

Resume & Cover Letter Guide

This packet provides guidance on creating professional resumes and cover letters that highlight your education, experience, skills, and accomplishments. For personalized feedback, [schedule an appointment with a Career Coach](#).

See the end of the guide for resume and cover letter examples.

Resumes

I. What a Resume Is - and Isn't

A resume is a brief, targeted summary of your background, skills, and experiences -typically one page for new graduates - tailored to a specific job or internship. Think of it as your personal brand on paper: a snapshot that shows an employer why your most relevant qualifications make you a strong fit for their opportunity.

A resume is *not* an exhaustive autobiography. It shouldn't catalog every experience you've ever had, exaggerate or misrepresent your achievements, or simply list job duties. Instead of describing what you were responsible for, it should demonstrate what you accomplished.

II. Resume Formatting & Layout

Formatting

- Keep it to one page.
- Use a professional font, size 10–12. Do not use colors or fancy fonts.
- Skip graphics, photos, columns, tables, and templates.
- Keep margins between ½" and 1" and put nothing in headers or footers.
- Proofread carefully — grammar and punctuation must be flawless.

Layout & Sections

- **Masthead:** Name, city and state, phone, professional email, and relevant links (LinkedIn, GitHub).
- **Education:** Belongs near the top - degree, school, location, graduation date, and GPA (optional).
- **Experience:** Reverse chronological order. Include title, organization, location, and dates.
 - Start each bullet with an action verb and focus on *accomplishments*, not duties.
 - Quantify when possible and prioritize what is most relevant to the job.
- **Other sections as needed:** Leadership, Honors, Organizations, Certifications, Skills.
- **References:** Separate page shared only when asked.

III. Writing Bullet Points

Strong bullet points are "accomplishment statements" - they prove your relevant skills by showing what you did, the context, and the results of your work. Follow this structure:

Action Verb + Project/Context + Result

- Start every bullet with a strong action verb. Don't repeat verbs.
- Use present tense for current jobs (Create, not ~~Creating~~), past tense for previous jobs.
- Add interesting context: timeframe, number of people, budget size, type of project or audience.
- End with the outcome and quantify results whenever possible.
- Show what *you* accomplished, not just your assigned duties.
- Give more bullets to your most relevant and recent positions.

Example:

Before: Followed up with customers.

After: Initiated discussion of new product information during routine follow-up calls with customers, resulting in 20 additional sales a month.

Stuck? Ask yourself:

- What problems did I solve?
- Did I save time or money, or exceed goals?
- What did I do beyond my normal duties?
- How did my work contribute to the organization's larger goals?
- Was I or my team recognized with an award?

IV. AI & Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS)

What is an ATS? Why does it matter?

Most employers use Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) to scan resumes before a human sees them - and recruiters then spend only seconds on each one. Your resume has to work for both.

- **Keep it simple.** Plain, text-based formatting is the most reliable. Submit a PDF (unless other format specified); no templates, graphics, columns, tables, or vertical-line separators.
- **Use standard section headings.** ATS relies on section titles to know how to categorize your skills and expertise, so don't get creative. Always include the word "Experience" in headings (i.e. Work Experience, Volunteer Experience, Project Experience).

- **Put keywords in your bullet points.** That's where they count most. You don't need a perfect match, but you do need to mention and provide details about as many keywords as you can.
- **Quantify the results.** Numbers catch the human eye, and ATS reads them too.
- **Keep it to one page.** Resumes of 475–600 words are twice as likely to advance (one page is approximately 550 words).

AI Use for Resumes

AI can be a powerful editing tool, but it shouldn't write your resume for you. Recruiters *and* ATS recognize (and flag) heavy AI usage.

- **Start with your own draft.** Create a draft with your experiences, impact, and numbers first, then use AI to refine - section by section or bullet by bullet for the most precise feedback.
- **Be specific with prompts.** The more context you provide, the better the results. "How can I better showcase my project management skills in this internship bullet?" or "What type of quantifiable result might I highlight here?" beats "How do I make my resume good?"
- **Treat output as a suggested edit, not a final product.** Adjust the language so it's accurate, authentic, and sounds like you. Don't copy and paste.
- **Check for coherence.** AI can produce sentences that are grammatically correct but don't quite make sense. Make sure your ideas connect logically.
- **Ask for feedback beyond wording.** AI can also review structure, flow, grammar, and keyword use.

