

engaged



People,
Pride &
Promise

The Campaign for Excellence at
Montana State University-Billings

A newsletter for Alumni & Friends *Volume No. 7 / Summer 2005*



A Message from the CEO



Amazingly, summer at Montana State University-Billings is almost over. All across campus, crews are painting, polishing, and preparing the facilities and grounds for the new academic year. The anticipation is palpable: soon students will be hurrying along walkways or studying by the waterfall in Peaks to Plains Park. Dorms will fill up, the Student Union will be bustling, and Fall



Marilynn Miller, *President & CEO
MSU-Billings Foundation*

Semester 2005 will be underway. A new academic year always generates excitement and renewed hope: every student has a dream, a goal that will change his or her life. The middle-aged mother of three reviewing her notes on the steps of McDonald Hall will own her own business one day; the man striding across the campus green will be a terrific special education teacher; the young woman walking into the library has been accepted into medical school on the strength of her test scores and her undergraduate performance as a biology major at MSU-Billings.

With diligence and perseverance, MSU-Billings students meet their goals and make their dreams come true. Diligence and perseverance, yes, but there is an additional ingredient that is essential to this “dreams come true” recipe: your help. The nascent businesswoman would still be struggling as a single mom on



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public assistance if you hadn’t contributed the scholarship money she desperately needed; our future physician wouldn’t have aced her MCAT test if you hadn’t provided the funds for up-to-date lab equipment; and the budding special education teacher would have dropped out after his freshman year if MSU-Billings couldn’t afford to staff the Student Academic Support Center. With growing challenges to funding higher education, private support is an increasingly important ingredient in the successes of Montana State University-Billings and our students. We are eternally grateful to you, our donors, who help make dreams come true.

This issue of *Engaged* highlights the success stories of a current student and an alumna. It features stories of two generous gifts: one from a corporation and one from a pair of individuals. These stories are representative of hundreds more, and are indicative of the vital importance of the partnership between the University and generous donors like you.

If you’d like to discuss a gift to MSU-Billings, please give me a call at 406-657-2244, or toll free at 888-430-6782. If you prefer e-mail, drop me a line at mmiller@msubillings.edu. I’d welcome the opportunity to talk with you about the many ways you can help our students realize their dreams.

Bo Kemble

working toward a new career thanks to scholarship



Sitting in his son's high school geometry class during an open house, Bo Kemble received his calling "to teach." Bo's calling came much later than most and on the heels of an intense period of soul searching, but a calling nonetheless that led him to Montana State University-Billings and on the road to a second affirming and rewarding career.

Bo's first wife of 22 years died from cancer in 1997, leaving him with a teenage son and daughter and a transformed outlook on life. Sitting in that classroom eight years ago, he listened to the teacher speak of how he loved his job and got to spend the day with kids. Robert was convinced that was the path for him and has been working toward that goal at full speed ever since.

A lot has changed for Bo since that evening in his son's classroom. He left his career as a land development consultant. He remarried. He and his wife Cathe moved from California to Montana four years ago to attend MSU-Billings. He has thrived as an elementary education major with a 4.0 grade point average and will

begin student teaching in Fall 2005. He is the recipient of the Outstanding Teaching as a Second Career Student Scholarship.

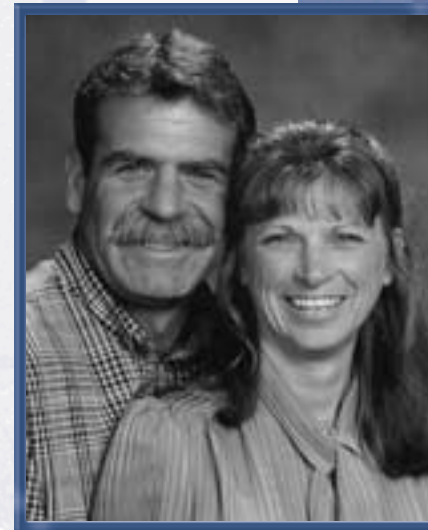
Bo came to MSU-Billings with the intention to teach in Montana. He currently substitute teaches for School District 2 in Billings, works as an EMT, and teaches CPR/First Aid. He says MSU-Billings is helping him fulfill his calling "to pursue teaching as a second career and live in Montana, and I couldn't be happier doing what I'm doing in any place other than where I am now."

Bo understands the impact of private support on his education. "Receiving this scholarship means a lot in terms of acknowledging my commitment to my goals. Your scholarship will allow me to put all my energy and effort into the

student teaching experience." As a result of hard work and scholarships, Bo will be able to graduate without the burden of student loans.

Bo represents one of the nearly 60% of MSU-Billings students who are of non-traditional age and may have to balance the demands of families and full-time employment with their education. Cost is a crucial issue of access. Merit and need-based scholarships help make college affordable. If you are interested in establishing a scholarship, please contact Susan Rhodes, Scholarship Administrator, at 657-2244 or srhodes@msubillings.edu.

