

2024

DONOR IMPACT REPORT

Analee, CWI Scholarship Recipient

"I am extremely grateful for the donors helping me with my education. I don't think I would be going to school right now if it wasn't for the scholarships that I have received."

Letters from Leaders



Your generosity changes lives — thank you for believing in College of Western Idaho (CWI) students!

You allowed us to stay laser-focused on our mission to provide affordable, accessible education that leads to employment and career advancement, driving growth and opportunity in the Treasure Valley.

Your support fuels scholarships, enhances student programs, and helps ensure cost is not the biggest barrier to success.

In 2024, CWI launched the Powering the Treasure Valley campaign that will provide unprecedented support for students and crucial campus development — all made possible through your investment.

Thank you for being part of this journey.

Gordon Jones, CWI President

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING CWI!

Your 2024 Donor Impact Report showcases the incredible difference your generosity has made, highlighting the success and opportunities you've helped create for our students and college community.



Your support of CWI powers our local economy. Because of you, students are gaining the education and training they need to achieve their goals — whether that means launching a career or continuing their education at a four-year institution.

Your impact is clear. Our latest survey shows 97% of CWI graduates are successfully employed or continuing their education. That is an incredible return on your investment in their future.

This past year, we have had the privilege of celebrating student success through events like CWI Nights, Opening Doors, and CWI Giving Day. We look forward to creating even more opportunities in 2025 for you to connect with the students whose lives you are changing.

I want say a special thank you to our volunteer board for their leadership. Their commitment to CWI has been instrumental to our success.

Thank you,

Mike Peña, Foundation President

GRACIE YOUNG

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT STUDENT



For Gracie Young, a Meridian, Idaho, native, helping others has always been a calling. Currently studying in the Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) program at CWI, her passion for making a difference is fueled by the generosity of CWI donors.

Young first discovered her love for occupational therapy during an apprenticeship at We Are Better Together, a local therapy clinic, during her junior year of high school. The experience opened her eyes to the transformative power of therapy, and she knew she had found her career path. "I fell in love with occupational therapy because it truly changes lives," she shares.

Pursuing higher education comes with financial challenges, and Young is determined to graduate debt-free. With the help of a CWI scholarship, she is one step closer to achieving that goal. "This scholarship will allow me to work fewer hours and focus more on my studies," she says. "It also gives me the opportunity to spend more time in clinics and volunteer in the community."

Young currently works in the food industry part-time to help cover her education costs. She is deeply grateful for the support that makes her education more accessible. "It is hard to put into words how grateful I am for the kindness and generosity of CWI's donors. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for easing my financial burden and supporting my dreams!"

Beyond her studies, Young has ambitious goals for the future. She has researched therapy opportunities abroad and hopes to volunteer in underdeveloped countries, using her skills to provide much-needed therapy services. "I want to save up and use my abilities to help others who may not have access to treatment or therapy," she says.

Ultimately, Young envisions a future where she can build a career she loves, while also having a home and family of her own — her version of the American dream. Thanks to the generosity of CWI donors, that dream is now within reach.

POWERING THE TREASURE VALLEY CAMPAIGN

CWI is on the brink of a historic milestone with its Powering the Treasure Valley comprehensive campaign — an ambitious \$138 million initiative to expand educational opportunities and strengthen workforce development across Idaho. With 89% of the campaign goal already secured, CWI is now calling on individuals and organizations in the community to help shape the future of education in the Treasure Valley.

At the heart of this campaign is a commitment to student success. From the three new buildings on our Nampa Campus, currently under construction, to the planned Boise campus expansion, these investments will directly impact our students' educational experience and address regional workforce needs. The campaign also supports expanding student scholarships and enhancing academic programs.



The generosity of early campaign leaders has been instrumental in our progress thus far. The J.R. Simplot Company, CapEd Credit Union, the Laura Moore Cunningham Foundation, and Delta Dental have stepped forward as champions of education, demonstrating their support for Idaho's students and economic future.

This campaign is about more than just building facilities — it's about building futures," said Mark Arstein, Vice President of Advancement at CWI. Together, we are empowering students, strengthening industries, and driving the future of Idaho's economy.

"This campaign is more than just building facilities — it's about building futures."

Mark Arstein
Vice President, Advancement



MIKE LAIRD

"You get a lot of bang for your buck at community college," says Mike Laird, who established the Robert Laird Scholarship in 2022 to honor his father's belief in the impact of education.

Laird's father was a businessman who knew hard work and dedication could change lives. He believed in giving people the tools to build something of their own — just as he had done.

That legacy inspired Laird and his family to start a foundation focused on expanding opportunities for students who might not have access to other resources.

For Laird, the impact of community college is personal. It was at a community college that he discovered his path, earning a chemistry degree that led him to a Master of Business Administration from University of California,

Irvine, and a successful career. Knowing firsthand how education opens doors, he wanted to help CWI students gain the same opportunities.

Introduced to CWI by Foundation Board Member, Estela Rosales, Laird saw the College as a great fit for his family's mission. "Ever since I moved here in 2007, I've heard great things about CWI and knew what a big need it fills in the community," he shares. "I'm excited to play a small part in helping students succeed — whether that is continuing their education or launching a career."

For those considering starting a scholarship, Laird offers this advice: "Think about the impact you can have. You can help open the eyes of students to new opportunities for them to succeed."

ENTREPRENEUR LAB

The CWI Entrepreneur Lab launched this past fall with seed funding from generous donors for the program.

The Entrepreneur Lab is dedicated to empowering the entrepreneurial spirit at CWI. From inception, a side-hustle, or next-level business planning, the Entrepreneur Lab was created to support the efforts of our students starting their own businesses.

In November, Meagan Ruped and Seth Hoover became the first winners of the Entrepreneur Lab Competition, with a business plan modeled on their own experiences.

In 2023, Ruped was diagnosed with breast cancer. “We came up with the idea for the Powerport Sweater as a potential solution to some of the struggles she faced while undergoing treatment,” said Hoover.

To develop their business plan, they partnered closely with the Entrepreneur Lab staff and used Hoover’s education in the Business program. They plan to use their prize winnings from the competition to keep moving their business forward.

“If we can make just one patient feel less like a patient, that will be a success for us,” Hoover said.



WISHING WELL

The Wishing Well Fund supports a wide variety of departments who are trying to innovate and enhance student learning opportunities.

Through this fund and other donor support, you allowed us to support seven projects that will provide new learning opportunities for students. These include everything from certification programs for social science students, new software and hardware supporting students in STEM and healthcare programs, special art supplies, and new software supporting students learning English with additional languages for accessibility.

"The Wishing Well project bridges the gap between producing high-quality images in class and professionally presenting them in public spaces. It enhances students' sense of achievement while fostering a stronger connection between them and the campus community."

Shawna Donahue
Adjunct Faculty, Art



YOUR GIFTS SUPPORTED

97%
POSITIVE PLACEMENT RATE FOR
CWI GRADUATES

\$750k+
DIRECT
SCHOLARSHIP
SUPPORT FOR CWI
STUDENTS

2,325
DEGREES AND
CERTIFICATES
AWARDED

\$1.95M
DONATED TO THE
CWI FOUNDATION
IN FY24

ACCESSIBILITY. AFFORDABILITY. EMPLOYABILITY



MEET YOUR TEAM



COLLEGE OF WESTERN IDAHO
FOUNDATION

We're Here to Help

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SAVE THE DATE

CWI *GIVING* DAY

April 10, 2025

Mark your calendars for CWI's
24-hour online fundraiser!

GIVE NOW
to the Powering
the Treasure
Valley Campaign



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