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April 6-12, 2021

THE UNIVERSE

Serving the Brigham Young University Community

Church leaders address social issues, encourage faith and hope during April 2021 General Conference

By KENZIE HOLBROOK

Leaders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints addressed several societal issues and provided encouraging words of faith, hope, peace and other gospel principles during the faith's 191st Annual General Conference held on Easter weekend.

This was the third consecutive General Conference held remotely because of the COVID-19 pandemic. While many spoke from the Conference Center in Salt Lake City, some General Authorities outside the U.S. pre-recorded their messages that were shown during the conference.

Love and inclusion

The concepts of love and inclusion for all God's children were a common theme in the conference. Elder Gary E. Stevenson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles said "we have a primary responsibility to set a tone and be role models of kindness, inclusion, and civility — to teach Christlike behavior to the rising generation in what we say and how we act."

Elder Gerrit W. Gong of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles shared principles from the story of the Good Samaritan and mentioned the equality of all God's children. "As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are all equal, with no second-class groups," Elder Gong said. "All are welcome to attend sacrament meetings, other Sunday meetings and social events."

General Authority Seventy Elder Jorge T. Becerra expressed the importance of reaching out to people in need and touched on the importance of how members minister to others.

"As we minister we should be led by revelation to those who are most in need, as opposed to just going down a list or visiting people in a methodical way," Elder Becerra said. "We should be led by the power of inspiration."

During the Saturday morning session, President Dallin H. Oaks, first



The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints President Russell M. Nelson greets members of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles at the start of the 191st Annual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

counselor in the First Presidency, announced a new Primary general presidency. Sisters Camille N. Johnson, Susan H. Porter and Amy Wright were called as the new Primary general presidency while Sisters Joy D. Jones, Lisa L. Harkness and Cristina B. Franco were released.

Sister Jones gave an address on the importance of teaching children the gospel of Jesus Christ. "Becoming like our Savior will not happen randomly," she said. "Being intentional in loving, teaching and testifying can help children begin at a young age to feel the influence of the Holy Ghost."

During Saturday's Priesthood Session, President Russell M. Nelson also talked about ministering and how God's children need each other.

"God wants us to work together and help each other," he said. "That is why He sends us to Earth in families and organizes us into wards and stakes. That is why He asks us to serve and minister to each other."

Social issues

Leaders addressed numerous social issues during the conference including abortion and abuse.

Elder Neil L. Andersen of the Quorum of the Twelve said each son and daughter of God is on their own spiritual journey and the Savior loves each precious child. "If an unanticipated child is expected, let us reach out with love, encouragement, and when needed, financial help, strengthening a mother in allowing

her child to be born and continue his or her journey in mortality."

Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve condemned all types of abuse. "Everyone has the right to be loved, to feel peaceful and to find safety at home," he said. "In no case are we to be guilty of any form of abuse or unrighteous dominion or immoral coercion — physical, emotional, ecclesiastical or any other kind."

He encouraged members to heal the world of chaos. "We cannot afford — and this world cannot afford — our failure to put these gospel concepts and fortifying covenants to full use personally and publicly," Elder Holland said.

See PEACE on Page 4

Negativity, hate speech on social media at a level 'never seen before'

By INGRID SAGERS

Negativity on social media has increased in the past year and has included backlash against leaders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, social justice movements and political turmoil, Church leaders have been active in their messages promoting getting vaccinated, wearing masks, social distancing and loving others. Their statements have been met with escalating backlash on social media, where users don't have to take personal responsibility for their negative comments.

On March 31, the Church updated its handbook to include a section on vaccinations. "Vaccinations administered by competent medical professionals protect health and preserve life," it reads. "Members of the Church are encouraged to safeguard themselves, their children, and their communities through vaccination."

The entry goes on to say individuals are responsible to make their own decisions about vaccination.

President Russell M. Nelson receives vaccine

Back in January, President Russell M. Nelson received the COVID-19 vaccine with his wife, Wendy Nelson.

He posted a photo and caption to each social media platform, stating they had prayed often for the vaccine, a "literal godsend."

With President Nelson's experience as a doctor and heart surgeon and overseeing the Church's medicinal humanitarian efforts around the world, he sees the COVID-19 vaccine as a blessing.

President Nelson's statement concluded by saying, "receiving the vaccine today is part of our personal efforts to be good global citizens in helping to eliminate COVID-19 from the world."

Some comments on President Nelson's Facebook post said:



Preston Crawley photo illustration

There has been a rise in negativity on social media in the past year, including backlash against leaders of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

"I have already had COVID. I'm doing everything to maintain my immunity. Please don't command me to take the vaccine."

"As someone with a family member who recently was vaccine injured, this is really upsetting. It sounds like those of us who have real and valid concerns about this aren't considered 'good global citizens' which isn't the case at all."

The Daily Universe declined to include examples of numerous comments that included profanity, disinformation and outright falsehoods. Instagram and Twitter comments expressed similar tones.

The Church's official social media account posted a statement underneath President Nelson's vaccine post on Facebook: "Please keep in mind

community guidelines. Comments that are profane, crude, insensitive, off-topic or contain personal attacks will not be approved. While we encourage conversation it is against our guidelines to support long threads of argument."

Increase in negativity

"Over my eight-plus years managing BYU social media accounts, I have noticed many shifts in user behavior among our audience," said BYU's previous social media manager Jon McBride who left the position in November.

McBride's career is focused on doing sentiment analysis on thousands of social media posts. He said he can't speak to whether there is more negativity among Church members as a whole or more political tribalism than before.

However, he said the negativity on social media has definitely increased, and the source of the majority of negativity in the BYU audience has shifted.

"This isn't about liberals and conservatives wanting to share their beliefs and values. We've always seen the desire for that. This isn't about simply sharing a difference of opinion or having a spirited debate. We've always seen that," McBride said. "This is about a level of negative sentiment that we have never seen before on social media."

Yvette Cruz has been the social media manager at KSL.com for two years now. She said she saw hostility on a slow uphill growth rate before 2020. When the pandemic began and a crazy year followed, Cruz saw online hate speech skyrocket.

Before the string of 2020 events that led to a hectic year, Cruz said she knew exactly what topics would create charged comments or debates on the KSL.com social media pages and what stories would have the most need of her monitoring the comment section to remove hate speech.

Once the pandemic started and political turmoil rose, Cruz said every single story would have thousands of comments and she could no longer monitor them all. She was saddened to see that because people needed to stay inside and away from others, they seemingly found more time and energy to be negative and lash out.

"We've always seen people disagree about politics or city zones or little things, but at that point, it turned into people attacking the characters of people they didn't know. There are now comment threads of hundreds of people attacking each other," Cruz said.

Anonymity feeds online negativity

During her time monitoring KSL.com's social media, Cruz said she has come to believe people are wary of their online presence. This leads to many users writing under anonymous accounts.

See MEDIA on Page 4

The Daily Universe to print final weekly paper April 13

By CASSIDY WIXOM

The Daily Universe will print its final weekly paper on April 13 as part of changes to BYU news labs.

The Daily Universe newspaper has been a core part of campus life since 1956 when the first daily newspapers were printed five days a week.

Starting in 2012, the Universe switched to weekly newspapers and after Winter Semester, the weekly print editions will shift to a monthly print periodical.

This change, along with other adjustments in the Newsline and Universe student labs, comes as a result of a journalism faculty task force that sought input from faculty and staff on how to better serve students in the journalism program.

This task force, made up of School of Communications Director Ed Carter and journalism professors Kris Boyle and Miles Romney, was initiated by a BYU President's Innovation Grant given to the program in 2020. The task force analyzed the current state of the journalism program and looked for ways to adapt it to the evolving news media industry.

According to a press release, the task force created a two-year pilot plan to "explore innovative solutions and ultimately decide on long-term adaptations."

"I think the entire journalism industry has a bright future and has an important role to play in society, and at the same time, (it) has a need for innovation and change," Carter said.

Some of these innovations include a focus on augmented reality applications to news and increased community engagement through collaboration with other campus departments and the surrounding community.

"This gives us an enhanced opportunity to really play a meaningful role in not just pointing out problems, but contributing to solutions and answers and understanding," Carter said.

The new magazine-style periodical is planned to debut on campus racks starting Fall Semester. Monthly newspaper print editions will be published through spring and summer to prepare for the transition. The task force expects to publish between four and 10 periodicals a year.

While online publications will continue to cover daily and breaking news, Carter said these periodicals will contain longer, explanatory news projects that tackle a range of questions, issues and current trends in society. He hopes this solution-oriented journalism will provide interpretation, context and analysis of events and help increase news literacy in the community.

With this format, reporters can drill into a topic and "provide meaningful solutions and answers as opposed to just raising questions that are unresolved," Carter said.

Boyle, who participated in the Daily Universe production as a BYU undergraduate, said he is sad to see this era end. But, "it's also really exciting because there's a bright future ahead in journalism and in the program here."

Ultimately, the changes were driven by a focus on improving the student experience. Boyle said even though the labs provide a great experience for students now, they hope to make it an even better experience through these innovations.

The skills learned in the newsroom labs at BYU are valuable to all who participate in the program, even if they don't stay in the journalism field after graduation, Carter said.

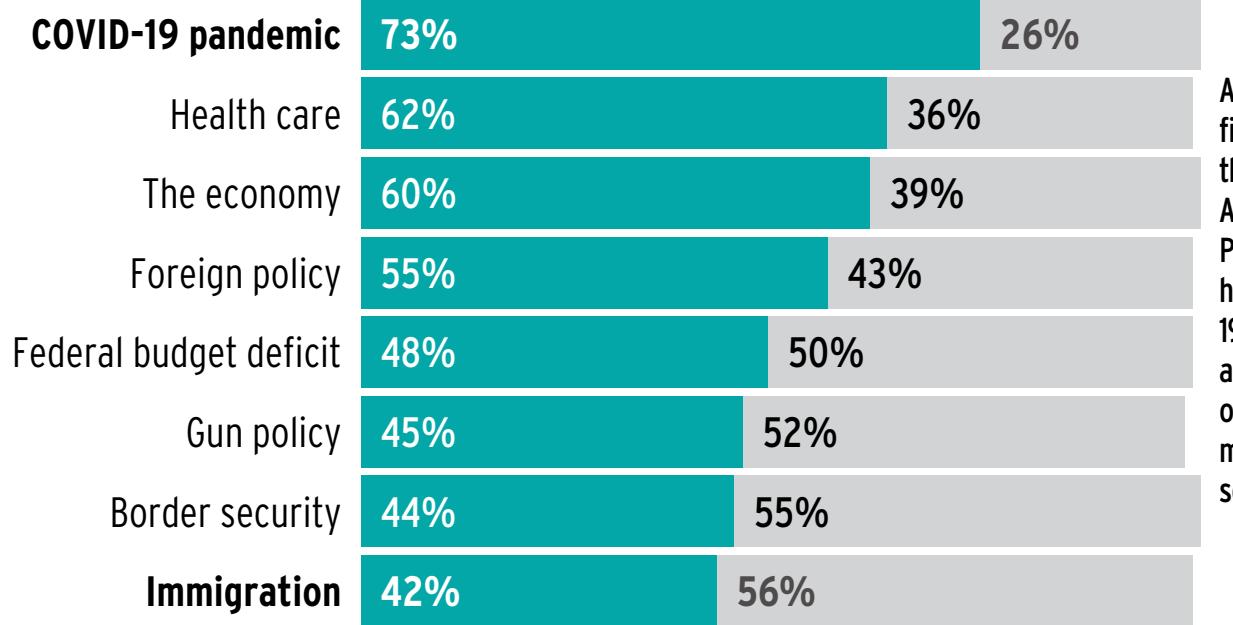
Newsline, the broadcast TV news program produced by students, will transition from daily traditional news programs to online video news shows that include in-depth videos produced alongside the print periodicals.

