

work after completing their schooling have found employment. Some 78 percent of those now employed say that their current employment is an improvement over what they had before receiving training. The average income after schooling for PEF participants is three to four times greater than income prior to schooling, representing a vast improvement in economic status.

Family and Community

“They will marry and go forward with skills that will qualify them to earn well and take their places in society where they can make a substantial contribution,” President Hinckley declared.³ Just over one-third of current PEF participants are now married.

Elder John K. Carmack, executive director of the PEF, says: “One of the most encouraging outcomes of the PEF so far is that we are seeing that young people gain more hope. This hope gives them the courage to get married and to move forward in their lives.”

As they do so, their growing families look forward to brighter futures.

Church and Leadership

“As faithful members of the Church, they will pay their tithes and offerings, and the Church will be much the stronger for their presence in the areas where they live,” President Hinckley said.⁴

In some areas where the PEF has been in operation for several years, as many as 10 to 15 percent of current Church leadership consists of PEF participants.

“Participants have encouraged other young people to use PEF loans and to break out of poverty,” said Rex Allen. “After 10 years we are seeing

the circle of hope expand as those who have been blessed share the blessings with others.”

Effects on the Lives of Many

“[The PEF] will become a blessing to all whose lives it touches—to the young men and women, to their future families, to the Church that will be blessed with their strong local leadership,” President Hinckley promised.⁵

More than 47,000 people have participated in the PEF since fall 2001. That’s not counting the extended families that are supported and inspired by family members participating in the PEF, the wards and branches that benefit from members who have a greater capacity to serve and contribute, and the local economies that need skilled workers to grow.

“Imagine the impact as you consider all who are affected,” Brother Allen said. “This extends to those who donate to the PEF—the donors, their families, their wards and branches—all are blessed by their contributions.”

“Within the grasp of almost all Latter-day Saints is the ability to give something regularly to this fund and to other worthy endeavors,” Elder Carmack said. “President Hinckley’s invitation helps those who contribute to the PEF as well as those who [use it to] improve themselves to draw closer to our Savior.”

Continuing Growth

President Hinckley’s prophetic vision of the Perpetual Education Fund has been realized as the influence of this inspired program continues to spread throughout the world, and it will continue to be realized in ever-greater numbers as

donations continue and loans are repaid, allowing a new generation of participants to improve themselves and their situations.

To learn more about the Perpetual Education Fund, please visit pef.lds.org. ■

NOTES

1. Gordon B. Hinckley, “The Church Goes Forward,” *Liahona*, July 2002, 4; *Ensign*, May 2002, 6.
2. Gordon B. Hinckley, *Liahona*, July 2002, 4; *Ensign*, May 2002, 6.
3. Gordon B. Hinckley, *Liahona*, July 2002, 4; *Ensign*, May 2002, 6.
4. Gordon B. Hinckley, “The Perpetual Education Fund,” *Liahona*, July 2001, 62; *Ensign*, May 2001, 52.
5. Gordon B. Hinckley, *Liahona*, July 2001, 62; *Ensign*, May 2001, 52.

Call for Survey Participants

If you have ever wanted to influence the *Liahona* or *Ensign* and the millions who read the messages in the magazines, here’s your chance. The magazines are looking for members around the world who are willing to provide feedback and participate in a handful of simple online surveys each year. If you would like to participate, please e-mail liahona@ldschurch.org or ensign@ldschurch.org and put “Magazine Evaluation” in the subject line. Volunteers must have Internet access and be able to communicate in English, Portuguese, or Spanish. Your feedback will help the magazines better meet the needs of readers around the world. ■