

THE DIRECTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

We are sending you this special edition of the Alumni Jacket to give our undivided attention to MSUB's 2009 Outstanding Alumni Awards recipients. Not only are these honorees generous, accomplished and driven, they are also genuinely wonderful people. It is my distinct pleasure to guide the selection process from beginning to end, and I can tell you that all of our nominees are simply amazing. To rise to the top of that field says something significant and spectacular about this very deserving group of alumni.

We will honor them on Saturday, March 28th at our 27th Annual Outstanding Alumni Awards Champagne Brunch at 10:00am in the Student Union Ballroom.



Director of Alumni Relations

Recognition for Exceptional Achievement

Honors four alumni who have distinguished themselves in fields ranging from business, professional, education, volunteer service to a community, public or civil service, or arts and sciences having impacted those fields while bringing a sense of pride and recognition to the University community.

Alumni Merit Medallion

Honors an alumnus(a) who is dedicated to the advancement of higher education, exemplified by his or her commitment of professional expertise and /or volunteer service to Montana State University Billings.

Distinguished Alumnus(a)

Honors an alumnus(a) who has distinguished himself or herself through personal and professional and civic contributions, while bringing a sense of honor, pride, and recognition to the University community.

J. Cody Montalban Award

In 2001, the MSUB Alumni Association Advisory Board established this award in honor of J. Cody Montalban, a loyal alumnus and deeply dedicated Alumni Board member who died during his board tenure. That year, Cody was posthumously honored with the award bearing his name.

From the beginning, the Alumni Board's intention was that this very special honor would be bestowed from time to time, and only when special recognition is merited. The J. Cody Montalban Award recognizes someone who has consistently, selflessly and enthusiastically given of his or her time and talents to benefit the Alumni Association and its programs.

Recipients

Edward Parisian ('73, '74)

Recognition for Exceptional Achievement

Lisa Reid Perry ('86)

Recognition for Exceptional Achievement

Lloyd D. Mickelson ('64)

Merit Medallion

Darryl Rensmon ('99)

J. Cody Montalban Award

Greg Krueger ('79)

Recognition for Exceptional Achievement

Mark W. Thompson ('85)

Recognition for Exceptional Achievement

Judge Susan P. Waters ('80)

Distinguished Alumna

SPECIAL EDITION



Edward F. Parisian

Occupation:

Regional Director, Rocky Mountain Region
Senior Executive Service
Bureau of Indian Affairs

Degrees:

1973, Associate of Arts Montana State University Billings	1974, B.S. Secondary Education Montana State University Billings	1977, M.A. Educational Administrator University of South Dakota, Vermillion, South Dakota
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RECOGNITION FOR EXCEPTIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

“If it is good for the student, just do it!”

Edward Parisian has been focused on and dedicated to education nearly his whole life. Even prior to enrolling at Montana State University Billings the summer following his high school graduation, Edward took advantage of the Upward Bound program for several summers during high school, so he was ready to hit the ground running once finally enrolled in college.

It didn't take long for Edward to find a mentor in Mike Harkins at MSU Billings. Mr. Harkins provided Edward with the opportunity to play basketball at the college level and inspired him to pursue a degree in Education and later to contribute to the lives of young men and women through athletics.

Since graduating from MSU Billings, Edward has been a teacher, coach, principal, superintendent, school board member, parent committee member, parent and eventually had oversight and responsibility for 184 schools in 23 states as the Director of the Office of Indian Education. He is the only person to hold this position on two separate occasions. Today, he is the Rocky Mountain Regional Director with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).

His initial goal was to first teach and then coach on an American Indian reservation. Edward really wanted to make a difference in the lives of young people. He started this journey in Browning, Montana, where he was a junior high teacher and coach.

In 1990, Edward's responsibilities broadened immensely. He was selected as the Director of the Office of Indian Education within the BIA and had responsibility for all BIA schools within the country. Edward describes this position with the same enthusiasm as his initial teaching/coaching position. “This started my career working for the government and becoming a steward of our most precious resource, the young men and women coming through our BIA school systems. What an experience!”

