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**From:** Office of the President <noreply@m.uidaho.edu>  
**Sent:** Friday, September 26, 2025 6:02 AM  
**To:**  
**Subject:** McCall Field Campus getting much-needed upgrade

# Letter from the President



Office of the President, [president@uidaho.edu](mailto:president@uidaho.edu)  
**Sept. 26, 2025**

Dear Vandals,

Located on the shores of Payette Lake in Ponderosa State Park, the University of Idaho McCall Field Campus is Idaho's most picturesque classroom. Limited dining space created challenges for the hundreds of Idaho students who stay and learn at the site each year.

We gathered with state and federal leaders, educators and students this week to break ground on a new dining center so that even more students can learn about Idaho's water, forests and wildlife alongside the lake.

The campus' new 7,600 square-foot kitchen and dining hall will triple the current facility's capacity, and the building will

generate more energy than it consumes, adding to the campus' educational mission.

Each week from September through May, about 60 fifth through eighth grade students take part in the McCall Outdoor Science School (MOSS). The students conduct experiments, measure snowpack, assess water quality, study bugs and discuss forest productivity, gaining skills in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The fun, hands-on experience in the heart of Idaho makes a lasting impact.

According to data from the Idaho State Board of Education, students who attend MOSS are more likely to continue their education after high school, with go-on rates up to 20% higher than the statewide average. The program provides students with confidence to persist in school and prepares them for a variety of in-demand career fields.

Former ASUI President Martha Smith attended MOSS when she was a middle schooler in Kooskia and the graduate students at MOSS inspired her to explore higher education. She credits her MOSS experience for driving her to excel in high school and eventually thrive at the U of I.

"Meeting students from the University of Idaho (at MOSS) sparked a newfound sense of confidence in me," Smith said. "For the first time, I could picture myself in college, learning growing and enjoying the experience."

The McCall Field Campus is the epicenter for Idaho-centered research and workforce training. For example, our graduate students sample, study and model snowpack, which factors into water availability for the state. With 70 percent of Idaho's water coming from snowmelt, this research has major implications for agriculture, hydropower, recreation and water quality. Their hands-on experience also prepares them for careers in forestry, fish and game, and land management. MOSS also serves Idaho teachers through professional development programs.

MOSS employees have provided experiential training to more than 2,000 Idaho teachers. Those educators take inquiry-based lessons back to the classroom and incorporate outdoor science education into their curriculum. They inspire their students to explore STEM and natural resources careers and to be lifelong, active learners.

Bringing Idaho youth and teachers outdoors and exploring how Idaho's natural resources contribute to our quality of life embodies the U of I's mission to illuminate students and elevate our state through research and service.

Go Vandals!

C. Scott Green  
President



## Snapshots

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### **U of I team studies erosion prevention**

Farming runs in the family for U of I graduate student Jaycee Johnson. She is working with Professor Dev Shrestha on erosion solutions. They are experimenting with biochar to help soil retain moisture, especially on erosion-susceptible slopes.

[Learn more.](#)

## **Elordi aims to improve student experience for his alma mater**

Caldwell native Erik Elordi gained invaluable experience as a U of I resident assistant while he was an undergraduate. Now he serves as assistant vice president of Campus Services at U of I, playing a central role in serving students in housing, dining and facilities.

[Learn more.](#)

## **UI Extension's Five for Five program gaining national traction**

A team of seven UI Extension educators launched Five for Five: Five minutes to Better Health to encourage people to improve fitness and focus. The program is growing in popularity and a mobile app is in development to make the content even more convenient and accessible.

[Learn more.](#)



The Vandal football team will face Montana Saturday in Missoula in The Battle for the Little Brown Stein. The travelling trophy was introduced in 1938 and currently resides in Montana after the Grizzlies' victory in 2023.



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