

THE DAILY UNIVERSE

MAGAZINE

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SEPTEMBER 2022

THE BLACK 14

These 14 Black men were kicked off the 1969 University of Wyoming football team for seeking to protest BYU and the LDS Church's policy on priesthood and race. Denied a voice in 1969, they remain committed to recognize the value of all individuals and voices today.

Jay Berry
Tony Gibson
John Griffin
Lionel Grimes
Mel Hamilton

Ron Hill
Willie Hysaw
James Isaac
Earl Lee
Tony McGee

Don Meadows
Ivie Moore
Joe Williams
Ted Williams



CREATING A LEGACY OF SERVICE

SEE STORIES
BEGINNING
PAGE 4



**RANDOM FACTS:
FOOD INSECURITY**

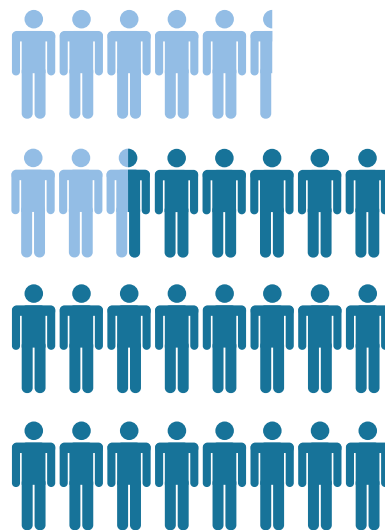
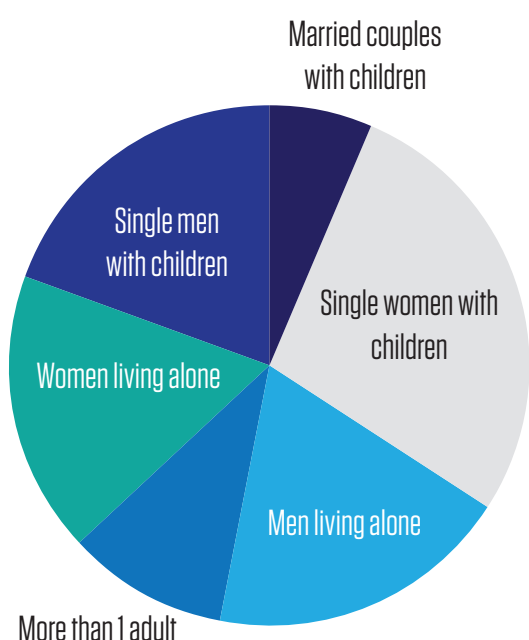
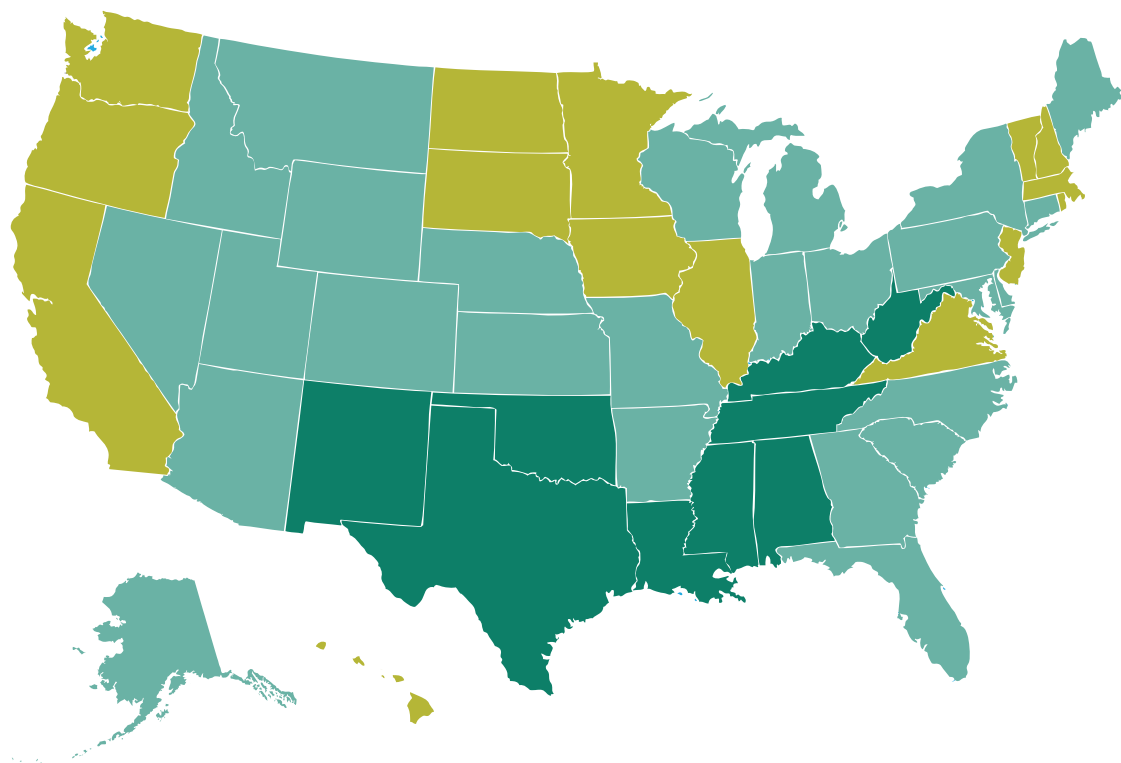
**HBCU MORGAN
STATE & ITS
POWERFUL
PROFESSOR**

**'STILL HERE'
BEAUMONT,
TEXAS WEATHERS
HURRICANES**

**HALL
MONITORING:
QUARTERBACK
JAREN HALL**

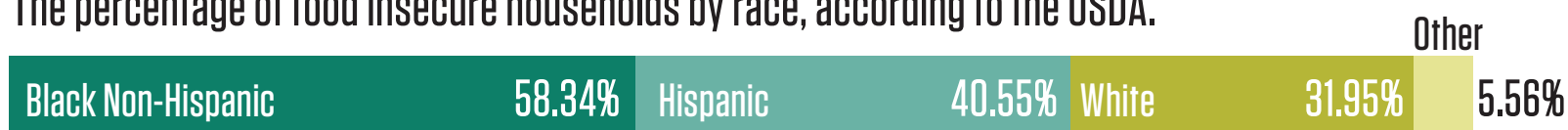
FOOD

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, food insecurity affects 13.8 million households. This accounts for 10.5% of households in the U.S., reflecting the need for many families to receive assistance from donations and food pantries to make it through the year.



In 2019, 29.5 million children ate school lunch every day. Of those, 21.6 million qualified for free or reduced-price lunches.

The percentage of food insecure households by race, according to the USDA.



ALLIE PETERSON AND MAYA BINGHAM

Information provided by the United States Department of Agriculture and the Food and Nutrition Service of the USDA based on studies conducted from the December 2020 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement and U.S. Census Bureau.

Cover designed by Allie Peterson. Photo sources (clockwise from top left): Kyle Spradley, University of Wyoming; Alan Neves; Alan Neves; The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Newsroom.

INSECURITY

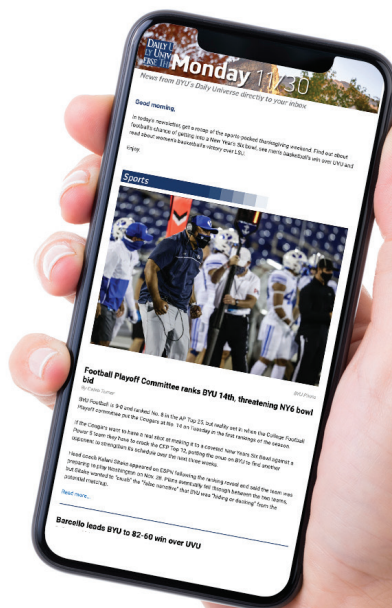
-  Below average US food insecurity
-  Average US food insecurity
-  Above average US food insecurity



Donations to food pantries and charitable organizations are important for their continuing operations, as they provide much needed help to many in local communities. In Utah County, there are several such organizations, including Tabitha's Way, Food and Care Coalition, United Way of Utah County, and Community Action Services.

