

Boise State University
2008 State of the University Address
President Bob Kustra
August 20, 2008

Introduction

This fall, we welcome 38 new tenure/tenure track faculty members to campus, or 62 total faculty including visiting professors, research faculty, and special lecturers. They hail from prestigious graduate programs across the globe.

I am also pleased to recognize our newest Deans. Dr. Melissa Lavitt in the College of Social Science and Public Affairs joins us from Eastern Washington University, where she previously served as Associate Dean and Director of the Master of Social Work program. Dr. Pat Shannon in the College of Business & Economics. He has served the College for more than 30 years, consults on a regular basis with many Idaho-based businesses and has been heavily involved in our new Executive MBA program.

In case you haven't heard, we are exceptionally honored to have NASA's former Educator in Space, Barbara Morgan, join us as Distinguished Educator in Residence. Barbara's husband, and Boise native Clay Morgan, is also joining the Boise State family. Clay, a published author with two novels, will teach creative writing as well as work on special projects in University Advancement. Barbara started on Monday and is already off on a speaking engagement today. But you are all invited to join us on Monday, August 25 at 12:30 p.m. at the Interactive Learning Center for a press conference regarding Barbara's new position here, followed by a reception at the Center for Teaching and Learning to welcome Barbara and Clay to Boise State.

Boise State in 2008

We are on track for another record enrollment this year. Numbers will not be finalized until the 10th day of classes, but we can report the following to date:

- Admitted students from our top 10 "feeder" high schools is up 11% (including 9% from Boise High and 7% from Borah); and we are up 6% in admits from our top 5 "feeder" colleges for transfer students
- Retention has increased better than 3%
- Graduate enrollment is up 7.5% thus far
- Admission of minority students is up 17%
- Finally, admission of international students is up nearly 25%

Of special note relative to our international enrollment, is a freshman student joining us from Uganda. You may have seen a recent article in the Idaho Statesman that told the story of how, after viewing the movie "Invisible Children," education professor Phil Kelly was so moved to become involved that he went to Uganda to teach for a summer and was transformed. Upon his return, he asked if we could create a scholarship for a Ugandan student. With assistance from our international programs office, Nancy Acii was chosen to receive the scholarship. She made the trek to Boise this summer. We are proud to have this bright young woman, who wants to study health sciences and someday open a clinic in her home village, here at Boise State. And I want to thank Dr. Phil Kelly, who has also welcomed our newest student into his household, where she will be living with the Kelly family.

While on the subject of good deeds and international reach, I want to mention our First Year Read for this year, Three Cups of Tea. The bookstore has plenty of copies and I encourage everyone to pick up a copy and join in on the campus wide discussion of the book. I had an opportunity to meet Greg Mortenson and interview him for my radio show when he visited Boise last spring. He is the genuine article. Greg will return to Boise and our campus on November 18 and I know you too will enjoy hearing from him.

As our first year students are introduced to their academic responsibilities with Three Cups of Tea, they may also need a map to navigate new buildings and new construction. But, then we will all need help learning our new campus, so allow me to give you an update of our campus master plan and construction underway as a result of it.

Student Union Building

The total size of the completed project is 250,000 square feet, adding 2/3rds to the original square footage. It will be filled with gathering space for students and faculty. The old SUB was originally built in the mid-1960s, when Boise State had around 4,500 students. The only other major remodel took place in the early 1990s when Boise State had around 14,000 students. As our population has grown and continues to grow, we are definitely in need of the new space to accommodate our students, faculty and staff, and also the community. The building will open in phases, please check the SUB's website for details on opening dates this year.

Norco: Department of Nursing and University Health Services Building

The new Norco Building will house nursing classrooms, seminar rooms, practice labs (including an acute care simulation lab) and offices, as well as a new Student Health, Wellness and Counseling Center complete with urgent care clinic and pharmacy. It is an 81,300 square feet, four story building to be completed in August 2009.

