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UM Selects New Director of the Bureau of Business and Economic Research

MISSOULA – After a nationwide search, the University of Montana has hired Dr. Jeffrey Michael to serve as the next director of the Bureau of Business and Economic Research.

Michael joins BBER from the University of the Pacific where he has served as director of Public Policy at the McGeorge School of Law since 2021. Specializing in economics with decades of experience in regional economic forecasting, Michael was previously the executive director of the Center for Business and Policy Research and the Director of the Business Forecasting Center in the Eberhardt School of Business at the University of Pacific for 13 years.

“BBER has a tremendous legacy of helping business, government and the public understand the economy of Montana,” said Michael. “I am excited to contribute to BBER’s mission and engage with Montana business and civic leaders on critical and emerging economic issues.”

Longtime BBER Director Patrick Barkey will stay on as research director until June 2025 when he plans to retire.

“We are truly fortunate to be bringing on a new leader with the experience and skills of Jeff Michael to the state of Montana,” Barkey said. “He will hit the ground running in putting his own stamp on everything that we do.”

As BBER director, Michael will lead the team of 20 research professionals at a nationally recognized research center that continues to produce economic and industry data for all geographic areas of Montana as well as present economic forecasts at the annual Economic Outlook Seminars throughout the state.

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