MontanaTech
STAFF SENATE NEWSLETTER

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Staff Senators
2016-2017

Peggy Delaney, President
Joyce O'Neill, Secretary/ Treasurer
Ronda Coguill
Scott Forthofer
Frances Holmes
Peggy McCoy
Carmen Nelson
Marilyn Patrick
Taryn Quayle
Amanda Shroyer
Kathy Stevens
Angela Stillwagon
Casey Vanatta

The Montana Tech Staff Senate is composed of representatives for classified staff, the crafts, professional, and union-exempt staff. The purpose of the Staff Senate is to "promote continued improvement of higher education at Montana Tech and in the state of Montana; promote stability and professional growth of the Montana Tech staff; and promote service to students by improving morale and working conditions of the Montana Tech staff."

Campus Technology Services

Campus Technology Services is comprised of three separate departments, Information Services, Network Services and Telephone Services.

Information Services	Network Services	Telephone Services
Responsible for maintaining & managing several systems: student information system which is used for student admissions, registration, financial aid and academic records management (Banner) content management system, Nolij single sign on (CAS & Shibboleth), campus portal (MyMtech) learning management system (Moodle)	Responsible for maintaining & managing several networks: North campus Dorm Highlands College Family housing Wireless The point-to-point microwave systems High-tech classroom design The Campus Data Center	Responsible for maintaining & managing: VOIP phone system Digital phone system Phones @ family housing Outdoor alert, and radio system.

INFORMATION SERVICES

Jennifer Simon is the Director of Information Services. Jennifer has worked at Montana Tech for 19 years. When she's not prioritizing projects for our department or performing regular system administration, her daily duties vary. For example, this week began by Jennifer having to trouble shoot some issues we were having with a couple different processes, then she switched to building a server that will be needed for an upgrade to Banner/OrediggerWeb. In a nutshell, she tries to help her team by pitching in wherever she is needed in order to facilitate meeting our goals and the users' needs. Jennifer is the supervisor to Alan Christensen, Bernie Tregidga, Pam Diedrich and Casey Vanatta.

Alan Christensen joined CTS as a student employee in late 2009. He moved into our Software Engineer position in 2011. He develops new applications and also maintains MyMTech, Course Evaluations, the online Directory and many other projects. He also oversees programs written by our student employees and assists with system administration. When the Director of Telephone Services is unavailable Alan assists with the Telephone System

Bernadette Tregidga is our Assistant Director of Information Services. She has been at Tech for 36 years, where she started off as a student employee under the same department. Her primary duties include troubleshooting, maintaining, and working with staff in the areas of Banner Student, Nolij and OrediggerWeb, alongside Pam and Jennifer. In addition, she works on other projects as they are needed and aids the Human Resources department with reporting.

From left to right: Alan Christensen, Casey Vanatta, Jennifer Simon, Bernadette Tregidga and Pam Diedrich

CAMPUS TECHNOLOGY SERVICES CONT…

Pam Diedrich joined CTS in June 2011. She is the Banner Database Manager. She updates, troubleshoots and maintains the Banner system. She also develops and maintains Banner data interfaces for other software the campus utilizes, such as Tutor Trac and Resource Scheduler.

Casey Vanatta has been at Tech since October of 2004. She serves as supervisor to CTS Help Desk and is our Information Systems Analyst. She works closely with other staff members, providing them with reports & Microsoft Access databases. She has 3 student employees that help her man the CTS help desk; Nina Pida, Josh Baldwin & Tyler Campbell.

The CTS Help Desk student employees help answer any questions regarding Moodle, your school email and MyMtech. They also maintain our CTS webpage & they design and implement web programs.

Nina is a freshman majoring in Engineering. Tyler Campbell is pursuing BS in Network Technology. Josh Baldwin is a Computer Science major.

