

OCTOBER 2020

BL  **T**
MAGAZINE

"NOW

MORE

THAN

EVER,

PEOPLE

ARE

LISTENING"



EDITOR'S NOTE

Readers,

When deciding what exactly I wanted to cover in this first issue of Blot — my first ever issue as editor-in-chief — the thought was daunting.

How do you create an issue during something as earth-shattering as a pandemic? I ran this thought through my mind many times. How would I create something students cared about when everything is so uncertain, so scary, and our minds are elsewhere?

I debated for a while whether our first issue should focus on the pandemic — something we all are tired of hearing about at this point. After going back and forth about it, I decided it should.

The pandemic is far from over, and although we would like to pretend, it still has a grasp on all our lives. From going to the grocery store or stepping foot on campus, the pandemic is looming all around us.

So, I decided, with the help of my amazing staff, that instead of avoiding the pandemic we would focus on the stories that needed to be told.

Stories about what it was like for study abroad students half a world away from their loved ones to experience the fear and uncertainty at the start of the pandemic, or what it was like to have been diagnosed with COVID-19 and to be put in quarantine while still on campus, so close but so far from those we love.

We explored many topics regarding COVID-19, like how it might forever change the freshman experience, or what it was like to be a student over 100 years ago during the Spanish flu. We even tried to find more uplifting stories on campus like the hobbies we found during quarantine, or the normalcy we try to find in a time that is anything but.

This new campus experience is exemplified by the Black Lives Matter movement, a wave that could not be shadowed by the pandemic. We explore in our centerpiece the impact BLM had on our campus and the students who live here.

So, as I said, this issue focuses on the movements and viruses that have forever altered and forever changed our lives. Whether we like it or not, our campus is altered from the events of the past six months — leaving behind a new campus.



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HISTORY REPEATED

A CENTURY AGO, QUARANTINE BOREDOM WAS STILL HARD TO BEAT

The paper is yellowed, the binding cracked and split. Emerald handwriting, cramped and neat, fills blocks of text across the months. The font is reminiscent of a grandmother's, but the sentiments contained in the loops of florid lettering are frighteningly familiar to a 21st-century reader.

"All schools closed now," Esther Thomas wrote. "Forty cases of the flu at the university. Bum at home all day."

As a home economics student at the University of Idaho, Esther kept a diary as part of her scrapbook. Every day of 1918 bears a line or two about what she'd done that day, how she was feeling or which friends she'd seen.

Esther's years in Moscow had been busy, with a party on Greek Row or dinner at a friend's house to attend whenever boredom struck. She filled her scrapbook with programs and tickets from fraternity dances and barn parties, noting the boys she'd danced with and the friends she'd gotten ready with beforehand. Now, the parties and dates were quickly drying up.

The Spanish flu, as it was then known, had already been circulating for months before it reached tiny, distant Moscow. The disease had popped up in military bases in the United States and on the European front as soldiers filled the trenches of World War I. Soon, it was in every corner of the earth, eventually infecting up to one-third of the world's population, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

It disproportionately sickened and killed the young and healthy, who on UI's campus were encouraged to stave off the disease by avoiding crowds, keeping windows open, chewing their food thoroughly and avoiding tight clothing — shots in the dark against an unknown assailant at the time.

When it did come, in October 1918, three members of the Student Army Training Corps (SATC) were the first to fall ill on campus. The school gym where the student soldiers slept had its heat shut off in an attempt to "freeze out" the flu germs, The Argonaut wrote.

To prevent further spread of the sickness, UI's campus would be quarantined from the outside world starting that October. Esther grew increasingly desperate. She'd been sick with the flu herself for a few days — only a mild case, she wrote, but the worst part was the doctor's orders keeping friends away from her bedside.

Esther, who lived off-campus in her family's home, found herself stuck inside even after her recovery. The white voile dress and black velvet jacket she'd just bought for the beginning of the semester would languish in her closet, she lamented.

"Still doing nothing," she wrote Oct. 21. "I am almost desperate."

She bided her time by sewing sheets for the SATC boys in the infirmary. But there's only so much sewing one girl can do in quarantine, after all.

Story By | Riley Haun
Photos By | Courtesy
Design By | Stevie Carr

"Made some more sheets," Esther wrote Oct. 22. "Desperation increases. What will become of me?"

The next day, she took some flowers to the sick bay to cheer the boys up. Desperately short-handed, the Red Cross volunteers quickly put Esther to work as a nurse. By the end of the week, her quarantine boredom was a thing of the past.



ESTHER THOMAS PICTURED IN 1918. | UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO LIBRARY



PHOTOS ADDED TO ESTHER'S SCRAPBOOK IN 1918. | UI LIBRARY

"Gave my first medicine to the sick men today," she wrote. "Didn't kill any of them either."

As cases began to pick up across Moscow — over 200 cases were recorded among the SATC men alone — orders came down from the U.S. War Department that all student soldiers must wear a gauze face mask.

That mandate was unpopular from the beginning. The Argonaut reported in November. Soldiers had to wear masks at all times unless they were eating, so "many prolonged their eating periods until nearly every minute in barracks was spent with an apple or a Hershey," the report stated.

Another soldier would let the mask slip below his nose, ready to pull back up if he was called out, because "he was afraid he'd breathed his mask full of germs and didn't want to breathe them back in again."

The mask mandate was rescinded within a week, reportedly because of countless complaints about being unable to smoke. The Argonaut reported.

Those quarantined on campus were making the best of their boredom, according to a regular Argonaut section titled "Quarantine Notes."

In Ridenbaugh Hall, the campus's main dorm building at the time, students took to holding singing and dancing recitals in the common rooms, and compiled a small newspaper called the "Peek-a-Boo" to disseminate the dorm's latest gossip.

At the Delta Gamma house, students held a fashion show one night where they served grape juice and popcorn balls. At Sigma Nu, brushing up on "the manly art of self-defense" one particularly boring evening resulted in a broken nose for one member.

By mid-November, Esther joined the girls of Ridenbaugh Hall in quarantine — off-campus students had to receive a health certificate after an isolation period before they could return to classes. She joined other home economics students in cooking meals for the convalescent soldiers. Her days settled into a blur once again — save the end of the war on Nov. 11 — until quarantine was lifted at the end of the month. By the end of that week, Esther was off to Spokane on a date. A week later, it was announced no final exams would be given that quarter — noted in Esther's diary with a "Hurrah!!!!!!!!!!"

By December, Moscow was almost back to normal. As the burden of disease and of war lifted off the town's shoulders, an immeasurable sense of relief must have swept the people. But the pandemic had not been without its losses, small as they may have been in remote North Idaho. Twelve SATC men, young and hardy, had died from the disease, their bodies sent by train from Moscow back home to Sandpoint, Coeur d'Alene and Montana.

