



DATE: Wednesday, June 20, 2018
TO: Montana Board of Regents
FROM: Beth Weatherby, Chancellor
SUBJECT: Campus Report for the July 2018 Board of Regents Meeting

Montana Western Students Head to NASA for Summer Internships

Two Montana Western students are heading to NASA for the summer, where they will be participating in summer research internships at the Goddard Space Flight Center (GSFC) in Maryland.

Business Administration and Mathematics double major Baleigh Doyle will be returning to Goddard for the second summer in a row, and Business Administration major Marcus Payne will be making the journey to GSFC for the first time.

The highly competitive internships have an acceptance rate of only about 450 out of thousands of applicants.

Legacy Plaza Celebration and Commencement Highlight Student Success

The University of Montana Western held its annual Legacy Plaza Celebration and Commencement Ceremony on May 4 and 5, 2018, celebrating the achievements of the Class of 2018.

Around 150 people attended the Legacy Plaza Celebration, a special graduation kick-off event, including students, parents, families and members of the community.

368 Montana Western graduates were awarded at least 443 degrees by the end of the 2017-18 academic year. Of the 368 students, 60 have completed two or more degrees, and over 50% of the graduates received honors by achieving a GPA of 3.33 or higher.

June Report 2018

Rodeo Coach Iola "Olie" Else Receives Spirit of Montana Award

Montana Congressman Greg Gianforte has honored Iola "Olie" Else, University of Montana Western's rodeo coach, with the Spirit of Montana award for her long-standing dedication to education and the sport of college rodeo.

Gianforte's Spirit of Montana is a weekly recognition of Montanans for their accomplishments, dedication, or service. Gianforte provides a statement about the recipient for the Congressional Record.

"For more than two decades, Coach Else has been the driving force behind the school's nationally recognized college rodeo team," said Gianforte in his statement for the Congressional Record.

Environmental Sciences Degree Program Ranked Nationally among the Top Five

The University of Montana Western was recently ranked nationally among the top five "Best Colleges for Environmental Science Degree Programs 2017-18" by Schools.com, an online education resource.

"It is gratifying to see that our Environmental Sciences program has been recognized as one of the very top in the United States," said Chancellor Beth Weatherby.

Montana Western's Environmental Science degrees apply the University's unique experiential learning model, called Experience One, where students take one course at a time for 18 days and then move on to the next course.

Assistant Professor Receives Early Career Prize for Historical Essay

"Atlantic Studies" has awarded Assistant Professor Erin Zavitz with their Early Career Prize for her essay "Revolutionary Narrations: Early Haitian Historiography and the Challenge of Writing Counter-History."

Her article, composed of two condensed chapters from her future book about Haiti, was published in the "Atlantic Studies: Global Currents" journal.

Zavitz is working on many projects involving the history of Haiti, including the preservation of rare historical newspapers.

"Hopefully we can get more grant funding to create a web page or a digital exhibit to make the newspapers more accessible," Zavitz says.

Governor Visits Stars Preschool Classroom of Distance Education Candidate

On May 3, 2018, Governor Steve Bullock visited the STARS Preschool classroom of teacher Mellonie Roesler-Begalke in Troy, Mont., who is currently enrolled in Montana Western's Pre-Kindergarten-Third grade early childhood education program.

As a distance candidate, Roesler-Begalke is able to complete her degree while teaching at the same time.

"The P-3 program fits the needs of my family and my educational goals. The University of Montana Western and its faculty have structured a program that allows a mother of two, a wife, and a full-time working teacher to obtain the certification that I need to continue working with young children, which is my passion in life," she said.

Montana Western Foundation Announces Gift to Support Indigenous Educators

The University of Montana Western Foundation received \$25,000 to support Professor Vikki Howard's work through the University of Montana Western's collaboration with Blackfeet Community College and Browning Public Schools.

Tara VanDerveer, legendary Stanford Women's Basketball Coach, is the benefactor of this exciting gift.

The donation will assist with Indigenous Teacher Education and the goal to increase the number of Indigenous educators on the Blackfeet Reservation.

The partnership is also supported by a \$1M federal Office of Indian Education grant and a \$20,000 NARCH Wellness grant. Over 40 Indigenous teacher candidates seeking degrees and/or certification are currently enrolled as students at Montana Western.

