January 2016 news releases

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Missoula, Montana

generosity of two UM families who came together to ensure the school will always have strong leadership.

Mark Burnham '84 and Eric Sprunk '86, together with their families, have each made a $1 million contribution to create the School of Business Administration’s (SoBA) Endowed Dean’s Chair. Their private support will enable SoBA to recruit an exceptional candidate to fill Dean Larry Gianchetta’s very big shoes. Gianchetta retires on June 30, 2016, after 41 years as a professor and administrator at SoBA. The $2 million endowment guarantees that funds to support the next dean’s salary and vision will be available in perpetuity.

"UM offers the best undergraduate business education, and the state’s only MBA program. It’s important that we have a strong leader to drive innovation," said UM President Royce Engstrom. “Mark and Eric have made an investment in this school that will pay dividends far into the future.”

Burnham and Sprunk are both SoBA graduates who studied finance and accounting. They never met while they were students at UM, but connected thanks to service with the UM Foundation and a shared passion for advancing
Several months ago, they met up in Oregon, where they both live, and conversation circled around to the importance of leadership at their beloved alma mater.

“All things flow from the leader of an organization,” says Burnham. “The school has a great reputation, built over the last 30 years with Larry at the helm, and now we need to find the next great leader to move us forward.”

Sprunk agrees, adding, “Mark was really the catalyst of the idea, but we both feel strongly about leadership and want to give the new dean the ability to drive the advancements that are necessary for the future.”

Both men know a little something about leadership, having built successful careers on the backs of their UM educations. Burnham is the director of finance of Hawthorn Retirement Group LLC, a senior housing company, and managing principal of OZ Cap LLC, an advisory firm. Sprunk, after starting his career at PriceWaterhouseCoopers, joined NIKE Inc. in 1993 and has been with the company in various management positions ever since, currently serving as chief operating officer.

They have both been engaged with SoBA as volunteers, sharing their professional experience with the Business Advisory Council (Sprunk), the UM Foundation Board of Trustees (Burnham) and with students as guest lecturers.

“I love spending time on campus, especially spending time in the classroom with students,” Sprunk said. “I am a big believer in giving back to the communities that help make you, guide you and develop you.”

Although Burnham and Sprunk spearheaded the idea of endowing the dean’s position, their connection to UM is truly a family affair.

Burnham has more than a dozen family members who are alums or associates of UM, including wife Cheryl, a graduate of UM’s Skaggs School of Pharmacy; brother Charlie, also a SoBA alum; sister Mary Burnham Alke, an anthropology major; and Cheryl’s father, John Gordon, who received both a bachelor’s degree in history and his law degree here.

Sprunk’s mother, Rachel Sprunk Smith, was a 1984 UM grad and a longtime volunteer for the University and the UM Alumni Association. His son, Cooper, is currently a business major and plays on the Grizzly football team.

The Burnham family has generously supported faculty teaching and research at both SoBA and the School of Pharmacy. The Sprunk family has given broadly to many areas on campus, including Grizzly Athletics and the College of Visual and Performing Arts, where they created the Rachel Sprunk Smith Scholarship.

“Missoula has a special place in our hearts, and we look forward to many more moments of impact,” Burnham said.

Recruitment for SoBA’s new dean is ongoing, with new leadership expected in place by July 1, 2016. The application deadline is March 1, 2016, and a link to the job description can be found on the University of Montana’s job site.

Contact: Melissa Wilson, UM Foundation AVP, Marketing and Communications, 406-243-4609,
UM News

UM Professors Listed Among ‘World’s Most Influential Scientific Minds’

January 29, 2016

MISSOULA – Two University of Montana professors are listed as “highly cited researchers” in the 2015 edition of “The World’s Most Influential Scientific Minds.”

The publication, recently released by Thomas-Reuters, lists UM Regents Professor of Ecology Ragan Callaway and conservation ecology and genetics Professor Gordon Luikart under the Environment/Ecology section.

The publication analyzes data to determine which researchers have produced work that is most frequently acknowledged by peers. Highly cited papers rank in the top 1 percent by citations for their field and year of publication. “The World’s Most Influential Scientific Minds” lauds Callaway and Luikart for publishing the greatest number of highly cited papers between 2003 and 2013.

“The inclusion of Drs. Callaway and Luikart in a listing of the ‘World’s Most Influential Scientific Minds’ is quite an honor, but comes as no surprise for those of us at the University of Montana who work with them,” said Scott Whittenburg, UM vice president for research and creative scholarship. “They are both nationally and internationally recognized for their research in ecology, conservation biology, genetics and invasive species. Their research is of
UM Professors Listed Among ‘World’s Most Influential Scientific Minds’ - UM News - University Of Montana

the highest caliber, and this recognition is much deserved."

Callaway is a professor in the UM Division of Biological Sciences who studies how plants function together in communities and ecosystems, and his research has taken him around the world. He tracked knapweed back to its native range in Central Europe, researching how the invader interacts with soil microbes and other plants in ways that might naturally keep knapweed in check. Callaway also has sought out low-lying cushion plants on mountaintops from Montana to Alaska, the Andes, Europe, the Caucasus and New Zealand, studying how plants facilitate survival among one another and form communities in some of the harshest environments on Earth.

Luikart works at UM’s Flathead Lake Biological Station and the Montana Conservation Genomics Lab to develop novel DNA-based approaches to understand the ecology and conservation of native fish and wildlife species. His publications include a textbook on conservation and genetics and research articles describing genetic approaches to monitor and predict a population’s response to climate change, to track the spread infectious disease, and to help protect aquatic ecosystems from invasive species, such as zebra mussels, by testing for mussel DNA in water samples.

The list also includes Michael Schwartz, a researcher at the U.S. Forest Service’s National Genomics Center for Wildlife and Fish Conservation, based at UM. Callaway, Luikart and Schwartz are the only researchers in Montana included on the list.

**Contact:** Scott Whittenburg, UM vice president for research and creative scholarship, 406-243-6670, scott.whittenburg@umontana.edu.
UM to Host ‘Writing at Work’ Conference

January 28, 2016

MISSOULA – Writing at Work, a conference hosted by the University of Montana Creative Writing Program, is slated for Friday, March 11. The conference, which connects UM students with successful, creative professionals who use their liberal arts education in their working lives, will be held from noon to 5 p.m., in the University Center Theater. It is free and open to the public.

Web entrepreneurs, freelance journalists, agents, editors and screenwriters will share with current students how they use reading, writing and analysis in their jobs.

The conference schedule follows:

- 12:10 p.m.: Freelancing on the Web and in Print
- 1:10 p.m.: Using your Skills in Business
- 2:10 p.m.: Writing for the Screen
- 3:10 p.m.: Book Publications
- 4:10 p.m.: Getting Started: Baby Steps

Visit the conference website for a listing of each session’s presenters and their full bios at my.umt.edu
The conference is sponsored by UM alumnus and R2C Group Chairman Tim O'Leary and UM's Creative Writing Program in collaboration with UM's Student Involvement Network.

For more information call 406-243-5267 or email creativewriting@mso.umt.edu.

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**Contact:** Karin Schalm, UM Creative Writing Program coordinator, 406-243-5267, karin.schalm@mso.umt.edu.
UM Journalism School Introduces New Scholarship

January 28, 2016

MISSOULA – The University of Montana School of Journalism has a new scholarship fund to encourage and attract the best and brightest young journalists.

Journalism Dean Larry Abramson created the Dean’s Scholarship for Incoming Freshmen, and multiple students can be supported by the fund.

“I hope these new scholarships inspire incoming students to specialize in areas that are a priority for this school,” Abramson said. “International reporting, diversity and digital skills are all critical needs for the future of our profession. These scholarships will encourage students to develop interests that are marketable skills going forward.”

The J-school will provide scholarships for as many as four incoming freshmen beginning in academic year 2016-17. The awards will range from $500 to $1,000.

Students can apply by writing a letter to Abramson. They must explain how their skills, experience and interests will
advance the major goals of the journalism school. Specifically, students should discuss their interests and strengths in any of these areas:

- Contributing to the diversity of the school, and to the media's coverage of issues related to diversity.
- Advancing the use of digital media to improve public engagement in news and public affairs.
- Supporting coverage of international news and explaining the impact of global events on local communities.

Submissions should be electronic and addressed to the journalism dean. The school also welcomes audio and video submissions if they address these top priorities.

There is no application deadline. Awards are given on a rolling basis at the discretion of the dean. Once the awards for a given year are exhausted, no more will be awarded.

The school offers many scholarship opportunities for undergraduate students thanks to the generous donations of many alumni and friends.

The majority of journalism scholarships are given each April at the annual Dean Stone Awards Banquet, named in honor of the School of Journalism’s first dean. Last year, students received more than $150,000 in awards and scholarships.

To learn more about School of Journalism scholarship opportunities, visit http://jour.umt.edu/undergraduate/support/default.php.

Founded in 1914, the School of Journalism is now in its second century of preparing students to think critically, to act ethically and to communicate effectively. The school recently was named as one of the top 10 journalism programs in the country by the Radio Television Digital News Association. Visit http://jour.umt.edu/ for more information.

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Contact: Alyssa Rabil, UM School of Journalism media and information coordinator, 406-243-4366, alyssa.rabil@mso.umt.edu.
MISSOULA – When University of Montana biogeochemistry Professor Cory Cleveland begins a new project in Panama this summer, he will push the boundaries of soil science and how scientists collaborate with journalists to document their research.

Cleveland will build on his long-held conviction that “a fundamental piece of good science is to communicate it effectively” when he has a graduate student from UM’s School of Journalism embed with his research team to document their fieldwork at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute.

