

ROCKY NOW

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May 2011



Rocky Now: Keeping our friends and supporters informed about what's new and exciting at Rocky Mountain College

Commencement



Photo: Dave M. Shumway, RMC
Grads react to the humor and wit of Bill Bowers as he spoke at the 129th RMC Commencement.

Be True To You

Actor, mime, and educator Bill Bowers reminisced about his years as a Rocky Mountain College student, and advised the Class of 2011 to stay in touch with their "bivouac," a metaphor for college friends and companions.

The bivouac, derived from what a college roommate told him when it was time to end a hike and head home, "is where you can return to those who know you, love you, those you can trust, and to a place where you will remember who you are and what you wanted to do with your life," he said.

The sometimes funny, sometimes profound, and always entertaining Bowers was the featured speaker at the 129th Rocky Mountain College Commencement, held May 7, 2011, in the Fortin Education Center. He was also the guest of honor at the annual RMC President's Dinner, held in the Great Hall that evening.

This year, 165 students graduated, some earning degrees in masters of accountancy, educational leadership, and physician assistant studies, but the majority earning bachelor of arts or sciences degrees.

*(Please see **Commencement** inside)*

Climbing into the FUTURE

It's unfortunate we cannot publish more than a handful of stories on graduates from the Rocky Mountain College Class of 2011. This was a class replete with exceptional students doing extraordinary things in class and in the community. More than a third of the class graduated cum laude, magna cum laude, and summa cum laude. It was a class that helped fundraise for Habitat for Humanity to build homes, volunteered for the Montana Rescue Mission, presented concerts at churches, and tackled an energy-saving project for Head Start. While exemplifying the total education experience that Rocky prides itself on, this class was also contributing to winning a national collegiate ski championship, and the All-academic All-American award for the Frontier Conference. There's more, but not enough space to tell it all, just as



Photo: Dave M. Shumway, RMC
Tyler Kaufmann is bound for Drew University Divinity School on a full scholarship, but before leaving, he completed work on a new climbing wall.

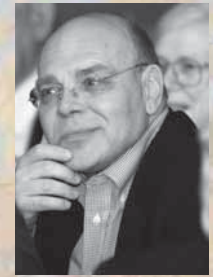
Habitat for Humanity to build homes. They donated clothes to the Montana Rescue Mission, presented concerts at churches, and tackled an energy-saving project for Head Start. While exemplifying the total education experience that Rocky prides itself on, this class was also contributing to winning a national collegiate ski championship, and the All-academic All-American award for the Frontier Conference. There's more, but not enough space to tell it all, just as

there is only enough space to showcase a few of our wonderful graduates. We hope the small representation in our special insert, Senior Sampler, gives you a glimpse into the transformational experience Rocky Mountain College provides, and confidence in our new alumni's ability to tackle future challenges. They are bright, eager, and prepared to climb into the future.



Insider

By MICHAEL R. MACE, PRESIDENT



A Thank You and Welcome to Chairs

A friend of mine, Dr. John Dugan, was not only a wonderful family practitioner, but a wonderful writer and poet. In his book, "Quotes, Notes and Antidotes," he says, "The ultimate value of greatness is what greatness does . . . not what greatness is!"

This statement best describes our out-going Chairman of the Board of Trustees. It's not that Barb Skelton is a past recipient of an Honorary Doctorate from this institution, or that she is a past candidate for Lieutenant Governor of our State, or that she is a board member of the Rocky Mountain Volunteers of America, or that she has served on over 20 volunteer boards and commissions, or that she is the proud mother of a wonderful graduate from Rocky Mountain College.

No, it's not what her greatness is, it is what her greatness does. It is all those things and many more. But it's not enough to just fulfill yourself unless you help others, and Barb Skelton does that.

Barb has served on the RMC National Advisory Council and the RMC Board of Trustees since 1999. She has been a member of the RMC Executive Committee since 2003. RMC

awarded her an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters in 2004. She and her husband, Paul Gatzemeier, are charter members of the Rocky 500 Club, and they served as honorary chairs of the 2008 RMC Black Tie Blue Jeans annual scholarship benefit.

