



Semester change

Professors adapt to a shortened winter semester and make up for lost time

Page 3



Untold stories

Tennis alum talks about the inspiring lives of athletes

Page 7



Universe Plus

Use the Universe Plus app to read Spanish translations

Pages 1 and 5

universe.byu.edu
January 19 - 25, 2021

THE UNIVERSE

Serving the Brigham Young University Community

Facebook Twitter Instagram @UniverseBYU
Brigham Young University
Provo, Utah

BYU colleges, departments addressing racism on campus

By MADDIE MEHR

BYU is heightening its efforts to address racism on campus.

Since the protests surrounding the death of George Floyd and the subsequent rise of the Black Lives Matter movement, BYU has sought to follow the admonition of President Russell M. Nelson and leaders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People to “review processes, laws, and organizational attitudes regarding racism and root them out once and for all.”

University level reform

The BYU Committee on Race, Equity & Belonging was formed under the direction of President Kevin J. Worthen over the summer. The committee’s mission statement says:

“Racism — whether implicit or overt, whether individual or institutional — is a highly destructive and complex feature of our society. Indeed, it is a sin, with consequences that detrimentally impact the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of BYU students, faculty, staff and alumni. Rooting out racism, healing its wounds and building bridges of understanding is the responsibility of every member of the BYU community.”

According to the Race, Equity & Belonging mission statement, the effort to combat racism begins with loving God and loving one’s neighbor. The statement lists various ways the committee plans to address racism at BYU, including listening to the experiences of students who are Black, Indigenous, or people of color, and enlisting BYU faculty and administrators to “understand both the subtle and overt ways that racism may impact individual thought and interactions, organizational units, processes, policies, practices, procedures, and operations.”

The Committee on Race, Equity & Belonging is in the process of submitting recommendations to President Worthen that “will assist BYU to advance racial understanding, enhance equity and promote belonging, and that will have a significant and enduring positive impact on the prosperity of our (Black, Indigenous and people of color) communities at BYU.”

Committee member and sociology professor Ryan Gabriel said the committee is not speaking with the media about the content of the recommendations until the report is submitted. But he said the committee is committed to



Nate Edwards/BYU Photo

BYU is addressing racism in multiple ways from a campus-wide committee to efforts of individual professors. These changes come after a summer of protests that impacted colleges and communities across the country.

transparency with the broader campus community.

BYU sociology professor Jacob Rugh, who has been a leading voice for change on the BYU campus, said the committee’s recommendations may deal with hiring more ethnically diverse faculty members and restructuring general education requirements to include diversity.

Rugh said classes on race and gender are not being pushed on BYU students by professors, but the demand for diversity classes has increased 40% in the last decade, according to research he conducted in 2019.

Rugh said he expects some recommendations from the Committee on Race, Equity & Belonging will begin to be implemented this semester and continue in Fall Semester.

President Worthen invited students to share their experiences with race and equity on campus through the Diversity and Equity Campus Climate Survey by The Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium in October.

Several members of the Black Student Union either did not respond to or declined requests for comment on the effectiveness of the university’s efforts.

College and department level

In tandem with the Committee on Race, Equity & Belonging, colleges and departments on campus have created their own committees to address issues of race and diversity and published their own mission statements.

Hiring ethnically diverse faculty, funding research on diverse families and recruiting a more diverse student body are examples of the reforms being considered by the School of Family Life diversity committee, said committee chair Erin Holmes.

Holmes said the committee proposed that individual faculty members should teach about prejudice, implicit bias, oppression, microaggression, racism, violence, intersectionality, and stereotyping and how they influence families. The committee also discussed including scholars from the Black, Indigenous and people of color populations in course syllabi, encouraging under-represented voices in class and celebrating diverse families in lectures and activities.

“We believe these efforts will require both institutional and individual work. We also believe that these efforts will benefit students, as well as faculty, staff, and administrators in the School,” Holmes said.

The History Department is one of several departments considering a diversity general education requirement, said department chair Brian Cannon. He said the creation of a one-credit diversity class for history majors was proposed, which may include guest lectures with prominent scholars and members of different ethnic groups. Cannon said another proposal being considered is the incorporation of anti-racism into already-existing coursework.

Carl Hanson, Department of Public

Health chair, said racism poses a significant challenge to the well-being of individuals. He cited the removal of Native Americans to reservations, where they were given nutrient-poor flour and lard by the government because their land was unsuitable for farming. “Indian fry bread is not a traditional food,” he said.

Hanson plans to send out a survey in January to get a grasp on how well the department is doing with diversity and inclusion. “We are sensitive to the issue and we’re committed to being part of the solution,” he said.

Among other efforts, the College of Fine Arts and Communications began the Bravo! Listen Up! initiative with the Theatre and Media Arts Department, hosting speakers to address issues of race and racism. A lecture with Ta-Nehisi Coates, author of the memoir “Between the World and Me,” drew over 400 students and faculty.

The J. Reuben Clark Law School began hosting a monthly reading group titled “Listen Together,” in which members of the law school community discuss books and articles addressing race. Dean Gordon Smith led the first discussion group in September, which focused on essays by Black author Ibram X. Kendi, who Smith described as being more politically liberal, and Black scholar John McWhorter, who Smith said leans more politically conservative.

See RACISM on Page 5

BYU president encourages perseverance, unity

By EMMA GADESKI

President Kevin J. Worthen told students to persevere in unity amid COVID-19 and chaos during the semester’s first devotional on Jan. 12.

The power of both unity and diversity is needed more than ever during the pandemic and other pressing issues, he said. President Worthen also reminded students that the pandemic is not over and to adhere to COVID-19 safety guidelines, commending their good work last semester.

“While there is increased optimism because the end is in sight, there is a commensurate need to be more diligent than ever in wearing masks, washing our hands, maintaining social distancing and complying with testing protocols,” he said.

In addition, Sister Peggy S. Worthen gave a message focusing on current struggles. She encouraged students to have gratitude at all times.

There is “power in unity,” President Worthen said, referencing the Prophet Joseph Smith. “We are more in need of that unifying power perhaps than at any time in our lifetime. Not only to whether the pandemic storm, but also to address pressing issues like social justice, poverty, racism, and angry divisiveness and intolerance in political and other messages.”

The presence or absence of unity determines both an individual’s eternal destiny and the stability and prosperity of communities. True unity, however, does not require people to give up their individuality, President Worthen said.

He emphasized both unity and diversity to help members of the campus community achieve their full potential. “Without unity, diversity becomes divisive. Without diversity, unity becomes stagnant.”

He then gave an example of jazz music and played a video from a forum Marcus Roberts and The Modern Jazz Generation gave last February. In a jazz ensemble, individual improvisation often takes center stage, but there is still a need for unity, he said.

“If we strive for true unity by following the Savior’s example to love others regardless of their race, gender, sexual orientation, political leanings or other distinguishing characteristics, we can truly transform both our university community and the larger world with which we interact.”

To enhance both unity and diversity, President Worthen told BYU students to avoid contention and recognize that perfect unity can be achieved only through God and Christ.

“While diversity is not the opposite of unity, contention is,” he said, adding that avoiding contention does not mean individuals won’t disagree.

Individuals should disagree in a way that focuses on issues rather than making personal attacks. Disagreements should also reflect the truth that everyone is a beloved spirit child of Heavenly Parents, he said.

“So my message to you is simple. Persevere in unity, by coming closer to Heavenly Father and Christ, who never tire and are perfectly united.”

Sister Peggy S. Worthen also addressed current trials and offered gratitude as an antidote. Gratitude, she said, “lifts our souls through its miraculous healing balm.”

“Whether we are right in the middle of a global pandemic, experiencing devastating loss and grief, or we are experiencing the joyful moments of life, we must never forget to express gratitude,” she said.

UNIVERSE PLUS Scan this icon with the Universe Plus app to read a Spanish translation of this story.

Faith in crisis: Navigating faith changes while at BYU

By LISI MERKLEY

April came to BYU full of hope that her university experience would allow her to learn, serve and thrive, but she didn’t expect to struggle with her faith.

“I have never been thrown into an environment where people nitpicked every part of my faith like what happened during my time at BYU,” said April, who asked to keep her last name anonymous because of the delicate nature of her situation.

A few months ago April, a member of BYU’s sponsoring institution The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, was close to losing her testimony. “I forced myself to have a wakeup moment in which I realized that what matters is that I can’t deny that God exists and as many mistakes as I make and as much as my views and opinions change, I can’t deny the fact that I’ve felt the Spirit and that I know this is real.”

While April said she now feels closer to God than she has in a long time, the process of re-evaluating her faith was complicated by her BYU attendance. “I felt inadequate when I struggled with my faith because the standard was always to be perfect and to never waiver.”

April is not alone in her experience with faith at BYU. She said she has talked to other students about their faith journeys and many asked her to



Lisi Merkley

Some students experience faith crises during their time at BYU. For these students, the culture and policies of the university present specific challenges.

not tell anyone else about their struggles out of fear of repercussions from the Honor Code Office. “I don’t believe BYU has created a healthy environment in which students may question their faith without feeling like they’re going to risk their status at school.”

Young adults and faith

Faith questioning and changes in beliefs aren’t unique to BYU students.

Studies show that general religious involvement is dropping in teens and young adults.

The National Survey of Youth and Religion followed over 3,000 American teens from 2002 to 2012 and examined their feelings and participation in religion over the years. Part of this survey found that weekly church attendance of youth 13-17 dropped from 40% to 20% over five years, and over

the course of the study, 48% of respondents didn’t change religion at all. The remaining group either converted, switched or distanced themselves from religion at least once.

BYU psychology professor Sam Hardy said there are a number of developmental reasons teens and young adults are likely to question or leave religion. College-aged youth are more able to think and reason critically than they were as children or teens. “They’re gonna start to pick apart belief systems, including maybe their own belief system, and think critically about it.”

Young adults in college also have more autonomy from their parents, which could lead to a decline in church attendance.

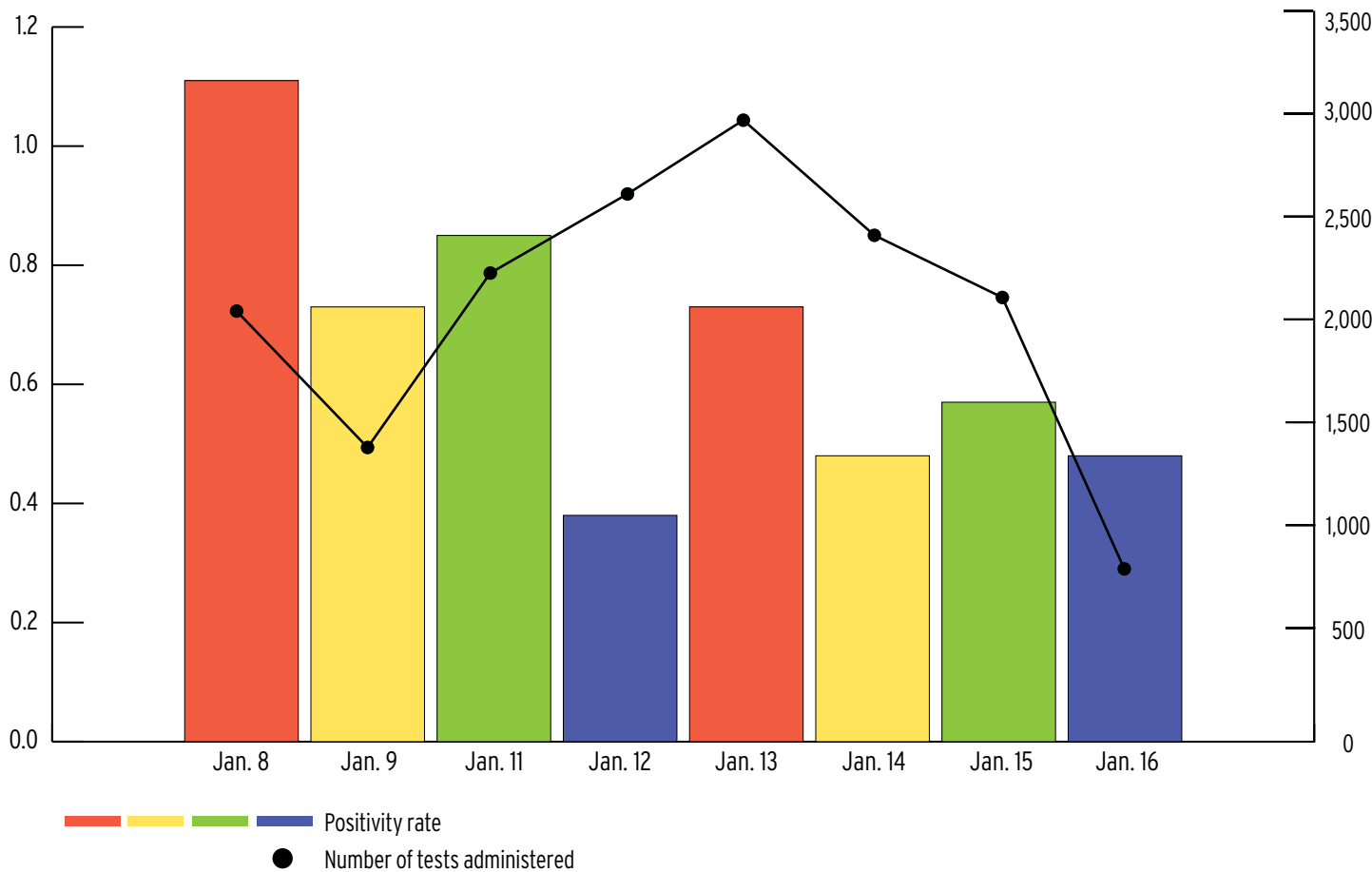
Teen and young adult years also involve some serious identity formation. “They’re trying to decide who they are and who they want to be, or whatever,” Hardy said. “It’s not only critically thinking about their beliefs that they make sense, but deciding if that’s who they want to be.”

BYU Counseling and Psychology Services psychologist Clint Hobbs said individuation and independence is actually a good thing. “That’s an uncomfortable process that we kind of want all of our students to go through so that you know why you believe what you believe.”

See FAITH on Page 4

COVID-19 OUTBREAK

Winter semester entry testing results



Allie Peterson

Data reported from BYU entry testing. The student screening tests are rapid antigen point-of-care diagnostic tests given to students who are not symptomatic.

Outside the outbreak

From the Associated Press



States declare emergencies, close capitols ahead of rallies

Responding to warnings of potentially violent demonstrations, governors across the nation are calling out National Guard troops, declaring states of emergency and closing their capitols to the public ahead of President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration. Though details remain murky, demonstrations are expected at state capitols leading up to Biden's succession of President Donald Trump on Jan. 20. State officials hope to avoid the type of violence that occurred Jan. 6, when a mob of Trump supporters stormed the U.S. Capitol, leaving a Capitol Police officer and four others dead.