COVID-19 OUTBREAK

COVID-19 remains top issue for Biden

Do you approve or disapprove of how President Biden is handling ___?

Approve Disapprove



A new AP-NORC poll finds that about three-quarters of Americans approve of President Joe Biden's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, while only about 4 in 10 approve of his handling of immigration and border security.

Results based on interviews with 1,166 U.S. adults conducted March 25-29. The margin of error is about 3.6 percentage points for the full sample. Data provided by AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

Associated Press

With new aid, schools seek solutions to problems new and old

ASSOCIATED PRESS

With a massive infusion of federal aid coming their way, schools across the U.S. are weighing how to use the windfall to ease the harm of the pandemic.

The assistance that was approved last month totals \$123 billion — a staggering sum that will offer some districts several times the amount of federal education funding they receive in

a single year. The aid will help schools reopen and expand summer programs to help students catch up on learning. It also offers a chance to pursue programs that have long been seen as too expensive, such as intensive tutoring, mental health services and major curriculum upgrades.

If important needs are overlooked — or if the money does not bring tangible improvements — schools could face blowback from their communities and from politicians who influence their funding.

Virus variant identified in Britain found on Navajo Nation

ASSOCIATED PRESS

A coronavirus variant first identified in Britain has been found on the Navajo Nation, tribal health officials said March 30.

The United Kingdom strain was confirmed in a sample obtained in the western part of the reservation that extends into Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. It has been detected throughout the United States.

The Navajo Department of Health is working with states and other public health agencies to identify any more variant cases, Navajo President Jonathan Nez said.

"We don't want to cause panic, but we want to reinforce the need to take all precautions by limiting travel, getting tested if symptoms occur, wearing one or two masks, avoiding medium to large in-person gatherings, practice social distancing and washing your hands often," Nez said in a statement.

Utah to help people reentering workforce during pandemic

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Utah is launching a return to work program to help people re-entering the workforce as new coronavirus case numbers continue to drop, state officials announced at a COVID-19 briefing April 1.

Lt. Gov. Deirdre Henderson said the program will provide returnships, similar to internships, as opportunities for those who've been away from

the workforce to build their resumes and gain relevant experience. She said the program is designed for those who've had a longer absence, such as full-time parents, retirees and military personnel.

Republican Gov. Spencer Cox signed an executive order during the briefing requiring state agencies to identify returnship opportunities that can be offered. He also urged Utah residents to continue wearing masks until everyone in the state is able to be vaccinated.

Biden launches community corps to boost COVID vaccinations

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Seeking to overcome vaccine hesitancy, the Biden administration on April 1 stepped up its outreach efforts to skeptical Americans, launching a coalition of community, religious and celebrity partners to promote COVID-19 shots in hard-hit communities.

The administration's "We Can Do This" campaign features television and social media ads, but it

also relies on a community corps of public health, athletic, faith and other groups to spread the word about the safety and efficacy of the three approved vaccines.

President Joe Biden encouraged more than 1,000 faith leaders on April 1 to continue their efforts to promote vaccinations in their communities.

Vice President Kamala Harris and Surgeon General Vivek Murthy held a virtual meeting with the more than 275 inaugural members of the community corps on April 1 to kick off the effort.

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AP SPB

For more news, including audio and video, visit

universe.byu.edu

ACCOUNTING

Taylor Bennett

Adam Dalton

Florida governor issues order banning 'vaccine passports'

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis issued an executive order on April 2 banning businesses from requiring customers to show proof they have been vaccinated against COVID-19 in order to get service.

His action also barred any government agency in Florida from issuing such documentation for the purpose of providing proof of vaccinations.

In his executive order, DeSantis asserts that "vaccination passports reduce individual freedom and will harm patient privacy."

Effective immediately, Florida businesses are barred from requiring patrons to provide documentation certifying COVID-19 vaccination to enter a business or to get served.

But the order does not preclude businesses such as restaurants and retail stores from screening protocols and other measures recommended by state and federal health officials.

As of April 2, more than 2 million Floridians have been infected by the virus.

Outside the outbreak

From the Associated Press



States push mental health training for police

In response to several high-profile deaths of people with mental health issues in police custody, lawmakers in at least eight states are introducing legislation to change how law enforcement agencies respond to those in crisis.

The proposals lean heavily on additional training for officers on how to interact with people with mental health problems. But none of the proposals appear to address the root question: Should police be the ones responding when someone is mentally ill?

Last month, Utah Gov. Spencer Cox signed legislation that will create a council to standardize training for police crisis intervention teams statewide.



'Real Housewives' star pleads not guilty to fraud charges

A Utah woman starring in "The Real Housewives of Salt Lake City" reality show pleaded not guilty April 2 to charges accusing her of ripping off hundreds of people in a nationwide telemarketing scheme.

A federal judge in New York City also imposed tighter bail conditions for Jennifer Shah during a virtual hearing after a prosecutor suggested she was still hiding illicit proceeds from the alleged fraud and is a flight risk. Agents searching her home found debit cards from the account of a shell company formed as part of the scheme, said Assistant U.S. Attorney Kiersten Fletcher.



Alex Jones' appeal denied in Newtown shooting case

The U.S. Supreme Court on April 5 declined to hear an appeal by Infowars host and conspiracy theorist Alex Jones, who was fighting a Connecticut court sanction in a defamation lawsuit brought by relatives of some of the victims of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting.

Judge Barbara Bellis barred Jones from filing a motion to dismiss the case, which remains pending, and said she would order Jones to pay some of the families' legal fees.

The families and an FBI agent who responded to the shooting, which left 20 first-graders and six educators dead, are suing Jones and his show over claims that the massacre was a hoax. The families said they have been subjected to harassment and death threats from Jones' followers because of the hoax conspiracy.



Utah city approves resolution that supports 'Dixie' name

The St. George City Council has unanimously approved a resolution that supports calling the region "Utah's Dixie."

The resolution approved April 1 said the city in southern Utah would support all institutions in the area with "Dixie" in its name, TV station KUTV reported. However, Republican Gov. Spencer Cox signed a bill this year that required the university in St. George to reconsider its name.

Nationwide protests against racial injustice created momentum to change the name of the university, which many consider offensive. Dixie is a term commonly used to refer to the Southern states, especially those that formed the Confederacy.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM BYU COLLEGES

BYUSA president-elect hopes to inspire others

By ELENA CASTRO

BYUSA President-elect Paul Victor is considered an inspiration by his peers and colleagues.

When running for BYUUSA president, Victor said he did not expect to win. He was running to make friends and get to know people.

"I think it's easier for people to say, 'he's just trying to be my friend because of the election.' But for me, I've been making friends and being personable since I've been here. I try to make myself approachable," Victor said.

Victor said he started at BYU as an introvert who had no friends, believes students don't have to be the labels they are given. "You can be whoever you want to be."

When he decided to run, he said he already had a large network of people to support him. He said he hopes being president gives inspiration to other students that they can do it too.

Kelsey Nield has served with BYUSA for a year and a half and said she is excited to be working with Victor as his vice president.

"He's exactly what this office needs right now. He's inviting and friendly and I think he will do a great job."



Tendela Tellas

Paul Victor is BYUSA's president-elect for the 2021-2022 school year. He says he hopes being president gives inspiration to other students.

He's just a great person to be around," Nield said.

She said she and Victor want to do as much as they can to facilitate change and improve student life. "Paul and I both have a similar vision of emphasizing diversity and inclusion this year

and really want to make sure the campus feels like they belong."

Student Connection and Leadership Center Director Anthony Bates said Victor is extremely personable and incredibly kind. He hopes the campus can benefit from that because he thinks the world could use more of it.

"The vision BYUSA strives to achieve is to 'inspire BYU students to create lasting connections, foster an inclusive campus, cultivate skills and talents and live with integrity.' My hope is that some aspect of his message and campaign appealed to one or more of the aspects of this vision," he said.

Bates said to his knowledge, Victor and Nield are "the first ethnic minority BYUSA President and Executive Vice President in BYUSA's history."

"Minorities that I have talked to say they are proud that I'm president because they now feel they are being represented," Victor said.

Sociology and Latin studies major Erick Calderon said he didn't think students voted for Victor solely on his ethnicity. "If you've ever met Paul you would know why people voted for him. I believe that will inspire other students of color to run in the future. Especially freshmen who will come in the fall."

New Instagram platform shares LGBT experiences at BYU

By HOLLY CLUFF

A BYU student has launched an Instagram account to share stories and experiences from LGBT students.

Maddison Tenney, a senior from Hooper, Utah, founded the RaYnbow Collective to create a community of love, support and kindness for students who identify as LGBT. The account features anonymous stories in a similar vein to the anti-racism account Stop Your Silence, as well as art and poetry about the LGBT experience at BYU. It also highlights "safe spaces" (offices that indicate support for LGBT students) seen on campus.

Tenney started the account in early March, and she said the turnout has been amazing. As of April 2, it had 734 followers. She said it's different from similar existing accounts because all submissions are anonymous.

"We want people to feel safe sharing art and stories even if they don't feel safe being themselves," she said.

Tenney said she had been passionate about advocacy and helping the LGBT community since she came home from her mission, but the "blatant homophobia" surrounding this semester's Rainbow Day spurred her to take more action. She drew inspiration for her initiative's name from efforts to protest Rainbow Day.

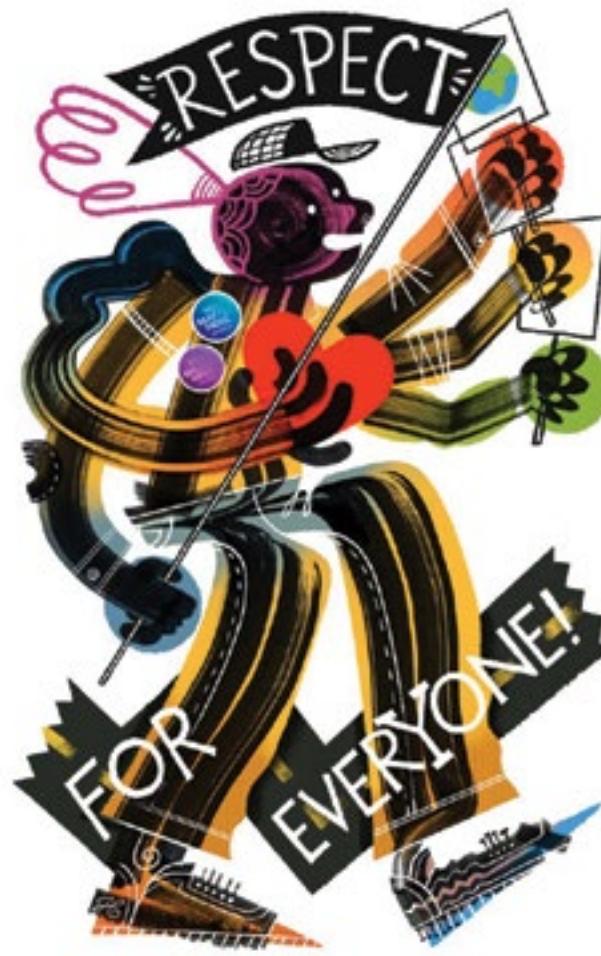
"On their posters, they call it 'raynbow' with a 'Y,'" she said. "I thought, 'you know what? It is the raynbow! I'm gonna reclaim that.'"

