Ten MSU nursing students recently traveled to Honduras as part of a senior-level nursing course to provide health care in dozens of homes, distribute water filters, conduct health education fairs and provide education about clean water. Students experienced the challenges and rewards of delivering health care services in a rural environment with scarce resources.

Two juniors in MSU’s Honors Program, Casey Donovan, Mathematics from Kremlin, and Daniel Barta, earth sciences from Helena, won MSU’s 52nd and 53rd Goldwater Scholarships, keeping MSU one of the nation’s top institutions for total Goldwater recipients. This is the third year in a row that MSU has had two winners.

Andres Munoz-Jaramillo, an MSU solar physics graduate who helped explain a two-year absence of sunspots, has received a major fellowship from NASA’s Living with a Star program. Munoz-Jaramillo received a Jack Eddy Postdoctoral Fellowship, which will allow him to study more about solar dynamics by using magnetic data from the past 60 years to develop the most accurate database so far on active regions of the sun.

MSU ecology graduate student Mariah Mayfield won the EPA’s Science To Achieve Results (STAR) Graduate Fellowship in 2010. The funding from the award will allow her to collect more water quality data, specifically about heavy metal concentrations in the Clark Fork River and explore some of the survival aspects of trout. Mayfield was the sixth MSU student to receive the award in the last five years.

Fifty-nine MSU students spent spring break volunteering in a variety of projects all over the country through BreaksAway, a program of the Community Involvement Office. The students volunteered almost 1,500 hours and helped refugees, served meals to the homeless, worked in a daycare, restored sand dunes and maintained trails.

A special issue of “Historical Biology,” an international journal based in London, was devoted to scientific papers from the Fourth International Symposium on Eggs and Babies which was hosted by MSU. Of the eight papers in the issue, five were authored or co-authored by MSU faculty and students from the Museum of the Rockies and the Department of Earth Sciences.

Engineers Without Borders at MSU, a student-run organization that provides clean water and sanitary latrines to schools in Kenya, recently raised more than $25,000 at its fourth annual “Clean Water for Kenya Jubilee.” The funds will be used to support the group's work in the rural Khwisero District of western Kenya.

The ASMSU Sustainability Center’s won a Montana EcoStar Award for pollution prevention, which helped to reduce the amount of solid waste from MSU that is taken to a landfill. In 2010 alone, about 235,000 pounds of waste was recycled at MSU.

Montana State University ranks number 18 on Peace Corps’ 2011 rankings for those colleges and universities with enrollments between 5,001 and 15,000 undergraduates. It is the first time the university has been on the rankings since 2007. Since 1961, 427 MSU alumni have served as Peace Corps volunteers.

Cascade County MSU Extension Agent Wendy Wedum has been recognized by the National Association of Community Development Extension Professionals (NACDEP) for her leadership in working with community members to develop, implement and coordinate a new Community Development Program to address poverty in Belt, Mont.
MSUB alumni were honored for service to the University, the State and communities during the 29th annual Outstanding Alumni Award event. Recognized for Exceptional Achievements were Kathy Bealer, Frontier Cancer Center, CEO; Colleen Riley, Kansas State Department of Education Special Education Director; Jeremy Morgen, Branch Manager, First Interstate Bank in Polson; and Mark Dawson, Owner/Broker of Century 21 Hometown Brokers in Billings and Owner of Classic Design Homes. Harvey Munford, recognized as Outstanding Alumnus, taught for 36 years in Nevada and is currently a State Assemblyman in the Nevada Legislature. Jeannie McIsaac-Tracy was the recipient of the Ronald P. Sexton Award for Professional Commitment to the University.

MSUB celebrated Faculty Excellence, by recognizing faculty in Teaching, Research and Service to the Campus and Community. Recognized were: Dr. Matthew Redinger, Dr. Sharon Hobbs, Dr. Deborah Schaffer, Dr. Lisa Kemmerer, Mr. Randy Pugh, Ms. May LaMotte, and Mr. Craig McKenzie. The ASMSUB Outstanding Faculty Awards were presented to Dr. Russell Lord, Dr. Carl Castles, Dr. Thomas Regele, Dr. Susan Barfield, and Ms. Susan Floyd. Dr. David Weiss and Dr. Tom Rust were the recipients of the Winston & Helen Cox Fellowship Award.

