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02 OCTOBER 2023

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UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

UM TO CELEBRATE MILITARY APPRECIATION WEEK

02 NOVEMBER 2023

MISSOULA – The University of Montana will celebrate student veterans and active military members with its annual Military Appreciation Week.

“It is our quest to be the most military-friendly university in the nation,” said UM President Seth Bodnar, an Army veteran and current member of the Montana Army National Guard. “Leading into Veterans Day, we will celebrate our student veterans and military-affiliated students for the contributions they bring to our campus. We encourage the community to join us at these events to learn more about these students and what UM is doing to serve those who served.”

The week kicks off on Saturday, Nov. 4, as the Grizzly football team takes on Sacramento State for the annual Military Appreciation Game. Prior to the game, the Montana Army National Guard will land a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter on the Oval at 3:30 p.m. Additionally on the Oval prior to the game, there will be military weapons and equipment on display, the UM ROTC Boom Crew will be on hand for pictures and the Grizzly Strong Club and Student Veterans Organization will conduct raffles.

“Prior to tailgating, we encourage Griz fans to swing by the Oval to support our ROTC cadets and student veterans,” said Tracy Mitchell, scholarship and enrollment officer with the UM Department of Military Science. “As the number of student veterans continues to grow on our campus, we are eager to host these events to build a strong connection between our ROTC cadets and student veterans and the entire Missoula community.”

In conjunction with Military Appreciation Week, UM will launch a jointly branded merchandise line with Operation Hat Trick – with a portion of the proceeds of each sale supporting veterans’ organizations.

Earlier this year, UM was awarded the 2023 Operation Hat Trick (OHT) Excellence in Service Award for its work to promote the OHT merchandise line. In return, Operation Hat Trick donated \$20,000 to Xsports4vets, a Montana-based nonprofit organization that serves combat veterans by expanding access to river boarding, rock climbing, trike flying, skydiving, rafting and other outdoor activities.

Jointly branded Griz and Operation Hat Trick merchandise is available at the M Store, Universal Athletics and the on-campus Go Griz Store – formerly the UM Bookstore.

Other events for the week include:

- **Coffee, Cookies and Conversation:** 8 to 10 a.m., Nov. 6 and 8, University Center Atrium. This event will include two “Why, How and Where Griz Serve” events to showcase UM’s commitment to service in all categories – military, local and national. Stop by and put a pin on the Griz veterans’ map.
- **Warrior Walk:** 6:30 a.m. Tuesday, Nov. 7, at the M trailhead. UM student veterans and ROTC cadets will hike the M Trail together.

- **Military Appreciation Griz Hockey Game:** 8:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 11, Glacier Ice Rink. Student-athletes will wear limited edition military appreciation jerseys that are up for auction.

This fall, UM has 384 student veterans enrolled, which is a 19% increase over fall 2022. Since 2021, student veteran enrollment has increased at UM by 24%.

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Contact: Tracy Mitchell, UM Department of Military Science, 406-370-0450, tracy.mitchell@mso.umt.edu.

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UM / News / Griz Chat: UM Philosophy Professor Talks Popularity of Scary and Scary-Bad Movies

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA, COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SCIENCES

GRIZ CHAT: UM PHILOSOPHY PROFESSOR TALKS POPULARITY OF SCARY AND SCARY- BAD MOVIES

27 OCTOBER 2023

Matt Strohl, a UM professor of philosophy, combines film criticism with philosophy of art to study why audiences enjoy scary and scary-bad movies.

By Abigail Lauten-Scrivner, UM News Service

MISSOULA – It's said that it takes 10,000 hours of practice to achieve expert status. Regardless of whether that's true, **University of Montana Philosophy Professor Matt Strohl** has far exceeded that number of hours, estimating he's watched over 10,000 separate movies during his life as both a film enthusiast and researcher.

Combining philosophy of art with film criticism, Strohl's research ranges from Aristotle's theory of pleasure to how audiences emotionally respond to scary movies.

That aura of academia might suggest that Strohl spends all his time musing over esoteric, avant-garde arthouse films, but don't be fooled. Strohl's affinity for defending disreputable movies has proudly earned him the title of "cinematic bottom feeder," as he's described in his 2022 book **"Why It's OK to Love Bad Movies."** A thematic follow-up, tentatively titled "Hard to Watch: How to Fall in Love with Difficult Movies," is slated to publish next year.

"I love movies of all kinds, but bad ones for sure," Strohl said. "What draws me to bad movies is the display of human eccentricity. Humans are weird."

With cult-followings for films like "The Room," Strohl is far from alone in enjoying "bad movies." His book examines the paradox of why so many people love art they also claim to hate, and digs deeper into how that fondness might involve something more sincere than irony.

A fan of paradoxes, Strohl also studies why audiences relish the seemingly negative experience of being horrified, disturbed or grossed-out by scary movies.

"There are a lot of competing explanations. Part of my work on this has been concerned with the idea that most of these explanations don't actually conflict with each other," Strohl said. "Different people are attracted to different emotional responses for different reasons."

Just in time for a chilly Halloween ideal for cozying up indoors and turning on a spooky flick, Strohl spoke with UM News to discuss why viewers might choose a scary or scary-bad film this spooky season.

UM News: It might seem contradictory to enjoy movies that are grotesque or frightening.

Yet, scary movies are popular among audiences and even critics. Why do such films delight viewers, and why might this not be so paradoxical?

It's understandable why one would think the popularity of art that provokes uncomfortable emotions is paradoxical, but the paradox dissolves when one recognizes that enjoyment and discomfort aren't strictly opposed to each other.

Our experiences are complex, and they can gain an overall favorable character partly in virtue of involving elements of discomfort. This is how it works when we go on a long, grueling hike and the discomfort of our exhaustion feeds into our overall sense of satisfaction and accomplishment. The negative emotions that horror provokes in us are not the whole story. These emotions can feed into positive aspects of our engagement with horror. For instance, watching horror movies together with friends is a classic bonding experience, where the group is brought closer together by their shared experience of an intense range of emotions.

UM News: Are there benefits to getting a good scare from the comfort of a couch or theater? What about risks?

It's not a one-size-fits-all thing. People are very different from each other, and our particular psychologies predispose some of us to get a lot more out of horror than others. For some of us, horror can be both fun and beneficial to our mental health. It gives us practice coping with fears, including for instance a general fear of mortality, and in social contexts it can enhance our feeling of belonging and connectedness with others.

But some people are predisposed to have a rough time with horror, because they are very emotionally sensitive or they have trouble maintaining a sense of distance from horror fiction. What they see on the screen feels "too real" to them.

I wish that people on both ends of the spectrum would refrain from judging each other. Some people who hate horror imagine the worst of people who love it, and that's really not fair. It's okay to love horror – it doesn't make you an amoral ghoul – but it's also okay if it's not your thing.

UM News: Genuine fear isn't always the main draw when it comes to popular Halloween movies. Viewers can't help but return to ridiculous flicks like the "Leprechaun" franchise, despite its lowbrow nature. What is it about campy, absurd or just plain bad movies that makes us love them?

When it comes to something like “Leprechaun,” there’s no question that the absurd, ridiculous, low budget, trashy character of the films is a big part of the appeal. For me the core appeal of something like “Leprechaun 4: In Space” is the wild creativity on display. The stakes are low for a movie like this – no one is going to get rich off it – and with low stakes comes great freedom.

UM News: You’ve been called a “cinematic bottom feeder” and “defender of disreputable films.” Why do you advocate for these so-called rotten tomatoes?

Because too many of us are in the grips of unjustified assumptions about what is and isn’t worthwhile. Our social media feeds and streaming algorithms tell us what is and is not worth our time, and most of us just go along with it. When people are told by Rotten Tomatoes and their Twitter friends that something is worthless trash, they tend to just go along with this narrative, and if they watch the movie at all, they approach it ironically, from a posture of presumed superiority.

I want to do my best to discard all these culturally instilled assumptions and consider what values might be lurking in the pile of so-called trash that we’ve been told isn’t worth our time.

UM News: Your book is titled “Why it’s OK to Love Bad Movies.” Why did you want to tell people that it’s OK to love films considered to be trash? What do you hope readers get out of the book?

I think that it’s better for us all for there to be a diversity of sensibilities in the world. I worry that our tastes are becoming too homogenous. The movies in the theater are mostly the same. The shows that are popular on TV are mostly the same. To promote diversity, we need to seek it out, and we won’t do this if we buy into the narrow mindset that says “see all those movies over there? Those are all trash and you either should skip them or watch them ironically.”

I want to explore values that this mindset hasn’t even imagined. I hope that readers will feel liberated by these ideas: They shouldn’t feel guilty about their disreputable pleasures. Instead, they should embrace the naughty thrill of enjoying things they’ve been told they aren’t supposed to enjoy.

UM News: What scary or scary-bad movies do you recommend for getting in the Halloween spirit?

For a genuinely scary movie, I recommend “Messiah of Evil.” It’s a wonderful example of the rich tradition of American regional horror. It’s deeply strange, and I find every second of it disconcerting.

For a “bad” horror movie that I love, I recommend “Death Spa.” Starting from the prompt “make a movie called ‘Death Spa,’” I don’t think you could do much better.

###

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UM / News / Of Mice and Mummies: UM Study Reveals Higher Elevation Limit for Mammal Life

RESEARCH

OF MICE AND MUMMIES: UM STUDY REVEALS HIGHER ELEVATION LIMIT FOR MAMMAL LIFE

26 OCTOBER 2023

This Andean leaf-eared mouse does not fear high elevations. (Photo by Marcial Quiroga-Carmona)



Researcher Jay Storz summits Volcán Púlar (20,450 feet) in northern Chile to excavate withered cadavers of leaf-eared mice. (Photo by Mario Pérez Mamani)

By Cary Shimek, UM News Service

MISSOULA – University of Montana researcher Jeffrey Good never suspected he would someday study freeze-dried mummy mice from atop some of the highest peaks in South America.

The mouse cadavers are a mystery because they were discovered on volcano summits reaching above 20,000 feet. The peaks rise from one of the most inhospitable spots on Earth, the Puna de Atacama plateau – a place so dry, cold and oxygen-poor that NASA uses it to practice hunting for life on Mars.

How could a mouse live up there?