She spread the word by distributing Raynbow Collective flyers, one of which hangs outside history professor Amy Harris's office in the Joseph F. Smith Building.

Harris said she discovered the account when Tenney sent her an email asking her to spread the word to students about submitting art and poetry.

"I support students having a variety of places to talk about their experiences, particularly students who are often on the margins and not sure if they have a place at BYU," Harris said. "So I put up the flyer."

Tenney said hearing the experiences of LGBT students has been both the best and hardest part of running the account because people have good and



David Habben

Illustration professor David Habben repurposed a character he had created to represent the LGBT community. He said respect for everyone is a core value of his faith.

bad experiences. "You want to believe BYU is doing its best, and I think we do try, but I think we can do better."

The account also functions to build hype and collect submissions for a virtual art show it will sponsor this summer, Tenney said. She will post some art submissions as teasers on Instagram and save the rest for the official show.

Though details about its execution are still up in the air, she said she hopes the show will become an annual event and help future generations of LGBT students feel like they have a place at BYU.

Illustration professor David Habben was one of the first to submit art to the Raynbow Collective. He repurposed a drawing he had done before of a character championing respect for everyone.

"The nature of this character here is he is marching forward with an idea of respecting everyone," Habben said. "That's a core value of my faith, and it should be of the university campus as well."

He said he follows the

account because he cares about the students at BYU and wants to know what their concerns and feelings are. "When I see an account like that, regardless of the topic, I like to know about it."

Habben said he personally wants LGBT students to know they are loved, respected and wanted on campus, in his classroom and in BYU programs. He believes it should be a cause for alarm if any student doesn't feel safe on campus.

"BYU is a place for learning and for exercising Christlike attributes, foremost of which is love," he said.

Tenney said if she could say anything to students at large, it would be that loving people is the most important thing anyone can do and that Christ loved people completely.

"He loved people, and He wanted them to come to Him," she said. "And if we are true representatives of Jesus Christ, it doesn't matter if we disagree with choices because they're not our choices. The greatest way to love God is to love the people around us."

MARRIOTT SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

Podcast informs student entrepreneurs of resources



Eddy Columna

A student-run podcast educates budding BYU entrepreneurs on resources available to them as they start their own businesses. Eddy Columna, a junior studying marketing, had the idea to start a podcast in September 2020 after working with the Rollins Center for Entrepreneurship and Technology for a few years. Columna considered BYU student innovators' success stories and decided he wanted to help others see how starting a business doesn't have to be intimidating.

"Starting a business feels intimidating for students at first, because they don't realize that resources out there, like the Rollins Center, can help them get started," Columna said. "The podcast takes that scare factor away by showing that other students, who had no prior experience in starting businesses, found success."

The team involved in making the podcast a reality included Rollins Center Marketing Manager Meeshell Helas, pre-communications sophomore Spencer Crowley, illustration senior and Daily Universe graphic designer Olivia Hales and media arts studies sophomore Noah Gull.

"Anyone can start their own business with the right resources, and the Rollins Center is a fantastic place to begin," Columna said.

BYU GRADUATE STUDIES

Several programs place in top countrywide rankings



Five Brigham Young University graduate programs earned a top 100 ranking in the 2022 edition of the U.S. News Best Graduate School Rankings. Three of these programs also earned a top 50 ranking: the J. Reuben Clark Law School (No. 29) and the Marriott School of Business's MBA (No. 31) and MPA (No. 48) programs. The McKay School of Education ranked No. 73 and the Nursing School ranked No. 81. U.S. News

ranks graduate school programs in business, engineering, law, nursing, education and medicine each spring. These rankings measure faculty, students and research through statistics and expert opinions.

"We're delighted with our improved ranking in the U.S. News & World Report," BYU College of Nursing Dean Jane Lassetter said. "We have an excellent program, and our graduates go forth to serve as remarkable family nurse practitioners in their role as primary care providers."

"BYU Marriott graduate programs are world-class and develop the kind of leaders that quality organizations demand," Marriott School of Business Dean Brigitte Madrian said. "We're pleased to be recognized by U.S. News for our students' business skills, innovation, global perspective and leadership abilities."

COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Students to present their research in international conference



Clockwise from top left: Stephanie Morales, Paige Lee, Adelaide Burgess, Cecilia Foster, Nathan Hicken and Olivia Morrow

Six communications students have been selected to present their research during a national conference in June. BYU professor Scott Church encourages students in his popular media and culture class to enter their research into the Popular Culture Association's conference each year. The association's international conference highlights the top scholarly work in pop culture each year. Adelaide Burgess, Cecilia Foster, Nathan Hicken, Paige Lee, Stephanie Morales and Olivia Morrow are the featured students. Their projects referenced TV shows including "Jane the Virgin" and "Saved by the Bell" as well as movies, songs and Sherlock Holmes.

"I have been so impressed seeing their quality of work, their motivation and their ability to receive feedback," Church said. "It's always hard to be critiqued on your own work. For them to take feedback and use it to make their work even better has been so impressive for me."

TODAY

UNIVERSITY DEVOTIONAL

Tuesday, April 6

11:05 a.m.

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



Ryan Gabriel

BYU Assistant Professor of Sociology

Ryan Gabriel is an assistant professor of sociology at Brigham Young University. He received his bachelor's degree from Utah State University, where he majored in sociology and minored in philosophy. He obtained his PhD in sociology from the University of Washington with an emphasis on racial stratification, demographic methods, and statistics.

Dr. Gabriel joined the BYU Department of Sociology in

2016. His research focuses on urban sociology, racial residential segregation, racial residential mobility and neighborhood attainment, and the legacies of racial violence. He investigates these areas through the use of quantitative methods with the goal to explicate the color line: its historical power on contemporary processes, how it is transforming through increasing racial and ethnic diversity, and how it will manifest in the future.

Selected speeches available at speeches.byu.edu

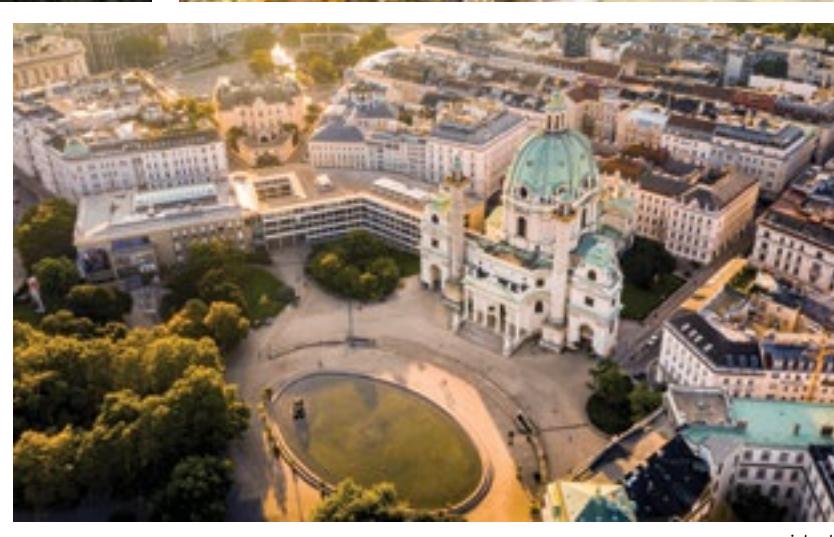
NEXT: THE UNFORUM



April 13
11:05 a.m.

General Conference

President Nelson announces 20 new temples



President Russell M. Nelson announced plans to build 20 new temples on April 4. These temples will be built around the world, including (clockwise from top left): Oslo, Norway; Singapore, Republic of Singapore; Capetown, South Africa; Cali, Colombia; Vienna, Austria.

By MARGARET DARBY

President Russell M. Nelson announced plans to construct 20 new temples around the world during the final session of the 191st Annual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The 20 new temples will be built in the following locations:

- Oslo, Norway
- Brussels, Belgium
- Farmington, New Mexico
- Grand Junction, Colorado
- Helena, Montana
- Torreón, México
- Querétaro, México
- Belo Horizonte, Brazil
- Cali, Colombia
- Torreón, México
- Belo Horizonte, Brazil
- Cali, Colombia
- Querétaro, México
- Torreón, México
- Helena, Montana
- Casper, Wyoming
- Grand Junction, Colorado
- Farmington, New Mexico
- Vienna, Austria
- Kumasi, Ghana
- Beira, Mozambique
- Cape Town, South Africa
- Singapore, Republic of Singapore
- Singapore
- Burley, Idaho
- Eugene, Oregon
- Elko, Nevada
- Yorba Linda, California
- Smithfield, Utah
- "We want to bring the house of the Lord even closer to our members," President Nelson said.

According to a Church press release, this announcement is second only to a 1998 announcement of 32 new temples by then President Gordon B. Hinckley. President Nelson has now announced 69 new

temples during his three years as president of the Church.

Temples are currently being reopened through a series of four phases after they were closed because of the pandemic. The re-opening of temples will be based on local government regulations and safety protocols.

"Meanwhile, keep your temple covenants and blessings foremost in your minds and hearts. Stay true to the covenants you have made," President Nelson said.



The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Members of the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles sit on the stand during the Saturday morning session of the April 2021 General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

PEACE

Lessons taught during Conference

Continued from Page 1

President Oaks said the U.S. Constitution and its inspired principles are important to Latter-day Saints because of its role in the restoration of the gospel. "Our belief in divine inspiration gives Latter-day Saints a unique responsibility to uphold and defend the United States Constitution and principles of constitutionalism wherever we live."

He said although the Constitution as a whole is divinely inspired, not every word of it is divine. "Despite the divinely inspired principles of the United States Constitution, when exercised by imperfect mortals their intended effects have not always been achieved."

"We should never assert that a faithful Latter-day Saint cannot belong to a particular party or vote for a particular candidate," President Oaks said, adding that constitutional principles are to be the focus of those governed, rather than allegiance to a particular political leader.

Temples

President Henry B. Eyring, second counselor in the First Presidency, talked about the importance of temples and invited members to always be worthy to enter the house of the Lord and go as often as circumstances allow.

"The only way you can have the feeling of that family embrace forever is to become worthy yourself, and help others, to receive the sealing ordinances

of the temple," President Eyring said.

President Nelson also announced 20 new temples around the world, including Utah's 26th temple to be built in Smithfield.

President Nelson said temples will open when local government regulations allow. "Do all you can to bring COVID numbers down in your area so that your temple opportunities can increase," he said.

Forty-one temples are presently under construction or renovation and last year the Church broke ground on 21 new temples.

Hope and the light of Christ

Another common theme during the conference was the principle of hope. President M. Russell Ballard, acting president of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, related to people suffering from loneliness at this time and encouraged members to turn to the Savior for hope.

He said every faithful, covenant keeping member would be exalted. "I speak of hope in Christ not as wishful thinking," he said. "Instead, I speak of hope as an expectation that will be realized."

General Authority Seventies Elders Thierry K. Mutombo and Timothy J. Dyches both spoke about the light of Christ and how it can help carry people through dark times. "Jesus Christ is the light that we should hold up even during the dark times of our mortal life," Elder Mutombo said. "When we choose to follow Christ, we choose to be changed."

