



The University of Montana Western Campus Report

DATE: Wednesday, June 17, 2020

TO: Board of Regents

FROM: Beth Weatherby, Chancellor

RE: Campus Report for the June 2020 Board of Regents' Meeting

- **UMW Announces Fall Semester to Begin as Scheduled on August 24**

UMW plans to welcome students to campus for Fall Semester 2020 on the originally published date of August 24. The university is scheduled to offer the usual four blocks each semester, with students taking one face-to-face, experiential learning course at a time.

“We worked hard to design a calendar that would not require our students to start early,” said Chancellor Beth Weatherby. “Our students were part of the process. They stressed how important it is to them to be able to work as long as possible, especially with the financial hardships many have faced due to this new coronavirus.”

- **Dr. Jane Helm Maddock Remembered for Commitment to Students and the Community**

The university community was saddened recently by the passing of Dr. Jane Helm Maddock, who taught for 17 years at Montana Western starting in 1986 and was recognized as Professor Emeritus of English upon her retirement by the Board of Regents of the Montana University System.

During her time at UMW, she established the Helm Honors Scholarship and the Helm Memorial Scholarship in memory of her parents. One of Montana Western's most prestigious awards is the Dr. Jane Helm Maddock Service Award presented annually to those individuals and community organizations who embody her spirit and generosity.

- **Montana Western's Jason Ferris Signs with the Carolina Panthers**

University of Montana Western linebacker Jason Ferris has signed a contract as an undrafted free agent with the National Football League's Carolina Panthers.

"I'm really excited and I can't believe it," Ferris said. "It's been a crazy couple of months with everything up in the air, but, I'm glad to know where I will be going."

In addition to the All-American and Conference Player of the Year honors, Ferris was a top-five finalist for the 2019 Cliff Harris award. He is a four-time academic all-conference selection, three-time CoSIDA academic all-district selection and a two-time Daktronics Scholar-Athlete.

- **Grant to Advance Opportunities in Horsemanship and Agriculture Education Announced**

Rural youth leadership and innovative rural development opportunities in southwestern Montana will take a major leap forward thanks to a generous "Seeds of Stewardship" grant awarded to the University of Montana Western Foundation and the Montana Center for Horsemanship (MCH). This \$10,000 grant was made possible by the CHS Foundation and Rocky Mountain Supply, Incorporated.

According to UMW Chancellor Beth Weatherby, "The University of Montana Western values our partnerships and the funding provided by CHS and RMS for the MCH classroom construction project not only represents strong partnership support in educating our ag-minded youth, but it also promotes innovative opportunities for the University and MCH."

- **Recent UMW Graduates to Attend Veterinary, Dentistry and Medical Schools**

Six graduates from UMW's Biology and Natural Horsemanship programs have accepted offers to attend veterinary, medical and dentistry schools across the country.

Students Garrett Mussmann, Carol “Grace” Maxwell, Jake Malek and Skye Sutphin graduated this May and will attend veterinary school, while 2019 students Riley Savage and Tristin Bullshoe will attend dentistry and medical school, respectively.

“My professors and advisor really wanted me to succeed. I also had constant check-ins and support from my supervisor at the Learning Center, Susan White, during the application process,” Maxwell said in her interview on the support she received at Montana Western.

- **UMW Students Collaborate on Local Ecology Research**

Bridger Bertram and Paul Helfrich, seniors at Montana Western, collaborated on an intensive research project during the 2019-20 academic year with a plan to present at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) this past spring in Bozeman which was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Helfrich and Bertram’s research project was focused on the temporal and spatial distribution of *Tetracapsuloides bryosalmonae*, a microscopic parasite that causes Proliferative Kidney Disease in many fish species found in Montana, including Brown Trout, Rainbow Trout, and Mountain Whitefish.

- **Montana Western Foundation Announces New Peters Education Scholarship**

Ken and Linda Peters have provided a generous gift to the Montana Western Foundation in order to support four annual scholarships for Education majors who have a desire to teach in Montana.

The newly founded Peters Education Scholarship has been awarded to its first four recipients: Cailey DenBoer, Kindel Hugs, Ellie Johnson and Alexis Higareda.

Ken and Linda believe this scholarship is a tool to help those future educators not only achieve their goals, but also to “enable four students each year to graduate with a minimal amount of college debt to repay as they begin their teaching careers.”

- **Montana Western Hosts Digital Viewing of Student Art Exhibition**

The UMW Fine Arts Gallery [held a digital viewing](#) of the Spring Student Art Exhibition, showcasing the talents and creativity of UMW’s students.

According to Gallery Coordinator Aja Mujinga Sherrard, “The University of Montana Western Fine Arts Gallery allows us to bring inspiring contemporary

artists from around the country to Dillon as well as to showcase the wonderful art in our own community.”

While the gallery was disappointed that they had to close their physical doors, it was a pleasure to celebrate what the students have achieved this year by hosting a virtual exhibition.

- **Montana Western Celebrates Annual Commencement Virtually**

The University of Montana Western celebrated its 123rd Annual Commencement Ceremony virtually on Saturday, May 9, 2020.

372 Montana Western Students were awarded 465 degrees. Of the 372 students, 69 completed two or more degrees, and over 64% of graduates received honors by achieving a GPA of 3.33 or higher.

[The Virtual Ceremony website](#) featured special video messages for the graduates from Montana Western Chancellor Beth Weatherby, Board of Regents member Robert A. Nystuen, ASUMW President Ethan Powell and Commencement keynote speaker, Kelly Cresswell. Each graduate also had an individual diploma presented digitally as their names were read aloud.

- **Montana Western Names Students to 2020 Spring Semester Dean’s List**

The University of Montana Western named 570 students to the 2020 spring semester Dean’s List. To achieve this honor, students must be enrolled full-time or for 12 semester credits and carry a minimum 3.33 grade point average. Several Montana Western students additionally received Dean’s List high honors.

- **Lydia Landau Shares Undergraduate Research Experience in Southwest Montana**

Lydia Landau grew up in Maryland and lived in several places before attending UMW, including California, Oregon and Montana. She graduated in 2019, majoring in Environmental Science with options in Sustainable Natural Resource and Wetland Management.

Landau’s most recent research was focused on a statistical analysis of soil moisture data from a mesic restoration site in Little Basin, located in southwest Montana. Mesic sites are areas that contain additional moisture than surrounding upland sagebrush and serve as important oases for arthropods, forbs, and the

animals that feed on them since they stay wetter later into the year than the surrounding landscape.

Landau's research will contribute to the understanding of potential mesic restoration methods as more research studies are conducted in the future.