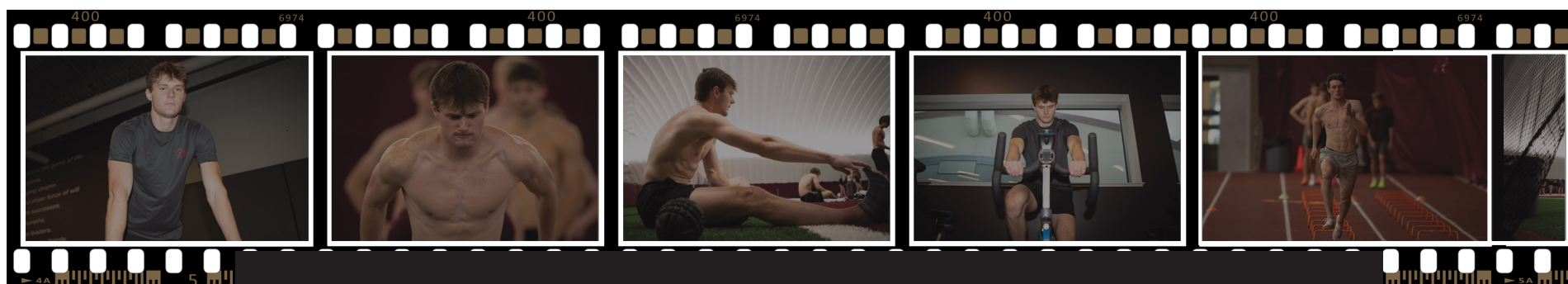
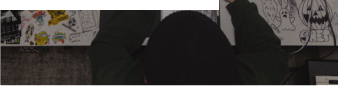
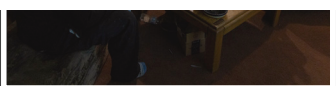
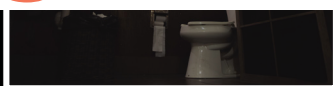


MONTANA KAIMIN



IN LIMBO

The struggles and triumphs of
living in between



6 College restructure

13 Retaining referees

15 Science on stage

Cover by Mackenna Gleave

November 21, 2024 | Volume 127 | Issue No. 13

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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KAIMIN KOMICS: SE 2 EP 7



UM needs to stop sneaking around and speak the truth

The University of Montana and broader higher education is standing at the edge of an enrollment cliff. In the next few years, enrollment nationwide is expected to drop.

With less revenue, UM will probably make cuts to programs, and the way the University goes about these changes is important. We are all scared for the future of higher education, but UM should be transparent with students and faculty about the hard decisions that must be made.

While the University boasted another year of increased enrollment this fall, it may not last as the amount of college-aged people is predicted to drop. After 2025, college enrollment numbers are projected to drop by more than 15% due to fewer families having kids around the time of the 2008 recession.

There are currently two plans coming from the Provost's Office to address this upcoming cliff: the Academic Affairs Playbook, presented last year, and this year's newly proposed college restructure. However, neither of these plans has been presented as a solution. Instead, they've been posed as a simple rebrand or a better way to evaluate programs. This creates the biggest problem with both these plans — instead of being upfront with students and staff, the University is cowering

and trying to sneak these changes in to avoid backlash.

On Oct. 9, John DeBoer, the vice provost for academic affairs, submitted a request to plan a college restructure to the Montana University System Board of Regents. The Board approved the restructure and the tentative plan is to split the College of Humanities and Sciences, giving science its own college and merging humanities with education.

At a Student Senate meeting on Oct. 16, DeBoer said the plan is to "align with how we are defining our strengths on campus right now." While this makes the restructure seem like a revamp, it's likely it will actually affect funding for the colleges and the way UM evaluates and prioritizes programs in the future.

The idea of the college restructure was first brought up to DeBoer by the science departments. For them, this plan makes complete sense. They're huge departments, they're completely separate from humanities, and most importantly, it makes getting funding from donors who care about sciences much easier.

Instead of giving the most affected departments time to comprehend the impact of the

changes and make suggestions, the University is trying to fast track the decision, looking to have the planning for the restructure approved by Nov. 21 and 22 at the upcoming Board of Regents meeting.

And this isn't the first time UM has tried to subtly set up programs to be cut in the dark. Last year, the Provost's Office announced the Academic Affairs Playbook, which the University would use to evaluate programs on things like enrollment data, graduation dates and interviews with program directors. The plan was given a cute nickname to distract from the fact that these evaluations would likely lead to the nixing of programs that didn't make the cut to make room in the budget for the inevitable enrollment cliff.

In the quantitative analysis that was done last spring to gather data on every program offered at the University, humanities often scored the lowest, with the bottom 14 of the 70 programs being from the College of Humanities and Sciences. Even though psychology scored number one out of all other programs, this restructure isolates humanities into its own college. If the University decides to cut the college with the lowest scoring programs, that top score isn't going to matter.

Last year, West Virginia University cut dozens of programs, with the majority being humanities, like languages, and laid off 143 faculty members in response to a \$45 million budget deficit. While UM isn't in such dire straits, the truth is simple: The demand for humanities is dropping, somewhere between 16% to 29%, according to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

While UM said many times last year it won't be cutting any programs the way West Virginia did, it did say some programs will need to be "sunsetting," which is a nice way of saying it is cutting the program once all current students have graduated.

At the end of the day, students understand difficult calls have to be made. We all want the University to thrive and want higher education to continue to be available. But UM needs to drop the act and acknowledge the tough truth. Difficult decisions are going to be made, so instead of sunsetting and playbooks, let's make a real survival plan and tell all of the students and faculty what needs to be done.

Like it? Hate it? Let us know.

Email us your opinions at claire.bernard@umontana.edu

Sweet victory



Grizzly offensive lineman Brandon Casey kisses his girlfriend, Emma Unger, following a home game against Portland State on Nov. 16. The Grizzlies won the game 28-17. **MARLEY BARBOEISEL | MONTANA KAIMIN**

SUDOKU

Edited by Margie E. Burke

Difficulty: Easy

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

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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:

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

Briefs & Blotter

House passes FAFSA deadline bill; Judge blocks bill that could close abortion clinics; UM to make new health research center

BILL PASSES, FAFSA DEADLINE SHIFTS

After the difficult revamping process of an updated application, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill to set an earlier deadline to open the Free Application for Federal Student Aid.

The FAFSA application previously was legally required to be open Jan. 1, but typically opens in October. This new bill will shift the legal deadline to Oct. 1. This new deadline would apply to the 2026-2027 application, which would open in late 2025.

The new application was tested in phases in 2023 after the 2020 FAFSA Simplification Act passed in Congress. Initially set to open in October, it wouldn't fully launch until December, a month shy of its deadline. But after its release, technical errors created delays in aid rollout and struggles to submit applications.

This new bill passes during a turbulent time for the financial aid department on the University of Montana campus. The department waived late fees for the semester as some students are still waiting for their financial aid to finalize to pay their tuition bill.

By standardizing the earlier deadline, U.S. Rep. Bobby Scott told the Daily Montanan he hopes the passed bill will, "help ensure that even more students have the information they need in a timelier manner to access Pell Grants and other vital student aid."

The new deadline shouldn't impact the 2025 rollout of the 2026-2027 FAFSA application. "That gives the department ample time to make improvements and fix any lingering issues," Scott said.

(Elle Daniel)

ABORTION CLINICS WILL STAY OPEN AS JUDGE BLOCKS LICENSE REQUIREMENT

A Lewis and Clark County District Court judge ruled to block a bill passed in 2023 by the Montana Legislature that would possibly shut down abortion clinics across the state.

The judge ruled last week that House Bill 937 would violate patients' rights to equal protection, as the bill treats abortion clinics differently than other healthcare providers that perform similar procedures.

The bill required abortion clinics to become licensed, but was issued a temporary restraining order that was set to expire Nov. 19 because the exact rules had not been

written yet.

In September, the rules for the bill were finalized, requiring clinics to pay \$450 annually for their license and provide background checks for all staff members proving them to be of "reputable and responsible character."

With the rules written, Judge Christopher Abbot heard arguments Nov. 8 on whether or not to block the bill again. According to the Daily Montanan, All Families Healthcare, Blue Mountain Clinic and provider Helen Weems said the requirements were "onerous and unnecessary," making it harder for clinics to stay open and provide patients care.

The judge agreed with the sentiment and said Montana citizens have a protected right to abortion especially with Constitutional Initiative 128 passing this election, enshrining abortion rights in the Montana Constitution.

"Whatever one's views may be, the law in Montana is well-established. Women have a state constitutional right of access to pre-viability abortions from a qualified medical provider of their choice," the court order stated. "... Moreover, voters recently affirmed the core holding of Armstrong when they approved the addition of an express right to abortion access in the Montana Constitution."

(Corbin Vanderby)

UM RECEIVES \$11M FOR NEW HEALTH RESEARCH CENTER

The University of Montana will use an \$11 million grant received from the National Institute of Health to create a research center with the goal of improving the health of Montanans.

The new research center, called the Montana Clinical and Translational Research Center, will partner with health providers across the state to take their research and translate it into methods of healthcare.

