



UNIVERSITY OF  
MONTANA

Missoula  
MT Tech  
Helena  
Western

MONTANA STATE  
UNIVERSITY

Bozeman  
Billings  
Great Falls  
Northern

COMMUNITY  
COLLEGES

Dawson  
Flathead Valley  
Miles

# COLLEGE! NOW

Montana's Initiative to Increase  
Montanans' Postsecondary Credentials

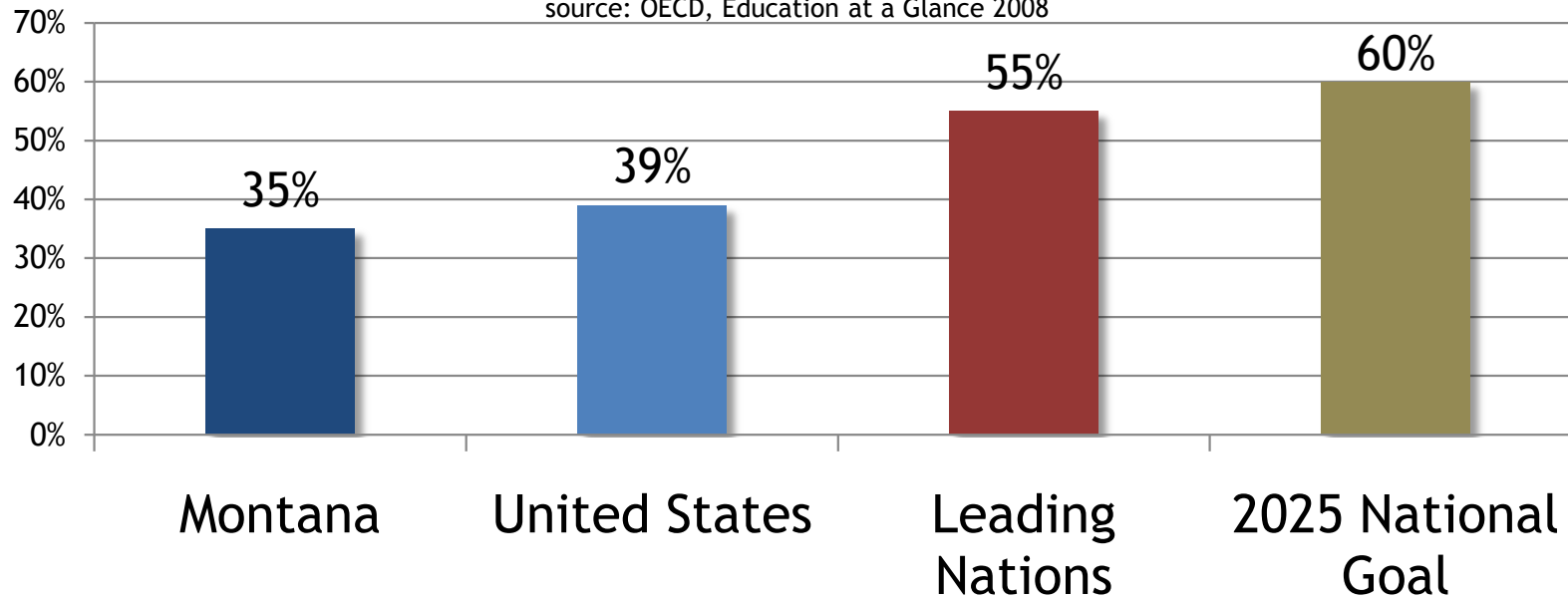


# GOAL: INCREASE DEGREE ATTAINMENT

## Young Adult Degree Attainment, 2008

Ages 25-34 with Associate's Degree or Higher

source: OECD, Education at a Glance 2008



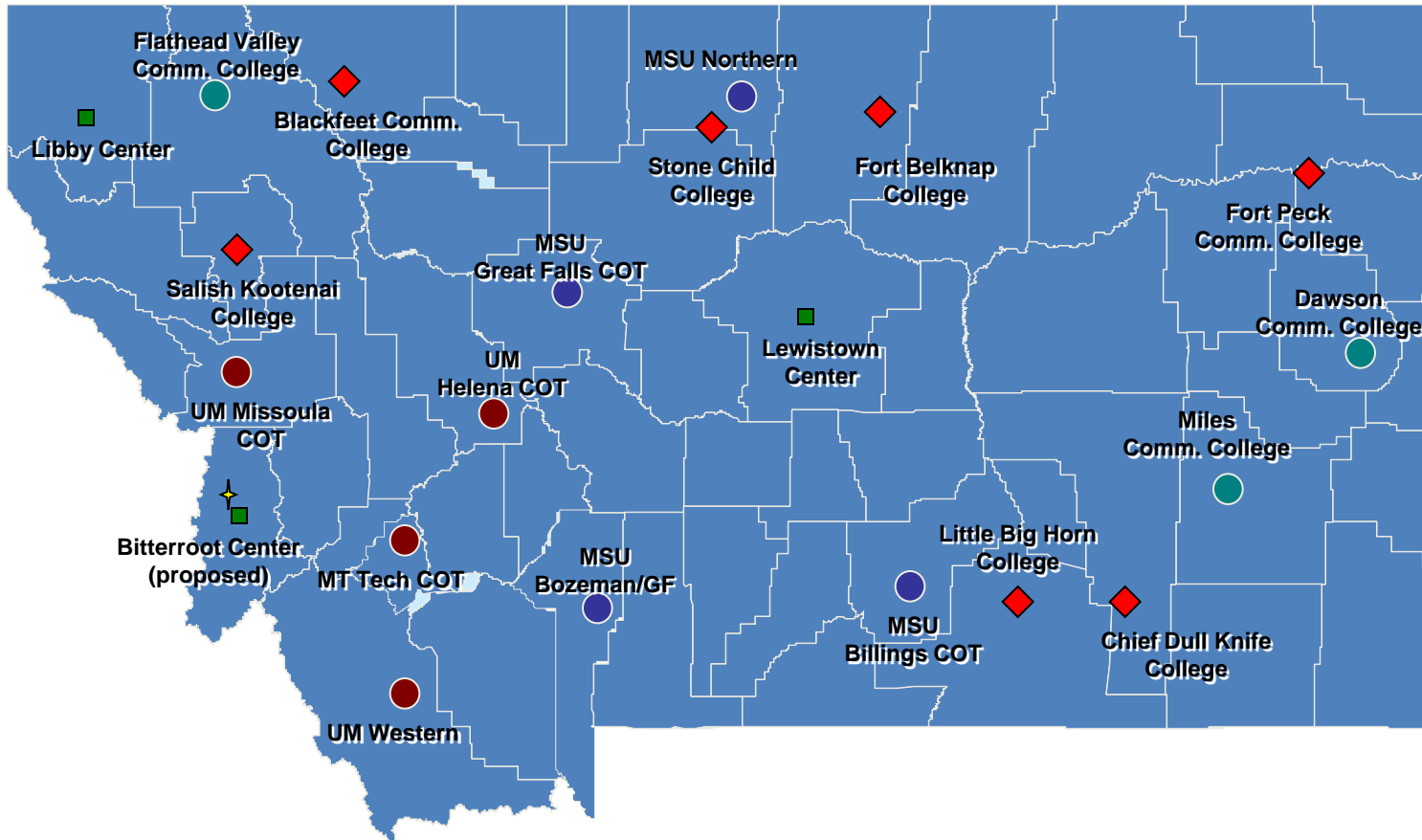
- Montana, as well as the entire United States, trails behind leading nations in the percentage of young adults with a higher education credential.
- In order to keep pace with leading nations, the U.S. must produce 16 million more degree recipients above its projected output (48 million) by 2025.

# COLLEGE! NOW

## Montana's Two-Year Education Initiative

- ◉ a focus on Montana's two-year colleges as the way to increase the number of Montanans who complete a college credential
- ◉ a shared commitment of Montana's university system, K-12 leaders, business and community leaders, legislators, and the governor's office
- ◉ an effort to combine new approaches and new technology to make Montana's two-year colleges even more accessible, student-responsive, and affordable
- ◉ the result of a significant investment by the State of Montana (HB 645) and a major national foundation (Lumina Foundation for Education), as well as a long-term commitment of the Board of Regents

# UNTAPPED RESOURCE



# WHY COLLEGE - WHY NOW?

- ◉ **Montana's two-year colleges are not being used to their full potential.**
  - Just under 25% of Montana college students attend two-year institutions, compared with nearly 50% in Western states. Of particular concern is the under-enrollment of two age groups:
    - **Adult students** -- only 3% of Montana's adults are engaged in college coursework, the lowest rate in the West. Montana enrolls the lowest percentage of adults (25+ years) in higher education
    - **High school students** -- less than 2.5% of Montana high school aged students engage in dual enrollment opportunities, the lowest rate in the western states.

