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NEWS RELEASE

Oct. 17, 1997

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AMERICAN STORES CO. CONTRIBUTES \$2.5 MILLION TO UM'S PHARMACY SCHOOL

MISSOULA --

A \$2.5 million gift from American Stores Co. has brought The University of Montana School of Pharmacy and Allied Health Sciences significantly closer to building a new home for some of the Missoula campus' most popular professional programs.

The Salt Lake City-based corporation operates Osco Drug Store in Missoula and nine others across Montana. "The company believes supporting the building addition project is an effective means of contributing toward higher education, particularly in the areas of pharmacy and health sciences," said Lisa Yeager, an Osco pharmacist in Missoula and a UM pharmacy school alumna. The donation, she said, complements the company's minority scholarship program, which awards four full-ride scholarships to UM pharmacy students each year.

The gift is among the top five made to UM's Capital Campaign - *Ensuring a Tradition of Excellence*, which concludes today with a gala celebration.

With other funds from the State of Montana, alumni, faculty and friends, a total of \$7.1 million of the \$10.4 million needed for the building expansion has been raised. The expansion project is desperately needed, said Dave Forbes, dean of the pharmacy school.

"Our academic mission centers around teaching, research and service," Forbes said. "This building addition essentially doubles the available space, which will allow us to make significant

impacts in each of those areas.”

UM President George Dennison said the American Stores gift has provided a “powerful impetus in the University’s effort to identify the funding for the pharmacy addition on our campus. We have a representative of industry stepping forward to assist us as we strive to provide the best possible education for the pharmacists American Stores will employ.”

Three campus buildings currently house the school’s two major programs -- pharmacy and physical therapy. The expansion will combine the school’s departments into one building with modern teaching laboratories and better accommodations for student and faculty research.

The building expansion project includes plans for new classrooms, a 250-seat lecture hall, science research labs, student learning labs, a Drug Information Service and a Motor Control Lab, as well as offices and conference rooms.

Because of society’s health care needs, these two programs continue to be in high demand, and applications for admission increase each year. But the school has neither the space nor the facilities to accommodate more students. Meanwhile, program graduates are heavily recruited in Montana and throughout the region.

UM is the only Montana university and one of only a few in the Northwest that offer pharmacy and physical therapy degrees. Equipment and lab renovations for these programs were designated a top priority in the UM Foundation’s Capital Campaign, which officially concluded with today’s announcement of the \$71 million total.

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