



NEWS RELEASE – June 16, 2010

Contact:

Jennifer Couch

(208) 562-3508

jennifercouch@cwidaho.cc

College of Western Idaho Surgical Technology Program Touts 100% Pass Rate on Certification Exam

Nampa, Idaho – This spring all 16 graduates of the College of Western Idaho’s (CWI) Surgical Technology program passed the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA) exam. The certification is a condition of employment for Treasure Valley hospitals and this is the College’s second year of 100% pass rate – well above the national average of approximately 75 percent.



CWI is the only program in the Treasure Valley that is accredited by Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP). Only students who graduate from CAAHEP accredited programs are eligible to sit for the national certification exam administered by the NBSTSA.

The program involves a combination of didactic and clinical experience. The clinical portion of the program begins in the CWI classroom/lab where students learn sterile technique, gowning and gloving, and instrumentation on a variety of procedures. They complete approximately six weeks of mock surgeries in the lab prior to entering clinical sites such as St. Alphonsus, St. Luke’s Boise, and St. Luke’s Meridian. Students then spend

approximately 500 hours in the actual OR setting and must participate in a minimum of 140 procedures.

“As an OR Clinical Educator at Boise St. Luke’s, I have had the privilege of being associated with the CWI Surgical Technology program for over 10 years. This is a strong program which has fine tuned it’s curriculum to meet the needs of the hospitals in our community while meeting the educational needs and expectations of their participants in a very affordable manner,” noted Reuben J. DeKastle of St. Luke’s Boise Center. “The director of the program, Mona Bourbonnais, has solidified the program and increasingly elevated the standard of training. We consistently hire graduates from this program for the simple reason that they are trained at a high level and have a predictable set of skills and theoretical foundation. Additionally, it is reassuring that the graduates are certified with their national accrediting organization when they graduate.”

In addition the outstanding pass rate, 12 of the 16 graduates have already obtained employment with local hospitals and one student, Heidi Reitmann, is headed to Belize on a medical mission to provide assistance to under-served areas.

“We provide a very fast-paced, intense program,” stated Program Head, Mona Bourbonnais. “Students must be able to fully engage in the program and dedicate 10-12 hours a week outside of classroom to study. We encourage our students to go above and beyond what is required for graduation and the dedication of the students pays off in the end as illustrated in the amazing pass rate on the national certification exam.”

Sophie Pech, one of this year's graduates, will have an article published in the June 2010 edition of the Journal of the Association of Surgical Technologists. "It has always been my dream to pursue a career in the healthcare industry," stated Pech. "The instructors and training I received at CWI have been exceptional and have prepared me for a great future as a surgical technologist."

CWI will be hosting a free Healthcare Information Session on July 15, at 9:00 a.m. for anyone interested in learning more about CWI's programs.

For more information on CWI's Surgical Technology Program and other healthcare programs please visit cwidaho.cc or contact Casey Brown at 208.562.2185.

-###-

About the College of Western Idaho:

The College of Western Idaho is a public, open-access, and comprehensive community college committed to providing affordable access to quality teaching and learning opportunities to the residents of its service area in western Idaho. CWI has seven campus locations throughout Southwest Idaho providing higher education and 21st Century technical skills acquisition. The college is dedicated to improving the community's economic well-being by responding with highly-educated and productive graduates. The foundation for the area's only community college was created by a supermajority of voters in Ada and Canyon counties on May 22, 2007. For more information about the college, visit www.cwidaho.cc or call (208) 562-3000.

###