Intercom: Letter from the President
Dawn Kenney

Happy spring everyone! Winter is over! I’m sure you are all busy. Many of us are getting ready to go to Seattle for the AIR Forum. Come and join fellow RMAIRians at the RMAIR SIG to find out the latest RMAIR news and about the next RMAIR conference in Montana. The SIG is scheduled for Monday, May 26, from 5:10-5:50 pm. Also, RMAIR’s best paper “Deconstructing the Tortoise and the Hare: How We Built a Web-based Student Tracking Application” by Christina Drum of the University of Nevada – Las Vegas is Monday, May 26, from 11:40am-12:20pm. I encourage everyone to attend.

I look forward to seeing everyone in Seattle!

Letter from the Editor
Lisa Muller

Spring Time greetings RMAIRians.

If you are going to AIR in Seattle at the end of the month I’d like to encourage those attending to send favorite ideas or memories to be compiled into an “AIR Lessons Learned” section for the next newsletter. I’d also like to ask those of you who attended SunGard Summit or the PeopleSoft Connect for any tips or tricks that you would like to share.

As your new Panorama editor I especially want to thank Wendy Kappy for her willingness to be the Panorama’s editor for so many years. I also want to thank our dedicated volunteers who are state reporters and to those who were able to recruit replacements when they left. I look forward to saying hello to many of you at AIR and really hope to put faces to names with our new state reporters.

There are still two state reporter vacancies. David Blair, of the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Research-University of Colorado Systems Office, has stepped down as state reporter for Colorado. In addition, Linda Heiss of the Nevada System of Higher Education, has stepped down from her position as Nevada state reporter. Thank you David and Linda. We appreciate your service and wish
you the best. If you are a RMAIRian from either Colorado or Nevada, please consider volunteering as a state reporter.

I think it is always good to hear how our different states are viewing and supporting education. It is also nice to get news of the different state meetings.

**Location of RMAIR 2008 and 2009**

**Save the dates!**

From Christina Fastnow (Montana State University) and Elizabeth Stotts (The University of Montana-Missoula)

**RMAIR’s annual conference is set for October 15-17, 2008 in Missoula, Montana.** The hotel is the newly renovated Holiday Inn Parkside in beautiful downtown Missoula. We’re planning a program around the theme of “Accountability” – do you have best practices, research, or lessons learned to share with your colleagues about accountability, assessment, accreditation, or other critical IR topics? Watch your email for the Call for Proposals and Call for Workshops, coming soon. (There will be lots of fun stuff to do OUTSIDE the panels, plenaries, and presentations too!)

From Ellen McGregor (Pima Community College, Arizona)

The 2009 RMAIR Conference will be held in Flagstaff, Arizona.

**News from the States**

**ARIZONA**

**State Reporter: Ellen McGregor (Pima Community College)**

19th Annual AZAIR Conference

The 19th Annual AZAIR Conference was held in Yavapai College, in Prescott, AZ. There were over 50 attendees. The preconference meetings and workshops covered changes in Perkins reporting with Julie Siwanowicz, Post-secondary Specialist from the Arizona Department of Education, IPEDS Peer Analysis Tool Training presented by Donna Silber of the Maricopa Community College System Office, and ASSIST updates and discussion. ASSIST is the state database of public universities and community colleges in Arizona.

On Friday, April 4, 2008, the meeting was focused on issues effecting higher education in Arizona. Patrick Kelly, Senior Associate and Director of NCHEMS Information Center, spoke of the study NCHEMS conducted in Arizona which examined the demand for higher education. Arizona currently imports bachelor degree recipients and needs to increase its production of graduates. The discussion of Patrick’s presentation had representatives of the Arizona Board of Regents (Dan Anderson), Arizona Community College Association (Kathy Boyle), and Erin Hart who serves on the P-20 Council and works for Governor Napolitano. The P-20 Council looks at the entire range of education from Pre-kindergarten to graduate school. The legislative update was of great concern, since the budget for the current year needs to be reduced, which will mean cuts in funding. After a business lunch, Ellen McGregor from Pima Community College, shared updates on IPEDS changes which focused on additional items for FY 2008-09 Financial Aid Survey and the implementation of race/ethnicity changes which impacts half of the surveys. The meeting ended with an update on the strategic planning for education in Arizona focusing
on the P-20 approach. Dan Anderson presented information on where we may be going – expanded linkages, funding issues, and the need for an educated and skilled workforce.

