



1300 West Park Street
Butte, Montana 59701
(406) 496.4868
Fax (406) 496-4387
lpcook@mtech.edu
mtech.edu

To: Board of Regents

From: Les Cook
Chancellor, Montana Technological University

RE: Campus Report for November 17-18, 2022, Board of Regents Meeting

- Avimanyu Das, PI, and Jerry Downey, co-PI, are leading a team, with collaborators from Idaho National Lab, on a \$700K project from the prestigious Office of Science in the Department of Energy. The team is working to develop a completely new process that combines mixed waste slags in a novel way that recovers critical minerals, reduces carbon emissions, utilizes waste materials such as those found in and around Butte, Montana, and eliminates toxicity of these slags such that they may be used in concrete without leaching concerns.
- Arthur H. "Art" Ditto, a Montana Tech alumnus and retired international mining executive, has pledged to donate \$1 million over the next two years to establish the Arthur Ditto Scholarship Endowment. The endowment will be used to fund scholarships for students studying in fields that support the mining extraction industry.
- Writing instructors Dawn Atkinson and Stacey Corbitt have developed their second open textbook, *Intermediate College Writing: Building and Practicing Mindful Writing Skills*. The no-cost publication integrates study skills work with reviews of key topics and thoughtfully designed writing opportunities. The textbook's Creative Commons license means instructors can adopt it as is, opt to use select chapters, or customize it for their own writing courses. The resource is available [here](#).
- The National Science Foundation has awarded Montana Tech \$1M that will be used to purchase and maintain a multifunctional electron microscope to significantly expand opportunities for research and discovery for the campus community and the state of Montana. Dr. Marisa Pedulla is the primary author of the grant. The microscope will allow researchers to visualize extremely small phages, as well as other biological and non-biological materials. It will also perform energy-dispersive X-ray spectroscopy (EDX), which determines the elemental composition of samples. This method is useful when analyzing ore, sediment samples from hot springs or geothermal features, stream and soil samples taken from Superfund sites, and environmental metal contaminants. In addition to providing opportunities for discovery in numerous departments on campus, the images will also be used to spark STEM interest state-wide in k-12 students who participate in the Clark Fork Watershed Education Program.
- The Clark Fork Watershed Education Program (CFWEP) received a three-year \$60,000 Capacity-Building Challenge Grant from the Dennis & Phillis Washington Foundation. This grant will help launch their development plan to continue to serve students in the Clark Fork and Blackfoot watersheds.
- Athletic Director Matt Stepan was named the Frontier Conference Athletic Director of the Year for the 2021-2022 conference year. The award is given annually to an athletic director for his or her accomplishments in all facets of athletic administration.

- The 22nd annual Montana Tech Career Fair was a huge success, with a record number of employers (424 recruiters from 24 states and 2 countries) and nearly 900 students attending.
- Highlands College Trades and Technology Day brought 370 high school students from 32 schools in 17 counties to campus, as well as 24 industry partners. The day consisted of hands-on interactive activities for students which included: a tire-changing competition, construction of cornhole boards, bucket truck rides provided by Highlands College and NorthWestern Energy, taking x-rays, machining keychains, cybersecurity, and pouring concrete. This event is made possible by generous donations from state and local businesses and industry partners.
- Montana Tech ranked highest in the state on the Forbes 2022 America's Top Colleges List. The rankings note that Oredigger graduates have a median salary of \$113,700 after a decade of work experience. Alumni salary is weighted for 20% of the ranking score. Student debt accounts for another 15%. Forbes notes Montana Tech's students graduate with an average debt of \$5,482, significantly less than the national average of \$28,950.
- Dan Rovig, a Flathead Valley native and retired international mining executive, received the Chancellor's Award of Distinction, Tech's highest honor, which recognizes individuals who have achieved the most distinguished personal and professional accomplishments while also serving and bringing distinction to Montana Tech. Rovig received his bachelor's in Mining Engineering from the Montana School of Mines in 1961, his master's degree in Mineral Dressing in 1965, a professional degree in 1976, and an honorary doctorate of science in 2008. During his 50-year career, Rovig served as Senior Vice President, Minerals Operations for the Anaconda Mineral Company; Technical Director of BP Minerals International Ltd.; and President of Amselco Minerals Inc. and Glamis Gold Ltd.
- Nucor, North America's most diversified steel and steel products company, announced a \$2M Endowed Distinguished Professorship in Metallurgical and Materials Engineering during Tech's 100th-anniversary celebration for the department. The centennial event – Celebrating our Past and Securing Our Future - included technical sessions, student poster sessions, workshops and social events and was attended by dozens of industry partners and alum.