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NEWS RELEASE

Sept. 8, 2009

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**UM TO HOST SYMPOSIUM ON GEOLOGY OF EARLY EARTH, MARS
MISSOULA**

The University of Montana will host the Winston-Thompson Symposium on the geology of the early Earth and what it reveals about the geology of Mars from 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 11, in the University Center Theater. The event is free and open to the public.

Sponsored by UM's Department of Geosciences, the symposium will feature 16 speakers from around the nation, including distinguished professors from Harvard, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, California Institute of Technology and Indiana University, among other institutions. The speakers will discuss the sedimentary geology of early Earth and what insights it provides for understanding the landscape of Mars.

The Winston-Thompson Symposium honors the work of Donald Winston II and Graham Thompson, UM geosciences professors emeriti. Winston joined the UM faculty in 1964; Thompson joined in 1969. Both retired in 2004, although they still teach formal field geology classes.

As part of the Winston-Thompson Symposium, a graduation ceremony will be held at 12:45 p.m. in the UC Theater for two UM students receiving dual Bachelor of Science degrees in international field geosciences. The dual degrees are offered in collaboration with Potsdam University in Germany. The students will receive UM's first-ever dual degrees.

A complete conference schedule is online at <http://www.umt.edu/geosciences>. For more information, call UM geosciences Professor Marc Hendrix at 406-243-5278 or e-mail marc.hendrix@mso.umt.edu.

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