

## Think Positive

“Life isn’t about waiting for the storm to pass. It’s about learning how to dance in the rain.”

— *Vivian Green*



## In This Issue

Welcome back to a new academic year at the University of Idaho! In this issue, you’ll learn more about voluntary wellness benefits that are designed to help you feel your best. You’ll also find important reminders about flu shots, annual enrollment and mental health resources. There’s also a special feature about the university’s Benefit Services staff, who are dedicated to helping you use your benefits from onboarding to retirement.

## Mark Your Calendar: 2023 Annual Enrollment

Annual enrollment for 2023 begins Monday, Oct. 17, and ends Tuesday, Nov. 1. You will have the opportunity to attend a Virtual Benefits Fair this year to find out everything you need to know about what’s new and exciting for 2023. Watch your University of Idaho email and the [Benefits webpage](#) for additional announcements.

Want to get a head start? Benefit orientations aren’t just for new employees — anyone can attend to get a refresher on their benefits package. Registration is required and all events are held via Zoom. View a list of events and [register today](#).



## Flu Shots: Your Best Line of Protection Against Influenza

With flu season approaching, consider getting a flu vaccine this year. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the flu vaccine is the single best way to protect yourself and your loved ones against the flu and its potentially serious complications. The flu vaccine is recommended for everyone age 6 months and older.

You can receive an annual flu shot at **no cost** to you as part of your preventive care benefits through your medical and prescription drug plans. You can receive your shot at many convenient locations, including local pharmacies and your health care provider's office. Be sure to show your medical ID card when receiving your vaccine.



## Wondr: A Different Kind of Wellness Program

No points, plans or counting calories. Wondr — a digital behavioral change program — teaches clinically proven skills to help you sleep better, stress less and lose weight. Wondr’s renowned team of doctors and clinicians teach the behavioral science behind the skills needed to improve your overall physical and mental wellbeing. Learn simple skills and the intriguing science behind behavioral health, with 24/7 support from the Wondr app, community and certified coaches.

This voluntary benefit is available to you at no cost. Your spouse or domestic partner and adult dependents age 18 and older who are enrolled in a Blue Cross of Idaho medical plan may also be eligible to participate.

### By the Numbers

Since earlier this year when Wondr was introduced, university employees and family members have had great success using the program:

- **146** University of Idaho participants attended two or more sessions
- **2,330** tailored lessons taken
- **568** total pounds lost!

### Firsthand Feedback

University of Idaho participants have good things to say about Wondr.

“I have gained important life skills — not only about eating, but managing stress. I would never have signed up for this program if it had not been offered through my work.”

“I’m really impressed with how easy this program was. It took me a couple of weeks to ‘get in the swing’ of the program...but when I did, the weight just started melting off.”

“Very helpful and practical skills!”

### Get Started!

Enroll Sept. 12-25 for the next Wondr session, “Stress Less.” The session begins Oct. 10. Simply complete the [online application form](#) to get started.

# Emotional and Mental Health Support Resources

In today's stressful world, you may need extra support managing your emotional and mental health. With September being National Suicide Prevention Month, we want to remind you of confidential and reliable mental health resources available 24/7 to you and your covered dependents.



## In-Person and Telehealth Support

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offers up to eight confidential counseling sessions per year at no cost to you and your covered dependents. You can receive professional help over the phone or in person. The EAP also provides free referral services to take the legwork out of provider searches for everything from childcare and adoption to financial planning. To access services, call **800-999-1077** or visit [eaphelpink.com](https://eaphelpink.com) (enter company code **UI1**).

## Online Support

You and your covered dependents can access mental health therapy from the comfort of your home through AbilitiCBT. Since earlier this year when this confidential and convenient program was introduced, AbilitiCBT has helped many University of Idaho participants. As part of this program, you are paired with a professional therapist who meets with you privately by phone or video. You work at your own pace and receive support through regular check-ins.

## By the Numbers

University of Idaho participants have positive things to say about the program, as these survey results indicate:

- **90%** would recommend the program to others
- **91%** said AbilitiCBT is helping them progress toward their goals
- **82%** said AbilitiCBT is helping them reduce their mental health symptoms
- **73%** learned a new skill

To access AbilitiCBT, register at [uidaho.abiliticbtus.com/home](https://uidaho.abiliticbtus.com/home).

## Trainings and Online Seminars

We invite you to consider attending **Question, Persuade and Refer (QPR)**, a one-hour training provided by University of Idaho to help faculty, staff and students respond to someone in a mental health crisis.