From left to right: Nina Pida, Josh Baldwin and Tyler Campbell

NETWORK SERVICES

Mike Kukay is our Director of Network Services, he has been here for 30 years. This position administers, coordinates and oversees all campus computer networking, including wireless. His responsibilities encompass centralized IT operations at the campus data center, all support infrastructure such as the electrical and cooling systems, the fiber optic backbone and within building network distributions. These critical support systems are a top priority for ensuring high performance networking and computing. Our IT staff monitors these systems around the clock to ensure exceptional reliability. Mike supervises Jed Wilson, Eric Luther and Cal Snow.

From left to right: Cal Snow, Mike Kukayy, Jed Wilson and Eric Luther

Jed Wilson is our Network/Computer Systems Administrator III. He started in an old department called New Media Group back in 2003 as a student employee and then moved into a Lab Coordinator position before transitioning into his current position. Specifically, he is responsible for the operations of all critical network systems and centralized services. When you login to a computer, check your email, print a document, use a file share, or connect to the wireless network there is a complex maze of components all working together in the background. Network Services maintains and fine-tunes these components and resources. Network Services strives to keep services up and running 24/7/365 and if we need a maintenance window, we try to keep it as short as possible.

Eric Luther has worked at Montana Tech for almost 10 years. The first 7 ½ years of Eric's service were as a Computer Support Specialist III for Tech's Administration and the last 2 ½ years have been spent as a Network/Computer Systems Administrator II. Eric is responsible for assisting Jed Wilson in the upkeep of key network components such as routers, switches, servers and wireless networks. Eric is also responsible for four student computer labs on campus, Museum 101, Main 205, Engineering 204, and the newest high-tech classroom, CBB 001. In his spare time, Eric enjoys hiking and downhill skiing.

Cal Snow is our Computer Support Specialist for Tech's Administration. He supports the Mill, Library, ACE, Veterans and Dorm labs. He enjoys spending time with his wife and my 3 sons and golfing.

TELEPHONE SERVICES

Joe Kujawa is the Director of Telecommunications. Joe has worked for Montana Tech for many, many years. He frequently works behind the scenes to make sure when you pick up the telephone, you have a crystal clear sound. In recent years, he has taken on the endeavor of moving all of our phones from the antiquated analog system to the new VOIP system. Joe also has been maintaining and expanding our outdoor emergency alert system, and radio infrastructure.

Joe Kujawa

Ask the Senate

Denise Herman (Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology) posted the following question to the Ask the Senate portal:

"I just attended the Luncheon/Learning webinar about retirement and am a bit overwhelmed and a little worried. I wondered, since the presenter discussed a course he teaches about this, if it were possible to have a week-long series of presentations for graduating seniors to really make them aware of the enormity of the task of saving for retirement. I had heard "It is easier to start saving young," but that point was really brought home by the hard numbers given in this presentation. These tools might help Tech even better prepare graduating seniors to succeed after they venture forth."

Montana Tech does want to prepare its students for their transition into "real life." The Montana Tech Alumni Association presents each graduating student a copy of "Life After Graduation: Your Guide to Success" written by Terry Arndt and Kirrin Coleman. The Guide provides easy to read suggestion on topics such as Know Your Credit Report, Get A Grip on Your Finances, Live Cheaply, Insurances, Emergency Funds, Retirement Planning Options, Staying Debt-Free, Investing, Taxes (ugh!), Repaying Your Student Loans, Identity Theft, Banking, and Goal Setting and Growth, both personal and professional.   It also has great ideas for staying connected with your fellow alumni, bosses, co-workers, and career development.

Montana Tech's commitment to the success of its students both on campus and after they graduate is evident with construction of the new Student Success Center (SSC) in the heart of campus. With completion scheduled for fall 2018, the SSC will house   student services, the Academic Center for Excellence, open and enclosed study/collaboration spaces, and computer labs.

Montana Tech's Student Success Services offers orientations to incoming freshman that prepare them for the rigors of college academics. It also provides academic and personal guidance, career goal planning, tutoring, time management and organizational training, career preparation by offering job fairs, STEM field trips, interview skill training, writing resumes, and preparing graduate school applications and assistance with scholarship applications.

On-campus and in the work world, the success of its students in life is Montana Tech's mission. Thanks for the question, Denise!

