

**John Edward Cech, Ph.D.**

**Business Address:**

Montana University System  
2500 Broadway  
Helena, MT 59620-3201



**Education**

Ph.D., Education with emphasis on higher education leadership, Walden University, Minneapolis, Minnesota (dissertation chair, Terry O'Banion, Ph.D.). Dissertation topic: *A Phenomenological Study of Leader Experiences and Reactions to Transformational Change in a Multicampus System (Inducted into Kappa Delta Pi, International Academic Honor Society)*

Master of Nonprofit Management, Regis University (one of America's 28 Jesuit colleges and universities), Denver, Colorado (*with Graduate Honors*)

Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and Computer Information Systems, Montana State University-Billings (Eastern Montana College), Billings, Montana

**Executive Summary of Professional Experience:**

**Montana University System, Helena Montana**

2015 – Present: Deputy Commissioner of Higher Education – Academic, Research, and Student Affairs, Montana University System  
  
(Affiliate faculty member at University of Montana and Montana State University)

2011 – 2014: Deputy Commissioner of Higher Education – Two Year & Community College Education

**Montana State University Billings, Billings Montana**

2002 – 2010: Dean/CEO, City College

**Rocky Mountain College, Billings, Montana**

1992 – 2002: Dean, Continuing Education, Summer Sessions & Community Services

1989 – 1992: Director of Continuing Education, Summer Sessions & Community Services

1985 – 1989: Faculty, Department of Computer Programming & Applications

### **Areas of Competency and Strengths:**

Distinguished 25-plus year career as a Senior Executive Officer in Montana public and private higher education with a wide breadth of contacts including corporate, media, private foundation, nonprofit management, and government.

- **Faith:** A lifelong practicing Roman Catholic (former Parish Council president, St. Patrick's co-Cathedral, Billings, and a product of Catholic education).
- **Comprehensive understanding of higher education administration (private & public) in Montana and nationally:** A native Montanan (raised in Butte); 13 years as a direct report to the president of Rocky Mountain College; 8 years as a campus Dean/CEO at Montana State University Billings; and 8 years as a Deputy Commissioner of the Montana University System. Recently participated in a 10-state White House Educational Summit; appointed as a Complete College America Fellow; and appointed by Secretary of HHS to serve on multi-year national Nursing Education Council.
- **Communication and Shared Leadership:** Building coalitions around new initiatives focused on student success, by supporting consensus and collaboration in faculty-led and administratively-supported efforts (Complete College Montana, strategic planning, recruitment/retention, program prioritization, remedial education reform, common course numbering).
- **Uniting a community around an educational vision:** A 28-year track record of working with faculty, staff, and partners to create a shared vision. Accomplishments are a result of motivating, mobilizing, collaborating, and building consensus toward common goals.
- **Strategic planning and execution:** experience creating and executing a campus strategic plan (City College); statewide Comprehensive Two-Year College Masterplan (MUS); chairing MSU Billings Community Visioning effort; and leading current MUS structure examination.
- **Strategic Enrollment Planning:** Proven record of creating enrollment growth through recruitment, retention, program prioritization, and new program development. Led effort to grow enrollment at City College at MSUB resulting in dramatic student growth: headcount growth of 257%, from 620 students in 2002 to 1531 in 2010; FTE growth of 79%, from 553 in 2002 to 988 in 2009-10.