“It’s an innovative model of collaboration between journalism and the sciences that we hope will serve as a model for other research efforts at the University of Montana,” said School of Journalism Associate Professor Henriette Lowisch, who runs the school’s master’s program in environmental science and natural resource journalism and is included on the grant as senior personnel.

Tropical forests are among the most productive on Earth and take up much of the carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere. If these forests can balance that extra atmospheric CO2 with the right nutrients, such as phosphorous,
they could absorb more CO2 as they grow bigger and greener. However, much of that needed phosphorous is in a form that is thought to be inaccessible to plants — bound up with iron or aluminum, for example.

Ten years ago, Cleveland started wondering if tropical plants were able to get more nutrients from the soil than scientists previously thought. He just received a grant of nearly $784,000 from the National Science Foundation to investigate if and how plants access scarce nutrients from soils.

Together with his co-principal investigators Noah Fierer from the University of Colorado and Benjamin Turner of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama, Cleveland will plant seedlings in varying mixtures of soil nutrients to see how plants access different forms of soil phosphorous.

“We think that plants might get help from bacteria and fungi to access and use the phosphorous traditionally thought unavailable,” Cleveland said. “If we’re right, this has huge implications for what we know about plant growth in the future.”

The research will improve predictions about future rates of plant productivity in tropical forests and could lead to improvements in how soil fertility is managed in tropical agricultural soils. If tropical forests can access more phosphorous than current global models predict, those forests might be able to remove more CO2 from the atmosphere.

The opportunity to document all phases of the research will allow the journalism student to produce compelling stories about a rigorous scientific experiment that has large potential impacts on humanity, Lowisch said.

“This will be a huge challenge for an emerging journalist, who will be able to practice all they’ve learned about making complex research accessible to the public,” Lowisch said.

Cleveland and collaborators will begin research in Panama this summer with expected preliminary results by fall 2017.

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**Contact:** Cory Cleveland, UM associate professor of terrestrial ecosystem ecology, 406-243-6018, cory.cleveland@umontana.edu.
MISSOULA – The University of Montana Athletic Training program recently received a perfect review from the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education. The review marks continued success for Athletic Training at UM, and a long accreditation history.

“We strive for excellence and this review validates the efforts within the program, the Department of Health and Human Performance and the Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences,” said Valerie Moody, director of the UM Athletic Training program and CAATE Review Team Member.

The Athletic Training program at UM was among the first in the nation and continues to lead the field as one of the fastest growing graduate programs at UM. The rigorous accreditation process ensures the program develops, maintains and promotes appropriate standards in educating students and providing professional and residency athletic training experiences.

“The Athletic Training Program boasts a 96 percent first-time pass rate on the Board of Certification Examination,” said Scott Richter, chair of UM’s Department of Health and Human Performance and CAATE Site Visit Member.
“The support from University of Montana administration has been invaluable to our continued success.”

This type of recognition and accreditation process adds further validity to quality programs and stands as a benchmark of high-quality instruction, clinical experiences and faculty involvement, Richter said.

“This wonderful recognition of our Athletic Training program speaks volumes,” said Roberta Evans, dean of the College of Education and Human Sciences. “The dedication of our athletic training and health and human performance faculty is unparalleled, and their hard work is reflected in the outstanding graduates that emerge from the program.”

To learn more about the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education, visit http://caate.net/. For more information on the UM Athletic Training program, visit http://coe.hs.umt.edu/umat/ or call 406-243-4911.

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Contact: Peter Knox, communications and outreach manager, UM Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences, 406-243-4911, peter.knox@mso.umt.edu.
MISSOULA – John Freer, an adjunct carpentry professor at Missoula College University of Montana, won the 2015 Green Building Educator of the Year award and was honored by the National Association of Home Builders at the 2016 International Builders' Show on Jan. 18 in Las Vegas.

Freer has worked as a leader and educator in green building for over 20 years. In 1996, he launched Riverworks and won a series of honors locally and statewide for his sustainable development projects and green-building advocacy. In 2006, he expanded the Missoula Green Building Initiative into the Montana Green Build Program. During his time as chairman, the program served over 2,500 members and provided certification and education on green building in Montana, offering incentives such as tax credits. Freer received the NAHB Green Building Advocate of the Year award in 2009 and the 2014 Master Certified Green Professional Designee of the Year award in 2014.

“The shortage of skilled labor and mid-level management in the construction industry is very real and growing rapidly nationwide,” Freer said. “It’s exciting to be involved in providing education not only on the technology, techniques and skills of the industry, but the vast opportunity available to the next generation of construction
industry professionals."

Freer also develops green-building curriculum at Missoula College, which allows students to earn a Certified Green Professional Designation. He currently is working on a program in sustainable construction technology. He serves as the owner and principal of GBS Consulting in Missoula.

Founded in the early 1940s, the NAHB consists of a federation of 140,000 members with state and local associations and constructs nearly 80 percent of new homes built in the United States. It aims to provide all Americans with safe, decent and affordable housing. The NAHB also includes educational opportunities, such as hosting the annual International Builders' Show, and is a founding partner of the International Housing Association, which works to advance home building globally.

To find out more information about the NAHB, visit https://www.nahb.org.

Contact: Katie Dalessio, Missoula College fiscal and personnel services director, 406-243-7908, katie.dalessio@mso.umt.edu.
UM Family Medicine Residency Program Achieves ACGME Osteopathic Recognition

January 27, 2016

MISSOULA – The University of Montana’s Family Medicine Residency of Western Montana is among the first family medicine residency programs in the nation to receive Osteopathic Recognition from the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME).
Education. This recognition is based on formal application and review of FMRWM's osteopathic curriculum.

“We are pleased to have been recognized by the ACGME as having a sound osteopathic curriculum,” said Dr. Marc Mentel, associate program director for osteopathic education. “This recognition can only enhance our ability to recruit high-quality residents to satisfy our mission to care for Montanans in rural and underserved parts of the state.”

FMRWM is dually accredited by the ACGME and the American Osteopathic Association. In early 2014, the AOA and ACGME entered into an agreement to merge, a process that will result in a single accrediting body in 2020 for all osteopathic and allopathic programs. While both osteopathic and allopathic physicians practice evidence-based scientific medicine, osteopathic physicians may use manual medicine techniques to complement their treatment regimens. Both types of doctors are licensed to practice medicine and surgery in all 50 states.

The ACGME is an organization that accredits graduate medical education programs in the United States. During the 2013-14 academic year, there were approximately 9,600 ACGME-accredited residency and fellowship programs. The ACGME created the Osteopathic Principles Committee to establish criteria for programs seeking Osteopathic Recognition and to formally review those programs. After an extensive application and evaluation process, FMRWM is one of the first programs in the nation deemed to have earned Osteopathic Recognition.

Having the ACGME Osteopathic Recognition is an important piece for the recruitment of top-notch osteopathic candidates who want to train in Montana and ultimately practice in Montana. Currently there are seven doctors of osteopathic medicine training in the FMRWM program.

Dr. Ned Vasquez, FMRWM program director, said the recognition will promote the program's success as it continues its mission to train family physicians for Montana.

“We feel incredibly fortunate to achieve the ACGME Osteopathic Recognition under the new single accreditation system,” he said. “For a relatively new residency program, we have made great strides and accelerated
UM Family Medicine Residency Program Achieves ACGME Osteopathic Recognition - UM News - University Of Montana

achievements in a short amount of time. This speaks volumes of the commitment of our faculty and staff."

The FMRWM, headquartered in Missoula, is a three-year family medicine residency program sponsored by UM and affiliated with the University of Washington Family Medicine Residency Network. The program's three sponsoring hospitals in Western Montana include Kalispell Regional Healthcare, Providence St. Patrick Hospital and Community Medical Center. Residents are involved in continuity clinic training at Partnership Health Center in Missoula and Flathead Community Health Center in Kalispell. Additionally, the program works with an extensive rural training network of nine sites, including Blackfeet Community Hospital, Northwest Community Health Center, Providence St. Joseph Medical Center, Clark Fork Valley Hospital, St. Luke Community Healthcare, Community Physicians Group-Stevensville, Marcus Daly Memorial Hospital, Community Hospital of Anaconda and Barrett Hospital and Healthcare.

The program welcomed its inaugural class of 10 residents in July 2013 with the first class graduating in June 2016. FMRWM is dedicated to training family physicians capable of providing comprehensive and transformed care for the rural and underserved areas in Montana. For more information visit http://health.umt.edu/fmrwm/.

Contact: Rebecca Morgan, project and communications manager, Family Medicine Residency of Western Montana at UM, 406-544-5085, rebecca.morgan@mso.umt.edu.

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UM Student Documentary Wins Big at Utah Film Festival

January 26, 2016

MISSOULA – A short documentary produced by eight seniors in the filmmaking program at the University of Montana School of Media Arts recently won several awards after its premiere at the Slamdance Film Festival in Park City, Utah.

The film “Everyone in Between” was one of 12 selected to premiere at the festival, and it won best
original score, best editing, best directing and best LGBTQ film in the festival’s Fusion Doc Challenge. In addition, the film won a distribution deal with Fusion networks.

It was created in five days as part of the Fusion Doc Challenge by Whitney Skauge of Bozeman; Sean Guslander of Missoula; Drew Daly of Spokane, Washington; Paris Bread of Great Falls; Jeffrey Neubauer of Billings; Hiroka Matsushima of Yokohama, Japan; Lane Brown of Missoula; and Sean Rudolf of Helena. It highlights, in a progressive manner, social issues typically not addressed in mainstream media. It profiles the lives of two transgendered women working on their personal identity and focuses on larger issues of gender nonconformity.

