

MONTHLY UPDATE

SEPTEMBER 2020



DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Each time I enter a classroom, whether it be in person or virtually, I am inspired and energized by the passion and commitment of the students. This semester I'm teaching the Master of Public Administration Capstone class and the inaugural semester of the Housing Opportunities for All Vertically Integrated Project (VIP). The students in both courses are engaging directly with community partners on research projects that examine housing affordability, nonprofit response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the revenue generation ability of local jurisdictions. The resulting research will supply decision makers in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors with timely evidence for use in decision making that will impact communities across Idaho.

I also find daily inspiration, and often humor, from my colleagues at IPI. Since March our dedicated staff have been working remotely to serve our clients and support each other. Whether it be collaborating with one another and clients, presenting research results, working on complex research proposals, or welcoming new team members, together we've done so exceedingly well. I'm grateful to have had a team of individuals to navigate with through the challenges, and opportunities, presented by 2020.

I'm pleased to share more details about IPI's work in this month's update—many thanks to you for your continued support.

BEST,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vanessa Fry". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

DR. VANESSA CROSSGROVE FRY

PROJECT LIST

PROPOSAL STAGE

- Juvenile Detention Program Evaluation (sponsor, Ada County)
- Idaho Outdoor Recreation Survey (sponsor, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation)
- Lincoln Community Health EMS Cost Benefit Analysis (sponsor, Idaho Health and Welfare)
- Peer Counties Analysis (Ada County)
- Permanent Supportive Housing Program Evaluation (Idaho Housing and Finance Association)
- West Central Mountains Regional Creative District (sponsor, Idaho Commission on the Arts)

PENDING

- A Foundation for Research into Webcams as Tools in Informal STEM Learning (sponsor, National Science Foundation)
- Accessing Independence by Leveraging Partnerships to Catalyze a Smart and Connected Region – Caldwell, Idaho (sponsor, National Science Foundation)
- Modeling Resilience Through a Community Lens: Discovering Data, Creating Tools, and Connecting People Who Make Resilience Possible (sponsor, National Science Foundation)

ONGOING SPONSORED

- Communities of Excellence Charter School Program Evaluation (sponsor, Bluum)
- Idaho Public Education Policy Review (sponsor, yes. every kid.)
- Idaho Public Television Attitudinal Awareness Survey (sponsor, Idaho Public Television)
- Literacy Intervention Program Evaluation (sponsor, Idaho State Board of Education)
- New Path Community Housing Evaluation (sponsor, City of Boise)
- Master of Environmental Management Needs Assessment (multiple sponsors)
- SAMHSA Treatment and Transitions Evaluation (sponsor, Idaho Health and Welfare)
- Streamflow Data and Climate Vulnerability Survey (Northwest Climate Adaptation Science Center)

ONGOING UNSPONSORED

- Annual Treasure Valley Survey
- Annual Statewide Survey
- Boise State's COVID-19 Dashboard
- Census Response Rate Reporting
- CityGo
- Industry Cluster Needs Assessment
- State of Local Governments Survey

ENDING

- Idaho's Transportation Infrastructure: Moving Idaho Forward (multiple sponsors)
- MPA Employer Needs Assessment
- Statewide Eviction Study



PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

IDAHO PUBLIC TELEVISION ATTITUDINAL AWARENESS SURVEY

Team: Matthew May, Benjamin Larsen, Vanessa Fry

In order to facilitate a deeper understanding of their viewers, Idaho Public Television enlisted the services of the Idaho Policy Institute to conduct an attitudinal awareness survey. Consulting with representatives from Idaho Public Television, the research team developed a survey questionnaire that asked respondents to identify which platforms (if any) they currently consume Public Television programming on, describe what they would like to see more of, and generally score current Public Television offerings, with particular attention paid to the Idaho Reports program that covers legislative happenings in the state.

IPI fielded the survey to two response pools: 1) a statewide sample of Idaho residents (N=771), balanced according to the regions of the state; and 2) existing Idaho Public Television constituents (N=132), such as subscribers and donors. In September, the research team shared top-level results with Idaho Public Television representatives, in addition to demographic breakdowns of each question according to region, age, race and ethnicity, gender, education, income, and party.

A little more than half (53%) of statewide respondents indicated that they currently watch Idaho Public Television. While most consumed Public Television content on their own TV, more than half expressed a desire for more content provided via their smartphone. A major theme noted by the research team was an appetite to see more coverage of how political decisions and public policy affects the everyday lives of Idahoans. This theme held true across multiple questions. Additionally, the research team found that the survey of existing Idaho Public Television constituents was consistent with the results of the pool of Public Television viewers in the statewide sample.

Idaho Public Television will use the results of these surveys internally to better understand public perceptions of their services and inform future decisions.



