

BFCC MAGPIE



OCTOBER 2025

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BFCC STUDENTS BRING 'NIITSITAPI-APPI' TO LIFE

The BFCC Student Senate had a great time putting together this year's Homecoming Parade float, which carried the theme "Guided by Tradition – Niitsitapi-appi." They would like to thank all the students and staff who helped decorate, plan, and show up on parade day. It was the first of many team efforts this year.

This year's Student Senate members are:

- President: Rylee Quesnelle
- Vice President: J'Vohn Lopez
- Secretary: Craig Reece
- Treasurer: La'Riah Scout
- Student Representative: Shaylee Heavyrunner

The Senate is already looking ahead to more activities this semester and would love to see more students get involved. Whether that's helping plan, lending a hand behind the scenes, or just showing up and participating, their presence is wanted. The focus of Student Senate this year is on student mental health, and they want to create events that give everyone a chance to connect, relax, and have some fun. Upcoming plans include a bake sale and a fall photo fundraiser, with more events to come.

Students who are interested in joining Student Senate activities can contact Elaine Littleplume at elaine.lp@bfcc.edu or 406.338.5441 ext. 2262.



PICTURED STUDENT SENATE MEMBERS: RYLEE, CRAIG, LA'RIAH, J'VOHN, SHAYLEE



STUDENTS RYLEE QUESNELLE, LA'RIAH SCOUT, COLTON SHARP, & CRAIG REECE HELPED WITH THE PARADE FLOAT

IMPORTANT DATES

- **OCTOBER 1-31:** SKETCHTOBER - MEDICINE SPRING LIBRARY
- **OCTOBER 3:** BEADED KEYCHAIN WORKSHOP - 9:00AM - 3:00PM - MEDICINE SPRING LIBRARY
- **OCTOBER 10:** RAWHIDE EARRINGS WORKSHOP - 9:00AM - 3:00PM - MEDICINE SPRING LIBRARY
- **OCTOBER 13:** BFCC CLOSED - INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY
- **OCTOBER 14:** SCHOLARSHIP DAY - 2:00 - 4:00PM - STUDENT LEARNING CENTER
- **OCTOBER 15:**
 - ELDER LUNCH - 11:00AM - 2:00PM - EAGLE SHIELDS
 - BLACKFOOT CONFEDERACY PUBLIC ART INITIATIVE INFORMATION SESSION - 6:00PM - 7:30PM - MEDICINE SPRING LIBRARY
- **OCTOBER 20:** LAND GRANT DAY
- **OCTOBER 21:** CRICUT WORKSHOP - 2:00 - 4:00PM - STUDENT LEARNING CENTER
- **OCTOBER 23:** BOOK CLUB KICKOFF - 4:30PM - 6:00PM - MEDICINE SPRING LIBRARY
- **OCTOBER 24:** RIBBON DRESS WORKSHOP - 9:00AM - 3:00PM - MEDICINE SPRING LIBRARY
- **OCTOBER 28:** FALLOWEEN FLING - 2:00 - 4:00PM - STUDENT COMMONS - WEAR YOUR COSTUMES!

USDA EXTENSION HOSTS FIRST EVENT IN NEW AG BUILDING

The USDA Tribal College Extension Program emphasizes youth development through coordination, confidence, safety, and technical knowledge—particularly in understanding Wildlife Sports Hunting and its deep cultural and spiritual significance to the Blackfeet Nation.

As part of our "Days of the Piikani" celebration, we proudly hosted our first event in the new Agriculture Extension Building. Morning prayers helped establish a safe and welcoming atmosphere, making this milestone not only a celebration of a new gathering space but also a renewed commitment to nurturing our community.

We believe that discipline—rooted in the traditional teachings of hunting—plays a vital role in developing self-confidence, personal responsibility, self-esteem, and sportsmanship. These values reinforce conservation and respect for the natural world, which are central to our cultural identity.

