

Chairman Mortimer, Vice Chairman Thayn and members of the committee: Thanks for the privilege of presenting to you today.

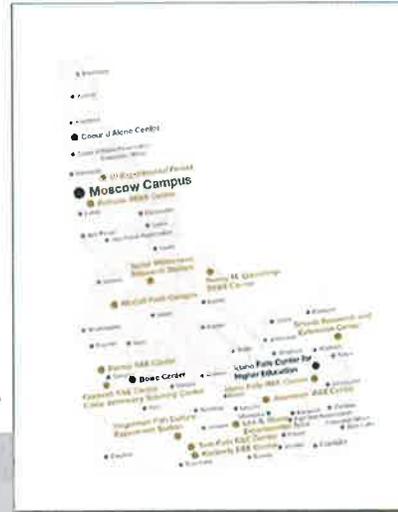
I appreciate the chance to discuss higher education and the work of the University of Idaho with this committee.

Today I will update you on some of our university's progress, especially on programs and initiatives that promote college access and affordability.

## IDAHO'S LAND-GRANT, NATIONAL RESEARCH UNIVERSITY

- Idaho's leader in student success – more than 116,000 graduates since 1889 founding.
- A national leader in research, scholarly activity and creative work – Idaho's only Carnegie R2 "Higher Research Activity" university.
- Engagement across Idaho: research, Extension and other programs in 42 of 44 counties, including Moscow main campus and centers in Coeur d'Alene, Boise, and Idaho Falls.

University of Idaho



The University of Idaho is a land-grant, public research university. We have a mission to offer high-quality education to Idaho citizens, to conduct research with impact, and to engage in communities across Idaho to promote economic prosperity, health, and leadership.

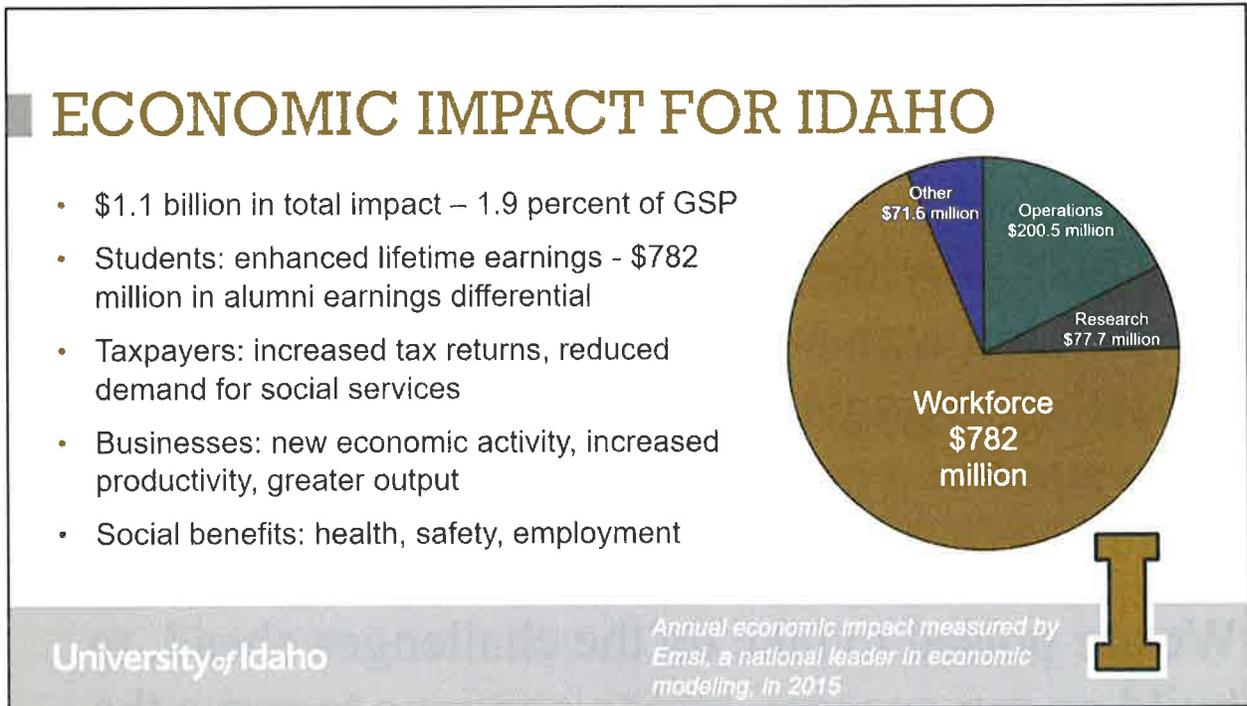
Educating students is at the heart of that mission, and is the focus of my presidency.

