UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT

The University of Montana's 20th president gets to work



6 Fresh PA program

13 Thriftin' big

14 New faces, same team

Story by Jack Snow
Photos by Jackson Mailey

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MONTANA KAIMIN

Kiosk

The Montana Kaimin is a weekly independent student newspaper at the University of Montana. The Kaimin office and the University of Montana are located on land originally inhabited by the Salish People. Kaimin is a derivative of a Salish language word, "Qe'ymin," that is pronounced kay-MEEN and means "book," "message" or "paper that brings news."

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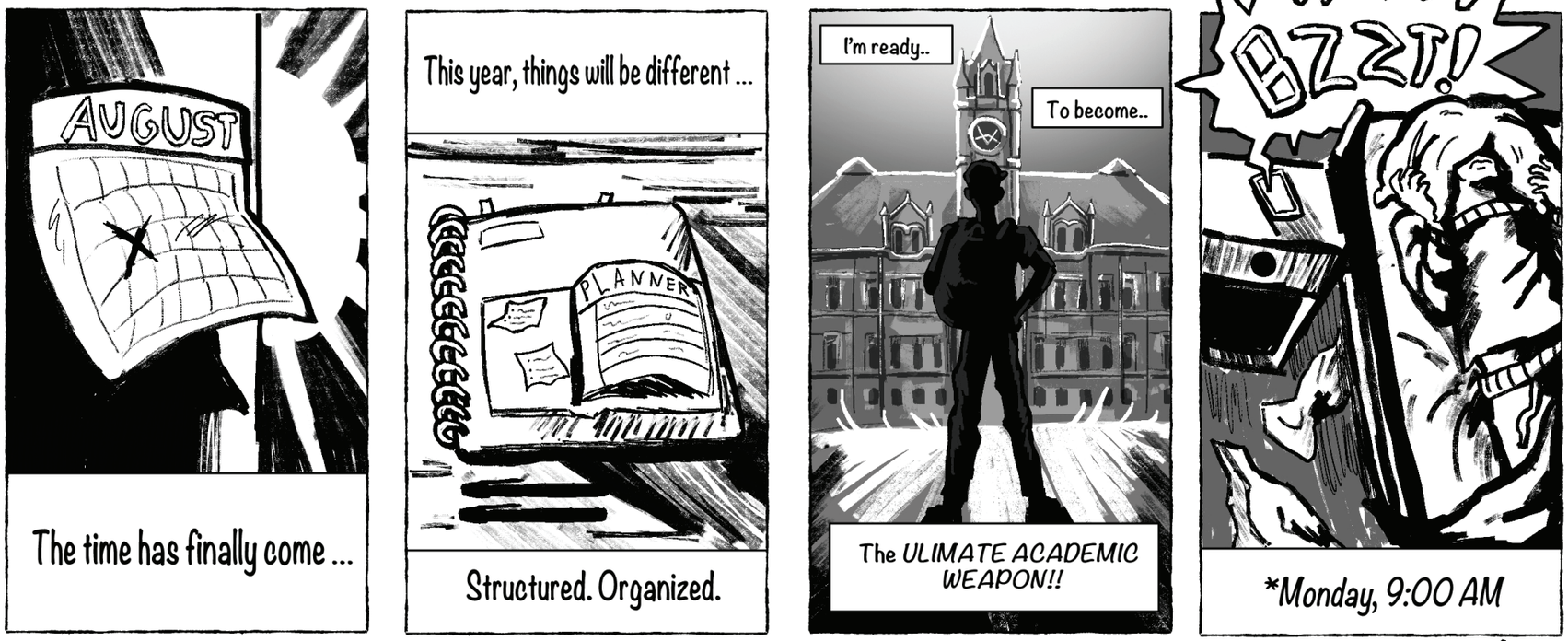
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KAIMIN KOMICS: #1 BEGINNING



ALYSSA JO MURNION | CARTOONIST

Inside our newsroom

Dear reader,

My name is Henry Doellinger and I am the new editor-in-chief of the Montana Kaimin.

I've worked in this newsroom since my freshman year, starting as a page designer, something I knew little about. From there I became a photographer, then the multimedia editor, and soon our eclectic office became a place of familiarity.

When I applied for the editor-in-chief position, I did so because I saw the challenges the Kaimin faced and I had ideas. Here we are, a weekly print paper and a website, wedged in a corner of Missoula between the breaking news coverage of local networks, several newspapers and the popularity of social media.

That may sound like a challenge, and it definitely is, but it also gives us direction. We recognize that our print issue will not bring you breaking news in any timely sense, but what it will do is bring depth and storytelling to our readers. This week's feature, "Under new management," is a great example of this. While Jeremiah Shinn may be a familiar name by now, our news editor, Jack Snow, has taken a deep dive into the president's past and what that could mean for the future of the University of Montana.

Our website, montanakaimin.com, on the other hand, is our platform for rapid-fire news stories, live updates and multimedia content like video productions and the Kaimin Cast. When we do cover breaking news, we make sure it's pertinent to our readers, usually with a direct tie to the University of Montana you won't find elsewhere.

We are proud of the fact that every aspect of our storytelling is created by people. Every photo you see, every paragraph, every graphic and every video is made at the hands of a dedicated UM student here to practice their craft.

Regardless of the platform or the story, one thing is universal: our audience. We exist to serve our readers the truth. As I'm sure some of you have felt, journalism is in a time of heavy scrutiny, and I believe transparency is more important than ever before. So, if you ever have any questions, ideas, concerns, or want to correct us, please talk to us. And for our part, we will continue to be open regarding our content, our corrections and our challenges.

- Henry Doellinger, editor-in-chief

Like it? Hate it? Let us know.

Email us your opinions at henry.doellinger@umontana.edu

SUDOKU

Edited by Margie E. Burke

Difficulty: Easy

							6	
	9		1			7	2	
4	8							1
		7				8		
		8	9				1	
	6		2	5				
		5					8	
						5		2
2	3	4		6				

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HOW TO SOLVE:

Each row must contain the numbers 1 to 9; each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9; and each set of 3 by 3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 to 9.

Answer to Previous Sudoku:

4	8	7	9	1	2	6	3	5
3	1	2	4	6	5	8	7	9
6	5	9	3	7	8	4	1	2
7	2	5	1	8	4	3	9	6
1	6	8	5	3	9	2	4	7
9	3	4	6	2	7	1	5	8
5	7	3	2	4	6	9	8	1
8	4	6	7	9	1	5	2	3
2	9	1	8	5	3	7	6	4

Intercepted



Sophomore safety Brock Beaner jumps up for the game-winning interception against Southern Utah on Aug. 29. **JACKSON MAILEY | MONTANA KAIMIN**

In local news...

SAV CHAVEZ | FEATURES EDITOR
savannah.chavez@umontana.edu

MONTANA TO ENFORCE INDIGENOUS EDUCATION FOR ALL

A group of Montana students, families and tribes are one step closer to a settlement with The Office of Public Instruction that will resolve a lawsuit filed in 2021.

The lawsuit alleged the state has failed to enforce the constitutional mandate which requires public school education to recognize the "distinct and unique cultural heritage of American Indians," according to the Montana Free Press.

The Office of Public Instruction has agreed to the use of its accreditation system to require districts to show that Indigenous Education for All curriculum is being used across the district and would establish mechanisms, including a yearly evaluation of at least seven schools' Indian Education expenses. If it is found that schools are not using funds meant for Indian Education appropriately, the settlement would allow a published list of noncompliant schools and potential funding reductions.

