



**MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY  
NORTHERN**

## Northern Network News

The Official Newsletter of MSU-Northern - February 28, 2025

### MSU-Northern Hosts 2nd Annual Casino Night



MSU-Northern hosted its 2nd Annual Casino Night on Wednesday (Feb. 26), following the success of last year's inaugural event. Students gathered in the SUB to try their luck at various casino games, including Texas Hold 'em, Roulette, Blackjack, and Poker, competing for over \$5,000 in prizes. Adding to the excitement, live music from Velvet Skyline filled the Lights Lounge from 8-10 p.m. The event featured a Vegas-themed mocktail bar and snacks, creating an authentic casino atmosphere.

## Leadership Montana Visits MSU-Northern



Leadership Montana's Flagship Class visited Havre from February 26–28, bringing 46 leaders from across the state to explore the community. On February 27, a community panel discussion took place from 2 to 3:30 p.m., followed by a tour of MSU-Northern's Diesel Technology Center led by Provost Dr. Jennifer Brown.

The Flagship Class meets monthly in different communities, and this marked their return to Havre after two years. Local Leadership Montana alumni—Jim Bennett, Christen Obresley, Adam Derby, Jennifer Dees, Sue Brurud, Treacy Jette, and Debbie Vandenberg-Henry—helped plan activities to showcase the area.

Leadership Montana fosters collaboration and leadership development through education and networking. Its alumni network includes influential professionals dedicated to shaping Montana's future.

---

## MSU-Northern Professor Presents at Annual Teaching Economics Conference



Dr. Barbara Zuck, Professor of Business, presented her Integrating Economics and Marketing Concepts pedagogy in February at the Robert Morris University's 36<sup>th</sup> Annual Teaching Economics Conference. Zuck was one of 11 faculty who presented. Over 100 educators, researchers, and service providers from multiple universities attended the conference.

Zuck says, "As a fourth-year presenter at the conference, I feel it is important to attend conference events as educators to expand horizons and reaffirm current teaching practices. It was invigorating to learn more about economics, and think about new ways to integrate economics and business concepts into my teaching pedagogy."

---

## Jaden Koon Honored as Senior Student-Athlete



MSU-Northern recognized Jaden Koon last Thursday, Feb. 20, for completing his athletic career as a member of the Lights Cross Country and Distance Track teams. A four-year competitor, Jaden earned numerous academic honors, including being on the Dean's list all four years, NAIA Daktronics Scholar-Athlete and Frontier Conference Academic All-Conference awards. He also received the NAIA Champion of Character award multiple times.

Jaden, who will graduate in Spring 2025 with a degree in Automotive Technology (3.66 GPA), has accepted a job with Toyota in Texas after completing two summer internships with the company. He and his wife, Grace, will relocate after graduation.

This season, Jaden set personal records in multiple events and helped the Lights place fourth at the 2024 Frontier Conference Cross Country meet.

---

## MSU-Northern Celebrates National TRIO Day



MSU-Northern TRIO programs recognized the 39th Annual National TRIO Day on Monday, February 24, with cupcakes and coffee. While the official day fell on February 22, the celebration was moved to accommodate students. Funded through a national TRIO grant, Student Support Services (SSS) and Veteran's Upward Bound (VUB) highlight the importance of educational opportunities for low-income, first-generation students.

TRIO programs offer academic support, mentoring, financial guidance, and other resources to help students succeed in higher education. Each year, nearly a million low-

income and veteran students receive college access and retention services through TRIO-supported institutions

---

## Skylights Basketball Seniors Honored



On Saturday, Feb. 22, MSU-Northern honored its senior Skylights basketball players for their contributions on and off the court. This outstanding group has excelled athletically, academically, and in the community, earning numerous awards. Collectively, they boast a 3.69 GPA, five Academic All-American honors, a Montana Campus Compact Athletes in Service Award, and 11 Academic All-Conference selections.. Pictured above (L to R) Katelynn Forner, McKenzie Long, Shyan Krass, Savannah Toms, Maci Molinario, and Emma Wass.

[Read more...](#)

## Lights Basketball Seniors Honored



On Saturday, Feb. 22, MSU-Northern celebrated six senior Lights basketball players, recognizing their dedication and impact both on and off the court. These exceptional athletes have distinguished themselves through their performance in the game, academic achievements, and community involvement, earning numerous accolades along the way. Pictured about (L to R) Jack Reardon, Onwaja Thomas, Jacob Randall, Anthony Mendez, Owen Smith, and Xavier Bailey.