- **Student success:** State lead for the Montana University System’s Complete College Montana initiative. In November 2017, all of the colleges of the MUS agreed to implement the most comprehensive, evidence-based reforms at scale to improve college retention and completion.
- **Liberal arts and professional programs:** Demonstrated accomplishments in support of the liberal arts, professional education, and economic development in at private and public colleges and university systems. In November 2016, I reached out to liberal arts professors from UM and MSU to make a special presentation to the BOR focusing on the critical role and significant impact of the liberal arts on students’ lives and careers.  
[http://www.mus.edu/board/meetings/2016/Mar2016/Video/3\\_BOR%20Dillon%20Day%20Two.mp4](http://www.mus.edu/board/meetings/2016/Mar2016/Video/3_BOR%20Dillon%20Day%20Two.mp4)
- **Creating a climate of faculty and staff collaboration:** created a climate of open communication and collaboration among the campuses of the MUS through the shared development of a new academic program planning and approval process; faculty and staff focus on student success through systemwide efforts to improve retention and completion; and the development of new joint academic programs which create both efficiencies and new opportunities for collaboration.
- **Fundraising & securing external resources:** Secured over \$45 million for the MUS through private foundation gifts, federal grants, and corporate gifts since 2011. Personal relationships and contacts at local and national foundations. Partial list includes: Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation, Lumina Foundation, Strada Foundation, M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust, Northwest Area Foundation, and the First Interstate Bancsystem Foundation. Personal relationships and contacts at federal levels including: US Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Labor, Commerce, and the White House (current Trump Administration).
- **Campus facility management, construction, and transformation:** Accomplishments include property acquisition, planning, design, and construction of a 50,000 sq. ft. Health Sciences building; refurbishment of 40,000 sq. ft. of space in City College Tech Building; creation of a “One-Stop” Student Services Center at City College; partnership with the City of Billings to locate a branch of Parmly Billings Library on the City College campus. Experience in managing auxiliary enterprises for both private and public campuses, and management of a multi-building campus including a soccer field and walking path.
- **Understanding of small faith-based colleges:** 17 years of experience working at Rocky Mountain College (Presbyterian USA, United Methodist, & UCC) as a faculty member, director, and a Dean (member of President’s Cabinet).
- **Scholarship:** member editorial board, *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, and frequent committee member of Ph.D., Ed.D., and D.Phil.

students (current PhD dissertation committees include Oxford University and the University of Montana. Appointed as an affiliate (graduate programs) faculty member at both Montana State University and University of Montana.

- **Diversity and inclusion:** serve as the MUS primary liaison to Montana's seven tribal college presidents and tribal schools. Responsible for MUS American Indian and Minority Achievement planning, execution, and compliance. Also, significant MUS experience with adherence to Title IX Educational Amendments Act of 1972.
- **Global Initiatives:** Steering committee member of MSU Billings international education initiative. Traveled to China and established articulation agreements with eight Chinese colleges and universities. Other international co-curricular development work and partnerships including: University of Oxford Exeter College, RMC's archeological summer expeditions to Bethsaida Israel, and student summer session opportunities in Greece and Ireland. Developed partnerships with Japanese Higher Education System resulting in enrollment of 50 Japanese students per year during the 1990s.
- **External communications and marketing:** Demonstrated experience with traditional media, social media, public relations, donor relations, and campus friend raising. Strong statewide media relationships including Montana Lee Independent Record and Montana Standard Publishers; Montana Public Television (former board member); Montana Public Radio; and Yellowstone Public Radio station managers and news staff.
- **Statewide relationships:** A wide breadth of working relationships across the state including industry, nonprofit, government, and elected officials (Governor Bullock, Senator Tester, Senator Daines, Congressman Gianforte, Superintendent of Public Instruction Arntzen; Commissioner of Labor and Industry Hollenbaugh, and members of the Montana legislature from both parties).
- **Experience working with boards of trustees and Regents:** Seven years of experience working with the Board of Regents where I staff two of the Board's three committees; 13 years of experience working with RMC's Board of Trustees.

**Detailed description of positions and accomplishments:****Montana University System Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (2011 – present)**

2015 - Present: Deputy Commissioner – Academic, Research & Student Affairs

2011 - 2014: Deputy Commissioner - Two-Year and Community College Education

**Position Profile:** Serves as the Chief Academic, Research, and Student Affairs Officer for the 11 campuses of the Montana University System including the State’s two-year/community colleges, regional comprehensive universities, Montana State University, and the University of Montana. Reports to Commissioner of Higher Education. Cech served as Deputy Commissioner for Two-Year and Community College Education from 2011 through 2014, when his position was merged with that of the previous Deputy Commissioner for Academic & Student Affairs. Cech’s responsibilities were expanded to include all levels of public higher education in Montana. As Deputy Commissioner, Cech is the Chief Academic Officer for the Montana University System.

Major system initiatives under Cech’s leadership include: Complete College Montana, including the MUS Student Success Initiative; MUS academic program and services prioritization, workforce development partnerships with the Montana Department of Labor and Industry, statewide high school to college pathways, dual enrollment, and defining and expanding the comprehensive mission of Montana’s Two-Year and Community Colleges. The Complete College Montana initiative has embodied the System’s student success agenda including: remedial education reform, math pathways, corequisite design, the adult learner initiative, and the State’s commitment to scale the game-changing student success strategies that CCA has recommended.