Utah activist who filmed fatal Capitol shooting released

A Utah activist who filmed the fatal shooting of a Trump supporter during the insurrection at the U.S. Capitol will be released on house arrest, a federal judge ruled Jan. 15. John Sullivan, 26, a self-described journalist and liberal activist, was arrested Jan. 14 and charged with civil disorder, violent entry or disorderly conduct and entering a restricted building or grounds. His initial court appearance was via video conference where he was released on multiple conditions, including remaining at his home when he isn't going to work, religious services or court appearances.



Church leaders condemn violence and lawless behavior

The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints released a statement on Jan. 15 condemning violence and urging members to obey, honor and sustain the law. "With great concern we observe the political and cultural divisions in the United States and around the world. We condemn violence and lawless behavior, including the recent violence in Washington, D.C. and any suggestion of further violence. While The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is neutral in matters of party politics, we remind our members - whatever their individual political views - to be united in our commitment to the Savior, Jesus Christ, and His teachings."



Urban Hire: Meyer returns to sidelines with NFL's Jaguars

Urban Meyer has won everywhere he's coached. Small colleges. Big-time programs. He's been a difference maker at each stop during his storied career. He's ready to try something new: the NFL. Meyer agreed to become head coach of the Jacksonville Jaguars on Thursday, leaving the broadcast booth and returning to the sidelines after a two-year absence that followed another health scare.

Utah reports first case of United Kingdom COVID-19 variant

ASSOCIATED PRESS

SALT LAKE CITY — Utah health officials confirmed the state's first case of the COVID-19 variant that's been seen in the United Kingdom on Jan. 15. Lab tests found a 25 to 44 year old man from Salt Lake County who tested positive last month had the variant. The state health department said the man hadn't traveled outside the state and experienced

only mild symptoms. "We fully anticipated we would find this strain in Utah," State Epidemiologist Dr. Angela Dunn said in a statement. The COVID-19 vaccines currently approved for use are believed to be effective against this strain, state health officials said. Preliminary information suggests the variant is significantly more contagious, though there is no evidence so far that it causes more severe illness or increased risk of death.

BYU library revamps COVID-19 safety guidelines

By VERONICA MACIEL

The Harold B. Lee Library is implementing Healthy Together daily passport checks at every entrance and reminding students to wear their masks with more signs. This comes after the library closed its reading room due to "non-compliance with the campus mask policy," a December tweet read. Now students who enter have to show a daily passport in Utah's Healthy Together

app as proof they are not experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. On Jan. 11, the library announced the reading room is back open for students to study in. Building access is limited to BYU students and staff this semester. According to BYU's COVID-19 updates, "in order to come to campus and access campus services, BYU students and employees are required to download and use the Healthy Together App or complete a daily checkup online or use a blank form."

BYU announces virtual Women's Conference for 2021

By VERONICA MACIEL

BYU Women's Conference will be completely online this year without any on-campus gatherings, the university announced Jan. 15. Both paid and complimentary sessions will be available through the conference website related to this year's theme, "I am a Child of God. His Promises are Sure." One of the seven complimentary sessions will feature Elder Ronald

A. Rasband of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles and his wife, Sister Melanie Rasband. The other six complimentary sessions available will include a Sister to Sister event and messages from selected presidency members of Church organizations. Some of the topics for this year's conference include: fostering understanding and unity in a divisive world, preparing children to live in a world of wondrous diversity, understanding differences between shame and guilt and encouraging women to speak out.

Long road to normalcy: Virtual village connects marathoners

ASSOCIATED PRESS

BOSTON — Organizers of the Boston Marathon — postponed indefinitely because of the coronavirus pandemic — have launched a virtual Athletes' Village to reproduce at least some of the camaraderie of the real thing. The Boston Athletic Association says it's an attempt to keep runners connected as the group works out a date for the 125th running of the planet's

most storied footrace. Last April's race was canceled and tentatively rescheduled to sometime this autumn, but because of a surge in COVID-19 cases in hard-hit Massachusetts, officials still can't say when in-person racing for the masses can safely resume. But the BAA hopes participants will use the village as a digital hub to share training tips, seek out coaching, compete against one another in monthly challenges — and just generally party like Boston Marathoners have done since 1897.

THE UNIVERSE

Serving the Brigham Young University Community

January 19 - 25, 2021 ■ Volume 74, Issue 14 ■ universe.byu.edu
152 BRMB, BYU, Provo, Utah 84602

EDITOR <i>Lisi Merkley</i>	EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS <i>Ally Arnold</i> <i>Gabrielle Shiozawa</i>	PROFESSIONAL STAFF DIRECTOR <i>Steve Fidel</i>
CAMPUS EDITOR <i>Emma Gadeski</i>	DEVELOPER <i>John Martin</i>	BUSINESS MANAGER <i>Ellen Hernandez</i>
METRO EDITOR <i>Whitney Eversole</i>	EDITORIAL DESIGNER <i>Allie Peterson</i>	DESIGN MANAGER <i>Warren Bingham</i>
SPORTS EDITOR <i>Caleb Turner</i>	GRAPHIC DESIGNERS <i>Kate Slobodian</i> <i>Olivia Hales</i>	NEWSROOM MANAGER <i>Carrie Moore</i>
FEATURES EDITOR <i>Emily Strong</i>	SPECIAL SECTIONS <i>Hannah Gladwell</i>	FACULTY ADVISER <i>Kris Boyle</i>
OPINION EDITOR <i>Kenzie Holbrook</i>	CIRCULATION <i>Jared Devenport</i> <i>Ean Price</i>	
ONLINE EDITOR <i>McKayla Kreutzkamp</i>	NEWSLETTER <i>Benjamin Daniel</i>	
COPY EDITOR <i>Erin Johnston</i>	MARKETING <i>Alena Black</i> <i>Aubrey Tanner</i>	
SENIOR REPORTERS <i>Maddie Mehr</i> <i>Cassidy Wixom</i>	ADVERTISING SALES <i>Eric Forbush</i> <i>Michael Wade</i> <i>Connor Poulsen</i> <i>Lexi Carley</i>	
PHOTOGRAPHERS <i>Hannah Miner</i> <i>Preston Crawley</i> <i>Addison Blacker</i> <i>Sydney Gonzalez</i>	ACCOUNTING <i>Taylor Bennett</i> <i>Adam Dalton</i>	
VISUAL PRODUCER <i>Britney Sam</i>		

The Universe is a product of The Daily Universe and is an official publication of Brigham Young University and is produced as a cooperative enterprise of students and faculty. It is published as a laboratory newspaper by the College of Fine Arts and Communications and the School of Communications under the direction of a professional management staff.

The Universe is published weekly except during vacation periods.

The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the views of the student body, faculty, university administration, Board of Trustees or The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Copyright 2021 Brigham Young University.

For more news, including audio and video, visit universe.byu.edu

@UniverseBYU
letters@byu.edu
News 801-422-2957
Advertising & Circulation 801-422-7102

Lockdown: Tennis players getting on with life in Australia

ASSOCIATED PRESS

With no way out, tennis players in lockdown are figuring out ways to keep themselves fit within the confines of their Melbourne hotel rooms as they prepare for the Australian Open. Angelique Kerber, who won the Australian Open in 2016, spent her birthday in quarantine on Monday. Kerber is among the 72 players doing hard quarantine for 14 days after five positive coronavirus tests were returned from charter flights that brought almost 1,200 players, coaches, officials and media to Melbourne. Some players have expressed anger at being classified as close contacts merely for being on board charter flights with people who later tested positive. But local government, tennis and health authorities have said all players were warned of the risks well in advance. Australia's international borders are mostly closed. All arrivals must do mandatory quarantine.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM BYU COLLEGES

BYU professors adapt classes to shorter semester

By CASSIDY WIXOM

BYU's Winter Semester started a week later causing professors to adapt instruction in order to compensate for lost class time.

BYU delayed classes by a week "to allow more time between the holidays and the first day of classes," according to the COVID-19 updates webpage. The end date of the semester stayed the same, meaning there would be one less week of instruction.

"We're in this situation where we need to know the same amount of stuff but in a smaller amount of time," said BYU organic chemistry professor Joshua Price.

Price said normally he starts his organic chemistry classes with a week of basic review to prepare students for the new material. However, this semester he had to cut out all review and instead made an introductory study guide he sent to students.

"Unfortunately, I feel like I am passing the trouble onto the students," he said. "Some might feel like it's day one, and I'm already behind."

Besides cutting review out, some professors have had to cut down on class material, accelerate learning speed, add extra homework, take away active learning activities, combine lessons or take other steps to ensure they are best helping students.

Price said one of his colleagues even recorded and sent students three introductory lectures of information that were optional for students to watch but contained important information.

In organic chemistry and other science classes, Price said it can be difficult to determine what to cut down as much of the information is necessary to understand before moving onto



Preston Crawley

BYU's winter semester started a week later due to COVID-19 safety measures.

higher classes, research or medical school exams.

Price said he believes students will still succeed because these classes teach skills and concepts, not just facts. While teaching skills takes time and practice, Price said it is possible to recover from losing one week.

BYU computer science professor Mark Clement said for his class they adjusted the number of labs required. He said the students will still learn everything they need, but the downside is they aren't getting as much experience as a programmer, which might make them feel less confident as they move to the next class.

"Professors care about their students and make changes that will still allow them to succeed," Clement said.

BYU engineering professor Larry Baxter said for his department, students are learning material faster. COVID-19 restrictions make it so many interactive learning opportunities aren't possible at this time which means students have more time to master the material but less active experience with the concepts.

Baxter said even though it is harder to learn and teach right

now, he thinks BYU has done a great job at giving professors and students tools to succeed.

BYU humanities professor Michael Call said his class was not as affected by this change because it already had large amounts of content, so it wasn't too stressful for him to take a few things out.

Call said he feels lucky his classes aren't as dependent on covering every single part of the material as hard science classes do.

After hearing multiple stories of students contracting the virus over the break, he said it was "the right call" for BYU administration to push class back so people could recover from the virus.

"I was fine with the compromise," Call said. "I want to make sure the campus can stay open."

BYU was not the only university to adjust school schedules for COVID-19 safety measures. Utah State University and the University of Utah start their spring semesters on Jan. 19, a week later than usual, and they also canceled their spring breaks. Utah Valley University started their semester on Jan. 11 along with BYU and will have a full spring break in March.

COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS AND COMMUNICATIONS Professor's research team wins award from Facebook



Brian Smith

A BYU communications professor's research team recently won \$100,000. Facebook recognized Brian Smith's team as the winner of the People's Expectations and Experiences with Digital Privacy research award. Smith also worked with BYU computer science professor Xinru Page, IIT Kharagpur professor Mainack Mondal, and Indiana University professor Norman Makoto Su. Their award-winning research project is titled, "Deploying visual interventions for users of varying digital literacy levels." The team will use the prize money to continue their research, including running experiments testing Facebook users' understanding of privacy settings.

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES New updated track for English and English teaching majors



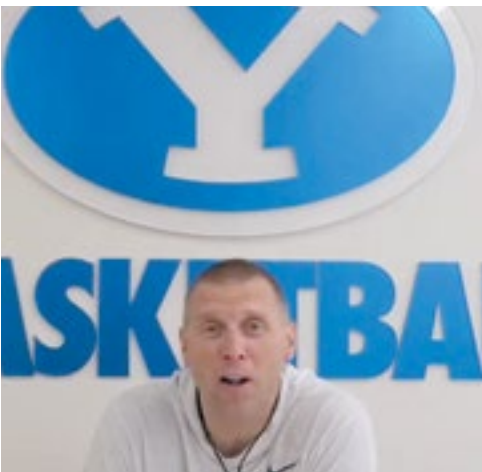
Joseph F. Smith Building

The BYU English Department announced an updated track for English and English

teaching majors and associated minors. The new requirements will start Fall Semester. The new English major allows students to focus on emphases including literary media and cultures, creative writing, literary studies, and professional writing and communication. The updated English teaching major will no longer require foreign language courses and will make other cosmetic changes. Minimal alterations have also been made to related minors including creative writing, English and professional writing and rhetoric.

"These changes build on the strengths of our legacy program," the department said in an announcement Jan. 8. "The new major allows students to benefit from our strong foundations while also specializing according to personal and professional interests."

MARRIOTT SCHOOL OF BUSINESS First-ever virtual alumni conference a success with viewers across the US



Mark Pope

Alumni of the BYU Marriott School of Business global supply chain management program held their first-ever virtual alumni conference. A record-breaking number of alumni, students and faculty were able to learn from and connect with each other from across the United States. The event included faculty and club president presentations. BYU men's basketball coach Mark Pope was the keynote speaker, encouraging participants to relentlessly work on creating a better version of themselves. Graduates gave counsel to current students, and each class of graduates reconnected during breakout sessions.

"I was actually glad the event went online because more alumni could participate," BYU senior Max Anderson said. "The event was easy to attend, allowed participants to reconnect and helped students learn from alumni."

CONFUSED ABOUT YOUR FEELINGS?



Learn about the traffic rules of dating in the latest edition of TWO.




Pick up the latest edition on racks around campus.

TODAY

UNIVERSITY DEVOTIONAL

Tuesday, January 19
11:05 a.m.

This event will be streamed live and available for viewing on BYUtv.



Elder David A. Bednar
Member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

Elder David A. Bednar was ordained and set apart as a member of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in October 2004. Prior to his call to the Quorum of the Twelve, Elder Bednar served as an Area Seventy, Area Authority Seventy, Regional Representative, twice as a stake president, and as a bishop.

Elder Bednar was born in Oakland, California. He served as a full-time missionary in southern Germany and then attended Brigham Young University, where

he received a bachelor's degree and a master's degree. He also received a doctoral degree in organizational behavior from Purdue University.


After completing his education, Elder Bednar was a professor of business management at Texas Tech University and at the University of Arkansas. He then served as the president of Brigham Young University-Idaho (formerly Ricks College) from 1997 to 2004.

Elder Bednar and his wife, Susan Kae Robinson, are the parents of three sons.

Selected speeches available at speeches.byu.edu

NEXT: UNIVERSITY FORUM

David Epstein
Reporter and Author



January 26
11:05 a.m.

FAITH

How to understand changes in faith

Continued from Page 1

This process of forming an identity leads to students being more invested in their beliefs. “That is a sign of psychological health, really kind of questioning and examining, and then coming to more firm conclusions and more kind of personal conclusions,” Hobbs said.

