



MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY BILLINGS

1500 University Drive
Billings, MT 59101

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Faculty EXCELLENCE

Tuesday, February 23rd, 2021

*Recognizing
excellence
in teaching,
research, and
service to the
campus and
community*



PROGRAM

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Dr. Stefani Hicswa
Chancellor

Ceremony

Dr. Susan Balter-Reitz
Interim Provost

Presentation of Awards

Naomi Norris, ASMSUB Student Resolution Officer, will
present the ASMSUB Outstanding Faculty Awards

Dr. Tom Manthey, Director of Montana Center for Inclusive Education,
will present the MCIE Award for Support of Students with Disabilities

Dr. Jennifer Lynn, Director of Women's and Gender Studies Center,
College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, will present the Dr.
Tasneem Khaleel Award for Mentoring Young Female Professionals

Dr. Paul Foster, Director of International Studies, will present
the Promoting International Student Success Award

Dr. Vicki Trier, Dean, City College, will present the Part-Time Faculty Award

Dr. Kari Dahle-Huff, Assistant Professor and co-chair of Department
of Educational Theory and Practice, College of Education, will
present the Excellence Award for Non-Tenured Faculty

Dr. Vicki Trier, Dean, City College, will present the
City College Faculty Leadership Award

Dr. Kurt Toenjes, Dean, College of Health Professions and
Science, will present one Faculty Excellence Award

Dr. Susan Gregory, Professor and co-chair of Department
of Educational Theory and Practice, College of Education,
will present two Faculty Excellence Awards

Dr. Christine Shearer and Mr. Dick Cox will present
the Winston & Helen Cox Fellowship Award

Dr. Sue Balter-Reitz and Cox Family Members will present the
Walter & Charlotte Pippenger Excellence in Innovation Award

Years of Service and Retirees

Closing Remarks

Dr. Stefani Hicswa
Chancellor

RETIREES

Dr. Oliver Chen
Professor
Mathematics, CLASS

Dr. John Hoover
Associate Professor
Mathematics, CLASS

Dana R. West
Assistant Professor
Educational Theory and Practice, COE

Dr. Cindy Dell
Associate Professor
Educational Theory and Practice, COE

Dr. Salem L. Boumediene
Associate Professor
Business Administration, COB

IN MEMORIAM: THOSE WE LOST IN THE LAST YEAR

Dr. Patricio Mori
Assistant Professor
Business Administration, COB

AWARD SPONSORS

The Winston & Helen Cox Fund

Montana State University Billings

Associated Students of Montana State University Billings (ASMSUB)

Montana State University Billings Foundation

SPECIAL THANKS TO

the Faculty Excellence Committee and to all those who
nominated faculty for these awards.



YEARS OF SERVICE RECOGNITION

5 YEARS OF SERVICE

Jenna Andujar, RT(R), BAS
Instructor
Nursing, Health and Public Safety, CC

Austin Grant Bennett, MFA
Instructor
General Education & Transfer, CC

Dr. Donna Marie Bulatowicz
Assistant Professor
Educational Theory and Practice, COE

Dr. Ambrin Masood
Associate Professor
Rehabilitation and Human Services, CHPS

Paul Nash
Assistant Professor
Biological and Physical Sciences, CHPS

Mrs. Amanda J. Standley, MBA, CPC
Instructor
Business, Construction, and Energy Technology, CC

10 YEARS OF SERVICE

Anne Cole
Instructor
General Education & Transfer, CC

David Craig
Adjunct Professor
University Honors Program, Provost

Lynne Fitzgerald
Assistant Professor
Health and Human Performance, CHPS

Dr. Jennifer Lynn
Associate Professor
History, CLASS

Michele T. McMullen, MS, MA,
RDN, LN
University Lecturer
Biological and Physical Sciences, CHPS

Patricia A. Nichols
University Lecturer
Rehabilitation and Human Services, CHPS

Dr. Rachael Waller
Associate Professor
Educational Theory and Practice, COE

Dr. Don Wilathgamuwa
Associate Professor
Mathematics, CLASS

15 YEARS OF SERVICE

Chairsty E. Stewart
Instructor
General Education & Transfer, CC

Dr. Bernard Quetchenbach
Professor
English, Philosophy and Modern Languages, CLASS

20 YEARS OF SERVICE

Andrea Payne Garza
Instructor
General Education & Transfer, CC

25 YEARS OF SERVICE

Matthew N. McMullen, Ph.D.
Professor
Psychology, CHPS

David Butler, Ph.D.
Professor
Biological and Physical Sciences, CHPS

Dr. Laura L. Tayer
University Lecturer
Biological and Physical Sciences, CHPS

Dr. Michael D. Havens
Professor
Psychology, CHPS

ASMSUB OUTSTANDING FACULTY AWARDS

Dr. Melissa Boehm

Associate Professor
Communication & Theatre
College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences



Dr. Sougata Das

Assistant Professor
Business Administration
College of Business



Ms. Corrine Thatcher Day

Assistant Professor
Educational Theory and Practice
College of Education



Dr. Sarah A. Friedman

Assistant Professor
Biological and Physical Sciences
College of Health Professions and Science



Mr. Eric Gilbertson

Instructor
General Education/Math
City College



MCIE AWARD FOR SUPPORT OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Michele T. McMullen MS, MA, RDN, LN

University Lecturer, Biological and Physical Sciences, CHPS



“Enthusiastic” and “engaging” are two words that can be used to describe Michele McMullen. A Lecturer in the Department of Biological and Physical Sciences, McMullen has a passion for creating a learning environment that is supportive of all her students. States McMullen, “We all learn in different ways and have our own personal strengths, which should be celebrated! I provide material in multiple ways, hoping something resonates. Given the opportunity, most students can enjoy learning — even topics that may seem intimidating, like biology — and find their efforts rewarding.”

One of McMullen’s students notes her dedication to each individual. “When DSS informed Mrs. McMullen I have a significant hearing loss and rely on lip-reading to understand people, Mrs. McMullen chose to wear a face shield instead of a mask. She also wore a small microphone, so her voice went directly to my hearing aid.” McMullen commented, “Using a clear facial covering was a ‘no-brainer’...I think we all do a lot more lip-reading than we realize, and facial expressions are an integral part of communication.”

Beyond meeting students where they are in the classroom, McMullen has a reputation of going above and beyond within Montana State University Billings and the Billings community to advance science education. She is the co-chair of the Girls-n-Science Steering Committee which aims to promote excitement in the STEM disciplines among girls of all ages in the region. She also supports her colleagues and students at events such as Science Expo, the Research & Creativity Conference, Atomic Circus, and the Women’s Faculty Caucus programs.

“I cannot think of anyone more deserving of the Faculty Award for Exceptional Support of Students with Disabilities than Michele McMullen,” comments a colleague.

McMullen has displayed that she will go to any lengths to provide the best quality education to her students, regardless of the obstacles they may face.



WINSTON & HELEN COX FELLOWSHIP AWARD

Tien Chih, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, Mathematics, CLASS



Dr. Tien Chih is well aware that mathematics is not typically a student-favorite course. However, assistant professor of mathematics, Chih describes math as being a great passion in his life.

In 2017, Chih joined the MSU Billings community eager to implement new approaches to mathematics. A year after being hired, he was selected as a cohort faculty member to incorporate High Impact Practices (HIPs) into the curriculum. Using HIPs encouraged engaging, hands-on learning rather than the classic lecture-testing style, something students found to be much more positive and

enjoyable.

As an innovative teacher, Chih has a number of approaches for various courses that involve interaction of data, so students are able to see “real world” scenarios. Aside from applying a new style of teaching, Chih has implemented Mastery Based Grading which encourages students to re-learn a topic, rather than moving forward without retaining all aspects. These successes granted Chih the honor of being named to the first cohort of Montana University System Regents Teaching Scholars. As a result, Chih was tasked as the lead in implementing HIPs throughout general education courses at MSUB.

“Dr. Chih is making strong progress in establishing Excellence in the professional area of Classroom Teaching,” comments fellow colleague. “He is clearly becoming a valuable member of our campus community as well as for the regional community we serve.”

Chih completed a Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics in 2007, a Master of Arts in Mathematics at in 2009, and a doctorate degree in 2014. In addition to his teaching duties, Chih coordinates the MSUB Math Circle, serves as editor for the Math Circle journals, is a task force member for MSUB Teaching and Learning Center, and a member of MSUB Science Expo Steering Committee.

Chih’s passion for mathematics is truly contagious and has earned him recognition and appreciation by students, faculty, and administrators at MSUB and across the state. His scholarly endeavors include numerous publications and directing students in grant funded undergraduate research.

For his immeasurable impacts on the field of mathematics and the next generation, Dr. Tien Chih is named the 2021 Winston and Helen Cox Fellowship Award recipient.



Dr. Kari Dahle-Huff

Assistant Professor, Educational Theory and Practice, COE



Dr. Kari Dahle-Huff, an Assistant Professor of the Educational Theory and Practice Department in the College of Education, is a deserving recipient of the Faculty Excellence Award due to her commitment to her students, scholarship, service, and leadership.

