

## Weekly Update 5/14/2020

With the Spring semester coming to a close and summer quickly approaching, we wanted to follow-up on some reminders and updates.

The 2020 Virtual Commencement Ceremony is quickly approaching and will be live-streamed on Saturday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> at 10 a.m. MST. Please be on the lookout for a notice from Marketing & Communications to the College community that will include a Facebook link for viewing the event. It will also be archived on the College's YouTube channel for later viewing, but the live debut of the event will be on Facebook. We hope you can join us in congratulating the seniors in a job well done and wishing them the best in their next adventure. We also want to thank the Virtual Commencement Team and Marketing & Communications for their hard work and dedication in coordinating this event. These trying times have created a few challenges, but the Yote spirit is alive and well! Please don't hesitate to contact the Virtual Commencement Team at [commencement2020@collegeofidaho.edu](mailto:commencement2020@collegeofidaho.edu) if you have any questions.

Students remaining on campus over the summer due to the inability to travel home will be working for their room and board throughout the summer months. A Summer Work Program Task Force has been created and the team will be assisting with coordinating job opportunities on campus for those students. This will be a comprehensive effort. If you, or your department, have any ideas where some extra support in the work force is needed, please don't hesitate to reach out to Danielle Dougherty Durham at [ddurham@collegeofidaho.edu](mailto:ddurham@collegeofidaho.edu).

We want to give you a sense of some of the circumstances that have led to over 150 students remaining on campus during this quarantine time. We have students who have lived through but lost family members to genocide. We have students who escaped from the Taliban, crossing mountain ranges and under gunfire. One student was on a bus that blew up killing a pregnant woman and her child who was sitting next to him – he was eight-years old at the time. We will share these stories over the summer. The one common denominator for all of these students is that they are grateful for the opportunity to go to college. It is not lost on them that education is the key to their future, and often for a better future for their extended family – not everyone from their background gets this opportunity. Domestic or international, these students are hardworking and determined to contribute to their community. They are eager to not just have a better life for themselves, but to help those around them lead better and more fulfilling lives. We have yet to meet an “entitled” student at The College of Idaho.

With that said, we would like to introduce senior Molly Vitale-Sullivan. To say that Molly is a high achiever would be an understatement. She is a math/physics major with minors in dual-degree engineering, analytical chemistry, Spanish, and psychology. She will pursue her Ph.D. in materials science in fall 2021. She is an NAIA National Champion in Indoor Track and Field in the 5000 meters, a ten-time All-American competing in Cross Country and Track, and an Academic All-American. She is a humble role model who leads by example. Here is what she has to say about COVID-19 and what she and others have experienced as a result. “In a matter of about a week, the C of I campus was left nearly empty except for international students and a few local Idaho students. The flurry of activity of professors and students walking to and from classes ceased and a hush fell over campus. Then after spring break, campus began to come alive in new ways. Administration and student organizations quickly adapted and soon a flood of virtual/distanced activities were available. From online yoga classes and dorm workouts to bedtime stories read by professors, there was no shortage of things to do while

finishing the semester online. With warmer weather, we could study and eat meals together outside on the quad. In many ways, the students on campus found new ways to be a community during this time. I am grateful that people took the time to personally check up on me and other students. Staying on campus during COVID made me realize how truly caring and supportive the Yote community is, and I am hopeful to be on campus in person for the upcoming fall semester. Now back at home, my heart goes out to the international students who are homesick and concerned about their student visas. I hope to find ways to support them over the next few months while they are worried about what the future will bring.”

We are pleased and grateful to three great corporate friends of the College that have stepped up to assist in a big way with our summer meals program. We committed early on that we would support our students who had no other options but to remain on campus for the summer with room and board, but it was an unbudgeted expense. Mark Miller and Del Taco offered to provide one meal a week for the entire summer for all 150 students. Del Taco helped us last summer and supported the football team last year and is a favorite place and a short walk for our students. Albertsons has also stepped forward to provide another meal a week, continuing the long record of philanthropy from the Albertsons company, Joe and Kathryn, and the Joe and Kathryn Albertson Family Foundation. Add to that the generosity of the Warren and Bernie McCain family, along with Mark Miller’s parents, Bob and Sharon Miller (both Warren and Bob were CEOs at Albertsons), and it is clear The College of Idaho owes a huge debt of gratitude for all that the extended Albertson family and company have done for us over all these years. Another legacy family and company, Simplot, is stepping up to support the summer meals program with a huge gift of great Simplot products. Jack Simplot was a trustee, a regular speaker at commencement for years and beloved by our students. He was also a major donor, and along with Joe Albertson, supported the college through some lean years. We are inspired and feel a deep sense of gratitude for the continued support. Thank you Del Taco, Albertsons and Simplot.

Stay safe and Go Yotes!

Doug and Jim