



## The University of Montana Western Campus Report

**DATE:** Wednesday, August 19, 2020

**TO:** Board of Regents

**FROM:** Beth Weatherby, Chancellor

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

- **UMW Healthy Fall 2020 Plan**

The University of Montana Western's Healthy Fall 2020 Plan is available on the [UMW website](#). The information follows the guidelines issued by the State of Montana and the Montana University System Healthy Fall 2020 Task Force.

In addition to requiring face masks to be worn to slow the spread of COVID-19 by all students, faculty, staff, and visitors to campus, the university is also practicing many other safety measures including social distancing, handwashing and committing to the "Bulldog Way," a series of actions that each member of our university community should practice in order to keep our campus healthy this fall.

- **Montana Western Graduate Featured by Complete College America**

Complete College America is an alliance of higher education institutions, including the Montana University System, working to implement strategies to remove barriers and close achievement gaps so that all students can achieve their college dreams.

UMW graduate, Heidi DuBray, was [featured with 19 other graduates](#) from across the country as a student from the Montana University System. Currently teaching at Napi Elementary School in Browning, Mont., DuBray was able to apply her education to teaching in her community right away as part of a 2+2 education partnership program with Blackfeet Community College, Browning Public Schools and UMW that allows Indigenous teachers to complete their education degrees without leaving their communities.

- **Montana Western Counseling Offers Year-Round Virtual Services to Students**

UMW counselors Jerry Girard and Heidi Peterson have been providing counseling services remotely to Montana Western students through the summer as they navigate the uncertainty of a global pandemic.

Student Counseling Services began offering eCounseling in January of 2019 to distance and online students making the transition after COVID-19 seamless.

“When schools started to transition to remote delivery, we were the only university in the Montana University System that was already providing virtual counseling services,” Girard said.

As the fall 2020 semester begins, students can now choose to meet face to face or remotely for all their counseling needs.

- **UMW Professor Co-Authors “Roadside Geology of Montana” Guidebook**

UMW Professor of Geology, Dr. Robert Thomas, has been working on the second edition of "Roadside Geology of Montana" for the past five years, traveling to almost every corner of the state gathering data, taking photos and constructing illustrations.

The book is a complete guide to the geological history of Montana and designed to be utilized from the state's many roadways whether the reader is an expert geologist or curious traveler.

“The ‘Roadside Geology’ idea is one of the great public education ideas in all of geology. It is exciting to have the Montana Western name on such a book,” Thomas said.

- **UMW Recognized for Early Childhood Education Degree Programs**

[Study.com](#) and [Learn.org](#) ranked UMW's Early Childhood Education degree programs as some of the best in the nation.

Learn.org recognized UMW for its online Early Childhood Education program, ranking it #9 on a national list of 35 universities. Learn.org considered the kind of degrees offered, program cost, flexibility and completion time. UMW was the only Montana university to be featured.

Study.com's list featured the “Best Early Childhood Education Programs for 2020,” whether it be traditional on-campus degrees or online degrees. Study.com looked at information like programs offered, extracurricular activities available and data from the U.S. Department of Education. Montana Western was ranked #13 nationwide out of 50 colleges and was the only Montana university to be featured.

- **Night of Stars Scholarships Awarded to UMW Students**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 9th Annual Night of Stars Education Hall of Fame event, held each spring at UMW, was postponed until the following year. Event sponsor Stockman Bank, even with the postponement of the event, committed to provide both their annual “Take Stock in Education” scholarship and “Stock your Classroom” award.

The \$750 “Take Stock in Education” scholarship was awarded to Todd Nordahl for the 2020-21 academic year. Nordahl is a senior majoring in Elementary Education. Gary Stevenson received the \$250 “Stock your Classroom” award. Stevenson graduated in 2020 with a degree in Business and Computer Applications Education.

- **Montana Western Business Professors Collaborate on New Publication**

UMW Professor Christian Gilde and Associate Professor Kurt Steadman recently collaborated on a new publication titled “The Demallification of a Nation: The Death of American Shopping Malls.” Gilde and Steadman, along with former UMW Professor Fredrick Chilson, were the main authors of the publication with contributions by UMW alumna Baleigh A. Doyle and other authors.

“The Death of American Shopping Malls” details how malls in the United States are changing as we know it. The book dives deeper into the state of the American shopping mall with chapters on the history of shopping malls, economics, real-estate and how malls can adapt to meet the needs of today’s consumers.

- **UMW Ranked Among Best Value Schools in Montana**

UMW was ranked as one of the best value schools in Montana by BestValueSchools.org.

The list features the top-ranked colleges and universities from Montana. Ranking factors focused on the number of online programs the university offers, graduation rate, tuition costs and overall quality of programs based on student feedback.

The University of Montana Western offers a Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education online, as well as two online associate degrees and five online certificate programs. UMW has a tuition cost of \$4,523 per year for 2020-2021 resident students, making it the most affordable four-year university in the state of Montana.

- **UMW Student Kori Mooney Shares Undergraduate Research**

Mooney was scheduled to present her report, titled “Isolating In-situ Carbonate in Lake Sediment Cores to Improve Climate Interpretations: A Method Development Project,” at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research this spring before it was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The goal of Mooney's project was to isolate authigenic (in-situ) carbonate found in lake sediment from detrital carbonate to be able to reconstruct historical climate trends.

Mooney received assistance from Montana Western professor, Dr. Spruce Schoenemann, who also helped her apply for the "Award for Research in Engineering and Science" grant from the Montana Space Grant Consortium in December 2018 to pursue her interest in climate research.

- **UMW Partners with MT Tech and Carroll College to Can-COVID**

Jason DeShaw and the Realize Hope Organization announced the launch of the Can-COVID campaign, a digital fundraising platform focused on raising funds in support of the Montana Food Bank Network, as well as student scholarships and assistance.

As part of a collegiate campaign, the Montana Tech Foundation, the University of Montana Western Foundation and Carroll College have entered into a friendly competition to Can-COVID. The competition will raise funds for the Montana Food Bank Network and students whose education was impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak. Visit <https://cancovid.us> to donate and for more information.