“These discoveries are forcing us to reconsider the elevational limits of where life can persist,”

said Good, a UM professor of ecology and evolution. “Some of these mice were discovered near ancient Incan ceremonial structures that were used to conduct human and animal sacrifices over 500 years ago. This led some early archeologists to speculate that mouse remains found in these areas were transported there by the Incas.

“However, our genetic results clearly show that these remains are not an anomaly associated with Incan transport, but part of a continuous population of mice that persist at elevations previously thought to be incompatible with mammalian life,” he said. “While humans occasional visit these peaks, the mice appear to be full-time residents.”

The research was a collaboration between UM, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the Universidad Austral de Chile. The results were published Oct. 23 in *Current Biology*: Cell Press.

The mummy mice were discovered on dry peaks where the temperature never rises above freezing and oxygen is less than half of that at sea level. Archaeologists first found the freeze-dried mice on expeditions to the Andean summits in the 1970s and '80s and assumed the rodents somehow hitched a ride with Incas who used the peaks as sacred sites.

That hypothesis was cast into doubt in 2020, when this study’s lead author, UNL biology researcher Jay Storz, and fellow mountaineer Mario Pérez Mamani captured a live specimen of a leaf-eared mouse atop the 22,000-foot peak of Llullaillaco, a volcano straddling the Chile-Argentina border.

No mammal had ever been previously found living at such an extreme altitude. Storz and his colleagues wondered whether the high-elevation mice might represent a distinct subpopulation of the leaf-eared rodent. That’s where Good’s UM lab came in.

“Our role was to lead all of the genetic analyses, which included recovering genetic material from the samples and then sequencing and analyzing their genomes,” Good said. “Dr. Storz and his team sent the precious samples that they collected from expeditions to 21 Andean volcano summits to my laboratory for analysis.”

Using methods optimized for ancient DNA recovery, Good’s team sequenced whole genomes from 44 mice, including the 13 mummified mice from the tops of some of the highest peaks in the Andean mountains. The genetic work was led by UM postdoctoral researcher Dr. Schuyler Liphardt and enabled by DNA sequencing expert Tim Wheeler of the [UM Genomics Core](#).

The genomic data clearly indicated that the mice from the summits, as well as those from the flanks or the base of the volcanoes in the surrounding desert terrain, were all from the same closely related population, leading the researchers to conclude the rodents were not hitchhikers, but mountaineers.

Now that the researchers have established that populations of leaf-eared mice somehow live in such an extreme environment, they want to study why and how. They want to pinpoint whatever adaptations are helping the rodents live the high life.

“It just boggles the mind that any kind of animal, let alone a warm-blooded mammal, could be surviving and functioning in that environment,” Storz said. “When you experience it all firsthand, it even further impresses upon you: How in God’s name is anything living up there?”

“Now that we know what is possible,” Good said, “we can study these natural populations to unravel how these extraordinary mice manage to persist in such extreme environments.”

###

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UM / News / UM Creates New Partnership to Expand Montana's Technology Workforce

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

UM CREATES NEW PARTNERSHIP TO EXPAND MONTANA'S TECHNOLOGY WORKFORCE

26 OCTOBER 2023

MISSOULA – The University of Montana and The Whole Group are partnering to develop workforce education and training pathways to position Montana as a global leader in meeting the rapidly growing need for a workforce skilled in the ServiceNow technology platform.

The Whole Group, a new venture focused on delivering ServiceNow technology solutions to

business and government customers around the world, selected Montana as the ideal location to build a skilled workforce.

"UM is continuing to do whatever we can to adapt and innovate to meet the needs of local employers," said UM President Seth Bodnar. "Through this new partnership, we can create another durable pipeline for Montanans to gain the skills needed to earn a high-paying job."

"Montana work ethic paired with innovative partnerships with two and four-year degree programs create incredible opportunities for Montana's workforce," said Scott Osterman, director of the Montana Department of Commerce. "In-line with Governor Gianforte's pro-jobs, pro-business policies, Commerce is laser-focused on the creation of more, good-paying jobs for Montanans and this announcement of a world-class ServiceNow career path will meet the needs of both Montana companies and businesses across the globe that leverage the ServiceNow platform, while keeping this talent in our state."

UM, along with Missoula College, Helena College and Accelerate Montana, will work with The Whole Group to offer multiple pathways for current and future students to develop ServiceNow skills. This partnership will enable them to pursue good paying jobs and careers working for Montana employers of ServiceNow talent or work remotely for national and international employers of ServiceNow skilled workers.

UM and Missoula College will offer options for 4-year and 2-year degree students to add ServiceNow training and work-based experiential learning opportunities to their college pathways.

ServiceNow helps digitize and unify organizations so they can find smarter, faster and better ways to make work flow. With over 7,000 global enterprise customers, including about 85% of the Fortune 500, many of the leading brands and government agencies rely on ServiceNow solutions using the Now Platform – the intelligent and intuitive cloud platform - for successful digital transformation.

"Missoula College is thrilled to establish a close collaboration with The Whole Group," said Tom Gallagher, dean of Missoula College and associate vice provost for Workforce Development and Two-Year Education. "This partnership will provide students with ServiceNow skills and the work-based learning opportunities needed to pursue careers in a high-demand technical field."

Accelerate Montana and Missoula College will also offer non-credit pathways that enable a

wide range of individuals from high school seniors to workers seeking a career change to pursue ServiceNow job opportunities. Accelerate Montana will also work with other 2-year colleges and with tribal colleges to facilitate statewide access to ServiceNow training and job opportunities.

“Partnering with The Whole Group aligns tightly with Accelerate Montana’s focus on expanding Montanan’s access to in-demand skills-based training that leads to good paying jobs,” said Paul Gladen, director of Accelerate Montana and associate vice president for Research & Economic Development.

“We appreciate the opportunity to partner with Accelerate Montana and The Whole Group as we work to meet the ServiceNow workforce training needs in our region and in Montana,” said Sandra Bauman, Dean/CEO Helena College.

The Whole Group was established to rapidly build and implement a new global software deployment model (Cosmos) to support ServiceNow in quickly launching and growing the usage of new products. The Whole Group partners with universities, colleges and state agencies to establish scalable talent creation programs.

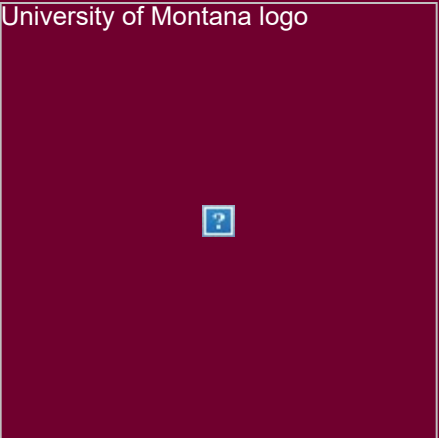
“We believe that technology careers should be accessible, attainable and equitable - reducing the income and opportunity disparity across many communities today,” said The Whole Group’s Paul Andrew. “We decided to base our global business in Montana, supporting customers around the world, based on the fact that many of our team members and leaders built their careers in Montana. We are delighted to partner with the University of Montana, Missoula College and Accelerate Montana to make fast growing, highly rewarding technology careers available to Montanans across the state, and look forward to many years of growing our company in Montana.”

“We're proud to partner with Accelerate Montana, the State of Montana, and our world class University to create opportunities for Montanans across the state,” said Jorge Watson of The Whole Group. “In addition to focusing on traditional education paths, we're co-creating a curriculum for individuals from all walks of life, from high school to those in later stages of their careers. We firmly believe that a key pathway to wealth creation and community prosperity lies in accessible technology careers, especially those in a high growth platform category like ServiceNow. We're committed to making this pathway accessible to as many Montanans as possible.”

###

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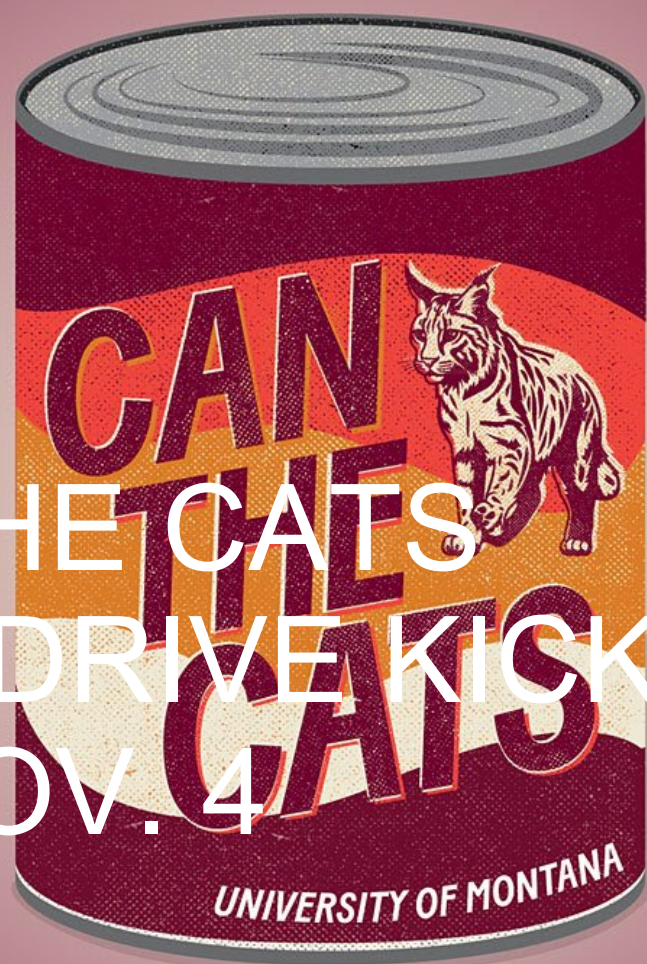
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UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

CAN THE CATS FOOD DRIVE KICKS OFF NOV. 4

25 OCTOBER 2023



MISSOULA – Before their football teams clash in the state’s biggest game of the year, the University of Montana in **Missoula** and Montana State University in **Bozeman** once again will compete in a food drive to support those facing food insecurity during this holiday season.