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THE DAILY UNIVERSE MAGAZINE

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THE BLACK 14



ALAN NEVES

A mural in Laramie, Wyoming, commemorates the 14 University of Wyoming football players who were kicked off the team in 1969. Artist Adrienne Vetter created the mural in 2018.

In 2019, John Griffin, Mel Hamilton, Tony McGee, Tony Gibson and several teammates were welcomed back to the University of Wyoming, 50 years after an incident that dramatically changed their lives. These men — a few of those known as the Black 14 — committed to turn a dramatic negative experience into a meaningful positive legacy.

In 1969, 14 Black players on the University of Wyoming football team wanted to wear black armbands as a protest against the BYU football team and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. At that time, Blacks could not hold the priesthood in the Church.

On the morning of Friday, Oct. 17, 1969, the 14 players appeared in the office of Coach Lloyd Eaton on the Wyoming campus in Laramie to request permission to wear the armbands in the next day's game against BYU. At the time, Wyoming was a national power in football and was ranked No. 12 in the country. The 14 players wanted to show solidarity with their fellow University of Wyoming students who were engaged in civil-rights activities.

Eaton, though, immediately dismissed the 14 players from the team. Their dismissal was upheld that evening in an emergency session of the University of Wyoming Board of Trustees meeting with the state's governor. Several of the players sat in the stands in the next day to watch the game, which Wyoming won, 40-7. The dismissal of the Black 14 not only impacted their lives — many were forced to withdraw from school due to loss of their scholarships, and returned to their hometowns across the United States — but it also signaled the end of Wyoming football's sustained success. The team lost its last four games in 1969, finished with a

1-9 record in 1970 and Eaton was not invited back to coach in 1971.

Although some of the Black 14 returned to the University of Wyoming, and even to the football team, the legacy of the dismissals for many years was a mixed one. The incident was followed by positive change in some respects. BYU recruited its first Black football player in 1970. The Church began ordaining Blacks to the priesthood in 1978. But it wasn't until 2019 that members of the Black 14 received an apology from the University of Wyoming. Not long after, several of them began working with the Church on food drives and other service and humanitarian initiatives, thereby creating a legacy of reconciliation and mutual aid.

Griffin became a ski instructor and corporate executive in Colorado, and now lives in the Denver area. Hamilton graduated from the University of Wyoming and spent years as a public school teacher and administrator in Casper. McGee played in the National Football League and then hosted a sports TV show in Washington, D.C. Gibson worked as a lineman for a power company in Massachusetts. All of them now coordinate service with various food banks and social-service agencies in their hometowns.

Students and staff from the BYU journalism program interviewed Griffin, McGee, Hamilton and Gibson in their hometowns in Spring Term 2022, leading to this special issue of the Daily Universe Magazine. Additionally, BYU journalism students produced a video documentary about the Black 14's service work with the Church, and the video is scheduled to premiere the week of the BYU-Wyoming football game in Provo on Sept. 24.

Jay “Jerry” Berry

#21, Safety. Tulsa, Oklahoma native. Retired after a career as a television sports reporter and anchor in Tulsa, Houston, Chicago and Detroit.

Tony Gibson

#44, Fullback. From Tulsa, Oklahoma. Retired in 2011 after 38 years as a lineman for a Massachusetts utility.

John Griffin

#22, Split End. Born in San Fernando, California. Was voted back on the Wyoming football team and graduated. Held several leadership positions with The Brand Company and United Airlines.

Lionel Grimes

#23, Defensive Back. Born in Alliance, Ohio. Worked for Ford Motor Company and later as an employment diversity executive at Toyota.

Mel Hamilton

#65, Offensive Guard, Tackle. Born in Boys Town, Nebraska. Graduated from the University of Wyoming. Hamilton became the first Black principal in Wyoming.

Ron Hill

#81, Split End. Born in Denver, Colorado. Became a physical education teacher in Denver.

Guillermo “Willie” Hysaw

#20, Flanker. Born in Bakersfield, California. Started his career in employment diversity and went on to become a vice president of Lexus Japan.

James Isaac (deceased)

#30, Halfback. Born in Hanna, Wyoming. Graduated from Dakota Wesleyan University in Mitchell, South Dakota. Died Dec. 25, 1976.

Earl Lee (deceased)

#66, Offensive Guard. Born in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Retired as a principal, football coach and biology teacher in Baltimore, Maryland. Died Jan. 13, 2013.

Tony McGee

#88, Defensive End. Born in Battle Creek, Michigan. Played in the NFL for 14 seasons capping his career in Washington. McGee hosts a sports talk show.

Don Meadows (deceased)

#52, Middle Guard. Born in Denver, Colorado. Returned to play football at Wyoming. Died Nov. 10, 2009.

Ivie Moore

#33, Defensive Back. Born in Pine Bluffs, Arkansas. Worked as a floor subcontractor in Arkansas.

Joe Williams

#26, Tailback. Born in Lufkin, Texas. Played briefly in NFL. Williams owns a property management company in Dallas.

Ted Williams

#24, Tailback. Born in Port Hueneme, California. Foreman at a paint manufacturing company in Waukegan, Illinois and top bowler.

PLAYING ON THE SAME TEAM:



Volunteers help to unload and package donated food for those suffering from food insecurity.

CAROLINE CLARK

THE BLACK 14 AND THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST

BY ABIGAIL GUNDERSON

In an unexpected partnership, two former football players brought their “teams” together to play for a higher cause: feeding the hungry and lifting their communities.

In 2019, Elder S. Gifford Nielsen a General Authority Seventy of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was asked to be a part of a hosting group in Salt Lake City.

The guest?

Mel Hamilton, one of the 14 Black football players kicked off the University of Wyoming’s team in 1969 for wanting to protest the Church’s policy restricting Black men from holding the priesthood.

As Elder Nielsen learned more about Hamilton and the Black 14, he was struck by their experience as college students and their lives afterward.

“To me, it’s a very compelling story,” he said. “So when I met Mel Hamilton for the first time, I went, ‘Oh my goodness, you’re the famous Mel Hamilton!’”

Over lunch Elder Nielsen, a former BYU quarterback, and Hamilton, a former offensive lineman, connected over their shared love of football. Hamilton told the Niensens about the sudden, devastating end to his football career in 1969 and how recently, he and his teammates had started to heal from the decades-old pain.

The University of Wyoming invited the 14 back in 2019 to receive their letterman jackets and a formal letter of apology, which provided some closure and forgiveness 50 years after the scandal that cost most of the 14 their college experience.

LDS students at the university invited the Black 14 to speak at one of their institute classes. As a welcome to the team and a gesture of goodwill, the students made black armbands for themselves and the former players.

“The whole thing was, you know, really almost brought me to tears,” Hamilton said of the experience.

Beginnings

After their first meeting, Elder Nielsen asked Hamilton what the Church could do for them. Hamilton said he’d think about it, and a few months later called Elder Nielsen with an idea.

The Black 14 had started the Mind, Body, Soul Initiative in 2019, a program to fight food insecurity. One of the group’s fundraisers was selling T-shirts and using the profits to buy food for those in need. “Buy a shirt and feed a family,” their website boasts.

Hamilton wanted to put BYU’s logo on the T-shirts. They would need permission from BYU, and Hamilton broached the idea with

Elder Nielsen.

The Church leader brought another offer to the table. The T-shirts, he explained, could only bring in so much food. Why not give the program a truckload of food and supplies from the Church?

