

2023 EDITION | 2023-2024

IDAHO

INVESTMENT GUIDE



Employers are asking themselves:

Where can we find qualified candidates and employees?

Idahoans are asking themselves:

How do I take the next step in my career?



Take the pledge to build your workforce



Idaho LEADER connects Idahoans and employers with work-based learning opportunities across the state.

Together, we're building a stronger workforce.





BUILDING IDAHO'S WORKFORCE



Idaho's Workforce Development Council (WDC) champions the development of a talent pipeline that improves the profitability and global competitiveness for its businesses and enhances the quality of life for its citizens.

WDC supports employers that contribute to training Idaho's workforce by awarding:

- Employer Grants
- Industry Sector Grants
- Innovation Grants



To learn more about Idaho's
Workforce Development Council, visit

wdc.idaho.gov

IDAHO

INVESTMENT GUIDE

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Photo courtesy of AIRE Inc.

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Our 24,000-square-mile service area offers plenty of room to grow.

If you're launching a new business or expanding an existing one, Idaho Power has the resources to take your business to the next level — wherever you put down roots.

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the speed of business[®]**

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your energy needs:**

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Web: idahopower.com/econdev

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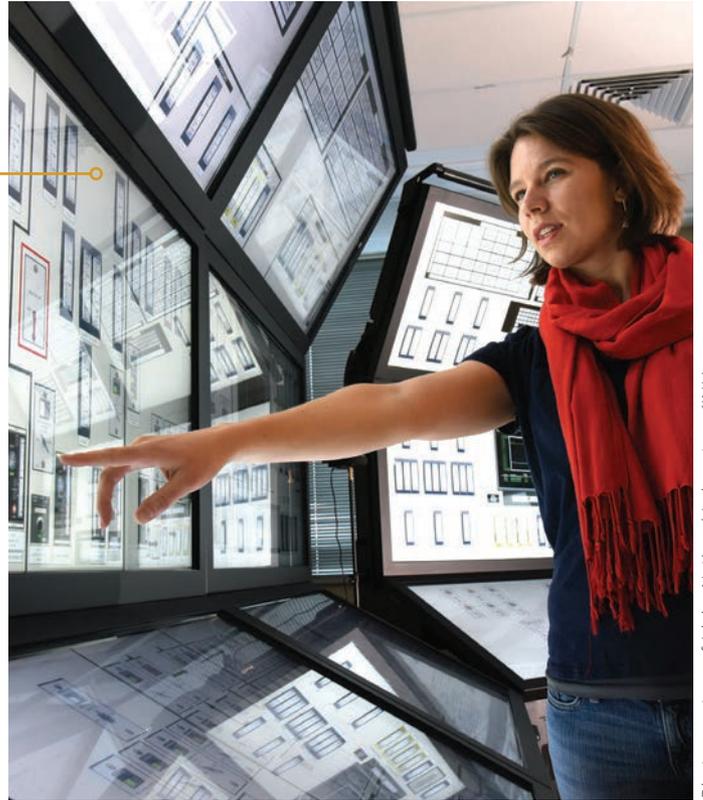


Photo courtesy of Idaho National Laboratory (INL)



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At Idaho National Laboratory, our researchers work together with industry and universities by advancing nuclear energy research, enabling clean energy technologies, and securing and modernizing the nation's critical infrastructure.

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Rooted in Idaho, growing worldwide

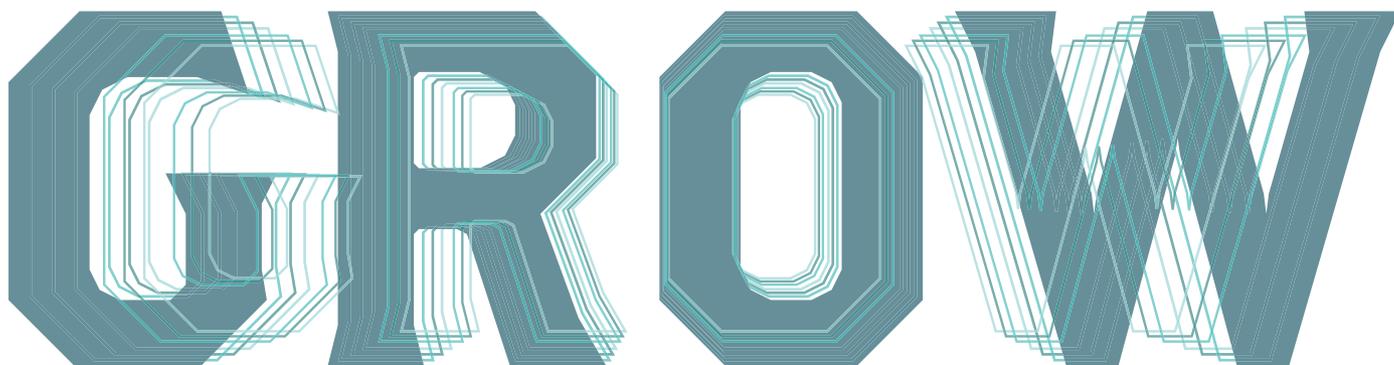
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SEEING POSSIBILITIES IN POTATOES

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Primed to



How Idaho supports businesses on the fast track to expansion.

by **RON STARNER**

Just how good is Idaho for business? Take a look. This state of 1.7 million people may be small, but it packs a powerful punch.

Bloomberg and Kiplinger recently ranked Idaho as the No. 1 Top Performing Economy in the nation. The U.S. Department of Labor rated Idaho No. 1 in job growth. The Census Bureau reports Idaho is the nation's fastest growing state.

In its 2018 rankings, CNBC rated Idaho No. 3 in the nation for overall business friendliness, No. 4 in cost of doing business, and the No. 5 best economy. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, meanwhile, reported that Idaho had the seventh-fastest-growing GDP in the country.

Bobbi-Jo Meuleman, director of intergovernmental affairs for Idaho Gov. Brad Little, says these performance measures are not the result of accident. Instead, she notes, they are by design.

With the passage of Tax

Reimbursement Incentives (TRI) and the establishment of 28 Opportunity Zones around the state, Idaho is aggressively promoting business growth and new business creation.

"Opportunity Zones were one of our biggest wins of 2018," says Meuleman. "They are an investment tool for capital. You get more tax benefits the longer you invest, up to a maximum of 10 years. You get zero tax on capital gains then. We are also very excited about the TRI. We approved seven projects in 2018 for that program. It is a new tool that we are very proud of, and it will lead to the growth of a lot of existing business in Idaho."

Under TRI, a qualifying company can receive a tax credit of up to 30 percent on income, payroll and sales taxes for up to 15 years. The incentive is available for a broad range of industries, including aerospace, agriculture, food processing and high-tech. The TRI is open to both existing Idaho businesses and those looking to expand to Idaho.



Kathryn Albertson
Park in Boise
Photo by Ron Starnier

Idaho Industries 10-Year Job Growth Forecast

Electrical Equipment Manufacturing	66%
Information Services	52%
Beverage Manufacturing	49%
Data Processing & Hosting	29%
Advanced Manufacturing	28%
Food Manufacturing	20%
Agriculture Support	16%
Computer & Electronics Product Manufacturing	13%
Wood Product Manufacturing	12%

“Opportunity Zones were one of our biggest wins of 2018. They are an investment tool for capital. You get more tax benefits the longer you invest, up to a maximum of 10 years.”

— Bobbi-Jo Meuleman, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs for Gov. Brad Little

Idaho launched the TRI program in 2014 and has seen it pay huge dividends since. One benchmark is how quickly it has enabled the state’s target industry sectors to grow. According to EMSI labor market data, the 10-year forecast is for industries in Idaho to grow by the amounts shown in the chart above.

“We will continue to focus on our existing businesses in 2019 and make sure they have the resources they need to thrive,” says Meuleman, who recently completed a stint as director of the Idaho Commerce. “We will also be strategic in our business attraction efforts and go after companies that make sense to be here in the Idaho

supply chain.”

Fostering innovation will also be a major component of that plan. A recent report by Verizon on the Most Innovative Metro Areas in the U.S. showed that Boise ranks fifth in the country in the number of patents per 10,000 residents in the metropolitan area.

“I personally think the word about Idaho is now out,” Meuleman notes. “We are now recognized as the fastest-growing state in the nation. We will continue to promote the state and make sure that we are getting out our image as a business-friendly location.”

IDAHO BY THE NUMBERS

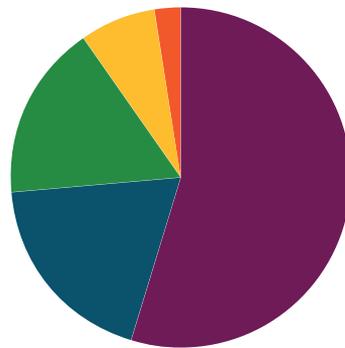


Top Projects by Investment

Companies	City	County	Product	New/Exp	Sector	Invested (US\$M)	Sq.Ft.(1000)	New Jobs
McCain Foods	Burley	Cassia	Potato products	E	MF	200	180	180
NewCold Advanced Cold Logistics	Burley	Cassia	Cold storage	N	DW	90	180	68
Idaho Milk Products	Jerome	Jerome	Dairy products	E	MF	31	220	53
Capitol Distributing	Caldwell	Canyon	Grocery distribution	E	DW	30	221	265
Jayco	Twin Falls	Twin Falls	Recreational vehicles	E	MF	21	248	360
DowDuPont	Burley	Cassia	Building materials	N	MF	20	60	25
Chobani	Twin Falls	Twin Falls	Dairy products	E	MF	20	70	25

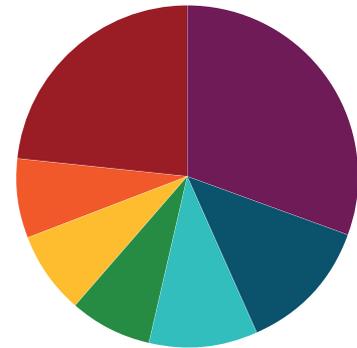
Source: Idaho Commerce

Projects by Type



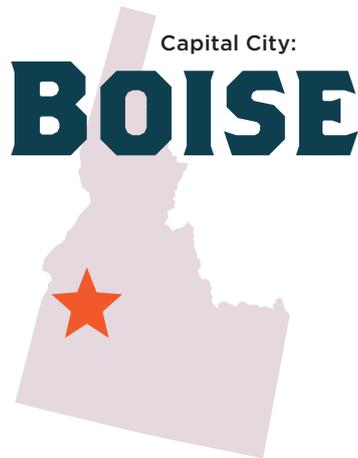
Type	Projects
Manufacturing	23
Office	8
Distribution Warehouse	7
Headquarters	3
Research and Development	1

Projects by Sector



Sector	Projects
Food & Beverage	12
Transport & Logistics	5
Chemicals & Plastics	4
Electronics	3
Metals	3
Machinery, Equipment & Construction	3
Other	9

Location



Major Industries



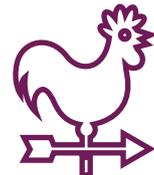
1. Manufacturing



2. Technology



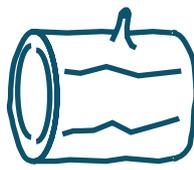
3. Tourism



4. Agriculture



5. Food processing



6. Timber



7. Mining

Source: Idaho Commerce

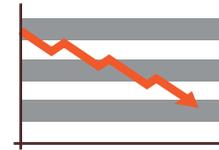
Workforce



8,431

Jobs since July 1, 2014

Total Tax Reimbursement Commitments



2.7%

**Unemployment rate
(U.S.= 3.7%)**

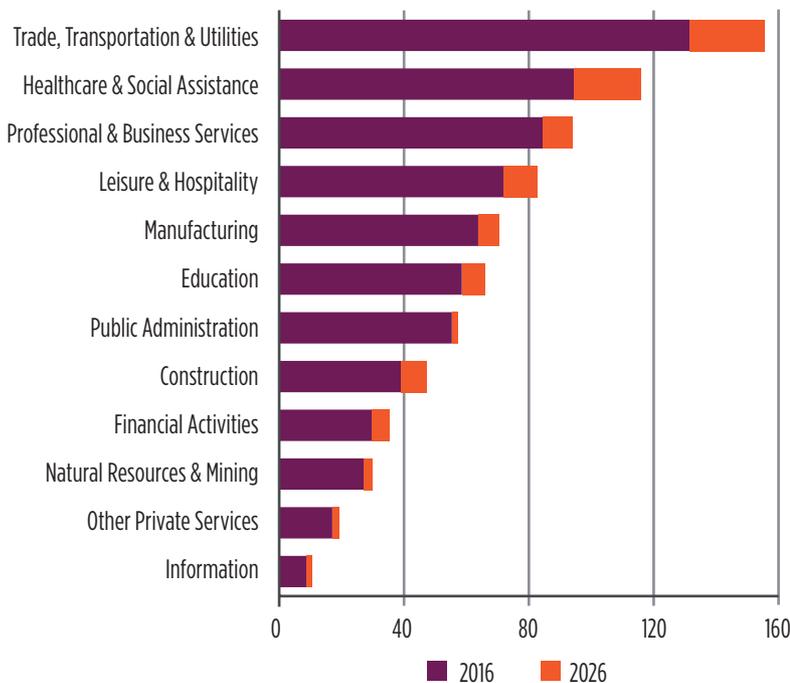
Idaho has consistently been recognized as a national leader for employment and wage growth.

Number of employed:

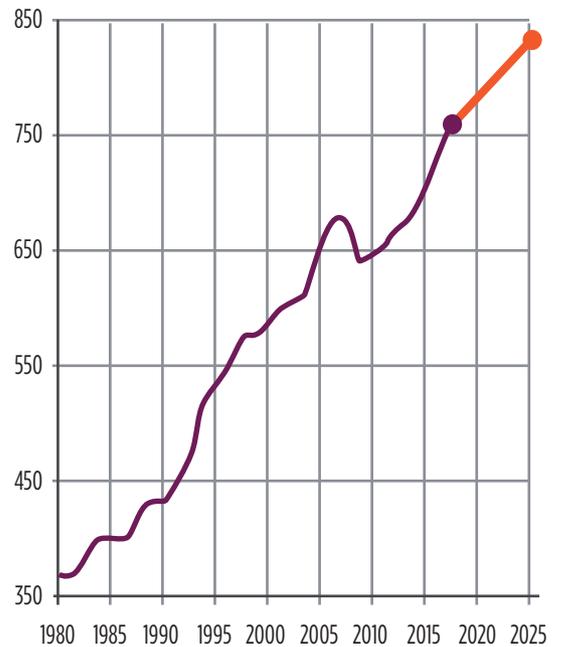
833,756

(as of 1/18/19)

**Idaho's Employment
by Industry**



**Idaho's Total Employment
in Thousands**



Technology



20%

10-year projected
growth rate

20,300

Jobs



\$110K

Average wage

2,100

Establishments

Source: Idaho Commerce

Food Production & Agriculture



7TH

in the U.S. for agriculture
goods and food product
exports per capita

2,000

Establishments

44,400

Jobs



5.4%

of the state's total
workforce

\$46,100

Average Wage

Source: Idaho Commerce



Building on the Strengths of the
Gem State

**Brad Little plans to streamline rules
and cut taxes as Governor of Idaho.**

by RON STARNER



In many ways, Brad Little has been preparing to be Idaho's 33rd governor his entire life. An Emmett native who was raised on his family's sheep and cattle ranch, he went on to graduate from the University of Idaho in 1977 with a degree in agribusiness.

He worked in ranching his entire professional life, and he and his wife Teresa still live in the small town of Emmett, about a 45-minute drive north of Boise.

His second calling, though, was public service. He served in the state Senate from 2001 to 2009 before becoming Idaho's 37th lieutenant governor. In January of this year, he took over the state's highest office after winning the governor's race in November.

Through it all, he's focused on the one thing he cares about most: Idaho's people. That's why he's made education the centerpiece of his new administration. In the following interview, he talks about the importance of making Idaho a better place for everyone.

What skills do you plan to bring from your career background to the Office of Governor, especially in the area of economic development?

GOV. LITTLE: My selection was predicated on what I've done the last 10 years. Everything from old traditional ag industries to brand new companies and international companies, I've dealt with all of them. We went to the SHOT (Shooting, Hunting and Outdoor Trade) Show in Las Vegas in

January. We've been very successful in the outdoor sector. I want to serve as a conduit for entrepreneurs and startups. I like to make the connection between existing companies in Idaho and how they complement new companies. Clif Bar is a good example. I put them in touch with a lot of employee stock ownership program (ESOP) companies in Idaho. They felt welcome in Idaho.

“I like to make the connection between existing companies in Idaho and how they complement new companies.”

— Gov. Brad Little

Idaho's economy, by many measurements, has been booming for years. What do you plan to do as Governor to sustain that growth and enhance it?

