



The University of Montana Western Campus Report

DATE: Wednesday, February 9, 2022

TO: Board of Regents

FROM: Michael Reid, Chancellor

RE: Campus Report for the March 2022 Board of Regents' Meeting

- **Montana Western Student Receives George M. Dennison Scholarship Award**

Montana Campus Compact recently announced the recipients of the 2021-22 George M. Dennison Scholarship Award, including University of Montana Western student, Morgan Duncan.

According to Montana Campus Compact, "This year we received an exceptionally strong set of applications from our affiliated campuses across Montana. All our civically engaged college student applicants represent George M. Dennison's vision of building strong, equitable, and just communities through volunteerism, civic engagement, and service. Each student's application spoke to an impressive range of service activities to address unmet needs within their communities."

"While serving as the President of the Biology Club, I have learned how to be more confident and how to be a leader. I believe this has also allowed my peers to become more confident as they participate in the events that we host and come closer as a campus community," said Duncan.

- **UMW Professor Estee Aiken Selected as MUS Teaching Scholar**

The Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education recently announced that it has selected 11 faculty members and instructors to be honored as Montana University System Teaching Scholars, including Montana Western Professor of Education, Estee Aiken, Ed.D.

The MUS Teaching Scholars program recognizes faculty members who have made exemplary contributions to teaching and learning at their institutions and by supporting these faculty in leading peers in further advancing excellence in teaching. Scholars will receive a \$1,500 award

as well as a \$500 stipend to design and facilitate a faculty learning community at their institution.

- **Montana Western Alumna Excels in Montana's Mining Industry**

Montana Western alumna, Lacey Morrison, graduated in May 2015 with a degree in Environmental Science with an option in Geology.

After graduation, Morrison returned to her hometown of White Sulphur Springs to work for Sandfire Resources on the Black Butte Copper Project. In 2016, Morrison was offered a position in Juneau, Alaska as an underground geologist for Coeur Mining Inc. where she gained valuable experience before returning to Black Butte Copper in 2017.

Today, Morrison holds the title of Senior Geologist and manages the diamond drill operation for the Black Butte Copper project and co-founded the Montana Chapter of the Women in Mining organization that educates the public on the importance of diversity and inclusion in the mining industry.

- **UMW Professor Denise Holland Honored with Teacher of the Year Award**

The Montana Association for Career and Technical Education recently announced that Denise Holland, Professor of Business at Montana Western, has been selected as the 2021 Montana Career and Technical Education Post-Secondary Teacher of the Year.

Holland, Ed.D, has taught at Montana Western since 2001. Before joining the UMW faculty, Holland taught public high school courses in business and marketing in Idaho and Montana and assisted elementary teachers in creating technology projects.

This award recognizes the finest career and technical education teachers at the postsecondary level who have demonstrated innovation in the classroom, commitment to their students and dedication to the improvement of CTE in their institutions and communities.

- **Dillon's Mike Richardson Receives Frontier Conference Distinguished Service Award**

Mike Richardson, longtime Frontier Conference basketball and football official, was honored in December in Dillon, Montana, prior to the Montana Western-Carroll College men's basketball game.

A Dillon native, Richardson was presented with the Frontier Conference Distinguished Service Award by conference commissioner Kent Paulson, conference supervisor of basketball officials Mike Fischer and Montana Western Chancellor, Michael Reid.

The Frontier Conference periodically recognizes individuals who have positively impacted the well-being of the conference through their service. Individuals are nominated for this award by members of the Frontier Conference and are voted on by the Conference Athletic Directors.

- **Nate Simkins Named AP NAIA Second Team All-American**

The AP NAIA All-America football team, presented by Regions Bank, was chosen by a panel of sports writers and sports information directors in conjunction with COSIDA.

Simkins, a Dillon native, was the top in all receiving statistical categories for the Frontier Conference, with the exception of yards per catch. He tallied 83 receptions, 1,122 receiving yards, 93.5 receiving yards per game, and 16 touchdowns in overall play this season.

Simkins also received the following honors this season: Frontier Conference First Team All-Conference Offense and American Football Coaches Association NAIA All-America Honorable Mention.

- **Fitzgerald Joins Women's Basketball 1,000 Point Club**

Junior Brynley Fitzgerald joined Montana Western Women's Basketball 1,000 Point Club after her 14-point performance against MSU-Northern on January 27th. She is the 18th women's basketball player to join in the university's history.

Fitzgerald played at Montana State as a freshman, then transferred to Montana Western as a sophomore. In the 2019-20 season, Fitzgerald totaled 290 points on 42.4 percent shooting from the field, 37.5 percent from the arc, and 71.6 percent from the foul line. In the 2020-21 Covid-shortened season, she tallied 422 points, averaging 16.9 per game.