Now in its 24th year, the Can the Cats Food Drive launches Saturday, Nov. 4. The event is sponsored by UM and Missoula Food Bank & Community Center. It encourages Missoulians and others to donate food and cash until the Griz-Cat Brawl of the Wild game on Saturday, Nov. 18, in Missoula, when the food drive winner will be announced.

“The Can the Cats Food Drive is an important annual tradition where the entire Missoula

community joins together to support those in need,” UM President Seth Bodnar said. “This isn’t just a UM event, and we are grateful for all the local businesses, organizations and individuals that participate.”

Food collected will benefit both the campus and community food pantries. Cash donations also are welcome. These efforts will boost the UM Food Pantry’s work to support students experiencing food insecurity, as well as Missoula Food Bank & Community Center efforts to support the thousands of Missoula County households working hard to make sure their families have enough to eat during the holidays.

“The food and money raised during Can the Cats comes at a critical time in our community,” said Amy Allison Thompson, executive director of Missoula Food Bank. “Last year we served one in five people in Missoula County. During the holiday season, families all over Missoula are stretching every dollar they have to meet their family’s needs. By donating during Can the Cats, you can make sure all families have enough to eat.”

This year Missoula Food Pantry, the UM Pantry and other community partners hope to Can the Cats with a donation goal of 500,000 pounds. Title sponsors are Clearwater Credit Union and the Advocates Injury Attorneys.

Allison Thompson said financial donations count, too. Every \$1 donated equates to a pound of food. All donations collected in the Missoula area during the drive stay local. More information about Can the Cats, including participating businesses, drop-off locations, events and volunteer opportunities, is available online at www.canthecats.com.

“We need everyone to help us can those Cats!” said Kat Cowley, who directs the Associated Students of UM Bear Necessities and the UM Food Pantry. “The benefits of this yearly competition cannot be overstated. Every year Can the Cats provides local food banks and pantries with increased abundance. Last year, the UM and Missoula communities donated 450,000 pounds.”

Some key events with Can the Cats include:

- **Food Drive Kickoff**, 5-6:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 4, Washington-Grizzly Stadium. Bring your food donations to the game against Sacramento State and donate food at every stadium entrance. Learn more: <https://grizhub.umt.edu/event/9507574>.

- **Griz Student Athletes Tailgate**, 5-7 p.m. Monday, Nov. 6, Missoula Scheels store, 2901 Brooks St. Grab some exclusive UM swag, meet student-athletes, take photos with Monte and more. Learn more: <https://grizhub.umt.edu/event/9550006>.
- **Stuff the Bus**, 3-5 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 12, Orange Street Food Farm. Join the UM Admissions team to raise food and funds for Can the Cats while sipping hot chocolate, visiting and grabbing some swag. Learn more: <https://grizhub.umt.edu/event/9549904>.
- **Esports: Smash Ultimate Doubles Tournament**, 5-7:30 p.m. Friday, Nov. 17, Esports Arena. Partner up with a fellow gamer, strategize your moves and enter the battlefield for an evening of intense action. <https://grizhub.umt.edu/event/9500189>.

Beyond canned goods and donations for food, UM and MSU also want your blood. Montana's two flagship universities will compete in a "Blood Battle" to see who gives the most life-saving blood. The Missoula portion of the blood drive runs through Nov. 13, and gift prizes are possible.

Schedule your appointment by calling 1-800-RED CROSS, visiting [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.redcrossblood.org) or using the Blood Donor App. The sponsor code is GRIZCATCHALLENGE. The scheduled donation times are:

- 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday, Nov. 6, UM Todd Building Room 204.
- 10:30 to 4 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 7, UM Todd Building Room 204.
- 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 9, American Red Cross, 2401 N. Reserve St. Suite 6-7.
- Noon to 5 p.m. Monday, Nov. 13, Southgate Mall, 2901 Brooks St.

###

Contact: Kat Cowley, director, UM Bear Necessities, 406-243-2017, kat.cowley@mso.umt.edu; Jesse Jaeger, director of development, Missoula Food Bank & Community Center, 406-541-0766, jjaeger@missoulafoodbank.org.

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UM / News / UM Law Student Finds Success Through Energy

SCHOOL OF LAW

UM LAW STUDENT FINDS SUCCESS THROUGH ENERGY

24 OCTOBER 2023

Bri Anderson, a third-year law student from Shepherd, initially planned on going into tax law until classes on oil and gas law changed her trajectory.

MISSOULA – How many lawyers does it take to turn on a lightbulb?

As it turns out, quite a few considering the nuances of the energy industry needed to power that bulb.

The University of Montana's **Alexander Blewett III School of Law** is currently training students to practice in the energy sector. Industry demand means these students will have numerous job offers upon graduation.

Bri Anderson a third-year law student from **Shepherd** initially planned on going into tax law until classes on oil and gas law changed her trajectory.

"I thought I had everything figured out," said Anderson. "Then I took Judge Brown's oil and gas class and realized this was a great path for me."

Judge Stephen Brown worked over 25 years in private practice and now sits on the Montana Water Court, which expedites and facilitates the statewide adjudication of over 219,000 state law-based water rights and Indian and Federal reserved water rights claims. These water rights are often at the forefront of energy development.

"All Rocky Mountain west law schools teach oil and gas and water law," said Brown, an adjunct professor at the law school. "From a legal perspective, these classes are the foundation to transactional law involving natural resources and energy."

Anderson spent the summer interning with Crowley Fleck, a law firm that does work within the energy sector. She interned with their oil and gas group, focusing on mineral titles and digging through documents to find out who owns what and where.

As with water rights, laws governing ownership of mineral rights can directly impact the energy sector. If someone owns land, it doesn't necessarily mean they own what's under it. With decades or even a century of paperwork on plots of land, ownership rights can get fuzzy. Lawyers are needed to dig through this paperwork to find clarity for their clients. "This work resonates with me intellectually," said Anderson. "I've always enjoyed doing puzzles, and that's what it feels like to work on these complex contracts."

Brown is happy to teach students about a field he's spent his professional life working in.

"It's more than just figuring out rules and regulations," Brown said. "Law students are learning how to critically think through various problems and then come up with meaningful solutions."

“Even with the transition to a net-zero energy policy, knowledge about oil and gas law is essential,” Anderson said. “There is a huge need for lawyers in the energy sector, and I’m grateful to be a part of it.”

Anderson plans on finishing out her last year of law school and will then move her family to Bismarck, North Dakota, to start her full-time job with Crowley Fleck PLLP.

“The opportunities I’ve had at law school have been tremendous,” said Anderson. “Think about the issues in the world that need solving, and that’s where the jobs are.”

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UM / News / UM Leads \$12.3M Contract to Advance TB Vaccine

RESEARCH

UM LEADS \$12.3M CONTRACT TO ADVANCE TB VACCINE

23 OCTOBER 2023

Research associate Alexander Riffey works with UM's Center for Translational Medicine, which is working on a tuberculosis vaccine. (UM photos by Tommy Martino)

UM



researcher Walid Abdelwahab is a co-principal investigator on a \$12.3 million contract to develop a vaccine adjuvant for use in a tuberculosis vaccine.

MISSOULA – The National Institutes of Health recently awarded a \$12.3 million contract to the University of Montana to develop a novel vaccine adjuvant for use in a tuberculosis vaccine. Adjuvants are substances that boost the effectiveness of vaccines.

The five-year award went to UM’s **Center for Translational Medicine** and its partners. The contract is titled “Development of UM-1098: A Novel Synthetic Th17 Inducing Adjuvant and Delivery System.”

“The development and clinical evaluation of safe and effective adjuvants is urgently needed for the advancement of vaccines to combat the ongoing threat of bacterial and fungal infections, including tuberculosis, pertussis and others,” said Jay Evans, director of the UM center. “TB affects a significant portion of the global population, and the only licensed vaccine, BCG, has limited effectiveness. Thus the development of an effective vaccine is critical to end the global TB epidemic.”

According to the World Health Organization, 1.6 million people died from TB in 2021. Worldwide, TB is the 13th leading cause of death and second leading infectious killer after

COVID-19 (above HIV and AIDS).

Drs. Evans and Walid Abdelwahab are the co-principal investigators on the contract, along with their colleagues Drs. David Burkhart, Asia Riel and Blair DeBuysscher with Center for Translational Medicine. The project also includes researchers from the University of Chicago (Dr. Shabaana Khadar), the Texas Biomedical Research Institute (Dr. Smriti Mehra) and Missoula-based Inimmune Corp., a corporate development partner (Drs. Kendal Ryter and Shannon Miller).

Evans said vaccine development for TB and other bacterial and fungal pathogens has been hampered by the lack of appropriate adjuvants and effective formulations. This new contract builds upon a recently completed \$13 million NIH Adjuvant Discovery Contract, which identified the lead candidate being advanced toward human clinical trials in the current award.

“This funding represents tremendous support for our continuous research efforts in advancing safe and efficient adjuvants and formulation strategies for further development of vaccine candidates against TB,” Abdelwahab said. “This contract is a strong endorsement of our exceptional vaccine research team at UM.”

UM



graduate student Elizabeth Lorentz gets to work on cutting-edge vaccines as part of the Center for Translational Medicine formulations team.

The project involves a large vaccine research team at UM with more than two decades of research on improving vaccines through the use of adjuvants and novel delivery systems to ensure vaccines are safely and efficiently delivered to the targeted cells. The UM research will involve both undergraduate and graduate students, providing them with an opportunity to do research on a new vaccine that may have a profound impact on global health.

“There is extraordinary research ongoing at UM that could positively impact the lives of countless people,” Evans said. “Our Vaccine Research Team is dedicated to nurturing and cultivating an interactive research community at UM, specifically geared toward advancing these technologies to help individuals and communities in Montana and across the globe.”

Inimmune is a biotech company located at the University’s business incubator, MonTEC. It will assist with vaccine manufacturing efforts and advancement of this new technology to human clinical trials. The Inimmune efforts will be led by Ryter, the company’s vice president of manufacturing and development.

“Inimmune is very excited to be chosen as a collaborator to advance this exciting new technology,” Ryter said. “Adjuvants and immunomodulators that effectively drive a Th17-biased immune response are not part of the standard vaccine tool kit, and we see this approach as having tremendous potential in developing therapies for some of the most difficult to treat and impactful infectious diseases in the world, such as TB.”

