Leadership Montana – building a better Montana through knowledge, collaboration, and civility.

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LEADERSHIP MONTANA

CLASS OF 2026 GRADUATION & ALUMNI AWARDS

Friday, May 15
Montana Heritage Center- Helena, MT

PROGRAM OF EVENTS

WELCOME
Kelly Heaton, Executive Director

FLAGSHIP CLASS
Presented by: Kass Thompson
CLASS SPEAKER
Zac Collins, Class Representative

MASTERS CLASS
Presented by: Jen Davis
CLASS SPEAKER
Andy Hunthausen, Class Representative

BOARD MEMBER RECOGNITION

ALUMNI AWARDS
Mike O'Neill Service Award
Barbara Braided-Hair
Leadership Award
Tom Scott Excellence in
Leadership Award

CLOSING
Kelly Heaton

SPONSORS

Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation

Dennis & Phyllis Washington Foundation

The O.P. and W.E. Edwards Foundation

Foundation for Community Vitality

PacificSource Health Plans

Montana State Fund

NorthWestern Energy
Delivering a Bright Future

First Interstate Bank

Glacier Bancorp, Inc.

MarshMcLennan

Morrison Maierle
engineers · surveyors · planners · scientists

Atomic Industries, LLC
Everywhere, USA

Intermountain Health

element
Bozeman

AgWest Farm Credit

D|A Davidson

BNSF Railway

SPONSORS

Flagship Program Graduates Class of 2026

| **Rebekah Abern,** Glasgow, MT
| **Mikel Allen,** Helena, MT
| **Teri Anderson,** Great Falls, MT
| **Cassie Arndt,** Glendive, MT
| **Randy Arnold,** Missoula, MT
| **Adriane Beck,** Missoula, MT
| **Zach Benoit,** Billings, MT
| **Zac Birdinground,** Billings, MT
| **Gina Boesdorfer,** Helena, MT
| **Mariel Butan,** Big Sky, MT
| **Genia Castro Waller,** Billings, MT
| **Brian Close,** Bozeman, Montana
| **Zac Collins,** Bozeman, Montana
| **Shane Colman,** Missoula, MT
| **Andrew Cziok,** Helena, MT
| **Mary Ann Dunwell,** Helena, Montana
| **Melissa Fisher,** Missoula, MT
| **Dusty Hahn,** Townsend, MT
| **Jon Henderson,** Bozeman, MT
| **Ethan Heverly,** Helena, MT
| **Ingrid Hill,** Helena, MT
| **Christine Hodges,** Bozeman, MT
| **Rachael Jones,** Livingston, MT
| **Ashley Kent,** Elliston, MT
| **Melissa Koch-Wittman,** Billings, MT

Flagship Program Graduates Class of 2026

| **Eliza Kuntz,** Red Lodge, MT
| **JoRee LaFrance,** Crow Agency, MT
| **Kenneth Lard,** Kalispell, MT
| **John Lavey,** Missoula, MT
| **Lexi Leffler,** Butte, MT
| **Ki-Ai McBride,** Helena, MT
| **Jacinda Morigeau,** Arlee, MT
| **Ashley Morris,** Lewistown, MT
| **Joseph Morrison,** Bozeman, MT
| **Donna Nicholson,** Missoula, MT
| **Andrea Olsen,** Missoula, MT
| **Jennifer Olson,** Helena, MT
| **Kylene Phipps,** Miles City, MT
| **Cole Reinhardt,** Billings, MT
| **Darryl Rensmon,** Helena, MT
| **Melissa Romano,** Helena, MT
| **Sarah Schlepp,** White Sulphur Springs, MT
| **Sally Schrank,** Bozeman, MT
| **Hillary Shepherd,** Great Falls, MT
| **Derek Stiegemeier,** Red Lodge, MT
| **Peter Strand,** Bozeman, MT
| **Timothy Tholt,** Helena, MT |
| **Shyanne Wallace,** Glasgow, MT
| **Rob Watson,** Helena, MT
| **Jane Weber,** Great Falls, MT
| **Leslie Weldon,** Billings, MT

Board Members, Staff and Trainers

Officers

| Darrell Hirsch, Chair
| Terri Cheff, Vice Chair
| Kacie Tollefson, Treasurer
| Julie Jenkinson, Past Chair

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| Tony Flynn
| Aimee Grmoljez
| Anne Hughes
| Courtney McKee
| Josh Pallister
| Cami Skinner
| Jim Swan
| Kurt Toenjes
| Ben Thiem
| Travis Yuzik

Staff

| Kelly Heaton
| Heather Collins
| Kass Thompson

Trainers

| Carmen McSpadden, Flagship Class Trainer
| Hatton Littman, Gracious Space Director
| Jen Davis, Masters Class Trainer
| Lanny Hubbard, Associate Trainer

TOM SCOTT AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP

The award, named in honor of the founder of Leadership Montana, was created as the highest honor for an individual who has made substantial, significant, and lasting contributions to Leadership Montana. Each year the Board of Governors selects this individual to recognize their dedication to the organization and its mission.