Dahle-Huff has extensive content knowledge in a variety of areas and is flexible in her teaching. During her past six years at Montana State University Billings, she has taught sixteen different course preparations. Dahle-Huff continually has high student evaluations scores, and students report high course satisfaction.

Along with her exemplary teaching, Dahle-Huff demonstrates creativity in her course design and delivery. She is currently teaching the COE's first Hy-Flex course. Additionally, Dahle-Huff uses local resources in order to keep her classes relevant and interesting, bringing in local experts as guest speakers to class. To keep her courses unique, she partners with organizations like Yellowstone Public Radio, Billings Public Library, and Skyview High School.

Dahle-Huff played an instrumental role in redesigning the Reading Master's program. She helped secure a \$7,000 e-learning grant which prompted the program to move online. "This change has resulted in a significant increase in interest and enrollment in the program and has significantly improved the delivery of content to extend to communities throughout the entire state of Montana," remarked a colleague.

In addition to the work she puts into her department, Dahle-Huff continues to establish herself as a scholar. In the past five years, she has published three book chapters, a journal article, and three peer-reviewed encyclopedia entries. She has also completed fifteen professional presentations.

Dahle-Huff serves on department and college committees and is chair of the graduate committee. She was recently elected co-department chair for the Department of Educational Theory and Practice. Outside of her college, Dahle-Huff serves as the co-chair for Higher Education Consortium (HEC) and as the Montana representative for the Northern Rocky Mountain Educational Association. She is also a co-editor of the Montana State Literacy Association's Literacy Voices journal.

Her classroom innovations, departmental contributions, and influence on campus and in the community make Dahle-Huff a worthy recipient of this award.



Brenda Dockery

Adjunct Instructor, Business Administration, COB



Through her intensive work mentoring young women in the Billings community as well as her own colleagues and students at Montana State University Billings, Ms. Brenda Dockery has earned the 2021 Dr. Tasneem Khaleel Award for Mentoring Young Professional Women.

Dockery is dedicated to shaping the next generation of females through her campus and community involvement. Dockery has served women in the Billings community and surrounding area through various experiential learning projects as an Adjunct Instructor in the College of Business since 2011. She regularly works with the Business Professionals of America, volunteers for Career Day presentations in School District 2, and other next-gen community service projects. Dockery has extensively worked on internships through the College of Business, liaising with both students and employers to connect them and create meaningful opportunities that are mutually beneficial.

Dockery's incredible ability to collaborate with others, convene people together, and support those around her have not gone unnoticed. "The middle school, high school, and university students supported and touched through these above programs have been countless, and multiple have reached out to share the impact she has had on their professional choices and future success," shares a colleague.

Her interest in mentoring women does not stop with the local youth and her students. Dockery has also shown a committed interest in assisting her colleagues, both in the COB and campuswide. She has taken the time to assist various faculty and staff over the years by sharing resources, advising, and genuinely caring about them and their successes.

Dockery is an active member of the Women's Faculty Caucus and spends time nurturing her relationships with other members of the caucus. She takes the opportunity at meetings to share and discuss important topics that are crucial to enhancing the opportunities for career advancement and success, in teaching, scholarship, service, and leadership among women.

In the words of her nominator, "My nomination comes as one of those young professional women she has supported through my own career, and I have seen this same exemplary support for many others around her."



PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SUCCESS AWARD

Dr. Thomas Regele

Associate Professor, English, Philosophy & Modern Languages,



CLASS

Associate Professor of Spanish at MSUB since 2014, Dr. Thomas Regele has proven to be a deserving recipient of the Promoting International Student Success Award due to his efforts in making international students feel welcome and encouraging students to study abroad.

Regele uses his curriculum to contribute to a greater understanding that students have about the world around them. More than just a class about learning the Spanish language, Regele incorporates background on the geography of the area of discussion, the people who live there, and their way of life. Beyond a focus on the language, he teaches on the actual Hispanic culture and civilization.

A friendly face on campus, Regele is willing to help anyone. Being a student in college can be especially daunting to international students who are very far from home and are taking classes and navigating a world in what may not be their native language. But Regele is always there to help students—especially his international students. One student explained “Every time I ask him questions, he patiently explains the policies of MSUB and helps find resources on campus.” At the same time, he challenges all his students to succeed. He is patient and kind with his teaching. He is readily available to his students regarding their classes and even to give life advice about future career goals or life aspirations.

Not only does Regele have a contagious enthusiasm for Spanish that he transfers to his students, but he actively influences them to study abroad. He helps U.S. born and raised students develop relationships with international students as well. One student explains that “he invites students to be engaged with Multicultural Club and other clubs on campus. I don’t see any professor but him who deserves the award.”

