



Greetings faculty, staff, and students,

I hope you had a nice holiday and 2022 is off to a smooth start. This week as a nation, we celebrate the legacy and teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. He was an inspiration, a risk-taker, a shapeshifter, and a true believer in the power of people. While his life was cut short, his impact has been longstanding and continues to be significant in our world today. Dr. King inspired us to dream big, embrace fear and be courageous anyway, inspire others and get everyone involved, and create a sense of urgency. As we celebrate his legacy this week and throughout the year, I encourage you to remember these lessons. It's part of what we do here at Tech and courageously helps us create the future we deliberately strive to make.

In this issue of the Chancellor Check-in, we celebrate a few of those on our campus making an impact and introduce you to others who will play a significant role in our future. Enjoy and best wishes for the semester ahead.



**WELCOME CRAIG ELLIOTT**

Dr. Craig Elliott has joined our Montana Tech team as the university's first-ever Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Dean of Students. Elliott will oversee the university's admissions, campus life, career services, counseling, dining, enrollment, financial aid, international, student success, and wellness departments. Elliott, a seasoned leader in higher education, comes to Montana Tech from Samuel Merritt University (SMU) in Oakland, California. At SMU, he served as the assistant vice president for student affairs/dean of students and assistant professor for 19 years.



Before SMU, Elliott worked at San Jose State University, Saint Mary's College, and Stony Brook University. He is a student-centered, collaborative leader with a strong student access, equity, and success record. Elliott has also led and served locally, regionally, and internationally, including through times of significant challenge and change. Notably, he served as president of ACPA-College Student Educators International from 2019-2020 and served as vice president and past president. He has also presented numerous programs at the local and national levels on student success, leadership, transformative learning, equity, inclusion, and social justice. He is actively involved in his community, serving as a coach and referee in soccer, a leader in scouting, and on the board of World Trust.

Please welcome Craig to the Montana Tech campus.



Stephen Malott has joined our Montana Tech family as the Interim Vice Chancellor of Administration and Finance. Malott's background includes over 30 years of higher education service including most recently as the Vice President for Finance and Administration at the South Dakota School of Mines & Technology (2014-2018, plus 3 months interim in 2019), Vice President for Administration and Finance at American University of Iraq (2012 -2014), and Vice Chancellor for Administrative Services at Missouri S&T (2001-2012). From 1981-2001 he was a Foreign Service Agent with the U.S. Department of State. Steve has a B.S.B.A. in Public Administration from Georgetown University and a M.P.A from the University of Southern California.



We look forward to his leadership and expertise while we develop and implement a search to permanently fill the position that was vacated by Michael Van Alstyne who left the University in December to pursue other opportunities.



## SPRING ENROLLMENT

This spring, there is a feeling of excitement and energy on campus as more students are living in residential housing compared to last year at this time. Initial evaluation shows the university's enrollment similar to spring 2021, which is considered a win given the climate of higher education nationwide. Recent studies by National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, for example, show college and university enrollment across the country down nearly a half a million students. Efforts to maintain enrollment include a robust student activity and engagement calendar with opportunities for indoor and outdoor activities showcasing all that Butte and Montana have to offer. What pleases university officials is the interest in continuing education opportunities which are not reflected in our enrollment reports. The commercial driver's license (CDL), certified nursing assistant (CNA), and other workforce development opportunities have tremendous growth opportunities. Applications for fall 2022 are up for both undergraduate degrees and Highlands College prompting optimism about new student enrollment for fall 2022 as well.



# ADVANCING

Montana Technological University



## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

### Advancing Tech Forum

Wednesday, February 2, 2022 | 3:00 pm

Join us in person at the Library Auditorium or via [ZOOM](#)



**LORRI BIRKENBUEL NAMED 2021  
DISTINGUISHED INDUSTRIAL HYGIENIST**

Congratulations to Lorri Birkenbuel, Associate Professor in the Safety, Healthy & Industrial Hygiene Department, for being named the 2021 Distinguished Industrial Hygienist by the Pacific Northwest Section of the American Industrial Hygiene Association (PNS-AIHA) at the Northwest Occupational Health Conference this fall. Professor Birkenbuel, who serves as the Montana Local Educational Officer with the PNS-AIHA, was recognized by her peers for her outstanding contributions to the profession of Industrial Hygiene.