Early last week, a district court judge preliminarily approved the settlement.

"This settlement means accountability for implementing that commitment, with real reporting, real curriculum developed with Tribes, and real consequences when schools fail to deliver," said Michael Dolson, chair of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.

MONTANA REACHES SETTLEMENT WITH META

Montana Attorney General Austin Knudsen announced a settlement agreement with Meta Platforms Inc. last week over allegations of the company's design specifically targeting minors to become addicted to platforms like Facebook and Instagram.

With the settlement, Montana could receive $127 million and is guaranteed to receive $89 million.

NBC Montana reported half of the money would go to programs like crisis intervention services, youth mental health programming and investigation, litigation and related efforts to improve teen safety on social media.

"This settlement agreement is the culmination of years of hard work to hold Meta accountable for [its] dangerous and deceptive practices that put the health and well-being of Montana kids at risk," Knudsen said in an interview with NBC Montana.

The settlement requires Meta to place safety features for minors on Instagram and Facebook that include nighttime blocks on the apps, restricted access from 12 to 6 a.m., and a daily time limit.

MAVERICK MOUNTAIN SKI AREA RECOVERING FROM FIRE

Last month, the Sand Creek Fire in the Pioneer Mountains ripped through the Maverick Mountain Ski area, taking the mountain's only ski lift with it.

The ski area turned to the community for financial support to rebuild what was lost, with local nonprofit The Dillon Jaycees setting up a "Friends of Maverick Mountain" initiative. According to the nonprofit's Facebook page, the initiative aims to repair not only the ski lift, which costs up to $2 million, but to replace the ski patrol building and the mountain's communication building that were also lost in the fire.

Beyond the lift and buildings that need to be replaced, funds will be used for mountain cleanup, restoration, materials and labor so "Maverick can reopen as soon as possible," a release from Maverick Mountain supporters stated.

This fund to rebuild the lift is the second donation account through Stockman Bank, according to the Bozeman Daily Chronicle. The bank has matched contributions up to $20,000.

On Monday, a press release from the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest noted the Sand Creek Fire was only 13% contained and covered 34,000 acres.



This week on the Kaimin Cast ...

As students return to the city and summer fades away, the Missoula community carves out a weekend for music, food, art and dancing.

The 20th annual River City Roots Festival brought together the local and university communities to connect and have fun. This year, the estimated 15,000 attendees were greeted by the rhythmic sounds of bluegrass music and the smells of an endless variety of food throughout the two-day event. The festival helps welcome incoming and returning students to downtown Missoula. Strategically placed the weekend before school starts, students come to socialize, enjoy music and engage with locals.

"I love the dancing. I love seeing everyone out in the community. I just love seeing all the people I know. It's just nice to get back at the start of the school year," said senior Taylor McPherson, who has come to River City Roots Festival since her freshmen year. "It's a welcome back party."

Tune in and learn more by checking out our latest podcast "Celebrating 20 years: Annual Missoula festival welcomes students back" on our website, montanakaimin.com.

- Grace Golbach and Miller Sebo, audio editor and audio reporter

New Kaimin Cast episode out this week. Stay tuned. Scan for the latest



US-VENEZUELA OIL DEAL ANNOUNCED

President Donald Trump announced on Aug. 28 that the U.S. reached a deal to take control of a large quantity of Venezuela's oil supply.

U.S. officials reported the deal involves a private company and 65 billion potential barrels of Venezuelan oil, according to The New York Times. Despite this, the Trump Administration has provided few logistical details at the time of writing.

According to a statement from Venezuela's acting president, Delcy Rodriguez, 17 oil fields could be developed under the contract that gives drilling rights for the next 100 years. Rodriguez has previously received backing from Trump.

"This Historic Transaction MORE THAN DOUBLES American Oil Reserves, greatly increases our Oil Supply, and will substantially lower Gas Prices for all Americans," Trump stated in a Truth Social post.

Critics of the deal include Democratic lawmakers, who are skeptical of the benefits to Americans and against the military raid that captured Nicolas Maduro, Venezuela's former leader.

"This is proof Trump put our service members at risk to get Venezuelan oil for his billionaire buddies," Sen. Chris Van Hollen, D-Md., stated on X.

FLASH FLOOD LEAVES THOUSANDS MISSING IN NEPAL

Rescuers in Nepal are racing to locate thousands of missing people after a flash flood struck the country on Aug. 26.

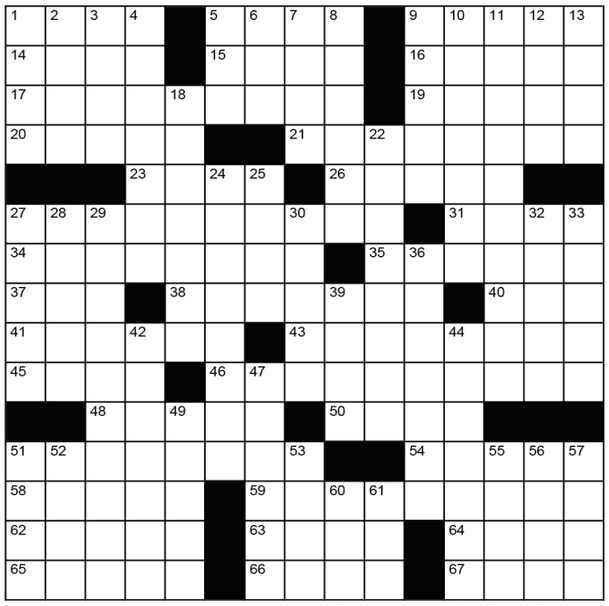
The death toll on Aug. 31 was 950 in Nepal and China, according to the Associated Press, and the number of missing individuals exceeds 4,400. A glacial collapse near the Nepal-China border likely triggered the wall of water that rushed through Nepal's central region.

The warming of the Himalayas due to climate change was likely a factor in the glacier's collapse, according to scientists such as Wouter Buytaert, a hydrology professor at London's Imperial College.

"Global warming shrinks glaciers, making it more likely for them to break apart," Buytaert said in an interview with CNN.

The Weekly Crossword

by Margie E. Burke



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ACROSS

1 Walden, for one
5 Walk the floor
9 Kind of coffee
14 Winglike
15 Cassini of couture
16 Meta's home: _____ Park, CA
17 Turning off, as app notifications
19 Give a ___ the back (2 wds.)
20 Major mess
21 They play on the range
23 Math course, for short
26 Projecting window
27 Burst of energy
31 Blood fluids
34 Texas Panhandle city
35 Houston nine
37 ___ King Cole
38 Above all the rest?
40 Don't just sit there
41 Hollywood's Charlize
43 Fishburne of "The Matrix"
45 1986 #1 hit for Starship
46 Indexing term
48 Pep up
50 Coop residents
51 Safeguard
54 Clothing store section
58 Prince hit, "I Wanna Be Your ____"
59 Wake too late
62 Rehab candidates
63 Jellystone bear
64 Aware
65 Latin dance
66 Messy dresser
67 Cozy spot