Across the nation, over 675,000 people died from the Spanish flu, according to the CDC. The virus's origins, commonly traced to an Army cook in Kansas or an overcrowded field hospital in France, are still not clearly understood.

Americans of the early 20th century grappled simultaneously with the death they'd confronted overseas during the Great War and at home in the war against an unseen attacker. They held their heads high, and they tried to carry on.

An Argonaut article that December looked back at the pandemic's course through Moscow and wondered whether the precautions taken were the right ones, or whether they'd been made in time to save enough lives.

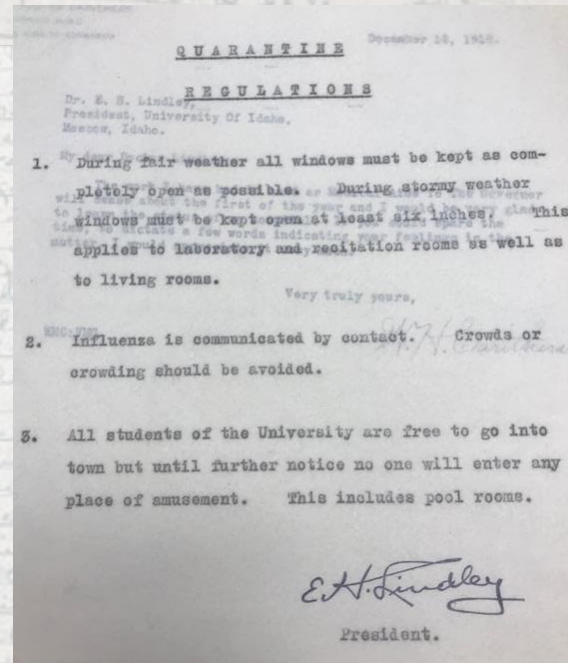
"Because there was no assured knowledge of how to deal with the disease, the nation was not prepared in advance for the epidemic," the article reads. "The result was that whatever was done was generally too late...But modern science, even for the time being baffled, refuses to be helplessly passive. It knows a great deal about the disease, despite the beliefs of absolute prevention or infallible cure."

And Esther got right back into the swing of things. There were still dates to be had, dances to attend and friends to play cards with. That Christmas season, she emerged from quarantine to make candy with the other home economics students and went caroling with friends on First Street. She went Christmas shopping downtown and brought in quite the holiday haul herself — "Old Santa was very good to me this year," she wrote on Christmas Day 1918.

As 1919 approached, it brought the promise of a clean slate. The snow falling on Moscow blanketed all in sight, and as it melted, maybe it would wash away the pain of 1918.

Esther rang in the new year surrounded by friends and family — no more isolation for her.

"Mama, Papa and I play cards," she wrote on December 31, 1918. "We make candy. Happy New Year."



A DOCUMENT OUTLINING QUARANTINE REGULATIONS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO DURING THE SPANISH FLU.

THE NEW

(SOCIALLY DISTANCED, MASK-WEARING)

KIDS ON THE BLOCK

MASKS, SMALLER CLASSES AND SOCIAL DISTANCING – HOW COVID-19 HAS FOREVER CHANGED THE "FRESHMAN EXPERIENCE"

If you've ever been a freshman at the University of Idaho when a virus wasn't running rampant around the world, you likely are able to look back with fond memories of the "typical freshman experience."

You likely remember eating at The Hub and waiting in line for far too long to get a mediocre slice of pizza. You may remember how Palousafest eased some of your first-week jitters after you collected copious amounts of flyers and free pencils and gave your email out to every club and organization who would take it. Perhaps you remember the dread and simultaneous excitement of making new friends, meeting your classmates and professors and making new connections.

These moments defined many of our college experiences, but they look quite different for this year's incoming freshmen.

Diving into Greek life during a pandemic, Isabella Leija, a new member of Kappa Alpha Theta, spoke about her unusual experience as a freshman in a sorority on campus.

"Rush week was all online this year," Leija said. Philanthropy, preference rounds, everything."

Bid Day was not what she was expecting it to be either. She remarked how the rules weren't as strict this year compared to the usual Bid Day rules, but everyone was split into 10 groups, and everyone wore masks and social distanced.

Story By | *Bailey Brockett*
Photos By | *Nataly Davies*
Design By | *Taylor Lund*

"THERE ARE A LOT OF LITTLE THINGS YOU DON'T THINK WOULD BE AFFECTED THAT ARE."



ADDISON THOMSON FOLLOWING GUIDELINES BY KEEPING A DISTANCE FROM GROUPS.



MADILYN HULL SHOWS HER COLLECTION OF MASKS.

Everyday life in sorority houses has changed too. Leija said everyone is required to wear a mask except when eating or while in their rooms.

Before COVID-19, Leija anticipated she would make a lot of friends and have big classes, but she said COVID-19 has increased the difficulty of socializing and academics immensely.

"Being online is hard," Leija said. "I'm a very visual learner and I appreciate face-to-face learning."

Addison Thomson, a new resident of Delta Delta Delta, spoke about her similar experiences of Greek life. She said new safety measures are in place due to COVID-19, changing house dynamics.

"The sanitation levels have gone up a lot more," Thomson said. "Masks are required pretty much everywhere throughout the house. It's kind of difficult because you have to watch every step you take, and it's hard to navigate sometimes."

Thomson also mentioned she's had difficulty meeting new people and making connections because of COVID-19.

"I think that COVID-19 has inhibited a lot of social activity," Thomson said. "It's a privilege to live in a sorority, but even the interconnectivity here seems hindered."

However, she also voiced how pleased she was with her sorority in their efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

"I am very proud of all my sisters," Thomson said. "Everyone does exceptionally well following the guidelines, wearing masks and sanitizing. I am impressed by their effort."

Though social distancing may be inhibiting socialization, both Leija and Thomson expressed their gratitude for still being able to have the close-knit community a sorority provides.

So, what about those who don't have that community to rely on?

"MASKS AND SOCIAL DISTANCING KIND OF TAKE AWAY FROM CONNECTIONS WITH OTHER PEOPLE."

Charis Peever, a new resident of the Theophilus Tower, said all the Tower residents have single rooms, and no one has roommates. Some of the additional procedures put in place for Tower residents include mandatory masks in the hallway and lobby, and students are required to social distance and wear masks at any events that take place.

"It is definitely very different," Peever said. "There are a lot of little things you don't think would be affected that are."

One of the biggest changes Peever said she had to adapt to is online classes. Peever said she feels it has made her worry about online classes much more.