Cover Letters

I. What a Cover Letter Is - and Isn't

A cover letter is a tailored, one-page document that accompanies your resume. Its purpose is not to repeat your resume, but to tell the story behind it - explaining why you are applying, what draws you to this organization, and how your experience makes you the right fit. Instead of listing responsibilities, use it to provide context, personality, and purpose, showing the employer who you are and why this opportunity matters to you.

II. Types of Cover Letters

Letter of Application. Written for a specific, posted position. Address the hiring authority directly, explain why you are a strong fit, and integrate keywords from the job description alongside your own research about the organization.

III. Formatting & Components

Keep your cover letter to one page. Use the same font (size 10–12) and masthead as your resume - your name, city and state, phone, professional email, and relevant links. This creates a cohesive application package. Avoid graphics, columns, tables, and templates, and keep margins between ½” and 1”.

Every cover letter should include:

- **Date** — the date you are submitting.
- **Employer Address** — recipient's full name, title, organization, and mailing address. Look it up if it's not in the posting.
- **Salutation** — address the reader by name when possible (e.g., Dear Ms. Johnson:). Use a colon, not a comma. If no name is available, use Dear Hiring Manager: or Dear Search Committee:
- **Introduction** — why you are writing, what position you seek, and a specific reason you are drawn to this organization.
- **Body** — your qualifications tied to the employer's needs, with concrete examples.
- **Conclusion** — your appreciation, enthusiasm, and follow-up plan.
- **Closing** — Sincerely, followed by your full name typed below a signature line.

IV. Writing Your Cover Letter

Introduction

Hook the reader immediately. Name the specific position you are applying for, give a sincere and specific reason you are drawn to this organization - explicit evidence of your research - and briefly state what you bring to the role. If someone referred you, mention it here.

Weak: *I am writing to apply for the open position at your organization. I am very interested in this role and believe I would be a great fit.*

Strong: *I am writing to apply for the Registered Nurse position in the Medical-Surgical Unit at Billings Clinic. As an MSU nursing student completing my BSN in May 2025, I am drawn to Billings Clinic's commitment to serving patients across rural Montana - a mission that aligns directly with my own reasons for pursuing nursing.*

Body

Describe your qualifications, tying in keywords from the job description. Highlight how your experience, skills, and abilities meet the employer's needs. Expand on the most relevant points

from your resume, but do not simply repeat it. Describe one or two concrete examples where you have added value to an organization or team, and keep the focus on what you can contribute, not on what you hope to gain.

Conclusion

Express your appreciation for their consideration, reiterate your enthusiasm, and state how and when you will follow up. Then follow up.

V. Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS)

Many employers use Applicant Tracking System (ATS) software to screen applications before a human reviewer sees them. To keep your letter ATS-readable, avoid templates, columns, headers, footers, and graphics. Work keywords from the job description into your letter naturally and in context, rather than copying and pasting them directly. Read the posting carefully for any specified file format; if none is given, PDF is generally preferred over .docx.

VI. Using Artificial Intelligence

AI tools can support your cover letter process, but they should not write it for you. Recruiters can tell when a letter has been AI-generated, and a generic AI-produced letter works against you. Your cover letter is one of the few places in an application where your voice and personality come through directly. That authenticity matters.

Where AI can help:

- **Research.** Prompt AI to summarize an organization's mission, recent news, and priorities before you write.
- **Keyword identification.** Ask AI to analyze a job description and identify the top skills and keywords you should address.
- **Editing and feedback.** Once you've written a draft, ask AI whether your letter makes a strong case for your fit, or prompt it to suggest improvements to specific paragraphs.
- **Brainstorming.** If you're stuck on how to frame an experience, AI can make suggestions but then rewrite them in your own words.

