

YOUNG MISSION PRESIDENTS

The founders of the J. Reuben Clark Law School hoped to train leaders as well as good lawyers. They hoped that families, communities, and individuals throughout the world would benefit from the service of graduates. One way this hope is being realized is through BYU Law graduates' service as mission presidents for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This significant service opportunity is often left to men more senior in their careers, but for six law school graduates these callings have come at a young age.

Rulon Munns '76 was the first graduate to serve as a mission president. Called at age 35, he served as president of the Japan Sapporo Mission from 1985 to 1988. He left his practice in Florida for three years and then returned and reestablished himself. Mark Zobrist '76 has spent the last three years as president of the Mexico City South Mission. He and his wife Linda returned to Salt Lake City in July. Von Packard '77 has completed his first year of service as president of the Monterrey Mexico Mission. This June three graduates started their service as presidents of missions within the United States: James Hamula '85, Washington, D.C. South Mission; Steve Snow '77, California San Fernando/Newhall Mission;

and Monte Stewart '76, Georgia Atlanta Mission.

The three new presidents and their wives have much in common: (1) they will take school age or preschool age children with them into the mission field; (2) they will preside over missions in the United States but have some missionaries who teach the gospel in languages other than English; (3) they all remember the exact day and even the hour of the day they received their mission calls from an apostle; (4) they have all been questioned by friends and associates about the wisdom of interrupting their careers at a crucial time; (5) they all responded affirmatively to the call without thought of their career.

Although acceptance of the calls may have been a "leap of faith," it appears that the way was made clear for each of them, Snow and Hamula with the help of their partners. Hamula practiced with Kimball & Curry, a Phoenix firm representing clients in environ-



President Steve Snow '77 and his wife, Phyllis. California San Fernando/Newhall Mission

mental law. His partners, both members of the LDS Church, and those of other faiths, encouraged him to accept the call. President Hamula said, "I'm grateful that the firm was so good to me to allow us to go—and promise that we'll have a place when we come back."

Steve Snow received similar encouragement from his firm, where all six partners are graduates of the BYU Law School. President Snow felt the example was set for

his firm by the original faculty at the Law School. He cited the example of Dean Lee's appointment as assistant attorney general in the Civil Division and the support he received from his colleagues.

Monte Stewart said that he and his wife, Ann, had felt that he should begin to scale down his successful civil practice in Las Vegas in 1991. This decision enabled him to work as U.S. attorney and also prepared him for his present calling.

Public and church service is not new to the three new mission presidents. Monte Stewart served as U.S. attorney in Nevada for 18 months. James Hamula served as stake president of two Arizona stakes for more than five years. Steve Snow had served for 11 years on the Utah Board of Regents, the governing Board for Higher Education—serving twice as chair in 1986 and



President James Hamula '85 and his wife, Joyce. Washington, D.C., South Mission



President Monte Stewart '76 and his wife, Anne Georgia Atlanta Mission.

again in 1993–94—and for 1987–93 as vice-chair between his two terms as chair. He also served as president of the Dixie College student stake

THE CALL TO SERVE

by Mark Zobrist '76

Editor's Note: In an interview with Mark Zobrist, recently returned mission president, the **Clark**

Memorandum asked him to review his three-year experience and explain how his legal training helped him to successfully complete his assignment

In December 1989 our family took a vacation to Mexico City to visit friends. Little did I realize that in less than two years our family would be living there. Approximately one year later, I received a telephone call that changed my life. Elder Boyd K. Packer called and asked if my wife and I could come to his office for an interview. After an additional interview with

President Hinckley on January 23, 1991, I received a call from the First Presidency to preside as mission president over a Spanish-speaking mission. We frantically began to make all the needed arrangements with my businesses, schooling for the children, renting our home, etc. In March I was assigned to the Mexico City South Mission with my three years of service to begin around July 1, 1991. I was set apart by Elder Boyd K. Packer on June 11, and later in June my wife and I attended a special mission president training seminar at the MTC. By July 1 I was in the mission field with Linda and our five children.

When I arrived, I was overwhelmed by the task. The mission boundaries are much larger than the name indicates. While the mission is based in Mexico City, it extends south to the coast and includes the states of Morrelos and Guerrero with the southernmost point of Acapulco. There were ten stakes and four large mis-

sion districts that I supervised. The farthest branch was 14 hours by bus from the mission home and over half of our 130 missionaries worked outside of Mexico City itself.

