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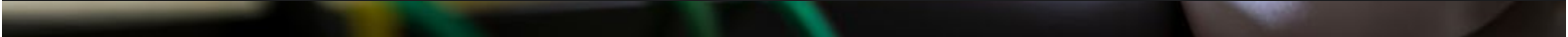
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UM / News / Eight UM Students Receive Nation’s Top STEM Graduate Award





The National Science Foundation announced the awardees and honorable mentions for their 2021 Graduate Research Fellowships Program and the list includes eight University of Montana Students.

**MISSOULA** — A prestigious cohort of outstanding graduate students in STEM research fields across the U.S. includes eight University of Montana students.

The National Science Foundation announced the awardees and honorable mentions for their 2021 Graduate Research Fellowships Program. The program includes a five-year fellowship with the NSF and includes three years of financial support, including an annual stipend of \$34,000 and a cost of education allowance of \$12,000 to the student's current institution.

The awards are given to graduate students who are pursuing research-based master's and doctoral degrees in science, technology, engineering or math at accredited U.S. institutions. The NSF named two current UM graduate students and two UM alumni as 2021 Fellows, and one UM alumni and three current UM graduate students were named honorable mentions.

"This is one of the biggest awards for graduate students in STEM fields in the country," said Kylla Benes, director of UM's office of **Prestigious Scholarships and Fellowships**. "For UM to have eight alumni or current graduate students on this list speaks to UM's rigor in the sciences and a robust commitment to research excellence and training."

This year, **UM was ranked in the top 10 nationwide for research growth**, according to data from the NSF. UM ranked No. 6 nationally for research growth among all universities with more than \$100 million in research expenditures, growing from \$55 million in 2014 to \$104.7 million in 2019.

Research at UM spans a wide range of disciplines, including health sciences, biological and biomedical sciences, natural resources and conservation, mathematical and physical sciences, geosciences, social sciences and computer sciences and engineering.

Scott Whittenburg, UM vice president for **Research and Creative Scholarship** and dean of the **UM Graduate School**, said the NSF Graduate Research Fellowships speak to UM's excellence in training undergraduates for postsecondary work and providing graduate students rigorous training and diverse experiences across UM's research profile.

"We're thrilled to celebrate these impressive NSF Fellows and honorable mentions who are

either UM alumni or current graduate students with us,” Whittenburg said. “UM provides a world-class education and training that’s on par with the nation’s top-funded research priorities. This list is reflective of the country’s next generation of scientists and researchers.”

2021 NSF Graduate Research Fellowship awardees include:

- Nicolas Matallana-Mejia, a graduate student at Colorado State University studying ecology and life sciences. Matallana-Mejia received his undergraduate degree from UM.
- Kendall Edmo, a graduate student at Montana State University studying geosciences, paleontology and paleobiology. Edmo received her undergraduate degree from UM.
- Cynthia Ulbing, a UM graduate student studying evolutionary biology in the Division of Biological Sciences. Ulbing received her undergraduate degree from Ithaca College.
- Cierra Keith, a UM graduate studying ecology and life sciences in the Division of Biological Sciences. Keith received her undergraduate degree from Oklahoma State University.

2021 NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Honorable Mentions include:

- Anthony Marcozzi, a graduate student studying computational science and engineering in UM’s Department of Computer Science. Marcozzi’s undergraduate institution was the University of Missouri-Columbia.
- Damien Ketcherside, a UM graduate student studying environmental and analytical chemistry in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry. Ketcherside received his undergraduate degree from Lewis-Clark State College.
- Sarah Sweezy, a UM graduate student studying developmental psychology in UM’s Department of Psychology. Sweezy’s undergraduate institution was Tennessee Technological University.
- Cody Wallace, a graduate student at the University of Wyoming in life sciences and ecology. Wallace received his undergraduate degree from UM.

###

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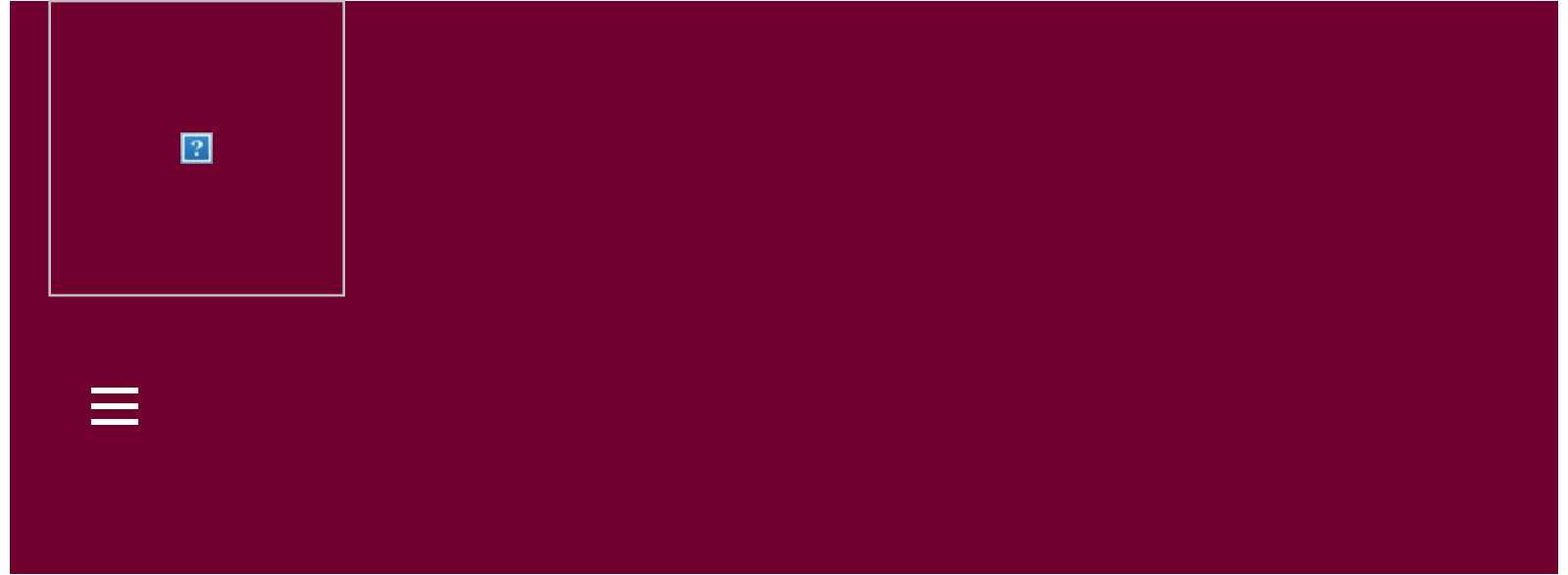
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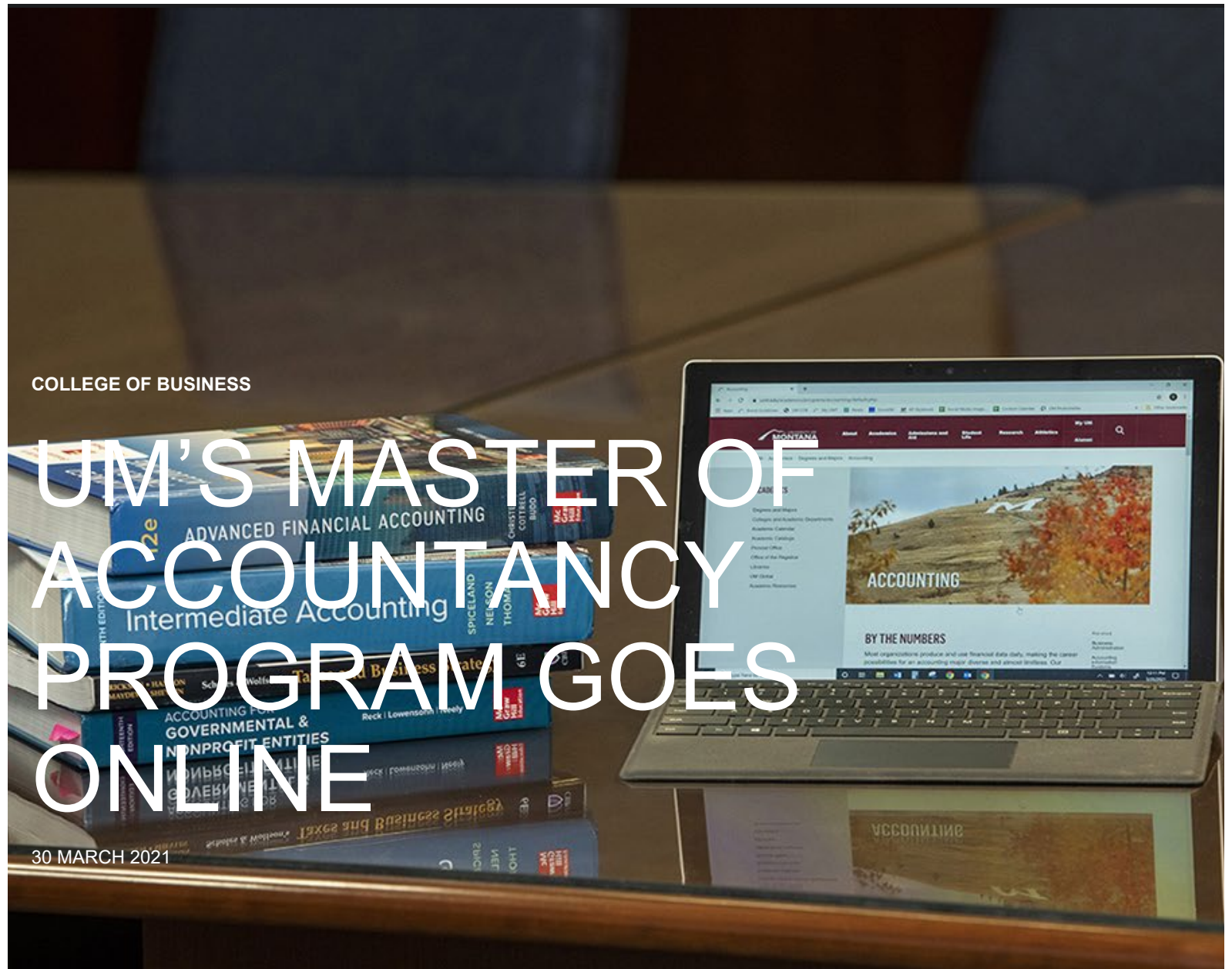
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UM / News / UM's Master of Accountancy Program Goes Online



**MISSOULA** - It is now more convenient for anyone in the state – or the world – to prepare themselves for a successful career in accounting. The University of Montana College of Business is now offering students the ability to earn a Master of Accountancy degree regardless of where they live.

With a “flexible delivery” format, the UM MAcct allows students to choose between attending traditional face-to-face classes or logging-in to live classrooms by videoconference from any location worldwide. Students also can blend the curriculum delivery options, depending on their individual needs throughout the semester.

“We have a deeply-rooted tradition of excellence in our accounting programs at the UM College of Business,” said Associate Professor Lisa Eiler, director of the MAcct program. “Moving to a flexible delivery will give many more students the opportunity to advance their careers and education, while maintaining the excellent curriculum and programing the MAcct has worked hard over many years to develop.”

The MAcct offers curriculum designed to help students develop a high level of technical knowledge, acquire in-demand data analytics skills, facilitate growth of peer and professional networks and promote leadership capability for advancement in the accounting profession. Whether a student is interested in auditing, tax planning and strategy, technology and risk assurance or wealth management, they will be prepared to pass the CPA exam, which they can prepare for and take as part of their curriculum.

A top-20 nationally ranked program, UM MAcct alumni pass the CPA exam at rates above national averages and 95% of students have jobs on graduation day.

The College of Business has invested in technology that helps students and faculty engage in a hybrid classroom setting. There are now three flexible-delivery classrooms, one lightboard room and one computer lab in the Gallagher Business Building that include technology specifically designed for flexible delivery.

The signature feature of these rooms is the technician desk, which allows tech support to

operate the infrastructure, freeing instructors to focus on instruction and ensuring lessons are transmitted smoothly to students.

Master of Accountancy students are guaranteed at least \$1,000 in scholarships during the program, along with the opportunity to apply for multiple graduate assistant positions available through the College of Business. Last year, over \$93,000 in scholarships were awarded specifically to College of Business graduate students.

Out-of-state students residing in the western United States may also be eligible to receive a tuition reduction. Through the Western Regional Graduate Program, an agreement among 16-member states and territories in the western United States, non-resident Montana students within the region will pay only 150% of resident tuition (<https://www.wiche.edu/tuition-savings/wrgp/>).

Graduate accounting students, on and off campus, also have access to the Gianchetta Student Success Center, which includes internship and career development opportunities through the College of Business.

For more information about the UM MAcct program, visit <https://www.business.umt.edu/macct>, email [gradbusinessprograms@umontana.edu](mailto:gradbusinessprograms@umontana.edu) or call 406-243-2064.

###

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UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

# UM ROLLS OUT STUDENT, EMPLOYEE VACCINE CLINICS

29 MARCH 2021



UM Senior Lea Tonnerro, left, receives the first dose of the Pfizer vaccine from UM pharmacy student Jenna Schabacker on Sunday morning.

