



Greetings Montana Tech Family,

Well-known investor and philanthropist, Warren Buffet has stated that “price is what you pay and value is what you get.” The signs of this couldn’t have been more evident than last week with our fall Career Fair and all the interviews and activities surrounding it. With a record 170 companies and over 500 individuals representing them, our students had a first-hand view of the incredible value of their investment.

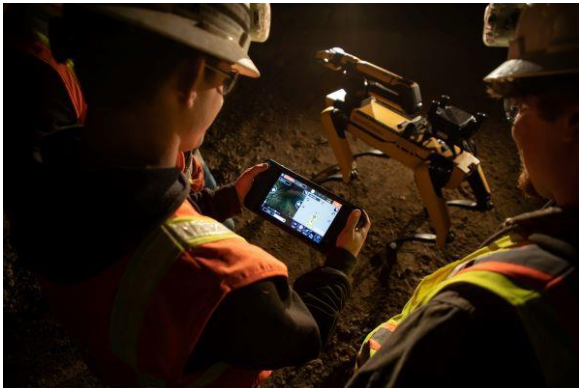
In this edition of the Chancellor Check-in, we not only recognize the success of the fall Career Fair but many other notable successes including the \$6.5M award for the establishment of a micro-credentialing program in extractive technologies, our 2024 distinguished alumni and the Chancellor's Award of Distinction; staff recipients of the Butte community’s 20 under 40, faculty members Dawn Atkinson and Stacy Corbitt’s third open-source textbook; and a lot more.

With the largest class of first-year students since 2008, a highly successful career fair, classes fully underway, and a full calendar of events including homecoming, and [family weekend](#) ahead, the fall couldn’t be better.

Thank you and enjoy all that is good at Montana Tech and beyond.



Les P. Cook  
Chancellor



## MONTANA TECH AWARDED FUNDS TO CREATE ONLINE STACKABLE CERTIFICATES

Montana Tech has been selected to receive an educational workforce award from the Department of Defense using Defense Production Act (DPA) authorities. The \$6.5 million project will address critical

workforce development needs in metallurgical, geological, mining, and environmental engineering. The University will deploy a suite of innovative online programs that will allow engineers to upskill in mineral extraction industries from anywhere in the world that has internet access. [Read more](#)



## CHANCELLOR ADVISORY SEARCH COMMITTEE NAMED

The advisory search committee will conduct a national search to replace Les Cook, who has announced his decision to retire at the conclusion of the academic year. Members of the committee are as follows:

- Chair: Tyler Trevor, MUS Deputy Commissioner
- Jeff Southworth, MUS Regent
- Kristen Manson, Montana Tech Foundation Board Member
- Scott Risser, Professor of Psychology, Faculty Senate Chair
- Katie Hailer, Professor, Chemistry
- Dan Trudnowski, Professor, Electrical Engineering
- Mike Fink, Construction Technology Instructor, Highlands College

- Scott Rosenthal, Associate Professor, Mining Engineering
- Michele Hardy, Dean, College of Letters, Sciences & Professional Studies
- Karen Byrnes, Community Member
- Jenna Snow, Payroll & Benefits Supervisor/Staff Senate President
- Leslie Dickerson, Executive Director of Admissions & Enrollment
- Taylor Liva, Student, ASMT President
- Matt Stepan, Director of Athletics

The Montana University System has contracted with Greenwood, Asher and Associates to help facilitate the search process. At the conclusion of its work, the committee will forward their recommendations to MUS Commissioner Clayton Christian and University of Montana President Seth Bodnar for consideration. View the search website [here](#).



## CHANCELLOR'S AWARD OF DISTINCTION

### SCHUYLER TO RECEIVE CHANCELLOR'S AWARD OF DISTINCTION

Energy executive, alumnus, and longtime University supporter Jerry Schuyler will receive Montana Technological University's Chancellor's Award of Distinction on Friday, Oct. 4, during Homecoming festivities.