"We will support research working with our statewide partners that makes an impact at the community level," said Tony Ward, director of the new center, to UM News. "We have some pretty significant health issues to address in our rural state and a lot of underserved populations."

Ward said the center will start with five funded research projects a year until they secure more funding. Some projects they are working on include studying why people

don't vaccinate kids in rural areas, researching ways to protect elderly people during wildfires and subjects like suicide, mental health and cardiovascular and respiratory problems.

(CV)

The medical stories: Contraception, home funerals, overdose vaccines



Betsy Meshlhausen, a medical assistant at Curry Health Center, displays a model IUD used for educational purposes at Curry Health Center Nov. 14. **MARLEY BARBOEISEL | MONTANA KAIMIN**

This week's Kaimin Cast brings you several intriguing and intimate medical stories from the School of Journalism at the University of Montana. We discuss a more comfortable contraception option at UM, how a student learned about hosting a funeral at home and drugs being developed at the University.

The University of Montana's Curry Health Center is working to offer a potentially gentler IUD insertion experience after students reported pain and discomfort with the procedure. Missoula hospice and palliative care group Hestia Advantage is teaching Missoulians how to have funerals in their own homes. UM's Center of Translational Medicine is developing a new compound to treat cancer and heroin and fentanyl vaccines to prevent people struggling with drug addiction or those at risk of accidental overdose.



New episodes out every other Monday. Scan for the latest.

POLICE BLOTTER

ABBY WILLIAMS

abbywilliams@umontana.edu

These were some mundane, yawn-inducing crimes this week, guys. Three different bike/scooter thefts, some online scams and a minor in possession in Miller? Hopefully you come back stuffed from your Thanksgiving feast, and those cousin walks sparked your interest, not just the fun stuff.

NOV. 9 – PERVERTED PERPETRATOR

A University of Montana employee filed a claim of sexual assault at the home football game against the University of California, Davis. The woman was at a north side tailgate when somebody she knew grabbed her from behind. The perpetrator was given a criminal citation and has been referred to Title IX. People really have to start keeping their hands to themselves like we learned in kindergarten. If people didn't pop so much Viagra, we wouldn't need nearly as much security. But at least there were cameras and the perv got caught.

NOV. 10 – CYBERSECURITY SHOULD BE A GEN-ED

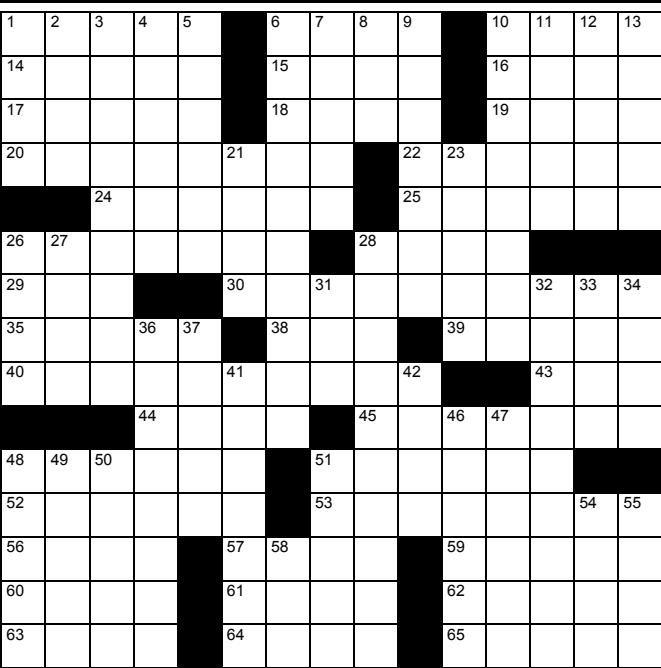
There was an attempted online fraud and theft in Knowles Hall around 10:30 p.m. The resident, however, was smarter than most grandmas and didn't send any money or give any information. Once again, there has been an uptick of online fraud cases, so keep an eye on your email for a message from IT. Also, please, please, please don't send information to fraudsters. Don't prove 'em right – you're not gullible. Maybe we should make internet training a Gen Ed. We can hold the class at the senior center.

NOV. 11 – BRINGIN' BACK A CLASSIC

A motorized scooter was stolen from outside Craig Hall. There are – say it with me – no suspects and no video footage. At least that's one less danger off these sidewalks. I hope our hero threw that thing out to go burn in a dumpster fire. I had to bring back a classic for the blotter, you're welcome guys.

NOV. 12 – TOO MUCH HOMEWORK

Around 1 a.m., a Miller resident assistant called the University of Montana Police Department to help with a drunk resident. The resident was given a minor in possession charge and referred for conduct. Nov. 12 was a Tuesday. Why are we drinking on a Tuesday? Probably drowning in so much homework that you forgot to heed some caution, huh? But to be fair, the way my classes are going, I might be right there with you next Tuesday.



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- 1 Nautical hazard

6 Sound's partner

10 Horror film staple

14 Sporty ride

15 Jack of "Rio Lobo"

16 Potential embryo

17 Eclipse shadow

18 Tide type

19 Nervous swallow

20 Doc Brown's time machine

22 Breakfast choice

24 There from birth

25 Overly diluted

26 Baton wielder

28 Skedaddled

29 Frequently, in poetry

30 Barking burrower

35 Coffee bar serving

38 Place to stay

39 Set of beliefs

40 Stay afloat, in a way

43 Wrecker's job

44 Teen fave

45 Rainwater tank

48 Lenin's successor

51 Lease signer

52 Like Pegasus

53 Town council member

56 Pond plant

57 Wickedness

59 "House of Wax" actor (1953)

60 Satisfy

61 Singer Coolidge
- 62 Skating sites

63 Archipelago part

64 Burn the surface of

65 At attention
- 21 1994 Costner role

23 In a frenzy

26 Drop down?

27 Not nigh

28 Sommelier's stockroom

31 Hill-building insect

32 Ascertain

33 Skunk's defense

34 Ball wear

36 Stadium party site

37 Actor Redmayne

41 Worldly septet

42 Lemon peel

46 Treeless plain

47 Extreme fear

48 Hindu guru

49 Mosaic pieces

50 Gabriel, for one

51 Indian condiment

54 Electrical letters

55 Birth place

58 "C'est la ____!"
- 1 Desert Storm missile

2 Base runner's goal

3 Castle's dungeon

4 Cooks' cover-ups

5 Picked up, in Britain

6 Like some D.C. committees

7 Coeur d'____, ID

8 Sky safety org.

9 Give authority to

10 One with ambition

11 Seed structure

12 Back-to-school item

13 Out of gas

Answers to Previous Crossword:

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

Horoscope

Pick your poison

KATE WIDMER
kate.widmer@umontana.edu

It's nothing to feel bad about, we've all got a habit that we wish we didn't. Maybe you pound energy drinks or hit your vape way too many times in a day. Either way, if you can't laugh at your own flaws, what can you laugh at?

SCORPIO (OCT. 23-NOV. 21): You may say that you smoke weed because it helps manage your stress, but let's be real, it's just because you think it makes you more fun to be around. But maybe you're right. It's legal, it's non-addictive and it's natural, so there's nothing to worry about. You totally win "non-problematic user of the year," we just recommend that you use the award money to go to therapy.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22-DEC. 21): Your dual love of gift-giving and camaraderie has made drinking culture very hard to refuse. With that said, it might be a little too instinctive at this point. No shame in taking a step back and analyzing your behavior before doing something you regret even more than what happened last week. Hangovers might be temporary, but Instagram is forever.

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22-JAN. 19): With an independent streak as fragile as yours, it makes sense that you'd need to "do things just for yourself" more often than most. That's how you ended up with tattoos of varying artistic skill all over your body, piercings in parts of your ears that we were not previously aware had a name and a crippling awareness of how different you look that's both cathartic and so, so terrifying. So terrifying that you might have to stop by your favorite shop on the way home about it. Yeah, don't act like we don't know you.

AQUARIUS (JAN 20-FEB 18): Patience is a virtue, but that's not why you're here, is it? We all know your favorite way to blow off steam is by rage-quitting and punching a wall. It's not your fault that other people are inconceivably stupid, but at least you have control over how you react to their dumb shit. Keep that in mind next time you feel the need to yell at the people in your group project for not doing their work, or the car that just pulled out in front of you only to hit their brakes or the inevitable interest increase on your student loans ... You know what? Maybe you have a point.

PISCES (FEB. 19-MARCH 20): Emotional rollercoasters are more fun on a full stomach, right? Nothing beats cravings to mitigate your feelings, seeking comfort is only human and you're much better at being in touch with your needs than the rest of us. We could all learn from that, to be honest. Seriously though, don't beat yourself up over something you can't control — part of living with your heart over your head is putting your appetite on top.

ARIES (MARCH 21-APRIL 19): You're good at getting what you want when you want it, but what does that mean when you're horny? That you win, of course! To you, the term "serial fucker" is a bit of a badge of honor. You might be bad at commitment and emotional connection, but you're really, really good at the other parts. Just make sure to let your fuckbuddies know you're not

playing for keeps, and for the love of God, wrap it before you tap it, unless you want your next one-night stand to turn into 18 years of cohabitative hell.

