

2026 MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING SUMMIT

BUILDING CULTURES OF CARE

a shared framework for campus action



MONDAY OCTOBER 19

PRE-SUMMIT TRAININGS

8-10:00am CHANGING OUR MENTAL & EMOTIONAL TRAJECTORY (COMET) | LH-1500

10:15-noon QUESTION, PERSUADE, REFER (QPR) | LH-1500
lunch on your own

SUMMIT DAY 1

11:00am-1:00pm CHECK-IN | HH FOYER

1:00pm WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS | HH
KEYNOTE: A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH TO MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

2:30pm BREAK | HH FOYER

2:45pm BREAKOUT SESSIONS:

- A COMPREHENSIVE FRAMEWORK FOR STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH & SUICIDE PREVENTION | HH
- SUPERVISING WITH CARE: TRAUMA-INFORMED LEADERSHIP IN PRACTICE | LH-1500

3:45pm SUICIDE PREVENTION: A CONTINUUM OF CARE FROM EARLY IDENTIFICATION TO POSTVENTION | HH

4:45pm DAY 1 CLOSING REMARKS | HH

5:00pm NETWORKING RECEPTION | HH FOYER

HHF: Heritage Hall Foyer

HH: Heritage Hall

LH: Lecture Hall room 1500

REGISTRATION & OTHER SUMMIT INFORMATION



TUESDAY OCTOBER 20

SUMMIT DAY 2

8:00am CHECK-IN, COFFEE & NETWORKING | HH FOYER

8:30am BREAKOUT SESSIONS:

- IN PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS: HOW TO HELP UNIVERSITY STUDENTS & STAFF IMPROVE THEIR WELLBEING | HH
- SELF-CARE & RECOVERY FOR HELPERS & HOW MUS BENEFITS CAN PROVIDE SUPPORT | LH-1500

9:30am BREAKOUT SESSIONS:

- INTENTIONAL WELLBEING | HH
- DATA-INFORMED WELLBEING: FROM CAMPUS PLANS TO STUDENT PROGRAMMING | LH-1500

10:30am BREAK | HH FOYER

10:45am FROM PLAN TO PRACTICE: CULTURES OF CARE IN ACTION - CAMPUS PANEL WITH Q&A | HH

12:00pm EXPANDING ACCESS, BUILDING CAPACITY: A CONVERSATION WITH MONTANA TECH & MANTRA HEALTH | HH

12:15pm LUNCH - SPONSORED BY MANTRA HEALTH | HH FOYER

1:15pm FACILITATED WORKSHOP & CAMPUS WORKING SESSION | HH

3:15pm CAMPUS TEAM REPORT-OUTS & COMMITMENTS | HH

3:45pm DAY 2 - CLOSING REMARKS & NEXT STEPS | HH

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 21

POST SUMMIT TRAINING

8am-5pm MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID | LH-1500

lunch on your own

HOSTED BY:



**GREAT FALLS
COLLEGE**
MONTANA STATE
UNIVERSITY

2026 MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING SUMMIT

SCHEDULE



MONDAY OCTOBER 19

PRE-SUMMIT TRAININGS*

7:45am PRE-SUMMIT TRAINING CHECK-IN OPENS | HH FOYER

8:00am **CHANGING OUR MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL TRAJECTORY (COMET) | LH-1500**

Darla Tyler-McSherry, Ask in Earnest

Open to all students, faculty, and staff, this training builds practical skills to notice when someone is struggling and reach out with genuine support. Walk away with simple, real-world tools to help classmates, colleagues, and friends, and to strengthen our culture of care.

10:15am **QUESTION, PERSUADE, REFER (QPR) | LH-1500**

Brian Kassar, MSU-Bozeman

Just as CPR prepares you for a medical emergency, QPR prepares you to respond in a mental health crisis. Students, faculty, and staff will learn suicide risk and protective factors, how to ask direct questions, and where to refer someone for support, so anyone on campus can help when it matters most.

