



The University of Montana Western Campus Report

DATE: Wednesday, June 16, 2021

TO: Board of Regents

FROM: Michael Reid, Chancellor

RE: Campus Report for the July 2021 Board of Regents' Meeting

- **Michael Reid Selected as New Chancellor of the University of Montana Western**

Michael Reid has been selected as the new Chancellor for the University of Montana Western and brings with him over 30 years of experience in higher education administration. Reid was serving as the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance at Montana Western and as the Chief Fiscal Officer for Helena College before being named Chancellor.

Reid started with the Montana University System in March 2013 and has been at the University of Montana Western since July 2018. His educational background includes both an MBA and a BA in Finance from Utah State University.

“Over the past few years, both Montana Western and the welcoming town of Dillon have been incredible places to call home with inspiring students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community support. I am enthusiastic about the opportunities ahead of us and look forward to working with everyone in continuing the legacy that is UMW,” said Reid.

- **Montana Western to Receive Nearly \$15 Million for Block Hall Renovation and Facilities Upgrades**

The University of Montana Western has been granted nearly \$15 million by the Montana State Legislature to undertake major upgrades to the campus's facilities. These include a \$12 million renovation of Block Hall, \$2.4 million to replace the central campus boiler, and \$450,000 to replace numerous roofs.

The news was announced on April 29 at the close of the 67th Legislative Session in Helena, known as “sine die,” wrapping up 80 days of legislative action.

- **Montana Western and Stockman Bank Recognize Outstanding Teacher Candidates**

The University of Montana Western and Stockman Bank recognized the 2021 Outstanding Teacher Candidates at Commencement earlier this spring. These inspiring UMW graduating seniors will be teaching and enriching their communities this fall.

The Outstanding Teacher Candidates are as follows: Tia Ware, Daniel Connelly, McKenna Fink, Lexi Higareda, Kennedy Grubich, Cameron Fuentez, Lindsey Buckley, Alyssa Owen, Molly Huber, Kacin Bolinger-Perret, Alex Rouse, Destiny Wallace, and Gennifer Sauter.

- **Montana Western Ranked as the Most Affordable University in Montana**

The University of Montana Western ranked number one in Montana for “Most Affordable Colleges and Universities by State” by UniversityHQ.org. University Headquarters is an industry-leading, independent educational organization that offers an all-in-one source for information on colleges, entrance requirements and career paths.

While the primary criterion was the lowest tuition cost, University Headquarters also looked at other aspects that made the school special, unique and beneficial to students. The survey excluded community colleges and four-year colleges that did not offer multiple bachelor’s degree programs. The rankings list featured the two most affordable universities in each state.

- **Atlantic Street Renovation Project Begins at Montana Western**

In coordination with the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) and the City of Dillon, the UMW campus area facing Atlantic Street will be under construction this summer to enhance the safety and access to the campus and to meet ADA guidelines.

While this project has been a long-time goal for Montana Western, in large part, the timing to initiate and complete this project this summer came from the MDT’s plan to resurface Atlantic Street next year and their willingness to fund a portion of the overall project.

- **Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture Partners with UMW Glass Program on Summer Treasure Hunt**

The Beaverhead County Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture and the University of Montana Western Glass Program have partnered to create a fun scavenger hunt activity throughout Beaverhead County this summer.

Over 100 glass cowboy hat paperweights, custom-made by the students in the University of Montana Western Glass Arts Program, under the instruction of Professor Ruth King, are hidden in businesses and points of interest in the towns of Bannack, Dillon, Lima, Dell, Grant, Jackson, Wisdom, Wise River, Dewey, Glen, and Melrose.

The scavenger hunt started over Memorial Day weekend and will run through Labor Day this fall.

- **Montana Western Holds Free Summer Course**

Montana Western invited the community to attend a free in-person history course taught on the UMW campus this May by UMW Professor of History, Dr. Bill Janus.

HSTR 294: Fear, Conflict, and Death in a time of Pandemic, looked at the history of world pandemics through time. An examination of how past societies confronted plague, cholera, typhoid, and smallpox pandemics provided a better understanding of the challenges experienced by Montanans during the COVID-19 pandemic. Students examined the response of Beaverhead County's medical professionals, local government, businesses, and essential workers to COVID-19.

- **2021-22 Chancellor's Leadership Scholars Announced**

The Chancellor's Leadership Scholars Award is a four-year, full-tuition scholarship awarded to exceptional students residing in the state of Montana who will be attending Montana Western in the fall.

Montana Western was proud to announce the five following high school seniors as the 2021-22 award recipients: Claire Nolan, Emma Anderson, Emma Hoover, Morgan Corean, and Toby Veltkamp.

- **Sean Miller and McKenna Fink Honored at 124th Commencement Ceremonies**

Two Montana Western students were recognized for achieving the highest-grade point averages of the 2021 graduating class at the 124th annual commencement ceremonies.

Sean Miller received the Rush Jordan Award and McKenna Fink received the Zella K. Flores Award. First awarded in 1958, these awards are presented each spring to a man and woman having the highest academic standing.

Jordan was Montana Western's president from 1946-56. Flores was an Associate Professor of Education at UMW from 1949-58. She was one of the founders and a past president of the Montana chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma, a national educational society for women.

- **Montana Western Holds Backcountry Skills and Leadership Course**

UMW's "Backcountry Skills and Leadership for Outdoor Professionals" course was held May 1-9 in the Dillon, Mont., area during the university's first-ever X-Block Summer Session. This unique week-long immersive course was taught by various backcountry and outdoor professionals that covered topics relevant to outdoor recreation and careers.

UMW Business Department instructor, Rocky Crandell, and Division Chair, Professor Cecil Jones, organized the course and also assisted in instruction.

The course paired the immersive experiential learning model with outdoor industry professionals who taught a wide-range of subjects including horse packing, swift water rescue, ham radio, wilderness trauma, helicopter operations, and more.

- **University of Montana Western Alumna Named Alaska Principal of the Year**

The Alaska Association of Elementary School Principals has named Trailside Elementary School Principal, Heather Jones, as the National Distinguished Principal for 2021. Jones was nominated and selected by her fellow principals through a statewide search process conducted by the Alaska Association of Elementary School Principals (AAESP).

Jones graduated from Montana Western with a bachelor's degree in education in 1998, and then completed both a master's degree in teaching in 2003 and a master's degree in administration in 2006 from Grand Canyon University. She began her administrative career as a principal at Eagle's View Elementary in Unalaska in 2007.