DOWN

1 Goalie's gear
2 Lena of "Nine Perfect Strangers"
3 "Apollo 13" org.
4 Schematic maker
5 DC denizen
6 Ryan's "Love Story" co-star
7 Wrestler-actor John
8 Holiday drink
9 Louvre Pyramid architect
10 Most authentic
11 Narrow-minded
12 Unappetizing food
13 Sharpen skills
18 Chipotle offering
22 Pirate's loot
24 Hawaii native
25 Seaside soarer
27 Part of a suit
28 Mutual of ____
29 It rises after a good rain
30 Breadbasket items
32 Madonna's son
33 Daisylike flower
36 Orchestra group
39 To ___ his own
42 Poker players, at times
44 Greek vowel
47 Diplomats, e.g.
49 Vice ___
51 Not only that
52 Actress Salazar
53 Darwin subj.
55 Artist Magritte
56 Reply to "Shall we?"
57 Kind of check
60 It may need a boost
61 Barbecue bit

Answers to Previous Crossword:

S	W	A	B	■	S	A	W	S	■	■	P	L	O	W
T	H	O	R	■	O	P	I	E	■	A	L	I	N	E
E	I	R	E	■	C	O	G	N	I	Z	A	N	C	E
A	T	T	A	C	K	S	■	E	N	A	C	T	E	D
L	E	A	K	Y	■	T	A	C	K	L	E	■	■	■
■	■	■	D	A	T	A	B	A	S	E	■	S	L	Y
D	E	T	O	N	A	T	E	■	T	A	C	O	M	A
A	N	E	W	■	S	E	L	M	A	■	A	L	A	N
B	O	N	N	E	T	■	S	O	N	G	B	O	O	K
S	S	S	■	R	E	C	O	R	D	E	R	■	■	■
■	■	■	U	R	B	A	N	A	■	T	I	E	I	N
A	C	T	S	O	U	T	■	L	A	S	O	R	D	A
F	L	E	U	R	D	E	L	I	S	■	L	O	L	A
R	O	A	R	S	■	R	I	S	K	■	E	D	E	N
O	P	R	Y	■	■	S	E	T	S	■	T	E	D	S

Horoscope

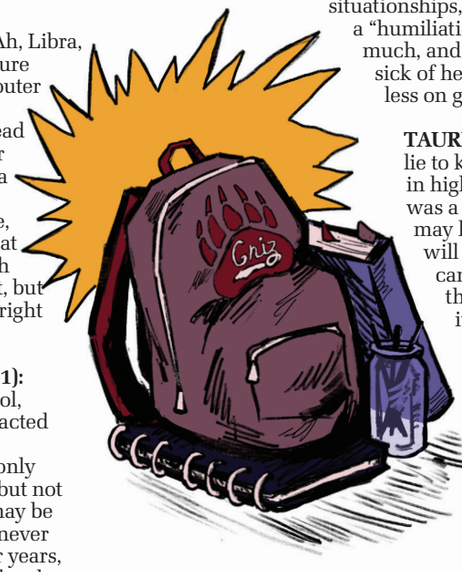
Freshman-o-scope

AIDAN GRAHAM | ARTS & CULTURE EDITOR
aidan.graham@umontana.edu

As the summer light dwindles and the air cools, the beginning of fall brings with it a fresh batch of new grizzlies to UM's halls. Sweaty, pimple-faced, not-so-humble, fresh adults have made their way across the Oval. While you upperclassmen readers may look upon them with disdain, you mustn't forget, it wasn't long ago that you stood in their stead. Here's what your sign says about your freshman experience:

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEP. 22): Virgo, some have called you a creep, maybe a bit of a weirdo, but maybe it's because you're just too real! However, your authentic and kind nature attracted the kind of friends that only come by once in a lifetime. Your freshman year was only the kicker. Everything comes in its time, Virgo, and you're no exception.

LIBRA (SEP. 23-OCT. 22): Ah, Libra, your knack, meticulous nature has built you an inner and outer circle. A veritable house of cards carefully stacked to lead you through the rest of your schooling. However, Libra, a brutus is in your midst, the Cady to your Regina George, ready to claim your empire at a moment's notice. So watch your back. It may be August, but the Ides of March could be right around the corner.



ALYSSA JO MURNION | CARTOONIST

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21): You're just too cool for school, Scorpio. Your drive has attracted a crowd of new friends, but they might as well be fans, only interested in your gravitas, but not where it comes from. You may be popular as ever, but you've never felt so alone. You've got four years, why not spend it with people who want to see the deeper you?

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21): Sagittarius, you animal! Finally away from the watchful eyes of Mom and Dad, ready to live the college experience you only thought possible in movies. However, that first house party was only the beginning. Come finals week, you'll need to perform the lock-in of the century, or join the 14% statistic of college dropouts.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19): Capricorn, you're not just an academic weapon, but a nuclear missile! Taking at least 20 credits your first semester, you've carried yourself with the pride of your academic standing and a vast array of stimulants for those late-night study sessions. This is just what you're built for. Just remember to have fun along the way. It's about the journey too, ya know!

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20-FEB. 18): Aquarius, you always told yourself when you turned 18 you'd finally be able to express your own beliefs. Opinionated, persistent with your activistic nature — you've already caught the ire of half the administration in your first month! You could try not making so many enemies in your first semester, but maybe that's just your thing.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20): Pisces, your kind, loveable, albeit pathetic nature scored you the favor of your upperclassmen. It's like your own personal coming-of-age story. It may not last for long, though. When your new best friends are at each other's throats, you might feel more like a child of divorce. It'll be alright though, no one keeps their friends from freshman year anyway!

ARIES (MARCH 21-APRIL 19): Aries, you're such a little lover. We love you for it, but honestly, how is it that by October you've been in one relationship, three situationships, four talking stages and something called a "humiliationship?" Your heart can only take so much, and frankly your new friends are already sick of hearing about it. Maybe it's time to focus less on getting laid and more on better grades.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20): You ain't gotta lie to kick it, Taurus. You had a difficult time in high school, and to you the logical solution was a total self-reinvention. Your new persona may have caught the eyes of your peers, but will you be able to keep it up? Even if you can, it's a lonely life to live. Someone loves the real you, you just have to let them see it.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20): Gemini, undeclared and unbothered. You came to college to find yourself, and while no one's expecting you to figure it out your freshman year, we kind of hoped you'd have some form of idea? You're running across campus from a science lab, to an English class, to a guitar lesson. You can be a jack of all trades, but maybe next semester you should be the master of one to catch your breath!

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22): Cancer, the wise, non-traditional student. Coming to campus you've found yourself relating more to your faculty than your fellow students. Your peers see you less as a freshman and more like a wise old wizard, and you've got the life advice to boot. Don't let it get to your head, though. Just because you've lived doesn't mean you don't have more to learn.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22): Oh Leo, did no one ever tell you your high school status is non-transferrable? If so, your first semester is going to be a real rude awakening. You're at the bottom ring with the rest of us, but maybe that's what you need! It might make the place where your homecoming sash once sat burn a little, but it's something you'll have to get used to. If you can't ... well ... maybe join student government?

New physician associate program intends to expand health care access to rural Montana

JOCELYN HOOD | NEWS REPORTER
jocelyn.hood@umontana.edu

The first university graduate physician associate program in Montana started its classes on Aug. 24 at the University of Montana.

Program director Marci Contreras began to create the program in 2024 and it received accreditation in April 2026. Its main goal, according to Contreras, is to improve access to health care for those living in rural Montana areas by training physician associates who want to stay in the state.

The only other physician associate program in the state is at Rocky Mountain College in Billings.

