



# News Release

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## **WESTERN HOLDS “GRIFFON EDGE” ORIENTATION PROGRAM *THREE NATIONALLY KNOWN SPEAKERS WILL BE FEATURED***

**St. Joseph, Mo.** —Aug. 18, 2005— New first-year students at Missouri Western State College will gain an “edge” this fall by attending Griffon Edge, the college’s four-day orientation session Aug. 24-27. The program is packed with information sessions, three nationally known speakers, campus displays and a student convocation. Also, for the second year, a day of community service is included in the program.

“We want to do everything we can to give students a good introduction to Missouri Western so they can be successful,” said Dr. Paul Shang, dean of student development. “They will learn about a lot of resources and meet a lot of people who want to help them be successful.”

Featured speakers at Griffon Edge this year include motivational speaker and author Joe Martin, “Dating Doctor” David Coleman and nationally known speaker Will Keim.

Martin will be the featured speaker at the student convocation at 6 p.m. Aug. 27 in the M.O. Looney Complex. Through his high-impact, high-energy style, he has become recognized as one of America’s “Top Motivational Professors,” and is known by educators nationwide as the “Educator Motivator.” He is considered one of the country’s leading experts in the field of student affairs. He was voted “Campus Speaker of the Year” by the Association for Programming Campus Activities, was nominated twice for the “Distinguished Teacher’s Award” and selected for “Who’s Who Among America’s Teachers.”

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## **Page 2 of 2 – Griffon Edge**

Keim will make his second visit to Western when he speaks at noon on Aug. 24. He has spoken on more campuses about leadership and actualizing peak performance than anyone in the nation. Dr. Shang said Keim will speak to the students about organization and time management skills, and how students need to become self-reliant. Keim is the author of five books, including “Keys to Success in College and Life,” “The Truth About College,” and “The Education of Character.”

Coleman, who will speak at 7 p.m. Aug. 24, has spoken to over 2,500 groups nationwide. He has been named National Speaker of the Year by Campus Activities Magazine six times and by the National Association of Campus Activities three times. He has written four books and produced a video on subjects dealing with dating and relationships.

Throughout the program, Griffon Edge participants will attend several information sessions on topics such as the library, the center for academic support, personal finances, public safety, recreation services, student services, and the center for multicultural education. They will also have the opportunity to check out co-curricular activities at a Welcome Fair, which will feature over 50 displays of campus clubs and organizations.

On Aug. 25, Griffon Edge participants will attend a “Traditions Night,” where they will learn the fight song and the Alma Mater, followed by a tailgate party and the Griffons’ first football game of the season at Spratt Memorial Stadium. The last day, students will participate in a day of service and the student convocation.

Dr. Shang noted that Griffon Edge gives students a chance to get to know each other and participate in community activities such as the football game.

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**Page 2 of 2 – Griffon Edge**

Those enrolled in Griffon Edge also participate in a common reading program, now in its fourth year. Students are required to read an assigned book before arriving and share in discussions about it throughout the week. This year's selection is "A Lesson Before Dying," a story of death and identity in a small Cajun Louisiana community in the late 1940s. Western is among a handful of colleges and universities in the nation that have instituted common reading programs within the past few years.

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*Missouri Western State College is a four-year public institution providing a blend of traditional liberal arts and professional degree programs. The college offers student-centered, high quality instruction that focuses on experience-based learning, community service, and state-of-the-art technology. Western is located in St. Joseph, Mo. and is committed to the educational, economic, cultural and social development of the region it serves.*