

Welcome Guide



**Research
Scholars**

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70
Goldwater
Scholars
Spring 2018



“ If you want to do state-of-the-art research in your chosen field with highly accomplished faculty while having one of the best outdoor experiences in United States, MSU is the place to be!
Dr. Indika Kahanda
Computer Science



250
Active Technology
Licenses



Enrollment
16,703
Montana's Largest
University
Fall 2017



Top
10
Best Place To Live
In the United States
(Business Insider 2017)



Top
3%
of Universities
for Research and
Expenditures



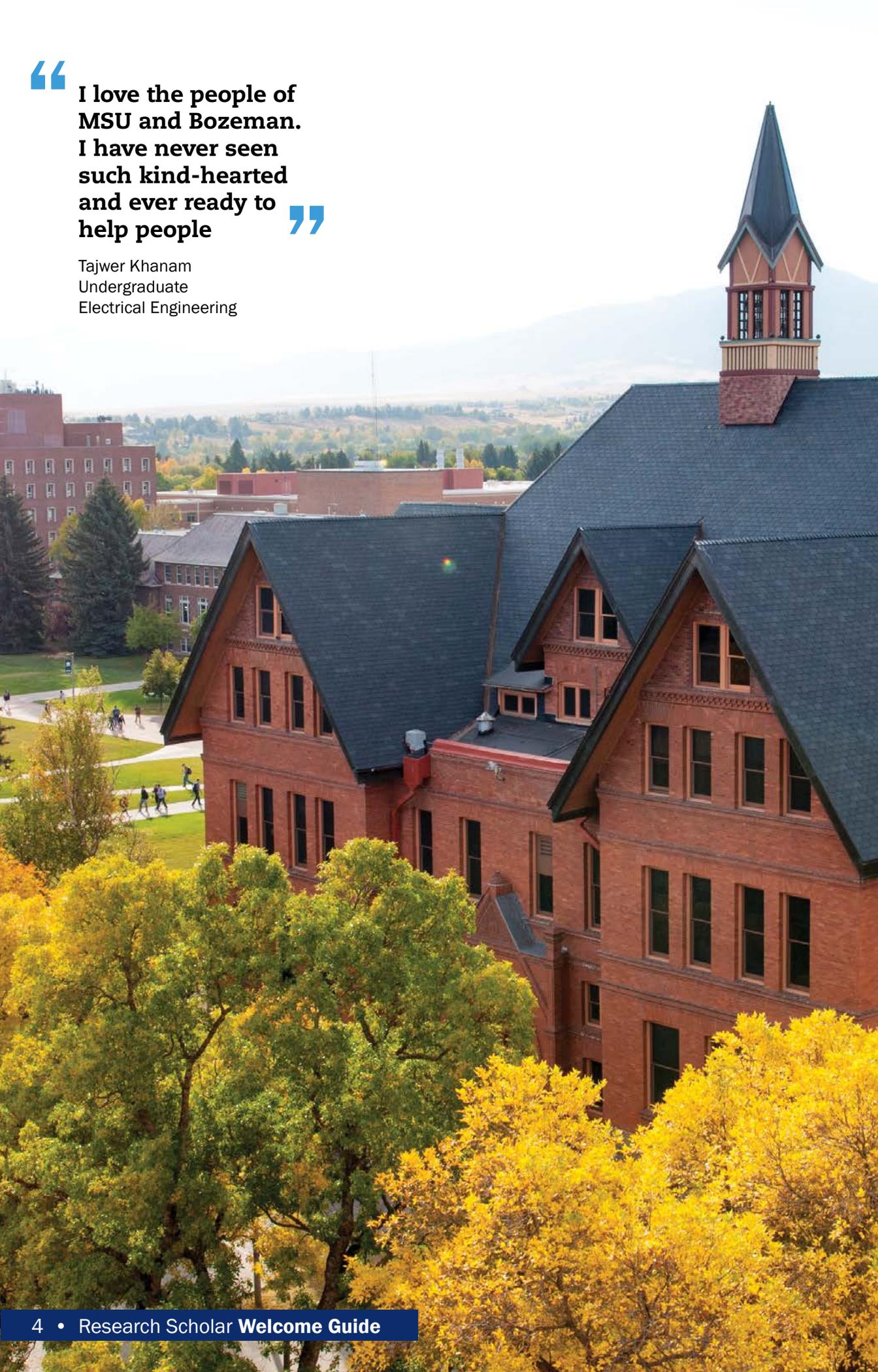
\$130
Million
Research
Expenditures

No. 1
College for Outdoor
Sports & Recreation
(LendEDU 2017)



“ I love the people of MSU and Bozeman. I have never seen such kind-hearted and ever ready to help people ”

Tajwer Khanam
Undergraduate
Electrical Engineering



Welcome to MSU

I am pleased to extend a welcome to you on behalf of our Montana State University community!