Usually supervised by a medical doctor, physician associates have a unique job. They can work anywhere and they learn a large variety of medical skills, according to Contreras.

"That's what's nice about being a PA versus, say, a nurse or nurse practitioner, or even a physician or going to medical school," Contreras said. "PAs have that workforce flexibility."

The program has 24 students, though there were over 600 applicants. Twenty of the students are from Montana, and Contreras said this was intentional, because they are likely to stay in the state after graduating.

Rural areas are in need of health care professionals. According to the director of clinical education for the program, Andy Ashford, there are "pockets of health care" near larger Montana towns, like Missoula, the Flathead area, Bozeman, Billings and Great Falls.

"A whole lot of people are outside of that," Ashford said.

He said that in his 12 years of working in Missoula, he's had many patients who drove four or more hours just to get adequate care in the city.

If rural areas had more resources, excessive travel wouldn't be necessary, and Contreras said that in-state students are better to fill clinical positions.

"Clinical sites and slots have been filled with non-Montanans, and then what are non-Montanans going to do?" Contreras said. "They're going to go home to Washington state or North Carolina or wherever they're from, and that's been pretty devastating to Montana."

A draw for people looking to be physician associatess in Montana is that once they graduate they only need 8,000 hours of supervised clinical experience before they can practice independently. Only five other states have this same rule, and Contreras called it a "mini residency" similar to what nurses and doctors go through after graduation.

Point-of-care ultrasounds are tools that are being utilized in the program to expand access to health care as well. Each student is required to have one, and Contreras said most other programs don't use them.

Ashford said that these are not average ultrasound machines.

"Most people have an idea of ultrasound for babies and that sort of thing, and it's so much more than that," Ashford said.

The point-of-care ultrasounds are handheld, cheaper and more portable than larger counterparts. They can also be used on most body parts.

"I'm excited to be part of a new program, using new technology, doing things in a modern way," said Taz Feldis, a 23-year-old student in the program from Anchorage, Alaska, about the ultrasounds.

Feldis also said that he was excited to start clinicals during his second year of the program.

According to Contreras, there are eight cycles in the clinical year, each lasting six weeks. Students rotate through family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, women's health, psychology, emergency room, surgery and one elective cycle of their choice.

The small class size of 24 means that staff can really focus on the students, according to Contreras.

She also said that they can't increase the class size until 2030 because the program is accredited provisionally, which means it is in a temporary review phase before it can be permanently accredited. When they receive continued status, or permanent accreditation, in 2030, she said the eventual goal will be a class size of 40.

Danny Matrosic, a 31-year-old student in the program from Holland, Michigan, said he appreciates his closer connection with his professors.



Rainha Miller, left, and Klaire Krumwiede, right, start their ultrasound machines on Aug. 27 in the Skaggs Building. **MARS JOHNSON | MONTANA KAIMIN**

"In undergrad, you kind of sometimes feel like you have the professors who are their own people, and then you have the students who just kind of show up, and that's it," Matrosic said. "Versus us, we're all kind of in this together, students and faculty."

Ashford said the motto for the lab is "non tibi solum natus es," a Latin quote from Cicero that translates to "we are not born for ourselves alone."

"It's the idea that we're born for the community that we're in, and you build the community that you want to live in," Ashford said. "That's what we try to teach all of our students."

UM cuts economics master's program, looks forward to this year's portfolio review

CORBIN VANDERBY | NEWS REPORTER
corbin.vanderby@umontana.edu

When the chair of the University of Montana's economics department, Derek Kellenberg, heard his master's program would be put in moratorium last fall, he said he was blindsided.

"It was really kind of sprung on us. We were disappointed in that," Kellenberg said. "It kind of came out of nowhere."

Along with the master's of economics program, UM cut its master's of literature and minors in Irish studies and Chinese. These changes come from the Provost Office's "Academic Affairs Playbook," an annual review of all programs at the school to see where cuts and improvements could be made. The playbook was created in January 2024 to address the incoming enrollment cliff as national birthrates dropped during the 2008 recession, leaving as many as 15% less college-aged students available to schools around the country.

The economics, literature, Irish studies and Chinese cuts are among the first made as a result of this new annual review which looks at statistics like the enrollment, graduation rate and amount of funding a program receives.

Vice Provost John DeBoer declined an interview on the program cut, stating he didn't have any comment to make about the decision that was made last spring by the Board of Regents.

Kellenberg said that in the few conversations he had with administration after the cut was decided, he wasn't really sure why the decision was made.

"The explanations for why that was happening were never clear," Kellenberg said. "We've had a very strong master's of economics program for the last 70 years. It's been small by design, but our graduate students have gone on to do great things, and they provide great value."

The program on average had eight to 10 students, some of which have become successful post-graduation, working for the state departments of transportation and revenue and even foreign governments, said Kellenberg.

Belinda Nyarko, a current student from Ghana in the economics master's program, will be one of the last of the program to graduate this December.



Students make their way to classes in Gallagher Business Building on Aug. 31.
MARS JOHNSON | MONTANA KAIMIN

Nyarko said she enjoyed UM's economics program as it explained complicated topics like statistics and microeconomics, which used to leave her confused, in a simple and practical way.

Nyarko heard the news of the program's moratorium in a meeting with faculty and was shocked.

"I was really concerned and kind of disappointed because I chose this program with the expectation that whatever it is I'm getting here, somebody else should get it too," Nyarko said. "I remember telling people about this program because you're not just learning a course. You are practicing what economics is all about."

After graduating, Nyarko hopes to find a Ph.D program and eventually become a professor of economics. She said the idea that important programs like economics could be cut with little faculty input was concerning to her future career.

"You see that across not just here in the state but a lot of universities nationwide," Nyarko said. "I'm like, 'Okay, what is the future plan for us?'"

Dave Kuntz, spokesperson for UM, said the main reason the economics program was chosen for moratorium was declining enrollment. In fall 2018 there were 17 students in the program compared to just 10 last year.

"Cutting a program is really hard, and that's why a process has been established to review this data," Kuntz said. "As the state of Montana's economy evolves and changes, we have to always be evaluating our programs and if they are meeting the needs of the state."

One benefit of the playbook, Kuntz said, is it allows the school to free up funding for new growing programs like the cybersecurity major which has over 60 students in its third year as well as a physician associate program which just began this fall and already has 24 students.

"The analogy that I've been using this past year on this issue is the size of the pie usually does not change for the University, but the size of the slices within the pie do," Kuntz said. "This is an effort where we can be good stewards of these resources by making sure that investments into our academic programs are of the highest need for the state and meeting the demands of students."

The cutting of Irish studies and Chinese resulted in two faculty layoffs, saving the University the cost of their salary, but Kellenberg said he doesn't think his program frees up much room in the budget other than the pay of his teaching assistants.

"I know the University is looking for ways to try and save money," Kellenberg said. "But it was not clear to us how this did accomplish that or why our program was one of many smaller programs across the University that were chosen for termination."

After the University told faculty its intent to put the programs into moratorium last fall, the Faculty Senate held a meeting in the spring to vote on what they believe the school should do. For all of the programs, the majority of the senate voted against moratorium. However, as just an advisory committee, the decision held little weight and the changes were approved by the Board of Regents.

Despite the disappointing blow of his program being cut, Kellenberg said he's using it as an opportunity to bolster the already successful undergraduate economics program as well as come up with proposals for a possible new master's program.

