



MEDIA RELEASE

Miles Community College

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IMAGE: New MCC students visits with staff at the Student Services Desk on the MCC Campus

MCC Orientation Sessions Offer Resources for New Students

MILES CITY, MONTANA: The halls of Miles Community College were buzzing yesterday as close to 40 students, some accompanied by parents, guardians, and other guests, attended this summer's second session of SOAR (Student Orientation, Advising, and Registration).

SOAR is a single, day-long event, held several times throughout the summer before the start of each fall semester at the college, catering to all newly enrolled MCC students (including transfer students and students returning after an absence of five years or more). Faculty and staff were on hand all day to answer questions and offer informational workshops to ease the anxiety of attending college for the first time.

"The SOAR session made it really easy to register for classes," says new MCC Student Megan Woitkielewicz of Miles City. "It was much easier to understand the process by talking directly to the faculty and staff. They made it so easy to find my way around!"

Students spent the day on the Miles City campus, completing all necessary components of enrolling for school, before ending the day with one-on-one advising sessions with their current program advisors and registering for their fall classes. Staff in the Student Services offices assisted students with any missing enrollment paperwork, transcripts (from both high school and/or transfer institutions), and also issued student identification cards.

During all of the SOAR sessions throughout the summer, students attend workshops to learn about student conduct and safety, on-campus housing, student resources, financial aid, and critical online platforms used for courses and other information. They also get to enjoy campus tours, visit the bookstore, meet faculty, and eat lunch in the MCC Cafeteria.

"Students leave SOAR feeling more confident and much more excited about starting school in the fall," says Jill Olson, MCC's Admission Counselor. "Attending college for the first time (or after a long break for some) can be overwhelming. The staff and faculty here do a great job of answering any questions students may have, knowing that when they show up here in the fall, they have everything they need to jump right in."

MCC also hosted an additional dozen students virtually that day by offering the SOAR session completely online—a new feature added after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Students receive the same information and are still able to connect with their advisors to register for their fall courses.

"Offering a virtual option has alleviated a lot of extra stress for our distance students," commented Erin Niedege, Dean of Enrollment Management and Educational Support Services. "They are now able to finish enrolling and register for classes before coming to campus in September, without having to make an additional drive over from other parts of the state or neighboring states."

Having this virtual option also helps relieve some of the congestion and traffic during the final SOAR in September, held just days before classes begin. "Allowing those students to complete registration online earlier in the summer helps free up more of our staff and faculty when students are arriving on campus in September," says Niedege.

Students have two more opportunities to attend SOAR on either Tuesday, August 16, or Friday, September 2, before classes begin for the fall term on Wednesday, September 7. All incoming students must have attended one SOAR session (either online or in-person) before the beginning of the semester in order to register for classes.

Students can register for SOAR by visiting www.milesc.edu/SOAR or by contacting the Student Services Office at 406-874-6100.

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