GLACIER BANK™

January 27, 2025

Chairman Bedey and Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Education Members
Montana State Capitol
1301 E 6th Avenue
Helena, MT 59601

RE: Support for Flathead Valley Community College's Budget Hearing

Dear Chairman Bedey and Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Education Members:

I would like to express Glacier Bank's dedicated support for Flathead Valley Community College (FVCC) and the outstanding job they are doing in our community. FVCC has been at the forefront of our area's workforce development efforts and supplying NW Montana families an excellent low-cost education for both vocational students and students transferring to four-year schools.

FVCC collaborates with the entire community to develop programs when needs are identified. For example, Glacier Bank and the College have partnered together to create a customized Business Foundations Career Credential as a professional development program to increase employee skillsets, diversify their talents and become well-rounded employees for Glacier Bank. The tuition cost is paid by the Bank. Since starting this partnership in 2022, 23 staff have enrolled in at least one of the requisite courses, and six staff have completed all the requirements and been awarded the Glacier Bank Business Credential Certificate.

Flathead Valley Community College is a true community partner. Over the past decade, the College has built a nursing school, vocational trades facilities, new library, student center, and a 1,000-seat performing arts facility that artists and community members alike are thrilled to have in the state. An Entrepreneurial Center is now under construction. All these facilities are enhancing the student experience creating opportunities for new and expanded curriculum. Many of these facilities are also open to the public and in the case of the performing arts center supply a significant economic development impact by attracting performers, like cellist Yo Yo Ma, who bring in attendees from around the state who stay in hotels, eat in restaurants, and support local businesses.

As the market president of a 300-employee division of Glacier Bancorp serving Northwest Montana, I can assure you that President Jane Karas, her Trustees, and faculty are a highly effective team that is a productive and effective deployer of Montana's higher education funding. We encourage you to fully-fund their efforts for the benefit of all Montana.

Sincerely,

Mike Smith, Market President
Glacier Bank