**MISSOULA** — For the approximately 10,000 students and about 3,000 employees at the University of Montana, a COVID-19 vaccine could not come soon enough.

On Sunday, the University opened up the first of three clinics to vaccinate students, employees, families of employees and retirees with the Pfizer vaccine.

Two more clinics will be held on Monday, March 29, and Friday, April 2, marking nearly 10,000 vaccinations administered to community members by UM pharmacy students.

UM's campus vaccination planning team organized the clinics after the Missoula City-County Health Department opened vaccine availability to all residents age 16 and older on Sunday.

Paula Short, UM associate vice president for campus preparedness, said the UM community has been eager to receive the vaccine.

"We refer to our campus community as the UM Family for good reason," Short said. "Seeing the familiar faces of our students, employees and retirees who are both working the clinics and coming to receive a vaccine really drives home the significance of this moment after a year of uncertainty during this global pandemic. It's a feeling of hope."

For the better part of the year, UM pharmacy students led the organization of local community vaccination clinics, while UM students and employees waited until they met vaccine phase criteria.

"It's been a challenge to navigate the distribution phases and guidance for vaccines administration as quickly as possible," Short said. "Now the time is here and we're seeing very robust participation in our campus clinics. It feels great to be able to vaccinate those who work for the University, in addition to members of the greater Missoula community."

Lacey Zinke, UM director of **Fraternity and Sorority Involvement**, volunteered for the Sunday clinic with more than 10 students from UM sororities and fraternities.

“This moment has been a long time coming and I’m thrilled to be able to finally get the vaccine,” Zinke said. “We’ve been diligent all year in terms of safety and protocol, and it feels great to think about returning to normal in the near-future. It’s also pretty special to be receiving the vaccine from one of our own Griz pharmacy students.”

Hannah Kosbab, a senior from Honeyville, Utah and member of Kappa Alpha Theta sorority, volunteered at the clinic.

“I am so grateful that we are able to get vaccinated, not only for ourselves, but for our entire community,” Kosbab said. “It’s wonderful to see so many people show up to offer their time and expertise to help us begin to get back to normal.”

At noon Tuesday, March 30, the campus community and members of the public are invited to join a conversation about vaccine development and safety led by Dr. Jeff Adams, medical director of Curry Health Center, Jay Evans, UM research professor and director of UM’s Center for Translational Medicine and Sophia Newcomer, UM assistant professor of epidemiology. The webinar will be held on Zoom, accessible by visiting the link <http://bit.ly/vaccineschat>.

The University encourages the community to still practice mitigations, including mask-wearing, physical distancing and washing hands, that are proven to reduce COVID-19 transmission.

###

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**Related stories:**

[UM Pharmacy Students Leading ‘Operation: Immunization’](#)

[UM Pharmacy Partners with Missoula County on Mobile Vaccination Events](#)

[UM Named COVID-19 Vaccine Provider, Distributor](#)

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COLLEGE OF FORESTRY AND CONSERVATION

# UM INSTITUTE: QUALITY OF LIFE, PUBLIC LANDS PROMOTE ECONOMIC





# DEVELOPMENT

26 MARCH 2021

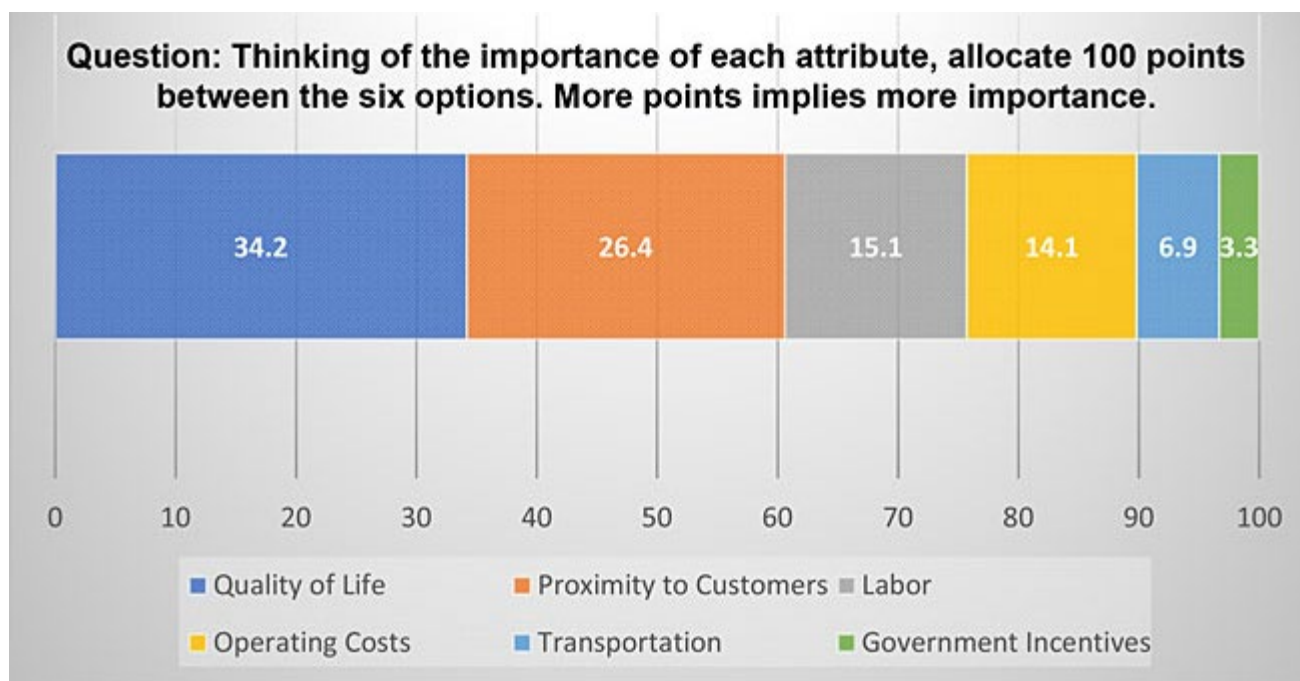
## MISSOULA

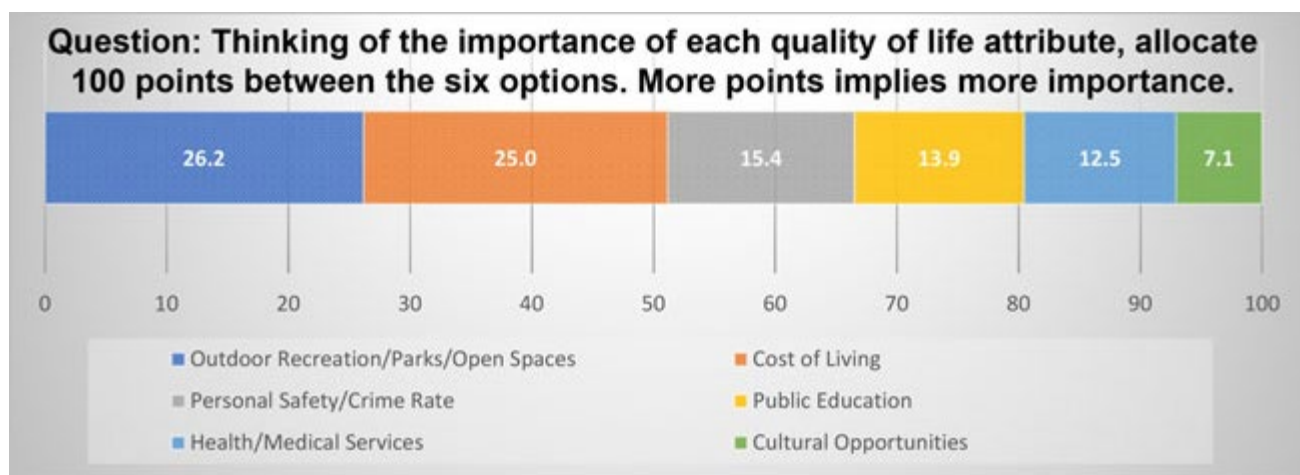
– As the 2021 legislative session rolls on in Helena and debate swirls about actions to boost a robust recovery, a survey of Montana

businesses by the University of Montana's Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research has received renewed attention.

ITRR has identified that quality of life exceeds, on average, all other attributes in driving entrepreneurs to start, relocate and keep their businesses and jobs in Montana. Quality of life outpaced government incentives – typically related to taxes – 10 to one on entrepreneurs' scale of importance.

During the winter prior to the COVID pandemic, ITRR researchers





surveyed  
nearly 500  
business  
owners and

managers throughout the state across most industries. They were asked about what attracted them to either start a business in Montana or move an existing business to the state.

“We routinely study the current visitor to Montana and the economic impacts they and their dollars have on the state’s economy,” said Jeremy Sage, the interim ITRR director. “But with this survey, we wanted to take it another step and explore the impacts tourism has on the state through introducing potential entrepreneurs to Montana and enticing them back later in life.”

Sage and his team found that 40% of responding business owners and managers were neither born nor raised in Montana, and more than a quarter of those indicated they had vacationed in the state prior to deciding to move here. This means that about 10% of businesses in Montana (excluding agriculture, mining and timber) are owned or operated by an individual who decided to move themselves and their business here after first being a tourist.

Whether the business owner was a Montana native or otherwise enticed here, ITRR sought to understand the important attributes of the state and communities in encouraging business development. Respondents to the survey were provided the opportunity to first identify the importance of 24 different attributes, ranging from tax incentives and labor costs to public schools and safety.

The top six scoring attributes were, in descending order: proximity to customers, personal safety, cost of living, air and water quality, rural lifestyle and public lands. On the opposite end, the lowest scoring attributes included energy costs, natural resources as inputs and overall costs of doing business. In fact, 57% of respondents indicated that the cost of doing business was not at all important in their decision to locate in Montana.

Sage identified that questions in surveys asking respondents to identify the importance of

various items is only so useful in comparison across those items.

“We wanted to take this a step further and ask our respondents to prioritize the various attributes by allocating 100 points across a set of items,” he said. “This gives us a much better way to gauge the relative importance of each one.”

When ITRR researchers did this, quality of life jumped to the top of the list, garnering on average 34 points, whereas government incentives received just three. When further asked to parse out what was important, quality of life, outdoor recreation, parks and open space lead the way, followed closely by cost of living.

Sage said they intentionally left out agriculture, mining and forestry, not because they are not important, but because they were interested in those businesses who are more mobile and largely able to locate their businesses almost anywhere.

“We wanted to get an idea of why those businesses who could choose numerous locations chose Montana,” he said. “This then gives us great opportunities to know what to focus on and what not to as much, in trying to continue to build on the economy we had going into the pandemic. Independent of the type of group we talk to, quality of life and, in particular, the access to outdoor recreation and public lands is front-of-mind. This holds for business owners, for workers, for retirees and for our visitors.”

For the full report, visit [https://scholarworks.umt.edu/itrr\\_pubs/409/](https://scholarworks.umt.edu/itrr_pubs/409/). All ITRR reports are available online at <http://itrr.umt.edu/>.

###

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UM / News / Alumni Association Features UM Authors for Virtual Book Club

A stylized graphic of a bookshelf with several books of varying heights and colors (maroon and grey) standing on it. The books are positioned behind the main title text.

ALUMNI, UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

# ALUMNI ASSOCIATION FEATURES UM AUTHORS FOR VIRTUAL BOOK CLUB

26 MARCH 2021

**MISSOULA** – For those looking for some good books this year, the University of Montana Alumni Association has it covered. The UM Alumni Association just launched its first Alumni Book Club, featuring books by four acclaimed UM alumni writers, and a series of Zoom discussions with the authors.

The alumni authors will share their UM experiences and backstories on how their ideas and writing evolved with readers.

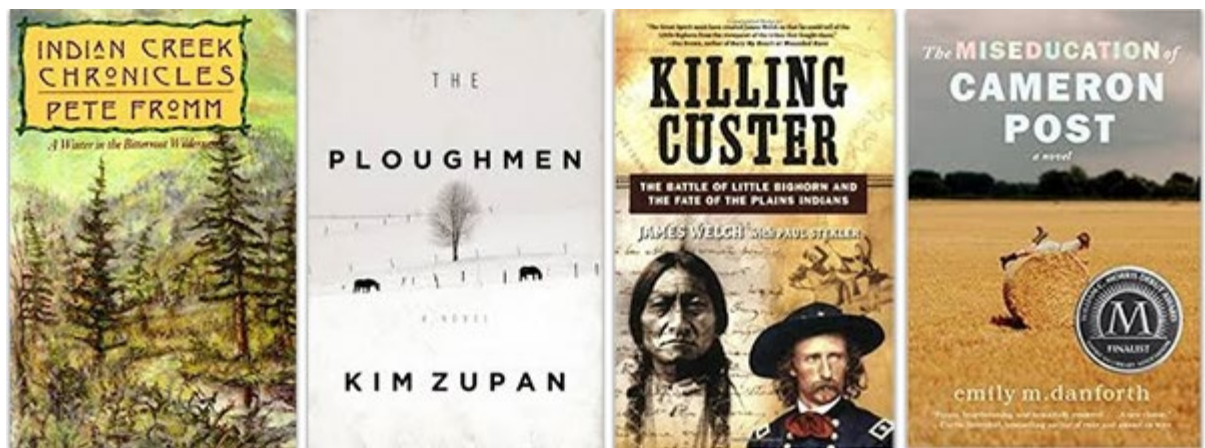
To participate, join the [Alumni Book Club Facebook group](#). Books are available for purchase in local Missoula bookstores and online. Participants also can submit questions for the authors in advance when they register.

