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A to Z

my.umt.edu

UM News

[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / July

July 2017 News

08/01/2017 - [UM Lands Grant to Study History of Large Wildfires in Rocky Mountains](#) - Phil Higuera

07/31/2017 - [Japanese High School Students Engage in Exchange at UM](#) - Kate Johnson

07/28/2017 - [New Magazine Examines Crown of the Continent, Yellowstone Issues](#) - Jerry Fetz

07/27/2017 - [UM Flathead Lake Biological Station Open House to Feature Invasive Mussel Detection Dogs, Monte](#) -
UM Flathead Lake Biological Station

07/27/2017 - [UM Professor Named 2017 American Chemical Society Fellow](#) - Nicolas Natale

07/26/2017 - [MTPR News Reporter Selected for Fellowship](#) - Rachel Cramer

07/07/2017 - [UM Law Negotiation Team Earns Third Place in International Competition](#) - Klaus Sitte

07/26/2017 - [UM Sets Research Funding Record for Third Straight Year](#) - Scott Whittenburg

07/21/2017 - [UM Paleontologist Teams with Hank Green to Launch YouTube Channel](#) - Kallie Moore

07/20/2017 - [Blue Mountain Observatory Adds Additional Public Viewing Night on July 28](#) - Diane Friend

07/20/2017 - [Montana Team to Livestream, Capture Data from Eclipse](#) - Jennifer Fowler

- 07/19/2017** - [UM's Montana Business Quarterly Examines Montana News Consumption, Gender Gap](#) - Scott Hawk
- 07/25/2016** - [New UM Study Quantifies Morel Mushroom Abundance After Wildfire](#) - Andrew Larson
- 07/19/2017** - [UM Professor Wins Fulbright Scholar Award to Help Advance Education in Ukraine](#) - Peter Knox
- 07/19/2017** - [SpectrUM, Community Partners Celebrate Grand Opening of EmPower Place July 22](#) - Holly Truitt
- 07/18/2017** - [BBER Economists to Present Midyear Updates in Seven Cities](#) - Patrick Barkey
- 07/17/2017** - [UM Joins National Coalition for Access, Affordability and Success](#) - Tom Crady
- 07/14/2017** - [UM Announces 2017 Presidential Leadership Scholars](#) - Brock Tessman
- 07/13/2017** - [Mountain Dance Festival at UM Culminates with Performance by Bay Area Troupe](#) - Laurel Sears
- 07/11/2017** - [UM Professor to Mark African-American Studies' 50th Year with 500-Mile Bike Ride](#) - Tobin Miller Shearer
- 07/11/2017** - [UM Researcher: Sea Spiders Move Oxygen with Pumping Guts, Not Hearts](#) - Art Woods
- 07/11/2017** - [UM Leadership Program Hosts Iraqi Youth](#) - Natalie Dawson
- 07/06/2017** - [UM Educator Named President of Statewide Accounting Association](#) - Joshua Herbold
- 07/03/2017** - [UM's Iron Griz Hosts Free Fourth of July Barbecue for On-Duty First Responders](#) - Sam Belanger



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[Employment](#) |

[Safety](#) |

[Privacy Policy](#) |

[Campus Map](#)



A to Z

my.umt.edu

UM News

[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / [July](#) / [UM Lands Grant to Study History of Large Wildfires in Rocky Mountains](#)

UM Lands Grant to Study History of Large Wildfires in Rocky Mountains

August 01, 2017

MISSOULA – Researchers at the University of Montana will reconstruct the causes and ecosystem impacts of large wildfires in the Rocky Mountains over the past 2,500 years, thanks to a new grant from the National Science Foundation.

Led by Phil Higuera, associate professor of fire ecology in UM's W.A. Franke College of Forestry and Conservation, the four-year, \$860,000 award will help researchers at UM, the University of Idaho, Kansas State University and the University of Wyoming reconstruct the fire and climate history in two study areas in the northern and southern Rockies.

Researchers say the study will lead to better understanding of the importance of large fires in the past, the impacts they had on the forests of the region and the role large fires may play in the future.

"We want to better understand how large fire events, like the 'Big Burn' in 1910 that affected large portions of Montana and Idaho, impact ecosystems – and if and how long it takes ecosystems to recover from those types of events," Higuera said.

Wildfires affect nearly 70,000 square miles in the United States every year – much of that in the West in the Rocky Mountains, the number of large wildfires has increased rapidly since the mid-1980s, a trend linked to warming spring and summer temperatures that will likely continue in upcoming decades.

The new study will help place recent and current trends in the long-term context of the past 2,500 years, revealing the precedence of ongoing fire activity and helping scientists learn more about how ecosystems may respond to future big burns.

Large fires also determine the amount and availability of carbon in the region, as well as other key nutrients forests require to regenerate. Current models used to assess ecosystem status and carbon budgets might overestimate the amount of carbon bound up in landscapes if they neglect to incorporate the impacts of infrequent but large wildfires. Improving those models becomes more important as large fire events become more common.

Researchers will use the sediments deposited in the bottom of lakes to reconstruct the environmental history of small mountain watersheds by looking at pollen, charcoal and other proxies of past environmental conditions. At UM, Higuera and graduate student Kyra Wolf will focus on developing these records from 12 sites along the Montana-Idaho border to characterize the frequency, severity and timing of past fire activity. Those records will be compared to records of vegetation and ecosystem change to assess the impacts of past fires.

The project also includes a unique collaboration with the UM School of Journalism's Environmental Science and Natural Resource Journalism graduate program. A student from the program will embed with the research team to document the work and learn more about the process of reporting on scientific research and findings.

For more information call Higuera at 406-243-6337 or email philip.higuera@umontana.edu.

###

Contact: Phil Higuera, associate professor of fire ecology, W.A. Franke College of Forestry and Conservation at UM, 406-243-6337, philip.higuera@umontana.edu.



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[Campus Map](#)



A to Z

my.umt.edu

UM News

[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / [July](#) / Japanese High School Students Engage in Exchange at UM

Japanese High School Students Engage in Exchange at UM

July 31, 2017

MISSOULA –Nineteen high school students from the Kumamoto Prefecture in Japan are visiting the University of Montana to participate in a two-week culture and language program hosted by UM's English Language Institute and Global Engagement Office.

The students arrived July 22 and will return home Aug. 6. During their time in Montana they will travel to Glacier National Park, visit downtown Missoula, bike along the Clark Fork River, go to a Missoula Osprey baseball game and meet local families during a host family event on Saturday, Aug. 5.

Kumamoto Prefecture and Montana share a sister-state relationship that was established in 1982 on the recommendation of Mike Mansfield, former U.S. ambassador to Japan. The partnership promotes cultural exchanges between residents of Kumamoto Prefecture and Montana. In addition to the Kumamoto high school students who have visited UM every summer since 2013, Kumamoto police officers, college students from Kumamoto Gakuen University and Kumamoto teachers also have participated in exchanges to Montana.

Those interested in learning more about the program or being a host family for the afternoon of Aug. 5, can call

Kate Johnson in the Global Engagement Office at 406-243-2288 or email global.engagement@umontana.edu.

###

Contact: Kate Johnson, UM Global Engagement Office, 406-243-2288, global.engagement@umontana.edu.



