

First Monday



*From the desk of: Marilynn Miller, President and CEO
Tuesday, September 2, 2008, 8:00 a.m.*

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

I hope your Labor Day holiday was enjoyable. Many Montana State University Billings students spent the long holiday weekend moving into the dorms. Fall semester classes begin September 3.

The Walter and Charlotte Pippenger Excellence in Innovation Award was established in 2005 by the Dick and Cheri Cox family to honor Cheri's parents. The award, which includes a \$5,000 grant, recognizes faculty, staff, or students whose efforts result in significant improvement to the undergraduate learning experience at MSU-Billings.

On August 19, at the University-Wide Opening Meeting, Dick Cox presented the 2008 Pippenger Award to the faculty team of Dr. David Butler and Dr. Kurt Toenjes in recognition of their outstanding success in providing world-class research opportunities to undergraduate students. In collaboration with student researchers, Drs. Butler and Toenjes discovered a new anti-fungal compound that can treat or control fungal infections such as those caused by *Candida albicans*. Drs. Butler and Toenjes filed MSU Billing's first-ever patent application for this anti-fungal compound.

Dr. Butler, an Associate Professor of Biology, has been at MSU Billings for twelve years. During that time, he has secured over a million dollars in external grants to support student learning of molecular biology, student research in the biomedical sciences, and the construction of two new biomedical research laboratories.

Dr. Toenjes, an Assistant professor of Biology, joined MSU Billings in 2005 with a solid research agenda and a strong publication record. His research involves innovative chemical genetic approaches to understanding the pathogenesis of the human pathogen *C. albicans*. Dr. Toenjes consistently involves undergraduate students in research.

We are grateful for these August gifts:

- **The Haynes Foundation** sent the first \$52,000 payment of a \$104,000 grant for scholarships for Montana undergraduate students with financial need who maintain a 3.4 GPA.

- **Deborah V. McDonald** pledged \$100,000 in honor of her children Brynn and Kara. \$50,000 of Deborah's gift will fund the Brynn and Kara McDonald Scholarships for academic years 2008-09 and 2009-10 to provide assistance to incoming freshmen with financial hardship. \$25,000 will establish the Brynn and Kara McDonald Endowed Scholarship, and \$25,000 will be added to the MSU Billings Foundation operating endowment.
- **Ernestine Jarussi Cameron** bequeathed \$40,000 to the Jarussi Sisters Endowed Scholarship Fund established in 1983 by Loretta Jarussi, the eldest of ten children born to Italian parents who came to Red Lodge, Montana in 1907. Eight of the Jarussi siblings became teachers.
- **Jackets & Company** contributed \$10,363 to the Edna Frost Bookstore Scholarship, established in Edna's honor after her 1970 retirement as manager of the Eastern Montana College bookstore. **Jackets & Co.** also donated \$2,000 to the ASMSUB Future Leaders Scholarship Endowment and pledged \$7,500 to the Soccer Complex Initiative.
- **First Interstate BancSystem** sent \$6,325 in employee matching contributions.
- **The Jane Buttrey Memorial Scholarship Fund** sent \$3,250 for the Jane Buttrey Memorial Scholarship, which was established in August 1982 by Ted and Ruth Buttrey in memory of Ted's mother, Jane.
- **PEO Chapter Y** contributed \$3,000 toward a scholarship for upper division female students. Recipients must demonstrate financial need and be able to complete their degree within 24 months.

For the ninth consecutive year, Montana State University Billings has been ranked as one of the "Best Colleges" by U.S. News and World Report in "America's Best Colleges 2008." MSU Billings was recognized as one of the top colleges or universities among institutions that provide undergraduate and master's programs in the West region third tier. MSU Billings received its rankings in the categories of:

- Peer assessment: Opinions of MSU Billings, as ranked by presidents, academic vice presidents and deans of admissions at colleges and universities throughout the country, gave MSU Billings a stellar rating, especially in the area of faculty dedication to teaching.
- The high percentage of faculty who teach full time and who have doctoral degrees
- A low average faculty/student ratio
- The students who enter MSU Billings with high ACT/SAT scores, and the percentage of students who graduated from high school in the top 25% of their graduating class
- The average freshman retention rate and the average graduation rate
- Alumni giving: The percentage of alumni who give to their school is an indirect measure of satisfaction, the publication's ranking criteria notes.

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

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