

ITEM 139-1002-R0508

**Title of Professor Emeritus of Dance: Amy W. Ragsdale; UM-Missoula**

**THAT:**

Upon the occasion of the retirement of Professor Amy W. Ragsdale from The University of Montana–Missoula, the faculty wishes to express its appreciation for her years of dedicated and valued service to the School of Fine Arts, the Department of Drama/Dance, and the State of Montana by recommending that the rank of Professor Emeritus be conferred upon her by the Board of Regents of the Montana University System.

**EXPLANATION:**

Amy W. Ragsdale earned her baccalaureate degree in Art History from Harvard-Radcliffe College in 1980 and a Master of Arts in Liberal Studies degree in Movement Studies from Wesleyan University in 1992. She came to The University of Montana–Missoula in 1985 from New York City, where she performed with two major, nationally known dance companies, the Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company for the Next Wave Festival at the Brooklyn Academy of Music and the Douglas Dunn and Dancers at the *avant-garde* venue La MaMa.

After being appointed to an adjunct teaching position in the Department of Drama/Dance in 1985, she commenced her tenure-track employment with The University of Montana–Missoula in 1988 as an Assistant Professor and earned promotions to Associate Professor in 1994 and Professor in 2000. She was tenured in 1995. During her 23 years on the faculty, she received two merit increments (1990, 1995) and was awarded two Sabbaticals (1997-98, 2004-05).

When she arrived on campus as Head of the Dance Program, there were eight dance majors, two tenure-track faculty members, two adjuncts, and a part-time accompanist. The program produced one annual dance concert. By the time she stepped down from her leadership role, twelve years later, the program had grown to include 35 majors, three tenure-track positions, and three adjuncts. Five concerts were staged each year, and a professional dance company was in residence.

During her tenure, Professor Ragsdale, along with her colleagues, substantially revamped the BFA (Bachelor of Fine Arts) degree curriculum, creating two professionally oriented tracks in Choreography and Performance and Teaching; and created, proposed and had approved a new Bachelor of Arts degree in Dance. She also designed and implemented an international studies program which facilitated study of the local arts and culture in Bali, Indonesia.

In addition to her teaching and administrative duties, Professor Ragsdale has continued to produce her own creative work. Her dance productions have been featured at the Montana Governor's Arts Awards ceremonies and have been produced in Seattle and New

York. Her company also has toured throughout the Northwest and has been shown on CNN's World News and broadcasts by KSPS in Spokane and Montana Public Television. She has been a recipient of the Montana Arts Council Artists Fellowship, The University of Montana's Teaching Award, and The UM School of Fine Arts Distinguished Faculty Member Award.

With this recommendation go sincere thanks for 23 years of invaluable service to the State of Montana, The University of Montana–Missoula, the School of Fine Arts, and the Department of Drama/Dance. Congratulations and best wishes for the future.

**ATTACHMENTS:**