She has not only served this College; children and horses have always been an integral part of her life. She has always believed that horses are a valuable therapeutic asset. She served two years on the Special Olympics Board, and she and Paul donated the use of their facility for the State Games Horse Show while it was in

Billings. The Intermountain Equestrian Center served as home to the Eagle Mount therapeutic riding program for three years, and she is committed to developing a program here.

A fifth generation Montanan, Barb's record of community service is admirable and crosses political party lines. She was Judith Basin County's first woman county commissioner. She was the first Democratic Party woman nominee for lieutenant governor, running with two-term governor, Tom Judge. She served as treasurer for U.S. Senator Max Baucus. For her work on the Selective Service Board, she received the Outstanding Public Service Award from President Ronald Reagan. For her work with the White House Conference on Small Business, she received an outstanding contributor award from President Bill Clinton. She served on the Montana Banking Commission, appointed by Governor Marc Racicot and, later, by Governor Judy Martz. She currently serves on the Montana Highway Commission, appointed by Governor Brian Schweitzer.

She has been there to help in every instance when the College needed a boost. She quietly, and without fanfare, provided scholarships for students, contributed to buying items

needed in various departments, and has been a wonderful host for special College events.

What she does for people in need, people who call on her wisdom, people who call on her gift of compassion and remarkable ability to recognize strengths and weaknesses in human resources, as well as those of organizations, is unsurpassed. She understands the antagonists and the supporters. She sorts out issues, gets into details, and rationalizes complex obstacles by putting them into a clear framework. This is what Barb does as a Trustee of Rocky Mountain College, and what her greatness has done for this great institution as its Chairman. The Trustees recognize it. The administrative officers, the faculty, and the students recognize her greatness and its contributions. She has made a difference here. I hope you'll join me in expressing gratitude to her.

* * *

With the completion of Barb's two-year term as Chair, it's comforting to know we have a solid replacement. Our new Chairman of the Board, Carl Hansen, is a 1985 graduate of

Rocky who is currently a Vice President and Certified Financial Consultant for D.A. Davidson & Company.

Carl, who was born and raised in Northeastern Montana, began his career in financial services in 1998. He completed training with the Cannon Financial Institute and the College of Financial Planning. Carl received his Certified Financial Planner™ designation, which demonstrates a comprehensive knowledge of the five areas of financial planning: insurance, investment planning, retirement planning, employee benefits, and estate planning. Carl is a member of the Financial Planning Association. Facilitating

philanthropy is an important facet of Carl's practice.

Carl gives back to the community by serving on various boards and committees of local nonprofit organizations. He currently serves as the Chairman of the Investment Committee of the RMC Board of Trustees; President of Boulder-Arrowhead Little League; and Treasurer for the Mayflower Congregational Church. Carl's personal life centers around his family. His wife, Marianna, is a Certified Public Accountant, and together they enjoy nurturing and encouraging their two children, Hannah and Miles. Coaching and leading in Cub Scouts, baseball, softball, and soccer have given Carl a tremendous opportunity to support the youth of our community.

Carl will bring his unique knowledge, training, and judgment to his role in leading the RMC Board of Trustees. Like his predecessor, Carl is someone who demonstrates who he is by what he does. He is a problem solver, and his calm demeanor and thoughtful openness, as well as his financial wisdom, will be of great value as we shape the future of his alma mater.



Photo: Dave M. Shumway, RMC
Barb Skelton, pictured with her husband Paul Gatzemeier at the RMC Yule Log Dinner, has been a great RMC Chair.



Photo: Dave M. Shumway, RMC
RMC has a solid new Chairman in an alumnus, Carl Hansen. Hansen is a Vice President and Certified Financial Consultant for D.A. Davidson & Company.

