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UM to host AIDS quilt Homecoming weekend

For the first time in 12 years, a sizeable section of the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt will travel back to the Treasure State for a display at The University of Montana Adams Center Sept. 18-21.

Seventy-five sections memorializing some 450 individuals who have died of AIDS-related illnesses will be showcased in the largest exhibit of the quilt ever in Montana. All known panels honoring those from Montana who have died of AIDS, as well as others from around the nation, will be on view.

Opening ceremonies will kick off the event at 5 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 18. The public display will continue through Homecoming weekend, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 19-21.

"For the state of Montana it is truly such a gift to be able to see the quilt on such a large scale, especially living in a rural area where oftentimes we fail to grasp

the effect or impact HIV or AIDS has on our community," said Keri McWilliams, Missoula AIDS Council executive director. "It's not until you're able to see a display of this size and see all the lives that were lost that you begin to realize how large this epidemic is."

UM has teamed with the Missoula AIDS Council to raise \$30,000 to help people living with HIV and AIDS, as well as support prevention and educational efforts in the community.

"A quilt is a nonthreatening, effective way to educate and raise awareness about HIV and AIDS," said Rita Munzenrider, director of University Relations and co-chair with McWilliams of the AIDS Quilt Committee.

"Not only do we have the opportunity to honor those lives that were lost, but we have the chance to educate the community on how far we have come

— Continued next page

Campus hires dean

Comer to lead College of Arts and Sciences

Christopher Comer, a scientist whose research may lead to brain-operated prosthetic devices and biologically based robots, will be the next dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at UM.

Comer is a professor of biological sciences, neuroscience and bioengineering at the University of Illinois at Chicago. He was one of four dean candidates brought to Missoula for interviews in April. He will start his new duties at UM in January 2009.

In his new role, Comer will oversee 23 departments and programs, 380 faculty members, 60 staff members and nearly 7,000 students.

He will replace Gerald Fetz, who has served as UM's College of Arts and

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First Kimmitt intern begins duties in D.C.

Lucas Hamilton, a UM junior majoring in political science and print journalism, recently was selected as the first J. Stanley Kimmitt Public Service Internship recipient.

Hamilton, who also is a member of UM's Davidson Honors College, is working in Washington, D.C., this summer as an intern for Montana Sen. Max Baucus on the Senate Finance Committee. He also will be enrolled in the Washington Center internship program, an opportunity that will involve him in a once-a-week class and access to scholarly guest speakers.

The Kimmitt internship also carries a \$1,500 stipend. The Havre native began his 10-week internship in May.

Hamilton, who said he heard about the internship through DHC Dean James McKusick, as well as through his mom,



Lucas Hamilton, left, was selected to serve as UM's first J. Stanley Kimmitt Public Service Intern. Kimmitt's five children, including Robert Kimmitt, right, created the internship to honor their father.

Lynn Hamilton, who serves on the Montana Board of Regents, said, "It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and I'm

honored to start the program off as the first intern."

The internship was established to honor Stan Kimmitt, former secretary of the U.S. Senate and aide to Montana's late U.S. Sen. Mike Mansfield. The internship was established by Kimmitt's five children — Robert Kimmitt, Mark Kimmitt, Jay Kimmitt, Mary Laxton and Judy Rainey — last fall during a visit to UM.

In future semesters, the Kimmitt internship will rotate among all members of the Montana congressional delegation.

Hamilton is the son of Lynn and Miles Hamilton of Havre. He also is a member of UM's College Democrats, and serves on the MontPIRG Board of Directors, as well as a peer adviser.

Sciences dean since July 2003. Fetz will complete his tenure as dean June 30 but will continue working at UM on a post-retirement contract. CAS employees will fulfill the dean's duties until Comer arrives early next year.

"We are delighted to attract Dr. Comer as the next dean of the College of Arts and Sciences," UM Provost Royce Engstrom said. "He has been an exceptional faculty member and is a tremendous scholar, so he will be able to lead by example."

From 2001 to 2007, Comer served as assistant dean, senior associate dean and dean of the University of Illinois at Chicago's College of Liberal Arts & Sciences. He also directed UIC's Laboratory of Integrative Neuroscience.