Elder Dyches testified about the light of Christ and what it can do for people. "Our Heavenly Father did not abandon us to darkness but promised us light for our journey through His beloved Son, Jesus Christ," he said.

New Primary general presidency sustained in General Conference



The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

(Left to right) Sisters Susan H. Porter, Camille N. Johnson and Amy Eileen Wright have been called to the general presidency of the Primary, with Sister Johnson as the president.

By INGRID SAGERS

Sisters Camille N. Johnson, Susan H. Porter and Amy Wright were called as the new Primary general presidency in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

President Dallin H. Oaks announced the new Primary leadership in the Saturday afternoon session of the 191st Annual General Conference.

President Joy D. Jones, first counselor Lisa L. Harkness and second counselor Cristina B. Franco were released and given a vote

of thanks for their years of service.

Sister Camille N. Johnson was called to be the general president of the Primary. Sister Johnson is a former ward Young Women president, Gospel Doctrine teacher, and ward Relief Society, Young Women and Primary counselor.

Sister Johnson was born in Pocatello, Idaho, and previously served with her husband, Douglas, leading the Perú Arequipa Mission.

Sister Susan H. Porter has previously served on the Relief Society general advisory council. She also

served as a counselor in her stake Relief Society presidency, ward Relief Society president, Young Women president, Gospel Doctrine teacher, and temple ordinance worker.

Her husband, Elder Bruce Porter was called as a General Authority in 1995 and passed away in December 2016.

Second counselor Sister Amy Wright was serving on the Young Women general board before her call to the general Primary presidency. She is a stage 4 ovarian cancer survivor and is supported by her family and husband, James.



The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Members of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles watch on the TV monitors the children's choir from Korea sing I Love to See the Temple during the Sunday morning session. Church leaders have not been immune from negative comments on social media.

MEDIA

Trends of hate speech on the rise

Continued from Page 1

"Nowadays, lots of employers, schools and even friends will hold people accountable for the things they do or say online, and so people might use so-called 'burner accounts' or fake usernames to say things — often negative, or even downright hateful — that they wouldn't want attached to their real person," Cruz said.

Some people believe as long as they remain anonymous, they can get away with more, she said.

McBride said an essential part of effective social media use is authenticity. He said

the basic definition of authenticity is "of undisputed origin" or "genuine."

"In relation to the rise of negativity, hate and outrage on social media, we have definitely seen that much of it comes from anonymous accounts," he said. "Many behind these accounts seem to feel emboldened to say whatever hateful thing they'd like, because of the lack of personal accountability there. It's certainly inauthentic content."

McBride said Church leaders have been clear that such online anonymity should be avoided.

Advice for social media use

Both Cruz and McBride said these are extremely difficult periods of being so involved in social media as a career. Cruz said at times, she has needed to step away from her computer or phone

and take breaks from consuming or creating media.

McBride said being the target, although mostly an unintended one, of never-ending negativity, hate and outrage has a very real impact on someone's mental health.

"It takes a toll being the one having to observe it day-in and day-out," McBride said, adding that a lot of his colleagues at other universities have left the social media management field.

Cruz said she hopes media consumers recognize the "mute" and "unfollow" tools are often underused.

She would encourage people to be conscious about when they need a break from certain people on social media or online forums in general. That can either be logging off for a couple of hours or deleting media apps for a period of time, she said.

Salt Lake Temple and Temple Square renovations in full swing

By KRISTINE KIM

Construction took over Temple Square as eyes turned to Salt Lake City for the 191st Annual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Church President Russell M. Nelson announced renovations to the Salt Lake Temple in April 2019, resulting in the temple's closure from December 2019 through 2024.

In his announcement of the renovation project, President Nelson said one of the main goals was to address safety concerns and replace obsolete systems within the building. He said the project was also intended to further enhance, refresh and beautify the temple.

"Accessibility will be enhanced so that members with limited mobility can be better accommodated," President Nelson said.

Exterior updates

In March 2020, one major aspect added to the renovations was the trumpet that fell from the statue of Moroni after a 5.7 magnitude earthquake hit the west side of the Salt Lake Valley.

According to a Church news release, scaffolding bridges now hang and surround the temple, while the fountain is being removed also. At the Church Office Building Plaza has been completely stripped, preparing for new landscaping layouts.

Hayden McDow, a BYU mechanical engineering student, said while this temple renovation project requires lengthy excavation, construction methods and significant cost for labor, the engineering methodology being used allows for preservation of culturally



Addie Blacker

The Salt Lake Temple construction is fully underway in Temple Square. The Church has received mixed feedback from members about renovation plans. *Read a Spanish translation of this story at unvr.se/spanish.*

significant and original designs while upgrading the temple with seismic and disaster-responsive materials.

"The final project will have an isolated base that allows for rolling during earthquakes and added structural responsiveness to other stresses and strains that are incurred on buildings of this size," McDow said. "Altogether this project will add safety, durability, modern functionality, and unique preservation of history that otherwise would isolate the temple from a more modern and developed Salt Lake City."

The project to create a tunnel underneath North

Temple is about halfway done. The temple's roof is being removed and replaced with a temporary cover.

BYU exercise science alumna and Salt Lake City resident Hannah Coombs said she doesn't view the construction as an inconvenience, but rather a much needed change for the temple.

"Overall, it might not look the prettiest right now, but if the seismic stabilizers help save the structure down the road it is definitely worth it," Coombs said.

Interior changes

The interior of the Salt

Temple is also undergoing major changes.

The March 24 First Presidency update on the renovations said the temple will be equipped with two more instruction rooms, additional sealing ordinance rooms and a second baptistry.

The First Presidency said these changes would be made to "ensure a familiar, uplifting experience for members who attend that temple."

The temple will also transition from live performances by volunteer temple workers to single-room presentations with film, allowing more sessions each day to accommodate the large

number of members attending the temple.

However, many of these interior changes meant some of the original murals in the temple had to be removed or repainted. "They were originally painted directly on lath and plaster walls, which had been repaired and repainted many times because of water damage and other deterioration," the update says. "The murals were carefully photographed and documented before removal, and some of the original portions are being preserved in the Church's archives."

Public reactions

There have been mixed

responses from the public, who say these changes are either momentous or have a negative effect on the history and design of the temple.

Kristine Haglund, former editor of "Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought," said switching from actors who are led by the Spirit to say lines a certain way to the films is a huge, unnecessary loss.

"The work of mental and spiritual imagination that has to occur in a live session is very different from the effect of the mass-produced and passively-received photographic version," she told the Salt Lake Tribune.

Other people view the changes as something that won't affect the overall experience of attending sessions at the temple.

BYU student Kelsey Johansen said something she loves about temples is being able to go anywhere in the world and have the same ordinances performed in the same way.

"A main reason we go to the temple is to turn to God and consecrate ourselves to Him, so the medium or presentation of an ordinance isn't that important at the end of the day," Johansen said.

Gerrit Van Dyk, BYU philosophy and Church history librarian, said updates in the presentation of the endowment show the globalization of the Church and its commitment to allow for more languages and a higher overall volume of patrons.

"In spite of what may be lost by this new direction, as a historian, I am encouraged by the Church's simultaneous dedication to the historical record — that is, their sincere desire to preserve these magnificent murals, in whatever way possible, for posterity and future research," Van Dyk said.

Virtual tours of Church historic sites offered to thousands worldwide



New York and Pennsylvania Historic Sites

Elder and Sister Turpin, senior missionaries assigned to the New York and Pennsylvania Historic Sites, give a guided online tour of the Smith family log home. Missionaries offer virtual tours of Church historic sites across the United States in response to pandemic restrictions. *Read a Spanish translation of this story at unvr.se/spanish.*

By ALLIE RICHAEI

Missionaries at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints historic sites are offering guided virtual tours for thousands of viewers across the world in compliance with COVID-19 restrictions.

"Clearly, technology is what has allowed us to go forward," said President Stephen Rizley of the Nauvoo Historic Sites.

According to President Terry Joe Spallino of the New York and Pennsylvania Historic Sites, some sites like the Sacred Grove remain open for visitors to walk around. More information on all United States Church historic sites is available on the Church website.

President Spallino said since June 1, 2020, missionaries at the New York and Pennsylvania historic sites have given 384,000 online tours that have reached as far as Europe, Latin America and Asia. "Four or five times as many people have experienced these tours virtually as those that would have experienced it being here."

Virtual tours have opened

Nauvoo up to the world as well, President Rizley said. "More people are experiencing Nauvoo in the month of March 2021 than they've ever experienced it in any March ever before."

President Rizley said a recent activity report showed over 3,600 people participated in virtual tours of Nauvoo from the week of March 15 to March 21.

The activity report also showed that Nauvoo tours reached people from Brazil, Vietnam, Nigeria, Germany and eight other countries just in the last month. President Rizley said people will often say at the end of a tour, "Thank you. I know I would never get there."

Former Nauvoo missionary Alyssa Reyes experienced both the very first and more recent virtual tours from both sides of the screen. "I think that the greatest advantage of the virtual tours is that they allow people who normally wouldn't experience the power and spirit of Nauvoo for themselves to do so in a very unique way," she said.

Kaelynn Thornton, another

former Nauvoo missionary, said it was difficult to transition from in-person to online tours. She said she learned to follow the Spirit as she tried to work with technology and find the best lighting inside the Nauvoo homes.

Despite the challenges brought on by pandemic restrictions, Thornton said virtual tours are worth it because of the spirit of Nauvoo. She said she learned something new from the pioneer stories each time she told them. "You can see the faith that they had, so it helps you boost your faith."

President Rizley said he saw a miracle with the switch to virtual tours. "The miracle came when we learned that the Holy Ghost testifies of truth and gives people that peaceful, spiritual feeling of what took place here," he said. "And they receive it through a series of ones and zeroes, through technology."

Visitors can look up virtual tours for the New York historic sites online and schedule a tour for an individual or group. The Nauvoo historic sites and others have their own websites for tour scheduling.



The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Church members in Munich, Germany, watch the 191st Annual General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Members have also been tuning in to their Sunday meetings, and now as vaccination efforts increase, some wonder if live-streams will continue.

Will wards continue live-stream meetings beyond pandemic?

By MADISON SELCHO

Leaders of wards and stakes for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are deciding if they will keep online meetings or get rid of them all together as COVID-19 transmission slows and restrictions loosen.

The worry for many bishoprics and stake presbyteries now is whether or not people in their congregations will attend in person if given the opportunity.

"We just don't know how many people are going to come and participate once everything goes back to normal," said Bishop Hiram Alba of Salt Lake Married Student 14th Ward.

Alba said they will take

into consideration for those who may have disabilities, but beyond that, they will move their meetings to be in person.

"We will keep those with disabilities in mind as we move forward, but ultimately we want our congregation to meet in person once the pandemic stops," Alba said.

In order to ensure a safe and comfortable return back to all in-person meetings, some bishoprics have enlisted the help and feedback of their congregations.

"We have sent out surveys for those in our ward to inform the bishopric if they have been vaccinated, how comfortable they feel starting to do in-person meetings, just so we can get a gauge on how everyone is feeling," Alba said.

While also juggling the

demands of their congregations, bishops must take into account guidance from the area and stake presidents.

"When a new policy comes out from the area presidency, the stake has usually provided a plan for implementation to try and have consistency within the stake, but a lot has been left up to the wards, especially early in the pandemic," said Bishop Scott Davis of the Valley View 3rd Ward.