**Responsibilities and Accomplishments:**

- Serves as key staff member for the Board of Regents on all matters related to academic, research, and student affairs including: student retention, completion, academic policy, workforce development, state-funded research initiatives, and MUS tribal college relations.
  - **Implemented wholesale change across the MUS** academic planning and approval process to increase communication, awareness, and collaboration opportunities.
  - **Fostered development of new shared/collaborative degrees:** Two degree programs – PhD in Materials Sciences and MS Occupational Therapy – were developed and offered collaboratively at multiple

- campuses across the system.
- Oversight of current **MUS structure review**. Includes execution of a mixed methods study analyzing the effectiveness of the 1994 system restructure. Structure review to be completed and presented to Board of Regents in May 2018.
  - Oversight of system **academic program prioritization** initiative (MSUB, MSUN, and Great Falls College completed; University of Montana underway; all other MUS units are at various stages of program prioritization efforts).
  - **Supervised the MUS Director of Research and the \$15 million research** initiative provided by the 2015 State Legislature with the goal to serve as seed money to leverage university-based research into strategic advancements for Montana's economy. Since 2015 five new companies have formed, 49 private companies and public entities have engaged with MUS researchers, 7 patents are in progress, 10 new commercial products are in development, and over \$22M in additional funds have been attained to support ongoing research.
  - Oversight of MUS campus NWCCU regional **accreditation process** and reviews. In addition, trained and served as an NWCCU external evaluator.
- Oversees MUS **student success initiatives** including: common course numbering/transferability, developmental education reform, math pathways, co-requisite design, EdReady, 15 to Finish, and Prior Learning Assessment.
    - **Serves as the State Lead** for the MUS Complete College Montana initiative which is focused on student retention and completion. Appointed by Complete College America as a national CCA Fellow.
    - **Math Pathways:** Montana's Math Pathways Taskforce has worked since 2014 to provide clear pathways for non-STEM majors, evaluate the appropriateness of college algebra usage, and strengthen advising processes for math; this culminated in the adoption of a single non-STEM gateway math course – M105 Contemporary Mathematics.
    - **Corequisite Remediation:** Campuses are on track to meet the 2018 goal of restructuring developmental math and English by placing students directly into college level gateway courses while providing support; corequisite remediation has shown promising early results when compared to the performance of other college students.
  - Primary liaison for **MUS with Office of Public Instruction**, Montana Board of Public Education, and K-12 schools including dual enrollment growth.

- **Dual Enrollment:** Aggressive growth has occurred in enrollment, teacher credentialing, access, course offerings, program alignment, and affordability, including a 132% increase in unduplicated headcount since 2012 and a 20% increase in the number of concurrent enrollment teachers since the 2014 initiation of the Dual Credit Incentive Program.
- **Statewide Pathways:** Articulated discipline-specific pathways between high school and college across Montana.
- **iGraduate Montana:** Lead for statewide initiative funded by the Dennis & Phyllis Washington Foundation to create linkage and pathways between Montana high schools and higher education.
- Responsible for **oversight of all MUS federal education and workforce development grants** including: two statewide U.S. Department of Labor grants (\$40 million), Carl D. Perkins (\$5 million per year), GEAR UP (\$4 million per year), TRiO Educational Talent Search (\$2 million per year), and Title II (\$300K per year).
- Oversight of **MUS workforce development initiatives** including: two statewide U.S. Department of Labor grants (Rev UP: Advanced Manufacturing and HealthCARE Montana); MUS partnership with the State Department of Labor and Industry; and MUS partnerships with nearly 800 businesses and industry associations.
  - **Rev Up:** From 2013 to 2017, the \$25M US DOL grant has improved manufacturing and energy programs at 12 colleges by engaging 576 employers, purchasing \$5.85M in state-of-the-art equipment and increasing enrollment, retention, and completion.
  - **HealthCARE MT:** Through a \$15M US DOL grant awarded in 2014, a consortium of 16 colleges, working with industry partners, have redesigned and implemented a statewide RN curriculum and an RN-to-BSN curriculum, and designed an allied health core curriculum to allow students to transfer skills across programs while creating innovative apprenticeship opportunities in eight health occupations, reducing time to degree, and creating quality pathways to target occupations.
  - **MUS Healthcare Education and Workforce Council:** Oversight of a 25-member council focused on statewide coordination of allied health and nursing educational programs from certificate to Graduate Medical Education.

