



Letter from the

President

Office of the President, president@uidaho.edu

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Less than two months into her first semester at the University of Idaho, Maria Kinne ventures into the snowy forest to judge stands of trees, measuring the crown and the trunk, looking for bleeding and pitching. The goal is to determine which trees should stay and propagate, and which should be thinned to benefit the forest's health.

Maria's informal education started after high school when she worked with her dad, John, at Odenwald Forestry in Kootenai. She then discovered the U of I's new associates degree in forest operations and technology and couldn't pass up the opportunity to gain hands-on education in the field.

"I'm taking classes to learn and help refine my skills," said Maria, who enrolled this spring. "Ultimately, I would like to either work with the Forest Service or work with my dad and eventually take over his business."

The forestry degree is one of three new associates degrees that provide vital pathways to jobs for industries in desperate need of workforce development. The College of Natural

Resources also offers associates degrees in forest nursery management and technology, and wildland fuels and fire technology. They're the first associates degrees offered at the U of I.

Shawn Keough, executive director at Associated Logging Contractors, Inc., said the two-year degrees are critical for the future of the timber industry, which provides \$2.5 billion to Idaho's economy each year.

"The forest operations program provides hands-on training in forestry and logging equipment operations that will be beneficial both for those seeking to become foresters and those seeking to go to work for logging contractors, or to become a logging contractor," Keough said. "All three of these programs are designed to help fill the jobs that exist today and will exist in the future."

The wildland fuels and technology program already has 17 students enrolled in this inaugural class. More than 70 students have been admitted to the three associates degree programs for next fall and demand is only expected to increase for the programs, which provide training in areas that are especially critical to Idaho's rural communities.

Maria grew up in a forestry family — her father started his business more than 20 years ago. She's excited to eventually return to her community, where logging and land stewardship go hand in hand.

"My dad thought I should look into a degree and this is a great option for me," Maria said. "There are a lot of great resources here, and a lot of my classes coincide with the bachelor's degree classes, so if I wanted to continue on to get a four-year degree, I could."

Go Vandals!

C. Scott Green
President



Snapshots

Vandal couple balance family, Army life and online courses

U.S. Army sergeant Cody Bowdrige and his wife September Wickham are both working toward degrees through the U of I's online programs. Bowdrige is studying organizational science and Wickham is pursuing psychology, sociology and criminal justice while they're living at Joint Base Lewis-McChord. [Learn more.](#)

Book details Black history at the U of I

Professor Sydney Freeman Jr. and U of I grad Brody Gasper unveiled a new book this month that explores the university's Black history. The book, "The Seminal History and Prospective Future of Blacks at the University of Idaho," was published online and discusses many important events in the history of the university. [Learn more.](#)

Eddy trades blue collar job for professor role

After working in an aluminum smelter for a decade, Zach Eddy decided to pursue his passion for writing at the U of I. He earned his Master of Fine Arts and is now a professor at Wenatchee Valley College, where he inspires his students to express their creativity. [Learn more.](#)



The King Spud trophy went missing in 1979, but student governments at the U of I and Idaho State University are reviving the King Spud, which will be awarded to the school with the most wins after their four matchups each season.



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