CREATE
INTEGRATE
ADVANCE

Donald M. Blackketter, Ph.D.
Professor and Dean
College of Engineering

University of Idaho
College of Engineering

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Dear Idaho Engineering and Computer Science Alumni and Friends,

Last July the College of Engineering launched the planning phase of the **Think Tank** project, a top priority of the college. This facility and related functions will help us to continue to improve an engineering environment that prepares students for 21st century careers. We have been working closely with the college's Advisory Board, faculty and students as we develop the **Think Tank** project that will improve the student experience and increase retention rates. The feasibility study is complete and this summer we are ramping up fundraising efforts to ensure that the **Think Tank** will be operational for engineering students when they return from spring break.

The **Think Tank**, a state-of-the-art facility, will be housed in the Janssen Engineering Building and have the look and feel of a world-class engineering facility to support student success. To address both the recruitment and retention issues, the College of Engineering will implement a success-oriented program and environment. It will be student-centered and delivered via collaboration between undergraduate students, graduate students, and faculty and staff to keep students interested and excited about engineering. It will communicate the message to incoming freshman that "We are expecting you!" If you are interested in giving to the **Think Tank** project, please email Mary Lee Ryba at mryba@uidaho.edu, or call 208.885.6774.

We are proud to announce that **Ron Olson**, BSEE '58, will chair the $1 million **Think Tank Campaign**. Ron, retired Boeing Company executive, has a distinguished history of volunteer leadership at the college. He was instrumental in the 1990's Engineering Physics Building campaign, served many years on the College of Engineering Advisory Board and as an EXPO judge. Ron received the Alumni Hall of Fame Award as well as the Outstanding Alumni Award.

We are excited to announce that **Maria Pregitzer** will be the new **Director of Student Services,** [**Think Tank]**, for the College of Engineering. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Natural Resources from the University of Michigan and a Master of Science in Forest Resources and Environmental Science from Michigan Technological University. She recently served as Director of the Student Center in the College of Agriculture, Biotechnology, and Natural Resources at the University of Nevada, Reno. In this position she was responsible for the recruitment, retention, and advising of students. We are fortunate to have found such a capable individual to help launch the **Think Tank** and increase the level of service we provide our students in the College.

Once again, it is my honor to share with you the important role our donors and friends play in our successes. I am extremely pleased to announce the $350,000.00 anchor gift for the **Endowed Professorship in Engineering Design and Innovation** by **Stanley P. Desjardins**, BSME '58 and 2010 University of Idaho Honorary Degree Doctor of Engineering recipient. Stan has more than 50 years of experience in the research and development of aerospace systems and components. He founded two companies that develop technology and products to improve occupants' chances of survival in airplane, helicopter and vehicle crashes. Energy-absorbing, crashworthy seats, developed by Stan, have saved many lives and prevented debilitating injuries. Stan also was responsible for major revisions in the U.S. Army's "Aircraft

Crash Survival Design Guide," which was considered the authority on crash-resistant aircraft design criteria. In 2002, Desjardins founded a new company, Safe Inc., to continue research to advance the state-of-the-art in crashworthy seats, as well as other interests. Stan has received many awards including recognition from the American Helicopter Society in 2003 for his contributions that increase aircrew and passenger safety. He also has been nominated for induction into the National Aviation Hall of Fame. Stan is a recipient of the UI Alumni Hall of Fame Award and Outstanding Alumni Award, and served many years on the College Advisory Board and as an EXPO judge.

The **Endowed Professorship in Engineering Design and Innovation** will support our teaching and research in the area of design and innovation and in particular support of our capstone design program. This program is a model program in which undergraduates, work with graduate students, mentored by faculty members to develop and create innovative products and new knowledge. By establishing an endowment for a Professorship in Engineering Innovation the college will be able to increase our ability to attract and retain outstanding faculty as well as provide a transformational educational experience for our students. We are extremely grateful to Stan for this remarkable gift. It is a long-term investment in the University and will continue to provide benefits year after year, generation after generation.

Dr. Peter Goodwin, professor of civil engineering and director of the Center for Ecohydraulic Research is one of the hundreds of experts around the nation who have been called upon to study the Gulf oil spill. Peter just returned from Louisiana and says the long-term consequences of the spill are still too difficult to tell because of the uncertainty of just how much oil is leaking from the ruptured pipe. According to Peter the spill in the Gulf is already much larger scale than the Exxon Valdez spill in Alaska 21 years ago. Some estimates say it is three times the size of the Exxon spill, which spilled 11 million gallons of oil. Peter's area of expertise is determining what impact the spill will have on Louisiana's delicate wetlands. He says when the wetlands are gone Louisiana becomes much more vulnerable to hurricanes and this year's hurricane season is predicted to be on the same scale as Katrina and Rita. Another concern is the coastal wildlife. "Of the many species in the Exxon Valdez, I believe only seven of the 31 species that were tracked have actually recovered to pre-Exxon Valdez levels. So what we're probably talking about is decades in many areas," said Peter. Peter will make another trip to Louisiana in September.

Enjoy your summer and the extra family time it offers.

Sincerely,

Donald M. Blackketter
Dean, College of Engineering

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