“I could only imagine what the Black 14 were saying,” Elder Nielsen said. “‘You’re not going to do that. The reason we got kicked off this team is because of you.’”

From that meeting, the relationship between Elder Nielsen and Hamilton flourished.

As friends and fellow humanitarians, the two began forging a bond between their respective groups.

Elder Nielsen remembers Hamilton on several occasions asking, “Why are you being so nice to us?”

After the history of hurt between the two groups, it was a logical question. Elder Nielsen’s answer was a simple declaration of his Christian beliefs.

“Because we love the Lord and we love our neighbor,” he said. “And Mel, you’re my neighbor. I love you.”

“Magnificent things”

After 50 years, the Black 14 and the Church aren’t seeking to erase a part of their mutual history. The men said this isn’t about covering a wound and moving on, it’s about

healing hurt that has festered for decades.

“What happened in 1969, that’s ancient history,” Black 14 member John Griffin said of the collaboration. “Let’s do something together. Let’s work together. And that’s what Gifford brought to the table.”

Since that first meeting between Hamilton and Elder Nielsen, the Black 14 and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have joined forces to serve communities in need, healing old wounds and bringing people together in a divided time.

“This is a time for us to come together and do magnificent things,” Elder Nielsen said.

So far, those “magnificent things” include 18 semi-trucks carrying 20 tons of food each.

That’s 700,000 pounds of food in nine different communities, and thousands of full and thankful bellies.

Working together has made a much greater impact than just feeding the hungry.

At Spirit of Faith Church in Brandywine, Maryland the Church and the Black 14 collaborated with several local churches to distribute food throughout the community.

As volunteers unloaded a truck from the LDS Church, Donna Hopkins, a sports broadcaster and longtime friend of Black 14 member Tony McGee, said she could

tell a new era was beginning.

“You could feel the energy, you could feel the excitement,” Hopkins said. “You could feel a new story being told that day from both sides.”

together,” he said.

With food insecurity at a high due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Hopkins said the partnership couldn’t have come at a better time.

“This is a time for us to come together and do magnificent things.”

ELDER S. GIFFORD NIELSEN
GENERAL AUTHORITY SEVENTY

Jeffrey Wooten, a pastor at Spirit of Faith, said collaborating with different faiths has made their impact farther-reaching than it would have been working alone.

“It’s good that we come together and we carry out these assignments because we can make a great impact when we work

“I thought that was a great partnership for healing to come forward,” she said. “And how that all transpired with donating the food, which (was) much needed during that time and much needed now.”

Mark Hahn, community relations and parish director for Catholic Charities in Denver, said

working with other faiths to serve their respective communities has strengthened existing relationships within those communities.

“We’ve been able to have really strong relationships,” Hahn said. “But this gift of food and compassion has just enhanced and really expanded and built those relationships.”

Beyond touching lives in a temporal way, LDS Church welfare and self-reliance manager Daryl Blount said the Black 14 collaboration is a way to share faith without using words. The message of Jesus Christ, he said, is woven throughout every food delivery.

“With food trucks and employment help ... all the kind of things that we do, they practically say, ‘Here’s the gospel of Jesus Christ,’” Blount said.

Hamilton said that unity and friendship has been one of his goals since the beginning.

As he recounted the division and hate that’s driving individuals and nations into crisis today, Hamilton asked, “Why can’t we love each other?”

He’s decided to be an active part of the solution.

“Rather than to ask myself that question, I want to put myself in motion to make that happen,” he said. “And that’s what I’m going to do right now. We’re going to show the world how to love.”



CAROLINE CLARK

Volunteers assist those in need by preparing food donations for delivery to local families and food pantries.

WORKING TOGETHER AGAINST FOOD INSECURITY

BY CAROLINE CLARK AND SHYLER JOHNSON

SOUTHEAST

Thomas Phillips walked down a street in Atlanta, heading to Dollar General, looking to quench his thirst after a long workout. Instead, he found himself being called to the local food pantry.

Phillips didn't know much about the area, having moved from Los Angeles to be closer to his family. But on that day, as he was crossing the street, a car stopped to ask him where the drop-off for clothes and food donations was.

He noticed a box of jeans down the road outside a gate; not knowing much, he directed the car there and crossed the street. After getting his Gatorade, Phillips began to walk home when he heard something say, "Go back."

"I was tired, I just worked out, and I wanted to get home," Phillips said. But again, he heard the voice say, "Go back." Phillips attributes this little voice to God calling him to the food bank.

Six years later, Phillips is the Fountain of Hope Food Bank director in Atlanta, Georgia. The food pantry started by handing out 25 peanut butter and jelly sandwiches a day, and now it serves nearly 30,000 food-insecure people a month.

The Fountain of Hope Food Bank's success comes in part from food deliveries funded by the Black 14 philanthropic organization in partnership with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Black 14 refers to a group of 14 former University of Wyoming football players who were kicked off the team in 1969 for asking their coach whether they could wear black arm-bands in a game against BYU, which is sponsored by the Church. The Church did not allow Blacks to hold the priesthood until 1978, something the Black 14 wanted to change back in 1969 when their scholarships

were taken away.

Once at odds over civil rights, these partnered organizations now provide truckloads of food to various food pantries across the United States to fight food insecurity. A team of BYU journalism students and staff recently traveled to interview members of the Black 14 in their hometowns and to witness the results of their partnership with the Church.

At Harvest Hope Food Bank in Florence, South Carolina, the truckload of food pulled up at just the right moment.

"We're in the perfect storm," said Chad Scott, director of development agency relations at Harvest Hope Food Bank.

Scott said because of the pandemic and the government subsidies over the last few years, and subsidies coming to an end in the last few months, there had been a higher demand for food. Harvest Hope's pallets were nearly empty when the Deseret food delivery arrived.

"In our 41-year

history, we've never had this little food coming into one of our highest needs for food. (The food delivery) was truly an answer to prayer," Scott said. "If it weren't for the Latter-day Saints Church and the Black 14, there would be kids going hungry tomorrow."

A miracle made possible through the Black 14, "this food is about way more than just filling bellies, it's about filling souls," Scott said.

Mel Hamilton and Tony McGee are two of the Black 14. McGee has cultivated relationships with food banks in Atlanta, whereas Hamilton is more focused on food banks in North Carolina and South Carolina.

Both have made a significant impact on those around them while mending relationships with The Church



The Church of Jesus Christ and Black 14 donated over 27,000 pounds of food donations for those in need at the Fountain of Hope Food Bank.

CAROLINE CLARK



CAROLINE CLARK

Black 14 in partnership with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints seek to help families with food donations, providing for communities in need.

Jesus Christ and finding common ground in a shared humanitarian purpose.

Amid heartache and ultimate reconciliation, the Black 14 and the Church mended relationships. They say they've built a beautiful partnership to help others fight food insecurity.

"One thing that I have said as I get more food out, there's no color on those boxes. This is the Latter-day Saints and the Black 14 trying to help anybody we can," McGee said.

McGee, Black 14 Charities, and the Church delivered a truckload of 27,000 pounds of food on May 3, 2022, to the Fountain of Hope Food Bank.

In the first week of May, this was one of three food drops sponsored by both organizations in the Southeastern region of the United States.

McGee said charity work is simple.

"It comes down to right and wrong," he said. "You take the Black out, the White out, and everything you can, you go with right and wrong, and you'll be all right. And within that, you always have to have God in your life because you can't make it without Him."

Alongside McGee at the Atlanta food drop-off was Elder Andrew Galt, an Area Seventy for the Church. Together, the men shared scripture and conversed about furthering God's work through charity and the love of His children.

"Every time we're doing something for somebody else, we know we're doing the work of God," Galt said. "I think it's all directed by God. It's just ministering angels, pulling people together to do what's right for God's children."