This year we have 11,780 students statewide, full and part-time, ranging from dual-credit participants to doctoral degree seekers.

Over the past year we have developed a new strategic plan for the University of Idaho through 2025.

This plan provides a concrete program for us to fulfil our mission with a focus on transformational education, engagement, innovation and the cultivation of a great workplace and inclusive culture.

We are poised to take on the challenges ahead, to build on our success, and to continue to serve the state of Idaho as only our institution can.



I want to give you some perspective on the role of the University of Idaho within our state's economy. Our institution's impact is deep and far-ranging.

As you can see, the largest single impact is our ability to provide Idaho with an educated workforce. That \$782 million total represents the wage differential enjoyed by graduates of the University of Idaho compared to those having only a high school diploma.

The economic impact of our research and other operations boosts this total over \$1 billion dollars, nearly 2 percent of Idaho's economy.

Our economic impact is a significant return on the state's investment in financial terms. But our graduates are leaders in their communities, and our research supports Idaho industries.

For our students AND for our state, the University of Idaho is a great investment.

## COMPREHENSIVE EXCELLENCE

- 10 colleges: Agricultural and Life Sciences; Art and Architecture; Business and Economics; Education; Engineering; Graduate Studies; Law; Letters, Arts and Social Sciences; Natural Resources; Science
- WWAMI program – Idaho's medical school, with access for Idaho residents to top-rated UW School of Medicine
- Other graduate-program success: College of Law, with locations in Boise and Moscow, No. 8 Best Value nationwide fall 2016; statewide veterinary medicine regional partnership through WSU.



University of Idaho

This road to a great life begins as a student in one of the many different disciplines at the undergraduate, graduate and professional level. Many of our programs are highly acclaimed and nationally ranked.

They meet Idaho's needs. We are an agricultural state, and a natural resource-intensive state, but we also have strong needs for a workforce prepared for the sophisticated emerging industries of Idaho, those fields served well by robust programs in engineering, business, education, and more.

I also highlight our Idaho WWAMI program, which provides the bulk of our state's physician workforce – a critical need for health and wellness and social savings.

Our law school is the nation's 8<sup>th</sup> best value in legal education, according to Prelaw magazine. We are poised to add a first-year option here in Boise, to expand opportunities for our students.

## CHANGING OUR COLLEGE-GOING CULTURE

- Total fall 2016 enrollment grew 3.6 percent to 11,780, UI's first increase since 2012.
- Expanding access for more Idaho students:
  - Direct Admissions/Enroll Idaho initiatives
  - Application fee waiver for Idaho residents
  - October FAFSA availability
  - December financial aid priority date
- Focusing on the higher education pipeline: dual credit programs that lead to postsecondary education, enhanced retention efforts, and improved degree completion success.
- Studying the higher education landscape to assess improvement opportunities.

University of Idaho



My focus as president has been in changing our state's college-going culture. As many of you know, we have a low “go-on” rate – less than half our high school graduates enter postsecondary programs within 16 months. Too many qualified students are not taking the next step to go on to postsecondary education.

I explored this problem in this presentation last year, and I am pleased to note that we have made progress over the past year, including our first growth in overall enrollment since 2012. I will explain some of those data in a moment.

We've come to that success, and hope to continue building on it with your help, as a result of a number of process changes, programs, and initiatives.

