NEW BEGINNINGS
IDAHO WWAMI GRADUATION,
U OF I SCHOOL OF HEALTH
AND MEDICAL PROFESSIONS
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Welcome to SHAMP!

I am thrilled to be able to say that the University of Idaho officially has a School of Health and Medical Professions (SHAMP).

This initiative marks a significant milestone in our commitment to advancing health care in the state of Idaho, starting with increasing the education opportunities available to Idahoans.

The establishment of SHAMP comes at a pivotal time for Idaho’s health care landscape. Our goal is to equip the next generation of health care professionals with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to address current and future health care challenges effectively.

As we embark on this journey, we invite you to join us in celebrating SHAMP and the students who have chosen to earn their health care education from us. Together, we can shape the future of health care education and the future of health care in Idaho.

Thank you for your support and partnership as we work towards creating a healthier Idaho through education, research, and clinical experiences.

Jeff Seegmiller, Ed. D., AT
Regional Dean, WWAMI Medical Education Program, School of Health and Medical Professions
INTRODUCING THE SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND MEDICAL
University of Idaho will welcome the School of Health and Medical Professions (SHAMP) to its graduate program roster in Fall 2025. These programs will address the physician and health care provider shortage that has plagued Idaho for years.

SHAMP will be a transformative force in addressing Idaho’s health care crises by expanding medical education and health care services both in rural north Idaho and statewide. The new programs will support existing programming in the state and propel Idaho out of its health care crisis.

Spearheaded by Idaho WWAMI Regional Dean and Director Jeff Seegmiller, the new school was approved by the Idaho State Board of Education (SBOE) today, June 13, determining that U of I will be adding SHAMP and a master’s degree in gerontology — the study of old age — to its health care offerings.

“This is a monumental step forward for University of Idaho and the state’s health care system,” Seegmiller said. “These programs are designed to equip future health care professionals with the knowledge and skills they need to meet the growing demands of our communities. Thank you to the Idaho State Board of Education for supporting the development of these new health care education opportunities.”

The state is experiencing a health care worker shortage, ranging from primary care providers and nurses to behavioral health professionals. Idaho ranks 50th out of 50 states in the country in practicing physicians per capita. Additionally, by 2031, an estimated 30% of Idaho’s population will be 65 or older, making this a critical time to introduce Idaho’s first gerontology degree.
The programs housed within SHAMP will include a Master of Gerontology, with the intent to add one additional master’s program and three doctoral programs upon final approval at the August SBOE meeting, including a doctorate in clinical psychology.

“Our goal is not only to fill the current gaps in health care provision, but also to create a sustainable pipeline of skilled professionals who can contribute to the well-being of Idahoans for generations to come,” Seegmiller said.

U of I has worked closely with Idaho State University on the development of health care education in Idaho.

“We appreciate the support from our sister institutions, especially Idaho State University, to help make the School of Health and Medical Professions possible and look forward to future collaborations to help meet the health care needs of our state,” U of I President Scott Green said.

U of I has the medical education building and anatomy lab in place to house SHAMP and is prepared to take on the expansion of graduate-level health care programs in north Idaho. Additionally, in anticipation of growth, U of I will break ground in July on an expansion to the D.A. Huckabay M.D. Medical Education Building.

“University of Idaho was founded on giving back to the state of Idaho as a land-grant institution and has a responsibility to better the lives of Idahoans,” Seegmiller said. “Developing the School of Health and Medical Professions furthers that mission.”
Dr. Claire Vietri and Dr. Aleksei Dingel (left to right) both entering into Pediatrics residencies.
Four years ago, 41 Idaho WWAMI students donned their white coats and stethoscopes. Medical school was about to begin.

Four years of intense studying at all hours of the day and night. Four years of practicing clinical skills and patient interactions. Four years of bonding with fellow classmates.

Now, those 41 students have walked across one final stage, trading in their short white coats for long ones. Those 41 students have turned from students to physicians. They’re the future of health care in Idaho, the future health care providers for countless families.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE E20 IDAHO WWAMI GRADUATES, IDAHO IS LUCKY TO HAVE YOU.
Out of our 40 graduating medical students, 16 matched into Idaho residencies. 75% of students matched into primary care specialties with 11 specializing in internal medicine. The E20 class also saw a couples match! Congratulations for the newlywed couple Colt Merges and Maggie Wilkins for matching into internal medicine at the Boise VA!
Bethaney Fehrenkamp is one of 50 people named by the Idaho Business Review as a 2024 Women of the Year honoree.

Fehrenkamp is a clinical assistant professor of immunology for the Idaho WWAMI Medical Education Program at the University of Idaho. She is an accomplished professor, researcher and mentor for medical students.

