

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

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CAMPUS REPORT | Board of Regents Meeting | May 21, 2025



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COLLEGE**
MONTANA STATE
UNIVERSITY

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Great Falls College continues to see strong enrollment growth, marking six consecutive semesters of increasing student numbers. At the spring 2025 census, student headcount reached 1,505, a nearly 8% increase from 1,396 a year ago. Full-time equivalent enrollment also rose to 845, up from 829 for an increase of 2%. The trend continued with the second eight-week block of the spring semester, where enrollment grew to 1,560 students and 849.9 FTE.

The college celebrated the achievements of graduates at its annual commencement ceremony at Montana ExpoPark's Pacific Steel and Recycling Arena. The ceremony highlighted students' perseverance and success, including dual-enrolled high school students earning college credentials before their high school diplomas. Heather Hoyer, Great Falls Public Schools superintendent and member of the Board of Regents, was the featured speaker. The Early Childhood Education and Veterinary Technician programs had their first students receive certificates on their path to receiving their associate degrees.

The 10th annual Night Out for Science was a resounding success, bringing the community together for an evening of hands-on learning, engaging demonstrations and exciting fundraising activities. Guests explored interactive exhibits led by students and faculty as they applied math and science concepts in innovative ways. The event also featured a robust silent auction, meat raffle, dessert and live auctions, as well as dynamic speakers during a prime rib dinner. While final numbers are still being tallied, the night's proceeds are expected to match last year's total, supporting STEM education at the college, meaning we should have passed over the \$100,000 mark in the history of the event. Most of the funds raised have occurred over the last few years as it has grown exponentially.

The colleges' unofficial science month of March started with a bang with the Regional Science and Engineering Fairs. The fairs brought together elementary, middle school and high school students from across northcentral Montana to showcase their research and compete for top honors. The high school grand prize winners are eligible to participate in the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair, while middle school participants have the opportunity to qualify for the Thermo Fisher Scientific Junior Innovators Challenge.

The Montana cohort of Goldman Sachs' 10,000 Small Businesses program is underway, with 31 businesses from across the state participating in the free training. This initiative provides entrepreneurs with a curriculum focused on business growth, leadership and financial management, with instruction from industry experts. Great Falls College continues to play a key role in facilitating this program and is currently recruiting for the upcoming Wyoming cohort, which will launch in the fall. Great Falls College is the hub of the Mountain West.

The college tried a first-ever event to unite students and alumni by bringing in the Montana Actors' Theatre group to perform *Foal Monty*. This free play served to strengthen alumni connections while offering a night of laughter and camaraderie for the college community. The event highlighted the importance of maintaining lifelong ties to Great Falls College. The history and communications departments also brought in John Kunz for a public presentation about his experience being born and raised in his early years in a Nazi concentration camp before moving to Great Falls.

Dr. Stephanie Erdmann, CEO/dean of Great Falls College, also celebrated recipients of the dean's awards, including Mark Plante, outstanding teaching; Ginny Pierce, outstanding contributions from staff; and Debra Huestis, outstanding adjunct faculty.