Students from BYU-Idaho were honored at the Associated Schools of Construction competition Feb. 6-9 in Sparks, Nev. Of the eight BYU-Idaho teams that competed, one was awarded first place in the design-build competition and another received third place in the commercial competition.

In total, 61 BYU-Idaho students attended the competition, accompanied by six faculty members. Over 1,200 students competed in the competition from schools as far away as the University of Florida and Purdue University.

“This regional competition in Sparks is really the biggest of them all,” said Reed Nielsen, who teaches in the Department of Design & Construction Management. “The students and program can get a lot of nation recognition if they do well.”

In the design-build competition, sponsored by McCarthy Construction, six BYU-Idaho students competed against multiple other universities. Each group was required to design an administrative facility for a prison in California.

“They were asked to create a building information model, a project schedule, a cost estimate, project management, waste control, quality and safety plans, and organize site logistics.” The team received the project at 7 a.m. and had to complete it by 10 p.m. the same day. They were also required to prepare proposals to present to industry professionals the following day.

“It was intense but fulfilling,” said Matthew Leavitt, who was part of the design-build team. Leavitt, from Calgary, Alberta, is majoring in construction management and will graduate in April. He said there were great networking opportunities at the competition, and he received face time with many employers.

“I am flying to California, Texas, and Minnesota this month for interviews with companies I spoke with during the competition career fair,” Leavitt said.

Nielsen said the competition carries multiple benefits. Exposing students to what it’s like to work in the industry, and providing a very different experience than what can be found in academia.

“The students get to participate in what I think is the best job fair around,” said Nielsen. “And I don’t think it would be a stretch to say this year is the best we’ve ever seen.” Nielsen said many students received multiple job offers from some of the biggest names in the industry.

Josh Jackson, from Mapleton, Utah, already has a job lined up with Mortenson Construction in Seattle after graduation. “The experience was really rewarding,” said Jackson. “Our team put in a lot of time and effort before the competition so it was nice to see it pay off.” He estimates his team put in close to 350 man-hours preparing...
Dressed in a hard hat, protective gloves, white doctor’s coat, and black rubber boots, Shaun Harris stands ready for another afternoon of research. As he enters the lab, the sights and smells are different than the typical work area of a scientist. The smell of burnt gas from a Bunsen burner and charts of the periodic table are absent. In their place hang six finely prepared animal carcasses moving slowly down the rafters as the scent of smoked brisket begins to fill the air.

Harris, a meat scientist, is a one-year faculty member in the Department of Animal and Food Science. Although he knows a good cut of meat when he sees it, he is more involved in providing a safe food supply for a growing community and nation. At the moment, Harris is doing molecular biology research looking at intramuscular fat development with beef cattle. Intramuscular fat development is responsible for the tenderness, juiciness, and flavor to any given cut of meat.

“About 40 years ago, a typical question for a meat scientist would have been, ‘How do I find a good steak?’ In our day, meat scientists need to have knowledge of farm animal production systems, animal welfare, meat-borne pathogens, and human disease among other critical information,” said Harris.

Along with his responsibilities in the meat lab, research and teaching, he is also a student. Harris is currently working on his doctorate at Washington State University. With only a few semesters remaining in his program, he hopes to return to the classroom to teach.

“Whether I end up at BYU-Idaho or another university, I love working with students,” Harris said. “I find that they have so much potential and capabilities. It’s within the classroom that I have the most influence and ability to touch other’s lives and for them to positively affect mine as well.”

The staff at Badger Creek used a specific set of hands-on activities to help the choir meet these goals.

“One activity in particular was the ‘spider’s web.’ The choir members had to really learn to communicate, and submit to the ideas of others. In fact, we weren’t even able to talk at one point, and simply had to use hand motions,” Casperson said.

Since that day at the OLC, the Collegiate Singers are unified and trust one another more.

“It has been a month since our retreat, but when we find ourselves slipping into the ‘pride cycle,’ we are able to draw from the experiences of our retreat and remind ourselves of the goals we made and our purpose as a group,” Casperson said.
Taking what started out on 4 x 6 study notecards, Terry Gorton, an instructor in the Department of English, turned points from his personal scripture study into a trilogy of books about the Book of Mormon called *The Messiah Made Manifest: Exploring the Temple of Mormon*. His series was recently accepted for publication.

“While studying years ago, I became interested in what the Book of Mormon had to say about temples, so I looked it up in the Index and Topical Guide,” Gorton said. “Interestingly, temples (or sub-temples, like mountains or walls) are always coupled with the greatest manifestations of the Savior’s Atonement.”

Gorton’s originally began developing his studies about temples in the Book of Mormon into a book for his family, but after a number of years he decided to submit his manuscript to publishing companies.

“I sent it off about ten years ago and went through many rejections,” Gorton said. “I decided to keep working on it, and last year I sent it off to six or seven more companies hoping they would perhaps find a chapter in one of the books worth expanding into a book, but I got more rejections.”

Despite rejections, Gorton continued to submit his volume for publication.