"Receiving this scholarship means a lot in terms of acknowledging my commitment to my goals. Your scholarship will allow me to put all my energy and effort into the student teaching experience."



Robert Kemble and wife Cathe

Drs. Deborah and Rachel Schaffer

family views passed on to build better lives



Dr. Elliott J. Schaffer opened the windows of philanthropy for his young twin daughters Deborah and Rachel when he established a scholarship fund named the Schaffer Family Endowment at the State University of New York (SUNY) in Fredonia, from which he had retired in 1981. That gift was the first of several endowments and scholarship funds he established, as his daughters have written, “to reinforce his abiding belief: education is a key to promoting mutual understanding, combating ignorance, prejudice and bigotry, and building better lives.” To know Deborah and Rachel is to witness the fact that their father’s values have been deeply ingrained in them, both in philanthropy and in his view of the worth of education.

Drs. Deborah and Rachel Schaffer are professors of English at MSU-Billings and have been actively involved in campus life since arriving over twenty years ago. Over that time their professionalism, volunteerism and accomplishments have garnered them much-deserved praise and recognition. Rachel has been a member of the MSU-Billings Foundation Board and received the MSU-Billings Faculty Achievement Award in 1997. In 1998, Deborah also received the MSU-Billings Faculty Achievement Award. In addition, the Associated Students of MSU-Billings have awarded both Deborah and Rachel the Outstanding Faculty Award. These honors are indicative of the high esteem in which the Schaffers are held by their peers and students alike. Throughout the years, Deborah and Rachel have demonstrated their fervent belief in philanthropy and education by their generous and continual gifts to MSU-Billings Foundation.

Their recent establishment of the Schaffer Family Endowed Scholarship Fund at MSU-Billings Foundation attests to their convictions and to the views passed on to them by their father throughout his lifetime of philanthropy and teaching. This fund, in honor of their father and mother, Elliott and Bernice Schaffer, will benefit English majors at MSU-Billings who have achieved a 3.0 GPA and who have financial need. Their thoughtful and generous gift, made through a deferred gift annuity,

entitles Deborah and Rachel to membership in the Beardsley Society, the planned giving honorary club of MSU-Billings Foundation.

Scholarship endowment funds may be established with a minimum qualifying gift of \$10,000 contributed over five years or fewer, and will continue in perpetuity, using earnings only to provide funds for scholarships. Endowments are a lasting way to honor loved ones or those for whom you have deep, abiding respect. A tribute that will span generations, an endowment at MSU-Billings can help others realize their dreams and goals in life through completing a quality education. To discover how you can create an endowment that lives beyond your lifetime, call Dick Buckley, Development Officer at MSU-Billings Foundation, 406-657-2244 or 888-430-6782 (toll free). If you prefer e-mail, contact Mr. Buckley at rbuckley@msubillings.edu.



Drs. Deborah (*left*) and Rachel (*right*) Schaffer

“...education is a key to promoting mutual understanding, combating ignorance, prejudice and bigotry, and building better lives.”

Laura Swogger Arensmeyer

helping serve a diverse ethnic population



Laura Swogger Arensmeyer ('00) is a Montana State University-Billings success story. After completing her bachelor's degree from MSU-Billings, Laura was accepted to Penn State University's College of Medicine and earned her M.D. in 2005. She is currently in a 5-year residency program at Kapiolani Medical Center for Women and Children in Hawaii and will become board certified in Pediatrics, Psychiatry, and Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.



Laura Swogger Arensmeyer

Dave Coppock's cross-country program first attracted the Miles City native to MSU-Billings, but she was soon impressed by the academic programs. Small classes and personal relationships with professors made an important difference in Laura's experience and established an academic foundation that continues to benefit her as she embarks on her medical career.

The professors in the College of Arts and Sciences truly made a difference for Laura's future. "Because my teachers at MSU-Billings gave me such a strong basic science background, I was able to do well in medical school," she said. She credits Dr. Will Wickun with instilling a love and appreciation of chemistry and believes that Dr. Rhonda Dillman's research instruction is the reason for her success in research in medical school. In fact, Laura was named the most outstanding student psychiatric researcher at Penn State College of Medicine.

Laura chose the residency program in Hawaii because she wanted to work with a diverse ethnic population while helping underserved patients. Upon completing her residency, Laura intends to practice in

rural Montana. Growing up in Miles City, she is acutely aware that rural Montana is greatly underserved in the areas of mental health, especially for children and Native Americans. Her dream is to open a child psychiatry clinic to treat and educate the public about pediatric psychiatric problems.

Laura has worked extremely hard for her success. But she is deeply aware of the support system behind the scenes that made it possible: the MSU-Billings faculty and staff, the MSU-Billings cross country team, her husband Fred Arensmeyer, and her parents Dave and Shirley Swogger. Because Laura is one of seven children, her undergraduate education presented a major financial hurdle for the Swogger family. Fortunately, Laura was the recipient of several scholarships at MSU-Billings including the Haynes Presidential Scholarship, the Energy Labs Scholarship, and the

John Weinschrott Memorial Endowed Scholarship.

