

The Spirit of Ricks

A Training Guide for Employees at BYU–Idaho

For more information on “The Spirit of Ricks” please go to
www.byui.edu/human-resources/training-and-development/spirit-of-ricks

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Introduction

The purpose of this training is to help you see what has made, and continues to make, BYU–Idaho a special place. This training will acquaint you with the history, mission, values, and spirit of this university. For years this distinctive culture has been affectionately referred to as the “Spirit of Ricks.” Our hope is that you will come to understand what has helped create this unique environment—and further, that you will help us to preserve and enhance the “Spirit of Ricks” at BYU–Idaho.

Highlights about BYU–Idaho

BYU–Idaho was established on November 12, 1888 as Bannock Stake Academy under the leadership of Thomas E. Ricks, President of the Bannock Stake of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The school was originally established as an elementary school with three levels. In 1900 high school courses were introduced. Beginning in 1915 college courses were offered. In 1923 the school was established as primarily a junior college, dropping all other courses. In 2001 Ricks College became BYU–Idaho and began offering 4-year college programs.

The school has been through a variety of name changes over the years. It was originally established as Bannock Stake Academy (an academy that resided in the Bannock Stake). It was later changed to Fremont Stake Academy (1898), Smith Academy (1901), Ricks Academy (1902), Ricks Normal College (1918), Ricks College (1923), and BYU–Idaho (2001).

The first Principal (President), Jacob Spori, had educational degrees in Mathematics, Arts and Music, and Metallurgy. In addition to his education he could speak nine languages. The early years of the school were very difficult financially. In 1890 the school registered a debt of \$177. In an attempt to keep the school in operation, Principal Spori worked on the railroad, in addition to his duties at the school, and applied his wages toward the school’s debts and the instructors’ salaries. Principal Spori’s efforts helped to nurture a spirit of sacrifice, humility, and love which were, and are today, a critical part of the institution.

BYU–Idaho strives to maintain a unique environment that fosters not only academic learning, but faith in Jesus Christ. The Board of Trustees for BYU–Idaho includes members of the First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, as well as other general officers of the Church.

The Spirit of Ricks

What is the “Spirit of Ricks”? What is it that we are trying to “preserve and enhance”?

What are some threats to the “Spirit of Ricks”? What could destroy this unique culture?

BYU–Idaho Mission Statement

Brigham Young University–Idaho was founded and is supported and guided by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Its mission is to develop disciples of Jesus Christ who are leaders in their homes, the Church, and their communities. The university does this by:

1. Building testimonies of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ and fostering its principles in a wholesome academic, cultural, and social environment.
2. Providing a high-quality education that prepares students of diverse interests and abilities for lifelong learning and employment.
3. Serving as many students as possible within resource constraints.
4. Delivering education that is affordable for students and the Church.

BYU–Idaho’s strong sense of purpose is shaped by the insight and direction of visionary leaders. Through the inspiration that comes to BYU–Idaho presidents and leaders of our sponsoring institution, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, we receive the guidance that helps us understand our mission and what we must do to make it a reality.

How do you, as an employee in your area, accomplish principle one of the BYU–Idaho Mission Statement?

Remember, *our primary mission is building testimonies of the gospel of Jesus Christ*. True, one of our main goals is providing quality education and service. But don’t forget to utilize your time to build the testimonies of the students and your co-workers. Sing the hymns, share scriptures, share quotes from the prophets, pray, be a resource to others, and set an example of true gospel living through your actions.

Honor Code & Dress and Grooming Standards

Honor Code and Dress and Grooming standards for students: <http://www.byui.edu/honor-code>

Honor Code and Dress and Grooming standards for employees: http://www2.byui.edu/policies/policy2_2bc.htm

In your own words, what is the Honor Code?

What is the purpose of the Honor Code?

