May 2020 news releases

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UM Graduate Awarded Fulbright for Iceland Energy Studies

May 29, 2020

MISSOULA – Nicholas Fry, a graduate of the W.A. Franke College of Forestry and Conservation at the University of Montana, has been awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to study in Iceland during the 2020-21 academic year.

Fry is one of six current and former UM students to earn a Fulbright Scholarship this year. He will use the award to complete his master's thesis at Reykjavik University’s Iceland School of Energy. Iceland uses geothermal energy widely, and Fry studies how well that model could translate to Montana.

“I am researching geothermal district heating potentials across lower heat-demand density communities in Montana,” he said. “This means, where feasible, Montana towns in proximity to low-temperature resources could convert about 60% of their
household energy expenses to lower-cost, non-fossil sources."

While federal dollars have been continuously appropriated to oil and gas exploration over the last 40 years or more, the last time Montana geothermal resources had similarly scaled investment and investigation was in the late 1970s and early ‘80s, Fry said. Materials technology and design have come a long way since then.

“It is up to individual research projects to attempt to close the gap,” he said. “I hope my effort contributes to that equalization and potential realization that low-cost clean energy is right in our backyards.”

In contrast, he said, Iceland has never stopped government funding of geothermal exploration since the 1970s oil crises. The country now enjoys geothermal district heating across most of the country, with a further 30% of their electricity generation originating from higher temperature geothermal reservoirs.

“Iceland’s clean energy transition, largely based out of necessity, has increased national energy security and directly correlates with its rise to the top of world-wide individual income rankings,” Fry said. “Where we source our energy matters, and I hope to learn the good and bad from the Icelandic energy model.”

Fry and his partner, Holly Gumz, a Montana State University graduate, left for Iceland a year ago. He started training in energy sciences, economics and engineering, and she works as a nurse at the national hospital.

“We have learned to enjoy longer winters, a new language and Nordic hospitality,” he said. “We are very grateful for how much of an impact Montana has had on our lives and hope to find our way back someday soon.”

Fry and the other recipients continue UM’s legacy of securing Fulbright Scholarships, said Clint Walker, the UM Fulbright adviser and an associate professor of Russian.
“We had a 50% success rate this year,” Walker said. “This percentage is well above the national average and speaks to the high quality of our UM applicants for Fulbrights.”

The Fulbright U.S. Student Program offers opportunities for students and young professionals to undertake international graduate study, advanced research, university teaching and primary and secondary school teaching worldwide.

For more information about the Fulbright Program, visit https://us.fulbrightonline.org/.

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**Contact:** Clint Walker, UM Fulbright adviser and associate professor of Russian, 406-243-2501, clint.walker@mso.umt.edu.
MISSOULA – Reporting from the University of Montana’s Montana Public Radio has garnered top journalism awards again, as MTPR’s latest honors include a Regional Edward R. Murrow Award and five awards from the Associated Press Television and Radio Association.

“These awards are a testament to the hard work that MTPR’s news team puts in every day,” MTPR digital editor Josh Burnham said. “We’re proud to be recognized by our peers for the important public service and investigative work our reporters are doing.”
Montana Public Radio Wins Regional Murrow, Associated Press Awards - UM News - University Of Montana

Murrow Awards are the embodiment of the values and principles set forth by Edward R. Murrow, a journalism pioneer who set the standards for the highest-quality broadcast journalism. They’re among the most respected awards in journalism.

The Regional Murrow award-winning story was an investigative report by MTPR News Director Corin Cates-Carney, who dug through hundreds of reports to determine how much money lobbyists reported spending to influence lawmakers during Montana’s 2019 legislative session. It is available online at https://bit.ly/2zMn6pq.

The Associated Press also honored Cates-Carney with a “Best Public Service” award. His story about Montana political candidates who failed to properly report their Facebook ad spending additionally won first place for “Best Investigative Reporting.”

Reporter Aaron Bolton also was recognized for “Best Public Service” reporting for his story on alleged labor violations at a Columbia Falls fast food restaurant run by a church ministry.

Nora Saks and Nick Mott were honored for “Best Documentary” for their work on MTPR’s podcast “Richest Hill,” which explores the past, present and future of Butte. The podcast is online at https://buttepodcast.org/.

Burnham received a “Best Digital Presence” award for his work on MTPR’s website and online channels.

Montana Public Radio is a service of UM. MTPR FM broadcast stations include 89.1 Missoula (KUFM); 91.5 Missoula, city (K218AI); 91.9 Hamilton (KUFN); 89.5 Polson (KPJH); 90.1 Kalispell, Whitefish, North Valley (KUKL); 90.5 Libby (KUFL); 91.7 Kalispell, city (K219BN); 101.3 Swan Lake (K267BJ); 91.3 Butte (KAPC); 91.7 Helena (KUHM); 91.7 Dillon (K219DN); and 89.9 Great Falls (KGPR). Visit www.mtpr.org for Montana news, arts and music.

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Contact: Josh Burnham, MTPR digital editor, 406-243-4203, joshua.burnham@umontana.edu.
MISSOULA – Perhaps you heard an overwhelming sigh of relief from Montana tourism businesses when Gov. Steve Bullock announced the June 1 lifting of the 14-day quarantine for people driving into Montana.
Forty-four percent of tourism business owners said they have six months or less to survive if the current conditions continued, and another 22% said they could last up to a year. This is according to a business survey conducted May 6-8 by the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research at the University of Montana.

Additionally, potential travelers to Montana and Montana residents are slightly more likely to travel than they were one month ago. That was before the end date of the 14-day quarantine was announced.

This uptick in travel interest showed that 81% of Montanan’s are likely to travel away from home, yet within the state, over the summer.

As for travelers to Montana, large majorities of trips to the state were canceled or not booked through May. Moving further into the summer, travelers are holding off on canceling and watching conditions as they consider their travel plans.

“Our survey results suggest that following a lifting of the 14-day quarantine period, we will see a bump up in the number of travelers venturing to Montana,” said ITRR Associate Director Jeremy Sage.

It has been a rough couple of months for tourism-related business owners and times remain tough for those seeking jobs in the travel industry this summer. The ITRR survey found that, on average, eight positions per travel business will not be filled for the near future. Out of the 440 respondents, these businesses alone will not hire 1,575 full-time jobs, 779 part-time jobs and 1,904 seasonal jobs that they typically fill in the summer.

Preparing for survival was a common theme from various types of businesses. One respondent wrote, “Compared to previous years, I've lowered the quantity of supplies ordered for the season and am not hiring the usual staff. This fall I will have to lay off most staff, which has never been done before, in order to make it through the winter.”

Less inventory, reducing workforce, applying for government aid or closing the doors completely were responses to how they can survive.

“This was the third business survey we conducted in two months to gauge the impact of COVID-19 on Montana’s
travel-related business,” ITRR Director Norma Nickerson said. “If I were to summarize in a word or two the sentiment from each survey, it would be ‘slightly worried’ in mid-March, ‘frightened’ at the end of March and ‘angry’ in early May.”

By May, business owners felt helpless with little hope, she said. Many blamed that on the 14-day quarantine.

On the other hand, some business owners said, “Not too fast.” One wrote: “I have no interest in reopening too quickly. I've read enough to believe that we'll bounce back faster, economically, if we keep to tighter restrictions now (analysis of the 1918 pandemic) and believe that's a smarter way to proceed. I don't want to see communities in Montana filling up with tourists (out or in-state) until we know that the pandemic is truly under control, meaning (to my current thinking) next year sometime. I think this summer tourist season is a bust, and we should all make plans to ensure that we both help that be a reality and plan for our own businesses accordingly. We’re playing the long game here.”

