



The Update in Brief

April 13, 2026

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- UHP Events | Honors Thesis Presentations; Floats & Votes (Pg. 2)
- Honors Thesis Spotlights | Shannon Hendricks; Amina Miljkovic; Joseph Funk (Pgs. 3-5)
- Announcements & Opportunities | Graduate School Advising; Job Opportunities; Fall '26 Courses; BRS CramSesh; Fulbright Information Panel; Volunteer for Benny's Closet with the Sustainability Club; SARE; Bengal Theater (Pgs. 6-15)

RUN FOR UHP Club Officer!

Submit your candidacy

by **Midnight, April 19 using [this form.](#)**

**All candidates must
give a speech at the
Votes & Floats Event
on April 21.**

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Historian (Social Media)

Learn more about each position on the
[UHP Student Club Webpage](#)

Contact Dr. Rick at sahrack@isu.edu with questions.

Upcoming UHP Events

SAVE THE DATE FOR HONORS THESIS DEFENSES

Shannon Hendricks

The rescue of Streptococcus pneumoniae Mn-sensitive growth defect by Magnesium

Tues, April 14 @ 10 AM | LC 17 & [Zoom](#)

Amina Miljkovic

Determinants of Oral Health Care Among Idahoan Pregnancies: Pregnancy Risk Assessment Tracking System (PRATS) Analysis

Wed, April 15 @ 10 AM | REND 108 & [Zoom](#)

Joseph Funk

Live, Laugh, Resist: A Care Ethic for the End Times

Friday, April 17 @ 10 AM | LA 151 & [Zoom](#)

Saige Rigby

Effects of Asbestos Dosage on Kidney IgG Deposition

Friday, April 24 @ 3 PM | LC 17 & [Zoom](#)

FLOATS & VOTES

Enjoy rootbeer floats while you listen to speeches and vote for the 2026/2027 UHP Club Officers.

Tuesday, April 21 | 6:00PM | REND 204 (Planetarium)

SAVE THE DATE FOR CIVIC SCHOLAR CAPSTONES

Lizbeth Arellano Santoyo | Thursday, April 20 @ 12 PM

Amina Miljkovic | Wednesday, May 6 @ 12 PM

Chelsea Blanchard | Monday, May 4 @ 10 AM

More Details Coming Soon!

Shannon Hendricks

Magnesium rescue of *Streptococcus pneumoniae* mntE manganese-sensitive growth defect



When Shannon isn't working on her own coursework or conducting experiments, she is busy spreading her love for science to others as a TA for the Principles of Microbiology lab, "I love watching students develop skills and knowledge during the semester. I hope that my enthusiasm for microbes is infectious and gets students to appreciate, if not love, microbes too!" Outside the teaching lab, she has also spent the last year serving as the President of the American

Society for Microbiology club at ISU, where she enjoys getting a variety of students interested in learning about microbiology.

Her research investigates the role of metal ions, specifically magnesium (Mg) and manganese (Mn), in the physiology of *Streptococcus pneumoniae*. In her study, she demonstrated that *S. pneumoniae* that lack a specific Mn-exporter exhibited impaired growth, but "this Mn-sensitive growth phenotype is rescued by exogenous Mg." Furthermore, she discovered that "these data suggest that Mg may be interconnected with Mn physiology in *S. pneumoniae* and, as such, has potential implications in bacterial virulence and pathogenesis within the human host." Ultimately, she hopes this work could "open new avenues of treatment for bacteria that are rapidly becoming more antibiotic and vaccine-resistant." Read her [full abstract here](#).

Shannon's entry into undergraduate research was inspired by fellow honors student Grace Cain, who helped her find a position in Dr. Martin's lab. Upon meeting Dr. Martin, the two quickly bonded over a "shared connection on pathogens infecting our loved ones." From that moment on, Shannon says she "started in her lab and I have never looked back." For Shannon, the most rewarding aspect of her research experience has been the personal growth she achieved. "My favorite part in my project is the resilience I have gained from it," she explains. "Sometimes your project does not want to work, whether that be cells not growing, user error, etc. To be successful you must adapt and overcome those obstacles." Following graduation, Shannon isn't going far. She will be starting a Master's degree in Microbiology right here at Idaho State University. "My passion for this type of research knows no bounds," she shares, "and that passion has led me to continue this research for a few more years."