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A to Z

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UM News

[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / [July](#) / [New Magazine Examines Crown of the Continent, Yellowstone Issues](#)

New Magazine Examines Crown of the Continent, Yellowstone Issues

July 28, 2017

MISSOULA – The latest issue of a University of Montana e-magazine delves into a potential gold mine near Yellowstone National Park, sculptures in the wild near Lincoln, the threat of invasive mussels to area waterways and much more.

The 60-page summer 2017 issue of the Crown of the Continent and Greater Yellowstone Magazine is online at <http://bit.ly/2tZ6K44>.

The issue features articles by leading Montana scholars, writers and thinkers, as well as stunning photos that reveal the beauty of Big Sky Country. Rick Graetz, co-creator of UM's Crown of the Continent and Greater Yellowstone Initiative, says the e-magazine was developed to focus attention on topics affecting the iconic Crown of the Continent (Glacier National Park region) and Yellowstone ecosystems.

Beth Kampschor with the Greater Yellowstone Coalition writes about the proposed Crevice Mountain gold mine site near Yellowstone National Park. Contributor Susie Graetz reveals how an international group of artists made Lincoln a must-see destination, the Blackfoot Pathways: Sculpture in the Wild art park. Tom Bansak with UM's

Flathead Lake Biological Station writes about how invasive mussels have been detected in Montana for the first time, and how they must be stopped from spreading westward in the state.

Other articles include a book review, recruiting citizen scientists, wolves and livestock, and imperiled pikas. The "Field Notes" section addresses a potential International Dark Sky Park designation for Glacier and Waterton national parks, as well as the continued threat of whirling disease among trout.

For more information about the e-magazine or the initiative, visit <https://crown-yellowstone.umt.edu/> or email the editors at fetzga@mso.umt.edu or rick.graetz@mso.umt.edu.

###

Contact: Jerry Fetz, UM Crown of the Continent and Greater Yellowstone Initiative co-director, 406-546-5711, fetzga@mso.umt.edu; Rick Graetz, UM Crown of the Continent and Greater Yellowstone Initiative co-director, 406-439-9277, rick.graetz@mso.umt.edu.



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UM News

[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / [July](#)

/ [UM Flathead Lake Biological Station Open House to Feature Invasive Mussel Detection Dogs, Monte](#)

UM Flathead Lake Biological Station Open House to Feature Invasive Mussel Detection Dogs, Monte

July 27, 2017

POLSON – The University of Montana’s Flathead Lake Biological Station invites the public to a free open house from 1 to 5 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 2.

Participants can explore the station and learn about its extensive research and education programs. This year’s



event features boat trips, as well as displays about FLBS science; Flathead Lake and its watershed; stream, pond and lake creatures; animal hides and skulls; and aquatic invasive species. The event also is an opportunity to meet and talk with FLBS researchers and scientists about their work.

The open house also will feature a few special guests. Aquatic invasive species detection dogs that currently serve at Montana's watercraft inspection stations will show off their skills and sensitive noses during presentations scheduled for every half-hour throughout the afternoon. UM's beloved mascot, Monte, also will entertain with his acrobatic antics from 1 to 2 p.m.

Denver Holt, owl researcher and founder of the Owl Research Institute, will present "Owls in Montana" at 2:15 p.m. Bierman Professor of Ecology and FLBS Director Jim Elser will give a presentation titled "State of the Lake, State of the Station" at 3:30 p.m.

Research boat tours take place at 1:10, 1:45, 2:20, 2:55, 3:30 and 4:05 p.m. Participants will need to reserve their space on the boat by picking up a free ticket when they arrive at the open house. Nature walks and guided station tours are slated for 1:45 and 4 p.m.

FLBS is located 17.5 miles north of **Polson** and 14 miles south of **Bigfork** along Highway 35 on the east shore of Flathead Lake, just north of Yellow Bay State Park. For more information visit <http://flbs.umt.edu/>, <https://www.facebook.com/UMFLBS> or call 406-982-3301.

Contact: UM Flathead Lake Biological Station, 406-982-3301, flbs@flbs.umt.edu.

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A to Z

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UM News

[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / [July](#) / [UM Professor Named 2017 American Chemical Society Fellow](#)

UM Professor Named 2017 American Chemical Society Fellow

July 27, 2017

MISSOULA – The American Chemical Society has named University of Montana Professor Nicholas Natale to the 2017 class of ACS Fellows, which honors scientists who demonstrate outstanding accomplishments in chemistry and make important contributions to ACS, the world's largest scientific society.

The selection of ACS Fellows is based on excellence and leadership in the science, profession, education and/or management of chemistry, as well as volunteer service to the ACS community. Natale, a professor of medicinal chemistry in UM's Department of Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Sciences, is the only researcher in the state included in this year's class.

Natale's current research focuses on how the application of medicinal chemistry can counteract chemotherapy resistance in cancer patients. He also teaches labs in medicinal chemistry and pharmaceutical sciences and advises students in UM's professional pharmacy program.

Natale earned the designation of ACS Fellow for his work as a founding member and director of UM's Medicinal Chemistry Graduate Program, his history of teaching and mentoring organic chemistry students, and his service in

both regional and national leadership roles for the ACS, among numerous other contributions.

“The ACS Fellows designation is based on science and service to the society, and it’s nice to be recognized for my efforts in each,” Natale said. “I also proposed to the Montana local ACS section that we set up an awards committee to nominate other deserving chemists in Montana for the recognition. I feel there are at least a half-dozen chemists on campus as deserving as myself for the honor.”

The 2017 ACS Fellows will be recognized at a ceremony and reception on Monday, Aug. 21, during the society’s National Meeting & Exposition in Washington, D.C.

ACS is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1876 and chartered by Congress. The organization is a global leader in providing access to chemistry-related information and research through its multiple databases, peer-reviewed journals and scientific conferences. The ACS Fellows Program was created by the ACS board of directors in 2008.

For more information call Natale at 406-243-4132 or email nicholas.natale@umontana.edu.

Contact: Nicolas Natale, UM professor of medicinal chemistry, 406-243-4132, nicholas.natale@umontana.edu.



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[University Relations](#)



A to Z

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UM News

[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / [July](#) / MTPR News Reporter Selected for Fellowship

MTPR News Reporter Selected for Fellowship

July 26, 2017

MISSOULA – Montana Public Radio news reporter Rachel Cramer is going on the road. Starting this fall, Cramer will be one of five early career reporters and recent graduates of public universities to report on issues dividing America in a fellowship titled “Crossing the Divide.”

The fellowship is a collaboration between the GroundTruth Project and Boston Public Radio station WGBH. The project aims to satisfy a national hunger for greater civic engagement, media literacy and journalism that seeks to bridge divides.

Cramer, a recent graduate of the University of



Montana Environmental Studies master's program, has worked at MTPR for nearly a year.

"I'm drawn to the power of sound and how it can transport a listener to a new place," Cramer said. "I hope this project will foster understanding during a divisive time in America."

The cross-country road trip will run from late-August to mid-November. Cramer will be the audio reporter for the team that includes data and investigative journalist Eric Bosco from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, photojournalist Brittany Greeson from Western Kentucky University, writer and reporter Gabriel Sanchez from the University of Minnesota and videographer and reporter Mahlia Posey from the University of California, Berkeley.