"I've been more worried about academics going online," Peever said. "I'm very much an auditory, kinetic learner. I've had some technical issues and have almost missed deadlines because of them. It's also been a challenge to keep track of what days I have online and in-person classes."

Among these changes, Peever said she has also had trouble meeting new people and "expanding her horizons."

"I can't really strike up a conversation in the elevator with someone," Peever said. "Masks and social distancing kind of take away from connections with other people."

JC Beals, a resident of the Wallace Residence Center, spoke about some of the measures taken to ensure social distancing in the dorm.



CHARIS PEEVER, LIKE MANY NEW FRESHMEN, CALLS THE THEOPHILUS TOWER HOME.

"The events are social distanced, and everyone has to wear a mask and gloves," Beals said.

This combined with a visitor policy prohibiting non-residents from entering has increased the difficulty of making connections with others.

In contrast with the Tower, Beals said she does have a roommate and two suitemates. She expressed her gratitude for the "forced friendship" quarantine has placed on all of them, and that even a small sense of community has been nice to have.

Beals said her expectations of college were wildly different than what she's experiencing currently.

"I had the movie stereotype in my head," Beals said. "You know, you meet new people, big groups, welcome week. COVID-19 kind of took that away. Everyone has to stay six feet apart; interactions are short or don't happen at all, there aren't big lecture halls. It's a lot more distant and you don't feel that sense of community."

Even more isolated outside the close-knit university campus, Madilyn Hull's freshman experience has been a tad out of the ordinary as well. Living in an off-campus apartment, Hull and her husband expressed their concern with the isolation COVID-19 has forced upon them.

"We're living in an apartment so we're away from all the other freshmen, so we don't have the opportunity to meet many other freshmen," Hull said.

"I'm kind of sad that I haven't really met anyone, but making friends isn't really an option right now," Hull said.

Hull expressed how her own expectations of college remained unfulfilled.

"I was expecting that friends would come over for game nights," Hull said. "I was expecting people in my major to be close-knit. I guess I expected it to be like high school but with more specific interests."

She also conveyed her frustration with the seclusion she has felt from COVID-19.

"I love to meet new people, especially like-minded progressive people," Hull said. "I was excited to express myself, but COVID-19 has kind of taken that away."

From Zooming in on Bid Day, to living solo in the Tower, this year proves to be strange for all of us, especially this year's freshmen.

A global pandemic certainly wasn't a hand everyone expected to be dealt, but as Peever said, "College is always a bit of an adjustment, and this just adds to it."

"COLLEGE IS ALWAYS A BIT OF AN ADJUSTMENT, AND THIS JUST ADDS TO IT."

FINDING NORMALCY

IN A TIME THAT'S ANYTHING BUT, STUDENTS SEEK OUT THE ORDINARY ON CAMPUS

A MASK REQUIREMENT HAS CHANGED THE LOOK AND FEEL OF SORORITIES ACROSS CAMPUS.

Story By | *Stevie Carr*
Photos By | *Stevie Carr*
Design By | *Taylor Lund*

It's no secret campus looks immensely different right now — from class structure, to signs conducting flow of traffic in and out of classrooms, to thermal scanning inside the Idaho Student Union Building. As life changes drastically on and off campus, students still seek normalcy in their day-to-day life.

Music education major Ryan Egan is struggling to find normalcy in the once simple task of attending music classes.

"You'll see a bunch of people practicing out on the Admin lawn here, finding ways to just play not indoors," Egan said. "Basically, the largest ensemble we have now is eight people maximum. They're real small compared to what we usually have."

The Lionel Hampton School of Music is a small, close-knit student body of around 200. Egan said he's used to seeing nearly everyone every day.

"It's a little weird, everything just seems a little quieter and a little more lonely," Egan said. "But I would say all the small interactions you have with people that you do see on your walk to class, really helped to just make you feel like you're at home again."

A CAMPUS TOUR LOOKS QUITE DIFFERENT FROM THE ONES OF THE PAST.





A MUSICIAN PRACTICES ALONE ON THE ADMINISTRATION LAWN.

Sophomore Imanol Rodriguez, like many students, attends most of his classes from home.

"I'm just going with the flow, trying to follow all the rules," Rodriguez said.

Right now, Rodriguez said he feels more than ever it's important to have some sort of normalcy throughout the day to distract from all the adjustments.

"I usually go to the gym, just something to do outside of school," Rodriguez said.

Freshman Abby Papaioannou said she doesn't mind the online classes.

"I tell myself tomorrow will be a better day, so I just sleep," Papaioannou said.

She finds normalcy in something as simple as getting ready in the morning, even if no one will end up seeing her unmasked face.

"I've been putting on makeup and making myself feel pretty on the outside even though I don't feel good on the inside," Papaioannou said. "If one doesn't feel good, I'll make the other one feel good."

"I TELL MYSELF TOMORROW WILL BE A BETTER DAY."



THE FOOD COURT IN THE ISUB REMOVED MOST OF THE TABLES AND CHAIRS TO MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING.

A photograph of a person holding a white sign that says "BLACK LIVES MATTER" in black, hand-drawn letters. The sign is decorated with small hand-drawn flowers and diamonds. The person is wearing a white t-shirt. In the background, other people and flags are visible, suggesting a protest or rally setting. The overall image is slightly blurred, focusing on the sign and the person holding it.

**"NOW
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Story By *Brianna Finnegan*
Photos By *Brianna Finnegan & Courtesy*
Design By *Danielle Hawkins*

BLACK LIVES MATTER HAS MADE A LASTING IMPACT AT UI, BUT THE WORK ISN'T DONE YET

I can't breathe. Hordes of people march down the streets wearing masks and bearing signs. They hold their fists in the air and chant the phrase. I can't breathe.

"Say their names," they shout as they march. Jacob Blake. Tony McDade. Dion Johnson. George Floyd. Breonna Taylor. Ahmaud Arbery. These are just a few names of individuals who have been injured or killed due to police brutality in 2020, sparking nationwide protests.

The Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement has been around for years now. It was formed in 2013 after the death of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin. But protests across the country revived the movement amid the COVID-19 pandemic this summer after the death of George Floyd, who was killed in May after a Minneapolis police officer knelt on his neck for over eight minutes.

Despite the nearest official BLM chapter being in Vancouver, Canada, Moscow and the Palouse saw its fair share of protests in solidarity. One organization, the Moscow Anti-Racism Alliance (MARA), was formed early this summer to create a conversation about race and racial issues in Moscow.

"We started out as just a really chill group of friends," Cydnie Gray, co-leader of MARA and a UI graduate student, said. "Eventually we decided that we were more motivated to become more active and organized in the community."

