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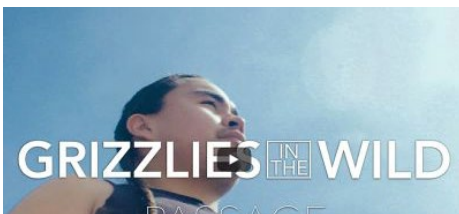
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UM student Elani Borhegyi recently won the prestigious Udall Scholarship.

By Kyle Spurr, UM News Service

MISSOULA – University of Montana student Elani Borhegyi is the latest in a long line of Grizzlies to win a Udall Scholarship, considered one of the top recognitions awarded to students in fields related to Native American nations or the environment.

Borhegyi – a junior majoring in **environmental science and sustainability** with minors in climate change studies, Spanish and biology – is one of 55 sophomores and juniors from 49 colleges

and universities across the nation to earn the recognition this year from the Morris K. Udall and Stewart L. Udall Foundation.

An additional 55 students nationwide were awarded honorable mentions, including Alexios Smith, a UM junior majoring in forestry. Smith, along with UM student Raina Woolworth, received the scholarship in 2021.

Borhegyi will receive a \$7,000 scholarship for academic expenses, access to the Udall Alumni Network and travel to Tucson, Arizona in August for an orientation to network and learn new skills.

“It’s going to open up a lot of doors for me,” Borhegyi said. “I’m excited to see what opportunities it brings and how I can use the scholarship to further my career goals in ecological restoration.”

Dr. Kylla Benes, director of external scholarships and fellowships at UM, said Borhegyi exemplifies what it means to put knowledge and convictions into action.

Benes noted Borhegyi’s work helping to draft UM’s Sustainability Action Plan, building collaboration across student groups, raising awareness around social justice and protesting last summer on the front line at a pipeline project through Minnesota.

“The positive impact of their work is palpable on and off campus and it is why, I believe, they were chosen for this honor,” Benes said.

UM students should not hesitate to leverage their passion and achievements to apply for scholarships as Borhegyi did, Benes said.

“UM is a top producer of Udall Scholars,” Benes said. “The emphasis on place, community and experiential learning at UM allows many students to engage deeply in issues around the environment and Native American communities and is likely why our students have found success in applying for the Udall Scholarship.”

Borhegyi of **Newton, Massachusetts** near Boston came to UM with an interest in biology and natural sciences. Over time, Borhegyi discovered a passion for restoration ecology, environmental justice and climate change, and how all three are connected.

“I want to work at the intersection of all three,” Borhegyi said. “I realized I want my career to not just be about science, but about how ecology impacts us in our everyday lives and how we are a part of the ecosystem.”

Borhegyi, who served as president of the Climate Response Club, recently organized the Four Sisters Garden at the PEAS Farm in Missoula. Drawing upon the traditional agricultural methods of the Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara nations, Borhegyi and other community members will plant sunflowers, corn, beans and squash to promote Indigenous ecological knowledge.

“It’s been a really cool project to teach community members and myself about Indigenous knowledge-based agriculture and regenerative farming techniques,” Borhegyi said.

This fall, Borhegyi will be in a Wilderness and Civilization program and will write a senior thesis on reimagining society’s relationship to the environment in the face of climate change.

Borhegyi was grateful for the opportunity to apply for the Udall Scholarship, adding that the application process alone was a valuable exercise in examining academic passions in ecological restoration.

“It’s been a chance to define my story,” Borhegyi said. “And to discover what I’m all about.”

###

Contact: Dave Kuntz, UM director of strategic communications, 406-243-5659,
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UM / News / UM, Montana Public Radio Win Regional Murrow Award for Wildfire Podcast

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

UM, MONTANA PUBLIC RADIO WIN REGIONAL MURROW AWARD FOR WILDFIRE PODCAST

26 MAY 2022

MISSOULA – The [University of Montana College of Business](#) and [Montana Public Radio](#) have been awarded a Regional Murrow Award for their collaboration on “[Fireline](#),” a podcast about what wildfire means for the West, our planet and our way of life.

The Murrow awards are among the most respected awards given to journalists. Murrow Award-

winning stories put public interest above all else and embody the values, principles and standards set forth by Edward R. Murrow, a journalism pioneer who set the standards for the highest quality of broadcast journalism.

“Fireline” is produced as a collaboration between the UM College of Business and Montana Public Radio. The podcast is hosted by Justin Angle, a UM business associate professor. It was produced by Nick Mott of the Peabody Award-winning show “Threshold” and “Richest Hill,” named one of The New Yorker’s “must-listen” podcasts of 2019. Victor Yvellez served as an editor and reporter for the show.

“Winning this Regional Murrow award is a tremendous honor,”

Angle said. “Our goal was to help people understand the complexity of wildfire: the effects of climate change, policy and practice, as well as leave listeners with tangible actions they can take to be a part of the solution.”

“Fireline,” a six-part series, examines the causes and consequences of the increasingly devastating wildfires burning in the U.S. It taps into the experience of firefighters on the ground, Salish and Kootenai tribal land managers bringing natural fire back to the landscape and climate scientists sounding the alarm about increasing wildfire risk.

“Fireline” will now advance to the National Murrow Award competition.

FIRE — LINE



All seven episodes of Fireline can be found on <https://www.firelinepodcast.org> or wherever podcasts are found.

The College of Business at UM has been named the top business school in the Big Sky Conference by U.S. News and World Report for six consecutive years.

Montana Public Radio is a service of UM. MTPR FM broadcast stations include 89.1 Missoula (KUFM), 91.5 Missoula, city (K218AI), 91.9 Hamilton (KUFN), 89.5 Polson (KPJH), 90.1 Kalispell, Whitefish, North Valley (KUKL), 90.5 Libby (KUFL), 91.7 Kalispell, city (K219BN), 101.3 Swan Lake (K267BJ), 91.3 Butte (KAPC), 91.7 Helena (KUHM), 91.7 Dillon (K219DN) and 89.9 Great Falls (KGPR). Visit <https://www.mtpr.org/> for more Montana news, arts and music.

###

Contact: Justin Angle, associate professor of marketing, 206-650-5522, justin.angle@umontana.edu.

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About 2,500 students made the spring semester Dean's List or President's 4.0 List at the University of Montana.

MISSOULA – At the University of Montana, about 2,500 undergraduate students made the spring semester 2022 Dean's List or President's 4.0 List.

To qualify, students must be undergraduates, earn a semester GPA of 3.5 or higher and receive grades of A or B in at least nine credits. Students who receive any grade of C+ or below or no credit (NC/NCR) in a course are not eligible.

The students on the linked lists below made UM's spring semester 2022 Dean's List or the

President's 4.0 List. Double asterisks after a name indicate the student earned a 4.0 GPA. A single asterisk indicates a GPA greater than 3.5 but less than 4.0. This information is grouped by hometowns or alphabetically by first name.

[View the Dean's List and President's 4.0 List for Montana students.](#)

[View the Dean's List and President's 4.0 List for out-of-state students.](#)

[View a full alphabetical list of all students who made the Dean's List and President's 4.0 List.](#)

All lists also are available on the [UM Dean's List and Degree Candidates webpage](#).

###

Contact: UM Registrar's Office, grading@umontana.edu.

Note: The University is prohibited from publishing information about students who signed the Student Request to Restrict Release of Directory Information form through the Registrar's Office. If students are not listed with a particular city or town, they should check other towns they may have listed as an address. If students are not listed and they believe they should be, email the Registrar's Office at grading@umontana.edu.

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Attendees at a donor-celebration event on May 24 include (left to right) Laurie Baefsky, College of the Arts and Media dean; Rafael Chacón, MMAC director; Clay Christian, Montana commissioner of higher education; Seth Bodnar, UM president; Terry Payne, donor and founder of PayneWest Insurance Inc.; Tim Payne; Dawn Payne; and Cindy Williams, UM Foundation president and CEO.

MISSOULA – When a group of impassioned University of Montana faculty and administrators began gathering a teaching collection of art objects and artifacts over 125 years ago, they embarked the institution on a remarkable journey. Their efforts led UM to become home to the

Montana Museum of Art and Culture and the most comprehensive collection of art in the state.

On Tuesday, May 24, University officials and friends gathered to celebrate another group of visionary MMAC pioneers: the donors whose philanthropic giving is providing the means for UM to construct a new building for the museum's permanent collection.

The much-anticipated privately funded project is made possible by the incredible generosity of many donors, including Patt and Terry Payne, who recently expanded their commitment for the project to a total of \$12.5 million. The building will allow the museum to transfer thousands of important works of art from campus storage to public display and engagement through study and research.

"We are excited and enthusiastic about the new facility that will provide unparalleled exhibition, storage, preservation and educational space," Terry Payne said at the event, which celebrated the launch of the building's construction in March. "Many of these works have been hidden away for decades, and together we will bring them to light for all to view, treasure and enjoy."

While lead donors enabled this new beginning for the physical building, further private financial support is needed to realize the full vision for the museum, Payne said. Additional private gifts will help the MMAC leverage the new space for research, education and programming to benefit all of its users – K-12 students, UM students, faculty members, artists, art lovers, the UM community, the broader Montana community and beyond.

"Our family invites additional donors to join us in bringing the new MMAC to its full potential," he said.

Payne is a 1963 UM graduate who received an honorary doctorate from the University in 2014. Together with his wife, Patt, Terry also has invested in UM's Payne Family Native American Center, which center's Elouise Cobell Land and Culture Institute, and a number of student scholarships. Their most recent gift of \$7.5 million established **the Payne Family Impact Scholarship** to help Montana students pay for college.

"This museum will be the embodiment of UM's enduring commitment to the arts and the history of our region," UM President Seth Bodnar said. "As we embark on its construction, we invite our giving community to seize this singular opportunity to join the Payne family and other generous donors in making the new facility the beacon for the arts in our state and the launchpad for a new generation of Montana artists."

The new campus landmark will provide approximately 17,000 square feet on three levels for galleries, state-of-the-art storage and preservation space, and public event areas. The museum will also include space for research, education and programming. The LEED-Certified building, designed by A&E Architects, will be a model of sustainability, providing the museum's collections with climate control and security.

“The aim of this facility is to build the first permanent home for this significant art collection in its history,” said H. Rafael Chacón, the Suzanne and Bruce Crocker director of MMAC. “Secondly, the building will provide spaces that allow us to fulfill our mission as a teaching and research institution and invite the public to enjoy these beautiful and compelling collections.”

