

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

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Great Falls College's [enrollment](#) rose for the third straight semester, with 1,322 students taking classes this semester. The total represents an increase of 11 percent over last year's fall semester when 1,192 students were enrolled in classes. The 1,322 students equates to 806 full-time equivalent students, which is an increase of 13 percent as 715.1 FTE were in school at Great Falls College last fall semester. Those numbers only tell part of Great Falls College's impact on the community as Great Falls College's Continuing Education and Training department helped another 1,506 students gain certifications in health care, commercial driver's licenses as well as pursue other classes and trainings. The college's partnership with Great Falls Public Schools' Career and College Readiness Center on the Great Falls College campus saw another 568 people go through the doors last year.

About 2,500 eighth- and 10th-grade students from around northcentral Montana explored career options on the campuses of Great Falls College and the University of Providence on Sept. 27 as part of the second annual [Worlds of Work](#). The event, put on by United Way of Cascade County and the Great Falls Area Chamber of Commerce as part of Central Montana Works, had 74 industry partners showcasing careers in everything from nursing to finance to military and police work with helicopters, backhoes, ambulances and everything in between on the two campuses. "It helps us decide and introduces us to careers," said Mary Dinigsao, an eighth-grader at East Middle School in Great Falls.

Great Falls College's efforts to start a veterinary technician program for fall semester 2024 continue to gain traction as the Montana Board of Veterinary Medicine supported the program concept, the college's curriculum committee approved 31 courses, Executive Council approved posting a program director job and the curriculum proposal documents have been submitted to the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education. The program would include three credentials: a one-semester certificate in technical studies, a one-year certificate in applied science and a two-year associate of applied science. Students will take the classwork online and then work with local veterinarians to do their hands-on clinicals and laboratory work. "This opportunity allows the student to stay in their hometown and complete the degree without ever having to leave home and uproot all of the responsibilities that they have," said Julie Barnwell, health sciences division director.

Great Falls College celebrated American Indian Heritage Day on Sept. 29 with a tipi raising as part of a collaboration between the Native American Enrichment Center and the Office of Student Engagement. The tipi will be up through the International Traditional Game Society's Gathering of Families in Great Falls Oct. 8-14. Great Falls College is pleased to host some of the events as part of the celebration. Weather dependent, the tipi will remain up through November for Native American Heritage Month. The college saw a small increase in Native American enrollment, going from 9.7 percent of students who self-identified as American Indian to 10.4 percent this year.

Great Falls College held a student appreciation burger burn for its students in September. The college served approximately 300 students, who met with campus and community leaders who came to serve them. The college also gave out 500 River Otter T-shirts as appreciation for the students earlier in the semester.

The first cohort of the college's accelerated [structural welding program](#) completed with eight students finishing the program. The second and third cohorts already are full as the unique partnership between the Montana Department of Labor and Industry, Great Falls College, ADF International, Allied Steel and Montana Vocational Rehab equips individuals with essential skills and qualifications to build careers in the welding industry. Great Falls College's first and second years of its welding program also are full as the need for welders in the region is great.