The organization held its first event, the Moscow Solidarity March, on July 12. At the event, protesters marched from East City Park to Friendship Square.

"I was expecting some pushback," Gray said. "I've been a part of this community and I've been a resident of Idaho for most of my life. So, I kind of am familiar with the climate and the culture that exists here."

There was a lot of positive feedback from the community, but there were some people who didn't understand or agree with the movement. Most of the negative pushback



SEVERAL PROTESTS WERE HELD IN MOSCOW THROUGHOUT THE SUMMER IN SUPPORT OF THE BLACK LIVES MATTER MOVEMENT. | ANGELA PALERMO

the group received was over the internet, Gray said.

"We didn't really see a lot of counter protesters," Gray said. "Though we did have people suggesting online that they were going to be showing up with their weapons."

The threat of armed backlash is not an uncommon theme within the area. Mikailah Thompson, a Lewis-Clark State College graduate, spoke at a BLM protest in Lewiston. Within one mile of the protest, a group called Protect LC Valley arrived with weapons, stating they were going to protect the city from looting.

Thompson said the BLM protest had been planned as a peaceful event, but there were fears in the community that looting or rioting would occur. Thompson told her family not to come to the event in fear of repercussions.

"(It was) in the back of my mind, this could go left. What if it does go left?" Thompson said. "I was thinking about myself. I was thinking about my family. I didn't want any of my little nieces or nephews there in case things went left."

Despite the anxiety in the beginning, the event remained peaceful with nearly 2,000 people showing up in support of BLM, Thompson said.

While Thompson said she does not consider herself to be a public speaker, after the Lewiston event she went on to speak at various events in the region and helped organize an event for Juneteenth, a holiday celebrating the emancipation of enslaved people in 1865.

At the Juneteenth event, Thompson worked to raise awareness of the holiday and share information on Black history. Especially with the pandemic and the widespread awareness surrounding BLM, it's as good a time as any to be demonstrating Black history, Thompson said.

"Now more than ever, people are actually listening," Thompson said.

Thompson went on to speak about her experiences as a biracial woman at various events, including the MARA protest.



"My job is definitely to bring awareness and speak up when I can," Thompson said. "And speak up loud enough so that it is memorable, and people do understand what I'm feeling and what my family is feeling and what my ancestors felt."

Making Black voices heard in rural towns is especially important because people in those areas often have less exposure to other cultures and fewer relationships with people of color, Thompson said.

DeVonte Smith, a University of Idaho student, said living in a rural community where there's less of an established Black community can be very difficult.

"It's not really the being Black part that's hard," Smith said. "It's the being in rural North Idaho part that's kind of hard."

Before coming to UI, Smith had previously gone to school at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. After transferring in 2018, adjusting to the campus at UI was difficult for a number of reasons, including a lack of diversity on campus, Smith said.



MIKAILAH THOMPSON TAKES THE STAGE AT A JUNETEENTH EVENT SHE HELPED ORGANIZE. | MIKAILAH THOMPSON

"There was no community really," Smith said. "It was different (in Alaska) because there were other brown people walking around on campus. (I'm) not saying that someone having brown skin or black skin automatically makes them relate to me, because all of our individual experiences are different, but it is something that can be reassuring in times of stress."

Before coming to UI, Smith worried about what it would be like to live in North Idaho as a Black person. There were a lot of rumors about North Idaho being a haven for white supremacist groups, Smith said.



THOMPSON SPEAKS AT A BLACK LIVES MATTER EVENT OVER THE SUMMER. | MIKAILAH THOMPSON

“The worst things that have probably happened is just the stares,” Smith said. “When I first got here a lot of people stared, and I couldn’t quite place why. Yeah, I’m very queer and yeah, I’m very proud to be in bold colors and all of this stuff, but it always felt a little bit deeper than that, especially on campus.”

In the wake of BLM protests in Moscow and across the nation, UI administration and organizations have released multiple statements about the movement and protests over the summer.

UI President C. Scott Green sent out two memos to the campus population in June. In the first memo, Green outlined ways UI plans to make a more inclusive environment for all people on campus. He outlined a strive for education and an updated plan for “comprehensive diversity.” However, the memo received backlash from people within the campus community who felt it was too passive and did not suggest any real change.

“Words and actions matter, especially in times of national unrest and fearfulness,” Green wrote in his second memo. “They can calm or provoke, heal or hurt, and at their best, motivate meaningful change for good. The memo we sent out earlier this week regarding diversity and safety missed that last mark.”

In the second memo, sent out two days after his initial remarks, Green explained “there is no room for disagreement” when it comes to issues of human rights and racial injustice. He explained that while his initial remarks were seen as passive or writing over the issue, the UI administration sees the importance of listening and bringing an end to racism and racial injustice.

President Green, Provost and Executive Vice President John Wiencek and Office of Equity and Diversity Director Yolanda Bisbee signed a “statement of inclusion and diversity” published on the UI website, The Equity and Diversity Unit, which includes campus offices such as the Women’s Center, the LGBTQA Office and the Office of Equity and Diversity, also issued a statement of solidarity.

The Office of Multicultural Affairs (OMA) has hosted several events aimed to educate community members on racial issues, including a series of speakers featuring activists and writers focusing on education on racial issues.

“Our office is aware of the systematic racism that occurs,” Jesse Martinez, OMA director, said. “So, for the six years that I’ve been here we’ve done a lot of programming around that.”

Martinez said after the BLM protests

this summer, OMA hosted other events and provided support surrounding these issues as well. After protests started, OMA reached out to students who identify as African American or Black to discuss how the office can best support them.

OMA has also been working with various campus partners such as the Counseling and Testing Center and UI administration to host events centered around education on racial issues, with speakers joining to share their experiences.

All events have been over Zoom due to COVID-19, but most events, even over the summer, had over 200 people in attendance with a combination of students, faculty, staff and community members participating, Martinez said.

“We hope that with this speaker series that there’s some individual growth that all of us are doing,” Martinez said.

As the conversation builds on campus, Black faculty, staff and students have come forward to explain changes they’d like to see on campus in order to better support the Black community.

Dr. Sydney Freeman, an associate professor in the College of Education, Health and Human Services, has recently published articles

documenting his experiences as a Black faculty member in a predominantly white institution (PWI) and offering a list of policies PWIs can enact to better support their Black members.

Freeman's ideas include providing Black student scholarships, hiring more Black faculty and staff and educating university alumni and donors.

Freeman also helped form a Black faculty and staff organization, the Black Lives Matter Advisory Group, over the summer. The organization's primary goal is to provide Black faculty and staff a space to discuss their needs on campus, as well as show UI administration the best ways to support Black students.

