

Expansion of Your Successful Campus Program

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A narrative to accompany the slide presentation

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 - Specifically about MOLLI
 - o Received funding 1.5 years ago
 - o Very short history, i.e. had first program in Winter 06, funded in August 06
 - o Offer three 6-week terms per year, fall-winter-spring
 - o Pay instructors
 - o Have Council, two committees: Program and Marketing & Membership
 - The mission of MOLLI is to provide innovative, intellectually focused programs that serve older adults in western Montana.
 - Wherever possible, collaboration with other Missoula and Montana groups is pursued.
 - Originally we anticipated that these non-credit programs would use a variety of delivery formats including online and technology assisted methods including interactive video networks, public television and radio, but thus far, we've only offered face to face in multiple sites
 - Courses are offered in the arts; humanities; western and rural studies; Indigenous peoples of Montana; the environment; current events
 - The University of Montana is located in Missoula, a place long noted for its unique blend of rural wilderness coupled with strong interests in the arts and humanities.
 - Missoula is a relatively small city that provides numerous opportunities to engage in formal and informal learning for students of all ages, particularly given its size.
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 - Kinds of teachers:
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 - Current members: 741
 - Spring enrollments: 421
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 - Discussion about Montana
 - o 4th largest state [28th]
 - o 44th in population [10th]
 - o Classified as a "frontier state" with 6.19 persons per square mile
 - o The rural nature of the state creates many challenges for accessing higher education, particularly for older adults.
 - o According to projections released by the U.S. Census Bureau, the number of people in the 65 and older age group living in Montana will more than double in the next thirty years, bringing it to 25.8% of the population or fifth in the nation
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 - Nearest towns: Dillon, Choteau, Big Fork, Butte—all of whom are well over 100 miles away
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 - Narrowed down to potential expansion sites:
 - o FVCC @ Kalispell = 110 miles
 - o MTech @ Butte = 120 miles
 - o Bitterroot MOLLI = 50 miles
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 - Share what our current members are saying:
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 - Current events/middle east: probably our most popular
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 - We do a lot in the arts, but Steven and Barbara teach to some of our larger audiences
 - Both are concert pianists and enormously talented
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 - We also try to focus on subjects that are of interest to Montanans
 - Former multiple-term representative to Congress, Pat Williams, talked about his experiences in developing the policies that have, over the years, impacted Montana's wilderness areas

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 - On our public television station which is co sponsored by UM and MSU, one of the favorite homegrown shows is the *Backroads of Montana*. In this course, the “star” of the program, William Marcus shared how they made *Backroads*
 - For the last class invited interested students to put forward their ideas for a segment, one of which will be selected for actual development

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 - I missed our WOW session for Kali, but this is what I was going to submit
 - We provided a “free” event for our members which was a 3 part segment consisting of two lectures about the music and the orchestra followed by a special session with the orchestra during dress rehearsal
 - Over 100 participants
 - Fabulous time: read quote
 - Darko is new conductor, very young and very talented and enthusiastic

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 - Noted earlier, we have one outreach site at the Daly Mansion in Hamilton
 - In our original proposal to the Osher Foundation, we included in both the plan and the budget, the idea that we would start a program in Hamilton immediately if funded
 - Missoula is a vibrant community of 65,000 people, the second largest in Montana. Nestled in the Rocky Mountains, it is one of the west's more progressive smaller cities with a relatively diverse economic base that includes education, health care, government, small businesses, tourism and timber. Within a few miles of Missoula, outdoor enthusiasts can experience several recreational opportunities in the millions of acres of wilderness and recreation areas, during all four seasons.
 - By contrast, Hamilton is a small community of 15,000 people, located 50 miles south of Missoula, it has a high percentage of people over 55.
 - Demographically, there is an interesting mix:
 - o Very wealthy individuals living in gated communities, most of whom are in the valley for short periods during the year
 - o Long-time, conservative residents who are largely employed in service jobs
 - o Home of the Rocky Mountain Research Laboratory, a federally funded group of researchers who make the claim that Hamilton has the largest number of PhD's than anywhere else in the state.

