



Office of the Chancellor MONTANA TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

1300 West Park Street
Butte, Montana 59701
(406) 496.4868
Fax (406) 496-4387

To: Board of Regents

From: Johnny MacLean
Chancellor, Montana Technological University

RE: Campus Report for March 12, 2026, Board of Regents Meeting

Four graduate students recently participated in an exchange with the **University of Camerino, Italy** via a grant from **Erasmus+**, the European Union's program to support faculty and student exchange. Led by **Ecological Restoration Professor Dr. Robert Pal**, the students are studying how lodgepole pine forests are recovering after fire events and how the under-canopy changes with maturity in relation to species composition in Yellowstone National Park. The students also sampled hot springs in Yellowstone National Park with **Dr. Alysia Cox's Laboratory Exploring Geobiochemical Engineering and Natural Dynamics (LEGEND)**, including participation in an NSF RAPID grant investigating the Biscuit Basin area after the hydrothermal explosion in 2024. [Read more.](#)

At **Highlands College, Welding Technology and Construction Technology–Carpentry** programs collaborated to design and build two large steel trailers to transport student-built modular homes. Designed entirely by students, each trailer features custom steel beams, supports, and hardware, all cut, welded, and assembled by hand, including the hitches and axle shackles. [Read more.](#)

Montana Tech was awarded more than **\$1M** as part of a multi-institutional effort to revolutionize how cement is produced and used. The project – **Alternative Cement Solutions for Infrastructure Maintenance, Repair, and Construction (ACERS)** – aims to reduce the environmental impact of one of the world's most widely used materials by developing and scaling up cement alternatives. Funded by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the ACERS project brings together Montana Tech, the University of California-Irvine and Solvus Global. Montana Tech's focus is to explore how waste materials – such as smelter slag, fly ash, lime waste, glass, cardboard, sawdust, biochar, gypsum, refinery byproducts, wastewater sludge, and certain plastics – can be incorporated into concrete without compromising structural performance. [Read more.](#)

Hexagon's Mining division signed an agreement granting access to **Montana Tech's Underground Mine Education Center (UMEC)**, providing a real-world testing environment for next-generation underground technologies. The partnership supports Hexagon's ongoing efforts to enhance underground safety through innovations such as fatigue monitoring, integrated safety platforms, and real-time alertness solutions. [Read more.](#)

Head football coach Kyle Samson was named the **NAIA Region 5 Coach of the Year** by the **American Football Coaches Association**. Samson guided the Orediggers to an 11-0 regular season.