MONTANA
THE MAGAZINE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

FALL 2021

ARE WE OUT OF THE WOODS?
UM RESPONDS TO FIRE AND COVID-19
HORSING AROUND
A U.S. Forest Service mule pack train hoofed it across campus in March to give students a taste of just one unique class at UM this summer. UM’s Department of Political Science offered Wilderness Policy and Packing, an intensive three-week course coupled with a five-day pack trip into Montana’s renowned Bob Marshall Wilderness. Students examined firsthand the theory and practice of wilderness policy, wrote and presented a policy paper on wilderness issues and learned the basics of no-trace camping, trail building and horse and mule packing.

ON THE COVER: Like the rest of the nation, UM would like to leave pandemics and smoky skies in the rearview mirror. Alas, for the greater part of the summer, the West was hazy and COVID-19 can’t take a clue. Despite it all, our modern trials present opportunities to solve today’s biggest challenges from the unique expertise at Montana’s flagship institution. Like Patrick Frasier, a Montana native and W.A. Franke College of Forestry and Conservation student, who volunteered to participate on a prescribed wildfire burn on UM’s Bandy Ranch this April. Frasier then spent the summer fighting fire for the Helena Hotshots. This brave UM alumnus is one of the many next-generation Grizzlies who are on the frontlines of change, peering through the smolder to a better future.
DEAR UM FAMILY,

It is a time of renewal at UM, and the campus is returning to a familiar buzz of Griz spirit. And so I am pleased to share that our Homecoming theme celebrates “the Heart of a Grizzly.”

I am renewed by the opportunity to swing the doors of our campus wide open for a new generation of Grizzlies this fall, nearly two years after the pandemic made it so difficult for many to walk through the doors of higher education.

Restoring our traditional in-person events, fostering a lively campus, seeing smiles on the faces of new and old friends, cheering in unison at Griz games and learning alongside others in full lecture halls and more intimate classrooms are all at the heart of the UM experience. As our students trade in Zoom screens for face-to-face communication and learning, I am renewed by their dedicated investment in their futures. I’m thrilled to see how they will embrace this year to the fullest.

I know our faculty and staff are emerging into the academic year with new energy, too. Many spent the last year honing teaching practices on remote platforms and have returned with a deeper understanding of how to meet the needs of all students and prepare them to succeed in a world full of unknowns.

Our own campus is undergoing a physical renewal, as we break ground on a host of infrastructure projects that include a new state-of-the-art Forestry Building, improvements to the Ryman Walk, a new dining hall and updates to the beloved Knowles Hall. The developments will create new, lifelong memories for many generations of Grizzlies to treasure.

As we come together this year to recapture our unmatched vibrancy on campus, I ask you to renew your own commitment to UM. Because of your engagement, giving and support, we remained steady and focused on navigating the pandemic, only to have emerged stronger to deliver our cornerstone mission: serving as a world-class flagship institution for Montana and the world.

I hope you join us this year, ready to celebrate the Heart of a Grizzly as we look toward a wonderful year ahead.

UP WITH MONTANA,

@SethBodnar
DEAR READERS,

You may have noticed a lighter mailbox. The Montanan – which has been published for nearly 40 years – took a little break this year. Like many of you, we used the pandemic to thoughtfully examine our own resources and bandwidth as the world adjusts to normalcy. What we found is that dramatic increases across postage, publishing and printing are making life hard for just about everyone, but especially for those who work in magazines.

So, like good Grizzlies, we used the challenge to identify what we can do, instead of what we can’t. We landed on publishing the Montanan once a year (every September – just ahead of UM Homecoming) in a longer issue with more stories, pictures and news from your alma mater. During the rest of the year, we’ll publish the Montanan Monthly, a monthly email newsletter (not the same, we know) directly to your inbox. You can visit bit.ly/SubscribeMtn to sign up for either a print or email version, or both!

We don’t plan on publishing one issue annually forever, and intend to return to two issues a year soon. If there’s one quality Montanans have in common, it might just be a penchant for making things work with what you have, while you can.

What will change is less recycling for you, but the Montanan will keep providing the same rich stories about the University of Montana touching and transforming lives with all of you serving as our best examples.

We are deeply thankful for your readership and support.

IN THE SPIRIT OF THE GRIZ,

Jenny Lavey
Editor-In-Chief

READER HIGHLIGHT
MARY (FEDSON) FITANIDES, ROCKLAND, MAINE

FITANIDES HAD ONLY RECENTLY STARTED OIL PAINTING WHEN SHE SHARED A SPECIAL GIFT WITH US – HER VERY OWN RENDITION OF A REPLICA OF OUR FALL 2020 ISSUE COVER, “VOICES OF THE MOMENT.”

From Mary: I attended the University of Montana in 1961-63, when there were only a handful of Black students. I was pleased to see your last issue highlighting Black students and their experiences of racism in their lives. Racial justice is long overdue.

I have started oil painting and decided to copy the photo of Robby Beasley on the Montanan cover. I hope Robby and all of your Black students have happy and productive lives.

THE MONTANAN WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING DONORS FOR RECENTLY SUPPORTING THE MAGAZINE:

Carol Ann Jacobsen, Clancy  |  Jennifer and Tom O’Loughlin, Billings  |  Donald Archibald, Helena  |  Rebecca J Dhue, Alton, Illinois
Gayle Ottman, Billings  |  Robert Alley, Wichita, Kansas  |  Colleen Seed, Beaverton, Oregon  |  Vicki Wilhite, Palo Alto, California
Marie Jospeh, Maplewood, Minnesota  |  Max Yandt, Sunriver, Oregon
A SHOT IN THE ARM
UM’s own Ken Chatriand and his team of pharmacy students and staff are the reason for 19,000 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine.

FROM PARIS TO SHELBY: A LOVE STORY
A nationwide bestselling book has its roots in a UM alumna, Montana’s Hi-Line and a true story.

CLASSROOM COMMUNITY
UM alumnus and scholar Timothy San Pedro puts his UM training to work creating more inclusive classrooms.
Growing season is in full swing in western Montana and students are busy tending plants, learning farming techniques and earning academic credit as they grow thousands of pounds of food this summer at UM’s 10-acre FTAG Farm in the Rattlesnake Valley.

A big thank you to Montana Griz Football for assisting with M Trail improvements this morning by hauling 19 railroad ties to the various places along the trail for later installation. Go Griz!

NEED TO GRIZ-IFY YOUR ZOOM BACKGROUND?

Download your favorite UM-themed background at bit.ly/griscreen
WHERE’S YOUR GRIZ BEEN?

Michael Tucker is taking his Griz pride to new heights.

The ’87 UM alumnus found a passion for mountaineering only about four years ago after hiking Mount Sentinel – having never done so in the 40 years he’d been living in town.

He’s been bagging peaks ever since. Tucker and his wife and dogs turned the pandemic into an opportunity to “carantine” – where they piled in their car as often as they could and sought “the big peaks” (Lolo, Cherry, Scott, Ch-paa-qn and Trapper Peaks) in the Bitterroot Mountains – to escape the stress and confinement of COVID-19.

Having expanded his range, Tucker made the commitment to summit all the volcanoes in the northern Cascade Mountains: Mount Baker, Glacier Peak, Mount Rainier, Mount Adams and Mount Saint Helens.

At the top of each summit, he plants a Griz flag.

“I’m just so proud to be Griz, and I want to share that pride outside of our little community,” he says. “It has been a rough few years for everyone. I’m proud to fly that flag.”

Tucker carries another memento in his pocket to place at the top of each summit: a rock, broken into four fragments. At the summit, he puts each quarter of the rock back together. Each piece in this ritual represents his brother, sister, mother and father – who all died within a few years of each other not long before Tucker was called to the mountains.

“It was a lot to go through, and I just decided to start living life,” he says. “So, I decided to start with the mountain in town, Mount Sentinel.”

It was on that first hike on that mountain that Tucker accidentally stepped on the rock that naturally broke into four pieces. When pieced back together, the rock perfectly (and providentially) resembles a mountain.

“I put the rock back together on each summit as a way to honor them and to take their Griz legacy with me, too,” Tucker says.

“My family has long connections to UM, so it’s kind of sentimental climbing.”

Though his passion for summiting heights was born of immense loss, Tucker finds joy in the beauty and challenge that the West has to offer.

After all, he says, “life is way too short.”

You can follow Tucker’s ascents on Instagram at @outdoorsinspiring.

“I’m just so proud to be Griz, and I want to share that pride outside of our little community.”

Do you have a photo of yourself wearing Griz gear in a unique place? If so, send it and a brief description to themontanan@umontana.edu. Winners will see their photo published in the Montanan. To be considered, photos must be in focus with the UM or Griz logo clearly visible. Pictures not selected may be shared on UM social media.
95% of UM Accountancy students have jobs on graduation day.
That number may tick up even more, thanks to UM’s Master of Accountancy Program moving to an online platform, making it easier and more convenient for students to earn a UM accounting degree regardless of where they live.

94% of UM Law School 2020 graduates landed a job in the middle of a global pandemic.
The Alexander Blewett III School of Law’s class of 2020 were employed or seeking a post-graduate degree 10 months after graduation, and 89% were in full-time, long-term positions that require passing the bar.

3,135 fans follow UM President Seth Bodnar on Twitter.
Check out @SethBodnar on the blue bird to stay up-to-date on campus news, UM inside information, updates and more!

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2 graduates in UM’s very first public health Ph.D. program.
Maja Pedersen’s next step is a prestigious National Cancer Institute Fellowship at Stanford University to continue studying physical movement in older adults. Helen Russette’s last completed study, titled Greenspace Exposure and COVID-19 Mortality in the US: January-July, 2020, was recently accepted for publication in Environmental Research.

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UM UNDERGRADUATES MADE THE DEAN’S LIST OR PRESIDENT’S LIST FOR SPRING 2021 SEMESTER. That’s 38% of students who achieved a GPA of 3.5 or higher in a year where a global pandemic altered education – and life – as we know it.

NASA GRANT GEOSCIENCES PROFESSOR HILARY MARTENS RECEIVED TO INVESTIGATE THE STRUCTURE OF THE EARTH’S INTERIOR USING GPS OBSERVATIONS OF OCEAN TIDES. Last year, Martens received $1.4 million in funding from the National Science Foundation as part of a multidisciplinary team to track changes in the shape of the Earth from the storage and flow of water in mountain watersheds.

MONTANA BUSINESS OWNERS & MANAGERS WERE ASKED WHAT ATTRACTED THEM TO MONTANA to either start a business or move an existing business to the state. Surprise, surprise, nearly all said “quality of life.” UM’s Institute for Tourism and Recreation found that quality of life and public lands promote economic development.

UM’S RECENT NATIONAL RANKING FOR ASSISTING STUDENTS WITH AUTISM. A UM program called Mentoring, Organization and Social Support/All Inclusion on Campus (MOSSAIC) is designed to support those who are neurodiverse and looks to develop resources and community on campus.

2,550 UM UNDERGRADUATES MADE THE DEAN’S LIST OR PRESIDENT’S LIST FOR SPRING 2021 SEMESTER.

$430K NASA GRANT GEOSCIENCES PROFESSOR HILARY MARTENS RECEIVED TO INVESTIGATE THE STRUCTURE OF THE EARTH’S INTERIOR USING GPS OBSERVATIONS OF OCEAN TIDES.

500 MONTANA BUSINESS OWNERS & MANAGERS WERE ASKED WHAT ATTRACTED THEM TO MONTANA

128 YEARS OLD AND GOING STRONG. Campus celebrated UM’s birthday with cupcakes in the University Center. UM President Seth Bodnar called on the day to “affirm our commitment to provide Montanans with access to a flagship University that prioritizes academic quality, launches successful careers and provides a vibrant campus experience that is second to none.”

20 YEARS UM’S VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE PROGRAM has been managed by Clem Lockman, a UM accounting alumnus and local CPA and Kent Swift, UM accounting professor emeritus, housed in the UM College of Business, while serving the local community. UM accounting students get hands-on training and job experience while preparing and filing individual tax returns at no cost.

YEARS OLD AND GOING STRONG.
Let’s do our part to recreate responsibly.

Montana residents and visitors can all pitch in.

Know before you go.

Plan ahead

Play it safe.

Leave no trace.

Explore locally.

Be wildlife wise.

Prevent wildland fires.

Prevent aquatic invasive species.

Build an inclusive outdoors.

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CHECKMATE: UM MATH STUDENT TOP-RANKED CHESS PLAYER IN MONTANA

For the better part of his academic career, UM senior Dorje McPherron has quietly focused on his studies alongside mastery of a board with 64 squares. McPherron, who studies math and Russian, happens to be the Montana state chess champion – a title he’s held for the past two years – and is the top-ranked tournament player in the state.

McPherron describes chess as his hobby, but of course it’s more than that. The Hamilton native’s been an ardent student of the game since high school and has slowly moved up in the arcane rankings of the national chess scene. Today, his United States Chess Federation rating is 2,035, placing him in the 96th percentile among tournament chess players in the country.

McPherron, who’s made the UM Dean’s List many times, says math and chess require many of the same skills, namely logical thinking and reasoning. Unlike math and most board games, however, chance is not a factor in chess. There is, in short, no roll of the dice.

“When you sit down at the board, it’s just you and your opponent,” McPherron said. “So when I lose, I get frustrated, but then I look back at the game again and realize my mistakes. It’s helpful and it makes me better.”

Montana’s expansive size and lack of big cities have made refining his skills a bit harder. Bigger cities have more tournaments and seasoned players, McPherron said.

“I’d like to play in more states and tournaments, but I’m pretty busy with school, and it costs money to travel,” he said, noting that sponsorships aren’t really a thing in chess.

“The Queen’s Gambit” is definitely fueling a renewed interest in chess, McPherron said, as did the COVID-19 lockdown, with people turning to the internet to learn new skills. In the past year, he said, there’s been an “explosion” of chess masters and grandmasters streaming their play on platforms like Twitch.