Thank you to all the schools and youth who participated in this important experience. A heartfelt thank you also goes to the dedicated BFCC staff, Facilities team, President Dr. Hall, Land Grant Programs and Institutional Development staff, Board Members, and USDA Interns. Your efforts made this event a success, and we look forward to many more to come in our new Ag Extension Building.

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FEATHER GAME RETURNS TO BFCC AFTER DECADES

For the first time since the 1980s, the Natoyiipitsikahsin (Feather Game or Holy Hand Game) was hosted at Blackfeet Community College during the Days of the Piikani. This sacred game brought together members from three bands of the Blackfoot Confederacy: Piikani, Siksika, and Amskapi Piikani, reconnecting the community with an important tradition that carries deep cultural and spiritual meaning. The event offered students, families, and community members a rare opportunity to witness and participate in the Feather Game, fostering a connection to Blackfeet heritage that many younger generations have not experienced. A traditional meal provided by the USDA Tribal College Extension Program helped bring everyone together in a welcoming and respectful environment. Special thanks go to the panel members: Jim Swag, Ronald Red Head Sr., Lyena Fish, Kent Ayounman, Marvin Weatherwax Jr., Gordan and Carolyn Little Mustache, and Noreen Plain Feather for their guidance. The game was hosted by Marvin Weatherwax Jr. and Melissa Weatherwax, with other bundle holders including Jaron Weasel Bear, Kaitlyn Yellow Horn, Kent and Linnie Ayounman, Brian Plain Eagle, Kyle Plain Eagle, and Josh and Frederick Horn. Local bundle holders, students, and community members were also invited to participate, strengthening the bond between generations.

Many of the young attendees were seeing the Feather Game for the first time, sparking curiosity, learning, and respect for this sacred tradition. All participants had the opportunity to be painted during the ceremony, including an elementary school class whose parents gave permission for them to join. The Knowledge Carriers Lodge expressed gratitude to the parents for allowing their children to participate and experience this meaningful cultural practice.

Rounds of the Feather Game continued into the evening, offering moments of reflection, connection, and shared understanding. The return of this game to BFCC was more than an event—it was a living reminder of the importance of passing down traditions, honoring our ancestors, and nurturing our community through shared cultural knowledge.



HONORING OUR LAND, OUR DUTY

BFCC recently held its annual Days of the Piikani, bringing together students, community members, and cultural leaders to celebrate the Blackfeet people's enduring connection to their ancestral lands. This year's theme, "Our Land, Our Duty," focused on environmental stewardship. As part of the celebration, high school and BFCC students had the opportunity to participate in Eco Flights over the reservation, reminding everyone of the privilege of living in such a beautiful place. Keeping our lands trash-free and protected was a goal shared throughout the event. The three-day celebration fed about 250 people and featured presenters including:

- Robert Hall – Blackfoot Language
- Sam Juneau – Subsistence Hunting
- Nico Matallana – Inni Biodiversity
- Catlin Smith – Blackfeet Eco-Knowledge
- Lea Whitford – 1855 Lame Bull Treaty

Participants also enjoyed hands-on demonstrations, traditional ceremonies, and workshops in horsemanship, mountain packing, archery, media training, and the Natoyiipitsikahsin (Holy Hand Game) ceremony. The event offered youth and community members a unique opportunity to connect with Blackfeet traditions, sacred lands, and environmental responsibility.

Hosted by: Blackfeet Community College LifeLong Learning Center

Sponsors: Blackfeet Culture Camp, BFCC Knowledge Carriers Lodge, USDA Tribal College Extension Program, USDA Institutional Development

For more information about the event and future celebrations, visit the Blackfeet Community College website or contact the LifeLong Learning Center.