The new MMAC building will be located in the upper northeast corner of Parking Lot P, across from the Student Rec Center and football practice fields. It is part of a larger renovation to the north end of campus that includes extending Memorial Row to the Clark Fork River and building a new indoor athletics facility on the River Bowl fields. Memorial Row, a walkway lined with stately Ponderosa trees, serves as a living tribute to those who died in service to the country and the 1917 influenza pandemic.

Swank Enterprises, a Missoula-based general contractor, leads construction of the new museum. The project is expected to be completed by fall 2023.

Please consider joining the donors who are helping to ensure the MMAC collection will soon be available to the public by emailing Cate Sundeen, director of development for the College of the Arts and Media, at cate.sundeen@supportum.org or calling 406-243-4990. Supporters also may [direct gifts to the University of Montana Foundation online](#) or P.O. Box 7159, Missoula, MT 59807-7159.

[The UM Foundation](#) is an independent nonprofit organization that has inspired philanthropic support to enhance excellence and opportunity at UM since 1950.

###

Video: [A video shows an animated rendering of the exterior of the new Montana Museum of Art and Culture building now under construction.](#)

Contact: Elizabeth Willy, director of communications, UM Foundation, 406-243-5320, elizabeth.willy@supportum.org.

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UM's M Trail is one of the most popular hiking trails in Montana.

MISSOULA – The University of Montana will soon begin work to make the famed M Trail on Mount Sentinel more sustainable for generations to come.

To prevent erosion and ensure the trail can continue to responsibly serve more than 1,000 hikers per day, UM will begin to reroute section 11 of the M Trail in early June. This work will impact two of the 13 switchbacks that lead to the M, and the entire trail will remain open to the public throughout the effort.

The trail reroute is part of a multiyear plan to rehabilitate the M Trail, which includes investing resources from a 2022 Recreational Trail Grant that will pay for vegetation rehabilitation around the M, as well as 100 additional railroad ties that were donated to UM by Montana Rail Link to prevent large-scale erosion.

The driving force behind recent upgrades to the M Trail is retired UM Professor Steve Gaskill, who led the effort to redesign the hiking trail and has fundraised for many improvements.

“UM is so grateful for Steve’s leadership through this enormous project,” said Marilyn Marler, who manages UM’s Natural Areas Program.

Members of the public interested in volunteering to help improve the M Trail can email MTrailVolunteer@gmail.com.

Additionally, to support prairie restoration and promote local biodiversity and wildlife habitat, UM employees will spot spray invasive plants on the M Trail in May and June to eradicate spotted knapweed, leafy spurge, dalmatian toadflax and other invasive species. These invasive plants crowd out Montana wildflowers and bunchgrasses, becoming a serious conservation threat to Mount Sentinel.

“For 22 years we have been spot spraying Mount Sentinel, and it looks better and better each year,” Marler said. “We also have all of the insect biocontrols released for those invasive plants, and we hand pull and seed with native plants when we can. It is so gratifying to see the return of the native prairies on UM land up on the mountain.”

To help identify invasive species on Mount Sentinel, UM will once again employ weed sniffing dogs trained by Working Dogs for Conservation. These canines detect seedlings of dyer’s woad and can prevent large-scale breakouts of this new invader to Montana.

“UM was one of the first sites in Montana to use search dogs to find this destructive plant,” Marler said. “But now the dogs are used at several infestations around the state. The idea is to find every single seedling each year, and kill it. If eight years go by with no new plants, then dyer’s woad is considered eradicated, which is a big relief.”

UM is also working to hire “M Trail rangers” for part-time summer work. Email Marler at marilyn.marler@mso.umt.edu if you are interested.

“We want to have a friendly presence on the M Trail to explain all the work going on, answer questions about flowers, take family photos for tourists and more,” said UM Associate Vice President Paula Short.

The M Trail was established in 1908 by UM students, and the .75-mile trail on UM property has been continuously maintained by the University ever since.

###

Contact: Marilyn Marler, UM natural areas manager, 406-544-7189,
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A new "Grizzlies in the Wild" video features UM's Zachariah Rides At The Door.

MISSOULA – The University of Montana today released a new “Grizzlies in the Wild” video on **Zachariah Rides At The Door**, a UM student from **Browning** who helped organize the **first in-person Kyiyo Pow Wow** since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the latest installment of the University’s video series, **Rides At The Door** describes his growth as a student at UM, which centers on how he used dance and his leadership role with the **Kyiyo Native American Student Association** to connect to his **Blackfeet** culture and develop the leadership skills to host one of the longest-running student powwows in the country.

"It's a celebration," Rides At The Door said about the powwow. "Being that they couldn't put it on for the past two years, I am so excited for our student members who have never seen Kyiyo."

The Kyiyo Pow Wow was held last month on the UM campus, bringing together Native Americans from across the nation and Montana. The annual event celebrates the rich heritage of tribes and Native cultures while sharing it with the University and future generations.

"If you are able to help your people, do it," Rides At The Door said. "It makes your heart feel good."

"Grizzlies in the Wild" is a digital video series created by UM to showcase students and employees who make Montana's flagship university dynamic and unique.

To view all editions of "Grizzlies in the Wild," visit the [University of Montana YouTube page](#).

###

Contact: Dave Kuntz, UM director of strategic communications, 406-243-5659, dave.kuntz@umontana.edu.

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ATHLETICS

GRIZ LACROSSE RETURNS TO NATIONAL TOURNAMENT STAGE

20 MAY 2022

The Montana lacrosse team poses for a photo after winning the Pacific Northwest Collegiate Lacrosse League championship this year to qualify for the Division II National Championship tournament.

By Kyle Spurr, UM News Service

MISSOULA – The University of Montana’s lacrosse team had its most successful season in 15 years when earlier this month it reached the semifinals of the Men’s Collegiate Lacrosse Association Division II National Championship.

Tucker Sargent, head coach and a former Montana lacrosse player who was on the 2007 national champion team, said the Griz lacrosse team has worked toward a return to the national spotlight since he took the helm as coach in 2010.

Jace Jarvis of Missoula joined the Griz lacrosse team in 2020. Jarvis is one of five players from Montana.

The team made it to the national tournament in 2017 – its first appearance since 2007 – and again in 2019. Both years, Montana lost in the first round. But this year the Griz won its first two games at the tournament in Round Rock, Texas just north of Austin. The team eventually lost in the semifinals to the University of Rhode Island, which then lost to University of Utah in the finals.

“It’s really fun for the players to be on that stage and see where Montana stacks up against everyone else,” Sargent said. “It was really exciting to see the guys get out there and



play for each other and represent the University of Montana and do pretty well.”

Montana’s lacrosse team, like other club sports at UM, draws student athletes from across the country who come to Missoula to study at the University and continue their athletic passions.

The lacrosse roster features athletes from all corners of the nation, including Hawaii, New York, Georgia, Minnesota and Ohio.

“For a lot of these guys, continuing to play their sport is a big priority when they are looking at college,” Sargent said. “We bring in a lot of kids who otherwise wouldn’t come here, and a lot of tuition dollars and a lot of excitement and good will for the University.”

The team also has several homegrown players from Montana, including Jace Jarvis and Ethan Eppard from **Missoula**, Wyatt Smith of **Kalispell**, Brenden Cahill of **Whitefish** and Aidan Potter of **Billings**.

Jarvis, who played lacrosse at Hellgate High School in Missoula before joining the Griz in 2020, said he remembers the college team visiting his practices in high school to invite the younger players to the Montana home games.

Jarvis, who studies business management at UM, said he continues to feel supported by the team and the community in Missoula. During the national tournament, the team regularly was featured in news articles across Montana and fans gathered at restaurants to watch the games being played in Texas.

“I had a lot of friends and family sending me articles and showing me they were watching the games at some of the local restaurants,” Jarvis said. “It was nice to have that Montana support.”

Sargent hopes to build off the momentum of the 2022 season and continue to grow the program. The team is independently funded and rents time to practice in Washington-Grizzly Stadium. One day, Sargent envisions finding a permanent turf field the lacrosse team could call home and attract more recruits. Improving facilities will help keep the team competitive, especially against rival teams at Montana State and North Dakota State, Sargent said.

In his three years on the lacrosse team, Jarvis has seen the team gain more success on the field and more attention from the community and University.

“We are being taken pretty seriously, which is nice,” Jarvis said. “I hope to move further in that direction.”

###

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COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SCIENCES

UM GRAD INSPIRED BY HISTORY, BIG DATA, AI

19 MAY 2022

Kayla Irish, from Lewistown, is a recent University of Montana graduate with bachelor's degree in history and math. Irish will begin a doctoral program at the University of Washington in statistics and will focus on the complexities surrounding ethical artificial intelligence.

MISSOULA – This is a story about a Grizzly from **Lewistown**, a town nearly smack dab in the middle of Montana, who carved her own path.



Kayla Irish, a recent University of Montana graduate, combined math and history degrees to pursue a unique focus on big data and societal challenges.

Her winding road includes history and math degrees, a stint interning at the nation's capital, time in a lab spent designing statistical models and a deep commitment to the ethical development of modern technology.

Meet Kayla Irish, a recent University of Montana alumna, who combined the critical thinking of the liberal arts with training in STEM fields, following a thread of curiosity the entire way.

“Sometimes I can’t believe how individualized my path was at UM,” Irish said. “And then I think about how much support I received to pursue practically any topic that interests me. The opportunities offered to me were limitless.”

This fall, Irish will begin a doctoral program in statistics at the University of Washington and focus on the ethical quandaries surrounding artificial intelligence.

“Our world now is all about data, every single choice we make and action we take is a data

point,” Irish said. “But what’s more interesting to me is what we do with that data. And a lot of those answers come from history because it can inform us about groups of people having power over the behavior of other groups of people. What we are capable of when it comes to data is worth being concerned about.”

Irish said she always felt a pull toward UM and found herself as a Presidential Scholar in the [Davidson Honors College](#) “completely enthralled” with an Introduction to American History class, taught by UM Associate Professor Kyle Volk, chair of UM’s [Department of History](#).

“I noticed right away Kayla’s penchant for rigor,” Volk said. “She sat front and center every day and was a force. She was always prepared and was very comfortable taking different positions with complicated historical problems. She thought deeply and always grounded her insights in evidence.”

Irish said from there she took as many history classes as she could and was invited to take Volk’s graduate level history class. He wrote a letter of recommendation for her to intern in Washington, D.C., which landed Irish an internship with U.S. Sen. Chuck Schumer and a bird’s eye view of the workings of the U.S. Senate Committee on Finance.

