



April 7, 2025

## *The Update in Brief*

- UHP Club Elections | Run to be one of the UHPC Officers! (Page 1)
- Honors Thesis Spotlight | Abby Card, Xavier Christy, Logan Bowman, Kyleigh Kowalski (Pages 2-5)
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## 2025/2026 UHP Club Officers Election

**President**

**Vice-President | Secretary**

**Historian | Treasurer**



Looking to play a role in the University Honors Program?  
Consider Running for one of the UHP Club Officer Positions!

All Club Officer Positions are open!

For more information about the UHPC and the Officer roles go to:

[www.isu.edu/honors/current-students/uhp-student-club/](http://www.isu.edu/honors/current-students/uhp-student-club/)

If you'd like to run for Office, fill out this

[UHPC Candidate Application Form](#)

## **Abby Card**

### ***Unearthing the Dead: An Investigation of Mesoamerican Chultun Burials at Archaeological Sites in Belize***



When Abby Card, '25, isn't working at the University Tutoring Center or being an Honors Peer Mentor, you can typically find her in the kitchen experimenting, learning, and trying her hand at all sorts of new recipes. "From cupcakes and cheesecake to macarons and croissants, I love being able to make someone smile with the food I make." After she's done baking, Abby loves to explore a hodgepodge of various artistic endeavors.

Abby's wide ranging interests are also evident in her academic degree. She'll graduate this May with an Honors Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology and minors in Art History and Geotechnology. Abby intends to pursue an Masters and PhD and will applying to graduate school after taking a gap year.

During an internship in the Archeology department, Abby discovered that she had more passion for studying human remains than lithic (rock) analysis. This led her to the work of Dr. Kirsten Mink. "She introduced me to the project concept through her relationship with the Belize Valley Archaeological Reconnaissance (BVAR) Project. They had already done some basic data collection on their own time, but didn't have the resources or time to take it further. Which is where I came in!" Abby's study is a spatial analysis of archaeological field reports from a sampling of 62 individuals from various Maya chultun burials in Belize across 10 maximal site locations. Her analysis created a chultun burial database that establishes "potential connections and points of comparison between the chultun burials. (This database) provides a starting point for future research into chultun burials and their relevance to Maya mortuary archaeology." Read her full abstract [here](#) and attend her defense if you'd like to know more.

Abby didn't originally plan on doing such a multi-faceted project. "The layered nature of my project makes me all the more inspired by my chosen field of bioarchaeology." This summer, she will be attending the BVAR Field School for three weeks to research with the team and develop her archaeological skills. "I am excited to be able to go to Belize this summer to actually experience the world that I have been researching from my computer screen for the last year."

When asked about tips for successful research, Abby says, "Be willing to put yourself out there. If there is something that you are interested in, talk to your professor about it. Make connections and conversations, that's the best way to make your own opportunities."

**You are invited to attend Abby's presentation of their Honors Thesis**

**Tuesday, April 8 | 11:00 am - 1:00 pm | Graveley 100**

**[isu.zoom.us/j/81589341845](https://isu.zoom.us/j/81589341845)**

# **Honors Thesis Spotlight:**

## **Xavier Christy**

### ***Effects of Cold Stress on Developing Respiratory Neural Network***

When Xavier Christy, '25, along with all his studies and research, he spends a lot of time volunteering. During the past 3 years, Xavier has volunteered over 500 hours at the Pocatello Free Clinic. "I also started volunteering at the Pocatello Animal Shelter over the summer, walking dogs. It's been a blast, and I appreciate every opportunity to improve our community."

It'll be no surprise that Xavier intends to go to medical school after graduating in May with his Honors Bachelor of Science in Biology with a Biomedical concentration. He will submit his medical school application on June 1st. "It takes an entire year to go through the application process and matriculate, so I'll be working and volunteering in the meantime."

As an INBRE fellow, Xavier knew he wanted to get involved in research and learned of Dr. Jason Pilarski's research on the development of the breathing-associated nervous system. "I cold emailed him asking to meet up. Thankfully, he let me join his lab. (Since then) I've been working on my project investigating respiratory related neural networks in Zebra Finch embryos." Specifically, Xavier is investigating the impact of cold exposure due to parental absences during nesting on developing brainstem motor rhythms essential for breathing patterns. "Temperature is important in physiological function, especially during early development. In birds, embryonic temperature drops during parental absences, but the consequences of cooling and rewarming remain unclear. While hypothermia typically suppresses neural activity, data suggests that respiratory-related brainstem circuits may develop resistance to acute cold exposure." Read his full abstract [here](#) to learn more.

