

\$5 million Micron gift to support new engineering Ph.D. program

The Micron Technology Foundation will award \$5 million to Boise State to support its new Ph.D. program in electrical and computer engineering.

The \$5 million donation from the Micron Technology Foundation, a private, non-profit charitable organization formed in 1999 by Micron Technology Inc., will fund new faculty and staff positions in the College of Engineering, stipends for ECE doctoral students, lab renovations, new instrumentation and other program costs.

“With the increasing demand for qualified, skilled and talented engineers in our state and country, Micron is pleased to support Boise State’s thriving College of Engineering and its new doctoral program,” says Steve Appleton, Micron’s chairman, CEO and president (BBA, management, ’82). “To be competitive on a global basis, it is vital for business and community leaders to support educational systems that continue to raise the bar in education and promote curriculum rich in math, science, technology and engineering.”

The gift, announced during a May 4 press conference, includes \$3 million to be awarded over the next four years. The remaining \$2 million is a challenge grant that will be matched



From left, President Bob Kustra, Engineering Dean Cheryl Schrader, Micron CEO Steve Appleton and Mark Durcan, Micron’s vice president for research, during the May 4 check presentation.

dollar for dollar with donations made to Boise State for the ECE doctoral program.

“This is tremendous news for Boise State, and we are very grateful to the Micron Technology Foundation for its vision and generosity,” says Boise State President Bob Kustra. “This gift will enhance our efforts to build a very strong program that will help meet the growing needs of high-tech industries in the state and the region, and provide new opportunities for research and collaboration.”

Legislators continue to mull decision on community college

Despite Boise State’s efforts to help establish a community college in the Treasure Valley, plans for a stand-alone two-year school in southwest Idaho remain in limbo (“Momentum builds at Boise State,” *FOCUS*, Spring 2006).

In spite of the endorsement of former Gov. Dirk Kempthorne to establish a statewide community college system, proposals from Boise State to transfer millions of dollars in land and resources to its campus in Nampa, and the potential offer of \$15 million in seed money from the Boise-based J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation to help set up a two-year school in the valley, the Idaho Legislature failed to act on several measures that would have created such a system.

Instead, lawmakers created the joint Legislative Interim Committee on Community Colleges to study the issue in a series of hearings this summer. When Kustra appeared before the committee in June, he used a hypothetical funding model and said Boise State could open a community college for 2,500 students and pay for more than three-fourths of it with tuition,

federal funds and existing state funds.

The committee is expected to present a proposal to the Legislature when it convenes in January.

Boise State’s Selland College of Applied Technology provides services generally offered by a community college, but proponents of a stand-alone two-year school, led by Kempthorne and Kustra, point out that the Boise metropolitan area is one of the largest in the country without a community college.

“An independent community college makes strategic sense for Boise State,” Kustra wrote in an opinion piece in *The Idaho Statesman* in June. “By separating community college offerings and services from the university, we can concentrate on our goal of becoming a metropolitan research university of distinction, serving the undergraduate, graduate and research needs of this growing region. Regardless of the funding model chosen, an investment in community college education for Idaho citizens is crucial.”