



The University of Montana Western Campus Report

DATE: Wednesday, August 21, 2019

TO: Board of Regents

FROM: Beth Weatherby, Chancellor

RE: Campus Report for the September 2019 Board of Regents' Meeting

- **University of Montana Western Featured in Missoulian Series**

The University of Montana Western was recently featured in a series of articles focusing on economic mobility and meeting the needs of today's students in higher education across the state in the *Missoulian*.

The articles highlighted the reshaping of Montana Western's educational model, when the university switched to Experience One- where students take one course at a time and learn by doing. The transformation made an impact on increasing and stabilizing UMW's enrollment since 2004 when the model was fully implemented.

The University of Montana Western is the only public university in the country offering Experience One and the block schedule. In the "block" schedule, courses run three hours at a time each day for 18 days. The longer courses fully immerse students in a topic and allow for extensive field work, and they also give students an easier way to schedule internships and employment.

- **Montana Western Ranked Among Best Public Universities**

College Consensus has ranked Montana Western among the 2019 "Best Public Colleges & Universities." The College Consensus scores are calculated based on a combination of rankings, reports and student reviews.

UMW was also ranked fourth out of fifty of the “Most Affordable Online Colleges,” based on tuition costs, unique certificate programs and the Experience One program the university offers by Study.com, an online educational resource.

The fields of academic study at Montana Western include Biology, Business and Technology, Environmental Sciences, Education, English, Equine Studies, Health and Human Performance, Fine Arts, Mathematics, and History, Philosophy, and Social Sciences.

- **Geology Professor Rob Thomas is a Consultant for "Yellowstone Live"**

Rob Thomas, Professor of Geology at UMW, is a consultant for “Yellowstone Live,” a program featured on the National Geographic Channel.

Though not in Yellowstone National Park while on air, Thomas is provided information in real time via phone while the broadcast is live on TV. He is given a question or photo taken on air of a geological feature and must quickly determine where and what it is. Afterwards, he provides a scientific explanation for the various phenomena and relays it to the show’s correspondents, where the information is then shared with the public on live TV.

- **UMW Welcomes AmeriCorps Volunteer Service Member Chloe Weber**

The University of Montana Western is excited to welcome AmeriCorps Volunteer Service Member Chloe Weber.

Weber is responsible for grant writing, donor research, event planning and creating media content during her 12-month position. She will initiate tribal community outcomes on campus, expanding UMW’s Indigenous education projects including the Teacher Preparation and Tribal Scholars Visiting Professor Projects. Weber will also support UMW Foundation efforts associated with fundraising related to these programs.

- **Megan Chilson Selected as the SHAPE America Western District Director**

Dr. Megan Chilson, a professor in the Health & Human Performance Department at UMW, was recently selected as the SHAPE America Western District Director.

SHAPE (Society of Health and Physical Educators) America is the national organization that serves as the voice for over 200,000 health and physical education professionals. Founded in 1885, the goal was to advance professional practice and promote research related to health and physical education and physical activity.

Megan Chilson joined SHAPE America in 1994 as a graduate student and has remained actively involved throughout her professional career.

- **UMW Athletic Trainer Kaleb Birney Wins National Award**

Kaleb Birney, UMW head athletic trainer, received the National Athletic Trainers Association (NATA) Young Professionals' Committee National Distinction Award.

The National Distinction Award is the Young Professionals' Committee's (YPC) highest honor to recognize a professional athletic trainer who has made a positive and lasting impact on the athletic training profession at the community, state, district or national level.

Birney received his award during the NATA National Convention in Las Vegas held this summer.

- **Students Attend Third Annual Montana New Leadership Institute**

Montana Western students Courtney George and Chloe Hanser attended the Third Annual Montana New Leadership Institute this summer.

According to a press release about this year's event, several undergraduates from across Montana met at the University of Montana in Missoula with local, state and national leaders to aid in the development of leadership skills.

They engaged in open-minded discussions, workshops and hands-on projects. The goal was to bring new ideas to different communities and improve community leadership and engagement.

- **X-CAMP Provides Impactful Learning Experiences**

X-CAMP is a hands-on educational camp for children ages 5-10 offered at Montana Western each summer that first started in 2014. This year's theme was "camping and the outdoors."

X-CAMP is a unique opportunity for prospective teachers at UMW to gain experience in the classroom while kids are able to learn and have fun at the same time.

The children engaged with local experts and guest speakers who shared lessons about wildlife, art and ecology during the eventful week. They also utilized the resources in UMW's state-of-the-art Model Classroom for Education.

- **Paul Helfrich Interns with Bald Head Island Conservancy**

Paul Helfrich, UMW student-athlete, recently completed an internship at Bald Head Island Conservancy (BHIC) on Bald Head Island, North Carolina, right outside of Wilmington, North Carolina.

Helfrich gained experience through a variety of scientific, hands-on procedures where he was able to collect data on both animals and water.

“A lot of people learn about this in lecture, but I’ve done it. All of the professors in the biology and ecology departments have really focused their classes on hands-on experience. I feel more ready for grad school than I ever thought I would,” said Helfrich while reflecting on his internship.