LITTLE: I am focused on what we can do to add value to our communities and existing industries. That's always what I will choose. I also want to diversify our economy. Commodity prices go up and down. But I want companies to be able to find a willing and capable

workforce and a business climate that is willing to adapt.

What policy initiatives do you plan to pursue and enact as Governor in the coming year to make Idaho an even more attractive destination for business owners?

LITTLE: Right now, my number one priority is education, particularly career technical education opportunities. Companies want to know that we have good schools here. They want to know there is ample opportunity to train their workers here. I will also focus on infrastructure — roads, broadband capacity, etc. If you come here by truck or rail freight and want to go to Asia or population centers in the U.S., we will look for ways to aggregate rail freight and truck freight for you so that you can get your products to market faster, cheaper and more efficiently.

How personally involved do you plan to be in the recruiting of companies from other states and countries to expand in Idaho?

LITTLE: I had a friend who worked for a bullet manufacturer. One of their vendors was going to build a new facility outside California and they were looking at Spokane, Washington. I steered them from Washington to Idaho and they located here. They provide a lot of the critical material that our bullet manufacturers need. That helped us keep those companies.



Governor Little and his wife, Teresa.

Photo courtesy of the Office of the Governor

How do you plan to take advantage of the new Opportunity Zones program to further economic growth in your state?

LITTLE: We are excited. When that program became available, the folks at Idaho Commerce got to work on it. We sent out a call to all communities. We scattered those out to create a broad and diverse landing pad for those investors in Idaho — rural, urban, etc. We will work with those communities to fulfill that. Final rules have not been issued by the U.S. Treasury, but we intend to be very aggressive.

You talked about strengthening agriculture and keeping energy costs low while you were running for Governor. How do you plan to do both?

LITTLE: By allowing the market to work. The current power producers and new power producers find that Idaho is a good place, from a regulatory standpoint and development

standpoint. We know we have to grow our power production. Managing the grid is very important. Whether you are a small producer or a large one, we want all producers to see Idaho as a place where they can continue to produce abundant and affordable power. We will diversify and secure our power supply. Just look at the risks in other states. We want people to have a good supply of affordable power here.

You also promised less government spending and more tax cuts. Can you share specific details of how you plan to accomplish these things as Governor?

LITTLE: My first executive order is to streamline business licensing to make sure we do not have any unintended restrictions on advances in construction and other businesses. My second executive order today was that for every new regulation, an agency has to repeal or simplify an existing rule. We want people to know the rules and not have to hire lawyers to decipher them.



280

ACRES IN PHASE 1

200

ACRES IN PHASE 2

120

ACRES IN PHASE 3

800+

ACRES IN
FUTURE EXPANSION

Your business. Our rail. Let's move.

Your next customer is just over the horizon. Reach them with rail.



FLEXIBILITY

Options for land purchase, including build to suit and Fee Simple Ownership.



UTILITIES

Fully equipped with working utilities, Mountain Home Industrial Park is ideally positioned to take advantage of clean, renewable energy with commercial and industrial rates that are consistently ranked as some of the Country's lowest.

- Water (14" Line)
- Intermountain Gas
- Sewer (10" Line)
- Idaho Power
- Fiber Optics



COMMUNITY

Various facilities are located near site, including:

- Mountain Home Air Force Base
- Marathon Cheese Corporation
- Wolfe Pac Pellets
- Mountain Home Solar 1



PRICE

Land is competitively priced, starting at \$1.50 per square foot.



INCENTIVES

Idaho Department of Commerce: Tax Reimbursement Incentive, Opportunity Fund, Business Advantage, 3% investment tax credit, and property tax exemption.

Elmore County Board of Commissioners: May exempt certain business property from property taxation for up to five years, based on investment in new plant and building facilities meeting tax incentive



ACCESSIBILITY

Close to every form of transportation, including:

- Union Pacific Rail
- Mountain Home Municipal Airport (1 mile off-site)
- Boise Airport (40 miles off-site)
- Close Access to I-84



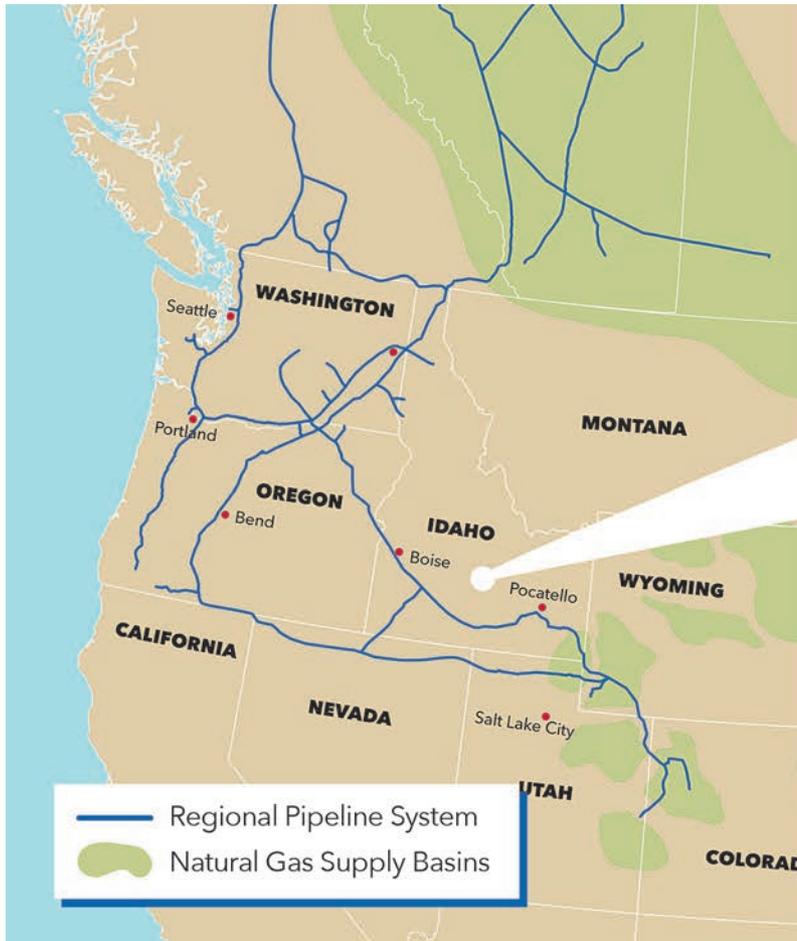
You also talked about the importance of keeping the children of Idaho in state. How do you plan to pursue the attainment of this goal?

LITTLE: That's my big one. When we interviewed staff and Cabinet members, we talked about that. First, they have to have a good job so they can live comfortably and plan for retirement. Everything we are doing is pointed toward that. Second, we must have a good education system. Third, we must have good and affordable health care. People want to know what the cost of health care is before they start a business. The next thing is protecting our quality of life. People want to have access to great recreational opportunities. The final part is

we want people to have the utmost confidence in our government.

Another pledge was to “give business the freedom to grow the economy” in Idaho. Can you share details of how you will promote this goal?

LITTLE: We just need to keep doing what we've done in the past and do it better. We want to do more of it. That's why we are really scrutinizing our rules and bringing down the tax rates. Taking the sales tax off of groceries is the next thing. We also must look at the unemployment rates, workers comp, etc. When businesses come, they all have a big macro spreadsheet. They plug in all these rates and it spits out a bottom righthand income number.



Having the energy to fuel your business is no small potatoes.

Securing abundant, reliable and affordable energy is the bottom line for finding your company's right location. For more than 60 years Intermountain Gas Company has provided our customers with clean, competitively priced natural gas. Our robust infrastructure drives our reputation for reliable delivery regardless of energy demands. And we have the customers—from international food processing companies to popular yogurt and cheese brands—to prove it.



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“Right now, my number one priority is education, particularly career technical education opportunities. Companies want to know that we have good schools here.”

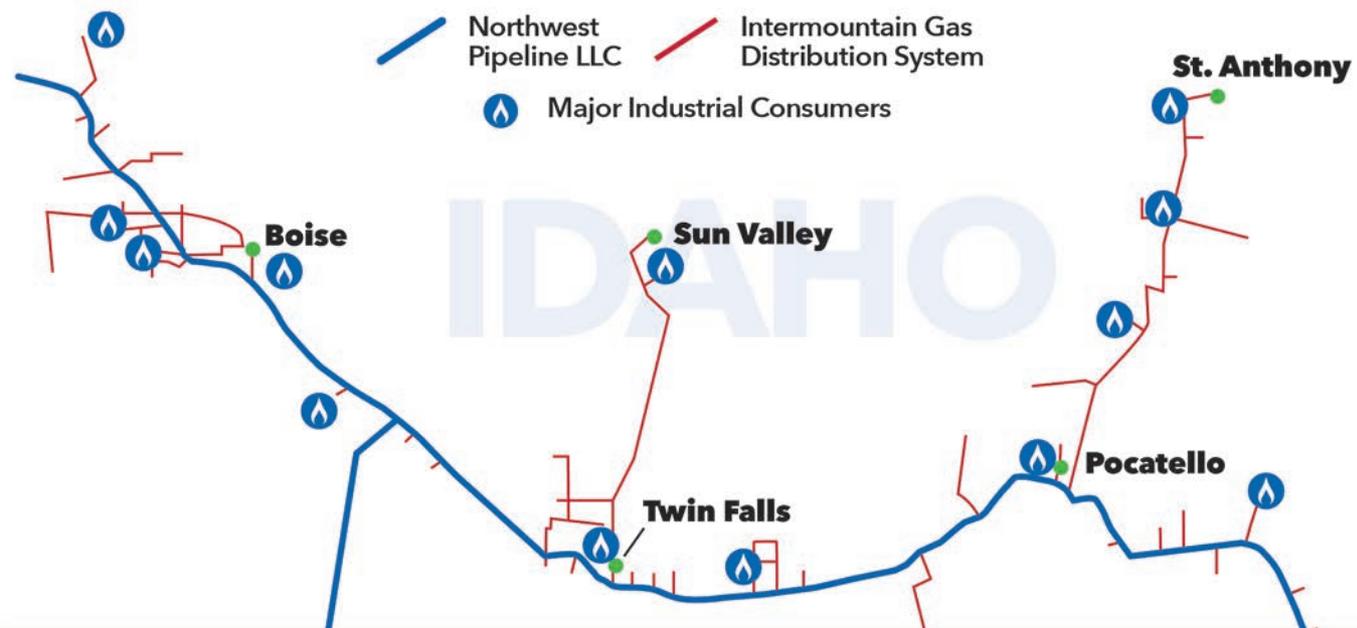
— Gov. Brad Little

They can't grow if they don't have a workforce. If they are looking at two different sites and they are looking at Idaho, we stack up well. But we can't take anything for granted.

If you were speaking face to face with the CEO of a company in another state, and you were trying to recruit that company to Idaho, what would you say as your closing sales pitch?

LITTLE: I'd give them a list of the last 10 companies that moved here and ask them to talk to them. There is no better presentation we could make. The proof is in the pudding. When we go to the SHOT Show, for example, we will have many outdoor recreation companies from Idaho there. We will just ask them to talk to these folks. They are our best sales force. 💎

A NATURAL FIT FOR YOU



FACILITATING LARGE-VOLUME NATURAL GAS TRANSPORT SINCE 1987



Removing
BARRIERS
to Entry

How Idaho's new commerce director plans to keep his state humming along.

by RON STARNER

When Idaho Commerce Director Tom Kealey offers business advice, the wise person listens.

Kealey is not only the state's chief marketing officer; he's a seasoned business leader who knows what it means to invest private capital, launch new ventures, meet payroll and close international deals.

With a resume that includes a Harvard Business School MBA and stints with GE Capital, Montlake Capital, TransUnion Corp., RoadRailer and other companies, Kealey brings a wealth of experience to the job he was appointed to by Governor Brad Little in January 2019.

He's also putting his money where his mouth is. Some 22 years ago, he and his wife Joy acquired the Chicago Connection Restaurant Group in Idaho, and today the chain operates popular eateries in Boise, Nampa, Meridian and Eagle.

In a recent interview with the Idaho Investment Guide, Kealey discussed his new role and his approach to economic development.

What are your department's top priorities for 2019?

DIRECTOR KEALEY: Our job is to help Idaho retain businesses, help those businesses grow, and attract new business to the state. To do that, we'll make innovation and technology a major emphasis. I have experience in

helping next-stage high-tech firms grow, and we'll do that here. We have a lot of momentum built up. Plus, I have a background in international trade, and we'll work to ensure that Idaho companies benefit from that.

We'll also focus on helping communities secure grants and development funds, increase investment in tourism, and secure broadband infrastructure. We'll focus on sustainable energy projects, including development of small modular reactors; and natural resource businesses will get a lot of attention. We'll make sure we're supporting existing Idaho businesses like Micron and others, and we'll work to grow our emerging industry sectors like fraud prevention, investment analytics, cybersecurity and related fields.

What is your value proposition for business executives?

KEALEY: I listen first. I want to know — why are they making this move? What is important to them? And then see if we have a match. First and foremost is listening to our current base of businesses and finding out what they need to stay here and expand. And then we'll focus on attracting new businesses, but we'll take time to learn about them first. Solutions will be different for each. What region of Idaho would be most attractive to them? Do they need incentives? Our value is as a consultant and facilitator to get them to the right decision.



“This is still a very accessible community – whether it’s your neighbors or companies or the government. **The way of life here is very inclusive.** There are not many barriers to entry.”

— Idaho Commerce Director Tom Kealey

How important to Idaho’s success is the Tax Reimbursement Incentive program?

KEALEY: It’s one of the elements in our tool kit. There are a lot more things that business leaders decide upon in advance of that: infrastructure, services, workforce, etc. We believe that the TRI program is important, but not everyone chooses it. Through December 2018, we’ve approved 50 companies with this program, but it doesn’t fit everyone. They still come to Idaho. Idaho has a lot to offer without TRI. It has to work for the company and for Idaho – and then they get the advantage of it. It is not a forever thing. It has a sunset. Companies have to work hard to earn it.

What do you feel is your state’s hidden gem?

KEALEY: Idaho is strong, growing and stable. It has a diversity of rural and urban land. We have the geography. Quality of life is one of the tops in the country. And we have been discovered.

Idaho consistently ranks as one of the fastest-growing states in the nation. Why?

KEALEY: Idaho has been building with a lot of new technology companies over the last 15 years. Our climate has been very pro-business and pro-quality of life. This is still a very accessible community – whether it’s your neighbors or companies or the government. The way of life here is very inclusive. There are not many barriers to entry.



Which industries are emerging now to become major players in Idaho's economy in the years to come?

KEALEY: The tech community has popped up around the universities in each region. Health care is growing. Food processing is growing. Idaho National Laboratory has gotten big contracts. Cybersecurity has spawned big growth in different parts of the state. Manufacturing is growing, and we are a hub for transportation.

Boise is a well-known metropolitan success story around the country. What are some other locations in Idaho that merit attention?

KEALEY: The Treasure Valley is the region around Boise. It includes Caldwell, Meridian, Nampa, etc. Tremendous business diversity exists here. Then there is the corridor on the east side — Rexburg to Pocatello. There is a swath of business activity there that is very robust with INL, Idaho State University, tech centers, farm equipment manufacturing, etc.; plus, it is the gateway to Yellowstone. Twin Falls and surrounding places are booming too. Sun Valley is a tourism corridor. Coeur d'Alene to Moscow is growing, and so is Lewiston.

How does your department plan to get better in the coming 12 months?

KEALEY: Our client is the community across Idaho. We'll ask questions like: are we missing anything? Are we being responsive enough? We'll look at our long-term initiatives. What needs to be on our radar? But right now, Idaho looks very strong as a place to do business. 💎

EMPOWERING Workforce



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Daniel S.
CWI Graduate, 2018
Heavy Duty Truck Technician Program

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COMMUNITY PARTNERS – Business & Industry

TRAINING CENTERS – Nampa, Boise, & Online

Workforce Development

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CLICK: www.cwidaho.cc



Moving at the Speed of Business

Recent projects attest that ‘rapid response’ is not just a catch phrase in Idaho.

by RON STARNER

You don’t win McCain Foods’ \$200-million investment or Fabri-Kal’s 75,000-sq.-ft. expansion without the ability to move the levers of government expeditiously.

In Burley, Idaho, various state and local government agencies worked together efficiently and seamlessly to ensure that corporate project timetables would be met, and the beneficiaries are the 230 workers who will soon see their paychecks from newly created jobs.

Fabri-Kal, which makes compostable

yogurt and food service containers out of wheat straw, received its building permit last April to construct a \$4.2-million facility in Burley. The project will create up to 50 new jobs over two years.

