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NEWS RELEASE

Jan. 26, 1998

Contact: Catherine Zabinski, Division of Biological Studies research assistant professor, (406) 243-4495.

WORKSHOP PLANNED ON RECRUITING AMERICAN INDIAN STUDENTS

MISSOULA--

A workshop designed to help campus faculty members learn how to recruit and retain minority students will be held Wednesday, Feb. 4, from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. in the Presidents Room of Brantly Hall at The University of Montana-Missoula.

The workshop is titled "Recruiting and Retaining Native American Students in Biology and Forestry," and all UM faculty and graduate students are invited to attend.

The event will include two panel discussions moderated by Patrick Weasel Head, a former UM professor of Native American studies now working as director of the High Plains Rural Systemic Initiative in Portland, Ore.

The first panel discussion is called "The Value of Diversity and How to Achieve It." Panelists will discuss strategies for recruiting minority students into biological sciences, and the needs of Native Americans and other minorities once they enter the programs.

The second panel discussion is titled "Resources and Networking to Achieve Diversity." Panelists will offer information that will help interested faculty access programs beneficial to Native Americans and other minority students.

A reception hosted by UM President George Dennison will follow the workshop, which is

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being sponsored by the Division of Biological Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences, School of Forestry, Native American Studies Program, UM Graduate School and Training Within Environmental Biology program.

Panelists will be Robin Kimmerer, associate professor of environmental and forest biology from Syracuse, N.Y.; Reno LoParco, UM graduate student and coordinator of the pharmacy school's Health Careers Opportunity Program; Ron Wakimoto, UM forestry professor; Gerald Slater, vice president of Salish Kootenai College in Pablo; Ray Carlisle, director of the Educational Opportunity Program at UM; Judy Gobert, coordinator of the All Nations Alliance for Minority Participation at SKC; Larry LaCounte, UM McNair Scholars Program director and acting director of the Native American Studies Program; and Penny Kukuk, a UM professor working with the National Science Foundation in Washington, D.C. Several panelists are Native American.

Catherine Zabinski, a research assistant professor in biological sciences, said the impetus for holding the workshop is to enhance the ethnic, gender and racial diversity of the scientific and academic community. She said the biological sciences division recently received a National Science Foundation grant designed to strengthen doctoral programs in environmental and conservation biology. The grant included a component designed to enhance minority participation in graduate education. However, no minority students applied for the program at UM, and she hopes this workshop will help change that.

"We hope the audience will be faculty members and future faculty members interested in increasing our diversity of students," she said. "This workshop will give guidelines about how to do that."

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