

impact

University of Idaho Extension programs that are making a difference in Idaho.

U and I Together: Extension continues to bring Idahoans together with virtual series

AT A GLANCE

Clientele across the state join University of Idaho Extension to learn new topics in an engaging lecture and demonstration class format, resulting in an increase in engagement and knowledge.

The Situation

In April 2021, a regional library association hosted a one-day virtual conference, inviting University of Idaho Extension educators in southern Idaho to present on potential partnership opportunities. During this presentation, library personnel shared a gap in educational programming aimed at the entire family unit. As COVID-19 limitations continued, libraries were not following universal procedures regarding their programming for clientele. With UI Extension educators continually adapting content for virtual implementation, a team identified this opportunity to develop specific content that could be delivered in an online format suitable for all families and libraries regardless of current protocol.

Our Response

The U and I Together program is specifically designed to run as an eight, 10 or 12-week series, for three sessions per year (spring, summer and fall). When a series is occurring, classes are hosted via Zoom on Tuesdays from 4-4:30 p.m. (Mountain Time). The timeframe intends to be a minimal commitment for adults, while holding youth participants' attention. The presentation structure includes introductions, a 30-second video highlighting University of Idaho



U and I Together participants making fruit kabobs as part of the lesson "Eat the Rainbow."

Extension, an engaging lesson paired with an activity viewers can follow along with, participant questions and a class evaluation.

UI Extension professionals across disciplines are invited to present on an area of expertise and interest. Participants can tune in from home or attend a virtual viewing site hosted by a community partner. These sites typically take place in afterschool programs and are comprised of youth.

Program Outcomes

The unique structure, variety of topics and marketing efforts of this program will continue to lead to an influx of new clientele. Evaluation data shows that over half of respondents had never previously attended an

UI Extension class prior to the U and I Together series. The increase in new participation demonstrates how the U and I Together series has the potential to increase awareness of all programming areas within University of Idaho Extension.

Each class incorporates engaging activities appropriate for adult and youth audiences. UI Extension professionals across multiple disciplines led these demonstrations to provide participants with an assortment of hands-on learning opportunities that increased participants' knowledge of content-specific topics offered. To raise awareness and interest in UI Extension's marketing video, which highlights a particular content-specific topic shown at the beginning of every class. Presenters use the footage to share opportunities provided by University of Idaho Extension and encourage participants to consider University of Idaho to achieve their educational goals.

Marketing includes techniques incorporating social media, community partners and community calendars. These strategies' implementation has led to new community partnerships and will lead to additional partnerships as marketing continues expanding statewide and UI Extension enhances and increases partnerships throughout Idaho.

A post-program evaluation is completed for all classes in each series. Some results from this evaluation are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Respondent Self-Reported Pre- and Post-Class Knowledge Change (Sliding scale one to five).

Series	Before	After	Difference
Summer '21	2.48	4.08	+1.6
Fall '21	2.76	4.09	+1.33
Spring '22	2.57	4.24	+1.67
Summer '22	2.34	4.37	+2.03
Fall '22	2.51	4.18	+1.67

The Future

To date, U and I Together has offered five complete series and is in the process of offering a sixth. Based on the response to this program, this team continues to recruit UI Extension professionals from various content areas and intends to continue offering this collaborative program statewide.

Cooperators and Co-Sponsors

This program's success has occurred through collaboration within University of Idaho Extension personnel and presentations provided by: Ariel Agenbroad, Andrew Bingham, Audra Cochran, Jim Ekins, Nikki Ennis, Melissa Hamilton, Lance Hansen, Jennifer Jensen, Scott Jensen, Siew Guan Lee, Sendy Martinez, Rebecca Mills, Bridget Morrisroe-Aman, Joel Packham, Joey Peutz, Tyanne Roland, Gail Silkwood, Alysson Statz, Brad Stokes and Maureen Toomey.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Surine Greenway, Extension Educator • University of Idaho Extension, Owyhee County • 208-896-4104 • surineg@uidaho.edu

Amy Robertson, Extension Educator • University of Idaho Extension, Boundary County • 208-267-3235 • amrobertson@uidaho.edu

Katie Hickok, Extension Educator • University of Idaho Extension, Bannock County • 208-236-7307 • khickok@uidaho.edu

4-23-sgreenway-ui-together • 2/23