Focus on Our Students

RMC Helps Friends in Japan

A month after an earthquake and tsunami devastated Japan, the grim statistics were staggering: more than 15,000 dead; 5,000 injured; 14,000 missing; 100,000 children without parents; and more than 500,000 homeless.

"For those of us who are okay, we need to do what we can to help," said Kyoko Nishiyama, a Rocky Mountain College student from Japan. Kyoko, a senior majoring in theatre, is from Kumamoto, located in the South of Japan, an area distant from the Northeast part of the country that suffered the most damage.

"My family is fine. We are blessed," the 22-year old said. "But the aftershocks are still going on every day in Northeast Japan, and it's still discouraging and frightening."

As graduation approached, the mood to celebrate her commencement was dampened by the remorse for what happened to her country, Kyoko said.

To offset her sadness, she and fellow Japanese student, Kentaro Miyamoto, have been asking for donations every day in the Bair Family Student Center, which they send to the Japanese Red Cross.

"The distribution committee (of the Red Cross) was formed by local governments in the affected disaster area, so the funds are transferred directly to victims," she said.

Kentaro, 23, an aviation major at Rocky, said his family, also from Kumamoto, is also safe. Kentaro will graduate next year, and expects to make a trip home before school starts again next fall.

"We felt we had to do something," he said. "The response has been encouraging."

At first, Kyoko said she was nervous undertaking this project, unsure how people would react, "but so many people are willing to support helping people in my country and



Photo: Dave M. Shumway, RMC

RMC students Kyoko Nishiyama and Kentaro Miyamoto collected donations for the Japanese Red Cross to help relieve suffering in their country.

curious about what exactly is going on, it was a relief to do this."

Kyoko and Kentaro solicit donations, offering a white wrist band that says "Sending Relief to Japan" in their native language, and "Hope for Japan" in English. They ask for a

(Please see Focus on Our Students on back page)

Focus on International Studies



RMC foreign students host an annual international food festival. RMC students relish their experiences overseas.

Photo: Dave M. Shumway, RMC

Rocky Students Excited for Education Abroad

Zac Bonhoff is extremely enthusiastic about spending a year in Helsinki, Finland.

"I'd say on a scale of one to 10, I'm at a 10," he said. "The classes offered at the University of Helsinki, and getting to live in a major European city, really got me stoked to study abroad."

Rocky Mountain College is sending five students to three different continents next year, and already has students in Europe this spring: artist Rebecca Baken is in Nijmegen, the Netherlands; computer science major Jacob Carter is at the University of Sunderland on the northern-English coast;

and soccer player Amelia Whaley is in Wroclaw, Poland, where Crista Couture is going in the fall.

Judah LoVato will be at the University of Plymouth, England, way down in Cornwall, for 2011-2012, and D'Jeane Peters can't wait to get to Morocco.

"As the U.S. becomes increasingly linked to Arab countries, it's important to foster an understanding of their culture. I want to experience Morocco, not just visit it. Also, where else would I be able to ride a camel?" D'Jeane said. "Rocky has wonderful resources to help me prepare for this experience."

(Please see Focus on International Studies on back page)

Neighbor to Neighbor

Remembering a Grand and Gracious Friend

By BARB SKELTON,
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

Judge each day not by the harvest you reap but by the seeds you plant.

-- Robert Louis Stevenson

When I learned that the Rev. George Harper died, it was with less sorrow than I sometimes feel for the loss of a good friend. I knew that George had not only enjoyed a remarkable life with his church, career, community, and family, but that he had made better the lives of countless others. This was a life to celebrate. This was a life well lived.

The way he lived his life exemplifies the theme I've tried to cultivate while I've been Chairman of the Board of Trustees at Rocky Mountain College. For this, my last column, I could not have chosen a better example of a neighbor who helped neighbors, of reaching back to bring others forward.

George was one to plant seeds. Certainly he knew the value of the harvest, but he spent more time planting and nurturing than he did celebrating what he had accomplished or reveling in what he reaped.

