

blot

Money talks

Tuition keeps going up and administrators say why

Future of fire

Why this past fire season was so bad and what to expect in the future

Philosophy of ink

Beauty isn't only skin deep, but skin can be a canvas for inner beauty



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Illustration by David Betts

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Editor's note

The tuition increase is the talk of campus.

Students worry they can't afford to go to school anymore and some even drop out.

More students are faced with taking out larger loans or taking out unsubsidized loans. They are figuratively being crushed by the weight of increased education costs. Students from the University of Idaho will, on average, have \$25,000 in debt after four years of school. That sum is enough to worry anyone.

Several students have had to cut back on the number of credit hours they take in a semester in order to have time for their jobs. Wages aren't going up, but it seems like the cost of everything students need to survive is creeping upward.

No student should feel like they have to slow down their education in order to make it by in life. To be able to learn something every day for a lifetime is a true gift, whether people do it in school or out. Education is the one thing that no government or human being can ever take away.

— CW



Story by Erin Bamer
Photography by Yishan Chen

A change of heart, mind & skin

How the connotations behind tattoos have changed in Moscow and on the national scale

● Some call it a permanent marring of the skin, others call it wearable art. Now, more often than not, people are appreciating tattooing for the art form Telisa Swan claims it is.

Swan is the founder of Swan Family Ink in Moscow. She has been tattooing for 22 years and said when she was going to college at Washington State University she originally wanted to go into advertising.

It wasn't until she found she had a natural talent for tattooing that she even considered the profession. News of her talent spread across the area, and she suddenly had people contacting her because they wanted her to tattoo them.

"It just ended up totally snowballing," Swan said.

Now she tattoos at Swan Family Ink with three other artists, including her daughter Cera Swan-Lake.



Cera has been tattooing since she was in high school — a total of 15 years. She said after watching her mother do what she loves for so long, she knew she wanted to follow in her footsteps long before she graduated high school.

“I was 12 when I knew that’s what I wanted to do,” Cera said. “I did my seventh grade job project on tattooing.”

Cera apprenticed under her mother and even spent some time working at a tattoo parlor outside of the Palouse area. She said it was a good learning experience, but what she really got out of it was that she wanted to work with her mom.

“There’s love there,” Cera said. “It’s just not the same without the family element.”

Together and with the two other artists who work there, Cera and her mom have developed a strong base of clients at Swan Family Ink. Cera said they get new customers who come in for their first tattoo, but a lot of their clients are also regulars, like Christina Altieri.

Altieri got her first tattoo from Telisa at the age of 40 and has only ever gotten tattooed from Telisa since, she said. Recently she got a flower tattoo for her son tattooed on her arm by the artist.

All of Altieri’s tattoos have some degree of meaning to her, and she said she trusts Telisa’s talent to come through and illustrate her vision.

“I think they’re beautiful,” Altieri said. “They’re art.”

Many people put a lot of thought into the tattoos they receive, some deliberating for months before finally deciding on a design they like. But that’s not the case with everyone.

Jim Taylor works as an associate professor of sociology at Ohio University and specializes in topics to do with body modification and self-harm, including tattooing. Taylor said there has been a steady reduction in the stigma against tattoos and a rise in its popularity.

The reason behind the increase in popularity comes from a variety of sources, but Taylor said it essentially boils down to a spike in the access of information through the Internet and other resources. An increase in information exchange means more people are getting knowledge about tattoos and are being exposed to more positive facts and stories about the process.

Because of this popularity, Taylor said more and more people are getting tattoos for more superficial reasons, but the numbers of people getting tattoos in general are also rising, so there are still several individuals who have deep stories behind each of their tattoos.

Hannah Quaglietta has been tattooing at Untamed Art in Moscow for almost six years and said she has seen a variety of clientele with different preferences for their tattoos. One of Quaglietta’s regular customers Gian Pastore was tattooed by her recently and

said he eventually wants to be tattooed fully from the neck down, so he often just lets her pick out a design and tattoo it on him.

“I trust her,” Pastore said. “There’s a lot of stuff that she likes that I let her do.”

University of Idaho sophomore Cait Bowyer has a similar philosophy. Bowyer has gotten a total of eight tattoos professionally done from one artist since she graduated high school, and said she intends to get a lot more.

Bowyer said most of her tattoos don’t have much meaning to her, but she likes them all the same.

Like Pastore and Altieri, Bowyer said she holds a lot of trust in the skill of her artist, so she will just let her artist know she’s interested in getting another tattoo and give him some vague guidelines and he will come up with a design. She said she hasn’t disliked any of his work so far.

Taylor said with the popularity of tattoos rising and the stigma against it decreasing, he is seeing a widening of the variety of demographics getting tattoos, including age. He said there is an increase in young people getting tattoos, even younger than 10 years old, but there is also a rise in people getting tattoos post-retirement.

“There is really a place for seniors and tattoos,” Taylor said.

Quaglietta said Untamed Art does usually see younger clients come in more often than they do older clients, primarily college students. The youngest client she has tattooed was 16, but she has seen 14-year-olds come in with their parents before, too.

Bowyer said she doesn’t know if she has a high pain tolerance, but none of the eight tattoos she’s received so far have hurt her.

“The first tattoo I got was on the top of my foot,” Bowyer said. “And after it was done my artist asked if it hurt and I said ‘Not really.’ And he was shocked. He didn’t believe me.”

Most of the responses Bowyer has gotten to her tattoos have been positive, she said. Some people give her weird looks, but more often she said she gets complete strangers coming up to her to tell her how much they love her tattoos.