Faith crises and the Church

Latter-day Saint young adults might be the exception to the trend found in the National Survey of Youth and Religion. Hardy conducted an informal survey of 500 BYU psychology students a few years ago and found about 80% attended church weekly, compared to 20% in the national survey.

However, in the last year, Hardy informally surveyed another 900 psychology students about their levels of doubt. He found that 36% had no doubts, 11% had many doubts, and the remainder had at least some doubts, showing that doubts are relatively common among BYU students.

A 2016 survey of over 1,500 current and former Church members of all ages found that 49.1% of respondents said they believe all the Church’s teachings. The remaining half believe many or some teachings, while about 5% said they don’t believe most or all teachings.

The survey conducted by Jana Riess, an author with a Ph.D. in American religious history, and Benjamin Knoll, a professor of politics at Centre College in Danville, Kentucky, also found that the average age that respondents left the church was 21, supporting the idea that faith questions often occur in young adulthood.

Hardy pointed to not feeling accepted or engaged, doctrinal or gender issues, and Church history as reasons members leave the Church.

Riess and Knoll’s study also found that relationships with family and friends and church attendance play a role in who has doubts and leaves the Church. “Those who attend regularly and have more Mormons in their social networks are more likely to be believers, while those who attend less regularly and have more non-Mormons in their family and friendship circles are

more likely to be doubters,” the study reads.

Faith and the Honor Code

BYU’s Honor Code states that students and faculty must abide by certain policies in order to attend or work for BYU, including religious policies like regular church attendance. For students experiencing a faith crisis or many doubts, the threat of receiving consequences from the Honor Code Office weighs heavy on them even if they haven’t committed an Honor Code violation.

“There is fear and shame that comes when imperfect people are expected to keep the Honor Code,” April said. “Students expect Honor Code violations to be treated like Christ treats sins, with mercy and a certain ‘curve’ in our performance, while the school certainly does not.”

Fellow BYU student Samantha also fears repercussions from the Honor Code Office while her opinions on the Church and its policies change. “Even though I keep all of the commandments and all of my covenants, I usually feel like I have to have a perfect faith in order to hold my Honor Code standing and my temple recommend,” she said. “It’s really scary, and I feel like I am afraid a lot of the time.”

Samantha, who also asked to keep her last name anonymous out of fear of potential consequences, said she doesn’t open up to others about her feelings often because of that fear.

BYU alumna Chelsea Homer started a private Facebook support group for women experiencing a faith crisis. During the pandemic, the group has grown from fewer than 100 members to more than 1,500. “I started it as a refuge of sorts for women,” she said. “The women range from people who are pretty nuanced or questioning to other women who have left who just don’t know where to go.”

However, that refuge was breached in December 2020 when someone sent screenshots of a BYU-Idaho student’s membership in the group to the Student Honor Office. The student, who asked to remain anonymous, was barred from registering for classes until she met with the office.

“They gave me a warning and told me if I didn’t remove myself from the group then I will have ‘actions taken against me,’” the student told Homer.

After this experience, a handful of BYU students decided to leave the group because they worried something similar would happen to them.

“Just the idea of people reporting or taking screenshots of really vulnerable things is scary,” Homer said.

A lot of the fear surrounding the Honor Code and potential consequences from faith crises stems from questions surrounding the office and what constitutes a violation of requirements like “participate regularly in church services.”

BYU Honor Code Office Director Kevin Utt said there is no “rubric” to follow when it comes to how often someone needs to attend Church activities to remain in good Honor Code standing. “As a community of 40,000 people living in an ever-changing environment, there will always exist situations or circumstances that will impact how we participate regularly in Church services.”

Utt did not answer questions about potential consequences a student could receive for failing to attend church services regularly or how the Honor Code Office handles cases dealing with questions of faith because “the Honor Code addresses behaviors, not beliefs.”

BYU students and faculty verbally recommit to living the Honor Code in annual ecclesiastical endorsements with a church leader, and according to Utt, these endorsements “can be withdrawn at the ecclesiastical leader’s discretion.”

The ecclesiastical endorsement portal for leaders on a BYU Office of IT Support webpage says “a student who is admitted without being fully worthy is not prepared spiritually and displaces another student who is qualified to attend.” Ecclesiastical endorsements ensure students are living Church standards and are not less active.

According to Utt, the ecclesiastical endorsement has three questions: “Has the student abided by the requirements of the Honor Code? Is the student now abiding by the requirements of the Honor Code? And will the student continue to abide by the commitments of the Honor Code while a student at BYU?”

Utt said BYU exists “to provide an education in an atmosphere consistent with the ideals and principles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints” and observance of the Honor Code helps create and preserve that atmosphere. But for students like April and Samantha, uncertainty about the Honor Code often creates an atmosphere of fear that is not conducive to the natural, hallmark developmental process of identity formation of young adults.



BYU Photo

Students experiencing any level of faith crisis at BYU can seek out support either from friends and family or from resources like CAPS on campus.

How to cope with a faith crisis at BYU

By LISI MERKLEY

Questions about religion are common experiences for young adults, and BYU students are no exception.

However, dealing with questions and doubts about faith can be difficult at BYU where the majority of students are members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

BYU student Samantha is an active member of the Church, but she has doubts about whether certain policies like women not having the priesthood and the Church’s treatment of gay couples are revelation from God or simply tradition.

Samantha, who asked to keep her last name anonymous because of the delicate nature of her story, said she is extra cautious about who she opens up to about her beliefs and opinions about the Church. “People can be really judgmental, and I would worry that people would turn me in to my bishop for lacking faith, which has happened to me before, or I’ll be talked about in the ward council, which has also happened.”

For students like Samantha, changes in faith can be a scary experience, and they might be uncertain of who they can turn to for support. However, Klint Hobbs, a psychologist at BYU Counseling and Psychological Services, said finding support

through these experiences is the biggest way for students to cope.

How to get support

Support can come in multiple forms for BYU students experiencing a faith crisis. Hobbs suggested finding online support groups or friends who can validate and understand. “The number one thing I think is just not being alone with it,” Hobbs said. “That can be one of the biggest things that can help alleviate psychological stress.”

Hobbs said some professors on campus are willing to be a resource for struggling students. “I’ve heard good stories about professors just being willing to kind of be with students as they struggle, and professors whose students feel comfortable with just coming into their office and sometimes talking about the struggle.”

Students can also find support at CAPS. Hobbs said CAPS is an environment where students won’t be judged. “We’re here to make sure that you achieve the goals that you have. If you don’t know what those goals are, we’re here to help you figure that out. Again, with no agenda whatsoever.”

While not every student experiencing a faith crisis will experience clinical distress, Hobbs said CAPS is an option for anyone on the path. “If somebody is really struggling with this, and they feel isolated and alone, this would be

a place where they could come and they can definitely talk to a counselor.”

Hobbs emphasized that CAPS is a safe and confidential place for students. “So, just because we work for BYU, we’re licensed by the state. And that means that BYU can’t access our records here. They are medical records that are protected. So this would be a safe place to come and just kind of air that, without that worry about that getting out to anybody or anywhere else on campus.”

How to support a loved one

Experiencing a faith crisis can be hard for the person experiencing it, but it also takes a toll on someone’s friends and family.

According to Hobbs, seeing someone else doubt their faith can cause a lot of discomfort and dissonance. Someone’s instinct might be to “solve the problem” by trying to convince their loved one to continue believing the same things as them. “That almost always has not been helpful.”

Hobbs suggested that rather than try to push someone to believe something they don’t, family members and friends should express their love for someone struggling through a faith crisis.

This approach allows people to explore their questions without having to worry about the consequences of those questions or exploration, Hobbs said.

BYU students say their academic motivation declined in 2020

By KENZIE HOLBROOK

Hundreds of BYU students have noticed a decrease in motivation after COVID-19 shut down a lot of normal routines without warning.

Online classes, as well as the lack of personal interaction with peers and professors, are some reasons they feel less motivated in their school work.

Several students admitted they noticed a sense of decreased motivation during Fall Semester 2020. In a poll on The Daily Universe’s Instagram account, 413, or 85%, of the 485 respondents said they felt their motivation decreased when classes moved online.

Ryker Steiner, a BYU chemical engineering student, said he feels like the lectures he has aren’t an experience anymore, but instead just another piece of material he has to go through.

BYU student Lane Gibbons also said she has felt noticeably less motivated this semester. “The absence of in-person classes really makes it hard to feel committed to the material and to the work,” Gibbons said. “Classes don’t really feel real, the discussions feel more superficial. And yet, the assignments and the tests and the grades are very real.”

Anna Cunningham, a BYU student from California, said she also felt a decreased sense of motivation compared to other semesters. “I’m like still getting everything done, but I know that I’m not doing my readings as thoroughly as I probably could be,” she said.

Other effects

Gibbons said she also feels



Preston Crawley

Students have noticed a decrease in their academic motivation because of the abrupt switch to online classes and the other stresses of the pandemic.

like part of the reason for her motivation decreasing could be because of the impending doom of the pandemic everyone is facing. “There’s something about that overarching feeling of dread and uncertainty.”

Rick West, a BYU professor in the instructional psychology and technology department, said he has noticed some of his students struggling since the pandemic started back in March, but it’s hard to know if that’s because of the way the class is taught online or if it’s more related to other effects of the pandemic. “There are a lot of emotional challenges that have been heightened with COVID.”

Julie Preece, licensed psychologist and faculty member in the BYU academic support office, said a big issue is the fact

that students who wouldn’t normally be signing up for online classes have no choice, therefore they are getting a completely different experience than what they expected.

“Suddenly a student is thrust in a very different kind of world than what their routine was,” Preece said. “That can bring some shock, some confusion, some disappointment and fear. I think all those things can impact motivation.”

According to Psychology Today, a student’s lack of online experience may promote fear, leading to doubts and uncertainty for students and teachers. “These doubts can cause withdrawal or resistance to participation. One solution to sustain motivation is not to lose the personal connection that

already exists between teachers and students.”

Relationships online

Cunningham said for her a big part of classes was the five minutes in between when she could talk to her classmates and professors, but now there isn’t that time. “You just kind of miss that organic communication when it’s a scheduled Zoom meeting that starts and ends in an hour period.”

Gibbons said she has also missed being able to have that time in between classes. “I am one who would always stay after class and talk with the professors and ask questions and just get to know them,” she said. “It’s been really weird not talking with them on an outside of class context.”

Although building relationships online is different, Charles Graham, a BYU professor in the instructional psychology and technology department, said there’s no reason why students and teachers can’t develop relationships in an online class.

“I think part of the challenge is that this is new to a lot of students and it’s new to a lot of faculty. So, students haven’t learned how to develop those relationships in the online space, and faculty are still learning and developing their ability to encourage those,” Graham said. “That kind of thing is just as possible in the online space, but it might be a little bit more difficult for teachers to implement because they’re not familiar with the tools; they haven’t done it before and the whole environment’s new for them.”

Class design

Although there are several reasons why students’ motivation is decreasing, West and Graham said the decrease in motivation has less to do with the fact that classes are being held online, and more about the design of the class itself.

“Students need to be patient with instructors because their COVID teaching is not as effective as their normal teaching probably would be,” West said.

In the instructional psychology and technology department, they believe that rather than online learning, a better term to describe the current situation is emergency remote teaching.

“This was an emergency situation and everything went remote and online, and teachers did not have a chance to design it as a true online experience, so instead it’s just crisis teaching,”

West said.

Graham said he believes it’s a lot about the method being used to teach the class, not whether the class is in person or remote. “It’s less about whether it’s online or in person, and really about what the teacher is doing to engage the students online,” Graham said.

Although Graham recognizes that some students may be struggling with online classes, he said it’s a blessing to have online learning as a possibility right now.

How to stay motivated

Bryce Bunting, a BYU professor and faculty member in the academic support office, said if students have a hard time with online classes, they should do everything they can to get into in-person classes. “Do what you can to put yourself in a position to be successful.”

Another thing students can do to stay more involved in their classes, according to Preece, is to always keep their Zoom cameras on. “It’s not easy, but it becomes essential,” Preece said. “Once the camera is turned off, people are tempted.”

Some of the temptations Preece mentioned were doing homework for other classes and looking at phones.

Students can also try to be understanding of their teachers. Mike Johnson, a teaching and learning consultant at BYU, said people can try to give each other the benefit of the doubt. “We’re in this together and teachers and students have the same goal,” Johnson said. “If we work together, we can achieve that, and the learning at BYU goes beyond just the outcomes, it’s about becoming better people.”

Native and Indigenous people disproportionately affected by COVID-19

By MARTHA HARRIS

Tamra Borchardt-Slayton stood outside the window of the hospital where her grandmother was being treated for COVID-19. Borchardt-Slayton was only able to wave at her grandmother before she was intubated.

“Currently, my grandmother’s in the ICU. We haven’t had any contact with her; it’s one of the most heart-breaking things I’ve ever had to deal with,” she said.

As the Tribal Chairperson for Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah, Borchardt-Slayton regularly provides updates to her Tribe on the state of COVID-19 in their community. In a video posted on the Tribe’s Vimeo channel in November 2020, Borchardt-Slayton and other Native American community leaders addressed the high number of COVID-19 cases in Utah.

“COVID-19 is on everyone’s mind. And it’s impacting our Native communities especially hard,” Borchardt-Slayton said in the video.

While older people are more likely to die from COVID-19 than younger generations, Native and Indigenous people of all ages have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19. American Indian and Alaska Native people are four times more likely than Caucasian people to be hospitalized due to COVID-19, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Data from The Atlantic’s COVID Tracking Project shows American Indians and Alaska Natives in Utah are more likely to die of COVID-19 than any other racial or ethnic demographic.

Bleu Adams, co-founder of Protect Native Elders and member of the Navajo Nation and Mandan/Hidatsa Tribes, said their main mission when



Bleu Adams

Protect Native Elders is a volunteer organization focused on helping Indigenous communities fight COVID-19. Protect Native Elders provided 700 face shields to the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe.

starting the organization was to protect Native Elders from COVID-19 because of the central role they play in Native communities.

“The elders hold our generational knowledge. They hold the community together, all of our teachings, all of our lessons, everything that we still need to gain from them, from farming techniques to ceremonial knowledge. It was all at risk of being lost,” Adams said.

Limited resources

Adams said when she was first hearing reports of a novel virus spreading back in February, she knew instinctively that the Navajo Nation would be deeply affected.

“They were telling people to wash your hands, try to sanitize, etc. And we knew that the Navajo Nation was going to struggle because around 40% of households don’t even have running water,” she said.

With health officials recommending social distancing,

Adams said the size of the Navajo Nation was another problem they faced in combating COVID-19.

“We’re the size of West Virginia and we have 13 grocery stores. So that means the first of the month when a lot of families get their money, they go to the stores, which creates huge crowds,” she said.