The award, established in 2021, recognizes individuals who have achieved the most distinguished personal and professional accomplishments while also serving and bringing distinction to Montana Tech. [Read more](#)

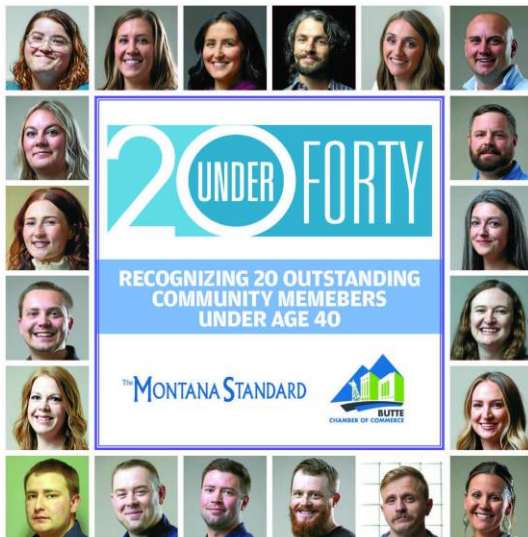


# DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS

## ROSENTHAL, OLDS, MISKIMINS TO RECEIVE DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARDS

Three outstanding alumni will be recognized during Homecoming Week as Distinguished Alumni of Montana Technological University. The awards are conferred by the Montana Tech Alumni Association.

Over the past 124 years, Montana Tech alumni have used their connections and opportunities to help change the world. This year's honorees have been influential in the fields of petroleum and mining engineering. They include Dr. Scott Rosenthal (B.S. Mining Engineering, 1982, MPEM, 2011), Nick Olds (Petroleum Engineering, 1992), and Dr. Jennifer L. Miskimins (B.S. Petroleum Engineering, 1990). [Read more](#)



## NORTH WOLFE AND RYAN NAMED 20 UNDER 40 AWARDEES

Congratulations to Montana Tech's Sarah North Wolfe and Sean Ryan on being named to the 2024 class of 20 under 40. The Montana Standard and Butte Chamber of Commerce presented the awards at the annual Chamber of Commerce dinner on September 19. The awardees are nominated by their peers for demonstrating and exemplifying outstanding leadership in business, philanthropy, and community. View

the [20 under 40 publication](#) recognizing 20 outstanding community members under the age of 40.



## SKINNER NAMED INTERIM DEAN OF THE LANCE COLLEGE OF MINES AND ENGINEERING



Dr. Jack Skinner has been appointed as the interim dean of the Lance College of Mines and Engineering. Skinner fills the position previously held by Dr. Ken Lee who left for a position at Farmingdale State College. Dr. Skinner graduated in 2000 from Montana Tech with a B.S. in General Engineering with a Mechanical Engineering Option. He went on to receive an M.S. degree in Mechanical Engineering from Washington State University and a Ph.D. in Mechanical Engineering from the University of California, Davis. Dr. Skinner worked as a graduate researcher at the Berkeley Sensor and Actuator Center (BSAC), Berkeley, California, during his time as a Ph.D. student. He worked at Sandia National Laboratories for nearly ten years, earning the rank of principal member of technical staff before becoming a faculty member at Montana Tech in 2012. [Read more](#)



From Interim Dean of the Lance College of Mines & Engineering Jack Skinner

**Petroleum Engineering:** The Petroleum Engineering Department is working with the National Parks Service to properly seal

**Metallurgical and Materials Engineering:** The Metallurgical and Materials Engineering Summer Program has proven to be a

**Electrical Engineering:** Faculty members, Dan Trudnowski and Ron Hruban, and students attended the IEEE Power & Energy Society

and remediate the very first well drilled in Montana. In 1901, the Butte #1 well was drilled in present day Glacier National Park (10 years before it became a national park). When no oil and only a small amount of natural gas was discovered, the well was filled with dirt and pieces of wood, and the company walked away, which is inadequate for today's well plugging standards. Petroleum Engineering professors, Todd Hoffman and David Reichhardt, visited the site in August to begin the design process to properly abandon the wellbore, but in a roadless, wilderness-designated area, this poses some challenges. They hope to complete the project by the end of summer 2025.

resounding success in all respects. Not only did twenty-three rising juniors and seniors from across the country participate in the first program, but ten of those students enrolled at Montana Tech as freshmen in Fall 2024, representing more than 80 % of those who attended the program as rising seniors. Of those, five have chosen to major in Metallurgical and Materials Engineering, with others majoring in Mining Engineering and Petroleum Engineering, and three enrolled at Highlands College. This program is making a difference in these students' lives, and it is an effective and powerful recruiting tool for Montana Tech's Lance College of Mines and Engineering in general and the Metallurgical and Materials Engineering Department in particular.