Comer studies sensorimotor integration — how sensory information in the brain is translated into commands for appropriate behavioral responses. He uses insects and naturally blind rodents called mole-rats in his research.

He has taught a variety of subjects in the life sciences, principally in the areas of physiology, animal behavior and neuroscience. During the summers he leads a program in Ireland that examines human cognition from the joint perspectives of the humanities — such as literature and visual arts — and neuroscience. 🐾

UM lands \$980,000 grant to commercialize water sensor

Mike DeGrandpre, a UM chemistry professor and oceanographer, has been awarded a grant to help make a submersible water sensor he developed commercially viable.

The \$980,000 grant comes from the National Oceanographic Partnership Program, a collaboration of 15 federal agencies that provides leadership and coordination of national oceanographic research and education initiatives. Grant co-sponsors are the National Science Foundation, NASA and the Office of Naval Research.

The sensor is called a Submersible Autonomous Moored Instrument for pH, or SAMI-pH. The instrument measures the pH of seawater or freshwater. It is an automated analyzer that can be placed on buoys for up to one year. Collected data is logged into an internal memory chip to be downloaded later.

"This grant will facilitate commercialization by providing support for improvements in the mechanical design and software in order to make the instrument more reliable and user-friendly," DeGrandpre said.

He said the sensors are of great interest because of increasing concerns regarding ocean acidification, in which absorption

of carbon dioxide released by fossil fuel consumption is decreasing the ocean pH. This is predicted to negatively impact many plant and animal species. Coral reefs and shellfish, for example, may start to dissolve, disrupting ocean food chains and impacting economies that depend on these marine species.

DeGrandpre first began working on sensor technology for marine research from 1990 to 1993 during his postdoctoral work. Since joining UM in 1996, he has commercialized a CO2 sensor (SAMI-CO2) which is in use by researchers around the globe. The SAMI-pH is a more recent invention that also is likely to have a significant international market.

In 1999, he founded UM spin-off company Sunburst Sensors, now co-owned with mechanical engineer Jim Beck, to manufacture and market the SAMI-CO2. Sunburst Sensors is located across the Clark Fork River from campus in the Montana Technology Enterprise Center, Missoula's business incubator.

"This is an exciting opportunity to commercialize a sensor while also providing a technology that can help researchers understand how CO2 is impacting the environment," DeGrandpre said. 🐾

AIDS Quilt — continued

in making progress," McWilliams said. "The epidemic is very different than it was in the early '80s when many lives were lost. It's still a devastating disease, but we've made so much progress in the treatment that people are living longer. I think it's important for the community to understand how far we've come and realize that it's still an issue. There are 40,000 new infections every year in the United States."

She continues, "We've been receiving phone calls from around the state from those in small communities and on reservations who are so excited to come and honor the memory and see the panel they made for those who have been lost. It means so much to us that the University is able to support us in this project."

The University will host this event as a fundraiser for the Missoula AIDS Council and is seeking community financial sponsorship. Munzenrider said.

In addition to financial contributions,

there is a need for many volunteers to contribute to the event by helping to unfold the quilt panels, read names and serve as quilt monitors. "Truly we need a community response to make this event," McWilliams said. "It won't be possible without the support of the community because there is such a need for volunteers."

Individuals can sign up to volunteer at the event by e-mailing quilt.volunteers@yahoo.com.

Those with family members who have a quilt panel may contact the Missoula AIDS Council at 406-543-4770 to request that specific panel be displayed. The deadline is Aug. 1.

More than 23 years ago, San Francisco gay rights activist Cleve Jones conceived the quilt. While planning a 1985 candlelight march to memorialize assassination victims San Francisco Supervisor Harvey Milk and Mayor George Moscone, Jones learned that more than 1,000 San Francisco residents had lost their

lives to the disease. He then asked each individual marching to write the names of friends and loved ones who had passed away from AIDS on placards. At the end of the march, the placards were attached to the walls of the San Francisco federal building, appearing like a patchwork quilt. Plans for a larger quilt memorial were made, and in 1987 the NAMES Project Foundation, which maintains and displays the quilt, was established.

