

THE Education OF A LIFETIME

By Devin G. Bost

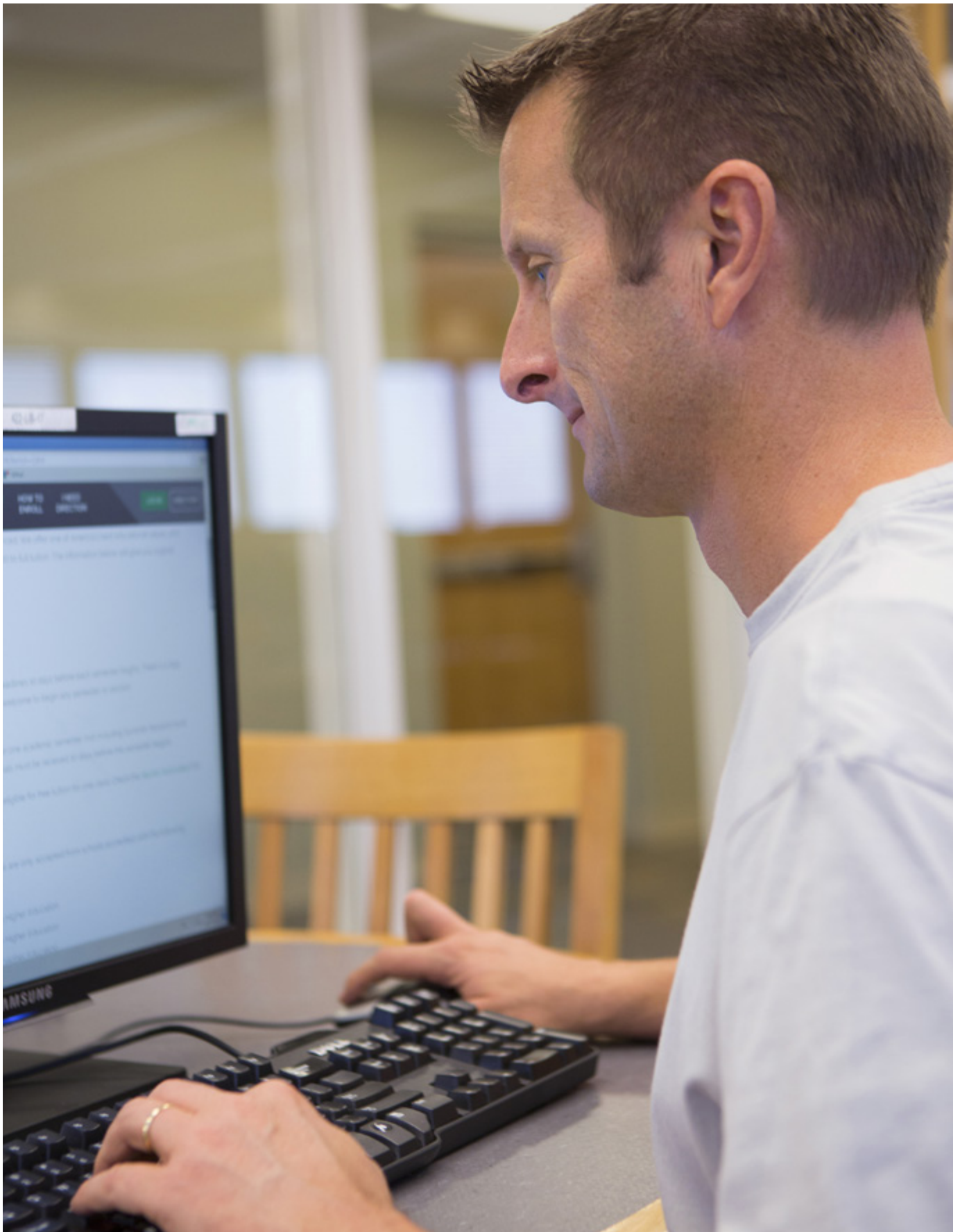
During my life, I have struggled with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). But nobody asked me if I had been evaluated for the disorder until I reached high school. In high school, I was placed into advanced classes, but when I couldn't focus on my homework, I began having trouble, and my grades began to drop. As soon as my grades began to drop, I started feeling a lack of self-confidence about school that I had never felt before. (I later learned that this is a common pattern among students with ADHD.)

The drop in my grades resulted in additional pressure to catch up, which meant I had to spend more time studying. To complicate matters further, my mother needed additional help with her business, so I needed to spend my evenings working instead of studying. I began feeling hopeless as I watched my world spiral out of control. When I became too depressed to attend school, my mother became extremely concerned. I started seeing a psychiatrist for my depression, not realizing that my depression resulted from my inability to focus, something that my peers didn't struggle with.

My psychiatrist suggested that I take some medication. Due to the effects of the drugs, I felt better, even though my problems were getting worse. Unfortunately, the medications made it even more difficult for me to focus.

The resulting chains of bondage extracted the remaining hope from my life until I attempted suicide. After I was discharged from the hospital (I was only 17 at the time), I moved away from home, and for almost two years I had no contact with my mother, my father, and my younger brother. I started living in a shelter for homeless youth and began working to support myself and save for an education.

