



# Performance Highlights

## Annual Newsletter

Office of Performance Evaluations

October 2016

**Mission**  
Promote  
confidence  
and  
accountability  
in state  
government  
through  
evaluation of  
programs and  
policies.

### Connecting governments across the globe



A delegation of five government leaders from Bhutan visited Idaho in August under the auspices of the US Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program. They visited us to explore how a nonpartisan, legislative evaluation office can support and monitor good governance.

### National recognition for outstanding evaluation

We received the Outstanding Evaluation Award from the American Evaluation Association for our work on Idaho's statewide K-12 longitudinal data system and instructional management system.

The awards committee was "most impressed by the way in which the evaluation was used and the influence that it had." The award is given to an evaluation that is considered exemplary of its kind and a potential model for other evaluators doing similar kinds of work.





## The value of stakeholder input

In addition to conducting objective data analyses and literature reviews, we broaden our understanding of policies and programs with input from stakeholders. Their perspectives enrich our findings and recommendations. The following examples come from our current studies:

The team evaluating Idaho's foster care system has been working closely with the Department of Health and Welfare as well as reaching out to policymakers, the Supreme Court, public defenders, court-appointed advocates, federal partners, foster parents, and advocacy groups.

The team evaluating state jurisdiction in Indian Country (Public Law 280) has been traveling to four reservations in Idaho and cultivating government-to-government relationships.

## Outstanding practitioner recognition

The Intergovernmental Administration and Management section of the American Society for Public Administration honored us with the Donald C. and Alice M. Stone Outstanding Practitioner award for outstanding professional contributions in the field of intergovernmental management.

## Informing interim committees

Our evaluations have informed or will inform the work of five of the nine interim committees established during the 2016 legislative session.

**Administrative Hearing Officer Committee:** Report [Risk of Bias in Administrative Hearings](#)

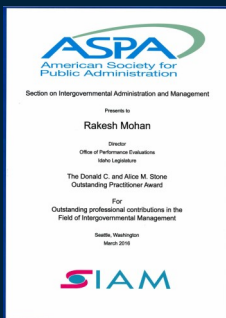
**Foster Care Study Committee:** Study underway on the child protection and foster care system

**Idaho Council on Indian Affairs:** Study underway on Public Law 280

**Public School Funding Formula Committee:** Report [Public Education Funding in Idaho](#), November 2009, and our study underway on the distribution of state funds for K–12 public education

**State Procurement Laws Committee:** Report [Strengthening Contract Management in Idaho](#)

**Our report findings and recommendations help the Legislature in making policy and budget decisions.**



## Informing legislation

Relevant to our recommendations from the following three reports, four pieces of legislation were approved in 2016.

*Confinement of Juvenile Offenders*: We recommended clarifying commitment criteria.

The Supreme Court updated the rule which specifies criteria that must be met before juveniles can be committed to the Department of Juvenile Corrections.

*Reducing Barriers to Postsecondary Education*: We recommended that school districts employ more college and career counselors.

Senate Bill 1290 clarified the use of college and career counselors in secondary education and required districts to develop a plan for these counselors in their schools.

House Bill 618 appropriated \$5 million to school districts for college and career counseling activities.

*Challenges and Approaches to Meeting Water Quality Standards*: We recommended establishing state guidelines for conducting a use attainability analysis.

The Legislature approved rules for state guidelines, which were brought forward by the Department of Environmental Quality.

## Studies for the upcoming session

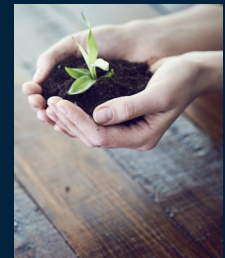
The Joint Legislative Oversight Committee received requests for 13 different evaluations from 27 legislators. In March, the committee selected the following requests for us to study:

- Distribution of state funds for K–12 public education
- Child protection and foster care system
- State jurisdiction in Indian Country (Public Law 280)

## Notable document award

Legislative Research Librarians of the National Conference of State Legislatures presented us with its Notable Document award for the report *Risk of Bias in Administrative Hearings*.

**Our juvenile offenders report received an impact award from the National Legislative Program Evaluation Society.**



**26% of all legislators requested an evaluation.**

## Staff

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## Sharing our work

### International

Rakesh served on a panel (via Skype) at the 12th biennial conference of the European Evaluation Society in Maastricht, the Netherlands. The panel discussed the use of evaluation in policy and political decision-making.

Through Skype, Rakesh presented to members and staff of the Cameroon Parliament on the benefits of an independent evaluation office.

### National

Lance and Margaret participated in a poster session at a conference of the National Legislative Program Evaluation Society in Denver. In breakout sessions, Lance discussed managing evaluations in a legislative environment, and Margaret discussed report formats and copyediting.

Rakesh participated on a panel webinar sponsored by the American Society for Public Administration and the Center for Accountability and Performance. The presentation was titled “Performance Measurement and Evaluation Are Key to Good Government.”

At the American Evaluation Association conference in Chicago, Rakesh talked about building new partnerships to address politics, policymakers, the public, and the press in evaluation.

At a conference of the Eastern Evaluation Research Society in New Jersey, Rakesh spoke about the language of sponsors and stakeholders.

### Local

Rakesh spoke to undergraduate and graduate classes in political science and public administration at Boise State University about evaluation and legislative oversight.

We hosted interns from Boise State University to help with general research. We benefited from the extra help and the students benefited from hands-on experience.

Rakesh was recently appointed to the board of directors of Jannus, an Idaho health and human services organization offering programs to individuals in difficult transitions. In his personal time, he will be working on Jannus’s performance measurement system.