In October of that year, the quilt was displayed for the first time on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. More than a half-million people came to view the 1,920-panel display. It was displayed four more times in its entirety on the Mall. The last time was in 1996.

Today more than 44,000 individual 3-by-6-foot panels commemorating the lives of individuals who died from AIDS-related illnesses have been sewn together by friends, lovers and family members of the victims. It is the largest community art project in the world. 🐾

Athletes Excel—Student-athletes at UM achieved their highest-ever grade-point averages both for the 2008 spring semester and cumulatively. UM's 271 student-athletes had an average GPA of 3.08 for the 2008 spring semester. The student-athletes' success in the classroom helped raise the average cumulative GPA to 3.05. Nine of Montana's 12 athletic teams posted spring GPAs of at least 3.00, with six squads finishing with GPAs of 3.20 or better. Montana had 168 student-athletes finish the term with a GPA of at least 3.00, had 52 on the Dean's List and saw 16 post perfect 4.00 semesters.



four original structures on campus. Architects Mike Gilbert and UM's Jameel Chaudhry designed the new addition to make the building comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The addition includes rest rooms, office space and elevators. The challenge was creating a modern addition while still respecting the historic architecture. The end result, completed in 2007, is what Gibson biographer and UM Professor Rafael Chacón described as "homage to Gibson."

Documentary Top In Nation—A documentary by UM students has been named the best student-produced long-form program in the nation by the Society of Professional Journalists. The radio-television students won the SPJ Mark of Excellence Award for "Beyond the Myths: Growing Up in Montana." The 2007 program profiles the lives of six teenagers across the state as they negotiate their teen years, battling issues such as racism, motherhood and mental health. It was produced by 17 seniors in a class taught by Assistant Professor Denise Dowling and Adjunct Professor Gita Saedi Kiely. SPJ will honor the UM students for their award-winning program at a September national convention in Atlanta.

Up And Coming Leaders—UM has awarded Presidential Leadership Scholarships to 16 exceptional incoming UM freshmen. The scholarships recognize outstanding talent, academic performance, leadership and contribution to the community. Montana's crop of 2008 Presidential Leadership Scholars are Eric Dunham and Charles Smillie, Billings; Kiandra Rajala, Clinton; KariLynn Dowling, Corvallis; Allyson Carroll, Ekalaka; Lucas Minnick, Havre; Jenny Gessaman, Highwood; Rebecca Pershouse and Kila Walser, Missoula; and Lindsey Appell, Roundup. Six Presidential Leadership Scholars will come to UM from other states and nations. They are Rebecca Temple of Homer, Alaska; Yuanyuan Bao of Shanghai, China; Michael Cole of Colorado Springs, Colo.; Kelsey Olson of Parker, Colo.; Erika Foster of Portland, Ore.; and Jayme Fraser of Cody, Wyo.

Grant Guru—Kari Harris, an associate professor in the School of Public and Community Health Sciences at UM, has accepted an invitation to serve with the National Institutes of Health Center for Scientific Review, which evaluates grant applications from across the nation for scientific merit. She will work in the Risk, Prevention and Intervention for Addictions Study Section. Her term will run from this July to June 30, 2012. In her own research, Harris studies smoking-related issues among college students. New grants have extended this research to focus on Montana health concerns.

High Marks—At UM, 2,744 students made the spring 2008 semester Dean's List. To make the list, a student must earn at least a 3.5 (B+) grade-point average and receive grades of A or B in at least nine credits. Students are not eligible if they earn grades of C, D, F, NP or NCR. Of those students on the list, 630 earned a 4.0 GPA (straight A).

Authentic Architecture—An addition to UM's Mathematics Building recently received a 2008 Historic Preservation Award from the Missoula Historic Preservation Commission. The math building, designed by famed Missoula architect A.J. Gibson, was originally the Women's Hall when it was constructed in 1903 as one of the

Athletic Training Awareness—Ten UM athletic training students were recognized this month with the Best Student Effort Award for the National Athletic Trainers' Association public relations contest that was held in March. UM Athletic Training Education Program Director Scott Richter accepted the award at the NATA annual convention in St. Louis in June on behalf of the students. During March, the students promoted the athletic training profession and the UM program on campus and in the Missoula community. Projects included educating high school students about the profession, holding trivia raffles, decorating bulletin boards and producing public service announcements. Recipients of the Best Student Effort Award are Jessica Raden, Jordyn Kanning, Klare Matthew, Michelle Gardner, JesiAnn Sessions, Nick Efta, Junji Nagashima, Yuki Tashiro, Maddy Wiley and Rachel School.