# WHY COLLEGE ! NOW?

**Montana cannot afford to keep doing “business as usual”  
in higher education.**

- Tuition and fees for students at Montana’s two-year colleges are 61% of the four-year colleges’ tuition and fees, compared with an average of 43% for states in the West.
- We say we want “seamlessness,” but we preserve silos:
  - K-12/higher education
  - Two-year college/four-year university
  - Campus/System
- With limited resources and growing enrollments, Montana’s two-year colleges must work together to operate as efficiently as possible by:
  - coordinating curriculum
  - sharing technological resources
  - aligning business practices

# STRATEGY #1

**Bring the community college mission to all two-year colleges to improve access, especially for target populations**

## **Activities:**

- Bring Adult Basic Literacy Education programs and services to all two-year campuses.
- House developmental education in Montana's two-year colleges and identify best practices, especially for adult students.
- Bring the transfer mission to all two-year colleges.
- Develop adult-friendly program delivery.

# STRATEGY #2

**Deploy Montana's two-year colleges as regional hubs for adult access, high school to college transitions, workforce responsiveness.**

## **Activities:**

- Engage business and industry in implementing best practices in workforce responsiveness.
- With the K-12 sector, establish a comprehensive approach to transitioning from high school to college, including dual enrollment policies and protocols.
- Establish Montana's two-year colleges as the portals to dual enrollment opportunities in their region and develop a "virtual community college" to broaden access.



# ZOOM IN: HIGH SCHOOL TRANSITIONS

## Communicating clearly about college readiness

- Aligning foundational requirements for degree programs leading to the same career.
- Clarifying the proficiencies in language, mathematics, and science needed for specific programs of study
- Providing K-12 counselors with helpful advising tools.

# ZOOM IN: HIGH SCHOOL TRANSITIONS

**Providing pathways for successful transition from high school to college**

- MCIS as an advising/career education tool.
- Programs of study transitioning students from high school to college
- Standard practices for AP, Tech Prep, dual enrollment

# ZOOM IN: HIGH SCHOOL TRANSITIONS

**Create a more equitable, affordable,  
high-quality dual enrollment landscape**

- Consistent pricing
- Quality controls
- Online access
- Policies and practices to support student success

# STRATEGY #3

**Coordinate curriculum and technology to expand access, promote readiness and completion, and improve efficiencies.**

## Activities:

- ⦿ Bring the community colleges onto Banner.
- ⦿ Integrate information systems on MSU and UM campuses.
- ⦿ Align related instruction in workforce programs.
- ⦿ Identify a streamlined “Regents Transfer Core” with articulations to high-demand baccalaureate majors.
- ⦿ Use course-sharing and resource-sharing through a consortium approach to the “virtual community college” featuring adult-friendly programming and dual enrollment opportunities.

# STRATEGY #4

**Develop performance-based funding strategies.**

## **Activities:**

- Identify performance metrics relevant to productivity at the two-year college.
- Identify performance metrics relevant to productivity at the four-year colleges.
- Implement a funding model for the Montana University System that rewards productivity.

# COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

## **Promote two-year education.**

- ⦿ Improve the perception of two-year institutions and programs.
- ⦿ Raise awareness of and interest in new two-year opportunities and programs created as a result of the College!Now initiative, especially among K-12 educators/leaders, students/parents, prospective adult students, business/community leaders, and the media.
- ⦿ Build support for and ownership of a policy agenda for a more accessible and affordable system of two-year education.

# COLLEGE! NOW - STRATEGIES

- #1 Offer basic two-year college services - transfer degrees, workforce degrees, developmental education, GED completion - on all two-year campuses.**
- #2 Designate each two-year college as the regional hub for local access to dual enrollment for high school students, workforce development for local economy, adult access to upward mobility, and affordable beginnings to four-year degrees.**
- #3 Use technology to expand access for students and create savings for two-year colleges.**
- #4 Fund colleges based on students' progress and success, not just enrollment.**