Davina Smith, a member of the Navajo Nation and training specialist for Restoring Ancestral Winds, said if people in tribal communities get COVID-19, it is difficult to get adequate health care. She said some people in the Navajo Nation have to drive three hours to get to a health clinic, and it is extra difficult for those who live in the mountains and have to drive on dirt roads.

Melissa Zito, director of Utah’s Office of American Indian/Alaska Native Health Affairs, said Native and Indigenous people also suffer from high rates of various underlying health conditions,

including diabetes and heart disease, which can put them at a greater risk of dying from COVID-19. She said these health disparities have only been exacerbated by the pandemic.

History between Native people and the government

Heather Tanana, University of Utah College of Law professor and member of the Navajo Nation, said COVID-19 has shed light on the challenges the Navajo Nation and other tribes have been facing for a long time. She said a lot of these challenges stem from past federal policies and mistreatment of Native people.

Tanana said while white settlers in Utah were able to establish infrastructure, tribal communities weren’t able to do the same because they were removed from their land and put on reservations by the federal government. She said that disparity can be seen in how most people in Salt Lake

City have water lines running into their homes and reliable internet so they can work from home, which isn’t the case in many tribal communities.

“The actions of the government in removal, setting up reservations, terminating tribal status at one period,” Tanana said. “It’s all of those actions that have put tribal communities at a lower base level than a lot of white communities.”

The federal government has a legal obligation to provide health care to American Indians and Alaska Natives based on the Constitution and treaties between the government and Native tribes. Tanana said the U.S. government has not kept that promise, pointing to a 2018 report from the Commission on Civil Rights that outlines all of the federal funding shortfalls for tribes and Native Americans.

Adams said while Native communities don’t have the necessary support from the government or infrastructure, there have been community-based efforts like Protecting Native Elders.

“That’s a part of being Indigenous; that’s a part of our philosophy and our teaching. You always strive to help your community, especially if you have opportunity and access like I do,” she said.

But Tanana said even with donations and community support, it’s not a sustainable solution to the inequalities that Native and Indigenous communities face.

“When you talk about long-term solutions, that has to be something with the federal government fully fulfilling its obligations,” she said. “It’s going to take time because they have to catch up on replacing old infrastructure, building new infrastructure that doesn’t even exist. That’s going to take time and a significant investment, not just a one-time thing.”

RACISM

Efforts to promote equality on campus

Continued from Page 1

“When we listen to people we need to treat them as individuals. We don’t stereotype people and say, ‘This is a Black public intellectual, therefore they believe the following things,’” Smith said.

In an email to introduce the reading group, Smith wrote, “BYU Law School aspires to be a place where racism is never ignored, but directly, consistently and explicitly opposed. As an academic institution, we study and listen so that we can acknowledge the ongoing problem of racism in the United States and recognize our role in perpetuating the problem.”

Smith also said understanding someone doesn’t always mean agreeing; however, understanding is an essential, and often neglected, step in civil discourse. “When you listen, it’s a lot of work,” Smith said. “You can’t just take the shortcuts of guessing what somebody thinks.”

Smith said the law school is actively trying to recruit students and faculty who are Black. The law school also recently announced full-tuition Achievement Fellowships for students who “have qualified for admission to law school in the face of significant challenges or hardships” such as homelessness, disability or living with family members who struggle with poverty, incarceration, abandonment, physical or mental health issues, or substance abuse.

Faculty initiative

Apart from efforts by BYU and its various colleges and departments, some faculty members have chosen to make discussions on racism part of their curriculum.

Cannon said professors in the history department have organized a faculty reading group, where they will coordinate anti-racist content to be used in existing history classes.

BYU professor Eva Witesman from the Marriott School of Business organized the extensive BYU Antiracism Database Project to provide more resources for combating racism.

BYU student Connor Jones said his ROTC professor made an effort to address racism on the first day of class, telling his students that racism was not permitted in the Air Force and that men and women in the military should strive for common goals. “He really inspired us and made us want to be good people and not treat anybody differently.”

BYU public health professor Stephanie Lutz dedicates a few minutes of her women’s health class each period to discuss topics in race and diversity, letting her students take the lead in teaching.

“It makes me a little bit emotional because the first students who signed up were my BIPOC students,” Lutz said. “We cried. We’ve laughed.”

She said some students caused offense and even conflict because they didn’t think racism at BYU was an issue, and one student felt Lutz incorrectly labeled her as a racist. Lutz said she was quick to apologize to the student.

“When things have gotten hard I’ve thought, ‘why am I doing this?’ My students are hurting. This is beyond what I can repair. And in these desperate moments I’ve thought ‘Do I just give up? This is too much. This is too hard,’” Lutz said. “But I’m so glad we’ve stayed the course.”

Lutz said students signed up to teach 20 of the segments on racism, and Lutz taught the other five or six, sharing scriptures, media posts and books from her independent research.

“I feel like my students will remember some content of women’s health, but I think what they’re really going to remember from Fall Semester 2020 is what we did together to battle racism,” she said.

Rugh said although selective universities across America — like Harvard, Princeton, and others — have implemented diversity and inclusion measures, BYU has a specific moral responsibility to send Christlike, sensitive people out into the world.

“I think it’s a hard environment because we’ve gone through an election and a period where things have been really divisive,” Rugh said. “People really have to rely on the Atonement and not have faith in the arm of the flesh and have that kind of confidence that this is right, this is what God wants.”

Google Fiber and Provo City negotiate new agreement



Preston Crawley

Provo City has negotiated a new deal with Google Fiber focused on internet revenue rather than cable revenue.

By EMILY ATWOOD

Google Fiber and Provo City recently decided to make changes to their negotiation, without removing their low bandwidth free internet option.

Google Fiber came to Provo in 2013 to introduce its high-speed internet services to Utah. Many Provo residents and students have since relied on Google Fiber for their internet services.

A recent shift toward the use of internet services over cable services caused Google Fiber and Provo City to re-evaluate their agreement.

When the city initially entered into the agreement, Google Fiber offered “Triple Play” which includes internet, video and IP phone services. However, because many Provo residents are removing cable from their homes and relying solely on streaming services instead, Google Fiber approached Provo City to adapt to the increase in internet use.

“What the new agreement essentially changes is rather than a 5% fee assessed to Google Fiber based on their television revenue, that’s going to a 2% fee based on all of their internet revenue,” said Wayne Parker, Provo’s chief administrative officer.

Parker, along with City Council members, said this change will not only benefit the city’s revenue but will also provide an opportunity for growth.

Provo Councilman Dave Sewell said the city has reached a mutually

agreeable solution. “I think both sides seem to be happy with this new proposed arrangement.”

According to Provo City finance director Dan Follett, the only residents affected are those who have cable services in place. Google Fiber intends to work with these residents in order to eventually transition them to another provider when they ultimately decide not to offer IPTV anymore.

Provo City Council members also said this new agreement is not related to the seven-year contract with Google Fiber for free low-bandwidth internet. Though the contract is nearing that seven-year mark, Google Fiber has indicated no immediate plans to disconnect the free service.

Google Fiber is aware these changes have an impact on low to moderate income households, so they are working with those households very closely, Follett said. Google is reaching out to customers and considering possible options on a customer-by-customer basis.

“We did express to them that you know we have residents that are in lower incomes and things like that that would really appreciate at least having a lower cost option,” Sewell said. “Ultimately, it is a business decision on their end.”

The new agreement with Google Fiber will be reviewed Jan. 19 at the next City Council meeting before being passed on for authorization by Provo Mayor Michelle Kaufusi.



Hannah Miner

Provo City Council members met with Utah legislatures on Jan. 12 to discuss state and local concerns, particularly the Provo housing shortage. Scan this photo with the **Universe Plus** app to read a Spanish translation of the story.

City Council, legislators discuss Provo housing shortage

By MOLLY OGDEN WELCH

The Provo City Council met virtually with members of the Utah Legislature on Jan. 12 to discuss upcoming state and local issues, including the affordable housing shortage in Provo.

Municipal and state governments normally function separately in order to give the municipal government power to make decisions for the communities where they reside. However, the Provo City Council meets with state legislators at least once each year to discuss issues facing the people of Provo.

Council members and state legislators alike expressed concern for the introduction of HB82 at the 2021 General Session, which would “prohibit municipalities and counties from establishing restrictions or requirements for the construction or use of certain accessory dwelling units.”

Accessory dwelling units are secondary housing units on the same land as a single family housing unit. These units are often rented out, with people living in a basement, attic, or even a separate smaller house on the property.

“Because of affordable housing concerns, there’s been a push from the legislature to encourage allowing (more accessory units). Provo already allows them in a number of places, but we still have quite a few zones that don’t allow them,” Council Chair Dave Sewell said. “I don’t know if it’ll pass. There may be some legislation that would try to mandate that cities allow them everywhere.”

Sewell said his reason for pushback on state involvement in housing is that cities are better suited to make their own local zoning decisions.

“I think we need some more flexibility with (accessory dwelling units). I think

that ought to be done at the local level. There are some elements of this bill as drafted today that are problematic,” Council member Shannon Ellsworth said. “Every city is different, and Provo’s affordable housing needs and opportunities and strengths are completely different than Mapleton and Alpine.”

Sewell said if accessory units are mandated throughout the state, there will be more cars and residents in certain areas, and some neighborhoods might actually have a lower quality of life with that many more residents.

“I’m not entirely sure that the state will do a great job at coming up with state-wide policies with regard to zoning,” Rep. Norman K. Thurston of District 64 said. “I think that the request on the other side is for the cities to step up and say, ‘we are doing a great job. We’re looking at ways that we can encourage some of these affordable housing options.’”

Calls to reopen classrooms grow as teachers get vaccinated

ASSOCIATED PRESS

State leaders around the U.S. are increasingly pushing for schools to reopen this winter, pressuring them, even, as teachers begin to gain access to the vaccine against the raging pandemic.

Ohio's governor offered to give vaccinations to teachers at the start of February, provided their school districts agree to resume at least some in-person instruction by March 1. In Arizona, where teachers began receiving shots this week, the governor warned schools that he expects students back in the classroom despite objections from top education officials and the highest COVID-19 diagnosis rate in the nation over the past week.

"We will not be funding empty seats or allowing schools to remain in a perpetual state of closure," said Republican Gov. Doug Ducey. "Children still need to learn, even in a pandemic."

Leaders of Arizona's major hospitals disagreed with the governor's position, noting at a news conference Jan. 13 that the



Associated Press

Spencer Jensen, a music teacher at the Legacy Preparatory Academy, receives the COVID-19 vaccine at the Davis County Legacy Center Tuesday, Jan. 12, in Farmington, Utah. Utah began vaccinating teachers and school staff across the state. They are aiming to have all teachers and school staff vaccinated by the end of February.

state is teetering on the brink of having to ration life-saving care.

"We understand that learning and bringing our children together is very important," said Dr. Michael White of Valleywise Health. "But at this time with uncontrolled spread of the

virus, we need to do things that we know will reduce the chance that the virus will spread and that is not gathering with people we don't live with."

The U.S. recorded an all-time, one-day high of 4,327 deaths on Jan. 12, according to

Johns Hopkins University. The nation's overall death toll from COVID-19 has topped 380,000, closing in fast on the number of Americans killed in World War II. Confirmed infections have reached about 23 million. President-elect Joe Biden

initially pledged to reopen a majority of the nation's schools in his first 100 days but recently revised the goal to most of the country's K-8 schools. He has said teachers should be eligible for vaccinations as soon as possible after those who are at highest risk.

Some states aren't waiting, but the process can be scattershot.

Meika Mark, a ninth-grade English teacher in Orange County, New York, got vaccinated Tuesday at a hospital, using a link a friend texted her.

"It's just word of mouth: 'Here's a link and hopefully you get a slot,'" said Mark, who contracted the virus in March and spent the rest of the school year teaching remotely. "I know of a woman who had her husband sit in front of a computer literally all day and just click the refresh button until an appointment came up."

Mark, 34, is now doing some in-person teaching and is grateful for the added layer of protection.

High school band director Michael Crookston was among the first teachers to get a vaccination in Utah, which is among the earliest states to give priority to educators. Crookston has been in the classroom since the new school year began, despite having diabetes, which puts him at greater risk from the coronavirus.

"It's been a thing I've been looking forward to, a little bit like Christmas," said Crookston, who teaches at Davis High School, north of Salt Lake City, where he used a parent's donation to buy 12 air filters for his band room. Students also wear face masks and use covers on their instruments.

Utah Gov. Spencer Cox has said he wants to vaccinate all teachers by the end of February.

Salt Lake City has been hit hard by the virus and was the only district in Utah to stay all-remote this school year. That has angered some GOP leaders, who have threatened to deny the city's teachers the \$1,500 bonuses promised to the state's educators.

An estimated 10.3 million Americans have received their first shot of the vaccine, or about 3% of the U.S. population, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. That is an increase of about 1 million from the day before, indicating the

vaccination drive is picking up speed after a slow start.

But the U.S. is still well short of the hundreds of millions who experts say will need to be inoculated to vanquish the outbreak.

A report released Jan. 13 by the CDC adds to the evidence suggesting that children aren't the main drivers of community transmission. It found that increases in reported cases among adults were not preceded by increases among children and teens. Young adults, it appears, may contribute more to the spread than children do.

Chicago began a phased-in reopening of its schools this week, with about 6,000 pre-kindergarten and special education students expected to return to classrooms and other grades set to follow in the coming weeks. Illinois teachers are not eligible for vaccines yet, but Chicago officials are providing virus tests on school grounds for staff.

Chicago teachers who were punished for refusing to show up for classes over COVID-19 concerns demonstrated Jan. 13 outside the school board president's home. Roughly 150 employees were initially docked pay and locked out of the school system, meaning they can't teach remotely either. District officials said late that night the number dropped to 100 as employees returned to work or had a valid excuse.

"I don't believe it's safe to reopen the schools. I don't believe it's safe for my family, I live with an elderly mom. I don't believe it is safe for the city's children or their families," said Kirstin Roberts, a pre-kindergarten teacher.

New York State expanded vaccine eligibility to teachers this week. But in New York City, the nation's largest school district, with 1.1 million students, Mayor Bill de Blasio said on Jan. 13 that middle and high schools will remain closed indefinitely.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom has proposed a \$2 billion plan to pay for testing, protective equipment and other safety enhancements to reopen the lowest grades as soon as Feb. 16.

But educators said it is too soon to know when California's 600,000 teachers can expect to be vaccinated. Jeff Freitas, president of the California Federation of Teachers, said vaccinations have to come first, then schools can talk about reopening.

"We cannot put our own lives, the lives of our students, and our communities at risk during what is clearly an escalating crisis in our state," the union leader said.

