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# The University of Montana

## NEWS RELEASE

University Communications  
Missoula, MT 59812  
(406) 243-2522

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August 23, 1994

### **KEMMIS TO SPEAK AT UM RURAL INSTITUTE ON DISABILITIES CONFERENCE**

#### **MISSOULA--**

Missoula Mayor Dan Kemmis will deliver a keynote address at the fourth annual National Conference on Disability Services in Rural Communities, to be held August 27-29 in Missoula.

The conference, Common Threads 1994, is one of two national forums to be held this week that will address how disability issues can be integrated into community programs and services.

Kemmis will draw from his book, "Community and the Politics of Place," said Alexandra Enders, rural training director and conference organizer. "The issues raised in the book are directly relevant to our audience, particularly their task of bridging the gap between rural issues and disability issues," she said.

Kemmis's speech is open to the public and scheduled to begin at 9 a.m. on Sunday, August 28.

The second conference, The State of the Art: Rural Employment and Disability, is an invitational meeting scheduled for August 25-27 to discuss how to bring rural employment and disability issues to the fore among public policy makers. Nationally, some 2.9 million working-age rural residents who have severe disabilities are unemployed.

The public is invited to the final session of the State of the Art conference, which is scheduled for Saturday, August 27, from 8:30 a.m.-noon. At that session conference participants are expected to share their findings from the previous two days of meetings.

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Both conferences are sponsored by The University of Montana's Rural Institute on Disabilities and will be held at the Village Red Lion Inn.

The rest of the three-day Common Threads 1994 conference will include workshops that will address non-traditional approaches to rural disability services; developing action plans for building the strengths of rural communities; and, in particular, developing ways for rural people with disabilities to find and keep jobs.

The public is also invited to attend a no-host reception for Common Threads participants, Saturday, August 25, from 5:30-8 p.m.

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**Contact:** Alexandra Enders, 243-2655.

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