For nursing, it will support 30% increase in size of class cohort, or add about 36 new students to the cohort annually. The result will be to more than double the current number of baccalaureate nursing graduates by the year 2011. For University Health Services, it will support primary care and counseling needs for our student population. I would once again like to thank Jim Kissler and the Kissler Family Foundation for their gift that started things rolling with this project.

Stueckle Sky Club

The total estimated project cost was \$37,695,635, and it will all come from privately raised funds. The unique funding arrangement for this building also includes set aside revenue for an academic building to compensate for the use of the university debt capacity. The grand opening is scheduled August 27, 2008, and we will have a special opening for faculty and staff on September 4. You have heard me speak of the request I get regularly from faculty for a place to gather, and this facility will have one. A new Bronco Club will open on the Loge level in October, intended for use by faculty, staff, emeriti, alumni and university supporters.

The future of Boise State, the quality and well-being of its students, the caliber of its faculty and staff and its academic and athletic programming will always depend upon engaging new friends of the university and building future generations of support for Boise State. There may be a few doubting Thomases among us who look at that sky box as a luxury of athletics' success with all the benefits going to athletics. To make my point that a rising boat lifts all ships, including academic programs, check out the name of the facility, the Stueckle Sky Club, for Duane and

Lori Stueckle, who have been supporters of Boise State athletics for years, but who have also recently donated over \$1.5 million to create an endowed chair and faculty support fund in the Department of Biology. For precisely that reason, we thought that the Stueckle naming was the perfect message to send to our donors in stressing the importance of giving across the campus.

Center for Environmental Science and Economic Development (CESED)

Located just east of the engineering building on the South side of University Drive, and as I have said before, this is the first major building on campus dedicated to research. It will be home to the departments of Geosciences, Civil Engineering, Public Policy and Administration and Political Science. Programming is interdisciplinary and will support a Western agenda on the environment, transportation, water, land use and community and regional planning issues.

Aquatics Center Addition – Student Recreation Center

We are working on an addition to the Student Recreation Center that will add two swimming pools and additional lockers, all funded by student fees. The approximate project cost is \$7.5 million and we hope to have it completed by July 2010.

Parkcenter Boulevard – New Research Park

Boise State University recently acquired 8.3 acres of property and an 80,000-square foot building located at 220 Parkcenter Boulevard in Boise in an effort to develop the University's first research park. We owe a large debt of gratitude to Linda Yanke and Supervalu for making the purchase of this property possible through their generosity. In honor of Linda's leadership and support of the project, it will be known as the Yanke Family Research Park.

The facility will be operational for Boise State in early 2009 for several of our existing research institutes and centers, along with a number of university offices that support research on campus, under the unifying theme of community engagement. We will also use the research park to develop collaborative relationships with local and regional partners interested in supporting the economic development and diversification of the state and region's economy.

Morrison Center

You may have seen the Greenbelt improvements at the west end of the campus, which will be completed this fall. This project includes a plaza and river overlook at the north entry to the Morrison center. The project is jointly funded by the City of Boise, state funds, and funds from the Morrison Center Foundation.

College of Business & Economics

We are about to begin detailed programming for the new COBE building. The Dean and faculty have been visiting recently constructed business buildings at institutions around the west as background to our efforts, and are working with facilities folks to determine the appropriate size for the new facility. The building will be located on the corner of Capital and University, on the site of the old University Inn. In addition to supporting the program needs of the College, the building will be an important addition to the west gateway to campus, and an important public face on what some call the most important urban street in Idaho. We are currently budgeting \$35.5 million for this project, with funding to come from the \$12.5 million Micron gift, other private donations and bonds. We hope to open the building in 2012.

Campus Security

Events over the last year have raised the profile and awareness of security on campus. The shootings at Virginia Tech and Northern Illinois have been the subject of intense examination and evaluation on our campus. We have implemented a number of recommendations of the published Virginia Tech reports in an effort to ensure that our campus is a safe environment. We are also working closely with a range of public safety and Department of Homeland Security units in evaluating and implementing security recommendations. Our current public safety operations staff have been instrumental in our efforts.