"A closed door is an opportunity to open new ones," Kellenberg said. "It gives us an opportunity to sit back, reevaluate and look at some new interdisciplinary opportunities and proposals that we are going to be putting forward to give our students opportunities to move forward with new and exciting master's level graduate work."

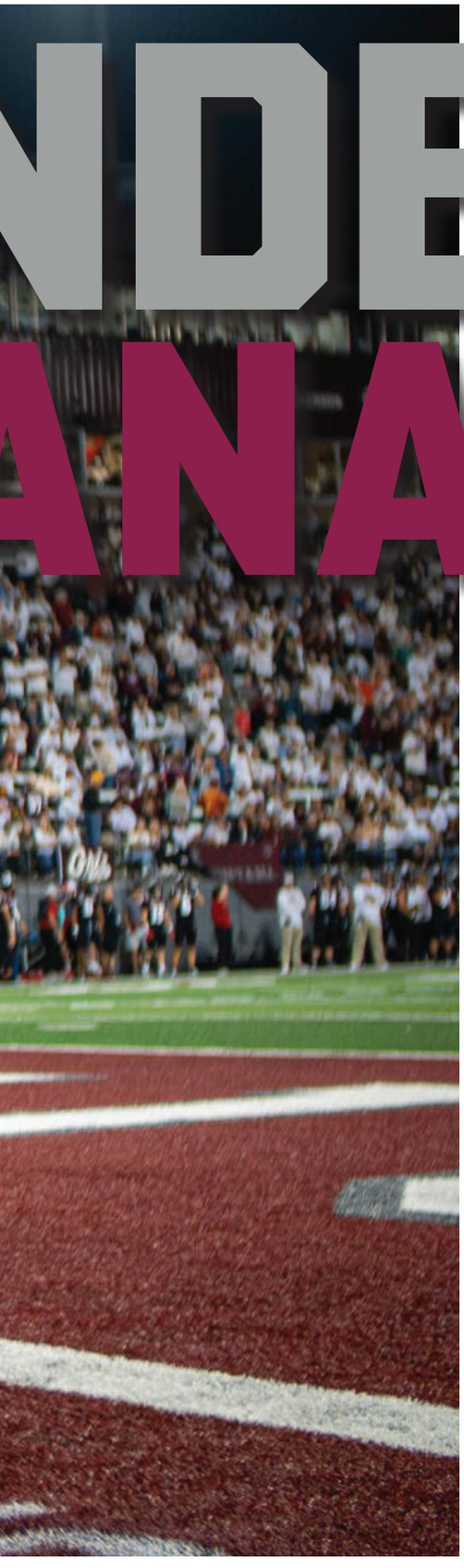
Kuntz said that as the playbook is an annual review process, that the next programs possibly up for moratorium will be evaluated as the semester continues.

"These aren't easy decisions and these are difficult conversations, but they're also decisions and conversations that have happened at our University for over 100 years," Kuntz said. "Ultimately, that's the responsibility of administration, to make sure that student tuition dollars and tax dollars that are invested into the University are being deployed in ways that best serve students and best serve Montana."



New UM President Jeremiah Shinn carries pizza to the student section in the third quarter of the Griz football game against Southern Utah University on Aug. 29.

UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT



The University of Montana's 20th president gets to work

Story by Jack Snow
Photos by Jackson Mailey

Jeremiah Shinn is not a pizza delivery man, but on Aug. 29, you could have been forgiven for thinking that he is.

At halftime of the University of Montana's football season opener, Shinn marched into the student section carrying a stack of Pizza Hut boxes. He spent the game break handing them out to gathered Griz fans for a time honored UM tradition: pizza with the president.

The president in question is Shinn himself, who was hired as the 20th president of the University four months after his predecessor, Seth Bodnar, resigned. As he begins his first fall semester in the role, he hopes to build on the framework the previous 19 leaders left behind. "I want to be sure that our foundation is not a resting place," he said. "I want to be sure it's a launch pad for what we need to be next, because the world is moving fast."

Shinn's suits, posture, three university degrees and decades of experience as a student affairs administrator paint the picture of a prototypical university leader, but it wasn't always a given that he would end up here.

As an undergraduate starting at Arkansas Technical University, Shinn wasn't even sure he wanted to complete his degree in natural science. "I didn't know how to navigate," he said. "The fact that I was able to persist and earn my degree was a life-changing experience, and one that I'm forever grateful for."

Shinn was the first person in his family to attend college. Though he didn't know much about higher education, he knew he was a good enough student to make it work. Initially, he wanted to pursue medicine, but he ended up joining the university's student government and serving as student body president, where he discovered a passion for academic leadership.

That pivotal experience still informs his leadership style today. "Being the first in my family to go to college was a transformational experience for me," he said.

His student-centered leadership style is easy to see in the way Shinn talks about his priorities. "I want to be absolutely certain that everything we do is [designed] with students in mind, and [be] sure that we're setting them up for success," he said.

That sentiment has shown up in almost every speech Shinn has given as president thus far. As someone whose own academic path wasn't always clear, Shinn has dedicated himself to helping students find their way, and his resume bodes well for the future of UM.

Shinn began his career in academic leadership in 2001, when he started his time as the assistant dean of students at Eastern Michigan University. Since then, he has worked at three other colleges in numerous

roles, but almost all have centered on improving student life, and he doesn't plan to shift gears at the University of Montana.

Shinn knows he lacks experience with UM and the state of Montana as a whole, but he's eager to learn. "It's not my job to come in and say to the students of the University of Montana: 'Here's what you need from us,'" he said. "It's my job to come in and listen to students and listen to folks from around the state and stakeholders of the University."

Although he's still in the early stages of his time in Montana, Shinn doesn't exactly lack experience in higher education. His past work at other universities and the many colleagues who served alongside him give insight into his leadership.

CARRYING THE BATON

Several people at the University knew Shinn long before he was wearing maroon quarter-zips. Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management Leslie Webb, who worked with him for years at Boise State University, was "ecstatic" to learn he'd be taking over as president.

"I've been doing this work for more than 25 years, and I've met a lot of good humans along the way," she said. "He's one of the best humans."

Webb has known Shinn for 16 of those years and expressed excitement about the future trajectory of UM with him at the helm. She worked closely with Bodnar as well, and sees the two men as runners in the same relay.

"I think it's kind of like a baton," she said. "President Bodnar came here and then served for almost nine years and did incredible work to revitalize every different aspect of the University of Montana. President Shinn gets to grab that baton and continue that good work."

In a time where trust is often in short supply for administrators and officials, Webb described Shinn's greatest traits as his clarity and consistency. She pointed to his first campus visit in April as an example, where he stood before a crowd in the University Center and answered questions from UM's community. The questions ranged from diversity, equity and inclusion to R1 research status to labor unions, but Shinn answered them all.

Webb attributed it to his wealth of experience in academic institutions. "He literally is a student of higher education," she said. "And as a result of studying and having multiple degrees in this thing, he knows it, he understands it and he has thoughts about it.



Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Leslie Webb talks to fraternity members at the S'mores with the Greeks event outside the Payne Family Native American Center on Aug. 27.

Running a university certainly isn't a one-person job, but Webb has confidence that Shinn can work with all the constituents of UM. "He will pull those people together to find a unified purpose to serve students, to serve Montana," she said. "Everyone can get behind those two things. To serve students and to serve Montana."

There are also administrators at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge who remember his time there fondly.

