

THE UNIVERSITY of MONTANA WESTERN

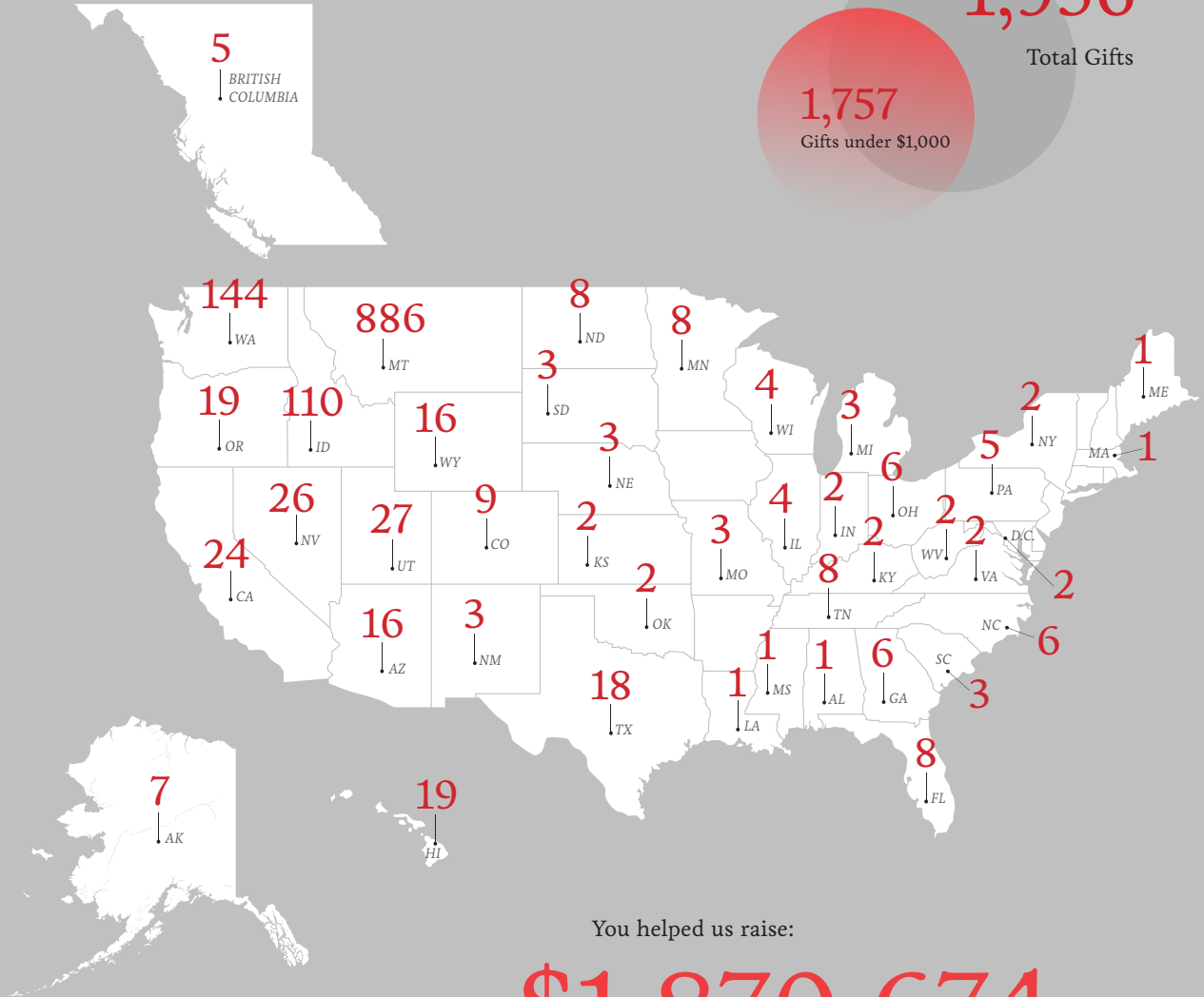
Foundation

GRATITUDE REPORT

2023-24



SPiRiT OF GiViNG NatiOnwide

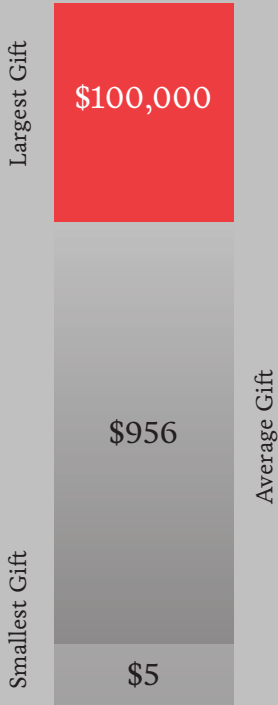


You helped us raise:

\$1,870,674

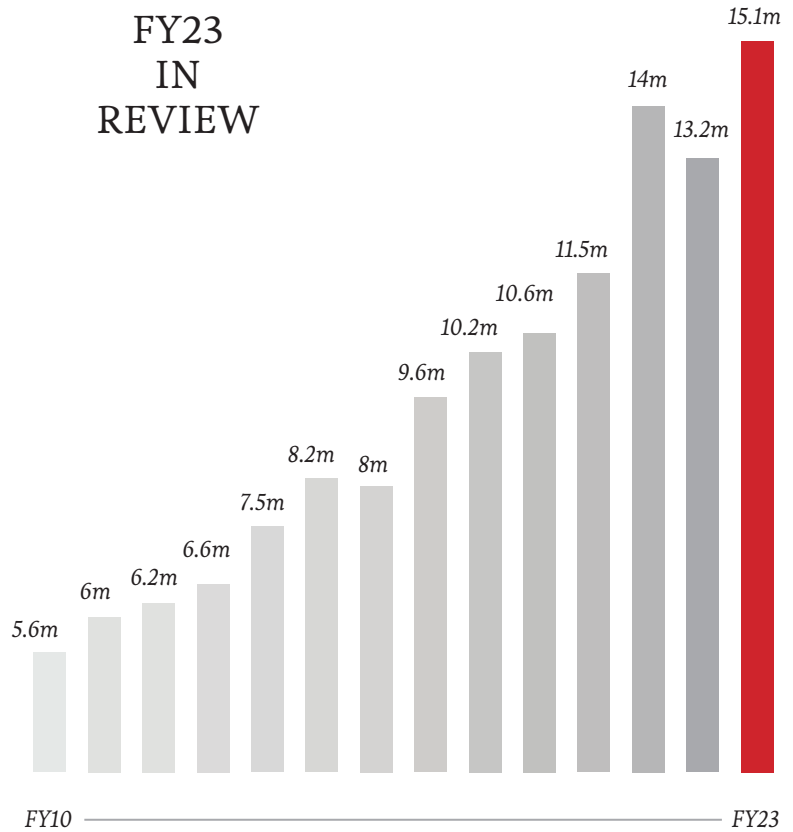
48%

Alumni
Participation
Rate



Amazing Growth

FY23
IN
REVIEW



FY23 year-end
value of endowment

\$15,130,633

LEAVING A LEGACY

Elena Sliepceвич
(July 29, 1919 – March 3, 2008)

Her generous gift, chosen to commemorate her joyful years as both a student and faculty member at Montana Western, will have a lasting impact on our alumni and the Carson Library.



Elena Sliepceвич (July 29, 1919 – March 3, 2008) was a remarkable individual with deep roots in Anaconda, MT. She had a significant impact on education both locally and nationally. She started her educational journey at Montana State Normal College, now the University of Montana Western, where, at a young age of 17, became the youngest person in Montana to earn an elementary teaching certificate in 1936. Later, in 1939, she completed her bachelor's degree in education at the University of Idaho, followed by a master's degree from the University of Michigan in 1949. Elena achieved a groundbreaking milestone in 1955 when she became the first woman to receive a Doctor of Physical Education from Springfield College in Massachusetts.