John “Chance” Houle, Chairman of the Chippewa Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy's Reservation commented, “Our tribe, tribal community, and tribes nationwide owe a huge debt of gratitude for all the hard work and direction he's provided to the politicians that determine the needs of Indian education, and now other critical American Indian issues. Ed has always, and will always be considered one of the true modern day “Indian Warriors” in our society who has devoted his life to helping those who can't always help themselves.”

SPECIAL EDITION



Greg A. Krueger

Occupation:

Development Director for
Downtown Billings
The Downtown Billings
Partnership, Inc.

Degrees:

1979, B.S. Secondary
Education
Montana State University
Billings

RECOGNITION FOR EXCEPTIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

“Empower – then get out of the way!”

“Truly, MSU Billings is a part of our family,” explains Greg Krueger as he described his youngest daughter’s graduation from MSU Billings with a degree in Elementary Education nearly 18 years after he graduated with a similar degree.

Greg Krueger has impacted the lives of many citizens in the greater Billings, Montana area. Through his resilience and dedication, Greg has brought not only renovation to the downtown Billings area but also national recognition. Perhaps more importantly, though, he has been instrumental in creating a vibrant downtown district that has attracted new businesses, new shopping, new entertainment and new customers to the area!

Greg received his Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education from MSU Billings in 1979. Greg spent the next seven years working for Billings School District in the Billings Career Center, where he taught broadcasting. Greg’s broadcasting experience began while a student at MSU Billings. In fact, Greg was a student broadcaster on the last football game ever played by Eastern Montana College at Daylis Stadium.

Since 1998 Greg has devoted himself to the improvement and viability of the Downtown Billings area. He started in 1998 as an Urban Renewal Professional with the Downtown Billings Partnership and the Downtown Development Corporation. He eventually became the Executive Director for the partnership in 2003. Under Greg’s leadership, Billings has been named the International Downtown of the Month twice, and was the site of the 2007 International Downtown Association Board of Directors retreat.

During this timeframe, Greg and his wife, Rita, have raised four children and he actively participated in his children’s lives. Greg served as a Cubmaster, Scoutmaster, and the District Vice Chairman for the Black Otter District of the Boy Scouts of America. He eventually was awarded the District Award of Merit.

As a friend and colleague, former Billings Mayor Chuck Tooley, says, “At the core of his consciousness is his proud relationship to Montana State University Billings and the role it has played in preparing him for a useful and valuable life... professionally, personally, and socially.”

SPECIAL EDITION



Mark W. Thompson

Occupation:

Senior Deputy Director, Advanced
Systems Group
High Performance Technologies,
Inc., Reston, VA

Degrees:

1982, A.S. Northwest College Powell, WY	1985, B.S. Economics MSU Billings Billings, MT	1990, MBA, with Honors University of Chicago Chicago, IL
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RECOGNITION FOR EXCEPTIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

If you work hard, take reasonable and calculated risks, and you are fortunate to have a little luck, you can get ahead in life.
–Mark Thompson

From a Montana cattle feedlot to Silicon Valley, Russia, Capitol Hill, and the nation's leading technology and services firms, Mark Thompson has lived by that code. Not one to wait for life to happen, but rather one to make life happen, Mark has approached his varied job opportunities and experiences as a stepping-stone to better himself.

After graduating from MSU Billings, Mark worked in the agriculture industry, at Vale Creek Ranch, a cattle feedlot south of Billings where he worked while attending college. A downturn in the cattle cycle and the economy in general made Mark realize he needed to seek out ways to create opportunity for himself, so he obtained his MBA from the University of Chicago.

Shortly after receiving his MBA, Mark joined Morrison Knudsen Corporation in Washington, D.C. where he served as the Director of Government Affairs and managed government and public affairs and international project development in the energy, transportation, and resource industries. While at Morrison Knudsen, Mark led a very unique medical relief mission for the Republic of Mongolia. Mark played an integral role in every aspect of this very complicated mission, concluding with an airlift that resulted in delivering some \$1.7 million of medical supplies (17 tons) to Mongolian hospitals and clinics nationwide. Ambassador L. Dawagiv, Mongolia's Ambassador to the U.S. noted at the time, "...Your humanitarian airlift, the first of its kind by an American private company, will insure that children's hospitals in Mongolia are stocked with medicines and medical supplies through the long winter."