When offering advice to incoming honors students interested in taking on undergraduate research, Shannon emphasizes the importance of a strong mindset. She encourages students to "be resilient and humble throughout your research," reminding them that "your results are not a reflection on you, and the only way through is to keep working hard!"

Tuesday, April 14th | 10:00 AM | LC 17 or on [Zoom](#)

HONORS THESIS SPOTLIGHT

Amina Miljkovic

Determinants of Oral Health Care Among Idahoan Pregnancies: Pregnancy Risk Assessment Tracking System (PRATS) Analysis



When Amina isn't deep into her public health research, her time is heavily rooted in service and community. She volunteers as a dental assistant at the Pocatello Free Clinic, where she has logged over 200 hours and provides Spanish medical interpretation for patients. On campus, she works as a Chemistry Stockroom Assistant and an Organic Chemistry Learning Assistant, confessing that she has a "genuine, deep love for chemistry that goes beyond coursework." She is also highly involved in student leadership, serving as President of the UHP Club, Vice President of the Pre-Dental Association, an Honors Peer Mentor, and Standards and Ethics Chair for Sigma

Lambda Gamma National Sorority Inc. If there is a thread connecting all her activities, Amina says, "it is the people I find in these communities! I am motivated to show up for students who need support, patients who need advocacy, and communities that are often overlooked."

Amina's project investigates the relationship between prenatal oral health and birth outcomes and was developed under the mentorship of Dr. Kristin Van De Griend. Using 2019 data from Idaho, her research highlights that less than half of pregnant individuals received routine dental care, yet those who did faced a lower risk of experiencing a fetal low birth weight. As a first-generation American raised in a family of Bosnian immigrants, the project is deeply personal. She understands that socioeconomic and cultural identity can "silently shape the quality of care you receive long before you ever seek it." She emphasizes, "What stands out most personally about this project is the urgency of its potential impact... My hope is that this work contributes, even in a small way, to a healthcare landscape in Idaho where the circumstances of a person's life do not determine the quality of care they and their child receive." Read her [full abstract here](#).

After graduation, Amina plans to apply to dental school, though she admits her upcoming summer public health program might "deepen, or perhaps even redirect" her path. Regardless of whether she ends up at a dentist's chair or a public health policy table, her commitment remains to "work at the intersection of healthcare and community in a way that creates meaningful change for underserved populations."

When offering advice to honors students interested in undergraduate research, Amina's biggest tip is to "open as many doors as you can and then be intentional about which ones you choose to close." She encourages students not to wait for the perfect opportunity or feel unqualified: "Do not wait. Send the email. Introduce yourself." Ultimately, she reminds students to trust that they belong in those academic spaces, noting that "the worst thing that can happen is that a door does not open, but that is far better than never knocking."

Wednesday, April 15 | 10:00 AM | REND 108 or on [Zoom](#)

HONORS THESIS SPOTLIGHT

Joseph Funk

Live, Laugh, Resist: A Care Ethic for the End Times



When Joseph isn't focused on his coursework, his "free" time is entirely consumed by a series of activist campaigns. Drawing on his background, he works as an organizer for About Face: Veterans Against the War and Veterans Against Fascism. His activism has taken him across the country, organizing and participating in actions from Washington D.C. and the United Nations to Portland, Minneapolis, and right here in Pocatello. For Joseph, this work is urgent and necessary: "There is a dire need for veterans to stand up right now, and there is an unbelievable amount of work to be done."

Joseph's honors thesis stems from an effort to familiarize himself with the current state of philosophical ethics, specifically within feminist philosophy. Because his department lacked a specialist in this area until recently, his early research was largely self-directed. Eventually, he connected with Dr. von Klemperer, and under her guidance, he was able to bring his independent project into focus. His thesis explores care ethics, which "concerns human interconnectedness and shared vulnerabilities." As he explains, "Those who subscribe to that philosophy believe that's where our morality can be found." Read his [full abstract here](#).

For Joseph, the most rewarding aspect of his research was how seamlessly it integrated with his real-world organizing over the past year. "It turns out, I, at least, find my arguments very convincing," he notes. Because care ethics emphasizes shared human vulnerabilities and community care, he realized that "activism turned out to be a natural extension of that."

