



DATE: November 6, 2013

TO: Board of Regents

FROM: Royce C. Engstrom, President *Royce C Engstrom*

RE: Campus Report for the November 2013 Board of Regents Meeting

STUDENT NEWS

- Student **Sara Thane** spent her summer at the White House through an internship with the Office of Presidential Correspondence. Thane is a junior at UM majoring in political science with minors in Arabic Studies and International Development Studies. She read and helped respond to correspondence from students and classrooms on behalf of the President, assisted in coordinating volunteers within the department and answered phone calls on the White House Comment Line, recording their comments for the Office of Presidential Correspondence.
- Student **Dustin Askim** recently earned a Jim Murray Scholarship, a top national award for excellence in sports writing. Askim, a senior in the UM School of Journalism, was one of five essay-competition winners from across the country. The award and \$5,000 scholarship honors the long and illustrious sports-writing career of Pulitzer Prize-winner Jim Murray. With Askim's win, five UM journalism students have claimed the prestigious award.
- UM doctoral candidate **Ryan Bracewell** recently was appointed a predoctoral fellowship through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Food Research Initiative. The fellowship recognized Bracewell's research on a bark beetle and fungal symbiosis with a \$77,000 award. Bracewell examines how the western pine beetle interacts with two mutualistic fungi critical to the beetle's success and survival. He uses next-generation DNA sequencing technology to conduct geographically comprehensive and genomically extensive analyses of the beetle and fungi. His results will lead to a more complete understanding of the evolutionary history and current genetic structure of these organisms and will help managers counter the pine beetle's impact on ponderosa pine.
- A delegation of three University of Montana students, **Stephanie Lackey**, **Sam Dexter** and **Mara Menahan**, will leave November 9th for the United Nations international

climate change negotiations in Warsaw, Poland. During the talks, nations from around the world aim to secure new global agreements on climate change for 2015. At issue is devising a new allowable target date for global greenhouse gas emissions to peak, subsequent emission-reduction targets for various nations and funding protocols.

FACULTY/STAFF NEWS

- Regents Professor **Steve Running** has been appointed to the NASA Advisory Council Science Committee and chair of the Earth Science subcommittee within that council. His responsibilities as subcommittee chair are twofold: He will lead the subcommittee in recommending priorities for new satellite missions, continuity of space-based Earth observations, Earth systems research, and information management of global datasets, and he will represent Earth science priorities within the broader NASA science goals and advocate for critical Earth science objectives that fulfill national policy needs.
- The National Communication Association recently awarded Professor **Alan Sillars** the Bernard J. Brommel Award for Outstanding Scholarship or Distinguished Service in Family Communication. Sillars earned the award for his research, which focuses on communication and conflict in families – specifically the way couples, parents and children talk about disagreements and tensions in the family, along with areas of misunderstanding affecting these situations. Most recently, he and his colleagues have studied parent-adolescent communication, including factors that affect parental understanding of children and child understanding of parents.
- In honor of national Banned Books Week, the **Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library** put together a series of videos featuring UM faculty, administrators and staff sharing their favorite banned books. The videos, produced by UM graduate student and School of Media Arts Adjunct Instructor **Tom Stagg**, introduce students to people who work on campus and the books they cherish. In the videos, UM employees speak from the heart about books they love and that have influenced them and why students should read banned books.
- A new, five-year, \$20.3 million grant announced September 18th from the National Institutes of Health will create a health research network of 13 universities across the West. Called the Clinical Translational Research Infrastructure Network (CTR-IN), the organization will expand the capacity of partner institutions across seven states to put clinical research into practice to address regional health concerns, including access to care, cancer, obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular and infectious diseases. The University of Montana is a member institution. **Curtis Noonan**, a UM associate professor of epidemiology, directs the CTR-IN Pilot Grants Program. In recent months researchers from CTR-IN partner institutions participated in a highly competitive pilot grant application process at 11 eligible institutions. Of the six pilot grants that will be funded

in the initial round, two \$75,000 awards went to UM researchers. One of the awardees, **Blakely Brown** in the Department of Health and Human Performance, will test an after-school nutrition and exercise intervention program. The second investigator, **Luke Conway** in the Department of Psychology, will study novel strategies to improve the efficacy of motivational interviewing to help people to quit smoking.