All Zoom book club discussions take place from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Mountain time:

- **March 30:** Pete Fromm ('81 Wildlife Biology), "Indian Creek Chronicles."
- **May 18:** Kim Zupan ('78 English, M.F.A. '84 Creative Writing), "The Ploughman."
- **September:** James Welch ('65 Liberal Arts, Honorary Doctorate '97,) "Killing Custer." Presented by Lois Welch.
- **November:** Emily Danforth (M.F.A. '06 Creative Writing), "The Miseducation of Cameron Post."

In March, book club participants read Fromm's "Indian Creek Chronicles," a winner of the Pacific Northwest Booksellers





*The UM Alumni Association's new Alumni Book Club will feature four books from UM authors this year.*

Association Book Award. The story describes his seven winter

months spent alone in a tent near the famed Indian Creek along the banks of the Selway River in the Bitterroot National Forest while guarding salmon eggs. Fromm is considered one of the premier voices of the West.

From April to May, book club members will read Zupan's "The Ploughman," set in Montana, which details the relationship between an aging killer awaiting trial and a troubled young deputy as they talk between the bars of a jail cell. Zupan is a native Montanan who grew up around Great Falls and also is a carpenter

August to September features Welch's "Killing Custer," co-authored with documentary filmmaker Paul Stekler, which examines the Plain Indians' side of the story in the Battle of Little Bighorn as a final celebration of waning power and freedom. Welch, an internationally acclaimed writer, who was born in Browning and grew up in the Blackfeet and A'aninin tribes, died in 2003. His widow, Lois Welch, who formerly served as head of UM's Department of English, will present the discussion.

The last read from October to November is Danforth's "The Miseducation of Cameron Post," also set in Montana, which details the story of a lesbian teen sent to a gay conversion therapy center. Danforth's novel was the basis for a 2018 movie that won the Sundance Grand Jury Prize, and she teaches English at Rhode Island College.

Membership in the Alumni Book Club is free. To find out more and register for the Zoom events, visit <https://grizalum.org/events/book-club.php>.

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UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

# UM FINANCIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM LIFTS STUDENTS TOWARD SUCCESS

25 MARCH 2021



UM Financial Education Program Director Julie Heaton and Andrea Janssen, program coordinator, manage the office at the University that delivers a robust financial education and support framework for the entire UM community, free of cost.

**MISSOULA** – Julie Heaton always keeps a box of tissues at the ready. When you're counseling people on how to pay for the biggest investment of their life, or running through the fees and charges included on the tuition bill, there are inevitable waterworks.

"It's kind of like being at the grocery store," said Heaton, director of the **University of Montana Financial Education Program**. "But at the store, you know all of the items you're paying for and how much they cost. We don't put a sticker price on higher education. You get to the checkout, and you have little idea what it's going to ultimately cost. For many students, we're the checkout counter. It can be a very emotional conversation."

Providing clarity and support to UM students, employees and alumni when it comes to sorting through the financial maze of paying for a post-secondary education is at the heart of UM's Financial Education Program.

Housed in the **UM Office for Student Success**, the program regularly is noted as one of the top 50 Best College Financial Literacy Programs in the country, embodying a successful model that provides robust financial education and services at no cost. Funded by the Montana Office of Commissioner of Higher Education, the program has existed at UM since 2013.

To empower the University community and make informed financial choices, the program provides information on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid form, advising students on financial choices (sometimes that looks like discussing the cons and pros of a trip to Europe vs. paying down credit card debt), explaining the intricacies of student loan repayment to UM seniors ready to graduate, or providing support to UM employees applying for loan forgiveness programs.

Heaton, who arrived at UM less than two years ago comes from experience in the nonprofit world helping victims of sexual assault and domestic abuse rebuild their lives financially. She said her experience helping women develop self-empowerment through finances directly translates to students educating themselves on personal finance.

“We’re not a financial planning firm or wealth management service,” she said. “Our services are about personal finances and providing the information for people to make the best choices according to their goals.”

Last year, the program reached more than 3,000 students, served 420 individual appointments and reached more than 400 viewers with online workshops.

And the demand for services is increasing.

A financial literacy base does not exist for most Americans and especially students entering higher education for the first time, Heaton said.

Financial experts estimate that about 70% of U.S. students take out loans to pay for college – a number accurately reflected at UM where about 61% of first-time, full-time students borrow money. The average indebtedness for a UM student hovers around \$23,000.

About one-third of UM undergraduates are first-generation college students or from low-income households, a demographic that largely finances college. Across the nation, minority students represent the largest portion of borrowers.

“What’s happening financially on college campuses is an awareness of the true cost of college truly affecting student retention and overall success,” Heaton said. “It’s important for us to have more realistic conversations about this and normalize access for support and education.”

As Heaton will attest, in addition to decades of research, possessing a college degree leads to larger overall earnings, career longevity and even greater amounts of health and happiness. Still, the large majority U.S. students arrive on college campuses with little or no financial preparation.

This year, Heaton secured a state-funded grant to host “FAFSA Nights” at local high schools to ready them for college. The events explain how to fill out the FAFSA form, what tuition and fees include and realistic budget models for students.

Zane Segal, a UM freshman from Bozeman, arrived in Heaton’s office in August after trouble understanding where, exactly, to sign on the FAFSA form so that he could secure federal funds in time to pay for classes.



“It’s a really tricky form that can be incredibly confusing, especially for someone who is approaching it for the first time,” Segal said. “Julie helped me understand the form, and I actually was able to fill it out myself correctly for the second semester. FAFSA no longer completely stresses me out.”

Segal said before he attended college, his peer group in high school wasn’t talking much about the FAFSA or how to pay for college, something he said now he “wishes he had paid more attention to and sought-out the resources.” He plans to use the financial education office throughout his time on campus.

Brian French, executive director of UM’s Office for Student Success, said it was a purposeful decision to include the Financial Education Program in the office that supports students academically.

“Placing financial education into the hub of academic support services is part of our holistic student success network,” French said. “A student is more likely to return for advising support, tutoring or get involved in various campus opportunities if they leave here with a sense of confidence and awareness. Often, their first entry point in connecting with our campus is through their interest in the Financial Education Program.”

French said keeping students connected to campus, while providing them with information that can make them feel more responsible, can reflect in strong retention rates.

“We want students to feel an authentic connection to our place and our people and to feel like they’re at home in the UM family,” French said. “For us in OSS, that means supporting them with tutoring and advising and helping them navigate the uncomfortable but necessary conversations of how to pay for college and do it wisely.”

Heaton and Andrea Janssen, Financial Education Program coordinator, began a series of hourlong workshops this year for the UM community called “Thrifty Thursdays.” The series includes workshops on repaying student debt, traveling and getting married on a budget. The program’s website even has a tab on “adulting,” which includes information on job searching, matching a salary with a cost of living and tips on searching for insurance.

When UM alumna Stephanie Maltarich was preparing to graduate from the master’s program in environmental studies and marry her partner, who also recently earned a master’s degree and



was left with heavy student loans, she sought support for understanding the best way to attack student debt as a newly married couple.

“The help we received from the financial program was invaluable,” Maltarich said. “I felt like I was never asking a dumb question; it felt like I was talking to a friend. Julie was able walk us through our accounts and look at our loans in detail, so that we had an accurate picture of the best repayment plan and getting on track to repayment.”

Heaton said the larger picture is about removing barriers to knowledge.

“Ultimately, we want to be a tool for creating greater social equity,” Heaton said. “We have to have more realistic conversations about how to finance higher education and be more transparent about that process so that people can lead happy, successful lives.”

For more information on UM’s FEP program, visit <https://www.umt.edu/financial-education/> or call 406-243-2800.

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Jenny Lavey, UM News Service

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MULE PACKING  
COURSE ONE OF  
MANY SUMMER  
OPPORTUNITIES AT  
UM

25 MARCH 2021



The United States Forest Service's Northern Region Pack Train became the first mule string to trot the Oval at a kick-off on the UM campus to highlight experiential summer learning opportunities.

**MISSOULA** – On Tuesday, a string of nine mules circling the University of Montana's Oval heralded summer's start at UM.

The mule string – the United States Forest Service's Northern Region Pack Train led by Casey Burns – was the first to ever trot the Oval and helped raise awareness for UM's Wilderness Policy and Packing course and other summer experiential learning opportunities.

Eva-Maria Maggi, instructor in UM's Department of Political Science, came up with the idea to bring the pack train to the Oval to get students excited for her course. She will lead the **Wilderness Policy and Packing course** over the summer and a five-day wilderness pack trip through Montana's famed Bob Marshall Wilderness.

"This is the only program in the United States that combines wilderness policy and packing horses and mules for college credit," Maggi said.

Wilderness Policy and Packing is open to 20 students from all majors. Through the course, students will apply skills such as mule packing, trail work, wilderness first aid and leaving no trace while in the backcountry. Additionally, they will learn about how wilderness policy intersects with wilderness theory and practice, land management, recreation, wildfire and tribal wilderness.

Students will visit the Ninemile Ranger Station and the Northern Region Pack Train. Co-founded by legendary UM alum Smoke Elser '64, the mules are one of only two such pack strings working for the U.S. Forest Service across multiple states, helping in management of forestry lands in Montana, northern Idaho, North Dakota and northwestern South Dakota.

Through lectures in Elser's barn, students will learn from Forest Service personnel, Emeritus Regents Professor of Ecology Steve Running and other speakers on wilderness issues from grizzly bear management to climate change to the Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Act. The students will then write their own policy papers.



Thanks to scholarships from the Back-Country Horsemen of Montana, the Montana Wilderness Association and UM's Political Science Department, 10 UM students also can join Maggi's pack trip through the Bob Marshall Wilderness from June 28 to July 2.



*Casey Burns with the U.S. Forest Service led a mule-packing demonstration on campus to promote the summer Wilderness Policy and Packing course.*

“This class is a unique opportunity to learn about our wild places and apply your skills on an actual pack trip,” Maggi said.

Maggi will lead the students through the North Fork of the Blackfoot River, where they will do some trail work and discuss their policy ideas around the campfire in the Danaher Valley. The trip is professionally outfitted by Bob Marshall Wilderness Outfitters.

Grace Gardner, director of UM Summer, said she is excited to see more face-to-face experiential learning opportunities for students this summer, especially with last summer's cancelations due to the pandemic.

“Heading into the Bob Marshall Wilderness on a pack trip is really a once-in-a-lifetime experience for those lucky enough to be able to do it,” Gardner said. “It's absolutely wonderful that we have a faculty member willing to combine her expertise of packing and knowledge of wilderness policy to be able to offer this course.”

Hands-on summer learning opportunities are a hallmark at UM, which serves as the backdrop for some of the greatest natural classrooms. Students can participate in field-based

observation at **Flathead Lake Biological Station** and help raise produce and learn about sustainable agriculture at the **PEAS Farm**. Through the Missoula-based nonprofit **Wild Rockies Field Institute**, they can gain natural resource science and management, environmental studies, geography, Native American Studies knowledge and college credit from their tents in locations all over the West.

Students can learn from Indian law scholars from across the country through the **Summer Indian Law program**, train in Aerie Backcountry Medicine and hone their media skills at the **Montana Media Lab**. They can participate in research in labs on campus, as well as other learning opportunities through Missoula College and Bitterroot College.

Along with taking specialty courses, Gardner said the benefits of summer studies include getting ahead, catching up and staying on track.

“We have about an equal split between graduate students and undergraduate students that study in the summer,” Gardner said. “For many graduate students, the summer is a great opportunity for research and to spend some time writing and working with faculty.”

UM also offers micro-credential courses and non-credit offerings through UMOOnline to the public and alumni, as well as learning opportunities for K-12 students, such as **Montana American Indians in Math and Sciences**, **MedStart**, **Summer Exploration**, **Upward Bound** and **S.E.A. Change** summer camps.

Last year, more than 400 degrees, minors and certificates were awarded in summer, with more than 3,000 students taking advantage of summer offerings. This year, more than 1,700 students have already registered for summer courses at UM. This year will blend face-to -face, online, remote and hybrid classes and use three tents on campus for some classes.

Summer at UM runs May 10 through July 30. To find out more, visit <https://www.umt.edu/summer/>. For a list of full summer camps on campus, visit <https://www.umt.edu/ces/summer/list.php>.

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UM / News / Checkmate: UM Math Student Top-Ranked Chess Player in Montana

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SCIENCES

# CHECKMATE: UM MATH STUDENT TOP-RANKED CHESS PLAYER IN MONTANA

23 MARCH 2021

**MISSOULA** – For the better part of his academic career, University of Montana senior Dorje McPherron has quietly focused on his studies with few fellow students knowing of his mastery of a board with 64 squares.

Then recognition came calling this spring thanks to the wildly popular Netflix series “The Queen’s Gambit” and local media and others reached out to McPherron to see what he thought of the show.

And for good reason.