Mark Thompson has held several executive positions in leading technology firms where he has been responsible for bringing to market new and leading-edge technologies and for developing collaborative partnerships between industry, academia and government. In previous positions he has served as President and Chief Operating Officer of GroupServe; Vice President, General Manager of Niku Corporation; Vice President, Corporate Development of ICF Kaiser International; and as Vice President General Manager, of GeoResearch, Inc., of Billings, MT and Vienna, VA.

Today, Mark is a senior director with High Performance Technologies, Inc. (HPTi) of Reston, VA where he has led the resurgence of the company's science and technology business. Most notably, Mark has formulated a unique research partnership with Stanford University, NASA, and several other partners to establish the Army High Performance Computing Research Center in Silicon Valley. The research center supports Army R&D activities across the nation. Mark has also been instrumental in the establishing HPTi's climate sciences capabilities where his team of scientists and application specialists support NOAA and NASA on climate change research.

In December 2007, Mark was awarded the HPTi "Summit Award," in recognition of these accomplishments and during the award presentation it was noted, "Mark's leadership, perseverance, personal commitment, and sheer relentlessness resulted in HPTi winning the single largest award in company history, a \$215 million contract to support the Army's new research [in] areas like advanced materials, intelligent networks, nanotechnologies, and biotechnology."

SPECIAL EDITION



Judge Susan Watters

Occupation:

State Judicial District Court Judge
13th Judicial District, Yellowstone
County, Montana
Yellowstone County Family Drug
Treatment Court Judge

Degrees:

1980, B.A. English
Montana State University Billings

1988, Juris Doctorate
University of Montana

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNA

“Work hard. Treat others with respect. Do the right thing.”

Judge Susan Watters lives her personal and professional lives following three simple rules: work hard; treat others with respect; and do the right thing.

Judge Watters was appointed to the District Court Bench in January, 1998. She presides over a general jurisdiction court. Besides maintaining a full and busy court docket, in 2000 Judge Watters was approached about a new and untested family drug court model for Yellowstone County. Without any hesitation, she said yes and the Yellowstone County Family Drug Treatment Court took its first client in June, 2001. Since that time the Drug Court has favorably impacted the lives of many families throughout the Yellowstone County region.

The Yellowstone County Family Drug Treatment Court is designed to “treat” parents whose substance abuse has resulted in the removal of their children due to their abuse or neglect. Judge Watters was instrumental in the design, model and implementation of this program. Since its inception, the Drug Court has served 97 parents and 167 children.

The Drug Court is not a simple short-term rehabilitation program, but rather a holistic approach to treating substance abuse problems, which many times involves a methamphetamine addiction. Judge Watters sums up her role with the drug court, “I’m part social worker, part parent, part motivational coach and part preacher.” She is also the judge and many times is forced to make life-altering decisions for many of those that go before her in the courtroom. Rebecca Bey, Drug Court Coordinator, described Judge Watters’ involvement saying, “Judge Watters brings to the team a true desire to affect positive change in families, a commitment to her team and to the participants being served, a positive attitude and a desire to learn. She has the unique ability to be both a leader and a team equal, and gives freely of her time and talents to ensure the continued success of this program and the program graduates.”

Besides the success of the Yellowstone County Family Drug Treatment Court, Judge Watters has excelled in other areas as well. She has served as a law clerk for the Honorable Diane G. Barz (Retired), was a prosecutor for the Yellowstone County Attorney’s Office, was a sole practitioner and an associate attorney for Hendrickson, Everson, Noennig and Woodward. Vernon Woodward commented, “I have enjoyed the pleasure of practicing against Judge Watters when she was a member of the Yellowstone County Attorney’s Office, the real gift of practicing with her when she was member of our firm, and the honor of practicing in front of her now that she is a member of the judiciary. Susan has distinguished herself in every endeavor.”

SPECIAL EDITION



Lisa Reid Perry

Occupation:

Community Affairs Manager
PPL Montana

Degrees:

1981, A.A. General Studies
Miles Community College, Miles City, Montana

1986, B.A. Organizational Communications
Montana State University Billings

RECOGNITION FOR EXCEPTIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

“Joie de Vivre!”