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BFCC REPRESENTS AT INDIGENOUS FORUM IN JAPAN

BFCC was represented at the International Indigenous Peoples Forum 2025, held in Biratori Town-Nibutani, Hokkaido, Japan. The event was hosted by the Ainu community, the Indigenous people of northern Japan who have long worked to protect and revitalize their language, cultural traditions, and deep connection to the land. The overall theme for this year's forum was "Environmental and Landscape Conservation and Cultural Tourism through Indigenous Participation."

Paula Bremner, Multimedia Communications Specialist, attended on behalf of BFCC and presented on the college's work in New Forms of Tourism and the Revival and Creation of Culture through Indigenous Participation. Her presentation highlighted the Piikani Studies program, workshops, CEUs, and community events, along with BFCC's partnership with Glacier National Park and ongoing marketing efforts that promote culture and education together.

The forum brought together participants from 40 Indigenous communities worldwide, including representatives from Japan, Taiwan, New Zealand, Finland, Wales, Hawaii, and Quebec. Discussions focused on protecting cultural landscapes, developing sustainable tourism practices, and creating new opportunities that honor Indigenous worldviews. Bremner noted that many groups are developing creative and interpretive ways to weave traditional knowledge into tourism, ensuring their cultural teachings are shared authentically and with integrity.

"Although each of our communities faces unique challenges, we also share many of the same experiences and hopes," Bremner reflected. "Even though we come from different parts of the world, our ceremonies, values, and ways of connecting to the land are deeply similar. There's a shared strength among Indigenous peoples, to protect our heritage, maintain our identity, and continue our resilience."

The gathering reaffirmed the importance of cultural revitalization, environmental stewardship, and global collaboration, strengthening Indigenous voices across continents. For BFCC, participating in this international exchange not only fostered new relationships but also reinforced the college's mission to preserve and share Blackfeet knowledge within the broader Indigenous world.



REMEMBERING THE IMPACT OF 9/11

On September 30, Blackfeet Community College held a meaningful day of reflection, made possible through a Student Success grant. For many students, 9/11 is a history they didn't personally experience, making this a valuable opportunity to learn about how the tragedy affected communities—even here on our reservation.

The day began with a warm breakfast of pancakes, sausage, and eggs, followed by red wieners for lunch, provided with help from Healthy Colleges Montana. Sharing meals helped set the tone for a program centered on community and remembrance.

MC Robert DesRosier guided the event, and Marvin Weatherwax offered an opening prayer. Former council members Ervin Carlson and Titus Upham shared personal stories and reflections on the lasting impact of 9/11, offering perspective and insight for all attendees.

Thanks to Gerald Last Star and Craig Reece for cooking, and to Rachel Wells-Hoyt, Karen Davis, Gail Bird Rattler, Dan Wagner, and Randy Running Rabbit Jr. for helping make the day possible.

It was a powerful reminder of the importance of unity, resilience, and supporting one another in times of hardship.



PARTICIPATE IN SKETCHTOBER

Celebrate 31 days of drawing fun this October with Medicine Spring Library! Each day has a creative theme — from Apple to Halloween — with Blackfeet translations to inspire your sketches. How to share your art:

- Tag Medicine Spring Library on Facebook
- Share your sketch on our daily Facebook posts
- Email your drawing to library@bfcc.edu

Everyone is welcome — students, staff, and community members. Draw as often as you like and be entered into a prize drawing at the end of the month!

October Daily Themes: Apple, Leaf, Pumpkin, Owl, Wolf, Spider, Corn, Moon, Acorn, Scarecrow, Bat, Candle, Mushroom, Fox, Maple Leaf, Ghost, Feather, Sun, Pumpkin Patch, Creepy Tree, Crow, Lantern, Candy, Hat, Spider Web, Raven, Mummy, Owl Eyes, Harvest, Moonlit Night, Halloween

Let's make October colorful and creative — share your Sketchtober spirit with us!

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ANNOUNCEMENT: INTERIM FINANCIAL AID DIRECTOR

Blackfeet Community College is pleased to announce that Desiree Lopez Brown has stepped into the role of Interim Financial Aid Director, effective Monday, September 29, 2025. Students seeking assistance with financial aid, scholarships, or related questions should now reach out to Desiree for guidance and support.