“They have doubled in size with this expansion, and they are not done growing,” says Doug Manning, economic development director for the City of Burley. “They like the good employee base here, and they are providing these workers with better jobs and better benefits.”

Like McCain Foods, Fabri-Kal benefits from Team Idaho’s Rapid Response Team, an initiative launched by former Gov. C.L. “Butch” Otter. The interagency team is responsible for collaborating quickly and efficiently when businesses are interested in launching, growing or relocating in Idaho.

“Working as a team has always been part of the Idaho culture and that culture is very evident in Burley’s string of successes. Collaboration and cooperation among state and local governments, stakeholders and businesses are at the core of Rapid Response,” says Tom Kealey, Director of Idaho Commerce.

Led by Idaho Commerce, the Rapid Response Team is comprised of representatives of the following state agencies: Idaho Commerce; Agriculture; Division of Building Safety; Energy Resources; Environmental Quality; Labor; the State Tax Commission; Transportation; Water Resources; and Lands.

The team works closely with local government and various economic development partners to carry out the state’s mission of “running at the speed of business.” The team proactively engages with companies to clearly

communicate regulatory requirements and speed up the timeline to secure permits, discuss infrastructure needs, and outline opportunities for grants or other incentives.

Site selection consultant Mike Mullis said the program worked as intended when he helped Amy’s Kitchen go through an expansion process in Idaho.

“When Amy’s Kitchen and I first toured the former Heinz building on September 15, we couldn’t have imagined that less than a month and a half later we would be announcing Amy’s expansion plans for the site,” he

“From the local level to the state agencies, everyone moved quickly to ensure we had the incentives and training programs in place to make Pocatello the best option for Amy’s Kitchen.”

— Mike Mullis, *site consultant for Amy’s Kitchen*

said. “The speed in which the project progressed can absolutely be attributed to the cooperation and coordination of the various Idaho agencies working with us. From the local level to the state agencies, everyone moved quickly to ensure we had the incentives and training programs in place to make Pocatello the best option for Amy’s Kitchen.”

Similar results were achieved when the world’s largest manufacturer of frozen potato products wanted to expand its facility just outside of Burley. McCain Foods announced in mid-2017 that it would invest more



The Burley area of Southern Idaho has seen over \$1 billion in capital investment in the last few years. Over \$350 million of that is FDI.

than \$200 million into expanding its plant and creating 180 jobs.

“The McCain Foods project is the largest capital investment we have received in an application for a Tax Reimbursement Incentive,” said Idaho Commerce spokesman Matt Borud. The firm will receive a 30 percent reimbursement of taxes over 15 years, totaling nearly \$6 million.

“This is the largest French fry plant in the world,” Manning said of the Canadian-owned company. “This is having a large economic impact on equipment sales in Southern Idaho.”

The Burley area is also reaping sizable investments from NewCold Advanced Storage Logistics (\$90 million), Redox Chemicals Inc., and Standridge Color Corp. “Standridge came here from Social Circle, Georgia, in the last 18 months,” notes Manning. “They are an international company, and they know they can do their work more efficiently and at less cost here.”

Manning says his region’s best-kept secret is “how easy it is to get something done. It is very easy to work here. The congressional delegation will always respond, and so will the

Governor’s Office. That’s why we’ve seen a billion dollars in capital investment in the last few years, and over \$350 million of that is foreign direct investment.”

Idaho Commerce expects to expedite projects even faster now that it has launched a revamped Gem State Prospector portal for site selection. The portal (www.gemstateprospector.com) provides a simplified layout that presents decision-making data about available sites and buildings across Idaho. The tool allows business owners, investors, executives and site selectors to research and analyze demographics, consumer spending, available talent pool, workforce, infrastructure, transportation, housing, business and industry information.

“The newly improved Gem State Prospector is the latest example of Idaho offering world-class tools to businesses, site selectors, investors and economic development professionals to make expanding or relocating businesses in Idaho as seamless, efficient and fast-moving as possible,” the Governor’s Office said. “We move at the speed of business.” 💎



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Photo courtesy of Visit Idaho

by SAVANNAH KING

As the hub of high-tech, manufacturing and health care in Southeast Idaho, Pocatello is an industry powerhouse.

Over the last few years, Pocatello has earned recognition from Financial Times (which ranked it among its Top 10 Micro Cities of the Future and No. 2 in Best Economic Potential) and Forbes (which called Pocatello the “Best Small Place for Business” six years in a row), among others. The city has also built a reputation for affordability, low crime and highly rated schools.

Outside of the city’s obvious business benefits, it’s also a haven for outdoor recreation. From biking to hiking and skiing to fishing, there is no shortage of fun to be had. Several museums, historical sites, and Idaho State University provide ample opportunity to take in the arts and the region’s culture.

We spoke with Mayor Brian Blad about the region’s advantages and why businesses find success in Pocatello.

What are some recent success stories in Pocatello’s economic development efforts?

MAYOR BLAD: Recently, we've had success with the announced expansion of the Federal Bureau of Investigation facility. The Siphon I-15 Interchange and Northgate development will also provide a boost to our economy in years to come. Over the last several years, we've also seen success in recruiting Amy's Kitchen to Pocatello, the expansion of Great Western Malting and Western States Caterpillar, and the growth of small businesses in our city.

What do you want business to understand about your community?

BLAD: The climate in Pocatello is very business friendly with low operating costs, including one of the lowest electricity rates in the country. The local governments are

Idaho by Zippia. Previously, we have been named as a "Best Place for Small Business" by Forbes and in the top 10 of best small places to move by Primary Relocation and World ERC.

Our workforce is well-educated and has a strong work ethic. Our service-oriented workforce is quality-focused and dedicated to the companies they work for.

How would you describe Pocatello's quality of life?

BLAD: Pocatello is a caring and dedicated community and is ideal for those looking to raise a family. Our access to the outdoors is second to none. Within 15 minutes, you can be at a trailhead and out exploring the beauty of nature.

“Pocatello is a caring and dedicated community and is ideal for those looking to raise a family.”

— Mayor Brian Blad

very supportive of our area businesses and willing to help them achieve success in our community. We also strongly believe in the public-private partnership model. We have incredible access to transportation including air, rail and interstate highways. There is also a good amount of land available for manufacturing, industrial and business park development at Pocatello Regional Airport. There are a number of workforce training courses offered through Idaho State University.

In 2018, Pocatello claimed the No. 3 spot in the nation for career opportunities by SmartAsset and the "Best City to Start Your Career" in

Would you share a little-known fact about the region with our readers?

BLAD: An interesting note is that Idaho State University's Holt Arena was the country's first covered football stadium on a college campus. Idaho State University is also a Carnegie-classified doctoral research institution and is one of only a handful of universities to offer technical certificates all the way to doctorates. We are also home to the Museum of Clean, which is dedicated to the "value of clean." 💎



Image by Tobin Rogers Photography

The Best-Run City in America

by SAVANNAH KING

In Nampa, things have a way of coming together — from the highways and railways that connect the city to a market of more than 66 million, to the way government, businesses, educational organizations and the community come together to ensure success for all. Perhaps that's part of the reason why Nampa was recognized by WalletHub as being the No. 1 Best-Run City in America in July 2018. Boise was ranked No. 3.

We spoke with Nampa Mayor Debbie Kling about Nampa's ability to get things done and help businesses reach their goals for success.

Tell us a little about what makes Nampa special.

MAYOR KLING: We're an amazing historical city that was built around the railroad back in the day. We're still a community where people speak to one another on the street and neighbors help neighbors.

What are some of Nampa's more compelling recent economic development projects and investments?

KLING: One that came out of our business incubator is House of Design. That is just a fun company to watch. They started in our incubator and they've grown and added 35 new full-time positions in the last year, and they're going to add another 20 in 2019.

Cordova Outdoors is the company that makes Yeti Coolers and they're here in Nampa. They've just recently added 30 employees. They have grown tremendously and have an addition that's underway.

Autovol Manufacturing is a new company coming in with a \$100-million investment and bringing 349 jobs. They're in more of the construction building industry, and they have a 400,000-sq.-ft. facility that is under construction.

Then we have a couple other

investments too, with a new company under the Project Widget name that's a \$21-million investment with 180 jobs coming. The other one is Project Bronco, which is a very large distribution center. That's going to bring in between 1,200 and 2,000 jobs. So, it's a massive distribution center. And we've got Syngenta, which has done an expansion on their R&D facility and that's a \$29-million investment.

What do you want our readers to understand about doing business in Nampa?

“My attitude toward growth and businesses coming in is, ‘It’s a yes! How do we make it work?’”

— Nampa Mayor Debbie Kling

KLING: If I were CEO of a business looking to move into a community, what I would be looking for is No. 1 a community that is welcoming and very family friendly because you need a workforce that has a good work ethic. We're forward facing; we're ensuring that we have that infrastructure and everything that a business needs to succeed.

We have a number of companies that really want to come here. It's just finding the right ground. One thing that we have in Nampa is available ground with good freeway access. That's important to providing the potential for a business to come into our community.

One thing that is great is the leadership in our community. The leadership of the various organizations, myself, the city council, our elected officials, we have a very open-door policy. If there is a need or a challenge that a business faces, there's a willingness to address those needs to

help them. My attitude toward growth and businesses coming in is, “It’s a yes! How do we make it work?”

Workforce is often the decisive factor in the site selection process. How does Nampa's workforce measure up?

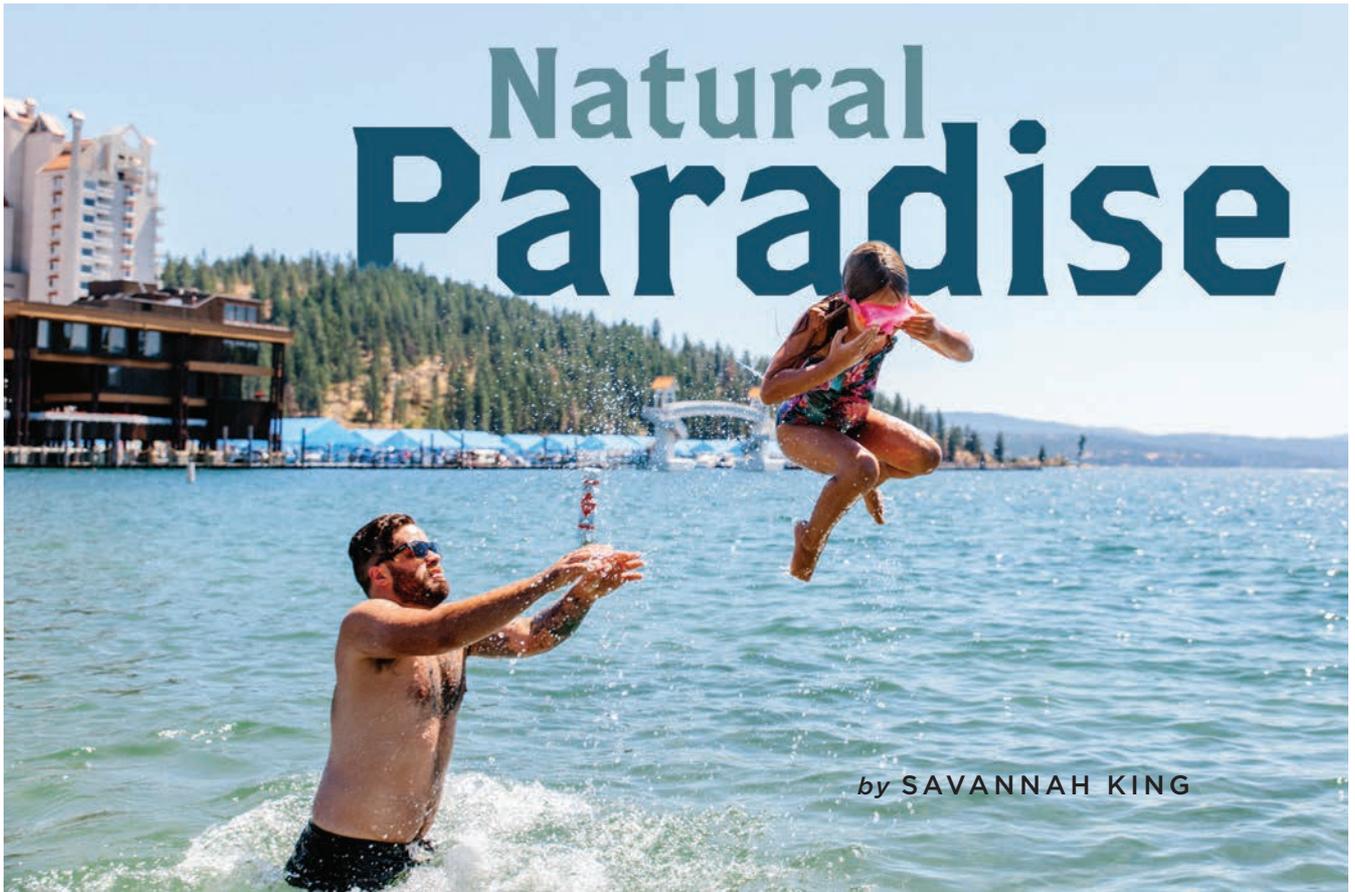
KLING: In Nampa, we have two school districts. We have six charter schools. We have three private schools. We have the College of Western Idaho. Northwest Nazarene University is here, and then we're bookended by the College of Idaho on the west and Boise State University on the east.

So, we have a wonderful educational environment.

The College of Western Idaho has been a huge asset because within a community college, students have a little bit more flexibility with their career side and their non-credit side with the Micron Technology Center that offers various programs to actually respond to the needs of our businesses.

How would you describe the quality of life in Nampa?

KLING: When I came here, I was concerned about coming to a smaller community, having been just south of Kansas City and having all those amenities around me. My husband told me how great the weather was here, and I didn't believe it. I have to say, I am so thankful that I get to live here. I think people are always surprised by how nice the people are and how many amenities we have right here. 💎



Natural Paradise

by SAVANNAH KING

North Idaho is a veritable natural playground. Stunning natural attractions, national and state parks, scenic byways, three ski resorts, amazing rivers and lakes — including the world’s longest floating boardwalk and floating greens for golfers — are enough to lure outdoor enthusiasts to the region year-round.

Coeur d’Alene is well-known and well-loved for its lakes, most notably Lake Coeur d’Alene. Formed by glaciers in the last ice age, more than 55 lakes are located a short distance from the city. Beyond the waterways, the region is also home to the Coeur d’Alene National Forest and miles upon miles of hiking and mountain biking trails.

“Our region is a nature-lover’s paradise where both national and state parks abound, and scenic byways pass

through stunning natural attractions,” notes Coeur d’Alene Mayor Steve Widmyer.

In addition to its ample outdoor recreational activities, Coeur d’Alene boasts logistical advantages, competitive operating costs, a strong pro-business community, and a highly skilled and trained workforce.

For years, Coeur d’Alene has been a hub for health, government, natural resources, manufacturing, IT, finance, real estate and construction. Home to multi-national companies like Buck Knives, Ground Force, Alliance Data, SQM, Empire Airlines, Hecla and others, the city knows how to help businesses not only survive but thrive.

With a regional workforce of more than 68,700 and growing, businesses can access highly skilled and highly trainable workers. Regionally, workers are drawn from nearby colleges and universities including



Lake Coeur d'Alene is a popular tourist destination.

Photos courtesy of Visit Idaho

Witworth, Gonzaga, University of Idaho, Washington State University in Pullman, Eastern Washington University, Spokane and Spokane Valley Community College.

“Because of our strong tourism and service industry base, we continually grow a new generation with excellent soft skills that are applicable to any industry,” says Widmyer.

that opened a year ago and has already doubled its space at the mall. Kitchen Coeur d'Alene’s goal is to help small business grow with the availability of commercial kitchen space.

The region is also part of a thriving aerospace hub. With Coeur d'Alene’s ideal location for distribution and warehousing along I-90 and US 95, moving goods across the county and

“Because of our strong tourism and service industry base, we continually grow a new generation with excellent soft skills that are applicable to any industry.”

— Coeur d'Alene Mayor Steve Widmyer

Success for Coeur d'Alene is a regional affair. The surrounding communities of Post Falls, Hayden and Rathdrum, along with Coeur d'Alene, have experienced their fair share of economic development activity over the last few years.

Inspire (Dish Network Technical Service Center) was recruited to the area in 2017 and chose to locate at the Silver Lake Mall. The company currently employs 300 workers with plans to hire 450. Also located within the Silver Lake Mall is the Kitchen CdA, a commercial kitchen rental space

into Canada and Mexico is quick and easy. The I-90 Aerospace Corridor Expo and Conference is a joint effort by Eastern Washington and North Idaho aerospace industries. The conference is in its third year and continues to grow with big-name sponsors like Boeing and SpaceX among others.