- UM Professor and Director of the UM Paleontology Center **George Stanley** will conduct research at Kumamoto University in Japan during October and November as part of the Japanese Society for the Promotion and Science BRIDGE Fellowship program. While in Japan, Stanley will continue work on a collaborative research project that will involve field work in Kyushu, the country's mountainous, southernmost island. As part of the Fellowship, Stanley will travel to universities across the country to promote the exchange of science between the U.S. and Japan.
- Associate Professor **Cara Nelson**, who teaches restoration ecology and directs the Wildland Restoration Program, was elected chairwoman of the Society for Ecological Restoration at their world conference in Madison, Wisconsin, earlier this month. This international science-based organization has members in more than 70 countries, hosts annual world conferences and publishes the journal *Restoration Ecology*. In this two-year-long appointment, Nelson will assist the society in its mission to advance the science of restoration ecology and improve the quality of restoration practice.
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced November 6th that it has awarded nearly \$10 million to an academic, industry and government consortium to study the major challenges in using insect-killed trees as a sustainable feedstock for bioenergy. The award was made by U.S.D.A.'s National Institute of Food and Agriculture. The University of Montana will receive more than \$1 million over five years to help study the issues related to using forest residue, including beetle-kill trees, as a feedstock in biofuel production. UM College of Forestry and Conservation Associate Professor of Forest Operations **Woodam Chung** will lead the group of scientists studying the logistics of harvesting, collecting and transporting underused forest biomass to a biofuel production facility.

ADDITIONAL CAMPUS NEWS

- The **College of Forestry and Conservation** celebrated its centennial with three days of events in September. The college formally opened on Sept. 8, 1914, with 25 students and one degree program. It since has grown to offer five undergraduate degrees, four academic minors, five master's of science degrees and three doctoral programs to nearly 1,000 students.

- The University of Montana recently was awarded a **National Science Foundation grant of nearly \$500,000** to support a project to improve the University's cyberinfrastructure. The project will fund the procurement of high speed bandwidth for several key buildings housing active, big-data research projects. The upgrade will greatly enhance the ability of researchers to actively participate in their fields, work in collaboration with other researchers at the national and international level, and broaden the impact of UM research efforts.
- The University of Montana plans to create a new **Cyber Innovation Laboratory** in collaboration with state technology companies. The new facility will train students in cybersecurity and using “big data” to search for patterns that solve real-world problems using massive datasets. Curricula will be designed for use with the lab, and UM officials envision new certificate and degree offerings involving cybersecurity, big data and assurance, which involves safety, security and compliance. The lab will train students in vulnerability assessment, in which they are taught how to identify weaknesses in information systems. In an isolated, secure laboratory, students will learn how hackers penetrate computer systems in order to help companies better protect themselves from hostile data breaches. Students also will study digital forensic analysis, studying evidence from data breaches to better track down hackers. In addition, UM’s Department of Mathematical Sciences will offer a big data analytics course this semester, and Missoula College faculty members are developing a proposal for a cybersecurity certificate.
- The University of Montana was named one of **America’s 100 Best College Buys** by Institutional Research & Evaluation Inc., an independent research and consulting organization that helps recruit and retain students for institutions of higher learning. UM was the only Montana University to make the list, which was released September 20th.
- The Online College Database recently ranked the University of Montana 43rd on its **“50 Colleges Advancing Women in STEM” list**. UM offers 66 science, technology and math programs, and the 450 women enrolled in them make up 56 percent of STEM students. The list identifies public, fully accredited higher education institutions that graduate a high number of women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields and successfully encourage female student participation in a variety of STEM programs. UM is the only Montana University on the list.
- For the second year in a row, the University of Montana has been ranked among the **top 300 universities worldwide** in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings. UM is ranked in the 276-300 level of the 2013-14 list – as it was last year – and is the only Montana university on the list. The Times Higher Education World University Rankings are the most comprehensive global rankings of higher education institutions,

using 13 performance indicators to examine a university's strengths against its core missions: teaching, research, knowledge transfer and international outlook. The data is collected and analyzed by Thomson Reuters.