Dr. Sliepceвич's connection with Montana State Normal College continued as she returned to campus to serve as Assistant Dean of Women and Director and Assistant Professor of Health and Physical Education from 1946-1948. Her dedication and exceptional abilities as both a student and faculty member reflected her passion for education and her commitment to her professional career.

The University of Montana Western is deeply honored to be remembered by Elena Sliepceвич in her will. Her generous gift, chosen to commemorate her joyful years as both a student and faculty member at Montana Western, will have a lasting impact on our alumni and the Carson Library. In collaboration, the two departments devised an innovative way to honor her memory and her wishes, as well as acknowledge her significant contributions to Montana Western.

The decision was made to allocate the funds towards digitizing the library's extensive print archive detailing history and evolution of the UMW campus. Previously, these records could only be accessed physically on campus, within limited hours under various restrictions. By making these collections available for free on the internet, 24 hours a day, from the comfort of one's home, we aim to benefit both the beneficiaries of her generosity.

The digitization includes a wealth of items from the campus archive, providing valuable resources for alumni and anyone interested in the historic development of the Montana Western campus and southwest Montana. Moreover, this initiative allows students, faculty, and staff to delve into the rich heritage of our institution. Dr. Sliepceвич's legacy will forever be a source of knowledge, connecting the Montana Western community with its vibrant past



BULLDOG SPIRIT OF GIVING

“It’s important to me to provide similar opportunities to promising students who follow the same path I once did towards Montana Western. This is also what drives me to contribute to the annual scholarship campaign”

Dr. Janelle Handlos’s journey began in Washington, but a fateful move to Montana during her senior year of high school introduced her to a life-changing opportunity.

While in Missoula, Janelle had the privilege of having Mr. Jim Lodge, a Dillon native and Western Montana College alumnus, as her guidance counselor. Mr. Lodge saw something special in Janelle and suggested that Western Montana College (now UMW), could be the perfect place for her to pursue her goals of becoming a teacher and coach. Janelle was skeptical at first, having never heard of WMC or Dillon, but Mr. Lodge’s unwavering conviction in her abilities led him to submit a recommendation to the Scholarship Committee on her behalf.

Upon her first visit to campus, Janelle instantly felt at home and knew that Western was the perfect fit for her. “Thanks to the generosity of scholarship donors, including John and Phyllis Erb, I was able to finance my entire undergraduate education at Western,” says Dr. Handlos.

Scholarships not only eased the financial burden but also allowed Janelle to explore a range of academic fields at Western. Her educational journey eventually led her to a graduate teaching position at Montana State University, where she successfully completed her master’s degree followed by receiving a Doctor of Education Degree in Educational Leadership from the University of Montana. Her academic achievements coincided with the opportunity to apply for a teaching and athletic training position back at Montana Western. Dr. Handlos is currently an associate professor in the Health and Human Performance Department.

Janelle’s education, family, and career have all been positively influenced by the generosity of those who contribute to the Montana Western Foundation. Now, as a member of the Scholarship Committee, Janelle has the privilege of witnessing firsthand the transformative effect of scholarships on countless students. “It’s important to me to provide similar opportunities to promising students who follow the same path I once did towards Montana Western. This is also what drives me to contribute to the annual scholarship campaign,” says Dr. Handlos.



SARAH DETLAFF
*Elementary Education,
PE and Kinesiology
Class of '24*

Your unwavering commitment to investing in students' education has had a profound impact on my life and the lives of countless others. Thanks to scholarship support, I will be able to pursue my teaching career debt free.

The influence of many great teachers and the unique education I received in my rural school inspired me to pursue a career in education. I'd like the opportunity to work in a rural Montana

school where I can give back and make a meaningful impact. My passion for the outdoors and health and fitness, makes Montana a great fit for me!