The organization is still in the beginning stages and has yet to be recognized as an official campus group. Freeman said some university employees worry about the implications for their professional lives if they align themselves with a Black faculty and staff group, which has hindered progress in establishing the group somewhat.

"Some of us come from different places," Freeman said. "Some of us come from Africa, some of us come from the Caribbean and some of us come from New Jersey. We all bring that to our own experience here, so all of that we have to navigate."

A primary goal for the faculty group is the creation of a Black cultural center on campus with its own director. Getting a director for the cultural center may be a challenge due to UI's budget struggles, but remains extremely important in order to support Black students and faculty on campus, Freeman said.

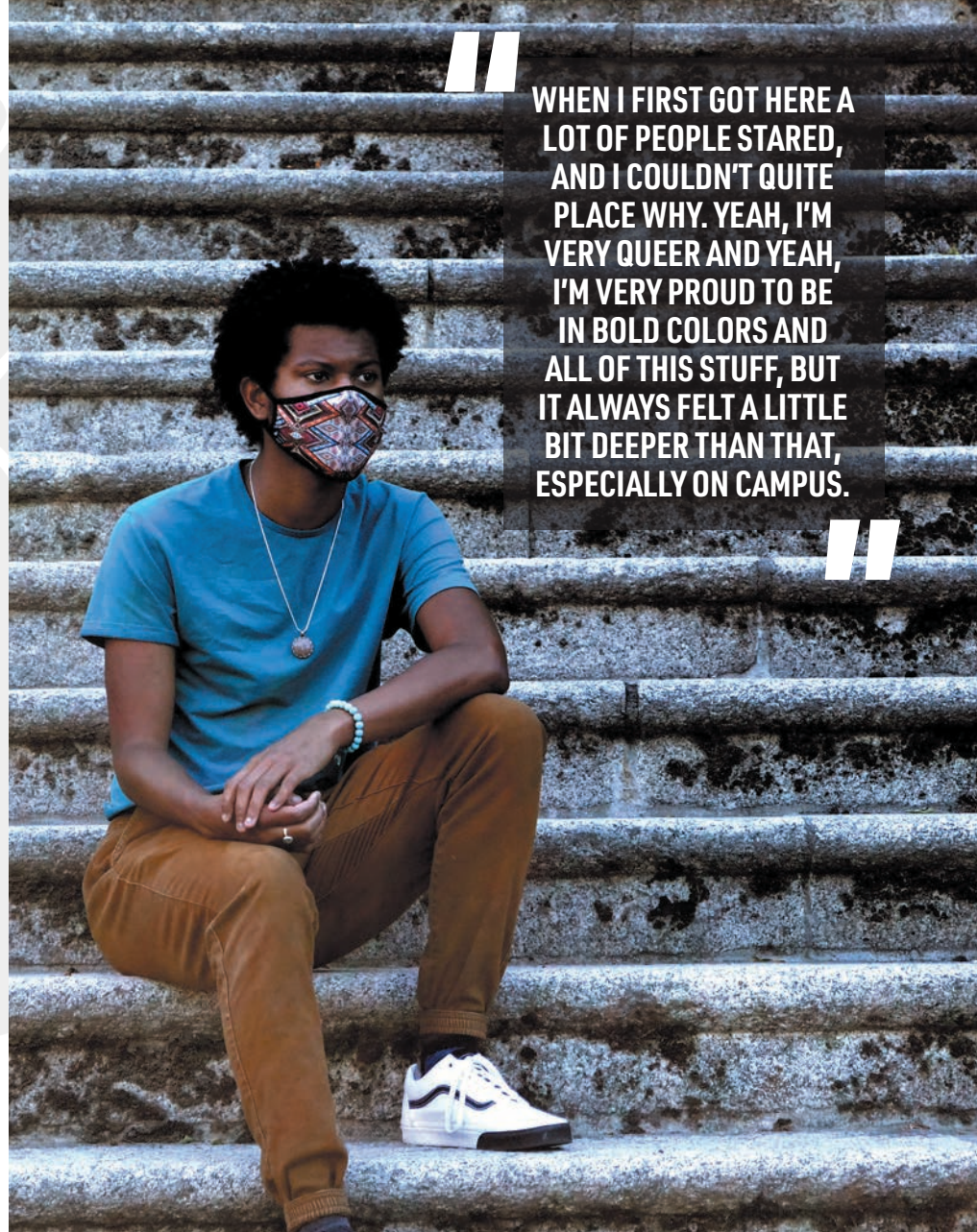
It's also crucial to create a culturally competent environment for students as they arrive on campus, Freeman said.

"Many of our faculty and staff may not have access to interacting with Black students and depending on what part of the country they're from, they may have cultural differences," Freeman said. "(We should try to) become more culturally competent and understand where they're coming from, not just assuming students should assimilate to the Pacific Northwest."

Thompson agreed that education is an important step towards allyship for the Black community and the BLM movement, whether it be as an organization or as individuals.

"There's racism in so many subliminal ways that a lot of people don't understand," Thompson said. "I think after you do the research and everything, you'll start to notice that how the world operates is really sickening."

Thompson suggested those who want to educate themselves should do research into history, read literature and attend events aimed toward educating. Martinez said education starts on an individual level.



“WHEN I FIRST GOT HERE A LOT OF PEOPLE STARED, AND I COULDN'T QUITE PLACE WHY. YEAH, I'M VERY QUEER AND YEAH, I'M VERY PROUD TO BE IN BOLD COLORS AND ALL OF THIS STUFF, BUT IT ALWAYS FELT A LITTLE BIT DEEPER THAN THAT, ESPECIALLY ON CAMPUS.”



DEVONTE SMITH SITS BEHIND THE ADMINISTRATION BUILDING CLAD IN HIS COLORFUL MASK.

"When you're talking about that education, it's really about self-reflection," Martinez said. "It's important to understand our privileges and identities."

Both Thompson and Gray also mentioned the importance of white allies using their privilege to support POC and the BLM movement.

"We can leverage our privilege and we can leverage what skills and what sort of strength that we have to amplify this movement, and to encourage inclusivity in our local areas," Gray said.

Thompson added a great way for white allies to use their privilege is to simply step in when POC are in uncomfortable or potentially unsafe situations.

"It's just everyday things whether it's being stared at in the store, whether it's being followed in a store, whether it's being questioned by a security guard or cop," Thompson said. "If you see someone's a POC and uncomfortable, it doesn't take much to step in and say, 'You cool man?' You know, whatever it is to make sure that we feel comfortable."

