

# THE UNIVERSITY *of* MONTANA WESTERN

DATE: Monday, Oct. 17, 2016  
TO: Montana Board of Regents  
FROM: Beth Weatherby, chancellor  
SUBJECT: Campus Report for the November 2016 Board of Regents meeting

Montana Western reports record-breaking enrollment up nine percent.

OFFICIAL 15TH DAY ENROLLMENT figures show Montana Western's student headcount is 1,501, up nine percent from last year.

In addition, this is the second consecutive year Montana Western has broken the modern record for students enrolling at the university for the first time.

Statistics include 1,418 full-time equivalent (FTE) students as compared to 1,332 last year (a six percent increase).

This year's record-breaking entering class includes 336 new freshmen and 131 transfer students.

Montana Western ranks among top western colleges in U.S. News survey.

Montana Western has been ranked third among the top Western Regional Public Colleges by the 2017 U.S. NEWS & WORLD BEST COLLEGES rankings released in September.

The publication also ranked Montana Western near the top for western regional public and private colleges including third for students graduating with the least debt; fourth for best colleges for veterans; and eighth for best value.

The U.S. News rankings come on the heels of MONEY MAGAZINE naming Montana Western the best university in the state for delivering a great education at an affordable price while assisting students to launch promising careers.

November Report 2016

Model Classroom and Legacy Plaza amphitheater are dedicated.

The DENNIS AND PHYLLIS WASHINGTON FOUNDATION Model Classroom for Education, and PIONEER FEDERAL SAVINGS AND LOAN Amphitheater in Legacy Plaza were dedicated in October.

The university also celebrated the completion of Legacy Plaza and final stage of the Main Hall complex restoration.

Executive Director of the Washington Foundation MIKE HALLIGAN and Pioneer Federal President TOM WELCH cut ribbons to open the exceptional new campus spaces.

The Haynes Foundation establishes endowment at Montana Western.

THE HAYNES FOUNDATION has established a \$417,773 endowment to provide scholarships through the Montana Western foundation for undergraduate students from Montana high schools.

The gift represents a 50-plus year commitment by The Haynes Foundation to promoting higher education in the state of Montana and helping to prepare students for a lifetime of success.

The endowment will benefit Montana Western students for many generations to come and continue to ensure that the goals of The Haynes Foundation are fulfilled in perpetuity.

Environmental sciences department awarded \$50K grant.

ROB THOMAS, professor of geology and Regents Professor has been awarded a \$50,000 grant to work with environmental sciences students on ecological site descriptions for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in western Montana.

The funds will support four paid student interns to work with BLM soil scientists, two each summer for two years.

Montana Western students will collect field data from roughly 40 sites throughout western Montana. The information will be added to the Natural Resource Conservation Service's database for use in managing the current and future health of public lands.

The data assists public, non-governmental organizations and private landowners to balance and manage multiple uses of public lands.

UMW students benefit by gaining direct experience in their discipline and through mentoring provided by federal land managers. They also develop contacts for future employment.

Dillon's hillside letter restored to historic "M."

Montana Western students, faculty and staff recently helped move rocks as part of the Dillon, Mont. hillside letter restoration project.

The hillside "M" above Dillon dates back to an initiative funded by the Montana State Normal School class of 1919. The "M" was completed by the class of 1920, but was converted into a "W" 10 years ago.

The restoration is a collaborative effort with various partners including Montana Western administrators, faculty, students and alumni; the Beaverhead Trails Coalition; U.S. Forest Service; Bureau of Land Management; and community members.

Montana Western ranked among top universities for affordability.

Montana Western was recently ranked among the top 40 universities in the west in the "Best Bang for the Buck" category by WASHINGTON MONTHLY magazine.

Washington Monthly has published annual rankings of U.S. colleges and universities since 2005.

The "Best Bang for the Buck" ranking includes an exclusive list of schools in the west "who help students attain marketable degrees at affordable prices."

Also included in the top 40 list were Stanford University, the University of California at Los Angeles, the University of Utah and Arizona State University.

Montana Western completes an eventful block one.

Geology professor REBEKAH LEVINE'S hydrology class was busy assessing beaver activity and wetlands generation on Alkali Creek southeast of Dillon, as well as assessing restoration work by The Nature Conservancy on Long and Middle Creeks in the the Centennial Valley.

First-year environmental sciences professor SPRUCE SCHOENEMANN spent eight of the 18 block days in the field with his geology of the American west class.

Students experienced class subject matter by traveling to areas including the university's Birch Creek Outdoor Center in the Pioneer Mountains, Yellowstone National Park, Craters of the Moon National Monument and geologic locations throughout Beaverhead County.

Longtime professor of English ALAN WELTZIEN took students from his composition class outside of the classroom to experience scenes from Norman Maclean's books, "A River Runs Through It" and "Young Men and Fire."