The managing editor and two field producers from the GroundTruth Project will accompany the reporters on their drive across the country.

"At a time of deep divisions in America, we wanted to bring together a truly diverse team of reporters to take the great American road trip and tell stories along the way that enlighten and inform," said GroundTruth founder and Executive Director Charles Sennott. "This is a truly extraordinary team that hails from red states and blue states, from rural towns and big cities, from new immigrant backgrounds and those who are part of America's long immigrant past. The goal of this project is for them to come together to report on the issues that divide us and to find the places where we can all come together."

The GroundTruth Project will partner with local high schools, including Two Eagle River School in **Pablo**. They will also partner with The Moth, a New York nonprofit dedicated to the art and craft of storytelling, for a community storytelling event in Montana.

MTPR is a local media partner for "Crossing the Divide." Montana Public Radio airs across much of western and central Montana at 89.1 and 91.5 in Missoula; 91.9 in Hamilton; 89.5 in Polson; 90.1 in Kalispell, Whitefish and North Valley; 90.5 in Libby; 91.7 in Kalispell; 101.3 in Swan Lake; 91.3 in Butte; 91.7 in Helena; 89.9 in Great Falls;

91.7 in Dillon; and online at <http://mtp.r.org/>.

The GroundTruth Project (<http://thegroundtruthproject.org/>) is an independent, nonprofit media organization dedicated to supporting a new generation of journalists to tell the most important stories of their generation.

WGBH Boston is America's preeminent public broadcaster and the largest producer of PBS content for TV and the web, including "FRONTLINE," "NOVA," "American Experience," "Masterpiece," "Antiques Roadshow," "Arthur" and more than a dozen other prime-time, lifestyle and children's series. WGBH also is a major supplier of programming for public radio, and Public Radio International is an affiliated company.

For more information visit <http://thegroundtruthproject.org/announcing-crossing-divide-fellows/>.

###

Contact: Rachel Cramer, Montana Public Radio news reporter, CramerMTPR@gmail.com; Eric Whitney, Montana Public Radio news director, 406-243-4075, eric.whitney@umontana.edu.



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A to Z

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UM News

[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / [July](#) / [UM Law Negotiation Team Earns Third Place in International Competition](#)

UM Law Negotiation Team Earns Third Place in International Competition

July 07, 2017

MISSOULA – University of Montana Alexander Blewett III School of Law students Frans Andersson and Kirsi Luther recently took third place at the International Negotiation Competition held in Oslo, Norway.

The competition, which was hosted by the University of Oslo, invited 32 teams from 28 countries worldwide to negotiate simulated oil drilling agreements between various entities. The



third round included a unique four-way multilateral scenario.

“That was such a fascinating session,” Luther said. “We had so little time to consider the complexities of multiparty negotiations. We needed to apply all we had learned and more to do well in that round.”

Competition week in Oslo began with a master class taught by renowned educators from around the world, and the final award ceremony was held in the historic Nobel Peace Center. The third-place finish by Luther and Andersson completed a North American sweep of the top teams, with the other U.S. team finishing first and a Canadian team placing second.

The UM negotiation team’s season began in September with the regional negotiation competition in Chicago, followed by more than 10 weeks of practice sessions. Last November the UM team competed against law schools from the Midwest and earned a first-place finish at regionals. The first-place finish earned the Andersson-Luther team an invitation to the American Bar Association’s national negotiation competition in Chicago once again in February.

“What a finish to an incredible year,” Andersson said.

The UM law school negotiation team is coached by Klaus Sitte, an adjunct faculty member who teaches negotiations and alternative dispute resolution. Sitte has coached the law school’s negotiation team since 1990, with seven teams competing at nationals and now two at international competitions.

###

Contact: Klaus Sitte, UM School of Law adjunct faculty member and negotiation team coach, 406-243-4670, klaus.sitte@umontana.edu; Paul Kirgis, UM School of Law dean, 406-243-5291, paul.kirgis@umontana.edu.



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UM News

[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / [July](#) / [UM Sets Research Funding Record for Third Straight Year](#)

UM Sets Research Funding Record for Third Straight Year

July 26, 2017

MISSOULA – Research continues to surge at a record pace at the University of Montana, with the institution setting a record for external funding for the third year in a row.

UM brought in nearly \$88 million in new funding during the past fiscal year to support

homegrown Montana research, entrepreneurship and statewide outreach. This exceeds the previous year's record of \$86 million.



University researchers also set a record for expenditures from previously awarded grants and contracts in the amount of \$88 million – a 12 percent increase from the previous year’s \$78.5 million record total. The new expenditure total is 50 percent higher than the 2014 fiscal year amount of \$58.3 million.

The number of proposals submitted by faculty for research support also increased, from 684 proposals last year to 716 this year.

Scott Whittenburg, UM vice president for research and creative scholarship, said these benchmarks all indicate that research at UM will continue to grow.

“Our upward trajectory indicates that the University of Montana continues to recruit and retain the best researchers from across the country and internationally,” he said. “The productivity of our faculty is on par with elite institutions anywhere.”

Whittenburg said UM faculty members are the foundation for UM’s growing research efforts.

“I am appreciative of our faculty’s efforts to seek new funding opportunities and to conduct world-class research,” he said. “I also acknowledge the work of staff both within the departments and in the sponsored programs office that support the faculty in their research.”

He highlighted some of UM’s newest awards brought in by faculty members.

Andrew Whiteley, an assistant professor of fisheries and conservation genomics, received the National Science Foundation’s most prestigious award for junior faculty, the Faculty Early Career Development award or CAREER grant. Whiteley will receive more than \$800,000 over five years as he and his graduate students experimentally translocate small numbers of trout among isolated natural populations as a window into understanding the effects of gene exchange. This is the fourth NSF CAREER award earned by UM assistant professors in the past two years and, Whittenburg said indicates the talent level new faculty being recruited by the University.

“What’s wonderful is that our students get to interact with and work alongside powerhouse researchers and scholars,” Whittenburg said.

UM faculty also received a \$3 million NSF grant to train graduate students in innovations at the nexus of food, energy and water systems. The funding is part of the NSF Research Traineeship program and includes funding for up to 30 graduate students.

These research accomplishments and the growth of enrolled graduate students (up 200 since spring semester) indicate that the University is on a path to achieving Carnegie R1 or Research Highest Activity status to place it among the elite research universities across the country.

“What’s great about UM’s growing research sector is that labs employ a lot of people, which generates economic activity for Montana,” said Joe Fanguy, UM executive director of Accelerate MT. “UM research is also generating lots of new technology of importance to Montanans – from solutions to the pine park beetle epidemic, to advances in addressing traumatic brain injuries experienced all too often by our veterans and athletes.”

For more information call Whittenburg at 406-243-6670 or email scott.whittenburg@umontana.edu.

###

Contact: Scott Whittenburg, UM vice president for research and creative scholarship, 406-243-6670, scott.whittenburg@umontana.edu .