12:00pm *lunch on your own*

ALIGNMENT WITH MUS MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING ACTION PLAN (2026-2030)

Highlighted sessions connect to the three goals of the Action Plan & support your personal wellbeing. Choose any session that interests you.

CULTURE & COMMUNITY

Building the systems, language, and shared responsibility that make wellbeing part of “how we do things here”.
Aligned with Goal 1: Integrate mental health and wellbeing into campus culture by implementing a public health approach that builds thriving communities.

STUDENT SUCCESS

Practical, evidence-based skills and practices that directly support student outcomes.
Aligned with Goal 2: Promote positive student success outcomes through evidence-based mental health and suicide prevention practices

EMPLOYEE WELLBEING

Equipping supervisors and employees themselves to support workplace mental health.
Aligned with Goal 3: Foster employee mental health and wellbeing to create a thriving workplace where all employees can fully contribute to the MUS mission.

PERSONAL WELLBEING

Practical skills and practices you can use in your own daily life – or yourself, not just the campus community you support.
A space to step back from campus-level strategy and invest in your own mental health and wellbeing, whatever your role.

2026 MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING SUMMIT

SCHEDULE



MONDAY OCTOBER 19

SUMMIT - DAY 1

11:00am **SUMMIT DAY 1 CHECK-IN OPENS | HH Foyer**

1:00pm

WELCOME

Leanne Frost, Dean/CEO, GFC-MSU

OPENING REMARKS | HH

Joe Thiel, Deputy Commissioner, OCHE

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH TO MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

Annie Belcourt, University of Montana

We will build a shared public health framework and vocabulary for the MUS Community as you implement the 4-year plan for mental health and wellbeing.

2:30pm

BREAK | HH Foyer

2:45pm

BREAKOUT SESSION - choose 1

1. A COMPREHENSIVE FRAMEWORK FOR STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH & SUICIDE PREVENTION | HH

Betsy Asserson & Brian Kassir, MSU-Bozeman

MSU will share how this model strengthened their campus's existing suicide prevention efforts. You'll leave with a clear picture of where your campus fits within a nationally recognized framework – and where your highest-impact next steps might be.

2:45pm
(con'd)

2. SUPERVISING WITH CARE: TRAUMA-INFORMED LEADERSHIP IN PRACTICE: What to say, how to respond, and where your role ends | LH-1500

Becky Edmonds, AllOne Health

Learn trauma-informed leadership skills to recognize stress, build trust, and have supportive conversations, plus when and how to refer, all within your role as a supervisor or campus leader.

3:45pm

SUICIDE PREVENTION: A CONTINUUM OF CARE FROM EARLY IDENTIFICATION TO POSTVENTION | HH

Karl Rosston, DPHHS, State of MT

We all have a role to play in suicide prevention: noticing when someone seems off, knowing who to call, and building a culture where there is no wrong door to ask for help. Learn to recognize warning signs, make referrals, use your campus tools, and HR reporting channels so no one falls through the cracks. You'll also learn why your campus response after a loss matters just as much as what you've done beforehand. A caring, coordinated response to a tragedy *is* prevention. *What grade would you give your campus on prevention right now?* Come find out where the gaps might be, and how we can close them together.

4:45pm

DAY 1 CLOSING REMARKS | HH

Kerry Davant, Executive Director of HR, OCHE

5:00pm

NETWORKING RECEPTION | HH Foyer

2026 MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING SUMMIT

SCHEDULE



TUESDAY OCTOBER 20

SUMMIT - DAY 2

8:00am CHECK-IN, COFFEE & NETWORKING | HH Foyer

8:30am BREAKOUT SESSION - choose 1

1. IN PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS: HOW TO HELP UNIVERSITY STUDENTS & STAFF IMPROVE THEIR WELLBEING | HH

John Sommers-Flanagan, University of Montana

Life is hard. Happiness is often elusive. University students report unprecedented anxiety, depression, and suicidality. In this presentation, we will take a unique approach to wellbeing and happiness. Instead of focusing on how to shrink what's wrong, we'll turn toward strategies for pursuing happiness and wellbeing more efficiently. We will discuss and briefly experience at least three research-based techniques for building positive emotion and personal meaning.