“As seniors in the film program, this group worked hard for this career-defining moment,” said Talena Sanders, a UM School of Media Arts assistant professor. “Acceptance into Slamdance is a rare occasion for any filmmaker, and these media arts students are proud to represent the University of Montana, the Missoula community and Montana with such high-caliber work.”

The student filmmakers attended Slamdance, where they met and networked with professional filmmakers and industry leaders, providing a chance to bridge their academic careers with real-world applications.

As part of the Fusion Doc Challenge, the film also will screen in Missoula during the Big Sky Documentary Film Festival in February.

Find out more about this honor at http://tinyurl.com/jdnb6o5 and http://www.slamdance.com/. For more information call Sanders at 406-243-4540 or email talena.sanders@mso.umt.edu.

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Contact: Talena Sanders, UM School of Media Arts assistant professor, 406-243-4540, talena.sanders@mso.umt.edu.
MISSOULA – The University of Montana’s We Are Montana in the Classroom program will travel to Browning and Heart Butte on Wednesday, Jan. 27, to share UM’s research and educational opportunities with high school students.

Six UM faculty members, professionals and graduate students will lead hands-on activities and demonstrations at Browning High School’s Family Science Literacy Night, a celebration of science and science careers, from 5 to 7 p.m. in the school gymnasium. The event is free and open to the community.

During the school day, the group will visit high school classrooms in Browning and in Heart Butte to lead activities and serve as higher education and career role models.

The group traveling to Browning and Heart Butte includes UM faculty members Mark Reiser (physics and astronomy), Riccardo Ton (Division of Biological Sciences), Amanda Duley (UM Center for Structural and Functional Neuroscience and spectrUM Discovery Area), Jim Sears (geosciences), Bradley Layton (Missoula College Energy Technology Program) and Shane Sangrey (College of Health Professions and Biomedical Sciences).
“We’re grateful to the Browning and Heart Butte communities for hosting us and excited to share with their students some of the many opportunities and rewarding career paths that await them in college,” said Holly Truitt, who directs We Are Montana in the Classroom.

We Are Montana in the Classroom, part of the UM Broader Impacts Group in the Office of Research and Creative Scholarship, partners with more than 100 UM faculty members, professionals and graduate students to inspire K-12 students about higher education and career pathways. This academic year, the program is on track to reach 10,000 students through statewide tours, local classroom visits and distance-learning experiences.

K-12 teachers can learn more about We Are Montana in the Classroom’s array of free programs by emailing nathalie.wolfram@umontana.edu.

Contact: Nathalie Wolfram, We Are Montana in the Classroom program manager, 406-370-7731, nathalie.wolfram@umontana.edu.
UM Gallery of Visual Arts to Display Sculpture, Paintings by Francis Paul Pearson

January 25, 2016

MISSOULA – The Gallery of Visual Arts at the University of Montana will present an exhibition of assemblage sculpture and relief paintings by alumnus UM Francis Paul Pearson. His exhibition, “What Lay Before – What Lay After,” will be on display Tuesday, Feb. 2, through Thursday, March 3. An opening reception for the exhibition is scheduled from 5 to 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 4. The Gallery of Visual Arts is located on the first floor of the Social Science Building and is free and open to the public.

Pearson, who lives in Clinton, creates assemblage sculpture and relief paintings that are inspired by the natural world, landscape and environment. Using a variety of found objects and a wide range of materials, his work examines natural processes that are cyclic and reflect the passage of time. He often uses birds
and other animal imagery to express something about nature that is fleeting or unseen. In some cases, the animal imagery and materials have a humorous, sarcastic point of view that expresses the emotional and tenuous human relationship with nature and with one another.

Pearson constructs painting and sculpture with similar additive processes. The relief paintings are made from numerous pieces of wood wrapped in canvas that are attached to the panel. The result is similar to a stained glass window and can evoke an iconic interpretation. In the sculpture, found objects and materials are chosen for their textural qualities, overall shape and ability to communicate content. Some of the tools used to create the work, such as putty knives, paintbrushes and pencils are embedded in the richly textured surfaces of both painting and sculpture.

Pearson earned his Master of Fine Arts from UM in 1991. He and his family have made the Missoula area their home ever since. Over the years, Pearson has been an art teacher for Very Special Arts Montana, the state organization on Arts and Disabilities; participated in the Artist in the Schools Program; and taught art to at-risk youth and diverse population of adults with special needs at Opportunity Resources.

For more information call gallery Director Cathryn Mallory at 406-243-2813 or email gallery.visarts@umontana.edu. Information about the Gallery of Visual Arts is available at http://www.umt.edu/art.

Contact: Cathryn Mallory, director, UM Gallery of Visual Arts, 406-243-2813, gallery.visarts@umontana.edu, cathryn.mallory@umontana.edu.
MISSOULA – Preliminary estimates by the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research at the University of Montana show that approximately 11.7 million nonresidents visited Montana in 2015 and spent almost $3.6 billion in the Treasure State. While the number of travelers visiting the state in 2015 increased by almost 8 percent compared to 2014 numbers, the total amount spent by those travelers decreased nearly 8 percent.

Though spending did not reach the record levels of 2014, the benefits of travel-related spending coming into the state still ripple throughout the economy, supporting more than 37,000 jobs directly and 52,750 jobs in total. Nonresidents contributed more than $208 million in state and local taxes in 2015.

Despite the decrease in overall statewide spending, many business owners reported an increase in customers during the past year on a recent ITRR survey. Of the tourism-related business owners surveyed by ITRR this fall, 59 percent saw an increase in visitation or customers in 2015, while 19 percent reported seeing a decrease. Of those businesses that benefited from increased visitation, 33 percent had a significant increase – more than 10 percent over 2014. Looking forward, 61 percent of the businesses responding to the ITRR survey expect to see their visitation increase in 2016.
Initial observations indicate that the decrease in spending may be attributed, in large part, to lower fuel prices. In 2015, spending on gasoline by nonresidents was down 36 percent compared to 2014. With gasoline so inexpensive, people can travel more often and likely took more weekend trips, increasing the total number of visitors to Montana. Additionally, the decrease in the value of the Canadian dollar has contributed to less spending by Montana’s northern neighbors, who typically represent about 14 percent of all nonresident visitors to the state. While they are still visiting Montana, their spending appears to have tapered off over the past year.

All information and reports published by ITRR are available online at [http://www.itrr.umt.edu](http://www.itrr.umt.edu).

**Contact:** Norma Nickerson, director, UM Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research, 406-243-2328, norma.nickerson@umontana.edu; Kara Grau, assistant director of economic analysis, UM Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research, 406-243-5107, kara.grau@umontana.edu.
UM Mansfield Library to Host Exhibit on Contemporary African-American Surgeons

January 22, 2016

MISSOULA – The Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library at the University of Montana will host the exhibition “Opening Doors: Contemporary African American Academic Surgeons” Wednesday, Jan. 27, through Saturday, Feb. 27. It is free and open to the public during regular library hours. The library also will host related lectures on Thursday, Jan. 28, and Thursday, Feb. 11.

The exhibition celebrates the medical and educational contributions of African-American academic surgeons. It tells the stories of four pioneering African-American surgeons and educators who exemplify excellence in their fields and believe in educating and mentoring younger physicians and surgeons.

Through contemporary and historical images, the exhibition takes the visitor on a journey through the lives and achievements of these surgeons and tells the stories of those who came before them and those who continue the tradition today.
The four pioneers are Alexa Canady, the first African-American woman pediatric neurosurgeon; LaSalle Leffall Jr., cancer surgeon and the first African-American president of the American College of Surgeons and the American Cancer Society; Claude Organ Jr., general surgeon and the first African-American to chair a department of surgery at a predominantly white medical school; and Rosalyn P. Scott, the first African-American woman cardiothoracic surgeon.

"Opening Doors' is not intended to be an encyclopedic look at African-American academic surgeons, but is intended to provide a glimpse into the contributions that African-American academic surgeons have made to medicine and medical education," said Julie Biando Edwards, Mansfield Library associate professor. "We hope that through this exhibition we can bring these stories to light and inspire others to pursue careers in academic surgery."

Ellen Baumbler, an interpretive historian at the Montana Historical Society, will present "African-American Montanans in the Healing Arts" from 6 to 7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 28, in the Mansfield Library East Faculty Office Area. The lecture will highlight the legacy of the pioneering Bridgewater family and daughter Octavia’s nursing career.

A virtual lecture, “Entering a ‘White’ Profession: Black Physicians in the New South,” will take place from 6 to 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 11, in the Mansfield Library East Faculty Office Area. It will be presented by medical historian Todd Savitt, who teaches at the Brody School of Medicine at East Carolina University.

The exhibition was developed and produced by the National Library of Medicine and the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History & Culture.

The exhibit will be open during the Mansfield Library’s regular hours, which can be found online at http://www.lib.umt.edu/about/hours/text.php.

Contact: Julie Biando Edwards, associate professor, UM Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library, 406-243-4505, julie.edwards@umontana.edu.
UM Professor Awarded Fulbright for Forest Restoration Research in Chile

January 22, 2016

MISSOULA – Cara Nelson, a restoration ecology professor at the University of Montana, recently received a Fulbright Scholarship to conduct research on forest restoration in Chile during spring semester 2016.

Nelson previously was chair of the international Society of Ecological Restoration and the first director of the ecological restoration program in UM’s College of Forestry and Conservation. Her research concentrates on increasing knowledge about ecological processes and applying it toward restoration efforts. Nelson currently is involved with the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity and other global efforts to meet the restoration targets set forth by international forums. As part of this work, she recently traveled to Kuwait and partnered with the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research to restore arid land.