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UM News

[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / [July](#) / [UM Paleontologist Teams with Hank Green to Launch YouTube Channel](#)

UM Paleontologist Teams with Hank Green to Launch YouTube Channel

July 21, 2017

MISSOULA – The University of Montana Paleontology Center has partnered with internet producer Hank Green to launch EONS, a new weekly YouTube series that explores the billion-years-plus history of life on Earth. Green will serve as host of EONS alongside Paleontology Center Collections Manager Kallie Moore and science writer Blake de Pastino.



The series premiered June 26. It can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/eons>.

EONS whisks viewers through the history of life on Earth with a scope from the dawn of life in the Archaean Eon through the Mesozoic Era — the so-called “Age of Dinosaurs” -- right up to the end of the most recent Ice Age. The evolutionary history of mammals including humans and other modern species is explored with paleontology experts. Series topics will include “What Color Were Dinosaurs (And How Do We Know)?,” “The Story of Saber Teeth” and “The Biggest Thing That Ever Flew.”

“Being able to share my enthusiasm for ancient life and getting to highlight fossils from the UMPC collection on a large scale platform is such a wonderful opportunity,” Moore said. “EONS will bring more awareness to paleontology, natural history, and hopefully more recognition to the UMPC.”

“EONS will go on a deeply engaging and wildly entertaining tour of Earth’s four-billion-year natural history, one fascinating vignette at a time,” Green said. “I’m excited to explore these topics in detail with Kallie and Blake and hope it will encourage audiences to become more interested in paleontology.”

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Contact: Kallie Moore, collections manager, UM Paleontology Center, 406-243-5406, kallie.moore@mso.umt.edu.



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UM News

[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / [July](#) / Blue Mountain Observatory Adds Additional Public Viewing Night on July 28

Blue Mountain Observatory Adds Additional Public Viewing Night on July 28

July 20, 2017

MISSOULA – Due to popular demand, the University of Montana’s Blue Mountain Observatory will offer an additional public night of astronomical observing on Friday, July 28.

Visitors are invited to explore planets, nebulas, star clusters and distant galaxies. Attendees are asked to reserve a free ticket for each person in their group via Eventbrite at <http://bit.ly/2ruw9oK>. Some tickets for viewing on Sept. 15 and 22 also are still available, but all other summer dates are sold out.

Viewing events are family-friendly and children are welcome. The observatory, located atop Blue Mountain at an elevation of 6,300 feet, is operated by UM. Astronomers from UM and the Western Montana Astronomical Association will be on hand at all events to talk about what’s visible through the telescopes, point out constellations, show attendees how to find interesting celestial objects with the naked eye or a pair of binoculars and discuss recent astronomical discoveries.

Observing begins about an hour after sunset, and organizers recommend bringing warm clothes for cool evenings and a flashlight for the short walk to the observatory from the parking area.

A link to Eventbrite, a map, directions to the observatory and complete observing information are available at http://hs.umt.edu/physics/Blue_Mountain_Observatory/. Viewing nights will be canceled if the sky is cloudy or fire or thunderstorms threaten visibility. Call 406-243-4299 or check <https://www.facebook.com/BlueMountainObservatory> for weather and cancellation updates.

For more information email Diane Friend, UM astronomy lecturer, at bmo@mso.umt.edu or call 406-243-4229.

Contact: Diane Friend, lecturer, UM Department of Physics and Astronomy, 406-243-4299, bmo@mso.umt.edu.



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A to Z

my.umt.edu

UM News

[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / [July](#) / Montana Team to Livestream, Capture Data from Eclipse

Montana Team to Livestream, Capture Data from Eclipse

July 20, 2017

MISSOULA – This August, the University of Montana will participate in a nationwide, NASA-sponsored project to livestream aerial video footage and gather scientific atmospheric data during the Great American Eclipse.

A team of students and faculty comprised of institutions participating in the UM-based Montana Space Grant Consortium, including Chief Dull Knife College, Miles Community College and Montana State University, will launch 18 high-altitude radiosonde balloons and two large payload high-altitude balloons on Monday, Aug. 21.



The team will launch one of the larger, roughly 8-foot-tall helium-filled balloons, which carries a video camera and other equipment to an altitude of up to 100,000 feet, around 10:30 a.m. near Fort Laramie, Wyoming. Live footage from the camera will be available for public viewing on NASA's website at <http://nasa.gov>.

Altogether, 55 teams from across the country will livestream footage of the total solar eclipse, during which the moon will entirely block the sun for approximately two minutes on a path progressing from the Pacific coast in Oregon to the Atlantic coast in South Carolina.

Within the Eclipse Ballooning Project, UM's Montana Space Grant Consortium has coordinated an Eclipse Radiosonde Project. Over 15 teams will launch a series of radiosondes throughout the duration of the eclipse to measure temperature, pressure, relative humidity and winds at altitudes spanning upwards of 85,000 feet.

The project has been three years in the making. According to MSGC Director Angela Des Jardins, it marks the first time that high-altitude video footage of a total solar eclipse has been broadcast live.

"We're excited to provide a unique perspective of this rare phenomenon," Des Jardins said. "The livestream video will show the curvature of the planet, the blackness of space and the whole of the moon's shadow crossing the Earth during the eclipse."

The consortium at UM has been involved with the coordination and science within the Eclipse Ballooning Project since 2014. Frenchtown High School teacher Joe Youngberg, MSGC Assistant Director Jennifer Fowler and flight director Deb Ross serve as mentors for the project.

The UM-based team consists of eight undergraduate students: UM undergraduate Tommy Colligan, from **Seattle, Washington**; Missoula College undergraduate Shauna Muns, from **Butte**; Flathead Valley Community College

student Kristine Pye, from **Chino, California**; and MSU undergraduates Ethan Fission, from **Corvallis**, Ian Fleming, from **Petersburg, Alaska**, Alex Healy, from Corvallis, Jaxen Godfrey, from **Belt**, Sami Sanderson, from **Naples, Florida**. UM post-baccalaureate students Fredrick Bunt, from **Hardin**, and Katherine Stocker, from **Billings**, also will engage in the project.

"I'm getting to do real science – creating and implementing models from first principles and comparing them to real data," Colligan said.

In addition to a video camera, the team's large payload balloon will carry a GPS-tracking system and a camera to capture still images of the eclipse. UM's second-largest high-altitude balloon will carry student science payloads consisting of an ultraviolet sensor, temperature sensors for student science research and a NASA microbiology experiment. Once the eclipse ends, the balloon will pop and its cargo will parachute to Earth for recovery.

The project is sponsored by the NASA Science Mission Directorate and NASA's Space Grant program, a national network including over 900 affiliates from universities, colleges, industry, museums, science centers, and state and local agencies belonging to one of 52 consortia in all states, the District of Columbia and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

For more information about the national project and press materials, visit <http://eclipse.montana.edu>.

For more information about the UM Radiosonde Team, visit <http://eclipse.montana.edu/radiosonde-project>.

Contact: Jennifer Fowler, assistant director, Montana Space Grant Consortium at UM, 406-396-8085, jennifer.fowler@mso.umt.edu.



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A to Z

my.umt.edu

UM News

[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / [July](#) / [UM's Montana Business Quarterly Examines Montana News Consumption, Gender Gap](#)

UM's Montana Business Quarterly Examines Montana News Consumption, Gender Gap

July 19, 2017

MISSOULA – The University of Montana Bureau of Business and Economic Research reports on how Montanans get their news in one of the feature stories in the latest edition of Montana Business Quarterly.

