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NEWS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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St. Luke's, BSU promote alternative transportation **May in Motion inspires businesses, organizations to participate**

BOISE – George Knight, a professor of philosophy at Boise State University, learned about a cool new indoor bicycle storage and locker facility at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) headquarters in Washington D.C. recently, and he thought, “I bet we can do that at BSU.”

With the help of Lynda Ransdell, chair of the BSU Kinesiology Department and an avid cyclist, BSU established “the Bike Barn,” an indoor bicycle parking area with lockers for bicycle commuters. It has 36 spaces for bikes, and it’s been booked by BSU faculty, staff and students for the last 1.5 years.

“Some people feel they need to have a safe place to park their bike, a locker and access to a shower for them to commute to work by bicycle,” Knight says. “Well, I thought, let’s see if we can provide that and see what happens.”

BSU is one of many organizations and businesses in the Boise area that strives to make it easier for people to commute while leaving their car at home. Spring is the season to remind everyone that ValleyRide and Commuteride co-sponsor an Alternative Transportation Champions contest to encourage participation and investments in alternative transportation. The contest offers winners up to \$8,000 in free publicity and paid advertising to recognize their contributions.

“After a long, cold and snowy winter, it’s time to dust off the bike to ride to work, take the bus, walk to work, carpool or join a vanpool – we don’t care what form of alternative transportation people use as long as they find a way to leave their car or truck at home,” says Kirk Montgomery, marketing and outreach coordinator for Commuteride.

The awards program is just one of many great opportunities that Boise-area businesses have to enhance their alternative transportation programs under the May in Motion program. There is an Alternative Transportation Celebration in downtown Boise on Friday, May 16, from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m., and the Alternative Transportation Champion awards banquet will be in late June.

A Bronze Award winner in 2007, St. Luke’s Regional Medical Center provides financial incentives for its 5,200 employees to plug into alternative transportation:

- Van poolers receive a \$24 credit per month to offset their vanpool bill.
- Walkers get a \$25 credit toward a new pair of shoes every 6 months.
- Bicycle commuters receive a \$40 gift certificate to a bike shop if they ride to work 60 percent of the time between May and September.
- Free ValleyRide bus service is available to all St. Luke’s employees with a valid I.D.
- Free locker rooms and showers for commuters.

Creating a safe place to store bikes, providing lockers and access to showers is one step that a business can take to earn points toward an Alternative Transportation Champion award. Some other initiatives at BSU include:

- Campus-wide free shuttles for students, faculty and staff.
- Free ValleyRide bus service for faculty, staff and students throughout the Treasure Valley with a valid I.D. and bus sticker on the I.D. card, available from the BSU parking department.
- Reserved prime-location parking spaces for car-poolers.
- A spring contest “Go Green, Get Lean,” a six-week challenge to notch 36 one-way trips using alternative transportation. The winners will receive a free T-shirt and “the great feeling you’ll get from helping reduce car emissions from entering the air.” Call 426-1592 or go to rec.boisestate.edu/fitness to sign up for Go Green, Get Lean.
- A Women’s Bike Fitness Festival, co-sponsored by BSU and Bob’s Bicycles. The event on Saturday, April 26, includes a bike festival in Ann Morrison Park and a fun ride to either Camelsback Park (6.5 miles) or the Eagle Velodrome & Cycling Park (21 miles).
- A Community Bicycle Congress at BSU on April 25 at the Student Union Building – a day-long series of presentations by local and out-of-state experts in alternative transportation and bicycle facilities.

For St. Luke’s and BSU to provide free bus service is a major commitment of thousands of dollars per year by each entity that keeps tens of thousands of vehicles off the road, Montgomery said. “We take our hats off to them for showing that kind of leadership in investing in alternative transportation,” he said.

The Alternative Transportation Awards also recognize businesses for doing relatively simple things to promote alternative transportation, such as:

- Posting information to employees about alternative transportation options.
- Offer premium parking spaces for vanpoolers or carpoolers.
- Subsidizing bus passes for employees.
- Setting up a pre-tax account for employees to use in purchasing bus passes or vanpool fares.
- Create incentive programs for employees to bike or walk to work.

For more information on the Alternative Transportation Champion contest, see the Commuteride web site, <http://www.commuteride.com/MayInMotion.aspx>, or call 345-POOL (7665).

To arrange media interviews at BSU, contact Frank Zang, Director of Marketing and Communications, 426-5391. To arrange media interviews at St. Luke’s, contact Beth Toal, 381-2002.

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George Knight at the BSU “Bike Barn” facility in the Kinesiology Department