

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

This past summer the senior staff, including members of the faculty senate, engaged in strategic planning sessions to continue to further map the future of Montana Western. We reviewed our strategic plan, marketing, recruitment and retention strategies and initiatives and discussed ways to enhance, support and promote Experience One. We reviewed business and marketing policies to review and enhance the academic program.

Biology major Amanda Kortum received a scholarship from the Montana Space Grant Consortium for the upcoming year. Kortum is sophomore biology major from Ekalaka, MT. "Amanda is a tremendous student with deep interests in all areas of science which have driven her to pursue a vigorous biological research project here at Montana Western," UMW biology professor Michael Morrow said. "Her love of basic scientific research and her outstanding academic record make her a very deserving recipient of this award and recognition."

Taylor Nahrngang, a senior business major just starting his second term as president of the student senate, served a summer internship at the American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) in Amarillo, TX. He worked in the AQHA marketing office on press releases, marketing material, AQHA events, web development and other media marketing projects.

"I had a great time and learned a lot," said Nahrngang. "What I am learned here is going to have a huge impact in my professional life. It was much more then I expected."

The opportunity to serve as an intern at AQHA was strongly supported by La Cense Montana, the university's neighbor and partner in UMW's unique natural horsemanship degree program.

Rob Thomas, professor of geology at Montana Western was awarded the Distinguished Alumni Award from Humboldt State University. Dr. Thomas received his bachelor of arts in geology from Humboldt in 1985.

During his tenure at Montana Western, Dr. Thomas helped the campus evolve into an experiential learning university based on Experience One. He teaches most of his courses where the class' lab is the natural lab of southwestern Montana.

Montana Western Business and Technology Department Instructor Shaun Scott recently made a presentation titled *Experiential Learning to Create Competitive Advantage* which focused on The University of Montana Western and Experience One at the IACBE (International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education) annual conference.

Ricki Jones, director of financial aid, was elected vice president of the Rocky Mountain Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators. She will serve a one-year term beginning in October. She has been the Montana Western financial aid director for the past four years and a member of the university's financial aid staff for the past 10 years.

In addition to her Montana Western duties, she served as president of the Montana Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators this past year. Ms. Jones, a native of Libby, Mont., is a 1992 graduate of the UMW. She received her MBA from the UM in 2005.

The Business and Technology Department is currently an approved candidate for accreditation with the International Assembly for Collegiate Business Education. If the business program is approved, full accreditation status will be conferred in April 2009.

In October, the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) will conduct its seven-year accreditation visit. As with NWCCU, this preparation involves the writing of a major document as well as electronic and physical exhibits. While much of the work for this visit needs to be done by the education faculty and administration, some involvement of all faculty and staff across campus will be needed for a successful visit.

A new art exhibits was on display at the Art Gallery/Museum recently. A public reception was held. The exhibit was organized by the Art Mobile of Montana, which focuses on the work of 16 Montana artists. The Art Mobile of Montana, currently based in Dillon, travels the state during the school year giving educational presentations to public schools. These presentations teach children about the visual arts and give students the opportunity to closely examine actual artwork. This exhibit includes a wide range of media, including paintings, prints, photographs, stained glass, sculpture, ceramics, and wood working.