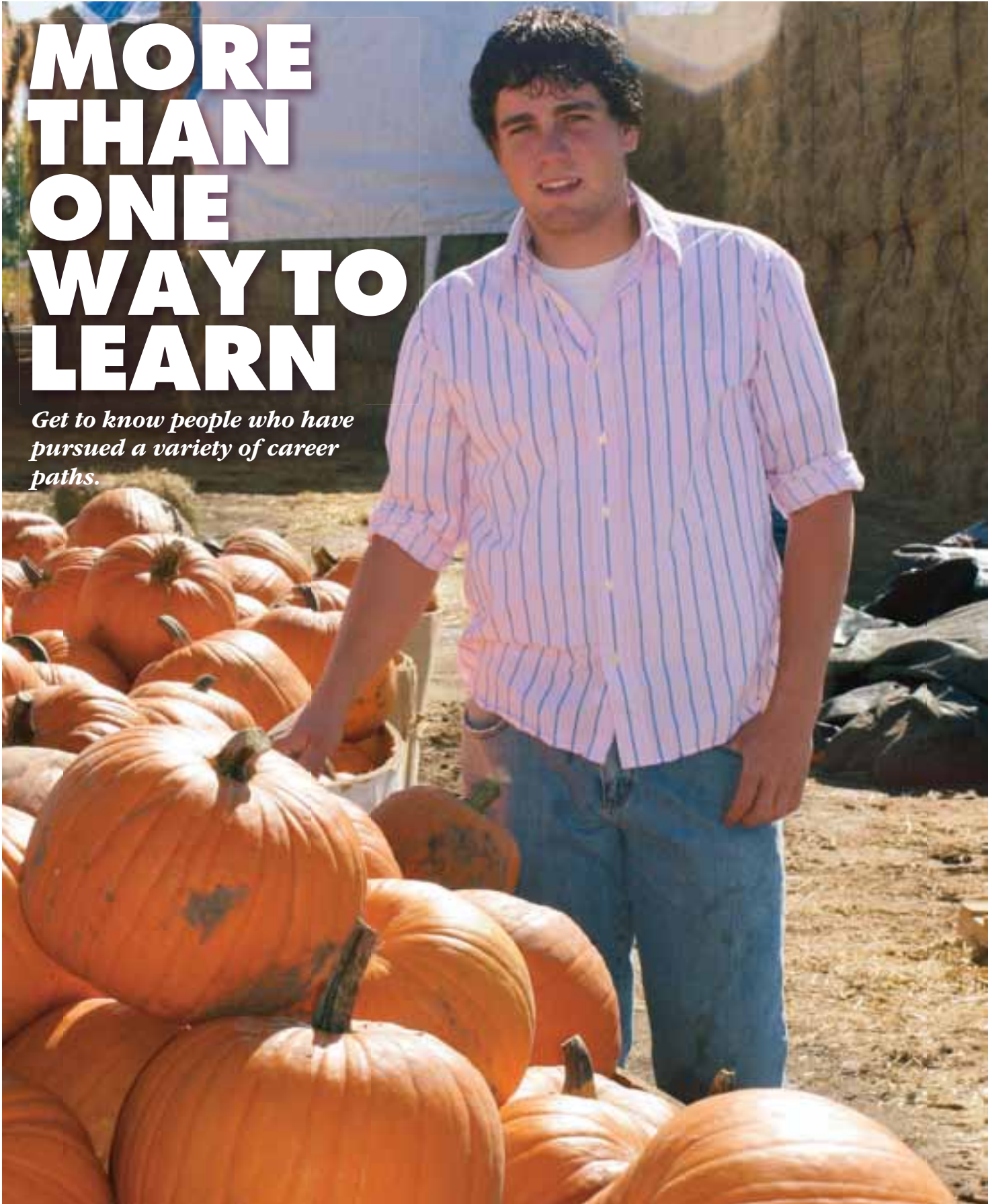


# MORE THAN ONE WAY TO LEARN

*Get to know people who have pursued a variety of career paths.*



*There are many different things you can do with your life, and not every career goal is reached through a university degree. Here are some young people who have chosen careers that take them on a variety of paths.*

## CHOOSING THE OUTDOOR LIFE

BY JANET THOMAS

Church Magazines

**T**he day we interviewed Talon Hobbs of Franklin, Idaho, it was easy to see why he loved his small family farm so much. The hill behind their fields glowed gold in the sun and was plastered against the dark green of the mountains. The sky was intense blue. The air was clean and crisp, with the drifting scents of fresh hay and distant animals. It was the kind of day that makes you want to stand still and enjoy where you are and what you are doing.