[Read more](#)



## MECHANICAL ENGINEERING RANKED 3RD IN THE NATION

Montana Tech's mechanical engineering program was named to the list of the Best Mechanical Engineering Bachelor's Degree Programs in the US. The ranking by Best Accredited Colleges ranked Montana Tech in the number 3 spot behind Michigan Technological University and New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology.

Congratulations to Montana Tech's mechanical engineering department for this impressive ranking!

[Read more](#)



## ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING NATIONALLY RANKED

Congratulations to Montana Tech's electrical engineering program for being named to the Best Accredited Colleges list of the [Best Electrical Engineering Degree Programs](#) in the United States. The university landed in the number 10 spot. The top of the electrical engineering list was Oregon Institute of Technology, Missouri University Science & Technology, and SUNY Maritime College.

[Read more](#)



## MONTANA TECH NAMED TOP COLLEGE IN MONTANA FOR BS AND MS PROGRAMS

University Headquarters named Montana Technological University as the top bachelor's and master's degree-offering school in the state of Montana. On the bachelor's degree list, Montana Tech was followed by Montana State University and Carroll College. The master's degree list saw Montana Tech, Carroll College, and Montana State University-Northern as the top three universities.

Montana Tech offers 19 master's degrees in a unique environment where faculty with a wide range of research interests mentor students in their program of choice. Graduate students benefit from the university's state-of-the-art labs and equipment and outdoors in Big Sky country.

[Read more](#)



## BUSINESS INSIDER'S WORLD WIDE WASTE

This past spring, Business Insider connected with Montana Tech Biological Sciences Professor Dr. Stella Capoccia in the mining city to film episodes for its online series World Wide Waste.

The first episode, [Meet the Man Who Shoots at Birds All Day to Keep Them Off A Toxic Pit](#), was posted on November 24, 2022, and has over 10.6 million views. The segment featured Mark Mariano, who graduated from Montana Tech's Ecological Restoration graduate program, and Dr. Capoccia.

The second episode filmed in Butte, [Life Inside America's Biggest Environmental Cleanup](#), was posted on December 15, 2021, with over 655,000 views. The Environmental Cleanup feature showcases Montana Tech associate professor Robert Pal and Ecological Restoration graduate student Morgan Schultz on Earth Day discussing the restoration efforts on the Butte hill. Dr. Pal is the Director of Restoration at Montana Tech. His research focuses on studying the flora and vegetation of disturbed habitats, including agricultural and urban areas, which led to his work on ecological restoration and plant invasions. Dr. Pal directs the Native Plant Restoration Project and is responsible for the Ecological Restoration master's program and Restoration Certificate at Montana Tech.

You can watch Life Inside America's Biggest Environmental Cleanup [here](#). You can also watch Meet the Man Who Shoots at Birds All Day to Keep Them Off A Toxic Pit [here](#).



## CONGRATULATIONS PROFESSOR EMERITUS HSIN-HSIUNG

Congratulations to Montana Tech Professor Emeritus Hsin-Hsiung for receiving the prestigious honor of the 2022 Frank F. Aplan award. Dr. Huang taught and performed research in the Metallurgical & Materials Engineering Department at Montana Tech for 40 years before his retirement in 2021. Dr. Huang specialized in process analysis and modeling and created StabCal, a thermodynamic calculation and process simulation software package that is used by industry throughout the world. Dr. Huang and his wife, ShuMing, make their home in Butte and have two sons, Nicolas and Oliver.