Davis said he sees potential problems with keeping a live stream option for everyone in their congregation after the pandemic ends.

"There's a fine line. I wouldn't want members who are physically able to attend to stay home just and miss out on the blessings of physically gathering together," Davis said.

Utah group shares Bolivian culture through dance



Ballet Folklorico Bolivia is currently a 17-member Bolivian dance group that aims to share Bolivian culture through traditional dance.

By KRISTINE KIM

Local Bolivian folk dance group Ballet Folklorico Bolivia strives to share Bolivian culture with Utah and other parts of the United States, while also bringing fellow Bolivians together and creating a sense of community through dance and music.

"Ballet Folklorico Bolivia gives an opportunity for everyone to enjoy the culture and to spread love through dance," said BYU alumna and dancer Angie Ayaviri McGraw.

Emmanuel Taboada, a Bolivian student studying English at Internexus Provo, created this group after seeing that no one in Utah had started a Bolivian cultural dance group.

When Taboada came to Utah to learn English, he missed dancing and doing the things he had done at home in Bolivia. He realized he could create a group for Bolivian dancing to help share the rich culture.

"It makes my life happier, and one of our goals is to share our culture with other people," Taboada said. Ballet Folklorico Bolivia currently has 17 members.

The group was able to go on stage for the first time in West Jordan on March 19, performing several Bolivian dances including Tinkus and Caporales.

Tinkus and Caporales are two of the many traditional Bolivian dancing styles, which include the wearing of certain traditional Bolivian outfits.

McGraw said she saw her father shed tears of happiness as he watched the group perform onstage for the first time.

"I think that the dances are not only for people that are from the U.S. but also for the people from Bolivia. A lot of us have been living here for a long time, so listening to all the music and watching Bolivia being represented makes everyone happy," she said.

Members of Ballet Folklorico Bolivia said it has become more than just a dancing group; it's a way for them to connect back with their roots and show their love for their country.

"It's hard to be away from home. We or our families have made a sacrifice to come to America to have a better life, and even though we are here, we still love our country, and we're really proud of our roots and we're from," McGraw said.

Another member of the group and mother of four children Melisa Pozo Martineau said being in the group has also helped her to get closer to her sisters. "My other two sisters are also in the group, it's been fun to spend time with them, and also with the other amazing people in the group too."

Out of the 17 members of the group, one person is from the U.S. and another person is from Peru. The group is currently looking for at least three more people to join, and anyone is welcome.

"We want anyone who wants to dance to come join us and feel comfortable with us," Taboada said.

Scientists: Grizzlies expand turf but still need protection

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Grizzly bears are slowly expanding the turf where they roam in parts of the northern Rocky Mountains but need continued protections, according to government scientists who concluded that no other areas of the country would be suitable for reintroducing the fearsome predators.

The Fish and Wildlife Service on March 31 released its first assessment in almost a decade about the status of grizzly bears in the contiguous U.S. The bruins are shielded from hunting as a threatened species except in Alaska.

Grizzly populations grew over the past 10 years in two areas — the Yellowstone region of Wyoming, Montana and Idaho, with more than 700 bears; and around Glacier National Park in Montana, which is home to more than 1,000 of the animals.

Grizzly numbers remain low in other parts of the Northern Rockies, and scientists said their focus is on bolstering those populations rather than reintroducing them elsewhere in the country.



Associated Press

Grizzly bears are slowly expanding in the northern Rocky Mountains but scientists say they need continued protections and have concluded no other areas of the country would be suitable for the fearsome animals.

The bears now occupy about 6% of their historical range in the contiguous U.S., up from 2% in 1975.

Conservationists and some university scientists have pushed to return bears to areas including Colorado's San Juan Mountains and California's Sierra Nevada.

The 368-page assessment

makes no recommendation on the topic, but scientists looked at the possibility of bears in more areas as part of an examination of their remaining habitat.

That analysis showed grizzlies would be unable to sustain themselves in the San Juans, the Sierra Nevada or two other areas — Utah's Uinta

Mountains and New Mexico's Mongolian Mountains.

"They were looking for areas that could sustain grizzly bears as opposed to areas that would continuously need for humans to drop bears in there," said Hilary Cooley, the Fish and Wildlife Service's grizzly bear recovery coordinator.

In each case, officials said, bears would face the same challenge — not enough remote, protected public lands, high densities of humans and little chance of connecting with other bears populations to maintain healthy populations.

An estimated 50,000 grizzlies once inhabited western North America from the Pacific Ocean to the Great Plains. Hunting, commercial trapping and habitat loss wiped out most by the early 1900s. The bears were last seen in California in the 1920s and the last known grizzly in Colorado was killed by an elk hunter in 1979.

Grizzly bears have been protected as a threatened species in the contiguous U.S. since 1975, allowing a slow recovery in a handful of areas. An estimated 1,900 live in the Northern Rockies of Wyoming, Montana, Idaho and Washington state.

Police Beat

Provo

THEFT

March 28 - Property theft was reported near 900 East and 420 South.

March 28 - Property theft was reported near 300 South on University Avenue.

March 29 - Property theft was reported at a school near 1700 West and 820 North.

March 29 - Property theft was reported near 2400 West and 960 North.

March 30 - Property theft was reported near 1200 South on Towne Centre Boulevard.

March 31 - Property theft involving deception was reported

at a school near 900 South on Cinnamon Hills Drive.

March 31 - Service theft was reported at a school near 2000 North and 550 West.

April 1 - Property theft was reported near 100 South and 300 West.

MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT

March 29 - A motorcycle was reported stolen from a residence near 1300 North on Freedom Boulevard.

March 30 - An automobile was reported stolen near 1500 North on Canyon Road.

BURGLARY

March 28 - A non-residential burglary involving an unlawful

entry was reported near 400 South on State Street.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

March 30 - A rape was reported at a residence near 200 East and 600 North.

March 31 - Forcible sexual abuse was reported near 700 South and 650 West.

April 1 - Forcible sexual abuse was reported near 200 East and 2020 North.

BYU

SEXUAL ASSAULT

A suspect was arrested on March 31 in connection with the following five incidents:

March 27 - A man reportedly groped a woman from behind

near the Tanner Building.

March 28 - A man reportedly groped a woman from behind by the Cannon Center.

March 28 - A man reportedly grabbed a woman from behind and attempted to grope her near the Life Science Building.

March 28 - A man reportedly grabbed a woman from behind and attempted to grope her by the Cannon Center.

March 28 - A man reportedly groped a woman from behind near 800 North and 700 East.

THEFT

March 29 - A bike lock was reported cut and a bicycle stolen from a Helaman Halls bike rack.

The daily part of The Daily Universe

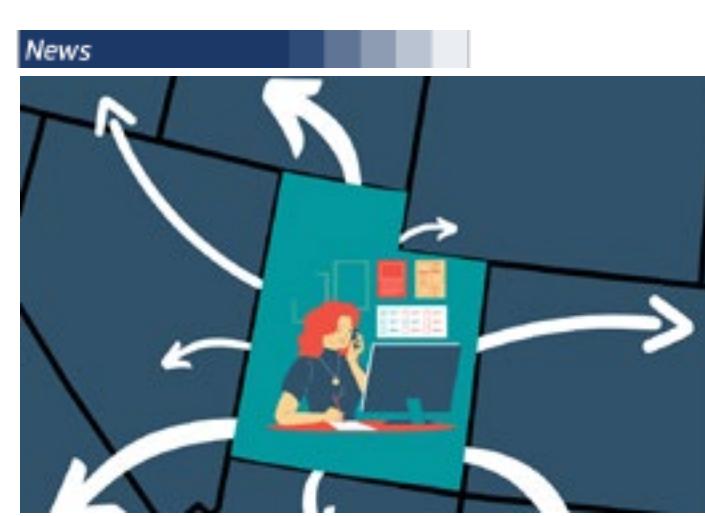
The Daily Universe Newsletter



Good morning,

Today's newsletter covers BYU's new policy for out-of-state work, fall sports that moved to winter and the first Reader's Forum of the semester.

Enjoy.



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BYU bars out-of-state work for student and non-student employees

By Sydnee Gonzalez

BYU recently announced a new policy barring employees, including those who work remotely, from working outside of Utah.

BYU men's basketball loses 4 players to transfer portal

By JAKE GONZALES

The BYU men's basketball team had four players announce their decisions to enter the transfer portal in the two weeks following the end of the season. Those players were former starters Kolby Lee and Connor Harding, as well as transfers Wyatt Lowell and Jesse Wade.

The transfer portal is an actual website where coaches all over the country can go to find and recruit players looking for a new home in the college ranks.

Wade, a junior point guard, was the first to declare his intentions, announcing his plans on Twitter on March 24.

"I had a great talk with Coach Pope today and I will be entering the transfer portal to explore possible options," Wade said on Twitter. "There are multiple ways this can go and no doors are closed anywhere, including BYU. I just simply want to explore options and see what is out there."

Wade has had a less-than-ideal college career thus far. He started at Gonzaga, but after a lackluster first year, decided to transfer to BYU. After waiting the requisite year according to NCAA rules, Wade faced critical knee issues and used a medical redshirt for the 2019-20 season. He was finally able to play again last season but rarely saw the court.

The next to declare was Harding, also a junior. After a breakout 2019-20 season, many expected Harding to be one of the leaders of the team this year. He began this season as a starter but struggled to meet expectations, and finished the season coming off the bench. Harding's role in the starting lineup was largely filled by newcomers Caleb Lohner and Gideon George.

Lowell, who followed head coach Mark Pope over from UVU, announced on March 30 that he was



Preston Crawley

Connor Harding defends against a Pacific player in the Marriott Center. Harding and three other BYU players announced their plans to enter the transfer portal and explore their options in the offseason.

entering the transfer portal.

He spent most of the last year plagued by injuries, including a season-ending Achilles injury against Gonzaga. Lowell has played in only seven games, averaging two points a game.

Lee declared his intentions via Twitter on March 30 as well, completing one of the busiest transfer weeks in recent memory for the

Cougars.

"From starting and playing in the awesome game last year as we took down Gonzaga, to making it to the NCAA tournament this year, it's been a fun ride," Lee said on Twitter. "Although this year didn't play out how I wanted it to, I enjoyed the friendships and the brotherhood I made with my teammates."

Like Harding, Lee saw his minutes

significantly reduced as the season went on. The big man started the first 15 games of the season but was later overshadowed by Purdue transfer Matt Haarms and Lohner. Both Lee and Harding also have spouses that play for the BYU women's basketball team: Kayla Belles Lee and Paisley Harding.

Assuming these four players land elsewhere, and everything goes as

planned with the incoming BYU signees, BYU will have two scholarship spots to fill. Pope could fill these spots with additional signees or, as has been his tendency in the past, transfer athletes.

In his two-year tenure at BYU, Pope has always managed to get the pieces he needs to build a successful team. Why should this year be any different?

A father and son's Olympic legacy with BYU gymnastics

By NATALIE ORR

BYU hall of fame gymnast Wayne Young came in 12th place at the 1976 Olympic Games in Montreal, the highest finish by an American in 40 years at that point. As Wayne's Olympic journey came to a close and he shifted gears to medicine, his son Guard's was just beginning.

Wayne attended medical school at the University of Utah and in 1989 moved his family to Oklahoma for residency. Guard, his 12-year-old son, was showing interest in gymnastics and Wayne wanted to be near good development programs. This played a major role when considering the move.