While in Chile, Nelson will collaborate with other researchers and focus on two major projects: a holistic assessment of temperate forests needing restoration throughout South America and analysis of the effectiveness of current forest restoration treatments in the region.

Nelson also will teach a graduate-level restoration ecology course at the University of Concepcion (Universidad de...
Concepción) in Chile this spring. The web-based course will include students from five other South American universities. She plans to contribute to two other undergraduate courses at UdC and work on strengthening relations and developing student exchange programs between UM and other Chilean universities.

“UdC is an ideal place to study forest restoration,” Nelson said. “It is one of the leading institutions in South America in the fields of ecology and natural resource management. In addition, my local hosts and collaborators, Cristian Echeverría, Aníbal Pauchard and Marcela Bustamante Sánchez, have each made important contributions to the fields of restoration ecology, landscape ecology and invasion biology.”

Ecological restoration has become a globalized effort during recent decades. The UN Convention on Biological Diversity set a goal to restore 15 percent of ecosystems by 2020 and the International Union for Conservation of Nature has similarly challenged countries to restore 150 million hectares of forest by the same year.

The Fulbright Scholar Program was established in 1946 under legislation introduced by Sen. J. William Fulbright of Arkansas and is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. The Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program awards teaching and/or research grants to nearly 800 U.S. faculty and professionals in a variety of fields. Currently, the Fulbright Scholar Program operates in over 155 countries worldwide.

For more information on the Fulbright Scholar Program, visit http://www.cies.org.

Contact: Leana Schelvan, UM College of Forestry and Conservation director of communications, 406-243-6693, leana.schelvan@umontana.edu.
UM Professor Awarded Fulbright for Forest Restoration Research in Chile - UM News - University Of Montana
MISSOULA – The Montana World Trade Center at the University of Montana created a business-centric agenda for visiting Israeli officials Jan. 20-22.

The officials were Andy David, Israeli consul general to the Pacific Northwest, and his consul for economic affairs, Gili Ovadia. They were accompanied by Maya Vardi Shoshani, the West Coast representative for the U.S.-Israel Binational Industrial Research and Development (BIRD) Foundation.

The MWTC guests learned about opportunities for research and development collaboration with Montana firms and investigated enhanced opportunities for trade between Montana and Israel.

Their agenda included exploring primary industries suitable for potential collaboration, supply chains and foreign direct investment opportunities. MWTC officials also evaluated the potential for future outbound and inbound trade missions. The visit highlighted Missoula and Bozeman, two areas of western Montana with a larger concentration of businesses with high potential for collaboration in research and development.
“Our goal is to help Montana businesses understand the opportunity that exists within the Israeli market,” MWTC Executive Director Brigitta Miranda-Freer said. “We strive to connect Montana businesses operating – or trying to operate – internationally with funding that may assist them. With the Israeli group, we created an agenda that offers a comprehensive representation of what Montana has to offer.”

She said officials met with a diverse group of companies, such as Rocky Mountain Biologicals and LMG Security in Missoula and Resonon and KC Harvey Environmental in Bozeman. The visit also included several group discussions, including a photonics industry overview hosted by the Montana Photonics Industry Alliance and a bioscience industry reception hosted by the Montana BioScience Alliance.

“We hope to strengthen our economic ties,” David said. “Every time I come to Montana, I meet people, and sometimes the best return on your investment comes from the unexpected. A lot of Israeli companies and companies in Montana don’t know much about each other. My role is to represent the government in strengthening those relationships and expand to new areas and explore new territories.”

Co-established by the U.S. and Israeli governments, the BIRD Foundation promotes and facilitates collaboration between U.S. and Israeli companies in a wide range of technology sectors. For more information visit http://www.birdf.com.

For nearly two decades, MWTC has served Montana as a trusted adviser for businesses wanting to connect globally and prosper locally. It serves as an extension of businesses across the state, enhancing their international commercial capabilities. In 2015 alone, MWTC assisted nearly 70 businesses with their international trade endeavors. For more information visit http://mwtc.org.

**Contact:** Brigitta Miranda-Freer, executive director, Montana World Trade Center, 406-243-6982, brigitta@mwtc.org.
MISSOULA – New this year, the Bureau of Business and Economic Research at the University of Montana will release its inaugural Montana Economic Report, a comprehensive assessment of economic activity in Montana, at its Economic Outlook Seminar series, which kicks off Tuesday, Jan. 26, in Helena.

“Montana Economic Report 2016” will cover topics such as 2015 in review, the U.S. economic outlook, an in-depth look at the Montana economy and assessments of eight key industry sectors in Montana, including technology and innovation, farming and ranching, and logistics and transportation, among others.

“We wanted to expand our coverage and analysis of Montana’s economy to include areas of importance to Montanans, and we believe this inaugural edition of the ‘Montana Economic Report 2016’ is a great start,” BBER Director Patrick Barkey said.

In BBER’s in-depth look at the Montana economy, the report covers the future of coal, the outmigration of Montana’s college graduates, Montana’s property tax system, Medicaid expansion and declining commodity prices.
The report will be provided to those attending the upcoming BBER Economic Outlook Seminars around the state. Doug Young, professor emeritus of economics at Montana State University, will present the keynote, “Rising Property Taxes – What You Should Know.”

In addition to Paul Polzin’s local economic outlooks, this year’s seminars also will include local market-focused information on property taxes, manufacturing, real estate and housing.

The seminars cost $85, which includes the “Montana Economic Report 2016,” a copy of the PowerPoint presentation, lunch and a one-year subscription to Montana Business Quarterly, BBER’s award-winning business journal. Continuing education credits are available. Groups of five or more can receive a discount by registering online at http://www.bber.umt.edu/.

The seminar runs from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the following cities:

- **Helena**: Tuesday, Jan. 26, Best Western Great Northern Hotel
- **Great Falls**: Wednesday, Jan. 27, Hilton Garden Inn
- **Missoula**: Friday, Jan. 29, Hilton Garden Inn
- **Billings**: Tuesday, Feb. 2, Northern Hotel
- **Bozeman**: Wednesday, Feb. 3, the Commons at Baxter and Love
- **Butte**: Thursday, Feb. 4, NorthWestern Energy Butte general office
- **Kalispell**: Friday, Feb. 12, Hilton Garden Inn
- **Lewistown**: Tuesday, March 15, Central Montana Education Center
- **Havre**: Wednesday, March 16, MSU-Northern, Hensler Auditorium

BBER is the main research unit of the School of Business Administration at UM. Established in 1948, its mission is to inform Montanans about the economic climate in which they live and work. In addition to conducting its Economic Outlook Seminars across the state at the beginning of each year, BBER researchers engage in a wide range of applied research projects that deal with different aspects of the state economy, including survey research, economic analysis, health care research, forecasting, wood products research and energy research.

For more information or to register, visit BBER online at http://www.bber.umt.edu/ or call 406-243-5113.

**Contact:** Patrick Barkey, director, UM Bureau of Business and Economic Research, 406-243-5113, patrick.barkey@umontana.edu.
BBER to Release Inaugural Montana Economic Report at Outlook Seminars - UM News - University Of Montana
MISSOULA – The Staff Senate at the University of Montana will host a community run/walk to raise money for the Staff Senate Scholarship Fund. The 5K Diploma Dash begins at 9 a.m. Saturday, March 26, at the Van Buren Street footbridge. The route will take racers around and through the UM campus, and all registered participants will receive a technical race T-shirt, chip timing and a 5K race diploma upon completing the course.

UM’s Staff Senate supports more than 1,000 classified University staff members who work behind the scenes to ensure a smooth-running campus and the success of UM students. Each year Staff Senate grants more than $3,000 in scholarships to dependents of UM staff members.

Register for the 5K Diploma Dash online at http://www.umt.edu/staffsenate/5k-diploma-dash/default.php by Sunday, Jan. 31, to receive the early-bird registration rate of $25. After Jan. 31, the price increases to $30. UM students receive a $5 discount. Register by Friday, Feb. 26, to be guaranteed a shirt. Children age 10 and under are free. However, they do not receive a shirt and must be accompanied by a registered adult. To register a child to run with an adult, check the box and list the child/children’s names during the adult’s registration process.
Contact: Rochelle Krahn, UM Staff Senate fundraising chair, 406-243-2465, rochelle.krahn@mso.umt.edu.
MISSOULA – After a successful first year at the University of Montana’s UC Market, the Optimal Bear Approved program run by Curry Health Center’s Wellness department is expanding to the Corner Store on campus.

Starting Monday, Jan. 25, shoppers will find Optimal Bear Approved
stamps on select items in this new location on campus to support and encourage healthy eating habits.

The growth of the program, which originally began at UM in 2015, is spearheaded by Optimal Bear Coordinator Kayli Julius. It seeks to identify and promote healthy foods to students.

“I’m excited to expand the Optimal Bear Approved program to the Corner Store to reach a wider demographic of students,” Julius said. “Sometimes I think students struggle to identify healthy choices. By putting the stamp on them, I think it will really help individuals make a better choice.”

Rebecca Wade, director of staff development and environmental health at UM Dining, shares Julius’ enthusiasm about the collaboration.

“UM Dining is thrilled to partner with the Optimal Bear Approved program for several reasons. Primarily, we want to make it easy for students to identify and choose healthy options that we offer in the Corner Store,” Wade said.

Items on the OBA list include Lara Bars, Lilly’s Hummus, Honest Tea and whole fresh fruit. The products typically are all-natural, sometimes organic, include no artificial color, limited added sugar and are made with real-food ingredients.

“We try to keep it simple and easy to understand,” Julius said.

The simplicity of the program appeals to Wade, a registered dietician, as well.