2. SELF-CARE AND RECOVERY FOR HELPERS & HOW MUS BENEFITS CAN PROVIDE SUPPORT | LH-1500

Jerry Girard, MSU-Billings & Karen Wood, OCHE

Supporting students and colleagues is rewarding work, but it can take a toll on our wellbeing. Learn how to build a self-care action plan and a recovery plan when self-care isn't enough. We'll walk through the MUS benefits, including services and confidentiality, and how to make a referral for yourself or others.

9:30am

BREAKOUT SESSION - choose 1

1. INTENTIONAL WELLBEING | HH

Karen Wood, OCHE

Well-being isn't a formula – it looks different for everyone. This session introduces practical tools – prioritization, boundaries, time blocking, mindfulness – alongside the reflection and self-awareness needed to actually use them, so you can find what balance looks like for you.

2. DATA-INFORMED WELLBEING: FROM CAMPUS PLANS TO STUDENT PROGRAMMING: Building programs with measurable outcomes

Ray Fisco, NASPA & Healthy Colleges Montana

Learn how to identify, gather, and use wellbeing and climate data to guide campus-wide priorities and see that same data-informed approach applied at the program level, through peer education programs that deliver measurable impact. You'll leave with tools for using data at both the strategic and day-to-day level.

10:30 am

BREAK | HH Foyer

2026 MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING SUMMIT

SCHEDULE



TUESDAY OCTOBER 20 - continued

SUMMIT - DAY 2 continued

10:45am **FROM PLAN TO PRACTICE: CULTURES OF CARE IN ACTION – CAMPUS PANEL AND Q&A | HH**
Hear directly from MUS campuses about their programs and initiatives that are building culture that advances mental health and wellbeing for student success and thriving workplaces.

- **Building a Home Away from Home: Paths to student wellbeing**
Meredith Hecker, MSU-Bozeman
- **Action Planning to Support Faculty Wellbeing**
Joy Honea, MSU-Billings
- **Wellbeing Wizards: Everyday magic for a culture of care**
Alana Bahe, University of Montana
- **From Resources to Relationships: Fostering a Healthy & Vibrant Campus Ecosystem**
Joe Cooper, Montana Tech

12:00pm **EXPANDING ACCESS, BUILDING CAPACITY: A CONVERSATION WITH MONTANA TECH AND MANTRA HEALTH | HH**
Joe Cooper & Maria Jose Norero
Hear how this partnership expanded mental health and wellness support for students. What does the partnership look like in practice and what it has meant for students and staff?

12:15PM **LUNCH SPONSORED BY MANTRA HEALTH | HH Foyer**
grab lunch in the HH Foyer, then join your campus team back in Heritage Hall



1:15pm **FACILITATED WORKSHOP & CAMPUS PLANNING | HH**
Kirsten Smith, Bloom Consulting
Regroup with your Campus Implementation Team to apply Summit learning to your Campus Implementation Plans

3:15pm **CAMPUS TEAM REPORT-OUTS & COMMITMENTS | HH**

3:45pm **CLOSING REMARKS & NEXT STEPS | HH**
Amber Spring, OCHE

2026 MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING SUMMIT

SCHEDULE



WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 21

POST-SUMMIT TRAINING*

8:00am - MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID | LH-1500

5:00 pm Jerry Girard, MSU-Billings

lunch on your own MHFA is an evidence-based, **8-hour** certification course that goes beyond a single conversation to build lasting mental health literacy. You'll learn to recognize the signs and symptoms of a wide range of mental health and substance use challenges, understand what someone may be going through, and know how to respond and connect them to the right kind of help.