“Then I got a short email from Cedar Fort Publishing in Utah that said, ‘we enjoyed reading your manuscript,’ and I thought to myself, ‘ah, I’ve seen this before.’ I was bracing myself for the rejection in the next part, but it said, ‘we would like to publish all three volumes of *The Messiah Made Manifest: Exploring the Temple of Mormon.*’ I was floored—and happy,” Gorton said.

Gorton’s books empower his readers with a greater understanding of the roles of temples.

“Everything works toward volume III—in which I try to show (and have readers participate in the discovery) how the Book of Mormon acts as an actual temple by performing the two greatest roles of every temple: 1. making the Messiah fully manifest to us—so we can choose to come to him; and 2. making the covenants fully available to us—so we can receive power from them,” Gorton said. ¶

JUSTIN KELLY, ASST. ACQUISITIONS EDITOR, CEDAR FORT PUBLISHING

Messiah Made Manifest is a uniquely-organized, interactive book that emphasizes the necessity of active gospel application in every day life. BYU-Idaho professor Terry Gorton invites dialogue between himself and his readers as they work together to understand Christ’s place and role in an increasingly secularized world. The idea that mankind’s Savior can be made literally manifest by way of scripture past and present is an extremely valuable insight that Cedar Fort believes worthy of sharing with the world entire, and it is for that reason that we chose to sign and endorse Professor Gorton’s work for public distribution and availability.

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Steven Vest has always taken an interest in music, especially in the various pipe organs found on campus. He also has a love for filmmaking and is currently enrolled in COMM 465, a corporate video and documentary class. Put those ideas together and what do you get? A documentary on some of the best kept musical secrets on campus. “The idea just kept getting bigger and bigger, until it was no longer just a project, but something more,” Vest said. That something more has snowballed into a full-scale documentary entitled, *The King of Instruments*.

Vest, from Ririe, Idaho, is a senior majoring in communication with an emphasis in video production. With this project he wanted to do something that has never been done before, and he wanted to do it big. “I hoped to find someone that would lend professionalism and clout to the film,” said Vest. “So I thought I’d start at the top of the list and work my way down.” At the top of Vest’s list: Dr. Clay Christiansen, organist for the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.

“I couldn’t believe that Clay called me back,” Vest said. “In my mind it was a serious long-shot that I never expected to work out.” Christiansen told Vest that he’d be happy to participate in the film. From that point the class project began to turn into something more. Soon Vest was receiving help and feedback from a number of people in the community and on campus, both faculty and students. Generous donors enabled him to work with a modest budget so that he could hire industry professionals to enhance the quality of the film.

Vest hopes to have the film completed by mid-April. He also would like to submit it to film festivals and hopes that it will eventually be aired on BYUTV. “Not only will it be hosted and narrated by Clay Christiansen,” said Vest, “but he will perform a brand new composition on the Ruffatti.” Vest explained that the Ruffatti is the “Cadillac” of pipe organs, and not many universities have such a quality instrument on campus.

Vest also believes the film provides many benefits to the university. He said the film sheds a good light on the school and will be able to be used internally. Dr. Daniel Kerr, who directs organ studies and oversees the Musicianship program, is considering using it as a promotional video for attracting future music students to the university.

“It has been a great experience,” Vest said. “Being able to rub shoulders with these accomplished musicians has been amazing.” Vest was impressed with how open and generous the Music Department has been. He said that they have opened their doors and allowed access to wonderful resources that have made the documentary better than it ever could have been. “After going behind the chambers and pipes of all the organs on campus, one can see that they truly are the king of instruments,” Vest said.

For more information about Steven Vest’s documentary, visit www.thekingofinstruments.com.

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for the competition. Jackson graduates in July and will assume the position of field engineer with Mortenson, which is headquartered in Minneapolis.

Jackson said having BYU-Idaho teachers who have spent years working in the industry is a huge help. He also credited the Learning Model for his team’s success.

“Construction” continued from page 1

Leavitt also speaks highly of the education he has received at BYU-Idaho. “I feel I am as prepared as I can be,” he said. “I have had positive feedback from my internship providers that makes me confident that I have learned what I need to learn.”

Nielsen said that of the 14 construction management graduates last fall, one is attending graduate school and 12 currently have full-time jobs with an average salary of slightly over $58,000.

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Crowded buses, exotic foods, and Mandarin Chinese. Welcome to another day in the life of Shawn Johansen, an instructor in the Department of History. Johansen and his family enjoyed a six month Fulbright Scholar Program in China from August 2012 to January 2013.

"Two colleagues in my department completed Fulbright programs in India, and it’s been something that has interested me," Johansen said. "My mission to Taiwan has drawn me to Asian culture and we adopted a daughter from China, so we were interested in doing a Fulbright program over there."

Receiving grants for the Fulbright program is a yearlong process that includes approval from both the United States government and the government of the foreign country. Johansen worked as a teacher at South China Normal University in Guangzhou, China. He taught a lower-division American History class and a graduate-level U.S. Constitution and Law class in English to Chinese students.

