



# News Release

Missouri Western State College • 4525 Downs Drive • St. Joseph, MO 64507 • (816) 271-5649

**Contact:** Kristy Hill

**Phone:** (816) 271-5649

**Title:** Public Relations/Marketing Director

**Email:** [hillk@mwsc.edu](mailto:hillk@mwsc.edu)

## WESTERN OFFERS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS

**St. Joseph, Mo.**—Feb. 27, 2004—Missouri Western State College student Gina Roggy of Kansas City, Mo., is a full-time nursing major with five children, but she is taking time out of her busy schedule this spring to improve her leadership skills. She is one of 20 students who was chosen to participate in Western's Barbara Sprong Leadership Challenge.

"We think this is a great opportunity for students to get general leadership skills," said Chad Elifrits, coordinator for the center for student activities. "We hope that by virtue of the skills they receive, they will be able to provide new dynamics for our campus as well as for themselves, personally and professionally."

The program began with a weekend retreat where students learned leadership and problem solving skills from Dr. Tim Crowley, peer counselor coordinator; Dr. Brenda Blessing, chair and professor of health, physical education and recreation; and Dr. James Grechus, professor emeritus of health, physical education and recreation.

Six local leaders will offer presentations over the next seven weeks: Dr. James Scanlon, Western's president; Bob Klostermeyer, acting dean of student development at Western; Dr. Jimmy Albright, pastor of Wyatt Park Baptist Church; Nicholas Sacarro, executive director of America's Second Harvest of Greater St. Joseph and Western alumnus; Lowell Kruse, CEO and president of Heartland Health Systems; and Lee Keith, president of Gold Bank.

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Elifrits is pleased with the choice of speakers and believes they will offer unique perspectives on community service, leadership and business.

Students are also required to complete at least 10 volunteer hours at a community organization and create a display board about their experience.

Nontraditional student Bob Hughs chose to participate in the program to gain more leadership experience in the St. Joseph community, his hometown. “I want to be able to motivate individuals to believe in my vision for the community,” he said. “In addition, I want to be a better husband and father by participating in the leadership challenge.” Hughs is married to recent Western graduate Jennifer Hughs and has a 19-month-old son.

The 20 students chosen to be a part of the Barbara Sprong Leadership Challenge are as follows: Lisa Cross, a freshman communication studies major from Blue Springs, Mo.; Robert Mitchell, a freshman legal studies major from Columbia, Mo.; Tanisha Washington, a sophomore English major from Columbia, Mo.; Bethany Miller, a junior criminal justice major from Curryville, Mo.; Jennifer Cassity, a freshman business major from DeKalb, Mo.; Daniel Kirk, a sophomore music education major from Emporia, Kan.; Hannah Coy, a freshman from Farragut, Iowa; Andrew Davis, a junior political science major from Garden City, Mo.; Malcolm Malone, a junior business major from Kansas City, Mo.; Roggy, a senior nursing major from Kansas City, Mo.; Jennifer Evans, a senior nursing major from LaCledde, Mo.; Lucas Gorham, a senior management major from Lexington, Mo.; Jamie Lee Bogacz, a junior elementary education major from St. Joseph, Mo.; Adam Brown, a junior government major from St. Joseph, Mo.; Nicole Hartenbower, a junior physical education major from St. Joseph, Mo.; Hughs, a junior business major from St. Joseph, Mo.; Scott Landers, a freshman nursing major from St. Joseph, Mo.; John Fabsits, a senior communication studies major from

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St. Louis, Mo.; Ashlee Kolieboi, a freshman social work major from St. Louis; and Jenny Soptic, a junior public affairs major from Trenton, Mo.

All Challenge participants are required to maintain a 2.5 cumulative grade point average and will receive one hour of credit through the division of continuing education upon completion of the program.

The Leadership Challenge program began in 1992 and is named in honor of Barbara Sprong, a former member and president of the Western Board of Regents who continues to be a leader in the St. Joseph community.

For more information, contact Elifrits at (816) 271-4220 or elifritsc@mwsc.edu.

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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.*