McPherron, who studies math and Russian, happens to be the Montana state chess champion – a title he’s held for the past two years – and is the top-ranked tournament player in the state.

“I watched it with my girlfriend and we liked it,” McPherron said of the series. “The chess moves are really accurate because Garry Kasparov and Bruce Pandolfini were consultants for the show. Of course, the series is overly dramatic. No one would want to watch for an hour and a half between chess moves.”

Kasparov, for those who don’t follow chess, was the former world chess champion, and Pandolfini, considered to be one of America’s most experienced chess teachers, consulted Walter Tevis author of “The Queen’s Gambit.” The title of the miniseries refers to the queen’s gambit, an opening move in the game.



*UM math student Dorje McPherron, the top-ranked chess player in Montana, has been asked a lot these days about “The Queen’s Gambit.” He hopes the popular series will inspire others to take up the game he loves.*

McPherron describes chess as his hobby, but of course it's more than that. The Hamilton native's been an ardent student of the game since high school and has slowly moved up in the arcane rankings of the national chess scene. Today, his United States Chess Federation rating is 2,035, placing him in the 96th percentile among tournament chess players in the country.

"I spend a lot of time studying chess in books and online," said McPherron, who's quick to note he is no prodigy. "Locally, I play classical chess and blitz chess."

The difference between the two?

Unlike classical chess, which allows players an hour or more between moves, blitz chess has a much shorter turnaround, McPherron explains, with moves coming every five minutes.

"Due to the shortness of games, you have to play more by feel or intuition, relying to a great extent on past experience," he said.

McPherron, who's made the UM Dean's List many times, said math and chess require many of the same skills, namely logical thinking and reasoning. Unlike math and most board games, however, chance is not a factor in chess. There is, in short, no roll of the dice.

"When you sit down at the board, it's just you and your opponent," McPherron said. "So when I lose, I get frustrated, but then I look back at the game again and realize my mistakes. It's helpful and it makes me better."

Montana's expansive size and lack of big cities have made refining his skills a bit harder. Bigger cities have more tournaments and seasoned players, McPherron said.

"I'd like to play in more states and tournaments, but I'm pretty busy with school, and it costs money to travel," he said, noting that sponsorships aren't really a thing in chess.

"The Queen's Gambit" is definitely fueling a renewed interest in chess, McPherron said, as has the COVID-19 lockdown, with people turning to the internet to learn new skills. In the past year, he said, there's been an "explosion" of chess masters and grandmasters streaming their play on platforms like Twitch.

As to what fuels his continued passion for the game, McPherron riffs on a famous quote from legendary player Anatoly Karpov, who said “Chess is everything: art, science and sport.”

“It’s a sort of science because often there is one move that is clearly the best, and it’s also art because you can come up with highly original ideas and express them through the medium of the game,” McPherron said. “It may not involve physical fitness, but like any sport it’s highly competitive.

“To me, because of its rich strategy and the deepness and variety of ideas and possibilities, chess is one of the best games you can play.”

###

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UM / News / UM Student Places Second in International Simulation Competition

SCHOOL OF LAW

# UM STUDENT PLACES SECOND IN INTERNATIONAL SIMULATION COMPETITION

22 MARCH 2021





Kaitlin Pugh, a UM Master of Public Administration student

**MISSOULA** – A University of Montana graduate student led her team to a second-place finish recently during an international, public-policy simulation contest involving students from 30 countries around the world trying to combat a fictional pandemic.

Kaitlin Pugh is a Master of Public Administration student in UM's Baucus Institute, which houses the Department of Public Administration and Policy. Her team competed in the virtual competition against 400 students from 120 universities at four global sites. The event was the 2021 NASPAA-Batten Student Simulation Competition. (NASPAA stands for Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs and Administration.)

"The teams were organized so that I was paired with students from all over the Western Hemisphere," said Pugh, who is from Pittsburgh. "I had never worked with such a diverse group, but our team was able to have such a fun time while working on policy decisions."

Her team included students from Villanova University, Georgetown University, Fundação Getulio Vargas and Columbia University.

The competition is a daylong event that allows graduate students in public policy and related fields to test their skills on real-world data. Each year, the Center for Leadership Simulation and Gaming develops an original participatory simulation specifically tailored for students of public policy and administration. The simulations give participants a chance to employ their knowledge in a realistic situation, as well as an opportunity to hone skills in leadership, negotiation and critical thinking.

"The simulation this year was 'Pandemic 2.0,'" Pugh said, "which has been a familiar topic in our lives that connected us regardless of our backgrounds. It was really special to get the chance to see how people would decide on policies based on their own experiences with COVID-19."

The simulation placed students in leadership roles within a time-sensitive, fast-paced environment where they worked together to minimize the impact of a deadly infectious

disease.

“I served as the prime minister for our team,” Pugh said. “Every decision I made came from trusting the advice that others gave me. With each game you could tell that we were growing our connection as a team and working better together.”

There were three games within the simulation requiring students to work in a team setting, make decisions under strict timelines and present findings and suggestions to a large group. Ultimately, Pugh’s team had the opportunity to present their strategies to a panel of judges and placed second overall in the competition.

“I am so fortunate to have represented our department,” said Pugh. “And I gained so much confidence in my capabilities as I head into graduation this May.”

“We’re so proud of Kaitlin for this accomplishment and representing the University of Montana on a global scale,” said Dr. Sara Rinfret, chair of UM’s Department of Public Administration and Policy. “She certainly has set the bar high for our MPA students, and the department plans to continue sending participants to this renowned experiential learning experience.”

UM’s MPA program is created to be flexible for pre- and mid-career professionals interested in working in public and nonprofit organizations. The degree consists of 36 credits of coursework and a portfolio project, and it offers a concentration in nonprofit administration.

For more information about the Department of Public Administration and Policy, visit <https://www.umt.edu/law/mpa>.

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**About NASPAA:** **NASPAA** is a membership organization of graduate education programs in public policy, public affairs, public administration, and public and nonprofit management. Its 300 member institutions – located across the U.S. and in 24 countries around the globe – award MPA, MPP, MPAff and similar degrees. NASPAA is the recognized global accreditor of master’s degree programs in these fields.

**About CLSG:** The University of Virginia’s **Center for Leadership Simulation and Gaming** at the Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy prepares students for public life by

allowing them to test real-world solutions in a virtual environment. CLSG designs, develops and implements cutting-edge simulations and experiments to advance education in leadership and public policy; conducts rigorous leadership and public policy research using simulations and experiments; and creates a community of scholarship where faculty, researchers and students are supported in their scholarly efforts related to the methodology of simulations and experiments.

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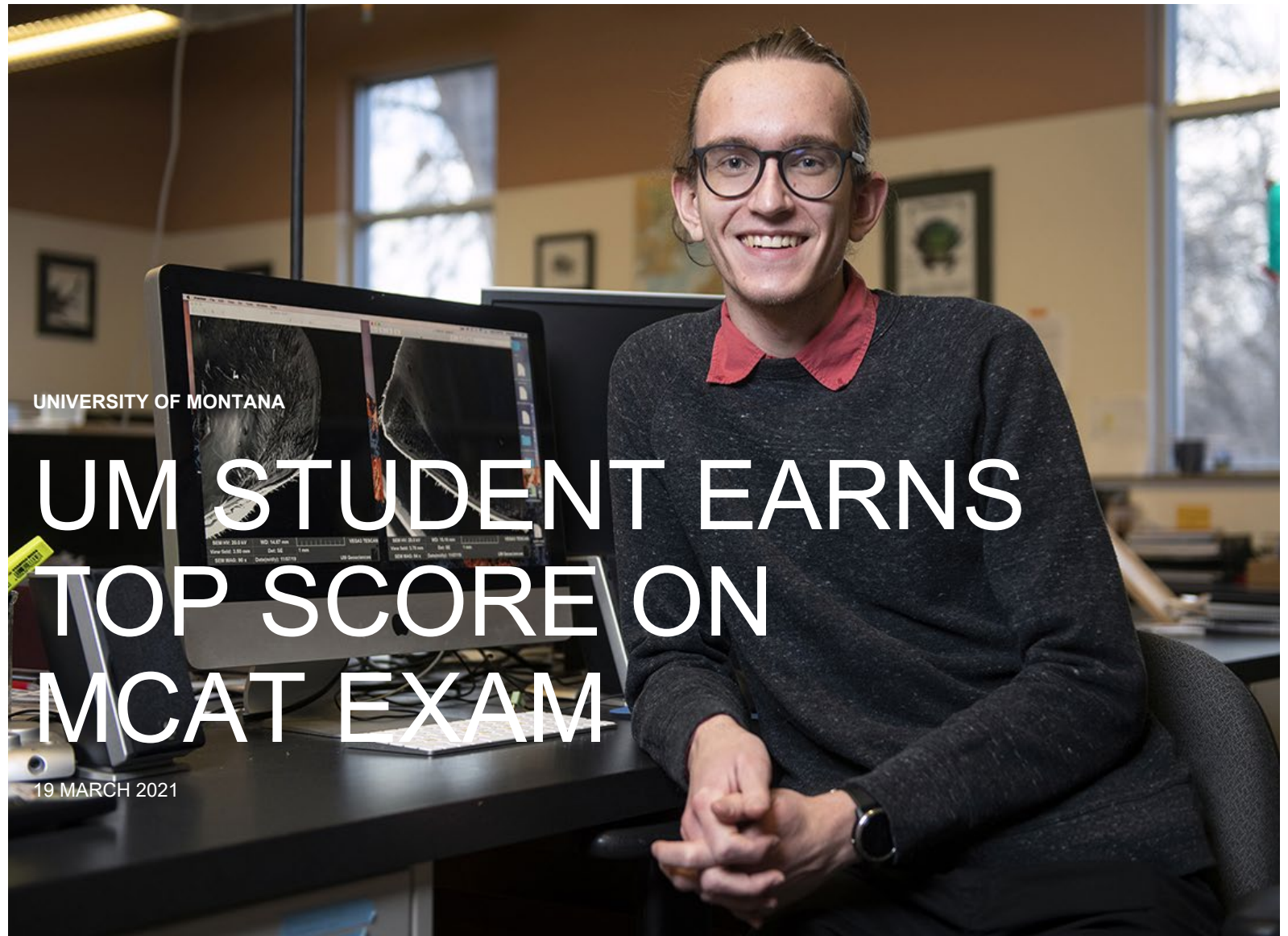
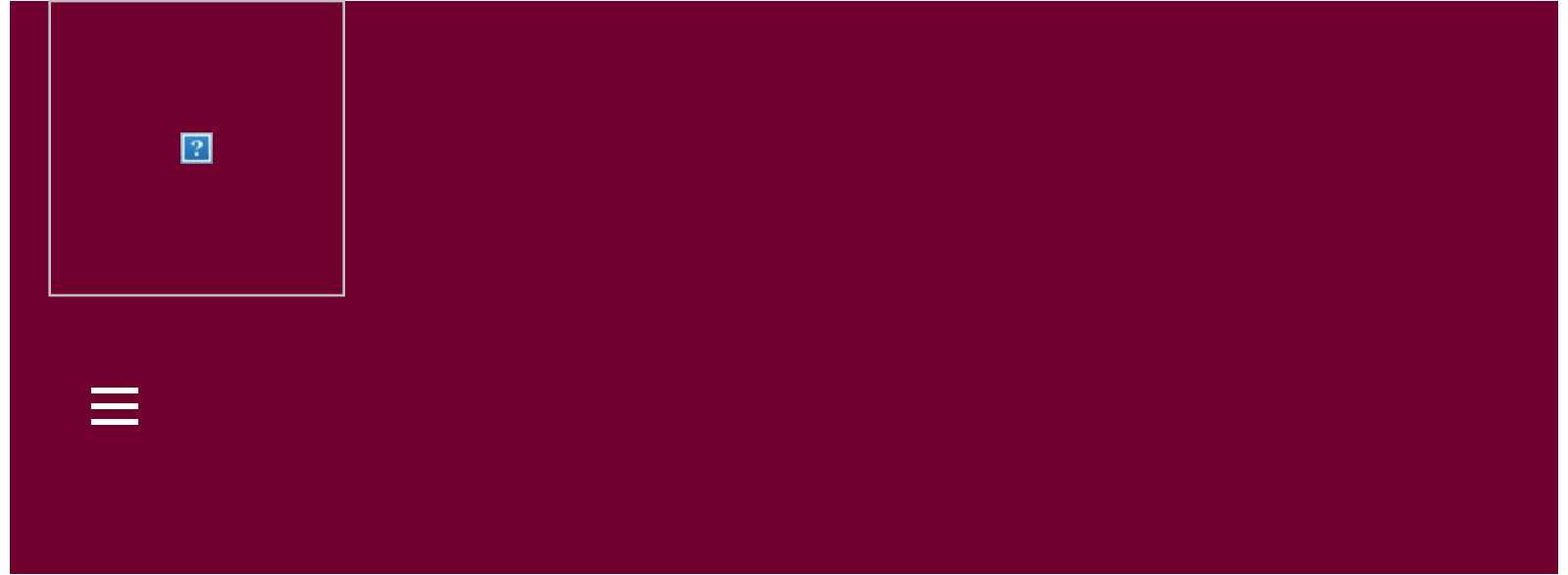
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UM student Devin Hunt earned a top score on the Medical College Admission Test. The biology and microbiology major was awarded a yearlong fellowship next year with the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.



