



Campus Compact

Montana

Nine Montana college students have been named as 2021 Newman Civic Fellows. They will participate as part of a 212 student national cohort of Newman Civic Fellows. The 2021 cohort comprises students from 39 states, Washington, D.C., and Mexico. The fellowship honors the late Frank Newman, one of Campus Compact's founders, who was a tireless advocate for civic engagement in higher education. Following are the Montana Fellows announced for 2021:

CHARLENE ALLMER | Montana State University Billings
Criminal Justice with a Psychology Minor: Class of 2021

Charlene Allmer has served in various roles on our campus. Charlene has a passion and dedication to MSUB. She loves planning and organizing programs and events for the benefit of her fellow students, something she would like to continue doing even after her time as a student. Charlene has expressed a strong desire to spend her life fighting to end human trafficking, and this is one of the main reasons she has pursued a degree in criminal justice. She has educated herself quite extensively on the issue, and she worked collaboratively with the Residence Hall Association and Diversity Center to plan an event educating the community about human trafficking. This passion to fight for those who have no voice makes her an excellent candidate. Charlene is full of positivity and has a commitment to excellence in all that she does. She has a strong work ethic, which is indicative of a passion for serving others that she will carry throughout her life. Charlene, who has worked tirelessly in the service of others, is incredibly deserving of this award. Charlene will graduate in the fall but is looking to extend her time at MSUB and attend graduate school in the spring. -- *Stefani Hicswa, Chancellor, Montana State University Billings*

PERSONAL STATEMENT

From a young age I knew what it was like to be on the low end of the totem-poll. I grew up in ragged apartments with my parents and siblings in a very poor neighborhood in the ghetto of Houston. As I got older and moved around there was more opportunities for me to be active in my beliefs, wants and dreams, with the push of my parents. Soon I was going to a high school on a reservation in Montana and became parts of various organizations to help me advance in creating change. One organization was the Montana State Student Advisory Board under Denise Juneau. I've always wanted to understand the truth and complexity behind serving for the better justices. I changed colleges and became a Criminal Justice major with a psych minor, and have taken on different roles under marketing, health, and mentorship to help influence those people around me to always fight for what you believe in.

JESSICA BRITO | Montana State University

Psychology: Class of 2022

Jessica is a passionate student leader and has been involved in many campus and community groups. Jess is incredibly committed to MSU and the Bozeman community, as well as dedicated to developing their skills and helping others in their future endeavors. On the MSU campus, Jessica is the Vice President and Program Developer of the Black Student Union. They spent their summer working with the Montana Racial Equity Project and Bozeman United Racial Justice to organize the Bozeman's Black Lives Matter marches. They also organize and participate in all of BSU's events throughout the year and track all financial activities. Jessica has worked with several faculty to create a new introductory course for the development of an Africana Studies Program at MSU. Jessica also co-founded Crescent Montana, a nonprofit focused on providing free menstrual products and reproductive health education to rural and tribal Montana schools in an effort to reduce health disparities and stigma. Crescent is currently partnering with at least 4 local middle and high schools to provide students with free menstrual hygiene products. Jessica works within the organization to raise awareness and collect donations.

-- *Dr. Waded Cruzado, President, Montana State University*

PERSONAL STATEMENT

As a queer, black, Jewish woman I have experienced and witnessed my fair share of discrimination and oppression and have learned how important it is to address such issues of inequality. During my time at MSU I have worked hard to address social justice through public service in multiple avenues. I am a leader in the Black Student Union at MSU where I work to improve the lives and resources of black students and have done so through helping to develop the Africana Studies Program and the BIPOC Action Plan. I am also a leader in Crescent Montana, a 501(c)(3) non-profit that focuses on providing free menstrual hygiene products to schools across Montana. I also participate in other student organizations such as the Queer Straight Alliance and strive to enhance diversity efforts on campus. I hope to continue advocating for equality and equity and bringing awareness to systemic issues like classism, racism, sexism, anti-Semitism, and homophobia in my daily life, professional life, and beyond.