"When I was going to do my residency, one of the criteria was that they needed to have a reasonably good men's and women's gymnastics program in the same city," Wayne said. "I only interviewed at schools that had that."

In Oklahoma, Guard worked with one of the best coaches in the nation: Mark Williams. At the time, Williams worked as the assistant coach of the men's gymnastics team at the University of Oklahoma. Today, he is the head coach of the Sooners, with nine national titles under his belt.

"I graduated high school and I had a hard decision to make," Guard said. "Do I stay with him and go to OU? Or do I go to BYU? I ended up choosing BYU, mainly for the environment and everything it had to offer me spiritually."

Off to BYU

Arriving at BYU in 1996, Guard was the No. 1-ranked recruit. As a Cougar, he collected impressive accolades, earning eight All-American honors and becoming a two-time NCAA National Champion on vault.

Unfortunately, by the end of his junior year in 2000, BYU made the decision to cut the men's gymnastics program because of scheduling issues related to Title IX. That would be his final chance to win the NCAA Gymnastics Championships. In the end, Guard was the all-around runner-up.

"I remember losing the NCAA Championships and I was the favorite to win," Guard said. "A great kid came in and flat out beat me. I remember I was hurting and my dad came up to me and immediately wanted to talk shop about things I needed to improve on. I just looked at him and said, 'right now, I need a dad.'"

With his collegiate career behind



Hannah Miner
BYU gymnastics alumnus Wayne Young, left, and his son, Guard, the current BYU coach, showcase some of their gymnastics medals. Wayne finished 12th at the 1976 Olympic games in Montreal, the highest American finish in 40 years at that point, and Guard won silver with Team USA at the 2004 games in Athens.

him, Guard traveled to Boston in hopes of securing a spot on the Olympic team. However, a 10th-place finish at the trials would put him out of reach of his goal.

"That's when I had some tough decisions to make," Guard said. "I was 23. I had just got married, BYU had just dropped the men's team so I didn't have a 'home.' I didn't have a place to train. I didn't have a coach."

As fate would have it, Williams was promoted to head coach at Oklahoma that year.

"He called me up and wanted me to be his graduate assistant and help coach while I trained for the next Olympics in 2004," Guard said. "It just sounded fun. My wife and I rented the smallest U-Haul that you could possibly rent, filled it full of hand-me-downs and drove to Oklahoma. We didn't even have an apartment when we got there."

Those next four years took a toll on Guard, both mentally and physically. Not only would he coach these athletes in Oklahoma, but he would be their competitor.

"Mentally, the first year, I really struggled adapting to the new roles," Young said. "I really thank Mark Williams for not quitting on me and not letting me quit on myself. I've shared that lesson with a lot of athletes that

have trained. You can't see four years away. That's too long. But four months? You can do four months. Four weeks? You can do four weeks. That is how I got through 2000-2004."

Preparing for Athens

In 2003, just a year before the Olympic Games in Athens, the World Championships took place in Anaheim, California, and Guard attended as an alternate, missing the team by one spot.

"It's a hard role to fill because you go with the team, train with them and then go sit in the stands," Guard said. "I remember watching a gymnastics meet for the first time, not as a coach or as a competitor. At that moment, I thought, 'what do I need to do to help Team USA?' From that experience, I went into that final year of training with a new outlook and approach every day in the gym. I believe to this day that that moment was the difference."

A year later, in the same arena where he sat as an alternate, Guard battled for a spot on the U.S. team at the Olympic Trials. From the Olympic trials, six team members are chosen, along with two alternates. Two days in, the committee named four members. Guard was not on the list.

With two spots up for grabs, the remainder of the competitors headed

to Colorado Springs to participate in a camp. There, they would compete for the final roster spots.

"I was one out of seven competing for those two spots," Guard said. "We had to go back to the gym and refocus and re-energize. I walked into that camp and no one had me on their short list for making this team. After the camp was over, everyone had me on their list and I made the team."

Wayne was there to witness his son make the team.

"The camp was grueling," Guard said. "I remember sticking a double-back pike dismount off the parallel bars. I stuck it cold. I remember looking up and the first person I saw was my father."

Fortunately, his hard work paid off. He finally reached his goal of becoming an Olympian, and in 2004, Guard helped lead the U.S. to the podium.

Olympic medalist and career shift

"I remember going into the team finals and we were starting on floor and I was the lead off," Guard said. "I remember marching out there with my team, climbing up the steps to the podium, walking to the corner of the floor and raising my hand to salute. Everything went quiet and I did one of the best floor routines of my life. It was such an important start to our meet."

Team USA won the silver medal: the best U.S. finish since 1984. The country that came in first? Japan, whose training secrets heavily influenced the Young family legacy after Wayne trained there for several months during his BYU career.

"We didn't care what color of medal it was," Guard said. "When you're standing up there getting an Olympic medal with your teammates, all you're thinking about is everyone that helped you get to this point in your life. My dad went back to medical school and yet he still provided gymnastics for us. We had gym owners who would say, 'don't worry about paying us, just pay us what you can.' That's what you think about when you're up there."

Coming back to Oklahoma on a high, Guard felt as though he went through a "mini mid-life crisis." In 2005, he experimented with something new. "You're 27 and you've sacrificed everything for that one opportunity and now you think, 'what am I going to do with my life?' I had the great opportunity to move to California to be close to my wife's family and I started coaching high school kids."

This is where he solidified his coaching style, pulling inspiration from those in his life. Reflecting on his career,

Guard pinpointed the styles of his father and Williams.

"Mark Williams really is my mentor," Guard said. "He has had a tremendous amount of success and I was fortunate enough that at 13 years old he started coaching me. He really pushes fitness and conditioning. I learned from him the power of a team. Yes, it's individual, but what that individual does, affects the team."

On the other hand, when Guard originally left Williams in 1996 for BYU, he found comfort in the experience of his father.

"I came to BYU and I struggled with the different coaching styles," Guard said. "My dad sat me down and helped me write training plans. He helped me understand its importance. The more successful you are with your plan, the more successful you are with your results. I'm implementing both styles to make my own style."

In 2010, his accomplishments led to his induction into the BYU Hall of Fame. In 2011, Guard became an assistant coach at Oklahoma, alongside his mentor. In 2015, the Sooners won the NCAA National Team Championship.

After that win, Guard started his new chapter: head coach for the BYU women's gymnastics team.

Coaching at BYU

Under his reign since 2015, BYU continues to jump in the rankings, reaching No. 11 nationally during the 2021 season. For two consecutive years, the team captured the Mountain Rim Gymnastics Conference championship title. A step further, the program is producing scores as high as 197.300. These scores and rankings haven't been seen among the team since 2004.

Wayne finds joy in watching his son carry on the family's legacy of BYU gymnastics.

"BYU has been a great move for him," Wayne said. "He's like a kid at a candy store. He loves what he does. He loves the girls. He's running a great program. He backward plans. He knows exactly what the girls are going to do every single day of training. From the start of practice to the final minute of practice. He keeps meticulous records of what they do and where they are at. He can modify his next year based on that. He spends almost every waking moment coaching, planning or recruiting."

Wayne and Guard maintain a close relationship and it's no surprise that gymnastics remains at the center of their conversations.

"It drives my wife and my mom crazy because that's all my dad and I talk about," Guard said.

High court sympathetic to college athletes in NCAA dispute

ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Supreme Court on March 31 seemed sympathetic to college athletes in a dispute with the NCAA over rules limiting their education-related compensation.

With the March Madness basketball tournament in its final stages, the high court heard arguments in a case about how colleges can reward athletes who play Division I basketball and football. Under current NCAA rules, students cannot be paid, and the scholarship money colleges can offer is capped at the cost of attending the school. The NCAA defends its rules as necessary to preserve the amateur nature of college sports.

But the former athletes who brought the case, including former West Virginia football player Shawne Alston, say the NCAA's rules are unfair and violate federal antitrust law designed to promote competition.

The case is not about whether students can be paid salaries. Instead, the outcome will help determine whether schools can offer athletes tens of thousands of dollars in education benefits for things such as computers, graduate scholarships, tutoring, study abroad and internships.

During an hour and a half of arguments conducted by phone because of the coronavirus pandemic, there were both liberal and conservative justices who sounded supportive to the athletes' case.

Justice Elena Kagan suggested that what was going on sounded a lot like price fixing. "Schools that are naturally competitors ... have all gotten together in an organization," she said, and used their power to "fix athletic salaries at extremely low levels."

Justice Brett Kavanaugh agreed, saying "antitrust laws should not be a cover for exploitation of the student-athletes." He told a lawyer for the NCAA that "it does seem ... schools are conspiring with



Associated Press

A Supreme Court case argued last week amid March Madness could erode the difference between elite college athletes and professional sports stars.

competitors ... to pay no salaries for the workers who are making the schools billions of dollars."

The NCAA's argument that what makes college sports distinctive is that players are not paid got a cool reception from Justice Samuel Alito. He said athletes "get lower admission standards" and "tuition, room and board, and other things." "That's a form of pay," he said, adding that the question is "the form in which they're going to be paid and how much."

Other justices expressed concerns about the consequences of ruling for the athletes. Chief Justice John Roberts suggested doing so could mean there will be a "wide number of rules that are subject to challenge, if not in this litigation, in subsequent cases."

Justice Stephen Breyer called the case "tough." "I worry a lot about judges getting into the business of deciding how amateur sports should be run," he told the former players' lawyer, Jeffrey Kessler, at one point.

A ruling for the former players would not necessarily mean an immediate infusion of cash to current college athletes. It would mean that the NCAA could not bar schools from sweetening their offers

to Division I basketball and football players with additional education-related benefits. Individual athletic conferences could still set limits.

Justice Sonia Sotomayor asked the NCAA's lawyer, Seth Waxman, about that at one point, asking why conferences wouldn't just "impose those limits?"

Waxman responded that a national agreement is the "only solution" because of the pressures schools would face to offer additional benefits to lure top talent. If the NCAA's restrictions are removed, that could create bidding wars for the best players. The NCAA says that could turn off fans and erase the distinction between professional and college sports.

In comments on March 31, NCAA President Mark Emmert called the case "very, very important to the way in which college sports is governed."

Whatever happens at the high court, changes seem on the way for how college athletes are compensated.

The NCAA is in the process of trying to amend its rules to allow athletes to profit from their names, images and likenesses. That would allow athletes to earn money for things like sponsorship deals, online

endorsement and personal appearances. For some athletes, those amounts could dwarf any education-related benefits.

The NCAA wasn't happy with the outcome the last time its rules were before the Supreme Court. In 1984, the high court rejected NCAA rules restricting the broadcast of college football. The justices' ruling transformed college sports, helping it become the multibillion-dollar business it is today.

This time around, the former college athletes have some big-time supporters. The players associations of the NFL, NBA and WNBA all urged the justices to side with the ex-athletes, as did the Biden administration. So far, the former players have won every round of the case.

A decision from the justices is expected before the end of June, when the high court traditionally breaks for summer.

Women's volleyball wins 7th WCC title



Preston Crawley

The BYU women's volleyball team celebrates with its West Coast Conference championship banner on March 31 in the Smith Fieldhouse. The Cougars' seventh conference title gave them an automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament, where they have a first-round bye and will play either Rider or UCLA on April 15 in Omaha, Nebraska.

There's something new in the neighborhood...