Mel and Carrie Hamilton also play a large part in helping those facing food insecurity. Mel, a member of the Black 14, worked in education for most of his career. As an educational administrator, he saw a lot of food insecurity.

"He would come home and talk about a family or some kids and their mom that was living out of their car. He would help them find a place to stay and get food," Carrie Hamilton,

Mel's wife said.

Although Mel was familiar with food insecurity when he worked in education, years later he reconnected with the cause and the Black 14 charity. He found his way to food banks in North Carolina and South Carolina through a local radio talk show host, Derrick Anderson.

Mel had connected with Elder Gifford Nielsen, a General Authority Seventy in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, before learning about the food need in his local community.

"One thing that I have said as I get more food out, there's no color on those boxes. This is the Latter-day Saints and the Black 14 trying to help anybody we can."

TONY MCGEE
BLACK 14

Mel was familiar with the Church and the humanitarian work they did for various communities, so he decided to reach out to Elder Nielsen to see if he could help with the food insecurity in the area.

After communicating and writing a proposal for Elder Nielsen, the food was soon on its way "and that's how it all got started," Mel said.

"I think they gave us nine truckloads of food the first time. We went to Washington D.C., Massachusetts, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Ohio. Nine different communities we took to serve food to," Mel said, adding that's how the whole nonprofit started. From

listening to the radio to making a phone call, and now a continued partnership with The Church of Jesus Christ and the Black 14 to fund and deliver food to food banks across the country.

"I feel I can't explain the feeling when that truck drove up with the food. I didn't know what it was, it was just something that went through my body that made me warm all over, and to see that happen then, to see the people come and get the food is the amazing thing," Mel said.

Aside from the miracles met in food deliveries, Mel and members of the Church have built strong and lasting relationships.

He recounted a time when his granddaughter was very sick in the hospital.

"My granddaughter almost died. She was in a coma, and I thought I was going to lose it," Mel said.

Two missionaries came to the hospital to give his granddaughter a priesthood blessing.

"My granddaughter was in an induced coma she opened her eyes and said, 'thank you' and went back to sleep. When I saw that I knew I needed to get serious about the Church," Mel recounted. "I mean, that was a miracle."

From working with impoverished children as an administrator to helping with Black 14 philanthropies and food donations, Mel said he knew that God was in control.

"God knew exactly what He was doing. All my life. So, it's all revolved around God. He puts me where He wants me when He wants me. It's all part of God's plan, and I really, truly believe that," Mel said.

Members of the Black 14 and the Church are delivering multiple tons of food, helping communities, and making miracles through humanitarian work.

"That's what we're all about," he said of the partnership between the Black 14 and the Church. "Feeling good and helping others. I've felt very, very (grateful), and very, very humble, and I always will."

PITTSFIELD

Pittsfield, Massachusetts, is the largest town in Berkshire County, Massachusetts, and is surrounded by large trees that tower above the buildings and its 44,000 residents.

One of those residents is Tony Gibson, a member of the Black 14. Gibson finished school at the University of Wyoming after being excused from the football team with his former teammates and moved to Pittsfield shortly after graduation. He worked for a power company for many years. In the last few years, he and fellow Black 14 members have reunited to create a philanthropic organization.

After seeing a need in his community and reuniting with his fellow members of the Black 14, Gibson suggested that they send food to a local food pantry in his area.

"It's hard for most people to think about that there are people that are hungry," Gibson said.

The Christian Center is the oldest nonprofit in the Berkshire County Social Service Agency at 130 years old. Betsy Sherman is the executive director of the Christian Center.

"What we do is outreach to the community in the form of a food pantry, lunch and a clothing boutique," Sherman said. They also offer a referral service to help individuals find other programs that can offer other services such as housing and phones.

When Gibson decided to send food to the Pittsfield area, he worked with the chairman of the board of the Christian Center, Patrick Gable.

"I had just started working here when Patrick came in one day and said, 'I found somebody who's going to give us 40,000 pounds of food,'" Sherman said.

Before the arrival of the food, the Christian Center had never received such a large donation. They didn't have the proper resources to take and store that much food all at once. However, with the help of Gibson and members of the community and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Christian Center found a way to take in and direct 40,000 pounds of food.

Christen Buyack was part of the group of individuals who showed up to help. Buyack's husband had just been called as the bishop of a local ward and the Church notified him that a large donation was coming to Pittsfield.

"We showed up and we served and there were a lot of people that came and helped," Buyack said.

Spirit of Faith Christian Center and High Expectations Ministry

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, about 13.8 million American

households (approximately 10 percent of all households) are food-insecure. Food banks and community centers that provide aid services saw increased needs during the COVID-19 pandemic the last couple of years.

About 400 miles south of the Christian Center in Pittsfield lies the Spirit of Faith Christian Center in Brandywine, Maryland. Paired with the Greater Expectations Outreach Ministry, they were another recipient of a large donation of food from the Church.

Another member of the Black 14, Tony McGee, has connections in the Washington, D.C., area so it was no surprise when several large donations were directed to different agencies there.

Wayne Smith is a member of the Spirit of Faith Christian Center. He was present the day the Church delivered its large donation to Maryland.

"It was an unbelievable line," Smith said. "There were cars around the block."

Capital Area Food Bank

Another location McGee was able to coordinate donations for was the Capital Area Food Bank. It provides 45 million meals to people in Washington, D.C., Maryland and Virginia.

While they receive large donations more often than the smaller food banks, the Church's donation was still one of the largest that the Capital Area Food Bank has received — equaling about 30,000 meals.

Melanie Rigsby is a food sourcing specialist at the Capital Area Food Bank. She helps coordinate donations that come in each day, and was able to help with the donation that the Church delivered.

The donation included things that other donations would also include such as pasta, cans of fruits and vegetables and soups. However, it was unique, not only because of its large size but also because there were more unusual items such as baked goods and box mixes.

"(These) are things we don't often carry here at the food bank," Rigsby said. "I think our families and our clients really appreciate those because if they're celebrating a birthday, they might not have the funds to go purchase cake mix, but if they're getting it at their food pantry, then it means that they can still have that celebration."



CAROLINE CLARK

Mel Hamilton works with other members of the Black 14 to help their local communities suffering from food insecurity.

HOPE Community Services

Another community center that received a donation from the Church was HOPE Community Services in New Rochelle, New York. Not only are they a food pantry but they also have a soup kitchen and other community resources such as housing and community outreach.

Walter Ritz has been the executive director of Home Community Services since 2019, just months before the COVID-19 pandemic would sweep the nation and change food insecurity forever.

Food distribution outlets across the country were struggling to continue having enough food to properly serve their communities after the pandemic began and the Church's donation to HOPE Community Services helped greatly.

"When we have opportunities to get so much food at once, it makes us feel better because we know that we'll never have to turn anyone away," Ritz said.

That kind of security only happens with the donations offered up by groups like the Church.

"The food that we get here at Hope Community Services is largely purchased by us ... but that's really not enough to be able to sustain the amount of food that's needed out in the community," Ritz said. "So we really rely on houses of worship, we rely on our friends, we rely on individuals in the community to be able to donate food and to be able to support us."



Healing Hearts and Feeding Souls

A documentary about the Black 14 and their work with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints fighting food insecurity

PRODUCED BY THE BYU SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS AND THE DAILY UNIVERSE JOURNALISM LAB

Campus screening Friday, Sept. 23, 7 p.m., Varsity Theatre, Wilkinson Student Center



PULITZER PRIZE WINNER FEELS CALLED TO MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

BY JAMIE CALICA

Before being labeled as “one of New York’s most intelligent, unpredictable and interesting voices,” Etheleen Renee “E.R.” Shipp was a little girl growing up in the South, determined to go beyond the path her mother had mapped out for her.