Regele could not be more worthy of the Promoting International Student Success Award. His curriculum leads to a better understanding of the world, he challenges and encourages his students to succeed, he is always more than happy to give life advice to anyone who is willing to ask, and he encourages student involvement in global initiatives.

FACULTY EXCELLENCE AWARD

Dr. Cheryl Young-Pelton

Professor, Educational Theory and Practice, COE



Dr. Cheryl Young-Pelton is a 2021 recipient of the Faculty Excellence Award for her work in developing a new hallmark program at MSUB, her efforts in the community, and greater contributions to her field.

Young-Pelton single-handedly developed the Master’s in Special Education Advanced Studies Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) option in 2009. As an online program, it increased graduate enrollment significantly in the college, attracting students nationwide and abroad. The ABA program is the only program of its kind in Montana and is ranked as one of the top programs in the country.

As the lead program faculty member, Young-Pelton spearheaded a five-year plan in 2014 that led toward accreditation by the Association for Behavior Analysis International in 2019.

Young-Pelton is an excellent professor who teaches graduate courses, undergraduate courses, and supervises student research projects and internships. She mentors her ABA graduate students in their early career paths, tutoring them through their professional exam and will occasionally publish and present with them.

Along with her other achievements, Young-Pelton continues to advance her own scholarship. She has published nine peer reviewed articles since she began at MSUB. Young-Pelton has also presented workshops and spoken at several national and regional conferences. These scholarship efforts have played a role in advancing the reputation and awareness of MSUB.

She has shown exemplary service to others. Young-Pelton was recruited as a consultant for the Office of Public Instruction, MT Autism Education Project, to support children with challenging behavior. Over the years she provided technical assistance to teachers in nearly 175 schools. In 2013, Young-Pelton founded Montana Association for Behavior Analysis, a statewide chapter for professionals in the field. Her service also included authoring plans for the Institute for Neurodiversity and ABA at MSUB and being chair for the advisory committee.

Young-Pelton could not be more deserving of this award for what she has brought to our university, her students, the field of Special Education and ABA, and this community.



FACULTY EXCELLENCE AWARD

Aaron Mertes, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor, Rehabilitation and Human Services, CHPS



Dr. Aaron Mertes became an Assistant Professor of the Rehabilitation and Mental Health Program at MSUB in 2019. While only his second year as faculty on campus and first year as an assistant professor, he has already made a profound impact on his students, peers, and university.

The relationships Mertes has already built are very telling of the type of person and professor he is. “It is impressive that he has made such a positive impression on both his peers and his students in such a short period of time—and in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic,” commented a colleague.

Mertes’ commitment to communicating with his students and ensuring their success is central to his teaching philosophy. His coursework is applauded for the way it is designed and organized. He purposely uses different technological tools and the organization of his courses to best facilitate connection.

Mertes has been consistently praised by his students and colleagues for his teaching ability and dedication to his students. Specifically, students commend him for the design of his courses, as one states, “Maybe all of the professors could have Aaron show them his process of creating material for class.”

Evidence of his continued scholarship is apparent in his contribution to the research field, as he continues to be published in various academic journals. Additionally, Mertes serves on the board of the International Association of Life Care Planners (IALCP), the Substance Abuse Connection Coalition, and the International Association of Rehabilitation Professionals Committee.

Mertes contributes to the greater discussions occurring in his field with his positions as Editorial Board Reviewer on the Journal of Life Care Planning and The Rehabilitation Professional. Creatively, Mertes continues to contribute by presenting on Strategic Planning after an invite from the Mayor of Billings just last year. Connecting with college students through education and helping them find themselves is central to his ongoing presentations and research.

It is evident that Mertes is a well-deserving candidate of the 2021 Faculty Excellence Award for his unwavering commitment to his students, his continued scholarship, and the way he serves his community.



PART-TIME FACULTY AWARD

Hans Bone

Instructor, Nursing, Health and Public Safety, CC



Since 2014, Mr. Hans Bone has demonstrated excellence as a part-time faculty member, serving his community as a physician assistant and his students as an instructor at City College. In his role as a physician assistant at St. Vincent Healthcare, he specializes in pain management and has eleven years of experience in both clinical and research medicine.

“As a part-time instructor he has been critical to the many successes of City College’s Health Occupations programs. Hans is highly intelligent, motivated, insightful and personable — all characteristics which have contributed to his excellence as an instructor,” reflects a colleague.