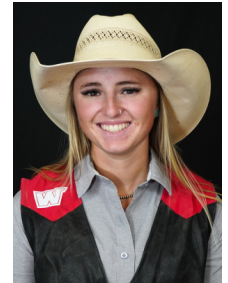
Receiving scholarships offered me the financial stability I needed to enroll in school another year so I could add two additional majors to my course of study. The additional majors of physical education and kinesiology have equipped me with the knowledge and skills needed to make a positive impact on students' lives by encouraging them to create healthy habits at an early age.

During my time at Montana Western, I was also involved in the work study program where I worked in Conference and Events. This opportunity also helped relieve the financial burden of educational expenses and enabled me to give back to the campus and community. Through the work study program, I built lifelong relationships and learned valuable skills that will serve me well in my future endeavors.

I knew that Montana Western was the place where I wanted to pursue my dreams. I am deeply thankful for the academic opportunities that I have been given because of scholarship support through the Montana Western Foundation.

In reflecting on her college journey, Malli O'Neal is profoundly grateful for the transformative impact of scholarship support on her education. Her dream of becoming an elementary teacher was inspired by her grandmother, who devoted her life to educating children on the Crow Indian Reservation. Growing up in Burns, Wyoming, Malli faced financial challenges that made pursuing higher education seem out of reach. However, the unwavering support of scholarships and the Foundation changed the course of her life.

After graduating from Burns High School, Malli took her first steps towards her dream at Laramie County Community College, where she earned an associate's degree in elementary education. The prospect of continuing her education at the University of Montana Western seemed impossible due to the daunting expense of out-of-state tuition. However, scholarships, including the Wayne W. Smith Elementary Education Scholarship provided her with the opportunity she never thought she'd have.



MALLI O'NEAL
*Elementary Education
Class of '24*

The impact of scholarships in Malli's life goes beyond academics, they have been the gateway to pursuing her dreams of competing in college rodeo.

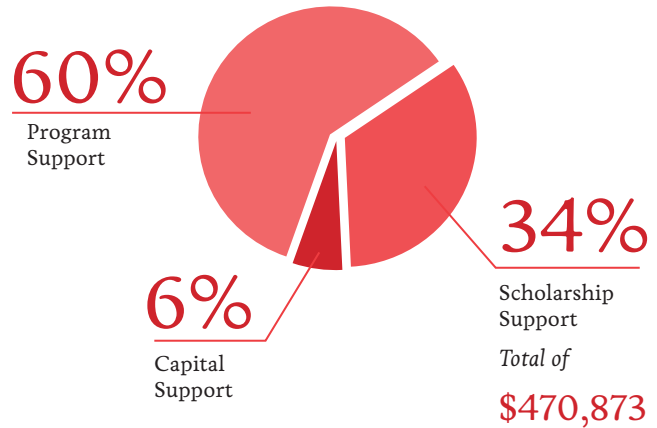
The financial assistance not only eased the burden of educational expenses but also allowed her to dedicate herself to the Montana Western rodeo team.

As Malli looks towards graduation, she is set on staying in Montana, where she intends to embark on a fulfilling career as an educator. "None of this would have been possible without the essential support of scholarships. They have not only made my dreams achievable but inspired me to make a positive difference in students' lives." she said.

BUILDING A FUTURE

We celebrate you and your generosity. When you give to UMW, you are supporting the achievements of a student who is the first in their family to attend college, an ambitious teacher ready to make their mark on the work, a non-traditional student who is returning to school, a motivated and determined student-athlete and so many others who find their home at Montana Western.

You are a vital part of the Bulldog family and we're grateful for you!



\$1,352,768

Foundation funds directed to UMW

YOUR FUNDS AT WORK



Supported pre-service educators in their quest to become the next innovative and inspiring teacher.



Funded critical research around Chronic Wasting Disease.



Provided vital scholarship support that allowed our student to flourish in the classroom and beyond.



Provided essential items for the UMW Food Pantry.



