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UM DEDICATES NEW DAVIDSON HONORS COLLEGE MAY 17

MISSOULA --

Ian and Nancy Davidson of Great Falls will help dedicate the new honors college building that bears their name on The University of Montana—Missoula campus Friday, May 17.

The couple will be joined by Gov. Marc Racicot and UM President George Dennison in officially presenting the 10,000 square foot, one-story brick building located in the center of campus to the public in a 4 p.m. ceremony.

The Davidsons donated $1.1 million to The University of Montana Foundation for the $2 million project built entirely with private funds at the south end of the Oval between Main Hall and the Journalism Building. Construction of the Davidson Honors College building was a priority of UM's ongoing $40 million capital campaign.

"The Davidsons have made possible the fulfillment of a dream on this campus," Dennison said. "This wonderful new facility exemplifies the pursuit of excellence in undergraduate education."

Davidson Honors College Dean John Madden; graduating honors student Nicole Rosenleaf of Great Falls; and John Howarth, past president of the National Collegiate Honors Council also will deliver brief remarks at the dedication ceremony. A reception and guided tours by UM honors students will follow.

UM's honors college made history last month by moving into its own home, equipped with
state-of-the-art teaching and learning technology. The Davidson Honors College previously was located on the third floor of Main Hall.

"This will put us right into the heart of the campus community and make our services and facilities easily accessible to everybody on campus" Madden said.

Built where UM's first building, the old Venture Center, once stood, the honors college is the first academic building of UM's second century. The new building was designed with bold arches, a gabled roof and detailed brickwork to blend with neighboring structures.

"The new Davidson Honors College building gives UM the most sophisticated honors facilities in the country, and the most beautiful," Madden said.

The honors college occupies the new building's main floor with offices, classrooms and a student lounge. The Information Technology Resource Center, a cutting-edge production facility for electronic and multimedia teaching resources, eventually will be housed in the basement.

The UM honors college began with 50 students in 1979 as an experimental program to offer classes with small enrollment, innovative teaching and learning strategies and personalized advising for promising students. Shortly after his arrival at UM in 1990, Dennison established a campuswide task force to investigate the establishment of an honors college to provide excellence in undergraduate education.

The UM Honors College was approved by the Faculty Senate and the Montana Board of Regents a year later. The board gave the program its current name in 1992, after the Davidsons made their contribution to pay for more than half the building.

Almost 500 students are enrolled in the Davidson Honors College today. Participating
students represent all undergraduate programs and departments on campus.

The Davidson Honors College administers UM’s premier academic scholarship program, the Presidential Leadership Scholarships, which are awarded to the 10 best incoming freshmen each year for four years of undergraduate study.

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