- **Utilized interagency data** to develop the Montana University System Workforce Talent Pipeline and Gap Analysis Report, a comprehensive study of how the education system meets workforce demand.
- **Strategically deployed state and federal resources** to target high-demand occupations through work-based learning and industry alignment by bridging the MUS and Montana Department of Labor to create over 20 new apprenticeship programs in areas of allied health, nursing, IT, and business.
- Oversight of MUS **Student Services initiatives** including: Veterans Initiative, Alcohol Education, Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention training, suicide prevention taskforce, and financial literacy in education program.
  - **Veterans Initiative:** Wraparound services for veteran students at MUS campuses were established or upgraded.
  - **Alcohol and Sexual Assault Prevention Modules:** Online trainings for all new and transfer students in the MUS were created for alcohol use education, sexual assault awareness and financial education.
  - **Suicide Prevention Taskforce:** Suicide prevention and student mental health recommendations were developed and implemented, including increased student screening and awareness and prevention peer training.
  - **Financial Literacy Education Program:** Financial education programs at all campuses of the MUS were established, resulting in a 12% reduction in first-time freshman resident student borrowing and a 4% drop in bachelor degree recipients who borrowed.
- **Recent Special Projects and Assignments**
  - Chairman of the MSU Billings Chancellor Search Committee (current)
  - Chairman of the MSU Billings Community Taskforce (current)
  - University of Montana Provost Search Committee (current)
  - Montana State University Provost Search (2017)
  - State Lead MUS Program Prioritization Planning (current)
  - Complete College Montana State Lead (current)
  - Complete College America Fellow (current)
  - Montana University System Adult Learner Initiative State Lead (current)
  - Chairman, Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation iGraduate Montana Initiative (current)
  - Chairman, MUS Rural Educator Taskforce
- **COT/Two-Year Program Reorganization:** Montana's five Colleges of Technology and the two-year programs in Bozeman and Hamilton were



restructured into seven comprehensive two-year colleges including rebranding and renaming. The Board of Regents adopted Montana's first statewide mission statement for comprehensive two-year education.

- **College!NOW Lumina Foundation Grant:** A \$1.5M grant to redefine two-year education in Montana and address student success reformation efforts was completed while receiving national recognition for program accomplishments.
- **MSU Billings Community Taskforce Facilitation:** Providing leadership for a broad university/community taskforce with the goal to create improved linkages between MSUB and the community and increase MSUB's student enrollment.

### **City College, Montana State University Billings (formerly the MSUB College of Technology)**

June 2002 – December 2010: Dean (campus CEO)

**Institutional Profile:** A comprehensive two-year college serving a community college role located on a separate 35-acre campus. The City College at MSUB offers Associate of Science (AS), Associate of Arts (AA), Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degrees, and a Certificate of Applied Science (CAS), as well as numerous additional certificates, developmental education, and GED adult education programming. The Fall 2010 enrollment was 1531. These students were served by 45 full-time faculty, 55 part-time faculty, and 41 staff, in addition to services such as IT, Registrar, Purchasing, and Facility Maintenance, supplied and budgeted by the MSU Billings campus. Billings, Montana is a regional hub for medical care, energy production and management, finance, communications, and retail.

**Position description:** As CEO/Dean of City College, Cech served as the campus executive officer, overseeing campus master planning; academic programming and assessment; facilities management; budgeting; community outreach, relations, and fundraising; student services, in collaboration with the University's Vice Chancellor for student services; and relations with the College's 25-member National Advisory Board.

### **Responsibilities and Accomplishments:**

- **College Transformation:** Led the evolution and rebranding of City College from a vocational-technical institution to a comprehensive two-year college resulting in the addition of 13 new academic university-transfer and applied technical programs from 2002 through 2010.
- **Budget:** Successfully balanced the college's budget each year between 2002 - 2010. Active participant on the MSU Billings university budget committee (\$47 million operating budget).

