

A Growing Need in Ravalli County for Youth Mental Health Support



Jim McNerney, SFGRF Board Member

“I am very proud to say the SFGRF is making a big difference here in Ravalli County.”

—Jim McNerney

{please read mental health crisis article on page 3}

Why is it important to give back to the communities we live in?

“As I suggested, it’s all about becoming a good neighbor and community member. I’d like to think we are providing hope to many. And when I talk to my friend, Melinda Depp, who helps with the scholarship applicant selection process—a very difficult job—I hear up close and personal both the significant needs and the high impact involved.”

Do you personally know how SFGRF contributions have helped lives?

“I have gotten to know many young people who have worked at the Stock Farm over the years. It is very inspiring to see many of them, with the Foundation’s support, go on to very successful college experiences and then become successful in their chosen fields. It’s very gratifying and puts a grateful face on the impact we can have. Having said that, in each and every case, the Foundation helped open the door but the recipient displayed the hard work and commitment to step through it on their own.”

Why is it important to contribute to the SFGRF Foundation?

“I think if the story can keep being told, one person at a time, combined with the large numbers that are receiving our support every year (and the cumulative numbers over the years) it can’t help but be inspiring! Events that co-mingle recipients, their families with donors and potential donors tells that story very effectively.”

Why did you want to serve on the board of SFGRF?

“It was pretty clear that the Stock Farm—and many of the new residents it brought to the valley—seemed ‘new and different’ to many of the folks in the Bitterroot. I felt it was our job to find creative ways of becoming good citizens here. That’s what attracted me to get involved on the Board. Even though we all fell in love with the physical beauty, the lifestyle, and the people here, taking for granted that we would seamlessly integrate with everyone and everything would have been a big mistake. Finding ways to help ‘contribute and build’ was the right approach and the SFGRF was the best way I could find to do just that!”

Do you feel the contributions of SFGRF are making a difference in Ravalli County?

“I am very proud to say the SFGRF is making a big difference here. I believe our contributions are strengthening families, providing meaningful higher educational opportunities for many who wouldn’t otherwise have them, and the following job opportunities will raise the standard of living for many. We should keep doing more!”

OUR HEARTFELT THANKS...