In contrast, Altieri had to wait to get her first tattoo until she was 40 because she worked at a bank and couldn’t get one while she was employed there, she said. But now things are changing in the professional world. She said she once met with a social security worker who had full tattoo sleeves.

Telisa said the thoughts about tattooing are vastly different than they were when she started more than 20 years ago. When she opened her first shop in Palouse, Washington, she said she was almost shut down right off the bat because people didn’t want a tattoo parlor in the middle of town, let alone one run by a woman.

Quaglietta started working as an apprentice for the owner of

— “ —
What I love is when the person I tattoo looks at it for the first time and they look like the tattoo has made them more complete
Cera Swan-Lake



Telisa Swan applies fresh ink to Christina Altieri, a regular at Swan Family Ink.

Untamed Art right after graduating from Moscow High School. She was the first female to apprentice at the tattoo parlor, but she said being a female artist hasn't severely impacted her career in a negative way, aside from her getting occasional creepy clients or people who think she isn't a good artist just because she's a woman. But she said those interactions are few and far between.

Unlike Quaglietta, Cera said she still sees people holding a prejudice against her for being a female tattoo artist. She said she will get male clients who tell her how to do her job because they don't trust her, or she even gets people making comments about her appearance, saying she would be beautiful if she didn't have so many tattoos.

"My tattoos make me beautiful," Cera said. "As far as I'm concerned, I'm decorating."

Being a female artist also has its perks though, Cera said.

About 80 percent of her clients say they prefer to get their tattoos done by women, she said, because women tend to be more compassionate and gentle.

"You learn a lot about people," Cera said. "A lot of times artists end up actually being like counselors to their clients."

Quaglietta said she's observed that the general prejudice around tattoos has died down slightly, but she thinks there are still a lot of people out there who think it's sketchy or gross.

Despite the prejudice and the negative interactions, all three artists said they continue to work because of the love they have for their craft. Cera said she can't think of anything else she would rather do than tattoo with her mom.

"What I love is when the person I tattoo looks at it for the first time and they look like the tattoo has made them more complete," Cera said. "It's really rewarding." ●

ORIGIN OF

Story by Corrin Bond
Photography by Tess Fox

ORANGE

● There were three things University of Idaho junior Tommy Burke told his best friend while they caught up after the summer on their first day of high school: Michael Jackson had died, Burke's father was getting a divorce from his stepmother and Burke had decided to wear the color orange every day for the rest of his life.

From orange sweatshirts to converse to sunglasses, Burke, who has worn the color orange every day for the past nine years, can be seen around the UI campus wearing his signature color on any given day.

Burke, a political science major and president of the Residence Hall Association (RHA), said the idea to wear the same color every day was originally prompted by a bet he made with a fellow student in the sixth grade.

"In sixth grade, I had this orange Nike sweatshirt that I loved so much I wore it almost every day, especially when it got cold," Burke said. "On December 13 of 2006, this kid Shawndrae, he's now a friend of mine, but at the time we were close to rivals, called me out on how much orange I wear."

Burke said after trying to explain to Shawndrae that he didn't love the color orange, he just loved the sweatshirt, his classmate bet him \$15 that he didn't have what it takes to wear orange every single day until the end of eighth grade.

"On the day he called me out, I realized how much orange I was unintentionally wearing at the time," Burke said. "I remember thinking, 'This is stupid.' But I followed through with it anyway, and wore orange every single day ... even when I had pneumonia and missed school. I made sure he knew I had worn orange pajamas every day I was home sick."

Even though Shawndrae didn't follow through with his end of the bet, Burke said he made the decision to continue wearing orange, even though the bet was over the summer before his freshman year of high school.

Burke's father, Tim Burke, said when his son first made the bet, he was impressed and amused by the situation.

"I thought it was funny that a kid in middle school had the drive to follow through with something like wearing the same color

every day," Tim said. "When Tommy sets his mind to something, he sticks with it and after a time, wearing orange became his thing. It just kind of became part of who he was."

Nine years after the original bet was made, Burke said he appreciates the bet as a moment which impacted the rest of his life.

In addition to being known for his signature orange wardrobe, Burke has made an impact on campus through his position as president of RHA.

While Burke said he never expected to become so deeply involved in an organization on campus, he has had a penchant for politics from a young age and became involved with student government around the time he first made the bet to wear orange.

— “ —

His personality now goes
with a visual that ties it
together — it is Tommy.
He is orange

Tim Burke

"I've wanted to go into politics ever since I was five and saw a presidential debate between George Bush and Al Gore," Burke said. "I didn't know who they were, but I recognized the things they were saying to be really important and I realized I wanted to be that guy who can talk about things that matter and make changes in the lives of others."

Burke said the desire to pursue a career in politics prompted his involvement and eventual rise to becoming RHA president. Burke said his involvement in RHA has not only taught him how to be an effective leader, but also how to persevere and learn from his mistakes.

Tim said after almost a decade of wearing orange every day, the color has come to embody and represent his son's outgoing personality.

"I think the color orange found Tommy years ago, and he just embraced that it was his personality," Tim said. "His personality now goes with a visual that ties it together — it is Tommy. He is orange."

Burke said he plans to continue wearing orange into the indefinite future, and that the color has grown to be a part of his identity as a human being.

"My freshman year of college, I weighed my clothing and I have 40 pounds of clothes that are orange," Burke said. "It's come to be something people remember me by now. Orange has become a part of who I am, which is funny, because my favorite color is yellow." ●

Tommy Burke,
University of Idaho
junior and president
of the Residence
Hall Association,
has worn the color
orange every day for
the past nine years.