As to what fuels his continued passion for the game, McPherron riffs on a famous quote from legendary player Anatoly Karpov, who says “Chess is everything: art, science and sport.”

UM STUDENT EARN TOP SCORE ON MCAT EXAM

Devin Hunt say she technically cracked the first book to prepare for the Medical College Admission Test, or MCAT, in August. But the truth, Hunt said, is that spending four years at UM deeply embedded in microbiology and biology classes, working in research labs and studying under the tutelage of faculty mentors, meant he really had been preparing for years.

Hunt, a senior in UM’s Davidson Honors College from Colville, Washington, was recently notified of a rare, impressive feat: scoring in the 100th percentile of the MCAT exam.

Anything between a score of 524 and 528 is considered in the 100th percentile, and there is no perfect score, as the exam is calculated on a percentage basis and changes from year to year. The Association of American Medical Colleges estimates that about 85,000 people sit for the MCAT every year.

The exam tests physical and biological sciences, verbal reasoning and writing skills, in addition to sociocultural, biological and physiological influences on behavior and social interactions, according to the Princeton Review.

“I fully credit the broad and robust training in the biological sciences and general microbiology I received at UM,” Hunt says. “That training, combined with faculty who pushed my boundaries of understanding, encouraged and supported me in advising and offered me opportunities at every turn, is really what UM does best.”

You can find full-length versions of these stories at umt.edu/news
UM Partners with Amazon to Make Students Job Ready

Just as the world began to transition to remote work last year, Amazon announced an initiative to prepare 29 million people around the world for roles in cloud computing. A few months earlier, Missoula College at UM launched the first Cloud Computing Certificate in the state.

In response to a rapidly growing tech sector, UM has partnered with Amazon Web Services, an IT service management subsidiary of Amazon, to prepare students for the jobs of the future. Through their coursework, students cover all the necessary skills and knowledge, such as cloud computing and fiber splicing, to pass certifications for high-tech jobs as part of UM’s Tech Skills for Tomorrow initiative to address a shortage of workers in Montana’s tech industry.

Missoula College Dean Tom Gallagher says the goal is to equip students for just about anything in the workforce through providing them with an in-demand skillset.

“We want all students to be career-ready,” Gallagher said. “And we want them career-ready the first day at a new job. The Cloud Computing Certificate provides individuals with the technical skills requested by employers and needed to land that first job.”

In 2020, LinkedIn ranked cloud computing – the delivery of different services through the internet – as second among the most important hard skills for today’s workforce. Missoula College’s first Cloud Computing Foundations class drew around a dozen students, and in a year, it doubled to 27 and became required for all students pursuing an IT degree.

Missoula College became Amazon Web Services-certified this semester, a broad credential accepted as the tech industry standard. To receive the Amazon certification, students must take six classes that range from databases to operating systems.

Victor Valgenti, who teaches the cloud computing course and became the only Montana AWS-certified instructor this January, says students may not be aware of why cloud computing is relevant to today’s workforce.

“The cloud is not anything magic, I tell my students all the time,” he said. “It’s not some new thing. The technologies involved in the cloud are not revolutionary technologies. It’s the application that is revolutionary.”

UM Brings Back Ice Skating Rink for Wintertime Fun

Bringing back a beloved winter tradition, the University invited students and community members to skate on the Oval during winter months and in between classes. The rink was also the place of practice for two UM students on break from professional skating for Disney On Ice. Ice skating was one of many events included in a lineup of “Winter Wonderland” activities for UM students, designed for students to enjoy winter recreation in and around Missoula. Other activities included warming fire pits on the Oval, Nordic skiing tours on the UM golf course and hot chocolate and live music on hand every Tuesday on the Oval.

UM Ranked No. 6 in the Nation for Research Growth

UM is ranked in the top 10 nationwide schools for research growth, according to data from the National Science Foundation. NSF is the national repository for data on research activity for 725 institutions of higher education across the nation. According to that data, UM ranked No. 6 nationally for research growth among all universities with more than $100 million in research expenditures.

“This ranking further underscores that UM faculty and student researchers are making a profound impact on some of the most pressing issues facing society,” says Scott Whittenburg, UM vice president for research and creative scholarship. “Whether it
Scholarships made it possible for Karen De La Luz Martinez — a first-generation college student who graduated from the UM College of Business in May — to access a world-class, hands-on education that prepared her to launch a meaningful career. Today, Karen helps protect global businesses against cyber-attacks as a member of KPMG’s Cybersecurity Transformation Team.

Imagine the impact your gift could have.
Please contact the University of Montana Foundation to learn how you can connect your passion for supporting students with scholarship giving opportunities.

The lives we change will change the world.
giving@supportum.org | 800-443-2593 | P.O. Box 7159 | Missoula, MT 59807
is critical COVID-19 vaccine research or identifying flood and drought risks through studying snowpack, UM researchers are providing an incredible resource to our state.

“Amidst the pandemic, we have already exceeded $100 million in research awards this year,” he said, “which bodes well for continued research growth at UM.”

Research expenditures grew from $55 million in 2014 to $104.7 million in 2019 – the last year that data has been reported – nearly doubling the amount of research expenditures at Montana’s flagship university in just five years.

“Every dollar invested in research at UM is felt across our community and the region,” UM President Seth Bodnar said. “Our growing research enterprise at UM is leading to not only new knowledge with benefits across sectors but also the creation of spin-off businesses that create new jobs and new opportunities for Montanans.”

Funding for UM’s research activity is secured by a large, diverse set of sources, including federal contracts and research grants. In 2019 alone, National Institutes of Health invested $28.1 million in UM for research activities and the U.S. Department of Agriculture contributed another $6.5 million.

Research growth at UM is measured across a wide range of disciplines, which include health sciences, biological and biomedical sciences, natural resources and conservation, mathematical and physical sciences, geosciences, social sciences and computer sciences, and engineering.

FAUCI LECTURE AT UM INSPIRES STUDENTS, DRAWS 6,000 ATTENDEES

Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, addressed the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic in a digital conversation hosted by UM’s Mike and Maureen Mansfield Center in February.

Over 6,000 people tuned into the virtual event to hear from the world’s leading infectious disease expert about the vaccine rollout, impact of the COVID-19 virus and lessons learned through the pandemic.

Fauci took questions from the audience, including several from UM students asking questions about a “return to normal” for the majority of the country.

“There is a light at the end of the tunnel, and it is because we have vaccines that are safe,” Fauci said. “When we get 70-85% of the population vaccinated, it will give us blanket protection and we can begin to approach a significant degree of normality.”

When asked what advice and guidance he would give to UM students studying science and public health, Fauci made a pitch to follow in his footsteps toward public service.

“There is an extraordinary impact one can have at the government level,” he said. “There is no more gratifying feeling to know that your impact touches lives in different countries.”

While attending a watch party in the Mansfield Library UM student Rachel Scuri was excited about how much detail Fauci covered during the hourlong event.

“There was a lot I learned about the vaccine development process,” says the ecosystem science restoration and environmental chemistry major. “It is just shocking when Dr. Fauci says that vaccine development began just five days after the virus was discovered.”

Fauci is no stranger to western Montana, which is home to the NIAD’s Rocky Mountain Labs and UM’s Center for Translational Medicine, which was awarded a $2.5 million grant in February 2020 from the National Institutes of Health to identify and advance COVID-19 vaccines.
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MONTANABOOKSTORE.SPIRIT.BNCOLLEGE.COM
CAMPING. Will Rice, UM assistant professor of outdoor recreation and wildland management, used big data to study 179 extremely popular campsites in Utah’s Zion National Park. Sifting through nearly 23,000 online reservations and working with a colleague at Florida Atlantic University, Rice found that price and availability of electricity were the largest drivers of demand for a good campsite. Proximity to the adjacent river and ease of access also affected demand, though views of canyon walls or number of neighbors seemed to have less impact. The work was published in the Journal of Environmental Management.

BEARS. We know we live in bear country, but not all of us remember to secure bird feeders and garbage cans to keep them at bay and on their way. The social behaviors of humans when it comes to bruins are the subject of a new UM study in the Journal of Wildlife Management, which analyzes why landowners do or don’t secure bear attractants. Social scientists in UM’s Human Dimensions Lab, housed in the W.A. Franke College of Forestry and Conservation, took the lead on the story. Lesson: Be Bear Aware.

BOOZE. A UM history class used America’s relationship with booze for an in-depth study of alcohol, its history, social context, economic impacts and place in modern times. “Intoxication Nation,” taught by Kyle Volk, chair of UM’s Department of History, also is producing oral histories by interviewing subjects about the commodity in local Montana communities. We’ll toast to that.

FRIENDS. Noah Grabe and Taylor Gregory met on the second floor of Knowles Hall at UM their freshman year. Fast forward four years, amidst a global pandemic, and the two friends are preparing to embark on an adventure they never imagined: serving for eight months as Fulbright Fellows in Madrid through the Fulbright English Teaching Assistant Program beginning this September. They didn’t know the other had applied and had been accepted. We call that UM kismet.
IN Bells for...

**BARNs.** The Montana PBS documentary “Keeping the Barn” received the 2021 Silver Telly Award in the Television: General Documentary category. Produced by UM’s own John Twiggs, the program reveals the rich heritage and stories connected to the barns of the Big Sky State, as many Montana families try to maintain their historic structures and the authentic culture they represent. The program was named the Television Non-Commercial Program of the Year by the Montana Broadcasters Association and the Greater Montana Foundation.

**DNA.** Meredeth Snow, a UM researcher and co-chair of UM’s Department of Anthropology, is part of an international team led by the Harvard Medical School-affiliated Joslin Diabetes Center that used human “paleofeces” to discover ancient people had far different microorganisms living in their guts than we do today. Snow said the gut microbes found in the ancient fecal material may offer clues to combat diseases like diabetes that afflict modern people. One man’s millennia-old human feces is another female scientist’s treasure.

**FAMILY.** Getting through a legal education with a young family is difficult at best. That’s why UM’s Alexander Blewett School of Law allows students to bring their kids to class when childcare falls through and created nursing rooms for new mothers. These are just a few examples of the many ways UM’s law school is keeping family life central – while setting record job placement for its graduates.

**MAMMALS.** Should we move animal species vulnerable to climate change to new areas? UM conservation researcher Jedediah Brodie recently published the idea in Science magazine, calling for the establishment of an international policy to set guidelines for species conservation and climate change adaptation through assisted colonization. Read: Moving certain animal species to new areas on Earth so they’ll survive climate change. A big idea for a big problem.
UM TURNS UP THE

As wildfires continue to expand, threatening and altering our ways of life and landscapes, UM remains committed to a cornerstone mission of providing national expertise across fire science, prediction and management, training and resources.

UM Students Lead Prescribed Wildfire Burn on University Ranch

In mid-April on the UM-owned Bandy Ranch in neighboring Powell County, the snow was still visible on the surrounding Garnet Mountains, geese were honking overhead and Cottonwood Creek was beginning to ripple.

But there would be a greater sound of the season that day.

Tree sap, water pockets and air popping, crackling and combusting from heat, and the swinging of Pulaskis into hard ground as bright orange flames raced up conifers against a backdrop of radio static and beeps.

“The first rule of fire is that it depends on batteries,” said Lloyd Queen, UM professor and director of UM’s FireCenter. “Everything runs on batteries – headlamps, radios, weather stations.”

Prescribed fires consist of purposely burning land to reduce the risk of wildfire and jumpstart plant life rejuvenation. It was the University’s first time hosting a cross-boundary prescribed fire, burning both UM property and adjacent land managed by other agencies.

As the world faces bigger and scarier wildfires, researchers and fire managers working together to prevent and manage them represents a new trend in fire science, Queen said.

The day also doubled as a hot and heavy training experience for UM students, who were front and center on the burn.

“The burn has two objectives — one is ecological, one is educational,” Queen said. “The first is restoring the landscape, getting rid of debris, and the second is providing an educational experience for students and partners on the burn.”

Queen was one of several FireCenter staff and UM professors in the W.A. Franke College of Forestry and Conservation who joined forces with fire scientists from the Missoula Fire Sciences Laboratory, a research institute with the U.S. Forest Service, and personnel from Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks to manage the burn, which took about two years to plan. At about 3,500 acres, UM’s Bandy Ranch is a working cattle ranch that also serves as an exploratory extension of a classroom.
“This is a complicated prescribed burn, given the involvement of our students and combination of jurisdictions and research activities,” said Carl Seielstad, UM Fire and Fuels Program manager and associate professor. “We’ve got students, University property that’s part of the Montana Forest and Conservation Experiment Station, the Forest Service and Montana FWP, all of whom are heavily and intimately involved.”

Seielstad, who authored the burn plan and secured the required permissions for the fire, served as the day’s incident commander or burn boss – or the main guy in charge if anything went wrong.

“From a fire management perspective, we are successful when executed safely, the burn doesn’t get out of control and the treatment meets the objectives of the burn plan,” Seielstad said.

The day’s charge included the lighting by drip torch of about 108 acres of native grassland and beetle-killed pine trees that included equal parts of Bandy Ranch, research plots from the Forest Service and the Montana FWP game range adjacent to the ranch.

Management of the fire also included a mix of 12 UM undergraduate and graduate students who either are members of the UM Fire Club, majoring in forestry or completing a minor in fire sciences and management.

As Missoula and UM both serve as a national nexus of wildland fire expertise, the burn also served as an opportunity for a host of research for interagency and University research objectives with important implications for national wildfire prediction, response and management.

Read the full story of the Bandy Prescribed Burn at:
bit.ly/bandyburn
2020’s extreme fire season, high-elevation forests in the central Rocky Mountains now are burning more than at any point in the past 2,000 years, according to a new UM study recently published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

Researchers from UM and the University of Wyoming analyzed a unique network of fire history records to understand how 21st-century fire activity compares to wildfires in the past. The findings highlight that burning in recent decades in high-elevation forests of northern Colorado and southern Wyoming is unprecedented over the past several millennia.

