



**For Immediate Release**

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## **HIGHER EDUCATION FACULTY RECOGNIZED AT GENERAL EDUCATION SUMMIT**

Idaho’s public institutions celebrated six outstanding faculty members this month for their innovative approaches to general education instruction. These educators were honored with the General Education Innovative Award for successfully integrating essential “durable skills” in their coursework.

The awards were presented during the annual General Education Summit held October 10-11 in Boise.

General education courses, typically taken in the first two years of college, lay the foundation for student success. Research shows that student performance in these courses strongly predicts both retention and achievement in their chosen majors. Recognizing this crucial connection, Idaho’s eight public institutions have prioritized making these courses relevant and engaging.

The award recipients stood out for their exceptional work in developing durable skills including critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, teamwork and adaptability within their general education curricula. These fundamental

capabilities not only support academic achievement but also prepare students for long-term career success.

The award winners, their institution, and areas of instruction are:

- Amanda Soza – Boise State University; Oral Communication
- Kimberly Tolson – Lewis-Clark State College; Humanistic and Artistic Ways of Knowing
- Hollie Leavitt – College of Western Idaho; Scientific Ways of Knowing
- Annik Martin – Idaho State University; Mathematical Ways of Knowing
- Matt Wilson – Idaho State University; Written Communication
- Jessica Sargent – College of Eastern Idaho; Social and Behavioral Ways of Knowing

Each General Education Innovative Award recipient received a \$500 honorarium for CapEd Credit Union, the longtime sponsor of the award. They were also invited to give a presentation during the Summit describing their classroom teaching methods that improve instruction for students.

“The passion and way these instructors find ways to connect general education and their students to real-world experiences is impressive,” State Board Executive Director Joshua Whitworth said. “These instructors had students learning about artificial intelligence while applying it to their writing or experiential learning techniques in A&P that engage students in driving their own learning. All of these innovators produced an environment that enabled their students to connect learning to highly sought after durable skills, and in the end, competitive advantages in the workforce.”

Degree-seeking students attending an Idaho higher education institution are required to take 36 credits in general education courses in order to graduate.

More information about general education in Idaho is available on the State Board of Education’s website: <https://boardofed.idaho.gov/board-facts/board-committees/general-education-committee/>

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