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To: Board of Regents

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From: Les Cook
Chancellor, Montana Technological University

RE: Campus Report for the September 15 & 16, 2021, Board of Regents' Meeting

- Dr. Leslie Webb has been hired as the Interim Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Dean of Students. Dr. Webb served the last five years as the vice president for student affairs at Boise State University. Leslie holds a Ph.D. in education from Colorado State University, a master's in college student personnel from Western Illinois University, and a bachelor's from Central Washington University.
- Graduates from the Business Department scored in the 97th percentile nationally on the Peregrine Business Administration Assessment Exam. This outbound exam was administered at 251 business schools nationally representing all business school accrediting bodies.
- Montana Tech faculty, in collaboration with UM and MSU-B were awarded an NSF grant for a project entitled, Collaborative Research: Mental Health Opportunities for Professional Empowerment in STEM (HOPES). Dr. Bev Hartline is the PI, and the Co-PIs are Dr. Scott Risser, Dr. Charie Faught, Dr. Sue Schrader, and Dr. Dario Prieto.
- Computer Science faculty Michele Van Dyne and Phillip Curtiss volunteered over the summer to write software and build hardware components for the Butte Silver Bow Vaccine Sweepstakes to randomly select de-identified recipients, audit and track sweepstakes data, and display award results. The ultimate goal of the program is to increase participation in the vaccination program in Butte Silver Bow.
- Montana Tech was named a best college for veterans by Military Times. Montana Tech has approximately 70 veterans and active duty military members attending.
- Dr. Amy Kuenzi, professor in Biological Sciences is co-PI on a 5-year, \$2.4M grant from the National Science Foundation's Ecology and Evolution of Infectious Diseases Program. Dr. Kuenzi is working with University of Montana colleagues Dr. Angela Luis (PI) and co-PI Dr. Bagamian from Bagamian Scientific Consulting LLC. The project seeks to understand mechanisms by which species diversity of competitors affects diseases of wildlife.
- Dr. Dawn Atkinson, Director of the Writing Program, has had a paper entitled "Reconciling Opposites to Reach Compromise during ELT Textbook Development" accepted for publication in the journal *Language Teaching Research*.
- Dr. John Kirtley, assistant professor in Chemistry, along with Daniel Goettlich (Ph.D. student, Materials Science), Abdul-Sommed Hadi (Ph.D. student, Materials Science) and Kelsi McEnaney (B.S. student, Chemistry), published, "Investigations of biochar as a tunable platform for aqueous malathion adsorption and decomposition. *MRS Advances*. (2021).

- Professors in the Electrical Engineering Department (Bryce Hill), Computer Science Department (Phil Curtiss), and Biological Sciences Department (Ryan Stapley) have teamed up with a faculty and grad student at Montana State University to develop a “Touchless Respiratory Monitor.” The monitor utilizes LiDAR and thermal cameras to measure the respiratory rate and breathe volume of subjects lying in a bed. The promising results have been published in the *2021 IEEE Aerospace Conference*.
- The Montana Tech National Institutes of Health Science Education Partnership Award (NIH SEPA) PHAGES project’s second summer research academy, directed by Dr. Marisa Pedulla, a professor in Biological Sciences, was delivered in June, 2021 with a focus on microbiological phage enumeration, bacterial culture, as well as bioinformatics analysis tools and the process of phage genome annotation. The 11 teacher participants developed curricular products and protocols for the CFWEP.org PHAGES website page, and had presentations on molecular biology, genome annotation, vaccine history and the COVID-19 vaccine rollout, as well as diversity and inclusion in science.