As fire paleoecologists—scientists who study historical ecosystems—the team uses the charcoal found in lake sediments to piece together the fire history of forests across the Rocky Mountains. The idea, said lead author and UM professor Philip Higuera, is that understanding the past is key to understanding changes we see today and how forests may change in the future.

When 2020’s massive fire season hit, its ferocity startled Higuera and his co-authors—UM

“2020 indeed pushed fire activity outside the range of variability these forests have experienced over at least the past two millennia.”

—PHIL HIGUERA
doctoral candidate Kyra Wolf and University of Wyoming Professor Bryan Shuman. Last year, wildfires in Colorado burned through October, unusually late in the year. By November, the 2020 wildfires alone were responsible for 72% of the total area burned in high-elevation forests since 1984 in their study region, and Colorado had seen three of its largest fires on record.

“As the 2020 fire season unfolded, we realized we already had a well-defined understanding of the fire history of many of the places burning, based on over 20 lake-sediment records our teams had collected over the past 15 years,” said Higuera, professor of fire ecology in the W.A. Franke College of Forestry and Conservation. “When the smoke settled, we thought ‘Wow, we may have witnessed something truly unprecedented here.' So we combined the existing records for the first time and compared them to recent fire activity. To our surprise, 2020 indeed pushed fire activity outside the range of variability these forests have experienced over at least the past two millennia.”

The authors found that since 2000, wildfires are burning nearly twice as much area on average compared to the last 2,000 years. Whereas a high-elevation forest historically burned once every 230 years on average, in the 21st century that has now shrunk to around 120 years. That's more fire activity than occurred during the “Medieval Climate Anomaly,” a period around 1,200 years ago when temperatures spiked higher than they were during the 20th century.

While human activity and past fire suppression are important contributing factors to wildfires across the West, the work highlights increasingly warm, dry conditions as an overarching cause of increased burning in these high-elevation forests.

Read the full story at: bit.ly/UMfire2000
Along with an increased awareness of general hygiene and health, public scrutiny of health officials also has intensified within the past two years.

So when D’Shane Barnett stepped up to become the Missoula City-County Health Department’s next leader, people said he must be crazy. But his years working in American Indian health, complemented with a rich health sciences training at UM, prepared him for the challenges of managing a public health department in a post-pandemic world.

Barnett, from Missoula, knew he was going to be a Griz from the time he was a kid. His grandmother June Chase Nickelson was the first in his immediate family to attend UM. Nickelson received a tribal grant to attend UM and pursue a degree in nutrition, and she became one of the charter members of the Kyiyo Native American Student Association.

His grandfather on his dad’s side also was a diehard Griz and always had season football tickets to see them play. Barnett carried on the tradition and is a season-ticket holder as well, considering those some of his most prized possessions.

While Barnett began his undergraduate studies in 1994, he “didn’t adapt very well” to college life and ended up withdrawing. He started working in American Indian Health as a peer reproductive health outreach worker.

“My job when I was in my 20s was to try to convince other Natives to use condoms,” Barnett said.

Almost a decade later, Barnett was working as the executive director for the National Council of Urban Indian Health in Washington, D.C., when his father had a heart attack. His father survived, but the scare pushed Barnett to move home. He moved back in November 2013 and soon resumed his undergraduate program. Almost 21 years after he began his studies, Barnett graduated from UM with a bachelor’s degree in sociology. His grandmother was there to see it.

“At that point she already had cancer, she was wheelchair-bound, she was on oxygen,” Barnett said. “But she was not going to miss my graduation from UM.”

Barnett had begun an educational tear. He left Missoula again in 2016 to get his Master of Science in Healthcare Administration and Interprofessional Leadership from the University of California, San Francisco. After that, he was hired as the executive director of All Nations Health Center in Missoula, where he worked while simultaneously earning his Ph.D. in public health at UM. He is expected to complete his doctorate in May 2022.

This past year, the Missoula City-County Health Department hired Barnett to lead the department.
The position of health officer is more public facing than ever and arguably an unenviable job at the moment. What made you want to take this on?

I am crazy in love with Missoula, this community. I was born here. My husband and I are raising our son here. My parents and grandparents are here. The mountains around Missoula were literally the first thing I would have seen when I was born. I am so in love with Missoula as a community. And the opportunity to play any kind of role in maintaining and improving the health of our community is just an opportunity that I couldn’t pass up.

Is there something you learned at UM that has bounced around your head as you entered this new job?

I can’t obviously speak beyond my experience. But for my experience, as a Ph.D. student at UM’s School of Public and Community Health Sciences, I learned concepts and practices that I can apply to my work that actually help improve the health of our community. And I think that’s pretty awesome.

What would you say to those who are considering a position in public health or American Indian health?

Health care in general, medicine in general and public health are fields that are never going away. We’re never going to not focus on the health of people. And as long as people are living in societies, we’re never not going to have public health. So I think that it’s a great career to consider in that it’s not dependent upon a fad or flux, you know. Health care and public health are always here.

For someone who hasn’t completed their degree, but still wants to, how did you reenter higher education and do you think it’s attainable for anyone?

It is never too late.

And I know that because my grandma’s cousin was the one who really instilled that in me. She got her bachelor’s degree when she was 55 and got her master’s degree when she was 60. When I was in my late 20s, early 30s, and really, anytime, I would say, “Well, I’m already working, it’s probably too late,” she would say, “It is never too late.” She was an example of that. She unfortunately passed not long after she got her master’s. Even though she didn’t ever get to see me graduate with my bachelor’s or my master’s or my Ph.D., I know that she knows, and that she can feel proud that she played a part in that.

When the intensity of the COVID-19 pandemic wanes, what are your other priorities for the health department?

We are lessening the time and attention that had to go toward COVID-19. As we do that, the other priorities I have include identifying health disparities. In order to do that, we need to improve the way that we collect data. We need to not just improve how the health department collects data, but how we make data high-quality and highly accessible throughout the community so that all partners or hospitals or practitioners or social service organizations can have access to this very broad but high-quality data. That’s one priority. The data helps inform where we are falling short. People are becoming more aware and acknowledging the impacts of the social determinants of health. The health department can’t necessarily directly influence a lot of those social determinants. What we can do is help coordinate and participate in efforts to begin addressing them.

You’re Mandan and Arikara, as well as a gay man. How does your identity play a role in your health care work?

What I will say is that representation matters. Representation matters in the work that I do in the Native community and it’s just the same in the LGBTQ+ community. When I first moved back to Montana, I was very reluctant to discuss my sexual orientation. But I’m not doing anyone any good by conforming when I could be doing more work to change the system to work better for all the Missoulians who deserve and need public health services.

To be anything less than my whole self would not be authentic. And, if in doing so, the indirect result is that there are LGBTQ+ individuals around Missoula, or wherever, who hear about me and the work we’re doing and then say, “Wow, I guess being gay, being trans, being two-spirit, being gender fluid, none of those have to stop me from working to get wherever I want to be.”

ASHLEY NERBOVIG is a UM School of Journalism alumna and a freelance reporter based in Montana. Her work has been published in USA Today, The Marshall Project, the Billings Gazette and the Chinook Observer.
Music to our Ears

You can’t spell music without UM. Like melodies that last throughout time, UM’s School of Music continues to train next-generation performers, artists, teachers, composers and professionals alongside national and internationally recognized faculty. A cornerstone expertise at UM, the School of Music in the University’s College of the Arts and Media prepares students for wide-ranging careers in music industries and shares their talents, gifts and grit with local, national and international audiences. The School of Music also serves Montana as a hub for music education, with its Music Education Program boasting a 100% graduate job placement rate. Many of these alumni teach in rural Montana communities, providing K-12 vocal and instrumental music instruction statewide.

Donor Support Propels UM Music Building Renovations

Thanks to $3 million in generous gifts from three families that include UM alumni and longtime supporters, the beloved Music Building in the heart of campus is undergoing renovation and repair to continue serving hundreds of students and thousands of community members each year. These donors provided philanthropic support for the first phase of upgrades to the 1953 building’s rehearsal rooms and several practice rooms. Reconstruction will upgrade accessibility, lighting and acoustic design and will enhance ventilation for band, orchestra, percussion ensembles and composition students. Subsequent phases of the reconstruction – to be fueled by future philanthropic gifts – will include updating classrooms, main floor practice rooms and the Music Recital Hall.

The renovations will elevate the Music Building to align with the quality of academic and performing arts programs that draw undergraduate and graduate students and faculty members to UM. The facilities host statewide competitions, festivals and music camps held at UM for nearly 2,000 junior high and high school students each year. The reconstruction also will help the School of Music accommodate the many professional community musicians who use the facility throughout the year, including the Missoula Symphony, the String Orchestra of the Rockies and the Montana State Music Teachers Association.

“Our Music Building serves as the front entrance to the University for so many in our community,” says College of the Arts and Media Dean Laurie Baefsky. “The long-anticipated renovation of the Music Building will not only benefit all music-loving Montans but will reflect the nationally acclaimed programs and faculty within our renowned UM School of Music.”

Read the full story at umt.edu/news
Cello Student Awarded Fellowship to Aspen Music School

David Harmsworth, a UM School of Music senior and cello performance major, was awarded an esteemed fellowship to what is regarded as the country’s premier training program for young musicians, the Aspen Music Festival and School. Harmsworth spent 10 weeks on a full fellowship for tuition and board at the prestigious summer school, where he played alongside some of the world’s top players in classical music.

The Aspen Music School is regarded as the country’s premier musical training program for young musicians, having cut its competitive acceptance rate this year for musicians from more than 600 down to about 270 as a COVID-19 precaution. To apply, Harmsworth submitted a digital recording of two solos and three orchestral and chamber pieces (all in one take) – in addition to a written portion, a performance resume and letters of recommendation.

“I knew they were selecting a smaller cohort this summer, so I wasn’t sure about my chances,” says Harmsworth, who comes from a family of professional musicians, including his older sister and both parents.

During the festival, students are offered a combination of intensive one-on-one instruction and professional performance experience. The festival includes five orchestras, opera, chamber music studies, master classes, lectures and panels. While in Aspen, Harmsworth performed for seasoned orchestral musicians, including teachers and principal players from New York, Vienna, Los Angeles, St. Louis, San Francisco, Cleveland, Chicago and Philadelphia. The rigorous weekly schedule of playing and performing is so demanding, that only the most serious, dedicated young musicians from around the world are accepted – a perfect environment for Harmsworth, who is training at UM under Adam Collins, UM’s cello instructor.

Harmsworth credits Collins, with his “more dimensional musicianship,” for helping him learn to better manage the small muscles required for playing and prepare for a career as a professional cellist.

“David has been really productive during his time at UM; he’s a thrill to teach,” Collins says. “He’s a great student and cellist, and it’s terrific to see him at Aspen this year. For a student like David, being exposed to all that Aspen offers, it’s an incredible opportunity.”
So when a group of UM music students visited the Montana State Legislature to advocate for rural music education outreach, they were funded on the spot. The UM students proposed a program that connects rural schools with the transformative power of music called Rural Outreach And Music, or ROAM. New music alumni Rory Anderson, Skyler Genazzi, Connor Dennis and UM rising senior Alli High, all of whom are music education majors and ROAM members, packed up a sampling of wind and brass instruments this summer and traveled to Alberton, Superior and Havre to visit K-12 students to share – and hopefully inspire – a love of music.

“Together, the four future music teachers provided the light and airy notes of the flute, the bellowing of the sousaphone and trombone, and the melodic French horn as they played themes from popular movies, including “The Incredibles,” “Frozen,” “Up,” “Jurassic Park” and “Monsters, Inc.”

“Bigger things sound lower and smaller things sound higher,” instructed Genazzi, a music education and trumpet performance major, who will teach pre-K through grade 12 general music for Alberton School District next year.

When the theme to “Harry Potter” was played, nearly every hand in the bleachers went up to guess the tune. The same for the “Imperial March” from “Star Wars.” The gym’s lighting fixtures began to shake as every foot in the bleachers stomped to accompany Queen’s “We Will Rock You.” Dennis sang a bit of Aaron Copland’s “Zion’s Walls” and played a sampling of Dvorák’s “Largo” from Symphony No. 9, after explaining how the reed works on an oboe and why students should consider their voice as an instrument, too.

“Does anyone know what tool you need to have to play these instruments?” asked Anderson, from Missoula, who plans to teach music next year. “All you need is your own breath. That’s why they’re called wind instruments; you’re using your own wind,” she said.

When the quartet demonstrated percussion with drumsticks on the bottom of 5-gallon buckets and showed how to remove a mouthpiece from the trumpet to sound like a bazooka, an Alberton fifth grader asked how they “got so good at music.”

“We practiced a lot,” said High, a flute major at UM. “You don’t get good at something unless you practice, but it was always fun for me because I met lots of friends in music, and I got better little by little.”

With funding support from the MREA and the Frank Foundation, ROAM is committed to delivering a sampling of music education to rural schools and students. MREA provides a rural scholars program, which offers a scholarship for student teachers to teach in one of the organization’s member schools.

UM School of Music Director James Randall said the ROAM program is a great opportunity for UM music education students to give back and to share what they have learned with school districts around the state.

“For many of our students, it’s also a chance to consider what teaching in a rural community would be like,” he said. “So many of our students want to continue to live and work in Montana, and we prepare them for the unique opportunities and challenges presented in rural school districts. ROAM offers them the opportunity to teach and learn at the same time.”

Mica Clarkson, principal of Alberton School and a UM education alumna, immediately said “yes” when ROAM offered to visit Alberton.

“Music is everything,” Clarkson says. “It’s creativity, history, analytical thinking and it’s constructive to every part of your life. I look at music education as inspirational to every other subject. Kids need to be exposed to music.”

Read these full stories at umt.edu/news.
Over 24 hours, the UM family — alumni, parents, faculty, staff, community members and friends everywhere — will unite to help UM open the door to success for the next generation of Grizzlies.

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When COVID-19 vaccines promised a way out of a grueling pandemic, Ken Chatriand saw a need that he and an army of UM pharmacy students were uniquely prepared to fill.

