
From: Office of the President <noreply@m.uidaho.edu>
Sent: Friday, March 13, 2026 6:01 AM
To:
Subject: Vandals reign over the Big Sky

Letter from the President



Office of the President, president@uidaho.edu
March 13, 2026

Dear Vandals,

Boise's Idaho Central Arena transformed into a Vandal fortress during the Big Sky Basketball Championships. Backed by boisterous, brave and bold fans, the Vandal women and men claimed historic Big Sky titles on Wednesday. For the first time, both teams will play in their respective NCAA Tournaments in the same season.

The top-seeded Vandal women won their 20th straight game, beating Montana State to claim the title. Idaho set a program record with its 29th victory of the season for an overall 29-5 record and will play in March Madness for the first time in a decade.

Second-year coach Arthur Moreira was unanimously voted Big Sky Conference Coach of the Year after leading the Vandals to the regular season title. Led by a tight-knit crew of transfer players, including Big Sky Tournament MVP Hope Hassman, the team has been fully embraced by the Vandal Family.

“Our arena is awesome, our community is awesome, we have the best band in the country, and they deserve to have a team playing in the NCAA Tournament,” Moreira said in his postgame press conference. “I was born and raised in Brazil, I’ve lived all over the place... and Moscow is the first place that feels like home. It’s a special place, a special community.”

About seven hours after the women’s celebration, the Idaho men ended a 36-year title drought. As Vandal cheers echoed through Idaho Central Arena, they capped a stunning five-day run to the championship with a hard-fought win over Montana. The Vandals entered the tournament as the No. 7 seed. They defeated No. 8 Sacramento State, No. 2 Montana State, No. 3 Eastern Washington and No. 4 Montana on their way to the title.

Coach Alex Pribble used a nucleus of players from Idaho to build the championship team. All-Big Sky Tournament selections included Coeur d’Alene’s Kolton Mitchell and Meridian’s Jackson Rasmussen alongside championship game hero Isaiah Brickner, from San Diego.

Even when they’re not winning titles, our Vandal student-athletes are outstanding representatives for our university. The men’s basketball team set a record with a 3.43 average GPA last fall. The players regularly visit with local elementary school students, discussing healthy life habits and the importance of education as part of the College Headed and Making Progress (CHAMPS) program.

“This was the vision three years ago when we took over the program, to build a program that we’re proud of, a team that is competing for championships and that did it the right way,”

Pribble said after the game. “We have extremely high-character young men and so to add a championship to the GPA records and community service these guys do makes it come full circle,” Pribble said.

Now our Idaho teams take the national stage. The NCAA Tournament is the pinnacle of college basketball, drawing millions of television viewers. The national television broadcasts and social media buzz can generate millions of dollars worth of exposure value. Both Vandal squads find out their NCAA Tournament destinations and matchups when the brackets are revealed on Sunday. Each tournament begins next week.

The U of I teams will certainly miss playing in the Gem State, but the teams know Vandal fans will be supporting them wherever they go.

“I haven’t been a part of a university that has a passionate fan base like this,” Pribble said. “It’s a group of people that really care deeply and who show up for you. They helped us get over the top tonight. When things got tight, we heard the fans, we heard the noise and that helped carry us through.”

We’re incredibly proud of our student-athletes and the Vandal Family that supports them in Moscow or wherever they compete. We truly have something special here. If you want to help us keep these coaches and their teams intact, reach out to me at president@uidaho.edu. I will gratefully and personally ensure we take care of these programs. It’s a great time to be a Vandal!

Go Vandals!

C. Scott Green
President



Snapshots

Anatomy lab partnership expands medical education

The U of I is preparing to expand medical education in the Treasure Valley through a partnership with Idaho State University. The U of I will lease ISU's Treasure Valley Anatomy and Physiology Laboratory, which will support U of I's potential partnership with University of Utah's Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine.

[Learn more.](#)

Picardi discusses the importance of migration tracking

U of I Professor Simona Picardi tracks animal movement and explains what it means for habitat and wildlife populations on

“The Vandal Theory” podcast. Picardi uses GPS tracking technology and data analysis to inform her research.

[Learn more.](#)

Vandal team drives efficiency for Idaho company

U of I Graduate student Hunter Hawkins is leading a team that is helping Amalgamated Sugar address safety and regulate production at their factory in Nampa. Hawkins and Professor John Shovic have worked for more than a year with employees at Amalgamated Sugar to prevent clogging in the company’s sugar beet processing steam dryer.

[Learn more.](#)



The Vandal men’s basketball team last won an NCAA Tournament game in 1982, when Coach Don Monson led Idaho past Iowa, 69-67 in overtime.



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