Travelers, too, have evolving perceptions of the risks of the pandemic. Through March, health concerns for themselves and their communities steadily increased. However, by May those concerns began to taper.

Economic concerns though, have not. More than 70% expressed they are extremely concerned about the economy, which is up from 41% in March.

“If there is any economic silver lining, it is that Montana is largely a drive market for visitors, and they are indicating an increased interest in driving to destinations this summer versus flying,” Sage said. “This will all, of course, have to be played out in balance with continued health threats for travelers and the Montanans they come in contact with.”


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

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**Contact:** Jeremy Sage, associate director, UM Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research, 406-243-5552, jeremy.sage@umontana.edu; Norma Nickerson, ITRR director, 406-243-2328, norma.nickerson@umontana.edu.
UM to Light Main Hall and M to Honor Area High School Grads

May 27, 2020

MISSOULA – The University of Montana will celebrate Missoula County high school graduates by lighting its historic Main Hall in the various school colors June 1-8.

UM will light its signature clock-tower building from 9 to 11 p.m. each night, with each high school getting its own...
evening. The University also will illuminate the perimeter of the M on Mount Sentinel in white lights during the events.

Graduates, their families and members of the public are invited to the Oval to witness the lightings. UM encourages precautions such as wearing masks and appropriate social distancing.

“High school graduation is a special time, and my heart goes out to our area students who are experiencing this significant rite of passage during a pandemic,” UM President Seth Bodnar said. “As Missoula's hometown university, we celebrate the Class of 2020. Illuminating the M and Main Hall symbolizes our confidence in a bright future for these graduates and for our community.”

Main Hall will be lighted in the colors of the high school on these nights:

- Hellgate High School: Monday, June 1.
- Valley Christian High School: Tuesday, June 2.
- Big Sky High School: Wednesday, June 3.
- Willard High School: Thursday, June 4.
- Sentinel High School: Friday, June 5.
- Seeley-Swan High School: Saturday, June 6.
- Loyola High School: Sunday, June 7.
- Frenchtown High School: Monday, June 8.

Attendees are encouraged to park behind Main Hall or in the nearby parking garage.

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Contact: Paula Short, UM spokesperson, Strategic Communications associate vice president, 405-830-6098, paula.short@umontana.edu.
MISSOULA – Along with other collegiate experiences canceled because of COVID-19, so too have gone many summer internships and the valuable career experiences they provide. As an alternative, the University of Montana’s Experiential Learning and Career Success office now offers an
innovative micro-internship program through Parker Dewey, a freelance platform for college students and recent graduates.

The platform connects students with micro-internship opportunities, mostly virtual, in highly specific, project-based positions — lead generation, content creation, copy writing, app design, social marketing, data entry — from small businesses to Fortune 500 companies.

“Students’ academic and career plans have been impacted by COVID-19 because many internships were canceled,” said UM career coach Dr. Cheryl Minnick. “Micro-internships provide students the opportunity to work remotely on short-term, professional assignments and fill their résumé gap with meaningful, skill-enhancing and career-building employment.”

Parker Dewey’s micro-internship program connects students without charge to a diverse network of companies and organizations to complete paid short-term professional assignments. As a complement to existing campus recruiting and semester-long internships, micro-internships provide opportunities for highly motivated college students to demonstrate their talent and skills, develop relationships and explore career paths while providing value to businesses.

Andrea Vernon, interim director of UM’s Experiential Learning and Career Success, said the program can provide local businesses with immediate project support and even help them identify future job candidates. She invites UM alumni, local nonprofits, businesses and industry partners to create and post micro-internships on the Parker-Dewey platform at http://info.parkerdewey.com/umt.

“We’re in this together,” Vernon said. “We need Griz Nation to come together to help students, especially the Class of 2020, by providing micro-internships and the career-enhancing, skill-building experiential learning opportunities they provide.”

For more information about UM’s partnership with Parker Dewey, call Experiential Learning and Career success at 406-243-2022, or email elcs@umontana.edu. More information also is available at https://www.umt.edu/experiential-
Micro-Internships Provide UM Students Big Resume Building Opportunities - UM News - University Of Montana

Contact: Andrea Rhoades, associate director, UM Experiential Learning and Career Success, 406-243-2825, andrea.rhoades@mso.umt.edu.
MISSOULA – Scott Waller, a graduate student in the University of Montana’s Wildlife Biology program, has been awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to study in Russia during the 2020-21 academic year.

Waller, a native of Kalispell, is one of six UM students to receive UM Wildlife Biology Master’s Student Awarded Fulbright Scholarship

May 26, 2020
a Fulbright Scholarship this year. The recipients continue UM’s legacy of securing Fulbright Scholarships, said Clint Walker, the UM Fulbright adviser and an associate professor of Russian.

“We had a 50% success rate this year,” Walker said. “This percentage is well above the national average and speaks to the high quality of our UM applicants for Fulbrights.”

The Fulbright U.S. Student Program offers opportunities for students and young professionals to undertake international graduate study, advanced research, university teaching and primary and secondary school teaching worldwide.

Waller will conduct research in the Russian Far East, testing new ways to monitor prey species of Amur (Siberian) tigers to foster tiger conservation.

“Specifically, I’m comparing new methods for estimating prey population size using camera traps, developed recently here at UM by my fellow graduate student Anna Moeller, with traditional Russian snow tracking techniques,” Waller said.

Because of COVID-19, the Fulbright program has been postponed until later this year or January 2021, but when Waller does go overseas, he will be based in a small village called Terney on the coast of the Sea of Japan.

“The village is surrounded by the Sikhote-Alin Biosphere Reserve, a stronghold for the Amur tiger population,” Waller said. “Russian scientists have conducted research there on Amur tiger ecology since the reserve’s formation in 1935 and have worked closely with the Wildlife Conservation Society’s Russia Program during the last quarter-century to protect this flagship species.”

Waller, whose parents are both alumni of UM’s Wildlife Biology program, said he wants to continue working as a wildlife biologist in international conservation.
“The global community needs to work together to solve our global conservation problems, even when the political situation is tense,” he said. “The relationship between the Sikhote-Alin Reserve and Wildlife Conservation Society is a great example of this, and I’m lucky to be able to work with and learn from them.”

For more information about the Fulbright Program, visit https://us.fulbrightonline.org/.

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**Contact:** Clint Walker, UM Fulbright adviser and associate professor of Russian, 406-243-2501, clint.walker@mso.umt.edu.
MISSOULA – Documenting the lives of Mexicans impacted by immigration and teaching her subjects how to tell their own stories is a project University of Montana alumna and filmmaker Alyson Spery knows intimately.

The latest UM grad to win a Fulbright Scholarship, Spery will take her passion to three rural communities in Tlaxcala, Mexico, to share “a more nuanced and authentic story about the impacts of immigration.” While there, she will complete her docuseries “Sister Cities” and show first-time filmmakers how to direct their own short documentaries in community
Spery studied public policy and philosophy at Hobart and William Smith Colleges and earned her Master of Fine Arts in Media Arts at UM in 2019. Raised in Salisbury, Maryland, she has lived in Montana and Wyoming for more than 15 years.

“Sister Cities” began in Jackson, Wyoming, where Spery taught filmmaking to first- and second-generation Mexican Americans, encouraging them to share their stories, passions and fears. Many immigrants to Jackson Hole come from Tlaxcala.

“The films made in Mexico will add to the collection of films shot and directed by my students in Jackson,” Spery said. “I will pass the camera (and therefore the control of the narrative) to those who have lived it.”

