

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 29, 2004

CONTACT: WALLY FELDT, UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA-WESTERN: 406-683-7201; LA CENSE MONTANA RANCH: KATHY HUBBELL, ADSCRIPTS, 406-728-4595

**UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA-WESTERN AND LA CENSE MONTANA RANCH
ANNOUNCE UNIQUE NEW DEGREE PROGRAM IN NATURAL HORSEMANSHIP**

Dillon, Montana: The University of Montana-Western and the La Cense Montana Ranch in Dillon, Montana, are pleased to announce that through their combined efforts, a new Associate of Applied Sciences (AAS) degree program in Natural Horsemanship is now available at the University, starting in the Fall of 2004. The first degree of its kind in the nation, the program is the result of a unique partnership between the ranch and the Equine Studies program at UM-Western.

Natural horsemanship methods are based on the horse's own behavior, instincts, personality and methods of communication. A student of natural horsemanship learns to replace the traditional prey/predator relationship with one of trust and cooperation, resulting in exceptionally strong bonds between a horse and its human partner, and in horses which are calmer, more flexible and safer in their behavior.

The Natural Horsemanship Associate's Degree builds on the successful UM-W Equine Studies Program. The new degree affords students the opportunity to gain experiential learning through the laboratory classes at La Cense Montana and the use of its 60,000-sq. foot arena. Use of La Cense as a working Black Angus and Quarter Horse ranch provides students with real-world learning and experience that merges with their classroom studies at the University.

The natural horsemanship method is quickly becoming the international standard by which horsemanship is judged. The creation of a university-accredited program will ensure, for those who wish to pursue a career in natural horsemanship, the existence of an internationally recognizable industry standard.

Those interested in the new natural horsemanship degree program may find UM-W enrollment information at <http://www.umwestern.edu>. More information about UM-W may be obtained by calling David Moore, Assistant to the Chancellor, at (406) 683-7036, or Tom Yahraes, Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement, at (406) 683-7306.

Those interested in learning more about the horses and educational programs available at La Cense Montana may go to <http://www.lacensemontana.com>. More information about the ranch may be obtained by calling owner William Kriegel at (917) 710-6636, or ranch Manager Bud Griffith at (406) 683-8777.

A background story about the development of the partnership between UM-Western and La Cense Montana is available upon request.

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