

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, program 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 potential 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 Extension offices across the state. These internships allow students to have diverse learning experiences in a variety of content areas while working with UI Extension faculty and staff. These include assisting with teaching, research, program development, logistics and more. This allows students to understand the University of Idaho Extension system, and explore agriculture, family and consumer sciences, food systems, horticulture and many other career fields.



Briyer Howell, summer intern for the UI Extension office in Owyhee County, teaching a youth educational event.

Qualifications for these internship positions require applicants to have completed 12 credits within the past 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 have access to these opportunities, thereby continuing a commitment to community investment. Furthermore, this position offers a competitive wage in the realm of internships, making the opportunity even more appealing to college students.

Not only are these internship programs beneficial for students, but they are also valuable for University of Idaho Extension and communities across Idaho as a whole. These programs enable students to gain a

deeper understanding and in-depth exposure to Extension as a career path.

Program Outcomes

One example of these summer internship program opportunities includes a highlight of Briyer Howell, who is a second-year student at University of Idaho studying finance. Briyer held the summer intern position at the UI Extension office in Owyhee County during the summer of 2025. Under the guidance of her supervisor, Briyer undertook three major independent projects that enabled her to apply and develop a wide range of skills, including educational programming, community fitness outreach and digital content creation.

One of Briyer's favorite projects was designing and delivering an eight-week hands-on educational series for youth in partnership with the Homedale Public Library. Each week focused on a new topic presented in an interactive and engaging way for youth. She was responsible for researching and presenting age-appropriate material, creating hands-on activities, managing time and advertising the events through flyers and social media. The multiweek program was successful and well-attended throughout the summer.

Her second major project involved leading an eight-week community wellness series to promote the use of Owyhee County's new outdoor fitness court. Using resources from the National Fitness Campaign, Briyer built progressive workouts and eventually adapted them to include modifications for all ages and fitness levels. After leading participants through the first week of fitness activities, she prepared adaptive exercises and even created laminated fitness cards with illustrated graphics to help participants follow each station.

Her ability to evaluate the effectiveness of her lessons in real-time and make changes to use in implementing the content was reflected through the interaction of participants at the court.

Lastly, Briyer produced a weekly "Tuesday Tips for Summer" digital series that covered seasonal safety topics like water safety, grill safety and fun hydration tips. These posts, published on the UI Extension, Owyhee County, Facebook page, were guided by Briyer's research into community needs and summer-specific hazards.

Throughout the internship, Briyer gained experience in program content and design, public health education, research, planning and social media marketing. She walked away with strengthened communication, leadership and creative problem-solving skills. This internship has made Briyer feel more prepared for a future career and confident in her ability to work in a fast-paced and changing environment. For Briyer, this opportunity was not just a summer job, it was a meaningful step forward in her professional journey.

The UI Extension internship program provides significant public value by fostering community engagement, enhancing local resources, and supporting youth and health education. Through projects like those led by Briyer Howell, the program builds community capacity by leveraging student talent to deliver meaningful evidence-based programs, while also preparing future professionals with real-world skills in leadership, communication and public service. Over the last 10 years, UI Extension in Owyhee County has supported and guided 10 interns. The internships not only benefit the students but also directly enriches the communities they serve, making it a mutually impactful program.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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