STUDENT INVOLVEMENT



MPA CAPSTONE YMCA PROJECT

Nonprofit organizations across the country have had wide ranging responses to the challenges presented by COVID-19, including YMCAs. This semester, a group of MPA Capstone students are working with DBD Group, a nonprofit consulting firm, to determine how specific COVID-19 response actions affected over 100 individual YMCAs. The students will create a survey and analyze secondary data to answer the question How did COVID-19 affect individual YMCAs' organizational health as related financial health, fundraising outcomes, membership stability, and connection to their community? The final report will enable DBD Group to assist YMCAs in developing a roadmap to resilience in times of disaster or crisis.

HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL VIP CLASS

In 2018, Boise State's Blue Sky Institute funded a project that allowed IPI to examine how Boise State could more strategically engage in homelessness service provision in Ada County. One finding of that report was to launch a Vertically Integrated Program focused on housing. Last year, Interim Director Vanessa Fry found the perfect partner to help design the course, SPS faculty member Dr. Krista Paulsen. Together they've co-developed the VIP Housing Opportunities for All, launched this semester. The course allows students from across disciplines, from undergraduates to post docs, an opportunity to use research to address one of the largest issues in the Boise metro region, access to affordable housing. For their first project the class is preparing a presentation for City of Boise's Neighborhood Interactive. Their presentation, "Affordable Housing in Your Neighborhood: Options and Inspiration" will clarify understandings of what affordable housing is and provide participants with examples of projects to inform discussion and inspire action.

PROJECT UPDATES

IDAHO PUBLIC EDUCATION POLICY REVIEW

Team: McAllister Hall, Vanessa Fry, Gabe Osterhout

This month, the Idaho Education Review project moved forward with survey distribution. Surveys were sent to school district superintendents across the state. Teachers in several school districts were also surveyed. The surveys asked questions about district- and school-level implementation of policies and programs such as open enrollment, out-of-school learning opportunities, and class sizes. Survey data will be synthesized and combined with data collected from district policy handbooks to create a report for the clients, the national nonprofit organization, yes. every kid. and the Boise-based firm, Kestrel West.

IDAHO POLICY INSTITUTE STRATEGIC PLANNING

Following Boise State's lead, the Idaho Policy Institute has started work on an institute-wide strategic planning process. Staff, clients, and student researchers, as well as stakeholders throughout the university, will be asked to come together to establish and evaluate IPI's goals, visions, and strategies for the future. This process will challenge IPI to push its boundaries and establish a forward-thinking mindset to match that of Boise State as a whole.

NEWS

["Idaho Policy Institute Staff Present to Idaho Association of Counties"](#)

Idaho Policy Institute News, September 15, 2020.

["Vanessa Fry Presents to RAND Corporation"](#) Idaho Policy Institute News, September 13, 2020.

["An Education Innovation That Beats Learning Pods"](#) Wall Street Journal, September 5, 2020.

["IPI Research Associate Explains Consequences of Census Undercount"](#) Post Register, September 3, 2020.

["IPI Presents Results of Transportation Infrastructure Research Project"](#)

Idaho Policy Institute News, September 3, 2020.

["Homeless people in rural America struggle to find help"](#) Cronkite News, August 27, 2020.

MONTH IN REVIEW

IPI PRESENTS RESULTS OF TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE RESEARCH PROJECT

IPI is wrapping up its year-long look into Idaho's transportation infrastructure. As a result, the team has begun sharing their findings.

On September 3rd, IPI's Interim Director, Vanessa Fry, presented at [Idaho Associated General Contractors' 2020 Summer Meeting](#). Following a welcome by Idaho Governor Brad Little and Idaho Transportation Department Director Brian Ness, Dr. Fry discussed the project. The report, [Transportation Infrastructure: Moving Idaho Forward](#), was also presented on September 15th by Dr. Fry, Gabe Osterhout, and Lantz McGinnis-Brown to Idaho Association of Counties' Transportation Committee. Results indicate an additional \$241.8 million in annual revenue is required to maintain and restore current transportation infrastructure (road, bridge, bike, pedestrian, and public transportation) in the state. Additional revenue is necessary to meet the state's expansion needs.

An [infographic](#) covering the report's major findings has been widely shared across the state. The full report will be released later in October.

VANESSA FRY PRESENTS TO RAND CORPORATION

On September 10, IPI Interim Director, Dr. Vanessa Fry, presented to [RAND Corporation's Justice Policy Program](#). In her talk, [Facilitating Evidence-based Decisions in Idaho](#), Dr. Fry described how leaders across Idaho have utilized IPI's objective research to inform policies and practices regarding transportation, housing, and economic development.

In recent months Dr. Fry has worked closely with RAND Justice Policy Program staff to submit a [National Science Foundation Civic Innovation Challenge \(CIVIC\)](#) proposal focused on enabling equitable access to housing, job opportunities, health care, and education through catalyzing user-innovators. The collaborators are currently working on a [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#) proposal aimed at advancing health equity.



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ipi@boisestate.edu



(208) 426-5488



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