[Read more...](#)

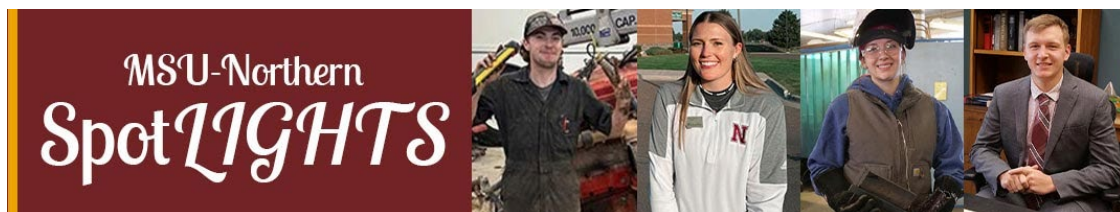


## Black History Month Film Series Concluded

This past Tuesday (Feb. 25) the library showed the fourth and final film in their Black History Month Film Series. The film was called *The Black Emperor of Broadway* (2020) and is a historical drama based on the true story of Charles S. Gilpin. The first Black actor to play the lead role in Eugene O'Neill's *The Emperor Jones* on Broadway in 1920. The film follows Gilpin's rise to fame, his struggle against racial

barriers in the theater industry, and his conflict with O'Neill over the use of racial slurs in the play. Despite his groundbreaking success, Gilpin's career is ultimately overshadowed by personal struggles and Hollywood's racial prejudices. The film highlights his significant but often overlooked contribution to American theater.

## New Webpage Showcases Northern Spotlights



MSU-Northern has launched a new webpage celebrating the achievements of our students, alumni, faculty, and staff. Many stories featured were first shared in the NNN.

Northern SpotLIGHTS highlights inspiring journeys and contributions from our university community.

Have a story to share? Contact [marketing@msun.edu](mailto:marketing@msun.edu)

[Click here to explore these stories...](#)

## Alumni Spotlight: Rick Shammel



Rick Shammel, originally from Sheridan, Montana, spent five years in the Navy, working as a jet mechanic. He honed his technical skills in a fast-paced environment, turning wrenches on some of the most advanced machines in the world. But when his military service ended, he found himself at a crossroads. He knew he wanted to continue working with his hands, but he also wanted to transition into a new industry. That's when he discovered MSU-Northern's Diesel Technology program.

Using the GI Bill, Rick enrolled at MSU-Northern, eager to build on his mechanical

background in a way that applied to civilian life. Despite his prior experience, he quickly realized that working on construction equipment was a different challenge altogether. "Turning wrenches is turning wrenches," he said, "but it's quite different."

The hands-on learning environment at Northern gave Rick the skills and confidence he needed to make the transition. He credits the program with providing him a strong foundation—teaching him not just about diesel engines, but also how to navigate and troubleshoot heavy equipment. What set his education apart was the opportunity to apply his knowledge through an internship while still in school. That experience, he says, helped him "cut his teeth" in the industry, allowing him to enter the workforce with real-world skills and connections.

After graduating in 2015 with a degree in Diesel Mechanics, Rick landed a job as a shop mechanic at RDO, working on construction equipment. His education gave him the technical expertise to diagnose and repair complex machinery, but more importantly, it taught him how to adapt, learn, and grow in his profession. "Be open to learning," he advises future students. "Don't act like you know it all—just be a sponge. Learn from everyone you can and use your resources."

Rick's journey from Navy jets to diesel engines is a testament to the power of education, adaptability, and hands-on experience. MSU-Northern not only helped him transition into a new career but also equipped him with the skills and mindset to thrive in it.

# STRONGER TOGETHER

Enhancing Health & Wellbeing at Northern



By Dr. Tiffany Vickers

## Join Our Wake-Up Walk!

Winter may be in full swing, but that doesn't mean we have to let the cold keep us from staying active and connected! There's always something happening on campus, and we want our Northern community to come together, celebrate each other's strengths and talents, and keep our minds and bodies engaged. Did you know that 12 laps in Hager Science Center equal one mile? If you're looking for a way to stay active without braving the cold, you can get your steps in right here on campus. We've got you covered!

We're excited to introduce Wake-Up Walk, a new walking program to help you start your mornings off right. Beginning next Tuesday (March 4), join us in the Hager Science Center every Tuesday and Thursday from 7:00–8:00 AM. All two-legged members of the Northern community are welcome! Stay warm, stay active, and let's keep moving, connecting, and making Northern the best place to learn, grow, and belong.

