



College

UI CALS celebrates 2005 gains, plans for future challenges

The University of Idaho College of Agricultural and Life Sciences moved forward during the past year, maintaining strong student enrollments, and celebrating benefits of partnerships and investments cultivated during recent years.

Two major gains, elaborated on this page, commit the university to upper Salmon River Valley residents and ensure biomedical research efforts will continue.

"The college focused major efforts on finding ways to meet future challenges," said CALS Dean John Hammel. An 18-month planning effort by college administrators and faculty members provided guidance on areas to emphasize in the future—college signature programs.

"Some of our plans require investments in facilities; others require us to fight to retain top researchers by finding ways to keep their salaries competitive," added Hammel. Losing experienced researchers means the college must invest another five to seven years of startup and development costs to bring new scientists to the same level of productivity. "Turnover undermines the college's ability to win competitive grant funding and disrupts our efforts to support Idaho citizens," said Hammel.

Long-range planning also demands resource and budget flexibility.

In other 2006 news, a new building will house college faculty and staff just two miles from an aging research station at Caldwell that is increasingly pressured by residential development. "We have worked hard to support our ties to the state's strong agricultural industry, help Idaho's people, and position ourselves to meet future demands," Hammel added.

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Cummings Ranch gift promises benefits

Best surprise in 2005 was a gift to the UI of more than 1,000 acres from the Auen Foundation of Palm Desert, CA, for the Nancy M. Cummings Research, Extension and Education center near Salmon.

UI and CALS leaders celebrated the generosity and creativity of the foundation's Ron and Sherrie Auen and their daughter, Catharine Reed, on a sunny August day with Salmon city officials, cattle producers, and friends at the scenic Salmon River site, in view of the Beaverhead Mountains.

The center honors the vision of the late

Nancy Cummings, Sherrie's mother, who wanted residents of the upper Salmon River Valley to benefit from the college's education, research, and outreach.

The new center provides the cattle industry with a research center dedicated to studying issues ranging from the inheritance of desired traits in beef cattle to noxious weed control.

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DID YOU KNOW?

15% of CALS students in Fall 2005 classes are of ethnic backgrounds or from other countries.

*Source: UI Fact Book, <http://www.ucm.uidaho.edu/uifacts/>

\$10.6 million grant to expand Idaho's biomedical expertise

The National Institutes of Health showed its support for the college's biomedical research by awarding a \$10.6 million grant to renew the UI Center of Biomedical Research Excellence (CoBRE), directed by Idaho Agricultural Experiment Station Director Greg Bohach.

The center focuses on infectious diseases. It began in 2000 with a \$9.6 million NIH grant. UI researchers collaborated with Idaho's other institutions to win some \$40 million more since then.

This renewal will help junior researchers develop competitive research programs. Their work will focus on the parasite that causes toxoplasmosis; staphylococcus diseases; human cytomegalovirus; bubonic plague; and fungal infections.

"Our new emphasis will be on expanding our expertise in viral, fungal, and parasitic diseases, while maintaining the initial core of investigators focusing on bacterial diseases," Bohach said.

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