



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

GOVERNOR SIGNS LEGISLATION DESIGNATING WESTERN A UNIVERSITY

St. Joseph, Mo. —March 17, 2005—Gov. Matt Blunt signed legislation today in Springfield, Mo. that designated Missouri Western State College a university. The new designation will be effective August 28, 2005. Gov. Blunt will travel to St. Joseph on March 19 for a ceremonial signing on the Western campus.

Western's president, Dr. James Scanlon, was in Springfield for the official signing of the omnibus bill that included Western's name change along with provisions for other Missouri public institutions. After Gov. Blunt signed the bill into law President Scanlon exclaimed, "This is an exciting day for the entire Missouri Western State College family and the community of St. Joseph. Western has been functioning as a university in every way but name, and it will now be appropriately recognized for the institution that it is.

"The legislation became official today, but we look forward to Gov. Blunt's visit to our campus on Saturday so that our campus and community can celebrate this wonderful outcome to a long effort to be acknowledged as a university," Dr. Scanlon added.

The festivities on Saturday (March 19) will be in the Leah Spratt Multipurpose Classroom Building beginning at 2 p.m. In addition to Gov. Blunt, others participating in the activities include Missouri legislators Sen. Charlie Shields and Reps. Rob Schaaf, Ed Wildberger and Martin Rucker.

Western's roots trace back to the founding of the St. Joseph Junior College in 1915. In 1965 it became Missouri Western Junior College when the junior college district was established. In 1967 the name was shortened to Missouri Western College. In 1969 the college moved to its new campus of over 700 acres and the third- and fourth-

year curricula were added. In 1977 Western became a part of the state higher education system and became known as Missouri Western State College. In her book “Missouri Western State College: A History 1915-83,” Frances Flanagan describes at length the important role of the St. Joseph community in the development of the college throughout its saga.

“We are grateful for the support of our community and legislators in Western’s efforts to become recognized as Missouri Western State University, and on Aug. 28 the dreams of the college and the community will become reality,” Dr. Scanlon said.

“The past several months have been exciting,” explained Dan Nicoson, Western’s vice president for institutional advancement. “We celebrated when the Senate passed Senate Bill 98, we celebrated again when the House also passed the bill and it was sent to Gov. Blunt. Now, on Saturday we will celebrate the governor’s support and the knowledge that the final hurdle has been achieved.”

—end—

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.