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## President of CWI: Growth will continue

### *Glandon delivers State of College speech*

NAMPA — In his first State of the College address held Monday at the Nampa Civic Center, College of Western Idaho president Bert Glandon hailed major strides at the school since its inception one year ago this month.

Glandon cited unprecedented growth at the school, which has seen enrollment skyrocket from about 1,200 students in its first semester to more than 4,000 students now enrolled. The growth has prompted officials to hire almost 100 new faculty members for the spring 2010 semester and double its course offerings.

Glandon said enrollment could balloon to as much as 7,000 to 8,000 students as early as next fall. And as the school prepares to send off its first graduating class this spring, school officials are laying the groundwork for the next phase of growth.

To keep up with the growth trend, which school officials expect will continue for at least the next few years, Glandon said it's possible the college may expand with three campuses scattered strategically throughout the Treasure Valley.

A land developer will speak to the school's board of directors next month about possibly adding 25 acres adjacent to land the college already occupies in Nampa, as well as 100 additional acres at a site in Meridian and another location in the eastern Treasure Valley. Glandon also hinted that construction of a student services building could also be in the school's future. "We have a community that wants to give us buildings, wants to give us land and help us emerge as one of the strongest institutions in Idaho," Glandon said.

Glandon said he was flying to Seattle after the address to present an application for accreditation, and that he expects CWI to be a fully-accredited community college within the next two to three years. Within two years, he promised the college will boast three to five nationally-recognized programs.

With all the growth the school is likely to continue to see, Glandon emphasized that maintaining the quality of education at the school is key to future success.

"One of the biggest challenges in the next year and a half is ensuring that we maintain the quality of our programs," Glandon explained. "If you have a high-quality program that industry wants, there's nothing people won't do to support you."

Glandon also spoke of the necessity to rely less on state funding in coming years, citing a need to explore other revenue sources through tuition, fees and external funding through organizations such as the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation, which recently gave the school \$7.5 million.

"We are looking to establish the kind of external fundraising effort that will give us the stability we need to keep growing," Glandon said. "We are working diligently to put an operation budget together that looks at

tuition and fees only ... We are in a different world now, and we need to be much more entrepreneurial, creative and innovative.”

As the area’s unemployment rate continues to suffer from historic highs in a difficult business environment, Glandon also pointed to the college’s role as a potential economic driver in the community.

“We’re here to help, and we can be an economic driving engine and we should be one,” Glandon said.

As for the long-term future, Glandon cited an emerging national trend of community colleges expanding their offerings to include some four-year degrees, though he admitted that’s likely a ways away for CWI.

“We just don’t know how large we’re going to be, quite frankly,” he said.