"My teaching load was light, which allowed for me to meet with colleagues and advise my students," Johansen said. "I got to take them out to lunch and get to know them personally."

Johansen’s family was also engaged in academics while he was teaching at his university. His wife, Michelle, homeschooled his 13-and seven-year-old daughters as an alternative to the expensive admission prices at the international school.

"With a significant language barrier hindering communication for his wife and children, Johansen enjoyed accompanying his family on all sorts of outings."

"We got to travel to lots of places: Western China, Hong Kong, Tibet, and Taiwan," Johansen said. "We spent a lot of time together as a family, which made us grow closer and learn more about each other."

The Johansens took advantage of Chinese cuisine, and ate out whenever they could.

"We got to eat out a lot, and we tried a kinds of different food, like grasshopper, which is very crunchy," Johansen said. "Our youngest never really got used to the food, but the rest of us love it."

Along with new foods, the Johansens also made a point to return to see the orphanage where they adopted their daughter.

"We visited our adopted daughter’s orphanage, and that was a very positive experience for her," Johansen said.

Because Johansen’s adopted daughter is Chinese, people often assumed that she spoke Chinese.

"People would talk to Tia expecting her to be able to communicate, but since she doesn’t speak much Chinese I would answer for her," Johansen said. "It was sometimes hard for people to process."

The Johansens were fortunate to attend an Latter-day Saint branch in their city, one of only a handful in China.

"We appreciated having members to associate with in our international branch," Johansen said. "There were over 100 people from every continent, including the countries of Madagascar, Brazil, Russia, the UK, and other Asian countries."

During his six month Fulbright, Johansen increased his love for the Chinese people.

"It’s good to understand other cultures because it makes us less ethnocentric. It helps us to have love in our hearts for other people," Johansen said. "In small way it has helped me fulfill the commandment of love thy neighbor."
Economics majors generally don’t go on to obtain their doctorate degree in Spanish, but that is just the case with Kirk Widdison, instructor in the Department of Languages and International Studies.

“I had a lot of classroom Spanish, though I never saw it as a career. But after serving my mission in Chile I worked a couple years and thought a lot about my future,” Widdison said. “I liked people and I liked the language, so I decided to go back to school to get my master’s in Spanish.”

Widdison received his master’s degree from BYU, and went on to obtain his doctorate from University of California, Berkeley in 1991. Upon graduation, Widdison and his family moved to Normal, Illinois where he taught Spanish at Illinois State University.

“I like teaching Spanish because it retrains the way you think,” Widdison said. “When you learn another language you think differently, and you start to see the world differently.”

In 2005 Widdison moved to Rexburg to teach at BYU-Idaho.

“There is a completely different feel here on this campus,” Widdison said. “I really feel the Spirit of Ricks here, and I think the school’s doing some wonderful things to help us reach our goals.”

Widdison enjoys incorporating the gospel into teaching Spanish.

“I like that we can use the language to talk about the gospel in simple things, like even singing hymns to practice pronunciation,” Widdison said.

Hearing students with unique mission language experience helps the learning environment within the classroom.

“I like the aspect of having missionaries either in training or those who have returned from a Spanish-speaking mission,” Widdison said. “Having recently returned from a mission or having a Spanish-speaking mission call is a great motivator. There’s that infusion of love, of culture, and people that keeps them going with the language.”

“Outdoor Learning Center” continued from page 2

Each semester, Layne Kinghorn, BYU-Idaho activities director, takes his new staff to the OLC to train for the upcoming semester.

“Our goals are to unify them as a group, put them in challenging situations that can be applied to their upcoming leadership experience, and build a sense of camaraderie and trust among the students,” Kinghorn said. “The Badger Creek staff takes all of these things into account and then plans out a series of experiences to help us reach our goals.”

Kinghorn has found a retreat at Badger Creek quickly and deeply unifies his student staff.

“In that relatively short amount of time we spend at Badger Creek, our student leaders connect with one another in a deeper, more significant way than we could ever hope for. The experiences that the students have at Badger Creek become anchor points for the rest of their leadership experience,” said Kinghorn.

While a retreat at the OLC can produce a dramatic change in an individual or group, other transformations that occur at the OLC may be more subtle but not any less significant.

When John Zenger, chair of the Department of Biology, took part of his department to Badger Creek for a retreat, he experienced a subtle change in perspective.

“I wish I could point to something specific and concrete that we gained from the experience, but I would have to describe the benefit as a subtle change in attitude and perspective,” said Zenger. “I know that I see my coworkers who participated differently, and feel closer to them, than I did before. I think several members of our faculty also faced challenges they had not experienced before and likely grew in personal ways.”

To learn more about the Outdoor Learning Center visit their website at www.byui.edu/badger-creek.

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THANK YOU

Thank you for the beautiful flowers and expressions of love and support sent to me at the passing of my father, Leo Leavitt. These expressions of kindness were so appreciated; I am truly grateful for your goodness.

Jill Evans