Contact Information:

- Email: desiree.bl@bfcc.edu
- Phone: 406-338-5441 ext. 2246
- Financial aid forms: fin_aid@bfcc.edu
- General campus help: askbcc@bfcc.edu (please include a specific subject line)

Desiree and the Financial Aid team are committed to helping students navigate their financial aid options and succeed in their academic goals. Please join us in welcoming her to this leadership role!

2025 MEDICINE SPRING LIBRARY ART SHOW WINNERS

The Medicine Spring Library Art Show showcased amazing creativity from students, staff, and community members. Thank you to everyone who participated, supported, and helped make the event a success!

Winners by Category:

- Beadwork: 1st Joseph Rutherford, 2nd Paula Bremner, 3rd Morgan Sellars
- Leatherwork: 1st Butch Conway, 2nd Regina Still Smoking, 3rd Geraldine Oscar
- Drawing: 1st Isabella LaPlant, 2nd Amelia LaPlant, 3rd Vernon Marceau
- Painting: 1st Ernest Marceau, 2nd Melisa Trombley, 3rd Isabella LaPlant
- Photography: 1st Eli Old Chief, 2nd Mona Kipling, 3rd J'Vohn Lopez
- Textiles: Tie 1st Paula Bremner & Kimberly Old Chief, 2nd Lola Wippert
- Three-Dimensional: 1st Craig Reece, 2nd Krue Kemmer, 3rd Adrien Wagner
- People's Choice: Regina Still Smoking
- Quick Draw: J'Vohn Lopez

Art Show Highlights:

- 32 artists shared their creativity with the community
- 59 art entries across beadwork, leatherwork, drawing, painting, photography, textiles, and three-dimensional art
- 121 community votes plus 482 online reactions for People's Choice
- \$1,675 awarded in prizes to recognize outstanding work
- \$2,500 raised/donated to support future art shows

The Library is exploring a permanent time for future shows — watch for upcoming surveys and updates so you can help shape the next event!

INTERESTED IN APPLYING TO MEDICAL SCHOOL?

BFCC students and community members are invited to attend the Montana WWAMI PreMed Summit on Friday, October 25, 2025, from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM at Missoula College, 1205 E Broadway, Missoula. This event is designed for those preparing for or considering a career in medicine.

What is WWAMI?

WWAMI is a regional medical education program run by the University of Washington School of Medicine, serving Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho. It allows students to complete portions of their medical education close to home while earning a University of Washington medical degree. The program emphasizes training physicians for rural and underserved communities, making it a great pathway for students interested in practicing medicine in Montana and neighboring states.

Who should attend?

- Rising sophomores, juniors, and seniors in good academic standing
- PreMed Advisors
- Post-baccalaureate students
- Anyone interested in a career in medicine

Past Summit Topics Include:

- Components of the medical school application
- Creating a personal statement
- A "day in the life" of a Montana WWAMI medical student
- Mock interviews
- Breakout sessions on TRUST, MD/PhD programs, loan/financing options, military participation, and undergraduate research experience
- Guidance from current Montana WWAMI students and PreMed Advisors

Contact Information:

- Drs. Jay Erickson and Serena Brewer, Montana WWAMI Clinical Deans
- Lisa Benzal, Outgoing TRUST Director
- Sara Houston, Incoming TRUST Director
- Phone: 406-660-0246
- Email: lisabenz@uw.edu / houston3@uw.edu

For more information about the Montana WWAMI PreMed Summit and program details, visit the website:

https://www.montana.edu/wwami/prospective_students/mc_atsummit_premedsommit/premedsommit.html (QR code link to website will continue to be updated)

Take advantage of this opportunity to learn about medical school, network with advisors and students, and prepare for your path in medicine!

Scan the QR code with your phone camera to bring you to the link!