Spery said she is surprised and thrilled that the Fulbright Committee, a branch of the U.S. State Department, has invested in a contentious subject like immigration.

“This is not just monumental for me, but for the people whose lives are at the mercy of border relations between the U.S. and Mexico,” she said. “This opportunity demonstrates an interest in the experience of immigrants and the communities forever changed by those who emigrated.”

Last year, Spery founded the nonprofit film production and educational organization, DIY Docs, to create more community media, and she hopes “Sister Cities” is just the beginning of documenting communities around the world.

“I feel so honored to be entrusted with the support of both communities in Jackson and Tlaxcala and for people’s
willingness to collaborate on this project," she said.

Spery joins five other UM grads and students in receiving a 2020-21 Fulbright Scholarship. The recipients continue UM’s legacy of securing large numbers of Fulbright Scholars, said Clint Walker, UM Fulbright adviser and associate professor of Russian.

“We had a 50% success rate this year,” Walker said. “This percentage is well above the national average and speaks to the high quality of our UM applicants for Fulbrights.”

The Fulbright U.S. Student Program offers opportunities for students and young professionals to undertake international graduate study, advanced research, university teaching and primary and secondary school teaching worldwide. For more information, visit https://us.fulbrightonline.org/.

Due to COVID-19, Spery will embark on her Fulbright adventure in January 2021 instead of this August as originally planned.

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Contact: Clint Walker, UM Fulbright adviser and associate professor of Russian, 406-243-2501, clint.walker@mso.umt.edu.
MISSOULA – University of Montana officials have announced an earlier start and end to the fall semester 2020 as a mitigation measure in response to novel coronavirus.

Fall semester at UM will start Wednesday, Aug. 19, and conclude Wednesday, Nov. 25, the day before Thanksgiving.

“We are committed to keeping our students, faculty and staff as safe and healthy as possible,” UM President Seth Bodnar said. “The intention behind the adjusted dates is to eliminate the need to return to campus after Thanksgiving to complete the semester. We believe this will reduce the potential for travel-related COVID exposure.”

Students will return to campus for the start of spring semester 2021 on Monday, Jan. 11.

Bodnar said the change to an earlier start came after consulting with a broad group of campus leaders representing academic affairs, student services and University operations. Officials still are working on important considerations such as whether winter-session classes will be offered between fall and spring semesters and how Commencement ceremonies will be handled in the fall and spring.
“We still have some decisions to make around the new semester dates,” Bodnar said, “and we will ensure that information is communicated promptly to enable our students and employees to plan accordingly.”

Updates and other information are available on the UM Coronavirus Fall 2020 webpage at https://www.umt.edu/coronavirus/fall2020.php.

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**Contact:** Paula Short, UM spokesperson, Strategic Communications associate vice president, 405-830-6098, paula.short@umontana.edu.
MISSOULA – Carly Zilge, a recent graduate of the University of Montana’s World Languages and Cultures department, has been awarded a prestigious Fulbright Scholarship to study in Russia during the 2020-21 academic year.

Zilge, who majored in communication studies...
with a minor in Russian, is one of six UM students to receive a Fulbright Scholarship this year. The recipients continue UM’s legacy of securing large numbers of Fulbright Scholars, said Clint Walker, UM Fulbright adviser and an associate professor of Russian.

“We had a 50% success rate this year,” Walker said. “This percentage is well above the national average and speaks to the high quality of our UM applicants for Fulbrights.”

The Fulbright U.S. Student Program offers opportunities for students and young professionals to undertake international graduate study, advanced research, university teaching and primary and secondary school teaching worldwide.

Zilge, who is from Felton, California, said she plans to use her time in Russia – her second visit – to gain practical teaching skills, improve her Russian and soak in the Russian culture.

“The last time I was in Russia was a year ago, and I remember thinking that it would probably be such a long time before I had an opportunity to return,” she said. “I couldn’t be more thrilled that I get to go back so soon.”

The Fulbright is not the only recognition Zilge received during her senior year at UM. She also won a Certificate of Commendation in the American Council of Teachers of Russian All-National Russian Essay Contest.

Because of COVID-19, the Fulbright program has been postponed until later this year or January 2021, but Zilge said the wait is worth the opportunity and that she is eager to get started. And when her Fulbright is over?

“I eventually plan to continue my education in Russian, but immediately after the Fulbright program, I plan to take some time to teach English abroad and travel,” Zilge said.

For more information about the Fulbright Program, visit https://us.fulbrightonline.org/.
Contact: Clint Walker, UM Fulbright adviser and associate professor of Russian, 406-243-2501, clint.walker@mso.umt.edu.
MISSOULA – Missoula’s wide-open spaces have perhaps felt a bit more crowded these days as residents flock to local trailheads seeking exercise, fresh air and a sense of normality.
Outdoor recreation provides much-needed relief during the pandemic, but increased use of recreational areas also can bring potential challenges, such as employee safety hazards, parking congestion, private-property-rights issues, conflicts between trail users, resource damage and potential health risks.

Two University of Montana researchers, in conjunction with Missoula Parks and Recreation, are quantifying how COVID-19 has affected the ways people use Missoula’s outdoor spaces during the pandemic to help park officials better understand and manage changing recreation trends.

Associate Professors Jennifer Thomsen and Libby Metcalf, social science researchers in UM’s W.A. Franke College of Forestry and Conservation, built an online survey that asked residents about their trail use during COVID-19 restrictions. More than 650 responded.

“Outdoor recreation is important for coping, but how do we make sure it’s done in a safe way? There’s lots of interest in this from both park and rec managers and the community,” said Thomsen, an associate professor of parks, tourism and recreation. “We’ve all seen examples from other states where trails or beaches have been closed. There was this fear: Is this going to happen in Missoula? Parks and Recreation is trying to find out about changes in use and peoples’ decision-making and awareness – are they safely recreating? If they are going to keep these places open, this data could be really important.”

“We asked questions about how people are recreating in the pandemic with increased use on trails,” said Metcalf, associate professor of human dimensions of natural resources. “Are you going with different people or at different times of day? We wanted to know how people are altering their behavior to stay safe but still have that outlet.”

The researchers still are analyzing the data and will release a full report to Missoula Parks and Rec later this spring. Preliminary findings indicate that 40% of respondents are using new trails and parks as a result of the COVID-19 stay-at-home order, and 77% of the respondents say hiking on trails is the most common recreation activity. Forty percent of respondents said they recreate when areas are less crowded.
The early survey results also showed that 98% of respondents indicated they were socially distancing on trails.

"We know from previous research in Yellowstone that people have very different perceptions about how far away they are," Metcalf said. "We’ve done similar studies regarding wildlife in Yellowstone. People think they are 30 feet away from a bison, but they are actually 10 feet away. It will be different to see how this applies to social distancing on trails."

Thomsen and Metcalf included questions about where people are going and what activities they would normally otherwise be engaged in – like a fitness class or participating in a team sport. They also wanted to understand participants’ motivations for recreating outdoors during COVID.

Preliminary results suggest respondents are motivated to experience solitude (62%), to rest mentally (53%), to be close to nature (53%) and to relax physically (52%).

A portion of the survey also addressed signage at trailheads to help Parks and Rec determine what is effective and how best to communicate with constituents. Many of the respondents have found the signage at trailheads and parks to be moderately helpful. This information also will aid in updating and educating residents and visitors, said Donna Gaukler, director of Missoula Parks and Recreation, who helped design the survey and works closely with Metcalf and Thomsen.

Beyond the health and safety of park visitors and employees, Thomsen said, there are concerns about the impacts increased traffic will have on natural resources.

