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### Defender project receives praise

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# NEWS

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DEFENDER PROJECT  
RECEIVES PRAISE

MISSOULA---

The Montana Defender Project (MDP), directed through the University of Montana School of Law, has been commended by the director of the National Defender Project (NDP) as one of the outstanding programs of its kind in the U.S.

Charles L. Decker of Washington, D.C., NDP director, recently sent a letter of commendation to William F. Crowley, the state Defender Project director who is an associate professor of law at UM.

In his letter to Crowley, Decker said he feels the UM Law School, largely through its defender program, was instrumental in establishment of a \$7.5-million federal program which will enable 136 accredited law schools throughout the nation to develop projects similar to the MDP.

Robert E. Sullivan, UM Law School dean, said the state Defender Project provides clinical training for UM law students.

"Included in the program" Sullivan said, "is the processing of petitions from indigent prisoners at the State Penitentiary at Deer Lodge. The program also provides assistance to lawyers assigned to defend indigents accused of crimes and to indigent Indians on Montana reservations."

The MDP, in its third year at UM, was funded through a grant from the NDP. Sullivan said the UM Law School plans to continue the Defender Project after current funds run out in June.

Commenting on UM Law School achievements, Decker said, "I have talked with many Montana Lawyers and have had letters from others praising the work of your law students. Based on their observations, I would say that your school is one in which the students appreciate the importance of facts and careful investigation. The letters also indicate that the judges, the lawyers and your law school faculty all work together to give the state the best justice they can today--and to prepare an oncoming bar to do an even better job in the future."

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