First, we've partnered with the State Board of Education on our Direct Admissions program, which offers automatic admission to Idaho public colleges to qualified high school seniors. Students receive a letter from the state, followed by robust communications from our University, informing them of their acceptance to college. This is our second year of implementation, and it is making a difference. A study by our McClure Center for Public Policy for the Treasure Valley Education Partnership showed that 30 percent of high school students thought that the letter they received made them more likely or MUCH more likely to attend college.

That is our goal. We want to change the mindset for our high school students. We want to change their question from "*If I should go to college ... to WHERE should I go to college?*"

But it's the impact on students that makes me proudest of this program. One student's response I find particularly telling. A student from Boise High School had had some "ups and downs." He was not sure if he would go to college, despite his mother's encouragement. Now a freshman at the University of Idaho, he said: "There were some times I definitely thought I'd drop out of high school and wouldn't go on. And when I did get the letter, it gave me a kind of guarantee. I was really surprised. I wasn't planning on applying to U of I. I didn't think U of I was really on my radar in terms of being accepted ... just the fact that I was accepted was enough to really get things started. I'm super happy at college now. I'm super excited for the next four years." He went on to say, "This wouldn't have happened without my letter. I'm excited for what the future has to hold." That is one story out of many, a success story for that young man and his family, and we hope a harbinger of many similar stories as this program improves in the future.

This fall the University Idaho went further. We eliminated the admission processing or application

fee for Idaho residents – an investment in getting more students to college. I believe no student should forego college just for the lack of \$60 in cash.

We have improved our financial aid process, implementing the FAFSA advanced date, that allows students and families to use their last year's tax return to apply for financial aid. This change allowed us to send out 2500 aid packages before Christmas this year, compared to 150 last year.

We increased our dual credit enrollment dramatically, bringing more young people into the higher education pipeline.

Our McClure Center will offer an update to their "Life After High School" study in the next couple of weeks, contributing to our understanding of the issues and spurring informed consideration of public policy in this area.

## MAINTAINING AFFORDABILITY

- \$11 million in scholarship support awarded to 4,000 Idaho residents with average family income of \$41,000 complement low annual tuition increases since 2014.
- Scholarship programs include UI's Go Idaho! program, VandaLink transfer student program, Tribal Excellence scholarships, and Operation Education scholarships for military service members.
- First-time college success: 32 percent of fall 2016 new freshmen are first-generation college students.



University of Idaho

The University of Idaho offers an outstanding educational experience at an affordable price. We are one of the great values in higher education, nationwide.

40 percent of our students have family incomes under \$40,000 and qualify for federal Pell Grants.

We offer \$11 million in institutional aid to Idaho residents with an annual family income of \$41,000, well below the median household income. Serving these students offers them an opportunity to participate in the American Dream.

During my presidency, we expanded our Go Idaho! merit scholarship program for Idaho residents.

We have forged more seamless transfer agreements with Idaho community colleges and enhanced our scholarship pool for those students.

We have built a Tribal Excellence Award program to help make college affordable for members of regional Native American tribes.

And we continue to offer unique, focused support for military veterans.

We are committed to bringing more students into the college, and realize that that means reaching those who do not have a history of college attendance in their family. Attending college is the key to economic and social mobility for most students.

## TRANSFORMING LIVES

### PROGRESS TOWARD OUR GOAL

- New first-year freshmen: 4.5 percent increase (6.5 percent Idaho residents)
- New transfers: 4.4 percent increase
- New & transfers from underrepresented groups: 14.3 percent increase
- Idaho residents: 7.2 percent overall increase
- Dual-credit participation: 27 percent increase



University of Idaho

So how are we doing in bringing more students in to higher education, at UI and across the state?

This year we realized our first overall enrollment growth since 2012. A strong increase in the size of our freshman class – 4.5 percent – has been a key part of that growth.

The size of the freshman class is due in large part to a surge in the number of new Idaho resident freshmen who have gone on to college – a 6.5 percent increase, as you can see.

We've also seen an increase in transfer students and in students who are members of underrepresented groups.

I also want to point out that we are committed to dual-credit participation by Idaho high school students, also a priority for our governor.

Dual credit participation helps high school students gain skills and experience, as well as credits, that will help them succeed in higher education and graduate on time and with less debt. We will continue to work to enlarge and improve the dual-credit pipeline to college.