MUSIC & MECHANICS



*Story by Nina Rydalch
Photography by
Alex Brizee*

● There's a certain comfort that comes from the acoustics of a bathroom.

Whether starting the day or unwinding from a long one, there's something relaxing about singing a favorite song in the shower.

Derek Eaton, a fourth year student at the University of Idaho, said he has been singing in the shower for as long as he can remember.

In elementary school, Eaton said he participated in choir before deciding that band was a better fit for his interests. The trumpet was his instrument of choice, and he's stuck with it for 10 years.

For eight of those years, Eaton was a member of marching band. He played all four years at his high school in central Washington, although he admitted that participating in a parade for their rodeo was the extent of the performing aspect of it. He has also been a member of the Vandal Marching Band since his freshman year and said joining the band was likely the best choice he could have made.

As a mechanical engineering major with a minor in mathematics, Eaton said he was originally concerned about whether he would have enough time to participate in marching band. What eventually influenced him to take on that commitment was Torrey Lawrence, director of the Lionel Hampton School of Music, Eaton said. Lawrence gave a spiel that let Eaton know that non-music majors would be able to make time for marching band.

Many engineers have made the same decision, according to the Director of Athletic Bands at UI, Spencer Martin. Martin said at one point, engineers were probably the second most common major in the band, after music majors.

The 2015 fall semester will be slightly trickier for Eaton,



Derek Eaton (furthest left in right photo) goes beyond his responsibilities as an engineering student to perform as a dedicated member of the University of Idaho Vandal Marching Band.

however, due to a class conflict that prevents him from attending every practice.

“This year is the first year that I’ve actually had a class conflict with marching band, and I’ve definitely noticed that it is harder to learn the music and learn the drill because I’m not there every single day,” Eaton said.

Martin said that he has no doubt that Eaton can manage the workload.

“He’s a very, very hard worker, and so when it comes to having his music learned or his drill learned, or anything like that, he always has it ready to go,” Martin said.

Martin said that, while maintaining good grades, Eaton has made time not only for marching band, but also for the basketball band, volunteer performances and now the “Band Beesten,” a project that involves making a robotic drum-set for marching band.

This project is unique in that it combines both of Eaton’s main interests into one. The university has been doing “Band Beesten” since 2012. Most of the students involved

this year are or were previously involved in the marching band like Eaton. As a band member, Martin said Eaton is both an excellent musician and someone that his peers respect as a person.

Martin said that he has no worries about Eaton’s success after he leaves the university. Indeed, Eaton’s future looks bright. Last year, Eaton said he was handing out resumes at the career fair when he stopped at the Navy table and applied for a job.

Eaton said that the interview process was intense. It included taking an exam in Washington, D.C., and having a personal interview with the admiral over the summer. However, immediately after the interview, he found out that he had been accepted as a nuclear propulsion officer for the U.S. Navy.

The rest of Eaton’s education will be paid for. After he graduates from UI, he will attend officer candidacy school, followed by nuke school and eventually go onboard a U.S. submarine as a nuclear engineer, he said.

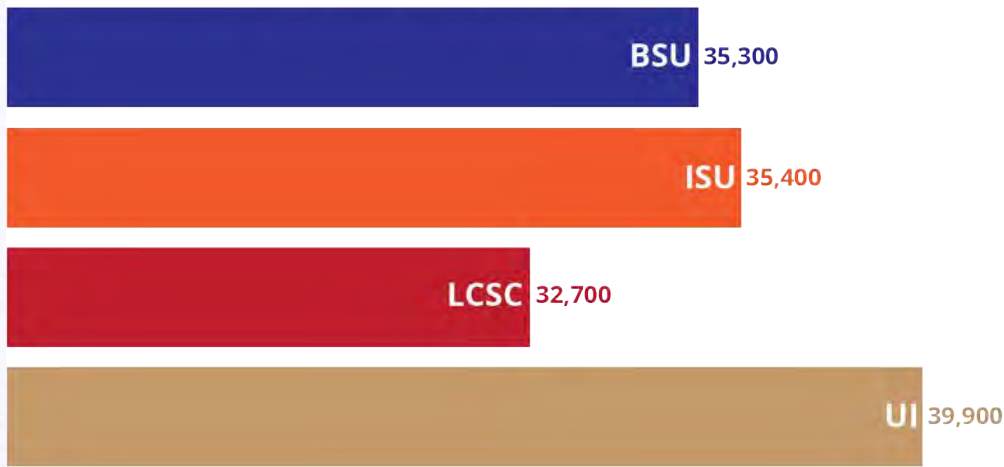
“If I was to give a definition of the type of person you want in this band, that would be Derek,” Martin said. ●

— “ —
 He’s a very, very hard worker, and so when it comes to having his music learned or his drill learned ... he always has it ready to go
Spencer Martin

THE COST



AVG. SALARY AFTER GRADUATION



Increasing tuition and fees creates a heavy financial burden on students

Story by Claire Whitley
Illustration by Cydnie Gray

Tuition is on students' minds. It is a check that seems to grow with each passing year, even if the 3.5 percent increase in 2015 was the smallest increase in 15 years, according to the Idaho State Board of Education's (SBOE) Chief of Communications and Legislative Affairs Officer Blake Youde.

According to the University of Idaho website, a full-time Idaho resident obtaining their undergraduate degree, tuition and fees alone in 2015 is \$3,510 per semester at UI. A non-resident's tuition and fees is \$10,512 per semester this year. This doesn't include art and architecture students, who pay \$4,063 per semester or law students, who pay \$8,615 per semester.

Using estimates for how much tuition will continue to increase, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) approximates tuition at UI to be \$4,183 per semester in 2018 — an additional \$670 increase.

