

# Policy Research

*Economic development, access to health care, strong civic leadership and a clean environment affect the quality of life for all Idahoans. Boise State oversees a broad array of research programs and services that provide policymakers, citizens and agencies with the information and skills they need to advance and protect the interests of our citizens.*

## DEFINITION

**Policy** research at Boise State University focuses on the laws, plans, actions and behaviors of government; on health resources and priorities; and on energy issues and initiatives.

## AT-A-GLANCE

**RESEARCH CENTERS** and institutes at Boise State take a strategic approach to addressing a wide range of policy issues. These organizations include:

- Center for Health Policy
- Energy Policy Institute
- Public Policy Center
- Office of Energy Research, Policy and Sustainability
- Andrus Center for Public Policy
- Institute for Urban and Regional Planning
- Center for the Study of Aging
- Social Science Research Center
- Frank Church Institute
- Idaho Center for History and Politics
- Center of Excellence for Environmental Health and Safety

**RESEARCH GRANTS** and contracts from many state and federal agencies, including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Energy, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, Idaho State Court System, Idaho Department of Transportation, Ada County Clerks Office and Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections

**PARTNERSHIPS** and funding support from many organizations, including Healthwise, Family Medicine Residency of Idaho, Idaho Academy of Physicians, Idaho Association of Counties, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Association of Idaho Cities, International Institute for Municipal Clerks, United Way, CASI Foundation for Children, Idaho Commission on the Arts and Pacific Regional Association of Clinical Pastoral Care Educators

## PROJECTS

**THE ANNUAL ENERGY POLICY INSTITUTE SUMMIT**, presented by the Energy Policy Institute, brought policymakers, scholars, and energy experts from across Idaho to Boise State to discuss energy policy and research initiatives

**THE CENTER FOR HEALTH POLICY** contracted with the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare for a third consecutive year to assess recruitment and retention issues related to physicians in Idaho

**PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR MASS TRANSIT** systems and local option taxes was gauged by the Social Science Research Center in public opinion surveys conducted statewide

**THE ADA COUNTY DETOXIFICATION PROJECT** was the focus of a Center for Health Policy project. CHP assisted in developing an evaluation model for the project through a federal Substance

Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration grant awarded to the United Way

**A SURVEY OF 34 RECOGNIZED** neighborhoods in the city of Boise was conducted as part of a Boise State research project. The project's focus was to learn more about the relationships between peoples' sense of community and the design of the community

**A STATE OF THE REGION REPORT** assessed the competitiveness and quality of life of the Treasure Valley and compared the profile with 14 other metropolitan regions in the West

**PUBLIC ATTITUDES** toward nuclear power as influenced by various methods of public involvement were surveyed in a joint study with Idaho universities and the Idaho National Laboratory



*"Idaho and the West are confronted with tremendous opportunities as well as significant challenges in the areas of energy policy and energy initiatives. The*

*Energy Policy Institute and Boise State are well positioned to take a leading role in addressing some of the critical issues the region faces."*

— Dr. David Solan (pictured at left)  
Director, Energy Policy Institute



### SUSAN MASON, PH.D.

Boise State University's location in what the U.S. Census Bureau has identified as the 85<sup>th</sup> largest metropolitan statistical area in the nation has provided an ideal setting for Dr. Susan Mason to study the issues cities face when confronted with continuing growth and development. Among her current research projects is a collaboration with Dr. Rebecca Mirsky and Dr. Anthony Marker to identify and analyze the deterrents and incentives to constructing environmentally friendly, or "green," buildings. Dr. Mason and her colleagues have conducted surveys and interviews with architects, contractors and city officials in four states. They have developed a one-stop website, accessible to the public, that can be used to gather information about "green" building practices. The online site will help prospective builders and city officials clearly understand the advantages and challenges of these practices and make an informed decision about whether to choose this approach.



### ED BAKER, PH.D.

With 20 years experience on the business side of the \$2 trillion health care industry, Dr. Baker brings an entrepreneurial, results-oriented approach to his work as director of the Center for Health Policy. During Dr. Baker's tenure, CHP has earned a reputation for providing insightful research and analysis on a wide range of health care issues that

affect the lives of Idahoans and for helping to define health policy at the highest levels in the state. CHP works on a contractual basis with government agencies, nonprofits and businesses. Among CHP's projects are contracts with United Way of Treasure Valley to assist in developing an evaluation model for the Ada County Detoxification Project, with the Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections to study the impact of clinical services in county juvenile detention facilities, and for a third consecutive year with the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare to assess recruitment and retention issues related to physicians in Idaho. In addition, Dr. Baker and his colleagues are in the second year of a contract with the Urban Institute to provide Idaho data for a study of the impact of Medicaid reform in Idaho and Kentucky.



### STACEY DONOHUE, MPA GRADUATE STUDENT

As part of a graduate research assistantship, Donohue is working under the direction of Carole Nemnich, associate director of the Public Policy Center, to develop and administer a survey for the Idaho Transportation Department. The ITD contracted with Boise State's Public Policy Center to conduct a survey to gauge how its many partners in the public and private sectors perceive the effectiveness of these partnerships, which are a critical aspect of ITD's strategic plan. Donohue worked with the ITD steering committee to identify what specific areas the survey should cover and she also helped formulate the survey questions. The survey was delivered to 1,900 recipients, and Donohue's next task will be to analyze and quantify the survey results for the ITD. "This project has taught me a lot about how public agencies work," said Donohue, who plans a career in the public sector after earning a master of public administration degree.

## RESEARCH GRANTS

*Here is a sampling of grants related to policy research at Boise State:*

Community Assessment Questionnaire Pilot Project  
**Family Medicine Residency of Idaho**  
\$8,000

Developing a Hunger Atlas for Counties in Idaho  
**Sage Community Resources**  
\$7,710

ITD Stakeholder Survey/Focus Group  
**Idaho Transportation Department**  
\$26,350

Cooperative Transportation Research Program  
**Idaho Department of Transportation**  
\$35,818

Minority Youth Contact Assessment  
**Idaho Department of Juvenile Corrections**  
\$22,505

Certification of Medicaid Managed Care  
**Idaho Department of Health and Welfare**  
\$220,861

Project Life: Lifestyle Interventions for the Elderly  
**Idaho Department of Health and Welfare**  
\$63,418

Return on Investment Calculator Development  
**Healthwise**  
\$6,046

Societal Nuclear Energy Research  
**Battelle Energy Alliance**  
\$104,323

Healthy Families Active Youth  
**Terry Reilly Health Services**  
\$10,000

Teens Against Tobacco Use  
**American Lung Association of Idaho**  
\$11,000

Investigating the Development of a Sub-Regional Identity in the Idaho Falls Sub Region  
**Yellowstone Business Partnership**  
\$9,959



As an emerging metropolitan research university of distinction, Boise State University is committed to fostering an environment where exceptional research and creative activity thrive.

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