



*Want a great career,
family, and testimony?
You can choose the path
to success today!*



YOUR FUTURE

Awesome by Design

Making choices now to achieve your dreams for the future can seem challenging, but good decisions in your teenage years will pay off. This approach follows this counsel from a prophet: “Our daily conduct and choices should be consistent with our goals” (Quentin L. Cook, “Choose Wisely,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2014, 49).

These four stories show that regardless of your specific personal goals, you can achieve future success through committed preparation today.

Illustrating Superheroes: Clint Taylor

Clint grew up in Utah and currently works in California, USA, at Nickelodeon Studios as a storyboard artist.

What are some accomplishments you're proud of?

I've been a director at Warner Brothers Animation, and I've worked for Disney, Warner Bros., DreamWorks Studios, Marvel Comics, and Sony Pictures Entertainment. I've worked on animated shows from the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* and *X-Men* to *Dora the Explorer*.

How did you get good at what you do?

As a young boy, I enjoyed drawing pictures of what I was interested in. I spent hours drawing soldiers or superheroes or animals or whatever interested me that day. The more I practiced, the better I got at it. I found that my talent grew through diligence, observation, and perseverance. I felt that God had given me a wonderful gift, and I wanted to excel at it.

How did your mission prepare you for career success?

My mission to Korea was crucial in that it helped me learn faith, self-discipline, and commitment to excellence. I came off my mission with a greater sense of confidence. I had done something difficult and succeeded at it. It certainly helped me to be a better student at college.

What part did your education play in your success?

After my mission I studied painting and drawing at the University of Utah College of Fine Arts. Then I spent a semester abroad in France studying art and culture in Europe, which opened my eyes and mind to more artwork.



Because of these experiences, I had a fairly extensive portfolio of artwork of my own. As soon as I graduated from the university, I was recruited by a man looking for artists to work on Marvel's *Spider-Man and His Amazing Friends*.

Becoming a Computer Whiz: Ioana Schifirnet

Ioana grew up in Romania and is majoring in information systems at Brigham Young University.

What did you do as a youth that prepared you for this work?

There was no moment when I just suddenly woke up and was good at programming or design, which I do a lot of nowadays. I know that I get to do the work that I'm doing because of a very large number of small decisions along the way.

I wasn't afraid to take hard classes, and I took the time to research different fields and the people in them. I also reached out to professionals and got advice from them. They know the good and the bad parts of the job and can help give you some direction.

What school subjects have been most helpful?

In my experience, the most helpful subjects in high school, and especially in college, had to do with technology. Learning a foreign language (for me, it was English) also helped because it taught me to be more understanding and respectful of other people and cultures. The foreign language might not translate directly into a career, but employers love to see that you have a global perspective.

What are some fears you had?

When I was younger, I feared that I would never really find something that I would enjoy doing. Then when I found something, I was afraid that I didn't have what it took to be successful.

It's normal to feel intimidated when you're trying to figure out what you enjoy, but don't let it paralyze you.

How did you overcome your fears?

The best thing that helped me was to go out and engage in meaningful activities, like doing online tutorials and



joining clubs. That's how clarity, knowledge, and confidence come. A group of friends or a club whose members share your interests can be such a powerful resource. The world is always changing and there is always something new to learn, but if you have a solid support system and great skills, keeping up with it can be fun.

Developing a Love for the Gospel: Jess McSweeney

Jess, a young adult from England, talks about her efforts as a teenager to stay strong in the gospel.

How did you strengthen your testimony?

As a teenager I studied the scriptures because I was counseled by leaders to do so. As I studied in faith, hoping for my testimony to grow, that is exactly what happened.

Now, as a young adult, I have found that my desire to learn and grow in the gospel comes from the way I can use it to impact others. I know that everything I learn can help someone else as well as myself.

Did you make goals to help you?

When I was in seminary, I made a goal to read the scriptures every day. However, as my daily scripture study became a habit, my motivation changed. I started reading not just to reach a goal but also because I loved the scriptures and wanted to strengthen my testimony. That reward isn't tangible, but it is something I can keep forever.

How has your love of the gospel helped you in your life?

Developing a love of gospel learning is not only about gaining knowledge; it's about understanding and applying

gospel principles. As I cultivate the habit of asking questions and seeking answers from the scriptures, I gain a testimony as well as the confidence to share the things I learn with others.

How important is hard work and diligence?

Gaining knowledge in any area of life takes time and effort. But to me, learning the gospel of Jesus Christ is one of the most important things to work hard for. You have to learn of Christ to gain a testimony of Him.

Raising Young Children: Han Lin

Han Lin was born and raised in Taiwan. He and his wife were sealed in the Laie Hawaii Temple, and they now live in Hawaii, USA, with their two children.

What's your definition of a good father?

A good father is not a perfect person, but he is one who is humble enough to take counsel from others and constantly seek to improve himself. A good father puts his family and their needs first. He is willing to sacrifice his time, personal interests, and everything else in order to make his family better. He strives to know how to help each family member grow and become Christlike.

What did you do as a youth that prepared you to be where you are today?

I did my best to keep all the commandments and make good decisions. Going to seminary definitely helped too. It was a big commitment since I had to wake up at 5:00 in the morning. However, I think that having friends who had the same goal as I did was helpful because we lifted each other. I think all the activities that we did as youth and as a group of good friends in the Church really helped us.

What messages from society did you have to overcome to become a good father?

The world tells people that they should have more fun and less responsibility, but hard work is essential in becoming successful at whatever you do. Being a good father requires everything you can give; growing toward perfection is a lifetime process—I grow together with my family.

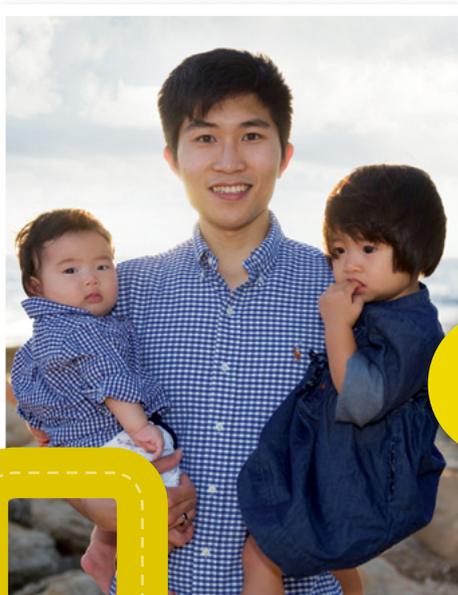
What would you say to your teenage self and other teenagers?

Everyone needs friends, so make good friends. Be friends with people who are “anxiously engaged in a good cause” (D&C 58:27). Learn from these good friends, and you will be influenced by their examples and have the desire to become like them and improve yourself.

Do your very best in everything that you want to do—don't hold anything back. That way you will have no regrets when you look back. ■



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