



Office of the Chancellor MONTANA TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

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To: Board of Regents

From: Johnny MacLean  
Chancellor, Montana Technological University

RE: Campus Report for May 20, 2026, Board of Regents Meeting

**Dr. Katie Hailer** was appointed **Vice Chancellor for Research and Dean of the Graduate School** following a comprehensive national search. She previously served in the role on an interim basis and has been a longtime professor and department head of Chemistry at Montana Tech. An accomplished scientist, Hailer has secured more than \$3.7 million in active federal funding. Her research spans environmental health, nanomaterials, and applied materials chemistry, resulting in numerous peer-reviewed publications and multiple patents. She has mentored more than 45 undergraduate researchers, as well as graduate students who have gone on to careers in science, medicine, and industry. In her role, she continues to lead the Office of Sponsored Programs and graduate education, with a focus on interdisciplinary collaboration and alignment with Montana's workforce needs.

Montana Tech was recognized as a **2025 Research Colleges and Universities (RCU)** institution by the **Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the American Council on Education**. This new designation highlights institutions with significant research activity and reflects Montana Tech's growing research portfolio and emphasis on applied research that benefits industry, communities, and the state.

**Highlands College** welding students completed a custom fence project to protect the historic locomotive displayed near the Butte Civic Center. The project includes 20 steel panels, each approximately 10-by-10 feet, constructed from square tubing and channel steel. Designed to complement Butte's historic character, the project was made possible through a community partnership that supplied materials.

The **Montana Tech Foundation** received a \$1 million gift from **Nick and Kari Olds**. The contribution includes \$600,000 for the Olds Family Endowed Scholarship, \$280,000 for the HPER Modernization Project, and \$120,000 for the Olds Family Match, a fund designed to double the impact of gifts made during DayOne, Montana Tech's annual giving event.

In recognition of its 125-year legacy, Montana Tech **conferred two honorary Doctor of Science** degrees during Spring Commencement on May 9. **David J. Lesar and Ryan M. Lance** were honored for their transformative professional achievements, as well as their leadership, generosity, and longstanding support of the university.