

# A New Class of Broncos

## Freshman Academics Shine



**EIGHTEEN-YEAR-OLD KRISTA KLEBENOW LOOKED AT BOISE STATE AND SEARCHED NO MORE.**

“It just felt right when I visited campus,” says the Spring Creek, Nev., native. “Boise is a beautiful place with a lot of artistic culture, and for being so large it has a really small feel. I see people outside being active every day. Aside from academics, it was just a really good fit for the person that I am.”

She is among 19,664 Broncos enrolled this fall, including an all-time high number of degree-seeking students. The incoming freshman class, to which Klebenow belongs, is 2,243 strong and is one of the most academically talented classes in school history.

“We are fast becoming known as an institution of excellence ‘beyond the blue’ for our program offerings, our undergraduate research opportunities, a thriving Honors College and a beautiful location,” says Dr. Lisa Harris, vice president for student affairs. “We can expect a high level of preparation from today’s students and they are delivering. Being well prepared for a challenging academic environment makes for a more meaningful educational experience at Boise State and enhances their futures.”

Attracting so many high-achieving students is no accident. Assistant Vice President for Enrollment Services Mara Affre and Admissions Director Jenny Cerda both arrived at Boise State in 2007, and have led an effort to draw interest from the best and brightest students. Campus tours and orientation are focused on

By Sherry Squires



giving students the best glimpse into all that is Boise State.

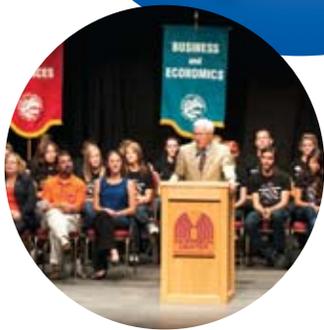
“We have a lot to offer,” Affre says. “Our priority is sharing information on our outstanding academic programs and comprehensive student life. Finding students who are a good fit with Boise State is our ultimate goal.”

### PERSONAL CONNECTIONS

Enrollment counselors, most of whom are alumni, take their Boise State stories to potential students in the region. They talk about undergraduate research opportunities, nationally recognized faculty, internships, access to the outdoors and limitless opportunities for campus involvement.

Once students select Boise State, alums often host send-off barbecues in their hometowns to strengthen connections. Orientation offers new students an experience to ease their transition, develop new relationships with fellow classmates, faculty and staff, and become more comfortable with university life. And when they arrive for the new year, Convocation and Welcome Week activities focus on campus life and graduating in four years.

All-time high  
degree-seeking  
students with  
**16,835**  
undergraduates and  
**2,057**  
graduates



Armed with a perfect 4.0 high school grade point average, Klebenow was thorough in her college search. She visited campus a few times, talked with an advisor and delved into academic offerings in art education.

“I knew the art program was a great one,” she says. “But they made things really personal for me when I came for a campus tour with my family, and Orientation was a blast. They didn’t offer that when I toured other places. Boise State won me over.”

The university hosted an unprecedented 10,000 potential students and their family members for campus tours in the past year, up from 3,300 two years earlier.

## RAISING THE BAR

With College of Western Idaho firmly established in the valley, Boise State has raised admissions standards, aiming for the students most likely to succeed in the classroom. The average high school GPA for incoming freshmen has risen from 3.3 five years ago to 3.41.

“That number is really hard to move,” says Affre. “It is rare to see an institution completely change its persona so positively in the time frame Boise State has.”

**82.3** percent  
of the freshman class  
came to Boise State  
straight from high  
school, compared with  
**78.3** percent  
five years ago

Boise State has attracted more full-time students and more who come directly from high school. There also are better retention rates from the freshman to the sophomore year,” says Cerda. “These improvements to our academic profile make Boise State a more vibrant place and increase the value of the Boise State diploma.”

The notoriety of the football program certainly has helped boost interest in Boise State. Potential students, at the same time, have taken notice of Boise State’s academic achievements.

Freshman Honors College student Kenny Mayer is well versed in Bronco football — his dad, Ken Mayer, was a walk-on center for the Broncos. But it wasn’t until his brother, a 2008 Boise State chemistry graduate, received a full scholarship to Boston College to pursue his Ph.D. that he began seriously to look at Boise State.

“Boise State’s science and engineering programs are growing more prestigious and that is exciting,” says Mayer, who is studying materials science and engineering.

He also chose to live on campus to take full advantage of college life. He is used to a full slate of activities — in high school he participated in football, basketball, track, golf, National Honor Society, Business Professionals of America and the scholastic team. He already has found

**53** percent of  
students are female,  
**47** percent male

**92.5** percent  
of new freshmen  
are full-time,  
compared with  
**83.5**  
in 2007

Ethnic diversity is up, with **14.2** percent of students from underrepresented populations, compared with **13.5** percent last year

**36.6** percent increase in fall applications compared with three years ago

Fall 2011 enrollment  
**19,664**

**2,243** incoming freshmen with a median ACT composite score of **22.7** compared with the national ACT average of **21.1** and the Idaho average of **21.7**

a number of ways to get plugged in to campus and, at this point in his collegiate career, he believes that is Boise State's greatest strength.

"I love being involved in the community and I have so many options here," he says.

Students like Klebenow and Mayer will play a central role in Boise State's future.

"So many people are shaping who Boise State is, from our administrators and faculty to our students and alums," says Cerda. "We are always talking about the importance of undergraduate academic opportunities here, about being located in the state capital and the headquarters for business, and about easy access to the outdoors. Students are coming here and finding that to be true."

Idaho residents comprise **81** percent of students, followed by California, Washington, Oregon and Nevada

**78** international freshmen, an increase of **200** percent, evidence of the university's growing global recognition; overall, **443** international students come from Canada, Saudi Arabia, India, Japan, Nepal, China, Germany and beyond