125th Birthday Bash and Festival Supports Student Programs

The University of Montana Western's Foundation and Alumni Office in partnership with Summit Beverage presented the Third Annual Southwest Montana Wine and Craft Beer Festival on May 19, 2018 on the Montana Western campus. A fireworks show was held following the festival.

Proceeds benefit the students and departments of Montana Western by raising funds that are utilized to support various programs and projects on campus and aren't limited to a specific department.

These "unrestricted funds" can be utilized in many ways including the purchase of research equipment and the support of art and literary series and student projects.

Associate Professor and Recent Graduates Publish “Women In STEM On Television”

Montana Western Associate English Professor, Ashley Carlson, wrote and edited a collection of critical essays titled “Women in STEM on Television,” with the assistance of two English Majors, Erin Nicholes and Hope Crowell.

Carlson explained that television has a strong influence displaying gender stereotypes, especially with the portrayal of intelligent women in science, technology, engineering, and math.

Two undergraduates had their work published with the help and encouragement from Carlson, a major accomplishment that may not have been possible without the opportunity and flexibility Experience One offers at Montana Western.

Vice Chancellor of Administration and Finance Appointment Announced

The University of Montana Western announced the appointment of Michael Reid to the position of Vice Chancellor of Administration and Finance.

Mr. Reid currently serves as Vice President for Administration and Finance at Sierra Nevada College, where he supervises several campus departments including Human Resources, Business Services, Facilities, Financial Aid, and Information Technology.

“Mike Reid is a perfect fit for the University of Montana Western. His wealth of experience with finance and budgeting, human resources, facilities and operations will be a great asset as we build upon the success of Experience One and continue to find innovative ways to foster student success,” said Chancellor Beth Weatherby.

Students Explore Geology of Southwest Montana

Dillon is a geologist’s dream and one of the largest classrooms in Montana.

“This place is ground zero for educational value in public lands,” said Montana Western Geology Professor Rob Thomas. “Because it’s available to all, it allows over 20 field camps, including international camps like Oxford University,” Thomas said.

Matt Powell, University of Oregon student said, “I’ve learned more here than I have in any other course.”

“It’s cool to see structures you see in a textbook in real life and to take strikes and dips and see what’s underneath,” said University of Oregon student Madison Ransom.

Degrees in Environmental Sciences Prepare Students for Future Careers

Assistant Professor and Chair of Environmental Sciences Department, Spruce Schoenemann, was excited about the recognition of the Department and University, recently ranked nationally among the top five “Best Colleges for Environmental Science Degree Programs 2017-18” by Schools.com, an online education resource.

Comprehensive data on over 500 schools provided by The National Center for Education Statistics was analyzed to produce the list.

The Experience One program allows Environmental Sciences students at Montana Western to study geology in places including Yellowstone National Park, work with nonprofits like The Nature Conservancy to restore local wetlands, and gather data on local streams for Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

Director of University Communications Appointment Announced

The University of Montana Western announced the appointment of Matt Raffety to the position of Director of University Communications.

"Matt Raffety is a great representative for the university," said Chancellor Beth Weatherby. "In just one year, he has developed a deep understanding of the power of Experience One. His enthusiastic support of the accomplishments of our faculty, students and staff is contagious."

"I'm honored to have the opportunity to share the success stories of our students, faculty, staff, and alumni with the community, state and across the country," said Mr. Raffety. "I'm continually amazed at the accomplishments of the students here at Montana Western."

Rodeo Coach Lola "Olie" Else Honored at College National Finals Rodeo

Montana Western Rodeo Coach, Lola "Olie" Else, was recognized as "Coach of the Year" at the College National Finals Rodeo on June 13, 2018.

The award was given to Else because of her continuous dedication and support while helping rodeo athletes excel in their education and achieve their competition goals. She is not only the only woman to have received this achievement, but also the only coach to receive the award twice. She first received the award in 2004.

June 13, 2018 was also declared "Iola Else Day" in Casper, Wyo., by Mayor Ray Pacheco, for her successful career at the University of Montana Western and her passion for helping improve the lives of her students.

Else will retire from coaching at the end of June after 50 years of involvement with the Montana Western Rodeo Team and Club.