

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

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CAMPUS REPORT | Board of Regents Meeting | July 9, 2026



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The college celebrated the achievements of 287 graduates at the 2026 [commencement ceremony](#) in an event that honored the perseverance and accomplishments of students across all programs, including 26 dual enrolled high school students earning college credentials ahead of their high school diplomas. The tone for the day was set with the Eagle Feather Ceremony. Alum Jessica Bray delivered the keynote address and helped award the first Kaelyn Serene Bray Memorial Scholarship. Graduates earned 362 total credentials, including the first cohorts in Early Childhood Education and Veterinary Technology, reflecting the college's commitment to meeting statewide workforce needs. The ceremony also marked Dr. Stephanie Erdmann's fifth and final commencement before her retirement.

Four [first-year welding students represented Great Falls College at the inaugural Hard Hats and Heels](#) celebration hosted by the Montana chapter of the National Association of Women in Construction. The event highlighted the strong sense of belonging the women have built in the welding shop, where they are pushed, supported and treated as equals as they prepare to enter a male-dominated field. Quincie Jones, executive director of Career and Technical Education at the college, delivered the keynote address, urging attendees to be the "one" who encourages women to see themselves in the trades and reminding the audience that belonging is often the deciding factor in whether students persist.

Computer technology faculty members [Dmitri Kharchevnikov and Steve Robinett published a peer-reviewed study](#) offering a breakthrough approach to automating AI security governance at a time when organizations are struggling to keep pace with rapid technological change. Their research analyzed 212 governance actions from major frameworks and found that nearly 85 percent can be translated into machine-executable controls, allowing organizations to move from manual checklists to continuous automated compliance. Their work positions Great Falls College as a contributor to national conversations about AI safety and will directly inform the new AI Fundamentals course they will teach this fall.

[Cybersecurity graduate Kaia Ecklund](#) earned a competitive NASA internship at Langley Research Center, where he will support the FireSense program focused on improving wildfire detection and firefighter safety. His preparation included a drone-focused internship and apprenticeship funded through the Montana Space Grant Consortium and administered by the University of Montana, which helped him build the technical foundation needed for the role.

The [Surgical Technology program completed its 10-year accreditation site visit](#) and received commendations across every category with no recommendations for improvement. Accreditors praised the program's leadership within the OneMSU Network and its partnerships with Gallatin College, City College and industry partners such as Billings Clinic.

Great Falls College was recognized again as a [military-friendly school](#), reflecting its strong support for veterans, active-duty service members and military-connected families.

The Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses program remains a key part of the college's statewide and regional outreach. The Mountain States Region, located at Great Falls College, just graduated its first-ever Idaho cohort, bringing total graduates of the program to 106 from Montana (31), Wyoming (34) and Idaho (41). The next cohort will be in Montana this spring, and the team just learned it will be going to Arizona in spring 2027. It also has been asked to become the pilot as the first of the four rural hubs across the nation to do a third cohort each year starting in 2027.