You will soon become a member of a growing community of scholars and be working with a world-class cadre of faculty committed to addressing global challenges through excellent education, research, creative activity and engaged civic responsibility. It is a place for learning, a place for discovery, and a place for success! As one of the most technologically advanced universities in the world, MSU facilities and faculty provide an exciting environment in which you will engage with others in becoming the next generation of global leaders!

Your decision to join a growing community of international scholars will add to our goals of diversity and inclusion. You are coming to a vibrant university surrounded by high mountains and an environment that fosters creative minds, in a place unlike anywhere else. We look forward to your contributions as you pursue your future opportunities at MSU. We are committed to making sure you accomplish your personal and professional goals as a member of our MSU Bobcat family.

The following pages contain important information designed to assist you in your journey. You will find information about our city and community. The staff in the Office of International programs is dedicated to making your arrival and stay a successful step in your pursuit of academic and professional goals.

We will provide you with a wide variety of services and assistance:

- Greeting you upon your arrival
- Providing you with visa and immigration services
- Helping you with cultural adjustment and university life
- Sharing resources for your research success
- Connecting you with people and places to make you feel at home

I look forward to greeting you personally upon your arrival and seeing you involved in many exciting activities during you stay at MSU!



Warm regards,

I Miley Gonzalez, PhD
Vice Provost for International Programs

Introduction to International Student & Scholar Services



Office open Monday - Friday
8:00 - 5:00 pm
(Exceptions for Holidays)



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Deborah Chiolero

Senior International Student and
Scholar Advisor
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Program Basics

- ✓ Always consult with ISSS staff in the Office of International Programs on matters related to the J-1 Visa.
- ✓ You must maintain legal status while in the U.S. This includes having a valid DS-2019 and passport at all times. Your I-94 arrival record must show "D/S" (duration of status).
- ✓ All J-1 exchange visitors must be covered by health insurance that meets Department of State requirements at all times while in the U.S. Proof of insurance must be provided to ISSS Staff upon check in. (see p.8)

! Important Message

It is the responsibility of the J Scholar to keep their DS-2019 up to date. Your DS-2019 must be renewed at least 30 days prior to expiration. If you have questions about renewing your DS-2019 please contact the Office of International Programs

“ I will remember the great friendships I had and the invaluable support I got from OIP. I will remember how MSU made me a better person and contributed to my future. ”

Hanan Alkalaji
Master's Student
Adult and Higher Education



Life and Logistics



Home Residency Requirement

- If you are subject to 212(e) you must spend 2 years in your home country (this needs to be carefully documented and can be accomplished over several periods of time with travel abroad in between) or have this requirement officially waived in order to change to the H-1B, L-1 or K visas or to apply for permanent residency status (green card). There is information on the back side of Form DS-2019 on this issue.
- 212(e) is based on the skills list or government funding.
- If you would like to discuss applying for the waiver, please read about this topic at the Department of State website and make an appointment with ISSS staff.
- Note: Your DS-2019 cannot be extended after you have a waiver recommendation from the Department of State. If you decide to apply for a waiver, ISSS staff must be informed.



Families: J-2 Dependents

- Employment - J-2 spouses and children (ages 16-21) can apply for work permission. There is a cost of \$410 to apply and processing time generally takes 2-3 months. ISSS staff will assist with this process, and an appointment is required.
- Study - J-2 dependents may study part or full time.
- J-2 dependents may travel separately from the J-1 visa holder, but need a travel signature.
- ISSS staff can give suggestions and information to scholars with families about the public schools, daycare, and children's activities. Many services and activities are available in Bozeman for J-2 dependents, including free English classes and inexpensive general interest classes.



Montana Driver's License

• All drivers who live in the Bozeman area for over two months must take the driver's exam at the local Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and pass a road test. OIP has study booklets available for the test; please ask for one. Driver's licenses for the exchange visitor and eligible dependents will be issued using the program end date on the DS-2019 form as the end date of the license. A Montana Identification Card is another option for an official ID, also available at the DMV

• If you plan to buy a car, you will need a Montana driver's license, to register your car with the county and to buy liability insurance. If you'd like to rent a car, you will need to contact the specific rental agency to see if they will accept your international driver's license. Most car rental shops are located near the airport.



Social Security and Taxes

- J-1 exchange visitors who will be paid by MSU or another U.S. entity will need to apply for a **Social Security Number (SSN)**. ISSS Staff will assist with the required forms and give directions to the local Social Security Office. Applicants will need to wait at least 10 days after arrival to apply.
- Some banks and businesses ask for a SSN as part of the application for an account. There are options to work around this request that can be discussed with ISSS.

