



**Date:** April 10, 2015

**To:** Board of Regents

**From:** Daniel J. Bingham, Ph.D.  
Dean/CEO, Helena College University of Montana

**Subject:** Campus Report for May 21-22, 2015, Board of Regents Meeting

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- For the fourth consecutive year, Helena College Fire and Rescue students and an instructor participated in the annual Scott Firefighter Stair Climb Challenge at the Columbia Tower (tallest building west of the Mississippi) in Seattle, Washington. Participants climb 69 flights (755 vertical feet) in full firefighter personal protective equipment while breathing through the self-contained breathing apparatus. Helena College's instructor finished in 15 minutes, and the students finished in 16 minutes and 26 minutes. This event raises money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society to help fund research. The Helena College participants sponsored a local Helena child, visited her and other children at the Ronald McDonald house in Seattle, and raised over \$2000.00 to help stomp out childhood cancer.
- Helena College is constructing a bookstore outlet at the Airport campus. The project was designed by students, the construction is being done by students, and the students will benefit from having access to a bookstore at their location rather than traveling across town to the Donaldson campus for books and supplies.
- The Director of the Student Support Center attended the ACT annual meeting in Tampa, Florida, from March 11-13 to serve as the ACT State Organization council chair for AY 2014-2015.
- Helena College Student Support Center staff is currently undergoing training for the Compass 5.0 placement test that will be fully implemented fall of 2015. The 5.0 version of the test is web based that will allow dual enrollment students to test at their home school site instead of traveling to Helena College through possible inclement weather.
- EverFi Transit is now available and will become a requirement for all new students starting the Fall 2015 term.
- Since implementing face-to-face loan entrance counseling and the delayed and split disbursements, Helena College has seen a decrease of 40% of all loan types borrowed when comparing loan types from AY 12-13 to 14-15.
- Thanks in large part to 'Never Attended' flags in Starfish and delayed disbursements, Helena College kept over \$238,000 in aid from being disbursed to students who became ineligible due to nonattendance. This drastically reduced personnel time taken returning the funds to the Department of Education, billing, and collecting, as well as the amount of bad debt to be collected

by the Department of Revenue. Most importantly, this takes down roadblocks for students to persist.

- Decreased the amount of aid returned to the Department of Education by 67% from AY 12-13 to AY 13-14, following the implementation of Starfish and delayed/split disbursements.
- Helena College Diesel instructors completed Snap-on instructor certification training to deliver Snap-on Torque and Ultra Pro meter certification courses. Turn-key carts house all equipment used to provide instruction and assessment for obtaining industry-recognized credentials in safe and efficient torque operations and diagnostic meters.
- A Helena College Welding instructor traveled to Warren, Ohio, to obtain operation certification on the college's new Cincinnati Baseform Press Brake.
- The annual high school Ford AAA Skills contest will be held at the Helena College Airport Campus on April 22-23, 2015. Eleven teams of two high school students compete by troubleshooting, diagnosing, and repairing new Ford Fiesta vehicles at this one-day event.
- The second annual professional diesel technician competition, Montana SuperTech Challenge, will be held at the Helena College Airport Campus on Saturday, May 2, 2015. Professional diesel technicians from the region compete by completing objective and performance-based tests on their troubleshooting, diagnostic, and repair skills. This year, contest organizers have opened the testing to interested Montana college students. Helena College is sending a team of three students to participate in this skill challenge.
- The second annual NOCTI Construction performance assessment was conducted at the the Helena College Airport Campus on April 10, 2015. This assessment was organized through a national grant to develop Rigorous Programs of Study in secondary and post-secondary construction programs in Montana. Helena area high school students are assessed to determine ability on a standardized performance test to demonstrate construction skills.
- A Helena College Writing instructor attended Council on Basic Writing meeting, Two-Year College Association meeting, and the Conference on College Composition and Communication that focused on developmental writing and first-year composition for two-year college students. She also attended additional workshops with sessions on first generation students and identity, social media in the composition classroom, and represented Montana as the NCTE Policy Analyst for Post-Secondary Education.
- The Director of Nursing for Helena College attended an ACEN conference in Chicago to prepare for the reaccreditation of the College's RN program in the Spring of 2016.
- The Director of Nursing for Helena College was also elected the chair of the Nursing Curriculum Committee for the Montana HealthCARE Project.
- The Montana School Counselors' Conference features Helena College Pathways Coordinator Jan Clinard and Helena High School Counselors Jason and Chrissy Murgel presenting "Big Sky Pathways: Ideals for Development and Realities of Implementation" at the Bozeman Holiday Inn on April 16.
- A Helena College Math instructor attended The Innovations Conference organized by the League for Innovation in the Community College on March 20-23 to explore a variety of ideas community colleges are utilizing. Some of the topics included covered were: improving student learning,

increasing student retention, raising completion rates, and an option for assessing general education outcomes. Two specific points of interest were:

- Completion Rates: 'Giving' achieved certificates along the way for students pursuing an AA/AS degree, without the students having to apply for it. This provides a way to increase certificate completion without much effort.
- Serving Adults with Cognitive Disabilities: An associative degree program for adults with cognitive disabilities (IQ >75), not intellectual nor developmental disabilities, providing an educational opportunity for a population that is generally untapped at the college level.