General Meeting (PESGM) in Seattle this summer and presented three research papers. The PESGM is the largest annual conference dedicated to power engineering that brings together practicing power engineers and academics from all over the world.

A research group including Kevin Negus and Brandon Hunt completed the seed phase of the PHANTOM research project for the 11th Airborne Division, US Army and have now started the pilot phase. The PHANTOM project is developing an enclosure and deployment methodology for unattended mesh repeater radios used in extreme arctic field environments with temperatures as low as -65 °C. Total research funding for the seed and pilot phases is >\$1M.





## BOGNAR HIRED AS DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

From growing water filtration membranes from kombucha SCOBYs to creating spray-on bandages, leading the way in extracting and processing critical minerals and making groundbreaking nanotechnology discoveries, researchers at Montana Technological University are hard at work creating innovative solutions to some of the world's most complicated problems. The University has hired Dr. John Bognar as its first director of technology transfer to spearhead a growing number of projects that seek to commercialize technological discoveries made at Montana Tech that have the potential to revolutionize a number of industries and spur economic growth. [Read more](#)



## CONNECTING STUDENTS WITH MENTAL HEALTH, COMMUNITY RESOURCES

As Orediggers head back to classes this fall, Montana Tech's Clinical Counselor Cara DeBolt is hard at work connecting students with the mental health and community resources they need. DeBolt's office is located in the Student Union Building 107A. She has a warm and inviting waiting area in SUB 107B. She spends a half-day at Highlands College every Tuesday. Many students seek her help with daily anxieties, including social anxieties, issues with relationships and friendship, life transitions, and more. DeBolt also can help students access a number of community resources, whether for mental health or other needs. [Read more](#)



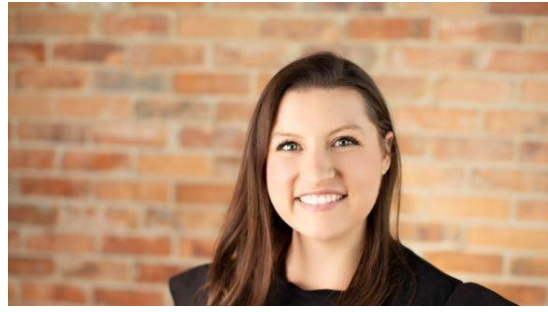


### **MONTANA TECH HELPED ALUMNA CONNECT WITH A CAREER IN LAW**

Tanna Campbell (B.S. Business Information Technology-Marketing/Management, 2021) says she came to Montana Tech from Big Timber to play collegiate golf with her sister, Taryn, a senior at the time. One class changed her career trajectory.

“I went into Computer Science for a semester and decided that was not for me,” Campbell said. “I switched my major to Business Information Technology with a marketing option, and I loved it. The Business Department was very welcoming, and I really enjoyed my time there.”

Campbell earned her Juris Doctor degree from the University of Montana-Alexander Blewett III School of Law in May 2024. [Read more](#)



### **ALUMNA SAYS EDUCATION GAVE HER THE SCIENTIFIC BACKGROUND TO BECOME A PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICER**

Lauren Bolton (B.S. Occupational Health and Safety, '17) says her path to finding the right career was a little bumpy. Now Bolton works as the Public Health Director and Health Officer in Anaconda-Deer Lodge County, helping make her hometown a healthier place, but it's a job that she had never considered as a high school senior.

“I didn't know what I wanted to do, but I always knew I was interested in health and science,” Bolton said. Bolton, an Anaconda native, says she started out thinking she wanted to go to medical school, and after she received a Montana Minds Scholarship that covered much of the cost of college, she landed in the Biological Sciences Department. [Read more](#)







## NURSING SCHOLARS EDGE PROGRAM GAVE BUTTE HIGH GRAD ADVANTAGE IN LAUNCHING HEALTH CARE CAREER

When Kieyrah Killoy of Butte was eight years old, she remembers excitedly awaiting the birth of her twin cousins. As an only child, the

babies were extra special to her, like sisters she never had.

