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Leadership Montana Names Annual Award Winner

Havre Resident to Receive the Tom Scott Excellence in Leadership Award

(HAVRE/HELENA) — The Leadership Montana Board of Governors is pleased to announce the selection of Debbie Vandeberg-Henry, as the recipient of the 2026 Tom Scott Award for Excellence in Leadership.

Named in honor of Leadership Montana's founder, the Tom Scott Award is the organization's highest distinction, presented annually to an individual who has made significant, sustained, and meaningful contributions to the mission and success of Leadership Montana. Each year, the Board of Governors selects a recipient who exemplifies outstanding leadership, service, and dedication to the organization.

As a Founder, and alumna of the first Flagship Class of 2005, Vandeberg-Henry has demonstrated a deep and ongoing commitment to Leadership Montana. She served on the Organizing Committee to create the Leadership Montana Program, under the leadership of Tom Scott. She then served on the Board of Governors from 2017 to 2025, including as Chair during the 2022-2023 term. As Chair, she played a key role in guiding the organization through a critical time, ensuring stability through their executive search and transition.

"Few people embody the spirit and purpose of Leadership Montana as fully as Debbie does," said Camila Skinner, member of the Board of Governors. "As one of the organization's founding members, she helped lay the groundwork for what Leadership Montana would become. Her early vision, steady leadership, and deep commitment shaped the mission and set the organization on a strong and meaningful path. Beyond her foundational role, Debbie has demonstrated deep dedication as a financial supporter, connector, volunteer, and staunch advocate. Her influence extends well beyond any single contribution; she has strengthened relationships, championed the organization's work, and inspired others to engage deeply with Leadership Montana. Debbie's impact is enduring, and her legacy reflects the very spirit of the Tom Scott Award."

Debbie was born and raised in Havre, a proud graduate of Havre High School and MSU-Northern. She returned to Havre after a few years working in retail in NYC and opened her own business, with the goal of making a difference. Being back home she has done her best to contribute and give back to the community and state. While Debbie may be retired, she is active in several community organizations: Havre Hill County Preservation Commission, the Art and

Beautification Committee and statewide with Leadership Montana. When she is not volunteering, she and her husband Dave both enjoy hiking, golf, travel and driving the backroads of Montana.

When notified of the award, Debbie shared, “Leadership Montana allowed me to grow in so many ways, professionally and personally. The magic of Leadership Montana still inspires me everyday. I am incredibly honored to be selected to receive the Tom Scott Award for Excellence in Leadership. When I review the previous winners- all friends and some classmates, - I am humbled to be in their company.”

Vandeberg-Henry will receive the award at the Class of 2026 Graduation and Alumni Awards luncheon at The Montana Heritage Center in Helena on May 15, 2026.

About Leadership Montana

Founded in 2003, Leadership Montana is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to building a better Montana through knowledge, collaboration, and civility. The organization offers a comprehensive leadership development program designed to enhance professional skills while encouraging personal growth and self-reflection.

Participants engage deeply with the complex issues facing Montana, gaining a broadened perspective and a stronger sense of civic responsibility. Throughout the program, they also cultivate meaningful relationships with fellow participants and join a statewide network of over 1,000 alumni. This diverse and dynamic alumni community represents leaders from all sectors and regions of Montana, united by a shared commitment to advancing the state’s future through collaborative leadership.

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