"He thinks very big picture, and I think sees very uniquely how the systems of a university operate," Emily Hester, who serves as chief of staff for LSU's student affairs department, said. "He's a person who believes that if you get the small things right, you're more likely to get the big things right."

Hester described a moment where Shinn had told the department they should try creating rejection letters that prospective students could learn from, rather than copy and pasting a denial statement. According to her, that level of intentionality and care is what sets him apart from other leaders. Shinn's time at LSU ended in 2023, but Hester said she still puts extra effort into rejection letters, and often receives grateful messages from the students she sends them to.

Shinn stands out, even today, among Hester's colleagues because of his innovative thinking. "The way that he thought was more unique than anyone I have worked with in the higher education space," she said. "I believe

that he was built to be a president, especially a modern-day president."

Only time will tell if she's right, but he holds the role whether he was built for it or not, and he's already communicating his ideas to the wider UM community.

FOR THE STUDENTS

Shinn delivered his first State of the University address on Aug. 21, where he outlined the goals and challenges that come with his new title. Associated Students of the University of Montana President Chase O'Brien introduced him after a speech about the works of student government. "In just his first couple months on campus, President Shinn has made a real effort to be present," she said. "He's been on campus, he's been meeting with students and faculty, he's been listening, he's been learning what makes this University great and what we can continue to build together."

Shinn began his address by talking about James Straw, a Marine Corps veteran and recent UM graduate who earned a Marshall Scholarship to pursue medicine at the University of Edinburgh. "His story reminds us that there is no single front door to the University of Montana," Shinn said.

He also referenced Susan Connelly and Elannah Flat Lip, who recently became the first Indigenous UM students since 2006 to earn Udall Scholarships, awarded to students with careers in environment, tribal public policy or Native American health care.

Connelly has been open about the homesickness she felt during her first year at UM, but eventually found community in the Curry Health Center, where she worked alongside other students. Shinn described her story as an example of how students can achieve amazing things when their community shows up for them.

"Another student like Susan moved into Turner Hall this week," he said. "She's here, and she's already wondering if she's gonna stay. She doesn't need the entire university to rally around her; she just needs someone. We get to be that someone."

In order to ensure students like Straw, Connelly and Flat Lip can afford to attend UM, Shinn announced the launch of a new fundraising initiative. "Finances should never be the reason a Montana student concludes that UM isn't an option," he said.

Some students say they've already felt a shift in the way things are done. O'Brien, who is a senior double majoring in history and political science in addition to her title as ASUM president, has already seen the differences.



New ASUM President Chase O'Brien poses for a portrait outside the ASUM office in the University Center on Aug. 28.

She's new in her role as well, and said that Shinn called when she was elected to congratulate her before he was even officially hired. As far as student government goes, he has already been more present than previous leaders. "Shinn has been in our office multiple times of his own accord, which is not something that we really had prior," O'Brien said.

She pointed to the address as an example of the way Shinn plans to prioritize students. "I think his State of the University address made it incredibly clear that he is more focused on the individual student experience rather than the broader numbers," she said.

Faculty have also noticed differences from previous leaders. Kristin Vekasi, who serves as the Mansfield Chair of Japan and Indo-Pacific Affairs, noted that Bodnar focused heavily on his message of "inclusive prosperity," where there seems to be no equivalent for Shinn. "Bodnar was very message focused," she said. "I'm still waiting to see what president Shinn's throughline will be."

Vekasi also mentioned that some faculty are curious to see how Shinn will approach program funding and support. She has her office in the Eck Liberal Arts building where several departments have faced cuts in the last year. "I hope that President Shinn will listen to faculty to really understand how the full scope of intellectual experience supports the University of Montana and student success," she said. "Is there optimism about that in Eck? Hard to say on Aug. 31."

Student-centered leadership isn't a new concept for the University, but Shinn seems intent on bringing it a step further. UM's change in leadership also reflects changing times for colleges as a whole, where the future looks increasingly uncertain.

THE PATH FORWARD

Budget cuts, confusion about artificial intelligence and mistrust of academics have all posed issues for universities in recent years, and during Shinn's first State of the University address, he spoke to some of these concerns.

Shinn is not blind to the fact that people have questions about the value of the education that UM provides. Rather than shying away from such questions, he said that the University must make sure the education it provides confronts those challenges. "Any institution that exists to serve the public should constantly ask whether they are fulfilling that responsibility," he said.

Asking the question is only part of the process, though. The true value lies in listening to the answer. Shinn has been transparent about the things he does not yet know about campus, but said he leans into those gaps. "I've been really intent on listening and learning as much as I can about where we are and what that means for the University," he said.

Shinn knows it will take time before he can address larger issues, like R1 status and department cuts. "I have ideas about what might need to change," he said. "But I don't want to let my own assumptions walking in cloud my judgment too much."

There is no defining answer to the question of what the University of Montana's purpose should be and where its worth lies. Every UM president — all 19 of them —have had their own visions for the school. Now a 20th gets his turn with the baton.

BODNAR'S SENATE CAMPAIGN

Before Jeremiah Shinn stepped into the University of Montana President's office, his predecessor, Seth Bodnar, stepped away from the position in January before eventually announcing his U.S. Senate campaign in March.

Bodnar, who is running as an independent candidate, faces Kurt Alme (R), Alani Bankhead (D) and Kyle Austin (L). Political pundits have raised concerns that Bodnar's independent candidacy could split the Democratic vote, fueling a Republican victory. Twenty-two democratic Montana lawmakers wrote a letter on Aug. 7 calling for Bankhead to drop out and endorse Bodnar, according to reporting by The Daily Montanan.

The Aug. 10 deadline for candidates to withdraw their name from the ballot came and went without any changes to the race.

Still, Bodnar is moving forward in his campaign. His platform emphasizes affordability, reproductive care freedom, rural education support and working to hear the needs of Montana tribes. He engaged with tribal members at Crow Fair in August, which is the largest Native American gathering in the state.

Bodnar's campaign leads in fundraising, at $3.2 million, compared to Alme at $1.98 million and Bankhead at nearly $60,000, according to data from the Federal Election Commission.

An Aug. 7 Hart Research Poll showed support for Alme at 45%, Bodnar at 30%, Bankhead at 15% and Austin at 6%. The poll also reported that among multiple candidates, 56% of democrats support Bodnar as opposed to 39% in support of Bankhead.

- Henry Doellinger

Does Gen Z lack generational sound?

NIAMH O'FARRELL | ARTS REPORTER
niamh.ofarrell@umontana.edu

The internet has changed nearly everything about how we live our lives, and music has been no exception.

Gone are the days when you went down to a record store to purchase music. Today, listeners have immediate access to almost all songs ever made, while artists are able to find audiences on their own and still achieve mainstream success.

Record labels used to make or break the music industry. You couldn't release anything without a Sony executive's stamp of approval. While the internet has given small artists the freedom to release music on their own terms without corporate direction, this freedom has left Gen Z lacking a musical identity.

"Kids are listening to stuff across the board," said 29-year-old Eleanor Harper, Rockin Rudy's radio deck operator. "Nu metal, a lot of late 90s and early 2000s stuff is coming back."

Part of the appeal that certain genres of music, such as metal and grunge, once had was that they weren't just music styles, they were whole subcultures and communities. Now the internet gives us up-close access to every subculture.

"Everyone wants to have their own niche taste," Harper said. "It's less of a monoculture thing now and more of a personal journey. You're not just a metal fan, you're a death metal or sludge metal fan, it's so much more specific now."