- **Campus infrastructure growth:** Led planning, resources acquisition, and building efforts around the construction of a new 50,000 square foot state-of-the-art Health Sciences Center (complete with simulation hospital) including the acquisition of 14 acres of adjacent land.
- **Enrollment growth:** Developed and implemented a shared vision and a strategic enrollment plan for City College resulting in dramatic student growth: headcount growth of 257%, from 620 students in 2002 to 1531 in 2010; FTE growth of 79%, from 553 in 2002 to 988 in 2009-10.
  - Full-time equivalent enrollment increased 79 percent.
  - Part-time female enrollment increased 85 percent.
  - Enrollment from Yellowstone County from 2006 to 2010 rose 51 percent.
  - The average age of students rose 2.6 percent.
  - The percentage of American Indian students jumped 63 percent.
  - The percentage of Hispanic students rose 88.6 percent.
  - The percentage of Asian students increased 185 percent.
- **Faculty shared leadership:** Led faculty through a comprehensive review of outcomes assessment for each of the College's 35 academic programs, including review of all program outcomes and revision of each individual program assessment plan. Reorganized college leadership structure from a "flat" structure with no department or division chairs to a four-division structure with faculty chairs, shared governance, and a focus on student learning.
- **Faculty development:** Actively encouraged faculty to pursue advanced degrees and professional development. Between 2002 and 2010, eight faculty enrolled in advanced degree or doctoral programs. Worked to increase the College's faculty professional development budget from nearly zero in 2002 to over \$30,000 in 2010.
- **Labor negotiations:** Represented City College on the statewide MEA/MFT Labor Vocational Technical Educators of Montana labor negotiation team between 2002 and 2010. Results include successful negotiation of three two-year labor contract agreements.
- **Program growth:** Led growth in developing allied health training, including approval of the state's first 3-year RN degree, Radiologic Technology Program, Medical Coding and Insurance Billing, and a Surgical Technology partnership with the University of Montana. Developed new business transfer degree with the College of Business, manufacturing, and alternative energy programs in partnership with local industries.
- **Focus on student success:** In collaboration with faculty and staff, designed a new "one-stop" student services center concept; early alert system; and revamp of developmental education. Worked closely with the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs to create a student-centered culture that ensured access, sustained

educational excellence, fostered student learning, and supported high levels of student achievement.

- **Academic Leadership:** Ensured all academic programs met regional and specialized accreditation requirements. Led accreditation for first approved ASN program in Montana. In NWCCU accreditation process, City College received commendations in every standard, a result of collaborative faculty-administrative work on outcomes assessment and measurement.
- **Fundraising/Resource Development:** Coordinated college fundraising efforts with the MSUB Foundation and grants development office including grants development, donor cultivation, capital campaigns, and federal and state appropriations.
- **Public Relations:** Provided leadership and support for all College external relations, including community relations, government relations, and marketing working in collaboration with the Director of University Relations.
- **Partnerships and Community Development:** Ensured the College is an asset for intellectual and economic development of the local and regional community. Established college/community partnerships with Billings Public Schools and with over 30 industry, hospital, and nonprofit organizations. Represented City College on key boards at the local, regional, and state levels, including Billings Chamber of Commerce and State Workforce Investment Board, and through leadership positions on numerous commissions and boards as appointed by the Commissioner of Higher Education and the Governor. Fostered strong relationships with the Montana legislature and with state and regional higher education institutions.
- **Industry engagement:** Established a 25-member National Advisory Board for City College with membership including senior level executives from Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, California, Oregon, Kentucky, and the District of Columbia.
- **International partnerships:** Traveled to China and established eight separate agreements with Chinese institutions (Dalian Jiaotong University, Nanjing Yingtian College, Wenli College of Bohai University, Liaoning Petrol Professional Technical College, Bohai Shipbuilding Vocational College, Shenyang Sport University, College of Engineering of Shenyang University of Technology, and Quangxi Medical University) to send students to the City College. Opened dialogue regarding partnerships with the Rector of Exeter College, Oxford University.