TAURUS (APRIL 20-MAY 20): Nothing like an ol' reliable wank, and who's better at dependability than you? With that people-pleasing attitude, you're an expert at navigating human impulse — talk about job-transferable skills. Nothing to be embarrassed over, though, you've got to get that frustration out somehow. And in addition to being completely normal, WebMD says that regular masturbation improves stress levels, sleep, mood, immune function and even actual sex!

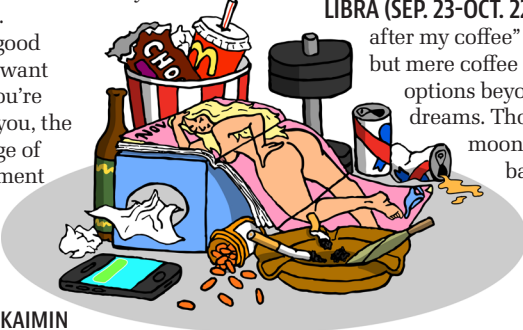
GEMINI (MAY 21-JUNE 20): You're a master of deception: You've deluded yourself into thinking that your perky attitude is a trademark of your personality when it's actually nicotine withdrawal. Honestly, you're probably hitting your vape while reading this. You're just feeling tweeky, and now the aggressively chipper demon that's possessed you is trying to ask someone you don't even like if they have something in their bag for you to "borrow." For someone so self-conscious, you should try gaining some self-awareness.

CANCER (JUNE 21-JULY 22): Other people are your jam, which means that when you feel lonely, as you often do, you fill the void with the worst television known to mankind. You're the only friend in your group who's seen every show on TLC (The "Learning" Channel) but we applaud your decision to hold your tongue when they ask you if you've seen all the "90-Day Fiance" spin-offs. Gotta protect what's left of that dignity.

LEO (JULY 23-AUG. 22): Admittedly, looking in the mirror at the gym is more fun than using one at home. Better lighting, for sure, and the post-workout endorphin rush you're riding out is making you feel like a million bucks. In fact, that workout was so epic, it even helped you forget about that emotional trauma you're refusing to process. How else does a person end up lifting weights at 3 a.m. on a school day? Just saying, if you really cared about your health, you'd talk to someone about all that stress.

VIRGO (AUG. 23-SEP. 22): You win the "simple yet effective" award for your vice of choice. Emphasis on choice, since you're such a total shopaholic. Exercising agency is a favorite of yours, so when life doesn't go your way, you search for a dupe. Actually, there's this one you saw on TikTok that you've been compulsively thinking about ever since you saw it and you're thinking about buying it even though you know you should probably save, but ...

LIBRA (SEP. 23-OCT. 22): Those "I'm not me until after my coffee" signs were invented for you, but mere coffee is of the past. Now, you have options beyond your wildest caffeinated dreams. Those Copper Mountain Coffee moonshines are taking a toll on your bank account (not to mention your ability to function), but it's that or confront your addiction, and we all know about your track record with confrontation.



BARRETT CLEMENT | MONTANA KAIMIN

Planning to stand out: The college restructure in the works

ELLE DANIEL

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The wheels are beginning to turn on a proposed restructure of three University of Montana colleges.

While it's still in early planning, the initial task force of deans from the College of Education and the College of Humanities and Sciences said it has high hopes for what can be achieved, a sentiment echoed by the Provost's Office. However, other faculty members hold some skepticism about the process — and they are still waiting on approval during the upcoming Board of Regents meeting scheduled for Nov. 21 to 22.

So far, the plan is to separate the College of Humanities and Sciences and combine certain programs from humanities with the College of Education. The current dean's task force created to oversee the restructure includes Dan Lee, interim dean of the College of Education, Matthew Semanoff, the interim dean of the College of Humanities, Rich Bridges, the associate dean of biological sciences and John DeBoer, the vice provost of academic affairs.

DeBoer and the deans submitted a request to begin planning to the Board of Regents, which will be reviewed during the November meeting. The team is continuing forward with the process under the assumption that the restructure will be approved. Following this, a concrete plan will be put together with input from the newly assembled task force, then released on Jan. 24. Afterward, the plan will go to a Faculty Senate meeting and be open to campus comment.

The idea of a college restructure has been floating around UM for years, but this one began as a "grassroots movement" between the biological sciences division and the Provost's Office, according to Bridges.

"It became very clear that a number of the issues we were raising were also shared by math and computer science and physics," Bridges said.

The biological sciences division, according to Bridges, nearly equals the W. A. Franke College of Forestry and Conservation in faculty size — but rather than being one college, it's actually six departments fused together.

"Very few majors have as intensive lab courses as we do. They're both costly. They take students a lot of time. They take a long time to teach," Bridges said. "Problem solving in that area didn't mean as much to faculty in other areas of the College of Humanities and Sciences because they weren't really experienced in those things."

By potentially restructuring the humanities and sciences, Bridges said they could better address issues around time and money. Additionally, a college specifically for sciences would make it easier to find donors, secure



From left to right: Dan Lee, dean of College of Education, Rich Bridges, associate dean of biological sciences, Matt Semanoff, interim dean of the College of Humanities and sciences, and John DeBoer, vice provost, meet on Nov. 12 to discuss the proposed restructure. **JAMES BENTON | MONTANA KAIMIN**

funding and attract new STEM-inclined students.

"People know what you do in a college of business," he said. "People don't know what you do in a college of humanities and science, but we think they might if we divided that up into more focused groups."

The plan expanded when it arrived at the Provost's Office. By separating the sciences, they could also take time to strengthen other areas, like education, the humanities and social science departments — areas that "could also use visibility and could use a more unified voice that is able to advocate for itself," DeBoer said.

With that in mind, another proposal for restructuring was submitted, this time by the administration.

Lee and Semanoff were curious but tentative about the possibilities of a restructure for the humanities and education.

"It's really hard for us to move forward, so we really have to explore avenues in which that might happen," Lee said about the College of Education.

To discuss the potential impacts and put together an even stronger plan, they assembled a committee of nine faculty members with "a healthy skepticism while remaining open to new ideas," Lee stated in a task force recruitment email.

Healthy skepticism is present among few faculty members, but for varying reasons. Associate professor of literature Katie Kane worried about a lack of collaboration and an expedited timeline.

"If we balkanize into different colleges,

what will that mean for students from different colleges to take classes?" she said.

Kane declined to share names, but said, "When I circulate in the English department, there's still all that confusion, and I would say even anger at not being fully consulted."

Because professors spend so much time with their students, Kane felt it was even more important for them to be a part of the process.

"We're the experts in our own classrooms, in our own departments and our own colleges, and we should be consulted," she said.

Kane also said she's worried that the pace of the plan, which was first proposed in October, is too fast.

"I don't know what will be lost, and that's disturbing to me," she said. "I would say, 'Slow down, let's have a conversation.'"

While the restructure was discussed more thoroughly with the sciences staff, the proposal is still new for other departments, like the College of Education.

"We're not there yet," Lee said. "We haven't looked at how we're going to organize a college as broad as this."

Interim Dean of the College of Humanities and Sciences, Matthew Semanoff said a mission statement for a new college would take a lot of thought.

"I think one of the big questions that's going to remain is: How [are] we going to operate with the finances we have?" Semanoff said.

For sciences, though, Bridges said the question isn't so much of "why," but "how." "We still have to work through the nuts and bolts of how this is going to function," he said.

DeBoer also presented the plan to the Stu-

dent Senate. Student government President Elizabeth Kamminga said she's very excited. As a double-major studying physics and Spanish, Kamminga said she often juggles tight scheduling between the two majors.

"Doing research on top of that can be really hard to schedule, because a lot of those classes don't interact or talk with each other," she said.

Kamminga said generally, her professors also seem excited. She anticipated student senators will be included in the conversation as well, but that it likely wouldn't be for another year.

For the main task force, there is a sense of optimism beneath the coming wave of planning.

"This is a chance for us to really identify our needs," Lee said. "I think that's what's most exciting for me, that we can make an impact in that."



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The urban dangers bears face on campus

EMMA WHITE

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Since the start of September, there have been seven reported bear sightings on campus, and with the frequent visits, bear experts and University of Montana authorities are exploring ways to not only keep people safe, but the bears as well.

The dangers bears face when they wander into human territory are extensive, according to Jamie Jonkel, a bear biologist who has worked in the Missoula area for decades. These dangers range from highway deaths, which Jonkel said are quite common, to dogs killing cubs and even the occasional malicious kill by a human.

But the biggest danger to bears who wander into human areas, according to Jonkel, is habituation. He said exposure to human food can cause a bear to go into “bully mode,” where they become more comfortable and more aggressive around humans. He likened this behavior to an obnoxious black lab begging for food.

“Once they learn the anthropomorphic foods, or the unnatural foods, their behavior changes, and they become more complacent, and they become habituated, and they start to feel comfortable around people, and that increases the chance that they’ll get killed,” Jonkel said.

Once a bear enters this mode, Jonkel said, they usually have to trap the bear and relocate it. In extreme cases, like in the case of a bear entering a residence, they may need to be euthanized.

“This year, it’s been quiet, we’ve trapped and relocated one bear,” Jonkel said. “This spring we did have to remove three, no, four. It was sad that one was a family group, a female with two yearlings, but she was really, really bad.”