- Your SSN should be carefully protected. Identity thieves can use this number in financial scams.
- Taxes must be filed by April 15th each year for funds earned the previous calendar year.
- J-1 Scholars who are paid by MSU will complete the online FINIS form and can get assistance from Human Resources

Your Health Insurance

Requirements

• The U.S. Department of State requires the following health insurance coverage for Exchange Visitors and their dependents: medical benefits of at least \$100,000 per accident or illness with a deductible not to exceed \$500; repatriation of remains in the amount of at least \$25,000; and expenses associated with medical evacuation of visitor to his or her home country of \$50,000. For more information, please visit <http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/go/health.html>

Helpful Tips

• Health insurance in the U.S. is very expensive, and most health insurance policies rarely cover 100% of expenses. If you are not covered by MSU's insurance plan, OIP can offer suggestions for other plans that do meet the coverage requirements.

• **Always carry proof of insurance in your wallet with you.**

• Bozeman has two urgent care clinics, a major hospital, and many private doctors and specialists to serve your health needs during your stay.

Please Be Aware

• Most insurances do NOT cover dental or lenses. It has to be a separate contract.

• Ambulances are very expensive. Going to the Bozeman Deaconess Hospital will cost at least \$800. Use it only if it is a true emergency.



IN AN EMERGENCY, DIAL
911

For more information on health insurance visit www.montana.edu/international/iss/health.html

• If you have MSU insurance and go to the Health Service, all lab tests, xrays, minor surgeries, procedures, and medical supplies such as crutches are free. You will have a co-pay for any prescriptions (this varies, depending on the prescription).

• If you do not have MSU insurance and go to the Health Service, the doctor visit is still free, but you will have to pay for any xrays, labs or minor procedures. The pharmacy at the Health Service can usually bill your insurance company for prescriptions. Charges for services such as xrays or labs are due at the time of the visit. The Student Health Service will give you a statement to send to your insurance carrier. If you have an international policy, often they will reimburse you for 100% of the services if you use the Student Health Service.

• Please make sure that pharmacy is covered.

What You Need To Know

Important Regulations to Know

• Your program length is shown on your DS-2019. Extensions can be possible in some circumstances (not for short-term scholars), and must be completed **before the DS-2019 date is reached.**

• A signature on the DS-2019 by ISSS Staff is required for re-entry into the U.S. after short trips abroad that take place during the program period. A valid visa is needed for re-entry. Please ask for advice before leaving the U.S. on any trip during your program.

• All J-1 exchange visitors have a **30-day grace period** at the end of their program during which they can prepare for departure or travel within the U.S. No work is permitted during this period.

Document Check-In and Departure

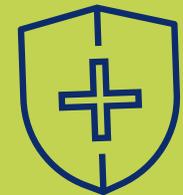
• We are able to activate your programs after you have submitted the following documents for yourself and any J-2 Dependents:



- Copy of Passport ID page
- Copy of Current Visa



- Copy of I-94
- Copy of DS-2019 form
- Student / Scholar Info Sheet (Provided by OP)



- Proof of Health Insurance

• When your program ends, you need to notify OIP of your departure date in person or via e-mail.

Requirements for SEVIS reporting

• **Within 10 calendar days** of any of the changes below you must report the change to ISSS staff so that your SEVIS record can be updated:

- A change in address
- A new phone number
- New e-mail address for yourself or your J-2 dependent
- An early end date for your program or for your J-2 dependent

Check-In With Office Of International Programs

• You are required to check in with our office **within 15 days after your arrival** in the United States or immediately if you arrive after the start date on your DS-2019. We can then carry out the proper visa documentation process, download your I-94 and activate you in SEVIS in order to guarantee your legal status in the U.S.



Visa Guidelines & Regulations

• For more information please visit www.montana.edu/international/iss/

Part 1: If You Are Not Yet in the U.S.

- You must have a valid passport issued by your government before you can obtain your visa to enter the United States. To apply for your J-1 Visa, you must first pay the SEVIS fee of \$180.00. Information on the fee can be found at www.FMJfee.com
- Visit the website of the U.S. Embassy or Consulate in your country to make an appointment to apply for your visa. The Visa officer may ask for documents showing funding that does not come directly from MSU (with such items as a letter of award or support, a bank statement, etc). If your dependents will be accompanying you, they will need J-2 Visas, and you should take their passports with you as well as SEVIS proof of payment. Be prepared to show proof of marriage to your spouse and parenthood of each child.
- When you receive your visa, you can make arrangements for your international travel
 - You can arrive in the United States up to 30 days prior to the start date on your DS-2019

Part 2: If You Are Already in the U.S. as a J-1 Scholar

You may change your J-1 sponsorship to MSU by leaving the U.S. and making a new entry (see steps above) or by transferring within the SEVIS system - as long as you remain within the 5 year limit.

