

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

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CAMPUS REPORT | Board of Regents Meeting | July 10, 2025



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COLLEGE**
MONTANA STATE
UNIVERSITY

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Great Falls College celebrated the accomplishments of the Class of 2025 with a joyful commencement ceremony at Montana ExpoPark's Pacific Steel and Recycling Arena. On May 10, 262 graduates earned 311 degrees and certificates, marking a major milestone in their educational journeys. Earlier in the day, the college held its Eagle Feather Ceremony, where 14 graduating students were honored in a special event recognizing their cultural heritage and academic success. The entire college community joins in applauding the hard work and dedication that brought these students to this proud moment. Regent Heather Hoyer, superintendent of Great Falls Public Schools, and Courtney Kolias, a 2025 graduate in the Substance Abuse and Addictions Counseling program, gave the commencement addresses.

In a meaningful addition to campus, Great Falls College held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for two newly built planter boxes that will be used to grow sweetgrass—a plant of spiritual and medicinal significance to many Native tribes. The project was initiated by the Native + Indigenous Cultural Center with support from the Student CARE Office and the Build Montana cohorts from both the college and Great Falls Public Schools. Members of the campus community joined in the transplanting process, supporting cultural preservation and education.

Students in the Substance Abuse and Addictions Counseling program hosted “Debunking the Myths: Understanding Substance Abuse,” a community-focused event held in Heritage Hall. The evening featured student-led presentations, resource booths and open discussions addressing common misconceptions around addiction and recovery. Designed for families, educators, counselors and anyone affected by substance use, the event underscored the college's commitment to public education and community support in tackling important health issues.

Great Falls College was honored to host the Montana Board of Regents on campus May 22, with pre-meetings taking place on May 21. This visit gave the college an exciting opportunity to showcase its campus, programs and innovative initiatives to the state.

Congratulations to Hope Westerman, who was named one of just 15 recipients statewide of the prestigious Montana Student Volunteer Award. Westerman served as student body vice president and treasurer, while also leading efforts in the Office of Student Engagement. From coordinating more than 60 Thanksgiving meal boxes each year to consistently stepping up in support of her peers, Westerman exemplifies the college's values of leadership and service. “Her dedication not only enriches the lives of those she serves but also embodies the spirit of civic engagement we strive to instill,” said Dr. Stephanie Erdmann, CEO and dean of Great Falls College.

As part of the college's ongoing multi-year branding project, large new signs were recently installed at exterior campus entrances to create a more welcoming and cohesive identity. Interior signage updates will continue throughout the year to enhance the campus experience for students, employees and visitors while helping the college better establish its identity. These visual improvements reflect the college's continued investment in creating a strong brand that ties to the northcentral Montana community.

Great Falls College hosted an invitation-only convening May 15 on programming and information related to the wraparound services of SNAP Education and Training. Higher education leadership and program staff shared valuable insights and discussed strategies to shape the future of SNAP Education and Training and its wraparound services in the state of Montana.