

2021 Mortar Board Outstanding Senior Recognition Ceremony

College of the Arts and Media

School of Journalism

<u>Major</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>Presenter</u>
Journalism	Becca Makayla Olson	Denise Dowling

Becca has embraced all the School of Journalism has to offer. She has taken courses in writing, reporting, audio, photo, video and documentary film. Her radio reporting work landed her in the top 20 of the William Randolph Hearst Journalism awards, known as the “College Pulitzer Prizes.”

Becca studied abroad in Greece during her junior year and was there when the pandemic broke out. Despite the challenges of being abroad during a global health crisis, she gained knowledge and experience in international affairs.

She has also worked in the School, both as an office assistant and an equipment checkout clerk. She’s known for her positive demeanor and grace under pressure. Becca managed to end her college career with an outstanding GPA, even as she’s been involved in all manner of extra-curricular activities.

On behalf of the School of Journalism, I am honored to nominate Becca Olson for a Mortar Board Award. Becca excelled academically and professionally. She produced video for the Montana Media Lab and the Sussex School, interned at the Big Sky Documentary Film Festival and led backcountry trips for UM’s Outdoor Program. Her crowning achievement was her stellar work as the director of a student documentary covering the impacts of COVID-19 on Montana’s fly fishing industry. The 30-minute show airs on Montana PBS in May.

School of Visual and Media Art

<u>Major</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>Presenter</u>
Art	Mickey Haldi	Cathryn Mallory

Mickey Haldi has impressive leadership skills and work ethic both within and outside the classroom setting. As former co-president of the ASUM recognized Artist Collective, they have organized opportunities for art students to exhibit and sell artwork. They are committed to arts

education and involvement with community non-profit organizations through teaching children's camps in music, film, arts and crafts at both the Zootown Arts Community Center and Roxy Theater in Missoula. Mickey has also volunteered with MontPIRG designing promotional materials and voter registration.

School of Theatre and Dance

<u>Major</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>Presenter</u>
Dance	JoLeah Akimi Nicholas	Michele Antonioli

It is a privilege to recognize JoLeah's immense contributions to our School. Her creative research, scholarship, and her achievements in all coursework are outstanding. She has managed this while living and working in Polson, MT, where she is sharing her knowledge and passion with children who have not had the privilege of studying dance.

JoLeah teaches with skill, insight, and the twin gifts of joy and compassion. Theatre and Dance is honored to have her working with young dancers and supporting the critical place that art holds in all of our lives.

<u>Major</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>Presenter</u>
Theatre	Kinsey Brooke Sternad	Dr. Bernadette Sweeney

Kinsey has been an outstanding student during her time in the School of Theatre and Dance in the areas of acting and dance. Her work blossomed in the theatre and dance studios, as she took every opportunity to learn and grow through research and performance practice. In class, in the studio and on stage, she proved to be a quick and thoughtful student, actor and dancer, and a truly generous ensemble member.

Kinsey also developed her interest in directing while at UM and shows great promise in this area, given her work in acting, movement and dance practices. Kinsey's work and thinking are creative and insightful; her presence has been sunny but also always smart. We are excited to see where her considerable skills as a performer, thinker and theatre artist will take her.

<u>Major</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>Presenter</u>
Theatre Musical Theatre Performance	Renee Ross	Dr. Pamyla Stiehl

Renee is a true musical-theatre "triple threat" for she is an extraordinary singer, dancer, and actor, as well as an exemplary student, peer, and collaborator. Renee embraces the art of

interdisciplinary work and has graced our stages with her performances of lead roles in both musicals and plays, while also actively participating in the Dance Program.

Whether it be onstage or in the classroom, Renee's commitment to success, her diligent work ethic, and her comprehensive talent benefited Theatre and Dance greatly and portend a bright future for her as she embarks upon a promising professional career in the theatre.

<u>Major</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>Presenter</u>
Theatre Design and Technology	Ryan Longdon	Brian Gregoire

Ryan exemplifies what it is to be a successful person, artist and collaborator. Approaching life, classroom, and production work with a sense of logic, positivity and ease are trademarks of his character that add to the list of reasons we are proud he has been a part of the School of Theatre and Dance. Ryan brings a helpful, tranquil vibe to everything he does.

Ryan has been an integral part of nearly every production since his first semester in the Scene Shop, working tirelessly and using his background in engineering to build a wide variety of scenery from the rolling two-story barn for White Christmas to the intricate human-sized icosahedrons that are used as part of our dance training modality. Wherever his path takes him after graduation, it will be a better place for his having labored there. Theatre and Dance certainly is!

<u>Major</u>	<u>Student</u>	<u>Presenter</u>
Acting	Claire Peterson	Bernadette Sweeney

Claire has been an outstanding student during her time in the School of Theatre and Dance, excelling in the areas of acting and costuming. Her combination of roles and design assignments was possible because of her talent as a performer, a designer and a student overall. Claire performed on our stages and with Montana Repertory Theatre, and designed and built costumes across a range of productions.

Claire proved to be skilled across performance genres, moving adeptly and bravely among comedy, contemporary and canonical work. She is a thoughtful collaborator and it has been our pleasure to work with her over the past few years. Her skills, training and experience should ensure her a bright future in theatre and her future collaborators will be lucky to work with her.