“As you might expect, younger people tend to use the internet more for news, while older generations fall back on traditional print and broadcast outlets,” said John Baldrige, BBER project manager. “But, that is changing too.

“Many Montanans do tend to live in an internet news echo chamber,” he said. “Not only viewing stories from sources they agree with, but sharing content with like-minded friends.”

These results can be found in Baldrige's feature article in the magazine's summer issue, online at <http://www.montanabusinessquarterly.com>.

The Montana Business Quarterly also contains a research article written by BBER Senior Researcher Daphne Herling titled "Montana's Gender Pay Gap," in which Herling examines the earnings differences between men and women in Montana.

"Every state in the nation has an earnings gap, but Montana ranks near the bottom at 46th in the nation," Herling said. Herling's thorough analysis of the issue, including nonworkplace issues, provides the reader with an understanding of some of the causes for the wage gap. It concludes there may be an opportunity to even the playing field if women can access training to develop the skills employers seek despite Montana's low unemployment rate and the fact that the state's labor force is not keeping up with demand.

In the summer 2017 issue of the Montana Business Quarterly also contains articles on trending topics such as Missoula's affordable housing crisis and barriers to entrepreneurship for women.

Established in 1948, BBER is the main research unit of UM's School of Business Administration. It informs Montanans about the economic climate in which they live and work. In addition to conducting its Economic Outlook Seminars across the state each year, BBER researchers engage in a wide range of applied research projects that address different aspects of the state economy, including survey research, economic analysis, health care research, forecasting, wood products research and energy research. It has published the Montana Business Quarterly since 1949.

For more information or to subscribe to the Montana Business Quarterly, visit BBER at <http://www.bber.umt.edu/> or call 406-243-5113.

###

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[Campus Map](#)



A to Z

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UM News

[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / [July](#) / [New UM Study Quantifies Morel Mushroom Abundance After Wildfire](#)

New UM Study Quantifies Morel Mushroom Abundance After Wildfire

July 25, 2016

MISSOULA – University of Montana forest ecology Professor Andrew Larson recently published research estimating the abundance of morel mushrooms after a wildfire in California’s Sierra Nevada.

“So many people love to harvest and eat morel mushrooms,” Larson said, “but there is very little research that measures the abundance of morels after a forest has burned. We wanted to give forest managers concrete data on morel abundance.”

Larson and his co-authors conducted their study in the Yosemite Forest Dynamics Plot, a long-term research site located in Yosemite National Park. A



fire burned the research site in September 2013, killing more than 70 percent of the trees. Researchers then surveyed for morels in May 2014 in 1,119 small sample plots within the research site.

Where morels were found, researchers discovered most of the ground surface was 100 percent burned by fire. Morels typically are found close together, yet unevenly distributed across the landscape.

According to Larson, burned white fir forests in Yosemite alone could produce an average crop of more than 1 million morels per year, a sustainable amount for recreational picking.

“The magnitude of post-fire morel production, especially the first year after fire, clearly supports the park’s current rule allowing people to pick one pint per day for personal use.”

At the start of their study Larson’s team was surprised by how little research has been conducted on morel mushroom productivity.

“We reviewed every published paper on post-fire morel mushroom productivity we could find,” Larson said. “Amazingly, only three earlier studies – in Alaska, Oregon and British Columbia, Canada, provide statistically sound estimates of morel abundance after forest fires.”

Much is still unknown about where morels grow after a fire, so Larson and his co-authors also propose a conceptual model to guide future research that could explain the mushroom’s spatial distribution in burned areas.

Their paper, “Post-fire morel (*Morchella*) mushroom abundance, spatial structure and harvest sustainability,” was published June 27 in the journal *Forest Ecology and Management* and is available online at <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0378112716303413>.

###

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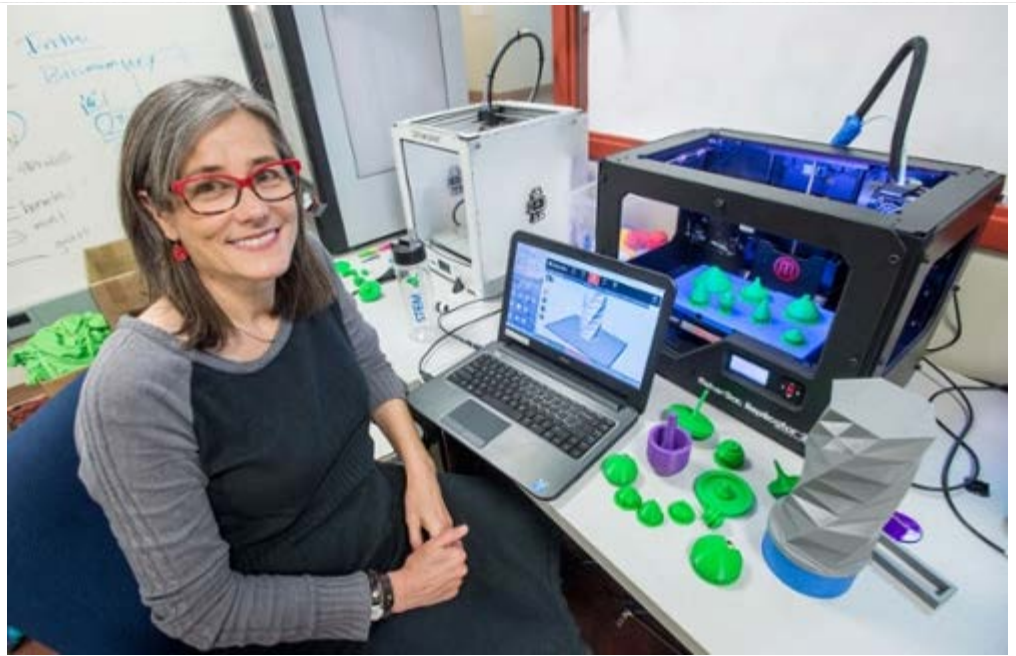
[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / [July](#) / [UM Professor Wins Fulbright Scholar Award to Help Advance Education in Ukraine](#)

UM Professor Wins Fulbright Scholar Award to Help Advance Education in Ukraine

July 19, 2017

MISSOULA – A professor in the University of Montana’s Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences has received a Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program award to travel to a school in Kyiv, Ukraine.

Lisa Blank will help teachers at Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University advance educational reform in classrooms, buildings



and communities through a semesterlong seminar and related workshops.

“This award is just one of many examples of Dr. Blank’s exemplary contributions to the field of education,” said Peter Knox, communications and outreach manager in UM’s college of education. “Her consummate dedication to enhancing educational practices and providing unique opportunities for students of all backgrounds and experiences is unparalleled and continues to garner positive attention to the crucial work being done by all the faculty in the College of Education and Human Sciences at UM.”

This year, Ukraine will host 29 Fulbright grantees and up to 10 Fulbright specialists to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the program in Ukraine. The country also will celebrate 26 years of independence, and Fulbright awardees will witness living history, as Ukraine just gained freedom in 2014.