After graduation, Joseph's ultimate goal is to attend graduate school to earn a PhD in philosophy. "I really do find joy in the entire process!" he shares, adding that he would be very happy to study for another four to six years. However, he plans to take a gap year or two first due to a deep "moral commitment to the activist work I'm engaged in." He emphasizes that he cannot simply walk away from his organizing right now: "Believing what I do, to do anything else would be intolerable. I couldn't look at myself again, much less fulfill a PhD in a philosophy I abandoned."

When offering advice to honors students interested in undergraduate research, Joseph strongly encourages them to find a project they care about deeply. "Research something you believe in! Get emotionally invested, love the process and not just the product," he urges. While he acknowledges the practical pressures of needing to produce just to survive "the capitalist machine," he advocates for finding the time to explore inspiring subjects. Reflecting on his own journey of spending his summers researching topics that were invigorating and life-changing, he concludes, "I don't regret a single minute of it."

Friday, April 17 | 10:00 AM | LA 151 or on Zoom

Summer Graduate School Advising

With Dr. Kathryn Holt

This summer, UHP will offer a speciality advising curriculum where students will work 1:1 with honors faculty to work through common graduate school application requirements, including:

- **Researching Graduate Programs**
- **Resume and Curriculum Vitae**
- **Personal Statement / Statement of Purpose**
- **Letter of Recommendation Requests**



All sessions will be held on Zoom and exact dates will be determined in collaboration between Dr. Holt and participants. Advising will consist of some group sessions and individual advising sessions.

There are only 15 spots available.

Applications are due

Monday, April 27 at 11:59pm

and decisions will be made by May 1st

Apply Here

Announcements & Opportunities

Job Opportunity:

Fall 2026 HONORS ENVOY

- Director's Assistant & Outreach Envoy
- Web Development Envoy
- Communications Envoy
- Instructional Assistant Envoy (2 positions available)

Paid position with \$300 scholarship and up to an additional \$300 (\$9 per hour)

We are now accepting applications!

Learn more about each position and submit your application by midnight on April 20th on the

[Honors Envoy Webpage](#)

or email honors@isu.edu for more info

Job Opportunity: Want to be on the radio?

Sustainable Idaho Radio Show Host GPI

No experience necessary--student hosts will receive training--but an interest in sustainable topics is a must!

[Sustainable Idaho](#), an award-winning weekly radio show on KISU, is seeking new student host interns to start this summer. Hosts work every week with professionals from the Portneuf Resource Council to decide on topics, write questions, arrange and hold interviews, edit the recorded interview with professional equipment, and revise their drafts after feedback.

This position is funded through the Career Path Internship program at **\$13/hour**. To be eligible, students should be prepared to train over the summer and then be available for a **10 hour per week** commitment during the academic year.

If you're interested in the position, send a cover email explaining your interest in the position, along with a resume, to Linda Engle LindaRSEngle@gmail.com

SPRING 2026

CRAMSESH

For the homework that was due yesterday.

April 16 | 3 - 6 PM
Rendezvous Suites

- DEADLINES**
- PIZZA**
- DRINKS**
- PRIZES**

*For more information,
visit blackrockandsage.org.*



**Idaho State
University**



Discover the World: Fulbright Information Panel


Are you interested in teaching, conducting research, or studying abroad? Join us for an inspiring afternoon with **Idaho State University's own Fulbright Scholars** to learn how you can take your academic journey global.

Event Details

 **Date:** Thursday, April 16, 2026

 **Time:** 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM (Noon)

 **Platform:** [Zoom](https://www.isu.edu/academicaffairs/isu-fulbright-program/) (or visit www.isu.edu/academicaffairs/isu-fulbright-program/)

 **Audience:** Open to all Faculty and Students

What to Expect

This panel is a unique opportunity to hear firsthand accounts from ISU faculty who have successfully navigated the Fulbright process. Our local scholars will share:

- **Personal Experiences:** Insights into living and working in a different culture.
- **Application Tips:** Strategies for crafting a competitive proposal.
- **Q&A Session:** A chance to ask specific questions about your field of interest or potential host countries.

What is the Fulbright Program?

