

From BOND TO BAGUIO

Blake McKeown, popularly known as the “rookie,” publicly left his post on Bondi Beach last May as a lifeguard in the Australian reality television show *Bondi Rescue* to perform another kind of rescue. He accepted a call to serve in the Philippines Baguio Mission. He shared this news and his feelings with colleagues and audiences on the show.

“When I found out I’d be going to the Philippines I was stoked to be going somewhere overseas and different,” he said. “It’s a big step. I will miss the beach for sure, but going on a mission is important to me. It is something I have been working toward all my life.”

Blake is from Penrith, Australia, and has taken part in junior triathlons, so he is a strong swimmer and runner. He started lifeguarding at swimming pools in the Penrith area before he became the youngest and first trainee lifeguard to be hired at Bondi Beach when he was 18 years old.

When asked about his favorite sports, Blake says, “To watch I like a good game of rugby. But to participate in I like cycling, as it’s just me on the bike, and it’s about endurance—it’s full of little mind games. It’s not about who’s the best rider, it’s who rides the best.”

On being a lifeguard Elder McKeown says, “There’s nothing I’d rather have done for the past two years than work on the beach—it’s the best job in the world—but for the next two years there’s nothing better I want to do than serve a mission. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is not a religion you can just say you’re part of; it’s a religion you have to live. It’s my life. I would be a very, very different person if it wasn’t for the Church.”

Blake McKeown from the Australian reality TV show Bondi Rescue has accepted a call to serve a mission in the Philippines.