Founded in 2016, Inimmune focuses on the discovery and development of new immunomodulatory therapeutics for treatment of allergic diseases, cancer and infectious disease. Learn more at <https://inimmune.com/>.

###

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UM / News / UM Stages Spooky Adaptation of 'Sleepy Hollow' this Halloween



COLLEGE OF THE ARTS AND MEDIA, UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

UM STAGES SPOOKY ADAPTATION OF 'SLEEPY HOLLOW' THIS HALLOWEEN

20 OCTOBER 2023

UM students rehearse their production of "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," which opens Thursday, Oct. 26 at the Masquer Theatre. (UM Photo by Coral Scoles-Coburn.)

By Abigail Lauten-Scrivner, UM News Service

MISSOULA – Spooky spirits and ghastly ghouls will descend upon the University of Montana a little ahead of Halloween this year – **just in time to bring frightening festivities to UM's Family**

Weekend.

The Headless Horseman, Ichabod Crane and a cast of other eerie characters will ride onto campus for “**The Legend of Sleepy Hollow**,” opening 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 26, at UM’s Masquer Theatre. The show runs through Saturday, Nov. 4, including a special screening on Halloween night.

The student-run show is a playful reimagining of Washington Irving’s classic tale that will spook and delight audience members of all ages. Community members and loved ones visiting for Family Weekend are invited to take part in the storytelling.

“We’re looking to create a family-friendly experience that we can bring people into, because part of our contention is that the audience is part of the story and we need you to help us tell it,” said Mike Post, an associate professor of theater and interim director of **UM’s School of Theatre and Dance**.

“It’s a ghost story. We’re all going to sit around the campfire and tell it.”

The play was spurred when Post realized one of this year’s shows would span both Family Weekend and Halloween. He went on the hunt for a script that was both ghoulish and kid friendly (which, unfortunately, ruled out “Evil Dead the Musical”). “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” checked the appropriate boxes.

Seated in the black-box-style Masquer Theatre, meaning the stage is in the middle of the audience, play-goers can expect an immersive show. The audience will be invited into the play, as actors break the wall between performer and spectator through direct address. Innovative video projections will enhance the story’s ambiance by illuminating screens that surround the audience.

While not altogether new, video projection as a storytelling technique in theater has become more sophisticated, and audiences can expect to see it employed at future UM shows.

“It’s tricky, because you don’t want people focusing on the projection, you want them focusing on your story. But it can become an incredibly powerful element within the storytelling itself,” Post said. “We can actually surround the audience with projection for more of an immersive experience.”

Attendees also can participate in an audience costume contest. The winner will be announced at the Halloween show, which will start at 7 p.m. – a half hour earlier than other evening showings to accommodate evening Halloween celebrations.

"It's going to be a really fun time," Post said. "Our kids are amazing, and I want to make sure we're giving them all the opportunities we can to learn more about what they're doing and have a good time doing it."

The script was adapted from Irving's original 1820 short story by UM MFA directing candidate JM Christiansen, who also is directing the show.

"I love working with students and using the principles of theater in my directing as a way to teach storytelling, relationship with the audience and the kind of self-confidence and use of your body and voice that theater is so good at teaching," he said.

Christiansen is in the final year of his MFA and has completed his thesis production, a staging of "The Odyssey" that toured a number of schools throughout Montana earlier this year. During his time at UM, he taught courses ranging from introduction to acting to dramatic literature and more. Enrolling at the University allowed him to explore his interdisciplinary interests in art and scholarship. After he completes his MFA, Christiansen plans to continue on at the University to earn a Ph.D. in interdisciplinary studies.

With his adaptation of "Sleepy Hollow," Christiansen wanted to show an admiration for the original text by staying true to its gothic atmosphere and playful language while also challenging some of the story's archaic notions. Christiansen hopes audiences find the story's updates amusing and engaging.

"I'm always interested in people coming to see theater and having a unique experience," Christiansen said. "It's always my hope that an audience who comes to see a show I'm working on leaves thinking, 'That was like nothing else I've ever experienced, and I'm fascinated by the fact that I had to be there to see it.'"

Campus community members visiting UM during Family Weekend can choose from various "Sleepy Hollow" showtimes Oct. 26-29. A \$10 donation is suggested at the door. [A list of other Family Weekend happenings is available online.](#)

“The audience can expect it to be sort of a spooky, weird environment that will be fun for Halloween-time,” Christiansen said. “It should be a great evening of laughter and fun stories.”

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UM / News / UM Students Create Virtual Reality Hunting Tool to Advance Stewardship

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA, COLLEGE OF FORESTRY AND CONSERVATION

UM STUDENTS CREATE VIRTUAL REALITY HUNTING TOOL TO ADVANCE STEWARDSHIP

18 OCTOBER 2023

By Kyle Spurr, UM News Service

*UM student Aidan Sweet uses the
virtual reality hunting tool.*

MISSOULA – University of

Montana student Aidan Sweet grabbed a hunting tag off an ATV, selected a rifle and range finder and walked down a trail in search of an elk.

But Sweet wasn't on the open range, rather he was standing in an open room at last spring's UM Media Arts Expo. Sweet used a virtual reality headset to

transport himself to a digital hunting ground. The hunting simulation was the creation of Sweet and a group of other **UM game design and interactive media students**.



"We wanted to develop a project where we can teach people safety and all the different facts about hunting, while keeping it fun within that 3D world," said Sweet, a senior from Maple Valley, Washington.

The UM game design students were hired through a grant to UM from the **Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation** to create the interactive VR hunting tool, which will be used to teach new hunters at UM and other university classrooms.

The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation's interest in VR hunting is part of a larger collaborative effort to support hunting-based curriculum at UM, said Blake Henning, chief conservation officer at RMEF. The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation has contributed about \$300,000 to back educational hunting programs at UM, including the **"Wild Sustenance" course** that provides campus and field instruction at the Boone and Crockett Club's 6,500-acre Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Ranch in Dupuyer. "Wild Sustenance" is offered within UM's **W.A. Franke College of Forestry and Conservation**.

Henning has been impressed with the progress of the VR hunting tool. The students began work last year, completing the first level which teaches players how and when to shoot while hunting.

"I think that's a great tool for teaching new hunters about what you are going to experience out there in the real world," Henning said. "You are going to have to identify the animal. You are going to have to get in a place to make a good shot. You are going to have to target, understand the ballistics of your gun, the range. All those things."

Joshua Millspaugh, UM's Boone and Crockett Professor of Wildlife Conservation who co-instructs the "Wild Sustenance" course with Dr. Libby Metcalf, said the VR hunting tool will be another way to teach hunting, especially for students who are adept with technology. It will allow students to practice and gain confidence before ever going out to hunt, he said.

"This tool is very cool and another option for reducing barriers for new hunters," Millspaugh said. "It's intended to allow new hunters a safe environment before going into the field. It leverages technology and expertise at UM in appropriate ways."

This semester, the group of UM game design students are working on the second level of the VR hunting tool which will feature how to dress and butcher an animal. Future levels will address trespassing, orienteering and other hunting topics.

Cora Lawrence, a UM game design student from Bigfork, is helping design the dressing and butchering level. The graphics are simple, but the level does show the reality of removing an animal's joints and intestines.

Lawrence remembers hunting for the first time and feeling overwhelmed with harvesting a deer. Having a chance to test out those skills virtually is a great opportunity for new hunters, he said.

"I think it's a good way to show people what hunting actually is," Lawrence said. "We're trying to express all of those things. And that includes this visceral aspect of hunting. It is not for everyone and it's important to know that before you decide to go hunting."

The game design group plans to unveil the second level at the Fall Media Arts Expo in December.

Sweet, who graduates after this fall semester and plans to pursue a career in game design, said sharing the latest version of the VR hunting tool will be a perfect way to end his time at UM. He is proud of the work he's put into the game, including working on it over his summer break.

Sweet grew up hunting but it wasn't easily accessible. He hopes the VR tool will be helpful for UM students like himself who are from areas without access to hunting.

"We are trying to make hunting more accessible to people and show it to those who maybe don't fully understand what hunting is about," Sweet said. "It's this virtual environment for them to try things out and learn about hunting and see if it's something they are interested in."

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UM / News / UM-Led Project Creates Mapping Tool Using Satellites, 1950s Photo Archive

