

THE UNIVERSITY *of* MONTANA WESTERN

DATE: Wednesday, October 25, 2017
TO: Montana Board of Regents
FROM: Beth Weatherby, Chancellor
SUBJECT: Campus Report for the November 2017 Board of Regents meeting

History Professor Preserves Haitian History

The British Library's Endangered Archives Programme has allocated funds to preserve a rare collection of Haitian newspapers thanks to a team of American and Haitian researchers including Montana Western professor, Dr. Erin Zavitz.

This grant will provide equipment and employees to digitize the historic newspapers, some of which are the only copies in the world.

Zavitz is currently working on a manuscript project entitled "Visions of Haiti's Past: Commemorations and Representations of the Haitian Revolution."

Psychology Student Assists with Government Research

Psychology Major and University of Montana Western junior Roberta Irvin interned at the University of Pennsylvania over the summer. She worked with the National Institute on Drug Abuse, aiding researchers in their studies on the transmission of HIV. The school was Irvin's first choice out of 30 sites across the country where NIDA employs student interns.

Irvin believes none of this would have been possible without Experience One.

"It's really nice having the one-on-one time with the professors. I wouldn't have heard about the internship without that, let alone applied for it," she said.

Alumna Inspires Student Success

Montana Western Alum Chrissy Murgel has been recognized for her outstanding work in counseling and education at Helena High School as part of "The Helena 20 Under 40 Awards."

With her mother and grandfather having both been teachers, Murgel dreamed of being a teacher and helping young people. This led her to pursue a bachelor's degree in secondary education from the University of Montana Western in Dillon.

For the past 17 years, she has been a champion for the students she works with as a counselor.

Montana Western Ranked Among the State's Best Colleges

The University of Montana Western was recently ranked among the "Eight Best Colleges in Montana for 2017" by College Choice, an online education resource.

The other seven colleges are Carroll College, Montana Tech, Montana State University, the University of Montana, Rocky Mountain College, the University of Providence, and MSU-Billings. The ranking is based on institutional excellence and student success.

Montana Western's 20-acre campus is an excellent choice for students to take advantage of the experiential learning offered by the Experience One program.

Athletics Department Recognized by NAIA

The University of Montana Western's Bulldog Athletic Department was recently notified that they were recognized as a Five-Star Character Institution by the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA).

This is the highest rating possible through the Champions of Character program and is a reflection of the outstanding work that all of Montana Western's coaches perform with their teams in the core values of the program.

Russ Richardson, University of Montana Western Director of Athletics, said "I am thrilled by this recognition as it is a direct reflection of our commitment to the holistic development of the Bulldog student-athletes."

Best College Rankings Announced for Montana Western

The University of Montana Western was recently ranked among the "Best Colleges" by U.S. News & World Report, and was also ranked among the top three "Best Colleges in Montana" by College Consensus.

U.S. News & World Report has bestowed The University of Montana Western, a public institution founded in 1893, with several impressive rankings in the Western region. The rankings include #8 in Best Regional Colleges, #4 in Top Public Schools, #5 in Best Value Schools, and #6 in Best Colleges for Veterans. One of the most unique aspects of Montana Western is the Experience One program, an innovative class scheduling system that allows students to focus on a single course at a time.

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Fine Arts Gallery Holds Grand Opening

The University of Montana Western's newly restored Fine Arts Gallery held its Grand Opening on Sep. 7, 2017.

Gallery Coordinator and art instructor Aja Mujinga Sherrard presented a Curator's Talk. There was also an Artist Q&A with contemporary sculptor Karl Schwieshow, whose works were installed in the Corr Gallery.

The Walton Gallery featured selections from the Permanent Collection, including original works by Salvador Dali and Charles M. Russell.

Close Sisters Visit Montana Western

As part of the program of the 1st Annual Big Sky Behavioral Health Summit, Keynote speaker Jessie Close, with sisters Glenn Close and Tina Close, made a special visit to the University of Montana Western on Sep. 6, in order to raise awareness and break down the stigma that surrounds mental illness.

Jessie Close is a nationally renowned mental health advocate, prominent speaker, and critically acclaimed author of the book "Resilience: Two Sisters and a Story of Mental Illness."

Jessie Close is also the sister of six-time Academy Award nominated actress Glenn Close, who is a co-founder of the non-profit organization "Bring Change to Mind."

In addition to the Keynote address, the Howard Gaines Service Award was presented to Julie Ingram for her outstanding work in the mental health field.

Ms. Ingram has helped patients in crisis for many years at Barrett Hospital and Healthcare.

Coach T.J. Nelson Headed into the NAIA Hall of Fame

Former University of Montana Western wrestling coach T.J. Nelson is heading to the NAIA Hall of Fame.

The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) announced 21 honorees with the association's highest individual honors as part of its annual NAIA National Awards Day.

T.J. was the head wrestling coach at Montana Western from 1987-1996. During his tenure, T.J.'s teams finished in the top 5 nationally, including earning the National Championship in 1994. Coach Nelson will be honored during the NAIA championship in De Moines, Iowa in March 2018.

Firefighter Fitness Assessed by HHP Students

Assistant Professor Laura Young's Exercise Physiology class had the opportunity to test the health of the Dillon Volunteer Fire Department as their final assignment in Block 1.

The University of Montana Western's new Health and Human Performance (HHP) Lab is opening its doors to the campus and to the community. In the first weeks of the school year, Montana Western's HHP students have already utilized the new facility, becoming skilled in administering and supervising fitness test batteries and providing support during the annual fitness testing of the Dillon community's first responders, including the Dillon Volunteer Fire Department.

The firefighters were evaluated for upper body, core, and grip strength among other tests. They also had their blood pressure and body mass index (BMI) measured by the students as part of this experiential learning experience.

October Report 2017

Bulldogs Shine at Home Rodeo

The Montana Western Rodeo Team closed out the fall portion of their schedule with a strong performance at the Harry Andrus Arena Sep. 29-Oct. 1, 2017.

After two performances and a long day of slack, 31 Bulldogs found themselves in the short-go. The Bulldogs brought home three buckles and two all-around champions.

Both the Men's and the Women's finished second. The men maintained their third-place spot in the Big Sky Region standings, sitting 661 points behind second place Northwest College. The women stayed in second place, 318.5 points behind Montana State University.

History Student Researches Rural Schools

As a part of her senior project, Miranda Martinez created an oral history project based on interviewing teachers at rural schools. Their personal accounts helped shape the path she's on today.

Martinez wrote: "During each of my interviews I asked what seemed to be the biggest difference between urban and rural schools. The overwhelming answer was the connection that teachers and students had."

After conducting her research, Martinez decided her goal is to one day teach at a rural school while also coaching.

Martinez felt that rural schools had more in common with the Experiential Learning that takes place at the University of Montana Western which she appreciates:

"I'd like to build a real relationship with my students and their parents. A smaller school provides me with that opportunity."

Celebration at Montana Center for Horsemanship

The Montana Center for Horsemanship (MCH) and the University of Montana Western held an Open House Celebration on Oct. 5, 2017.

The event began with student-guided tours, followed by a celebration of the success and future plans for the MCH, with Master of Ceremonies Beth Weatherby, Chancellor of the University of Montana Western, providing opening remarks to around 100 guests in attendance.

Four guest speakers, including Clayton Christian, Commissioner of Higher Education of the Montana University System, Mike Cooney, Lieutenant Governor of the State of Montana, William Kriegel, co-founder of the MCH, and Tess Turk, one of Montana Western's natural horsemanship students, shared their excitement and passion for what the center adds to the Dillon region and to the opportunities it provides for students and the community.