Energetic, dedicated to community, tireless volunteer and tremendous work ethic—all describe Lisa Reid Perry.

Some wait until they have completed their college education to begin a career, Lisa, on the other hand, started a career while maintaining 12 credit hours per quarter and by the time she earned her college degree she was already on an upward-bound career path!

Lisa started her career at Big Sky Airlines as a Customer Service Representative and eventually became the Marketing Manager for the airline. She transitioned from Big Sky Airlines to Northwest Airlines where she served as the Manager for Corporate and Agency Sales in Montana, Wyoming and St. Louis, MO. It was during this time that Lisa achieved many honors for her contribution to the travel industry within the state of Montana. In 2000, she was awarded the Montana Tourism Person of the Year, the Billings Chamber of Commerce Tourism Person of the Year and was also awarded the Northwest Airlines President’s Award. The NWA President’s Award is awarded to only 12 (out of 40,000) employees of Northwest Airlines per year.

During her tenure in the tourism business, Lisa was appointed to the Governor’s Tourism Advisory Council. She remained on this Council for ten years, serving three years as Chairperson. While on the Council, Lisa took a very active role in promoting Montana tourism. She took three trips to Asia representing Montana Tourism, met with President Clinton at the White House to kickoff the Lewis and Clark 200 Year Anniversary Celebration, and increased Northwest Airline’s seat capacity to Billings by 400 per day during the summer months.

In 2005, Lisa left the tourism field and became the Community Affairs Manager for PPL Montana. This career change really allowed Lisa’s volunteerism and community spirit to shine. At PPL Montana, Lisa manages the Community Fund which awards \$200,000 annually to schools and non-profit organizations. She also administers the United Way Campaign.

Lisa is also an active volunteer through PPL for United Way. In addition, Lisa has volunteered for the Salvation Army, American Cancer Society, PPL Montana Corp of Volunteers, and MSU Billings Campaign for Excellence and sits on the board of the Billings Community Foundation.

Lisa is a member of the 2006 Leadership Montana class and Executive Director Bruce Whittenberg commented, “...To participate in this program requires a passion for community service and leadership and an extraordinary commitment of time and energy. Lisa honored that commitment completely and has demonstrated the same sort of dedication in all that she does. Lisa is highly thought of across the State of Montana for her knowledge, trustworthiness, humor and ability to bring together people of diverse backgrounds.”

SPECIAL EDITION



Lloyd D. Mickelson

Occupation:

Realtor
Prudential Floberg REALTORS

Degrees:

B.S. English and Speech
Minot Teacher's College/Minot
State University, Minot, North
Dakota

1964, M.S. Education
Montana State University Billings

ALUMNI MERIT MEDALLION

I have always believed that it is important to give of myself in helping to better the profession by doing my part – getting involved in the governance of that profession. –Lloyd Mickelson.

To most, teaching 27 years in the public school system would be enough to call it a career and it would be time to enjoy retirement. But for Lloyd Mickelson, at the end of one career he simply catapulted himself directly into another and did it with the unrelenting passion and dedication that allows him to not only excel, but be a leader.

Lloyd started teaching in the public school system in 1955 and continued to do so until 1982 after 24 years at Billings Senior High School. In characteristic Lloyd style, seeing a need and reacting to it, he developed journalism classes and had them adopted into the curriculum. His original goal was to have enough students to fill 5 classes per day. In the end, he reached his goal plus there was enough demand to require one-and-a-half more teachers to satisfy the need of the students.

Staying true to his belief in improving a profession through involvement, Lloyd was extremely active in his teacher's union. He served as both President and Vice President of the Billings Education Association as well as on numerous committees. He also served as Regional Vice President of the Montana Education Association, and was on the Environmental Committee of the National Education Association.

For the past 19 years, Lloyd has immersed himself into the real estate business. He is currently a Senior Broker, Senior Vice President at Prudential Floberg REALTORS. Just like his career in education, Lloyd again took an active role in the governance of the real estate profession and has served on the Billings Association of Realtors Board of Directors, the Montana Association of Realtors Board of Directors and is a member of the National Association of Realtors. Marilyn Floberg commented on Lloyd's contribution to the real estate industry. She wrote, "The community and real estate industry state-wide have been amply blessed by his talents for organizing and vision as well." In 2001, Lloyd was selected as REALTOR of the year at both the local and state level. Lloyd was especially proud of this accomplishment, "...because my fellow realtors are the ones who honored me through their votes."

