

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY

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CAMPUS REPORT | Board of Regents Meeting | September 18-19, 2024



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COLLEGE**
MONTANA STATE
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Great Falls College prepped to kick off the fall semester with a variety of events to build momentum and enthusiasm, including River Otter Days that featured games and food trucks, a night out at the ballpark with the Voyagers, an annual burger burn and convocation. “We want to ensure every student feels welcome and supported,” said Dr. Stephanie Erdmann, CEO and dean of Great Falls College. “River Otter Days and our other activities at the beginning of the school year seek to foster that feeling of community that Great Falls College is known for. It’s a special time of the year for all of us.”

Great Falls College is starting its first cohort of 30 students in the Veterinary Technician program. The program is at capacity going into its first semester, with students from all over Montana. The innovative program will allow students to remain in their hometowns by taking the classroom portion of their studies online and the hands-on portions with approved veterinary partners. “This program is another example of the way Great Falls College responds to workforce needs as we listened to our industry partners to offer this pathway for students,” Erdmann said. “We are beyond excited to welcome this first class to Great Falls College.”

Tracy Ellig, Vice President of University Communications at Montana State University, and Kellie Peterson, Legal Counsel at Montana State University, agreed to offer First Amendment training for all employees at Great Falls College ahead of the fall election season and the 2025 Montana Legislature. “We are extremely grateful to have the wisdom and experience of Tracy and Kellie as they help us understand our obligation and responsibility to ensure Great Falls College upholds its duty,” said Scott Thompson, Executive Director of Community Relations at Great Falls College.

Great Falls College also held AVERT (Active Violence Emergency Response Training) for employees earlier in August. The campus was scheduled to hold six two-hour trainings provided by the Cascade County Sheriff.

The college gave its main atrium and the Office of Student Engagement a face-lift this summer to match the Weaver Library that was rejuvenated in the summer of 2023. Next up this fall will be the Military Family Center and the Native American Enrichment Center. Both new centers will be moved up to the front of campus to help integrate them into the hub of Great Falls College. Student feedback was an integral part of the designs of both spaces. The college also will start installing new internal and external signs this fall.

Great Falls College decorated the town with an aggressive use of the FAFSA campaign money, installing billboards at every major entry into Great Falls and the city’s main thoroughfare, 10th Avenue South. Great Falls College also advertised on television with the Olympics and on radio with the Montana State Fair.

Sherry Lynn Dow, admissions representative at Great Falls College, was named this year’s Rising Star Award recipient at the Montana Post Secondary Educational Opportunities Council Summer Conference. “I’m so proud of the work Sherry Lynn is doing to elevate the image of Great Falls College and two-year options in Montana. We’ve got a great River Otter in Sherry Lynn” said Shannon Marr, director of recruitment and enrollment at Great Falls College.