Actually, he didn't really spend time; he invested time. He trusted that if he could help people, it would turn into something good. The people he helped would help others. It was a perpetual motion concept that defied the laws of physics. Good never ceased generating good.

George's own life was remarkable. He was an exceptional athlete. In college, he was only 11 seconds off the world record mile. He once clobbered a home run off legendary Hall of Fame fastball pitcher, Bob Feller.

He became an extraordinary pastor, serving St. Paul's United Methodist Church for 17 years. During his career, he served as Executive Secretary of the National Conference of Methodist Youth, a million-members strong, and Executive Secretary to the Montana Conference Board of Education.

Living in Helena, George devoted hours to his community. In 2003, he was inducted as a charter member to the Helena Sports Hall of Fame, and this winter, Helena High School's "The Jungle" basketball floor was named in his honor.

He served as a delegate to the Montana Constitutional Convention in 1972, and coined the slogan, "Praise the Lord and Pass the Constitution," only one example of his wonderful wit.

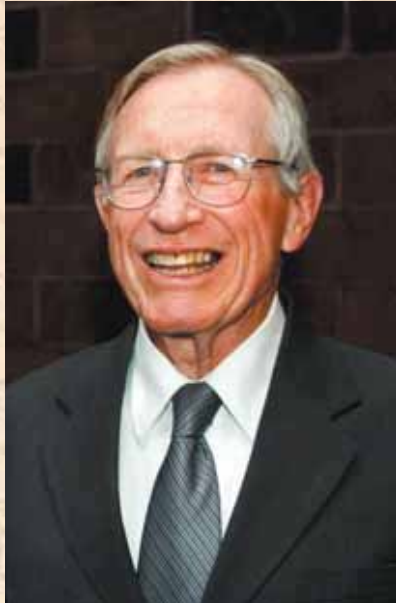


Photo: Dave M. Shumway, RMC
Rev. George Harper was a devoted friend of the College.

The citation for his honorary doctorate in 2007 records more about his clever humor:

"When we think of Mark Twain's devilish wit, we think of George Harper. When we think of Will Rogers' comedic insight, we think of George Harper. He isn't either one of them, but we think of him anyway. Probably no one in Montana can tell a story or give a speech and make people laugh as readily as George Harper. Like Twain and Rogers, the amusing stories also convey a deeper message, one of honesty and honor, of fair play and compassion."

One honorary doctorate from Rocky Mountain College was not sufficient to thank him for his service. He received an Honorary Doctor of Divinity in 1967. In 2007, he received an Honorary Doctor of Public Service.

Letters to the editor in the Helena Independent Record are further testimony to how great a man George Harper was. One writer, Craig Wright, stated that, in his career, he had met "many accomplished people - some of the greatest professional athletes, Grammy-winning musicians, bestselling authors, billionaire businessmen, congressmen, senators, governors, and a future U.S. president. None impressed me as much as George Harper, one of the finest men it has ever been my pleasure to know."

Another, the Very Rev. Stephen Brehe, the retired rector and dean of St. Peter's Cathedral, wrote: "A favorite author of mine writes: 'In his holy flirtation with the world, God occasionally drops a handkerchief. These handkerchiefs are called saints.' One of those 'handkerchiefs' was the Rev. George Harper. All of us have been

blessed with God's holy flirtation with us through 'Saint George.'"

It's difficult to sum up the life of someone like George Harper and, in a way, it shouldn't be summed up. That would imply an addition with a total at the end. The total for George Harper is still evolving, as all those seeds he planted mature and plant their seeds.

We note that George's family, in his obituary, asked that in lieu of flowers, donations could be made to Rocky Mountain College, where he would hope we keep planting those seeds. Because of George Harper, more seeds will be planted and nurtured by good neighbors, and more greatness will be born.