Always read your final letter aloud. If it doesn't sound like you, revise it. Be able to speak to every claim you make. And follow any employer guidelines on AI use in application materials as some organizations prohibit it explicitly.

VII. Finalizing Your Cover Letter

Proofread carefully - automatic spell check does not catch every error, and more than 70% of hiring managers will filter out a candidate after finding a single mistake. Read your letter aloud, then have a Career Education Coach review it before you submit. Follow the application instructions completely: missing a step can remove you from consideration entirely.

MARCUS ALLEN THIELEN

Bozeman, MT • (406) 555-0374 • mthielen@montana.edu • linkedin.com/in/marcusthielen

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

Mechanical Engineering student with hands-on experience in product design, fabrication, and testing through academic projects and internship work. Skilled in SolidWorks, AutoCAD, and MATLAB. Proven ability to collaborate across disciplines and deliver results under project constraints.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science (B.S.), Mechanical Engineering Expected May 2027
Montana State University, Bozeman, MT
GPA: 3.58/4.0

- Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) Exam, Mechanical, passed October 2024

PROJECT WORK EXPERIENCE

Senior Capstone Project — Wildland Firefighter Cooling Vest Aug. 2026 – Present
Client: Montana DNRC, Bozeman, MT

- Designed a phase-change material cooling vest to reduce heat stress for wildland firefighters, working in a team of 4 with a client-defined weight and cost budget
- Built and tested two prototype iterations, collecting core temperature and comfort data from volunteer testers to validate performance against design specifications
- Generated full SolidWorks drawing package and assembly documentation for client handoff

Junior Design Project — Automated Seed Planter Jan. – May 2023
Course: Multidisciplinary Engineering Design, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT

- Collaborated with electrical and agricultural engineering students to design and build a small-scale automated seed planter for use in greenhouse research settings
- Used AutoCAD to produce part drawings and SolidWorks to model the final assembly prior to fabrication
- Demonstrated the working prototype to a panel of faculty and industry judges at the MSU Engineering Design Showcase

RELATED WORK EXPERIENCE

Mechanical Engineering Intern May – Aug. 2026
RightNow Technologies (Norco Industries), Kalispell, MT

- Supported the product development team in redesigning a trailer hitch component, running stress analysis in SolidWorks Simulation to evaluate load cases
- Prepared engineering change orders and updated technical drawings in the company's CAD library
- Participated in weekly design review meetings with senior engineers and contributed to documentation for a new product line launch

ME Design Lab Assistant Sep. 2025 – May 2026
Montana State University, Mechanical and Industrial Engineering Dept., Bozeman, MT

- Supported students during open lab hours with SolidWorks modeling, 3D printer operation, and basic machining on the mill and lathe
- Maintained lab equipment and flagged maintenance needs to the supervising faculty member

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

MSU Chapter of American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME) Sep. 2021 – Present

- Organized the spring industry tour to Knife River Materials in Billings as events lead (2023–2024)

Bobcat MotorSports — MSU SAE Chapter Sep. 2022 – May 2024

- Contributed to suspension design and fabrication for the BAJA SAE off-road vehicle entry
- Competed at BAJA SAE Kansas 2023, supporting the team through dynamic and endurance events

ADDITIONAL WORK EXPERIENCE

Carpenter's Helper, Thielen Construction, Whitefish, MT Summers 2021 – 2023

- Assisted with residential framing, roofing, and finish carpentry on new construction projects
- Operated power tools and equipment safely on active job sites

MARCUS ALLEN THIELEN

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June 24, 2025

Mr. Jason Aldrich

Engineering Recruiting Manager

RightNow Technologies

1900 Hutton Ranch Road

Kalispell, MT 59901

Dear Mr. Aldrich:

I am writing to apply for a full-time Mechanical Design Engineer position with RightNow Technologies. Having interned with your product development team in summer 2026, I experienced firsthand the collaborative, detail-oriented engineering culture at RightNow, and I am eager to return as a full-time contributor. I will complete my Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from Montana State University in May 2027 and have already passed the Fundamentals of Engineering exam.

