

UI president purchases new home away from home

By Shanon Quinn, Moscow-Pullman Daily News, Moscow, Idaho (TNS)

University of Idaho President Chuck Staben's recent acquisition of a home in the east end of Boise is not an indication of changes in residency or an increased dedication of time in the capital, according to Executive Director for University Communications and Marketing Stefany Bales.

Staben and his wife purchased the three-bedroom, one-bathroom home for \$283,000 on June 30, according to the Ada County Assessor's Office and Paul Doughty of Idaho Mountain Realty.

Although Staben's wife, Mary Beth Staben, is listed as the primary owner of the home, Bales said the couple purchased it together.

"As a practicing physician, Mary Beth had an opportunity to continue her career in Boise at St. Luke's Boise Medical Center," Bales said. "Purchasing a residence made sense. Nothing has changed here."

In the spring of 2014, Mary Beth Staben told the Daily News she planned to practice medicine on the Palouse.

"Their center of gravity is Moscow," she said at the time.

Bales said Chuck Staben's responsibilities often require he spend time at the UI campuses in Idaho Falls, Coeur d'Alene and Boise, as is traditional for UI presidents. A statement from the university said Staben spends at least four days per month in the capital city - an estimate Bales said will not change.

"Boise is the capital of the state," Bales said. "We have a lot of alumni and stakeholders there."

She said Chuck Staben also meets with legislators in Boise on a regular basis.

Bales said Mary Beth Staben will divide her time between Boise and Moscow, but Moscow will remain the couple's home base.

"None of that's changed," she said. "It doesn't signal any intentions of the UI in Boise."

UI President's Office staff member Brenda Helbling said Staben was unreachable for comment.

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