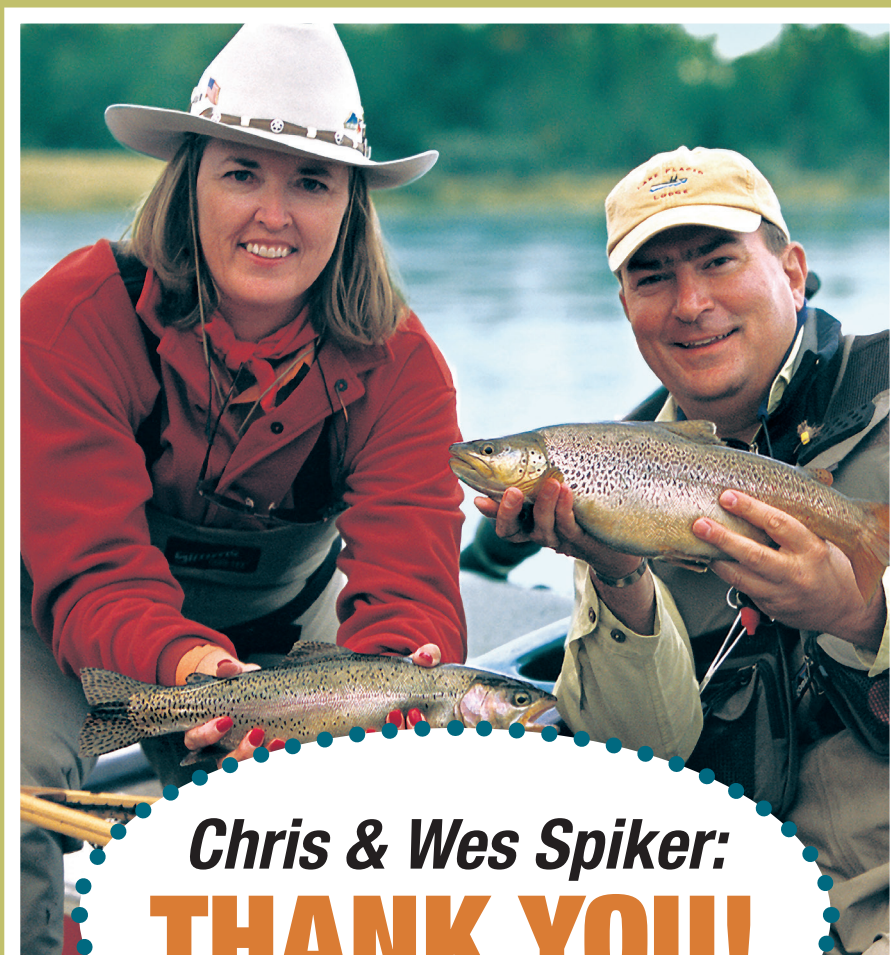
Chris and Wes Spiker,

On behalf of the SFGRF and the Bitterroot Valley Community we want to thank you so very much for all you’ve done for over 20 years to enhance the lives of the youth/families.

It’s rare to find such a giving, generous and dedicated couple as you are. You have been part of the cornerstone of the SFGRF since the very beginning, I assure you, we could not have done this without you. Your expertise in communication, packaging, public relations is par excellence. Imagine if we had to pay for these services, it couldn’t have been done without your generous donation of time, cost, experience and a never floundering dedication to the foundation and youth in the valley. Your loving heart shines out, things change and lives are changed forever. We will never forget what you have done, your footprint will always be with the SFGRF.

Love You and God Bless,

Jim Cote and Jim Schueler, Co-Founders of SFGRF and the entire SFGRF Board

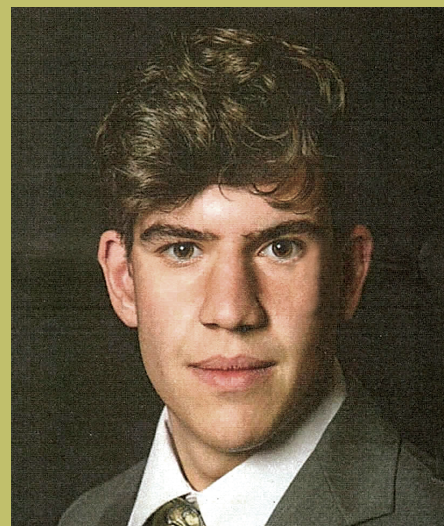


**Chris & Wes Spiker:
THANK YOU!**

School of Law UM Four Plus One Program Fast Tracks Students to Careers

10 August 2023

SEBASTIAN DRIVER
2020 Scholarship Winner



YELLOW BAY, FLATHEAD LAKE – With a few seductive chords plucked on her web, the female Sierra Dome spider (Neriene litigiosa) hijacks the neuro response of potential suitors and makes them go into a trance. As she strums her love song, potential partners start battling to be her next groupie.

This exotic arachnid courtship never fails to intrigue University of Montana student Sebastian Driver, who has spent the past two summers at UM's Flathead Lake Biological Station studying an array of different species.

"I've always been interested in behavioral ecology," Driver said while observing the Sierra Dome dance. "I enjoy studying the natural behaviors of animals. You really get to know them."

The mating dance of Sierra Dome spiders is full of intrigue and broken hearts.

The biological station is an ecological research and education center in Northwest Montana. For over 100 years, students from a variety of academic backgrounds have come to the station to conduct research and take courses focused on the Crown of the Continent ecosystem. This ecosystem encompasses the Rocky Mountain region of Montana, British Columbia and Alberta.

Driver is enrolled in UM's "Four Plus One" program, which is designed for students to complete an undergraduate degree in wildlife biology and a Master of Public Administration in five years instead of six.

"An MPA is a practical and flexible graduate degree that is relevant for individuals with a wide range of career interests," said Dr. Shannon Vaughan, director of the Department of Public

Administration and Policy at UM. "Earning an MPA through UM's Four Plus One program helps students like Sebastian combine the specialized knowledge of their undergraduate major with the organizational management skills learned throughout the MPA program, in an accelerated timeframe.