“We have a strong aerospace and aviation industry that’s part of the supply chain for major manufacturers in the Seattle-Tacoma area and the general aviation industry as well,” notes Widmyer. ♦

Explore New Opportunities

by SAVANNAH KING

In 1805, famed American explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark arrived at the meeting point of the Snake and Clearwater Rivers as they passed through the Gem State on their way to discover the Pacific Ocean. Today, two cities along their route are named for the adventurers — Lewiston, Idaho and Clarkston, Washington, just across the Snake River that also serves as the state line.

Located in the Lewis-Clark Valley in North Central Idaho near the border of southeast Washington, Lewiston is a hub of activity for both business and recreation in the Pacific Northwest. For much of its history, the region's industry centered around timber and forestry products. Today, the region

has diversified its economy to include manufacturing, high-tech industries, health care and education.

Businesses can draw from a deep well of talented and educated workers from Lewis-Clark State College (LC State), and Walla Walla Community College in neighboring Clarkston, as well as two research universities within an hour's drive.

From the furthest inland port on the West Coast at the Port of Lewiston, to the country's deepest river gorge at Hells Canyon National Recreation Area, Lewiston is full of unique assets and surprises.

We recently caught up with Lewiston Mayor Michael Collins about what makes Lewiston a location worth exploring.



Photo courtesy of Visit Idaho

How would you describe the business climate in Lewiston?

MAYOR COLLINS: Very positive. Our base businesses are growing, we are seeing a revitalization of our downtown and waterfronts, and tourism is up. Our wine industry is taking off like crazy. I cannot speak enough about how good we are feeling about the future here in Lewiston. Our city council enacted some new rules on new businesses that basically eliminated initial license fees to encourage new businesses as they get started.

We have a lot happening right now. Among other things, we have our new high school that is currently being constructed that was overwhelmingly supported by the community. But quite importantly, local business has been supportive because of the Career and Technical Education (CTE) program that will go with it. At the same time, Lewis-Clark State College is building a \$20-million CTE facility on the same site that will also work with the high school and local businesses. We expect this to help our local economy and businesses, as well as regionally, in providing a workforce in areas that are in dire need of workers. It may take some time for it all to kick in, but we're pretty excited about it. We have seen expansion of local manufacturers like Seekins Precision, our boat builders, and Vista Outdoors, to name a few.

What do you want business to understand about your community?

COLLINS: We have a very diverse community when it comes to business and general population. All ages are well-represented. This creates challenges in our efforts to meet all of those needs, but we are working hard to meet those to the best of our abilities.

We need skilled labor, and through the support of many of our local businesses, we are seeing great progress. Some of our largest employers

include Idaho Forest Products and Clearwater Paper, Vista Outdoors, and St. Joseph Regional Medical Center.

What industries would you like to attract to the region and why?

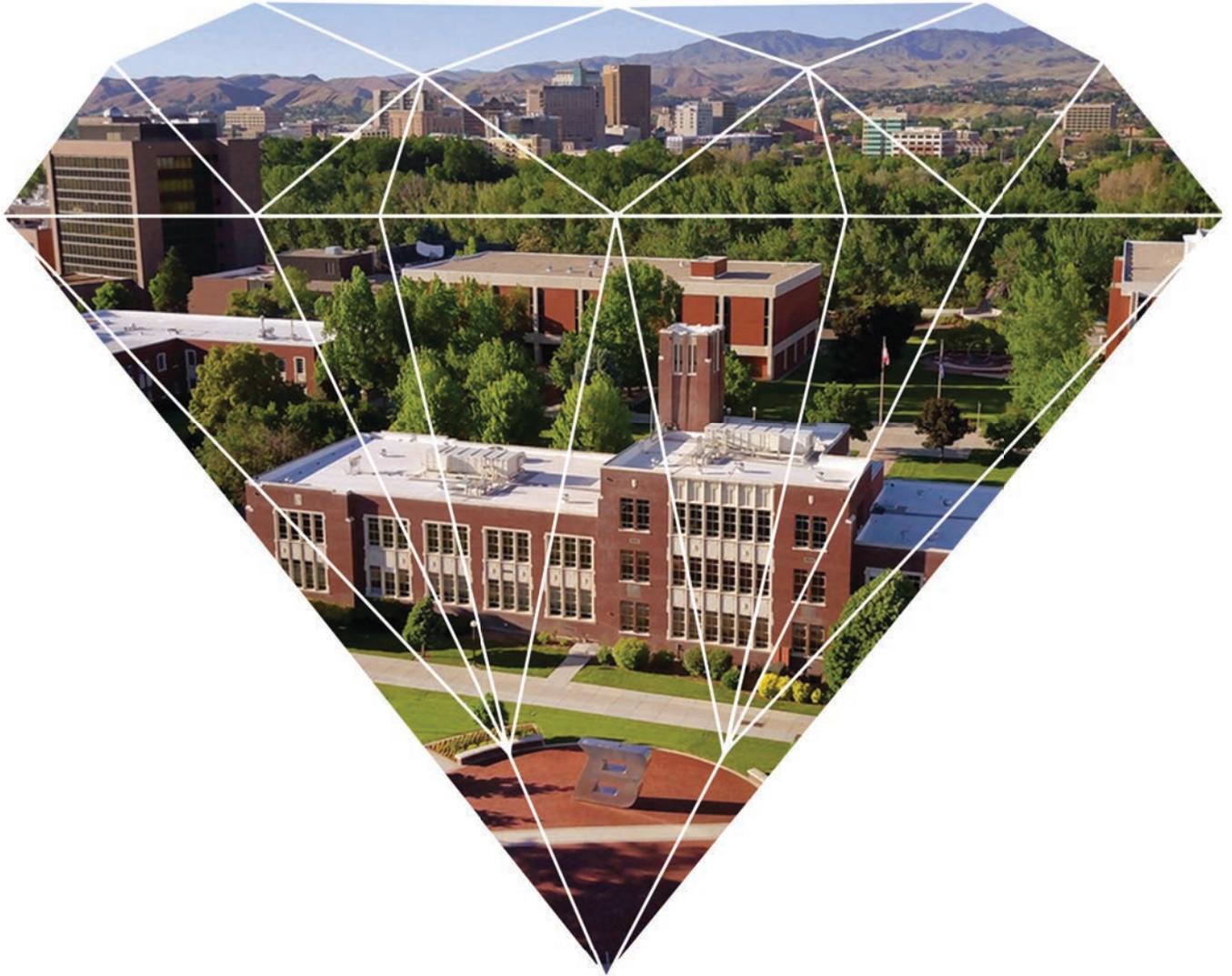
COLLINS: Our wine industry is already moving forward. We would love to see it continue to grow. There is a lot of potential to expand on some of the areas that we are already showing great strength in like munitions and firearms. Expanding in similar and complimentary areas would be good. The fact that we are working toward providing a trained and skilled workforce for companies that can use them should be a huge enticement for those that want to take advantage of it.

How would you describe the quality of life in Lewiston?

COLLINS: It is awesome. My personal favorite is the climate, something we obviously don't control. The ability to be outside year-round is amazing. Being able to play golf 11 months of the year and do all of the other outdoor activities is a positive factor in many lives here in the valley. Fishing, outdoors, tourism and our growing wine industry all benefit because of this. Access to hospitals and other professional services is growing at an amazing rate that benefits all of our citizens.

Every time we bring someone to town — in job searches, just visiting and even in my role as a collegiate coach here in the community — I hear from them all as to how friendly and helpful everyone is. It is one of the characteristics of this community that caused me to fall in love with it and why I work so hard to promote it and make it better. I want my kids to be here as I get older and have the quality of life that I am blessed to have. 💎

Boise State University



A Gem of an Idea

Idaho is on a mission to fuel entrepreneurship and its research universities at the same time.

by SAVANNAH KING

With three research universities in the state, there's a wealth of opportunity in Idaho's research and development resources, leading to new businesses and the launch of new products.

In 2019, Boise State University was named one of the most innovative universities in the country by U.S. News and World Report. The university was also elevated to the second-highest research category in the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. The University of Idaho in Moscow, and Idaho State University in Pocatello, also share the Carnegie distinction.

"This designation is the latest external validation of Boise State's continued evolution as a doctoral research university, which is so critical to the vitality of a growing metropolitan area," said Interim President Martin Schimpf. "It is a testament to the world-class research and creativity of our faculty, high-quality lab and field work of our students, and commitment to continuous improvement that unites the faculty, staff and administration of Boise State."

BSU's research strengths include materials science, geosciences and sensor systems. As the state's largest public university, it's also one of the fastest-growing graduate schools in the country. More than 25,000 students are enrolled in the university, with some 3,000 students enrolled in its doctoral programs. In 2018, the university topped \$50 million in research.

Other research universities, like the University of Idaho, are also integral to the state's research and development efforts. UI's research fund spends more than \$109.5 million on research expenditures every year. In 2018, 66 percent of undergraduate students participated in research. The university is working on 84 different research projects in its Integrated Research and Innovation Center and intends to begin more projects soon.



Idaho State University is the state's designated lead institution in health professions. Its students and faculty are leading cutting-edge research in a variety of areas including health care, energy, nuclear research, teaching, humanities, engineering, technology, biology, pharmacy and business.

One of the key measures helping to turn university research into commercial products is the Idaho Global Entrepreneurial Mission (IGEM). IGEM is a grant program that funds commercialization research for businesses that have partnered with university researchers to bring new innovations to market. IGEM is directed by Idaho Commerce and



University of Idaho is one of three research universities in Idaho.

Photo courtesy of University of Idaho

“IGEM’s goal of fostering economic prosperity is a great benefit to the communities of Idaho, and Idaho State is pleased to be part of the process.”

— Kevin Satterlee, *president,*
Idaho State University

invests in the development of new business while supporting Idaho’s research universities.

IGEM funds are available to assist Idaho businesses that have partnered with Boise State University, Idaho State University or the University of Idaho. The grant pays for costs associated with research time, supplies, and expert time (regulatory compliance guidance and expertise).

Since 2012, this dual investment strategy allows businesses to create new products, companies and jobs while also increasing the three university’s research capacity. Over the last six years, IGEM’s average award size was \$214,846.

In November 2018, Idaho State University and its industry partner, House of Design, a robotics company in Nampa, was awarded \$162,606 to design and develop an augmented reality platform for robotic systems design and interaction. This research aims to be the next step in robot interaction for industrial automation applications by combining state-of-the-art robotics and augmented reality.

“I am very excited about this opportunity to connect business and industry partners with our university researchers,” said Idaho State University President Kevin Satterlee. “IGEM’s goal of fostering economic prosperity is a great benefit to the communities of Idaho, and Idaho State is pleased to be part of the process.”

Several other projects were funded in FY 2018:

- Boise State University received a grant for \$368,772 to support the design and development of a market-ready, general-purpose portable infrasound goniometer. The device will be able to detect and differentiate between natural and man-made sounds and its source. Boise-based bomb technician training and equipment provider,

WMDTech, is the university's industry partner and will bring the new technology to market. The researchers at BSU have created several of the infrasound systems and are currently running successful tests in Boise and Utah.

- Nuclear Engineering faculty at the University of Idaho and the Materials Science Department at Boise State University have partnered to design a used-fuel cooling cask that could be a game-changer for nuclear reactor sites around the world. The researchers were awarded a \$237,898 grant to help alleviate the problems that come from lack of space for used-fuel pools at the sites. The universities are working with

industry partner Sakae Casting, a Japanese company with facilities in Idaho Falls. This project is expected to produce design information for the company to create a full-scale testing prototype which will be produced by another Idaho company, Premier Technology Inc.

- Shaw Mountain Technology is a Boise State University startup founded in 2015 with the purpose of commercializing Magnetic Shape Memory (MSM) technology. BSU received an IREM grant of \$343,330 to develop a working MSM Micro-pump prototype. The technology is intended to improve micro-pump performance and removes all movable parts within the pump. ♦

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The Helping Hand



How Idaho makes it easier for businesses to reach their financial goals.

by RON STARNER

Ask any Idaho executive to name the state's trump card when it comes to supporting business growth, and the answer will likely be the same: the Idaho Tax Reimbursement Incentive.

If your business is adding or bringing high-wage jobs to the state, your firm may be eligible to receive Idaho TRI funds. This post-performance incentive awards a maximum credit of 30 percent on income, payroll withholdings and sales taxes for up to 15 years.

To be eligible, companies in rural areas must create 20 jobs, and those in urban areas must create 50. New jobs must be full-time and pay equal to or greater than the average county wage. The firm must prove its stability

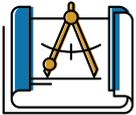
and make a significant economic impact to the community and Idaho; the company must also prove that the incentive is a critical factor in its expansion decision.

Through December 2018, a TRI award has been approved for 50 projects that are projected to create an estimated 8,431 jobs throughout Idaho. The total capital investment of the projects is an estimated \$1.4 billion. Together, they represent a total payroll of \$3.85 billion.

Of the approved projects, 26 went to existing Idaho businesses and 24 went to new companies. Rural areas, communities of 25,000 people or less, landed 29 awards while urban areas garnered 21 awards.

The average refundable tax credit is 21 percent over 10 years, while the

**Through December 2018,
TRI has awarded**



50 projects

**that are projected to create an
estimated total of**



8,431 jobs

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investment of these projects was \$1.4B,
representing a total payroll of \$3.85B.**

average projected wage is \$46,605 per year. For the state, the net return on investment is 4.27 to 1.

Among the bigger deals awarded was McCain Foods, which broke ground on its \$200 million expansion in December 2017. The company plans to hire 180 new employees to fill the 259,000 square foot facility.

Roll Call of TRI Recipients

McCain, the world's largest producer of frozen potato products, chose to expand production capacity in Burley in May 2017 after receiving a TRI award of 30% over 15 years, at an estimated value of \$5.9 million over the term of the incentive. The award calls for McCain to create more than 180 jobs paying an average annual salary of \$44,200 and to invest more than \$200 million in

new capital. More recently, Idaho Milk Products announced plans to expand its specialized milk protein concentrate and dairy ingredients operation via a \$26-million investment to its plant in Jerome. The firm received a TRI grant last June of 25 percent over 10 years to add 53 jobs at an average annual wage of \$51,300.

Jayco Inc. qualified for a TRI award in 2017 to add a 248,000-sq.-ft. production facility to its campus in Twin Falls. The refundable tax credit of 24 percent over 12 years is helping Jayco, a travel trailer manufacturer, create 360 new jobs that pay an average yearly salary of \$43,300. The firm's total capital investment is expected to be \$21 million.

Other TRI awards over the past 5 years include Albertsons, Amy's

Kitchen, Aspen Skiing Company, Dow Chemical Company, Glanbia, Orgill Inc., Quest Aircraft, SkyWest Airlines, Vista Outdoor, Wildwood Grilling, Woodgrain Millwork and many more.

TRI is not the only incentive program available in Idaho. All businesses are eligible for a 3 percent investment tax credit on all new tangible personal property (machinery and equipment) with a carryover of 14 years or a two-year exemption from all taxes on personal property on the qualified investment. This can offset up to 50 percent of income tax liability.

- A new jobs tax credit from \$1,500 to \$3,000 for new jobs paying \$24.04 per hour or more.
- A 2.5 percent real property improvement corporate income tax credit up to \$125,000 in any one year along with a 25 percent rebate on sales tax paid on construction.
- Upon request of the business, the local county commissioners may also authorize a partial or full property tax exemption for up to 5 years.



All businesses are eligible to receive personal property tax exemption on the first \$100,000 of personal property,

All businesses are also eligible to receive personal property tax exemption on the first \$100,000 of personal property, such as equipment and furnishings, and a 5 percent tax credit on qualified research expenses.

Giving Business a Real Advantage

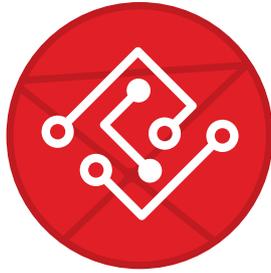
Enhanced incentives are available to qualifying businesses under the Idaho Business Advantage program. Businesses that invest at least \$500,000 in new facilities and create at least 10 new jobs paying \$40,000 annually plus benefits may qualify for the following:

- An enhanced investment tax credit of 3.75 percent up to \$750,000 or 62.5 percent of corporate income tax liability in any one year.

Beyond these programs, Idaho Commerce offers Infrastructure Grants, STEP Grant Export Assistance, New Market Tax Credits, and customized recruiting and workforce training services.

In addition, counties may apply for financial assistance through the Idaho Opportunity Fund. The Idaho Opportunity Fund serves as a “deal-closing fund” to support existing industry expansion and recruit new companies to the state. Funds can be used for public infrastructure improvements and are awarded at the discretion of the Director of Idaho Commerce.

