



The University of Montana Western Campus Report

DATE: Wednesday, April 22, 2020

TO: Board of Regents

FROM: Beth Weatherby, Chancellor

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

- **Montana Western to Celebrate 123rd Annual Commencement in the Spring and Fall**

The University of Montana Western will be hosting a virtual commencement ceremony on May 9, 2020, to recognize our graduates and their amazing accomplishments throughout their academic career at Montana Western.

On May 9, each graduate will have an individually designed diploma presented digitally as their names are read aloud. These digital diplomas will include the

choose to submit one. Congratulatory messages from our Chancellor and other presenters will be featured on our website, www.umwestern.edu.

The website will also feature students who have earned special recognition, including the highest GPA and other honors. These items will also be shared on our Montana Western Facebook page to allow for families and friends to wish their graduate well and congratulate them on completing their degree.

At the request of our graduates, a special in-person ceremony will also be held sometime this fall. We will release more information about this event over the summer as details become available.

- **UMW Alumna and 2020 Commencement Speaker Works to Create Opportunities for Montana Students**

UMW graduate, Kelly Cresswell, Executive Director at Reach Higher Montana and Vice President of the Student Assistance Foundation, has led the way for higher education opportunities for Montana students since 2004.

Reach Higher Montana is also part of the Montana Youth Apprenticeship Partnership, which is creating youth apprenticeship models in healthcare and information technology. This will allow high school students to work in their chosen field while continuing their education, and ideally, complete the program with at least an associate's degree and significant progress on their career path. Cresswell will present the Commencement Address at Montana Western's spring virtual and in-person ceremony to be held this fall.

- **Over \$135,000 Generated by Annual Colt Sale Held Online**

The Annual Colt Sale was hosted by the Montana Center for Horsemanship (MCH) in partnership with the University of Montana Western. Due to the challenges of COVID-19, the sale, including 30-plus well-trained colts, was held entirely online.

The change to an online format occurred quickly, but the sale continued to be successful, as over \$135,000 was raised from the online event. The net proceeds will go towards class costs and scholarships. The Director of Horsemanship for MCH, Eric Hoffmann, says "the auction was a great success because of student dedication and community and national support of the sale. It's a true team effort and a major commitment to education and community collaboration."

- **2020-21 Chancellor's Leadership Scholars Announced**

The Chancellor's Leadership Scholars Award is a four-year, full-tuition scholarship awarded to exceptional students residing in the state of Montana who will be attending the University of Montana Western in the fall.

The scholarship recipients are Jodi Cameron from Manhattan, Justin Tofflemire from Helena, Hayden Kunhardt from Glendive, Ruby Stenberg from Manhattan, and Talya Fletes from Circle.

“We look forward to welcoming these high-achieving students to Montana Western,” said Chancellor Beth Weatherby. “They are fascinating, talented individuals who will add so much to our community. Congratulations to all five recipients of this well-deserved award that recognizes leadership and scholarship.”

- **UMW Ranked as the Most Affordable University in Montana**

The University of Montana Western was recently ranked the most affordable university in Montana according to universityhq.org. University Headquarters is an industry-leading, independent educational organization that offers an all-in-one source for information on colleges, entrance requirements and career paths.

While the primary criterion was the lowest tuition cost, University Headquarters also looked at other aspects that made the school special, unique and beneficial to students. The rankings list features the two most affordable universities in each state.

The University of Montana Western ranked first in Montana, followed by Montana State University Billings. To view the full list of universities, visit universityhq.org.

- **Iola ‘Olie’ Else Inducted into Montana Cowboy Hall of Fame**

Earlier this spring, the Montana Cowboy Hall of Fame (MCHF) inducted its newest members during the annual Circle the Wagons event and ceremony held in Great Falls, Mont., including retired Montana Western rodeo coach, Iola ‘Olie’ Else.

Else has been the faculty advisor for Montana Western Rodeo and started as head coach in 1994.

“This year we celebrate our 14th gathering and 12th class of inductions into the Montana Cowboy Hall of Fame,” said MCHF President Bill Galt in a press release. “The inductees embody the spirit of our Montana communities and way of life.”

- **Montana Center for Horsemanship Announces Major Gift**

The Montana Center for Horsemanship recently received a pledge of \$250,000 to begin the development of state-of-the-art classrooms, a conference center, a veterinary/research area, kitchen and additional restrooms. The pledge requires matching funds to complete the Center's expansion of these key areas.

The President of the Montana Center, William Kriegel, says, "This project is ground-breaking, and provides a significant opportunity for the Center to contribute to education in Montana as well as to advance natural horsemanship education while contributing to the local economies of Dillon, Beaverhead County and Montana. Investing in the local community is a central part of our vision."

- **Dillon Community Participates in Early Childhood Education Courses at UMW**

Montana Western students studying Early Childhood Education taught local children, ages 3-5, in the Dennis & Phyllis Washington Foundation Model Classroom at UMW. Instructor Aaron Cashmore taught Early Childhood Curriculum and Environments during block four, followed by Integrated Early Childhood Curriculum in block five.

"In project work, it's about listening to the children. The children develop the curriculum that you use by basing all of your teaching on their interests and abilities, which scaffolds a higher level of learning," Cashmore said, adding "It has been a great opportunity to connect with parents and children in the community."

- **Campus Compact Announces 2020 Newman Civic Fellows**

Campus Compact, a Boston-based non-profit organization working to advance the public purposes of higher education, has announced the 290 students who will make up the organization's 2020-2021 cohort of Newman Civic Fellows, including Tristan Stockton, a student at Montana Western.

Stockton is a Physical Education & Health K-12 major graduating in 2021. He is an active participant in Peers Advocating Toward Health (PATH), where he focuses on raising awareness of healthy lifestyle choices for UMW students.

The students selected for the fellowship are leaders on their campuses, demonstrating a commitment to finding solutions for challenges facing communities locally and nationally.

UMW Students Explore Montana Wildlife Research & Careers

Dr. Michelle Anderson, Montana Western biology professor, and four UMW students, Mike Grover, Kayla Coleman, Mark Mastrofini and Will Larson, attended the Montana Chapter of The Wildlife Society (TWS) annual conference in Butte, Mont., held earlier this year.

According to the TWS website, this year's conference focused on land conservation and what the future holds.

"It is beneficial for our students to meet undergraduate and graduate students engaged in wildlife research across the state, learn about current research in wildlife and natural resource management, and have the opportunity to network with wildlife professionals to explore career opportunities," said Anderson.