Jonkel said main campus, University housing complexes and encampments along the river are where the bear family was trained to fixate on human food. He said this is often because students who come from different regions are not educated on how to properly store their trash to minimize attracting bears.

Jonkel said in his time with Fish, Wildlife and Parks, he has had to trap and relocate over 25 bears.

“That is a really traumatic experience for a bear, absolutely,” said Eva Rocke,



Eva Rocke shows off the new bear-proof trash cans coming to campus over the next year. The cans will hopefully discourage the bears from coming onto campus. **JAMES BENTON | MONTANA KAIMIN**

the sustainability director at UM, about the trapping and relocation of bears. “I believe it is our collective responsibility as a community to see that happen as little as possible.”

Rocke said the city of Missoula is expanding the Bear Buffer Zone as of spring 2025 to help avoid this. The zone requires all trash to be stored in bear-proof containers to mitigate temptations for them to enter human areas. Rocke said the sustainability department has been working for the past few years to prepare for the second phase of the zone, which will include UM’s campus.

For the University’s part, Rocke said it has been gradually working to install bear-proof trash cans along University Drive for the past few years, as well as fenced enclosures around dumpsters and composting sites. There are two more bear-proof trash cans slated to be installed this week on campus. Rocke said the sustainability department has been working with funding from outside grants for the past few years to make the campus more bear-proof and fulfill the requirements of the Bear Buffer

Zone.

Each trash can and enclosure is an investment, according to Rocke. She said a bear-proof trash can cost \$1,221 each, plus the cost of shipping. The cost of the three most recent dumpster enclosures installed on campus was \$10,000, in total. Rocke said they’ve been working with the grants they have, but they will need more allotments from UM’s internal budget to make this happen.

“Right now it’s been piecemeal. And really, what we gotta do is, figure out an internal budget,” Rocke said. “We’re gonna have to figure out how to make this happen, because we have a lot of trash cans on campus and we have a lot of three-yard dumpsters.”

Another element of this issue, according to Jonkel, is human responses to bear sightings. He said while the tendency is often to go see the bear up close, this is the worst thing someone can do for their own safety and the safety of the bear.

“For a bear that is lost in humanity, or for a bear that’s just desperate, the best thing to do, the most polite thing to do as

a person, is to give them lots of space and lots of room and not push them, not hurt them,” Jonkel said.

Jonkel added it is best to give them a wide berth and let the trained professionals handle the situation.

“When a bear is in a tree, he’s going there for sanctuary. And it doesn’t then help, if you’ve got a crowd of 200 people under that tree,” Jonkel said. “The best thing to do is give them lots of space so that they can come back down and get to the mountain.”

Rocke also said the bear alerts that are required by law to be sent out by campus police often have the unfortunate effect of drawing people to the scene.

“I don’t know how you instill a sense of respect and compassion and people to be like, just leave them alone,” Rocke said.

This phenomenon was addressed by UM Police Chief Brad Giffin in an email sent to the student body Nov. 1, where he asked students to refrain from crowding bears after the alerts are sent out.

“Please keep clear of the area when these bear notices go out,” Giffin stated.

“Gathering around the bear creates a heightened risk for everyone, including the bear. Officers must protect people. Creating a situation where the bear becomes agitated due to a crowd may result in officers needing to resort to protective measures. I want to avoid putting our officers in this position, so I ask for your help.”

Jonkel said it is important for students to be aware of the wildlife surrounding UM’s campus, especially when they are from places where this is not a concern. He said while it is not necessary to be paranoid, it’s important to be aware and educated about the proper protocol for wildlife encounters.

“It’s like when you go to a big city—you don’t want to be wandering around the city, because something bad might happen, right? It’s the same here. When you go out in the wilds, you got to be prepared,” Jonkel said.

Jonkel added that coexisting with bears is possible as it’s been done before, but it is a matter of remembering and relearning that knowledge.

“People have been living with bears for 300,000 years,” Jonkel said. “And we’ve just kind of forgotten how to do it the last 100 years.”

IN LIMBO THE STRUGGLING

UNCERTAINTY IS ONE OF THE FEW guarantees in life. It's human nature to doubt the paths we take, whether we change courses or not.

When it comes to college, lying in limbo is as common as student loans.

It can be a quiet pain for sure, and often a collective loneliness. Finding your way after graduating. Coping with the off-season. Feeling lost in your major.

Stuck between social circles.

But for some, that's how they choose to live, like one professor who is taking advantage of that limbo while he can, spending his time floating between trailheads, parking lots and classrooms.

It can feel strange to feel stuck in space, to be waiting. Sometimes it's a source of energy, sometimes a years-long vacuum of hope. It can paralyze, motivate or comfort.

Regardless, it's a relatable feeling, and not one exclusive to these first four years of adulthood. The photographers of the Montana Kaimin set out to chronicle five people living in that uncertainty and how they are finding their own sense of the world.

— Clayton Murphy, Features editor

ONE DOOR(DASH) CLOSES, ANOTHER OPENS

BY AIDEN HAVENS

At the end of his second year as a doctorate student, Caleb Heil failed a class that forced him to wait a year in his pursuit of becoming a pharmacist.

Now three months into losing a full-ride scholarship and no longer attending school, that doctorate dream seems to be fading away. Heil was taking 15 credits while in the pharmacy program when he failed a prerequisite class that he needed to continue his degree. Since the University of Montana only offered the class he needed to retake the following spring, it forced Heil to wait until he could resume classes and pay for school by himself or switch career paths.

In a study by the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, only 62% of students who start a degree or certificate program finish within six years.

Nearly one year ago, Heil was dedicating most of his time to school, including working at the Albertsons Pharmacy as a paid pharmacy student to fulfill his degree requirements.

On a normal day, he would get done with classes and head straight to work after a short meal. After getting back to his house at 10:30 p.m. most days, he would do homework and go to bed, then repeat. Most of the time Heil would have one day on the weekends free, but overall, he was unhappy with his work-life balance.

Now, his life has faced a massive shift. With most of the day free, Heil had more time to think. He began to realize there might be different ways to work toward a more fulfilling career choice.

Heil can now set his own working hours. To make money, he's taken up DoorDashing, which he typically starts around 5 p.m. because dinnertime pays more hourly, around \$30, than any other time of the day.

The flexibility has given



Putting a DoorDash order in the trunk of his car, Caleb Heil speeds off to deliver the order in a timely manner. Drivers for DoorDash are rated based on their acceptance rate of their orders.

Heil opportunity to explore interests he's always wanted to pursue, but didn't have the time, including various backpacking trips he took in September.

"He's not just trying to slap a bandaid on life," said Luke Konson, Heil's roommate.

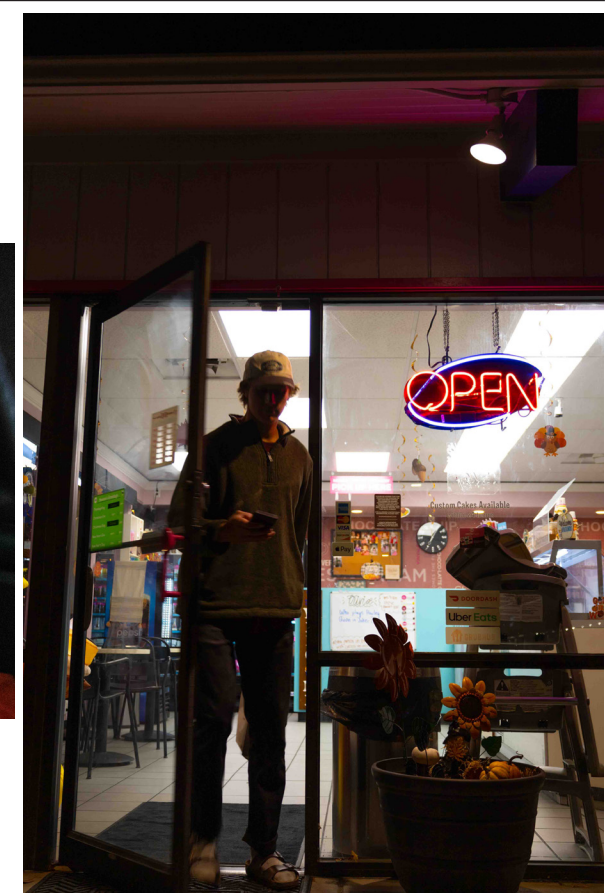
With time to step back and examine his life, Heil has started to change his mind about what his dream truly is. Spending less time in academics and more time in the real world has made

him realize he wants to start working with his hands. Recently, he's been reaching out to electricians to try and start an apprenticeship.

"Not being held back by any responsibilities is nice," Heil said. "I think everyone kind of wants that."

But as Heil waits for his work to flourish, he is content with exploring this new avenue of his life.

"I've maybe met one person that likes driving more than him. I haven't heard him complain about



Heil walks out of Baskin Robins with a customer's DoorDash order right before laughing at the repetitive scenario.

the situation one time," Konson said.

Although Heil said his parents are worried that he is not pursuing anything specific at the moment, he still remains driven to find a pathway that works for him at this crossroads in his life.

"He's driven to figure it out now but wasn't when

he was working at the pharmacy," Konson said.

Although at first Heil felt incredibly uncertain about his new position in life, he's come to see it as an opportunity. Being in between an old dream and a hopeful future, Heil is working to discover what works best for him.