Universities offer a Bond Proposal – to stimulate the economy

Arizona’s higher-education chiefs and business development leaders Thursday pushed a $1.4 billion bond proposal for the state’s public universities, promoting it as both a short-term economic stimulus and a building block for the future. The proposal enjoys the backing of Democratic Gov. Janet Napolitano but is no sure-thing at the Republican-led Legislature in Phoenix. Under the plan, the universities would bear 20 percent of the cost and the state the rest, with the state making annual payments to bond purchasers starting in the 2009-2010 fiscal year. It would provide some $500 million for repairs and at least $310 million to each of the three universities for new facilities. Arizona Board of Regents members and University presidents said the proposal is critical to making and keeping the state competitive.

COLORADO
State Reporter: Open position

Please contact Lisa Muller if you are interested in serving as the Colorado state reporter. Her contact information is at the end of this newsletter.

In February the Colorado Association of Planners and Institutional Researchers Annual Meeting was hosted by Aims Community College Greeley, CO. The meeting included a tour of Aims’ new Allied Health and Science Building along with sessions about the Emerging Scholars Program, a New Undergraduate Enrollment Model and Participation in a National Study of the Research Doctorate.

Gregory B. Appling, CAPIR President, 2007-2008

IDAHO
State Reporter: Barbara Zuck (University of Idaho)

The University of Idaho will offer a new graduate degree in bioregional planning and community design. The new master’s of science degree links faculty from many academic disciplines and is part of the university’s initiative focused on Building Sustainable Communities. As reported in the press release, Steve Hollenhorst, director of the program stated: “This approach considers the ecological functions and human settlement patterns of a region, builds more inclusive civic constituency, and emphasizes regional resources and energy sources in an effort to inform community and economic development policy and design.”

Jack McIver was hired as the University of Idaho’s new vice president for research. McIver previously held senior research leadership positions at the University of New Mexico, as deputy vice president for research and senior associate vice president for research and economic development. He joined the University of New Mexico in 1980, after serving as a research associate at the University of Arizona. In 1978, he spent a year as a National Academy of Sciences exchange scientist to the P.N. Lebedev Physical Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. in Moscow (now Russia). As reported in the press release, President Tim White stated: “He [McIver] has perceptive science and technology insights and a proven ability to develop and harness the power of interdisciplinary research, which is a core value and strength of the University of Idaho and which addresses the needs of Idaho in the global economy. Jack has experience working with national laboratories, and also has a keen sense for facilitating the research and creative activities in our professional colleges, as well as in the letters, arts and social sciences.”
The University of Idaho was recognized in the 2007 President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll – the highest federal recognition for commitment to service learning and civic engagement. Last academic year, 2,213 U Idaho students engaged in community service projects through the Associated Students of the University of Idaho Center for Volunteerism and Social Action, and the University’s Career and Professional Planning Service-Learning Center and volunteered an estimated 50,000 hours.