"College is becoming unaffordable," said assistant clinical professor of economics Steven Peterson.

Peterson calculated the cost of tuition based purely on the inflation rate from 1980 to 2014. In 1980, the university's tuition and fees were \$295 per semester. Peterson calculated that without any tuition increases in addition to inflation, students would now be paying \$848 per semester.

"It's getting more difficult for students to go to school," Peterson said.

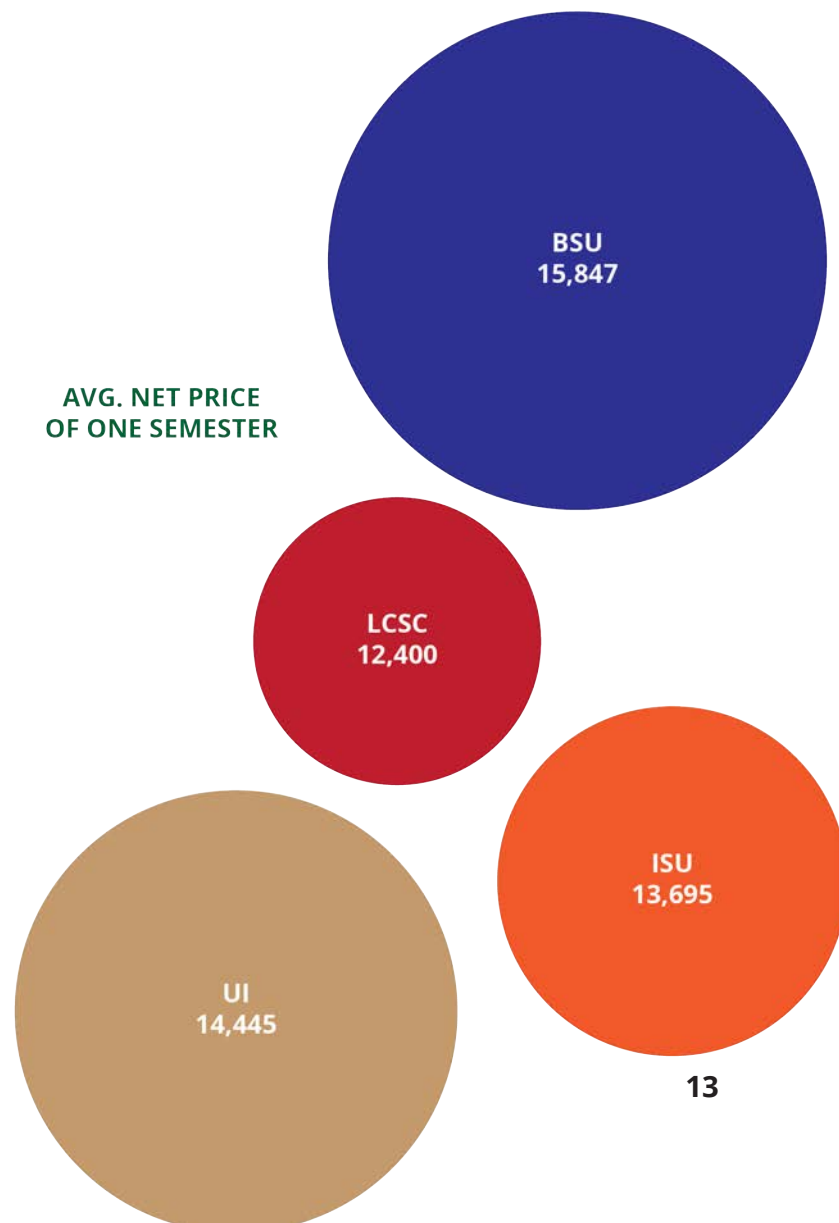
According to the U.S. Department of Education's College Scorecard, UI has the second highest average annual cost for schooling in the state, behind Boise State University by about \$1,000. However, UI graduates generally have larger salaries than their BSU counterparts.

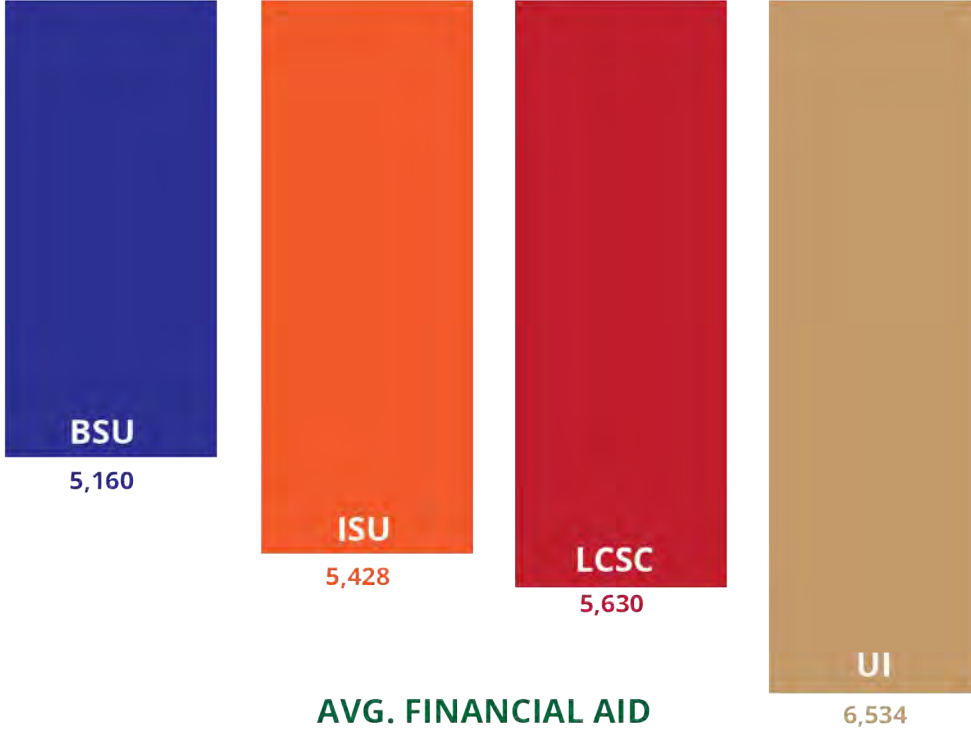
UI President Chuck Staben said the tuition increase was in part due to the Idaho legislature giving a 3 percent raise to all state employees. Staben said at UI, with several of the faculty and staff not being state-funded, it didn't seem fair for universities to let only part of their staff receive raises.