"It's the perfect storm. It's spring time. The weather is nice. People want to get outside, and because of the COVID restrictions, people don't have many other options for recreation," Thomsen said. "But you also have fragile vegetation that blooms now and wildlife are becoming active. New behaviors have to be learned by all. How do you maximize safety, but also how do we protect these sensitive resources? There are a lot of unknowns, but it's really important to assess these baselines now and then continue throughout the season, so managers have the data to help make decisions and can explain those science-based strategies to the public."

The researchers hope to use the survey to help support Parks and Recreation staff, who have worked hard to ensure open spaces in Missoula remain open.

"We often forget in the community that our public lands and open spaces require maintenance. When you dump a whole bunch of people on trails that have never seen use like this, it creates cascading effects," said Metcalf. "Managing outdoor spaces requires human resources. How do we meet the needs of the community and keep our employees safe?"

As academic researchers, Thomsen and Metcalf also are interested in understanding how outdoor spaces serve as coping mechanisms in times of crisis. They plan to conduct a more in-depth analysis related to recreation and mental health during the pandemic and to eventually submit the results for publication in a peer-reviewed scientific journal.

The two said they see the uptick in recreation during the pandemic as an ultimately positive thing.
“My hope is that eventually all these new users will create new conservation advocates,” said Metcalf. “Conservation often comes back to votes. I hope our community puts together another open space bond in the future. We want to be able to conserve later on. It will ultimately improve conservation down the road. It also makes a point for strong educational programs.”

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**Contact:** Elizabeth Metcalf, UM associate professor, W.A. Franke College of Forestry and Conservation, 406-243-4448, elizabeth.metcalf@umontana.edu; Jennifer Thomsen, UM associate professor, FCFC, 406-243-6581, jennifer.thomsen@umontana.edu.
MISSOULA – After a two-and-a-half-month closure due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the Montana Museum of Art and Culture at the University of Montana reopened its doors Tuesday, May 19, with strict adherence to safety protocols outlined by the governor’s office.

The museum reopened with its popular exhibition “Monte Dolack: The Artist’s Nature” in the Performing Arts and
“All of us at MMAC have waited a long time for this day,” said MMAC Director H. Rafael Chacón. “We are excited to be back to sharing the art and culture we so desperately need in this time of global crisis.”

Going forward, the museum will follow strict sanitation and social distancing procedures to protect its staff and visitors. This includes keeping visitor capacity at 50% and groups under 10 people, maintaining a physical distance of 6 feet between guests, wearing appropriate personal protective equipment, sanitizing all surfaces touched by the public in common spaces and having visitors sign-in to facilitate contact tracing should a staff member or volunteer become ill.

Celebrating its 125th anniversary in 2020, MMAC is home to one of the oldest and deepest art collections in the Rocky Mountain Northwest. Its world-class collection of more than 11,000 objects includes significant historic and contemporary works of art.

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Contact: Rafael Chacón, UM Montana Museum of Art and Culture director, 406-243-2019, hrafael.chacon@umontana.edu.
UM Art Museum Reopens With Popular Monte Dolack Exhibition - UM News - University Of Montana
GLACIER NATIONAL PARK – Glaciers are retreating in Glacier National Park and across the globe due to climate change. Researchers have long predicted that the shrinkage and disappearance of glaciers will reduce biodiversity in...
mountain ecosystems as species that live in habitats influenced by glacier meltwater are lost.

However, a new study shows that a specialized community of cold-water invertebrates unexpectedly has persisted in the high-elevation streams of Glacier National Park, even in areas deglaciated since the Little Ice Age, nearly 170 years ago. The study was led by Clint Muhlfeld, a U.S. Geological Survey research ecologist and associate research professor at the University of Montana's Flathead Lake Biological Station.

“This study is unique,” Muhlfeld said. “It's the first to directly assess the impacts of glacier loss on the persistence of a large number of species across a mountainous region.”

Recently published in the prestigious journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, the research used high-resolution glacier retreat data from 1850 through 2015. This was combined with extensive stream community data from 129 sites to test whether glacier retreat has reduced biodiversity in Glacier National Park through the loss of uniquely adapted meltwater stream species.

“Although shrinking glaciers pose a significant risk to cold-water species, our results show that these mountaintop species may be more resilient to glacier recession than previously thought,” said Timothy Cline, a USGS ecologist and co-author on the study.
Researchers identified a specialized cold-water invertebrate community, which includes the Endangered Species Act-protected meltwater stonefly, living in the highest elevation streams fed not only by melting glaciers, but also snowfields and groundwater springs.

The study projects a 70% to 80% decline in suitable habitat by the end of the century, but not necessarily loss of this community, with the complete disappearance of glaciers.

“Our results demonstrate that high-altitude streams and snow-fed water sources will continue to serve as refuges for mountain biodiversity as glaciers soon disappear,” Muhlfeld said. “These findings highlight the need to protect these important landscapes while addressing the root causes of climate warming at a global scale.”

The researchers note that climate change impacts on mountain biodiversity are complex and uncertain. They emphasize the urgent need to assess the widespread impacts of climate-induced glacier loss in high-elevation mountain ecosystems.

Other co-authors on the study are: Joseph Giersch, Caitlin Florentine and Erich Pietzsch at the USGS Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center; Dean Jacobsen at the University of Copenhagen; and Scott Hotaling at Washington State University.

For more information about the study, email Muhlfeld at cmuhlfeld@usgs.gov or call 406-600-9686. The study is online at https://www.pnas.org/content/early/2020/05/12/2001697117.

Contact: Clint Muhlfeld, research ecologist and associate research professor, U.S. Geological Survey and UM Flathead Lake Biological Station, 406-600-9686, cmuhlfeld@usgs.gov; Ian Withrow, FBLS media/information specialist, ian.withrow@flbs.umt.edu.
Montana Public Radio Reschedules Spring Pledge Drive

May 15, 2020

MISSOULA – Montana Public Radio will ask listeners for their support during its Spring Pledge Drive, which was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

MTPR’s rescheduled drive begins at 6 a.m. Wednesday, June 3, and runs until 9 a.m. Monday, June 8.

The pledge drive and MTPR are made possible thanks to the involvement of thousands of people dedicated to public broadcasting in Montana. Listener contributions are vital and make up 75% of MTPR’s income annually.

“Montana Public Radio is really a community effort – our wonderful staff who make sure this service goes out every day no matter what challenges we face and, of course, our amazing listeners who step forward and support this work not only for themselves but also for those who can’t donate right now,” said Ray Ekness, director of the University of Montana Broadcast Media Center and MTPR general manager. “This team effort is truly inspiring, and it’s never been stronger as we celebrate our 55th anniversary this year.”

MTPR Director of Membership Anne Hosler said the decision to postpone this year’s Spring Pledge Drive was
difficult but the right choice “because we knew people needed uninterrupted coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic and also the other music and children’s programs on our service that bring a respite from the news. While the drive was postponed, however, the need for listener donations cannot be postponed.”

This spring’s drive will look a little different in an era of social distancing and phased reopening of the state. Instead of volunteers coming into the station, MTPR will use a smaller in-house phone bank staffed with MTPR employees placed six feet apart to take pledges over the phone.

“Above all, we want to set a good example and follow the public health best practices to keep everyone safe – especially our staff and volunteers,” Hosler said. “We will really miss the volunteers coming into the studio to help, but we want to keep them safe and healthy.”

Another spring drive tradition, listener-donated thank-you gifts, will be offered but with some added precautions and guidance from the health department.