Homeless and without hope, I finally reached out to God in prayer. I found peace and a pathway to success and happiness.



An Important Decision

After the two hardest years of my life, I reconnected with my father, started treatment for ADHD, and later reconnected with my mom and brother. With a broken heart and a contrite spirit (see 3 Nephi 9:20), I finally decided to cry in prayer to God and ask if He existed. This was the single most important decision I ever made in my life. Three days later, on April 10, 2011, to my complete and utter astonishment, my prayer was answered in a sacred and personal way that changed my life forever.

Realizing that I needed to learn more, I began a search for truth about this God who answered me. That prayer led to more prayers, and those prayers ultimately led me to a logical deduction, beyond any reasonable doubt, that there was only one true church upon the earth: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Subsequently, I was baptized in June 2011.

I discovered feelings of peace and hope that I had never before experienced. I hadn't even known it was *possible* to obtain feelings of peace and hope of this magnitude. Finally, I knew with certainty that God existed, that the priesthood had been restored, and that God loved me personally and had a glorious plan for my future (see Moses 6:52–62).



EDUCATION: THE ABILITY TO HELP OTHERS

"There is no shortcut to excellence and competence. Education is the difference between *wishing* you could help other people and *being able* to help them."

President Russell M. Nelson, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "Will You Choose to Increase in Learning?" *New Era*, Sept. 2014, 3.



The author (second from left) with his Pathway class.

Enrolling in Pathway

Sometime later, my bishop recommended that I enroll in the Pathway program, a low-cost education option in partnership with Brigham Young University–Idaho. It combines online courses with local in-person gatherings and allows students to earn credit that can lead to a degree or professional certificate. After a recommendation from my stake president, I decided to take a leap of faith and join the program. I was in the second class to complete the program in Portland, Oregon, USA.

Pathway helped me become true and faithful and focused on success. I learned to integrate prayer into my secular study, and I began to see the Lord direct my studies (see D&C 130:18–19). As I obtained the companionship of the Holy Ghost, I found myself learning more quickly, so I began praying more frequently and asking more difficult questions in my prayers. Those questions led to answers by revelation (see James 1:5). Consequently, the pieces of my broken life finally began to assemble.

This education completely transformed my life. It gave me the study skills that helped me maximize the use of my time and the financial preparedness skills that helped me maximize the value of my resources. Combined with the treatment I was obtaining for ADHD, this program accelerated my path toward success. I obtained the Melchizedek Priesthood and learned how to make decisions that helped me retain the Spirit. For example, I destroyed *all* of my worldly music and media and replaced them with media that

invited the Holy Ghost. Finally, I began moving in a direction toward greater happiness. I was blessed to be able to baptize my father and later receive my temple endowment.

An Individualized Learning Experience

Thanks to the miracle of the Atonement of Jesus Christ, I learned that God will individualize our learning experience. This experience led me to an exciting career in software engineering. As I learned to trust in God and His promises, I received faith-building experiences and an increased capacity to learn from others. These experiences led me to develop my own software company, and as I began investing in people who needed the help (see Matthew 19:21), miracles began to occur. I reached a major breakthrough on

an unsolved problem, leading me to new insights in artificial intelligence.

Never before in my life would I have imagined all of this to be possible. Never before in my life have I felt the happiness that I currently feel. And never before in my life have I felt so strongly that God loves me.

Everything I have learned in my life has brought me to the realization that nothing anybody can do or say will ever change the fact that Joseph Smith is the prophet of the Restoration of the gospel of Jesus Christ. This gospel will lead us to more happiness in this life than anything else we can ever experience, and every decision I've made to apply the gospel has been among the greatest decisions of my life, yielding more hope than I ever thought possible. ■

The author lives in Oregon, USA.

HOW PATHWAY WORKS

In partnership with Brigham Young University–Idaho, Pathway is a one-year, low-cost educational program that offers online academic courses, religious education, and local face-to-face gatherings with other students.

The Pathway experience helps participants develop confidence, become self-reliant, build leadership experience, and gain employable skills while learning by the Spirit within the framework of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Two program versions are available: one for native English speakers and one for individuals with low English proficiency.

After Pathway, participants may pursue a variety of opportunities, including applying to the BYU–Idaho Online Degree Program, where they can work toward a professional certificate



or degree—and continue to pay the low Pathway tuition rate.

Visit pathway.lds.org to apply, learn more, or find a location.

BY THE NUMBERS

Students: 14,983

Locations (for in-person gatherings): 387

Countries served: 39

Average age of participants: 34



EDUCATION FOR PEOPLE EVERYWHERE

"I believe that the community which education should serve is the whole world. . . . Just as our obligation is to our local students, to prepare them to serve the world, we must also find ways for this college to serve young people whose needs are shaped by a great variety of cultures and situations and who may not be able to come to this campus. . . .

" . . . We will find direct ways to move the blessing of education—the struggle for perfection—from this campus out into the lives of men and women everywhere."

President Henry B. Eyring, First Counselor in the First Presidency, at his inauguration as president of Ricks College (now Brigham Young University–Idaho), Dec. 10, 1971.