MARA HANKS | Flathead Valley Community College

Elementary Education: Class of 2023

Mara Hanks, a sophomore at Flathead Valley Community College, is an advocate for social equity for marginalized youth. For the last five years, she has worked closely with Sparrow's Nest of Northwest Montana to create a home funded and staffed by local community members for unaccompanied high school students experiencing homelessness. Additionally, she has worked with the Center for Restorative Youth Justice to provide restorative justice for youth in the community and empower youth to recognize the impacts of their decisions and actions on their community. Mara is an exceptionally charismatic leader who works hard to provide a welcoming and inclusive campus at FVCC, where she is a vital part of the TRIO program, AmeriCorps, the Native American Student Association, Phi Theta Kappa, and Student Government, and serves as a Resident Assistant at Founders Hall. She excels at connecting people with the resources they need to achieve greater independence and success. -- *Jane Karas, President, Flathead Valley Community College*

PERSONAL STATEMENT

I have been fortunate to have had many opportunities to be active in community organizations that are making a true difference for marginalized youth. When Sparrow's Nest opened for unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness, I had the privilege of working directly with them and learning about the importance of encouraging youth to use their voices. Our students had been discounted in many areas of their life because they weren't adults, but often had adult responsibilities. Later, while working at the Center for Restorative Youth Justice, I learned more about our legal system and how restorative justice works very well with youth who have

harmed the community in some way. Empowering people to fix their mistakes works wonders and creates stronger, more resilient youth who recognize the impact of their decisions and actions on their communities. As a student at FVCC, I have been active with TRIO, AmeriCorps, the Native American Club and as an RA in student housing. These opportunities have helped me learn to connect students to the resources available to them. Additionally, I have developed an appreciation of the importance of offering a welcoming campus environment that celebrates diversity and respects culture.

MIA MCKINNEY | University of Montana

Sociology/Inequality and Social Justice and Women's Gender and Sexuality Studies and Minor in Nonprofit

Administration: Class of 2022

Mia Mckinney, a junior at the University of Montana, is an exceptional student having achieved many high-ranking awards throughout her college career thus far. Mia is equally dedicated to her work in the community advocating for social change, guided by a firm belief in education as way of addressing and deconstructing workplace inequality. She volunteers her time facilitating the YWCA GUTS! program fostering an environment in which young girls are encouraged to explore and discover their individual strengths. Mia also works with women students and faculty at SEA Change, a program at the University of Montana promoting a safe, empowering, and career accelerating learning environment for women. Mia interned at the UM Women's Resource Center and created a podcast dedicated to exploring women's perspectives on social issues. During this time as an intern, she also spent a significant amount of time registering Montana residents to vote. Mia's academic record, invested work as a volunteer on campus and in the community, and her complete dedication and leadership in her academic field, exemplify the outstanding student and community advocate she is. -- *Seth Bodnar, President, University of Montana*

PERSONAL STATEMENT

My passion for social justice began in high school. It is because of my early educators that I am who I am today. I wanted to expand on this passion I had discovered, so after seeing a flyer for the "Women's Gender and Sexuality" program I knew University of Montana would help me develop my passion for advocacy. One way I have been an advocate in my new community is as a YWCA GUTS! facilitator. In my role I create a safe space for young girls to discover and use their strengths. I have also interned at the Women's Resource Center, where I created a podcast interviewing a variety of women from the northwest region about social issues in their fields. Through my life I hope to foster a justice-oriented society. It is my firm belief that education is one of the keys to getting to the root of many social issues. It is through formal and informal education that I have deconstructed institutions that uphold inequality. It is with fact based, intersectional and accessible education that we will be able to act and change the inequality in our institutions.

