

Memorandum

To: Board of Regents

From: Jane Karas, President
Flathead Valley Community College

Re: January 2015 Campus Report

Date: December 12, 2014

- FVCC President **Jane A. Karas, Ph.D.**, joined **U.S. President Obama**, the **First Lady** and **Vice President Biden**, **Commissioner Christian**, **President Cruzado** and **President Engstrom** along with several hundred college presidents and other higher education leaders, to commemorate the **White House College Opportunity Day of Action** in Washington, D.C., December 4. The event centered on a national movement to help more students prepare for and graduate from college in support of the President's initiative to help our nation reach its goal of leading the world in college attainment. To help reach this goal, FVCC has committed to **increasing the number of graduates** transferring into **four-year STEM programs by 15 percent** in the next two years. In conjunction with the goal, the **college's STEM faculty** launched a weekly **STEM Colloquium**, providing opportunities for faculty and staff to showcase their research to the broader community. In addition, FVCC Biology Associate Professor **Ruth Wrightsman, Ph.D.**, has partnered with local ninth-grade biology teachers to perform DNA sequencing on native plants in their classes.
- Nearly 50 FVCC students presented their research projects during the college's annual **Fall Scholars Conference on Student Research**. The event provided participating students the opportunity to present their research, portfolios and projects to college faculty, staff and students and members of the community. Students delivered 30 oral presentations, and 15 research posters were showcased during the event.
- FVCC President Jane A. Karas, Ph.D., and UM President **Royce C. Engstrom, Ph.D.**, hosted a **legislative breakfast** on the FVCC campus December 16. President Karas and President Engstrom presented campus updates and addressed questions from the area legislators in attendance
- The FVCC art, music and theatre departments collaborated to host the first **Celebrate the Arts! at FVCC** event December 8-13. The community was invited to partake in a variety of art-centered events from a student and faculty holiday art sale, art faculty demonstrations and student art exhibit to concerts by FVCC music faculty and the Vocal Jazz Ensemble and the FVCC Theatre production of the world-premiere holiday musical comedy, "**Cowboy Christmas**," written and directed by husband and wife FVCC Theatre Adjunct Professors **Nick and Rebecca Spear**.

- The seventh season of the FVCC Foundation's **Festival of Flavors** raised **record net proceeds of \$170,000** to support scholarships and programs. The kick-off event featured Culinary Institute of Montana students in a cook-off that led nine days of food, wine and brew tastings throughout communities in the Flathead Valley. The Foundation collaborated with business and individual sponsors; local chefs and restaurants; beverage companies, wineries and breweries; art, culinary and music faculty and students; and donors to make a difference for FVCC students.
- The FVCC Foundation held its 21st annual **Scholarship Award Luncheon** to honor scholarship donors and student scholarship recipients. A total of **317 FVCC students** received **\$501,790** in FVCC Foundation and community-supported scholarships for the 2014-15 academic year. Student speakers **Skyler Bexten, Baylee Brinton, Wendy Stanislaw** and **Scott Brooke** shared their gratitude and personal stories about the impact scholarships have made on their lives.
- FVCC launched a new 17-credit **Business Innovation and Development Certificate** to prepare entrepreneurial thinkers to start their own businesses or obtain entry-level management positions. Designed to allow students to complete the program in the evening over the course of one semester, the program is supported by a **U.S. Department of Labor Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College and Career Training grant** to encourage entrepreneurship in Northwest Montana.
- FVCC received national recognition for being named to the **Corporation for National and Community Service 2014 President's Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll**. The honor acknowledges institutions of higher education that support exemplary community service programs and raise the visibility of effective practices in campus community partnerships.
- FVCC sponsored a **Community Forum on Ebola** presented by **Kalispell Regional Healthcare, North Valley Hospital** and the **Flathead City-County Health Department** on the FVCC campus November 10. The event featured a presentation on the history and transmission of Ebola followed by an opportunity for the public to ask questions about the disease. The panel was comprised of Infectious Disease Specialist **Dr. Jeffrey Tjaden**, Flathead City-County Health Department Health Officer **Joe Russell** and representatives from the sponsoring hospitals.