2021 HOUSING GUIDE

Now on
racks across
campus

Utah schools discuss on-campus Native American representations

By MARINA MCNAIRY

Discussions about inclusivity on Utah campuses continue after a resolution urging Utah schools to retire Native American mascots failed in the recent Utah legislative session.

The resolution, HCR3, would have encouraged K-12 public schools to retire their Native American mascots. It failed to pass the House on Feb. 16 after Utah lawmakers spoke against it.

HCR3 would not have been binding law, but a statement of encouragement to promote inclusivity and sensitivity toward native students.

The resolution began as a way to encourage public high schools to change mascots. For example, names like the Indians, Braves and Red Men were deemed harmful because of their non-specificity and misrepresentation of Native Americans.

"No one tribe has the authority to regulate these names, images and practices. The lack of proper oversight has allowed scores of public schools to misrepresent Indigenous Americans," said James Courage Singer during the House Education Committee. Singer is a Salt Lake Community College sociology and ethnic studies professor, co-founder of the Utah League of Native American Voters and tribal citizen of the Navajo Nation.

However, HCR3 didn't specify that all Native American mascots were required to be changed.

If a school is named in honor of a Native American, they could choose to retain the name of the school. For example, the University of Utah entered an agreement with the Northern Ute Indian tribe for use of the Ute name.

Franci Taylor, director of the University of Utah's American Indian Resource Center, said the university has a "very strong Memorandum of Understanding with the Northern Ute Tribe, which is based on their support for the use of their tribal identity in conjunction with U. of U. athletics."

According to the memorandum, the Ute Indian Tribe encourages the University of Utah to use the Ute name for the university's sports programs with its full support, and the U. recognizes that the Ute name is at the core of the cultural identity of the Tribe and "constitutes an inseparable element of their rich cultural traditions."

The U.'s goal is to raise tribal visibility and community awareness through promoting educational benefits for Ute Indian tribal member youth. This includes summer youth programs for students, opportunities for tribal member youth to attend U. sporting events, providing educational services to tribal



A resolution in Utah's most recent legislative session started conversations about on-campus representations of Native Americans. These representations include mascots and statues, like the "Massasoit Indian" statue by Cyrus Dallin on the BYU campus.

students to increase college attendance, and honoring Ute tribal members through a design that will be incorporated into team uniforms at one home game during Native American Heritage Month.

However, some U. students feel the name could use an upgrade. "The university could honor and represent the Ute people better by using a word in the Ute language for the mascot. For example, the word for eagle.

This would put the spotlight on culture and language revitalization over using people as a mascot," said Kali Dale, chapter president of the U.'s American Indian Science and Engineering Society.

"There are negative connotations that are received by Native students," Virgil Johnson, a former tribal chairman of The Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation and the former chair of eight tribes in the state of Utah, said during the House Education Committee. "It affects their academics, as well as spiritual and social standings. They're harmful and perpetuate stereotypes that have been around in this country for a long time."

A 2005 American Psychology Association study found that Native American mascots harm Native American students' social identity and self-esteem.

The APA recommended the retirement of Native American mascots, symbols, images and personalities by schools and organizations because the practice "undermines the educational experiences of members of all communities, establishes an unwelcome and hostile learning environment for American Indian students,

has a negative impact on the self-esteem of American Indian children, undermines the ability of American Indian Nations to portray accurate and respectful images of their culture; and may represent a violation of the civil rights of American Indian people."

In the midst of the discussion of Native American representation in Utah schools, a Native American statue stands southwest of BYU's Harold B. Library.

The statue honors Chief Massasoit, the Native American chief who prevented the failure of the Plymouth Colony and the starvation the Pilgrims faced in the earliest years of its establishment. He is also known for the peace treaty he signed with the pilgrims of Plymouth Colony in March 1621, which was honored by both sides until after Massasoit's death.

The original sculpture was erected on Cole's Hill in Plymouth in 1921. It was made by Utah artist Cyrus Dallin, who also created the Angel Moroni statue for the Salt Lake Temple.

The BYU statue, known as the "Massasoit Indian," is one of three copies of the original. The others are located in Kansas City and in front of the East entrance of the Utah Capitol.

BYU law professor Michalyn Steele said the statue is "appropriate as a recognition of a great Indigenous leader and the Utah artist who honored him in this way."

Since Massasoit doesn't belong to a tribe indigenous to the West, the statue may be regarded more as a tribute to a famous Utah artist rather than a local tribe. Massasoit was the chief of the Wampanoag Confederacy of modern-day New England,

which inhabited parts of present Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

The BYU campus sits on the traditional homelands of the Ute, Paiute and Shoshone peoples, which don't currently have statue representations in any public area on campus.

BYU history professor Jenny Pulsipher said it may be time to review the Chief Massasoit statue.

"Perhaps its identifying plaque should be updated, explaining both the past and present context in a way that helps current members of BYU's community understand what the monument meant to people when it was created and what it means to people now — particularly Native American people," Pulsipher said, adding that "more history teaching, more open, civil discussion, more contextualization, particularly of monuments, art, or other things that, in our current time, are hurtful to specific groups" should be encouraged.

As for the legislature's willingness to consider a future resolution retiring the use of Native American mascots statewide, House Majority Leader Francis Gibson, R-Mapleton, questioned whether lawmakers were being too sensitive and if animal mascots would be considered too controversial in the future.

"I'm not trying to directly compare the two," Gibson said on the House floor in February. "But will we have PETA arguing against that as well?"

The resolution's sponsor, Rep. Elizabeth Weight, D-West Valley City, said the measure was about being "more conscientious of our Native American neighbors."



Pexels/Pavel Danilyuk
A paramedic wheels a stretcher into an ambulance. The Provo Fire Department hopes to attract more paramedics to the area with new higher salaries.

Provo Fire Department to increase salaries for incoming paramedics

By MOLLY OGDEN WELCH

Provo City Council members unanimously approved a resolution appropriating \$105,000 to the fire department's budget in order to create more competitive salaries and attract new paramedics, during the March 30 council meeting.

"Over the last two years, we've seen several agencies up and down the Wasatch Front, as they are trying to recruit people into public safety, making significant adjustments to their salaries that are paid to attract people into the service," said Provo human resources analyst Daniel Softley.

Softley said Provo is behind in these trends for increased pay for first responders compared to surrounding cities.

Councilman Bill Fillmore said in the council work meeting earlier the same day that this change "seems like it's entirely necessary."

Rather than waiting for the beginning of the next fiscal year to propose these changes, city administration expressed the need to make these changes as soon as possible.

Softley said because of retirements, a request for medical leave, and some moving on to other jobs, there will be "nine vacancies in the fire service by July 1. We're going to be filling four of those which leaves five more vacancies that we need to fill."

The department has a specific need to hire paramedics for ambulances, and it hopes that competitive salaries for paramedic positions will attract applicants to Provo.

"One of the things that we've noticed is that we've been able to hire EMTs, but have had a difficult time attracting paramedics," Softley said.

Provo has the most EMTs working for the department that Softley has seen in his

20 years of work with Provo City. "These are qualified and quality people, but if we hire too many EMTs, it means that we start running into an inability to have minimum ambulance staffing levels," Softley said.

"Paramedics have a higher level of certification, which means they can do more things on the ambulances," Softley said. This higher certification merits higher pay, and while other fire departments statewide have made adjustments to their salaries budgets for paramedics, Softley said that "based on our current study, Provo Fire is behind."

The Provo Fire Department often helps EMTs with their schooling to become certified paramedics, but between paying students overtime for when they are in school and covering the costs of paramedic training, the department can spend upwards of \$35,000 for one certification.

Softley and other city officials hope that increasing the pay will cost the city less money and bring more paramedics to Provo soon.

"There is a paramedic class coming up graduating in May. The intent is to make these changes effective in April, so that we can be competitive for many of those graduates," Softley said.

The revenue for the additional budget allocations came from the Wildland Fire Response Revenues, which compensates fire departments that assist in emergencies outside of their jurisdiction.

"Our fire department responds to fires across the country, primarily in California, and there's additional revenue that comes in," said Provo's director of administrative services John Borget. "What we've done as a past practice is (allow) the fire department to utilize certain things that they need from that additional revenue that comes in."

Utah company develops first fully FDA-authorized COVID-19 test

By MARGARET DARBY

A Utah biotech company has developed the first COVID-19 test to be fully authorized for use by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

The test, known as the BioFire Respiratory Panel 2.1, was granted full marketing authorization by the FDA on March 17. Other COVID-19 tests are being used under the FDA's Emergency Use Authorization which will ultimately be lifted as the country nears the end of the pandemic.

"Today's action is a great demonstration of the FDA's work to protect the public health in emergency response situations and beyond," said FDA acting commissioner Janet Woodcock in a statement. "While this is the first marketing authorization for a diagnostic test using a traditional premarket review



Todd Jackson
A BYU life science student works with COVID-19 samples. A Utah lab called BioFire developed the first fully FDA-approved COVID-19 test.

process, we do not expect this to be the last."

Salt Lake City-based

BioFire's test offers simple usage and quick results using polymerase chain reaction

(PCR) technology. PCR is a testing method that rapidly makes millions or billions

of copies of a DNA sample so scientists can amplify a small sample and study it in close detail.

PCR is not unusual in COVID-19 testing technology. PCR tests are known for being more accurate than antigen tests because antigen tests are more likely to miss an active COVID-19 infection and produce false negative results.

"Outside studies have shown that antigen tests only pick up 40-60% of people who actually have COVID, but a PCR test is going to pick up 95-100% of people who have COVID," said BYU public health professor Mary Davis.

Using the BioFire test kit is also more streamlined than other COVID-19 tests, and the simplicity creates less room for human error.

Samples are taken from patients using a nasal swab. The test requires only about two minutes of prep time, and results come within 45 minutes to an hour.

"BioFire has a really nice system," Davis said. "It's pretty hands-off. The BioFire is two minutes of hands-on time so there's a lot less error time."

The BioFire test stands apart from other tests because it tests for multiple strains of COVID-19 as well as dozens of other viral and bacterial pathogens responsible for respiratory infections.

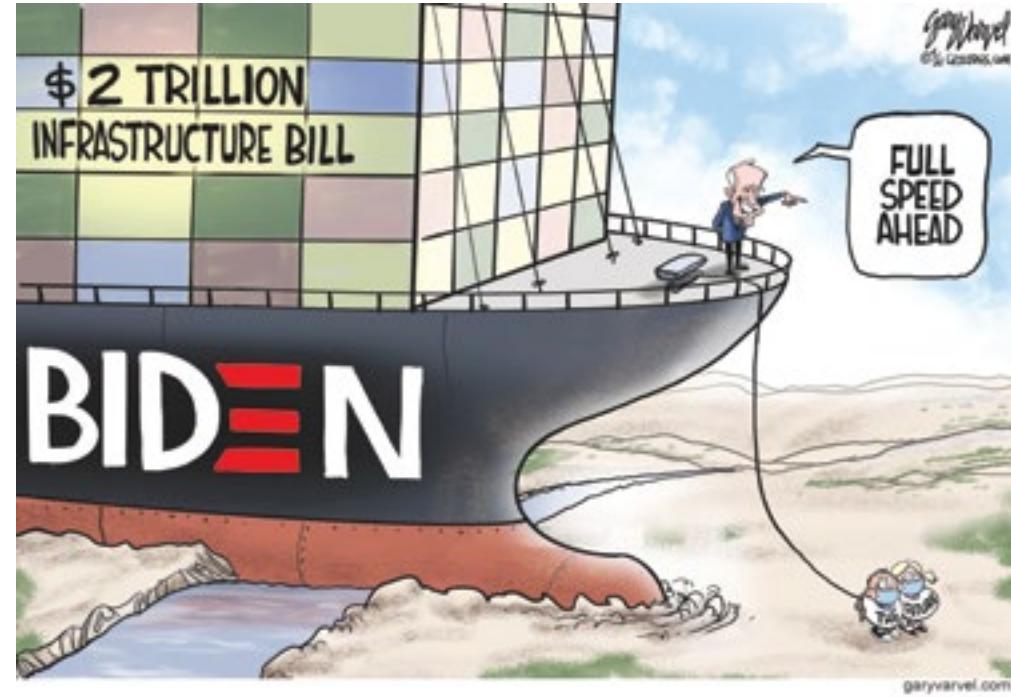
"It is beneficial to be able to get a test result that might be COVID-negative, but which may also pinpoint another respiratory virus that is causing the symptoms," said Joel Griffits, BYU professor and department chair of microbiology and molecular biology.