Not into walking? No problem! The Vande Bogart Library offers stationary bikes and a comfort room designed for nursing mothers or anyone in need of a peaceful space.

Let's make movement a part of our routine—see you there!



## Introducing Tabitha Van Dalen

This week, I want to highlight someone who has been making campus life a little brighter—Tabitha Van Dalen, a welding student with an incredible eye for detail, a fun spirit, and a heart for helping others.

As the social media manager for the College of Health Sciences (COHS), Tabitha has done an outstanding job showcasing the faces of COHS and capturing how we engage across campus. But her impact goes far beyond social media.

Tabitha is the kind of person who lifts others up. Her journey is one of true dedication—she



balances her studies with a job at Gary & Leo's, working hard to put herself through school, all while commuting from outside Havre to pursue her goals.

She embodies the resilience and drive that define Northern students—pushing forward despite challenges, finding ways to give back, and making a lasting impact on our campus and community. Tabitha, you make Northern proud!

---

## ANNOUNCEMENTS:

---

### **Last Day for Student Excellence Awards Nominations**

Each year, Northern recognizes students who exemplify excellence. This year, we will be presenting awards to students as part of the Awards Day celebration, scheduled for April 11th. Nominations will be accepted until 5pm today. To nominate a student and review criteria, please use this link:

[CLICK HERE](#)

---

## UPCOMING EVENTS

---



### **American Indian Historical Trauma – Feb. 28**

Join Us today at 4 PM in the Little River Institute for a lecture by Dr. Joseph Gone, Harvard professor and Faculty Director of the Harvard University Native American Program. Dr Gone will present in the Sweetgrass Commons.

His talk will examine the concept of “historical trauma” and its role in explaining the disproportionately high rates of mental health distress among Indigenous Americans. He will explore how colonization’s legacy affects tribal

communities today and consider alternative perspectives on the link between historical oppression and contemporary mental health challenges.

---



## Women's History Month Documentary Series – Mar. 4

**Date/time/location:** Mar. 4, 11, 18, and 25,  
3PM in the Vande Bogart Library near the  
main-level Northern Brew coffee shop  
Description:

Throughout March the MSU-Northern Vande  
Bogart Library is celebrating Women's History  
with a documentary film series. Attend film  
screenings on Tuesday each week at 3PM  
near the Northern Brew coffee shop on the

library's main level. Drop by and stay as little or as long as you like! To watch  
on your own, all films can be found on Kanopy through the library's A-Z  
databases.

- Mar. 4 - *Women's Power in Global Perspective*
- Mar. 11 - *This Changes Everything*
- Mar. 18 - *Women Composers*
- Mar. 25 - *Electric Kingdom*

---

## Blood Drive – Mar. 5

Give blood and save a life. There are still open appointment times available for  
the upcoming blood drive, and here are three easy ways you can help us meet  
our goal on Wednesday, March 5, 2025 from 10:00 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

1. Schedule your appointment at [RedCrossBlood.org](https://RedCrossBlood.org) using sponsor code  
msu northern or download the Blood Donor App.
2. Invite your spouse or significant other. Share the love as you share the  
lifesaving gift of blood together.
3. Invite a friend to our drive. Donating blood is always more fun with a  
friend, so bring one along!

Each donation can help save up to three lives, so please consider donating to  
help us meet our goal.

If you have any questions, please contact Wanda at: 406-265-3599 or  
[wandameredith@msun.edu](mailto:wandameredith@msun.edu). We'd love to see you there!

---

## OTLE Brown Bag Lecture Series – Mar. 4, Apr. 2, 23

Back by popular demand, The Office of Teaching and Learning Excellence is  
pleased to present their 4<sup>th</sup> annual Spring Brown Bag Lecture Series Lineup.

## **Teaching and Learning at the AI Crossroads - Tuesday, March 4<sup>th</sup>**

This Brownbag Lecture will be taught by the Teaching Scholars Group which consists of Dr. Gwen Hart, Kristi Peterson, Dr. Praveen Dubey, Dr. Chad Spangler, Kenny Wait, Mary Ward, Erin Markus, and Dr. Mattius Rischard.

## ***Qach Rresh: A Neo-Assyrian (950-600 BCE) Site Full of Post-Assyrian (600-323 BCE) Trash on the Erbil Plain - Wednesday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>***

Don't miss this Brownbag Lecture where Dr. Kyra Kaercher will be sharing some of the findings from Qach Rresh, a rural site founded in the late Neo-Assyrian period, located just 15km south of modern-day Erbil (Iraqi Kurdistan) as well as exciting new ceramic research.

