September 2021

2D Barcode

Quote

“Thank you. You’ve always been a view to the outside world. Yet, in my lifetime, through a pandemic, you’ve been a lifeline.” – Mary

It’s Official!

Last week I was appointed by the State Board of Education as General Manager of Idaho Public Television. I have to say it was a surreal moment. I started my time here at IdahoPTV just a few short years ago in 1983 as a high school intern. And as I told the board, this position was not at all in my mind. The multiple jobs I held afforded me the room to grow, be creative, learn, fail and try again.

I grew up with here at IdahoPTV working with some amazingly talented people. I am in awe of their work and we get to stand on their shoulders. Ron Pisaneschi is one of those people. We’ll miss his deep understanding of the public media system. But I am equally in awe of the current staff. What a wonderful collection of hardworking and dedicated people. There couldn’t be a better place to work. I can’t wait to see what great things we will all do going forward.

Since early 2020, the world has been rocked by three simultaneous crises: a global pandemic, ensuing economic disruptions, and a reckoning with long-existing racial inequities. Unemployment in the United States rose to a rate not seen in more than a century.

A majority of Americans now report economic distress and concern about the future certainty of stable employment. The usual ladders to security — education, hard work, and a lifelong career path — appear to have broken down.

These realities are not distributed equally. Service workers, disproportionately people of color and recent immigrants, have been hit hardest by the pandemic and the ensuing economic hardships. Meanwhile, many high-earning white-collar workers have stayed employed virtually.
With education becoming virtual, debates about the value of traditional post-secondary schooling and vocational/technical career training programs are fueling discussions about how best to prepare for the jobs of tomorrow.

The three-part series Future of Work explores how America can preserve opportunities for work that sustains families, communities and the nation while preparing workers for careers of the future.

EPISODE 1: “The New Industrial Revolution” (airs Sept. 1 at 9 p.m.)
In addition to illuminating the ongoing drivers for disruptions to the world of work — AI, robotics, platform technology, globalization, labor practices — the pandemic has been a driver of change. Unemployment flipped from the lowest rate in 50 years to the highest in a century.

EPISODE 2: “Futureproofing” (airs Sept. 8 at 9 p.m.)
Front-line and service workers have borne the health consequences of the pandemic, increasing racial and economic disparities. Certain robotic and AI applications are accelerating as the value of human workers is further questioned. Determining the likely areas of job growth and training needs is difficult. Post-secondary education has become more virtual and its costs more controversial.

EPISODE 3: “Changing Work, Changing Workers” (airs Sept. 15 at 9 p.m.)
Companies rethink the need to even have offices, and the traditional 40-hour workweek is losing relevance. Many companies are adopting the remote work model, spawned by the pandemic, as their new normal. The sense of precariousness and fear increases for many. Does the nation need new policies of Guaranteed Basic Income or a drastic rethinking of social safety nets?

Welcome Trisha Mick to the Education Team

We are thrilled to introduce our newest education staff member, Trisha Mick. As the community education specialist, Trisha will be working with the community at large to provide resources and support.

Trisha has a passion for early literacy and STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) and loves being able to share simple and low-cost activities with families to encourage learning together. Trisha previously worked in public libraries for 13 years and facilitated story times, coding camps, and kindergarten readiness programs. When she’s not at work you can find her outside enjoying Idaho’s mountains and rivers with her family and dogs or wandering the aisles of her local bookstores and libraries.

When asked about her new position Trisha said, “I’m very excited to be working at Idaho Public Television. I grew up watching PBS KIDS shows at home, and Outdoor Idaho was, and still is, on a constant loop at my parents’ house. At the public library I got to provide free and easy-to-use resources to my community, but now I get to provide those same resources and more to my entire state. I can’t wait to get out and start learning from and connecting with the different communities in Idaho.” We are so excited to welcome Trisha to the team here at IdahoPTV. She has a contagious energy and her passion for education and community engagement is evident. Trisha hit the ground running and hasn’t stopped.
In the Community

Join Idaho Public Television and MontanaPBS for another season of Tech Talk Tuesday, a weekly online discussion for teachers about implementing technology in the classroom. The virtual discussions are hosted by Kari Wardle and Nikki Vradenburg, public media educators who are tech nerds and former classroom teachers!

This season (Sept. 7, 2021 through April 26, 2022), Tech Talk Tuesday begins each month by announcing an overarching theme. Then each Tuesday, videos will be released on the Tech Talk website (idahoptv.org/techtalk) featuring national experts along with teachers from Idaho and Montana sharing strategies, tips and tricks, and real-world solutions for integrating technology into the classroom and online learning environments. This is not another boring webinar. Tech Talk Tuesdays are all about teachers discussing practical tips for overcoming challenges and mastering technology.

“MontanaPBS is thrilled to collaborate with Idaho Public Television to host Tech Talk Tuesday for teachers in both of our states,” says Nikki Vradenburg, director of education at MontanaPBS. “The conversations are sure to be packed with great, just-in-time information for teachers as they implement media and technology with students. This is a rich opportunity for teachers in Montana and Idaho to share and learn together, proving that in public media we are better together!”

Kari Wardle, education manager at Idaho Public Television, adds, “I am excited to partner with MontanaPBS to facilitate Tech Talk Tuesday. We recognize that teachers are being inundated with distance-learning and remote-teaching resources, so we hope that each Tech Talk will provide teachers with the why and the how for using those resources. Additionally, we are proud to elevate the voice of innovative teachers from both of our states and showcase the amazing things they are doing. We hope educators will return to view new installments each Tuesday. They won’t be disappointed.”