Billings Canstruction II

Members of the RMC Students In Free Enterprise (SIFE) review plans before building their sculpture in the second annual Billings Canstruction, a benefit for the Billings Food Bank. The theme this year was Disney Pixar movies. Teams of architects, sponsoring businesses, and organizations compete to design and build colossal structures made from full cans of food. The results are giant "canned art" exhibits. The teams competing to build the best included the SIFE team, with architect Jim Beal, CTA; RMC Campus Corps, with architect Sherril Burke, HGFA; Albertsons Grocery Store (management), with architect Mike Patterson, TUYA Studios, Inc.; Albertsons Grocery Store (associates), with architect Craig Frohlich, Designlab Architects; and HDR Engineering, Inc., with JGA Architects. After the entries were judged and admired by the public, all the food went on the Food Bank shelves for distribution to needy families.



Photo: Dave M. Shumway, RMC

129th RMC Commencement

(Continued from front page)

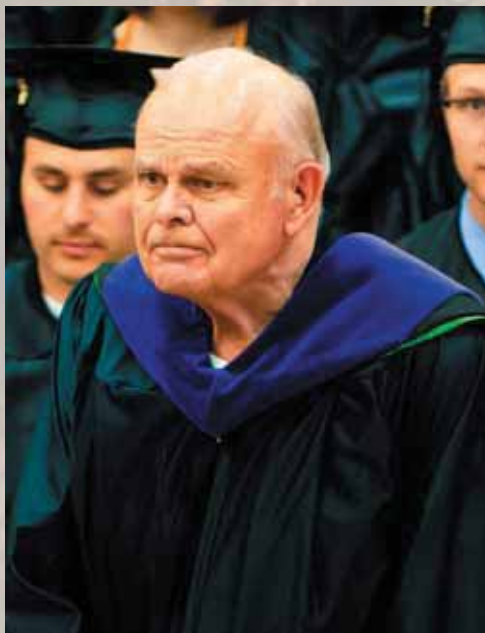
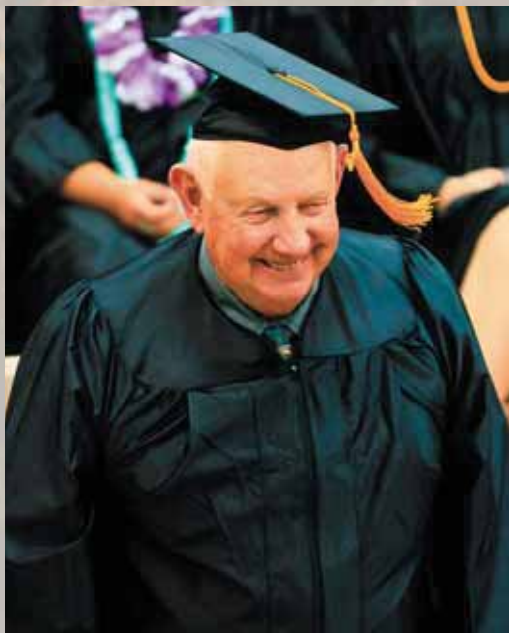


Photo: Dave M. Shumway, RMC

John Flanagan, left, was one of 30 Half Century Club graduates honored at Commencement; Robert Waller, right, was one of past 14 Honorary Doctorate recipients recognized during Commencement.



Photo: Dave M. Shumway, RMC

Longtime RMC supporter Susan Heyneman, left, joined RMC Chair Barb Skelton in welcoming Bill Bowers, RMC '81, at the reception and dinner hosted by RMC President Michael Mace and his wife, Karen.

Bowers graduated from RMC in 1981. He earned a Master of Fine Arts from Rutgers University before launching a career as a Broadway actor and mime. He studied under legendary mime Marcel Marceau. He was a recipient of the RMC Alumni Association Outstanding Achievement Award in 1999. In 2001, Bowers received an Honorary Doctorate of Fine Arts from RMC.

As an actor and mime, Bowers has performed throughout the U.S., Canada, Europe, and Asia. He appeared on Broadway, television, and in movies. He has written and performed his own plays, including "It Goes Without Saying," and "Under a Montana Moon," and both received critical raves. He will premiere his new solo play, "Moving Pictures," in New York this fall.