TAKE A LOAD OFF, VANDALS'

UI STUDENTS BREAK DOWN THE HOBBIES THEY PICKED UP WHILE BEING COOPED UP

Story By | *Abby Fackler*
Photos By | *Abby Fackler & Courtesy*
Design By | *Danielle Hawkins*

COVID-19 gave many University of Idaho students a really long, stressful spring break spanning from mid-March to mid-August. Students left campus and were met with quarantine, strange living situations, unemployment, scrambled online classes and a lot of uncertainty about the future.

Makena Douglas, like so many students trapped between home and campus, found herself with a lot of time on her hands.

"At first, I had a lot of extra time that I didn't know what to do with, and it was kind of just me and my parents," Douglas said. "I had to find way to get away from them for a little while and do my own thing — to be independent."

That's when she took up embroidery — the art of weaving creative designs into fabric using a needle.

"I saw it on Pinterest, and I felt inspired," Douglas said. "At the time, I was unemployed, and I needed something to do. I know how to sew, so I was like, 'OK, I'm going to start this project.' Then I just went for it."

Despite the uncertainty the pandemic has caused for many people over the past six months, it's created an unprecedented amount of free time for many as well. Some people, like Douglas, are taking advantage of this time by picking up new

hobbies or rekindling forgotten passions.

"It takes a long time, but I'm proud of the final product," Douglas said. "I like it because there are so many different things that you can do with it. It's very relaxing too — it's my alone time."

Alone time was something Douglas came to appreciate over the course of her time home, and embroidering helped her enjoy it.

"(Embroidering has) definitely shown me the importance of alone time," Douglas said. "I feel like I'm very dependent on social interaction and being around people, but I've noticed that it's nice to just be on my own for part of the day and have that time to myself."

For UI student Kelsey Starman, on the other hand, having so much time to herself was a much bigger adjustment.

For Starman, being sent home in March was hard because UI was just beginning to feel like home.

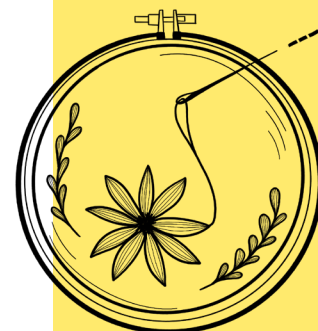
"Second semester, I was just starting to get in my groove, and then the coronavirus hit," Starman said. "I just cried a lot."

Despite the difficult adjustment of being back home, Starman rediscovered a lost love — crocheting.

"My aunt taught me when I was 10, so I



**MAKENA DOUGLAS
HOLDS THE
SWEATSHIRT THAT SHE
EMBROIDERED IN HER
FREE TIME.**



learned the basics then,” Starman said. “I didn’t do it for years, and then I was sitting at home during quarantine, bored out of my mind, and I had a big bucket of yarn in my closet. I was like, ‘I can do something with this.’”

From that moment forward, Starman began crocheting frequently, weaving two tank tops, a bucket hat and a large orange cardigan — her first big project. She is currently in the middle of making a big, thick sweater in preparation for the cold winter months.

While finishing multiple projects was rewarding for Starman, the process of crocheting itself is something she feels has benefited her on a deeper level.

“It taught me to be patient,” Starman said. “I get really antsy, but you can only crochet so fast. You have to be patient and trust the process and enjoy it too.”

While some students, like Douglas and Starman, found solace in activities that challenged the mind, other students took up activities that challenged the body.

Terron Tvrdy, another UI student, used to take frequent backpacking trips with his parents when he was younger. As he got older, his family had less time, so they stopped backpacking as often as they used to.

After the pandemic hit, Tvrdy rediscovered the sport when a friend stepped into the picture.

“Just this last summer, my buddy Lars asked me if I wanted to go backpacking and I said, ‘Yeah, let’s do this, not just say we’re going to do it and then actually not end up doing it,’” Tvrdy said. “We went to this lake that I’d been to before with my parents, it’s called Two Mouths Lake.”

Tvrdy was reminded of how much he enjoyed being out in the wilderness, and started planning his next excursion right away. Over the course of the summer he went on several other trips around North Idaho, and he doesn’t feel like slowing down anytime soon.

“It’s my new passion,” Tvrdy said. “I’m going to go backpacking every opportunity that I get. Never say no to a backpacking trip — that’s my New Year’s resolution.”

After being so immersed in the outdoors over the summer, Tvrdy believes it’s imperative others get outside more as well.

“It’s so easy to get caught up in your phone or watching Netflix or whatever, and there’s a whole other world out there that people are just missing out on,” Tvrdy said. “You have to make a conscious effort to get out there and have a good time.”

Backpacking and being outdoors has also taught Tvrdy that it’s OK to take a step back, especially during stressful and often overwhelming times like these.

“If you read about the pandemic every day, and you hear about it every day and it’s all that’s ever going on in your life — yeah, that’s going to make you anxious,” Tvrdy said. “If you give yourself some time to get away from it all, it’s healthy — it’s a cleanse.”



TERRON TVRDY BACKPACKING IN NORTHERN IDAHO. | TERRON TVRDY



KELSEY STARMAN CROCHETING AND PURLS HER WAY TO WEAVING A NEW SWEATER.



LOCKDOWN ABROAD

UI STUDENTS DESCRIBE THE PANDEMIC'S EFFECTS HALF A WORLD AWAY

Story By | *Hanna Jackovich*
Photos By | *Dani Moore*
Design By | *Bonnie Lengele*

Waking up on the morning of March 14 with 87 missed phone calls from her parents, Olive Swan, a current University of Idaho senior and my roommate in Lyon, France, was told to leave the country within 24 hours. She had seen me leave four weeks earlier as COVID-19 began to reach Italy, only a short train ride from our new city. At 4 a.m. on Feb. 18, I waited for an Uber outside Residence André Allix, the first time I'd been in a car since arriving in France six weeks prior. It would be taking me to the airport.

Trains, buses and our feet had been the mode of transportation that we relied on during those first weeks to take us to museums and bakeries, then further to Paris and the United Kingdom. That was all ending months earlier than planned now.

I had decided to leave for personal health reasons while the pandemic was still underestimated. Experiencing a health care system abroad brought unique challenges with language barriers and a general lack of understanding for how to seek care. To avoid this, I risked unknowns for my financial situation and graduation plan to return home.

I never expected a month later I would be considered lucky for leaving my study abroad experience early. Nor did I anticipate being followed across the world by COVID-19.



OLIVE SWAN LEFT HER PROGRAM IN FRANCE.

BEFORE THE WAVE

This story of being uprooted began before Swan was scrambling to get home in March, and even before I chose to leave in February. Students from UI, including Tyler Moye, faced the pandemic first in China, where COVID-19 originated.