Irish said her time in Washington, D.C., sparked an interest to understand “modern societal issues through data and math.”

So she returned from her internship with a hunger for STEM and enrolled in math and computer science classes, taking a deep dive into the disciplines after completing requirements for a history degree.

She sought mentorship and found herself statistics and computer science faculty members like Jon Graham and Travis Wheeler. She also found opportunities to engage with big data. All along, Irish developed a passion for statistical theory and analysis as they relate to human populations.

“The critical thinking side of my brain drives me to pursue human-centered research in AI [Artificial Intelligence], and the logic side of my brain really enjoys dissecting and exploring systems.”

Those systems include self-driving cars, cancer detection technology, advertisements and even phone facial recognition and the ways data is provided to machines.

“Artificial intelligence is only as good as the data it’s given,” she said. “Any bias in the data can hurt the integrity of its decisions.”

That might look like companies using technology to scan for job placements that inadvertently leave female candidates out of the running. Or when a facial recognition system doesn’t identify people of color because the system doesn’t have enough diversity in its data.

“Ideally, I would like to see AI be able to explain or articulate the choices it makes,” she said. “I want to provide AI with an ethical framework.”

Irish said her training in the humanities taught her to approach complex power dynamics with strong writing, research and communication skills, which created a bridge to STEM.

“I cannot overstate how important training in the social sciences is for the modern world,” Irish said. “Data, machine learning, and AI are critical parts of everyday life, so the people working on these technologies need to feel responsible for their impacts.”

Volk said Irish organically found the “connective tissue” between math and history and mastered multiple disciplines.

“Artificial intelligence and data capitalism are rapidly transforming our lives and presenting all sorts of ethical dilemmas,” Volk said. “We should all want someone with Kayla’s humanistic training doing this type of work in the STEM fields. The stakes couldn’t be much bigger.”

###

Contact: Kyle Volk, associate professor, chair, UM Department of History, 406-243-2979, kyle.volk@umontana.edu.

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COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SCIENCES

GRIZ CHAT: UM EATING DISORDERS RESEARCHER CAITLIN MARTIN- WAGAR

17 MAY 2022

UM Assistant Professor Caitlin Martin-Wagar studies eating disorders, a common and often undiagnosed mental health condition.

MISSOULA – When Assistant Professor Caitlin Martin-Wagar joined the University of Montana faculty in 2021, she knew she'd be a program of one.

Martin-Wagar's specialty is the research and treatment of eating disorders. When it comes to her field, fellow practitioners are rare – particularly in rural states like Montana.

“There is huge gap in access to eating disorders care in rural communities,” she said. “I was excited to come here, and I want to be of help.”

There is no doubt much work needs to be done to improve outcomes for the estimated 30 million Americans who struggle with EDs in their lifetime – a situation that became even more dire during COVID-19, where one recent study found hospital admissions for those with eating disorders rose 48%.

“I wasn't surprised about the significant uptick during the pandemic,” Martin-Wagar said. “Some of the sociocultural risk factors for eating disorders (for example, weight stigma) and normalized behaviors (like dieting) were already increasingly prevalent in society,” she said. “Add intense uncertainty, loneliness, fear, increased time online and loss of routine to the mix, and it was unsurprising so many individuals with eating disorders relapsed, and others developed eating disorders.”

She entered the field of eating disorder research through her work with dialectical behavior therapy, which is a type of treatment for people with emotional issues, suicidality and difficulty regulating emotions.

“There was an opening at an EDs facility provider, and I applied to work there providing DBT, cognitive behavioral therapy and family-based treatment after getting my master's degree,” she explained. “Working with eating disorders felt exactly the place for me. I quickly noticed how inequities contributed to the development and maintenance of EDs.”

The Ohio native would go on to earn a Ph.D. in counseling psychology at the University of Akron and had just finished a postdoctoral associateship at Yale School of Medicine before joining UM's [Department of Psychology](#), housed in the College of Humanities and Sciences.

Recently, Martin-Wagar sat down with UM News to talk about EDs, dispelling myths and exploring reasons why EDs are often misdiagnosed. The good news, she said, is that eating disorders are treatable, especially if caught early, and people can go on to live meaningful, productive lives.

UM News: Are there common personality traits or personas of individuals that struggle with eating disorders?

Not really. Eating disorders occur in all types of people. However, we do know that certain factors, temperaments, traits and experiences can put someone at a higher risk for developing an eating disorder. For example, thin ideal internalization, expectations for thinness, perfectionism or negative impulsiveness can put someone at a higher risk for developing an eating disorder. Ultimately, complex biopsychosocial factors interact in a person to develop an eating disorder.

UM News: What misconceptions might we have about EDs that are important to clarify?

Where to begin? Eating disorders are highly misunderstood. To me, one of the most harmful misconceptions about EDs is that only young, thin, white, affluent girls have eating disorders. However, only six in 100 individuals with EDs are actually underweight! Unfortunately, those in larger bodies are about half as likely to be diagnosed with an eating disorder. Furthermore, eating disorders absolutely occur among all racial and ethnic groups, genders, age groups and socioeconomic backgrounds. In fact, being in a minoritized group, such as being a member of the LGBTQ+ community, puts someone at higher risk of developing an eating disorder.

Another misconception that is quite dangerous is the commonly held belief that those with EDs are making a choice to have an eating disorder. Eating disorders are highly impairing and deadly disorders that no one chooses to experience. Aside of opioid overdoses, eating disorders have the highest mortality rate of all mental illnesses.

Finally, a third misconception is that they are rare. It is estimated that EDs affect at least 30 million Americans at some point in their lifetimes. Though we don't know the eating disorder prevalence on our own campus, a recent survey I provided to around 400 UM undergraduates found that about 9% endorsed having been previously or currently treated for an eating disorder. The number of individuals with eating disorders is likely even higher, with the vast majority being cases that are missed. Not to mention the millions of Americans who experience disordered eating but do not meet full criteria for an eating disorder diagnosis.

Our culture has a toxic relationship with food, eating and bodies, so it is somewhat normative to have some issues around eating and body image.

UM News: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other health

organizations reported increases in the number of teens, particularly girls, seeking medical care for EDs during COVID-19. What about the pandemic influenced this?

Eating disorders have increased substantially during the pandemic. With people feeling more uncertainty, less control over their environments and future, and disrupted routines and structures, the general public has experienced changes in their eating patterns. With this time being particularly stressful for most people, their vulnerability to mental health problems is quite high. This is even more so the case with adolescents, who are already at high risk for developing eating disorders during that developmental period.

Relapse for people with treated eating disorders has also risen during the pandemic. Despite the alarming prevalence and severity of eating disorders, waitlists and a lack of resources cause a gap in receiving vital care.

UM News: Eating disorders have long been associated with females, but they also occur in males. Are the factors that lead to EDs different for men and women?

Though eating disorders are more common in girls and women, the prevalence of eating disorders in boys and men is much higher than what folks expect. About one-third of those with eating disorders are men. A main difference in the presentations of eating disorders in men includes a greater focus on muscularity. Muscle-enhancing disordered behavior is more common in boys and men than in girls and women.

UM News: The media, and in particular social media, have been linked with an increase in the incidence of EDs among young people. How might our online culture be contributing to weight stigma?

Limiting promotion of social media accounts that encourage problematic body image and eating patterns would be helpful. However, I do think we are in for an uphill battle if weight stigma is not better acknowledged and addressed in our culture. In our society, we tend to obsess over weight, and people with higher weights face prejudice and discrimination. There are currently no federal laws in place that prohibit size or weight discrimination.

We also know that weight is not a direct indicator of health, and shaming people for their weight is cruel and can result in disordered eating, avoidance of health care, reduced exercise and poorer mental and physical health.

Even if we limit exposure to unhealthy messages on social media – and we should – how we all contribute to weight stigma will continue to negatively impact children and adolescents. Children as young as 3 exhibit anti-fat attitudes, and over 80% of 10-year-olds are afraid of being fat. Weight-based discrimination is one of the most common forms of discrimination, yet is socially acceptable and encouraged. As our society grapples with many forms of discrimination, we need to work hard to dismantle weight-based stigma and discrimination.

UM News: Your research has focused on EDs and mental/physical health outcomes related to sociocultural conditions. Talk a bit about what you have found in your research?

Yes, my research examined eating disorder interventions, mechanisms of change, access to care and weight stigma. An elephant in the room is that many folks with higher weight are being encouraged by loved ones and health care providers to engage in harmful eating disorder behaviors, with the hopes of decreasing body weight. Next, I am working on finding ways to more directly and intentionally decrease internalized weight stigma as part of eating disorder treatment.

Right now, current evidence-based eating disorder treatments are between 21-50% effective for adults, with slightly better results for adolescents doing family based treatments, so my work will aim to contribute to efforts to improve eating disorder treatment.

UM News: What steps can be taken to make access to mental health care more accessible in rural states like Montana?

Access to eating disorder care is not sufficient even in the most resourced states. Despite EDs routinely being seen in all health care settings – often at higher rates than those without eating disorders – providers typically view EDs as a “specialty” area.

In rural Montana, health care providers may be the only provider within hundreds of miles, and as such, tend to operate as health care generalists versus specialists. One of the many reasons I am so excited to be in Montana in this faculty role is that now more students will be trained in eating disorder research and clinical care. My hope is that some of those I train will fall in love with Montana and return here after residency to help address our shortage of eating disorder resources.

To make mental health care more accessible – especially eating disorder care – our state

needs to allot more funding to mental health care. Despite the severe health implications and impairment with EDs, federal funding for EDs is extremely low compared to other mental health concerns.

I think telehealth can help improve treatment access, but it will not be a sufficient solution without more resources dedicated to training health care providers in assessing and treating eating disorders. We also need systemic changes to insurance and work to reduce weight-based stigma and eating disorder stigma. I also would love to see more school-based screening and interventions, because we know the best prognosis for EDs is if we intervene as soon after onset of symptoms as possible.

Finally, we need more eating disorder researchers and clinicians from underrepresented backgrounds to improve how we conceptualize and screen for EDs.

UM News: When we think about EDs and treatment, like other disciplines of health care, a question of privilege and equity arises. What can we glean from the socio-economic markers of those who have eating disorders and the resources to seek treatment and recover?

Only about 20% of individuals with EDs ever receive treatment. Access to treatment tends to be higher for those with good insurance and other financial resources. Then, treatment-related research at eating disorder clinics often has skewed demographics, furthering misconceptions in the field. One way to address this problem is for funding agencies to allot more money to eating disorder interventions studies, because these studies do not rely on folks having insurance or financial resources to participate in treatment.

