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IDAHO 4-H HELPS YOUTH GROW

THE UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM REACHED 56,786 YOUTH IN 2015 WITH THE HELP OF 3,198 VOLUNTEERS ACROSS THE STATE. TO BUILD CONFIDENCE, 14,227 4-H CLUB MEMBERS DELIVERED ORAL PRESENTATIONS, AND 701 SERVED AS YOUTH LEADERS. TO NURTURE THEIR INTEREST IN SCIENCE, 24,075 YOUTH PARTICIPATED IN 4-H TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE PROJECTS. TO DEVELOP LEADERSHIP, 5,840 YOUTH ENROLLED IN PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CITIZENSHIP PROJECTS.

Wheat Commission Steps Up to Help UI Hire Geneticist to Expand Variety Development

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A NEWLY HIRED SCIENTIST will help the University of Idaho expand the effectiveness of its wheat breeding efforts.

Daolin Fu will begin work for UI CALS in August. He is a molecular wheat geneticist with advanced degrees from Kansas State University and the Beijing-based Chinese Academy of Sciences.

The Idaho Wheat Commission is giving initial funding to hire the new molecular wheat geneticist.

"We are pleased to have Daolin Fu join the UI faculty and to have a researcher focused directly on wheat genetics and trait development," said Blaine Jacobson, Wheat Commission executive director. "It will help Idaho growers continue to have the most current technology in their wheat seeds and help Idaho continue to be a leading wheat-growing state."

His role, Fu said, will be working with wheat

breeders to use new molecular genetics tools to identify genes that control disease resistance or wheat qualities needed for different products.

"It's a different direction for our wheat breeding program, and we are looking forward to it," said Paul McDaniel, the college's Plant, Soil and Entomological Sciences Department head.

Wheat growers' strong support was critical, he said. "Them stepping up really made this happen."

Adding Fu enhances UI's work with Limagrain Cereal Seeds, the U.S. subsidiary of one of the world's largest seed companies, said Mark McGuire, Idaho Agricultural Experiment Station interim director in Moscow.

"We will be able to, in partnership with Limagrain and the Idaho Wheat Commission, advance our selection of varieties to support the growers of the Pacific Northwest," McGuire said.

Michael Parrella Steps in as CALS Dean

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MICHAEL PARRELLA BEGAN HIS TENURE Feb. 1 as dean of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences.

An entomologist and researcher for the University of California system for 35 years, including 27 at UC Davis, he worked closely with the state's horticulture industry, which posted 2011 sales of \$3.54 billion.

In working with farmers and as an administrator and Extension researcher, Parrella emphasized finding collaborative solutions.

"I think he brings a good combination of passion, energy and fresh ideas that is going to work very well for the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences and all of its stakeholders," said Kelly Olson, Idaho Barley Commission administrator. "He clearly has an excellent history of industry collaboration working with stakeholders in California, where they have a huge, diverse agricultural industry."

The positive feelings were mutual, Parrella said. "What impressed me here was the tremendous passion for supporting agriculture, supporting CALS and supporting the University of Idaho. There is a higher level of satisfaction you get by knowing there are people who are really passionate and believe in the college."

Parrella succeeds John Foltz, special assistant for agricultural initiatives to UI President Chuck Staben. The new dean said he is happy to have Foltz at UI to work with and to know that Rich Garber, who is retiring from UI to work with the Idaho Grain Producers Association, will continue working on agricultural issues.

A Feb. 16 reception is planned for Parrella in Boise at 5:30 p.m. in the Red Lion Downtowner. A Feb. 17 reception will honor Garber's 15 years of service to UI CALS in The Willows at the Boise Centre at 4 p.m.

4-H Know Your Government Returns to Capitol

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PRESIDENTS DAY WEEKEND will again bring nearly 200 young leaders to Boise to try out the levers of government through the University of Idaho Extension 4-H Youth Development program.

This year's 4-H members will explore the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government while learning from top state leaders during the annual Know Your Government event.

The 4-H'ers will also represent the beginnings of a new 4-H initiative designed to help them exercise their talents for leadership and other life skills. The effort will help the UI youth development program increase coordination throughout UI Extension offices statewide.

An enhanced appropriation during last year's legislative session funded the addition of three district 4-H positions to coordinate and expand training and curriculum for 4-H members, volunteers and staff.

When a search for a top state 4-H office position failed to yield a qualified pool of applicants, the job was refocused as a fourth district position, creating one for each 4-H district statewide, said Jim Lindstrom, state 4-H director.

The new regional youth development educators focus on 4-H science, youth development and youth leadership and citizenship.