California's rollout of vaccines has been slower than anticipated, with the first phase, involving health care workers and nursing home residents, still underway.

On Jan. 13, Chiefs of Change, a bipartisan group of school administrators, called on state and federal officials to make teachers and other school employees immediately eligible for vaccinations and provide more resources to conduct testing and contact tracing in school districts.

"Those individuals are very uncomfortable and they're very scared about coming back into school, no matter how safe we make it," said Robert Runcie, superintendent of public schools in Broward County, Florida.

Coronavirus vaccine brings relief to Utah homeless hospice

ASSOCIATED PRESS

SALT LAKE CITY — While no one living at a Salt Lake City hospice center for homeless people has tested positive for COVID-19, the vaccine's arrival has provided a new sense of relief.

Kimberlin Correa, executive director of the INN Between, said staff and medically fragile residents at the medical respite center began receiving coronavirus vaccines Jan. 9. The Salt Lake Tribune reported.

Utah is giving shots to residents and staff at long-term care facilities in its first vaccination phase, which also includes health care workers, first responders and teachers. Those 70 or older are next

in line, then people with underlying health conditions and those experiencing homelessness.

None of the INN Between's residents have contracted the virus, to the relief of its directors, who have watched outbreaks devastate many care facilities.

Though some residents raised questions about the shot, managers were not aware of anyone who ultimately refused the vaccine.

"In the beginning, I was actually in the camp of 'I'm not going to be one of the guinea pigs that's first in line for the vaccine,' and I was pretty adamant about that," resident Kathy Conway said. "Then, as we saw the results, I completely did a 180. And now here I am today ready to get my vaccine."

Update your residential address at och.byu.edu by January 19.

Failure to update your address could result in fees and holds.

A gravity-defying reminder from the BYU Off-Campus Housing Office, C-141 ASB, och@byu.edu

The New Zealand connection with BYU Women's Basketball

By EMILY FAIRBANKS

The BYU women's basketball team has established various recruiting pipelines for international players, but none has been stronger in recent years than New Zealand, with two New Zealanders currently on the roster and several more over the last decade.

New Zealand is an island country in the southeastern Pacific Ocean that is home to 5 million people. The country is known for its scenic views, sheep and Manuka honey.

The team has had a string of players who call New Zealand home, including alumni Kalani Purcell, Shalae Salmon and Kaedin Taito. The Cougars also signed Arielle Williams-Mackey from Hamilton, New Zealand for the 2021-2022 season. The two Kiwis currently on the team are graduate transfer Tegan Graham and sophomore Kaylee Smiler.

Graham was raised in Wellington, New Zealand and has always had a passion for basketball. She took her talents to Hamilton, New York where she played basketball at Colgate University from 2016-2020. She decided to continue her career by attending graduate school at BYU, studying mass communications.

"While I was being recruited, I felt everyone at BYU was very genuine," Graham said. "This year has been weird because of COVID and I couldn't take any official visits but the coaches put in so much effort and made me feel wanted. I knew it would be a great fit for me."

Roughly 300 miles north of Wellington is Temple View, Smiler's hometown. The redshirt sophomore is majoring in human resources management. Her recruitment story is unconventional and further shows the connection between BYU and New Zealand.

"Kalani Purcell is a really big role model in my eyes," Smiler said. "She is a really good family friend and she offered to show my highlight video to the assistant coach, Ray Stewart. One thing led to another and I was offered a scholarship."

Smiler's recruitment process displays the unique circumstances



BYU Photo

The BYU women's basketball team, including Kaylee Smiler (11) and Tegan Graham (10) from New Zealand, huddles during a practice in the Marriott Center. Smiler and Graham are two of four international players on this year's roster. The diversity on the team extends beyond demographics but to abilities and accomplishments as well.

that come with an international perspective. Athletes that are native to the United States have a structured recruitment process that includes ACT/SAT scores, coach scouting trips and an official visit to the university. International players have to think outside the box to get noticed by large state-side schools.

Graham echoed Smiler's experience and said she was noticed by BYU through word of mouth.

"New Zealand is a small place but networking with people is really powerful," Graham said.

Graham also looked up to former BYU women's basketball player Shalae Salmon who is from Porirua, just 13 miles north of Wellington. Salmon shared her BYU experiences with

Graham when they were both home during the summers.

"Hearing about Shalae's experiences made me excited when BYU started showing interest in me. I felt like I had the inside scoop on the program," Graham said. "I was comfortable attending the school and I knew it was a good fit."

Graham and Smiler's recruitment experiences are great insights into international recruiting. However, recruitment is only one step in an international athlete's journey. Adjusting to life in a new country can be overwhelming.

"I love this country and I love being here but sometimes I miss my (home) culture," BYU point guard Maria Albiero said. "It's so nice to have

people from other places on the team because they understand that things are a little different and I appreciate that."

Albiero is from Brazil and one of four international players currently on the BYU women's basketball roster, with the others being Smiler, Graham, and Signe Glantz from Sweden.

"I think adding diversity is a good thing," Albiero said. "Diversity is really valuable these days. I think it is especially important for us here at BYU."

In a recent interview, Smiler mentioned her fellow Kiwi players being there for her when she was homesick. She said having a diverse team enables a sense of unity and understanding.

The Cougars' diversity does not just include demographics, but abilities

and accomplishments as well.

"This team has great chemistry," sophomore Shaylee Gonzales said in a recent press conference.

Head coach Jeff Judkins also mentioned in that press conference that, "the players have great team effort."

BYU was predicted to finish second in the 2020-21 West Coast Conference Preseason Poll following a tie for second place in the WCC regular-season standings last season. The Cougars are currently sitting at 8-2 overall and 4-1 in conference play.

"We use our diverse dynamic to our advantage because other teams can't stop us, we have a presence," Smiler said. "We like each other on and off the court and nobody on this team is selfish."

Tennis alum creates platform to share 'untold' athlete stories

By MAX CLARK

BYU tennis captain David Ball was left dumbfounded following a shocking announcement from the NCAA on March 12, 2020. "Today, NCAA President Mark Emmert and the Board of Governors canceled all remaining winter and spring NCAA championships. This decision is based on the evolving COVID-19 public health threat (and) our ability to ensure the events do not contribute to the spread of the pandemic."

Ball, who worked his entire life to compete at the collegiate level, unexpectedly had his fourth-and-final season stripped away from him without notice.

"I was devastated," Ball said. "You work your entire life to compete at this level and seemingly overnight it all gets stripped away."

Ball launched an Instagram page called "Untold Athletes" on March 16, 2020, just four days after the NCAA's announcement canceling college sports.

"I started Untold Athletes because I realized there were so many amazing athletes with inspiring stories who had sacrificed so much to get to the level they were at," Ball said. "It was tragic to us that many of them wouldn't get the recognition and closure they deserved so we created the platform to change that."

In just two weeks, the Untold Athletes Instagram page went from zero followers to 1,200 followers, connecting athletes across the country going through similar struggles. The platform has since tripled its following to over 3,700 followers.

Untold Athletes is a platform dedicated to sharing the inspiring stories of athletes everywhere, not just those whose collegiate seasons were cut short by COVID-19.

This new community is a place



BYU Photo

David Ball competes in Southern California Intercollegiate Championship in 2017. Ball started an Instagram account highlighting athletes whose seasons were cut short after the NCAA announced sports would be canceled due to the pandemic.

where "athletes can support other athletes and be uplifted while doing so," Ball said.

Though the community was started by BYU students, including the ones featured below, athletes from across the world have used this platform to voice their stories.

Jake Toolson

Jake Toolson was the first athlete to be featured on Untold Athletes. Toolson began his career at BYU as a freshman before deciding it was in his best interest to transfer to Utah Valley to play under then-head coach Mark Pope.

Pope took over as head coach at BYU in 2019 and brought some of his players along with him from UVU, including Toolson. BYU made a great

run at the end of the 2019-20 season, beating No. 2 Gonzaga in front of a sold-out audience at the Marriott Center in Provo and punching its ticket to the NCAA Tournament, only to have the season canceled as a result of the pandemic.

"Growing up it was always my dream to play at BYU," Toolson said in his Untold Athletes story. "I loved the Cougars and would dream of the day where I would be wearing the blue and white jersey. As my dreams became a reality I quickly realized that it wasn't exactly what I pictured as a kid. Adjusting to college life on my own was really difficult for me. I was faced with some mental health challenges and ultimately decided to transfer to UVU and play for Coach Pope."

"I am grateful for the adversity I

have faced," Toolson said. "It has allowed me to grow as a person. I am glad that everything came full circle and I finished my career as a Cougar, making the dream I had as a kid come true."

Toolson signed a free-agent contract with the Utah Jazz and participated in the team's preseason training camp and games prior to being waived when the regular season began.

Shaylee Gonzales

Before receiving the news that she sustained a season-ending injury prior to her sophomore season in 2019, Shaylee Gonzales was the second-highest scoring freshman in women's college basketball and was invited to attend a Team USA

basketball camp.

"I was on cloud nine," Gonzales said in a video for Untold Athletes. "Then the doctor told me the worst news, the worst news any athlete could ever hear. I had torn my ACL and meniscus and I would be out for nine months."

Gonzales has three years left at BYU and has since returned to the court with the goal to help the Cougars win the West Coast Conference all three years and make deep runs in the NCAA Tournament. Ultimately, Gonzales hopes to continue playing basketball at a professional level either in the WNBA or in Europe.

Will Stanley

BYU setter Will Stanley, who is tenth among the team's all-time assists leaders, led BYU the men's volleyball team to a No. 1 ranking in the nation before his senior season as a Cougar was cut short.

"Being the best team in the country was something we strived for as a team this year," Stanley said in his Untold Athletes post. "Having our season cut short was definitely one of the hardest things I've had to deal with at BYU. Knowing it was for all of the right reasons but still having the reality set in that my career was over took some time to accept."

Untold Athletes is a platform for athletes everywhere to share their stories. Whether an athlete shares the experience of Ball and Stanley having seasons ended prematurely, Gonzales suffering a season-ending injury, or Toolson struggling with mental health before making it to the top, everyone has a story to tell.

BYU women's soccer player and Untold Athletes contributor Natalie Ball described Untold Athletes as a way for athletes everywhere to feel validated. "It is a platform designed to provide comfort and empathy for athletes and other individuals who may have faced adversity for one reason or another."

Comfort over style for coaches is college basketball trend

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Let’s just say Gabriele D’Annunzio isn’t on board with the new fashion trend for college basketball coaches.

Coaches across the country have eschewed the traditional game day attire of coats, ties and dress slacks in favor of polos, quarter-zips and warmup pants. Notre Dame’s Mike Brey went so far as to coach a game in shorts.

The 76-year-old D’Annunzio is the personal tailor for the best dressed man in the game, Villanova’s Jay Wright. It nearly broke D’Annunzio’s heart when Wright told him about the vote by Big East coaches to go casual this season.

“The coaches shouldn’t look exactly the same as the players and everyone that’s affiliated with basketball — a pair of warmup pants and all that,” D’Annunzio said. “For a game, you need to look the part and be respectful for the position. It’s a little disappointing but I understand. This is just a difficult time.”

NBA coaches went casual when the league re-started its season over the summer at Walt Disney World in Florida and college coaches have followed their lead. The idea picked up serious momentum for the general public during pandemic lockdowns, too.

Dressing down isn’t a new concept in college athletics. Bob Knight and his red sweater were inseparable. George Raveling was wearing a tracksuit on game days at Iowa in the 1980s, well before Bob Huggins made the look cool.

“Bob Huggins is light years ahead of all of us,” Brey said. “Maybe we should all stay in the Huggins look.”

Creighton’s Greg McDermott said he doesn’t plan to dress up for games again.

“I think it makes way more sense,” he said. “We’re moving a lot, we’re bending down when we’re in the huddle. Bankers don’t wear suits anymore.



Associated Press

BYU head coach Mark Pope takes advantage of the relaxed dress code for NCAA coaches and wears polos instead of a suit to games this season.

Everything has changed. I think it’s the way it should be anyway.”

On the women’s side, Stanford’s Tara VanDerveer and UConn’s Geno Auriemma traded in their blazers for quarter-zips while Arizona’s Adia Barnes, known for her trendy wardrobe and Gucci shoes, coached a game in a long-sleeved T-shirt.

Tennessee’s Rick Barnes said he came up in an era when a coach was considered disrespectful to the game if he didn’t do what his predecessors had done, and that included the way he dressed. That’s no longer the case.

“The way we are now is basically the way we are in practice every day,” Barnes said, “so I like it. I really do.”

So does Wisconsin’s Greg Gard, who said Raveling had the right idea with those tracksuits.

“I’m not going to go as far as Mike Brey has at Notre Dame and start wearing shorts on the sideline,” Gard said, “but I do love the casual.”

Brey said he took the notion of acceptable coaching attire to a “ridiculously new level.” He sensed his team was tight going into a game at North Carolina on Jan. 2, and he wanted to loosen them up, so he put on gray shorts along with a blue polo.

“I get it. Hey, the suit look is classy,” Brey said. “I’m a physical

education major. I like dressing like a PE major for game day. I do for practice every day.”

Brey is like a lot of coaches, D’Annunzio said.

“Look, most of those coaches have no style sense,” he said. “For them, they were jocks, and they’re really not into wearing suits because they don’t have that sense of style like Jay.”

D’Annunzio, who has owned D&B Tailors in suburban Philadelphia since 1966, has made tuxedos for Frank Sinatra and suits for the late comedian George Burns and also has had Phillies great Mike Schmidt and other pro athletes as clients.

D’Annunzio estimated he’s made 40-50 suits for Wright, whose nickname is “GQ Jay.” That works out to between three and five suits a year, and the tailor acknowledged the coaches’ agreement to dress casual is taking money out of his pocket.

D’Annunzio said Wright told him he would wear suits again next season, which conflicts with Wright’s remarks in a Zoom news conference last month.

“Yeah, I hope this goes into the future,” he told reporters. “I’ve long contended this is how we should dress for games.”

All is not lost for D’Annunzio. Wright had him make some changes to the polyester-blend warmup pants he wears for games.



Gonzaga Photo

BYU’s Mikayla Colohan fends off a Gonzaga defender during a 2017 game. Colohan was recently drafted to NWSL’s Orlando Pride.

Women’s soccer standout Mikayla Colohan gets drafted to NWSL’s Orlando Pride

By CHASIA WEBB

BYU women’s soccer midfielder Mikayla Colohan was the 14th overall pick in the second round of the National Women’s Soccer League Draft on Jan. 13.

The draft took place before the NCAA women’s soccer season this year as the season was postponed from the fall to spring due to COVID-19.

Rule changes were enacted for the 2021 draft allowing players to compete this season and not have to wait for the 2022 draft to enter the league.