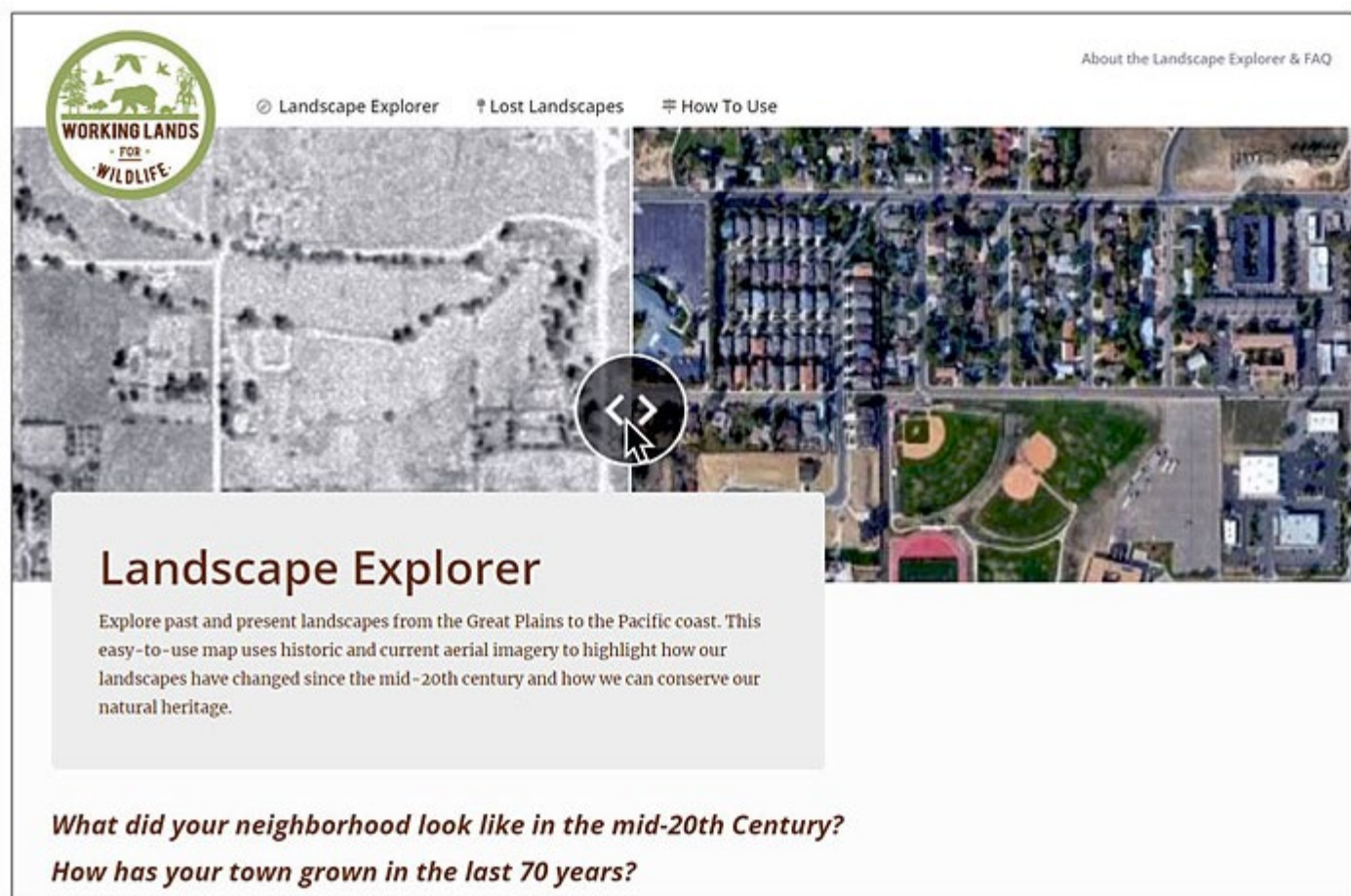
COLLEGE OF FORESTRY AND CONSERVATION

UM-LED PROJECT CREATES MAPPING TOOL USING SATELLITES, 1950S PHOTO ARCHIVE

17 OCTOBER 2023

Scott Morford, a UM research scientist, shown here in Montana's Blackfoot Valley, was a lead designer of the Landscape Explorer GIS tool. (UM photos by David Naugle)

A



screenshot of Landscape Explorer.

By Cary Shimek, UM News Service

MISSOULA – When the Cold War grew chillier around 1950, the U.S. military worried about a communist land invasion of the United States. So pilots were employed – many of them veterans of World War II – to photograph the entire country using aircraft.

This 70-year-old archive of overlapping photos was taken at different angles, providing topographic information for artillery in the event the Soviets rolled onto American soil. Such a “Red Dawn” never happened, but those pilots created an invaluable historical snapshot that predates useful satellite imagery by decades.

The collection was stored away and eventually digitized by the U.S. Geological Survey. Now the University of Montana and its partners have created a new tool, **Landscape Explorer**, which combines those 1950s photos with modern satellite imagery. It can be found online at <https://www.landscapeexplorer.org/>.

Visit the site and type in a city, location or your own address, and a slider can be pulled back

and forth across the resulting image, allowing people to easily visualize the changes that have taken place during the past seven decades. At present the tool covers the American West, from the Pacific Ocean to North Dakota and down to Texas.

“Very rarely can you find a visualization tool that takes you back 70 years,” said Dr. Dave Naugle, a UM professor of large-scale wildlife ecology. “Satellite imagery doesn’t start getting really useful until the ’80s. We took something originally from the military, assembled it, made it really easy for anybody to use, and now it’s a great way to start a conversation about conservation.

“Thank goodness USGS archived all the car parts, but then our guys put it together and made a Ferrari out of it.”

Morford
speaks
to



landowners and practitioners Oct. 4 at Private Lands Partners Day in the Blackfoot Valley. The event was organized by Partnerscapes, a landowner-led group that connects private landowners to organizations and agencies that share a common purpose to sustain working lands for people, wildlife and natural resources through voluntary conservation partnerships.

Naugle is a researcher with UM’s **Numerical Terradynamic Simulation Group**, which has crafted software for NASA environmental satellites and regularly creates data products for scientists, land managers and others who use satellite imagery. NTSG is part of the

University's W.A. Franke College of Forestry and Conservation.

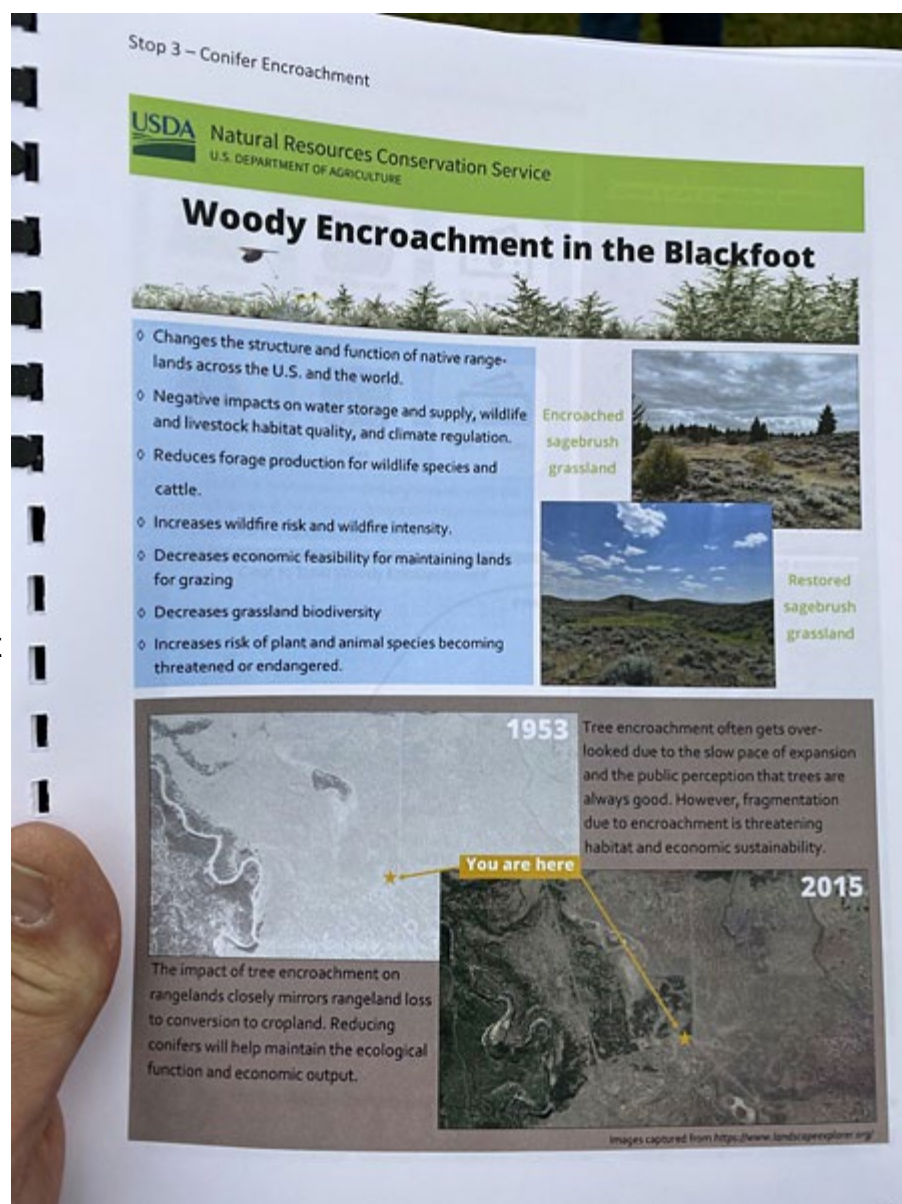
A handout derived from Landscape Explorer that was used during Private Lands Partners Day.

Other Landscape Explorer partners include **Working Lands for Wildlife**, a Natural Resources Conservation Service effort to improve agriculture and forest productivity while enhancing wildlife habitat on working landscapes; **Montana NRCS**; the **Intermountain West Joint Venture**, which works to conserve wetlands and sagebrush rangelands; and Nvidia, the graphic card producer that provided support through its Academic Hardware Grant Program.

Scott Morford, an NTSG research scientist and the project lead, said the original military imagery collection comprises millions of photographs from across the United States. Landscape Explorer incorporated roughly 170,000 of these images, using nearly 40 terabytes of data. The project scaled up from just western Montana to the entire state and eventually 17 western states.

Morford said the innovative part of what they accomplished was bringing all the historical digital images into a mapping platform and then automating most of the image processing.

“What we did is cracked the nut to figure out how to do this to scale,” Morford said. “People have done this with a couple hundred images, but taking all the historical imagery, automating how it was processed and bringing it all into an easy-to-use mapping interface, that’s a brand-new thing. And it’s been a wow-factor for a lot of folks who have seen it.”



While NTSG researchers automated most of the process to create Landscape Explorer, some work was still done manually. Enter Kristopher Mueller, a map-loving student from Iowa who arrived at UM to earn a **GIS (Geographic Information Science) certificate from the forestry college**. When GIS students were asked to work with imagery in the NTSG lab, he jumped at the opportunity. He's now a UM graduate student in **systems ecology**.

"As I was stitching these images together and seeing all these cool areas, I became excited to get Landscape Explorer out into the world and have other people look at it," Mueller said.

Naugle said, "If you can help young people like Kris earn their next degree while still getting experience working on our conservation team, that's a win for conservation, UM and our employees."

"We almost had Kris chained to the desk," Morford said with a laugh. "He was pulling the imagery and georectifying it – stitching it together – so that it can all be one big visualization. It was a lot of work."

Morford speaks with Jim Faulstich, a landowner leader from South Dakota, during Private Lands Partners Day.



Both Naugle and Morford have worked to conserve sagebrush country and grasslands across the West to benefit wildlife, including species like sage grouse. This often means establishing conservation partnerships with ranchers and other

private landowners. They said Landscape Explorer will help them illustrate their conservation project goals.

“Woody encroachment is one narrative this will help us communicate,” Morford said. “It’s powerful to show ranchers how much trees have invaded their grazing lands using the 1950s imagery.”

Other conservation groups are finding it useful as well.