Through the process, Xavier's favorite part was learning how to create a brainstem preparation, and more specifically, analyzing the electrical rhythm from Cranial Nerve IX. "It's incredibly small, so the whole procedure is basically microsurgery. The tissue is delicate, so one misstep could cut it off and make obtaining data impossible. There was a big learning curve. Eventually, I became skilled enough to successfully isolate the nerve."

When asked about tips for successful research, Xavier says "If you're even thinking about participating in research, I recommend getting started as soon as possible. That way, you can decide if research is something you want to spend your time on." If you're interested in working in a specific lab group, he recommends reading papers published by the professor and their students and talking to them about the work they do in the lab. He encourages sending a professional email expressing your interest and a request to meet. "Don't be afraid to contact them!"



**You are invited to attend Xavier's presentation of his Honors Thesis**  
**Tuesday, April 8 | 2:00 - 3:00pm | REND 115**



## **Logan Bowman**

### ***Gender, Sexuality, and the Nuclear Family in Early Cold War America***



After school work and the duties of serving as Vice President of the Sexuality & Gender Alliance Club and the President of Phi Alpha Theta have been crossed off their to-do list, Logan needs their downtime! "I've been really into crafting lately, specifically collaging and making my own pins."

Logan will graduate in May with an Honors Bachelor of Arts in History and a Political Science minor and plans to spend their gap year in Pocatello before applying to graduate school.

Seeking a mentor, Logan scrolled through the History department's website hoping to find a professor with similar research interests. Logan found Dr. Robey, and despite not having taken classes from them, Logan reached out. "I barely knew Dr. Robey, but I asked if they would be willing to mentor me on this project, and luckily they said yes!"

Logan admits that their final project looks different than initially expected. "I was planning on focusing on the Lavender Scare, or the federal government's purging of homosexual employees during the 1950s and 1960s, but as I read through more materials, I decided I wanted to expand and add other topics, such as the emergence of gay rights organizations, the impact of stereotypes, and gender roles specifically within the nuclear family."

Logan's research "uses the unifying factors of fear and uncertainty to examine how the political and social climate of the early Cold War impacted widespread perceptions on gender and sexuality." Those impacts range from an exclusion of homosexuals from government and military positions to women's perceived domesticity playing key roles in the defense of American values. Read Logan's full abstract [here](#). Logan notes, "As my project progressed, I started noticing more and more parallels between my historical research and today's social and political climate. I think it is incredibly important to understand the past, as events that took place decades, or even centuries ago, can have a massive and long-lasting impact on our lives today."

When asked about tips for successful research, Logan says "Reach out to a faculty member! Even if you can't find someone with interests or ongoing research that 100% aligns with what you want to do, it doesn't hurt to ask. I think that more often than not, professors will be more than happy to help guide you through a research project, whether it be an Honors thesis or otherwise. It shows that you are willing to go above and beyond what most students are doing at this point in their college career."

**You are invited to attend Logan's presentation of their Honors Thesis**  
**Wednesday, April 9 | 10:00 - 11:00 am | LA 324**

**[isu.zoom.us/j/87174592062](https://isu.zoom.us/j/87174592062)**

# **Honors Thesis Spotlight:**

## **Kyleigh Kowalski**

### ***Quantitative Classification Model for Terrestrial and Planetary Basalt Morphologies at Various Resolutions***



As Vice President of the GeoClub, Kyleigh loves to spend her time interacting with her peers. After school though, you can find Kyleigh lifting weights, playing tennis, dancing, and training jiu jitsu. "On the off chance that I am at home, I enjoy reading and spending time with my friends and family."

After graduating in May with a Bachelor of Science in Earth and Environmental Systems and a Geotechnology minor, Kyleigh is moving to North Carolina to pursue her Master's degree in Geology at East Carolina University. She'll study coastal processes and specifically, saltwater encroachment along the East Coast.