GOALS AND TRIUMPHS OF IN BETWEEN

OFFSEASON UNCERTAINTY

BY DIEGO HERNANDEZ

Being a student-athlete often means time in the spotlight, a position of purpose and an environment focused on improvement and success. But when the season ends and fans go home, these students navigate through quiet months of life off the field.

Cody Lease, a 20-year-old sprinter, runs for the University of Montana on a Division I scholarship. A sophomore majoring in business finance, he ran for the majority of last year until he suffered a hamstring injury, something that still lingers both in his mind and on the track.

For student-athletes like Lease who compete in the spring, those few months before the start of the next season can be a confusing time marked by silence. Between academic responsibilities, training and his injury, Lease has to work even harder to find motivation.

"Sometimes I contemplate why I'm even doing it, but I always have this thought in my mind that in a few years, I'm going to be done," Lease said. "It's because you're training through four or five months with nothing to look forward to."

UM offers nine varsity sports encompassing 471 athletes: 246 men and 225 women, with over 197 athletes in season during the fall. Students are thrust

into practice the moment they arrive on campus. But while their first semester may be filled with intense competition and drive, as the weather gets colder, these students are stripped of a major pillar of their schedule.

Some students, like Lease, have a more gradual approach. Their training starts in the fall, well before competition season.

Lease lives off campus with three of his teammates in a rented home. He said it's easier to get close to his teammates because they spend so much time together.

"We talk to each other, which helps with the depressing thoughts," Logan Tate, a teammate of Lease, said.

Athletes often rely on each other when it comes to staying focused in the offseason. "We motivate each other," 19-year-old Tate said.

Lease is from Loveland, Colorado, a town of about 80,000, located about 50 miles south of Denver. Like many other students, Lease admits that at first it was a struggle to adjust to his new surroundings at UM. On top of that, being a Division I athlete complicated his feelings of belonging.

"It gives you an identity different from the normal student. People have different perceptions of who [athletes] are," Lease said. He feels the public holds athletes to different standards, which

isolates them. "Most athletes tend to hang out around each other. I'm usually just hanging out with my track friends," he said.

Isolation can be a significant factor in an athlete's offseason performance. Lease uses it as a way to look forward, both to the next season and his future outside of track.

He said he has been orienting himself toward school recently and that while he enjoys his time on the track, he knows it won't last forever. Lease has taken a finance internship for next summer with the hopes of pushing forward his future outside of athletics.

"It's such a short point in our lives doing this. I want to have that experience. I want to say that I did it," Lease said. He looks at his time on the track as an experience that is important but not defining. "Not having the competition part is a little bit difficult, but I think the offseason is a great chance to put time into all the things that you wouldn't be able to during the season," Lease said.

When a sport is the defining part of your identity, the offseason can be a time to figure out who you are on and off the field. Lease's second offseason at UM is underway with two more to come. He says that despite this, he has no plans to transfer or stop running.



Cody Lease stretches his hamstring at a track practice session Nov. 14. Lease injured his hamstring at the end of the last season. The stretching loosens his hamstring that he says was "extra tight today." Lease says the injury played a role in feeling isolated last season, but it has motivated him for the next season.



Lease rides a stationary bike alone in the upper level of the UM athletic training center Nov. 14. Lease says that being an athlete can be isolating because of how other students see them.



DESIGNING THE FUTURE

BY MARLEY BARBOEISEL

In a dimly lit bathroom in downtown Missoula, customers at Market on Front are exposed to an unusual art gallery.

Hanging in a minimal black frame just above the toilet, one of Sawyer Reed's posters is on full display. As one goes about their business, they can admire Reed's unique cartoon figures whose vibrant colors and clean outlines make the simple, blob-shaped characters pop off the page.

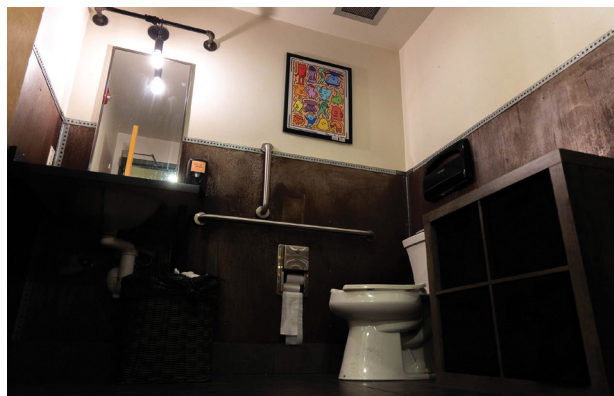
"I don't put a bunch of detail into it. I don't try to overdo stuff. I just kind of, whatever comes to mind, I just put it on the paper, I guess," Reed said. "As long as I like it and like, you know, my friends like it, it's all that really matters to me."

Last December, Reed graduated from the University of Montana with a degree in media arts and a focus in graphic design. However, nearly a year later, he is still working the job that he had during college: front-end shift lead at Market on Front.

But he hopes this isn't the case for much longer. He fantasizes about this graphic design side gig becoming his full-time job, but he knows it won't be easy.

This period of uncertainty is typical. Many post grads find themselves in limbo. They finished four years of a path that opens to a world of possibilities, only to find themselves in a career that only requires a high school diploma.

A study released in February by the Burning Glass Institute and Strada Institute for the Future of Work found that more than half of college graduates'



A poster made by Sawyer Reed is displayed in the bathroom at Market on Front in downtown Missoula on Nov. 12. A small sign on the frame indicates how customers can inquire about buying one.

first jobs out of college are outside their field of study and in positions that don't require college degrees.

Since graduation, Reed has been content with the situation. He acknowledged the fact that it's not what he has been trained in or what he wants to do, but that it is a part of the process to get there.

Reed is tall, put together and confident. He walks around work, seamlessly bouncing between interacting with his coworkers and customers.

When not at work, however, Reed is a different person. Large, baggy clothes cover his body, a crooked beanie sits rolled on his head, and oftentimes, he holds a skateboard in hand. He is comfortable and courteous, joking with people passing his skating spots.

Reed and his buddies usually roll up to a spot with a short collapsible rail and an old BMX ramp that they put a large "DETOUR" sign over to smooth the texture.

This time spent with friends is often reflected in his work. Many of

Reed's designs also include references to skating with his roommates. The first time his roommates saw his art was when Reed put a poster up in their living room.

"I loved it! First, he started doodling just like a couple of the characters at first, and they were just all like separate in their own shits, and then he just decided to put them all together," Declan Ryan, a roommate of Reed's, said. "I was like, 'hell yeah.' You know, little extra linework in between the characters and I was like, 'Oh fuck it's a poster!'"

His friends see Reed's drive, and they have faith in him.

"I actually do believe in him on that one. His designs are clean. He's good with it. I've seen some of the shit [Reed] can come up with. He's good, so I think he could take it pretty far," Nick Parise, another one of Reed's friends and roommates, said.

Reed sees his day job as a means to an end goal — to buy a computer that he believes will jumpstart his graphic design career.

With more processing



Reed attempts a kickflip in a downtown Missoula parking garage on Nov. 12. He regularly brings an old BMX ramp with a construction sign on it to this spot to skate with his buddies. His time spent skating is often reflected in his graphic artwork.



Reed works on a design for his company, Save Our Stupid Selves, at his desk Nov. 14. The desk is covered in original doodles and stickers.

power, Reed already has plans for graphics that he will make with it. So far, he's got a few designs that he hopes to print on T-shirts as a first product from his brand, Save Our Stupid Selves.

"Sometimes I actually have [inspiration] at work, so I'll just write it down on like a little work thing," Reed said as he grabbed a pastry bag with a sketch on it. "I know it looks childish and just like shit, but when [inspiration]

strikes I literally, I shit you not, I did that in 30 seconds"

Throughout his day, Reed is thinking about his dream. His whole mindset seems to entirely revolve around his goals for the future, but until he gets there, his dreams are uncertain.

For now, though, Reed will continue balancing his time working at the Market and crafting his next designs. Everything he's working on now is just a stepping stone

to where he really wants to be. The road forward is mostly unclear, but Reed will skate it out, grinding curbs on the way, until he achieves his mission.

He laid out his life philosophy while attempting a kickflip over his homemade ramp.

"You'll never get anything if you half send it," Reed said.



FROM TRAILS TO TEACHING

BY MARC ANTHONY MARTINEZ

It is a lifestyle not fit for most. But Charles Hayes finds happiness knowing he's living in a free and minimalist way out of the bed of his Toyota Tacoma.

"I don't know where I'm going to be next year," adjunct professor of philosophy Hayes said. "This is another reason why I live in my truck — I can't invest right now because I need to find a more permanent job."

Hayes, who is in his second year of a two-year teaching contract at the University of Montana, bought a 2017 Toyota Tacoma and started living in it in 2018 while getting his doctorate at Michigan State University. Michigan was a challenging place to live in parking lots — it was technically legal but highly unacceptable, Hayes said.

"At the time in Michigan, I wanted [my truck] as generic as possible. Nobody would notice," Hayes said.

At first, the day-to-day problems were a struggle. He didn't know where to park and every little noise woke him up. After around a year, he got used to living in his truck, sleeping in the University's parking lot and taking showers at Planet Fitness before class. Since then, he's found comfort in his simple way of life and has come to enjoy it.

