

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

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CAMPUS REPORT | Board of Regents Meeting | July 14-15, 2022



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Great Falls College [graduated](#) 250 students on May 7, including 40 who received multiple degrees, 43 who graduated with high honors (3.5-3.749 GPA) and 60 with highest honors (at least a 3.75), 60 veterans, their spouses or dependents, 12 who completed their certificate or degree before graduating high school, and 16 received their Eagle Feather to honor their American Indian heritage. A [livestream](#) was and is available. 2022 dental hygiene graduate Hannah Johnson gave the student address, and Quincy Balius, who graduated from Great Falls College while in high school and just completed her master's degree at Montana State, was the keynote speaker. There are [photo galleries](#) from the commencement ceremony and Eagle Feather Ceremony.

A video series highlighted the successes of our graduates. [Brian Tucker](#), who kicked addiction and admitted he figured he would fail when enrolling in classes, graduated with his associate degree in welding. He took the first year of welding and got a certificate in 2019-20, then got a certificate in industrial technology in 2020-21 and finished his welding degree this year. Even more remarkably, he was teaching classes in industrial technology this past year. [Jaynee Leigland](#), physical therapist assistant, admitted she doesn't enjoy school and was hesitant coming back to the classroom more than a decade after high school. She said she found a family. [Stormi Roulon](#) came to Great Falls College looking to move from a J-O-B to a career and found one with dental assisting. [Alger Swingley](#) told his story of failing out of the paramedic program because his math skills were rusty after more than 40 years not using them. When he tried school again, he worked so hard he was named the college's math student of the year and then the paramedic student of the year.

Great Falls College is a finalist for [The Million Dollar Community College Challenge](#) sponsored by Lumina Foundation. The college beat out hundreds of applicants to be named a finalist and has completed step two of the challenge. As one of 10 finalists, Great Falls College will receive a \$100,000 grant and technical assistance to support brand-building and strategic marketing efforts upon completing the required steps. The grand prize winner will receive the \$1 million prize. "We hear frequently that Great Falls College is the best-kept secret in the community," said Dr. Stephanie Erdmann, CEO/dean of Great Falls College. "It's intended as a compliment, but we also have taken it as a challenge to raise our profile, and this grant will be a big help. We are so appreciative of Lumina and The Million Dollar Community College Challenge."

Great Falls College [celebrated](#) an incredible first year offering certified nursing assistant courses and other health care certifications with a ceremony on campus. 52 people completed the course in the last year. The program has a 100 percent completion with 94 percent passing their required exams for licensure on the first try. The program has helped 12 businesses in five communities. Classes are offered each month. "Our goal was to meet the increasing need for highly skilled healthcare workers, which has grown considerably during the pandemic, said Tammie Hickey, director of Lifelong Learning at Great Falls College. "These short-term certifications are the foundation of being successful in a variety of healthcare careers."

[Hickey](#) was awarded Great Falls Pre-Release Center's 2022 Law Day Award for the work she and her team do offering re-entry services to people in the Great Falls community.

Great Falls College held a [ceremony](#) and luncheon to honor its students of the year in each academic department and program.