**Rocky Mountain College, Billings, Montana**

1989 – 2002: Dean of Continuing Education, Summer Sessions, and Community Services (1989-1992 title was Director)

**Institutional Profile:** Rocky Mountain College is a private, four-year liberal arts institution created by the 1946 merger of the Billings Polytechnic Institute and Intermountain Union College. It enrolls about 1,000 students annually, with 70 faculty in 45 programs of study. The College is governed by a Board of Trustees.

**Position Description:** As Dean of Continuing Education, Summer Sessions, and Ou, Cech was a member of President's Cabinet and participated in quarterly Board of Trustee meetings. The position's scope included development, coordination, scheduling, and direction of the following: Summer Session; "OutReach: Continuing Education" program; Fortin Health Education Center, including direction of the College's physical education/athletic facilities, community health and recreation club, and aquatics program; youth enrichment programs and athletic camps; Elderhostel Program (one on-campus and four off-campus sites; program attained Supersite status); Computer Applications AA Program; 18-month adult learner baccalaureate degree completion program; contract training and community small business development; teacher recertification courses; and scheduling and coordination of all conferences.

**Responsibilities and Accomplishments:**

- **President's Cabinet Membership:** Served on President's Cabinet from 1989 through 2002. Addressed Cabinet issues including: budget management, strategic planning, college fundraising and advancement, and student and academic affairs.
- **Budget:** Responsible for over \$1.5 million dollar budget including all continuing education, summer session, and auxiliary enterprises. Balanced budget each year of service.
- **Summer Session:** Planned and administered campus summer session in collaboration with Academic Vice President and College Division Chairs.
  - Re-engineered RMC's Summer Session to include multiple sessions, on-line offerings, as well as study abroad opportunities resulting in 300% enrollment growth between 1989 and 2002.
  - Developed studies abroad summer travel program opportunities at Rocky Mountain College including study programs in Israel, Greece, and South Africa (1995-2002).
  - In conjunction with the RMC President, worked with Dr. Chikara Higashi of the Japanese House of Representatives on developing a Japan/Montana international partnership and student exchange program, resulting in enrollments of over 50 Japanese students per year during the 1990s.

- **Outreach and Continuing Education:** Led development of all credit and noncredit outreach certificates, courses, and workshops for the College.
  - Established a well-respected continuing education program at RMC which grew to nearly 10,000 unduplicated enrollments in noncredit and credit continuing education programs and youth enrichment programs including summer camps.
  - Expanded a small summer camp program to an annual enrollment of over 2,000 campers each year including a wide variety of sports and academic enrichment camps during summer and intersessions.
  - Developed and implemented Montana's first 18-month adult learner baccalaureate degree completion program.
  - Developed a Computer Applications AA/AS degree designed for working adults (Saturdays and evenings).
  - Developed numerous partnerships including: Montana State University's Extension Service to provide agricultural conferences and training programs for the Billings region; Saint Vincent Hospital and Billings Clinic for continuing medical education; and a wide array of local businesses and industries.
  - In 2001, led effort at RMC to serve as one of three sites officially approved by the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association for a series of four major Pearl Harbor 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Memorial events, attracting over 1,000 attendees from around the region.
  
- **Administration of AA Degrees:** Administered two-year Associate of Science and Associate of Arts degrees and supervised program faculty.
  
- **Community Relations and Marketing:** Led community relations and marketing for college continuing education programs, summer session, summer camps, and associate degree programs. Represented the President frequently in the community and at media events.
  
- **Auxiliary Enterprises:** Developed an RMC facility use/rental strategy designed to build bridges to the community as well as generate additional income.
  
- **Fortin Education Athletic Center:** Supervised the operations and budgeting of the Fortin Education Athletic Center including community health club and aquatics program.
  
- **Fundraising:** Participated in "To the Summit" Capital Campaign for Rocky Mountain College, which raised in excess of \$21,000,000 for capital and endowment projects (including legislative bonding approval).
  - Raised over \$700,000 in grant funds for specific project support, including grants from the M.J Murdock Charitable Trust, the American Honda Foundation, Harvest States Foundation, the Fortin

Foundation, the C.M. Bair Memorial Trust, and several gifts from the First Interstate Bancsystem Foundation in support of conferences for the Rocky Mountain College Institute for Peace Studies, in partnership with James Scott, President of the First Interstate Bancsystem Foundation.

**1985-1989: Faculty Member, Rocky Mountain College, Billings, MT**

Instructor in Computer Information Technology and founder and director of the College's first AA degree in Computer Applications.