With the heightened awareness related to these issues, increasing staff for our security operation is a prudent course. As such, we have created a new position of Executive Director of Campus Security and Police Services. This position will be charged with enhancing our existing efforts and bringing new safety and security initiatives to our campus. The Executive Director will report to the Associate Vice President and University Counsel in the President's office.

The University is also implementing a new electronic telephone and text-based emergency notification system that will allow the University to immediately notify faculty, staff and students of an emergency occurring on or near our campus. This is the single most critical improvement campuses added to their public safety strategies after Virginia Tech. For this process to work effectively, it's important for ALL students, faculty, and staff to register their personal contact information on BroncoWeb. Doing so ensures you will receive a voice mail, e-mail, or text message with details on what to do or where to go in an emergency. We hope this system is never used, but if we were ever in need it will only work in keeping everyone safe if everyone is linked to our communication life line.

Larry Selland College of Applied Technology & CWI

The College of Western Idaho plans on offering lower division academic courses starting spring semester 2009. At the same time, 100 acres of property on the West campus as well as the West campus academic building will transfer to CWI. Boise State University will retain approximately 50 acres of the West campus and the TECenter building. In spring 2009 Boise State University plans on offering upper division courses on the CWI campus, and will continue offering some lower division courses to current Boise State students already in the pipeline at another location in Canyon County. These will primarily be courses designed for degree completion programs and 2+2 programs.

Although we will have a number of opportunities throughout the year to thank employees of the Selland College for their dedicated service to Boise State, I want to acknowledge at this time the key role that the Selland College has played -- through hard work and quality programs -- in helping Boise State remain responsive to the workforce needs of the region. The Selland College has created an invaluable legacy for our new community college.

Academic Programs

The screen lists programs added since 2004 and programs planned in the near future. With new programs comes the need for new faculty. We continue to expand our faculty ranks and create clinical professorships and special lecturers, in addition to tenure track faculty.

Campaign Update

Tomorrow marks the first anniversary of the public phase of our comprehensive campaign, "Destination Distinction." I'd like to mention a few notable accomplishments:

- Almost \$100 million has been raised to date toward the campaign goal of \$175 million. Even though we kicked off the official campaign one year ago, we operated in a silent phase for two years prior, raising \$70 million during that time.
- The level of annual contributions has been raised from an average of \$16 million per year to \$27 million per year.

Raising the annual level of giving is the most important accomplishment of the campaign. While it is always important to reach your campaign goal, by meeting and raising the fundraising bar, we institutionalize a higher level of giving, thereby creating a stronger foundation for Boise State student scholarships, faculty support, facilities, and academic and athletic programming. Despite a soft economy, our community of supporters is demonstrating its belief in all that we are seeking to achieve, keeping us on target to reach the campaign goal by the end of 2011.

There are many reasons why we are doing so well with this campaign notwithstanding the soft economy. The \$10 million "campaign for the future" consisting of deferred and planned giving is 75% completed. This means that people are remembering us in their wills, in their estate planning, and choosing to create their legacies at Boise State. I am pleased to report that we are also close to full staffing for the Advancement office, especially development officers who work directly with their respective colleges in strategic fundraising initiatives.

It is interesting to note that individuals from the community who are not alumni or faculty/staff have provided the bulk of donations to the campaign so far - contributing 41% of the total to date, or \$49 million.

The Boise State Foundation, served by a 34 member board of alumni, community members and other friends of the University, has been transformed since my arrival in 2003 and now provides leadership and gifts that make our campaign progress possible. For the last two years, I have had the opportunity to work with the Foundation's Board Chair, Bill Ilett. A 1967 graduate of Boise State, Bill is a successful businessman in Boise and the Managing Investor of the Idaho Stampede. Bill leaves his leadership post this fall as another of our graduates, Mark Lliteras, assumes the role of Chair. Bill Ilett has played a critical role in the evolution of the Foundation and its relationship with Boise State. His leadership, the countless hours he spent with his colleagues on the Foundation, his advice and counsel on which I could always depend, all of these add up to a devotion to alma mater that is truly inspirational and a source of pride to all of us who call Bill a friend of Boise State.