Smithsonian Bestows Title—George Stanley, a paleontologist and geosciences professor at UM, has earned a prestigious new title — research associate — from the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. The honorary appointment was made in recognition of his professional status in the scientific community. Stanley joins 234 other scientists around the globe who have earned the recognition. Individuals worldwide with outstanding publications and achievements are selected by the Smithsonian for the honor. The appointment is for three years, and during that time he is invited for active association and research collaboration with the Smithsonian, the world's largest museum complex and research organization. The appointment will allow him to work whenever he wishes at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C., as well as at its network of research facilities around the world. Stanley is a paleontologist specializing in the global evolution of coral reefs, the paleobiology of ancient life and the reconstruction of paleogeography using plate tectonics. He worked as a geologist at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C., before joining the UM faculty in 1982. He also directs UM's Paleontology Center.

Culinary Classes—UM's College of Technology will hold culinary courses this summer that are open to the public. Courses are available as noncredit, for COT credit or for Office of Public Instruction Continuing Education credits. Those who are interested in attending the courses are encouraged to register soon, as space is limited. To register or for more information, call 406-243-7812, e-mail mary.opitz@mso.umt.edu or go to the COT Outreach Office at 909 South Ave. W. in Missoula. Baking and Pastry Tips for Teachers will be held from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday-Friday, July 28-Aug. 1. The course, taught by chefs Andrea Paskert and Mark Johannes, is designed for family and consumer science teachers, but also is open to the public. OPI credits are available. ☺

UM dean named liaison of the year

The Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars has selected James McKusick, dean of UM's Davidson Honors College, to receive its 2008 Liaison of the Year Award.

The center is an independent, nonprofit organization that serves colleges and universities in the United States and other countries by providing selected students

challenging opportunities to work and learn in Washington, D.C., for academic credit.

The award recognizes McKusick's exceptional dedication and support of the Washington Center on the UM campus, where he has worked to bring internship and seminar opportunities to students and to encourage participation.

McKusick will receive the award during

the center's annual Academic Affairs Awards Luncheon Sept. 22 at the National Press Club.

Currently, three UM students are participating in summer internships through the Washington Center program, and three more students will attend national political convention seminars that the center will offer in Minneapolis and Denver. ☞

Holiday—July 4. Independence Day. UM office closed; no classes.

Board of Regents Meeting—July 8. Montana State University—Great Falls. Meeting schedule: <http://www.mus.edu/board/meetings/meetingschedule.asp>.

Sports Performance Enhancement and Injury Prevention Camp—begins July 8. High school (14-18 yrs.), 8:30-9:30 a.m. Middle School (11-14 yrs.), 10-11 a.m. Cost: \$60 for the three-week session. Instructor: Brenda Mahlum, director, UM Physical Therapy Clinic. Information: 406-243-4006, brenda.mahlum@umontana.edu.

Montana Volleyball Camps—July 9-12. Position Enhancement Camp for grades 10-12. Total Player Camp for grades 8-9. Head Start Camp for grades 6-7. Information: <http://www.montanagrizzlies.com/content/camps/sportscamps.htm>.

UM Orientation—July 9-11; Aug. 20-22. Information: http://admissions.umt.edu/orientation_summer.html; Karissa Drye, 406-243-2332, 800-462-8636, karissa.drye@mso.umt.edu.

College of Technology Orientation—July 10. Students who need to take the Montana University System Writing Assessment should check in at the COT Administration Building at 7 a.m. The exam begins promptly at 7:30 a.m. Others check in by 8:30 a.m. To RSVP call the COT Admissions Office, 406-243-7882 or 800-542-6882, or e-mail cotadmissions@umontana.edu.