For many people, music has always been a defining form of self-expression. Whether creating it or listening to it, the internet has given artists and audiences more options than they might know what to do with, while making both access and production cheaper.

"I remember mowing yards for extra money. I would mow one lawn and could buy one cassette and it was kind of like a deviation from those artists," said James Randall, professor of music history at The University of Montana. "Younger folks aren't so tied to owning music as part of their identity."

Randall often asks his students: If their music collection was stolen, what would it say about them? He then has them put mini playlists together, play them at random and have the students guess whose playlist it was. "Sometimes they were able to pick up things such as sexuality, politics, religion, even some students having their major identified," Randall said.

With so much musical access, it may seem like we've lost that connection. However, if anything, it has opened people up to a new form of connection.

It has granted people the opportunity to discover songs that might not have been heard otherwise, like that feeling of saying "let me put you on," and playing a song for a friend and seeing that song on their playlist a week later. The vast range of music has allowed people to show each other who they are as individuals.

While Gen Z's music might not be as instantly recognizable as the synthesizer of the 80s or trumpet of the 20s, the generation has a unique opportunity to have a specific sound for every era, location and phase of their lives.



Rockin Rudy's radio deck operator Eleanor Harper looks at her iPad while she works on Aug. 26.
ETHAN SMITH | MONTANA KAIMIN

Grizzlies go green with new campus thrift store

SABRINA PHILIP | ARTS REPORTER
sabrina.philip@umontana.edu

The Food Zoo is officially a distant memory as the space has been transformed for new purposes. Accompanying the Starbucks and human resources offices is a brand-new project aimed at increasing sustainability on campus, "The Loop @ Lommasson."

The Loop, located in Lommasson 120, is a thrift store. The project partners with the Office of Sustainability alongside Campus Thrift and shares the space with Campus Surplus.

Zoe Belinda is a new member of the sustainability team, who, according to herself, is "kind of the one heading up the point of sale" at the Loop. With Eva Rocke, the campus' sustainability director, she runs Campus Thrift and conservation efforts associated with it.

Belinda said Lommasson 120 will house an "amalgamation of a bunch of different stuff." The Loop partners with multiple on-campus entities on both the goods sold and how it shares the space.

According to Belinda, the thrift store will house dorm appliances, decor and storage alongside surplus goods from campus.

"When offices and departments on campus get new things, their old things come here to our surplus manager, and we are able to sell them to staff and students on this side," Belinda said.

The Surplus is a separate program on campus that sells items bought originally for the University with public state money. The program is ultimately responsible for the disposal of the University's surplus goods. The money from these goods can be accepted by The Loop, but goes back to the surplus program, not toward sustainability efforts.

The Loop also partners with Griz Career Closet to provide career and business clothing for students and to sell more casual clothing collected during the campus thrift sale. Belinda shared that many of the dorm supply donations come from the campus thrift sale at the end of the year, during dorm move-out.

"The big issue with campus thrift is that we weren't hitting incoming freshman students," Belinda said. "The circularity of the items that we were saving from the landfill were going into the campus community but not necessarily staying on campus."

Belinda explained that the business' namesake relates to The Loop's main priority: "Keeping those items in the circular economy of the University."

"Students give up a mini fridge, and then a new student coming in the next year gets a mini fridge."

Belinda stated The Loop has two goals. The first is to ensure sustainability and increased lifespan for items on campus with a focus on underclassmen. The other, she said, is for the convenience of freshmen, giving them access to items without having to travel to purchase them.

Money from The Loop goes to two places, depending on what is purchased. Rocke explained that when a Campus Thrift item is bought, the money goes toward campus sustainability programs and zero-waste initiatives. However, money from items bought from the surplus go back to the surplus program.

Belinda said the response has been "overwhelmingly supportive," especially with the recent move-in on campus. Her next goals are to start accepting donations and to increase marketing efforts.

Rocke said she wants to remain student-focused, explaining she doesn't envision the store "ever really publicizing to community members." Yet, she does see a possibility of the store accepting donations from non-students and faculty in the future. Belinda encourages those on campus to visit the store and explore.

"I feel like it's a space not only to get things you need, but also just to spend some time browsing through the clothes and all the fun things that we have to offer on campus," Belinda said. "Some of the surplus stuff is quite historic. We're excited to give people a space that's their own and a sustainable place for them to get what they need."



The Loop thrift shop contains many housing essentials in the the Lomasson Building on Aug. 27.
ETHAN SMITH | MONTANA KAIMIN



New season, new hunger to win

MARIN ANDERSON | SPORTS REPORTER
abigail.stenkamp@umontana.edu

The University of Montana volleyball team delivered a strong season last year. With a new defensive specialist and a third-place prediction in the Big Sky conference for the 2026 season, the team is ready to build on that momentum and is hungry to win.

The team is the strongest it has been in over a decade, going 17-11 overall and 9-7 in the conference last year. They finished the season tied in fourth place with Weber State. But after defensive specialist leader Alexis Batezel graduated, the team needed someone to step into the role.

Setter Gracie Cagle knew Maddie Sanderson, a defensive specialist, could do the job.

"[Batezel] had such a huge presence on the court, she was such a leader. I feel like Maddie has just stepped into the role, and she has become such a leader on the team," Cagle said.

Head coach Allison Lawrence has already seen Sanderson's growth.

"What's been fun about Maddie is she slowly realized 'I don't have to be like [Batezel] at all. I need to be me,'" Lawrence said.

"When there's a new dynamic in the gym when someone leaves, especially someone that was a big contributor, it requires others to step up and others to contribute in different ways," Lawrence said.

Sanderson had a staggering 245 digs and 18 serving aces under the guidance of Batezel last season. Despite the admiral ending, they expect more out of the 2026 season.

"We had such a good and record-breaking year last year, but it ended kind of disappointing. A lot of us have pretty bitter tastes in our mouths," Cagle said. "All of us are very hungry to kind of just go out there and go a lot further in the postseason than we did last year."

And what better way to go further than to adapt and build the deepness that the volleyball team needs.

"The depth that we have on our bench, we have the ability to go pretty far," Cagle said. "Even with injuries, we have two people behind them that can come on and just step right in there and perform."

Lawrence has confidence in this redefined lineup.

"[I'm] optimistic about this group's adaptability and this group's toughness," Lawrence said.

The team has been adapting not only to the absence of Batezel, but to their tough away schedule and split weekends. Luckily for them, Cagle and Lawrence both mentioned the eight-month-long preparation for this season.

"We've been working for this season since January. We work really hard throughout the spring and work to get stronger and ready for the regular season," Cagle said. However, preparing for the season does not come without sacrifice and determination, Lawrence said.

"They're here working out together, they're doing so on their own time, jobs, sacrificing a lot of their lives to be here and be training when we can't work with them, and really holding the standard away from the coaches," Lawrence said. "No one's watching, no one's telling them what to do. It would be easy to take their foot off the gas."

As Lawerence began her 10th season as UM volleyball's head coach, the Griz swept Central Michigan University 3-0 on Aug. 28. Cagle had 21 assists and 2 blocks and Sanderson had 9 digs and a kill in their game against the Chippewas.

As the season continues, Lawrence is looking forward to what the team has to offer.

"It's time to build our own thing this year."