BY JACOB BAYNHAM

A SHOT IN THE ARM
AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION
Ken Chatriand grew up in Butte, cracking eggs in the kitchen when his mother was baking and crawling under the truck in the garage when his father was changing the oil. Like many kids in Montana, Chatriand was raised on elbow grease. In Big Sky Country, if you wait for someone to come along and do something for you, you might wait a long time.

Chatriand was the first in his family to attend college, at the University of Montana, where he followed his love for chemistry to receive a doctorate of pharmacy in 2006. A year later he landed the job he’s held for the last 15 years, managing the pharmacy in UM’s Curry Health Center. The nonprofit pharmacy provides prescriptions to the campus community and serves as a training ground for students in the Skaggs School of Pharmacy.

Chatriand has spent his life rolling up his sleeves. So perhaps it wasn’t surprising that in early 2020, when COVID-19 was forcing entire countries to lock down and frontline workers across Montana scrambled to keep themselves and others safe, the most immediate question on Chatriand’s mind was: “What can I do?”

At first, it wasn’t much. Campus went quiet last March as students went home for spring break and didn’t return. Chatriand mailed prescriptions to his patients and offered curbside service. But he kept wondering how he, as a pharmacist, along with a network of students, staff and faculty, could respond to COVID-19. He had studied pandemics in pharmacy school, but only in theory. Without safe and reliable drugs to treat the virus, Chatriand understood the most hopeful response would be a vaccine. Scientists around the world were racing to create one, and once they did, Chatriand knew pharmacists would be instrumental in delivering it.

That’s why, months before any vaccine was available, Chatriand applied to be a vaccine holder and distributor with the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services. UM had ultra-low temperature freezers in campus research labs that could safely store vaccine.

“I at least wanted to be a storing site,” Chatriand says. “I could be a resource. I have an army behind me — the School of Pharmacy and my students.”

Finally last December, the Food and Drug Administration granted emergency-use authorization to the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines. The first doses to reach Montana went to hospitals, but in early January, Chatriand received several hundred Moderna vaccines from the state to inoculate the Phase 1a members of the campus community. That’s when Chatriand received his own vaccine — from his wife, Heather, who is also a pharmacist.

The Missoula City-County Health Department noticed how well Chatriand and his team delivered those vaccines and asked if he could do more.

So at the end of January, Chatriand and two students visited senior living centers and group homes around Missoula to vaccinate staff and residents. Meanwhile, Chatriand was cooking up something much bigger. Capitalizing on UM’s event space, pharmacy students and ultra-low freezers, Chatriand imagined streamlined, socially distanced mass clinics that could inoculate hundreds if not thousands of community members in a matter of hours.

“We already had a plan in place, we knew what we could do. We just needed the vaccine.”
"We already had a plan in place," he says. "We knew what we could do. We just needed the vaccine."

Pharmacists in the United States only began vaccinating people in 1996. Before that, a pharmacist was known to “count, lick, stick and pour” as they dispensed doctor-ordered drugs. The role of the U.S. pharmacist is rapidly evolving, though. As the most accessible health care provider, pharmacists help manage complex drug interactions, and their active community presence make them ideal vaccine distributors.

At UM, first-year pharmacy students are immunization certified within their first two weeks of coursework. After that they conduct six hours of vaccinations — usually flu shots — to hone their technique.

Chatriand understood their potential. So when he got a vaccine allocation of 400 doses at the end of January, he knew he was ready to launch his first mass clinic at the Adams Center. The appointments went like hot concert tickets. Chatriand arrived early and left late.

"I was ushering people to their seats," he says. "I had to be excited; to show we cared. I had to watch student techniques, intervene when a patient needed it and always look out for my students to make sure they were being safe. It was a lot."

The clinic went off without a hitch. So did the next one, and the next — 21 in total. By the end, Chatriand’s pharmacy students were delivering more than 1,000 shots in six hours.

Adriane Beck, who directed Missoula County’s incident command for COVID-19 vaccinations, says she realized Chatriand and his team would be an asset in January, when he called her cellphone on a weekend and asked how he could help.

"He was an Energizer Bunny," Beck says. "His connection and management within the School of Pharmacy and the Curry Health Center, and their ability to get Pfizer vaccines in large quantities, became a phenomenal resource not only for UM, but for the community at large."

Chatriand’s relentless planning and knack for logistics made the process safe, efficient and uncongested.

"I could stand back and watch the magic happen," Beck says. "It was a great opportunity for pharmacy students to get a lot of experience and be involved with something pretty big."

Among them was Camryn Cooper, a first-year pharmacy student from Missoula. The first shot Cooper ever gave was a syringeful of saline to a fellow student during her immunization certification. Cooper was finishing up her two years of pre-requisites when the pandemic hit. By the end of 2020, she was immunization-certified and had given almost 100 flu shots. She jumped at the chance to volunteer at Chatriand’s mass clinics.

"I thought it was important for us to be doing them," she says. "I really wanted to be a part of that history."

Cooper volunteered at all 21 clinics. On clinic mornings, she was at the Curry Health Center by 5 a.m. to help draw up syringes of vaccine. Along with about 20 other students, she gave shots from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. Then it was time to disassemble, sanitize and restock Band-Aids, gauze and other supplies for the next clinic.

"Afterward, I was ready for a nap and, to be honest, homework, because pharmacy school is definitely a workload," Cooper says.
By now Cooper estimates she’s given about 1,400 COVID-19 shots. The vaccination effort — here and around the country — made her feel safe enough to board a plane this summer for a trip to San Diego, her first vacation since the pandemic began. Cooper credits Chatriand for pulling off what seemed impossible: securing the vaccine from state and federal agencies, coordinating with EMTs, nurses and the Adams Center staff while supervising the students and processing insurance claims.

“He wore every single hat he could,” Cooper says. “He worked pretty much nonstop. He was an absolute rock star.”

Marketa Marvanova, dean of the Skaggs School of Pharmacy, was proud to watch her students rise to the challenge of this unprecedented vaccination effort.

“The students we’re admitting are professionals,” she says. “It didn’t surprise me they could step up to the plate and provide the vaccines.”

The past year has been full of teachable moments for UM pharmacy students — they’ve studied everything from mRNA vaccine technology to the body’s immune response to COVID-19. It was a teachable moment for the public, too.

“A pandemic is never good,” Marvanova says. “For pharmacists, though, it was an opportunity to be seen as the integral health care professionals that we are. We often work in the background.”

By this summer, Marvanova could meet people in her office unmasked and even shake hands. Her staff moved furniture back into the hallways of the Skaggs Building so students could congregate and interact as they once did. All of it was possible because of the vaccines that Chatriand and the pharmacy students delivered.

“I’m proud of Ken, and I’m proud of us as a college that we were able to offer these services to the community,” Marvanova says. “Time was of the essence.”

At the end of January, a 700-pound Thermo Scientific ultra-low freezer was delivered to the Curry Health Center, where it now occupies a room adjacent to the lobby. Chatriand has grown so fond of it that he’s given it a name — Yeti. When Chatriand opens its door on a summer morning, a cloud of frozen air billows out and then clears, revealing a plastic box of purple-topped vials holding more than a thousand doses of Pfizer vaccine. The UM pharmacy gives them out on a walk-in basis now.

This year Chatriand’s first real day off didn’t come until April. On clinic days he and his wife would get to the Curry Health Center at 3:30 a.m. to start preparing. Once it was over, they’d go home, eat dinner with their three boys and fall asleep before the evening news.

“It was an emotional and administrative roller coaster like I’ve never been on,” Chatriand says. “Now the loopy-loops are over. Going back to my regular job is going to be a weird transition.”

Chatriand and about 150 pharmacy students delivered nearly 19,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccine in total. Thanks in part to this work, Missoula County has the highest vaccination rate in the state. In April, UM President Seth Bodnar recognized Chatriand with the Outstanding Service to the Campus Community Award and the Skaggs School of Pharmacy designated him professor of the year.

The pandemic isn’t over, and more mass clinics may be needed down the road. But none of that daunts Chatriand.

“That’s why I went to pharmacy school,” he says, “to answer that question: What can I do? Now I know.”

JACOB BAYNHAM graduated from UM with a journalism degree in 2007. He writes for Outside, National Parks and other magazines. He lives in Missoula with his wife, Hilly McGahan ’07, and their two sons.
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A UM ALUMNA’S SMALL-TOWN MONTANA BACKSTORY INSPIRES BESTSELLER...
One winter when she was in high school in the late ‘80s, Janet Skeslien Charles came from her hometown on the Hi-Line to Missoula for a band competition. Charles stayed at UM for the weekend, marveling at how people sauntered around the wintry campus in Birkenstocks and socks, and how the snow drifted down from the sky. In Shelby, where she was from, winter wind whipped snow horizontally.

“On the Hi-Line, you would rush from your garage to your pickup to wherever you had to go, then get straight back to your garage,” Charles says. “You didn’t just walk around.”

Missoula seemed beautiful to her, and that made up her mind to attend UM for college. In part because her youth had been informed by the Cold War — in a place where one regularly drove past missile silos — she studied Russian.

And in part because, growing up in her small hometown, she had made an acquaintance with a war bride — a Frenchwoman who had married an American serviceman after World War II and returned with him to the Hi-Line — she also studied French.

But most importantly for this story, because she was always jotting down notes in her journal, she studied writing. “I knew I was a writer even when I was 12,” Charles says.

What a writer she’s become. Charles, who splits her time between Shelby and Paris now, published her first novel, “Moonlight in Odessa,” in 2010. Earlier this year she published “The Paris Library,” which was on the New York Times, Washington Post and USA TODAY bestseller lists. The novel is informed by Charles’ own life experiences and ties together two parallel stories: a young Frenchwoman coming of age in Paris on the eve of World War II, and a girl growing up on the Hi-Line, who meets that Frenchwoman years later when she came to Montana as a war bride.
Following graduation from UM, Charles went to Ukraine—a former Soviet state—to teach English as a second language. Then she taught in France. But while working at the American Library in Paris from 2010 to 2012, she stumbled across the true story of Dorothy Reeder, the institution’s director during the occupation of Paris by German soldiers during World War II.

Reeder heard about the Nazis systematically destroying literature that did not support their worldview. She started sending vulnerable books to the library’s subscribers to protect them from raids on the library. Once the persecution of Jews and other groups became known, Reeder had library staff members hand-deliver books to library regulars in those groups, who could no longer hazard the random checkpoints while seeking literature and community at the library.

Although Charles’ story is fiction informed by history, she imagines Reeder as the moral compass in the story. The two main characters need this wayfinding. In the Paris plotline, Odile, a young Frenchwoman in love with the world of books, navigates petty jealousies and an inability to keep her mouth shut while all around her the world crumbles before Nazi aggression.

Her loose tongue triggers Odile’s exile from France and eventual landing in a fictional version of Froid, Montana. There, near the end of her life, a much older, much wiser Odile offers counsel to Lily, another young woman who struggles to control emotional outbursts. Odile helps Lily process the teenaged amplification of jealousy, envy and boredom — as well as true, heartbreaking loss. The Montana story is quieter than the perils of World War II Paris, but nonetheless poignant.

It took Charles 10 years to write “The Paris Library.” Because she was writing about a past we’re all familiar with, she did copious research to bring characters and events to life. Charles pored over old Paris editions of the “New York Herald.” To capture the vérité of libraries in the 1930s and ’40s, she studied a journal for librarians from that era. That publication informed many details of the book, bringing the world of the library to life.

I wanted to capture how hard it is to live in a small town on the plains and have all these feelings and not be able to express them.
Charles discovered the role of librarians who provided books for soldiers recuperating from injuries, jammed cheek by jowl on cots with no personal space.

“I did some research on soldiers during the war, and what I found was that books gave soldiers a privacy of the mind,” Charles says. “Librarians interviewed said that the men were surrounded by others all the time. They were never alone. But they were also all on their own. They didn’t have family nearby, so they had no visitors.”

As she has with all of her historical learnings, Charles rendered this understanding into beautiful, heart-rending fiction in a hospital scene where Odile tells stories to a young soldier while he quietly dies.

In “The Paris Library,” books serve as metaphors for many things. In Odile’s young, romantic mind, words matter as much as people seem to — which is why small-town Montana is so hard for her to endure. When young Montana farm boys went off to war and returned with foreign brides, they broke the hearts of hometown sweethearts who waited for them. Odile coming to Froid was a repudiation of the town’s expectations. She was shunned. The woman for whom words meant everything had nobody to say them to.

“She can’t communicate with anyone, and nobody will communicate with her,” Charles says.

Lily, meanwhile, cannot voice her desires. She can’t bring herself to speak to a boy she has a crush on. She can’t talk to her father about his new bride.

“I wanted to capture how hard it is to live in a small town on the plains and have all these feelings and not be able to express them,” Charles says.

Which is no slander of her own upbringing in Shelby. Charles’ parents were farmers east of Dunkirk, Montana. To this day, she returns to the Hi-Line for an extended stay every summer. Her French husband (they met at the Charles de Gaulle airport on her first day in France) enjoys going for long runs under the arc of the Big Sky.

“I always feel really lucky to be able to come home. That’s probably why I’ve always been a teacher — I wanted to be able to come home in the summer,” Charles says.

Charles now appreciates the world of her youth in a way that’s hard to feel when you’re growing up.

“The thing about Lily that is closest to me is the desire to get out and the mistaken belief that bigger is better, when bigger is just bigger,” Charles says. “After living in a city for so long, where every square centimeter is taken up with people and cars and cement, it’s so nice to be back in Montana, where there’s so much space and you can move at a slower pace and people are not so impatient. These are things I took for granted when I was growing up.”

Writing “The Paris Library” helped Charles better understand another thing she might have taken for granted — the sacrifices made by Claudine Maynard, the war bride she knew in Shelby growing up.