###

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COLLEGE OF FORESTRY AND CONSERVATION

A person in dark clothing stands on a rocky shore, holding a camera up to their eye to take a photo. The background features a calm lake reflecting the sky, with majestic mountains in the distance. Some mountain peaks are covered in snow. The sky is filled with large, white, fluffy clouds against a bright blue background.

UM INSTITUTE: VISITORS TO MONTANA RETURN TO NEAR PRE- PANDEMIC LEVELS

16 MAY 2022

MISSOULA – About 12.5 million nonresidents visited Montana in 2021 and spent around \$5.15 billion in the Treasure State, according to estimates by the [Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research](#) at the University of Montana.

The number of travelers visiting the state in 2021 increased 12.5% from 2020, bringing the

number nearly back to the pre-pandemic visitation levels. This recovery performance far exceeded most of the nation.

Those 12.5 million travelers made up 5.6 million travel groups in Montana during the year. Nearly half of those travelers were here during the third quarter from July through September.

“Overall for 2021, slightly larger group sizes, longer lengths of stay and higher daily average spending per group resulted in the significant increase in spending compared to previous years,” said Jeremy Sage, ITRR interim director.

As is generally the case, money spent on fuel is the highest category, accounting for nearly a quarter of average daily spending for travel groups. Restaurant and bar spending and accommodations make up another third of the average daily travel budget for nonresidents.

Visitor spending during 2021 supported an estimated 47,800 jobs directly. Associated with those jobs is \$1.3 billion of labor income directly supported by nonresident spending.

An additional \$734 million of labor income is indirectly supported by nonresident travel spending. These travelers contributed more than \$387 million in state and local taxes in 2021.

All information and reports published by ITRR are available online at <http://www.itrr.umt.edu>.

###

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UM / News / Balancing Both: UM Graduate Succeeds with Molecular Biology, Marching Band

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SCIENCES

BALANCING BOTH: UM GRADUATE SUCCEEDS WITH MOLECULAR BIOLOGY, MARCHING BAND

13 MAY 2022

Hunter Grimes' path to her UM graduation included molecular biology lab work and running onto the field with the marching band at Griz football games.

By Dave Kuntz, UM News Service

MISSOULA – In the final months of her senior year, University of Montana student Hunter Grimes presented her molecular biology research at a prestigious conference in California.

Grimes played an important role in Dr. Stephen Lodmell’s on-campus research lab for three years, working to identify interactions of the protein RIOK3 with the cellular immune response to viruses like Rift Valley fever – a deadly mosquito-borne virus that spreads among livestock.

But when asked if she could do anything before she graduates this month, Grimes said, “I’d love to run onto the football field with my piccolo one last time.”

In an era when much of society pushes students to choose an exclusive academic path of sciences or the arts, Grimes proudly used her time at UM to prove that practice wrong.

“A lot of students feel pushed to go one way or the other, music or science,” she said while reflecting on her time on campus. “You don’t have to choose a single path. If more students pursued their passions, it would be very beneficial.”

After graduating from **Whitefish** High School, Grimes applied to more than a dozen universities across the country as she sought to find a home to further her education and interest in biology.

“I think bacteria are cool,” said the microbiology major. “I have always found the interaction between bacteria and humans interesting.”

But when it came time to choose the college where she would study that bacteria, one factor stood out above all else: the university had to have a marching band.

And after being offered a scholarship by UM’s **Davidson Honors College**, she packed up and made the journey down Highway 93 to her new home at UM, where she pursued two paths as a scientist and musician.

In Lodmell’s research lab, Grimes thrived right away and was even honored at the conclusion of her first year for her exceptional performance in a chemistry course.

Lodmell himself noted that Grimes will leave a lasting impression within his department.

“Hunter is doing advanced research related to virology and cellular immunology in my lab, has presented her work at regional and national meetings and already is a coauthor on a peer-reviewed research article,” he said. “She has been steadfast and passionate about her research, regularly devoting many hours per week to the cause.”

Grimes credits faculty members like Lodmell, and the unique opportunities made available through the Davidson Honors College, for providing her world-class research opportunities at UM – something she doesn’t believe she would have received anywhere else. In fact, the Davidson Honors College furnished the funds Grimes needed to present her research in California earlier this year.

“I couldn’t have found an environment that was more supportive,” she said. “So many people at UM are invested in my career and my research.”

While she thrived in the classroom and the research lab, it was the marching band that provided her the energy to power through some of her more challenging academic courses.

“The marching band is my second family,” she said. “It is where I have my best memories from college, and it is where I experienced my best moments.”

Grimes’ high school did not have a marching band, but once she joined the Grizzly Marching Band, she knew she had found something special.

“Hunter was a positive influence on those around her,” said Kevin Griggs, UM associate director of bands and the director of athletic bands. “She was accepting and friendly to everyone and set an example of hard work, kindness and positivity that made the band a better experience for everyone she encountered. Her love of music and support for UM – and all things Griz – were apparent in her dedication and leadership.”

When asked to choose her favorite memory while in the Grizzly Marching Band, Grimes is quick to respond, “Winning the Griz-Cat game last fall.” But then she immediately pivoted to an anecdote about a little-known Brawl of the Wild tradition.

“The Grizzly and Bobcat piccolo sections always exchange cookies,” she said with a smile, revealing a hidden bond with her woodwind counterparts across the Continental Divide.

It is experiences like these that Grimes is going to miss the most as she walks across the Commencement stage, but she already looks forward to joining UM’s Alumni Band in the years ahead.

Grimes is preparing to apply to medical school next year, and as she reflects on her time at UM, she is grateful for the unique opportunity to pursue her two loves, science and music. In fact, she feels strongly that her time in the marching band complimented her work in the research lab.

When prompted, Grimes’ parting advice for future Grizzlies reflects her own journey at UM:

“The best thing I’ve done in college is the marching band. Every student at UM can find something like that. UM is the one college I looked at where there is truly something for everyone, so go out there and find your marching band.”

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UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

UM ANNOUNCES SPRING 2022 GRADUATES

12 MAY 2022

Nearly 1,800 students are set to graduate from the University of Montana on May 14.

MISSOULA – The University of Montana has nearly 1,800 students who are degree candidates for spring semester 2022.

The students listed in the links below are UM degree candidates or have been awarded their degrees.

Students with “cum laude” after their name indicate a GPA of 3.40 to 3.69. “Magna laude” indicates a 3.70 to 3.89 GPA, and “summa laude” is 3.90 and above.

Official awarding of a degree and any official designation of graduation with honors or graduation with high honors is not made until students have completed their final term of enrollment and have met all requirements.

- [View a full list of Montana in-state candidates for graduation.](#) (Listed by hometown.)
- [View a full list of out-of-state candidates for graduation.](#) (Listed by state or country.)
- [View a full list of all candidates for graduation alphabetized by first name.](#)

All lists also are available online on the [UM Dean's List and Degree Candidates page](#).

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MISSOULA COLLEGE

GRADUATION SPOTLIGHT: ESPORTS HELPS GRIZ GAMER WIN THROUGH TO GRADUATION

12 MAY 2022

Jimmy Painter captained the Grizzly Esports Overwatch team while earning his IT degree. (UM photo by Andy Kemmis)

By Cary Shimek, UM News Service

MISSOULA – All those parents scolding their kids about playing too many video games because “that will never get you anywhere” shouldn’t talk with Jimmy Painter.

The Missoula College student will graduate May 14 from the University of Montana with a degree in information technology. To hear Painter tell it, he never would have found his career path without a healthy dose of video games and becoming a founding member of the Griz Esports team.

“I used esports to help pay for college,” he said. “Most of us on the team receive scholarships through esports. We’ll log onto CyberBear (UM’s online student services portal) and get a couple thousand dollars of scholarships, which really helps out. I have gotten it a couple of times, and it’s just for being on the teams.”

Painter managed to find a winning path for himself at UM – he already has a job lined up after graduation – but it didn’t happen right away.

“I had issues where I struggled finding out what I wanted to do with my life and what degree would suit me best,” he said. “I just had a hard time figuring it out.”

His story started in his hometown of Toledo, Washington, where the dedicated gamer already administered his own Minecraft server by age 14. Over the years he upped his pixel violence with shooters like Counter-Strike and Overwatch, and then he discovered UM while visiting a friend on campus. He quickly fell in love with the area.

A year later he was a computer science student on the central UM campus. He liked programming, but the intense math wasn’t his favorite, so he switched to media arts. In that department he met Michael Cassens, an assistant professor preparing to launch UM’s fledgling **Griz Esports program**.

“I started going to their orientation events, and I walked onto the Overwatch team,” Painter said. “The following year I took over as team captain, and I’ve done that the past two years.”

Painter often uses "Lodeman" as the gamertag for his online video game personas.

For those not in the know, Overwatch is a first-person shooter where two teams of six battle it out, fighting over payloads, key points on a map or who will be the last avatar standing. He generally plays as Reinhardt – an armored dude with a giant hammer – or Cassidy – a cowboy with deadly



revolvers. Painter is a platinum-level player, so he’s not one to mess with online.

“I had the pleasure of having Jimmy as both a student and player on our team,” Cassens said. “He has always been hardworking and dedicated to his academics while leading our Overwatch team with incredible grace. He truly embodies our UM Esports ideals by accepting everyone regardless of their background, and he garnered the respect of all his teammates because he uplifts everyone’s strengths through his leadership.”

Painter started working for the UM Information Technology department as a student tech. He enjoyed helping professors and staff members fix their email or reset forgotten passwords. He also started IT work for his esports team, helping manage and maintain the team’s machines in the **Gaming Den in the University Center**, where team members meet to practice, compete and hang out. In fact, one of his proudest UM accomplishments was spearheading a project that overhauled their powerful gaming computers so that all the software updates automatically in a system that is completely locked down and doesn’t need to run Windows.

“Eventually I had an epiphany that I could do IT as a full-time career,” he said.

But UM didn’t have a dedicated IT major as part of the main campus. For that, he would need to head across the river to the University’s two-year Missoula College. It was a key turning point he wouldn’t regret.

“It’s been a fantastic program,” he said. “They are very good professors who know what they are doing. Vic Valgenti over there teaches like half the classes. The networking classes are amazing. I’ve learned so much.

“The great thing is that I take those classes and get all that information, and then I can immediately take that and apply it to my job and work at UM IT,” Painter said. “And everything I learn at UM IT helps me with my classes.”