September Topic: “Technology Integration”
Since the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers are using digital learning tools now more than ever to support students to be creative and collaborate with one another. We learned so much during the 2020-21 school year about how digital tools should and should not be used, when to pick them up and when to put them down, but most of all we learned that high-quality technology integration is just as important now as it ever was. Join Montana PBS and Idaho Public Television for this series about how technology and digital tools can continue to successfully support student learning.


The COVID-19 pandemic forced teachers and students to use digital tools for learning and communicating more than ever before, and many schools have more access to technology than they did before the pandemic. And while the pandemic may not be over, we know there may be fewer students learning at home this year depending on the county they are in. What does this mean for digital learning this new school year? How will teachers continue to use technology to engage students? What practices are worth holding onto and which ones are we happy to let go? Technology integration specialist Mekca Wallace-Spurgin will share her research about strategies for getting the most out of digital learning with students and the importance of sound technology integration practices.

Find this video on Sept. 7 and additional weekly videos on the Tech Talk website (idahoptv.org/techtalk).
Resilience Virtual Webinar Series #2

Idaho Public Television is excited to partner with Idaho Children’s Trust Fund to bring teachers, counselors, and other practitioners a three-part virtual, professional development series centered around our documentary Resilient Idaho: Hope Lives Here.

In this second webinar, attendees will learn about trauma-informed classrooms. This webinar takes place virtually via Zoom on Thursday, Sept. 16, from 5-7 p.m. Mountain time (4-6 p.m. Pacific time).

To register: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZItc2grDltHdUSFsX06Dmson17y-5M-LEY

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Our IdahoPTV Productions

**IDAHO REPORTS**

Special “The Consequences of Crisis Care”
– Airs live Thursday, September 9, at 8 p.m.

Host Melissa Davlin will be joined by hospital representatives from around the state to update viewers on the current COVID-19 surge and the impacts it is having on the delivery of healthcare services in every region of Idaho.

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“Idaho Utopia: The New Plymouth Colony”
– Airs Thursday, September 23, at 8:30 p.m.

At first glance, New Plymouth, Idaho, looks like any small town. But from the air, New Plymouth reveals its unique place in history. As far as anyone knows, it’s the world’s only horseshoe-shaped town. The New Plymouth Colony was founded in the 1890s by members of the National Irrigation Congress in Chicago, who were looking for somewhere to test the premise that small, productive irrigated farms could be arranged to let farmers work their land while living close to church, school and neighbors. The shape was part of that plan. The horseshoe included boulevards on either side of a U-shaped park one mile long, which separates inner and outer rows of houses. Each “colonist” got one of these “home acres.” Farmland radiated out from the horseshoe, with churches, businesses and village hall inside the ring. “This is a surprising story, because no one expects a town with utopian roots or in the shape of a horseshoe,” says producer Bill Manny. “Every small town has a story to tell, but few have origin stories as compelling as New Plymouth’s.”
The Science Trek topic for September is weather. In September’s video shorts, host Joan Cartan-Hansen discusses the different tools and words meteorologists use to predict the weather, the 10 basic kinds of clouds, and more.


In the News

State Board of Ed appoints Jeff Tucker as next GM at Idaho Public Television
Posted by Betsy Aug 26, 2021

Idaho’s state Board of Education voted unanimously today to name Jeff Tucker the next general manager of Idaho Public Television, succeeding Ron Pisaneschi, who retired at the end of July. Tucker, who is currently interim general manager and has served as director of content for IdahoPTV since 2013, has held numerous positions with the network, including director, videographer, producer, production manager and more.

Tucker told the board, to laughter, “When I started in 1983 as an intern in high school, this was not in my mind, but I will do the best darn job I can.”

Tucker was selected after a board committee conducted a national search and interviewed candidates. “The committee has unanimously recommended to us, the board, the appointment of Jeff Tucker as general manager,” said board Vice President David Hill.

The appointment is effective today.

Board President Kurt Liebich had high praise for the work Idaho Public Television has done to support Idaho kids and their learning. “I think the work you all have done was just amazing and really helped during the pandemic,” he told Tucker. “A lot of your programming specific to Idaho is just terrific. You’ve got big shoes to fill, Ron did just an amazing job, but knowing you, you’re up to the task.”

Betsy Z. Russell is the Boise bureau chief and state capitol reporter for the Idaho Press and Adams Publishing Group. Follow her on Twitter at @BetsyZRussell.
‘Idaho Reports’ special looks at ‘Hospitals in Crisis’ in current COVID surge...

Posted by Betsy Aug 30, 2021

In case you missed it, Idaho Public Television’s “Idaho Reports Special: Hospitals in Crisis,” which aired Thursday night, included stunning information from around Idaho on the pressure Idaho’s hospitals currently are under due to the COVID-19 surge among the unvaccinated. Hospital officials said the severity of the situation is like nothing they’ve seen ever in their careers.

Dr. Christine Hahn, state epidemiologist, said she looked back at the same date a year earlier, “And boy, instead of 1,000 cases we were looking at 400.”

“If you think about it that way, compared to a year ago, we’re in worse shape,” Hahn said. “We have more cases going into the fall and they’re rising more steeply, putting incredible pressure on our hospitals. Schools are just starting to open, and of course with the delta variant, which we know is much more contagious, I think we’re all very, very concerned about this.”

You can stream the 30-minute special live online here at idahoptv.org. It also re-airs this evening at 8 on Idaho PTV’s Plus Channel. In addition, Idaho Reports has another special coming up Thursday Sept. 9, airing at 8 p.m. MT and 7 p.m. PT, on “The Consequences of Crisis Care.”

Recently the PBS NewsHour spent some time in Idaho looking at housing prices. Economics correspondent Paul Solman turns to potential home-buyers in Boise, Idaho, one of the many areas in the country that has seen a stark increase in prices.