Now living in Montana with almost 185,000 more miles on the odometer, his truck is lifted with better suspension, a helpful upgrade for off-roading and his rugged lifestyle. He sleeps on a custom-made bed that has a slide-out drawer containing the essentials for outdoor living. The space allows



A blazer with a couple of line-designed ties and a hiking backpack hang in Charles Hayes' office. Hayes teaches at the University of Montana as an adjunct professor in philosophy. He keeps his professional clothes in his office for when he teaches.

him to store his cooking supplies, a tent for when he sleeps outside, lights and a couple sleeping bags that he uses in the winter when temperatures drop below zero degrees Fahrenheit. "When I wake up in the morning, I'm happy about the way I'm living, which doesn't always happen in other places," Hayes said.

Hayes doesn't rent an apartment because it doesn't suit his lifestyle. In the summer, he prefers living out of a backpack. If Hayes doesn't get four to five hours of walking or sitting quietly somewhere, he can't be happy. He uses his time in nature to help him calm down and relax, usually with a campfire three to four nights a week. He thinks it's great living in his truck because he doesn't have any other responsibilities when it comes to paying rent or having to maintain a house.

He typically drives 20 to 30 minutes outside of town, finding a picturesque place to park in nature. Unlike

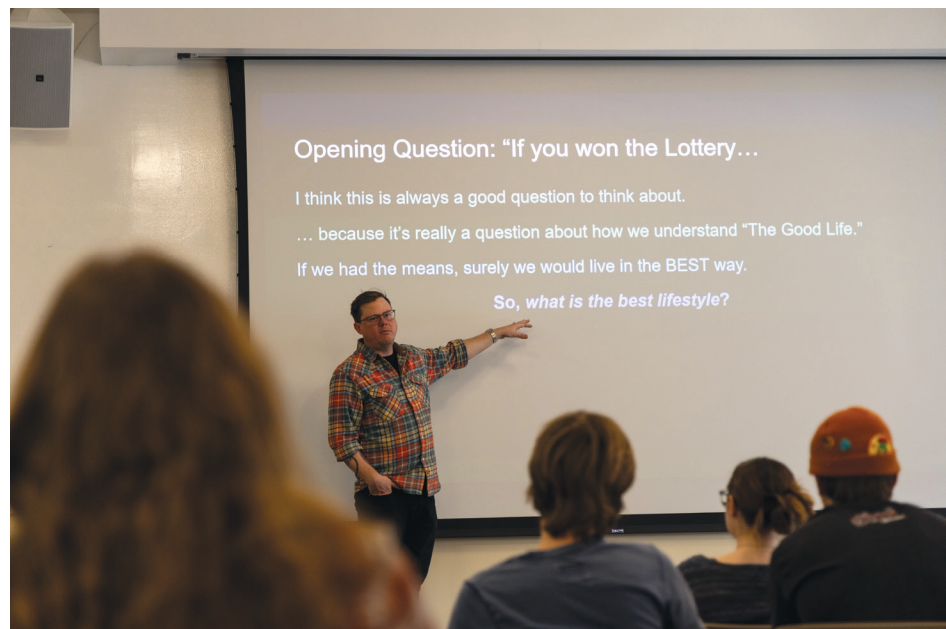
his time in Michigan, he doesn't have to worry about being parked somewhere he shouldn't be. "It's easy to live in your car because it's public land," Hayes said.

Hayes graduated from the University of Montana in 2017 with his master's in environmental philosophy. When he transferred to Michigan, he stayed in contact with University of Montana professors, which helped him get his current teaching job.

His office is plain — a coffee-making setup with a heating pot, water filter pitcher and grinder for coffee beans sits on a steel three-door cabinet filled with his typical uniform of flannel shirts. His bookshelf looks lighter than most in the philosophy department — all those books have to fit somewhere when he packs up his Tacoma. A blazer with a couple ties hangs on his wall behind the door for when he needs to look more professional, yet he keeps a travel backpack hung next to the formal



Hayes made a bedframe with a rollout shelf in his Toyota Tacoma, where he keeps all his essentials like cooking gear, foldable chairs, extra lights and other tools.



Hayes asks his class what they would do if they won the lottery. He wants to get a tenure position where he can stay in one place and eventually buy a house or some land.

wear.

"I think that Charles has found a way to minimize some of the clutter of having lots of things and really invest in things he cares about," Kaleb Cohen, a friend of Hayes, said.

An adjunct professor himself, Cohen met Hayes in one of his classes that Hayes was sitting in on in the fall of 2022. Cohen said he was inspired by

Hayes and bought a truck as well, but he doesn't live in it yet. Cohen is also in his contract's last year and will be applying for his doctorate soon. Hayes' free-wheel lifestyle is a nagging thought going into the big move.

Though his teaching is coming to an end here at Montana, Hayes is faced with the challenge of what he will do next. Hayes'

hometown friend from West Virginia, Honor Forte, said Hayes isn't afraid to try new things and new hobbies, but he looks forward to what is in store for Hayes.

"Charles has always embraced new places, new change and new groups of people, so, I say he's uncertain but it's kind of an exciting time for him," Forte said.



FROM TOULOUSE TO THE BIG SKY

BY RACHEL YEAGER

On a dreary November day, French exchange student Julia Paulo-Hernandez sat in her apartment thinking of home.

The reality of being torn between different countries is a struggle every exchange student can relate to. With one foot in America and the other in France, Paulo-Hernandez is trying to explore her new environment without feeling like she is missing what is happening at home.

Paulo-Hernandez arrived in Montana with the excitement of experiencing a new culture. An English and Spanish major in her last year of college, Paulo-Hernandez hoped to better her English during her year at the University of Montana. She is no stranger to being an exchange student. She spent a year in Iowa with multiple host families, where she grew to love traveling and experiencing new places. Although she didn't get any choice in what state she was sent to, Paulo-Hernandez is still trying to make Missoula her temporary home for the year.

Whether it's missing the taste of home, like "real" cheese and bread, as she described it, or just missing the simpler aspects such as lounging around chatting with her parents and sister while the family dog runs around, she is learning how to cope with the distance.

Through all of the challenges, Paulo-Hernandez has found comfort in the friendships she's made, helping fill the aspects she has been missing.

Paulo-Hernandez said when she met her other French friends they all immediately clicked. Just being able to speak their first language together helped make Montana a bit homier.

Since meeting French exchange students Clement Troussicot and Carla Cardoso, the trio has been inseparable. They meet up for almost everything, offering each other help no matter what.

The friends have helped each other navigate loneliness by offering a sense of home and shared experiences in an unfamiliar place. From chores like grocery shopping to just coming over every night to play cards and goof around, they have been able to create a bond and feel comfortable telling each other anything.

But Troussicot and Cardoso are only staying for the fall semester.

"I'm scared for what my life here is going to be like without them around, since I will be so far away," Paulo-Hernandez said.

While her friends are excited to go back to their own beds, Paulo-Hernandez will only be visiting home for the month of winter break, then coming back to school in America.

"The thing I will miss the most about them is the joy that they bring me, because they always make me laugh when I feel more stressed, anxious or sad. We created a really strong friendship and I'm really proud," she said, grinning.

Troussicot considers Paulo-Hernandez as his best friend and "confidante."

"Julia is an extraordinary



Julia Paulo-Hernandez prepares her suitcase for her trip to Iowa for Thanksgiving. She is going to visit one of her old high school exchange families from her first exchange experience.

person, and what I love the most about her is her spontaneity," Troussicot said. "She feels emotions intensely or laughing or crying, and her smile alone can brighten your day."

There is an 8-hour difference in the time zone between Montana and Toulouse, Paulo-Hernandez's hometown, which makes it difficult to stay in contact with her family.

"I try to call them, but it's really hard with the time difference," Paulo-Hernandez says. "I have to adjust to their schedules, and they adjust to mine."

In moments when she is missing home the most, she likes to look at the photos of her and her mom, or photobooth strips of her and her boyfriend. She has them all around her room and on her phone. She also listens to music that reminds her of family and friends.

As Paulo-Hernandez faces the uncertainty of the



Paulo-Hernandez, Clement Troussicot and Carla Cardoso reach out to grab candy from a bucket on their first Halloween. The group celebrated by trick-or-treating, dressed up as French people. Paulo-Hernandez made sure everyone knew they were actually French.

coming months without her close friends, she remains optimistic about her experience of her short time left in Montana. She knows this year will be full of lessons

and personal growth and is learning to be comfortable in the in between.

"I know that when I come back, the city will not change," Paulo-Hernandez

said. "But I will change personally in a positive way and look back and see how much I have grown."

Filling the ranks of a thankless job in sports

MAXWELL JOHNSON

maxwell3.johnson@umontana.edu

On a brisk November night in a musty locker room, a small group stretched, laced up their skates and discussed the upcoming game.

With three minutes until puck drop, they walked through the tunnel and stepped onto the ice with nervousness building in their stomachs. As they did a couple laps and went about their final preparation, they were largely ignored by an unsympathetic crowd.

They calmed their nerves, reminding themselves that they've trained for this. They've moved up the leagues and been around the game since childhood. With seconds remaining, the veteran of the troop skated to center ice, placed his hand out in front of him and dropped the puck into a flurry of sticks before withdrawing to the perimeter of the ice. It was a group of referees and their night was just beginning.