Bowers has stayed in touch with his Montana roots. He helped Billings Senior High Drama Department rehearse "Heyokah," a play he wrote and that, under the

direction of BSHS Drama Teacher Bonnie Banks, the students will perform in Scotland this summer at an international theatre festival. Ms. Banks introduced Bowers at the President's Dinner.

"Heyokah" is a Lakota Sioux expression for someone who walks backwards and sees things differently. From "heyokah" comes "hokahey," that is sometimes translated into "a good day to die," another theme of his Commencement address. But, in Lakota, "hokahey" is not about mortality as much as living each moment as if it's the last, and better translates as "Let's do it, let's go!"

Commencement concluded a busy April, with academic, aviation, and athletic award banquets; "Voices," an evening honoring student writers, photographers, and artists; Earth Week; a senior art show and reception; spring choir and band concerts; and a variety of student-faculty events.

Coming Attractions

NEWS & NOTES

Rocky Now will not be published July and August while we work on the President's Annual Report, which is issued in September.

We will also be busy with a new RMC website, scheduled to be unveiled in August.

Some of you may be interested in receiving RMC Newsworthy and RMC Photoworthy emails, which provide links to stories about RMC faculty, students, alumni, and friends, and current listings of photo galleries of RMC events. We also email periodic updates of RMC events. If you would like to be included, please send your email address to burkhard@rocky.edu.

We have frequent requests for back issues of Rocky Now. These are in short supply, however, they are all archived online. It's three clicks to go to www.rocky.edu, then to site index, and then to Rocky Now.

We always welcome comments and suggestions. They can be addressed to: Dan Burkhard, RMC news and information director, 1511 Poly Drive, Billings, Mont. 59102 / (406) 657-1104 / burkhard@rocky.edu.

JUNE 12

The Annual Festival of Cultures, from 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., on the campus of Rocky Mountain College, is an amazing celebration of cultural diversity, with more than 7,000 people attending to sing, dance, and sample ethnic delicacies. Free and open to the public, it is sponsored and hosted by the RMC Institute for Peace Studies. Shaded seating areas are provided for our mature guests and free -- all day -- children's activities in every area. Vendors offer ethnic crafts representing their cultural background and food and drink from lands around our world. Wander the grounds enjoying your tamale from Mexico, sipping your coffee from Italy, while you watch drummers from Japan. For more information: Cindy Kunz, IPS administrator, (406) 657-1042 / kunzc@rocky.edu.

JUNE 17

The 11th Annual RMC Alumni Golf Scramble at Peter Yegen Golf Course. Shotgun start at 1:00 p.m. The public is welcome to participate. For more information: Kristin Mullaney, RMC alumni coordinator, (406) 657-1007 / kristin.mullaney@rocky.edu.

AUGUST 27

The Absaroka Region Porsche Club of America of the Greater Billings and Yellowstone region of Montana/Wyoming holds its fourth annual All Euro Car Show at Rocky Mountain College, on the Green, from 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Pre-registration is encouraged at: www.clubregistration.net. A portion of the \$10 per car entry fee is donated to RMC. The club website is: <http://vista.pca.org/abs>. For additional information or questions contact: Fred Magers (406) 245-6733 / abs.pres@gmail.com.

Focus on Our Students

(Continued from inside)

donation of \$1.50 for each wristband, but they said most donate more than that, and Kyoko said she is also receiving donations via her Facebook.

"I even received some orders (for wristbands) outside Montana, which was very exciting," she said.

Support from the RMC community was not surprising, since there is a 50-year history of Japanese students attending Rocky. Over the years, more than 300 students have come from Japan to study at Rocky, with roughly a third graduating.

In many cases, those connections cemented lifelong friendships. When the earthquake and tsunami struck, RMC alumni were quickly trying to check on classmates from Japan to see if they were okay.

Cindy Kunz, who had several Japanese work study students at the RMC Institute for Peace Studies, where she is administrator, worried about their status, but was relieved to learn that Michiko Hashinokuchi, Yukair Nagamine, and Hideki Ishida were all alive and safe.