A week before his departure from Shanghai, China Jan. 28, Moye noticed elderly community members were no longer socializing in their front yards. Soon he was informed that China was locking down. He needed to leave.

"We couldn't even get food because none of the grocery stores were open... so (the study abroad program) sent us oranges and apples and Chinese snacks, and it definitely wasn't enough to really be living on," Moye said.

Though he had to flee China, he didn't give up his once-in-a-lifetime opportunity yet.

Instead of returning home, Moye flew to Taipei, Taiwan, to complete a different Mandarin-language immersive program to stay on track for graduation. When he arrived, he saw little to no sign of a pandemic. Schools and businesses were open with minimal social distancing.

"I was in this oasis," Moye said, praising the immediate Taiwanese response to the outbreak that allowed the virus's impact to remain minimal.

As COVID-19 cases continued to rise across the world, Moye was confused to see other countries were not nearly as well-prepared.

TYLER MOYE FLED HIS CHINESE STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM TO TAIWAN.



LIMBO

"For this earliest group, there was a quick solution, it seemed like," Dr. Bill Smith, director of UI's International Studies program, said.

Prior to mid-March, the spread of COVID-19 appeared to only subtly impact the Western Hemisphere. Every student impacted had a unique situation until the U.S. had its major shutdown, Kate Wray Chettri, UI director of Education Abroad, said.

Though students like Moye and myself were still concerned about finishing our degrees, this was manageable for UI's study abroad program.

"People have had to come home from study abroad for military coups or there's a volcanic eruption... so this is work we had done before," Smith said.

No one was ready for the scale and magnitude of this pandemic, but students and staff abroad were among the least prepared. Many found themselves in a state of limbo.

"I called my mom, I was crying, everybody was crying," Reece Christman, a UI junior who studied abroad in Viterbo, Italy, last semester, said.

Instead of seeing her mom on vacation in Italy the following week, she would be coming home.

Christman then had one week to change her flight and prepare to leave Italy. As the virus spread through Europe, other programs began to consider a shutdown as well.

The U.S. State Department said to come home. UI hadn't been in contact, and the University Studies Abroad Consortium (USAC) study abroad program in Lyon wouldn't call it off, Swan said, remembering her confusion.

This occurred as UI staff, including Smith and Wray Chettri, attempted to contact over 100 people across the world that were affiliated with the university — a difficult task that required late-night and weekend phone calls with scared faculty, students and parents.

As a result, a disconnect between programs and students lasted weeks before the final shutdown left Swan and others rushing to return to the United States within 48 hours.

Choosing to leave for home before study abroad programs shut down was a financial unknown for many, but staying eventually meant paying thousands in airline fees.

Others faced a reverse issue as foreign students visiting Moscow for the semester, Wray Chettri said. In these situations, options varied from a shelter-in-place order to a 48-hour period to return home. No one had an easy choice.



REECE CHRISTMAN HAD ONE WEEK TO FLY HOME FROM ITALY.

“

**I CALLED
MY MOM,
I WAS
CRYING,
EVERYBODY
WAS
CRYING.**

”

HOME SWEET HOTSPOT

Moye believed he found a perfect alternative when he arrived in Taipei, but after two months, he was instructed by the U.S. State Department to decide immediately whether to stay in Taiwan or come home to a country where COVID-19 cases were uncontrollable.

"We had students abroad where the risk wasn't as strong as it was in Seattle," Smith said.

Preparing for the worst, Moye packed toilet paper.

Upon arrival, Moye dealt with reverse culture shock alone. The resources that typically help ease the disorienting adjustment back into a routine at home were focused instead on cleaning up the aftermath of programs closing early.

Christman quarantined for two weeks upon her return while friends didn't understand why she was taking COVID-19 so seriously.

Swan watched France from afar, feeling like her host country was combatting the pandemic more effectively than her home country. The International Programs Office faced COVID-19-induced budget cuts. Smith focused on rearranging graduation requirements for International Studies students whose required study abroad trip, was no longer possible.

I lost the feeling of security that I first felt arriving back home. I thought I escaped an oncoming wave six weeks earlier, but the United States was now the hotspot of the world.

“

**NORMAL
RULES
DIDN'T
APPLY.**

”

GOING FORWARD

As policy and regulations in the U.S. slowly caught up to the rapidly spreading pandemic, changes started happening more quickly for study abroad students, Smith said.

"Normal rules didn't apply," Wray Chettri said.

Program requirements were adjusted for students no longer able to complete a study abroad experience, language immersion or senior seminars abroad.

Study abroad programs began instructing remotely once students returned home — though that meant logging into a class streamed from a far-off land at 3 a.m. in many cases — and offered refunds when possible.

Many once-in-a-lifetime experiences will never be recovered, but there was a silver lining in the dark cloud.

Christman said despite the pain of leaving, she would do it again for those two months in Italy.

Looking back, Moye realized he'd gained some experiences unique only to a worldwide pandemic. Not all once-in-a-lifetime experiences were lost.

"I was the only person on the metro in Shanghai (and) I'm probably one of the only people to ever experience that," Moye said.

MOYE POSES IN FRONT OF A MAP IN THE INTERNATIONAL STUDIES OFFICE.



CHRISTMAN PHOTOGRAPHED WITH A GLOBE, WEARING A SWEATSHIRT SHE BROUGHT FROM ITALY.



Humans of Moscow

Story By
Photos By
Design By

Elizabeth Holdridge
Nataly Davies
Nataly Davies

Emily Hengehold, a University of Idaho sophomore, first arrived on campus Aug. 9. That night, she discovered she had a fever. She was immediately moved into her sorority's quarantine space, then quickly shuffled to a hotel, struggling to find on-campus housing that was safe. Four days later, she received a positive test for the coronavirus, and "a million doors opened."

Q: When did you first think you had COVID-19?

A: "I came up on Aug. 9 to unpack in DG (Delta Gamma) and was in here for probably all of three to four hours before I finally spiked a fever and was like, 'OK, I don't know if I'm hot from just moving my bins in or if there's something going on.' So, I took my temperature and had a 100-point something, just barely a fever. So, I texted DG's president and she put me right in the quarantine room. Literally day one getting here and hours after, it was so frustrating."

**READ THE FULL Q&A AT
BLOTMAGAZINE.COM**



UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO STUDENT EMILY HENGEHOLD RECOUNTS HER ON-CAMPUS QUARANTINE EXPERIENCE.

Q: How long did it take for you to get your results?