“We’re working closely with the Missoula County Health Department to determine what thank-you gifts we can offer, and while most of the traditional favorites will be available, homemade baked goods and food items will not be accepted this time,” explained Hosler. “We know those items are popular, but we’re going to have to skip those this year, and we’re hopeful that we can bring them back in the future.”

During the pledge week, listeners can pledge online at https://www.mtpr.org, call 800-325-1565 or mail in pledges to MTPR at 32 Campus Drive, Missoula, Montana, 59812.

“Listeners are passionate about Montana news and programs, but it takes their financial support in any amount to make those programs a reality,” Ekness said.

Montana Public Radio is a service of UM. MTPR FM broadcast stations include 89.1 Missoula (KUFM), 91.5 Missoula, city (K218AI), 91.9 Hamilton (KUFN), 89.5 Polson (KPJH), 90.1 Kalispell, Whitefish, North Valley (KUKL), 90.5 Libby (KUFL), 91.7 Kalispell, city (K219BN), 101.3 Swan Lake (K267BJ), 91.3 Butte (KAPC), 91.7 Helena (KUHM), 91.7 Dillon (K219DN) and 89.9 Great Falls (KGPR).

###

**Contact:** Anne Hosler, MTPR director of membership, 406-243-4214, anne.hosler@umontana.edu.
MISSOULA – The University of Montana’s Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research will once more work on improving national parks as a collaborator on a $40 million contract from the U.S. National Park Service.

ITRR, part of UM’s College of Forestry and Conservation, will study visitor use and social issues for the nationwide research projects conducted to assist with park service planning and management.
Two other research companies, Otak of Redmond, Washington, and RRC Associates of Boulder, Colorado, also are involved on the five-year N.P.S. contract.

Since 1988, UM’s ITRR has conducted tourism and recreation research within the state and region.

“This contract is an opportunity to assist our nation’s park service with a variety of issues, from evaluating and improving the visitor experience to congestion and transportation to internal staffing and management,” said Jeremy Sage, ITRR associate director. “We are excited to work with Otak, RRC, and the rest of our stellar team on new and creative research methods and analysis.”

The trio of research companies, with Otak as the main contractor and RRC and ITRR as subcontractors, previously worked together on a large visitor study on crowding in Yellowstone National Park.

“Our unique approach in Yellowstone of handing out tablets with location-specific surveys that would later pop up on the tablet caught the attention of the park service in our proposal,” said Norma Nickerson, ITRR director. “We had the ability to ask in-the-
moment questions about crowding and satisfaction to visitors and upload the data nightly for immediate consumption by Yellowstone administrators.”

Through the new park service contract, Otak, RRC and the ITRR will provide more creative approaches to informing park managers on social and natural resources issues. Some projects and goals include:

1. Understanding in-park visitor use so land managers can make better decisions on visitor experiences and resources protection.
2. Investigating personnel and partner studies of internal agency and department issues.
3. Assessing regional economic impact and economic welfare studies that include cost/benefit and regulatory flexibility analyses, willingness to pay and visitor spending profile estimates.
4. Studying recreation, transportation and carrying capacity issues, including visitor movement, travel pattern studies, visitor use level estimation and evaluations of conditions with changes over time and under various use levels.
5. Conducting non-visitor studies to look at visitor displacement and increase awareness of gateway communities and regional stakeholders, as well as studying potential visitors to assist in future management decisions.

Academic partners at UM’s College of Business, Department of Mathematics and the W.A. Franke College of Forestry and Conservation also will contribute research to the five-year contract. Other team members around the country include researchers from Utah State University, Oregon State University, University of Colorado, Kansas State University, University of Florida, University of Georgia, University of Maine and Virginia Polytechnic University.

Collaborative business partners nationwide include:

Bioeconomics and Global Parks Solutions both from Missoula; NatureWerks, LLC, from Minneapolis; Agnew Beck Consulting from Anchorage, Alaska; EPS from Oakland, California; Fehr & Peers from offices throughout the U.S.; New Line Consulting from Gallatin Gateway, Montana; Evermost from Kirkland, Washington; Industrial Economics from Cambridge, Massachusetts; Kirk Value Planners from Goodyear, Arizona; OmniTrak Group from Honolulu; NeoTreks from Castle Rock, Colorado; and L2 Data Collection from Boise, Idaho, and Salt Lake City.

“The park service is excited to work with this extensive team of subject-matter experts to inform the variety of socioeconomic and natural resource data and analytic needs for our parks and programs,” said Bret Meldrum, park
service social science program chief. “This contract will significantly contribute to data-driven decision-making across the bureau.”

Contact: Jeremy Sage, associate director, UM Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research, 406-243-5552, jeremy.sage@umontana.edu; Norma Nickerson, director, ITRR, 406-243-2328, norma.nickerson@umontana.edu.
UM Journalism School Welcomes Fall Pollner Professor

May 12, 2020

MISSOULA – The University of Montana School of Journalism has named reporter and former attorney E. Tammy Kim the Distinguished T. Anthony Pollner Professor for fall 2020.

Kim will be in residence at the School of Journalism this fall, teaching about the history and institutions of the American worker. Her course will focus on an overview of key labor issues while guiding student journalists to develop research,
interviewing, writing and fact-checking skills.

Kim currently is a freelance magazine reporter and contributing opinion writer at The New York Times. She previously worked at The New Yorker and Al Jazeera America and has written for The New Yorker, The Nation, The New York Review of Books and Columbia Journalism Review, among other publications. She also is the co-author and co-editor of “Punk Ethnography,” a 2016 book about the politics of world music.

Kim earned her Juris Doctor at the School of Law at New York University and completed her undergraduate degree in philosophy at Yale. She has earned prestigious awards for both her journalism and work in the legal profession and has taught courses in labor, immigration and human rights at Yale, the Cooper Union and the City University of New York.

Kim is a second-generation Korean American and grew up in Tacoma, Washington. In addition to teaching a seminar, she will advise the Kaimin, the student newspaper at UM.

“The course I’m planning for the fall, ‘The American Worker,’ will introduce students to the basics of labor history and train them in reporting sensitively on the working class,” Kim said. “I’m thrilled to have this opportunity, and appreciate the kind welcome of the University community.”

The Pollner professorship was created in 2001 by the family and friends of T. Anthony Pollner, a 1999 School of Journalism alumnus who died in a motorcycle accident. Dozens of renowned journalists have served as distinguished professors at the school since the program’s inception.

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Contact: Denise Dowling, director, UM School of Journalism, 406-243-5250, denise.dowling@mso.umt.edu.
MISSOULA – A crew of workers from the University of Montana will spot spray noxious weeds on Mount Sentinel between May 14 and July 3. The group of four to six people will work from about 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday, weather permitting.

Noxious weeds are a legal category of non-native, invasive plants that must be controlled by all landowners. UM has worked hard over the past 21 years to control noxious weeds and promote restoration and conservation of native prairies on Mount Sentinel.

“These are backpack applications on specific plants,” said Marilyn Marler, UM natural areas manager. “We include a bright blue dye in the tank mix so that people can see what areas have been sprayed.”
The spray mix is Tordon 22k, which controls leafy spurge, Dalmatian toadflax and spotted knapweed, with a small amount of MSM 60 to control invasive tumble mustards that have been a problem in recent years.

The crew will work below the Fire Road for most of the season. UM property on Mount Sentinel includes the area around the M Trail, but also low on the mountain from East Beckwith Avenue south to behind UM Family Housing near the UM Golf Course. Signs with maps will be posted at trailheads. If you have questions, call or text Marler at 406-544-7189 or email marilyn.marler@umontana.edu.