“When we show Landscape Explorer to land trusts and others doing conservation work in the West, they are like, ‘Oh, my gosh! We pay companies for this. Now it’s going to be free!’” Naugle said.

And for the NTSG team, sharing this powerful tool is as important as building it.

“We just want to get this into the hands of as many people as possible to drive good decision-making,” Morford said.

###

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UM / News / Rising Star: UM Alumna Lily Gladstone Breaks Through

ALUMNI

RISING STAR: UM ALUMNA LILY GLADSTONE BREAKS THROUGH

16 OCTOBER 2023

Lily Gladstone, shown here in 2016, graced stages as a UM student from 2004 to 2008. (UM photo by Todd Goodrich)

Note: *“Killers of the Flower Moon,” an epic Western crime drama directed by Martin Scorsese, hits theaters nationwide on Oct. 20. Lily Gladstone, who was born on*

Montana's Blackfeet Indian Reservation and graduated in 2008 from the University of Montana, will star in the film alongside Leonardo DiCaprio and Robert De Niro. The following article appeared in the spring 2016 issue of the Montanan, UM's institutional magazine. Since this piece ran, Gladstone has appeared in many more movies and television shows, including "First Cow," "Fancy Dance," "Billions" and "Reservation Dogs." As you will read, the Gladstone of 2016 might not have believed her present was possible.

By Jacob Baynham



Last February, Rene Haynes was standing in line at a Los Angeles Costco when her phone buzzed. She didn't recognize the number, but as a Hollywood casting director, she's used to urgent calls from strange numbers at all hours of the day. This one was from a fellow casting director, Mark Bennett. He was looking for Native actors to audition for a lead role in an independent film set in Montana.

The cashier scanned Haynes' groceries as Bennett described the character – a reclusive ranch hand, the strong, silent type, grounded. Haynes, a UM theatre and dance alumna whose casting credits include "Dances with Wolves," the "Twilight" series, and "The Revenant," knew the perfect person. The conversation was over before she pushed her cart into the parking lot.

She'd given Bennett only one name: Lily Gladstone, a relatively unknown young actor from Montana's Blackfeet Reservation.

At the time, Gladstone was between acting jobs and wondering about her future. When her agent called, she quickly recognized the scale of the opportunity.

"It was a dream role," she said. "I've always been drawn to quiet films, subtlety, what is not said. I couldn't believe I was auditioning for it."

She spent two weeks learning about the role. First she bought a pair of work boots and a flannel shirt. She wore them every day to get comfortable in her character's wardrobe. She studied the script. Her character had broken bones, so she practiced moving with creaks. Finally, she drove to tiny Belfry, the town where the story was set. She wanted to feel her character's landscape. After all that, two friends helped her film some scenes, which she sent to the director, Kelly Reichardt.

Three days later, she got the call: The role was hers. She screamed. She paced. She called her mother. And then, shortly thereafter, she spent almost six weeks on set near Livingston, acting across from Kristen Stewart in "Certain Women," a feature film based on three short stories by Helena native Maile Meloy.

"It's pretty revolutionary that part went to an almost total unknown and that it went to me, a Native actress, without it being a trope," Gladstone said.

When "Certain Women" premiered at the Sundance Film Festival this January, Gladstone's performance was singled out for praise. Rolling Stone heralded her a "breakout star" with "greater depths of feeling than many performers could ever hope to show." A writer for Variety called her "luminous" and said a sustained close-up of Gladstone's subtly expressive face was "the best single minute of acting this critic saw all festival."

"It was really validating and exciting," Gladstone said, "but something in there is terrifying. It's a lot to live up to."

For a future movie star, Gladstone had a suitably cinematic birth. Her parents lived on the

Blackfeet Reservation, and when her mother went into labor early one August morning, no one was available at Indian Health Service in **Browning** to give her a caesarian. So an emergency helicopter flew her to Kalispell Regional Medical Center just as the sun crested the Rocky Mountain Front. Lily's father told her she didn't cry when she was born. She just looked around the room and smiled. It was her first audience.

Growing up as an ethnically mixed kid on the Blackfeet Reservation wasn't always easy. Her father is Nez Perce and Blackfeet, and her mother is Dutch and Cajun. Because she was a light-skinned Native girl, Gladstone often found herself in an awkward middle ground between her Native and non-Native classmates. She shrugged off the teasing mostly from mixed kids like her – and tried to make people laugh with her goofball antics in class.

"I had a lot of energy I didn't know what to do with," she said.

Gladstone found her outlet when the Missoula Children's Theatre came to **East Glacier** to put on Cinderella. She was cast as one of the evil stepsisters.

"It was the first time that I felt cool," she said. "I think I just loved attention."

When she acquired a videotape of "The Nutcracker" ballet, she watched it every day, marveling over the dancing and drama. She started seriously pursuing ballet herself, first in the basement of a Browning church. Her parents encouraged her, their only child, even driving Gladstone to **Columbia Falls** for lessons.

Eventually, Gladstone's family moved to Seattle, in part to give her more performance opportunities. Her mother got a teaching job as an early childhood specialist. Her father found work as a boilermaker in a shipyard. Gladstone joined a ballet troupe and honed her practice until age 15, when her passion became self-destructive. She developed an eating disorder. Her self-esteem plummeted.

"In ballet, you get so involved in perfectionism that you hate yourself and what you're not able to do," she said.

Gladstone fled ballet for theater, which restored her self-confidence and allowed her to use her body in different ways. She performed Shakespeare, contemporary drama and fairy tales in high school productions and in a small community theater.

“As a teenager, I was someone who didn’t keep a lot of friends,” she said. “Theater and acting changed that. I loved being on stage.”

Gladstone enrolled at UM’s Davidson Honors College in 2004, where she was the first Native American to earn a prestigious Presidential Leadership Scholarship. She got her B.F.A. in acting, with a minor in Native American studies. And she performed every chance she got – in campus plays and in student films.

“There are a lot of talented kids at UM, but she’s always been a standout,” said Greg Johnson, who taught and directed her in Montana Repertory Theatre productions. “She’s absolutely a transcendent actress. We were lucky to have her.”

Johnson watched Gladstone transform from a “wide-eyed freshman” into a “thorough professional.” He said her focus, keen insight and work ethic elevated her acting above her peers. She was punctual. When she got on set, she was usually “off-book,” meaning she’d memorized her lines. She instilled her characters with emotional depth. She paid attention and took notes.



As a longtime Broadway performer, Johnson knows that professional actors are beset with extreme highs and lows. Great achievement can be followed by spells of professional drought.

“Whether you’ve done 50 films or two films, you never know what tomorrow will bring,” he said. “You have to be strong of mind and spirit to succeed.”



But Johnson predicts a bright career for a grounded actor like Gladstone.

“I think she’s going to weather the slings and arrows of the profession very well,” he said. “She’s centered. She knows who she is.”

Gladstone graduated from UM in 2008 and went on a yearlong national tour with a Montana Rep production of “To Kill a Mockingbird.” She found work with a project called Living Voices, in which she traveled and performed one-woman plays about Native American boarding schools, Japanese internment camps and migrant farmworkers.

Gladstone toured again with the Montana Rep for “The Miracle Worker,” in which she played Helen Keller’s mother. She wrote a play with a friend. And she directed children’s theater in Seattle with a group called Red Eagle Soaring.

She picked up local film work, too, first as an assistant for Montana filmmaking brothers Alex and Andrew Smith. The brothers were assembling a cast for their production of “Winter in the Blood,” the novel by Blackfeet author James Welch. Gladstone loved the book as a teenager. During the casting process, she read parts off-camera for hundreds of auditioning actors.

“We kept noticing no matter who we put in there, she was better,” said Andrew Smith. “We knew way before she did that we wanted her in the film.”

Eventually they cast Gladstone as Marlene, a woman who meets the main character just as his life is spiraling out of control. Smith said Gladstone worked hard to develop Marlene, while also contributing valuable cultural insight on the Blackfeet spiritual entities behind the other characters.

“She never stops thinking about the role,” said Smith, a professor in UM’s School of Media Arts. “I would like to put her in every film I make. She makes films better.”

Her success in “Winter in the Blood” soon led to other work. She played a minor speaking role opposite Oscar-winning star Benicio del Toro in “Jimmy P.” She acted in a short called “Universal VIP” and in a microbudget feature called “Subterranea,” which was made by UM media arts alumni.

But Smith said as a Native actor in an industry that is being skewered for its lack of diversity, Gladstone faces challenges other performers don’t.

“It’s more difficult if you’re an actor of color to get roles that are multidimensional,” Smith said, “because so few of those roles are written. But I think her talent will transcend the racial and ethnic pigeonholing. And as long as interesting roles get to her, she’ll have a damn good chance of getting them. I think her talent will transcend the racial and ethnic pigeonholing. And as long as interesting roles get to her, she’ll have a damn good chance of getting them.”

Gladstone’s black hair, high cheeks and transporting brown eyes are all products of her Native heritage. But her mixed genes lend Gladstone a look that many find hard to place.

“People see me and they know I’m something,” she said. “They think I’m Latina, or Japanese-American, but not Native American. We’re still a myth as a people.”

So Gladstone spends a lot of time explaining herself.

“Yes, I’m mixed,” she said. “Yes, I’m light. Yes, I’m Native.”

Her appearance is important, because it determines the roles she gets. Gladstone suspects she’s too fair to play a Native American in a historical movie like “The Revenant.” But she’s not

fair enough to play the more plentiful roles written for white actors.

“That’s the industry,” she said. “It’s built around pigeonholing you based on appearance and type. You have to be confident in who you are. Otherwise it’s easy to get offended.”

To a casting director, Gladstone is “ethnically ambiguous,” meaning she could fit a variety of roles. And sometimes her characters reflect that ambiguity. In “Certain Women,” Gladstone’s character isn’t explicitly Native. Gladstone is proud of parts like these, because when Native actors play rounded, non-stereotypical roles, it helps demythologize the Native experience.

Independent movies are doing better at this than Hollywood. Gladstone said Native filmmakers Sydney Freeland and Nanobah Becker are telling modern Native stories, as is the sketch comedy group the 1491s. And she is encouraged by the success of Native actors like Q’orianka Kilcher and Chaske Spencer.