"This reduces tuition costs and gives them a head start toward achieving successful careers in the public and nonprofit sectors," she added.

For students like Driver, the program is a fast track to the workforce.

"I want to make an impact in the wildlife biology realm and saw the Four Plus One program as the quickest way to achieve this," he said.

By pairing a hard science with an MPA from the Department of Public Administration and Policy, Driver feels he is becoming a more rounded person.

"I have learned how to interface with the public to better explain complex scientific datasets in ways more people can relate to," he said. "This is a key skill in getting study results to the public in a way that is tangible."

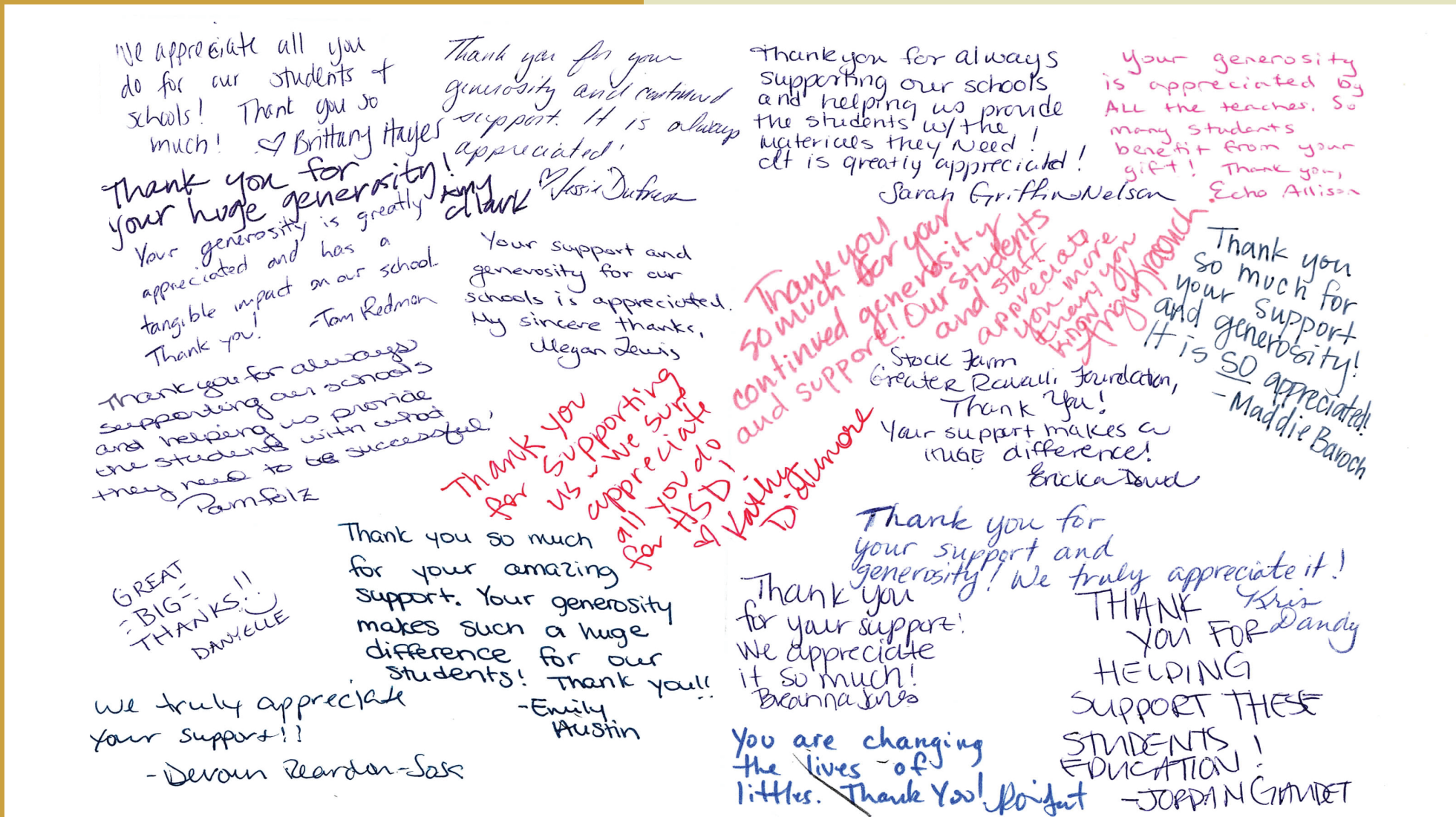
Driver finds that studying the behaviors of different species also helps him reflect on his own life.