Greg Mortenson and acclaimed journalist David Oliver Relin, authors of Three Cups of Tea: One Mans Mission to Promote Peace…One School at a Time, were invited speakers to the University of Idaho. On April 3rd, over 200 Moscow High School students attended a presentation at the Moscow High auditorium. Over 300 U Idaho and LCC students attended a presentation at the Kenworthy Theatre and over 1500 people attended the 7:30 pm presentation at the Memorial Gym on the U Idaho campus. In addition to the presentations by Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin, the “Three Cups of Tea Event” included “teas”, dinners hosted by local residents, silent auctions for tea pots and the “Pennies for Peace” drive. The New York Times Bestseller, Three Cups of Tea, was a common reading among numerous CORE curriculum classes. So far, contributors have given over $31,000 to the Central Asia Institute to help Greg build and maintain schools in some of the most remote and dangerous areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Around the State
Presidents from five area institutions of higher learning gathered at Nez Perce National Historic Park to sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) — agreeing to work together to provide improved American Indian education. The document was signed by university Presidents Dene Thomas of Lewis Clark State College, Priscilla Bell of North Idaho College, Cheryl Crazy Bull of Northwest Indian College, Tim White of the University of Idaho and Elson Floyd of Washington State University. As reported in the press release, “the MOU calls for the formation of the ‘Native American Collaborations Committee,’ which will report to the provosts of the five institutions and be comprised of the institutions’ respective tribal liaisons, deans (or representatives appointed by the deans), and any directors of recruiting, support services and special programs involved with American Indians….The committee’s mission is to enhance existing joint opportunities for American Indians, establish ‘organizational framework’ for accumulating and sharing information between institutions, collaborate on research, instruction and service and work together to get external funding for projects.”

The Idaho State Board of Education set and approved higher education tuition and fees for the 2008-2009 academic year:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Percent Increase Requested</th>
<th>Percent Increase Approved by the SBOE</th>
<th>2008-2009 Annual Tuition and Fees Idaho Resident –FT/UG</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boise State University</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>$4,630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Idaho Technical College</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>$1,666</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho State University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lewis Clark State College</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Idaho</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>$4,632</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The Idaho State Board of Education approved a Collaborative Online Special Education Paraeducator-to Teacher Alternative Route program. Four Idaho institutions are participating in the collaborative program: University of Idaho, Boise State University, Idaho State University and Lewis Clark State College. This program is designed for paraeducators who possess an AA/AS or higher degree or equivalent credit and who wish to become certified special education teachers. Upon successful completion, students will receive a Bachelor’s degree in Special Education and a recommendation for the Exceptional Child Certificate, K-12 Generalist Endorsement. As stated in informational materials, the program is viewed as “an exciting opportunity for school districts to ‘grow their own’ special education teachers….The
opportunity is uniquely designed to address the needs of rural Idaho and the challenges paraeducators face in accessing higher education programs in the state.”

Idaho State University recruitment poster received the “Best of Show” Admissions Advertising Award. The recruitment poster was created by the ISU Division of enrollment Management, Office of Admissions Recruitment Services. Craig Joseph, assistant director of marketing and publications for ISU enrollment management, was honored at the 23rd annual Admissions Advertising Awards sponsored by Admissions Marketing Report. The poster also received the Gold Award in the University Poster Category. The Admissions Advertising Awards is the largest educational advertising awards competition in the country.

North Idaho College has a new three-part recruitment program beginning at the middle school level. Xplor NIC is aimed at exposing students to North Idaho College’s programs and services at a young age and subsequently following up with them during the middle of their high school years. As stated in the news release, NIC President Priscilla Bell stated: “We want to show students the benefits of attending college while they’re still forming their opinions. At the very least, we want them to understand the impact this decision will have on the rest of their lives.” To kick off the program, Xplor NIC, the college will host nearly 3,000 sixth, eighth and 10th graders in May.

Lewis Clark State College junior Trevor Nesbitt of Lewiston won the Idaho Lottery Collegiate Scratch Ticket Design Contest. Trevor is a student in the Graphic Arts and Printing Technology field at LCSC. Trevor’s design, features the theme “Amped on Cash and as stated in the news release, Trevor Nesbitt stated: I wanted to create something unique, but followed in the trends of recent video games like ‘Guitar Hero’ and ‘Rock Star.’ I blended my two loves, graphic arts and playing the guitar, to create my lottery design.”

