



**MONTANA UNIVERSITY SYSTEM**  
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**Montana Board of Regents Approve Re-branding and Renaming of Six of Montana’s  
 Two-Year Colleges and Programs of Higher Education,  
 As Part of the Montana University System’s College!NOW Initiative**

**HELENA, Montana (Wednesday, July 11th, 2012)** – As part of the Montana University System’s (MUS) College!NOW initiative to expand the comprehensive mission of its two-year colleges and programs and to better communicate this new mission to make two-year education in Montana better understood and better utilized across the state, the Montana Board of Regents (Regents) of the MUS recently voted to approve the re-branding and renaming Montana’s five Colleges of Technology, as well as the Bitterroot and Gallatin College Programs at MSU and UM, respectively.

The new names approved by the Board of Regents are:

<u><b>NAME</b></u>	<u><b>LOCATION</b></u>
Bitterroot College University of Montana	(Hamilton)
City College at Montana State University Billings	(Billings)
Gallatin College Montana State University	(Bozeman)
Great Falls College Montana State University	(Great Falls)
Helena College University of Montana	(Helena)
Highlands College of Montana Tech	(Butte)
Missoula College University of Montana	(Missoula)

Re-branding Montana’s two-year education system sets the stage for transformation of higher education access and degree attainment in Montana. The focus will be on implementation of a comprehensive mission that promises to offer more services and programing for the both traditional age students and the adult learner and emphasizing workforce partnerships, flexible scheduling, open access admissions, core course programming, and increased opportunities and pathways for transfer to the four-year colleges and universities in the state.

“The Board’s decision will likely be remembered as a vote of significant impact for a number of reasons,” said John Cech, Deputy Commissioner for Two-Year and Community College Education at the May 25<sup>th</sup> BOR meeting. Cech said the Commissioner’s Office will begin working immediately in Billings, Bozeman, Butte, Great Falls, Hamilton, Helena, and Missoula to start creating local task forces comprised of students, faculty, staff, and community members to plan for the transition to the new names which will take place within the colleges through the Summer 2013. During the course of the next year, new logos, brand characteristics and guidelines will be created for each institution.

**Why Expand and Re-brand the Two-Year Education Comprehensive Mission in Montana?**

Montana currently ranks last in the West and 45<sup>th</sup> in the nation in the percentage of its population 25 years of age and older who are engaged in higher education, and only 40% of Montanans have an Associate Degree or higher. The primary goal of this initiative is to increase high-quality degree and certificate attainment for all Montanans. As part of this initiative, the Regents approved a

comprehensive mission and vision statement for two-year higher education in the state. The comprehensive mission and vision statement will be extended to the state's five COTs and two-year programs through a twenty-five month plan that includes renaming and re-branding them.

The Regents and the MUS are working to create a system-wide identity for Montana's two-year colleges and programs linked to parent Universities, to make two-year education in Montana better understood and ultimately better utilized by all Montanans, to create a better future for the state, preparing our citizens to meet workforce demand, attain degrees and build the strength of our communities. The re-branding initiative is an important part communicating the two-year college mission prospective students and achieving these goals.

A key goal of re-branding and renaming each of the two-year colleges (colleges of technology) and two-year programs in Bozeman and Hamilton is to create brands that better signify to prospective students the attributes of a two-year college mission; such as, affordable tuition, night classes, on-site childcare opportunities, adult-focused education, transfer credits, and strong workforce training partnerships.

Each of Montana's five Colleges of Technology and two-year programs in Bozeman and Hamilton are at a different stage of planning for the implementation of the comprehensive two-year mission, which was adopted by the Regents in May 2011. The Regents has established a goal that by Fall 2013, each of the COTs will have made substantial progress toward full implementation the comprehensive two-year mission by Fall 2013, including renaming and re-branding the colleges. In November the BOR extended this goal to include the two-year programs located in Bozeman and Hamilton.

Each College will provide the following five elements of the comprehensive two-year mission:

1. Transfer Education Through the Associate's Degree
2. Workforce Development, Including Certificates and Applied Associate's Degrees
3. Developmental and Adult Basic Education
4. Lifelong Learning
5. Community Development

The attributes of the comprehensive two-year mission include:

- Open Access Admissions
- Affordability
- Student-Centeredness
- Adult Focused and Accessible Learning
- Responsiveness to Local Needs
- Cultivation of Partnerships

### **The Rebranding and Renaming Process**

Beginning in 2005, the Regents identified Montana's two-year education institutions and programs as a key strategy for increasing access and overall degree and credential attainment for Montana. Since 2005, every Board meeting has engaged in discussions regarding the role and expansion of two-year education in providing increasing access to affordable and quality education.