Robert Dale Hajek, who graduated in 1972, conveyed news from Takashi

Okoshi, who graduated in 1970, to Obert Udem, RMC director of planned giving, who has often corresponded with Japanese alumni.

"When I had a conference at my university, I was hit by the biggest earthquake which I had ever experienced. After the first earthquake ceased shaking, I ordered all students and staff to evacuate the buildings. Fortunately, nobody was injured at school," Okoshi emailed Hajek.

Hajek also forwarded information to Udem from Pete Araki, who attended RMC in the 1970s.

"It was the first experience of an earthquake in my 63 years," wrote Araki. "It started so gently and slowly... and then there was rolling as if we were on a vessel, or rather like swinging in a hammock. Not shaking. It lasted very long."

Okoshi had also heard from two other Japanese RMC alumni who were fine, although the day after the quake he reported ominously that, "Nuclear power plant in northeastern Japan has problem...we hope it will be okay..."

The crisis at Japan's Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant turned into what one analyst called "a slow-

moving nightmare," with fires, leaks of poisonous radiation, and mass evacuations. It may rank as one of the worst nuclear disasters in history.

Brad Nason, RMC vice president and dean of student life, developed friendships with many Japanese students, some who stayed with his family when they were here. He was in contact with Ken Briggs, former RMC international program director, who forwarded information he received from several graduates, all of whom survived.

"With several hundred alumni in Japan, it's difficult to check on all of them, but we were anxious to hear about as many as we could, and so far the news has been a relief. All are fine," Nason said.

But the recovery will be arduous and long, Kentaro and Kyoko know.

"I want to pursue a career in film for awhile, and then maybe go back to attend grad school," Kyoko said. "It may be best to stay in this country for now."

Kentaro believes the effort they make to help may be small, but will add up to make a positive impact.

"We are thankful we are here to do what we can," he said. "It is nice to have Rocky understand our situation and extend their help."

Focus on International Studies

(Continued from inside)

"Tokyo is one of the world's most-important cities, and Japan has the third largest economy, which makes it very influential in global affairs," said Shannon Hartmann, one of Rocky's skiers, who is heading to Toyo University for two semesters.

Shannon also mentioned she's fascinated by the Japanese view of society and philosophy.

"It will be much easier to understand and relate to Japanese values and beliefs if I can experience them firsthand."

According to assistant professor of communications Shelby Long-Hammond, "The first step to a deeper understanding of a society is to learn its language; that gets you through the door."

"That's how I'm going to know Moroccan culture; I'm going to become

fluent in Arabic," said D'Jeane.

Shannon agrees. She chose Toyo University over many others because she could take Japanese-language classes.

"Being in an East-Asian culture, studying for a year in Japan and learning Japanese will broaden my world view," she said.

Zac intends to learn Finnish.

"Finland is a place where I can learn about a new culture through its language, and broaden my knowledge in ways I wouldn't necessarily be able to by just staying in Montana."

Currently in Northern England, Jacob has some advice for the students going abroad next year: "The key is to not hang out just with the other American exchange students, but to meet the locals and let them show you what they do for fun."

And the fear of foreign food that some have?

"There's still some of the stereotypical weird food, but some of the best food I've ever had I didn't even know existed until I came here," Jacob said.

On a scale of one to 10, Shannon rates her eagerness an eight. "I'm still just a little bit nervous, but I'm really excited about going to Japan."

"The Office of International Programs was really great at helping me get ready for this experience, and I am so raring to go now," said Zac.

Accenting the anticipation for those waiting to go are reports from those already "over there." Rebecca Baken, who even missed her commencement to have the opportunity to study in the Netherlands, keeps a regular blog chronicling her experience. It is ripe with food, fun, friends, and studies. (<http://rebeccabakentravels.blogspot.com/>)

By MICHAEL WEST,
ROCKY MOUNTAIN COLLEGE DIRECTOR OF
INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