“I am extremely humbled and honored to be included as an honoree as one of the 50 Women of the Year in Idaho,” Fehrenkamp said. “Honestly, I don’t feel that I do anything special. I am an educator at heart and have found my passion in my work. I am blessed to do what I do, where I do it, and with whom.”

A native Idahoan, Fehrenkamp joined the Idaho WWAMI team in 2022, becoming the only full-time immunologist on our team and leading the Infections & Immunity (I&I) block, while providing research experiences to University of Idaho students.

Fehrenkamp has been a staple in Idaho WWAMI since joining the team, consistently going the extra mile, surpassing her responsibilities as a professor and researcher.
“Since joining our team, Dr. Fehrenkamp has tangibly impacted the future of medicine and is in my vernacular a true rockstar when it comes to women in medicine,” said Jeff Seegmiller, dean and director of the Idaho WWAMI Medical Program. “Medicine needs more women like Dr. Fehrenkamp if we are to change the future leaders advancing science and teaching of medicine.”

In addition to teaching, she has mentored 20 medical students from 2023 to 2024, with four of them earning talks at the Western Medical Research Conference and one of them receiving a Student Subspecialty Award. Most recently, she took a medical student to the national meeting of the American Association of Immunologists, mentoring this student in her research and earning her a first-author publication.

“The students who work with her witness a powerful female who serves as a role model for what can be accomplished when you are unwilling to accept the status quo,” Seegmiller said.

Fehrenkamp’s tenacity and dedication to health education and the advancement of health literacy in Idaho makes her a force to be reckoned with. She constantly strives towards excellence in her role within the University of Idaho and the Idaho WWAMI Medical Education Program and is an asset to the Moscow community and Idaho at large.
What has been your most significant professional accomplishment in the last 12-18 months?

Idaho has a shortage of health care workers from physicians to nurses to behavioral health professionals. Idaho must do more to change this. One of my greatest accomplishments has been the creation of the new School of Health and Medical Professions at the University of Idaho. The school will house much needed graduate health profession programs as well as our only state supported medical school. To change the health care landscape, we will need all state institutions rowing the boat in the same direction to solve Idaho’s health care crisis. I am proud to say that we Vandals will be part of the solution.

What are some goals you are hoping to achieve in the next year?

As great of a state as Idaho is, we have some challenges. Every one of Idaho’s 44 counties is a designated Health Professional Shortage Area for behavioral/mental health. My goal is to change this by offering educational training through world class telehealth education (ECHO Idaho) and by offering new professional programs to produce clinical psychologists for Idaho.

What was the biggest challenge you overcame to be successful in your industry?

When you love the state of Idaho, you sometimes look past the challenges right in front of you. Early in my career I embraced the importance and value of research to understand and solve our state’s problems. By researching Idaho’s challenges and working to fix them, I have found that you end up loving your state even more.

How do you think your work has benefited Idaho?

The work we have done has created tangible support for Idaho’s health care workers through ECHO Idaho — our statewide telehealth education system. In September 2023, ECHO Idaho launched the K12 Education series, bringing valuable information on K12 behavioral health, school nurses and substance use prevention and treatment to educators all over the state of Idaho. In only three months, ECHO Idaho trained 259 professionals from 138 different organizations. 80% of those who participated are currently working in roles providing direct support to students in K12 settings.

How did you come to your current career?

I started as an athletic trainer who rehabilitated sports injuries and found that I had a passion for solving problems. I have found that the skill set I have in solving a patient’s problem with a musculoskeletal injury was the same process for solving bigger statewide problems. It requires curiosity, unrelenting determination to fix the problem and compassion for those impacted. These characteristics have led me to eventually become a professor, researcher and an administrator solving problems in health care.

If you weren’t in that career, what other career would you be working in or would like to work in?

Early in my career, I passed up an opportunity to be the athletic trainer for the United States Ski and Snowboard Association. It would have combined my passion for winter sports and sports medicine.
To change the health care landscape, we will need all state institutions rowing the boat in the same direction to solve Idaho’s health care crisis. I am proud to say that we Vandals will be part of the solution.

JEFF SEEGMILLER Ed. D., AT
Regional Dean, WWAMI Medical Education Program, School of Health and Medical Professions
“This is the 2024 Idaho WWAMI Award for Teaching, Mentoring, Leadership and Patient Care,” said Mary Barinaga, Assistant Dean of Idaho WWAMI. “There are over one-thousand alumni of this program and Dr. Hartwig was chosen for this award.”