Going against the expectation to live a simpler life, Shipp picked college over a husband and a job at a paint factory. She made her way to the University of Georgia, where she was named

Freshman of the Year before going on to become a New York Times reporter, co-author of *Outrage: The Story Behind the Tawana Brawley Hoax*, a Pulitzer Prize winner and an assistant professor at the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism. Her achievements and opportunities as a journalist continued to grow. The one opportunity that particularly drew her attention was teaching at Morgan State University, a historically Black university in Baltimore, Maryland.

In April 2022, Shipp hosted three BYU journalism students and a BYU journalism faculty member on a visit to Morgan State. She proved to be a gracious and knowledgeable host, giving her visitors a glimpse into her life as a journalist and her dedication to the Historically Black College and University where she now works.

Teacher’s impact on students

While reflecting on her own personal experience as a student and the relationship she had with her teachers, Shipp emphasized the impact they had on her career.

“I credit my teachers with putting me on the path to work where I am because they realized that my parents had six kids and that they couldn’t afford or didn’t think it was important to find ways to afford some of those extra things that the teachers would like you to have in school,” Shipp said.

Shipp added that her teachers were the ones who saw her talent in talking and writing, which pushed her into a future in journalism. She explained how this was a career that no one in her family had worked in before, forcing her to blaze her own trail.

The care and support she received as a student has been intentionally passed on to the students in her community. She has opened her home to help those in the journalism program network with others and to teach them more about the possibilities for life and career.

Shipp shared how students are nurtured and encouraged to thrive beyond externally imposed limitations when attending an HBCU.

“They’re gonna be in an environment where they are expected to succeed as opposed to in the predominantly white institution environment where people are questioning whether you’re good and (if) you belong here in subtle ways. You’re led to think that maybe people don’t want you here. That’s not going to be the issue (at HBCUs),” Shipp said.

She explained some of the challenges faced by Black Americans and said that often minority students must push themselves to be twice as good just to be considered equal.

In her 1995 New York Daily News column, “Affirmative Action Flawed but Needed,”

Shipp touched on this topic of inequality and how it has played out in her life. The column was included in the entry that won Shipp a Pulitzer Prize, generally considered the most prestigious award in journalism.

“I’ve made something of myself, they might say. But, no. Because I am black, they will always say that I am where I am solely because of Affirmative Action. That I am filling some quota. That I am not worthy of whatever



LILLI VEHIKITE

Pulitzer prize winner E.R. Shipp reflects on the impact of education in her life and her time spent advocating for HBCU students.

“You’re led to think that maybe people don’t want you here. That’s not going to be the issue (at HBCUs).”

E.R. Shipp

job I hold. That they and their father and their brothers and their cousins are better. It infuriates me that the least among white folks thinks himself superior to me,” Shipp wrote.

To further illustrate this point, Shipp told the BYU group in April 2022 that if a sloppy piece of writing were to be submitted by a student from Yale, the student may be given a second chance by teachers and employers. But if the same work came from an HBCU student, the story would be different.

Adding to the challenge, Shipp said, many students attending Morgan State University are single parents, balancing multiple jobs, or are the first members of their families to attend college. These factors can add to the difficulty but they can also foster determination.

History of Morgan State University

Morgan State was founded in 1867, creating a community of unity through a deep relationship between students and faculty sharing history and commitments.

The university started off with the name Morgan College and was a private school supported by the Methodist Church until 1939. At the time, Maryland did not have any institutions of higher learning for Black people. However, this changed over time, even as racial segregation persisted.

Initially, the university’s faculty and staff were unable to live anywhere near the campus in existing housing. So administrators set aside some of the campus’ land as a residential community, establishing the first planned Black communities in a location known as Morgan Park.

Professor Shipp led the BYU journalists through Morgan Park, telling them about the land’s history and the people who once lived there. One of the houses they visited belonged to Eubie Blake, considered to be among the founders of modern jazz.

Some early historically Black colleges and universities were set up to prepare students for college-level work.

In another of Shipp’s Pulitzer Prize columns



LILLI VEHIKITE

Students cross campus at Morgan State University.

from the New York Daily News, “Clarence Thomas’ Input in Race Debate,” she provided context from a past case concerning race and the education system.

“It never ceases to amaze me that the courts are so willing to assume that anything that is predominantly Black must be inferior,” Shipp quoted from one of Thomas’ judicial opinions. Thomas is the second African American to serve as a Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, where he has served since 1991.

During the BYU group’s stay in Baltimore, they learned about the history of Morgan State students’ participation in the civil rights and desegregation movements of the mid-20th century. Morgan students participated in sit-ins and other demonstrations for social change and justice. Shipp painted a picture of these events.

“Students (would) go buy a ticket to the movie and sit in the regular seats. They would not leave (until) arrested for trespassing. And so they would come in waves. One group would come, get arrested (and) taken away,” she said.

Connection

BYU student journalists came to appreciate the similarities and differences between Morgan State and BYU during their visit. The journalism programs at the two universities have had a partnership for nearly a decade now that has included short-term faculty exchanges, student collaborative projects and visits of groups from one campus to the other.

The BYU journalists this year were able to attend events during “I Love Morgan Week,” a campus-wide celebration near the end of the semester. At one busy lunchtime, the campus cafeteria was filled with loud music and dancing while the student government association worked to carry out a series of activities outside.

Additionally, BYU students attended Professor Milton Kent’s multimedia journalism lecture. They observed a classroom full of laughter and debate while each student shared their thoughts and the group bounced ideas off one another.

Throughout the experience, BYU journalists interviewed students and faculty about their time at the university, providing insight into why someone might choose an HBCU over other institutions.

Rashashim Gafney, the President of the Alpha Iota chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity at Morgan State, explained how he wanted to attend a school where people would understand and prioritize his needs.

In addition, he talked about the acceptance he has felt within the university’s atmosphere.

“Morgan is really a place where you can be whatever you really want to be, and nobody is going to get on you for that, because Morgan wants you to come as who you are,” he said.

Raven Fernandes, who is originally from Boston, Massachusetts, a city with a smaller Black population, echoed this sentiment, describing how she felt when she first began attending an HBCU.

“(It) being my first time going to a predominantly Black school it was almost like a culture shock to me but then it was like I fell right in,” Fernandes said.

Jamera Forbes, president of the student government association, emphasized the importance of transparency when speaking for the students and collaborating with the administration.

She said that during her meetings with administrators, she informs them that she will share their responses with the rest of the student body. This helps students understand the administration’s reasoning and concerns.

Forbes also said she appreciates Morgan’s administrators taking the time to listen to students.

While focusing on the current state of the university, she also highlighted those who have played a role in Morgan’s past.

She discussed the upcoming plans to plant a legacy tree at the school to honor those who have died.

During her time at the school, two of her close friends passed away before graduating, which inspired her to create a memorial area for those who had attended Morgan.

HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES PROVIDE OPPORTUNITY

BY LILLI VEHIKITE

Brightly painted shirts dry in a Baltimore breeze. Music echoes through the mess hall as students dance. Student organizers hurry to and fro, many of them sporting sorority and fraternity letters with pride. It's "I Love Morgan" week on the Morgan State campus, and the student body is buzzing with life.

Morgan State University holds a spot as one of 101 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) in the United States. According to the Higher Education Act of 1965, HBCUs were defined as "any historically Black college or university that was established prior to 1964, whose principal mission was, and is, the education of Black Americans."

Not only do these places of higher education offer a rich legacy of Black excellence, they offer a university experience distinctly catered to the needs and challenges of young Black Americans. For many of the students at Morgan State, personal and cultural legacies bleed together.

"Morgan is like my heart," said Tomi Reed,

a Morgan State senior. "It means a lot to be a student here. I'm leaving with a legacy behind me so that people can follow what I've done. That's what it's about — leaving your mark on campus."

