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MONTANA NURSERY & LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION PRESENTS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD TO MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY STUDENT RYAN MCHUGH

BIGFORK, MT, September 18, 2008 — The Montana Nursery & Landscape Association (MNLA) is pleased to announce that Ryan McHugh, a University of Montana Forestry student is the recipient of the Association's horticulture scholarship award. He expects to graduate in December of 2008.



Upon graduation, McHugh will focus on either forestry management with a private or state forestry agency, or he will to continue working at Webb Landscape, Inc. in Bellevue, Idaho growing and selling trees and shrubs. He has worked at Webb Landscape since March of 2005, first managing wholesale sales operations and as a nursery foreman. Webb Landscape management allowed McHugh to continue managing nursery sales part-time while attending graduate school in Montana. Whether he continues to work with Webb Landscape or moves into forestry, he is sure that he will be involved with trees – growing, managing, or selling them.

Ryan's interest in working outdoors started with his first job at age 14, watering plants at a nursery near his home in Reno, Nevada. "It has always been my passion to work outside while enjoying what nature has to offer," commented Ryan. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology from the University of Nevada in 2003. In addition to his work with Webb Landscape, he has worked as a fisheries biologist, in construction, he spent three summers as a fire-fighter, and most recently worked as a field crew foreman for his graduate professor. This summer and last, he measured and installed research plots with other undergraduate students for an ongoing small-tree growth and yield cooperative study. The research sites are located on state, tribal, and industrial land holdings in Idaho, Washington, and Montana. The study focuses on the interaction between small conifer trees and competing understory shrubs and overstory trees.

"These studies have allowed me to not only learn all the native shrubs, forbs, and grasses in the northern Rockies, but also the opportunity to evaluate the interactions and witness ideal growth conditions for these plants and trees. I will be writing my thesis on these studies." In addition to his final semester of Graduate school, Ryan and his wife are also expecting their first child this month. Ryan is a member of the Montana Nursery & Landscape Association and the Society of American Foresters.

The Montana Nursery & Landscape Association annually presents scholarship awards to students who demonstrate both academic excellence and a commitment to horticulture in Montana. Scholarship awards are also offered by MNLA to Association members pursuing additional learning or certification in horticulture or related areas of study. The scholarship

program was initiated in 2001 and MNLA has awarded nearly \$15,000 in scholarship funds to date. Details and applications for the scholarship program are available from the MNLA office or the MNLA website: www.plantingmontana.com – Education & Scholarships – Scholarships.

The mission of the MNLA is to provide programming, information, and other opportunities for professional development of direct benefit to its members. MNLA monitors and lobbies governmental agencies on issues relevant to the membership. MNLA promotes the nursery and landscape industry in Montana through education and community interaction.

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Electronic copies of this press release are available at www.plantingmontana.com or click here: **McHugh Media Release**, as well as a photo of the award recipient—<http://www.plantingmontana.com/photos/ryan.jpg>