The Non-Retail Property Tax Exemption allows businesses that invest at least \$500,000 in new or existing non-retail, commercial or industrial facilities to receive a partial or full property tax exemption for up to 5 years from local counties. 



Growing with

S - T - E - M

Idaho places emphasis on STEM learning and career training to grow business and opportunity.

by SAVANNAH KING

Across the country, employers and employees know how difficult it can be to grow without a strong STEM background.

The same is true in Idaho, where STEM-based occupations are expected to grow 23.1 percent by 2024, according to projections based on information from the Idaho Department of Labor and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. That expectation translates into the creation of more than 10,000 job openings in science, engineering, math or IT and

more than 7,600 new positions in the health sector.

“The greatest opportunity we have in Idaho is to upskill our workforce,” says Wendi Secrist, executive director of the Idaho Workforce development Council. “We are well-known as a state with a stable business climate whose workforce has a strong work ethic. As our economy is transitioning based on rapidly changing technology, we have the opportunity to help Idahoans – which in turn helps our businesses – develop the skills that will lead to increased earning power and a mindset of continuous learning.”

“We have a unique advantage in that we are nimble – as a small state, businesses have access to their elected officials, government agencies and education partners and we are all willing to implement innovative workforce development practices and recruiting strategies.”

– **Wendi Secrist**, *Executive Director of Idaho Workforce Development Council*

By 2024, 61 percent of Idaho workers are projected to have at least some education beyond high school and 29 percent are projected to have a bachelor’s degree. With a population of 1.7 million and a labor force of 807,000, there’s ample opportunity for businesses to find and train qualified workers.

Secrist notes that in 2017, former Governor C.L. “Butch” Otter launched a task force dedicated to improving the state’s talent pipeline. His initiatives involved a comprehensive statewide public engagement campaign that connected educational pathways to careers as well as key investments in work-based learning programs.

“While Idaho has a low unemployment rate, the state is an active partner in workforce development, and we are working across business, government and education to ensure that our citizens have the right skills for the jobs being created in the state. We have a unique advantage in that we are nimble,” Secrist explains. “As a small state, businesses have access to their elected officials, government agencies and education partners and we are all willing to implement innovative workforce development practices and

recruiting strategies.”

Secrist goes on to say, “One of our shining stars in Idaho is the STEM Action Center.”

Last year, the center engaged in over 400,000 interactions with students, educators and their communities and invested nearly \$1.4 million in training educators to prepare the workforce of the future. In addition, through Apprenticeship Idaho, the State is partnering with the Idaho Technology Council to develop registered apprenticeship programs in IT and software development among others.”

Angela Hemingway, the executive director of the STEM Action Center, says having the ability to interact and form partnerships with industries is the key to bridging any skills gaps and ensuring workers receive the training they need to be successful.

“We’re reaching deep into communities, we are impacting students in multiple areas, it might be that their teacher attends one of our professional development programs and goes back and implements virtual reality or drones or 3D printing in their classrooms.”

Another of Idaho’s best STEM assets is the Idaho National Laboratory, in Idaho Falls. INL actively supports the



STEM Action Center’s mission and internships with leading universities. INL’s workforce development mission is one of its most important as 30 percent of the lab’s workforce is over 50 and nearing retirement age.

“The future of INL — and of business and industry — relies in part on the next generation of STEM professionals,” says Amy Lientz, INL’s Director of Stakeholder and Education Partnerships. “Our STEM mission is to build Idaho’s workforce of tomorrow by empowering teachers, motivating students, and collaborating with families and communities to encourage exploration of STEM careers and transform K–12 STEM into a driver for innovation.”

“INL invests in STEM in a number of ways, seeking to engage rural, underserved and underrepresented populations, and to create a STEM road map connecting K–12 education, industry and higher education programs and opportunities for Idaho students,” says Lientz. “As a STEM leader in Idaho, INL leads outreach activities impacting tens of thousands of students, provides grant opportunities for educators, offers thought leadership at a regional and statewide level, and more.”

The state’s registered apprenticeship program is one of the state’s go-to solutions for closing the skills gap and helping employers hire people with needed skills and experience.

As of January 2018, 245 Idaho companies have registered apprenticeship programs — almost twice as many as were registered two years earlier. With 1,432 registered apprentices across the state and another 47 new programs created over the last year, the program is growing.

In addition to being able to confidently hire qualified employees, trends reveal that apprenticeships lead to higher job retention rates (up to 91 percent) and \$1.47 in increased productivity for every dollar that business invests in the apprenticeship,

according to the U.S. Department of Labor.

The Idaho LEADER Initiative aims to create meaningful collaborations between educational institutions and employers and provide workers with work-based learning opportunities. The initiative works by exposing students to opportunities and the pathways that can lead to success. For example, elementary students might explore career pathways while high school and college-age students can learn on the job through internships. Employed workers are also able to receive on-the-job training or apprenticeships through the initiative.

“Technology is infused into every industry,” says Secrist. “And Idaho’s Workforce Development Training fund is one of the tools we have to quickly adapt to technology changes. The budgeting cycle for traditional education and training programs is lengthy but we are able to infuse workforce development training funds to fill the gap between when needs arise and when money is available to adapt existing programs or start new ones. We also can grant funds directly to businesses to support training of their workforce to align to technology investments.”

Idaho is focused on exposing young students to STEM education and career pathways.

Photo courtesy of STEM Action Center





How to Catch Startup Fever: Move to Idaho

So, you want
to be an
entrepreneur?
Maybe you should
start by moving
to Idaho.

by RON STARNER

Branch Publishing recently analyzed data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Business Employment Dynamics report and found that where your venture is launched may have as much to do with its success as you do.

Consider this: of all the states that boast the most new-business establishments and employment growth in the U.S. from the third quarter of 2016 through the second quarter of 2017, only one state scored higher than Idaho. With 7,036 new businesses started and 20,172 jobs created from those startups during that period, Idaho ranked second overall to Florida. Moreover, about 3.5 percent of all new jobs created in Idaho came from startups.

Why does this happen? Douglas Sayer, chief business officer at Blackfoot-based Premier Technology Inc., credits the people of Idaho.

"The workers here are very loyal,

and they express an eagerness to be trained and advance as professionals," he says. "Plus, the quality of life here is unmatched. We are only a couple hours from Salt Lake City. We are the same distance from Jackson Hole and Sun Valley and Yellowstone. We have had a lot of success in getting talent to come here from Utah, Wyoming, Montana and other parts of Idaho. We recruit mainly from Idaho State and Boise State, as well as the University of Wyoming in Laramie."

This abundant talent pool has enabled Premier Technology, a multi-faceted engineering, manufacturing and construction management firm, to grow from a fledgling startup of six employees and 5,000 square feet of space in 1997 to over 300 highly skilled professionals today. And they're not done growing.

Premier Technology broke ground last June on a 70,000-sq.-ft., \$15-million expansion that will create more than 100 new jobs in Blackfoot. "It is an addition

onto our existing headquarters and manufacturing facility,” says Sayer. “We moved to Blackfoot in Eastern Idaho from Pocatello in 2007. It put us halfway between Pocatello and Idaho Falls. It is a strategic location that allows us to draw from a larger demographic for workforce.”

The Eastern Idaho location has proven so successful that Sayer says he and Shelly Sayer, CEO of Premier Technology, never considered moving the operation anywhere else.

“The expansion complements what we’re doing,” he notes. “The equipment we’re adding is state of the art in material handling and laser processing. It allows us to more effectively use our floor space while potentially quadrupling capacity. The Eastern Idaho Regional Economic Development partnership (REDI) has

decided to move their innovative vest-and jacket-making venture from Chicago to Idaho about 15 years ago. The rest, as they say, is history.

“My wife said Sun Valley was her first choice,” says Jordan. “It was either here or Aspen, and she chose Idaho. We packed up all our dogs and inventory and moved out here. Ever since, we’ve been adding more products. We were the first clothing company to start online as our main distribution channel. For us, it was our first and primary channel. It was about marketing our consumer brand. You either grow or die in this business. Our sales started to pick up when we began advertising. We doubled our business last year.”

After at one point turning down an offer on Shark Tank, SCOTTTeVEST today is a \$50-million company that

“We have had a lot of success in getting talent to come here from Utah, Wyoming, Montana and other parts of Idaho. We recruit mainly from Idaho State and Boise State, as well as the University of Wyoming in Laramie.”

— Douglas Sayer, Chief Business Officer, Premier Technology Inc., Blackfoot

been very supportive of this project. The business climate in Idaho is very strong with a lot of growth and a lot of new jobs being created.”

Of the INC. 5000, a ranking of the 5,000 fastest-growing private companies in America, 23 of them are located in Idaho. The highest-ranked of these firms are software companies: ConvertKit (No. 72), ClickFunnels (No. 76) and Ventive (No. 172). Some popular brands on this list include Cheekys (No. 356), Dollar Fulfillment (No. 363), The Newsletter Pro (No. 3,164) and Bottom Line (No. 4,921).

Not on this list, but still growing by leaps and bounds, is SCOTTTeVEST, a highly entrepreneurial company based in Sun Valley. CEO and co-founder Scott Jordan said he and his wife Laura

makes and sells its products from Idaho. “Idaho is beautiful. I love it,” Jordan says. “I absolutely adore living in Sun Valley.”

Idaho supports entrepreneurs in a variety of ways. One of the more notable is the Idaho Pitch Competition. Organized through the University of Idaho’s Idaho Entrepreneurs program, the pitch contest gives students the opportunity to present their business ideas to experienced entrepreneurs, venture capitalists and business professionals. It is held each semester.

Winners receive teaching in skills, as well as the resources and connections they need to move their innovation from the classroom and lab into the marketplace. 



Photo courtesy of Idaho National Laboratory

by ADAM BRUNS

With economic impacts accounting for 1.3 percent of all Idaho personal income, Idaho National Laboratory is a linchpin partner for the state and its companies.

In an era where conserving energy is considered found treasure, institutions such as Idaho Power and the Idaho National Laboratory (INL) are helping customers uncover it, all while looking out for the next big energy discovery.

Energy is one of seven key industries targeted for growth by Idaho Commerce. But it undergirds many of the rest. There's no better example than INL, managed by Battelle Energy Alliance, whose parent company, Battelle Memorial Institute, manages many other national labs.

Designated as the U.S. Department of

Energy's lead nuclear research facility, INL's reach extends much further than nuclear power, incorporating research in such areas as life sciences and geothermal energy. Among other programs, the Center for Advanced Energy Studies (CAES) is a research and education consortium led by the INL with member institutions Boise State University, Idaho State University, University of Idaho and University of Wyoming, all on a mission to promote the effective and efficient use of energy resources.

In FY 2017, INL operations — which directly employed an average of 4,256

workers and spent \$139 million with Idaho businesses — added \$1.94 billion to Idaho’s GDP, increasing personal income in the state by \$862 million.

Amy Lientz is the INL’s director of partnerships, engagement and technology deployment. If that sounds like a broad mandate, her resumé explains why: She’s worked on everything from energy project siting to waste management to project management with such firms as CH2MHill, Northrop Grumman and EG&G.

“Here in Idaho we like to think of ourselves as small, but mighty and fast,” she says. “If industry wants to site, permit and build, then one would be hard-pressed to find a state to deliver that entire package faster ... If an industry is growing and wanting to innovate in energy or security, they often have research needs and interests. We have a multitude of mechanisms where industry can get help from our experts and researchers; use our facilities, laboratories, capabilities and equipment; and partner with us for competitive grants. We are constantly trying to make ourselves more accessible to industry and make it easy to do business with us.”

Lientz responded to a few questions about the state’s place in the energy landscape.

Put yourself in a corporate site selector’s shoes and describe the chief competitive advantages you see in Idaho when it comes to the energy sector.

LIENTZ: I am in the business of energy research for Idaho National Laboratory. We partner with the energy sector in Idaho and across our borders, not only for research projects but also to supply our own energy needs on our 890-square-mile site. Companies like Idaho Power and Idaho Falls Power are two example of our strong partners, helping us to innovate new energy solutions and working with our power engineers to reduce our own energy costs. As other businesses look to move to Idaho, they are quite surprised by the low energy costs. It is partnerships like ours between

industry and utilities that help deliver Idaho’s low monthly utility costs (\$343.71) — one of the lowest in the nation.

You have degrees from both major Idaho universities, and now work for what many would call the state’s leading institution. Are there other, lesser known aspects of the state’s “institutional infrastructure” that corporate leaders should know about?

LIENTZ: Idaho is an exquisite state, but our geographic beauty of protected wilderness, deep river canyons and high mountain peaks often makes it a challenge to get around and collaborate with other research institutions. Our state and INL invested in the Idaho Regional Optical Network (IRON), a dedicated high-speed fiber-optic network infrastructure to connect us and enable us to transfer “big data” among the research universities, other educational entities, the national laboratory system and the health sector. Without IRON, research and economic development would be significantly impeded in Idaho.

Describe some examples of partnering on a research or operational project with major employers and with startups in the state.

LIENTZ: It’s important to mention INL’s work in nuclear energy, because of our history— the development of 52 original reactors that paved the way for an industry that provides nearly 20 percent of America’s electricity and more than half of our carbon-free electricity. But it’s also important because INL is a partner at the forefront of an exciting new nuclear technology. The INL site is the proposed location for the first small modular nuclear reactors (SMRs) designed by NuScale Power. These 60-megawatt reactors would be owned by the Utah Associated Municipal Power Systems (UAMPS), a consortium that provides electricity to roughly 40 cities in seven western states.



Rate Comparison

Small Industrial Billings for Selected American Cities
Monthly Cost for 1,000 kW and 400,000 kWhz

CITY	COST PER 1,000 kWh	AVG. MONTHLY BILL
Boise	\$62.20	\$24,879
Reno	\$73.42	\$29,369
Salt Lake City	\$76.62	\$30,649
Portland	\$78.80	\$31,519
Spokane	\$85.31	\$34,125
San Francisco	\$139.84	\$55,935

The NuScale plant would hold up to 12 individual modules, and possess a much smaller footprint than conventional nuclear reactor power plants. With SMRs, individual modules could be built in a factory and transported by truck or train to the power plant site, as needed. It's akin to building a garage and filling it with vehicles over time. SMR designs incorporate advanced safety features and maximize operating efficiency. SMRs could potentially power significant users of energy, such as production facilities (e.g. water treatment/purification or mines) and large industrial complexes.

Partnering with other companies has been quite a success story at Idaho National Laboratory. Some examples:

Premier Technology, Blackfoot:

INL has partnered with Premier Technology, Inc., a vertically integrated engineering, manufacturing and construction company. Support provided to DOE by Premier has included gloveboxes, hot cells and related equipment, lead and glass shielding and windows and low-level-waste boxes.

Idaho Power:

INL researchers and Idaho Power have installed more than 40 weather stations along transmission lines in windy southern Idaho's

interstate utility corridor. Researchers installed the weather stations to measure weather conditions along the more than 450 line-miles of high-voltage transmission lines. The team also works with multiple utility partners to train system operators in the use of weather station data and software tools to generate transmission capacity operating limits.

Idaho Falls Power, Idaho Falls:

INL is working with Idaho Falls Power on a microgrid project. As part of DOE's \$220-million Electrical Power Grid Modernization Initiative, INL's Real Time Digital Simulator is modeling how Idaho Falls Power can spread load evenly during times of peak demand — how, for example, run-of-the-river power can be integrated into a microgrid to make power distribution more reliable. Battery research at INL will help Idaho Falls Power explore ways to store energy from hydroelectric and wind turbines.

WindSim, Idaho Falls:

WindSim, a Norwegian company that has been conducting wind energy research with INL, will be opening an office in Idaho Falls to continue this partnership and the commercialization of its Power Line-Optimization Solution. WindSim's software has been integrated with INL's GLASS dynamic line rating solution.

Rocky Mountain Scientific (Global Phosphate Solutions), Idaho Falls:

Rocky Mountain Scientific (RMS) has been working around the world on a solution to reduce phosphate runoff in freshwater, which can cause toxic algae blooms. RMS developed a phosphate-attracting compound and partnered with INL researchers to create a process for composite pellets that incorporate an INL-developed binder with this phosphate-attracting powder to make a 'sponge' that absorbs phosphates from water and can be wrung out and reused.

Sakae Casting, Idaho Falls:

This Japanese-based aluminum casting company opened its first U.S. location in Idaho Falls, which will give the company a chance to work directly with INL and other nuclear and advanced manufacturing customers in the region. Sakae decided to use this location to focus on research and development opportunities with INL and other partners.

Inergy Solar, Pocatello:

When it came for the testing and validation of a new battery storage technology, Inergy Solar, a three-year-old company with headquarters in Pocatello, didn't have to look far for help. Under INL's Technical Assistance Program, researchers at the lab's Battery Testing Center helped the company determine how an advanced generation of lithium-ion battery cells would perform under various conditions that mirror those seen in Inergy's products.