Staben said the heads of universities wanted to ensure the quality of education at their institutions, the best faculty to teach their students and to maintain competitive salaries that are in step with the state. Staben said about 75 percent of students' tuition and fees go toward salaries and benefits of faculty and staff.

The state funding for higher education in the last few years has decreased, Youde said. State funding has to be shared across all

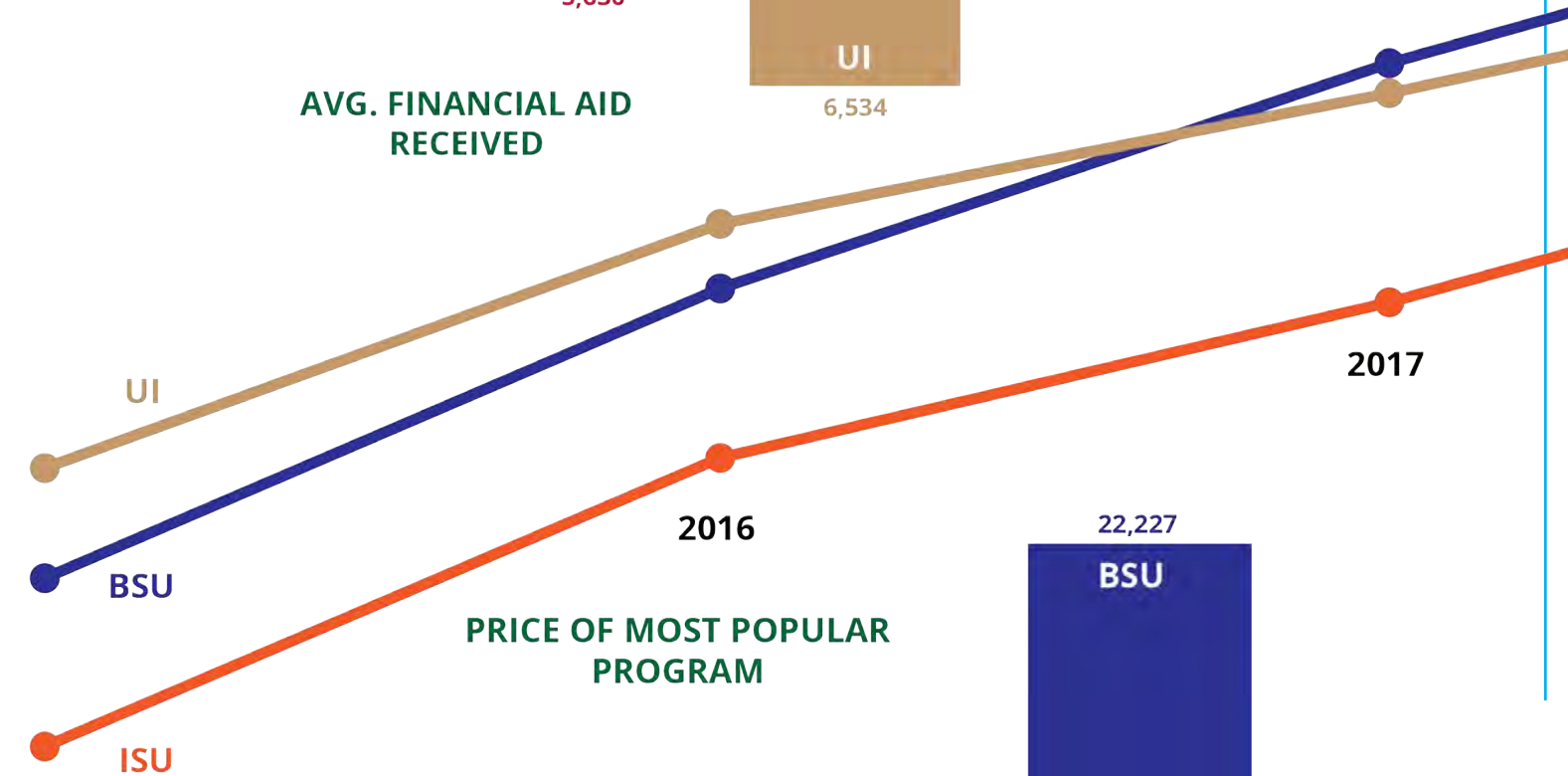
AVG. NET PRICE OF ONE SEMESTER



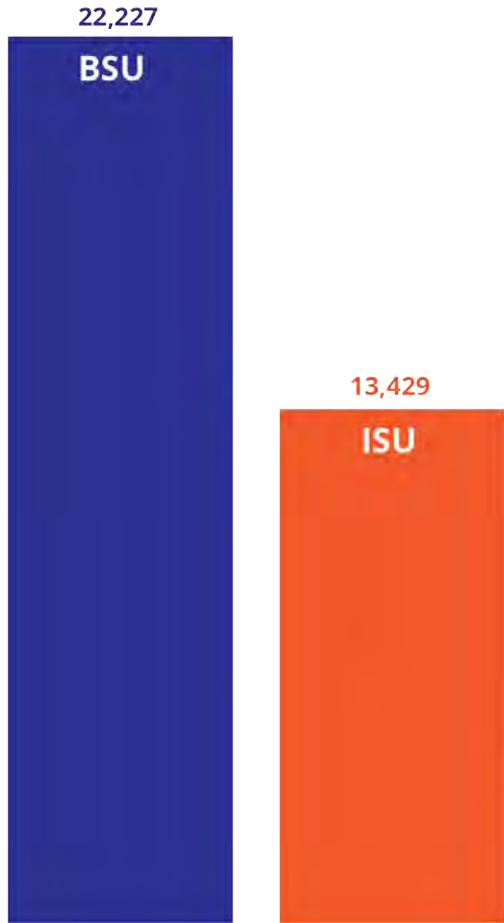


— “ —
 Costs have increased for higher education and students have had to bear that burden
Blake Youde

AVG. FINANCIAL AID RECEIVED

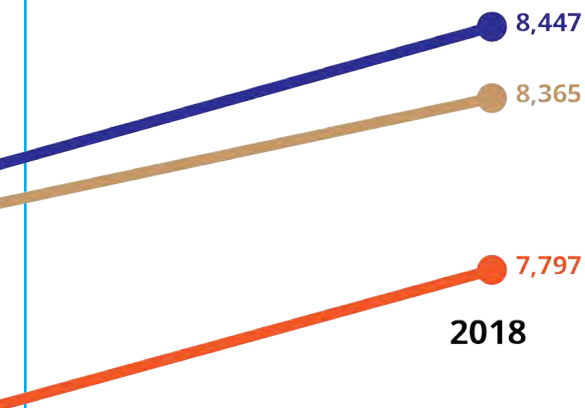


PRICE OF MOST POPULAR PROGRAM



areas, including higher education, and it is a competition to gain priority. Currently, K-12 public education has the highest priority, followed by health and human services, public safety and then colleges and universities, Youde said. Altogether, the top four priorities make up 62 percent of the state budget. Youde said since state funding has been decreasing, the burden of education on students is heavier than it has been in the past. In the 2005 fiscal year, students

alone had to carry 30 percent of their college costs. In the current fiscal year, students are shouldering 47 percent of the costs. “It is a bigger burden,” Youde said. “Costs have increased for higher education and students have had to bear that burden.” Staben said there are three different areas students receive money from: scholarships, loans and other financial aid, plus the money that the students provide themselves. Since state



funding has gone down for college education, the amount that students are personally providing has gone up, which is why students are seeing and feeling the pressure, Staben said.

Youde said the SBOE is aware of the pressure that raising tuition is putting on students and it is a concern which will likely be discussed in April. Youde said SBOE is trying to take steps to limit the cost of college and to still maintain the high quality of education.