Dr. Kim Hartwig, Idaho WWAMI c/o 2003, received the 2024 Idaho WWAMI Award for Teaching, Mentoring, Leadership and Patient Care. Dr. Hartwig grew up in Lapwai, Idaho on the Nez Perce Reservation, excelling in academics and athletics. She attended the Idaho WWAMI Medical Education Program, graduating in 2003 and then completing her residency at Family Medicine Residency Spokane. Post residency, Dr. Hartwig practiced as a rural family physician for the Coeur d’Alene Tribe in Plummer, Idaho, quickly being promoted to Medical Director.

In 2019, Dr. Hartwig returned to Lapwai to assume the medical director position of Nimipuu Health, directing all healthcare for her community, providing direct patient care, managing grants and serving as the Nez Perce Tribe’s Public Health Director. Come 2020, Dr. Hartwig received the Director’s Award for COVID-19 Pandemic Heroism by the Portland area Indian Health Service.

“Since I’ve known Dr. Hartwig she’s been involved with teaching,” Barinaga said. “I’ve seen her teach medical students and residents and I’m sure lots of other learners. It is so important to give back to the next generation and she has done that. It takes a lot of extra time, it takes a lot of extra energy when you are in the middle of a long day and you’re running around seeing patients, but to have a student with you it’s the best gift that you can give.”

Remaining active in the Idaho WWAMI community, Dr. Hartwig has served on the Idaho WWAMI Admissions Committee since 2021, helping to choose the next generation of Idaho physicians. She has been able to exercise her experience and leadership capabilities by acting as a member of the Idaho Academy of Family Physicians Board of Directors, advocating for healthcare and influencing statewide policy.

Outside of medicine, Dr. Hartwig is a mother of six and is an engaged member of her community in Lapwai.

“Thank you to everybody for welcoming me home,” Hartwig said. “It’s quite an honor. Every decision or input that I make really has our people at the forefront.”
Eighth to 12th graders spent a day at the D.A. Huckabay M.D. Medical Education Building, attending Hands-on Health Care (HOHC). Hosted by Idaho WWAMI students in conjunction with NI-AHEC, the workshop teaches the visiting teenagers about the different career paths in health care.

The workshop was organized by Liz Bryant and Idaho WWAMI first-year students Sydney Mena and Benjamin Worthley.

The workshop featured six health care professions: nurses, public health professionals, athletic trainers, physicians, EMTs and dieticians.

Participants had the opportunity to practice splinting
with active EMTs, give physical exams with Idaho WWAMI students, take blood pressure with nurses and wrap wrists with athletic trainers.

“Healthcare can be a blast, and getting students to see those really fun experiences is what’s going to make them want to enter and stay in a health field,” Mena said.

Living in Idaho with limited access to health care and health care education, younger students might not know of the range of job options available in health care. Even as medical students, both Mena and Worthley said that they learned something new about the health field during the workshop.

“I think it speaks to how important experiences like this workshop are when you can be in medical school and still be learning things about the general field you’re in,” Worthley said.

“...I think an event like this is really helpful to show how diverse health care careers can be.

SYDNEY MENA,
First-Year Idaho WWAMI Student

NI-AHEC is the North Idaho Health Education Center, committed to serving Idaho by emphasizing rural/underserved health care. The AHEC network is a national system of more than 300 program offices and centers developed to enhance healthcare access and delivery in underserved areas.
The Vandal Health Clinic will become a teaching clinic for medical students while providing on-campus health care services to University of Idaho students.

The Idaho WWAMI Medical Education Program and U of I Division of Student Affairs will take over management of the clinic from Gritman Medical Center to create the first higher education medical teaching clinic in North Idaho. Gritman will continue to partner with Idaho WWAMI by providing opportunities for clinical rotations and collaborating on the advancement of health education in the community.

"Not only will the clinic serve the health care needs of students, but it will also serve as a center for learning for future medical practitioners who will then go on to meet the needs of Idaho through their professional careers," said Blaine Eckles, vice provost for student affairs and dean of students. “Students will receive this top-notch health support and education from medical professionals who are teaching in the WWAMI program and who will continue their efforts of keeping students at the forefront of the Vandal experience.”

The Vandal Health Clinic will continue to provide the same standard of primary care services to students to which they are accustomed. Students have the opportunity to assist in the education of Idaho WWAMI medical students, allowing them to lead the appointment under the supervision of physician faculty, or be seen by other primary care providers in the clinic.