Idaho Scientific, Boise:

Idaho Scientific was awarded a \$149,000 Small Business Innovation Research grant by DOE after participating in an INL SBIR roadshow. This grant will provide funding to prototype and demonstrate a promising processor architecture capable of mitigating cyber vulnerabilities in critical infrastructure, like the United States energy grid. ♦

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“I” is for Innovate

Idaho’s new wave of tech enterprises builds upon a solid foundation.

by GARY DAUGHTERS



Photo: Getty Images

Sean Luangrath, a former refugee from Laos who came to the U.S. when he was six, says he’s “living the American Dream” as CEO of a tech startup in Pocatello, Idaho. A technology industry lifer with stints around the world for Hewlett-Packard, Peoplesoft, Oracle and Apple, Luangrath leads Pocatello-based Inergy, whose flagship product is the Kodiak Solar Generator.

“We’ve taken an off-grid home solar system and basically shrunk it down into a 20-pound box,” Luangrath says. “We are the most light-weight, compact and portable solar generator in the market.”

Since its inception in 2014, Inergy has sold some 5,000 units to campers and other off-the-grid explorers, as well as “tiny home” dwellers and emergency preparedness enthusiasts. The company’s revenues, Luangrath says, have roughly doubled each year.

Innovative enterprises such as Inergy are part of an Idaho tradition. The television set was born in Rigby; the frozen French fry originated in Boise, courtesy of the venerable J.R. Simplot Company, still a leader in food technology; Micron, the country’s only maker of DRAM (dynamic random-access memory) computer chips, has operated out of Boise for the entire four decades of its history and is currently valued at \$45 billion.

With a population of fewer than two million people, Idaho boasts more than 2,000 technology enterprises employing 20,300 workers, according to the state Department of Commerce. Technology and innovation contribute \$3.5 billion to Idaho’s GDP. The state’s history of entrepreneurship and its easy lifestyle have helped cement Idaho, especially among tech-centric millennials, as an attractive alternative to expensive and cutthroat Silicon Valley.

“The quality of life in Boise is incredibly strong,” says Leif Elgethun, CEO and co-founder of Retrolux, a

“Whether it’s government officials, other tech companies’ CEOs, city officials or chamber of commerce reps, the ability to find and actually get meetings with literally anybody in town is pretty much guaranteed.”

— **Leif Elgethun**, CEO and co-founder of Retrolux

Boise-based software startup that helps deliver energy-saving solutions for the commercial lighting industry. Ranked as one of 2018’s 10 Best Idaho Startups by the Tech Tribune, Retrolux says its modeling platform can reduce lighting and installation costs by 20 percent.

While Boise is growing from “a big town into a small city,” says Elgethun, it retains a vital sense of place and community that makes it distinct from larger technology hubs.

“In Boise,” he says, “you have amazing access to the outdoors, an active lifestyle, an attractive cost of living and vibrant growth.

“From a business perspective,” he says, “one of the things that I really like about Boise is the access to really anybody in the community that you would want to connect with. Whether it’s government officials, other tech companies’ CEOs, city officials or chamber of commerce reps, the ability to find and actually get meetings with literally anybody in town is pretty much guaranteed.”

Retrolux, says Elgethun, can operate in Boise at a fraction of the cost of San Francisco. Similarly, Inergy’s Luangrath says the cost factor has been crucial to keeping his company where it is.

“The original plan,” he says, “was to move the headquarters from Pocatello to Salt Lake City, which is theoretically a bigger market with more resources and more opportunity. But when we looked at the cost of operation and all the opportunities in Idaho, we abandoned that plan and decided to keep the company here in Pocatello.”

Idaho’s system of universities, including Idaho State, the University of Idaho, Boise State, Brigham Young University-Idaho and the College of Eastern Idaho, says Luangrath, “are

producing a really talented workforce.”

In 2017, Idaho took steps to improve secondary school technology offerings by passing legislation that will require every high school to offer at least one computer science course by 2020.

Another draw, says Luangrath, is the presence of Idaho National Laboratory in Idaho Falls. In operation since 1949, INL is the nation’s leading center of nuclear energy research and development, with offshoot programs in areas including robotics, wind power, high-performance computing, biofuels and advanced vehicle testing. “They have a ton of really smart engineers, and we’ve been fortunate enough to be able to collaborate with them,” Luangrath says.

Inergy also has received a \$178,178 grant from the Idaho Global Entrepreneurial Mission, which partners university researchers and business to bring new technologies to market. Robust support institutions also include the Idaho Technology Council and Boise’s Trailhead, a tech-focused business incubator that recently partnered with Albertson’s, the mammoth Boise-based grocery chain, on a competition for food startups.

“Boise and Idaho have an incredible history of food innovation,” says Nic Miller, Director of Economic Development, City of Boise. “Trailhead is honored to partner with one of the original innovators, Albertson’s, to help find the next handful of companies that will launch in Boise to continue that tradition.”

For Luangrath, the formula for success in Idaho is simple.

“If you hustle and work and do the best you can,” he says, “the opportunities will come.” 



‘Advanced’ Means Made in Idaho

by MARK AREND

Blackfoot, Idaho, Mayor Marc Carroll used the occasion of Premier Technology’s June expansion announcement to liken the company and its workers (about 300 at the time, with up to 150 new jobs forecast) to the very future of the eastern Idaho city — situated midway between Idaho Falls and Pocatello. The engineering, custom manufacturing and construction management company, founded in 1996, caters to government and commercial clients.

Mayor Carroll was referring to the close cooperation between Premier and Blackfoot that would be required to ensure the woman-owned company’s success in the years to come — success

made possible by its employees and management. Then-Governor C.L. “Butch” Otter was at the event, too, where he pledged state cooperation in helping Premier Technology, and other Idaho manufacturing companies, meet their workforce requirements.

That cooperation will become increasingly important as Idaho’s \$7.3-billion advanced manufacturing sector gains momentum. Idaho is already home to a diverse range of operations, from millwork and trailer manufacturing to ammunition and locomotive construction and repair. Consider the numbers: Idaho has more than 1,500 advanced manufacturing establishments that combined employ nearly 41,000 people. Sector growth

Idaho National Laboratory is working with energy providers to create new technology.

Photo courtesy of Idaho National Laboratory

over the next 10 years is forecast to be 10 percent. And average wage for workers in the sector is \$77,000 — that's more than twice the average wage in Bingham County, where Premier Technology is based.

On the very advanced end of the scale is work taking place at the Idaho National Laboratory (INL), including production of a small nuclear reactor for Oregon-based energy provider NuScale Power. It's part of the Western Initiative for Nuclear (Program WIN), a multi-western state collaboration to study the demonstration and deployment of a series of NuScale Small Modular Reactor power plants in six western states. "The technology of small modular reactors holds real promise for cleanly and safely addressing long-term energy needs in the West," noted Governor Otter at the June 2013 project announcement. "I'm pleased that western governors are engaging with industry to realize that promise."

INL also is heading up a Versatile Test Reactor team, with engineers from GE Hitachi Nuclear Energy, that will adapt the company's sodium-cooled nuclear reactor design to the needs of a test reactor for state-of-the-art research and development purposes.

"To meet our aggressive schedule for establishing this much-needed capability in the United States, it is necessary to leverage an existing and mature sodium-cooled fast reactor design that can be modified to meet the needs of a versatile test reactor," said INL's Kemal Pasamehmetoglu, executive director of VTR. Establishing a fast spectrum test reactor ensures continued U.S. technology leadership in nuclear energy

innovation. Currently, only a few capabilities are available for testing fast neutron reactor technology in the world and none in the U.S.

Non-Nuclear Options

Need to test drive a new harvester for the lower 40 acres? Head to Heyburn, in south-central Idaho, where Double L manufactures those, as well as pliers, potato planters and other equipment for operations growing the state's signature crop.

Speaking of potatoes, plenty have been processed in equipment made by Boise-based American Food Equipment Corp. (AMFEC). Among other machines, the company makes mixer/blenders, vacuum stuffers and tumblers.

Also based in Boise is AceCo Precision Manufacturing, a provider of precision CNC machined components for multiple industries, particularly such high-tech industries as semiconductor, TFT-LCD, and solar. Its experience with manufacturing components for capital equipment used in semiconductor manufacturing led to refurbishment and repair of high vacuum and electro-mechanical components and sub-assemblies. In 2009, according to the company, AceCo established itself in the orthopedic implant industry by partnering with Scott Humphrey, a renowned Orthopedic surgeon and inventor to develop and manufacture the Cuff Repair Plate (CRP)TM from Shoulder Options, Inc.

The company operates two facilities in Boise — a manufacturing campus and repair and rebuild facility, as well as a repair facility in Singapore. ♦

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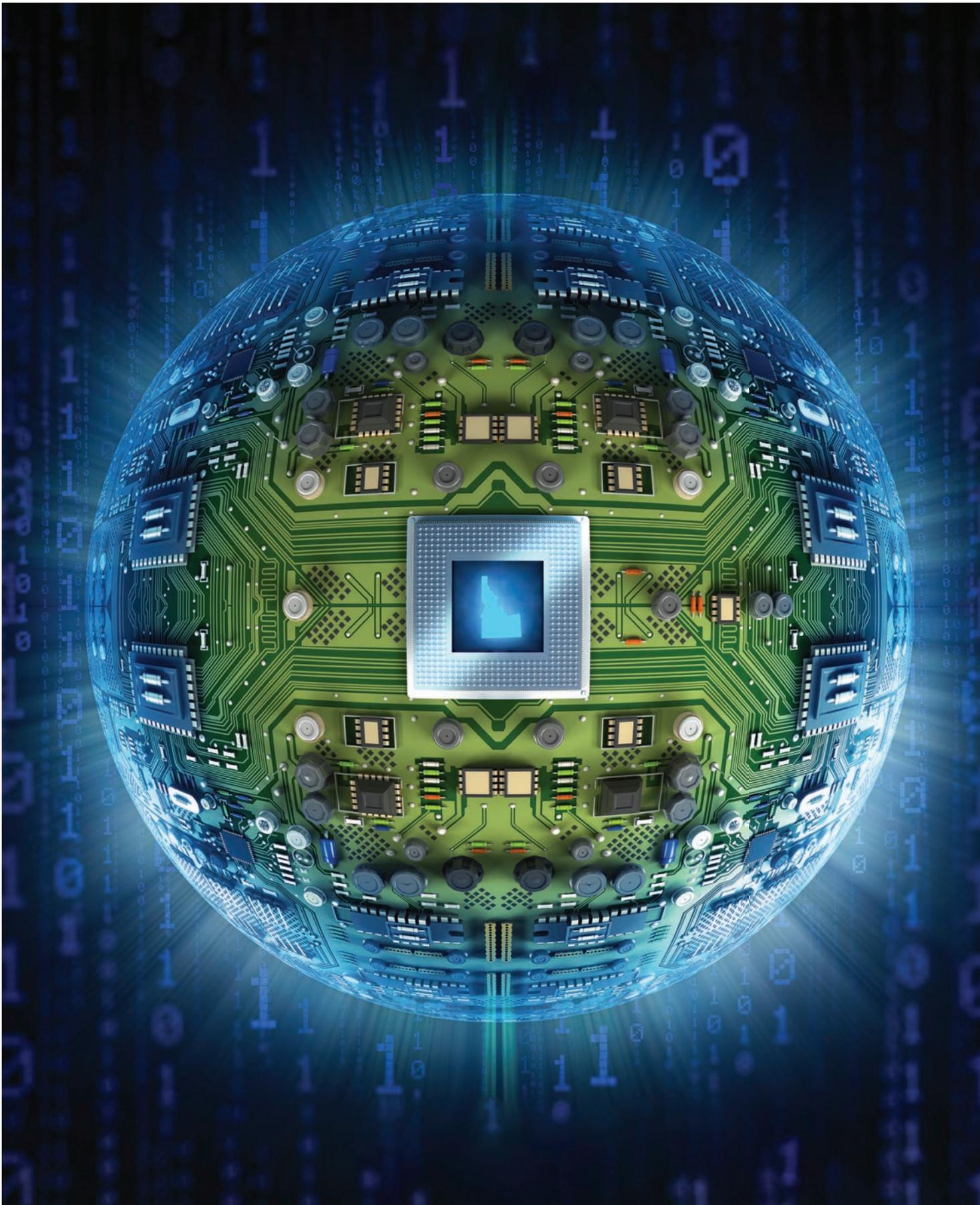


Photo: Getty Images, edited by Richard Nenoff

Guess Where Idaho-Made Electronics Are Going

by MARK AREND

Several countries known for exporting computer parts and accessories also happen to be importers of electronics made in Idaho. Of its \$3.9 billion worth of exports in 2017, integrated circuits were the state's top export, at 15.4 percent of the total. Other top exports were solar power semiconductors and photovoltaic cells (6.6 percent), computer parts and accessories (6.3 percent), parts for electrical quantity measurement instruments and semiconductor checking instruments (3 percent each).

Idaho's customers for these and other electronic and non-electronic exports — unroasted malt makes the top 10 list — are Canada (\$842 million in 2017, or 21.8 percent), Taiwan (\$574 million; 14.9 percent), Singapore (\$459 million; 11.9 percent), China (\$353 million; 9.2 percent) and Mexico (\$231 million; 6 percent). Rounding out the top 10 importers of Idaho products are Japan, South Korea, the United Kingdom, Malaysia and Hong Kong. The approximately \$1 billion of Idaho goods exported to Canada and Mexico include food products, minerals and fertilizers, in addition to high-tech products.

The Gem State's fastest-growing exports are solid state semiconductor storage devices — up 130 percent since 2016 — and computer parts and accessories, up 15.7 percent. Boise-based Micron Technology and ON Semiconductor, Pocatello, are among Idaho's leading manufacturers of such equipment.

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Idaho's Manufactured Goods Exports, in Billions of Dollars, 2000-2017



Source: Center for Manufacturing Research, October 2018

Who's Investing in Idaho

Storage devices of another sort are behind a recent foreign investment in Idaho — one of many in recent months that illustrate the state's appeal to manufacturers around the world. Specifically, NewCold, a deep-frozen storage and logistics company based in the Netherlands, will open a state-of-the-art freezer facility this spring in Burley. It will be one of the largest frozen storage facilities of its kind in the USA, bringing an estimated 75 jobs to the area.

The 180,000-square-foot, fully automated building will serve the logistics needs in the Northwestern U.S. region for McCain Foods USA Inc, a division of McCain Foods Limited, based in Canada, the world's largest manufacturer of frozen French fries and potato specialties. One of McCain's 11 manufacturing facilities in the U.S. also is in Burley and is undergoing a \$200-million expansion.

French food processor Materne Industries purchased a former Micron Technology building in Nampa in recent years and invested more than \$80 million converting it for production of GoGo SqueeZ applesauce, yogurt and other products. Last year, the company appeared on Glassdoor's list of the Best Places to Work in 2018.

Irish global nutrition group Glanbia operates several facilities in Idaho, including cheese plants in Twin Falls, Gooding and Blackfoot, and whey processing operations in Gooding and Richfield. The company has had a presence in southern Idaho for 25 years. It processes over 12 million pounds of milk per day, one third of all milk in Idaho. With its sister plant in New Mexico, Glanbia processes over 23 million pounds of milk daily, shipping more than 830 million pounds of cheese and 170 million pounds of value-added whey products annually to over 30 countries. ♦

What's your first thought when you hear "Idaho"? You'll be excused if you answered "potatoes," Idaho's being world famous. As money-makers, though, spuds finish second to cows. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Idaho's milk products, including cheese, yogurt, butter and cream, yielded some \$2.4 billion worth of revenues in 2016, more than twice what potatoes brought in.

Idaho's 600,000 dairy cows produce an average of 40 million pounds of milk per day, according to the Idaho Dairymen's Association.

"In an average year, we'll represent nearly 40-percent of the total agriculture receipts in the state of Idaho," says Rick Naerebout, the Dairymen's Association's CEO. "As the dairy industry goes, so goes the rest of agriculture in Idaho."

Idaho's dairy cows are the highest producing in the nation, each yielding an annual average of more than 4,000 pounds of milk.

Naerebout credits what he calls "the perfect climate" for raising milk cows, with frigid winter cold to kill diseases and long growing seasons that provide for enough feed. Idaho ranks fourth among the states in dairy production, behind only California, Wisconsin and New York.

About three-fourths



by GARY DAUGHTERS

of Idaho's milk comes from the bountiful "Magic Valley," the south-central region of eight counties anchored by picturesque Twin Falls and Burley. The Magic Valley boasts nearly 300 dairy farms and 13 of Idaho's 19 dairy processors, including Glanbia Foods, which processes 12 million pounds of milk per day. According to the University of Idaho's McClure Center for Public Policy Research, the number of dairy processing jobs in the Magic Valley has grown four-fold in 25 years and now accounts for 10-percent of all employment in the region.

