

Persist Until the Clock Reads Double Zero

CHRIS FEINAUER

I am honored to represent the Brigham Young University Alumni Association at these commencement exercises and hope the opportunity you have had to attend BYU fills your heart with gratitude. This university embodies sacred strength as part of the Lord's work. Petr Ruda, a native of the Czech Republic who graduated last December with a degree in nursing, said:

*BYU makes me happy; it connects me to Heavenly Father—even by just walking on campus. This place significantly changed me, and I'm grateful to those who made it possible for me to come. [In "Nurse, Immigrant from Czech Republic Cares for U.S. Veterans," *President's Report*, winter 2009–2010, 8]*

I trust we all feel that same kind of gratitude for our BYU experience.

Our family has a tradition related to sporting events: When we attend, we stay until the clock is at "double zero." No matter how bleak the end might appear, or how miserable the weather, we wait until the clock reads double zero—even when others are exiting the sports arena. Staying until double zero has often

yielded a victory for both fans and players. Consider these defining events in the history of BYU sports:

- The 13-second football miracle when quarterback John Beck passed to tight end Jonny Harline at the University of Utah in 2006 for BYU to win 33-31.
- The 2007 Pioneer Las Vegas Bowl: With three seconds left in the game and BYU leading 17-16, UCLA kicker Kai Forbath lined up for a 28-yard chip shot field goal. BYU freshman defensive lineman Eathyn Manumaleuna blocked the kick to give BYU the victory.
- The NCAA basketball tournament last March in which No. 7 seed BYU, led by Jimmer Fredette's 37 points, held off No. 10 seed Florida in double overtime to defeat the Gators 99-92 and give the Cougars their first tournament victory in 17 years.

The players did not give up, and we did not give up on them. Staying or perhaps "enduring

Chris Feinauer was president of the BYU Alumni Association when this commencement address was given on 12 August 2010.

to the end” enriched the experience for both fans and players.

Just like waiting until the clock reads double zero, you have prepared for the proper educational plays, emerged victorious, and received your hard-earned degree. We applaud you—and no one gave up on you. Professors, family, friends, and unknown benefactors trusted in you and have high expectations for the rest of your life.

We are confident you will

- live a Christ-centered life
- serve in the Church and your community
- be a good parent and supportive spouse
- use the fruits of your BYU experience to build the kingdom of God on the earth
- remain virtuous
- be strong in your gospel testimony
- work hard
- pursue learning throughout your life
- stay “connected for good” to BYU

There is something else.

Remember how excited you were when you opened your acceptance letter? Qualification for this university requires exceptional academic performance and moral excellence. To participate in the experiences that touched the social, spiritual, and intellectual pieces of your life was a profound blessing. Our sponsoring organization, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, has made a tremendous investment in you. You have received a “loan” from the Church in the subsidizing of your education in the form of low tuition relative to the value of your education. Many generous benefactors have supplemented the costs of your education. You are indeed fortunate, and we anticipate that as you prosper, you will follow this vital tradition of giving back to your alma mater.

Chris Giovarelli, the 2006 BYU student-body president and 2008 Student Alumni

Association president, once shared these thoughts:

As we reflect on our BYU experiences and see how far the university has come, basking in the light of national ranking and acclaim, let us remember that the work is not done. Our founders sacrificed time, talent, and treasure to build the foundation of this university, and through similar small and simple offerings we can continue that work today. [“Return to Give Back,” Emeritimes Newsletter, spring 2008, 1]

My hope is that you will replenish BYU. Commit to advancing the educations of future students. Nourish the university with your resources through volunteer service or financial support for the outstanding programs and disciplines developed at BYU. Many of us wear a CTR ring that reminds us to “choose the right.” Let me suggest another meaning for the acronym: “choose to replenish.”

When you look at your CTR ring, consider BYU as a unique and sacred place. Choose to replenish the university so your children and grandchildren will also enjoy the benefits of BYU.

As its president, I hereby confer on each of you lifetime membership in the Brigham Young University Alumni Association. We offer our congratulations and welcome you into this great association of more than 378,000. You will have many opportunities to join your fellow alumni in meaningful activities associated with the university.

We are proud of you. Your efforts to persist until the double zero will reward you abundantly throughout your life.

May the Spirit of the Y live in you as you embark on your journey of lifelong learning and service. May your Christlike influence be felt wherever you may be found throughout the world, I humbly pray in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.