In his IT job, he began to relish tackling bigger problems – like taking several days to bring dying university computers back from the brink. “I’ve done like three different hard-drive corruption things in the past couple months,” he said proudly, adding that the department has trained him to become a full-time systems analyst for campus.

In fact, that’s the job he will move into immediately after graduation. And staying at UM means he gets to continue helping with the flourishing Griz Esports program.

“If you want to do stuff with gaming and esports, this is definitely the place to be,” Painter said. “There are so many different opportunities for our students, and you can get scholarships for esports just like a regular student-athlete. And in some of the collegiate tournaments, there are like \$90,000 grand prizes that sometimes go to scholarships divided among team members.”

The Griz Esports Rocket League team recently earned a trip to nationals in Virginia at the College of William and Mary. (Rocket League? It’s basically arcade-style team soccer with vehicles and explosions.) The red-hot UM team made it to the final four in the nation but eventually crashed and burned against a tough University of Delaware Blue Hens squad.

Painter said Griz Esports had tripled in size since its inception, with growing diversity and much more female representation than most universities. The team also raises thousands for charitable causes. A recent digital-video livestream earned more than \$5,000 for a children’s hospital in Helena in 24 hours.

“We use technology that makes it easy to donate,” he said. “There is a ticker that is constantly updated so we can see how well we’re doing. We’ve been able to help a lot of great causes.”

Painter is excited to level up at Commencement on May 14 and start his next chapter at UM.

“When you get offered a great position in a place you love working at, you might as well take it.”

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UM senior Zoe Transtrum studied at the PEAS Farm, which grows thousands of pounds of fruits and vegetables for the Missoula Food Bank.

By Kyle Spurr, UM News Service

MISSOULA – Zoe Transtrum wasn't planning to pursue environmental studies when she came to the University of Montana on a soccer scholarship from her hometown of **Boise, Idaho**.

Zoe



Transtrum had several hands-on learning experiences at UM, including gardening at PEAS Farm

But after taking a class on sustainable communities her first semester in fall 2018, Transtrum was hooked. She went on to double major in **environmental studies** and **sustainability science and practice** and minor in **climate change studies** and **ecological restoration**.

“After I took that course my freshman year, I thought this is where I belong,” Transtrum said. “It introduced all of these topics that were completely new to me. And it really drew me in.”

Throughout her four years, Transtrum had several hands-on learning experiences including an internship at the **PEAS Farm**, an urban, sustainable farm that grows thousands of pounds of fruits and vegetables for the Missoula Food Bank.

Last summer, Transtrum earned college credits through an outdoor course with the Wild Rockies Field Institute, where she backpacked for three weeks through Yellowstone National Park. She learned first-hand about restoration efforts in the park.

“It was three weeks of backpacking and camping the whole time and meeting with land managers,” Transtrum said. “I’ve never been backpacking before so it was awesome to learn.”

Peter McDonough, climate change studies program director at UM who has known Transtrum for the past four years, said he is impressed with her ability to examine major global issues such as climate justice and women empowerment while staying positive and motivated.

“She has a characteristic combination of intense passion for and wry humor about really big issues,” McDonough said. “The result is this powerful but encouraging presence of mind and purpose.”

Transtrum’s work in the climate change studies program has directly contributed to sustainability efforts and awareness on campus through projects and her ability to connect easily with people, McDonough said.

“I like to think the climate change studies program attracts a certain kind of student who can emotionally face a global crisis and thrive in a supportive community of others doing the same,” McDonough said. “Zoe epitomizes that idea and has been an inspiration to many others in the program.”

Outside of environmental studies, another major highlight for Transtrum was her participation in the **Sports Diplomacy: Sport for Social Change** exchange program through the Mansfield Center. In the program, Transtrum traveled to Peru in the spring of her freshman year with a group of about 15 people, ranging from high school students to adults. Their goal was to advocate for gender equality and women empowerment by using soccer as a platform.

Transtrum, a midfielder on the Griz soccer team, played soccer with young girls in Peru and helped host workshops and training sessions. The Peruvian girls later came to Missoula as part of the two-way exchange.

“There’s so many more barriers that women have there to be able to play sports,” Transtrum said. “That was really eye opening to me. It made me really appreciate my opportunity to play

soccer here.”

Heidi Blair, program manager at the Mansfield Center who oversees Sports Diplomacy, said Transtrum thrived in the program and connected cross-culturally with the Peruvian girls using her kind and genuine personality. Transtrum also led and mentored the high school students in her group, Blair said.

“Not only is Zoe a skilled and passionate soccer player, she also stepped into these leadership and teaching positions with humble confidence and grace,” Blair said.

As a Griz soccer player, Transtrum finished her college career on a high note when the team won the Big Sky Conference Tournament last fall and qualified for the NCAA Women’s Soccer Tournament.

Transtrum has continued to share her love of soccer by coaching a U12 youth team and playing in adult soccer leagues. She enjoys being a role model for the younger players.

“It reminded me that this game can be used for so much more than just competition,” she said.

Transtrum’s other skill is playing the violin, which she has done since she was about 4 years old, the same time she started kicking a soccer ball. Before graduation, she performed in the pit orchestra of the musical “She Loves Me,” produced by UM’s theater and music schools.

As she finishes her final performances and looks back fondly at her time at UM, Transtrum is excited for all the possibilities that lie ahead. She is interested in careers focused on sustainability or climate change. Both have become strong passions since she arrived on campus.

“I didn’t even know I was interested in going into the environmental field,” Transtrum said. “But to have all these really cool experiences and to learn about it here has been so special.”

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COLLEGE OF THE ARTS AND MEDIA

GRADUATION SPOTLIGHT: JOURNALISM GRADUATES BRING MODERN FACE TO MEDIA

10 MAY 2022

Graduating students Austin Amestoy (left) and Antonio Ibarra have made their mark on UM's journalism program and plan to put what they've learned to bettering the world around them.

MISSOULA – One student aspires to be a nightly news anchor. The other to serve as a photo editor for a major international publication.

Both have made a lasting mark on the University of Montana **School of Journalism**, and each believes their chosen profession is critical to a thriving democracy.

As they head to graduation this month, it's no small wonder then that Austin Amestoy (the future anchor) and Antonio Ibarra (the future photo editor) exude an excitement born of the knowledge that they are ready take what they have learned at UM and make a difference in the world.

Amestoy, a native of **Laurel**, studied a broad swath of journalism subjects at UM but found covering the 67th Montana Legislature in 2021 as a statewide student reporter to be a formative experience.

"I love government reporting, and being in Helena was an incredible opportunity and a real launchpad for me," said Amestoy, who minored in political science and spent the past three summers working as a TV reporter for KTVQ in Billings.

Learning about the inner workings of government came with an opportunity to try his hand at audio reporting, which led him to suggest that the student staffers of UM's student newspaper, the **Montana Kaimin**, launch a podcast, where Amestoy serves as host.

An edition of that podcast – **The Kaimin Cast** – was a top 10 national finalist in the NPR College Podcast Challenge for 2022. It was one of multiple recognitions Amestoy has earned during the course of his collegiate career. Most recently, he was nominated for several student awards from the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences-Northwest Region, which will be given out at the Emmy Awards ceremony in June.

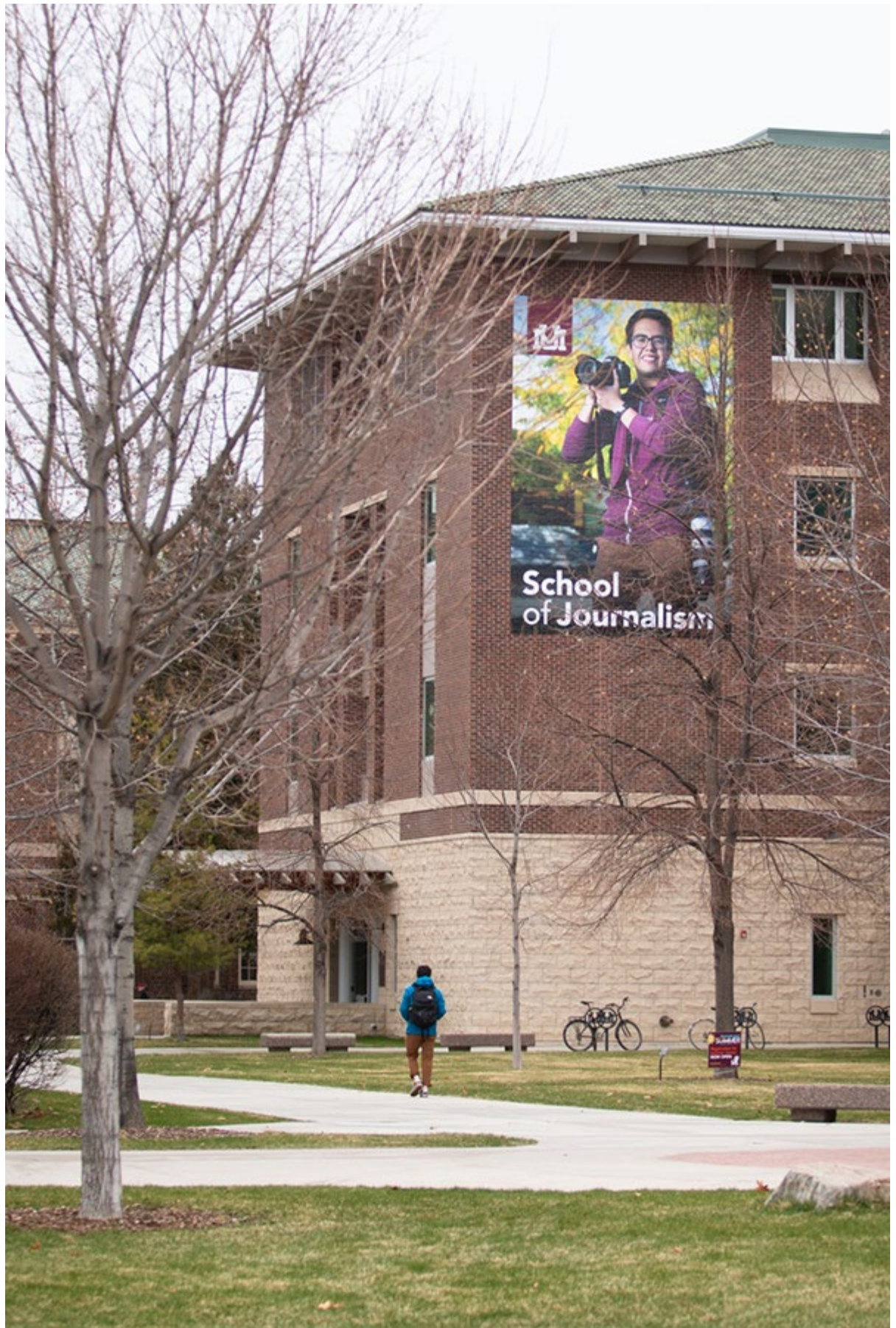
"Austin came to UM to learn everything, and then he mastered all of it: writing, podcasting, videography, racking up awards and accolades in those areas and more," said Jule Banville, associate professor in journalism and faculty adviser to the Kaimin. "We know that he could go anywhere in the world of journalism and be a success, but if you've ever had even one conversation with Austin, you know Montana runs through his core. I can't wait to see what he'll do."