**MISSOULA** – Devin Hunt said he technically cracked the first book to prepare for the Medical College Admission Test, or MCAT, in August. But the truth, Hunt said, is that spending four years at the University of Montana deeply embedded in microbiology and biology classes, working in research labs and studying under the tutelage of faculty mentors, meant he had really been preparing for years.

Hunt, a senior in UM's **Davidson Honors College** from Colville, Washington, was recently notified of a rare, impressive feat: scoring in the 100th percentile of the MCAT exam.

Anything between a score of 524 and 528 is considered in 100th percentile, and there is no perfect score, as the exam is calculated on a percentage basis and changes from year to year. The Association of American Medical Colleges estimates that about 85,000 people sit for the MCAT every year.

The exam tests physical and biological sciences, verbal reasoning and writing skills, in addition to sociocultural, biological and physiological influences on behavior and social interactions, according to the Princeton Review.

"I fully credit the broad and robust training in the biological sciences and general microbiology I received at UM," he said. "That training, combined with faculty who pushed my boundaries of understanding, encouraged and supported me in advising and offered me opportunities at every turn, is really what UM does best."

Originally declaring a math major with the possibility of combining premed studies, Hunt quickly found himself enamored with the biological sciences at UM. He developed relationships and projects with faculty members representing the intersection of biomedical and microbiological sciences, ecology and evolutionary biology. That layered and broad access to health and hard sciences is what allowed him to "make connections at the systems level" when it comes to human, microbes and the environment.

Hunt immersed himself under the mentorship of Regents Professor of Evolutionary Biology Doug Emlen in UM's **Division of Biological Sciences**, Associate Professor Mark Pershouse in UM's **Department of Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Sciences** and Assistant Professor Patrick Secor in UM's **Center for Biomolecular Structure and Dynamics**.

“Working with Devin is always a joy,” Emlen said. “His enthusiasm is infectious, and his curiosity reminds me daily of why I love my job.”

Pershhouse said Hunt is “one of his best students,” and he has yet to observe Hunt “doing anything only halfway.”

Hunt said each of his professors were “constantly drawing parallels and bringing in real-world examples” to get students to view biological problems in a larger perspective. Hunt’s penchant for deep questioning is what Secor said propelled his journey at UM.

“Devin is innately curious and intrinsically motivated – skills that have served him well in the lab and classroom, and they will serve him well in his future endeavors,” he said.

His interest in the ways microbes interact with the human body only intensified this year when the COVID-19 pandemic broke out and his professors tailored coursework to make deeper connections between biology and infectious diseases.

“We know that biological systems are not static and they are uniquely influenced by their environment,” Hunt said. “Environmental elements can make humans incredibly sick and cause immense pain and suffering, as we’ve seen this year. I’m interested in what happens to microbes and humans when they come face-to-face. Are there opportunities to improve human lives? Is there an exception to a biological rule?”

Hunt said a natural inquisitiveness is what drives him. When he needed an inevitable break from academic rigor, Hunt would swim laps at Grizzly Pool on campus before walking to the library to study with classmates. A former competitive swimmer of 15 years, he said the pool is where he was offered a quiet space to reflect.

“I spent a lot of time in the pool, that’s for sure,” he said. “I needed a quiet place to go and found that swimming gave me a chance to process a lot of things I was thinking about.”

Spending several semesters as a research associate in Secor’s Bacteriophage Pathobiology Lab on campus, Hunt said his access as an undergraduate student and the critical thinking he developed greatly influenced his performance on the MCAT as he “approached the exam material in the same way” he did in class or in the lab, “although I probably didn’t realize it,” he said.

“What’s a better way to develop and practice critical thinking than to analyze data and investigate conclusions that either support or reject hypotheses?” he said. “The MCAT tries to measure this kind of thinking, which is what I’ve spent most of the last four years doing.”

Hunt will graduate in May, impressively finishing dual degrees in microbiology and biology in only four years.

Next year, he’ll serve as a Postbaccalaureate Intermural Research Training Fellow with the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, which is part of the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland. Afterwards, he plans to apply for a medical scientist training program that combines medical and doctoral degrees, where he can examine “some of the big questions facing our world and advance standards of care from benchtop to bedside.”

He said he hopes his experiences at UM, in labs, in the community and classrooms will position him to be a competitive applicant for these coveted programs.

“Tests are imperfect measures of imperfect people,” Hunt said. “A lot of people take this test. But I’m from a liberal arts college, and what’s more liberal arts than drawing connections, engaging critically in a lot of disciplines and finding those places where they intersect?”

###

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UM / News / UM B.E.A.R. Initiative Helps Small Businesses Survive COVID-19







Right before COVID-19 hit, Purusa Yoga had just started to grow. Thanks to help from UM's B.E.A.R. initiative, Fernando (third from left), was able to move classes online and keep Purusa open. (Photos courtesy Sherika Fernando).

**MISSOULA** – It's been almost a year since Sherika Fernando's yoga studio went dark.

Purusa Yoga had just begun to grow when COVID-19 hit. After upping her cleaning standards, Fernando had to rapidly pivot to offer the practice outdoors and then switch to online classes while monitoring what was happening with the pandemic.

"It was shocking and very scary," she said.

So, when her father sent her some resources from the University of Montana to help businesses stay afloat, Fernando, who earned a psychology bachelor's degree from UM in 2013, took advantage to keep Purusa's doors (virtually) open.

UM launched its Business Emergency Assistance & Recovery (B.E.A.R.) initiative last spring to help business owners like Fernando during the pandemic. Through a webpage set up by a student team in conjunction with Blackstone LaunchPad, B.E.A.R. streamlined UM's Accelerate Montana economic development programs into one location, making it accessible for business owners.

Jenn Stephens is a 2005 Master of Business Administration UM alumna and regional director for the Missoula Regional Small Business Development Center, which just celebrated its fifth anniversary at UM. She said so far there have been more than 70 queries from business owners. Some have just asked questions, but others have been in dire need of resources.

"Many business owners think 'Hey, I need some help right now,'" Stephens said.

Purusa is a labor of love for Fernando, born from her experience in high-trauma work with children and teens and incorporating healing yoga into her own life. Through combining spiritual healing with the ancient eastern practice of yoga from

her Sri Lankan roots, Fernando started Purusa for those who have gone through injury, illness and loss to help them develop strength and flexibility, calm anxiety, heal their pain and feel empowered.

“I learned in my own journey how necessary this was,” she said. “Not only did I have my academics and that background in biological psychology, but as I made that change in my own life, I really started to see how much the yogic practice helped me to heal and recover and really changed my entire life from the inside out.”



*Sherika Fernando, a 2013 University of Montana psychology alumna, began Purusa Yoga in Missoula three years ago based on her own experience using yoga for healing.*

Through help from SBDC – as well as relationships she had built through the Missoula Downtown Association and UM’s Blackstone LaunchPad – Fernando applied for grants to alleviate the financial burden of moving online and losing the building housing Purusa Yoga.

**SBDC at UM** is one of 10 regional centers across the state that support small business growth through offering counseling and training in finances, strategic planning and more for business owners. SBDC applied for funding from the United States Small Business Administration during the pandemic, citing a health emergency as a natural disaster.

Stephens said SBDC serves as a “warehouse of information” helping businesses access “life-

saving money.”

For Carla Proud the money she received for her business during the pandemic was much-needed. As owner of Every Nook and Cranny commercial cleaning, she found cleaning work hard to come by as businesses closed their doors.

When her daughter learned about UM’s B.E.A.R. initiative, she too decided to reach out for help.

Proud, who also attended UM, said she was shocked after her daughter helped her apply for a grant through B.E.A.R.’s resources and she received a \$16,000 loan. With money allowing her to replace equipment and pay up on her vehicle, lease and storage unit, she was able to sleep soundly.

“The money that was loaned, it was just amazing and it did help me,” she said. “It lifted some of the burden of being scared. It gave me peace of mind.”

Fernando received two state grants: a business stabilization grant to support wages, rent and expenses and a business adaptability grant to help in the transition online. She also earned a small business grant through the Missoula Downtown Association and has applied for a Women’s Business Center impact grant to help her find a new studio location.

“It just kind of evolved in a very serendipitous way,” Fernando said.

Proud has continued cleaning during the pandemic and hopes Every Nook and Cranny, which she started in 2017, continues to grow despite the pandemic.

She is extremely grateful to SBDC at UM for giving her financial peace of mind.

Purusa Yoga just celebrated its third anniversary. Fernando said businesses can always seek help within the UM and Missoula community and other business owners, who lift each other up.

“You don’t have to do it all on your own,” she said. “That’s huge. I think as business owners you can get really scared and feel alone. It’s really helpful to know you can always reach out more, and it’s a strength.”

###

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By Courtney Brockman, UM News Service

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UM / News / Art Educator and Host of PBS Series to Speak at Next UM President’s Lecture

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

# ART EDUCATOR AND HOST OF PBS SERIES TO SPEAK AT NEXT UM PRESIDENT’S





# LECTURE

15 MARCH 2021

President's Lecture speaker Sarah Urist Green

**MISSOULA** – PBS series host and art educator Sarah Urist Green headlines the next installment of the President's Lecture Series at The University of Montana.

Green, creator and curator of "The Art Assignment" on PBS, will present "What the Internet has Taught Me About Art" in a virtual format on Wednesday, April 7. This event is free, and audience members are asked to register at [www.umt.edu/president](http://www.umt.edu/president) for the Zoom link.

A former curator of contemporary art at the Indianapolis Museum of Art, Green works to demystify the world of art and museums to a wider audience. She has written "You Are an Artist," a book that combines art history with art prompts by some of the most innovative artists working today. "The Art Assignment" on PBS is an educational video series that introduces viewers to artists, presents them with assignments and explores art history through a modern-day lens.

She holds a Master of Arts in modern art history from Columbia University and a Bachelor of Arts from Northwestern University.

"Sarah Green's lecture about art coming on the heels of February's conversation on race by Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum illustrates the breath of subjects the President's Lecture Series highlights," said Kelly Webster, chief of staff with the UM Office of the President. "This series is committed to bringing diverse topics and voices that matter to our campus and wider community."

The event is sponsored in part by the Jim and Jane Dew Visiting Artist Fund and UM's School of Visual and Media Arts.

For nearly four decades, the [President's Lecture Series](#) has provided opportunities to gather,

learn and discuss important ideas and issues that animate UM and the communities of Montana. UM President Seth Bodnar continues this tradition by hosting a series that challenges all to engage in meaningful and enjoyable learning, both on and off campus. UM will present this lecture online in the interest of public health while also expanding its availability to audiences beyond campus.

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UM / News / UM Tax Program Marks 20 Years of Student Experience, Community Benefit

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

# UM TAX PROGRAM MARKS 20 YEARS OF STUDENT EXPERIENCE, COMMUNITY



UM accountancy students volunteer for the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program at a clinic this February hosted on the UM campus. Now in its 20th year, the program allows UM students to prepare tax returns for low-income individuals as a free, public service.

**MISSOULA** – Kent Swift has more than 450 connections on LinkedIn.

The University of Montana professor emeritus in the **College of Business** finds it particularly gratifying that the majority of the those are his former students.

“I like to keep in touch, see where they are now and the many places their accounting degree has taken them,” Swift said. “Our graduates are in every accounting job there is and in places all over the country.”

Swift, who has been teaching accounting and tax law to Montana students for the better part of his life, said many received their first public accounting experience through **UM's Volunteer Income Tax Assistance Program**.

The program, now celebrating its 20th anniversary, trains UM undergraduate and graduate accounting majors to prepare and file tax returns for community members who make less than about \$57,000. Sponsored by the Internal Revenue Service, the program is free to the public and runs for six Saturdays every February and March.

Clients represent a broad swath of the community – from refugees who are first time tax filers to international students requiring a deep knowledge of international tax treaties for an accurate filing.

Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, Swift and Clem Lockman, a UM account alumnus, VITA site coordinator and local CPA, committed to delivering the program this year safely and according to Missoula City-County Health Department guidelines.



“We had to make changes this year, of course, but we knew how important this program is to our community,” Lockman said. “We agreed we had to find a way to make it happen.”

Instead of face-to-face appointments, participants book an appointment online and the tax filing is done in a separate room. UM students call the clients directly for questions, instead of meeting in person.

In previous years, Lockman said, “There would be a line out the door and down the sidewalk.” This year, the appointments booked up within days.

On any given year, UM’s VITA program files close to 600 federal returns and about as many state returns, Lockman said. Collectively, the returns net about \$600,000 in individual federal returns and close to \$200,000 for individual state returns, all at no cost to the taxpayer.

“That’s money going directly back into the community every year,” Swift said. “Those are funds that are spent in our downtown, our restaurants and stores.”

But perhaps more than the funds generated for local people, the real value is in the career experience for UM students learning to work for a diverse clientele. Students also receive academic credit for their volunteer service.

Students take Swift’s individual tax course in preparation for volunteering and are required to complete the training materials supplied by the IRS.

“Tax law is quite complicated, and there are so many things students need to know,” he said. “There’s a lot of specialized training needed to do this.”

For example, he said, understanding the federal and state stipulations from the CARES Act and income from the stimulus checks are aspects that made preparing tax documents more complicated this year.

