

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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### **Whitney Benefits pledges to support agriculture programs at Sheridan College**

SHERIDAN, Wyo.— A \$240,000 gift from Whitney Benefits Inc. to Sheridan College will enable SC to grow, improve, and develop agricultural programs. The pledge is for \$80,000 per year over the next three years to support an Instructor and Director of Agriculture position.

“The primary responsibility of this faculty member will be to grow our agriculture programs and to connect with the community,” said Dr. Ami Erickson, SC Dean of Ag and Technical Programs. “In the market today, we have to be proactive and thoughtful in our approach. We have made significant progress in our programming over the last few months including the addition of a Biotechnology certificate, our new Natural Resources and Ranch Land Management degree, as well as several curriculum updates to our other programs. Adding a team member with expertise in rangeland or restoration ecology and the skills to lead, grow, and connect our agriculture programming with our community and the University of Wyoming is the next step.”

The current agriculture programs offered at SC are: Agricultural Business, Agricultural Science, Animal Science, Biotechnology, Food Science, Horticulture and Sports Turf Management, and Natural Resources and Ranch Land Management.

“Supporting the agricultural programs at Sheridan College is not only something that is important to the current board members of Whitney Benefits, it is the exact passion of E.A. Whitney, the creator of this foundation,” said Roy Garber, Whitney Benefits Trustee. “We are proud to continue the tradition of supporting programs that speak to the heart of our area and look forward to seeing them grow.”

Over the past several years, gifts from Whitney Benefits to Sheridan College in support of agricultural programs include: support for the building of the Watt Agricultural Center, support for a 1440 square foot greenhouse next to the center, and support for an Endowed Professorship in Horticulture, which is a partnership with the University of Wyoming.

“We are extremely thankful for the support of Whitney Benefits,” said Dr. Jon Connolly, Interim President of Sheridan College. “It is especially encouraging right now to have an opportunity to infuse an academic department with new energy and ideas. With a tight budget there are many initiatives that are put on hold because of resources, and we are fortunate to have a community partner like Whitney to see that vision and potential and help us get there.”

Through the vision and generosity of the late Edward A. Whitney, Whitney Benefits has played a pivotal role in establishing and helping grow the Sheridan College campus and its programs. This includes the first gift of land on which the campus is built and which now encompasses 140+ acres – all given by Whitney Benefits. In total, Whitney Benefits’ unmatched generosity and unparalleled gifts to Sheridan College exceed \$36 million.

Within the past ten years alone, Whitney Benefits has generously funded over a dozen campus projects including updating the SC Master Plan, the Watt Agricultural Center, the SC Technical Center, the Health Science Programs, the four -year endowed Nursing Chair, the Trolley Catering Wagon supporting the Culinary Arts Program, and the new Whitney Villas student housing project. Whitney Benefits is a private, non-profit educational foundation located in Sheridan, Wyoming. Whitney Benefits was created under the Last Will and Testament of Edward A. Whitney, a Sheridan County resident, who passed away in 1917.

For additional information requests, please contact: Whitney Benefits President Tom Kinnison at 672-0768 or Wendy Smith at Sheridan College at 674-6446 ext. 2801.

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