

# impact

University of Idaho Extension programs that are making a difference in Idaho.

## UI Extension internships provide hands-on opportunities for Idaho collegians

### AT A GLANCE

The University of Idaho Extension internship program provides hands-on opportunities for Idaho collegians to gain experience in teaching, research, youth development and more.

### The Situation

Each summer, college students begin looking for employment opportunities that may help them gain experience and increase their skill sets. For many, one of the most important qualities of a summer internship is being exposed to diverse work opportunities. Not only does this help to build their resume, but it also helps students identify career interests. Unfortunately, options for students to explore a variety of careers are sometimes difficult to acquire in a single internship.

### Our Response

University of Idaho Extension has created a summer internship program in local county UI Extension offices across the state, that provide diverse learning experiences in a variety of content areas. These internships allow students to work with UI Extension educators to help with teaching, research, program content and logistics, 4-H youth development and much more. This experience allows students to understand the University of Idaho Extension system, and also explore agriculture, family and consumer sciences, food systems, horticulture and many other career fields.

Qualifications for these internship positions require applicants to have completed 12 credits within the past



Cassie Moody, summer intern, leading a lesson for youth participants at Wilson Elementary School.

year at one of the eight Idaho public universities or colleges. Priority is given to University of Idaho student applicants. These parameters are in place to ensure that Idaho students are getting access to these opportunities, and that we are investing in our community. Furthermore, this position offers a competitive wage in the realm of internships, which makes the opportunity even more exciting for college students.

Not only are these internship programs beneficial for students, but they are also beneficial for University of Idaho Extension, and communities across Idaho as a whole. These programs allow students to gain a better understanding of what takes place in county UI Extension offices and receive exposure to Extension as a career path.

## Program Outcomes

Cassie Moody, who is a junior at the University of Idaho studying agricultural education, held the summer intern position at the UI Extension office in Owyhee County during the summers of 2022 and 2023. The two summers she has spent interning for University of Idaho Extension have proven to be impactful to her in numerous ways. Her internship focused on agriculture, family and consumer sciences and 4-h youth development. Her responsibilities ranged from creating a social media campaign, assisting with structuring classes and day camps, participating in ongoing research, designing and implementing a youth program and helping with the Owyhee County Fair.

Cassie identifies two favorite things about her internship, the first being assisting Owyhee County's Agricultural Extension Educator Scott Jensen with his ongoing research projects. In the summers of 2022 and 2023, she assisted with data collection on the Fine Fuels grant-funded project in Rockville, Oregon. She learned all about rangelands including identifying plants and line-point, collecting biomass, laying transects, and measuring gap and density. In 2022, she also assisted with a project at the Rinker Rock Creek Ranch in Bellevue where she was responsible for gathering data on cows and calves, including observational data and assisting with GPS collars. Cassie says, "working on these research projects was an experience unlike any other I have done. The knowledge and experience I gained has made me a more well-rounded agriculturalist which I am very grateful for."

Cassie's other favorite part of her internship has been teaching. As a future educator, she finds these

experiences to be especially valuable. In 2022, she assisted Owyhee County's Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Educator Surine Greenway with the "Just Grill It!" program and with the "Let's Grow!" program in 2023. Both experiences allowed her to work with community partners and teach in a variety of settings including elementary schools, day camps, preschools and daycares. Furthermore, Cassie also had the opportunity to assist in establishing and piloting the "Let's Grow!" program which involved developing curriculum and organizing sites to visit. "The experiences I have had in a variety of educational settings through Extension have helped me feel more prepared to enter the classroom as a teacher in just a few years," Cassie says.

Overall, the outcomes of this program are invaluable. Real-world experiences, new opportunities and countless connections are just a few benefits of the program. "Not only has this position helped me to grow professionally, but it has also allowed me to make connections within the University of Idaho which has helped me in my academic endeavors," notes Cassie. Cassie was awarded the Outstanding Sophomore Award within the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences this past year and credits her internship with UI Extension as being a major component that set her apart from other candidates.

## The Future

Each summer, internship positions are available in University of Idaho Extension offices across the state. These diverse internships provide a specialized opportunity for anyone passionate about serving their community or who enjoys learning and likes to work in multiple work environments.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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