In an effort to support local Latino students interested in attending postsecondary education, Eastern Idaho Technical College held its first Latino Education Assistance Conference in March. The purpose of the forum was to learn what barriers Latinos face when either they or their children seek a college education. As reported in the news release, Rich Belknap, ABE division manager stated: “If you’re not raised in a situation where the precedent for a higher education sets the table for you, it’s a challenge to get there, and that’s really the basis of what we’re trying to do here – help facilitate that transition.” Conducted in both Spanish and English, the topics included financial aid, choosing a school and family involvement and support. Conference participants met with other Latinos who have successfully navigated the higher education system. Deemed a success with approximately 100 people attended the conference, including several community leaders, EITC plans to hold future conferences.

MONTANA
State Reporter: Jim Rimpau (Montana State University-Bozeman)

University of Montana’s fund raising a success
UM's $100 million capital campaign has come to an end; the accountants have tallied the total and UM raised a record-breaking $131 million. The breakdown for distribution will follow the originally envisioned plan: 38 percent of the campaign donations are earmarked for renovations and new buildings; 22 percent will fund student scholarships and fellowships; 22 percent will fund academic programs, including bolstering library holdings and funding research; and 18 percent will pay for faculty programs, including professorships and endowed chairs.
New Adult Education program in Billings
A program to engage adult learners, who have the desire to never stop learning, was introduced at Montana State University in Billings. The MSU Billings Senior Academy was developed by the College
of Professional Studies and Lifelong Learning. The new program features a variety of classes for ages 55 and older.

MSU’s Spring enrollment stronger than expected

The Bozeman campus was anticipating a $1.1 million budget cut as a consequence of lower than expected Fall 2007 enrollment. The need for that cut has been eliminated by a stronger than expected spring enrollment. After being down approximately 150 FTE in the fall, the university reported there are only 15 fewer full-time student equivalencies at MSU spring semester than there were a year ago.

MSU begins accreditation process

Montana State University has begun the lengthy process to renew the university's regional accreditation, which is required once a decade. MSU will take more than a year to prepare for the October 2009 visit by an evaluation team from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.

College of Technology in Billings ready for new building

Student nurses in Billings now get the chance to feel what it's like to work in an emergency room when they walk into the new MSU College of Technology building for classes. The new Health Sciences and Education Building includes a large room which boasts a replicated up-to-date emergency room, with digital monitors on the walls and curtained-off areas just like a real ‘ER’. The two-story, 50,000-square-foot building, which cost $11 million, is the first new academic building in 40 years at any of the university's three campuses.

Placement of Indian administrators

A Montana State University program that aims to triple the number of American Indians serving as principals and superintendents in the state received a $1.3 million federal grant to continue its work. The program, Indian Leadership and Development or ILEAD, will seek to reduce the administrative turnover at schools where more than half the student population is Indian.

Butte Campus doubles in size due to ARCO donation

Montana Tech received 57 acres of land west of the current Butte campus which nearly doubled its size. The land was donated by ARCO Environmental Remediation LLC. Chancellor Frank Gilmore said the gift will help Tech realize its Vision 2025 program which envisions expanding the current 56-acre campus with several new buildings, additions to the academic departments and expanded course offerings for students.

UM-College of Technology now offering college prep courses to veterans

Starting Feb. 20 the University of Montana College of Technology in Helena will be offering free college prep courses to U.S. veterans. The courses are derived from a program at MSU Billings provided through the Montana Veterans’ Upward Bound program, and are funded through a federal grant by the U.S. Department of Education.

Montana's oldest tribal college celebrates 30 years

Montana's oldest tribal college is celebrating its 30th year; the Fort Peck Community College was founded in 1978. It offers associate's degrees and bachelor’s degrees through associations with Rocky Mountain College, Montana State University-Northern, University of Montana and the University of Mary.