Reed knows a thing or two about legacy. By her own assertion, her decision to attend Morgan State was easy. With her grandparents having met at the university, and with a grandfather on the Morgan State Board of Regents, Reed had witnessed firsthand the value HBCUs bring to the lives of their graduates.

"It runs in the family. Morgan, born and raised," Reed said.

However, Reed isn't just looking back. As chief staff secretary of the campus activities board, she is proactive in building her own legacy and developing herself for her post-graduate life.

"Morgan really is the advocate for its students," Reed said. "They really help you get internships, help you get jobs, and opportunities that I don't think I would have if I went to a different school."

Reed's impression regarding the opportunities

afforded to her by Morgan is validated by the school's own mission statement. Morgan State's first proclaimed goal is "Enhancing Student Success." This drive to develop the student body is also reflected in statistics surrounding HBCUs.

"The Numbers Don't Lie: HBCUs Are Changing the College Landscape," an article released by the United Negro College Fund, identified some of the key ways HBCUs bring value to Black students. According to the article, HBCUs cultivated nearly 20 percent of all African American college graduates despite constituting only three percent of the colleges and universities in the United States. The Fund also identified the low pricing of HBCUs as a major factor in broader student success, as Black students may encounter financial roadblocks when pursuing higher education.

"HBCUs disproportionately enroll low-income, first-generation and academically under-prepared college students," according to the article. "On average, the cost of attendance at an HBCU is 28 percent less than attending a

MORGAN STATE UNIVERSITY TEACHES VALUES, EXCELLENCE

BY ASH PITCH

Editor's note: The following story reflects the experience of one of the BYU students who visited Morgan State University in 2022.

I'm sitting in the back of a classroom at Morgan State University in east Baltimore, Maryland. While the room has only about 15 people present, it's loud.

"Are you kidding me? There's no way that's ethical!" cries one student near the front.

"Who cares? I don't think that that is newsworthy at all," responds another.

The professor simply chuckles and proceeds to lay out other possible scenarios, prodding students along in a conversation about journalistic ethics in today's world.

Between my BYU classmate who is keeping me from completely falling asleep (thanks, red-eye flight) and the banter in the classroom, I am amazed at the setup.

The students and professor are so keenly in tune with one another. There is an underlying love and

respect for the opinions, goals and interests of everyone.

This environment feels different than the common college experience of hundreds of students packed into a lecture hall in a class where barely the TAs, let alone professors, know your name.

But it wasn't just the number of students that brought about this sort of tight-knit relationship. It also has a lot to do with Morgan State's core values and mission and the history of America's Historically Black Colleges and Universities, or HBCUs.

Painted on numerous walls in the signature blue and orange, dotted across campus on flags and pennants in the same color, are Morgan State University's values: excellence, integrity, respect, diversity, innovation and leadership. I'd like to focus on excellence, innovation, and leadership and how these values were prevalent even in the short time I spent at Morgan State.

To set the stage, I'd like to use the university's exact definitions of these values:

- "Excellence. Excellence in teaching, research, scholarship, creative endeavors, student

services and in all aspects of the university's operations is continuously pursued at Morgan to ensure institutional effectiveness and efficiency."

- "Innovation. Morgan encourages and supports its faculty, staff and students in all forms of scholarship including the discovery and application of knowledge in teaching and learning and in developing innovative products and processes."
- "Diversity. A broad diversity of people and ideas are welcomed and supported at Morgan as essential to quality education in a global interdependent society. Students will have reasonable and affordable access to a comprehensive range of high quality educational programs and services."

One of the most prominent examples of excellence brings me back to the classroom I found myself in at the beginning of my trip. Many college and university classroom experiences are often void of personal connection between student and professor. And that's not to blame anyone, that's generally just the nature of mass classrooms or

comparable non-HBCU.”

The unique opportunities afforded by Morgan State and other HBCUs like it touch the lives of students like Tommy Netterville. According to Netterville, seeing the experience his sister had at Morgan State convinced him to follow in her footsteps — even if that meant moving across the country from Missouri to Maryland. And because of the more accessible tuition rates offered by Morgan State, Netterville said he was able to make the critical move toward higher education.

Not all his opportunities were financial. Through Morgan’s tight-knit community, Netterville was able to discover a passion for lacrosse he’d never tested before. Now, he plays as a member of the Morgan State lacrosse team.

“Morgan has given me an opportunity to play lacrosse and really develop that part of myself, which I love,” he told a BYU student journalism team in April 2022. “Doors have just been opened, ones I didn’t even know about when I came here.”

For Joanna Collins, Morgan State offered a place where she didn’t have to feel like a minority — because she wasn’t one. According to Collins, her family moved from Nigeria to Maryland when she was a teenager. Collins transferred to Morgan State after two years at Community College of Baltimore County and she appreciates the dynamic and resources provided to her by Morgan.

“The classes are small — I don’t like classes that are too huge,” she said. “And then that’s how you get a good relationship with your lecturer and your classmates, too.”

“I did want to go to school where I wasn’t a minority. I always thought, ‘Well, it’d be nice to go to school like that.’” Joanna said. “I feel really comfortable here.”

E.R. Shipp, a founding faculty member of the School of Global Journalism and

required subjects. We’ve all had our share of 200+ student classrooms where we’re all sort of slogging through a general course so we can get to what we really want to study.

Yes, university classrooms can be isolating and lonely. Professors might not know your name, even if they really want to. They often have several classes to worry about as well as their own research, families and lives to maintain. And as students, our calendars are usually overflowing with a mishmash of deadlines, work shifts, social events and the occasional nap trying to pass as sleep. With all of this in mind, the opportunity and capacity to connect with students or professors often takes a backseat.

But this did not seem to happen in the classroom I visited. The comfortable discussion and banter, the apparent respect between students and staff, and the overarching focus on an involved, engaged learning experience was educational excellence. Perhaps it was the students, perhaps it was the professor, perhaps it was the day. I’d like to think though, that it was actually a combination of the overall feeling of Morgan, as well as a genuine



“Doors have been opened ...”

Tommy Netterville
Morgan State University
student

LILLI VEHIKITE

Tommy Netterville, a student at Morgan State, speaks with BYU journalists about how seeking higher education through HBCUs offered opportunities he had not before considered and provided him a supportive community.

Communication at Morgan State University, expressed her belief in HBCUs as a valuable resource for Black students.

“Folks have asked ‘Why are y’all still around?’” Shipp said, referring to HBCUs in the 21st century. “As if we should fold up and deny our own history and walk away from the cultural presence we have been as an institution.”

According to Shipp, HBCUs such as Morgan not only exist for those hoping to sustain the

legacy of Black universities, but also for students fighting against disadvantages.

“Sometimes (students) are gonna need a little bit more nurturing,” said Shipp. “They’re gonna be in an environment where they are expected to succeed as opposed to in the (predominantly white institution) environment where people are questioning whether you’re good and if you belong there.”

Shipp expressed her concerns surrounding

dedication, conscious or not, to the pursuit of excellence in both staff and student.

Morgan State University was one of America’s early Historically Black Colleges and Universities. The university was built out of a desire and need for a place where Black Americans could receive their education, when no other such institution was found in the state of Maryland.

In an interview with Professor ER Shipp (see accompanying story), a Morgan State professor who teaches journalism, the university was founded as a Methodist ministry school. The institution was named Biblical Centenary School and, as said by Professor Shipp, “was going to be a seminary to teach Black boys to be ministers and therefore to help control the Black population... educate and control.”

But as time went on, power and money changed hands. Eventually, in 1939, the call for an institute of higher education for Blacks was heeded, at least partially. Morgan State did not become Morgan State University until 1974, although it had been accredited as a college back in 1925. Prior to this, there was no state university where Blacks in

Maryland could receive their higher education.