Helped purchase a ground penetrating radar that will advance research in multiple areas across campus.



Allowed Bulldog student-athletes to excel in the classroom while successfully competing at a high level.

LEGACY OF NO. 18

Western Bulldog and Dillon Beaver football player MJ Simkins, whose life was tragically cut short before his senior year, wore the number 18 with pride. MJ wore the no. 18 for three seasons (2014- 2016). In 2022 the number 18 became a legacy number for the Bulldog Football team. Kameron Rauser proudly wears the no. 18 jersey this season. The number 18 will continue to remind the team, community, and recipient to never forget the value of making a difference in the world around us and leaving it better than you found it.

Named for the no. 18 jersey in honor of MJ, Engine 18 began as a tailgating fire engine built in 2017 by a group of Montana Western alumni and sports fans. Engine 18 provides athletic scholarships to students with financial need and exemplary work ethic both in the classroom and on the field.



KAMERON RAUSER

Environmental
Sustainability
Class of '24

Growing up in Townsend, MT, Kameron Rauser developed a deep passion for sports and the great outdoors. In high school, Kameron was a three-sport athlete, competing in football, wrestling and track and field. When it came time for

Kameron to choose a college, Montana Western stood out to him not just for its exceptional football program but also for its outstanding environmental science department and unique Experience One program. The promise of small classes, personal interactions with professors and the chance to learn outdoors resonated deeply.

Scholarship support eased Kameron's financial burdens allowing him to pursue his degree in Environmental Sustainability, play football for the Bulldogs and become only the second person in his family to graduate college.

"Receiving the Engine 18 Scholarship for the Fall 2023 semester is a profound honor, and I cannot express how deeply touched and humbled I am by the generosity," said Kameron. As his final semester comes to an end, Kameron is filled with gratitude for the opportunities he's been given at Montana Western. The impact of scholarship support reaches far beyond the classroom or the football field, it paves the way for his dream job of becoming a game warden, a goal that Montana Western has equipped him to pursue with confidence.

93%

Rate of course completion
for first-time freshmen

MONTANA'S MOST AFFORDABLE COLLEGE

UniversityHQ.org

HIDDEN GEM



in the
Rocky Mountains

Collegeraptor.com

Ranked number

THREE

in top public schools in
the Western region

U.S. News & World Report

14

Average class size



A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



On behalf of the entire Montana Western community, I want to thank you for helping to build a future for our students, campus, community and beyond. Together, with your investment, we have made a difference in the lives of our students and we are supporting and inspiring tomorrow's leaders.

The Foundation exists to enhance the University's ability to achieve its mission. The Foundation Board of Directors supports the strategic goals set forth by the University and our goal with this report is to demonstrate how your gifts have made an impact.

I hope you have found examples of impact within these pages that resonate with you and affirm your decision to give to the University of Montana Western. Our success is your success, and on behalf of the entire university community, thank you. Go Dawgs!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Roxanne G. Engellant".

Roxanne G. Engellant, Executive Director

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Board Chair, CLASS OF 2003



Paul Tash
Board Vice-Chair



Glen Leavitt
Secretary/Treasurer



Tom Tucker



Jane Haker
CLASS OF 1973



Judy Siring



Kevin Peterson



Collin Erb



Ben Snipes
CLASS OF 2005



Deb Creger



Todd Morstein
CLASS OF 1992



Ron Fick



Fred Snook
CLASS OF 1968



Charlene Loge



Ted Ori
CLASS OF 1980



Taylor Nahrgang
CLASS OF 2010

THE UNIVERSITY *of* MONTANA WESTERN

Foundation

710 S. ATLANTIC ST. | DILLON, MONT. 59725



The Montana Western Foundation publishes its annual Gratitude Report each fall for the previous fiscal year ending June 30. The Gratitude Report is designed to provide a glimpse into the impact that our alumni and friends had on our students, programs and campus. It also contains a financial summary of gifts raised, a snapshot of net assets and powerful stories describing the impact of our donors.