Founded in 1946, the **Fulbright Program** is the U.S. government's flagship international educational exchange program. Its mission is to foster mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries.

- **For Students:** Provides grants for individually designed study/research projects or English Teaching Assistant (ETA) programs in over 140 countries.
- **For Faculty:** Offers opportunities to lecture, conduct research, or lead seminars abroad, helping to build long-lasting professional connections and globalize curricula.

"The Fulbright Program's mission is to bring a little more knowledge, a little more reason, and a little more compassion into world affairs." — *Senator J. William Fulbright*

Questions?

Please contact the ISU Fulbright Committee at fulbright@isu.edu or visit the Office of Academic Affairs website for more information.

We look forward to seeing you there!



**Idaho State
University**

**Mathematics
and Statistics**

Fall 2026

Thursdays, 4-4:50 pm

Graph Theory Seminar

MATH 4491/5591

This is an informal 1 credit seminar on metric graph theory. Faculty presentations on advanced topics in graph theory alternate with sessions for students to learn background for the talks.

Students may take this course for credit or audit the course. The prerequisite is Math 2240, Linear Algebra.

Please email the instructor if you would like more information or need an override to register.

Instructor: Dr. Tracy Payne, tracypayne@isu.edu



DANC 1199-01 | FALL 2026

Argentine Tango

Nell Flanders, instructor

Mondays | 7-8:30 PM

Red Hill Building | Room 101

1 Credit

All dancers will learn both roles, so you
don't need a partner to join.
Please wear socks or soft-soled dance shoes.



Summer Authentic Research Experiences (SARE)

Summer Authentic Research Experiences (SARE) is designed to engage Idaho undergraduates in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields related to I-CREWS research and increase the number and preparation of skilled scientists and engineers in I-CREWS fields (geosciences, biological sciences, social sciences, and resilience science, computational modeling, machine learning and artificial intelligence) to provide analytical outcomes to proactively address the impacts of meteorological, population, and technological change on energy-water (E-W) systems.

Each student receives hands-on, paid (up to \$6,000) summer research experiences (full-time or part-time educational opportunities available), where they study topics broadly related to the I-CREWS project. Each SARE educational opportunity is designed as a learning experience and not employment.

Students participating in SARE will be expected to present research results at the Idaho Conference on Undergraduate Research (ICUR) in July 2026, as well as the Idaho NSF EPSCoR Annual Meeting. Students will be expected to participate in a virtual Summer Research Community, hosted by Boise State University, and network with other students in the SARE program. Students will also be required to submit a research profile to the Idaho EPSCoR website.

Student Applications are due on **May 1, 2026**

Find more information at idahocrewws.org/sare/
or contact ISU SARE lead Emma Fox-Fogle (emmafoxfogle@isu.edu)



IDAHO
NSF EPSCoR
ADVANCING GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY IN STEM





Participate in **Benny's Closet**, a service project to bring affordable secondhand items to campus



The Sustainability Club needs your help!!

- Build your resume
- Get involved on campus
- Connect with other sustainability opportunities

In need of volunteers to help with collection and storage of thrift items.

Email betinastrawhun@isu.edu for more information





DONATE TO BENNY'S CLOSET

EVERY MONDAY • 12 - 2 PM

Pond Student Union Table

Bring clothing and any items in good condition!



If you have any questions, reach out to sustainability@isu.edu

- ✔ Clothing
- ✔ Household Items
- ✔ Stationery

Thank you for your donation!

ISU Bengal Theater Showings



Marty Supreme
(R)
April 16 & 17 - 7pm
April 18 - 4pm, 7pm



The Biggest Little Farm(PG)
April 19 - 4pm & 7pm
\$1 admission



Wuthering Heights
(R)
April 23 & 24 - 7pm
April 25 - 4pm & 7pm



The Secret Agent
(R)
April 26 - 4pm & 7pm



Idaho State University

University Honors Program

Dr. Sarah Robey | Honors Director | sarahrobey@isu.edu
Dr. Kathryn Holt | Instructor/Coordinator | kathrynholt@isu.edu
Dr. Sarah Rick | Instructor/Coordinator | sarahrick@isu.edu
Lori Tapanila | Academic Support | loritapanila@isu.edu

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