Morgan State was born out of a desire to meet the needs of Black citizens in Maryland. Innovation created the solution to the desire for the higher education that was generally exclusive and selective of white people only. Innovation was what created Morgan State and innovation is what keeps it as influential as it is now.

Diversity is a value that many institutions deem as one of their most important focal points. And as social movements fighting for the equality of various minority groups continue to increase, so does the cry for institutions big and small to diversify.

“Morgan’s mission, like those of most HBCU’s, is to try to reach the broadest number of people who would otherwise be left out,” Shipp said.

And Morgan seems to be doing that in no small way. As found on their website, the institution boasts over 140 academic programs ranging from “the baccalaureate to the doctorate.” The university is also known as Maryland’s preeminent public urban research university.

But aside from these accomplishments, Morgan State also focuses on what one might consider

the environment Black students face in primarily white institutions of education.

“Even in subtle ways, you’re led to think that maybe people don’t want you there,” she said.

Shipp’s comments are supported by recent studies. According to the United Negro College Fund, “HBCUs, in general, outperform retention and graduation expectations” proportionate to their target demographic of students and the resources at their disposal. This idea was reinforced by a 2015 Gallup Poll titled, “USA Funds Minority College Graduates Report.” The results of the report showed Black students attending HBCUs are more satisfied with their college experience and more confident in their future outlook than Black students attending primarily white institutions.

Fortunately, Historically Black Colleges and Universities aren’t going away anytime soon. According to data from the National Center of Education Statistics, “Black enrollment at HBCUs increased by 11 percent between 1976 and 2020” with institutions like Morgan State, North Carolina A&T State, and Howard University seeing enrollment surges during the pandemic. The HBCU tradition is, it seems, going strong. And according to Shipp, HBCUs aren’t going out of style anytime soon.

“HBCUs are a space where being Black is not an impediment in any way,” said Professor Shipp. “(At HBCUs) you’re gonna build up your self-confidence. You’re gonna have whatever skills you need.”

a more “traditional” or “typical” definition of diversity.

“I think that the added thing that comes with being part of an HBCU is diversity in a broader sense that we bring it and we seek it and we try to understand it,” said Jacqueline Jones, dean of the Morgan State School of Global Journalism and Communication.

“I think that because we live that kind of dual life in this country that we can understand and are maybe in some ways better able to explain what’s going on from somebody else’s perspective, because we’ve always had to explain ourselves to other people,” she said.

Jones also highlighted the importance of having diversity in academic work, including a variety in the ages, races, sexual orientations and experience levels of journalistic sources.

“When you’re really young, you’re always told ‘give both sides of the story.’ Well, sometimes there’s multiple sides,” Jones said.

Excellence, innovation and leadership seem to guide the story of Morgan State University, from its beginnings in the mid 1800s, to my recent visit in 2022. There is no doubt that these values will continually serve as a guiding light as the university expands and “seeks to ensure that the doors of higher education are opened as wide as possible to as many as possible.”



BY JAMIE CALICA AND HAILEY DEEDS

Editor’s note: In Spring Term 2022, journalism students and faculty from BYU traveled to Beaumont, Texas, to learn about the impact hurricanes have on a community. They interviewed people whose lives were changed by natural disasters, and this article reflects some of the lessons learned.

Jeff Mathews coaches football at Vidor High School, about 95 miles east of Houston, Texas. When Hurricane Harvey hit the southeast coast of Texas in 2017, Mathews’ life changed forever.

He was not able to live in his badly damaged house for an entire year, and his children could not stay with him. Mathews eventually ended up living in the high school fieldhouse with many of the football players he coached. The students spent their free time during summer break and on weekends during the school year helping others clean out their houses from the mess left behind by Harvey.

“Until it happens to you, I know it’s probably a selfish thing to say, you don’t realize what something (like Harvey can do),” Mathews said.

Johnny Ross, a retired assistant school superintendent in Vidor and member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, shared some of the spiritual experiences he had during hurricanes. When Hurricane Rita hit in 2005, Ross was a stake president and recalled a meeting he had to discuss evacuations before the storm arrived.

“They call them bridge calls, where you have 65 stake presidents. I think that was this whole area all the way from San Antonio, over to the Florida Panhandle. We were on the call every night monitoring this ... all the missions and the stake presidents were on this call and there was some direction telling us what we were doing,” Ross said.

With information gathered from the news, they decided that they’d only be encouraging those in the Houston area to evacuate because that was where the hurricane would be heading. The next morning at 6 a.m., Ross received a phone call from a local bishop telling him that the hurricane had changed directions and was coming towards Vidor.

A wall of water up to 13 feet high threatened to overtake the community, which began evacuating right away.

“They were going to be OK. And I was so grateful, I thought we have plenty of time to leave, our people have plenty of time to leave and so we did,” Ross said.

According to Ross, one of Houston’s stake presidents had a problem to get transportation for about 200 members. The Church had authorized funds to get buses, but by that time there were none left. This meant there would be no way for them to evacuate.

Now that the hurricane had changed directions, all of those people in Houston would be safe. Those living around Vidor received the warning with enough time to prepare, Ross said.

Kimble Callahan, the owner of Callahan Machine Works Inc. in Beaumont, Texas, just west of Vidor, said he feels fortunate that his family and house have never been directly affected by any hurricanes.

During Hurricane Rita in 2005, his family did evacuate, but thankfully came back and only had some yard cleanup to do. In 2017, when Hurricane Harvey hit, about 80 percent of the people in his neighborhood experienced damage to their houses, Callahan said.

Once again, Callahan didn’t sustain damage to his home but was able to help those up and down the Gulf Coast clean out their properties.

Communities helping each other

One of these efforts has become known as the “comeback cooler.” These coolers often contain food, drinks, and over-the-counter medication. As a cooler gets passed along to different communities, individuals take what they need and send it on, continuing the cycle.

Mathews received one of these coolers after Hurricane Harvey.

“I think something happened over two years later in Sulphur, Louisiana, and we were able to fill that (cooler) up and send it to somebody else that needed it,” Mathews said.

Hurricane Harvey was an experience that left a mark on Mathews, making him more aware when it comes to assisting others in need.

“I think I’d be more apt to help people not that I wouldn’t before but I’m really gonna make a conscious effort to try to help people when that happens,” Mathews said.

Just like any other community, the residents of Beaumont didn’t always get along. However, Mathews described an experience in which he set aside his negative feelings to lend a hand, resulting in the beginning of a friendship.

One of the houses that was assigned to Mathews and his group to be cleaned out belonged to a



HAILEY DEEDS

The area around Beaumont, Texas still bears the scars of the impact of powerful hurricanes like Harvey and Rita.

man who didn't have the best relationship with Mathews. Hurtful words had been said in the past but Matthews looked past it and continued to help him.

"I think he saw me with a different view. I saw him in a different view," Mathews said.

Local churches have also stepped up to help in the aftermath of the hurricanes. Throughout the years, Ross held multiple callings within The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He often worked with volunteers after natural disasters and provided them with names, places, and addresses where they could help clean up. In addition, he directed 14 missionaries and looked out for them as they served others during these events.

Taking a more personal approach to helping his community, Callahan uses his own experience from helping others that have been hit by a hurricane. He teaches his children to do the same. He shared how when his boys were just 14 years old they were able to be crew leaders and other volunteers.

"I was able to drop them off to others' homes that needed to be gutted out, and they knew what they were doing. And I tell the homeowner 'look even though he's young, he knows what he's doing,'" Callahan said.

One group that came to the aid of Beaumont residents was the so-called Cajun Navy, a loose group of volunteers from Louisiana that offered their own boats and time to provide disaster relief. Much of their work included evacuation of families.

Vidor resident Glen Ledger said during one hurricane, he and his family had 25 inches of water around their house. The Cajun Navy came to the rescue in a 19-foot bass boat.

