

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

BOZEMAN | BILLINGS | NORTHERN | GREAT FALLS COLLEGE

CAMPUS REPORT | Board of Regents Meeting | January 4-5, 2021



MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY BILLINGS

- **Stefani Hicswa selected as new chancellor of Montana State University Billings.** The hiring of Stefani Hicswa, Ph.D., as MSUB's new chancellor was approved by the Montana Board of Regents in November 2020. She most recently served as the president of Northwest College in Powell, Wyoming for seven years. Under her leadership, Northwest College achieved the highest completion rates in its history, completed significant capital projects, and launched comprehensive strategic visioning, enrollment management, and facilities master plans. She officially starts her new position on January 11, 2021.
- **Grace Manchala becomes first MSUB OCHE Research Fellow.** MSUB graduate student Grace Manchala was selected as a Fall 2020 OCHE Research Fellowship Award recipient. Manchala is the first MSUB student selected for this award. The fellowship provides professional development opportunities to do valuable research under mentors. At the conclusion of the fellowship, she will present her research and connect with MUS professionals.
- **Office of International Studies awarded foreign language grant.** MSUB's Office of International Studies (OIS) was awarded a major three-year undergraduate international studies and foreign language grant from the International and Foreign Language Education program at the U.S. Dept. of Education. This grant will allow MSUB to develop new study abroad programs in East Asia, create a new Global Studies Certificate Program, and develop additional faculty expertise in international studies.
- **City College at MSUB received GEER grant funding.** City College at MSUB received funding from the Montana Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) grant to grow the Licensed Practical Nursing program. They received funds along with Great Falls College and Gallatin College to work on the OneMSU Workforce Consortium of Respiratory Therapy which will open new avenues for students to enroll in high-demand health care programs. Additional grant funding was awarded to City College together with Missoula College, Gallatin College, and Great Falls College, to create a statewide certificate of technical skills for construction technology.
- **MSUB volleyball team gives back.** MSUB's volleyball team participated in a service project to freshen up the grounds of Yellowstone Public Radio (YPR), while following state-mandated health and safety guidelines. The project lasted three hours as they pulled weeds, cleared vines, raked leaves, and trimmed trees in an effort to maintain and spruce up the grounds before YPR's fall fund drive.
- **MSUB athletics winter sports update.** MSUB, the sole NCAA Division II institution in Montana and member of the Great Northwest Athletic Conference (GNAC), announced that they will not compete in a conference schedule of men's and women's basketball during the 2020-21 season due to concerns surrounding the coronavirus pandemic. Six of the ten conference schools announced they would not be competing. MSUB fall sports which include men's and women's soccer, men's and women's cross country, and women's volleyball, will also not participate in a conference or championship schedule. Currently, MSUB spring sports which include baseball, softball, men's and women's track and field, women's triathlon, and men's and women's golf remain on track to compete and could begin competition schedules as early as February 2021.
- **Virtual volunteer platform provides connections to giving back.** MSUB's Center for Engagement encouraged students and employees to stay connected to the local community by volunteering virtually as social gatherings are limited due to COVID-19. The virtual volunteer program connects individuals to volunteer opportunities in their area of interest with numerous virtually based volunteer activities to choose from. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual volunteering has kept nonprofits up and running. The reach of MSUB's virtual volunteer program has expanded significantly and is part of statewide resources available for college campuses via Montana Campus Compact.
- **MSUB promotes democratic engagement among students and the community.** MSUB's democratic engagement plan strives to give students access to resources needed for voter registration, encourage decision-making based on non-partisan information, promote ballot completion, and encourage civic engagement. MSUB first-generation, nontraditional student Lisbeth Madriz spearheaded this initiative bringing with her a unique background of becoming a U.S. citizen at the age of 21, volunteering alongside the League of Women Voters, and making an appearance for the Equal Rights Amendment.
- **Geography professor, Dr. Susan Gilbertz published in Annals of the American Association of Geographers,** a bi-monthly peer-reviewed academic journal for geography, after seven years of research and effort in collaboration with Dr. Matthew Anderson, associate professor of geography from Eastern Washington University, and Dr. Jason Adkins, assistant professor of political science from MSUB. The research contributes to a larger discussion on planetary urbanization in Eastern Montana.