## **Idle Assets to Active Learning: Revitalizing Campus Resources for Student Engagement - Wednesday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>**

In this Brownbag Lecture, Aaron Riggan will share some of the ways he has retrofitted, updated and revitalized campus equipment to expand and enhance student learning and engagement.

---

## **Science Saturday Series**

The "Science Saturday" series provides teachers of grades 5-12 with tools to grow STEM opportunities in classrooms across the Hi Line. Participants can earn 5 hours of Professional Development Units each Saturday. This series is offered at no cost to participants.

**Science Saturday I: Fluid Mechanics** - March 8, 2025: 10am - 4pm

**Science Saturday II: Astronomy** – April 4, 8:30pm 10pm, April 5, 9am 12:30pm,

**Science Saturday III: Medicinal Plants of Montana** May 3, 2025: 10am 4pm

[Click Here for more information...](#)



## London Study Abroad Program English High Tea Fundraiser - Mar 9

Join MSU-Northern's London Study Abroad students on March 9 at 2:00 p.m. in Donaldson Commons for a delightful English High Tea in gratitude for your support! Your donation grants you entry to this elegant afternoon featuring:

- A selection of fine English teas
- Cucumber sandwiches, scones with clotted cream & jam
- Live piano performance by Michael Stevenson

### **Sponsorship Levels**

#### **Thames River Sponsor: \$25**

English tea. Scones, Sandwiches, sweet treats, with Michael Stevenson playing the piano for a nice relaxing afternoon.

#### **Big Ben Sponsor: \$50**

Everything above + a postcard from England from one of our students.

#### **Tower Sponsor: \$100**

Everything above + a video message from students on an excursion in England.

#### **Crown Sponsor: \$500 Corporate Sponsorship**

Everything above + a group photo with your company logo in front of an English monument.

Every donation helps make this journey possible—thank you for your support!

[Click here to register...](#)

---

## NEXT WEEK

---

### **Saturday, March 1**

- Spring Deferred Payment Schedule: 50% Due

### **Sunday, March 2**

- Skylights Basketball @ Frontier Conf. Postseason Tourney - 1:00 PM
- Lights Basketball @ Frontier Conf. Postseason Tourney - 7:00 PM

## Tuesday, March 4

- Brown Bag Lecture: Teaching and Learning at the AI Crossroads - 1:30 PM - 2:30 PM

## Wednesday, March 5

- Red Cross Blood Draw - 10:00 AM - 3:30 PM
- Board Game Night at the Library - 6:00 PM - 8:30 PM

## Thursday, March 6

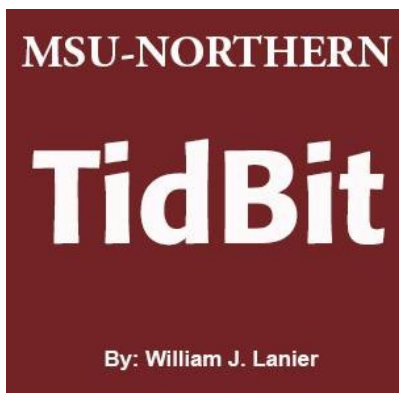
- Lights Wrestling @ NAIA National Championships
- Midterm grades due to Registrar's Office

## Friday, March 7

- Lights Wrestling @ NAIA National Championships

## Saturday, March 8

- Lights Wrestling @ NAIA National Championships



## (#430) Northern Alumni – Ted Hill

Northern Alumni, Ted Hill lead the Laurel Locomotives to their second consecutive Montana State Class A state championship. This is Coach Hill's third state championship with the Laurel Locomotives. Last Fall, Ted Hill was inducted in to the Northern Athletic Hall of Fame. Here is a link to Ted's bio that is on the Northern

Hall of Fame web page: [Ted Hill \(2024\) - Hall of Fame](#) Ted is married to Northern Alumni, Cheryl Ingle Hill.



*Please let me know how other Northern Alumni Wrestling coaches fared this year around the country.*

If you have an idea for a future NNN TidBit, please contact me at [wjlanier1963@yahoo.com](mailto:wjlanier1963@yahoo.com)

Visit our website

Montana State University-Northern | 406-265-3700 | [www.msun.edu](http://www.msun.edu)

STAY CONNECTED



MSU-Northern | 300 13th Street West | Havre, MT 59501 US