“Food companies engineer their products to appeal to our most fundamental biological needs,” she said. “We are wired to seek out foods that are high in fat, sugar and sodium, so most packaged foods contain unexpectedly high amounts of sugar, fat, sodium and other additives.”
Wade also believes that it takes a fair amount of knowledge and effort to make healthy choices, not only on campus, but in everyday life.

“The items that are OBA approved, by and large, are going to be the healthiest options available – meaning students can make quality food choices quickly, saving mental and physical energy for learning,” she said.

The OBA initiative also supports clients of the Curry Health Wellness department’s Optimal Bear and Weigh to Go UM programs. Both programs help UM students set and reach goals that support healthy lifestyles. With an emphasis on preventative care and encouraging a healthy lifestyle, Wellness aims to be an easy-to-access resource for students across campus.

“We saw a trend of students who found it challenging to make healthy choices on campus so we decided to create programs to make it easier,” Julius said.

Wade also supports the one-on-one coaching that Optimal Bear and Weigh to Go UM programs provide.

“We love that the OB program utilizes student health coaches,” she said. “It offers an educational opportunity for the students managing the program as well as our student guests.”

Curry Health Center Medical Director Mary Kleschen shares the excitement of both the Wellness department and UM Dining about OBA’s success and growth. She sees the benefits of a holistic approach to health.

“Healthy food choices like that enhance student health and are good from both a medical perspective and a student-success perspective – which is exactly the kind of thing we want to help students with every day.”

For more information about the Optimal Bear program call Julius at 406-243-6719 or email kali.julius@mso.umt.edu.

Contact: Jessica Vizzutti, UM Curry Health Center media specialist, 406-243-6958, jessica.vizzutti@umontana.edu.
UM News Announces 2016 Charter Day Award Recipients

January 20, 2016

MISSOULA – The University of Montana Alumni Association will honor eight members of the UM and Missoula communities at the annual Charter Day awards ceremony and reception on Thursday, Feb. 18.

The ceremony, which will cap off the celebration of UM’s 123rd birthday, starts at 5:30 p.m. in the University Center Ballroom.

A list of this year’s award recipients follows.

- **ASUM Student Service Award**: Byron Boots, UM senior, business administration
- **Neil S. Bucklew Presidential Service Award**: Nelson Weller, former UM Foundation Board of Trustees member
- **Montana Alumni Award**: Marcia Holland, former UMAA board chair and active volunteer
- **George M. Dennison Presidential Faculty Award for Distinguished Accomplishment**: Vince Colucci, professor, Department of Pharmacy Practice
- **George M. Dennison Presidential Staff Award for Distinguished Accomplishment**: Barb Seekins, assistant
UM Alumni Association Announces 2016 Charter Day Award Recipients - UM News - University Of Montana

- **Outstanding Service to the External Community Award**: Sara Polanchek, clinical director, Department of Counselor Education
- **John Ruffatto Memorial Award**: Sam Panarella, associate professor, Alexander Blewett III School of Law
- **Robert T. Pantzer Presidential Humanitarian Award**: Deena Mansour, associate director, Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center


**Contact**: Angela Weisenburger, UM Office of Alumni Relations on-campus events coordinator, 406-243-6439, angela.weisenburger@umontana.edu.
MISSOULA – The University of Montana Alumni Association invites the UM community to escape the cold Montana winter – if only for an evening – at the second annual Boots to Beaches fundraiser, slated for 6 to 9 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 30, at the Holiday Inn Downtown Missoula.

The lakeside-party-themed evening will feature live and silent auctions, food and beverages, music, entertainment and prizes.

Auction items include a round of golf with Montana Grizzlies head football coach Bob Stitt, one-half beef from Big Sky Natural Beef, lift tickets for Whitefish Mountain Resort and more. All proceeds will benefit the UM Alumni Association, an organization that reaches out to more than 105,000 UM alumni and friends, helping them stay connected to the University and each other through events, programs and services such as Homecoming and Commencement reunions, alumni awards and career mentoring.

The public is invited to attend, and summer attire is encouraged. Tickets are $25 per person. Tickets can be purchased online at http://www.grizalum.org/events/SignatureEvent.php or by calling the UM Alumni Association at
Contact: Jodi Moreau, outreach coordinator, UM Office of Alumni Relations, 406-243-6124, jodi.moreau@umontana.edu.
MISSOULA – University of Montana School of Journalism photography student Evan Frost placed among the top 20 finalists in the national Hearst Journalism Awards Photo One Competition.

Frost’s portfolio placed 18th in the Photojournalism I: News and Feature Photography category. UM journalism professors Keith Graham and Jeremy Lurgio said they knew Frost’s work was worthy of placing among the best students in the nation.

“His submission of eight images showed vision, humor, action and impact,” Lurgio said. “Above all they were solid storytelling images.”

Lurgio said Frost was able to put his skills to the test through a summer internship at the Great Falls Tribune.

“That hard work in the professional world rewarded him with a group of solid images that earned him a top-20 finish,” he said. “This is a testament to the importance of the professional internship experiences our students pursue.”
Frost worked as the photo and video editor at the Montana Kaimin during fall semester of 2015, as well as the multimedia editor for the 2016 edition of the Montana Journalism Review. Montana Kaimin adviser and UM journalism Professor Nadia White worked with Frost during fall semester.

“Evan combines a keen eye with a sense of community,” she said. “He’s the kind of student that rolls up his sleeves and gets things done.”

To see Frost’s work and recent projects, visit his website at http://www.evanfrostphoto.com/.

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**Contact:** Alyssa Rabil, UM School of Journalism media information coordinator, 406-243-4366, alyssa.rabil@mso.umt.edu.
MISSOULA – World-renowned pianist Tanya Gabrielian will visit Missoula Jan. 22-24 to teach and perform at the University of Montana as part of the Celebrate Piano Series.

Gabrielian will present a free public masterclass from 3 to 5 p.m. Friday, Jan. 22, and a public concert at 3 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 24, in the Music Recital Hall. The concert will be preceded by a “Conversation with Tanya” at 2 p.m.

“When Tanya first came to my attention, I was floored by her technical prowess and musical sensitivities,” said UM music Professor Steven Hesla, coordinator of UM’s Celebrate Piano Series. “We’re thrilled that this gracious young artist is performing in Missoula.”
She was hailed by the London Times as a “pianist of powerful physical and imaginative muscle,” and a review by the Washington Post said “the Herculean keyboard demands were met with a strikingly poised nobility and commanding presence.”

Gabrielian has performed in acclaimed venues, including Carnegie Hall in New York City; the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.; the Sydney Opera House; Queen Elizabeth Hall and Wigmore Hall in London; and the Salle Cortot in Paris. She has performed with orchestras such as the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, New London Sinfonia and the Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra.

Tickets to the UM concert cost $20 for general admission, $15 for seniors or $10 for students and are available online at http://www.umt.edu/griztix/ or by calling the UMArts Box Office at 406-243-4581.

Gabrielian also will make an hourlong live statewide radio appearance from 10 to 11 a.m. on Friday, Jan. 22, on Morning Classics with Michael Marsolek on Montana Public Radio.

UM’s Celebrate Piano Series concerts benefit the UM School of Music’s Keyboard Fund. Gabrielian’s performance is the fourth concert in the five-part series. Piano duo Lomazov and Rackers will cap off the series with a concert in April.

For more information on Gabrielian, visit http://www.tanyagabrielian.com. For more information on her Missoula visit, call Hesla at 406-243-6055 or email steven.hesla@umontana.edu.

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Pianist Tanya Gabrielian to Perform at UM - UM News - University Of Montana

**Contact:** Lucy Beighle, UM Celebrate Piano Series publicity coordinator, 406-239-3193, lucy.beighle@umontana.edu.
Education Graduate Programs at UM Earn Top Rankings for High Quality

January 13, 2016

MISSOULA – The University of Montana’s Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences recently earned two top national rankings for its graduate programs in curriculum and instruction.

U.S. News and World Report ranked UM among the “2016 Best Online Graduate Education Programs,” noting UM’s College of Education for its significant number of online graduate programs, access to tenure-track faculty and a curriculum-delivery model that enables greater collaboration and connection to peers and mentors than other traditional education programs.

“Continued recognition of our strong programs in education helps validate the incredible amount of time and effort our faculty invest in creating the best educators,” said Roberta Evans, College of Education dean. “Our students remain at the center of what we do and this acknowledgement reflects that.”

The second nationwide ranking came from Top Masters in Education. It ranked UM among “The Top 50 Best Value Masters in Special Education Programs,” at the No. 29 spot. UM strives to maintain a special-education program to prepare students who seek initial licensure in special education, as well as for teachers currently working in the field.
of teaching but who are seeking to serve students with special needs.

“I am so pleased that we are being recognized for our outstanding program in special education,” said Georgia Cobbs, chair of UM’s Department of Curriculum and Instruction. “The wealth of expertise and experience held by the faculty in our program is astounding and is clearly reflected in this ranking.”

UM’s graduate programs in curriculum and instruction incorporate the integration of ideas, cooperative endeavors, respect for learning and individual worth to successfully prepare education professionals who will work in K-12 classrooms, in teacher education programs and as district curriculum leaders.


**Contact:** Peter Knox, communications manager, UM Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences, 406-243-4911, peter.knox@mso.umt.edu.
UM History Professor to Share Backstage Experiences at Free ‘Mercy Street’ Screening

January 13, 2016

MISSOULA – A preview screening and discussion about the new PBS Civil War drama series “Mercy Street” is slated from 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 16, in the University Center Theater at the University of Montana. The event is free and open to the public.