Guiding Principles for BYU–Idaho

(Reference: David A. Bednar, *Inaugural Address, BYU–Idaho, February 27, 1998*)

1. True teaching is done by and with the Spirit of the Holy Ghost

Quote: “All truth, spiritual as well as secular, is manifested through the spirit of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is a revelator, a teacher, a comforter, and a sanctifier. To create an environment where the Holy Ghost can teach, everything done at [BYU–Idaho] must be in harmony with the principles of the restored gospel of Jesus Christ.”

2. Every person at [BYU–Idaho] is a teacher

Quote: “Everyone at [BYU–Idaho]—faculty, staff, students, ecclesiastical leaders, and so forth has a responsibility to impact others for good. Each interaction with a student or colleague is a potential teaching and learning opportunity.”

3. The most effective teaching and learning experiences occur “one by one”

Quote: [BYU–Idaho] is uniquely positioned as an institution of higher education to show and lead the way in applying the principle of “one by one.” This [university] is legendary for the individualized and nurturing attention given to students by the faculty and staff....”

4. More students must be blessed

Quote: “All worthy youth of the Church deserve a [BYU–Idaho] experience, yet an increasingly smaller percentage of them will ever have that opportunity.... It will be necessary for us at [BYU–Idaho] to serve ever better the thousands of students we have on campus while simultaneously reaching out to bless the lives of tens of thousands of young Latter-day Saints throughout the world.”

5. Righteous sociality is essential to individual development

Quote: “Participation in all types of wholesome activities—spiritual, academic, social, and cultural—promotes the positive interactions that bring about a righteous sociality capable of enduring throughout eternity.”

6. Service provides opportunities for growth

Quote: “Only those individuals who lose themselves in meaningful service to others can ever discover who they really are. True service both blesses the one being served and provides unparalleled opportunities for personal growth and development to the one doing the serving.”

7. A [BYU–Idaho] experience must be affordable for students and families

Quote: “The efforts to provide unique teaching and learning experiences at [BYU–Idaho] are of no avail if only an elite group, academically and economically, can ever come here. The cost of a [BYU–Idaho] experience must be kept within reasonable and affordable limits.”

Quotes about BYU–Idaho

PRINCIPAL JACOB SPORI

The seeds we are planting today will grow and become mighty oaks, and their branches will run all over the earth.

PRINCIPAL DOUGLAS M. TODD

This school will yet grow and surprise the world with its great men and women, because it was conceived in righteousness and dedicated to the service of God.

PRESIDENT JOHN L. CLARKE

[BYU–Idaho] was founded upon the firm belief there are extraordinary possibilities in ordinary people.

PRESIDENT STEVEN D. BENNION

This is a special [university]—there’s not another one like it. The people you meet and the spirit you feel here will be one of your greatest treasures.

PRESIDENT DAVID A. BEDNAR

Having begun my service as president of [BYU–Idaho] in July 1997, I quickly recognized the uniqueness of this great institution. I have a strong desire to preserve and enhance the “spirit of Ricks.”

PRESIDENT KIM B. CLARK

This is a school full of people united in their commitment to the Lord, striving to do His will, humble and teachable, willing to consecrate of their time and their talents in His work.

Key Addresses to Study

Links to full text located at <http://www.byui.edu/human-resources/training-and-development> or on the BYU–Idaho Devotionals and Speeches link (<https://web.byui.edu/DevotionalsAndSpeeches/#/>)

- President Henry J. Eyring (Inaugural Response - September 19, 2017)
- President Clark G. Gilbert (Inaugural Response - September 2015)
- President Kim B. Clark (Building Zion Together - September 2009)
- President Kim B. Clark (The Spirit of Ricks - September 2007)
- Elder David A. Bednar (The Spirit and Purposes of Gathering - October 2006)
- President Kim B. Clark (Inaugural Response - October 2005)
- Elder David A. Bednar (Thomas E. Ricks Building Dedication - February 2005)
- Elder David A. Bednar (BYU-Idaho: A Disciple Preparation Center - August 2004)
- Michael Orme (Vision, Faith, and Work: From Wagonbox to University - January 2004)
- Elder Henry B. Eyring (A Steady, Upward Course - September 2001)
- President David A. Bednar (Inaugural Response - February 1998)