As an Honors Geosciences major, Kyleigh connected with her mentor, former Honors Director Dr. Shannon Kobs Nowatniak!

"Shannon had an internship position that sounded like an exciting opportunity to gain research experience, and we ended up developing it into my thesis project."

Kyleigh's project involved collating large amounts of Remote Sensing Data using the Geographic Information System (GIS) computer program to improve a quantitative classification model of the surface roughness of basalt flows at various resolutions. Her study "expands upon this quantitative classification by including additional surface roughness measurements, slope and Root-Mean-Square (RMS) slope." This improves the model's ability to distinguish different types of basalt flows and deposits. What's really cool is that the "same methods can be applied to planetary remote sensing studies to better understand and map lava flow textures on Mars and the Moon." Read her full abstract [here](#). Kyleigh says, "I was really surprised by how much I learned about coding during my project. It wasn't originally a focus of the project, but it quickly became evident that code was going to be the most effective way to tackle the massive amount of data I had to work with."

When asked about tips for successful research, Kyleigh says "From what I've seen during my time at ISU, there are tons of research opportunities and professors who are eager to brainstorm with you, all you have to do is reach out and ask!" She continues "My biggest piece of advice is to write often and thoroughly, especially when reading literature, and to document your methods as often as possible."

**You are invited to attend Kyleigh's presentation of her Honors Thesis**

**Friday, April 11 | 2:00-4:00pm | REND 108**

**[isu.zoom.us/j/83889739730](https://isu.zoom.us/j/83889739730)**

## Announcements & Opportunities

# JOB OPPORTUNITIES

## UHP Now Accepting Applications for Fall 2025 Envoy Positions!

Four F25 Envoy positions are available.

- Director's Assistant
- Communications & Outreach
- Web Development
- Instructional Assistant

These are paid positions with a \$300 scholarship and up to an additional \$300 (\$9 per hour worked through the semester).

Learn more about each position and fill out the online application at [isu.edu/honors/current-students/honors-student-leaders/envoy/](https://isu.edu/honors/current-students/honors-student-leaders/envoy/)

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## Sustainable Idaho Podcast Host

The Portneuf Resource Council (PRC) is hiring a host for the Sustainable Idaho podcast for the summer with the possibility of continuing in the 2025/2026 school year. This is a 10 hour a week, \$13/ hour internship position. Student applicants must be interested in research and interviewing experts on the climate, the environment, wildlife, and other topics as they relate to sustainability in Idaho. PRC fully trains our hosts on all aspects of the job including: finding experts, writing interview questions, and how to edit the audio recording to make a professional podcast. Previous hosts have won awards from the Idaho Press Club.



The Sustainable Idaho podcast is broadcast on our local campus NPR station, KISU. You can listen to past episodes at <https://www.kisu.org/podcast/sustainableidaho> and learn more about the position in the [job description file](#).

If you would like to apply or have any questions, contact Liana Litzsinger at [recycleliana@gmail.com](mailto:recycleliana@gmail.com)

## Announcements & Opportunities Continued

# WANNA BE A VOLUNTEER?



## Student Survey for CMP Research Project

A group of Communication, Media and Persuasion students are conducting a research project on the effects of product packaging in marketing and want to survey you! In an effort to gain a rigorous and random sample, they're asking you to kindly take 5 minutes to complete the survey. Your response will go towards important research and help CMP students gain experience presenting accurate and abundant data.

Thank you in advance for your participation!

**Take the Survey**

**BVD  
2025**



## Volunteers Still Needed for Bengal Visit Day on Saturday, April 12

These are the areas where we could still use more assistance!

- Morning Building Guides/Greeters (would need to be available from 6:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.)
- Afternoon Building Guides/Greeters (would need to be available from 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.)
- Information Table Volunteers (would need to be available from 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.)

**Register Here**

**by Friday, April 4th:**

**Volunteer Sign-Up**

## ISU Visiting Artist Scholar Presenters Program: Eric Anderson

Join the ISU Department of Art for a virtual guest lecture by Eric Anderson, Senior Animator at Epic Games and former artist at Pixar, Disney, and Blue Sky Studios. Anderson, who has contributed to major films like Inside Out 2, Elemental, Lightyear, and Encanto, will share insights into the animation industry and creative processes behind these iconic productions.