Playing professionally has always been in the back of Colohan’s mind and playing at BYU has helped her to come to love the sport more. “Soccer became more of a passion for me than just a hobby.”

Colohan has become a leader for this season’s BYU team. The senior All-American and team captain started every game of the past two seasons and was a scoring machine during the

2019 campaign. She had 16 goals and seven assists over 22 games.

“For an attacking midfielder that can score the goals like Mikayla Colohan has been able to do, I think it is just an added bonus for the attacking mid-field (in Orlando),” analyst Lori Lindsey said during the draft.

Colohan wants to continue what she did last season and increase the number of goals under her belt. “I scored 16 goals last year and I hope to score more, around 20.”

She took a major leap in the number of goals scored between her sophomore and junior year, scoring just five in 2018. This 11-goal jump added to her contributions to the team and has allowed her to showcase her talents and strengths that built her draft stock.

The women’s soccer team finished 21-1-1 in a spectacular 2019 season, with the only loss coming in the Elite Eight of the NCAA tournament to the eventual national champion Stanford. Colohan finished

second on the team in goals scored and was top five in assists.

Colohan was awarded the West Coast Conference Player of the Year for the 2019 season and was named to the All-WCC First team. She was also one of three BYU players to receive All-American honors from the United Soccer Coaches/ NSCAA.

After an incredible junior season with the No. 5-ranked women’s soccer team, Colohan is expected to produce another great season and help lead the team along the way. She expects to play both the spring and fall seasons this year before moving to the Pride.

“This is another attacking midfielder that can come in, play the way (the coach) needs them to play, and be able to link up,” Lindsey said in the draft. “She’s a player that has great vision, can play that final pass, and has a relentless work ethic. We need the players who are going to fight and I believe that this player is going to step in and be able to do that.”

Stay informed.

News from *BYU’s Daily Universe* directly to your inbox



Subscribe now

universe.byu.edu/subscribe



Preparing exhibitions is a multi-faceted process at BYU’s Museum of Art

By REBECCA NISSEN

Museums can be filled with anything from ancient statues to modern sculptures. Some even display historical documents, colorful paintings and illuminated texts.

The BYU Museum of Art displays art through its semi-permanent and traveling exhibitions. Behind the art displays and interactive elements of exhibits are the museum staff — each member fulfilling unique responsibilities to aid in the acquisition and installation of art.

Acquiring art

Before art can be displayed at the MOA, it must first be acquired by the museum’s curators. Ashlee Whitaker, the Roy and Carol Christensen curator for religious art, has been in charge of curating a number of art pieces displayed at the museum. Whitaker’s curatorial responsibilities include searching for art to be added to the museum’s collection.

“We’re always looking for acquisitions and pieces of art that will enhance our collection and mission as a university art museum,” Whitaker said. She explained that art can be acquired by the museum in many ways, from art auctions to open galleries.

“We also have been really lucky where there may be someone who has already collected works of art and have had it in their private collection,” Whitaker said. “Which is, you know, like Christmas anytime that happens.”

One of those donations happened to be painted by Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn — the Dutch painter famous for his portraits. His self-portrait is currently on display at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

In a narrative written in 2016, Whitaker wrote that the artist of the painting titled “Head of Christ,” was unknown. Its previous owner had stored the painting under her bed for many years, not knowing what do with it. The owner’s wish to donate the painting to a museum was realized when a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was helping her clean her estate and offered to call the MOA. The artwork was soon hand-delivered to



Rebecca Nissen

Paintings are displayed at the MOA’s “Treasures from the Collection” exhibition. The exhibition runs through the summer. Putting together an exhibition like this one requires teamwork across multiple departments of the museum.

the MOA.

“When the wrapped artwork was unveiled, exuding the style and technique of Rembrandt and with paperwork asserting it as ‘Head of Christ, Circle of Rembrandt,’ it was a transformative day for the museum’s collection,” Whitaker said.

She said the series of paintings of Christ completed between the years 1643 and 1655 likely could have been painted by Rembrandt’s students, as they “all seem to reflect the same model with similar features.”

Art like the “Head of Christ” isn’t always donated to the museum. Oftentimes, curators like Whitaker have to attend art auctions to acquire pieces to display at the MOA.

The MOA doesn’t only display art from their own collection. Whitaker said that by reaching out to professional museum organizations, museum curator associations and independent curating groups, the MOA can display art that is on tour or that is on loan from another museum.

Whitaker said compiling art for an exhibit is like writing an essay. She will often come up with one theme or message

and find artwork that supports that message.

“That’s how I look at the exhibits that we build,” Whitaker said. “We have an idea and then each work of art contributes something unique that feeds back into them.”

Installing art

After acquired art is restored by conservators and the art from other museums is delivered, the exhibit is installed. However, before the art can be installed, the exhibit layout and display must be created.

Anna Bates, exhibition designer for the MOA, is in charge of designing environments that best exhibit the art on display at the museum. Bates said although each process of designing an exhibition is different, a team is always assigned. According to Bates, each team usually consists of the following: a curator, educator, designer, fabricator and the registration team.

After the curator plans the theme and selects art pieces for the exhibition, they will go to exhibition designers like Bates. She said she then works “closely with the curator and the educator (to)

distill those ideas and those messages down to the visual representation.”

“We want the design to make the art stand out,” Bates said. She explained that the design is never supposed to overshadow the art on display. However, there are occasional pieces of art that need a bigger “dramatic” display.

“We had a show — an exhibition. It was about Vishnu from Indian culture,” said Bates. “The design was over the top, and it was beautiful. And it made these artifacts that you might have passed by kind of shine and jump out in this colorful and beautiful dynamic space.”

In addition to creating space for artwork, Bates and other designers also often leave space where patrons can interact with and contribute to the exhibit. Bates gave an example of an area in the “Loving Devotion: Visions of Vishnu” exhibit where patrons could write messages on lotus-shaped flowers and place them on the wall.

“Our museum isn’t really a hands-on museum like a natural history museum might be or a science museum,” Bates

said. “We ask patrons not to touch the art because it’s sensitive and delicate and often worth quite a bit of money. So, we try to add these elements that are interactive.”

After the exhibition designer and educator design the exhibit and the fabricator creates it, the registration team is then in charge of installing the art.

“The registration team (members) are the art handlers,” Bates said. “They handle all of the artwork coming in and out of the building and they keep (the art) safe. They are the only ones who are physically allowed to touch the art, hang it or move it.”

Tiffany Wixom, collections manager, said everyone who handles the art must receive proper training. “We always wear gloves whenever we’re handling artwork.”

Handling and hanging the artwork isn’t the only thing Wixom does when it arrives at the MOA. She is also in charge of knowing the location of all the museum’s artwork. This includes all loaned art on display at the museum. She tracks the art through an online database called The Museum System.

“Each object that comes

into the collection is given a nine-digit number that we can use to track the work,” Wixom said. “It’s always on the artwork somewhere where no one else can see it — usually on the back of a frame, or if it’s work on paper, we write it on the back of the work. Or if it’s on statues, it’s usually on the bottom.”

Tracking, installing, designing and curating are a few of the responsibilities that museum employees shoulder to create exhibitions that convey their intended messages to the museum’s patrons, young and old.

The MOA has been hosting patrons since its opening in 1993. Although COVID-19 required the museum to shut its doors, it reopened to the public in August 2020. As one of a number of university museums in Utah, the MOA sets itself apart with its large collection of religious art.

“I think what makes us the most unique is our connection to the Church” and the museum’s emphasis on religious art and spirituality in art, said Janalee Emmer, associate director of exhibitions and programming.

‘Planemaker’ brought back to life at Covey Center

By MARGARET DARBY

BYU alumnus Marvin Payne will perform his 1978 original musical, “The Planemaker” at Provo’s Covey Center for the Arts despite the ongoing pandemic.

“The Planemaker” is the story of Lucas Lightbrow, a boy who loves airplanes and has dreams of flying. Lucas meets a strange young boy who makes his dreams of flying a reality. The Covey Center describes the show as “a magical story with songs.”

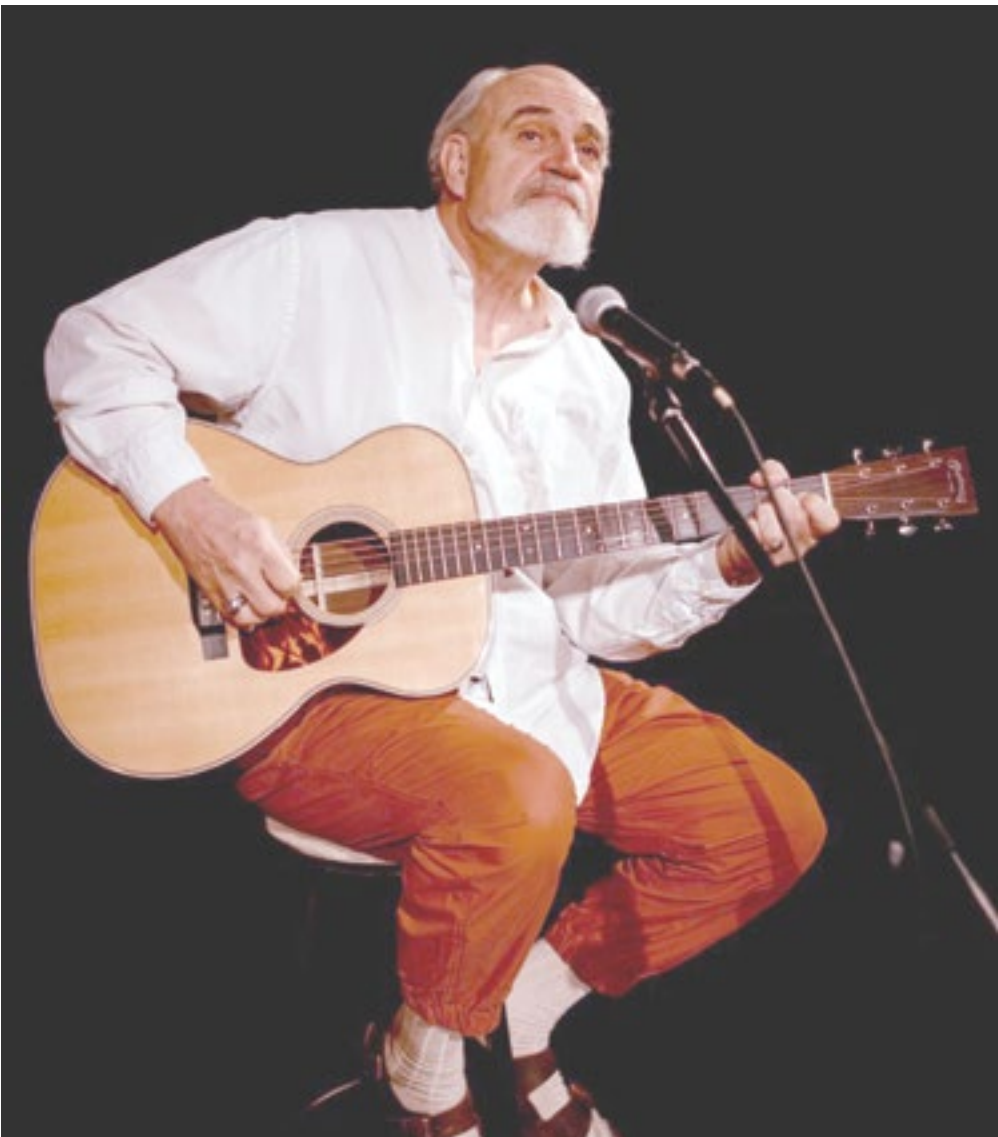
“I hope people will take a kind of magical feeling of renewed belief in the power of dreams. I would like for them to enjoy reflecting on how they felt as children,” Payne said.

Payne wrote “The Planemaker” with the help of Guy Randle. The piece went between the two of them until it was finished in 1978. Since then, the show has been enjoyed by audiences across the United States and Canada and is now being brought back to life at the Covey Center.

The performance has been adjusted slightly throughout the decades, but Payne’s performance at the Covey Center is almost exactly the way he performed it back in 1978.

“It is not just a nostalgic revival,” Payne said. “The Planemaker is back!”

The Covey Center has taken precautions regarding the COVID-19 pandemic that make it safe to attend “The Planemaker” and other productions. Audience members are required to wear masks. The audience size has been restricted to about 20% capacity so patrons can socially



Marvin Payne

Marvin Payne is the writer, director and sole performer in his original musical, “The Planemaker.” He will perform each Monday, Wednesday and Friday from Jan. 22 through Mar. 27.

distance within the auditorium. Payne will also maintain a distance of at least 8 feet from audience members at all times.

The Covey Center reopened after Memorial Day of last year and has been successful in keeping audience members safe.

“To date as far as we know, we do not have any cases traced back to our building,” said Paul Duerden, the Covey Center general manager.

The Covey Center has also moved to a no-touch ticketing system where tickets are sent through email and shown digitally at the door. The

same system is used for viewing digital show programs.

Performances begin Jan. 22 and run through March 27. The 29 performances will be on Mondays, Fridays and Saturdays. Tickets are on sale now and can be purchased through the Covey Center website.

Police Beat

BYU

THEFT

Jan. 9 - A bicycle was reported stolen from a bike rack at Helaman Halls.

Jan. 11 - A bicycle was reported stolen and the lock cut from a bike rack at Heritage Halls.

CRIMINAL MISCHIEF

Jan. 9 - An individual was reported for spray-painting a bench at the Y Mountain trailhead.

Provo

THEFT

Jan. 9 - Vehicle parts were reported stolen near 1500 North and 300 West.

Jan. 9 - Vehicle parts were reported stolen near 1800 North on Freedom Boulevard.

Jan. 10 - Vehicle parts were reported stolen from an alley near 1700 North and 450 West.

Jan. 10 - Property theft was reported at a gas station near 900 South on University Avenue.

Jan. 10 - A bicycle was reported stolen from a residence near 300 South on State Street.

Jan. 10 - Vehicle parts were reported stolen near 1800 North on Freedom Boulevard.

Jan. 11 - Property theft was reported at a residence near 1100 West and 550 South.

Jan. 11 - Property theft was reported near 1300 North on Riverside Avenue.

Jan. 11 - A bicycle was reported stolen from a parking garage near 100 East and 300 North.

Jan. 11 - Vehicle parts were reported stolen from an alley near 100 West and 800 North.

Jan. 12 - Property theft was reported near 500 West on Columbia Lane.

Jan. 12 - Vehicle parts were reported stolen near 400 West and 1720 North.

Jan. 12 - Property theft was reported near 400 North on University Avenue.

Jan. 12 - A bicycle was reported stolen near 1500 North on University Avenue.