**Faculty/Teaching Experience**

**1985-89**, Rocky Mountain College, Billings, MT, 1985-1989. Instructor in Computer Applications and Technology; program director, AA degree in Computer Applications.

**1984-85**, Eastern Montana College School for Extended Studies, Billings, MT. Adjunct Instructor, Computer Literacy and Applications.

**Selected Board Memberships, Professional Committees, and Community Activities**

- Fellow, Complete College America, Indianapolis, IN (2017 – present).
- Facilitator/Coordinator, MSU Billings Community/University Vision Taskforce (2017-present).
- Member, National Advisory Council of Nursing Education and Practice (appointed by US Secretary of Health and Human Services), 2015-present.
- Chairman, National Association of State Community College System Directors, 2014-2016 (Board member since 2011).
- Executive Committee Member, Western Interstate Commissioner of Higher Education Academic Leadership Forum, 2015-present.
- Executive Committee Member, Western Interstate Commission of Higher Education Community College Alliance, 2011-present (Chairman in 2016).
- Member, National Association of State System Heads (NASH), 2015-present.
- Member, Montana Oral Health Foundation Board (Treasurer), 2012-present.
- Member, State of Montana Workforce Innovation Board, 2011-present.
- Member, Montana Public Television Board of Directors, 2009-2016.
- Parish Council President, St. Patrick's Co-Cathedral, Billings, MT, 2008-2010.
- Member, United Way of Yellowstone County, Board of Directors, 2007-2010.
- Member, Billings Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, 2006-2010.
- Member, ExxonMobil Community Advisory Board, 2006-2010.
- Rotary Club, Member, Billings Club 1989-2010; Co-Chair, Program Committee, 1997-2010; Board Member, 1999-2001. Member, Helena Club, 2011-present.
- Member, Billings Town and Gown Society Board, 2009-2010.
- Co-chair of Education Committee, Celebrate Billings, a collaborative venture of MSU-Billings, the *Billings Gazette*, Saint Vincent Healthcare, Billings Clinic, the

- Big Sky Economic Development Corporation, City of Billings, the Billings Chamber of Commerce, and Yellowstone County, 2001-2008.
- Secretary of the Board, Zoo Montana, Board of Trustees, 2002-2007. Co-Chair (with spouse Victoria and Billings Gazette Publisher Mike Gullede and his spouse Susan) 2009 Zoofari Fundraiser; event raised nearly \$100,000 for Zoo operations.
  - Member, Yellowstone Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commission. Appointed by Yellowstone County Commissioners in 2000, term through 2006.
  - Co-Chair, Western Heritage Center (an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution), National Advisory Council, 2004-2009.
  - Advisory Board Member, Saint Vincent Healthcare Bio-Terrorism Preparation Task Force, 2003-2008.
  - Member, Community Seven Television Board of Directors, 2002-2004.
  - Institute for Peace Studies at Rocky Mountain College, Program Committee Chairman, 1991-2001.
  - Yellowstone Art Museum (a regional museum of the fine arts), Billings, MT, Marketing Advisory Committee, 1996-2000.

### **Awards**

Montana State University Billings, MT, 2012 Distinguished Alumni Award - Recognition for Exceptional Achievement, College of Business.

Inducted into Kappa Delta Pi, International Academic Honor Society, 2009.

Regis University, Denver, CO, 2007 Distinguished Alumni Award for Community Service.

Rocky Mountain College, Billings, MT 2001 Distinguished Service Award.

Montana State University, Bozeman, MT 2000 Agricultural Extension Service Director's Distinguished Service Award (Recognition for Agricultural Leadership in Montana).

North American Association of Summer Sessions, Providence, RI, 1999 Innovative and Creative Award for Summer Session. NASS represents over 500 colleges and universities from the United States, Canada, Caribbean, United Kingdom, and Australia.

### **Selected Workshops, Lectures, and Academic Presentations (full listing available upon request)**

January 2018 (invited and accepted), guest lecturer, Harvard Graduate School of Education, "Montana University System initiatives to create pathways from high school to college," Cambridge, MA.

November 2017, Keynote Speaker and breakout speaker, Complete College America Annual Summit, “Montana University System’s Focus on Student Success,” New Orleans, LA.

