

# State of the University Address to the Boise Business Community

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*Hosted by the Boise Metro Area Chamber of Commerce  
Boise State University President Bob Kustra  
Boise Centre on the Grove, Sept. 15  
Outline of Remarks*

## **Acknowledgements**

- Thank you to the Boise State Meistersingers, led by Dr. Michael Porter
- Thank you to the Boise Chamber of Commerce, led by Bill Connors

## **Boise State University Today**

### *SLIDE SHOW – STUDENTS FROM 2006 TO TODAY*

- Much has changed in recent years at Boise State University, including our student body:
  - Boise State enrolls more than 22,000 students. So far this fall, we are up around 1% over last year.
  - We are seeing a significant increase in first-year students this year, from Idaho and out-of-state.
  - Nearly 2,800 students are living on campus or in nearby university-controlled housing this year — including more than 400 more first-year students than last year.
  - The average incoming GPA for these freshman students has climbed to 3.45 this year, and average SAT and ACT scores are on the rise as well.
  - 4 out of 5 of our Idaho graduates are from the Treasure Valley
  - Though more than 40 percent of our new freshman come from out of state, Idaho students make up the great majority of the overall student body. Both groups of students contribute to the “**Brain Gain**” that Idaho experiences thanks to Boise State University.

### *SLIDE: BRAIN GAIN*

- **Brain Gain:** 44 percent of students who came to us originally as nonresidents and 83 percent of Idaho residents remain in Idaho living and working five years after they have graduated from Boise State.
- Our costs have changed as well, current tuition for resident students is \$7,354 and \$21,804 for nonresident students. Recent story discusses a study that accounts for rising tuition across the country: <http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/fancy-dorms-arent-the-main-reason-tuition-is-skyrocketing/>

- Boise State's campus life is changing as well. In 2010, for example, just 100 students participated in fraternities and sororities. Today, more than 1,100 students are members in 15 Greek organizations focused on service and excellence. Last year alone these students contributed more than 13,000 hours of volunteer work in the community, and each chapter on campus posted a higher GPA than the university average.

*SLIDE: HONORS COLLEGE RENDERING*

- The Honors College has grown to around 700 students, and will be moving into one of the most visible buildings on campus — a public/private partnership unique in Idaho higher education that will combine 650 student beds, dining facilities and Honors classroom and work spaces.
- Boise State now has Idaho's largest graduate school by enrollment, its 11 PhDs and 67 master's degrees — often created with community business partners — awarding nearly 1,000 post-graduate degrees last year.
  - A recent research study showed that Boise State was one of just three universities that ranked within the top 5 percent of graduate school growth in each of the past two decades.
  - This growth in research and graduate programming has been attracting top-notch faculty from around the world, with recent hires coming to us with degrees from universities including Stanford, Cornell, Cambridge, Michigan and more. *SLIDE: WHERE OUR FACULTY COME FROM*
  - Speaking of Stanford, Elsevier Academic Publishing, a company that tracks university publications told us recently that of all the universities, agencies and companies that Boise State faculty work with on research and scholarship, our No. 1 collaborator is Stanford University.
- Online courses are becoming a large part of our current and future offering to Idaho students and those around the world. Last year, more than 2,428 students took classes exclusively online.
  - Boise State offers 27 degrees fully online
  - We are planning for 15 more in the coming five years.
  - In addition, many traditional students have incorporated online courses into their graduation plans: some 10,000 students are taking at least one online course this fall.
- If you add our impact in student credit hours with other types of offerings – those that include non-credit workshops, the Osher Institute for Lifelong Learning and professional development offerings for business professionals – last year we served 33,563 individuals.

- Research (and our own observations) on our current and upcoming college students — “Generation Z” — shows that these true digital natives are pragmatic, planning ahead, concerned with the job market and want tangible pathways to career and financial stability.
- They will be well-suited for a fundamental change underway at Boise State: credential reform.
  - Brought on in large part by employers who have grown more vocal about the need for well-prepared graduates
  - And to address the needs of this new generation of students
  - Boise State is in front of this movement:
    - College of Innovation and Design - HBX Core credential of business readiness, which Boise State is offering in collaboration with the Harvard Business School — the first public university to be chosen to do so.
    - College of Innovation & Design - “Work-U,” a cooperative education program that gives students on-the-job experiences like an internship combined with classroom discussions that help put those experiences into context. The first major partner is St. Luke’s Regional Medical School. The J.R. Simplot Co. has joined as well. Boise State is looking for more partners in hopes of scaling this up to as many students as we can engage.
    - College of Business & Economics – Bridge to Career are courses designed for the non-business major to help prepare these students for jobs in the private sector after graduation

**As Idaho’s fastest growing research enterprise, we are committed to linking our research and efforts to the communities and economies we serve across Idaho**

**SLIDE: MICRON CENTER FOR MATERIALS RESEARCH RENDERING**

- Boise State’s best-known partner — and the example that shows what can be done when we work together — is Micron Technology, including its corporate leaders and its foundation. The foundation’s recent \$25 million gift to build a research facility for materials science was the largest philanthropic gift in Boise State’s history, but just the latest in a more than two-decade partnership that has built our College of Engineering and other programs vital to the growth and success of Boise’s high-tech economy.
- Boise State is also pursuing collaborations with the Idaho National Laboratory, including a first-of-its-kind cybersecurity research facility supported by Governor Butch Otter and the Idaho Legislature last year, which will team experts from both entities to tackle security issues inherent in increasing technological national systems like pipelines, power grids and more.