"There is a lot of time for you to sit and think," said Driver. "You get plenty of opportunity to sit in a calm place and be in nature."

As he resumes watching a Sierra Dome spiderweb, Driver sees a bright future as a scientist and looks forward to a long career of sharing his love of the natural world.

"There she goes," Driver marks another note in his observation book as he sits front row to the courtship dance. "Those guys don't have a chance."

ARTICLE REPRODUCED COURTESY OF PHIL STEMPIN, DIRECTOR OF EVENTS, MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS, UM ALEXANDER BLEWETT III SCHOOL OF LAW, 406-243-6509, PHIL.STEMPIN@UMONTANA.EDU.



MENTAL HEALTH

in Ravalli County



A teenage girl, alias “Jane”, was being sexually abused and threatened by an adult family member and had planned to kill herself to escape the pain. She was sent to the ER in Ravalli County and waited three and a half hours before the on-call Mental Health Practitioner could respond and then was released without any follow-up support. Eventually, “Jane” was sent to Emma’s House in Hamilton, a trauma-treatment center for severe physical and sexual child abuse victims.

Unfortunately, Jane is not alone as our nation faces a serious mental health crisis in today’s youth. The crisis stems from issues like Covid-19, social media, drugs, and family problems. Causing feelings of isolation, loneliness, anxiety, and depression in young people. Alli Bristow, a Florence High School Counselor, said that after Covid mental health for students has been “terrible” and “devastating”. While Vice-Principal, Angela Dondero, and Counselor, Alexis Holland, of Hamilton High School, said “social media is a leading cause for mental health issues they see at the school.”

According to the Montana Department of Health and Human Service, 10.2 percent of Montana High School students and 13.5 percent of seventh and eighth graders attempted suicide in 2021. Yet, as demand increases, budget cuts and elimination of mental care programs has also increased.

The Western Montana Mental Health Center started downsizing five years ago due to budget cuts. Once providing services to seventeen counties, they now have two crisis centers, one in Missoula and one in Ravalli County. Emma’s House has three full-time



STATISTICS

- **In 2021, 10.2 percent of Montana High School students and 13.5 percent of seventh and eighth graders attempted suicide.**
- **Social Media is a leading cause of mental health issues in high school students.**
- **Covid and lockdowns created an increase of mental health issues in young people.**
- **Most children at Emma’s House are below the poverty line, from a single parent household, from households with domestic violence and substance abuse.**
- **There is a growing need for mental health support in Ravalli County as programs and facilities close due to budget cuts.**

“social media is a leading cause for mental health issues...”

counselors with 20 to 30 children on their waiting list. The Florence High School counselor has 15 students on her waitlist.

These programs provide youth with a safe place to get help they desperately need. While Montana lawmakers work on legislation toward our behavioral health care system, it could take years to see a difference. Meanwhile, current programs are struggling to keep up with demands and patients like “Jane” continue to face an uncertain future.



funding • training • awareness • counselors ■

The SFGRF Executive Board just voted to fund professional development in youth mental health to all teachers in Ravalli County (over 500 teachers in total). In addition, awarded \$20,000 in Grants to the Emma’s House to fund mental health resources in Ravalli County.

inactivity • online bullying • isolation • hunger

Make a Better Future for the Bitterroot Valley

Please consider donating to the Stock Farm Greater Ravalli Foundation this season. The goal of The Foundation is to assist and unite the students and families of Ravalli County. Our goal is to make a sizable impact from Darby to Florence for generations to come. The Foundation would not exist without Stock Farm members who generously contribute 98% of its funding. Funding which provides support and growth for public education, awards 40+ scholarships every year to graduating high school seniors, and sustenance programs for food and warm clothing. Make a difference this year to create a better future for Ravalli County with your contribution using any number of donation programs including charitable trusts; filling out a pledge card; or through PayPal at SFGRF.org.

