By Kathleen Craven

As Boise State's reputation grows, so does its student body. Not only has the university set another all-time record for Idaho higher education with 17,667 students, it also has continued its advancement into a metropolitan research university of distinction by attracting more diverse and high ability students.

This year's student body includes a record 21 National Merit Finalists, including 10 incoming National Merit Scholars. With these new students, the National Merit Scholarship Corporation acknowledged Boise State's commitment to recruiting academically talented students by officially naming the university a National Merit Honor school. Boise State earned this designation in just two years, the shortest time possible.

In addition, more than 37 percent of incoming freshmen have a high school GPA of 3.5 or higher, and almost 36 percent of newly enrolled freshmen ranked in the top quarter of their high school classes.

"Our strong enrollment numbers point to Boise State's increasing reputation for offering excellent classroom instruction as well as enhanced research opportunities," says Vice President for Student Affairs Michael Laijberte.

Academic excellence — just one more indication that Boise State is, indeed, a New U Rising.

NO DEBATING
NEW COACH FOR TALKING BRONCOS

By Nicholas Bock

New Boise State forensics coach David Bailey has some pretty big expectations to live up to. After all, Boise State's speech and debate team, the Talking Broncos, has repeatedly proven to be among the best in the country.

Taking over duties from communication professor Marty Most, who served as the team's coach for more than 20 years, Bailey's approach is straightforward: "Our objective is to try and win every competition."

The focus this season will be the biennial Pi Kappa Delta Tournament in Shreveport, La., which determines the national speech and debate champions. The tournament is analogous to the football team's competition in a major bowl game. The Talking Broncos won the tournament in 2005 and lost the 2007 tournament by only one point.

Bailey earned his Ph.D. from Texas A&M University in 2008 and his MA from Missouri State in 2002.

ROTC Staffer Named Tops

Keeping up with Boise State's 150 ROTC cadets can be a challenge. Between classes, grades, training exercises and summer camps, there's a lot of paperwork to track. And no one does it better than John Rossi.

For his professional expertise in managing records and tracking training progress, Rossi has been named the Human Resource Assistant of the Year by the U.S. Army Cadet Command, the highest level of command for university ROTC programs. Rossi was selected over 300 of his peers nationwide.

"Mr. Rossi is truly an asset to the Boise State University Army ROTC program, our partnership schools and the U.S. Army Cadet Command," wrote Lt. Col. Phillip Chambers, department chair, in his recommendation letter for the award. "His tireless work ethic and dedication to ensuring the cadets and cadre are set up for success is paramount to the success of this program."

Rossi also serves as an administrator for the ROTC programs at Idaho State University, Brigham Young University – Idaho, Northwest Nazarene University and the College of Idaho.