"Nobody is discounting tuition and fees," Youde said. "The cost of education can bring pressure to students ... Education really impacts a student's entire life, both intellectually and financially."

Staben said that while a 3.5 percent increase is not tiny, it is a pretty small increase compared to previous years. As tuition and the cost of college goes up, so do loans, Staben said. UI graduates normally graduate with approximately \$25,000 in loan debt, but Staben said it is worth the investment.

"It is a significant burden, but it is a great investment," Staben said.

There is help available for students who are considering dropping out for a semester to raise money to continue their college education, Staben said. He said taking a break to gain money is almost always a bad decision. It is more important for students to graduate as soon as possible and start their career, he said.

"It will be the best \$25,000 investment you will ever make," Staben said. "It is good for individuals and for society."

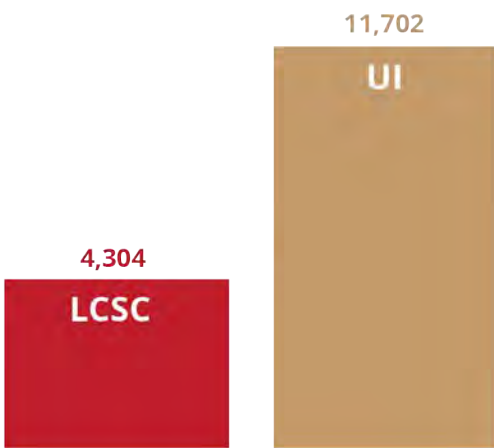
The burden of tuition is also being spread over a smaller number of students, Staben said. According to the NCES statistics, which are based on 2014-2015 numbers, UI has 9,283 undergraduates. BSU has 19,333 undergraduates and ISU has 11,517. In order to increase tuition by a total of 3 percent, a smaller population will pay more than a larger population, Staben said.

Peterson said between 2003 and 2013, UI's student body shrank 7.8 percent while BSU's grew by 19.3 percent over the same 10-year period. Peterson attributes this decrease to the increased cost of attending school at a resident campus like UI, especially with the tuition increase.

Peterson has been keeping track of the raising tuition for nearly 30 years. He said UI should implement more scholarship programs and bring back the Western Undergraduate Exchange to help increase the student population and therefore alleviate some of the financial pressure. Peterson and Staben both said they want the state funding to increase so the amount of money students have to provide is smaller.