What you'll gain:

- Greater empathy and less stigma toward those facing mental health challenges
- Clear knowledge of the signs, symptoms, and risk factors for mental health and substance use challenges
- More confidence – and a greater likelihood – to step in and help someone in distress
- Skills you can use to manage your own wellbeing, not just support others

How MHFA supports student success:

- Catches struggles early, before they turn into burnout or a student leaving school
- Gives faculty and staff the tools and confidence to step in when a student needs support
- Builds a campus of care, guided by the MHFA Action Plan
- Reduces stigma, so students feel safer sharing when they're struggling

How MHFA supports the workplace:

- Helps colleagues spot warning signs, offer help, and guide one another to support.
- Reduces stigma and makes employees more likely to seek help and use benefits like employee assistance programs and health insurance
- Boosts job satisfaction, since people do their best when they feel good about their mental health
- Builds a workplace culture where it's genuinely okay to talk about mental health and ask for support.

GREAT FALLS



FOOD & DINING

CLOSE TO CAMPUS

- **Double Barrel Coffee House Cafe** | 1500 9th Ave S
Mon-Fri 5:30am-2pm, Sat 7am-2pm
- **El Comedor Mexican Restaurant** | 1200 25th St S
Mexican | every day 11am-9pm
- **Pomodoro** | 1008 29th St S
Italian | Sun-Mon closed, Tues-Sat 11:30am-8pm
- **Teriyaki Madness** | 1710 10th Ave S
Asian fusion | every day 11am-9pm

QUICK BITES

Many establishments on 10th Avenue South such as Sonic, Burger King, McDonald's, Subway, Starbuck's, Taco John's, Dave's Hot Chicken, Five Guys, Panera, Pita Pit, and more)

LOCAL FAVORITES

- **Celtic Cowboy Public House** | 116 1st Ave S
Sun. 9am-2pm, Mon-Fri 11am - 9pm, Sat 9am-9pm
- **Howard's Pizza** | 713 1st Ave N or 4300 3rd Ave S
local favorite for pizza | every day 4pm-12am
- **Maria's Mexican Restaurant** | 520 Central Ave
Sun-Mon closed, Tues-Sun 11am-8pm
- **Roadhouse Diner** | 613 15th St N
creative burgers or build your own - fresh local ingredients
open Wed-Sat 11am-7pm
- **Saibeen's Kitchen** | 525 Central Ave, Times Square 2nd floor
Indian & African, vegetarian friendly, vegan options
Sun-Mon closed, Tues-Sun 11am-8pm
- **Sip 'n Dip Lounge** | 7th St & 1st Ave S, downtown
original 60's tiki bar, home of the MT Mermaids & piano bar
Sun & Mon 3-10pm, Tues-Sat 11am-10pm

LOCAL ATTRACTIONS

First People's Buffalo Jump State Park | 342 Ulm Vaughn Rd, Ulm
Mon-Sun 8am-6pm

Giant Springs State Park | 4803 Giant Springs Rd
Mon-Sun 5:30am-9:30pm

Hi-Line Climbing Center | 608 1st Ave S
Mon-Fri 12-9pm, Sat 12-8pm, Sun 12-7pm

Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art | 1400 1st Ave N
Sun-Mon closed, Tues 10am-9pm, Wed-Sat 10am-5pm

River's Edge Trail

70 miles of paved trail along the Missouri River,
including art & view of the dams

Map →



Railroad Historic District Walking Tour



← brochure & map

Sidequest Arcade Bar | 2 5th St S

old school & new arcade games, air hockey, racing & pinball
Mon-Sun 11am-11pm

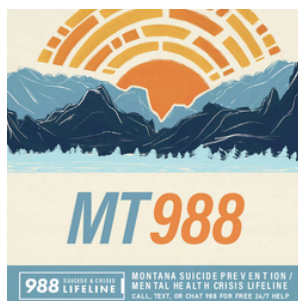
2026 MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING SUMMIT RESOURCE TABLES



WELLNESS
MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM



takecontrol
Customized Plans. Individual Results. Real Savings.