Students from six clubs at MSUB (Student United Way, the Residence Halls Association, HEROES, Student Activities Board, Catholic Campus Ministry and ASMSUB) sponsored a series of events designed to bring suicide issues out of the dark. “Out of the Darkness” walks were held throughout the country to raise money for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), the leading national not-for-profit organization exclusively dedicated to understanding and preventing suicide through research, education and advocacy.

MSUB student Jesica Henderson presented her senior clarinet recital. Garion Holian performed his junior viola recital and Branden Martinez his junior choir recital. Curtis Johnson has studied classical guitar for almost 10 years and presented his junior recital, Nathan Gurtler, percussion major, performed his junior recital and the MSU Billings Jazz Ensemble, directed by Jim Robertson, presented its Spring Semester concert.

After serving more than five years as Interim Dean, College of Education, Chancellor Groseth announced Dr. Mary Susan Fishbaugh as the new Dean following an extensive search. Simultaneously, the accreditation certificate from the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) was presented to Dean Fishbaugh. As an affirmation of the excellence of the College of Education’s programs in teacher preparation and advance preparation levels, reviewers for NCATE and the Montana Office of Public Instruction recently reaccredited the MSU Billings programs with flying colors after the College and staff met rigorous standards set forth by the professional education community.

The 43rd Montana State University Billings Inter-Tribal Indian Club Pow Wow was held, bringing Indian education to the forefront. “Pow Wow’s across the country strive to renew the culture and preserve the rich heritage of American Indians,” said Reno Charette, Director of American Indian Outreach at MSUB.

The state contest for Montana National History Day was held in the College of Education at MSUB. The contest, awards ceremony and exhibits were free and open to the public for viewing. This year over 162 students from schools across Montana participated by displaying the products of their research. The students researched a project of their choice and present their results as a type of museum exhibit, documentary, a website, a dramatic performance, or a traditional paper.

The “2011 Chicks in Science” was a successful celebration showcasing opportunities in math, science and technology to young girls. Dr. Cruzado was our special guest and the program also featured two Billings guests who have taken their passion for science to the national level. Mikayla Nelson, Billings Central High School freshman, who was First Lady Michelle Obama’s guest at the Union Address, shared her thoughts on receiving the Principal’s Leadership Award while a student at Will James Middle School. Dr. Kathryn E. F. Russell, a Billings Senior High School graduate and daughter of Dean Fishbaugh, also celebrated Chicks in Science.
Student Awards Convocation – Northern hosted its annual Student Awards Convocation Day. Two hundred and four scholarships were presented on March 25 totaling over $155,000. Eleven students were given Student Excellence awards, the highest award a student can receive.

Golden “N” Winners - Marianne Hamilton and Pam Wilson were this year’s Golden “N” winners. The award is given by Student Senate and is a significant recognition award for a faculty or staff member.

Leadership High School Banquet - on March 22, Havre’s Leadership High School participants came to the Northern campus for an awards banquet. Senator John Tester attended the banquet and urged the high school students to be active and effective leaders in their school and community.

Lights Wrestling Senior Awards Banquet - on March 26, the Lights Wrestling team seniors were honored at an awards banquet in the Student Union Building.

Regional SIFE Competition - The MSU-Northern SIFE (Students In Free Enterprise) team competed last month at a regional competition held in Minneapolis. The team has been active since 1996 and was the first SIFE team in the state of Montana. Participating students use business concepts to develop 18 community outreach projects that improved the quality of life and standard of living for people in need.

SkillsUSA State Conference - 347 students from 36 high schools attended this year’s SkillsUSA Competition. Students competed in several skill areas including welding, carpentry, drafting, small engines, job interviewing and many more.

