

# MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

BOZEMAN | BILLINGS | NORTHERN | GREAT FALLS COLLEGE

**CAMPUS REPORT** | Board of Regents Meeting | Nov 19-20, 2020



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Montana State University reported [strong fall enrollment of 16,249 students](#). MSU's retention rate hit its highest mark in more than 30 years of modern record keeping at 78.2% percent. The fall figures showed that the four-year graduation rate was up to 34.7% from 29.7% last year.

Montana State University tallied an [all-time high for total research expenditures](#) in 2019-2020, totaling \$167 million.

Three MSU faculty members were selected to take part in the [Montana University System's 2020 Teaching Scholars program](#), which seeks to help students succeed at Montana campuses. Paul Gannon, professor of [chemical and biological engineering](#); Wan-Yuan Kuo, assistant professor of [health and human development](#); and Meta Newhouse, professor of [graphic design](#), were among the 14 scholars picked from across the university system.

Montana State University has been ranked one of the [best employers in Montana](#) in Forbes' 2020 annual "America's Best Employers by State" list.

Chaofu Lu, a professor in MSU's Department of Plant Sciences and Plant Pathology, will lead a team in administering an [\\$11 million grant from the Department of Energy to explore](#) uses for the crop camelina. MSU will receive \$5.1 million of the total funding over five years.

MSU professor Vanessa Simonds and her collaborators received a grant worth nearly \$1 million to create a program for Apsáalooke youth to [spark interest in STEM fields and lead to cleaner water](#) for the Apsáalooke nation in southeast Montana.

MSU received a five-year grant worth at least \$1.3 million to continue the [TRIO Student Support Services program](#), helping first-generation college students, low-income individuals and individuals with disabilities stay in school and graduate.

Cathy Cripps, a longtime Montana State University professor and researcher was recognized with a [national teaching award](#) for her work educating students on the wide world of wild fungi.

MSU students and area bankers had the opportunity to hear from national leaders in the banking industry during a [virtual roundtable](#) presented by the [MSU Jake Jabs College of Business and Entrepreneurship's Community Banking Program](#).

A team of three students representing the recently reestablished student chapter of [American Indigenous Business Leaders](#), or AIBL, at Montana State University recently took [first place in a business plan competition](#) at the organization's national conference.