"Students need to make legislature more aware of the burden," Peterson said. "This needs to be a serious issue." ●

TOTAL ENROLLMENT



— “ —
 Students need to make legislature more aware of the burden. This needs to be a serious issue
Steven Peterson

*Story and photography
by Alex Brizee*



● The stairs leading down to Taylored Hair Barber Shop don't exactly look inviting, but upon walking through the door, customers are greeted by a welcoming and engaging environment.

Posters and framed baseball cards cover the walls. Professional wrestling action figures line the counters and a lone barber chair sits awaiting regular clients and curious new customers.

Krys Taylor has a very old-fashioned style to his Taylored Hair Barber Shop that is evident not just by his customer's haircuts, but also by the rest of their experience at his shop.

Whether it's getting their haircut just right or making sure the music playing in the back fits the taste of the current client, Taylor said his goal is to tailor each appointment to his customers' needs.

In addition to a wide range of music, a variety of magazines are piled on a circular coffee table, which shows how Taylor provides his customers with diverse material to fit their needs.

"Being able to have a shop like this where I can have the old metal frames and marvel comic books, DC stuff and old Michael Jordan posters from the '90s ... People look at that stuff and they know that I put my heart and soul into the environment," Taylor said.

Taylor said his love of the old-fashioned-styled barber shop is deeply rooted in his childhood memories of the barber shop in Moscow that his family frequented when he was younger. Taylor said the shop was the kind of place where everyone knew the owner by his first name, Clarence.

"I would always go into his shop and he would have these old classic baseball seat chairs or theater chairs," Taylor said. "He would sit there with his strop and he would



Krys Taylor trims the beard of University of Idaho senior Cody Blamires.

strop that razor back and forth with this huge smile on his face.”

Taylor said out of everyone he has ever met, Clarence is the person he remembers the most vividly, and the memory of Clarence has been clear in his mind for the last 25 years.

Taylor now serves clients who once went to Clarence’s shop, and he said he hopes his business can provide locals with an experience as positive as the one he used to have at Clarence’s.

“I want people to walk in here and have that same feeling that I had when I walked in Clarence’s,” Taylor said. “Where you can walk in and kids come in here and they’re like ‘Batman toys! Basketball hoop!’ so you know it’s catering to every gender, every demographic, every age group.”

Taylor is not only old-fashioned at his shop, but also in his personal life. His mother Jeanne Stevenson, vice provost of Academic Affairs at the University of Idaho said Taylor has always been very respectful of people. Stevenson said she is very proud of her son and his success with owning his own small business.

Taylor’s artistic abilities, people skills and independent nature are characteristics that may have gotten passed down to him from others in the family, and they are traits that make him a distinguished barber, Stevenson said.

Most salons or barber shops nowadays that are more new-age could be described as trendy and perfect, but also sterile and white-washed, Taylor said, not at all the comforting feeling that he wants to give off at Taylored Hair.

Taylor brings that comforting feeling into his practice. He uses an older approach to cutting hair by using scissors or

clippers over a comb, as opposed to electric razors.

“You can use all your talents and all your ideas as an art project and say I know exactly what you’re talking about,” Taylor said. “Just being able to say you would use this part of a new haircut, this part of an old haircut, this part of a weird haircut and put it all together and make it work.”

Taylor said he makes sure that every customer leaves with an amazing haircut and a smile on their face. Another part of Taylor’s style that is representative of his character is that he performs every haircut by individual appointment in a one-on-one setting.

He has no assistant or anyone else in the shop who cuts people’s hair. It is just him. Taylor said this allows him to get to know his customers on a personal level so they are not just clients, but friends. He knows regular customers by their first names and remembers aspects of their lives and their haircuts.

Cody Blamires, a senior at UI and client of Taylored Hair, came in without much of an idea of what he wanted for his hair. All he knew was that he wanted a major trim and Taylor was able to interpret the small things to give him the exact haircut Blamires wanted without too much explanation.

Blamires said he picks Taylored Hair Barber Shop out of all the other shops in town because of the personal service, great music taste and great haircuts.

Cooper Salmon, a regular client of Taylored Hair, said he enjoys the shop because Taylor is willing to work with him, as he tends to be picky about what he wants. He also enjoys the fact that he knows who is going to cut his hair when he walks in. There is no surprise, because it is a one-on-one experience. ●



THE FUTURE OF FIRE

An increasingly severe fire season means uncertainty about the future of the Northwest's landscape

Story by Corrin Bond

Photography by Jackson Flynn

● This summer felt like a scene straight out of an apocalyptic film — homes were lost, environments were engulfed by flames, smoke filled the air and ash rained down upon countless towns.

During the summer of 2015 the Inland Northwest alone had a record of 52 large fires burning at once. Penelope Morgan, a University of Idaho professor with the College of Natural Resources, said the increasing severity of the region's fire season doesn't necessarily mean the end of the world just yet.

"When people move to Seattle or Portland, they understand that they have to deal with the rain," Morgan said. "Well, when it comes to Idaho, you're going to get fires — fires and smoke are a part of the world, especially in the interior west."

Although fires are as natural to the area as rain is to the Pacific Northwest, Morgan said fire ecologists and environmental researchers have noticed a startling trend. Since 1984, the fire season has gotten to be a month longer, Morgan said, which will lead to many large fires and will have two to five times as much area burned in the next few decades.

Morgan said this year to date, 7.5 million acres have burned across the United States. The 10-year running average of acres burned stands around five million, which means about 50 percent more area has burned this year compared to the last 10 years.

Crystal Kolden, a UI assistant professor with a doctorate degree in geography, said fires are a tool necessary for the growth and success of the region's environment, but the sustained severity of fire seasons over the past few years could change the composition of the landscape.

