Scholarship Donor Tom Cotter Honored with Order of the Grizzly

On September 25 the UM Foundation awarded Tom Cotter the Order of the Grizzly, its highest honor. Cotter, who died in July, gave millions to support student scholarships at the University of Montana. His daughter Mary Ann Cotter accepted the award on his behalf.

The Order of the Grizzly was established in 1965 to honor individuals who sustained an active interest in Montana and whose accomplishments contributed to the welfare of the state, nation and world. The award is now conferred on those who have made a significant impact on the University through their leadership and philanthropy. It was last awarded in 2002.

“It is a great privilege to bestow this award on so deserving an individual,” said Shane Giese, president and CEO of the UM Foundation. “Tom showed a keen understanding of the ways in which education can change a life.”

Cotter was a longtime and very generous supporter of UM students, especially those from Montana.

“In the Spring 2014 issue of Raising Montana, Cotter explained why philanthropy was so important to him. “I never could have made it without my education, and I want to see if I can help upgrade the situations of students who want the chance to learn,” he said. “I have such a love for Montana and the University and have always felt that students could be very good recipients of my money.”

To hear from more Tom Cotter Scholars, please visit SupportUM.org/Cotter.

Above, Order of the Grizzly recipients are awarded a bronze miniature of a grizzly bear, the mascot of the University, sculpted and cast by former professor Rudy Autio.

LEFT, Tom Cotter’s daughter, Mary Ann Cotter, accepted the award on his behalf.
Washington Foundation Makes Historic $7 Million Gift to Support Grizzly Athletics

In 1985 you could sense that the fortunes of the University of Montana football team were about to change. Thanks in large part to Dennis and Phyllis Washington, a new stadium was rising on the UM campus. The team seemed on the cusp of something big.

No one could have foreseen just how far the Grizzlies would go: a pair of national championships, 11 NCAA title game appearances, 15 Big Sky Conference championships and 26 consecutive winning seasons. Three decades later, a new generation of the Washington family is transforming Grizzly Athletics once again. Dennis and Phyllis’ sons, Kyle and Kevin, have given $7 million on behalf of the student-athletes that give so much to the University that the tradition of excellence will continue.

Kyle Washington ’96 believes the new space will take Grizzly Athletics to the next level. “I hope this new facility inspires Missoula and Griz fans statewide and reinvigorates their Grizzly pride,” he added.

This will be the third athletics department construction project in recent years. The University broke ground on a new softball complex in July, and construction of the new student-athlete academic center started in August. The center was part of the Investing in Student Success initiative, which aims to raise $45 million to support scholarships, innovative programs and dynamic learning environments.

Director of Athletics Kent Haslam said he is elated for both student-athletes and coaches. “It’s exhilarating to be able to sit down with people like Kyle and Kevin, share the vision we have for this department and then have them invest in that vision,” Haslam said.

Over the years, the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation has been among the University’s most generous benefactors. Among many other facilities, programs and scholarships, the foundation has been a key supporter of the Phyllis J. Washington College of Education and Human Sciences, helping establish the Phyllis J. Washington Center for Education in 2009 and, most recently, providing $2.4 million to support the Washington Center for Education Research. The foundation has given more than $150 million to various causes since it was established in 1988.

“With $7 million, you could sense that the fortunes of the University of Montana football team were about to change. Thanks in large part to Dennis and Phyllis Washington, a new stadium was rising on the UM campus. The team seemed on the cusp of something big.

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“We have always been supporters of education and believe that all children deserve the opportunity to maximize their learning potential.” – Suzanne Peterson

Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation to the University of Montana to support the Washington-Grizzly Champions Center.

The 46,000-square-foot facility — almost 15,000 square feet larger than the current facility — will include the football locker room and a two-level weight room accessible to all 15 of UM’s sports teams. Construction on the $14 million center will begin once the project is approved by the Montana University System Board of Regents.

“The Grizzlies have a strong tradition of excellence,” said Kevin Washington. “This facility is an investment that sends a clear message to the student-athletes that give so much to the University that the tradition of excellence will continue.”

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“The Washington family’s generosity to the University of Montana is truly remarkable,” said UM President Royce Engstrom. “Their latest investment to support this endowment, contact Director of Development Erika Twedt at 406.243.4568, by email at erika.twedt@mso.umt.edu, or online at SupportUM.org/Education.

