



Students attend seminary in Wetterau, Germany.

Worldwide Seminary Program Anchors Students in the Gospel

By **Melissa Merrill**

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Lauren Homer of Utah, USA, walks across the street to attend during second period of high school every other day. Frazer Cluff of Tasmania, Australia, attends at home with his mum as his teacher. Ben Gilbert of Vermont, USA, participates weekly, right before Mutual; and in Alabama, USA, McKenzie Morrill attends daily via web conference. Jamie Greenwood of New Mexico, USA, gets up at 4:00 a.m. to be able to get to her 5:15 a.m. class on time.

All of these teens—and nearly 370,000 others like them—are

following prophetic counsel to make seminary a priority in their lives.

The seminary program, which celebrates its 100th anniversary this year, has been implemented differently over time, and even today individual needs and local circumstances often necessitate adaptation. But across time and distance, one thing remains the same: gospel study is helping anchor teens in their testimonies of the Savior and His gospel.

As Elijah Bugayong, 18, of the Philippines approached her final year of high school—and of seminary—she

thought about having always been second in her high school “batch,” or class. That year, she was determined to secure the honor of being first. She told herself that she would do anything to reach that goal, including giving more time to academic subjects. She even considered forgoing seminary, until one day when she had a poignant experience.

“I [looked at] my study table,” she explained. “I saw a pile of books and near it, my quadruple combination together with my seminary notebook and manual. Deep inside I asked myself, ‘Which matters most?’”

She prayed and later found her answer in Matthew 6:33: “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

From that point on, she put extra effort into balancing her time so that she could still faithfully attend seminary and excel in her academic performance. At the end of the year, she was named valedictorian and won a scholarship that would help her with her university expenses.

To read of the sacrifices and successes of seminary students around the world, search “Seminary Program Anchors Students in the Gospel” at news.lds.org. ■

To watch a video in which Elder Oaks encourages seminary students in their study of the Old Testament, visit seminary.lds.org. To learn about a seminary 100th anniversary fireside with President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, on January 22, visit news.lds.org.