To transfer programs without leaving the U.S., you will need a “transfer in” form from MSU. You will see the Foreign Student Advisor at your present university and get approval to transfer to Montana State University. You will fill out the top portion of the form and the Foreign Student Advisor at your present university will complete the form. It will notify us of your “release date from SEVIS”. On that date we will be able to go into the SEVIS system and access your records and transfer you to MSU. We will then produce a new DS-2019 for you. It is not necessary to have this form before you report to MSU when you arrive on campus. You can pick it up from the Office of International Programs at MSU when you arrive on campus.

Part 3: Extending Your J-1 Status

For information concerning the possibility of extending your J-1 status, or traveling outside the U.S. and returning, please come to the Office of International Programs and speak with Deborah Chiolo.

Special Notes

- Canadians do not need visas to enter the U.S. if they are citizens of Canada. A passport is necessary as is a copy of your birth certificate. You MUST show your DS-2019 at the port-of-entry to be in status as a J-1
- Other countries do not need visas to enter the U.S. but if you are coming from one of those as a J-1 Scholar you DO need a visa to enter

Welcome to your community, Bozeman, MT

Bozeman is a youthful, energetic town located in the heart of the Scenic Rocky Mountains that attracts a wide variety of visitors year after year. Home to scholars, students, artists, athletes, and engineers alike, the town has become a hub for the state of Montana. This development is highlighted by the success of the University, high-tech companies, and an ever-growing population.

Residents and visitors alike enjoy the many amenities of Bozeman year-round. World-famous Yellowstone National park, acclaimed guest lectures, a thriving art community and nationally-competitive sports teams, are only some of the many sources of entertainment. Locals can be seen enjoying the wonderful outdoors and downtown alike. **Bozeman is the ideal place to live, work, study, and enjoy.**

- **Best Places to Live (Money 2017)**
- **World's Best Ski Towns (National Geographic 2012)**
- **Best Place to Live in the U.S. (NY Post 2016)**

Gear Up



Rent any of 62 different types of gear from MSU Outdoor Recreation on campus.

300 DAYS
Of Sun Annually

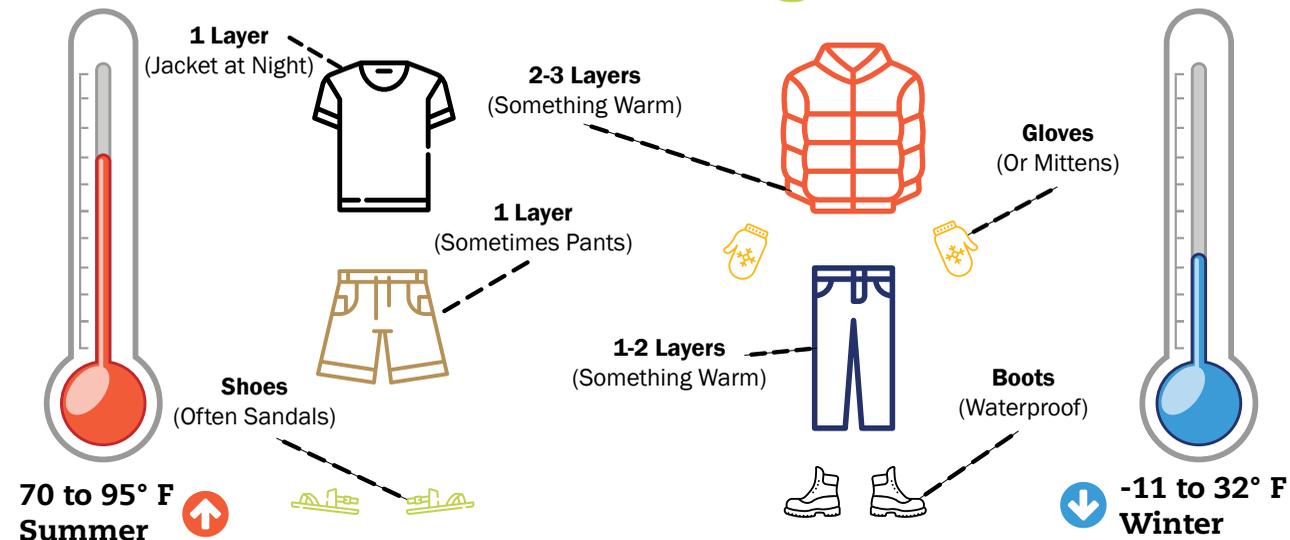
218 CM
Annual Snowfall

28 CM
Annual Rainfall

Mountains & Minds.



Climate and Clothing (What Bozemanites Wear)





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