## STUDENT EXCELLENCE

- Home to the largest cadre of National Merit Scholars among Pacific Northwest institutions.
- The UI Honors Program average membership is 470 students, including 150 freshmen.
- Vandal service is recognized by perennial inclusion on the President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, the highest such honor.
- With a tradition of military service, UI supports Army, Navy and Air Force ROTC programs.



As students come to the University of Idaho, they find an outstanding educational experience. The University of Idaho offers academic excellence and a unique residential campus in Moscow, as well as statewide opportunities.

This year our cadre of National Merit Scholars, the best and brightest, grew to 83 students, the largest such class in the Pacific Northwest, more than even the University of Washington.

We have a strong Honors Program, whose students interact closely with faculty and conduct undergraduate research in our state of the art labs.

Our students are also deeply committed to service. Students spent Martin Luther King, Jr. Day conducting a food drive. Many students will spend their Spring Break in locations across Idaho and the United States helping communities in need. That spirit of service informs their future citizenship, and I am proud to watch it grow and take action at the University of Idaho.

The University of Idaho is also home to Army, Navy, and Air Force ROTC programs. We have a proud history of military service at the university, dating back to our founding, and it is a great honor to serve the students who are serving our country.

**VANDAL SUCCESS**

UI RETURN ON INVESTMENT

- Lowest average annual cost among Idaho public universities, according to College Scorecard.
- Highest Idaho public institution six-year graduation rate (56 percent) and freshman-to-sophomore retention rate (77 percent).
- PayScale: Vandals earn highest early- and mid-career salaries among Idaho institutions.

*U.S. News and World Report 2016: UI No. 90 "Top Public Schools" and No. 171 among national universities*

*Money magazine: UI one of nation's "Best Colleges" and the "Best College in Idaho" for quality of education, affordability and outcomes*

*Washington Monthly: UI No. 84 nationwide among national universities for student success, innovative research, and public service*

University of Idaho

Many reports from third parties describe and support the University of Idaho's excellence.

According to the federal government's College Scorecard, the University of Idaho has the lowest average annual cost among Idaho public universities, something public investment helps keep a reality, as we seek to keep tuition and fees low for students.

That same College Scorecard shows that the University of Idaho has the highest graduation rates and freshman-to-sophomore retention rates among Idaho's public universities.

Students leave our institution prepared to succeed. They become valued employees, innovative entrepreneurs, and dedicated public servants. According to the 2016-2017 PayScale College Salary Report, that Vandal graduates earn the highest early- and mid-career salaries of graduates of any Idaho institutions. Our graduates find the financial stability with which to live rewarding lives, support families, and contribute to communities as taxpayers and as citizens.

A core value that I am sure we share is that an outstanding education leads to a great job and a great life.

## INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

- Completion scholarships
- Change in employee compensation
- Computer science in Coeur d'Alene
- Center for Agriculture, Food and the Environment
- Idaho WWAMI program
- Agricultural Research and Experiment Station



University of Idaho

We were pleased to see adult completion scholarships among the governor's recommendations. That is a good opportunity to reengage our citizens and help them get the training and degrees they need to further their growth.

