



1221 N. Russell St.
Missoula, MT 59808
www.blackfoot.com

Contact: Kate Olney
Blackfoot Telecommunications Group
Phone: (406) 541-5020
FAX: (406) 532-5018

PRESS RELEASE

Blackfoot's distributes \$16,000 in Scholarships to High School Grads

June 6, 2008 Missoula, Mont - Several Western Montana high school seniors have reason to celebrate. Recently, Blackfoot Telecommunications Group mailed out over 30 congratulatory letters to recipients of the 2008 Blackfoot Scholarships. After considering over 50 applications from high school seniors throughout the Blackfoot service areas, trustees chose the winners, judged to be some of the more outstanding students in western Montana.

In Thompson Falls, Matthew Hojem, Bryant Normandeau, and Aaron Whittenburg received the awards.

"It's a difficult job narrowing down the applications because of the high quality of students in our area schools. We considered academic ability, community service, need and character in making the selections for the best and the brightest who demonstrated a determination to enter the arena of post high school education," said Tom Eggenesperger, Blackfoot's board president.

Each graduate received \$500 with the exception of Bryant Normandeau who received \$1000. Normandeau, a graduate from Thompson Falls "demonstrated the determination, inventiveness, and practicality of a young man that will go on to achieve great things" says Eggenesperger.

Normandeau will be attending Butte College of Technology for a two-year degree in metals fabrication. A talented welder and aspiring inventor, he hopes to graduate from college in two years and work on his inventions.

"It will probably take a million dollar idea to start my company, so I plan to go straight to work for a metal/machine shop. This is so I can house, clothe, and feed myself while I work on my first invention. I will be lucky to have my first idea working and sold by the time I'm thirty or about seven years after college graduation," an excerpt from Normandeau's scholarship application.

Other scholarship winners and their schools include Katherine Neis, Chelsea Nygaard and Cleyone Talbot of Alberton High School; Kelsey Christopher, Danna Clizbe, Annela Rova of Arlee High School; Jean-Paul Toussaint, Ashley Vincent, Thomas Wartick of Charlo High School; Dustin Hover, Steven Tucker of Hellgate High School (resident's of Clinton); Peter Ferrell, Kimberly Moore of Noxon High School; Ashley Kent, Trent Thomas of Powell County High School (resident's of Elliston); Kathryn Barsotti of Granite High School (resident of Philipsburg); James Arnold, Tara Baker, Kara Bates of Plains High School; Chance Thompson, Tana Thurston of Hellgate High School (resident's of Potomac); Sadie Frey of St. Ignatius High School; Tailor Davis of St. Regis High School; Jessica Baier, Shayna Hurley, Caitlin Stone, Nathan Stone of Seeley-Swan High School; Luke Regan of Superior High School; and Matthew Hojem and Aaron Whittenburg of Thompson Falls High School.

About Blackfoot Telecommunications Group

Named after the Blackfoot River running through much of the territory it serves, the Blackfoot (Blackfoot) Telecommunications Group was originally established in 1954 as Blackfoot Telephone Cooperative. Blackfoot offers state-of-the-art telecommunications, Internet and data solutions to customers in Missoula and throughout Montana and Idaho. Headquartered in Missoula, Montana, Blackfoot employs more than 165 Montanans. Blackfoot can be reached at 406-541-5000 or through its web site at <http://www.blackfoot.com>.

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