

**The University of Montana Western
November 2008 report to the Board of Regents.**

The campus is still engaged in sessions to review, and if needed to update, the Montana Western strategic plan. We also may decide to update our mission statement as we discuss our identity now and where we want to be in five and ten years.

When school started this fall I formed an enrollment strategy task force to provide proactive, collaborative leadership for the analysis and strategic planning of enrollment goals and initiatives. The task force will research, analyze, discuss, develop, set goals, oversee, and accomplish a shared vision for enrollment strategies including admissions, marketing, student success, retention, persistence and graduation. I will chair the task force.

In late September we released the following statement about our enrollment. It ran in newspapers and on radio and TV stations around the state as it was picked up by the AP.

MONTANA WESTERN SEES RECORD ENROLLMENT THIS FALL

DILLON, Mont., Sept. 23 2008 — The University of Montana Western has recorded its highest head-count enrollment since 1927 with 1,190 students, a 3.6 percent increase from last fall.

Chancellor Richard Storey said the university has also recorded its highest full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment since fall 1973 when UMW began measuring such statistics. Storey said Montana Western has 1,097 FTE students this fall up 3.3 percent from last year.

Storey attributed the increases to three factors. “We are finding that our unique scheduling of classes, Experience One, is working extremely well for our students. In addition the hard work of our retention committee is paying off with more students staying in school and completing their degrees.”

“The final factor is that prospective students across the region and nation are realizing that Montana Western offers a top-quality education in an innovative way that gives them a real advantage as they enter their career of choice or continue on in graduate school,” Storey said.

The university also saw an increase in Montana residents from 857 last fall to 915 this fall, an increase of nearly seven percent. In addition the number of part-time students rose from 186 to 198 up 6.5 percent.

Montana Western Registrar Jason Karch said this is the third time in the past four years that Montana Western has shown an increase in enrollment from the previous fall semester.

This past spring Montana Western graduated their first class who has completed all four years under Experience One.

This fall the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education will conduct its seven-year accreditation visit. Extensive preparation involves the writing of a major document as well as electronic and physical exhibits. While much of the work for this visit has been done by the education faculty and administration, some involvement of all faculty and staff across campus will be needed for a successful visit.

The University of Montana Western received \$29,277 in Acce\$\$ Grant funds from nonprofit Student Assistance Foundation on Sept. 20, 2008. Since 2000, the university has received \$146,990 through this program.

University of Montana Western geology professor Robert C. Thomas has been named a "Fellow of The Geological Society of America (GSA)." The GSA Fellowship is an honor that is bestowed on the best of the profession once each year. GSA members are elected to Fellowship in recognition of distinguished contributions to the geosciences. Dr. Thomas is one 65 scientists and educators elected as a 2008 Fellow. He will travel to Houston for induction ceremonies at the GSA Spring Council meeting. "The Fellowship is a big accomplishment for Rob and the University of Montana Western," Chancellor Richard Storey said. "Rob is one of the nation's top geoscientists and our university is fortunate to have him as a member of our outstanding faculty."

Montana poet and author Joseph R. McGeshick was the featured writer at this year's first installment of the English Department's acclaimed "Dances with Words" series. McGeshick was born on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation in northeast Montana. McGeshick's first book "The Indian in the Liquor Cabinet and Other Poems" was published in 2006. His second book, "Never Get Mad at Your Sweetgrass," was published in 2007. He is the co-author of "The History of the Assiniboine and Sioux of the Fort Peck Reservation" published in January 2008. McGeshick's newest book, the novel "Sister Girl" is due later this year.

"It's a Bug's World: Insects, Forests, Changes and Choices" was the title of the first "On the Rocks" presentation of the semester at the UMW. "On the Rocks" is a guest speaker series sponsored by the department of environmental sciences and mathematics program at Montana Western. Lee Harry, a retired silviculturist of the U.S. Forest Service was the featured speaker. His presentation focused on the bug infestations impacting the forests of southwestern Montana.

Richard Storey
Chancellor