

November 6, 2009

Vandal Parents Newsletter,

Homecoming Weekend filled campus with festive music, cheerful alumni reunions and football. Homecoming has been a ritual at the University of Idaho for 100 years! On Friday night, Kelby Wilson from Cottonwood was crowned Homecoming King and Jill Smith from Boise was named Homecoming Queen at the pep rally, bonfire and fireworks display. On Saturday morning, Moscow seemed like College Town USA as 105 entries marched down Main Street in the more than hour long Homecoming parade. The weekend was made perfect when the Vandal football team (7-2) beat Louisiana Tech with a miracle finish.

Homecoming was a welcome distraction from the serious academic activity that is felt in late October. Mid-terms exams are behind us and students have a more realistic view of the challenges that are ahead. We aggressively encouraged students to look at their mid-term grades and then make adjustments to their study strategies, use of resources, and course load. We sent numerous e-mails and made many phone calls to students urging them to take advantage of the drop date deadlines and to begin using academic support services. Last Friday was the last day to make changes so they must now do their best with what they have.

We are in the midst of academic advising for spring 2010 and registration for spring semester classes begins next week. You may want to ask your Vandal about whether they have had their academic advising consultation and ask them about what courses they are planning to take next semester.

Thanksgiving vacation begins in two weeks. Your Vandal will be eager to come home for a few days to see their friends, family and get some rest before final examinations are taken. You may want to encourage your student to ride the Holiday Break bus. We offer service to southern Idaho and Portland, Oregon. We make many stops along the way. You can get more information about this excellent safe transportation option at www.uidaho.edu/dos.

Student use of the Student Health Clinic seems to be high for this time of the year but there are very few flu cases. We continue to monitor health trends related to H1N1 flu. Some H1N1 vaccine is being distributed by Public Health staff to people who are considered to be at high risk but we do not expect large quantities of H1N1 vaccine to be available for general distribution.

Learning through service is a matter of great emphasis. We create opportunities locally, regionally and in distant places. Two weeks ago, more than 300 students dedicated their Saturday for "Make a Difference Day" by working in local projects such as tree planting, park clean-up and work to improve other public spaces. We also have groups of students preparing for international service during the Winter break to Cambodia, the Dominican Republic and Romania. These projects will focus on schools and orphanages and will give these students life changing service opportunities.

Each morning, I am inspired by the commitment of our military students. As I drive onto campus, they are finishing their 6:00 am workouts. We have excellent Army, Air Force and Navy ROTC programs that

prepare our students to be officers. We are proud of our long term commitment to this mission and these men and women.

Go Vandals!

Bruce Pitman

Vice Provost for Student Affairs/Dean of Students