In fact, that is exactly the reason Talon gives for wanting to go into the family business. At 18, he has learned from his father how to do virtually every job on the farm. “My dad tells me what I need to get done, but I can choose what I do throughout the day. It’s really quiet. You’re not stressed. You get to have your quiet time. That’s what I really like about it.”

### More Than Chores

But it’s not easy work. There’s no such thing as procrastination when chores need to be done and animals cared for. “I figure you might as well get the worst job done first, then you get to do the easier ones. There is always something to do.”

And what about when it’s winter, when it’s 20° below with the snow blowing? Talon shrugs because he doesn’t really see that as the worst thing. “You just have to deal with it.” He goes on to explain how his parents will give their hired hands the day off on holidays such as Christmas. “We used to groan and moan about it when we were little, but now it’s our family tradition to be on the farm on Christmas Day doing the chores together.”

### College Is Still in the Picture

Ironically, the only way that Talon Hobbs will get to own part of the family farm and the outdoor life he craves

is by getting more indoor learning. “I’ve always wanted to farm, even when I was little. I wanted to have some of my own animals, but Dad didn’t want me to get too tied down. He wanted to give us the opportunity to go to college. I plan to go into animal science. I’d like to take some plant science classes, and learn how to add to the farm and make it better. I’ll need to learn some small business management. I figure it’s better for me to take classes than struggle my whole life trying to figure it out.”

In the meantime Talon is getting ready for another kind of advanced education, his mission. Looking back, his mission preparation has been going on for years. He tells of meeting a girl just as they were starting high school and how he admired how she stood up for the gospel. He says, “I saw that she could be strong at that age, and her example made me realize that I also knew the Church is true. It made me think. Choosing to follow the Church may not always be the popular thing to do, but it’s always the best.” **NE**

## SERVING UP SATISFACTION

BY RICHARD M. ROMNEY

Church Magazines

**L**ya Luna Becnel doesn’t just slice fruit or arrange food. To watch her in a kitchen is to watch an artist in action.

She chooses the plate the way an painter selects a canvas. She wraps several flavors of Mediterranean olives in carefully selected slices of dry sausage, and does the same with salad greens. She places four types of cheese in the foreground, with an oriental ladle holding a sauce made of fruit and mustard. As her personal signature, she adds an apple, carefully cut and sculpted into the shape of a swan. The swan is a symbol with deep meaning to her.

### An Incredible, Edible Swan

When Lya was a young girl growing up in Tehuacan, Mexico, she saw a food magazine that inspired her. “On the front cover was a beautiful white swan carved from jicama (an edible root) and on the back was an exquisite turkey made from pieces of watermelon and other fruit,” she says. “I can still remember the artistry of those sculptures. The image of them stayed in my mind, and a voice





PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD M. ROMNEY

inside me said, ‘Someday, you will make one of those.’” It wasn’t until years later, in a professional cooking class, that Lya was trained to carve a swan exactly like the one she had seen so long before.

### **Food as Art**

Today, Lya is fulfilling her lifelong dream to serve others (literally) by preparing beautiful, nutritious food. In Europe and the U.S. she counsels cooks about the quality of their meals, prepares fancy dinners at gourmet restaurants and in people’s homes, and also teaches cooking and nutrition classes. She is known for the excellent food she prepares and the way she presents it. “Food is art,” she says. “Having it look good is part of having it taste good.”

But getting where she wanted to be has not been, shall we say, a piece of cake.

“My parents wanted me to be a doctor,” she says. After counseling with them and praying, she finally agreed she would study nutrition. That would allow her to be around food and yet still be involved in a medically related field. After college, she began work as a nutritionist in Mexico City. She loved the working environment and the people, but she still longed to be a chef. After giving the job a fair chance, she counseled with her parents again and mapped out a new plan.