Ibarra moved to Montana from Morelos, Mexico as a child when his parents got jobs at the Rocky Mountain Laboratories in Hamilton and lived for a time in Tampa. His interest in writing started at an early age, he said, but his true love is photojournalism. He has made a name for himself in both fields, winning multiple awards and finalist rankings from Society of Professional Journalists and the William Randolph Hearst Journalism Awards Program, also known as the college Pulitzer Prizes.

Ibarra walks past his billboard on the journalism building.

“A lot of people asked me why I wanted to go into journalism, and I’ve said it’s to tell stories and highlight people you don’t always see in the media,” said Ibarra. “You have to have respect for your audience and learn from them.”

In addition to being known for his writing and photography, Ibarra gained campus notoriety as one of several students featured in large billboards on college buildings. He calls being the face of the journalism program a



“humbling experience” and said plenty of undergraduate students deserved recognition.

“In the Kaimin office, Antonio is ‘Big Toni,’ and it’s not just because of the huge photo of him

holding a camera on the side of the J-school,” said Banville. “Everything good about people is larger when it comes to Antonio – he’s the most generous, the most thoughtful, the one who’s always positive. He has so much talent, and it’s great to see someone like him enter this profession and be an ambassador for kindness in the news biz.”

Denise Dowling, director of the School of Journalism, said Amestoy and Ibarra exemplify the world of modern journalism.

“They’ve successfully embraced the multifaceted platforms of today’s news – writing, photos, video, audio,” Dowling said. “And they’ve shown an understanding of which medium is most appropriate for the story they are telling.”

The support they give each other – in an interview they joke about being public relations representatives for the other – typifies the journalism program, Dowling added.

“The commitment to the profession and to fellow students really sets our school apart and makes it an inspiring place to be,” she said.

Following graduation, Amestoy will work as an intern for Montana Public Radio, producing the weekday newscasts. He hopes to do some reporting on the side.

Ibarra has been hired by Lee Enterprises, owners of the Missoulian and papers in Helena, Butte and Billings, as a statewide photographer and also looks forward to writing.

They credit their professors for helping them make initial and important connections to journalism outlets in the state, “and we expect their guidance won’t end at graduation,” Ibarra said.

Adds Amestoy, “Once you are a part of the journalism school, you say, ‘see you soon, not goodbye.’”

###

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UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

UM CELEBRATES CLASS OF 2022 AT UPCOMING COMMENCEMENT

09 MAY 2022

MISSOULA – The University of Montana will celebrate the Class of 2022 with in-person Commencement ceremonies on Saturday, May 14, in the Adams Center.

UM will hold two Commencement ceremonies. The 9 a.m. ceremony will be for students in the:

- W.A. Franke College of Forestry and Conservation
- Phyllis J. Washington College of Education

- Department of Public Administration and Policy
- College of Health
- College of Business

The 2 p.m. ceremony will be for students in the:

- College of Humanities & Sciences
- College of the Arts and Media
- Missoula College

Businessman Dennis K. Eck and banker James “Jim” R. Scott will each receive **Honorary Doctorates during the Commencement ceremonies**. Eck will be presented an Honorary Doctorate of Business and Scott will receive an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters.

The two also will serve as Commencement speakers, with Eck speaking to graduates at the 9 a.m. ceremony and Scott speaking at the 2 p.m. ceremony.

Family and friends who are unable to attend commencement, can watch **via livestream**. The morning ceremony livestream will begin at 8:40 a.m. The afternoon ceremony livestream will begin at 1:40 p.m.

Parking is free the day of Commencement; however, due to construction, it will be limited and guests are encouraged to arrive early. It is highly recommended that attendees use carpools or public transport where available. There will be spots reserved in Parking Lots Z and Y for guests and degree candidates with limited mobility. The UDash shuttles also will provide free Park and Ride services. Please see the **Commencement Day map** for more information on parking, shuttles and ceremony locations.

For more information, visit the **spring 2022 Commencement website**.

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COLLEGE OF THE ARTS AND MEDIA

GRADUATION SPOTLIGHT: UM THEATER GRADUATE FASHIONS FUTURE IN COSTUME DESIGN

09 MAY 2022

UM student Morgan Brooks turned her love for sewing into a career as a costume design graduate from the School of Theatre and Dance.

MISSOULA – University of Montana graduating senior Morgan Brooks’ budding career in the theater started in a rather unconventional way – through 4-H.

Raised in **Ronan** with a menagerie of pets, Brooks joined the youth organization not only to compete in animal husbandry but also sewing, a skill she would go on to apply in competitions and eventually her studies in costume design in UM’s **School of Theatre and Dance**.

Among her early accolades were state and national placements in Make it With Wool competitions, which are supported by the American Sheep Industry.

“In this competition you make garments completely of wool,” Brooks said, noting that among her winning creations were a biker-styled jacket and pencil skirt. “My family didn’t actually raise sheep – my Dad would have put his foot down on that – but my sewing teacher was involved in the industry, and she suggested I compete.”

While in high school, Brooks developed a keen interest in plays and costume design – “acting wasn’t my thing” – going on to spend the first two years of her collegiate studies at Flathead Valley Community College, where she enrolled in the theater arts transfer track and served as costume shop manager.

During the summer she worked at Bigfork Summer Playhouse, honing her early skills and learning the hierarchy of costume design.

“The stitcher is the lowest rung, and then you work your way up from there to costume designer,” she explained.

She chose UM to continue her studies because she liked the **costume design program** and the lower tuition made completing her degree more affordable. UM offers a bachelor’s degree in fine arts in theatre with an emphasis in design and technology.

The bustle is a particular favorite of Brooks and the subject of her senior project.

She said her classes have been steeped not only



in the technical aspects of her craft – pattern making, tailoring, textiles – but also in the history of dress through the centuries.

“I really like the bustle period. I

chose that for my senior project,” Brooks said, adding that the materials cost \$300. “It is super detailed, with an underskirt and an overskirt.”

Because of her past experience, Brooks joined the program with an extremely strong set of sewing skills, as well as theater construction and design experience, said Paula Niccum, supervisor of UM’s costume shop.

“Morgan’s always hungry for more knowledge and has never been afraid to take on a complex project,” Niccum said. “She’s been an exceptional role model for younger students interested in costuming.”

UM Professor Alessia Carpoca, head of design and technology in the school, has watched Brooks grow in her technical abilities and understanding of the full breath of costume design, which includes not only historical elements but character inspiration as well. Her skills were fully on display, Carpoca said, in “Machinal,” one of the last plays of the 2021-22 season where Brooks served as the costume designer.

“Designing costumes for ‘Machinal’ was a difficult task because the play has a large cast and different actresses play the leading role in different scenes,” Carpoca said. “Morgan stepped up the plate and did a beautiful job. Her work was really gorgeous.”

The work of a costume designer doesn't end when the play's a wrap. Brooks and teammates also are responsible for cleaning and storing costumes.

"We have three places on campus for storage. But it's always a discussion about how much more can we fit into tiny closets," she said with a chuckle.

Now that she is about to graduate, Brooks is already under contract to work on costumes for a movie that will be produced in Montana.

"I want to do more freelance work," she said, "but I still hope to have some time to sew for fun."

###

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COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SCIENCES

GRADUATION SPOTLIGHT: HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY STUDENT FINDS COMMUNITY

06 MAY 2022

Maddie Hagan is a senior at UM studying history and philosophy. After graduation she will head to Columbia University in New York City to pursue a master's degree in historic preservation.

By Kyle Spurr, UM News Service

MISSOULA – Two years before the COVID-19 pandemic, Maddie Hagan had to isolate in her dorm at the University of Montana.

Hagan, a history and philosophy major with a minor in African American Studies, was diagnosed with an extremely rare autoimmune disorder in spring 2018 before her freshman year at UM. The Eosinophilic Fasciitis diagnosis meant she had to take high-dose steroids and a chemotherapy drug that wreaked havoc on her immune system.

“It’s a super weird and wacky experience to navigate social life and school while being sick,” Hagan said.

The treatments lasted two years. And just as Hagan was feeling better her junior year in 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic shut down the social life on campus.

“Luckily, I really leaned into things I’m passionate about,” Hagan said. “History and philosophy are two things I’m very passionate about. The community in both departments is so strong that I had people who helped me and who I could fall back on.”

Despite the challenges of her diagnosis and the pandemic, Hagan has excelled in her time at UM. She was part of a leadership team that brought back the UM History Society. The group, which Hagan has led as president for the past three years, hosted movie nights and “Coffee with Profs” meetings that connected students and faculty members.

“She worked with her peers to turn a mostly defunct organization into a thriving space for intellectual exchange and community building,” said Kyle Volk, professor and chair of the UM history department. “None of these things—which have proven critical to our department’s culture—would have happened without Maddie’s leadership.”

In the summer of 2020, Hagan interned with the [UM Department of History](#), housed in the [College of Humanities and Sciences](#), to create a COVID-19 oral history project. She interviewed a single mother studying at UM, an environmental studies professor dealing with the illness of his partner and another student from Hagan’s hometown of Portland, Oregon, who was passionate about the Black Lives Matter movement. The project has been archived in the Mansfield Library for future generations.

The experience of interviewing the three subjects, especially on the topic of Black Lives Matter, strengthened Hagan's interest in justice and political activism.

Hagan has done research papers on abortion justice, felony disenfranchisement, gender roles in history, selective law enforcement and government actions.

"The research I've done both in history and philosophy are always oriented around justice," Hagan said.

Hagan constantly strives to apply her education to real-world issues, said Soazig Bihan, a philosophy professor at UM.