But when it comes to building a career as a professional actor, Gladstone is aware that being Native is a mixed bag.

“It helps and it hurts,” she said. “My identity has got me in the door for a lot of fantastic projects, but it’s not what ultimately landed me the role.”

On a recent Wednesday morning, I meet Gladstone in a café near campus. It’s unseasonably sunny, and she walks in wearing calf-length jeans, black Dr. Martens, a heather sweater and a mustard-colored beanie.

She’s on time, and she holds the door for a stranger. Newfound fame hasn’t robbed her of any Montana decency. She’s confident, but considerate, too. She orders coffee and eggs.

Gladstone is 29 years old. But at a time when many in her position would be fleeing for L.A. or New York, she just moved into a modest apartment near UM.

“I’m never going to fully leave Montana,” she said. “I like being in a place where I can work with Native communities. And Missoula’s a really nice place to be grounded when you’re a working, traveling artist.”

Gladstone did spend a week in L.A. during spring pilot season. She auditioned for 16 roles, including a gypsy assassin, Nancy Drew, a lost millennial nanny, a hippy-dippy psychic who's actually a witch and a futuristic Marine sergeant on Mars. She's waiting to hear back on some, but she's not holding her breath.

"Sometimes you know you're right for something," she said. Other times, you're just introducing yourself to a casting director.

It's been four months since Sundance, enough time for the buzz to fade and questions to creep in about her future as an actor. She doesn't have any definite acting work lined up. As for "Certain Women," it won't even hit theaters until the end of the year. Patience is part of the process.

"Even when you get something enormously exciting, it takes a long damn time," Gladstone said. "It's a lot of hoping and wishing. You have to learn to let go."

Gladstone knows the phone could ring any minute, like it did with "Certain Women." But in the meantime, she's pursuing her own film ideas and working with kids. She's helping produce a friend's first feature. She thinks about grad school.

"I don't know exactly what I'm going to do next," she said, "but it's going to be something unconventional."

For now, Gladstone is heeding some advice from a former professor to never stop growing as a person, because character is the only thing with a shelf life in a business that can make you disposable.

"People want to work with good actors," she said, "but they also want to work with good human beings."

It bodes well for Hollywood and for the rest of us, then, that Gladstone is equally prepared for both of those roles.

###

The 2016 Montanan article about Lily Gladstone.

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UM / News / Business Students Drawn to UM's High-Earning Degree



By Kyle Spurr, UM News Service

The MISA student group offers professional development opportunities.

MISSOULA – Sarah Keller followed her passion for singing to a private college in

Washington. But when COVID-19 made music school more difficult, she decided to study business at the University of Montana.

Three years later, Keller is finishing a **degree in management information systems** (MIS) and already has a job lined up this spring with one of the largest professional service firms in the nation.



“I realized how great of a career it was,” Keller said. “You can just do so much with an MIS degree.”

Keller, who grew up in **Great Falls**, is not alone in making the switch to MIS. A growing number of students from a variety of majors are transferring to the MIS degree, making it the fastest growing major in **UM's College of Business**.

The degree teaches students how to integrate technology into business, which helps organizations with their processes and decision making. It can lead to careers in cybersecurity, data analytics and solutions delivery – all areas projected to grow over the next decade.

Already, an MIS degree is considered one of the highest-earning at UM with graduates making an average of \$84,533 in their first year out of college, said David Firth, a professor of MIS at the UM College of Business.

“Clearly the opportunity to earn very good money is a draw,” Firth said. “But I think the fact that we have recent grads from a whole variety of companies and firms come back and tell their stories of why they love their careers is actually way more important and the bigger draw.”

Firth said recent MIS graduates regularly return to his classes to talk about their work. Alumni also return for meet-and-greets and recruiting events. Three of the four largest national professional service firms send recruiters to UM.

"We have a robust program for our students to engage with potential employers, and this gives them a multitude of touchpoints to understand what it's like to work at a firm or company, as well as talk to people who have graduated from our MIS major and they would likely be working with," Firth said.

Current MIS students also feel supported through the **Montana Information Systems Association student group**, which hosts visiting firms and companies and gives students another opportunity to hear about potential career paths.

The MISA student group is led by Keller, who is the president, and Collin Baker, vice president of the club and a senior MIS student from **Missoula**.

Baker said the club is open to any major and meets once a week. The meetings are a good chance for professional development and often feature events such as resume building workshops and meetings with companies interested in information systems.

"Companies are investing in MIS because that's the way things are going," Baker said. "Every company is integrating technology into every part of their business."

Baker said another beneficial aspect of UM's MIS degree is the real-world experience. A paid internship is required to graduate, which helps students gain professional connections before leaving campus. Baker interned with the national professional service firm, PwC, last summer and will start a career with that national firm after he graduates this spring.

"Even as interns we did a lot of hands-on work," Baker said. "I was scheduling and meeting with the clients myself and giving presentations to the partners. You do actual work from the get go."

MaKenna Boring, a junior from **Anchorage, Alaska**, was originally interested in studying international business because she grew up learning Japanese and is interested in international careers. She realized an MIS degree would give her a strong path to those goals.

"I am confident in my interpersonal skills, my drive, and my sense of community to help me succeed, but I need to broaden my knowledge in the technology world and the MIS major is making that possible for me," Boring said. "MIS is a language that I want to be able to understand in the business world."

After she graduates, Boring plans to return to Alaska with her MIS skills and help a business or organization achieve their goals.

"I do think MIS is valuable to any type of person," Boring said. "I'm a very people's person and often question what degree can help me get where I want to go. Overall, I think having an MIS degree will help me stand out and enter the tech world – which is everywhere now – without being intimidated."

For Keller, earning an MIS degree allows her to find a fulfilling career while still supporting her love of music.

During her studies, she has participated in a recital choir and UM's Chamber Chorale. She also is in the Commercial Music Ensemble directed by John Wicks, UM professor of drum set and former rock star drummer for the band Fitz and the Tantrums.

"MIS was an attractive major to me," Keller said. "A career in MIS will allow me to support my hobbies and interests while learning valuable skills."

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UM / News / Missoula College Named NSA Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense



Missoula College Dean Tom Gallagher takes part in the second annual Cyber, IT and CS Career Networking Event at Missoula College. (April, '23)

Missoula College Named NSA Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense

UM News Service

MISSOULA – The University of Montana’s push to be the region’s cybersecurity hub took another step forward this week after the National Security Agency officially redesignated Missoula College as a Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense.

This prestigious designation highlights UM’s growing field of cybersecurity education and training, as well as a commitment to promoting a secure cyber landscape in today’s interconnected world.

The NSA Center of Academic Cyber Defense designation is awarded to institutions that excel in providing students with the knowledge and skills necessary to defend against cyber threats. Missoula College received the designation as a direct result of the two-year college’s dedication to preparing the next generation of cybersecurity professionals and contributing to national cybersecurity efforts.

"Missoula College is a leader in cybersecurity education and training, and we are proud the NSA recognizes that," said Dr. Tom Gallagher, dean of Missoula College. "This designation is a big deal and a testament to the hard work and dedication of our faculty and staff in providing a top-notch cybersecurity education to our students. We are proud to contribute to the nation's cybersecurity efforts and to be part of a network of institutions dedicated to protecting our digital world."

In recent years, **Missoula College has grown its cybersecurity offerings** to include short-term credentialing courses, a two-year associate’s degree and dual-enrollment courses for Montana high school students.

"Missoula College’s cybersecurity program has consistently demonstrated excellence in teaching, outreach and innovation," said Diane Burke, a Missoula College clinical professor and director of **CyberMontana**. "The college's faculty members are recognized experts in the field, and students benefit from hands-on training and access to cutting-edge resources."

The designation was announced at the National Cybersecurity Education Colloquium in Chicago. This event serves as a platform for cybersecurity experts from academia, government and industry to share knowledge, best practices and the latest developments in the field. Missoula College’s presence at this event highlights its commitment to staying at the forefront of cybersecurity education.

Cybersecurity is just one academic program powering significant growth at Missoula College. With 1,436 students taking courses this fall, enrollment has increased by 18% over the past year. Since 2021, Missoula College enrollment has grown by more than 24%.

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UM / News / Brawl of the Wild T-Shirts Raise Money for UM Student Groups



MISSOULA – Griz fans will have a chance to show their school spirit during this year’s Griz-Cat football game while supporting University of Montana student groups.

The Associated Students of the University of Montana have created limited edition Griz gear for fans to celebrate the 122nd Brawl of the Wild.

The maroon T-shirts and sweatshirts feature the phrase, “Good ol’ Grizzlies” on the front and “Down with the Foe” on the back, which are lines from the UM fight song. Maroon beanies also

have the phrase, “Good ol’ Grizzlies.” The **Griz gear is available online until Sunday, Oct. 15** or in the UM Bookstore in November.

UM students voted for the specific design during the first week of fall classes. As part of a new annual tradition, students will choose the design of a line of merchandise that will launch in connection to the Brawl of the Wild. Anyone can purchase the items, but the theme is “by students, for students.”

Proceeds from each sale will go directly toward UM’s student groups. When an item is purchased, the buyer can select a specific student group to support.

"We're so lucky to have this partnership with Grizzly Athletics and even better, the opportunity to use it as a fundraiser to give back to our students," said ASUM President Maggie Bell. "One of the best parts about being a student is getting involved in student groups. Having funding to participate and put on events is a crucial aspect of that. Brawl of the Wild is back in Missoula this year and I can't wait to see everyone in their maroon gear while benefiting our students!"

UM’s student groups hope the maroon gear will fill the stands during the Brawl of the Wild, which will take place at noon, Saturday, Nov. 18 in Washington-Grizzly Stadium.

“The Brawl of the Wild is one of our most important traditions. This is a great opportunity for Griz fans to purchase new shirts, hats and hoodies,” said Jenny Petty, UM vice president of Marketing Communications. “This merchandise line was inspired and chosen by current students, and it not only helps fans show their Griz pride, but directly supports our students.”

The enthusiasm for the exclusive gear is part of a growing excitement for Grizzly Athletics. UM set a new Washington-Grizzly Stadium record with 26,978 people in attendance last month during the Black Out football game against Ferris State. New attendance records also were set this fall for Montana’s soccer and Griz volleyball games.