During my internship, I supported the redesign of a trailer hitch component by running stress analysis in SolidWorks Simulation to evaluate load cases, preparing engineering change orders, and updating technical drawings for a new product line launch. That experience reinforced both my technical preparation and my ability to contribute meaningfully to a professional engineering environment. In my current senior capstone project, I am leading mechanical design on a phase-change material cooling vest for wildland firefighters, developed in partnership with the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation. Working within a client-defined weight and cost budget, my team has built and tested two prototype iterations, collecting core temperature and comfort data to validate performance against design specifications and producing a full SolidWorks drawing package for client handoff. This project has sharpened my ability to translate engineering constraints into practical, testable solutions. It is exactly the kind of work I want to continue at RightNow.

I am drawn to RightNow's focus on durable, real-world products and to the opportunity to build my career close to home in Montana. I am confident I would make a strong contribution to your team and look forward to the chance to discuss how my skills and experience fit your current needs. I have enclosed my resume for your review and plan to follow up within two weeks. I am available at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Marcus Allen Thielen

JORDAN MARIE CALLAHAN

Bozeman, MT • (406) 555-0213 • jmcallahan@montana.edu • linkedin.com/in/jmcallahan

PROFILE

Compassionate BSN candidate with clinical experience across medical-surgical, pediatric, and community health settings. Skilled in patient assessment, therapeutic communication, and care coordination in high-acuity environments. Committed to delivering patient-centered care to rural and underserved Montana communities.

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)

Expected May 2025

Mark and Robyn Jones College of Nursing, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT

GPA: 3.82/4.0 Dean's List 2022–2024

CERTIFICATION AND LICENSURE

Registered Nurse License, Montana Board of Nursing

Expected: Summer 2025

- Sitting for NCLEX Exam July 2025

Basic Life Support (BLS) for Healthcare Providers, American Heart Association

Expires: March 2026

Certified Nurse Aide (CNA), Montana DPHHS

Expires: October 2025

CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

Bozeman Health Deaconess Hospital, Bozeman, MT

Jan. 2025 – Present

Medical-Surgical Unit, Capstone Preceptorship (120 hours)

- Assume primary care for 4–5 patients per shift, conducting head-to-toe assessments and developing individualized care plans in collaboration with the interdisciplinary team
- Administer medications via multiple routes, perform wound care, and document patient progress in Epic electronic health records
- Provide discharge teaching to patients and families on medication management, wound care, and follow-up instructions

Bozeman Health Deaconess Hospital, Bozeman, MT

Sep. – Dec. 2024

Pediatric Unit, Clinical Rotation (60 hours)

Gallatin County Health Department, Bozeman, MT

Jun. – Aug. 2024

Community and Public Health, Clinical Rotation (80 hours)

Bozeman Health Deaconess Hospital, Bozeman, MT

Jan. – May 2024

Labor and Delivery Unit, Clinical Rotation (60 hours)

Billings Clinic, Billings, MT

Sep. – Dec. 2023

Medical-Surgical Unit, Clinical Rotation (90 hours)

Rimrock Foundation, Billings, MT

Jan. – May 2023

Inpatient Mental Health, Clinical Rotation (40 hours)

WORK EXPERIENCE

Bozeman Health Deaconess Hospital, Bozeman, MT

May 2023 – Present

Certified Nurse Aide (CNA), Medical-Surgical Unit

- Assist nurses in providing direct patient care for 8–10 patients per shift, including vital signs, hygiene, mobility, and feeding
- Communicate patient changes and concerns to the nursing team promptly, contributing to safe care transitions

The Ridge Athletic Club, Bozeman, MT

Sep. 2021 – May 2023

Front Desk Associate

- Greeted and checked in members, managed scheduling software, and handled membership inquiries
- Addressed member concerns calmly and resolved issues to maintain a positive environment

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing

Jan. 2024 – Present

Montana Student Nurses Association

Aug. 2022 – Present

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

MSU COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT

Spring 2022

Heart of the Valley Animal Shelter, Bozeman, MT

Sep. 2021 – Present

JORDAN MARIE CALLAHAN

Bozeman, MT • (406) 555-0213 • jmcallahan@montana.edu • [linkedin.com/in/jmcallahan](https://www.linkedin.com/in/jmcallahan)