If the striped skaters ever get noticed, it will almost certainly be crowd upheaval over a call an official determined violated one of the 38,000 words in the league's rulebook in seconds.

Officiating is hardly a job for the thin skinned, but it's one done dutifully out of love of the game. However, the pressure compounded by other factors makes finding referees challenging at times. Hockey requires a minimum of two, but ideally has four officials per game, and referees are still out numbered 18-1 by players nationally.

"It's one of the only jobs, per se, where you're thrown in [on] day one and expected to be right 100% of the time," Missoula Referee Association President and hockey referee Casey Caywood said. "A big push is to just go up and just introduce yourself [to coaches and] say, 'Hey, I'm Casey, I'm working your game today.'" He said chatting beforehand makes officials seem more human and gives them a chance to go over expectations with coaches.

The particular rulebook comes down from USA Hockey (USAH) and serves as the basis for all of Glacier hockey leagues. The USAH itself is the governing body for organized hockey in the country, currently possessing 564,000 registered players and 31,000 registered officials who must renew

and recertify every year.

According to Miriam Richmond, local seminar instructor and district head of women's officiating, recertifying is the biggest challenge in Missoula since right now the hockey season isn't year-round and other sports that youth referees often officiate, such as football and lacrosse, overlap with various deadlines.

"People have to think about recertifying in August, and we don't have ice until September. We don't have travel hockey until November," Richmond said. "So we're now seeing a lot of people coming to the rink and saying, 'How do I certify to be an official' and we're two weeks past the [Oct. 31] deadline."

When it comes to the process of recertifying itself, it generally costs \$55 the first year and \$110 for future years. Most recently, only a Zoom seminar was required to certify, due to restructuring, but in the past, a test was also needed, which will likely be reinstated in the future.

This year, to divide between roughly 1,500 games, Glacier has 75 total certified officials spread out among levels one through four. Each progressive level requires more experience and allows officiation of higher level games. Veteran officials help younger referees get better and there is a mentorship program that pairs them with experienced officials for their first season who advocate, advise and work with them. Glacier has also absorbed some extra cost to allow for a greater presence of officials in their recreational "house league" games.

Richmond said officiating some of the lower league games first allows officials to experience reffing in a calmer environment, where a parent or coach isn't yelling at them.

"Once you get a kid or an adult doing their first couple of low pressure games, they kind of get the bug, and then they want to stick with it, and then that can take them through their first or second



Referee Aimee Konet waits to drop the puck at the University of Montana hockey game against the University of Denver Sept.

26. MARC ANTHONY MARTINEZ | MONTANA KAIMIN

challenging game where somebody is maybe yelling at them, or they got a call wrong," Richmond said.

While referees are expected to put up with some heckling, COVID-19 led to a drop in officials and better exposed their grievances related to abuse. Since then, Missoula and the hockey community have pushed for zero tolerance. Rink staff backs officials and asks troublesome individuals to leave when necessary. Even with more supportive rinks, about 50% of USA Hockey officials don't return after their first year. If an official can stick it out until their third year, 95% will renew.

"Retention is more key than recruitment. That's where we see our numbers," Richmond said, "because hockey players, they join and they keep playing, refs, they join and then they quit."

Richmond said recruiting is essentially

out of her control as being a referee is something you have to want to do and it's more about making it as easy as possible to become one and excel. That being said, the pay ranges from \$27-\$170 a game with flexible but sometimes unusual hours, such as 10 p.m. games on weekends.

"Most of the rules are put in place either to maintain fairness or to prevent injury, and just knowing that itself, because so many times you call a penalty and people are outraged, and it's like, 'Well, is what you did constructive to the game of hockey?'" Richmond said. "Every year I think about quitting. I travel with my kids and watch them play all over the country, and we're always impressed with how officiating in Missoula looks. We have a truly dedicated core of officials that want to do a good job for our games."

The benefits and drawbacks of a two-quarterback system

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As the Griz football season nears an end and the playoffs come closer, the power of the quarterbacks has come into question.

After a national runner-up season last year, fans are wondering if these two proclaimed powerhouse quarterbacks can help push the scales into the favor of the Grizzlies and win a national title for Griz Nation.

After losing Clifton McDowell, who scored 22 touchdowns during the 2023 season, to the transfer portal, the Griz needed new quarterbacks.

Last year the Griz enlisted Keali'i Ah Yat, a redshirt freshman from Hawaii. This isn't the first time the name Ah Yat has shown up on the Griz roster. Keali'i Ah Yat's father, Brian Ah Yat, was once UM's quarterback and a Grizzly Hall of Famer.

When asked about being one of the Grizzlies' quarterbacks, Keali'i Ah Yat said, "I don't take it for granted. It's a blessing for both me and my family."

The Griz added Logan Fife, who originally planned on transferring from Fresno State to the Minnesota Golden Gophers, but he ultimately decided the University of Montana would be a better fit.

While both quarterbacks are new to being full time Grizzlies, they bring their own level of experience. Ah Yat was on the field for five of the 15 games last season for the Griz.

"The entire quarterback room helps each other. We feed off of each other," Ah Yat said.

Fife was able to play 21 games in his three-year tenure in the Mountain West Conference.

"They have prior knowledge in the system. I have some past knowledge from maybe a bigger level than the Big Sky," Fife said to SWX. "So there are things that I help them with and they help me with stuff they already know."

One clear thing about football is that a team needs a good offensive line. "All good football teams have a good offensive line and good defensive line," Bobby Hauck, head coach of Griz football, said.

However, the offensive line is something the Griz are struggling with. In the game against UC Davis, the Griz were only able to score two touchdowns for the fans, who made their presence known by throwing food and trash onto the field.

"We did not run it well. Our quarterbacks struggled seeing coverage," Hauck said in the post-game press conference.

When a team plays two quarterbacks, it gets double the reward. It forces an opposing team's defensive line to study another player and additional plays.

Yet, UM doesn't do this and instead uses the same routes and the same calls for both quarterbacks.

"I don't know if it helps us or hurts us," Hauck said.

"The thing with them is I don't think they run the offense differently when another quarterback comes in," Tim Plough, the head coach for the UC Davis Aggies said. "When a different QB came in we thought we could just play the same structure for both guys and I think they did a good job at that."

It can be beneficial for teams to have two quarterbacks with the same play calls because it allows the offensive line to focus on a smaller amount of routes, perfecting them to a tee.

But the stats don't back up this tactical move for Montana.

Both Ah Yat and Fife have combined for five interceptions and 19 sacks on the year, causing the Griz to lose 212 yards.

Yet not everyone is seeing this as a concern.

"We don't consider that a lot, but we just need to get rid of the ball faster and we need to do better at making sure the defender can't get to them," Hauck said. "Statistics are not an important factor, it's just about helping the guys on the offense"

However, not all the stats are on the negative side.

Ah Yat and Fife have around a 65% pass completion rate, a stat that shows how often they pass the ball into the hands of a teammate. An average college quarterback is expected to get around 65%-70%.

In the game against Western Carolina, Ah Yat secured the win for the Griz with his four touchdowns.

"It was crazy, I was pretty concussed so I didn't know I had gotten four 'till I came off the field," Ah Yat said.

He then sat on the sidelines for the next two days as the team decided to make sure there was no underlying injury. However, that game would be a turnaround for the Griz.

Going from almost every game being a blowout win, it has now resorted to the score being only a difference of a touchdown.

On this upcoming Saturday, the annual Brawl of the Wild graces Montana with its presence. As Montana State is currently undefeated on the season, many Griz fans have started to worry if the bragging rights will return to Missoula.

"I'm locked in, it's a big time game," Ah Yat said. "It's a great game to show that you're a great player."

When asked if he would enjoy being named the starting quarterback for the Griz in the Brawl of the Wild, Ah Yat said, "It would mean a lot to me and to my family."

But the Brawl of the Wild isn't the only thing on Griz fans' minds — so is the conference playoffs.

Last season, the Griz were able to make it way to the championship game in Frisco, Texas. There, it lost against South Dakota State, forcing the Griz to take a long flight home empty handed.

But as far as the Grizzlies are concerned, "We'll continue to do what we do and play them both," Hauck said.



Grizzly quarterback Keali'i Ah Yat throws the ball during a game against Portland State on Nov. 16. The Grizzlies won the game 28-17. **MARLEY BARBOEISEL | MONTANA KAIMIN**



Logan Fife, who entered the game when Ah Yat was injured in the second quarter, throws a pass downfield last Saturday. **MARLEY BARBOEISEL | MONTANA KAIMIN**

'Silent Sky' how astronomy, equality and disabilities converge

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Within the University of Montana's School of Theatre, representation for people with disabilities is highlighted in the program's rendition of "Silent Sky."

"Silent Sky," by Lauren Gunderson, is a play about the life of Henrietta Leavitt, a late 19th and early 20th century astronomer. She worked at Harvard Observatory as a "computer," processing astronomical data and studying photographic plates of stars. Her research and measurement of the fluctuation in brightness of Cepheid variable stars helped shape an understanding of Earth's distance to galaxies and the sheer scale of the universe.

