



The University of Montana Western Campus Report

DATE: Wednesday, October 19, 2022

TO: Board of Regents

FROM: Michael Reid, Chancellor

RE: Campus Report for the November Board of Regents' Meeting

- **Montana Western Ranked Among Best Colleges by U.S. News & World Report**

The University of Montana Western has been ranked #3 in Top Public Schools, #4 in Best Colleges for Veterans, #8 in Best Regional Colleges, #8 in Best Value Schools, and #36 in Top Performers on Social Mobility in the Western region by U.S. News & World Report in their 2022-23 rankings.

The rankings evaluate more than 1450 colleges and universities on up to 17 measures of academic quality. The Western region is comprised of 15 states. U.S. News calculates each ranking based on a specific methodology, using factors including overall graduation rates, academic quality, Pell grant graduation rates and social mobility, programs for full and part-time veterans, financial support, and academic resources for faculty.

- **UMW Named “Hidden Gem College” Three Years in a Row**

The University of Montana Western has been selected as a 2023 Hidden Gem College in a recent announcement by College Raptor, a leading college planning platform. College Raptor is a website designed to help students, parents, counselors, and colleges resolve significant challenges in college planning.

This selection recognizes UMW as one of the best colleges in the country, based on a combination of factors, including retention rates, graduation rates, student-to-faculty ratio, endowment per student, selectivity, and other key metrics as reported via the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) for the most recently available enrollment year.

- **2022-23 Montana Western Bulldog Ambassadors Announced**

The Montana Western Bulldog Ambassador Program supports the Admissions and Communications Offices with promotional efforts and recruitment each academic year. Following a selection process in which students are interviewed and submit application materials, Bulldog Ambassadors embody what it means to be a student leader and advocate for Montana Western by providing engaging ideas for social media campaigns that share the impact of Experience One, capturing photos of student life, and leading campus tours.

The Montana Western Foundation provides \$1,000 scholarships to each Ambassador for the academic year. The students selected to be ambassadors this year are Shae Anderson, Abigail Eathorne, Kelsey Goddard, Raina Mortenson, and Loran Murphy.

- **University of Montana Western Offers New Pathway to River-Based Careers**

The River Management Society (RMS) recently announced a partnership with the University of Montana Western benefiting students who are passionate about river science, recreation, and conservation. UMW now offers the River Studies and Leadership Certificate (RSLC) to students, bringing them one step closer to landing their dream river careers.

The RSLC is a natural complement to the Environmental Sciences program at UMW, where students learn how water moves and is distributed, gain field experience surveying and sampling rivers, engage in local water policy and management issues, and practice communicating water science with public audiences. Students participating in the RSLC program will receive a free one-year membership to RMS.

- **Montana Western Fine Arts Gallery Hosts Artist David Rathman**

The University of Montana Western hosted a reception and artist talk on September 30, 2022, in the Fine Arts Gallery located in historic Main Hall.

David Rathman, born in 1958 in Choteau, Montana, is known for his delicately rendered paintings of stereotypically male motifs from American history and contemporary culture. The reception and gallery talk are free for all to attend. Rathman's exhibition has been open for viewing since September 30 and will continue through November 18. Gallery hours are Monday-Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

- **UMW Foundation Announces Scholarship Honoring Ed and Eileene Armstrong**

Montana Western alumnus, Ed Armstrong, passed away in April of this year following the passing of his beloved wife, Eileene, in 2020. His son and daughter-in-law, Scott and Sarah Armstrong, recently approached the UMW Foundation about establishing a scholarship to honor Ed and Eileene and their commitment to education. The first scholarship will be awarded for the 2022-23 academic year.

"Ed and Eileene embodied a spirit of giving to their community. They worked hard to make a difference in the lives of their students and their community and this scholarship will be

awarded to a Montana graduate who possesses those same qualities. We are grateful for the opportunity to honor two of Beaverhead County's most loyal and dedicated educators," said UMW Foundation Director, Roxanne Engellant.

- **UMW Homecoming Activities, Alumni Weekend, and Hall of Fame**

The University of Montana Western held its Homecoming events September 26-October 1, 2022. The week of activities was an exciting opportunity for alumni, friends, students, faculty, staff, and community members to gather and enjoy a series of events hosted by Montana Western Alumni and Friends, Bulldog Athletics, the Associated Students of the University of Montana Western, and the Bulldog Life Office.

Events held included the Bulldog Athletics Hall of Fame Ceremony which featured this year's alumni inductees: Montana Western Professor, Dr. Janelle Handlos, 2001-06 Head Football Coach Tommy Lee, 1993-1997 linebacker Rob Hankins, 2005-07 Women's Basketball All-American Becky Kurtz (O'Neil), and 2002-04 defensive end, Nick Rewerts.

- **"God's Country" Feature Film to Release Nationwide**

With scenes filmed at the University of Montana Western, "God's Country" was released in September across 500+ theaters nationwide. Set in western Montana, the film tells the story of a grieving college professor who confronts two trespassing hunters on her property. From there, an escalating battle of wills transpires with catastrophic consequences. The movie premiered at the 2022 Sundance Film Festival and was filmed in Montana, predominately in the Livingston area. "God's Country" premiered in Dillon on September 16 at Big Sky Cinemas.

- **Montana Western Announces 2022-23 Bank of Commerce Performing Arts Series**

The 20th Annual "10 Minute Play Festival" opened the Bank of Commerce Performing Arts Series October 6-10 in Montana Western's Small Auditorium. This popular event shines a spotlight on students, faculty, staff, and community members and featured a variety of exciting and emotional performances. This year's production was facilitated by Daniel Chapman, UMW's Associate Professor of Theatre and Technical Director.

The Bank of Commerce Performing Arts Series provides exceptional, exciting, and thought-provoking theatre work to the UMW and Dillon community. It is their mission to provide students and youth with a professional space to express themselves, explore the theatre arts, and bring laughter and excitement to their lives. UMW's Theatre program also launched a new platform for purchasing tickets for the series online for the first time this fall.

- **Men's and Women's Rodeo Teams Finish Strong at Home Rodeo**

The University of Montana Western Rodeo Team ended the fall season at the Montana Western Home Rodeo on October 1st, 2022. Numerous UMW student-athletes on the team hold places in the regional rankings in their respective events. The men's rodeo team is currently at the top of the NIRA Big Sky Region and the women's team is ranked third. The Bulldog rodeo team will be preparing for the second half of the season that begins the weekend of April 13-16 at the Montana State University Rodeo in Bozeman, Montana.