"We were on the second floor on the stairs talking to these guys in a bass boat floating in my garage," Ledger said.

Perspective gained from natural disasters

Being exposed to natural disasters and knowing how easily they can take away lives and material possessions has caused many individuals to shift the way they view the world.

Before Harvey hit, Mathews had just spent thousands of dollars renovating parts of his house such as the floors, appliances and bathrooms.

He said his perspective changed after going through Hurricane Harvey. He regrets not being able to gather the irreplaceable things such as photos of his children when they were young, high

school yearbooks filled with memories of his past friends, and pictures of his playing days that he planned to pass down to his children.

"You can replace a couch, you can replace a refrigerator, you can replace anything in your house. Those kinds of things (photographs) right there, you can't get them back, they're gone forever," Mathews said.

Another takeaway Mathews received from his situation living at the fieldhouse was understanding the struggles many of his students faced.

There were many players that didn't have a place to stay when football season rolled around. After talking with the parents of these high schoolers, Mathews got them to agree to let their sons live at the fieldhouse with him. This experience opened his eyes and allowed him to see the boys as more than just athletes.

"In some ways, I was their dad. They were my kids because I was responsible for them," Mathews

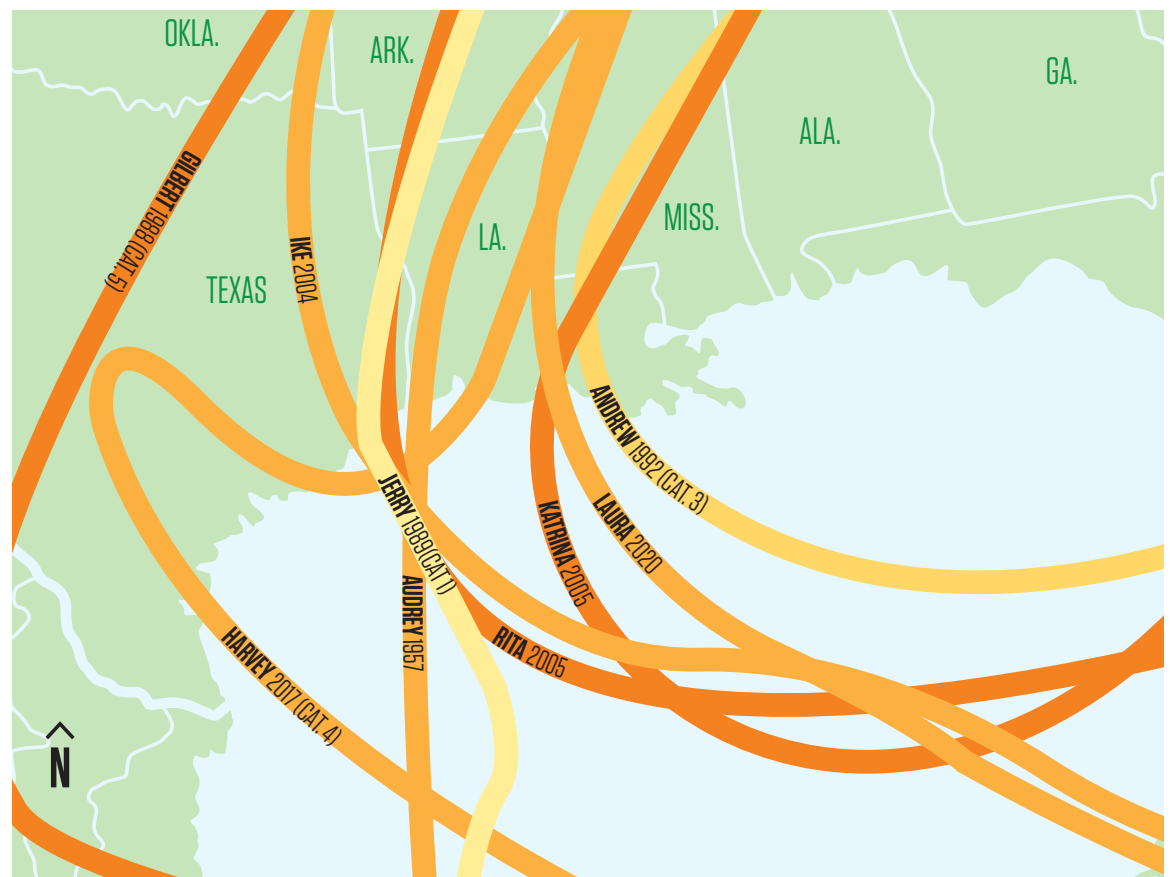
said.

When it came to Ross' experience and the last few moments he had with his belongings before Hurricane Rita, he recalled loading up with his family and looking at his house, wondering if it would be the last time he saw it and how severe the storm would be.

"You just have to decide that as important as you think this is, the important stuff is in the car and it's going with you," Ross said.

For Callahan, his exposure to hurricanes has made him aware of the good in his community. He described the countless times people have reached out and helped strangers with whom they have no connection.

"You see people from all walks of life helping each other out and not really questioning the needs of people, they just get in there and help. You see people wanting to reach out and help in lots of different ways," Callahan said.



MAYA BINGHAM

Paths of recent and historically destructive hurricanes through Beaumont and the surrounding area.



JAREN HALL READY TO RIDE

as BYU's incumbent starting quarterback

By Jackson Payne

Jaren Hall was given a monster task in 2021: How does one go about succeeding an NFL quarterback, let alone a first round draft pick and highest overall selection in program history?

Not only did Hall prove himself as the clear winner of BYU's preseason quarterback derby, but he established himself as much more than merely Zach Wilson's replacement, quietly putting together one of the most efficient passing campaigns in the nation. Now, he's securely fastened in the driver's seat as BYU's unquestioned starter in 2022, where the fifth-year junior hopes to pick up right where he left off.

Hall threw for more than 2,500 yards over 10 games in 2021, throwing at least one touchdown in nine contests and multiple scores in seven. He completed 64% of his passes for a 78.0 adjusted QBR — good for 15th best in the country. BYU's offense averaged 33.3 points per

game with Hall under center, but more importantly the Cougars went 8-2 in Hall's starts with six Power 5 wins and, of course, beat Utah.

Tossing 20 touchdowns over 10 games in 2021 — with another three scores on the ground at five yards a carry — Hall coughed up a mere five total turnovers in 358 combined passing or rushing attempts for a minuscule 1.4% giveaway rate. With BYU returning the nation's second-most offensive production, Hall will benefit from the ultra-valuable asset of stability in his offense.

"Everyone's coming back, so now we get to take time to really get to know each other," Hall said. "It's been great to get to know guys personally, let down my own walls and let them get to know me and it's been very humbling to see everybody's experiences, where they come from and I think that builds more trust on the field."

Hall's throws are zippy and accurate. His footwork is sound,

his decision making is steady and his dual-threat abilities make him capable of extending any play — all traits that professional scouts drool over leading up to draft day. Hall's size and skillset have earned him comparisons to Pro Bowlers Russell Wilson and Dak Prescott, although Hall admitted to watching more film from Josh Allen, Tom Brady and Patrick Mahomes in his personal study.

Will Jaren Hall be an NFL quarterback? 2022 is the year to find out, but there's little doubt among his BYU teammates that Hall's talent can lead the Cougars to a third straight season of national prestige.

"He's intelligent, but I think the biggest thing is he's a competitor and wants to win," running back Lopini Katoa said. "Jaren has that same love for the game that Zach (Wilson) had, so it starts with him and flows to the whole offense, and even into the defense sometimes when they need it. With his skill set, he can do it all."



BYU PHOTO

Top: Jaren Hall fires a pass in BYU's win against Utah on Sept. 11, 2021. Bottom: Jaren Hall looks on during the first practice of fall camp on Aug. 4.