Rewarded by the U.S. Department of State, Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program awards recognize academic or professional achievement and leadership potential in a field. More than 800 U.S. citizens will travel abroad for the 2017-18 academic year to teach, conduct research or provide expertise.

The Fulbright Program operates in 160 countries and since 1946 has engaged more than 370,000 students, scholars, teachers, artists and scientists in studying, teaching, conducting research, exchanging ideas and finding solutions for international concerns. Alumni have won multiple awards, including 57 Nobel Prizes and 82 Pulitzer Prizes, and 37 have served as the head of a state or government.

For more information on the Fulbright Program, visit <http://eca.state.gov/fulbright>

Contact: Peter Knox, communications and outreach manager, UM Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences, 406-243-4911, peter.knox@umontana.edu.



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A to Z

my.umt.edu

UM News

[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / [July](#) / SpectrUM, Community Partners Celebrate Grand Opening of EmPower Place July 22

SpectrUM, Community Partners Celebrate Grand Opening of EmPower Place July 22

July 19, 2017

MISSOULA – The Missoula community is invited to join the University of Montana spectrUM Discovery Area, the Missoula Food Bank and the Missoula Public Library in celebrating the grand opening of EmPower Place from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, July 22.

EmPower Place is a family learning center embedded in the Missoula Food Bank, located at 1720 Wyoming St., and collaboratively is operated by the food bank, spectrUM and the Missoula Public Library. Intended to serve as a vibrant community gathering place for children and families, the space includes spectrUM science exhibits, library books for children and parents, hands-on activities led by role models with UM's We Are Montana in the Classroom initiative, and Story Time with the Missoula Public Library. Admission to EmPower Place and its programming is free and open to all.

"EmPower Place makes the food bank experience entirely different for families," said Jessica Allred, director of development and advocacy at the Missoula Food Bank. "Parents and kids learn and play together. It is a completely new way of addressing food security in our community. It's magic."

The EmPower Place grand opening will feature a free barbecue, spectrUM science activities, games with Missoula Parks and Recreation, Missoula Public Library's WOW Bus, a free kids' raffle and a free ice cream cone for the first 150 children.

EmPower Place was seeded with funding from the Missoula Redevelopment Agency and a National Leadership Grant for Museums from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

SpectrUM Director Holly Truitt, who serves as principal investigator on the \$910,000 IMLS project, said, "SpectrUM is honored to steward these funds for EmPower Place, which is the result of a collaborative, co-creative process with our partners to inspire our next generation about the bright futures that await them in higher education and potential career pathways. We see this space as a national model for the powerful collective impact that organizations can make when we link arm in arm with a shared vision of closing opportunity and achievement gaps in our community."

EmPower Place is open from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday through Friday. Kids' Table free meals are served at EmPower Place from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 5 to 7 p.m. Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. Children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult unless attending a Kids' Table meal.

For more information about EmPower Place and the array of free programs it offers, call Truitt at 406-243-4872.

###

Contact: Holly Truitt, director, UM Broader Impacts Group and spectrUM Discovery Area, 406-243-4872, holly.truitt@umontana.edu.



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A to Z

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UM News

[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / [July](#) / BBER Economists to Present Midyear Updates in Seven Cities

BBER Economists to Present Midyear Updates in Seven Cities

July 18, 2017

MISSOULA – Patrick Barkey, director of the University of Montana’s Bureau for Business and Economic Research, and Paul Polzin, the bureau’s emeritus director, will travel to seven Montana cities in July to provide midyear economic updates.

As part of the 12th Annual Economic Update Series, presented by the Montana Chamber Foundation, Barkey and Polzin will present “Infrastructure Builds Montana,” a midyear economic update on the state and local economies.

Polzin will deliver “Whether or not there was a ‘Trump Bump’” and “Why the oil bust in eastern Montana matters in western Montana.” Polzin also will address “Why are world markets important to Montana?”

Darryl James, executive director of the Montana Infrastructure Coalition, will join Barkey and Polzin for the seven-city tour as one of the keynote speakers. James will address the critical status of Montana’s infrastructure and the impact it has on the state and local economies.

According to a 2015 report issued by the American Society of Civil Engineers, Montana’s infrastructure is

approaching a critical state of disrepair. This series will focus on the economic impact of infrastructure on Montana's economy.

The midyear update schedule is:

- 7 a.m., Tuesday, July 25, Northern Hotel, Billings.
- Noon, Tuesday, July 25, Holiday Inn, Bozeman.
- 4 p.m., Tuesday, July 25, NorthWestern Energy, Butte.
- 8 a.m., Wednesday, July 26, Radisson Colonial Hotel, Helena.
- Noon, Wednesday, July 26, Hilton Garden Inn, Great Falls.
- 7 a.m., Thursday, July 27, Hilton Garden Inn, Missoula.
- Noon, Thursday, July 27, Hilton Garden Inn, Kalispell.

The cost of attending is \$30 for members of the Montana Chamber of Commerce and \$35 for nonmembers. Updates are approximately 90 minutes and include either lunch or breakfast. The Butte event will feature a social gathering after the event. Register online at <http://events.montanachamber.com>.

Established in 1948, BBER is the main research unit of UM's School of Business Administration. It informs Montanans about the economic climate in which they live and work. In addition to conducting its Economic Outlook Seminars across the state each year, BBER researchers engage in a wide range of applied research projects that address different aspects of the state economy, including survey research, economic analysis, health care research, forecasting, wood products research and energy research. For more information about BBER, visit <http://www.bber.umt.edu/> or call 406-243-5113.

###

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A to Z

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UM News

[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / [July](#) / [UM Joins National Coalition for Access, Affordability and Success](#)

UM Joins National Coalition for Access, Affordability and Success

July 17, 2017

MISSOULA – The University of Montana was among 40 schools recently to become a member of the Coalition for Access, Affordability and Success for public and private colleges and universities across the nation.

To be eligible for coalition membership, schools must score high in two of the following three areas: engaging underserved populations, helping students graduate with little to no debt and achieving high graduation rates.

The coalition also aims to improve the college admission application process for students through streamlining a free platform of online tools for high school students.

Membership in the coalition now includes 135 college and universities, representing 34 states and the District of Columbia.

For more information on the Coalition for Access, Affordability and Success, visit <http://www.coalitionforcollegeaccess.org/>.

###

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thomas.cradycrady@mso.umt.edu.



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A to Z

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UM News

[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / [July](#) / [UM Announces 2017 Presidential Leadership Scholars](#)

UM Announces 2017 Presidential Leadership Scholars

July 14, 2017

MISSOULA – University of Montana Presidential Leadership Scholarships have been awarded to 23 exceptional incoming UM freshmen. The scholarships recognize outstanding talent, academic performance, leadership and contribution to the community.

This year's scholarship winners were chosen from a field of more than 350 qualified applicants. Scholarship recipients enroll in UM's Davidson Honors College and receive a four year tuition waiver, plus an additional \$5,000 to \$7,500 per year.

"We have worked with a wide range of campus partners to recruit a wonderfully talented group of students for this prestigious scholarship program," said Brock Tessman, dean of the Davidson Honors College. "As has been the case with the Presidential Leadership Scholars who have come before them, these students will contribute to the entire campus through their aspiration to academic excellence and their engagement in leadership and service. We look forward to tremendous accomplishments from them."