"She has been an excellent student and University citizen during her undergrad, despite the fact that she faced some serious personal issues," Bihan said. "She represents the best of what the humanities can bring to the world: genuine intellectual curiosity and bounteous civic engagement."

This fall, Hagan will pursue a graduate degree in historic preservation at Columbia University in New York City. The two-year graduate program will combine practice and the ethics and theory of historic preservation. Hagan hopes her time at UM and graduate school at Columbia will open doors for careers around history in the public sector. She is interested in opportunities with the National Park Service, museums or local government historical preservation offices.

Before she enters the next chapter of her life, Hagan still has a few weeks to finish her studies at UM. She is wrapping up her final history thesis on how early 20th century Black politics related to prohibition. She presented the thesis recently at the Northwest Regional Phi Alpha Theta conference in Bellingham, Washington.

"I do have a lot between now and graduation," Hagan said. "It's scary and stressful but I'm excited."

###

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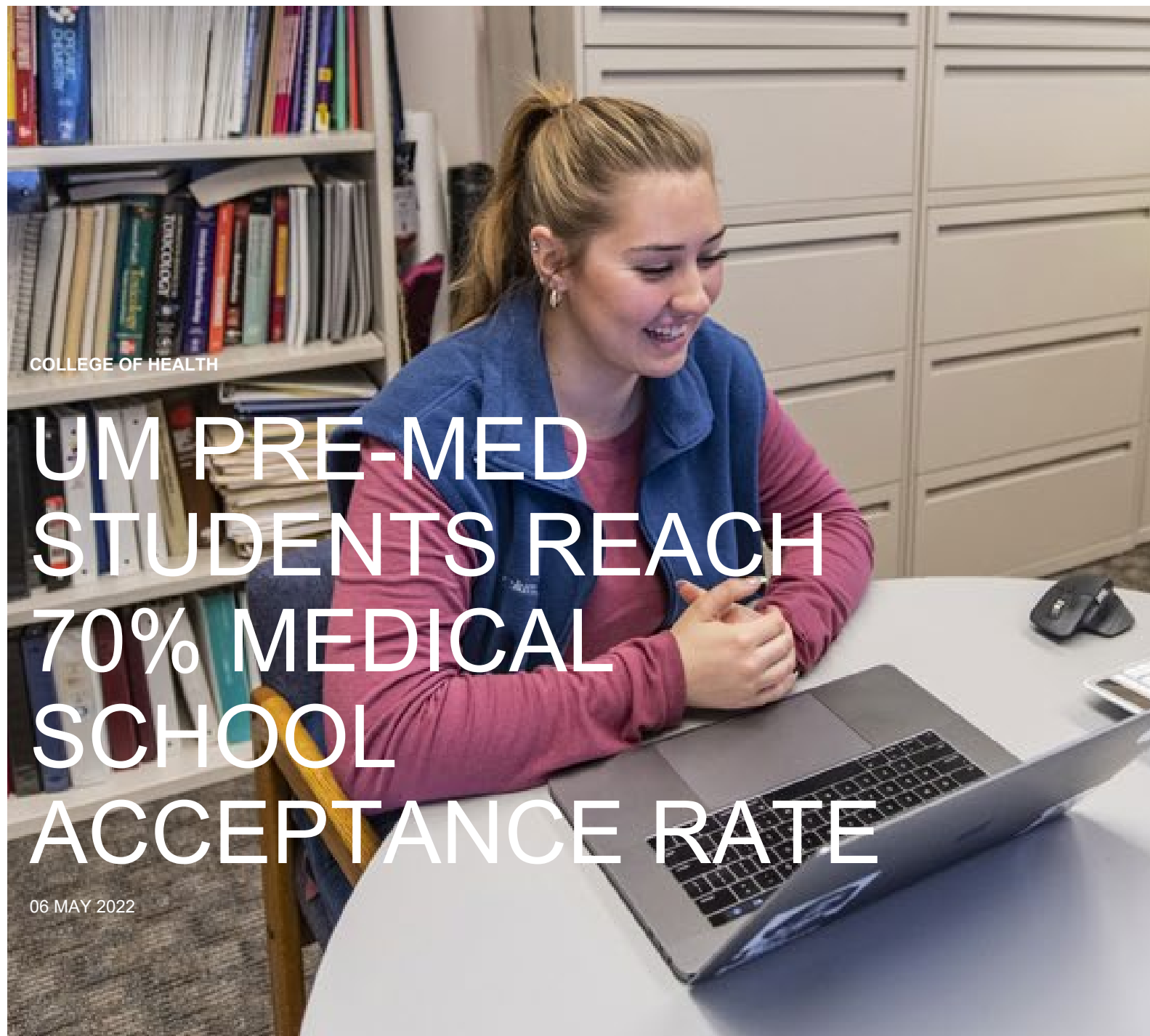
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COLLEGE OF HEALTH

UM PRE-MED STUDENTS REACH 70% MEDICAL SCHOOL ACCEPTANCE RATE

06 MAY 2022

Mark Pershouse, University of Montana pre-medical sciences director and associate professor, provides advice to UM alumna Amanda Jennings on applying to medical school. This year, 70% of students in UM's pre-medical sciences track have received acceptance into nationally ranked medical schools.

MISSOULA – As the application year for medical school winds down, an impressive class of

University of Montana students has been accepted into a host of the nation's top medical schools.

Among them: Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Stanford University of Medicine, Harvard Medical School, Yale School of Medicine, Vanderbilt School of Medicine, University of Washington School of Medicine, Mayo Clinic Alix School of Medicine, University of Colorado School of Medicine and UC San Diego School of Medicine.

The American Association of Medical Colleges reflects a national average medical school acceptance rate of 41%. At UM, the acceptance rate for pre-med majors so far this year is 70%.

"We're very pleased with this exceptional class of students," said Mark Pershous, pre-medical sciences director and associate professor in UM's **Department of Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Sciences**. "It's certainly a year of success for these bright, accomplished and unique students, and it's also a win for us as an institution to see that our formula of student support and intensive academic advising is working."

Pershous added that while a 70% acceptance rate is impressive, it's not the highest UM has seen in its history. The program had a peak of 88% acceptance in 2013, and over the last 14 years has achieved an average of 61% acceptance. He said not only is UM's acceptance rate well above the national average, it's also inspiring given the surge in American students applying to medical school.

The pandemic has inspired a new generation of doctors, so much so that the Association of American Medical Colleges saw nearly an 18% increase in 2021-22 med school applicants. This was dubbed the "Fauci effect."

Applying to medical school involves a process that lasts well over one year, beginning in May and lasting through August. Many UM students graduate in the spring and choose to take a "gap" year to complete recommended activities such as physician shadowing, volunteering or hands-on medical experience.

That was true for Madison Reichelt of **Big Sandy**, who graduated from UM with degrees in human biological sciences and integrative physiology last year. During her time at UM, Reichelt completed the pre-med track and picked up a **medical assistant certificate from Missoula College**. Reichelt now works as a medical assistant at Johns Hopkins Medicine in Bethesda,

Maryland, and is accepted into the **WWAMI Medical Education Program** at the University of Washington. About 4% of applicants are accepted into WWAMI's six campuses overall, and about 25% of Montana residents are accepted.

Reichelt said because of her training at UM, which included peer-leading classes coupled with a meaningful clinical internship at Community Medical Center with Dr. Tondy Baumgartner, she feels prepared for medical school.

“The best decision I made was attending UM and taking advantage of all that was offered to me,” Reichelt said. “In my work now, I understand a large majority of what the doctors are talking about. That’s a testament to the serious training at UM and excellent faculty in anatomy and physiology and chemistry and basically all of the coursework. It’s also the time outside of class that prepared me and all of the time each and every faculty gave me advice and guidance.”

Pershouse said UM’s focus on wide and deep preparation for medical school is unique. At UM, **students studying pre-medical sciences** participate in an advising program that helps students become well informed and aware of the diversity of health care professions, with access to professionals, mentorship and support at every turn.

That program is complemented by eight faculty mentors, four clinical mentors and two staff members who bring a wealth of expertise and passion and a dedicated team, Pershouse said. The pre-med coursework includes the requirements for application to medical school in addition to a class, taught by Pershouse, on the logistics, timeline and formula of medical school applications. The class also invites diverse practitioners in health care to share details about their work and have candid conversations regarding the investment in time, patient care and challenges of the field.

Pershouse said it’s necessary for for undergraduates to combine UM’s pre-med path with another major like biology, neuroscience, microbiology, English or a major in any of UM’s colleges. Most pre-med students pursue majors in the College of Humanities and Science, but applicants in the last five years have come from 20 different majors in several colleges on campus.

The key is for the student to find something they are passionate about and also get the prerequisite coursework for medical school done, Pershouse said.

“Whatever professional interest a student might have, we provide them the academic and science training needed to apply,” he said. “Students are also provided multiple opportunities for hands-on training by arranging for them to shadow doctors and volunteer in clinics. We do our best at being transparent about the uniqueness of each field and prepare them to enter several professional tracks.”

Sophie Friedl from Agoura Hills, California, graduated from UM in 2016 with a degree in sociology with a concentration in inequality and social justice, and minors in global public health, international development studies and biology. In the six years since graduating, Friedl has kept in touch with her UM professors, keeping them abreast of accomplishments like attaining a master’s degree in public health and working for Sen. Jon Tester on the U.S. Senate Committee for Veterans Affairs. Friedl decided it was time to apply to medical school and reached out to UM faculty for support.

“Three of my letter writers for medical school were from UM,” Freidl said. “And even though it’s been some time since I graduated, they were still incredibly committed to my success. UM has a unique focus on individual mentorship and tailoring support to whatever it is a particular student is interested in and where they want to go. I was able to get so much exposure to the different kind of jobs in the health care field, and I’m able to see now how the curriculum works together and really prepares you.”

This year, Friedl underwent seven medical school interviews, was accepted to three schools and waitlisted at three more. This fall she plans to attend the Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine in Cleveland, an institution with a 2.4% acceptance rate.

Pershouse said every student arrives with a different background story or passion when it comes to wanting to work in health care. That passion, combined with a rigorous curriculum and mentorship is paying off, he said, as the college sees scores on the Medical College Admissions Test that are above the national average.

Last year, UM alumna Devin Hunt **scored in the 100th percentile on the MCAT**. As of press time, Hunt is deciding among various competitive, application offers to nationally ranked Md-Ph.D. programs.

“Not every student who has their heart set on medical school gets accepted,” Pershouse said. “But that doesn’t mean our support, counsel or advice stops at that point. Sometimes it means adjusting application materials, getting more experience or talking through alternatives and

different routes to support a student getting to where they desire to have an impact.

