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### Fulbright scholar from Kyrgyzstan plans study at UM

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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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July 21, 2003

**Contact:** Barbara Seekins, international liaison, Office of International Programs, (406) 243-6183, seekinsbh@mso.umt.edu.

### **FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR FROM KYRGYZSTAN PLANS STUDY AT UM**

#### **MISSOULA-**

The head of a university in Kyrgyzstan will spend five months learning about American higher education at The University of Montana during the upcoming academic year.

Almazbek Akmatalliev, rector at Naryn State University, will be a visiting Fulbright Scholar at UM from October through March 2004.

Akmatalliev comes to UM at the invitation of President George Dennison, who traveled to Kyrgyzstan last October to sign a collaborative agreement with Naryn State University. The agreement between the two university leaders solidified their commitment to cooperate on issues and programs of mutual concern.

Akmatalliev will study the American university system, focusing on strategic university management, academic enhancement and evaluation, and professional development of administrators and faculty members. His goal is to return to Kyrgyzstan with the knowledge to help create a more effective higher education system in the country.

"Rector Akmatalliev brings a very distinct perspective to his work at The University of Montana as a Fulbright Scholar," Dennison said. "I have full confidence that we will learn a great deal from the interaction, since I intend to involve him in the planning and daily functioning. I believe as well that we can contribute to his understanding of global trends and

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issues that affect higher education.”

Kyrgyzstan gained independence from the Soviet Union in 1991. With a population of just under 5 million in a country about the size of South Dakota, Kyrgyzstan is working to develop a modern, competitive and financially self-sufficient system of higher education. The Central Asian country faces obstacles including a remote, mountainous population; a low economic standard of living; and a poor telecommunications structure.

The Fulbright Program was established by the U.S. Congress in 1946 to promote "mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries of the world." It is administered by the Council for International Exchange of Scholars. For more information, visit [www.cies.org](http://www.cies.org).

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