*5 Ways to Donate

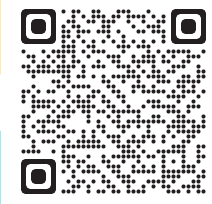
If you want to make a difference this season, please make your generous donation today!

1. By Mail

You can donate by either filling out the donation remittance envelope that is included with this newsletter or by downloading and printing a pledge card then mailing it to the address on the card – go to SFGRF.org, click on DONATE/download pledge card.

2. Online via PayPal

If you wish to make a donation by credit card, you can do so through PayPal – go to SFGRF.org, click on DONATE/donate through PayPal or scan this QR code.



3. Charitable Remainder Trust

When you transfer assets to a charitable remainder trust, 100% of the proceeds can be reinvested to support your loved ones and our mission.

By transferring assets to the trust, you will receive income for yourself and/or your chosen beneficiaries for life or a period of up to 20 years.

The income amount may be greater than what the assets currently yield. Many donors choose a rate between five to seven percent. At the end of the trust term, the remaining balance goes to The Foundation.

4. Charitable Remainder Annuity Trust

A trust from which you receive fixed income for a life or a term of years. Best for those older than 70 seeking to make a substantial gift and receive a higher income for a short period of time. Fund with cash or securities, typically \$100,000 or more.

Benefits —

- Fixed income
- Income tax deduction
- No up-front capital gains tax on transfer of assets
- Significant gift to use in the future

In Montana, there are two basic types of charitable remainder trusts.

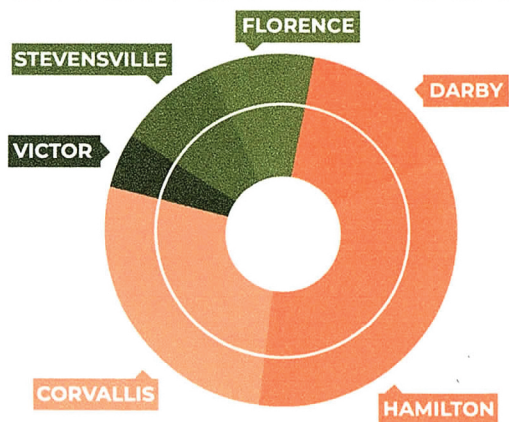
5. Charitable Remainder Unitrust

A trust from which you receive variable income (based on the trust's value each year) for life or a term of years. Best for those older than 55 seeking to make a substantial gift. Funded with cash, securities or other assets, typically \$100,000 or more.

Benefits —

- Variable income
- Income tax deduction
- No up-front capital gains tax on transfer of assets
- Allows additional gifts
- Significant gift to use in the future

SCHOLARSHIPS GIVEN BY SCHOOL



86% Graduation Rate includes two-year schools.

Approximately 80% of our scholarship recipients stay IN STATE.

Based upon 404 scholarships given (1 deceased), 403 calculated.

\$4.5 million awarded to date, calculating 2004-2023 total recipients.

POST SECONDARY GRADUATION RATE

90%

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

Help the children and families of Ravalli County by giving a generous donation of any amount. Contact Deb Gabelhausen, your Executive Director, or visit our website sfgrf.org to learn more and give boldly today!

debg@sfgrf.org
406-381-3795

29%

OF TOTAL
SCHOLARSHIPS
ARE
FIRST GENERATION
RECIPIENTS

2023 – 11 First Generation Recipients & 69% are PELL Eligible

* The information is not intended as legal or tax advice. For legal or tax advice, please consult your attorney or tax advisor. Figures cited in examples are for hypothetical purposes only and are subject to change. Reference to estate and income taxes apply to Federal taxes only. State income/estate taxes or state law may impact your results.