“Our staff and faculty are proud of each and everyone of these students and we know their impact on health care, patient care and the field are going to be important.”

###

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UM / News / UM Anthropologist Becomes 4th Montanan Elected to Prestigious Academy

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SCIENCES

A close-up portrait of a woman with long, wavy, light brown hair, smiling warmly. She is wearing a blue and green patterned top and a thin silver chain necklace. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

UM ANTHROPOLOGIST BECOMES 4TH MONTANAN ELECTED TO PRESTIGIOUS ACADEMY

03 MAY 2022

UM Regents Professor of Anthropology Anna Prentiss has become only the fourth Montanan ever elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

MISSOULA – Anna Prentiss has made a career out of sifting through layers of history to reveal the daily lives of ancient people. Her efforts have led to layers of accolades.

The University of Montana archaeologist and anthropologist already holds the rank of Regents Professor – the top professor rank awarded by the Montana University System – and now she has become only the fourth Montanan ever elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Founded in 1780, previous members of the academy include Benjamin Franklin, Charles Darwin, Albert Einstein and Martin Luther King Jr. The prestigious organization is both an honorary society that recognizes and celebrates the excellence of its members and an independent research center that convenes leaders to address significant challenges.

“I’m honored and humbled to have my life’s work honored in this way,” Prentiss said. “I think this is another indicator that the research and scholarship at UM has impacts far beyond the borders of Montana. We can compete with anyone in the world.”

The other Montana scholars elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences include UM’s Fred Allendorf and Doug Emlen and Montana State University’s Henrietta Mann.

Prentiss earned her archaeology doctorate from Simon Fraser University in 1993. She joined the UM faculty in 1995 and became a full professor in 2009. The state Board of Regents approved her promotion to Regents Professor of Anthropology in 2018.

Her research interests include hunter-gatherers, village societies, ancient technology, evolutionary theory, and the method and theory of archaeology.

Her fieldwork has taken her and the scores of UM students she has mentored around globe, from British Columbia and Alaska to Patagonia. She also served as a visiting scholar in the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research at the University of Cambridge, England.

Prentiss has written and co-authored eight books, including 2017’s “The Last House at Bridge River,” which details a comprehensive study of a single-floor aboriginal home in British Columbia during the 19th-century Fur Trade period. She also has written more than 80 peer-

reviewed articles, and her list of awards and accomplishments stretches her curriculum vitae to 51 pages.

Prentiss said her robust research agenda was developed as a byproduct of collaborations and partnerships with Canadian First Nations and Montana tribes.

“Dr. Prentiss is strongly deserving of being a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences,” said Scott Whittenburg, UM vice president for research and creative scholarship. “Her work spans multiple disciplines and includes both research and creative scholarship.

“Efforts such as Anna’s are one of the primary reasons UM recently joined the top tier of research universities as a Carnegie Very High Research Activity (R1) campus,” he said. “The research and doctoral completer accomplishments of our social science faculty were a primary contributor to this seminal achievement of the University.”

###

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UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

UM SURVEY: MONTANANS CONCERNED ABOUT GROWTH, WANT CONSERVATION

03 MAY 2022

A student enjoys the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness. (Photo by Rick and Susie Graetz)

MISSOULA – A University of Montana survey shows a majority of Big Sky voters are concerned by the current pace of growth, and this dynamic is reinforcing bipartisan demands to protect Montana’s wildlife and open spaces.

The **2022 Voter Survey on Public Lands** was commissioned by the University's Crown of the Continent and Greater Yellowstone Initiative (COCGYI). The biannual survey has tracked opinions of likely voters in Montana since 2014 and seeks to understand how residents think about public land and natural resource issues.

According to this year's survey, Montana voters are feeling some negative impacts as the state's population climbs. Fifty-seven percent of voters say the current pace of growth is too fast, and only 7% say their quality of life has improved in five years. Housing affordability is a top concern, with 92% of residents calling it a serious problem, while 85% say that the loss of ranches and open spaces to new development is a serious problem as well.

Last week, the Montana Governor's Office **announced the economy grew** at its fastest rate in more than 40 years. UM initiative director Rick Graetz said Montana decision-makers need to consider some of the voter anxiety that comes alongside this rapid growth.

"Growth is important for Montana's economy, but decision-makers should also consider some of the anxiety we are seeing over its pace and impact on the land," said Graetz. "This survey shows Montanans clearly want to keep our state livable, affordable and continue efforts to protect open lands and wildlife."

The survey was conducted by Republican pollster Lori Weigel of New Bridge Strategy and Democratic pollster Dave Metz of Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3). The bipartisan team of pollsters said long-held conservation values are being reinforced as voters witness more impacts of growth.

"Montanans have always self-identified as conservationists, but now they are experiencing a risk they haven't seen before in the form of growth and development," said Dave Metz, president of FM3. "The data shows this is contributing to remarkable consensus, in both rural and urban areas, around proposals to protect the state's water, wildlife and land."

Bipartisan consensus for wildlife corridors and enhanced conservation funding

According to the survey, protecting wildlife migration corridors is a popular bipartisan priority. Eighty seven percent of Montana voters support constructing more wildlife crossing structures, 86% support providing incentives to landowners to conserve private lands, and 81% support managing larger blocks of public lands as wildlife habitat.

The survey also finds very strong bipartisan support for continuing to direct tax revenue from the sale of recreational marijuana toward conservation programs administered by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. Eighty-two percent of voters say the state Legislature should continue using recreational marijuana taxes to support wildlife conservation, create public access and maintain state parks and trails.

Continued support for public land protection

As in past years, the 2022 survey finds cross-party support for several citizen-initiated efforts to protect public lands. These proposals require Congressional approval and include:

- More voters than ever, 83%, support the Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Act to expand protections on public lands adjacent to the Bob Marshall Wilderness.
- 77% of voters support a proposal to protect a Wilderness Study Area in the Gallatin Range near Yellowstone National Park.
- 71% of voters support the Lincoln Prosperity Proposal to increase protections on national forest lands, boost recreation opportunities and promote forest restoration near the town of Lincoln.

This year's survey also finds strong support for some national strategies aiming to protect public and private lands. For instance, 78% of voters support the president's ability to protect existing public lands as national monuments, and 66% of voters support the America the Beautiful Initiative, a national policy that seeks to conserve 30% of America's land and 30% of its oceans by the year 2030.

Finally, when it comes to management of public lands, 79% of voters say it's important for Native American tribes to have a stronger role in decisions that impact public lands when they are sacred or historically important to tribes.

A summary of the results and the full survey is available for download at [2022 Voter Survey](#). The 2022 Public Lands Survey polled 500 voters by phone and online April 4-10, with a margin of error of +/- 4.38%.

###

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Members of the UM team represented Georgia at the recent National Model United Nations Conference in New York City.

MISSOULA – Twelve members of the Model United Nations Travel Team at the University of Montana recently received an Honorable Mention Award Delegation award, placing in the top 20% of competing international and national universities.

The National Model United Nations Conference was held in New York City. The MMUN Travel Team represented the country of Georgia with the following committee assignments:

- Maxwell Shaver, political science and economics, Missoula, General Assembly First

Committee (Security and Disarmament).

- Noah Vanderkar, political science, Sacramento, California, General Assembly First Committee (Security and Disarmament).
- Camellia Xu, political science, Moody, British Columbia, General Assembly Second Committee (Biodiversity).
- Carolyn Crowder, political science and English, Maple Valley, Washington, General Assembly Second Committee (Biodiversity).
- Kasey Swisher, history/political science secondary education and political science, Tampa, Florida, General Assembly Third Committee (Social and Humanitarian). Swisher served as the team vice president.
- Sarah Hauser, political science, Missoula, General Assembly Third Committee (Social and Humanitarian).
- Clara Bentler, political science and nonprofit administration, Billings, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).
- Kersey Blackford, political science and international development studies, Gardiner, UN Women.
- Carson Brandt, political science, Missoula, United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA).
- Cassandra Williams, political science and nonprofit administration, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, UN Habitat (Sustainable Infrastructure).
- Shang Vang, political science and history, Missoula, UN Habitat (Sustainable Infrastructure).
- Caroline Fowler, political science, Manhattan, Montana,
- International Organization for Migration. Fowler served at the team president.

On April 3, the UM team arrived in New York City for the first in-person NMUN conference since the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. The team arrived motivated to discuss current global issues in a real-world setting and eager to meet similar teams from around the world.

In the opening ceremony, NMUN Executive Director Michael Eaton acknowledged the collegiate team who had traveled from Ukraine to attend the conference. The Ukrainian team earned a standing ovation as an expression of support and solidarity. Committee sessions started after the opening ceremony, and UM team members began opening speeches and created new connections with students from all around the globe.

On the second day of the conference, the team attended a UN Mission Briefing at the Permanent Mission of Georgia to the United Nations. The team met with Gvaram Khandamishvilli, deputy permanent representative of Georgia, at the UN Mission Headquarters to discuss Georgia's UN agenda.

The mission briefing with Khandamishvilli was a true highlight of the NMUN Conference.

“Participating in the National Model UN conference provided me the opportunity to take a hands-on approach to my education, all while gaining international connections that will last a lifetime,” said Kasey Swisher, the team vice president and incoming president. “It is definitely an experience I will never forget.”

Following the mission briefing, team members returned to committee sessions or worked on innovative and collaborative solutions to diverse humanitarian and security issues.

“Being able to interact with so many intelligent people who share similar interests is an invaluable experience that I will apply for again,” UM sophomore Max Shaver said. “On the final day of the conference, each team member passed one or more resolutions within their committee, which are now [published on the NMUN Website](#).”

The team placed in the Honorable Mention Delegation Award category, maintaining a four-year streak of NMUN Delegation Awards for UM MMUN Travel team's top performance.

“The Model United Nations trip to New York City was such an incredible, hands-on experience to practice diplomatic engagement in our international governing systems,” UM junior Clara Bentler said. “We learned lessons that are hard to mimic in the classroom like negotiations, working towards consensus and compromise. I am thankful for the opportunity to get to experience the NMUN conference with such a great group of students, peers and friends from the University of Montana and will forever cherish those memories.”

For more information, email MMUN faculty adviser Eva Maggi at eva.maggi@mso.umt.edu, MMUN Team President Caroline Fowler at caroline.fowler@umconnect.umt.edu or incoming President Kasey Swisher at kasey.swisher@umconnect.umt.edu.

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