Jan. 12 - Vehicle parts were reported stolen from a parking garage near 600 West and 1720 North.

Jan. 13 - Property theft was reported at a construction site near 1000 South and 1000 East

Jan. 13 - Property theft was reported at a residence near 1400 East and 1230 South.

Jan. 13 - A bicycle was reported stolen near 1800 North on Freedom Boulevard.

Jan. 14 - Property theft was reported near 800 South and 170 East.

MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT

Jan. 9 - A vehicle was reported stolen at a church near 4700 North and 300 West.

Jan. 9 - An automobile was reported stolen near 700 West on Heather Lane.

BURGLARY

Jan. 12 - A residential burglary was reported near 100 North and 600 West.

Jan. 14 - A non-residential burglary was reported near 100 East and 500 North.

ROBBERY

Jan. 14 - A robbery involving a weapon was reported at a gas station near 200 West and 300 South.



WEEKLY QUESTION

Daily Universe editors post a question on Instagram each week asking readers their view on a specific topic. Here's what they had to say. Responses are unedited.

Should Trump be impeached during the last days of his presidency? Why or why not?

Yes. Even if he is not removed, it will make a statement to future presidents and officials.

@CUMMINGSKARISSA

He formed insurrection. Yes, he should be impeached.

@JAKEWOODS_2019

Seems like a lot of effort when he's going to be out in less than a week.

@PAIGE_SIMPSON

Absolutely not. With so little time left...it's a gross misuse of tax payer money.

@JENNIFER_BEZZANT

Yes! To prevent him from being able to run again. He is a danger to the American people.

@LINDSEYLWADSWORTH

I think so to set a precedent for future presidents.

@BRACHELAVERETT

Yes. He will not receive the 200k pension and security benefits. Back to normal citizen

@JEREMYRAINE_

No. His speech did not rise to the level of incitement.

@JOHNNYBLOOD3

Why should he be impeached? He's leaving office anyway, and he hasn't incited violence or rioting.

@STEVETEEM

YES! No one should be able to look at this and think that they could get away with it too

@THEJORRIMICHELLE

No. He did not play a DIRECT role. It was extremists who chose to do that, not him.

@EMMMVALENTINE

No. He didn't do anything wrong.

@DOCTORJOHNSTON

STAFF OPINION

Don't buy textbooks

New semesters always come with a long checklist of expenses for students. Paying tuition makes sense and could certainly be worse when BYU is one of the most affordable universities in the country. Paying for housing also makes sense, even if Provo landlords and parking can be unbearable.

Still, there is one major expense that has never made any sense to me: textbooks. Students likely know this ordeal well — you head to the BYU Store and search high and low for an American Heritage textbook, finding the last one on the shelf. Then you also have to find the professor-specific workbook before waiting in the obscenely long line and spending a hefty sum.

Have you ever really compared the difference between textbooks that are different editions? Between a first and second edition version of a textbook, it's likely the differences are extremely minor. Maybe 10 pages were added or removed, some spelling errors were corrected, or the glossary was expanded. All ultimately negligible changes, but just enough to alter the page numbers of assignments. Just enough to consider it a "brand new edition" and charge you another \$100.

In several classes at BYU, I had to purchase an "access code" to an online textbook. You would think these codes would be less expensive since there are no costs associated with printing or shipping, but you would be wrong. The codes I had to purchase were no less than \$70 every time.

Here's a word of advice to those still working on GEs: you probably don't need the latest edition of every textbook. If your professor insists on having the latest edition for their course, do your research. How different are the editions, really?

To give credit where it is due, BYU has improved in a few textbook-related areas since my first semester here. Starting this semester, the BYU Store has implemented a textbook price match policy, meaning if you find a better price for the textbook somewhere else, you can get it from BYU for the lower price. Another excellent resource is the library, where a lot of textbooks are available to be used in the study rooms and many are accessible online for free, so long as you have a BYU login.

I don't believe this is a BYU-centric issue, because this sentiment has been echoed by university students across the country. I don't know that this issue will change any time soon, but I do know that I could have saved a lot of money for the first three years of my college experience if I had known what I know now about textbooks.

Do your research: find textbooks online, rent your textbooks, price-match them, use the library, buy old editions, and do anything you can to save money. You're already paying for your education, so see the textbook publishing industry for what it really is: a big, fat cash-grab.

—Erin Goulding
Copy Editor

Tweet Beat



#BYU #BYUprobs

Want to see your tweet in print? Tweet something about life around you with #BYUprobs or #BYU and hopefully it makes the cut.

Leave comments at

universe.byu.edu or @UniverseBYU

@tiamammamia_

"this assignment will be a blessing in your life" no it will stress me out sir

@classicmrm

the guy at the Cafe Rio drive thru just said "welcome to Costa Vida" what a mood

@NateLovie4

I hope blessings find trump during his social media fast

@lvnnfisher

have y'all ever answered a risky text and all of a sudden became busy and productive?

@laursmeltz11

successfully made it 12 days into the new year without crying... but only 12. we back to zero now

@autumndaun

byu culture is just asking other people if their learning suite is down too or if it's just u until u die or graduate

@shafer_soc

Can't believe its already impeachment time again. Seems like it was just January 2020.

@jess_foutz

you know they're a psychopath when their dating profile just says "tell about yourself" like sir this bio is supposed to be about you

@heygotayo

why does it feel so much worse to eat during zoom class than normal class

@the_cassadilla

one of my classes has nine people plus our instructor. we played among us after class. it was amazing

@itsmebrittnee

Panda Express is discontinuing their cream cheese ragoons. 2021 just isn't my year :/

@darthcaro

the fact that there is a JSB and a JFSB building at byu makes me want to rip my hair out

@utahmads

people who have been single through the entire pandemic should get their stimulus checks first

@spencerrmarsh

if you can't admit to liking the jonas brothers at least a little bit then I'm not sure we can be friends

Tweets are unedited.

OPINION OUTPOST

The Opinion Outpost features opinions and commentary on the latest hot topics from state and national news sources.

Unity requires honesty

To prevent more bloodshed in the days and months ahead and to ensure that those responsible for the attack on the Capitol are held to account, the nation needs to hear from two key groups of people: the people who encouraged the violence and those charged with preventing it.

Republican lawmakers who objected to the electoral vote results on the grounds of mythical election fraud should

immediately and publicly apologize, repudiate their lies and admit that Joe Biden won the election fairly.

—Editorial Board
The New York Times

Due process matters, even for rioters

As a group, the mob inside the Capitol certainly was breaking the law in the most serious of ways, attempting to stop the workings of government and possibly to physically attack members of Congress. But no one has been convicted. It puts our society in a tricky position: We need to repudiate and take strong though appropriate

steps against those who act violently toward our government. At the same time, we have always cherished the words "innocent until proven guilty."

Beyond that, some employers have reportedly demanded resignations from employees who were outside the Capitol, rallying, marching, sometimes saying abhorrent things and parroting President Trump's baseless nonsense about stolen elections.

... Those who remained outside and did not break the law should keep their jobs ... unless they broke some other company rule, such as claiming a sick day in order to protest while on the payroll.

—Editorial Board
The Los Angeles Times

Violence is not a democracy

As we would seek the protection of our democratic institutions for ourselves, so we would protect those same foundations for others.

Even if they stand outside the U.S. Capitol ... rather than bursting in and ransacking the place, these thugs force the transformation of our shrines of democracy into stark bunkers where no one feels welcome.

It is time for the people, the

media and our elected leaders, ... to end the acquiescent silence that gives aid and comfort to our domestic enemies and instead stand against violent uprisings and the presidents who encourage them.

—Editorial Board
The Salt Lake Tribune

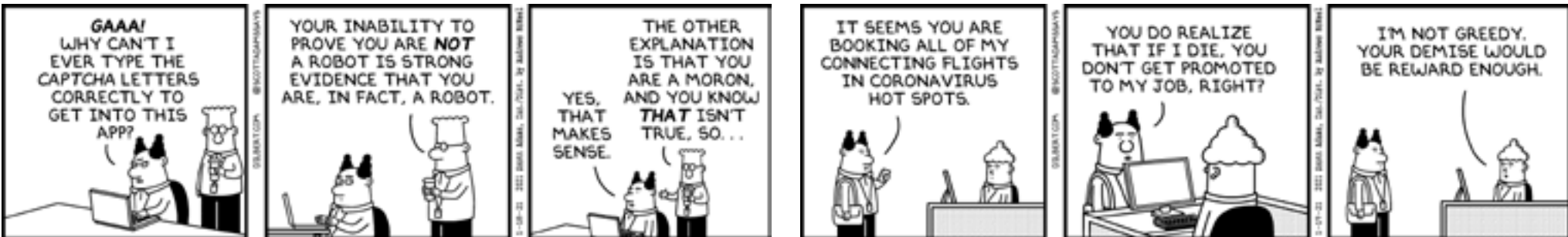
WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

The Daily Universe encourages students, faculty and BYU staff to add their voice by writing letters to the editor or by submitting editorial cartoons.

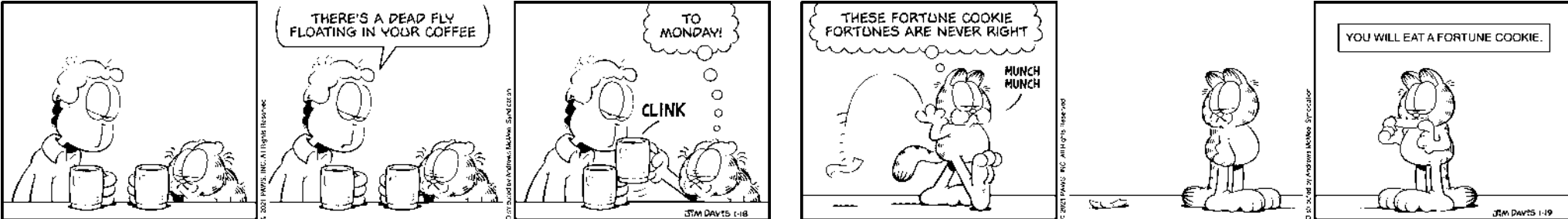
- All letters should be submitted by email to universe.ideas@gmail.com. The topic of the letter should be included in the subject line.
- Letters should also include the author's name, hometown (for students), campus position (for faculty and staff) and phone number. Anonymous letters will not be published.
- Letters should be no more than 250 words and may be edited for length, clarity or style.

Opinion editor Kenzie Holbrook can be reached at universe.ideas@gmail.com.

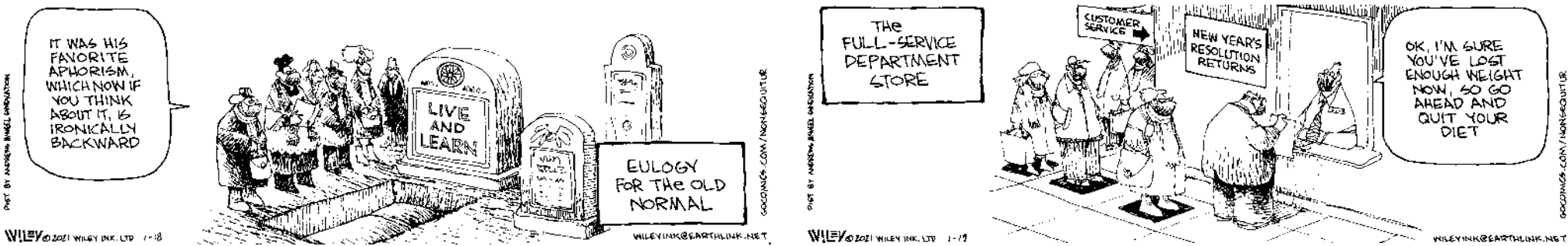
Dilbert®



Garfield®



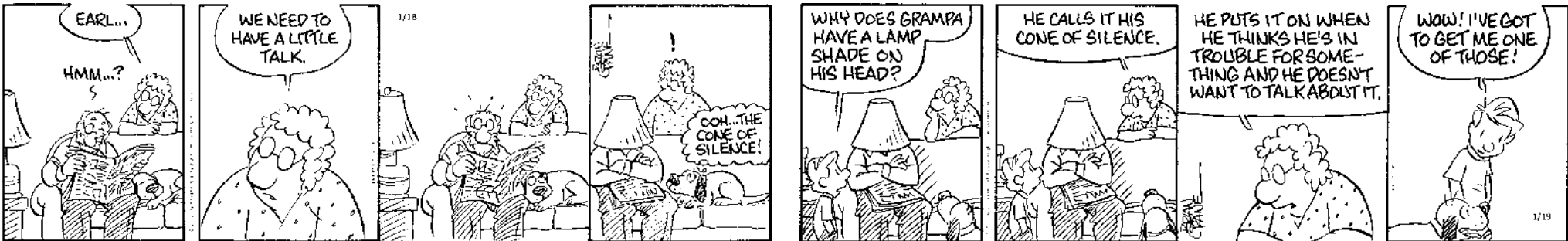
Non Sequitur®



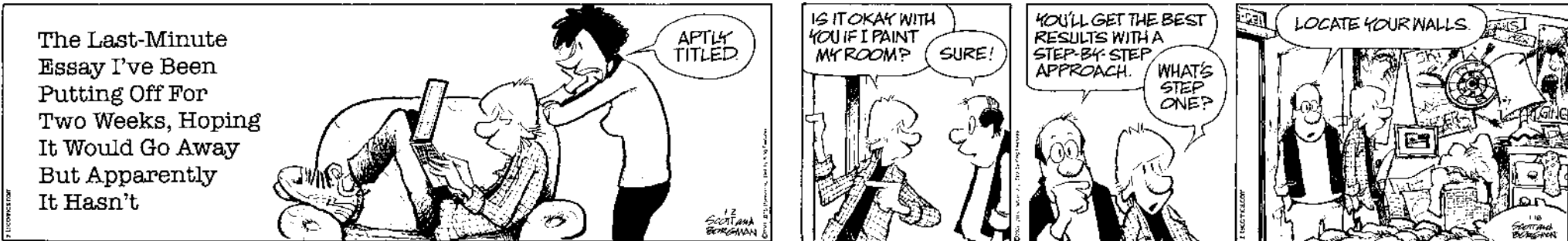
Peanuts®



Pickles®



Zits®



Sudoku

Use the numbers 1-9 once in each row, column and marked grid of 9. Puzzles increase in difficulty from left to right. Solutions are at universe.byu.edu/sudoku.