Fitzgerald has also collected the following honors during her career as a Bulldog: Daktronics Scholar Athlete (x2), First Team All-Conference, Third Team All-American, Academic All-Conference, and CoSIDA Academic All-District and All-American.

- **"God's Country" Feature Film Receives Award at Sundance Film Festival**

"God's Country," with scenes filmed at the University of Montana Western last spring, premiered at the 2022 Sundance Film Festival in January in Park City, Utah.

The feature-length film headlines Emmy-winning actress Thandiwe Newton. Filming for "God's Country" began in spring 2020 before production was halted due to COVID-19.

Production company Cold Iron Pictures filmed several scenes in the Livingston, Mont., area and then came to Dillon, Mont., in late March 2021 to film several scenes on the University of Montana Western campus. The film was awarded the "Amazon Studios Producers Award for Fiction" during the festival for Producer Amanda Marshall.

- **"Power of the Dog" Receives Three Golden Globe Awards**

Dillon-area author, Thomas Savage, grew up as a rancher in Horse Prairie, writing what he knew through 13 books over a 44-year period. His most famous novel, "Power of the Dog," premiered this fall as a feature film at Big Sky Cinemas in Dillon and then became available for streaming from Netflix starting December 1st.

The movie, starring Benedict Cumberbatch and Kirsten Dunst, is a psychological drama based on 1920s-era life on the Montana ranch where Savage grew up.

The project got its start in 2018, when director Jane Campion contacted now-retired Montana Western Professor Emeritus of English, Dr. Alan Weltzien, regarding the biography he was writing on Savage which has since been published.

At this year's Golden Globe Awards on January 9th, "Power of the Dog" received three Golden Globe Awards: Best Picture (drama), Best Director for Jane Campion, and Best Supporting Actor for Kodi Smit-McPhee.

- **Montana Western Names Students to 2021 Fall Semester Dean's List**

The University of Montana Western is pleased to announce the naming of 563 students to the 2021 fall semester Dean's List.

To achieve this honor, students must be enrolled full-time or for 12 semester credits and carry a minimum 3.33 grade point average.

- **Upcoming Spring Exhibitions & Events at the Montana Western Fine Arts Gallery**

The Montana Western Fine Arts Gallery invites the public to attend two upcoming exhibitions that will feature illustrator, Carson Ellis, and glass artist, Preston Singletary.

Ellis's gallery exhibit will run from February 2 to March 4. Ellis will be Zooming into classes throughout the week of February 7-11, with invitations for the campus and community to join to be posted on the Montana Western Fine Arts Facebook page as the event approaches.

Preston Singletary's gallery exhibition will run from March 18 to April 20. A gallery reception will be held on Friday, March 18 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., with an Artist Talk at 6:30 p.m.; followed by an artist presentation and public demonstration on Saturday, March 19 from 3:00 to 5:30 p.m.

- **UMW and MCH to Host Annual Colt Challenge and Sale in April**

The Annual Colt Challenge and Sale, hosted by the University of Montana Western and the Montana Center for Horsemanship, will take place April 1-2, 2022, at the Montana Center for Horsemanship in Dillon, Montana.

Students and colts compete in a series of events that demonstrate their wide range of abilities on the first day, and the following day, a public auction features the colts for sale, with all proceeds reinvested in the program in order to provide scholarships to Natural Horsemanship majors at the University of Montana Western.

- **Mental Health Support Services at Montana Western**

During the fall semester, the University of Montana Western implemented new online counseling and mental health resources for students, faculty, and staff, and welcomed Morgan Bialas to the university counseling team.

Counseling services are available year-round for students, including during the winter and summer break. In addition to in-person and online counseling options year-round, UMW

Counseling Services is now offering three new online ways for students, faculty, and staff to receive free mental health support: ThrivingCampus, Kognito, and You@UMWestern.

The three services provide a wide range of support services, including connecting users with a nationwide network of counseling options and specialists, suicide prevention training, and a digital platform for managing wellness, anxiety, and goal-setting.

- **Montana Western Hosts Missoula Children's Theatre**

The University of Montana Western was pleased to host “The Emperor’s New Clothes” by the Missoula Children’s Theatre as part of the 2021-22 Bank of Commerce Performing Arts Series.

The Missoula Children’s Theatre and more than 50 local K-12 students presented an original musical adaptation of the Hans Christian Andersen classic.

“The Emperor’s New Clothes” was presented on January 22nd at 3:30 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. at the Beier Auditorium on the University of Montana Western campus.