



**Provost and
Vice President for
Academic Affairs**

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October 22, 2010

ISU Faculty and Staff

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing with an update on issues affecting Academic Affairs. The State Board of Education met last week in Lewiston, and I am delighted to report that ISU fared quite well. The Board gave formal approval to offer our pharmacy programs on our Meridian campus, and it also approved our request to offer a Technical Certificate in Renewable Energy. Congratulations to the faculties of the Colleges of Pharmacy and Technology.

At the meeting, ISU and the other institutions of higher education presented their annual performance measures to the Board, and the data demonstrate ISU's continuing forward progress. The report illustrated that over the last four years we showed increases in our student retention rate, our graduation rate, our overall student enrollment, the number of degrees awarded in STEM disciplines, and our externally funded research. ISU now enrolls more graduate students than any institution in the state, and student enrollment on our regional campuses has risen to historic heights (2,831). Not only is the number of students increasing, but so is the number of better prepared students: the number of students needing remediation has dropped sharply, while the ACT of incoming students is on the rise (currently 21.35). Clearly, ISU has performed well over the last 4 years, and I applaud you for everything you have done to contribute to this success.

Also at the Board meeting, our recently published audited financial statements show that, with a net increase in assets of \$14.7 million, ISU finished last year in the best financial condition we have been in for six years, despite the heavy holdbacks we have experienced. When our financial results are adjusted for the holdbacks that we underwent last year, it is the best financial performance we have experienced in over 20 years. Unlike some of our sister institutions, our financial performance has been achieved without any salary reductions, layoffs, or furloughs. These financial results, achieved in the midst of what some have called the greatest economic decline since the Great Depression, are something we all should be very proud of.

Yesterday, I had the privilege of attending the press conference where Governor Otter announced that Allstate Insurance would open a facility in Chubbuck. Not only is this a positive development for the region, creating about 500 jobs for Idahoans, but it will also directly benefit ISU, in that our College of Technology will enter into a partnership with Allstate and other agencies to train employees for the new facility.

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Finally, I am pleased to report that ISU's Family Medicine Residency Program was just awarded a grant of nearly one million dollars by the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration that will enable ISU to increase the number of medical residents in our program. Congratulations to our colleagues in Family Residency.

As usual, I will continue to give you periodic updates on Academic Affairs issues as news becomes available. I hope you continue to have an enjoyable and productive fall semester.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary A. Olson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Provost and Professor

GAO/cmt