Following the screening, UM history Professor Anya Jabour, a historical adviser to the show, will share her experiences of being on the set during production and offer the Missoula audience a historical perspective. She also will lead a post-screening discussion.

“Mercy Street” follows the lives of two volunteer nurses on opposing sides of the Civil War — New England abolitionist Mary Phinney (actress Mary Elizabeth Winstead) and Confederate supporter Emma Green (actress Hannah James). The Green family’s luxury hotel in Alexandria, Virginia, has been transformed into Mansion House
Hospital, a Union Army facility tending to the war’s wounded. The new PBS drama is based on real events. It was inspired by memoirs and letters from actual doctors and nurses at Mansion House Hospital. The series reveals the stories of those struggling to save lives while managing their own hardships.

The intersection of North and South within the confines of a small, occupied town creates a rich world that is chaotic, conflicted, corrupt, dynamic and even hopeful – a cauldron within which these characters strive, fight, love, laugh, betray, sacrifice and, at times, act like villains. This series is not about battles and glory. It is about the drama and unexpected humor of everyday life behind the front lines. It’s a fresh twist on an iconic story, one that resonates with larger themes society struggles with today.

Linda Talbott, interim director of UM’s Broadcast Media Center, says the Jan. 16 event will “include a partial screening of episode one, plus series extras. And, she adds, “we are lucky to have access to an insider’s perspective into the production of the series, presented by history consultant and UM Professor Anya Jabour.”

Contact: Linda Talbott, interim director, UM’s Broadcast Media Center, 406-243-4154, linda.talbott@umontana.edu.
MISSOULA – America’s public education system was once seen as a beacon of American democracy. Most Americans regarded public education with a sense of pride. Decades later, that narrative has shifted. Today, there is rising concern that public education in America is not producing students able to compete in a global economy.

“The impression of many people across the country, including many public policymakers, is that our schools are not challenging students or meeting standards and that teacher education programs are mediocre at best,” said Roberta Evans, dean of the University of Montana’s Phyllis J. Washington
College of Education and Human Sciences. "We have the opportunity to change that national narrative by inspiring teachers and re-engaging students. By investing in the strong potential of our public schools, we are taking a radical approach to reform. And it's already working in Missoula."

Three years ago, UM partnered with Missoula County Public Schools in a groundbreaking effort to ensure students graduate from high school with strong critical thinking, creative problem solving, communication and teamwork skills. With major support from the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation, they launched Schools and Higher Education Advancing Public Education across the P-20 Spectrum (SHAPE P-20), a set of initiatives aimed at creating a 21st century learning environment by transforming the relationship among universities, teachers and student experiences from preschool to the doctoral level.

"SHAPE P-20 delivered on many levels: increasing high school retention and graduation rates, developing family and community investment and engagement with the school district, teaching relevant skills and promoting professional development for teachers," Evans said. "But, we never foresaw the greatest outcome of all: The powerful partnership that emerged between the university and the schools."

SHAPE P-20 initially started as a way to connect MCPS teachers with training opportunities and other educational resources on the UM campus, but it was the collaboration between UM and MCPS that became a major game-changer for the participants. "We are truly better together," said MCPS Superintendent Mark Thane. "Schools reach students, but often don't have time for research. Universities already do research, but need access to students, teachers and administrators to show the capabilities of new models of education as well as the vast array of expertise and academic
resources available at UM. When we collaborated with UM for SHAPE P-20, we realized the incredible impact we could have together in building an educational environment focused around helping every student succeed."

This month, thanks to a second $1.5 million grant from the Washington Foundation, the program will take a big step forward. During the next three years, SHAPE 2.0 will harness the momentum of a successful pilot program, expanding the impact of a state-of-the-art education to reach more school districts.

SHAPE 2.0 refines the original initiatives from SHAPE P-20 to focus on programs that incorporate cross-cultural studies and an understanding of global issues; STEAM (science, technology, engineering and math, plus arts integration); early intervention for at-risk toddlers and preschoolers; universal design for learning environments and strategies that are flexible for students’ needs; pioneering digital education; and professional learning communities that allow teachers to investigate and improve teaching practices. These programs place the focus on learning, which empowers students and staff to create a globally competitive learning environment in every MCPS school.

Missoula’s Big Sky High School, for instance, challenges students to employ science and math skills to solve a mystery. Incoming freshmen receive details about a fictional crime and must sift through clues over the course of the school year to crack the case. "We had to analyze the [crime] scene and look for evidence," said Big Sky student Bri Canning, who now is a junior. "It was hard. But it was really interesting and engaging."

The scenario might sound like
something out of a kids’ detective series, but it’s all part of the school’s Health Science Academy. From freshman through senior year, students in the academy learn how to explore problems in a hands-on way, through the lens of science and medicine.

Students also shadow professionals at a local hospital and take out-of-state field trips to cutting-edge medical facilities. All of their classes are tied into the health science curriculum. The International Baccalaureate program at Missoula’s Big Sky and Hellgate high schools is another example of an inquiry-based approach to learning. With an IB diploma, students can earn college credit for the work they do in high school and directly engage with campus life.

“These programs have expanded the opportunities for students who are interested in a particular career path to have hands-on, relevant and rigorous experience,” say Big Sky’s Principal Natalie Jaeger. “They take kids out of the defined boxes that courses are traditionally in and encourage interdisciplinary thinking, inquiry, problem-solving and international-mindedness. SHAPE initiatives have really changed our teaching and learning at Big Sky.”

The Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation’s support will allow SHAPE 2.0 to offer solutions at multiple stages of a child’s education. Not every child comes into high school is ready for IB or the Health Science Academy – but that could change with early intervention programs. Kindergarten Readiness, a program spearheaded by UM Professor Trent Atkins, develops tools for parents of preschoolers who need help with the basics, from ABCs to sitting still at story time. Those tools can significantly level the playing field, so that by the time kids reach high school, they’re likely to embrace – and succeed in – the same projects as their peers.

SHAPE 2.0 also focuses on the most important component of any classroom: the teacher. UM’s role as a nationally recognized training ground for MCPS teachers means research and cutting-edge techniques are available to educators locally, without having to invest in costly out-of-state training.

“Although everything we do is ultimately for kids, teaching also needs to be fulfilling for educators,” says Trevor Laboski, executive regional director for MCPS. “Those trained in various strategies, programs or approaches don’t just apply their new learning in specific classes. It impacts every student they teach and helps create opportunities for every child to succeed.”

An assessment report in April showed that the number of students served, teachers trained and schools impacted met and often surpassed the goals of SHAPE P-20. But the numbers are only a glimpse into a larger story.

“UM and MCPS have taken the lead in reimagining education,” said Mike Halligan, executive director of the Washington Foundation. “The success of SHAPE P-20 proved that these are not just pie-in-the-sky ideas; they are practical ways to implement reform and impact generations of educators and students to come.”

SHAPE 2.0 is the beginning of a new national narrative. Americans know it’s time for a change, and Missoula is leading the way.

“We need to seek avenues of engagement that test our comfort zone,” says Thane. “[SHAPE 2.0] is a way to enhance the relevancy and vibrancy of public education. It’s giving us the opportunity to become recognized as such a leader that ultimately there may be a demand regionally, nationally and internationally for seats in our schools.”

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Contact: Peter Knox, Phyllis J. Washington College of Education communication and outreach manager, 406-243-4911, peter.knox@mso.umt.edu.
MISSOULA – University of Montana Professor Anya Jabour spent five weeks in Virginia this past spring working as a historical consultant for the new PBS Civil War drama “Mercy Street.” The program will premiere Sunday, Jan. 17.

As a historical consultant, Jabour’s job was to make the actors appear as authentic as possible, whether they were interacting with family members or with strangers, whether they
were of a younger generation or an older one, African-American or white, Confederate or Union. And that meant providing them with the social guidelines of the time.

“Mercy Street” follows the lives of two volunteer nurses on opposite sides of the conflict. Mary Phinney is a New England abolitionist, and Emma Green is a young, upper-crust Confederate. Their worlds collide in Alexandria, Virginia, the occupied border town that has become home to all manner of people, including runaway slaves, displaced rebels, Union soldiers and spies. Some characters are composites; others are based on real people.

Jabour was asked to lend her expertise after her 2007 book “Scarlett’s Sisters: Young Women in the Old South” ended up in the hands of producer Lisa Wolfinger.

“Scarlett’s Sisters” provides a look into how elite Southern women found a catalyst during the Civil War. Jabour said the fervor of rebellion against the Union made it easier for Confederate women to step outside their usual social parameters. Their new roles involved more choices, more independence from men and even independence from a life that involved slaveholding.

“Our research team and I read many, many, many books, including some original source material,” Wolfinger told the Montanan magazine. “And I came across Anya Jabour’s ‘Scarlett’s Sisters,’ and I thought she could help us bring to life the Green family and specifically the younger daughters.”

Wolfinger originally asked Jabour to serve as a script reviewer when the series was in the early stages of development, in early 2013. As a script reviewer, Jabour commented on the characters, plot and dialogue, with a focus on young women’s wartime experiences, including shifting gender roles, evolving courtship practices and changing family dynamics. Once the series went into production in spring 2015, Wolfinger invited Jabour to serve as on-set historical consultant.

In addition to providing guidance when it came to behaviors that were changing as a result of the war, Jabour
worked with the actors on following the social mores of the time, like how to walk in public.

“Women, for instance, wouldn’t walk unaccompanied,” Jabour said. “People of inferior status would walk on the right side and just behind their superiors. Party etiquette for the elite, especially, was precise. Gloves were to be worn while dancing but not when eating or drinking. Gents escorted ladies off the dance floor.”