UM has established all of the available biocontrol insects for Mount Sentinel’s noxious weeds, and also relies heavily on community volunteerism for weed pulling. The COVID-19 situation required the cancellation of several volunteer events this spring, but Marler hopes to welcome back UM students and community volunteers next spring.

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**Contact:** Marilyn Marler, UM natural areas manager, 406-544-7189, marilyn.marler@umontana.edu.
UM Recognizes Outstanding Student Volunteer

May 11, 2020

MISSOULA – The University of Montana’s Department of Experiential Learning and Career Success has recognized freshman Natalie Temple with its annual Outstanding Student Volunteer Award.

The award salutes one outstanding individual who has volunteered his or her time, energy...
and resources to making a lasting impact to an organization.

Temple, a philosophy major from Glendive, volunteers at CASA of Missoula, an organization dedicated to advocating in court for children who are at risk of abuse and neglect. She volunteers as a Court Appointed Special Advocate, serving the court system by meeting with the children, biological parents, foster parents, family attorneys and the social workers to gauge the well-being of family.

"The role of a CASA is not easy, and Natalie's passion to help our vulnerable populations shines through," said Katie Didier, CASA’s education and volunteer coordinator, who nominated Temple for this award. "She demonstrates a true desire to be thoughtful and thorough in her advocacy role."

Didier said Temple works with three children in the program who have suffered significant abuse and neglect.

"Typically, we would not assign such a difficult case with multiple children as a first case," Didier said, "but staff were confident Natalie would be a strong CASA and could take on anything."

Temple said working with CASA has been one of the best challenges she’s ever taken on and that advocating for the safety and well-being of children is something she is passionate about.

"Every child deserves to feel safe and loved, and being a consistent source of comfort and trust for a child who has experienced trauma has the power to change lives and communities," Temple said. "The University of Montana has been supportive of my work, and I'm fortunate to attend an institution that prides itself on giving back to the community."

Jordan Blow, AmeriCorps Vista service member with UM's ELCS department, said they received a number of outstanding nominations from nonprofit organizations this spring.
“We wish we could recognize all of our nominees for the work and effort they have invested in Missoula,” said Blow. “These students represent the spirit of giving back that personifies UM’s commitment to making a contribution to the world around us.”

In addition to recognizing Temple, the ELCS department selected two honorable mentions for their work: Hannah Benshoff, who volunteered at Forward Montana Foundation, which is dedicated to increasing the involvement of younger generations in politics; and Christopher Johnson of Kalispell, who volunteered for the Missoula Food Bank and Community Center.

The ELCS department works with students to enrich their college experience and develop career building skills. It helps students connect with jobs, internships, volunteer opportunities, international experiences and student exchanges.

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Contact: Jordan Blow, AmeriCorps VISTA service member, 517-862-0927, jordan.blow@mso.umt.edu.
UM Plants Trees at Ranch to Commemorate 2020 Graduates

May 09, 2020

MISSOULA – Despite a global pandemic that forced remote instruction for the final weeks of their academic career at the University of Montana, nearly 1,900 students persevered to reach their May 9 graduation day.

Of course, COVID-19 stole the in-person, pomp-and-
circumstance
Commencement
students and their families have come to expect each spring. So UM administrators came up with a uniquely Montana solution:

They would plant trees. Two thousand and twenty ponderosa pine and western larch seedlings to celebrate the stoic and gritty Class of 2020 – all planted on a University-owned ranch in the heart of Big Sky Country.

“Just the act of planting trees demonstrates hope for the future,” said UM President Seth Bodnar, who joined the planting crew, along with wife, Chelsea, and their three children. “While we are disappointed that coronavirus has altered our traditional plans for Commencement, we hope our graduates know that we are thinking of them and honoring them with a hopeful gesture that, in a small way, makes the world for the better.”

The seedling planting is part of a reforestation project on a timbered section of the ranch managed by UM forestry students. In addition, back on the main campus in Missoula, a large shade tree will be planted for the Class of 2020, with a marker describing the graduation-day Bandy Ranch conservation planting.

“We considered several options, from mailing gift boxes to ordering personalized items, but we were also constrained by shutdowns in manufacturing and other issues with so many employees working remotely,” said Paula Short, UM’s director of communications. “We were running through options, and the idea of planting trees was mentioned. It instantly felt like the perfect symbolic measure to celebrate our graduates.”

UM students have access to incredible outdoor classrooms, as the University owns the Bandy Ranch, the 26,000-acre Lubrecht Experimental Forest (which one passes on the drive to Bandy) and the Flathead Lake Biological Station, located on the shore of the largest natural freshwater lake west of the Mississippi.

Bandy Ranch is located about 45 miles northeast of campus. This spectacular outdoor classroom and laboratory was deeded to UM’s Montana Forest and Conservation Experiment Station in 1990 by the estate of Ed Bandy. The experiment station is part of the University’s W.A. Frank College of Forestry and Conservation.
The ranch teaches students about sustainable ranch management and grass-fed, grass-finished cattle operations in a wildland setting. Research into interactions with domestic livestock and wildlife is made easier by the abundant wildlife in the area and that the ranch borders the Blackfoot-Clearwater Game Range. Philanthropic support helped purchase UM's first cattle herd there in 2019. And if you take Highway 200 to Bandy, much of the drive follows the Blackfoot River of a "A River Runs Through It" fame.

On Saturday – UM graduation day and planting day – about 15 people gathered to be dispersed into smaller groups among the rustic ranch buildings for initial instructions. The sky was blue with snowcapped mountains in the distance. The plan was to start the planting that day and finish on subsequent weekends. Because of COVID-19 concerns, most people wore masks, and non-family groups kept a healthy distance apart.

"We are doing a real tree planting today," said Christopher Keyes, associate director of the experiment station (perhaps eyeing his work crew of University administrators and their families skeptically). "At the site we will talk about proper seedling handling and proper planting methods. That ranch is about 3,600 acres, and about half of it is forested. We hopefully will get a lot of new trees planted in the upper part of the forest."

The group then caravanned up dusty, rutted roads for about three miles to a remote elevated section of the ranch. Vehicles passed among the pines, slipped through a boggy stretch and bounced over rocks.

At the join of two forest roads, the group paused for final training. They received instruction on how to use tools – planting bars and hoedads – to plant 10-cubic-inch seedlings of western larch and ponderosa pine. They were told to dig deep enough to fit the entire plug, but admonished not to create an hourglass-shaped hole with air pockets.

"If they aren’t planted correctly, they are bound to die," Keyes said. "It’s a lot of work to plant seedlings, so what’s the point of all that work for nothing?"

He said to keep the seedlings in their bag, so they didn’t dry out. Don’t put the seedling roots in upside down. Avoid the “stomp of death” – instead, gently tamp down the earth with your foot. Look for shaded sites for seedlings, but avoid over-story trees. Don’t plant on rotted stumps. Don’t be afraid to move rocks or underbrush to create a shaded microsite for your seedlings. The advice went on. The goal was to give the seedlings the best chance at establishing and growing into a healthy, mixed conifer forest.

“Basically, we are building a stand that is tomorrow-proof,” Keyes said, eliciting applause from his audience for his clever use of a marketing phrase describing the benefits of a UM education.

He said professional tree planters can plant 700 to 1,000 seedlings in a day. “They almost don’t break stride as they move along – it’s pretty impressive.”

The UM team of planters broke into two groups to work. UM President Seth Bodnar and Provost Jon Harbor planted seedlings at a site with spectacular 360-degree views but with ground that made one understand how the Rocky Mountains got their name. Often their digging was accompanied by a spine-jarring “thunk” of their digging tools hit a rock. They also kept an eye out for wildlife. Members of the media had spotted two bears less than a mile away. Like UM’s mascot, they were grizzlies.

