donations from about forty countries. Initially nervous about how the book would be received, Barron has been amazed at the responses from readers around the world. "My kids got to see this book going to Japan and Saudi Arabia," Barron says. "All the reviews that came back were positive. For me, that was super satisfying."

After seeing the success of the book, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt contracted publishing rights for the highly visual volume, which is slated to be released in the United States this April. Other publishers abroad



have also taken an interest in pursuing the rights to translate and publish the book.

Barron remembers a time when he felt like giving up on the project altogether. As a father of five, he had to balance time amid the MBA program, compiling the book, and caring for his family. "It was a big challenge," Barron says. "More than once I thought, 'I can't accomplish this. No one will like it. It will be too much work.'" The reassuring words of his wife, Jackie, and a strong support system helped Barron push through moments of struggle and to complete the endeavor.

A creative mind-set and the knowledge he gained from the MBA program continue to help Barron's career goals today. "I think the ability to think outside the box and do things differently is critical," he says. Thinking creatively helped him as a founding partner of a startup and currently as senior project manager of user experience for the Publishing Services department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The lessons learned have also helped him in other aspects of his life. "This entire experience—earning my MBA and the process of publishing the book—has helped me in my Church calling and as a father," says Barron. "I can think more broadly and find a better way to do things. The whole experience has been a huge blessing to me."

Brick of Mormon Stories

For BYU Marriott MBA alum **Steve Van Wagenen**, teaching his children about the importance of self-reliance and resourcefulness involves LEGO blocks. Van Wagenen is the author and creator of *Brick of Mormon Stories*, a storybook that depicts scenes from the Book of Mormon in the form of LEGO toys. He has enlisted the help of all five of his sons with the project.

Van Wagenen earned both his bachelor's in economics in 1996 and his MBA in 1998 from BYU and is now the director of operations at KLAS Enterprises, a research and insights company in Orem, Utah, specializing in healthcare. While a student, Van

Wagenen learned skills that taught him the value of ingenuity and innovation. "Those skills have helped me immensely as I've worked on the creation of this book," he says.

Van Wagenen was first inspired by the idea for his book when he had a back injury that limited his mobility. While he couldn't move much, one thing he could do was sit on the ground and play with his boys. They built numerous creations out of LEGOs, and Van Wagenen wanted to save the memories they'd made; instead, he took pictures, which sparked an idea. "I'd seen picture books telling stories from the Book of Mormon,"

he says. "I thought I could do something similar using LEGOs."

Van Wagenen ran with the idea—although it didn't turn out to be nearly as easy as he initially anticipated. "I discovered there was a lot more involved than just playing with LEGOs," he observes.

Once the models were built, the real work began. Creating a picture book requires photography, design, publishing, and print skills—all of which Van Wagenen lacked. Not one to be afraid of a challenge, Van Wagenen pursued self-publishing; he read books, watched videos, and learned through trial and error.

He also involved his sons throughout the process, knowing it would be a great tool for teaching them at a young age the wisdom of saving and managing money wisely. In addition, the boys would be able to put the money they earned to good use—funding their future missions for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. One son has now paid for his mission through funds from *Brick of Mormon Stories*, and a second son is preparing to serve. And Van Wagenen and his sons are now working on a second book that depicts scenes from Church history.

"I like that we learned to do something we didn't know how to do and that we have done it together," Van Wagenen says. "And to have our testimonies strengthened while we were doing it was perhaps the greatest benefit."



2009



Getting an MBA was always **Jeremy Romney Coon's** goal, so he chose a BYU undergraduate degree in media arts studies to diversify his business school application. But by the time his independent film *Napoleon Dynamite* received overwhelming popular response upon its release in 2004, Coon's career path had shifted. His business education would play a supporting rather than starring role. After graduating with a BYU Marriott MBA in 2009, Coon worked as a media and entertainment account manager at Adobe, founded Jeremy Coon Productions, and executive produced an animated *Napoleon Dynamite* television series with FOX Television. He also produced several other award-winning films. Coon is currently the executive producer at the September Club, a successful documentary-editing company. Coon sits on the board of the Utah Film Center and enjoys pickleball, skiing, traveling, and spending time with his wife, Katharine, and their two-year-old son.

2011



A fifty-minute train ride south from Milan will take you to the historic yet small town of Piacenza, Italy—the riverside hometown of BYU Marriott MBA alum **Andrea Cordani**. While in Italy, Cordani received a master's degree before moving more than five thousand miles away to Provo. The move, and the accessible professors and integrated classroom work, proved to be exactly what Cordani needed. The summer after his first year in the MBA program, Cordani interned for Apple then spent four weeks in Paraguay with the BYU Kennedy Center and Fundación Paraguaya. After graduation, Cordani took a job with Adobe and then with Amazon. Now Cordani and his family have returned to Italy, where he works as the Amazon Prime Italy and Spain leader. He enjoys traveling and spending time with his wife, Danielle, and their four children.