“I think when I was young, I thought it was romantic of her to leave her friends, her family, her language for love. Now I see the sacrifice,” Charles says. “When we’re younger, as Lily says in the book, when you watch movies and soap operas, love is loss, love is hurt. I look at Claudine with a different point of view now. I appreciate so much more what she gave up, and how brave she was.”

Books, as Charles’ writing seems to suggest, can inspire and even guide a person. But the lived life — in Paris or on the Hi-Line — is what gives us the chance to be human.

JEFF HULL is a writer who lives in Missoula. He graduated from the UM Creative Writing MFA program in 1992 and taught in the UM Journalism department for 12 years.
When Timothy San Pedro began his dissertation research on Indigenous education at Arizona State University, he met Eileen, a high school student in the only Native American literature studies course offered in the Phoenix area.

Eileen, who is Navajo, shared with San Pedro that the class was the first time her people’s stories were taught in a classroom. After classes, Eileen said she would go home to her father and share what she’d been learning. Her father would add his own knowledge of their people and told Eileen it was time for her to learn their language: He began to speak only Navajo to her.

This experience – sharing, lifting and recentering Native stories and truths in public education – is now at the heart of San Pedro’s work and his mission to shift Western methods of education to include culturally relevant practices in classrooms across the country.

“To center Indigenous experiences to show that schooling is something productive and worthwhile for everyone, that helps you understand your world, your community and – in these stories – your tribe, in a more critical perspective,” San Pedro said.

San Pedro is Filipino-American and grew up in Polson, on the Flathead Indian Reservation. As he listened and learned with students in the literature class in Arizona, he felt transported back in time, wishing a course like this was taught to him and his friends during his adolescence, learning the rich stories and histories of Indigenous peoples locally and beyond.

“That was a moment when I thought ‘Wow, when students have a course where they can see themselves in the curriculum, where there’s a veteran teacher who cares about them and is learning with them about their stories, there’s something really special that happens,’” San Pedro says.

As the country grapples with the motivations and rhetoric about who, why, and what, teachers should teach – San Pedro’s research and teaching approach begins with simply listening to learn who is in the classroom, where they come from and the stories they carry with them.

“Including and prioritizing Indigenous knowledge not only shows Native students in the classroom that they and their people are valued,” he said, “but also that schooling can be a tool for them to help their communities.”

San Pedro’s new book “Protecting the Promise: Indigenous Education between Mothers and their Children” focuses on the transformative education that happens within Indigenous homes outside traditional schooling while also highlighting the hard work of Native mothers when it comes to sharing knowledge intergenerationally. The book is the first in a series called, “Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies,” edited by San Pedro’s academic mentor/adviser and close friend, Django Paris.

Paris says “Pedagogies” is about sustaining the culture and knowledge of communities where education has previously done the opposite.

“What has it meant and what could it mean to shift teaching and learning settings toward sustaining the communities for whom education has really had the opposite purposes in terms of the nation state,” Paris says.

The answer to those questions is at the heart of San Pedro’s experience, too.

San Pedro, who graduated with bachelor’s degrees in

UM ALUMNUS AND SCHOLAR TIMOTHY SAN PEDRO IS WORKING TO INDIGENIZE EDUCATION IN HIS RESEARCH AND NEW BOOK

BY JORDYNN PAZ
journalism and English teaching as well as a master’s degree in curriculum and instruction from UM, was always drawn to Indigenous education.

“I had the opportunity to really see students light up when their histories, their stories were centered in a school, and they were validated for the first time in that setting,” San Pedro says of his dissertation research. “When I was witnessing it in that class, I was picturing myself as that senior with them learning these lessons and engaging with them.”

Growing up going to school in Polson, San Pedro noticed that some of his Native friends transferred to other schools with more Native students or were pushed out of school altogether. Recent educational statistics show that American Indian and Alaska Native students have a dropout rate twice the national average.

At the time, San Pedro asked himself: “Why are my friends leaving me?”

Watching some of his Native friends leave school stuck with him. As he learned more about curriculum and instruction, the stories that are highlighted in textbooks and the ways students are taught, his question transitioned into:

“What is happening in our educational experience that makes us feel disengaged, makes us feel on the margins of what is being shared and what is being taught?” he says.

These questions followed him throughout his time at UM and eventually led to his shift from a career in journalism, to studying how to improve the educational experience for communities that have been and continue to be harmed by it.
“I wanted to better understand those questions, those experiences of students, so that something can be done to make it better,” he said.

To investigate those questions and the context from which they arise, San Pedro argues in his book that the concept of relationality is key: “We need to stop hiding behind the façade that relationships have no bearing on the research we do. Instead, the work must center and sustain relationships that we have with those who invite us into the work already being done in communities.”

He’s resisted traditional research methods, while relying on Indigenous-centered ways of understanding. A big shift for him was working with people he’s known for years, close friends. This pushback against “traditional” research standards is intentional because this work could not be possible or as meaningful without those relationships, he says.

“Relationships matter. Who we are matters,” San Pedro says. “This project and prior projects have been tough. I’ve been trained in western research norms, I had to resist the urge to go down that path of saying that ‘relationships should not be part of these projects, that to [include them] invalidates the work that we do.’ That felt so wrong because the lessons that I learned from the friends and families of the Salish, Kootenai and Pend d’Oreille on the Flathead Indian Reservation, taught me otherwise. They taught me that relationships are central to the stories that we tell.”

San Pedro said growing up in a Native community shaped his perspective and worldview immensely. This feeling of being both an insider and outsider in his community taught him the importance of invitation, of knowing who you are and your role within a larger system.

Without this understanding and these relationships, his book would not be what it is, says Faith Price, one of the Native mothers featured in his book.

“Most people don’t research people [they] know,” she says. “Because he knew us, I think he had a lot more access and probably got a deeper picture of who we are. We were probably more willing to share than we would with a researcher because he was a friend. He was someone we’d known forever.”

There was a lot of nuance that San Pedro was able to understand and “get” without being told because of their long friendship, Price says. Rather than interviews, she felt they were engaging in meaningful conversations during San Pedro’s research, sharing stories that she’s hopeful will impact others. And each of the chapters is co-authored with the mothers and their children to make sure they are told in a way that honors their stories and carries the hope they had in sharing them with him originally.

San Pedro hopes the book will help teachers at all levels to include Indigenous-centered stories, histories and ways of understanding in their classrooms.

In his own classes, San Pedro models his lessons after stories and tries to teach his students that they each come with their own set of “lenses.” The students bring their own experiences and knowledge about their communities that shape the perspectives they use to learn. He encourages his students to share their own stories and their own reasons for being where they are. To become aware of those lenses and their own worldviews helps them understand their position within their education and to discover the ways they can act to make it better, he says.

And that, he says, is more powerful than any lesson a teacher can deliver.

“As you understand yourself, you also understand that there have been particular stories that have been kept from us,” he says. “It’s a process of being reflective of oneself, being aware of more stories beyond the ones we have been exposed to and thinking through how to enact or correct some of the things that have been wrongly done to particular people because of schooling.”

JORDYNN PAZ, Apsaalooke from Garryowen on the Crow Indian Reservation, is a recent UM alumna. She graduated with her bachelor’s in journalism and Native American studies. It is her goal to share Indigenous stories and experiences through writing.
As the new school year begins on campus, I cannot adequately express how excited I am to see a return of college athletics!

We look forward to welcoming crowds back to Grizzly athletic events, and I cannot say thank you enough to those many fans who supported our student-athletes during the pandemic. I missed seeing so many great friends around campus and at our events.

It is an understatement to say this past year was difficult. In many ways, we were learning as we went along. I am extremely proud of how our coaches, staff and student-athletes adjusted and worked through many unknowns, and continued to work hard with a positive attitude.

We owe a great deal of gratitude to President Seth Bodnar and the University leadership team, along with our medical staff and campus partners at the Curry Health Center and the COVID Response Team. These dedicated professionals literally kept the athletic department open and operating with a focus on student-athlete success. I come away from this pandemic with a better understanding of what teamwork really means and with a deeper appreciation for those working at this first-class University. I am proud to be a Griz!

For all the challenges of the past year, there are great successes to celebrate. Despite remote learning, shifting practice and competition schedules, (with strict COVID-19 testing protocol) Grizzly student-athletes stayed the course when it came to academics. These dedicated students set record highs in cumulative GPA in both fall and spring semesters, topping out with a 3.41 GPA during spring semester. This marks 32 straight semesters of Grizzly student-athletes posting a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher. These dedicated students continue to outpace the general students in GPA, credits completed and graduation and retention rates.

There were great athletic accomplishments as well. Grizzly soccer won another conference championship and represented the University at the NCAA Division I women’s soccer national tournament in Cary, North Carolina. There were outstanding individual performances in track and field, tennis and golf, and we successfully reopened Washington-Grizzly Stadium with two football games in the spring. Men’s basketball went to Seattle, knocked off the Huskies of the University of Washington and made another terrific run in the Big Sky Conference tournament. Softball played in front of limited crowds and had another exciting showing in the conference tournament. Pitcher Tristin Achenbach from Choteau threw every inning in a five-game run through the tournament.

We welcomed two new head coaches to the department. Brian Holsinger takes the reins of our treasured Lady Griz program (coming to Missoula from Oregon State
University). Clint May moves up from head cross country coach to take over as director of the men’s and women’s cross country and track and field programs.

What does the future hold? We continue to make progress on our master plan, improving the facilities that serve our student-athletes. A new men’s basketball locker room is well underway, funded completely by our generous donors. We released renderings and plans for a new equipment room along with locker rooms for our women’s basketball and volleyball teams. Fundraising for these projects is underway. We have also started the process of planning for an indoor practice facility. This facility would benefit not only Grizzly student-athletes, but also all UM students and our wider community. Thank you again for all you do to support the University of Montana. This is such a great place to learn, live and compete. The athletic department will continue to focus on success in the classroom, in competition and in the community. We cannot do it without you.

GO GRIZ!
Kent Haslam
Director of Athletics

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We were pleased to receive so many wonderful Bookshelf submissions this year, particularly following a year of solitude where many of our readers morphed into authors. We received a record number of submissions this year and selected 15 titles to feature for this issue.

A Corner of Space and Time: Lee Nye’s Eddie’s Club Portraits
edited by Jean Belangie-Nye, Aaron Teasdale and Benjamin Ferencz. Nye Imagery Ltd. and The Design Cooperative, 2020, 184 pages, $84.
Between 1965 and 1973, iconic Montana photographer Lee Nye created 125 portraits of regulars at the Missoula bar Eddie’s Club, recording the images in the alley behind the bar with his Rolleiflex medium-format camera against a brick wall. His subjects included famed Missoula writers and the not-so-famous – mostly men, railroad workers, bull riders, poker players and loners. The fine-art book, put together by Nye’s wife, a UM graduate and teacher, with two others, contains all 125 original portraits that are still displayed on the walls at the bar, now Charlie B’s, in downtown Missoula.

You Must Have Your Famine
Michael Poage studied with Richard Hugo and Madeline DeFrees in UM’s Creative Writing program and since earning his Master of Fine Arts has taught around the world, run a sheep and cattle ranch and become an ordained minister. He is interested in the physical world and the world of the spirit and the places where the two meet. “All the craving / hangs from my arms / like apples on a tree.”

May We One Day Pick All the Shrapnel from Our Hearts
In his debut novel, UM English literature graduate Shaenrayce Leigland tells the story of middle-aged Bridger, who has returned home to Missoula to drive a sewage truck; care for his 8-year-old curly-haired daughter, Eppy, who is deaf; and sort out his life. Searching for connection, he tries to understand his relationships with his wife and his affair with a co-worker. “I can no longer think in terms of beauty,” Bridger says.

If you’d like to submit a print book for Bookshelf, mail a reader copy and brief letter describing your connection with UM to Montanan Magazine: Bookshelf, Brantly Hall 203, Missoula, MT. 50801. Books must be published within the calendar year and available for sale to the public.
**OYO, The Beautiful River**


UM graduate Mark B. Hamilton earned an MFA in poetry and has traveled the Lewis and Clark expedition route on its original timetable by paddle and pack mule. With an interest in cultural environmental values, he wrote this series of lyric narratives while traveling down the Ohio River from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Cairo, Illinois, in a 15-foot rowing dory. His reader has a seat in the boat, observing everything from pelicans to paper mills.

**Providing for the People:**
**Economic Change Among the Salish and Kootenai Indians, 1875-1910**


Robert J. Bigart, librarian emeritus at Salish Kootenai College in Pablo, gives credit and thanks to the collections and professionals of UM’s Mansfield Library. Bigart documents the transition on the Flathead Indian Reservation from a hunting and gathering economy to farming and cattle ranching. That change was accomplished with hard work and the strong wish by tribal members to fight for economic independence, which became a hallmark of its tribes – Bitterroot Salish, Kootenai and Pend d’Oreilles – against great odds.

**The Grizzly in the Driveway:**
**The Return of Bears to a Crowded American West**


When Missoula journalist Rob Chaney taught a COVID-19 virtual class last winter for a UM Lifelong Learning class on the complexities of grizzly bears trying to live in the ever-more-populated American West, he drew on his career covering science and environment in Montana and a recent Nieman Foundation fellowship at Harvard University. Chaney uses science, narratives and interviews with grizzly bear specialists to explain the recovery of grizzly bears from near-extinction to life in the modern mountain West – full of humans with mixed feelings.

**Falcons of North America, Second Edition**


UM zoology graduate and educator Kate Davis and her photographer collaborators gave readers the first edition of this book 12 years ago. This update is full of new science and photographs that take readers into nests, onto cliffsides and up in the air for falcon’s-eye views of hunts and courtships. The text explains everything from feather molt patterns to flight to the threats presented by climate change today and stories of conservation success.