		3			6			
	8			5		7		
1	5	6		7	8		9	
		2	6	5				
	6		5		1		8	
	7		4		1			
5		1	9		6	2		8
	7			3		5		
		9			3			

	4			5			6	
5			9		3			8
		1				4		
	8		7	6	9		3	
1			2		5			6
	9		1	3	4		8	
		8				7		
6			3		7			4
	2			1			9	

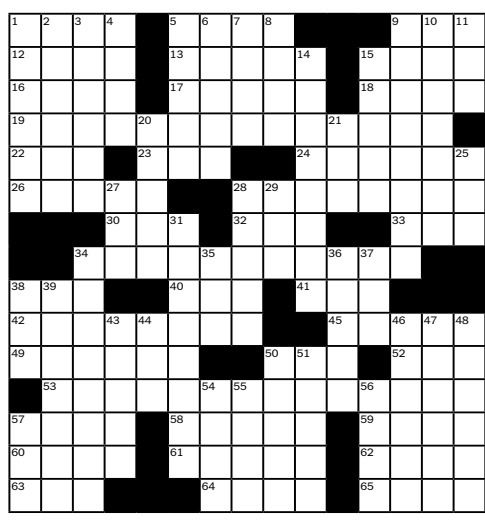
4			5		3			9
	9		6		7		5	
		6		8		7		
9	4					6	7	
		7				9		
2	5					3	1	
		9		5		3		
	2		3		6		9	
3			4		8			2

	8	6			1			
4		3	2					
5	7					1		
	5			1	2			6
					6			
6			3		4		1	
		8					6	3
						9	8	1
			5			9	7	

The New York Times Crossword

Edited by Will Shortz No. 1214

- ACROSS**
- Swedish group that once comprised two married couples
 - With skill
 - Opening to be filled
 - Sagan who hosted TV's "Cosmos"
 - Like calamari ... or overloaded circuitry
 - Catches, as a crook
 - Game with Mrs. White and Professor Plum
 - Kendrick with 13 Grammys and a Pulitzer Prize
 - "The Little Rascals" assent
 - Model/TV host on a record five Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Issue covers
 - Envision
 - Top card
 - Skeeves (out)
 - Spirited horse
 - "Grey's Anatomy" actress
 - Snitch (on)
 - Rink surface
 - It has a double helix
 - "Full Frontal" host
 - Dem.'s counterpart
 - Prefix with -phyte or -lithic
 - Down Under hopper, informally
 - North Carolina senator who unseated Elizabeth Dole
 - Kind of tea from India
 - Highly decorative
 - Parts of the body that are "crunched"
 - Blue, e.g. ... or a rhyme for "blue"
 - "Grey's Anatomy" actress
 - Female scholars ... or a hint to 19-, 28-, 34- and 42-Across
 - Rink surface
 - Cher or Adele
 - Storehouse of valuables
 - "Pick me, pick me!"
 - Like, for-EV-er
 - See 64-Across
 - ___ mortals
 - Fashion monogram
 - With 61-Across, like some typefaces
 - Small wire nail



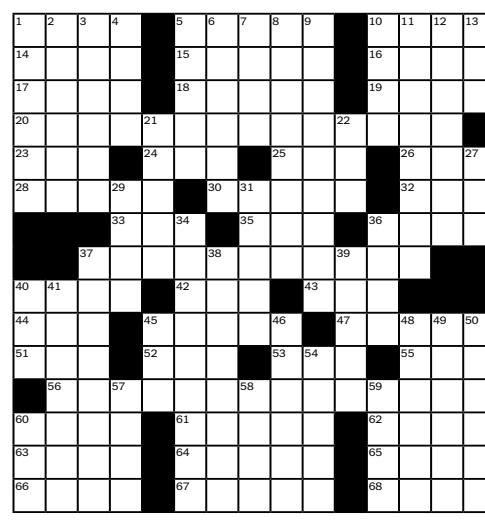
- DOWN**
- Means of entering
 - "Swan Lake," for one
 - Crème (dessert)
 - Downwind, at sea
 - Company with a spokesduck
 - Aid for a twisted knee or ankle
 - Result of a twisted ankle
 - Opposite of nah
 - Beverage with a lightning bolt in its logo
 - Leave in the lurch
 - "Gangnam Style" rapper
 - Got close
 - Negative reply to a general
 - G.O.P. color on an election map
 - ___ Na Na
 - 1970s measure that fell three states short of passing, in brief
 - Not publish yet, as a scoop
 - German's "Alas!"
 - Completely different lines of thought
 - Typical John le Carré work
 - Unionized teachers' grp.
 - Brag
 - Greek goddess of the dawn
 - Roman goddess of the dawn
 - Intertwined
 - Choreographer
 - Alley
 - Fortifies, with "up"
 - Metal deposits
 - Places to hold discussions
 - Pincered insects
 - Gaza Strip governing group
 - Devoured
 - Common pronoun pairing
 - Choreographer
 - Fortifies, with "up"
 - Metal deposits
 - Places to hold discussions
 - Pincered insects
 - Gaza Strip governing group

MEMO INCA PESTS
OPEC DEAL EXPAT
WENT DOWN THE TUBE
SENIOR STOOL ROE
OPUS POSTOP
CANIGETALIFT
OBT SLICE FATED
METZ FLEAS NAPA
BLEAK LISTS XIS
PASSTHETORCH
COPSTO MOUE
OH ROBOT IGLLOO
CASHINONESCHIPS
ORION ACRE TEES
AETNA TEMP AFRO

The New York Times Crossword

Edited by Will Shortz No. 1215

- ACROSS**
- All-encompassing
 - Wear, as something snazzy
 - Bag with an NPR logo, maybe
 - Parisian priest
 - Comic Fields on old Ed Sullivan shows
 - Well-ventilated
 - Sleeping spot for a baby
 - Stars-and-stripes land, informally
 - Mystery dropped in a mystery novel
 - Where one might find Boston news reporters?
 - "You crack me up," in a text
 - 24 & 25 "___ saying ..."
 - Use a "+" sign
 - Sound from a floorboard
 - Bronze finisher's place
 - British rule in India
 - PBS-funding org.
 - "___ be an honor!"
 - Crab traps
 - Where a Baltimore news reader's desk might be found?
 - Go for the gold?
 - Prefix with political or physics
 - Org. for Kings and Senators
 - U.N.C. and Clemson are in it
 - Lowest workers
 - Talk show queen named after a figure in Ruth
 - Bit of animation
 - What a boater might have hands-on experience with?
 - Magnum
 - Annual video game competition, for short
 - Beaten to a news scoop in Los Angeles?
 - Bright part of Rudolph
 - Welcome at the door
 - Short, quick breath
 - The ugly duckling, eventually
 - Start over on a blackboard
 - Together, in music
 - Donations to the poor
 - "___ anything"
 - One of 28 in Monopoly



WORK ABOVE HARD
EXEC DEVIL ASHE
TOFU DEEDS STOP
PIERRE SAUNA
OHM TRYTO OTTER
LEASES TAT EST
DAKAR MEADOW
POLAROPPOSITE
STELAE PLAIN
ANT ICE EEEYORE
RANDO KAMSA SEW
RUNIN SAMSICKS
ISIT FINCH WARD
VEES INURE ACER
EASY BELOW PLAY

- DOWN**
- H.S. math for some college-bound students
 - Misbehaving toddler
 - Cal Ripken, for his entire major-league career
 - Indian ox
 - Male calendar figures
 - Sticky note
 - "But then again ...," in a text
 - Permeated by
 - Locale for an outdoor Japanese party
 - ___ Bell
 - John D. Rockefeller, for one
 - Bearded figure in a classic poster
 - Storks up on again
 - "Damn it!"
 - Cheese go-with
 - Nickname for the 1967 N.F.L. Championship Game, famously played at about -15°
 - Hawaiian taro dish
 - Sharp split
 - Like "A Star Is Born," repeatedly
 - One of 17 in Monopoly
 - Threw, as a party
 - Actress Zellweger
 - Female grouses
 - Cutting board wood
 - Surface competitor
 - Source of information leaked by Edward Snowden, for short

Online subscriptions: Today's puzzle and more than 7,000 past puzzles. nytimes.com/crosswords (\$39.95 a year). Read about and comment on each puzzle: nytimes.com/wordplay.

NYC to terminate Trump contracts after Capitol insurrection

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK, NY — New York City will terminate business contracts with President Donald Trump after last week’s insurrection at the U.S. Capitol, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced Jan. 13.

“I’m here to announce that the city of New York is severing all contracts with the Trump Organization,” de Blasio said in an interview on MSNBC.

De Blasio said the Trump Organization earns about \$17 million a year in profits from its contracts to run two ice skating rinks and a carousel in Central Park as well as a golf course in the Bronx.

The city can legally terminate a contract if the leadership of a company is engaged in criminal activity, the Democratic mayor said.

“Inciting an insurrection — let’s be very clear, let’s say the words again — inciting an insurrection against the United States government clearly constitutes criminal activity,” he said.

A Trump Organization spokesperson said the city



Associated Press

Skaters take to the ice at Wollman Rink in New York’s Central Park in 2016. New York City will terminate business contracts with President Donald Trump after last week’s insurrection at the U.S. Capitol, Mayor Bill de Blasio announced Wednesday, Jan. 13.

can’t cancel the contracts.

“The City of New York has no legal right to end our contracts and if they elect to proceed, they will owe The Trump Organization over \$30 million,” the spokesperson said in an emailed statement.

“This is nothing more than political discrimination, an attempt to infringe on the First Amendment and we plan to fight vigorously.”

The move to end Trump’s business contracts in the city he formerly called home is the latest example of how the Jan. 6 breach by violent Trump supporters is affecting the Republican president’s business interests.

The PGA of America voted Jan. 10 to take the PGA Championship away from his New Jersey golf course next year, a move that came after social media platforms disabled Trump’s accounts and Shopify took down online stores affiliated with him.

De Blasio had said earlier that the city was examining its legal options to end the Trump contracts. He said Jan. 13 that city lawyers determined that if Trump sues over the move, the city would win. Trump “incited a mob to attack the Capitol,” de Blasio said, adding, “the lawyers looked at it and it was just as clear as a bell that’s grounds for severing these contracts and we’re moving to do that right away.”

Jim Johnson, the head of the city law department, said the PGA’s move to cut ties with Trump gives the city additional grounds to terminate the golf course contract.

“One of the reasons that he was given that contract was his ability to attract major golf tournaments,” Johnson said at a briefing with the mayor. After the PGA’s action last weekend, Johnson said, “we’re entitled to and are invoking our provisions, our right to declare him in default.”

The split with Trump’s namesake company won’t happen immediately, though. De Blasio said in a news release that terminating contract to run the Ferry Point golf course in the Bronx is complex “and is expected to take a number of months.”

Termination of the contract to run Wollman Rink and Lasker Rink in Central Park will take effect 30 days after written notice is delivered, de Blasio said. Termination of the contract to run the carousel, which is now closed because of the coronavirus pandemic, will take effect 25 days after written notice.

The city will seek new vendors for all the attractions, the mayor said.

Removing the Trump name from the rinks, carousel and golf course won’t erase him from New York City. He will still operate Trump Tower on Manhattan’s Fifth Avenue and the Trump International Hotel on Central Park West. Trump moved his official residence from Trump Tower to Florida in 2019.

HOUSING FAIR



RENT

Close to campus
security deposit
STUDYING
CLEANING CHECKS
LATE FEE
email
APARTMENTS

Private Room
BYU CONTRACTED
Family Housing
friends forever

WASHER & DRYER
COOKING
REFRIGERATOR
SPACE
GREAT WARDROBE

Home Evening Group

2021

Off campus
INTERNET
SPEED
MANAGER

Wed., Jan. 27, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Visit och.byu.edu to attend the fair. Provided by BYU Off-Campus Housing Office



Associated Press

Researchers say smoke from wildfires accounted for up to half of all small particle air pollution in parts of the western U.S. in recent years.

Study: Wildfires produced up to half of pollution in US West

ASSOCIATED PRESS

BILLINGS, MT — Wildfire smoke accounted for up to half of all health-damaging small particle air pollution in the western U.S. in recent years as warming temperatures fueled more destructive blazes, according to a study released Jan. 11.

Even as pollution emissions declined from other sources including vehicle exhaust and power plants, the amount from fires increased sharply, said researchers at Stanford University and the University of California, San Diego.

The findings underscore the growing public health threat posed by climate change as it contributes to catastrophic wildfires such as those that charred huge areas of California and the Pacific Northwest in 2020. Nationwide, wildfires were the source of up to 25% of small particle pollution in some years, the researchers said.

“From a climate perspective, wildfires should be the first things on our minds for many of us in the U.S.,” said Marshall Burke, an associate professor of earth system science at Stanford and lead author of the study.

“Most people do not see sea-level rise. Most people do not ever see hurricanes. Many, many people will see wildfire smoke from climate change,” Burke added. The study was published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

The researchers used satellite images of smoke plumes and government air quality data to model how much pollution was generated nationwide by fires from 2016 to 2018 compared to a decade earlier. Their results were in line with previous studies of smoke emissions across earlier time periods and more limited geographic areas.

Large wildfires churn out plumes of smoke thick with microscopic pollution particles that can drift hundreds or even thousands of miles. Driving the explosion in fires in recent years were warmer temperatures, drought and decades of aggressive fire fighting tactics that allowed forest fuels to accumulate.

Air pollution experts say that residents of the West Coast and Northern Rockies in particular should expect major smoke events from wildfires to become more frequent.

There’s little doubt air quality regulations helped decrease other sources of pollution even as wildfire smoke increased, said Loretta Mickley, an atmospheric chemist at Harvard University. But it’s difficult to separate how much of the increase in smoke pollution is driven by climate change versus the forest fuel buildup, she added.

Mickley and researchers from Colorado State University also cautioned that fires can vary significantly from year to year because of weather changes, making it hard to identify trends over relatively short periods such as the decade examined in the new study.

An AP analysis of data from government monitoring stations found that at least 38 million people in California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana were exposed to unhealthy levels of wildfire smoke for at least five days in 2020. Major cities in Oregon suffered the highest pollution levels they had ever recorded.

Smoke particles from those wildfires were blamed for health problems ranging from difficulty breathing to a projected spike in premature deaths, according to health authorities and researchers.

Fires across the West emitted more than a million tons of particulate pollution in 2012, 2015 and 2017, and almost as much in 2018.

Scientists studying long-term health problems have found correlations between smoke exposure and decreased lung function, weakened immune systems and higher rates of flu.

The new study matches up with previous research documenting the increasing proportion of pollution that comes from wildfire smoke, said Dan Jaffe, a wildfire pollution expert at the University of Washington. Jaffe added that it also raises significant questions about how to better manage forests and the role that prescribed burns might play.

“We have been making tremendous progress on improving pollution in this country, but at the same time we have this other part of the puzzle that has not been under control,” Jaffe said. “We’re now at the point where we have to think about how to manage the planet a whole lot more carefully than we’ve done.”