June 24, 2025

Ms. Rachel Nguyen

Director of Nursing Recruitment

Billings Clinic

2800 10th Avenue North

Billings, MT 59101

Dear Ms. Nguyen:

I am writing to apply for the Registered Nurse position in the Medical-Surgical Unit at Billings Clinic. As a Montana State University BSN candidate completing my degree in May 2025, I am drawn to Billings Clinic's reputation as the region's leading health system and its commitment to serving patients across rural Montana. It's a mission that aligns directly with my own reasons for pursuing nursing. I also have a personal connection to your unit: my clinical rotation in Billings Clinic's Medical-Surgical Unit in fall 2023 was among the most formative experiences of my training.

My clinical preparation spans more than 450 hours across six settings, with significant experience in medical-surgical care. In my current capstone preceptorship at Bozeman Health Deaconess Hospital, I assume primary responsibility for four to five patients per shift. I conduct head-to-toe assessments, administer medications, perform wound care, and document in Epic. I have learned to prioritize quickly in high-acuity environments and to communicate clearly with both patients and interdisciplinary teams. Alongside my clinical rotations, I have worked as a CNA on the same medical-surgical unit for two years, giving me a ground-level understanding of care delivery that I believe makes me a more effective new-graduate nurse.

I am confident I would contribute positively to your team from day one, and I would be honored to serve the Billings community through Billings Clinic. I have enclosed my resume for your review and welcome the opportunity to discuss my qualifications further. I plan to follow up within two weeks and am available at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Jordan Marie Callahan

CASSIDY JANE BROOKS

Bozeman, MT • (406) 555-0192 • cjbrooks@montana.edu • [linkedin.com/in/cjbrooks](https://www.linkedin.com/in/cjbrooks)

EDUCATION

Montana State University, Jake Jabs College of Business & Entrepreneurship

Bozeman, MT

Bachelor of Science (B.S.), Business Finance

Expected May 2027

GPA: 3.7/4.0 Dean's List 2022-2024

Relevant Coursework: Financial Statement Analysis, Corporate Finance, Bank Management, Investments, Agricultural Lending, Financial Modeling

WORK EXPERIENCE

Stockman Bank of Montana, Bozeman, MT

Jun. 2024 - Aug. 2024

Credit Analyst Intern, MSU Jake Jabs Community Banking Internship Program

- Spread financial statements for 20+ commercial loan applicants, calculating debt service coverage ratios and collateral adequacy to support senior credit officer decisions
- Drafted credit memoranda for loan committee review on facilities ranging from \$50K to \$1.2M, synthesizing borrower risk profiles and repayment capacity
- Researched Gallatin County real estate and agricultural market conditions to support collateral valuations on ranch and farm loans

D.A. Davidson and Co., Bozeman, MT

Jun. 2023 - Aug. 2023

Wealth Management Summer Intern

- Prepared portfolio performance reports for advisors managing \$85M in combined client assets, enabling more efficient quarterly client review meetings
- Produced 8 equity research briefs using Bloomberg Terminal, summarizing company fundamentals and sector trends for advisor investment committee discussions
- Streamlined client onboarding by auditing account transfer documentation across CRM and custodial systems, reducing processing errors

Opportunity Bank of Montana, Bozeman, MT

Sep. 2021 - May 2022

Teller and Member Services Representative

- Processed 80+ daily transactions including deposits, withdrawals, and loan payments with a perfect balancing record across 9 months
- Generated branch referrals by identifying customer financial needs during service interactions, contributing to quarterly cross-sell targets

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

MSU Finance Club, Jake Jabs College of Business & Entrepreneurship

Aug. 2022 - Present

Vice President (2023-Present), General Member (2022-2023)

- Coordinated annual New York City trip for 22 students with visits to Goldman Sachs, BlackRock, and the NYSE; secured \$2,500 in departmental sponsorship to fund the trip
- Recruited 6 guest speakers from Montana banking and investment firms, including First Interstate Bank and Glacier Bancorp, to present at club events throughout the year