**Blood is Not the Water**


Montana Poets Series editor Mark Gibbons calls UM English literature graduate Mara Panich’s debut collection of poems “delightful and deadly serious.” Panich is widely known as the proprietor – “empress,” she warmly acknowledges in her thanks to her colleagues – of Fact & Fiction Bookstore in downtown Missoula. Readers of her work will come to know her as a rebel and a rejector of paternal conventions and traditional concepts of women. “Blood is not the water / our children are restless about.”
Aviary
Missoula novelist and journalist Deirdre McNamer sets her readers down in a building of condominiums for seniors in an almost-recognizable Western city on a river. Her characters, all making their ways through their last years with various degrees of success, are faced with a mystery: Who set the fire in the apartment of the building's creepy manager, Herbie Bonebright? And why? Add a city fire inspector with a story of his own and the novel becomes a study of the daily challenges of being human. McNamer was most recently on the UM creative writing faculty.

A Theory for What Just Happened
Award-winning poet, essayist and novelist Laurie Blauner earned her MFA in creative writing at UM, where she studied under Richard Hugo and Madeline DeFrees. Blauner’s titles alone hint at her range of themes: “I Am Born Lacking Emotional Content,” “Approximate,” “The History of Animals That Arrived Late.” Warnings and disasters surprise the reader on every page. “There’s something to be said about / looking in the mirror with a pair of upraised / scissors in your hand.”

Waltzing Montana: A Novel
Mary Clearman Blew, UM graduate and professor emerita in the University of Idaho’s English Department, dedicates her new novel to its inspiration, Edna Mary Murphy McGuire. McGuire ran a sheep ranch in central Montana and served her neighbors as a nurse midwife who arrived on horseback. Blew’s reinvented fictionalized character leads a female-centric story that turns the traditional Western tale of men on the range inside-out.

The Wolves of Mirr
Paul Piper’s first novel, set partly in the Bitterroot Valley of Montana, takes on the gamut of touchy emotional human responses to wolves. Piper’s central character, Levi Brunner, is a wolf biologist who navigates those human feelings and their effects on the local wolves in a mix of mystery, fantasy and eco-fiction that takes the reader from the Bitterroot to ancient Greece. The book rises out of Piper’s love of wilderness and wolves and his education as a wildlife biologist and a poet at UM.

Billy Above the Roofs: A Novel in Stories
Bob Ross takes on the racism of small towns on the edges of Indian reservations in the 1950s through the story of Billy Dixon. Dixon is a young small-town constable and Korean War veteran in Turtle Lodge, Nebraska. Readers of James Welch’s “The Death of Jim Loney” will recognize him as a cousin of the lawman in Welch’s novel. Ross uses a series of related stories rather than true chapters to draw his readers through Dixon’s painful story of unrequited love and loneliness. Ross earned his MFA in creative writing at UM.
Imagining Tanya
Fans of Missoula writer David Cates know him best for his five award-winning novels. In this book, readers get 13 stories invented by Cates as a young writer. The stories focus on lost, struggling souls in a setting of 1980s Central America against the backdrop of military struggles, grief, loss and unrest. Cates never shies from surprising his readers with the outlandishness of life. He earned his MFA in creative writing at UM.

The Amateur Scientist’s Notebook
The poems in Jesse DeLong’s debut collection are set in the mines and farmlands of Idaho, the landscapes of his youth. Those settings lead the poet to study human relationships using principles and techniques of science and materials of the natural world. The result is a notebook that pairs the chemistry of fossil fuels with the experiences of loggers and conjures up ghost caribou. DeLong studied creative writing at UM, where he was UM’s Outstanding Undergraduate in Creative Writing in 2008.

Bookshelf book summaries are not formal reviews by the University. Submission of works to Bookshelf does not guarantee a commitment to publish. Submitted books are added to the Bookshelf alumni library.

GINNY MERRIAM comes from long-time Montana families on both sides. She earned a bachelor’s degree in journalism at UM in 1986 and worked as a newspaper journalist for 20 years. She works now as communications director for the City of Missoula. She has been writing Bookshelf for the Montanan since 2009.

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Having attended high school and college in Missoula, those formative years of academic and social learning provided the launching pad for my life and career. As a member of our University of Montana Alumni Association Board the past four years and now with this opportunity to serve as Chair, I feel tremendously blessed to lead the continuation of the positive transformation in our association, and more importantly to provide support during a critical time for UM.

Facing a host of higher education challenges that are not unique to UM, which became exacerbated by the pandemic, it is now the perfect time for alumni to engage and support our beloved University.

Through the pandemic, we’ve been able to continue our time-honored alumni recognition programs — the Distinguished Alumni Award, the Grizzly of the Last Decade Award and Alumni Scholarship Awards — in addition to maintaining our newly formed Alumni Chapter program and significantly increasing our virtual engagement offerings. Further, the association moved offices twice and our staff was reduced to only two team members (Jodi Moreau and Carrie Enyeart). A loud “shout out” to them both for keeping the Griz growling! We are now back home in Brantly Hall ready and eager to welcome our fellow alumni back to campus.

UMAA’s strategic focus is to prioritize and invest in alumni engagement initiatives that include community-building, career building and student recruitment support. In all three areas, the key to success will be our ability to create meaningful programs that provide platforms for our alumni to engage and participate. Our community-building initiative is well underway with the launch of our Chapters program and the ongoing development of alumni-focused virtual programming. We’ll look next to working with UM’s Office of Career Services and the colleges as we develop an alumni-supported career opportunities network. On the recruitment front, we stand ready to assist when and wherever possible to introduce our 112,000 alumni to potential students and their families, so that we can share what makes us all proud of our University of Montana education and the foundation it provided as we stepped off campus.

As campus returns to normal this fall, UMAA looks forward to working with our campus partners in our collective effort to return the University of Montana to its rightful place as the unquestioned premier institution of higher education in the state of Montana.

GO GRIZ!
Kristofer Kloser,
UMMA Board Chair
THE REV. DOCTOR ANDY KONIGSMARK TAKES THE PULPIT, STAGE AND OBSTACLE COURSES WITH GRACE

BY SUSAN CUFF

Of all the things you can do with a UM degree – it’s not surprising one alumnus has tried on and succeeded as a reverend, author, doctor of philosophy, ninja warrior, comedian, author, bartender, shredder, husband and dad. Enter Andy Konigsmark ’01, a kid from the deep South who was told college wasn’t an option, but chose to became a scholar of life who leveraged his time at UM as a catapult into diverse experiences.

To say that Konigsmark has had a rich and varied life since his years at UM would be an epic understatement. His degree in psychology led to a near-career as a psychologist or family therapist, but it soon took a turn into paths unknown and unexpected.

Konigsmark was raised in Georgia in a close-knit conservative family. He struggled with a severe learning disability and later, clinical depression. Konigsmark drew on his family’s support and his faith to counter a guidance counselor who said his attending college was a “pipe dream.”

Taking advantage of an exchange program between UM and the University of Georgia, Konigsmark and a buddy headed to Missoula after high school.

“After the first six months in Montana, I knew I wasn’t going back (to Georgia),” he says.

Wedged between his studies, he managed to squeeze in skiing, snowboarding and mountain biking.

“Montana was new, different, raw,” Konigsmark says, sharing that he thought Montana had a similar “charm of the South.”

“Genuinely sweet and kind people welcomed us immediately,” he said. “I never felt like an outsider.”

And UM was “bending over backward” to help him succeed.

UM counselors and advisers were “very forward-thinking” in helping Konigsmark’s quest for a degree, he says. They organized a curriculum to fit his abilities and align with his challenges.

UM “showed great compassion for me. It’s unknown if I would have graduated if not for UM,” he said.

He did graduate, though, earning a bachelor’s degree in psychology.

After one early post-college job, he was offered a position in youth ministry in Sun Valley, Idaho. During his stint there, the church minister...
Coming to UM from the University of Kansas, Meyer served as the assistant director of advancement for KU Libraries, where she led a unified engagement approach through strategic communications, annual giving and alumni relations.

Born and raised in Topeka, Kansas, Meyer attended Kansas State University, where she earned bachelor’s degrees in theater and business and a Master of Arts. She held the position of associate director of marketing for the School of Music, Theatre and Dance at KSU, and went on to spend a year at the Topeka Library Foundation before returning to her career in higher education. Meyer, along with her partner, Tyler, and dog, Leo, look forward to joining Griz Nation and the Missoula and campus communities.

LEANN MEYER JOINS THE GRIZ FAMILY!

MEYER JOINS UM AS THE NEW UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION DIRECTOR.

Encouraged him to go to seminary but, at the time, Konigsmark didn’t have any interest in the ministry as a profession. He eventually changed his mind and enrolled at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, to work on his master’s degree, where he also reinvigorated a passion for stand-up comedy.

While living in nearby Los Angeles, Konigsmark wanted to try out for the TV show “Last Comic Standing.” He missed the audition, but ran across another audition announcement for “American Gladiator.” He had stayed in good physical shape over the years and wanted to see if he had the chops to compete.

He was selected for the show out of 3,000 applicants. After two episodes, he was out of the competition, but his TV career wasn’t over. He later competed on “American Ninja Warrior” and won $10,000 on “Million Dollar Mile.”

In the meantime, he finished his master’s degree in divinity and started work on a doctorate in ministry.

“For a kid who didn’t think he’d go to college,” he says, earning a doctorate in two years was a major accomplishment.

Konigsmark now lives in New Mexico, where he spends time with his wife and two children, preaches at Christ Presbyterian church and is a waiter and bartender on the side. He also is the author of two books, “Born to Backslide: A Divine Struggle” (available on Amazon) and “Stand-up Sermon.”

“Thanks to the University of Montana,” he says, “I’ve made it this far.”


1950s

GLENN CHAFFLIN ’55, Corvallis, Ore. “Time flies! I figures this out the last time I read the Class Notes in the (Journalism School) Communique. When I turned to the notes and looked for the year 1955, there was not a word. So, I thought, ‘Well I’m not the only one over the hill.’ I wish everyone well. Stay healthy.”

ZANE SMITH ’55, Springfield, Ore. “Betty and I are pleased to keep current with UM. Forest Service retirement is good, and we have a grandson enrolled at UM.” Smith is retired from the U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Air Force reserve and is a former member of the UM Alumni Association Board of Directors. He was honored as a Distinguished Alumnus of the College of Forestry and Conservation in 2014.

GARY SORENSON ’57, Missoula, says, “It has been 64 years since I graduated from UM. Thirty of those years were spent in the U.S. Army and 28 years back in Missoula in a retired status. It has been just great being back to help promote the Griz whenever I can.”

1960s

DAN PLUTE ’67, Clube de Campo, Calif., is residing in the Lisbon area of Portugal with his wife, Nina. Griz spirit in Europe.

GORDON SPUNICH ’68, M.B.A. ’69, and JILL BECK SPUNICH ’68, Spokane Valley, Wash. Gordon says, “It has been more than 50 years since my wife, Jill Beck Spunich, and I graduated from UM. I will never forget wearing my AFROTC uniform on Monday and marching drills on the Clover Bowl. And, I will never forget the Vietnam War demonstrations on campus and my fellow students who lost their lives in Vietnam. Life has been good for Jill and me, and the University was a very educational and thought-provoking experience.”

1970s

KEVIN S. GILES, ’74, Stillwater, Minn., now writes books and a blog after retiring from a 45-year reporting and editing career at six newspapers. His first mystery novel, “Mystery of the Purple Roses,” set in Butte, was released in September 2020. He lives and writes in Minnesota.

ROBERT COX M.B.A.’76, Pasadena, Calif., retired as a colonel from the U.S. Air Force in 2000 and from NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory in 2017. He completed his master’s degree in theology from Fuller Theological Seminary in 2020. Cox started as an ICBM launch officer at Malmstrom Air Force Base in Great Falls from 1972-76 and spent the remaining 40 years in America’s national space program with gigs in policy, acquisition, program management, technology development and executive management in the Earth Science and Technology Directorate at JPL. He felt called to ministry and now is serving in his church.

1980s


THOMAS ALTON ’83, Fairbanks, Alaska, wrote “Alaska in the Progressive Age: A Political History, 1896 to 1916.” The book has been released by the University of Alaska Press. He is retired from the University of Alaska-Fairbanks after a career as editor at the Alaska Native Language Center. His book is a history of the growth of modern-day Alaska within the context of a national political movement.

KELLY BUECHLER ’84, Happy Valley, Ore., was appointed chief philanthropy officer for Providence Foundations of Oregon in December 2020. He oversees all 10 Providence foundations in the state. The promotion comes after 16 years of service as executive director of Providence Portland Medical Foundation.

JAMES MCCANN ’85, Verdi, Nev., for the past 20+ years has been an executive recruiter in the advertising/marketing niche, partnering with Fortune 500 companies and high-profile ad agencies worldwide, to help them hire their executive-level talent. In addition, he recently began collaborating with marketing executives to write their bios, revise resumes and polish their LinkedIn profiles.

MARLEE MILLER ’85, Boonsboro, Md., continues as COO of a public affairs firm that counsels nonprofits on fundraising and advocating progressive causes. The firm now is doing online teaching, and Miller works from home on the St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, during the pandemic.

ROB JENSEN ’87, Missoula, received the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching after retiring from a 22-year teaching career. The former Hellgate High School teacher, who studied wildlife around the globe before settling into teaching, says education is the most important profession of all.
CAROLINE BYRD ’88, Bozeman, was the executive director of the Greater Yellowstone Coalition for seven years. At the beginning of 2020, with GYC in great shape and with a remarkable team of staff and board members, she decided it was time for her next adventure. In preparation, Byrd has set up SeaBird Strategies to consult in conservation strategy, leadership and funding.

MATTHEW BLESSING ’89, Lake Mills, Wisc., recently retired as director of collections (library, archives and museums) at the Wisconsin Historical Society. He published “Alaska Ho! Anville Schaleben and the Matanuska Valley Colony.” The article was awarded the Kay Levin Award for Short Non-Fiction from the Council for Wisconsin Writers and the William Best Hesseltine Award from the Wisconsin Magazine of History.