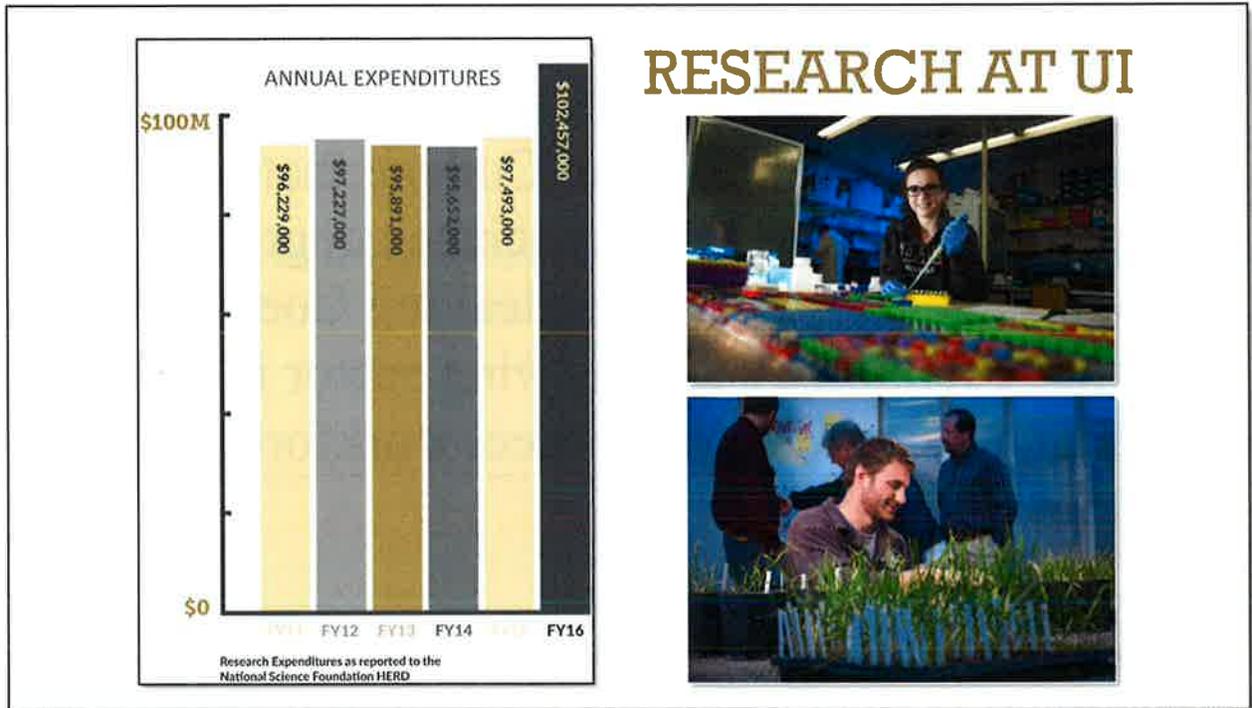
The change in employee compensation recommended by the governor is also welcome. Attracting and retaining faculty and staff is a perennial challenge for our institution, and we need to offer competitive salaries to continue to succeed in all aspects of our mission, especially those that serve students.

We hope to see an investment in the fourth year of our Computer Science program in Coeur d'Alene, a partnership with North Idaho College that allows students to begin a computer science degree at NIC and complete it at UI without leaving Coeur d'Alene. Technology is a growing sector in North Idaho, and we are poised to meet workforce needs with that program.

The governor has also recommended a \$10 million investment in the Center for Agricultural, Food and the Environment, for which we are grateful. I will have a bit more to say on that in an upcoming slide.

We are also looking to invest in a clinical and anatomy lab for our Idaho WWAMI program, to enhance our delivery of medical education that trains doctors who stay in Idaho to practice, often in rural areas where they are needed.

Lastly, we look forward to bolstered the capacity of our Agricultural Research and Extension Service, an investment in opportunity and hands-on learning for students.



The University of Idaho isn't just about transferring knowledge, but also about expanding knowledge. I often show people this chart of our growth in research expenditures, and I'm proud of the significant growth in FY16, breaking the \$100 million mark.

But I realize that that's an abstract way of looking at research.

Research, scholarly activity, and creative work are impactful in two other ways.

First, they are critical ways to train students, both undergraduate and graduate, for careers in academia, in industry, or in other pursuits.

Second, research expenditures are impactful because the research they support applies to real challenges. Our research improves the day-to-day life of Idahoans and spurs the growth and development of the state's economy.

## INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

- Leveraging our research strengths to solve problems and address critical issues
- Supporting key and emerging Idaho industries
- Offering opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students
- Building capacity for future growth



University of Idaho

As a land-grant research university, we are uniquely poised to create industry partnerships with lasting and significant impacts for the state of Idaho. Those partnerships also provide opportunities for students.

I'd like to share two examples: the Idaho Arena and the Center for Agriculture, Food and the Environment.

