College of Engineering Reaches Record Year in Private Donations

The receipt of a $700,000 payment from The Boeing Company, part of a $1.5 million gift to the University of Idaho's (UI) College of Engineering , has led the college to reach a new record in private donations.

With the donation, the college received more private gifts -- donations from businesses and individuals -- this fiscal year than any other year in college history. Total private donations amounted to $2.17 million for the year. In the last six years, the college has received an average of $1.60 million annually in private donations, with a previous maximum of $1.94 million being contributed in FY 91.

With this $1.5 million gift, Boeing became the primary corporate force behind the Cornerstone for Innovation campaign for engineering and physics facilities. The Boeing gift leads the $24.4 million campaign for renovations to existing engineering buildings and for construction of the Engineering and Physics Building, which was opened in fall of 1996. In an earlier campaign, Boeing contributed $500,000 to support the University's program for advanced technology in teaching and research within the College of Engineering.

Engineering Dean Richard Jacobsen shared his delight at the strong show of support the college received this year. "With limited growth in state support, there's a need to increase our efforts to maintain the quality of engineering education in Idaho that Idaho's citizens expect. Our wonderful friends and alumni are rallying to make the difference," Jacobsen said.

At The Boeing Company Educational Center in the new building, students will take courses in seven technology classrooms that can be interactively linked to other classroom sites around the state.

Jacobsen cites Boeing as a longtime supporter of research and education at UI and its College of Engineering. "The company's participation on our industrial advisory board has been crucial to our ability to provide the finest education for our students. Boeing's regular financial support for scholarships and programs has been essential to our continued growth."

Idaho alumnus and Boeing Company Chairman Emeritus Frank Shrontz (Class of '54), said the UI College of Engineering warrants support because of program quality. "Boeing maintains strong relationships with universities so we can recruit the best and brightest candidates for the company," he said. "Boeing works with key colleges and universities to enhance undergraduate education, especially in engineering and business, so graduates have the skills needed for success."

Dean Thornton (Class of '52), is among the UI graduates who have provided leadership at Boeing and at UI. A former president of Boeing Commercial Airplane Group, Thornton retired from Boeing in 1994 and headed the fundraising effort for Engineering and Physics. That effort has resulted in the completion of the new Engineering and Physics Building on the Moscow campus. Thornton joined UI President Bob Hoover, Engineering Dean Richard Jacobsen, and Idaho State Board of Education member Roy Mosman in opening the new facility last October.

Renovations funded by the campaign began this spring.

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