



The University of
Montana

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DATE: February 18, 2011

TO: Board of Regents

FROM: Royce C. Engstrom, President

RE: Campus Report for the March 2011 Board of Regents' Meeting

- The Nonprofit Leadership Alliance awarded [Business Administration](#) senior **Marcus Mueller** and [Intercultural Youth and Family Development](#) graduate student **Elizabeth Strong** \$4,500 NextGeneration Scholarships that will allow them to serve 300-hour internships with area nonprofit organizations. Since 2007, 16 UM students have received NextGeneration scholarships totaling \$72,000.
- **Jonathan Leiman**, a master's candidate in [Environmental Studies](#), received a \$500 Love of Learning Award from The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi.
- UM student-athletes **Amy Roberts** and **Casey Weinman** received 2010 Montana Athletes in Service awards in November for their commitment to civic engagement. Roberts, a [Mathematics Education](#) senior on the women's volleyball team, serves as a math tutor for middle school and high school students and gives time to community events that encourage healthy lifestyles. Weinman, a [Resource Conservation](#) junior on the men's cross country and track and field teams, coaches, mentors, and tutors high school students in the off-season and has served with the Center for Global Education, teaching children about the damaging effects of environmental degradation.
- Several students instructed by Assistant Professors **Mark Raymond** and **Zachary Reddig** in the College of Technology [Welding Technology Program](#) received 2010 James F. Lincoln Foundation Awards recognizing student achievement in the design, blueprint creation, and fabrication welding projects in October. **Geoffrey Franklin**, **Jason Besch**, and **Seth Nemitz** won Division II Silver Awards and \$750, and **Donald Hansen** won a Division II Bronze Award and \$500 for their projects. Seven other students won Merit Awards.
- The University of Montana ranks No. 14 on Peace Corps' 2011 rankings of medium-sized colleges and universities. Currently, 33 UM undergraduate alumni serve as Peace Corps volunteers, up from last year when 29 undergraduate alumni served.
- UM received \$50,000 in Osher Reentry Scholarships for 2011-2012 for undergraduate students who have experienced an interruption in their education of five or more years.
- The University of Montana will present honorary doctorates to Bernard Osher, founder and treasurer of the Bernard Osher Foundation, and journalist Tom Brokaw at commencement ceremonies in May. Brokaw will also serve as speaker at the ceremonies.
- Professor of [History](#) and [President's Lecture Series](#) coordinator **Richard Drake** received the 2011 Governor's Humanities Award, honoring achievement in humanities scholarship and service and enhancement of public understanding and appreciation of the humanities presented by [Humanities Montana](#).
- **Stephen Sprang**, a Professor in the [Division of Biological Sciences](#) and Director of the University's [Center for Biomolecular Structure and Dynamics](#), is the new Associate Provost and Dean of the [Graduate School](#).
- **Ryan Smith**, an educator for [spectrUM Discovery Area](#), received the Governor's Outstanding Science and Math Volunteer Award in November for volunteering more than 80 hours in 2009 to bring "Hands on Health" to rural and tribal communities in eastern Montana.

- **John Gerdes**, Associate Professor in the [Department of Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Sciences](#), is lead inventor of brain imaging agents that may help understand, diagnose, and follow new therapies for neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases and neuropsychiatric conditions such as depression. Gerdes' work was funded, in part, by the National Institutes of Health.
- The [Payne Family Native American Center](#) received the Environmental Achievement award of the Pacific Northwest International Section of the Air & Waste Management Association during the association's 50th annual conference at UM in November.
- The [Montanan](#), the alumni magazine of The University of Montana, has received a Gold award for general excellence from the regional Council for Advancement and Support of Education.
- **Roger Maclean** began serving as the new Dean of the [School of Extended and Lifelong Learning](#) in January, replacing Dean **Sharon Alexander**, who retired after 21 years of service to the University.
- [Office for Civic Engagement](#) statistics show that 1,641 UM students completed 161,246 hours of community service during the 2009-10 academic year, equating to an economic impact of more than \$2.2 million.
- The American Bar Association and the Association of American Law Schools will renew accreditation for the [UM School of Law](#). A report sent to law school Dean **Irma Russell** cited the highly innovative and stimulating courses and the clinical experience requirement as particular strengths of the school.
- President **Royce Engstrom** has joined the Board of Directors of the [Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation](#), and was invited to serve as a peer evaluator for the states of Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington for the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.
- Several UM faculty members have received national news coverage for their research:
 - A story about the USDA's Sage Grouse Initiative appeared in the Feb. 7 edition of *The New York Times*. [Wildlife Biology](#) Professor **Dave Naugle** was instrumental in launching the SGI, which affects 56 million acres of sage grouse habitat across 11 Western states. Last year the initiative received \$18.5 million to remove sage grouse threats and sustain working ranches.
 - Division of Biological Sciences Professor **Joel Berger** was featured in the Science section of *The New York Times* in December in an article highlighting Berger's musk ox research, including the animal's unique story and how it can be used to help other endangered large land mammals facing extinction.
 - A team of researchers led by [Geosciences](#) Professor **George Stanley Jr.** found fossil corals in central Nevada representing the oldest occurrences in North America of ancestors of modern reef-building species. The research, published in GeoScience World's journal *Palaios* in December, was featured in [BioOne](#), a global, free access Web site that brings together scientific societies, publishers, and libraries to provide access to critical, peer-reviewed research in the biological, ecological, and environmental sciences.
 - University of Montana researchers, with colleagues from the University of Idaho and the University of California, Davis, recently completed a study challenging a widely held assumption that vegetation will move uphill in response to climatic warming. The results of the study appeared in an article titled "Changes in Climatic Water Balance Drive Downhill Shifts in Plant Species' Optimum Elevations" in the Jan. 21 issue of the prestigious journal *Science*.
 - An international team that includes University of Montana researcher **Jeffrey Good** recently studied DNA from a 30,000-year-old finger bone found in 2008 in the Denisova Cave in southern Siberia, Russia. The scientists discovered previously unknown connections among the ancient ancestors of modern human populations and their paper was published in the Dec. 23 issue of the international science journal *Nature*.
 - The [Flight Laboratory](#), led by **Ken Dial**, was featured in the online magazine [Science Nation](#).