BioFire has over 25 years of molecular experience. The company is a leader in syndromic infectious disease testing. This test is one of many of BioFire's molecular diagnostic platforms.

"It really shows that you need scientists with creativity," Davis said.

AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM

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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 there be stricter gun control in the US?

No. If a bad person wants a gun, they'll figure out how to get a gun. Only good people will be prevented.

@RYAN.ECHOLS.56

Waiting periods, background checks, no guns to anyone convicted for violent crime.

@MAMALUNT

Absolutely. There's no reason to not make it so we have to go through further checks/training.

@THERES_A_BELL

No, it's already strict. Changing it would only hurt law abiding citizens.

@ASHLEY_AVERY

Surely we can at least have the same level of regulation that we do with cars, but for guns.

@SUPERBROCK_

Nope. The people who get guns illegally and do illegal criminal activity will still get the guns.

@SARA_TUILOMA

Yes! Countries with stricter policies have fewer mass shootings & gun violence deaths.

@CAROLINN.AAA

It is our second amendment to own and use guns. I will not have that taken away from me.

@KIERNI_JENSEN

I'm so unsure. I think there are studies that support both, but I'm worried about the mass shootings.

@MORGAN_HARTMAN

Yes! It should be just as hard as getting a drivers license.

@KAITIETCINDRICH

No. The best defense to a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun.

@JOHNNYBLOOD3

If it will reduce gun violence, then yes.

@LEXBYBEE

Yes. Nobody needs an AR-15.

@EDISN

When you've been on the activities committee since the pandemic:



When you are hungry but all the food in the house need to be cooked first



When the professor calls on you during Zoom, but you were playing a game



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

cut: They mimicked it. Since 2017 several of the largest and wealthiest countries in Europe and Asia have slashed taxes on business, while few have increased them.

—Editorial Board
The Wall Street Journal

Dr. Birx

The coordinator of the Trump administration's coronavirus response made a shocking revelation during a recent CNN interview — many of the 550,000 Americans lives lost to the pandemic could have been saved with better leadership.

... Managing the response to the pandemic under President Donald Trump — Dr. Deborah Birx's responsibility — was a

failure of historic proportions. ... When you have a front row seat to deaths you know could be avoided and don't raise the alarm publicly, that's your responsibility.

—Editorial Board
USA Today

Protect veterans

Congress invited predatory for-profit colleges to bleed military veterans of education aid — and give them nothing in return — when it wrote a loophole into rules that govern how federal student aid streams are classified. It comes as welcome news that the loophole was closed as part of the pandemic recovery bill signed into law last month.

... There is more that the

OPINION OUTPOST

Biden administration needs to do to protect veterans, and the American public, from companies that earn their profits by stripping students of federal education dollars while giving them valueless degrees.

—Editorial Board
The New York Times

Utah drought

The drought Utah and the American West are now suffering ... requires action on many fronts. Cox is correct to call everyone's attention to it. He is correct to activate the state's Drought Response Committee

to make assessments and recommendations.

... The drought is ... Utah's new normal, and it will only get worse unless we bring in a term that Cox's declaration tellingly omits: Climate change.

—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.

US hunger crisis persists, especially for kids, older adults

ASSOCIATED PRESS

America is starting to claw its way out of the economic fallout from the coronavirus pandemic, but food insecurity persists, especially for children and older adults.

Food banks around the U.S. continue giving away far more canned, packaged and fresh provisions than they did before the virus outbreak tossed millions of people out of work, forcing many to seek something to eat for the first time. For those who are now back at work, many are still struggling, paying back rent or trying to rebuild savings.

"We have all been through an unimaginable year," said Brian Greene, CEO of the Houston Food Bank, the network's largest. It was distributing as much as 1 million pounds of groceries daily at various points during the pandemic last year.

Data from Feeding America, a national network of most food banks in the U.S., shows that its members dispensed far more in the last three months of 2020 compared with the same period in 2019.

The food banks that agreed to let Feeding America publicly share their data, 180 out of 200 total, collectively distributed far more food — about 42% — during the last quarter of 2020 than in the same period of 2019. The amount of food allotted in the last quarter slipped just slightly from the previous three months, down around just 1%.

Katie Fitzgerald, Feeding America's chief operating officer, said the network's members are still seeing demand above pre-pandemic levels, although final numbers for this year's first quarter aren't yet available. Fitzgerald said she expects the food banks will collectively distribute the equivalent of 6 billion meals this year, about the same amount they gave away last year and far above the 4.2 billion meals given out in 2019.

"A lot of families who were living paycheck to paycheck before the pandemic were already experiencing food insecurity," she said. "Now, the level of insecurity for some has grown more extreme, when you see real hunger — mom skipping meals to feed the family."

America's yearlong food insecurity crisis has been felt especially sharply by children who lost easy access to free school meals, and older adults who struggled to get groceries or meals at senior centers because they worried about contracting the virus.

"It got really ugly," said Silvia Baca Garcia, 33, a Phoenix resident from Honduras who scrambled to feed her three children and granddaughter during months of unemployment caused by the viral outbreak. "It had been a lot easier when my two boys were in school and getting their hot breakfasts and lunches everyday."

Hungry children

When COVID-19 fears shuttered schools around the U.S. last spring, school districts nationwide suddenly had to get food to students who rely on free lunches even in the best times.

The number of free meals districts served to children whose families meet income criteria fell sharply: Nationwide approximately 1.65 billion fewer breakfasts and lunches were served by child food service programs between March and November of 2020 than were served March through November of 2019 -- a decrease of 30 percent.

"There are definitely a certain amount of students that are falling through the cracks," said Reggie Ross, president of the School Nutrition Association, which represents school food service employees and food suppliers.

From rural to urban areas, districts have had to get creative to deliver the food to kids.

In Phoenix on a recent, hazy afternoon, grownups and kids lined up by a yellow school bus for bags of free food.

The tiniest kids balanced multiple bags as they trudged home to apartments nearby, an occasional apple or juice box tumbling onto the asphalt. A young woman stuffed bags of food under her toddler's stroller seat.

"This has been important because most refugees don't have a ride," said Sinthia Rehmet, originally from Pakistan. She was among those picking up



Associated Press

Rita Scanlon, 92, eats lunch delivered to her by Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island. Meals on Wheels of Rhode Island has been delivering on average 4,000 meals per day up from their pre-pandemic average of 1,200.

bags containing small milk cartons, peanut butter, hamburgers and pre-cooked meals to be re-heated.

The Alhambra School District in Phoenix went from serving 6,000 free breakfasts and 9,600 free lunches every day before the pandemic down to about 2,500 meals overall daily, said Brienne Berg, the district's child nutrition coordinator. Berg said about 5,000 of the district's estimated 10,000 students returned to campuses in March while a similar number were signed up to continue remote learning.

For Baca Garcia, the struggling Phoenix mother, without a car, it was often difficult to pick up the packages of food the kids' school was offering while the campus was closed. Fortunately a neighborhood church ensured the family always had something to eat. She's now relieved to be working as a hotel housekeeper and her sons Hugo, 14, and Adrian, 6, have returned to classes and two hot meals a day at the district's Valencia Newcomer School.

In Mississippi's impoverished Jefferson County, the school district for months has used aging school buses to deliver meals to the homes of remote learners. All 1,100 students in the district qualify for free school meals.

As districts reopen, including some with hybrid models where kids don't attend in person every day, schools are trying to ensure their access to food is consistent. As New York City works to get kids back in school, the school district has made students' meals available at pickup sites in the mornings. In the afternoons, families can also get free packaged meals and snacks available to the whole community.

Jennel Jerome, a New York school district supervisor, worries about students' nutrition when they aren't in class where staff can make sure they eat lunch and encourage them to grab an extra milk or fruit if they are still hungry.

"Now that we're not seeing them, there is that concern: what are they really getting to eat?" she asked.

The USDA has announced that during summer recess it will extend flexible food programs providing free meals to all children across the U.S. regardless of income.

Older adults

Since the pandemic began, many older adults in the U.S. have turned to food banks, Meals on Wheels home deliveries and other charities to get enough to eat.

Daily meals at the local senior center are no longer an option during shutdowns and going to the grocery store may be dangerous. Many older people are cut off from family and friends trying to keep them safe.

Meals on Wheels programs that deliver food to homes were flooded with calls, while other programs also popped up to feed older adults nationwide. Meals on Wheels America said at the end of 2020 its branches nationwide were still serving on average 60% more seniors than before COVID-19.

Over \$1.675 billion in emergency funding has gone to nutrition programs under the Older Americans Act to pay for food, gas and drivers to deliver meals, along with masks, gloves and sanitizer to protect staff.

Jackie Robinson, a 66-year-old retired cook who once worked at a French Quarter restaurant in New Orleans, struggled to get by on his Social Security benefits before the pandemic, occasionally visiting a food pantry. But over the summer he signed up for a city-run delivery program and now gets

not have food if not for the program," said Darnell Head, of Revolution Foods, which operates the program in New Orleans.

New Orleans resident Helen Smith Green, 76, uses a walker to get around and depended on her 96-year-old mother to cook for both of them before the older woman fell and went to an assisted living facility. Green now gets meals through the New Orleans program. Separately, she also gets a monthly food box delivered.

"I'm very thankful for these meals. It makes a big difference in your life, you know," she said.

With vaccinations hopefully hastening an end to the pandemic, advocates working with older adults who are food insecure worry the increase in clients won't abate when the outbreak does.

It's been renewed monthly since its inception in July. The city is planning a survey to get a sense of who will need help once the program ends so they can help them with things like applying for SNAP benefits or finding other food services.

"We've had quite a few people tell us that they would not have meals, they literally would

the older adults eligible sign up for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, which lets people buy groceries at a store. While some don't know about the program, others are ashamed to use it or struggle with the paperwork, she said.

Robert Blancato, executive director of the National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs, said in a January survey that 90% of its members were still serving more people than before the pandemic, and most worried funds would run out.

"Once the pandemic ends, people go back to their normal business, and again, seniors won't be on the radar," said Al Robichaux who heads the Jefferson Parish Council on Aging based in the New Orleans suburbs.

Terry and Barbara Jackson, who live in the town of Marrero, count on the home meals they started receiving from the council's delivery program. He is blind and has diabetes and congestive heart failure while his wife suffers from Alzheimer's and dementia.

"We get Social Security and disability, both of us," Terry Jackson said. "It barely gets us by."

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