The university also offers a **Mental Health First Aid certification program** designed to help participants understand and respond to signs of mental illness and substance use disorders. Participants must pre-register and complete two hours of pre-work before the scheduled instructor-led sessions. Find more information and **learn about upcoming courses**.

You also have access to a series of live and on-demand online seminars through the university's EAP provider, including topics such as digital detoxing, managing stress, and self-care tips. These seminars are confidential and available at no charge. To learn more, visit **eaphelplink.com** (enter company code **UI1**) and then click **Online Seminars**.



### Finding Yourself Through Nature

#### *On-demand seminar*

Studies show that being outdoors in green spaces has many benefits for your emotional wellbeing, including:

- Increases relaxation and reduces stress
- Improves your mood
- Restores attention and increases creativity
- Increases altruistic actions
- Makes you feel more alive and vital

Tune in to this online seminar to learn more about the importance of being outside and finding ways to enjoy nature and increase your wellbeing. Access the seminar at **eaphelplink.com** (enter company code **UI1**) and then click **Online Seminars**. If you have any issues finding the seminar, call **800-999-1077**.

## Helping a Loved Who Is Suicidal

If someone you know shows signs of suicide, get help immediately:

- Don't leave the person alone.
- Call 911 and tell them your loved one is actively suicidal and at immediate risk of physical harm and/or death. You also can call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at **800-273-TALK (800-273-8255)**.
- If your loved one is amenable and not trying to actively harm themselves, you can take them to the emergency room yourself and report that they are actively suicidal. Every emergency room can evaluate a suicidal individual and connect you with the necessary resources.
- Remove any firearms, knives, medications or other means that can be tools for self-harm.
- Tell a family member or friend. Don't try to handle the situation alone.

## Meet the University's Benefits Team

The University of Idaho Benefit Services staff is dedicated to helping you navigate benefits, leaves of absence, retirement and more. This experienced group of HR professionals has more than six decades of combined experience. Here's more about the team.

### Arlette Jameson

**Tenure with the University of Idaho:**

Arlette has been with the Benefits Team for six years.

**Background:** She has a strong background in health insurance, including 28 years working for Regence BlueShield of Idaho as the statewide manager of professional and provider relations. Before joining the university, she spent two years as the health information manager at Garfield County Hospital District in Pomeroy, Washington.

**Hometown and Interests:** Arlette, a native of Idaho, was born and raised in Grangeville. She has two children and four grandchildren, all located in Lewiston where she currently resides. Her hobbies include camping, boating and travel.

### Keli Jones

**Tenure with the University of Idaho:** Keli recently joined the University of Idaho as a benefits specialist.

**Background:** She has 17 years of experience working in HR. She enjoys working with employees and assisting them with benefits and leave options.

**Hometown and Interests:** Keli grew up in the Palouse region, raised a family here, and plans to continue to enjoy everything the area has to offer. Her favorite hobbies include reading, gardening, boating and camping.

### Kim Ridle

**Tenure with the University of Idaho:**

Kim joined the Benefits Team in 2014.

**Background:** Before joining the University of Idaho, she retired from the State of Alaska with a background in retirement and benefits, along with grants and contracts experience.

**Hometown and Interests:** She raised her four children in Alaska and then fulfilled an item on her bucket list by buying a remote hobby farm in North Idaho. While she has learned she's not the pioneer woman she had hoped, Kim continues to enjoy the beauty, peacefulness and wildlife that come with remote living. She also loves the lower 48 road system that allows for many weekend adventures in and around Idaho, Washington, Oregon and Montana.

### Mindi Wood

**Tenure with the University of Idaho:** Mindi joined the University of Idaho in 2016 as the human resources assistant.

**Background:** She transitioned to managing the HR front office and then started gravitating toward roles with a focus on employee benefits. She enjoys helping employees understand their benefit options.

**Hometown and Interests:** Mindi lives outside of Moscow with her husband, son, two dogs, two cats and a bird. In her free time, she enjoys hunting, fishing, hiking and golfing.



## UI Benefit Services

[benefits@uidaho.edu](mailto:benefits@uidaho.edu)

Within Idaho: 208-885-3697

Outside Idaho: 800-646-6174

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## UI Benefits Website

[uidaho.edu/benefits](http://uidaho.edu/benefits)

- View plan documents for core benefits
- Learn about the UI education benefit for employees, spouses and dependents
- Find retirement resources, information and links
- Register for orientation events
- Access wellness and employee assistance resources
- Understand leave and time-away-from-work benefits
- Find frequently used forms and FAQs