Small wonder, then, that Chobani chose Twin Falls to build the world's largest yogurt factory, which opened in 2012, with an initial \$750-million investment that has since ballooned by hundreds more millions. Chobani's latest investment is a \$21-million addition to house employees, the company's research and development team and a business startup incubator. Hamdi Ulukaya, Chobani's founder and CEO, calls Twin Falls "the Silicon Valley of Food."

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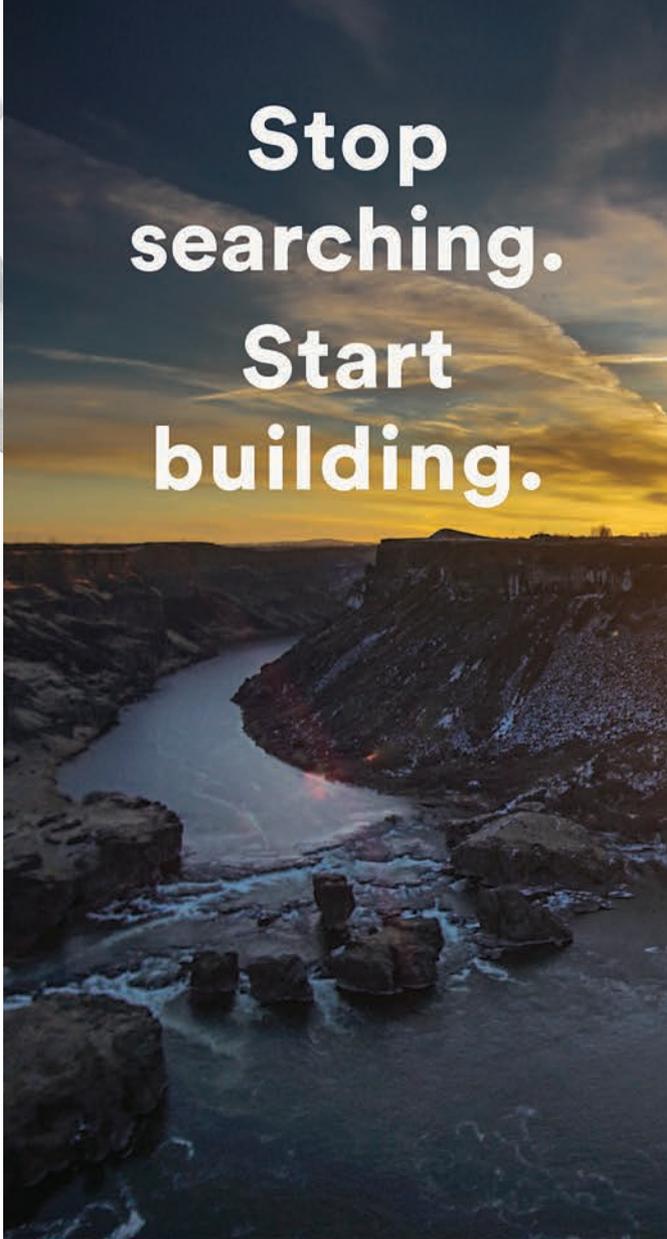
“The U.S. dairy industry, in places like Idaho in particular, has a great opportunity to supply an increasing proportion of the **growing global demand for dairy products.**”

Daragh Maccabee, Idaho Milk Products' CEO.

The smallish town of Jerome, a stone's throw from Twin Falls on I-84, is practically swimming in milk, with four major dairy-related expansions in 2018. Idaho Milk Products, which processes more than 1.1 billion pounds of milk a year in Jerome, launched a \$26-million expansion to expand its processing capacity by one-third. The company converts raw milk into mild protein concentrate, milk permeate powder and cream.

Also in Jerome, Magic Valley Quality Milk Producers announced a \$20-million expansion to branch out into processing, Commercial Creamery broke ground on a \$7-million expansion and Jerome Cheese began work on a 14,000-sq.-ft. addition.

While the number of Idaho dairy farms has fallen over the last two decades, the 500 or so that remain are more productive than they've ever been. Following national trends, Idaho's dairy industry is gravitating toward fewer and larger farms, even as all remain family-owned.



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Start
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IDAHO** ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT

Opportunity Grows Here

Idaho offers: Abundant High Quality Raw Ingredients • Affordable Energy
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Opportunity Case Study #1 > IDAHO DAIRY



Dairy is Big in Idaho

15 BILLION POUNDS OF MILK ANNUALLY

30 YEARS OF MILK PRODUCTION GROWTH

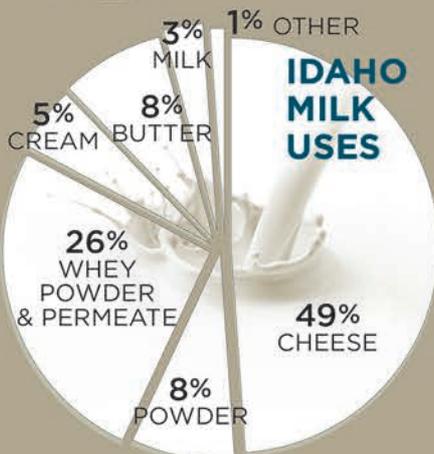
IDAHO DAIRY RANKS

AMONG TOP FOUR IN THE NATION

THANKS TO AVAILABLE LAND

LOCALLY GROWN FEED SUPPLIES

AND EFFICIENT SHIPPING SYSTEMS



ALL OF IDAHO'S DAIRIES ARE FAMILY OWNED

\$10.4 BILLION+ 39,400 JOBS



Food Processing is Idaho's Second Largest Manufacturing Sector

\$4 BILLION+ 30,000 JOBS



Opportunity Case Study #2 > IDAHO® POTATOES

Idaho® Famous Potatoes

320,000 ACRES HARVESTED ANNUALLY

1/3 OF THE NATION'S POTATOES



IDAHO POTATO USES

IDAHO IS THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE COMMERCIAL FROZEN FRENCH FRY



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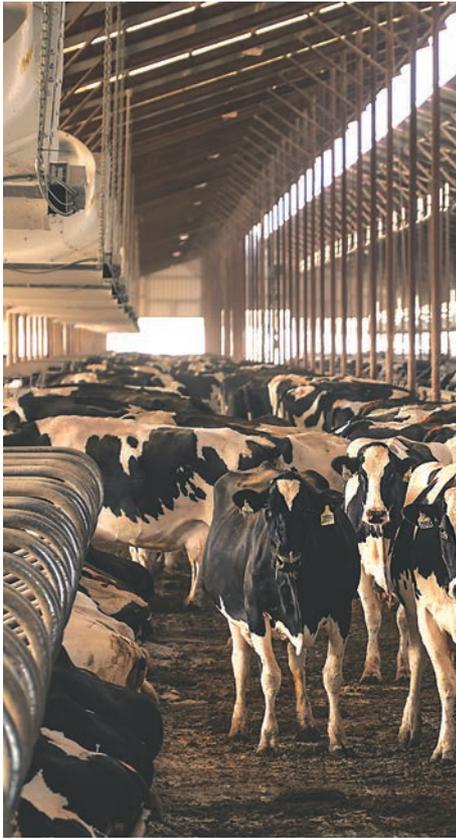


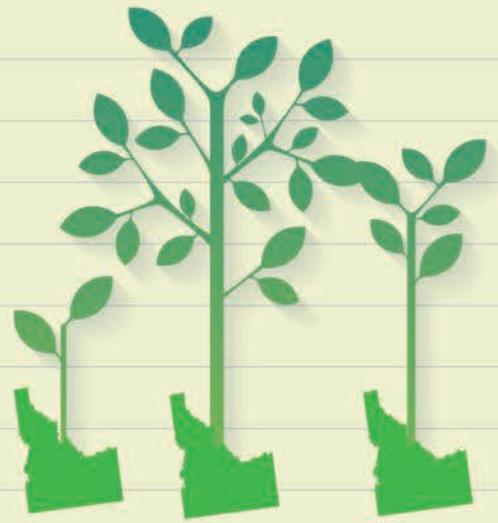
Photo courtesy of Idaho Dairymen's Association

“A lot of our facilities are bigger, to where it’s a viable business entity to be able to pass on from one generation to the next,” says the Dairymen’s Association’s Naerebout.

With Magic Valley farms producing more milk than the region’s processors need, Idaho exported \$336 million worth of dairy exports in 2016, generating more than \$735 million in economic activity.

“The U.S. dairy industry, in places like Idaho in particular, has a great opportunity to supply an increasing proportion of the growing global demand for dairy products,” says Daragh Maccabee, Idaho Milk Products’ CEO.

“As Idaho looks to grow demand for our dairy foods,” says Maccabee, “exports will undoubtedly play an increasingly important role.” ♦



You’ll Find Room to Grow in Idaho

Idaho’s agriculture industry is thriving. Agribusiness is the single largest contributor to Idaho’s economy based on sales. Plus, food and beverage processing is the state’s second largest manufacturing sector.

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A Stone-Cold LOCK

by RON STARNER

The air-tight case for NewCold to build its storage plant in Idaho.

Boise skyline
Photo: Getty Images

If you want to know why so many logistics operations are setting up shop in the Gem State, just ask Bobbi-Jo Meuleman, director of intergovernmental affairs for Idaho Gov. Brad Little.

She served on the front lines of Idaho's efforts to land NewCold's \$90-million investment into a cold storage warehouse in Burley.

"NewCold is a Netherlands company," says Meuleman, who was serving as Idaho commerce director at the time of the project. "This was an FDI project. They reached out to us for information, and we worked on the project for two years. It turned out to be one of our biggest wins of 2018."

The successful FDI venture was announced at the annual SelectUSA Investment Summit on June 26.

NewCold is investing \$90 million to build a 140-foot-high, 25-million-cubic-foot, sub-zero cold storage facility in the town of Burley. It will be one of the largest frozen storage buildings of its kind in the U.S. The 180,000-sq.-ft., fully automated facility will serve frozen food producers throughout the region and is set to open by the spring of this year.

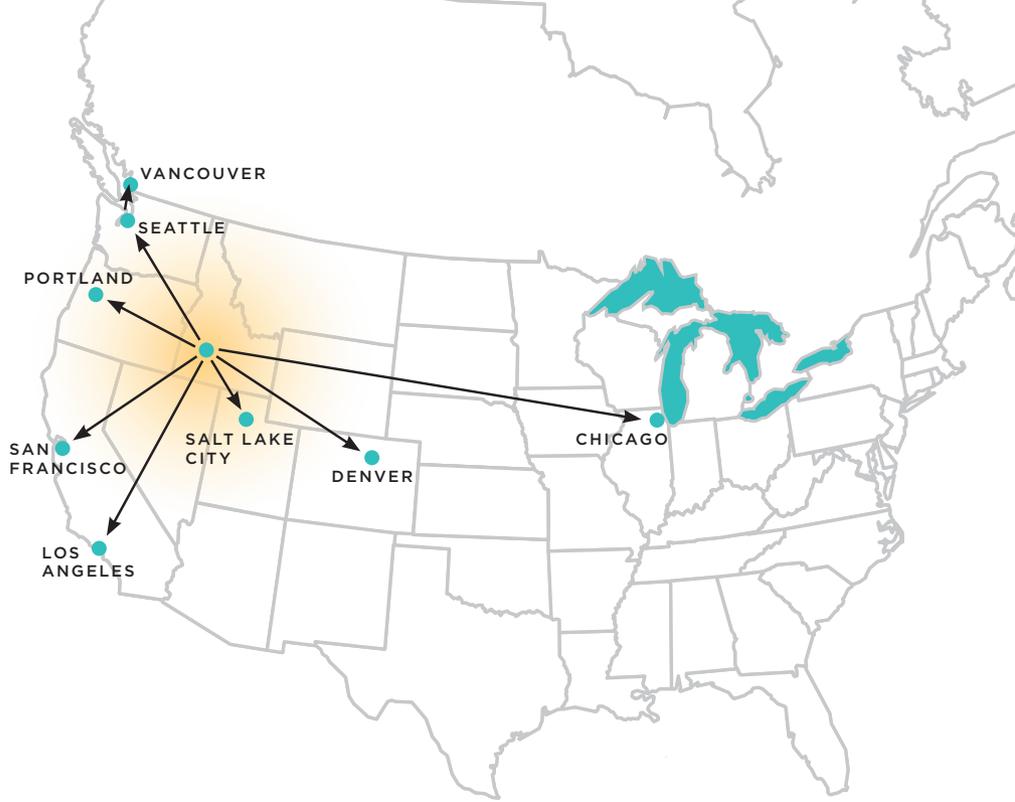
"Idaho is looking to benefit from this technologically advanced collaborative effort," said Jonas Swarttouw, NewCold's U.S. country manager. "They have partnered with us throughout the process and have proven to be a valuable partner in establishing our second U.S. location. We are excited to offer a competitive edge to existing and new Idaho food processors, and provide jobs in robotic



software, systems operations and automation in Burley.”

The facility will have a rail spur connected to Watco Transportation Services’ short-line rail facility next door. Watco’s “perishable express” transport option cuts days off normal delivery schedules, providing an advantage to businesses that need upgraded storage and distribution of frozen products.

NewCold is not alone. All around Idaho, logistics operators are finding a lot to like. The state’s infrastructure makes sure of that. It starts with a highly competitive transportation network. Five interstates, 20 U.S. highways and 30 state highways serve the state and provide quick ground access to such key markets as Salt Lake City, Denver, Portland, Seattle,



Vancouver, San Francisco, Las Vegas and Phoenix.

For companies needing rail access, more than 1,500 miles of rail bisect Idaho, transporting more than 100 million metric tons of freight per year. Established Class I railroad companies such as Union Pacific and Burlington Northern Santa Fe operate within the state while providing competitive shipping costs.

By rail, goods being shipped from Boise can reach Salt Lake City and Portland within one day; Seattle and Vancouver within 1.5 days; Denver and San Francisco within 2 days; Los Angeles in 3 days; and Chicago in 5 days.

Air shipping is competitive as well. Seven commercial airports are located in Idaho. The largest of these is in Boise. About 3 million passengers and more than 300 million pounds of cargo transit Boise Air Terminal each year.

A competitive business environment is a major drawing card as well. Nampa was recently named the Best-Run City in America, with Boise checking in at No. 3, according to WalletHub. The same rating agency also named Boise the 10th Safest City in America. 

By rail, goods shipped from Boise can reach Salt Lake City and Portland within one day; Seattle and Vancouver within 1.5 days; Denver and San Francisco within 2 days; Los Angeles in 3 days; and Chicago in 5 days.

KILGORE IS HERE

So are a lot of other opportunities in Idaho's blossoming mining sector.

by ADAM BRUNS

Judging by what Idaho Geological Survey Research Geologist Dr. Virginia S. Gillerman calls a “quite active” mining and exploration scene, the resources in and around Idaho's mountains are as beautiful as they are valuable.

Gillerman ought to know. 2019 marks her 30th year working for the Survey, and as an economic geologist — i.e. one concerned with the geology of economically useful materials — her perspective is highly valued in the industry.

“We interact with industry quite a bit,” she says, noting her team's geological research contracts and historical archives. She says the exploration sector is “probably almost as active as when I started in 1989 in terms of number of projects, excitement and amount of drilling. It's definitely on a big upturn.”

Recent discoveries and exploration projects have come from companies such as Integra and Revival Gold, whose president and CEO Hugh Agro recently told Kitco News, “Idaho is probably one of the most mining-friendly states and that gives investors some security ... The state has an interest in growing its economy and doing so by leveraging its resources sector in a responsible and sustainable manner.” Midas Gold's Stibnite Gold Project, in the permitting stage in one of the state's most historic mining districts in central Idaho, is anticipated to attract up to \$1 billion in investment, with \$86 million in local and state taxes and \$56 million in direct and indirect annual payroll.

Otis is a British Columbia-based mining concern whose Idaho portfolio includes the Oakley Project (gold and silver) in Cassia County, and the gold-



seeking Kilgore Project: 614 federal lode mining claims and one Idaho State Land Permit totaling 12,150 acres located on U.S. Forest Service (USFS) land in southeastern Idaho's Clark County, north of Idaho Falls. In announcing further exploration and drilling work in September 2018, the company noted that work will be coordinated from Otis' new field office in the county seat of Dubois. Moved from Spokane, Washington, the new office centralizes Otis' exploration office, core logging and core storage needs into one location, "significantly simplifying logistics and decreasing occupancy costs," said the company.