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY ~ Campuses at Billings, Bozeman, Great Falls, and Havre

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Dawson Community College (Glendive) ~ Flathead Valley Community College (Kalispell) ~ Miles Community College (Miles City)

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In May 2011, the Regents approved the State's first "Comprehensive Two-Year Mission" statement which was the result of a collaborative effort involving faculty, staff, and leadership from all of Montana's public two-year colleges. This effort was co-chaired by UM Helena COT Dean, Daniel Bingham and former MSU Great Falls COT Dean, Joe Schaffer. At this meeting, the Board approved extending the newly approved comprehensive two-year mission to the five COTs including re-branding and renaming them by Fall 2013.

Following the May 2011 BOR meeting, a Comprehensive Mission and Re-branding Taskforce was created and co-chaired by MSU Billings Chancellor Rolf Groseth and Deputy Commissioner John Cech. The membership of the taskforce involved the leaders of the State's COTs, two-year programs, comprehensive community colleges, Chancellor Don Blacketter, and UM Provost Perry Brown. In an effort to listen and to attain as much consensus and understanding from key stakeholders, the College!NOW initiative conducted a very deliberate and time consuming research and community input program to help each two-year college fulfill the goals of the initiative.

Since June 2011, the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education and the Comprehensive Mission and Re-branding Taskforce has engaged and provided leadership for the following efforts:

- Development of a 25 month timeline for extending the comprehensive mission and re-branding which was approved by the BOR in Summer 2011
- Held five statewide two-year leadership in-person meetings focused on mission expansion
- Convened 18 conference calls with two-year leaders over the past year
- Six listening sessions conducted in October 2011: Billings, Bozeman, Butte, Great Falls, Helena and Missoula
- In November, 2011, convened a statewide mission expansion retreat including faculty and staff
- In December 2011, convened a statewide two-year education and re-branding summit (100 plus faculty, staff, students, administration, and community)
- Fourteen (14) campus and community listening sessions were held in Billings, Bozeman, Butte, Great Falls, Helena, and Missoula
- Conducted media press conference on mission expansion (12/12/02)
- Conducted a wide variety of presentations to MEA/MFT, Missoula City Club, SHRM, State Adult Education Association, MHWAC, Big Sky EDA, and other organizations
- Launched College!NOW Facebook and Blog
- Conducted six prospective student focus groups: Billings, Bozeman, Butte, Great Falls, Helena, and Missoula
- Student surveys conducted – 354 responses
- Community surveys conducted – 951 responses
- Local newspaper public opinion survey – Independent Record
- Deputy Commissioner Cech engaged multiple presentations and additional listening sessions with various community, faculty, student, and civic groups around the state
- Conducted listening sessions in Bozeman in March
- Engaged the Bitterroot College Program Advisory Board
- Business input survey completed (100 participants)
- Campus directed name-input surveys and leadership discussions

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On March 2nd, 2012, the Regents unanimously approved a new name framework for Montana's Colleges of Technology. This new name framework will display the *Place* identifier first, followed by the *Mission* as represented by the word "college", and followed by *Affiliation* identifying the college's parent university.

During the presentation of the name framework research and recommendations, three to five *Place* identifier options for each college were recommended based on the extensive market research and community input. Upon approval of the name framework, the Regents requested that each campus engage in a process of gathering stakeholder input on the names presented to the Board, in order to determine the *Place* identifier for their college.

Following the March 2<sup>nd</sup> name framework vote, college leadership engaged their campuses in a process of gaining stakeholder input to determine a final name for their college that follows the framework approved by the board. These names will be formally recommended in a Resolution being presented to the Regents on May 24<sup>th</sup>.

On May 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012, Regent Joe Thiel, BOR Chair of Two-Year and Community College Education; Clayton Christian, Commissioner of Higher Education; and John Cech, Deputy Commissioner for Two-year and Community College Education convened separate teleconferences for each COT and two-year program including: Dean/CEO of the COT, their respective chancellor and supervising president. In addition, representatives from Strategies 360 participated in the calls to answer questions about the market research. During the respective calls, each two-year college Dean/CEO provided a summary of their on-campus input process conducted to determine the *Place* identifier and final college, following the approved name framework.

At the May 25<sup>th</sup> 2012 Regents meeting, the Board voted unanimously on the new names presented for four Colleges of Technology and the Bitterroot and Gallatin College Programs, with the exception of the College of Technology located in Great Falls. The Regents held a meeting via conference call, the morning of June 26<sup>th</sup>, and approved the name Great Falls College Montana State University, making it the last of the five former Colleges of Technology to be renamed by the Board of Regents to represent a community-focused two-year college mission.

The funds for the College!NOW initiative are being provided through a competitive grant from the private/nonprofit Lumina Foundation for Education, through their College Productivity Initiative. No tuition and tax dollars are being used for the College!Now initiative.

Please learn more about College!NOW at [www.montanacollegenow.com](http://www.montanacollegenow.com).

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