2013



In 2007, **Austin Beckham** graduated with a bachelor's in neuroscience from BYU. He planned to attend medical school but reevaluated that decision after undergoing surgery. Instead, Beckham chose to study business. While in the MBA program, he interned at Domo and Mrs. Fields Famous Brands, gaining experience as a business-intelligence analyst and brand manager. He graduated in 2013 and stayed in Provo to work for health company BPX Innovations. Beckham then worked in marketing at Symantec before taking his current job at Cisco. He started as a project manager before being promoted to offer-strategy manager in 2018. He hopes to one day start his own business involving machine learning, artificial intelligence, and SaaS. Beckham and his wife, Katie, have two young children and live in Lindon, Utah.

2013



Sarah Adams Mitchell chose to study marketing because of the way it "perfectly blended creativity and analysis." She earned her BS in management with an emphasis in marketing from BYU Marriott in 2006. Following graduation, Mitchell served an eighteen-month mission in Germany and Austria. Upon her return, she took a job as a marketing manager for Mortgage Compliance Advisors in Salt Lake City. After almost three years with the company, she decided to return to school. Mitchell graduated with her MBA from BYU Marriott in 2013 and landed her dream job as the marketing manager at Harmons Grocery. For four years she oversaw the grocer's strategy and content creation. She recently transitioned to life as a stay-at-home mom to her baby girl. Mitchell and her husband, Jeff, are raising their daughter in Salt Lake City.

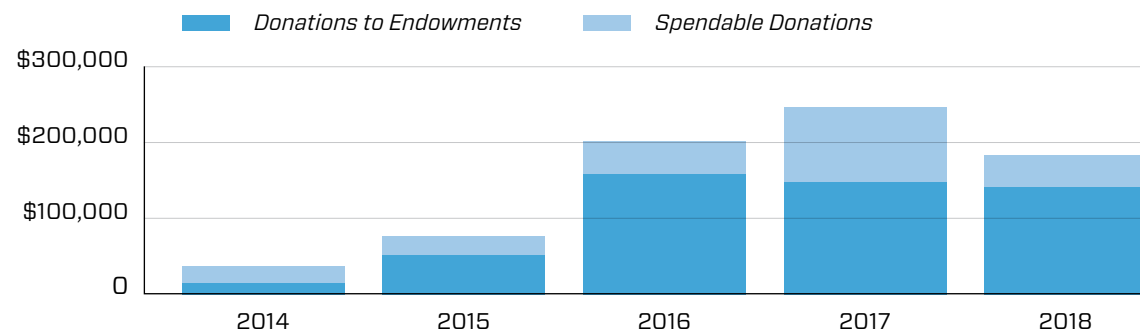
Program Support

Started two years ago, the BYU Marriott MBA annual alumni conference provides an ideal opportunity for alums to catch up with their classmates, network with other BYU Marriott colleagues, and stay connected with their alma mater. Attendance more than doubled this year, as grads enjoyed an agenda packed with inspiring keynote speakers, informative classes, and great food. The class reunion is only one of many events the MBA program hosts to serve its alumni. Read more about those events on page 39.

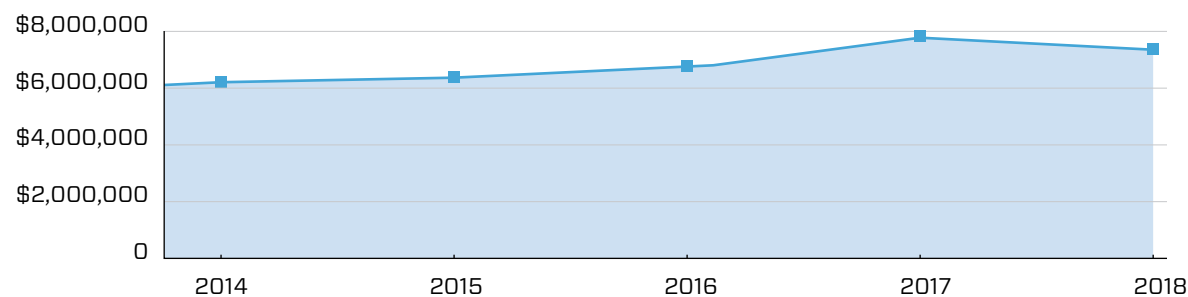


Fundraising Report

Total Donations to MBA Program



MBA Endowment Funds Growth



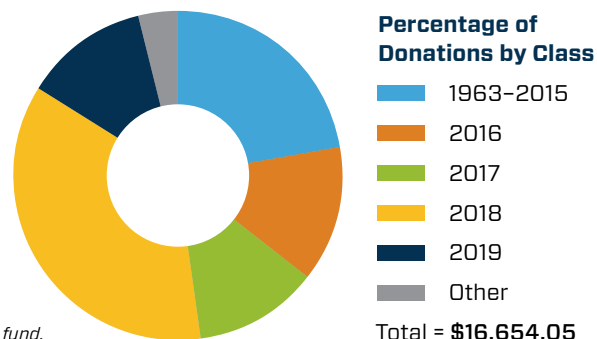
New MBA Student Endowment Fund

The MBA Student Endowment Fund was created in 2016 and focuses on allowing MBA classes to set goals and donate toward a common cause. Classes can work with the MBA program to direct their portion of the fund toward the following:

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

If your class would like to participate, as a group you should set a class goal, choose where your donations are directed, and reach out to the MBA alumni manager David Jungheim at dmj32@byu.edu.

Students and alumni from 29 different classes have donated to this fund.



My School Cares for Me

Attending the Career Boost event sponsored by BYU Marriott's MBA program is something **Allan Rodriguez** anticipated this year. This is the second year Rodriguez, who graduated from the program in 2014, has attended the event. "I have been with my employer for twenty years," Rodriguez explains, "so I am vested with them. I attended Career Boost looking for ways to progress within my employer organization. I also enjoyed the opportunity to discuss current job challenges with professors and other alumni, and to look for suggestions and recommendations."



That is exactly what the annual Career Boost event is designed to do, says **David Jungheim**, alumni relations manager for the BYU Marriott MBA program. "It's a half-day event that includes breakfast and lunch, a keynote address, and multiple breakout sessions that allow participants to tailor their training depending on what they're looking for," he explains. "They can strengthen skills to improve their current position or get advice and help in finding a new job."

Career Boost is only one of dozens of events planned and facilitated by the MBA program, all designed to help the program meet what Jungheim has identified as three main needs of its alumni:

- Networking opportunities so alumni can connect with other class members, the program, and the school
- Continuing education
- Career services to help alumni develop and move forward

In addition to Career Boost, the program held its second alumni conference in 2018. "The alumni conference has gained significant momentum," observes Jungheim. "This is our second year, and we more than doubled our attendance."

For the alumni conference, alumni are invited to attend every five years "so there is a dynamic mix of individuals attending the conference," Jungheim explains. "It's held during Homecoming week, which is an ideal backdrop for our alumni to reconnect with their classmates as well as network with peers working around the world in many different organizations." The half-day event includes a networking dinner, a keynote speaker, a variety of lectures, MBA swag, and an opportunity for each class to reconnect.

The MBA program also sponsored two tech networking trips: one to Seattle and one to San Francisco. "Our alumni are crucial to the success of our tech networking trips," Jungheim says. "In Seattle, we visited Nike, Intel, Amazon, Microsoft, and T-Mobile. Our career services team worked closely with alumni contacts, who set up those meetings and arranged for panel discussions, tours, mixers, pizza parties, and all sorts of different things to introduce our students to their company and introduce company reps to our students."

Being part of these tech networking trips is something that **Jacob Morris** looks forward to. A 2015 MBA grad, Morris took a job with Intel after he graduated because of his own tech networking experience. "I was deciding between a few different internship offers," he says. "So coming to Intel personally to see

the campus and talk with employees helped solidify that I wanted to come here for my internship, which then led to my employment. I choose to help host these trips because I have gone on the trips myself and recognize the benefit, and I want to return the favor and help other students in the same way I was helped.”

Tyler Nebeker, a 2016 MBA grad, organized the half-day tech visit to Microsoft and feels the same way. “I absolutely came away from my tech trek with a better feel for the companies we visited,” he says.

“In some cases, it confirmed my interest level in the company—for better or worse. Everyone interested in the tech world should go on at least one tech trek.”

Finally, the MBA program held more than fifty information sessions on campus, at the BYU Salt Lake Center, and across the country. These sessions offer a face-to-face opportunity for potential students to chat with alumni, current students, and program officials. MBA alumni play crucial roles in these events as they connect and share their experiences with current and potential students. “Having our alumni at these sessions always provides interested individuals with an important perspective,” says Jungheim. “They



bring credibility as they talk about how important the program has been in their careers, and how much they learned from and enjoyed their experience at BYU Marriott. Hearing that directly from alumni is more powerful than hearing us talk about how great the program is.”

Whether attending Career Boost, reunions, trips, or recruiting events, MBA alumni are connecting and networking in ways that make their time spent in the Tanner Building even more rewarding. “I talk with my work peers for weeks about what I learn at these events,” Rodriguez observes. “They are a big value-add of being a BYU Marriott alum. These events remind me that my school still cares for me.”



Have you **MARCH-D** Forth?

Mentored MBA students or fellow alumni
Attended a reunion or alumni conference
Referred a potential student
Connected with students and alumni
Hired MBA interns and alumni
Donated to an MBA student fund



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