

# First Monday



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*From the desk of: Marilyn Miller, President and CEO  
Monday, October 5, 2009, 8:00 a.m.*

*First Monday* is provided to friends of Montana State University Billings Foundation to advance the cause of philanthropy.

**The MSU Billings Office of International Studies & Outreach (ISO)**, under the leadership of Dr. Kirk Lacy, has expanded its partnerships with universities in China. Over the past nine months, delegations from MSU Billings have met with leaders at several Chinese universities to establish agreements for student exchange, faculty exchange, and degree-completion partnerships. Degree-completion partnerships enable Chinese students to start their studies at partnering Chinese universities and then transfer to MSUB to complete Associate, Bachelor, or Master degree programs.

Over 50 different degree-completion pathways have been approved and partnership agreements have been signed with five Chinese universities. Several others are in process. This fall, 10 of MSUB's 27 international students are from China, compared with only one or two from China in previous years. Since China is the area on which ISO has focused its recruitment efforts the past nine months, Dr. Lacy sees this increase as a positive outcome of those efforts, and expects to see increased numbers of Chinese students attending MSU Billings in upcoming semesters.

**Chinese visiting faculty/scholars** are also on campus. While at MSU Billings, the visiting faculty/scholars will work with MSUB faculty on research projects, observe and guest lecture MSU Billings courses, participate in university and community meetings and events, and explore the social and cultural aspects of Billings and the region. The visiting faculty/scholars are not compensated by MSU Billings but typically get a stipend from their home university in China.

The first two visiting faculty/scholars from China arrived September 28:

- **Li Shuhua**, Associate Professor & Deputy Dean for Anshan Normal University, with a specialization in English language & literature, will be with us for twelve months.
- **Gangyi Luo**, an Associate Professor & Dean for Anshan Normal University, with a specialization in management, will be at MSUB for six months.

Three more Chinese faculty/scholars are awaiting visa approvals to travel to MSU Billings.

**More international activity:** College of Business faculty Farzad Farsio and Shokoofeh Fazel brought a group of students from Dubai to MSU Billings in September for a seminar in American economy and culture.

**The National Collegiate Scouting Association (NCSA)** announced its annual Power Rankings for 2009 and placed Montana State University Billings Athletics **ninth among all NCAA Division II schools in the country** for combined athletic and academic achievement with a power ranking of 141.33. The Yellowjackets are the only Great Northwest Athletic Conference school in the top 10 and only Alaska Fairbanks (37<sup>th</sup>) joins them in the top 100. This is the first time MSUB has made the top 100 since the poll began in 2004.

**Private donors make a huge difference at Montana State University Billings.** Many thanks to these September donors:

- **Deborah McDonald** established the Brynn and Kara McDonald Scholarships in 2008 in honor of her daughters. These scholarships benefit incoming freshmen with demonstrated potential for college success and severe financial need. In September, another \$25,000 was donated to that scholarship, an additional \$25,000 was given to create the Brynn and Kara McDonald Endowed Scholarship Fund, and \$25,000 was contributed for the MSU Billings Foundation operating endowment fund. To date, a total of nine of students have benefitted from Deborah's generosity, and many more will benefit in the future.
- **Langlas & Associates Inc.** donated \$20,000 for the Langlas & Associates, Inc. Carpentry Scholarships, which are awarded to full-time students enrolled in the construction technology carpentry program at the College of Technology.
- **KAKATU Foundation Inc.** donated a total of \$15,200. \$10,000 was directed to the Frederick J. Urbaska Baseball Scholarship Endowment and \$5,200 to the Frederick J. Urbaska Baseball Restricted Scholarship. The Urbaska scholarships benefit student-athletes who have made the Yellowjacket baseball team, have played Billings American Legion baseball, and have demonstrated athletic and academic excellence.
- **Athletic Medicine & Performance** pledged \$15,000 to the Soccer Complex Initiative.
- **Jackets & Co.** contributed \$10,000 to the Edna Frost Bookstore Scholarship and \$1,500 for the soccer complex.
- **Dr. (1959, 1964) & Mrs. (1960) Ronald P. Sexton** gave a total of \$4,500 to the Marilyn A. Sexton Scholarship Endowment Fund as well as a \$500 unrestricted gift.
- **Ironwood Throwers Camp (Barton D. Templeman 1967)** donated another \$3,500 to the Ben Plucknett Memorial Scholarship for student-athletes who excel in shot put, discus, or javelin throwing.

**To make a gift online** go to <http://www.msubillings.edu/foundation/> & click "Make-a-Gift."

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