- The University of Montana announced October 2nd that that the East Broadway site will be the location for the new **Missoula College** building. UM President Royce Engstrom made his selection after months of public comments, meetings and forums with interested UM students, University employees, elected officials and community members. Engstrom said the site will a distinctive opportunity to make a bold statement about UM and the role two-year education plays in the Missoula community and western Montana. A feasibility study completed in July outlined plans for a multistory building along with parking and bicycle spaces at the site, which is across the river from the mountain campus and adjacent to UM's MonTEC business incubator. The study showed no major impediments to developing the site and outlined a building with more than 155,000 gross square feet that could handle current and projected enrollment for Missoula College.
- For the second year in a row, the **UM School of Law** has been named a "**Best Value Law School**" by National Jurist Magazine. UM comes in at No. 17 on the national list, which appears in the magazine's October 2013 edition. The ranking takes into account the cost, debt load, bar passage and employment of graduates in actual law jobs. The UM School of Law emphasizes a skill-based curriculum, and the success is evident as UM alumni enter the workforce. The National Jurist recognition takes into account 90 percent bar passage rate for UM law students in 2012, 74.7 percent employment rate after graduation, 2013-14 yearly tuition and fees of \$11,104 for resident students and relatively low \$14,790 cost of living.
- Five outstanding University of Montana graduates received **Distinguished Alumni Awards** during Homecoming weekend festivities. The awards are the highest honor presented by UM's Alumni Association. This year's distinguished alumni are Dorothy Bridges of Minneapolis, George Dennison of Missoula, Jim Messina of Chicago, Milton Parsons of Denver and Yoko Takeuchi of Tokyo.
- The University of Montana's **Fire Program**, based in the **College of Forestry and Conservation**, is now certified by the Association for Fire Ecology. AFE's certification recognizes the national impact of UM's academic programs in Wildland Fire Sciences and Management, which include a minor in Fire Sciences, a major in Resource Conservation and graduate degrees in Forestry and Resource Conservation. UM's fire degrees combine rigorous academic coursework with innovative field experiences to train the next generation fire professionals. UM was among seven academic programs certified by AFE in 2013. The association developed the certification to recognize academic programs that prepare future fire professionals. Students who graduate from

an AFE-certified program have expedited application access to certification as an AFE professional wildland fire managers and ecologists.

- The Fallen Soldier Memorial at the University of Montana is a solemn reminder of those who served in Iraq and Afghanistan. The memorial, bearing the names of Montana soldiers who lost their lives in the recent wars, was recognized as the **Official State Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans' Memorial** on Saturday, October 26th. In its last session, the Montana Legislature passed House Bill 351, extending the state designation to the memorial, without a single opposing vote. Montana Gov. Steve Bullock signed the bill into law on April 8th.
- The **Bureau of Business and Economic Research** (BBER) recently won the national 2013 Website Award of Excellence for BBER's redesigned website. The Association for University Business and Economic Research (AUBER) presented the award at its recent conference in Richmond, Va. AUBER is the professional association of business and economic research organizations at public and private universities and is composed of 100 leading economic research centers. Re-launched in September 2013, the bureau's new website provides research studies, articles and data covering diverse topics related to Montana's economy, including energy, health care, housing, forest products, manufacturing, agriculture, entrepreneurship, children and families, population, demographics, state and local economic forecasts, and more.
- UM students and faculty conducting research on Chaucer's "The Canterbury Tales" have an exceptional new resource available through the **Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library**. The library recently acquired a detailed facsimile of the Ellesmere Manuscript, a beautiful, illuminated edition produced in the early 15th century. The facsimile allows students and researchers to engage with the most important manuscript of "The Canterbury Tales" in a form that reflects the original as closely as possible. Combining the best of the old and the new, the facsimile features high-resolution photographic reproduction supplemented by authentic 24-karat-gold letter gilding to emulate the look and feel of the medieval manuscript.
- UM hosted the 8th annual **Day of Dialogue** on November 6th. The Day of Dialogue is a campus-wide symposium focused on topics of diversity. Students, faculty, staff, alumni and community members discuss, present, perform and exhibit art that explores topics such as race, gender, ethnicity, ability/disability, religion, sexual orientation, class, social hierarchy and privilege.