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Media Contact: Amanda Cairo, University Communications - North, (208) 885-6259, acairo@uidaho.edu; Ysabel Bilbao, University Communications-South, (208) 989-8855, ybilbao@uidaho.edu

Competition Bridges Two of Idaho's Greatest Natural Resources: Students and Forest Products

MOSCOW, Idaho – By bringing together two of Idaho's natural resources — students and wood products, the University of Idaho's College of Art and Architecture and Idaho Forest Products Commission have joined forces with the Idaho chapter of the American Institute of Architects to establish the Best Use of Idaho Wood Architectural Design Awards.

Winning designs will be recognized during a luncheon, featuring guest speakers architect Steven Rainville and Mark Brinkmeyer, chairman of Idaho Forest Group, Nov. 12 at 11:30 am – 1:30 p.m. in the Idaho Commons. It will conclude with a gallery reception of the design plans.

Architecture and natural resources students are encouraged to attend the luncheon, where they'll learn of the outcome of the competition. Awards include a \$500 prize for first place, \$300 for second place and \$200 for third place.

"It was an excellent opportunity for students to connect with the natural resources around them and opened the possibility for working with wood products as a medium for their comprehensive design projects," said Diane Armpriest, U-Idaho associate professor of architecture.

The competition was open to the 10 students in Armpriest's Arch 553 course. Each student created a design plan based on the actual construction of a new Pitkin Forest Nursery building. Entrants were challenged to create buildable and conceptually strong designs that met the needs of the client. While wood is a common building element, students were encouraged to explore new, innovative ways in which to use it.

Part of the students' experiences included outings to learn more about wood as a building material. They visited with professional foresters at the University of Idaho's Experimental Forest for an up-close look at Idaho's forests, the breadth of tree species in the woodlands and learned more about the role forestry plays in wood production. They also visited a sawmill in Grangeville to see the process of turning logs into lumber.

"It's exciting to see University of Idaho architect students consider how to best use wood in their designs. It's a great opportunity for them to take a closer look at a locally grown building material that's sustainable, renewable and beautiful," said Betty Munis, director of Idaho Forest Products Commission. "The students are truly inspiring and we're honored to sponsor this project."

This is the inaugural event of the Best Use of Idaho Wood Architectural Design Awards.

The project also helped students build stronger connections to other professionals. Students connected with Chris Patano, the architect for the actual Pitkin Nursery project. Patano reviewed the students' work three weeks prior to the competition's end.

"It was great to see the projects, they are at a high level," said Patano.

The projects are being judged by a jury of experts from around the region: architect Steven Rainville from Olson Kundig Architects in Seattle; Ken Gallegos, past president of AIA's Idaho chapter; Jeff Filler, a structural engineer from the University of Idaho faculty; and Marc Brinkmeyer, Idaho Forest Group chairman. Students will have an opportunity to meet with the jurors and receive feedback on their projects.

The results of the competition will be showcased in the Reflections Gallery through Nov. 23.

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About the University of Idaho

The University of Idaho inspires students to succeed and become leaders. Its land-grant mission furthers innovative scholarly and creative research to grow Idaho's economy and serve a statewide community. From its main campus in Moscow, Idaho, to 70 research and academic locations statewide, U-Idaho emphasizes real-world application as part of its student experience. U-Idaho combines the strength of a large university with the intimacy of small learning communities. It is home to the Vandals, and competes in the Western Athletic Conference. Through the university's \$225 million Inspiring Futures capital campaign, private giving will enhance student learning, faculty research and innovation, and a spirit of enterprise. Learn more: www.uidaho.edu.

Other Contacts:

Idaho Forest Products Commission

Betty J Munis, Director

Tel: 208-334-3292 or 208/863-1514

e-mail: ifpc@idahoforests.org

website: www.idahoforests.org

American Institute of Architects, Idaho Chapter

Ken Gallegos, Past President

Tel: 208-345-6677

e-mail: kengallegos@lcarch.com

website: www.aiaidaho.com