Otis Gold Vice President of Exploration Alan Roberts joined the company in April 2018. He's worked over the past 25 years at various exploration and resource development projects throughout North America, Central and South America, China and Africa. Reached by satellite phone at his horse

ranch in the mountains of southeastern Wyoming (not far from the Kilgore site), he compares his first experience in Idaho to the positive support his team received in San Bernardino County, California, on his last assignment.

"The local community in Clark County is very supportive," he says. Most of the headaches in the extraction industry come from the federal government level, he says, but even that is better in Idaho. "What I find in Idaho is the federal agencies are much more local and more amenable to us working in the state. I have a great relationship with both the BLM [Bureau of Land Management] and USFS offices in Kilgore." The USFS in August authorized a five-year exploration plan that will allow Otis to drill at up to 140 sites at the Kilgore Project.

At the state level, "the governor's office and his administration have been very supportive of the mining industry," Roberts

says, noting Otis President and CEO Craig Lindsay's trip with former Gov. Butch Otter to New York and Toronto in spring 2018 to promote Idaho mining and exploration.

Even within Idaho's gubernatorial history, there is a rich vein of exploration heritage: In October, Canadian firm Revival Gold announced drilling had commenced on its Haidee claim with its Arnett Gold Project site in Lemhi County. The Haidee claim was originally staked in 1887 by frontiersmen including George L. Shoup, the first governor of the state.

"Gold was first discovered in eastern Idaho in the 1860s at Beartrack-Arnett," said Hugh Agro, Revival Gold's president and CEO. "With a third drill turning at Beartrack-Arnett we have embraced the spirit of Idaho's earliest frontiersman and marked another exploration milestone for the benefit of our shareholders, Lemhi County and the State of Idaho." ♦



TESTED in IDAHO

by RON STARNER

Greg Ramp is typical of outdoor recreation enthusiasts in Idaho. Like many who came before and after, he turned his passion into his business. A hardcore fan of inflatable kayaks and whitewater sports, Ramp started building his own kayaks in his garage in Grand Pass, Oregon. After landing a job as lead engineer for Maravia in Boise, Idaho, he finally got a paycheck for doing the work he loved most: designing boats.

It wasn't long before he teamed up with three likeminded souls to establish AIRE Inc. in Boise in 1989. Together with Alan Hamilton, Kris Walker and Dennis Hill, Ramp set out to create an inflatable kayaking company that would take the whitewater world by storm.



Whitewater Rafting

Photo courtesy of AIRE Inc.

Outdoor enthusiasts trek to Idaho for the fun, stay for the business.

Today, nearly three decades later, AIRE sets the standard for inflatable whitewater vessels and boasts a booming business in Meridian, Idaho, just west of Boise.

“The Boise area is the perfect location for AIRE because of its proximity to so many different river systems,” says Shaun Allumbaugh, whitewater division sales manager for AIRE. “From Class I to Class 5 rapids are here. We can go test and play on the river with our new designs anytime we want. Idaho is the whitewater state. Anyone who is into rafting in the country knows about Idaho.”

AIRE employs 50 workers in Meridian and is looking to expand, says Allumbaugh. “We can build a vast array of products using different materials,” he says. “We also make small pontoon boats and fishing boats. We make spill containment products which we sell to the government for environmental cleanup work. That is our industrial division. We are always looking to launch another division.”

Taking the Show on the Road

The success of AIRE and companies like it is a big reason why Idaho Commerce recently launched the Tested in Idaho program. A grassroots marketing program, Tested in Idaho is designed to showcase the stories, innovation and quality behind the companies that create so many industry-leading outdoor products in Idaho.

The numbers for this sector are staggering: 267 business establishments employing 5,600 people at an average annual wage of \$50,600. The industry has a projected 10-year growth rate in Idaho of 18 percent.

“Tested in Idaho started with a list of 10 companies 18 months ago,” says Jenny Hemly, business retention and expansion specialist for Idaho Commerce. “It serves as additional marketing for our companies. We started meeting with other businesses and doing outreach. People got excited about the Team Idaho co-branding approach.”

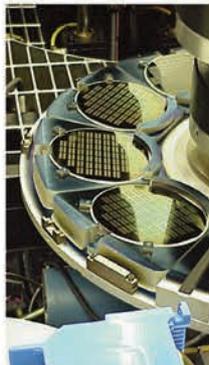
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“We’re finding that people of all generations are choosing first where to live and then figuring out what they’ll do for work while they’re here.”



— Jenny Hemly, Business Retention & Expansion Specialist, Idaho Commerce

Hemly notes that, like Ramp, many business owners in Idaho got their start by converting their passion into their paycheck. “For many of them, it grew out of their hobby,” she says. “We’re finding that people of all generations are choosing first where to live and then figuring out what they’ll do for work while they’re here. Many are entrepreneurs who love the outdoors in Idaho, and so they decide to live here permanently.”

Idaho success stories abound. Kryptek in Boise creates combat-proven features and designs in ultra-high-performance technical and tactical outdoor adventure apparel. Sego Ski Co. in Teton Valley designs and manufactures 16 total ski shapes. Partner Steel and Asana were both born in Idaho to serve the camping and climbing sector. Buck Knives, Nightforce Optics and Vista Outdoor supply hunters from their Idaho plants.

It’s all a natural fit, notes Hemly. With access to over 35 million acres of public land including nine national forests, nearly 79 percent of Idaho residents participate in some form of outdoor recreation each year.

Many of Idaho’s hunting and shooting sport businesses migrate annually to the SHOT Show (Shooting, Hunting & Outdoor Trade Show) in Las Vegas. Idaho Commerce also attends to support the over 75 Idaho companies who participate in the show.

“We work with sponsors to

host a reception for all our Idaho companies and their guests. This is a great opportunity to support our Idaho businesses and showcase our state,” says Hemly. “We bring the Governor and have over 200 people at the event. This is tremendous exposure for our companies.”

Finding a Better Home in Idaho

Cordova Outdoors is another Idaho success story. Based in Nampa, Cordova makes coolers for a variety of outdoor uses, from hunting and fishing to tailgating. Doug McMaster bought the company from its previous owner, who had moved the firm from Walla Walla, Washington, to Idaho to access a better workforce and a better airport.

“There is a strong work ethic in Idaho,” says McMaster. “Many folks here were raised on farms and ranches. They possess a strong ability to do what they say. They’re on time, and they have a great sense of integrity. They work hard and play hard, and many of them are used to building a business from the ground up. And they are good stewards of the land.”

Cordova just received its certificate of occupancy to expand its new manufacturing plant of 10,400 square feet in Nampa, says McMaster. “We’re adding to our workforce. About 32 people are employed here now. We have big growth plans, and we plan to grow right here.”

18
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**Paddle boarding at
Shoshone Falls in
Twin Falls.**

Photo courtesy of Visit Idaho

Idaho is the Pacific Northwest's Prize Gem.

by **SAVANNAH KING**

Perhaps it's the unspoiled natural landscape, the state's propensity toward quality health care and education, or maybe it's the lure of safe neighborhoods and short commutes to work — but one thing is certain, people want to live in Idaho.

As the fastest growing state in the country, Idaho clearly has way of winning people over. Between 2016 and 2017, the state's population jumped by 2.2 percent to 1.7 million people. According to a Wall Street Journal article, 85 percent of Idaho's newest residents from other states came from California in 2016.

Forbes recognized Boise as the fastest growing city in the U.S. in 2017. The population increased by 3.08 percent that year alone. Moody's Analytics forecasts that the city will continue growing thanks in part to the region's growing tech scene. Other bustling yet affordable cities in the state include Nampa, Coeur d'Alene, Twin Falls, Lewiston, and Idaho Falls.

According to Zillow, the median home price in Idaho is \$299,900 and the median rent price is \$1,375. And with the fourth-lowest energy costs in the U.S. — 21 percent below the national average — money just goes further in Idaho.

Adventure Central

As the undisputed wilderness champ, Idaho has the most acres of wilderness in the continental U.S. Idaho is an outdoorsman's dream come true with more than 3,000 miles of whitewater rafting and kayaking, more than 12,000 miles of single-track trails and 30,000 miles of dirt and two-track roads for cyclists, hikers and powersport enthusiasts.

As for natural landmarks, Idaho's rival those of other states. In fact, Shoshone Falls in Twin Falls is 36 feet higher than Niagara Falls and Hells Canyon is the deepest river-carved gorge in the North America at 7,900 feet (even deeper than the Grand

Canyon). In Soda Springs, the largest captive geyser in the world erupts 100 feet into the air every hour, on the hour.

Thanks to these and more natural wonders, Idaho's tourism industry is the third largest in the state behind agriculture and technology. Each year, travelers make more than 34 million visits to the state. And according to Outdoor Industry Association, 79 percent of Idaho residents participate in outdoor recreation every year which leads to \$7.8 billion in annual consumer spending and 78,000 direct jobs.

With four distinct seasons, Idaho is a year-round destination. In summer, popular pastimes include mountain biking along 15 miles of converted railroad tracks on the Route of the Hiawatha and exploring the hidden depths of the state's cave systems including Minnetonka Cave and Mammoth Cave. Spring and fall weather create the ideal backdrop for the state's hiking and rafting activities. And of course, there's St. Anthony Sand Dunes where visitors can experience 10,600 acres of white quartz sand and 400-foot-tall sand dunes and see one of the largest herds of wintering elk in the U.S.

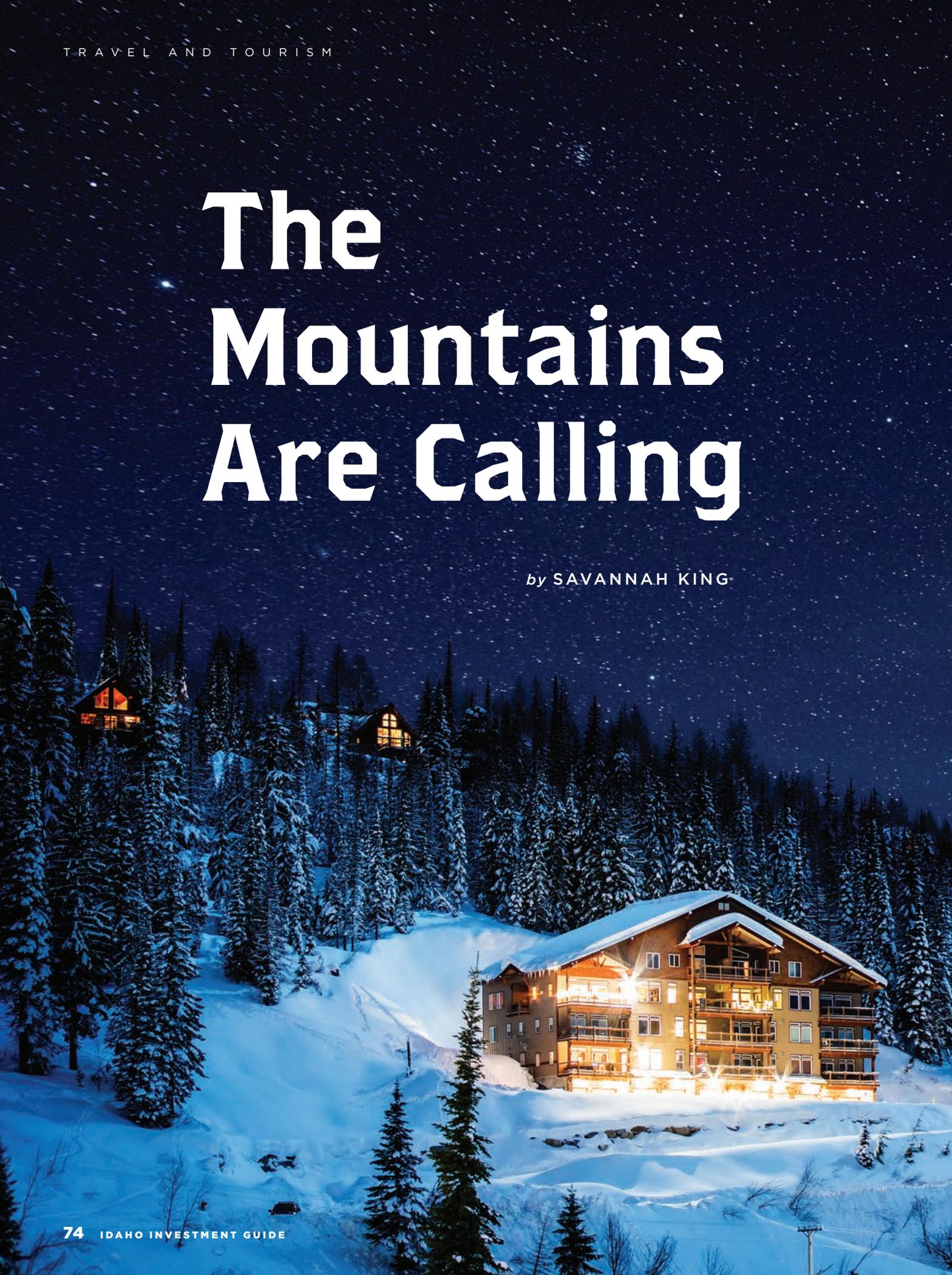
From shredding fresh powder at the state's many world-class ski resorts to enjoying a warm soak in a hot spring or gliding over the snowy paths on a sleigh or snowmobile, Idaho does winter right. As one of the most sought-after ski destinations in North America, winter transforms the scenery and opens the doors to many seasonal recreational activities.

More than 50 wineries and more than 1,200 acres of vineyards make for perfect weekend getaways. And with 58 craft breweries in the state (while equals 4.6 breweries per 100,000 adults) Idaho is ranked 10th nationwide for breweries per capita.

With such a multi-faceted quality of life in one place, it's easy to see why people take such a shine to Idaho. 

The Mountains Are Calling

by SAVANNAH KING



From the steep canyon walls, ancient forests, striking sand dunes, and geysers you can set your watch to, there's a world of adventure to be found in Idaho's vast wilderness.

In fact, tourism is the state's third largest industry behind agriculture and technology. The tourism industry alone has created more than 45,800 jobs and generated \$3.7 billion in total direct spending in 2017. Travel generates more than \$475 million in local, state and federal taxes which is the equivalent to saving each Idaho household \$740 in taxes every year.

Idaho is a large and geographically diverse state. Did you know that if you were to flatten all the mountains in Idaho, the state would be the same size as Texas? Or that Idaho covers two time zones, runs all the way from Canada to Nevada and encompasses the western side of the continental divide of the Rocky Mountains?

With all that pristine topography, it should come as no surprise that Idaho is a mecca for skiing and snowboarding enthusiasts. Across the state, some of the most popular destinations for travelers are the Gem State's 18 ski resorts. Every winter skiers descend on resorts like Schweitzer Mountain Resort, which boasts more than 2,900 acres of terrain. Sun Valley is said to have some of the greatest cross-country skiing in the United States. After hitting the slopes, many visitors revel in the opportunity to dip in state's many developed hot springs located around the state.

In the warm summer months, intense water sports like whitewater rafting and kayaking beckon travelers to the state's fast-flowing rivers.

Idaho has been ranked No. 1 in whitewater adventures by several outdoor magazines and has more whitewater than any state in the lower 48. Popular lakeside communities, like Coeur d'Alene offer visitors a more tranquil way to enjoy the Gem State's waterways with fishing, boating, and river cruises.

History and nature combine to offer amazing vacations in Idaho. For instance, the world's first national park, Yellowstone, is in Idaho and neighboring states Montana and Wyoming. The historic Oregon Trail passes through Idaho and visitors can still find ruts and traces on the ground from the wagon train voyages of American settlers.

While outdoor recreation is an obvious draw for the more than 20 million tourists that visit on the state every year, there's so much more to the Gem State.

Idaho's wine industry was set to explode in the early 1900s, but the prohibition era quickly put a stopper in the burgeoning industry. Today, wineries, craft brewers and distilleries are experiencing a resurgence in the Gem State.

While Idaho's most famous crop might be potatoes, its hops and barley crops are fueling the growth of craft breweries across the state. In 2006, there were fewer than 20 breweries but in 2018 that number is over 80. Wine lovers can tour the more than 50 wineries and 1,300 acres of vineyards planted in the state. Those who would prefer to taste freshly distilled spirits can tour the state's seven distilleries.

No matter which flavor of adventure you're after, Idaho has something for everyone. 

Photo courtesy of Visit Idaho

Eyes on Idaho



Hiking Craters of the Moon National Monument & Preserve, Near Arco

Mountain Biking, Bogus Basin Mountain Recreation Area





Scenic views at Perrine Bridge, Twin Falls

All photos courtesy of Visit Idaho

Horseback Riding at Redfish Lake, Near Stanley



Aerial View, Downtown Boise





Mountain Village Hot Springs in Stanley

Balanced Rock, near Twin Falls





Road to Redfish Lake near Stanley

Kayaking at Thousand Springs near Hagerman



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