The latest development on the campaign front is the Employee Campaign which will kick off this fall. Campus wide support of Destination Distinction sends a powerful message to the wider community that we are all behind the efforts to enhance Boise State. I encourage everyone to become involved in this key component of the campaign. Thanks to Provost Sona Andrews and Dean Jim Girvan for co-chairing this effort.

The New U Rising

Allow me to offer a few thoughts on the challenge ahead. For the last five years, I have had the privilege of working with you -- and our many partners in the state and region we serve -- in a transformation that seeks to improve the quality of the academic experience at Boise State and to

improve the quality of life in the state and region. Some of the change that characterizes this transformation is hard to miss – like the construction cranes for instance!

But I would add that the most important aspects of the change underway are those that cannot be seen and may not even be understood nor appreciated in their entirety by those in the campus community. Certainly, we do a fine job of publicizing and marketing our successes in public relations campaigns such as “Beyond the Blue” and now “The New U Rising,” our new campaign. You have probably noticed the banners around campus. In fact, we can share with you today the new 30 second spot that will be shown this year on ESPN as part of our football broadcasts, as well as in Seattle, Portland, Spokane, Twin Falls, Northwest Cable and on KTVB in Southwest Idaho.

The New U Rising may be the most literal depiction of our campus under construction, but it symbolizes a host of changes beyond construction, the breadth and depth of which are not discernable to the casual observer.

And these changes have created a buzz about Boise State. But if I could leave you with just one thought today, it would be this: Boise State’s continuing transformation into a Metropolitan Research University of Distinction is not a static exercise. The bar is constantly moving – upward – and expectations move up with it. Expectations which require the quality of our support services to improve as well. And unlike the cranes, this progress can’t always be seen because it is often about changing and enhancing the culture.

Allow me to provide a few examples. Over the course of the last few years, we have focused on recruiting high ability students to Boise State.

- Ten new National Merit Scholars will enroll this fall, for a program record of 21 National Merit Finalists on campus this academic year. With the addition of these new students, the National Merit Scholarship Corporation acknowledged Boise State’s commitment to recruiting academically talented students by officially naming the University a National Merit sponsor school. Boise State earned this distinction in the shortest timeframe possible, two years, aided considerably by a gift from the Langroise family that has provided scholarships for these stellar students.
- Eighty-five students qualified for a National Smart Grant, a federal program in its third year designed to encourage students with financial need to major in the areas of engineering, technology, science, and math.
- At our final Bronco Venture orientation program this summer a student from California was in attendance. His father, a retired researcher at both Columbia and Stanford universities, shared with staff that his son was admitted to Stanford, MIT and Boise State. Because of contacts from Admissions and prior attendance at a Boise State program for high school students, where he made valuable connections with our Computer Science faculty, he developed a sense of comfort and the knowledge he would be successful. He chose Boise State University.

These and other efforts have had a significant impact on the academic profile of our student body

as the powerpoint slide shows. But now comes the challenge. What impact do increasing numbers of high ability students have on undergraduate education, on student services, on all we do to engage students? Can our departments do more to identify and mentor students with graduate school aspirations and potential? Do opportunities for intellectual engagement have to be expanded? Should we rethink the investment we are making in our Honors College with more students likely interested and eligible to attend? An increasing number of our students were recruited competitively by other universities and if I were in their or their parents shoes, I would not come here so grateful of my choice, but with a set of expectations that matched the recruitment pitch.

