

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

UM TO HOLD LISTENING SESSION ON RENAMING ECK HALL

23 JUNE 2022

MISSOULA – The University of Montana will hold an on-campus listening session on Wednesday, July 7 to gather public comment on the proposal to rename the Liberal Arts Building after Dennis and Gretchen Eck.

The proposed name is the Dennis and Gretchen Eck Liberal Arts Building.

The listening session will take place from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. in the President's Room of Brantly Hall on July 7 – in accordance with Montana Board of Regents of Higher Education Policy 1004.1. Public comments may also be submitted electronically via email to news@umontana.edu or through the U.S. Mail to Brantly Hall 101, University of Montana, Missoula, MT 59812.

"It is with great enthusiasm that I offer full support for the proposal to rename UM's Liberal Arts Building," said Julie Baldwin, interim dean of UM's College of Humanities & Sciences. "The proposed name, the Dennis and Gretchen Eck Liberal Arts Building, is fitting, given the generous support Dennis and Gretchen have provided to the college over the past several years.

"The support of Dennis and Gretchen has enabled us to undertake a complete transformation of the teaching, learning and technology environment of one of UM's most heavily used buildings for academic instruction," Baldwin said. "Their generous support will impact students for generations to come."

Dennis and Gretchen are both native Montanans and alumni of UM. Dennis grew up in **Wolf Point** and Gretchen in **Butte**. After completing a degree in history and political science in 1967, Dennis launched a successful career in corporate retail, serving in executive leadership positions with Jewel Companies Inc., The Vons Companies, Coles Myer and Ulta Beauty Inc. Today, he is the principal of DKE Retail Studies.

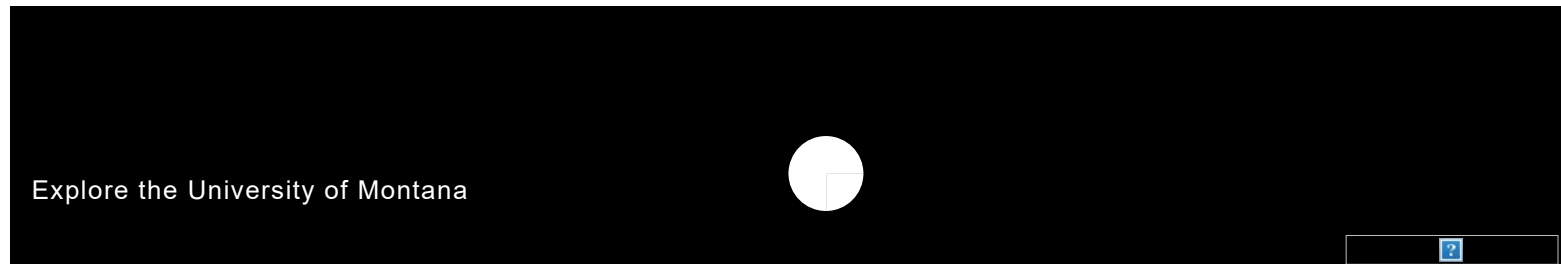
Dennis and Gretchen have contributed more than \$11 million to UM. Their gifts have funded renovation of the major portion of the Liberal Arts Building. They also funded the University's S.E.A. Change Initiative, which prepares students to be change-drivers and

next-generation leaders who champion gender equity, and established a scholarship fund for Native Americans.

UM's Liberal Arts Building is one of the highest frequented buildings on Montana's flagship campus. It was constructed in 1953 and has served as the primary home for UM's humanities offerings. Due to the contributions of the Eck Family, the building now includes 25 classrooms with innovative teaching technology, a 120-seat auditorium, a new central building entrance on the famed Oval, three student and faculty engagement hubs, several ADA accessible restrooms, a new academic advising center and significant upgrades to the building's sprinkler, electric, HVAC and internet infrastructure.

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