Bone has instructed several courses including Foundations of Human Biology, Foundations of Human Biology Lab, Anatomy and Physiology, and Medical Terminology. He has an exceptional ability to quickly and easily grasp highly complex issues, enabling him to develop and teach well thought-out and highly organized online courses. Whereas some professors may struggle with converting courses of such rigor to an online platform, Bone has done it seamlessly and skillfully.

While he stays busy with his job as a physician assistant, he has shown dedication and commitment to his job as an instructor as well. Apart from teaching his own courses, Bone also contributes to City College by regularly collaborating on course design with other faculty members to enhance his own courses. These collaborations have truly improved his courses and student performance, in challenging courses such as Anatomy and Physiology.

Not only is Bone knowledgeable about his courses, but he educates with kindness. “He teaches, guides, comforts and encourages his students and exhibits a high degree of professionalism in all that he does,” explains a colleague. Bone instills passion for learning in his students and encourages them through the difficult courses he teaches.

Bone is an exemplary candidate and deserving recipient of the Part-Time Faculty Award through all of his hard work and the excellence he has demonstrated as a valued instructor at City College.



EXCELLENCE AWARD FOR NON-TENURED FACULTY

Katherine S. Holt

Adjunct Assistant Professor, Educational Theory and Practice, COE



In her 24 years at MSU Billings, Kathy Holt has become an invaluable faculty member in the College of Education.

Holt began her teaching pursuit at George Fox College, graduating with a bachelor's degree in Language Art Education in 1981. In the following years, Holt went on to receive a Master of Arts in Teaching from Lewis and Clark College. Before joining the MSUB community, Yamhill-Carlton High School and West Linn High School, both in Oregon, granted Holt her first positions as an English teacher. Her initial job in Billings was teaching English at Billings Adult and Community

Education. Four years later, she became an adjunct faculty member in the Department of English and the College of Education.

Throughout her time at MSUB, Holt has maintained this faculty position and also gained the role of Clinical Practice Coordinator in 2009. As Clinical Practice Coordinator, she is the conduit between area schools and MSUB's student teachers, ensuring that the processes go smoothly for all involved and that the students get the valuable in-classroom teaching experience they need before venturing into teaching on their own.

"Ms. Holt is a highly valued member of our faculty" comments a fellow colleague. "She brings years of experience in both the K-12 and college setting and provides a wealth of pragmatic knowledge of challenges in the field to our department."

Holt is credited for her adaptability in teaching a variety of courses while upholding the English Education Liaison position to improve the curriculum for students. Her success in teaching is highly recognized, but her continual dedication to provide quality student teaching opportunities amidst the COVID-19 pandemic is the exact attitude that exemplifies this award.

The uncertainty of the pandemic cast a shadow across the education system; however, Kathy maintained that attitude of "we are going to make this work."

Her nominators spotlight her perseverance within the past year: "We honestly cannot think of any faculty member more worthy of a faculty award this year. It has been a privilege to work with Ms. Holt during the COVID-19 pandemic, and feedback from schools indicates the schools feel likewise."



CITY COLLEGE LEADERSHIP AWARD

David E. Nedrow

Instructor, Business, Construction and Energy Technology, CC



Becoming an instructor at City College in 2018, Mr. David Nedrow made an impact immediately on the construction program and college overall. His dedication and commitment to the university and community remains evident today, making him this year's recipient of the City College Leadership Award.

Nedrow continually goes above and beyond what is expected of him as an instructor. "His dedication to the college and his students surpasses what is 'required' from a faculty contract. In terms of academics, David has turned the program around," remarks a colleague.

Nedrow truly transformed the program from outdated blueprint reading to current technology courses and specific project management courses. He has elevated the Carpentry program to one that gives students the leadership skills to go into construction program management upon graduation. Nedrow has spent countless hours working on curriculum development, course changes, and program alignment with other programs within City College to ensure his students earn a well-rounded education. He is currently teaching in overload this semester to ensure his students can take the classes they need to accomplish their goals and graduate on time.

In his time on campus, Nedrow has also shown great resourcefulness. Upon taking the program over, he took it upon himself to sell the sheds built by the previous lead instructor and construction students in order to bring in income for the program. He actively promotes the college and his program in the community.

Beyond the classroom, Nedrow develops relationships with his students. He teaches professionalism, courtesy, and how to best portray yourself. He has a solid outreach in the community, as he has donated time to the Homebuilding and Remolding Expo as a representative of the City College Construction Program. Additionally, he developed social media marketing for his program to attract new students and stay connected with his current and past students. Nedrow played a key part in the development of City College's 2020 strategic plan and is currently on the City College Curriculum Committee.

His outstanding work in the classroom, college, and community are worthy of the merit of being named as this year's award recipient.