2026 MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING SUMMIT SPONSORS



Mantra Health



GREAT FALLS COLLEGE
MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

Level 1

SUMMIT ROOMS:
HHF: Heritage Hall Foyer
HH: Heritage Hall
LH: Lecture Hall room 1500



Destination	Destination	Destination
1 Academic Success Center (ASC)	2 Financial Aid	2 Records
4 Academic Success & Accessibility Office	10 Food Pantry	14 South Court
13 Administrative Suite	5 Heritage Hall	2 Student Accounts
2 Admissions	12 Human Resources	2 Student Central
2 Advising Center	1 Information Desk	3 Student Government Office
11 Bookstore	17 KGPR 89.9 FM Montana Public Radio	18 Study Lounge
13 Business Services	1 Library	1 Weaver Library & Learning Center
16 Career & College Readiness Center	7 Military Family Center	
15 Career & Technical Education Division	6 Native & Indigenous Cultural Center	
9 Commons Area	10 Office of Student Care	
8 Dental Clinic	3 Office of Student Engagement	

Classrooms

- Classrooms 1215 - 1226
- Classrooms 1449 - 1453
- Classrooms 1500 - 1544

2026 MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING SUMMIT

THANK YOU



ATTENDEES

Thank you for being here and for your dedication to the mental health and wellbeing of your campus community. The work you do, often quietly without recognition, makes a real difference in people's lives. We hope you leave with new connections, fresh ideas, and a reminder that you are not doing this work alone.

MUS MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING TASK FORCE

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to the MUS Mental Health & Wellbeing Action Plan. Over the next four years, your work will build a foundation for thriving campus communities, where students can succeed and employees feel valued and supported.

- Amy Capolupo, Dean of Students & Associate Vice President of Wellbeing, UM
- Betsy Asserson, Associate Vice President of Student Wellness, MSU
- Carmen Roberts, Executive Director of Finance & Administration, GFC-MSU
- Crystine Miller, Director of Student Affairs & Student Engagement, OCHE
- Daisy Nyberg, Dean of People & Culture, Dawson County Community College
- Dimitria Harding, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Miles Community College
- Elizabeth Mader, Employee Wellness Specialist, UM
- Jerry Girard, Director Student Health Services, MSUB
- Johnny MacLean, Chancellor, MT Tech
- Karen Wood, Associate Director of Employee Wellbeing, OCHE
- Katelynn Eberhardt, Director of Student Wellbeing & Engagement, Helena College-UM
- Kerry Davant, Executive Director of Human Resources, OCHE
- Lee Vartanian, Provost & Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, MSUB
- Matt Erdel, Instructional Designer/Educational Developer, MSUN
- Shannon Willoughby, Director of the Center for Faculty Excellence & Associate Professor, MSU
- Stephanie Gray, Dean, Gallatin College
- Tasha Felton, Director of Student Counseling, UM-Western
- Wendy Jeschke, Program Director of Student Engagement, Flathead Valley Community College
- Harrison Fortunati, Student Representative, MSU-Bozeman
- Michael Singels, Student Representative, GFC-MSU

GREAT FALLS COLLEGE -MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

Thank you to Carmen Roberts and the faculty and staff of GFC-MSU for welcoming the MUS community so warmly. Your generosity gave colleagues from across Montana a place to gather, share ideas and leave inspired. We are grateful for your partnership.

2026 MUS SUMMIT PLANNING COMMITTEE

Thank you for lending your time, perspective, and care to this Summit so all attendees feel welcome.

- Elizabeth Mader, Employee Wellness Specialist, UM
- Joshua Archey, Student Engagement and Well-Being Program Manager, GFC-MSU
- Joy Honea, Professor of Sociology, MSUB
- Lane McAlpine, Events and Alumni Relations Coordinator, GFC-MSU

CAMPUS IMPLEMENTATION TEAMS

Thank you to the CITs for your dedication and deep understanding of your students, employees and institutional culture. Your knowledge is key to successful implementation, as you align the Action Plan with the good work you are already doing and weave mental health and wellbeing into the everyday life of your campus.

SPONSORS

Finally, thank you to our sponsors, whose generosity makes it possible for us to offer this Summit free to all attendees!



Mantra Health

Amber Spring

Amber Spring, MS, LPC

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Coordinator, MUS Mental Health & Wellbeing Task Force
Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education

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