

**GIANFORTE TRADE SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE THROUGH REACH HIGHER MONTANA:
APPLICATION DEADLINE SEPTEMBER 15**

HELENA, MONTANA—A dual degree student, Orion McKinney of Great Falls completed a Certificate of Applied Science Degree in Welding from Great Falls College-MSU before graduating from CMR High School.

“In high school I never thought I’d go to college, but then realized I could afford it,” he says. A Gianforte Trades and Technology Scholarship through Reach Higher Montana made this possible. “The scholarship helped me a lot. It was the biggest thing that paid for my college.”

McKinney went on to earn his Associate of Applied Science Degree this past spring. At age 19, he now works for Electric City Roofing, using his background in welding, mechanics, and related areas.

The Gianforte Trades and Technology Scholarships are one of many financial awards offered through Reach Higher Montana. Executive Director Kelly Cresswell says, “There are excellent career opportunities in trades and technology. Dual-degree programs are especially popular and get kids thinking about an education earlier.”

The scholarships provide \$1,000 per semester for full-time students and \$500 for part-time students. Applicants must reside in Montana, apply each semester, and file a FAFSA. The fall deadline for the Gianforte Trades and Technology Scholarships is Wednesday, Sept. 15.

Eligible programs include automotive technology, plumbing, electronics, construction, diesel technology, cybersecurity, and dozens of other computer and technical programs. According to McKinney, “I firmly believe everyone should have a skill or trade. A liberal arts degree is great, but it’s also good to have a skill to fall back on, in life.”

Participating schools are: Aaniiih Nakoda College, City College, Dawson Community College, Flathead Valley Community College, Fort Peck Community College, Gallatin College, Great Falls College MSU, Helena College, Highlands College, Little Big Horn College, Miles Community College, Missoula College, MSU Northern, Salish Kootenai College, and Stone Child College.

More information is available on the Reach Higher Montana website: <https://tinyurl.com/4wttyu9v>. To apply, visit <https://tinyurl.com/duxbdhs>.

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