“Finally, I had babies!” Killoy remembers.

The joyous addition to the family took on a more serious tone when one of the twins had to be flown to Missoula due to a life-threatening condition. [Read more](#)



## STUDENTS, SCHOOLS INVITED TO SIGN UP FOR TRADES AND TECHNOLOGY DAY

Trades and Technology Day allows students to participate in hands-on activities in their field of interest. The Construction Technology and Carpentry Program engages students by having them use hammers and tape measures on a project. The Automotive Technology Program holds a tire-changing competition. Tours of the Radiologic Technology Program’s lab space are given. The Pre-Apprentice Line Program often has students tie knots or ride in the bucket truck. [Read more](#)





## TRIO HOSTS SUCCESSFUL SUMMER PROGRAM

Twenty high school students from Butte, Anaconda, and Helena capped off a five-week immersive, hands-on summer learning and research program at Montana Tech with a once-in-a-lifetime trip to Washington, D.C.

The students were the summer 2024 cohort in the TRIO Upward Bound and TRIO Upward Bound Math and Science programs. TRIO is a federally funded program that provides academic tutoring, counseling, mentoring, financial guidance, and other support to assist first-generation and low-income students in obtaining post-secondary higher education and career training. [Read more](#)



## STUDENT ATTENDS GLOBAL TRAINING IN THE NETHERLANDS

Geophysical engineering junior Halli Weis, of Anaconda, honed her leadership skills, immersed herself in foreign culture and made new friends when she participated in the Keith Sherin Global Leadership Program in the Netherlands this summer. [Read more](#)

Weis was one of just 20 students from around the U.S. to participate in the highly competitive program, which is hosted by the Council for Opportunity in Education and the Institute of International Education. Weis is both a member of the TRIO Student Success program, and a student worker for the TRIO program. Weis qualified for the program through TRIO. [Read more](#)



## WRITING DUO MAKE EDUCATION MORE AFFORDABLE

Writing instructors Dawn Atkinson and Stacey Corbitt have penned their third textbook, *Advanced-Level Writing in the University Classroom and Beyond: Mindful Practices for Technical, Business, and Scientific Communication*, which is available for download from the [Open Textbook Library](#) and [OER Commons](#). Acknowledging gaps in existing commercial and open textbook catalogs, Atkinson and Corbitt set out to develop a comprehensive product that can be used in all upper-division writing courses taught at Montana Technological University—technical writing, business writing, scientific writing, and technical editing—and is freely available to students, instructors, and members of the public as a quality learning tool. The open-source textbook can be adopted as is or customized for learners and teachers in various classes and contexts thanks to its copyright permissions. [Read more](#)



## OREDIGGER HOCKEY RETURNS

[Oredigger Hockey](#) returned to the ice on September 13 in Provo, Utah kicking off their first American Collegiate Hockey Association Division II season in four years. The return to division play comes after the Hockey Club was revived last year, and the Orediggers won

several exhibition games. [Read more](#)



# Upcoming Events

**9/26:** Robert Lester's *Columbia River Canoe Project* (6:00 pm, Library Auditorium)

**9/28:** Volleyball vs Montana Western (2:00 pm, HPER)

**10/2:** Walk to School with the Orediggers  
Trades and Technology Day (9:00 am-2:00 pm)

**10/3:** Volleyball vs Northern (7:00 pm, HPER)

**9/30-10/5:** Homecoming Week

**10/4:** Bed Races (12:00 pm, Park Street)

**10/5:** Football vs Southern Oregon (1:00 pm, Bob Green Field)

**10/19:** Football vs Simpson University (1:00 pm, Bob Green Field)  
Volleyball vs Carroll College (6:00 pm, HPER)

**10/26:** Football vs Rocky Mountain College (1:00 pm, Bob Green Field)  
Volleyball vs University of Providence (6:00 pm, HPER)

**10/30:** Volleyball vs Carroll College (7:00 pm, HPER)

**MONTANA**  
TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