As I reflect back on those first few months, I realized that the Lord guided my every step. Sometimes he did so rather directly through very personal inspiration. But just as often, he permitted me to draw upon my past experiences to formulate the best solution to a particular problem. I found that my training from law school was a valuable part of that process. The practice of law is not quantitative. The solutions to particular problems clients may have are not taught in law school. Instead, methods of analyzing the facts, gathering support, formulating and evaluating possible alternative solutions and then presenting a particular point of view are taught. I found that this methodology had a much wider application for me. Such a process, when the result was confirmed by the Spirit, allowed me to more effectively solve a variety of problems I faced daily. Often I did not realize that I was using something I had learned in law school and perfected in practice. I now know that my training as a law student and my experiences as an attorney were part of my preparation to be a better mission president.

Service is an interesting concept in the gospel of Jesus Christ. When we

received our call, many of our friends and associates were surprised that we were willing to leave our work, our friends, and our new home. Yet shortly after we arrived in the mission field, we knew we were supposed to be in Mexico. The Lord truly qualifies his servants for their assignments. He also prepares the field, we knew we were supposed to be in Mexico. I believe that I was prepared in many ways and also that the Mexico City South Mission was prepared beforehand to use my particular talents. Many events have reaffirmed this for me, but none more than the missionaries assigned to us and the growth and reorganization of the Church in Mexico while I was there.

Of the more than 360 missionaries assigned to us during our tenure, over 300 were Mexican nationals. The country is truly becoming self-sufficient in supporting the missionary work in Mexico and is sending hundreds of its young men and women into missionary service every year. Yet more can be done. While serving in Mexico, I came to appreciate the sacrifices that many faithful saints at home make when they voluntarily contribute to the general missionary or Book of Mormon funds. Such donations helped dozens of young men from our districts to serve full-time missions and return as future leaders in their home districts.

With respect to growth and restructuring of the Church during our mission, we enjoyed over 6,000 new converts. We also witnessed the creation of two new stakes, the formation of a

new mission district and a pending proposal to form two additional stakes in the southern part of Mexico City—all in three years

Our mission coincided with a historical event for the Church and its legal status in Mexico. In late 1992 Mexico amended its constitution to legally recognize churches. Until that time, churches used various societies or corporations to conduct their activities. To put the name of the Church on any building, the Church had to first donate that building to the government (which the Church did

efforts to characterize us as a sect. Again, because righteous men who had been prepared for many years were serving as local leaders, the adversary was overcome and the Church was officially recognized.

I remember well the evening of that historical day. The acceptance of the Church's application had been delayed for several weeks, because the ministro de gobernacion himself wanted to receive the application. As the deadline neared, the area president, F. Burton Howard, and Agricol Lozano, the

ny of the restoration of the gospel. To have the Church's application accepted personally by the minister of government was an honor and privilege unique to our application. Some of us had been invited to have dinner at Elder Howard's home that evening. When he arrived he was in a state of awe and wonder. He shared with us some of the details of how the events had unfolded that day. He repeated that he could not believe what he had seen nor how well the Church had been treated. To me, it was yet another confirmation that the Lord directs the affairs of his church and that he does so by those he qualifies and prepares. To many of us, it was a modern-day miracle.

I am sure that many of my classmates and other members of the legal profession are being chastened, qualified, and prepared for similar service in the kingdom, and I'm sure the Lord will bless each of you individually as you heed the call to serve.

An Interview with
Mary Hales Hoagland,
New Career Services Director

What comes to mind first when I ask you to describe yourself personally and professionally?

Since returning to graduate school, my life has been an exciting, constant balancing act, and I've learned much about setting priorities. My family has always come first. My husband, Dennis, and I have raised three sons: Jason, who was recently married and begins medical school at the University of

Utah in September; John who has spent the last year serving a mission in Porto Alegre, Brazil; and David who is a junior at Orem High School. Because I've always enjoyed the challenge of multiple tracks, I've chosen to mix work, education, and family. I would hope that this places me in a position to understand the students, who are trying to keep their lives in balance.



How have you meshed your family life and education?

My family has always had a strong educational undercurrent. My parents and their brothers and sisters were all college educated. My father and grandfather Hales were both professors at BYU. My father and his three brothers all had medical degrees or PhDs, and their mother graduated from college at the same time as one of her children.

I had completed two years at BYU when I married Dennis. Our son Jason came as we celebrated our first anniversary. We arranged our schedules so I could continue my education and receive my BA in English from BYU while Dennis worked and attended law school.