It was an amazing day to work outside in Montana. But at one point Bodnar paused and said, “Typically, I would be
shaking 1,000 hands right now. Instead, I’m planting 1,000 trees. Commencement is one of my favorite days of the year – to see those students’ faces light up. And I’m learning it’s a lot easier to shake 1,000 hands.”

Harbor seemed to relish working to improve the timberlands on the ranch.

“This is an amazing place,” he said as he methodically planted seedling after seedling. “It feels great to be honoring our students who can’t be here, but who are here in spirit.”

Short said experiential learning and deep connections to place are cornerstones of a UM education.

“Our outdoor areas are invaluable for research, but they provide opportunities for education, connection and recreation for all students,” she said. “Our forestry, wildlife biology and ecology majors learn in one of the most extraordinary ecosystems in the world, with the opportunity to get out on the ground to perform research. But these spaces also provide inspiration for writers, photographers and artists, which are also tremendous programs of distinction at UM and the reasons many students choose to study with us.”

Regardless of major, UM students are passionate about sustainability. Short said the student government debuted some of the first zero-emission electric transit buses on college campuses in the country, and student leaders are passionate about carbon neutrality, renewable energy, recycling and climate.

“While it’s difficult to know exactly what will be meaningful to every graduate, this planting trees seems to capture the essence of our students’ care and concern for the environment,” Short said. “It’s been a great day.”

The team estimates it planted about 500 seedlings. A good beginning.

###

**Contact:** Paula Short, UM spokesperson, Strategic Communications associate vice president, 405-830-6098, paula.short@umontana.edu.
MISSOULA – The University of Montana Alumni Association Board of Directors has chosen winners for its second year of the Grizzly of the Last Decade Award.

This year, UMAA highlights seven alumni who represent the best of the Griz spirit through their trailblazing, service and leadership:

- **Jonathan Adams ’10** first put his degrees in psychology and counseling to work by helping create a clinical service for dementia patients and caregivers. He has worked as a mental health clinician for low-income clients and a counselor for employees experiencing work-related stress, but he is most passionate about career
For the past six years, he has been a career counselor and adjunct faculty member at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Wake Forest University and UNC Chapel Hill, where he served underrepresented student populations at the career center. He currently is working on his own venture that creates day-in-the-life experiences using immersive technology to help organizations maximize retention and employee engagement.

Adams earned the North Carolina Association of Colleges and Employers’ President’s Award in 2018. His team at UNC Greensboro received national accolades in 2015 for integrating Gallup's Clifton Strengths Assessment across campus, and his team at UNC Chapel Hill received similar recognition in 2017 for holding a Food Truck Rodeo for career education.

- **Luke Bahnmaier ’10** began his career as a graduate assistant athletic trainer for the University of Oregon football and women’s lacrosse teams, before earning a place among the country’s competitive athletic training residencies at St. Luke’s Sports Medicine in Boise.

From 2013 to 2017, Bahnmaier worked as a clinical athletic trainer, and he now manages St. Luke’s Orthopedic Urgent Care clinic, the first in the St. Luke’s health system. With a focus on improving care for patients with injuries, he shares his knowledge with athletic trainers and physicians at state, regional and national conferences, including Montana’s annual athletic trainers’ symposium.

As well as mentoring athletic trainers, he collaborates with boards in Montana, Washington, Oregon and Alaska as vice president of the Idaho Athletic Trainers’ Association and serves as a volunteer preceptor to the UM Athletic Training Program.

Bahnmaier earned the Northwest Athletic Trainers’ Association New Horizon Award in 2018.

- **Bryce Carver ’13** has incorporated his experience as a Griz football receiver into his position as head football coach for Hamilton High School since 2017.

Under his leadership, the Hamilton Broncs have played in two state championships and posted a 30-5 record. He coached the Montana Shrine Game in 2018 and 2019 and the Montana-North Dakota game in 2018.

Carver is involved with numerous service activities, such as Hamilton Athletics Community Service Day, an Emma’s House Fundraiser for children’s advocacy, the Marcus Daily Memorial Hospital Fundraiser and various Hamilton football and basketball camps. He also hosts summer programs, as well as a youth football program – all while serving as Hamilton High School’s assistant basketball coach.

Carver follows a line of Griz and often connects his football players with UM after they graduate.

- **Emily Graslie ’11** is the first-ever chief curiosity correspondent for the Field Museum in Chicago and the developer of the popular science education channel “The Brain Scoop.”

In the more than 200 episodes of “The Brain Scoop,” created with YouTube educator Hank Green in 2013, she interviews scientists, tours collections and describes how to prepare museum specimens.
Graslie has earned multiple awards for her creativity, including six Webby Awards, listings on the 2018 Forbes 30 under 30 list in Education and the Chicago Tribune’s 2017 “Chicagoans of the Year.” The Wahydra graslieae butterfly species found in Ecuador is named after her.

The University featured her on the 2019 Odyssey of the Stars, and UM has a Graslie Curiosity Internship in her honor, which encourages students from any major to pursue a creative project with the Philip L. Wright Zoological Museum.

- **Svein Newman ’09** has served Montana with his political science expertise for the past decade.

As a staff member of the conservation and family agriculture nonprofit Northern Plains Resource Council, he helps develop community leaders and works with Montanans to help protect water quality, family farms and ranches and Montana’s unique quality of life.

Newman’s initiatives have focused on natural resource conservation, improved water quality standards for agricultural water users, and strengthened clean energy and local food systems. He is a frequent leader for other like-minded organizations around the state.

Newman co-founded Soft Landing Missoula for refugee resettlement and is the vice chair of the Montana Human Right Network’s board of directors. In 2018, he organized crowdfunding efforts that saved 31 low-income households from losing their homes to back taxes, and in 2019, led a successful state property tax reform campaign to save hundreds of additional Montanans from losing their homes in the future.

- **Ashlynn Reynolds-Dyk ’08, M.A. ’10, Ph.D.**, is known for her focus on active and engaged learning in the classroom, as well as high-impact practices incorporating civics and service.

She taught writing and communications at UM, Colorado Mesa University, Colorado Christian University and Rocky Mountain College. She currently is an assistant professor of English at Rocky Mountain College, where she has taught for the past four years.

At RMC, Reynolds-Dyk helped pilot the new Technology Enhanced Active Learning classroom and created a new course in digital and media literacy. She coordinates service learning projects for her students and received RMC’s Active and Engaged Learning Grant two years in a row for a major community service project with her freshmen. Her students have helped numerous local nonprofits.

A mother of three, Reynolds-Dyk finds time to volunteer in her children’s schools, youth sports programs and the local PTA and contribute to Simply Local Magazine Billings.

- **Daniel Zolnikov ’10, M.B.A. ’19**, is completing his fourth and final term as a representative in the Montana State Legislature. Since 2013, he has protected the civil liberties of all Montanans.

He helped create the first, full-time law enforcement agents to combat human trafficking and pass the nation’s strongest freedom of the press bill, as well as leading legislation protecting Montanans’ privacy rights with new technologies.
Zolnikov also helped pass legislation ensuring Montanans under 21 would not receive a Minor in Possession misdemeanor for calling 911 during a medical emergency and carried legislation that brought Uber and Lyft to the state to reduce drunk driving. He helped reform asset forfeiture laws and removed laws allowing the state to seize professional licenses of people who default on student loans.

As chairman of the House Energy and Technology and Federal Relations Committee, he successfully wrote and passed further legislation reforming major energy and utility laws.

Zolnikov ranked as one of Forbes' "30 Under 30" policymakers in the nation in 2014.