Women in Business, Montana State University

Sep. 2022 - Present

Events Coordinator

- Designed and launched a semester-long mentorship program connecting 30 students with Bozeman-area finance and accounting professionals
- Organized a professional panel of 5 local businesswomen that drew 80+ attendees from across the Jabs College

CFA Institute Research Challenge, Spokane Regional

February 2023

Team Member, Jake Jabs College of Business & Entrepreneurship

- Co-authored a sell-side equity research report on a publicly traded company, including financial modeling and valuation analysis, competing against teams from WSU, Gonzaga, and University of Montana

SKILLS, CERTIFICATIONS, AND HONORS

Certifications: Bloomberg Market Concepts (BMC), 2023

Technical Skills: Excel (financial modeling, pivot tables), Bloomberg Terminal, QuickBooks, Tableau, PowerPoint

Honors: MSU Presidential Scholarship (\$4,000/yr)

Languages: English (native), Spanish (conversational)

CASSIDY JANE BROOKS

Bozeman, MT • (406) 555-0192 • cjbrooks@montana.edu • [linkedin.com/in/cjbrooks](https://www.linkedin.com/in/cjbrooks)

January 24, 2026

Ms. Lauren Whitfield
Campus Recruiting Manager
D.A. Davidson & Co.
8 Third Street North
Great Falls, MT 59401

Dear Ms. Whitfield,

I am writing to apply for the Financial Analyst Internship with D.A. Davidson & Co. for Summer 2026. Having interned with your Bozeman office the summer after my freshman year, I gained direct exposure to D.A. Davidson's client-first approach to wealth management, and I have spent the past two years building the analytical skills to contribute at a deeper level. I will complete my Bachelor of Science in Business Finance from Montana State University's Jake Jabs College of Business & Entrepreneurship in May 2027.

Since my time at D.A. Davidson, I have continued to develop the financial and credit analysis skills that are central to this role. Last summer, as a Credit Analyst Intern with Stockman Bank of Montana through the Jake Jabs Community Banking Internship Program, I created financial statements for more than 20 commercial loan applicants, drafted credit memoranda for loan committee review on facilities up to \$1.2M, and researched Gallatin County real estate and agricultural market conditions to support collateral valuations. Earlier this year, I competed in the CFA Institute Research Challenge for the Spokane region, co-authoring a sell-side equity research report that included full financial modeling and valuation analysis against teams from WSU, Gonzaga, and the University of Montana. These experiences, combined with my Bloomberg Market Concepts certification and financial modeling coursework, have sharpened my ability to synthesize financial data into clear, actionable analysis.

D.A. Davidson's independence, its long track record in the Mountain West, and its genuine investment in developing early-career professionals are all reasons I want to return. I am confident I would make a stronger contribution in this next role than I did in my first, and I look forward to the opportunity to demonstrate that. My resume is enclosed.

Sincerely,

Cassidy Jane Brooks

ETHAN JAMES MORRISON

Bozeman, MT | (406) 555-0187 | ejmorrison@montana.edu | linkedin.com/in/ethanmorrison

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Science (B.S.), Psychology (GPA 3.6)

Expected May 2027

Montana State University, Bozeman, MT

- Relevant Coursework: Abnormal Psychology, Counseling Theory, Developmental Psychology, Personality Theory
- Worked 20–30 hours/week throughout college while maintaining full-time enrollment and 3.6 GPA.

