

September 12, 2008
Vandal Parents Newsletter

Fall semester has started with great energy and the first round of tests is on the near horizon. Students are settling into campus life. The sights and sounds of campus include ROTC cadets shouting during calisthenics at 6:30 am, music from marching band practice at lunch, the crack of football helmets during afternoon practice and quiet conversations as classes meet outside under a tree. The weather has been perfect.

As the semester begins, we welcome new students and their families to the Vandal family. In fact today, we are pleased to announce that our overall enrollment (11,791) is a 1.3% increase and that our new freshman class (1709) is 4.7% larger than last year. The University of Idaho has the largest number of national merit scholars of any public university in the northwest except for the University of Washington. We are also pleased that the percentage of students returning for their sophomore has increased. Modest growth creates more resources to improve quality and gives us an opportunity to do focused strategic planning.

There were many notable changes this fall.

- Phi Beta Phi Sorority moved into their house after it was being remodeled last year.
- Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity moved into its house after a major remodeling project.
- Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity moved into an on campus fraternity house from an off campus site.
- Targhee Hall (Fine Arts Residence Hall) opened after being closed two years for remodeling.
- Steel House women's cooperative reopened this fall in an unoccupied fraternity.

Last weekend was a good time to be a Vandal. The women's volleyball team beat Eastern Washington University, Washington State University and Notre Dame in an early season tournament. The women's soccer team won a match with Idaho State University and the Vandal football team won their game against Idaho State University. Go Vandals!

Dad's Weekend activities are scheduled for October 3rd and 4th. More details about Dad's Weekend activities can be found at www.uidaho.edu/dos. A featured event will be our football game with the University of Nevada Reno. If you want to sit with your Vandal, you can simply buy a general admission ticket and sit on the student side of the stadium. In addition to several University scheduled activities, many living groups will host other events. Ask your Vandal what may be on the agenda. Encourage your Vandal to take you for a walk in the Arboretum...it is one of our beautiful places. Take some time to enjoy Moscow with the Saturday morning Farmer's Market, local coffee shops and a visit to the UI Bookstore to buy some Vandal gear!

Here is a parents weekend story from another campus.... a local bar owner placed an advertisement in the school newspaper before Dad's Weekend that said "bring your parents in for a beer... and we will pretend to NOT know you". In the next edition of the school paper, a minister from a local church ran a follow-up ad that said "bring your parents to church... and WE will pretend to know you". It will be fun to see how your off-spring learns to host you. Take

your daughter or son's roommate out for a meal. It is useful to get to know their friends.....just like it was useful to know their friends when they were in high school.

University of Idaho alumna have recently been making news. A couple weeks ago, our campus was invaded by news network camera/broadcast trucks when Sarah Palin was introduced as the Republican Vice Presidential candidate. Alaska Governor Palin graduated from the University of Idaho in 1987 with a degree in Journalism. She lived in Theophilus Tower during her Vandal years. She also has a brother who has graduated from the University of Idaho. This is not an endorsement but it is an interesting story. We also recently celebrated Kristin Armstrong's Olympic Gold medal in cycling. Kristin graduated from the University of Idaho in 1995 and did not compete in NCAA sports while on campus. Several other UI alumni also competed in the Beijing Olympic Games for other countries and have interesting stories. The Danish flag was carried into the opening ceremony by a Vandal.

I hope that your Vandal is making a smooth transition to the academic year. If you sense that your daughter or son is having difficulty, please send an e-mail to me bpitman@uidaho.edu and I will try to help.

Check out the University of Idaho website www.uidaho.edu. Bookmark it so that you will have easy access to other University of Idaho news. Use the "askjoe e-mail service" if you have questions about specific issues. Just write your question to askjoe@uidaho.edu. (Joe is for Joe Vandal) You may also want to bookmark the UI Parents website www.uihome.uidaho.edu/parents.

As the academic year gets underway, I would like to share some dates to help guide your planning. Please do not schedule holiday travel for your Vandal until you know their final exam schedules.

Homecoming	October 25, 2008
Winter Commencement	December 13, 2008
Spring Semester begins	January 14, 2009
Spring Break	March 16-20, 2009
Mom's Weekend	April 17-19, 2009
Spring Commencement	May 16, 2009

I am pleased that we are making this journey together.

Sincerely,

Bruce Pitman
Vice Provost for Student Affairs/Dean of Students