June 2017, Represented Governor Steve Bullock and Montana at a 20-person White House Summit on Education (President Trump and three cabinet members), Workforce Development, and Apprenticeship Programs.

February 2017, guest lecturer, Harvard Graduate School of Education, “Montana University System educational strategies to serve rural and underserved students,” Cambridge, MA.

June 2016, presenter, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Advisory Council for Nurse Education and Practice, Washington, D.C.: Population Health. Presentation focus: Population Health Issues from the Rural/Frontier Regions of the United States.

December 2016, presenter, Oxford Educational Research Symposium, Pembroke College, University of Oxford: Phase III of Montana's Research involving Scaling Online Readiness Interventions, Oxford, UK.

September 2016, presenter, United States Senate CTE Caucus of the United States Senate: Future role of Career and Technical Education in Montana, Washington, D.C.

December 2015, presenter, Oxford Educational Research Symposium, Somerville College, University of Oxford: Phase II of Montana's Research involving Scaling Online Readiness Interventions, Oxford, UK.

December 2014, presenter, Oxford Educational Research Symposium, Rhodes House, University of Oxford, Phase I of Montana’s research involving Scaling Online College Readiness Innovations: Preparing Students for College Level Math, Oxford, UK.

September 2013, Keynote presenter, Montana Adult Basic Education Annual Conference, “Reaching the Adult Learner,” Helena, MT

March 2012, co-presenter with Terry O’Banion, “Models of Student Success,” Annual Symposium on Student Success, Walden University, Minneapolis, MN

### **Selected Publications**

Cech, J. (2017). “Montana’s Workforce Innovators (Guest Editorial)”: *The Billings Gazette*. [http://billingsgazette.com/opinion/columnists/guest-opinion-montana-s-workforce-innovators/article\\_24c7803a-251e-518a-a8d6-123cf2a74caf.html](http://billingsgazette.com/opinion/columnists/guest-opinion-montana-s-workforce-innovators/article_24c7803a-251e-518a-a8d6-123cf2a74caf.html)

Cech, J. (2016). “Overcoming Common Barriers to Transfer for Community College Students,” *The Evollution*. <https://evollution.com/attracting-students/accessibility/overcoming-common-barriers-to-transfer-for-community-college-students/>



Cech, J. (2015). "The Powerful Role of Career and Technical Education in Today's Workforce," *The Evollution*. <https://evollution.com/managing-institution/government-legislation/the-powerful-role-of-career-and-technical-education-in-todays-workforce/>

Cech, J. (2015). "Scaling Online College Readiness Innovations: Preparing Students for College Math," *Journal of Academic Perspectives*, Oxford University.

Cech, J. (2013). Book chapter, "History of Two-Year and Community College Education for Montana," *America's Fifty State Community College Systems*, Iowa State University.

Cech, J., & Wendt, B. (2009). "Dual Enrollment, Multiple Paths and Diverse Students: A Look at Options for Enhancing Entry into Postsecondary Education," *The Montana Professor*, (19)1, 15-23.

### **Dissertation Committees**

Committee membership for Ed.D., Ph.D. and D.Phil. doctoral dissertation and thesis committees:

- University of Oxford, St. John's College, Oxford, UK.
- Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton, FL.
- University of Montana, Missoula, MT.
- University of Wyoming, Laramie, WY.
- Montana State University, Bozeman, MT.

### **Other Scholarly Activities**

Editorial board member, *Community College Journal of Research and Practice* (2013-present).

### **Personal Information**

Spouse: Victoria S. Cech, M.A. (University of Oxford, U.K.) M.Ed. (MSU-Billings); former adjunct instructor at Rocky Mountain College (Introduction to Ancient Greek Language; Art and Culture of Ancient Greece, with Prof. Mark Moak) and MSU-Billings (Introduction to Ancient Greek Language; History of Civilization 1500-Present); past Board member and Board Chair, Western Heritage Museum, Billings; past Board member and Education committee chair, Billings Catholic Schools; current Board Member and Immediate Past Chair, Humanities Montana.

Occupation: Foundation Director, Montana Hospital Association

One child: Isaiah S.-P. Cech, Student at Carroll College (junior) and Defensive Assistant, Carroll College Fighting Saints Football Team