Luncheon Learning: Montana Tech Pool Re-Opens

Staff who attended the March 14 Luncheon Learning seminar toured the updated HPER complex and newly remodeled swimming pool. The HPER features a fully equipped weight room, exercise rooms, complete with big screen TVs and spectacular views of the Highland mountains. Newly installed monitors in the front lobby keeps visitors informed of upcoming HPER events and room schedules. A new lounge area provides space for special events such as the annual Science Fair and Career Fair. It is also equipped with audio-visual equipment and chairs that for its use for meetings or classroom space.

The 25-yard swimming pool opened on March 27, 2017. Renovations included a new liner, LED lighting, a new chemical treatment feed system, a security monitoring system, and disability access equipment. Pool hours will be the same as HPER hours; 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Friday; and noon to 5 p.m. on weekends. During school breaks, the HPER hours are Monday through Thursday 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. and 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Friday.

Faculty, students, and staff may access and use all HPER facilities by presenting their Digger Card. The HPER fee for student, faculty, and staff spouses or dependent is $75/semester. Non-Tech community members may purchase a pass for $160/semester. A punch card (with 10 uses) are available for $50. Hours of operation, room schedules and a fee schedule are available at: http://godiggers.com/documents/2017/2/27/Spring_2017.pdf

Availability of the HPER complex is a tremendous benefit for Montana Tech students, faculty and staff. Hope to see you all taking advantage of it!

For more information, please contact Jake Hogart, Assistant HPER Director/Pool and Recreation Manager at 406-496-4744 or JHogart@mtech.edu

Our thanks to Chancellor Blackketter for providing lunch for the tour and to Carmen Nelson for scheduling it.

Luncheon Learning Seminar: Deferred Compensation Benefit

On February 14, Jenny Weigand (Education Supervisor, Montana Public Employee Retirement Administration) presented information on the MUS Deferred Compensation Plan. The benefit, offered to all State of Montana employees, is a proactive way for you to save for retirement. The plan allows you to voluntarily contribute a portion of your compensation as traditional pre-tax and/or Roth after-tax contributions and invest them on a tax-deferred basis. That means that the amount you invest, plus any accrued interest investment, it not taxed until withdrawn at a future date.

You control the amount deferred. The minimum deferral amount is $10 per month (the cost of about 2 large lattes). You may defer up to $18,000 annually. You may enroll in the plan at any time. The plan offers both fixed and variable interest rate investment options. The best tip: start saving early!

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"You need more time to prepare for retirement. Sign this to legally change your age to 25."

Plan advantages include:
- You pay no income taxes on any contributions or earnings until you withdraw the money
- Enrollment is easy
- It's an easy way to save for retirement – through an automatic payroll deduction
- The plan's website offers educational tools on its website to help you learn and plan for retirement, including investment fundamentals, mutual funds, asset allocation, and risk tolerance
- The plan offers advisors that can assist you in structuring a retirement plan based on your current financial situation and future retirement goals

There are fees charged to you to pay for plan administration costs. They are very competitive and based on your account balance.

To learn more about our Deferred Compensation Benefit, go to http://mpera.mt.gov/457bdefComp.shtml

The Staff Senate would like to thank Jenny for a helpful and informative presentation.

REMINDERS

Pat on the Back recognizes individual staff members and/or teams who have performed beyond expectation, making exceptional efforts toward achieving the mission of Montana Tech.

Submit here: https://www.mtech.edu/app/staff_senate/Nominate.aspx

Ask the Senate As an advisory group to the Chancellor, the Staff Senate recommends policies or changes to policies for consideration by the Chancellor and facilitates effective communication between Montana Tech administration and staff. Please use this forum as a neutral conduit to share your ideas, concerns, and ask questions about Montana Tech issues. The Staff Senate will forward each submission to the appropriate department for response and share the information on the Staff Senate webpage. We hope to hear from you!

Submit here: https://www.mtech.edu/app/staff_senate/AskSenate.aspx

Next Luncheon Learning Series:
Tuesday, April 25th at noon in the Kelley-Steward Room (SUB)
Graphic Design Tips and Ideas with Lisa Sullivan