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### UM student seeks solution to lines

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### UM STUDENT SEEKS SOLUTION TO LINES

MISSOULA--

Although waiting in long cafeteria lines may seem like a frustrating part of the game to most students, one University of Montana mathematics senior plans to find a solution to end or minimize the waiting by using mathematics operations research.

Mary Shark, a UM student from Grand Forks, N.D., has received a \$1,000 Watkins Scholarship to research and write a senior honors paper to solve the problem. She is one of 35 seniors in the UM College of Arts and Sciences honors program researching topics in the sciences, humanities and social sciences.

Shark said that she will apply mathematical theories and techniques to the problem of too many students crowding into breakfast lines in a small UM food service cafeteria just before going to classes. Using the mathematics, data on the problem, statistical analysis, computer programming and developing models, Shark said she should be able to come close to the optimum solution which will decrease the number of students who must wait in line.

Shark will be advised in her project by Dr. Hien Nguyen, assistant professor of mathematics at UM.

Shark, daughter of Loretta M. Shark, is a 1977 graduate of Red River High School in Grand Forks, N.D.

Since the program began in 1978, a total of 114 UM students have been awarded the competitive Watkins Scholarships based on their prior academic achievements and the quality of their research proposals. The scholarship funds come from the \$353,000 Gordon and Anna Watkins Endowment at UM.

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