

ReIMAGINE

## *President Bradley J. Cook*

President Cook's Sanpete roots run deep. George Washington Bradley, his third great grandfather and namesake, was one of the men Brigham Young sent to settle the Sanpete Valley. Along with his wife Betsy and their children, George faced the harsh conditions with resourcefulness, faith, and grit. Sanpete and Sevier counties also play a central role in Brad's own life: he spent his early years near Richfield and went to college in Ephraim. Raised on the stories of his ancestors and seeing the way his own Snow College experience opened doors for all he has accomplished, President Cook believes that this is a hallowed place, and he feels responsibility for it. To him, ensuring the future success of Snow College is more than just a job. It's personal.

Born in Ogden, Utah, Bradley J. Cook is the son of Gilbert and Jerry Cook. When Brad was eleven years old, his father took a position at an international school in Saudi Arabia. The experience was a defining one. The world opened up to Brad as he made friends from around the globe. Although that first overseas experience lasted only four years, Saudi Arabia made a lasting impression on him and taught him that our lives are richer through diversity.

Brad's family moved back to Utah as he entered his sophomore year of high school. As much as he loved living in the Middle East, he was thrilled to be back in the states where he could pursue athletics. Playing football was Brad's dream, and he loved every minute of it. He worried that football would end for him after high school. However, an unexpected door opened for Brad during his senior year when he received a letter from Snow College, offering him a football scholarship. The scholarship was for only \$501, but every dollar, including that five hundred and first, made possible the life trajectory that began at Snow. Brad is serious when he says Snow College "opens doors."

As a student at Snow, Brad excelled. However, despite all of his accomplishments, Brad is the first to say that his story isn't unique and that his success was not predetermined. President Cook assures current Badgers that he is not being modest when he says he isn't special: he doesn't feel that he is smarter or more talented than anyone else. He built on his natural abilities with hard work and a sense of gratitude for what Snow had to offer. Because of his time at Snow, he found additional op-



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opportunities for himself to study at the world's great universities and to have an impact in far-flung places.

In other words, Snow College opened doors for Brad that may not have otherwise been possible. After his time at Snow, he attended Stanford where he majored in international relations and played defensive back on their football team, earning PAC-10 Academic All-Conference honors. In turn, Stanford opened the door for his graduate studies at Oxford, which led to his teaching position at Brigham Young University and other opportunities after that. He served as the Vice President for Academic Affairs at Utah Valley University before moving to the United Arab Emirates where he was named President of the Abu Dhabi Women's College. Most recently, Dr. Cook served as Provost and Executive Vice President at Southern Utah University, where he oversaw the academic programs and directed the school's long-range academic planning.

Through all of his accomplishments, President Cook is most proud of his family. Together, he and his wife, Jen, have six children: Sam, Cairo, Dyson, Dara, Jack, and Charlie. Jen is the perfect partner in this new adventure. She is an educator at heart and has worked in the field for twenty years. Jen has seen the value of education firsthand, and she strongly believes that it prepares one for unexpected situations in life. She is a champion for education and is excited for the opportunity to serve the students of Snow College alongside her husband.

As the seventeenth president of Snow College, President Cook is keenly aware of his responsibility to those who have gone before. He says, "I am thrilled and honored to be in this position. Our challenge moving forward is to remain loyal to our past and our heritage, yet ever be faithful to our future. These cannot be mutually exclusive propositions." Just as he stepped through an open door as an eighteen-year-old freshman in 1983, President Bradley J. Cook and the rest of the Snow College community now stand before other open doors. President Cook invites us all to remember the greatness of Snow and to reimagine what our future can be. As we cross the threshold into the Cook era at Snow College, we commit to celebrating and preserving the history of the school while embracing the opportunities tomorrow affords.

SNOW COLLEGE





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