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UM STUDENTS EARN AND LEARN IN
COOPERATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM

By Maribeth Dwyer
UM Publications and Media Relations

MISSOULA--

Learning to solve problems of the workaday world by applying knowledge gained in classroom or laboratory is a challenge eagerly accepted by students in the cooperative education program administered by the University of Montana Center for Continuing Education.

Sue Spencer, director of the center, says a grant from the U.S. Department of Education enabled the University to hire a full-time director of cooperative education this year, making it possible to expand job-placement opportunities for students, especially those in liberal arts.

Barb Olson, who was appointed to the post in October 1980, coordinates campuswide efforts to place students in jobs in governmental agencies and private business firms.

"This practical experience complements the students' academic training and adds luster to their resumes when they leave school to enter the job market," Olson said.

She noted that sometimes the students are offered permanent jobs by their employers.

Students hired through the cooperative education program generally receive the same salaries and benefits as regular employees doing comparable work, she said.

(over)

COOPERATIVE EDUCATION -- add one

She explained that some students get work experience through one-time internships while others are involved in arrangements that require them to work at least two quarters off campus. All must meet certain academic and work requirements. They receive academic supervision from UM while they are working, and many also earn academic credit.

About 80 UM students are participating this summer in some type of cooperative education, Olson said.

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