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To learn more about this historic gift, watch our video at SupportUM.org/Washingtons.
Dear Friends,

We have so much to be thankful for this year, starting with you. Because of our generous donors and friends we achieve great things.

For starters, UM has broken ground on three new facilities this fall. While parking on campus may be tougher for the next year or two, I hope you’ll agree these projects are worth it.

A new Athletics Academic Center will help some 300 student-athletes thrive both in the classroom and on the field or court. The Gilkey Center for Leadership, Entrepreneurship and Executive Education will offer innovative programs that draw students and professionals from the region and the nation. And, Missoula College students will be able to learn in a bright, new facility closer to the main UM campus.

Thanks to generous gifts from so many of you, more transformative projects will soon be underway.

The future is bright. Here’s to 2015, and here’s to you.

Sincerely,

Shane Giese
President and CEO, UM Foundation

Dreams Come to Life in UM Animation Program

In a darkened computer lab in McGill Hall, a group of students works on two animated films. The artwork is so smoothly drawn, so carefully crafted, that a viewer might think it’s created totally by machine. But these students know better.

They are all seniors in the School of Media Arts’ digital animation program. For their capstone project, they’ve formed a small production unit. They are taking two stories each from concept, storyboards and initial drawings to a finished animated film.

Assistant Professor Heejoo Kim, who presides over the class in an advisory role, fields technical questions while keeping the projects on schedule.

“I’m treating them professional-ish,” Kim said with a laugh before reminding the class to keep one story tight to the original scope. “We need to simplify the story. If you want to graduate, you need to finish this.”

Kim also fosters the collaboration that the budding filmmakers can expect to encounter after graduation, making the lessons learned in school even more valuable.

“We’re learning a vocabulary of media arts,” said Cody Whitmer. “I don’t do rigging, but I am able to talk to Kento [Kamimura, the crew’s rigging guru and camera operator], and he knows what I’m saying.”

Though human hands guide the process, technological horsepower is harnessed at each stage. There’s the modified Microsoft Xbox Kinect system that helps with motion capture — a version of the technology used to bring Gollum to life in the “Lord of the Rings” films. Then there’s a room full of computers powerful enough to crunch the data generated by high-end, 3-D modeling software. Students access this professional-grade software thanks to the Korean company FXGear, which donated licenses, a gift valued at over $300,000.

“Most of us had never touched 3-D modeling,” said Lauren Mackey, one of the crew responsible for the detail work of texturing animated characters and landscapes.

Located far removed from the world’s movie capitals, this advanced media arts program exists at UM because of an alumnus who found success in the bright lights of Los Angeles. Palmer West produced such acclaimed independent films as “A Scanner Darkly” and “Waking Life,” both of which feature animation styles that captivated critics upon their releases. A $1 million gift from West and his wife, Alison (also a UM alum), helped launch the media arts program and has fostered the next generation of talent right here in Montana.

“The kids — with Heejoo’s help, she’s a big part of why they’re producing at such a high level — are doing some amazing work,” said Mark Shogren, director of the School of Media Arts. “I think they’ll go on to do great things. They have a strong chance of entering the industry and potentially bringing the industry to Montana.”

Students have landed internships with the cable network SyFy, and many have dreams of working in film festivals around the country. To find out more about the Digital Animation BFA, visit umt.edu/mediaarts. To contribute, contact Christian Gold Stagg at 406.243.4990 or by email at christian.goldstagg@mso.umt.edu or give online at SupportUM.org/MediaArts.

First Dennison Doctoral Fellowship Awarded

The 2014 spring semester was just coming to a close when Patrick O’Connor received the news: the Department of History doctoral candidate would be the first George M. and Jane I. Dennison Doctoral Fellow.

“The Dennison Fellowship will support my work in a number of ways,” said O’Connor, whose research focuses primarily on the social, political and intellectual histories of late 19th-century America. “Immediately, it relieves me of some teaching duties. With that time I can travel to archives, attend conferences and devote myself more fully to my project.”

UM alumni, trustees of the UM Foundation and members of the community established the fellowship to honor former UM President George Dennison and his wife, Jane, for the many contributions they have made to the University. The endowment supports graduate students in the history department, where Dennison earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees.