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 - Daly Mansion is affiliated with The University of Montana
 - Originally built in 1910, it was the summer home of Marcus Daly who owned the Anaconda Company located in and around Butte, Montana
 - Mansion was boarded up many years ago and suffered an untold amount of damage.
 - Local committee was formed to initiate a fund-raising drive including gifts, endowments, federal grants, etc.
 - Over the past 5 years, the Mansion has been lovingly restored and all of its rooms are now furnished in period pieces that have recaptured the spirit of the home
 - With strong support from the President of UM as well as the Vice President for University Relations, I met on several occasions with the Executive Director and the Board of Directors to assess their interest in partnering with us, including discussing what each of us would bring to the table

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 - The Mansion offered us location and very nice meeting rooms that were historically preserved yet accessible to the public.
 - Our primary lectures are housed in the Trophy Room
 - Larger courses are held in the Billiard Room

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 - Essentially, our partnership divided responsibilities in this manner:
 - We agreed to develop the program, provide most administration and marketing while having one of their board members sit as a non-voting member of our Council
 - In turn, they agreed to rent us their facility
 - Provide some assistance with marketing including
 - o being mentioned in their newsletter as a “partner”

- assisting with presentations at service clubs
- This past fall, we modified the agreement and identified a local committee of 5 members to direct program development with the hope of taking advantage of the large numbers of scientists in the area

- 18 - In terms of marketing, here is a list of things that we have put into play related to Bitterroot MOLLI
 - We experienced very light turnout at the two open-houses, averaging about thirty attendees. Given the associated expenses, we have decided to forego these in the future
 - Another “new” experiment we have put into play is offering their significant number of volunteers a \$10 discount on courses they take. Whether or not this had an impact on enrollments remains to be seen, although, over-all they rose by 22 individuals this spring.

- 19 - Here are some examples of the Bitterroot marketing ads
 - We went so far as to have a billboard for the many commuters from Hamilton to see. I’m pretty sure we wasted our money on that one

- 20 - In regards to enrollments, here is the history
 - A year ago, we offered two courses
 - Rafael: art history professor, very engaging
 - AJ Gibson was the architect for the rebuilding of the Mansion plus he had designed several other houses and public buildings in the area
 - As one might expect, the students were very well versed and, in the end, took Rafael around the community to share these
 - Because of its focus, we were pleased at the enrollments [33]
 - In the fall, as you can see, we offered three courses and had a disappointing turnout. [33]
 - It was after this that I met with the Executive Director and we decided to cancel the winter courses to give us more advertising time as well as to identify a local group to help plan the programs
 - Courses just started this week, on Monday and Tuesday, and we are pleased that we have increased enrollments [55]
 - One thing that surprised us was the response to Rafael as he had had such a good response before—we are guessing it was the topic, but we really don’t know for sure.
 - Dave Emmons’ topic is directly involved with the Mansion and Marcus Daly, so we are not surprised at this response
 - Harry Fritz is one of UM’s greatest showmen—he often shows up at lectures dressed like Lincoln, complete with stovepipe hat—therefore we were not surprised at this, either.
 - In reviewing Esther’s diminishing numbers, we may have stayed too long at the dance with that subject

- 21 - As you can see on the next slide, we have gone from losing \$3,350 on the first session to \$6,250
 - From a practical point of view, this is untenable and both the Executive Director and I are aware of the fact that something has to change or we will have to drop the program
 - We are encouraged, however, that we have 22 more people this spring
 - If this upward trend continues, the program actually may become solvent

- 22 - In spite of low turnout, our Bitterroot MOLLI students are very happy with their courses
 - The problem may well be that we need to do much more advertising, although all of our experiences teach us that word of mouth is the best tool in our kit

- 23 - In reviewing the issues with the program you can see they are:
 - Low enrollment resulting in loss of money
 - Population base is too small to support a program
 - Location of the Daly Mansion which sits on the very edge of town on a busy highway
 - Lack of transportation
 - Competition from the local Adult Learning CenterNot sure which one or all is responsible, but will continue one more term this fall

- 24 - In our relatively limited experience with one program, we feel we have learned a lot
- As we consider going to Kalispell and Butte for further extension of the program, we will be more formally focused on these things:
- Community readiness:
i.e. what is the population base and what percentage is in the "Seasoned Adult" stage of life.
Are there competing programs that would preclude our getting sufficient response?
Is this a community that values intellectual pursuits?
 - Community Partner:
Is there an academic unit or a strong community based organization with whom we could work to help sponsor the program?
 - If these two things are present, then it is essential to develop a written business plan or a memo of understanding to clearly spell out the responsibilities of each partner including both financial and time commitments
 - Monitoring success, or lack thereof, on an annual basis is essential to ensure the optimum development of the program
- 25 - In closing, although Montana's one extended program has had a somewhat tenuous existence thus far, I remain convinced that this kind of outreach in a state as large, yet as rural as Montana, is essential and is worth the time, money and effort involved in support.
- 26 - Discussion period

Respectfully submitted,

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