ABOVE: University of Montana women's volleyball standout Gracie Cagle (9) celebrates with her teammates during an exhibition match in the Adams Center on Aug. 18. **EMBRY ERICSON | MONTANA KAIMIN**

BELOW: Cagle sets the volleyball during an exhibition match in the Adams Center on Aug. 18. **EMBRY ERICSON | MONTANA KAIMIN**



After a slow start, Griz soccer looks forward

JULIAN CLEMMER | SPORTS REPORTER
Julian.clemmer@umontana.edu

The head coach of the University of Montana women's soccer team is looking to build and train a winning team after 16 former players from the 2025 roster graduated or transferred. Fortunately, the team has 18 fresh faces from transfer students and new freshmen.

"Absences is experience we've lost," said Stuart Gore, the new head coach of the team. "The players that remain have to fill that void."

The UM women's soccer team is always a formidable challenge to go through for any team looking to claim the Big Sky Conference Tournament. The team has taken the Big Sky Conference tournament eight times in its history, advancing to the NCAA tournament those same years.

So far this season, the team has gone 2-3.

"I went into the season, and I said to them, 'It wasn't about the results at the beginning,'" Gore said. "Do we want to win every game? Yes, but you can play terrible and win, but that doesn't help you."

The team practices frequently during the season to keep its skills up and to improve team cohesion.

"In coaching it's really important to have a game model," said assistant coach James Landham. "Instead of just playing the game of soccer, it's 'How are we going to play the game of soccer?' and 'How are we going to help the athletes understand that game model?'"

Landham's goal is to train players to plan for offensive and defensive plays and to anticipate transition times when the ball changes possession.

"When we're going to have the ball, we're going to try and expand, spread out and move the ball up quickly," he said. Landham also wants to be aggressive on defense. "If we just lost the ball, we want to try and win the ball back in five seconds."

After a slow start to the season, the team scored its first victory on Aug. 27 against the University of Lethbridge in Missoula, with two goals scored in the first and second half, respectively.

One of those goals was scored by junior center forward Elli Lewis, 20, a new transfer player. "I came from a [Junior College Athletic Association], so [UM is] definitely a lot more intense, a lot more physical. The game is definitely a lot faster and everyone is working a lot harder," Lewis said.



New Griz soccer head coach Stuart Gore accepts the game ball after his first win in Missoula on Aug. 27.
EMBRY ERICSON | MONTANA KAIMIN

Lewis managed to score a goal in the second half of the game. She attributes her success to her aggressive offensive play style.

"I knew my job was to press them as hard as I could, so I just ran and pressed them. I was really physical and I won the ball and then shot it in the bottom right corner," she said.

In practice, Lewis continues to drill, keeping the pressure high on opponents and "staying on the inside."

Junior goalkeeper Avery Heeb displayed a stalwart defense, blocking every shooting attempt by Lethbridge. Heeb, 20, is another transfer from the University of South Carolina Upstate who has been working to improve defensive cohesion.

"Personally, I have been working on my communication and dealing with my back line because we're all brand new, so I think communication for this team is a big deal," Heeb said.

As goalkeeper, Heeb has lots of responsibility offensively as well. This includes distribution, which is how the goalkeeper handles the ball after gaining possession and delivers it effectively to their teammates. "I think my distribution was really important yesterday," Heeb said. "We are a very big possession team, so I think that using me is very good because we could switch the field."



University of Montana midfielder Grace Morton chases the ball during a match in Missoula on Aug 27.
EMBRY ERICSON| MONTANA KAIMIN

The season is still early with many more games and even more practice days to come. Each game and practice offers continual opportunity to improve.

Coach Gore is confident, he sees how the team has grown in the last few weeks and how the team can accomplish its season goals. "It's the girls realizing this is a marathon, not a sprint," Gore said. "And you can't win a marathon sprinting."

SPORTS BRIEFS

DILLON RICHARDSON | SPORTS REPORTER
dillon.richardson@umontana.edu

NAIL-BITER IN MISSOULA

The University of Montana's football team got the win in its first game of 2026, defeating Southern Utah University 28-21.

Southern Utah, along with Utah Tech University, officially joined the Big Sky Conference this year. The Thunderbirds previously were in the Western Athletic Conference.

The Griz led 14-3 at halftime, but were outscored in the second half and allowed over 500 yards of offense for a Southern Utah team that was picked to finish sixth in the Big Sky Conference preseason poll.

The game came down to the wire as Southern Utah was driving deep in Griz territory, but Montana intercepted the ball from Thunderbirds quarterback Will Burns with four seconds remaining to seal the win for UM.

After the game, Montana head coach Bobby Kennedy told UM Athletics that the Griz "made some silly mistakes, but we'll fix those this week."

A LOOK AHEAD

Montana football will take on the Drake University Bulldogs on Saturday to open the team's non-conference schedule.

Drake will enter the game 0-1 after dropping its season opener to South Dakota School of Mines & Technology, a Division II school.

The Bulldogs were picked to finish second in the Pioneer Football League, receiving five of 11 first place votes in the poll.

Montana has never lost to a team from the Pioneer League in its over 30 years of existence, and the last time UM played a team from the Pioneer league it defeated Morehead State University 59-2.

Expect a bounce-back game from Griz quarterback Keali'i Ah Yat, who threw an interception on UM's first play of the season, as well as the rest of the offense that only had 14 first downs and held possession for only 16 minutes against Southern Utah.

Shakespeare in the Parks modernizes 'The Merchant of Venice'

MARS JOHNSON | PHOTOGRAPHER
jack2.johnson@umontana.edu

"In sooth I know not why I am so sad ... and such want-wit sadness makes of me that I have much ado to know myself."

So began Shakespeare's "The Merchant of Venice," presented by Montana Shakespeare in the Parks on Aug. 27 on the Oval. The play blurred the lines of comedy and tragedy and explored themes of religious discrimination, justice and greed.

Every summer, Shakespeare in the Parks makes a stop at the University of Montana and garners a large crowd. The open-air environment encouraged passers-by to stop and watch.

"It's a good way to get outside," UM junior Oscar Hunt said.

Hunt was joined by his friends Alden Lamson, Maisie Wellman and Sophia Parks. They discussed theater's importance to the UM community in bringing people together. Wellman noted the accessibility of Shakepeare's works and how the donation-based model of the event only increases that accessibility.

"We get to see a free show that is not something you get to see in the real world," Wellman said. "Getting exposed to a different type of art is super important for building communities."

The theater troupe brought many modern elements to the 16th century play. The costumes largely reflected the mid-20th century. Actors incorporated casual ad libs and stutters. Line deliveries were adjusted to fit a contemporary cadence.

Hannah Freund, who portrayed Lancelot the clown, called Octavio Jimenez, an acting apprentice, on stage. As an apprentice, Jimenez learned about business dynamics, teamwork and discipline.

"It felt like a year of school in six months," Jimenez said.

Tour manager and actor Sam Cheeseman has been with Montana Shakespeare in the Parks for 12 tours spanning seven years. He said there's always a new reason he loves being a part of it.

"This year it's been the adventures," Cheeseman said. "The fact that it changes every day."







TOP LEFT: Johnathan Wallace, as Antonio, stands on the set of "The Merchant of Venice" on Aug. 27.

LEFT: Hunter Trammell, left, and Sam Cheeseman, right, perform on the Oval on Aug. 27.

ABOVE: The Shakespeare in the Parks performance of "The Merchant of Venice" drew hundreds of audience members of all ages on Aug. 27.