Debbie Vandeberg-Henry, LMT 2005, Founder

Debbie was born and raised in Havre, a proud graduate of Havre High School and MSU-Northern. She returned to Havre after a few years working in retail in NYC and opened her own business, with the goal of making a difference. Being back home she has done her best to contribute and give back to the community and state. While Debbie may be retired, she is active in several community organizations: Havre Hill County Preservation Commission, the Art and Beautification Committee and statewide with Leadership Montana. She has had great life opportunities and experiences. The one most pivotal experience was participating in the organizing committee that created the Leadership Montana Program, under the leadership of Tom Scott. Experiencing first-hand the work of the LMT Organizing Committee's work, she was selected to participate in the 2004-05 class and later served two terms on the Board of Governors. Now she and her husband Dave are both enjoying retirement. They love to hike, golf, travel and drive the backroads of Montana.

Masters Program Graduates Class of 2026

| **Jim Bennett**, Havre, MT
| **Kurtis DeShaw**, Billings, MT
| **Greg Doyon**, Great Falls, MT
| **Brian Elsmore**, Billings, MT
| **Emily Frazier,** Helena, MT
| **Sam Giordanengo**, Miles City, MT
| **Adrienna Hines**, Billings, MT
| **Lorene Hintz**, Billings, MT
| **Darrell Hirsch**, Bozeman, MT
| **Karen Hughes**, Hamilton, MT
| **Andy Hunthausen**, Helena, MT
| **Jamie Larson**, Sidney, MT
| **Patrick Lonergan**, Bozeman, MT
| **Chris Lounsbury**, Missoula, MT
| **Tommy Robinson**, Lame Deer, MT
| **Joanne Romasko**, Helena, MT
| **Nancy Schlepp**, White Sulphur Springs, MT
| **Melissa Shannon**, Helena, MT
| **Nicole Smith**, Missoula, MT
| **David Strohmaier,** Missoula, MT
| **Kacie Tollefson**, Helena, MT
| **Katie Weaver**, Livingston, MT
| **Erin Woodrow**, Helena, MT

MIKE O'NEILL ALUMNI SERVICE AWARD

The Leadership Montana Alumni Service Award recognizes and promotes alumni service to support the Leadership Montana program and/or alumni activities. The award recognizes a Leadership Montana Alumnus who has used their leadership skills, knowledge, and resources to benefit Leadership Montana.

Dr. Susan Wolff, LMT Class of 2019

Dr. Susan J. Wolff is a proud LMT graduate from the Flagship Class of 2019 and a certified Gracious Space facilitator. Susan was raised on a cattle ranch homesteaded in Hall, Montana in 1876. Dr. Wolff earned her college degrees from Montana State University and Oregon State University. She retired the first time in June of 2021 from a 45-year career in higher education in three states, with her last position being the CEO/Dean of Great Falls College MSU. She was elected to the Great Falls City Commission November 2021 with her term ending December 31, 2025. Susan used the tenants of Gracious Space in every interaction those four years. After serving every community in which she lived, she is now happily retired, spending time in Florida and traveling.

BARBARA BRAIDED HAIR ALUMNI LEADERSHIP AWARD

The award recognizes a Leadership Montana Alumnus who has had a significant impact at the local or state level, demonstrates outstanding leadership in keeping with and expanding the Leadership Montana philosophy in their community or the state, and serves as an example of leadership for others.

Anne Hughes, LMT Class of 2012, Masters 2022

Anne Hughes is the Chief Operating Officer for Missoula County. She has worked in federal and local government for 26 years and is committed to public service that reflects her values of growth, empathy, and humor. She currently serves on the Leadership Montana Board of Governors, the Clay Studio of Missoula Board of Directors and on the Master's in Public Administration Alumni Advisory Council for the University of Montana. She believes in cheerleading her colleagues and friends and doing good work with kindness.