“The Vandal Health Clinic will serve as a pivotal cornerstone for the University of Idaho’s medical education, providing an invaluable clinical teaching space for students,” said Jeff Seegmiller, regional dean and director of Idaho WWAMI. “As it materializes, it will not only elevate the caliber of our WWAMI program but will also lay the groundwork for future health profession endeavors, ensuring a vibrant legacy of excellence in health care education for years ahead.”
Charla Willis, M.D.
Dr. Willis graduated from Loma Linda University School of Medicine in 1991, going to residency for Internal Medicine. Dr. Willis has been a part of the WWAMI-ly since 2016, teaching medical students part time as well as precepting for several years. Now, she's going to be the full-time physician at the Vandal Health Clinic, where she'll get to be more involved in teaching health professions students and helping to develop a university health facility.
Janet L. Lindsay, the principal of rural Bear Lake Middle School in Montpelier, sees daily the impact of bringing behavioral health training directly to her teachers through ECHO Idaho, a part of Idaho WWAMI. The courses are delivered online for free so educators can engage from wherever they are in the state.

“The K12 Education series is crucial for our community and the state of Idaho as a whole,” Lindsay said.

In Fall 2023, ECHO Idaho, known for its programming for healthcare providers, launched a new training to support K12 educators. ECHO Education began with three, year-long series — K12 Behavioral Health, K12 Substance Use Prevention and Treatment, and K12 School Nurses. A fourth series, K12 Youth Suicide Prevention launched in January 2024.

Providing access to the latest information and best practices is critical for educators in their effort to support Idaho families.

“The interactive nature of the sessions allows our teachers to engage with experts in various fields and stay updated on the latest research and best practices,” Lindsay said. “This, in turn, enhances the overall quality of education we can offer to our students.”

Each virtual training is developed by an Idaho panel of interdisciplinary experts from education and healthcare, uniquely tailored to meet the current needs of our state’s school-based professionals.

“ECHO Education brings a unique approach to the training by blending experts from healthcare and education,” said Eric Studebaker, director of Project ECHO Idaho.

“This interdisciplinary approach in the development of the training curriculum and in the case-based learning will create a new and fresh opportunity for participants.”

MEETING EDUCATORS WHERE THEY ARE

Virtual Behavioral Health Training Benefits Idaho’s Students
I am excited to see how this collaboration between Idaho’s leading experts in healthcare and education translates into the learning experience.“

As of December 2023, 488 attendees from 138 organizations and 40 school districts across Idaho participated in 10 sessions. Participants can claim free professional development and continuing education credits through a partnership with the University of Idaho College of Education, Health and Human Sciences.

Participants in the K12 Education series said that participation in the sessions has helped them build positive relationships with students, staff and local community members, with 80% of participants currently working in a role that provides direct support to students in K12 settings.

The trainees included school nurses, social workers, guidance counselors, administrators, psychologists, physicians, public health professionals and classroom teachers.

“The impact on K12 students is significant. The knowledge and skills gained by our teachers through the ECHO Idaho sessions directly translate into enriched classroom experiences,” Lindsay said. “Our students benefit from a more dynamic and relevant curriculum, incorporating the latest advancements and ensuring they are well-prepared for the future.”

JANET L. LINDSAY
Principal of Bear Lake Middle School
Seven years ago, Reagan Badger said she wanted to work toward a career in pathology and medical research.

Now, she’s almost there.

Badger, a second-year Idaho WWAMI student, earned a highly competitive pathology fellowship spending the year acting as a first-year pathology resident, working within the various hospitals covered by UW Pathology.

Through the fellowship, Badger will rotate through services in anatomic pathology — the study of organs and tissues in disease diagnosis — and clinical pathology — the study of bodily fluids and tissues in disease diagnosis.

“I get to take on the role of a pathology/lab medicine resident and gain exposure to a variety of different fields,” she said. “This includes reviewing cases, attending teachings and research conferences and delivering presentations. I also work closely with residents and attending physicians within the program.”

Her first three months of the fellowship were spent working in the lab as a clinical pathologist. She’ll spend the remaining nine months in anatomic pathology assisting in tissue diagnosis.

“This fellowship is an amazing opportunity for Reagan and will shape her entire professional career,” said Bethaney Fehrenkamp clinical assistant professor of immunology at Idaho WWAMI. “Reagan will make a brilliant doctor one
Fehrenkamp said that she was thrilled when Badger received this opportunity and has loved watching her go forward on this journey.

“Reagan is an all-around rock star,” said Fehrenkamp. “She was highly accomplished prior to arriving at WWAMI, but once she arrived, she was prepared and determined. She has worked very hard for a long time towards her goal of becoming a pathologist.”

Long term, Badger said that she would be interested in practicing pathology, rheumatology or immunology.

“Whether or not I decide to pursue a career in pathology, I know the skills and knowledge I take away from this fellowship will make me a better future physician,” Badger said. “I think having a strong foundation in pathology is important to all clinical practice. I can foresee this experience sparking an interest in academic medicine and helping to guide my choice of future specialty.”
CHEERS TO ANOTHER WONDERFUL YEAR.