CATHERINE MULHOLLAND | Montana Technological University

Environmental Engineering: Class of 2023

Grace is a third-year student at Montana Technological University majoring in Environmental Engineering. Since joining the program, she has become very involved in all that the department has to offer. She is the treasurer and Pacific Northwest International Section (PNWIS) chapter head for the Environmental Engineers of Montana Tech club, works for the department as a lab assistant, and has done undergraduate research with professors in the department. As a sophomore, Grace took on the leadership role of forming her own team for the 2020 PNWIS Environmental Competition. During summer 2020, she completed an AmeriCorps term of service as a Conservation Intern for Montana Conservation Corps. This involved over 500 hours of community service dedicated to preserving the Montana wilderness. This summer, Grace will continue to work in the Rocky Mountain wilderness in Kellogg, Idaho for CDM Smith as an environmental engineering intern at the superfund location. Her passion is conservation and teaching others about the importance of being able to enjoy nature

instead of abusing it. These experiences have helped her develop her leadership skills and made Grace more convinced that she has chosen the correct career path. -- *Les Cook, Chancellor, Montana Technological University*

PERSONAL STATEMENT

The national percentage for women in the STEM workforce is roughly 27%; Montana Tech is no exception to this statistic with a campus that is 70% male. The number of women entering STEM is rising, however, it is very intimidating as a female when you are one of seven women in a fifty-student class. Eliminating the number of females that feel they cannot pursue a career in STEM due to this fact should be the industry's goal. I am studying to become an environmental engineer where I am fortunate enough to have several women role models in the department. They have inspired me to persevere through the gender discrimination I have faced and turn the discomfort into progressive actions for women in STEM. I am treasurer and Pacific Northwest International Section chapter head for Environmental Engineers of Montana Tech which has allowed me to reach out to prospective female engineers and inform them of their importance for women to not only be present in the STEM field but active and confident in their abilities. Reminding women how imperative they are in STEM is necessary until the inequality women face is eliminated.

HANNAH PATE | Montana State University Northern
Community Leadership: Class of 2022

Hannah Pate, a third-year student studying Community Leadership at Montana State University-Northern, is determined to institutionalize civic engagement, working with college and university administrators across the state to develop comprehensive and intentional campus engagement strategies. As a student, Hannah has served the Northern campus community through leadership in student government and other campus organizations, as a member of and champion for underserved communities, and has lobbied on behalf of students in state legislative sessions related to the rising cost of education and enhancing access to higher education in Montana. As a professional, Hannah has worked to enhance voter registration and education, to generate collaborative solutions around equity, inclusion, and engagement with college and university administrators, and to raise awareness of the need for sustainable, systemic solutions that support healthy civic discourse within our campus communities. Hannah's professional and educational efforts are centered on reminding all of us that truly transformative change is predicated on and realized through the connections we form with each other. -- *Greg Kegel, Chancellor, Montana State University - Northern*

PERSONAL STATEMENT

My first time registering people to vote was in 2016 through volunteering for a statewide nonprofit that aimed to get low-income Montanans civically engaged. There are many barriers that exist for young people specifically to the ballot box and other means of civic engagement. I became involved in advocacy with another organization and have worked full-time with them while going to school. Throughout this, we've been able to protect school funding to ensure college can be more accessible to all Montanans, and registered thousands of voters. If we continue to engage with young Montanans, we will be able to not only increase civic engagement, but create a more equitable state for all its inhabitants.

SARAH PARKER | Rocky Mountain College
Political Science/History Major with a Pre-law Minor: Class of 2023

Sarah Parker is a committed student leader at Rocky Mountain College. Through her involvement in student government, community non-profit agencies, and the state legislature, she is seeking to break cycles of poverty and bring change. Sarah currently serves as both the Minority Representative and Financial Administrator for ASRMC, and uses her role in student government to highlight the diversity that exists in the Rocky Mountain College community. She has also served as a Campus Election Engagement Project Fellow, helping to engage the Rocky community in nonpartisan voter education and engagement. Sarah began her commitment to community engagement in high school. She maintains this commitment through her work with a local non-profit that serves the families and children in south Billings, an area underserved in many ways. She also volunteers to mentor local youth through Big Brothers Big Sisters. Sarah's goal is to affect changes well beyond the boundaries of her neighborhood. -- *Robert Wilmouth, President, Rocky Mountain College*