The lecture will be followed by a Q&A session. The event is free and open to the public. Contact Rachelle Cooper at [rachellecooper@isu.edu](mailto:rachellecooper@isu.edu) for more information

**Tuesday, April 8 | 4:00 – 5:00pm | FA 401**



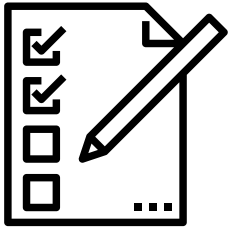


## Announcements & Opportunities

# FALL 2025 REMINDERS

**The Fall 2025 Course Schedule is LIVE and Registration begins on April 7th at 7:00am!**

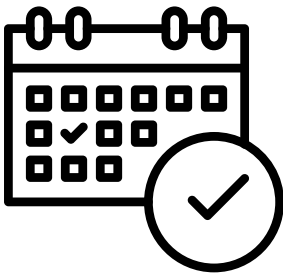
Here's your checklist:



Check your [Degree Works](#) and plan of study for needed courses and Honors credits.

Create your F25 Course Plan using the registration tools in [MyISU](#) and this list of [F25 Honors courses](#).

S	M	T	W	T	F	S



Schedule an appointment with your major advisor and [Honors advisor](#).

## Financial Literacy Week | April 7 - 10

Established in 2023, Financial Literacy Week aims to educate and increase understanding in financial planning, taxes, estate planning, real estate, insurance and more.

Events include Trivia Night, Movie Night, and more!

**All events are free and include cash prize giveaways!**

See the schedule and description of events at

[www.isu.edu/cob/flw/](http://www.isu.edu/cob/flw/)





April

# UHP EVENTS

## ABBY CARD, THESIS DEFENSE

***Unearthing the Dead: An Investigation of Mesoamerican Chultun Burials at Archaeological Sites in Belize***

Tuesday, April 8 | 11 am - 1 pm | Graveley 100

[isu.zoom.us/j/81589341845](https://isu.zoom.us/j/81589341845)



## XAVIER CHRISTY, THESIS DEFENSE

***Effects of Cold Stress on Developing Respiratory Neural Network***

Tuesday, April 8 | 2:00 - 3:00pm | REND 115



## LOGAN BOWMAN, THESIS DEFENSE

***Gender, Sexuality, and the Nuclear Family in Early Cold War America***

Wednesday, April 9 | 10:00 - 11:00 am | LA 324 or

[isu.zoom.us/j/87174592062](https://isu.zoom.us/j/87174592062)



## KYLEIGH KOWALSKI, THESIS DEFENSE

***Quantitative Classification Model for Terrestrial and Planetary Basalt Morphologies at various Resolutions***

Friday, April 11 | 2:00-4:00pm | REND 108

[isu.zoom.us/j/83889739730](https://isu.zoom.us/j/83889739730)





ISU POLITICAL SCIENCE CLUB

&

POCATELLO PEOPLE'S COALITION PRESENT:

# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

*Panel*

## IMMIGRATION

**Wednesday**

**April 9, 2025**

**6:30-8:00p MT**



Register here

**ISU Student Pond Union Building  
Little Wood River Room, 2nd floor**

**Or**

**Register for zoom**





Idaho State  
University

# STD AWARENESS EDUCATION PREVENTION

Wednesday, April 9  
4 - 6 PM

**Recreation  
Center  
Lobby**

Trivia  
Educational Tabling  
Games  
Giveaways

**SPONSORED BY:**

Recreation and Wellness | Idaho Collaborative for Infectious Disease  
Prevention | Department of Community and Public Health | ISU  
Health Center | Title IX | Associated Students of Idaho State University

# TRIVIA NIGHT!

max 6 people per team • one section related to finances  
all other sections pop-culture and general knowledge

*Part of Financial Literacy Week*

Sponsored by



Hosted by



**April 7 • 6pm • SUB Wood River Room**

**FREE • Prize to top team • Drawings for \$\$\$**



**Idaho State  
University**

University  
Honors Program

**[www.isu.edu/honors](http://www.isu.edu/honors)**

Dr. Sarah Robey | Honors Director | [sarahrobey@isu.edu](mailto:sarahrobey@isu.edu)

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