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UM / News / UM, Army Strike Partnership to Manage 9 Military Installations Across the West

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

UM, ARMY STRIKE PARTNERSHIP TO MANAGE 9 MILITARY INSTALLATIONS ACROSS THE WEST

04 OCTOBER 2023

MISSOULA – The University of Montana’s Center for Integrated Research on the Environment and the U.S. Army have strengthened their partnership with a new 10-year agreement to provide resource management and environmental research on nine Army installations across the western U.S.

“This agreement will ensure the government’s management and diverse use of the Army’s multimillion acres of military lands within these bases are sustained in order to accomplish the Army’s mission into the future,” said William G. Kidd, director of G4 facilities and logistics, Installation Management Command of the U.S. Army.

The Regional Intergovernmental Service Agreement is the first of its kind to include multiple Army installations and areas of research and service. In the future, possibilities are open to expand the partnership to other Army installations as the capacity for research continues.

“This is the latest example of UM expanding our partnership and impact across the country,” said UM President Seth Bodnar, an Army veteran and member of the Montana Army National Guard. “This partnership with the Army will increase research opportunities for our students and faculty, as well as pave the way for future collaboration between UM and our military branches.”

Through this collaboration, CIRE will provide expertise and technical resources to perform research and services that include forestry and wildlife management, threatened and endangered species surveys, tribal consultations, archeological surveys and wildland fire planning and management. The center also will provide affiliated technical GIS support services and environmental project consultation.

“The agreement is designed to expand upon the natural resource management we already provide to multiple Midwest Air Force installations via a similar five-year cooperative agreement, the wildland fire management we provide for California Air Force bases and the wildlife management we provide at certain Marine Corps installations in California,” said Kevin Swinford, CIRE director and a 28-year veteran of managing environmental contracts and agreements for the Department of Defense.

“The opportunity to expand our outreach provides multiple new opportunities for research and hands-on field learning for our student and faculty partners across the university community,” he added.

CIRE’s research team is made up of UM professors and students who conduct field and task-based research in Montana, Washington, Oregon, California, Arizona, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico, Idaho, Colorado, Wyoming, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas.

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UM / News / President's Lecture Series Brings Slate of Experts to Speak at UM

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

PRESIDENT'S LECTURE SERIES BRINGS SLATE OF EXPERTS TO SPEAK AT UM

03 OCTOBER 2023

The President's Lecture Series brings lecturers from a wide variety of professional fields to speak at UM each year. (UM Photo by Tommy Martino)

MISSOULA – The University of Montana will bring another diverse program of speakers to campus for this year's slate of **President's Lecture Series events**.

The President's Lecture Series invites experts across a variety of fields to UM to discuss ideas and issues that animate public conversation. Each lecture is free and open to the community.

President Seth Bodnar looks forward to hosting another series that will challenge the public to engage in meaningful and thought-provoking dialogue both on campus and in the greater community.

"Part of our mission as a university is to be a forum for the free exchange of ideas across the ideological spectrum," Bodnar said. "I invite campus and the greater community to cultivate curiosity, exploration and mutual respect through this public event series."

This year's talks will range from a discussion on the vital role of Indigenous voices in climate change to the future of democracy.

The schedule of upcoming President's Lecture Series events include:

- **Tuesday, Oct. 10, at 7 p.m. in the UC Ballroom:** Robin Wall Kimmerer, "Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings Of Plants"
- **Thursday, Nov. 2, at 7:30 p.m. in the UC Ballroom:** Nick Estes, "Ancestors of the Future: Indigenous Resistance and the Climate Change"
- **Monday, Nov. 6, at 7:30 p.m. in the UC Ballroom:** Kenneth Stern, "Hate, Memory, Binary Thinking and the Future of Democracy"
- **Thursday, Feb. 1, at 7:30 p.m. in the Alice Lund Instructional Auditorium:** Judith Weisenfeld, "American Religions, American Psychiatry and the Long Civil Rights Struggle"

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UM / News / UM Museum to Launch Docent Tours in New Building

COLLEGE OF THE ARTS AND MEDIA

UM MUSEUM TO LAUNCH DOCENT TOURS IN NEW BUILDING

02 OCTOBER 2023

With its new building open to the public, the Montana Museum of Art and Culture kicks off Docent Tours Oct. 3. (UM photo by Tommy Martino.)

MISSOULA – Less than one week after officially opening its new facility, the Montana Museum of Art and Culture will kick off regular Docent Tours of the Permanent Collection and its new facility starting Oct. 3.

The MMAC's 17,000-square-foot, state-of-the-art facility is the first permanent home for the

MMAC holdings, the largest and deepest collection of art in Montana.

Docent Tours will run from noon to 12:45 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays – save for Griz football game days – and focus on highlights from the museum’s Permanent Collection.

The MMAC also will offer Special Docent tours focused on specific themes within the Permanent Collection from 2 to 2:50 p.m. on Friday. Special Docent tours for October are:

- **6: Mary Engstrom, “The Backstory: Two Artistic Legacies”**

This tour focuses on Fra Dana and Rudy Autio, two iconic Montana artists and their professional lineages. Of different generations, both shared a mission of artistic exploration and innovation and cultivated creative communities around them. This tour provides an opportunity to discuss the backstories of these two significant artists.

- **13: Cay Drew, “Listening to Art: a Sense of Sound”**

Works of art communicate more than just visual ideas or challenges. They can provoke multiple senses, including sound. In this tour, participants will “listen” to works from the Permanent Collection that span many centuries, genres and media. Through observation and conversation, participants will discuss how artists often create a multisensory experience to communicate sound.

- **20: Jean Belangie-Nye: “Amphora to Autio: the Evolution of Ceramics”**

This tour is an examination and discussion of the changes in attitudes toward ceramics over the centuries and the acceptance of ceramics as an art form. Visitors will explore important work from an ancient Greek amphora and a 15th-century Italian vase – all the way to works of 20th-century masters.

- **27: Rosella Mosteller: “Warp and Weft: Photographic Narrative”**

A discussion of the fabric of photography could begin with the “warp” of light woven with the “weft” of narrative. This tour, focused on masterpieces of photography in the Permanent Collection, allows visitors to see the best photographs, both descriptive or abstract, as “weaving” these two important elements.

- **3: Dolly Browder: “Leading the Way: Women Artists in Montana”**

Female artists in Montana inspired countless artists in their genres. This tour discusses the importance of a group of pivotal artists, their backgrounds, techniques and personal statements, as well as the sociopolitical atmosphere of their time. Highlighting the work of these women artists rebuilds a more balanced history that supports all artists.

No reservations are needed for Docent Tours, which are free of charge. For more information, call Dagny Walton at 406-243-2019 or email dagny.walton@mso.umt.edu.

Editor's note: The new 17,000 square-foot MMAC building opened to the public in September. The privately funded project is made possible by the generosity of many donors, including a contribution of \$12.5 million from longtime UM donors Patt and Terry Payne.

###

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UM / News / Missoula Named No. 1 'Most Fun' College Town for Young People

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

MISSOULA NAMED NO. 1 'MOST FUN' COLLEGE TOWN FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

02 OCTOBER 2023

A UM student enjoys a campus event as part of UM's brand experience that welcomes first-year students to Missoula. Missoula was recently named the nation's "most fun" college town for young adults by a survey conducted by SmartAsset, a national financial information marketplace. The survey analyzed data from the U.S. Census Bureau and MIT to appraise the best places for new college graduates. UM photo: Ryan Brennecke

MISSOULA – Missoula, home to the University of Montana, has landed on top of a national list for its fun factor.

In a survey conducted by SmartAsset, a national financial information marketplace, data was analyzed from the U.S. Census Bureau and MIT to appraise the best places for new college graduates. CNBC published the survey results in September.

According to the data and methodology, for those aged 20 to 29 with a college degree, Missoula is the place to be for entertainment. The survey's "fun" measure included local demographic and business metrics that evaluated social potential based on-population aged 20-29; the number of restaurants and bars per-capita; and entertainment venues.

"Missoula's vibrancy and cultural depth – for a town its size – is one of the greatest assets to UM," said Jenny Petty, UM vice president of marketing, communications and brand management. "Universities should work in deep parallel with their surrounding municipalities when it comes to values, opportunities and personality of place. UM just happens to be located in one of the most unique entertainment hubs in the Rockies and we're going to continue to leverage and celebrate that."

Missoula's colorful atmosphere most certainly has impact on enrollment, as the University places the city's access to wilderness, concerts, diversity of population and public transportation as part of the UM experience.

UM has also created new traditions and events that provide an experience into Missoula's entertainment amenities. For example, the University developed an annual Freshman Float experience that connects first-year students with Missoula's river recreation and UM's first-year student orientation includes the Big Sky Experience, where students work alongside and volunteer with community organizations.

The SmartAsset survey also scoured data from the online jobs site ZipRecuriter that found nearly half of 2023 college graduates report being willing to relocate to a new city for work or additional education. The survey also found that in response pandemic cultural shifts and the rise of remote work, the youngest members of the workforce are willing to live in smaller cities.

"Today's college graduates are confronting an uncertain economy, inflation and rising costs of living," said LeAnn Meyer, director of UM Alumni Relations and President of the Alumni Association. "Many are choosing to move to smaller cities after graduation. Missoula fits that bill for a small-town feel, with the entertainment landscape of a metro area and ample recreation. It's the best of both worlds and we're getting that feedback from young alumni and new students."

Many students report musical acts promoted by Missoula's Logjam Presents and the unique concert venues like the KettleHouse Amphitheater and The Wilma offer a vibrancy to their campus experience. Students also report using and enjoying Missoula's bikeable mobility and available resources provided by Home Resource and FreeCycles, in addition to a host of year-round activities through the Missoula Downtown Partnership and Missoula Downtown Association.

"What we're starting to see is that students in a post-pandemic world are looking and expecting much more from institutions in terms of community, availability and interests," Mary Kreta, UM vice president for Enrollment Management and Strategic Initiatives. "When you're located in a town like Missoula, all of those elements are an asset to the college experience."

In September, **UM reported its largest incoming class in seven years, with a 12.5% increase in Montana-resident first-year students.** UM's student body is now 66.5% Montana residents. Additionally, enrollment figures are up for Native students, Missoula College and first-generation students.

###

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