And to our staff's credit, we are responding. We have modified and improved our New Student Orientation Programs to meet the ever-changing needs of new students and their families. These new programs have been overwhelmingly successful and are getting great reviews from all participants. I use this program as an example, because it is not the work of just one small group of people, taking place over the course of a few days. This program represents a collaboration of many departments and services from across all facets of the university. Whether it is Academic or Student Affairs, the Registrar's Office, Parking, Food Service, Academic Advising or Financial Aid, to name just a few, each area plays a key role in making students and their families feel welcome, feel important, and spreads the message that we are happy to have them here as members of the Boise State University community.

We also are providing new programs for students interested in our living and learning communities. We are expanding our residential college program by adding two new faculty, Drs. Bob Smart and Michael Humphrey, and adding two new residential colleges, including the Global Village, a mix of students who are international and from the U.S. who will live together and explore global issues including cross-cultural communication and understanding.

Student housing is also a great example of how this university is evolving and why we can't march in place. Four years ago, we opened the new Keiser and Taylor apartment suites along the river and the new University Village apartments on University Drive. They were very popular among our prospective students and, I believe, accounts in part for our increased desirability as a campus of choice. But it has also created even more demand. By the way, check out the slide that shows the latest ranking of universities and colleges in Idaho as identified by ACT test takers as to where scores should be sent. Boise State has clearly become the top choice among the majority of Idaho students.

Today, our students enjoy expanded and enriched opportunities to participate in a campus community that strengthens the bonds of campus citizenship to prepare our students for citizenship for life.

But even with new campus housing opportunities in recent years, there are demands from our students every fall that we simply cannot meet. Although we are using the old University Inn to house overflow, it is hardly ideal and will be razed as the COBE building becomes a reality. To address this issue, we began discussions with a firm almost a year ago about significantly increasing housing opportunities on campus to create a dominant residential campus culture at Boise State.

Our latest efforts along these lines, which I can share with you today in concept only, will once

and for all change the image of Boise State solely as a commuter campus and culture. Later today, we will update the State Board of Education on a student housing initiative that will more than double the residential units on campus, from over 2000 to over 4700, and create a new university village near the newly expanded Student Union. We are still a couple of months away from seeking final approval of this unique project from the State Board, but we are excited about the prospect of such a defining moment in the history of Boise State.

So, if we build it and they come, what will our new students expect? What about the rigor of our course offerings? What about the integrity, strength and relevance of the core curriculum to undergraduate education at a university in an era of rising expectations?

You may remember last year I briefed you on a meeting I had with faculty whose teaching and scholarship focuses on the liberal arts. We agreed it was time to address liberal arts education at Boise State and, for the past year, Dr. Susan Shadle has welcomed faculty members into the Center for Teaching and Learning as they explored the role of the liberal arts on our campus and sought out ideas and best practices from other campuses.

They issued a report on their year's work which they shared with me last week when we met to discuss how to move their agenda to the next level and begin implementing some of their recommendations. The report on the committee's findings and recommendations can be found online at the CTL website. (ctl.boisestate.edu)

The Core Curriculum Committee, a standing committee of the Faculty Senate, has also been reviewing the core and assessing the extent to which our students are meeting the learning objectives of the core and, even more important, whether the learning objectives are sufficient. I know that our Provost stands ready to work with the faculty to revise and improve this most fundamental statement of Boise State's commitment to a quality undergraduate education. This fall, Sona will call a meeting of the two committees and other interested faculty so we can continue this important work. I'd like to acknowledge the time and effort of all who have contributed to the discussion thus far and look forward to their work this year.

Another subtle change taking place here at Boise State is our enhanced faculty profile. It not only adds value to our teaching and research agendas, but also distinguishes the university in the national higher education community. Today, our faculty enjoys a wide range of intellectual and professional accomplishments, including placement in the finest scholarly journals, significant external funding of their research, recognition of distinguished community service and, of course, our traditional emphasis on excellence in classroom teaching and learning.

It's very difficult to single out faculty honors among so many deserving colleagues, but I would like to share a few.