Once it premieres, Jabour will contribute to a “Mercy Street Revealed” blog, available online at http://www.pbs.org/mercy-street/blogs/mercy-street-revealed/. She also was featured on the “Historical Accuracy” video, which is part of the Uncover the History website online at http://www.pbs.org/mercy-street/uncover-history/.

For more information call Jabour at 406-243-4364 or email anya.jabour@mso.umt.edu.

Contact: Anya Jabour, UM history professor, 406-243-4364, anya.jabour@mso.umt.edu.
UM Earns Top Military School Designation

January 12, 2016

MISSOULA – The University of Montana has been named a top school in the Military Advanced Education & Transition 2016 Guide to Top Colleges & Universities, a searchable online database that measures institutions based on best practices in military and veteran education.

The guide assesses colleges and universities based on six criteria: military culture, financial assistance, flexibility, general support, online support and on-campus support.

The entry on UM cites the Veteran’s Education and Transition Services Office as a prime example of how the University supports student veterans. The VETS Office acts as a liaison between UM, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and students. It is responsible for all G.I. Bill transactions and provides a positive environment for veterans and their family members.

The guide states “the University of Montana has taken huge strides to ensure the veteran population is taken care of and given the opportunity to succeed in college.”

The listing, available online at http://mae.kmimedia.com/schools/university-montana, is just one of several accolades recognizing UM for its commitment to veterans. MilitaryFriendly.com also included UM in its 2016 Military
UM Earns Top Military School Designation

Friendly Schools rankings. Last year, UM was officially designated a Purple Heart University – recognition that places it among a handful of select universities in the country. Not only is UM the only institution in Montana to earn the designation, but the only one in the Northwest.

“The University has made a concerted effort to improve services for our veterans and their beneficiaries over the past several years,” said Shawn Grove, VETS Office director. “The great support our students receive would not be possible without the collaboration of UM as a whole.”

For more information call Grove at 406-243-5044 or email shawn.grove@umontana.edu.

Contact: Shawn Grove, UM VETS Office director, 406-243-5044, shawn.grove@umontana.edu.
MISSOULA – The Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center at the University of Montana will host a one-day forum on Friday, Jan. 15, titled “The Art of Diplomacy: How the Arts and Cultural Engagement Shape Foreign Affairs, Politics and Society.”

The event is free and open to the public in conjunction with the weeklong Vienna International Ballet Experience, an international ballet and dance competition bringing approximately 400 children and adult participants to Missoula. This is the first time the Vienna competition will be held in the U.S.

The forum explores the ways in which diplomatic relations are not only shaped by policy and economics, but also by cultural, societal and artistic influences. Artistic interactions and movements have profound impacts on people, shaping politics and cultures.
Abraham Kim, director of the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center, said he is especially excited to bring these topics to the forefront.

“Creative channels frequently facilitate greater communication, understanding and cooperation between communities,” he said. “At other times, the arts can be disruptive and even subversive, especially within closed societies where the creative works can inject new ideas and alternative cultural understandings.”

Highlights of the day include luncheon speaker Elaine de Prince, who will address “War, Rehabilitation and International Ballet.” She will share her experience as an adopted mother of two girls from war-ravaged Sierra Leone, who both overcame adversity to become world-class artists, one a ballerina and the other a singer/songwriter. Another highlight of the day will be a performance by Aidan Carberry, an award-winning hip-hop and freestyle artist.

The day will include other performances and moderated conversations including: “The Importance, Process and Impact of Cultural Diplomacy,” moderated by former Montana Public Radio News Director Sally Mauk, “Building a National Image through Art,” “Breaking Down Walls through Ballet during the Cold War,” “The Arts, Resistance and Conflict,” and “Bridging the Chasm: Connecting Divergent Communities.”

Participants can register for the event online at http://www.umt.edu/mansfield.

For more information call Kim at 406-243-6778 or email abraham.kim@umontana.edu.

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Contact: Abraham Kim, director, UM’s Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center, 406-242-6778, abraham.kim@umontana.edu.
MISSOULA – One hundred middle-school girls will gather on the University of Montana campus on Saturday, April 23, for the third annual Expanding Your Horizons Conference, a full day of workshops exploring STEM careers in science, technology, engineering and math.

The conference, organized by UM’s Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences, is an opportunity for sixth- to eighth-grade girls to engage in workshops led by female scientists, engineers and technology specialists from UM, as well as local STEM businesses and organizations. Conference registration begins Monday, Feb. 1, online at http://www.missoulagirlsstem.net.

“Last year, memorable moments cited by participants included ‘being rolled on a gurney into the helicopter,’ making aspirin, ‘flying’ in the physical therapy lab, learning research can be fun, making new friends and realizing ‘that I can do anything,’” said UM curriculum and instruction Professor Lisa Blank, who directs the conference. “The 2016 slate of workshops promises to be equally exciting.”

STEM role models and hands-on activities are designed to motivate girls to continue their studies in science and
math so they can become innovative and creative thinkers who are ready to embrace their goals, aspirations and 21st-century challenges.

Margaret Mead Gill, an electro-physicist at The Boeing Company in Seattle, will deliver the conference keynote address. Carson MacPherson-Krutsky, a UM geosciences graduate student, will lead a workshop called “When the Earth Shakes.” MacPherson-Krutsky is especially interested in how scientists communicate and says more young women need to step forward to be role models to show girls “that you can really do this.”

A recent report by the American Association of University Women, supported by the National Science Foundation, found that because most people choose careers in which they believe they can do well, girls’ lesser belief in their skills may partly explain why fewer young women go into scientific careers. Expanding Your Horizons female workshop hosts from the University and the private sector donate their time in an effort to provide real-life role models and eliminate the notion that it is unfeasible for women to excel in STEM fields.

For more information about the EYH Conference, visit http://www.missoulagirlsstem.net or call Blank at 406-243-5304.

Contact: Lisa Blank, UM curriculum and instruction professor, 406-243-5304, lisa.blank@umontana.edu.
MISSOULA – Dennison Theatre Productions and Montana Public Radio will present “An Evening with Garrison Keillor” Tuesday, March 1, in the Dennison Theatre at the University of Montana.

Tickets are on sale now for the 7:30 p.m. event, which will feature Keillor, the popular radio personality, author, storyteller and humorist who is best known as the creator and host of NPR’s “A Prairie Home Companion.” He also is a best-selling author of more than a dozen books, including “Lake Wobegon Days,” “Love Me” and “Homegrown Democrat.” Following the event, Keillor will hold a book signing at 9 p.m.

Tickets cost $57.75 and are available at all GrizTix locations, by calling 406-243-4051 or online at http://www.griztix.com. All seating is reserved.

For more information call Tom Webster, Dennison Theatre director, at 406-243-2853 or email thomas.webster@umontana.edu.

Contact: Tom Webster, UM Dennison Theatre director, 406-243-2853, thomas.webster@umontana.edu.
Public Radio Personality Garrison Keillor to Perform at UM - UM News - University Of Montana
UM Professor Receives Prestigious Teacher Educator Award, Brings National Attention to New UM Graduate Degree

January 07, 2016

MISSOULA – Julie Bullard, professor of early childhood education at the University of Montana, received a revered Teacher Educator Award from the National Association of Early Childhood Teacher Educators at its annual conference in November.

Every year NAECTE recognizes two teacher educators from across the country who demonstrate meritorious leadership and professionalism in early childhood teacher education.
education. Recipients receive national recognition, as well as a monetary award.

“I feel extremely honored to have received this award from my early childhood teacher educator colleagues,” Bullard said.

Bullard demonstrated the criteria needed to earn the prestigious award, which include leadership in the field; professionalism through advocacy, expertise and ethical standards; and a strong mentorship track record.

“We are incredibly lucky to have Dr. Bullard on our team,” said Roberta Evans, dean of the Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences at UM. “The depth and breadth of her experience and knowledge is astounding, and early childhood education professionals will benefit immensely from her instruction. It is high-caliber faculty such as her that help put our college and University at the forefront of positive national trends in education.”

Bullard has been an influential member of the early childhood education community for more than 30 years. Throughout her time in the field she has served in various capacities, including lending her expertise to the Montana Faculty Learning Outcome Council, the Montana Early Childhood Advisory Council and in the Montana Early Childhood Higher Education Consortium.

She serves on the Montana Early Care and Education Career Development Task Force and recently was involved in writing the state curriculum standards for pre-K.

Bullard also has contributed her expertise at the national level, serving in various working groups and development panels with the National Association of the Education of Young Children, National Head Start, Educational Testing Service and with the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education. She helped write the national standards for early childhood teacher education.

Bullard has earned other notable awards. For her early childhood education advocacy and improvement of educational settings for young children, she was awarded the McCarthy Public Service Award in 1993 and the Montana Association for the Education of Young Children Early Childhood Service Award in 1997. In 2011, she received the Carnegie Foundation U.S. Professor of the Year for Montana for extraordinary dedication to undergraduate education, a passion for educating, a commitment to students and innovative instructional methods.
In conjunction with Associate Dean Susan Harper-Whalen, Bullard helped design and implement a Master of Education in early childhood education and the Master of Education in advanced early childhood education, the only degrees of their kind in Montana. She also has been instrumental developing a new early childhood education bachelor’s degree at UM that currently is awaiting Montana Board of Regents approval.

“As a state and national leader in early childhood education, Dr. Bullard’s dedication to the preparation of high-quality early childhood professionals has greatly shaped our programs,” Harper-Whalen said. “UM’s Early Childhood Education graduate degree has already garnered national attention with a top-10 ranking for online Master of Education early childhood programs in the country. It is College of Education and Human Sciences students at UM who truly benefit from the expertise that Bullard brings to our program.”

