

May 6, 2008

Vandal Parents Newsletter

A large fleet of U-Haul trailers are ready to be packed. Final exams are ending as spring semester comes to a close. The excitement and tension to leave is evident in the faces of tired students. It is also a joyful and bittersweet time for seniors who prepare for Commencement and first steps after college. Deep friendships have formed and great growth has taken place here and now it is time to go elsewhere. I do hope that they are not planning a long-term relocation to their old room at home.

Commencement will begin Saturday, May 10th at 9:30 am in the Kibbie Dome. We will have one main ceremony with numerous small receptions that will follow. Commencement will last about 2 hours and 20 minutes so you may want to bring seat pads or stadium seats to soften the bleachers. Students will gather at 8:30 am on the plaza beside the Commons to form the procession to the Dome. Additional information about these proceedings can be found at www.uidaho.edu.

This has been the season to recognize students who have accomplished much. Our students have done extraordinary work. Ten students have been recognized as outstanding seniors who have been major leaders of student organizations, studied abroad and committed themselves to service in Appalachia, on the Gulf Coast and/or Peru.

The following students received Outstanding Senior Awards:

Carrie Phillips, Charlottesville, Virginia
Kirsten Cummings, Burley, Idaho
Tyson Deschamp, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho
James Fox, Grangeville, Idaho
Jonathan Gaffney, Moscow, Idaho
Shannon Hohl, Seward, Alaska
Kenneth Henderson, Mountain View, California
Jeanie Levinski, Meridian, Idaho
Bruce Mann, Santa Rosa, California
Jacob Parker, Colorado Springs, Colorado

Women have dominated major student awards in the last eight years. Since 2001, 71 women and 23 men have won outstanding senior awards. It is an interesting trend.

Last week, Delta Sigma Phi Fraternity earned an unusual award called the Kill-A-Watt Award, which was sponsored by Avista Utilities. This was an energy conservation contest which measured the reduction of electrical power since December. This fraternity reduced their use by 24.7% and saved almost \$1,000 during this four month period. Eleven fraternities and sororities participated and reduced usage an average of 12.2%.

On Monday, the University will shift to summer operating hours. We will open 7:30am and many offices will close at 4:30pm.

Those of you with graduating seniors will be celebrating graduation . . . and the end of sending checks to the University of Idaho. I wish you well as you navigate another big change in your family experience as your daughter or son leaves a somewhat structured environment to the world of endless possibilities and many choices. This next step can be challenging . . . finding new jobs with benefits . . . physical relocation to distance places...creating a new circle of friends . . paying the bills. It is very satisfying when you know they are self sufficient.

I hope that you have a few weeks of quality time with your Vandals this summer. It may be a challenge including another person back into the family routine that has changed since they left home last fall to go to the University of Idaho. Your family has changed and so have they. Give them a few stinky jobs so that they will be highly motivated to get a degree....and return for fall semester.

In closing for this academic year, I wish you and your family the best. I hope you have a wonderful summer.

Best wishes,

Bruce M. Pitman
Vice Provost for Student Affairs/Dean of Students