In addition to being highly active in both of his careers, Lloyd has given tremendously to his community and his country. He is a member of the Billings Magic City Optimists, Rimrock Opera Company, Billings Cultural Partners, and is on the Parnly Billings Library Board of Trustees. He is a past member of the Official Board of the First United Methodist Church, Commission of Education and Committee of Evangelism; a past member of the Board of Directors for the Billings Studio Theater and the Board of Directors for the Downtown Billings Partnership, and he served in the United States Air Force during the Korean Conflict.

SPECIAL EDITION



Darryl Rensmon

Occupation:

Vice-President, Chief Information Officer - Morrison-Maierle, Inc.
President - Morrison-Maierle Systems Corp.

Degree:

1999, B.S. Business Administration – Information Systems
Montana State University Billings

J. Cody Montalban Award

My story is simple and no different than the stories of many others who have passed through MSU Billings; for me it is not about Darryl, but what Darryl can do to lift up others. I am just a servant that desires to help others through many different avenues. I am very proud that I have been able to be a small piece of great organizations that

support the human spirit.—Darryl Rensmon “I am blessed so I can be a blessing.”

While Darryl’s story may not be a lot different than many other non-traditional students, Darryl’s humility and selflessness are not simple or ordinary.

The MSU Billings Alumni Association Advisory Board decided to recognize Darryl Rensmon with an award that embodies the qualities of selflessness, dedication, and commitment—the J. Cody Montalban Award for Outstanding Service. Cody Montalban was an Alumni Association board member who passed away while serving on the board. An award honoring him was established and is given away only when the Advisory Board feels there is a very deserving candidate who has committed time and talents, beyond the norm, to the Alumni Association and the alumni programs.

Darryl joined the Alumni Association Board of Directors in 2001 and had an immediate and lasting impact. Shortly after agreeing to serve on the Board, a strategic planning committee was formed and Darryl immersed himself in this project that lasted well over a year. MSU Billings Foundation President Marilyn Miller commented, “Conscientiously attending weekly meetings and combining his signature clear-headed thinking with a deep affection for his alma mater, Darryl and the group created a clear and concise roadmap for the Association.”

Jeannie McIsaac-Tracy shared similar thoughts about Darryl while working directly with him on the Alumni Association Board of Directors. She said, “Darryl proved a constant sense of direction and leadership during this (strategic planning) process and put in many extra hours volunteering to support the endeavors of the Alumni Association.”

Darryl continued to support the Alumni Association even after moving to Helena for his career via phone meetings, special trips to Billings and staying involved and connected as he served out his term. Darryl served six years on the Alumni Association Advisory Board, two as vice president. Currently, he serves on the MSU Billings Foundation Board of Trustees, the MSU Billings College of Technology National Advisory Board and the Drafting and Design Advisory Board.

In addition, he is active in his community serving as a coach for many youth activities and has also been a Sunday school teacher and youth leader. Commitment to youth is special for Darryl and this is one reason why he is active in the MSU Foundation. He explained, “I am passionate about helping students through the MSU Billings Scholarship program. By participating in the Alumni Association and now the Foundation, I am able to share and promote opportunities that were given to me.”

Darryl has approached his career with the same dedication he exhibits in his personal life. He has worked for Morrison-Maierle, Inc. (MMI) even before he enrolled at MSU Billings. In fact, he worked full time for Morrison-Maierle while attending college on a part-time basis. Once he completed his degree, he advanced within the company and in 2003 became the Chief Information Officer for Morrison-Maierle, Inc. and in 2006 added the role of President of Morrison-Maierle Systems Corp. a technology subsidiary of MMI to his duties.

Darryl concluded, “My faith is the foundation of my life, followed by Jamie (wife), Austin (son), and Torea (daughter), family, friends and work. This prioritizes life for me. I have been blessed beyond measure and I never forget it.”