"This has been a fairly severe fire season for the Northwest, but it's in line with the drought conditions we've experienced all through last year," Kolden said. "It's not unusual to have these intense fire seasons in this region, but what is unusual is that 2015 was the fourth

year in a row that the Northwest had a very large, active fire season."

Kolden, whose research specializations include ecology and climate impacts, said among the many contributing factors to such severe fires are bark beetles, a reduction in logging, long-term drought, climate change and even decades worth of successful fire suppression.

The firefighter success rate of suppressing fires not only resulted in the accumulation of dry fuels over time, but Kolden said it also contributed to a shift in the composition of the landscape.

"There was an enormous amount of fires in the area before humans settled here, and as a result the native flora and fauna evolved with those conditions," Kolden said. "Fire is rejuvenating for many of these ecosystems — it refreshes things and creates this mosaic of vegetation that supports a large biodiversity, but all of that gets diminished when you begin suppressing a lot of that fire."

Kolden said the success of fire suppression paired with consecutive years of drought have made it more difficult for native species to return to the environment and easier for invasive species to settle in the area.

"In the past decades, there have been many places where after a fire has burned we've not seen the same species returning," Kolden said. "Instead we've seen new species that favor warmer climates or invasive species take over."

However, Kolden said since the long, intense fire seasons began, fire ecologists have started to see a gradual return to what the composition of the environment was like before humans settled.

Kyle Swanstrom, a UI student and fire ecology major, said to aid the natural process, fire crews try to prevent the introduction of invasive species into an environment immediately after a fire has burned.

— “ —
What is unusual is that 2015 was the fourth year in a row that the Northwest had a very large, active fire season
Crystal Kolden



Kyle Swanstrom is a fire ecology major at the University of Idaho and spends his summers fighting wildland fires for the Bureau of Land Management.

"When a fire is wrapping up, we want to make sure we have the next step ready to go," Swanstrom said. "We go through and plant the seeds of the region's historically native species so there's a good chance the area will reestablish a level of ecological stability."

Swanstrom, who spent the summer working for the Bureau of Land Management in Twin Falls, Idaho, said as a student starting out in the field, he believes he is going to be seeing a number of changes in the years to come because of how much the climate has changed over the last 80 years. Swanstrom said he believes new policies and procedures are needed when it comes to how fires are fought as well as how to adapt to the changing landscapes.

Kolden said of all of the contributing factors to the succession of large, severe fire seasons, the drought that the Northwest has experienced remains one of the strongest.

"We're still searching for concrete evidence, but as scientists and researchers, we can make an estimated guess that climate change plays a role in the droughts we've experienced," Kolden said.

Kolden said the idea of climate change as a contribut-

ing factor to the change in both the severity of the fire season and the ways in which it impacts the environment is one that still requires a great deal of research.

"It's an area we really don't know," Kolden said. "Climate change is happening so fast that it's really difficult for us to try and keep up with how quickly some of these environments are changing."

Despite the ongoing research process, Kolden said the past four years of large, intense fire seasons serve as indicators of what the future of the Inland Northwest is likely to hold under sustained drought conditions.

Morgan said while such severe fire seasons can cause the widespread destruction of environments and homes, it's important to remember that there is more to fire than the labels of "good" or "bad."


"It's easy to listen to Smokey the Bear and think all fires are terrible, scary things, but fire is an act of nature that is more complex than ideas of what's good and what's bad," Morgan said. "Fire can be traumatic for humans and animals, but it can also renew habitats and increase natural resources ... Not all fires are bad, not all fires are good. They're somewhere in between." ●

— “ —
Fire can be traumatic for humans and animals, but it can also renew habitats and increase natural resources
Penelope Morgan

HUMANS OF MOSCOW

*Photo essay by
Jackson Flynn*

Stories, experiences and perspectives are always unique to the individual. When they are shared, they allow the potential for others to empathize or even adapt their own perceptions. This is a project that pairs portraits of individuals with glimpses into their experiences. An homage to Brandon Stanton's "Humans of New York," this photo essay seeks to share some of the interactions with people of Moscow.

A portrait of Ruby Hodges, a young woman with long brown hair, smiling and looking upwards. She is wearing a black top with white polka dots. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees and a building.

RUBY HODGES

One of my biggest accomplishments in my life so far was leading a volunteer team of young people in India for three months. We made it there safely and didn't die. Enjoyed ourselves and didn't get too sick.

A portrait of Thad Froio, a man with a full beard and sunglasses, wearing a colorful plaid shirt. He is looking to the right and has his hand raised in a gesture. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees.

THAD FROIO

Every little kid draws, I just couldn't stop. I want to travel more, do more tattoo conventions, do more visiting artist spots, go to different cities. I want to use ink as a means to find the Moscows of the world. That's my goal.



ALEX ARNOLD

We have an old-school limo that we drive around in now, and I have this little one so he's making his rounds. Before the limo we were just hitchhiking place to place. Hitchhiking from San Francisco to Black River Falls, Wisconsin, was the craziest trip. While hiking through some mountains in Montana we were swarmed by thousands of mosquitoes and ran out of water, eating our grapefruit as our last item.



CRAIG OLSON

Straight out of the gate I was a courtesy clerk, and then the bakery manager saw me pushing a broom really fast and was like "I want him to be a baker." And so they picked me up and I started loving it. From broom to baking.

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in conjunction with the College of Letters, Arts, and Social Sciences and
Office of the President*

Supported by Local area businesses and community volunteers

December 11, 2015

7:00 p.m.

ASUI Kibbie Activities Center

(North Concourse entrance)

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