“Patrick’s important research agenda explores the problem of urban public health in the United States at the turn of the 20th century,” UM history professor Kyle Volk said of O’Connor’s work. “The Dennison Fellowship will transform Pat’s career as a graduate student by providing him the critical resources needed to engage in deeper — and likely more distant — research and to craft a more significant doctoral dissertation.”

To support the George M. and Jane I. Dennison Doctoral Fellows in History Endowment, visit SupportUM.org/Dennison or contact Ric Thomas at 406.243.3615 or by email at ric.thomas@mso.umt.edu.

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A Life on the Land
Honoring ‘One of the Last Old-Time Rangers’

He was a true Bitterroot woodsman. From a young age he could hunt, trap and fish. He packed mules and fought fires. He built log cabins by hand. Most importantly, he understood and loved the land, and he shared his vision for holistic land management with scores of U.S. Forest Service employees, students and others.

Now Bud Moore is being honored in a most fitting way: by helping UM graduate students who share his passion for land stewardship. Moore’s children and friends recently created the William R. (Bud) and Jane Buckhouse Moore Graduate Research Endowment, which will support research in fields Bud Moore cared about, like resource conservation, systems ecology, and society and conservation.

For Bud’s daughter, Vicki Moore, this legacy fits with her father’s practice of reaching out to students, community groups and landowners to talk about land ecology — what she calls “doing the Bud thing.”

“He was a real strong believer in future generations,” she said.

Bud Moore’s remarkable career spanned a broad scope of changes in land management. He was born in Florence, Montana, in 1917 and raised up Lolo Creek at a time when the road stopped at the hot springs and the Lochsa wilderness was full of trappers and mountain men.

He made it as far as eighth grade at the one-room Woodman School before the lure of the woods took over. As a teenager, he fought fires in the summer and worked trap lines in the Lochsa in the winter. Soon he joined the Forest Service full time.

It was in the mountains, at the Lochsa Lodge near Powell, where he met Jane Buckhouse. She was a Missoula native descended from one of the city’s original homesteading families. They married in 1941. Bud became assistant ranger, then ranger, at Powell Station. He was one of the last true mountain men to achieve such a position.

After stints in Ogden, Utah, and Washington, D.C., Bud requested a transfer back to his beloved Bitterroot. He became the director of fire and aviation for Region 1, which encompasses territory in Montana, Idaho, Washington, North Dakota and South Dakota.

“When he came back, he took a certain amount of pressure for being in the mountains,” said Bill Moore, Bud’s son. They thought the director of fire and aviation should sit at a desk in the regional office. He said, “You can’t manage the land without being on the land.”

After his retirement in 1974, Bud remained heavily involved with conservation and land management education and advocacy. He wrote a book, “The Lochsa Story — Land Ethics in the Bitterroot Mountains,” and was instrumental in the creation of the Wilderness Institute at UM and the Swan Ecosystem Center, located in Condon, Montana.

The year he retired from the U.S. Forest Service he was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Montana’s School of Forestry and Conservation, in recognition of his contributions to land ethics.

Throughout his later years he continued to teach, write, talk and showcase ecosystem management principles on his forest property. His children believe the breadth of his experiences gave him a unique perspective on land management.

“He could tie it clear back to the days in the Lochsa before there was logging, why something did or didn’t work out, right up until how things are going today,” Bill Moore said. “He was still engaged and available. I think that was one of the most important things he did. He passed those values on.”

In the years before his death in 2010 at age 93, Bud spent time organizing his extensive collection of journals, articles, photographs and ephemera from a lifetime on the land and in the Forest Service. He then donated his collection to UM’s Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library.

“He had a real consciousness of where he was in time and tried to document it,” Bill said.

Vicki Moore hopes the collection will be a resource for many scholars, including the Moore Fellow.

“For me it was a kind of synergy,” she said about creating an endowed fellowship at the same university where her father’s archives are stored. The family hopes this commitment will help others learn about and care for the Northwestern Rocky Mountain land their parents so loved.

“I want the message of ecosystem management, taking care of the land and land ethics to continue,” Vicki said.

To support the William R. (Bud) and Jane Buckhouse Moore Graduate Research Endowment, contact Sam Barkley by phone at 406.243.5533 or by email at sam.barkley@mso.umt.edu or visit SupportUM.org/BudMoore.