



# Expanding Horizons

The Newsletter of International Programs at  
The University of Montana, Missoula, MT, April 2004

## Montana World Trade Center Organizes Successful Trade Missions By Megan Harrington, Montana World Trade Center, Gallagher Business Building

The Montana World Trade Center (MWTC), located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Gallagher Business Building, is a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to help businesses establish and strengthen their international commercial capabilities. MWTC holds the unique attribute of being the only World Trade Center (WTC) housed at a university, which provides incredible opportunities to tap in-house resources and offer students real-world international business experience.

Several international adventures have produced favorable results for Montana companies interested in pursuing international markets. From the green fields of **Ireland** to the Great Wall of **China** to the Outback of **Australia**, the Wild West is on the map.

**IRELAND/UK:** MWTC and the U.S. Department of Commerce's highly successful trade mission to Ireland in July 2003 resulted in more than \$5 million in sales and up to ten new jobs in Montana. Omega II hot tubs currently sends a container-load of product a week to London for distribution throughout Europe, while Peanotz, Inc. signed a \$1 million distribution contract and sent its first container to London in December 2003. Neither company had previous export experience. The start of the trade mission coincided with the opening of a Montana art exhibit at the Bank of Ireland Cultural Center in Dublin. The exhibit traveled the country for another six months, closing in January 2004. In total, more than \$75,000 worth of Montana art was sold. MWTC is receiving national recognition for its innovative efforts to increase business trade opportunities by combining art and cultural activities within a trade mission.

**CHINA:** MWTC Executive Director Arnold Sherman was invited by Senator Baucus to travel to Japan, China and Thailand as part of a U.S. Senate Finance Committee trade visit. The trip, which took place March 14 to 21, was coordinated by the Mansfield Foundation. Mr. Sherman's goal was to establish relationships in China that would help serve clients of MWTC. Meetings with the mayors of Beijing and Shanghai, the Minister of Commerce, the Vice Minister of Agriculture, COFKO (the Chinese ag buying organization), and other political and government officials highlighted the trip. As a result of the visit, several business ventures for Montana companies are being considered.



**Top:** Representatives from Sparky, Inc., a company that sells roping machines out of Conrad, in Palmerston North, New Zealand

**Right:** Monte Dolack explains his art to an interested buyer in Dublin during the Ireland/UK trade mission



**AUSTRALIA/NEW ZEALAND:** MWTC and the U.S. Department of Commerce combined resources again, leading a trade mission to New Zealand and Australia March 26 to April 2. Five businesses sent representatives to meet with potential buyers, sales representatives, and business partners. These targeted meetings, together with opportunities to meet with important officials, proved invaluable for participating businesses. Similar to the Ireland/UK trade mission, the event officially started with the opening of a Montana art exhibit in Missoula's sister city, Palmerston North, New Zealand. Eight Native American tribes were represented, as well as other contemporary Montana artists. Missoula Mayor Mike Kadas, Palmerston North's mayor, and the U.S. Ambassador to New Zealand all were featured speakers.

# School of Business Administration to Offer International Business Option Beginning Fall 2004

By Aaron Andreason, Professor, Management and Marketing

The School of Business Administration at The University of Montana has moved forward in recent years to increasingly internationalize its curriculum. This includes the addition of international topics to many of its core courses and a strong representation of international students as majors. In addition, business majors may choose the International Business Option which provides them with the opportunity to focus on the managerial, economic, cultural, and social dimensions that will prepare them for functioning in the international business community.

Students who choose this option tend to be high achieving students who are interested in foreign languages and cultures. The International Business option requires a minimum of four semesters, or the equivalent, of a foreign language, and these students frequently double major or minor in a foreign language. Under proposed changes to this option these students will also be required to complete one of the other business options, which are: management, marketing, finance, information systems and accounting. This will ensure that they will be fully prepared in at least one of the other fundamental business option areas as well.

Required courses in the International Business option include: a foundation course in International Business (Mgmt 368), Cross-cultural Management (Mgmt 480), Multinational Financial Management (Fin 473), World Trade and Commerce (Mgmt 465) and a Seminar in Contemporary International Issues (Mgmt 485). Students are also required to take 9 credits of internationally-focused courses across campus which are approved by the international business advisor, an international exchange, or an international internship.

International business option students are encouraged to learn experientially by studying or finding internships abroad.

The Montana World Trade Center, located in the Gallagher Business Building, gives students an opportunity to work with regional businesses that are expanding their markets into foreign countries. This kind of emphasis on

practical experience is the hallmark of the UM business program, which also includes at the graduate level: a Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.), Master of Accountancy (M. Acct), joint J.D./M.B.A. and joint M.B.A./Pharm.D.

## MLS Modules to be added to SOBA Curriculum By Udo Fluck, Director of Multicultural Learning Solutions (MLS), International Programs

Starting this coming fall semester, the School of Business Administration will offer Multicultural Learning Solutions (MLS), an online supplement focusing on expanding global-mindedness and multicultural thinking in students. To succeed in today's global environment, students increasingly need to complement their academic and career learning with the multicultural skills that allow them to understand and work with people from diverse countries. The supplements will be offered to business students as an attachment to the traditional courses 'International Business' and 'Cross-Cultural Management', according to Nader Shoostari, Chair, Management Department at UM.