MSU-Northern opens organic fuel testing, certification lab

Montana State-Northern’s new organic fuel and lubricant testing lab will be instrumental in increasing the use of alternative fuels. "It sends a signal to the rest of the state; it sends a signal to the rest of the country and the rest of the world. We will grow, produce and consume our own fuel domestically," Gov. Brian Schweitzer said Thursday. Northern's lab allows a 16-step process to test the quality of fuels and lubricants. The lab includes equipment donated by companies including Kiewit Construction Co., one of
the largest construction companies in the nation, and some equipment purchased with a special appropriation made by the state Legislature.

Miles City Community College offers new degree
An equine studies associate degree program will be offered at Miles Community College in the fall. The degree will be offered as either an associate of science degree, with the option of transferring into the University of Montana-Western's baccalaureate program, or an associate of applied science degree. The degree will include classes in introduction to equine studies, equine science, horse care, and nutrition and horse conformation, in addition to general-education classes necessary for transfer to a four-year college.

MSU researcher found a renewed interest in turning algae into fuel
Ever slip on a slimy rock trying to make that perfect cast? The brown algae that caused the fall (it couldn’t have been poor judgment!) contain oil that can be turned into diesel fuel. Keith Cooksey said the idea of pumping algal fuel into gas tanks is not reality yet, but the idea holds promise. After a 20 year gap in research Cooksey has had renewed interest from outside sources and has picked up the research again. I just want to know how he plans to get it off all those rocks.

**NEVADA**
State Reporter: Open position

No report. Please contact Lisa Muller if you are interested in serving as Nevada state reporter. Her contact information is at the end of this newsletter.

**NEW MEXICO**
State Reporter: Carol Bernhard (University of New Mexico)

No Report

**UTAH**
State Reporter: Steve Jones (Weber State University)

A modest increase in new state funding was appropriated to the Utah System of Higher Education (USHE) by the State Legislature during the 2008 General Legislative Session. Overall, $38.8 million in new, ongoing funds and $4.4 million in one-time/supplemental monies were awarded for higher education, including $27.7 million for employee compensation and $8.3 million toward various programs and initiatives. An additional $71.5 million was allocated for capital facilities projects. A breakdown of appropriations is available at [http://www.utahsbr.edu/PressRelease/PR_2008/PR_Mar_05_2008.pdf](http://www.utahsbr.edu/PressRelease/PR_2008/PR_Mar_05_2008.pdf).

The lowest tuition increase statewide for public colleges and universities since 2001 was approved in March by the State Board of Regents. The average total increase for USHE institutions was 5.7 percent, down from 6.6 percent for the previous year. According to Board of Regents Chairman Jed Pitcher, “We believe that by keeping the tuition increases relatively low, we can assist more students as they make one of the greatest investments in their lives.” Annual general student fees will increase by 3.49 percent on average, which is down from 4.08 percent the year before. Additional information is available at [http://www.utahsbr.edu/PressRelease/PR_2008/PR_Mar_21_2008.pdf](http://www.utahsbr.edu/PressRelease/PR_2008/PR_Mar_21_2008.pdf).
Utah enrollment numbers continue to be relatively unchanged between spring 2008 and spring 2007. A press release on March 7, 2008 from USHE indicates that third week enrollment numbers for spring semester, budget-related student headcount decreased 0.19 percent, while budget-related full-time equivalent (FTE) students increased by 0.19 percent. Institutions that saw increases in headcounts and FTEs include Southern Utah University, Dixie State College, Salt Lake Community College, and Utah Valley State College. Although the statewide decrease in enrollment was minimal, the State Board of Regents and higher education leaders want to boost college participation rates annually by 0.5 percent system wide. Additional data including overall enrollment figures for institutions, gender, and ethnicity can be found at http://www.utahsbr.edu/PressRelease/PR_2008/PR_Mar_07_2008.pdf.

