



**DATE:** August 24, 2016  
**TO:** Montana Board of Regents  
**FROM:** Royce C. Engstrom, President   
**RE:** Campus Report for the September 2016 BOR Meeting

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### **Student Achievements**

**Jennifer Pepprock**, a recent UM graduate, won a Phi Kappa Phi Fellowship to support her UM law school career, which she will begin this fall. Pepprock won the Mortar Board President's Outstanding Senior Recognition Award for her major, history, and earned a minor in political science. This past May, she graduated with high honors in history and as a University Scholar from the Davidson Honors College.

The Fulbright U.S. Student Program has offered grants to six UM graduate students – **Chase Ellinger, Jordan Krause, Max Kaisler, Selena Garefino, Sophia Weinmann** and **Tylyn Newcomb** – to study abroad during the coming year. They will be teaching English and studying in Germany, Taiwan, Poland, Nepal, and Kenya.

UM doctoral candidate **Joanna Kreitinger** was one of 48 people nationwide selected to receive a 2016 American Association of Immunologists Careers in Immunology Fellowship. This highly competitive fellowship will provide Kreitinger with one year's salary to support her training in **Professor David Shepherd's** lab, which is housed in the College of Health Professions & Biomedical Sciences.

**Casey Massena**, a UM chemistry doctoral student recently helped develop a new type of molecule, and his work was the cover story for a top scientific journal. He works in the lab of Assistant Professor Orion Berryman. Massena's work was published in *Angewandte Chemie International Edition*, which has a global readership.

### **Recognition for UM Programs**

The National Association of College and University Food Services awarded UM's Iron Griz – An American Bistro the grand prize in its 2016 Loyal E. Horton Dining Awards. The Iron Griz first earned the gold award in the single-concept retail operation category for a large university. From this elite group of gold-award winning operations, it was recently selected as a grand prize winner. The Iron Griz offers American cuisine featuring seasonal ingredients from local farmers, purchased through the UM Farm to College Program, as well as produce from UM Dining gardens.

A UM research center was awarded \$10.5 million from the National Institutes of Health. The major, five-year award will augment UM's Center for Biomolecular Structure and Dynamics –

led by **Professor Stephen Sprang** – which works to unravel the molecular foundations of biological processes in health and disease. The funding is a Phase II NIH Center of Biomedical Research Excellence (COBRE) award. The award will provide up to three years of research funding to four faculty investigators: **Kasper Hansen**, **Celine Beamer** and **Philippe Diaz** in the Department of Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Sciences (BMED), and **Dong Wang** in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry. It also will fund research programs of **Travis Hughes** and **Andrea Stierle**. The COBRE award also will support: the BioSpectroscopy Research Laboratory directed by **Sandy Ross** and managed by **Chelle Terwilliger**; the Molecular Computational Core directed by **Nicholas Natale** and managed by **Dave Holley**; the Protein Expression and X-ray Diffraction Core operated by **Tung-Chung Mou**; small-molecule X-ray diffraction services provided by **Orion Berryman**; and the nuclear magnetic resonance and mass spectrometry core facilities managed in part by **Earle Adams**.

### **Private Support**

For the third year in a row, giving to UM has topped \$50 million, with a total of \$53.67 million, just edging out the previous fundraising record set in fiscal year 2014. Gifts came from all sectors – individuals, foundations and corporations – and included cash, pledges, estate commitments and private grants. Donors supported a variety of areas, including scholarships, campus facilities, and faculty and student research. Three consecutive years above \$50 million has helped the UM Foundation exceed a goal set in 2013, when the organization launched the Investing in Student Success Initiative. Through the initiative, the Foundation set out to raise \$45 million for scholarships and fellowships, dynamic learning environments and program enrichment. Thanks to sustained support from committed donors, the organization has exceeded that fundraising goal by 37 percent, raising a total of \$62 million. The \$45 million goal was met a year early, at the end of FY2015.

### **Leadership Changes**

**Paula Short** is the new Director of Communications for the Office of the President. Prior to joining the UM administration, she served as Chief of the Forestry Assistance Bureau for the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation. Short is a UM alumna, having received her Bachelor of Science in forestry in 1994. During her time as a student, she served as a UM Advocate and was elected business manager of the Associated Students of UM. Short began her career with the DNRC in 1994 and also worked for several years as a morning show co-host and news director for western Montana radio stations. In 2008 she received her master's degree in organizational leadership from Gonzaga University. Short's position at UM is a newly reconfigured role combining the work of communications and lobbying.

**Ray Ekness** is the new director of the Broadcast Media Center, which houses the public broadcasting stations of KUFM Radio and KUFM-TV. Ekness is a former UM School of Journalism professor and former department chair of the Department of Radio-Television. Ekness worked a few radio jobs in his native North Dakota and worked on-air at KUFM as a UM student in 1982. He then launched a career as a commercial producer and newscast director at television stations in Montana and Idaho. Starting in 1989, he was a producer and director at the Broadcast Media Center for 11 years – working as an adjunct at the journalism school during that time – and he joined the J-school full time in 2000.

## **Alumni News**

Four outstanding UM graduates will receive Distinguished Alumni Awards during Homecoming weekend festivities Sept. 30-Oct. 1. The awards are the highest honor presented by UM's Alumni Association. This year's distinguished alumni are **Darrel Choate, Timothy Conner, Arlynn Fishbaugh, and Tom Seekins**. Choate, who earned bachelor's and master's degrees in mathematics at UM, was instrumental in coordinating Boeing Co.'s efforts in the Strategic Defense Initiative – also known as Star Wars – for which he performed sensitive trade studies and analysis that have influenced the current U.S. ballistic missile defense architecture. Conner, who earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from UM, is the chairman and former CEO of AeroVironment Inc., a world leader in aeronautical research innovation involving cutting-edge flight technology. One of the most prominent arts administrators in the country, Fishbaugh will retire in September as executive director of the Montana Arts Council, a role she's held since 1992. Seekins is a professor of psychology and director of the Research and Training Center on Disability in Rural Communities at UM.

## **Enrollment Efforts**

Enrollment remains the greatest challenge and the greatest opportunity for UM. As an institution, we are focusing on four keys areas to improve our enrollment situation. First, we've brought in Dr. Tom Crady to serve as our new Vice President for Enrollment Management. Dr. Crady brings with him extensive knowledge of and experience in the latest and most effective recruitment techniques. He and his team are improving the overall operations of the Enrollment Management office, including implementing a paperless office system and increasing communications with prospective students. Second, we are investing in more extensive and effective marketing and communications under the leadership of Mario Schulzke. We are increasing our television and social media presence, producing more stories about the accomplishments of UM students, staff, and faculty, and we recently launched the new UM App. Third, we are actively working to improve our customer service. We want all of our interactions to be positive and to demonstrate the caring nature of our campus community. We're implementing a customer service award to recognize the people and offices who exemplify the standard we hope to achieve. And finally, we are constantly evaluating the relevance and attractiveness of our curriculum. We are embracing our core mission as the liberal arts and sciences research institution for the state. We are ensuring that we offer courses and programs that are appealing to today's students and will prepare them for the specific professions and opportunities upon which our society thrives. We are also working to expand our online, evening, weekend, and short-form offerings to better meet the scheduling needs of our diverse student body.