Everybody is ethnocentric by nature, the trick is to decrease the levels and keep it in a healthy balance. In an experiment in 2003, the initial online supplement prototype reduced levels of ethnocentricity in participating students. This prototype served as a foundation for the design of other multicultural online learning supplements at International Programs (IP). "At IP, multicultural supplements are developed to assist international students and scholars to adapt to the American culture. Supplements are also currently planned to prepare UM students and faculty for their cultural adjustments, participating in our exchange programs abroad," according to Mehrdad Kia, Assistant Vice President for Research and Director of IP.

Learning environments can have a big impact on the growth or the reduction of ethnocentrism in a student. In order to reduce ethnocentrism, the student needs to be 'internationalized' or 'multiculturalized', to understand and appreciate different cultures. MLS has the potential to empower students to become more enlightened global citizens. Students receive an excellent 'hard skill' education on this campus, however 'global mindedness' and 'multicultural awareness' are more like a form of 'behavior', an 'attitude', or a 'soft skill', that is difficult to teach in a traditional class, that focuses primarily on factual, hard content.

Future managers will need to be aware of the similarities and differences that exist when conducting business with and in other countries. Graduates need to be able to distinguish between those procedures that can be successfully transferred to business settings abroad and those that require modifications.

Given today's uncertain worldwide environment, any steps that move us forward toward greater understanding of other cultures and help bring us closer together as members of the international community need to be encouraged and supported in higher education. Offering a hybrid of traditional classroom and online instruction to students at the School of Business Administration at UM is a step in the right direction. More information about MLS is available at [www.umt.edu/mls](http://www.umt.edu/mls)



# International Symposium on Macro and Supramolecular Architectures and Materials to be held at UM

The 2<sup>nd</sup> International Symposium on Macro- and Supramolecular Architectures and Materials (MAM-04): Functional and Nano-Systems is to be held at The University of Montana from June 13 to 17, 2004. The symposium will bring together scientists from around the world to present scientific and technological findings that relate to the areas of polymer chemistry (macromolecular) and extended molecular networks (supramolecular).

This is the second symposium of a rotating site conference. The first symposium, MAM-02, was held at the Kwangju Institute of Science and Technology in South Korea, which is rated as the top technological academic institution in South Korea. The meeting was organized by Professor Kurt Geckeler, Director of the Materials Science Center at that institution. Professor Geckeler spent the 2002-03 academic year as a Visiting Professor in the UM Department of Chemistry's laboratory and thought Missoula would be a perfect venue for the second MAM meeting. The upcoming symposium is co-chaired by Professor Geckeler and Professor Ed Rosenburg of UM's Department of Chemistry.

The theme of the first meeting emphasized biological applications while this meeting will emphasize applications to nanotechnology and functional materials of the polymers and supramolecular structures. The structural motif of the meeting helps to bring together a wide range of scientists including engineers, organic, inorganic and physical chemists as well as material scientists. This interdisciplinary approach nicely complements the more common professional society-oriented meetings. Moreover, this meeting will give the research and the educational environment in Montana exposure to a wide range of scientific investigators from around the globe.

Two hundred to two hundred fifty participants from various countries are expected to attend the conference. The response to the call for papers has been impressive with over one hundred abstracts received so far from all over the world. An exciting group of plenary and invited speakers have accepted invitations to attend the meeting and the single session venue will maximize interactions and exposure of the Montana-based research presented at the meeting.

## Experiencing Vietnam: An Academic, Travel and Service Course By Amy Esp, Office for Civic Engagement

For fall semester 2004, the Office for Civic Engagement is partnering with Liberal Studies, Social Work and The Davidson Honors College, to offer a new and unique service learning, study abroad course for UM students.

The first part of the course will prepare students for travel and service in Vietnam. In September and October, students in the class will participate in weekly seminars covering various aspects of Vietnam, including history, social issues, the American War, politics, economics, and more. These seminars will include readings, media presentations, discussions and guest lectures from various faculty and community members.

Travel to Vietnam will then take place for three weeks in November. Students will travel together to Hanoi, Vietnam's capital city. The group will travel extensively around Hanoi and up into the north near the Chinese border. They will visit cultural and historical sites and volunteer with a medical aid and humanitarian organization called Project Vietnam ([www.projectvietnam.net](http://www.projectvietnam.net)). During the volunteer service, students will have the chance to interact directly with individuals in some of the most poverty stricken areas of Vietnam. During their travel students will join in reflection exercises and discussions to tie their previous coursework with what they are experiencing and observing in their travels. Upon returning to UM, students will complete their coursework with a final project/presentation of their experience.

The two-credit course will be listed as SW 495 and LS 495 and will offer Honors credit as well. Starting on April 5<sup>th</sup>, applications and information will be available at the Office for Civic Engagement in Social Science 126. We realize that some students may need to arrange to be absent from their other courses during the travel. We will work with these students to facilitate this with their faculty. If you have questions about this or anything else with this course, please contact Amy in the OCE at 243-5128 or [amy.esp@mso.umt.edu](mailto:amy.esp@mso.umt.edu).