USHE posted on 4/28/08 an opening for Director of Institutional Research. A posting was also listed by USHE on 4/11/08 for an Institutional Research Analyst. Both positions are expected to be posted until filled. Details available at http://www.utahsbr.edu/job09a.html

**WYOMING**

State Reporter: Lisa Muller (University of Wyoming)

The Wyoming’s legislature continued its strong support for both the University of Wyoming and the state community colleges in the February 2008 session. The legislative Wyoming budget for higher education emphasized libraries and matching funds for endowments. Legislators passed major maintenance funding and an average 4% salary increase each of the next 2 years with continued health insurance funding at the 85% level. The Excellence in Higher Education Endowment Fund supporting faculty positions at the University of Wyoming and the community colleges has led to busy search committees looking for endowed chair faculty members.

Wyoming's community college tuition and fees will increase to $65 per credit hour, for 12 or more hours, starting with the 2008-09 school year, The University of Wyoming tuition is not increasing but there will be a slight increase in fees.

University of Wyoming
GE Energy and the University of Wyoming announced that an advanced coal gasification research and technology center will be located in Wyoming. “Governor Freudenthal said he hopes the relationship will provide a long-term benefit for Wyoming and especially for UW students.”

Planning
The process of the third round of academic planning for the period 2009-2014 is in progress. Planning at the University of Wyoming, as previously reported, includes an academic plan which drives a support services plan and a capitol facilities plan.
[http://uwadmnweb.uwyo.edu/AcadAffairs/Univ_plan/creation_of_the_future_2.pdf](http://uwadmnweb.uwyo.edu/AcadAffairs/Univ_plan/creation_of_the_future_2.pdf)

In capital facilities planning the model of a 3 phase cycle of planning and funding phases for new building continues to be successful. The 3rd phase of funding for a major renovation and expansion for the College of Business ($54 Million) was approved in 2008 while stage 1 planning for the central energy plant ($4.7 Million) and stage 2 funding for design work towards a Fine and Performing Arts building ($650 Thousand) were also approved. In addition the UW School of Energy Resources will receive new funding ($17.4 million) from the Abandoned Mine Lands funds.

Building, building, building
The construction at the University has necessitated periodic public updates on routes for walking, parking and driving. The hotel conference complex opened with regional competitions in Theater and Dance this spring. A newly completed transportation study suggested more public transportation and easily identified
walking and biking paths. To put this into context for those of you who are in urban states, the University of Wyoming only closed the core of campus in the past 5 years and the state expectation is still that residents should be able to drive up to the front of the building in which one works or studies. Buildings scheduled to be complete later this year are the remodeled honors house and the new information technology building.

No Wyoming Community College Commission report for May 2008

Transitions

Arizona State University changes:

Sarah Lindquist writes: After over 25 years of practicing or using institutional research, I am leaving the university setting. I have accepted a position in the development office at the Scottsdale Mayo Clinic to basically act like an assistant dean in a healthcare setting. The position title is office administrator which essentially means that you make things happen, make sure that nothing falls through the cracks, and be generally useful. I will not be a fundraiser but will be supporting the effort. I did not go looking for this job, but it found me and now I am quite jazzed about starting a new adventure at this stage of my career.

I will not be attending the Forum since the new job starts May 19th. My timing was really bad from that perspective. I do plan to request emeritus status in RMAIR and AIR when I explore the process. Who knows? I might want to pop into a conference in the future.

I have enjoyed working with you all and hope that our paths will cross again. If you are ever in Phoenix, please contact me. Best, Sarah (Lindquist)

Montana State University:

A big welcome to 2 new analysts. Deanna Tarum has joined the Office of Planning and Analysis at Montana State University as a research analyst. She is now knee deep in NCAA reports and Key Performance Indicators. Brandon Hardin recently migrated to OPA to program web applications for us. We’ve borrowed him from our Information Technology Center and hope they don’t ask for him back any time soon.

University of Texas promotions:

Dr. Nicolas A. Valcik, was promoted to Associate Director for the Office of Strategic Planning and Analysis and now has an academic appointment as well in the capacity of Clinical Assistant Professor for the Program of Public Affairs. Sharon Etheredge was promoted to Assistant Director for the Office of Strategic Planning and Analysis.

Wyoming Community College Commission:

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