As the VITA site coordinator, Lockman reviews and vets returns and Swift is available to answer any questions.

Carley Dedominicis, a UM master’s student in accounting from Calgary, Alberta, is volunteering

for the VITA program for a third year. Dedominicis completed an undergraduate degree in accounting from UM and applied for the one-year **Master's of Accountancy Program** last year. In 2019, The Accounting Report **ranked UM's bachelor's and master's accountancy programs in the top 25 in the country.**

She said the hands-on experience VITA provided has shaped an interest in nonprofit accounting and helped her connect the work in the classroom with serving working people.

"A lot of the class work is really technical and formulaic," she said. "What's so interesting about the VITA program is that stuff you learn, like charity contributions and pension distributions, come up a lot, and it feels great to have that training and knowledge."

This year, Dedominicis mentors other VITA volunteers, and she plans to sit for the CPA exam this summer. UM regularly ranks nationally for its first-time pass rate on the CPA exam.

Dedominicis said the guidance she receives from Swift and Lockman play a large role in her job prospects and a well-rounded understanding of public accounting.

"Dr. Swift is a phenomenal teacher and mentor. He's funny, tells jokes in class and brings in companies and former students that have had successful careers," she said. "You just know that he really loves teaching and his students."

Lockman, who Dedominicis calls "a stickler for accuracy, and rightly so," participates in the VITA clinics alongside Swift. He checks the returns for accuracy – sometimes staying up late at night at his own house filing returns or going the extra mile to answer a question about a particular return for a student. With about a 90% accuracy rate, Lockman said the UM VITA program has received high marks from the IRS for accuracy and running a strong program.

For Lockman, who was a UM student VITA volunteer years ago and remembers filing returns with pencils and only a handful of computers, the VITA program is a critical community service that places UM students as experts.

"The program has stuck with me all these years," Lockman said. "It means something to me. To see these young people develop the confidence and experience in talking to strangers about their financial picture, it's very rewarding."

Swift said the experience VITA provides is another reason why outside employers are eager to hire UM students.

“Businesses need accountants in Baker, Montana and in San Francisco,” he said. “It’s an in-demand skill set almost anywhere in the world, and employers really like Montana kids, because they know how to work hard. We have a lot of alumni in Big Four accounting firms, and plenty who chose to stay in Montana or elsewhere. The good news for students is that we can fulfill that supply.”

###

Jenny Lavey, UM News Service

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UM / News / UM Student with Passion for Service Named 2021 Newman Civic Fellow

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

# UM STUDENT WITH PASSION FOR SERVICE NAMED 2021 NEWMAN CIVIC FELLOW

10 MARCH 2021





University of Montana junior Mia McKinney's passion for social justice and outstanding academic record earned her a spot on the prestigious 2021 Newman Civic Fellows cohort.

**MISSOULA** – University of Montana junior Mia McKinney's passion for social justice took root at an early age when, as a high school student in Boise, she volunteered on a teen council for Planned Parenthood and founded a student club for Special Olympics.

Her interest in promoting good has expanded with her studies at UM and it, along with her stellar academic record, has led to her selection for the prestigious 2021 cohort of **Newman Civic Fellows**.

Students selected for this yearlong fellowship are leaders on their campuses who demonstrate a commitment to finding solutions for challenges facing communities locally, nationally and internationally. The 2021 cohort comprises 212 students from 39 states, Washington, D.C., and Mexico.

McKinney said when she learned that UM offered studies in women's gender and sexuality she knew the University would be the place to foster her passion for advocacy while helping her earn a valuable degree.

"I believe education is one of the keys to getting to the root of many social issues," said McKinney whose bachelor's degree concentration includes studies in **sociology, inequality and social justice**, and **women's gender and sexuality**, as well as a **minor in nonprofit administration** from UM's Department of Public Administration and Policy.

"It is through formal and informal education that I have developed an understanding of how institutions uphold inequality," she said. "Fact-based, intersectional and accessible education allows us to change the inequality in these institutions."

The Newman Civic Fellowship is sponsored by Campus Compact, a Boston-based nonprofit working to advance the public purposes of higher education. Each year, Fellows participate in numerous virtual training and networking opportunities to provide them with the skills and connections they need to create large-scale positive change. The cornerstone of the fellowship

is the Annual Convening of Fellows, which offers intensive skill-building and networking over the course of two days. The fellowship also provides Fellows with pathways to apply for exclusive scholarship and post-graduate opportunities.

“We are proud to recognize these extraordinary student leaders and thrilled to engage with them,” said Campus Compact President Andrew Seligsohn. “The experience of the last year has driven home to all of us that we need open-minded, innovative, public-spirited thinkers and doers.”

In nominating McKinney for the fellowship, UM President Seth Bodnar noted many of her volunteer activities including facilitating the YWCA GUTS! program fostering an environment in which young girls are encouraged to explore and discover their individual strengths; her work at SEA Change, a UM program promoting a safe, empowering and career accelerating learning environment for women; her internship at the UM Women’s Resource Center, where she created a podcast dedicated to exploring women’s perspectives on social issues; and her work registering Montana residents to vote.

“Mia’s academic record, invested work as a volunteer on campus and in the community, and her complete dedication and leadership in her academic field, exemplify the outstanding student and community advocate she is,” Bodnar said.

###

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UM / News / In the Cloud: UM Partners with Amazon to Make Students Job Ready



MISSOULA COLLEGE

# IN THE CLOUD: UM PARTNERS WITH AMAZON TO MAKE STUDENTS JOB READY

09 MARCH 2021



Cloud computing is one of many tech skills Missoula College at the University of Montana teaches to prepare students for a job in a dynamic tech workforce.

**MISSOULA** – Just as the world began to transition to remote work, Amazon announced an initiative to prepare 29 million people around the world for roles in cloud computing. A few months earlier, Missoula College at the University of Montana launched the first Cloud Computing Certificate in the state.

In response to a rapidly growing tech sector, UM has partnered with Amazon Web Services, an IT service management subsidiary of Amazon, to prepare students for the jobs of the future. Through their coursework, students cover all the necessary skills and knowledge, such as cloud computing and fiber splicing, to pass certifications for high-tech jobs as part of UM's Tech Skills for Tomorrow initiative to address a shortage of workers in Montana's tech industry.

Missoula College Dean Tom Gallagher said the goal is to equip students for just about anything in the workforce through providing them with an in-demand skillset.

"We want all students to be career-ready," Gallagher said. "And we want them career-ready the first day at a new job. The Cloud Computing Certificate provides individuals with the technical skills requested by employers and needed to land that first job."

In 2020, LinkedIn ranked cloud computing – the delivery of different services through the Internet – as second among the most important hard skills for today's workforce. Missoula College's first Cloud Computing Foundations class drew around a dozen students, and in a year, it doubled to 27 and became required for all students pursuing an IT degree.

Missoula College became Amazon-Web Services-certified this semester, a broad credential accepted as the tech industry standard. To receive the Amazon certification, students must take six classes that range from databases to operating systems.

Victor Valgenti, who teaches the cloud computing course and became the only Montana AWS-certified instructor this January, said students may not be aware of why cloud computing is relevant to today's workforce.



“The cloud is not anything magic, I tell my students all the time,” he said. “It’s not some new thing. The technologies involved in the cloud are not revolutionary technologies. It’s the application that is revolutionary.”

Valgenti likens cloud computing to a video rental market, where large companies offer up their resources as rentals and other companies purchase time on their hardware. He said understanding cloud computing is important as businesses move toward storing in the cloud rather than hosting less secure hardware on the premises that takes up space.

“The cloud is where the industry is moving,” Valgenti said. “It’s really kind of taking over.”

Amos Heil, a Missoula College student pursuing a career in remote network management and security systems, said he hopes to show companies that cloud computing can save both space and money.

“This technology excites me in many ways,” he said. “Learning about it has peeled back a layer and allowed me to see how a lot of companies are operating, as well as shown me how cloud computing can be used by smaller companies to lower startup costs and reach more people.”

For Brenna Bibler, a Missoula College student in Valgenti’s class who wants to learn how to program apps and video games, the future of cloud computing also is promising.

“The most interesting thing about cloud computing to me is thinking about what it could be used for,” Bibler said. “Intel, the world’s largest manufacturer of PC microprocessors, has been researching the ability to decode brainwaves in order to implement interaction with software, model water resource management and even cure cancer.”

Heil said the pandemic only has highlighted the importance of cloud computing.

“Look at how many businesses and classrooms would have been shut down and the negative impact that would have had with COVID-19,” Heil said. “Yet we all moved to Zoom or similar ways of communicating that was housed on the cloud. I wonder how many other businesses moved resources to the cloud and will be staying there after the pandemic ends.”

Missoula College’s cloud computing certificate is open to all UM students, who can pair it with

bachelor or associate degrees.

“Cloud computing training is not just for technical people,” Gallagher said. “It is a technology that everyone needs to know about. We need to understand from a business standpoint some of the concepts involving software as a service, platforms as a service, storage as a service. They are revolutionizing what is taking place in the business industry.”

Bibler also believes everyone can benefit from understanding cloud computing and the opportunities it offers.

“Hopefully more people will catch onto this idea, as the cloud has the ability to create many jobs for people who need them, and the number of services, platforms and applications will rise,” Bibler said. “If more people apply their ideas to cloud computing technology, the internet is going to grow into a marvelous place, made up of many unique applications from people all over the world.”

Valgenti is working on “cloudifying” his other classes to bring them up-to-date. He plans to teach a class on advanced cloud concepts this fall, as well as modify the certificate requirements to work well with other UM programs.

UM also will partner with other institutions across the state and train them in cloud computing this summer, ensuring everyone has access to important tech skills as the cloud only continues to grow.

###

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# SKAGGS BUILDING

COLLEGE OF HEALTH

# UM UNVEILS NEW L.S. SKAGGS INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH INNOVATION

08 MARCH 2021



Pharmacy faculty members Erica Woodahl (left) and Hayley Blackburn are part of UM's new L.S. Skaggs Institute for Health Innovation, which will offer the field of pharmacogenetics to Montanans.

**MISSOULA** – The University of Montana announces the creation of the new L.S. Skaggs Institute for Health Innovation (SIHI) in the College of Health. The Institute will serve Montana as a statewide hub for health education, research and outreach to improve access to health care for all Montanans, particularly those living in underserved communities.

One mission of the SIHI is to offer Montanans pharmacogenetics – the process of analyzing how the genetic makeup of an individual affects their response to medications.

Pharmacogenetics is a model of cutting-edge innovation in health care called precision medicine. Precision medicine uses patient-specific information such as genetics to tailor disease diagnosis and treatment. Instead of prescribing a one-size-fits-all drug, health-care providers customize a person's treatment plan tailored to that individual, using a patient's genetic profile to choose the safest and most effective medications.

Pharmacogenetic consultations will be provided via telehealth, allowing these services to be used by health-care professionals and patients statewide. Additionally, SIHI will provide broad interprofessional telehealth services across the state, while providing hands-on training opportunities for pharmacy students and other trainees at the UM College of Health.

"Montana is a large, rural state that constantly battles a shortage of health-care providers and limited access to cutting-edge health innovations," said Dr. Hayley Blackburn, assistant professor in the **Skaggs School of Pharmacy**. "Pharmacists are highly trained health-care professionals who can use their expertise to help fill those gaps and improve access to care."

Dr. Erica Woodahl, a professor in the Skaggs School of Pharmacy, said the institute will prepare the next generation of health-care professionals while ensuring Montanans have broad access to emerging innovations like telehealth and precision medicine.

Woodahl, a leader in pharmacogenetics among rural and tribal populations, said SIHI is poised to be the first in the country to deliver widespread adoption of pharmacogenetics in rural and



tribal settings.

“Most Montanans do not have access to pharmacogenetic testing,” she said. “The institute provides an exciting opportunity to expand access to pharmacogenetics for patients across the state and to train health professionals in this rapidly growing field.”

While Montanans have previously leveraged telehealth to improve health-care access, the COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the importance of telehealth across Montana and the need for telehealth training for health professionals. The institute was jump-started by a generous donation from The ALSAM Foundation, a Utah-based organization founded by L.S. Skaggs and his wife, Aline W. Skaggs.

Dr. Marketa Marvanova, dean of the Skaggs School of Pharmacy and acting dean of the College of Health, said the new institute will transform the UM College of Health.

“Health innovations like telehealth and precision medicine offer expanded roles for health-care professionals, and the institute will **offer** patients access to care that might not otherwise be available,” Marvanova said. “SIHI will facilitate delivery of innovative services to rural and tribal populations and improve health outcomes for Montanans.”