Montana's crop of 2017 Presidential Leadership Scholars are:

Billings:

- Anna Potter, a Billings West High School graduate who plans to major in education.
- Molly Putnam, who graduated from Billings Central Catholic High School with a 4.0 GPA.

Bozeman:

- Elaine Chandler, who graduated with a 4.0 GPA at the top of her class at Bozeman High School.
- Joseph Kelly, a graduate of Bozeman High School who will study physics.
- Chloe Loeffelholz, who graduated at the top of her class at Bozeman High School with a 4.0 GPA and plans to study cultural anthropology.
- John Schafer, who graduated at the top of his class at Bozeman High School with a 4.0 GPA.

Butte:

- Samuel Schonsberg, who graduated from Butte High School at the top of his class with a 4.0 GPA and plans to study music performance and composition.

Darby

- Evangeline Campbell, who graduated at the top of her Darby High School class, and plans to study mathematics education or English education.

Gallatin Gateway:

- Evynn Gibbs-Cook, who graduated from Bozeman High School and plans to study humanities.

Great Falls:

- Kenna Karjala, who graduated from Great Falls High School and plans to study marine biology.
- Jeremiah Ormseth, a Charles M. Russell High School graduate who plans to study computer science.
- Leonard Ormseth, who graduated at the top of his class at C.M. Russell High School with a 4.0 GPA. He plans to study environmental studies and resource conservation.

Hamilton:

- Hadley Gideon, who graduated top of her class at Hamilton High School with a 4.0 GPA and plans to study physics with an astronomy emphasis.
- Morgan Weidow, who graduated from Corvallis High School and plans to study pre-medicine and biochemistry.

Kalispell:

- Brock Adkins, who graduated with a 4.0 GPA from Glacier High School and plans to study statistics.
- Silas Schwarz, who earned a 4.0 GPA and the top spot in Glacier High School's 2017 graduating class and

plans to study computer science.

Lewistown:

- Kayla Irish, who graduated at the top of her class at Fergus High School with a 4.0 GPA.

Missoula:

- Lea Tonnerre, who graduated from Sentinel High School at the top of her class with a 4.0 GPA. She plans to study physics.

Red Lodge:

- Abigail Nordstrom, who graduated from Red Lodge High School at the top of her class with a 4.0 GPA. She plans to major in journalism and literature.

Rexford:

- Kaylee Kronsperger, a Lincoln County High School graduate who earned a 4.0 GPA and finished at the top of her class. She plans to study biochemistry.

Whitefish:

- Makkie Haller, who graduated from Whitefish High School and plans to study political science with a focus on international relations and comparative politics.

Two Presidential Leadership Scholars will come to UM from out of state:

Colorado Springs, Colorado:

- Mary Carrigan, who graduated from Discovery Canyon Campus High School with a 4.74 (weighted) GPA and plans to study communicative sciences and disorders.

Camas, Washington:

- Melody Hollar, who graduated from Camas High School and plans to study wildlife biology and computer science.

###

Contact: Brock Tessman, UM Davidson Honors College dean, 406-243-2541, brock.tessman@umontana.edu.



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A to Z

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UM News

[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / [July](#) / Mountain Dance Festival at UM Culminates with Performance by Bay Area Troupe

Mountain Dance Festival at UM Culminates with Performance by Bay Area Troupe

July 13, 2017

MISSOULA – The Bay Area dance company GERALDCASELDANCE will present two performances open to the public during the final nights of this summer’s Mountain Dance Festival, hosted by the Dance Program in the University of Montana’s School of Theatre & Dance.

Performances will take place at 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday, July 21-22, at The Open Space in UM’s Performing Arts and Radio/TV Center. Tickets, which cost \$10 for general admission and \$8 for students or professional dancers, will be available for purchase at the door for cash or check only.

GERALDCASELDANCE, led by acclaimed modern dancer Gerald Casel, creates and presents dances that ask questions about human beings – who they are, what they do and how their actions affect the world in which they live. For Missoula audiences, Casel’s company will share a sneak preview of choreography they are currently generating for the company’s 20th anniversary performance, scheduled to premiere in San Francisco in June 2018.

GERALDCASELDANCE supports collaboration and music to enhance the transformative experience of live performance art. Missoula audiences will be treated to a sensational concert, heightened through the exquisite composition and performance of the company's composer and collaborator, Tim Russell.

Through this work-in-progress, Casel features the prominent truths of power and racial ideologies embedded in postmodern dance structures and contends with assumptions about what "postmodern dance" means to our culture. Issues deeply affecting Casel's creative process for this and other work include assimilation, mimicry, migration, memory and melancholia relative to Asian-American identities. In a time when our culture grapples with realities associated with control, privilege, resistance and identity, this work will likely strike a relevant chord for many viewers.

Known for producing work that leaves audiences knowing and wanting more, Casel will again provide that opportunity in this performance. The company will perform an improvisational score to prelude the feature choreography and provide a glimpse into how the work is being developed. The performance will end with a Q-and-A session inviting the audience to join the conversation about the issues fueling the choreography.

For more information or to request an interview with any of the coordinators or featured artists, email Laurel Sears, UM School of Theatre & Dance, at laurel.sears@umontana.edu or Casel at gerald@geraldcasel.com.

Contact: Laurel Sears, adjunct assistant professor, UM School of Theatre and Dance, laurel.sears@umontana.edu.



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A to Z

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UM News

[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / [July](#) / [UM Professor to Mark African-American Studies' 50th Year with 500-Mile Bike Ride](#)

UM Professor to Mark African-American Studies' 50th Year with 500-Mile Bike Ride

July 11, 2017

MISSOULA – As the University of Montana African-American Studies Program prepares to celebrate 50 years on campus, its director is about to embark on a 500-mile bike ride.

Tobin Miller Shearer, an associate history professor who recently was voted Best UM Professor in the Missoula Independent's "Best of Missoula," hopes to raise funds and awareness for UM's Black Student Union and African-American Studies Program – the country's third oldest program of its kind – which marks a half century of existence in



2018.

“Riding 500 miles in the mountains of Montana in the course of seven days won’t solve racism,” he said, “but this has been a year in which I’ve watched my African-American students deal with increasing racial harassment, seen Black Lives Matter posters repeatedly torn down by my office door, watched white supremacists ramp up their rhetoric in the state I now call home, and been put on a national watchlist for speaking out against racism and white privilege.

“It seems like the time to do something positive, something that offers some movement forward. Something hopeful.”

Shearer’s students are planning a Black Solidarity summit as part of the anniversary, and he has set his sights on raising money through his ride to support them and the program’s next 50 years.

“My students are amazing,” he said, “but there is very little money right now in our university system to support them in their efforts. So, I’m setting out to raise \$15,000 to support them, celebrate our 50th anniversary and bring amazing speakers like Darlene Clark Hine – one of the country’s pre-eminent scholars of African-American history – so my students and our community can learn from her.”

There is a long history of biking and black history in Montana, including an incredible recreation of the original 25th Infantry’s 1897 Missoula to St. Louis ride by Black Student Union members in 1974. The story, covered by the UM student-produced Montana Kaimin, is online at <http://bit.ly/2t61jQI>.