A: "I got tested on the morning of Aug. 10 and I think it was four or five days. I had just checked out of my third hotel room because they were booked again, and I was driving around waiting to figure out what to do and it came around 4 p.m. on Aug. 14. I had called Gritman and U of I and everyone I could think of and got so many different stories. I called the lab the night of Aug. 13. (They said) they had to send all of their swabs to Seattle and that it would be another week and a half. I don't think they were all on the same page, which was frustrating. It was fine but it definitely could've been faster, especially since it was the 24 to 48 hours you will have your results they were pretty insistent on."

Q: What were the quarantine dorms like?

A: "It was a dorm. I don't think it's been used in a while because it was kind of gross and dirty, there were bugs in my room. The bed was one of those blue camping mattresses and they gave me these thin little top sheets to put down and a quilt. The pillow was pretty thin. Luckily, I had brought my own blanket with me and that was my lifesaver. They had a little kitchenette that they kept stocked. They didn't deliver food to your door; you were kind of just free reign. You'd go down with a mask and they had breakfast, lunch and dinner every day which was super nice. It was good, I was definitely well fed. I'm sure I could've walked outside if I wanted. They didn't really say anything about it, but I just opened my window, there were huge windows. I had the fresh air which was nice."

DUAL

MINDS

Story By
Illustration By
Design By

Dakota Brown
Maxen Stone
Joel Bartlow

Yesterday morning I woke up to the sound of my alarm clock blaring at 4 a.m. I crankily threw back the covers and watched through crusty eyes as my feet began to shrivel up from touching the cold stone ground. I had forgotten to close the window. *Great.* I said to myself, grabbing a grey towel from the dirty laundry basket and a bar of soap from the tin can I kept beside my bed.

I ran down the stale-aired hallway of Saint Anne's Foster Home toward the communal showers. I liked being the first one awake in the morning, even if it was a pain to get myself out of the sack. When I got up at 4 a.m., usually nobody else would be in the bathroom to bother me. This morning, however, I already heard at least two showers going. This is just perfect, I thought, they are going to use up all the hot water before I even get there.

Stepping into the bathroom, I immediately knew something was off. The water in stalls four and seven were going, but no towels or toiletries were left hanging on the hooks. Someone had also forgotten to close the shower curtain in four and peeking around the side I could see nobody was there. The water was just falling to the floor on full blast.

"That's weird," I said aloud, half expecting someone to call out, "don't worry about it man, Ollie just ran back to his room to grab a towel," or something like that.

Ollie is also an early riser. Well, I shouldn't say that, really. Ollie doesn't ever actually go to sleep, so normally if anyone is up in the morning showering with me it's Ollie or Adam. Adam is our ROTC wannabe. He wakes up every morning to go for a jog up and down the three-story foster building, and sometimes I'd see him in the showers too, cooling off after his run. So, this is what I thought it might be. Maybe Adam was in seven and would call out at any moment to let me know that Ollie would be back soon. I waited. Still silence.

"Hey Adam, man, you in seven?"
Nothing.

I walked to the back of the showers toward stall seven, and that's when I noticed it. Pooling out from beneath the shower, a slow-moving mixture of water and a dark red liquid.

Quickly I pulled back the curtain and when I did, I collapsed to my feet. I reached out to the body of a young man, maybe 16 or 17, with warm hazelnut colored hair and bronzed corkboard skin. His face was covered by a mass of tangled locks and blood dripping down the side of his head. It looked like he had smashed his face against the wall and fell on the floor face down. His mouth just barely underneath the water, he wasn't breathing.

"Help!" I called out.

"Somebody come help me! There's a kid here, he's not breathing, somebody please hurry!"

I heard running from down the hallway. I turned to see Ollie dashing toward the bathroom with a uniform gray Saint Anne's towel wrapped around his waist. Mother Mildred came in behind him with a security officer. They entered the room and Ollie started shouting.

"Mother! Mother! He's over here in shower seven. He passed out while I was showering and hit the floor. I ran to you as soon as I could."

"Quiet down Oliver. We need you to step back for a moment while we take care of this. You've surely woken the others with all your yelling. Go and close the door. Lock it so nobody can come in, and please turn off that damn shower before you waste all of our hot water!" Mother Mildred snarled at Ollie. I stepped out of the shower.

"He's dead." I said. "He drowned."



CONTINUED ON BLOTMAGAZINE.COM

SUNFLOWER GIRL

The illustration depicts a young girl with her head tilted back, looking up at several large, stylized sunflowers. She is wearing a light blue dress and a pink headscarf. The sunflowers have bright yellow petals and dark brown centers. The background is a warm, golden-yellow color with large, soft-edged shapes in shades of purple and orange, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The ground is a mix of green and brown, representing grass and soil.

Poem By | *Austin Emler*
Illustration By | *Emma Boobar*
Design By | *Emma Boobar*

She roots herself in the open meadow,
Next to the flowers she loves,
Mimicking their amber faces,
Turning to the rays of the sun.

The tender kiss of the breeze,
Shared between her and the flowers,
A vibrance in her smile,
Stolen from golden petals.

She flaunts the beauty,
Expressed by a Sunflower,
Embracing their meaning,
Of happiness and warmth.

BECAUSE STORIES ARE WORTH TELLING.



@BLOTMAG

SAFETY at UOF!

Call 911 if it's an Emergency

GENERAL SAFETY ON CAMPUS

- Lock your residence and vehicle
- Keep your Vandal Card on you and don't loan it to anyone else
- Stay alert and in tune with your surroundings, know your location in case you need to get help
- Look up from your phone before you cross the street, have something reflective on your bag or coat, lights on your bicycle
- If you notice streetlights or building lights out while on campus, email lightsout@uidaho.edu
- If you see broken or icy sidewalks or other physical hazards, report it at uidaho.edu/isafety

CAMPUS SECURITY SERVICES -

- 24-Hour Campus SAFEWALK call 208-885-SAFE(7233)
- Regular patrols of campus to watch for potentially hazardous situations & criminal activity
- Vehicle jumpstarts, loaner gas can
- Assistance with after-hour building and office lockouts

PUBLIC SAFETY & SECURITY -

uidaho.edu/pss

- Sign up for Vandal Alerts
- Environmental Health & Safety Information & Reporting
- Active Shooter Response
- Annual Security Report

MOSCOW POLICE DEPARTMENT, CAMPUS DIVISION -

(208)883-7054 (non-emergency)

- ISUB Campus Office
- Community Policing, educational workshops
- Promoting safety, security and protection

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uidaho.edu/vandalcare

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- If you've witnessed concerning behavior from another member of the Vandal Community
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- Email askjoe@uidaho.edu with questions

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- 24-hour Dating or Domestic Violence & rape crisis hotline (208)883-4357
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