###

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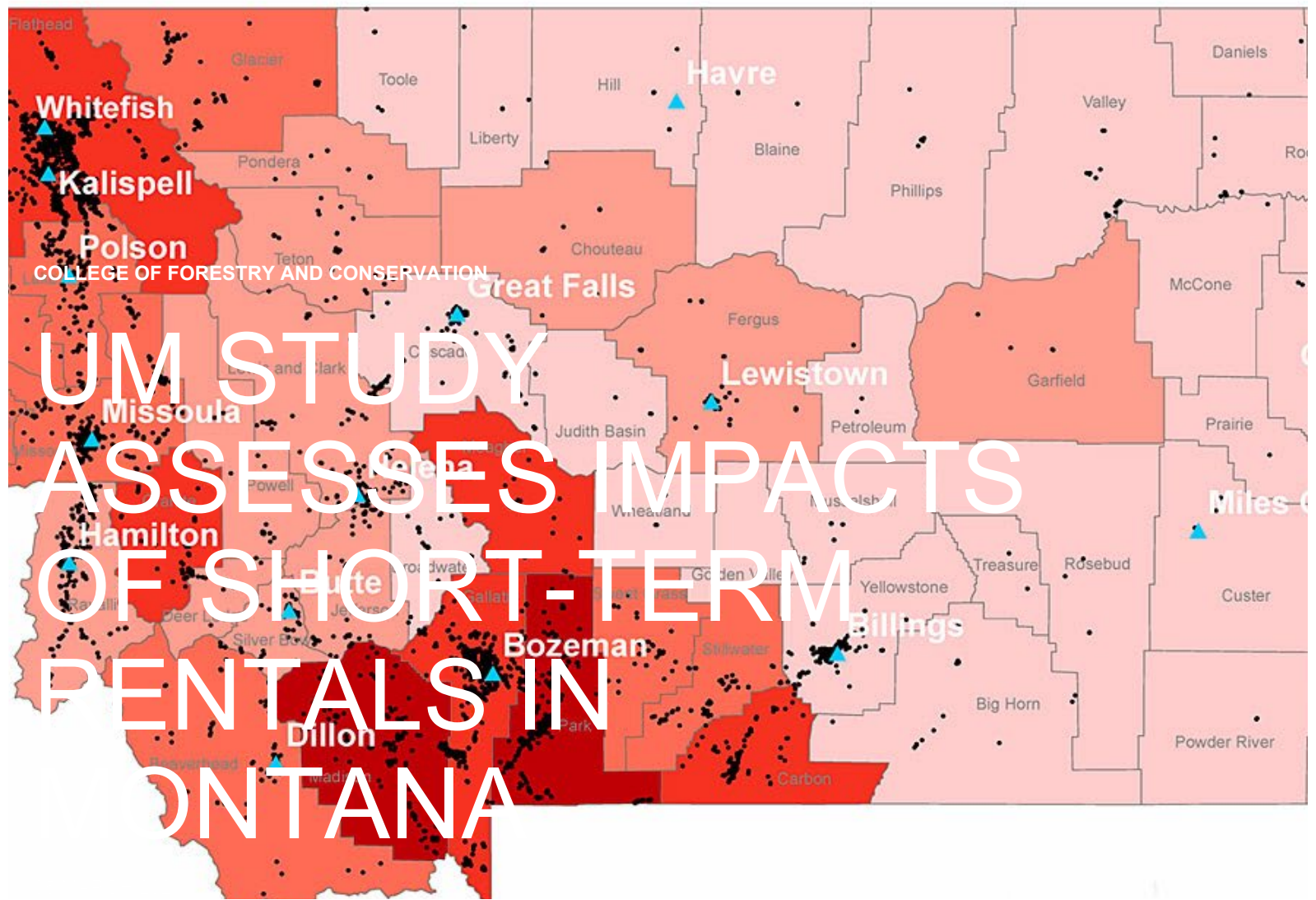
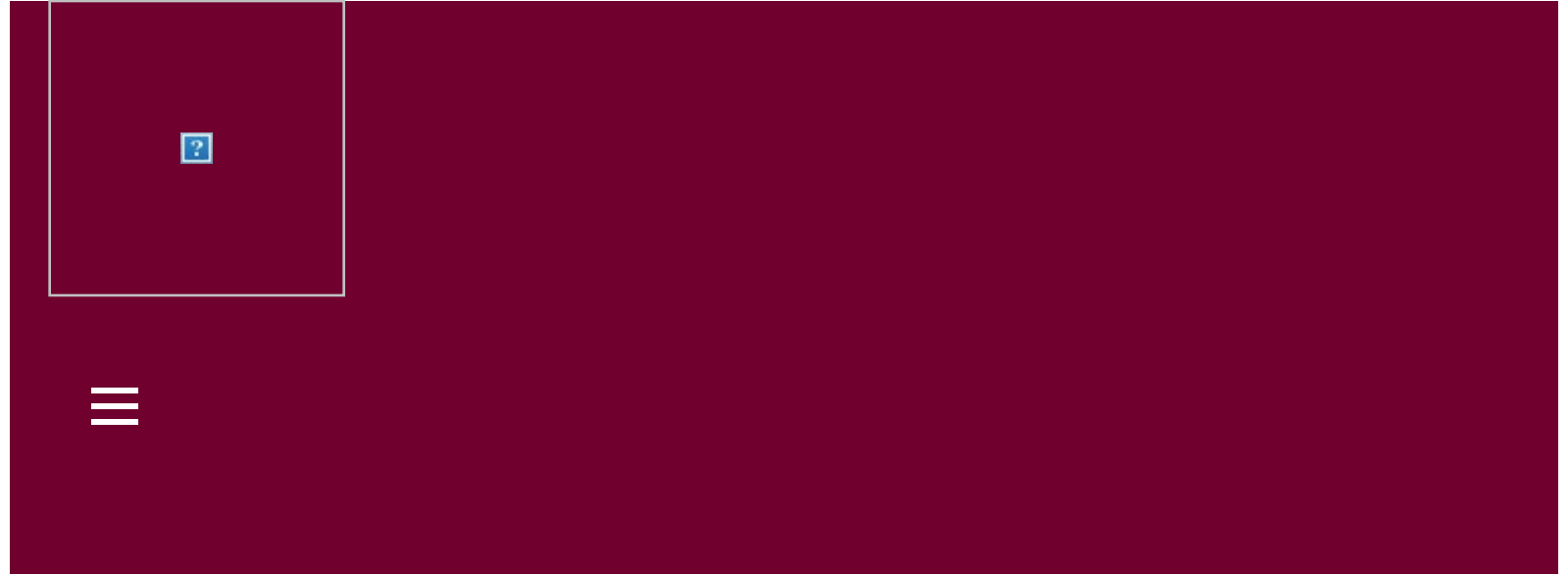
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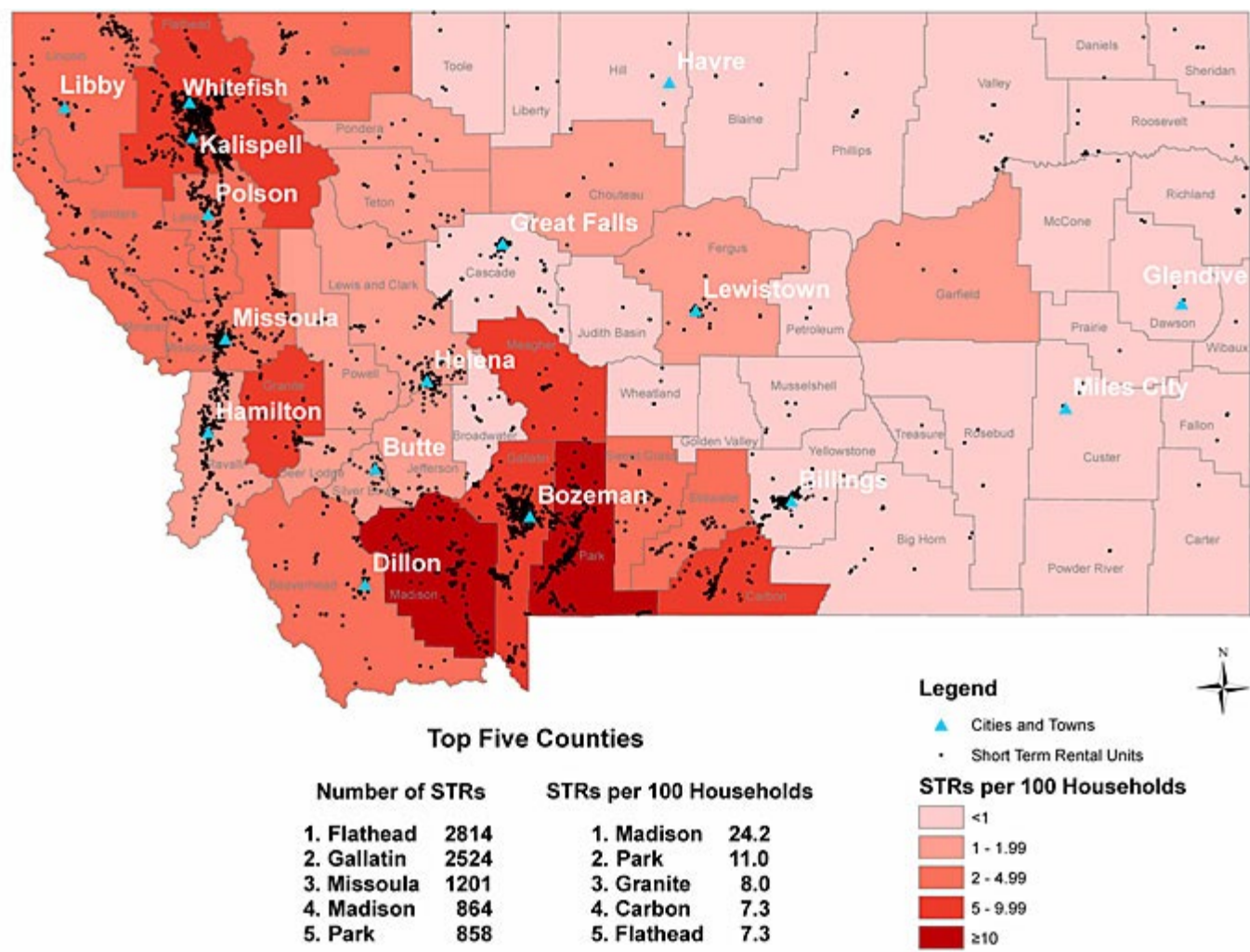
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The distribution of short-term rentals across Montana.

**MISSOULA** – Two new studies from the University of Montana assess the positive and negative impacts of short-term rentals on Montana communities, as well as examine the visitors who use STRs, their motivations and characteristics. The studies were highlighted in a report by UM’s Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research.

Short-term rentals usually are private accommodations that travelers book online through sites such as Airbnb and VRBO for less than 30 days. During the last five to seven years, the availability of and interest in STRs have soared, with little knowledge of their true scale in Montana, how these new accommodation choices are regulated and the makeup of STR guests and hosts. The new ITRR report answers those questions.

As of September 2020, over 12,000 STRs had been active in Montana at some point during the preceding 12 months, with Flathead and Gallatin counties showing the highest volumes. Meanwhile, Madison and Park counties have the highest densities of STRs (STRs per household).

Interviews with city and county officials in selected communities around the state revealed a wide variety of STR regulations. There are no regulations in some smaller towns and counties. Some areas require a business license or special use permit, fire marshal inspection, street parking standards or providing emergency phone numbers for guests. Some areas have zoning limits on the number of STRs allowed.

The lack of consistent policies related to STRs seems to have worked for most areas up until now, according to many city and county officials, who feel that they don't have enough STRs or haven't had enough complaints about them to warrant developing policies at this point.

Many of the perceived challenges facing STRs in Montana are similar to the challenges that STRs experience globally, such as negative impacts of STRs on long-term rentals and affordable housing for working families, disruptions for neighbors, loss or change of community identity and change of the community feel.

On the other hand, many respondents emphasized positive impacts and benefits that STRs can provide in Montana, such as tourism and monetary benefits and diverse accommodation options.

The potentially positive impacts identified by these community leaders are reinforced by the online survey of travelers and STR hosts also explored by ITRR. Of the leisure travelers surveyed, 40% said they are likely to seek out STRs for their trip, in Montana or elsewhere, and 7% of business travelers said the same.

Over three-quarters of travelers have either stayed in an STR at least once (61%) or are interested in giving it a try (16%), with reasons of cleanliness, safety and location being the most important features considered when choosing an STR.

Of survey respondents who have stayed in an STR within Montana, location, use of a kitchen and comfort topped the list.



Reasons for being a short-term rental host are varied, but financial aspects topped the list. The three most important reasons to rent out a room or home include making money; helping pay for insurance, taxes and utilities; and using the place as an investment.

“This information is intended to help city and county officials better understand the STR market and make informed decisions about STR policies,” said ITRR social scientist Elena Bigart. “It should also assist STR guests and hosts to have better experiences. Our study is one of the first steps to collect information about STRs in Montana. Future research efforts are needed to analyze the trends of STR usage in the state and evaluate the success of STR regulations over time.”

For the full report, visit [https://scholarworks.umt.edu/itrr\\_pubs/418/](https://scholarworks.umt.edu/itrr_pubs/418/).

All ITRR reports are available on the website at <http://itrr.umt.edu/>.

###

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UM / News / UM Professor's Podcast Illuminates Burning Questions

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

# UM PROFESSOR'S PODCAST ILLUMINATES BURNING QUESTIONS

05 MARCH 2021



UM Marketing Associate Professor Justin Angle hosts a new podcast, “Fireline,” which looks at our complicated relationship with wildfires, both good and bad.