“While I won’t be reprising any of the historic routes, I am honoring that tradition by choosing a bike ride to raise funds,” Shearer said.

His weeklong bike journey is scheduled from Saturday, July 29, to Friday, Aug. 4.

He encourages supporters to follow his journey on Facebook and Twitter under the hashtags #ride4blacksolidarity and #500forthe50th. Those particularly inspired and equipped are invited to join him for a leg of the ride. His fundraising page is online at <http://hs.umt.edu/aas/news-pages/solidarity-ride-page.php>. For a specific route, email tobin.shearer@umontana.edu.

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UM News

[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / [July](#) / [UM Researcher: Sea Spiders Move Oxygen with Pumping Guts, Not Hearts](#)

UM Researcher: Sea Spiders Move Oxygen with Pumping Guts, Not Hearts

July 11, 2017

MISSOULA – To keep blood and oxygen flowing throughout their bodies, most animals depend on a beating heart. But University of Montana researchers report in the July 10 issue of *Current Biology* that sea spiders use a strange alternative: They move blood and oxygen throughout most of their bodies by pumping their guts.

The sea spiders have an unusual gut in the first place, the researchers say.

“Unlike us, with our centrally located guts that are all confined to a single body cavity, the guts of sea spiders branch multiple times and sections of gut tube go down to the end of every leg,” said UM Associate Professor Arthur Woods. “In effect, sea spiders guts are ‘space-filling’ and ubiquitous in their bodies in the same way that our circulatory systems are space-filling and ubiquitous.”

So, how do they use that branching system to move fluids? The answer is gut peristalsis. In fact, the human gut also uses peristalsis – waves of

involuntary constriction and relaxation of muscles – to mix gut contents and move them along. Sea spiders, which take in oxygen directly through their cuticles, show peristaltic waves that are much more vigorous than needed for digestion.

Woods and colleagues made that discovery after an Antarctic mission to explore a phenomenon known as “polar gigantism.” Scientists had long observed that polar species, including giant sea spiders, have larger bodies than their more temperate or tropical relatives. That trend raised a lot of intriguing questions about how the polar species manage basic life processes, including how to get oxygen into their bodies.



One of the things that Woods said makes sea spiders a great organism to study is “that they are really skinny and, using a microscope, you can see easily into their bodies.” In his first season at McMurdo Antarctic Station, Woods found himself spending “a lot of time just watching blood and gut flows in sea spiders.”

He soon realized that the sea spiders’ hearts were beating weakly. Their hearts weren’t moving any blood beyond the spiders’ central portion. In contrast, he noticed, their guts showed very strong and organized waves of peristaltic contractions.

“My ‘aha!’ moment was to consider that maybe all that sloshing of blood and guts was not about digestion but instead about moving respiratory gases around,” he said.

A series of experiments and observations in 12 sea spider species involving video microscopy of tracers in the animals’ hemolymph and guts together with experimental manipulation of the guts’ ability to contract allowed them to test out and confirm that hypothesis.

The researchers say the findings highlight the vast evolutionary diversity of solutions to problems that all animals encounter. It’s not clear whether the sea spiders’ space-filling guts first arose for purely digestive functions and the respiratory benefits came later or vice versa.

Woods says that future fossil finds might help to weigh in on the evolutionary origins of the animals’ unusual respiratory strategy. It also would be worthwhile to explore gas transport in other living arthropods with similarly complex guts, he said.

Read Woods’ paper, “Respiratory gut peristalsis by sea spiders,” at <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0960982217306280>.

###

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A to Z

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UM News

[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / [July](#) / [UM Leadership Program Hosts Iraqi Youth](#)

UM Leadership Program Hosts Iraqi Youth

July 11, 2017

MISSOULA – The University of Montana welcomes 25 Iraqi students this week as part of the 2017 Iraqi Young Leaders Exchange Program.

The students are participating in a three-week program focused on international peace building through studies in environmental and cultural preservation. They were selected by the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad, the U.S. Department of State and UM.

“I have already learned so much from these students about a region of the world that has been so central to foreign policy activities for a number of years,” said Natalie Dawson, a UM professor and one of the program’s organizers. “We have students from Mosul, Baghdad, the northern regions of

Kurdistan and many others.”

UM was one of only four institutions in the United States selected to host the students through a competitive grant program with the World Learning Institute based in Washington, D.C.



While students are in Montana, they will visit Glacier National Park to examine international peace park development and resource protection. They also will visit the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes to discuss indigenous rights and cultural history preservation. They also will explore aspects of Missoula’s summer excitement with baseball games, concerts in the park, and visits to local farms and host families.

Students are selected for the program based on their interest in the topics, as well as their general interest in visiting the United States. When asked, one student said about Montana, “At home, I spend most of my time studying for medical school, and I chose Montana because I wanted to see the beautiful landscapes and escape my studies to explore nature for three weeks.”

The program welcomes community members to join in for activities. For more information and ways to meet with the students, call Dawson at 406-552-5550 or email natalie.dawson@umontana.edu.

###

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[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / [July](#) / [UM Educator Named President of Statewide Accounting Association](#)

UM Educator Named President of Statewide Accounting Association

July 06, 2017

MISSOULA – University of Montana accounting Associate Professor Joshua Herbold was recently named the 2017-18 president of the Montana Society of Certified Public Accountants board of directors. He is the first educator to hold the office of president of MSCPA since 2000.

Herbold is the chair of the Department of Accounting and Finance in UM's School of Business Administration. He also is a registered CPA in the state of Montana.

Originally from Illinois, Herbold received both his undergraduate and graduate accounting degrees from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He has been teaching at UM since 2004.

A member of MSCPA since 2007, Herbold is a valued leader in



Montana's accounting profession. He is a popular speaker at MSCPA conventions and is the innovator and moderator of the annual "Success in Montana" panel discussions. In 2013, he received the Jack Kempner Outstanding Educator Award from the society. Herbold officially assumed his role as president on June 22 in Billings at the 104th annual MSCPA conference.

The Montana Society of CPAs is a professional association comprised of nearly 1,800 members worldwide. Its mission is to inspire, empower and impact members to achieve professional excellence.

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[UM](#) / [News](#) / [2017](#) / [July](#) / [UM's Iron Griz Hosts Free Fourth of July Barbecue for On-Duty First Responders](#)

UM's Iron Griz Hosts Free Fourth of July Barbecue for On-Duty First Responders

July 03, 2017

MISSOULA – On Tuesday, July 4, all on-duty first responders who work in Missoula are invited to a free barbecue at The Iron Griz, located at the University of Montana Golf Course.

The salute to first responders will be held from noon to 3 p.m. The free event includes Montana-raised Waygu burgers and Redneck hot dogs. The event will be staffed by volunteers from UM Dining and their families. The food has been donated by area food producers.

“We wanted to say a special thank you for their hard work and bravery,” said Camp Howard, director of UM Dining.

The Iron Griz, a UM Dining restaurant, is the winner of three international awards for collegiate retail dining concepts. Opened in 2015, the restaurant boasts a menu that features locally sourced food, including produce grown in the 1/3-acre garden in front of the restaurant.

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