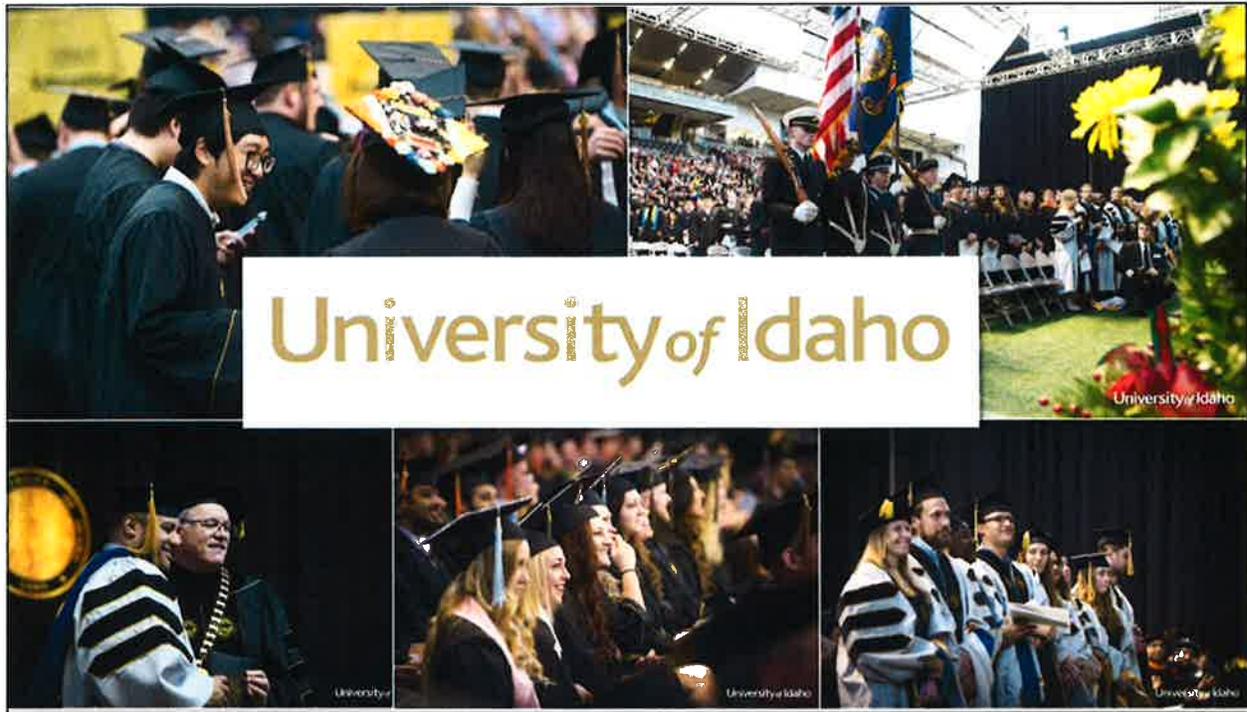
The Idaho Arena project fulfills a longtime need for a standalone facility for our court sports. We are partnering with the timber and wood products industry and Idaho architects as we develop this new facility, and we'll provide chances for students in

architecture, natural resources, and engineering to work on an important project. When completed, the facility will continue to provide not only a great home for our student-athletes and fans but for students in many disciplines.

The Center for Agriculture, Food and the Environment is one of the governor's priorities. It has been a personal priority for me for the last 3 years. So, it is very satisfying that Governor Otter has recommended \$10 million in funding for this project to address the complex problems and needs at the intersection of the cattle, dairy, and food processing industries. These industries are critical to Idaho, having grown dramatically over the last 10 years. We look forward to working with these industry partners as we build a dynamic center that can serve these important and growing sectors of the Idaho economy. The center will also provide outstanding opportunities for undergraduate and graduate student involvement in much-needed research.

These kind of partnerships are central to how our university serves our students and our state, and I

hope you have a better sense of what they mean to us.



**Thank you** for your support of the University of Idaho.

My presentation in many places emphasized the economic return that students and Idaho receive from the investments we make together in the University.

Of course, those who work at the University also see the personal differences we make in the lives of Idahoans, which is why I wanted to end with pictures of Commencement – the symbolic beginning of new lives shaped by our state’s leading, national research university.