**MISSOULA** – Justin Angle, a marketing associate professor in the University of Montana’s College of Business, vividly remembers his first introduction to wildfires. He had just moved to Missoula and nearby fires were choking the city, forcing evacuations and threatening homes.

“I quickly realized wildfire was a part of living here,” Angle said of the 2012 fires. “As I’ve spent time in wild spaces, I saw landscapes changed by fire. I met firefighters, fire scientists, foresters and land managers. I realized that Missoula is an epicenter for wildfire science, policy, history and firefighting apparatus. What’s happening here informs wildfire policy and practice across the country. I wanted to learn more about all this.”

Angle, who hosts his own podcast “**A New Angle**,” turned his innate curiosity into a new podcast on wildfires called “**Fireline**,” a six-part audio series from Montana Public Radio and the UM College of Business. The podcast is produced by Nick Mott of the Peabody Award-winning show “Threshold” and “Richest Hill,” named one of “The New Yorker’s” “must-listen” podcasts of 2019. Episode 1 of the podcast releases on March 9

“By just about every measure, wildfires are getting bigger, hotter and more devastating than we’ve ever seen before,” Angle said. “But what all that fire means – and what to do about it – depends on who you ask. “

Angle’s guests on the podcast, all experts in the field of fire, will address such questions as: How have our views of fire shaped our expectations of safety, forest management and firefighting? Are people in the West prepared for the responsibility of living in the wildland urban interface? And what’s our role in figuring out how to live with the system-wide challenges wildfires pose?

“Fireline” editor and co-producer Victor Yvellez, a recent UM journalism graduate, said listeners will come away with a better understanding of wildfires and an appreciation that – while often catastrophic – wildfires are essential to the landscapes we live on.

“Fire helped our species evolve,” Yvellez said. “It's been a part of our world for millions of years, and it's a part of the human soul. As the effects of climate change become more evident, fire will shape the future of life in the West.”

To learn more, visit [www.firelinepodcast.org](http://www.firelinepodcast.org). Subscribe wherever you get your podcasts.

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UM / News / The Big Give, UM's Annual Giving Day, Returns March 24-25

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

# THE BIG GIVE, UM'S ANNUAL GIVING DAY, RETURNS MARCH 24-25

03 MARCH 2021

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA  
**THE BIG GIVE**  
MARCH 24-25



**MISSOULA** – The University of Montana will hold its second annual day of giving from noon Wednesday, March 24, to noon Thursday, March 25. The Big Give is an online giving event that inspires UM alumni, donors, parents and friends to help reach the goal of 750 donations and \$100,000 to support UM students in just 24 hours.

Big Give donors may choose from 24 areas to support, including Student Success Scholarships for students with financial need, Grizzly Athletics, the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library, the UM Food Pantry, TRIO Student Support Services and more.

Supporters also may designate their donations to the UM Excellence Fund and all school and college Impact Funds, which provide campus leadership with the ability to direct unrestricted resources where and when they are needed most. For example, resources from Impact Funds help UM offer emergency aid for students and faculty during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Big Give participants are encouraged to explore the stories at [www.SupportUM.org/BigGive](http://www.SupportUM.org/BigGive), find a UM cause that inspires them and make an online gift. Early gifts and gifts of every size count toward the event's fundraising goal.

Additionally, gifts may be mailed to the University of Montana Foundation, P.O. Box 7159, Missoula, MT 59807-7159 or made via credit card by calling 800-443-2593. Checks should be made to the UM Foundation, noting the designated area for support.

Supporters are invited to encourage others to participate in The Big Give by signing up to be a Champion at [www.SupportUM.org/BigGive](http://www.SupportUM.org/BigGive) and spreading awareness for specific giving areas, challenges and matching gift opportunities on their social media channels with the hashtag #UMBigGive. Participants may watch the day of giving unfold on social media and track the giving progress across all the areas of need throughout the day on the event website.

“We know the momentum is building for UM's annual giving day, even during the pandemic,” said Cindy Williams, president and CEO of the UM Foundation. “The Big Give is special because both gifts and participation from supporters across the U.S. tell a wonderful story – students see that our UM family really cares about supporting their growth and preparation for lives of impact through their careers and in their communities.

“To the generous and proud Griz Nation: Thank you for participating and making this event a success,” Williams said.

The success of the inaugural Big Give in 2020 demonstrated the passion, loyalty and commitment of UM's giving community. The event took place in April and focused on raising support for the UM Emergency Student Support Fund to help students facing unexpected financial hardship during the emerging COVID-19 pandemic. The generous UM giving community answered this call with enthusiasm, giving 516 gifts totaling nearly \$100,000 for UM students and programs.

The Big Give is managed by the UM Foundation, an independent nonprofit organization that has inspired philanthropic support to enhance excellence and opportunity at UM since 1950.

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UM / News / UM's Master of Public Administration Program Earns Another Top Ranking



SCHOOL OF LAW

# UM'S MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM EARNs ANOTHER TOP

# RANKING

02 MARCH 2021

Cara Grewell is a student in UM's Master of Public Administration program, which recently placed fourth nationally on a list of the "Best 25 Masters in Public Administration Schools in 2021." She credits the UM faculty for student success.

**MISSOULA** – Best Value Schools has awarded a second top ranking this year to the University of Montana's Master of Public Administration program, placing it fourth nationally out of the **Best 25 Masters in Public Administration Schools in 2021**.

UM bested a number of other top universities in the country, including Johns Hopkins, Northwestern, University of Southern California, Texas A&M and Clemson.

"We have some of the best faculty in the nation," said Dr. Sara Rinfret, chair of UM's Department of Public Administration and Policy. "They are committed to student success and want to ensure a quality, affordable education for our students."

In the ranking, Best Value Schools spotlighted the practical experience students receive. With guidance from faculty, they build portfolios detailing their professional growth, public administration-related research and ability to work cooperatively in team settings.

"I have been encouraged to take initiative on several research projects – both in coursework and through research assistant positions," said MPA student Cara Grewell. "Faculty in the program do a great job setting us up for success and are always available if help is needed."

Grewell was hired as a summer research assistant for a survey project gauging the opinions of election administrators among the Intermountain West states. She also worked on a research project exploring emotional labor before and during a global pandemic and is currently engaged in an independent study with the City of Missoula's Office of Neighborhoods.

"These opportunities have helped me prepare for the reality of deadlines, conflict and other challenges, while giving me stronger tools to address these obstacles professionally," she said.

Earlier this year, **Best Value Schools** ranked UM's MPA program **fifth out of the top 30 schools in the country offering nonprofit management programs**, as well as named UM the top such program in the region.

In its most current ranking, Best Value noted the advantage of being able to complete an MPA degree online at UM. Students are able to work across multiple modalities – fully online, in-person and by robot.

"I work full time while taking care of a 5-year-old, a 3-year-old and a 3-week-old," said MPA student Kyndra Cozzie. "The flexibility of this program has allowed me to return to school for my master's degree."

Cozzie, who works for the Department of Administration in Helena, said the program has been extremely important in helping her excel as a State of Montana employee and manager – especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The program has given me skills to effectively communicate with my seven employees to achieve common goals while working remotely," she said.

Under Cozzie's leadership, the unit has built a community, worked collaboratively and adapted smoothly to continue operations.

"As I near the completion of the MPA program," said Cozzie, "I am confident that the knowledge and skills that I have gained will guide me not only in my own success in the public sector but also allow me to help others with their achievements."

UM's MPA program is created to be flexible for pre- and mid-career professionals interested in working in public and nonprofit organizations. The degree consists of 36 credits of coursework and a portfolio project, and it offers a concentration in nonprofit administration.

For more information, visit the **Department of Public Administration and Policy** website.

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UM / News / Stroke Survivors Receive Holistic Care from UM Group



01 MARCH 2021



Rick and Ann Nash (left) and Mary and Frank Quigley were participants in UM's new Interprofessional Aphasia Community Group aimed at helping stroke survivors and their caregivers. (Photos courtesy Ann Nash and Mary Quigley).

**MISSOULA** – Frank Quigley had just retired as a lawyer at 71 years old. Two weeks later, he underwent bypass surgery and then suffered a stroke that altered his communication.

His wife of 50 years, Mary, who teaches at New York University, heard about a speech-language program at the University of Montana and decided they should give it a try to help him regain his speech.

“It was extremely intensive,” Mary said. “But the program was incredible.”

The Quigleys are one of eight families across the country who participated in the new Interprofessional Aphasia Group at UM, which provides support for stroke survivors and their caregivers. Funded through a novel Interprofessional Research Seed Grant at UM, counseling and speech-language pathology students use the group to offer families whole-person care. The main goal: help stroke patients regain communication and lost pieces of their life.

According to [Aphasia Access](#), 2.5 to 4 million people in North America live with aphasia, which can impair any part of communication, such as language expression, reading, writing and comprehension. Those whose aphasia is due to a sudden stroke or injury face a particularly daunting road to recovery because insurance plans drop reimbursement for rehab once acute treatment is over, making it difficult for many to afford or access longer-term services.

“The science is telling us, however, that continuous rehab throughout the chronic phase will support continued learning,” said Dr. Catherine Off, an associate professor in UM’s School of Speech, Language, Hearing and Occupational Sciences.

Off decided to put the new seed grant to good use by developing affordable resources for stroke patients while teaching students how to collaborate across disciplines.

Part of the larger Big Sky Aphasia Program’s Intensive Comprehensive Aphasia Program (BSAP ICAP), which Off runs, UM’s Interprofessional Aphasia Community Group brings together students from the speech-language department and the UM Department of Counseling.

“Learning to work interprofessionally isn’t necessarily something that can be taught in a classroom,” said Dr. Kirsten Murray, UM Department of Counseling chair. “These are things learned by doing. That’s why opportunities like this interprofessional collaboration can be so pivotal for students.”

Over three weeks, the Interprofessional Aphasia Community Group offered care to families from across Montana and the nation, providing 90-minute weekly group sessions and five to six hours daily BSAP ICAP sessions.

Molly Murphy, a UM second-year doctoral student in mental health, and Harley Kincheloe, a UM second-year speech-language pathology master’s student, designed and facilitated the group. While Kincheloe focused on increasing communication success for the patients, Murphy focused on supporting the mental well-being of both patients and their families.

People with aphasia experience a 30 % increase in depression as their social groups diminish and communication decreases – especially in rural regions with less resources.

“It’s really hard to go out when you can’t speak anymore, or when you do speak, it doesn’t sound understandable or coherent,” Murphy said.

As well as helping patients with wellness practices, building community among stroke survivors is key – especially in processing losses in everyday life.

“Just ordering a cup of coffee or saying hello to a friend ... all these minute acts of communication make up our identity,” Kincheloe said. “To have something like aphasia take that away from you causes so many complex levels of change that we can’t fully understand or treat as individual health care providers. Collaborative care is vital for providing holistic treatment and improving patients’ quality of life.”

Moving the group to telehealth because of COVID-19 further complicated building community and creating organic conversations. The students focused on providing intimacy in breakout rooms on Zoom, integrating individuals into the larger group and especially allowing everyone to hear shared experiences.

Ann Nash ’11, from Washington, learned about the aphasia group through a friend in UM’s speech-language department. Her husband, Rick, had suffered a stroke that ultimately forced

him to quit dentistry.

She said the schedule was perfect for Rick to rest in the middle of the day, although she needed to be near the computer at all times for assistance. Seeing someone speaking close up on Zoom helped Rick with his comprehension, and having a group of peers added a sense of community.

“There’s an emotional support component not there with a one-on-one,” Ann said. “There’s always a feeling of isolation with aphasia.”

Mary Quigley said seeing where everyone else was at in the group was both “upsetting and encouraging.”

After the first few approaches failed in helping Frank communicate, the clinicians found one that worked and incorporated his interest in history into the sessions. The UM students also made the Zoom sessions fun by adding remote trips to a museum, fly-fishing and even hosting a 1960s name-that-tune event to help their clients speak.

“There’s a many-pronged approach to getting someone to talk,” Mary said. “They didn’t give up.”

After the group, Frank showed a 25% improvement rate in his communication.

Murphy, who is working on a paper with Kincheloe about the Interprofessional Aphasia Community Group, said as a counseling clinician, she tried to remain open to learning, believing there are no hopeless cases and each patient’s journey is unique.

“You get to show up and walk along with people in their process,” she said.

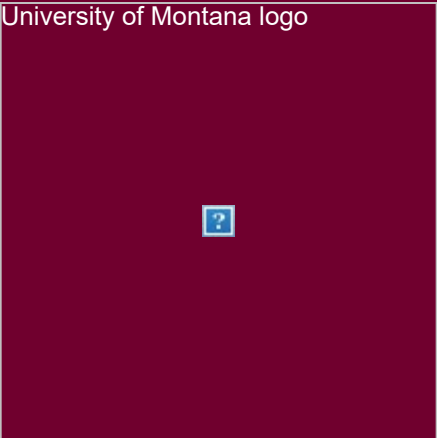
Today, Frank continues his habit of reading three newspapers every morning in his Long Island home, and the Quigleys look forward to spending more time with grandchildren post-pandemic. In Washington, the Nashes enjoy their Meals on Wheels delivery route every Thursday, and Rick intends to go skiing soon with his daughter.

Both families credit the UM Interprofessional Aphasia Community Group with providing confidence, community and hope for post-stroke recovery.

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