WORK EXPERIENCE

Undergraduate Research Assistant

May 2025 – Present

Dept. of Psychology & Dept. of Health and Human Development, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT

- Assist faculty researcher studying stress and coping in college students; manage participant recruitment and scheduling for an active longitudinal study tracking 40+ enrolled participants across multiple semesters
- Code and enter qualitative interview data into SPSS; conduct inter-rater reliability checks and resolve discrepancies in coordination with supervising graduate student
- Administer IRB-approved surveys and maintain data integrity protocols in accordance with APA research ethics standards
- Transcribed and coded 25+ participant interviews using qualitative coding frameworks under faculty supervision
- Prepared and presented a research poster at the MSU Undergraduate Research Celebration, April 2026, communicating study design and preliminary findings to a cross-disciplinary audience

Front Desk Agent

May 2024 – Present

Kimpton Armory Hotel, Bozeman, MT

- Manage check-in and check-out for 80–120 guests daily in a high-expectation boutique hotel environment, resolving complaints and special requests with composure and professionalism
- De-escalate guest disputes involving billing, room assignments, and noise complaints, consistently reaching resolution without supervisor involvement by applying active listening and clear communication
- Trained 3 new front desk hires on Opera PMS reservation systems, Kimpton service standards, and conflict resolution protocols; serve as a go-to resource for the team during busy shifts

Server

September 2023 – May 2024

Blackbird Kitchen, Bozeman, MT

- Delivered attentive service to up to 60 patrons per shift in a high-volume restaurant, managing 5–6 table sections simultaneously while adapting communication to guests' needs including dietary restrictions, accessibility considerations, and limited English proficiency
- Recognized by management for patience in high-stress service situations and for consistently keeping guests informed and at ease during long waits and kitchen delays

Sales Associate

October 2022 – August 2023

REI Co-op, Bozeman, MT

- Assisted up to 50 customers daily with gear selection, adjusting recommendations and communication style to match each customer's experience level and specific needs
- Contributed to \$4,000 in cooperative membership sign-ups over two holiday seasons through personalized, low-pressure customer engagement

ACTIVITIES & ORGANIZATIONS

Psi Chi International Honor Society in Psychology

January 2025 – Present

- Inducted based on GPA standing in top 35% of class; participate in professional development workshops and career panels focused on graduate school preparation and counseling careers

MSU Psychology Club

September 2023 – Present

SKILLS & CERTIFICATIONS

Certifications: Mental Health First Aid (MHFA), 2025; CPR/AED, American Red Cross, expires 2026

Technical: Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), SPSS (introductory), Opera PMS

RILEY JEAN STOCKTON

Billings, MT • (406) 555-0847 • rjstockton@montana.edu

EDUCATION

Montana State University, College of Agriculture

Bachelor of Science (B.S.), Animal Science
Livestock Management and Industry Option

Bozeman, MT
Expected May 2028

Billings Senior High School

High School Diploma GPA: 3.8/4.0

Billings, MT
May 2024

WORK EXPERIENCE

Yellowstone River Ranch, Billings, MT

Jun.-Aug. 2022 - 2024

Ranch Hand

- Assisted with daily feeding, health checks, and pen maintenance for a cow-calf operation
- Helped process and wean calves each fall using squeeze chutes and portable panels
- Completed fencing repairs and general property upkeep independently

Murdoch's Ranch and Home Supply, Billings, MT

Oct. 2022 - May 2024

Sales Associate, Farm and Ranch Department

- Helped customers select feed, livestock supplies, and equipment based on their needs
- Stocked shelves and assisted with inventory counts in a busy retail department

ACTIVITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Collegiate FFA, Montana State University

Aug. 2024 - Present

- Attend chapter meetings focused on agricultural career development and community outreach

MSU Livestock Judging Team

Sep. 2024 - Present

- Develop skills in evaluating beef cattle, sheep, and swine alongside experienced teammates

4-H of Yellowstone County, Billings, MT

2014 - 2024

- Raised and exhibited market steers and heifers at the Yellowstone County Fair for 6 years
- Earned Grand Champion Market Steer at the 2022 county fair
- Mentored younger members in animal preparation and showmanship as a Junior Leader

HIGH SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

FFA Chapter, Billings Senior High School

2021 - 2024

- Managed \$3,200 in chapter funds and coordinated fundraising as Chapter Treasurer
- Competed in livestock judging and agricultural sales events at the district level

Varsity Volleyball, Billings Senior High School

2021 - 2024

- Three-year varsity letter winner; elected team captain senior year

SKILLS

Technical: Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, PowerPoint), basic livestock record keeping