PERSONAL STATEMENT

I first became interested in the issue of less solid resources for low-income families after being considered part of that bracket when younger. My family lived off of food stamps and it was tough for my single mother to ever get ahead. As I entered high school I saw the opportunity to start volunteering and to learn more about why people from low-income backgrounds seem to be stuck in a cycle. I became more interested in politics and began to work with a local nonprofit. My new goal is to offer aid and services to as many low-income families as possible and show them that they can succeed. I have worked at our state capital twice alongside legislators and have done a fellowship that aimed to register and inform new voters. Alongside my goals to inform I also enjoy being a mentor to local youth. I work closely with the teen program at the non-profit I work with and I am also a BIG for the Big Brother Big Sister Program. On campus, I am currently working as the minority senator and Financial Administrator and hope to highlight the diversity we have on campus and properly represent its minority students.

SAVANNAH VANNETT | University of Montana Western
Psychology & Elementary Education with a minor in Special Education: Class of 2024

Savannah Vannett is the true embodiment of a civic leader. While double majoring in psychology and elementary education, she utilizes her spare time to volunteer and engage her community in events to support those in need. The majority of Savannah's civic engagement has been targeting the issue of food insecurity in her community. Savannah has helped in the origination and implementation of monthly events to serve food to those in need. Beyond that, Savannah also hosted events to improve social belonging and support to the same population. On campus, Savannah is a member of PATH (Peers Advocating Towards Health), a student group that works to engage and educate students about various health topics, as well as a Mentor in the TRIO SSS program. In both roles, she works to organize and implement tabling events, interactive educational events, and increase social belonging. Some of the events that Savannah has had a hand in making successful are Voter Registration Day, First-Generation College Student Day, and sexual health awareness events such as Condom Bingo and Sex in the Dark. -- *Beth Weatherby, Chancellor, The University of Montana Western*

PERSONAL STATEMENT

There are people all around me and each of them has a need. I have needs like them, some big and some small. Throughout my entire life, there have always been resources to help me through most of life's many challenges. As I have grown, I wanted to be a part of these groups. I want to give back to the resources that helped me along the way. Being involved in community outreach, soup kitchens, homeless shelters, church programs, rescue resources, non-profits, and food pantries gives me hope for the people around me. There are many resources that most people don't know about within their own communities. I want to bring awareness to

those small outreach resources that want to help people. My passion is to help people. That is why I am going to school and volunteering to make the community I live in a better place. I want to help people so they can pass it on!

NOLIN WATERHOUSE | Great Falls College Montana State University
Social Work: Class of 2024

Nolin Waterhouse is a second-year student at Great Falls College Montana State University with an absolute passion about helping people. After serving in the Army, he enrolled at Great Falls College MSU determined to make a difference. He will graduate from Great Falls College in spring 2021 and plans to pursue a bachelor's degree in social work. In fall 2020, he used his high school grocery store experience to reorganize and improve the college food pantry, making it more accessible and attractive for students. He is an articulate and dedicated student, according to one of his instructors, and a great writer. Besides working at the food pantry, he is a member of Phi Theta Kapa Honors Society, Montana Healthy Colleges student group and is a Montana Campus Compact AmeriCorps team member. -- *Susan J. Wolff, CEO/Dean, Great Falls College Montana State University*

PERSONAL STATEMENT

I come from a poor background where I always felt like I would never achieve anything. I was bullied a lot growing up, but I did not let it affect who I was as an individual. I was the only child out of five siblings to graduate high school. Once I graduated, I left for the Army. I had to join the military to get out of a bad situation because I was never good at school and struggled with the basics. After leaving the military and traveling around the United States, I decided to go back to school and started pursuing a degree in social work. Life has taught me many things about being an active member of society and helping others who are in need just as I was long ago. I believe one person motivating another into paying it forward will create a domino effect of goodwill that will benefit us all.