1990s

PAUL BERGEN-HENENGOUVEN ’93, Mont Belvieu, Texas, recently was promoted to president/general manager of KBMT, the ABC/NBC affiliate in Beaumont, Texas. He worked there for 10 years as news director prior to being promoted. He resides in the area with his wife, Jennifer Walsh, and their six kids. His second daughter, Natalie, will attend law school at UM after graduating from the University of Texas.

SHANNON NOBLE ’97, Missoula, is the Job Service Disabled Veterans Outreach Program and outreach specialist for the Veteran Support Network, Missoula Region.

2000s

BRYCE TERNET ’00, Hailey, Idaho, is the Sun Valley community development director and has spent years hiking and snowshoeing in Sun Valley’s trails, paying close attention to the trees. His newly released book, “Sun Valley Serenade,” is the result. It is a work of fiction, a mystery novel, based on authentic Idaho history, specifically the arborglyphs drawn into the valley’s trees, predominantly by the early Basque settlers. Arborglyphs are carvings into the bark of trees, depicting everything from Basque-region town names to flocks of sheep to nude figures.

ALAN FUGLEBERG A.A.S ’11, B.A.S. ’02, M.P.A. ’04, Florence, retired as director of Kodiak College for the University of Alaska-Anchorage (senior administrative and academic officer). He previously served as assistant director for Academic Affairs and assistant professor for Kodiak College. Fugleberg was an associate dean at Missoula College.

JAMES PEDDIE ’01, Altadena, Calif, is a developer of Skrillo, a software platform available for both iOS and Android. Skrillo is the fastest and most entertaining way to find out what is pre-trending on the internet.

SARAH SADOWSKI ’01, Helena, was honored as the 2020 Outstanding Commission Staff Member of the year at a virtual awards ceremony held by America’s Service Commissions. The awards program is held each year to recognize the leadership and accomplishments of state service commissions. She is the grants manager for ServeMontana, the Governor’s Office of Community Service. Nominated by a local AmeriCorps program, Sadowksi has been employed with ServeMontana for six years and is a lifelong advocate of service.

CHAD DUNDAS ’02, M.F.A ’06, Missoula, is an executive producer of the history and true crime podcast “Death in the West,” the first season of which tells the story of the murder in Butte of labor activist Frank Little. He also is co-host of the weekly Co-Main Event MMA Podcast. He is the author of the acclaimed novels “The Blaze” and “Champion of the World,” which was named a 2016 Boston Globe Best Book of the Year, as well as a finalist for the David J. Langum Sr. Prize for Historical Fiction and Reading the West Book Awards. His short fiction has appeared in the Beloit Fiction Journal, Sycamore Review, Sou’Wester and Thuglit. Since 2001, he’s worked as a sportswriter for outlets such as ESPN, The Athletic, NBC Sports, The Sporting News, Bleacher Report and the Associated Press, among others. He lives in Missoula with his wife and children.

JUSTIN MCBRAYER M.A. ’03, Durango, Colo., is a philosopher working at Fort Lewis College, the public liberal arts college for Colorado. His latest book explores the technological, economic and psychological roots of the fake news crisis and offers interested readers a way to find the truth in a world of misinformation. “Beyond Fake News” was released in 2020 and published by Routledge.

AARON FLINT ’04, Billings, hosts the statewide “Montana Talks” radio show.

BRYAN HAINES ’04, East Helena, is a communications consultant with BlueCross and BlueShield of Montana in Helena. Haines also serves as the Governor’s Cup Race Director and shares two sons, Connor and Spencer, with his wife Tricia ’04.
ERIKA KIRSCH ‘04, Anaconda, has lived in Hong Kong for the past six years. During her time there, she’s worked in public relations, as a communications and marketing manager, a freelance writer and editor and currently an editor for the Hong Kong Tourism Board.

ROBIN “ROSE” SIMON
M.F.A. ‘04, Nordland, Wash., says, “After completing a Master of Arts in Individualized Arts and Education through the Creative Pulse program in 2004, I am proud to say I published my first book in 2020, titled ‘Jo’s Journey, A Resource Book for Stroke Survivors, Caregivers and Coaches.’ What I learned in the program helped me put together an integrated cognitive recovery at-home program for stroke survivors. I am indebted to the amazing professors in this program.”

CHRISTINE TUTTY JOHNSON ‘05, Huson, is the owner of Clover Creative, a business strategy and corporate event planning company in the Pacific Northwest. She also is the majority owner of Nine Mile Planning company in the Pacific Northwest. She also is the majority owner of Nine Mile planning company in the Pacific Northwest. Johnson served on the GSA Missoula, Destination Missoula and Montana Tech Alumni Association boards. She lives in Huson with her husband, Justin, son Eamonn, and daughters Annilise and Eirnin.


NATALIE MEYER
’06, Bozeman, was recognized by the U.S. Department of Energy for her achievements and leadership in clean energy as part of the U.S Clean Energy Education & Empowerment (C3E) Initiative. Meyer leads climate and sustainability initiatives in Bozeman. Under her leadership, the city has experienced a staggering 37% growth, but per capita emissions have decreased by 15%. Meyer was one of nine women honored and was the award winner in the Government category. She and the eight other winners were celebrated in 2020 at the C3E Symposium hosted by Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

STANLEY PILLMAN ‘06, New York City, is the CMO of Hypoxic Altitude Training Systems and is working side-by-side with fellow Griz BRIAN OESTRIKE ’02. Still loving New York City, his two dogs Jake and Elwood and playing hockey, he also owns his own beer league softball team.

JACOB BAYNHAM
’07, Missoula, was nominated for a national magazine award last year for a profile on his late father-in-law, Jerry McGahan. The story was published in 2019 in The Georgia Review.

SOUTA CALLING LAST ’07, Missoula and Phoenix, Ariz., is the founder and executive director of Indigenous Vision, which started as a grassroots community-based organization in the Phoenix area in 2015. “There was nothing in the area at that time. We brought in educators to bridge urban and tribal communities and ensure everyone was getting the same environmental education.” She is most proud of her work to create the first cultural conservation land trust, calling it her “core life’s work.”

JEN LUEBKE ’08, Bend, Ore., grew up in Missoula and started her triathlon career on the UM club triathlon team. In 2013, she moved to Bend and, shortly after, hung up her running shoes and swim gear and switched sports. Luebke has worked her way up from novice cyclist to the professional ranks, traveling around the country for races. When she’s not on a bike, she’s coaching for The Endurance Collaborative (cyclists & triathletes) or teaching strength classes for Rebound Physical Therapy. You can follow Jen on social media or follow her team, Hagens Berman Supermint.

JEREMY POOL ’08, Sultan, Wash., is the director of football technology at the University of Washington, where he has been named the Pac-12 Video Coordinator of the Year. The award honors exemplary performance in the field of team video and surrounding technologies. He has been with Washington Husky football for four seasons, managing all aspects of the football video program. He spent 10 years with the Jacksonville Jaguars and interned at NFL Films right out of his time at the J-school. Pool says he loves working with the Huskies, but he’s a “Griz to the core.”

ALLYSON WELLER DAVIS
’09, Lander, Wyo., is working as the marketing director for five physical therapy clinics. “I have been making promotional videos of our clinics and getting to use those broadcast skills I picked up in school and have continued to hone over the years. I have 2-year-old twin boys who are keeping me very busy!”

2010s

JULIA CUMMINGS ’12, Vancouver, Wash., recently was promoted to senior content lead at Evanta, a Gartner Company. “I lead a team of content managers that create compelling community engagements for top CIOs and CISOs across North America. In 2019, I launched our brand into Australia and was able to travel there to meet more than 100 executives. I worked with each of them to create content that showed their corporate successes, struggles and opportunities.”

ZACH BROWN ’13, Bozeman, was elected to the Gallatin County Commission last fall. He also is the evening lead at the Fork & Spoon, Human Resource Development Council’s pay-what-you-can restaurant that serves Bozeman’s housing- and food-insecure population. A three-term state legislator, Brown is a former ASUM president.

ALUMNI
SHANNON CARAWAY ’14, Burnsville, Minn., has been promoted from loan operations associate to credit analyst. She earned a bachelor’s at UM in community health and global public health. She began her career with Gateway Bank in 2019.

CONNOR ROBINSON ’14, Worcester, Mass., successfully defended his Ph.D. thesis in astrophysics at Boston University in August. His thesis research focused on the processes of star formation from swirling disks of space dust and gases. While still an undergrad at UM, Robinson was one of only two U.S. students chosen for a paid summer internship with Lockheed Martin Solar and Astrophysics Laboratory in Palo Alto, Calif., working on the Interface Region Imaging Spectrograph (IRIS) mission to explore why the surface of the sun is hotter than its core. Later, he joined the Minerva research team, a collaborative project with Caltech, South Wales, Harvard and Penn State, which searches for planets outside our own solar system. Robinson has received a three-year post-doctoral teaching fellowship to continue his research and teach at Amherst College in Massachusetts.

MARA MENAHAN ’15, Helena, created a short video last year that documents her work at the Summit Station on the Greenland ice sheet. Her video work is part of the National Science Foundation’s Scientist Selfie series. She is an environmental studies graduate and a Truman scholar who works on climate issues in Greenland.

BEN CHIEWPHASA
M.A. ’16, Granger, Ind., joined the Hesburgh Library at the University of Notre Dame as the economics and data librarian. He is responsible for quantitative data analysis, consultation and teaching through the Navari Family Center for Digital Scholarship and also serves as the primary representative of the library to Notre Dame’s Department of Economics.

REBECCA DURHAM ’17, Missoula, had her debut book of poetry, “Half-life of Empathy,” published by New Rivers Press. It interrogates the complex human/non-human relationship in the Anthropocene. Rooted in the author’s deep fascination for the scientific knowledge of ecology, these poems take literal experiences and explore/distort them with language. Moving away from the traditional nature poem, this work enacts an ecology where a human speaker is decentered and earth regains agency.

BENJAMIN POLLEY ’17, Missoula, is recently engaged and temporarily living in Revelstoke, B.C. He has written profiles, adventure narratives and scientific feature articles for Esquire, Sierra, biographic, the Flathead Beacon, Bugle, Appalachia Journal, Lake Superior Magazine, Written River, Earth Island Journal, Canoe & Kayak, Mountain outlaw, Flathead Living, Sisyphus, Filson, Mountain Life Annual (summer), and Go Local Flathead, among others, and science poetry in Literary Orphans and Black Heart journals. He is an editor of the Whitefish Review and was the content writer for the Forever Glacier project at the Nancy Cawdrey studio. Currently, he is writing a book.

RACHEL DICKSON ’18, Crested Butte, Colo., works as a research technician at the Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory where she studies, among other things, plant pollinator interactions. She currently is involved in a phenology study of bees and how they are impacted by climate change.

CHRIS SLAVIN ’18, Missoula, was selected as a finalist for the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship Program funded by the U.S. Department of State. Slavin was one of just 90 finalists to participate in the final round of selections, from which 45 fellows were awarded the fellowship. Finalists often come to the attention of international affairs schools, which then invite the finalists to apply to their programs. Slavin was invited to apply to Harvard and Princeton.

JUSTIN JACKSON ’19, Stevensville, is the morning newscast director for NBC Montana in Missoula. “A task that is not easy, but one that can be maintained, thanks to the J-School.”

IREE WHEELER ’19, Missoula, a parks, tourism and recreation management grad, received the 2020 Dark Sky Defender Award from the International Dark-Sky Association. This award is given to individuals and organizations in recognition of their exceptional efforts to advance the mission and programs of IDA by promoting quality outdoor lighting to reduce light pollution and its environmental impacts. Wheeler was instrumental in the International Dark Sky Place application of Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park – the first International Dark Sky Place to span an international border. She recently was profiled in Forbes.

2010s

KITTY GALLOWAY
M.S. ’20, Missoula, is a field instructor for the Wild Rockies Field Institute, where she teaches the courses Colorado Plateau: Desert Canyons and Cultures in Southern Utah and Wild Rockies: Conservation Across Boundaries courses, among others. In addition to freelance writing and publishing, Galloway also works with Freeflow Institute, where she initially helped as an intern with outreach for their wilderness writing river trips. She has thru-hiked three long distance trails, two of them solo, almost 5,000 miles, including the 2,650-mile Pacific Crest Trail. Her thesis (and soon to be book) is a collection of coming of age stories – healing through walking and time spent outside. She has freelanced for several magazines, including Bitterroot Magazine, NRS Duct Taped Diaries and Camas Magazine. In 2018-19, she was the co-editor of Camas Magazine.

ANNA WEARN ’20, Bozeman, is the conservation policy analyst for the Center for Large Landscape Conservation.
We extend sympathy to the families of the following alumni, faculty and friends. In particular, during this year of the pandemic, we offer our condolences to those who lost loved ones due to COVID-19. Names without class or degree years include employees and friends. To be included in “In Memoriam,” the UM Office of Alumni Relations requires a newspaper obituary or a letter of notification from the immediate family.

Send to:
Office of Alumni Relations
Brantly Hall
Missoula, MT 59812
alumni@umontana.edu


1940s
Merrilyn C. “Merry” Wentz Roberts ’46, Billings

1950s
Frances Louise "Fran" Simons Bernatz ’50, Victor
Kelly Hardenbrook Clifton, Sr. ’50, Madison, WY
Lloyd “Kent” DeVore ’50, Helena
Thomas Alan “Tom” Ford ’50, Hamilton
Rosemary Olney Daigle Kenney ’50, Troutdale, OR
Daniel W. “Dan” Marinkovich ’50, M.Ed. ’57, Missoula
Donald Reeves "Don" Norman ’50, Colorado Springs, CO
John "Jack" Oberweiser, ’50 Anaconda
Helen Josephine “Jo” Carson (Kolar)
Shipman ’50, Lewistown
Mark P. Sullivan ’50, Butte
Vern L. Thompson ’50, Florence
Raymond Eugene “Ray” Bauer ’51, Great Falls
Ralph William Julian ’51, Highlands Ranch, CO
George Scott ’51, Missoula
Barbara Lue Galen Stewart ’51, Sun City, AZ
Gordon Duff Stewart ’51, Sun City, AZ
Denzil R. Young ’51, Baker
Margaret Eloise Johnson McCarthy ’52, Ann Arbor, MI
Elmer E. Afdahl ’52, Milton Freewater, OR

In Memoriam

Dr. Bill Reynolds ’48, devoted alumnus and dedicated physician with a devout Griz spirit, passed away at age 91 on Aug. 5. Bill began his time at UM especially early when he attended nursery school on campus in the 1930s. Later, he studied pre-medical sciences, ran track, served in the Air Force ROTC, led as student body president and was a member of the Sigma Chi Fraternity. His love for the Griz never wavered and UM awarded him an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters in 2019. Throughout his years, he mentored many UM students and student-athletes and enjoyed his time on the advisory board of UM’s Davidson Honors College. There is an oak tree on campus named in Bill’s honor and the Williams Reynolds Teaching Award is given annually to a faculty member of excellence.