President Mark Zobrist '76 and his wife, Linda. Mexico City South Mission

frequently). With these changes to the constitution, any "religion" could submit its application for official recognition by a certain deadline. A serious effort was made to classify the Mormons as a "sect" and not as a "religion." Members worried and non-members continued their

church's attorney and next temple president, worked night and day to prepare a multivolume application. Finally they were scheduled to present the package to the government's minister himself. To their amazement, the press, radio and television stations had also been invited. Elder Howard and President Lozano were given ample opportunity to explain Church doctrine, including the Book of Mormon, and bear testimo-

After completing your bachelor's degree, at what point did you decide to attend graduate school?

I took a part-time teaching job with the community college system, helping to oversee a multimedia library/resource center. I designed curriculum and provided individualized instruction and tutoring. Before long, I decided to pursue a master's degree in education technology and librarianship at San Diego State as work-related professional development.

What motivated you to go to law school?

Dennis went to law school while we were in San Diego. It took me eight years to recover enough to consider attending law school myself! I had always enjoyed the adversary system, from the time I debated in high school, so when I learned there was a law school in Fresno, I applied to San Joaquin College of Law.

How did you manage to balance your academic and domestic lives?

I chose a four-year evening program so I could be home during the day, and Dennis simplified his life to support me. I did a great deal of reading and studying at home, and my cooking suffered tremendously. My children still refuse to eat Hamburger Helper because I abused it during those years.

Did you have a good experience in law school?

Definitely. My classmates, without exception, had full-time jobs besides their night

school. They were high school principals, engineers, paralegals—extremely bright people. They were each focused on the goal of becoming attorneys and enjoyed the camaraderie that springs from a common challenge. I knew I wanted something that would give me professional fulfillment and open doors, and law school does train people for a variety of career options: teaching, researching, practicing, etc.

And after those four years, which path did you choose?

I began clerking for my real property professor while I was still in law school and continued after taking the bar. The work experience before graduation built my self-confidence and skills. In 1986 I had the opportunity to clerk for Bankruptcy Judge Eckhart A. Thompson of the Eastern District of California.

Put on your Career Services "hat" for a moment and share your thoughts about your judicial clerkship.

I think a clerking experience is invaluable, especially if you work in the area you are considering. Daily you see the inner workings of the courtroom and how the judge perceives the written and oral presentations. Whether it's a judicial externship during the school year or a clerkship after graduation, the insights gained are exceptional. It's an opportunity to hone research and writing skills without the pressure of billable hours and client needs. It's a wonderful transition from law school to practice.

After your clerkship, what opportunities did you seek?

While clerking, I evaluated the many attorneys who appeared in court as potential employers. I was fortunate to have several offers from local firms and chose to practice with Baker, Mannock & Jensen, for three years.

How did you come to accept the position as Career Services director at the Law School?

After moving to Utah, I decided to get the family settled and take the Utah Bar Examination before reentering the work force. Then, after sitting for the 1994 February bar, my interest in returning to law-related employment coincided with the opening in the Career Services Office.

After having time this summer to evaluate existing programs and assess the legal employment market, what will be your plan in working with students?

As most of us know by now, the 1990s present different challenges in the market than the 1980s. The downsizing and cautious hiring approach of most employers should lead students to be open-minded about what they want to do when they graduate. They must, I think, become excellent networkers, looking for every opportunity to gather information and make contacts, giving them exposure to many professionals so they can evaluate what would be a good match for them.

Also, students need to use their summers and part-

time employment during the school year to either confirm or reject various legal employment options. This year we're beginning a "Fundamentals of Legal Career Planning" course for students in their first semester. It's designed to help them assess early what might best suit them professionally and teach them the skills to pursue such opportunities. (This fundamentals class is also available to second- and third-year students.) I think they must plan a systematic approach to looking for employment. They should schedule time for their job search in the same way they schedule classes and studying.

We're also working to compile an international directory of contacts about employment and externship opportunities abroad. The International & Comparative Law Society has spearheaded much of this effort. Students interested in foreign job placement will now have more information to consider.

I know a most frightening time for inexperienced attorneys is that moment when they are entirely on their own to make decisions in practice. I want to help connect our students and graduates with those who can help. Mentoring by seasoned attorneys is essential, even with smaller employers. Thus, a network not only for locating job opportunities but for sustaining new attorneys is important.

Students need to craft and execute their own job search and their entry into the profession. My staff and I are here to provide every resource available to help them.