- We expect this to be a valuable source of education for our students as well as research — more than 200,000 cybersecurity jobs went unfilled last year in want of qualified applicants, a study showed.
- Our two entities are now in talks about leveraging some of Boise State's expertise in researching and developing the kinds of sensors that can survive the harsh environments of space and nuclear radiation, since INL is continually looking at ways to better and more safely monitor nuclear power generators and related equipment.

*SLIDE: GORONGOSA*

- A collaboration that starts just across the river — at Zoo Boise — runs halfway across the world to the Gorongosa National Park in Mozambique. Thanks to entrepreneur, philanthropist and Idaho native Greg Carr, Boise State has been able to send multiple researchers to the park already, and will be working closely on environmental and other issues there for years to come.
  - Two researchers from the region around the park have already come to Boise to learn from our Intermountain Bird Observatory. Diolinda Mendoza, shown on the slide, is interning this fall here in Boise.
  - And it isn't just scientists getting involved. Our Theater Department has been approached to help design related exhibits at Zoo Boise. The humanities, once again, come to the rescue of the sciences!

*SLIDE: COMPUTER SCIENCE BUILDING*

- Perhaps our best current example of our symbiotic relationship with the city of Boise is the recent move of our entire Department of Computer Science to the new buildings being constructed around The Grove.

*SLIDE: MAP OF SOFTWARE COMPANIES DOWNTOWN BOISE*

- Our students will now be just steps away from most of the local software and tech companies where they will intern and work.

*SLIDE: COMPUTER SCIENCE GROWTH*

- Thanks to industry and state support in recent years, that program has grown rapidly and with intention. From 2010 to 2016, the program has grown from:
  - 9 to 25 faculty
  - 261 to 650 undergraduate students
  - 31 to 70 graduate students
  - 19 to 80 bachelor's degrees awarded
  - 6 to 15 master's degrees awarded
  - \$105,000 to \$1 million in research expenditures

- Our School of Public Service is also expanding our downtown presence. Along with the Andrus Center for Public Policy and other units in our BoDo center, the newly christened Idaho Policy Institute will be moving into the Zions Bank Building on 8<sup>th</sup> Street.
  - Already, faculty and graduate researchers in that applied research center are helping local civic and elected leaders address homeless challenges in Boise, tackle affordable housing in the Wood River Valley, and explore tourism and business opportunities in far northern Idaho.
- Boise State’s commitment and importance to Boise goes far beyond policy and business concerns, however. We take seriously our role in developing the artistic and cultural resources that make our city one of the most livable in the nation. We continue to raise money for our proposed Center for Fine Arts, which will house our World Museum — a place where technology and the arts truly converge to offer virtual reality experiences with the world’s treasures that Idaho children and residents may not otherwise ever get the chance to see and understand.

*SLIDE: WORLD MUSEUM RENDERING*

## **Distinctions**

- No matter what business you’re in, we all seek validation from objective sources, whether it be customers, regulators, trade associations, etc.
- We do the same in university business. Our customers are students and parents and apparently we are doing well given the increased interest in Boise State over the years
- Beyond our customers, we also rely on external observers and evaluators to judge our work. Recently, three such entities have given Boise State high marks:

*SLIDE: DISTINCTIONS*

- Designated a Doctoral Research University by the Carnegie Classification
- Among top 300 “National Universities” in the US News and World Report Rankings
- 1 of “20 Rising Stars” in the World — Firetail “Class of 2030”
  - A recent study by Firetail, a London based consulting firm that works around the world to help ambitious organizations achieve positive social change and develop strategies which result in better and smarter choices, identified “a class of 2030,” which consists of a new generation of challenger universities that are quickly

rising in the world rankings and have an opportunity to become globally renowned in the next 10-20 years.

- The study looked at over 300 universities worldwide as potential candidates for their class of 2030, but **singled out 20 universities**, termed “**rising stars**” because of their rapid ascent in academic performance rankings – among this list of 20 is Boise State University!
- It is a tribute to our faculty and staff to be recognized in this way coming off some difficult recession and post-recession years in higher education.

*SLIDE: IMPACT OF UNFUNDED STATE ENROLLMENT FORMULA*

- Idaho public higher education suffered during the recession and Boise State was particularly hit hard. As you can see from the chart, we lost \$58 million over recent years that should have followed the new students we are attracting.
- As the Chamber prepares its legislative agenda for the upcoming session, we hope you can support either the funding of the EWA or a new outcomes-based funding formula for higher education that will have appropriated dollars following where increased numbers of students in 2017 go to school.

**An Open Invitation: Partner with Boise State University**

- The formula for growing Idaho’s and Treasure Valley’s economies is to have both Boise State University and our region’s industries and employers investing in each other.
- We need you and your companies to come along beside us and invest in our students. Whether that is through internships, hiring our graduates, funding scholarships (even for just one student), mentoring career-driven students and more — there are so many ways to realize the potential of Boise State and our students.
- For more information about how you can help Boise State students and Boise State resources can help you and your business, check out the pamphlet on your tables and visit [partnerships.boisestate.edu](http://partnerships.boisestate.edu).
- Though we can’t pinpoint an exact enrollment target for Boise State (so much hinges on the growth of the Valley itself), know this: We will grow with you. We will be flexible for you. We will be there for you and we will help you create a sustainable economy that works for families across the region.