The core interdisciplinary nanobiotechnology ("NanoBio") group at Boise State, led by Alex Punnoose (Physics) working with Denise Wingett (Biology) and Kevin Feris (Biology), recently made a very exciting discovery: that Alex's zinc-oxide nanoparticles are able to preferentially kill human cancer cells grown by Denise, while leaving ordinary cells healthy! This is a significant discovery, which has led to a patent application, and to a scientific paper by an all-Boise State team of Punnoose, Wingett, Feris, and five Boise State graduate and undergraduate students, published in the high-impact journal *Nanotechnology*. This paper was downloaded more than

250 times in the first month of its publication, placing it among the top 10% of papers downloaded from that prestigious journal. This a first for an all-BSU team of authors.

The discovery of the home-grown Boise State NanoBio group and the high-level of interest it has generated nationally and internationally is a milestone that deserves to be recognized. In order for Boise State to become widely respected outside of Idaho, there is no substitute for high-quality research, as judged by the national and international research community, published in high-impact peer-reviewed journals.

Another example is Kris Campbell of Electrical and Computer Engineering. She received a \$1.5 million grant from the Department of Defense's Air Force Research Laboratory to develop reconfigurable electronics and non-volatile memory devices (electronic memory that does not lose data when power is lost) needed in applications that require low power and insensitivity to radiation. Dr. Campbell's research in this area has also resulted in negotiations with the Air Force Research Laboratory to establish a Non-Volatile Memory Research Initiative in the State of Idaho based at Boise State. The only other research initiative of this kind is at Stanford University.

On the other side of the university both geographically and figuratively:

- Brady Udall joined our English faculty two years ago and brings with him the national acclaim he received with the publication of his novel, The Miracle Life of Edgar Mint and his short stories publication, Letting Loose the Hounds.
- Tony Doerr, who has captivated the national reading public with his award-winning book of readings, The Shell Collector; his novel, About Grace and his latest book, Four Seasons in Rome, a memoir of his year in Rome with newly-born twins, teaches for us as an adjunct professor.
- Art professor Larry McNeil was recognized in Washington, D.C., after his selection as one of only five artists nationwide to contribute to the Art in Embassies program. He was subsequently invited to attend the United Nations' Seventh Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues earlier this year. A highlight of the Forum was the presentation of National Geographic's All Roads Program films and photography.

In the last two weeks, I have received two unsolicited requests from professors with substantial research and external funding at major universities to discuss the possibility of bringing their research and teaching expertise, funding and what I would call reputational currency to Boise State. Needless to say, we are following up, but these recent examples demonstrate how rapidly and dramatically our faculty profile is changing at Boise State, and how they encourage yet another contingent of faculty interested in joining us.

I wish there was time to cite more examples, as there are many. But the point is not to beat our chests and revel in our new found academic or research celebrity. Yes, we are in the process of becoming a university different than earlier versions of Boise State, but we are hardly prepared to make the quantum leap to a new Carnegie classification and research status until we have internalized who we are about to become and what we must do to justify such a distinction.

Forgive the play on an almost hackneyed phrase, but if it takes a village to raise a child, then it takes an entire university to raise the stature of research and creative activity. We have come a long way over the past several years, but work remains on enhancing and embracing a culture

that values research and creative activity across the university. Although science and engineering have led the way in terms of sponsored project activity, the arts and humanities, social sciences, business, education, and health all must be supported and advanced in order to truly become a metropolitan research university of distinction. The Division of Research continues to advocate for, and support, all scholarly works that help the university achieve distinction whether it is an NSF award in sciences, a Department of Defense grant in engineering, a musical composition, a journal article or a book.

The Division of Research also established a research block grant program in FY09 that invests in disciplines outside of science and engineering across campus to foster research growth in these areas. We have also established an arts and humanities working group to advance scholarly and creative works in these areas.

Staff support of our research efforts is imperative if we are to remain competitive and increase our stature among funding agencies and foundations. The Division of Research has recently formalized a working relationship with Finance and Administration to reexamine and assess business practices to ensure the University is able to provide contemporary and timely services to the research community. We are engaging a consultant to review our research infrastructure, processes, efficiency, business practices and technology and provide us with advice on how to take our research enterprise to the next level.