Bitterroot River Floatin' Weed Pull—July 12. Join the Ravalli County Weed District for a whole day of pulling invasive plants from along the Bitterroot River. For transportation details: Lindsey at 406-777-5842, <http://prairiekeepers.dbs.umt.edu>.

Steve Earle In Concert—July 12. 8 p.m. University Theatre. Cost: \$32, reserved seating. Tickets: All GrizTix outlets, 406-243-4051, 888-MONTANA, <http://www.griztix.com>.

Griz Basketball Day Camp—July 14-18. for kindergarten through eighth grade. For information call Julie Tonkin or assistant Griz basketball coach Andy Hill at 406-243-5334 or e-mail tonkinja@mso.umt.edu or andy.hill@mso.umt.edu.

Words With Wings—July 14-18 and/or July 21-25. An intensive writing program for ages 8-14 presented by the Missoula Writing Collaborative. Cost: \$160 (five three-hour workshops) or \$300 (10 three-hour workshops). Information and to register: 406-549-3348.

Butterflies and Birds—July 19. 8-11 a.m. Montana Natural History Center Discovery Day. Join naturalist Charles Miller for a look at local butterflies and birds of the PEAS Farm. Cost: \$15;

UM Events

MNHC members \$10. OPI credits available. Information and to register: MNHC, 120 Hickory St., Missoula, or call 406-327-0405.

Lady Griz Day Camp—July 21-24. For grades K-8. Information: <http://www.montanagrizzlies.com/content/camps/sportscamps.htm>.

Seed Collecting—July 22. 7 p.m., Fort Missoula Native Prairie. Bryce Christiaens of Native Ideals Wildflower Seed Company, Arlee, will teach participants how to effectively and ethically collect seeds of many species. Information: 406-243-6642, marilyn.marler@umontana.edu, <http://prairiekeepers.dbs.umt.edu>.

Blue Mountain Observatory: Observing Nights—July 25, Aug. 1, Aug. 8. Blue Mountain Observatory. Free and open to the public. Observing begins about one hour after sunset. Events will be canceled if the sky is cloudy or thunderstorms threaten. Call 406-243-5179 for updates before going. Observatory location: <http://www.physics.umt.edu/BlueMountain/bluedir.html>. More information: <http://www.physics.umt.edu/BlueMountain>.

Beneficial Insects—July 26. Montana Natural History Center Discovery Day. Join naturalist Byron Weber for an up close look at the world of insects. Time TBA. Cost: \$15; MNHC members \$10. OPI credits available. Information and to register: 406-327-0405.

Montana Soccer Camp—July 27-31. Girls Residential Team College ID/Development Camp. Information: <http://www.montanagrizzlies.com/content/camps/sportscamps.htm>

Volunteer For Wilderness—July 31-Aug. 3. Explore and contribute to the conservation of Idaho's Gospel Hump Wilderness. Backcountry experience is helpful but not necessary. Dinners provided and transportation available from Missoula. Volunteers receive T-shirts and prizes. Information and to register: UM Wilderness Institute, 406-243-5361, wi@cfc.umt.edu, <http://www.cfc.umt.edu/wi>.

Martina McBride In Concert—July 31. 7:30 p.m., Adams Center Cost: \$59.50, \$49.50 and \$35.50. All seats reserved. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., show at 7:30 p.m. Tickets: all GrizTix outlets, 406-243-4051, 888-MONTANA, <http://www.griztix.com>.

Evening Bat Walk—Aug. 2. 9-10:30 p.m., Montana Natural History Center Discovery Day. Featuring Kristi DuBois, Missoula Fish, Wildlife and Parks native species coordinator. Cost: \$20; MNHC members \$15. Family rates available. OPI credits available. Information and to register, 406-327-0405, ☞



The University of
Montana

Main Hall to Main Street is published by University Relations at The University of Montana. Send questions or suggestions to Jennifer Sauer, editor, 323 Brantly Hall, Missoula, MT 59812, or call 406-243-4878. Scott Bear Don't Walk, Brianne Burrowes, Brenda Day, Rita Munzenrider and Cary Shimek are contributing editors and writers. Todd Goodrich is the primary photographer. The newsletter is online at <http://www.umt.edu/urelations/mainhall>.