



"I ask you to uphold the values of America and remember why so many have come here. We're in a fight for our principles, and our first responsibility is to live by them. No one should be singled out for unfair treatment or unkind words because of their ethnic background or religious faith."

*George W. Bush, President  
Address to a joint session of Congress  
9-20-2001*

### **What is the Change Agent States (CAS) Project?**

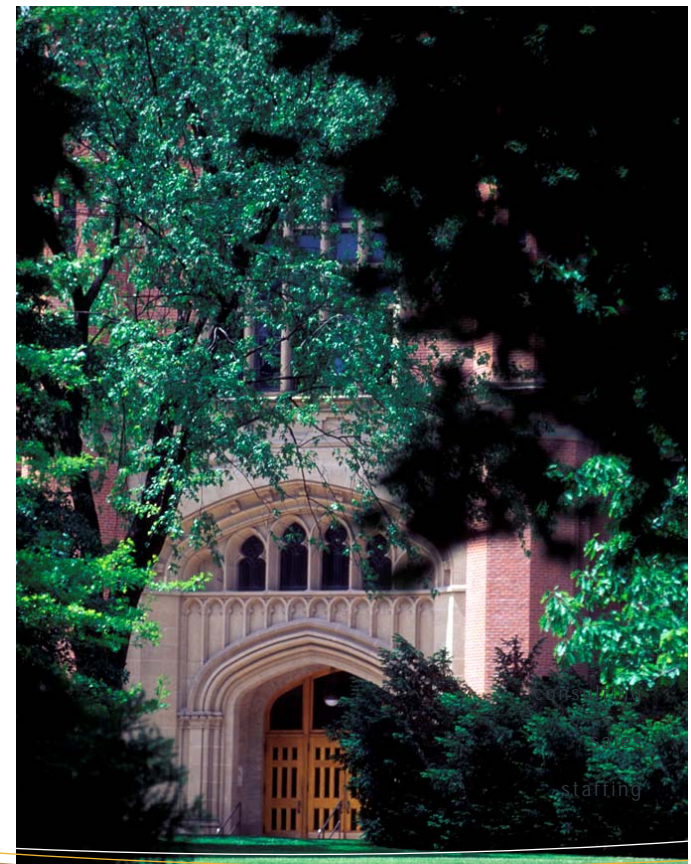
The CAS project is a consortium of 16 states dedicated to supporting greater cultural diversity in land-grant universities. The overall goal is to function inclusively and effectively in a multicultural world.

### **What is a Change Agent?**

The main role of a change agent is to facilitate change within an organization. A change agent will assume goodwill and possibly ignorance, fear, or disconnection and work to challenge the status quo for the greater good.

### **What can I do?**

In order to support the effort of the UI CAS Team and to improve the culture of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences you should always question the norm. Could your actions or the actions of others possibly exclude another or make them feel uncomfortable?. If you need assistance seek out a team member. We are here to help and answer questions.



### **Idaho Catalyst Team Members:**

- Charity Buchert — [charityb@uidaho.edu](mailto:charityb@uidaho.edu)  
Moscow, Idaho
- Charlotte Eberlein — [ceberl@uidaho.edu](mailto:ceberl@uidaho.edu)  
Twin Falls, Idaho
- Gulhan Unlu — [gulhan@uidaho.edu](mailto:gulhan@uidaho.edu)  
Moscow, Idaho
- Harriet Shaklee — [hshaklee@uidaho.edu](mailto:hshaklee@uidaho.edu)  
Boise, Idaho
- Jeannie Romans — [jeannier@uidaho.edu](mailto:jeannier@uidaho.edu)  
Moscow, Idaho
- Joel Packham — [jpackham@uidaho.edu](mailto:jpackham@uidaho.edu)  
Bear Lake County, Idaho
- Larry Van Tassell — [larryv@uidaho.edu](mailto:larryv@uidaho.edu)  
Moscow, Idaho
- Michael Howell — [mhowell@uidaho.edu](mailto:mhowell@uidaho.edu)  
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho
- Mireille Chahine — [mchahine@uidaho.edu](mailto:mchahine@uidaho.edu)  
Twin Falls, Idaho
- Rachel Halsey — [rmlorenz@uidaho.edu](mailto:rmlorenz@uidaho.edu)  
Moscow, Idaho

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### **References:**

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Dr. Harvey L Lineberry II, , "Prayer in a Public Institution." 14 December 2007 <[http://www.extension.org/pages/Prayer\\_in\\_a\\_Public\\_Institution](http://www.extension.org/pages/Prayer_in_a_Public_Institution)> (1 December 2008)

College of Agricultural and Life Sciences  
University of Idaho  
PO Box 442335, Moscow, Idaho 83844-2335  
208.885.0168 ph - 208.885.4719 fax  
[www.agls.uidaho.edu/CASE](http://www.agls.uidaho.edu/CASE)

# **GIVING THANKS:**

## **Prayer in a Public Institution**

**University of Idaho**  
A LEGACY OF LEADING

# Giving Thanks in a Public Institution— what to do when you are asked to lead prayer at a University of Idaho sponsored event.

## OUR RESPONSIBILITY:

- ❖ Remember the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.
- ❖ Honor and respect all who attend our programs, meetings, classrooms and offices.
- ❖ Find common ground by looking to what binds us together rather than that which divides us from one another.



As educators and public servants at the University of Idaho (UI) it is our responsibility to understand the concern over prayer in a public institution. We are bound by law, legal precedent and the First Amendment of the Constitution, which mandates that governments cannot “...compose official prayers for any group of the American people to recite as a part of a religious program carried on by government.”

The majority of our society is Christian with approximately 75% of North Americans identifying themselves with Christianity. However, even within Christianity there are differences. We must show compassion and respect to deal responsibly with everyone. Therefore, the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALs) supports an option of inclusive reflection rather than traditional prayer at any event sponsored by CALs.

**everyone has a right to their own religion ..  
.. even if it is no religion**

## INCLUSIVE REFLECTIONS:

Let us pause: We meet together in an effort to build community, to advance education and understanding. We seek the patience of one another as we strive to learn and grow and the stamina to make a difference in our state, nation and world. We express our thanks for the gifts of life and for the food that we are about to partake of.

Let us pause: We gather here today as colleagues and friends with attention to a common goal. That goal is the continued service to the citizens of our state through our programs and information. We understand our responsibilities as committed

educators as well as learners—personally and professionally. It is obvious that we work and live in challenging times. We seek the patience of each other as we strive to learn and grow, and the stamina to make a difference in our state, nation and the world.

We express our thanks for the opportunity to gather together where we can reinforce our community principles of openness and engagement for all people, for the gifts of life and for the food that has been prepared for us. For all this, we are thankful.

## ➤ Religion

Any specific system of belief about deity, often involving rituals, a code of ethics and a philosophy of life.

## ➤ Religious Tolerance

Extending religious freedom to all religious traditions, even though you may disagree with the beliefs and/or practices. Does not require you to endorse their beliefs but shows your respect for their right to hold different beliefs without being oppressed.

## ➤ Compassion and Respect

We must learn to reach a place of compassion and respect for our colleagues, friends and neighbors who may have different beliefs than we do. Speak to others in your office, or members of the CAS Diversity team about what it means to honor each person within our organization.



*“The need of the moment is not one religion, but mutual respect and tolerance of the devotees of the different religions.”*

*Mahatma Gandhi*