A well-known author in the field, Bullard continues to influence and assist colleagues and early childhood professionals every day. Her most recent publication, “Creating Environments for Children: Birth to Age Eight,” serves as the gold standard in the instruction and development of early childhood education settings across the country and internationally, having been translated in to various languages.

“The early childhood years form the building blocks for all later development and learning,” Bullard said. “I am happy to be part of a profession dedicated to helping all young children and their families thrive. It is so exciting to see emerging national and state initiatives dedicated to serving our youngest populations.”

For more information on Bullard’s award, degrees or the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at UM, visit http://coehs.umt.edu/departments/currinst/default.php or call 406-243-4911.

Contact: Peter Knox, communications and outreach manager, UM Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences, 406-243-4911, peter.knox@mso.umt.edu.
MISSOULA – Incoming University of Montana graduate student Leanne Falcon recently was awarded a $5,000 Native Science Fellowship from Hopa Mountain, a Bozeman-based nonprofit organization, which she will use for her research project during spring semester 2016.

Falcon, a member of the Blackfeet Tribe, graduated from UM with a bachelor’s degree in biology. After earning her undergraduate degree she worked as a project coordinator for the Glacier-Two Medicine Alliance, where she contributed to the conservation of the Badger-Two Medicine Area – a sacred area to the Blackfeet people.

At UM, Falcon will work with environmental studies Assistant Professor Rosalyn LaPier, who will serve as her thesis adviser, to research the intersection between environmental science and traditional ecological knowledge.

As part of her fellowship, she is invited to participate in the spring Native Science Fellows meeting March 3-5 at Montana State University in Bozeman.
Hopa Mountain and Blackfeet Community College cooperatively offer this innovative Native Science Fellows program for Native American undergraduate and graduate students to participate in community-based science organizations in an effort to increase their engagement in higher education and geosciences careers. Funded by the National Science Foundation, the program has four primary goals: to increase the number of Native American students engaged in community-based geosciences education and careers, to provide role models and work experience for Native American high school and college students interested in the geosciences, to develop a career ladder network of Native students who are interested in pursuing geosciences careers, and to build a network of community-based science professionals who are committed to the success of Native students and provide ongoing support for personal, academic and professional success.

For more information about the Native Science Fellowship, call Bonnie Sachetello-Sawyer, Hopa Mountain executive director, at 406-586-2455.

For more information about Falcon’s UM project, call LaPier at 406-243-6787 or email rosalyn.lapier@mso.umt.edu.

Contact: Rosalyn LaPier, assistant professor, UM Environmental Studies Program, 406-243-6787, rosalyn.lapier@mso.umt.edu.
MISSOULA – For the 41st year, the Bureau of Business and Economic Research at the University of Montana will visit nine Montana cities to deliver its local, state and national economic outlooks. New this year, BBER will release its inaugural Montana Economic Report 2016, a comprehensive assessment on the Montana economy, at the half-day events, which kick off Tuesday, Jan. 26, in Helena.

This year’s program focuses on property tax growth across the state, an issue of importance to many living or doing business in Montana. According to BBER economists, one of the reasons why Montana’s oldest tax is among the least popular is because it also is the least understood. And in most communities, it continues to increase. The BBER’s 2016 Economic Outlook Seminar series, to be held around the state January-March, takes aim at that issue.

The program will address how the tax works, whether it’s working well and why its growth is seemingly endless. It also will question whether the state’s oldest tax is prepared for the future.

Doug Young, professor emeritus of economics at Montana State University, will discuss Montana’s current property
tax system and its viability for the future in his keynote address, “Rising Property Tax Bills: What You Should Know.”

The half-day seminar and luncheon will highlight the latest economic trends for local, state and national economies. BBER economist Patrick Barkey will deliver the national and state outlooks, BBER economist Paul Polzin will present economic forecasts for each seminar city, and industry specialists will provide the outlook for Montana’s important economic sectors: nonresident travel, health care, real estate and housing, agriculture, manufacturing, forest-industry products, and energy.

Registration costs $85, which includes the Montana Economic Report 2016, a copy of the PowerPoint presentation, lunch and a one-year subscription to Montana Business Quarterly, BBER's award-winning business journal. Continuing education credits are available. Groups of five or more can receive a discount by registering online at http://www.bber.umt.edu/.

The seminar runs from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. The full schedule follows:

- **Helena**: Tuesday, Jan. 26, Best Western Great Northern Hotel
- **Great Falls**: Wednesday, Jan. 27, Hilton Garden Inn
- **Missoula**: Friday, Jan. 29, Hilton Garden Inn
- **Billings**: Tuesday, Feb. 2, Northern Hotel
- **Bozeman**: Wednesday, Feb. 3, The Commons at Baxter and Love
- **Butte**: Thursday, Feb. 4, NorthWestern Energy Butte general office
- **Kalispell**: Friday, Feb. 12, Hilton Garden Inn
- **Lewistown**: Tuesday, March 15, Central Montana Education Center
- **Havre**: Wednesday, March 16, MSU-Northern, Hensler Auditorium

BBER is the main research unit of the School of Business Administration at UM. Established in 1948, its mission is to inform Montanans about the economic climate in which they live and work. In addition to conducting its Economic Outlook Seminars across the state at the beginning of each year, BBER researchers are engaged in a wide range of applied research projects that deal with different aspects of the state economy, including survey research, economic analysis, health care research, forecasting, wood products research and energy research.

For more information or to register, visit BBER online at [http://www.bber.umt.edu/](http://www.bber.umt.edu/) or call 406-243-5113.

**Contact**: Patrick Barkey, director, UM Bureau of Business and Economic Research, 406-243-5113, patrick.barkey@umontana.edu.
Sixth Annual MLK Read for Peace Project to Engage Missoula-Area Students

January 06, 2016

MISSOULA – Missoula residents, University of Montana students and national service volunteers will bring the message of Martin Luther King Jr. to hundreds of elementary school children in classrooms as part of the sixth-annual MLK Read for Peace project on Friday, Jan. 15.

MLK Read for Peace, a collaboration between Montana Campus Compact and local schools with support from the Corporation of National and Community Service, places college student volunteers, community members and national service participants in kindergarten through fifth-grade classrooms to read and discuss an age-appropriate book about the life and work of King. Volunteers then lead students through an activity – creating a drawing or poem – which the Missoula Public Library and Barnes and Noble will display during the month of February.

“Montana is a state that values differences and that works collectively to solve its problems,” said Josh Vanek, MTCC network services director. “Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service is a great reminder of the grassroots work that communities regularly undertake to address their biggest challenges.”

The event allows students to contemplate the ideas of peace, equality and social justice while enjoying a long
weekend observing King’s birthday on Monday, Jan. 18. Though King’s work is not a required part of the elementary curriculum in most schools, many teachers choose to include King in their January coursework.

MLK Read for Peace helps teachers engage their students in learning about the iconic leader of the American civil rights movement and his community engagement.

Last year during MLK Read for Peace, 123 volunteers read to more than 2,900 students at 50 schools. This year, volunteers hope to reach more than 2,500 students statewide. Volunteers for this event include AmeriCorps VISTA members; Senior Corps volunteers from Missoula Aging Services; UM students, faculty and staff; community volunteers; and local elected officials. This year marks the 30th observation of King’s birthday as a federal holiday.

For more information on the event, email MTCC AmeriCorps VISTA leader Lacy Fiore at fiore@mtcompact.org or call 406-243-5671. Information for statewide Martin Luther King Jr. Day events can be found online at the Governor’s Office of Community Service website, http://serve.mt.gov.

MTCC works to improve communities and educate students of their civic and social responsibilities. In addition to UM, MTCC member campuses include Blackfeet Community College, Carroll College, Flathead Valley Community College, Fort Peck Community College, Montana State University, MSU Great Falls College of Technology, Helena College UM, Little Big Horn College, MSU-Billings, MSU-Northern, Montana Tech of UM, Rocky Mountain College, Salish Kootenai College, UM Western and the University of Great Falls.

Contact: Lacy Fiore, AmeriCorps VISTA leader, Montana Campus Compact, 406-243-5671, fiore@mtcompact.org.
MISSOULA – The University of Montana School of Journalism recently was ranked the eighth best college journalism program in the nation in a survey by the Radio Television Digital News Association. The No. 1 theme cited by voters in the survey was equipping students with real-world experience.

“Being in Missoula, Montana, provides something no one else can,” one survey respondent said. “It’s a mix of people, cultures, the great West, history and beautiful scenery.”

The UM School of Journalism was praised for both quality and location by voters. Dean Larry Abramson said he’s thrilled the school has been recognized as one of the top 10 journalism schools in the country.

“The secret is out,” Abramson said. “Journalism students can get a big-city experience in a beautiful place. They can study with great faculty in a state-of-the-art facility, yet pay an affordable price. We have everything the competition has, except for the traffic.”

Another survey respondent noted the hidden-gem appeal of UM’s journalism school, calling it “the best under-the-
radar school in the entire country," noting the school "has this amazing mix of being a small school with national faculty and being in an incredible location."

The association is a professional organization for reporters working in digital formats. RTDNA members include those working in the industry, as well as educators and students. NewsPro, a publication serving those in the news profession, also was part of the survey.

According to the website, the survey was sent to all RTDNA members. More than 1,300 people participated; of those nearly 43 percent were news professionals. Additionally, nearly 28 percent of respondents identified as students, nearly 19 percent reported they were non-news professionals and 10.5 percent said they were educators.

Access the article online at http://www.crainsnewspro.com/assets/newspro/pdf/2015-12-newspro.pdf.

Contact: Alyssa Rabil, UM School of Journalism media and information coordinator, 406-243-4366, alyssa.rabil@mso.umt.edu.