

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

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CAMPUS REPORT | Board of Regents Meeting | January 14, 2026



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The **Early Childhood Education program** reached an important milestone with the **graduation of its inaugural cohort**. This achievement demonstrated the college's responsiveness to Montana's urgent need for qualified early childhood educators and highlighted its ability to launch and scale programs that directly support statewide workforce priorities. The program also was integral to the community's first-ever **Brain Builder Conference** spotlighting the importance of early childhood education. The conference was held at Great Falls College.

The college secured a transformative **\$1.4 million grant from the Berkshire Hathaway Energy Foundation** to create the nation's first **grid-operator training center**. This investment reflected national recognition of the college's leadership in workforce innovation and positioned Great Falls College at the forefront of training for a rapidly evolving energy sector.

The **Mountain West Region of the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses program**, now operated through Great Falls College, advanced its mission of strengthening small businesses in Montana, Idaho and Wyoming. The program **graduated its second cohort in December, with 34 Wyoming business owners** graduating in a ceremony at Central Wyoming College in Riverton. That totals 65 graduates from the program in Montana and Wyoming this year. An Idaho cohort will start this spring, and recruitment for a fall 2026 Montana cohort will launch in January. The all-expenses paid, 12-week program offers specialized training that will help scholars develop a five-year growth plan.

Continuing Education and Training advanced the college's mission by **completing successful cohorts in structural welding and basic flooring**, two high-demand areas that directly support Montana's construction and manufacturing industries. Graduates exited these programs with the skills to immediately enter the workforce.

The **Associated Students of Great Falls College** demonstrated exceptional leadership and commitment to student well-being **by providing 71 Thanksgiving holiday meals** for their peers—an increase from 50 the previous year. This substantial rise underscored both the growing need within our student body and the dedication of our student government to addressing food insecurity. Their efforts strengthened our culture of care and reinforced the college's commitment to supporting students beyond the classroom.

The **student government at Great Falls College was awarded the September 11th National Day of Service and Remembrance grant** from The Montana Campus Network for Civic Engagement. The student government executive team organized an initiative to **honor School Resource Officers in Great Falls** by assembling and delivering care baskets to the officers at East Middle School, North Middle School, C.M. Russell High School and Great Falls High School.

Faculty innovation continued to enhance student learning. **Dr. Toni Sawhill received an award from the Montana Space Grant Consortium** to purchase **student-friendly materials to help math students grasp foundational concepts**. Her project aligned closely with the college's mission to expand access and reduce barriers, and she ensured the resources were available not only in her classroom but also in the Weaver Library, Academic Success Center and other support areas.