Leavitt, who was hard of hearing, was extremely influential when it came to advocating for equality toward women in science.

Sydney Lauren, a junior studying theater at the University, plays Henrietta Leavitt. Like Leavitt, Lauren struggled with hearing loss and was diagnosed with sensorineural hearing loss at the age of 13.

"Hearing loss is very common, it's just invisible, so people don't pay attention to it," Lauren said.

She wore hearing aids for nine years and decided to get cochlear implants because her hearing worsened. Cochlear implants transfer sound into electricity, which then bounce off the cochlear nerve, sending signals to her brain and allowing her to hear. Without the implants, she was constantly reading lips, which became tiring and left her feeling like she couldn't keep up with the world around her.

Leavitt is Lauren's first role in one of the University's theater productions. She said the theater program has done a wonderful job at making classes accessible for her, including passing microphones around that send the feedback directly to her implants.

"They make a game out of it half the time because we're theater kids," Lauren said.

While most students in the department were eager to audition for "Into The Woods" during the spring semester of 2024, Lauren was set on "Silent Sky."

She eventually got the role of Leavitt and knew how important it was to portray such an inspiring and resilient person and accurately represent her through their shared experience with a disability.

"I didn't have representation growing up,"

Lauren said. "The fact that I can be that for people now means the world to me."

During tech rehearsal week for the play, she and the cast would use American Sign Language to communicate with each other when they weren't allowed to talk. She taught the production crew ASL signs and said it's been a bonding experience for both the cast and crew.

Right now, there is only an interpreter for one matinee performance of the play. She hopes that one day, the University will have an entire ASL-interpreted show with captions to make the performances more accessible.

Bernadette Sweeney, head of acting and musical theater at the University, decided to take on the role of producing "Silent Sky." She said everyone involved has been very mindful of working with Lauren as an actor with hearing loss.

"It's a big part of our challenge as theater makers to be as responsive and responsible as possible," Sweeney said.

She acknowledged the powerful synergy between Leavitt's story and Lauren's experience as an actor and wants to honor that.

Within the industry, Sweeney said there are challenges with accurately representing people of all abilities and gender identities, and it's something people need to pay attention to. For the audition process for University performances, she said, actors of all gender identities and abilities are considered for roles, and they try to keep casting as open as possible.

It's not just UM making strides in representation for people with disabilities, as the upcoming movie adaptation of "Wicked" has casted a disabled person to play Nessarose for the first time. Nessarose is the sister of protagonist Elphaba and uses a wheelchair due to complications at birth. Marissa Bode's portrayal of the character in the adaptation has been a long time coming in regard to disability representation.

"The field is developing and changing quickly, and it will continue to change and grow," Sweeney said. "It's important that we're all a part of that change."

"Silent Sky" will continue to run at the Masquer Theatre from Nov. 21-24. Tickets are available at <https://griztix.eventue.net/events/TDSS>



Sydney Lauren gazes into the stars during the dress rehearsal of "Silent Sky" Nov. 5. She plays Henrietta Leavitt in the UM Theater production, open until Nov. 24. RACHEL YEAGER | MONTANA KAIMIN

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A culinary journey, a home away from home

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Sheltah Chase, a 24-year-old culinary arts major from the Navajo reservation in the Four Corners area, is more than just a student at Missoula College. They're a culinary artist with a passion for cooking that began long before they enrolled in the college's culinary arts program.

Chase's love for food has evolved from a childhood dream into a career focused on connecting with others through the art of cooking.

Born and raised on the Navajo reservation, Chase's culinary roots run deep in their culture, where food is a value of community and tradition. Chase grew up both on the Navajo Nation Reservation in Arizona and in Albuquerque, New Mexico, surrounded by the flavors of their heritage. Traditional Navajo dishes featuring lamb, squash, corn, and other local ingredients laid the foundation of love for food.

In Albuquerque, the local cuisine centered around bold spices, green chilies, red sauces and the unmistakable flavor of corn tortillas — Chase's preference over flour tortillas. "I hate flour tortillas; I grew up eating corn tortillas only and really spicy food," they shared, adding that New Mexicans often say, "It's always Christmas in New Mexico," referring to mixing green and red salsas together.

In 2013, Chase moved to Missoula at the age of 13. Away from the familiar tastes of home, their family began exploring Mexican cuisines, but found that nothing quite compared to the authentic flavors they missed. "We found the ingredients and cooked from home," Chase recalled, keeping their cultural roots alive through food.

It wasn't until the pandemic brought them back to the reservation that Chase rediscovered their childhood dream of becoming a chef. With time to reflect, they began experimenting with recipes, blending the love of food formed in their childhood with the world of culinary arts. Today, this rich tapestry of influences — rooted in Navajo tradition and infused with the vibrant flavors of New Mexico — continues to shape Chase's journey as a chef.

"I remembered when I was really young, I had this memory of telling my parents I wanted to be a chef when I grew up," Chase said. "Feeding people makes me so happy, and a lot of big events always happen around food, so that's where my love for cooking comes from."

Before they entered culinary school, Chase started their academic journey at Montana State University, where they pursued film and photography. However, after a year and a half, they realized that a career in film wasn't something they wanted to do every day. The pandemic gave them the time to reflect on their interests, and they decided to follow their



Sounds of lively conversation and sizzling fill the air of the kitchen inside of Black Bear Cafe hidden in the basement of the Missoula College Nov. 6. **RACHEL YEAGER | MONTANA KAIMIN**

passion for cooking, eventually enrolling in Missoula College's culinary arts program.

Chase thrived as a visual learner in the program, excelling with time and practice. "Cooking comes naturally with time and dedication toward what I want to accomplish," they explained. Students in the program work alongside chefs who are also local to Missoula, such as Bert Gahagan, who has experience as the head chef at upscale steakhouse 1889, and Kyle Jackson, a co-founder of the tapas joint, Bar Plata. Chase credits their mentorship and guidance for giving them the confidence to tackle any culinary challenge.

One of the most unique aspects of Missoula College's culinary arts program is the structure of its second-year class. Each week, one student takes on the role of sous chef at the Black Bear Cafe in Missoula College and is responsible for creating their own menu. Chase had the opportunity to lead the class's breakfast menu earlier this semester and will be leading the kitchen again with their own menu, focused on Mexican cuisine.

"I get to create my own menus, and it's a great learning experience," they said. This hands-on approach to learning allows students to collaborate and experiment in the kitchen, while also taking on responsibility for the preparation, cooking and presentation of the dishes.

During their term as sous chef at the Black Bear Cafe, Chase has been refining their culinary skills, making waves with their gourmet Mexican dishes. The cafe itself has been buzzing with energy, especially around 11

a.m., when members of the Missoula community stop in for a bite. Chase's dedication to their craft has paid off, as their dishes quickly became a hit with the cafe's clientele.

Students dining at the cafe were quick to share their appreciation for Chase's culinary creations. Amber Redneck, a 22-year-old Native American studies major, praised the dishes, saying, "Very good and filling, the presentation is perfected."

Thomas Yellowstone, a 23-year-old forestry major, highlighted a standout item on the menu, sharing, "The enchiladas are delicious," while also complimenting the refreshing cantaloupe juice. Logan Hardin, an 18-year-old undeclared student, echoed Yellowstone's sentiment: "I had the enchiladas. I think they are super delicious. I wouldn't change anything."

Avery Rose, a 19-year-old radiology major, tried the birria tacos and suggested, "I would add a little more seasoning, but overall super great job."

Inside the kitchen, there's a sense of camaraderie and support. Maddie Smith, a 19-year-old culinary arts student and classmate of Chase, sang their praises: "They're great. This is what they should be doing with their life, they are so good at it."

Her words reflected the sentiment shared by the entire kitchen team, where a member yelled, "Great job team!" as they shifted between garnishing plates and preparing gourmet dishes.

Beyond the classroom, Chase's culinary journey is guided by their desire to stay connected to their Indigenous roots. As part of



Cade Smith tops off an empanada with a sour cream garnish. **RACHEL YEAGER | MONTANA KAIMIN**

their long-term vision, Chase wants to incorporate Indigenous ingredients into fine dining. "The main protein we eat in my community is lamb, and I grew up learning how to butcher sheep and cook with it," Chase explained. "I'd love to bring that into fine dining plates, using squash, pumpkins and corn — ingredients that are so central to my culture."

Chase finds inspiration in Indigenous chefs who have paved the way for others, such as the winner of the first season of "Next Level Chef," who was from the Osage Nation Reservation in Oklahoma. This chef used Indigenous ingredients in her cooking, which motivated Chase to pursue their own dreams of blending traditional and modern culinary techniques.

"If she can do it, then I can do it too," Chase said with determination. As for their future, Chase has set their sights on appearing on "Next Level Chef" themselves.

In the meantime, Chase continues to perfect their craft, experimenting with new recipes and flavors for the coffee bar at Missoula College. They have created unique cinnamon roll combinations, like pumpkin brown butter and chocolate pomegranate, and this week, they're trying out a fennel cinnamon roll, inspired by their desire to incorporate unusual ingredients.

Through their work at Missoula College and their vision for the future, Chase is not just shaping the future of food — they're redefining it. With every dish, they blend heritage, creativity and passion, carving a path that honors their roots while pushing boundaries in the culinary world.