Laura's story exemplifies the mission and purpose of MSU-Billings and the Foundation. She came from a small town in rural Montana and because of the generosity of others was able to receive a superb education that prepared her for medical school and her career.

Scholarships are an important part of the educational experience at MSU-Billings, allowing thousands of men and women to continue their education. If you are interested in establishing a scholarship, please contact Susan Rhodes at 657-2244 or srhodes@msubillings.edu.



Rocky Mountain Bank

committed to community through generous contributions



Rocky Mountain Bank recently pledged \$50,000 to the People, Pride & Promise Campaign for Montana State University-Billings. Danny T. Skarda, President and CEO of Rocky Mountain Bank, commented on the Bank's philosophy in the communities they serve. With branches in Billings, Bigfork, Plains, Stevensville, Whitehall, Bozeman, Plentywood, and Broadus, Rocky Mountain Bank sees its community contributions as investments. "We



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believe strongly in giving back to the communities where we do business. Our employees work, play, and raise their families in these communities, so anything we can do to improve the quality of life is a win-win for us."

Rocky Mountain Bank's gift to MSU-Billings is for student scholarships. "Every day, we read about the rising cost of higher education, so supporting students seemed the best fit for us. The value and importance of having a top-notch university here in Billings is just a tremendous asset for all of us in this region and for Montana," Skarda said. "Tuition increases are one of many challenges that prevent students from starting college or completing their degrees, so it is our pleasure to establish a scholarship in Rocky Mountain Bank's name. Higher education creates greater earning potential and that benefits all of us economically. Access to a highly skilled workforce is a tremendous draw for those of us already in business in Billings and for those businesses looking to relocate in Billings."

Scholarships support our most important asset – our students.

Scholarships are an important key to attracting top students and essential to



"We believe strongly in giving back to the communities where we do business. Our employees work, play, and raise their families in these communities, so anything we can do to improve the quality of life is a win-win for us."

making a college education possible for students who are unable to afford the cost.

The primary fundraising initiative of the \$21 million People, Pride & Promise Campaign is to raise \$7,650,000 for current and endowed scholarships. Five areas of priority have been identified: Chancellor's Excellence Awards,

traditional and non-traditional scholarships, non-resident scholarships, graduate fellowships/scholarships, and athletic scholarships.

For information on the People, Pride & Promise Campaign, please contact Kathie Riggs, Campaign Director, at 406-657-2244 or toll free at 888-430-6782. You may e-mail Ms. Riggs at kriggs@msubillings.edu.

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Learn more about **People, Pride & Promise: The Campaign for Excellence at Montana State University-Billings** by visiting www.msubillings.edu/foundation. The campaign focuses on scholarships, building renovations and campus renewal, technology and lab equipment, student services, and endowment funds.

Montana State University-Billings Foundation Board of Trustees



Special Tax Break for Gifts

A 1997 Montana law created a significant tax break for Montana taxpayers who make gifts to nonprofit organizations such as the MSU-Billings Foundation. The benefit is in the form of a tax **credit** – a direct reduction of your Montana income taxes – in addition to the federal tax deduction you receive for a charitable gift. This tax credit applies to gifts made to **endowments**, such as the Chancellor's Undergraduate Endowed Scholarship or the Library Excellence Endowment. Endowments are pools of money that are invested to produce annual distributions for student scholarships or university programs.

The legislature designed the law so donors must use “planned gifts” to access the tax credit. The simplest planned giving vehicle for this is a charitable gift annuity. A charitable annuity is a straightforward legal agreement between you and the Montana State University-Billings Foundation. The Foundation has established scores of these agreements with donors – you'll find it an easy process. We also produce the documentation you or your tax accountant need to assure you receive your tax credit.

The credit is **40% of the value of the gift**, to a maximum of \$10,000 per taxpayer (a couple is **two** taxpayers). Because gift annuities provide for payments to the donor(s) at some point in the future, the “value of the gift” may be somewhat less than the actual gift amount. We'll calculate that for you, and then it is a simple matter of multiplying the value of the gift by 40% to get the MT tax credit amount.

Businesses can donate to an endowment, without using a planned giving vehicle, and receive a 20% tax credit, maximum of \$10,000 per year.

Simply put, the Montana Tax Credit for Gifts to Endowed Philanthropy is a powerful tool to considerably reduce your state income taxes. Discover how this popular law can help you make a positive impact at MSU-Billings and reduce your taxes at the same time. Contact Development Officer Dick Buckley or Chief Financial Officer Jon Egeland at 406-657-2244 (toll free: 888-430-6782) or email rbuckley@msubillings.edu or jegeland@msubillings.edu.

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The MSU-Billings Foundation and Alumni Association are in the midst of a data conversion. Inadvertent errors may have occurred. Please contact Phyllis Kerr, Research and Records Coordinator, at 406-657-2244 (toll free, 888-430-6782) if your name is printed incorrectly.



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