Let me take a moment here to commend Dean of Libraries, Dr. Marilyn Moody, and her staff. Major new databases such as BioOne, PsycArticles, Early English Books Online, Ethnic Newswatch, and the complete Web of Science database enhance faculty and student research on campus. The Library now subscribes to over 194 research databases. The Lexis Nexis Academic outline database we added this year is used by researchers across the campus and will be particularly helpful to the new Ph.D. in Public Policy and Administration. I could go on and on.

Boise State will reach another milestone this fall when we feature a wide array of research and creativity activities (across all disciplines) in our first ever research magazine.

The milestones are many at Boise State these days as we break enrollment records, increase the sum and substance of research and creative activity, welcome more high ability students and new faculty with impressive credentials.

The challenges are many as well. Deeply ingrained habits and practices, vestiges of an earlier era that do not serve faculty or student needs of today must be improved. Attitudes about our new challenges that undervalue the new agenda at Boise State must be changed.

In fact, our latest challenge, this one hurling toward us like a meteor from outer space, is the convergence of a new energy crisis with the economic realities of a new age that could seriously hinder our progress.

We cannot ignore the increasingly burdensome economic circumstances of our students; nor can we ignore our neighbors in the community who may have lost jobs or income with the shift in our regional economy. It is usually in difficult economic times that universities and colleges experience surges in enrollment as students find their way back to additional training and education to prepare for jobs in new sectors of the economy. We must be nimble, compassionate

and facile in welcoming and accommodating these student needs. I'd like for us to explore a "one-stop shop" for returning nontraditional students seeking additional educational assistance.

Times such as these also present us with the opportunity to examine our own budget priorities and our programming to be absolutely sure we are using student fees, state and donor funding in the most cost effective fashion. Some universities have already been hit by declining revenues, especially state aid losses, and I think it is important to thank our state elected officials for the \$90 million in state funds added to our coffers this year.

On the energy front, perhaps we have the greatest opportunity to create a sustainable campus and save energy costs as a result. Last fall, I asked Professor John Gardner in Mechanical Engineering to assume the role of Associate Vice President for Energy Research, Policy and Sustainability. John is currently completing a comprehensive five-year greenhouse gas inventory to be released in September. Boise State ranks among the best of higher education institutions in the country in terms of our carbon footprint on a per capita basis. Much of this is due to the fact that we are very efficient in our use of space.

In addition, through John's office, we are a "track sponsor" of the inaugural Idaho Green Expo, a highly successful educational event at the Boise Centre on the Grove in May. We were also recently recognized as one of the "Best Workplaces for Commuters" by the EPA. Kudos to Jared Everett and his staff for this distinction.

The steps we need to take to further reduce our carbon footprint are also what we need to do to operate in the current economic environment. Utility costs are likely to rise 10-15% next year. If we don't economize that could mean an increase in operating expenses of nearly \$500,000. How many faculty lines would that place on hold?

Even before I appointed John Gardner to his position, James Maguire, Associate Vice President for Campus Planning and Facilities, had undertaken a number of projects that continue to save money and resources for the university. For example, we've undertaken a long-term relationship with Siemens, Inc. to retrofit our least efficient buildings with energy saving lighting and air handling systems. In those target buildings, we have already realized savings of 15 to 20% each and every year. Talk about a gift that keeps giving! The new buildings being constructed and planned (Norco, CESED) will be much more energy efficient than required by building codes and we are drafting a university policy to specifically spell out the energy efficiency requirements for all campus buildings.

And on that note, I think I've expended just about all the energy up here that your seat can withstand! It is time to get back to work and head for lunch. I am looking forward to another great year. That will be easy for me as I have never worked with a greater group of people, and I thank you for the honor. I look forward to seeing you at the picnic at Taco Bell Arena from 11:30-1:30. Have a great year!