Read more about these Grizzlies of the Last Decade at www.grizalum.org.

###

**Contact:** Jodi Moreau, UM Alumni Association board relations and engagement, 406-243-6124, jodi.moreau@umontana.edu.
UM Announces Spring Semester Graduates

May 06, 2020

MISSOULA – The University of Montana has 1,863 students who are degree candidates for spring semester 2020.

The students listed below are UM degree candidates or have been awarded their degrees for spring semester 2020.

Graduates with *cum
laude” after their name indicate a GPA of 3.40 to 3.69. “Magna laude” indicates a 3.70 to 3.89 GPA, and “summa laude” is 3.90 and above.

Official awarding of a degree and any official graduation with honors or graduation with high honors designation is not made until degree candidates have completed their final term of enrollment and have met all specific requirements.

The full list of in-state graduates is here: https://bit.ly/2SHLLSI.

The full list of out-of-state graduates is here: https://bit.ly/2YDzDFY.

###

Contact: UM Registrar’s Office, 406-243-5600,
It’s a First: UM Graduate Student Earns Top Speech-Language Fellowship

May 05, 2020

MISSOULA – For the first time ever, a University of Montana student has earned a highly competitive Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities' Speech-Language Pathology Fellowship at Oregon Health & Science University.

Kathleen Cotter of
Helena will graduate this spring with a master’s degree in speech-language pathology. This fall, she will join the LEND team at Doernbecher Children’s Hospital in Portland, Oregon.

At the hospital, Cotter will engage in interdisciplinary training while treating children with craniofacial disorders, feeding challenges, autism, Down syndrome, and other developmental delays and disorders. She also will participate in family mentoring, research, leadership, instruction and other opportunities.

“Kathleen made significant contributions to UM during her graduate studies,” said Jennifer Schoffer Closson, a clinical educator in UM’s School of Speech, Language, Hearing and Occupational Sciences. “As the vice chair of the Interprofessional Education Student Interest Committee, she helped bring students together across campus to launch several meaningful programs.”

Cotter helped build and implement a program called Youth Engagement Through Intervention-Support Through Education and Planning (YETI-STEP). This program trains parents on communication and behavior. She also was a student director for the summer 2019 YETI Camp, a day camp for children with autism and related disorders that focuses on social skills, behavior and language development.

This past semester, she co-presented on language and behavior at the Montana Conference for Exceptional Children. In addition, she engaged in student teaching, research and helped build a simulation lab for new graduate students.

The LEND Fellowship in Speech-Language Pathology is a full-time position that lasts one year.

“This fellowship will really help Kathleen further hone her clinical skills and leadership abilities,” Schoffer Closson said. “The recognition is truly a credit to what she’s accomplished and to her potential.”

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Contact: Jennifer Schoffer Closson, assistant clinical professor; UM School of Speech, Language, Hearing and Occupational Sciences, 406-243-5261, jennifer.closson@mso.umt.edu.
UM Mansfield Library Makes Native News Archives Available

May 04, 2020

MISSOULA – A project that began at the University of Montana School of Journalism to investigate and document national trends affecting Montana’s tribal nations is now fully online and publicly accessible.

Every issue of the UM School of Journalism’s Native News Project is now available online courtesy of UM’s Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library and ScholarWorks. The issues were digitized from physical print copies held by the Native News Project faculty and the library’s Archives and Special Collections.

Since the project was digitized last year, UM oral history curator Hannah Soukup said Native News has been downloaded almost 100 times by users all over the world, including by a university in Frankfurt, Germany.

“I’m thrilled to be able to make this publication more widely available to UM students and the general public,” Soukup said.

She said the most popular issue to date is
the 2018 “In Their Hands” piece, which explores the evolution and current state of tribal self-governance on each of Montana’s reservations.

The Native News Honors Project is an annual publication that is reported, photographed, edited and designed by students in the UM School of Journalism. Each year, teams of students travel to Montana’s seven Indian reservations to investigate and document how news trends affect the state’s Indigenous population with in-depth stories, photographs and videos. They also report on issues affecting urban Indians. The stories appear in the nationally distributed Montana Native News tabloid, which was first published in 1992 as a stand-alone, special report.

UM Professor Emeritus Carol Van Valkenburg said she started the project after observing that issues of concern to the state’s Native Americans were not being covered in-depth by the news media.

“We wanted to look closely at the history, culture and social issues that shape the lives of Montana’s 12 Indian tribes and make certain their voices and experiences were represented,” Valkenburg said. “We also recognized that most of our students had too little experience reporting on people who were not like them and had little insight into the state’s largest minority population. Our Native students in the course helped direct the students’ research and introduced them to sources who helped shape their stories.”

What started as a print-only publication later expanded into a printed tabloid and a multimedia online project that includes stories, photographs and short documentary films. The graduates of the class over the last three decades have improved coverage of Native issues in the region as they took jobs in the professional media, Valkenburg said.

To read the Montana Native News Project issues, visit https://scholarworks.umt.edu/nativene.ws_asc/.

To learn more about the project, visit https://jour.umt.edu/student-projects. Native News complements other collections of UM student publications in ScholarWorks, including the Forestry Kaimin, Montana Kaimin and the Black Student Union yearbook, Watani.

###

Contact: Hannah Soukup, UM Mansfield Library Archives and Special Collections oral history curator, 406-243-
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2053, hannah.soukup@mso.umt.edu.

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UM Student Wins Prestigious Udall Scholarship

May 04, 2020

MISSOULA – University of Montana student Jonathan Karlen has been named a Udall Scholar, considered one of the most prestigious recognitions awarded to students studying in fields related to the environment and issues related to Native American nations.

Karlen, a junior majoring in wildlife biology with a minor in climate change studies, is one of just 50 students nationally to win a scholarship this year from the Morris K. Udall and Stewart L. Udall Scholarship and Excellence in National Environmental Policy Foundation. Originally from New York City, Karlen came to Montana after high school to study at UM and explore the state’s public lands.
“The Wildlife Biology Program and my education here at UM have given me a strong foundation in science, rigorous research methods and skills to address complex problems with an interdisciplinary approach,” Karlen said.

With support from the Udall scholarship, which provides $7,000 toward academic expenses, Karlen will begin a new joint wildlife biology and public administration degree program at UM. Launched in January 2020, this 4+1 program allows UM students to earn both a four-year Bachelor of Science degree in wildlife biology and a two-year master’s degree in public administration at an accelerated pace of just five years.

“Jonathan is part of the inaugural cohort for our 4+1 degree, and we could not be more excited for him,” said Professor Sara Rinfret, director of UM’s Master of Public Administration program.

“Earning an MPA will provide me with a more focused skill set to launch a meaningful career in the field of natural resources policy,” said Karlen, who also is a student in the Davidson Honors College, was a former president of the UM Student Chapter of the Wildlife Society and was just elected to serve on UM’s student government.

“We’ve been extremely fortunate to have Jonathan as a member of our campus community,” said Chad Bishop, director of the Wildlife Biology program. “He is an amazing individual who is the embodiment of a student leader.”

“My experience at UM, specifically with the faculty and administrators, has been instrumental in shaping my career goals and connecting me with extraordinary opportunities,” Karlen said.

UM historically is a top producer of Udall Scholars, and this year’s result brings its total to 43 since the program was launched in 1992 by the Udall Foundation.

For more information about the Udall Undergraduate Scholarship, visit https://www.udall.gov/. To learn more about
the 4+1 wildlife biology and public administration joint degree program, go to https://www.umt.edu/law/mpa/curriculum/four-plus-one.php.

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