Dr. Ulysses Doss, arguably one of UM’s most influential figures, died in August at age 88. The very summer that Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, Doss worked with UM students to found UM’s African-American Studies program in 1968, becoming only the third such program in the country at that time. Doss also mentored Black students as they organized to launch UM’s Black Student Union in 1967 against the backdrop of the civil rights movement. His classes at UM were often standing room only and his professorship was known for mentoring many UM students. Before his time at UM, Doss was a minister in Chicago and worked closely with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. He led UM’s African-American Studies program for 25 years before retiring in 1993.
1960s

Edward William “Bill” “Ed” Arbuckle ‘60, Alamo, CA
John William Gerike ‘60, Mill Creek, WA
Darlene Cunningham Grattan ‘60, Kalispell
Manfred L. “Manny” Haiges ‘60, Rocklin, CA
Kathleen Ann Fleming Welty Holden ‘60, ’80, Missoula
Susan Claire Brymelson Lehew ‘60, Minnetonka, MN
Myrna Lou McCulloch ‘60, Anaconda
James Perham “Jim” McNally ’60, Scottsdale, AZ
Paul Vincent Sullivan ’60, Anaconda
Nancy Jean Peterson Weaver ‘60, Great Falls
Marilyn Louise Boward Wells ’60, Tehachapi, CA
Charles William “Charlie” Wicks ’60, Lewistown
LaDonna Marie Appelhans Young ’60, Las Vegas
Anthony Joseph “Tony” Antonucci ’61, Lynden, WA
Delbert Gene “Dei” Ivey ’61, Bigfork
Philip James “Phil” Jones ’61, Wenatchee, WA
Charles Adam “Chuck” Smith III ’61, ’64, Helena
James Edward “Jim” Welch ’61, Whitefish
Glenn Carter Barrows ’62, M. Ed. ’66, Helena
William Pauly “Bill” Corette Sr. ’62, Butte
Alfred J. “Fred” “AJ” Donich Jr. ’62, Ennis
Earl Edward Grigg ’62, Moose Jaw, SK
Virginia Mary Hanson Jensen ’62, Missoula
Ronald Arthur “Ron” Long ’62, Highwood
Charles Franklin Maris ’62, Billings
Barbara Jane “Barb” Tobin McGiboney ’63, Billings
Charles William “Charlie” Wicks ’63, Lewistown
LaDonna Marie Appelhans Young ’63, Las Vegas
Earl Edward Grigg ’63, Moose Jaw, SK
Virginia Mary Hanson Jensen ’63, Missoula
Ronald Arthur “Ron” Long ’63, Highwood
Charles Franklin Maris ’63, Billings
Glen A. “Mont” Mortenson ’63, Great Falls
Carolyn Marie “Griff” Griffin Richard ’63, Seattle, WA
Demetrios Peter “Jim” Prekeges, M.Ed. ’63, Boston, MA
Larry E. Riley ’63, J.D. ’66, Missoula
Janice Lousie “Jan” Thrunstow Schwartz ’63, Bozeman
Robert L. “Bob” Svehla, ’63, Bella Vista, AR
Janice Lousie “Jan” Thrunstow Schwartz ’63, Bozeman
Robert L. “Bob” Svehla, ’63, Bella Vista, AR
John William “Jack” Whelan ’63, J.D. ’65, Butte
Bonita J. “Bonnie” Jacobson ’64, ’70, Helena
Barbara Jane “Barb” Tobin McGiboney ’64, ’80, Missoula
Carolyn Marie “Griff” Griffin Richard ’64, ’70, Helena
James Lewis Fournier ’74, Lolo
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Susan Jayne “Sue” Adams Butler, Missoula
Kay Louise Clayton Cain, Missoula
Georgiann Strange Dayton Clark, Pocatello, ID
Mayre Lee Harris Clifton, Madison, WI
Norris “Mack” Cole, Billings
Richard Scott Cordes, Missoula
James Harry “Jim” Corning, Billings
Keith Lloyd Running Crane, Jr., Browning
Rial Wheeler Cummings Jr., Missoula
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William Richard “Bill” Derrick, Missoula
John Olaf Frakie, Missoula
Theodore John “Ted” Furshong, Missoula
Brandon Dale Gaillbreath, Browning
Sharon Oidegard Grassman, Power
Robert Hunter Greene, Missoula
Duane Burl Hagadone, Coeur d’Alene, ID
Terence Patrick Harkins, Hamilton
Ada Jane Paulson Harlen, Helena
Linda Louise Westin Luckett Haugen, Missoula
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Dawn M. Hawkinsson Homaday, Florence
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Gregory Thomas “Greg” Johnson, New Orleans, LA
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Dorothy Ann Larson Lane, Billings
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David K. “Dave” Lawrence, Columbia Falls
Donna Crossman Leary, Missoula
William Gary “Bill” Lewis, Missoula
Debra Ann “Debby” Mackey Magstadt, Seeley Lake
Helen Marjory Wilcocks Braunberger Manion, Kalispell
Marjorie Jean “Margie” Allard Marr, Billings
Russell Eric “Russ” McKinnon, Missoula
Nancy Lee Crago Meissner-Gougler, Missoula
Thomas Edward “Tom” “Buddy” Mills III, Saint Marie
Ann Carroll Mitchell, Dillon
Virginia Stetson (Gilmore) Nelson, Portland, OR
Gene Scott Peterson, Missoula
David Mark Reynolds, Florence
Christy Lynn Slikle-Pyrn, Missoula
Beverly “Bey” Toole Sherman, Bigfork
Franklin Eugene “Frank” Szimore, Columbia Falls
Kevin Edward Skunkcap, Browning
Prudence “Prue” Hamilton Smith, Missoula
Brian Keith Last Star, Browning
John Gordon Liggett, Roundup
Helen-Vaughan DeJamette MacKenzie, Mount Vernon, WA
Ollie Munier, Livingston
David Norman “Duke” Oliver Jr, Salem, OR
Gene Scott Peterson, Missoula
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John George Photiades, Missoula
Shelley B. Mahan Pickete, Helena
Elizabeth Francis Jordan Reid, Great Falls
Julie Ann (Lowery) Remington, Great Falls
John Hugh Risken Jr., Helena
DeeJay Robinson, Great Falls
Elizabeth Marie (Gilberti) Rose, Thousand Oaks, CA
Judit Sidkey “Judy” Adams Schaffer, Issaquah, WA
Marilynn Ann Kelson Schooley, Kennenwick, WA
John R. “Jon” Schumacher, Missoula
Robert H. “Bob” Smith, Great Falls
Lois Ann Cook Sol, Chandlere OK
Mary Sternitz Stevenson, Missoula
Philip John Louis Sullivan, Phoenix, AZ
Warren Lee Thompson, Missoula
Emery Daniel “Buzz” Weston, Deer Lodge

Friends and parents

Antone G. “Tony” Banovich, Plains
Althea Marian Squires Bartlett, Missoula
Valerie Elaine Brunson Bieker, Vancouver, WA
John Trent Browne, Bozeman
John D. Bryan, Lake Oswego, OR
Bruce E. Crocker, Palo Alto, CA
Nancy Bergetta Bird Deden, Missoula
David V. “Dave” Diggs, Missoula
James Patric “Pat” Ellis, Sr., Hamilton
Hugh Willis Frame, Missoula
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Ralph Allen Frame, Missoula
Agnes Kirkpatrick Godchaux, Abbевilje, LA
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Patricia Ann “Patty” Bell Henneman, Polson
Michael “Mick” Ainsworth Holien, Polson
Roger Ingersoll, Missoula
Rashel Levine Jeffrey, Missoula
Anita Jean Hanuske Keams, Townsend
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Hollister Alexander “Holly” Larson, Kalispell
Margaret Ann “Marge” Foley Slama Larson, Missoula
Arlene Etherington Mathews, Helena
Marjorie Helen “Marge” Howard Mayes, Missoula
David S. “Dave” Melrose, Sun City, AZ
Adam D. “A.J.” McNichnoch, Jr., Missoula
Raymond “Ray” Nose, Missoula
Margaret Rose McDermott Olson, Missoula
Mary Burke Ornott, Missoula
Louise “Lou” Berry Ozmun, Salt Lake City
Claudia Jean Pratt, Missoula
John Joseph “Jake” Quinn II, Lake Oswego, OR
Stan Winton “Stan” Reifey, Arlee
George Franklin Risi, Jr., Missoula
Stan Stephens, Kalispell
Gregory Ben “Greg” Taylor, Shelby
Beth Elaine Thompson, Missoula
Roxana Thompson, Florence, MT
Shirley Vincent Tienman, Missoula
Carol Elaine Anderson Cook Timmons, Polson
Luella Mae Wilson, Missoula
Sarah Nash Zimmer, Bozeman

NEW LIFETIME Members

The following alumni and friends made a commitment to the future of the UM Alumni Association by becoming lifetime members. The Alumni Association thanks them for their support. You can join them by calling 877-862-5867 or by visiting www.grizalum.org.

This list includes all new lifetime members from 2020 to present.

Shannon ’91 and Jeffrey Behounek ’91, Billings
Laurie Blauer ’81, Seattle
Timothy Brick ’76, Cedar, MI
Julianne Dufresne ’64, Billings
Daphne Felker ’14, Missoula
Cort Jensen ’21, Missoula
Thomas Johnson ’75, Sioux Falls, SD

Michael Kello ’90, Florence, OR
Patrick ’94 and Denali Lovely ’93, Fairbanks, AK
Michael Millet ’03, Cleveland, OH
Tina Montgomery ’91, Sidney
Patrick ’86 and Janet Quinn ’82, Elk River, MN
Maureen Sarment ’70, San Francisco, CA
Madison Tyson ’20, Missoula
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The Montanan’s "something old" for this issue isn’t a physical object or a tactile memento of old UM.

Instead, our artifact for this issue is a drumbeat and song. Rather, ancient songs of the Blackfeet Nation that have echoed through the gates of Hellgate Canyon long before any of us walked this valley.

For about the past 26 years, Chief Earl Old Person and the Rawhide Singers of the Blackfeet Nation have made the four-hour trip down from Browning to the UM campus every spring. The 200-mile drive from the Blackfeet Indian Reservation to Missoula, just as western Montana finally awakes from winter slumber, is an annual journey for the
Blackfeet elders. They arrive at UM’s graduation ceremonies with buffalo skin drums and eagle feather headdress to sing sacred tribal songs in front of UM graduates, their families and friends.

At 92 years old, Old Person is one of the country’s most decorated and respected Native leaders. He holds a UM honorary doctorate and is a lifetime honorary chief of the Blackfeet Nation.

He knows his history. And when he shares why it’s important for UM students, families and administrators to hear those tribal songs on graduation day, we listen.

“We don’t sing only for our Native students, we do it for all of the graduates,” Old Person says. “It really means something for our young people to hear the songs. It means they have achieved something.”

The Rawhide Singers used to be four. Now they are two.

Kenneth Old Person died last year at age 83, and Victor Sure Chief died from cancer in 2010. Old Person and Paul Old Chief remain, though Old Person has folded in Joshua Horn, Kenneth’s great-grandson, as a next-generation Rawhide Singer.

Time is running short for elders who speak fluent Blackfeet and intimately know the songs, which can only really be learned by listening, Old Person says.

“The best teacher is hearing,” he said. “One day all of the elders will be gone. I tell my people, I tell our young people that the best time to learn is when they are young. Knowing our language, our songs is a way to carry us forward.”

In the early 90s, former UM President George Dennison asked Old Person if the Rawhide Singers might sing at Commencement. The president, who was given an Indian name from Old Person and enjoyed a long friendship with him, wanted to find a special way to honor UM’s Native graduates, many of them of the Blackfeet Nation, but represent all of Montana’s Indigenous peoples. Dennison also thought it was particularly important for UM non-Native students and their families to hear the song.

“We did an opening song and then an opening prayer and this is how this all started,” Old Person said. “I guess they liked our songs.”

For the next two decades, the Rawhide Singers would become a staple of UM’s annual Commencement ceremonies.

For a university that sits on the historical grounds of the Salish and Ktispel people, there’s a special Montanan reverence when the ancestral songs are laid on top of the drumbeat rhythm, at the same moment when thousands of people in attendance suddenly go pin-dropping quiet.

One song is particularly special, the Flag Song, that Old Person says is comparable to the Blackfeet national anthem, reserved only for moments of celebration.

“We sing the Flag Song when our boys and girls become ladies and men, or when they join the armed forces,” he said. “We honor our veterans with this song and use this song for celebration to open graduation. It’s one of the main songs we sing.”

Because melodies carry memories, Old Person says the songs are a way to link the past of Indian culture to the futures of UM students.

“Our language, our songs, our traditions are the foundation of being Natives and it’s important for everyone to hear them,” he said. “We have to keep it going as long as we can.”

UM President Seth Bodnar feels the same way.

“We understand what a significant honor it is to have the Rawhide Singers with us,” Bodnar says. “Not only to mark a distinct moment for our graduates, but also to reflect the important ways our community has been and continues to be shaped by our Indigenous colleagues and friends.”

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