“I prayed to Heavenly Father and asked Him to guide me,” she says. “Then I did all the research I could about culinary schools.” She saved money, studied English as a second language, then enrolled in a cooking school in

London, England. That opened up the opportunity for her to also have apprenticeships—if she would work without pay. She did and gained experience as well as forming friendships with several of the top chefs in the world.

### **Hard Work, High Standards**

“Working without pay was hard,” she says. “I had to cater private dinners on the side to pay my way through school.” She also found a job at a restaurant equipment company in France, preparing meals and demonstrating professional ovens. For a year and a half, between school and work and various apprenticeships in two countries, her days were filled with long, hard, work. “I had to pay the rent, and I had to pay for transportation, but I always had food because I was always allowed to eat in the restaurants.”

She also kept her standards high. “Living the Word of Wisdom was less of a challenge than some people might think,” she says. “For example, when people invited me to have a glass of wine, which is a big part of the restaurant business, I explained that I don’t drink alcohol. They respected that. And when people would party or suggest immoral activities, I would explain that my standards were different. We were colleagues at work, but I didn’t hang out with them in places that would bring me down.”

Lya and her husband, who is also a chef, offer this advice about careers: “Find something you love doing and that you’ll want to do for your entire life. Set goals and work hard, then pray, be humble, and follow your heart.” **NE**

## SERVICE IN THE SERVICE

BY SALLY JOHNSON ODEKIRK

Church Magazines

**E**lizabeth “Buffy” Tateoka Fairbanks of Holladay, Utah, loves serving others, and she always wanted to work in the medical field. But by the time she graduated with a degree in biology, she realized medical school wasn’t for her.

Then she discovered a 15-month accelerated nursing program that seemed a perfect fit. Still, she would need help with tuition expenses. Buffy looked into scholarships and found that the military offers tuition assistance programs for those on active duty as well as for those who finish their military service.

“I decided to join the Navy because my husband, Tom, is already in the Navy. He received a scholarship to pay for his degree in mechanical engineering,” she says. After discussing the idea with him, and making it a matter of fasting and prayer, Buffy applied for and received a scholarship “to help me get through nursing school and become a registered nurse.”

### The Nurse Candidate Program

Buffy was accepted into the Nurse Candidate Program. “I wasn’t required to do anything but go to school and pass my state licensing exam after graduation,” she explains. “But once I graduated, I was commissioned in the Navy Nurse Corps.”

Nursing school, Buffy discovered, emphasizes critical thinking skills and ways to apply those skills as a nurse. “It was exciting to come through the program knowing how to help save people’s lives,” she says. “I enjoyed learning

### TRUE EDUCATION

“I have spent most of my life involved in education. When I was younger, I thought education meant going to school, taking tests, and getting good grades. But as I grew older, I began to learn the difference between doing well in school and becoming educated. A person can do well on tests and still not be educated. True education is learning how to learn. Once I discovered that lesson, learning became fun.”

**Elder David A. Bednar of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, “The Glory of God Is Intelligence,” *Friend*, Oct. 2007, 6.**



PHOTOGRAPH BY JANET THOMAS

how to care for patients and getting to know them as individuals.”

The thought of serving in the Navy appealed to Buffy’s sense of adventure as well as her desire to serve others. “In addition to getting help to pay for my schooling, I also knew the Navy would provide opportunities for experiences that I otherwise wouldn’t have.”

### Serving in the Military

Serving in the military means time away from home and family. Fortunately, Buffy and her husband are stationed near each other and they can be together. Even during times of separation, the Internet helps them communicate with each other frequently.

They also know how important it is to rely on their testimonies of Jesus Christ to repel Satan’s temptations. She says, “We are all faced with adversity throughout our lives, and sincere prayer and staying in tune with the Spirit are important to keeping us on the right path, and also help us when we have difficult decisions to make.”

Buffy knows that faith and prayer are important in choosing educational and career paths—and in life in general. She knows that for her, choosing to join the Navy and become a nurse helps fulfill her desire to serve others. **NE**