

An Investment That Works For Montana

HB 540 and the Advancement of Colleges of Technology

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**MONTANA STATE
UNIVERSITY-BILLINGS
COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY**

Spring 2005

Based on the 2002/03 Planning Study funded by the 57th Legislature.

Access the study in its entirety at:

www.msubillings.edu/facilityservices/COT%20study.pdf

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Access & Excellence

THE PLAN

Renovation and construction as outlined in the long range planning study will clearly position the MSU-Billings College of Technology to significantly expand and more efficiently operate its two-year and certificate allied health programs. The effect on workforce preparation for Billings and the greater Yellowstone region would be significant. HB 540 allows for:

- » Renovation of 29,000 square feet within the existing facility
- » Construction of 32,000 square feet of new instructional space
- » A new path toward opportunity for students and the Billings community for expanded workforce training
- » Opportunity to build new partnerships in the Yellowstone Valley, including additional Billings Job Service location.



"Bresnan Communications is a growing company with a steady need for strong, well-prepared operational support technicians. We look to the MSU-Billings College of Technology to provide us with talent that can help our company grow. We strongly support the Computer Technology Programs at COT!"

— Allan Leishman, Call Center Manager
for Bresnan Communications,
January, 2005



THE OPPORTUNITY

The primary access service area for Montana State University-Billings is approximately a 120-mile radius from around the city. The most recent census estimates that this area's population is about 133,000. The area is also home to three major oil refineries, two regional health care facilities and numerous regional banking and technology companies.

- » Of the 591,000 Montana residents who are 25 or older, about 249,000 have a high school degree, equivalency or less.
- » Workforce development tuition and fees charged at colleges of technology are typically less than those charged on four-year campuses, making it more affordable .
- » Jobs requiring technical training (as a percentage of all jobs) have shifted from 20% in 1950 to 65% in today's economy.
- » Two-year programs are known for fostering strong relationships with businesses through active advisory committees, resulting in current and relevant curricula.
- » Expansion at the MSU-Billings College of Technology can assist area high school students through dual enrollment and other programs.
- » The MSU-Billings COT currently has a 96% graduate placement rate in its programs and is uniquely positioned to fill Montana's workforce needs in the future.



"I have always been intrigued by refineries. So when I reached the top of the ladder at my past job, I made the decision to attend the College of Technology's process plant program. The program was very demanding, but with persistence and hard work, I was able to make it through the program and start my career in the refinery."

— Brianne Hefty, 2003 Process Plant Technology graduate now working at ConocoPhillips