[Read more](#)



## GO DIGGERS

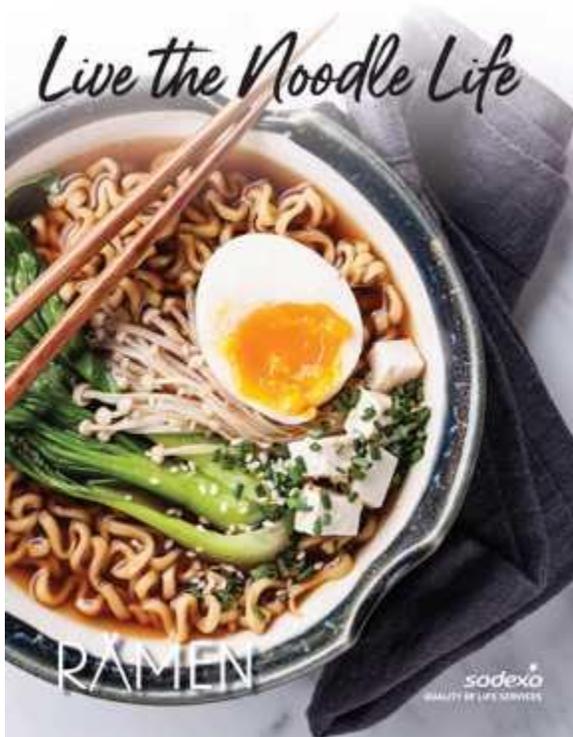
The Montana Tech basketball teams are in full swing with the Frontier Conference schedule. The women's team is currently 11-10 overall and 2-4 in league action. The Orediggers picked up their first conference victory at MSU-Northern last week 71-61 and faced tough opponents this week in No. 15 Rocky Mountain Thursday and No. 6 Carroll College Saturday. The Oredigger men are off to one of their best starts in over 20 years with an overall record of 16-5 and 5-1 in conference. The Orediggers have won their last three games and have an 8-1 record at home this season. After the Rocky Mountain game Thursday, Tech hosts league-leading No. 6 Carroll. The Orediggers last loss came at the hands of Carroll 80-78 in Helena.

The Oredigger Track & Field teams started indoor competition last week for their first time participating in more than just distance events. The teams competed strong against NCAA Division I and II competition along with other Frontier schools at the Bobcat Challenge in Bozeman hosted by Montana State. Freshman Hailey Nielson won the 3000m race and was just seconds off qualifying for the NAIA Indoor National Championships. Natylia Jacobson finished second in the 60m and 200m races and qualified for nationals in the 60m. The women's 4x400m relay team consisting of Emily Ratz, Abby Clark, Carlin Manning, and Hailey Nielson won their race. Freshman Drake Schlachter won the long jump beating his best mark by 1.5' with a jump of 21'11.5". The Orediggers next meet is the Stacy Dragila Invitational hosted by Idaho State on January 29th.



## ESAI LONGORIA RECEIVES THE MONTANA ATHLETE IN SERVICE AWARD

We are so proud of Montana Tech former student-athlete, Esai Longoria, for receiving the Montana Athlete in Service award in December. Longoria graduated from Montana Tech in December with a master's degree in Interdisciplinary Studies. From Caldwell, Idaho, Longoria was a member of the Oredigger football team.



On January 17th, Montana Tech Dining Services began offering “Ramen” in the Student Success Center. Modern ramen was invented in the 20th century, and its popularity is increasing coast to coast with its delicious interpretations of Japanese street food. Ramen bowls feature fun-to-try combinations—chewy noodles, seasoned broths, fresh vegetables, proteins and toppings. This culinary pop-up concept will offer both BYO bowls and six signature bowls with two new broths (vegetarian miso and chicken) joining the traditional tonkotsu (pork) broth providing added variety to bowl options. Ramen is warm, filling, social media worthy and swirling with adventurous ingredients. Stop by Monday through Thursday from 11:00 am to 8:00 pm or Fridays from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm to try some ramen.



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TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