Spring Fling Success - The 2011 Athletic Spring Fling was a great success with over 450 people attending. The Male and Female Athletes of the Year were named.

2011 TekNoXpo – Northern sponsored the third annual TekNoXpo. During this event students learned about the many programs in MSU-Northern’s College of Technology and compete in a BIG EQUIPMENT RODEO, which allows students a chance to work on some heavy equipment and simulators.

The 2011 Northwest Diesel Instructors Conference – over 100 Diesel Instructors from the Northwestern states and Canada came to Northern to receive training on some of the latest diesel equipment.

North Central Montana Science Fair - Young Junior High scientists from North Central Montana came to campus to display their science fair projects. Students from this fair were selected to represent this region in the State Science Fair.

Ted Turner Speaks at Graduation – Ted Turner, chairman of Turner Enterprises, Inc. was keynote speaker at Northern’s Commencement Ceremony.
Interior Design student, Kinzi Anderson, a second year Interior Design student, designed the main floor of a duplex for the NeighborWorks Tour of Affordable Homes, collaborating with Eklund’s Furniture to furnish the home. In a separate achievement, Anderson received notice from the National Kitchen and Bath Association that her bath design for the student competition was one of 14 entries that made it to second round judging out of 152 entries from across North America.

Over 300 area high school students from Great Falls and the surrounding area attended the annual Healthcare Career Day. The event exposed students to a variety of healthcare professions beyond nurses and physicians, while stressing the importance of taking math and science classes in high school. The students engaged with healthcare providers from the community during the “Medical Rounds” session where they participated in hands-on activities requiring math and science skills, such as calculating dosages of medication, viewing an endoscopy scope, matching food intake with insulin dosages for diabetic patients, performing endotracheal intubations, administering IV drugs, reading EKG’s, and viewing radiological films. Community partners included Benefis Health Systems, Centene, Gateway Recovery Center, Clark’s Orthopedic and Medical Supply and Malmstrom Air Force Base. This year, a new addition to the “Healthcare Career Fair” was a Parent Night Open House that provided an opportunity for the parents to speak to Healthcare Science Program Directors and faculty, Science Faculty and Financial Aid advisors.

A Veteran Center has been opened on campus as a result of efforts by student veterans and Student Affairs staff. Students will staff the center and welcome students who wish to meet, share their experiences, and learn about support systems available at the College and in the community.

Physical Therapist Assistant Students held a campus wide Massage Clinic, offering massages to students, staff and faculty at low cost. Funds raised will pay for a unique course to prep them for the PTA licensure exam. Students from seven area high schools competed to qualify for state welding competition at the College. Students spent 45 minutes in each of four different welding stations and then took a written test. Prizes, materials and equipment were donated by Gendco, Pacific Steel and MSU - Great Falls. The three top winners moved on to the state Skills USA Welding Competition at MSU – Northern to compete for a shot at nationals.

There were over twenty-five companies and agencies represented at Community Day. Students were invited to learn about services and resources available to them in the Great Falls community.

Dental Assistant students celebrated Children’s Dental Health Month by helping the Cascade County Health Department educate local preschool and kindergarten students on the importance of good oral hygiene and eating right. Students visited classrooms in eighteen area schools and the Great Falls Public Library to spread the word on good oral hygiene to more than 500 children.

The College’s Simulated Hospital is essentially complete with some equipment yet to be installed. Benefis Health Systems has been instrumental in providing high quality used furnishings for the SIM Hospital to help provide healthcare students with realistic simulated classroom experiences. Purchases of a simulation baby, child and adult are planned to give students the opportunity to enact simulations on patients of varying ages. During summer, the simulation hospital will be prepared for use starting fall semester. A simulation trainer will be traveling to the College to provide instruction in the use of the patient simulators. Both faculty and students are excited to incorporate the hospital into the clinical experience to allow students to practice their profession in a simulated environment, mastering procedures in the clinical setting.